

# The Evangel

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

May 2017



**It's Spring in Arizona!** We enjoy the “cooler” temperatures as long as we are able, knowing that searing summer is not far behind!

May brings the end of the school year for most of our students, and with that come graduations and other celebrations. What a great time to celebrate ministry at First United Methodist Church of Gilbert, as well! Please enjoy reading about upcoming activities and ways to be involved in ministry through our church family!

May the blessings of Spring flow to you and yours!

## Graduation Sunday - May 21

We will recognize graduates from high school and any level of university on Sunday May 21, by listing their names in the bulletin and recognizing them at each service. Please send us the names of those you know who call First UMC home, and the school from which they are graduating.

### \*\*\*Youth and Family Event\*\*\*

Join us for the Arizona Rattlers Game Sunday, May 28th at 3:00 pm. Tickets are \$15.00. RSVP to Ray at [youthministry@gilbertumc.org](mailto:youthministry@gilbertumc.org) by May 7th.



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

05/14	Mother's Day
05/20	First Aid/CPR
05/21	Confirmation
05/21	Graduation Recognition
05/29	Memorial Day

## Message from Pastor Deborah



May is a time of transition and change in many households. Graduations are happening, and promotions from elementary into junior high or high school. There is a looking forward to changed schedules for summer, and time away, and summer camps. The sweep of time from April through year end for those in schools is all about testing, and finals, and final papers, and proms, and graduation events. In the church we observe promotion Sunday and celebrate confirmations as youths declare themselves ready for full membership.

The Bible has something to say about transitions. Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 reminds us that life is all about change.

*For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:  
a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;  
a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;  
a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;  
a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;  
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a time to lose;  
a time to keep, and a time to throw away; a time to tear, and a time to sew;  
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate;  
a time for war, and a time for peace.*

The question for different moments in our lives remains the same: what is this the time for? If this is a time of sadness, it is ok to be sad, and weep, knowing that it will not last forever. If it is a time for withholding, we can be sure a time will come for sharing. If it is a time for death, we can grieve and weep for all we are worth, and trust that by God's grace we will make it through. We can't rush from this season into another. There is a fullness of time that must be observed before we can move on.

What time is it in your life? If you are struggling, can this scripture help you know that this is just a part of the journey that will eventually ease? If you are in a season of loss, might this scripture give you permission to experience the fullness of your sadness while also holding onto the promise that the season will not be permanent? If it is a time to move on, can you learn to respect the sense of loss even as you lean into the goodness you anticipate?

The author of Ecclesiastes lived faithfully but without the hope we have in Christ Jesus, who died that we might live, and lives that we might die without fear. Carry the hope and promise of Easter with you through every season of life: Christ has died, Christ has risen, Christ will come again. And daily, in the seasons of life, Christ is with us, by the power of his Spirit, to see us through.

Blessings and peace,  
Pastor Deborah



## Becoming Servant Leaders



“But that’s not the way it will be with you. Whoever wants to be great among you will be your servant. Whoever wants to be first among you will be your slave— just as the Human One didn’t come to be served but rather to serve and to give his life to liberate many people.” - Matthew 20: 26-28 (NRSV)

Do you remember, when you were just a child, what you wanted to be when you grew up? Many of us had dreams of greatness and valor. We think high thoughts of becoming someone the world thinks is awesome – someone like. . . a Superhero. Some of us are still trying to meet those expectations!

The truth is, we will never be great until we surrender our concept of greatness to the scripture. We have a God who wants to make us great in his sight. In fact, God created us to be great. But God’s plan is just the opposite of the world’s. The scripture tells us that to be great we have to humble ourselves and become servants of others. We have to lay down our lives, stop seeking the world’s form of greatness, and give our hearts entirely to God’s service. God’s plan won’t earn us a place in the history books or in Who’s Who. Yet those who follow God’s path will earn an eternal reward, and in this life, significance and satisfaction.

You have been called by God to a task that only you can do. God will use you in mighty ways to further God’s Kingdom when you humbly serve those around you. Yet it will cost you to do it. It will cost you everything.

John MacArthur, in his commentary states, “The cost of true greatness is humble, selfless, sacrificial service. The Christian who desires to be great and first in the kingdom is the one who is willing to serve in the hard place, the demanding place, the place where he is not appreciated and may even be persecuted. Knowing that time is short and eternity is long, he is willing to spend and be spent. He is willing to work for excellence without becoming proud, to withstand criticism without becoming bitter, to be misjudged without becoming defensive, to withstand suffering without succumbing to self-pity.”

This is what those who have a role in the work of the church ascribe to. This is the attitude we are to have when we do small things with great love. Are you great in God’s eyes? Indeed you are when you give yourself to humble, selfless, sacrificial service!

Reaching out with God’s Amazing Love,  
Pastor Gwen

**Please join us on Sunday, May 7 for the Consecration of  
New Stephen Ministers and Congregational Care Ministers.**

## **Determination is a response to the character of God.**

Throughout Scripture, we can discover that God has been faithful to His people. He rescued them from slavery in Egypt. He sent Jesus to rescue them from their sin. He remained faithful to the early church as they spread the message of Jesus throughout the world. When we see how God gave His people what they needed to continue following Him, we can respond with determination believing that God will give us what we need to finish what we start.

## **Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to help us have determination.**

When Jesus gave His disciples the incredible mission of spreading the message of the Gospel throughout the world, He didn't make them do it alone. Instead, He sent the Holy Spirit to empower them to show faith and determination in the face of whatever might happen along the way. When we put our faith in Jesus, the Holy Spirit empowers us to finish what we start.

## **Our Memory Verse for May comes from Galatians 6:9.**

In **Galatians 6:9**, we read, ***"Let us not become tired of doing good. At the right time we will gather a crop if we don't give up"*** (NIRV). When Paul wrote this verse to the church at Philippi, he encouraged the followers of Jesus to show determination and keep doing good. We may not see results right away, but in time, God will help us see that finishing what we started was worth all of the effort. (For more information, see Page 7.)

## Hello, FirstKidz Pre-School Friends!

It's time to "Come to the Castle" and hear stories from the King. We can't wait to share both this theme and these stories with you. This month's theme was inspired by Chris Tomlin's new book, *Good Good Father*.

As we travel through the stories of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, Hagar, Gideon, and Daniel, your preschoolers will learn that . . . .

God is always with me.

God hears me and gives me what I need.

God teaches me the way to go.

God protects me.



It's a fantastic focus that is sure to help your preschoolers know that God is with them all the time.



Uniquely Wired, Wonderfully Made.

## ***It's almost time for Vacation Bible School!!***

Registration for this year's VBS is open online on our website at [gilbertumc.org/vbs-registration/](http://gilbertumc.org/vbs-registration/). Plan to bring your kids Monday through Friday, June 5 through 9, from 9:00 am—Noon for lots of fun, fellowship and learning! The cost is \$20 per child, with a family cap of \$60.

Camperships are available as needed.

# Preschool News

What's been happening?



## Preschool Olympics

The 2017 Preschool Olympics were amazingly fun this year! After our class "team" relay races, the children enjoyed athletic games that encouraged good sportsmanship. Parents led fun events, such as scooter bug racing, long jump, hurdles and kids lacrosse! A huge thank you to our parents and the church community for their help and support for this event!

## Preschoolers with Heart (Missions)

For our mission this month, preschoolers and their families are invited to donate items to help support this year's VBS. This month we'll collect:

- |                          |                            |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| Rice Krispy Treats       | Graham Crackers            |
| Corn or Rice Chex cereal | Fruit Roll Ups             |
| Cheerios                 | Individual Applesauce Cups |
| Goldfish                 | Raisins                    |



## What's Coming Up?

Enrolled preschoolers may join our three summer camps held in May. We have C is for Cooking, Adventures with Blocks, and Patriotic Pals. Call the preschool office for more information.



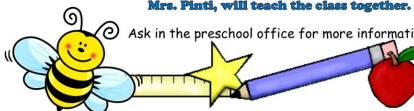
We're very excited to offer a **new class** for the 2017-2018 school year!

**PreK 12:15 -2:45pm**  
**M-Th**

Tuition \$270 a month

Our wonderful teachers, Mrs. Marlinga and Mrs. Fintz, will teach the class together.

Ask in the preschool office for more information!



If you have any questions about the preschool, please call Adrienne Mesa or Lora Norris, preschool directors at 480-892-9166.



# Youth News



On Sunday April 23rd, First Gilbert Youth split up for a fun night of Escape Room and bowling activities. Senior high youth went to Escape Rooms to test their skills at solving clues to find a key to escape from the “Lost Dutchman Room” and the “Mad Hatters Tea Party Room.” Both groups were successful at getting out before time expired. This was a great team building experience prior to our mission trips.



We also had a group of Junior High youth and 6th graders go bowling and have fun in the arcade. We had lots of fun and new friends participated!

## **Stock Sale Fundraiser update**

Thank you to everyone for supporting our Youth Stock Sale Fundraiser! We were able to raise over \$2500 this year to help fund our three mission trips this summer to San Francisco, California June 17-24<sup>th</sup>; Cortez, Colorado, July 2-7<sup>th</sup> and to Washington D.C July 16-23rd.

## **Conversations to Prepare Our Hearts for Mission Work**

Meet at *SoZo Coffee House* (SW corner Alma School/Warner) at 1982 N. Alma School Road in Chandler. The remaining dates are Friday, June 9<sup>th</sup> from 4-5pm and Saturday June 10<sup>th</sup> from 11am-Noon.

## **Adult Youth Council Meetings**

The typical meeting is the second Thursday evening of each month, with a break during June & July. The next meeting is in room 140 on Thursday May 11<sup>th</sup> from 7pm – 8:30pm.

## **\*\*RATTLERS FOOTBALL GAME – Youth & Family Event**

Tickets to the May 28<sup>th</sup> - 3pm are \$15 each. Please RSVP to Ray @ youthministry@gilbertumc.org by May 7<sup>th</sup>.

## **Youth Summer Volleyball – (beginning the first part of June thru the end of July)**

We have enough youth for two Senior High teams and one Junior High team to represent 1<sup>st</sup> Gilbert. Rosters are in process and we are waiting for scheduling to complete. More information will follow soon.



# K-6<sup>th</sup> Grade and Kids Worship

(Continued from Page 4)

## WEEK 1

We start our discussion about determination in **Acts 3 and 4**. Peter and John are arrested for healing a man and teaching about Jesus. They are brought before the Sanhedrin where they tell them to stop talking about Jesus or face severe consequences. Peter and John show determination as they proclaim that nothing can keep them from talking about Jesus.

Bottom Line: **Keep going even when it gets hard.** Life will be difficult. As much as we might try, we can't escape hardships. But in those times, we can trust God to give us what we need to show determination and keep going.

## WEEK 2

In **Acts 10**, Peter was a Jewish follower of Jesus. Cornelius was a Roman commander. These two were unlikely friends even in the best of circumstances. But through a couple of visions, these two men were about to cross paths. And through this meeting, Peter discovered the mission Jesus gave the disciples was way bigger than he originally thought.

Bottom Line: **Keep going even when the job is bigger than you think.** There are times we start a job and soon realize that it will be a much larger endeavor. Our first instinct might be to give up all together, but we need to keep going. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we can push through and show determination right up until the end.

## WEEK 3

In **Ephesians 6:10-18**, we read a portion of a letter Paul wrote to the church at Ephesus. The early church is feeling attacked from all sides, and Paul encourages them by reminding them how the Holy Spirit can help them. We have armor that stand against anything that we might face in this world.

Bottom Line: **God gives you what you need to keep going.** We pray that through this lesson, kids will realize all they have available to them right now to help them show determination when they feel like giving up.

## WEEK 4

Finally, we head to **Revelation 21:1-8, 22-27 and 22:1-5**. John's vision of the New Heaven and New Earth is an encouragement to anyone facing trials in their life. Through Jesus, we have the opportunity to spend forever with God in a world where there is no sorrow or pain or suffering, where our hope in Jesus is fully realized.

Bottom Line: **Keep going because God knows the end of the story.** Showing determination in the face of difficult situations is never easy; however, because of Jesus, we have a hope that God will make all things new. God does know the end of the story, and we can trust Him!

## It is Almost Camp Time!!

We now have information from Desert Southwest Conference UMC about this year's summer church camps.

This summer there are seven Elementary camps, five Junior High camps and five Senior High camps. There also is one fun camp for all ages as Mingus Mountain Camps celebrate its 70th year! For a complete listing of camp dates and details check out [DSCCAMPs.org](http://DSCCAMPs.org).

When you take a look at the website make sure to see the different type of camps. There is a Horse Camp and this will be the second year for the Younger Elementary Camp which is shorter (2 nights) for K-3rd grade with one adult.



The Mingus Mountain Camp bus is available again this year. Campers will meet at the UMC 1550 E. Meadowbrook Avenue Phx, AZ 85014 for pick up and drop off. The cost for each one way bus ride to and from Mingus Mountain is \$25.



## Look What Your Giving Is Helping Us Do!

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

- Provided nine worship services during Holy Week, planned and carried out by Pastor Deborah and Pastor Gwen along with our Worship team, including Music Director Marty Province, Organist Jonathan Cochran, Contemporary Worship Leader Troy McDonald, our Chancel Choir, Praise Band, Youth Praise Band and many other volunteers. The services were attended by 1,653 people, including 21 first-time guests.
- Provided an Exploring Membership Luncheon on April 9, coordinated by Welcome and Connection Director Sylvia Harris with Pastor Deborah and several church leaders in attendance to answer questions and discuss the many programs our church offers. Nine new members joined our congregation on Easter Sunday, and another five were joined on April 30.
- Provided space for a Girl Scout camp-out in our Activity Center on April 21-22. Seven girls, along with their mothers and one grandma, attended this fun event. The girls earned canopy badges, cooking badges, movie badges and public speaking badges.

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

**Please remember one of the easiest financial gifts you can make to our church is to donate a portion of your 2016 tax refund. Your gift will be used to continue and expand our church's ministry efforts as set forth in our 2017 budget.**

March financial statement summaries are available in the church office. If you have any questions about the church's finances, or if you would like to receive a copy of the 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 online. If you have any questions about online giving options, or if you need help setting up your online giving, please contact our Financial Secretary, Taleen Carpenter (480-892-9166, [financialsecretary@gilbertumc.org](mailto:financialsecretary@gilbertumc.org)) or Deanna Helland (contact information above).



Giving



## Building on the Past/Believing in the Future Update Land Sale Update

At a recent all church conference, the trustees of First UMC were authorized to carry out the sale of the properties to the east and south of the church. A condition of the sale was that the water retention area (which is costly to maintain) would be included. A special land sale committee was appointed to oversee the details of the sale, under the oversight of the trustees. The chair of this group is Leroy Johnson. Members include Dan Vrana, Kitty McGrath, Erik Scharff, and Ed Stressman. Advisors include Joan Kreuger, Commercial Real Estate Agent, and Darrin Orndorff, architect, as well as Pastor Deborah.

Please pray for our land sale team as they oversee this complex process, and for the "right" buyer to show up quickly with the means to complete this sale.



## May Anniversary Celebrations

May 7	Ruth & Carter Lee	20 Years
May 14	Jimmie & Jacob Galvin	1 Year
May 15	Errol & Amy Ryland	35 Years
May 15	Dan & Mary Vrana	35 Years
May 19	Alan & Nancy Ball	27 Years
May 24	Joe & Lisa Strazz	20 Years
May 25	Matthew & Tara Pettengill	15 Years
May 26	Tom & Margaret Knoll	38 Years
May 26	Randy & Cheryl Wedmore	44 Years
May 29	Jo & Ronald Goslar	13 Years
May 29	Jeff & Lisa Kimbrough	29 Years
May 29	Aldon & Marilyn Pell	57 Years
May 29	Kim & Derek Updegraff	18 Years



## May Birthday Celebrations

3	Bethany Castle	12	Bruce Bettis	18	Gerri Crawley	26	Grace Wiemers
	Mike Clark		Jennifer St. Pierre	21	Michelle Comstock	27	Jim Wilkins
	Ryan Sovchik		Ricky Zeilstra		Chris Thompson	29	Joe Mayne
	Anna Trinidad	13	Kyle Frederick		Nate Koenig	30	Janet Bose
4	JoAnn Mannion	14	Steven Burks	22	Samuel Whittington		Michael Crann
	Angela Mittner		Michael Harris		Zachary Moore	31	Kyle Hanson
	Shawna Palmer		Jim Ramsey		Errol Ryland		Judy Haugen
5	Brian Fisher		Gunter Scharff	23	Emily Masterson		Katelyn Clark
	Joyce Metcalf		Susan Waechter	24	Austin Matterson		Jimmie Galvin
	Tucker Moore	15	Cade Burks	25	Eric Schmidt		Judy Strom
7	Alix Haugen	16	Garry Disch		Alaina Tesarek		
9	Stan Gill	18	Steve VandenBerg	26			
	Jason Rempel		Rebekah Alls				



## Orchard Africa Missions Trip Update:

The second international mission trip to Africa is almost here! The team of ten will board a plane to Atlanta and then to Johannesburg, South Africa on June 22nd. The team includes Janelle Chiricuzio, Gayle Disch, Adriana Hernandez, Mike Miller, Andrea Reiners, Al, Ashley, and Michelle Reynolds, Ed Taggard and Brianna Wiemers. From Johannesburg, they will travel to Mafikeng where we will stay in the Orchard: Africa Mission House. During the week, they will visit various villages and will hold a "Prayer" Vacation Bible School in the morning for children, and facilitate a vertical agriculture program for adults in the afternoon.



Orchard: Africa is the non-profit agency that the church has partnered with for this mission trip. The agency's programming structure is to develop and empower the local church and its leaders to be the response to extreme poverty and injustice. First UMC Gilbert's Mission Team wants to be a resource to the local churches in the Mafikeng area. The team's joy and enthusiasm for this work is bubbling over!

It has been about 20 months since they started preparing for the trip. Team members raised over \$35,000! The funds raised not only cover the travel cost and mission work to be done, but a portion goes into Orchard: Africa's direct ministry fund in South Africa for food/agriculture, care, education and ministry programming. Thank you for helping them reach their fundraising dollar goals! They are grateful for every dollar donated and for every prayer that is helping them stay focused for this journey!

## Donate PURSES for Moms

Help make Mother's Day special for moms in local domestic violence and family shelters. Purses are stuffed with goodies like cosmetics, scented lotions and bath gels, manicure and pedicure items, jewelry, and hair accessories. Donate your new & like new purses. We are also accepting donations of toiletries to fill the purses. Please double check your purses before donating them, and remove your personal items. All donated purses should be received in the church office by Sunday, May 7th.



## Calling All Crafty People!!!

### Fall Break - October 9th through 13

A community art camp for kids providing opportunities for all types of projects sponsored by First Kidz, our Children's Ministry at First United Methodist Church. To discover how you and your children can be involved, contact [Adriana.143.10@gmail.com](mailto:Adriana.143.10@gmail.com) or [childrensministry@gilbertumc.org](http://childrensministry@gilbertumc.org). Please pray for this program to provide an offering of creativity that helps children build a foundation of loving Christ. This program is being developed as a much-deserved dedication to our former Children's Ministry Director, Marsha Lehman.





## *New Members in April 2017*

*We are delighted to have several new members who joined the family of First United Methodist Church of Gilbert during the month of April. Please help us make our new members feel welcome!*



Keith and Taleen Carpenter



Heather Gomez



Dennis and Gail Greeley



Jean Roberts



Val Kellogg



Dave and Julie Melka



Mike and Peggy Johnston

(picture missing)



Donn and Joyce Brown



## Exploring Membership Luncheon

Sunday May 7 - 12:15 pm - Activity Center

For all who have considered becoming members and those who wonder what being a member entails, join us for lunch and a time of conversation and sharing. Learn about what it means to be Methodist and what it means to be a part of this particular Methodist church. Meet a few leaders; ask questions and receive a packet of helpful information. Let us know you plan to come by responding to Sylvia Harris, Director of Welcome and Connection, at [connection@gilbertumc.org](mailto:connection@gilbertumc.org) or by calling the church office. Child care is available if requested no later than Thursday May 4 at [nursery@gilbertumc.org](mailto:nursery@gilbertumc.org). We would love to have you!

## A Special “Thank You” on Sunday, June 4th

Many awesome individuals have faithfully taken time out of their busy schedules to volunteer with our children and youth. One of the most important things we can do as a church is to teach our children about Jesus’ love and promises, and then support them on their walk with Christ. As a church we will take time in each service on Sunday, June 4th to publically express our gratitude to these dedicated servants.

## Confirmation Sunday, May 21, 2017 11:00 am Service

Our confirmands will be with us in all services on May 21 and will be confirmed as part of the 11:00 am service. These youth have worked hard all year, under the leadership of Ryan Collins until his departure, and with the dedicated teaching of Aryn Peppin, to learn about their faith and what it means to express that faith in a United Methodist Church. They will be making the decision to become full, participating members of the church as we approach this date. Please hold them in prayer and give thanks for their presence among us.

## Safe Sanctuary Training

Sunday, May 21st 12:30pm—2:30pm Room 142

Tuesday, May 23rd 6pm—8pm Room 142

With upcoming Youth Missions Trips, Bible School for the kids, and commissioning of Congregational Care and Stephens Ministries, it is important to remember all of these volunteer opportunities require annual completion of Safe Sanctuary training as well as background screenings. Please email Sylvia Harris at [connection@gilbertumc.org](mailto:connection@gilbertumc.org) to sign up for a training or to find out if you are current on your training and background screening.

**First United Methodist Church of Gilbert**

**331 S. Cooper Road Gilbert, AZ 85233**

**480-892-9166**

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**Office Hours: 8am-4pm Monday—Thursday**

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**<http://www.facebook.com/FUMCofGilbert>**

FOR MOBILE GIVING

