



THE PALM LEAF

Church of The Palms

EST 1969

14808 N Boswell Blvd
Sun City, AZ 85351



CELEBRATING THE PAST;
EMBRACING THE FUTURE

A Letter from Paul



"How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?" —*Psalm 13*

This time of quarantine has been long. I confess that I am tired of it and I am most certainly ready to have things get back to normal. But my wants are not what is important right now. We have to have 20/20 vision in 2020 and focus on what is truly important. So, what is important? Love is. Compassion is. Understanding is.

With love, compassion and understanding, the moderators and clergy of The Palms met electronically. We have decided that for the month of June, we will not have in-person worship. That is, Pastor Jim and I will continue producing our video worship for all of June. We may have to go longer; we will make that decision further down the road.

That is not the news I wanted to tell you. But it is the news that we at The Palms need to share. Thus, we need to hold on to our core values in this quarantine and realize God is not hiding from us; God is all around us. We must have 20/20 eyesight in 2020 and see the holy in that which we missed in our first glance. It's there! Let's open our eyes, hearts and souls.

With love, compassion and understanding, be the church deployed. You're a missionary. So live out our mission. Share God's unconditional love, justice and extravagant welcome. Even in quarantine? Especially in quarantine! For we are The Palms.

Shalom,

Paul

Everything In Moderation



By Judy Jondahl

The Church of the Palms is an open and affirming church which has provided the LGBTQ members of the community a place where they can feel welcome to worship. I cannot help but smile as I think of the many contributions these individuals have brought to The Palms. As I have been staying at home, I have had opportunity to think about becoming a WISE church and to explore the mental health needs of the LGBTQ members and others in our church who are enduring this social distancing/quarantine period. I would like to share a few of the thoughts and wisdom I have gleaned.



I decided to research the topic of LGBTQ individuals and mental health as part of my learning curve and wonder if members of the Church of the Palms were aware of their disparities in mental health status. Overall, the statistics indicate that LGBTQ individuals are more than twice as likely to have mental health issues than heterosexual individuals. Among the disorders they commonly experience at a greater rate are depression, anxiety and substance abuse, as well as an increased rate of attempted suicide. What can this awareness tell us with regard to becoming a WISE (Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive and Engaged) congregation?

Given the stigma and discrimination many LGBTQ individuals have experienced or anticipate, I was drawn to thinking about how difficult this period of social isolation. I recently talked with a gay longtime friend to see how he was doing. His history includes major depression and substance abuse, as well as a number of physical issues, including being HIV positive. He told me how fortunate he was to have made the decision to move closer to his family before this all began. He had not realized how supportive they could be and that he didn't have to buy their support and love, as he had done for many years. I had experienced and helped him select some expensive gifts for his mom and sister and her children, and often wondered how he afforded them with his limited income. Anyway, he was crying as he thanked me for listening to his tales of woe for several years and for assisting him to get the strength to finally move closer to family. I share this story as a way of saying, we can all "be there" for providing support and being an accepting family.

WORSHIP THEMES FOR JUNE

Pastors Jim and Paul will continue to provide video worship through the weeks of June.

June 7: Read the creation stories found in Genesis 1:1-2:4a. God created humankind and declared it good. Let's be intentional about our words like God was/is. Pastor Paul will preach.

June 14: "You've got to laugh a little, cry a little, until the clouds roll by a little. That's the story of, that's the glory of love." That's also the story of Genesis 18:1-15 and 21:1-7. God accomplishes great things through all of us...at any age. Pastor Jim will be preaching.

June 21: Pastor Paul will talk of relative difficulty. Do you have one of those relatives that is difficult to be around? So did Jesus. We're jumping off the lectionary and looking at Mark 3:31-35.

June 28: Read Psalm 13. Focus in our verse one. Pastor Paul will be taking his case before God arguing with the Almighty in a courtroom.

Jeannette Reeves	June 3
Dan Kozlowski	June 4
Richard Nagel	June 6
Sylvia Masny	June 7
Edith Bentz	June 8
Sandy Znetko	June 8
Darwin Wille	June 11
Don Zoss	June 11
Vickie Ashenbrenner	June 14
Hazel Urquhart	June 15
Donna Rosebery	June 18
Lucille Clark	June 24
David Deardorff	June 24
Corky Weiss	June 24
Mary Hoy	June 29
Ramona Schenk	June 30



I-HELP Needs Your Help This Summer

The Church of the Palms has been hosting I-HELP for more than six months, and we have seen 12 of our guests acquire housing. Since the lockdown, we have had seven guests in the program. Each new guest is tested for COVID-19, and we have an extensive protocol of taking temperatures, social distancing, wearing masks, hand washing and wiping down all surfaces before and after we host. This will be our first summer (June, July, August) hosting the program, and we need your help in the following areas:



Meals: We need evening meals prepared — as well as breakfast and lunch the following day — by three different volunteers. Laurie Cathey (623-238-3826) is our coordinator for food. You can bring the food to the church after 4 p.m. on Mondays and Fridays that we host. You are always welcome to serve and eat with the guests, but it's not required.



Monitors: We also need monitors to stay with our guests. We have two shifts: 10 p.m. to 3 a.m. and 3 a.m. to 8 a.m. We need two monitors for each shift; new monitors will be paired with an experienced monitor. Vickie Ashenbrenner (831-233-2548) is our monitor coordinator.



Laundry: After each night of hosting, we have sheets and pillowcases that need to be laundered before the next time we host. If you are interested in helping with laundry, you can do it at the church with our washer and dryer or take it home to do. Laundry is available on Tuesday and Saturday mornings after we host. Contact Max Klinkenborg (816-377-4618) if interested in helping.

I-HELP continues to meet the needs of the homeless in the Northwest Valley. Through the generosity of four other churches, we are providing seven nights of lodging and a place to be during the day to keep our guests safe. During these challenging times, the program is needed more than ever. Thanks for your prayers and support.

Login to the website and listen to the daily devotionals posted at <https://thepalms.org/daily-devotional/> You will find the link on the first page of the website, left-hand panel.

Pastors Paul and Jim and others in the congregation are using this opportunity of Healthy Hiatus to bring you good news! Hear messages of peace, extravagant love and about being The Palms of Jesus.

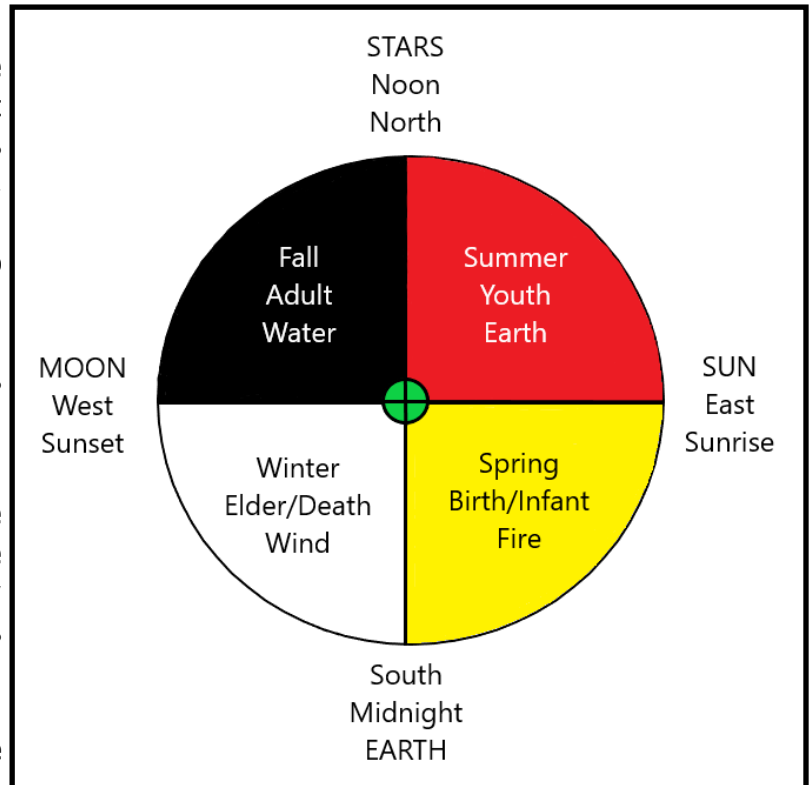


Medicine Wheel, Sacred Circle or Circle of Life

By Max Klinkenborg

The three names in the title all describe the same pattern but from different perspectives. Medicine Wheel, which is the most common and latest naming, came from the Europeans who had concept of a wheel, an alien idea to Native Americans. Sacred Circle describes the communal, ceremonial use. Circle of Life describes the completeness and unity of life's seasons and ages.

A Sacred Circle has been built on Church of the Palms' property to the west of the labyrinth. Its presence acknowledges the tribal peoples who lived in the Valley centuries before the earliest explorers and their reverence for all of Creation. (Interpretive material about the Sacred Circle will be available in the literature box at the labyrinth entrance.)



The Sacred Circle was common to the upper plains tribes; the oldest and largest is the Bighorn Medicine Wheel in Wyoming, which dates back to at least 4,000 BCE, the time of the construction of the pyramids in Egypt. The Chartres Cathedral with its labyrinth in France was built in 1,200 AD, five thousand years later.

"The circle, being primary, influences how we as aboriginal people view the world. In the process of how life evolves, how the natural world grows and works together, how all things are connected, and how all things move toward their destiny. Aboriginal peoples see and respond in the world in a circular fashion and are influenced by the examples of the circles of creation in our environment." (Dumont, J 1989)

Western thought tends to be linear, moving in a line into a new future. But for the Native Americans, they see life as cyclical: one season follows another; one generation replaces another; and sunrise and sunset follow each other. The Circle of Life is acknowledged and celebrated for its promise and predictability.

The Sacred Circle is divided into four quadrants with the lines of separation indicating the four directions: North, South, East and West. Mother Earth is below and Father Sky is above and the Great Spirit is at the center. The East-West axis points to the sunrise and sunset and sets the time of the Vernal and Autumnal Equinox that separates the seasons from Spring to Summer and Autumn to Winter. The circle shape represents life; we change like the seasons as we pass through life.

The four quadrants each have a color and a season of the year. Beyond that, the interpretation of what each quadrant means varies greatly and becomes a very individualistic interpretation, seeking meaning and relevance. The purpose of the Sacred Circle is to show the path to healing, health and balance.



After the Rain

By Pastor Jim Alexander

There's always a rainbow after the rain.

The Church of the Palms has been encouraged to focus on some aspect of mental health each month for the past several months. Our areas of focus have been: Self Esteem (February), Developmental Disabilities Awareness (March), The Warning Signs of Mental Illness (April), and Mental Health Awareness Month/WISE Congregation for Mental Health Survey (May). We have provided tips and tools along with hotlines and websites to support our community along the way.

As we continue on our quest to become a WISE Congregation for Mental Health, our WISE Steering Committee has been very busy developing their plans and drafting the WISE Covenant that will be presented to the Church for adoption. The results from the congregational survey and input from across the membership of The Palms as we develop the content of The WISE Covenant. Please continue to pray that we may draw the circle wider as a welcoming, inclusive, supportive and engaged congregation for all people.

Our Mental Health Focus for the month of **June** is twofold. June is **LGBTQ Pride Month** and it is also **National Hunger Awareness Month**. These two go very well together and here's why.

The coronavirus pandemic has had unexpected effects for LGBTQ people around the world: forcing some LGBTQ citizens who may not be accepted by their family and friends to face hostile living environments. The pandemic is also placing vulnerable people of all walks of life at risk of homelessness and employment insecurity. It has also become very apparent with the financial and social destruction being leveled by the pandemic, that certain government agencies are stalling progress on potential legal changes that could grant LGBTQ and other marginalized people greater rights.

In an ordinary year, Pride celebrations would offer a chance to gather together, celebrate the achievements of the community and reflect on the future for social change.

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But four months ago, more than 220 Pride celebrations scheduled worldwide were cancelled or delayed, including Phoenix Pride. The Palms has participated in this event for the past three years.



"LGBT people around the world are insanely resilient, but they face isolation every day in their life," says J. Andrew Baker, co-President of Interpride, the international association of Pride organizers. "One of the challenges we find today is that LGBT people are even more isolated." To overcome that isolation, the world's biggest international Pride networks, Interpride and the European Pride Organizers Association, are organizing a "Global Pride" to be celebrated online on June 27. Global Pride organizers are planning a 24-hour live streamed event, including remote contributions from international Prides, speeches from human-rights activists, workshops with activists and high-profile performers yet to be confirmed.

Be sure to check out <https://www.interpride.org/communications.html> and make your plans to participate! The Palms will provide reminders and additional information about this event.

As a church, let us look for ways to make The Palms a safe place for those who may be experiencing abuse in their homes and communities due to their sexual orientation. Whether you are a part of the LGBTQ community or not, if you feel that you are not safe in your home, remember: you are not alone, you are loved and we will provide help to you. Call Pastor Jim or Pastor Paul at 623.977.8359.

Because there are so many people unemployed/underemployed, homeless, or displaced due to the pandemic, we also want to focus on the ways in which we might address the issue of hunger during this month. The People of The Palms have been consistently generous in providing food for I-Help, HART Pantry, and various food banks within the Sun City area. We are meeting the urgent needs of those who would otherwise be going without.

There are mental health concerns associated with food deprivation. Nearly 15 % of all households in the United States did not have enough to eat daily and suffered from recurring hunger before the pandemic, and that percentage has increased dramatically. The emotional and psychological tension associated with hunger can be devastating to individuals and whole families. **Here are some ways to ensure that we are doing our part.**

Donate

Donating, whether money or food, is a great way to help local food banks. Most donations to food banks are made between Thanksgiving and Christmas — which is great — but donations are needed year-round.

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Monetary donations allow the food banks to buy food during the less popular months for giving. You can drop your donation off in the church office. Make sure you mark it HUNGER RELIEF.

Volunteer with a Food Bank

It doesn't always take a big financial investment to make a big impact. Volunteering is a great way to spend your time making a difference. By volunteering, you give families the opportunity to use the money they have towards bills and other living expenses while being able to have food on the table. In addition, volunteering can be a great family gathering, team bonding or employee engagement event. Witness firsthand how your presence and support are affecting those in your community!

To find a food bank in Arizona, visit the website of the Arizona Food Bank Network at azfoodbanks.org.

Continue Bringing Food and Filling the Shopping Cart

Food drives help stock shelves and play a vital role in encouraging community participation. Continue bringing your non-perishable food items to the church and fill the shopping cart. If you are not able to bring it yourself, please call the church office at 623.977.8359 and we will arrange to have your items picked up.

Favorite Hymns

On June 7th we will begin our services with FAVORITE HYMN SINGING!! This will continue throughout the summer months.

Please feel free to click on <https://hymnary.org/hymnal/CH1995> in case you would like to choose from the hymnal OR you can just provide the titles of your favorite hymns. Once you have decided what you would like to submit, THEN, click on [this link](#), type in your titles and hit submit. You can do this as often as you like. We will include these links within every Order of Worship throughout the summer. Keep `em coming!

Summer Special Music

Every summer we invite members of our congregation to participate in our services by providing Summer Special Music. Even though it says "special music," we have had folks read poetry, tell stories, and share other talents. As I always say, you can play the saw or comb and waxed paper if that's your thing!!!

Well, this summer shouldn't be any different. If you have something you would like to share during our worship (of a worshipful nature), please call me and we will make all of the necessary arrangements. EVEN if you are at your summer home and away from Sun City, we can make this happen by the magic of television. I look forward to hearing from you! —Pastor Jim

CONNECTING WITH OTHERS



It's possible to be surrounded by people and still feel alone. It's the connections we make with other people that help enrich our lives and get us through tough times, but sometimes it's hard to know how to make those connections.

TIPS FOR CONNECTING



Connect with others at places you already go to. There are places that you go to over and over again - these are great places to strike up conversations and start to make friends. At work you might ask a co-worker to join you for lunch or to grab a cup of coffee. If you have kids involved in extracurricular activities, you probably see the same other parents attending their practices or dropping off each time. If you go to the gym at the same time each day, you may notice others who are on the same workout schedule.



Use shared experience as a topic of conversation. Use your current situation as a topic to talk about. Maybe you're stuck waiting in a long line, or you noticed someone is wearing a shirt from a place that you've been. Hometown sports, local news and events, or even the weather can also get a conversation going.



Give compliments. If you're struggling to figure out what to say to someone to strike up a conversation, try starting with a compliment. You can comment on a person's outfit, tattoo, or a piece of jewelry that you like and maybe ask them where they got it. Use their response to continue the conversation, for example if they tell you they got it at a certain store, ask where that is.



Make time to be social. Going to work and taking care of life's other daily responsibilities is time consuming and many of us feel exhausted by the end of the day. While it's tempting to just sit on the sofa and zone out in front of the TV, that time can be spent in a more meaningful way. Set aside at least half an hour each day to connect with other people outside of work.



Not all connections have to be done in person. While spending time with someone face-to-face helps to create the strongest relationships, phone calls, text messaging, emails, and video chats can maintain friendships when distance or time constraints get in the way of hanging out.



Accept invitations. If someone asks you to go somewhere or do something with them, accept their invitation. When you turn people down over and over, they may stop inviting you. It may not be your favorite place or activity, but you can use the time to build your friendship and suggest things you like better for the next time you get together with that person.



Pay attention to what other people are interested in. For instance, you may notice a family portrait or a pet's picture on a coworker's desk. Ask them how old their children are, or what their pet's name is - and show genuine interest in their answers. Ask follow up questions and if appropriate, share something relevant about yourself, like how many children you have or the name of your pet.



Organize activities. If there is something that you are interested in doing, ask someone else (or a group of other people) to join you. It can be hard to make the first move, but it may end up that someone else wanted to do the same thing all along and was waiting to find out who else was interested. Don't be discouraged if schedules don't cooperate sometimes. Keep making invitations!

FAST FACTS



Research shows it can take 50 hours for someone you don't know that well to turn into a true friend.¹



During the week, Americans watch an average of 2 ½ hours of TV per day, but only spend half an hour per day socializing.²



The number of friendships you have early in your adult life and the closeness of those relationships can influence your wellbeing 30 years later.³

IF YOU FEEL LIKE YOU ARE STRUGGLING WITH YOUR MENTAL HEALTH, VISIT [MHASCREENING.ORG](https://www.mhascreening.org) TO CHECK YOUR SYMPTOMS.



It's free, confidential, and anonymous. Once you have your results, MHA will give you information and resources to help you start to feel better.

Sources

- ¹Hall, J. A. (2019). How many hours does it take to make a friend? *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 36(4), 1278-1296.
- ²US Dept. of Labor. (2018). American time use survey. Retrieved from <http://www.bls.gov/tus>.
- ³Carmichael, C. L., Reis, H. T., Duberstein, P. R. (2015). In your 20s it's quantity, in your 30s it's quality: The prognostic value of social activity across 30 years of adulthood. *Psychology and Aging*, 30, 95-105.



In Memoriam



Richard Kuelbs

May 1926—May 2020

In Memoriam



John Ostenson

November 1948—May 2020

June 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 4:00 pm (KH) I-Help	2	3	4	5 4:00 pm (KH) I-Help	6
7 9:00 am - 11:00 am (SA) Open for prayer	8 4:00 pm (KH) I-Help	9	10	11	12 4:00 pm (KH) I-Help	13
14 9:00 am - 11:00 am (SA) Open for prayer	15 4:00 pm (KH) I-Help	16	17	18	19	20
21 9:00 am - 11:00 am (SA) Open for prayer	22 4:00 pm (KH) I-Help	23	24	25	26 4:00 pm (KH) I-Help	27
28 9:00 am - 11:00 am (SA) Open for prayer	29 4:00 pm (KH) I-Help	30	<i>Notes:</i> KEY: Sanctuary (SA); King Hall (KH)			