



The Spirit of St. Francis



A Word from Our Pastor

Not Riveting Entertainment, but...

This week I went to the General Conference in St. Louis dealing with LGBTQ inclusion in the United Methodist Church. **Things did not go the way I wish they would have gone.** The church voted to implement the Traditionalist Plan, which our Judicial Council told us had more than fifty percent

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It's Back!

St. Francis in the Foothills
4625 E. River Rd
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(520)299-9063
www.stfrancisumc.org

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(520)299-9063 x102

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Monthly Newsletter
(520)299-9063 x101

Prayer Requests:
(520)299-9063 x101

of its components that were contrary to our constitution. Yet people were convinced that was what they had to do to preserve "Christian Holiness."

Yet I wonder what is truly holy in this world. .

As I made my way to St. Louis for the conference, I stayed most of one night in the Dallas airport. As morning approached, a man who with whom I had shared a row of chairs in the airport much of the night put on traditional Jewish garb and began his morning prayers. Even though he was trying to be as unobtrusive as possible, I noticed several disapproving looks.

One lady in particular actually turned her body away from him in displeasure, but he silently but reverently, prayed his prayers.

I thought I was noticing this scene because I, like my Jewish "neighbor," would need to be strong in my devotion throughout the next few days. However, it was really the looks of the disapproving woman that were the precursor for me.

Again, and again over the conference I saw people turning their backs on those around them

- because they were wearing a rainbow stole
- because they voiced opinions that were contrary
- because they celebrated when their neighbor didn't
- and, most typically, because they seemed a "little too gay".

The judgmental looks, the scornful voices, and the turned backs became votes that said loud and clear, "You are not welcome here."

But the woman in the airport couldn't stop a worshipful heart . . . and nothing can stop the amazing, loving, reconciling community that I also saw at the General Conference!

In fact, I believe that community grew . . . because in the midst of turned backs, I saw open arms reaching out. When scornful eyes sneered, other, loving eyes invited. When votes were cast against, more and more hearts resolved to not be defeated.

Room Reservations:
(520)299-9063 x101

Sunday Bulletins
(520)299-9063 x105

International School for Peace
(520)299-8908

FOR PASTORAL HELP
Reverend Jim Wiltbank
(520)299-9063 x106



**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

On the surface it might have appeared that we lost . . . but that was only the preamble to the real story . . . a story that you, and I, and millions of other hearts around the globe get to write.

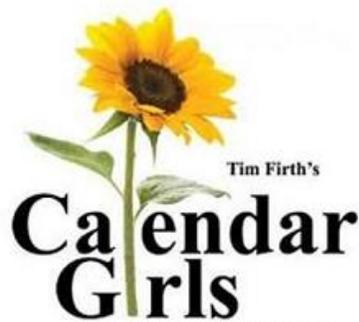
- That story is a story of love, not disdain;
- A story of acceptance and inclusion, not of turned backs;
- A story of open arms and open hearts;
- A story that St. Francis has been writing for decades!

I can't wait to read the next chapter!

Jim



- 1 Diane Wilson
- 2 Susan Morgan
- 2 Sandy Graddy
- 4 Korey Sargent
- 4 Elizabeth Davis
- 6 Mike Harris
- 8 Jody Mallie
- 8 Anne Huth
- 9 Karen Sparks
- 10 Noreen Wiedenfeld
- 10 Steve Barclay
- 11 Dixie Siegel
- 12 Michele Dixon
- 12 Paul Petrass
- 14 Alana Swoyer
- 15 Andy Robson
- 15 David George
- 16 Brooke Warner
- 16 Dennis Warner
- 17 Patrika Murphy
- 17 Cindy Hayden
- 17 Andrew Donnellan
- 17 Greg Falk
- 19 Stephen Poe
- 19 Ron Stock
- 19 Amelia Uhrlaub
- 19 Ted Gemoets
- 19 Claire Sweeney
- 20 Joseph Chambers
- 20 Susan Vincent
- 21 Nancy Buchanan
- 21 Grace Reuther
- 23 Renee Manogue
- 23 Sue Alexander
- 23 Nicholas Villec
- 23 Bob Smith
- 23 Mike Whitlatch
- 24 Shelby Greider



A slightly risqué, comedy about a Women's Club whose members, all very respectable and of a certain age, are determined to raise money for charity by posing for the new calendar.

St. Francis Theater
4625 E. River Rd., Tucson, AZ 85718

March 8, 9, 15, 16, 22, 23 at 7:30 p.m.
March 10, 17, 24 at 3:00 p.m.

Ticket Prices: \$25 General, \$20 Military, Students and Seniors.
For ticket reservations and information, Call 520-329-2910
For online ticket purchases and information,
visit www.artmeetsheart.com or www.stfrancismc.com



***Jon & Noel Are Recipients of the
2019 Leadership Award!***

Longtime TIHAN volunteers Jon Stetson and Noel Floresca have been selected to receive the Center for Health and Hope's 2019 Leadership Award for their extraordinary volunteer service in Southern Arizona's HIV community. The award will be presented during the 5th annual Swinging@AIDS Benefit weekend featuring a concert and golf tournament on March 22 and March 23, 2019. Jon and Noel have been life partners for 22 years, and through all that time, they've been active in making a difference.

Jon spearheaded the reconciling movement at St. Francis in the Foothills UMC, also worked for inclusiveness and welcome in other congregations and in the United Methodist conference. When an HIV ministry began at St. Francis, Jon was a key of it, helping with HIV education and also serving on CareTeams helping people with AIDS in their final days.

Not long after they met, Noel joined TIHAN. Noel, who is HIV-positive, was experiencing a number of health concerns, even having to spend three months in the hospital. TIHAN matched him with a CareTeam of supportive volunteers, and as his health improved, so did his engagement with TIHAN. After a few years, Noel transitioned from being the recipient of the CareTeam to being one of the volunteers on the CareTeam, helping support other people with HIV. With the support of

25 Mickey Dixon
25 Joy Mills
25 Meg Lee
26 Kris Masalsky-Gougen
26 Marita Stith
26 Wynn Houtkooper
26 Karen Kennedy-Schwind
26 Amy Barron-Gafford
26 Kate Sweeney
27 Holli Kent
27 Lorelei Neiburger
29 Kent Vincent
29 Sarah Tomassetti
30 Megan Petrass

Exploring Our Differences
TOGETHER

***Joy and Wisdom
Discussion Group***

Meets the 1st and 3rd Fridays
of every month in room 50.

Join us as we discuss a wide variety
of topics from an even wider variety of
sources - books, movies, etc.

Newcomers are always welcome!

For more information call
404-1691.

Weekly Breakfasts



Sophia's Circle Women's Group
Wednesdays, 6:45 - 8:00 am
Ravenscroft Hall

his partner Jon and family, Noel wanted to give back to express his gratitude.

Noel also started volunteering in the TIHAN office, and was one of a small group of people who founded Poz Café. TIHAN's lunch program that has now served over 26,000 meals. Both Jon and Noel have been volunteering in Southern Arizona's HIV community for more than 20 years. They've helped in multiple ways, including leading HIV education, training volunteers, answering phones, doing data entry, helping with handyman work, volunteering at Poz Café, helping with newsletter mailings, serving on TIHAN committees, presenting at TIHAN Living Well with HIV classes, volunteering at fundraising events, and being friends and providing emotional and social support for people with HIV.

For more than 20 years, Jon and Noel have shared their time, talents, and treasures in support of the HIV community in Southern Arizona, and the Center is honored to recognize their efforts with the 2019 Leadership Award. Past recipients of the Center's Leadership Award include Rev Charlie Arehart, Kevin Carmichael MD, and Linda Girard RN.

(Thanks to TIHAN for sharing this article)



Chrysalis Men's Round Table
Thursdays 7:00 - 8:00 am
Ravenscroft Hall

**Newcomers
are always welcome!**



Spruce Up Day!
Saturday, March 16th
8:00 am - noon

The beautiful Spring weather cries out for us to get our hands dirty as we clean up our beloved campus.

Join your St. Francis friends and family, along with volunteers from the International School for Peace.

There will be jobs of all kinds.
**ANY TIME YOU CAN GIVE US
MAKES A DIFFERENCE!**

For more information,
contact Steve at 299-9063.



A Compassionate Discussion About Suicide

by Diane Wilson,
Chair, Mental Health Ministry

This was the title of a joint Adult Education /Mental Health Ministry class held on January 27th. The goal was to develop a discussion around suicide where all felt honored and safe.

We began by creating a sacred space for this discussion. We lit a candle to hold each other and what we said with care and to surround us all with light. We read a poem by Susan Gregg Schroeder, a Methodist minister who experienced severe bouts of depression and had suicidal thoughts. She describes the monsters who "crept up ever so quietly" and from whom she had tried to run. She decides to face them and prays, "If I decide to meet these monsters, O God, please stand beside me and hold my hand."

We had three panel members who talked about their experiences around suicide: one person who had attempted three times and two people who had lost loved ones to suicide. There were several common themes that recurred. One important one was that the person who attempted or died by suicide was in great pain, and the removal of that pain was paramount. Also the person attempting believed that, not only she/he would be relieved, but that those around would be relieved from the burden of that person's life.

Those loved ones who survive are often left with the feeling that they could have done something different to prevent the death. It is crucial then that



Elder Circle . . .

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

Friday, March 8th,
10 -11:30 am in Ravenscroft Hall

Elder Circles is a project of Center for
Community Dialogue, Our Family
Services

IT'S BACK!!



Sunday Night At The Movies

Starting
Sunday, April 14th, 5:00 pm
in the Community Center



Which Way Home
(2009, 90 minutes, NR)

they surround themselves with people who will care for them and not judge. There is significant stigma around suicide that must be removed for all to heal.

We also learned it is important to recognize some of the warning signs from those contemplating suicide: ongoing depression, withdrawal from friends, mood changes and impulsiveness. These are just some of the signs, but the key thing is for us to pay attention to the changes in a loved one and ask if he/she is considering suicide and promising to be with that person without judgment. We don't like saying that word and are afraid it might put the idea in that person's head. But that is not how it works. Rather, addressing concerns about suicide is helpful in prevention. Here are some resources:

Community-Wide Crisis Line 520-622-600 or 866-495-6735;

National Crisis Line 800-273-8255;

National Alliance on Mental Illness Southern Arizona 520-622-5582;

La Frontera/EMPACT Suicide Prevention Center 480-784-1514 x 1108

Website American Foundation for Suicide Prevention - Arizona www.afsp.org/az.

Facts about suicide:

- Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the United States.
- Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death for people ages 15-24.
- Many of those who die by suicide have an underlying mental illness, oftentimes not treated. However most people with mental illness do not die by suicide.

Books:

- *The Suicidal Mind* by Edwin Schneidman
- *Why People Die by Suicide* by Thomas Joiner
- *Choosing to Live: How to Defeat Suicide Through Cognitive Therapy* by Thomas E. Ellis and Cory F. Newman

In this gripping, award-winning documentary, a group of young, unaccompanied Central American children struggle to make their way through Mexico, in order to ultimately reach the United States and jump the border to a new home. Director Rebecca Cammisa follows the struggles of these would-be illegal aliens as they battle poverty, dangerous train rides and potential predators, keeping their sights set on the possibility of a better life that awaits in a new country.

Pick up our 2019 season brochure in the Celebration Center or Community Center lobbies, the church office, or the Library for Peace.

If you would like to be on our email list, please send your address to mmitchell@stfrancisumc.org



Market on the Move

Saturday, March 23rd,
8:00 - 10:00 am in the
Community Center parking lot.

For a \$10.00 cash donation, you will get up to 60 lbs. of produce!

We need volunteers to collect money and work the produce line.

Volunteers get their produce FREE!

RSVP to
440-0100 or
eiswerth@iskashitaa.org



It's new! It's exciting!

It's the

St. Francis Bookstore!

Starting Sunday, March 3rd, after the 9:00 am service, check out our full inventory of

- *Books for adults
- *Books for kids
- *Books for adults who think they're kids (or who would like to be!)
- *DVD's
- *CD's

Get a free bookmark with every purchase!

Brought to you by the
Library for Peace

Come visit the *Library for Peace*, located in the church office building.

We have over 3400 books covering subjects of all kinds, CD's, audiobooks and an amazing collection of DVD's boasting the finest in drama, foreign films and documentaries.

Open Sundays, 9:00 am - 12:30 pm.
During the week, please call 299-9063.

Come check us out - literally!



Endowment Fund News

Twice a year, the St. Francis Endowment Fund Committee considers dispersing funds.

Applications for funds will be considered in the following areas: Mission, Scholarship, Property, Ministry or Special Need.

Applications may be picked up in the church office and must be returned by April 15th.

The St. Francis Endowment Fund was established in 2008 for the purpose of providing members and friends with the opportunity to make charitable gifts to St. Francis in the Foothills that would become a permanent endowment of financial support and a living memorial.

The St. Francis Endowment Fund is invested in the Desert Southwest United Methodist Fund.

While the principal of the fund remains intact and untouched, the earnings of the Funds maybe distributed at the discretion of the Endowment Fund Committee.

You can help support the future of St. Francis by bequeathing funds or property to the *St. Francis Endowment Fund* in your Estate plans. More Endowment giving information is available at www.stfrancisumc.org/giving.html



**LET'S HELP TIHAN:
Collecting Shampoo for our
Care Packages**

As the need for Care Packages continues, we're asking for your help to keep up with the demand. We're seeking all kinds of toiletry & cleaning products, but we are especially in need of bottles of shampoo.

Can you help us make sure that every Care Package that we distribute to a Care Partner living with HIV includes the vital necessities of life? Please consider making a donation of shampoo, conditioner, or a 2 in 1 combo. These items can be dropped off in the St. Francis office, in the lobby of the Celebration Center, or directly at the TIHAN office Monday through Friday between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm.

For a full list of needed items, visit www.tihan.org and click on the Donate page, then Care Package Wish List.



**GET FREE TAX PREPARATION
HELP WITH V.I.T.A.!
(Volunteer Income Tax
Assistance)**

January 30th - April 14th
ICS Main Office,
2820 W. Ina Rd.
Wednesdays 4:00 - 7:00 pm
Saturdays,
9:00 am - 1:00 pm
No appointment required.

Trained volunteers provide FREE tax preparation for households earning up to \$66,000 annually. For more information, including a list of needed documents, visit our website at icstucson.org

WHY A WILL SEMINARS

Friday, April 5th, 9:30 - 11:00 am
Tohono Chul Park
7366 N. Paseo del Norte

This free and informative seminar is offered in conjunction with *Leave a Legacy of Southern Arizona* and the *Planned Giving Roundtable of Southern Arizona*.

Attendees will learn how to formalize and ensure their wishes are known and respected.

A question and answer session, workbook and light refreshments are provided. The presenter is experienced estate attorney Craig Wisnom, Bogutz and Gordon P.C.

Registration is required.
Call 520-526-9304.

A Benefit Concert
 featuring
**Heather Hardy and
 the Lil' Mama Band**



**Friday, March 22
 Monterey Court**

Part of the **Swinging@AIDS**
 weekend of events



Swinging @ AIDS Benefit Golf Tournament
 Saturday, March 23rd, 8:00 am.
 El Conquistador Resort
 10555 N. La Canada Dr.

Join us for a fun-filled scramble-style golf tournament and silent auction. The tournament begins at 8:00 pm with a shotgun start. The \$125.00 registration fee includes greens fees, meal, prizes and a \$50.00 donation.

For more information, contact Jess at 447-6852 or go to www.swingingat aids.org to register, purchase tickets or become a sponsor.

**ICS CARE PARTNERS
 PROGRAM**

This program assists those who have recently been hospitalized due to surgery or critical illness. Specially trained volunteers assist the individual with transportation to follow-up appointments, the pharmacy and grocery shopping.



Refugee 101: Info Night
 Join us for a Tucson-wide
 Training!

Tuesday, March 12th,
 6:00 - 8:00 pm
 SEMA Foundation
 2843 N. Alvernon Way

Hosted by:
 Lutheran Social Services of
 the Southwest

- *Who is a Refugee? Asylee? Immigrant?
- *Why does resettlement help the United States strengthen our country's security?
- *Learn about the struggles and successes of a new American.
- *How do you welcome a family into your neighborhood?

If you plan to attend, please RSVP to Iskashitaa at eiswerth@iskashitaa.org or call 440-0100.



Welcome Team News

SAVE THE DATE!

Exploring Membership Retreat

WHEN: Saturday, April 6th,
8:30 am - 2:00 pm

WHERE: Community Center

WHO: Everyone is welcome

HOW: RSVP @ 299-9063

WHY: Our class provides an excellent opportunity to learn more about St. Francis in the Foothills. We will answer your questions and introduce you to members of our Ministry teams.

WHAT:

A healthy, light lunch will be served.

**For any questions please contact the
Welcome Team leaders:**

Diane Everhart @ 272-4341

Nancy Stevenson @ 323-0318

COMING TO ST. FRANCIS -



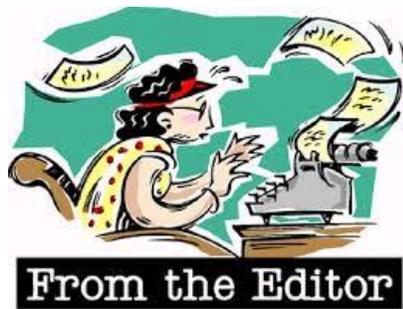
Sons of Orpheus - The Male Choir of Tucson will present its 28th Anniversary Gala Spring Concert on Saturday, April 6, at 3:00 p.m. in the Celebration Center.

An eclectic program will include among others the famous *Easter Hymn* by Pietro Mascagni, three selections by Randall Thompson, a South African freedom song, cowboy favorites including a humorous addition to the repertoire, a setting of Kipling's *If* and Broadway musical selections.

The choir will be joined by outstanding guest performers, including The N.A.M. International Choir.

Tickets costing \$15 may be purchased online at sonsoforpheus.com, from choir members, or at the door. Students may attend free of charge.

For more information,
contact 484-3743.



I hope you've enjoyed this month's newsletter. There's always so much going on at St. Francis in the Foothills and I'm interested in any submissions that have to do with the people, ministries, and activities of our congregation.

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 the April 2019 newsletter is Friday, March 15th. Anything submitted after that time may not be included.



"A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening in the church hall. Music will follow."

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

The Spirit of St. Francis
St. Francis in the Foothills UMC
Newsletter Editor/Writer: Melissa Mitchell

