



# *Palm Leaf*

*Church of the Palms*

*December 2016*

Connect with God, find community, make a difference!  
We are an Open and Affirming church—You are welcome here!



Warren wonders,  
is this hat redundant??  
Friends, Visitors and  
Members enjoy The Church of the  
Palms 20th  
Thanksgiving celebration!  
Many thanks to Joyce Spaulding  
and all the  
dedicated volunteers who  
make this day  
Possible, year after year!



# Pastor Paul's message

## A Letter from Paul



If I decorate my house perfectly with Christmas bling of plaid bows, have a 10' ft. blow-up Santa in the front yard, hang strands of twinkling lights and shiny

ornaments, but do not show love to my neighbor, I'm just another decorator.

If I work myself to exhaustion in the kitchen, baking dozens of Christmas cookies, preparing gourmet meals and arranging a beautifully adorned table at mealtimes, but do not show love to my neighbor, I'm just another cook.

If I work at the soup kitchen, sing carols to our shut-ins, and give all that I have to charity, but do not show love to my neighbor, it profits me nothing.

If I trim the spruce tree with shimmering angels and crocheted snowflakes, attend a myriad of holiday parties and sing the choir's cantata but do not focus on Christ, I have missed the point.

Love stops the cooking to hug the child. Love sets aside the decorating to kiss the spouse.

Love is kind, though harried and tired. Love doesn't envy another's home that has coordinated Christmas china and table linens.

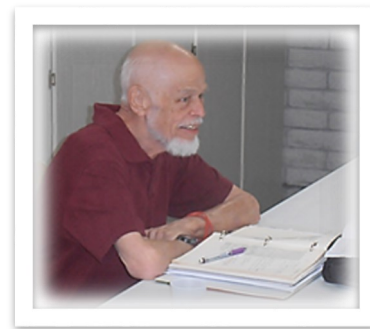
Love doesn't yell at the kids to get out of the way, but is thankful they are there to be in the way.

Love doesn't give only to those who are able to give in return but rejoices in giving to those who can't give back.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.

Computer games will break, pearl necklaces will be lost, golf clubs will rust. But giving the gift of love will endure! Give the gift of love this season!

Shalom, Paul



*Marshall Esty*

*Thank you, from The Church of the Palms*

December will see a change of referee for the "Inchworms" Bible study. Mary Whitlock will be the new referee for the Tuesday morning Bible Study.

Thank you, Marshall for the many years of service to God and The Church of the Palms. We thank you for the long term contributions you have made and the loyalty you have shown.

Thank you for sharing your experience and wisdom with others. Your hard work and dedication despite your own personal obligations, joys and challenges is a blessing to us all.

Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!"

(Matthew 25:23)

## **Office Holiday Closings**

The church office will be closed on Friday, December 23, Monday the 26th and Monday, January 2nd.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will begin at 7 p.m. on Saturday the 24th.

Christmas Day Worship will begin as usual at 10 a.m. In hopes of getting everyone off to a blessed family day, we will not be having Fellowship in King Hall.

Regular hours will resume on January 2nd.

## **Life Long Learning**

Mondays, January 9<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>

*"Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food" - Hippocrates*



In this series of classes, we will explore whether Hippocrates had it right. Through videos,

presentations and class discussions, we will look at which populations around the world have the healthiest and longest lives and what we can learn from them. We will look at the dietary recommendations from the USDA and how to incorporate them into our lives.

We will examine the claims by medical doctors and researchers that many of our contemporary degenerative diseases such as diabetes, hypertension and obesity can be controlled and possibly reversed through dietary and lifestyle changes. Many of the suggestions may be unorthodox, provocative or controversial. We invite you to come with an open mind and prepare to learn some new things.



Shirley Jesberg

November 9, 2016

Don Henderson

November 23, 2016

Merl Case

November 24, 2016



## **Cosmic Christians December Schedule**

The Cosmic Christians meet as usual every Tuesday of the month through December. The discussion group begins at 11:30 and goes to 1 p.m.

Everyone is invited. Bring a lunch if you are so inclined. Currently we are reading Einstein's God: Conversations About Science and the Human Spirit by Kristen Tippett.

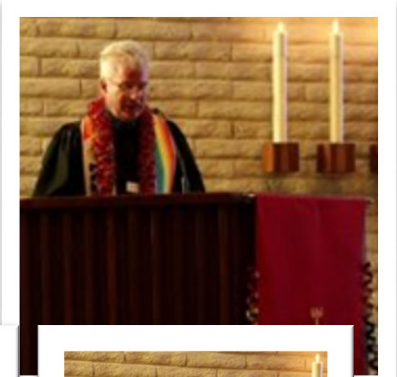
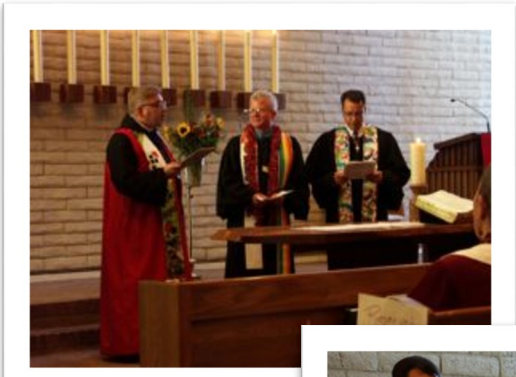
**Wednesday December 14, at 12:00**

### **Lydia Circle Holiday Brunch**

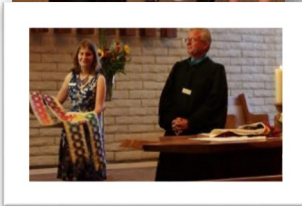
Tivoli Gardens Restaurant at 12535 W Bell Rd, Sun City West, AZ 85375 will host our annual Lydia's Circle Christmas Luncheon.

Please call Bonnie Green at 623-974-1972 to reserve your place, before December 12th.

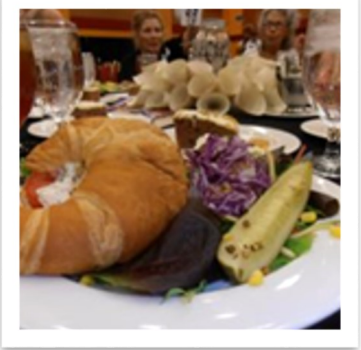
All women are welcome! We hope to see you there!



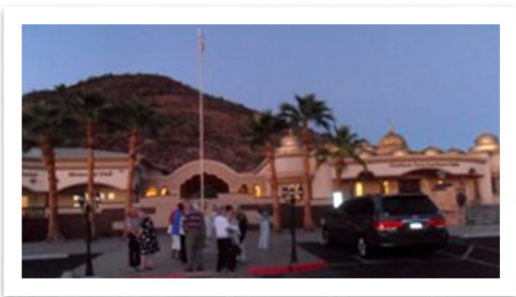
Pastor Paul Whitlock  
Service of Installation



### November Events



New Life Center  
"Brighter Day" Luncheon  
Renaissance Hotel



NISHKAM  
SEVA GUWARA  
SAHIB  
Sikh Temple





*Come to the December Fellowship Breakfast*

**Dec. 13 –8:00 a.m.  
“Summer Surprise:  
Como Encounter!”**

The Board of Evangelism will again offer an uplifting program at our Fellowship Breakfast on Tuesday, December 13, at 8 a.m.

Len Silvester retired as our pastor at the close of 2104. He will visit us and speak at our monthly breakfast on Tuesday, December 13, at 8 a.m.

Len, Liz, and their companion, Miss Olive, enjoyed a 4-month stay on beautiful Lake Como in Italy last summer, where they encountered the hundreds of refugees stranded when Switzerland closed its borders.

Supported by many Facebook friends, they delivered much-needed food and supplies throughout their stay. Len will show us the sights and share insights into a world-wide struggle that connects with Jesus’ own story.

Enjoy a full, hot breakfast provided by our always smiling kitchen team of Maria and George Wall and Bonnie Green. Invite a friend or neighbor! There is never a charge for breakfast, but a giving basket will be out for donations



## December Birthdays!

- |       |                    |
|-------|--------------------|
| 12/03 | Pat Durbin         |
| 12/05 | Sharon Christenson |
| 12/05 | Marian Watson      |
| 12/08 | Donald Marselle    |
| 12/8  | Ruthie Whitlock    |
| 12/11 | Calvin Lane        |
| 12/11 | Chris Johnson      |
| 12/11 | Roline Baker       |
| 12/12 | P.J. O’Donnell     |
| 12/13 | Bonnie Tweedy      |
| 12/15 | Pastor Len         |
| 12/15 | Carol Bryan        |
| 12/15 | Donald Connelley   |
| 12/18 | Howard Schenk      |
| 12/19 | Irene Kozlowski    |
| 12/19 | Yolanda Brown      |
| 12/21 | Herb Carson        |
| 12/22 | Brian Hannon       |
| 12/24 | Shirley Hochstein  |
| 12/25 | Leonard Weiss      |

### Christmas Eve Candle Lighting Service.

Welcome to the world, Baby Jesus!

December 24th 7 p.m.

**Join Us!**



Church Parking Lot Resurfacing:

Tues. Dec. 6<sup>th</sup>

Wed. Dec. 7<sup>th</sup>

Thurs. Dec 8<sup>th</sup>



You are Welcome

to Park At the Sundial Recreation

*Notes from the  
Music Room*

*The Sanctuary Choir of  
The Church of the Palms  
presents:*

**A Gift of Hope**

**Sunday, December 18,  
10:00 a.m.**

**Come and worship as we  
celebrate the birth of  
Christ through  
music and scripture.**

Palms Service Project Craft Group

**Craft items on sale in King Hall**

Christmas is a time of love, caring, and sharing. The Palms Service Project Craft Group has many hand crafted items on their table in King Hall.

There are useful, fun, and warm items. All amounts are suggested, you are free to put in the donation box what you choose to contribute. All monies go to the Penny Magic fund to help our Christmas Family throughout the year.

We hope you will find some treasures to share!

***NEW SUNDAY FLOWER MINISTRY***

*Starts in January*

COTP will begin a new Sunday flower ministry beginning in January.

Instead of purchasing flowers from a florist, Jeff Scruggs has offered to create vase arrangements for every Sunday. Sun City Florists and Joni Babbett, (who supplied flowers at no cost...whenever she was needed!) have been doing a fine job. However, this program will be less expensive and hopefully more reliable. Members are currently paying \$40.00 per arrangement. The cost will be reduced to \$30.00. Flowers may be ordered through the office as usual. Jeff will try to honor any reasonable special requests whenever possible. If someone just has to have a chartreuse bunch of roses that may not happen.

When you place your order, please let us know the occasion; i.e. anniversary, memorial, birthday, etc. We will also begin offering single bud vases in celebration of new babies in your life. The cost of the bud vases is \$5.00.

The flowers always belong to whoever is purchasing them. If you choose to take the arrangement home, please return the vase for reuse if at all possible. This will help keep costs down. If you would like to donate your flowers, the arrangement will be given over to our CARE team. They will then make sure that they are taken to an appreciative member who could use a flower to brighten their day.

Please try to have your order placed no later than Thursday of the preceding week. Last minute requests cannot be guaranteed.

If you should have any special orders that you would like to discuss with Jeff, please contact him directly. Cell: 623-810-8044  
Email: dzlbug@cox.net

*The Board of Mission and Outreach invites you to:*

***“Church of the Palms Baby Shower”***

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Lord, we have the chance to donate to other new babies in our area through New Life Center. New Life Center is a non-profit corporation that provides shelter, counseling, advocacy and other services necessary to assist victims of domestic violence and their families build sustainable, violence-free lives.

In addition to safety and shelter, New Life provides clothing and personal items to over 150 women and children each day. There is a special need for baby items.

No need to wrap. What could be simpler!

Suggested list of needs:

- |                       |              |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| Diapers (sizes 3,4,5) | Onesey’s     |
| Diaper rash cream     | Sleepers     |
| Baby lotion           | Diapers      |
| Baby bottles          | Towels-Baby  |
| Sippy cups            | Blankets     |
| Bibs and Pacifiers    | Crib Toys    |
| Diapers!!!            | Gift         |
| Receiving Blankets    | Certificates |
| Pacifiers             | Baby Soap    |
| Baby wipes            | Booties      |
|                       | Bibs         |



All during Christmas, gifts may be placed under the narthex tree or in the Play Pen provided for use by Miss Olivia Lawler! It was hers...after all.



***Annual Report 2016***

Statements due soon!

If you are the chair of a church board, it’s time to get started writing your report of activities during the past year. Please submit your report to Pastor Paul or the office mail at manger@thepalms.org by December 15. We need to get everything together in order for the report to be ready for the church Annual Meeting in January. Thanks in advance, for your timely response to this request!



***Christmas Memorial Poinsettias***

This year again we will be decorating our Sanctuary with vibrant, beautiful poinsettias. We invite you to memorialize your flowers by filling out your offering envelope marked “Poinsettia/ Christmas Flowers,” including \$10 and give it to the church office by December 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Order forms also available in the Narthex**



***Mondays***

December 5th at 10 a.m. Debby Stinton leads this intriguing Open and Affirming program entitled “Let’s Talk Sex, Baby!”

December 12th at 10 a.m. “The Christmas Season. Pastor Clint Reynolds (retired) leads this special holiday program.

Look for more Life Long learning events coming in January.

*The Church of the Palms*  
*"Merry Christmas" to the teenagers*  
*In Peoria High School*



HART Pantry provides sacks of food to homeless teens in the Peoria High Schools all year long. At Christmas, not only food is given to them, but needed clothes items. Helping At Risk Teens (HART) is our goal. Please help us and these teens at this special time of year.

**Blessing Packets:**

Low cut sports socks/hand knitted hats made of dark yarn; boys want plain colors of dark blue or black.

Samples of toiletries especially needed,

Deodorant

Girls: Body wash, Shampoo, Conditioner and Mousse

Boys: 3 in 1 (Body wash, Shampoo, Conditioner)

Gloves

Gift Cards (Please bring Gift Cards to the church office)

Tooth Brushes

Tooth Paste

Throw Blankets for warmth

Penny Jar funds can go to the Pantry to buy hoodies (Sweatshirts).

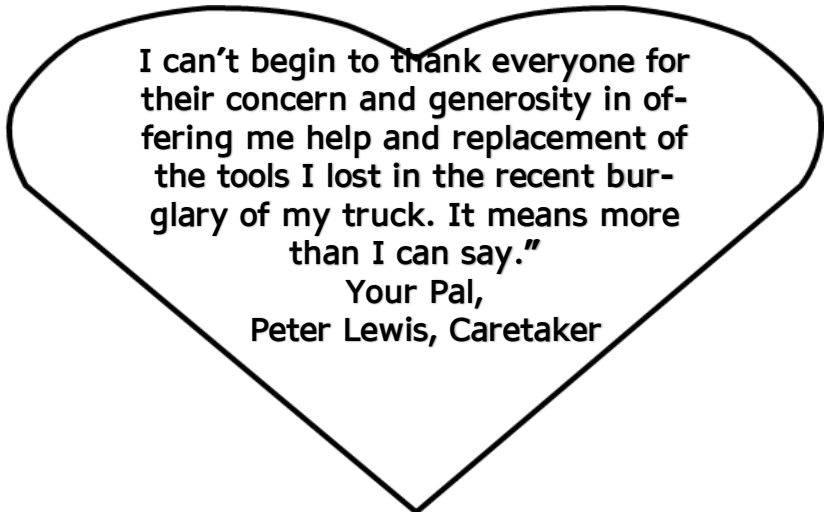
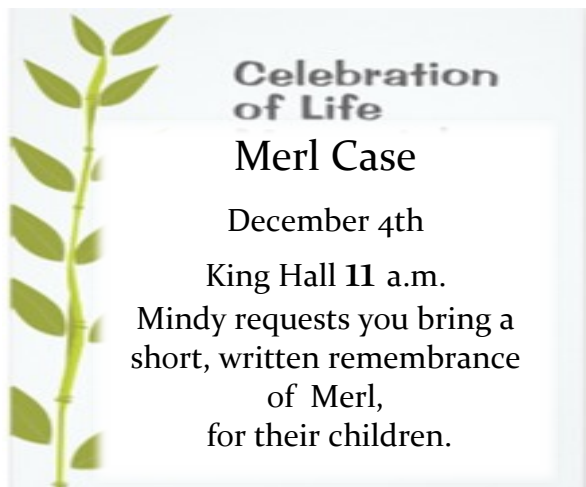
**Service Project Craft Group**  
**Christmas Gifts Galore!**

A necklace for sister Shirley, a pillow for cousin Elaine; a hat and scarf for brother Albert; earrings for friend Marge; a lap robe for Glenn; slippers for grandchild Pam; a light weight quilt for Fred; stuffed animals for Joyce and all the grandkids; a table runner and placemats for neighbor Liz; a "small comfort" for friend Helen who is in a care center and would welcome a small reminder that you remember her.

The Service Project Craft group has been busy making things for your Christmas giving - including lots of jewelry! Suggested prices are very reasonable or pay what you can. Visit our table in King Hall for all your holiday shopping.

Have materials, need hands! Even if you don't sew or knit, the Service Project Craft Group can use your assistance in helping us sort, stuff, cut, trace, tie threads, or help-out with whatever projects we have going. We meet Wednesday mornings from 9 - 11 in the board room.

As we create, we share our stories, concerns, and blessings. Come on in, have a cup of coffee, and see what is





## Services in December

Lord's Day Service each week at 10 a.m.

*Fellowship Time in King Hall at 11 a.m.*

### **For bus pick-up:**

Call Mary at 623-249-8999

by noon Friday for Sunday pick-up



December 4...This is the Second Sunday in Advent. The gospel lesson is from Matthew 3:1-12. John the Baptist and "Homeless Jesus" tell us how to prepare: Go out into the streets, find someone who thinks they are alone, convince them they are not. Pastor Paul will preach.

December 11...On this Third Sunday in Advent we will look at Matthew 11:2-11. Pastor Paul will be preaching. Sometimes our expectations see things not there; conversely, sometimes, things right in front of our faces are the hardest to see. What do we want to see this season?

December 18..."A Gift of Hope" what a treat to have our music spectacular this Sunday; Great music provided by our choir under the direction of Jim Alexander. We will hear a homily from Pastor Paul, entitled, "The Parable of Christmas," from Matthew 1:18-25.

December 24...Christmas Eve Candle Lighting Service, there is a song in the air. Can you hear it? Opportunities abound, can you seize them? God's grace is flowing, can you share it? On this silent night, we will explore what makes it a holy night. Luke 2:1-14. Pastor Paul will preach.

December 25...Christmas Day! Yes, we will have worship! Yes, we will celebrate with familiar carols and a brief story from Pastor Paul. Read Isaiah 9:2-7 to prepare for the Christ Child to be born among us.





If you use Facebook, you are invited to “like” Church of the Palms and become a friend of the church.

Photos from events and outings reposted there.

[www.thepalms.org](http://www.thepalms.org)



We offer:

- Sermon Gallery
- Paul at the Palms
- News and Events
- The Palm Leaf Newsletter
- Monthly Calendar
- General Synod News
- Photos



**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**

Drawn together by the Holy Spirit, we are a distinct and diverse community of Christians that come together as one church, joining faith and action.

In covenant with the church in all of its settings, we serve God in the co-creation of a just and sustainable world as made manifest in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

“That they may all be one,” Jesus, speaking in prayer. —John 17:21

**Palm Leaf** is a monthly newsletter from the Church of the Palms that makes it easy for you to keep up with opportunities, events, and friends at church.

Articles deadline: 15th of each month

You may submit an article or information for an article by:

Email ([manager@thepalms.org](mailto:manager@thepalms.org)),  
 Phone (623-977-8359),  
 Or drop it off at the church.

Office Staff:

Pastor Paul Whitlock, Minister  
 Deborah Martin, Office Manager