



The Oasis

August 2025

Cross in the Desert UMC

Where God's Love Transforms Lives, building a just and joyful community.

Who are we as United Methodists?

The United Methodist Church is a global denomination that opens hearts, opens minds and opens doors through active engagement with our world. The mission of The United Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

A United Methodist is someone who joins in that mission by putting faith and love into action. We believe that God loves all people, and that we share in expressing that love. So the United Methodist tradition emphasizes God's grace and in serving others. We believe that Jesus Christ is the fullest expression of God's love--showing us the fullness of God's care through Jesus' teachings, death and resurrection. As United Methodists, we nurture our faith through public acts of worship and private acts of devotion. Prayer, contemplation, the study of Scripture, singing and learning open our hearts to the movement of the Spirit. These sacred moments lead us to a more Christ-centered life.

As one of our hymns states, "The church is not a building, the church is not a steeple, the church is not a resting place, the church is a **people**" ("We Are the Church" United Methodist Hymnal #558).

The United Methodist Church connects more than 12 million members on four continents, and engages in ministry all around the world. We speak many languages, come from various cultures, and span generations. Yet, we are united in our faith in Jesus Christ.

John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, taught that we pursue our faith in community and action with others. We practice a social holiness. We insist that personal salvation always involves Christian mission and service to the world. The United Methodist Church has a long history of action and advocacy for social justice.

United Methodists are active in their communities and in the world in a variety of ways, including: participating in local mission projects and service initiatives; supporting global mission efforts through the United Methodist Committee on relief (UMCOR) and other mission organizations; and advocating for social justice by working to address issues such as poverty, hunger and inequality. United Methodists also provide educational and vocational training opportunities; offer counseling, support groups and other forms of pastoral care; and support community development programs.

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Pastor's Corner



As the summer sun blazes overhead and temperatures soar, we officially enter the “dog days of summer.” This term, traditionally referring to the hottest and most uncomfortable part of the season, is named after the star Sirius, the Dog Star, which rises with the sun during this period. The 'dog days' are a metaphor for a period of stagnation or difficulty, often associated with the hottest days of summer. While the phrase often evokes a sense of languor or discontent, this summer invites us to find a deeper meaning and inspiration in these sweltering days.

The dog days can be a challenging time for many. Heatwaves can make outdoor activities difficult, and for those who experience other types of stress—whether personal, financial, or societal—these days can feel particularly daunting. Yet, amidst the discomfort and uncertainty, there lies a profound opportunity to embrace hope. Hope acts as our guiding star, urging us to push through even the most challenging of circumstances. It reminds us that each season, each moment of discomfort, is temporary, and that brighter days are on the horizon. This summer, no matter the oppressive heat or tough challenges we face, let us take a moment to reflect on the strength we each possess to move forward.

Exploring new ideas, such as starting a new hobby or learning a new skill, nurturing relationships, and engaging in mindful practices like meditation or yoga, can be powerful tools to combat the lingering effects of the dog days. Community gatherings and social events can remind us of the strength found in unity, emphasizing that we are never alone in our struggles.

As we continue the move into August, we can harness the essence of cohesion, resilience, and hope, driving us forward. Let us allow the light of hope to guide us through this stretch of summer, encouraging us to push past fleeting discomforts and towards whatever future we aspire to create. Whether through a refreshing swim, a good book in the shade, or the comforting presence of friends and family, make it a goal to find moments of joy during these dog days.

In doing so, we not only embrace the spirit of summer; we also embody the relentless human capacity to overcome and flourish, even in the hottest, most challenging of circumstances. So, let's step into the dog days with open hearts and hopeful minds, reminding ourselves that, like the changing seasons, we too have the power to move forward into brighter days ahead.

Here's to embracing hope this summer!

Pastor Gina

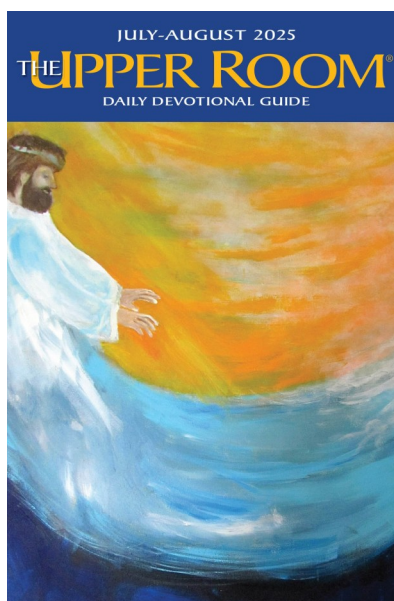


Jewell Hood	August 2
Rhonda Mortenson	August 3
Kathy Hobbs	August 12
Melanie Konski	August 13
Jim Dukarich	August 16
Mary Nell Woodward	August 16
Ronan Cahill	August 18
Jeff Bulkeley	August 19
Karen Bulkeley	August 20
Kian Francis	August 24
Linda Moore	August 25
Shirley Buonauro	August 31

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Pete & Marlene Thompson	August 3
Dave & Jeannette Delster	August 12
Ray & Arlene Roop	August 19

We apologize if we have missed your special day. It means that the office does not have your information. Please notify the office if we need to update your information.



Have you been looking for a devotional? Did you know that *The Upper Room* is available in the narthex. Regular and large print versions are available.

A small donation is appreciated if you are able, but feel free to take one even if you can't donate.



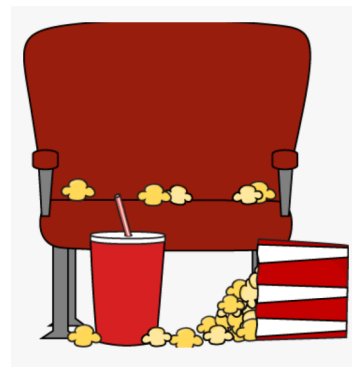
Stay Cool!

Back by popular demand—Summer Saturday Movies. Mark your calendar to join us in the youth room (comfy couches) for fun and fellowship. Rhonda Mortenson would love to hear from you if you have a favorite movie suggestion!

August 16 3:00 pm

September 13 3:00 pm

Summer Saturday Movies

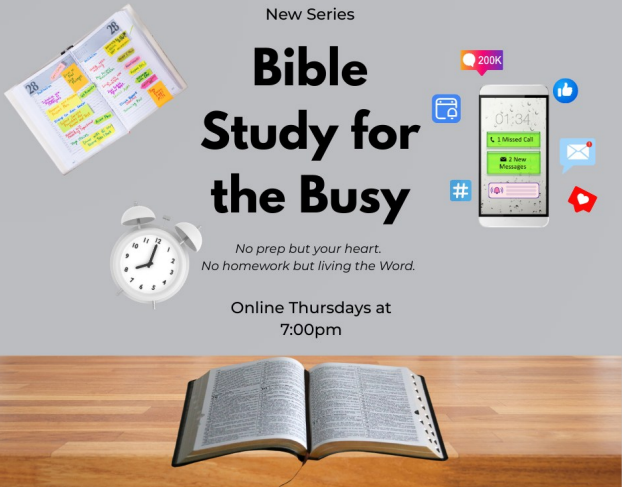


New Series

Bible Study for the Busy

*No prep but your heart.
No homework but living the Word.*

Online Thursdays at 7:00pm



- First session is June 5th
- Register for or share the Zoom link found in the Oasis or on our Facebook events.
- Study is 7-8 pm with an optional half hour “parking lot” fellowship afterwards.



It's not too late! There is still an opening on the October walks for your pilgrim. There is a LIMIT of 20 Pilgrims for this location. Don't delay in getting your applications mailed in.

The Men's Walk #267 will be October 9-12 at Red Mountain UMC, 2936 N. Power Rd in Mesa.

The Women's Walk #268 will be October 16-19 at Red Mountain UMC, 2936 N. Power Rd in Mesa.

There are brochures and applications in the narthex. Questions—Contact the office or Mary Ann Crist.

This may not be the right time for your pilgrim, so plan ahead for 2026.

The Men's Walk #269 will be January 29-February 1 at Christ Community UMC, 104 W. Western Ave, Avondale.

The Women's Walk #270 will be February 12-15 at Christ Community UMC, 104 W. Western Ave, Avondale.

Prayer Corner

LET'S TALK ABOUT JESUS -

Elizabeth Weir, S.D.

Many things in life clamor for our attention but we have to be careful not to let them become more of a priority than our relationship with God. The first of the Ten Commandments states we will have no other gods before Him. (Exodus 20:3)

Yet, how many of the things that occupy our time, money, thoughts and attention have taken the place where God is supposed to be? Anything can become a god to us - anything we put an excessive amount of time, money, effort into can become a god. Even our feelings can become a god if we allow them to control us.

But, there's good news! We don't have to settle for this way of living because in Christ, we can enjoy our lives abundantly! (John 10:10) God's Word contains wisdom, encouragement, comfort and inspiration for every conceivable human problem or dilemma. It brings peace and stability to our spirits and renews our minds. (Romans 12:2)

We all want a deep, intimate relationship with God so we must let Him into every area of our lives. If we look to other people for answers and validation, we need to pray and ask the Lord to help us stop doing that and instead look to Him. When Jesus walked this earth, no one was more politically incorrect. Why? Because he did not follow the crowd, he followed what God, Himself, commanded. Charles Colson said "never confuse the will of the majority with the will of God". As we live to please God, He promises to bless our lives and make us prosper. (Ps. 1:3)

When we decide to serve God with our whole heart and make Him first in our life, our soul will prosper and our joy and peace will increase. Remember to lean on Him more than anyone or anything else. He doesn't expect us to live for Him in our own strength or ability. He understands when we make mistakes. We don't give in to discouragement and let it hold us back; we confess it, rest in Him then get up renewed and keep following Him. He will give us the grace to do what we need to do. One day at a time you, me, we and God together can do anything!

WALK WORTHY

Mighty God, You have given us the key to having an abundant life. Please grant us consistent commitment to daily prayer and time spent in Your Word. We stand on Your promises of love, peace and joy that comes when we walk habitually before You. You are the Alpha and the Omega, there is none like you. Praise your glorious name. Amen

East District Prayer Focus for August

First UMC—Mesa

Rev. Sam Parkes

First UMC — Tempe

Rev. Diamond Pate

Pastor Andrew Devereaux

Gold Canyon UMC—Gold Canyon

Rev. David Harriss

Pastor Katharine Keller

Pastor Jeremy Brigham

Rev. Gary Capen

PRAY
without ceasing
1 Thessalonians 5:17



United
Women
in Faith

August Meetings of UWFaith

August 14	Outreach Circle	10:30 am
August 19	Devotions & Dinner	6:30 pm
	Meet at Mellow Mushroom, 5350 E. High St.	
August 21	Bookworms United - Zoom	10:00 am
	Book— <i>The City of Fallen Angels</i> by Cassandra Clare	

Outreach Circle of United Women in Faith make baby layettes every year for needy mothers. They need some donations to make this happen. They have plenty of diapers but could use footed sleepers and onesies, size newborn or 3 month. Please bring your donations to the narthex.



Mark your calendar for CITD United Women in Faith Unit Meetings

Unit Meeting – World Thank Offering – 11/15/2025, 10:00 a.m.

Speaker: Maria Luz Saldana, Youth Service Director, Wesley Community Center

Unit Meeting – Brunch and Installation of Officers, 12/6/2025, 11:00 a.m.

Conference Event - United Women in Faith Annual Celebration

October 25 8:00 am - 3:30 pm

The Annual Celebration of United Methodist Women will be held on **October 25, 2025** at Willowbrook United Methodist Church from **8:30 a.m.** to **3 p.m.** Willowbrook UMC is located at 19390 North 99th Avenue, Sun City, Arizona. The theme is “You are like a spring of water”. Registration closes on October 15, 2025 and is **\$25.00**.

[Register Now](#)



UMC Conference Chancellors Association Elects Marilee Miller Clarke as President

by [DSC Communications](#) | Aug 4, 2025 | [Conference Newsletter](#)



Ms. Clarke is an active attorney in Scottsdale, Arizona, and is the founder and owner of Clarke Law Firm, PLC. She has been an attorney for more than 40 years, and her experience includes private practice with a Scottsdale and a Phoenix law firm. She was the first woman President of a law firm of 10+ attorneys in the Phoenix metropolitan area. With Resolution Trust Corporation-Legal, Phoenix, she acted as section chief for the Western Savings Section and was the Alternative Dispute Resolution Coordinator. Prior to that, she was the first woman Vice President and General Counsel of Wells Fargo Credit Corporation, a subsidiary of Wells Fargo & Company with \$1+ billion in assets that was headquartered in Scottsdale. Ms. Clarke also had a judicial clerkship with the Chief Justice of the Idaho Supreme Court.

Ms. Clarke served as President of the Scottsdale Bar Association. She is Editor-in-Chief of the Arizona Civil Remedies text published by the State Bar of Arizona and is the author of its chapter on *Rescission and Specific Performance*. The Fifth Edition was published in 2025. She also served on the Claremont School of Theology Board of Trustees.

Ms. Clarke and her husband, David, are members of Paradise Valley UMC, where she was on the Board of Trustees twice. They have one son, Douglas, who is a regional set designer in live theatre, based in Scottsdale.

Conference Contacts

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Building and Grounds Concerns
Please contact the office by phone or email so
the Property Team may be notified