



First United Methodist Church
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“Continuing the Journey of Spiritual Formation in 2025”

By Pastor Eun Ko

Dear Beloved Church Family,

As we step further into the year 2025, I find myself reflecting on the beautiful journey we are on together. Our walk with God is not one that happens overnight or in a single moment, but rather, it is a lifelong process of spiritual formation. It is an ongoing commitment to grow deeper in faith, to be shaped by God's love, and to live in a way that reflects God's heart.



In this new year, I want to remind all of us of the importance of spiritual formation in our daily lives. It is easy to get caught up in the busyness of life, with all the responsibilities and tasks that demand our attention. But it is essential to remember that spiritual formation—our growth in Christ—is the foundation upon which everything else in our lives is built. Without intentional growth in our relationship with God, we can easily find ourselves drifting, disconnected from the source of life.

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Continuing the Journey of Spiritual Formation in 2025 cont.

Spiritual formation is not a task or a project that we can complete; it is a continuous journey that requires our time, attention, and devotion. Whether through prayer, studying Scripture, worship, fellowship, or serving others, each step we take is a step closer to becoming the people God created us to be. It is a process that shapes our hearts and minds, transforming us from the inside out.

In 2025, I encourage you to take intentional steps to continue this journey. Let us set aside time each day to be still before God, to listen to His voice, and to allow Him to mold us. Let us gather together as a community to support one another, share our struggles and joys, and encourage each other to grow in faith. Let us serve in our church and our community, offering the gifts God has given us for His glory.

In the busyness of life, may we never lose sight of the importance of spiritual formation. Let us commit, together, to continue this journey with God in 2025, knowing that He is faithful to guide us every step of the way.

Scripture:

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law." - Galatians 5:22-23 (NIV)

"성령의 열매는 사랑과 기쁨과 화평과 인내와 친절과 선함과 신실함과 온유와 절제입니다. 이런 것들을 반대할 법이 없습니다." - 갈라디아서 5:22-23 (새번역)

May God bless you abundantly this year as you seek to grow closer to God.

Blessings and peace to you all,

Eun Young Ko

Senior Pastor

First United Methodist Church of Tucson



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT FIRST CHURCH OF TUCSON!

Below left: Michael Caufield, who is serving in the army in South Korea, joined our worship on Dec 29 during his break. Blessings on your journey in South Korea! *Below right:* This married couple visited and worshiped with us on Jan 12, 2025, celebrating their wedding anniversary from Texas. She was baptized at FUMC of Tucson. What a special memory she has carried on!



Below: Our beloved friend and family of faith, Lana Lee moved to California for her mother who needs her care being apart from Steve Lee. The Korean young adult group gave her a farewell card and gift on Jan 12, 2025. The Korean congregation had a farewell dinner gathering at a Korean BBQ place sponsored by Andy Min on Jan 15, 2025.



Below: The Advent book study with "Unafraid" by Rev. Adam Hamilton finished on the second Monday of January, 2025. We had many great discussions, which guided all of the participants to be strengthened in spirit against fear.



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Above left: Bishop Bob and his wife Susan Farr (from the Missouri Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church) visited and worshiped with us on Jan 19, 2025 during his renewal leave. What a privilege we have Bishop's presence in our regular Sunday worship! Glory to God!

Above middle: Jae Hammond is homebound because she can't drive on the highway from Sahuarita to Tucson anymore. However, she is in good spirits, as always. We love you, Jae Hammond. You may send a card to her at 181 E. Corte Rancho Encanto, Sahuarita, AZ 85629.

Above right: Diane Russell had a hip replacement surgery on Feb 3rd. She still needs our prayers for her full recovery.

Christiana Ageh also had a hip replacement surgery on Jan 22nd. In addition, Ozzie Nelson is going to have his surgery on Feb 12. We can be a prayer warrior for those who need it!

Below: On February 3rd, Nan Rollings, a member of our church and a volunteer of the INN, helped The Loving Church to receive clean clothing, hygiene and first aid items, blankets, and other supplies needed by the homeless men and women they serve. David Soto came and picked them up. We send our prayers that all the items would be used for good.



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Below: Our beloved church family member, Marjorie Task, had been struggling with health issues and was transferred to hospice care last November. Pastor Ko visited her on January 13, 2025, not knowing that this would be the last time she would see her. (Left: Pastor Ko and Marjorie. Right: Lee, her husband, and Marjorie).



A pastoral message from Western Jurisdiction College of Bishops

by DSC Communications | Feb 5, 2025 Originally published at <https://westernjurisdictionumc.org/wjcob-message-feb2025/>

“Jesus calls every generation to wholehearted discipleship: opening our hearts to the people we encounter daily; practicing compassion with our families and neighbors; honoring the dignity and worth of all people near and far; recognizing the systems that destroy human lives through poverty, war and exclusion; and advocating justice and care in our churches, communities and social structures. God calls us further to be stewards of creation, caring for the skies and waters, soil and plants, and all beings.” – preamble to United Methodist Social Principles

Like all of you, your Western Jurisdiction bishops have been paying attention to the stories in our national news feeds that showcase, above all, how deeply fractured our country is right now. Like you, we’ve felt Anxious. Sad. Angry. Numb.

As United Methodists, we turn to scripture, to our Social Principles, and our own lived experiences to inform how we are called to put love into action in this season of our country’s history.

Your Western Jurisdiction College of Bishops humbly offer this video for you to watch or show in your local ministry setting as we seek to reclaim the narrative of love, justice and mercy for a time such as this.

As you embody what it means to be a disciple of Jesus in this time, you are encouraged to keep sharing the stories that highlight the beauty and diversity of God’s creation.

In gratitude and solidarity,

The Western Jurisdiction College of Bishops

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 meets on Mondays at 4:30PM in the library.
-New book to be chosen soon!

Korean Young Adult Student's Bible Study

-This group meets on Monday at 7PM via Zoom.
-The current book is "The New Beginner" by Red. Jaechul Lee.

Narcotics Anonymous (Underground)

-This support group 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

-Practice on Thursdays at 6:30PM in the Sanctuary.
-A shorter rehearsal on Sundays at 8:50AM.
-Join now, in time for the Easter Cantata!

Progressive Book Study (PBS)

-PBS meets on Thursdays at 3:30PM over Zoom. The current book is "The Great Spiritual Migration" by Brian McLaren.

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

[Zoom ID: 980 1573 8087](#) [Passcode: 622648](#)



We Need Your Help in the Kitchen!

We would greatly appreciate having just 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:

Christ Church UM, Tucson
Bowie UMC Start, Bowie
Duncan UMC, Duncan
South District Fresh Expressions

Pray for Pastor Ko, who will participate in the interview process for provisional candidates and Full Connection Elder candidates. Her BOOM (Board of Ordained Ministry) schedule is from Feb 24 to 26 and March 25 to 27, 2025.

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

Yvonne Windham (Feb 6)	Josh Williams (Feb 11)	Kay Jackson (Feb 17)
Cindy Turnbull (Feb 8)	Barbara Jones (Feb 12)	Byung Kim (Feb 24)
Tripp Cahill-Gordon (Feb 11)	Abby Turnbull-Frontroth (Feb 13)	

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

February Meet'n'Eat

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'Eat is on **Friday the 14th (Valentine's Day) at 11:30 AM** at the Olive Garden on the northeast corner of Oracle/Wetmore ([300 W Wetmore Rd, Tucson, AZ 85705](http://www.olivegarden.com)).

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

Animal & Environmental Holidays for February 2025

By Diane & Victoria Russell



February - National Bird Feeding Month

Created in 1994 by Congressperson John Porter, to help birds survive during the long winter months. The goal of this month is to help your local birds in winter by providing extra food by putting up a bird feeder and water in your yard. Then enjoy the wonders of bird watching.



February - National Cat Health Month

Cats are amazing animals, and the month of February is dedicated to focusing on keeping them in tip-top shape. So make an appointment with your favorite vet to check out your cat's physical and emotional well-being. Cats can't tell you when they feel sick and they often hide illnesses.



February - National Goat Yoga Month

Goat Yoga month was created in Gilbert, Arizona in 2015 by April Gould, a goat farmer, and Sarah Williams, a yoga teacher. It has both physical and mental benefits such as improved mood, reduced stress, increased flexibility, and becoming closer to nature.



February 5th - Western Monarch Day

This day was established by the California legislature in 2004, to celebrate the annual migration during the winter months. Monarchs can't survive in cold climates so they migrate to warmer climates. Sadly, their numbers are declining due to pesticides, climate change, loss of habitat, predators, and migration loss.



February 14th - World Bonobo Day

Created in 2015 by conservationist Ashley Stone, to help bring awareness to the endangered species of Bonobos. They are apes that are only found in the Democratic of Congo. Because of their loving nature, they are sometimes referred to as the "hippie apes." This is the perfect day to celebrate Valentine's Day.



February 14th - Valentine's Day

Valentine's day is a day to express love. It is not a day reserved only for couples, but for our friends, family members, animals/pets, and even ourselves. Enjoy and celebrate this day of love.



February 15th – World Pangolin Day

Created in 2012 by Rhishja Cota to raise awareness to the plight of Pangolins and to encourage people to join together to help save them. There are eight species of pangolins and all are considered endangered. Sadly, they are the most trafficked mammal in the world.



February 17th – Random Acts of Kindness

Created in 1995 by the Random Acts of Kindness Foundation, it is a day to spread kindness to other people. Kindness starts with you and will often be passed on to other people. Some acts of kindness include complimenting someone, helping a friend or neighbor, volunteering, or donating.



February 22nd – National Wildlife Day

It is a day to raise awareness of endangered animals and the organizations that work to protect them. This day focuses on endangered species, preservation, and conservation efforts around the world to help protect wildlife.



February 24th-28th) – National Invasive Species Awareness Week (NISAW)

This week is to raise awareness of invasive species in your area. Invasive species are species not native to a certain area that can cause harm to native plants and wildlife. Some local invasive plant species such as stinknet, buffelgrass, and fountain grass are creating major problems in Pima County.



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.