

# The Desert Disciple

Volume 71 Issue 3

First Christian Church - Tucson, AZ

(520) 624-8695

March 1, 2020

## SEEK GOD

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



## Worship this Month: Wilderness

Lent begins in the wilderness. The Spirit guides Jesus into the wilderness where he faces temptation and struggle. Yet, forty days of fasting, resisting, and wandering shaped and formed him for his ministry. Similarly, Lent invites us to surrender to the wild leadings of the Spirit. Rarely do we enter the wilderness willingly. However, no wilderness space is too harsh or threatening for God's love. Welcome to the journey.

## Lent Devotionals #pictureLent



SUSTENANCE FOR THE WILDERNESS OF LENT  
PRAYERS WRITTEN BY SARAH ARE

The Words for the Wilderness devotionals are available in the Welcome Area. Word cards for each day of Lent include a scripture passage and prayer. Take a moment in the morning or at the end of your day for reflection and prayer during this season. As you go through the cards, you may want to put them up in a place you will see them, such as your refrigerator or bathroom mirror. Also, we invite you to post a picture that depicts the word of the day as a comment on FCC's Facebook page each day: [www.facebook.com/TucsonFCC](http://www.facebook.com/TucsonFCC)

## Lenten Dinner Series

The  
Season  
of  
Lent



Enjoy food, friendship, and creative worship at our Lenten dinner series. This year we will gather with Desert Dove Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Church of the Painted Hills UCC, and Casas Adobes Congregational UCC for four Tuesday evenings at 6:30pm.

March 3 at Church of the Painted Hills; Pastor Pedro leads devotional

March 10 at Desert Dove; Pastor Michael leads devotional

**March 17 at First Christian;** Pastor John leads devotional

March 24 at Casas Adobes Congregational; Pastor Ailsa leads devotional

**First Christian will host on Tuesday, March 17.** This means we will provide a potluck meal with enough to share with all of our guests. Please arrive with food by 6:15pm, if possible, so we have time to set everything up.

Seek



Love

Serve

Sunday Worship  
10:30am

Church School  
9:00am

Church Office  
(520) 624-8695

Pastor  
Ailsa Guardiola González  
[fccailsa@gmail.com](mailto:fccailsa@gmail.com)

Moderator  
Rudy Byrd

Office Manager  
Jenna Hosler  
[TucsonFCC@gmail.com](mailto:TucsonFCC@gmail.com)

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## Pastor's Note

The Wilderness Is Somewhere We've Been Before  
by Sara Are

I'm not the first.  
That's what I tell myself when I wake up in  
the wilderness—  
Big sky, worried heart, wondering which way  
to start.  
I have been here before.  
We have been here before.  
For as long as there has been creation,  
There has been wilderness.

First it was an endless void,  
Until God and God's paintbrush painted the  
sky gold.  
And then it was all that lies east of Eden,  
Which is everywhere that our story unfolds.

So like a child memorizing their home address,  
You'd think I'd learn my way out of  
this wilderness.  
But like the Israelites who wandered for forty  
plus years,  
I think I'll spend most of my day to day here.

For the wilderness is everywhere that I start  
to grow.  
Cracks in the sidewalk, daisies take hold.  
And the wilderness is every single place  
of unknown,  
Or when shame and fear move into my home.  
And the wilderness is where dusty feet tread,  
Familiar with the truth that we have days left.

So where is God, you ask?

God is in the big sky and in my worried heart.  
God is the sidewalk cracks where new  
life starts.  
God is in the realization that I am not the first.  
So may we take these limited days left  
And remember that we've been here before—  
God and I and this untamed world.  
God and the Israelites and the  
gathered assembly.  
God and the horizon and the new  
day beginning.

Wilderness. What does it mean to you? I recently witnessed the wilderness experience of a friend, which caused major disruptions in their life and that of their family. No one could figure out the root of the problem. No one could understand the desperation and angst my friend felt as a body no longer functioned as it should. Then...a diagnosis...acceptance of the condition...willingness to receive treatment...and a journey toward healing.

The crisis of wilderness unearthed things beyond the medical diagnosis: the health of marital and parental relationships, the mental health of those in their circle, and the testing of friendships, to name a few. It seemed as though the wilderness had layers that went deeper and deeper and would never end...until there was nowhere else to go. Facing the stuff of wilderness was not easy. It meant appointments with specialists, therapists, and spiritual leaders. It meant finding support groups and being gracious and forgiving of self. Yet, it carved a way out toward something new with "God and the horizon and the new day beginning."

Lent offers us a time of intentional journeying in the wilderness. Time to stop. Time to be intentional. Time to block distractions that keep us from going into the layers that lead to our healing and wholeness. I hope you decide to take this journey these next six weeks. I hope you seek the support of your faith community as you do, whether in opportunities for worship, Sunday Bible study, Lenten dinners, or other moments of conversation and fellowship. May you experience a blessed Lent!

*Arla*

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Psalm 46:10

### 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Service Day:

On the months with 5 Sundays, we have a shorter than normal worship serviced followed by a hands on service project benefitting the community. The next 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday will be March 29. Mark your calendars and look for more information in the upcoming weekly emails!

### Holy Week Worship:

**Palm Sunday – April 5** Join our processional with palms and hear the story of Holy Week in this engaging service. We will gather in the patio and process into the sanctuary together.

**Holy Thursday – April 9** Witness the story of Jesus' last supper and the events that follow through our intergenerational meal and service in the chapel.

**Easter Sunday – April 12** Celebrate the promise of New Life! Easter egg hunt for children and appetizers for all, following worship.

## LOVE LIKE JESUS

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

### Celebrating Baby Winnie!



**Sunday, March 1 at 12:15pm in the Parlor**

Our new Childcare Coordinator, Shannon Fojtik, gave birth to a baby girl, Winnie Joyce, on January 8th. We are so glad Shannon is back to work and we look forward to showering her with love from FCC on **Sunday, March 1 at 12:15pm** in the parlor. Please check out her registry from Target (link in the weekly email).

### Disciples Women's Ministry

**Tuesday, March 10 at 11:30am**



We have a special opportunity to learn about another culture at our March meeting. The program will be provided by our member Margaret Dean, who will tell us about Fiji. Margaret is from Fiji and will share about the traditional dance of that part of the world. All are welcome! Bring a brown bag lunch and come at 11:30am or join us at 12:15pm for the program.

# LOVE LIKE JESUS

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

## Congregational Meeting & Potluck

**Sunday, March 15 following worship**

The congregational meeting will take place Sunday, March 15 following worship. There will be a potluck lunch. Please bring a dish to share. We will also celebrate March Birthdays with a cake.

## Sabbatical Planning

Those who have been around the church for many years are probably familiar with the idea of Sabbatical. This is a time allocated to pastors/ministers to experience a pause from the routine day to day demands of

professional ministry and to focus on the work of spiritual renewal, regeneration, reconnection, refocusing, and education. This can also serve as a time of spiritual renewal, reconnection, refocusing, and education for the church community.



The time has come for our very dedicated, talented, visionary, and busy Reverend Ailsa to experience Sabbatical this summer. We have put together a workgroup to focus on and plan for this. The workgroup includes Rudy Byrd and Janis Sherick, Moderator & Vice Moderator, respectively; Rosemary Bolza and Jean Jackson, co-Chairs of the Elders; Debbie Stadle, Personnel Chair and Financial Secretary/Treasurer. Others will be purposefully consulted and included based upon areas of leadership and expertise.

If anyone has questions, concerns, or input around this process, please feel free to speak with a workgroup member. We will be sharing regular updates on our work with the church community in various formats.

## Mind Wholeness Ministry: A Spiritual Support Group

Mind Wholeness Ministries of First Christian Church offers a spiritual support group for people and families facing mental health challenges. Anyone desiring spiritual and/or emotional support is invited to this group.



**For people affected by mental health challenges:**

1st & 3rd Monday at 6:00pm: March 2 and 16

**For families facing mental health challenges:**

1st Wednesday at 3:00pm: March 4

The Rev. Mary Alice Do facilitates the groups and is working with our denomination's National Benevolent Association to help churches become welcoming and supportive of people affected by mental health challenges.



## SERVE THE WORLD

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

### Church Work Day



**Saturday, March 14, 9am—12pm**

Lent is a time of repentance and clearing out, both spiritually and with our physical stuff. Join us for our "Lenten Clearing Out the Clutter" workday on **Saturday, March 14, 9:00am-Noon**. We will let go of the things we do not need and organize the things that will stay in hopes of more efficient use of our space.

### Good Samaritan Fund Offers Emergency Assistance

The busy intersection at our church property means we often meet people experiencing difficulties with housing, finances, and health. For this reason, the church has a Good Samaritan Fund from which we may offer assistance. If someone asks you for assistance, please direct them to contact the church office Monday - Friday, 9:00am - 1:00pm. Money from the Good Samaritan Fund is dispersed at the Pastor's discretion, and our practice is to offer one-time assistance to each individual we help.

In the last year, the Good Samaritan Fund has helped us give grocery store gift cards, direct cash assistance, pay utility bills, assist in the purchase of medications, and hire an immigration lawyer for a detained individual seeking asylum.

The Good Samaritan Fund is funded by over-and-above donations from church members. You can donate by writing a check to FCC and indicating Good Samaritan Fund on the memo line.

### Week of Compassion Offering



Thank you for contributing to the Week of Compassion offering in February. We received **\$1,070.00** of our \$1,000 goal. Thank you for giving generously. The funds received through the offering allow the wider Church to respond to disaster when it occurs, enabling Week of Compassion to immediately provide grants for urgent needs like emergency supplies, water, and food.

### Community Events:

#### Habitat for Humanity Lenten Faith Build

**March 21, 2020, 132 E. Yavapai Rd., 7:00 am - 2:00 pm**

Since our beginning, Habitat has been built on a foundation of faith. Our mission is to build safe, affordable housing with people in the United States and around the world, and that comes from a desire to put God's love into action. **We'd be thrilled if you joined Habitat for Humanity Tucson for our first Lenten Faith Build!** Allow your hands to be tools of service during this season of preparation and spiritual steadfastness! **Everyone desiring to participate in the build must sign up online in advance at [www.HabitatTucson.org/faithbuild](http://www.HabitatTucson.org/faithbuild).** All are welcome to join the picnic lunch & fellowship following the build from 12:00pm - 2:00pm.



# 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](http://firstchristianchurchtucson.org)

CALL OUR OFFICE: (520) 624-8695

## NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Articles for the April *Desert Disciple* should be received in the office no later than **Friday, March 20.**

# Praying For Our Mission Co-Workers!



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

During the week of...

- March 1:** Debbie Colvin, Ghana
- March 8:** Karen Campbell-Nelson, Indonesia
- March 15:** Jeanette Salley, Zambia
- March 22:** Michelle McKay, Haiti
- March 29:** Fritz Gerald Joseph, Morocco

For more information regarding our missionaries, overseas partners, or how you can make a difference, visit: [www.globalministries.org](http://www.globalministries.org)

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