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“Precious Renewal Time With My Family!”

By Pastor Eun Ko

Dear families of the First United Methodist Church of Tucson,

I am thankful for your support and prayers that allowed me to take some time off to visit my family in South Korea. I returned last Friday, but I am currently dealing with jet lag. Nonetheless, the precious moments I spent with my family are irreplaceable. As many of you are aware, my father has been battling severe dementia, resulting in the loss of his eyesight and speaking ability due to the side effects of diabetes following a stroke. Since his stroke in December 2022, my mother has been his primary caregiver. During my visit, my mother was overjoyed to spend time together and proud of my achievement in receiving a Doctor of Ministry degree from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois.

Below far left: Lunch date with my mom. Below left: Three sisters, I am the oldest. Below right: With my grandmother who is 98 years old. Below far right: Farewell with Halla at Starbucks, in South Korea - * They serve quite different menus along with all coffees.



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Precious Renewal Time With My Family! cont.

I recently visited my grandmother, who is in a nursing home, to bid her a short farewell before Halla embarks on a journey to explore life in South Korea with my siblings and her cousins. This change will allow me to be more flexible with my busy summer schedule, without worrying about her food and care. This will be the first time I have been alone as a single parent since my husband's passing.

What a journey it has been! I always dreamed of witnessing her growth, but I never imagined that my parents would age and face sickness. How foolish and immature I was! I am reminded of Jesus and how he dealt with his disciples, understanding their foolishness and immaturity. Yet, the love of my parents prevails over me, just as the true and immense love of Jesus Christ prevails over all of us.

I feel incredibly lucky and blessed. You have shown me amazing blessings, love, and care since my move to Tucson, especially as we celebrate my recent move to a new home. How can I complain about my life? Sometimes, I do find myself overwhelmed by schedules and situations, but I am also reminded to be humble and grateful for where I come from - my mother's womb, Jeju Island (my hometown), South Korea (my country of origin), Illinois (my second hometown), and now here in Tucson, AZ.

Philippians 4:13 (NIV) - "I can do all this through him who gives me strength."

빌립보서 4장 13절 “ 내게 능력 주시는 자 안에서 내가 모든 것을 할 수 있느니라.”

This verse reminds us that through our faith and reliance on God, we can find the strength to face any situation, whether it be challenges, blessings, or changes in our lives. It speaks to the idea that with God's help, we can overcome obstacles and find peace and contentment in all circumstances.

May this scripture provide you with comfort and inspiration as you navigate the journey ahead with your family and your community.

With love and blessings,

Pastor Ko

What's Happening at First Church of Tucson!

- Young Christians' Time: Nancy Tomlinson and her elephant hand-puppet were joined on the steps by Nan Rollings, Margo Kahler, and Dottie Poczulp.



- Mothers' Day: Halla Kang, An Lam (assisted by her grandfather Sam), and Yuhyun Park read letters to their mothers. Yuhyun's mother came all the way from South Korea to visit her son.



- On Sunday, we heard testimony from David.



BRUCE BILLINGS MEMORIAL SERVICE

Over 80 people celebrated the life of Bruce Billings this past Saturday (June 1st) in our Sanctuary.



We heard eulogies from family and friends, including Pastor Raven, Catlow Shipek, Bill Bensema, John Billings, and Melissa Olson. The overall theme of each eulogy was Bruce's kindness.



Below left: April DuBoce sang, "Lord of the Dance," accompanied by piano. *Below right:* Isabelle Olson sang, "You Raise Me Up," also accompanied by piano. They both have beautiful voices!



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Bruce's family displayed multiple photo albums and a photo collage on the Social Hall stage, along with two beautiful flower arrangements.



ANNUAL CONFERENCE NEWS

[UPDATE: Phase Two of AC Mission Project Announced: The Inn](#)

by Billie K. Fidlin | Apr 2, 2024



The first part of this year's Annual Conference Mission Project is monetary donations to support the [Asylum Aid and Border Ministries Fund](#). This fund provides financial support to our churches who are engaged in asylum and border mission work, helping people who come from all over the world to the United States, seeking asylum and safety from human predators.

We are delighted to share that [The Inn](#) has been selected to receive item donations. This ministry provides care for migrants passing through the U.S./Mexico border.

Director Lopez will happily accept gift cards as well. Should you wish to purchase gift cards: Walmart, Amazon or Visa will be GREAT!

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IMPORTANT NOTE: You may bring your church's product donations to the main lobby of Annual Conference and drop off at the tables located there. The Inn staff will be picking up your donations daily. Should you be bringing gift cards, please give to Billie Fidlin.

Volunteers Needed for Ramp Assembly/Disassembly

By Ray Spooner

Greetings in Christ.

I am the Volunteers in Mission coordinator for the Desert Southwest Conference, United Methodist Men conference president, and on the board of [SAWs Southwest](#). SAWs is providing a ramp for Annual Conference in Tucson in June. I am looking for assistance in several ways: The ramp is fabricated in the SAWs shop in Fountain Hills, AZ and will need to be transported to Tucson on the 12th.

Specifics:

- Will need a means to pull the trailer from Fountain Hills to Tucson on the 12th.
- Will need volunteers to install the ramp on the 12th at the convention center.
- Will need volunteers to disassemble the ramp on the 16th.
- Will need a means to pull the trailer back to Fountain Hills.
- All persons 16 and over are welcome.
- Tools will be provided. I'll even provide lunch on the 12th.

Ray Spooner, IHS

raymond.spooner@comcast.net

925-321-2312

Chancel Choir Summer Break

The choir has worked hard this past year and it's time for them to take a well-deserved break. They will take time off from June 1st through August 3rd, resuming on Sunday, August 4th.

THIS WEEK'S
ANNOUNCEMENTS & GATHERINGS

10AM SUNDAY SERVICE

Join us in person for our English-language service! Or you can watch it live online at <https://www.youtube.com/c/TucsonFirstUMC>.

한국어 사역

주일 오전 11시 30분에 한국어 예배가 현장예배와 온라인예배로 진행됩니다. 기도와 참여 부탁드립니다.

WEEKDAY GATHERINGS

Women on a Spiritual Quest (WSQ)

-WSQ meets on Mondays at 4:30PM in the library.

Narcotics Anonymous (Underground)

-NA meets at 7:30PM on Monday evenings in the Arizona room.

All God's Creation (AGC)

-AGC meets on Tuesdays at 3PM over Zoom.

[Zoom ID: 994 3610 1655](#) [Passcode: 6226481](#)

Chancel Choir

-The choir is on summer break beginning June 2nd and resuming August 1st.

Progressive Book Study (PBS)

-PBS meets on Thursdays at 3PM over Zoom. The current book is "Poverty, by America" by Matthew Desmond.

Questions? Call Rev. Gaston at (520) 323-1611.

[Zoom ID: 980 1573 8087](#) [Passcode: 6226481](#)

Cocaine Anonymous (CA)

-This support group meets at 7:30PM on Friday evenings in the Arizona room.



We Need Your Help in the Kitchen!

We would greatly appreciate having a few more volunteers in the kitchen for food prep before the 10AM worship service and for clean-up after Fellowship hour. The work is not difficult at all, but it can be time-consuming with so few people doing it.

Thank you to everyone who has helped out so far! Everyone at First Church values your gifts of time, effort, food, and monetary contributions.

GIVING TO FIRST CHURCH TUCSON



When you attend Sunday services in person, the offering box is in the narthex for your generous giving. Head to our website www.firstchurchtucson.org/give to give online. As always, you can mail in checks to the church office at the address printed on the front page. Alternatively, have your IRA advisor automatically make payments from your IRA.

When we give to God from our hearts, it is always enough. We see you, and we thank you for your commitment to making a difference in our community.

* * *

PRAYERS FOR OUR COMMUNITY

We offer our prayers for those in our community who are suffering, who are physically, mentally, & emotionally unwell, and for those caring for them.



We offer our prayers for these sister faith communities:

Bishop & Staff of the Desert Southwest
Conference Staff & Churches of the East, North, and West Districts

If you have a prayer request you would like to share in the Digest, please contact the church office at office@firstchurchtucson.org or (520) 622-6481.

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Howard Velzy - June 3
Pearl Zimmerman - June 4
Christopher Kang - June 8
Victoria Russell - June 9

Ann Goff - June 12
Sungmin Ji - June 12
Daniel Baek - June 15
Gretchen Lopez - June 18

Sungjin Park - June 18
Joy Ageh - June 19
Arthur Turnbull - June 28

Bob & Jessie Hansen - June 7
Howard & Carol Velzy - June 10

(If we have missed your birthday or anniversary, please let us know so we can update our records!)

June Meet'n'Eat

This is a fellowship time to visit with each other and see old and new friends. *All are welcome, everyone is invited!*

The next Meet'n'Eat is on **Friday, June 14th at 11:30 AM** at the Olive Garden on the northeast corner of Oracle/Wetmore ([300 W Wetmore Rd, Tucson, AZ 85705](http://www.olivegarden.com)).

If you're interested in coming, please notify the church office or Shirley Murray at (520) 297-4796 by Wednesday so she can reserve enough seats at the restaurant.

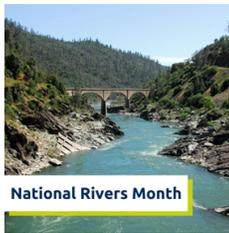
Animal & Environmental Holidays for June 2024

By Diane & Victoria Russell



June is National Zoo and Aquarium Month

In 1982, President Ronald Reagan dedicated the month of June to honor and celebrate zoos and aquariums for their conservation, education, and research efforts. This month encourages people to visit their local zoos/aquariums to learn and experience the wildlife/marine life of our planet.



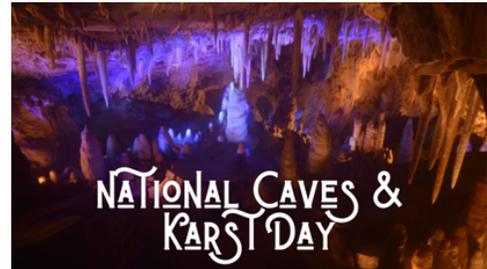
June is also National Rivers Month

Inspired by Canadian conservationist Mark Angelo, this month-long event was first celebrated in 2005. The goal of this month is to protect the Earth's precious commodity of water for future generations. Ways to help include saving water or participating in a river cleanup event.



June 5th – World Environment Day

In 1974 the United Nations General Assembly created this day to raise awareness and action for the protection of the environment. The theme of World Environment Day 2024 is, "Land Restoration, Desertification, and Drought Resilience."



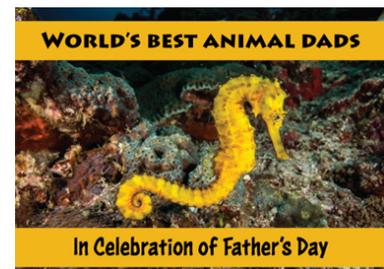
June 6th National Caves and Karst Day

Created in 2017 by the National Caves Association to celebrate the unique ecosystems that can be found underground. Karst landscapes are subterranean limestone formations such as caves, caverns which feature stalagmite/stalactite, underground streams, and sinkholes.



June 11th – World Lynx Day

Created in 2017 by the Transboundary Lynx Project to raise awareness about this medium-sized wild cat. There are four species of lynx in the world with two species found in Europe and Asia, and two species found in North America, known as the Canadian Lynx and Bobcat.



June 16th – Father's Day

Father's Day is celebrated on the third Sunday of June to celebrate all the wonderful fathers (dads). Fathers can come in all shapes and sizes.



June 17th – World Crocodile Day

Created in 2017 by the Crocodile Research Coalition along with the Belize Zoo to raise awareness about the plight of endangered crocodiles, alligators, and gharials in the world. There are three species of crocodylians with over twenty different types.



June 22nd – National Pet Choking Prevention Awareness Day

It was created in 2023 by Bow Wow Labs along with veterinarians with the goal to help prevent avoidable pet choking. Choking can occur with anything that is smaller than the windpipe or back of the throat can get stuck, such as food, chew toys, balls, rawhides, bones, and sticks.



June 24th – Upcycling Day

Upcycling means to repurpose items that are no longer being used. It helps give the item a new purpose and second life. This way they do not go to waste and end up in a landfill. It's a day to celebrate creativity and sustainability.



June 30th – International Asteroid Day

In December 2016, the UN General Assembly declared this day to be a global awareness campaign about the asteroid hazard and the crisis communication actions to be taken if there is a near-Earth object threat. It is a day to remember the Earth's largest asteroid impact on June 30, 1908: the Siberian Tunguska event.



First Church Tucson is an inclusive multi-ethnic faith community and a reconciling congregation of the United Methodist Church. Established in 1879 as the first Protestant church in our city, First Church Tucson continues to pave the way in creating a faith community that embraces all peoples into the grace of God.

As a courageous family of faith, we celebrate the diversity of all God's children, welcome everyone to share in God's love and grace, and offer a sanctuary of hope.

We seek to be in ministry with all God's people, regardless of gender, race, age, class, ethnicity, culture, country of origin, ability/disability, gender identity, and sexual orientation. We continue to work towards building a loving and faithful community in Tucson, and welcome all of you to be part of it.