



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

What do you remember about your childhood Christmas celebrations? How do you want your family to answer that question someday? If you're like me, you don't tend to remember the gifts you were given as much as the special moments. One of my great regrets with my kids is that our Christmas season was often too crowded with everyone else's agendas rather than the one we set for our family. We tried to attend everything we thought we should, which meant we were gone from our kids more often than we wished.



The preacher and spouse are supposed to be at every church program and celebrate with the numerous church groups. Throw in a few community events, as well. It took some strategic planning to make sure we could share Christmas as a family. Eventually, I learned to look at the holiday with a larger perspective. I remember thinking, ten years from now, the people who would be most important to me should also be most important to me now. That helped me say, "no", a little more often.

Before your calendar gets too full, it's good to consider this year's holiday with a 2026 perspective. Five years from now, what will you and your family talk about and laugh about when remembering Christmas? That answer should impact your Christmas planning this year. You have an entire month to celebrate. There is plenty of time to make sure this Christmas creates some great memories for the future generations.

Christmas is a season when family, generosity, kindness, joy, peace, and caring about others is front and center. The world is watching our celebrations, our priorities, and our values. Our Christmas celebration may be the best witness opportunity of the entire year! What will your family do together this year that will share your witness with others?

The shepherds were going about their normal lives when the night sky was suddenly bright. The angel said, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" Luke 2:10-11. Our normal lives are interrupted by Christmas as well. Be okay with that. Trust me, Christmas 2022 is right around the corner, and your family will be glad you did!

Shalom, Paul

Update from the Mod(erator) Squad

Music to Our Ears

Greetings from the Mod Squad,

OK, the truth is none of us are in the choir. In fact, we have such great respect for Pastor Jim and the members of the choir that we would not want to damage their fine reputation by inflicting our voices upon them. But we do love music! And we especially love the beautiful voice sounds that come from the hearts and out the mouths of our choir members. We are looking forward to the day



(L-R) Suzanne Boisclair, John Durbin, and Jerry Lovell.

someone with the skill to bring its full capabilities to us. We find it interesting that most members of our congregation, who grew up with the notion that you are to remain stoic during worship service and are too self-conscious to stand up, start waving their arms and “amening” after another beautiful song, have resorted to frequent clapping, another taboo from prior times. Music is a very important and moving part of our worship experience. Reverend Rob Still, a worship pastor, songwriter, missionary and coach, puts it this way: “Music is a precious resource to enable people to worship God. Consider these four aspects:

- Music in worship helps us commune with God. It is unique in its tangible and intangible ability to connect deeply with the human soul.
- Music in worship gives us the vocabulary and actions to express praise and worship. It encourages our brothers and sisters when we sing or hear sung the truths of God.
- Music both expresses and affects our emotions so that we grow closer to God. It inspires, informs, and motivates us to grow spiritually.
- Music helps unite and encourages us to be the body of Christ, to “be the church.”

Indeed, our music ministry is a very important part of what makes our Church of the Palms a very special place. Those of us who have been around awhile have seen the music program grow and flourish under the leadership of Pastor Jim and the encouragement of Pastor Paul. So, give our music team (choir, soloists, accompanists, bell ringers) a real hug or a virtual hug and let them know how much we love and support them. And be thinking about how we can support this wonderful ministry going forward and incorporating our new organ, with all its potential, into the mix as we move to the next level.

Psalm 92:1 “It is good to praise the Lord and make music to your name, O Most High.”

Sending love,

The Mod Squad: Jerry, Suzanne, John

Report on Church Governance

As you know the Church of the Palms new constitution and bylaws were approved by the congregation on Sunday, September 26th, 2021. Since then, the Executive Board has held three meetings, mostly focusing on the 2022 budget, making minor changes to the bylaws, and assisting in launching the Ministry and Operations Councils. The Operations Council, made up of representatives from the Boards of Finance, Trustees, Personnel and Stewardship, has met twice and been exploring ways to maximize our financial, physical, and personnel assets. The Ministry Council, made up of representatives from the Worship, Evangelism, Lifelong Learning, Mission & Outreach Teams has also met twice. This Council has been busy exploring ways these teams can work together and determining how to best use the financial assets available to them. The Fellowship Team, part of the Ministry Council, and which is new in the Constitution, has not yet been formed. If you are interested in being part of the Fellowship Team, please contact Suzanne Boisclair or a member of the Volunteer Engagement Committee. The Volunteer Engagement Committee has met three times and recently sent out the Time, Talent & Interest Survey. If you have not yet completed that survey, please do so. Copies are available in the office. All the Teams and Boards which make up the Councils have met at least once. The Constitution Rewrite Committee is currently developing a standard format template for the procedures of all the boards, teams, and committees.

The meeting times and places of all the groups mentioned above are listed in the Palm Leaf calendar and Sunday bulletins. All members of the congregation are invited to attend meetings of interest. In addition, the notes from all meetings are submitted to the Office Manager, Lindsey Riley. If you would like to review minutes of a particular leadership group, please contact Lindsey for a copy at 623.977.8359. If you have any questions about church governance, please contact Eona Schulz, Member-at-Large. We will use this space in the Palm Leaf to report monthly on issues of significant importance. We ask for your prayers, encouragement, and patience as we move forward in rolling out our new constitution and bylaws. Thank you!

—The Executive Council



Christmas Celebrations at The Palms

- **Christmas Eve at the Labyrinth,
A Self-Guided Labyrinth Walk**
Friday, Dec. 24, 6:00 p.m.
- **Christmas Eve Worship**
Friday, Dec. 24, 7:00 p.m.

WORSHIP THEMES FOR *DECEMBER*

In-Person Worship at 10:00 a.m. Sunday

Online Worship Monday

*****If you are interested in becoming a liturgist in worship, contact the church office.*****

December 5: 2nd Sunday in Advent - Peace Sunday. Pastor Paul will be preaching on Peace. Read Luke 3:1-6. Prepare the Way by being at Peace.

December 12: 3rd Sunday in Advent - Joy Sunday. Read Luke 3:4-16. The Kin-dom of God is at hand. Rejoice! Pastor Paul will be preaching.

December 19: 4th Sunday in Advent - Love Sunday. The Sanctuary Choir, musicians, and congregation will be worshipping through music and the spoken word as we reflect on what really happened at the manger so many years ago.

December 21 (Tuesday): Longest Night — Blue Christmas Service 3:00p.m. — Blue? Yes, blue as in the blues. As in "I am feeling blue." Not everyone is up and cheery for the Christmas holidays. Dealing with the death of a loved one, another type of grief or loss, facing life with cancer or some other dis-ease that puts a question mark over the future, and a number of other human situations make parties and joviality painful for many people in our congregation. This service will be a reflective worship time of holding out healing and hope. Rev. David Klingensmith will be leading.

December 24: Christmas Eve. 7:00 p.m. service. Special music, beloved carols, communion, and candlelight will fill the sanctuary. Pastor Paul will be preaching.

December 26: 1st Sunday after Christmas. Pastor Jim's message is entitled, "I Am Because We Are." We will explore the seven principles of Kwanzaa in preparation for new year. We will reflect on Umoja (unity), Kujichagulia (self-determination), Ujima (collective economics), Nia (purpose), Kuumba (creativity) and Imani (faith).

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS



Lorena Lewis	12/1
Pat Durbin	12/3
Sharon Christenson	12/5
Rhonna Fiihr	12/7
Ruthie Whitlock	12/8
Janet Bozgan	12/9
Terry Hanson	12/12
Carol Bryan	12/15
Leonard Sylvester	12/15
Glenn Fiihr	12/17
Doris Hoy	12/17
Howard Schenk	12/18

Victoria McWilliams	12/19
Violet Jeffery	12/21
Chuck Udstuen	12/21
Brian Hannon	12/22
Julie Nichols	12/22
Andrea Stefanov	12/22
Shea Darian	12/30
Cindy Kunkel	12/30



Congregation for Mental Wellness
Welcoming | Inclusive
Supportive | Engaged

Important Phone Numbers

National Alliance on Mental Illness Help Line

1-800-950-6264 <https://www.nami.org/help>

Suicide Prevention Lifeline 800.273.TALK

Veteran's Crisis Line 800.273.8255 *press 1*

Pastoral Care—Pastor Jim Alexander 623.792.5295

How To Thrive During the Holidays

Thanksgiving is past and now we prepare for Advent and Christmas. Rather than just surviving the holidays, here are some ways we can thrive during the holidays. Many of us experience anxiety and grief due to several factors. The holiday season can magnify the emotions that accompany anxiety and grief. When you are feeling these heightened emotions, try any combination of the following:

- **Devise an intentional plan:** rather than trying to forget about the holidays in hope that they will just disappear, write a contract with yourself that spells out what and how much you will do.
 - This year, you may not be up to attending all the activities to which you're invited. Pick the one or two that are the most important to you.
 - You don't have to put out every decoration in your collection. Choose the ones that are the most meaningful or that elicit feelings of positivity. Use items from nature to decorate and focus on the holy in the holiday.
 - When it comes to gift-giving, spend time with those you enjoy being around rather than spending time at the mall or on-line trying to find that perfect gift. Enjoy an experiential activity and conversation.
 - Try as we might, we can't duplicate past holidays. Try doing something completely different. What way could you honor your loved one(s) who are no longer with you? What traditions could you do a little differently that help you focus on the true meaning of Advent and Christmas?
 - If you choose to be alone, it is a good idea to plan some activities that help you to acknowledge your feelings of depression, anxiety, or anger. Write them down and include some ideas on how you might relieve their place in your life. Avoid the temptation to numb the pain with excessive alcohol, food, or drug consumption. Remember, you are never truly alone. Any of the helplines listed above are always available for your use. There are also many rich resources on our Tools2Thrive page of the website which may help you.
 - When the memories of holidays past come flooding in, cherish them. Write them down and design ways to preserve them: make a scrapbook, collage, or journal.
 - Attend the Blue Christmas Service at The Palms on Tuesday, December 21st at 3:00 p.m. We will journey together to thrive during the holidays.



CARE Corner

Brought to you by Church of the Palms'
CARE Ministry Team

This Christmas, the Care Ministry Team will be sponsoring a Christmas Card Shower for all of our members and friends who are homebound or who are otherwise unable to come to campus for worship and other activities. The Care Ministry Team invites YOU to come to the Board Room on Sunday, December 5th, and/or Sunday, December 12th, either before or after worship. There, you will find Christmas cards for each person who will appreciate hearing from YOU and receiving your Christmas wishes to them. Each station will be labeled with their name and have a collection of Christmas cards that will be sent to them. You don't need to sign all the cards that go to one individual. But YOU should sign card for as many individuals as you can!!

If you can think of a member or friend of The Church of the Palms who may not be represented at one of the stations but would really enjoy receiving a Christmas Card Shower, please feel free to make one of the Christmas Card Elf Attendants aware and they will set up a station.

Together, let's Be the Church in spreading Christmas Cheer!!

The Care Team Mission

**Assist the Pastors when our community
needs help spiritually, physically,
emotionally or socially**

Do you need a last minute gift?/

We have \$25 gift cards for you to purchase &
take home on **Sunday, Dec. 5**



Walmart 



***Bring your checkbook or cash to the SCRIP table
in the Narthex and take the gift cards home with you.***



Social Justice @ The Palms

I-HELP & King Hall: In the room where it happens

By Nancy Mueller

The Church of the Palms has been an integral part of Interfaith Homeless Emergency Shelter (I-HELP) of the Northwest Valley since it began in October 2019, usually hosting every Monday night. I-HELP is administered by Lutheran Social Services who interviews, selects, and provides case management for those who have lost safe and stable housing. A host church like ours provides the basics of shelter, meals and transportation for a maximum of 12 guests. COTP provides this and much more — friendly faces who listen with their hearts.

Our volunteers prepare homemade dinners, hot breakfasts, and a hearty lunch bag for every overnight guest. Our monitors, who pass a background check by the State of Arizona, provide a secure shelter for our guests every hour they are on our site in King Hall. Our bus drivers provide transportation to and from COTP. A team of COTP members and others organize and support these key functions and activities.

Laurie Cathey has been a strong advocate for the homeless. From Day 1, Laurie coordinated all the meals, prepared the dining area, greeted the guests, helped serve and clean up and filled in the gaps as needed. We are thankful for her 2 years of service. She is ready for a Monday night at home. So, starting in December, Randolph Omahana will begin as meal coordinator.

We thank Mo Goodrick, who has been making lunches for many months. She passes the brown lunch bags to Marcia Hollingsworth for December. We need others for 2022. Randolph welcomes anyone to contact him about providing meals for 10-12 people or helping in the kitchen. Contact Randolph at 847.828.8045 about participating in this unique way, to make a difference in the lives of those we meet through I-HELP.

You may contact Nancy Mueller (608.838.3575) about other related volunteer activities. These include monitors from 10pm-3am or 3am-7am, laundry once a week, bus drivers 1 hour at 7:30 am or 4:00 pm. Perhaps you'd like to visit on a Monday evening to socialize. You will be welcomed to the room where it happens.

HART Pantry is having trouble purchasing needed food items. The quantities they need are often restricted. If you are thinking of a cash donation, consider buying the non-perishable food items if it is convenient to do so. Some of the items are juice boxes, canned pasta dinners, tuna or chicken lunch packs, pudding or fruit cups, individual cracker/cookie packs, cereal bars/cereal cups and protein bars. These items can be put in the donation box at church. Your generous support of our teens is appreciated.



The Creation Justice Task Force will recycle your used batteries. **Please don't put them in the garbage!** Put your used batteries in the box in the Narthex.

Updates from our Service Project Craft Group

By Bonnie Green

We just keep moving forward and the "Blessings" just continue to roll in. What is of no use to someone else can be turned into lap robes, small quilts, crocheted and knitted items for people in need. Yes, and some things will adorn our Table in King Hall someday for you to purchase for yourself or others. We use these monies to purchase items that are not donated or for another monetary cause.

One of our members contributed many different kinds of material. A non-member goes to sales and thrift shops and has brought us beautiful yarns. She heard about our work with Hart Pantry and wanted to help. Still another could no longer see to work on her crafts and donated material, and many items were almost finished. This is just a few of our many blessings this month. We say "a big thank you" to EVERYONE!



(L-R) Leah Huse, Opal Wille, Lou Dever, Sharon Pitts, Carol Reynolds. Credit: Bobbie Chapman.



Church of the Palms at Phoenix Pride

Ten members of The Palms participated in the Phoenix Pride Parade on Nov. 6. Below is a newspaper clipping from the Nov. 17 edition of the Sun City Independent.

PRIDE

The newspaper clipping features four photographs of the Church of the Palms bus decorated for the Phoenix Pride Parade. The bus is white with "Church of the Palms" and "www.thepalms.org" written on it. It is decorated with colorful balloons and a rainbow flag. A group of people is standing in front of the bus, and another group is holding a banner that says "LOVE is LOVE".

Local church represents LGBT community
The Church of the Palms, 14808 N. Boswell Blvd., represented the Sun City LGBT-plus community at the Phoenix Gay Pride Parade Nov. 6. There were 10 members attending, decorating the church's bus and walking in the parade. The Church of the Palms is an open and affirming church, so everyone is welcomed, respected and accepted as God's children. Lead pastor is Pastor Paul Whitlock. Attendees who walked in the parade included Pastor Jim Alexander, Ronn Enzweiler, Mike Cullen, Cynthia Morgan, Eric Holmes, Michael Balch, Dave Klingensmith, Jeff Fay, Kevin Nicastro and Steve Meoli. [Submitted photos]

FUNDRAISING

Help Raise Money for The Palms with Your Everyday Purchases

There are several ways to support The Palms during your everyday shopping activities: You can make Church of the Palms the recipient of Fry's Community Rewards when you buy groceries; purchase gift cards for family, friends (and yourself!) through Scrip for a percentage to be kicked back to The Palms when the cards are used; and buy items on Amazon Smile for The Palms to receive a percentage of the purchase price.



Fry's Community Rewards Signup

1. Log onto **Frysfood.com**
2. Scroll to the bottom of the page
Under "**Community**" click on
"**Fry's community Rewards**"
3. Click on the blue box:
"**Link your shopper's card**"
4. Set up an account if you do not already have one
You will need an email & your Fry's
shopper's card number
5. On the Community Rewards page type in
"**Church of the Palms**" in the box
Click on Enroll

At the bottom of your receipt you will see:

****Fry's Community Rewards****

At your request Fry's will donate to
Church of the Palms



1. Choose your gift cards by retailer and denomination. [Click here](#) for a full list.
2. Fill out a Scrip Order Form. A printable version is available on our website at <https://thepalms.org/scrip-gift-card-program/>
3. Please make checks payable to Church of the Palms, and make sure to write "Gift Card Order" in the memo line.
4. Deliver the Order Form and your payment to the church by the first Sunday of the month. Leave your order form and payment in the "Scrip" cubby in the church office.
5. Gift Card Orders will be placed that week and delivered by the third Sunday of the month.

amazon smile
You shop. Amazon gives.

Continue to shop as normal on Amazon while raising money for The Palms. Nothing changes for you and your account by shopping Amazon Smile; it works exactly the same.

To get started, sign in at smile.amazon.com, type "Church of The Palms United Church of Christ" in the search tab and start shopping!

Lifelong Learning in December 2021

Educational opportunities continue at Church of the Palms. HYBRID classes meet in person and online — your choice. Access online classes at <https://thepalms.org/bridges>.



Sunday

- *Shared Conversations*, 7:30-8:30 a.m. Online only. Facilitated by Bobbie Chapman. NO CLASS Dec. 26.

Tuesday

- *Jump Start: Prep for Sunday Sermon with Scripture/Dialogue* 4:00-5:00 p.m., HYBRID in the Boardroom and online. Facilitated by John Durbin. NO CLASS Dec. 28.

Wednesday

- *Spiritual Growth Class: "From Evangelical to Progressive Christianity in Ten (Not so Easy) Steps,"* 10:00-11:30 a.m., HYBRID in King Hall and online. Facilitated by Dr. Phil Ladd. Last session is Dec. 29.

Thursday

- *Cosmic Christians*, 10:00-11:30 a.m. Online only. There is no class Dec. 2, but Class resumes Dec. 9 with a new book: "Torah of the Earth: Exploring 4,000 Years of ECOLOGY in Jewish Thought, Vol.1."

Description: "Torah of the Earth: Exploring 4000 years of ECOLOGY in Jewish Thought, Vol 1." Edited by Arthur Waskow. This collection of writings presents "human responses to the natural world through the last 4000 years ... It gives us an invaluable key to understanding the intersection of ecology and Judaism, and offers the wisdom of Judaism in dealing with the present environmental crisis." Two major time focuses: 1)Biblical Israel: One Land, One People; 2)Rabbinic Judaism: One People, Many Lands. Facilitated by Linette Stenberg.

A Message from the Pain Support Group

Do you experience occasional or chronic pain from arthritis, fibromyalgia, neuropathy or other physical conditions? The Church of the Palms has a support group, started a few years ago by Scott Patrick. This is a safe place for you to come and share what you are experiencing within a supportive and loving group. Information and experiences with physicians, medications, and treatment plans are shared.

Meetings are held the second Thursday of each month at 10:00 a.m. Because we have so few members right now, meetings are currently held in a host's home. As our group expands, we can consider other options for a meeting place.

This group is open to anyone, not just for those attending Church of the Palms, so let your friends or relatives know. For further information, call or text Scott Patrick at 708.813.0137. You may also email him at fishdog300@yahoo.com.

December's meeting will be hosted by Marcia Hollingsworth 10:00 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 9, at 9924 W Tarrytown Ave., Sun City. If planning to attend, please call, text or email her at 719-784-4087, grannymarcia.mh@gmail.com.

December 1-16, 2021

1 Wednesday	9:00 am (BR) Service Project Craft Group 10:00 am (KH) Spiritual Growth Class 1:00 pm (BR) Anti-Racism Retreat Follow-up	2 Thursday	1:00 pm (HY) Worship Team meeting 2:30 pm (MR) Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal
3 Friday		4 Saturday	
5 Sunday	7:30 am (B2L) Shared Conversations 9:00 am (MR) Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal 10:00 am (SA) Sunday Worship	6 Monday	4:00 pm (KH) I-HELP
7 Tuesday	4:00 pm (HY) Jump Start	8 Wednesday	9:00 am (BR) Service Project Craft Group 10:00 am (KH) Spiritual Growth Class 2:00-5:00 pm (OS) Feet-N-More Shower Ministry
9 Thursday	10:00 am (B2L) Cosmic Christians 2:30-4:00 pm (MR) Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal	10 Friday	
11 Saturday	9:00 am (MR) Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal	12 Sunday	7:30 am (B2L) Shared Conversations 9:00 am (MR) Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal 10:00 am (SA) Sunday Worship
13 Monday	2:00 pm (BR) Board of Trustees 4:00 pm (KH) I-HELP	14 Tuesday	9:00 am-1:00 pm (OS) Feet-N-More Shower Ministry 10:00-11:30 am (HY) Starting Conversations about Suicide and its Prevention 1:00 pm (HY) Ministry Council 1:00 pm (KH) Operations Council 2:00 pm (HY) Board of Stewards 4:00 pm (HY) Jump Start
15 Wednesday	9:00 am (HY) Board of Mission and Outreach 9:00 am (BR) Service Project Craft Group 10:00 am (KH) Spiritual Growth Class	16 Thursday	10:00 am (OS) Pain Support Group 10:00 am (B2L) Cosmic Christians 12:00 pm (HY) Personnel Board 1:00 pm (HY) Care Team 2:30-4:00 pm (MR) Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal

SA=Sanctuary, KH=King Hall, BR=Boardroom, B2L=Boardroom, B2L=Bridges to Learning, PL=Parking Lot, OS=Offsite, HY=Hybrid, MR=Music Room

December 17-31, 2021

17 Friday	1:00 pm (BR) Social Justice Action Team	18 Saturday	
19 Sunday	7:30 am (B2L) Shared Conversations 9:00 am (MR) Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal 10:00 am (SA) Sunday Worship	20 Monday	4:00 pm (KH) I-HELP
21 Tuesday	9:00 am (B2B) Creation Justice Team 10:00 am (HY) Volunteer Engagement Committee 3:00 pm (SA) Blue Christmas 4:00 pm (HY) Jump Start	22 Wednesday	9:00-11:00 am (BR) Service Project Craft Group 2:00-5:00 pm (OS) Feet-N-More Shower Trailer Ministry
23 Thursday Office Closed		24 Friday Christmas Eve	6:00 pm (LB) Self-Guided Labyrinth Walk 7:00 pm (SA) Christmas Eve Worship
25 Saturday Christmas Day		26 Sunday	7:30 am (B2L) Shared Conversations 9:00 am (MR) Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal 10:00 am (SA) Sunday Worship
27 Monday	4:00 pm (KH) I-HELP	28 Tuesday	2:00-5:00 pm (OS) Feet-N-More Shower Trailer Ministry 4:00 pm (HY) Jump Start
29 Wednesday	9:00-11:00 am (BR) Service Project Craft Group 10:00-11:30 am (KH) Spiritual Growth Class	30 Thursday Office Closed	
31 Friday			

KH=King Hall, B2L= Bridges to Learning, B2B=Bridges to Boards, SA=Sanctuary, BR=Boardroom, OS=Offsite, HY=Hybrid, LB=Labyrinth