

The Voice

DECEMBER 2023



AND THEY
LAID HIM IN
A MANGER....

ABOUT SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS



The place where faith and life connect.
The place with open hearts, open minds,
and open doors.
The place to belong, believe, become.

Pastoral Team

Rev. Deborah Lerner, Senior Pastor
Pastor Daniel Gómez, Associate Pastor
Rev. Ron Friesen, Assistant Minister of Care
Rev. Cliff Asay, Minister of Digital Arts

Welcome

Shepherd of the Hills United Methodist Church affirms the teachings of Jesus Christ by welcoming everyone in our community regardless of race, age, socioeconomic status, or any other factor that might separate us from each other. We invite you to join our shared journey of faith and to participate fully in the life of our church. Here, you will find open doors, open hearts, and open minds.

Staff

Tanner Akers, Sound Tech
Julie Calvert, Accounting
Jodi De Luca, Administrative Secretary
Ken Goodenberger, Director of Music Ministry
Jessica Lunceford, Assistant Secretary
Julie Killebrew, Health Education Facilitator
Shawn McMullen, Maintenance Engineer
Bill Moore, Organist/Pianist

Hospitalization Notification Procedure

All members and friends of Shepherd of the Hills United Methodist Church are encouraged to immediately call the church office when you or a loved one are admitted or discharged from the hospital.

Office Telephone: 623-584-2280
Pastor on call for emergencies: 623-584-7642
Prayer Request Line: 623-584-2922
Prayer Request:
prayers@shepherdofthehills.org

VOICE DELIVERY METHODS- You may pick up a paper copy of the Voice in the church office starting on the first of the month. Limited church participants and out-of-state copies will be mailed.

The Voice published by Shepherd of the Hills United Methodist Church

Submit articles: church@shepherdofthehills.org

Address corrections: church@shepherdofthehills.org

Article deadline for the January/February issue of The Voice is December 31, 2023

Worship online at: www.shepherdofthehills.org



Sam and I enjoy taking an evening walk through our neighborhood, although with his long stride he is often half a block ahead of me. It can sometimes be challenging to get him out the door, but once we are on the way he loves to check out the neighbors' decorations for Halloween, then Thanksgiving, and now Christmas. The folks around us now have lots of lights, inflatables, and Santa's on their rooftops (replacing the spiders of Halloween and the turkeys of Thanksgiving)

The last few weeks we have needed flashlights after 6:30 for this walk, it is dark! Every day the night comes sooner and lingers longer. This time before Christmas is always a season of darkness – the darkest day is also the shortest, on December 21.

In the church, we know these dark December days as Advent – four weeks of spiritual preparation leading up to the celebration of the birth of Jesus. During Advent, even as we anticipate the joy of Christmas Eve, we prepare, in part, by acknowledging our darkness, and the darkness of the world. We don't do it to punish ourselves. We do it to remind ourselves how much we STILL need that special baby who was laid in a manger more than two thousand years ago, because there was no room.

This year we are using a resource from Adam Hamilton entitled, ***Prepare the Way of the Lord*** to shape our worship messages and Advent reflections. Hamilton reminds us that the Advent Season is not just about waiting for the baby Jesus to show up. It has also traditionally been about preparing our hearts and spirits for the anticipated second coming of Christ. The story is not yet complete, but one day it will be, with his triumphant return. The question for our spiritual reflection is simply this: Are we ready?

One of the key biblical characters in the lectionary (the assigned readings for this season) is John the Baptist, who came "to prepare the way of the Lord." He was a fearsome prophet in the wilderness whose cry echoes through the centuries: "Repent!" By that John meant more than inviting people to say "I'm sorry for what I have been and done."

Repentance is much more than acknowledging and having remorse for our sin and waywardness, although both are necessary to help us understand our failings. It involves making a deliberate and conscious choice to turn away from that sin and waywardness toward the new life that can always be ours in Christ. It involves transformation of ourselves and of our world.

One of my deliberate and conscious choices this season is to make more time and space for God. I try to spend at least a half hour in prayer at the beginning of my day, but often that time is cut short and sometimes missed altogether. So I am getting up a little earlier to make sure I don't shortchange the creator of the universe, who must be pretty busy himself, but who unimaginably will make time and space for me if I will make time and space for him.

I hope you will spend a little time reflecting on what would be helpful for your spiritual journey. How will you turn away from things that hold you back in your relationship to God and turn toward the goodness and grace of the One who loves you enough to send his Son to set you free?

May your season and your Christmas be deeply blessed.

Pastor Deborah

Pastor Daniel and Christmas Worship Schedule



The commercialization of holidays has undoubtedly transformed cultures worldwide. Those holidays which began with deep religious roots have now become opportunities influenced by consumerism engines that fuel national economies. According to the BBS (Bologna Business School), “the commercialization of Christmas and Easter, but also the creation of ad hoc holidays such as Valentine’s Day and Mother’s Day, have worldwide exported not only boxes of chocolates, red-nosed reindeers and pumpkin-shaped lanterns, but mainly an apparently unstoppable cultural transformation.”

I thought I would share with you something I read from Pastor N. Lawrence titled “***Strange Things***”. First, there is Thanksgiving on the last Thursday of the month. Families get together to enjoy each other's company and aren't we learning not to take that for granted anymore? Following Thanksgiving is “Black Friday,” as stores entice shoppers to make that Christmas gift purchase at a deeply discounted price. But, perhaps this year, some of those things will be a challenge even to buy! Then, we have “Small Business Saturday,” as people are encouraged to shop local and support the “Mom and Pop” stores downtown. It's a great idea, but please, let's not let that happen only one day! Then, it's Sunday! Yes, Church is on Sunday between all of this, and it's important we take that time to be in the House of God together as His family! Then, it's back to shopping on “Cyber Monday.” Online business offers some of their best sales of the year, and you can snap up great bargains if you're quick enough! Then, it's “Giving Tuesday”! This particular day has been somewhat of a new phenomenon in the past few years as people are encouraged to give to ministries, churches, non-profits, and more on this special day. I've honestly wondered why the “Giving” day is after all the spending days. In my opinion, it should be first!

Blessings in Christ!

Daniel Gómez

Christmas Worship Schedule

Saturday, December 23:

4:00 PM Sweet Hour of Prayer Service—Chapel

Sunday, December 24:

8:30 AM Informal Praise Service—Fellowship Hall

10:00 AM Spirited Traditional Service—Sanctuary

Join us on Christmas Eve for our Candlelight Services

3:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service—Sanctuary

5:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service—Sanctuary



WINTER ROSE CANTATA

Saturday, December 9

4:00 PM

Sunday, December 10

10:00 AM

The Winter Rose uses roses as imagery throughout the 40 minute Cantata, and features beloved tunes such as "Lo, How a Rose" "The Sally Gardens" and "Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella" as well as several songs written especially for the Cantata by Joseph M. Martin. The orchestra will include Clarinet, Oboe, Bassoon, Strings, percussion and a Harp.

RENAISSANCE SINGERS

Friday, December 22

7:00 PM – Sanctuary

The group, made up of 12 professional singers from around the valley, has been providing the finest of choral Christmas music to the valley for 50 years and utilizes the best vocal talent available. \$10 tickets for the event from the church office or at the door.



MAKING THE MOST OF VISITING YOUR DOCTOR

Tuesday, January 9—10:00 AM
Fellowship Hall Meeting Room



Learn how doctors organize their time with patients and how to come prepared with information and questions to make the visit a mutually rewarding experience.

BROWN BAG MEDICATION REVIEW

On **Thursday, January 25, from 11 AM-3 PM**, a Clinical Pharmacist from Banner Health, will be at SHUMC and will provide a 20 minute personal review of your medications.



Bring all of your medications in a brown paper bag to review with the Pharmacist, including all prescription, over-the-counter meds, vitamins, herbals or supplements. Please sign up for your appointment or call the church office. Each appointment is 20 minutes.

COPING WITH GRIEF DURING THE HOLIDAYS?



Christmas is coming up. Does this time of year fill you with dread? The parties, the joviality? Not feeling so jovial because someone you love isn't here?

SHUMC is offering a program that may help you deal with this difficult time of the year. On **Tuesday, December 5, 2023 at 1 PM** in Fellowship Hall, Hospice of the Valley will discuss ideas to help you manage the feelings of sadness and grief we often experience during this time of the year.

HEALTH CARE DECISIONS: ADVANCE CARE PLANNING & HOSPICE OF THE VALLEY

Tuesday, January 16
10:00 AM Fellowship Hall Meeting Room

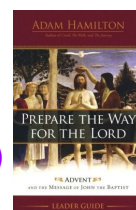


A living will and medical power of attorney ensures your wishes will be followed and is the best gift you can give your loved ones.

SUNDAY CONNECTIONS

Sundays at 8:45 AM in Fellowship Hall Meeting Room
December 3 (1st Sunday in Advent)

Prepare the Way For The Lord by Adam Hamilton. Facilitated by Glenn Meeden. Books are available in the office for \$14 (large print \$15).





LIFE CHANGING BIBLE STUDY ONLINE

The group meets **Monday afternoons at 3 PM via Zoom**. Call the church office if you have questions. The Zoom link will be sent to your email inbox on Monday morning.

MEN'S PRAYER GROUP

Meets every **Wednesday morning at 7:00 AM** in the Prayer Room. Please join us. For more information, call Cal L.



GRIEFSHARE

The next session will begin in **January 2024**. For more information, please contact Kathy Culliton.



Grief Support Group

WEDNESDAYS at 10:00 a.m.

Location: **Prayer Room**

Facilitated by Rev. Ron Friesen

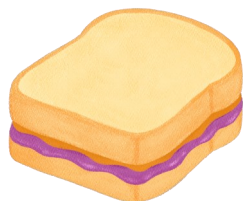
For More Information Call Church Office 623-584-2280

THINKING ABOUT JOINING SHUMC?

We are not having new member classes right now, but welcome persons who wish to join. Let the church office know you are interested or have questions, and Pastor Deborah will contact you. If you want to remain a member of "the church back home," you are welcome to become an affiliate member (a person who belongs primarily to another United Methodist Church), or an associate member (a person who belongs to a church from another denomination).



MONDAY SANDWICH MAKERS



The sandwich makers meet on Monday mornings at 8 AM in Fellowship Hall. They are in need of grape jelly and creamy peanut butter (**PLEASE —NO ORGANIC**). The sandwiches are taken to the Justa Center, a day center for homeless seniors. If you are interested in helping, just show up! For questions, contact Mary G.

CHESS CLUB



Jerry N.

Join the Chess Club every **Thursday at noon** in the Narthex. A beginner chess group meets Wednesday at Noon in the SCW Library. Questions: please call



If you would like personal prayer after worship, the prayer minister will be at the front of the Sanctuary to pray with you. The Prayer Room is open for you if you prefer a time of private prayer.

STRENGTH TRAINING EXERCISE CLASS

The Strength Training Exercise class meets at **9:45 to 10:30 AM, every Tuesday and Thursday in Fellowship Hall**. Everyone is welcome and the class is free. This is low impact — sit or stand.



CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED



The church office will be closed
Monday, December 25 – Tuesday, January 2.

Warmest wishes for a joyful holiday season! May your days be filled with laughter and cheer.

Happy holidays from the SHUMC Staff.



New to SHUMC? Have questions? Looking to connect?

Please plan to join us for a Newcomer's Lunch

Monday, December 11, 2023 at 12:00 Noon in Fellowship Hall

Our pastors and program staff look forward to getting to know you a little better and helping you find new places of connection and support. Please RSVP to the church office or sign up at the Kiosk by **Friday, December 8.**



ANNUAL ALL CHURCH CHARGE CONFERENCE



with our District Superintendent Rev. Javier Olivares

**Wednesday, December 6, 2023
10:00 AM in Fellowship Hall**

**SPRC Meeting with DS
preceding at 9:00 AM
Fellowship Hall Meeting Room**

All persons who call SHUMC home are invited to come and celebrate our accomplishments and hear about our plans moving forward. Those who are full members may vote. Plan to join us.

FERRELL BAPTISM

On Saturday, November 4, 2023, Pastor Deborah baptized Arabella and Freya Ferrell, daughters of Kyle and Ashley Ferrell. Kyle is the son of Cal and Karen Slaaen, members of SHUMC.

Pictured: Cal & Karen Slaaen, Arabella Ferrell, Freya Ferrell, Kyle & Ashley Ferrell



ROOM RESERVATIONS FOR 2024 CALENDAR

All Committee chairs are asked to please fill out a pink Room Reservation form for the 2024 church calendar. Please fill in the meeting dates, times and location of your regular scheduled Committee meetings. Be sure to request room setup or equipment needed as Shawn needs this information. The forms can be picked up by the office window (next to the check request form). Thank you!



JEANS AND T-SHIRTS MISSION PROJECT

The Missions Committee will again be helping to provide jeans and T-shirts for youngsters at Dysart Community Center. All gifts must be brought to the church by **Monday, December 11.** If you have questions, please contact Gail P.



LOOKING FOR SOMETHING FUN TO DO?



Do you like to play cards or games? Would you like to join a group that meets once a month to play cards/games and fellowship with each other? If so, please contact Peggy P.

FOOD BANK COLLECTION

DECEMBER 2-3



Our church continues to collect food and other products for Valley View Community Food Bank, which serves residents of the Sun

Cities and El Mirage, including children and senior citizens. The needed non-perishable items are canned: fruits, vegetables, meat, beans, soup, cereal, pasta, rice, peanut butter, granola bars, paper products, diapers, wipes, hygiene items and household cleaning supplies. Please place your items in the collection bin at the Kiosk.

SUPPORT GROUP MINISTRY

Depression and Anxiety Group

First and third Mondays, (Dec. 4 & 18)

6:30 PM to 8:00 PM

A support group for those struggling with anxiety or depression.

Complicated Grief

Second and fourth Mondays

(Dec. 11) 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM

A support group for those who have experienced the death of a loved one or friend by suicide or violent death.

For more information, pick up a Support Group information sheet with a detailed explanation of the groups. The information sheet is by the church office (where the Upper Rooms are found).

If you are interested in joining one, or both, of the groups, contact Pastor Ron at 623-215-3330 on his direct office line.

2023 Order Form for Christmas Honorariums



\$15.00 per plant

**Deadline to order is
Sunday, December 10**

Name _____

of Plants _____ Total Enclosed _____

In **Honor** of

In **Memory** of

To the Glory of God

(Donor name(s) will be in bulletin)

_____ I will pick up my plant(s) after the 5:00 PM service on Christmas Eve (Dec. 24).

_____ I would like to donate my plant to someone who will enjoy it for the holiday.

Please make your check payable to:
SHUMC (Shepherd of the Hills UMC)

And in the Memo: **"Poinsettias"** Please place your check and this completed form in an envelope marked "Poinsettias." If the office is closed, place it in the mailbox outside the church office, or place it in the Offering Box.

*Thank you for helping adorn our church at
Christmas time.*

HOLIDAY GREETINGS AND NEWS FROM UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH



United
Women
in Faith

We have had a very busy fall season and are looking forward to our Christmas Luncheon to be held on **Thursday, December 7 at 11:30 AM.** This is always a gala affair and will be catered so the price is a little higher than most of our luncheons (\$15.00 per person). There will be a Pasta Bar, salad and breadsticks from Olive Garden. We will also be serving brownies for dessert. Sign-up at the kiosk on Sunday,

December 3. All are invited.

This year our group has adopted 20 children from the Wesley/Golden Gate After-School Program to buy Christmas gifts for. Sponsors will bring their gifts to the Luncheon and they will be taken to Wesley/Goldengate next week.

Our November luncheon featured Leslie Friedman, a representative from Circle the City. The Blessing Kits that the congregation put together during Homecoming Week were presented to the speaker and sent with her to give to the homeless of the Phoenix area.

We ask our membership to participate in a special offering in the fall called "World Thank Offering." The monies collected are put with all other national Units' monies and used by the national organization for a project designated by it. Our very generous women have donated over \$1200.00 so far. This is truly a very loving and concerned group that see the need to help women, children and youth around the world.

At our November luncheon, a slate of officers and a budget were presented for 2024 and both were approved. We are thankful for the officers who have volunteered to serve in the coming year. At our January, 2024 meeting, our members will present their pledges for the year and our program will be a speaker from Benevilla.

We are thankful for the congregations' participation in our Mission Candle project. This year we have received nearly \$2,700 and that has helped us help others. All women are invited to be a part of this ambitious and caring organization.

May you have a blessed Advent Season!

Submitted by Sandy B.

MONETARY DONATIONS FOR THE JUSTA CENTER



A \$10.00 donation will buy a sandwich for 25 friends. A \$20.00 donation will buy a sandwich for 50 friends. Or, splurge and go for 250 sandwiches for just \$100.00.

Please place your donations in the white baskets (with the sandwich signs posted on them), by mailing or dropping off a check in the office or by debit or credit card by calling Julie Calvert. **Thank you for your generosity!**

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WEST VALLEY CHORALE

Thursday, December 7, 2023 at 7 PM

Celebrating their 40th anniversary with Holiday music by American Composers.

For tickets see Ken Goodenberger on Sunday or the church office during the week. Tickets will be \$15 or \$20 at the door.



=Welcome=

WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS

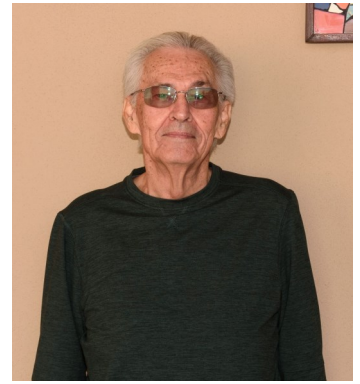


Jeff and Penny are coming to us as a transfer of membership from Lakeview UMC in Sun City, where both have been very active in service to the church. Jeff is a certified chaplain, and looks forward to helping us in our caring ministries. He is also a Lay Speaker with multiple courses completed and has served as a Stephen Minister. He is retired from a career in firefighting, serving as an elected official, and working in Boeing management. He owns a fire truck!

Penny is studying to become a certified chaplain. She spent a season most recently helping in the church office. She is retired from a career

as accounting clerk, licensed multi-line insurance agent, court clerk, and caregiver. She enjoys the outdoors.

Larry C. comes to us as a re-affirmation of faith. He is retired from MTI corporation. His career has been in precision measurement and engineering in many different fields. He has traveled widely. For fun he likes to do bicycle racing, dance, do woodwork, and play board and some card games. He is helping his son in Sun City build an addition on his house.



CALLING ALL CITRUS GLEANING VOLUNTEERS

Each year volunteers from SHUMC and PRIDES partner to glean citrus from homes in Sun City West. This is the 7th season of this volunteer partnership in service! Gleaning teams work together to pick oranges, grapefruit and lemons for St. Mary's Food Bank. The oranges, lemons and grapefruit are distributed in food boxes to families and individuals through the food bank. Home owners and HOA groups who have their trees gleaned also make a donation to the food bank.



Gleaning will start **Wednesday, January 31** and continues every Wednesday for 9 weeks. Last year the group gleaned over 180 trees, resulting in thousands of pounds of citrus for the food bank.

A mission project of this scope requires volunteers. There is no tree climbing involved! No ladders. We use claw like pickers. Jobs are: pickers, muckers (those that pick up the fruit that the pickers pluck and put it in crates) and mules (using handcarts to move the crates to the truck). It is a special type of fellowship, working alongside your church and community friends.

Volunteers meet at SHUMC at 8:00 am to get their assignments with the goal of starting gleaning at 8:30 am. The groups usually finish assigned trees by 11:30.

Confirmation calls are made in December to everyone who had a tree gleaned last year. Please go out in your yard and check your trees- this summer was hard on our local plant life! If you would like to be added or if you have question about gleaning or the gleaning program, call/text Kathy Culliton (435) 730-4466 or email at Culliton.kathleen@gmail.com.

STUFFED IN A BURLAP SACK, NOT ME!

Since Christmas is almost here, I thought I would tell you how the Dutch celebrate the arrival of Santa. We don't do that on the 25th but on the 5th of December. We don't have a Santa either, but a Sinterklaas. History has it that during the Middle Ages, there lived in Spain, a St. Nicolas, an old, kind man who loved people. His name was later changed to Sinterklaas (the i sounds like the i in sit). To the Dutch, he represents someone who is kind and considerate although he is not a push-over! Everyone needs to behave themselves, children and adults alike!

Sinterklaas, his two aides and his horse arrive by boat from Spain. He is beautifully dressed in long red robes embroidered with gold and wears a matching hat. His aides are outfitted in silk colorful jackets. The mayor welcomes them all, there are speeches, his horse is fed and the best way to go is planned. He climbs on his horse which is capable of walking over the rooftops and it is said that if you listen carefully you can hear the clatter of his hooves! How Sinterklaas at his age can climb down to the front door is not known. Off they go, usually during early evening, with one aide carrying a big book which has all the names of the children and the other a large sack with presents. However... if you were not well behaved and considerate the past year there would be no presents for you, or you might get spanked or worse, taken to Spain in that sack, brrr! All this is very worrisome to a small child as Sinterklaas knows everything.... Therefore many children put out some carrots for the horse a week ahead: it might improve their chances

I was an only child of elderly parents and raised by a soft-spoken mother and a strict father who had an office on the second floor of our home. Ever since I was old enough to understand, he told me to be quiet at all times and so I grew up to be a shy, quiet little girl, always afraid to do wrong. Weeks before December 5 my father had already warned me about St. Nicolas and "the sack" adding I had better be extra good. I didn't know what he meant by that, I was always good!

When December 5 came, my mother tried to reassure me. I had been good all year! Not to worry! But I couldn't eat. All I could think of was that big, black sack! Then, our doorbell rang and I just knew it was Sinterklaas- I would not be considered a good girl. What would it be, a spanking or that sack.. My mother opened the front door. "Hello Sinterklaas," I heard her say, "please come in." The door opened and in he walked with one of aides shaking a bundle of twigs. He sat down, opened his book and frowned! At that moment something burst inside me and all my pent-up anger spilled out. I was NOT going to be spanked or into that sack!! I pushed my mother aside and looked Sinterklaas straight in the eye. What was that? I knew those eyes and those glasses and that voice.. It was my father!! I screamed it out loud, "you are NOT Sinterklaas, you're my father". He wouldn't admit it but his helpers started to laugh and that was the end of my belief in Sinterklaas. He stood up, left, went upstairs and nothing was ever said about it. The rest of us had hot chocolate and I was given a beautiful doll!

It was also the last time we celebrated Sinterklaas. The following year on May 10 Germany entered the Netherlands and we lived the next five years with all the horrors of WWII.

Thinking back to that episode with its worries and fears, I firmly believe that Santa is a far better choice to make children happy than Sinterklaas. I also know that the image of him has changed over the years and has become more "Santa" like which is a good thing.

I wish you all a very happy and blessed Christmas!

Til H.



PRAYER NOTES

To all Men and Women

HERE IS YOUR INVITATION

Come and find out...

How to be a Partner in Prayer and pray weekly for the prayer requests of our church family...AND/OR

What it means to be a Prayer Minister and offer prayer one on one.

When: December 3, 10 or 17 after the 10:00 AM Sunday service

Where: In the Prayer Room to the right before you enter the Fellowship Hall.

Ephesians 6:18

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. Philippians 4:6

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.



WAYS TO GIVE

1. Drop a check by the office (or mail it);
2. Go to www.shepherdofthehills.org and click on the DONATION tab OR use your mobile phone camera and hold over the QR Code shown.
3. Call Julie Calvert, our Financial Secretary, to set up regular online giving or to make a gift using your credit or debit card by phone.
4. Add Shepherd of the Hills to your list of payees for bill pay from your checking account through your bank for weekly or monthly gifts to the church.
5. Arrange with your financial advisor to send all or part of your RMDs directly to the church and avoid paying any taxes on your donation.



Thank you for your generosity!! If you have any questions, call Julie at 623-584-2280 or email her at: accounting@shepherdofthehills.org.

In Memoriam



Birt K.

10/28/23

Thomas C.

11/19/23

Lois G.

11/26/23

Anita C.

11/9/23

MISSION CANDLE

The Mission Candle can be dedicated to anyone to celebrate a birthday, anniversary, honor, or in memory of someone special.

Please call, email, or stop by the office to set this up. Your request will be printed in the announcements and on a slide, but read only at the 4 PM and 10 AM services.

Your donation of \$20 or more will enable the UWF to raise more funds and allow the opportunity to help support approximately 13 local charities.



SPOT LIGHT ON; DAVE AND DEB



Dave and Deb moved from the cornfields of Normal, Illinois to the cacti of Surprise, Arizona in July, 2021. They have visited every U.S. state except Alabama and have always loved the West. They have been married for 51 years and have two children and five grandchildren, some in Kentucky and some in Arizona.

Before retiring, Deb taught family science (relationships, marriage enrichment, public policy for families, etc.) at the university level. She enjoys genealogy, sewing and gardening and is a member of a PEO group which provides financial support for educating women.

Dave was an agronomist, helping farmers improve crop production. He likes fishing and model railroading. Together, Dave and Deb enjoy geocaching, which is an outdoor activity to find treasures hidden by others. They have done geocaching while traveling in different states and countries.

The couple likes many aspects of Shepherd of the Hills Church. They feel that the ministers are well-read in theology and can translate Scripture for meaning in everyday life. They like the music program and the emphasis on social justice and missions. Dave participates in the cantatas and gleanings. They are members of the Social Shepherds and the strategic planning group.



December Birthdays

3 Toni T.	22 Barbara H.
4 Bill P.	24 Frances V.
6 Carol C.	25 Renee E.
14 Charlie F.	26 Shirley F.
20 Lois G.	27 Lois B.
20 Linda W.	31 Annette J.

December Anniversaries

25 Lewis & Carol C.



We need your permission to print your name and the day of your birthday and/or anniversary. Contact the church office by phone or email to set this up.

Use your mobile phone camera and hold over the QR Code.

OUR WEBSITE



OUR FACEBOOK



What a whirlwind—and we survived!!! The sale was a great success because of ALL of



you!!! A BIG thank you to all who helped with the sale and all who provided the yummy food for the hungry workers! Before expenses, we brought in more than \$15,000! But, also, most importantly, we reached out to our community for Christ and showed His compassion to many folks who needed to be helped.

LUNCHEON

We will be having a luncheon on **Sunday, December 3, 2023 at 12:00 after Fellowship Hour.** I'd like to discuss the sale, good/bad and make some plans for next year. It is important that all who participated have a voice, so please plan on coming to have lunch and share your insights. We need folks to sign up so we'll have enough food, please add your name to the sheet by the office or at the kiosk. Thanks, Julie

Missions Team Thank You, Year End Giving, 50th Anniversary Celebration, Planned Giving Committee

thank you

The Missions Team wants to thank SHUMC member Lois B. for crocheting over 60 (yes, 60!) lap

robes. The lap robes will provide comfort and warmth to members and friends of the church who are ill. The pastors and the CARE Team will distribute the items.

We also want to thank everyone who supported the recent effort to complete 200 Kindness Kits for Circle the City. The Kits were assembled during the Homecoming Week Barbeque. A representative of Circle the City stated that they were completely out of Kindness Kits until receiving ours.

PLAN AHEAD – YEAR END GIVING

This is a reminder regarding your end-of-year giving if you wish to receive contribution credit for gifts in 2023. Because of IRS rules, we will only be able to accept gifts for your 2023 contribution credit if the following are true:

Gifts are physically received by 12/31/2023. The office will be closed Dec 25 thru Dec 31. There is a mail slot at the main door to office. If you are hand delivering your contribution, please keep this in mind. I will be checking the mail slot periodically during that last week of 2023.

OR A mailed gift must be dated AND postmarked on or before 12/31/2023.

A gift from distributions such as IRA must also be dated AND postmarked on or before 12/31/2023.

Thank you all for your generous support of Shepherd of the Hills UMC and may you all have a very Merry Christmas and a joyous New Year.

Julie Calvert,
Financial Secretary

50th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Shepherd of the Hills will celebrate those couples who have been married 50 years or more (and have not celebrated with us before) on **Sunday, February 18, 2024**, at the 10:00 AM service. A reception with cake will be held during coffee hour.

50th

If you wish to join us for this celebration, please call the church office and leave your name and anniversary date. We would also like to have a wedding photo, along with a current photo, to display during the reception hour. The photos will be returned to you after the reception. Please leave your photos in the office no later than **January 10, 2024**. If you have any questions, please call Sondra S. Thank you and we look forward to sharing this special milestone with you.

PERMANENT ENDOWMENT AND PLANNED GIVING COMMITTEE UPDATE

The purpose of this committee is to accept gifts and bequests, serve as trustee of these gifts and use the income from these assets for the benefit of SHUMC and other projects of the committee. YTD gifts are as follows:

College Scholarships
\$ 15,000.00

Sun Health—Nursing Scholarships
\$ 40,000.00

SHUMC—Care Ministry Support
\$143,666.00

YTD TOTAL
\$198,666.00

Thank You to Our Wonderful Volunteers!

At a time when Giving is down, Hunger is up!

Feed My Starving Children (FMSC) is a Christian nonprofit dedicated to providing nutritious meals to children worldwide. On Tuesday – Nov 28th, many church members of Shepherd of The Hills church, volunteered to hand pack meals which are then sent to an incredible worldwide network of partner organizations who distribute them to those in need. In 1.75 hours, we packed 164 boxes which equals to 35,424 meals. These meals will feed 97 kids for one year.





13658 W. Meeker Boulevard

Sun City West, AZ 85375-3700

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THE SHEPHERD'S VOICE

December 2023

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP ONLINE

www.shepherdofthehills.org

4:00 PM, Saturdays	Sweet Hour of Prayer Weekly Communion	Chapel
8:30 AM, Sundays	Informal Praise Communion 1st Sunday of the Month	Fellowship Hall
8:45 AM, Sundays	Connections Sunday School	Fellowship Hall Meeting Room
10:00 AM, Sundays	Spirited Traditional Service Communion 1st Sunday of the month; Communion offered after 10 AM service on remaining Sundays	Sanctuary