

THE DESERT DISCIPLE

Volume 70 Issue 1

First Christian Church - Tucson, AZ

(520) 624-8695

January 1, 2019

Worship this Month



We enter the New Year having celebrated God's amazing gift—Emanuel! God with us. God revealed in us. A gift that never ceases. This January, we seek deeper understanding of this gift in our "Greater Gifts" series.

New Leaders for 2019

Thank you to everyone who has volunteered to serve as leaders in 2019. We will recognize incoming elders, deacons, newly elected board officers, and ministry team leaders on **Sunday, January 20 during worship**. Through the gifts of the Spirit, God calls us to serve together in a ministry of worship and witness. We look forward to a new year guided by the Spirit as we grow in our purpose and mission to Seek God, Love Like Jesus, and Serve the World.

Moderator:	Rudy Byrd
Vide Moderator:	Janis Sherick
Secretary:	Susan Harris
Treasurer:	Debbie Stadle
Historian:	Ann Nichols
Deacons (class of 2021):	Violet Bierce, Willis Jackson, Mark Thornburgh, Rebecca Orman, Austin Troike, and R.C. Troike
Elders (class of 2021):	Rudy Byrd, Lori Bryant, Paul DeArman, Jean Jackson
Trustees (class of 2021):	Rosemary Bolza, Willis Jackson, Barbara Marshall



Tucson Faith Community Connections Forum



Faith Community Connections is a network of members from faith communities interested in supporting folks who have been incarcerated as they re-enter into the community. Nancy and Paul DeArman and Ann Nichols have been participating in activities of this group.

On Sunday afternoon, January 13 from 4-5:30 there will be a forum at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 1200 N Campbell (close to Speedway). The topic is

"Successful Re-Entry after Incarceration". There will be information about Second Chance of Tucson and about other opportunities to help with this issue. Mayor Rothschild is scheduled to speak, as will some people participating in the program. All are invited to learn more about this issue and explore how First Christian may further partner in this effort.



Sunday Worship
10:30am

Church School
9:00am

Church Office
(520) 624-8695

Pastor
Rev. Ailsa Guardiola González
fccailsa@gmail.com

Moderator
Rudy Byrd

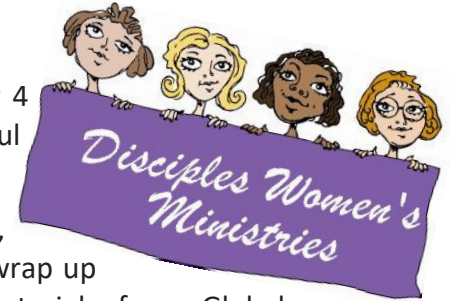
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Disciples Women's Ministry

The Christmas concert offered by Janet Tolman and David Gale on December 4 provided a joyful beginning to the season. We thank them for their beautiful music and meaningful drama.

We will meet next on **Tuesday, January 8**. We gather with sack lunches at 11:30, and the program will begin at 12:15. Ann will bring cookies to share. We will wrap up our discussion of refugee and migrant issues in the Caribbean using materials from Global Ministries. All are welcome!



Mental Health Support Groups

For people affected by mental health challenges:

1st & 3rd Monday

January 7 & 21, 6:00 – 7:30 PM

The Family Support Group that meets on the 1st Wednesday of every month.

January 2 at 3:00pm.

XPLOR Potluck at Desert Dove



Hear updates from the XPLOR residents, Natalie, Emily, and Ethan, at the potluck hosted by Desert Dove Christian Church on **Sunday, January 27 at 5:00pm**. Desert Dove is located at 6163 S Midvale Park Rd. Please bring a dish to share.

How FCC Served the World in 2018

We celebrate the generosity of our congregation lived out through over and above donations to the Community Food Bank; CROP Walk; Week of Compassion, Global Ministries, and other ministries of our wider church. This generosity has connected us to and impacted our community as we supported hospitality through The Inn Project, various organizations through our 5th Sunday Service Days, and offered a spiritual connection to our community through Ashes to Go and the weekly prayer in the chapel.

It has been quite a year—a year filled with the steadfast love and mercies of God that never end! We celebrate your generosity!

Over and Above giving for Special Offerings: **\$9,625.00**

5 th Sundays:	\$505
A.L.A.S:	\$825
Christmas Offering:	\$660 as of 12/21/18
Community Food Bank:	\$325 and 2,018 pounds of food!
CROP Hunger Walk:	\$841
Easter Offering:	\$1,290
Pentecost:	\$1,035
Reconciliation:	\$845
Staff Gifts:	\$1,062 as of 12/21/18
Thanksgiving:	\$700
Week of Compassion:	\$1,537



Forward Together: Discernment Process update



The participants in the Forward Together Spiritual Discernment met five times over six months for intentional prayer and conversation around our future as a congregation. Many thanks to all those who participated for their incredible dedication to this process and the integrity with which it was carried out.

As was shared at the December congregational meeting, the group found unity around a number of key areas related to our identity and call for the future. These include:

- Evangelism—a strong sense that we must reclaim this word and act on sharing the good news of the gospel more broadly to include a more effective online presence, investing in various forms of advertising, and building relationships in the community as a congregation and as individuals.
- Assessing current ministries and programs—a sense that we need to prioritize the ways in which we use our collective energy in moving forward. We do not want to do things only because we have always done them and use up the energy of leaders and volunteers that could be more faithfully placed toward other opportunities.
- Hub of Connections—a sense of call to be a hub of connections for our wider Tucson community. This includes recognizing the increased isolation and need for connection experienced by people in our society.
- Partnerships—a sense that engagement in the community calls us to intentional partnerships with other faith communities, nonprofit organizations, and other entities, and we need to purposefully seek these partnerships.
- Repurpose building—a call to open our building and property to new uses and functions, which could include use by new partners or new ministries. In addition, a desire to explore building use related to musical and visual arts.
- Listening—a call to intentionally listen to our community and recognize we cannot assume anything about what are the greatest needs and the best ways to address them, whether physical, emotional, or spiritual.
- Location—a sense of call to try to stay in our current location. This sense is *not* to maintain our status quo, but to explore numerous possibilities for ministry, expanded use of the building, and sources of revenue to address current and future maintenance issues.

These key aspects from our discernment process offers us a foundation for next steps. The ministry formation team will continue to guide us as we work on our SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-bound) strategic plan. We do know some of these next steps include a listening campaign, which will entail meetings with local nonprofits and other entities in order to better understand our community and its needs and identify intersections and potential partners. They also include moving forward with some projects we have put on hold, such as cleaning out spaces to clear clutter; paint the welcome area; better manage building maintenance; display outdoor banners of welcome; and create a budget for 2019 that reflects our intended direction for the future (for example in the area of evangelism). Additionally, we foresee changes to our institutional structure (by-laws), the use of staff time, and things we have not even thought of or realized yet.

Finally, we will need the support and active involvement of all our members. Whether going out to listen as part of our listening campaign, clearing clutter, painting, exploring partnerships and other uses of our property, helping explore fund raising or resources, sharing one-on-one about the good news of God's love, or volunteering in other ways, everyone's gifts and passion is needed. Most importantly, we need to continue in prayer together. The discernment process granted a solid foundation in this regard, upon which we must continue to build.

Please stay tuned to further updates and opportunities to volunteer.

Sunday Book Group

The book group, which usually meets from 4-6 on Sunday afternoons, has been "on vacation" during the holiday season. We are a small group, and the loss of Claudia has made us too small to have good discussions. If others are interested, we could consider re-establishing the group, either at the same time or another time convenient to all. We have a book under consideration as our next one to study. It is *Beyond Jesus: My Spiritual Odyssey* written by Patricia Pearce. Some of us who have been around for a long time remember the author as Patty Pearce, who served as an intern at FCC under Pastor Jim Symons. The book was published by She Writes Press and has received excellent reviews--I just checked Amazon and she's getting 5 stars! Let Susan Harris or Ann Nichols know if you are interested.

Opportunities to Serve the World:

Thursday Bilingual Prayer Vigil

Vigils of accompaniment and hope are a time to pray for our hospitality guests; those affected by the political, humanitarian, and legal complexities of the border; others experiencing challenges; and to lift our concerns for our lives and the world. All are welcome. The prayer vigil takes place at 6pm in the chapel.

Food for Community Food Bank

First Christian collects non-perishable food items for the Community Food Bank throughout the year. Donations can be placed on the shelves in the Welcome Area.

Accompanying Guests Seeking Asylum

You can share the love of God by accompanying asylum-seeking guests in the following ways:

1. Home Hospitality

There is a need for home hospitality for individuals while they await their court date. A list is being compiled of who can host guests in their home. If you have the capacity to house one or more persons in your home, please contact the church office or Pastor Ailsa with the length of time you could host.

2. Bonding Folks out of detention:

- A. If you would like to immediately donate to an existing bond fund, you can donate to: ProNet Action Fund, a community group in existence since 2012. They pay bonds for immigrant leaders detained from the Tucson community. <https://pronetaction.wordpress.com/donate/>

- B. Pima Friends Meeting has just approved a bond fund!! They're still in the process of setting it up and will share information when it is ready.

3. Donate to phone calls and commissary vouchers, donate to the Casa Mariposa Detention Visitation Program (CM Visitation). You can select what your donation will go towards on their donation website: <https://donorbox.org/cmvisitation>

4. Start writing to people in detention, you can also ask the CM Visitation folks. E-mail cmvisitation@gmail.com

5. Items for People released from detention

A. The Inn (run through the Desert Southwest Conference of the United Methodist Church) has an Amazon wish list for items they need. Please contact the church office for the website link to view the list.

B. Casa Alitas (run through Catholic Community Services) has this list of donations on their website. You may contact the church office for that list.

6. Volunteer at a shelter:

The Inn Project has been busy with many families. If you would like to volunteer, follow this link or please contact Gretchen Lopez at 520-312-1451. There are morning, afternoon, evening, and overnight shifts. The Inn Project continues to give support to families seeking asylum. Donations can be placed in the welcome area inside the bin labeled "Inn Project."

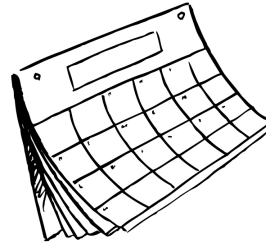
Community Events:

Tucson Peace Center: Spaghetti Dinner

First Christian Church's kitchen will be used Saturday, January 26, 2019, to prepare and serve pasta with a side of peace.

On the last Saturday in January, the Tucson Peace Center hosts their annual vegetarian spaghetti dinner at our church. Volunteers show up at noon to help chop vegetables and prepare sauce and salad – all are invited to participate.

Dinner is served at 6:00pm and continues until the spaghetti runs out. A donation of \$10 is suggested (kids' meals \$5), but not required; everyone is welcome to attend. There will be a silent auction, information on Sanctuary Cities, good conversation, music, and great food.



January at a Glance

Mind Wholeness Family Support Group—

1st Wednesday (1/2) at 3:00pm

Elders Meeting—Thursday, January 3 at 6:30pm

Mind Wholeness Spiritual Support Group—

1st & 3rd Mondays (1/7 & 1/21) at 6:00pm

Disciples Women's Ministry—Tuesday, January 8 at 11:30am

Tucson Faith Community Connections Forum—

Sunday, January 13 at 4:00pm (Our Savior's Lutheran Church)

Manna & Mercy Bible Study—2nd & 4th

Mondays (1/14 & 1/28) at 6:00pm

DD Deadline—Friday, January 18

Blessing of Leaders—Sunday, January 20

Tucson Peace Center Spaghetti Dinner—

Saturday, January 26 at 6:00pm

XPLOR Potluck—Sunday, January 27 at 5:00pm

Prayer Vigils—Thursdays at 6:00pm

Week of Compassion update:



Christ at Home in Us --

**A Christmas Greeting
December 20, 2018**

"Come, Desire of nations come,
Fix in us Thy humble home;
Oh, to all Thyself impart,
Formed in each believing heart!"

"Home" is a word we throw around quite often around Christmas, with songs on the radio reminding, albeit sentimentally, that there is no place like home for the holidays and crooning of a longing to be home for Christmas.

Home is a word that shows up quite often, as well, when we talk about the ministry of Week of Compassion. Be it in rebuilding houses after hurricanes or tsunamis or in resettling refugees and migrants displaced by violence, restoring home is a fundamental part of our work.

The celebration of Christ's birth invites us into an even deeper and holier sense of the word home. This fourth verse of "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing," in the form of a prayer, suggests that home is something far more intimate and more powerful. These words, so often accompanied by fanfare and the organ with the all stops pulled out, entreat the incarnate one to take up residence not just among us, but indeed within us.

The mission of Week of Compassion is born out of this desire both for Christ to be present among and within us and for us to recognize our neighbors as the dwelling places of God. This year, your prayers, partnership and financial support have enabled this work around the world: in Bangladesh, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Paradise, California, west Africa and more. These are just a few of the places your gifts have made an impact this past year. Thousands of lives have been touched by your generosity, partnership, and solidarity.

"News from the Pews"

- ♥ The church office will be closed from December 24—January 1. **In case of a pastoral emergency, please contact Susan Harris.**

Please be in prayer for:

- ♥ **Our hospitality guests and XPLOR Residents:** Ethan, Emily & Natalie.
- ♥ **The N.A. Groups that meet in our church, and others** struggling with addiction.
- ♥ **The Mind Wholeness Ministry and the people & families** affected by mental health challenges.
- ♥ **Continued prayers for:** Peggy & Marion Brady, Lily Foster, Grace Judson, Larry Kimberlin, June King, William Koller, Ron & Patti Lemke, Phil Shosie, Ruth Stokes, Jody Vanderkolk, Sally Van Slyke, and Roger White.



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
10:30 am	Morning Worship - Sanctuary *



VISIT OUR WEBSITE:
firstchristianchurchtucson.org

CALL OUR OFFICE: (520) 624-8695

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Articles for the February *Desert Disciple* should be received in the office no later than **Friday, January 18.**

Praying For Our Missionaries!



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

During the week of...

January 6: Cara McKinney, Mexico

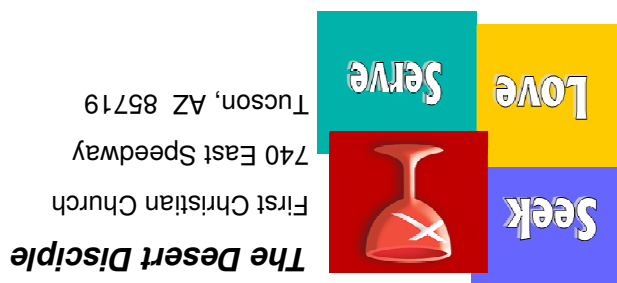
January 13: Kearstin Bailey, Greece

January 20: Paul Turner, Democratic Republic of Congo

January 27: Rosalind Gnat, Germany

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

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Serve

Love

Seek