



The Spirit of St. Francis



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Standing on the Outside

The Desert Southwest Annual Conference meeting this year, which brought together hundreds of delegates from throughout Arizona and southern Nevada to deal with issues of structure and policy within the United Methodist Church, left me feeling both wonderfully connected and strangely distant. The emotion I felt during the ordination service as Bishop Bob Hoshibata acknowledged that he had openly defied the actions of the 2019 General Conference left me able to speak only two words to him: "Thank you."

We passed some great legislation, chiefly a petition condemning the horrendous actions of the General Conference and one (sponsored by our local AZ-JFON) standing for the reunification of families and the rights of those seeking asylum at our border. I

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NUMBERS TO KNOW

Church Newsletter
(520)299-9063, Ext. 101

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

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

was proud of our work . . . even while it exhausted me. In very clear words and actions we said that we will not be either the church that we have been, nor the church that conservatives are trying make us become. **Desert Southwest Methodists pointed very clearly to a wondrous new, inclusive and loving future!**

And yet I stood on the outside of that grand assemblage of Methodists (my friends and colleagues), feeling not quite connected either to the work that was being done, nor the future to which it pointed. The words of Dr. Martin Luther King passed through my mind: "I've seen the promised land! I may not get there with you, but I want you to know tonight that we as a people will get to the promised land."

I'm not sure who my heart was speaking to in that moment as I internalized those words. Myself? The other Annual Conference delegates? The United Methodist Church? I felt both distant and present, alone and connected, loved and lost.

At the core of my puzzlement and separation was a simple question: Were we talking about OUR future or THEIR future? Did my ministry have a connection into the work being done?

I don't have an answer yet.

Jim



A Report from the Annual Conference
by Sue Gemoets

The 35th Desert Southwest Annual Conference was held at the Mesa Convention Center, beginning on Thursday, June 13th. For the next three days, the 300+ laity, 190 clergy and 2 folks who did not declare being part of either group, worked and voted on 28 pieces of "business".

Room Reservations:
(520)299-9063, Ext.101

Sunday Bulletins
(520)299-9063, Ext.105

International School for
Peace
(520)299-8908

FOR PASTORAL HELP

Reverend Jim Wiltbank
(520)299-9063, Ext.106
or (602)460-0711



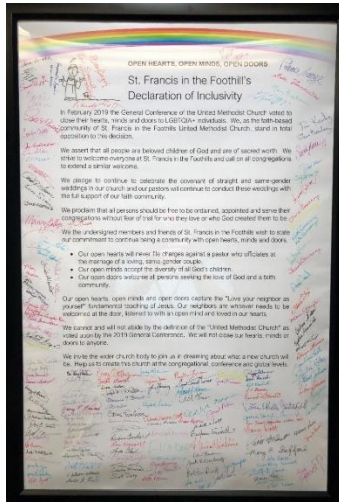
**The Desert
Southwest
Conference of the
UMC**

Resident Bishop
Bishop Robert Hoshibata
(602)266-6956

District Superintendent
Reverend Mark Conrad
(520)325-2775

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

Bishop Bob Hoshibata facilitated the conference with humor, frankness and sincerity. In his opening talk, he stated how the church is currently wandering through the wilderness, walking a zigzag path, and that we are being called, and yet not sure where to or how we are going to get there. He asked that we keep on the journey, while trying to figure out when and where the wilderness will end.



Our *Declaration of Inclusivity* was well-received and per the Bishop's request, remained on display for all to read. Many attendees made a point of going to look at it, and Pastor Jim was seen many times talking with people about it. We had copies to give out and many people asked for extra copies to take back to their churches.

Resolution 8, a statement much like ours, was presented to the conference attendees. There was much discussion, some very positive and some on the other side of the aisle. In the end, by written ballot, the resolution was approved, affirming the conference's stand on acceptance of all God's children.

There will be a special Annual Conference on held on September 14th, from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, at Gold Canyon UMC in Phoenix, to finish business from this conference. Registration will open on August 1st at

<https://dscumc.org/annual-conference/>

The cost will be \$20.00. Keep checking the Annual Conference webpage for the most up to date information about the special session of Annual Conference.

Last but not least, several people told me that Pastor Jim behaved very well during this conference. That makes me wonder what he's done in the past!

I thank you for allowing me to be one of your delegates to Annual Conference. Peace to all of us during this time forward.



2 Cynthia Gilliland
2 Virginia Bohme
2 Grace Calterone
2 Abigail Moreland
3 Jamie Holehan
6 Janice Crist
6 Christie Rogers
6 David Liddelw-Curry
7 Robert Evans
7 Marshall Helgeson
7 David Daniell
9 Ginny Jones
11 Shelley Phipps
14 Cheryl Berry
15 Grace Rich
17 Scott Cleaves
17 Peggy Rodgers
14 Floyd Faulkner
18 Joan Hansen-Lester
18 Stevie Moreland
19 Joyce Leissring
20 Patricia Bowen
20 Max Houtkooper
20 Karen Bauder
20 Sarah Kacer
22 Connie Belknap
23 Suzanne Smith
23 Torey Salyer
23 Ross Rohde
24 Sue Gemoets
24 Joel Petrass
25 Jill Wheatley
25 John Garcia
27 Jackson Hamstra
29 Marilyn Keefer



SEA OF ORANGE

by Diane Wilson

The "sea of orange" lines up to sign the *Declaration of Inclusivity - Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors*. St Francis in the Foothills has written a strong statement declaring "We assert that all people are beloved children of God and are of sacred worth." This is in opposition to the international UMC General Conference vote to close hearts, minds and doors to LGBTQ people. Our Declaration will be taken to our Annual Conference to encourage other churches to join us and become full-inclusion churches - and possibly leave this worldwide institution who have chosen divisive policies we cannot accept. It takes a while for the more than 100 people in this one service to write their names on the large Declaration poster. As I bend to sign, I hold back my tears so I don't cause blots on the paper.

We are a sea of orange in honor of *Gun Violence Prevention Day*. A group of teenagers, whose friend was shot and killed, initiated the idea of wearing orange as a signal not to be shot - just as hunters wear orange to protect themselves from other hunters who might mistake them for prey. A sad comment that children would have to think of such a way to protect their lives. But those of us who wear orange show that we are with them and all humans to prevent the continuation of gun deaths.

It is also Pentecost Sunday when we remember the story of the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles with "rushing wind and tongues of fire", so they knew they were all connected and impelled to action. We sing, "Send down the fire of your justice, send down the rain of your love. Come, send down the Spirit, breathe life in your people, and we shall be the people of God....Give us righteous souls, 'til your justice rolls, make us burn with the fire of your love." And we are on fire. Our fire is carried in the color that we wear; it is carried in the Declaration we



Home Communion is now available!

St. Francis Stephen Ministers are now providing Home Communion the first Sunday of every month.

If you or someone you know is unable to attend services and would like to receive Communion, please contact the Church Office at 299-9063.

Weekly Breakfasts



Sophia's Circle Women's Group

Wednesdays, 6:45 - 8:00 am
Ravenscroft Hall



Chrysalis Men's Round Table

Thursdays, 7:00 - 8:00 am
Ravenscroft Hall

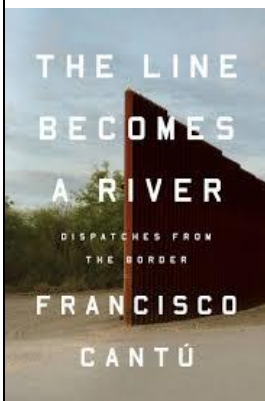
**Newcomers are
always welcome!**

wrote, and our voices rush with the wind to send forth these messages to all.

Outside this space made sacred by song and commitment is another sacred space: that of the rooms where we house asylum seekers. Those we call our "guests". They are brought here by ICE because they have been approved to apply for asylum and have sponsors that will take them in until their hearings. They are only with us for a few days, and we provide water, food, showers and a safe place to sleep. Children play outside and love the freedom of running and riding bicycles. There is a constant stream of twenty guests - men, women and children - all leaving their countries of origin in hopes of being in a safer, kinder country. They smile on us, thank us and warm our hearts.

I have never been so proud and humbled to be part of an institution as I am of St. Francis, my home where Jesus' work is being done. As we hold each other, both figuratively and literally, we feel centered, loved and cared/caring for. Blessed be!

Library News



"For Francisco Cantú, the border is in the blood: his mother, a park ranger and daughter of a Mexican immigrant, raised him in the scrublands of the Southwest. Haunted by the landscape of his youth, Cantú joins the Border Patrol. He and his partners are posted to remote regions crisscrossed by drug routes and



Refugee 101: Info Night

Wednesday, July 24th,
6:00 - 8:00 pm
Jewish Community Center
3800 E. River Rd.

Participate in an enriching setting to gain knowledge on the struggles and successes of new Americans.

*Who is a refugee, asylee or an immigrant?

*How do you welcome a family in your neighborhood?

*How do new Americans become self-sufficient?

Registration required.
Please call 440-0100.



Tucson Interfaith HIV/AIDS Network
A Compassionate Response to HIV/AIDS

Many Ways to Volunteer At TIHAN

TIHAN has opportunities for dedicated, compassionate volunteers to join our team. If you are interested in volunteering with TIHAN, take a moment to look at our current volunteer opportunities on our website at www.tihan.org/volunteer/

If there is a role that you are interested in, please email us at VolunteerCoordinator@tihan.org or call us at 299-6647 ext 206. We'll send you the Volunteer Application and get you signed up for the next volunteer

smuggling corridors, where they learn to track other humans under blistering sun and through frigid nights. They haul in the dead and deliver to detention those they find alive.

Cantú tries not to think where the stories go from there. Plagued by nightmares, he abandons the Patrol for civilian life. But when an immigrant friend travels to Mexico to visit his dying mother and does not return, Cantú discovers that the border has migrated with him, and now he must know the whole story. Searing and unforgettable, *The Line Becomes a River* makes urgent and personal the violence our border wreaks on both sides of the line."

(Book review courtesy of Goodreads)

This is probably the best, most moving and informative book on border issues that I've read.

The author spent 4 years as a Border Patrol agent, and we learn a lot from his personal boots-on-the-ground experiences.

The focus is on the immigrants crossing the desert, mostly from Mexico, but there is also a short informative section on life in Central America. The afterward in the paperback version is worth reading on its own.

- Ginny Jones
Library for Peace volunteer

Check us out - literally!

The *Library for Peace*
is open most Sunday mornings
from 9:00 - 12:30 pm.
We are also open during the week,
but hours vary.
Please call 299-9063,
Ext. 101 for
availability.



orientation. There is a \$17 fee to cover the cost of materials and snacks, and there is also a simple online background check that needs to be initiated. Once you complete these steps, you are well on your way to becoming a TIHAN volunteer!



School Supplies Needed for Gifts of Love.

Help children get a good start
to the school year!
Donate school supplies for
children in grades K-12
now through July 24th.

We need:

Backpacks Erasers
Notebooks Markers (12 pk)
Scissors Glue Sticks (2 pk.)
Pens Pencils
Crayons Paper
Highlighters Rulers
Backpacks Folders
Protractors Spiral Notebooks

Supplies can be dropped off at
the ICS offices:

Northwest
2820 W. Ina Rd. 85741
9 am - 4 pm, Monday - Friday

Eastside
8701 E. Old Spanish Trail 85710
10 am - 3 pm, Monday - Friday

For more information,
contact Stella Ede at
sede@icstucson.org or call
(520)526-9304.

Volunteer Opportunities

Eastside Food Pickup
Needed!

Drive the ICS van to grocery
stores in the mornings to pick up
food donations on the eastside
of town and deliver to the ICS

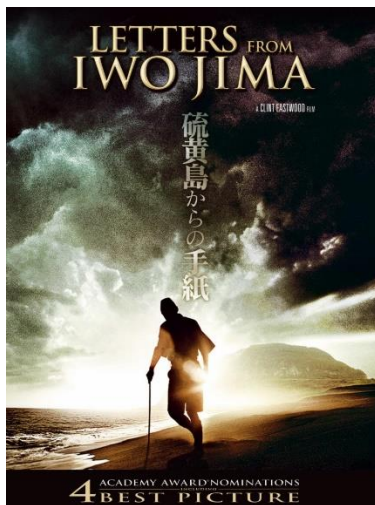


Sunday Night At The Movies

**Sunday, July 14th,
5:00 pm in the Community Center**

Join us for dinner and a movie!

Showing in July:



Letters from Iwo Jima
(2006, 141 minutes, R)

In 1945, World War II was in its final stages, and U.S. forces were planning to fight the Japanese on a small island known as Iwo Jima. While the island was mostly rock and volcanoes, it was of key strategic value, and Japan's leaders saw the island as the final opportunity to prevent an Allied Invasion.

Eastside office. Must be able to load boxes up to 50 lbs. This is an early morning opportunity!

Transportation/Van Drivers Needed in All Areas!

If you or someone you know would be available to provide rides to home-bound seniors, our transportation program is flexible, fun and has mileage reimbursement available! Use your own car or drive one of our Care-A-Vans! Drivers in all areas of town are needed.

For more information on these volunteer positions, please contact Tori Carlson at tcarlson@icstucson.org or call (520)526-9308.



These days, *anything* cool is welcome! So here are a few really cool deals from *Shop with Scrip* that will not only save you money, but will help St. Francis too!

* Planning to beat the heat and get out of town? *Shop with Scrip* has plenty of gift cards to make your trip even cooler! Hotels, restaurants, gas stations, Starbucks, and more!

* Now that school is out, many families need help providing their children with nutritious meals.

You can help them by purchasing grocery cards through *Shop with Scrip* that we'll use to restock our Food Pantry. Walmart cards are especially helpful in that we can get more for less there.

As the Japanese forces dig in for a battle they are not certain they can win - and most have been told they will not survive - their story is told both by watching their actions and through the letters they write home to their loved ones, letters that in many cases would not be delivered until long after they were dead.

Directed by Clint Eastwood, filmed in Japanese, with a primarily Japanese cast, this is a touching and insightful view into those on the "other side", the "enemy". It shows their loves, fears, hopes and dreams are not so different from our own.

We will start with a potluck dinner at 5:00 pm, so please bring a main dish, side dish or salad to share.

Drinks and desserts will be provided

The movie will begin at 5:30 pm.

This is a free event, however donations are always appreciated.



* St. Francis' *Library for Peace* is a haven for those looking to expand their world through learning. We have a dedicated group of volunteers who are constantly working to make the library even better. We rely mainly on the money from our book carts, and donations. **You can help!** Simply purchase an Amazon Gift Card for any amount from *Shop with Scrip*, and designate it for the library.

* The Facilities department is hard at work this summer in our buildings - painting, cleaning and doing repairs. Home Depot and Lowe's cards are a great help to them for purchasing the various supplies they need.

And as always - thank you!

From the Editor



Dear Reader,

I hope you've enjoyed this month's newsletter. I'm always interested in submissions that have to do with the people, ministries, and activities of St. Francis in the Foothills.

If you have something you'd like to share, please send it to mmitchell@stfrancisumc.org

Please be aware that the cut-off date for accepting submissions for the August 2019 newsletter is Friday, July 19th. Anything submitted after that date, may not be included.