



The Spirit of St. Francis



*December 2019/
January 2020*



Advent & Christmas Calendar

**Sunday, December 1st
First Sunday of Advent**

Worship: 7:45, 9:00 & 10:45 am
in the Celebration Center

**Sunday, December 8th
Second Sunday of Advent**

Worship: 7:45, 9:00 & 10:45 am
in the Celebration Center

Adult Education: 10:30 am
in the Community Center

*Choose
Love*

In This Issue

A Word from Our Pastor

We Are the Future

A Story St. Francis Can Be Proud Of

From the Soul

Library News

Holiday Survival Tips

Can We Count On You?

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

www.stfrancisinthefoothills.org

**SUNDAY SERVICES:
7:45, 9:00 & 10:45 AM
IN THE CELEBRATION CENTER**

**ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES:
10:30 AM
IN THE COMMUNITY CENTER**

**Sunday, December 15th
Third Sunday of Advent**
Worship: 7:45, 9:00 & 10:45 am
in the Celebration Center

Adult Education: 10:30 am
in the Community Center

**Sunday, December 22nd,
Fourth Sunday of Advent**
Worship: 7:45, 9:00 & 10:45 am
in the Celebration Center

Adult Education: 10:30 am
in the Community Center

**Tuesday, December 24th,
Family Christmas Eve Service: 5:00 pm**
in the Celebration Center

Candlelight Christmas Eve Service: 11:00 pm
in the Celebration Center

We're taking our annual Christmas break!



**The St. Francis church office will be closed from
Monday, December 23rd through
Wednesday, January 1st.**

We will re-open on Thursday, January 2nd.

**From the entire St. Francis staff, we wish you
and your loved ones safe and joyous holidays.**

NUMBERS TO KNOW

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

Monthly Newsletter:
(520)299-9063, Ext. 101

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

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

Room Reservations:
(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

A Word from Our Pastor

Christmas Miracles

I hope you've been thinking about the **Christmas Miracle Challenge** I gave to you.

There is so much need all around us and so many ways that we can help.

Our tendencies to give to those who already have plenty can blind us to the amazing ways we can change lives with just a small change in habit.

One estimate I saw said that the average American household in 2018 spent \$1,536 on Christmas.

How many pairs of pajamas could we buy if we spent 10% less on each other and gave that amount to the Angel Heart Pajama Project?

If we shifted 25% of that total, how would that \$384 help feed homeless families trying to get back on their feet?

Even if we gave away half of that total to help others around us, isn't \$768 still a tidy sum to give to one another?

And if you don't spend any money on gifts for others, there is still opportunities to be a miracle. *The Soul Box Project* allows us to add to a growing movement in America to stop gun violence and increase community connection. And speaking of connection. . . .

Yesterday a group of "representatives" from the International School for Peace came to the church office with a gift. One by one these three and four-year-old children brought in cans of vegetables, boxes of cereal, and bottles of spaghetti sauce until our kitchen table was overflowing with their love.



And we needed it...because close to 15 bags of food went out that same morning.



1 Irene Walden
3 Kate Storie
7 Meghan Morrison
7 Ann Rau
8 Norm Weber
9 Sam Turner
11 Judith Holt
11 Lee Vought
13 Dean Moore
13 Kathleen Faller
14 Marlene Ramirez
15 Cadence Moore
16 Doris Morris
16 Jon Stetson
16 Robbie Dick
16 Cindy Lomenick
17 George Daranyi
17 Marie Pearthree
19 Stewart Chan
21 David Osollo
24 Paul Little
26 Joannie Wiltbank
31 Ava Daranyi-Nichols



3 Fran Donnellan
4 Greg Lee
5 Harvey Kemp
7 Marti White
8 Alyce Little

Please consider being the miracle in another person's life this holiday season.

Give whatever gifts are appropriate to each other, but then take part of the money that you might have given and bring a true blessing to those who have others who can use it so wonderfully well.



Visit the Angel Heart Pajama Project at <http://angelheartpajamaproject.org/> or the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona at www.communityfoodbank.org/ or The Soul Box Project at <https://soulboxproject.org/> for more information.

Thank you for the miracles you will make happen this season,

Jim

A Special Thank You to our ISP Angels -

Cathy DeMers and the staff and families at the International School for Peace for all the food they collected and donated to the St. Francis Food Pantry for Thanksgiving.



15 Diane Everhart
15 Levonne Kelly
15 Victoria Dunson
16 Tom Reed
17 Hank Mullis
20 Sarah Leonard
20 Judie Garnet
22 Gina King
23 Susan Watson
24 Jerrie Merrifield
25 Doug Bobbitt
27 Jeanette Mathias
31 Jeff Hidalgo
31 Ed Leigh



***Sing in the Holidays with
Lisa and Diane!***

Friday, December 6th,
7:00 pm in the
Celebration Center

General Admission: \$15.00

Join Lisa and Diane as they sing
many of your jazzy, bluesy and
traditional holiday favorites!

Purchase tickets at the Creative
Arts table during Sunday
hospitality time, or you can
purchase them online at
stfrancisinthefoothills.org/currentevents
(A service charge will be applied)



St. Francis' Christmas Party
 Sunday, December 8th,
 4:00 pm in the Community Center

Join us for Christmas Carols, Wassail, Egg Nog and Christmas Goodies with your St. Francis friends.

This year, we will be giving you a festive and welcoming place to take up Pastor Jim's *Christmas Miracle Challenge*.

Make a Soul Box to honor the life of someone killed or injured by gunfire. Meg Pradelt will be on hand to guide you through this meaningful project.

Bring new children's pajamas and/or books to donate to our Pajama & Book Drive. You'll be able to meet with a representative from the *Angel Heart Pajama Project* and find out more about this wonderful charity.

Write and sign Christmas cards for those who will need even more of our St. Francis love.

And much more!

Please bring Christmas finger foods to share - sweets, hors d'oeuvres, etc.

And we'd love for you to stay and join us for *Sunday Night at the Movies* Holiday movie and potluck dinner at 5:30 pm.



***Cavalcade of Music
 Christmas Show!***

Saturday, December 14th,
 3:00 pm in the
 Celebration Center

Tickets purchased in advance:
\$18.00 General Admission
\$15.00 Seniors/Students
Children under 12 free!

Order online at
tucsonbarbershopharmony.org

Tickets purchased at the door:
\$20.00

Sunday Night at the Movies



Joyeux Noel

Sunday, December 8th,
 5:00 pm in the
 Community Center



Our 2020 pledge campaign is underway. We know the upcoming year is filling many people with lots of questions and concerns. So first, let us reiterate our beliefs and promises to you.

As a faith-based community, St. Francis in the Foothills:

- Asserts that all people are beloved children of God, however you believe God to be, and are of sacred worth. We strive to welcome everyone at St. Francis in the Foothills and call on all congregations to extend a similar welcome.
- Pledges to continue to celebrate the covenant of straight and same-gender weddings in our church, and our pastors will continue to conduct these weddings with the full, loving support of our faith community.
- Proclaims that all persons should be free to be ordained, appointed and serve their congregations without fear of trial for who they love or who God created them to be.

We re-commit to continue being a community with open hearts, minds and doors.

We still aren't sure what the institutional future of St. Francis will be; or, what formal - or informal - relationship our church will have to the broader United Methodist church. But we know what is in our hearts and minds: our values, principles and commitments will not change.

We ask that you join with us in making a re-commitment to the future of St. Francis in 2020. We promise to remain true to our vision and goals, but frankly, we need your help to keep these things

In 1914, World War I, the bloodiest war ever at that time in human history was well under way. However, on Christmas Eve, numerous sections of the Western Front called an informal and unauthorized truce where the various front-line soldiers of the conflict peacefully met each other in No Man's Land to share a precious pause in the carnage with a fleeting brotherhood.

This film dramatizes one such section as the French, Scottish and German sides partake in the unique event, even though they are aware that their superiors will not tolerate its occurrence.

Come join us at 5:00 pm for a holiday potluck and movie.

We ask that you bring holiday-themed dishes such as casseroles, mashed potatoes and gravy, hors d'ouvres, etc.

As always, St. Francis will provide the drinks (including hot "virgin" wassail and Egg Nog) and desserts.

The movie will start at 5:45 pm.

And if you'd like to come earlier and join our church Christmas Party which will start at 4:00 pm, you are more than welcome!

There will be Christmas carols, finger foods and activities.

Your votes for our upcoming 2020 season are currently being tabulated!

Keep your eyes open for our Sunday Night at the Movies brochure with the 2020 lineup!

strong and alive. Generosity comes in many forms - through your time, talents and treasure. The truth is, St. Francis in the Foothills is you, and we would not exist to do the work we do without you.

So we ask that you help to fund our ongoing operations for the important year ahead. We Are the Future - and that future is you.



A Story St. Francis Can Be Proud Of

by Art Aldag

About ten years ago, we welcomed a new member to St. Francis in the Foothills who had just received his US citizenship, was working on his undergraduate degree at the University of Arizona and was passionate about providing help for his native homeland. John Akuar was one of Sudan's "Lost Boys", and their story has been the topic of over a dozen documentaries. John believed strongly that education, particularly for the young girls, was the path forward for Sudan. This passion was contagious, and John soon had St. Francis actively working to bring his vision to reality. And we did it!

The St. Francis community funded the construction of a school with 8 classrooms and had 5 water wells installed in his village of Abul. Several of us from St. Francis went and visited John's village as South Sudan won its independence and became the newest country in the world. The school is up and running and I even brought home a bottle of water from the new well, which I still have in my refrigerator. You can see a video of the visit put together by Rolly Loomis at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dFzeNDi-nKI>

Heifer for the Holidays!



Heifer Project International works all over the world, including the US, giving families livestock and the training to make sure they thrive. The livestock are not for direct consumption. Angora rabbits give wool, goats give milk, water buffalo plow fields. In southeastern Asia, flocks of ducks or geese lay eggs. The eggs or milk can be consumed by the family to raise their level of nutrition, or sold for funds for medicine or school fees.

Heifer works hard to make sure families have the knowledge to succeed, allowing the gift to become self-sustaining as well as shared with others.

In December, on the four Sundays before Christmas, we will have a table set up outside the center with literature and information.

Heifer offers unique gift giving: whole llamas or shares of sheep, and we have cards to go with your gift. Please stop by and check us out.

If you have questions, please contact Jamie Holehan at jholehan@msn.com

South Sudan has had a difficult birthing experience with tribal conflict for government control the predominant feature of their first years of independence. The school was closed for a while, but as of February of 2019 it is back functioning. When John was here at St. Francis this past June, he talked about the status of the project and expressed, on behalf of the Abul community, their appreciation for the support provided by St. Francis.

There is one area of concern and I am appealing for support from our St. Francis community. As John noted during his visit, the government is not financially supporting the teachers. John felt that if we could provide each teacher \$100/mo., that would be incentive enough to attract some good, qualified teachers for the Abul School. Currently there are 6 teachers providing their time gratis. A salary of \$100/mo. would go a long way in John's village of Abul.

To help with this, St. Francis has established a fund for the Abul School which would allow us to transfer money monthly to the KCB Bank in Wau, South Sudan, a major city close to John's village. Several St. Francis members have already responded and set up a transfer of \$100/mo. and I invite others who share in my enthusiasm to help John fulfill his vision. To set up a donation, you can contact the church office at 299-9063, and talk to Treasurer Linda Van Pelt, or go to www.stfrancisinthefoothills.org/giving and click on the "Give Now" button under Easy Tithe. Then under the "Fund" section, scroll down and choose the "School for Abul" fund. Any amount would help John achieve his goal and on behave of John and the School for Abul, I thank you for your support.



Market on the Move

Saturday, December 28th,
Saturday, January 25th,
8:00 - 10:00 am
St. Francis in the Foothills

For a \$10.00 donation, you will get up to 60 lbs. of fresh produce in a farmers market-like atmosphere that you can share with your friends, family, neighbors or other people in need. Doing so also helps us rescue good fresh produce from going to the landfills.

For more information, or to volunteer, contact Barbara at 440-0100.

Going on now through January.

Special time: St. Francis' Christmas Party
Sunday, December 8th, 4:00 pm.

Art revealing the gunfire epidemic



MAKE A BOX. SEND IT IN. IT COUNTS.

SoulBoxProject.org

The Soul Box Project is a community art project created to help us put meaning to the number of lives torn apart by gunfire.

A Soul Box is a hand-folded origami box that holds space for the life of someone killed or injured by gunfire. Make a Soul Box to remember a loved one. To honor someone you've never met. To share a message of love and hope. To express frustration. To issue a call to action.

Each box will be counted and included in a traveling exhibit, culminating in a powerful display of 200,000 Soul Boxes on the Washington Mall.

Will you help us reach this goal?

Join us in December. Learn how to make a Soul Box. Materials provided.

St. Francis in the Foothills United Methodist Church
4625 E. River Road

Ravenscroft Gallery

Wednesdays 10 – 12:30

Sundays 10 – 12:30

For more information, contact Meg Pradelt at
mpradelt@icloud.com



Elder Circle . . .

The Wisdom Journey.
A safe, respectful place
to harvest your life

Friday, December 13th
Friday, January 10th
10:00 - 11:30 am
in Ravenscroft Hall

Elder Circles is a project of the
Center for Community Dialogue,
Our Family Services.
There are five components to our
Elder Circle journey:
life review, life repair, my legacy,
facing up to my mortality, mentoring.

Monthly topics cover new
beginnings, leaving a legacy, and
end-of-life planning.

**Newcomers are always
welcome!**

Library News



You never know who you're going to
meet at the *Library for Peace*!



New Arrivals:

God Was Here and I Was Out to Lunch
by James W. Moore

*The Death and Life of Aida Hernandez:
A Border Story*
by Aaron Bobrow-Strain

*Breaking Barriers:
An African-American Family and the
Methodist Story*
by Angella Current



Thursdays,
January 30th - March 5th,
7:00 - 9:00 pm
in Ravenscroft Hall.

We are starting to prepare for the
*2020 Great Decisions Discussion
Group* at S.t Francis.

This will be our 7th year of offering
this program, and we've grown in
attendance for each year!

As in the past, we will have a
short 20-minute DVD on the topic
being addressed that evening
followed by a lively group
discussion.

Here are the topics that will be
discussed this year:

Climate Change and
the Global Order

India and Pakistan

Red Sea Security

Modern Slavery and
Human Trafficking

U.S. Relations with the
Northern Triangle

China's Road into Latin America

The Philippines and
the U.S.

Artificial Intelligence
and Data

Come check us out - literally!

We're open on Sundays from
8:30 am - 12:30 pm,
and are located in the
church office building.



If you would like to participate,
please email Art Aldag at
aldag@aol.com.

The book being used sells for
\$24.50 and should arrive
by early January.



A monthly tip from the
St. Francis Green Team:

There is something we each
can do to halt further impact
on our climate. Just go to:
citizensclimatelobby.org
and sign your name in support
of The Bipartisan Climate
Solution H.R. 763.

When passed, this bill will put
a fee on fossil fuels like coal,
oil and gas. This will move the
industry towards the use of
cleaner, cheaper options.

To make an even bigger
difference, go to
www.energyinnovationact.org
to take further action to
support this bill, and
remember to sign in a number
of times!

Thank you for helping St.
Francis walk our talk!



Life can be rough - and not just during the holidays.
Sometimes you just feel overwhelmed. Here are a
few ideas to help you cope when life gets to be too
much.

*Give yourself a few minutes of quiet time - possibly
in meditation. This can be as simple as taking
several slow, deep breaths with your eyes closed.

*If you're tired and longing for a nap, take one. Try
some aromatherapy or a scented candle.
Allow yourself to relax.

*Give yourself a gift. Whether it's buying a book
you've been wanting, or just drawing a hot bath. Do
something just for you.

*Volunteer! Whether at St. Francis or for the many other agencies who need help. It may be hard to get

yourself out, but once you do, you'll be able to focus on something new.

*Take five minutes to be grateful. There's always something to be thankful for.

St. Francis has had a *Stephen Ministry* program since 2009. If your days are too long and life is challenging you in ways you didn't ever expect, we will gladly walk through it with you, listen and provide a caring presence.

To contact a Stephen Minister, call the St. Francis church office at (520)299-9063.



The holidays usually stand out as a season of plenty - even excess. So sometimes it's hard to conceive of the fact that people in our own community, many of them **children and senior citizens, won't have enough to eat.**

For the month of December, in addition to our usual Food Pantry needs, we are asking for donations of holiday foods and treats. It truly is a time to be reminded of all we have, of our many blessings - even when things seem bleak - and that we are all connected. Giving is truly its own reward.

All Church Spruce Up Days 2020



Even if you can only spare an hour or two, every little bit helps, and we have plenty of jobs for you to choose from. For more information, contact Facilities Coordinator Steve Barclay at 299-9063, Ext. 103.

Saturday, January 18, 2020

Saturday, March 21, 2020

Saturday, May 16, 2020

Saturday, September 19, 2020

Saturday, November 21, 2020

Times for all dates:
8:00 am - 12:00 pm

Please join us!

Holiday Treat Suggestions:

- *Boxed or Bagged Stuffing mix
- *Canned Yams
- *Boxed Potatoes (Mashed, Scalloped)
- *Boxed Baking Goods (Cake mixes, cookie mixes, Quick Bread mixes, brownies)
- *Cans or jars of gravy (Turkey, chicken)

- *Cans of fruit filling for pies (Apple, Cherry, etc.)
- *Canned vegetables (Green Beans, Corn, White Potatoes)

Donations can be dropped off in the church office during business hours
(M - Th. 8:30 am - 4:00 pm, Fri. 8:30 am - noon)
or in the Center lobby on Sundays.

Or how about stopping by the Scrip table on Sunday mornings and purchasing grocery cards to donate to the Food Pantry? That way we can fill our shelves with what we need, and St. Francis will receive a rebate from your purchase.

As always, thank you for your generosity.



There are only 3 Sundays left to order personal gift cards, cards for friends and family, or the church ministries!

And why not order from home?



Holiday Gifts of Love

We are looking for generous shoppers to step forward and take part in the ICS Gifts of Love Adopt-A-Family. We match families and seniors who could use some help with shoppers who want to give.

Your support means ICS will help children and seniors have a happier holiday.
For more information, email mfreeman@icstucson.org

***Save the Date!
Strut 4 Success***

A fashion show benefitting ICS Single Mom Scholars in their pursuit of a college education.

Sunday, January 26th,
2:00 - 4:30 pm
Sheraton Tucson Hotel & Suites
5151 E. Grant Rd.

Tickets start at \$40.00 and are available at
www.icstucson.org

Go to shopwithscrip.com and create an account.
Type in our organization code E186L1EE33926

Shop on December 5th and 6th only and you will get access to special bonuses and you won't have to pay the online fee when you pay with a Visa, Mastercard or Discover credit card.

Take advantage of this limited-time opportunity by simply entering your credit card information at checkout. It's an easy way to feel good about giving back to your organization during the holidays - AND - for those 2 days only, we can earn up to 20% for St. Francis on physical cards that are purchased. You pick them up at the Scrip table on Sunday mornings.

See Lorelei at the Scrip table to answer any questions.



Hello Everyone!

I hope you've enjoyed this newsletter. If you have something you'd like to share about the people and ministries of St. Francis, please email ideas to:

mmitchell@stfrancisumc.org

Please be aware that the cut-off date for accepting articles and photographs for the February 2020 issue is Friday, January 17th.

Anything submitted after that date, without prior communication may not be included.

