

# *Palm Leaf*

*Church of the Palms*

*February 2017*

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

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## January Kwanzaa Breakfast!



Great Presentation!  
Great Breakfast!

## Pastor Paul's message



My first fulltime church job after I was ordained was in Dallas, Texas. My start date: February 1, 1991. I was the associate minister and when the senior minister died suddenly, it fell to me to do much of his job—including 29 funerals my first year out of seminary. Wow! It's a wonder I survived.

I am a lot grayer now and laugh a lot more, but I am still working at the church.

I don't claim to be superstar – more of a journeyman. But, if you do anything for 26 years, you learn lessons about it, whether it's laying bricks or leading a congregation. Here are a few insights about the ministry that I've gleaned from experience:

- *I don't know much.* That's right, I said it. I don't know much. When I started, I saw many issues *clearly and absolutely: baptism, sin, hell, communion, heaven.* You name it, I had the answer. Today, my opinions are about as gray as my hair. Life, relationships, and religion have turned out to be not nearly as clear-cut as I would have preferred.
- *We can fall out a canoe on either side.* People who are extremists on one side of an issue are as prone to disaster as those who are extremists on the other side. For instance, if we believe God never performs miracles today, we're going to cheat ourselves out of many blessings. But if we believe God is duty-bound to dole out a miracle every time we're in a mess, we're going to lose our faith completely.
- *When we're dealing with people, what we see is what we get.* People can seem heaven-sent one week—they're volunteering in kitchen or mending the sanctuary roof—and be long gone by the next week. Enjoy them today, while we've got them.
- Ignore the man behind the curtain. I've learned that being in the church is a lot like journeying to Oz. *I've learned that to be the church God calls us to be we've got to have a heart, a brain, and some courage.*
- *Details rarely matter.* In the scope of eternity, it's inconsequential whether the fellowship hall renovation gets finished on time or a month late. It doesn't matter whether the choir robes are trimmed in green or blue—or whether we have choir robes.
- *People will overlook almost any fault we have if they know we genuinely love them.* Call people when they're sick, rejoice when they get a promotion, commiserate with their frustrations about their kids—and many will become your brothers and sisters for life.
- *The gospel is the simplest message on earth.* It boils down to principles a kindergarten student could understand: love them all, and forgive them all; if you do that, God will love and forgive you. It's simple, but it's not easy.

Shalom, Paul

### ***Church of the Palms Grief Support***

Due to your positive response to the Grief Support Group, sessions have been scheduled in March at The Church of the Palms.

Wednesday's from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. March 1st, 8th, and 15th. This group is open to anyone with need. These sessions are a great help to those struggling with grief in all its forms. Sign-Up sheets for the three dates will be on the Opportunity Table in the Narthex or please contact Yolanda Brown, 623-972-3970.



### ***Equal Exchange 2nd Sunday of each month***

Equal Exchange products from small farmers is embraced by twelve denominations. When coffee (or other products) are purchased by church members in each denomination, the denominations get money back for their projects. Our purchases count twice-ask your members of Board of Missions that are selling coffees the second Sunday of each month. (Narthex, before and after church)



### ***Cosmic Christians in February***



Cosmic Christians invite you to join us on Tuesdays from 11:30 AM until 1 PM for lively discussion. Bring your lunch! We are

almost ready to begin discussion of Re-Imagine the World: An Introduction to the Parables of Jesus by Bernard Brandon Scott, a Jesus Seminar scholar. Meanwhile we are finishing our discussion of Kristen Tippett's book, Einstein's God.

### ***Volunteer kudos for Week Of Prayer***

Hello wonderful members of Church of the Palms. You all did a marvelous job in your various roles in the Week of Prayer service today.

Your efforts are much appreciated!

**THANK YOU!!**

### ***Inchworms Bible Study***

Tuesdays, 10 -11:20 A.M. Guided by Mary Whitlock. Our next study will be the Stillspeaking Bible Study. "In this brief Stillspeaking Bible Study, nine different voices interpret nine different biblical passages that urgently say one thing: "We serve a living, loving God who is still speaking, who is not finished yet, who has more truth and light to break forth, and who is calling you and me to respond this day. Right now."



## Dining



## Dark



## in the

On Saturday, January 21st, held a, "Dinner in the Dark." the speaker, the kitchen and



The Board of Life Long Learning There were 32 guests including serving helpers, and the escorts.

We learned so many things completely without sight. speaker. She was born blind to day life for someone who has never seen. During the meal, Diana shared the benefits of modern technology. Devices exist that can tell you what color your clothes are. You can be age at the store by holding one. She immediately realized as all of the buttons are old one with raised buttons. Alexander's Valley Women's piece of music for each performances over and over help her accomplish this. It was mentioned that some sighted people can't memorize their music with the pages in front of them.



about what it would be like to be Diana Garret was the guest and helped us to understand day and night. One technology not working in her favor is Her parents bought her a new sized that it wasn't going to work now flush. They traded her their Oh yes, Diana also sings in Jim Ensemble by memorizing every performance. Listening to recordings

We handed out blind folds that created a complete black out for each diner. Diana taught us how to safely escort a blind person to their chair. They grab your elbow, and as you reach their chair, you place the same hand on the back of the chair. They then follow your arm down to your hand to find the back of the chair.

She helped us navigate the dinner plates by starting with the protein at 6 o'clock. The drinks, flatware, salad bowl, etc. had to be placed in the same position for every diner. We learned that the bread item is very useful as a tool to help avoid scraping your food off of the plate. Plenty of that happened, but overall most participants did very well. The experience proved to be challenging but rewarding. Any fear or anxiety only helped us to better understand living in this situation and what remarkable courage and strength these people have. It was an honor to share a meal with such a gifted, special person.



On Monday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>, The Board of Life Long Learning hosted a seminar by Kevin Cabrera of Research For Life. Research for Life offers research and living tissue donation services. Kevin had a very informative discussion with our members in attendance as well as some family members. There were interesting facts brought to light about who qualifies, the age limits, condition exceptions, etc. We also learned what areas his organization serves and even what exactly happens to the body based on individual criteria. The church office has more pamphlets available if you would like to inquire further. Kevin invites folks to call him directly or even come and take a tour of the facility. There are also representatives who will come to you.

Thank you to those in attendance,  
Jeff Scruggs



What a fun time at the  
ice cream social!

Thank you to all of you who helped donate, serve ice cream, provide cookies and help with cleanup. What great team work!! Thank you to all who attended. I hope you had a good time, sounded like it by the laughter I was hearing. God Bless you!





*The Southwest Conference  
Nominating Committee begins  
discernment for conference leaders*

The Southwest Conference Nominating Committee is beginning its discernment to identify our next conference leaders. If you are feeling called to serve the conference through one of our standing committees, the Nominating Committee invites you to let them know that. Those committees are: Executive Board, COCAM A, COCAM B, Personnel, Nominating. If you know an outstanding leader in your church we encourage you to talk with them about sharing their name with us. Youth, young adult, and under-represented groups nominees are encouraged. You may contact the nominating committee with questions about the various committees, or submit names by emailing [nominating@uccswc.org](mailto:nominating@uccswc.org) or by calling Eli in the conference office ([602-468-3836](tel:602-468-3836)).

Thank you for helping us listen for God's voice in our discernment process.

Bill

Rev. Dr. William M. Lyons,  
Designated Conference Minister  
[602/317-2724](tel:6023172724)

Southwest Conference United Church of Christ



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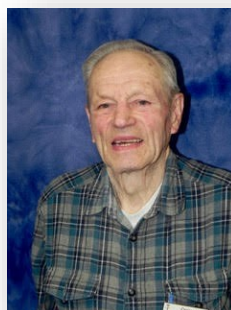
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Susan Thacker  
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January 2017 **Welcome**  
 New Members!

OVER

Russell Stinton  
11436 N. 89th Avenue  
Peoria, AZ 85345  
602-809-3229  
Joined: 1-29-2017

Dale Andress  
14210N. Thunderbird Blvd.  
Sun City, AZ 85351  
623-602-616-1753  
From: New Jersey  
Joined: 1-29-2017



Feb. 14—8:00 a.m.



Come to the February Fellowship Breakfast

Church of the Palms Storytellers

The Board of Evangelism will again offer an uplifting program at our Fellowship Breakfast on Tuesday, February 10, at 8 a.m.

The Church of the Palms Storytellers will celebrate Black History Month On February 14th breakfast at the Church of the Palms . The theme is " African American Inventors during the 1800's."

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 .

Barbara Arnold



## ***FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS!***

**02/02**

***Ruth Behle***

**02/04**

***Jack Evans***

***Fred Plumb***

**02/07**

***Allan Gott***

***Mary Funck***

***Virginia Martin***

**02/09**

***Rosemary Armbrust***

**02/10**

***Roy Taylor***

**02/11**

***Mildred Hofer***

***Hellen Bishop***

**02/14**

***Clint Reynolds***

**02/16**

***Sheila Kuelbs***

**02/19**

***Mary Lou Jindra***

**02/20**

***Randolph Omahana***

**02/21**

***Earl Peterson***

**02/24**

***Helen Stafford***

**02/27**

***Beverly Jensen***

***Judy Jondahl***

January 6, 2017



**Indianapolis Office**

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Dear Friends,

Global Ministries sincerely thanks you for your gift of \$1,520.00. As you have indicated, your gift will be used in its entirety for the work of Mark Behle in Lesotho. Gifts like yours are vital to Global Ministries as we accompany global partners in God's in the world.

Global Ministries is excited to envision the possibilities your condnued support represents in this New Year. Last year, gifts such as yours accomplished incredible things—creating new microcredit enterprises in Mexico, implementing new agricultural projects for food security in Swaziland, and training Sunday school leaders in the Middle East to provide an important Christian witness during times of conflict. Global Ministries looks forward to continue sharing with you the hopes and celebrations of global partners as we continue to accompany sisters and brothers in Christ around the world.

We thank you again for your ongoing support of Global Ministries as we are present with global partners in God's mission in the world.



Mark Behle

Reverend Jane Sullivan-Davis, CFRE  
Executive for Resource Development

Global Ministries P.O. Box 1986  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46206-1986

Telephone: 317-713-2558 Fax: 317-635-4323 [janesd@dom.disciples.org](mailto:janesd@dom.disciples.org)



## 2017 Rummage & Bake Sale First Call

### DONATIONS & VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Now is the time to begin going through your closets and storage areas and make a donation of those items that have served you well but now need to have a new life with a new owner who has been looking for just such an item. Your donated items should be brought to the church beginning Monday, March 20<sup>th</sup> through Wednesday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>. There they will be sorted, priced and staged for the Rummage Sale which occurs on Thursday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> thru Saturday, March 25<sup>th</sup>. If you need to have an item picked up prior to Monday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, please contact John Durbin. If you will be baking something for our wonderful bake sale, please plan on filling out the Bake Sale sign up sheet which will be available in the Narthex beginning on Sunday, March 5<sup>th</sup>.

Of course, we will also be including a **BAKE SALE & FOOD SERVICES**. There will be an organizational meeting on Wednesday, February 15<sup>th</sup> for volunteers and all those interested in finding out more about the sale.

### Rummage Sale

**ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING**  
Wednesday, February 15<sup>th</sup>

(cont.) If you can help or have questions please contact one of the members of the 2015 Rummage Sale coordinating team (John Durbin ~ Board of Mission and Outreach, Pat Durbin ~ Board of Evangelism, Judy Jondahl ~ Board of Stewards). Or sign up on one of the Volunteer Sheets in the narthex or office. We need lots of help and we would love to have you be involved.

Thank you very much!!



We will be accepting all donations at this time but the items for the March sale include:

**CLOTHING; HANDBAGS, SHOES, BELTS & LUGGAGE; COLLECTIBLES; LINENS & DECORATIVE PILLOWS; BOOKS, DVD/CD's & OFFICE ITEMS; NOTIONS; HOUSEWARE; and FURNITURE.**

*The Church of the Palms Welcomes Debby Stinton!*



We are excited to be expanding our staff at The Church of the Palms! Debby Stinton has come on board to help us as a Pastoral Assistant. She will help with visitation, women's issues, plus other duties.

Debby earned her undergraduate degree from ASU and her MDiv. from Clairemont School of Theology. She is a cancer survivor and married to Russell Stinton.

She embodies God's love and grace. Get to know her - she has been and will be such a blessing to the church .

# The Indoor Picnic and Talent Show

**YEEE HAWW!**

Saturday, February 11<sup>th</sup> 4:00 p.m.

The Palms Indoor Picnic and Talent Show is scheduled for Saturday, February 11<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. in King Hall! We'll be servin' up fried/ baked chicken OR sub sandwiches. You'll be servin' up a side-dish or dessert!!



There will also be a heapin'-helpin' of some great talent by the folks in our congregation!! There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex. Make sure you include your name, what vittles you're bringin' to eat and what talent you're plannin' to share!!!!

See ya there, Pardner!



**YEEE  
HAWW!**

**YEEE  
HAWW!**

**YEEE  
HAWW!**

**YEEE  
HAWW!**

## *Yearly Giving Statements*

The Church of the Palms has just mailed out members and visitors yearly giving statements. If you did not receive your statement, please contact us at 623-977-8359.

The church Attendance Register is passed around at every Sunday service. It is so important to add your address, especially if you are a visitor and new to the church. Making sure you get your mail is as important to us as to you. If you have moved or are visiting...addresses please!

*In Loving  
Memory*

*Shirley Hochstein-1-14-2017*

*Myron Masney 1-22-2017*



Many Thanks to The Church of the Palms and it's members for the cards, prayers and good wishes sent to Arloa. Your concern is more than appreciated.

God bless and thank you,

Arloa and Nelson Hyman

## Services in February

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



February 5: Matthew 5:3-12. The Beatitudes. Blessed are...these sayings sound more like typos than guidelines for healthy community. Do we really believe the poor are blessed? What about those who are mourning or who are meek? We are challenged to find a place for these in our hearts and in our community. Pastor Paul will be preaching.

February 12: 1 Corinthians 13. Pastor Paul leaps off the lectionary for this Sunday as we hear about love. What is God's love all about?

February 19: We will take a look at Matthew 5:38-48 and consider the possibilities of perfection. Jim Alexander will bring the message entitled, "Perfect...almost".

February 26: Matthew 17:1-9. Transformation is possible. Holiness is all around if we but have eyes, ears, and hearts to perceive it. So, what are the holy blessings from God that you see today? Pastor Paul will be preaching.

### *Annual Meeting Highlights*

The congregation met for our Annual Meeting on Saturday, January 28 with 72 members present. The 2017 budget was approved - part of the budget included hiring Debby Stinton to help us part-time with pastoral visitation; Church membership is 236; We finished 2016 with a \$20,024 surplus!  
God is Good all the time; All the time, God is good!

Thank you one and all!

## Here's what's coming up

### From the Life-Long Learning team

Learning and growing events planned for the coming months include:

Our Sunday Morning Lifelong Learning video and conversation is brought to you by Professor Bart Ehrman of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and our very own Debby Stinton, M.Div from 8:30 – 9:30 am in the Board Room. We are learning about the New Testament from a historical perspective and then answering some questions or chatting about what stood out as the most intriguing idea to each of us. Come be in conversation and relationship! Our upcoming lectures are:

February 5: Pauline Ethics

February 12: Paul's Letter to the Romans

February 19: Paul, Jesus, and James

February 26: The Deutero-Pauline Epistles

March 5: The Pastoral Epistles

March 12: No Class. Debby in Ireland

March 19: The Book of Hebrews and the Rise of Christian Anti-Semitism

March 26: First Peter and the Persecution of the Early Christians

April 2: The Book of Revelation

April 9: Do We Have the Original New Testament?



### **It's Planting Season!**

**We would like to improve our landscaping by having a cactus planting party on Friday, February 17, at 9:00 a.m. at The Palms.**

**If you can share some cactus from cuttings from your yard, or if you can buy some from a store, we will have people who can plant it at the church.**

**What's the best way to get a cactus planted?  
Have someone else do it for you!**

**Shalom,  
Pastor Paul**



# BOARD OF EVANGELISM NEIGHBORHOOD CHILI FEED!

(All Food and Beverages Provided)



This is a great  
opportunity  
to meet  
neighbors of our  
Church!

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4,  
FROM 11:00 AM TO 1:00 PM  
IN KING HALL.

WE ARE INVITING FOLKS WHO LIVE IN THE NEIGHBOR-  
HOOD

SURROUNDING OUR CHURCH  
OF COURSE, OUR CHURCH

**FAMILY IS ALWAYS WELCOME!**



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