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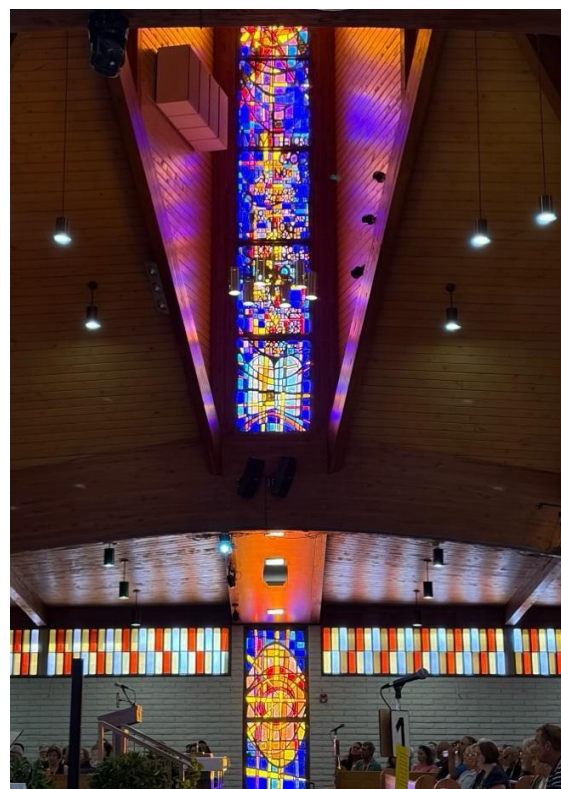
“With Gratitude as I Begin My Sixth Year at First UMC of Tucson”

By Pastor Eun Ko

As many of you know, I recently returned from our Desert Southwest Annual Conference. It was a meaningful time of worship, learning, fellowship, and discerning where God is leading our conference and our local churches. The Annual Conference always reminds me that we are part of something much larger than ourselves - the body of Christ serving together in God's mission.

The final session of the Annual Conference includes the fixing of appointments and the Closing Worship Service. On June 14, 2026, during the fixing of appointments, I was reappointed to First United Methodist Church of Tucson, beginning my sixth year of ministry here on July 1. It is hard to believe that I have now been serving in Tucson for more than five years. I am deeply grateful for each of you, for your love, your prayers, and your faithful support.

After several busy months of ministry and the intensity of the Annual Conference, I am also taking time this summer to recharge spiritually, pray, and seek God's direction as we prepare for a new season of ministry this fall and for the coming year. Just as Jesus often withdrew to quiet places to pray before beginning a new chapter of ministry, I believe it is important for pastors and congregations alike to pause, listen, and allow God to renew our hearts.



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With Gratitude as I Begin My Sixth Year at First UMC of Tucson, cont.

One moment from the Annual Conference has stayed with me. As the closing worship service ended, people immediately began taking down the stage, moving equipment, and cleaning up. There was noise, activity, and a sense of urgency everywhere. While I was trying to greet a member of the praise team, I happened to look over and saw Bishop Carlo quietly praying while holding the bishop's stole.

In the middle of all the commotion, he had chosen stillness. Before leaving the conference, before conversations and travel, before the work was completely finished, he simply stopped to pray. That quiet moment became one of the most powerful sermons I experienced all week. Leadership is not only demonstrated from a podium or through important decisions. Sometimes the strongest witness comes through simple acts of humility and faithfulness. Watching Bishop Carlo reminded me that our first calling is not merely to accomplish God's work, but to remain close to God while doing it.

That moment challenged me personally. As your pastor, my prayer is not simply to lead programs, organize ministries, or make plans. My deepest desire is to become a spiritual leader who continually seeks God's presence and points others toward Christ. I hope that together we will become a congregation known not only for what we do, but for who we are - a people whose lives are rooted in prayer, guided by the Holy Spirit, and filled with Christ's love. During these summer months, I invite you to make space for renewal as well. Whether you are traveling, spending time with family, or simply enjoying a slower pace, may you also find moments of quiet to listen for God's voice. Often it is in those still moments that God prepares us for what lies ahead.

I am excited about the ministries we will begin this fall and the new opportunities God is placing before First United Methodist Church. Thank you for your prayers, your faithfulness, and the privilege of serving alongside you. As we continue this journey together, may we never grow weary in doing God's work, trusting that the One who has faithfully led us through these past five years will continue to guide us in the years ahead.

"Let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up." (Galatians 6:9)

"우리는 선을 행하다가 낙심하지 말아야 합니다. 포기하지 아니하면 때가 이르러 거두게 될 것입니다." (갈라디아서 6:9)

May this summer be a season of rest, renewal, and deeper faith for all of us. I look forward to all that God has in store for us as we continue this journey together.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Eun Young Ko

Lead Pastor - First United Methodist Church of Tucson

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING AT FIRST CHURCH OF TUCSON IN MAY & JUNE!

Pastor Ko took a vacation to South Korea to spend time with her family and friends.

First row, left: Halla, Pastor Ko's mother, and Pastor Ko in Pastor Ko's hometown of Jeju Island. *Right:* Pastor Ko visiting her 102-year-old grandmother at a nursing home. *Second row, left:* Pastor Ko's friends flew to Jeju Island to spend time with her and her mother at a café overlooking the ocean. *Right:* Pastor Ko's nieces and nephews enjoying a board game with Halla.



Pastor Ko & Cindy Turnbull participated in the Desert Southwest Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church from June 11 - 14 in the Peoria area. (Lakeview UMC, Sun City UMC, and Phoenix Korean Fellowship) *Below left:* Bishop Carlo asking the historic questions for the candidates for Ordination. *Right:* Opening Worship Service at Lakeview UMC.



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Below left: Tongsung Gido (Intercessory Prayer) during the early morning prayer worship at Phoenix Korean Fellowship. Right: The Korean congregation served breakfast to the conference participants - a long-standing tradition following the Saturday morning prayer service.



Below left: Joy Ageh, daughter of Christiana Ageh, who grew up at First UMC of Tucson, served as one of the praise team vocalists for the Closing Worship Service. Right: Cindy Turnbull was delighted to reconnect with Joy, whom she remembered from First UMC of Tucson.



Below: Pastor Ko and Cindy Turnbull enjoyed dinner at Buca di Beppo, an Italian restaurant, after the Thursday afternoon plenary session.



Summer Sermon Series: People Jesus Met



This summer, we will journey through the lives of those who encountered Jesus—each story revealing grace, transformation, and a deeper invitation to follow.

From seekers and skeptics to the broken and the faithful, Jesus meets people right where they are—and calls them into new life.

Join us as we discover how these encounters still speak to us today, inviting us to begin again, to see with new eyes, and to follow with renewed faith.

Week	Sermon Title	Text
1	Starting Over (<i>Nicodemus</i>)	John 3:1-10
2	Living Water (<i>Samaritan Woman</i>)	John 4:7-16
3	Salvation at Home (<i>Zacchaeus</i>)	Luke 19:1-10
4	Open My Eyes (<i>Blind Bartimaeus</i>)	Mark 10:46-52
5	The Better Part (<i>Mary & Martha</i>)	Luke 10:38-42
6	Do You Love Me? (<i>Peter</i>)	John 21:15-19
7	Rise and Follow (<i>Levi/Matthew</i>)	Luke 5:27-32
8	Grace Without Stones (<i>Woman Caught in Adultery</i>)	John 8:3-11
9	One Thing Missing (<i>Rich Young Ruler</i>)	Mark 10:17-27
10	Beyond Doubt (<i>Thomas</i>)	John 20:24-29

PHISHING/SPAM EMAIL WARNING!

We've had more reports of emails with unusual requests supposedly from Pastor Ko. We want to remind you that Pastor will not ask you to be "discreet" or have secret or email-only communication with her. If the email does not come from pastortucsonfirstumc@gmail.com, then it is fake. Please do not respond; just click the "Report as phishing/spam" button.

2026 Desert Annual Conference Closing Worship and Sending Forth

Christina Dillabough | Jun 21, 2026 |

<https://www.dscumc.org/news-detail/closing-worship-and-sending-forth-19845062>

The Desert Southwest Annual Conference gathered one last time at Lakeview United Methodist Church in Sun City, Arizona, on Sunday, June 21, 2026, following the close of the Annual Conference Session. The sanctuary was packed with congregations from Lakeview UMC and Iglesia Aliento, as well as members of the Annual Conference. With so many appointed clergy at Annual Conference, many other congregations joined the worship service virtually from their home churches.

It was a celebratory vibe all around, maybe because we were filled with inspiration, maybe it was because of the holy work we did together, perhaps this is because of the excitement generated from learning about the resources, or the support teams available through our connectional system. I'm thinking Iglesia Aliento's energizing praise band probably had something to do with it, too. The music was a deeply spirited and joyful noise in the best way possible!

The scriptures for the final service were Acts 2:42-47 and Ephesians 4:11-16. Bishop Carlo A. Rapanut delivered the sermon. In his message, he wrapped up the teachings and sermons from the days before so that those joining the session in person and online could be caught up.

"We as human beings have forgotten how to live together. The divisions run deep. Two years ago, we committed ourselves as an AC to a vision of a healthy church for a healthy world. In this four-year journey, we are focusing on personal health, the health of our churches, the health of our neighborhoods and communities, and the health of the world. Although it is not that linear, the premise is simple. Healthy individuals will form healthy churches. Healthy churches will help create healthy communities. Healthy communities will make a healthy world. Like ripples in the water, let it begin with me."

Acknowledging that healing starts with each one of us. Bishop Carlo noted, "If we are about the healing of the world, we need to start with our own healing; physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health. The truth is, Hurt people will hurt people. But healed people and those in the process of healing will help healing because they've experienced the transformation."

Bishop Carlo talked about his many travels and how impressed he is with flight crews and all it takes to get people from where they came from to where they need to be.

"Desert Southwest, the Holy Spirit is upon you. You are now cleared for takeoff. Fly, and may you be A Healthy Church For A Healthy World. God's speed."



WE ARE THE CHURCH TOGETHER

ACTS 2:42-47 | EPHESIANS 4:11-16

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. 매월
첫째 주 토요일 오전 11시에 선인장 모임 (소그룹
예배 모임)이 있습니다.

청년부 선인장 모임은 여름방학 동안에는
재충전을 위해 잠시 쉬을 것입니다. 많은 기도와
참여 부탁드립니다.

WEEKDAY GATHERINGS

Nifty Needlecrafts

-Join us on Sunday at 3 PM for crafting and
conversation! Don't have your own supplies?
We have quilting fabric, notions, sewing
machines, books, and much more available
for use.
-Questions? Text Tripp at 520-428-4680 or
leave a voicemail.

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.

Wanderers on a Spiritual Quest (WSQ)

-WSQ is on break until a new study book is
chosen.

Narcotics Anonymous – Underground

-NA meets at 6:30PM on Monday evenings in
the church basement. (Access via the long
stairway on the north side of the building,
NOT the stairs behind the smoking benches.)
-Medallion Night is on the last Monday of
the month.

Chancel Choir

-Currently on summer break.
-Resumes on August 9th at 9 AM.

Progressive Book Study (PBS)

-The 3:30 PM Thursday online book study
group is beginning a new book, "The Faith
Club: A Muslim, a Christian, and a Jew," by
Ranya Idliby, Priscilla Warner, & Suzanne
Oliver. If you'd like to join, please contact
Rev. Raven Gaston at 520-323-1611.

[Zoom ID: 980 1573 8087](https://www.zoom.us/j/98015738087) [Passcode: 6226481](https://www.zoom.us/j/98015738087)

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 District, North District, and West District
Grace UMC, Douglas
Sierra Vista UMC, Sierra Vista
Camping Program, South District

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.

JUNE & JULY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Howard Velzy (June 3)	Joy Ageh (June 19)	Judy Longenbaugh (July 8)
Christopher Kang (June 8)	Blaise Lolika (June 23)	Chuck Humphrey (July 8)
Victoria Russell (June 9)	Diego Urbina (June 24)	Gene Kunde (July 11)
Ann Goff (June 12)	Gary Poczulp (June 28)	Jay Charland (July 12)
Sungmin Ji (June 12)	Arthur Turnbull (June 28)	TaeHyeong Kim (July 15)
Daniel Baek (June 15)	Ron Longenbaugh (July 6)	Judith Billings (July 20)
Sungjin Park (June 18)		Shinhye (Chloe) Park (July 30)
Blaise & Nathalie Lolika (June 2 - 25 yrs)		Howard & Carol Velzy (June 10 - 71 yrs)
Bob & Jessie Hansen (June 7 - 60 yrs)		Steven & Lana Yoo (July 12 - 46 yrs)

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

July 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, July 10th at 11:30 AM** at the Olive Garden on the northeast corner of Oracle/Wetmore ([300 W Wetmore Rd, Tucson, AZ 85705](https://www.google.com/maps/place/300+W+Wetmore+Rd,+Tucson,+AZ+85705)). If you're interested in coming, please notify the church office or Shirley Murray (520-297-4796) by the 8th so that enough seating can be reserved at the restaurant.

Animal & Environmental Holidays for June & July 2026

By Diane & Victoria Russell



June – Perennial Gardening Month

Enjoy the wonderful world of perennial plants that return every year for you and your family to enjoy. Tucson's Sonoran Desert climate requires hardy, drought-tolerant plants. Some common perennials include Autumn Sage, Damianita Daisy, Penstemon, Desert Marigold, Baja Fairy Duster, and Lantana.



June – National Pollinator Month

Let's celebrate not only bees, but butterflies, birds, bats, moths, insects, and other pollinators for their amazing role they play in our food supply and ecosystem. Help them by planting native plants, providing water and shelter, and eliminating pesticides.



June – National Adopt a Cat Month/Adopt a Shelter Cat Month

Remember our feline friends this June when considering a new pet. Created in 1974 by

American Humane to encourage adoptions during the peak “kitten season.” Ways to help include adopting, donating supplies, fostering kittens, volunteering, and of course spreading the word about shelter cats.

June 30th – National Meteor Watch Day

Celebrate this annual event by looking up into the night sky and observing “shooting stars.” Meteors are not actually stars, but rather small pieces of space rock or dust. They are the glowing streaks of light created when a meteoroid enters our atmosphere.



July – Wild About Wildlife Month

Established in 1984 by the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) to raise awareness about biodiversity and to inspire wildlife conservation efforts. Ways to celebrate include planting native flora to provide food and shelter for local wildlife.

July – Smart Irrigation Month – Save Water

Created by the Irrigation Association to highlight new technologies and ways to optimize water usage for landscapes and agriculture. “Drip irrigation” is the most water-efficient way to irrigate. According to the City of Tucson for seasonal guidelines, avoid watering from 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM.



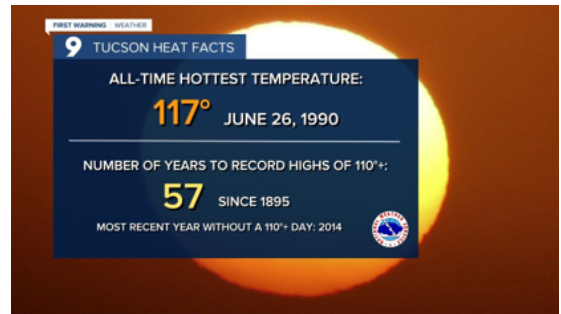
July 4th – Independence Day – Safety for Animals and People

July 4th is exciting for humans, but not so much for pets, wildlife, and people with PTSD. Fireworks are very scary to them and often cause pets to run away and to trigger PTSD with humans. Ways to keep your pets safe include checking collars and ID tags, exercising your pets early, keeping pets secured inside your home, giving pets a safe place to hide, masking loud noises, and staying calm.



July 21st – Andean Bear/Spectacled Bear Day

Andean bears are also known as the Spectacled Bear. They are native to South America, and according to the IUCN Red List they are considered to be threatened. Visit Tucson's Reid Park Zoo which has two Andean Bears named Joaquin and Oja.



July 23rd – Hot Enough for Ya Day

A fun little day to remember and complain about the hot Tucson heat. Remember that Tucson is very hot during the summer months, and if you go out, always prepare ways to protect yourself. Avoid peak sun hours from 10 AM to 6 PM, bring water, wear lightweight/light-colored clothing, and use sun protection.



July 30th – Earth Overshoot Day for 2026

Every year, Global Footprint Network raises awareness about the Earth's limited resources. July 30th marks the point in the year when humanity's demands for ecological resources and services exceed what the Earth's ecosystems can regenerate over the year. After July 30th, we are living off our future generations' resources.



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.