



# The Evangel

## 'Tis The Season

This is a joyful time of year when we prepare for the celebration of our Savior's birth. It is a time of preparation, reflection and sharing. This newsletter is filled with information to be shared and great opportunities to worship, learn and celebrate the season together.

### Special Events in December

- \* Dec 6th Explorer's Class at 2pm
- \* Dec 6th Blue Christmas Service at 4pm
- \* Dec 11th Preschool Christmas Show at 7pm
- \* Dec 12th Prayer Walk at 9am
- \* Dec 13th Christmas Cantata in 8am and 9:30am Worship Service
- \* Dec 13th Chili & Caroling at 4pm
- \* Dec 24th Christmas Eve Services at 4pm, 6pm, 8pm & 10pm

**“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”**

**- Isaiah 9:6**



*December 2015*



# Message from Pastor Deborah

December is the darkest month of the year, when the sun seems more reluctant to rise and more eager to set with every passing day. It is the beginning of winter, the season we associate with bare trees and chilly winds, as Mother Nature takes a break from fruitfulness to rest.

In the midst of the darkness, at least in the city, lights twinkle from every storefront and adorn many houses. Red nosed Rudolfs sprout from rooflines; inflatable globes on front lawns rain artificial snow on Linus and Lucy and Snoopy figurines; and Sleigh Bells ring, even here in the desert. Many folks love this time of year more than any other, reveling in the parties and shopping and cooking and gathering for fellowship and fun.

Others find this season to be wrenchingly difficult. For anyone who has had a recent loss – of job, or loved one, or health – the sounds of Christmas carols may ring a little hollow. For someone whose last child has gone off to school, the house may seem achingly empty. For those whose relationships are failing, the loneliness is only made more acute by the thought that everyone else seems to be having such a great time. For those who find family gatherings difficult, this supposedly festive season can be nothing less than excruciating!

If you are one who struggles with the “Christmas Season,” please know that you are not alone. In fact, those who stand in darkness in the weeks leading up to December 25 are in very good company. In traditional churches, the early weeks of December are NOT part of the Christmas season, which begins with Christmas Day and lasts for 12 days following, until the celebration of Epiphany, when we honor the arrival of the wise men from the East. The four weeks preceding Christmas are observed as the season of Advent, a time of spiritual preparation for the coming of the Lord Jesus.

Traditionally, this is a season of darkness, in which we remind ourselves of the period of our faith history known as the Babylonian exile. During these long years the people of Israel lived in a foreign land, so far from home that they were not at first sure that God could even hear their prayers. Their hearts ached for Jerusalem. They were strangers in a strange land. It is into this darkness that the hope of God for salvation begins to be heard. In Jeremiah, the promise that God had plans and a hopeful future for his children. In Isaiah, images of people in darkness seeing a great light. These promising images became more real as some of the people returned home after 70 years in exile; but began to blossom as the time of Jesus’ birth became near.

In Luke 1 we hear the words of Zechariah, father to John the Baptist, spoken when his tongue was loosed after a period of speechlessness: “Blessed be the God of Israel, for he has looked favorably upon his people and redeemed them.”

The darkness of the world was yielding to the light of Christ. The light was beginning to dawn, bursting into glorious day with his birth. That’s who we are, at the core: a people who walk in darkness until the redeeming light of Christ begins to shine in our hearts and in our midst; Emmanuel, God with us, forever and ever, our light, our life, and our hope.

This year, the darkness seems particularly intense, with news of terrorists on the move in Paris, Beirut, and Cairo. But Christ has come, and Christ is coming, and all will finally be well, in the light of his love. If your heart feels dim for any reason this year, we invite you to join us on Sunday December 6 at 4 pm for a Blue Christmas Service. We will honor the darkness that surrounds us, and reassure ourselves that light is just around the corner.

The Theme of our Sunday messages will be “Out of Darkness,” as we remember who and whose we are. On Christmas Eve we will conclude the series with “Into the Marvelous Light!” Join us.

Blessings and Peace

Pastor Deborah

## December Messages – Out Of Darkness

Sunday December 6	The Breaking Dawn	Luke 1:68-79
Sunday December 15	Exult with All Your Heart	Zephaniah 3:14 – 20 (11:00 only)
Sunday December 22	Favor	Luke 1:39-56





## Chili & Caroling

Join us for an evening of celebrating the season with yummy food, amazing people and caroling. This is a potluck event, see below what to bring based on what letter your last name begins with.



### Sunday, December 13th Chili & Caroling Schedule

Crafts & Photo Booth 4pm

Dinner & Live Music 5pm

A-M Bring Chili or Soup

N-S Bring Cornbread or  
Mac ' Cheese

T-Z Bring Desserts

Caroling & Hay Rides 6pm

Fire Pit & Smores 7pm

The evening also includes a hilarious Ugly Christmas Sweater contest.

Although this is an evening of warm and cheer not everyone is feeling the same warmth. Please bring socks to donate to UMOM's Watkins Shelter.

Join us for

## CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT CELEBRATIONS

4:00 pm

Family Service with Praise Band

6:00 pm & 8:00 pm

Traditional Lessons and Carols  
with Organ and Choir

10:00 pm

Traditional Lessons and Carols with  
Handbell Choir and Holy Communion

Live Nativity after 4:00pm & 6:00pm Service  
Professionally Staffed Nursery  
Available for children through age 3  
From 3:30pm—7:30pm

**First United Methodist Church of Gilbert**

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

**480-892-9166**

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



# Filled with Expectation (Luke 3:7-18)

by Rev. David Harriss

Some clergy begin their worship service with the typical introduction *The Lord Be with You*. Still others, may use *The Peace of the Lord Jesus Christ Be with You*. John the Baptist prefers a more excoriating approach *You brood of vipers!* I wonder how many accosted parishioners would remain in their seats if I used this approach.

Following his initial accusatory interjection, John goes into a brief discourse regarding the significance of repentance. He asks his followers, *Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits worthy of repentance.* The term *repentance* has its roots in the Greek word

*metanoia*. The translation of this word means *transformation* or to turn one's life around. John is literally convicting his congregation of irresponsible and self-defeating behavior and encouraging them to transform themselves for the greater spiritual good. Then he goes on to say, *Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor.'*

We often rapidly move forward in this Advent text, failing to understand the significance of this statement. Within the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter of Genesis, God makes a covenantal promise with Abraham that everyone within his lineage would receive divine blessing. As you can imagine, this understanding was taken out of context from its original meaning: *Let's do whatever we want to do. After all, we are related to Abraham so we have God on our side.* This perception may have been widely accepted during the Greco-Roman Empire; however, John the Baptist suggests that without repentance, none of us are considered to be children of Abraham.

Which prompts the crowds to ask the question, *What then shall we do?* John the Baptist challenges them (and us too) to transform our hearts by giving a portion of what we have with the less fortunate. *Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise (NRSV, Luke 3:11).* This scripture underscores that any act of repentance is correlated with our generous acts of giving. That is, any sincere and meaningful transformation is accompanied by our heartfelt desire to serve God and to serve neighbor, no exceptions. Immediately, the crowds were *filled with expectation.*

Advent is a time in the life of the church when you and I are preparing our hearts for the presence of Christ-child that appears on Christmas day. We too, should be filled with expectation every Advent season. However, I think that you and I often do not consider any preparation which comes before we experience the nearness of God. We simply want to have that mountaintop experience immediately! John gives us the recipe for anticipating God's presence this Advent season: change your heart through your acts of generosity and you will be exposing the love of God in this world. After all, isn't Christmas all about God's love for humanity through the ultimate act of generosity?

So how are you and I preparing for the nearness of God this Advent season? What generous acts we are offering in order to be filled with *great expectation*? Did you participate in the Family Promise last month? Have you purchased a card which will allow a homeless child a night in the UMOM shelter? Did you participate in the Thanksgiving Turkey Drive in November? In anticipation of Christ's presence in our lives, have we changed our hearts through any active outreach, community service, or other acts of generous giving? If not, can we really anticipate being *filled with expectation* this Advent season?

It is my dearest hope, that we would all practice emulating Christ's presence in other people's lives through our acts of generosity this Advent season. This is the best way to witness the presence of the living Christ in this world at Christmas time and throughout the year.

## Christmas Cantata

Sunday, December 13th 8am & 9:30am Worship Services

Join us for a morning of beautiful music of the season as the Chancel Choir sings

"Portraits of the Season: A Christmas Carol Gallery"





## Prayer Walk

We are looking for volunteers to join us on Saturday, December 12th for a Prayer Walk in our community. As we walk through the neighborhood we will pray for families. Pray for health, wholeness, guidance and peace. It is part of our church's purpose to share God's love to our neighbors.

It is vitally important to continuously pray not only for our congregation but for those beyond the four walls of our church.

We will meet in front of the church office at 9am on the 12th. For more information please contact the church office at 480-892-9166.



## Prayer Walk

### Dec 12th

All are welcome!

A special time for the church to leave the building.



Gil

## Look What Your Giving Is Helping Us Do

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

- Allow our Associate Pastor and Missions Team to plan and carry out our participation in the Gilbert Cares project on November 7, where they worked with a team of volunteers to paint the home of a local veteran and mow his lawn.
- Provide facilities to feed and house Family Promise homeless families the week of November 15-22.
- Provide facilities as well as the talents of our organist Jonathan Cochran, our Music Director Marty Province, our Chancel Choir, and other volunteers to plan and carry out Gilbert's Interfaith Thanksgiving Service in conjunction with other Gilbert faith communities on Tuesday, November 24.
- Allow our Youth and Family Ministries Director, our youth, and Follow the Leader, the youth praise band, to plan and lead our Come As You Are Thanksgiving Day worship service.

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"!

If you have any questions about the church's finances, please contact Garin Campbell, Finance Chair (623-363-0662, [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. Click on the GIVING link on our website to process your donation on-line.



Giving

# DECEMBER 2015

Wednesday Evening Classes

Dinner at 5:45pm in Activity Center

Class Description	Room	Time	Facilitator	Start & End Date
<b>Confirmation Class:</b> 7th Graders and older on the journey to confirmation.	140/141	6:30 pm	Ryan Collins, Gayle Disch & Aryn Peppin	8/19/15—5/11/16
<b>Divorce Care:</b> Separation and divorce support group.	201	6:30 pm	Adriana Hernandez	11/4/15—2/17/16
<b>Women of the Bible:</b> DVD study of the powerful and brave women of the bible.	203	6:30 pm	Kay Pealstrom	12/2/15—12/16/15
<b>Sent:</b> An Advent study by Jorge Acevedo	204	6:30 pm	Sharon Kotsonas	12/2/15—12/16/15



# JANUARY 2016

Wednesday Evening Classes

New Classes Begin January 13th

## Wednesday Night Fellowship

Everyone is welcome to join us for dinner at 5:45pm, individual meal is \$3 and it is \$12 for a family. New for 2016! The second Wednesday of each month there will not be a fee! Instead the church will provide the main dish but the remaining part of the meal will be potluck. Please bring a dish to share. January's main dish will be ham.

Class Description	Room	Time	Facilitator	Start & End Date
<b>Disciples Bible:</b> 24 week study from Genesis to Revelations	133	6:30 pm	Molly Hahn	1/13/16—6/29/16
<b>Confirmation Class:</b> 7th Graders and older on the journey to confirmation.	140/141	6:30 pm	Ryan Collins, Gayle Disch & Aryn Peppin	8/19/15—5/11/16
<b>12 Extraordinary Women:</b> How God shaped women of the bible and what He wants to do with you.	142	6:30 pm	Anna Stearns & Sylvia Harris	1/13/16—3/23/16
<b>The Jesus Lifestyle:</b> Based on Jesus' radical teaching from the Sermon on the Mount.	200	6:30 pm	Robin Lee	1/13/16—2/24/16
<b>Divorce Care:</b> Separation and divorce support group.	201	6:30 pm	Adriana Hernandez	11/4/15—2/17/16
<b>Jeremiah:</b> Daring to hope in an unstable world.	203	6:30 pm	Kay Pealstrom	1/13/16—3/2/16
<b>Hurting Mom, Healing Hearts:</b> Working through the process of a healing heart of a mom.	204	6:30 pm	Sharon Kotsonas	1/13/16—3/23/16



## Explorer's Class

Want to learn more about this church and membership?  
Explore your questions with us on December 6th at 2pm  
in Activity Center.

## Children Ministries for December 2015

**First Look** will be taking a look at “It all fits together” Our lives are like puzzles. Only God knows how it all fits together.

**252 Basics** will be discussing service; lending a hand to help someone else. Our God always keeps His promises.

### **Parent Scoop:**

Monthly 15 minute information sharing. Meets the first Sunday of every month in room 142 from 10:35—10:50 am.

### **God Time Cards:**

These are available every week from your child’s SGL (Small Group Leader) and are for your child to do alone or as a family. There are four different devotions on each God Time card.

### **Parent Cue Cards:**

Provides simple CUES throughout the week that remind you to pause and make the most of everyday moments.

Contact Marsh Lehman at [childrensministry@gilbertumc.org](mailto:childrensministry@gilbertumc.org) with any questions about the program.



# It’s Just a Phase, Don’t Miss It

Part of the Orange Strategy is using the idea that we all have gone through, and will go through, different phases in our lives. It is important therefore that we as parents and we, the church understand and be there for each of our kids, no matter the phase they are currently in.

What is the definition of a phase? A phase is a timeframe in a kid’s life when you can leverage distinctive opportunities to influence a kid’s future.

### **Every phase has significant relationships you can influence.**

Kids in different phases listen to different voices at different volumes. (Kind of the same way they listen to different music at different volumes, too) So, it just makes sense. If you want to influence a kid’s future, you need to know who they are listening to. You need to find out who has influence with them, and influence those who have influence.

### **Every phase has present realities you should understand.**

Kids at every phase are changing in six ways: mentally, physically, relationally, culturally, emotionally and morally. If you want to make an impact on a kid now, you need to begin by understanding who they are right now—and chances are, it’s not who they were last year.

### **Every phase has distinctive opportunities you can leverage.**

**Every phase has unique rhythms you can leverage to incorporate faith into everyday life.** (You probably don’t get as much quality bedtime conversation with a high schooler as you did when they were in preschool). **Every phase also has unique milestones**—the first day of kindergarten or getting a driver’s license. These once in a lifetime opportunities are also opportunities to accomplish something more in the heart of a child.

### **Every phase has future implications to navigate.**

**Every phase builds on the phases that came before, and every phase leads to the phase that comes after.** That’s why leaders of kids and teenagers need to think with the end in mind. Imagine the long-term goal and respond the needs of this phase in light of where you hope they will go.

Every week leaders across the country spend countless hours and dollars investing in kids and teenagers. Moms and dads hope their children will grow up with the kind of faith that transforms their decisions, enriches their relationships, and leads to a better future.

But in spite of the best hopes and intentions, many kids still grow up and miss experiencing God’s unconditional love and forgiveness.

Any leader or parent who wants to connect the message of God’s love and forgiveness to this generation of kids and teenagers needs to know two things:

1. They need to know God’s love and forgiveness personally.
2. They need to know kids and teenagers.

That’s why the Just a Phase Project was created. It is a collaborative, ongoing, effort assembling classic and innovative research, with practical application. It synthesizes the work of national leaders and authors around the country to summarize and simplify... hundreds of hours of research interviews with licensed professional counselors surveys of more than 250 state teachers of the year countless conversations with age group ministry staff so the average parent and leader can understand kids better.

Why?

So adults don’t miss what’s happening during the critical phases of growing up. So leaders and parents can connect God’s love and forgiveness to the heart of the next generation.





December 11th Christmas Show



1<sup>st</sup> United Methodist Church  
**Gilbert Preschool**  
*spreading God's love*

## Preschool News

### “Christmas Lights” Preschool Show

All are invited to our preschool Christmas pageant on December 11 at 6:30pm in the Sanctuary! Church member, Beth Boesch wrote the songs! Join us as we celebrate Jesus’ Birthday!

### Advent Activities

Our preschool families each receive a story book about the first Christmas and a collection of Advent activities to do as a family throughout December. What a fun way to keep Christ in Christmas!

### Registration

Registration for the 2016-2017 school year will begin in early February. Tell a friend!

If you have any questions about the preschool, please contact Lora Norris or Lara Fink at 480 892 9166 or visit our website [www.gilbertpreschool.com](http://www.gilbertpreschool.com)

*The Lord has done great things for us and we are filled with JOY” Psalm 126:3*



## Fun Recipe Idea: Rollup Blender Packages



Makes 12 pancakes. These pancakes can be cooked, cooled, stacked and sealed in a Ziploc bag and refrigerated for a few days (reheat in the microwave or quickly in a warm skillet). They can also be frozen for several months.

### INGREDIENTS:

- 1cup low-fat cottage cheese
- 6 large eggs
- 1/2 cup all purpose or whole wheat flour (about 2 1/2 ounces)
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup oil (canola, vegetable or coconut)
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 tablespoons sugar

### DIRECTIONS:

1. Combine all the ingredients in a blender and process until smooth.
2. Heat a 10-inch non stick skillet over medium heat. Lightly spray with non-stick cooking spray. Lift the skillet from the heat and ladle in about 1/4 cup batter, spinning the skillet in a circle to form a somewhat even circle about 6 or 8 inches wide.
3. On the heat, cook the pancake until golden, about one minute, then use a wide, flat spatula to carefully flip the pancake and cook for 30 seconds on other side.
4. Slide the pancake to a plate and repeat with remaining batter.
5. Serve with butter, Nutella, jam, powdered sugar, syrup, fruit and whipped cream. Spread the filling down the center and roll up!



## Ugly Christmas Sweater Contest

I, for one, love Christmas sweaters, and that is probably why the folks putting on the Chili and Caroling event thought I would be the PERFECT person to run with this!! So here we go....

Make sure you come to the Chili and Caroling on December 13th beginning at 4pm. Wear your "ugly Christmas sweater" or vest or shirt. Don't have one?? That is ok, because we are going to give you some ideas on how to make one. Take a look at First United Methodist Church of Gilbert's Pinterest page that will have some ideas on the Ugly Christmas Sweater Board. Check out:

[www.pinterest.com/fumcgilbert](http://www.pinterest.com/fumcgilbert)

You can always stop by your neighborhood Goodwill and check out what they might have on hand. There will be prizes, best of all bragging rights!!! Come and help get the competition going. This contest is open to all ages. ~ Lori Wiemers

[Volunteer@gilbertumc.org](mailto:Volunteer@gilbertumc.org)



Sunday Night Youth Fun

## Youth News

### Watkins Service Opportunity

We are participating in the Saturday, December 12<sup>th</sup> meal preparation and meal service for the Watkins Center in downtown Phoenix. This is a great opportunity for students to put their Christian faith into practice and see the faces of those they help. There are limited spaces available due to available "jobs" and transportation. If you are interested in helping, please let Ryan Collins know at [youthministry@gilbertumc.org](mailto:youthministry@gilbertumc.org). We have two shifts available, cooking and prepping the meal from 2:00-4:00pm and serving the food from 4:00-7:00pm.

### Youth Christmas Party

On Sunday December 20<sup>th</sup>, we will be having our annual Youth Group Christmas Party from 5:00-9:00pm. We will eat dinner together (potluck style) and also enjoy a night of fun filled with celebration and fellowship where we enjoy Christmas themed movies and games, as well as a White Elephant gift exchange (\$15.00) limit. In coordination with the Party, we are also collecting items to donate for the Watkins Center. The "entrance fee" for this Party is the donation of canned goods and/or new socks (NOTE: Socks are valuable this time of year). If you plan on attending, please RSVP for the party by Thursday, December 10<sup>th</sup>. You can RSVP by contacting Ryan Collins at [youthministry@gilbertumc.org](mailto:youthministry@gilbertumc.org).

### Christmas Eve Nativity Scene

There will be another Live Nativity Scene this year at the Christmas Eve worship services. You can sign up **NOW** to be part of the Live Nativity scene for either the 4:45pm shift or 6:45pm shift! We need Mary, Joseph, wisemen/women, shepherds, etc. If you're interested in helping make this another great year with the Live Nativity, please email Ryan Collins ([youthministry@gilbertumc.org](mailto:youthministry@gilbertumc.org)) to sign up.



## Give the Gift of Giving

This season you can help provide shelter to a homeless child and his or her family while solving your Christmas shopping woes with the purchase of UMOM New Day Center's Christmas Tribute Cards.

The purchaser receives a card, blank mailing envelope and an insert describing the meaningful gift. You can purchase 1 night of shelter (\$15), 1 day of shelter, food and childcare (\$50), 1 week of shelter (\$100) or 1 month (\$360). Cards are available at the Missions Table on the patio in between services on Sunday.



## Be Santa to a Senior

Thank you so much for supporting all 53 tags representing gifts to be purchased for a Senior in the Home Instead Senior Care program. This program serves low income senior citizens in the Mesa and Gilbert area with personal care and home health services which allows them to remain in their homes.

Please remember to bring your wrapped gift, with the Santa Tag attached on top to church no later than Sunday, December 6th. We want all 53 seniors to receive a gift!



## Watkins Homeless Shelter

This unique, year-round program is designed specifically to serve up to 120 homeless single women as well as up to 20 families every night. On the second Saturday of each month our church meets in the church kitchen from 2pm—4pm to prepare a meal and then head to the Watkins Shelter to serve the meal.

You can join us to prepare the meal, meet us at the church at 4:30pm to caravan to shelter or do both! Any and all help is appreciated for this great program. Next date is Dec 12th. If you can't make December the next one will be January 9th.

Contact [missions@gilbertumc.org](mailto:missions@gilbertumc.org) with questions or to sign up.



### *Top 10 List: Greeting & Welcoming People at Church*

10. Welcome to church this morning, I'm ....
9. Can I take you out for coffee? Let's head over to the Activity Center.
8. I'm sorry, I think I missed meeting you, I'm .....
7. You look like you have a question, can I find an answer for you...
6. One of my favorite things is to meet new people. I don't believe I've met you yet. Have I?
5. A great day for worship today, how are you?
4. I'm taking a class on Wednesday nights and have been looking for someone to talk about it.
3. First Gilbert loves visitors, thanks for coming!
2. I don't think we've met before....
1. Hello



## Check Out New Website

[www.firstgilbert.church](http://www.firstgilbert.church)  
New website and logo!!

Contact Lori at [volunteer@gilbertumc.org](mailto:volunteer@gilbertumc.org) if you see something missing or in need of updating.





## December Birthdays

- |    |   |    |                 |
|----|---|----|-----------------|
| 1  | Bobbie Johnson<br>Ruby Rosemond-Taylor              | 14 | Ernie Broughton |
| 2  | Sarah Bowser  | 15 | Lauraie Moore   |
| 5  | Jo Asplin<br>Ashley West                            | 17 | Judy Pierce     |
| 6  | Ray Crawley   | 20 | Steve Kopp      |
| 7  | Mark Blackledge<br>Virginia Franklin<br>Nancy Young | 21 | Sharon Poeske   |
| 8  | Miriam Gill   | 26 | Bonnie Paisley  |
| 10 | Linda Allen   | 28 | Sylvia Harris   |
| 12 | Christy Robertson Yoder                             | 29 | Emily Tognacci  |
| 13 | Robin Lee<br>Barbara Signor                         | 30 | Phyllis Petrone |

## December Anniversaries

- |    |  |                    |
|----|--|--------------------|
| 11 | Lydia & Matt Ramirez                         | 4 Years            |
| 20 | Jeff & Jeni Hemingson                        | 12 Years           |
| 21 | Sarah & Adman La Point<br>Ed & Pam Stressman | 1 Year<br>47 Years |
| 27 | Tim & April Ryan                             | 12 Years           |
| 28 | Mike & Wendy Griffith                        | 32 Years           |



### Living the Questions

This adult Sunday school class is a small group that explores modern questions about the Christian faith. For example, what were the original intentions of the writers of the scriptures? How and why might the original texts have changed? Which aspects of the original Christian life apply in the 21st Century? What may not? What is the role or calling of Christians in our culture?

Curriculum is written by theology researchers, pastors, lay leaders, teachers, Bible scholars and other contemporary thinkers. We welcome thoughtful and diverse opinions. Our class meets every Sunday at 11 AM in room 142. For more information, contact Odus or Diana Elliott at 480-786-0055 or [dbelliott@msn.com](mailto:dbelliott@msn.com)



# Making Healthy Choices

I believe that we can set an example as a church, as parents, grandparents, Christians and Children of God. There are small, simple ways that we can help take care of the Earth and honor the gift God has given us, preserving it for our children, grandchildren, and future generations. Our church has several recycling programs that many people may not be aware of. Around campus, there are many recycle cans or bins in classrooms, in the Narthex, in the Activity Center.



The benefit to the church has been multifaceted and has helped us to:

- Take better care of the Earth that God has entrusted us with.
- Raise awareness for future generations.
- Set an example for others, our children and our visitors.
- Purchase needed items for the church that help us maintain a healthy church environment as well as to help reduce the cost of spending money on other needed items in our church ministries.

I encourage you to take a moment to look around and see which you may have ready to go into the trash and to set them aside and drop them off at church instead. By that simple act, you will be honoring God by choosing to take better care of the Earth, our home and His gift to us. There is a complete list of items that can be recycled on the red welcome cart on Sunday mornings between worship services.

Teri Martin, Recycling Coordinator

***Gifted Hands by Ben Carson***  
***Book Club—December 17th***  
***Chris Thompson 480-201-1152***



*Check in the bulletin inserts to purchase a poinsettia in honor or memory of someone this holiday season.*



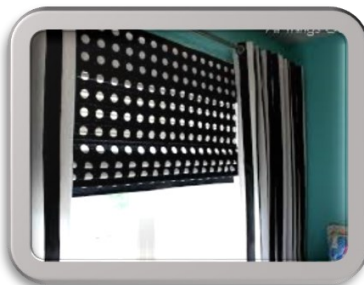
***Blue Christmas Worship Service***  
***Sunday, December 6th at 4pm***



## Junior High Room

The Junior High Room is coming together and we are still in need of a few more “adoptions” of our windows. The cost to adopt a window is \$30 and that pays for the material, black-out material, wood and hardware.

Won't you please consider adoption one? If you decide to, please mark your check “JH Room Adoption.”



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

## Contact Us

**First United Methodist**  
**Church of Gilbert**

331 S. Cooper Road  
Gilbert, AZ 85233  
480-892-9166

[www.firstgilbert.church](http://www.firstgilbert.church)  
[info@gilbertumc.org](mailto:info@gilbertumc.org)  
<http://www.facebook.com/FUMCofGilbert>

**Sunday Morning**  
**Worship Schedule**

8:00 Traditional Service  
9:00—9:30 Coffee Hour  
9:30 Traditional Service  
10:30—11:00 Coffee Hour  
11:00 Contemporary Service

Adult Sunday School  
8am, 9:30am & 11am  
FirstKidz 9:30am & 11am  
Professional Nursery  
7:45am—12:30pm

**Church Office Closed**  
**Dec 24th & 25th**

