

Encanto Community Church

A United Church of Christ Congregation
2710 N. 7th Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85007-1124
602.266.4602

The Pilgrim

December Events

December 1	Choir Cantata Hanging of the Greens Play Practice 11:30am-1pm
December 3	Choir 6:45pm
December 7	Yard Sale Sorting 10am-12pm
December 8	Deacons Meeting Outreach Meeting Pet Food Re-Bagging Play Practice 11am-12pm
December 10	Choir 6:45pm
December 11	Tech Rehearsal 7pm
December 14	Mandatory Dress Rehearsal 9am
December 15	Christmas Play and Dinner 11:15am
December 17	Choir 6:45pm
December 18	Blue Christmas 7pm
December 19	Nourish Phoenix 8am
December 21	Council and Trustees Joint Meeting and Brunch 10am
December 22	Worship Service 10am
December 24	Candlelight Christmas Eve 7:30pm
December 25	Merry Christmas
December 29	Worship Service 10am
December 30	Newsletter Deadline
December 31	New Year's Eve



December 2024



Please Remember in Your Prayers:

Steve Barrett, Diane Boudle, Bill Edens, Tammy Hughes, Jane Gempeler, Debbye Jones and Rev. Gloria Smith, Carolyn Krietenstein, Carol Krietenstein, Rich Maxwell, Carl Madsen, Gary Mahoney, Sandee Martinez, Valerie Moreno, Lillian Pain, George Penny, Nancy Studebaker, Shanti Sunderajan, Lewis Swarens and Family, Gavin V., Max Valentine, Encanto Community Church, Our Community and Our World. May God's grace and healing touch be with you all.

Late Last Supper

Encanto Church Late Last Supper Club will take December off for the holidays. Don't worry, though, we'll resume our culinary adventures in January.

Here's a photo from November's Supper at Alexi's. A wonderful time was had by all.



**WE ARE AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING
CONGREGATION.
EVERYONE IS WELCOME
HERE!**

Be on the lookout for January's newsletter. It will have information on the next Supper Club Adventure. You don't want to miss out!

NEWS AND INFORMATION

Treasurer's Report. (General Fund for October 2024)

Beginning Balance: \$-2,023.33
Received: \$15,699.93
Disbursed: \$15,703.30
Ending Balance: \$-2,026.70
For a loss of: \$3.37

Total Offering Receipts for October 2024

10/6	10/13	10/20	10/27
\$839.11	\$4,566.00	\$1,156.32	\$1,452.00

There was no withdrawal from the Endowment Fund in October.

Yard Sale Proceeds: \$4,784.50

Neighbors in Need (Oct. and Nov): \$247.00



Copies of the monthly Treasurer's Reports, including a list of all disbursements, are on file in the office.

All week, every week, please remember that we collect a variety of items for recycling including plastic water bottles, aluminum cans, newspaper, catalogues, and scrap metal. Proceeds go to support various church activities. Please see Cindy or Michelle for details about where to leave the recyclables when you bring them to church. Thank you!

Deacons on Duty

The Deacons are available to assist the pastor.
The Deacons on Duty for December are:

Lauri Gilchrist: 602-573-2734
And
Michelle Lusania: 602-783-7507

Birthdays To Remember **December**

Santiago Quinteros	7th
Lauri Gilchrist	10th
Chase Bauer	14th
KJ Kinder	18th
Iris Morales	19th
Cris Probst	27th



and...

A very happy anniversary to Jill and Cindy. They celebrate their anniversary on December 27th.



In an effort to better express our appreciation for our **VERY** hard-working staff, Church Council has decided to handle the employee Christmas gifts as they did last year. Instead of giving everyone a Christmas "bonus" from the General Fund, we will harken back to olden days when we simply took up a congregational collection for our marvelous employees.

Accordingly, as the Christmas season approaches, you may give whatever you feel is appropriate to show your gratitude to our beloved staff members: Rev. Gloria Smith, Choir Director Jill Mahoney, Organist Genevieve Benham, Office Manager Michelle Lusania, and Caretaker Tony Lusania.

Gifts may be made in cash and should be given to John Hasenstab or Kathy Van Etten not later than Sunday, December 22, 2024, with a note designating the intended recipient(s). Please feel free to contact Kathy V. or John H. if you have any questions. Thank you!!!



This year, we will be Hanging the ECC Greens after Fellowship Hour on Sunday, December 1, 2024, starting about 11:30 a.m. This means that we will all join together to decorate the Fellowship Hall and the grounds for Christmas! It is a big job, and we need all the help we can get. We need everyone from tree-decorators to wreath-hangers to bulb-replacers to cord-untanglers. No matter what your ability (or where you are on life's journey), you can provide some invaluable help. All Elves are welcome, and we'll provide the pizza lunch around 1 p.m. or 1:30 p.m. (once we're pretty well finished)!



Several of our youth have commented that they would like to learn about civics since that subject is no longer taught in grade school or high school. Accordingly, Kathy V. and Steve H. have agreed to teach a Civics 101 course at the church during the upcoming spring semester, if anyone is interested. The class will meet one weekday evening per week for approximately 12 weeks from mid-January through mid-April with the specific evening to be determined based on the schedules of interested students. We will build on the Civics 101 curricula offered by the Sandra Day O'Connor Institute for American Democracy that is based at the ASU Law School. If anyone is interested in participating in this class, please let Kathy V. or Steve H. know within the next few weeks, so that we can set the schedule for spring. Thank you!



Hey all you foodies! The Saturday Morning Social Gang is about to hold a new food event!

On Sunday, January 19th, to celebrate Betty Grotewold's 90th birthday, we will be holding our first but hopefully not our last ECC Chili Cook-Off! We will need people to enter their chili, and everyone else to taste the chili. The event will be held after church on that Sunday. Details to follow. Be thinking about this! If you are interested in entering your chili let me know. I need to know what kind of response we get in order to plan accordingly. I know you're wondering how we are going to do this after church but believe me we can do it - I hope! We will need volunteers to help set up and clean up. If you have any questions or are interested in entering your chili you can text Jan at 602-300-6156. Save the date! Thank you.

Rehearsals for the Church Youth Christmas play will continue to be held on Sundays after church from 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. until the show date, with a mandatory dress rehearsal occurring at 9 a.m. on Saturday morning, December 14, 2024. The show will be presented during the annual Church Christmas Luncheon on Sunday, December 15, 2024. If you or the young people in your world would like to be involved in this year's adventure, please check your schedules, and let Kathy Van Etten know directly.

December 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Hanging of the Greens Choir Cantata Play Practice	2	3 Choir 6:45pm	4	5	6	7 Yard Sale Sorting 10am- Noon Happy Birthday Santiago Quinteros
8 Deacons Meeting Outreach Meeting Pet Food Bagging Play Practice 11-12pm	9	10 Choir 6:45pm Happy Birthday Lauri Gilchrist	11 Tech Rehearsal 7pm	12	13	14 Mandatory Dress Rehearsal 9am Happy Birthday Chase Bauer
15 Play and Dinner 11:15am	16	17 Choir 6:45pm	18 Blue Christmas 7pm Happy Birthday KJ Kinder	19 Nourish Phoenix Happy Birthday Iris Morales	20	21 Council/Trustees Brunch 10am
22 Worship 10am	23	24 Candlelight Christmas Eve 7:30pm	25 Merry Christmas	26	27 Happy Birthday Cris Probst Happy Anniversary Jill and Cindy	28 SAA 9am
29 Worship 10am	30 Newsletter Dead- line	31 New Year's Eve				

Blue Christmas Service

Offered by First Church & Encanto Community Church
United Church of Christ



A peaceful service for those who are living with pain, grief, aloneness or stress during this season of celebration

Wednesday, December 18th at 7:00 PM

Location: Encanto Community Church UCC
2710 N. 7th Avenue, Phoenix, AZ

Fellowship Hour



The Hospitality Committee wants to thank Margie and Christina, Tom, and Ricky for providing refreshments for the Fellowship Hour during November.

December 1st will be "Hanging of the Greens" starting during Fellowship Hour. Feel free to grab an ornament and assist with the decorating. We will then serve pizza around 1:30.

On December 15th we will have the Christmas Play and Luncheon. **Please bring a side dish or dessert to share for that event.** Thank you!

Christmas Play and Dinner

Sunday, December 15th
following Worship

Encanto Church Council provides the meal for you to enjoy. You are asked to bring a salad or dessert to share.

Christmas Eve Service

December 24th
7:30 PM



Advent Sermon Themes
December 8th, 15th, & 22nd.

Insights taken from an Advent Study:
"The Heart That Grew Three Sizes"



Pastoral Ponderings

As you read this pondering, we are headed into Advent and Christmas season. The stores have been ready for Christmas for over a month. Christmas carols have played for 3 weeks. Television ads have featured a Christmas theme since the election. Hallmark has been showing Christmas movies since the end of October. Now, in the next week the church will transform from Ordinary Time to Advent and then Christmas.

Christmas is the destination for all individual, family and church activities but what about the journey? For many the journey is seen as chores to accomplish in order to prepare for Christmas. Well, to some extent that is true. I wonder if we miss some of the joy by not focusing on the journey.

During the journey we will pay attention to meal planning, gift buying, event attendance or planning, and community giving and sharing (to name just a few). Are these just another thing to do or do we have the opportunity to think about the people involved. As you prepare a menu, do you think about different family members and friends favorite foods and how much pleasure you bring to them with this dish? As you purchase and wrap a gift, do you think about the enjoyment they will receive from the gift in the coming year and how you are affecting their lives? When you visit with friends and family do you think about the memories you share and the many roads you have traveled together ... moments that will bind you together forever ... moments that make you who you are? Are church events another activity to accomplish or do you delight in sharing a special sacred moment in history and the present that binds you eternally in spirit. An event (meal, decorating, giving or worship) that reminds all of us that the bond we share is the essence of our entire being and life. A life grounded and formed from a following of Jesus' ministry and mission.

When we think about how our past and present, memories and new experiences, and hope and love all come together during our journey to Christmas. I hope your journey is delightful and a joyful experience. When we reach our destination, may we know, within our hearts, that Advent and the Christmas season has been a blessing we could not have planned or arranged.

Happy Thanksgiving – A Blessed Advent – Merry Christmas

Rev. G



Council Meeting: November 17, 2024

The ECC Council meeting on November 17, 2024, was called to order by Moderator Lisa Herrmann at 11:56 A.M

Attendees: John Hasenstab, Rev Gloria Smith, Steve Barrett, Lisa Herrmann, Kathy Van Etten, Steve Holloway, Kathy Stock, Todd Montague and via Zoom Melanie Herrmann.

Prayer was led by Melanie Herrmann.

Trustees Report given by Steve Holloway: The irrigation gate problem has been resolved by Martin; he replaced the frame and gate to control the overflow, it will be assessed this week during the last irrigation run for this year, the annual maintenance is scheduled beginning in January 2025. We will still need to rent a tamper tool to repair the berms, and work will continue on the additional problems on the sidewalk portion of the ECC campus caused by irrigation flows. Research continues regarding the church office replacement sign, but the temporary solar lights have been installed; these should last until the more permanent lights with solar panels are purchased and installed. The grant project continues to obtain funding for various approved projects and we were recently notified that this grant year a Supplemental Grant Program is available but with a very short turn-around time frame.

Stewardship Report given by John Hasenstab: The presentation was well received this morning given by Cindy Walley. The Pledge cards were made available today for the upcoming year 2025. Stewardship continues to actively improve membership involvement within the ECC Church Life.

The information for ECC Members to give through the Fry's program when grocery shopping will be put in upcoming weekly bulletins and monthly newsletters.

Memorial Fund Report was given by Kathy Stock; printed copies given to all in attendance. New Paraments have been ordered and hopefully will be received and in place for usage by the second Sunday in December.

Religious Education Report was report given by Kathy Van Etten and Steve Holloway: Changes were made to the cast for Christmas play, so we are super excited for the upcoming play.

Outreach Report given by Melanie Herrmann: We will review and align the budget for 2025 with Rev Gloria Smith.

Hospitality Report given by Todd Montague: We now have more glass coffee mugs thanks to a recent purchase. Hospitality welcomes all who wish to serve and host Fellowship Hours or events or furnish Fellowship Hour Treats.

Deacons' Report given by John Hasenstab: The sand jar for the burning match sticks will now be replaced by sand/water. We received good feedback from the All Saints' Day services. New candles will be ordered for Blue Christmas and next year's All Saints' and Christmas Eve services. Blue Christmas will be on December 18, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. The Toy Drive at Nourish Phoenix will be our Christmas project this year, details will be announced soon.

Pastor's Report given by Rev Gloria Smith: Updates on the December church services.

Moderator's Report given by Lisa Herrmann: None this month.

Treasurer's Report given by Kathy Van Etten: The budget was very close this month, but thanks to the yard sale we made it. The Endowment fund was down but will hopefully bound upward. Goodwill picked up the poundage, and we are awaiting payment. We are still catching up on pending bills and expenses. Calendar updates were made.

Review of Christmas dinner items and who does what.

New business: Number of calendars needing to be ordered? Christmas staff gifts.

Old business: none

Meeting adjourned at 2:25 P.M. by moderator Lisa Herrmann.

Encanto Community Church
United Church of Christ
2710 North 7th Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85007



Rev. Dr. Gloria Smith, Minister
Lisa Herrmann, Moderator
Jill Mahoney, Choir Director
Genevieve Benham, Organist
Tony Lusania, Caretaker
Michelle Lusania, Office Administrative Assistant

Encanto Community Church
United Church of Christ
Phone # 602.266.4602
www.EncantoCommunityChurch.org

