



First United Methodist Church
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“Family Reunion!”

By Pastor Ko

Greetings in Jesus Christ,

I hope and pray that you are doing great and experiencing the grace of God every day.

Thanks to your support and prayer, I returned to Tucson after my vacation in South Korea.

I would like to share my travel report with you. Departure itself was not easy. On June 7th, I was supposed to get on the flight at 7:17 AM at Tucson airport, but it was delayed. That's why Halla and I missed our flight from San Francisco. Due to the high demand for the flight, we had to wait two days in San Francisco for our departure to Seoul, South Korea. At first, we were frustrated by messing up our schedule. However, we were so grateful to stay with my brother's family for two days in San Francisco, which became a very special gift for us. As a matter of fact, we had never visited my brother's house in San Francisco before.

Halla and I had to take another Covid test and go through the process of entering South Korea again but it was worth being in San Francisco.

I have a big extended family on my father's side. He is the oldest among seven siblings. And I have four siblings. Due to the Pandemic, they haven't met all together in South Korea since January 2020. So our visit to South Korea became a good motivation for all of us to gather and take a family photo even though my older brother's family couldn't join us.



Left: My sister-in-law and niece in San Francisco

Middle: Family photo

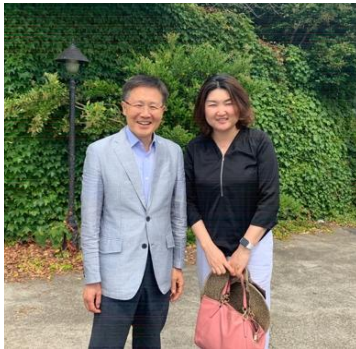
Right: My mom, her three daughters, Halla, and my nieces from my sisters

(cont. pg 2)

Family Reunion! (cont.)

I was born on Jeju Island. People sometimes call it “Sam Da Do,” which means that there are plenty of three components on Jeju Island, which are *women*, *wind*, and *rocks*. Jeju Island is surrounded by the Pacific Ocean so it is very windy. Also, the Island is made of rocks from a volcanic explosion a thousand years ago. Also, many men have lost their lives due to their fishing jobs and a historical tragedy (Jeju 4.3 incident), and instead, women survived to maintain their families. Thus, I had Jeju female blood from my mom. What a strong spirit I got from her! As part of our family photo, I suggested taking a picture only with the biological women of Jeju Island. My mom, her three daughters, including me, and their daughters, including Halla (picture above right)!

Not only was I able to reunite with my biological family, but I also could reunite with my faith family. Mr. Lee and his wife have been part of the First UMC of Tucson with our Korean congregation for the last ten years until 2020. Their two daughters attended the University of Arizona for their Master's and Ph.D. degrees. Mr. Lee is a retired professor (Linguistic department at Jeju National University). While visiting Jeju island, we met and had a reunion in the name of First UMC of Tucson. He has visited Tucson every winter for the past ten years to visit his daughters and attend our church. What a special blessing for me to see him in my hometown!



Mr. Lee, who has come to our church every winter for ten years before the Pandemic



Right: Halla enjoying the waves at the beach in Jeju island



Also, Halla enjoyed the waves for the first time at the beach. She loved it and never wanted to leave the beach. I couldn't be happier to observe her excitement and happiness. Because of our move to Tucson, Halla had to leave her old town and her friends in Illinois. It was God's plan and my decision, but Halla has had a hard transition as a pastor's kid. So I hoped to reward her sacrifice during our vacation. She spent time with her cousins, sisters, brothers, and my friends' kids. She visited a Korean amusement park with her uncle and cousins even though she was completely wet due to the heavy rain. She said that it was the most memorable moment of the vacation. Of course, I had been refilled and recharged with lots of love and care from my family and friends. Even though I don't have any friends and family in Tucson, AZ, Halla and I are so grateful for our faith community, which became my faith family. We are back and getting ready for another church and school year. I am ready to serve you as your pastor in my second year. Let us begin with love to serve the community in the name of Christ Jesus. Having a vacation always gives me a longing for my return to my home and ordinary life. Thanks be to God!

If you have any concerns or suggestions, feel free to contact me at pastortucsonfirstumc@gmail.com.

With God's blessings,

Pastor Eun Young Ko



WELCOMING NEW STUDENTS!

August 16-18, 11 AM-1 PM

Volunteers needed

The University of Arizona's student move-in week is fast approaching, and we'd like to show the incoming students some First Church hospitality. On August 16th-18th (Tuesday-Thursday) we will make our fellowship hall available to students and their families as a "cooling lounge" to relax in after moving, complete with free cold water bottles. We will need volunteers for this event to supervise the social hall and hand out water from 11AM to 1PM. If you are interested, please contact the office at 520-622-6481 or office@firstchurchtucson.org.

Thought-Provoking Remarks from Pastor Raven Gaston

Do you know why melons have weddings? Because they cantaloupe.

I read the comics weekly and rarely do they make me laugh. But this riddle did! A message that is short and clever reminds me of how the Old Testament book of Proverbs is written. Here are a couple of short sayings from Proverbs:

"Like one who seizes a dog by the ears is a passer-by who meddles in a quarrel not his own." (26:17)

"Do not gaze at wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it goes down smoothly! In the end it bites like a snake and poisons like a viper. Your eyes will see strange sights and your mind imagine confusing things." (23:31-33)

"Better a poor man whose walk is blameless than a rich man whose ways are perverse." (28:6)

The book of Proverbs is introduced with this explanation:

"Proverbs is a collection of wise sayings and good advice for daily living." I can certainly find wisdom in the three quoted here. Maybe you'd like to pick out a few from your Bible that speak to you.

Note from Tripp, Digest editor:

Inspired by Pastor Raven's words above, I'd like to share three of my own favorite Proverbs.

"Anxiety weighs down the human heart, but a good word cheers it up." (12:25)

"Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him." (30:5)

"Whoever is kind to the poor lends to the Lord and will be repaid in full." (19:17)

UPCOMING LAY SERVANT MINISTRY CLASSES

Are you hungry to perceive God in your life and to learn from the faith of others? Why not take advantage of the Lay Servant Ministry (LSM) Classes offered in person by the South District this Fall. The cost of each class is \$15.

1. If you have never taken a LSM class, start a wonderful journey by taking:

Introduction to Lay Servant Ministry Basic Class

Two-day class Dec. 3 and Dec 10 at Santa Cruz Valley UMC in Sahuarita

2. After taking the Intro course, become a “Certified Lay Servant” by enrolling in one advanced class below. LSM classes are for all of us—no one is required to have been a star student back in their school days!!

Leading Missional Small Groups

Two-day class

Sept 10 and Sept 17 at St. John’s UMC

Lay Pastoral Care Giving

Two-day class

Oct. 15 and Oct. 22 at St Mark’s UMC

Spiritual Gifts

Two-day class

Oct 1 and Oct. 8 at Green Valley UMC

Prayer

Two-day class

Nov. 5 and Nov. 12 at St. James UMC

Nan Rollings, Anita Lange, Sam Haney, Diane Russell, Margo Kahler, and Min Hahn are happy to share what these classes meant to them. Current Lay Servants must take at least one class every 3 years to maintain their certification.

To register for the Introduction Class or any of the other classes, go to

<https://dscumc.org/lay-servant-ministries-training-sessions/>

You can also reach out to Kelly Deyoe kjdeyoe@cox.net 520-740-1334 or to Gretchen Lofgren glofgren22@gmail.com 520-404-2268. They co-direct the Lay Servant Ministry program in our District.

Is preaching something you are drawn to? Speak to Anita Lange, our “Certified Lay Speaker,” and begin the path through classes offered by Lay Servant Ministries.

August Meet’n’Eat

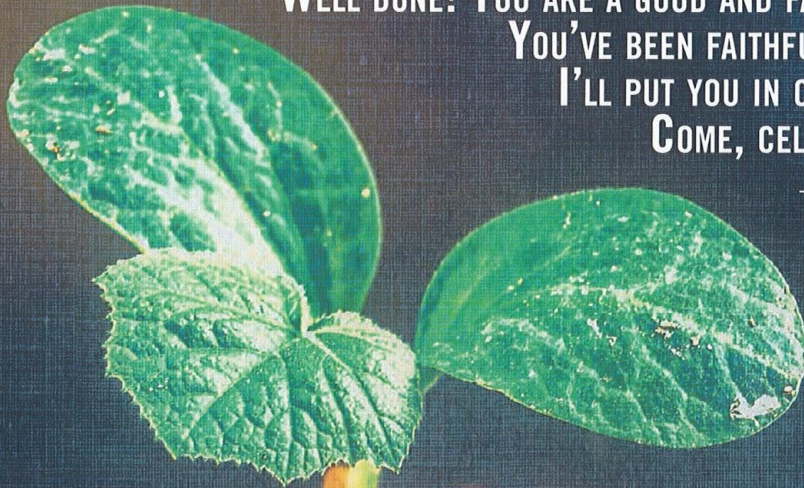
This is a fellowship time to visit with each other and see old and new friends. *All are welcome!*

The next Meet’n’Eat is **Friday, August 12th at 11:30 AM** at the Olive Garden on the northeast corner of Oracle/Wetmore ([300 W Wetmore Rd. Tucson, AZ 85705](https://www.olivegarden.com/locations/300-W-Wetmore-Rd-Tucson-AZ-85705)).

If you’re interested in coming, please call Shirley Murray at (520)297-4796 by Thursday, August 11th so she can reserve enough tables at the restaurant.

"WELL DONE! YOU ARE A GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT.
YOU'VE BEEN FAITHFUL OVER A LITTLE.
I'LL PUT YOU IN CHARGE OF MUCH.
COME, CELEBRATE WITH ME."

—MATTHEW 25:23, CEB



THANK YOU

for giving faithfully 100%
to the apportionment covenant in 2021

First
United Methodist Church
Tucson, AZ

Desert Southwest Conference
Bishop Grant J. Hagiya

A. Moses Rathana Kumar
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and Administration

882228



Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.

The people of The United Methodist Church®

Bishop Michael McKee
President, General Council on
Finance and Administration

South

THIS WEEK'S
ANNOUNCEMENTS & GATHERINGS

10AM SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

Join us in person, or watch the service Live at
<https://www.youtube.com/c/TucsonFirstUMC>.

한국어 사역

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

매주 금요일 저녁 7시, 성경공부가 줌으로
진행됩니다.

Meeting ID: 998 6112 0822 Passcode: 6226481

NOTICE: Due to the increase in COVID-19 variant cases in Pima County and across the United States, our safety guidelines have been updated again:

- **We are asking everyone to return to wearing masks inside the building.** Social distancing is also in effect (minimum 6 ft between households).
- If you are not yet fully vaccinated or are immuno-compromised, or if you are not feeling well, we ask that you watch the YouTube livestream rather than attend in person.
- Choir members are required to be fully vaccinated in order to sing for the congregation during the service.

These guidelines are subject to change with Pima County and CDC recommendations.

WEEKDAY GATHERINGS

Women on a Spiritual Quest (WSQ)

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

Narcotics Anonymous

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

All God's Creation (AGC)

-AGC meets on Tuesdays at 3PM over Zoom. The group is reusing last year's book, "All God's Creatures: Daily Devotions for Animal Lovers 2021."

Zoom ID: 994 3610 1655 Passcode: 6226481

Chancel Choir

-Summer schedule in effect through July 31st: Practice is at 9AM on Sunday in the Sanctuary.

Progressive Book Study (PBS)

-PBS meets on Thursdays at 3PM. The current book is, "The God You Didn't Know You Could Believe In" by Dr. Jeffrey Frantz. Questions? Call Rev. Gaston at (520) 323-1611

Zoom ID: 980 1573 8087 Passcode: 6226481

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:

New Hope UMC, Tucson

Sierra Vista UMC, Sierra Vista

St. James UMC, Tucson

St. Francis in the Foothills UMC, Tucson

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

Sumin Lee (August 15)

Christopher & Stephanie Kang (August 7)

Byung & Young Kim (August 15)

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



Farewell to our Music Director



August 7th will be Lorena Suarez's last day at First Church.

Congratulations on your new full-time position as high school music conductor in Minnesota! Even though we are sad to say goodbye, we send you with blessings and prayers for the next chapter of your journey. Thank you again for your faithful service to our church.

We will miss you!

“Bishop Hagiya’s Statement on Dobbs v. Jackson”

By Bishop Grant Hagiya, 6.24.2022



One of the most difficult pastor care situations I faced as a local church pastor occurred in my second appointment. I had a good 15 years of pastoral experience under my belt; and completed all of my Ph.D. classes in theological and social ethics, so I was not a pastoral rookie. A church family was in crisis over the pregnancy of their teenage daughter. The parents, fearing this would destroy their daughter's future, wanted her to get an abortion. The daughter, in her first trimester, wanted to keep the child. The daughter's boyfriend was so immature he could not commit to anything, so she would be alone in raising the child. The daughter was also so young that she could not foresee the challenges of teenage motherhood, as she would be a sophomore in high school. Both parents and child lobbied me to take their side and try to convince the other that they were right. Much of my book knowledge and pastoral experience went out the window in such an emotionally charged situation. I kept reminding this family that I was not there to take a side but to provide emotional and spiritual support so that they could make the best decision. I kept reminding myself that I had to leave my values and options out of their decision, and my role was to provide a safe holding space for them to hash this out and make the best possible decision.

The Supreme Court decision of Dobbs v. Jackson has taken such decision-making out of the hands of this family for many states who will outwardly ban abortions. We are lucky to be living in a state that will still allow it, but many other Americans will be denied this crucial decision-making ability.

No one decision, doctrine or law is a solitary matter. United Methodists from around the world worked over many years to revise our Social Principles to ensure that the church's stance was clear on many current issues and realities. That includes abortion:

“Our commitment to the sanctity of human life makes us reluctant to condone abortion. We unconditionally reject it as an acceptable means of birth control or a mechanism for gender selection and other forms of eugenics. We support measures requiring parental, guardian or other responsible adult notification and consent before abortions can be performed on girls who have not yet reached the age of legal adulthood, except in cases of alleged incest.”

“We oppose late-term or partial-birth abortion, a process also known as dilation and extraction. We call for the end to this practice, except when the life of the mother is in danger, no other medical treatments are feasible, or when severe abnormalities threaten the viability of the fetus. We recognize that these and other tragic conflicts of life with life may justify decisions to terminate the life of a fetus. In these limited circumstances, we support the legal option of abortion and insist that such procedures be performed by trained medical providers in clean and safe settings.”

(cont. pg 5)

Bishop Hagiya's Statement on Dobbs v. Jackson (cont.)

"We urge all those considering abortions to seek appropriate medical advice and pastoral counseling and to engage in searching, prayerful inquiries into other alternatives, such as making babies available for adoption. We pray for those facing unintended pregnancies and offer our prayers and support as they attempt to discern God's will and seek God's wisdom and guidance. Regardless of the circumstances in which someone might get an abortion, we do not condone bullying or shaming people for their decisions or actions."

"We acknowledge that young women of childbearing age frequently report that they lack the ability to make meaningful life choices or exercise effective control over their own lives. We challenge pastors, congregations, campus ministries, and others to be at the forefront of efforts to empower these young women. Additionally, we support resource centers that offer compassionate care and help women explore alternatives to abortion." (The 2020 Revised Social Principles of the United Methodist Church, K. Reproductive Health and Abortion, p. 28-29).

As always, I am impressed with the collective wisdom of our church on this stance. It is a balanced and compassionate stance that takes into account the autonomy of women to make their own decision on what is best for their lives and the future. Too often, the patriarchy of our culture means that men make decisions that are not theirs to make. Dare I also say that our legal and political system is making this same presumption. Abortion, as difficult a decision as that is, must be decided by the individual woman and her family.

In the end, no legal court, no political system, and no church can unilaterally make that decision for an individual woman.

In the coming days, I pray that you will openly and compassionately discuss this with each other and your church members. We will have different options and values on this, but we need to dialogue openly and listen to each other.

Be the Hope,

Bishop Grant





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. We welcome all of you to be part of it.