



The Oasis

September 2025

Cross in the Desert UMC

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

CITD Leadership Board

The Leadership Board has been studying the book "Followers Under 40" by Rachel Gilmore and Kris Sledge. It is "a book that addresses the critical relationship between the church and young adults today. The authors, who are Millennial pastors, aim to examine why many churches today struggle to effectively engage with young adults while offering constructive approaches to bridge this gap." The book is easily available on Amazon as well as other sources if you're interested in joining us in that study.

A more detailed report of the Together We Can Capital Campaign status is in a separate article. One of the main items of interest is that the CITD Foundation donated money to cover the cost of a digital sign. The Leadership Board voted to move forward, and a downpayment to the company is in progress to get it installed. The second thing is that since the Leadership Board meeting, we met with a landscape architect to decide next steps. For a variety of reasons, we're planning to restart with him in December to kick off the project in earnest.

There is also a separate report regarding the Safety Action Team that is being formed.

We spent time reviewing and approving a new fee schedule for usage of our facilities. We are also getting new groups interested in paying us to use our facilities.

We spent time reviewing and updating our goals and action items.

Church Conference will be on October 19th at noon. For committee/ministry groups, please be prepared to prepare a report for that. The Nominations Committee will also be looking to fill positions.

Our next meeting is planned for September 30th at 7:00 PM via Zoom. I want to remind you that our meetings are open to anyone who wishes to attend. If you're interested in attending, the office or anyone on the committee can get you the link.

If you have questions, concerns, or want to get involved, please reach out to me or any member of the Leadership Board: Mary Nell Woodward, Romi Simons, Brooke Henry, Jonathan Foster, Rhonda Mortenson, Ada Thompson, Wanda Picciotti, and Kristin O'Shaughnessy.

In His service, Eugene O'Bryan, Chairperson CITD Leadership Board

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Pastor's Corner



Dear Friends,

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus didn't just give us a set of ideals, but a practical roadmap for living. The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3–12) are an invitation to a life of humility, mercy, and peace—a life that we can embody in our daily actions, reflecting the very light of Christ.

“Blessed are the poor in spirit...”

To be poor in spirit is to recognize our need for God, not relying on our own strength but on His grace. Humility isn't weakness; it is the strength to admit we depend on our Creator. In a world that prizes self-sufficiency, our humility becomes a beacon that points others to God's love.

“Blessed are the merciful...”

Mercy is love in action. It is forgiveness extended when it isn't deserved, compassion shown when it isn't expected, and kindness offered when it isn't easy. When we live as merciful people, we embody the heart of Christ and create ripples of healing in a hurting world.

“Blessed are the peacemakers...”

Peace is not simply the absence of conflict; it is the presence of love, understanding, and reconciliation. Each time we choose patience over anger, dialogue over division, and forgiveness over bitterness, we shine Christ's peace into dark places.

As followers of Jesus, we are called to be **beacons of love, humility, and mercy**. These lights are not for us to hide under a basket but to let shine before others, so they may see God's goodness reflected in us.

This week, let's ask ourselves:

- Where can I show mercy to someone who needs it most?
- How can I practice humility in a culture that prizes pride?
- What act of peace can I offer in my family, community, or workplace?

May our lives echo the Beatitudes, not just in words but in daily witness. Let's commit to becoming small but steady flames of hope that lead others closer to Christ by embodying the virtues of humility, mercy, and peace in our daily lives.

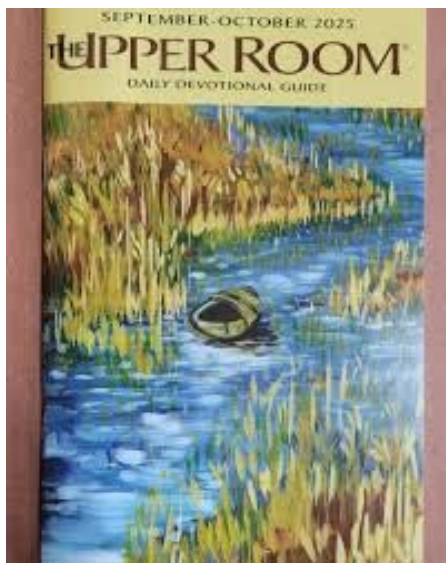
Pastor G



Becky Bussey	September 1
Cindy Tigges	September 2
Jane Fricker	September 3
Allison Goodwin	September 6
Hannah Falknor	September 9
Ellen Odart	September 10
Jack Smith	September 12
Tom Falknor	September 13
Lois Keel	September 30

Jonathan & Heather Foster September 4

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.

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.

Apply today. There are brochures and applications in the narthex.

Questions—Contact the office or Mary Ann Crist.





Here's the status of the Together We Can Capital Campaign funds as of July 31, 2025:

As of	7/31/2025
Together We Can Funds General Capital Campaign	
Goal	\$215,000.00
Received Funds	\$173,137.18
% of Goal	80.53%
Total Funds Spent or Committed	\$123,742.29
Money left to be spent	\$49,394.89
Together We Can Funds Designated for Digital Sign Expenses First from CITD Foundation	
Received Funds	\$45,000.00
Total Funds Spent or Committed	
Money left to be spent	\$45,000.00

Projects completed as of 8/26/2025:

- Painted Sanctuary lobby and hallways
- Replaced Sanctuary lobby and hallways flooring
- Painted Guthrie exterior
- Painted Fellowship Hall/Office exterior
- Painted gazebo and paint over turquoise
- HVAC replacement for Kitchen/Library
- Painted Sanctuary interior
- Replaced Sanctuary interior flooring
- (note: Guthrie NW HVAC replaced by CITD Foundation)
- Replaced carpet in all rooms in the Outreach Building

Projects being worked on:

- Grass replacement and further landscaping improvements
- Digital Sign

We are currently evaluating and prioritizing the next projects to be addressed. If you have any questions or input, please see or contact Eugene O'Bryan at 602-363-4115



Book for Baby

Instead of a card we have a small Request bring a book that you Like best. Either well-loved or brand new, Please sign your book with a line or two Letting baby know this gift is from you!

Diaper Raffle

Please bring a pack of diapers in any size for your chance to win a special prize!

Name _____



A New Service Opportunity!

Our church is a place of worship, fellowship, and care — and part of caring for one another is making sure everyone feels safe. This year, we're launching a **Safety Action Team**: a group of trained volunteers who will help prepare for the unexpected, from prevention to crisis response. If you have a heart for protecting and serving your community, we invite you to prayerfully consider joining this new ministry. Together, we can ensure our church remains a sanctuary in every sense of the word.

Phoenix Women's Chorus

We are pleased to announce that the Phoenix Women's Chorus has chosen Cross in the Desert as their performance home for the 2025-2026 Concert Season!

Concerts are scheduled for November 15 and 16, 2025 and May 15 and 16, 2026. Watch for more information as the dates near.



You may see some new people on campus on Tuesday mornings beginning September 23rd. BNI Phoenix Elevate will be holding their meetings in Fellowship Hall.

What is BNI? BNI (Business Network International) was founded by Dr. Ivan Misner in 1985, BNI® is now the world's largest networking organization with 40 years of continuous growth. The mission of BNI is to help members increase their business through a structured, positive and professional referral marketing program that enables them to develop long-term, meaningful relationships with quality business professionals.

<https://www.bni.com/>

Since they will be using Fellowship Hall on Tuesday mornings, we ask that anyone coming for Bible Study or other meetings enter the building through the main entrance double doors only.

PRAYER

LET'S TALK ABOUT JESUS -

Elizabeth Weir, S.D.

READ JAMES 1:19-20

Did you ever notice that we all have so much to say that we can't wait for someone to stop talking before we start talking? We think that what we have to say is so important we don't want to forget it? At church, a business meeting or a classroom the leader will be trying to start and people just keep right on talking just like that person up front is not even there, like the work he or she has put into their presentation has no value. It's sad that we do that to each other not to mention rude.

READ JAMES 1: 26

It's a bit harder than the previous verse. Maybe James was getting tired of not being listened to. We have to be in the mindset to learn from any source God chooses to use because we don't know what he will use or who. Remember, he used a jackass to talk to Baalam.

Do you make it hard for people to speak into your life? Paraphrasing Proverbs: the fool will not listen but the wise person says maybe God has ordained this person to speak to me, right now. By not listening to others we dishonor them. Listening honors others - honor translated is to assess value or worth. None of us would intentionally dishonor someone and yet that is the reality of what we do when we don't listen and fail to recognize the worth that is already there. The mark of a Christ follower is agape, we say we know that, but do we recognize the worth and value of what God has set before us? God loves what he creates. And we need to do that, too. We don't need to be looking at the clock or our watch or looking over our shoulder because that dishonors the one who is speaking. If we want to love and honor someone - listen to them. Listening proves we are interested in others and we should treat bumping into someone as a divine appointment.

WALK WORTHY

Dear and glorious God, as we pray, we are confident and comforted in knowing that you are listening to us. We sing, "hear our prayer, oh, Lord, hear our prayer oh, Lord. Incline thine ear to us and grant us peace." We want you to listen to us. Help us to honor others and you by quietly listening to what you have to say through them. In the mighty name of Christ, we pray. Amen,

East District Prayer Focus for September

North Scottsdale UMC—Scottsdale

Rev. Christopher Wurpts

Rev. Leah Bergstrom

Paradise Valley UMC—Paradise Valley

Rev. Jonathan Arnpriester

Rev. Loye Ashton

Payson UMC- Payson

PRAY
without ceasing
1 Thessalonians 5:17

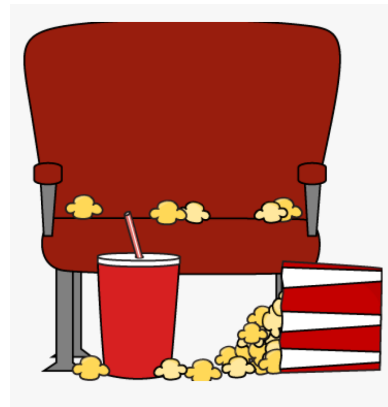


September

Summer Saturday Movies

The last Summer Saturday Movie of the season.
Plan to join us in the youth room (comfy couches) for
fun and fellowship.

September 13 at 3:00 pm



October



Back by popular demand!

**Food with Friends will return on October 18th
at 5:00 pm in Fellowship Hall**

Mark your calendar, plan your favorite dish, and
join us for a potluck

DINNER AND DIALOGUE

OCTOBER 16 AT 6:00 PM

Stay tuned for more information as it develops!



November

Blessing of the Animals

Saturday November 8

10:00 am—1:00 pm

New Day, New Look

Don't miss it!



Friendsgiving Potluck!

Saturday November 22 at 5:00 pm

Mark your calendar and save the date for a fellowship meal to celebrate Thanksgiving. Know a friend who will be alone for the holiday?

Be sure to invite family and friends to join us.



ADVENT

Advent begins November 30th

December Highlights

Advent Study—December 3, 10, and 17th at 5:30 pm

Blue Christmas—December 21 at 5:30 pm

Christmas Eve Service—December 24 at 6:00 pm



United
Women
in Faith

September Meetings of UWFaith

September 4	UWF Leadership Team Meeting	10:00 am	Zoom
September 10	Mary Martha Circle	9:30 am	Library
September 11	Outreach Circle	10:30 am	
September 16	Devotions & Dinner	6:30 pm	
	Meet at Topnotch Island Flavor Kitchen, 16816 N. Cave Creek Rd.		
September 18	Bookworms United	10:00 am	Zoom
	Book— <i>The Postcard</i> by Anne Berest		

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](#)

November Unit Meeting (United Women in Faith):

Fellowship Hall November 15, 2025, 10:00 a.m.

World Thank Offering Program

Speaker from Wesley Community Center, Maria Luz Saldana, Youth Services Director

DSC Officers Needed for 2026!



The Desert Southwest Conference has been blessed this past year with extraordinary women serving as officers! Some of the women will be leaving their offices to move onto new challenges and/or new offices. Many thanks to all of you! It is only through the offerings of your time and talent that United Women in Faith can do all it does for women, children and youth! There's more information in the Southwest Winds Newsletter on the Desert Southwest Conference website.



Desert Southwest Conference

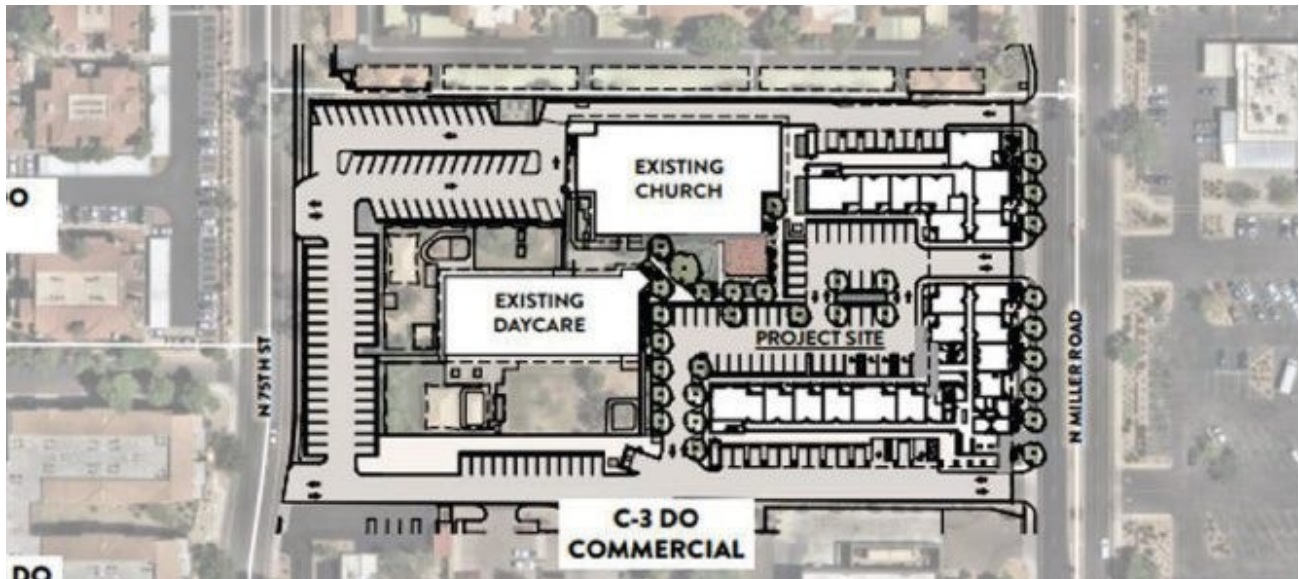
The United Methodist Church

Honoring the Legacy, Embracing the Future: Scottsdale UMC Steps Boldly into New Ministry
by [Christina Dillabough](#) | Aug 15, 2025 | [Conference Newsletter](#), [East District Newsletter](#)

[Scottsdale United Methodist Church](#) has been a trusted presence in the community for a long time. Since 1924, when Scottsdale UMC was little more than a crossroads, the church has offered a place for worship, learning, and service. That legacy continues today in ways that are both familiar and refreshingly bold.

On a campus already known for its [award-winning daycare](#), church leaders are now nurturing something new. Scottsdale UMC is exploring how to be a church for the community, especially its neighbors. It's an intentional season of listening, praying, and discerning what church might look like for the next generation.

At the same time, the church is proposing to develop workforce housing on its property. The idea originated from conversations with the Valley Interfaith Project and local city leaders, as well as a desire to contribute to the solution to the region's housing crisis. The official City of Scottsdale plan acknowledges the need for more affordable homes. Scottsdale UMC has an underutilized space and a calling to serve. That combination is shaping the church's response.



Conference Contacts

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East District Superintendent

Melissa Rynders

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East District Lay Leader

Trinity Donovan

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(Assistance with technology)

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Cross in the Desert UMC Staff

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Julie Wagner
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Thomas Hartwell

Financial Secretary

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