



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

“A New Chapter in God’s Grace”

By Pastor Eun Ko

Dear Church Family,

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

As many of you know, my journey in ministry has taken me through various stages and places, and I am excited to share a significant update with you. I moved to Tucson, AZ, in July 2021, and since then, I have been blessed to serve and grow within this vibrant community.

This June, I officially transferred my membership of the United Methodist Church from the Northern Illinois Conference to the Desert Southwest Annual Conference. This transition marks a new chapter in my ministry and personal life, one filled with gratitude and anticipation for what God has in store.



Reflecting on my journey, I graduated from seminary in 2010 and received my first appointment in Maple Park, IL, at Grace United Methodist Church. Serving there for six years, I built cherished memories and relationships. Recently, I had the opportunity to visit my previous appointments while in Chicago for the Clergy Session of the Northern Illinois Conference. It was a touching and inspiring moment to reunite with Roger Kahl (*left*), the chair of Trustees at Grace UMC, and hear the updates about the congregation. It has been eight years since I left that church, and reconnecting brought back many heartfelt memories.

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A New Chapter in God's Grace cont.



Left: Grace UMC in Maple Park, IL. Middle: Elmhurst Faith Evangelical UMC. Right: Glenbrook Korean UMC.

I also visited Glenbrook Korean United Methodist Church and Elmhurst Faith Evangelical UMC. These visits allowed me to reflect on my time in Illinois, where I studied at Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary, got married, welcomed my daughter Halla, faced the profound loss of my husband, and served three congregations with joy and dedication.

As I look back, I see how God has woven my experiences into a rich tapestry of grace, love, and growth. The year 2024 feels like a new chapter in many ways. I am now fully integrated into the Desert Southwest Annual Conference, not just as a member appointed from another conference, but as an official member of this wonderful community.

I praise the Lord who has blessed, guided, and walked with me through every season of life. I am grateful for His presence in times of joy and sorrow, and I trust in His continued guidance as we journey together in faith.

Thank you for welcoming me with open arms. Let us continue to seek God's will and serve God with all our hearts.

“여호와께서 네게 복을 주시고 너를 지키시기를 원하며” (민수기 6:24)

"The Lord bless you and keep you." (Numbers 6:24)

Thanks be to God!

With gratitude and love,

Pastor Ko

THE PRIMARY ELECTION IS COMING UP!

The Primary Election takes place on July 30th. We will host a polling place in our Arizona room from 6AM-7PM.

What's Happening at First Church of Tucson!

We had several different groups of youth stay in our fireplace room upstairs during the past month. One group came here to attend Annual Conference at the Tucson Convention Center. Another group was traveling through California and Arizona on a summer mission trip; their original accommodation plans fell through, so they asked if they could sleep here for one night.

Thank
♥ you ♥

Thank you so much for your
hospitality and willingness to let us
stay at your church.

Victoria
Norah
Shaf
Rachelle
Colby
Alice
Eli
Maia
Trenton
Landon

Thank you so much for letting us
stay at your church during Annual
Conference. We truly are so grateful for
letting us use your space. You guys went
above and beyond and made us way more
comfortable and happy.

This was one of my best experiences
sleeping at a church. We usually sleep on

the floor and have something like
pop tarts for breakfast, but we were able
to sleep on cots and have fresh hot
breakfast.

Thank you so much!

Blessings,

Youth at Annual Conference
2024

Hallmark



Thank you so much for
letting us stay here!

This is an offering to
share our gratitude.

Shepherd of the Hills UMC

Bright

Sam
Nella Josh

Keagan Zachary
Camelion
Pah

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Below: A group photo from the Western Jurisdiction Korean clergy retreat. Pastor Ko spent time at the retreat from July 1st through 4th.



Below: On June 2nd, Duk and Hae Sook Hong came back to visit us. They had moved away to Oceanside, CA in 2022.



Below left: Cindy Turnbull, Margo Kahler, Dottie Poczulp, and Pastor Ko at Annual Conference at the Tucson Convention Center from June 13th-16th. Below right: Pastors Kim, Paul, and Ko.



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Pastor Ko attended the ordination service at Catalina UMC on June 15 at 7PM. Top middle: Sylvia Moats Harris. Top right: Diamond Pate. Right: Bishop Dan of the N. Illinois Conference.



Below left: Korean pastors at First UMC. Left to right: Rev. Chong and Mrs. Chong, Rev. Ham, Pastor Ko, Rev. Kim and Mrs. Kim. Below right: Pastor Ko graduated from her Doctorate program! She is a Doctor of Ministry in Congregational Leadership program.



Below, left to right: Flooding after a big storm near the end of June. Jessie and Sam (pictured) as well as Tina helped clean up the water and set up fans to dry out the wet floor.



UPCOMING EVENTS

WSQ Book Study - July 8th and August 12th

By Dottie Poczulp

Wanderers on a **Spiritual Quest** decided to pick a book: “The Shack” by William Paul Young over the summer. We will read the first half of the book and talk about it on July 8th at 4PM in the church library.

To participate: pick up your book and read roughly ½ of the book. The book comes in all formats: library, e-book, Audible, hard back... I saw one at Bookmans.

Our last meeting will follow the same format but we will finish the book. This meeting will be August 12.

New Bible Study Beginning on August 13th

By Pastor Raven

At the time of the apostle Paul, Rome was thought by many to be the capital of the world. He wrote this letter to the Christians in the church in Rome, hoping to come visit them soon. Unfortunately when he did get there (AD 56-7) he was ultimately executed.

His letter, what we call the Book of Romans in our Bible, is a challenging theological study. Come join us as we reflect with one another on its meaning and inspiration.

Place: First United Methodist Church – library

Day: Tuesdays

Time: 6:30 PM

Leader: Rev. Raven Gaston

First Meeting: August 13

Meet’n’Eat - July and August

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’Eats are on **July 12th** and **August 9th at 11:30 AM** at the Olive Garden located at 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/@32.271471,-110.941471,15z)).

If you’re interested in coming, please notify the church office or Shirley Murray at (520)297-4796 by the Wednesday prior so she can reserve enough seating at the restaurant.

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.

WEEKDAY GATHERINGS

Wanderers on a Spiritual Quest (WSQ)

-WSQ is currently reading "The Shack" by William Paul Young. See the special announcement on the previous page for details.

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

- The choir is currently on summer break. Rehearsals resume at 8:50AM on August 4th.

Progressive Book Study (PBS)

-PBS meets on Thursdays at 3PM over Zoom. The current book is "Poverty, by America" by Matthew Desmond.

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.

Chancel Choir Summer Break

The choir is taking a well-deserved break from June 1st through August 3rd. Rehearsals will resume at 8:50AM on Sunday, August 4th.



We Need Your Help in the Kitchen!

We would greatly appreciate having a few more volunteers in the kitchen for food prep before the 10AM worship service and for clean-up after Fellowship hour. The work is not difficult at all, but it can be time-consuming with so few people doing it.

Thank you to everyone who has helped out so far! Everyone at First Church appreciates your gifts of time, effort, food, and monetary contributions.

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:

New Hope UMC, Tucson
Grace UMC, Douglas
Sierra Vista UMC
Camping Program, South District

Patagonia Community UMC
Sanctuary UMC, Tucson
Santa Cruz Valley UMC, Sahuarita
St. Francis in the Foothills UMC, 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

Ron Longenbaugh - July 6
Chuck Humphrey - July 8
Judy Longenbaugh - July 8
Kathryn Sovie - July 12

Jack Wen - July 13
TaeHyeong Kim - July 15
Judith Billings - July 20
Bill Warnock - July 29

Chloe (Shinhye) Park - July 30
Sejong Kim - Aug 1
Sumin Lee - Aug 5
Sang Ho Park - Aug 11

Steven & Lana Yoo - July 12
Christopher & Stephanie Kang - Aug 7
Byung & Young Kim - Aug 15

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

Animal & Environmental Holidays for July and August 2024

By Diane & Victoria Russell



July is Pet Hydration Awareness Month

July is usually the hottest month and it is important to keep our pets hydrated. Without enough water, one of the risks is dehydration. Some symptoms include: Loss of appetite, dry mouth, diarrhea, excessive panting, drooling, sunken eyes, and lethargy.



July 4th, Independence Day - Safety for Animals

Celebrating July 4th with fireworks is an exciting holiday for people, but not so much for pets and wildlife. Many pets get scared, run off and end up getting lost. Keep your pet safe by checking collars/ID tags, creating a quiet space in the house, using distractions, and staying calm.



July 12th - Paper Bag Day

Today, millions of people have switched to paper bags rather than using the plastic bags that have harmful effects on the environment. Paper bags are made of renewable raw materials that can be reused and recycled.



July 14th - Be Nice to Bugs

Created in 2021 by Kiana Monson to remind people that bugs are often not treated nicely or with kindness. Ways to celebrate this day and everyday is to learn about bugs, instead of swatting or squishing them--please do a catch and release method for everyone's safety.



July 28th - World Nature Conservation Day

It is an annual event to raise awareness to help preserve and protect our environment, natural resources and ecosystems. Goals of this day include: saving and protecting plants and animals from threats of extinction and to also protecting our natural resources for our future generations.



August 4th - Anniversary of the Great American Outdoor Act

The Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) was passed in 2020 which provides funding to improve infrastructure and to improve recreational opportunities in the national parks. To commemorate the anniversary of GAOA, all National Parks are free on 8/4/24.



August 4th - International Owl Awareness Day

Today we celebrate these amazing nocturnal raptures in the world. There are more than 200 species of owls in the world with 19 species located in North America. Sadly, some species of owls are considered to be endangered due to loss of habitat and hunting.



August 8th - International Moon Bear (a.k.a. Asiatic Black Bear) Day

This day was founded by Animals Asia founder and CEO Jill Robinson in 2018. They are the world's most exploited bear species, being used in the bile farming industry that is used for traditional medicines, and are also exploited in the entertainment industry.



August 25th - Nat'l Park Service Founders Day

On August 25, 1916, President Woodrow Wilson signed the Organic Act, creating the National Park Service. This day recognizes the conservation and preservation efforts of the National Parks system. Today there are 400 areas and 59 National Parks protected.



August 25th - Nat'l Secondhand Wardrobe Day

Do you want to help preserve the Earth's resources, find unique fashion finds, and also save money at the same time? Now is the time to go to your favorite secondhand store and find your own unique trend.. Remember to always - Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle.

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.