



Embrace the Future: Be Intentional.

THE PALM LEAF

The Church of the Palms, UCC
14808 North Boswell Boulevard Sun City, Arizona

A LETTER FROM PAUL

February 2024



2023 was a marvelous year in many respects for our church. Throughout the year we asked, "What makes you come alive?" Like a caterpillar emerging from the

cocoon, we were coming out of COVID. What would make us come alive?

Individuals, small groups, and the whole congregation examined how to come alive. We were stretched and pulled, so that God could transform us. We emerged as a butterfly soaring to new heights.

2023 saw a record number of new members - 52. Wow! God is still speaking at The Church of the Palms!

Last year produced record dollars given to the ministry budget - \$349K. We not only balanced the budget, but the \$306 dollar surplus was achieved without moving one dime from our reserve account. We had anticipated having to move \$11,250. That, in and of itself, would be astonishing. But it was done when we also raised \$130K for a new bus. We added a piece of art for another \$80K of which \$20K will be given directly to homeless ministries. Wow! Wow! Wow!

So, we've patted ourselves on the back for the wonders that God has done in us, through us, and despite us in 2023. What about this new year? We have come alive. Now what? What are we going to choose to do with our newfound aliveness?

We need intentionality! May our decisions for ministry and direction be intentional this year. The end of my mom's life demonstrated that we can't always choose when or how we're going to die. The only thing we can choose is how we are going to live right here, right now.

Choose the Fruits of the Spirit: *Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self-Control.*

Choose to share love and make that love unconditional.

Choose to work for justice and be the voice for the voiceless.

Choose to live out radical hospitality in your words and deeds.

Choose.

Namaste.

Shalom, Paul



Notes from your Executive Board at The Church of the Palms

I am beginning my third and final year on the Executive Board. My love for *The Church of the Palms* has continued to grow as I have heard reports from the various Operation Boards and Ministry Teams. We really are a social justice church that attempts the best we can to show love and acceptance of everyone. As we have said, "Jesus didn't reject people and neither do we". Some churches say that they are *Open and Affirming*. We really are *Open and Affirming*. We are encouraged to be our authentic selves at the Church of the Palms.

I have attended most of our orientation sessions. I continue to be impressed concerning why people join our congregation. Most are joining because they want to be part of church of action. While many mainline churches are declining in membership, our church added 52 new members in 2023.

If you have not figured out where you wish to be involved, I encourage you to visit some of our boards and teams as visitors are welcomed. If you are interested in joining any of the boards or teams, please let the team leader or any of the Executive Board members know so we can add you. You do not need to be a member of the church to join a team.

A verse of Scripture that has been important to both my wife and I, is from Micah 6:8 – "God has told you, O mortal, what is good, and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God." I look forward to the rest of 2024 as together we try to honor that verse.

Dr. Phil Ladd, Executive Board Chair

*To love yourself right now, just as you are,
is to give yourself heaven. Don't wait until you die.*

If you wait, you die now.

If you love, you live now.

-Alan Cohen



National Alliance on Mental Illness Help Line
1-800-950-6264 <https://www.nami.org/help>
Suicide Prevention Lifeline 800.273.TALK
Suicide/Crisis Hotline TEXT 988
Translifeline 877.565.8860
Veteran's Crisis Line 800.273.8255 *press 1*
Pastoral Care - Pastor Jim Alexander 623.792.5295
<https://thepalms.org/Tools2Thrive>

INFORMED, BALANCED, AND NOT SATURATED: SELF-CARE DURING THIS ELECTION YEAR

The American public has been 'saturated' by the news of the upcoming political party primaries and the 2024 presidential election for over a year. If you are like most US citizens, we have been experiencing election-induced stress since 2016^{3,4,5}. It is not a formal diagnosis³, but these are intense times in our country, so I recommend we be intentional about taking care of ourselves emotionally. In doing so, we can be balanced with ourselves spiritually and physically (I don't separate spiritual care from emotional care... but some people do).

Saturation...an experience to the boiling point; something about to run amok; can't hear anymore and don't know what to do with the information I have already. Oxford Dictionary describes it, "as much as can be absorbed." I am recommending we learn to set some boundaries, be proactive in this election year and not reach saturation; and when we recognize that is beginning, we activate choices to keep ourselves informed and balanced.

In our capitalistic world, self-care is often seen as selfish...not true. Jessica Young Brown Licensed Clinical Psychologist writes in Duke University's Divinity School "News & Ideas" blog:

"Self-care is a multifaceted act of stewardship, which attends to multiple life demands. Self-care entails building a system of practices to support our living the rich and satisfying life that Jesus talks about in John 10 ... *'I have come that you may have life more abundantly'*. It is an evolving process, in conversation with the Holy Spirit, that honors the whole person."¹

I researched self-care during election years ... nothing new has shown up since 2022. This tells me we have been living in a 'constant state of stress' for several years. Most people reading this article understand self-care: Diet, exercise, sleep, etc. I am offering some new ideas to consider and you decide what to incorporate.

STOP DOOMSCROLLING: PUT THE PHONE DOWN.

A relative new word in our culture, Cole Arthur Riley, author of Black Liturgies: Prayers, Poems and Meditations for Staying Human has a chapter in this book "For Those Who Doomscroll." She writes: "God ... remind us that there is much the world needs, including our attention to atrocity—but if we watch the world burn for long enough, the fire becomes our only reality."^{2,3,4}

Set boundaries on scanning for updates on your phone. It becomes addictive to need the newest update of the news. Remember before cell phones, we got news once a day in the evening, or through the daily newspaper. This abnormal attachment creates an unconscious anxiety, constant vigilance and apprehension if we aren't up to the minute on the latest development. In fact: "The excessive consumption of news and social media predicts poorer long-term mental health during times of crisis."³

CONTROL COMPUTER, T.V., and PRINT CONSUMPTION

Limit how many news shows you watch a day. In reality, why would you need an hourly check-in ... ? We don't. We have been unconsciously conditioned to think we are going to miss something if we don't stay up to date. It is recommended you select two times a day to watch a portion of news. It is also recommended you not watch news at least one hour before going to bed. The last thing you put in your mind influences your quality of sleep and dreams. Screen-light of phones, I-Pads, computers is not good for getting to sleep and staying asleep. One hour disconnect prior to bed is recommended.

When reading ask: 'Is this article helpful?' and 'Is this article real (or reflective of my own truth)?' If you answer 'no' to either of those questions, give yourself permission to move on from it.⁵ Also ask, is this making me more anxious? If so, put it down. You know the information you've gleaned thus far, trust yourself.

AVOID "WORSE CASE SCENARIO" THINKING

Good news doesn't bring customers to the T.V., media or networks. Bad news, sensationalism, repetitive telling of news increases viewership. "Worst case scenarios," or "what if..." keeps us wired with adrenaline and living unconsciously with anxiety. A personal opinion, news shows do a lot of speculation, bringing in experts attempting to predict the next scenario. We can think for ourselves, draw our own conclusions and questions. Why sit listening to continuous speculations about events ...that is not stewardship of our time.

Catastrophic thinking is a learned behavior for many of us. Before, it served a purpose; to help us emotionally prepare for the "worst case scenario and not be caught off guard." We can change that thinking. We can learn to stop catastrophic thinking and thus significantly reduce the anxiety we are unconsciously living with. That type of stress is not good for our bodies. It creates a lot of 'cortisol (adrenalin) dumping' that is physically harmful.

KNOW YOUR "RANGE OF INFLUENCE"

Being informed voters is our responsibility. We can accomplish that while doing self-care. Each of us determines with our physical and emotional energy what we can do to be involved politically. We need to honor each other's choices of how to stay engaged. We might be actively working a phone line, writing emails/letters to state and federally elected officials, we might be lifting our concerns in prayer, or making financial contributions. It matters not what you do ... it is that you make a choice.

We cannot control politics at large; BUT we have a voice. That is our democratic system. Not having control of the outcome personally is hard for most of us. Learning to live with ambiguity is a spiritual practice. Living without knowing ... we call that practicing faith. We come learning how to do that; thus we need to continue practicing.

"Most of the political climate is not controlled by us nor can we change other's beliefs or feelings around it. Accepting the idea that we can only control ourselves and change things for us is a powerful reminder to not get caught up ruminating on the unchangeable and the uncontrollable. It is important to point the finger inward and ask, 'What about this can I change and control?' before you get caught up in the stress of it all."⁵

MOVE

One of the more important things I learned as a counselor helping others under stress, what ever the cause ... movement changes thinking. If you get up and go to another room, you have activated new neurocircuits ... you see things differently because you literally aren't in the same location. You interpret things differently because you have created a surge of fresh oxygen through your body. Do a different activity. Go for a walk. Raise your arms in the air ten times in a row. MOVE. It will shift something within you, and you can regroup. (Resources 2-6 suggested this as one of their priorities in self-care during election times).

CONNECT

Reach out to trusted friends. Find a discussion group or create one. Do not go this year of stress alone. The U.S. and the world are at a heightened level of stress and concern like our generation hasn't witnessed before. Community is vital to stay grounded, in touch with self, receiving feedback, and receiving compassion from others.

GRATITUDE

If you are not in the practice of keeping a gratitude journal, or at least verbally lifting gratitude once a day ... it is a marvelous time to start. Things are tough right now. It is hard to know the reality of what is happening in the world, our country, our state, our county, etc. Plus, we are living our own personal experiences we are processing in the midst of this year. Gratitude owning keeps me more balanced quickly than almost any other tool I use for self-care. Own our blessings, lift up thanksgiving.

We are all more blind to what we have than to what we have not. -Audre Lorde

We can do this hard year. We will find our way. We can walk this path. We are not alone. *"I can do all things through {the} Christ who strengthens me."* Philipians 4:13 (KJV)

My prayer for us this year:

Dear God, may we challenge ourselves this year to stay informed of the critical issues. Guide us in practicing stewardship with balanced and wise use of time, energy and self-care. Guide us to catch when we are reaching saturation with the noise of the naysayers, too much media. Remind us to intentionally move to positive choices; not trapped in catastrophic thinking or mistrust of our own truth. May we claim the inherent good within each of us and lean into our faith and humankind's capacity for compassion and justice. Amen.

¹ Young-Brown, Jessica (2023). "Self-Care is Not Self-Soothing"; May 2, <https://leadership@divduke.edu>.

² Riley, Cole Arthur (2024). *Black Liturgies: Prayers, Poems and Meditations for Staying Human*.

³ "Mental Health and Wellness: Coping with Election-Related Stress". Berkeley University Health: <https://uhs.berkeley.edu/mental-health-and-wellness-coping-election-related-stress>

⁴ Stieg, Corey, (2020) CNBC Report: <https://www.cnbc.com/2020/10/07/study-american-adults-report-election-stress-anxiety-tips.html>

⁵ Managing Your Mental Health in An Election Year", (2020). <https://blog.umd.edu/terpstakecare/managing-your-mental-health-in-an-election-year/> Univ of Maryland.

⁶ "Self-Care Tips for an Election Year"; (Updated: May 20, 2022). Colibri Collective: <https://www.thecolibricollective.com/post/self-care-tips-for-an-election-year>

© Kay F. Klinkenborg, MA (January, 2024)

Spiritual Director; Member Spiritual Directors International; Author & Poet
Retired: RN; LMFT; Clinical Member AAMFT



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS!



Eric Lewis 4

Claudia Fenton 14

Mo Goodrick 6

Jack Evans 14

Mary Funck 7

Marcia Hollingsworth 18

Allan Gott 7

Pete Peterson 21

Linda Kehl 11

Shari Kanehl 22

Mildred Hofer 11

Donna Elianow 22

Ann Plaziak 11

Kay Klinkenborg 23

Judy Jondahl 27



February Worship Themes

February 4th:

Read Isaiah 40:21-31 & Mark 1:29-39. Pastor Paul will be preaching.

Prayer is a dangerous thing! Beware!

February 11th:

Transfiguration Sunday. Sometimes, it is best not to say anything - to be silent.

Nevertheless, Pastor Paul will still be preaching out loud!

Read 2 Kings 2:1-12 & Mark 9:2-9.

February 14th: (Ash Wednesday)

Ash Wednesday. We will gather at United Church of Sun City (11250 N 107th Ave Sun City, AZ 85351) with sister churches for a 5:00 p.m. worship service.

February 18th:

1st Sunday in Lent. Pastor Jim will be preaching from Psalm 25:1-10.

This Psalm is a prayer asking God to "Show," "Teach," and "Guide."

During this Lenten Season, listen as God whispers love and mercy.

February 25th:

Pastor Paul is back in the pulpit. Read Mark 8:31-38.

Pastor Paul will share some Cross Words.

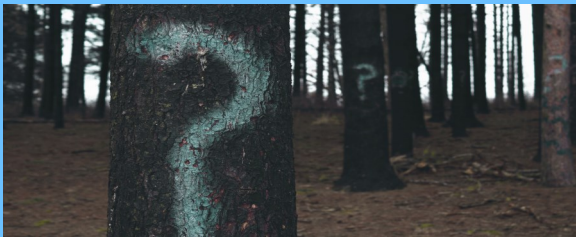
IF YOU ARE PUZZLED ABOUT WHERE YOU BEST FIT, SIGN UP FOR THE UPCOMING INFORMATION SESSION



The Evangelism and Growth Team is always seeking new members for The Church of the Palms. If you want to see if the church fits your needs, please consider signing up for an Information Session in King Hall on **Wednesday, February 7th, at 3:30 p.m.** You will be given an opportunity to meet Pastor Paul and/or Pastor Jim in addition to a few other church leaders. For visitors and anyone else interested, there will be introductions of all people present, information given (including history and church structure), a question-and-answer period, a guided tour of the church which will be followed by a couple of forms to complete and photographs taken of those who desire to become members. Plus, this will all be followed by a light supper with good fellowship.

New members will then be introduced to our congregation at the following **Sunday service, February 11th.** We have been extremely fortunate in adding approximately 47-50 new members so far in 2023 and hope to continue with good growth in 2024. Please help anyone who is interested in attending to sign up at either the Welcome Visitors' Desk or at the Sign-Up Table in the Narthex. If you have any questions, please contact Eona Schulz at 623-974-5970.

"LIVING THE QUESTIONS" STUDY GROUP BEGINS FEBRUARY 21st



Someone once asked their rabbi, "Why is it that rabbis always answer a question with another question?" The rabbi answers, "So what's wrong with a question?" Jesus followed this same path. He rarely gave a straight answer to a question. He usually responded with another question or told a story. He put questioners in the position of having to think for themselves.

Unfortunately, over the centuries, many churches and denominations have discouraged the asking of questions and have wanted assent to a list of beliefs. Some of us may have grown up in those situations. We may have given our assent but inside we still had questions about God, Jesus, and other aspects of Christianity.

The "Living the Questions" series provides an environment where it is a safe place to ask questions. Through videos, reading, and lots of discussion we will examine what it means to take the Bible seriously and to think theologically. We will look at the creation stories and we will explore who Jesus is. There is no expectation that we will all agree on everything (or anything!) but we will each seek to see how the Spirit is moving in our midst.

If this sounds like something you would like to explore, we will be meeting in King Hall for five Wednesdays in Lent beginning February 21st. The class will run from 10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. and be facilitated by Rev. Dave Klingensmith. Each session will end with some spiritual disciplines to practice during the week.

Because there will be printed materials each week it will be helpful if you will sign up for the class in advance. A sign-up sheet will be available in the narthex. If you have any questions please see Rev. Dave.

The newsletter below is written by a woman who lives and was raised in Jerusalem. I met Elie Pritz in July of 2023 through a common friend, Kelley Nikondeha, author of "The First Advent in Palestine" (she spoke at our church on November 26th, 2023). Elie is the founder of an NGO, "Global Peace Heroes" who works with and writes curriculum for K-12 children about peace-building and non-violence. She also knows Daoud Nasser, whom our congregation supports through his peace mission farming as a Palestinian Christian.

"I know Daoud Nasser and have written about the Nassar family for Peace Heroes. In fact, several years ago we were able to connect the Nassars with a school in Kenya that was learning about peace heroes from the region. These kids were so excited to meet a real life Peace Hero! And Daoud was beyond surprised and honored that there were kids in Kenya learning about he and his family's work. It was wonderful (All on Zoom, of course)." -Elie Pritz, January 2024

I was deeply touched by Elie's newsletter regarding her current experience in Israel. Her message is quite timely for the upcoming classes in February on Palestinian/Israel issues. Please enjoy the newsletter below as much as I did.

Thanks, Kay Klinkenborg:

[Living A Different Story: A Message From Jerusalem](#)

It was about a month after the war started that I walked into Hand in Hand—a Hebrew-Arabic school in Jerusalem. We had originally planned to meet on October 9th, which clearly didn't happen after the war broke out on October 7th. I was surprised when, a month later, they contacted me and asked if we could try again. Wasn't their plate already ridiculously full, trying to keep a school like theirs running during a war? But we set a date and time, and two days later I was sitting inside the principal's office, preparing to talk to her and one of the English teachers about our Peace Heroes program.

Bilingual schools (Hebrew and Arabic) are very rare in Israel. The vast majority of schools are sector based: secular Israeli Jewish schools, religious Jewish schools, Palestinian Israeli (Muslim and Christian) schools. Schools don't integrate. The nine bilingual schools dispersed throughout the country are an anomaly—a place where Jewish and Palestinian Israelis can learn together in one another's languages.



Peace Heroes' founder and program director, Elie Pritz.

I could only imagine how recent events would have greatly strained this mixed school community. So I asked the Jewish Israeli principal how this war has affected them.

“Look,” she said, “we’re in a war. And our students represent both sides of this war. It’s hard. But unlike some other organizations, we don’t have the privilege of going into ourselves right now, to reflect on the situation and decide how to move forward. Our students are coming to school every day. We have to figure this out every day.”

The English teacher, a Palestinian Israeli, said: “After October 7th I didn’t want to come in to work. But I chose to come anyway. **Every day I wake up and I make that choice all over again—the choice to be here...**It’s not easy, but it’s my choice. It’s the choice every single one of us in this school is making.”

We spent the next hour talking about Peace Heroes, brainstorming ways they could make it part of their school program. It was the first time in a month I felt inspired and even hopeful. Here is a school that is doing the hard (hard!) work of figuring out how to live life together. **Here is a school that understands, at an existential level, how crucial it is to raise the next generation of leaders in this land to be pursuers of peace and mutual thriving.** They loved the idea of using stories of Peace Heroes from all over the world—as well as from the region—to not only model to their students how to navigate really hard things while still upholding the dignity of all people, but also to open up difficult conversations around identity, justice, and security within the safe space of storytelling.



Watch this inspiring video about the Hand in Hand schools by Israeli Arab creator NasDaily to learn more about their unique and vital mission (this auto-generated thumbnail looks rather intense, but the video is lovely and inspiring!)

To watch video, click [here](#).

At the end of the meeting the principal told me that our hour together felt like oxygen to the soul. I understood what she meant. For the first time in weeks, I felt like I could breathe again, even if only for a moment. To be in the room together with people who, like me, were making a supreme effort to swim against the tide that in this moment is dividing not only the people of this land but also of the world, brought me to tears. Tears of relief in feeling that there are others who are doing what is possibly one of the hardest and most isolating things to do in a war: fighting to stay united, to be in relationship, to be mutually empathetic to and supportive of one another’s identity as well as experience of the nightmare we are all living through.

October 7th and its aftermath is changing our landscape in a way that will take us years to fully understand. In the days following the beginning of the war, people everywhere asked me to tell them how I was doing, to explain to them what was happening. It felt impossible. **I was stunned into silence, completely unable to articulate the chaos, trauma, fear, and grief we were all suddenly plunged into.** And yet, even while I sat in this stunned silence, I was completely taken aback by the onslaught of divisive and damaging words being spewed out by people around the world, aimed at one or other of the communities in this land.

This tsunami of hate-filled words quickly spiraled me down into a despairing depression. I felt as voiceless as I've ever felt, and so alone in my desire to push forward another narrative, to tell a different story.

But slowly, I began to hear other voices speaking the words I could not speak—local peacemakers, both Israeli and Palestinian, whose stories I had written, whose organizations I had been following since the days I had started my journey with Peace Heroes more than a decade ago.* These people were articulating what I could not: the unbelievable pain of the moment we suddenly found ourselves in, **AND** the absolute necessity of upholding the dignity of all the people in this place. Their voices anchored me the way nothing else could. They gave me solid ground to stand on and brought me back to myself and to what I knew to be true: that violence is our common enemy, and that taking a stand against violence and its dehumanizing effects is the only way we will ever come out of this moment with our humanity still intact.

Words matter. They matter so much. Words can break our world or they can remake it. It took me a few weeks to connect the dots (blame the war—it messes with one's ability to think logically), but it finally dawned on me that I do have life giving words. I've been writing them for a decade, telling the stories of people from all over the world—as well as from Israel and Palestine—who have faced devastating situations and have chosen to be a light in the darkness, a force for healing rather than division, hate, and fear. Voices that will never stop trying to remake our world.



Hand in Hand's mission is to build partnership and equality between Jewish and Arab citizens of Israel through our growing network of integrated Jewish-Arab schools and communities throughout the country.

From Hand in Hand's website
<https://www.handinhandk12.org/>

Hand in Hand school is one of these voices. They understand the toxicity of the space we are living in, and the urgency of raising our voice to tell (and live) a different story. **Peacemakers are often the first to be sidelined in a war**, but I believe it is precisely these people who are doing the hardest work of all: the work of daily choosing to live out a different reality. A reality that says to people across the divide: **"You matter, and I will live my life in a way that manifests this conviction and upholds your dignity as well as mine, no matter what."** This is the only reality that promises any kind of viable and shared future in this land.

As this year comes to a close it is my deepest hope that we will all follow in the footsteps of these peacemakers. **May we live a different story—one that daily chooses to remake our broken world.**

- Elie Pritz, Founder of Global Peace Heroes

The LGBTQ+ Ministry Team is excited to bring you some upcoming opportunities to be get involved in our local LGBTQ+ community!

On Saturday, February 10th, the LGBTQ+ Club of Sun City is hosting a Valentine's Day concert featuring Tret Fure's new CD, Lavendar Moonshine. It will be held at the Bell Recreation Center at 5PM and tickets are on sale for \$25 and can be purchased in advance at <https://lgbtclubofsuncity.com/socials-RSVP> (they will be available at the door for \$30 day of, cash only). This will be a beautiful night of soft music, dancing, hot chocolate, and more!

Looking forward to March, mark your calendars for the Rainbows Festival on Saturday, March 23rd and Sunday, March 24th from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. at Heritage Square Park! Be on the lookout for upcoming announcements with further information on how to get involved.

One of the top goals of the LGBTQ+ Ministry Team in 2024, is to expand our extravagant welcome to people we have not connected with. To achieve this goal, we plan to strengthen our partnerships with clubs and organizations in our communities that share the same mission and seek out opportunities for learning that we can share with The Church of the Palms. We highly encourage you to participate and learn alongside us, as together, our impact will achieve greater heights.

Each month in the Palm Leaf, we will feature a bite-sized learning opportunity to continue our LGBTQ+ education journey!

This learning opportunity can include a highlight of an organization that we love to partner with, a Television/ Movie/Book recommendation, current event update, etc.

Learning Opportunity - February 2024
Community Organization Highlight:
Gay for Good, Phoenix Chapter
<https://gayforgood.org/phoenix/>

Gay For Good mobilizes lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (LGBTQ+) and ally volunteers to promote diversity, foster inclusion and strengthen ties to the broader community. Joshua Barelli, a member of the Phoenix Chapter's Leadership Team, came and spoke to us a few months back on the impact of this organization. They host service projects in partnership with other local organizations, which is a great opportunity for all of us to get involved!

The LGBTQ+ Ministry will continue to highlight their events on the calendar so please stay on the lookout! You can also sign up for their newsletter that highlights upcoming events and news about the organization.

The next LGBTQ+ Ministry Team meeting is Monday, February 12th at 2:00 p.m. Please contact Georgia Feiste if you are interested!



Happy New Year. My name is Shari and I'll be presenting you with a short article each month regarding Creation Justice and Sustainability. I was on a sustainable committee and wrote the bi-monthly sustainable newsletter for a National Insurance Company. I now get to share some of that passion with you. We will follow how The Church of the Palms cares for our environment and also look at ideas of how to support our earth at home!

What are you doing already? Can you email me with how you love on our earth at home? I'd love to hear and give shoutouts! My email is Kabestik1@gmail.com. I look forward to hearing from you and sharing some great ideas!

Join us for Shared Conversations!

Embrace the power of connection!
Engage in meaningful conversations,
share experiences, and build friendships.
All are welcome.

Every Sunday morning at 7:30 a.m.
via Zoom through the church's website.
Click [here](#) for the link!

Let's celebrate the strength of
sisterhood together!

RSVP to Bobbie Chapman at 719-480-0105.

Can't wait to see you all there!

NEEDLES & PINS CRAFT GROUP

We are a small group in number that meet every Wednesday in the Board Room from 9:00 a.m.-11:00a.m.

You have probably seen our Table in Fellowship Hall, covered with many different kinds of handmade items, Cloth, yard, wood, stone, etc. We are able to keep this display through the help of others that also contribute to our table. We contribute throughout the year to many worthy things in and out of our Church. We could not do this without the contributions of many friends. They give us yarn, material for quilts, ready made items such as aprons, leather and wood items, stones and jewelry, etc. for which we are grateful. Thank you to All.

If you enjoy sitting around a table working on your craft, kibitzing about this and that, a good cup of coffee or tea and a "sweet", please join us. We meet in the Board Room on Wednesday mornings, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Sometimes we go out as a group for lunch. Trying new places and all types of food. Snowbirds are welcome, or some people just like to work at home and come occasionally. Hope to see you soon.

Love & prayers, Needles & Pins Gals

Re-Entry Simulation: Experience the Outside World After Incarceration

**“Leaving
prison is like
being shot out
of a cannon
blindfolded.”**

*Sue Ellen Allen, author and former inmate in
Perryville Women's Prison in Goodyear, AZ*

Do you know how difficult it is to get around the roadblocks upon release from incarceration? Come to our Re-Entry Simulation. You'll be given your own release status profile with requirements to be fulfilled immediately upon re-entry into the community. Then the fun begins!

**Saturday, March 2nd,
10:00a.m.—12:00p.m.**

***Followed by a light lunch and the opportunity to process the morning with other participants.**

It will be an enlightening, fun and, sometimes frustrating, morning, and you will leave more sensitive to the "life sentence" that follows those once incarcerated.

To enjoy this eye-opening experience, please register at the link below by February 24th. For questions and/or to get the full link, please contact Nancy at nnonini19@gmail.com or Nicole at the church office. This event is FREE and the experience is priceless!

Click [Here](#) To Register

How can dogs help change the world?



Join Ray Larson who will be the book discussion leader for "The Man in the Dog Park" written by local NAU professor emeritus Dr. Cathy Small and Ross Moore.

Wednesdays, April 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th from 2:00 -3:30 p.m.

This four-part book discussion series seeks to explore varying aspects of housing focused on our state of Arizona.

"I have been involved with the Interfaith Homeless Emergency Lodging Program for five years. From this book I learned more about the complex system for housing applications, the effort needed to be on time when transportation isn't in your garage, the stress of not knowing how long the housing, the employment, the budget will last, and the invisibility of a homeless person. It's an easy to read book and very personalized by the authors. Small is a Professor and More is the homeless man she met at the dog park. I encourage anyone with an interest on the topic to read this book. The discussion will enhance what you learn."

Nancy Mueller

It's a long drive to Mesa but easy driving on a Sunday morning. Five TCOTP members gathered with Desert Heritage Church-Mesa where the Whitlock family were long time members. We were invited by members when they came for the memorial for Mary Whitlock. Their Peace and Justice ministry focused on Gun Violence within the Mesa community, Arizona, and the US at their Martin Luther King Jr. Service on January 14th. Personal testimonials wretched our hearts. Reading the list of names was begun but halted because it was too long.

The church property borders Kino Junior High School and Principal Ms. Hasebe-Dilbeck shared its 3rd guiding statements of *Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Safe*.

Pastor Derrick Elliott led us in the covenant prayer "we commit to challenging injustice and inequality and ask for courage and wisdom to confront prejudice and advocate for fairness". The question we reflected on is "How can we champion justice and peace?" Wayne, Phyllis and Pastor Derrick suggested we consider meeting again to gab, exchange ideas and opportunities.

If there are any The Church of the Palms' members interested in connecting the two churches talk with Pastor Paul or Nancy Mueller.



Linda, Mark, Nancy N., Bonnie, & Nancy M.

The Church of the Palms' Mission and Outreach Team is collecting donations of soup (ramen, cans, etc.) each Sunday through February 6th for Valley View Community Food Bank. Our sister congregation, United Church of Sun City, has challenged us to a friendly rivalry to see who can donate the most. Let's tackle hunger!!

February 1-15

Thursday, 1

- 10:00 a.m. Cosmic Christians (BR/HY)
- 1:00 p.m. Worship Team Mtg (BR/HY)
- 2:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal (MR)
- 3:00 p.m. Inspirit Bible Study (RC/HY)

Friday, 2-OFFICE CLOSED

- 11:00 a.m. Feet N More Shower Trailer (OS)

Saturday, 3

Sunday, 4

- 7:30 a.m. Shared Conversations (B2L)
Facilitator Bobbie Chapman
- 9:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal (MR)
- 10:00 a.m. Worship (SA)
- 11:00 a.m. Fellowship (SA)
- 11:00 a.m. Feet N More Shower Trailer (OS)

Monday, 5

- 10:00 a.m. Executive Board Mtg (BR)
- 4:00 p.m. I-HELP (KH)

Tuesday, 6

- 9:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship @ George's (OS)
- 10:00 a.m. Operations Mtg (BR/HY)

Wednesday, 7

- 9:00 a.m. Needles & Pins Craft Group (BR)
- 10:00 a.m. VEC Mtg (NA)
- 10:00 a.m. Enneagrams Class (KH)
- 11:00 a.m. Feet N More Shower Trailer (OS)
- 3:30 p.m. Information Session (KH)

Thursday, 8

- 10:00 a.m. Cosmic Christians (BR/HY)
- 2:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal (MR)
- 3:00 p.m. Inspirit Bible Study (RC/HY)

Friday, 9-OFFICE CLOSED

- 1:00 p.m. Social Justice Team Mtg (BR/HY)

Saturday, 10

May the day have a great you :)

Sunday, 11

- 7:30 a.m. Shared Conversations (B2L)
Facilitator Bobbie Chapman
- 9:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal (MR)
- 10:00 a.m. Worship Service (SA)
- 11:00 a.m. Fellowship Hour (KH)

Monday, 12

- 10:00 a.m. Lifelong Learning Mtg (BR/HY)
- 2:00 p.m. Trustees Mtg (BR/HY)
- 2:00 p.m. LGBTQ+ Team Mtg (KH)
- 4:00 p.m. I-HELP (KH)

Tuesday, 13

- 10:00 a.m. Ministry Council Mtg (BR/HY)
- 10:00 a.m. Feet N More Shower Trailer (OS)

Wednesday, 14- ASH WEDNESDAY

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!!

- 1:00 p.m. Feet N More Shower Trailer (OS)
- 5:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday Service
will be held at:

United Church of Sun City
11250 N 107th Ave
Sun City, AZ 85351

Thursday, 15

- 9:00 a.m. Care Team Mtg (BR/HY)
- 10:00 a.m. Cosmic Christians (BR/HY)
- 2:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal (MR)
- 3:00 p.m. Inspirit Bible Study (RC/HY)

MARCH PALM LEAF DEADLINE

***Please submit all articles
NO LATER THAN FEB 15th**

Thank you!

SA=Sanctuary; B2L=Bridges to Learning; HY=Hybrid; KH=King Hall; BR=Boardroom;
OS=Offsite; NA=Narthex; CHP=Chapel; PP=Pastor Paul's Office; MR=Music Room

February 16-29

Friday, 16- OFFICE CLOSED

4:00 p.m. Special I-HELP (KH)

Saturday, 17

4:00 p.m. Special I-HELP (KH)

Sunday, 18

7:30 a.m. Shared Conversations (B2L)
Facilitator Bobbie Chapman

9:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal (MR)

10:00 a.m. Worship Service (SA)

11:00 a.m. Fellowship Hour (KH)

Monday, 19-OFFICE CLOSED

President's Day

4:00 p.m. I-HELP (KH)

Tuesday, 20

9:00 a.m. Men's Fellowship @ George's (OS)

Wednesday, 21

9:00 a.m. Needles & Pins Craft Group (BR)

10:00 a.m. Living the Questions Class (KH)
Led by David Klingensmith.

11:00 a.m. Feet N More Shower Trailer (OS)

Thursday, 22

8:00 a.m. Feet N More Shower Trailer (OS)

10:00 a.m. Cosmic Christians (BR/HY)

2:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal (MR)

3:00 p.m. Inspirit Bible Study (RC/HY)

Friday, 23-OFFICE CLOSED

Saturday, 24



Sunday, 25

7:30 a.m. Shared Conversations (B2L)
Facilitator Bobbie Chapman

9:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal (MR)

10:00 a.m. Worship Service (SA)

11:00 a.m. Fellowship Hour (KH)

Monday, 26

4:00 p.m. I-HELP (KH)

Tuesday, 27

10:00 a.m. Palestinian Issues Class (BR)

10:00 a.m. Red Cross Blood Drive (KH)

10:00 a.m. Feet N More Shower Trailer (OS)

Wednesday, 28

9:00 a.m. Needles & Pins Craft Group (BR)

10:00 a.m. Living the Questions Class (KH)

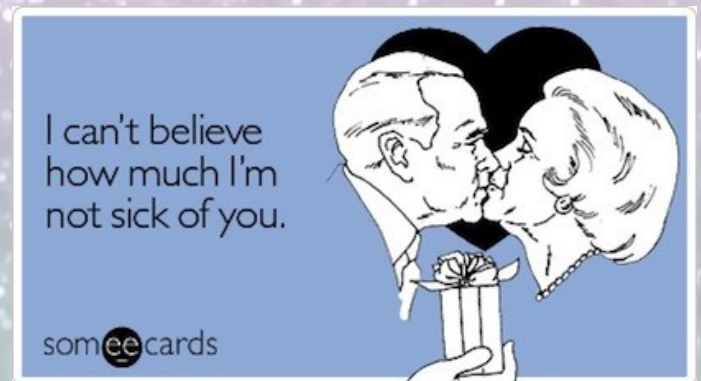
1:00 a.m. Feet N More Shower Trailer (OS)

Thursday, 29

10:00 a.m. Cosmic Christians (BR/HY)

2:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal (MR)

3:00 p.m. Inspirit Bible Study (RC/HY)



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OS=Offsite; NA=Narthex; CHP=Chapel; PP=Pastor Paul's Office; MR=Music Room