



THE CATALINA NEWSLETTER

2700 E. SPEEDWAY - TUCSON, AZ 85716

WWW.CATALINAMETHODIST.ORG

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One of the most special moments about Christmas day when I was growing up was the night before. I still have a vivid memory around the time I was in high school. I was driving out to my dad's church where he was pastoring. It was dark, the air felt heavy, and there was a scent of burning logs in the air. Here and there houses were decorated with twinkling lights.

It felt like I was making my way to something non-ordinary. That the houses and business that I passed, that the church that I visited often, was somehow different for just that night. That is what makes the moments special--the "charge" in the atmosphere that seems to come in a different way on just Christmas Eve. It feels like time has been transgressed and that a little something different has been added to the space we inhabit—like spice in a drink.

We will have several opportunities this Advent season to experience this kind of a charge—Christmas Eve, of course, but also a Christmas concert, the preview services the Outreach team is planning, the decorating we do, and maybe in a less charged way as we simply count down the days to Christmas together over the four Sundays of Advent.

I hope that you will feel that specialness, that twisting of time itself, the warping of space as we look forward to celebrating the birth of Jesus together. Perhaps as a token of your own joy you might consider remembering Catalina as a part of the way you give gifts this year. We will have Christmas Offering envelopes on Christmas Eve for those who choose to support Catalina in this way.

But mostly, I hope you form your own special memories this year from the music, the fellowship, the celebrating, the preparing as we, once again, prepare a place in our hearts to receive the Christ child again.

Merry Christmas! --Pastor Mike





Fall Worship Pilots Continue: Open Table & What Comes Next

This fall, Catalina began experimenting with new ways of gathering for worship and community—ways that reflect who we are becoming as a church and the kind of hospitality we hope to offer our neighbors. We piloted two Wednesday evening "Open Table" a dinner-church style of worship. About 50 people—including 8 children—shared a simple worship service and discussion around a table over dinner.

Open Table: What We Learned

Across both preview nights, one message was overwhelmingly clear: the heart of Open Table was the fellowship.

More than anything else, participants told us how meaningful it was to sit down with new and familiar faces, share conversation, listen to one another's insights, and build community in a deeper way. Words like intimate, friendly, welcoming, insightful, and connected appeared again and again in the surveys.

Parents also shared how much their children enjoyed the experience—especially with pizza served early and a dedicated kids' table. One child even prayed that night, "Thank you for letting me go to Open Table," which says so much about how included and valued our kids felt. Their voices in our songs and their presence around the table helped shape Open Table into something truly intergenerational.

We tried incorporating a teaching video in one of the Open Table services as a way to spark conversation. The feedback was mixed but helpful: some appreciated the content and variety, while others preferred a longer clip, advance viewing, or more open discussion instead. This kind of honest, constructive feedback is exactly what these preview weeks were designed for.

And of course, the food mattered too! Words like delicious, tasty, and excellent showed up repeatedly, and many appreciated the shift to buffet-style serving. Helpful suggestions—like adding more fruit, fewer carbs, and a big tossed salad—will guide our future planning.

When asked about preferred times for this style of gathering, most indicated they'd be most likely to attend a weeknight dinner church, with interest also shown in Sunday morning "brunch church" or a Saturday monthly gathering, especially for families. All of this information will help shape our planning in the coming year.

What's Next? Introducing "Chapel Connections"

As we continue discerning what a new worship offering could look like in 2026, our third and final preview this fall will shift from dinner church to a Sunday morning service called Chapel Connections.

Chapel Connections will meet at **10:00am in the Chapel on December 7, 14, and 21**, during the season of Advent, featuring a sermon series titled ***Look for the Light***. This service will be relaxed and welcoming, but still follow a familiar Sunday morning flow with prayer, music, Scripture, and a message. We're trying 10am because it's a natural time for families and newcomers, and because Sunday School and fellowship already happen around that hour. We'll also have clear signage each week so worshippers can choose between the traditional 10am service in the Sanctuary and this new worship option in the Chapel.

Thank You!

These previews have reminded us that Catalina is a congregation willing to try new things, listen generously, and respond with openness and grace. Thank you for showing up, offering thoughtful feedback, inviting friends, and helping us imagine what new worship opportunities might take root here. Your participation is shaping the future of our church, and we are grateful.

Stay tuned—more updates and decisions will be coming in early 2026!

In Christ's Care,

Pastor Kelli

(photos from Open Table on page 4)



Chapel Connections

Love boldly. Serve joyfully. Lead courageously.

This Christmas

Look for the Light

Dec. 7: When Hope Feels Far Away

Dec. 14: When We're Overwhelmed

Dec. 21: When Cynicism Creeps In

Sundays in Dec @ 10:00am

**Catalina United Methodist Church - Chapel
2700 E Speedway Blvd, Tucson**

Christmas Eve

Wed Dec. 24th

@ 6:00pm



MISSIONS UPDATE

BY DOUG WINGERT, CHAIR

At Catalina United Methodist Church, we work to assist the “poorest of the poor” in our community.

Primavera Men’s Shelter – On November 22, our Primavera cooking team served our 5-course dinner to approximately 52 men living at the Primavera shelter. But we still need just one more volunteer for the December 27th date. Since that is the weekend following Christmas, many of our volunteers may be travelling or otherwise not available. If you can help on Saturday, December 27 from 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm, please notify Doug Wingert at dougwingert@gmail.com or contact the church office. (If a four-hour outreach is too much, how about a two-hour shift? We could divide the work from 2:00 – 4:00 pm and 4:00 – 6:00 pm). The meals are planned in advance and the grocery shopping is done by team leaders. The work involves standing and lifting, cooking, and serving. All volunteers who are gloved, and over the age of 12 are welcome. Who can help us out on December 27?

Casa Maria Soup Kitchen – Catalina volunteers will serve approximately 350 cups of chicken vegetable soup, made from scratch, at the Casa Maria Soup Kitchen on Saturday, December 13th. We have our cooking team for that date, thanks to the leadership of Rich Mayorga.

Peanut Butter & Jelly Sandwich Making Marathon – It’s on!! Our final sandwich making event of the year will be held on Friday afternoon, December 12th. We will need about 20 volunteers to make more than 500 sandwiches for those living with hunger. We will meet in Room E23, (next to the church kitchen), at 3:00 pm. It will be easiest to park in the lot east of the church campus and enter through the east gate.

Office Snack Packs – Catalina continues to offer snacks and bottled water to our homeless and hungry neighbors. Prior contributions toward this outreach have been exhausted, so we are now funding this important mission effort through your generous donations. If you wish to contribute to our snack pack budget, please designate “snack packs” on your donation.

Angel Tree – The gift tags are chosen, the gifts are being purchased and will soon be delivered to 50 children, whose parents or guardians are incarcerated. Thank you so much for those who have purchased gifts, those who will be wrapping gifts, and those who will be delivering gifts. Your generosity is so greatly appreciated.

When we volunteer, we lift others—and discover we’re lifted too.

*Santa, Cookies
& Crafts*
DECEMBER 12, 2025
5 pm- 6 pm
Room E18

Join us for a FREE photo with Santa, cookie decorating and crafts to take home!

In this season of wonder, we gather to remember the light that breaks into our world, hope that renews us, and love that brings us together. Come celebrate the holiness of this season.

Lessons & Carols
Dec 14 - 4pm
in the Sanctuary

**Christmas Eve
Candlelight**
Family Service - 6pm
in the Chapel
Traditional Service - 8pm
in the Sanctuary



Happy Birthday

The month of November was celebrating Mrs. Martha Adair's #100 birthday on November 22 in the Fellowship Hall. Attendance was over 100! Happy Birthday Mrs. Martha!



Photos from Open Table (continued from Pastor Kelli's article on pg. 2)

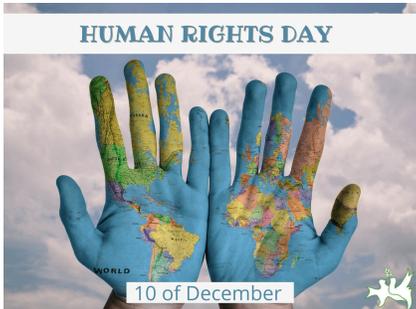




December Observances

By Kent Batty

December is HIV/AIDS Awareness Month, a time dedicated to raising awareness about the epidemic, promoting testing and treatment, and supporting individuals living with HIV/AIDS. It serves as a time to educate the public about HIV and AIDS, and to encourage open conversations, working to eliminate the stigma surrounding the virus. The month-long focus begins with World AIDS Day on December 1st.



December 10 is International Human Rights Day, observed across the world. This year's theme is "Human Rights, Our Everyday Essentials."

In this period of turbulence and unpredictability, where many feel a growing sense of insecurity, disaffection and alienation, that theme is meant to bring focus to reaffirming the values of human rights and showing that they remain a winning proposition for humanity. Its programs aim to re-engage people with human rights by showing how they shape our daily lives,

often in ways we may not always notice. Too often taken for granted or seen as abstract ideas, human rights are the essentials we rely on every day. By bridging the gap between human rights principles and everyday experiences, the campaign aims to spark awareness, inspire confidence and encourage collective action, emphasizing that human rights are positive, essential and attainable.



SPPRC
Staff Pastor Parish
Relations Committee

Our Pastors' Roles and Responsibilities

By Diana Hill, SPPRC Chair

We are blessed to have two pastors serving Catalina:

Pastor Mike Kerr-Osman, our Senior Pastor, and Pastor Kelli Knight, our Associate Pastor. Primarily, Pastor Mike leads traditional worship each Sunday and oversees the administrative responsibilities of our staff and campus. Pastor Kelli is focused on researching, leading, and creating possible alternative worship services, and she leads the Outreach & Worship Team.

Catalina's lay leadership sets annual goals and aligns staff to live out those goals. Among these goals is sustaining our traditional service and developing an alternative service in support of community outreach, as assigned to Pastor Kelli. She is focusing her ministry beyond the traditional Sunday service. Her work includes connecting with the wider community and developing a second worship service. This means she cannot always be present at the 10 a.m. service on Sunday. Just as Pastor Mike assigns time for planning and creating Sunday worship, Pastor Kelli devotes her energy to visiting other churches, seeing what works, and bringing ideas to Catalina. They are both in ministry to us with God's love and guidance.

Thank you all for supporting both Pastor Mike and Pastor Kelli as we live more fully into Catalina's mission and vision for a vibrant future.



Prison Fellowship - Angel Tree

The 2025 Angel Tree season is in full swing. Calls to caregivers to get gift suggestions were completed. Almost 100 Angel Tags for the Christmas tree were made, two for each child; a fun gift and a clothing gift. On two Sundays in Nov. the congregation took ALL the Angel Tags from the tree and then shopped like crazy. ALL gifts have been returned and the gifts were "staged" by family on Nov. 29th, and wrapping was on Nov. 30. All is set for the deliverers to deliver the gifts from pick up day Dec. 7th, with delivery completion by Dec. 21st. THANKS TO ALL WHO PARTICIPATED IN SOME WAY! It takes a village. Thanks to the Day School families also. They participated in getting several gifts as well.

Blessings, Judy Wingert



CUMC Foundation News

The Catalina United Methodist Foundation is a critical component in the health of our church. This year alone we will have provided \$400,000.00+ for the good of the church. Things like new mission tile roofs for the Day School and the Fellowship Hall, and contributions to Trustees for ongoing building maintenance are important for the upkeep and the improvement of campus areas.

The project I am personally proud of is the remodeling and improvements in 5 restrooms on campus. My parents, George and Elsie Nelson had donated to the foundation years ago. Their fund has provided for updating the two restrooms in the H building, the 2 restrooms in the E building and one restroom in the back sanctuary hallway. Construction is currently underway with an approximate finish date of Dec. 3rd. We have many community meetings in the H building and it was my personal wish to improve those restrooms in particular. That building was built in 1961 so it was time! The E building and the sanctuary were built in 1956. Also time for updating. A pull down spray faucet for the kitchen sink will also be installed.

In the Spring there will be opportunities to donate to the Foundation and become a member of Tres Cruces, a group of members who have already taken that step. We hope to also offer another financial planning seminar.

Judy Wingert, President of the Foundation Board





Catalina UMC Day School Report

by Carolyn Lovell, Executive Director

Day School Happenings...

The Day School has been buzzing with excitement, curiosity, and joyful learning this fall! Our enrollment is currently 85 children, and our classrooms are full of energy and enthusiasm as students explore and grow each day.

Pre-K Dinosaur Dig ~ Our Pre-K students recently transformed into little paleontologists during a special Dinosaur Dig in the sand yard! Equipped with brushes, shovels, “fossils,” and even geode rocks, the children worked together to uncover dinosaur bones and make exciting discoveries. Activities like these build early science skills, spark imagination, and bring so much joy to our students.

Mr. Nature Visits - We were delighted to welcome Mr. Nature this month for his music and movement program. The children always light up when he arrives! His sessions support creativity, rhythm, social-emotional learning, and whole-body engagement—wrapped in music the children absolutely love.

Friendsgiving Dinner - Our annual Friendsgiving Dinner in the trike yard was a beautiful evening of fellowship. Families gathered with delicious, shared dishes, laughter, and gratitude. Events like Friendsgiving highlight the strong community that continues to grow within our school.

Preparing for Our Christmas Program - The children are practicing for our Christmas Program on Tuesday, December 17th in the Trike Yard. Classrooms are filled with festive songs and joyful rehearsals as we get ready to celebrate the season with our families. We invite our church community to join us for this special event.

Supporting the Day School -As a ministry of Catalina United Methodist Church, the Day School thrives through the prayers, involvement, and generosity of our congregation. If you feel called to support the continued growth and success of our program, we welcome contributions in any amount. Catalina Day School is also now listed on Benevity, a corporate giving platform used by companies such as Raytheon. If you or someone you know works for an employer that offers Benevity matching funds, the Day School is an eligible cause. Matching gifts help us expand classroom resources, enhance playground spaces, and continue providing a nurturing environment for our children.

Thank you for keeping our students, families, and staff in your prayers as we continue shaping a warm, joyful, faith-rooted learning environment for our youngest learners.

Save The Date

Catalina United Methodist Day School
Annual Christmas Program
in the Fellowship Hall at 6p.m

School closes at 5pm that day so families & teachers can go grab dinner before Performance

Dec | 17 | 2025
2700 E Speedway Blvd., Tucson, AZ

A collage of five photographs showing children engaged in various activities: a child in a hat digging in the sand, a child holding a green dinosaur toy, a child in a blue hoodie with a Nike logo, and a group of children in a classroom setting.

THE UPPER ROOM®

Dear Douglas Wingert,

On behalf of the staff of The Upper Room Daily Devotional Guide, we wish to express our sincere gratitude for the contribution you made to our magazine in 2025. This year is of special significance because it marks our 90th year of publication. This milestone in our ministry would not have been possible without people like you who use their talent, insight, and voice to share their faith with our readers.

We made this video for the official celebration of our 90th anniversary in August, and we hope you will enjoy learning more about The Upper Room's history and impact over the decades.

Thank you for taking part in this special work that guides hearts and shapes the spiritual lives of millions of people around the world. God's richest blessings on you,



The Upper Room Editorial Staff
www.UpperRoom.org

To view their video Celebrating 90 years, go to
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZ_I5j8bR50

God answers prayers.



Please Be In Prayer For...

Catalina has an active prayer team, Prayer Partners, praying for YOU throughout the year. If you would like to add a special prayer request, please send it to office@catalinamethodist.org and we will publish it here!

Please be in prayer for:

- Carolyn, Chuck and Paula experiencing health issues.
- LaVon going through medical procedures for her heart.
- Chaplains & Counselors in the South District, TMM Family Services - People served and staff
- Peace. Love. Prayer. Always.

Need a Visitation?

If you, or someone you know, would like a visitation from our Deaconess, Toni Smith, please contact her at toni@catalinamethodist.org



UPCOMING EVENTS

Seekers Adult Sunday School Class @ 8:45am – 9:45am in Room H230

A desire to enrich your understanding and faith is the only requirement. Join us for a variety of video-based lessons led by volunteer class members. For lesson schedule go to <https://www.catalinamethodist.org/adults/>.

Koinonia Class for Adults: Sundays @ 9am in Room E-23

AN ALTAR IN THE WORLD: A GEOGRAPHY OF FAITH begins Sunday morning, October 5, 9:00 am in Room E23. Books are available from Rev. Reed. Adults of all ages can enjoy learning together! For more info: wkirkreed@gmail.com.

Women's Bible Study: Wednesdays @ 9:30, Room H230

We're on break until January. For more info, contact Brenda Halferty at 520-481-6993 or email bjhalferty@gmail.com

Men's Bible Study: Wednesdays @ 6:45am, Room E23

Bible study, Brotherhood, and Breakfast! We gather for breakfast at 8am after studying! Join our Men's Bible Study each week. We will not meet on the Wednesday before Christmas or on New Year's Eve.

(continued on next page).

UPCOMING EVENTS Continued

Catalina Breakfast Forum: Saturday, December 06 at 9am in Fellowship Hall

Chrisann Black of Club Zeus will be the featured speaker. \$4/person donation requested at the door. Please RSVP to 520-327-4296 so we know how much food to prepare!

Peanut Butter & Jelly Sandwich Making: December 12, 3-5pm, Room E23

We need about 20 volunteers to make more than 500 sandwiches. Please contact dougwingert@gmail.com for more information.

Casa Maria Soup Kitchen Outreach: Saturday, December 13

Volunteers needed. Contact dougwingert@gmail.com or the church office at 520-327-4296.

"Rejoice and Sing: A Festival of Lessons and Carols": Sunday, December 14, 4pm

The Sanctuary Choir presents this annual FREE event with beautiful music, favorite carols, hot chocolate and cookies. A joyful celebration for all ages.

Christmas Eve Worship: Family Friendly at 6pm in the Chapel; Traditional at 8pm in the Sanctuary

Primavera Men's Shelter: Saturday, December 27: 2-4pm or 4-6pm

Volunteers needed to cook and serve a 5-course meal to approximately 52 men living at the Primavera Men's Shelter. Please contact dougwingert@gmail.com for more information.

Shalom Circle: Tuesday, January 03, 10am in the Library

Please come and join with other women in love, justice and service! Can't wait to see you there! If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Deaconess Toni Smith at toni@catalinamethodist.org

Also of Note:

www.UMC.ORG/EN

Want to know more about the United Methodist Church? You'll find it on the website link shown above. Take a look--you'll be surprised!

Catalina Cares - E-news Weekly

Are you on the email list? If not, go to: <https://www.catalinamethodist.org/newsletter/> and fill out the form at the bottom of the page. We'll add you to the list and you can stay "In the Know!" every Thursday afternoon!

Monthly Bible Verses

You can find them at: <https://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/> If you would like a copy in print, please contact the office.

Catalina Loves Music

If you love music too, consider joining our Sanctuary Choir which rehearses Thursdays @ 7pm in the Choir Room, or if you can read music, join our bell ringers on Thursdays @ 5:30pm. Mariana@catalinamethodist.org for more info.

The Upper Room On-line

If you love the Upper Room daily devotionals in print, you're going to love them on-line! Just go to: <https://www.upperroom.org/>

Church Office Hours

The office is open Monday-Thursday, 10am to 3pm. Email: office@catalinamethodist.org
Phone: 520-327-4296

**HELP US GET THE WORD OUT: LIKE US ON
FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM!
REVIEW US ON GOOGLE!**

Catalina 
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