



**First United Methodist Church**  
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## “A New Birth with the Spirit of Resurrection”

By Pastor Eun Ko

Dear Beloved in Christ,

Spring has finally arrived here in the desert of Tucson, Arizona. As flowers bloom and life reawakens, the earth reminds us once again that God is the God of new beginnings.



*(Blossoms on the nectarine tree in Pastor Ko's backyard)*

We are now walking the final stretch of our Lenten journey. The Holy Week is just around the corner, and soon, we will gather to remember the suffering, the cross, and ultimately, the triumph of Jesus Christ's resurrection.

Just as spring follows the winter, resurrection follows the cross. New life comes through the pain of labor. Hope is born even in the shadow of sorrow. In this season, nature and faith whisper the same truth: **Resurrection is real.** It is not a distant promise—it is a present reality for all who believe.

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## A New Birth with the Spirit of Resurrection cont.

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There may be moments in our lives when we feel like we are walking through dark valleys—seasons of grief, loss, fear, or uncertainty. But the resurrection of Christ assures us: we do not walk alone. Jesus has gone before us into death and come out victorious. And because He lives, we can face each new day with courage, with hope, and with joy.

Let us open our hearts to this holy season. Let the Spirit of the Risen Christ breathe into your soul, bring new birth to your faith, and awaken fresh hope in your life. May this April be not only a turn in the calendar but a turning point in your spirit.

“See, I am making all things new.” (Revelation 21:5)

“보라, 내가 만물을 새롭게 하노라.” (요한계시록 21:5)

Christ is risen. He is risen indeed. Let us rise with Him.

With grace and peace,  
Rev. Dr. Eun Young Ko

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT FIRST CHURCH OF TUCSON!



Above: The Ash Wednesday Service was held on March 5th, 2025, at 6 PM, marking the beginning of the Lenten journey.

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Below, top row and first photo of second row: Labyrinth Walk with Reflections from the Book of Psalms during the Lenten Season – every Thursday at 10 AM at Rio Vista Natural Resources Park. (We welcome new participants each week!)

Second row, second photo: Jeannie and Steve Lee, regular attendees of our church, are members of the Board of APIDA (Asian Pacific Islander Desi American Fund). A fundraising event was held on Friday, March 21, at 5 PM at the Yun Gee Park Gallery & Atelier.



Below left: We truly appreciate the dedicated service of our Bookkeeper, Sue Smith, and our Financial Secretary, Margo. Pastor Ko expressed appreciation for their service on March 13.

Below right: A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held on March 16 to celebrate the renovation of the Young Adult Room, formerly known as the "Balcony Room."



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The Korean Young Adult Retreat was held from March 13-14 during the University of Arizona's spring break. *Below left:* Preparing for opening worship. *Below right:* Korean BBQ dinner.

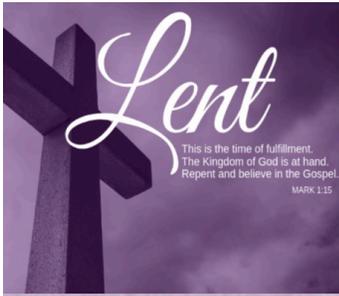


*Above left:* Korean BBQ dinner. *Above right:* An outing in Phoenix on Friday – they enjoyed lunch and traditional Korean desserts.



*Above left and middle:* Lunch at Hodori Restaurant in Mesa. *Above right:* Group photo.

**Covenant Board Meeting on Saturday, April 12th at 10 AM**



## Lenten season of 2025

We invite all of you to the time of spiritual discipline during upcoming Lenten season.

### **Lent reflection with booklet of Psalm**

Reflection group meets on every Thursday at 10:00 am  
at Rio Vista Natural Resource Park. We will walk on the Labyrinth)

### **Small Group Discussion about Spirituality**

(at Wesley Center on March 18, 25, April 1, 8, 15 at 5:00 pm)

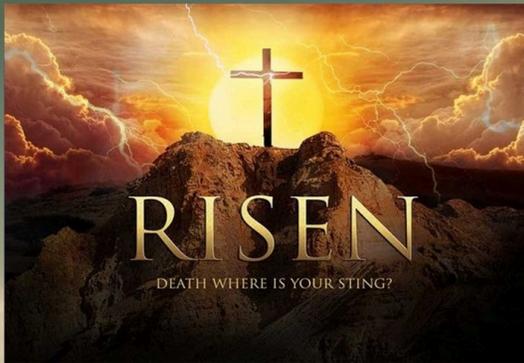
**Ash Wednesday Service - Wednesday, March 5 at 6:00 pm**

**Maundy Thursday Service - Thursday, April 17 at 6:00 pm**

**At Catalina UMC (2700 E. Speedway Blvd)**

**Good Friday Service - Friday, April 18 at 6:00 pm**

**At First UMC (915 E. 4th Street)**



## Celebration of Easter 2025

We invite all of you to this celebration of Easter

**Easter Sunrise Service - April 20 at 7:30 am**

**Easter Pancake Breakfast - April 20 at 8 am**

**Easter Cantata Celebration - April 20 at 10 am**

**at First UMC (915 E. 4th Street)**

## DSC Responds to LA Fires

by Rev. George Cushman | Mar 18, 2025 | <https://dscumc.org/blog/2025/03/18/dsc-responds-to-la-fires/>



Our **Conference Disaster Response Ministry** was a recipient of a very generous donation to provide aid to the survivors of the fires in California. As many of you know, *The Inn*, our conference ministry to asylum seekers, ceased its ministry several months ago. In their quest to be good stewards of the resources provided to this ministry, they have been finding appropriate ministries and programs to donate these resources. Our ministry is blessed by their stewardship.

We received **358** boxes containing **5000** feminine hygiene kits and **332** boxes containing **8000** regular hygiene kits. [...]

Rev. Dr. George Cushman  
CDRC for the Desert Southwest Conference

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## An Inspirational Passage to Share with You

by Cindy Rinehart

To First UMC congregation:

The Progressive Christianity Book class has been reading a book called [The Great Spiritual Migration](#) by Brian McLaren. We were reading a passage that we thought was so helpful, we wanted to share it with the whole church. The section of the book was talking about what love looks like in families. What skills are needed to show love. Here is the passage:

*These skills include common courtesies, gratitude, admitting weaknesses and failures, self-reporting emotions, expressing hurt or disappointment, confronting and forgiving, asking for help, differing graciously, surfacing and negotiating competing desires, taking the first step to resolve conflicts, upholding wise boundaries, saying yes and no, winning and losing graciously, creating win-win outcomes, speaking truth in love, speaking truth to power, asking good questions, requesting feedback, expressing affection, opening one's heart, giving gifts, and seeking wise counsel.*

Our class felt that many of these expressions are important to show to others in our lives. Our example can become a great teacher.

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.

**SPECIAL SERVICES & EVENTS**

**-Gathering for Renewal & Fellowship** - April 12 from 1-4PM at St. Francis in the Foothills UMC (4625 E River Rd)

**-Maundy Thursday** - April 17 at 6PM at Catalina UMC (2700 E Speedway Blvd)

**-Good Friday** - April 18 at 6PM in the First Church Sanctuary

**-Easter Sunday sunrise service** - April 20 at 7:30AM

**-Easter morning pancake breakfast** - April 20 at 8:15AM

**-Easter Sunday joint service** - April 20 at 10AM

**WEEKDAY GATHERINGS**

**Wanderers on a Spiritual Quest (WSQ)**

-WSQ meets on Mondays at 4:30PM in the library.

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**Narcotics Anonymous (Underground)**

-NA meets at 7:30PM on Mondays in the Arizona room.

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**All God's Creation (AGC)**

-AGC meets on Tuesdays at 3PM over Zoom.

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

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**Chancel Choir**

-Practice on Thursdays at 6:30PM in the Sanctuary.

-A shorter rehearsal on Sundays at 8:50AM.

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**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 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](http://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:

First UMC, Safford  
First UMC, Tucson  
Frontera Wesley, U of A, Tucson

If you have a prayer request you would like to share in the Digest, please contact the church office at [office@firstchurchtucson.org](mailto:office@firstchurchtucson.org) or (520) 622-6481.

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## **BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES**

Deullae Min (April 8)  
Denise Grzywacz (April 9)

Angelica O'Connell-Lange (April 15)  
Kelly Lee (April 16)

Jae Hammond (April 19)  
Miwon Lee (April 27)

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

### **April 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 11th 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.

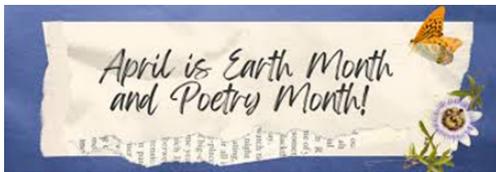
# Animal & Environmental Holidays for April 2025

By Diane & Victoria Russell



## April – Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Month

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) created this month in 2006 to raise awareness about the mistreatment that animals often face. Ways to help include reporting animal abuse, buying cage-free eggs, grass-fed beef, and shopping for products with a cruelty-free bunny logo.



## April – Poetic Earth Month

Poetic Earth Month was created by Tweetspeak in 2019 to combine both Poetry Month with Earth Month. This month-long celebration focuses on earth care by inspiring people to connect to nature with ways to protect the world around you that is reflected in their poetry, art, and storytelling.



## April 10th - National Farm Animal Day

This day focuses on the humane care of farm animals and finding homes for abandoned and abused farm animals. This day raises awareness about the poor living conditions some of these animals face. These animals deserve to be respected and live in humane conditions.



## April 13th – Int'l Plant Appreciation Day

A day to appreciate all the plants whether you are a gardener or not. Flowering plants for their beauty, vegetables and fruits to feed us, trees to provide shelter and shade. Plants also support life – they take in carbon dioxide and produce oxygen which is essential to life.



## April 16th – Save the Elephants Day

Elephants are the largest land mammal inhabiting areas in Africa and Asia. Sadly, these animals face problems such as poaching for ivory, habitat loss, and human elephant conflict. Ways to honor this day include supporting organizations fighting to help them and not purchasing ivory products.



## April 17th – International Bat Appreciation Day

The Bat Conservation International (BCI) created this day in 1982 to raise awareness about the importance of bats for the ecosystems and conservation efforts to protect them and their habitats. There are more than 1,400 bat species in the world, with 47 species in the United States.



**April 19th-27th – National Parks Week**

An annual celebration of America’s National Parks to encourage people to visit and connect with nature. Parks offer spectacular landscapes, diverse ecosystems, and wildlife viewing. Some parks offer outdoor recreation like hiking, camping, and boating. There is a Free Entrance Day on April 19th.



**April 22nd – Earth Day**

Earth Day is a world wide annual event where people celebrate the earth by promoting awareness for the health of our environment. We all need a healthy planet to thrive, and our planet needs us to take action for nature. This year’s theme for Earth Day is “Our Power, Our Planet”. Ways to help include using less plastic and saving water.



**April 27th – International Crow and Raven Appreciation Day**

It is a day to celebrate these amazing intelligent birds. They are known for their intelligence and problem-solving skills. Crows and ravens may look alike but they have a few differences such as their beaks and tail feather shape. There are both ravens and crows in Arizona, but in Tucson it is ravens.



**April 26th–May 4th – Stewardship Week**

The 70th annual celebration to promote conservation awareness of our natural resources and to support preservation efforts. The 2025 theme is “Home is Where the Habitat Is”, where both natural and managed habitats are important in supporting biodiversity and ecological balance in nature.



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.