



FEBRUARY 2026

Our Mission at Vista de la Montaña United Methodist Church

To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, and to reach out to others, help them, welcome them into our family of faith as we gather for worship, fellowship, education, and service.



“Tuesdays with Pastor Mary”

Remember to tune into Vista’s Facebook page every Tuesday for a message from Pastor Mary. To access Facebook, go to our website: www.vistaumc.org and click on the Facebook icon.

Address for ALL Echoes articles!

The email address for all Echoes articles is Echoes@vistaumc.org
Please make sure that you send your articles to that address only! If you send it to another address, it is possible the article will not be published.

Nancy Yob, Echoes@vistaumc.org

FELLOWSHIP FOCUS – Pete & Sandy Schwartz



Pete and Sandy, a sweetheart couple of Vista, led a dynamic life together marked by love, family, career changes, and community involvement. Their story, as told here by Sandy, is one of two individuals from different backgrounds who met on a blind date and whose lives became intertwined through shared experiences, moves across the country, and enduring commitment to each other and their community.

Once upon a time a young man from far away met a young woman. They fell in love, married, raised two sons, worked hard, traveled much, and lived happily ever after.

“Now” ...as Paul Harvey would say, “comes the rest of the story.”

Pete (Hanspeter) was born in 1940 in Ribnitz, Germany and moved to the U.S. with his mother, Lottie, his father Fritz, and sisters, Barbel and Traute. He was 12 years old. They lived in Chicago where Pete attended high school and started classes at U of I at Navy Pier.

Sandy, born in 1939, the only child (unspoiled) of Jean and August Vintus was raised in Melrose Park, IL. She attended Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic School (the only non-Catholic there) and Proviso High School.

Now, an amazing event happened! These two souls, with not much background in common, met on a blind date (thanks to Sandy’s Elmhurst College roommate) and dated for almost two years. There was a short separation; Pete’s family moved to Seattle. He was only 18 at the time. But as they both agree...”some things are meant to be.”

They married in November, lived in Melrose Park where their son Peter was born. After several manual jobs, Pete’s father suggested they move to Seattle and work for Boeing. It was a good move

which gave Pete lots of experience in manufacturing. Sandy was a stay-at-home mom. Their second son, Brian, was born there.

But change was on the way again. Boeing went into a slump and they decided to head back to the Midwest: "Hello, Rockford!!" Pete was hired by National Lock Co., and then took an up-grade job at Chrysler. He finally moved to a better position at Barber-Coleman, a major manufacturing company.

During their 15 years in Rockford, they decided it would be wise for Sandy to finish her education. She graduated from Rockford College (now University). With both boys in school, she started teaching. After only two years as a high school English and reading lab teacher, she was offered a job too good to turn down. A friend asked her to be a partner in a pre-school. Sandy loved teaching at Spring Creek Pre-School for nine years. There they built their first home.

But change was coming again. During the Rockford years, Pete continued his education too. His on-the-job experience was a real plus, but his degree from Northern IL University was just what he needed. He was hired by Waterbury-Farrel in Cheshire, CT, a position with a big promotion.

As much as they loved Rockford, their church, their neighbors, their friends (which are still connected) they moved to Cheshire, population 20,000! And there they built their second home: a log home, which was the "talk of the town"!

During the six years in Connecticut, Sandy had retired from teaching and found a new vocation: volunteering at nursing and assisted living homes.

Through all the years their church homes were always a big part of their lives, and a varied part from Lutheran to Presbyterian, to Congregational Presbyterian again, to Methodist. Pete served as an Elder and Sandy as a Deacon.

After those happy years of knowing and loving good friends and neighbors, another change was looming. Jobs still call the shots. There were company buyouts, new employers, and closings. They were moving again.

Pete learned of a company for sale in Richmond, IN (population 40,000). He arranged a leveraged buyout, and they became owners of a 600-employee manufacturing company, NATCO: National Automatic Tool Co. After living on both coasts, they were back in the Midwest. And like every other town or city, they had called home, they loved Richmond. They built their third home: their "dream home" again enjoying the company of many friends and neighbors who remain friends today. The company flourished for many years, but when the industry flagged, they had to close.

After filing for company bankruptcy, Pete and Sandy realized it was time to get off the "corporate train". Hey!! Retirement sounds good. How about moving to a warm sunny place...Tucson"! So, they did.

Like all "once upon a time" stories, this one has its high and low points. In 2020, their older son, Peter, died. And months later, their only grandson, P.J. died of a drug overdose.

And like those stories, this one is filled with lessons learned, happy times remembered and loved and loving people. Their family has grown to include their son, Brian, granddaughters and spouses,

Kristina (Joe), Lisa (Brett), Hailey (Michael) as well as great grandchildren: Leighton, Samuel, Thomas, Camden, and Carter.

Pete and Sandy lived a wonderful life. They found a great neighborhood within Unit 29 at SaddleBrooke, a retirement community North of Tucson. It was here once again they found many friends that included many ways to serve their community through Meals on Wheels and the Golden Goose, an upscale resale shop nearby, and retirement home visitations. And they found a loving, welcoming church home: Vista UMC.

And they lived happily ever after.”

This story would not be complete without mentioning the many volunteer duties to which the Schwarts have contributed at Vista UMC. Sandy has served on the Board of Trustees, Worship and Membership Committees, Chair of Mary Martha Circle, Chair of Chancel Committee, Dinner for Six, Congregational Care and Shepherds Committee. She frequently delivers small bouquets of flowers divided up from Sunday arrangements for assisted living facilities.

Not to be outdone, Pete has also kept busy with Vista committees: Chair of Missions, Stewardship, Finance, two-time Council Chair, Lay Leader, several times as Lay Member of the Conference and Building Committee for the new office building. He has done several projects like building our sign and flag pole on Oracle Road entrance.

Thank you both for making a difference!

Robin Conner and Sandy Schwartz

Thursday Bible Study

Meets on two Thursdays each month
2:00 PM to 3:00 PM, in the St. Matthew's Room
We connect current events to appropriate scriptures.

Everyone is welcome to attend.
February 05 & 19

Don't Forget!

Interested in becoming a member of
Vista UMC?
Come to pizza with the Pastor
February 01, 2026
After worship in the Elizabeth Rm
Call the office to sign up

MISSION OUTREACH

Vista United Methodist Church Participates in " Souper" Sunday

Vista United Methodist Church continues to answer the call to feed the hungry in our community. On February 1 and February 8, Vista will join hundreds of Methodist churches, along with other denominations, across our country in celebrating the Super Bowl in unique and creative ways. The "Souper Bowl of Caring" unites us in our efforts to raise awareness of the need to fill our community's food banks. All of the soup collected nationwide is donated to local community food banks.

This "Souper" Sunday tradition began in 1990 with a simple prayer, led by Brad Smith, a seminary intern at a church in Columbia, SC. He prayed, "LORD as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us to be mindful of those who are without even a bowl of soup to eat".

For the past four years Vista has held a soup competition to determine which team will win the big game. Each can of soup is a vote! Folks vote for the team they think will win the big game. Bins decorated with each team's logo serve as voting stations.

Last year on Super Bowl Sunday Pastor Mary Dotson announced the results of our voting. The vote was 292 cans of soup. The Eagles won the count and the game! But the real winner was Impact Food Bank! Our goal this year is 300 cans of soup. **Bring your soup February 1 and February 8!**

Always giving thanks to God for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ephesians 5:20

COMMUNION & LOOSE CHANGE OFFERING FOR FEBRUARY

SNACK PAK

SAFE SANCTUARY POLICY

The Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) has developed a process for confidential background checks in conjunction with Vista Church's **Safer Sanctuary Policy**, which is required by the District Southwest Conference of the United Methodist Church. The importance of conducting background checks is to protect the safety of children, youth and vulnerable adults. Background checks are a key tool to manage liability risks and prevent negligent hiring, build and maintain trust, and provide a safe environment for all persons on our campus. A third-party administrator has been identified at the reasonable rate of \$12 per person, the cost of which will be covered by the Church.

Key positions have been selected for confidential background checks, which include all paid positions, church council members, finance department members, congregational support team chairpersons, and anyone who works directly with children and youth. Letters to those individuals will go out in early February. Cecilia Verdugo-Volz will be administering the program on behalf of Vista Church, and will be available to assist each person with the confidential on-line reporting if needed. We encourage anyone who would like assistance to set up a brief appointment with Cecilia.

We appreciate everyone's support in our efforts to fulfill the requirements set forth in **Vista's Safer Sanctuary** program and keep our church community as safe as possible. Copies of the **Safer Sanctuary Policy** are available in the church office and in the narthex. If you have any specific questions about this notice, please contact Pam Kravitz, SPRC Chairperson.

ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Adult Christian Education Series on Jesus' Disciples Wednesdays, Jan 14 – Feb 11

Elizabeth Room located in Vista's Education Building
When Jesus chose his disciples he selected twelve ordinary men.
In this study we will explore what happened to each of disciple and why they were so determined to share the gospel after Christ's death.

OPPORTUNITIES TO CONNECT, SERVE & SUPPORT

Communion Servers: If you are interested in being part of this ministry, please contact Linda Galka lindagalka65@gmail.com or speak with me at church and I will add you to the list. We need two servers the first Sunday of each month to serve bread and juice alongside Pastor Mary and the Liturgist. All elements are gluten free! No advance training is required!

Landscaping


The Landscaping crew are now meeting on Thursdays at 7:00 instead of 8:00, due to the increase in temperatures. The guys are always seeking others to join them, and sometimes there are even donuts provided for those who show up, such a deal!

Agua Prieta greeting cards are available for 50¢ each in the Library during office hours.

Complimentary Prayer Beads are available in the Narthex and in the Library.

Upper Room booklets are available in the Narthex and the church office for \$2.00 each or online at upperroom.org. It is free to sign up for a daily devotional email.

A wheelchair is available during services in the Narthex.

We encourage all members to sign up for the prayer chain emails. It's easier to get notifications for  prayer/healing updates.

Email Lou Phillippi at lnphillippi@yahoo.com

Prayers for Healing

Eileen Carender, Dottie Lou Colby,
Margaret Overman, Mary Louise Roberson,
Marilyn Rutkowski, and Carol Wilson

Prayers for our South District Churches
Chaplains & Counselors in the South District,
TMM Family Services, Tucson

Homebound

Marlin Bolar, Jerry Browning, Orland Burbey, Rev.
Alan and Kathy Campbell, Lynn Duenkel, Jerry
Eshelman, Bill Gureck, Marsha Hartz, Jo Ann
Hubbard, Ken and Diane Podlasek, Sharon Poole,
Barb Rempel

Upcoming Events

Tuesday 02.03.26	5:00pm	Trustees Meeting
Wednesday 02.04.26	10:00am	Handbell Practice
Wednesday 02.04.26	1:00pm	Choir Practice
Thursday 02.05.26	2:00pm	Thursday Bible Study
Friday 02.06.26	9:30am	Creative Hands
Friday 02.06.26	10:00am	Prayer Bead Group
Saturday 02.07.26	8:00am	Vista Men's Meeting
Tuesday 02.10.26	2:30pm	Finance Committee Meeting
Wednesday 02.11.26	10:00am	Adult Study on Jesus' Disciples
Wednesday 02.11.26	11:00am	Handbell Practice
Wednesday 02.11.26	1:00pm	Choir Practice
Sunday 02.15.26	After Church	Mardi Gras Potluck
Tuesday 02.17.26	9:30am	Women of Faith Meeting
Tuesday 02.17.26	3:00pm	Church Council Meeting
Wednesday 02.18.26	9am-4pm	Ash Wednesday Prayer Stations with Ashes
Wednesday 02.18.26	11:00am	Handbell Practice
Wednesday 02.18.26	1:00pm	Choir Practice
Thursday 02.19.26	2:00pm	Thursday Bible Study
Friday 02.20.26		ECHOES Articles due
Saturday 02.21.26	10:30am	Fram Hampton Memorial Service
Wednesday 02.25.26	11:00am	Handbell Practice
Wednesday 02.25.26	1:00pm	Choir Practice

Breakfast with the Pastor

2nd Tuesday, of the month, 8:00 AM Sunny side Up Cafe

Pizza with the Pastor

For those interested in becoming a member of vista UMC

After worship on February 1 in the Elizabeth Room

Sign up or call the office

Guest Preacher

Feb 8, 10AM, in the Sanctuary

Paster Cela from Agua Prieta

Pastor Gela Villacana from our sister church Fuente de Vida (Fountain of Life) will be giving the message during the Sunday, February 8th service. The photo was taken at Karen Tamayo and Mitzva Perez's college graduation party with their Vista sponsors Ken & Jan Almer and Nancy & David Yob. This was just the beginning of many college graduations resulting from the success of Vista Church's school supplies economic development mission project. The goal of this program is for these families to be economically successful in their own country.



Fran Hampton

Saturday, Feb 21, 10:30 AM, in the Sanctuary

Light luncheon following in the Elizabeth Room

PICTURES FROM JANUARY 25TH SERVICE



Cecilia's daughter, Willow, volunteered to pass out refreshments.



Pete enjoying the rocker!



Our AMAZING Choir!!!