



First United Methodist Church of Sun City
First Word
DECEMBER 2017



The Longest Night

On Thursday, December 21st, we will be having a special worship service at 3:00 p.m. It is the Winter Solstice, the longest night of the year; the day with the most darkness. This service is sometimes called "Blue Christmas" because not everyone is happy at Christmastime. We have a vision of everything being bright, shiny, and

happy with lots of family and friends at Christmas. Not everyone is at this place. Many are missing loved ones, children, relationships, and the holiday is just another reminder of what they no longer have in their lives. The service of the Longest Night acknowledges the losses we have in our lives and focuses on the one true hope we have in Jesus Christ whose birth we celebrate at this time of year.

Jesus is the light at the end of our dark tunnel, the light of the world. The darkness will slowly go away as the days grow longer. Come and celebrate this wonderful service of hope with us, and bring a friend who may need a little light in their lives too.

"Christmas Traditions Around the World"



A special musical presentation on December 17th, by the choir and musicians will be offering a wonderful experience to get us ready for the arrival of the Christ Child. Please join us for either service (or both) as we celebrate Christmas in music and worship.

Instead of our regular potluck, we will be having appetizers (hors d'oeuvres) and a time to thank our Choir, the Steury Handbells, Cathy and Terry for all the work they do and the wonderful contributions they make to our worship services.

Message from the Pastor

For many unfamiliar with the liturgical year, there may be some confusion surrounding the meaning of the Advent Season. Some people may know that the Advent Season focuses on expectation and think that it serves as an anticipation of Christ's birth in the season leading up to Christmas. This is part of the story, but there is more to Advent.

The word "Advent" is derived from the Latin word *adventus*, meaning "coming." Scholars believe that during the 4th and 5th centuries in Spain and modern day France, Advent was a season of preparation for the baptism of new Christians at the January feast of Epiphany. Epiphany, the celebration of God's incarnation represented by the visit of the Magi to the baby Jesus, baptism in the Jordan River by John the Baptist, and first miracle at Cana. During this season of preparation, Christians would spend 40 days in penance, prayer, and fasting; originally, there was little connection between Advent and Christmas.

By the 6th century, however, Roman Christians had tied Advent to the coming of Christ. But the "coming" they had in mind was not Christ's first coming in the manger in Bethlehem, but his second coming in the clouds as the judge of the world. It was not until the Middle Ages that the Advent Season was explicitly linked to Christ's first coming at Christmas.

Today, the Season of Advent lasts for four Sundays leading up to Christmas. The church is in a similar situation to Israel at the end of the Old Testament: in exile, waiting and hoping in prayerful expectation for the coming of the Messiah. Israel looked back to God's past gracious actions on their behalf in leading them out of Egypt in the Exodus and, on this basis, they called for God once again to act for them. In the same way, the church, during Advent, looks back upon Christ's coming in celebration while at the same time looking forward in eager anticipation to the coming of Christ's kingdom when he returns for his people. In this light, the Advent hymn "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" perfectly represents the church's cry during the Advent Season:

*O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

While Israel would have sung the song in expectation of Christ's first coming, the church now sings the song in commemoration of that first coming and in expectation of the second coming in the future. To balance the two elements of remembrance and anticipation, the first two Sundays in Advent look forward to Christ's second coming, and the last two Sundays look backward to remember Christ's first coming.

Keep these thoughts in mind as we enter this Advent Season. We rejoice in the birth in Bethlehem so many years ago and eagerly anticipate the Messiah's return. We pray for the Spirit's continual work of grace within us all.

God Bless Y'all,
Lois

CHRISTMAS FAMILY TREE



This year for Christmas we are not having an “Angel Tree” for the Salvation Army. Our Missions Committee decided it might be nice to sponsor several individual families instead. We asked Jesse from the food bank and he found 3 families. Jesse said this is their first year to ask for assistance from the Food Bank. Each family has lost their jobs and are struggling. One family has 5 children and one family is a single mom living with her mother and 3 children. The last family has 7 children.

We are also including the mother in these families. So that makes a total of 18 persons we will be buying for. There will be Christmas balls with individual first names, ages and sizes on them, much as with the “Angel Tree.” Each family will be a different color. This way we can keep the families separated. With only 18 persons to buy for we should be able to have several individuals (or a group) for each family. The mom should have at least one practical item but that is up to you. **BE SURE TO MARK YOUR GIFTS WITH THE NAME TAG OF THE APPROPRIATE COLOR SO THEY DO NOT GET MIXED UP. THESE GIFTS ARE TO BE WRAPPED.**

We want to have the WRAPPED gifts back by December 10th - 13th for the dedication of the gifts on December 17th. You can make a monetary contribution on Communion Sunday December 3rd. Thanks and have fun!

FAMILY CHRISTMAS TREE COMMUNION SUNDAY

As you can see from the title, December 3rd will be dedicated to the Family Christmas Tree. In one, the family with the 7 children, the mother asks for a washing machine. I can't imagine having that many children and one a 7 month old (especially with no washing machine). I know there are some of you that aren't capable of shopping and so how would it be if we all gave just a little and were able to come up with enough money to purchase a washing machine. Who knows? This is Christmas and miracles do happen!



Community Christmas Party.....



...is planned for Saturday afternoon, December 16, at 4:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. You are invited – AND you are invited to ask your friends and neighbors to join us! It will be a fun time of singing carols, enjoying finger foods,

retelling of favorite Christmases from years ago and a reading of the Christmas story ... all wonderful ways to celebrate the season. Bring your favorite food, your best singing voice and someone you'd like to sit with to this event planned to introduce our church to others. And don't be surprised if a strange visitor from the east shows up!



WANTED!! Greeting cards...new OR used, inside message OR blank OR personal writing, front or back missing. **NO GLITTER!** Unused envelopes are sometimes matched with unused cards to sell at our Fall Festival. Thank you for your donations into the Lobby box.
Judy Brown

JANUARY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE FOR ARTICLES IS DECEMBER 15TH

Please submit any articles you have by December 15th. This may sound early, but multiple people and steps are involved in compiling this newsletter. Thank you.

2018 Administrative Training – Workshops for new and continuing local church committee members of Finance, Trustees and Staff/Parish Relations. This will be on Saturday, January 13, 2018, from 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. at Dove of the Desert United Methodist Church in Glendale. Registration is required.



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



HELP WANTED



On Friday, December 1st, we will gather in the church at 8:00 a.m. to decorate our Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall for the holiday season. There are greens to hang, trees to assemble and decorate, tables to set, lights to string, and lots of fun to share. Then on Saturday, December 30th, at 8:00 a.m., we will be taking down the decorations and will again need your help!

Mark your calendar and plan on coming to help make our space special for this miraculous time of year. Many hands make light work. Watch your weekly bulletin or speak with Connie Scott for more information about these fun mornings.

Metho Travelers invites you to....

Go Places: Fun trips with great people.

Remember, **FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED.**

Many people are now signing up for these activities and **space is limited.**

PRE-CHRISTMAS GALA TO LAS VEGAS, Wednesday-Friday, December 6-8, 2017. Trip includes 3 days/ 2 nights at the Golden Nugget Hotel, some meals, transportation, taxes and tips. Cost is \$390/double occupancy; \$525/single occupancy. Depart at 8:00 a.m. and return no later than 5:30 p.m. See the flyer for more details.

THE TENORS (formerly known as The Canadian Tenors) will be performing at the Phoenix Symphony Hall on Sunday, January 21, 2018, at 2:00 p.m. Cost is \$60/person. Bus will leave Lakeview United Methodist Church at 12:45 p.m. Payment is due upon sign-up.

RHYTHM CATS VARIETY SHOW, Saturday, February 17, 2018, at the Silver Star Theater, Mesa. Cost is \$68.00/person and includes buffet lunch, show, transportation, taxes and gratuities. Depart Lakeview United Methodist Church at 10:15 a.m. and return 5:00 p.m. Payment due within 2 weeks of sign-up. Reservation is confirmed when payment is received.

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT'S TALIESIN WEST TOUR, Tuesday, February 20, 2018. This event includes tour, lunch, bus and gratuities. Cost is \$65/person and is due one week after sign up. Deadline is January 30th. Meet at Lake-view United Methodist Church at 7:45 a.m. with the bus leaving promptly at 8:15 a.m. Expected return to Lakeview is around 3:00 p.m.

PANAMA CANAL CRUISE, Wednesday, March 7, 2018, to Sunday, March 18, 2018. Trip includes round trip airfare, hotel in Fort Lauderdale (dinner and breakfast), all transportation, post cruise Everglades excursion, taxes, tips and portage. Prices range from \$2,590 to \$3,290 per person, double occupancy. A deposit of \$250/per person is due upon sign up. More detailed information is listed on the flyer at the information desk.

ALASKA CRUISE, Saturday, May 26, 2018, to Wednesday, June 6, 2018. Tour includes round trip airfare, and all land transportations, taxes, tips and portage. Prices range from \$3,100 to \$4,250 per person. A deposit of \$250/per person is due upon sign up. Ports of call are listed on the flyer at the information desk.

For more information and sign up, visit the Metho Travelers' table in the Fellowship Hall.



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN NEWS ATTENTION ALL READERS:



The deadline to turn in your Reading Program Report is December 10th. Please turn them in to me, Betty Zingre, so we may receive credit for 2017. Thank you for supporting the United Methodist Women's Reading Program!

Betty Zingre, Program Resources



DECEMBER CALENDAR

Sundays

Sunday Worship	8:00 & 9:30 a.m.
Fellowship Hour	9:00 & 10:30 a.m.
Food Drive (3rd Sunday)	
Potluck (3rd Sunday)	10:30 a.m.

Mondays

Bible Study	10:00 a.m.
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Tuesdays

Game Night	6:00 p.m.
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Wednesdays

Handbell Rehearsal	2:30 p.m.
Choir Rehearsal	4:00 p.m.

Thursdays

Bible Study	3:00 p.m.
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DECEMBER Committee Meetings:

Trustees	9:30 a.m.	Dec. 05
Church Growth	9:00 a.m.	Dec. 06
Care Council	1:00 p.m.	Dec. 12
Social Media	3:30 p.m.	Dec. 12
Finance	1:30 p.m.	Dec. 14
Missions	1:00 p.m.	Dec. 19
Church Council	9:30 a.m.	Dec. 27

HANDS OF FRIENDSHIP LUNCHEON



December 2nd at 11:30 a.m. at Mercer's Restaurant, 9720 W. Peoria. Hands of Friendship is a group that gets together for fellowship and food the first Saturday of each month at Mercer's restaurant. We order from the menu and pay individually.

Please call Phyllis Sutton (623-322-8547) so we will have a spot waiting for you. Everyone is welcome. Come join us!



UMW Executive Board Meeting:

Monday, December 4th at 1:00 p.m. in the Lillian Carver Room.

Tabitha-Dorcas Circle:

Wednesday, December 6th, meet at 1:00 p.m. at Carol Jones' home (11041 W. Mountain View Road) We will have a Christmas Party with a \$5 gift exchange.

Elizabeth/Esther Circle:

Wednesday, December 13th, meet at 11:00 a.m. at Mercer's Restaurant where we will have our Annual Christmas Party. **ALL LADIES OF THE CHURCH ARE WELCOME!**

Priscilla Circle:

Thursday, December 14th, meet at 11:00 a.m. at Nan Weihmuller's home for our Annual Christmas Party.

UMW Local Organization Meeting:

Monday, December 18th, at 11:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall.



Birthdays & Anniversaries

BIRTHDAYS

Helen Teichman.....	12/03
Billie Jo Scott.....	12/04
Verna Smith.....	12/04
Sandy Constantine.....	12/05
Barb Romine.....	12/05
Bob Smith.....	12/10
Peg Ward.....	12/10
Bishamber Lal.....	12/12
Shirley Wolfe.....	12/12
Norma Gaddy.....	12/15
Dorothy Murray.....	12/16
Barry Catto.....	12/19
Bobbie Trout.....	12/21
Jean Coulter.....	12/22
Ruth Saathoff.....	12/23
Dick Budke.....	12/24
Carl Bock.....	12/25
Nancy Jenkins.....	12/25
Irene Smith.....	12/26
Dan Martin.....	12/27
Jan Ward.....	12/28
Tom Hill.....	12/29
Marilyn Brinkman.....	12/31

ANNIVERSARIES

Floyd & Jaye Reddy.....	12/05
Bill & Esta VanMeter.....	12/26



Bible Studies... Lectionary Study DECEMBER

Mondays at 10:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall

December 4th

Isaiah 40:1-11	Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13
2 Peter 3:8-15a	Mark 1:1-8

December 11th

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11	Psalm 126
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24	John 1:6-8, 19-28

December 18th

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16	Luke 1:47-55
Romans 16:25-27	Luke 1:26-38

December 25th

Isaiah 61:10-62:3	Psalm 148
Galatians 4:4-7	Luke 2:22-40

NO CLASS

Reading Through the Bible

We meet every Thursday afternoon at 3:00 p.m. in the Lillian Carver Room for an hour of Bible reading, discussion and questions. We will be in the book of Hosea.

Come and join us!

UPCOMING EVENTS MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Hands of Friendship Luncheon	11:30 a.m. Dec. 02
Food Bank Sunday	Dec. 17
Potluck	10:30 a.m. Dec. 17
Longest Night Service	3:00 p.m. Dec 21
Christmas Eve Service	4:00 p.m. Dec 24

CHRIST IS BORN!!

“Let the Heavens rejoice and the Earth be glad.”

Psalm 96:11

Red Kettle Drive

Our congregation is going to ring the bell for the Salvation Army at Fry's on 107th and Grand again this year on the 1st and 2nd Wednesday in December. That is December 6th and December 13th from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Please keep those dates open. You really enjoyed doing this the last 2 years so we are repeating it again. Remember, you can do it with several persons so you don't have to be alone. There will be sign-up sheets with 30 minute increments in the Narthex/ church lobby on November 19th, 26th and December 3rd and 10th. So dig out those Christmas sweaters and Santa hats. Pretty cool in the mornings and warmer later in the day.



I want to thank my church family and friends for their prayers, cards and calls as I am recovering. The cracked vertebrae and broken hip are healing nicely and I am doing well in therapy.

Mabel Heeter



WANT TO KEEP CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS?

*Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, forgive the guilty,
welcome the unwanted, care for the ill, love your enemies,
and do unto others as you would have done unto you.*

That is how you keep Christ in Christmas.

Won't you try it?

HELPING OUT IN TIMES OF NEED....

... that's what the Care Council tries to do, and it's what we all need more of! For instance, when people can't get to important commitments like church or a doctor's office or when they are going into or getting out of the hospital – that's when extra help is often welcome. So here are three (3) really important programs the Care Council supports:

- Transportation Ministry – call the church office 24 hours in advance for a ride to or from church or a scheduled doctor's visit (in Sun City, please).
- Post-Hospitalization Meal Ministry – call the church office to have something good to eat when you are discharged from the hospital.
- Pet-Sitting Ministry – call the church office before you go to the hospital to have someone take care of Spot or Fluffy while you are away.

Church office phone number is 623-974-3631.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Pauline Bortz
Lucille and Gordon
Gudmundson
Libby Hearne
Alice LaClair
Bishamber Lal
Diane Lang
Dolores Morris
Gert Neumann
Gordon Plancich
Mary Jean Roush
Ruth Saathoff
Billie Jo Scott
Esta and Bill VanMeter
Don Watson



ECUMENICAL PRAYER CIRCLE

We pray for the following congregations:

DECEMBER:

Sun City congregations

St. Elizabeth Seton

All Saints of the Desert

Church of St. Joachim & St. Anne

Church of the Palms

Faith Presbyterian Church

United Methodist congregations in our District

Sunrise UMC, Phoenix

Willowbrook UMC, Sun City

Youngtown UMC

Condolences & Christian Sympathy.....



...to **BETTY KIMPSTON** on news of the passing of her spouse, Nate, October 13th in Waterloo, IA.

POINSETTIAS

Thank you for your gift(s) of flowers to decorate our sanctuary for Christmas. Please take your plant(s) home after the Christmas Eve Service



Dear Pastors,

This would have been our second year not going to Arizona for the winter. It's a miss, but things do change with age. I lost my "hubby" on October 13th from complications of surgery. We were blessed with 68 years of marriage so we were fortunate. He loved First UMC in Arizona greatly (me too!) so I am sending a bit of his memorial money to you.

God Bless First UMC, Betty Kimpston



To all my dear friends at First United Methodist Church.

Thank you all for your prayers, calls and beautiful cards our family has received during the passing of Bernie! I miss and love you all. Thanks so much for all your support,

Love, Bonnie Wedekind

STEWARDSHIP

Our Stewardship campaign this year will be an on-going campaign. Once again we are not completing any type of pledge cards; we will be highlighting our personal stewardship throughout the year. There will be media presentations with our time of offering in worship occasionally. There will be regular articles in the First Word Newsletter about stewardship. Our goal is to make our stewardship a part of our thought process and lifestyle instead of what it has become for many...just paying another bill. The church will rely on God and you for your faithfulness and support.

REMINDER.....if you want your offering to be credited for 2017, please have it in the office **by noon, Thursday, December 28th**. Thank you!

Pancake
Breakfast



PANCAKE BREAKFAST

December 9th
7:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.
(or until the food is gone)
\$5.00 at the door

Pancake
Breakfast



This is a fund-raiser for a new kitchen floor.

POTLUCK TIME Sunday, December 17th



Every third Sunday of the month we have a Potluck Sunday. Our fun potluck will be held on December 17th at 10:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Everyone is welcome to attend. Remember to bring your own plate and utensils. Please bring dessert, finger food, or an appetizer to share so we can easily include our guests and visitors.

This month our **HORS D'OEUVRES** potluck will be to say **THANK YOU** to the participants in our music program and to their leaders Cathy Murray and Terry Smith. Be sure to ask your neighbors and friends to come hear the Christmas Musical Presentation.

VALLEY VIEW COMMUNITY FOOD BANK



Tilly 2Can is the mascot for Valley View Community Food Bank. Her message — every time you shop for your family's groceries, grab an extra **TWO CANS** for Valley View. Thank you in advance for all you do for the community.

Our food bank donation Sunday is December 17th. If you forget your food, cash or a check will suffice.



MARIAN THOMPSON MEMORIAL FUND

For the past six years, I have served on the Foundation Board. Since six years is the maximum allowable term, I have now attended my last board meeting. My final responsibility is to bring you the end of the year report on the Marian Thompson Memorial Fund which is overseen by the Foundation.

It is my pleasure to tell you that the fund is consistently growing. Currently it increases by approximately \$2,000 per month and that enables us to pay the largest portion of Pastor Tom's salary without any problem. Thank you so much for your continuing generosity.

The total amount in the fund is about \$400,000, but it fluctuates since its purpose is "to cover expenses not covered by our regular tithes and offerings." It also fluctuates because sometimes large sums of money (such as a portion of the Ethel Malone legacy or gifts with a designated purpose) are temporarily held in the fund in order to earn interest until they are spent for the designated purpose. Even so, we are nearly half way to our goal of a million dollars.

I think Marian Thompson would be pleased at the way her original gift of \$25,000 has been cared for and how much good it has accomplished. Let's continue to make her proud!

Mary Brickey
Finance Chair and
Former Foundation Board Member

PINK SUNDAY

Pink Sunday is December 17th and will be observed in both worship services. We will light the Pink Advent Candle, which is the candle of Love. Christmas season is an opportunity for each of us to experience love; the love of friendship, the love of family, and the love of God. Wear pink to help us celebrate this day.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

*Sunday, December 24th, at
4:00 p.m....carols, scripture,
communion and candle-lighting.
This is a family friendly service
so bring along your family and
friends.*



9849 N. 105th Ave.
Sun City, Arizona 85351

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First United Methodist Church Newsletter

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Visit our website at www.fumcsuncity.com

Join us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/fumcsuncity

TELEWORSHIP:

Teleworship allows a person to dial a phone number remotely and listen to the worship service as it occurs. Here's how it works:

- Call **623-777-3306** during the 9:30 a.m. service
- When prompted, enter extension **930**
- Dial **536-545-940 #**
- You will be connected to the worship service.

Note: You can have a convenient wallet size card with the above information. These are available in the church office.

You can follow the service with a copy of the Sunday bulletin which is located on our website: **fumcsuncity.com**. Under the heading "WORSHIP" click on "SUNDAY BULLETIN."

First United Methodist Church

9849 N. 105th Avenue, Sun City, AZ 85351
623-974-3631

Website: www.fumcsuncity.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/fumcsuncity

Email: office@fumcsuncity.com

The ministers of this church are its members. Those who assist and support them are:

Lois Hedden	Senior Pastor
Thomas Ondra	Pastor
Terry Smith	Music Director
Cathy Murray	Organist, Handbell Director
Sharon Weber	Office Manager
Richard Vickers	Audio Engineer
Lou Farrar	Media Operator
Robert Schmidt	Maintenance

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