

The Palm Leaf



Church of the Palms, 14808 N. Boswell Blvd., Sun City, AZ 85351

A Letter from Paul



First, and it pains me just a bit to admit this, if you are to be met by God, (DO I DARE SAY IT?) it may not be on Sunday, and it may not be in church, but it could easily be on Monday or the next day or the next day, when you're at appointments, in the market, still only half awake, or just cruising down the street in your golf cart.

God does not intend to remain boxed in on one day of the week, for an hour at church. The God doesn't recognize the separation that we tend to make between "secular" and "religious." The Jesus intrudes, comes to where we are, speaks to us, and reveals God to us.

Second, we cannot, nor need we try to, sustain the status quo. Don't sit in the sanctuary, close your eyes, and try to pray hard enough to force joy in your hearts. Just go on about your business, and I'll bet Jesus will find you. We believe not because we're particularly adept at matters of the Spirit. We believe because Jesus has come to us.

Third, when the risen Christ comes to

us at breakfast, on Monday, or whenever, and graciously reveals God to us, we are also called. Don't miss that part. We are called.

That's the way with Jesus. Have you noticed that every conversion with God involves a call to help others? Every conversion is a call to help, to work, to share. Revelation and call go together. Jesus says to them between bites of an egg McMuffin and sips of a Starbuck's latte, "I've got work for you to do." Jesus tells us to care for the ones for whom he cares.

What work is Jesus calling you and I to do? What does it mean for you as an individual and for us as a community? What does "Follow me" mean?

I'm not going to define for you. I want you to Dream Big about it. Think about that tomorrow at breakfast and the next day. Dream about it between the bites of corn flakes and that sip of coffee; Because that's where Jesus will come to us, seek us, reveal God to us, and then give us work to do to finish building the church. "Follow me," are the last words to the disciples. And they are the first and last words to us as well. Follow me.

Shalom, Paul



(L-R) Front row: Dr. Phil Ladd, Margaret Carpenter, Suzanne Boisclair, Bertie Fitch. Back row: John Durbin, Eona Schulz, Larry Cornelius, Pastor Paul Whitlock, Pastor Jim Alexander.

Introducing our 2022 Executive Board

By Suzanne Boisclair
Executive Board Chair

Hello Friends—

I am so humbled and honored to be part of, and introduce to you, the Church of the Palms 2022 Executive Board! As you may already know, with the implementation of our new Constitution and Bylaws we have a strategic and nimble governance structure that allows us to respond quickly and efficiently to the changing needs of our church and have an even greater impact on those beyond our church family needing the love and energy we bring. We are ready to serve God, our beloved church, and the greater community!

In addition to myself, now in the role of Executive Chair, we are blessed with Dr. Phil Ladd as Chair of the Ministry Council and Eona Schulz as Chair of the Operations Council. John Durbin is assuming the Member at Large position until June, when Larry Cornelius will join the Board. And we continue to be blessed with Bertie Fitch as our Treasurer and Margaret Carpenter as Executive Secretary.

Oh — and of course Pastor Paul and Pastor Jim! We are so grateful for their guidance and encouragement to truly be the Church and the palms of Jesus.

We hope that you will look to this space for news, ideas and maybe even some inspiration.

I speak for all of the Executive Board members when I say please share your ideas and don't hesitate to contact any of us with questions or concerns. We are here for you!

We look forward to following the advice of Pastor Paul to Dream Big, Act Boldly and Love God in the coming year, as always with the emphasis on Act.

What are your Dreams for Church of the Palms that we can put into Action in 2022?

Commit to the Lord whatever you do and He will establish your plans. Proverbs 16:3

WORSHIP THEMES FOR MARCH

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

Online Worship Monday

March 6: It's the first Sunday in Lent. Read Luke 4:1-13. Pastor Paul will talk about the potato salad promise.

March 13: Read Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18. Pastor Paul will explore our calling in Lent.

March 20: Pastor Jim will be preaching from Isaiah 55:1-9. It is the great invitation! Ho! Everyone! Y'all come!

March 27: Luke 15 – The lost sheep, coin, and child. Or should it be the sheep, coin, and child that was found? Pastor Paul will be preaching.

Happy Birthday to our March Babies

Richard Anderson	3/4
Mary Fimbres	3/7
Marion Barmore	3/8
Lila Miller	3/8
Jane Lane	3/14
Charlotte Harger	3/16
Steve Sutto	3/18
Nelson Hymans	3/20
John Laabs	3/22
Millie Carlson	3/25
Phil Ladd	3/25
Jon Mahaffey	3/25
Jillian Frenning	3/28
Vern Greenhalgh	3/28
Gloria Peterson	3/28
Scott Kranzusch	3/31

VISITOR INFO

Do you have questions about Church of the Palms? You are invited to join us Wednesday, April 6, at 3:30 p.m.

The Evangelism and Growth Team is hosting an Information Session in King Hall. Meet with Senior Pastor Paul Whitlock and Associate Pastor Jim Alexander for a slide presentation, plus you can meet some other active church members. This will give you an opportunity to ask questions, get answers, gain information about the United Church of Christ, and discover the many opportunities to be involved in our church life.

A guided tour of the church will be provided following with a light supper and fellowship. All visitors wishing to just learn about our church or those contemplating joining as members are welcome. New members will then be introduced to our congregation at the following Sunday, April 10, 2022, service.



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

The month of March has many “awareness and health education” dates that we could choose to focus on. Gender Equality, Women’s History, World Water Day, Deaf History just to name a few. There is an entire week in March devoted to National Sleep Awareness! (March 13-19). So, what keeps you up at night? Much of our mental well-being can be related to getting the proper amount of sleep and some good nutrition. Cognitive Neuroscientist Moshe Bar offers this article that just might help us all rest a little better.

Research in cognitive psychology, combined with experience with psychotherapy and the practice of meditation, teaches us very clearly that we cannot get rid of thoughts just by wishing. In fact, if we try to stop thinking of something specific deliberately, we curiously achieve the exact opposite effect; we think about this very same topic obsessively. As Fyodor Dostoyevsky said in *Winter Notes on Summer Impressions*, “Try to pose for yourself this task: not to think of a polar bear, and you will see that the cursed thing will come to mind every minute.” This intuition was later supported by beautiful research, pioneered by the late Dan Wegner, with the phenomenon that was later dubbed “the ironic process.”

Trying to stop a thought is not some fancy experimental task reserved for a lab setting but rather an everyday necessity for all of us. From suppression of thoughts and feelings, as has been described by Freud and others, to trying to avoid thinking about various traumas, and trying to stay in control by not worrying too much, not thinking is a constant challenge. Without our ability not to think about certain things, we would not be able to board an airplane, eat meat (I don’t), or forgive.

Here, again, my silence retreats taught me things I did not know. There are two efficient ways to make a thought disappear. The first is to acknowledge the thought and face it head-on, like is done also in psychological therapy. The second is to acknowledge it and then give that thought a label, or a name, which would usually put it in a mental “box” so it stops reappearing involuntarily.

Pause to ponder this for a moment: a nagging thought, worry, obsession, or fear that you could not rid yourself of, no matter how hard you tried, not only efficiently disappears merely by attaching a label to it, but you can hardly bring it back even if you wanted. (Of course, some thoughts, like intrusive memories from a trauma, or persistent ruminations, need a heavier artillery than just thought labeling.) This revelation was amazing in how powerful and novel it felt, and it had opened for me a door toward a better understanding of mind, feelings, and experience.

You might have noticed how the moment you decide to write a reminder to yourself on a note, that something you need to remember so badly vanishes from your conscious

mind (or working memory, more precisely). You stop clinging to it once you have put it in writing. You have delegated your foreground mental processing to the little note. This is similar to what happens to a labeled thought as it disappears.

We suffer from (or enjoy) thoughts less when they have been labeled because they are then encapsulated. A word simplifies the way we handle complicated thoughts and concepts. If I tell you about someone who is not physically stable, does not speak coherently, smells bad, and his behavior is overall inappropriate, you will be worried and unsure how to approach him if you need to. But if I say only one word about him, “drunk,” everything is clear and manageable in an instant. It is like when a doctor gives a diagnosis after hearing a list of symptoms; we give a label to describe a thought or a concept. And what happens to feelings that cannot be put into a label because they are too abstract? We use those categorical dimensions of positive or negative, self or others, past, present, or future, and so on, and it forces just anything to be labeled. It is a method for tricking the amorphous.

Take as another example the question of why talking about my “issues” makes them less of an issue. The mere utterance of a concerning thought, like acknowledging it aloud, can improve feelings markedly. At some point, I started to believe that I could talk to a wall, as long as I talked concretely and explicitly, and it would be sufficient to bring about improvement. Indeed, I later learned that as suffering individuals put bothersome thoughts in writing, their symptoms are typically alleviated, even if they end up tearing that note apart without showing the note to anyone. Such “writing therapy” has even been claimed to help reduce the effects of trauma. Just acknowledging to oneself, explicitly and specifically, seems to suffice.

Marion Milner, in *A Life of One's Own*, writes eloquently about similar individual revelations, how merely admitting thoughts makes them less of a bother. In one such example, she describes sitting on the grass on a summer day, which felt instead like a foggy November day to her at that instance, in Cornwall, trying to put into words what worried her. She found out that it was a previous encounter with a man to whom she had felt attracted, and that attraction had not materialized. She realized that she had been going over and over that encounter, what we call ruminations in the context of depression and other mood disorders. But then just talking to herself intentionally about the incident and what worried her about it made those ruminations less obsessive. Admitting thoughts—confessing, acknowledging, accepting—is akin to labeling by attaching names to thoughts, and it makes them vanish.

Interestingly, the same principle works for physical sensations, not just mental events and worries. You feel a fly on your arm (and they seem to land on you more often when you meditate and are trying to sit still...), and your first reaction is to try to scare it away, just like when you are trying to remove a thought by actively aiming to get rid of it. It disrupts, it is intrusive, and it is inefficient. Simply give in and let whatever it is be—a thought or an itch; look at them and acknowledge rather than try to push them away, and they seem to find their place. Don't will it; allow it. I have to admit that talk such as this, about acknowledging thoughts and allowing things, used to seem to me unbearably abstract and unsubstantiated. But it works, and as a brain scientist and as a human this fascinates me. Admitting thoughts helps us label thoughts, thereby facilitating their detachment and propagation away from the front stage of our thinking.



CARE Corner

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

Sun City Community Assistance Network: Transportation to Support Group for Individuals with Low Vision

The Sun City Community Assistance Network (CAN) offers a variety of services for residents of Sun City and surrounding communities. Included in the services are:

Freezing Property Value	SNAP (formerly Food Stamps)
Widow/Widower Tax Break	Arizona Property Tax Credit
Increased Excise Tax Credit	Medicare Savings
Fire Department Lock Boxes	EPCOR Condo Rebates
Utility Bill Discounts	APS and SW Gas Crisis Assistance
Paint the Town	Transportation Assistance

A chart further defining the services provided by CAN is included in this Palm Leaf. It is also available on the Church of the Palms website or available on line at <https://www.suncitycan.org/senior-fact-sheet/>.

Can is primarily a volunteer organization with two part-time employees. They can be contacted by calling 623-933-7530. Their only source of income is donations from residents, service clubs, and businesses. They never charge for the help provided.

One of the services provided is transportation to a low vision support group which has been in existence for 16 years and is open to anyone having low vision. The low vision support group's goal is, "To be a sharing support system to identify resources, to provide social opportunities and to discuss strategies and tactics for living with low vision for individuals and their families." For more information on the low vision support group, you can contact Mary Ann Keogh Hoss, volunteer coordinator, at 623-266-4402.

The group determines annually the types of speakers, resources and needs of the group. Transportation to the meetings was the top concern identified in 2021 as the majority of members cannot drive due to their vision. In response to this, they joined forces with Northwest Valley Connect to provide rides to the low vision support group.

SCAM Alert

The February 9, 2022, the Sun City Independent included the following in an article entitled, "Church Scam Going Around." A member of a local church received a text from someone claiming to be another member of the church. The content of the text claimed that the sender had \$100,000 to give away and all it required was for the receiver to complete a form. To make the text appear legitimate, it contained a photograph of the church member being impersonated. The text was determined to be a scam, most likely to obtain personal information.

If you should be on the receiving end of such a text, DO NOT REPLY and notify Lindsey at the church office, 623-977-8359.

The Care Team Mission
**Assist the Pastors when our community
needs help spiritually, physically,
emotionally or socially**

Senior Citizen Resources *Includes Residents of the Sun Cities, Youngtown, El Mirage, Surprise, Peoria.....*

If you think you are eligible for any of these benefits, call Sun City CAN at 623-933-7530 and make an appointment to meet with a counselor.

FREEZING YOUR PROPERTY VALUE

Requirements:

- over 65 years old
- must have lived in the house for two years
- income less than \$37,008 (single); \$46,260 (multiple) owners
- must apply between January 1st and September 1st
- must renew every three years

Benefit:

- three year freeze on the full cash value of your property.

WIDOW/WIDOWERS TAX BREAK

Requirements:

- must be a current Arizona resident and the deceased spouse must have been an Arizona resident at the time of death
- income less than \$33,037 if no minor children in the home; do not include social security or Veterans' Disability

Benefit:

- exempts \$39,650 of Limited Property Value with a corresponding reduction in annual property taxes.
- permanent exemption as long as eligibility requirement are met.

ARIZONA PROPERTY TAX CREDIT

Requirements:

- 65 years old or receiving SSI (not social security disability)
- available to both owners and renters
- Arizona resident for the entire year
- maximum annual income is \$3,751 (single); \$5,501 (multi person) household. [do not include social security, railroad retirement, veterans' disability, welfare, etc.]
- must file application by April 15th

Benefit:

- a cash refund on your property taxes of up to \$502 per year

INCREASED EXCISE TAX CREDIT

Requirements:

- resident of Arizona at year's end
- adjusted gross income of less than \$12,500 (single); \$25,000 (two person)
- in most cases, this does not include Social Security

Benefit:

- \$25 check for each household member, max. \$100

MEDICARE SAVINGS PROGRAM

Requirements:

- monthly income less than \$1,469 (single); \$1,960 (two person)
- no restrictions on ownership of a car, house or other resources

Benefit:

- Free Medicare! You receive Medicare without paying the \$100.00+ premium that is automatically deducted from most Social Security checks

HELP WITH TRANSPORTATION

Requirements:

- full time Sun City resident
- ADA-certified (disabled)
- monthly income less than \$2,147 (single) or \$2,903 (two person) household

Benefit:

- \$50 worth of rides four times each year

FOOD STAMPS (NOW CALLED SNAP)

Requirements:

- over 60 years old or disabled
- monthly income less than \$1,718 (single); \$2,326 (two person)
- less than \$3,250 in savings, but you can own a car and house

Benefit:

- participants receive a plastic card that works like a debit card

FIRE DEPARTMENT LOCK BOXES

Requirements:

- full time Sun City resident
- monthly income less than \$2,147 (single); \$2,903 (two person)
- savings and investments less than \$13,300

Benefit:

- installation of a Fire Department lock box at no charge. Normal cost is \$70.

EPCOR CONDO REBATE PROGRAM

Requirements:

- condo or apartment resident in Sun City or Youngtown
- both water & wastewater rebates-less than \$1,610 (single); \$2,178 (two person)
- water rebate only-less than \$2,147 (single); \$2,903 (two person)

Benefit:

- a rebate check twice a year

UTILITY BILL DISCOUNTS

Requirements:

- over 65 years of age
- full time Arizona resident
- less than \$1,610 per month (single); \$2,178 for (two person)

Benefit:

- discount on your bills from Arizona Public Service, Southwest Gas and EPCOR Water

APS & SW GAS CRISIS ASSISTANCE

Requirements:

- monthly income less than \$2,147 (single) and \$2,903 (two person)
- have an acceptable crisis reason that is documented (loss of income, medical expenses, unexpected repairs, etc.).

Benefit:

- up to \$400 payment on your utility bill during a 12-month period (funds permitting)

PAINT THE TOWN

Requirements:

- Sun City home owner living in a home badly in need of paint
- monthly income less than \$1610 (single) or \$2,178 (two persons)
- savings and investments less than \$13,300

Benefit:

- exterior house painting by Habitat for Humanity at no charge

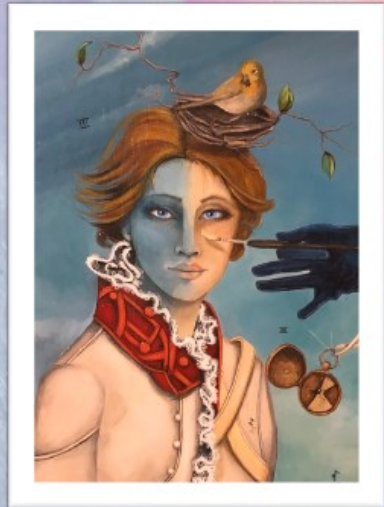
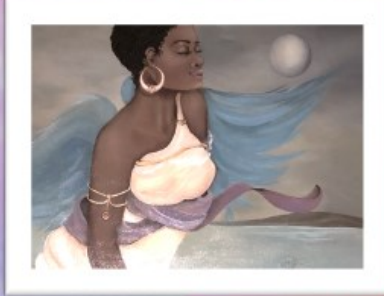
Sun City CAN!

623-933-7530 | 10195 W. Coggins Drive | Sun City, AZ 85351

EFFECTIVE MARCH 1, 2021. Requirements subject to change periodically



Social Justice @ The Palms



Straight from the Heart ***Prison Art Exhibit***

MARCH, 2022

THE CHURCH OF THE PALMS • 14808 N. BOSWELL BLVD, SUN CITY • 623-977-8359
DISCUSSION MAR. 5TH AT 3:00 PM • GALLERY OPEN SATURDAYS FROM 1:30 TO 3:30 PM

The “**Straight from the Heart**” Art Exhibit featuring art from currently and formerly incarcerated women is coming to Church of the Palms during the month of March. The artwork on display was created primarily by women who attend the Episcopal worship services at Perryville Women’s Prison in Goodyear. Rev. Kim Crecca of Tucson participated in those worship services for 6 years, knows many of the artists personally, and will be hosting a discussion at the opening on **Saturday, March 5th at 3:00 p.m.** You will have opportunity to ask questions as you learn more about these artists and the creative ways they find to express themselves, as well as information about prison ministry programs. One artist stated, “I do arts & crafts to release my anxiety and to stay out of trouble. It takes me out of my head and relaxes me.” The exhibit will also be open in King Hall **Sundays immediately after worship until noon** and the **following Saturdays in March from 1:30-3:30 p.m.** Art will also be available for purchase — cash or check only — and proceeds will benefit the artist and prison ministry programs. Contact Nancy Nonini for more information.

Social Justice Legislative Update

Good news! The branches of the AZ legislature agreed to waive the Aggregate Expenditure Limit for this year. So schools will be able to use funds appropriated to them.

There are several bills on voting requirements: SB1338 and HB2571 want to revert to hand counting of ballots instead of machine counting, which has been shown to be faster, more accurate and less costly. SB1572 & HB2780 would require a published list of eligible voters before the election and posting of images of all ballots after the election (another bill requests to have each ballot given a number when it is received—this combination could take away all anonymity). Several other voting bills are proposed.

HB2448 would require public district and charter schools to provide students with firearms education one or more times between grades 6 and 12, with no specific requirement on the training of the person providing such education. If you feel inclined to let your AZ legislators know your opinion on these and other bills, please call, email or write them. To find your legislators, use www.azleg.gov/findmylegislator. For phone, email and address info, use <https://www.azleg.gov/memberroster/>

Let them know how you feel about social issues. They are supposed to represent you!

Sock, Underwear Drive to Benefit Dysart Kids



The Church of the Palms has selected Dysart Community Center to receive non-monetary donations during March and April. As the church did several years ago, we are requesting donations of underwear and socks for the children they serve. Please refer to the chart below to ascertain the sizes of the boys and girls who participate in their programs. Dysart can also always use staple food goods and hygiene and paper products, which are distributed each Wednesday. Mo Goodrick volunteers each Wednesday to package and distribute these products. More information: <https://dysartcommunitycenter.org>

GIRLS SOCKS		
3-7 Years	6 – 7.5	30 Children
8 – 10 Years	8 – 9.5	20 Children
11 – 14	10 – 13	20 Children
GIRLS UNDERWEAR		
3-5 Years	XS	20 Children
6 years	S	10 Children
7 – 9 Years	M	20 Children
10 – 12 Years	L	10 Children
13 – 14	XL	10 Children
BOYS SOCKS		
3 – 7 Years	6-7.5	25 children
8-10 Years	8-9.5	20 Children
11-14 Years	10-13	25 Children
BOYS UNDERWEAR		
3-5 years	Xs	15 Children
6 years	S	10 Children
7-9 Years	M	5 Children
10-12 Years	L	15 Children
13-14 Years	XL	25 Children



Rainbow Bridge Pet Memorial Project

By Jeff Scruggs
Project Coordinator

The Board of Stewards has some exciting news. There have been plans in the making for several years now but COVID and life got in the way. I am happy to announce that it is finally happening. The "Rainbow Bridge Pet Memorial" project is coming soon.

The outside wall of King Hall across from the columbarium will be used to display custom tiles. The tiles will be 4" x 8" and in terra cotta red. You will be able to write your own text and have the option to choose a logo.

There will be a 24" x 24" tile sign with the name of the memorial and the name of the church mounted on the wall, also. Details and order forms will be available soon so watch for them on the table in the Narthex.

We will make sure you know when they are on display.

A little food for thought: You will be allowed 16 characters per line and up to 3 lines.

If you choose a logo, you are allowed 13 characters per line and up to 3 lines. Punctuation and spaces in between count, so think carefully. It may be tricky in some cases. There will be 3 logos from which to choose: puppy paw print, a rainbow bridge, or a palm tree. Examples coming soon.

The cost of each tile is \$50, which covers the custom tile, shipping, and

installation costs.

A portion of the proceeds will be going to a "special fund" to assist members if there is a critical financial need for their pet care that we can help with. Details to follow.

I hope you'll consider ordering a tile to honor your deceased pet that has crossed over the Rainbow Bridge. Pastor Jim and I have already designed 2 for our beloved pups and are happy to be able to memorialize them.



Project Coordinator

Jeff Scruggs

623-810-8044

dzlbug@cox.netwill

Fellowship Hour Resumes March 6 After Sunday Worship



Join us after church for Coffee & Cookies starting Sunday, March 6. We are back and the new Fellowship Team is happy to invite you to join us for fellowship in King Hall!

- Wrapped cookies will be served
- Enjoy coffee, lemonade & water
- Limited seating at tables to allow browsing of the Art Show
- Service Project Craft table will have items for purchase
- Masks optional

Lifelong Learning in March 2022

Educational opportunities continue at Church of the Palms. Classes will be HYBRID, in person and online, unless otherwise indicated. Each person should feel comfortable to make their own choices about whether to mask or not mask and whether to attend in person or online.



Access online classes at <https://thepalms.org/bridges>.

Sunday

- *Shared Conversations*, 7:30-8:30 a.m. Online only. Facilitated by Bobbie Chapman.

Tuesday

- *God & Imperial Power, Jesus & Economic Injustice*, 10:00-11:30 a.m. Online only. A DVD series by Dr. John Dominic Crossan and Dr. Joerg Rieger. Class will be held March 1 and March 8; no class March 15. Facilitated by Jim Yang-Hellewell.
- *Living the Questions*, 10:00-11:30 a.m. Tuesdays beginning March 22. HYBRID. Newest edition of the DVD series with discussion: 20-minute video segments include conversations with leading voices of faith, digital stories illustrating aspects of an evolving faith, and concrete spiritual practices and disciplines. "It is designed to help people wrestle with the relevance of Christianity in the 21st century." Growing out of two United Methodist congregations in Arizona, the curriculum is part of the larger movement of Progressive Christianity Created to resource moderate to more liberally-minded Christians. Jim Yang-Hellewell, a member of Church of the Palms, will be facilitating these Tuesday morning DVDs and discussions. Jim has MDiv and MSW degrees.
- *Jump Start: Prep for Sunday Sermon with Scripture/Dialogue* 4:00-5:00 p.m. HYBRID. Facilitated by John Durbin.

Thursday

- *Cosmic Christians*, 10:00-11:30 a.m. Online only. Study of the book "Torah of the Earth: Exploring 4,000 Years of ECOLOGY in Jewish Thought, Vol.1." Facilitated by Linette Stenberg.



Now accepting submissions! "QUOTES FOR YOUR SOUL" will be a new feature every two months in The Palm Leaf. The fun: they will be your favorite quotes on the topic selected for that issue. There is a lot of creativity and readers in our congregation and guests. We want to hear from you as to what speaks to you and what you find meaningful. It could be your own quote!

Send your selected quotes with author's name to: kayklink@yahoo.com with subject heading "quote for palms." Your name will be placed in parenthesis, unless you don't want that. Kay Klinkenborg will collect them and have them printed every two months in The Palm Leaf. Deadlines for submission are the 12th of each month. **LET'S BEGIN!**

Deadline	Topic	Published
March 12	Water, abundance, brimming (Lent and Easter)	April Palm Leaf
April 12-May 12	Direction, wind, breath or combine them (Pentecost, Spirit)	June Palm Leaf



HOPE STILL LIVES

for a Just Peace Between Israel & Palestine

By Beth Moore
Creation Justice Team

I'm guessing many of us have heard about the recent release of Amnesty International's report entitled: "Israel's Apartheid Against Palestinians" and perhaps before that the Human Rights Watch report in a similar vein. And maybe you know that an Israeli human rights organization — B'tselem — also released their report with tremendous evidence for and a conclusion that Israel is an apartheid state.

However, I wonder how many of us know that in July of this past year, at the UCC General Synod gathering, a resolution entitled — "Declaration for a Just Peace Between Israel and Palestine" was passed with the support of 85% of Synod delegates. This resolution draws on 50 years of general synod resolutions on the conflict in Israel-Palestine. It is a response to and in support of the witness of our Palestinian Christian partners.

Beginning on March 9 from 10:00-11:30 a.m. in King Hall and online, we will be looking at four major themes of the Resolution: its designation of the oppression of the Palestinian people as representing a sin in violation of the message of the biblical prophets and the Gospel; its naming of Israel's system of laws and legal procedures as apartheid; its statement of Christian Zionism as a theology/ideology that privileges the Israeli state; and its framing of the search for a just peace between Palestine and Israel in universal human rights and international law.

By way of review (or introduction for those new to this issue), you will be given information for the viewing of an 85 minute documentary entitled "1948:Creation and Catastrophe" **prior** to our first session on March 9. The documentary's footage of events before and after the founding of the State of Israel is interspersed with "testimony" and reflections of Jewish and Arab individuals who participated in the military actions or suffered from them.

In the sessions on March 9, 16, 23, and 30, we will discuss four of the major portions of the resolution, and ask what are the implications of the resolution for our congregation. Beth Moore is leading this class; she is part of the Creation Justice group under the Social Justice Action Team of the church.

This series of classes is open to all. In order to take the best advantage of the sessions, it will be important to prepare for them by reading resources provided to you ahead of time. Please contact me by email: ebmoore1@live.com or phone (608.498.9023) if you wish to participate in this series. This will allow me to send you the link for viewing the documentary (available March 3rd through 8th), as well as information for the subsequent sessions.

I look forward to being together with you in our study and conversation about this important issue and reflections on the very real impact it has on our lives.

March 1-14, 2022

1 Tuesday	10:00 am (B2L) God & Imperial Power, Jesus and Economic Injustice 4:00 pm (HY) Jump Start	2 Wednesday	9:00 am (BR) Service Project Craft Group
3 Thursday	10:00 am (B2L) Cosmic Christians 1:00 pm (HY) Worship Team meeting 2:30-4:00 pm (MR) Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal	4 Friday	
5 Saturday	3:00 pm (KH) Straight from the Heart Art Exhibit Opening Discussion	6 Sunday <u>Gift Card</u> <u>Orders Due</u>	7:30 am (B2L) Shared Conversations 9:00 am (MR) Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal 10:00 am (SA) Sunday Worship 11:00 am (KH) Fellowship Hour
7 Monday	1:00 pm (BR) Executive Board 4:00 pm (KH) I-HELP	8 Tuesday	9:00 am-1:00 pm (OS) Feet-N-More Shower Ministry 10:00 am (B2L) God & Imperial Power, Jesus and Economic Injustice 4:00 pm (B2L) Jump Start
9 Wednesday	9:00 am (BR) Service Project Craft Group 10:00-11:30 am (HY) Hope Still Lives for Just Peace between Israel and Palestine 1:00 pm (BR) I-HELP meeting 2:00-5:00 pm (OS) Feet-N-More Shower Ministry	10 Thursday	10:00 am (B2L) Cosmic Christians 10:00 am (KH) Pain Support Group 1:00 pm (BR) Board of Finance 2:30-4:00 pm (MR) Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal
11 Friday	12:00 pm (HY) SJAT Criminal Justice Reform 1:00 pm (HY) Social Justice Action Team	12 Saturday	1:30-3:30 pm (KH) Straight from the Heart Art Exhibit
13 Sunday	7:30 am (B2L) Shared Conversations 9:00 am (MR) Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal 10:00 am (SA) Sunday Worship 11:00 am (KH) Fellowship Hour	14 Monday	11:00 am (BR) Othering and Belonging Task Force 2:00 pm (HY) Board of Trustees 4:00 pm (KH) I-HELP

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

March 15-31, 2022

15 Tuesday <u>Palm Leaf</u> <u>Deadline</u>	9:00 am (BR) Creation Justice Team 1:00 pm (HY) Operations Council 2:00 pm (HY) Board of Stewards 4:00 pm (HY) Jump Start	16 Wednesday	9:00 am (BR) Service Project Craft Group 10:00 am (NA) Board of Evangelism and Growth 10:00-11:30 am (HY) Hope Still Lives for Just Peace between Israel and Palestine
17 Thursday	10:00 am (B2L) Cosmic Christians 1:00 pm (HY) Care Team 2:30-4:00 pm (MR) Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal	18 Friday	
19 Saturday	1:30-3:30 pm (KH) Straight from the Heart Art Exhibit	20 Sunday	7:30 am (B2L) Shared Conversations 9:00 am (MR) Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal 10:00 am (SA) Sunday Worship 11:00 am (KH) Fellowship Hour
21 Monday	10:00 am (B2B) Life Long Learning Board 4:00 pm (KH) I-HELP	22 Tuesday	9:00 am-1:00 pm (OS) Feet-N-More Shower Ministry 10:00 am (HY) Living the Questions 1:00 pm (HY) Operations Council 4:00 pm (HY) Jump Start
23 Wednesday	9:00 am (BR) Service Project Craft Group 9:00 am (HY) Board of Mission and Outreach 10:00-11:30 am (HY) Hope Still Lives for Just Peace between Israel and Palestine 2:00-5:00 pm (OS) Feet-N-More Shower Ministry	24 Thursday	10:00 am (B2L) Cosmic Christians 2:30-4:00 pm (MR) Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal
25 Friday		26 Saturday	1:30-3:30 pm (KH) Straight from the Heart Art Exhibit
27 Sunday	7:30 am (B2L) Shared Conversations 9:00 am (MR) Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal 10:00 am (SA) Sunday Worship 11:00 am (KH) Fellowship Hour	28 Monday	4:00 pm (KH) I-HELP
29 Tuesday	10:00 am (HY) Living the Questions 4:00 pm (HY) Jump Start	30 Wednesday	9:00 am (BR) Service Project Craft Group 10:00-11:30 am (HY) Hope Still Lives for Just Peace between Israel and Palestine
31 Thursday	10:00 am (B2L) Cosmic Christians 2:30-4:00 pm (MR) Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal		

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