

First Edition



TEMPE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Share the Joy, Share the Journey

SPECIAL WORSHIP SERVICES

“Can We Really Make a Difference?” will be the topic of **Youth Sunday** set for February 19 at the 9:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. worship services. Our junior and senior high students will be speakers, readers, liturgists and prayer leaders.

Centering on the New Testament story in the Gospel of John about Jesus feeding the crowd with the help of a boy's lunch, the students will talk about the ways and places they have reached out to serve the community this year. You will hear about their experiences visiting a center for homeless teens in downtown Tempe, working in the breakfast kitchen at the United Methodist Outreach Ministries' New Day Center, collecting funds for the Souper Bowl project and participating in the 30-Day Famine for hunger awareness.

Don't miss this powerful message from our youth led by Pastor Sarai Case and this opportunity to show our support for their good work.

The **Ash Wednesday** worship service will be held on February 22 at 7 p.m. in the sanctuary led by Pastor Rob Rynders and our Valley Wesley college students. The service will include the imposition of ashes as well as a variety of music and message to begin the Lenten season.

BE PART OF OUR LENTEN BLOG

A daily blog written by Tempe First folks will be posted on our church website during the 40 days of Lent. Our Lenten theme, “Walking the Path,” will challenge us to explore our own pathways that move us to God. If you enjoy writing and would like to submit a blog article, please contact Diana Spratt, diana@tempefirstumc.org or 480-967-3376. Details about length, themes, suggested topics and tips on blogging will be available to all contributors.



FOCUS ON THE CROSS is part of our Lenten observance each year. Lent begins February 22 and concludes on Easter Sunday, April 8.



PLANS FOR LENT

Pancake 'Palooza is set for Shrove Tuesday (Mardi Gras), February 21, the day before Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent. We'll have a “top your own yummy pancake” feast in Ross Hall at 6 p.m. with a plethora of delicious toppings.

Zany pancake races and cool pancake crafts will be offered for children and the young at heart. A family study guide for Lent will also be available. An intergenerational “table talk time” about faith journeys will be part of this special event.

“Walking the Path” Table Talk will be held Thursdays, March 8 and March 22, at 6 p.m. in Ross Hall. You're invited to share a simple supper and conversation about sharing our faith stories. Pastor Sarai Case will lead the discussion.

TAKE A NEW STUDY

--Embracing the Prophets. Monday, February 20, 6:45 p.m. Join us (live) and Walter Brueggemann (via dvd), a leading Old Testament scholar and theologian, on a wild ride through the poetic prophecy of Hebrew Scripture. Themes include cultural contexts, framework to Israel's history and connections between Israel's sociological, economic and spiritual status and that of America! Kent Olson & Diana Spratt will lead.

--Invitation to the Old Testament. Thursday, March 1, 6:30 p.m. What does it mean to be God's chosen people? Hear the story of God and God's calling of the people of Israel through the many “voices” of the biblical text. Learn about the books of narrative, poem, history and prophecy. Listen for God's call and purpose in our lives today. Leaders are Pastor Dave Summers, Skip Bass & Mike Hitt.

FROM *the Pastor*

Dear Friends,

As I write this I am preparing to leave for Zimbabwe, Africa. Three of us from Tempe First (Charlie and Kathy Schock and myself) will be participating in our Conference's mission trip to Africa University.

Twenty-five years ago the United Methodist Church began a new university to educate students from throughout the continent of Africa. The University was launched when the United Methodist Church in Zimbabwe donated 1,542 acres of land in the Nyagambu River Valley, near the Old Mutare UMC Mission Centre.

We support this important institution of higher learning each year through our apportionments (the UMC contributes \$2.5 million annually). Africa University was the first private university chartered in Zimbabwe and now has students from 27 countries.

While we are there we will have the opportunity to meet with students and faculty and participate in the 25th anniversary celebration. As United Methodists in the Desert Southwest, we have raised \$500,000 to endow a faculty chair in health sciences. Our giving will help to prepare students to fight life-threatening

diseases such as malaria and HIV/AIDS. The United Methodist Church has set a goal to address issues of global health. Our contributions here will be a step in making this a reality.

I am excited to be a part of this mission experience. Africa University is a powerful expression of the Methodist desire to engage God's world and bring resources of faith, hope and love to difficult and hurting places. I am proud to be part of a church that has such a large vision for God's transforming work as happens through education in developing nations.

John Wesley said "The world is my parish." We reach well beyond our own community in bringing God's grace to people who will be Africa's future leaders, educators and health care providers.

Please keep us in prayer during the time of travel and as we meet with University representatives. We will look forward to sharing with you the story of our experience and learning upon our return.

In faith and hope,

Dave Summers
Senior Pastor

OUTREACH INTERN

Tiffany Shuford, a new intern from the social work school at Arizona State University, has joined our Urban Outreach staff to work through August. Tiffany, 26, is an Arizona native and a graduate of Mesa High School. She is assisting with Home At Last clients to help maintain their goals and secure needed support. She has served as a volunteer with a local hospice and is interested in social work in the area of substance abuse. We welcome Tiffany to Tempe First!



TIFFANY SHUFORD

HELP FIGHT HUNGER

Tempe Empty Bowls, an annual event dedicated to end hunger one bowl at a time, is set for Friday and Saturday, February 24 & 25, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Friday's location is Sixth Street Park in downtown Tempe and Saturday's location is Tempe Library Complex Courtyard. Handcrafted ceramic bowls and a light lunch will be sold for \$10. Proceeds benefit United Food Bank, Tempe Community Action Agency and Escalante Community Center.

BUILD A HOME

Tempe First's Habitat for Humanity build team will work on a Phoenix home for the Cavazos family on Saturdays, February 18 and March 31. If you would like to volunteer for the Habitat team, please contact the church office or Charlie Schock, schockckkd@aol.com.

We've been asked to provide lunch for the crew (about 25 folks) on February 18. If you can't work on the house, but would like to bring lunch to the site, that would be a great opportunity to be part of this Habitat build. Or if you'd like to prepare lunch, just call the church office and we can deliver it for you.

BRING A BOOK

Donations of books and magazines are needed by our Urban Outreach homeless ministry for the newly organized library in Baker Center. Favorites are thrillers, mysteries, Westerns, non-fiction and *National Geographic* and *Reader's Digest* magazines. You may bring books to the church office or place them in a bin for books that is set up in the sanctuary narthex.

YOUNG LEADERS UNITE

Keep in prayer this weekend our Valley Wesley students and Young Adult group members who will attend Relevance X 2012 in Las Vegas, Nevada.

This movement, now in its third year, focuses on empowering young adults through worship and service to create change in our communities. It unites the voices of the “under 35 crowd” to see and tell a different story of faith. The weekend includes music, worship, fellowship, speakers and opportunities for outreach.

MEALS FOR STUDENTS

Valley Wesley, our campus ministry group, meets every Wednesday night in Ross Hall for a home-cooked meal, program and worship. Volunteers are needed each week to provide a dinner for 15 to 20 students. If you'd like to help, contact Kathy Schock, 480-969-4973 or kathhuck@aol.com.





THE MEN OF TEMPE FIRST enjoyed a beautiful weekend at camp in Prescott for their annual Men's Retreat. Relaxation and fellowship were high on the agenda for this event which included music, movies and a message.


Adult EDUCATION


GPS: GOD'S PATHWAYS IN THE SPIRIT

Be sure to take the GPS personal spiritual assessment and consider joining one of these small group studies for the new year. Copies of the assessment are available in the narthex.

 **Just Give Me Jesus.** Study the Bible in depth with this ongoing reading/discussion group. Members meet every Sunday from 10:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. in Smart Lounge. New folks are welcome to join the current study of the Gospel of Mark.

 **The Bridge.** Our new group called The Bridge meets on Mondays at noon in Ross Hall. A light lunch will be provided each week. The group will be reading and discussing *Beginnings: An Introduction to Christian Faith*. The Bridge is especially for our homeless guests, but all are welcome.

 **Alpha Course.** A new 12-week Alpha Course meets on Thursdays at 9:30 a.m. in the church parlor. A continental breakfast will be served each week. This practical introduction to the Christian faith addresses foundational questions and provides participants an opportunity to explore the meaning of life.

 **Christian Faith 101.** Join the group on Sundays from 10:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. in the church parlor. New participants are always welcome. The study is an introduction to the tools for spiritual growth.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING TOPIC

A social action education event called *Human Trafficking: What Is It?* is set for Saturday, March 3, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Cross in the Desert United Methodist Church in Phoenix. Sponsored by Desert Southwest Conference United Methodist Women, the seminar will include speakers from StreetLightUSA.

Registration begins at 9:30 a.m. Cost is \$15 per person. Transportation will be provided via the Tempe First church van. To reserve a seat in the van or for more registration information, please contact the church office or Joan Huston, 480-967-0352,

ALL in the Family

Our deepest sympathies go out to the family of **Ethel “Effie” Flanders** who died January 8 in Colorado. Please keep them in your prayers.

Remember in prayer **Zak & Cristi Janes** who have recently returned from Ukraine with their newly adopted son **Timothy**.

We rejoice with **Doris Cornett** whose health is greatly improving. She thanks everyone for cards, gifts, time, food and prayers offered for her. The Bycura family sends its thanks for prayers for **Miescha Bycura** who had successful surgery in Mexico and is doing well.

Billie Bogart thanks our building superintendent, **Denny Bartlow**, for installing new railings on the stage steps in Ross Hall.

SERMON SERIES

Journey to Jerusalem will be the theme of a Lenten sermon series by Pastor Dave Summers. The series is scheduled for Sundays, March 4, 11, 18, 25 and April 1. Topics for sermons will include "The Spiritual Life as a Journey," "The Spiritual Life as Action and Contemplation," "The Path of Intimacy with Jesus," "Our Experience of God" and "Palm Sunday Journey to Jerusalem: The Path of Divine Ascent."

The sermon series is based on *Longing for God: Seven Paths of Christian Devotion* by Richard Foster. It centers on our life of faith as a journey of learning, longing and growing in valuable spiritual lessons that draw us closer to God. It also speaks to faithfulness as we walk with Jesus toward the cross of Lent.

Plan to attend worship services during this special season of Lent to hear these thoughtful messages. Take time to renew commitment to God in a personal, meaningful way and to prepare to celebrate Christ's presence at Easter.



FORUM FOLLOWUP

The 2012 Tempe Candidates Forum, hosted by Tempe First on February 12, was very successful with some 250 persons attending the afternoon session. Coordinated by Valley Interfaith Project, the forum included participation by mayoral and council candidates for the city of Tempe. Input on issues was also given by several Tempe citizens.

Many thanks go out to our VIP team who worked hard to prepare for the event and to outstanding speakers from Tempe First--Amy Notbohm, Pastor Dave Summers, Doug Entrican and Jane Kolbe.



A VISIT from David and Lori Persons (left), United Methodist missionaries in the Democratic Republic of Congo, was enjoyed by all at Tempe First in late January. They have faithfully served in mission work in Africa for more than 30 years.

SIDEWALK PRAYERS

Sidewalk Sunday School brings Christian education activities to at-risk children in a north Tempe neighborhood. The project meets monthly on Saturday mornings. Please keep the children, their families and Sidewalk leader Jennifer Poe in prayer.

LET'S DANCE!

The Boomers group will get together for a dance party and potluck supper on Sunday, March 4, from 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the home of Alyson Hanson. Everyone needs to bring a dance partner and a favorite food to share for the evening meal.

Cost is \$15 per couple which includes two beginning dance lessons (Salsa and East Coast Swing) provided by Sam Fisher, ballroom dance instructor at Mesa Community College. Please make reservations and get directions by contacting Alyson, 480-383-3878, by Sunday, February 26.

No dance experience is required--just come and have fun. Boomers is a group for couples or singles in the 50s and 60s age category. Visitors are always welcome.

SHAPE UP IN 2012

Add exercise to your life at our aerobics class offered on Saturdays in the church parlor free of charge. Aerobics begins at 8:15 a.m. followed at 9 a.m. by a body toning time working on legs, abs and arms and then a 10-minute, soothing, full-body stretch.

No registration is required; just come and join at any time. All are invited, men or women of any age. Please contact instructor Cris Bass, crisb9146@cox.net or 480-831-9595, with questions or for more information.

Tempe First United Methodist Church
215 E. University Drive
Tempe, AZ 85281
Phone: 480-967-3376
Fax: 480-967-8647
www.tempefirstumc.org
email: office@tempefirstumc.org

PASTORS:

the Rev. Dr. David Summers
the Rev. Sarai Case

Wesley Campus Ministry director:
the Rev. Rob Rynders

Sunday Worship Times:
8 a.m.~Service of Holy Communion
9:30 a.m.~Traditional Service
11:30 a.m.~Alternative Service