

Palm Leaf

Church of the Palms

February 2018

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

because

He first

loved us.

1 John 4:19



Pastor Paul Whitlock

A Letter from Paul...

2018 is looking like it will be a fabulous year for ministry and mission! Before I get to that...let me briefly highlight some things from 2017.

In 2017 we had 47 new members! Thank you to our Evangelism Board for their excellent work. Thank you, also, to everyone who greeted and welcomed a new face. It is hard to walk into a church without knowing anyone.

By providing an extravagant welcome, week after week, you make that difficult task easier. The results are in the record number of new members. It takes a village to do this right; thanks for doing your part well.

We finished \$5K in the black for 2017. Plus, we raised our assets over \$93K or an increase of 13%. Thank you to our Board of Stewards and our Board of Finance. When many churches are struggling financially throughout the country, we are setting the standard for financial giving. Some people tell me not to tell you when you have done a good job of giving because they falsely think that folks will stop giving. Wrong! I try to model integrity in my financial giving and I will always tell you the truth in love – even about financial issues. 2017 was a good year!

We were able to reverse the negative trend because of the financial commitment of so many members. You see, they had the vision, the hope, the desire for their church, which they love, to continue on after they were gone. By including the church in their will, the church received a part of their estate. That level of commitment helps buoy us through rough waters and allow us to adjust our sails and soar! We owe gratitude for opportunities today to our ancestors in faith.

But really, the most important part of 2017 was clearly the ministry. Over \$56K was given to outreach causes in the community and world – that's cash donations reaching out with compassion and love. More was given when you consider the non-cash items donated: soup, left overs from the rummage sale, diapers, etc. Plus, think of the value of the learning, laughter, tears, and support. Ponder the fellowship, the challenge to be your very best, and the opportunity to share love, joy, presence, and forgiveness. All of this adding up to a recipe of grace, justice, and an extravagant welcome! In other words, Good News!

2017 was a year when we sought justice, loved kindness, and walked humbly with God. Now 2018 stands before us. May 2018 bring even more love, an increase of kindness from us, and a continual spiritual journey with God. God is giving us the gift of possibility. What will we make of it? Church, it's your move!

Shalom, Paul



As You Are Moved...

On Christmas Eve of 2017, there were two vessels filled with sand placed at the front of the sanctuary.

The congregation was invited to come and light a candle and place it in the sand during any of the hymns. As they placed the candle, they could pray, meditate, remember, or just be still.

Because this gesture seemed to be very powerful for many, the Board of Worship and Fine Arts, with the blessing of council, decided that the vessels would remain. As you are moved, please feel free to light a candle on any given Sunday during the hymns. You may also come up before or after the service.

**Jeff Scruggs
Board of Worship and Fine Arts- Chairperson**

Rev. Brittani
Rush



Rev. Jayne Hubbard,
Rev. Dr. Bill Lyons,
Rev. Jim Alexander



Assistant Pastor
Debbie Stinton



Clergy
Laying on of Hands



Reverend Jim Alexander and
his Mother, Jane Zukowski

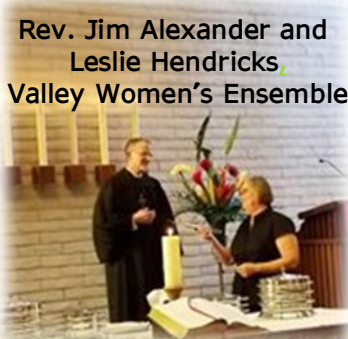
Jeffery
Scruggs



Rev. Brittani
Rush



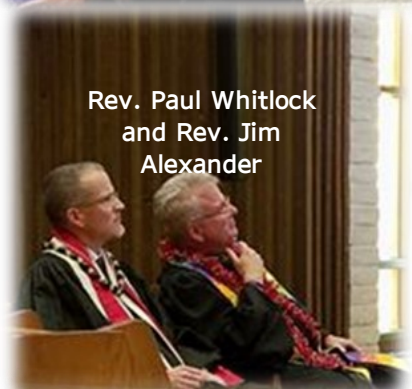
Rev. Jim Alexander and
Leslie Hendricks,
Valley Women's Ensemble



Rev. Jim Alexander and
his Daughter,
Rev. Brittani Rush



Rev. Paul Whitlock
and Rev. Jim
Alexander



Rev. Jim Meadows



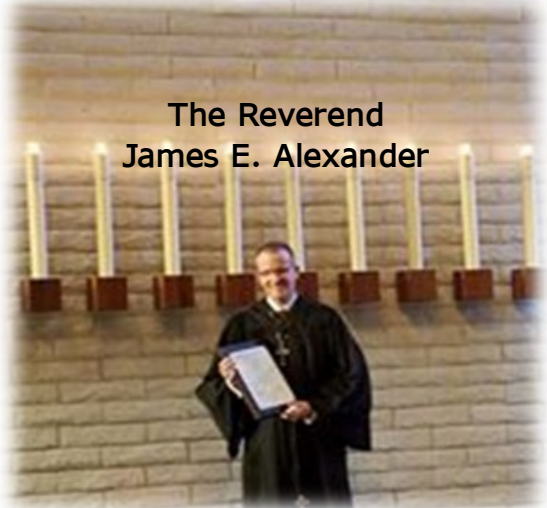
Valley Women's
Ensemble



The Rev. Jim Alexander
Rev. Paul Whitlock and
Wendy Whitlock



The Reverend
James E. Alexander





DEBBY'S CORNER

Happy LOVE Month Beautiful People!

February, short and sweet. Love and Lent will be on our minds with Valentine's Day and Ash Wednesday both on the same day. I will not be giving up Love for Lent, but I may take on a few spiritual disciplines to keep me grounded on my journey to Easter.

I will be heading to Columbus, Ohio from February 7-13 to visit my mother for her 78th birthday and to see my sister, great nieces, and my nephews. I hear that I need to bring my parka and snow boots. Time to bundle up and enjoy some snow days.

I look forward to a quieter month in February, compared to January, but know that I will need to save some energy for March, because Church of the Palms will be busy once again with classes, programs, and the Spring Rummage Sale. Woo Hoo!

On a more personal note, I am writing my ordination paper and will be needing your prayers and support as I look to go before COCAM A and seek ordination.

Blessings of Love, Joy, and Peace!

Debby

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Brings Christian Brothers and Sister Together

Ten Sun City churches participated in this year's Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. An average of 110 participants per day joined in a lay lead service and fellowship meal. As Christians prayed and work together in seeking to bring about Christian Unity, they realized just how important this Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is for our world today. Throughout the biblical narrative of salvation, an unmistakable motif is the unrelenting determination of the Lord to form a people whom He could call His own. The formation of such a people, united in a sacred covenant with God, is integral to the Lord's plan of salvation and to the glorification of His name.

God's covenanted people must always strive to be a reconciled community that serves as an effective sign of how to live in justice and peace for all the people here on earth. When Christian denominations come together they rediscover the importance of unity in Jesus.

Churches participating in this year's Week of Prayer were:

First Presbyterian	St. Joachim & St. Anne
First United Methodist	St. Clements of Rome
Faith Presbyterian	United Church of
All Saints of the Desert	Sun City
Shepard of the Desert	Church of the Palms
St. Elizabeth Seaton	Our Lady of Lourdes

Please mark your calendar for the 2019 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity





Sale!
Folding Chairs
\$5.00

For more information
Contact: 623-977-8359

Please Call the office
623-977-8359

- ◆ When you feel the church can assist you in any way.
- ◆ When you or a member of your family is admitted to the hospital so visits can be arranged and proper people notified.
- ◆ When your class or group plans to meet so that a room can be reserved for you and placed on the church calendar.
- ◆ When either your home address or phone number changes so the church records can be amended.
- ◆ When you are planning to move—either out of town or locally.

Care Ministry Team



2018 Birthdays

- 02/02**
Ruth Behle
- 02/04**
Jack Evans
- 02/07**
Allan Gott
Mary Funck
- 02/09**
Rosemary Armbrust
- 02/11**
Hellen Bishop
Linda Kehl
- 02/14**
Clint Reynolds
- 02/16**
Sheila Kuelbs
- 2/17**
John Whitlock
- 02/20**
Randolph Omahana
- 02/21**
Earl Peterson
- 02/24**
Helen Safford
104 years old!
- 02/27**
Beverly Jensen
Judy Jondahl

2018 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 19th through Wednesday, March 21st. There they will be sorted, priced and staged for the Rummage Sale which occurs on Thursday, March 22nd thru Saturday, March 24th. If you need to have an item picked up prior to Monday, March 19th, 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 4th.

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

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

**Of course, we will also be including a
BAKE SALE & FOOD SERVICES**

There will be an organizational meeting at 9:00 AM on Thursday, February 15th for volunteers and all those interested in finding out more about the sale. 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.

**The Church of the Palms
14808 N. Boswell Boulevard,
Sun City, AZ 85351
Phone (623-977-8359)**

The Church of the Palms Art Show 2018



**"Response to Art"
Planning Meeting
Monday,
February 5th
Board Room**



The Art Show is fast approaching! We will present the show all in one day on Saturday, February 24th, and shorten the hours slightly. The doors will open at 10:00 a.m. and close at 3:00 p.m.

The "Response to Art" planning meeting will gather on Monday, February 5th from 1-2:30 p.m. in the Board Room at The Church of the Palms. There will be written task lists for specific jobs to try to eliminate, as much as possible, the need for further entire group meetings. Small groups may have separate, brief meetings closer to the Art Show on February 24th.

If you would like to volunteer to work on this committee, preparing space or providing service and support to the exhibiting artists, please call Judy Beal at 623-875-3469. We may not realize your special interest in supporting the "creative world" and would welcome your help!

Thank you
Judy Beal and Mary Funck

**Hope to see you at the
Planning Meeting!!**

The Church of the Palms
14808 N. Boswell Boulevard,
Sun City, AZ 85351
Phone (623-977-8359)

We love our donors!



Helping **A**t **R**isk **T**eens
Thank you to Donors!

Open House

Wednesday,
February 21st
3-7 p.m.



Lions Foundation
Campus
9451 N. 99th Ave
Peoria, AZ 85345
(623) 583-6674



The Church of the Palms and all of its generous donors are invited to the HART Pantry Open House. Every month, without fail, your church donates everything from used bikes to backpacks, school supplies, much needed snacks, personal care products, gift cards and most importantly your concern and caring for those in need. Please join us at our Open House and let us say

Thank-you!



Used Bikes for Hart Pantry



If you have a used bike to donate to the HART (Helping At Risk Teens) Pantry for use by the teens of this great organization, please contact:

Jan Eckstein 623-875-7015
Ruth Langford 252-259-5331

Don't worry about the condition of your donation; the bikes are repaired before they are gifted. HART Pantry gets them to our at-risk teens as soon as they can get them refurbished and checked out, sending along a new bike lock with each bike so they are protected.

God bless you!

Tuesday, **March** 13th 8:00 a.m.



**MARK YOUR
CALENDAR!**

March Fellowship Breakfast

Tuesday, March 13th 8:00 a.m.

The program for the March Fellowship Breakfast is presented by Daoud Nassar, entitled "We Refuse to Be Enemies". Mr. Nassar is a Palestinian Christian farmer and Director of the peace-building center Tent of Nations, located on the family's farm outside of Bethlehem.

Tent of Nations is an educational and environmental farm covering 400 dunams next to the village of Nahalin, on a hill top southwest of Bethlehem. The farm has been in Daoud Nassar's family since 1916 when his grandfather purchased the land known as Dahers' Vineyard.

Enjoy a full, hot breakfast provided by our always smiling kitchen team of Maria and George Wall and Bonnie Green. There is no charge for our breakfast. The free will giving basket will be out. Invite a friend or neighbor!



Just a few more days to Donate!!!

Last year The Church of the Palms won the Silver Ladle Trophy for the most cans of soup collected (Four THOUSAND +) during this fun and helpful campaign to fill the shelves of the Valley View Food Bank to overflowing. We have until February 4th, (Happily enough, it's a SUNDAY) to meet or exceed last years total of four thousand cans or packages of soup.

Have I mentioned we collected four thousand cans of soup last year?!

Let's make it two years in a row!

To What Are We Called?



"Now this was the sin of your sister Sodom: She and her daughters were arrogant, overfed and unconcerned; they did not help the poor and needy." - Ezekiel 16:49

Since 1980 the U.S. has set an average refugee resettlement goal of 95,000 each year and has resettled an average of 85,000 each year. In 2016, 84,995 refugees were admitted to the U.S., the highest in over two decades.

The Refugee Act of 1980 requires that the President recommend a refugee ceiling number prior to the beginning of the fiscal year. Based on world events, President Obama proposed increasing the ceiling of refugees for 2017 by 29% or 110,000.

However, it is expected that the total will be about 60,672. The recommendation by our current President for FY 2018 calls for a ceiling of resettled refugees to 50,000.

We must remember that a refugee is a person who has been FORCED to leave their country in order to escape from harm in their own country and are unable to return because they fear serious harm if returned. The United Nations decides if the person fits the definition of a refugee and whether to refer the person to the U.S or to another country for resettlement. Only the most vulnerable are referred, accounting for less than 1 percent of refugees worldwide. Prior to acceptance by the U.S., the refugee must go through at least 20 filters while waiting for approval. Most people spend years waiting in squalid refugee camps. Historically refugees have been a special humanitarian concern to the U.S –Remember the words on the Statue of Liberty!

Providing safe haven and services for refugees means adequately funding the U.S.

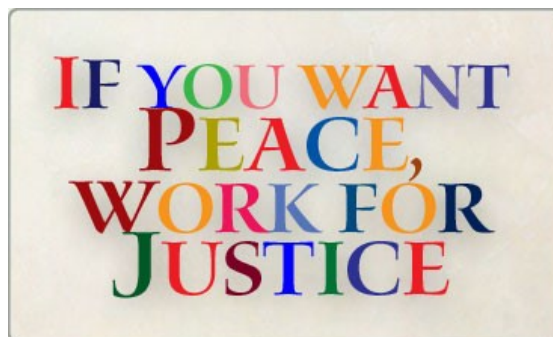
Refugee Resettlement Program which provides short term assistance to newly arrived refugees while they become self-sufficient. Assistance includes, helping with English as a second language, providing employment and housing assistance. U.S. funding for the UAC (unaccompanied alien children) program comes from the same budget as the Refugee Program – and 80-90,000 unaccompanied children are expected to need assistance.

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(Cont.)

Your Social Justice Committee has become acutely aware of the problems facing the social service providers as we began working with the Lutheran Social Service-Southwest organization in Phoenix. Recent cuts from this administration closed all service providers who did not provide service for 100 refugees. The local group provided service for 1200 in 2017. Based on expected cuts, management prepared staffing for 800. However, it appears that 2018 will provide for less than 100 refugees. As this office is part of the national association, the AZ offices will not be closing the local Refugee Program. However, staff will need to be cut including staff who work with and train volunteers. Cuts in funding also affect sharing cuts of administration costs. Arizonians are fortunate in that by giving to organizations which qualify under the Qualifying Charitable Organizations list, their taxes are reduced up to \$400/individual and \$800 for couples filing jointly. Adan Batar, a refugee who worked his way up to director of immigration and refugee resettlement for the Catholic Community Services in Salt Lake City, said "We can rely on our community more than the federal government." Several members of your Social Justice Committee are volunteering to work with the refugees serviced by the Lutheran Social Services-Southwest. In the midst of a global refugee crisis, the United States must not walk away from its spot as a world leader when it comes to assisting refugees and other vulnerable populations both here and abroad. The administration's proposal is incredibly worrying in that regard. Congress has the authority to maintain the U.S Refugee Admissions Program at a level proportionate to the global crisis and in line with our capacity, history and values.

If you share the U.S. humanitarian concern, write to your representatives now and tell them to protect the Refugee Resettlement Program. And donate time or talent.
Beth Malmgren – member of the Social Justice Committee, Church of The Palms





Our Board of Lifelong Learning Sunday Morning Discussion at 8:30 am presents The Great Courses "Confucius, Buddha, Jesus, and Muhammad" taught by Professor Mark W. Muesse. In this course, we examine these four figures both separately and comparatively in an effort to grasp the essential features of their lives and teachings and to explore the factors that contributed to their greatness. Debby Stinton is leading this group. Talk to her if you are interested in catching up, or just plan to come join the Sunday morning community of lifelong learners! February concludes the conversation on Jesus and takes us into the story of Muhammad.

- | | |
|-------------|---------------------------------|
| February 11 | No Class |
| February 18 | Arabia in the Days of Ignorance |
| February 25 | The Trustworthy One |
| March 4 | "I Am Only A Messenger" |
| March 11 | Madinahn |
| March 18 | "There is No God but Al-Lah" |
| March 25 | The Ethics of Islam |





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:
Please Call Mary Kennicott: 623-249-8999
or the church at 623-977-8359

February 4: Mark 1:29-39 is the text. Pastor Paul will be preaching. What are the dangerous things you do in life? Is prayer on the list? It just might be after this Sunday.

February 11: We welcome Pastor Jim into the pulpit! Pastor Jim will be preaching from Mark 9:2-9. Who are you listening to? Who are you following? What gets in your way of a closer walk with God?

February 14: 5:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday. We are partnering with United Church of Sun City. Come and start the Season of Lent off correctly, with ashes!

February 18: The First Sunday of Lent. Read Mark 1:9-15. What tempts you? Pastor Paul will be taking about the difference between living and dying.

February 25: Read Mark 8:31-38. Second Sunday of Lent. Pastor Paul will be giving us some cross words on this.

REMEMBER THAT THOU ART DUST...



ASH WEDNESDAY

FEBRUARY 14TH

5:00 P.M.

...AND UNTO DUST SHALT THOU RETURN



LGBT Club of Sun City presents:
Tret Fure

Thursday, February 1st. 2018
7:00 p.m. (Doors open at 6:15)

The Church of the Palms-King Hall
14808 Boswell Blvd.
Sun City, AZ 85351

Tickets on Sale Now!
General Admission: \$20 day of show \$25

**For more information contact:
Debby Stinton 623-977-8359**

Pages to Projector

This series of films will focus on stories that have moved from the written page to the movie screen. From a short story, F. Scott Fitzgerald's "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button," to a magazine serial, Leo Tolstoy's "Anna Karenina," to novels set in the 50s, 60s and 2000s. Julian Barnes' Man Booker Prize winner "The Sense of an Ending," and Robert Harris' taut thriller "The Ghost Writer."

Anyone who is interested may also read the corresponding fiction before viewing but it is not necessary for the enjoyment of watching these finely crafted cinematic works of art.

Jack and Pastor Judy will be taking a long delayed trip and will be gone the months of February and March. Films will resume again in April.

February: No Movie

March: No Movie

Friday, April 20th

Anna Karenina

Friday, May 18th

The Ghost Writer

Friday, June 15th *The Sense of an Ending*

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

New!

The Palms Community Photo Album - share your photos of church events!

goo.gl/u2QtrE

www.thepalms.org

We offer:

Sermon Gallery

Paul at the Palms

News and Events

The Palm Leaf Newsletter

Monthly Calendar

General Synod News

Photos

Welcome New Member Dates



The Church of the Palms
14808 N. Boswell Boulevard,
Sun City, AZ 85351
Phone (623-977-8359)



Office Hours:

Monday-Thur. 8am-2pm

Friday- 8am to Noon

Office e-mail: manager@thepalms.org

Website: www.thepalms.org

**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



Drawn together by the Holy Spirit, we are a distinct and diverse community of Christians that comes 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)

Phone (623-977-8359),

Or drop it off at the church.

Office Staff:

Pastor Paul Whitlock, Senior Pastor

Jim Alexander, Associate Pastor

Debby Stinton, Assistant Pastor

Deborah Martin, Secretary

KH=KING HALL SA=SANCTUARY BR=BOARD ROOM NX=NARTHEX CP=CHAPEL LB=LIBRARY

1 JOHN 4:19
WE LOVE BECAUSE
HE FIRST LOVED US.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
4 8:30AM Sunday Discussion Group 9:15 Choir Warm-up 10 Worship/Communion 11 Fellowship(KH)	5 9AM Life Long Learning (BR) 1-2:30PM Art Show Committee Meeting (BR)	6 10AM *Inchworms* Bible Study (BR) 11:30 *Cosmic* Christians (BR) 3:30PM *Jump Start* Bible Study (CP)	7 9AM Board of Stewards (CP) 9AM Service Project Craft Group (BR) 10:30 Women's Friendship Group (CP)	8 1:00PM Music and Fine Arts (BR) 2:30 Choir rehearsal (MR) 5:00 LGBT Club of SC The Pure Concert (KH)	9 12 Bridge Group (KH)	10 9AM Communion Preparation
11 Equal Exchange 8:30AM Sunday Discussion Group 9:15 Choir Warm-up 10 Worship (SA) 11 Fellowship (KH)	12 9AM Life Long Learning (BR) 4PM Board of Trustees (BR)	13 9AM Fellowship Breakfast: Sharon Christianson India Redux 10 *Inchworms* Bible Study 11:30 *Cosmic* Christians 3:30PM *Jump Start* Bible Study (CP)	14 Ash Wednesday 9AM Service Project Group 9 Board of Missions and Outreach (CP) 9:30 Board of Evangelism (KH) 10:30 Women's Friendship Group (CP) 5PM Ash Wednesday Service with United Church of Sun City	15 9AM Spring Rummage and Bake Sale Organizational Meeting (KH) 10 Care Ministries Team Meeting (BR) 2:30PM Choir Rehearsal (MR)	16 12PM Bridge Group (KH)	17 9AM Church Council (BR)
18 First Sunday of Lent 8:30AM Sunday Discussion Group 9:15 Choir Warm-up 10 Worship 11 Fellowship (KH)	19 PRESIDENTS DAY OFFICE CLOSED	20 10AM *Inchworms* Bible Study (BR) 11:30 *Cosmic* Christians 3:30PM *Jump Start* Bible Study	21 9AM Service Project Group 9 Board of Mission and Outreach (CP) 10:30 Women's Friendship Group (CP)	22 2:30PM Choir Rehearsal (MR)	23 9AM Life Long Learning Meeting (BR)	24 Art Show 2018 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
25 Second Sunday of Lent 8:30AM Sunday Discussion Group 9:15 Choir Warm-up 10 Worship (SA) 11 Fellowship (KH)	26 9AM Life Long Learning (BR)	27 10AM *Inchworms* Bible Study (BR) 11:30 *Cosmic* Christian Circle (KH) 3:30PM *Jump Start* Bible Study	28	<p>FEBRUARY 2018</p> <p>IN THE CHURCH OF THE PALMS</p> <p>UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST</p>		