



The Evangel

New Sermon Series starts January 7, 2018

#NewYearNewLife

January 7	#WhenLifelsHard
January 14	#Don'tKidYourself
January 21	#AllTalkNoWalk
January 28	#WatchYourTongue
Feb 4	#NoBragging
Feb 11	#We'reAllInThisTogether

Sanctuary Renovation Begins January 8th!

We are excited that our long delayed sanctuary renovation is about to begin! We will need to remove all hymnals and materials from pew pockets, take altar, podiums, and removable chairs out, remove sound equipment and the temporary stage area used by praise band, and generally empty the place out. Pastor Deborah will order some pizzas to fuel our labors. Please bring any heavy duty hand truck/dollies or four wheeled dollies that we might use for this endeavor. If you have copy paper boxes that could contain hymnals, or moving boxes for books, please bring those too! We will also put away our Christmas decorations this day.

The next week we will worship in the same place but it will be a little primitive, with freshly poured concrete and carpet and upholstery in progress. We are hopeful that by January 21 everything will be restored to a new and more beautiful normal!

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Church Office News!

- Welcome Trevor High, new church secretary (page 2)
- New Office Hours—Open Monday thru Thursday 8:30-4:30 and by appointment on Friday.
- Holiday Office Closures: The office will be closed January 1 for New Year's Day and on January 15 for Martin Luther King Jr. Day

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

Welcome Trevor High

The Staff Parish Relations Committee and Pastor Deborah are pleased to introduce our new Administrative Secretary, Trevor High.

Trevor has an extensive background as a technical analyst with Jeppesen. He also has a strong background in graphic design and communications, as well as experience with technical support for PCs, AV equipment, and phones. He is married to Jeannie High, who is a member of our choir, and they are parents to Sam and Lily.

Please stop by to welcome Trevor in his new role with us.



A Word from Pastor Deborah

Happy New Year!

I hope your Christmas season was fulfilling and joyous, and that you had the opportunity to draw near to Christ, who chose to draw near to us 2,000 years ago, coming among us as a helpless babe laid in a feed trough in an animal pen. It is a remarkable story. It is who we are.



As the New Year dawns many of us spend time reflecting on where we are and where we want to be – in our jobs, our families, our callings, our faith. It is a time for new beginnings, for reboots, for setting aside the things that hold us back and grabbing hold of things that can pull us forward into all God has for us to do and be. Many of us will be writing down resolutions: declarations of how we will change the shape of our lives and step more fully into the future we dream about.

In our life together it will be a season for new classes that we hope will open your hearts and spirits and deepen your relationship with Christ. On Sundays we will spend the first part of the year in a new series called #NewYearNewLife. Our Music Director, Marty Province, asked me why I had that “sharp sign” in front of this title. It’s because we swim these days in a sea of tweets, where “hashtags” like this one are used to draw ideas, comments and responses together on the social media known as Twitter.

The scripture that will guide us in this season is the book of James. It is a short book, easily read in one sitting. It contains many nuggets of sage advice for sound and faithful living. My invitation to you is to make this book the cornerstone of your devotional Bible reading time throughout the month. I hope many of you will choose to read the entire book every day, or at least two or three times a week. If you choose to do this by the end of the month you will have almost memorized some wonderful passages of scripture. Here are a few to whet your appetite:

- * *My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy....(v 1:2)*
- * *How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire. And the tongue is a fire.... (3:5d)*
- * *Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. (4:7)*
- * *The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up... (5:15)*

Plan to join us as we consider the new life we are called to live as followers of Emmanuel, “God with us.”

Blessings

Pastor Deborah

Administrative Board and Ministry Team Council Merge to Form Administrative Council

On Tuesday, January 19, 2017 a charge conference was held for the purpose of merging the administrative board and ministry team council into an Administrative Council. This change takes effect January 1, 2018. For a list of the “new” members of the Administrative Council, please see the Lay Leadership Report published elsewhere in this newsletter.

The Administrative Council will meet on third Tuesdays in the even months of the year, beginning in February.



Did you know that our church now has an endowment fund? This new fund allows us opportunities for giving beyond the general fund. Special such opportunities include mission, worship, education, youth, etc. Disbursements will only be from the interest of the account and not from the principle. Further information is available by contacting Tom Bristow at 585-503-2749 or at tbristow56@hotmail.com.

Congregational Care Ministry

This year Rev. Gwen Mader introduced to a new program, Congregational Care Ministry which restructured and re-energized how we care for one another.

In the first year, fourteen Congregational Care Ministers completed their training and were commissioned.

Other good works completed by this team were nine new Stephen Ministers commissioned, over 200 meals delivered via Food Tidings, 133 prayer shawls delivered, 55 care kits, 14 college gift bags, 92 home communion visits, 75 people received grief support, hundreds and

hundreds of cards were made and sent out. Prayers were lifted each week by 45 Prayer Warriors and prayer notes were written for hundreds and hundreds of prayer requests.

The most beautiful thing about this year was the new confidence and joy in helping one another.

Helping others in the congregation was exemplified as our wonderful church members pitched in to purchase gifts for seven families within our church and community.

Thank you to all for making not just the Christmas season



but the entire season of a new effort such a tremendous success. Success that directly touches the heart of others. With each care package, card, hug and listening ear we not only hear but feel the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

If any part of this pulls at your heart strings, additional help is always needed. Talk to Pastor Gwen or any of the Congregational Care Ministers and find out how you can help.

Giving Statement Correction Deadline January 23, 2018

Giving Statements will be emailed or mailed out the first week of January 2018. In order to complete our paperwork for the Desert Southwest Annual Conference Office any and all statement corrections need to be submitted to the Financial Secretary by Tuesday, January 23rd.

PLEASE check your statement carefully!

If you have questions/concerns, please contact Taleen Carpenter, Financial Secretary, at 480-892-9166 or financialsecretary@gilbertumc.org.



A Word from Pastor Gwen

We would like to invite you to join us on the greatest journey of your life – the journey to become a deeply devoted follower of Jesus. Sometimes getting started can be intimidating as we step out in faith and begin. If you are looking for a great place to get started, The Alpha Class is designed to be a good foundational experience.



Then the Journey 101 classes help you experience growth and support as you engage the discipleship journey. Journey 101 explores what it means and looks like to know, love and serve God, and provides a comfortable environment in which to meet others on the Journey. There are three separate, interactive Journey 101 classes, each 6 weeks in length. The classes are Knowing God, Loving God, and Serving God. You can take these courses in any order that you choose. When you have taken the three classes you will be given an assessment tool and we will help you determine your areas of strength and lesser strength and what further courses would help you to grow in your relationship and walk with Jesus.

When you are ready, you can move into leadership and/or a ministry area that interests you.

You may have been walking with Jesus for many years already and may be wondering why you might want to go back and take these options. You may already serve in a leadership role in the church. The number one reason would be to deepen your own faith journey, but the number two reason would be to experience a pathway that you could lead others on – to become a disciple that makes other disciples.

Take a look at schedule of classes being offered beginning in January. There is something for everyone at whatever stage you are at in your journey. May God bless you as you grow in the love and grace of Jesus Christ.
Pastor Gwen

Safe Sanctuary Classes

There are two Safe Sanctuary classes scheduled. They are on Sunday, January 28th 12:30-2:30 and Tuesday, January 30th from 6-8pm. Both classes are held in room 142.

Reserve your spot with Sylvia at connection@gilbertumc.org.

These classes are designed to prepare our volunteer and paid staff to create and sustain a safe environment for the church's vulnerable populations.



Adult Education Classes Coming in January

Beginning January 10th, Wednesday evenings begin with a meal at 5:45pm and classes follow at 6:30pm.

The following classes begin January 10th:

Journey 101 – 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 faith. Prerequisite Alpha
There is a continuing class led by Mike Miller that will resume on Jan 10th in the Activity Center.
There is a new class beginning January 10th, to be led by Anita Broughton that will meet in room 200. The schedule for the new class is:

Knowing God (Jan 10 – Feb 21) – Discover tools to deepen your understanding of God and the Scriptures.

Loving God (Mar 7 – April 18) – Experience spiritual practices that will help you to love God and others.

Serving God (May 2 – June 6) – Learn how you can serve others and share Christ.

Unshakable Trust – Find the Joy of Trusting God at all Times, in all things By Joyce Meyer – Room 204, Led by Christine Bayer, this class will be using the book and workbook with discussion format. (6 weeks)

Disciple I Bible Study (cont.) – (Mollie Hahn, teacher) 24 weeks, Room 133

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.

Journey 202 – (Classes are open to all, the Journey 101 prerequisite has been removed for these sessions)

Five Practices of Fruitful Living – Jan 10 – 31 - Five passionate practices that transform us. Pastor Gwen, facilitator. (4 weeks) – Rm 201

Three Simple Rules – Jan 10 – Feb 21 (no class on Feb 14)

John Wesley's three rules with the opportunity to put them into practice. Pastor Deborah, facilitator. (6 weeks) – Room 202

Becoming a Contagious Christian – Mar 7 – April 18 (no class on Mar 28) how to share your faith. Pastor Gwen, facilitator. (6 weeks) – Rm 201

Serving From the Heart – Mar 7 – April 25 (no class on Mar 28) discover your spiritual gifts. Pastor Deborah, facilitator. (7 weeks) – Rm 202

Follow Me – Apr 25 – May 30 Following Jesus as a lifelong calling. Pastor Gwen, facilitator. (6 weeks) – Room 201

The following class begins January 24th 6:30-8:30pm (meal 5:45pm):

Financial Peace University – Room 142, led by Janet Bose. This class will run until March 28th, with no class on March 14th. Register online or on this form! You can pick up your class materials in the church office.

New! Thursday Night with Meal included:

Alpha - Thursdays, March 1-May 17 - 6:00pm – (Leadership Team - Mike Miller, Rev. Gwen Mader, Rev. Deborah Lerner) – Activity Center Alpha begins with a Celebration Dinner on March 1st at 6:00pm. The ten week class follows starting on March 8th. 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 303 – Leadership From the Heart; Thursdays in Fall 2018 (Class is open to all, Prerequisites waived for this session) (10 weeks) Learning to Lead with Love and Skill. Pastor Gwen, facilitator.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Celebrate with each other!

January Birthdays

- | | | | |
|----|---|----|---|
| 1 | Alyssa Bruce
Cameron Whittington | | |
| 2 | Carolyn Phelps
Arianna Smith | | |
| 3 | Don Adams
Maximillian Boesch
Travis Taylor | | |
| 4 | Brielle Leinhase
Derek Sovchik | 16 | Emily Ingalls |
| 5 | Leona Metz
Heidi Riedel | 18 | Elice Province
Ethan Rempel |
| 7 | Mike Johnston | 19 | Jenna Bose
Mike Griffith |
| 8 | Charles Bowser
Adeline Compton
Bea Kurtz
Kris O'Reilly | | Christopher Johnson |
| 9 | Finley Bouchie
Karl Kotsonas
Sandra Toney | 21 | Miah Contreras
Lori Wilkins
Elizabeth Boesch |
| 10 | Steve Blackledge
Trish Jung
Danielle Rowley | 25 | Heidi Mueller
Keely Orndorff
Alexandria Shamsiddeen |
| 12 | Al Decker
Hailey Palmer | 26 | Makena Sy
Ellie Tinsley
Christian Waechter |
| 13 | Dawn Harvey
Steve Losey | 27 | Brandon Cloyd
Isaiah Harris |
| 14 | Jennifer Karavakis | 28 | Aaron Province
Laura Rowley |
| 15 | Brodie Skinner | 31 | Sam Lerner
Charlie Zbasnik |



January Anniversaries



Anniversary Date	Sweet Couple	Years Married
2	Eric & Shawna Palmer	25
3	David & Lauraie Moore	31
6	Garry & Gayle Disch	22
11	James & Elisa Tinsley	4
18	Ava & Philip La Rose	
28	Anna & Matthew Trinidad	1

It has been an amazing year for Missions

Let's take a moment to celebrate the incredible Mission work that was completed in 2017! Efforts are organized and planned through our missions team, led by Michael Harris, but the team is well aware that it takes everyone with in the congregation to turn the team's plans into a reality.

This year we were blessed with so much support, the plans weren't just completed - well, our church **crushed** it!!!

- * Family Promise February 2017: Prepared food, volunteers spent the night and activities to homeless families.
- * Easter Baskets (aka Boxes): Prepared over 100 boxes that were distributed to lower-income kids in the community.
- * Purses for Mom: Collected over 60 purses filled with "mom" needs to woman seeking employment. This effort made their Mother's Day special.
- * Financially assisted in Ron Mason's UMCOR trip. Provided dollars to help Ron on a missions trip to help those devastated by flooding.
- * Family Promise July 2017: Prepared food, volunteers spent the night and activities for homeless families.
- * Orchard Africa trip to Mafikeng South Africa: Ten individuals traveled to the other side of the world to teach vertical agriculture classes, Vacation Bible School and to represent God's love to others.
- * Mission Backpack Drive July 2017: 310 backpacks purchased or donated that went to kids as the school year began.
- * UMOM Walk for the Homeless Families & Youth September 2017: Church members joined in this walk at the Phoenix Zoo.
- * UMCOR Relief Buckets: Over \$4,000 raised and approximately 125 buckets were filled with supplies needed for recovery of hurricane in Texas.
- * Family Promise October 2017: Prepared food, volunteers spent the night and activities for homeless families.
- * Financially assisted Rev. Joyce Steiner with a Prison Ministry program
- * Operation Child Shoebox Drive: Over 100 shoeboxes collected filled with gifts for boys and girls all over the world.
- * Turkey Drive: Dollars raised for 100 complete turkey meals to be delivered to lower income families. Not only were the funds collected but wonderful volunteers took the time to deliver the meals.
- * Senior Santa: Seventy five senior citizens received fabulous gifts for Christmas. The gifts were shopped for with love and wrapped beautifully.

Thank you for all you have done to make this year so special. The mission team will meet for the first time in 2018 on January 21st from 1pm—3pm in room 142. All are welcome to join and help out on any project that speaks to your heart! New chair is Adriana Hernandez, she can be reached at Adriana.143.10@gmail.com or just come and join us. The first meeting is to plan what the team will work on in 2018.

"Sing to the Lord, all the earth; proclaim his salvation day after day." 1 Chronicles 16:23

2018 Leadership Team

“Do not look to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.” ~ Philipians 2:4

Welcome New Members and Continued Leaders

As we begin a new year, the Ministry teams are welcoming new members, preparing new chairpersons and rolling their sleeves up to start work in 2018. Please keep everyone on these teams in your prayers. 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 this mission.



Administrative Council

All Ministry Team Chairs will attend the Administrative Council meetings. This is the time to share efforts, collaborate on help needed and ensure all teams are working towards our mission statement.

Chairperson: Garin Campbell

Current Members: Chairperson/Rep from each Ministry Team, Lay Members, Lay Members, Church Accountant

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.

Chairperson: Elected in January

Current Members: Lydia Ramirez, Erik Scharff, Joan Kreuger, John Holmberg, Al Reynolds

Newly Elected: Dan Vrana, Kelly McClain, Ron Slamka

Finance

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

Chairperson: Leroy Johnson

Current Members: Laurel Redman, Karyn Neal, Stuart Wiemers, Kim Harding, Jim Hall

Newly Elected: Ed Stressman, Susan Young

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.

Delegate: Philip Tesarek & Sharon Kotsanas

Alternate: Gayle Disch

Leadership Development & Nominations

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

Chairperson: Pastor Deborah

Current Members: Norma Mayne, Kitty McGrath, Jo Asplin

Newly Elected: Cindie Remple

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.

Current Leaders: Gary & Kitty McGrath

New Leaders: Norma & Joe Mayne, Michael Harris, Sharon Kotsonas

Generosity

The committee is to guide the congregation to have an attitude of stewardship and generosity.

Chairperson: TBD

Current Members: Kim Harding, Tommy Campbell

Newly Elected: Michael Harris, Cathy Panella

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.

Chairperson: Kitty McGrath

Current Members: Brian O'Brien, Chris Odell, Michelle Comstock, Lay Leaders, Lay Members

Newly Elected: Mary Vrana, Jo Asplin, Glen Compton, Katie Bird

Adult Education

Committee is to select curriculum and provide education opportunities that meet the spiritual needs of the adult congregation members.

Chairperson: Anita Broughton

Current Members: Sylvia Harris, Mike Miller, Deanna Helland

Newly Elected: Helen Williams, Karen Coleman, Malcolm Herring

Family Ministry

Committee is 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.

Chairperson: TBD

Current Members: Matt Ramirez, Michael and Bethany Castle

Newly Elected: Jim Wilkins, Eric and Michelle Butler, Larry and Tina Young, Jo Ann Mannion, Michelle McClain

Children Ministry

This committee is charged to identify, organize and provide ministry to the children of the church.

Chairperson: Debbie Munn

Current Members: Jennifer Karavakis, Jeni Hemingson, Ron Dalton, Ellie Koenig

Newly Elected: Brittany Murphy, Erna Huitema, Aryn Peppin, Angela Mittner

Invitation & Welcome

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

Chairperson: Tom and Linda McKinley

Current Members: Phyllis Spittell, Judy Bristow, Elaina Harwick, Michelle Reynolds, Cindy Howell, Val Kellog, Cindie Remple

Newly Elected: Sika Norvor

Missions

This committee is charged provide missions events and programs for those within and outside of the church.

Chairperson: Adriana Hernandez

Current Members: Alana Uhl, Elice Provice, Ted Jung, Randy Reed, Margie Zielstra, DyAnn O'Brien, Tom Bristow, Dianne Crann, Sheronna Johnson, Kyera

McCluskey, Ernie Broughton, Ron Mason

Newly Elected: Val Kellogg, Adriana Hernandez

Youth Ministry

This committee is charged to identify, organize and provide education, activities and programming for youth 7th grade-12th grade.

Chairperson: Janet Bose

Current Members: Alex Houseman, Erik Scharff, Dan Minks, Keith and Taleen Carpenter

Newly Elected: Ron Mason, Philip Tesarek, Janet Bose

Worship

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

Chairperson: Barb Burford

Current Members: Norma Mayne, Beth Flores, Mary Ann Kolmer, Bethany Castle, Gary McGrath, Troy McDonald, Marty Province, Brian Fischer



What's been happening?

The Preschool Christmas Celebrations

"Let's Dress Up for Christmas" Christmas Program was performed on Dec. 14th in the sanctuary. Our 60 preschoolers, in the 3s and PreK classes, did an amazing job of celebrating the Christmas story through songs that were accompanied by live music. They wore adorable costumes from the nativity! A wonderful evening was enjoyed by family, friends, and loved ones!

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. It was a wonderful way to close our semester!

First day back to school is January 8th! 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. They are learning so much about who they are and how to be a good friend!

Registration for 2018-19 school year begins in January!

Registration for church members and current and previous preschool families begins on January 16th. Open registration, for all our friends, begins on January 22nd! Registration information and registration documents are available online. Spread the word! Follow us on Facebook, Instagram and on our website: gilbertpreschool.com!

Lora Norris
Adrienne Mesa
Phone: 480-892-9166
Preschool
@gilbertumc.org





Preschool January Fun & Good Works

Donuts with Dads

On January 23rd or 24th, 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.

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!

Music Ministry

Music Ministry is pleased to welcome **Sue Hunter** to our Music Team beginning in 2018. Sue comes to us from Iowa where she has played in a number of churches. Although she is an accomplished organist and pianist, her major study in college was in voice, and she is a wonderful soprano. In addition to her work in churches, Sue has taught public school, working with all grades as a conductor and teacher. She has been worshiping with us for the past several weeks, and we look forward to working with her full time in the coming months and years.

Sue's addition to our staff follows the retirement last October of our long-time organist, **Jonathan Cochran**. After 14 years serving our church (and 45 years of playing in churches here and abroad), Jonathan was ready to move on to the next phase of his life. We will miss him, and we wish him all the best in the coming years.

Two other people deserve a special word of thanks. Since the middle of October, **Norma Mayne** and **Margaret Knoll** have served us as organist and pianist respectively. From providing service music and accompaniment for hymns to accompanying the choir in rehearsals and Sunday-morning anthems, these two outstanding musicians have kept our music program alive and vibrant. We are fortunate indeed to have such talented members in our church who are willing to share their gifts in rehearsal and worship. Especially memorable are the three duets they played for Prelude, Offertory, and Postlude on December 17. Thank you Norma and Margaret. We appreciate you more than we can show.

This month's **Third Friday Jam Session** will be January 19, 7:00-10:00 in the library (Room 142). Join us for some informal music making.

Children's Ministry

Janelle Chiricuzio, Childrens Ministry Director
childrensministry@gilbertumc.org

Sunday Mornings

FirstKidz—Sunday School for
Elementary Children at
9:30am
Kid's Worship at 11am

Nursery

Professionally staffed
nursery from 8am-12:30pm.

Children's Ministry is ready for the New Year!

For our Preschoolers, First Look is here! Preschoolers love showing us what they can do. They are full of WATCH THIS moments. And it can be anything—turning in a circle, running and jumping on a pile of pillows, curtsying like a princess, or my favorite, making their eyebrows go up and down. I love it when they learn how to do that. Their facial expressions are hilarious!

This month we are going to run with that them and the words "WATCH THIS!" The goal for the month is to learn that Jesus is the one to watch, because JESUS CAN DO ANYTHING!



Work It Out

For our Kindergarten to 6th grade children, it is time to Work It Out! God keeps all His promises and puts His plans into action. Because God has kept His promises to us, we can make a plan and stick to it. One of the best plans you can make is to commit to an ongoing relationship with Jesus. Commit to practicing faith by reading God's Word, praying to Him consistently, talking about Him with friends, and living out your faith every day.



Alpha for Youth ...Coming January 10th

The Alpha Youth Series is a brand new interactive series exploring life, faith and meaning. Re imagined for today's youth culture, each episode looks at a different question around faith and is designed to create conversation.

Please email Childrensministry@gilbertumc.org for more information. This series will meet weekly on Wednesdays from 6:30-8pm

Wednesday Wilds

Lego Bible stories each week in room 205! Open to children K-3rd graders to build and explore bible stories with Legos. Each Wednesday 6:30-8:30pm.

Upcoming Opportunities for Youth in 2018 Confirmation

Confirmation Class begins January 7, 2018 and will be held on Sunday afternoons from 3-4pm for 7th-12th graders that have not been confirmed.

Youth Winter Retreat

This is always one of the annual favorites. An amazing weekend at UCYC in Prescott. The trip is planned for February 9th thru the 11th.

Summer Mission Trips

The Junior High trip will be July 1st-7th in San Diego, CA. We will be providing services for Youth Works.

The Senior High trip will be serving with SSP in Tsaille, AZ July 8th-11th.

Call or eMail Ray for inquiries on any of these items.

“But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you, and we have given only what comes from your hand.” 1 Chronicles 29:14

Youth Holiday Toy Drive & Christmas Party

The Youth of 1st Gilbert would like to thank everyone that donated money, gifts and/or time to ensure the success of this wonderful outreach event. Due to your generosity, we were able to take and donate 180 gifts, over 250 Life Book Bibles, prizes to give away! We had many volunteers, crafts, Advent calendars, face painting, games, prizes, bubbles and a photo booth for participants to capture the fun of the day. You have proved that we serve an awesome God from our hearts!

This event is held in downtown Phoenix for the Meira House. It is an opportunity for

the youth to work directly with children and share the light of Christ with others who have way less than most. The festivities make for an amazing day. Even if you didn't make it into the photo booth for a photo the youth of our church will forever have the memories of sharing love with others.

“Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else.” 2 Corinthians 9:13

Youth Ministry

Ray Vallera, Youth Ministry Director
youthministry@gilbertumc.org



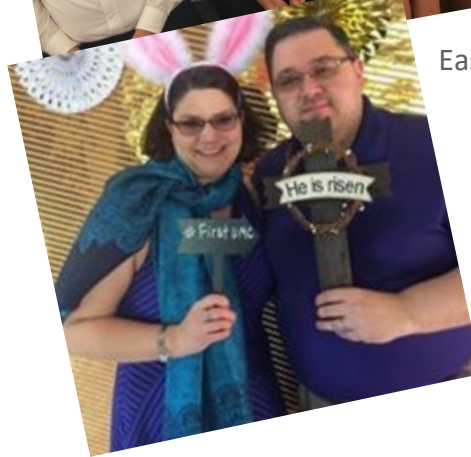
A Few Picture Perfect Moments

It is impossible to capture a full year of memories, good works, joy, friendship and love within a couple of pages! Here is our attempt to show off some of the highlights.

Thank you for all the volunteers, leaders, hard work and creativity. This was an amazing year! Blessings for greater works in 2018.



Confirmation Class



Easter



Labyrinth



Dedication of New Preschool Playground



Children's Ministry Selfie Booth & Vacation Bible School



Mission Trips



UMCOR Buckets



Summer Volleyball



Backpack Drive

New Congregational Care & Stephen Minister



New Roof Tiles



Pastor Appreciation Day



Fall Festival



Thanksgiving Day Service



Christmas Festivities

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:

- Made possible through the work of our Music Director Marty Province, over 35 members of our Chancel Choir and 18 instrumentalists, the presentation of our annual cantata, A Festival of Lessons and Carols by John Leavitt, in both traditional services on December 10. It was a beautiful morning of worship!
- Provided space and support for our Preschool's Christmas program on December 14. Our sanctuary was full of friends and family members pleased to see their preschoolers perform, including many from outside our church family.
- Provided space and support for our Congregational Care Ministry's appreciation luncheon in the Activity Center on December 16. Under the leadership of Pastor Gwen, a total of 130 volunteers helped with Congregational Care programs in 2017, and 70 of them attended the luncheon. This included Congregational Care Ministers, Stephen Ministers, prayer chain members, as well as volunteers in Prayer Ministry, Food Tidings, Shawl Ministry, funeral receptions, Health Ministry, support group facilitators, and many more.

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"!

November 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 (accountant@gilbertumc.org).

IMPORTANT NOTICE: To ensure the deductibility of your church contributions, do not file your 2017 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 2017 giving has been recorded.

Have you used any of our electronic giving options? Electronic giving is the most confidential and accurate way to give to our church, and it's more efficient for our staff, as well. In addition to our church web-site, which you can access at www.firstgilbert.church or with your smart phone using the QR code below, you can also use our new Give by Text option, or the Joyfully 2 UMC app on your smart phone. All the details are on the web-site, and in the weekly bulletin. 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 (financialsecretary@gilbertumc.org) or Deanna Helland ([480-892-9166, accountant@gilbertumc.org](mailto:accountant@gilbertumc.org)).

If you already have an electronic recurring gift set up, please remember after year-end to change your giving amount to match your new 2018 pledge. Thank you for pledging, and for giving electronically.



Giving

