



First Church Tucson Weekly Digest

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

9.14.2021

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 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.

“Are We Compassionate People?”

By Rev. Matt Ashley, South District Superintendent

“As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.” ~Mark 6:34~



Marine Sergeant Nicole Gee, age 23, died in an August 26th airport attack in Afghanistan, along with at least 12 other U.S. soldiers and at least 90 Afghans. A few days before, Sergeant Gee posted a photo of herself assisting Afghani refugees boarding a plane, desperate to escape the violence in their country. A week prior to the attack, Sergeant Gee posted a photo of herself holding an Afghani baby. “I love my job,” Sergeant Gee wrote under the photo.

Whether or not the United States should've left Afghanistan, and whether or not the Americans should've been there in the first place, one thing is certain: Sergeant Gee died a hero. Her compassion for the Afghan people she was trying to help in the photos was evident in her face.

In Mark 6, Jesus and the disciples take a fishing boat to a deserted place for a spiritual retreat of sorts, but they change their plans when they see a crowd has gathered on the shore awaiting their arrival. Jesus has compassion for the crowd because they are like “sheep without a shepherd” and starts to teach them.

The woman at the well? Jesus had compassion for her. The leper howling on the roadside? Jesus had compassion for him. The little children? Jesus had compassion for them.

In Mark 6, the Greek word for ‘compassion’ is related to the Greek word for intestines, bowels, guts. Compassion is empathy you feel deep in your gut for someone who is suffering – empathy that leads to action. For Jesus, compassion always leads to action. For Sergeant Gee, compassion led to action. *(cont. pg 2)*

Are We Compassionate People? (cont.)

Someone once suggested to me that we shouldn't mourn the dead because of the words Jesus speaks in John 11:23, when Martha tells him that her brother Lazarus is dead. "Your brother will rise again," Jesus says. But a few verses later, Jesus himself weeps with compassion when he sees Martha's sister Mary and her friends and neighbors grieving together. He is "greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved" (John 11:33). Theological concepts like resurrection are important, but they are not substitute for compassion when someone is grieving.

It has been a troubling season in our country and the world. Maybe a troubling period would be more appropriate, because in a way the fires and destruction of 9/11 are still burning. (Some of the fires have been burning for far longer than that.)

Over the last twenty years we have seen war, we have seen conflict, we have seen violence, we have seen a resurgence of racism, we have seen protests in the city streets and at the border and in the U.S. Capitol. We have seen that when there is not justice, there is not peace. And Jesus weeps with us and for us.

Compassion is often missing in these conflicts. We are so convinced that we are right that we are hard-hearted towards our neighbors. I think Jesus weeps at that too.

I wish the church was different from the world, and in many ways it is, but in others it is not. Sometimes the harshest and cruelest words are spoken in the church. Sometimes we are so convinced that we need to be right that we do not remember to love. Sometimes the theological concepts in our heads crowd out the empathy in our hearts. And Jesus weeps.

Jesus has compassion for the crowd because they are like sheep without a shepherd, and he starts to teach them. And then what do the disciples do? It's getting late, and the crowd is getting hungry, and rather than having compassion and figuring out a way to feed them, the disciples just want to send the crowd away on an empty stomach. If Jesus hadn't intervened, they would not have broken bread together.

We have twenty-nine churches in the South District, all with sparks of vitality, all with wonderful people, and the love of Christ is ready to shine within us so that we are shining like stars in the world.

I hope that we will be twenty-nine compassionate churches. Churches that are greatly troubled in spirit and deeply moved when people are hurting. Congregations that are ready to set aside politics and agree that putting children in cages at the border is just wrong, no matter who does it. Congregations so moved by compassion that they will not send people away on an empty stomach. Congregations that are moved to learn and to act when they see the suffering caused by racism. Congregations full of people who are committed to not using our words as weapons but to instead work at having grace-filled conversation around disagreements. Congregations filled with people who know we are not meant to harm our neighbors but to love them.

We are meant to be a compassionate people. They will either know we are Christians by our love, or they will not know we are Christians. When someone visits your church, do they experience Compassion?

Thanks for listening –

Matt

THIS WEEK'S
ANNOUNCEMENTS & GATHERINGS

SUNDAY MORNING HYBRID SERVICE

There are two ways for you to participate in our 10AM hybrid online/in-person Sunday Service.

YouTube: Join us Live! on our channel. Visit bit.ly/fumcYouTube

In-Person: For those of you who are well and fully vaccinated, join us in person.

NOTICE: Due to the rise in Delta-variant COVID-19 cases, our safety guidelines have been updated. Please see below:

- Masks are required to be worn 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, it is strongly recommended that you watch the YouTube livestream rather than attend in person.
- Choir members are required to be fully vaccinated in order to sing in front of 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 bit.ly/fumcYouTube
Meeting ID: 998 6112 0822 Passcode: 6226481

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WEEKDAY ONLINE GATHERINGS

Women on a Spiritual Quest (WSQ)

-A classic UM Bible study group with accountability and fellowship, in the church library on Monday afternoons at 4:30PM.

All God's Creation (AGC)

-A time of scripture reading and reflection with a focus on living creatures, now on Tuesday afternoons at 3PM.

Meeting ID: 994 3610 1655 Passcode: 6226481

Chancel Choir

-Practice is held in-person in the Sanctuary on Wednesday evenings at 6:30PM.
-There will be a rehearsal on Sunday mornings at 9AM before the service.

Meeting ID: 929 7830 4567 Passcode: 6226481

Progressive Book Study (PBS)

-Meets on Thursdays at 2:30PM. Book title: "God's Politics—Why the Right Gets It Wrong and the Left Doesn't Get It" by Jim Wallis.

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

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 pastortucsonfirstumc@gmail.com



UPCOMING
BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES



Shirley Murray (Sept 14)
Elizabeth Rollings-Friman (Sept 15)
Carole Koo (Sept 19)
Jeanne Bensema (Sept 20)

Grace Ageh (Sept 22)
Margo Kahler (Sept 25)
Diana Gertz (Sept 26)
Sherry Hoskinson (Sept 27)

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

JOYOUS OCCASION!

Please welcome **Olivia Miyeon Cho** to the world! The third child of Rev. Paul and Julie Cho, she was born September 3rd, 2021.



Ranking up!

By Emily Rud (pictured on right)

Ranked up from Airman to Airman First Class on September 3rd. This is a Lieutenant Colonel (*left*) giving me my certificate! I work as an Aerospace Medical Technician at Davis-Monthan Air Force base. My favorite part of my job is seeing patients every day, and being able to help people.



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:

Sanctuary UMC, Tucson
Santa Cruz Valley UMC, Sahuarita
St. John's UMC, Tucson

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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.

MUSICAL INVITATION

Join our music groups at First United Methodist Church!
You are welcome to participate, whether you can read music or not.

FUMC Choir Our rehearsals are on Wednesdays at 6:30PM and Sundays at 9AM in the Sanctuary.

FUMC Ensemble If you play keyboard, drums, guitar, bass, woodwind, brass, or strings; or if you sing, contact us and join this ensemble for worship services and special occasions.

FUMC Handbell Choir We will prepare music for the Christmas Season!

Contact information:

Lorena Suárez (218) 409-3783 / suarezmolina@email.arizona.edu
First Church Office (520) 622-6481 / office@firstchurchtucson.org





Please join us for a special Blessing of the Animals on October 10th in honor of Saint Francis of Assisi, the Patron Saint of animals and the environment. He expressed his devotion to God through his love for all of God's creations. Pastor Ko will be performing the Blessing of the Animals Service. All blessings will be done from pictures provided by the animal owners.

Please submit your pictures of all the animals you would like to be blessed during the service to the church office in care of Diane or Victoria Russell.

- Please include the animal's name on the back of the picture along with your name.

For questions and concerns please contact Diane at the Animal Ministry at (562) 708-3942 and email is russelldc@live.com. Church Office email is: office@firstchurchtucson.org.

SUNDAY COFFEE/SOCIAL TIME

On Sunday, August 29th, we tried a simplified version of coffee after the worship service. It went very well. Thus, we are reinstating the time with social distancing rules:

1. Masks are to be worn when not seated at a table.
2. Tables have been set up with only 4 chairs to ensure there is social distancing and must remain this way.
3. Food will be limited to finger foods like cookies, doughnuts and crackers or chips. Utensils must be used to pick up food, **DO NOT** use your fingers.
4. Coffee and water will be the beverages for now.

If these rules are observed, we will continue until covid conditions change and we must reconsider the circumstances.

Welcome back to social time and enjoy responsibly.

Animal Holidays - A Week at a Glance

By Victoria Russell



September 17 - National Pet Bird Day

Not all pets look the same--some happen to have feathers and can fly! One thing they have in common is the love/bond they have with their owners. Celebrate the pet bird in your life. The Bird Enjoyment and Advantage Koalition (BEAK) sponsors this day each year.

September 18 - Responsible Dog Ownership Day

When owning a dog there are responsibilities involved. Our biggest job is that they are healthy, happy, and safe. Ways we can do this include: regular vet care, training, grooming, exercise, dog-proofing your home, and registering your dogs.



September 18 - International Red Panda Day

Red Pandas are not related to the giant panda. Their natural habitat is among the trees in the Himalayan Mountains. There are about 10,000 left in the wild. They are considered endangered due to deforestation, poaching, and the illegal pet trade. Ways to celebrate include learning about these cute

mammals and researching ways to help them.

September 18 - Puppy Mill Awareness Day

Puppies and adult dogs in puppy mills lie in horrible conditions. Puppy mills do not care about the animal living conditions--all they care about is the profit they make off the puppies. The best way to celebrate this day is to go to a responsible dog breeder or even better adopt from your local animal shelter.



Picture of the Day

Baby duiker enjoying some leaves from the San Diego Zoo.

The Tiniest Frog I've Ever Seen

This diminutive amphibian is the Arizona Tree Frog (*Hyla eximia*). It was spotted hopping about in the litter on the forest floor a few miles outside of Payson, AZ.

Photo by Tripp Gordon



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



www.firstchurchtucson.org

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