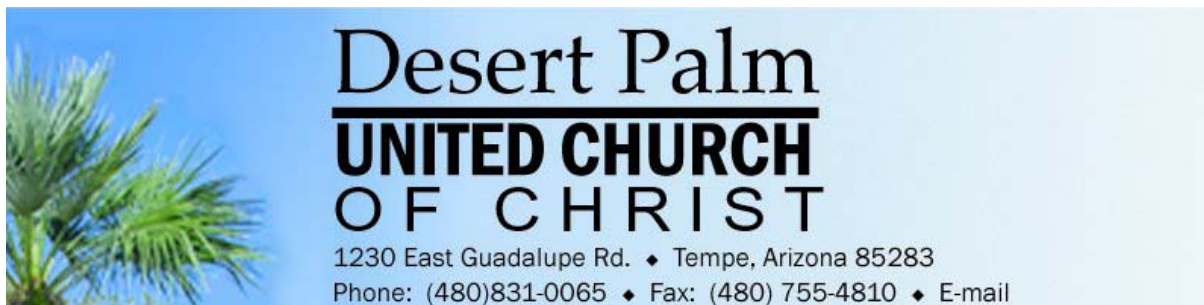


THE BREEZE

January 2012



**Volume 33- Number 1 Published Monthly
Desert Palm United Church of Christ
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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

NO HUMBUGS ALLOWED!

Charles Dickens spent a great deal of time trying to focus old Ebenezer Scrooge on the spirit of Christmases Past before the more vague images were offered by the other two spirits- “Christmas Present” and “Christmas Yet to Come.”

Sadly but inevitably there comes a moment when the Spirit of Christmas seems to fade. We return home or our visitors return to theirs. We go back to our jobs or our schools, maybe even to final exams, which always dampen whatever’s left of our Christmas Spirit.

But the church tends to try to keep the Christmas Spirit alive, as if answering the spoken or unspoken wishes of any of us whenever we give voice to the desire that “Every day should feel like Christmas!” The liturgical season called Epiphany tries to do this- asking us, like the Wise Ones of long ago, “What’s it really mean to encounter God in a human life? Are you, too, prepared to go home ‘by a different way’ because of that encounter?”

Advent brought us many gifts- not only gifts of preparation, but of fulfillment. Together we baked hundreds of loaves of gift bread to present to total strangers in the IHELP program, Paz de Cristo and our favorite Veterans at Victory place. Holiday baking ingredients filled our food baskets on Sundays. We selected and purchased Christmas gifts for a hundred children in the Foster Care network. As a congregation we made certain that all the children we knew would have a good Christmas, and that some others we didn’t even know could have the same. Several of us picked up Desert Palm children and helped them shop for their own parents as special new ministry this season. We dispatched brightly clad, smiling-faced Handbell players to Westchester to sing to retirees and the choir sang at Desert Cove and in a few Desert Palm living rooms for members who might not be able to share the holiday here in person. In the sanctuary we sang and rang for and with our overnight IHELP guests the weekend before Christmas, and one of our Paz teams prepared and served Christmas dinner at the Paz de Cristo dining room in Mesa. At the moment you can barely see the Sanctuary Christmas tree for all the pairs of socks and toothbrushes hanging on it. And thank goodness for the many members here who also opened their homes to others on Christmas day in the broadest definition of the word “family” you could ever imagine.

There have been countless manifestations of the “Spirit of Christmas Present” with us at Desert Palm this season. I suspect that we all know Who is behind that Spirit, and that there is an excellent chance that we might be able to keep it alive the entire year, if only we remember how we were touched by it. Perhaps it will be as Dickens describes it of old Ebenezer, “and it was always said of him that he knew how to keep Christmas well, if any man alive possessed the knowledge.” May that be truly said of us, and all of us! And so, as Tiny Tim observed:

God Bless Us, Every One!

JOHN

December Council Meeting Summary

Marion Durham, our Grocery Certificate/ Card Program Coordinator reported that although most programs are reasonably simple to administer, Safeway's system has become increasingly labor-intensive and less rewarding, and we may need to end our participation.

Custodial Concerns- The growth of St. Dominic Savio Academy has generated increased our cleaning needs, particularly in restrooms and kitchens, and a single visit each week is insufficient, particularly with the time constraints of IHELP every other Saturday. Accordingly we are **increasing our custodial visits** by adding a midweek cleaning of restrooms and kitchen, and will work on the Sanctuary mid-week on weeks when IHELP is here on Saturday nights. Additional income from St. Dominic (based on increased enrollment) will cover the associated additional costs. Mission Hall and West Wing classroom floors will be cleaned and polished during Christmas Break, and sanctuary chairs were steam-cleaned in mid December.

2012 Preliminary Budget Discussion- We anticipate being able to provide 3% salary increases and also to increase OCWM (Our Church's Wider Mission) from 7.8 to 8.4% in 2012. The Facilities Maintenance budget will increase by \$6000, and the completion of our West Wing mortgage in 2012 will enable us to dedicate about \$11,500 toward "capital" projects.

The **Annual Budget Meeting** has been set for **Sunday, January 22 at 10:15 a.m.** Advanced copies of the budget will be available for review by the congregation on January 8, following worship. The final version will be presented at **a Budget hearing on Sunday, January 15 at 10:15** for those interested in details and rationale.

The **enhanced lighting** in the parking lot and east entrances has been completed and seems to be effective.

FINANCIAL REPORT OF 2011 PLEDGED RECEIPTS AS OF 11/30/11

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

\$173,605 – Actual 2011 pledged receipts as of 11/30/11.

(\$173,005 paid during 2011 and \$600 paid in 2010 for 2011)

\$178,601 -- Pledged amount due as of 11/30/11 (11 months/92% of year)

25% of accounts have paid less than the total pledged to date. Resulting in a '**shortage**' of **\$9,639**.

(Last year 25% had paid less.)

- There are still 2 accounts that have paid zero for this year.
- 44% are right on target. (Last year 42% were current.)
- 31% of accounts have paid more than amount due, resulting in an 'overage' of \$4,606. Of this 'overage', \$3,066 will be applied to December and \$1,540 has been paid by accounts more than their total pledges for the year. (Last year 33% had paid in advance.)

Marlene M. Schanz, Financial Secretary

Pastors' Discretionary Fund- The St. Nicholas Project

Many, many thanks for all those who designated seasonal gifts to be used by the Discretionary Fund to augment the Christmas budgets of several Desert Palm families and also a few "neighbors" (such as one very sick grandmother who was visited by 9 out-of-town grandchildren, possibly for the last time, and another grandmother who is caring for the children of a son who is currently incarcerated.)

Blessings!

John and Michael-Ann

January Thank You Notes

- To **Marc Klein** for removing the mold from the restroom and repairing the wall. To **Bob Carver** for replacing the float valve and to **Marc** for replacing the supply valve.
- To all the **carolers** and Desert Palm **members** who came to the I-HELP sing-a-long on Saturday December 18th. All were appreciative and many touched by the music.
- To all the **elves and angels** who helped decorate the sanctuary for Christmas-especially the Friday elves who came a day early so two elves could go to the opera on Saturday: **Jim and Marion Durham, Steve Klein, Larry Seubert, Jon Sywassink, Sandy Kaszeta, Barb Hofflander, Bill Young, Linda Stewart, Lorraine Diehl, Rui Zeng, Cindy Nordstrom, Lori Jewett, Stephanie and Shannon Maloney, Leslie Schefski**
- To **Bob Carver** and **Bill Kaszeta** for removing the dead tree in the north parking lot island.
- To **Carmella Ramirez, Rebecca Kennell, Randy Bulriss** and various other experts in addressing the "fluttering on-screen images", and for their continued energies to give us better experiences with the new technologies. To **Carmella** for her efforts in improving the sound and video system.
- To **Michael-Ann, Jon, all our choirs, our children and their helpers** for the (pick one: outstanding, moving, incredible, fantastic, meaningful, wonderful, sweet, unique) Christmas cantata and Pageant "**Lead Me Back to Bethlehem**" on December 18th.
- To the puppet **Jesse of Bethlehem** for coming out of John's closet to share once again the stories of the symbols on our "Jesse Tree" mobile.
- To our **Advent and Christmas decorating team** for creating our worship space for the seasons of the new church year.
- To **Kristin, Katarina, Dalton and Arianna Wetzel** for their unsung faithfulness in coming early each Sunday to do a final "clean sweep" of the atrium.
- To the **Banner Committee** for the new garlands.
- To all **those who financed and installed the new parking lot lights**. They are great!!
- To **John Herman** for listening to all those who need help and for keeping the spirit alive.
- To all **those who contributed sock "snowballs" and toothbrush "tinsel."** The tree was beautiful and these decorations will be well used.
- To our emergency response team of **Bob Carver, John Herman and Bill Kaszeta** whose collective historical memory helped our contractor locate and remove the sewer blockage the week before Christmas.
- To **Michael Bulriss, his family and Scout Troop** who provided and placed the hundred of luminarii on the property for our Christmas Eve services.

January 6 Lunch Bunch

Join us on Friday, January 6th for our annual after Christmas Lunch Bunch (Epiphany edition). Bring a dish to share as well as a gift to exchange (around five dollars). This is your chance to practice the art of re-gifting. We meet around 11:30 a.m. and eat around Noon. Be prepared to watch in amazement as your gift makes the rounds of the room! If you have any questions please contact **Larry Seubert, Fellowship Ministry Chair**

GET YOUR ACT TOGETHER!...

for the Desert Palm Talent Show Fundraiser. Circle your calendars for Saturday February 11th at 6:30 PM. Think hard, and when you have figured out exactly what your talent is please see Jon Sywassink or Larry Seubert to sign up your act. Is your talent in the kitchen? We need desserts for the after show dessert bar. Finally, if you have a knack for organizing and setting up dessert bars, we need you too!

Victory Place Ministry

SNOOZE & SMILE

We continue working on the needs list for Veterans working to get back on their feet. Sheets and blankets - new, or clean, gently used - are an ongoing collection. Clean out the closets! Hit the yard sales! Fitted sheets must be single size. Flat sheets can be single or full size. Blankets should be full size, though singles are welcome. Pillows any size. Sheets don't have to match. If you could write the sheet size and style (flat/fitted) on masking tape and wrap it around the item, it's helpful for us and them.

There are lots of smiles when we unload the car. We're collecting smile items so they continue. These items may be any size, any brand or generic. 70 pieces of each are needed.

TOOTH PASTE/BRUSH

DENTURE ADHESIVE

DENTURE CLEANER

FLOSS

LIP PROTECTION (LIKE CHAPSTICK)

MOUTH WASH

all items * ***MUST BE ALCOHOL FREE* ***

For **Valentine's Day we'd like to give a card to each resident**, including a \$10 fast food gift certificate (Burger King is closest to them). We need handmade cards and left over cards from school packs, to total 70.

It's a privilege to serve these people. They are so grateful for your generosity. Info, pick up, call Jaci Scott 602.300.1918

I-HELP: Interfaith Homeless Emergency Lodging Program

The purpose of **I-HELP** is to provide lodging, comfort, hope and opportunities for the homeless people in our community. More than **30 faith communities**, service clubs and businesses in the Tempe area participate in the I-HELP program. I-HELP is under **Tempe Community Action Agency** which provides the van, the sleeping mats and counseling and a connection to available community services.

Each evening, **30 to 40 men and women** are fed a hot meal and housed overnight in the various faith communities. Desert Palm feeds and houses these overnight guests on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month. All participants are screened at the Salvation Army on University Ave. before they are transported by van to the place where they will stay for the night. They arrive around 5:00PM and eat a hot, healthy meal about 5:30PM. They clean up and put the tables and chairs away. Then there is time for T.V., game, cards or reading. After a safe night's sleep, they leave by 8:00AM.

There are plenty of opportunities for volunteering in this ongoing mission project:

- Provide food for the meal. A menu is posted on the bulletin board for sign-up.
- Help cook and serve a meal
- Do laundry. Wash and dry and bring back the follow week.
- Money can be given to John Herman designated "I-HELP" .
- Socks, Underwear, T-shirts, Jackets, Flannel Shirts, Bath Towels, Personal hygiene items for men and women are always needed.

If you would like to learn more about I-HELP, volunteer to help one evening and see what it is all about.

Lorraine Diehl

LOOKING AHEAD - JWM FORUM -th Justice and Witness Ministry

As the JWM Team has met, we have decided to focus on children and other related concerns as our priority. It is out of this concern, we decided to sponsor a church forum with the approval of the Church Council, which was given. In early February we will be hosting the **Children's Action Alliance** who will be providing information as to how to make our voice heard to our elected officials and the media and State or federal budget and tax issues.

The JWM Team determined that what the Children's Action Alliance is "About" would best provide us an excellent direction for our heartfelt concerns. The following is a CAA statement of what they are "About". Through research, publications, media campaigns, and advocacy, CAA seeks to influence policies and decisions affecting the lives of Arizona children and their families on issues related to health, child abuse and neglect, early care and education, budget and taxes, juvenile justice, children and immigration, and working families. CAA works towards a future in which all children have health insurance, no child is raised in poverty and hunger, every child enters school ready to learn and succeed, no child endures the ravages of abuse and neglect, every child has a place to call home, and struggling teens have the support they need to become responsible adults. More information available at www.azchildren.org.

An exact date and speaker information will be forthcoming at a later time. We hope that Desert Palm members will become educated about what each of us can do to make a difference for those without a voice or the opportunities most of our children have on a daily basis.

In Christian Service,

Jo Vredenburg,

Chairperson, JWM Team

Desert Palm's Prayer Ministry

There are presently 219 names on our weekly prayer list. The **Prayer Group** consists of fifteen praying participants, and we would welcome **additional members**. We do not meet as a group; the list is simply divided among us, and each member holds 15 to 20 people in prayer each week, simply adding those people to their regular daily prayer time. It is truly rewarding to know that you are easing the minds and spirits of those we hold in prayer. If you would like to join us, **please contact Beverly Byington** at church, or phone her at 480-839-1352.

CHRISTMAS FUND OFFERING

Thank you Desert Palm for your generous response to the financial support and ministry of the Christmas Fund. Once again we increased our contributions to this important special offering. This year \$2,114.00 was received. In addition, thank you to Jim Vredenburg for a meaningful Mission Moment presentation and to Shelley Daley and Cyndi Carver for copying and overseeing that the appropriate inserts were in the bulletins along with the envelopes.

The mission of the Christmas Fund is to provide assistance dollars in situations of critical need, while preserving the dignity of those who receive the aid.

Remember Desert Palm that your significant contributions can and do make a difference in the lives of many . Jo Vredenburg

LECTIONARY FOR JANUARY

Sunday, January 1st-First Sunday after Christmas (White)

Isaiah 61:10-62:3, Psalm 148, Galatians 4:4-7, Luke 2:22-40

Sunday, January 8th-First Sunday after Epiphany (White)

Genesis 1:1-5, Psalm 29, Acts 19:1-7, Mark 1:4-11

Sunday, January 15th-Second Sunday after Epiphany (Green)

1 Samuel 3:1-10 (11-20), Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18, 1 Corinthians 6:12-20, John 1:43-51

Sunday, January 22nd-Third Sunday after Epiphany (Green)

Jonah 3:1-5, 10, Psalm 62:5-12, 1 Corinthians 7:29-31, Mark 1:14-20

Sunday, January 29th-Fourth Sunday after Epiphany (Green)

Deuteronomy 18:15-20, Psalm 111, 1 Corinthians 8:1-13, Mark 1:21-28



JANUARY ADULT BIRTHDAYS

1/2	Katy Moakley	1/18	Amy Heisler
1/3	Madeline Lull		Marlene Schanz
	Lori Shepard	1/19	Daniel Kaszeta
1/6	Cynthia Jewett	1/20	Celee Manning
	Peggy Stewart	1/21	Steve Klein
1/7	Marie Parsey	/23	Ian O'Neill
	Michael Ann Veziroglu	1/24	Zach Felker
1/12	Aubrey Casper	1/27	Gayle Mills
1/13	James Rodgers	1/28	Del Bohlmeier
1/14	Carmela Ramirez	1/29	Holly Herman
1/16	Jennifer Markus		Randy Pemberton
			Gena Wilson
		1/31	Taryn Williams



JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

1/1/11	Allison (Mrozinski) & Michael Kern	1 year
1/26/85	Tom and Winnie Brennan	26 yr
1/29/00	Michelle and Tony Paul	11 yrs
1/30/71	Jim and Marion Durham	40 yrs
1/30/71	Allan and Paula Teichman	40 yrs.

YOUTH AND CHILDREN BIRTHDAYS

1/10/01	Destiny Rios	11 yrs.
1/11/98	Katarina Wetzel	14 yrs.
1/13/11	Clay Leo O'Brien	1 yr.
1/14/06	Citlali Balcells	6 yrs.



SUNDAY SCHEDULE:

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

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

January 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 6 am LPC Prayer mtg 7:00 pm Al-Anon	3 6 am LPC Prayer mtg 9:30 am Banner Group (Library) 6:30 pm Visual Tech Squad	4 6 am LPC Prayer mtg 6:30 pm Bells of Peace 7:30 pm Chancel Choir	5 6 am LPC Prayer mtg 6:00 pm-8:30 pm Girl Scouts	6 6 am LPC Prayer mtg 11:30 a.m. Lunch Bunch	7 6:00 am-8:00 am LPC 3:00 pm I-HELP
8	9 <i>7:00 pm Council Meeting</i> 7:00 pm Al-Anon	10 9:30 am Banner Group (Library) <i>4:45 pm Worship Committee Mtg</i>	11 6:30 pm Bells of Peace 7:30 pm Chancel Choir	12	13	14 6:00 am-8:00 am LPC 1:30 pm Knit Wits (Mission Hall)
15 <i>10:15 Budget Review Meeting</i>	16 7:00 pm Al-Anon	17 9:30 am Banner Group (Library)	18 6:30 pm Bells of Peace 7:30 pm Chancel Choir	19 6:00 pm-8:30 pm Girl Scouts	20	21 6:00 am-8:00 am LPC 3:00 pm I-HELP
22 <i>10:15 am Congregational Meeting</i>	23 7:00 pm Al-Anon	24 9:30 am Banner Group (Library)	25 6:30 pm Bells of Peace 7:30 pm Chancel Choir	26	27	28 6:00 am-8:00 am LPC <i>Tour de Hero Bike Ride Rest Stop 9:00 am-11:00 pm (United Blood Services)</i>
29 <i>10:30 am Justice & W Witness Ministry Team Meeting</i>	30 7:00 pm Al-Anon	31 9:30 am Banner Group (Library)				