

THE DESERT DISCIPLE

Volume 67 Issue 9

First Christian Church - Tucson, AZ

(520) 624-8695

September 1, 2016

Creating a World that's a Blessing to All



In September as part of our focus on stewardship, we celebrate God's gifts that equip us to join God's work in the world through our series, "Creating a World that's a Blessing to All." God's gifts are everywhere. They come to us, and sometimes we are unaware. Sometimes we see but do not recognize them for what they are. But they come...in each breath we breathe, in a newborn's cry, in the arms of the saguaro reaching up to the sky. We have them...relationships with encouraging friends,

resources by which we live, a faith community that comforts and nudges us to go deeper. These gifts come to bless us and all of life. They come to bring healing. They come to make us whole. They come calling us to step in faith to share them with the world!

In worship, we will give thanks for these gifts. We will see how our newly identified core values call us to offer them as blessings. We will hear and rejoice in how the ministries of our church unite us in God's work of "Creating a World that's a Blessing to All."

Creating a World that's a Blessing to All:

September 4: Seek God - Acts 11:1-18

September 11: Love Like Jesus - Luke 17:1-10

September 18: Serve the World - Luke 16:19-31

September 25: A Blessing to All - Luke 9:23-24, Commitment Sunday

Congregational Meeting & Creating a World of Blessing Lunch



Our next congregational meeting will be **Sunday, September 18** following the worship service. We will celebrate how we live out our faith and core values through the ministries of our church and how the gifts of our lives and resources make it all happen! Praise God! Together we are creating a world that's a blessing to all.



For lunch, we are glad to welcome Wild Dogs food cart. Wild Dogs will be at the front of the church for members to purchase lunch and will donate 20% of the proceeds to

our church. Once food is purchased, please go to the chapel where we will eat. Water and lemonade will be provided.



Sunday Worship

10:30am

Church School

9:00am

Church Office

(520) 624-8695

Pastor

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Pastor's Note

At our last congregational meeting in March, church members had the opportunity to help articulate the core values of our congregation. After receiving this input, the Ministry Formation team refined the value statements:

1. We celebrate that all are beloved children of God.

We believe all people are made in God's image and are loved by God. We embrace this each week at the Lord's Table where all are welcome.

2. We seek to encounter God.

We seek to be shaped and formed by God's in-dwelling Spirit through opportunities for all ages to worship and explore Scripture and faith questions.

3. We honor everyone's faith journey and their diverse gifts.

We affirm the unique journey of each individual and are enriched by the gifts of ministry each person has to share.

4. We join God's work in the world.

As followers of Jesus, we participate in individual and communal acts of love, mercy, peace, and wholeness. We accompany people who feel alienated and unloved. We also do this work through partnerships with community and faith-based organizations.

And we summarize these values in a way that is easy to share with anyone. **At First Christian we: Seek God, Love Like Jesus, Serve the World**

Identifying core values helps congregations to discern call and mission, and that is exactly how we hope our core values will guide us. As I mentioned in the August DD, the board has asked the Ministry Formation Team to use our core values to 1) lead us in discerning our mission and calling today and 2) lead us in an assessment of what physical (people and facility) and economic resources we need to fulfill this mission. This is a new day for First Christian Church. A time pregnant with opportunities as we look toward the future of how our congregation will join in God's amazing work in the world.

Thanks be to God, we are not alone in this prayerful discernment. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), thanks to gifts to the Disciples Mission Fund, offers help for churches on this path. We will partner with Disciples Church Extension to assess the condition, sustainability, and possibilities for new ministry offered by our physical facilities. In addition, Hope Partnership for Missional Transformation will work closely with us in the discernment of our missional focus.

This is a time of prayer for our congregation. It is a time to pray for our openness to God's Spirit. It is time to adopt a stance of wonder in order to fully trust the Spirit into new places. It is a time to pray for our minds to be open to things beyond what we have always known or imagined. A time to pray that our preconceived notions do not hinder God's work within us. A time to trust God in the midst of discomfort, uncertainty, and questions. A time to be courageous and bold. A time to speak truth and be honest. A time to proceed with grace. A time to recognize that this is not about us, but about God's mission of healing and making whole a broken world.

Thanks be to God, we are not alone! As 1 Thessalonians 5:24 reminds us, "The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this."

The one who calls us is faithful, my friends! This one, this God of our faith, will do this!

See You Sunday,
Ailsa



National Benevolent Association
XPLOR
 FAITH, JUSTICE AND COMMUNITY

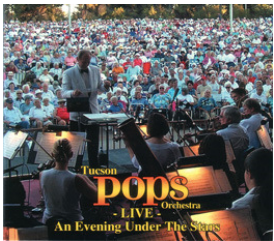
**XPLOR Residents
 are Here!
 Come Welcome Them!**

You are invited to meet our new XPLOR residents Thursday, September 8 at 6 PM in FCC Fellowship Hall. We will also be hosting members of the other Disciples Churches involved in the program. Please bring your favorite family dish and recipe to share!



We appreciate all members showing consideration of the residents' privacy. Please remember that four young adults will be living in the XPLOR area downstairs by the Fellowship Hall. A new accordion door has been installed to clearly delineate the living area that includes the bedrooms and living room. The residents will also use the restrooms and the kitchen. All these spaces make up the residents' home for the next 10 months. **In order to not cause panic on the part of the residents, we ask that if church members have a need to be in the Fellowship Hall, kitchen, or storage room late at night or early in the morning that they contact the Church Office so we can let the residents know ahead of time.**

FCC Outing: Music in the Park



Bring out your lawn chairs and enjoy a night of Music in the Park at Reid Park! The Tucson Pops Orchestra will be playing for 3 Sunday nights in September: the 11th, 18th, and 25th. All are welcome. Bring your own lawn chairs or ground covers to sit on; also bring your own drinks and food to enjoy. The concert starts at 7:00PM, but it is best to get there at 6:30 for parking and getting a space to sit. Contact Barbara Marshall for more information and to know where to find us.

Children/Youth Activity

On September 11, we'll take another walk down the street to enjoy the splash pad at Catalina Park (4th Avenue & 2nd Street). Bring your lunch, lawn chair, towel, bathing suit, and sunscreen.

Thursday Small Group Bible Study

Thursday small group conversation on 7 big topics of faith continues in September every Thursday at 11:00am in the Parlor. Topics include: God, Religion, Jesus, Salvation, Cross, Bible, and Church. Come when you can. Invite a friend. All are welcome. Contact Pastor Ailsa with any questions.

Sunday Evening Book Study

We will continue our discussion of Anne Lamott's book *Traveling Mercies* through Sept. 3. Watch the bulletin for an announcement of our next book.

Disciples Women's Ministry

Our DWM group will have its fall organizational meeting on Tuesday, September 13, from 11:30-1:30. Bring a sack lunch and your ideas to share. We will hear about the statewide DWM Retreat from participants and discuss plans for future programs. There will be a brief guided reflection.



The Mind Wholeness Project



Living out our core value to Serve the World, First Christian Church will launch a new ministry on Mental Health Sunday, October 2, called the Mind Wholeness Project.

As you know, First Christian sent a resolution to the General Assembly calling churches to be welcoming and supportive of people affected by mental health challenges and their families. What you may not know is that Rev. Mary Alice Do has been working with our denomination's National Benevolent Association to discern how churches can live out the call of that resolution.

In September, the NBA will send Mary Alice and Susan Harris to the SENT Seminar in Kansas City to gain insight and guidance for starting and growing the Mind Wholeness Project.

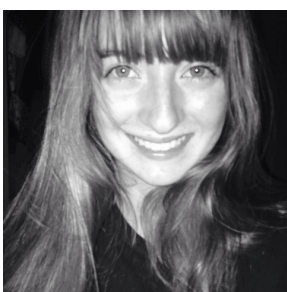
The Mind Wholeness Project will begin with a spiritual support group for people facing mental health challenges and for family members of those facing mental health challenges and it will meet two Mondays each month. It will start on Monday, October 3, with the awareness that the holiday season can be particularly stressful. Anyone desiring spiritual and/or emotional support is invited to this group.

Mary Alice feels a strong call to this ministry, not only within our church but also as an outreach to help other congregations become welcoming and supportive of people and families affected by mental health challenges. As a result, she will transition from working full time to fully focusing on developing and strengthening the ministry the Mind Wholeness Project. We will share updates as the ministry proceeds.

Your prayers, gifts and commitment will support the Mind Wholeness Project and offer healing to individuals in our churches and the Tucson Community. Thank you!

If you have any questions or want to know more, please call Rev. Mary Alice Do at 520-440-3276.

Personnel Team: Riley Johnson



This month we honor Riley Johnson as she begins her 6th year working with our children at First Christian Church. She began working as a childcare attendant in September 2011 and became the coordinator in December 2012. Riley brings a caring, thoughtful and loving approach to her work with our children. She is conscientious in making sure that we always have attendants in our childcare area to accompany our children. She provides direction and supervision for her coworkers Tyler Parks and Lillian Le and ensures that the team works well together and with the children. This past year, she has expanded her role to be a storyteller with the Children Worship & Wonder Program and also to plan and participate in monthly Family Activities after church. Riley is a senior at the University of Arizona where she is majoring in Public Health with a minor in Spanish. She is doing an internship at the Skin Cancer Institute and beginning a research position studying vector-borne disease. She's also considering graduate school to pursue research in epidemiology. Riley has an interest in health education and a career in community outreach. Riley also works with the UA Bookstore and can be seen in that job at many of the U of A's sporting events. Though she is busy, she still finds time to fulfill her role at FCC in the childcare department. We are very grateful for her dedication and blessed by her presence. Please take the opportunity to thank her for enriching the ministry of our congregation when you see her.



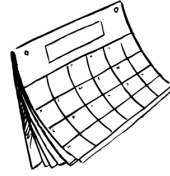
UPDATE ON LOUISIANA FLOODING AND FIRE IN CALIFORNIA

August 19, 2016

As the waters begin to recede in parts of Southern Louisiana, and the damage of this week's floods begins to be revealed, Week of Compassion continues to be in contact with Disciples in the Baton Rouge area. We will continue to provide support as clean-up begins and in long months of recovery ahead. The best way to help now is to give money - it is not glamorous, but cash can be turned quickly into buckets, soap, water, food, blankets, or gas and can help provide necessary resources for clean-up or repairs. If you are within a half-day's driving distance of the floods and interested in volunteering, you can contact VolunteerLouisiana.gov or First Christian Church of Baton Rouge. Please be aware that all volunteers will need to be prepared to arrange their own transportation, lodging, and meals; current housing is prioritized for evacuees and emergency personnel.

The Blue Cut Fire continues to burn outside of San Bernardino, CA. Thankfully, improved weather conditions have enabled firefighters to reach 22% containment as of Friday morning, and mandatory evacuations are beginning to lift. The extent of the damage is yet unknown. Week of Compassion will continue to monitor the situation and coordinate with the Pacific Southwest Region and local congregations to provide relief and support the future recovery.

We invite you to keep the people of Louisiana and California in your prayers. Given the severity of these disasters we encourage you to make a special gift to Week of Compassion to support relief and recovery. Below are resources for use in your worship community.



September: At a Glance

- Elders Meeting** – Thursday, Sept. 1 at 6:00pm
- Primavera Meal** – Friday, Sept. 2 at 6:00pm (Contact Sharon Sorensen if you'd like to help!)
- Ministry Team Leaders Meeting**—Wednesday, Sept. 7 at 6:30pm
- XPLOR Potluck at FCC**—Thursday, Sept. 8 at 6:00pm
- Children's Activity**—Saturday, Sept. 11 after Worship
- Board Meeting**—Tuesday, September 13 at 5:00pm
- Worship Team Meeting**—Wednesday, Sept. 14 at 6:30pm
- Congregational Meeting & Lunch**—Sunday, Sept. 18 after Worship
- October Worship Planning**—Tuesday, Sept. 20 at 6:00pm
- XPLOR Team Meeting**—Tuesday, Sept. 27 at 6:30pm
- Prayer Time in the Chapel** – Tuesdays at 11:00am
- Small Group Bible Study** – Thursdays at 11:00am
- Book Study** – Sundays at 4:00pm



“News from the Pews”

- ♥ **Continued prayers for:** Peggy Brady, Lily Foster, Grace Judson, Bea Kimberlin, Larry Kimberlin and Jack & Jody Vanderkolk.
- ♥ **Congratulations to new member, Laura Allen!** Laura joined the church on 8/28/16.
- ♥ **With great appreciation, we recognize the hard work of our church members** who volunteered over the course of three Saturdays to get our rental houses ready and to prepare the XPLOR living space for our new residents. What a turn out! You are amazing! Thank you.
- ♥ **Prayers for people with mental health challenges** and their families.
- ♥ **Prayers for our women** attending the Disciples Women's retreat September 9-11.



Sunday Schedule

9:00 am	Adult Education—Parlor*
9:00 am	Children/Youth Education—Room 107 & 110 *
9:00 am	St. Michael's ECC - Chapel
9:45 am	Children's Music *
10:30 am	Morning Worship - Sanctuary *
4:00 pm	Book Study—Parlor *

Praying For Our Missionaries!



Please be in prayer for our missionaries serving through Global Ministries.

During the week of...

September 4: Scott Couper, South Africa

September 11: Teresa Henry, India

September 18: Kristin Wolf, Thailand

September 25: Paul Turner, Democratic Republic of Congo

For more information regarding our missionaries, overseas partners, or how you can make a difference, visit: www.globalministries.org



VISIT OUR WEBSITE:



firstchristianchurchtucson.org

CALL OUR OFFICE: (520) 624-8695

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Articles for the October *Desert Disciple* should be received in the office no later than **Monday, September 19.**

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