



JUNE/JULY 2026

The Epistle

A newsletter for the community of
St. Paul's United Methodist Church



**Coming in
September
to St. Paul's!**
Sat. Sept. 5th from 4 - 6 pm

What is Messy Church?

Messy Church is a global movement where fun, faith and all ages come together for a meal, activities, and celebration. The name "Messy Church" comes from founder Lucy Moore as a way of saying this is church for the people in the "messy" margins, those who don't fit tidily into traditional models of church. In this way, Messy Church sets out to be like Jesus, reaching those who lived in the messy margins of society. Messy people. Messy lives. Messy world. Lucy Moore says, "We are all messy, our lives aren't perfect, our families and children aren't perfect and we believe that the best space for God to deal with us in our messiness and disorder is in church." God welcomes us all and, indeed, welcomes the mess! The "mess" of Messy Church is about welcoming all people where they are, no perfection required. New to the faith, left the faith, not interested in faith? There's room for all at the Messy Church table!

This fall, beginning Saturday, September 5th from 4:00 to 6 pm, St. Paul's will be introducing a new worship experience for all ages. Messy Church is a time of fellowship, activities, and celebration that welcomes all people in a less traditional setting - one more like how Jesus led.

Schedule:

- 4:00 - 5:00 - Activities
- 5:05 - 5:25 - Celebration
- 5:30 - 6:00 - Dinner

Messy Church successes:

- 48% of people attending Messy Church are exploring faith for the first time
- 70% of people attending Messy Church feel a deepened sense of belonging. One of the most critical factors in determining if children and youth remain in the faith community beyond graduation is belonging.
- 80% of people attending Messy Church feel deepened relationships between generations
- 55% of attendees consider Messy Church their only church, with the majority being previously unchurched

"When young and old in the community of faith - the family of God - journey together in commitment to one another led by God, beautiful, enriching spiritual formation occurs for all. When children are included as respected, active participants in the community of faith, they draw us all back into the story of our faith and help us reactivate our imaginations to experience the story anew."

-Catherine Stonehouse,

Joining Children on the Spiritual Journey



This Summer, Join Heather for Creative Prayer Practices

Join us in the A-Frame Saturday mornings in June and July at 10:00 am

Heather will be leading a variety of creative prayer practices that you can use to start, enhance, or grow your prayer life.

This class is open to all ages and will include breath prayer, labyrinthian prayer, conscious coloring, prayer boards, prayer beads and more! No registration is necessary, just show up as you are!



Children's Summer Sunday School will begin Sunday, June 7th at the 10:30 am service

Children ages 3 through 5th grade will be learning Bible stories involving water - and of course we will be having water games!! Please have your children wear closed toe shoes (not sandals) and a towel so they can participate fully and safely!

Save the Dates!



**Grill 'n' Chill
Potluck & Talent Show**
Sunday, July 12th after the 10:30 service
in the Life Center

Sock Hop
Saturday, September 19th
2:00 - 4:00 pm
in the Life Center

Sign Up Today for our Grill 'n' Chill Potluck & Talent Show and share your gifts with our St. Paul's family!

This Event is FREE, but registration is required! This event is open to the community and all ages. This is a great opportunity to invite friends, relatives and neighbors to church and then a fun event afterward for fellowship. The church will provide hotdogs, hamburgers, and garden burgers. Please bring a side dish if your last name begins with A-M and a dessert if your last name begins with N-Z. Grillers, set up, and clean up help are needed!



Contact Heather Stein for information on Children and Family Ministries or any events on this page. 520-296-6149 or FamilyMinistries@StPaulsUMCTucson.net



Shared Youth Ministry: **Belong - Believe - Serve**

The last two months (April -May):

Our youth learned about faith, service, friendship, and God's creation. They reflected on the last 24 hours of Jesus' life, celebrated Mother's Day with cards and crafts, and learned about telescopes during an Astronomy Workshop with Professor Mike Nofziger to prepare for the Grand Canyon trip.

During these weeks, our youth also served and had fun together. They washed more than 40 cars for the Honduras Service-Learning Trip, picked citrus fruit with Iskashitaa to help feed hungry people in Tucson, helped at Chaverim Community Garden, enjoyed Jumping Cholla Trampoline Park, and gathered for the Annual Pool + Volleyball Party. These gatherings helped students grow in teamwork, faith, courage, joy, and community.

Summer Trips 2026 - Fun & Service-Learning:

Rosters are now closed for both the Grand Canyon Trip and the Honduras Service-Learning Trip; thank you for your prayers and support!

Through these trips, students will grow in faith, teamwork, service, leadership, and friendship as they camp, hike, reflect, serve others, learn about God's creation, and experience Honduran culture, community, and ministry.

Upcoming Youth Group Events/Gatherings

- May 31: End-of-the-Year Cooking Party at Desert Skies UMC, 3255 N. Houghton Rd., from 4–6 PM. Everyone is welcome! Teens are encouraged to invite a friend.
- Youth Sunday School this summer, May 31–June 21, will focus on Sabbath reflections and truly resting in Jesus Christ. **There will be no Youth Sunday School in July.**
- June and July: **There will be no weekly youth group gatherings.** We will restart on the first Sunday of August.

Would you like to lead a one-time workshop? Do you have any suggestions or comments for the next school year? They would be greatly appreciated. Please email Luis at youthdirector@tucsonumcyouth.com

News from the Annual Conference

Annual Conference Mission Project

Rae Lathrop, Director of Justice and Community Development

The theme for this year's Annual conference is "We Are the Church Together," based on Acts 2:42-47 and Ephesians 4:11-16, the second in our vision of becoming "A Healthy Church for a Healthy World."

As we think about being a healthy church this year, we hope to provide tools for our churches to provide resources for their congregations and neighbors. This year's annual conference mission project directly aligns by providing funds for churches to be the true hands and feet of God as we protect and care for those most impacted by the threats and fears to immigrants. The Solidarity Fund is one tool that churches can act on our call to faithfully serve our neighbors.

We already have requests to support congregations serving those most impacted – so your help is truly needed!

We have both a monetary and participation goal this year, set based on previous projects and with the intent to literally show our community what a healthy church really looks like:

- We hope to grow the Solidarity Fund to at least \$40,000 by the end of June.
- To show our solidarity as a unified body, our goal is to receive at least 1,800 individual donations, roughly 10% of our annual conference membership.

Because our collective action is an important witness to show the love of our members and the love of God.

Celebrate 70 Years - Share Your Stories & Pictures of Women in Ministry

Rev. Sylvia Harris, COSROW Chairperson

Can you believe that 2026 marks seventy years of women being ordained in The United Methodist Church?

This is a milestone for our denomination and people the world over. Even as we know we have more work to do toward equity and justice for all people formed in the imago Dei, we give thanks for the impact of women in ministry.

Other upcoming celebrations include a new live episode of the General Commission on Archives and History's (GCAH) 'Un-Tied Methodism' podcast releasing on May 4 with General Secretary Ashley Boggan and guest Dr. Emily Nelms Chastain to reflect on this historic event. You can find the link to listen using the QR code on the back page.

We plan on celebrating this milestone as part of our 2026 Annual Conference. The DSC's Commission on the Status and Role of Women invites you to share your stories of women's ordination ministries. Please share your pictures and personal stories with us.

Our hope is to tell the story of how women in ministry have impacted our annual conference, our denomination, and the beloved kin'dom of God. Please submit your pictures and stories at <https://dsc-reg.brtaapp.com/StoriesofWomensOrdinationMinistriesStorySubmission>. If you have any questions or want to offer additional comments on this project, please contact Rev. Sylvia Harris, the COSROW Chairperson.