

The Evangel

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

August 2017



Fall Kick-Off! Opportunities to get involved in First Gilbert This Month!

- **Friday, August 4-Sunday, August 6 - Magic Mountain!**
- **Sunday, August 6 - Open House for FIRST KIDZ!**
- **Wednesday, August 9 - Supper, Adult Classes, Wednesday Wilds, Choir Practice!**
- **Sunday, August 13 - Youth Ministry Info Meeting!**
- **Friday, August 25 - Diamondbacks Faith & Family Night!**

Mark your calendar and plan to attend as you are able!



CHURCH OF GILBERT

331 S. Cooper Road

Gilbert, AZ 85233

480-892-9166

www.firstgilbert.church

Office Hours:

Monday—Thursday 8a—4p

Friday By Appointment

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Important Dates

08/06	Children' Sunday School Open House
08/09	Wednesday Night Dinner/Classes
08/13	Youth Ministry Info Meeting
08/25	Diamondbacks Faith and Family Night

Message from Pastor Deborah



The desert in summer is a formidable place to live. In late July and early August we are struggling to survive the intense heat and rising humidity. It hardly seems the time for children to be filling backpacks for the “fall” return to school – but that’s what is happening. Those who have not already returned soon will.

And that means that it is time for us to boot up our “fall” season. This year will be an exciting one. We have a broad spectrum of Wednesday evening programs to enrich your spirits and help you become more proficient readers of the Bible; more attuned to the work of God among us; more aware of how the Christian life and faith is shaped in the light of God’s amazing love.

We hope eventually all persons who call First UMC home will attend the Alpha class at some point. It is a comprehensive survey of the Christian faith that will help you articulate your own journey and learn to share it with others. There is a retreat experience in which you will learn what it means to be filled with the Holy Spirit of God.

We also strongly recommend the Journey classes we are starting this fall, which will facilitate your journey toward knowing, loving, and serving God. The Disciple class will give you a strong grounding in the Bible. The Experiencing God class I will facilitate will draw you into deep and thoughtful consideration of how God works in our lives and how you can recognize and join that work. A number of support groups will help you work through all kinds of challenging times. Vicky Hanson will lead a series using materials by Andy Stanley, a pastor whose church created the Orange curriculum and who inspires many of us to be more faithful followers of Jesus. Join Pastor Gwen Sundays at 11:15 for a study of Luke starting August 13th.

I’m sure I am missing some. Each is a unique offering for a particular group of folks at a particular spot in the journey of faith. Check your bulletin and the rest of this newsletter for further information.

Which one is for you? I know one has your name written all over it! I hope you will pick one that intrigues you, that calls to you, that challenges you. Then commit yourself to regular attendance, and be here to grow with us into all that God calls us to do and be.

You’ll be glad you did.

Grace and Peace
Pastor Deborah

Why Missions?



Matthew 25:40 – “Then the King will reply to them, ‘I assure you that when you have done it for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you have done it for me.’”

Why does our church provide mission opportunities for its members? Have you ever considered the answer to that question? We have mission opportunities available all through the year. There is always something going on, whether it is the monthly meal at UMOM, gathering groceries for Gilbert Open Arms food pantry, staying the night at the church with homeless families, or going on a mission trip. As a church we are the hands and feet of Jesus in many ways. Yet, we are much more than that. We are a blessing to Jesus himself.

Doing acts of kindness and mercy with others in mission is a way we worship God. It is a way we honor Jesus with our lives. We do mission work as a church because in loving others we are loving Jesus himself. We serve because by our service toward others, we are doing it for God.

Our church gives you many opportunities to be involved. As I write this, we have homeless families living at night for a week at our church through Family Promise. Many of you are bringing in meals, playing with children, helping them with homework, keeping parents company in the evenings, and providing a safe place for them to sleep in our classrooms, away from shelters and the streets.

On the last Sunday of each month someone hands out bags for you to bring back the next week. Items of greatest need are listed on the bag. These bags help the families in need of food in the Gilbert area.

The second Saturdays each month people gather in the activity center at 2:00 and make a meal that is taken to UMOM's Watkins Shelter in Phoenix. Others come later in the afternoon to go as a group to serve the meal.

We blessed 310 school backpacks last Sunday and this week people are delivering them to schools and agencies in the area for children in need as they begin the new year. Coming up you will hear about the UMOM Walk for the Homeless and a chance to paint a house for someone who couldn't paint it for themselves through our Paint-a-Thon event. And there is more to come as we get closer to the holidays!

If any of these opportunities to love and serve Jesus grabs at your heart, just send off an email to missions@gilbertumc.org and we will get you connected. Or you can contact me, or a member of the mission team at the mission information table on Sundays.

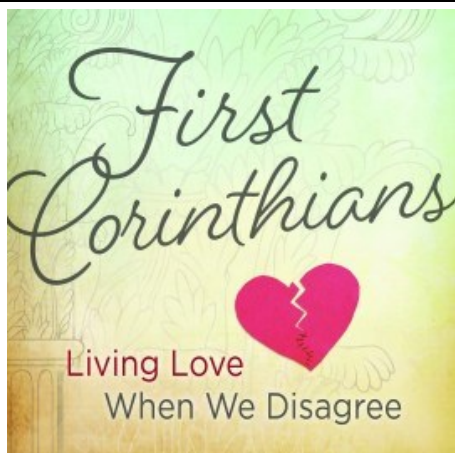
Why does our church provide mission opportunities for its members? Because we love Jesus!

Blessings to you as you serve!

Pastor Gwen

Finding Peace and Harmony When We Disagree

We're all different and imperfect, and even as Christians, we struggle to get along. Delve into the Apostle Paul's letter to the Corinthians to discover that the only way to deal with disagreements, differences, and divisions, while remaining true to what we believe, is by living out the radical love of Jesus Christ.



First Corinthians: Living Love When We Disagree
7-session DVD/ Book Study by Melissa Spoelstra

Tuesday Morning Women's Bible Study

**First United Methodist Church of Gilbert,
Tuesday, August 15, 2017 Room 142 (library)
9:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.
Workbook Cost: \$11.00**

The workbook for this study will be available for purchase on August 15th.

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

Are you looking for a way to get involved at church?

Would you like to learn more about the Bible?

Do you need a little time to refresh and recharge your soul without the kiddos?

Are you interested in making new friends?

Whether you are a Bible expert or are just starting your journey of faith, come join the Tuesday Morning Women's Bible Study!

We hope to see you on the 15th at 9:00!

Orchard Africa Missions Trip 2017

Submitted by Adriana Hernandez

It is with a humble heart that this team returns to our church family to share this journey. A journey that is hard to put into words.

The basic summary of our trip is simple. We taught vertical agriculture to 25 adults in the morning and taught "Prayer" Vacation Bible School to 23 children in the afternoon. The trip also included an overview of South African history, HIV training, a trip to a local cemetery and home visits in the village of Dihatshwane. We met local pastors working for Orchard: Africa and went to church in Top Village. We also visited the community garden of Top Village. The simple comes in what we did.

It is harder to put into words what we felt. We were welcomed, open arms adorned with happy faces. Smiles, songs and the love of Christ were everywhere we went. As we taught the two curriculums, adults and children were focused on the lessons, engaged in the opportunity to learn and present in the joy of the moment. God is evident. As a mission team, we each had our own concerns going in but once in, once you gave in and leaned into Christ the words came to share, pray and teach. When words didn't come, a hug always sufficed.

"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me - watch how I do it. **Learn the unforced rhythms of grace.** I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly." Matthew 11:28-30 MSG

The people of South Africa showed us the unforced rhythms of grace. A rhythm each of us are willing to share and to incorporate into life at home. Look for us (request us) to come and share our stories in your small groups. The mission trip reiterates to us in a bold and vibrant way that He is the creator of everything.

Team members Janelle Chiricuzio, Gayle Disch, Adriana Hernandez, Mike Miller, Al Reynolds, Ashley Reynolds, Michelle Reynolds, Andrea Reiners, Edward Taggard and Brianna Wiemers are all grateful for your support and prayers. We are all excited to share how this trip has remolded us to serve the Lord.



Don't forget to sign UP! Feed My Starving Children Friday August 18th 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

We have set up times when the kids with their families can go and help pack at the local location.

If interested in volunteering please email as space is limited.
Janelle Chiricuzio at childrensministry@gilbertumc.org

Mesa FMSC
1345 S Alma School Rd, Mesa, AZ 85210



FUMC- Gilbert Youth



AUGUST 2017

Youth Mission Trips

Our 3 youth mission's teams have returned safely and are reporting great successes. Mission trips are impacting and memorable for both leaders and students, and these trips could not have happened without the support of the congregation. It is with gratitude and appreciation that we thank all who supported the Youth Mission Trips, whether it was financially and/or prayerfully. We thank you all for partnering with us in furthering God's kingdom through action. In worship services on Sunday, August 13th, youth will give reports of their mission trips.

Confirmation Update

Confirmation Classes will be available for 7th-12th graders, and held for 10 weeks starting in January 2018. Further details will be provided near the end of the year.

Adult Youth Council Meetings

Wish to have input on Youth events, programs, etc... Then come join us on August 10, 2017! Currently meet on the 2nd Thursday of the month, 6:30-8:00 pm. Please contact Ray ASAP by email if interested.

Volunteers Needed- For Youth Sunday Morning Gatherings

Starting August 13th we will be splitting Senior High & Junior High for Sunday morning Gatherings, due to the number of youth we now have attending. We'll need more Male & Female group leaders for the split, contact Ray ASAP by email if interested.

PARENT & YOUTH INFORMATION MEETING

Sunday, August 13th, at 5 pm, there will be an informational meeting for youth parents in the Activity Center. We'll bring in pizza for dinner and share our summer stories to kick off our 2017/2018 year and Sunday evening activities so please RSVP by email to Ray at youthministry@gilbertumc.org

Salt River Tubing Sunday 8/27/17 from 8am-1pm - \$18 per person

Meet at church parking lot and leave by 8:30 am and return around 1-2pm. RSVP to Ray by August 20th.

Family Ministry News

D-Backs Faith & Family Night

Friday, August 25th 6:40 pm. Fireworks & the **Newsboys** concert after game! Tickets are \$22. Contact Ray Vallera to RSVP.

Mingus Mtn. Fall Family Camp 'Mountain Top Renewal'

Need 25 adults plus their families to RSVP by **August 7th** to reserve our spot for Sept 15-17, 2017. Archery, zip lines, fishing, disc golf, bible studies, fellowship, board games and many other opportunities will be available. Email Ray Vallera for more information.

If you have any questions about Youth or Family Ministries, please contact Ray Vallera at youthministry@gilbertumc.org or 602-291-1968.



FIRST KIDZ - Fall Curriculum for August!

Preschool

This month we partner with you to introduce your preschoolers to this wonderful world God made.



Elementary

God is the all-powerful, Creator of the universe. There is no one else who has the position or power of God. We can't help but respond to Him with respect. When it comes to people, everyone is important for two reasons: God made them in His image and Jesus died for them. That's why respect is also a reflection of the character of Christ in us. When we see people like Jesus sees them, we can show everyone they matter to God.



RESPECT is a response to the character of God.

Wednesday Wilds begins August 9th! Adventure awaits!

Please join us for dinner at 5:45 in Activity Center then classes at 6:30 for Wednesday Wilds and Wednesday Book club!@

Lego Bible Stories:

Come join us as we build and explore more bible stories with Legos. We will get creative while exploring the stories of Jesus!

Open to K-3rd graders

Book Club

We will continue the series from C S Lewis the Chronicles of Narnia with The Voyage of the Dawn Treader!

Join us as we explore this fun series and act out, create, explore the meanings behind and just have a fun creative time together!

Open to 4th-6th graders

For information about Children's Ministry contact Janelle Chiricuzio at childrensministry@gilbertumc.org.



Curriculum Built on Faith + Bible + Legos





Look What Your Giving is Helping Us Do!

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

Provided for our Director of Youth and Family Ministries, Ray Vallera, to plan 3 Youth Mission Trips to San Francisco (in June), Cortez, CO, and Washington, DC. A total of 19 youth and 5 adult chaperones went on the trips, where they served on various projects at each site.

Made possible the church's monthly payment of our annual apportionments to our Desert Southwest Conference. Apportionments help support the Conference budget, including national and global missions, new faith communities, urban ministries programs including UMOM, Wesley Community Center, and Justa Center, camping ministries at Mingus Mountain and Potosi Pines, and campus ministries at U of A, ASU and NAU.

Provided facilities to host four Family Promise families, including 13 children, who stayed at our church July 23-30. Many volunteers from our church helped set up and take down sleeping rooms, provided evening meals and activities, and stayed overnight to provide assistance if needed during the night. Often one or more families "graduate" to their own apartments during the week they are at our church, with new families coming in to take their place. It's exciting to play a small part in the success of the Family Promise program.

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"!

June 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) or Deanna Helland, Treasurer/Church Accountant (480-892-9166, accountant@gilbertumc.org).

Have you used the new giving app, Joyfully2UMC? It's an easy way to give from your smartphone, whether you're sitting in worship or away on vacation. Just download the app "Joyfully 2 UMC" on your smartphone. Search for "First United Methodist Church of Gilbert", complete a few questions to set up your account, and donate. The app will even scan your credit or debit card if you don't want to key in the account number. You can donate to our General Fund or any of our most commonly used designated funds (including our Capital Campaign).

You can also use the QR code below 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 electronic giving options, or if you need help setting it up on your phone, tablet or computer, please contact our Financial Secretary, Taleen Carpenter (480-892-9166, financialsecretary@gilbertumc.org) or Deanna Helland (480-892-9166, accountant@gilbertumc.org).



Giving



August Anniversary Celebrations

2	Ernie & Shirley Wilkowski	3 Years	11	Tom & Kimberly Dare	33 Years
3	Keith & Jo Asplin	60 Years	15	Kim & Vicki Harding	46 Years
5	Christopher & Trish Odell	43 Years	23	David & Phyllis Spittell	19 Years
	Ron & Sharon Dalton	19 Years			
8	John & Marjorie Croushore	47 Years			
	Malcolm & Peggy Herring	4 Years			



August Birthday Celebrations

1	Gayla Sutton	12	Judy Bristow	22	Lara DeRoule
2	Norma Mayne		Rebecca Hernandez		Jim Johns
	Emily O'Brien	13	Diane Crann		Brittany Norris
	Linda Cranford		Daniel Harvey	24	Edwina Perschke
4	Anita Broughton	14	Drew Martin	26	Molly Hahn
5	Keela Clark		Tom McKinley		Midori Hall
	Jackie Holmberg	15	Alan Ball		Andy Martin
	Eric Palmer		Jim Hall	28	Scott Bouchie
6	Laura McLeod	16	Lynn Ingalls		Lori Van Dam
7	Dirk Smith	18	Jennifer Burks	31	Kevin Boesch
	Andre St. Pierre	20	Carlos Flores		Alyssa Castro
8	Suzzann Todd	21	TJ Granado		Bob Frederick
	Lori Wiemers		Julia Strazz		Jeff Kimbrough
	Eli Chiricuzio				

Adult Wednesday Night Classes Begin August 9th:

Alpha – (Mike Miller, teacher)

Alpha begins with a Celebration Dinner on August 2nd at 6:30pm. The ten week class follows starting on August 9th. This class is an excellent refresher course for longtime Christians, and a chance for exploring Christians to ask questions about the faith. It gives you everything you need to know that is foundational to our faith.

Journey 101 – (Rev. Gwen Mader, teacher)

While Alpha is about the faith, Journey 101 is a series of three 6 week classes that give the essentials to live out the Christian faith. It is designed to help us grow as Christians.

Knowing God (Aug 9 – Sept 13) – Discover tools to deepen your understanding of God and the Scriptures.

Loving God (Sept 20 – Oct 25) – Experience spiritual practices that will help you to love God and others.

Serving God (Nov 1 – Dec 13) – Learn how you can serve others and share Christ.

Your Move and Breathing Room – (Vicki Hanson, teacher)

These two Andy Stanley courses, each 4 weeks, will resonate particularly with young families. What do we do when it's your move and you aren't sure what to do? How do we make decisions we never anticipated having to make? How do you find breathing room in an already crowded schedule, especially when breathing room feels more like a luxury?

Disciple I Bible Study – (Sylvia Harris & Mollie Hahn, co-teachers) 24 weeks

Disciple I presents an overview of the entire Bible from Genesis to Revelation. Participants will read portions of the Bible and the Guidebook as homework each day and come to the study to discuss it. This study is a valuable resource to a general knowledge of the Bible.

Experiencing God – (Rev. Deborah Lerner, teacher)

Experiencing God is a thirteen week class that awakens us to a radically God-centered way of life in which we know and do the will of God. You will learn how to know when God is speaking to you, recognize God's activity around you, adjust your life to God's ways, identify what God wants to do through you, and respond to God's activity in your life.

Congregational Care Support Groups

Hurting Moms, Mending Hearts - (Sharon Kotsonas, facilitator) – Wed. 6:30pm - 10 weeks beginning 8/16. Support for moms who are hurting over a child's poor choices.

GriefShare – (Kay Pealstrom and Kathy Rae Tracy, facilitators) – Sat. 9:30am – 13 weeks beginning 8/12. Help and encouragement after the death of a loved one.

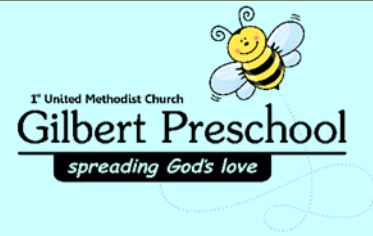
DivorceCare – (Adriana Hernandez and TBA, facilitators) – Tues. 6:30pm – 13 weeks beginning 8/29. Help for recovering from the pain of separation and divorce.

Living Hope (PTSD/Trauma) – (Steve Hanson, Sr., facilitator) – Sun. 1:00pm – ongoing. Support and help for rebuilding lives and families following trauma.

New Adult Bible Study begins Sunday, August 13th at 11:15 - Rev. Gwen Mader will lead this study of the Bible, book by book, chapter by chapter, beginning with Luke's gospel.

Preschool News

www.gilbertpreschool.com



We have some exciting things happening in preschool in August! We look forward to seeing both returning and new families and starting a very blessed year together.

Parent/Tot class- Your 2-year-old can come to preschool, with the comfort of their own special adult! Classes are offered either Monday or Thursday from 9-10:30am. Sign up now!

Like us! - "Like" us on our Facebook page: FUMC of Gilbert Preschool. We have up to date reminders and fun pics of what's happening at school!



Shop at Fry's Food Stores with your VIP card and get great savings, earn fuel points, and help our church preschool. Just go online to FrysCommunityRewards.com, log in to your account, scroll down to community rewards, and type in 80635 and click save. You're all set!

Music Ministries Update from Marty Province

August marks the return of the **Chancel Choir** to the Choir Loft. The first rehearsal will be August 9, 7:00-8:30 in the sanctuary. There is no audition required, and all are welcome to join us to help lead worship musically. Even if you would just like to "try us out," come to rehearsal, and let us help you find a place for your talents.

Other musical groups (**Wesleyan Bells, Children's Music**) will be starting soon. Watch the bulletin and/or weekly update for more information. If you have questions, contact Marty in the church office.

SAVE THE DATE

The first **Third-Friday Jam Session** of the season will be held on September 16, 7-10:00 in the church library. Come and join us with an instrument, your voice, or just your ears (to listen) for an evening of informal music making.

Stewardship Evolving into Daily Generosity

As the vacations of summer give way to school days, family and church concerns change. Our church family is anticipating the “fall” kickoff, pursuing sale of land east of the church, completing new building designs, and marveling at the rapid growth of our Congregational Care Ministry program, among many other things.

Simultaneously, the “stewardship” team is focusing not only on annual fundraising but on cultivating a climate of generosity; reflecting on how we best find purpose in our lives and reorient ourselves to being Christ-like in our Church and in our day to day living.

The “Stewardship Team” has become the Generosity Team, and will focus on how Generosity is reshaping how we think as true Christians and how we define contentment in our lives. We are going to reflect together on how the Holy Spirit is touching lives within our Church, and how we all become able to do extraordinary things thru Extravagant Generosity.

In coming months we will share “Generosity Moments” each Sunday highlighting how we at First UMC are being changed by our Generosity to others in the church, community, and world. We are going to hear how giving of our time, money, talents, and love is changing our lives and the lives of those around us. We will focus on the joy of giving, rejoice in the ways you are making a difference, and anticipate all God has for us yet to do and give. The Bible says it this way:

“A sower went out to sow his seed”and...“It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred-times more than sown.”
Luke 8:5; 8:8

Join us on the journey to learn about how we here at First United Methodist Church are practicing Extravagant Generosity and what difference it is making in the world. Your Generosity Team includes Kim Harding, chair, and Tommy Campbell.

****COMING SOON****

- September 23 - Annual UMOM Walk for Homeless Families at the Phoenix Zoo
- October 9-11 - Colorful Blessings Art Camp for Children (Volunteers and Participants Needed)
- October 15-22 - Hosting Family Promise (Volunteers needed!)
- October 31 - Trunk-or-Treat (Volunteers needed!)

Stay tuned for more information about these opportunities or contact the office.

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FOR MOBILE GIVING

