

THE BREEZE

Advent 2011



**Volume 32- Number 12 Published Monthly
Desert Palm United Church of Christ
Pastor: John F. Herman**

**1230 E. Guadalupe Road
Tempe, AZ 85283-3932**

**Phone: 480.831.0065
Fax: 480.755.4810**

OFFICE HOURS

9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.; T, W, Th, F
Telephone: 480.831.0065
Fax: 480.755.4810

Email: Pastor John Herman-desertpalmucc@qwestoffice.net

Church Office: admindpucc@qwestoffice.net

Website: <http://desertpalmucc.org/>

Caregiver Contact, Mon-Fri, 9:00 am-5:00 pm: 480.235.3922

CHURCH LEADERS:

Moderator: Bill Albert
Clerk: Mark Williams
Financial Secretary: Marlene Schanz
Treasurer: Randy Bulriss
Christian Education: Marie Parsey
Church Development: Pat Lantrip
Community World: Beverly Crawford
Financial Affairs: Kent Utter
Fellowship: Larry Seubert
Facilities Management: Bob Carver
Spiritual Life and Worship: Linda Stewart
Youth Member-at-Large: Michelle Bulriss

STAFF:

Pastor: John Herman
Associate Pastor: Michael-Ann Veziroglu
Pastor Emeritus: Don Arey
Administrative Assistant: Shelley Daley
Office Volunteer: Cyndi Carver
Nursery: Kristin Wetzel

MUSIC DEPARTMENT:

Minister of Music: Jon Sywassink
Pianist: Eric Carlson

DEAR FRIENDS

It's Advent. Let the countdown begin! Assuming today is December First, there are now 24 days until Christmas. There are between 11 and 16 School Days. Today there used to be 20 shopping days until Christmas as of December First, but that was a long time ago, in a galaxy far away. (The place where and when I was born) And there are three Sundays left for us to get ourselves ready.

But how long does it really take to get ready? I'm told by parents that it actually takes far **more** than nine months, although nine is usually all the time parents get.



So here we are, theologically preparing to welcome the Holy Child of Christmas into our world and we only give the idea a four week gestation period. Complicating that, this four week period is packed full of the trappings of the secular celebration of the same holiday.

One of the traditional ways of preparing is to light more and more Advent Candles each week as a way of symbolically driving the darkness away until the great celestial turning point at the winter solstice. (It is no coincidence that early Christians decided to celebrate the birth of Christ at the darkest time of the year.)

Another tradition is the one we have reintroduced this year with the Jesse Tree. In the Hebrew Scriptures Jesse was the father of young David, who would eventually unite the twelve tribes and establish the capitol at Jerusalem, and who would lay the groundwork for the great Temple of his son, King Solomon. By the time of the first Christmas a beaten and downtrodden remnant of Israel- largely from the tribe of Judah- was struggling with the idea that their eventual salvation from the current political, economic and military oppression of the Romans might come from a descendent of the family tree of David – of Jesse. It's one of the reasons the genealogies of Jesus family connects itself to that lineage, and one of the reasons Jesus is sometimes called Son of David.

The Jesse Tree reminds us in our time of Christmas preparations that the Hebrew Scriptures contain constant reminders of God's blessing and God's faithfulness to the Covenant that had made them. The little devotional booklet we will be making available to families contains about two dozen reminders of these stories- the perfect stories for families who can actually sit down at the same dinner table might actually share each evening as one, two, three, or four candles are progressively lit each week. There is a pictorial symbol- an "ornament" representing each of these stories.

At Desert Palm we have selected a dozen of these visual reminders to display in our sanctuary- along with a "cut and color," take-home version of them that children of any age are welcome to take home to decorate a Christmas tree, or a door, or a refrigerator.

The truth of the Jesse Tree is that Christians as well as our Jewish forbears had wonderful stories of God's grace that sustained them through centuries of otherwise gloomy history.

It's Advent. Let the countdown begin!

Hope, Peace, Joy and Love are coming our way in the twinkling of an eye.
Blessings to all!

JOHN

ADVENT- SPECIAL WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

SUNDAY DEC. 4 **THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT** THE PEACE CANDLE
SUNDAY DEC. 11 **THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT** THE LOVE CANDLE
SUNDAY DEC. 18 **THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT** THE JOY CANDLE-
CHORAL CANTATA AND CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT
WEDNESDAY, DEC 21 7:00 PM **THE WINTER SOLSTICE HEALING SERVICE**
SATURDAY, DEC 24 7: & 11:00 PM **CANDLELIGHT CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES**
SUNDAY, DEC 25 9:00 AM **CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP SERVICE**

Church Council Meeting Digested

--Council approved the newly formed **Justice and Witness** Committee Group bringing a spokesperson from Children's Action Alliance to a meeting to talk about **Children's Advocacy**.

--Fellowship: next month's **Lunch Bunch** gathering will feature a speaker on **healthy joints** (i.e., anatomical parts, not herbal cigarettes).

--Facilities: Bob Carver installed **temporary sheer curtains** on the outside of the windows above the Dove, to see if that helps mitigate the glare on the video screen. Cloudy weather on the Sunday before the council meeting means the jury is still out on whether that strategy was beneficial. Also, **awning replacement** will have to await next year due to budget limitations. Also, the **Capital Improvement Committee** was to meet to do a campus tour to generate a to-do list for upcoming maintenance/improvement projects.

--Council approved going forward with the **fascia lighting** (to light the sidewalk area on east side of church, to be financed with an anonymous donation and individual contributions to make up the difference.

Summarized by Mark Williams, Church Clerk

FINANCIAL REPORT OF 2011 PLEDGED RECEIPTS AS OF 10/31/11



\$194,131 – Adjusted Total 2011 pledges by 94 accounts

\$156,074 – Actual 2011 pledged receipts as of 10/31/11.

(\$155,474 paid during 2011 and \$600 paid in 2010 for 2011)

\$161,129 -- Pledged amount due as of 10/31/11 (10 months/83% of year)

23% of accounts have paid less than the total pledged to date.

Resulting in a '**shortage**' of **\$10,310**. (Last year 23% had paid less as of Oct. 31st.)

There are still 4 accounts that have paid zero for this year.

52% are right on target. (Last year 47% were current.)

25% of accounts have paid more than amount due, resulting in advance payments of \$4,499, which will be applied to future months. (Last year 30% had paid in advance.)

PLEASE NOTE—If your pledged amount needs adjusting, please contact Marlene Schanz, Financial Secretary 480-634-7716 or mmschanz118@cox.net. Thank you.

REMINDER—IT WOULD BE REALLY REALLY REALLY HELPFUL IF WE RECEIVED ALL OF OUR ESTIMATES OF GIVING (PLEDGE CARDS) BY DECEMBER 11 SO WE CAN BEGIN TO ASSEMBLE OUR 2012 BUDGET

2011 CONTRIBUTIONS

Please note that Christmas Day is the last Sunday in this year, 2011. Therefore, **ALL CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE YEAR 2011 MUST BE RECEIVED BY DECEMBER 25, 2011.**

Any monies received after December 25, 2011, will be credited to next year (2012).

Desert Palm UCC books will close December 25, 2011. Thank you.

Marlene Schanz, Financial Secretary

Our December "Thank You's" Go To:

- ✚ *Carmela Ramirez* and *Rebecca Kennell* for all of their fine tuning of the sound system.
- ✚ *Kathy Skinner* for her beautiful accompaniment (It was so nice to see you!)
- ✚ The new *Desert Palm Caregivers* group for their Lunch Bunch presentation.
- ✚ *Everyone* who brought in cookies and cakes for the AAFC Halloween Party.
- ✚ To *Mark Klein* for all of the trouble shooting he did to find the leaks in the irrigation system and then to coordinate the repairs. Then for tackling repairs to the powder room by the Library.
- ✚ To *Bob Carver* for working on the solution for the sunlight from the windows and for taking over the Facilities Management chair on Council. Bob also re-aimed the parking lot lights for better nighttime coverage.
- ✚ To *Bill Albert* for coordinating changes to our night lighting on the East Side of the building.
- ✚ To the faithful folk who joined together on November 5 to Protest at the NARTH event in Phoenix. (NARTH is a pseudo-therapy to "correct" homosexuality.) Thanks to *Dallas, Denise, John, Jon, Larry, Cindi, Lori, and Stori.*
- ✚ To *Everyone* who contributed at our *Blessing of the Animals Event* in October. \$280.00 was donated! We received a thank you note from PACC911:
"Dear Friends,
Your generous donation sent to PACC 911 was most appreciated. These funds will be used for our emergency medical fund program-saving countless lives of innocent animals.
Our Sincere Thanks / Bari Mears"

Lunch Bunch December 2nd

Join us for our December Lunch Bunch when we will have a presentation by St. Luke's Hospital on healthy joints. We meet around 11:30 and eat around Noon. Bring a dish to share along with your questions about your creaking knees. If you have any questions please contact Larry Seubert.

DPUCC CAREGIVERS' CORNER

Do you need a ride to a doctor appointment or assistance in getting your weekly grocery shopping done? The Desert Palm Caregivers are available to meet the medical transportation and essential grocery shopping needs for Desert Palm members and their immediate family members.

We ask that, if possible, you give us 48 hours advance notice of your doctor appointment or anticipated grocery shopping day. You may call 480-235-3922 Monday-Friday from 9:00 A.M.-5:00 P.M. to schedule your ride.

Thank you,
Your Desert Palm Caregivers

Blues, Blahs, Bah Humbug!

Many people have trouble getting through the holiday/Holy day season.

Some know why, others don't.

Here at Desert Palm, small groups will be meeting for mutual support during Advent and Christmas.

Groups are small & confidential, will start after Thanksgiving and go until Jan 6, and are open to anyone.

If none of the times below are good for you, or to join a group, talk to Jaci Scott. Groups will be formed as needed.

Monday 10 am Tuesday 7pm Thursday 7pm Saturday 7pm
Jaci Scott jacaz03@yahoo.com 602.300.1918

Christmas Carols at Desert Palm

Please come to a special presentation by our own choir members when they sing carols with our I-Help guests on Saturday, December 17th at 6:30 p.m. It would be a nice way to wind down a day of Christmas shopping and listen to the sounds of the season.

SANCTUARY DRINKING

.....I hope that got everyone's attention! **Please** remember our long-standing plea (though not widely enforced) of limiting drinks in the sanctuary to water. We've been cleaning the carpet when moving chairs around and finding spots of spilled drinks. Even clear sodas containing sugar make horrible stains. Usually it's one of our Church Staff members who does the clean-up. We appreciate your attention to this problem. Thank You.

Pat Lantrip, Church Development Ministry Chair

Snowballs and Tinsel

Each year we decorate our sanctuary Christmas Tree with small items that can help others. This year we will be decorating with snowballs and tinsel.



How do these things help others? Well, when the snowballs are rolled-up socks and the tinsel are toothbrushes, we can help some great agencies, like the Child Crisis Center, I-Help and Victory Place.

Please help us to decorate our tree with these beautiful gifts. Socks can be any size and color, tights are also appreciated. And, of course, all kinds of toothbrushes will be gladly received. We will be collecting these items through the Advent and Christmas seasons, delivering them in January to the various agencies.

We will be decorating the entire Sanctuary for Advent on Saturday, December 3 at 8:30 a.m.- decorating the tree, hanging the greens and wreaths.

Thank You for the letting the Advent and Christmas Spirit Shine!

Linda Stewart for the Spiritual Life and Worship Ministry and Larry Seubert for Fellowship.

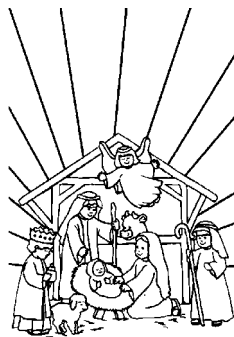
Our Christmas Pageant December 18th

Our children, youth and choirs will join together on December 18th during Sunday morning worship to offer the Christmas story in word, song and pageant through *Lead Me Back to Bethlehem* by Pepper Choplin. We will need many gifts to be shared that morning and in the days and weeks that lead up to this celebration.

December 17th is our rehearsal.

1-2 pm will be with the choir, children and youth.
Please plan to arrive at 12:45 to get into costumes.

Thank You!



ADULT DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

12/1	KRISTOPHER HOTT
12/2	CAROLINE LULL
12/5	RYAN JESSE
12/7	KARYN HOTT KATHERINE HEATH
12/9	KATHY BERRY RICHARD KASZETA
12/15	REBECCA BOND MARION INWARD
12/16	KRISTIN WETZEL
12/17	JOHN LINDA JULIO RIOS
12/19	HOLLY HANSEN
12/20	BEVERLY BYINGTON KIP CARROLL
12/24	LINDA THORNTON
12/27	STEPHANIE MALONEY
12/29	DAVID MOAKLEY VIVIAN PEMBERTON
12/30	KARI YOUNG
12/31	BEVERLY PITTMAN



DECEMBER YOUTH AND CHILDREN BIRTHDAYS

12/05/04	ARIANNA WETZEL	7
12/09/10	LANDON SMITH	1
12/18/99	OWEN MALONEY	12

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

12/9/95	Bill and Kari Young	16 years
12/14/62	Jim and Jo Ann Vredenburg	49 years
12/21/97	Rebecca Kennell & Carmela Ramirez	14 years
12/26/53	Lois and Don Arey	58 years
12/29/79	Sally and Gordon Jesse	31 years
12/29/08	Jim and Barbara Pyle-Rodgers	3 years
12/30/46	Barbara and Dick Nearing	65 years
12/31/99	Hope Dillon and Oliverio Balcells	12 years



Christmas Flowers

Sign up now to dedicate flowers that will decorate our chancel area at Christmas. You may choose to purchase a poinsettia plant (\$10.00) that you may take home after whichever service you attend on Dec 24th or Sun., 25th, or you may make a donation to the Desert Palm Chancel/Flower Fund, which is used to provide Chancel items throughout the year.

Please indicate how you wish your flower dedication to appear in our Christmas bulletins, include your check, noting that it is for "Christmas Flowers", and place this sheet in the offering plate or return it to the church office by Tuesday, Dec. 13th. Questions, Linda Stewart 480-940-9618.

Name: _____

- I wish to purchase a plant to take home.
- I wish to make a donation to the Chancel/Flower Fund.

In Thanksgiving for _____

-or-

In Celebration of _____

-or-

In Loving Memory of _____

Paid Check _____ Cash _____ Date _____

Plants disposed after 1/1/2012 service

December 2011

SUNDAY SCHEDULE:

9:00 a.m.
10:15 a.m.

Worship/Church School
Children's Choir
Refreshments in atrium
Lighthouse Presbyterian Church (LPC)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2 11:30 a.m. Lunch Bunch	3 8:30 am Decorate sanctuary 3:00 pm I-HELP (Thornton)
4	5 7:00 pm Al-Anon	6 9:30 am Banner Group (Library)	7 6:30 pm Bells of Peace 7:30 pm Chancel Choir	8	9	10 6:00 am-8:00 am LPC 1:30 pm Knit Wits (Mission Hall)
11	12 7:00 pm Council Meeting 7:00 pm Al-Anon	13 9:30 am Banner Group (Library) 6:30 pm Bells @ Westchester Villa	14 7:30 pm Chancel Choir	15	16	17 6:00 am-8:00 am LPC 12:30 pm-3:00 pm Pageant Rehearsal 3:00 pm I-HELP (Schanz) 6:30 pm I-HELP Carols
18 Christmas Music and Pageant 9:00 am "Lead Me Back to Bethlehem"	19 Choir and Bells Party and Caroling 7:00 pm Al-Anon	20	21 7:00 pm Winter Solstice – Healing Service	22	23	24 7:00 pm Christmas Eve Service 11:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service
25 Christmas Day 9:00 am Worship 4:00 pm PAZ (Heath Team)	26 7:00 pm Al-Anon	27	28	29	30	31

December items for the Food Barrel: Low salt canned Vegetables (United Food Bank requests no glass containers.)

LECTIONARY FOR December

Sunday, December 4th-Second Sunday of Advent (Violet or Blue)

Isaiah 40:1-11, Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13, 2 Peter 3:8-15a, Mark 1:1-8

Sunday, December 11th-Third Sunday of Advent (Violet, Blue or Rose)

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11, Psalm 126, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24, John 1:6-8, 19-28

Sunday, December 18th-Fourth Sunday of Advent (Violet or Blue)

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16, Luke 1:47-55, Romans 16:25-27, Luke 1:26-38

Sunday, December 25th-Christmas Day (White) Isaiah 52:7-10, Psalm 98, Hebrew 1:1-4 (5-12), John 1:1-14