



The Oasis

July 2023

Cross in the Desert UMC

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

Strategic Plan Update

By: Karen Bulkeley

I continue to be amazed at how God is working through each and every one of you so that Cross in the Desert can thrive and continue our quest to meet our Mission Statement: **Cross in the Desert is a place where people meet to discover Christ, grow together, inspire hope and serve the community.**

Exciting things continue to happen with individuals stepping up to find ways to use their gifts and talents to serve Cross in the Desert which contributes toward meeting the goals of our 2023 strategic plan.

This month I would like to highlight the following goal: **CITD will become visible in the community by identifying and assessing suitable actions to embrace community opportunities.**

Have you noticed all the activity on social media? Thanks to Phillip Botts, our presence on social media platforms including Facebook and Instagram have been revived. Phillip is doing a great job posting videos and photos to highlight who we are and what we do. You can help by working with Phillip to create content to highlight special events, or even ongoing activities. Follow Cross in the Desert on whatever social media you use, like what is posted, and share with your friends on social media. Social media is a critical component for getting the word out about our church to our community and neighbors.

Also, did you know that NICE GUYS is back? Dave Delster has volunteered to work with the Trustees to revive this former tradition. For those of you who are unfamiliar with this group, NICE GUYS are a group of individuals who share their time and skills to keep our campus clean, safe, and beautiful. Many people think this is the job of the Trustees. While the Trustees have the overall responsibility for our facilities, the Board of Trustees is not chartered to be the day-to-day caretakers of our facilities, this is the responsibility of all of us. In addition to our Sunday morning worship activities, we have members of our community on campus virtually every day. We want those that visit us and well as those that are just driving by to see Cross in the Desert as a place that cares about its campus and that wants to be a good neighbor in the community. The NICE GUYS will help us to continue to meet this goal.

Please thank Dave and Phillip for stepping up to complete these important activities. If you would like to be involved in either of these activities, please reach out to them. If you are searching for more ways you can serve at CITD, check out the Strategic Plan posted in Fellowship Hall and prayerfully consider how God is calling you to use your spiritual gifts.

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Pastor's Corner



Greetings from your new pastor!

I'm Pastor Gina Pollard. I've been in Phoenix since 1977. I have dog and two cats.

I grew up in a military family, and when we weren't going to chapels on the various Air Force bases, we were going to the local Baptist churches, in the tradition of both of my parents. My father even became a Baptist minister after retiring from his second career.

Despite having grown up in the church, my story is like many others: addiction, abuse, and self-loathing. But it is also a story of God's unwavering grace and the fact that the Creator of the universe can, and does, turn lives around regularly.

Once I rejoined the community of faith and fully grasped the depth of God's love for me, I realized that in significant ways and little ways, the time that I spent off "doing my own thing" had not been wasted.

The only thing that makes sense in my life is that my mistakes help others and that they be a part of my service to God. So, I work hard to ensure that EVERYONE knows that God loves them. It is important for us to be about spreading the GOOD NEWS of God's great love for humanity.

I have an MDiv from Fuller Seminary and am a Certified Grief Recovery Specialist as well as a Certified Trauma Support Specialist. I have a private practice at my office in northwest Phoenix.

In a time when the world desperately needs hope, it is up to us to spread the news of love, rather than hatred and judgement. I am looking forward to working with CITD to broaden our scope of changing the world by spreading love, instead of hatred and judgment. Won't you join me?

Let me know what questions you have as we get to know each other and dream about the work we can do together.

Pastor G.



Happy Anniversary

Beverly Ashcraft	July 2
Diane Ingold	July 2
Fran Kirk	July 3
Curt Robinson	July 5
Marlene Thompson	July 8
John O'Bryan	July 9
Charlotte Osborn	July 9
Pam Bortz	July 11
Wendy Pleake	July 11
Suzy Zarkovich	July 11
Conner Carpenter	July 16
Rod Gaylor	July 16
Gina Pollard	July 16
Gretchen Miller	July 20
Tom Botts	July 23
Heather Foster	July 23
Margaret Bridgewater	July 25
Jeannette Delster	July 26
Junior Harlan	July 26

Jerry & Kathy Hobbs	July 1
Dave & Rosalie Wagner	July 5
Bill & Connie Bruhn	July 12

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.

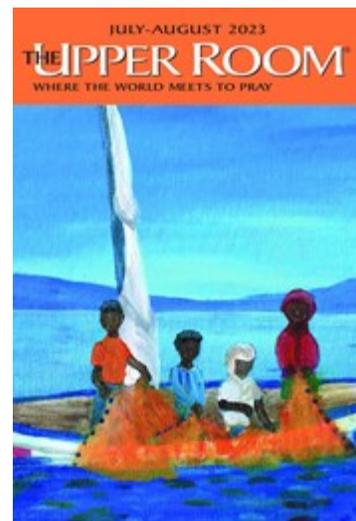
Opportunities!

There are several ways for someone to participate on the worship team here at Cross in the Desert. Here are a few that require very little time commitment.

- Be a Greeter—A great way to get to know people as you welcome them to church! Contact Mary Nell Woodward for more information.
- Be an Usher—Contact Charlie Diller.
- Be a Liturgist—Read scripture during the service and assist the pastor. Contact the church office.
- Help in the Media Booth—Help with slides, sound or the camera. Contact Kevin Joy.
- Be a Communion Steward—Check on supplies and set up the elements on Communion Sunday. Contact the church office for more details.



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.



Trustees Report



Sanctuary roof repairs

The trustees are staying busy keeping the campus in shape. The best news is that the sanctuary roof has been repaired, and we beat the monsoon! The repairs were done during the week and caused little disruption (but lots of trash!).

The advent of hotter weather has necessitated some repairs on the A/C units for Fellowship Hall and the office area.

The process involved with Global Minds Preschool opening on our campus has taken longer than we anticipated, due to the difficulty in scheduling an inspection with the City of Phoenix Fire Department. Work will begin soon on renovations of the Guthrie building, with an anticipated January opening date for the preschool.

All the trustees are working to maintain our campus in a well kept and appealing manner. Please notify the office if you see something that needs attention.

Rose Garden Update

In the early fall of 2022, the roses were trimmed back, and five bags of red wood mulch was added to the bed.

Due to the extended rains and cool weather this spring, the roses have been slow to bloom.

A few blossoms were out for Easter. A new multi-colored bush called *Joseph's Coat* has been added to our garden. It's blossoms are pink, yellow and orangish red.

Best news of all is that Carolyn Halloran has volunteered to help care for the roses this year. The church has provided us with a new light weight 100 foot hose to use for watering the roses.

Judy Smith, The Rose Guardian



FINANCE COMMITTEE



CITD Financial Corner

Year	Comparison General Giving YTD					
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Total
2021 Actuals	\$ 19,770.18	\$ 22,786.24	\$ 24,963.31	\$ 22,905.45	\$ 26,154.85	\$ 116,580.03
2022 Actuals	\$ 18,674.22	\$ 19,242.73	\$ 18,845.90	\$ 21,048.65	\$ 19,821.89	\$ 97,633.39
2023 Actuals	\$ 17,810.63	\$ 14,713.79	\$ 16,068.93	\$ 25,157.85	\$ 13,341.89	\$ 87,093.09
2023 Budgeted	\$ 17,960.00	\$ 17,960.00	\$ 17,960.00	\$ 17,960.00	\$ 17,960.00	\$ 89,800.00

May Giving was down. May was probably affected by April 30th being a fifth Sunday which probably included some May Giving. Unfortunately, June Giving is not running any better. We are seeing reduced expenses, mostly in staffing expenses, which is helping to reduce our deficit for the year, but we are still needing the Foundation help that was noted last month. Going from a full-time to three-quarters time Pastor will also further reduce our expenses for the second half of the year.

As of this writing, we have received \$3550.00 towards the roof repair. Although the repair has been completed, any additional help will be greatly appreciated and will save money coming from other areas to cover the cost. We've also had two recent A/C repairs which totaled \$7,204.50. Hopefully, this will be it for a while, but any donations you can give to our A/C fund would also be appreciated.

We are continuing to make progress with Global Minds Preschool, but our preliminary work is taking longer than planned. We are currently planning on opening next January. Global Minds Preschool will invest their own money to pay for improvements which we will then reimburse back to them through rent reduction until it is paid back.

Thanks, again, for your prayers and financial support. If you have any questions or ideas, please feel free to contact me.

In His service,

Eugene O'Bryan, Chairperson
 CITD Finance Committee
 Home: 602-788-0742
 Cell: 602-363-4115
 eobryan@cox.net



Did you know? It takes \$6,325.00 per week for CITD to pay all the bills!

Prayer Corner

Dear loving and mighty God, we come to you with all our hearts and minds and pray for your presence to be in our lives. Our country is broken in some ways and needs good leadership and congress people. We pray for the war in the Ukraine to cease and for all the countries around the world to have more respect for each other. God, our hearts hurt and our eyes cry for all those people who have had to run for their lives and for homes and buildings to be destroyed. All of us pray daily for that country and those people who do not deserve to be treated like this.

O God we also pray for our destructive and out of control economy. So many people cannot afford both housing and food and clothing. May our government bodies find ways to help these people. We pray for the sick and grieving. We pray for all the children and youth who need extra help to live in these cities and difficult times. May adults and parents come to realize how important it is to bring them to church and religious activities so they can get to know you and your love for them. We pray desperately for families to find ways to function and for people to stop abusing and shooting others. Thank you for our police who get there very quickly and work to stop crimes. Help us all share your love O Christ and be respectful and caring of each other. In Jesus name, Amen.

Prayer written by Rev. Sharon MacVean

PRAYER NOTES Rev. Sharon A. MacVean

Petition – the Lord’s prayer has three personal petitions: Provision of daily bread, forgiveness of sins, and deliverance from evil.

This demonstrates Jesus’ desire that among our prayers we also pray

For ourselves. Petition is asking God about our needs. When we pray

This way, we being to focus on the things for which we are grateful.

Gratitude and listing what we are grateful for always brings about a

Positive attitude and a release of things for which a person is anxious.

Intercession-moves our enter of focus from ourselves toward the needs

Of others. Intercession is a way of loving others. If we truly love others, we will desire for them more than is within our power to give them.

We wonder at times if our little prayers make a difference. Yet, the Bible

And those around us encourage us to continue to pray for others whether

To find a job or to fight against an evil war. God is active with us and does listen to us.

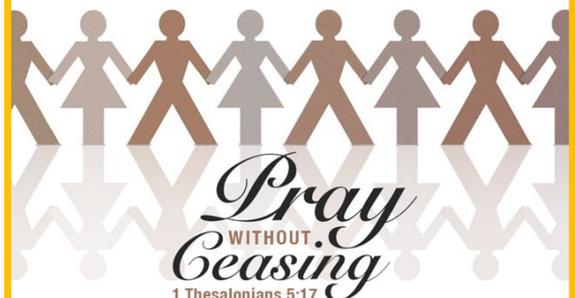
East District Prayer **Focus for July**

AZ Korean UMF , Mesa
Rev. Sang Jae Lee

Chandler UMC, Chandler
Rev. Candace Lansberry

Cross in the Desert UMC, Phoenix
Pastor Gina Pollard

Desert Chapel UMC, Apache Junction
Pastor Philip Tesarek





United
Women
in Faith

July Meetings of UWF

July 13	Outreach Circle Meeting	11:00 am	Fellowship Hall
July 13	Mary Martha Circle	6:30 pm	Alice's home
July 18	Devotions & Dinner	6:30 pm	Café Zupas, 21001 N. Tatum Blvd
July 20	Bookworms United	10:00 am	Zoom
	Book: <i>Red Paint</i> by Sasha LaPointe		
July 21-22	Mission u		Prescott UMC
July 26	Palm Lakes Village Circle	2:00 pm	Contact Judy S.

Mission u in-person 2023 Deadline to register is July 14

Prescott UMC, 505 Gurley St., Prescott, AZ 86301

Friday, July 21, 12:30 p.m. check in

Saturday, July 22, 8:00 a.m. light breakfast

REGISTER:

In-Person Event: <https://dscumc.org/secure/2023-mission-in-person-registration/>

Adult Study: Living the Kin-dom: Exploring the Lord's Prayer as a Spiritual Practice for Social Transformation by Riva Tabelisma

Youth Study: Seek and You Shall Find: Living in the Kin-dom by Rachel Mosher

Please purchase your study book prior to Mission u. To order contact Mission Resource Center at 800-305-9857 or order online at: <http://www.umwmissionresources.org/>

Godspeed Pastor Galene!

Most of you are aware that Pastor Galene Boyett was reassigned, effective July 1, 2023. Her new churches are Sunrise UMC in Phoenix, and Spirit of Hope UMC in Peoria. While we are sad to see her go, we wish her well in her new assignment.

Her last Sunday here at Cross in the Desert was June 25. A potluck was held after the service to say goodbye and to thank her for her time in ministry with us.



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Resolution on Death Penalty Commutation PASSED. This resolution affirms the UMC opposition to capital punishment and sets actions to take to put pressure on Executive and Legislative branches of government to end the death penalty.

Resolution Net-Zero Greenhouse Gas Emissions: Conference and Local Church Commitment PASSED. This resolution asked that we confess our sin in properly caring for the earth, identify and appoint people in every congregation to investigate ways to lower congregational output of greenhouse gases, and to include creation care and justice in all levels and types of ministry.

Resolution Supporting Central Conference Leadership and the Christmas Covenant PASSED. This resolution recognizes how our current denominational structure is detrimental to ministry in the United States and supports the creation of a US Regional Conference which can amend the Book of Discipline for consistency with US law, as other central conference can already do.

There were two late submission resolutions brought to the conference which were considered during the last plenary session. These were:

Supporting the Removal of Discriminatory Policies with Amendment PASSED. This legislation concerns removing language in the Book of Discipline which discriminates against members of the LGBTqi+ community and must be approved by the General Conference in order to proceed.

Encouraging Leadership With Integrity PASSED. This resolution recognizes that there are leaders within the UMC denomination who have made statements about leaving, but have retained their positions in order to inhibit actions within the UMC, especially in regards to Annual, Jurisdictional, and General Conferences being held in 2024. It requests people leaving the denomination not participate in legislative activities.

Report submitted by Rev. Galene Boyett



Did you know that the Desert Southwest Conference has a full slate of summer camps for children and youth entering first grade all the way to graduating seniors in high school? In addition to age-specific camps, specialty camps for Grandparents/Grandchildren; art, leadership and missions are on the schedule. Camp Mingus has been a special place for United Methodists in Arizona for over 70 years and, each year, new generations of children and youth discover the magic of summer camp at Camp Mingus.

It's not too early to register, and scholarship information is available on the website. By the way, volunteer counselors and nurses are always needed too! To learn more visit [2023 Sessions | Mingus Mountain \(mingusmountaincamp.org\)](https://www.mingusmountaincamp.org)

Desert Southwest Conference News

Annual Conference Report



#WeAre Wrestling, Engaging, Rising – Annual Conference Meets

The Desert Southwest Conference met at the Mesa Convention Center June 15-17 with the theme of **#WeAre Wrestling, Engaging, Rising**, based on Genesis 32-33 and Luke 22-24. Along with worshipping, celebrating, and even grieving together, the body did the business of the Church.

There was one ordination of an Elder, and one commissioning of a Provisional Elder. Appointments were set. The total budget for 2024 was set to match the total current year budget. Retirees were recognized. Awards were given out. The closing of churches/fellowships and two new church starts were also recognized. It was announced that next year's Annual Conference will be held at the Tucson Convention Center, a new experience for all of us. To date, Annual Conferences have been held in Flagstaff, Yuma, Scottsdale, Mesa, and Glendale.

A report was presented on the 2020 General Conference which is scheduled to be held in 2024. The Jurisdictional Conference of 2020 held in 2022 was also reported on, with information also given on the next Jurisdictional Conference. The Who's On First style report necessitated by the many delays due to COVID can be watched online as part of the first plenary session.

Delegates received training in using Pronouns, which many found very helpful. Information, including definitions, and how to have this training at the local level is available by checking the DSCUMC website under Annual Conference 2023.

For those wondering about legislation:

Resolution Call to Action as a Welcoming and Reconciling Conference PASSED. This resolution said declaring ourselves a Welcoming and Reconciling Conference (2009) was not enough, we must act to make it so, and recommended three actions for the conference to take.

Resolution Concerning Christian Nationalism PASSED. This resolution called for a document, including study materials, to be created and sent to all local churches explaining why Christian Nationalism is inconsistent with both the US Constitution and the Christian faith.

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Conference Contacts

Bishop

Carlo A. Rapanut

Bishop's Assistant:

Julie O'Neal joneal@dscumc.org

Conference Lay Leader

Alberta Farnsworth

East District Superintendent

Melissa Rynders

Assistant: Cynthia Holly cholly@dscumc.org

East District Lay Leader

Trinity Donovan

Director of Communications (Assistance with technology)

Christina Dillabough

cdillabough@dscumc.org



Cross in the Desert United Methodist Church
12835 N. 32nd Street
Phoenix, AZ 85032
Phone: 602-992-1960
E-mail: citd@crossinthedesert.org
Website: <https://www.crossinthedesert.org>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CrossintheDesertUMC>



Cross in the Desert UMC Staff

Pastor

Pastor Gina Pollard

pastorgina@crossinthedesert.org

Lay Leader—vacant

Coordinator of Children’s Ministries

Vacant

Youth and Technology Coordinator

Kevin Joy

Administrative Assistant

Julie Wagner

citd@crossinthedesert.org

Financial Secretary

Alice Easter

finance@crossinthedesert.org

Building and Grounds Concerns

Please contact the office by phone or email so the Trustees may be notified