



The Evangel

Inside this issue

- Pastor Deborah Message 2
- Congregation Care Ministry 4
- Adult Ministry 5
- Birthday/Anniversary 6
- Events 7
- Preschool 8
- Children’s Ministry 10
- Youth Ministry 11
- Finance 12

Join us for Holy Week

- March 25 Palm/Passion Sunday • 8:00 am 9:30 am 11:00 am
Palm processional at all services
- March 29 Maundy Thursday • 7:00 pm
With foot washing and Communion
- March 30 Good Friday • 7:00 pm

Church Office News!

- Office Hours—Open Monday thru Thursday 8:30-4:30 and by appointment on Friday.
- The office will be closed March 30 (Good Friday).
- Many classrooms and other doors on the church campus have been rekeyed. If you run a class or need access, please contact the secretary or stop by the office for a new key.

Easter Sunday

April 1 • A Celebration of the Resurrection

Holy Communion in all services

- 6:00 am Sunrise service in the Prayer Garden
- 7:00 am Pancake Breakfast served by the Scouts
- 8:00 am Traditional service with Brass Quartet
- 9:30 am Traditional service with Brass Quartet
- 9:30 am Surprise Easter Egg Hunt for Kids
- 11:00 am Contemporary Service

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

A Word from Pastor Deborah



As we move into March we move more deeply into the Lenten season, the 40 day season of spiritual preparation that leads us into the remembrance of Christ's death on the cross and his resurrection "on the third day." This season I have "given up" eating sweets, and I have discovered the extent of my addiction to cookies, candy, and other confections. The point of doing this is not to cause personal suffering. It is to change things up enough so that I notice my need of God more often and more acutely. When I find myself craving that late night ice cream, I remind myself that what I need more than anything is God's love. Nothing else is truly satisfying. Nothing else lasts. I am not sure why it is so challenging for me to remember these truths!

In fact spiritual growth is often a rocky road for me. I stay focused for short periods, then get distracted. That's why I need to "practice" being attentive to God's presence, the love of Christ, the work of the Spirit within me. I could easily stay so busy I never think of God at all! I hope you are finding your own ways of making room for God this season. If you missed getting the guide to Lenten practices February 18, there are a few extras in the lobby and on the welcome cart, as well as on the website. Be sure to pick one up and choose a few ways you can put God more in the center of your life. Join us each week to hear the last words Jesus spoke from the cross, and to hear how each one carries a life touching and changing gift.

As we move into the last week of March, we also move into Holy Week, beginning March 25, Palm / Passion Sunday. In all services we will remember Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem with a Palm Processional. By the end of each we will have acknowledged that the triumph was short lived. He entered in triumph and soon was in conflict and distress, headed toward his inevitable death.

On Thursday, March 29, join us for our Maundy Thursday service at 7 p.m. We will remember Jesus' washing the feet of his disciples, and the way he transformed the celebration of Passover into the sacrament we know as Holy Communion.

Friday, March 30 be here for the solemn remembrance of his death on a cross. A dramatic presentation will help us be in touch with the way these events affected those around Jesus. By the time we get to Easter, our hearts will be ready to celebrate the wondrous event: Jesus who died lives again. We will be here at 6 a.m. in the prayer garden for sunrise service. The scouts will be here to feed you pancakes, bacon, ham, fruit – a festive Easter breakfast. At our traditional services we will enjoy a brass quartet. All morning we will rejoice in the triumph of life over death, light over darkness, hope over despair. Holy Communion will be served in all services.

This is the holiest time of the Christian year. Don't miss it. Be here with us each Sunday, and for the special services throughout Holy Week.

Blessings and Peace,
Pastor Deborah

Easter Flowers

Each year at Easter, the church places flowers on the altar as a way of remembering and/or honoring a loved one, family member or friend. Names of those remembered or honored will be printed and shared on a bulletin insert on Easter Sunday.

The cost of each plant is \$15.00.

Order forms are available from your usher or from the office. Completed order forms with payments may be placed in the collection plate, mailed or brought to the church office no later than Sunday, March 25th. Please make your checks payable to First UMC Gilbert, with "Flowers" in the memo line. Flowers may be taken home after the 11:00 service on Easter.



Building on the Past / Believing in the Future Update

Have you seen our "new" sanctuary? This is the first major renewal project using funds from our capital campaign. The chancel was extended to be several times its original size, giving us space for contemporary worship, children's plays, and other uses. The carpet was replaced. The pews and chairs were re-upholstered. THANK YOU for your faithful gifts, which enabled us to refresh and renew our beautiful sanctuary.



Volunteer Opportunities

- A detail-oriented person is needed to coordinate our care kit ministry, approximately 2-3 hours per week. Responsibilities include gathering and stocking kit materials; preparing kits for mailing; preparing kits for CCM distribution; and keeping care kit distribution records. Please contact Pastor Gwen.
- Persons needed to sew heart-shaped and port pillows for the care kits. Contact Pam Campbell at tommypam@cox.net or Pastor Gwen at pastorgwen@gilbertumc.org.



Congregational Care Support Groups

For more information about groups and other support available, please contact Pastor Gwen at pastorgwen@gilbertumc.org

Living Hope



Starts March 21
Wednesdays
6:30 - 8:30pm
Room 205

The Living Hope group is a 16 week curriculum-based support group for those who have experienced trauma or PTSD. Facilitated by Beth Flores.



Wednesdays 6:30 to 8:00 pm • Rooms 203 and 204



Thursdays 6:30 to 8:30 pm
Room 200



Saturdays 9:00 am to 10:30 am
Room 140

Adult Education

Wednesday nights with meal at 5:45 • Classes at 6:30 pm

Journey 101 – Prerequisite Alpha

(Continuing class led by Mike Miller – Room 200)

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.

Serving God (March 7 – April 18) – Learn how you can serve others and share Christ. (6 weeks)

Journey 202 – A deeper look into the topics covered in Journey 101.

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

Becoming a Contagious Christian • Mar 7 – April 18

(No class on March 28) How to share your faith.

Pastor Gwen, facilitator. (6 weeks) – Rm 201

Serving From the Heart • Mar 7 – April 25

(No class on March 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

Thursday night class at 6:00 pm

Alpha - Thursdays, March 1-May 17 - 6:00pm – (Leadership Team -

Mike Miller, Rev. Gwen Mader, Rev. Deborah Lerner) – Activity Center

Alpha begins with a meal served each week. 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.

Questions or to Register contact Kathy Rae Tracy at

adminsupport@gilbertumc.org

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Celebrate with each other!

Birthdays in March

3	Kathy Snyder	
6	Nancy Moberg	
7	Ashley Reynolds	
9	Jonah Orndorff	
10	Robert De Bolt Jim Eggen	
11	Dennis Greeley	
12	Sue Dunning	
14	Lynn Carroll	
15	Darlene Hanson Sue Stone	
16	Sarah La Point	
18	Carolyn Skinner Margie Zeilstra	
19	Mollie Belcher Georgia Pell	
20	Beth Flores Susan Young	
23	Philip Tesarek	
26	Darline Moyer	
27	Kevin Becker Kelly Williams	



Anniversaries in March



Anniversary Date	Sweet Couple	Years Married
3	Steve & Dawn Kopp	11
4	Curtis & Kathy Provance	40
9	Denton & Tammy Ross	22
11	Stan & Miriam Gill	29
14	Dave & Julie Melka	15
15	Bob & Anna Stearns	5
16	Chris & Stacy Cantwell	6
21	Mark & Pam Turner	32
25	David & Sharon Barclay Gary & Katie Lang	18 29
27	Kelly & Helen Williams	41



Easter Egg Hunt

Begins 9:30 am for K-6th.

Walkthrough event including:
Upper Room
Garden
Easter Egg Hunt
A surprise!

A separate Easter Egg Hunt for preschoolers will be held.



Pancakes and Easter Sunday—All Welcome!

Boy Scout Troop 88 is hosting the Annual Easter Breakfast on Easter Sunday!



We are serving a delicious breakfast buffet consisting of :

Pancakes	Sausage
Eggs	Cereal
Bacon	Fruit
Ham	and more!

All families and friends are welcome – you don't have to be a member of the Church or Scouting unit.

Breakfast will be available starting after the Sunrise Service (7am) and going through the beginning of the 11 am Contemporary Service. Donations are accepted and will help Scouts attend Summer Camp and the Troop purchase camping equipment.

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



Registration continues for 2018-19 school year

We are still enrolling students for the 2018-2019 school year. Our preschool has classes for ages 2, 3, and 4/5 year olds! Check out our website and give us a call for a tour! Please share this information with a friend. Registration information and registration documents are online. Spread the word! Follow us on Facebook, Instagram and on our website: gilbertpreschool.com!

REGISTER NOW!

What's been happening?



In February, the preschoolers collected supplies for Easter baskets that benefited Sidewalk Sunday School (Scottsdale United Methodist Church), UMOM (Watkins Homeless Shelter), and Gilbert/Chandler CAP (Community Action Program). We love opportunities to help the greater community!

Outside Play

This time of year is beautiful and so fun for outside play! Encouraging your child to spend time playing outdoors can help their motor, sensory, social and cognitive development – and is great for their general health and wellbeing. Our garden is growing and we love playing in the sand table! We harvested and ate lettuce for snack and we love seeing the tomatoes turn red!



Looking Forward

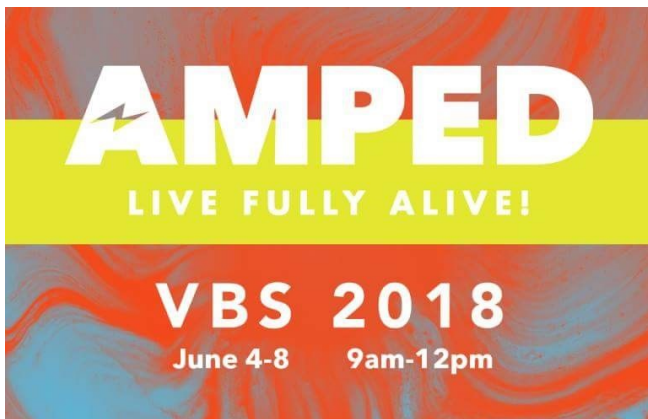
March is a wonderful month full of sunshine and spring changes! Our PreK classes will celebrate their 100th day of school and at the end of the month we'll begin to observe caterpillars as they change into butterflies.

Spring Break

Enjoy your Spring Break this year! There will be no school from Monday, March 12th – Tuesday, March 20th. The first day back will be Wednesday, March 21st.

Third Friday Jam Session

This month's **Third Friday Jam Session** will be March 16, 7:00-10:00 in the library (Room 142). Join us for some informal music making!



Register now for VBS 2018

Register online at
gilbertumc.org/vbs

To volunteer, contact the VBS
team at:

childrensministry@gilbertumc.org

Sunday Mornings

FirstKidz
Sunday School for
Elementary Children
at 9:30am
Kid's Worship at
11:00am

Nursery

Professionally staffed
nursery from
8:00 am-12:30pm.

Preschool—March Program

This month we've GONE FISHIN' and we can't wait to see what ideas you and your preschoolers reel in to go with this theme. We're imagining ponds and fish and little kids running in the room to see what they're going to get to do next!

It just seems perfect since this month is all about Jesus and how He taught the disciples to be fishers of men. How did they learn to be fishers of men? Well, they followed Jesus! And, we want our preschoolers to know that they can follow Jesus too!



We'll start the month with the man who introduced Jesus to the world—John the Baptist. He even baptized Him. John was famous in his own right, but he was just preparing the way for Jesus. When Jesus came to the river, John told everyone how special Jesus is.

During week two, we'll hear Jesus say, "Follow Me" to four different men. When Jesus asks you to follow Him, you drop whatever you're doing and follow Him. Preschoolers will hear how four different fishermen went from fishing for fish to being fishers of men.

In week three, we'll stick to the idea of "Follow Me" and meet Matthew the tax collector. Even though Matthew had made some bad choices and wasn't liked by the masses, he still followed Jesus when He asked. We can all follow Jesus, even when we've made bad choices.

We'll end the month with a celebration. Week four is Palm Sunday, and Palm Sunday is a party! We celebrate Jesus because He is special. He is God's Son. When the people heard He was coming to town, they were excited and they yelled, "Hosanna! Hosanna! Yay Jesus!"

This is going to be a wonderful month as we help preschoolers prepare to celebrate the biggest act of love ever known to man ...Easter. And when they're old enough to hear Jesus say 'Follow me,' we want them to be ready to say yes!

Special Confirmation Service • May 19 4:00 pm

Bishop Bob Hoshibata will be attending and be our special guest preacher for this service. Confirmands will then join the church membership on Sunday May 20 during 9:30 am service.

2018 Youth Shirts

Our design will be put on shirts for youth mission trips and other youth events this year. Your drawing needs to be smaller than 8.5" x 11" image and done in 1 color or pencil. Your Completed drawings/designs are due March 25th by 5 pm. Please make it meaningful to you and 1 of these Bible verses: Galatians 5:14, Matthew 7:12, Jeremiah 29:11, Matthew 19:26

Youth Winter Retreat Update

We'd like to thank everyone for helping 20 youth & 3 adult leaders attend this year. We had an awesome weekend focused on "Messy Love". Live music, games, worship, breakout sessions, small group and large group times were all a true blessing. Thank you again for your moral & financial support in the youth ministry.



Youth Easter Plan—Sunday April 1 9:30-10:30am

All youth will help children's ministry with their annual egg hunt on Easter morning. Seeking 12 disciples, 3 elementary helpers, 3 garden helpers, 4 egg hidiers, and more. Signup sheets available Sunday mornings, confirmation and during youth group gatherings.

Youth Alpha Weekend

The Alpha for Youth group recently enjoyed an overnight adventure filled with fun, games and prayer. Thank you to all those whose gifts of time and financial support help make these events possible.



Look What Your Giving is Helping Us Do!

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

- Provided staff and volunteers for our Youth Winter Camp event in Prescott 2/9-11, attended by 20 youth, our Youth Director and 2 adult chaperones, with other youth groups from our Conference. See the youth article in this Evangel for more details about this event. 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, staff and volunteers for our first Youth Alpha Retreat on 2/16-17. 12 youth and 2 chaperones attended this inspirational weekend.
- Hosted Family Promise on our campus 2/18-25, organized by our Missions team with the help of many volunteers. 2 families including a total of 2 adults and 7 children were served during the week.

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"!

January 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).

Please remember one of the easiest financial gifts you can make to our church is to donate a portion of your 2017 tax refund. Your gift will be used to continue and expand our church's ministry efforts as set forth in our 2018 budget. If you would like a copy of the approved budget, please contact the church office.

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 bulletin each week. 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

