

Open hearts

Open minds

Open doors

**The People of the
United Methodist Church**



Faith United Methodist Church
8640 North 19th Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85021

.....
: Come, sinners, to the gospel-feast, :
: Let every soul be Jesu's guest, :
: You need not one be left behind, :
: For God hath bidden all mankind. :
:
: -From hymn by Charles Wesley :
.....



The *Koinonia* is a monthly publication from Faith United Methodist Church. Its purpose is to provide items of interest and information about events and people related to the ministry of the church locally, district-wide and in the conference.

KOINONIA
Monthly Newsletter from
Faith United Methodist Church
8640 North 19th Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85021

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*Members of Faith UMC: Volunteers of Time,
Talent, Prayers, Gifts, Service and Witness.*



Koinonia

Faith United Methodist Church

8640 North 19th Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85021

Phone: (602) 943-3465

From the **PASTOR**—

March 2017

On March 1, we will enter into the Season of Lent. This is an especially holy season for us as followers of Christ, as it is the time when we consider the things we've done during this past year – especially the ways we have sinned against God and each other – and contemplate how we can do better during the coming year to be the kind of people God would have us to be.



As a child, I don't remember observing the season of Lent, and I certainly don't remember participating in any Ash Wednesday worship services. It wasn't something the Methodist Church of my childhood did, and in fact, if you take a look at Methodist Church history, making special efforts to observe Ash Wednesday and Lent weren't part of the official worship resources until the 1990s. So if it seems like this is something new for United Methodists, in a way, you're right!

By way of contrast, Easter has always been a big deal in the church. But the weeks leading up to Easter? Not so much. But I would argue that when we do observe the season of Lent – when we spend 40 days (not including Sundays) contemplating the way we've lived our lives and what we ought to have done differently – that makes the joy of Easter that

much more...well, joyful! So I'm glad the United Methodist Church has revived the tradition of observing Lent, and I pray that our observance of Lent at Faith UMC will be meaningful for all.

God Bless,

Pastor Jody

Upcoming Sermons

As we enter into the Season of Lent, our Sermon Series called *Christ Is For Us*, will follow the Revised Common Lectionary Lenten Season Scriptures. It will help us explore God's saving and redeeming love and the new life offered to us through Christ. The series includes an accompanying Lenten Study that is being offered on Wednesday mornings at 10 AM at the church. So, as this most holy season begins, we encourage you to immerse yourself in the incredible, sacrificial love of God through Christ.

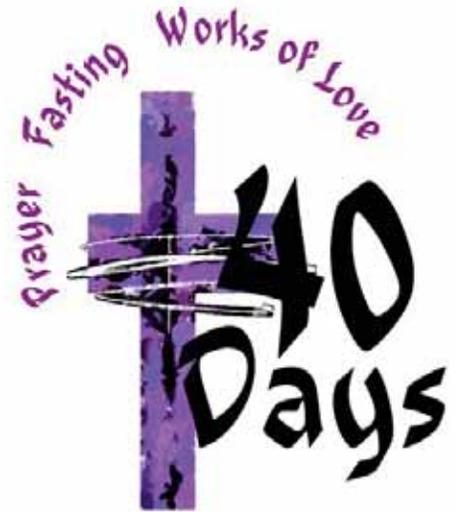
Christ is For Us

- March 1 – Ash Wednesday Worship Service, 7:00 PM @ Faith UMC
- March 5 – “A Place to Begin” (First Sunday of Lent)
- March 12 – “Faith for the Journey” (Second Sunday of Lent)
- March 19 – “Renewed by the Spirit” (Third Sunday of Lent)

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Upcoming Sermons

- March 26 – “A Study in Contrasts” (Fourth Sunday of Lent)
- April 2 – “Waiting for Resurrection” (Fifth Sunday of Lent)
- April 9 – “The Passion of the Christ” (Palm Sunday)
- April 13 – Maundy Thursday Worship (Service information to be determined)
- April 14 – Good Friday Worship (Service information to be determined)
- April 16 – “Tributes to Christ Jesus” (Easter Sunday)



Thinking Theologically with Pastor Jody

“Listen here, mortal: God has already made abundantly clear what good is, and what YHWH needs from you: simply do justice, love kindness, and humbly walk with your God.”

Micah 6:8 (The Inclusive Bible)

My friends, we are living in troubling times. So many of our systems are broken to the point that no one truly understands how they can be fixed. Those who are currently in power in this country are promoting policies that are



breaking up families and causing people to be filled with fear. Those who have hate in their hearts feel emboldened to take that hate to the next level by destroying property and confronting people, even to the point of doing physical harm. Rather than trying to understand one another – our desires, our fears, our religious traditions, and our feelings – many people in this country are acting based on preconceived notions of what “the other” might do to them or to their families. It seems like every day when I listen to the news, some new hate crime or hate-filled act has been committed, and it breaks my heart...but it also inspires me to speak out.

God, speaking through the Hebrew prophet Micah, makes it abundantly clear what God expects from us: We are to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God.

So what does that mean exactly? Well, let's break it down, shall we? The word **justice** is defined as “the quality of being fair and reasonable” or “the administration of the law or authority.” So as I see it, “doing justice” is more than just obeying the law. It's doing what is right, what is fair, what is reasonable. Is it fair and reasonable to rip families apart by enforcing unjust immigration laws? Is it fair and reasonable to deny people access to this country because they come from a country where the majority of those who worship belong to a religion other than Christianity? I think God would say “no.” Because elsewhere, throughout the Bible, we find instances where God demands that we welcome the immigrant and the stranger, and we find instances where God demands that we treat people with fairness and dignity. So “doing justice” means doing what is

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right in the eyes of God rather than through some other lenses.

God also demands that we love kindness, which I think is pretty straightforward. **Kindness** is defined as “the quality of being friendly, generous, and considerate.” It means we lend a helping hand or a listening ear, not just toward those we know and love, but toward those we don’t know, and even those we may not want to love. Jesus reminds us that we are not only to love our neighbors, but also our enemies, and we must pray for those who would do us harm. Being kind is what we as Christians are meant to be – and yet, we often fall short of this goal. It isn’t always easy being kind toward other people, especially those who are different than we are, because our nature is to flock toward people who are like us and to fear “the other” – those who are different. But God call us to a higher place. God calls us to be better than what we think is OK. God calls us to **love kindness**...which is the embodiment of Christ.

And finally, we are called to walk humbly with God. The word “humble” is defined as “having or showing a modest or low estimate of one's own importance.” Some synonyms for

humble include *gentle, modest, polite, respectful, and unpretentious*. To me, walking humbly with God means allowing God to guide my footsteps, listening for God’s voice, and letting God’s ways be my ways. It means thinking with the mind of Christ: loving people the way Christ loved, and respecting people the way Christ respected others.

In these troubling times, it’s important for us to rely on the Scriptures for guidance and direction, and it’s important for us to be in prayer for our country, our city, our neighborhood, our church, those that we know and love and those in our community that we don’t yet know. But it’s also important for us to act: we need to work against policies that harm other people – God’s people – and we need to work to promote those policies that are in line with God’s Realm. When we, as followers of Christ, work together, amazing things can happen.

May God continue to bless us, and bless those around us that we can serve. And may God always remind us what it means to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God.

Grace and Peace, *Pastor Jody*

Chancel Choir and Handbells Ensemble PRACTICE SCHEDULES



Choir Practice -> Wednesdays @ 7:30— 9 PM
-> Sundays @ 8:30 AM
Handbells Practice -> Sundays after fellowship



Connecting with Faith UMC

Website:

faithumcphoenix.org

Videos of Sunday sermons:

faithumcphoenix.org/sermon-videos/

On Facebook

facebook.com/FaithUMCPhoenix

[facebook.com/groups/](https://facebook.com/groups/FaithUMCPhxGroup)

[FaithUMCPhxGroup](https://facebook.com/groups/FaithUMCPhxGroup)

Deadline for the
April 2017
issue of the *Koinonia* will be
Friday, March 26th.
Please submit all articles,
information, and photos
to Shane Taber, editor.
(sctaber56@gmail.com)

Lent and Easter at Faith UMC

This year during the season of Lent, our theme is *Christ Is For Us*. This is a lectionary-based sermon series with an accompanying study book that we will be using during our Wednesday morning study group. The church has purchased several copies of the study book, not only for those who participate in the Wednesday morning group but for those who would like to read along during the series or who are interested in engaging in further study on their own. These books are available in the church office for those who are interested. In her introduction in the study book, author April Yamasaki writes:

After all, the Lenten reflection on repentance, suffering, and death exists not for its own sake or purpose. Instead, Lent points beyond itself to Easter, points beyond itself to life and spiritual renewal. Confession and repentance hold the promise of forgiveness and the power to live a new life in the Spirit. The suffering of Jesus – so horribly wrong and undeserved – reveals the depth of his divine-yet-human compassion, courage, and character. His gruesome death led to glorious resurrection, and the risen Christ continues to offer resurrection and new life for us today. When I look at Lent this way, I realize that Lent is really all about life...

*In this season of Lent, as we reflect on Jesus' journey to the cross, we can rest assured that his life, death, and resurrection are **for us** – for the woman who anointed him; for Judas who betrayed him; for the disciples who ran; for Peter who denied him; for the priests who accused him; for Barabbas who was released in his place; for Pilate who condemned him to*

*death; for his mother and others lamenting at the cross; for the soldiers who gambled for his clothes; for the crowds and scholars and prostitutes and tax collectors; and for all of us today whatever our age and station in life. God sent God's Son for the world as Savior, Emmanuel, God-who-is-with-us. **Christ is "for" us in the sense of Christ being meant for us, sent by God's purposeful, loving will to save us and***

make us whole.

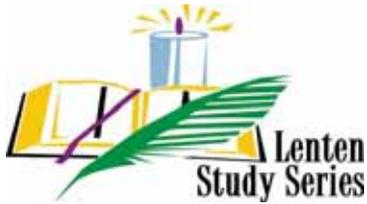
As we embark on the Lenten journey together, my prayer is that we will all gain a better understanding of the ways Christ is for each and every one of us. May God bless our journey together.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Jody



Ash Wednesday Prayer: Merciful God, we know we have sinned in what we have thought and said, in the wrong we have done and in the good we have not done. We have sinned in ignorance; we have sinned in weakness; we have sinned through our own deliberate fault. We are truly sorry. We repent and turn to you. Forgive us, for our Savior Christ's sake, and renew our lives to the glory of your name. Amen.



FUMC's Midweek Adult Study Group begins its spring Lenten class on Wednesday, March 7th.

This study will continue for 7 weeks through the end of April and will use *Christ is for Us* by Canadian Mennonite pastor, April Yamasaki, as its text. It will support Pastor Jody's Lenten sermon series.

All are welcome and invited to join this study group, which meets weekly on Wednesdays at 10:00 AM in Room 1-2.

Faith Lunch Bunch News

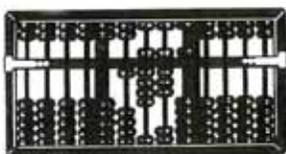
by LaVonna Goudie

The Faith Lunch Bunch meets monthly on the third Thursday at 11:30 AM for lunch at a different spot each month. For February, a group of fifteen ladies enjoyed a variety of Mexican dishes at Los Compadres Mexican Restaurant on Northern Avenue.

On March 16th, we will meet at Abacus Inn Chinese Restaurant located at 3509 West Thunderbird Road, in Thunderbird Square off North 35th Avenue.

All are welcome to join in the group as we share food and fellowship. We look forward to seeing another large group!

ABACUS INN



Sunday Post-Service Discussions

Looking for opportunities to dig a little deeper after Pastor Jody's sermons? Please freely join one or both hour-long small groups.

HOPE= Honest Open Perspective Exchange

This lively discussion group meets after the service during Fellowship Time on the second and third Sundays. Our March meetings, led by Karen Clark, will take place on 3/12 and 3/19 from 11:15 AM. So bring your coffee and snacks to Room 4 and join the conversation!

Our HOPE group is interested in the essential parts of our democracy. We consist of nonpartisan, intergenerational, old and new Faith members.

4SWBS = 4th Sunday Women's Bible Study



On Sunday 3/26, the 4th Sunday Women's Bible Study will meet from 11:15 AM to discuss a selected daily devotional with questions from *The Upper Room*. We also hear the scriptural passage read in 3 different languages, English, Spanish and Tamil.

Led by Shane Taber and Eunice Moreno Moses, all FUMC women are invited to join our faith-filled discussions.

MISSION STATEMENT

Faith United Methodist Church

Faith United Methodist Church is an inclusive* Christian congregation dedicated to the care of its constituents in order to serve the local community; and in co-operation with other faith-based organizations, to reach out to all persons* who seek personal acceptance, require sustaining assistance, or yearn for a meaningful life purpose beyond self.



Joshua's Journey



To My Faith Family:

It is with exciting joy that I share with you the next step in ministry that God has called me to: I have been offered and have accepted the role of coordinator/supervisor of the program that I have been a part of since I began working for Empact in 2015.

The Comprehensive Community Health Program is designed for those on the margins of society with mental illness or substance abuse who need support and guidance as they participate in their own treatment. I work with great staff of 12 who have life experiences that they can offer to our clients during their treatment.

We also offer a permanent supportive housing program which helps the chronically homeless with stable housing. The program is built on a "housing first" model which demonstrates that, in order to be "well" emotionally and spiritually, housing needs to be the first priority.

During the last two years, I have come to understand much more about myself and those who I serve (and with whom I serve). I am thankful for all that God has allowed me to do in this field while affirming the ministry that I am called to.

As always, I thank you for your prayerful support.

- *Joshua L Warner, M.Ed. '10; M.Div. '15*

FUMC Grief Group Musings

By Joshua Warner

There was a recent article in the UMC.org's Interpreter online magazine by Polly House discussing mental illness, "Body, mind and spirit connect to create abundant life." Here is some information from the article:

Rev David McAllister-Wilson, president of Wesley Theological Seminary has stated time and again that the human mind is capable of wonderful things, created in the image of God. He declares "We are wired for curiosity and creativity. I believe God made us this way so that we can enjoy the fullness of his creation."

Rev McAllister-Wilson also knows that the mind is a fragile, human organ - this includes how we experience, process, and resolve grief in our lives. Grief can mean different things to

different people, but in essence involves some type of loss - death of a loved one, loss of a job, loss of a relationship - all these things are some of the many issues over which humanity can experience an overarching sadness without the ability to cope.

Rev McAllister-Wilson further states, "Sometimes the best step is to find someone who can help us when we need guidance to get back to the healthy and positive place. Being in community with other people, doing the best to live the life God intended for you and recognizing that we are all tied together as humans are all part of living abundantly."

One of the resources available at Faith UMC is our grief processing group which meets on the first and third Tuesdays of the month. To better fit the varied work schedules found

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in our faith community, the group has decided to move the meetings from 5:00 to 6:00 PM.

The grief processing group is a confidential place where you can come and talk, listen and discuss how grief impacts all of our lives. The group is always open - you can start or stop at any time.

If you have any questions or would like to know more, please contact Pastor Jody or Joshua.

To access the Interepreter article, go to <http://www.interpretermagazine.org/topics/body-mind-and-spirit-connect-to-create-abundant-life>.



**19 NORTH
COMMUNITY
MEETING**
MARCH 16TH
6PM - 8PM
8301 N 19TH AVE
OPEN DOOR FELLOWSHIP



A big **THANK YOU** goes out to **Barbara Babbitt** for her kind donation of hand towels and washcloths for Family Promise. We now have a supply to last a couple of years and replacements for worn out items.



Holy Land Pilgrimage – A Change in Plans

Unfortunately, the Holy Land Pilgrimage scheduled to begin May 15, 2017 has been cancelled due to insufficient interest. We didn't get enough people to sign up, so we had to cancel that trip. However, Pastor Jody has not been deterred! She found another Holy Land tour being led by a UMC clergy couple from Austin, Texas, so she and David have signed up for that trip. One plus is that the cost of this alternate tour is a little bit less than the trip that was planned for May, but it leaves in the middle of October for 10 days instead.



If you have been considering taking a trip to the Holy Land but the timing wasn't right before, you might want to consider getting more information about this trip in October. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Pastor Jody and she will direct you to the right website.

Looking back on February...



February 4th — Sidewalk Sunday School was held on an unseasonably warm Saturday morning. Ariel Luna and David Topping share the scripture passage for the day: 1 Samuel 16:7. "People judge others by what they look like, but I judge people by what is in their hearts." ❤️



February 11th — The "Love Our Community" event, sponsored by the 19th North Initiative, saw a small group from Faith UMC come out to join the work crews and fun. While some spent their time weeding and cleaning up in the parking lot and around the front and sides of our church, others manned the information table at the neighborhood festival held down 19th Avenue at Open Door Fellowship. Thank you to everyone who pitched in to help!



February 18th — Friends and family gathered at the memorial service to remember long-time FUMC member and former president of the United Methodist Men, Ron Blackstone (1947—2017). Ron will be remembered for his many years of service at Faith as well as for his love of minerals and rocks! After the service, a delicious lunch was provided in the Koinonia Room. Continued prayers and love for Susie & family.



Handbell Choir performs on 2/19.



Hi, Sam, Synthia & Leandra!

Happy Birthday to BetteJo!
Blessings to Shyllarajakumari & Rajendran James!





Support, Discussion and Fellowship Groups at Faith UMC

At Faith UMC, we believe in offering our members, friends, and those in the community the opportunity to share with each other their grief, their feelings, and even their frustrations. We do this through a number of different groups that are open to all who wish to attend.

Grief Processing

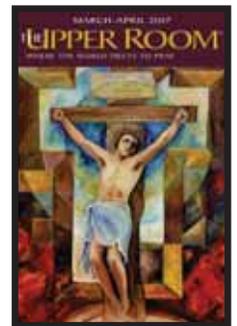
Our Grief Processing group meets at the church on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of the month in the Library (Admin Bldg). Those who are dealing with grief and loss – whether from the death of a family member, the loss of a job, or lifestyle changes related to health issues or other concerns – find this group to be a wonderful time of sharing and support. All are welcome to attend, including church members, constituents, or members of the community.

HOPE Group

Our HOPE (Honest, Open, Perspective Exchange) group meets on the 2nd and 3rd Sunday after worship in Room 4 at the church. Using issues of the day and/or themes included in the morning worship service, this group offers those who attend an opportunity to share their thoughts and concerns. While politics can sometimes be a topic for discussion, this is not a political group. It is intended to be a safe place where ALL perspectives are welcome for discussion.

4th Sunday Women's Bible Study (4SWBS)

On the 4th Sunday of the month following worship, our Women's Bible Study meets in Room 4. Using resources from the Upper Room and other devotionals, the women attending this group share their thoughts on the scriptures and the devotional ideas that go along with them. Women of all ages are welcome and encouraged to attend.



United Methodist Men

Our United Methodist Men's group meets at 8am on the 3rd Saturday of each month for devotions and a hearty breakfast, followed by a business meeting and periodic campus work projects. This group also helps feed the homeless on a bi-monthly (every other month) basis. Men of all ages are encouraged to attend.

Faith Lunch Bunch

Our Lunch Bunch group meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 11:30 am at different restaurants in the area around the church. This time of fellowship is open to church members and non-church members alike. Check the monthly newsletter and the weekly worship bulletins for locations, as they vary from month to month.

Enjoying lunch together at JB's Restaurant in January.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p style="color: green; font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">MARCH 2017</p>	<p>Birthdays:</p> <p>3/1 Eunice Archer 3/2 Betty Altomare 3/7 Ariel Luna 3/11 TJ Darby 3/19 David McPherson 3/25 Jeneferr Olme</p>		<p>1 Ash Wednesday</p> <p>10:00 am Study Group - Rm 1-2 7:00 pm Ash Wednesday Service - Sanctuary 7:30 pm Choir Practice-CR</p>	<p>2</p> <p>5:30 Faith & Wellness - Rm 1-2</p>	<p>3 World Day of Prayer</p>	<p>4</p> <p>10:00 am Sidewalk SS 12:30 pm Roadrunners - K 1:00 pm Recovery-Rm 1-2</p>
	<p>5</p> <p>8:30 am Choir-Sanctuary 9:30 am Worship-Sanctuary 10:45 am Coffee Chat - K 11:00 am Handbells - Rm 1-2 1:00 pm Samoan Worship</p>	<p>6 Office Closed</p> <p>6:00 pm Quilters - Rm 4 6:00 pm TOPS - Rm 1-2</p>	<p>7</p> <p>9:00 am Zippers - Rm 1-2 10:00 am Quilters - Rm 4 6:00 pm Grief Group - Lib</p>	<p>8</p> <p>10:00 am Study Group - IHOP 7:30 pm Choir Practice-CR</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>
<p>12</p> <p>8:30 am Choir-Sanctuary 9:30 am Worship-Sanctuary 10:45 am Coffee Chat - K 11:00 am Handbells - Rm 1-2 11:15 am HOPE - Rm 4 1:00 pm Samoan Worship</p>	<p>13 Office Closed</p> <p>6:00 pm Quilters - Rm 4 6:00 pm TOPS - Rm 1-2</p>	<p>14</p> <p>9:00 am Zippers - Rm 1-2 10:00 am Quilters - Rm 4 6:30 pm Church Council - Rm 4</p>	<p>15</p> <p>10:00 am Study Group - IHOP 7:30 pm Choir Practice-CR</p>	<p>16</p> <p>11:30 am Lunch Bunch - Abacus Inn</p>	<p>17 St Patrick's Day</p> <p>6:00 pm Movie Night- S</p>	<p>18</p> <p>8:00 am UMM Breakfast-K 10:00 am Sidewalk SS 11:00 am C O D A - Rm 1-2 1:00 pm Recovery-Rm 1-2</p>
<p>19</p> <p>8:30 am Choir-Sanctuary 9:30 am Worship-Sanctuary 10:45 am Coffee Chat - K 11:00 am Handbells - Rm 1-2 11:15 am HOPE - Rm 4 1:00 pm Samoan</p>	<p>20 Office Closed</p> <p>6:00 pm Quilters - Rm 4 6:00 pm TOPS - Rm 1-2</p>	<p>21</p> <p>9:00 am Zippers - Rm 1-2 10:00 am Quilters - Rm 4 6:00 pm Grief Group - Lib</p>	<p>22</p> <p>10:00 am Study Group - IHOP 7:30 pm Choir Practice-CR</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p> <p>10:00 am Sidewalk SS 1:00 pm Recovery-Rm 1-2</p>
<p>26 UMCOR Sunday (One Great Hour of Sharing)</p> <p>8:00 am Handbells - Sanctuary 8:30 am Choir-Sanctuary 9:30 am Worship-Sanctuary 10:45 am Coffee Chat - K 11:15 am 4SWBS - Rm 4 1:00 pm Samoan Worship</p>	<p>27 Office Closed</p> <p>6:00 pm Quilters - Rm 4 6:00 pm TOPS - Rm 1-2</p>	<p>28</p> <p>9:00 am Zippers - Rm 1-2 10:00 am Quilters - Rm 4 7:00 pm Neighborhood Outreach - Rm 4</p>	<p>29</p> <p>10:00 am Study Group - IHOP 7:30 pm Choir Practice-CR</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>	<p>Anniversaries</p> <p>3/23 Joey & David Devlin</p>