

Circuit Rider

December 2016 

A monthly publication of the First United Methodist Church of Glendale • December 2016

AGAIN!

It's the second week of November, and the ads for the Christmas holiday have already begun. A house down the street is already all decked out with Christmas lights. The very day I took down our Halloween decorations...the Mercedes Benz Santa ad was up and running on the TV screen. I've already memorized (involuntarily) Target's cute Christmas ad, with the adorable little girl/director and *her little dog too!!!* And by the time you read this, I will have grown weary of Chevrolet's ad to avoid the potential hazards on Black Friday by buying a new Chevy early. Is it just my imagination, or is all this commercialization of Christmas

creeping in a little earlier every year? Christmas is so out of control these days (bah! humbug!).

Thankfully, the Spirit intercedes, AGAIN... reminding me it's always been that way. Our world has been spinning hopelessly out of control from the beginning of time, and Mary and Joseph's troubles were far more worrisome than any insignificant irritation I have with Christmas commercialism. I pray the Spirit of God will break into my life AGAIN... and instead of complaining when a neighbor puts up Christmas lights early, I thank God for the birth that transformed our world! Instead of whining about repetitive Christmas songs, I ask God to

open my heart enough to be fully present and available to anyone who has lost hope. Christmas has become a lonely season for so many. The ancient story of Jesus' birth reminds us that God became fully present for Mary and Joseph in their greatest time of need.

Join me in resisting the stress or irritation we might feel due to the commercialism of Christmas. If we ask God to remind us, AGAIN, of what happened at the first Christmas—God coming closer than ever before—we will rediscover the world-changing event of all history; that is, God entering our chaotic spinning world, offering love that has the power to end war, overcome hate, and transform any and all trouble into goodness and love.



Rev. Kim Gladding

First United Methodist Church

7102 N. 58th Drive • Glendale, AZ 85301

Phone: 623.939.1409 • Fax: 623.236.9284

www.glendalefirstumc.com

Office Hours: Monday–Thursday 9:00 am—3:00 pm; closed Friday at 1:00 pm

Sunday Schedule

8:00 am (Lay-led Communion) • 9:00 am Worship • 11:11 am Worship

10:10 am Sunday School Classes for all ages

Rev. Kim Gladding, Senior Pastor



West District Holy Huddles with Bishop Hoshibata

Bishop Robert Hoshibata will be holding several sessions of “Holy Huddles on the Unity of the Church” in the West District. Holy Huddles will offer the opportunity to engage in listening to and hearing one another as we share our concerns and thoughts about human sexuality and the church. In these Huddles, the Bishop’s role is to listen to your concerns, to share his perspective, and to respond to questions you may have about any topic of concern. The Bishop strives to create a safe space where we will be able to speak and listen with respect for others and pray together for our United Methodist Church in the spirit of Jesus Christ.

The “Holy Huddle” sessions will be held as follows: Please make the attendance at one of the sessions a priority. Clergy and laity are encouraged to attend. Each congregation is asked to bring a chalice from their church as a symbol of unity in the midst of our diversity.

- Sunday, December 11 from 2:00-4:30 pm at First United Methodist Church, 5510 N Central Ave, Phoenix
- Tuesday, December 13 from 6:30-9:00 pm at Trinity United Methodist Church, 3104 W Glendale Ave, Phoenix
- Tuesday, January 10, 2017 from 2:00-4:30 pm at Willowbrook United Methodist Church, 19390 N 99th Ave, Sun City
- Thursday, January 12, 2017 from 2:00-4:30 pm at Prescott United Methodist Church, 505 W. Gurley Street, Prescott
- Sunday, February 5, 2017 from 1:00-3:30 pm at Trinity United Methodist Church, 3030 S. 8th Ave, Yuma

November 27: 1st Sunday of Advent

Message: *The Weapons of Light*
Read: Luke 21:25-26, 28, 34-36

December 4: 2nd Sunday of Advent

Message: *Again! Prepare the Way!*
Read: Matthew 3:1-3

December 11: 3rd Sunday of Advent

Message: *Again! God Chooses the Least!*
Read: Luke 1:46b-55

December 18: 4th Sunday of Advent

Message: *Again! The Spirit Gives New Life!*
Read: Matthew 1:18-25

December 24: Christmas Eve

5:00 pm—Family Christmas Eve Service
7:00 pm—Christmas Eve Worship with Candlelight
11:00 pm—Traditional Candlelight Service

Message: *Again! A Child is Born to Us!*
Read: Luke 2:1-20

December 25: Christmas Day

10:00 am—One Service, No Sunday School
Message: *Again! Welcome Christ, Light of the World!*
Read: John 1:1-14



Advent/Christmas Worship Schedule

Wesley Community Center Annual Christmas Adoption Program

Although the annual “Christmas Adoption” program at Wesley Community Center has much support, they still have a need for “adopting” 26 Sewing Class participants (adult women). Please contact Betty Mathis, 602-252-5624, if you are able to help. You will be sent specific requests that the students have suggested (usually blenders, bathroom towels, kitchen items, gift cards, etc.).

The Wesley Community Center, a 501 (c)3 located in South Central Phoenix, provides programs for children, youth, adults, families, and senior adults. The Center is also a National Mission Institution of the United Methodist Church and a Primary Partner of the Valley of the Sun United Way.

Report from United Methodist Women

“You already know how to please God in your daily living, for you know the commands we gave you from the Lord Jesus himself. Now we beg you—yes, we demand of you in the name of the Lord Jesus—that you live more and more closely to that ideal.” – 1 Thessalonians 4: 1-2

The November UMW meeting was well attended, even though there was rain. The nominating committee presented the slate of officers for 2017 and there was unanimous acceptance. Officers will be inducted at the January meeting. These include: Eva Ndavu, President; Irma Wilson, Vice President; Olive Norris, Secretary; and Karleen Miller, Treasurer. Becky Miller will continue as Chair of Esther Circle; Jeanne Rumbold will move into the Chair for Lydia Circle. The group made a World Thank Offering, and Karleen Miller announced that we had met our Mission pledge for the year 2016.

On November 4, several members attended the Northwest Unit meeting of Church Women United. This was held at New Song United Methodist Church in Surprise, and the topic was “Sharing Gifts at the Table.”

The Christmas Tea was scheduled for December 3. This is our main social event of the year and reveals all the hostess skills of our members as well as those of the United Methodist Men. The men traditionally serve the tea, provide back-up assistance in the kitchen, and also help with clean-up. The festive tables are decorated individually, which provides lots of variety for the holiday season. Entertainment was provided by Valerie and Anthony Rolandu, a world-renowned accordion duo. This elegant event included prayer, music and gift-giving.

Glendale Glitters is the premier social event in the city. It is a wonderful time of year, when we can interact with the community on the weekends leading up to Christmas. Many UMW serve as sanctuary hostesses and guides for the thousands of visitors to historical downtown Glendale. It is an opportunity to reach out to non-Christians and explain our beliefs and customs. Many former members return at this time of year to visit the church and remember past experiences with friends and congregation. The highlight of each evening is a concert by the church choir or a visiting group. Glendale Glitter and Glow is a similarly popular event held on the first weekend of the new year (January 7) when the sanctuary will again be open to the community at large.

On December 18, a group of 18 will attend a matinee performance of *Black Nativity* at the Helen K. Mason Performing Arts Center in Phoenix. This classic in American literature tells the Christmas story with a unique interpretation using scripture, song and dance by well-known Harlem Renaissance author and poet Langston Hughes. The Black Theater Troupe of Phoenix has produced this show annually to sold-out audiences. This song-play touches a special chord in the hearts of all at this wonderful time of the year.

As the calendar year draws to a close, we Christians are actually rejuvenated by the celebration of the birth of our savior Jesus Christ, the event that begins our worship calendar. Christmas activities guide our days and nights, and it is this event that unites us.

—Eva Ndavu, Acting President

Church News & Notes

For more information, contact the church office 623-939-1409 or rebecca@glendalefirstumc.com



See your Sunday bulletin folder for the Christmas poinsettia order form.

The cost is \$10.00 per plant. Poinsettias will be placed on the chancel on Christmas Eve, and may be picked up after the 11:00 pm worship service. If you cannot pick them up after the 11:00 pm service, you may pick them up after 10:00 am worship on Christmas Day, or during office hours on December 27.

Singles' Time Out

5:30-6:30 pm Saturdays in the Patio Room at Cross Roads UMC, 7901 North Central Avenue, Phoenix

Single adults of all ages meet each Saturday at Cross Roads UMC for an hour of praise and prayer, reflection and renewal. "Time Out" is followed by dinner at a nearby restaurant except for the second Saturday of the month. That's the day to celebrate birthdays with a potluck celebration followed by parlor games like Scrabble, Dominoes, RummiKube, and more. For more information, please call (602) 258-1207 or (602) 944-1524.



Staff Christmas Gifts

We like to give a Christmas gift to each of our staff members as a token of our appreciation for the work they do for us all year long.

Additionally, we provide a Christmas lunch for the AZTEC cleaning crew, as well as our staff and volunteers who can join us for lunch. We need your support to do this, and are asking for donations to make it possible.

Use your giving envelopes and designate "Staff Gifts" in the space that says "Other." Donations will be accepted through Sunday, December 18th. Thank you very much!

Gifts You Cannot Open

During this holiday season, please consider sharing your precious gift of time to bring joy to others! Just a couple hours per month will transform life for an isolated elder. Take the next step by registering for an upcoming Duet volunteer orientation at (602) 274-5022 or www.duetaz.org.

Financial gifts also lead to free-of-charge, transformational services. Donations to Duet qualify for the dollar-for-dollar AZ Charitable Tax Credit. The credit doubled this year to \$400 (for individuals) and \$800 (for couples)! The credit may be claimed in addition to public school and school tuition organization credits. Visit www.duetaz.org to volunteer, donate, or request help. Thank you!



African Team Ministries Sale—December 4 & 11

The Missions Team will have crafts and jewelry for sale on Sunday, December 4 and 11. These are to support African Team Ministries and are made by women in Africa. They will be displayed during Coffee Hour Fellowship.

ATM is a Christian ministry working as an intermediary between African and American churches. This support goes to funding orphan and refugee relief missions and evangelism in East Africa. Funds are sent directly to their partnering Bishops to provide school fees, tuition, books and uniforms. This ensures children receive an education and a measure of stability needed to rebuild their lives.

Please stop by our table and help support this important ministry!

Know the 10 Signs—Alzheimer's Education

If you or someone you know is experiencing memory loss or behavioral changes, it's time to learn the facts. Early detection of Alzheimer's disease gives you a chance to begin drug therapy, enroll in clinical studies and plan for the future. This interactive workshop features video clips of people with Alzheimer's disease.

The Alzheimer's Assn will hold this class on Monday, December 5 in Room 101 at 1:30 pm. There is no charge to attend, but registration is required.

For registration or questions, **please call Martha Burruel at 602.528.0545**, or see the website <http://www.alz.org/dsw>.

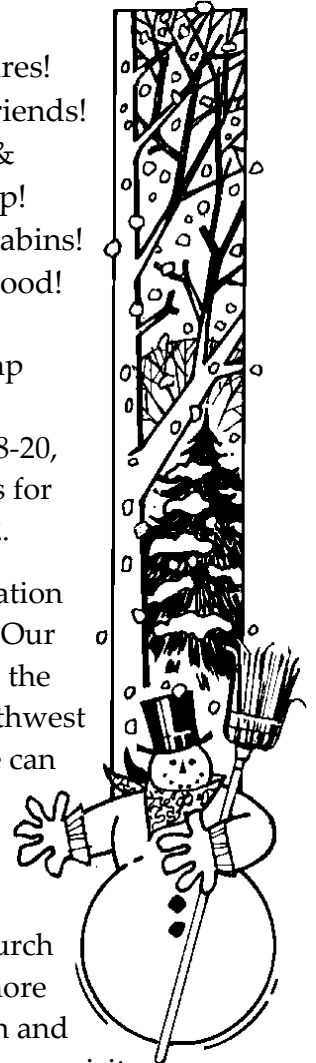
Jr/Sr High Winter Camp at Mingus Mountain

- Snow!
- Campfires!
- New Friends!
- Music & Worship!
- Cozy Cabins!
- Great Food!

Winter camp takes place February 18-20, 2017, and is for grades 7-12.

The registration fee is \$130. Our church and the Desert Southwest Conference can provide financial assistance.

Call the church office for more information and scholarships, or visit <http://www.dsccamps.org/>



From the Treasurer...

Don't forget that all giving for the 2016 tax year must be received by Sunday, December 25. The counters will make the final deposit on Monday, December 26. If you use online banking, please make sure your checks arrive in our office the week before December 25 so they will be included on your 2016 giving statement.

Boxes and packets of giving envelopes for 2017 will be available at church the first two Sundays in January.

As always, you can stop by the office for more envelopes and we keep a supply in the church narthex, too. Thank you!



*From out of my memories
In thought I can see
The family at Christmas
And our freshly cut tree.*

*We had not much money
For bright finery;
But that didn't matter
To us children, you see.*

*We strung up some popcorn
And tied gingham bows.
Beauty is in the eye;
So the old saying goes.*

*As for us children,
We were proud of our tree;
For it held the meaning
Of what Christmas should be*

*Giving and sharing
Your heart and your love
For that was the first gift
Sent from heaven above.*

*So let's not forget
What Christmas does mean;
It's not about presents
But to honor a King.*

The Nativity Story

How well do you know the Biblical account of the Christmas story?
Test your knowledge with this multiple choice test.

1. When was Jesus born?

a. December 24th b. December 25th c. December 26th d. The exact date is not known

2. What does Jesus' other name, "Emmanuel", mean?

a. He who is God b. Anointed One c. Son of God d. God with us

3. Why did Joseph and Mary go to the city of David?

a. To celebrate their wedding b. To visit Joseph's parents c. To seek the prophet Simeon d. To pay taxes

4. In what city was Jesus born?

a. Galilee b. Cyprus c. Bethlehem d. Nazareth

5. Why were Mary and Joseph unable to stay in an inn?

a. The innkeeper hated them b. They didn't have enough money c. All the inns were closed d. There was no room for them

6. With what did Mary wrap newborn Jesus?

a. Joseph's cape b. scarves c. swaddling d. a blanket

7. After Jesus was born, where did Mary lay Him?

a. in a pile of hay b. she held him c. on the ground d. in a feeding trough

8. What did the angel tell the shepherds?

a. to not be afraid b. the location of the newborn Savior c. how to recognize the newborn Savior d. all of these

9. Who visited Joseph, Mary and Jesus on the very night Jesus was born?

a. shepherds b. shepherds, wise men, & all those dwelling in Bethlehem c. wise men d. wise men and shepherds

10. The wise men traveled _____ to Jerusalem.

a. Northward b. Eastward c. Westward d. Southward

11. How many wise men brought gifts to Jesus?

a. two b. three c. The Bible doesn't say d. one

12. Who persistently asked the wise men about baby Jesus?

a. King Elias b. King Pilate c. King Herod d. King David

13. Why did this king want to learn more about Jesus' whereabouts?

a. He wanted Jesus to heal him b. He wanted to kill Jesus c. He wanted to worship Jesus d. He wanted Jesus to be his heir

14. What gift did the wise men NOT give Jesus?

a. myrrh b. frankincense c. silver d. gold

15. What was Jesus' approximate age when the wise men presented him with gifts?

a. 12 years old b. 6 years old c. infancy d. 2 years old

16. In which books of the Bible is the Nativity story recorded?

a. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John b. Matthew and Mark c. Mark and Luke d. Matthew and Luke

Answers: 1. d, 2. d, 3. d, 4. c, 5. d, 6. c, 7. d, 8. d, 9. a, 10. c, 11. c, 12. c, 13. b, 14. d, 15. d, 16. d

"Glendale Glitters"

Our Sanctuary will be open during the "Glendale Glitters" festival Friday and Saturday nights from 7:00-9:00 pm through December 17. Stop by to enjoy wonderful Christmas music in our historic church. Performances and dates listed below:

Friday, December 2

A Mariachi Christmas by Guillermo Saenz

Guillermo Saenz displays his mastery of all forms of Latin music. His performance includes traditional Mexican songs, mariachi-style music and popular Latin melodies...an excellent performer presenting an exceptional program of one guitar and one voice.

Saturday, December 3

The Choirs of Phoenix College; Kenny Miller, Dir.

The Phoenix College Choirs have been an honored guest for the last several years. Their performance is one of the highlights of the schedule! The individual groups each perform selections from their Christmas programs, displaying their great range of talent.

Friday, December 9

Small Group Instrumental Concert

Our own church musicians play holiday selections.

Saturday, December 10

Desert Overture Jazz Band; Scott Helms, Artistic Dir.

You will rock and roll and also enjoy the swing of this group of exciting performers.

Friday, December 16

G.F. Handel's Messiah Chorus Sing-a-long

We will host an open singing of the popular chorus from the Christmas portion of Handel's Messiah. Pre-recorded accompaniment and direction will be provided. Invite your musical friends, bring your copy of "Messiah" and join in this entertaining, fun-filled program!

Saturday, December 17

Traditional Evening Christmas Concert

The Chancel Choir is honored to present its annual Christmas Program in our beautiful sanctuary. Included are traditional carols, contemporary Christmas songs and holiday favorites. The Choir will be joined by Echoes of Praise and invited instrumentalists. The spiritual importance of Christmas will be celebrated in this beautiful evening of music.



Holiday Schedule

Christmas Worship Services

5:00 pm Family Christmas Eve Service

Our children and youth will host this family-oriented worship service.

7:00 pm Christmas Eve Worship with Candlelight

*Contemporary, jazzy music, piano & instruments
Message: Again! A Child is Born to Us!*

11:00 pm Classic Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

*Traditional music with our Chancel Choir.
Message: Again! A Child is Born to Us!*

10:00 am Christmas Morning Worship

*One service at 10:00 am, no Sunday School
Message: Again! Welcome Christ, Light of the World!*

Our sanctuary will be ringing with Christmas music on Glendale Glitters' weekend nights, but you can still enjoy the lights during the week! Glendale Glitters' lights are on every evening, even though programmed events are only happening on Friday and Saturday evenings through Dec. 17. The non-event nights, Sundays through Thursdays 6:00-10:00 pm, are a perfect time to enjoy a more serene experience and take in the 1.5 million lights, covering 16 blocks of Glendale's Historic Downtown!



First United
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7102 N. 58th Drive
Glendale, AZ
623.939.1409
glendalefirstumc.com



Christmas is Coming!

The Riner Outreach Center is joining up with Wednesday Open Worship to provide **TOYS** and **SOCKS** to members of our community. You can help by bringing new and unwrapped toys and socks and dropping them off in the box outside the sanctuary.

Note: The church office will close at noon on December 23, and be closed Monday, December 26. Merry Christmas!

Deadline for the December Newsletter is November 14. Your items for the newsletter should be submitted to the church office by 3:00 pm.
email: office@glendalefirstumc.com
fax: 623-236-9284

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