

THE CHURCH NURSERY IS OPEN
The nursery is professionally staffed by the Lullaby Guild, open Sunday mornings, 8:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m., in Room 109, and welcomes infants through 3 years old. Ask any host for directions to the nursery.

Jr. High and Sr. High Youth Group (6th-12th Grade)
Youth Group will meet on most Sunday evenings from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. during the school year, and will include a good mix of fun, fellowship, life skills, service opportunities, and outings. All youth in grades 6–12 are welcome! Dinner is provided. Please contact julie@firstchurch.church to be added to the youth invite list.

Consider Prayer Quilting
Whether you have a few sewing skills or you’re an accomplished quilter, we have room for you! We meet weekly on Wednesdays in Epworth Room from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Your schedule may bring you in later, or if needed, you may leave earlier. We enjoy fellowship, laughter and end with prayers for quilt recipients. Come join us!

Prospective Member Orientation
Thinking about joining the church? Come visit with Pastor Mike and some of our church leaders as we discuss what it means to be a member of the First United Methodist Church of Phoenix. You’ll hear some background information on the denomination and our local church, meet some of our more active members, and learn how you can get involved. We’ll meet on Saturday, September 26, from 9 a.m. to noon, in Room 102. New members will be received during the combined service on October 4. Please scan the QR Code to register or contact the church office at 602-263-5013.



**All-Church Worship Service and Lunch
Sunday, October 4 at 10 a.m.**
On Sunday, October 4, our church will unite in a single service to celebrate World Communion Sunday. This celebration of unity will include contemporary and traditional music; we will also receive new members!
After the service, you are invited to a meal in Asbury Hall. This time of fellowship is hosted by the Groups and Gatherings Committee and generously sponsored by the First Church Foundation. Please scan the QR Code to register.



Pastor Mike Is Holding Open Office Hours
Pastor Mike will be holding open office hours at the church to meet with anyone who wishes to stop by and chat on **Mondays between 6 and 7 p.m. and Wednesdays between 11 a.m. and noon.** There will also be a Zoom Room open during these hours using the following meeting ID and passcode:
Pastor Mike's Zoom Room ID: 602 263 5510
Pastor Mike's Zoom Room passcode: 5013
If you would like to schedule an appointment at a different time, please email Pastor Mike at mike@firstchurch.church.

Do No Harm: Examining Our Hearts, Widening Our Welcome
Hospitality is at the heart of the Christian life—but true welcome requires honest self-examination first. Join us for a special workshop, rooted in John Wesley's Three Simple Rules, that invites participants to look inward before looking outward: to name the assumptions, comfort zones, and unexamined biases that quietly shape who feels at home in our churches and who doesn't. This isn't about guilt, it's about grace. Through candid conversation and reflection, we'll explore how doing no harm means paying attention to the harm we don't always see, and how doing good means actively widening the circle of belonging. Come ready to examine your own heart, and leave equipped to help your congregation become a place where everyone truly knows they belong.
We will gather in Asbury Hall on Saturday, October 3, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., for this special training facilitated by Ms. Rae Lathrop, the Director of Justice and Community Development for the Desert Southwest Annual Conference, and Rev. Gina Pollard, Associate Pastor at Paradise Valley UMC. A light lunch will be provided.



Happening This Week	
Today	
9 a.m.	Worship - Contemporary
9 a.m.	Children’s Sunday School (Rooms 221, 222, 223)
10 a.m.	First Kids Choir (Room 106)
10 a.m.	Jr. and Sr. High Youth Sunday School (Room 103)
10 a.m.	The Table Adult Class (Room 116)
10 a.m.	Faith for Today Adult Class (Centennial Room)
10 a.m.	Upper Room Adult Class (Epworth Room)
11 a.m.	Worship - Traditional
4:30 p.m.	Youth Choir (Room 106)
5:15 p.m.	Al-Anon: Sunday Night Bookworms (Centennial Room)
5:30 p.m.	Jr. and Sr. High Youth Dinner (Epworth Room)
6:15 p.m.	Jr. and Sr. High Youth Programs (Room 101 and Room 103)
6:30 p.m.	AA Group - Solution on Central (Asbury Hall)
Monday, September 14	
12 p.m.	Admin Prep Group (Conference Room)
2:30 p.m.	Covenant Sisters (Virtual)
5 p.m.	Giving Subcommittee of the Finance Committee (Off Campus)
6 p.m.	Pastor Mike’s Open Office Hours (Room 101)
6:30 p.m.	Missions and Social Justice Committee (Virtual)
Tuesday, September 15	
9:30 a.m.	Yoga (Room 114)
6 p.m.	Finance Committee (Epworth Room)
6 p.m.	Worship Committee (Room 116)
7 p.m.	Axios (Room 102)
Wednesday, September 16	
9:15 a.m.	Weekday School Chapel (Weekday School)
9:30 a.m.	Prayer Quilting (Epworth Room)
11 a.m.	Pastor Mike’s Open Office Hours (Office)
2:30 p.m.	Cherub Choir (Room 106)
5:45 p.m.	Handbell Choir Rehearsal (Epwoth Room)
6 p.m.	Next Generation Committee (Virtual)
6 p.m.	Boy Scouts #41 (Asbury Hall)
6:30 p.m.	AA Group - Solution on Central (Asbury Hall)
7 p.m.	Chancel Choir (Choir Room)
7:30 p.m.	Al-Anon (Room 116)
Thursday, September 17	
9:30 a.m.	Congregational Care Team (Library)
1 p.m.	Knitty Witty Chain Gang (Wesley Lounge)
4:30 p.m.	Yoga (Room 114)
6 p.m.	Celebration of Discipline Book Study (Chapel)
6 p.m.	Praise Choir (Choir Room)
6:30 p.m.	Boy Scouts District Boards (Asbury Hall)
7 p.m.	Praise Band (Sanctuary)
Friday, September 18	
7 a.m.	AA - Solution on Central in the morning (Room 102)
Saturday, September 19 - no church events	
Next Sunday, September 20	
9 a.m.	Worship - Contemporary
9 a.m.	Children’s Sunday School (Rooms 221, 222, 223)
10 a.m.	First Kids Choir (Room 106)
10 a.m.	Jr. and Sr. High Youth Sunday School (Room 103)
10 a.m.	The Table Adult Class (Room 116)
10 a.m.	Faith for Today Adult Class (Centennial Room)
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11 a.m.	Worship - Traditional
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6:30 p.m.	AA Group - Solution on Central (Asbury Hall)



First United Methodist Church of Phoenix
5510 N Central Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85012
602-263-5013
www.firstchurch.church

First Church is an inclusive community of faith where **ANYONE** can experience the goodness and grace of God.

September 13, 2026 • 9 a.m.



*If you need assistance at any time, please notify a host (usher). They are here to help ensure you feel welcomed and supported.

Thank you for silencing phones before the service begins.

Our Ministry Together	
The ministers of this church are its members; those who assist them are:	
Carlo A. Rapanut - Bishop	Natasha Hawkins - Weekday School
Melissa Rynders - District Superintendent	Director
Mike Wilkerson - Senior Pastor	Monica Rockey - Weekday School
Don Campbell - Lay Leader	Assistant Director
Joshua Elder - Minister of Music	Russ Morrow - Business Administrator
Sammi Burkhart - Director of Church	Cathy Fuentes - Office Manager
Communication,	Christine Kyhn - Organist
Growth and Marketing	Elizabeth Leyva - Children/Youth
Julie Cochran - Director of Next Gen	Choirs
Ministry	Dan Hawkins - Campus Superintendent
Patricia Magyar and Deby Campbell -	Geoff Barkley - Morning Custodian
Congregational Care Coordinators	Karissa Morales - Evening Custodian
	Ryan Newberry - Media Booth

ORDER OF WORSHIP		
Welcome and Announcements	Rev. Mike Wilkerson	
(Please register your attendance on the <i>Church Center</i> card found in your pew or <i>Online</i> .)		
*Greeting Our Friends and Neighbors		
*Call to Worship	Liturgist: Bonnie Hicks	
One: God calls us from what has been into what is yet to be.		
All: When the way ahead is uncertain, God journeys with us.		
One: Through every season, God is still shaping us, calling us, and helping us discover who we are becoming.		
All: We are God’s beloved people, still growing, still changing, still journeying.		
One: So let us step forward with courage and faith, trusting the One who goes with us.		
All: Let us worship God, who leads us from captivity into freedom and from the familiar into new life!		
*Opening Song	How Good It Is	
Children’s Message	Julie Cochran, Next Gen Ministry	
Following the Children’s Message, children pre-K through 5th grade are invited to follow the teachers to Children's Sunday School located upstairs. Children may return to their parents in the pews, or childcare is available for infants through age three in our nursery, Room 109. First-time visitors are encouraged to accompany their children to the Sunday School room.		
Commissioning UMCOR Mission Team		
*A Time of Praise	Promises No Longer Slaves	
Pastoral Prayer	Rev. Mike Wilkerson	
Silent Prayer and Reflection		
The Lord’s Prayer		
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.		
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.		
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.		
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.		
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.		
Sharing Our Tithes and Offerings		
Special Music	Way Maker First Praise Band	Leeland
Offertory Prayer		

Scripture Reading	Exodus 14:19-25	Liturgist: Bonnie Hicks
Sermon	Escaping to New Adventures	Rev. Mike Wilkerson
Unison Prayer		
God of freedom, you call us from what has been and lead us toward what is yet to be. When we stand at the edge of uncertain waters, give us courage to step forward. When we discover that freedom brings new challenges, give us strength and wisdom for the journey. When we are tempted to return to what is familiar, remind us that you are still leading us. Through every change and every challenge, teach us more about ourselves, more about one another, and more about you. Lead us into new adventures of faith, trusting that wherever the journey takes us, your presence goes with us. Amen.		
*Closing Song	Call Upon the Lord	
*Benediction	Rev. Mike Wilkerson	

For those who are able, please stand.		

WELCOME GUESTS!
Thank you for visiting First Church today. We are so glad you chose to worship with us! Please stop by our Welcome Table in the narthex and take a gift bag. We also encourage you to share your contact information so we may formally welcome you. Please complete the <i>Online</i> attendance form or the <i>Church Center</i> card in your pew.

	Electronic Giving Made Easy	
Use the Church Center mobile app to give to First Church with convenient and secure electronic methods, including credit card, debit card, bank transfer from savings or checking, and Apple Pay. Scan this QR code to get started. Thank you!		

Strategic Plan	
Church leaders have developed a comprehensive Strategic Plan to guide the next few years. It is centered around our vision of being an inclusive community of faith where ANYONE can experience the goodness and grace of God. Built from congregational input, it outlines key goals to help our ministries grow in a sustainable and vibrant way. The plan will be actively monitored, with regular updates and adjustments to ensure we’re not just creating a plan, but truly living it. Please scan this QR Code to read the Strategic Plan.	

Would You Like to Receive Text Messages from First Church?
If you'd like to receive text message news and updates from our church, please contact the office to be added to the text list!

Afternoon Book Group
The Afternoon Book Group meets on the fourth Tuesday of most months at 1:30 p.m. in the Library. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 22 . The book for September is <i>Murder on the Red River</i> by Marcie R. Rendon. We welcome all who love to read and discuss and travel the world through books.

Volunteer for Fall Festival!
Fall Festival is a beloved tradition within our church and an important outreach connection to our local community! And to make it happen, we need A LOT of volunteers. We need people to hand out candy for Trunk or Treat, people to run booths for games and activities, as well as people to help behind the scenes setting up and cleaning up. If you would like to volunteer but have mobility challenges, there are plenty of seated positions; let us know, and we'll get you a chair! Please contact the church office to sign up, or reach out to Sammi directly at sammi@firstchurch.church .

PRAYERS TO THE CONGREGATION
WE INVITE YOU TO TAKE A BLUE PRAYER CARD IN THE PEW Write your prayer request for yourself or a loved one, and place it in the offering plate. The Care Team will hold the prayers in love and care.
PRAYERS FOR OUR SPECIAL CARE Laura DeNinno, Yvonne Fischer, Barbara Harvey, Barbara Johnson, Vickie Johnson, Ronda Klein, Betty Luallin, Terry Lutz, Ray McFarland, Gerry Oliver, Jean Oliver
PRAYERS FOR OUR CHURCH COMMUNITY Jim Hyde and Karen Champagne
WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES (Celebrating 50 or more years of marriage) Jim and Jan Hyde 9/2 Bob and Connie Bailes 9/9
SENIOR MILESTONES (Celebrating 80 or more birthdays) Charles Raines 9/15 (95) Joanne Lynch 9/16
HOSTS Steve Haehl, Mindy Smidt, Marilyn Seese, and Janet Spiker
PRAYERS FOR OUR CHURCHES Trinity UMC, Phoenix; Trinity UMC, Yuma; Sedona UMC

Planning for the Future
On Saturday, October 10, 10-11:30 a.m., the First United Methodist Foundation will sponsor a program on Planning for the Future. This educational program will provide information on options for when we or our loved ones may need more care. Participants will find out what’s available and obtain tips to identify the best options for a variety of life situations.
Whether you're thinking about your parents or friends who are aging, or you'd like to have that peace of mind for yourself, you won't want to miss this program!

FirstKids Choir
Calling all kindergarteners through 5th grade: Experience the joy of singing in a fun environment. Come try FirstKids Choir on Sundays, 10:05-10:50, in room 106. For more information, contact Elizabeth Leyva at elizabeth@firstchurch.church .

Exploring Spiritual Practices	
Sign up for our new book study! Pastor Mike is hosting a 10-week study of the book <i>Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth</i> by Richard Foster. Grab a copy from your favorite book distributor and come join us on Thursdays at 6 p.m. in the church's chapel. Please scan the QR Code to register, or just show up!	

Fall Festival Sponsorship Opportunities
Mark your calendars! Our annual Fall Festival will be on Sunday, October 25, and we are excited to make this year's event our best yet. This fun-filled community celebration brings together families, friends, and neighbors for an afternoon of fellowship, food, games, and activities for all ages.
To help make this event a success and build on last year's festival, we are seeking financial sponsors to help underwrite event expenses. If you own a business, work for a company that supports community events, or know someone who may be interested in sponsoring the festival, we would love to hear from you. Sponsorship opportunities are available at the following levels:
- Gold Sponsor: \$1,000 - Silver Sponsor: \$500 - Bronze Sponsor: \$250
If you would like more information about becoming a sponsor, please contact our office at info@firstchurch.church .
Thank you for helping us create a wonderful event that welcomes our congregation and the entire community!