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“The Spirit of Easter!”

By Pastor Eun Ko

Greetings in Jesus Christ,

This week is Holy Week, which is the most sacred week in the liturgical year in Christianity. We have had our spiritual journey for the last six weeks, participating in the suffering of Jesus Christ and the sacred moment of our faith to be Christlike. Holy Thursday is Maundy Thursday. Christ’s “mandate” is commemorated on Maundy Thursday – “maundy” being a shortened form of mandatum (Latin), which means “command.” Jesus and his disciples had shared the Last Supper, and Jesus washed their feet. It shows the definition of love which Jesus Christ offered to the disciples in the most humble way on earth.



And there is Good Friday which is a day commemorating the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and his death at Calvary. Death is not an easy topic in our lives nor in the Christian liturgical calendar. However, we stand in awe of the sacrificial love Jesus showed through the crucifixion on the cross. That love only worked through the death of Jesus Christ.

We have experienced the death of our loved ones or our own spiritual death. Whatever we experience, it is so painful. However, it always reminds us of the unexpected joy of resurrection as Jesus showed and completed the salvation of human beings through his resurrection of him.

Do we believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ?

Do we believe in the reunion of our loved ones in heaven?

Do we believe in the new birth of our spirituality after the death of our spirituality?

(cont. pg 2)

The Spirit of Easter! cont.

I dare to proclaim that all of the above are truths we need to believe in.

What a great privilege to go through this year's Lenten season and to celebrate the spirit of Easter this Sunday! Praise the Lord. Amen.

Those who don't know the sacred secret of the resurrection of Jesus Christ won't be able to celebrate the spirit of Easter as well as make their daily lives joyful, peaceful, and blessed by the love of Jesus Christ.

Colossians 3:1-4

¹So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on the things that are above, not on the things that are on earth, ³for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

골로새서 3:1-4

- 1 그러므로 너희가 그리스도와 함께 다시 살리심을 받았으면 위의 것을 찾으라 거기는 그리스도께서 하나님 우편에 앉아 계시느니라
- 2 위의 것을 생각하고 땅의 것을 생각하지 말라
- 3 이는 너희가 죽었고 너희 생명이 그리스도와 함께 하나님 안에 감추어졌음이라
- 4 우리 생명이신 그리스도께서 나타나실 그 때에 너희도 그와 함께 영광 중에 나타나리라

Let us get ready for the Celebration of Easter Sunday along with Good Friday.

Good Friday Service - April 7th at 7:00 pm

Easter Sunrise Service - April 9th at 7:30 am

Easter Pancake Brunch - April 9th from 8:15 am to 9:45 am

Easter Celebration Service - April 9th at 10:00 am

With gratitude and love,

Pastor Ko



What's Happening at First Church of Tucson!

We are so glad to have Bill Synder as he offered our offertory song on March 26th at 10:00 am. He sang "There's Something About the Name / His Name Is Wonderful."



We welcome any gifted and dedicated people of God who want to contribute to our worship services. Please contact our music director, Mirae, or the church office.

We are so grateful for five people who completed the discipleship study with Pastor Ko. We will recognize their accomplishments on Easter, April 9th at 10:00 am.

Congratulations!!!



Left: Jun, Kay, Gina, Stephanie, Kate.



Right: The group with Pastor Ko.

(cont. pg 4)

A new member will join our faith community, First Church of Tucson!

Welcome and love you, Joyce Holloway!!!



Lenten Spiritual Journey for the year of 2023

Well done and so proud of all of you who were a part of this journey!!!

Scripture Reading Challenge – the Book of Psalms

Participants: Margo Kahler, Cindy Turnbull, Arthur Turnbull, Nan Rollings, Joyce Garcia, Kay Kaiser, Stephanie Kang, Andy Min, Min Han, Min woo Ahn, Lana Yoo, Steven Yoo, Young Kim, Kyoung Kim, Halla Kang, Sam Haney, David Carrico

Lectio Divina

Labyrinth Walk



Group photo after the Labyrinth walk

Come Join the New Fight for God's World!

Hello, First Church Family! I'm Jessie Hansen.

As the Missions Coordinator, I want to invite all of you to join in a very important new community wide missional outreach opportunity! For the past several months, there has been a new trial recycling program in Tucson/Pima County. This has focused on all plastic throwaways. This has been a very successful trial program led by the councilman of Ward 6 in Tucson. You may have seen me rummaging through the various "trash" barrels at the church and seen the signs directing to the proper containers to recycle plastic materials separately from the usual recyclable materials.

The trial of plastic recycling in Tucson has been overwhelmingly successful! The target quantity in a 4-month period was 20 tons – yes tons! – And the actual quantity recycled was 35 tons!! Think about how much plastic that really is! Instead of being thrown into the ocean where it kills millions of ocean wildlife and clogs up fishing and travel, the plastic is turned into 22-pound blocks shaped like Legos. These blocks are then used to build houses for Habitat for Humanity and other building projects!



I am asking you to join in with plastic recycling at home and at the Church. I can supply the clear bags to get you started in this very important program. The current drop off location is at the 6th Ward Office, 1 block east of Country Club Rd. and 1 block south of Speedway Blvd. The address is 3201 E. Anderson St. More locations are planned. You can bring your bags to the Church, and I will transport them to the collection site if that is easier for you.

If you participate in this project, I promise that you will be astonished at the amount of plastic you can prevent from polluting the oceans and landfills.

Please prayerfully consider our role as stewards of God's World. This is one easy way to participate in this stewardship!

THIS WEEK'S
ANNOUNCEMENTS & GATHERINGS

7PM GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE

Please join us in the Sanctuary as we somberly relive Jesus' crucifixion and death.

7:30AM EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE

Join us in the Memorial Garden courtyard for our early morning Easter Sunday sunrise service celebrating Christ's resurrection!

8:15AM EASTER SUNDAY BRUNCH

Join us for coffee, pancakes, sausages, and other delicious foods between the Sunday services!

10AM EASTER CELEBRATION SERVICE

Join us in person for this joint Easter Sunday service celebrating Christ's resurrection! Or you can watch it live online at

<https://www.youtube.com/c/TucsonFirstUMC>.

NOTICE: Due to the low numbers of new COVID cases in Pima County, our safety guidelines have been updated again:

- **We are relaxing our mask recommendation for the time being;** however, please feel free to continue wearing them if you want to.
- 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 (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. The group is reusing last year's book, "All God's Creatures: Daily Devotions for Animal Lovers 2021."

[Zoom ID: 994 3610 1655](https://www.zoom.us/j/99436101655) [Passcode: 6226481](https://www.zoom.us/j/99436101655)

Chancel Choir

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

-Rehearsal is at 9AM on Sundays.

-The Christmas Cantata is coming up—don't miss it!

Progressive Book Study (PBS)

-PBS meets on Thursdays at 3PM. The current book is "The Naked Now" by Richard Rohr.

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

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

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.

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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:

First UMC, Safford
Campus Ministry, UofA, 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

Justin Havins (April 2)
Beth Walkup (April 7)
Denise Grzywacz (April 9)
Angelica Lange (April 15)
Kelly Lee (April 16)

Jae Hammond (April 19)
Nancy Vorres (April 20)
Brooklynn Dominguez (April 25)
Miwon Lee (April 27)

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

April 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 **this Friday, April 14th at 11:30 AM** at the Olive Garden on the northeast corner of Oracle/Wetmore ([300 W Wetmore Rd, Tucson, AZ 85705](http://300WetmoreRd.Tucson.AZ.85705)).

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

Animal & Environmental Holidays for April 2023

By Diane & Victoria Russell



April 4th – World Stray Animal Day

According to WHO, there are 600 million stray dogs and cats living on the streets around the world and about 70 million in America. Help by calling animal control, giving fresh water/food, taking the animal to your local shelter, donating/supporting rescue organizations, adopting or fostering.



April 8th – Zoo Lovers Day

This day encourages people to visit their local zoos and learn about the animals that live there. Approximately 175 million people visit zoos every year, which are also known as Zoological Parks. Always visit AZA accredited zoos to ensure animal welfare standards are met.



April 12th – National “All is Ours” Day

A day to show appreciation of all the beauty and nature around this beautiful world. It is also a day to be grateful for all the things you have and possess and to share them with friends, family and others who may not have enough. Even sharing a smile or saying hello is sharing.



April 13th International Plant Appreciation Day

A day to appreciate all the plants whether you are a gardener or not. Flowering plants for their beauty, vegetables and fruits to feed us, trees to provide shelter and shade. Plants also support life – they take in carbon dioxide and produce oxygen which is essential to life.



April 22nd – Earth Day

Created in 1970 by Senator Gaylord Nelson, to bring political attention to environmental issues. Since then, millions of people around the Earth have celebrated this day to bring awareness and promote environmentally friendly ways of living. The 2023 theme is “Invest in Our Planet”.



April 23rd – International Pallas’s Cat Day (AKA Manul)

Pallas’s cats live in the mountainous regions of Central Asia from Iran to Western China and prefer cold and arid environments. They are solitary and territorial. According to the IUCN, they are considered Near Threatened, and considered Extinct in Armenia and Azerbaijan.



April 24 - World Day for Animals in Labs

Apr 24 thru Apr 30 - World Week

Animals are tragically used in laboratories as test subjects. These tests are inhumane and need to be stopped! According to PETA, more than 110 million animals are killed each year in US labs. There are non-animal alternatives available - it is time to only use those methods.



April 28th - Arbor Day

The first Arbor Day was created by J. Sterling Morton on April 10, 1872; when more than a million trees were planted in Nebraska. Each year since, people have planted trees for future generations. The goal of this day is to inspire people to plant, raise, and celebrate trees.



April 28th - Stop Food Waste Day

Started in 2017 by Compass Group USA to be a day of International Day of Action to raise awareness about the amount of food waste in the world. According to the FDA in the USA, food waste is estimated at 30-40% of the food supply. The goals of this day are to donate food to local food banks, and to reduce the amount of food that ends up in landfills.

Go Birding Day
(Last Saturday in April)



April 29th - National Go Birding Day

Observing birds in their natural habitat has been a favorite hobby of many people. This day encourages birding or birdwatching of all ages to join in the fun. Ways to celebrate include - getting a bird guide, some binoculars, going to a local preserve and looking up and enjoying.



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.