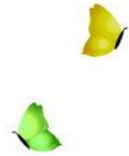




The Spirit of St. Francis

www.stfrancisinthefoothills.org

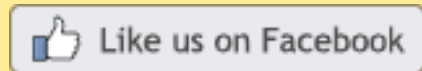


2020



It seems like every day - every *hour* brings new changes. This morning we received a COVID-19 update from Bishop Bob Hoshibata in response to Governor Doug Ducey's decision to keep the "Stay at Home" order in place in Arizona.

Bishop Bob is taking no chances with the health and well-being of the Desert Southwest Conference churches, church-goers and staff. At this time, it appears we will be keeping our church campus closed until mid-May and perhaps until the beginning of June. He also has urged that church office staff members work remotely.



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A Word from Our Pastor

You Give, We Give

What If . . .

May Birthdays

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TIHAN News

LOL!

4625 E. River Rd.
Tucson, AZ 85718
(520)299-9063

www.stfrancisinthefoothills.org

ONLINE SUNDAY CELEBRATIONS:

9:00 am

ON OUR WEBSITE OR FACEBOOK

(SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE TO WATCH ANYTIME

AFTER

9:00 AM)

10:45 AM TALK BACK
ON ZOOM

NUMBERS TO KNOW

Contribution/Pledge Questions:
(520)299-9063. Ext.102

After a meeting between Pastor Jim and the remaining church staff, it was decided that beginning May 1st, we would close the church office to the public. However, Melissa will continue to work Mondays through Thursdays from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm, and Fridays from 8:30 am to noon. Should you need to contact the office, please call 299-9063 or email mmitchell@stfrancisumc.org

Since the office will be closed to everyone except church staff, we will not need any drop-offs for the food pantry, and ask that if you wish to drop off a check or written communication, there is a mail slot on the back northeast corner of the church office building for you to use.

Remember that we are still here *for you*. If you need:

- *Pastoral Help
- *Stephen Minister or Care Team support
- *To make a Prayer Chain request
- *Or you have other questions/needs

Call or email Melissa at the Church Office.
We are sending all our love and blessings to you during these challenging times. You are not alone.

A Word from our Pastor

Melissa reminded me (again) that she needed my article for the newsletter and so I sat down and as I stared at the blank screen, realized exactly



Prayer Requests:
(520)299-9063, Ext. 101

International School for Peace
(520)299-8908

FOR PASTORAL HELP
Reverend Jim Wiltbank
(520)299-9063, Ext. 106



**The Desert
Southwest
Conference of the
UMC**

Resident Bishop
Bishop Robert Hoshibata
(602)266-6956

District Superintendent
Rev. Mark Conrad
(520)325-2775

South District Lay Leader
Maritza Velazquez
(520)285-6928

why I had not yet sent her my article. How can I possibly speak into a moment like the one through which we are passing and help all the fears, doubts, worries, struggles, concerns, questions, anxieties, and, maybe worst of all, disconnections, that are in our lives at the present.

And I realized once again, as I have every day for the past few weeks, that I am human...

Now I know that all of you have known that very well for quite some time now, but I have been able to pretend most of my life, most of the time, that I could overlook the obvious evidence of my imperfect state, and pretend that whatever competence, capability, and intelligence I possess made it possible to consider myself something a little removed from that fact.

I think COVID-19 has exposed that in all of us.

This pandemic has thrown into all our faces (and our lives) the extreme need we have for one another. Rather than the self-contained, able-to-do-it-all individuals that we pretend to be, the disease that is invading and the social isolation needed to combat it, is thrusting our communal nature back into our separated lives.

And we are better for the lesson it is bringing to us...if we listen...

For one day, the restrictions will be lifted, and we will be able to return to whatever life we deem appropriate. Let us hope and pray that at that time we do not, as Henry David Thoreau called it, return to "living our lives in quiet desperation."



1 Mary Langlois
3 Sterling Holehan
6 Suzannah Whitlatch
6 Curt Pradelt
6 A.J. Sherrill-Langlois
7 Anne Stericker
7 Barbara Jo Mullis
8 Barbara Murray Grinnell
9 Richard Hartman
11 Mason Moreland
11 Jordan Moreland
12 Rolly Loomis
14 Nancy Stevenson
15 Linda Houtkooper
15 June Webb-Vignery
15 Maya Liddelow-Curry
15 Ray Sparks
17 Terri Hamstra
18 Phil Franchine
18 Randal Scott
19 Matt Lehrer
20 Donovan Porterfield
23 Diane Van Deurzen-Otey
24 Mary Harris
26 Phyllis Turner
26 Les Kirk

Instead, let's join our hearts and lives into the commitment to work toward the best of ideals of what we as a church, as a society, as a world, and as a family of God, can become. This is our opportunity to turn toward our highest selves, seeing the wonder and the possibility of those around us...and in ourselves.

Perhaps we can practice with the ones closest to us. You know who I mean - the ones trapped in a house with you; the ones whose faults have magnified in the past weeks; the ones who have become...annoying.

And yet they are the same people who we know we love - Practice that love with them. And then, when we "have been released," continue to see everyone else through the same eyes of love. For it is love and the relationships to which it calls us, that will rescue us from this crisis!

Jim

**JOIN US
ONLINE**

Join us on Sundays as we bring the love and energy of St. Francis into your homes!

We're here for you.

St. Francis Stephen Ministers

Stephen Ministers are here to listen and walk alongside you during life's challenges. For more information, contact

Joyce Leissring 404-1691
Sue Gemoets 885-0780

The Care Team

The St. Francis Care Team is here if you need a friendly voice on the telephone, cards in your mailbox, or someone to talk to.

For more information, contact

Pat Fox 850-9203



Now, every day of the week at 10:00 am, St. Francis is putting out a daily Morning Prayer/Meditation. We not only send them out via email, we post them on our website and our Facebook page.

During such challenging times, taking a moment for yourself just to breathe and be aware can be a wonderful gift.

We hope these readings help.

The Sunday Celebrations will be broadcast and available to view all day and over the coming weeks.

Go to:

<https://www.stfrancisinthefoothills.org>

or

www.facebook.com/stfrancisumc

(The song lyrics are incorporated in the video.)

Please note: Services will not be posted on Facebook until Sunday morning at 9:00 am.

The logo features the word "Talkback" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. It is positioned inside a yellow speech bubble that has a tail pointing towards the bottom right.

At 10:45 am, Pastor Jim will host a Talk Back session on Zoom.

There will be a link to the Zoom account

**Library
News**



As the days pass, trying to find things to occupy our time may be becoming more of a challenge for some people.

Here is a link to an article you might enjoy in which famous authors recommend books that influenced and moved them.

<https://lithub.com/which-books-do-famous-authors-read-and-recommend-most/>

Now, especially as it starts to heat up, might be the perfect time to re-read some well-loved classics.

The *Library for Peace* volunteers wish you all good reading, comfortable armchairs, cold drinks and excellent health.

Be safe.



on the celebration webpage or go directly to:

<https://zoom.us/j/407902602>

For those who don't have a computer,
call into the Talk Back session by dialing
(346) 248-7799 and entering the code:
407 902 602

New to Zoom?

Zoom is a program that allows you to interact with other congregants and Pastor Jim by voice or video.

So, if you miss the hugs and camaraderie of your St. Francis friends, you can give them virtual hugs and talk with them and Pastor Jim.

You may be asked to download the *zoom.us app*.

Simply follow the prompts to download.

Once in, you will be given an option to join the group with video or only voice (wonderful for people who want to participate in their pajamas!).



Available now -

**Josh Pielemeier's
*A Slow Peace***

Josh's first studio album, recorded this past year, is now available for purchase. The cost is \$13.00 plus a small shipping charge. If you live in Tucson, Josh will deliver it to you, socially-distanced style by placing it outside your door or in your mailbox.

Please email josh.pielemeier@gmail.com with your address, to purchase a copy.

Josh will be donating \$2.00 of every physical CD sale and \$1.00 of every digital sale to the *Coronavirus Relief Fund at Global Giving*.

<https://www.globalgiving.org/proje.../coronavirus-relief-fund/>

<https://joshpielemeier.bandcamp.com/album/a-slow-peace>



by Paula Van Ness

Throughout my life I have committed myself to community service. First, as a teen fundraiser in Indianapolis for St. Jude Hospital and as a candy striper at my local hospital...later as a college student activist, community organizer, nonprofit staffer...then over the next 45 years, as a grantmaker, leadership trainer and coach, and nonprofit executive for various causes that I have cared about. From women's reproductive rights, to HIV/AIDS, homelessness, and families confronting life-threatening illnesses in their children, during my career, as Pastor Jim has put it, I have always liked "to focus on people who have been pushed aside and overlooked, rejected or ignored."

That is why I choose St. Francis as my faith community.

I have always eagerly tested and applied strategies for building and cultivating thriving communities. The cumulative impact of these experiences has informed my personal sense of mission, grounded in a strong desire to lead change that leverages the collective and diverse wisdom of each person, family and institution. Here at St. Francis I have found kindred spirits who cultivate a thriving Tucson community.



**Don't miss the
St. Francis Facebook page!**

Daily Prayer/Meditation,
Inspirational articles of good news,
Ideas for spending quality
time during the quarantine,
and much more!

<https://www.facebook.com/stfrancisumc/>

That is why I choose St. Francis as my faith community.

My sentiments (and perhaps yours as well) were captured by the theologian, Henri Nouwen.

"We cannot change the world by a new plan, project or idea. We cannot even change other people by our convictions, stories, advice and proposals. But we can offer a space where people are encouraged to disarm themselves, lay aside their occupations and preoccupations and listen with attention and care to the voices speaking in their own center."

That is why I choose St. Francis as my faith community.

From the first time I walked through the door here in 1979, continuing through the next couple of years while living in Tucson and working for Planned Parenthood... to periodic visits over the decades that I lived and worked in other parts of the country...to the last couple of years that I have had Tucson as my home base for semi-retirement, St Francis has always resonated with me because of programs reaching out to the hungry and homeless, asylum seekers and new refugee families, and the LGBTQ community. Combine that with Sunday morning celebrations filled with great music, uplifting messages about love, when I am here, I fill my own reservoir with the kind of energy that creates an electrical charge here in this place and in the world beyond.

Because of St Francis's unique role in the broader Tucson community, we are an apropos space for all of us to slow down, decompress, listen to each other, gain exposure to a range of perspectives and reconnect with our own voices which are the full expression of our inherent power. As



TIHAN's staff is still hard at work, along with volunteers, reaching out to the 400 people actively enrolled in our programs, checking in with them and offering our support during these challenging times.

We are "locking down" our office, but we are continuing to provide support to our CarePartners via minimal-contact "grab and go" opportunities and by phone; and we're also available to accept quick "drop and go" donations, during our regular office hours of Mon-Fri 8:30am-4:30pm.

All services, appointments, and requests for support will be handled by the telephone, including social support, information and referral, check-in calls, and requests for financial assistance. Since some of our CarePartners do not have phones, or may be out of minutes for their phone plan, we are devising other safe ways to communicate and provide support. Any in-person appointments that cannot be carried out by phone will involve a screening for exposure to, and symptoms of, COVID-19.

The CarePackages and Poz Café meals that are so important to our CarePartners will now be provided in a "grab and go" format, and a limited number of volunteers will be providing home delivery (quick drop off at doorstep) to people without transportation, people who are in self-isolation, and people who are not feeling well.

we work for social justice and for the causes we care about in our community and in the world, it is an extension of our commitment to St. Francis and its vision.

That is why I choose St. Francis as my faith community. And that is why I support this community by giving cheerfully to support our on-going needs and social justice initiatives. I have a hunch that's why you give, too. I'm so glad we do.

I chose St. Francis as my faith community 40 years ago and today, once again, I am privileged to choose St. Francis as my faith community. This is where I belong.



by Kate Kosse,
Member, St. Francis Green Team

A striking image in the news of these past weeks was a side by side photo of New Delhi. Before the quarantine the air was dense with gray smog. Then after, clear blue skies. On this 50th anniversary of Earth Day, or as people of faith may call it, the Celebration of God's Creation, that photo made me wonder... what if we acted on life lessons learned from this pandemic?



Dear Reader,

I hope you've enjoyed this month's newsletter. I'm always interested in any submissions that have to do with the people, ministries and activities of St. Francis. If you have something you'd like to share, please send it to mmitchell@stfrancisumc.org.

The cut-off date for accepting submissions for the June newsletter is May 22nd.

Submissions may be edited for length.

What if we learned the actions of an individual, multiplied by millions, can change the fate of all of us?

What if we really learned that every life is precious, and each of us CAN act to protect the lives of all of us?

What if we learned from this month that worldwide disasters, like pandemics and climate chaos, hurt the poor and powerless first and worst, and took on our God-given responsibility to do something about that?

What if we learned to take seriously the warnings of scientists and act in time to change the path we are on? That failing to act on these warnings is far more expensive in the long run than acting promptly, and that our grandmothers got it right, a stitch in time saves nine?

What if we learned that shopping isn't entertainment, focused our money on the necessities, with the excess honoring Matthew 24, "I was hungry and you fed me"?

What if we learned the invisible things, like viruses and carbon molecules multiplying out of control, are the real dangers; weapons of war can't protect us from these, but an empowered humanity can?

What if the iconic photo from this time isn't of a magnified corona virus, but of New Delhi, the air healed in a matter of days?

What if, what if...



"Eight new choir robes are currently needed due to the addition of several new members, and to the deterioration of some older ones. "

*from Church Bulletin Bloopers
Just-One-Liners.com*



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(520)299-9063, Ext. 101

