



The Oasis

September 2023

Cross in the Desert UMC

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



Join us on Sunday October 1 from 3:00-5:00 pm

Join us as we celebrate the animals in our lives! There will be a short service and then blessings for each individual animal. The prayer team will offer prayer for the owners as well, and there will be a "Rainbow Bridge" memory table to honor those pets that we have lost. Come and meet the animals from Foothills Animal Rescue. You may find a new friend. You will meet the Ambassa-dogs from AZ Golden Rescue, and learn how you can join their fostering program. Fun stuff includes a bounce house for the little visitors, door prizes, and an ice cream truck offering people and puppy treats!

Everyone is invited—spread the word to your friends and neighbors. All animals should be leashed or safely contained please.



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Pastor's Corner



Dear Community,

As the hot summer days slowly give way to cooler evenings, we find ourselves on the cusp of a new season. While the temperatures in Phoenix may still be soaring, there's a subtle change in the air, signaling the arrival of autumn. It's a time of transformation, new beginnings, and a chance to come together as a community.

Despite the blazing temperatures, we invite you to join us in welcoming the spirit of autumn. As a community, our mission is to foster love and hope, empowering and uplifting those around us.

Together, let's discover ways to make a positive impact on the lives of others.

With autumn comes a sense of renewal, just like the changing leaves that adorn our surroundings. It's a time to reflect on our blessings and find inspiration in the world around us. Despite the challenges presented by the sweltering heat, we can still find joy in working together to create a more compassionate and vibrant community.

Our efforts to bring justice, love, and hope to those in need are as crucial as ever, no matter the temperature outside. Let's channel the warmth in our hearts into action, turning adversity into opportunity. **You** can get involved and make a difference in countless ways, regardless of the season or the circumstances.

We are excited to introduce new initiatives to further our mission this autumn. From organizing gratitude-focused events to facilitating workshops that promote personal growth, we aim to nurture an environment where love and hope flourish.

We encourage you to join this journey by joining us in our upcoming events and sharing your ideas to uplift and inspire. We can create a community that radiates warmth, compassion, and grace, even amidst the scorching Arizona sun.

Let's embrace this autumn as a season of unity and change. Let us sow the seeds of love and hope, ensuring they bloom throughout our community. Regardless of the heat, our collective efforts can make a meaningful difference in the lives of those around us.

We look forward to welcoming you on this journey of new beginnings and compassionate endeavors. Let's bring love and hope to our community and make this autumn a season to remember.



*Happy
Anniversary*



Jonathan & Heather Foster

September 4

Becky Bussey	September 1
Jane Fricker	September 3
Allison Goodwin	September 6
Hannah Falknor	September 9
Julie Lattin	September 12
Jack Smith	September 12
Tom Falknor	September 13
Lois Keel	September 30

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!

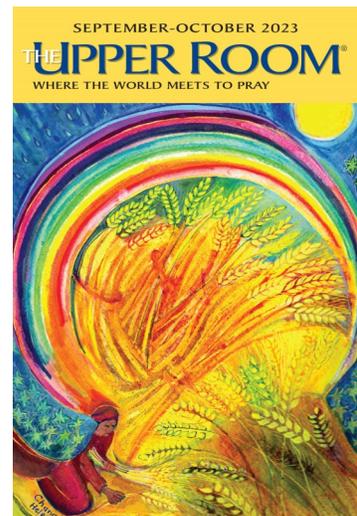
There are several ways for someone to participate on the worship team here at Cross in the Desert. Here are a few that require very little time commitment.

- 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.
- Do a Children's Moment—Give a short message to the children during the service. Contact the church office for more information.
- Help in the Media Booth—Help with slides, sound board 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.





FALL EVENTS CALENDAR 2023

September

6—Community Coffee	11:00 a– 1:00 p	32 Shea, 10626 N. 32nd St
11—Scout Court of Honor	6:45 pm	Sanctuary
17—Youth Ignited at PVUMC	6:30-8:00 pm	PVUMC, 4455 E. Lincoln Dr
21—Community Coffee—PM	6:30-8:00 pm	Village Inn, 4040 E. Bell Rd

October

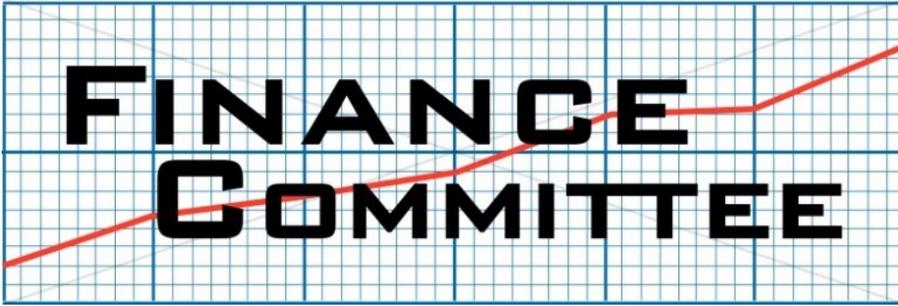
1—Blessing of the Animals	3:00-5:00 pm	Courtyard
4—Community Coffee	11:00 a—1:00 p	Chompies, 3212 E. Cactus Rd
8—Pastor’s Installation	10:00 am	Sanctuary
14—East District UWF	10:00 a– 1:30 p	Fellowship Hall & Sanctuary
22—Hymn Sing	3:00—4:00 pm	Sanctuary
22—Church Conference	4:00 pm	Sanctuary

November

1—Community Coffee	11:00 a—1:00 p	32 Shea, 10626 N. 32nd St
4—Grief Workshop	12:00-4:00 pm	TBD
4—Luminarias	5:00-7:00 pm	Courtyard
18—Friendsgiving Potluck	5:00—7:00 pm	Fellowship Hall

December

3—Advent begins		
10—UWF Christmas Tea	3:00 pm	Fellowship Hall
17—Blue Christmas Service	5:00 pm	Sanctuary
24—4th Sunday Advent Service	10:00 am	Sanctuary
24—Christmas Eve Service	7:00 pm	Sanctuary



CITD Financial Corner

We are continuing to run lower than originally planned on our income/giving, but we have also been running lower on expenses primarily due to the loss of our janitorial services and adjustments to our plans for staffing. We've had the Music Director position and janitorial services open for quite some time. The new Pastor's salary is a significant reduction in expenses for us. Even though we have now contracted for janitorial services again and have hired a new Music Director, our year-end prognosis looks significantly better.

We are planning to have another Luminarias event this year where the proceeds will go toward Apportionment. If you are not familiar with this event, close to All Saints Day we take donations in memory of deceased loved ones. We create a luminaria for each person with their name on it. It's been a very moving, memorable event for those participating. Details are still to be determined, but if you have any ideas to enhance our experience or if you are willing to help with setting up and taking down, please let me know.

We have also started planning for our Stewardship drive this year. Our theme will be "A Future with Hope". I think this is an excellent theme fitting with the fact we have so many positive things happening. Again, if you're willing to help with this, please let me know.

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
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Did you know? It takes \$5610.00 per week for CITD to pay all the bills!

Prayer Corner

Dear Holy God, We thank you for your love and your blessings. Some days we are discouraged and pray that you will lift us up and help us remember our blessings. We live in a country with many resources and many freedoms. We pray for those around the world who are struggling to get food and clean water. We pray for wars to cease and for all those who are suffering because of war. We pray for those who do not know you as a loving God who cares for all people. Grant us your wisdom and help as we remain strong in one of your congregations. Be with those who are ill and suffering from grief and family troubles. We pray for safety and good learning for our children. Bless us as we work to carry on your call to each one of us.

In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Prayer written by Rev. Sharon MacVean

PRAYER NOTES

Rev. Sharon A. MacVean

The fact that prayer was a natural habit for Jesus has profound implications for us today. Paul writes in 1 Thessalonians 5:17 that we should pray without ceasing. How do we do this in the post modern world? Brother Lawrence lived in a monastery and wanted to do more than regular prayers and so learned to pray even when working in the kitchen. Eventually, he said that, for him, there was no difference between the time of business and the time of prayer. Some people use the breath prayer and there are many different ways to pray. You can pray in the desert and on the mountain. The Jesus Prayer is described in a book called *The Way of a Pilgrim*. It does not matter how young, old or busy you are, prayer changes you and your life. Prayer involves not only asking God but also listening to God.

East District Prayer Focus for September

St Matthew UMC, Mesa

Rev. Joel Bullock

Tongan UMC, Mesa

Pastor Taike Lolohea

Velda Rose UMC, Mesa

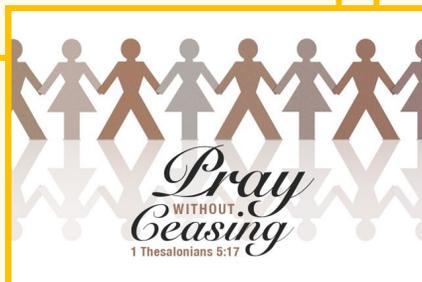
Rev. Ann Lyter
Rev. Chan Hong Kim

UMC of Casa Grande, Casa Grande

Pastor Steve Gregory

Wesley UMC, Phoenix

Rev. Towanda N.T. Connelly





United Women in Faith

September Meetings of UWF

September 7	Leadership Team	3:00 pm	Zoom
September 14	Outreach Circle Meeting	11:00 am	Fellowship Hall
September 14	Mary Martha Circle	6:30 p.m.	at Mary Nell's house
September 19	Devotions & Dinner	6:30 pm	Timo Wood Oven Wine Bar, 8801 N. Central Ave #104
September 21	Bookworms United	10:00 am	Zoom
	Book: <i>Stories from Suffragette City</i> by Fiona Davis		
September 27	Palm Lakes Village Circle	2:00 pm	Contact Judy S.

CITD's UWF will continue to supply feminine hygiene products to the three middle schools along the 32nd Street corridor. Join us as we address the issue of period poverty. There is a basket in Fellowship Hall to collect donations of sanitary napkins, which we distribute monthly during the school year. Thank you!



It's Baby Layette Time!

Would you like to help with baby layettes? From now until October 23 we are collecting items to put together layettes for the newborns of needy mothers. The layettes will be taken to hospitals, where they will be distributed. Monetary donations are appreciated if you prefer not to shop. See Jeannine Diller with any questions.



Newborn and 3 month sizes only

Sleepers with feet

Onesies (both short and long sleeved)

Flannel Baby Blankets

Diapers (#1 up to 14 lbs. or newborn)



Mark your calendar!

On October 14 CITD will be hosting the East District Annual Meeting!



We are delighted to introduce Thomas Hartwell, the new Director of Music here at Cross in the Desert! Thomas has been a lover of the church and its music since a very young age. Prior to Cross in the Desert, he was the music director and lead accompanist at Crosswinds Presbyterian Church, and he studied music and theatre at Scottsdale Community College. Thomas is a prolific arranger, composer, and music director, working with theatre companies and orchestras across the valley. He is excited to be working with Cross in the Desert to help further their music ministry and develop a deeper sense of love with the Lord through song.



Do you love to praise God through music?

Get involved with the fun and fellowship of the music ministry here at Cross in the Desert!

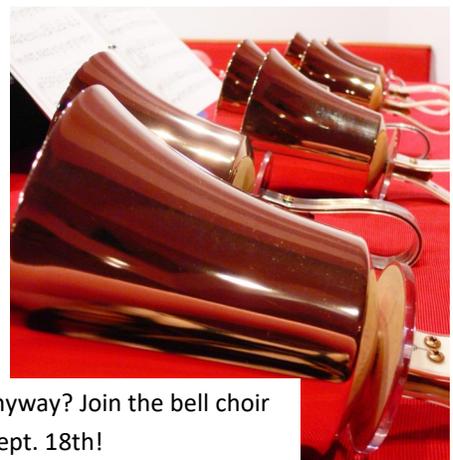
One Flock Choir—Meets Wednesdays at 7:00 pm. Contact Thomas if you are interested.

Bells of Joy—Meets on Mondays at 7:00 pm. Contact Julie Wagner.

Do you play an instrument and want to be involved with worship music? Talk to Thomas.



Thomas and Pastor Gina after leading worship on August 27. "You shall go out with joy.." TFWS #2279



How do they make these things work anyway? Join the bell choir and find out—starting Sept. 18th!

MISSIONS



Mission Project - Can You Help?

We are continuing to collect items for *Project Humanities*, a non-profit that provides clothing and hygiene items for the unhoused on the Human Services Campus in Downtown Phoenix.

Urgent Needs include summer clothing for adults - shorts, tops, dresses (no skirts), adult pants of all sizes, and new adult men's underwear.

Always needed are - reading glasses, backpacks, shoes, hygiene items (toothpaste, dental floss, disposable razors, toothbrushes, and deodorant), and WATER.

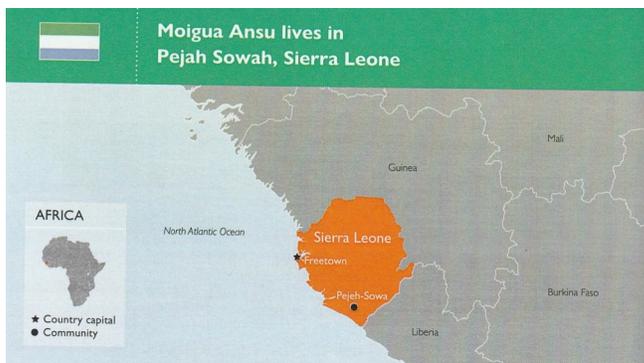
Please bring any donations to the designated area in Fellowship Hall, or to the office during the week. Thanks!

Meet Our New World Vision Child!

Hi! My name is Moigua Ansu Lumeh. I am 9 years old and I live in Pejah Sowah, Sierra Leone, in western Africa. I live with my parents, and I am an only child. Both my father and mother are farmers. They are struggling to meet our family's needs.

I go to school and my favorite part of school is reading.

Thank you for sponsoring me! You are helping to make big things happen for my community.



COMING EVENTS

Is there a teen in your household? If so mark your calendar for Sunday September 17th at 6:30 pm!

On September 17th, Paradise Valley UMC is hosting a crazy and fun concert-style event called "Youth Ignite(d)" for any and all teenagers. The PVUMC youth band by the same name will be leading their peers in worship with some awesome modern worship music.

We'll also have great food, an inspirational message, and some wild group games that will have our teens exhausted from all the laughs!



Contact Ben@pvumc.org for questions or registration!



Arizona Walk to Emmaus is excited to announce dates for upcoming walks.

Lakeview UMC, Sun City: Men February 15-18, 2024 and Women February 29-March 3, 2024

Trinity Heights UMC, Flagstaff: Men July 18-21, 2024 and Women July 25-28, 2024

Fill out the google form at <https://forms.gle/5zFCeyKM6VBC5HaN9> to let us know of your willingness to serve. This is to help facilitate the formation of teams.

Questions: Contact Mary Ann Crist, Treasurer, AZ Walk to Emmaus or any board member

Coming in November

November 4th Grief Workshop Noon—4:00 p.m.

The holidays can be a challenging time to get through. Knowing that you are not alone and creating a plan to help you navigate the feelings can help.

This half-day workshop can help you:

- ⇒ UNDERSTAND WHAT GRIEF IS
- ⇒ UNDERSTAND HOW THE FOUR DIMENSIONS OF BEREAVEMENT ARE EXPERIENCED DURING SPECIAL EVENTS AND HOLIDAYS
- ⇒ CREATE A PLAN FOR HANDLING THE HOLIDAYS IN A WAY THAT HONORS YOU AND YOUR EMOTIONAL PLACE

Look for sign up information soon

November 4th Luminarias 5:00—7:00 p.m.

An opportunity to honor our loved ones who have passed before. More information in October.

November 18 Friendsgiving Potluck 5:00-7:00 p.m.

An opportunity to celebrate thankfulness with your church family and show off your favorite recipe!

Desert Southwest Conference News

By Rev. Dr. Denyse Barnes, Director of Justice & Compassion EMT from the California-Pacific Conference of The United Methodist Church



In response to the devastating fires which have ripped through Hawai`i in the last few days, a special giving link has been set up at the Conference center. As United Methodists, we want to bring our resources to the table in the most effective way possible; as such, 100% of all you give will go towards helping the people of Hawai`i.

We are committed to supporting the community of Lahaina as they navigate the challenges before them. All of the money collected through the links below will go towards helping this community in their time of need.

The first responders in Hawai`i have asked us not to send goods or people at this time as they work out what their specific needs will be over time. Our [Disaster Response Task Force](#) has mobilized and is working at assisting as plans develop. We will let you know more as the recovery plan is implemented.

Online Giving: Individuals can give to the Lahaina Relief Fund at calpacumc.org/donate.

Giving by Check: Gifts for the Lahaina Relief Fund can be made payable to the **California-Pacific Conference** and sent to California-Pacific Conference, Lahaina Relief Fund, PO Box 6006, Pasadena, CA 91102-6006.

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

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Cross in the Desert UMC Staff

Pastor

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pastorgina@crossinthedesert.org

Financial Secretary

Alice Easter

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Lay Leader—vacant

Music Director

Thomas Hartwell

Coordinator of Children's Ministries

Vacant

Youth and Technology Coordinator

Kevin Joy

Building and Grounds Concerns

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

Administrative Assistant

Julie Wagner

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