

# The Evangel

Our mission is to lead people of all ages on the journey to become deeply devoted followers of Jesus.



## Spirituality: A Messy Business!

### New Sermon Series Beginning January 8

*If you struggle with your journey of faith, do things you regret, are haunted by doubts, addictions, failures; if you just feel like you aren't making it as a follower of Jesus, join us! Some of our topics:*

Jan 8	Under Construction and Unfinished Romans 3:21-16
Jan 15	Missing the Point John 9 – The Blind man healed
Jan 22	Redeemed and Free in Spite of Ourselves John 4 – The Samaritan Woman
Jan 29	Lopsided and Tipping Over Luke 14: 12-24
Feb 5	Spiritual Growth Is Not a Science 2 Corinthians 3:12-18
Feb 12	God's Annoying Love for Imperfect People Matthew 20:1-16



CHURCH OF GILBERT

331 S. Cooper Road

Gilbert, AZ 85233

480-892-9166

[www.firstgilbert.church](http://www.firstgilbert.church)

Office Hours:

Monday—Thursday 8a—4p

Friday By Appointment

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#### Important Dates

01/03	Special Charge Conference
01/08	Resume regular Sunday schedule
01/11	Wednesday Night Fellowship Resumes
01/15	Hurting Moms, Mending Hearts Open House
01/29	Safe Sanctuary Training
01/30	Safe Sanctuary Training

### Mark Your Calendar!

We are hosting Family Promise February 19-26! Your help is greatly appreciated! This will be the only week we are doing Family Promise in 2017. Sign up to volunteer!! We will need people to volunteer to:

- Make a meal
- Set up rooms for our guests
- Breakdown rooms
- Laundry
- Purchase food
- Overnight at church
- Provide an activity

If your normal family life sometimes limits you from volunteering this could be the week for you! Monday the 20th is a holiday, pack up the entire family and sleep here at church for an amazing experience. Teaching moments at its finest!

This ministry can not be completed with our all this help.

Contact DyAnn with any questions or to offer help at [dyannob@gmail.com](mailto:dyannob@gmail.com).



## Message from Pastor Deborah

January is a time for new beginnings; for reflecting on life changes and goals and hopes; for making resolutions about life and spiritual life. It can also be a time for guilt, as we begin with such high aspirations and sometimes fall so far from achieving them by mid month. It can be discouraging and disheartening to "fail" again!



If you have had that experience, I hope you will join us on Sundays beginning January 8 for a series entitled "Spirituality: A Messy Business!" We will use Michael Yaconelli's book *Messy Spirituality* to give shape to our reflections each week. Here is the invitation to this journey: *"If you struggle with your journey of faith, do things you regret, are haunted by doubts, addictions and failures; if you just feel like you aren't making it as a follower of Jesus, join us!"*

I think it will be helpful to acknowledge how incomplete the work of God is in us; how often we fall off the wagon as we try to give up ways of being and doing that are unhelpful; how hard it is to make simple commitments to one another and to Christ and keep them every day. I hope we will each find encouragement and support for a journey toward becoming deeply devoted followers of Jesus that is often rocky and filled with unexpected twists and turns.

Make it a point to join us every week. You'll be glad you did!  
Blessings  
Pastor Deborah

## Renew Your Mind

*Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God — what is good and acceptable and perfect.*  
~ Romans 12:2



Coming into a new year many of us find ourselves desiring to make resolutions to change something in our lives. Have you ever wanted to change something in your life, but no matter how hard you tried you kept following the same old patterns? In Romans 12: 2, the Apostle Paul gives us a clear idea as to how we can get out of the ruts and old ways we tend to think – renew our minds! Paul doesn't say to "try really hard" or "work at it", or even "pray about it" (although that may be the first step), he says we have to totally change the way we think.

How does this happen? How does one renew the mind? First, know it is an action of the Holy Spirit, a gift of grace. The mind of Christ is given to us as we exchange our will for God's. Second, we continually grow in our understandings, so that we might know Christ's mind. To renew our minds, then, we need a regular intake of God's Word.

The best churches are places where mind-renewal happens. They are places where we can take our daily struggles, share them with fellow strugglers, and together lift up the Scriptures to clarify our thinking and grow together into change. They are places where the things we are learning on Sunday are meditated upon during the week and are allowed to permeate into our lives, changing us.

So as you make your resolutions for 2017, consider renewing your mind. Consider making a habit of reading and meditating on the Scriptures, and attending worship each week. You just might change those old patterns!

Have a blessed New Year!  
Pastor Gwen

## First UMC Says Goodbye to the Collins Family

It is with sadness but also joy that we bid farewell to Ryan Collins, who has served as our Director of Youth and Family Ministries for the last two years, and to his beautiful family: Bobbie, Riley, Wesley, and Clara.

They have blessed our congregation in many ways. We will miss them! Join us January 22 after the 8 and 9:30 services for a farewell reception.

Ryan has been called to serve as the Lead Pastor at Poplar Creek Church in Bartlett Illinois. It is a wonderful opportunity for him to move forward in the vocation God has for him. We know he is a great preacher and has all the gifts necessary to bless any church he

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*"The heart of man plans his way, but the LORD establishes his steps"*

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### A Word From Ryan

Proverbs 16:9 says, *"The heart of man plans his way, but the LORD establishes his steps."*

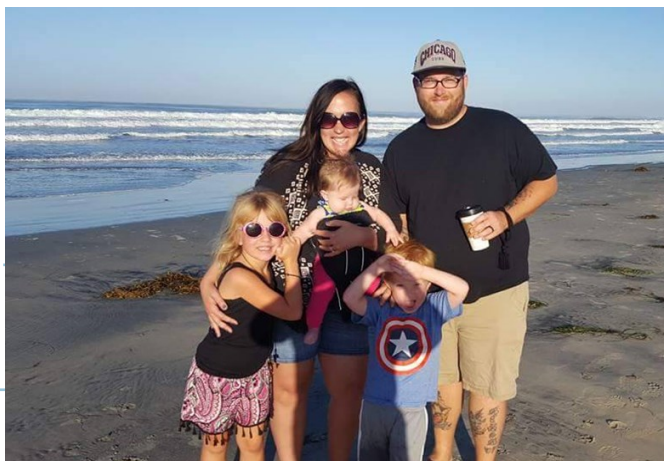
The Lord has surprised me again. When I first started my biblical studies education in college, I had every intention and plan of pursuing doctoral work in the Hebrew Scriptures. And while those were *my* plans, the Lord had a very different purpose for me. When I started my graduate work, the Lord brought a youth ministry role into my path that drastically changed my vocational direction. While *I* had the plans of doctoral studies, the Lord had plans of ministry. After seven years of youth ministry, including two here at First Gilbert, the Lord brought a Lead Pastor position into my path that is going to drastically change my vocational direction again. I have thought, drafted, and attempted to follow many plans in my life, but the Lord is the only one who establishes my steps on the path that He calls me toward.

And it's with an excited yet saddened heart that I leave First Gilbert. Every objection that I could possibly muster and think of to *not* go the direction that God was drawing us towards, He overcame and took care of it. The Lord made it abundantly clear to me, after much fighting and doubting, that He is establishing my steps and while this may not be "according to my plan" at this time, it is according to God's plan.

I am so thankful for the relationships that I have made here at First Gilbert with the Pastors, staff, students, parents, and congregants. Since day one this congregation has welcomed and loved my family, which

serves.

We've asked him to give us some reflections to include with this article. Be sure to thank him for all the goodness and grace that have come our way because of his presence among us.



makes it even more difficult to leave. I know that God is going to do great things in and through First Gilbert. God has started a good work in this congregation and He will bring it to completion; I am excited to see this development and to thank God for His work along with you, albeit from a distance.

Please keep my family in your prayers. This is a big transition for us and we will need every bit of God's strength and grace to do what He is calling us to do. Thank you for everything and I pray that I represent First Gilbert well at our new home in Bartlett, IL. In Christ,  
Ryan Collins

### An Interim Youth Director Named

The Staff Parish Relations Committee and Pastor Deborah are pleased to announce that Ray Valera will step in to serve as our interim youth director as we move through a time of transition. Ray has been a small group leader on Sunday mornings, a member of the youth council, and a helper on Sunday evenings. He knows all the youth and they know him well. We will arrange some significant overlap time in January so Ryan can train Ray for this position. Welcome Ray to our staff for this interim period as we seek a permanent leader for this position.





## Breakfast with Santa

Around 300 parents and children were treated to a wonderful "Breakfast with Santa" experience on Dec. 10th sponsored by Arizona Children Association Foster Care and Adoption program and our church. Families enjoyed waffles, games, raffle prizes, cookie and ornament decorating, two bouncy houses and of course the main attraction, a special visit and picture with Santa. Santa also gave a cuddly stuffed animal to each child. A special thank you to our Missions Committee, Lara Fink's Girl Scout Troop and over a dozen church members who volunteered to make it an extra special day.



## *Special Charge Conference to be Held Tuesday January 3rd at 6:30pm*

*Please join us in room 142 for a special charge conference. The purpose is to 1) rescind increases to the pastor's salaries approved in November and 2) electing one trustee to service in 2017.*

## Measuring Up

As many of you know, we have recently moved far north in Phoenix. We are now over 50 miles from FUMC-G so we are looking for a new church closer to home.

In our search for a new church, we have learned a number of lessons. The biggest lesson is that finding a church that measures up to FUMC-G's standards is proving to be difficult. Here are some of the questions we ask ourselves when we visit a new church:

Is the church friendly? At FUMC- G we have found others reach out to those who are new and let them know they are part of this special family of God. Hospitality is so important to any visitor!

Is there a good message for us? One of the most wonderful things about FUMC-G is the preaching of Pastor Deborah and Pastor Gwen. Worship is about praising God, but also about how to go forward into the world as Christians, acting on Christ's teaching. At FUMC-G, we always knew what we were to go into the world to do.

How is the music? With both of us in the choir, and working with Cherubs, and loving music as we do, music is an important part of our worship life. At FUMC-G, we have found the music to be fulfilling as we participated and inspirational as we listened. Our worship is enhanced by music and our expression of faith comes in the form of music and we find that at FUMC-G. Is there a place to serve? We have both

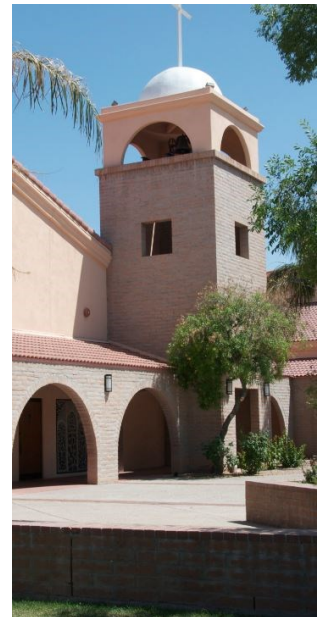
been involved in the operations and missions of our church for our entire adult lives. At FUMC-G, we had a place where our time and talents could be used in service to the church and community. Everyone at FUMC-G can find a way to serve.

Can this feel like home? We always felt at home at FUMC-G. Yes, FUMC-G had become our home and the members had become our family.

Sometimes it is easy to think the grass might be greener elsewhere, but believe us, there are not many churches that can measure up to the standard that FUMC-G has set.

As we seek another church, we hope you know how wonderful it was for us to be part of your family for these last 9 years. We will miss all FUMC-G offered us and the fellowship extended. We pray that FUMC-G will be blessed and be a blessing to all.

John and Susan Bowers



## Tuesday Morning Bible Study

The letters of 1, 2 & 3 John were written to encourage followers of Jesus to remain faithful to the truth. In this 7 session study, believers are challenged to look at contrasting themes such as walking in the light instead of darkness, truth versus lies and deception, the meaning of true fellowship and community rather than shallowness, and loving God more than loving the world.



### ***What Love Is: The Letters of 1, 2, 3 John*** **DVD and Book Study by Kelly Minter**

**Tuesday Morning Women's Bible Study**  
**First United Methodist Church of Gilbert,**  
**Tuesday, January 10, 2017 Room 142 (library)**  
**9:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.**  
**Workbook Cost: around \$15.00**

The workbook for this study will be available for purchase on January 10<sup>th</sup>.

Please contact Christy Robertson Yoder at [roberch1@yahoo.com](mailto:roberch1@yahoo.com) or Deanna Helland at [dzhelland@yahoo.com](mailto:dzhelland@yahoo.com) with any questions. To register for free childcare, please contact Katie Bouchie at [kebouchie@gmail.com](mailto:kebouchie@gmail.com).

## Preschool News ~ What's been happening?

*The Preschool Christmas Show* was performed on Dec. 9<sup>th</sup>. The preschoolers did an amazing job of teaching us the Christmas story through songs! A wonderful evening was enjoyed by family, friends, and loved ones! We even had a special visit from Spike, Mary and Joseph's donkey!

*Christmas Celebrations*- The preschoolers had a party for Jesus' birthday where they decorated Graham Cracker Houses, made ice cream cone Christmas trees, and read the Christmas story.

**What's coming up?** The lost sheep, baby Moses, lions in the den, pets, you and me... God loves us all! January is a month full of bible stories! As we discuss the parable of the Lost Sheep, we'll relate it to our lives by letting the preschoolers know that each one of them is important to us, to the class, and to God. On January 23<sup>rd</sup> or 24<sup>th</sup>, the children will have a special day to show their Dads how much they're loved. A breakfast snack will be provided in the activity center from 8:15-9am and they'll enjoy some fun games together.

**Registration** for the 2017-2018 school year begins the first week of February. Watch the bulletin for the dates for Pre-Registration for church members and current and previous preschool families. Then registration will be OPEN to all of our friends! Spread the word!

**Missions** – This month the preschool will collect Clorox wipes and boxes of Kleenex for a nearby title one school. Our neighbors need our help to stay healthy during this year's cold and flu season. If you're interested in dropping off a donation, stop by the preschool office.

**Shop at Fry's**—It's a great time to register your Fry's grocery card online so that the church preschool receives money back! The process is done online in just a few simple steps. Our account number is 80635. Throughout the years, we've bought playground toys, purchased a portable stage, and lots of other great items with the Fry's money. Thank you!

If you have any questions about the preschool, please contact Lora Norris or Adrienne Mesa at [preschool@gilbertumc.org](mailto:preschool@gilbertumc.org) or 480-892-9166

## Holy Huddles on the "Unity of the Church"

Bishop Robert Hoshibata will be holding several sessions of "Holy Huddles on the Unity of the Church" in the East District.

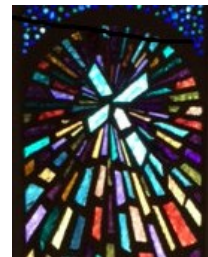
These sessions will be held as follows at three locations in January. Clergy and laity are encouraged to attend. Each congregation is asked to bring a chalice from their church as a symbol of unity in the midst of our diversity.

Please make attendance at one of the sessions a priority.

- Sunday, January 15<sup>th</sup> 2:00-4:30pm at Central United Methodist Church 1875 N. Central Avenue Phoenix
- Tuesday, January 17<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-9:00pm at Chandler United Methodist Church 450 E. Chandler Heights Road Chandler
- Saturday, January 21<sup>st</sup> from 9:30am-12:00pm at Paradise Valley United Methodist Church 4455 E. Lincoln Drive Paradise Valley

First UMC Gilbert will have a group attending the session on January 17<sup>th</sup>. Please contact Pastor Deborah if you would like to participate.

## An Update from Our Building Committee



On December 14 the plans for our new building were looked at by the staff of the Gilbert Planning Commission. They made minor suggestions that are being incorporated into our design. We anticipate getting the revised plans before a study session of the Planning Commission in February and on the agenda for consideration for the whole Commission on March 1. Meanwhile the architectural firm, DFDG, will begin work on the construction documents, in concert with our Construction Manager at Risk, Concord. We expect to have a guaranteed maximum price from Concord by about the third week of March, at which time we can pursue a financing package to bring before the church. If all falls according to plan, an all

church conference will be held the last week of March to approve final design and the financing package for construction. Many things can happen that might alter this schedule, but this is our hoped for plan at this moment.

We hope to move our office into temporary locations the Monday after Easter so that demolition / construction can begin the following Monday. We anticipate 7 – 8 months of construction.

Please continue to hold all involved in these important matters in your prayers!

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### **Winter Camp Registration: Winter Camp is just around the corner!**

*When: February 18-20 2017 Where: Mingus Mountain Camp What; Winter fun, speakers, sessions, Army of Light Worship + more! Cost: \$130.00 If you want more information, visit the website: [www.vividretreat2017.com/](http://www.vividretreat2017.com/) to register and reserve your spot. Spaces are limited!!*

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## Make a Miracle Happen

**A transplant can save a life!** Mom is a 42 year old, single parent of 3. Until recently, Mom was in college full time to follow her passion of social work but had to take a medical leave until she gets her health back. She has hereditary polycystic kidney disease resulting in her current condition: end stage renal failure. She is a strong woman...in a very difficult situation. The solution is a kidney transplant.

To live she needs a kidney. Her team of doctors at Mayo have told her she qualifies immediately for the transplant. A live donor is best. Otherwise, she may wait on the transplant list for 3 to 7 years for one.

Anyone with 2 healthy kidneys can donate. Mayo in Phoenix can determine if there is a match. If the kidney donor is not compatible, Mayo might be able to match donors through a paired kidney exchange. All expenses for the donor to qualify-as well as have the surgery and recovery-will be covered or managed by her insurance.

For more information about the process,

- check the National Kidney Foundation at <https://www.kidney.org/transplantation>.
- Practical information (completely anonymous to the recipient) can also be found at <https://www.mayoclinic.org/departments-centers/transplant-center>. The site will guide you through information and the process there.

If interested, you can begin a confidential screening process. Contact Mayo at the Living Kidney Donor Team via telephone: 480-342-1010 or via email: [SDL-Kidney@mayo.edu](mailto:SDL-Kidney@mayo.edu) Her client number is 73779308.

Otherwise, you can do something right now: state on your Arizona driver's license that you will be an organ donor. And tell your friends.



## Look What Your Giving Is Helping Us Do!

Thank you for your faithful and generous support of our church. During the month of December, your donations to the church's General Fund:

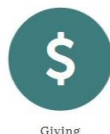
- Provided space for our Preschool's Christmas program on December 9. The sanctuary was full of friends and family members excited to see their preschoolers perform. 56 preschoolers were in the program, most of them from outside our church family.
- Provided space in our Activity Center, and many volunteer helpers, for Breakfast with Santa, an event for foster families sponsored by Arizona's Children's Association and our Missions Ministry Team. The Activity Center was filled with over 300 people who had a great time making crafts, getting pictures taken with Santa, and of course eating breakfast! This event brought many families onto our church campus for the first time.
- Made possible through the work of our Music Director Marty Province, Organist Jonathan Cochran, over 50 members of our Chancel Choir and 20 instrumentalists, the presentation of our cantata, Christmas Carol Celebration, in both traditional services on December 11. What a treat for everyone in worship that day!

Without your gifts, we could not do this work which is all focused on our Mission "To Lead People of All Ages on the Journey to Become Deeply Devoted Followers of Jesus"!

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** To ensure the deductibility of your church contributions, do not file your 2016 income tax return until you have received a written acknowledgment of your contributions from the church. Some of your contributions may not be tax deductible if you file your tax return before receiving a written acknowledgment of your contributions from the church. Year-end giving statements will be sent out as soon as possible after all 2016 giving has been recorded.

Susan Bowers is stepping down as Finance Committee Chair at the end of 2016. Please join the committee in thanking her for her service as Chair. Our new Finance Chair will be LeRoy Johnson. If you have any questions about the church's finances, or if you would like to receive a copy of the monthly financial statements, please contact LeRoy Johnson, Finance Chair ([Financechair@gilbertumc.org](mailto:Financechair@gilbertumc.org)) or Deanna Helland, Church Treasurer/Accountant (480-892-9166, [accountant@gilbertumc.org](mailto:accountant@gilbertumc.org)).

The QR code below is for giving via your mobile device. Or click on the GIVING link on our website to process your donation on-line. If you have any questions about on-line giving options, or if you need help setting up your on-line giving, please contact our Financial Secretary, Taleen Carpenter (480-892-9166, [financialsecretary@gilbertumc.org](mailto:financialsecretary@gilbertumc.org)) or Deanna Helland (480-892-9166, [accountant@gilbertumc.org](mailto:accountant@gilbertumc.org)).



## Anniversary Celebrations

January 2nd	Eric & Shawna Palmer	24 Years
January 3rd	David & Lauraie Moore	30 Years
January 6th	Garry & Gayle Disch	21 Years
January 11th	James & Elisa Tinsley	3 Years
January 18th	Philip & Ava La Rose	
January 24th	Herb & Carol Miller	14 Years



## Birthday Celebrations

January 2nd	Cody Anderson
January 3rd	Don Adams
January 8th	Bea Kurtz
January 9th	Karl Kotsonas
January 10th	Trish Jung
January 12th	Hailey Palmer
January 13th	Steve Losey
January 14th	Jennifer Karavakis
January 16th	Emily Ingalls
January 18th	Elice Province
January 19th	Mike Griffith
January 21st	Lori Wilkins
January 25th	Beth Boesch & Keely Orndorff
January 26th	Makena Sy & Christian Waechter
January 31st	Sam Lerner





## Congregational Care to Expand Ministry

In January we will begin a training for Congregational Care Ministers at First Gilbert. Congregational Care Ministers (CCMs) are lay ministers who work alongside of the pastors to provide care for the church family, enabling us to provide a deeper level of care. They are trained to do a broad range of tasks depending on interest and gifts, including hospital visits, nursing home ministry, homebound communion, funeral care, food tidings, writing notes of hope, leading support groups, or doing fun things to offer care and love to those who are hurting in the congregation. Quite frankly, the opportunities are only limited by the imaginations of the ministers. And yet, we work in an organized and intentional way.

Congregational Care ministers differ from Stephen Ministers. Stephen Ministers are trained to do primarily one-to-one ministry. They are the "after" people. Stephen Ministers are a needed aspect of our Congregational Care here at First Gilbert. But the majority of the day-to-day care will be done by CCMs, who are the "before and during" people.

CCMs also differ from our Health and Wellness Team. This team consists of mostly health professionals who lead us in blood pressure Sundays and blood drives, keep us healthy with wellness events, keep the environmental health of our campus, and maintain our medical lending closet. They are also a vital team to our Congregational care.

We will be offering training beginning on Wednesday, January 11 from 6:30-8:30 for 9 weeks. If you are interested and have reviewed the requirements, you can find an application form on the website at [www.firstgilbert.church](http://www.firstgilbert.church). The cost for class materials is \$15.00. Training will be offered again in the future. There is also the opportunity to attend the training in April in Kansas City.

Because CCMs work along with the Pastors, there are Biblical and theological requirements, church membership requirements, and Safe Sanctuary training requirements, in addition to the CCM Training. A list of these requirements are also available on the website.

Congregational Care Ministers will be expected to commit to at least three hours per week to this ministry and attend a monthly Continuing Education and Information session.

For further information, contact Rev. Gwen Mader at 480-892-9166, [pastorgwen@gilbertumc.org](mailto:pastorgwen@gilbertumc.org) or Pam Campbell, Congregational Care Coordinator at 480-907-7673, [tommypam@cox.net](mailto:tommypam@cox.net).

## Congregational Care Needs

We invite you and your family to consider ways you could be a blessing to others in the church:

- Several of our members cannot come to church unless they receive a ride. Rides are currently needed from Mesa, Gilbert 85295 and Gilbert 85234
- Housecleaning help - One time or ongoing with no pay.
- Provide family meals to those ill or following surgery by becoming a part of the Food Tidings team.
- Donations of the following new items are currently needed for Cancer Kits and Surgery Kits – cold packs, waterproof cast & bandage protectors, colored pencils.

Contact Pastor Gwen at 480-892-9166 or [pastorgwen@gilbertumc.org](mailto:pastorgwen@gilbertumc.org) if you would like to help out in any of these ways.



## Prayer Minister Appreciation Dinner & Worship

On Thursday, January 19<sup>th</sup> in Rm 142 we will be appreciating our Prayer Ministers with a Dinner and time of worship. The event will go from 5:30-7:00pm.

All Prayer Ministers are invited and asked to RSVP to [pastorgwen@gilbertumc.org](mailto:pastorgwen@gilbertumc.org). If you have been blessed by the ministry of these individuals and would like to assist with serving, please contact Pastor Gwen.



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***Gen X: Rediscover Life with Faith Sunday School: Meets at 11am in room 201. The class will begin a new series on 1/8/17. In seven sessions, Seamless a study by Angie Smith covers the people, places, and promises of the Bible, trying them together into the greater story of Scripture. Participants in this study will gain an overarching understanding of the fundamental layout and meaning of the Bible.***

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## Music Ministries

Now we find ourselves at the start of a new year, a time when we make resolutions . . . many of which we are unable to maintain. The Music Ministry offers you a chance to make a resolution that is easy to keep, one that benefits you and the church. Why not make 2017 the year that you become involved in one of the musical groups at church? Share your talents with others through helping to lead in worship. Time commitments are minimal, and the rewards are numerous. (Since you sang with us on Cantata Sunday you passed the "audition.")

In addition to making music, members support one another during good times and bad. At the close of each Chancel Choir rehearsal, we take the opportunity to share joys and concerns before prayer. Often, we hear stories of members (and former members) who are going through difficult situations. During this time, members have told of similar experiences and how the choir had served as an extended family, offering Christian love and support. From personal experience, I know that this is one of the most valuable functions of our choirs. If a person is open and receptive, our musicians are there to help through those rough times, and you are invited to join us.

It is often said that what one gains from a program is directly related to what one gives. What better way to start to RECEIVE more from your church than by GIV-

ING of yourself to one of its ministries? Make no mistake, we hope that you will want to become involved in the music program, but if not in music, consider where you can best use your talents, make the contact, and get started. For information about opportunities in music, contact Marty Province at [music@gilbertumc.org](mailto:music@gilbertumc.org).

Upcoming Events:

**Third Friday Jam Session** (First one of the new year) – January 20, 7:00-10:00 in the Church Library. Bring an instrument (including your voice) for an evening of informal music making. (You can also come and just listen.)



## 2017 Leadership Team

As we begin a new year, the Ministry teams are welcoming new members, preparing new chairpersons and rolling their sleeves up to start work on 2017. Please keep everyone on these teams in your prayers. Reach out to them to encourage and offer assistance. It is this church's mission to "Lead people of all ages on the journey to become deeply devoted followers of Jesus." These teams are charged with guiding all of us to meet that mission.



## Administrative Board

The Administrative Board members represent officers from various church committees including Ministry Team Council (MTC), Lay Leaders, Lay Members, Church Accountant, Finance, Trustees, Staff Parish Relations and Building Committee. This team meets every other month and makes sure that all the components of the church's ministries are working within the guidelines of UMC and are working towards the church's mission.

Chairperson: Garin Campbell

Current Members: Kitty McGrath, June Morrison (Emeritus at Large) plus a representative from all of the committees mentioned above.

## Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees is chartered to oversee the physical campus and all legal matters including the maintenance, insurance coverage and adequacy of church property, buildings and equipment. This team meets on a monthly basis.

Chairperson: To be elected in January 2017

Current members: Kevin Boesch, Dan Vrana, Bruce Woolsey, Lydia Ramirez, Al Reynolds, Erik Scharff, Diana Elliott

Newly Elected: Rod Mader & June Krueger

## Finance

The Finance committee provides oversight of financial resources and providing a framework for budget development.

Chairperson: Leroy Johnson (newly elected)

Current Members: Janet Bose, Stuart Wiemers, Laurel

Redman, Karyn Neal

Newly Elected: Kim Harding & Jim Hall

## Lay Delegate to Annual Conference

These church members have been elected to represent our church at annual conference. They serve on a number of administrative committees in an ex officio role.

Philip Tesarek & Kristy Bottesch

Gayle Disch (alternate)

## Leadership Development & Nominations

This committee is charged to identify, develop, deploy, evaluate and monitor Christian spiritual leadership for the congregation.

Chairperson: Rev. Deborah Lerner

Current Members: Elice Province, Mary Vrana, Norma Mayne, Jo Asplin

Newly Elected: Kitty McGrath & Pam Johnson

## Lay Leaders

This group is charged to guide church council on matters regarding leadership (other than employed staff) and to identify, train and support leaders in the congregation.

Chairperson: Rev. Deborah Learner

Current Members: Kelly McClain, Michelle McClain, Kristy Bottesch

Newly Elected: Gary McGrath & Kitty McGrath

## Ministry Team Council (MTC)

The committee meets every other month and is responsible for all program ministries of the church.

Chairperson: Anita Broughton  
Current Members, Chairs of the following teams: Adult Education, Childrens Chair, Family Ministry, Missions, Sports Ministry, Health & Wellness, Preschool, Prayer, Historian, AV Tech Team, Worship & Youth.

## Generosity

This committee is charged to guide the congregation to have an attitude of stewardship and generosity. They carry our an annual campaign to raise funding.

Chairperson: TBD  
Current Members: Katie Smith  
Newly Elected: Tommy Campbell & Lori Van Dam

## Staff Parish Relations

This committee is charged to reflect biblically and theologically on the role and word of the pastor(s) and staff as they carry out their leadership responsibilities. The committee assist the pastor(s) and staff in assessing their gifts, maintaining health holistically and work-life balance, and setting priorities for leadership and service. They set personnel policies and oversee issues related to employment.

Chairperson: Sharon Kotsonas  
Current Members: Michelle Comstock, Brian O'Brian, Chris Odell, Kitty McGrath  
Newly Elected: Sini Ouellette, Dan Murphy & Aryn Peppin

## Adult Education

This committee is charged to select curriculum and provide education opportunities that meet the spiritual needs of the adult congregation members. The scope includes Sunday school classes and Wednesday Evening classes, retreats, men and women groups.

Chairperson: Anita Broughton (newly elected)  
Current Members: Sylvia Harris, Mike Miller  
Newly Elected: JoAnn Mannion, Molly Hahn, Deanna Hel-land, June Morrison, Ashley Reynolds

## Family Ministry

This committee is charged to identify, organize and provide ministry events that encourage family faith development for families of all kinds and for the church family as a whole. Past events organized by this committee are Family Fun Festival, Chili & Caroling, End of Summer Luau and Friday Nights Family Night.

Chairperson: Katie Smith (newly elected)  
Current Members: Jenny Vallera, Bethany Castle, Michael Castle  
Newly Elected: Carrie Mueller

## Children Ministry

This committee is charged to identify, organize and provide ministry to the children of this church. This team coordinates volunteers and activities for FIRSTKIDZ (Sunday School), Wednesday WILDS and Vacation Bible School.

Chairperson: Vicky Hanson (newly elected)  
Current Members: Debbie Munn  
Newly Elected: Jeni Hemingson, Jennifer Karavakis, Ellie Koenig, Ron Dalton

## Invitation/Welcoming/Evangelism

This committee is charged with creating invitational opportunities to attract those with no church family and creating an atmosphere of welcome and inclusion for those who visit.

Co-Chairpersons: Tom & Linda McKinley (newly elected)  
Current Members: Cindie Remple, Phyllis Spittell, Michelle Reynolds  
Newly Elected: Sandra Campbell, Judy Bristow, Elaina Harwick, Cindy Howell, Cathy Panella

## Youth Ministry

This committee is charged to identify, organize and provide education, activities and programming for youth 7th grade—12th grade. Scope of responsibilities include Sunday school, Confirmation, Sunday Evening Fellowship and mission trips.

Chairperson: Jo Beth Minks  
Current Members: Ray Vallera, Ron Mason (Senior Advisor)  
Newly Elected: Alex Houseman, Erik Scharff, Dan Minks, Keith Carpenter, Taleen Carpenter

## Worship

This committee shapes to worship life of the congregation in all its fullness.

Chairperson: Barb Burford (newly elected)  
Current Members: Brian Fischer(AV), Herb Miller (Greeters), Gary McGrath (Ushers), Mary Ann Kolmer & Pam Johnson (Communion), Marty Province (Music Director), Troy McDonald (Contemporary Music), Sean Comstock & Cindie Rempel (Acolytes) and Charlotte Hazelrigg (Liturgists).  
At Large (all newly elected): Barb Burford, Norma Mayne, Beth Flores, Barb Carroll and Lynn Carroll

## Upcoming January Classes

**Congregation Care Minister Training** Wednesday Evenings at 6:30pm 1/11—3/15/17 Rm 133 Taught by Rev. Gwen Mader  
People who are hurting find not only relief but hope and companionship through our congregational care ministry. Congregational Care Ministers (CCMs) are lay ministers who work alongside of the pastors to provide care for the church family, enabling us to provide a deeper level of care. In this 9 week training, you will be equipped with the tools and skills necessary for providing ministry in this capacity. Contact Pastor Gwen for an application and the requirements for becoming a CCM.

**Serving from the Heart** Wednesday Evenings at 6:30pm 1/11—2/15/17 Room 142 Taught by Sylvia Harris  
Does your ministry match who God created you to be? In this six week journey you will discover your intended role in the body of Christ. This study will help you assess your spiritual gifts, talents and abilities, individuality, dreams, passions and experiences—all adding up to an enhanced capacity to serve God and neighbor.

**Financial Peace University** Wednesday Evenings at 6:30pm 1/11—3/8/17 Room 201 Taught by Janet Bose  
Through video teaching, class discussions and interactive small group activities, FPU presents biblical practical steps to money management. This plan will show you how to get rid of debt, manage your money, spend and save wisely, and much more.

**Alpha FREE Celebration Dinner on Tuesday, 1/10 at 6:30pm in the Activity Center**  
Classes (including dinner) begin Wednesday Evenings 5:45pm 1/11/17—3/22/17 in the Activity Center. Alpha is an opportunity to explore the meaning of life in a relaxed, friendly setting. The course is a basic introduction to Christianity. Taught by Mike Miller.

To register for these classes please contact the office at 480-892-9166 or fill out the registration form on line at:  
<https://firstumcgilbert.wufoo.com/forms/m10txy5codi4czt/>

## Support Groups Beginning in January

**Grief Share** is a support group that meets weekly. You'll find it to be a warm, caring environment and will come to see your group as an "oasis" on your long journey through grief. This 13-week program has been developed to help and provide encouragement after the death of a spouse, child, family member or friend. This group will meet on Saturdays from 9:30am—11am from January 14, 2017 to April 8, 2017. The group is facilitated by Trish Jung and Kay Pealstrom. You can register at <https://www.griefshare.org/leaderzone/my/groups/74811> or contact the church office at 480-892-9166.

**Divorce Care** is a support group that meets weekly. This 13-week program is designed to help people recover from the pain of separation and divorce. The group is structured to review an encouraging and information-packed video, small group discussion and a workbook each week. This group will meet on Tuesdays from 6:30pm—8:00pm from January 17, 2017 to April 11, 2017. The group is facilitated by Adriana Hernandez. You can register on line at <https://www.divorcecare.org/groups/74812> or contact the church office at 480-892-9166.

**Living Hope** groups are designed to provide an ongoing support structure to help trauma survivors hold one another up and give each person practical skills and tools in order to regain their lives and rebuild their families. The group will meet weekly beginning, Sunday, January 8th at 1pm in room 201. Join us! The groups are facilitated by Steve Hanson and Beth Flores. Contact the office at 480-892-9166 to register.

## Lord, What Do You Want to do Through Me?

It is often said that great tragedies build great strength. I saw my mother suffer a tragedy when my sister was killed during a violent crime. I couldn't believe something like that could happen to our family. I prayed I would never know the pain my mother was enduring. A short three years later my fear became true. In April of 2015 I lost my 23 yr. old son Nicholas to a heroin overdose. It was the worst thing I've experienced. I felt an indescribable pain as a piece of me died. My heart was in need of healing and mending and by the grace of God, my family, my close friends, my neighbors and my church family I was able to feel whole again. God used Facebook to lead me to a wonderful ministry called Hurting Moms, Mending Hearts out of California. I communicated with the publisher Sherry Ward and the author of the workbook, Cathy Brown, via emails and phone calls and after reading the material I knew I was not alone, I felt hope and peace again. I started thinking "what can God do through me at this church" to bring hope, peace and healing to other hurting moms? Four months after losing my Nick, I started leading my first Hurting Moms group on Wednesday nights. It was an amazing experience for me as I was receiving my healing along with 9 other moms from our community and our church family. A few months later I started a second group and a third was just completed in November 2016. I have received a number of emails and calls letting me know how God's work through this ministry have brought much peace, hope, and even joy! Praise God!

I'm excited to host a Meet and Greet with the author of Hurting Moms, Mending Hearts, Cathy Taylor here at our church library (room 142) on Sunday, January 15<sup>th</sup> at 12:30 pm. Light refreshments and great fellowship for all Moms wishing to attend. Cathy will be taping my testimony for a live Facebook video and she also wants to have a group photo from this event to add to her website. Please come and bring your books for signing. Invite other moms from the community who may also benefit from this time of encouragement. May God continue to use each one of us to lead all people to the Peace and Love of Christ. ~ Sharon Kotsonas

