



First United Methodist Church
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“Spring is Near, and Holy Week and Easter Are Approaching!”

By Pastor Eun Ko



Dear families of FUMC of Tucson,

While the arrival of spring might not be as evident in Tucson, AZ, with its ever-present yellow flowers, March is a month that symbolizes new beginnings, sprouts, and light green colors. Having come from Elmhurst, IL, I personally feel the freshness and renewal that March brings.

As Christians, we also enter into Holy Week during this month, with Easter falling in March this year.

What’s happening in the world? March Madness, the term used for the NCAA Division I men’s and women’s basketball championship tournaments, is just around the corner. Additionally, daylight saving time begins on March 10.

What’s going on in your life in March?

Whether joys or concerns, each of you is facing the vibrancy of life in your own unique circumstances.

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Spring is Near, and Holy Week and Easter Are Approaching! cont.

Our Lenten book study with Pastor Ko focuses on making better decisions to lead a life with fewer regrets. I encourage you to reflect on your decisions this month. I extend an invitation to join our Holy Week journey this year:

Maundy Thursday Service at FUMC on March 28th at 5:30 pm.

Good Friday Service at Catalina UMC on March 29th at 7:00 pm.

Easter Sunrise Service at FUMC on March 31st at 7:30 am.

Easter Sunday Service at FUMC on March 31st at 10:00 am.

Reflecting on Joel 2:12-14: “Yet even now, says the LORD, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing. Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from punishment. Who knows whether he will not turn and relent and leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering and a drink offering for the LORD your God?”

요엘서 2장 12-14절: 12 여호와와의 말씀에 너희는 이제라도 금식하고 울며 애통하고 마음을 다하여 내게로 돌아오라 하셨나니 13 너희는 옷을 찢지 말고 마음을 찢고 너희 하나님 여호와께로 돌아올지어다 그는 은혜로우시며 자비로우시며 노하기를 더디하시며 인애가 크시사 뜻을 돌이켜 재앙을 내리지 아니하시나니 14 주께서 흑시 마음과 뜻을 돌이키시고 그 뒤에 복을 내리사 너희 하나님 여호와께 소제와 전제를 드리게 하지 아니하실는지 누가 알겠느냐

With love and prayers,

Pastor Ko



What's Happening at First Church of Tucson!

Below left: There was an Ash Wednesday Service on February 14th at 7 pm in the sanctuary. Ash Wednesday is the beginning of the Lenten journey in reflecting the love and cross of Jesus Christ for us.

Pastor Ko challenges each church member to choose any books from the Bible and finish reading as many of them as they can during Lent.

Below right: The altar is decorated by Joyce Garcia for the season of Lent.



Below left: We had a guest speaker, Rev. Misook Yoo, a lead pastor at Algonquin UMC, IL on March 4th, 2024.



Above right: One of the Students, Gyujang Shim, came from South Korea as a Ph.D student to complete one of his research projects only for two months. Even though he is Catholic, he attended FUMC as his spiritual home while he was here. He had never had an American-style breakfast here in Tucson, AZ so Pastor Ko treated him as his farewell heading back to South Korea with blessings on February 21st.

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Below left: There is a birthday celebration time on every first Sunday of the Month in Korean Congregation. Andy Min is one of the people who has a birthday in March. Andy is a member of FUMC and also a member of the Board of the FUMC Foundation.



Middle and above right: Group of FUMC church gathers to have a book study with Pastor Ko during this Lenten season. The book is “Better Decisions, Fewer Regrets” by Andy Stanley.

Is God Calling You to Service at Your Church?

An Introduction to Lay Servant Ministries class is being offered **Saturdays, May 4th and 11th at St John's UMC in Tucson (from 9 am to 3 pm both days)**. Upon registration, more detailed information about the class will be provided. Registration is open at:

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

Lay Servant Ministries is a program to educate and empower the laity to roles of leadership, caring and communications in the church and community.

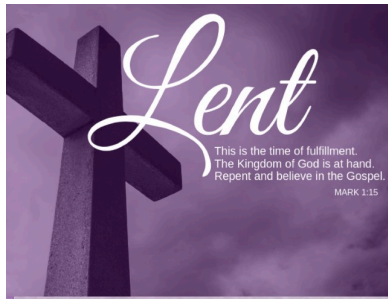
The first class in "Introduction to Lay Servant Ministries" is offered 4-5 times a year in the conference. Also offered are Advanced Courses that cover many topics of interest in our three focus areas of leadership, caring, and communications. One is allowed to take advanced courses at any time, although we do encourage the Introduction (Basic) Class first. Each course is 10 hours in length and can be in 3.5 hour sessions or two 5 hour sessions (or other appropriate timeframe). This will be described in the advertisement and registration document. Attendance at all class times is mandatory for credit to be given.

Once the Introduction Class and one Advanced Course are taken, one is designated a Certified Lay Servant. An annual report is required each fall and is due to your church for your annual church conference which is usually held in the fall. A requirement of completing at least one Advanced Course every 3 years is also required to maintain status.

Questions??? Contact one of the Co-Directors for the South District:

Gretchen Lofgren
glofgren22@gmail.com

Kelly Deyoe
kjdeyoe@cox.net



Lenten season of 2024

We invite all of you to the time of spiritual discipline during upcoming Lenten season.

Scripture Reading Challenge –Choose any books from the Bible

**Maundy Thursday Service - Thursday, March 28 at 5:30 pm
At First UMC of Tucson**

**Good Friday Service - Friday, March 29 at 7:00 pm
At Catalina UMC (2700 E. Speedway Blvd)**



Easter Sunday Brunch !

Brunch will begin at 8:15 - 9:45

Pancakes, sausage, coffee, and juice will be provided.

Bring your favorite brunch dish, a donation or just yourself.

Please RSVP on the sign-up sheet on the Narthex table or in the Social Hall.



Remember a Loved One or Honor Family or Friends

We place flowers in the sanctuary at Easter to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ and hope of life everlasting.

If you would like to purchase a plant in honor or memory of a loved one, please fill out the form below. Put it in the offering bag or turn it in at the church office, along with your payment of \$12.00 per plant.

Names of those honored or remembered will be in the worship bulletin. ***All order forms must be in the church office by March 18th. Please make checks payable to FUMC.***

If you would like to donate without purchasing a plant, please make note of that in the form below.

Names: _____

Phone: _____

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

No. Plants Ordered: _____ Amount Enclosed: \$ _____



Donation to Pastor's Discretionary Fund Only

Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Bishop Carlo's Call to Annual Conference 2024

by Episcopal Office | Feb 14, 2024 | Annual Conference, Annual Conference Sessions Committee, Conference Newsletter, East District Newsletter, Featured-News, North District Newsletter, South District Newsletter, West District Newsletter

Phoenix Episcopal Area
of The United Methodist Church



Carlo A. Rapanut
Resident Bishop
Julie O'Neal
Executive Assistant to the Bishop

[A PDF of this letter can be downloaded by clicking this link.](#)

DATE: February 14, 2024
TO: Lay and Clergy Members of the Desert Southwest Conference (DSC) and the Secretary of the Desert Southwest Conference
FROM: Bishop Carlo A. Rapanut, residential bishop of the Desert Southwest Conference
RE: Call to the Desert Southwest Annual Conference Regular Session 2024

Dear Desert Southwest United Methodists,

Greetings in the name of the one who makes a way!

I hereby call the regular session of the Desert Southwest Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church to meet on June 13-16, 2024, at the Tucson Convention Center in Tucson, AZ.

This is a milestone year for us as we mark 40 years as the Desert Southwest Conference of The United Methodist Church. We will gather to celebrate the ministry highlights of the past four decades, mark our present place in that ongoing story and together discern and cast a vision for the next decade.

Our theme this year is "Making A Way" based on Jeremiah 29:4-7, 10-14 and Isaiah 43:18-19. As we look to the future with hope, acknowledging where we are and where we've been, God is calling us to perceive God's new thing and inviting us to be way makers with God. I invite you to reflect on our theme and these two passages as we prepare for our time together.

This year also marks the beginning of a journey of getting to know each other and each other's contexts better by allowing each district to take a turn at hosting annual conference in their area. We look forward to learning more about the people and ministries of the South District.

Information is now available by visiting www.dscumc.org/annual-conference. I especially invite you to pay attention to the due dates for registration and other submissions and ask you to

(cont. bottom of pg 7)

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.

Coin Sunday on March 31st

This special collection will support The Loving Church's homeless ministry.

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](https://www.zoom.us/j/99436101655) Passcode: 6226481

Chancel Choir

-Practice is on Wednesdays at 6:30PM in the Sanctuary.
-A shorter rehearsal is on Sundays at 9AM.
-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](https://www.zoom.us/j/98015738087) Passcode: 6226481

Cocaine Anonymous (CA)

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

Bishop Carlo's Call to Annual Conference 2024, cont.

please abide by these deadlines. Doing so will greatly help the continuing work of planning the conference and will avoid causing undue stress on our staff and volunteers. I trust that you will do your part as beloved members of our covenant community.

I look forward to being with all of you in Tucson in June! May the Holy Spirit move in our minds and our hearts, even now, as we prepare for this important work of holy conferencing.



Bishop Carlo A. Rapanut

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:

El Mesias UMC, Nogales
First UMC, Bisbee
First UMC, Eloy

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

Andy Min (Mar 12)
Susan Williams (Mar 13)
Hyeonah Kang (Mar 14)
Stephanie Kang (Mar 16)

Esther Lee (Mar 20)
Janet Ageh (Mar 21)
Ozzie Nelson (Mar 24)
Peggy Ford (Mar 26)

Don Rollings (Mar 28)
Carol Velzy (Mar 30)
Martha Preston (Mar 31)

Jong & Miwon Lee (Mar 6)
Art & Cindy Turnbull (Mar 7)

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

March 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, March 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 Wednesday so she can reserve enough seats at the restaurant.

Animal & Environmental Holidays for March 2024

By Diane & Victoria Russell



March 3rd - World Wildlife Day (WWD)

Animals and plants have an important role to play in our world. The goal of WWD is to spread awareness about the status of our most critically endangered animals and plants. The 2024 Theme is "Connecting People and Planet: Exploring Digital Innovation in Wildlife Conservation."



March 13th - K-9 Veterans Day

Created in 1987 by Joe White, a Vietnam War Veteran, to honor the service of our brave K-9's that have served and sacrificed in the military, law enforcement, service, and support dogs. White stated canine veterans, "served to save, and they deserve to be remembered".



March 14th - National Learn About Butterflies

Created in 1983 to raise awareness of these amazing and beautiful pollinators that are vital to the ecosystem. According to the Smithsonian, there are about 17,500 species of butterflies in the world with about 750 in the United States. We can help butterflies by planting more flowers.



March 15th - Int'l Day of Action for Seals

This is a time when the international community comes together to stop the unnecessary cruelty for the sake of fashion. It is a day to protest commercial hunting and its methods. Ways to get involved include signing petitions to stop seal hunting and to boycott seal products.



March 18th Global Recycling Day

The 7th Global Recycling Day was created to raise awareness of the importance of recycling to help preserve and protect the earth's natural resources. The 2024 theme is "#Recycling Heroes" - to honor the people, places, and activities of recycling.



March 21st - International Day of Forests

Created in 2012 by the UN General Assembly to raise awareness of the importance of all types of forests. The theme for 2024 is "Forests and Innovation: New solutions for a better world." According to Our World Data, about one-third (38%) of habitable land area are forests.



March 22nd – World Water Day

Created in 1993 by the UN to raise awareness of the importance of freshwater for the world. The 2024 theme is “Water for Peace”, which focuses on the demand for water and how water plays an important role for the stability and prosperity of the world.



March 23rd – Earth Hour

The first Earth Hour was organized by WWF in 2007. This annual global event encourages individuals, communities, and businesses to turn off all non-essential electric lights for one hour from 8:30 pm to 9:30 pm (local time) to help protect the planet.



March 30th – International Day of Zero Waste

Created in 2023 by the United Nations to raise awareness about the impacts of waste on human health, the economy, and the environment. The Zero Waste concept is based on waste prevention, reduction, and recycling. Waste is seen as a resource that can be reused or repurposed.



March 30th – Take a Walk in the Park Day

This day was created to help people reconnect with nature by enjoying the wildlife and beauty of this wonderful world. Getting out in nature even improves your health and wellness by being healthier and happier.



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.