

First Edition



TEMPE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Share the Joy, Share the Journey

LOOKING TO LENT

We're approaching an important time in our church calendar when we observe the season of Lent. It is the 40-day period before Easter Sunday (April 8 this year) when we take time to remember the sacrifices of Jesus. During Lent we reflect on our shortcomings and seek forgiveness, renew our commitment to God and prepare to celebrate Christ's presence at Easter.

Lent is a good time for families and friends to pray together, study the Bible, attend worship services and get more involved in church and community.

Plans for Lenten activities at Tempe First include:

--Pancake 'Palooza on Shrove Tuesday (Mardi Gras), February 21, the day before Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent. We'll have a yummy pancake supper in Ross Hall at 6 p.m. followed by traditional pancake races for children and the young at heart. An intergenerational "table talk time" about faith journeys will also be part of this special evening.

--Ash Wednesday worship service with the imposition of ashes is set for February 22 at 7 p.m. in the sanctuary.

--Table Talk on Thursdays, March 8 and March 22, at 6 p.m. in Ross Hall. We'll have a simple supper and conversation about sharing our faith stories. Pastor Sarai Case will lead the teaching and discussion.

BLOGS BY YOU

A daily blog written by Tempe First folks will be posted on our church website during the 40 days of Lent. 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 and tips on blogging will be available to all contributors.



WINTER CAMP (top & above) was a great weekend for our Tempe First youth group!

LEARN & SERVE

Youth group members learned about poverty and hunger at Winter Camp in January--in addition to having some fun in the snow on Mingus Mountain.

Upcoming plans for serving and working this year to show our faith in Jesus Christ to those in need are:

***Sunday, February 5.** Morning worship services. We'll collect a special *Souper Bowl* offering to help fight hunger in our area.

Time to be announced. Super Bowl Party at Pastor Sarai's house.

***Friday-Saturday, February 10-11.**

Experience the 30-Hour Famine!

***Sunday, February 19.** 9:30 & 11:30 a.m. worship services. We'll lead Youth Sunday.

TEMPE CANDIDATES FORUM

A Candidates Forum for the 2012 Tempe city elections will be held here at Tempe First on Sunday, February 12, at 4 p.m. in the sanctuary. Sponsored by Valley Interfaith Project, the forum will be a time for conversation with the mayoral and council candidates. On the forum slate are Mark Mitchell, Michael Monti and Linda Spears, for mayor, and Dick Foreman, Kolby Granville, Joel Navarro, Angie Taylor Thornton and Corey Woods, for city council.

Child care will be provided. For more information, please contact Tim McManus, VIP organizer, 617-875-4454 or timothy.c.mcmanus@gmail.com.

FROM *the Pastor*

St. Francis of Assisi (a 12th century Italian Catholic monk who founded the Franciscan order) said a lot of good things, but here's one he's best known for:

*Preach the Gospel at all times
and when necessary use words.*

There are so many ways to make your beliefs crystal clear to someone else.

Show up to a kid's soccer game = you think that child is important.

Bring in the trash can for a busy neighbor = you care enough to notice he's having a rough time.

Ask a co-worker, "How are you?" and stick around to hear the answer = what she says matters to you.

When it comes to sharing the Christian faith, most of us are much more comfortable cooking a meal, lending a hand in a moment of crisis, or you know, just physically **DOING** something for someone. In fact, **TALKING** about one's faith can be, well, hard.

The United Methodist Church in the United States has steadily lost members for over 50 years going from almost 11 million members in 1960 to just under eight million today. One hundred years ago there were 28 churches for every 10,000 Americans and today there are only 11 churches per 10,000.

It's not because the church has lost relevance in the lives of people today. On the contrary. Wars, lost jobs and an economic dive are the very things that bring



PASTOR ROB HONORED

Claremont School of Theology has selected the Rev. Rob Rynders as the 2012 Distinguished Alumnus. Pastor Rob received in 2006 his master's degree in divinity from the seminary located in Claremont, California. The school cited these accomplishments:

Rob Rynders has taken the Arizona State University Wesley Foundation from a small, part-time ministry to a full-time position of leadership. He has led students in expanding their social conscience with international as well as local mission trips. He engages his students in opportunities within the United Methodist Church to expose them to possible vocations. In 2011 he continued with the popular Relevance X conference for young adults and brought major speakers to his ministry. In short, Rob has a vision for young United Methodists in and around Tempe, and he is effectively bringing that vision into reality.

forth spirituality in individuals and societies. The UMC is also uniquely poised to share Christ's message with an emphasis on justice for all God's people. Its theology teaches that God's grace is prevenient and continues to draw us closer to God in a lifelong journey toward perfection.

Our founder John Wesley never planted a single church or started a single new congregation. He proved what I suspect we all know deep down: Relationships are what draw people together and meaningful, genuine conversations are the key to the best relationships. As a church, we will spend the next few months encouraging one another to talk freely about what we believe and to have conversations with people with whom we've never discussed our faith. We're not pushy or rude or confrontational. But we will be open and real and honest.

You are invited to an evening of food and fun with your brothers and sister in Christ to learn how to tell your faith story. I hope everyone who attends Tempe First will save the dates and join us at one or more of these dinner events:

Shrove Tuesday, February 21, 6 p.m.

Thursday, March 8, 6 p.m.

Thursday, March 22, 6 p.m.

See you there,

Sarai Case
Associate Pastor

A RELEVANT WEEKEND

Relevance X 2012 is set for the weekend of February 17-19 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, outreach opportunities and testimony. Tempe First's Young Adult group and Wesley Foundation students plan to attend. For more information, please contact Pastor Rob, rob@valleywesley.com.

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 would like to cook a meal or donate funds for food, please contact Kathy Schock, 480-969-4973 or kathhuck@aol.com.



HEARTS, FLOWERS & SMILES are all around at our annual Four-Score & More Luncheon sponsored by the United Methodist Women. This delightful event set for February 9 honors members and friends of Tempe First who are 80 years old or older.



LET'S DO LUNCH

Our annual event for members and friends of Tempe First who are 80 years old or older is set for Thursday, February 9, at 11:30 a.m. in Ross Hall. A delicious lunch of chicken salad, fruit, roll and dessert will be served. The program will feature our own Elizabeth Heinrichs, a doctoral student in vocal performance at Arizona State University. She will sing a selection of classic jazz standards with accompaniment by pianist Joseph Leyva.

If you have not received an invitation and would like to attend or if you need transportation, please contact the church, office@tempefirstumc.org or 480-967-3376. Send your RSVP to the church office or to Kathy Schock, 480-969-4973 or kathhuck@aol.com.

WARM WELCOME

A short meeting and training for ushers, greeters, faith friends, parking lot greeters and welcome booth volunteers will be held Tuesday, February 7, at 6:30 p.m. at church. If you are interested in serving on the Hospitality Team, please contact Kathy Espinoza, 480-777-8671, or Dawn Wilde, 480-947-8708.

OUTREACH LIBRARY

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. A bin for books is set up in the sanctuary narthex.

COOKIE UPDATE

The 35th Annual Holiday Cookie Walk was a big success with proceeds of about \$3,000. Funds were given to four local charities: The Arc of Tempe (in memory of Josie Cochran), Tempe Adult Day Services, Justa Center in Phoenix and StreetLight Phoenix. Thanks to all who contributed.

Adult EDUCATION



PROPHETS & POWER

It's a world of power, money and violence--not so different from the times of the Old Testament prophets. A new study by Walter Brueggemann, called *Embracing the Prophets in Contemporary Culture*, presents the current relevance of the Biblical prophets as those who spoke about morals, justice and a covenant with God. This six-week Lenten study has a dvd component featuring Brueggemann in candid dialogue with groups. Class is set for Monday, February 20, through Monday, March 26. Times are 6:45 p.m. to 8:15 p.m. at church. Group facilitators will be Kent Olson and Diana Spratt.

TRAINING TIME

A day of workshops for church leaders will be offered at the Central East District training event on Saturday, February 4, at First United Methodist Church of Mesa. Times are 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. with registration at 8:30 a.m. Cost which includes lunch is \$15. For details, please contact April Martinez, 480-854-1217 or april@desertsw.org.

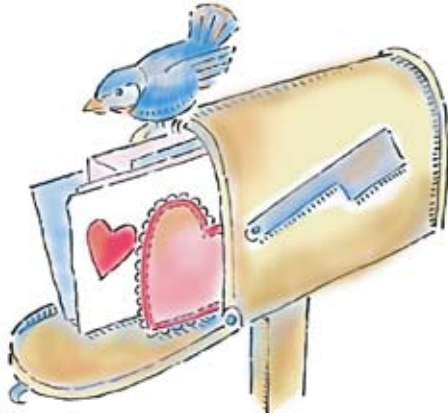
ALL in the Family

Our deepest sympathies go out to the family and friends of **Carolyn Mohn** who died January 22. Please remember them in your prayers.

Please pray for **Pat Terry**, who is recovering from kidney transplant surgery, and **Tom Baker**, who also had surgery recently. Remember in prayer **Miescha Bycura** who underwent surgery last week in Mexico.

We also ask for prayers for **Ruth Jones** and **Phyllis Stone**, who are struggling with health concerns.

Opal Martinson thanks everyone for the cards, visits and prayers offered during her illness and for the beautiful Love Knots blanket. She appreciates your thoughtfulness.



GROUP FOR PARENTS

A study and support group for parents who have children between the ages of two and 17 years will begin Saturday, January 28, at Tempe First. We'll be reading the book *Positive Discipline* by Jane Nelson. The parenting study's philosophy of encouragement and avoiding power struggles will also have a spiritual tie as we discuss how this model of parenting aligns with our faith values.

A donation of \$10 is requested to cover the cost of books. We'll also be hosting a live guest speaker during one of the sessions. Register with Diana Spratt, 480-967-3376, or at www.meetup.com/tempefamily and leave a message for the moderators.

Sessions are scheduled from 5:45 p.m. to 7 p.m. on these Saturdays, *February 11 & 25, March 10 & 24, and April 14 & 28.* Child care will be provided.

SUNDAY AFTERNOON

After The Journey worship service, stay for a light lunch and a conversation time. Here's our lineup:

February 5: *Enough* study #2

February 12: *Enough* study #3

February 19: *Enough* study #4

Enough centers on the power of money in our lives and how to live in simplicity and joy. Leader is Chris Scarff.

DON'T FORGET DOOZY


Urban Outreach has partnered with a local company, Doozy of a Deal, Inc., to help with fund raising. To save money with local businesses and send 7.5 percent of every purchase to Urban Outreach, simply visit the website www.doozyofadeal.com/phoenix and sign up. The daily deal delivers 50 to 90 percent savings with all kinds of neighborhood businesses.


Be sure to select Urban Outreach of Tempe First UMC as your benefiting organization. Then make a purchase on the site and 7.5 percent of the total will go to Urban Outreach. It's a great way to save big, spend less and give back!


Education HIGHLIGHTS


CHECK YOUR GPS

Be sure to take the **GPS** personal spiritual assessment and consider joining one of these small group studies.

 **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 and the lively sharing of insights and ideas. Facilitator is Diana Young.

 **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 discussing *Beginnings: An Introduction to Christian Faith*. The Bridge is especially for our homeless guests, but all are welcome. Leaders are Chuck Rowell and Shirley Wells.

 **Alpha Course.** A new 12-week Alpha Course is offered on Thursdays at 9:30 a.m. in the church parlor. A continental breakfast is served each week. This practical introduction to the Christian faith addresses basic questions while providing participants an opportunity to explore the meaning of life. Leaders are Joan Shacklock and Sally Atsumi.

 **Christian Faith 101.** An introduction to the tools of spiritual growth, this class meets on Sunday mornings beginning February 5. It will be held from 10:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. in the church parlor led by Kim Summers. Newcomers are welcome.

GPS (God's Pathways in the Spirit) is designed to help identify where you are in your faith journey so you can get intentional and make choices to guide your growth.

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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*