

The Desert Disciple

Volume 70 Issue 12

First Christian Church - Tucson, AZ

(520) 624-8695

December 1, 2019

SEEK GOD

"Be Still, and know that I am God"
Psalm 46:10

Worship this Month: What Can't Wait?

Advent is a season of expectation and waiting, but what does waiting look like? Is it like waiting for a flight at the airport with everyone's face attached to a screen? Is it the kind of impatient waiting in the check-out line at the store? Is it like falling asleep in the doctor's office waiting room? Do we sit idly or should we do something while we wait? This is the focus of our worship this month as we wonder, what can't wait? As we wait for the coming Christ child, what demands our immediate attention? What requires our work? As we acknowledge our condition and that of the world, what is it God can't wait for?

In his book *New Seeds of Contemplation*, Thomas Merton writes:

The more we persist in misunderstanding the phenomena of life...the more we involve ourselves in sadness, absurdity, and despair. But it does not matter much, because no despair of ours can alter the reality of things, or stain the joy of the cosmic dance which is always there. Indeed, we are in the midst of it, and it is in the midst of us, for it beats in our very blood, whether we want it to or not. Yet the fact remains that we are invited to forget ourselves on purpose, cast our awful solemnity to the winds, and join in the general dance.

This season, may we join in the general dance with the confidence that God is at work with and within us. As we wait, may our dance steps be on behalf of a world yearning for courage, truth, repentance, and joy.

I look forward to seeing you in worship!

Blessings,
Ailsa

Advent devotionals and activity calendars with special FCC magnets **will be available in the welcome area.** Please enjoy one per household.



Seek



Love

Serve

Sunday Worship
10:30am

Church School
9:00am

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Blue Christmas Service

Wednesday, December 18 at 6:00pm

Christmas can be a difficult time for people. In this season we may be missing people dead or away. We may feel heavy with the burdens we carry. We may not be able to give the gifts we want to give. Christmas can be a difficult time when we are all supposed to be merry. Join us on Wednesday, December 18 at 6:00pm for our Blue Christmas service in the chapel where we can find support and fellowship.



Christmas Eve Services

6:30pm – Family Service & Walk-in-Pageant

Family Service with children's walk-in pageant. **Children wanting to participate should arrive between 6:00-6:10pm** to choose a role and get in costume. Children are encouraged to invite friends and family to participate. Since there is no rehearsal, any child can participate. If you will attend the family service and can help children get into costume, please let us know by contacting Lori Bryant or the Church Office. If you have a child interested in reading one of the scripture passages, please contact Pastor Ailsa by December 20th.

11:00pm – Candlelight Service

Celebrate the birth of the Christ child with scripture, music, and the lights of Christmas at the candlelight communion service.

Save the Dates! Youth Events Coming Up:

Winter Youth Experience for middle and high school aged youth will be January 18 - 19 at Foothills Christian Church in Glendale, AZ. — 30 Hours. Experience Community. Experience God. Look for more information soon!

Elementary aged youth – February 8 – Church of the Painted Hills

LOVE LIKE JESUS

"And let us consider how we may provoke one another to love and good deeds" Hebrews 24:10

Mind Wholeness Ministry

For people affected by mental health challenges:

1st & 3rd Monday 6pm—7:30pm: December 2 & 16

Family Support Group meets on the 1st Wednesday at 3:00pm: December 4





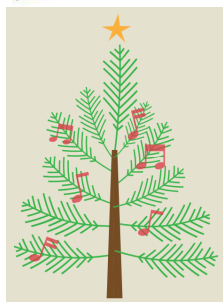
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Prelude to Christmas: Songs of the Season

Tuesday, December 3, 12:00pm

Disciples Women's Ministry Presents Prelude to Christmas: Songs of the Season



Start your holiday celebrations with inspiring music. Hear sounds of the season from Dr. David Gale and Janet Tolman on piano and solo performances by Lori Bryant and Bob Stauffacher. There will be traditional & non-traditional music along with audience participation. A light lunch will be provided before the concert at 11:00am in the parlor. All are welcome.

FCC Outing: Marana Christmas Express

Saturday, December 14

5:00pm — 8:00pm

Post Farms (Marana Pumpkin Patch)

Enjoy an evening on the Marana Christmas Express at Post Farms (Marana Pumpkin Patch) on **Saturday, December 14**, 5pm-8pm. **Admission of \$10 (+tax)** includes a ride on the Christmas train, lights display, seeing Santa, jumping pillows, petting zoo, and Christmas story time. Children 34" & under are free.



Please sign up at the greeter stand to let us know you plan to attend. We will meet at the entrance at 5pm.

Included in the cost: Gates open at 5:00 PM for visiting Santa, story time, jumping pillow, petting zoo, and train rides start at 6:00 PM and end at 9:15 PM. Train rides are expected to be approximately 20-25 minutes. **For additional cost:** Great festival food such as pizza, hamburgers, hot dogs, chicken strips, corn dogs, fries, nachos and wonderful Mexican combo plates. Also hot chocolate, cappuccino, coffee and fresh baked goods from the bakery.

Church Anniversary Christmas Dinner & Caroling

Christmas is a time for sharing and love, and what better way to celebrate than with a meal? On **Sunday, December 22**, you are invited to bring a favorite family Christmas dish to share at our Christmas potluck. (Meat will be provided.) We are mindful that not everyone has someone with which to share the holiday. This is a perfect opportunity to invite someone who may be alone this Christmas season. Sunday, December 22 is also the 112th anniversary of First Christian Church, so we will celebrate that, too!



After our meal, we will go caroling to homebound members and friends. All are welcome to help share the spirit of the season, regardless of your musical abilities!

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Congregational Meeting: Sunday, December 15

The annual congregational meeting will take place Sunday, December 15 following worship. Each year the congregation meets in December to consider the budget and officers for the New Year.

Notes from the Church Board

The Trustees have been working in small groups on tasks that were identified at the beginning of the year some of which have been completed or will be within the next few months:

Tamper proof receptacles were installed in the Desert Spring school classrooms, our childcare room and classroom areas. We also upgraded the receptacles in areas close to water, such as water fountains. Desert Hills Electric completed the work for less than was anticipated. Thank you to Jenna Hosler, Willis Jackson and Sara Van Slyke for assisting with this project.

Trustees formed a new Columbarium Committee at our last meeting. Members are Mark Thornburgh, Barbara Marshall, Janis Sherick, Cathy Nichols and Nancy DeArman.

Restoration of the Columbarium Wall has been completed. Thank you to Marco González and his crew for the excellent and timely work.

Safe Church Plan Task Force: Thanks go to Judy Indermark, Violet Bierce, David Stadle, Pastor Ailsa and Sara Van Slyke as they continue to meet to develop the plan. We have been reviewing and prioritizing our current building security needs and are working on a plan to present to the Church Board and then the congregation during the first quarter of 2020. We will also be looking for members willing to serve on the Safe Church Ministry Team, a group who will oversee the implementation of the plan, as well as those who would like to be part of the Security Team who will have specific tasks and training. We will be making recommendations to the budget team as well as the building priority group for items such as the purchase of two way radios, supplies for first aid kits, and commercial grade easy exit door handles for classrooms and offices.

Insurance: Trustees will meet in December to review the proposal from the Insurance Board and compare that with our current coverage with Guide One through Landmark Insurance Company to determine which best meets our needs and make recommendations to the Church Board for approval.

Please thank our hard working trustee committee members which include those mentioned above and also Rosemary Bolza, Nancy DeArman, and Barbara Marshall who contribute so much in service to our mission at First Christian Church.

Janis Sherick
Trustee Chairperson
Vice Moderator of the Board

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Childcare Staff

Providing quality childcare for our youngest participants is a priority and has presented some challenges. We had hired 2 childcare staff who started in September, however, due to a variety of circumstances we have had to work on hiring 2 more. One of our new staff, Tia Watts, ended up facing a devastating diagnosis and had to leave for reasons of illness. Please keep her in your prayers.

We have hired two new staff members, Shannon Fojtik and Gabriela De La Cruz (Gabby). They will start with us on December 1st. We will need to identify a third person as well and are working on that.

We are still working on preparing the new childcare area (Room 113 upstairs) which has been delayed due to the disruption in staff. Hopefully this will also be available the first or second week of December.

SERVE THE WORLD

"Speak up for those who cannot speak... ensure justice for those being crushed" Proverbs 31:8

Hospitality Ministry

First Christian will host guests the second week of December: **Monday, December 9 through Thursday, December 12.** This is not an on-call status. **We will receive guests, barring any major changes.** Please save these dates on the calendar, and add your name to the sign-up genius (link in weekly email).

Donations Needed:

CLOTHING

(Please - only new or gently used CLEAN clothing)

JACKETS—Men, Women, and Children

Baby clothes sizes 0-36 mo: onesies, short and long sleeved shirts, pants for boys & girls

Baby clothes 6-12 mos boys & girls pants and shirts; onesies
 Sizes 18-24 mo girls pants & tops (short and long sleeved
 Girls clothes S, M tops and shirts, (long sleeved) ; pants and leggings

Boys Sm, M, L Pants

Boys L pants and shirts

Ladies Sm pants and leggings (Size 2-4)

Ladies underwear, Small and Medium (bras and panties)

Men's Jeans Small (28-30 Waist), Medium 32-34 and Large 36 and above

Small, Medium and Large long sleeved shirts (knit or cotton button styles)

SHOES

(Please - only new or gently used CLEAN shoes)

Travel Shoes! For everyone, especially in small sizes

Toddlers 3-5 boy or girl (colors that work for either)

Children slip on or tie sneaker type shoes for travel Sizes 6-13

Small teen, ladies travel shoes (tie or slip on) 4-7

Boys 6-13, Men's 7- 9 sneaker shoes with ties or slip on

See these and other items needed on our Amazon Wish List. You can order and have items shipped directly to the church. This list is subject to change as needs change.

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/18OXTQWUCMRDN/ref=nav_wishlist_lists_1?_encoding=UTF8&type=wishlist

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Campus Pantry at University of Arizona



Thank you for donating to the Campus Pantry. Your gifts help feed the students, faculty, and staff that experience food insecurity each day. **Everyone can help by purchasing food on the list provided in the welcome area and in the link in the weekly email.** Donations will still be received in the welcome area. Thank you to Sylvester Gaskin for sharing about the Campus Pantry in worship on November 10.

Little Free Library

My grandmother, Essie Crum loved to read. When her sight made it difficult for her to read my mother read aloud to us in the evening. The places we visited in those books, WWII Europe in *The Silver Sword* and colonial India in *Dr. Ida* are still vivid to me. Sharing books is something I love.

During the discernment process, the vision of making First Christian Church an open and welcoming place was a common theme. In envisioning this I saw a little free library as a way to connect with our neighbors, both those who walk by and those who catch the bus. This idea kept coming to me so I presented it to the board. I am donating the little library in memory of my mother, Mary Esther Bolza. Thanks to Mark Thornburgh and Burl the library is ready to be put in place. **Look for it soon on the Speedway sidewalk.**



The little free libraries are unique in offering books without conditions. People are free to take books and everyone is free to bring books to put in the library. My neighborhood has a little free library on the corner of my block. When it first went up someone did come and take a lot of books. However, the market for used books is so low that has not happened again. When the little library has room for more books I am able to get a box of books from the Friends of the Pima County libraries. I hope this will be an addition to help us serve the world.

~ Rosemary Bolza

Christmas Poinsettias



Each year we provide the opportunity to purchase Poinsettias in memory or honor of loved ones, and we use them to decorate our worship space. The Poinsettias that we buy are sold as a fundraiser for Our Family Services, a social service organization benefiting homeless and displaced women, elders, and families. **Order forms for Poinsettias will be in worship bulletins the first two weeks of December (12/1 & 12/8). Please fill out the order forms, and submit them with your checks or cash .Make payable to First Christian Church with "poinsettias" on the memo line and/or envelope. Poinsettias cost \$12 each.**

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Christmas Offering, December 15 & 22

Our finest gifts support the work of regional ministries this Christmas. Your regional ministry works to:

- Connect congregations to each other
- Foster faith development
- Gather Disciples in camps, conferences, and assemblies
- Nurture the development of a new generation of pastors
- Assist churches in calling new ministers
- Interpret the global mission of the Church
- Represent the Church in ecumenical gatherings
- Counsel and pray with those who are troubled of spirit
- Lead the Church to address racism
- Inspire leaders to experiment and create



The Christmas Special Offering supports all of these and many other ministries of our Arizona region. Your generous gifts make a difference! FCC's goal is \$1,000.00.

Staff Love Gifts



First Christian Church is very blessed by our staff. We have enjoyed great stability and consistency in employment, incredible commitment, dedication, and integrity in their work and willingness to be flexible with the unique challenges of working for a church. Each of our employees sees their job beyond just a paycheck. They see it as a calling, a mission of their own within this faith community.

Therefore, we want to show our gratitude to them through a **"love gift" that will be received through December 15**. Please prayerfully consider their value gifts within our ministry and how you would like to show appreciation. Please put "staff gift" on the memo line and/or note it on the envelope if you give cash. As always we are grateful for your generosity.

5th Sunday Service Day

Planning to upgrade electronics this season, but don't have a plan for your old ones? Our next 5th Sunday Service Day is your chance to clear out your old and/or non-functioning electronics and take another step toward caring for the environment. **On Sunday, December 29**, bring old electronics to church to be donated to RISE Equipment Recycling Center (ERC) electronic recycling program.

A list of ACCEPTABLE ITEMS will be at the greeter stand and in the weekly email.

RISE is a subsidiary of COPE Community Services, Inc. (COPE). Unwanted electronic equipment is processed in the ERC facilities and, whenever possible, is returned to the community. When refurbishing is not possible, materials are responsibly recycled. Donating electronic equipment and electrical appliances to the ERC helps provide employment to area residents and supports a local non-profit organization dedicated to reducing the amount of hazardous materials going into local landfills.





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 January *Desert Disciple* should be received in the office no later than **Friday, December 13.**

Praying For Our Mission Co-Workers!



Please be in prayer for our mission co-workers serving through Global Ministries.

During the week of...

December 1: Kahala Cannon, eSwatini

December 8: Elena Huegel, Mexico

December 15: Israel / Palestine

December 22: Michael Joseph, Colombia

December 29: Judy Chan, Hong Kong

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

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