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“A Time to Deepen Our Spirituality in Faith during Lent!”

By Pastor Ko



Dear families of FUMC of Tucson,

Approaching the season of Lent tomorrow, it feels as though we had only just begun the year 2024 yesterday; yet, here we are in the middle of February. The initial excitement and thrill of January and February, usually filled with exciting plans for the months ahead, sometimes give way to the storms of life – the losses of our loved ones, including family, friends, and church members.

(cont. pg 2)

A Time to Deepen Our Spirituality in Faith during Lent! cont.

In these initial months, there is a general mode of excitement and thrill as we make plans for the future. However, we also recognize that sometimes, life takes an unexpected turn, and the storms come – storms manifested in the losses we experience. It's a reminder that, despite our plans, life can be unpredictable.

Recently, I embarked on a cruise trip to Mexico with my sister and her family, an experience that perfectly encapsulated this unpredictability. While the ship was a haven of good food and ocean views while docked, once it set sail, my family and I grappled with severe motion sickness, losing our appetite and desire to explore other amenities. The same ship and the same people felt entirely different in those challenging conditions.

Life, like the sea, is full of adventures and challenges – storms that we must be prepared for at any time, whether in the safety of the port or out in the unpredictable ocean. Lent provides the perfect opportunity for us to deepen our spirituality in faith, preparing ourselves for life's storms, whether anticipated or unforeseen.

For those already weathering storms in your life, and for those anxious about uncertainty or burdened by heavy loads, know that you are not alone. God is with you, inviting you to draw closer and deepen your spirituality, a wisdom that comes from God.

“I do believe in your nearness, yet I get too caught up in my desires, pressures, and needs. Once again, I open my being to you. Come, Peaceful One, come! Fill me with surrender and quiet. Draw me into the stillness of your heart. Together we will walk the seashore of my life.” (Quoted from “Prayers to Sophia” by Joyce Rupp.)

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.” Proverbs 9:10

주님을 경외하는 것이 지혜의 근본이요, 거룩하신 이를 아는 것이 슬기의 근본이다. Proverbs 9:10

With love and prayers,

Pastor Ko

EASTER LILIES

Request forms for Easter lilies in memory or honor of your loved ones will be distributed in your Sunday bulletins. Please mail your completed form to the church office or drop it in the offering box by March 20th. You can also download the request form at

<https://firstchurchtucson.org/publications>.

What's Happening at First Church of Tucson!

Below: We had a guest speaker, Rev. Rachel Gilmore, Director of New Faith & Vital Faith Communities, on Jan 21st, 2024.



Below left: Nomads group visited us and worked hard to improve our church building and property. Thanks to them and our church volunteers who provided a gourmet meal for them, this amazing mission was made possible for the year 2024.



Above right: Our loving music director, Inho Eom, needed to bid farewell and leave our church due to an unexpected emergency, as he departed for South Korea. Additionally, one of our students, TakHyung Kim, graduated and earned his Master's Degree at the University of Arizona. He has relocated to Ohio for the break before pursuing further studies.

Thank You, NOMADS! See What They Did for Us

This list includes virtually every task that the NOMADS accomplished during their 3-week stay:

- Dug holes/planted five trees between the sidewalk and 4th St (south side of church).
- Installed pole on 4th street (attached blue church sign to pole).
- Cut out plywood under manhole cover along 4th St.
- Installed awning/shade cloth over Memorial Garden patio.
- Repaired light fixture over the lawn on the east side of the church.
- Repaired men's room paper towel dispenser (outside NOMADS meeting room).
- Moved the paper towel dispenser in the office.
- Stripped/repainted bathroom floors in the basement with epoxy paint.
- Repainted walls & ceiling in CCC bathrooms (building north of the church).
- Hung new banners on the east and west sides of the church.
- Repainted/Rebuilt plywood cover over the basement window on the north side of the church.
- Replaced the lightbulb in the narthex.
- Repaired/replaced sink faucet leak (right sink) in men's room outside NOMADS meeting room.
- Installed a new pole on the northwest side of the solar parking lot for parking instructions & blue church sign.
- Repaired the seat with the missing flagstone in the circular landscape wall
- Skinned bark off palm trees - many done.
- Replaced 4 upstairs toilets.
- Repaired the damaged light in the finance office.
- Replaced walkway lights with dusk-to-dawn bulbs.
- Replaced the left patio light with the walkway light.
- Repaired the third toilet in the women's restroom.
- Trimmed the tree trunk at the corner of the building near the Carillon room.
- Cleaned sanctuary windows.
- Cleaned narthex windows.
- Repaired library room door knob.
- Repaired women's restroom door (jamming/door return disconnected).
- Fixed problem with basement kitchen sockets not working.
- Cleaned the upstairs room.
- Repositioned the sign to be parallel to 4th Street.
- Reattached bird netting in the walkway.
- Cleaned sanctuary window to Park St.
- Repaired the loose flagstone seat in the patio area.
- Repainted many outside handrails.
- Put anti-skateboard eyebolts on handrails.
- Provided comprehensive landscape design to the church.

Food for Thought

By Rev. Raven Gaston

Walter Wink, Professor of Biblical Interpretation at Auburn Theological Seminary in New York, is the author of the book “Engaging the Powers”. The following comparison of “God’s Domination Free Order” and “The Domination System”, copied from that book, I found quite interesting. It reminds me of the ‘worldly’ way of life, compared to a God-centered approach to life.

Societal Mode	The Domination System	God’s Domination-free Order
Gender differences	Patriarchal; difference implies superiority/inferiority	Equality of sexes; differences may lead to specialization but not to ranking
Power	Power over; power to take life, control, destroy Win-lose Domination Competition	Power with; power to give, support, nurture life Win-win Partnership Competition/cooperation
Politics	Conquest Autocracy Authoritarian Bureaucratic	Diplomacy Democracy Enabling Decentralized
Economics	Exploitation, greed, privilege, inequality	Sharing, sufficiency, responsibility, equality
Religion	Male God—jealous, wrathful, punishing, lawgiving	Inclusive God-images—Mother/Father, loving/judging, compassionate/severe, merciful/demanding
Relationships	Ranking Domination hierarchies Slavery, classism, racism We/they Rigidity	Linking Actualization hierarchies Equality of opportunity We/we Flexibility
Transformative mode	Violence, force, war Suppression of conflict	Nonviolent confrontation, negotiation, inclusiveness Nonviolent conflict resolution
Ecological stance	Exploitation, control, contempt	Harmony, cooperation, respect
Logic	Either/or, analytic	Both/and, analytic/synthetic
Role of ego	Self-centered	Affiliation-oriented
Education	Indoctrinating	Enabling
Sexual responsibility	Subordination of women’s reproductive capacities and sexual expression to male control	Control of sexuality by individuals in the light of community values
Eschatology	Status quo, holding and keeping power; “this world,” “this evil aeon”	Cultural transformation, the reign of God, the coming aeon

29 Ways You Can Participate in Black History Month

by DSC Communications | Jan 23, 2024 | Conference Newsletter, Religion and Race | originally published at <https://www.r2hub.org/library/29-ways-you-can-participate-in-black-history-month>



No matter your heritage, culture, or racial background, Black history is EVERYONE's story. Here are 29 ways you, your family, and your congregation can celebrate and participate in Black History Month.

- Patronize a local or online Black-owned business.
- Attend church, Bible study, or worship at a historically Black church and experience the Gospel from another vantage point.
- Sing hymns or songs during worship by a composer from the African diaspora. Include the history of the song or hymn in the church bulletin or on your website.
- Attend or co-host a Black history or Black culture event in your community, in partnership with a Black congregation.
- Take a church family field trip to a Black history site or museum in your area.
- Learn more about “Black Harry” Hosier (c. 1750-1806), an African-American Methodist preacher and evangelist.
- Research other Black United Methodist leaders from our church's heritage.
- Fearlessly learn more about how racism has and still affects Black people around the world and start confronting racism.
- Donate to a Black nonprofit or empowerment organization in your community.
- Watch a film by and about the heritage and lives of Black people. Titles to consider: “Antwone Fisher,” “Malcolm X,” “If Beale Street Could Talk,” “Hidden Figures,” “The Hate U Give,” and “One Night in Miami.”
- Watch and discuss documentaries about the Civil Rights movement and other series on the challenges and triumphs of Black people. Suggestions: “Eyes on the Prize,” and Henry Louis Gates' recent series, “The Black Church: This Is Our Story. This Is Our Song.”
- Visit a landmark about the lives of local Black heroes in your area.
- Read a contemporary book by a Black author.

For the full list, please visit

<https://dscumc.org/blog/2024/01/23/29-ways-you-can-participate-in-black-history-month/>

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.

SPECIAL SERVICES & EVENTS

Feb 14th - Ash Wednesday Service at 7PM

Mar 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th - Lent book study with Pastor Ko every Monday at 4PM, with "Better Decisions, Fewer Regrets," by Andy Stanley

Mar 10th - UMCOR Sunday

Mar 24th - Passion/ Palm Sunday

Mar 28th - Maundy Thursday service at 5:30PM

Mar 29th - Good Friday Service at 7PM

Mar 31st - Easter Sunrise Service at 7:30AM
Easter Pancake breakfast begins at 8:15AM through 9:45AM
Easter Celebration worship with Choir Cantata at 10AM

WEEKDAY GATHERINGS

Women on a Spiritual Quest (WSQ)

-WSQ meets on Mondays at 4PM 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 is on Thursdays at 6:30PM in the Sanctuary.

-A shorter rehearsal starts on Sundays at 8:50AM.

-It's a great time to join!

Progressive Book Study (PBS)

-PBS meets on Thursdays at 3PM over Zoom.

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.

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:

Christ Church UM, Tucson
Community UMC, Bowie
Duncan UMC

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

Yvonne Windham (Feb 6)
Cindy Turnbull (Feb 8)
Tripp Cahill-Gordon (Feb 11)
Josh Williams (Feb 11)

Barb Jones (Feb 12)
Abby Turnbull-Frontroth (Feb 13)
Kay Jackson (Feb 17)
Byung Kim (Feb 24)

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

“Nifty Needlecrafts” Ministry Seeking Fiber Artists of All Kinds!

If you sew, quilt, embroider, knit, crochet, or anything similar... whether you are an expert, intermediate, or beginner crafter... you are more than welcome to join our ministry! The church has several sewing machines you can learn on, an abundance of donated fabrics that are free to use, a wealth of crafters' books and magazines, and other handy bits and bobs. (Come get your very own cookie tin for holding crafting supplies!)

If you're interested in joining or just want more information, speak to ministry team leader Tripp on Sundays after the 10AM service or email rainbowlavender99@gmail.com. Future meeting dates and times TBD.

Animal & Environmental Holidays for February 2024

By Diane & Victoria Russell



February – Declutter for a Cause Month

This month was created by decluttering expert Stacey Agin Murray in 2016 with the goal of clearing out your home/office and donating your unwanted items providing extra funding to your favorite charity.



February 10 – Int'l Day of the Arabian Leopard

The UN proclaimed this day in 2022 to raise awareness of this Critically Endangered subspecies of the leopard that is native to the Arabian Peninsula. According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature, there are less than 200 Arabian Leopards left in the world.



February 13 – Love Hornbills Day

Created in 1997 by the Hornbill Research Foundation to raise awareness and conservation efforts. There are 62 species of hornbill, and some are considered endangered. They are considered symbols of love because they are monogamous and mate for life.



February 14 – Valentines Day

Valentine's Day is a day to express love. It is not a day only for couples, but for our friends, family members, animals/pets, and even ourselves. Enjoy and celebrate this day of love.



February 14 – Pet Theft Awareness Day

In 1988, Last Chance for Animals created this day to raise awareness of the rising threat of pet theft and how to help prevent this tragedy from happening to their pets. Ways to help include leashing your dog on walks, microchipping, and having a collar with an ID tag.



February 16-19, 2024 – The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC)

The 27th annual GBBC is a global event where anyone can participate in this community science event by counting birds to get a real-time snapshot of bird populations. Participants are asked to count birds for at least 15 minutes and report their sighting online at birdcount.org.



February 17 – Random Act of Kindness Day

Created in 1995 by the Random Acts of Kindness Foundation, it is a day to spread kindness to other people. Kindness starts with you and will often be passed on to other people. “No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted,” (Aesop).



February 18–24 - National Justice for Animals Week

The Animal Legal Defense Fund created this week to educate the public about crimes that are perpetrated against animals. It is important to learn what is considered animal cruelty and to hold abusers accountable through prosecution. This year’s representative is Bella, a shih tzu who was abused.



February 18 – World Whale Day

Created in 1980 by the Pacific Whale Foundation to raise awareness about the endangered humpback whale. Now all whales are celebrated along with their ocean home. Whales and all marine life are threatened when their home is not safe for them by overfishing and pollution.



February 24 - Skip The Straw Day

Created by the “Coral Keepers” students and advisor Susan Tate from Whitehall, MI to help fight plastic pollution and help protect marine life. Straws take 200 years to decompose, have toxic byproducts, and often hurt marine life. “Tip the Glass” by not using straws today & consider stopping use altogether.



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.