



THE CATALINA NEWSLETTER

2700 E. SPEEDWAY - TUCSON, AZ 85716

WWW.CATALINAMETHODIST.ORG

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Chapel Connections: A Season of Creativity & Hope

As part of Catalina's 2025 goals to (1) offer a second worship service, (2) deepen community engagement, and (3) strengthen our family and children's ministry, our Outreach & Worship Team has spent the last four months piloting several new worship experiences. These previews—offered at different times, in different spaces, and with different styles—have helped us learn what resonates with our own community and how Catalina might faithfully expand its ministry in the months ahead.

Our third preview, **Chapel Connections**, took place in December and featured a relaxed, intimate worship service in the Chapel, accompanied by acoustic music, a warm atmosphere, and an emphasis on progressive, justice-centered faith. Attendance ranged from 20-40 people, and feedback survey responses were overwhelmingly positive.

Feedback Survey Highlights for Chapel Connections

Attendees expressed deep appreciation for:

- The chapel space — described as warm, intimate, peaceful, and inviting.
- The music — especially the acoustic, comfortable feel.
- The preaching and overall message — consistently described as relatable, meaningful, hopeful, and grounding.
- The welcoming and joyful spirit of the service.
- The balance and flow of worship, with several people saying the depth and casual feel together made the service “just right.”
- Many said they would love to see this style of service continue in the future.

When asked what matters most in choosing which worship service to attend, the top responses were style of worship and convenient time, with some also naming the chapel vibe and pastoral connection. Nearly everyone who completed the survey supported continuing two worship options at 10am.

Another strong theme emerged: the majority of respondents said that a justice-engaged, advocacy-oriented worship community aligns with their hopes for Catalina's future. This affirmation is a meaningful guidepost as we discern next steps.

A Season of Joyful Experimentation

This fall has truly been a fun and energizing season of ministry. Having the space—and the support—to dream, test, and try new things has been such a gift. Each of you who attended, served, volunteered, or completed a survey helped shape this process and share in its success. Your reflections have helped Catalina stay on the forward-leaning edge of ministry, and your openness to creativity is a testament to who this church is becoming.

(continued on next page)

Chapel Connections: A Season of Creativity & Hope (continued from page 2)

I also want to name how extraordinary the **Outreach & Worship Team** has been throughout this process. The amount of work behind these pilots has been tremendous: designing worship, recruiting volunteers, writing liturgy, learning new styles, rehearsing music, preparing meals, setting up, tearing down, evaluating, and planning next steps. This team has met nearly every week since July, offering thoughtful leadership, prayerful insight, and unwavering support. This season could not have happened without them.

What's Next?

The Outreach & Worship Team will convene again in January to make decisions about what might become part of Catalina's regular worship rhythm. While nothing is finalized yet, it is likely we will explore a monthly schedule that includes a mix of worship expressions—for example:

- **Catalina Unplugged** twice a month
- **Open Table** (dinner church) once a month
- **Chapel Connections**—a 10am chapel-style blended service twice a month

We'll share more detailed updates in January and February as plans come into focus.

A Personal Word of Gratitude

As I step into my 18th year of pastoral ministry, I can honestly say: this is the most fun I've ever had in ministry! Before I was appointed here in 2024, the Conference asked me what my dream church would be, I said, "A church that truly wants to try new things." And here we are. Catalina UMC has been an answer to that prayer. The energy, enthusiasm, curiosity, openness—and the willingness to support new ideas even if they aren't everyone's personal preference—has created a renewed spirit of hope.

The energy is growing. The Spirit is moving. And I feel more hopeful than ever about what lies ahead as we step into 2026 together.

With Gratitude and Great Love,
-Pastor Kelli

Congregational
care



Congregational Care Report

by Deaconess Toni Smith

The month of December was busy, busy busy! But with God's grace, we came through it all successfully. We made a couple of visits to some congregants, took them birthday cards and served them the sacraments as they requested. They seemed to enjoy our visit, filled with joy, laughter, and good conversations.

The Stephen Minister team met at Jim Gill's home for our annual Christmas dinner party. As you can see from the picture, everyone was all smiles and laughter, and sharing the peace of Christ was such a blessing to receive during the holiday.

May the peace of Christ be with you all, and may the new year be filled with many blessings upon you!

In love, justice and service,
Deaconess Toni Smith





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

Primavera Men’s Shelter – On December 27th, our Primavera cooking team served a very special holiday dinner to approximately 45 men living at the Primavera shelter. The special menu was created by professional chef, Todd Eanes and the Caridad Kitchen, (a division of the Community Food Bank). Thank you, Todd and Caridad, for your generous donation of time and groceries for this event. And a special “thank you” for Chef Kevin, for the hard work and coordination of our volunteers in the kitchen. The meal consisted of pot roast, roasted carrots, macaroni and cheese, salad, rolls, and dessert. The dessert was especially appreciated; sweet and gooey bread pudding! The men in residence LOVED it. Now it’s time to turn the page and look at 2026. We will be cooking and serving again on **Saturday, January 24th**. That may seem like a distant date, but it’s coming up fast. Who can help us out? We need four volunteers. If you can help on that date, 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 pm – 4:00 pm and 4:00 pm – 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. If the January 24th date does not work for you, we will be cooking and serving at the Primavera Men’s Shelter on the **fourth Saturday of every month in 2026**. Mark your calendars. We need volunteers.

Casa Maria Soup Kitchen – Catalina volunteers typically serve approximately 350 cups of chicken vegetable soup, made from scratch, at the Casa Maria Soup Kitchen. This provides a hot meal for so many people living with homelessness and hunger. We do not yet have a cooking schedule for 2026. Stand by for more information on this important outreach.

Peanut Butter & Jelly Sandwich Making Marathon – Once again, Catalina held its final sandwich making event of the year on December 12th. We only had 11 volunteers, (about half of the usual number), but they were so adept at sandwich making that we produced more than 500 sandwiches in just a few hours. We plan to schedule future sandwich making events in 2026 in March, June, September, and December. Keep reading the newsletter for future updates.

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.

Other News - Your Church & Society – Missions team also make year-end donations to TMM Family Services and to the Fuente de Vida UMC in Agua Prieta, Mexico.

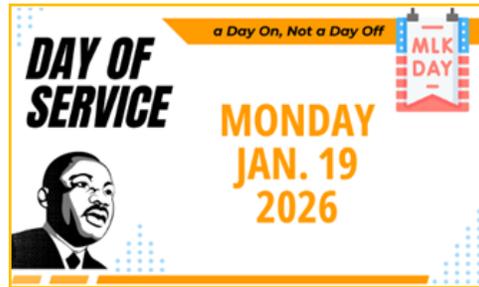


When we volunteer, we lift others
—and discover we’re lifted too.



December Observances

By Kent Batty, Multicultural Committee



January is **Poverty Awareness Month**, a period during which we should remind ourselves of the depth and breadth of poverty in this very wealthy nation. While poverty has been reduced over recent years, the numbers still shock the mind: 37.9 million people in the United States live in poverty, a rate of 11.5 percent (2022 data). With poverty increases looming as health care costs rise, let us look for ways that we can reduce overall poverty, supporting the effort with our time, our resources and our political involvement.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day is observed this month, commemorating Dr. King's leadership in the American civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. Through peaceful protests and powerful speeches, he challenged racial segregation and **inspired a nation to pursue social justice**. He dedicated his life to the nonviolent struggle for civil rights in the United States and his leadership played a pivotal role in ending entrenched segregation and in the creation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, considered the crowning achievement of the civil rights era. The holiday is designated as a **National Day of Service**, encouraging Americans to volunteer and give back to their communities.

The King Center, honoring Dr. King's enduring legacy, has established this year's theme as "Mission Possible II: Building Community, Uniting a Nation the Nonviolent Way," calling it a blueprint for action toward a world where injustice ends, violence is replaced by compassion, and love becomes the prevailing force.

International Holocaust Remembrance Day occurs on January 27th. It commemorates the 6 million Jews and millions of other people who were victims of this genocidal series of events. It should remind us of the absolute horror of the concentration camps and other atrocities that were perpetuated by the Nazis. It also should bring to mind other similar events that have occurred in our lifetimes: Cambodia, Rwanda, Darfur, Myanmar, Ukraine and Gaza.



“There is no moral justification for poverty in the midst of plenty.”
— Martin Luther King Jr.



Successful 2025 Angel Tree Outreach

Thanks to the generosity of our congregation we delivered to 20 different caregivers, caring for 48 children - 96 wrapped Christmas gifts, on behalf of an incarcerated parent or grandparent!! We had many volunteers help with calling caregivers, making the angel tree tags, addressing Christmas cards to inmates, wrapping the gifts and delivering them. It takes a village to do this outreach annually and the caregivers and inmates are so appreciative. Thank you!

And if you got any non-profit, free Christmas cards in the mail this year, and aren't going to use them, please consider donating them to the Angel Tree project. We give each caregiver an addressed, stamped card to the inmate, to write a thank you note, and each inmate is sent a card stating that their gifts have been delivered. Thanks in advance. Judy Wingert, Angel Tree Coordinator.



2025 CUMC Foundation Update

by Judy Wingert, President, Foundation Board

Catalina Family, we are so thankful for those who started our Catalina UMC Foundation back in 1958. And for those who have given generously to the Foundation since then. As you probably know, over the years, our congregation has shrunk and aged. Many churches in Tucson and all over the US have this same phenomenon. Currently, it is lovely to see many more young families and their children in church. We also have several college students joining us in church on Sundays and in various Sunday School classes. We want to continue this growth.

Our Foundation provided Catalina UMC approximately \$447,000.00 this year to continue growing and making improvements to an aging campus. The Fellowship Hall, office wing and Day School space were built in the 1940's. The sanctuary was completed in 1956. The H building was built in the early 1960's. The Trustees have done a great job in maintaining and improving buildings in 2025. Both mission tile roofs on the Day School and the Fellowship Hall were completely replaced this year. Early next year another section of tile will be replaced. The plans for the sanctuary mission tile replacement are forthcoming. Rain gutters were replaced on several roof lines, and the Day School replaced all of their sleeping mats. Many other program and property expenses were supported by the Foundation. The George and Elise Nelson memorial fund provided funding for the remodeling and updating of five restrooms. The Foundation also provided 6 scholarships in 2025, 3 of them for ministerial students throughout the Desert SW Conference and to 3 students associated with Catalina who are attending universities or participating in extended education.

The Foundation is looking for ways to grow. Please consider the Foundation in your estate planning and continuous giving throughout the year. Stay tuned for information on Tres Cruces, a group of people who have already given to the Foundation. Here is the link to the Foundation page on the church website where a donation form and a list of fund descriptions are found. <https://www.catalinamethodist.org/foundation/>

Have a blessed New Year, and look for monthly Foundation Updates in upcoming Catalina News issues.



Catalina UMC Day School Report

by Carolyn Lovell, Executive Director

Day School Happenings...

The holidays have come and gone at the Day School, and each classroom was filled with Christmas spirit and joyful learning. Our current enrollment stands at 85 children, and classrooms celebrated the season with festive Christmas parties, hot chocolate, and, in some rooms, a Christmas Book Exchange.

We are grateful for the success of our Fall Cookie Dough Fundraiser, which raised \$786.75—thank you to everyone who supported this effort! Please mark your calendars for our next fundraising opportunity: a Winter Fundraiser at Raising Cane's on February 3rd (save the date) to support the Day School.

We also enjoyed our Annual Christmas Program on Wednesday, December 17th, held in Fellowship Hall. The children delighted families and friends with Christmas songs, and the Webby Dancers added to the celebration. Fellowship Hall was filled with joy, community, and holiday cheer.

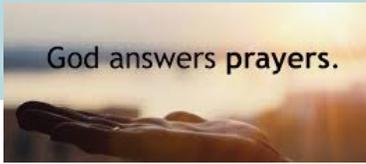
As we look ahead, we are excited for more opportunities, events, and growth in 2026. As a ministry of the Church, we encourage continued support of the Day School through Benevity and Fry's Community Rewards. Happy New Year! We look forward to another year of learning, connection, and community.



United Women in Faith Shalom Circle

The UWF Shalom Circle is meeting on January 13 @ 10 am in the library . Our scheduled speaker is from the newly built Women's Shelter called Star Village with the Primavera nonprofit organization. We are looking forward to seeing you there !

In love , justice and service ,
Deaconess Toni



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!

Pease be in prayer for:

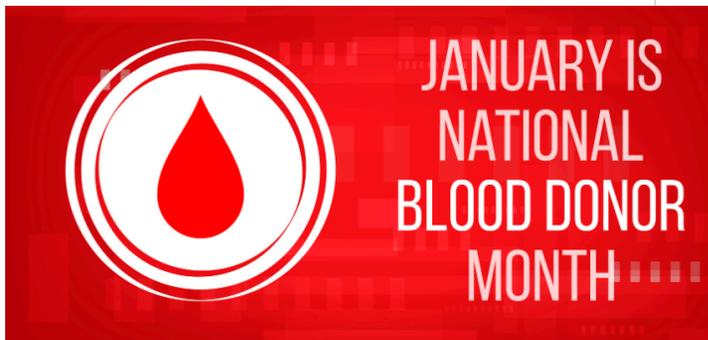
- Juan Flores and his family as he recovers from critical condition after random gunshots on Dec 26.
- ...a slow progression, dignity in disability, and peace that passes understanding for Janee, who was diagnosed with ALS at age 35. Please also pray for healing and comfort for her family.
- Juan Flores in critical condition in the hospital and for his family.
- Umbelina Mendez diagnosed with throat cancer. This week's surgery will be her second for this illness.
- Janet Williams dealing with asthma and hearing issues.
- Catalina UMC, Desert Skies UMC - Tucson; Oasis UMC Start, Eloy
- 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



Edge High School – One block West of CUMC
 Bloodmobile in Front of School
 2555 E. 1st St. Tucson, AZ 85716 (520) 230-5969
 Tuesday, January 27th 8:30 am to 1:30 pm
 Organizer: Lee Borzick - leeb@edgehighschool.org
 Sign-up online at: <https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/drive-results?zipSponsor=edge>
 Eligibility requirements:
<https://www.redcrossblood.org/donate-blood/how-to-donate/eligibility-requirements.html>

Seekers Adult Sunday School Class: Sundays @ 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

Koinonia Class for adults will begin an important book by Barbara Brown Taylor, *Home By Another Way*, on Sunday, January 18 at 9:00 am, Room E23. Books may be purchased from Amazon new or used or from Rev. Kirk Reed for \$10.

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

Our study will be *The Way of Wisdom*, a study of Proverbs by six authors. We will meet in room H230 at 9:30 until 11:30. We hope to see you there. We are a committed, welcoming group of women. Please contact Brenda Halferty if you wish to attend. Bjhalferty@gmail.com or 520-481-6993.

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. [Click Here](#) for a schedule of topics

Sing With The Sanctuary Choir: Rehearsals Thursdays-7-8:30pm

Do you sing in the shower? Come sing with us at rehearsals and on Sundays—it's a blast! Got questions? Reach out to Mariana@catalinamethodist.org

UPCOMING EVENTS Continued

Festival Ringers Bell Choir: Rehearsals Thursdays @ 5:30-6:30pm

Can you read music? We would love to have you join this fun group for rehearsals and performances throughout the coming year. Reach out to Kyle@catalinamethodist.org

Catalina Breakfast Forum: Saturday, January 03 at 9am in Fellowship Hall

"Circus Wagons Come to Town - The 2026 Rodeo Parade" presented by Stan Martin and Ken Tittelbaugh. \$4/person donation requested at the door. Please RSVP to 520-327-4296 so we know how much food to prepare!

United Women in Faith - Shalom Circle: Tuesday, January 13, 10am in the Library

We invite all women to join us in fellowship as we gather in the spirit of love, justice, and service. For questions or more information, please contact Deaconess Toni Smith at toni@catalinamethodist.org.

Time to "undeck" the halls: Tuesday, January 6, 2026, 9 a.m

Please come help us take down the Christmas decorations on Tuesday, January 6 at 9 a.m. We welcome and appreciate all volunteers especially those who can climb a 6 foot ladder to reach high places to take down wreaths and garland. Please contact Janice Golden (626/372-9688) or janicelgolden@yahoo.com if you have any questions or to volunteer -- or just show up in the Sanctuary that morning.

Primavera Cooks @ the Men's Shelter: Saturday, January 24, 2-6pm

We need 4 volunteers for this date. Work involves standing, lifting, cooking and serving. All volunteers over the age of 12 are welcome. Please contact dougingert@gmail.com for more information.

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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