

Circuit Rider



A monthly publication of the First United Methodist Church of Glendale • December 2017

Changed By the World or Changed by God?

Like it or not, our environment and our experiences in life change us—sometimes for the better, and other times for the worse. Try as we may, we will never stop the forces that come at us. Billy Joel said it best in the song, *“We Didn’t Start the Fire, it was always burning, since the world’s been turning. We didn’t start the fire, no we didn’t light it, but we tried to fight it.”*

We cannot control the forces or the people in our world. We can, however, choose how to respond to those forces. We always have a choice. In First Thessalonians the followers of Jesus are encouraged to give God *“thanks*

in every situation.” This is one of the most challenging aspects of Christianity. Honestly, I could never thank God for mass shootings, murders, or any sort of violence in our community or world! But this was not the intended advice. Rather, the writer was encouraging the Thessalonian community to lean heavily on God’s promises at all times—especially in the most trying times.

Whenever I have trusted that God was with me during the most challenging times of life—including illness—I found the courage to respond in love rather than hate. I believe this is

the key to giving thanks in all situations! We must lean on God, especially in difficult times. Whenever we feel the foundations shaking, and our world changing, we must *“examine everything carefully and hang on to what is good.”* (1 Thessalonians 5:21, Common English Translation). By clinging to God through all things, we are able to *“avoid every kind of evil.”* (1 Thessalonians 5:22, CET)

It’s true the world will change us. But instead of reacting with *an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth* (read Matthew 5:38-48), we

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First United Methodist Church

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Office Hours: Monday–Thursday 9:00 am–3:00 pm; closed Friday at 12:00 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



December 3: First Sunday of Advent*Mountain-Quaking Love!*

Read: Isaiah 64:1-3

Preaching: Pastor Kim

December 10: Second Sunday of Advent*Heart-Changing Humility!*

Read: Mark 1:1-8

Preaching: Pastor Kim

December 17: Third Sunday of Advent*Spirit-Inspiring Life!*

Read: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Preaching: Pastor Kim

December 24: Fourth Sunday of Advent*Life-Altering Obedience...*

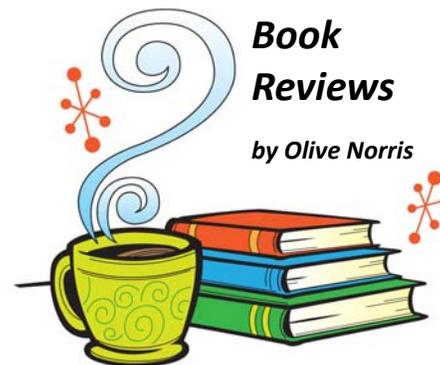
Read: Luke 1:26-38

Preaching: Pastor Kim

December 24: Christmas Eve**5:00 pm** – Family Service: *The Symbols of Christmas***7:00 pm** – Blended Candlelight Service (no communion)**11:00 pm** – Traditional Candlelight Service with Communion**December 31: First Sunday After Christmas***A Detour on the Way Home*

Read: Luke 2:22-32; Revelation 21:1-6a

Preaching: The Reverend Tom Wick

**Book Reviews**

by Olive Norris

UMW Books:***Miss Brenda and the Loveladies*
by Brenda Spahn & Irene Zutell**

A powerful book about what one lady and her faith can do. When Brenda Spahn faced a possible jail sentence, she checked out the local women's prison. She was soon taking the story of her faith inside the gruesome facility. Brenda felt that she was led to open her mansion to 7 paroled convicts to show the system what love and faith can do. She continues to rehabilitate women in a renovated hospital that has room for 400 women and their children. I urge you to read this fascinating book and then Google her name to see the results of her faith.

CBS: Christmas Books!

How can I choose just one book of the many Christmas-themed books that we have? Christine and I have tried to separate them for the season and you will find inspiring, light mystery and yes, even a western story or two. So

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Room at the Inn Project Update — By Rev. Dr. Dottie Escobedo-Frank

This article was originally published at <https://revdottie.org/2017/11/21/room-at-the-inn-project/>

The Inn Project is nearing its one year anniversary on December 14th! We started last December when we received a call from ICE asking the question, “Can you house immigrants with children who are being released to go to their families?” It was Christmas time, the time when we remember that there was no room at the inn for Jesus. Where would we house these children and parents? Was there a church that would open their doors right away?

Two churches opened doors quickly: First United Methodist of Tucson, and later, Christ Church, UM. The first guest we received was a father, Jesús, and his children, from Honduras. Many people stepped up to volunteer, and UMCOR helped with starting funds. It was a harried, furiously-pulled-together plan, but somehow, it worked.

I remember that first December well. The families were tired and confused and hungry. They really wanted a shower, and then food, and then sleep. Some needed sleep first, so we watched their children so parents, weary from traveling across 2, 3, & 4 country borders, plus detention, could get much-needed sleep.

We heard their stories: the kindness of strangers in towns across their countries and Mexico; the scary times and the times of hunger; and the dangers they left in their own homes. Being migrant means moving because it is a matter of life and death, not because of any dreams for a richer life. It just happened...and in their stories you could hear the longing for home and for mama and little brother...

Recently I dropped by to see how The Inn Project was doing. There were seven families with many little children running around, and playing ball, and shyly saying hello. The parents were so glad and grateful for our hospitality. Deep facial creases and soulful eyes showed in their smiles.

Every time I visit, I get a sense of peace about my own life. They have suffered so much, and I have it so easy in comparison. And my heart opens up to their smiles, and their thanks, and their view of living. It's Christmas time again, and The Inn Project is still housing guests who are seeking to connect with their families in the US. I'm wondering if you can help us keep our doors open for them? Perhaps there is a special Christmas offering or gift that can be directed their way? If so, send a check to The Desert Southwest Conference, with “The Inn Project” in the memo. I know the children, and their parents would be so very grateful for whatever you can do.

Because it's Christmas time. And we are trying to provide room at The Inn.

Knock knock.

Who's there?

Jesus.

Jesus, Who?

Jesús, from Honduras...

(fade to dreams...)



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.

You may also pick up your plant on Tuesday, December 26, from 9:00 am – 12:00 noon.



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 17th. 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!



From the Church Treasurer...

Don't forget that all giving for the 2017 tax year must be received by Sunday, December 24. The counters will make the final deposit on Tuesday, 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 2017 giving statement. Boxes and packets of giving envelopes for 2018 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!

Changed By God

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can choose to be transformed into a force for good and a response of love. Every challenge and tragedy we see as an opportunity for God's grace will bring us more peace than reacting in a negative way. And...*the God of peace [will] cause you to be completely dedicated to him; and...your spirit, soul, and body...intact and blameless* (1 Thessalonians 5:23a, CET). No longer will we be "conformed to the patterns of this world," instead, we will "be transformed by...God's will." (Romans 12:2, CEB)

Striving to be thankful in all things,



Book Reviews

(Continued from page 2)

stop the mad December rush and take some time to sit down, put your feet up and read a good book from the Christian Book Shelf.

P.S. We have about 600 books, some on the shelf and some in a cupboard. We will try and rotate them periodically, so keep checking back for a good book!

Single United Methodists Annual Christmas Gala

One and all are invited to Single United Methodists & Friends' annual Christmas gala, 5:00 pm on Saturday, December 2 at First United Methodist, 5510 N. Central Ave., Phoenix.

This hugely popular event starts with dinner and a Christmas program, followed by the City of Phoenix's spectacular Electric Light Parade.

Cost for dinner and reserved curbside seating is \$15 for adults and \$12 for children under 12; parking is \$7 per car in advance. For more information or to RSVP, please call Max McQueen, Cross Roads UMC, 602-944-1524.



2018 Administrative Training

Plan to join the members of the West and East Districts for Administrative Training for new and continuing local church committee members.

Saturday, January 13, 2018

Administrative Training

9:30-11:30 AM

Dove of the Desert UMC

7201 W Beardsley, Glendale, AZ

Training will include concurrent workshops for ...

- ⇒ Staff/Parish Relations
- ⇒ Finance
- ⇒ Trustees

Registration is required.

Register Online at:

<https://dscumc.org/2018-admin-training>

Questions, contact Carla Whitmire, 602-798-8236 or

cwhitmire@dscumc.org

Register Today

Successful Work Day— Thank You!

A big THANK YOU to all the people who participated in our November 4 work day:

Doug and Linda Hardesty, Ted and Azzie Turner, Al Dixon, Paul Cleaveland, Erma Garling, Linda Triolo, JoAnn and Tyrus Kissler, Andrew and Ethan Rubio, Jeanne Rumbold.

We painted all the wooden benches and latticework outside, swept, raked, trimmed and washed. Paul did a walk through of the Sunday School rooms, fixing things, noting jobs to be done, and videotaping for inventory. There is always more to do, but we accomplished a lot. Taking care of our church property requires a lot of volunteers. We have a dedicated team, for which we are thankful.

The Miller Family had a prior engagement Saturday, so they came on Friday and worked. Thank you again to all participants!



Extraordinary Love: 2018 Winter Camp @ Mingus

Saturday, February 17 - Monday, February 19

Join us for a fun and inspirational youth retreat at our annual Winter Camp with this year's special guest, Wayne Kerr!

Wayne Kerr was the music leader at Youth 2015 in Orlando, Florida, and will be joining us for our 2018 Winter Camp!

Wayne shares his heart through music and speaking, regularly performing alone or with his band, 180-200 days per year, all over the US and abroad! Wayne has been featured at events like Resurrection with over 12,000 students, Student Life Camps, United Methodist Youth15 National Event, and many more. Wayne will tell you that some of his favorite events were ones that had 12 kids in attendance.

Camp participants will be able to engage in worship and conversation with Wayne in the smaller, more intimate setting of our own Mingus Mountain Methodist Camp.

Winter Camp is open to youth currently in grades 6–12, with options to register as an individual (\$100) or as part of a chaperoned church group (\$80). Chaperones are free with groups of at least 4 youth! Participants will experience the opportunity to connect with peers, leaders, and God, as well as enjoy outdoor winter activities (weather permitting), amazing music, fun activities, great food, and faith-filled conversation with Wayne and other Christian leaders about the “extraordinary love” of God!

Camp begins with arrivals at 10:00 am Saturday, February 17 and will end at 11:00 am Monday morning, after closing worship. Groups may also choose to arrive early, on Friday, February 16, for an additional \$20/youth. Register at <http://www.minguswintercamp.org/register.html>.



United Methodist Women at Fort Yuma UMC

At the end of October, several UMW members (Pam Jackson, Christine Jones, Eva Ndavu, and Linda Triolo) from FUMC Glendale attended the Desert Southwest Conference annual celebration in Yuma. The event was sponsored by UMW of Gila Mountain UMC. This was a wonderful opportunity to interact with our sisters in faith from other churches in the area.

The weekend event started on Friday afternoon with Ubuntu activities. Many of us chose to visit the Fort Yuma United Methodist Church on the Quechan Reservation near the territorial prison museum. Built in 1921, this is one of the oldest Methodist churches in the state of Arizona. Though membership has dwindled to less than fifty, the women are working steadfastly to preserve this historical monument and sustain the congregation for future generations.



Three of the women told of their lifelong Christian commitment to the community.

Norraine Hill told of how she used to teach Sunday school and tell the small children about Jesus. She continues to do so. Ila Mae Dunzweiler and Barbara Levy told of how the church grew from the Indian Mission in 1900 to a chartered church in 1992. They told of the Rainbow Chapel, the beaded cross, and stained glass window. These three convinced their lifelong friend, Dorothea Montague, to also relate her Christian story at the nearby Catholic cathedral on the other side of the hill.

Through the years, this church has received much assistance from other Methodist congregations in the Yuma area as well as NOMADS, Women's Home Missionary Society, and the tribal community.

Other highlights of the weekend included the program on Living the Charter for Racial Justice, words from Missionary Nan McCurdy, a skit on promoting the UMW reading program, and the guest speaker, Tweedy Sombrero Navarrette, the first Native American woman to be ordained in the Desert Southwest Conference.

—Eva Ndavu, UMW President

It is also with great pleasure that I announce that two new officers will be serving UMW in the new year: Linda Biggar will be the Sunshine Secretary and Marty Cole will join the Committee on Nominations. All the other officers and mission coordinators were re-elected from 2017.



FOR TO US
A SON IS GIVEN

Christmas Eve Worship



Oh sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth!



Psalm 96:1, ESV



8:00 am Prelude

Early morning worship with Holy Communion—in Fellowship Hall

9:00 am Traditional Sunday Morning Worship

Our Chancel Choir sings at this service in our sanctuary

11:11 am Blended Sunday Morning Worship

A mix of traditional and contemporary songs with our praise band

5:00 pm Family Christmas Eve Service

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

7:00 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship

Contemporary with piano and other instruments

11:00 pm Classic Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with Communion

Traditional music with our Chancel Choir

Please Note: The church office will close at noon on December 22, and both the Riner Office and the church office will be closed the week between Christmas and New Year's Day.

Deadline for the January 2018 Newsletter is December 11. Your items for the newsletter should be submitted to the church office by 3:00 pm.
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