

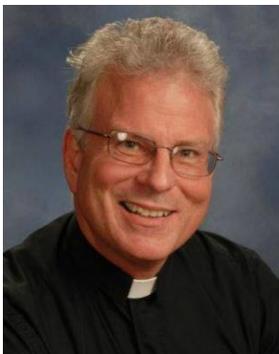


THE PALM LEAF

CELEBRATING THE PAST;
EMBRACING THE FUTURE



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A Letter from Paul Rev. Paul Whitlock, Senior Minister

Easter Sunday was great; we had two different but wonderful services! It was a great day for the church! But now we're post-Easter. It's not easy to feel Easter a couple of weeks afterwards. Thus, we can identify with the disciples after the resurrection. Where are they? Well, they're back at work. It's Monday, it seems. Easter may have been great, but no matter how good a Sunday is, there is always Monday. Our lives often seem strung between momentary "highs" when the music and the words are just right. But then there is Monday, and sitting at the breakfast table, well, who can say what we feel? So, the disciples are doing what they did before they met Jesus and he called them to become the disciples. They're fishing or doing what they normally did. How is it possible to sustain Easter faith and Easter joy? We can't. So, we go back to the reassuring drone of ordinary life.

What is Peter's response to the empty tomb, to the strange and wonderful appearances of the risen Christ? "I'm going fishing. Who wants to go with me?"

Then Jesus turns to them—to the same disciples who had forsaken him and left him on the cross, the same disciples who failed to recognize him even when he spoke directly to them—and he commands them to feed his sheep. He tells them, if they love him, the way to love is to care for those for whom God cares.

Here are a couple of learnings about Easter from many years as a pastor...

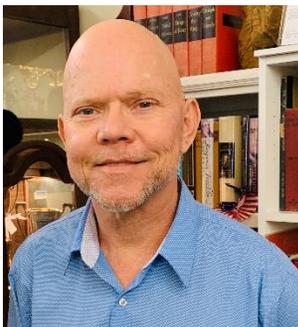
First, (and it pains me just a bit to admit this since I am a pastor who does some of my best work for you on Sunday), if you are to be met by the risen Christ, it may not be on Sunday, and it may not be in church, but it could easily be on Monday, when you're out living your normal life. The risen Christ does not intend to remain boxed in on one day of the week, for an hour at church. Jesus intrudes, comes to where we are, speaks to us, and reveals God's love to us.

Second, we cannot try to sustain Easter joy and Easter belief. Just go on about your business, catching fish or whatever you do, and God will find you.

Third, when the risen Christ comes, we are called to follow. That's the way it is with Jesus. Every moment is a call to help others. He tells them to "feed my sheep." He tells them to care for the ones for whom he cares. Which, when you think about it, is rather amazing, but also rather typical of Jesus. To the very ones who earlier had forsaken him, to those who were nowhere to be found when he was arrested and crucified, he gave a call to discipleship. Their past failures didn't stop him from continuing to entrust to them his most important work.

What work is the risen Christ calling you and I to do? When God says, "Feed my sheep," what do you think this means for us? Think about it. Think about it in your everyday life - that's where the risen Christ will come to us, seek us, and then give us work to do.

Shalom, Paul



Everything in Moderation **Jeff Scruggs, Moderator**

I have never been to Paris. It has always been on my bucket list though. Since I was a young child, I have been enamored with the architecture, the art, and the history. I, like the rest of the world, was in disbelief when I saw the first images of the fire at Notre Dame Cathedral. I am sure it was a very personal experience for everyone even those of us who have

never been there. As I listened to the different news reports about the details of what may have happened, what was lost, what may have been saved, I thought about how the people of Paris were affected. To see them huddled in the streets praying and singing in harmony was very powerful indeed.

As a man of faith, my initial reaction was of great sorrow at the idea of it all. I thought about all of the physical artifacts, statues of saints, the paraments, the niches and their contents. What little details adorning the interior were now gone. The little details that people would focus on as they sat in mass or as they visited as a tourist were now ash. What little details that represent God to the Catholics and all of the stories of God and the bible were destroyed as the roof collapsed?

The following day, I began to see the event in a different light. Plans for restoration were already being discussed. The building will be grand and glorious again. Items thought lost were being recovered. There was a sense of hope; a sense of future. The images that were shared on social media were amazing. I felt ashamed at first because I felt that they were absolutely beautiful. The spire in flames will remain an image in my mind for a very long time. The image of the gargoyle jutting out toward the city with flames behind it has so many different messages within. I reflected back to the image of a cross that was formed by beams in the rubble of The World Trade Center. Here, though, was a cross. The cross on the altar was still standing. It wasn't just there. The cross was illuminated by a beam of light that was allowed in where there once was a beautiful ceiling. Was this the creator being dramatic? Was this my mind being dramatic? It doesn't really matter. What does matter is that in the massive destruction all around, it is up to us in our own minds as a people of faith to find the beauty; to find the message.

Jeff Scruggs
Moderator

Church of the Palms is a Giving Church Calendar for Non-Monetary Donations

Thanks to your financial generosity and receiving 20% of the proceeds from all fundraising events, our Board of Mission and Outreach is able to contribute between \$15,000 to \$20,000 annually to various charities and community-based organizations (CBOs) in our local and global communities. Recipients this year include: Benevilla, Meals on Wheels, Sun City Community Fund, Sun City Posse, New Life Shelter, Sow the Seed Youth Camp, UCC Disaster Relief Fund, NW Sun City Connect, Glendale Missions Ministry, HART Pantry, Solutions Church, Asylum Seekers, Tent of Nations, Dysart Community Center.

In addition to these monetary contributions, our members donate physical items throughout the year including clothing, water, soup, diapers, hygiene products, backpacks, snack items, school

supplies, blankets, and more. In an effort to maximize our non-financial donations, and provide the most help possible to our beneficiaries, the Social Justice Action Team and Board of Mission and Outreach have established a donations calendar. The needs are great, and donations can be made anytime throughout the year. But by emphasizing specific charities and CBOs during specific months of the year we will help bring attention to the causes, the items needed, and make our donations power more effective.

Thank you, Church of the Palms, for being such a giving church!

Months	Charity/CBO	Items Needed
January/February	Children First Academy (homeless elementary school students)	Water (8oz bottles)
	Valley View Community Food Bank (Souper Bowl competition with neighboring churches)	Soups (cans and dry mix)
March/April	Dysart Community Center	Children's Underwear and Socks, Copy paper, Construction Paper, Arts & Crafts Supplies, Pencils/Erasers, Board Games, English/Spanish Dictionaries
May/June	New Life Center (Domestic Violence Shelter)	Baby Diapers (sizes 4-6 months)
July /August	HART Pantry (homeless high school students)	Back to School Items (school supplies & backpacks)
September/October	Asylum Seekers (mostly women & children approved by ICE for asylum court hearing)	Adult (size small) and Children (boys & girls) Clothing
November/December	HART Pantry (homeless high school students)	Christmas gifts (high school students)

The Time is Now

Exploring faith and criminal justice reform in Arizona



Criminal Justice Reform

8–11 a.m., May 21, Arizona Jewish Historical Society, 122 East Culver Street, Phoenix

“It is said that no one truly knows a nation until one has been inside its jails. A nation should not be judged by how it treats its highest citizens, but its lowest ones.”

–Nelson Mandela.

The Social Justice Action Team encourages all to attend the Arizona Faith Network annual meeting to hear Judge Cecil Ash describe how our justice system needs reform. All are welcome. Free; registration required. [Click here to register.](#)

Thank You for Being the Church: Benefits of a Rummage Sale

Church of the Palms lives its mission statement: “Sharing God’s Unconditional Love, Justice and Extravagant Welcome.” This is evident in many ways, but no more so than in the Rummage Sale. What are the benefits of all that hard work and who really benefits from a Church of the Palms Rummage Sale? Here are some of the beneficiaries: New Life Shelter (domestic violence victims), HART Pantry (homeless teens), Justa Center (homeless seniors), Disabled Veterans, Downtown Phoenix homeless shelter, Solutions Church (African refugees), Asylum Seekers from Central America, CASA, Navajo Reservation, Children First Academy, Charity Recycling (supporting Boys & Girls Clubs). Oh, by the way, don’t forget: 20% of the proceeds of the sale go to our Board of Mission and Outreach and all the other organizations they support.

But what are the direct benefits to the Church of the Palms? The Rummage Sale, like our

Community Thanksgiving Dinner, allows us to "Be the Church." These events build and strengthen the sense of community that permeates the fabric of our church. These activities help us make new friends and build relationships. But what about the money? Well, 80% of the \$19,000 in sale proceeds, or about \$15,000 this sale, stays with our church and is used to maintain and improve the building in which we all gather to worship God and share fellowship experiences together.

Oh, it's just a rummage sale. Hardly!! Thanks to the "donators," the workers, the buyers. We love you all!!

Faith Health Ministry Event

Beginning May 12, 2019, blood pressure screening will begin with screenings to be held on the second Sunday of every month. The goals are to detect elevated blood pressure and assist members in seeking assistance and to monitor blood pressures of those undergoing treatment for control of blood pressure.

The screenings will take place in the Faith Community Nurse's office (the back corner of the Ruth Behle Resource Center) during Fellowship Hour, after worship. There will be sign-up sheets on the Opportunity Table and you are asked to sign up if you would like to be a part of this screening. "Walk-ins" will be accepted if time permits.

Avoid caffeine, tobacco and alcohol for 30 minutes before having a measurement taken. Also, go to the toilet prior to the test. You will be asked to sign an agreement each time you participate in this program. The Faith Community Nurse will maintain a confidential record of your blood pressure readings.

If anyone is interested in assisting Judy Jondahl with this program, please contact her at judyjondahlfcn@gmail.com or 480-388-0707.

Opening Prayer: Social Justice Team meeting April 12, 2019

In the 13th century, English Bishop Richard of Chichester wrote this prayer: "Day by day, Dear Lord I Pray, to know thee more clearly, love Thee more dearly, follow Thee more nearly" Do these words sound familiar? They can be found in some hymnals. They were then used in a song in the Broadway musical "Godspell" which was first performed in 1971.

Let us pray. We pray, O Lord, to see you more clearly. Yet we often suffer a spiritual astigmatism.

We may see you clearly in the sanctuary, but things and people seem to get blurry in the commonplace. We pray to love you more dearly. "Dear God" we say so easily, but to love dearly we know implies cost, sacrifice, all those day by day efforts which translate that over-worked word "love" into its deeper meaning.

We pray to follow you more nearly. Sometimes we stray like lost sheep and sometimes we go off on a tangent, prodigals that we are. By your nearness we are made more sensitive to the hurting multitudes in this world. Together with them, may we be inspired to follow you more nearly. Through you, O Christ, we pray, Amen.

Rev. Paul D. Clark



Walk for Peace on World Labyrinth Day

9 a.m. – 12 p.m. on Saturday, May 4, 2019

Labyrinths at the Palms will be hosting a 'Walk for Peace' in partnership with The Labyrinth Society which promotes a World Labyrinth Day walk. In 2018 over 5000 walkers in 35 countries around the world participated.

The 'Walk for Peace' theme is most appropriate as our larger labyrinth has a peace pole in the center. We will be dedicating the peace pole and acknowledging the plaque as we begin our walk

together.

Walkers can use either the larger labyrinth which is 1/2 mile round trip or the smaller 3 circuit labyrinth which is ideal for walkers and wheelchairs. Water, shaded seating, and restrooms will be available.



Lingering thoughts on the English Afternoon Tea

Thank you to all, you know who you are, for sharing your time, talents, and treasures for a delightful afternoon taking and enjoying tea. From the set up to the clean-up and all the time in between – there were sandwich makers, scone and dessert bakers, musicians, hat decorators, and gift creators who came together to smile, laugh, hug, and enjoy fellowship. Among those who attended were ladies who picked up a flyer from the recent rummage sale and decided to join in our celebration. There's a ripple effect of our extravagant welcome!

Editor's note: Pastor Paul took many photos at the Tea and we posted them on Facebook. View them [HERE](#) and [HERE](#).



Summer Music

If you'd like to provide music, a poem, or an instrumental offering during the special music parts of our summer worship, please sign up on the bulletin board outside of the music room. There are two slots for each Sunday. You may do one or both if you'd like. This will begin June 9th and last until September 8th. Thank you for your time and talent!! - Pastor Jim

Splinters from the Boards...

Trustees...Letter B, Letter B, Letter B. Not really; they dealt with it, so to speak. A swarm of bees decided to take up residence in the outside vents of the narthex bathrooms. This allowed them access to all sorts of places. They were removed.

The new chiller (A/C unit for the sanctuary, narthex, and King Hall) will be installed the first week of May. Pray the old one holds out until then!

A new landscaping company was hired to take care of the weeds and trim bushes and trees.

The construction company that is using part of our parking lot extended their contract with us through May. We are getting \$1000 per month.

The leaky windows on the front of the sanctuary were repaired and cleaned. Rotten wood was also replaced.

Evangelism...is looking to have a new member session in June. Interested? Contact Eona Schulz or any of the Evangelism Board.

Mission and Outreach...is once again sponsoring graduating high school students in the HART program. Each graduate will receive a \$50 gift card.

Finance...A gift of \$30,000 is coming from the Bonnie Tweedy estate. It is dedicated to the "music program."

Worship and Fine Arts...The peace pole dedication will be on World Labyrinth Day, May 4.

Other:

The **Service Project Craft Group**'s gift of \$500 to Katie's Kart inspired some first-time visitors to give \$100 to that cause. Generosity infuses others to do likewise.

Budget Stuff...We finished the first quarter with an income of \$121,336. Our expenses were \$73,042. That leaves a positive balance of \$48,294 which is a "fantabulous" way to start the year!

We are sitting right at \$18,000 of the goal of raising \$25,000 for our **Associate Pastor Fund**.

50th Anniversary...After a successful tea which made around \$1,000, the 50th Anniversary team will taking a summer sabbatical until gearing up again for the big fall activities.

Summer Learning Opportunities and Activities

Board of Lifelong Learning - Tuesday Morning Breakfasts

May 14, 8 a.m. - Guest speaker Ruth Huff will present information about The Olive Branch Senior Center

June 11, 8:30 a.m. – Guest speaker Max McQueen will present “Hollywood Secrets I Would NEVER Tell.”

July 9, 8:30 a.m. – Guest speakers Max and Kay Klinkenborg will repeat “Why the Labyrinth” program. They will also present information about the Peace Pole.

August 13, 8:30 a.m. – Guest speaker Gordon Street, Commissioned Minister from First Congregational UCC Phoenix will present a program entitled “Recovering from the Hurts of Organized Religion”

September 10 - look for more details on the presentation...we hear that goats and yoga are involved!!

Living the Questions

Your Board of Lifelong Learning is beginning a new class for those of you who are wondering what it is that we call “Progressive Christianity” and/or might be questioning the things you were taught as a youngster. What are we “supposed” to believe? Would you like to explore all those questions you have with others who are asking similar questions? If so, you are invited to attend our new class offering, “LIVING THE QUESTIONS.”

This class will be taught by Linette Stenberg beginning May 6 and will have 12 sessions. It is scheduled for Monday afternoons from 1 to 2:30 pm. We will watch and discuss the presentations on the DVD “Living the Questions” You will receive a handout packet of information about the content of the DVD and a bibliography of books that might interest you.

If you have any questions, please contact Linette Stenberg at 623-594-3718 or curlinsten@msn.com.

Board of Worship and Fine Arts activities for your participation and enjoyment

Saturday, May 25 – Dining with the Sharks at Dillon’s @ World Wildlife Zoo – Bus leaves at 10 a.m.

Thursday, June 13, 1 pm – Palms Cinema Presents “Harry and Tonto”. Snacks and drinks provided.

Thursday, July 11, 1 p.m. – Palms Cinema Presents “What’s Up, Doc?”. Snacks and drinks provided.

Thursday, August 8, 1 p.m. – Palms Cinema Presents “The Greatest Showman.” Snacks and drinks provided.

Help in the office

If you can spare 5 hours every 60 to 90 days we might have an opportunity for you. The church needs office assistance on Fridays from 8am-1pm.

We need someone with word processing skills (MS Word, LibreOffice or Open Office) who can answer phones, greet people and assist Pastor Paul and Pastor Jim with office duties. If we get 8-12 volunteers you would only have to commit to working one day every two or three months.

If you are interested, please contact: Farrell Ford or email her at manager@thepalms.org.

Care Team

If you are interested in becoming part of the Church of the Palms Care Team, please contact Pastor Jim.

Dementia and Alzheimer's program

The first two sessions of the Dementia and Alzheimer’s program have been completed and were very informative for all who attended. The sessions will resume in October. Stay tuned for further information on dates and times.



Dining with the Sharks

Saturday, May 25, 11 a.m. (bus departs at 10:30)

Sharks in the desert? You bet! On May 25, 2019 the Board of Worship and Fine Arts will again host Dine with the Sharks at Dillon's KC BBQ Restaurant next to the Wildlife World Zoo, Aquarium & Safari Park in Litchfield Park. The Palms' bus will be available for those who don't drive. Lunch is at 11:00 and the bus will leave at approximately 10:30.

If barbeque doesn't tempt you, there are loads of other options on Dillon's extensive menu. The shark tank is fascinating; the company is fabulous; and the food is fantastic. A sign-up sheet will be on the events table in the narthex on Sunday, May 6.

Mark your calendars now and if you want to ride the bus, sign up early. This is one of our most popular events and the bus fills up rapidly.

Winter visitors: let's stay in touch!

To all of our Winter Family:

Thank you for coming and playing such a vital role in our ministry. You have blessed us. As you

travel back home, please know that we are praying for safe travels for you. We also pray that the coming months bring you many blessings. Here's a date for you to remember: Our big 50th Anniversary celebration will be November 3, 2019. We hope that you will be able to join us on that special Sunday.

Please email any new contact information to: manager@thepalms.org.

Shalom,
Pastors Paul and Jim

Click here to fill out the winter visitors contact form – it's easy!



From Jack's Private Stock

Friday, May 24 at 9 a.m. in the boardroom

This month's film: *The Cranes Are Flying*

Women's Friendship Group

The Women's Friendship Group will meet only on the fourth Wednesday of the months in May - August. All women are invited to spend the hour of 10:30 –11:30 AM in a safe, non-scriptural atmosphere for a time of sharing, stories, laughter, and support for each other.



Grief Share

Grief Share will resume again on Friday, September 6.

Worship Themes for May

May 5: Read [John 21:1-19](#). Pastor Paul will be preaching about life after Easter. What are we called to do and be after the resurrection? Communion will be served.

May 12: Pastor Paul will be preaching around the theme of a tearless time. [Psalm 23](#) and [Revelation 7:9-17](#) are the texts.

May 19: Pastor Jim will be preaching.

May 26: What is *the one thing that you and I should be doing as a disciple of Jesus Christ*, as we put our faith into action? [Acts 16:9-15](#) will supply the text. Pastor Paul will be preaching.



**Click here for
this month's calendar**

May Birthdays

Cecil Pennington	May 1
Richard Kuelbs	May 2
Bertie Fitch	May 5
Mark Hermann	May 5
Stella Garcia	May 5
Beth Malmgren	May 6
Diana Berry	May 7
Judy Pinter	May 7

Marimae Roder May 8
Malinda Case May 13
Linda Wilson May 14
Beth Moore May 15
Opal Wille May 16

Glen Modeen May 19
Max Klinkenborg May 21
Nancy Tsuchiya May 21
David Pizer May 25
Edwin Znetko May 27
Jane Zukowski May 27
Sharon Pitts May 28
Betsy Kindinger May 29
Elaine Dinse May 29
Marcia James May 29
Shirley Spotts May 29
Liz Adler May 30

The Church of the Palms UCC
14808 N Boswell Boulevard, Sun City AZ 85351

623-977-8359

Rev. Paul A. Whitlock, Senior Minister
Rev. Jim Alexander, Associate Pastor, Pastoral Care and Worship

Sunday worship service: 10 a.m.

office hours:
Monday–Thursday 8 a.m. to noon

website: thepalms.org
email: manager@thepalms.org



Website



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