



First United Methodist Church
915 E 4th St, Tucson, AZ 85719
www.firstchurchtucson.org

Pastor Ko (847) 345-8070 pastortucsonfirstumc@gmail.com
Office (520) 622-6481 office@firstchurchtucson.org
Office hours: Monday-Thursday 10AM-2PM

“Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love!”

By Pastor Eun Ko



Dear families of the FUMC of Tucson,

As we approach the festive season, adorned with twinkling lights, the warmth of shared moments, and the echoes of joyous laughter, I am filled with gratitude and hope. Christmas is a time that brings us together, transcending boundaries and fostering a sense of unity, kindness, and compassion.

It is hard to believe that we are in December already. In the midst of our busy lives, it is essential to pause, reflect, and appreciate the beauty that surrounds us. The twinkling lights on our trees mirror the hope that resides in each of our hearts. This season is a gentle reminder to embrace the simple joys, cherish the company of loved ones, and extend a hand of generosity to those in need.

(cont. pg 2)

Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love! cont.

As we gather around the hearth with family and friends, let us be mindful of those who may feel a sense of loneliness or hardship. In the spirit of Christmas, let us extend a helping hand, share a kind word, and spread love in our community. Small acts of kindness have the power to illuminate even the darkest corners, fostering a sense of belonging and warmth for all.

As we prepare to celebrate the magic of Christmas, let us also extend our hearts and hands to those in need. This year, we are excited to share news of a special Christmas mission led by two extraordinary individuals, Blaise and Nathalie Lolika, who are working tirelessly to bring hope and healing to women and children in Congo who have faced the harsh realities of injustice. First Church will support 50% of the Christmas Offering for the mission. Your generosity will not only make this holiday season brighter for those in need but will also serve as a beacon of kindness and solidarity within our community and even beyond the community.

The birth of Jesus Christ symbolizes the promise of hope, love, and redemption. This Christmas, let us reflect on these timeless values and strive to incorporate them into our daily lives. The joy we find in giving, the peace we experience in forgiveness, and the love we share with one another are the true gifts of the season.

Wishing you all a Christmas filled with joy, love, and the warmth of cherished connections. May the spirit of Christmas shine brightly in your hearts, illuminating the path to a new year filled with hope and promise.

With love and blessings,

Pastor Ko

This Year's Donation Boxes:

- "Friends of PACC" Food & Supply Drive for Needy Animals (sponsored by our Animal Ministry) - Deadline to donate is Sunday, December 17th.
- "Roskruge Bilingual Magnet K-8 School" Supply Drive (sponsored by Jessie Hansen) - Deadline to donate is Tuesday, December 19th.

If you would like to make a monetary donation instead, you can mail it to the office.



What's Happening at First Church of Tucson!



Above: All Saints Sunday worship service was held on Nov 5th.

Below: Our Heaven's Touch Ministry was held at The Loving Church on November 5th.



We are so proud of our music scholarship students who performed in the musical on Nov 17 at the Fred Fox School of Music. Our church members joined to celebrate their performance!



(cont. pg 4)

Thanksgiving Week

Korean young adult female students came to Pastor Ko's house spending time eating Korean foods and playing games on Nov 22. They had fun!



There was a Thanksgiving Dinner at the church on Thanksgiving Day. What a plenty and delicious food we can share! Thanks be to God!



Our beloved sister, Jeanne E. Bensema's memorial service was held on Nov 25 at 11AM. She was so talented in so many ways, such as quilting and sewing. She will be missed dearly.



(cont. pg 5)

Below are some of Jeanne's quilts.



Advent Bible Study is taking place every Monday at 4:30 pm in the church library, led by Pastor Ko. The study is based on the book titled "The Faithful," written by Rev. Adam Hamilton. Members of diverse ages are actively participating, making the time more vibrant and enriching.



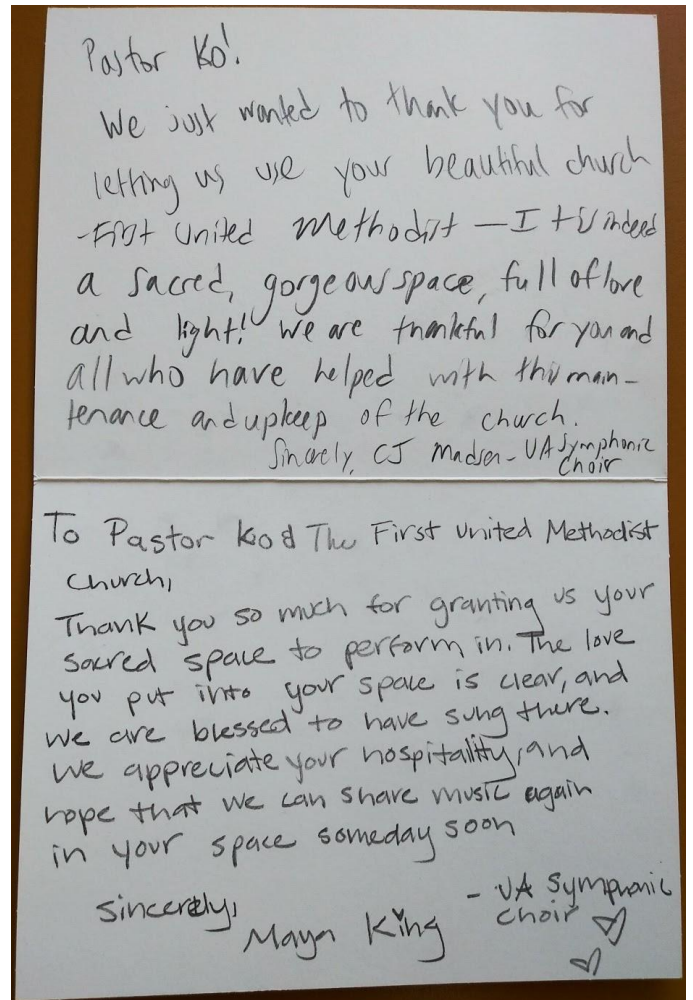
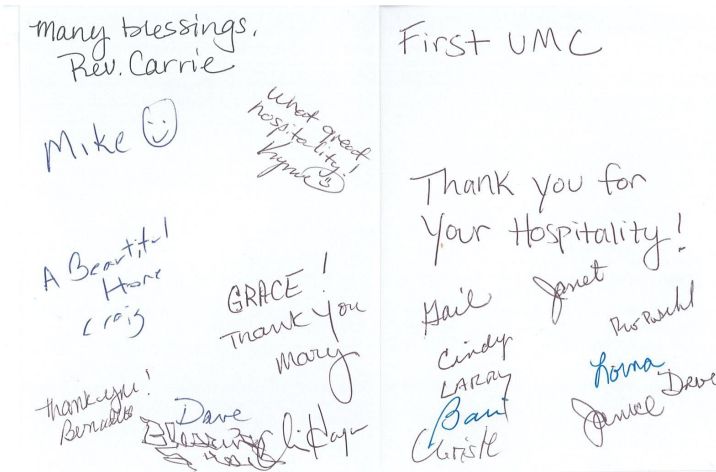
The Hanging of the Greens took place on December 2nd in the church. Several church members joined in decorating the church, preparing it to be beautiful for Christmas. We have a total of six Christmas trees, wreaths, and various other decorations. After the decorating session, participants enjoyed pizza and fellowship.



Thank You Cards to First UMC

Below left: Our visitors from the Mountain Sky Conference left us not one, but **two** cards thanking us for our hospitality during their late October/early November visit to Tucson and the surrounding areas to observe and learn from several immigration organizations.

Below right: A big thank you from two members of the UA Symphonic Choir, which presented a concert in our Sanctuary on the afternoon of October 22nd.



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.

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.

UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

Dec 10th, 10AM - Christmas Cantata: Our chancel choir will sing Advent songs for us in a joint English/Korean service! 성가대 특별찬양과 함께 드리는 연합예배가 12월 10일 오전 10시에 본당에서 드려집니다.

Dec 10th, 3-6PM - The Sights, Smells, & Sounds of Christmas: This is an afternoon of family Christmas traditions where we gather together for fun, food and song!

Dec 24th, 11AM - Christmas Eve Joint English/ Korean Morning Service: 연합예배가 본당에서 있습니다.

Dec 24th, 7PM - Christmas Eve Evening Service: 성탄절 전야 촛불예배를 저녁 7시에 본당에서 드립니다.



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

-Practice on Wednesdays at 6:30PM in the Sanctuary.

-A shorter rehearsal at 9AM on Sundays.

-The Christmas Cantata takes place on December 10th at 10AM!

Progressive Book Study (PBS)

-PBS meets on Thursdays at 3PM over Zoom.

The current book is "Jesus: Uncovering the Life, Teachings, and Relevance of a Religious Revolutionary" by Marcus J. Borg.

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

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

Cocaine Anonymous (CA)

-This support group meets at 8:30PM on Friday evenings in the Arizona room.

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:

Chaplains & Counselors in the South District
The Inn of Southern Arizona, Tucson
TMM Family Services - people served and staff, 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

Nan Rollings (Dec 3)
Bruce Billings (Dec 5)

Adam Lange (Dec 9)
Kate Park-Havins (Dec 11)

Jim Rollings (Dec 19)
Deanne Kelly (Dec 23)

Don & Nan Rollings (December 21)

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

December 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, December 8th 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 call Shirley Murray at (520) 297-4796 by the Wednesday before so she can reserve enough seats at the restaurant.

Animal & Environmental Holidays for December 2023

By Diane & Victoria Russell



December 5 – Volunteer Day

Volunteers are wonderful humans with a helpful spirit. There are many ways and many places one might volunteer; their time or services. One could walk a shelter animal or help feed the homeless. Volunteers are always welcome and needed to help clean up after fellowship time.



December 10 – International Animal Rights Day

Created in 1998 by the animal rights group Uncaged. This day is also shared with Human Rights Day, because both animals and humans have the right to be treated with respect and without cruelty.



December 11 – International Mountain Day

Designated by the UN General Assembly in 2003 to raise awareness of the importance of sustainable mountain development. The 2023 theme: “Restoring Mountain Ecosystems”. Mountains are under threat from climate change, overexploitation, and pollution.

HOLIDAY PET FOOD DRIVE



December 11 – Holiday Food Drive for Needy Animals

This day focuses on collecting animal food and other needed supplies that help support the animals that are in shelters. There is a collection box located in the Fellowship Hall for “Friends of PACC” to help support PACC and the community. The last day to donate is 12/17.



December 14 – January 5 – Christmas Bird Count Week

The National Audubon Society has conducted its Christmas bird counts since 1900. Tucson Valley Christmas Bird Count is celebrating its 52nd year. It’s an international census of birds consisting of 17 countries participating in the counting. Volunteers count birds in their circle.



December 25 – Christmas

Christmas is one of the most important Christian holidays during the year. The true meaning of Christmas is the celebration of our Savior, Jesus Christ.