



First Church Tucson Weekly Digest

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

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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.

FORWARD

A lot is on my mind as of late in light of the hate-crimes targeting Asians. As I shared in the message this past Sunday, advocating for justice in this, even though it is directly about me, my family, and my kin, is not an area of my strength. Last year, I had the privilege of studying in the Progressive Asian American Christian Fellowship program. Through it, I had the opportunity to learn from Rev. Laura Cheifetz. CNN recently carried an opinion by Rev. Cheifetz which I share below in full. - Rev. Paul Cho

“Being Asian American means living in a country that treats you as a perpetual foreigner. That has to change.”

By Rev. Laura Marko Cheifetz, Mar 20, 2021. [CNN OPINION](#)



"You're a cute little tricky." That's what a White male customer at the Poulsbo, Washington, bookstore where my mother and I worked called my mother 28 years ago, when I was just 15.

Our co-worker overheard him and was angry, but my mother was just annoyed. She was simply trying to sell books.

That was the day I began to understand more about what it means to be an Asian American woman in the United States. By college, I knew more about sexualized violence by US military personnel toward women in Asia, and how centuries of racist stereotypes about Asian and Asian American women could be experienced concretely.

(cont. pg 6)

WHERE LOVE LIVES

Creating a Fully Inclusive United Methodist Church

As the “Where Love Lives” campaign celebrates its sixth month, the Western Jurisdiction continues to call on everyone to recommit to the promise of Fair and Equal Ordination for All. This commitment liberates all our clergy – including our LGBTQ+ clergy – to love and serve God and the community in fully open and honest ways, without fear of discrimination, derision, or punishment. The Desert Southwest Conference and the Western Jurisdiction strive to be a home for all God’s people, where Fair and Equal Ordination for All is just one expression of being a place #wherelovelivesUMC

Find the latest video for the campaign on Youtube at <https://youtu.be/uU67yonlvCg> and on the DSCUMC website at [Where Love Lives March Resources \(https://bit.ly/2NEPCR4\)](https://bit.ly/2NEPCR4).

SAFE PLACE PROGRAM FOR YOUTH

This week (March 21 - 27, 2021) is National Safe Place (NSP) Week. The nationally-recognized week serves to raise awareness about the Safe Place® program, a national program which brings together youth service agencies, businesses, volunteers and other community partners to help youth in crisis.

Safe Place, operated locally by Our Family Services, partners with businesses and community organizations to provide immediate safety and support for local youth (ages 12-17). Local Safe Place site locations include:

- American Legion Post #36
- Aviva Children’s Services
- COPE Community Services
- Pima Prevention Partnership
- Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation
- Sullivan Jackson Employment Center
- Tucson Preparatory School
- Tucson Youth Development
- Tucson City Council Offices for Wards 3 and 6
- Youth on Their Own
- All 20 QuikTrip locations in Tucson



“It is so important, especially during this past year, for young people to have a place to go for immediate help. They need to know that people are here who care about them. We are some of those people and we are open 24/7 to help meet their needs,” notes Cindy McClain, Safe Place Coordinator and manager of the local Reunion House Shelter for youth.

THIS WEEK'S
ANNOUNCEMENTS & GATHERINGS

SUNDAY MORNING LIVE!

Join us this Sunday morning at 10am on Youtube for our Sunday reflection. It is followed by a time of sharing and fellowship on Zoom. Join the meeting at the link below.

[Meeting ID: 972 7492 7766](#) [Passcode: 6226481](#)

Visit our Youtube channel. bit.ly/fumcYouTube

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한국어 사역

주일 오전 11:30에 Youtube에서 말씀 묵상의 시간이 있고, 이후에 Zoom에서 나눔과 교제의 시간이 있습니다. 아래 링크를 사용하십시오.

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

Youtube 주소는 bit.ly/fumcYouTube

금요일 오후 7시에 시편 묵상과 나눔의 시간이 위와 같은 Zoom 주소에서 진행되고 있습니다.

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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](#)

Nifty Needlecrafts

-A friendly crafting group for all kinds of fiber arts. Join us Tuesday Morning at 10AM as we brainstorm our first group project.

[Meeting ID: 986 5849 6872](#) [Passcode: 6226481](#)

All God's Creation (AGC)

-A time of scripture reading and reflection with a focus on living creatures, on Wednesday Mornings at 10AM.

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

Chancel Choir

-Meet with the choir online from the comfort and safety of your home on Wednesday Evenings at 6:30PM.

- Join the choir in the parking lot on Saturdays at 2PM and sing in an ensemble with directing.

[Meeting ID: 929 7830 4567](#) [Passcode: 6226481](#)

Progressive Book Study (PBS)

- Would you like to be part of a book study? If you'd enjoy reading with us, join Progressive Christian theology on Thursday Afternoons at 2PM. The new book is titled: "Eternal Life - A New Vision" by John Shelby Spong.

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

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Not seeing something of interest?
We'd love to hear from you. Let's talk.
Contact pastor@firstchurchtucson.org

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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 those caring for them.

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We offer our prayers for these sister faith communities:

Sierra Vista UMC, Sierra Vista
Christ Church UMC, Tucson
Menlo Park UMC, Tucson

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

Ozzie Nelson (Mar 24)
Peggy Ford (Mar 26)
Don Rollings (Mar 28)

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

SOUL KITCHEN

Easy Fried Rice

<https://therecipecritic.com/easy-fried-rice/>

Ingredients

3 c cooked rice (day-old cold rice is best)
2 Tbsp sesame oil
1 small white onion, chopped
1 c frozen peas and carrots, thawed
2-3 Tbsp soy sauce (to taste)
2 eggs, lightly beaten
2 Tbsp green onions, chopped

Directions

1. Preheat a large skillet or wok to medium heat. Pour sesame oil in the bottom. Add white onion and peas and carrots and fry until tender.
2. Slide the onion, peas and carrots to the side, and pour the beaten eggs onto the other side. Using a spatula, scramble the eggs. Once cooked, mix the eggs with the vegetable mix.
3. Add the rice to the veggie and egg mixture. Pour the soy sauce on top. Stir and fry the rice and veggie mixture until heated through and combined. Add chopped green onions if desired.

Animal **Holidays** - A Week at a Glance

By Diane Russell

March 22 - International Seal Day

This is a day to celebrate and promote the conservation of seals around the world.



March 23 - World Bear Day

This day is a celebration dedicated to the rescue and protections of the bears around the world, regardless of the species and natural habitat.

March 23 - Cuddly Kitten and National Puppy Day

This is a day to celebrate the unconditional love and affection that puppies and kittens bring to our lives.



March 27 - National Terrier Day

There are five different groups of terrier with each group having different shapes and sizes.

March 28 - Respect Your Cat Day

A day to celebrate and acknowledge your best friend and loyal companion.

A colorful mural depicting a magical night sky over the desert mountains, painted on a door at Bookman's Northwest Entertainment Exchange.

“This is one of my favorite murals around Tucson because of the archway made of books. Reading really can transport you to new worlds.”

Photo by Tripp Gordon

Have a photo you feel is worth sharing?
Email it to office@firstchurchtucson.org!



REV. CHEIFETZ (cont.)

A temptation to 'eliminate'

In the March 16 Atlanta shootings, complex human identities -- real lives and stories -- were reduced to objects. Before we knew the names, ages, ethnicities, family backgrounds or migration stories of the six women of Asian descent murdered in three spas spanning the Atlanta metro area, we knew that the man charged with shooting them was a churchgoing White man seeing the spas as a "temptation" that he "wanted to eliminate."

This is textbook sexism, racism, objectification and misogynistic violence.

Asian and Asian American women are objects of temptation. In the alleged shooter's Christian worldview, we are the cause of his sin. His vision fit into an ardently evangelical tradition such as the Southern Baptist Convention, a denomination whose roots are White supremacist, where we are targets for missionary activity, or a jumbled set of stereotypes to be mined for mediocre racist curriculum.

We are not fully human, with loves, religious beliefs, fears, families, shortcomings, hopes.

We are objects

In the early 1900s, Filipinos were put on display like animals at the St. Louis World's Fair. "Ch*nk," "J*p" and "g**k" are slurs hurled at us. During World War II, with persecution of Japanese and Japanese Americans, other Asian Americans would wear buttons declaring "I'm Chinese" or "I'm Korean." Most of us who are not Chinese react, upon being called "ch*nk," with "I'm not Chinese." Vincent Chin, a Chinese American man, was killed by White unemployed auto workers who were angry at Japanese car companies.

We are simply objects. Our ethnic identities matter to us, but not to American White supremacy. We who are Asian or Asian American women have our own lives and agency, but to American White supremacy, we are hypersexualized dragon ladies and young brides to be sold. And to the shooter, objects tempting him to sin. Objects to be eliminated.

These women were likely the most vulnerable among us -- yes, among the so-called model minority. That myth is deadly, erasing the lives that many of us live on the margins, in precarious financial, immigration and vocational situations.

A huge gash in our social fabric

These murdered women leave behind not emptiness, or an absence of temptation. They leave behind families shredded with grief. They leave communities who depended upon them. They leave children who will never be held by their mother again, parents who will never see their daughters, vacant holes in the hearts of an entire network of people who are nothing but faceless Asian hordes to White American supremacy.

I told an Asian American friend to quit her habit of running outside for exercise. Another friend, Clara Seo, said she feels like "someone melon-scooped my heart. Someone took a little melon baller and took a tiny round scoop out." Have you ever scooped out a melon? At the end, there is mostly a shell with melon-shaped wounds in it.

White supremacy rips a huge gash into the melon that is our social fabric, and now it is scooping away at us. The 2018 shooting at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh. The faithful at Mother

Emmanuel cut down after Bible study in 2015. The 2012 shooting at the gurdwara in Oak Creek, Wisconsin. The Asian and Pacific Islander elders who have been beaten, shoved, stabbed and murdered over the past year. Missing and murdered Indigenous women. The migrant children, most of them Mexican and Central American, separated from their families and imprisoned along the border, or disappeared into a foster care system with shoddy tracking. Ahmaud Arbery, Sandra Bland, Tamir Rice and George Floyd.

This is who we are

The tale of racist and White supremacist violence in the United States has a narrative arc in the popular imagination. It begins with a violent act, catching dominant culture by surprise. This shock is treated as an exception. It was a bad day, after all, for the perpetrator, and he was at the end of his rope. It is declared that this one-off incident is a bad apple problem. It is "not who we are." And eventually, it is forgotten.

But this is exactly who we are as a country. And say something about how we are still grappling with the project that was the Civil War and slavery? Let's not forget the significance of January 6, when one of the insurgents entered the halls of the US Capitol carrying the Confederate flag.

There is another narrative arc. For those of us who live and love in this country, and are told we are never fully American, the violent act feels familiar. We feel rage and fear. We worry about the family members left behind, the people behind the businesses impacted. We know this is who this country is, and who we are to it: the perpetual foreigner.

And we will not be able to heal until we begin to acknowledge American civilization is made up of shredded pieces of the lives of vulnerable people.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

John 12:20-30

Our story begins with a few Greek followers who desired to see Jesus. In response to this news, Jesus gives us this lesson of a grain of wheat. The lesson is a fantastic metaphor for our spiritual life. Jesus illustrates that such a small thing can bring upon a large crop. Our spiritual lives, which we might find as small and insignificant, can also bring upon much spiritual fruit, that is, when we die to ourselves. This is perhaps the most important gospel, the ultimate Truth, that in Christ, only in dying, do we truly live.

Our reading in John is so essential to our Christian living because it also tells us that we do not get to decide how or when we die. Does the grain of wheat, once it has fallen to the earth, does it know when it will die? It does not. The kind of death to our selves is not up to us. But when the Living Water of Christ flows into and out of our hearts, when the love of God, the love of Christ breaks through so that we see each other, see the pain in another, we die to our old selves and begin a new life. And in doing so, we present Christ to those who are seeking him. I encourage you to first be filled with the living water of Christ Jesus to burst out of you... to let your old selves die, and to grow into a new life.

Pastor Paul Cho



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