



First Church Tucson Weekly Digest

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

1.25.2022

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 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.

“Bringing Light to the Journey” (Part 1)

By Nile Sprague, with Tara Barnes, 1.3.2022



Wesley Community and Health Centers in Phoenix offers health and wholeness to its changing communities.

Wesley Community and Health Centers began in 1950 as a small community center in south central Phoenix. Today, Wesley has three Phoenix campuses, and it continues to grow. Its health clinics and community centers work together to provide a holistic approach to well-being and build what Chief Executive Director Blaine Bandi calls a vibrant, effective connection with the community.

The health clinics offer a wide range of services, including family medicine, prenatal care, chronic disease management, vaccinations, breast cancer screening, counseling and more. The health center services are offered on a sliding scale based on family size and income for those who are uninsured. The community center offers exercise and nutrition classes and gym as well as a community garden and kitchen. It also offers English-as-a-second-language classes and afterschool and summer care for students in kindergarten through 8th grade. Community center programs rely on grants, donations and partnerships to provide programming for free or reduced rates.

As a national mission institution, Wesley is supported by United Methodist Women through grants, training, technical support and member involvement. Members' generous Mission Giving is what enables United Methodist Women to help organizations like Wesley across the country uplift their communities.

(cont. pg 2)

Bringing Light to the Journey (Part 1) (cont.)

Whole-person care

Wesley has always served low-income, primarily Hispanic communities. Almost all staff are bilingual. The original community center focused on adult English classes and citizenship activities, then expanded to include more children's programming as a gymnasium was added. The mother and baby clinics of the 1970s and 1980s also expanded into more comprehensive health-care offerings. The original building, on 10th Street, known as the Phoenix Campus, is a physical example of Wesley's growing outreach as additions were built onto the site as the centers needed to expand.

The Golden Gate campus, about 7 miles from the Phoenix Campus is the biggest and most active, with modern facilities built to meet health-care and community needs. Like the original location, it has clinics and a gym, and this is also where the garden and community kitchen are located. The third location, the Health Center at Coffelt, is a small clinic near an affordable-housing complex and low-income housing neighborhood next to a nice park.

What makes Wesley unique is its understanding of the social determinants of health, which are often a much better predictor of health status than genetics, Bandi explained, factors such as education level, first language and housing and employment status. So Wesley intentionally offers additional support to clinical care.

"This is where the community center comes in," Bandi said. "The community center wraps services complementary to treating people and keeping them well and healthy. There probably isn't an exercise class where you go to the doctor. We do have exercise classes. Your doctor probably doesn't offer an ESL class or a class that will help you find a job. We do that here. More than likely there isn't an afterschool program where you go to the doctor. Here, we do that. The health centers and community centers complement each other in helping us be better stewards, better respondents to the needs of our community."

Equipping for change

About 30 women were exercising in the gym when I arrived at the Golden Gate Campus early on a Thursday morning. In the kitchen I met Lucia Sisterna, who had just started her job as the kitchen manager a few months before. She was making a peach and kale salad for the women to eat after their exercise class, which was being led in Spanish by J-Lee Stewart. Sisterna partners with Stewart to offer participants natural and healthy foods.

"I love this job because I love to cook," Sisterna said about her first professional cooking job. "And I also like that I can help people understand that good food isn't necessarily bad tasting. It's very simple. And it's still pretty yummy."

The meals aren't just served to the program participants. They also learn how to make the meals and often take ingredients home. Some of the ingredients are grown right in the center's garden. The exercise and nutrition classes, according to Stewart, aren't just about losing weight but are also about disease prevention and mental health.

"The feedback that I get from the participants is great, because they see the changes," Stewart said. "They gradually start feeling better, and then say they have fewer back problems, fewer headaches, fewer joint problems. They're stronger. They feel more awake and have more energy. They sleep better."

They get less angry. They're a little bit happier. And the more they do this, the more they feel the change that they were looking for. They improve their health—physical, mental and emotional.”

The students at the afterschool and day-care programs provided at Wesley also learn about good health and nutrition and exercise. It's part of Wesley's goal of caring for the whole person and the whole family. The children's programs also offer homework assistance, structured physical activity, arts and crafts, snacks, gardening and educational activities in science, math, reading and cultural awareness.

Graciela Ohlmaier says she's seen improvements in her grandchildren's behavior since they've been attending Wesley's programs. She often helps take care of her four grandchildren, who have been in the program for about six years. She appreciates the positive changes she's seen in their lives.

Connecting care

Ohlmaier is also a patient of Wesley's health clinic. A regular checkup in July found abnormalities in her mammogram. A biopsy, which she also received at Wesley, showed that her breast cancer had returned. She's now receiving treatment.

“I'm not afraid because I have a lot of faith in God,” she said. “The size of the tumors is quite small. I caught them just in time.”

Among its other clinical offerings, Wesley is a Well Woman HealthCheck Program contractor and a Title X Family Planning site. The health centers offer culturally competent family-planning services, including exams, testing, education, birth control and treatment to uninsured or low-income community members. WWHP provides free breast and cervical cancer screening for those who are low income, uninsured or underinsured.

Nancy Vasquez is Wesley's patient navigator for WWHP. A casual conversation she had with Ohlmaier is what encouraged Ohlmaier to get screened. Vasquez' role, as her title implies, is to help patients navigate the health-care process. She helps them with paperwork and communication and connects them to services—and not just clinical services but counseling and financial resources. She says she loves the one-on-one with patients.

“A patient recently told me that his wife had gone to many different places, but it was here that his wife was finally diagnosed and treated, and she's doing so much better,” Vasquez said. “He said they'd gone to specialists and spent so much money that they didn't have, but at Wesley she was diagnosed with the right illness and they didn't have to spend their whole life savings getting her treatment. Stories like that just really touch your heart.”

Vasquez helps empower patients to ask questions, advocate for themselves and come to her if they need help. She's often a shoulder to cry on. She's a connector, a way Wesley goes out into the community as well as being a place to which the community can turn. She helps eliminate barriers.

“Our job at its core is eliminating barriers, building bridges, making it easier for people to access services,” said Bandi.

(This is Part 1 of a news article from www.UnitedMethodistWomen.org. Part 2 will be published in the next Digest. For the full article, see www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/news/bringing-light-to-the-journey.)

THIS WEEK'S
ANNOUNCEMENTS & GATHERINGS

10AM SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

We will once again have in-person worship services starting January 30th! Alternatively, you can join us Live on YouTube by going to <https://www.youtube.com/c/TucsonFirstUMC>.

NOTICE: Due to the new COVID-19 variant cases that are emerging, our safety guidelines have been updated. Please see below:

- Masks are required to be worn by everyone inside the church building, and social distancing is still in effect (min. 6 ft between family groups).
- If you are not yet fully vaccinated or are immuno-compromised, or if you are not feeling well, we very strongly recommend that you watch the YouTube livestream rather than attend in person.
- Choir members are required to be fully vaccinated and masked in order to sing for the congregation during the service.

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한국어 사역

주일 오전 11시 30분에 한국어 예배가
현장예배와 온라인예배로 진행됩니다.
기도와 참여 부탁드립니다.
금요일 저녁 7시에 성경공부 모임이 줌으로
진행됩니다.

Youtube 주소는

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

[Meeting ID: 998 6112 0822](#) [Passcode: 6226481](#)

* * *

WEEKDAY ONLINE GATHERINGS

Women on a Spiritual Quest (WSQ)

-WSQ meets on Mondays at 4:30PM in the church library. The group's current book is "Living a Chocolate Life" by Deb Burma.

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."

[Meeting ID: 994 3610 1655](#) [Passcode: 6226481](#)

Chancel Choir

-We will resume this week with practice on Wednesday at 6:30PM in the Sanctuary.
-Rehearsal is at 9AM before the Sunday service.
-New requirement: Choir members must remain masked during practices, rehearsals, and Sunday worship services.

Progressive Book Study (PBS)

-If you like challenging your understanding of the meaning of life, join our book study on Thursdays at 2:30PM. We are reading "The God You Didn't Know You Could Believe In" by Dr. Jeffrey Frantz. We will continue to meet online for a while, hoping to eventually meet in person.

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

[Meeting ID: 980 1573 8087](#) [Passcode: 6226481](#)

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:

Duncan UMC
San Pedro Valley UMC, Benson
UMC of the Good Shepherd, Kearny

UPCOMING

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Jim Goff (Jan 26)
Winona Powell (Feb 1)
Cindy Rineheart (Feb 5)

Yvonne Windham (Feb 6)
Howard Jones (Feb 7)

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

SUNDAY COFFEE/SOCIAL TIME

We will again have fellowship time with coffee and snacks after the English worship service. Please observe the following rules, which are in place to help minimize the spread of COVID-19:

1. Masks must be worn when not eating or drinking—**please stay masked while chatting.**
2. Tables have been set up with **only 5** chairs to ensure there is adequate social distancing and **must** remain this way.
3. Food will be limited to finger foods like cookies, crackers, and chips. Utensils must be used to pick up food from serving trays, please **do not** use your fingers.
4. Coffee and water will be the beverages for now.

We are counting on people taking this very seriously after having the church closed again for 2 weeks.

COIN SUNDAY JANUARY 30TH, 2022

Every 5th Sunday of the month, we do a special offering collection for a worthy cause. January's Coin Sunday offering will go to Subuiga Methodist Church in Kenya, Africa to support its congregation and its HIV/AIDS ministry.

On January 11th, we ran an article by Shirley Murray describing how she first learned about this church and met the "Servant Evangelist," Daniel. Last week the Digest featured an email from Daniel to Shirley describing his congregation's activities in 2021.

Below are photos from their HIV/AIDS ministry efforts, visiting schools and distributing feminine products to the teen girls, as well as educating their parents on the dangers of teen pregnancy.



Animal Holidays - A Week at a Glance

By Diane Russell



January 28-30 – Big Garden Birdwatch

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) is putting on the 44th Annual Big Garden Birdwatch which will take place in the United Kingdom. Over a million bird lovers are expected to participate in this year's count.

January 23-29 – Kiss a Shark Week

This week was created to bring awareness and to promote efforts to save sharks. There are more than 500 species of sharks in the world. Ways to celebrate include donating time or effort to shark causes, visiting your local aquarium, and watching shark documentaries.

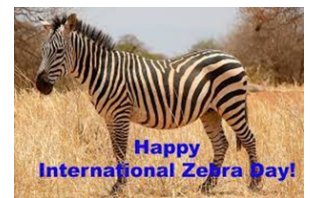


January 29 – The Seeing Eye Guide Dog Anniversary

On this day in 1929, the oldest guide dog school in the world will celebrate 93 years of enhancing the life of blind or visually impaired people. The school was founded by Dorothy Harrison Eustis, who trained dogs, and Morris Frank, a visually impaired person, along with his seeing eye dog Buddy.

January 31 – International Zebra Day

This day was created to bring awareness about Zebras and the need to protect them. There are three species of zebra – the Grevy's, the Mountain, and the Plains (also known as the Common Zebra). They usually live in treeless grasslands and savanna woodlands in Africa.



Picture of the Day

Genet chillin' at Pete's Pond in Botswana, Africa.

ORDER A COVID-19 HOME TEST KIT

You can now order at-home COVID-19 test kits online. Please visit www.covidtests.gov for more information. The tests available for order:

- Are rapid antigen at-home tests, not PCR
- Can be taken anywhere
- Give results within 30 minutes (no lab drop-off required)
- Work whether or not you have COVID-19 symptoms
- Work whether or not you are up to date on your COVID-19 vaccines
- Are also referred to self-tests or over-the-counter (OTC) tests

Every home in the U.S. is eligible to order **4** at-home COVID-19 tests. The tests are completely free. Orders will usually ship in 7-12 days.

SUNDAY SERVICE ORDER OF WORSHIP

English Worship Service at 10AM

Welcome & Announcements
Call to Worship
Opening Hymn
Opening Prayer
Scripture Reading
Anthem (Choir)
Message
Song of Response
Sharing joys and concerns
Prayers of the People
Offertory Prayer
Closing Song
Benediction
Postlude
Passing of the Peace

한국어 예배 오전 **11시 30분**

환영 및 인사
조용한 기도
예배의 부름
찬양
여는 기도
성경봉독
설교
응답찬송
알리는 말씀 (광고)
목회기도
봉헌기도
결단찬송
축도
후주

Please contact the church office if you have any questions, need information, or want to submit an article or put an announcement in the weekly digest.

Office Hours: Mon-Thurs 10AM-2PM

Church Staff

Senior Pastor: Rev. Eun Young Ko
Visiting Pastor: Rev. Raven Gaston
Music Director: Lorena Suarez
Worship Video Team: Sumin Lee & Juyeon Lee
Office Assistant: Tripp Gordon
Bookkeeper: Sue Smith



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