



First Church Tucson Weekly Digest

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

1.18.2021

First Church Tucson is an inclusive multi-ethnic faith community, 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 and disability, and sexual orientation.

We welcome you to join in our journey of faith through worship, prayer, Bible study, and service for social justice and ministries of compassion.

At First Church Tucson,
you have a home.
At First Church Tucson,
You have a family of faith.
At First Church Tucson,
you belong.



A protest in support of the Black Lives Matter movement in Seoul, South Korea, June 2020
SIPA USA / AP

“Solidarity”

By Rev. Paul Cho

I wish to write you a two-part story that sits between Martin Luther King Jr. Day and Black History Awareness month.

I am an Asian American, born in Korea, later naturalized as a citizen of the United States. With the exception of high school, I received all of my education (1st-8th grades and college) in Arizona followed by my graduate studies at Claremont in California. Despite the length of my time here in the US (29 years) and the years of education I've received, I was still victim to lies that were told over and over in our society.

Growing up, the expression that America is a melting pot (of immigrants) was common. History classes taught me that with Lincoln's Emancipation Declaration, slavery came to an end. With these two pieces of information, I was taught that we, no matter the color of our skin, were all equals and that racism was, for the large part, non-existent except among the extremists like the KKK and the Neo-Nazis.

(cont. on page 3)

THIS WEEK'S
ANNOUNCEMENTS & GATHERINGS

SUNDAY MORNING LIVE!

Find us on Youtube for a live stream of our Sunday morning reflection followed immediately with Zoom fellowship gathering.

Sundays @ 10AM (English), 11:30AM (Korean)
Visit <https://bit.ly/fumcYouTube> and subscribe to the channel. (Address is case-sensitive.)

First Church Fellowship is on Zoom
<https://dscumc.zoom.us/j/97274927766?pwd=bVlqNmZjTk84bHFHd0JRS0U5R0c4Zz09>

Meeting ID: 972 7492 7766 Passcode: 6226481

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한국어 사역

주일 오전 11:30에 Youtube에서 말씀 묵상 나눔이 있습니다. <https://bit.ly/fumcYouTube>

이어서 Zoom에서 교제에 시간이 있습니다.
<https://dscumc.zoom.us/j/97274927766?pwd=bVlqNmZjTk84bHFHd0JRS0U5R0c4Zz09>

Meeting ID: 972 7492 7766 Passcode: 6226481

같은 주소에 금요일 오후 7시 소그룹에 초대합니다.

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WEEKDAY ONLINE GATHERINGS

Women on a Spiritual Quest (WSQ)

-A classic UM small group accountability and fellowship on Monday Evenings at 4:30PM.

Meeting ID: 920 5951 9248 Passcode: 6226481

Exploring Biblical Wisdom (EBW)

-A Lectio Divina format biblical commentary with small group sharing on Tuesday Mornings at 11AM.

Meeting ID: 981 7986 2680 Passcode: 6226481

Virtual Choir

-Sing with us from the comfort and safety of your home on Wednesday Evenings at 6:30PM.

Meeting ID: 929 7830 4567 Passcode: 6226481

Progressive Book Study (PBS)

-An open conversation-based book study on Progressive Christian theology on Thursday Afternoons at 2PM.

Meeting ID: 980 1573 8087 Passcode: 6226481

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*Not seeing something of interest?
Consider starting your own group!
We are looking for new hosts
to explore new areas of interest.
Contact pastor@firstchurchtucson.org*

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PRAYERS FOR OUR COMMUNITY

With the rise in COVID-19 cases, we offer our prayers for those in our community who are suffering under its grip, both those who are ill and those caring for them. We also pray for those burdened with other illnesses and health complications.

Particularly, we raise up Pastor Raven Gaston, Chuck and Beatrice Humphrey, Christina Ageh, and Mabel Warnock.

* * *

We offer our prayers for these sister faith communities:

St. Paul's UMC, Tucson
San Pedro Valley UMC, Benson
Trinity UMC, Bisbee

SUPPORT FIRST CHURCH TUCSON

Head to our website, www.firstchurchtucson.org, 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. We thank you for your commitment to making a difference in our community.

THIS WEEK'S BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Michi Michalsky (Jan 18)
Chang Koo (Jan 20)

Bill Bensema (Jan 23)

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

SOLIDARITY *(cont.)*

I was taught that their ideals were not shared with the majority, so I need not worry about them. So, despite the racist name calling and bullying, I should hush it. There was no problem. They were just being boys. In fact, I was the one being too sensitive to their play. I should become a man and be more like the model minority that Asians were known for.

So, there I was, a young Asian boy, learning what it meant to become an American. I learned to accept that I would always be called last for team sports. I learned to accept that being called an oriental or a chink was normal. I learned the piano and the violin like you'd expect. I was top of the class in math. This is who I thought I needed to become. And if I continued to be who I was taught to be, then everyone else would also be who they said they will be.

Wrong. I was wrong to hold myself to such a stereotypical Asian character. I was wrong to believe that everyone else would see me as their equal. Clearly these so-called extremist ideals are more common than we want to admit. While we can say without hesitation, "certainly not I," unless we are willing to face the truth in its entirety, then we contribute to these ideals in our disengagement.

Allow me to ask, do we believe that America has ended slavery, eradicated racism, and accepted that all citizens of this country are equals? What was slavery, really? What caused it to begin with?

Allow me to share with you the journey of "my kind". Were you aware that Asians were first brought to the US *after* the Emancipation Proclamation to replace Blacks because there was a shortage of slaves?

Yes. That is right. With the sudden release of millions of slaves, who would do their work? Who would now do the "slave's job"? The former slave owners? Other young and hard working Americans? The already decimated Indians?

Whoever thinks that slavery ended once and for all with Lincoln's celebrated document turns a blind eye to the truth. The truth is that when slavery ended, America simply went out to another continent and imported cheap laborers of another skin color. This time, it was yellow. We did so with lucrative false-promises of riches and grandeur. We claimed that they were not slaves, that they were free, yet they lived in camps like prisoners, held in bondage to pay off the debt of their boat ride here. That is how we got the railroads, that is how we collected the cotton, that is how America moved from the 19th into the 20th century.

In the new century, the two world wars and the following wars in the Pacific/South-Eastern oceans made it difficult to entice Asians to immigrate to the US and fill labor needs. In the States, minority communities were organizing and advocating for their rights by the mid century. In response, America began manufacturing what we now call the Model Minority Myth (more on this next week). For factory owners, it was easier to move the factories abroad for cheap labor than to bring those laborers here. So came the boom of the "Made in (fill in Asian country here)" market. As for the kind of jobs that required laborers to be physically here in the US, America traded yellow for brown and the influx of Latinx as our laborers became the norm toward the end of the 20th century.

The 21st century we live in now is not very different. Our clothes, shoes, and household products were made by some Asians in sweatshops overseas. Our fruits and vegetables were picked by Latinx workers doing backbreaking labor. If the job is dirty or dangerous or difficult, the chances are a person of color is doing it.

I wonder, is a nation built on taking advantage of persons of color really "Great?"

Some say that with Kamala Harris, a woman of both African and Asian descent, now our Vice President that the glass ceiling has been shattered. Political views aside, yes, this is a worthy celebration. Yet, it also speaks to why having a woman, an African, an Asian, in one of the highest positions in our government is so astounding. Because it breaks out of the prejudices we know exist in our society.

While we may have formally ended slavery, the prejudism and racism that allowed for slavery in the first place continue to this day. Our collective recognition of this vicious cycle is necessary for reconciliation to take place. Then and only then, perhaps we might celebrate our "great nation."

Until then, we still need to act for racial justice. Because America has yet to eradicate the racist ideals that allowed for slavery, we still live very much in its grip. Therefore, until we are all free, I stand in solidarity with our Black siblings and I hope you will join me.



We pray for those who have suffered loss
and are grateful for the lives shared with us.

Nan Rollings

SOUL KITCHEN

Easy Macaroni and Cheese

From Margo Kahler

Ingredients

7 oz uncooked elbow macaroni
2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
1 can condensed Cheddar Cheese soup
1-3/4 cup milk
1 jar sliced pimientos, drained (optional)
3/4 tsp salt
1 cup of crushed potato chips

Directions

1. Mix all ingredients, except chips, in a greased 2 qt. casserole dish.
2. Cover and refrigerate up to 24 hours.
3. Heat oven to 350°F.
4. Stir macaroni mixture, then sprinkle with crushed chips.
5. Cover with foil and bake for 1 hour.
6. Uncover and bake for 20 minutes more.

You can also substitute salsa for the milk to make it Southwestern.

Gluten-free Japanese-style Beef Curry

From Tripp Gordon

<https://www.justonecookbook.com/how-to-make-curry-roux/>

Ingredients

Roux:
3 Tbsp unsalted butter
4 Tbsp rice flour
1 Tbsp curry powder
1 Tbsp garam masala
¼ tsp cayenne pepper (optional)

1 Tbsp vegetable oil
1 lb beef, thinly sliced across the grain
1 head of broccoli, cut into florets (slice stem thinly)
3 cups water
Pinch or three of salt

Directions

1. Make the roux by melting the butter in a small pan on medium-low heat, then add the rice flour and stir continuously until lightly browned. Take care that it doesn't burn.
2. Thoroughly mix in the curry, garam masala, and cayenne pepper. Set aside.
3. In a skillet over medium heat, sear the beef in the oil. Once browned, push to the sides or remove from the pan then add the broccoli, sauteeing until crisp-tender.
4. Add the water and stir in the roux. Add salt to taste.
5. Cover the pan and simmer on low heat, stirring occasionally, until the broccoli has softened, the meat is tender, and the sauce has thickened, about 10 mins or so.
6. Serve with rice.

You can also use potatoes, carrots, onions, bell peppers, and asparagus in place of (or in addition to) the broccoli. Just adjust the amount of roux, and subsequently the amount of water.

If you want thicker curry but don't want to make more roux, you can instead add xanthan gum to the curry while it simmers. Whisk together ½ tsp xanthan gum in 1 Tbsp hot water until smooth. Stir into the curry and allow a minute for the mix to thicken before adding more.

SONG FOR THOUGHT

“I Was There to Hear Your Borneing Cry” - **John Ylvisaker**

John Carl Ylvisaker (1937 - 2017) was a liturgical songwriter, performer and composer. He finished his music and history degrees in 1959 at Concordia College (Moorhead, MN). Ylvisaker published more than 1,000 songs and his most famous one is *I was There to Hear Your Borneing Cry*.

This hymn came to life in 1985, when the American Lutheran Church asked Ylvisaker to prepare a series on baptism called “Reflections”. The text is written in the first person and God is the one who is speaking. In this seven-stanzas hymn, the composer narrates how God sees each and every phase of our lives. Enjoy!

by **Lorena Suarez**
Director of Music Ministries

Lyrics:

“I was there to hear your borneing cry,
I'll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized,
to see your life unfold.
I was there when you were but a child,
with a faith to suit you well;
In a blaze of light you wandered off
to find where demons dwell.

“When you heard the wonder of the Word
I was there to cheer you on;
You were raised to praise the living Lord,
to whom you now belong.
If you find someone to share your time
and you join your hearts as one,
I'll be there to make your verses rhyme
from dusk 'till rising sun.

“In the middle ages of your life,
not too old, no longer young,
I'll be there to guide you through the night,
complete what I've begun.
When the evening gently closes in,
and you shut your weary eyes,
I'll be there as I have always been
with just one more surprise.

“I was there to hear your borneing cry,
I'll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized,
to see your life unfold.”

Suggested recording:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pJI3NFT5T_c

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

John 1:43-51

There is an intriguing story about God calling Samuel. It was during a time when visions were rare and God did not speak to His people. Samuel had mistaken God calling him for Eli, the head priest he was training under. After 3 failed attempts, Eli finally gets it and instructs Samuel to respond to God saying, "Speak, Lord, Your servant is listening."

There is a parallel to this story and Nathanael's story because it was also a time when visions were rare and God did not speak to His people. So when Phillip comes to Nathanael to share the joyous news of Jesus from Nazareth, Nathanael sarcastically responds, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"

As I look around our society, our culture, it seems that we are also living in a period when it feels like God is silent. Perhaps in the quiet, our inclination may be just like Nathanael's. "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" In other words, "Can anything good come out of

the pandemic/this country/our church/my future?"

I understand that our experiences keep us grounded, realistic, rational. That is expected and acceptable. However, perhaps our skepticism is rooted in our content. Perhaps we feel that we are just fine even without God. You may need to think on that a bit longer.

The point of learning, and what draws me to Nathanael in our scripture is that he goes with Phillip to see Jesus anyway. Despite his doubts or whatever he held unto, whatever simple or complex reason there may have been, he left anyway. He gave it a shot. Nathanael took those steps to Jesus. And there, his life was changed.

I hope we may be like Nathanael. Not in our sarcastic "Can anything good come out of this?" But like Samuel's responses, "Speak, Lord, your servant is listening" as we step forward closer to Christ. May this be our response on this day and forevermore. Amen.

by Rev. Paul Cho



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