

Volume 53/Issue 11
November 2014

Shepherd Life

*The Monthly Newsletter for
Shepherd of the Hills Congregational UCC*

Shepherd of the Hills is a faith community which seeks to learn, to love, and to serve together.



WOOLGATHERING

By the Rev. Patti Aurand

*"What Could You
Be Grateful For?"*

What could I be grateful for? That was the question – and the challenge – presented to me on the first evening of the recent Southwest Conference Clergy Retreat. We were in the midst of evening vespers when Inge Detweiler led us in a meditation on gratitude.

As we entered the Petroglyph Room of the Redemptorist Renewal Center, we were encouraged to claim a blessing jar. With jar in hand, the meditation began. After each set of thoughts, we were each left to ponder "what could you be grateful for?"

I was immediately caught by the use of "could". I was expecting to hear "should" as in "what *should* you be grateful for?" as though this was another exercise to compel me to redeem more frequent flier miles for yet another guilt trip. And yet there was no guilt implied in the question. Where "should" is defined as "ought to, but not necessarily shall", "could" is defined as a way to indicate possibility.

The difference that one little letter makes is astonishing and compels me to wonder where else to substitute "could" for "should".

Instead of focusing on the "shoulds" from "what should I do today" to "what should I do to support my faith community" to "what should I be thankful for", I wonder what would happen if we focused on the "coulds". Imagine the possibilities!

So, what could *you* be grateful for?

*When you look at life through eyes of gratitude,
the world becomes a magical and amazing place.*

Jennifer Gayle

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT HOST FAMILIES NEEDED

By Katy Kohner



Hosting an international student has many rewards.

The students are here to learn English through classes at ASU and immersion. While staying in your home, they learn the language, as well as American culture, humor, and traditions. There is a time investment with helping them navigate the university system at first, but once they learn the bus route and make friends, they become more and more self-sufficient. They also contribute so much in terms of joy, a new perspective, and teaching some of their language to you!

The Overseas Educational and Consulting Services (OVECS) program is very supportive and helps if you have any difficulty picking up or dropping off students from the airport. They pay \$500 every four weeks for their housing and food. You provide breakfast and dinner - lunch is on their own.

We have had 6 students now, and all have become family. I encourage you to give it a try.

The student needs to have their own room, but it is okay if they share a bathroom.

Please feel free to call me with any questions.

Katy – 480-361-7919

PASTOR/PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

The next monthly meeting of the Pastor/Parish Relations Committee will take place at 6:00pm on Tuesday, November 18.

The purpose of this confidential group is to maintain and facilitate open communication among the Pastor and the Parish (the members and friends of Shepherd of the Hills) in order to cultivate both pastoral and congregational health and vitality.

If you have any questions, comments, compliments or concerns, please contact *any* member of the PPRC.

Current members include Rev. Patti Aurand, Beth Franco, Liz Mullen (facilitator), Sue Spahle, and Tom Trickle.

SHEPHERD'S SANDWICH SEMINAR WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19TH

In celebration of Thanksgiving and Veterans' Day, Shepherd is presenting four WWII veterans who will talk about their time in service, and share what they are most thankful for this season.

Come to hear and honor four of our "Greatest Generation" veterans: **David Baker, Hank Craig, Dave Fuller, and Richard Taubert.**

This month's Sandwich Seminar is November 19th from Noon to around 1:30pm in Shepherd Hall. This is a BYOBBL event (Bring Your Own Brown Bag Lunch). We'll supply the coffee, water, and lemonade.

Join us on the third Wednesday of each month at noon to listen to interesting presenters followed by lively Q&A sessions as we learn together.

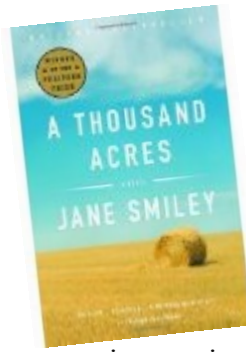
ICM FOOD & CLOTHING NEWS

By Liz Mullen

Thanksgiving is around the corner and that means it's time for turkeys (among other things!). Shepherd has always led the effort in donating turkeys to ICM. Nearly one thousand turkeys will be distributed in the three days preceding the holiday. Turkeys not donated will have to be purchased. St. Mary's Food Bank provides the balance of the meal.

Dan and I will collect frozen birds Sunday, November 23, before church, in the parking lot.

Please consider purchasing a turkey for ICM when you buy one for your family. It's not just a good quantity of protein for a reasonable price; it allows the clients to share in a great American tradition. Thank you!



BOOK CLUB IS READING "A THOUSAND ACRES"

The next gathering of the Shepherd Book Club will take place at 11:30am on Thursday, November 20th in the Fireplace Room of Fellowship Hall.

Participants are encouraged to bring their lunches and their impressions on the November book pick: [A Thousand Acres by Jane Smiley.](#) This group is open to anyone who enjoys reading and discussing literature.

CHURCH WORK DAY – NOV 8TH

By John Schneeman

Volunteers are requested to help plant courtyard flowers on Saturday, November 8.

We will be planting annual bedding flowers in the courtyard gardens on Saturday, November 8, 2014 from 8:00 AM until 10:00 AM. Last year we planted snapdragons, petunias and geraniums. This year's flowers may be the same or they may be different based on what is available, what looks super healthy and what is appropriate for the location. I will pick them up on Friday to ensure we get the "pick of the crop". Planting consists of digging up and turning over the soil while avoiding underground sprinkler lines, incorporating mulch and fertilizer, raking to break up clumps and level the bed, determining flower placement and then the best part – planting the flowers. If you wish to volunteer all you have to do is show up.

I will bring my own gardening tools to supplement Shepherd's inventory so we should have tools covered. However, if you have a favorite shovel, rake or garden trowel please feel free to bring with you. We are, of course, expecting perfect autumn weather.

Hope to see you there!

CHANGE OF ADDRESSES

Jerry & Val Trickle

5557 South Sandstone Court

Gilbert AZ 85298

602-618-4082

valandjerrytrickle@hotmail.com

Lionel & Doris Miles

New email: lmiles1955@gmail.com

GETTING TO KNOW THE FLOCK –

Liz Mullen

By Mary Benin

Liz has been a life-long UCC member. Prior to coming to Shepherd she and Dan were members at Encanto Community UCC. Their children came to a Shepherd Vacation Bible School and the family was impressed with the program. As the children reached youth group age, they started looking for a church with a viable youth group and Shepherd had one. At the time Steve Davis and Mary Baard were the pastors and they felt a strong bond with Mary, who had children of similar ages to the Mullens.

I asked what has kept Liz and Dan at Shepherd now that their children are grown. Liz said the community of people and friends at Shepherd, and the openness and acceptance of all by the UCC denomination. Liz and Dan are involved with their covenant group and the outreach group, and in the past the Sisterhood was important to Liz. She mentioned that she would like to get the Sisterhood group started again. Anyone else interested? Liz is also active in the Good Earth Group (the new “coffee lady”!), chairs the Pastoral Relations Committee and has been a leader in launching the Book Club.

Prior to having children Liz was a financial analyst, but she quit to raise her children. While her children were young Liz was very involved in volunteering, including working with the PTA, scouting, and the ASU Alumni Association.

Many of you know that Liz is the former President of the Board at ICM and that she still sits on the board. I asked her how she got involved with ICM, and she said that while she was at Encanto, she did some volunteer work and was very impressed with the services at ICM. ICM not only feeds the working poor and provides them clothing and toiletries, but if needed, they will assign each of their clients a case worker, who meets with him or her, determines the client’s needs and works with the client to get them back on their feet. Liz is still on the board at ICM. She is very proud of the organization which has a very small staff and is able to function at a very high level with mostly volunteer labor. She reported that an impressive 94% of donations to ICM go directly to clients. Liz is appreciative of our congregation's gifts to ICM both financial and *in-kind*. She appreciates the many members who volunteer their time to ICM (formerly *Interfaith Cooperative Ministries*).

CHURCH RENEWAL PROJECTS

DISCUSSED

By Lew Shaw

Church Renewal was the topic of a Town Hall meeting attended by 50-plus congregants on Oct. 19 in Fellowship Hall. Moderator Mary Benin stated that the Council has a number of physical plant issues under review that should be addressed in the next two-to-three years, the most important of which involve updating the audio and sound system in the Sanctuary, replacing deteriorating roofs, and installing more efficient equipment affecting the heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) of Church buildings.

There was considerable discussion regarding the Sanctuary sound system, which last had a major upgrade in 1994. The current system was described as “dying a slow death,” and the problem was identified as involving both volume and clarity.

The plan calls for sound mapping the Sanctuary, which determines the placement of speakers; installation of large flat screens on each side of the chancel to replace the portable screen currently in use; and the purchase of new hearing devices, at an overall cost of \$30,000-\$50,000, of which \$10,000 has already been received as a voluntary donation. The system could be installed over a two-week period and may involve moving the choir to a new location. An informal and unofficial vote of the Town Hall attendees was nearly unanimous in favor of implementing these improvements.

The cost of replacing roofs and HVAC equipment was estimated at \$107,000 and would be paid for by the Church’s Reserve Fund or a capital campaign. It was pointed out that there would be operational savings when the new equipment is in place, making it possible to hold the Buildings & Grounds budget at its current level in spite of rising prices.

The job description for the new Sexton calls for a flexible 10-15 hours a week. The work load decrease is due to the anticipated hiring of outside contractors to handle cleaning and landscaping. The Sexton position is expected to be filled by Dec. 1.

The Council has unanimously approved the hiring of a church-renewal consultant to guide the Church as it undertakes “progressive renewal” in the upcoming years. Other topics discussed during the meeting were the need for facilities to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the importance of continuing to strengthen ties with the Hills School.

ON A DIFFERENT NOTE

By Dan Kurek

Editor's Note: Recently Dan submitted his resignation as Shepherd's Director of Music. Although unexpected and reluctantly accepted, we recognize his amazing gifts and pray only good things for him in the future. The letter is reprinted here in full.

Dear Pastor Patti and Members of Shepherd of the Hills Council,

I am very grateful to all of you for the wonderful musical, personal and spiritual experiences I have been privileged to share with you during the past 15 years or so. I have been honored by your confidence and support. My time at Shepherd will always be dear to me and remembered with great affection.

Although this decision does not come easily, I feel it is time for me to move on to other venues and opportunities in my professional life.

Therefore, I tender my resignation as Music Director of Shepherd of the Hills Congregational United Church of Christ.

Sincerely and gratefully,
Daniel Kurek

Dan's last day at Shepherd will be November 23rd, Thanksgiving Sunday.

Join us in saying "goodbye" on November 23rd as we give thanks for Dan's time among us through our time in Worship and through a lunch in Dan's honor following Worship.

As a "thank you" from Shepherd, we are providing his insurance coverage until year's end.

If you wish to make an additional, personal contribution to Dan's retirement from Shepherd, please designate your gift by writing "Dan Kurek" on the memo line and returning it to the Church Office by Noon on November 21st.

The gift will then be presented to Dan during Worship on November 23rd.

SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE MUSIC MANIA

3:00pm - Sunday, November 9

First Congregational UCC in Phoenix
Support your Southwest Conference and have some fun fellowship at the same time!

You Are Invited to Arizona Interfaith Power and Light's 5th Anniversary Celebration & Annual Meeting

Saturday, November 15, 2014

Noon - 4:00pm

Community Christian Church
1701 S. College Ave., Tempe, AZ

Program includes:

Interfaith Creation-Centered Worship
Music

Catered Lunch

Election of Board Members

Presentations by:

Citizen's Climate Lobby & Climate Reality Project

News from the People's Climate March

Networking

R.S.V.P to doug.bland@aziplorg
or 480-967-5266 by November 7

LANTERN WALK AT THE PRESCHOOL

By Dr. Nola Enge

Fall brings a lovely feel to schools, doesn't it? Soon we'll gather for a favorite fall event, our Lantern Walk. This peaceful and reverent festival takes place as the sun is setting at two homes of grandparents in the school. Families gather to quietly walk and sing, carrying our handmade lanterns. We enjoy a campfire and baskets of warm bread and cider.

The Lantern Walk coincides with the European tradition of the feast of St. Martin of Tours. According to the most famous story of the saint, Martin was a Roman soldier who was traveling one cold winter night when he saw a beggar in the streets. Even though Martin felt frozen to his toes, he was compelled to cut his cloak in two and give one of the halves to the beggar. This act of kindness led Martin to become less interested in the business of battle and when he finally left the service with an honorable discharge, he founded a number of monasteries and was elected Bishop of Tours in 371.

While we construct our lanterns this month, retelling this story provides for many opportunities to introduce empathy, caring and service. The walk provides warm fellowship for the young families. As winter approaches we kindle the light within each of us, symbolized by the lanterns the children carry. Happy November to all.

MODERATOR'S MUSINGS

By Mary Benin

It's November and Spring is in the Air.

I was thinking about how the fall and spring seasons are almost backwards in Arizona. In the fall fresh (winter rye) grass starts growing, people are planting their flower and vegetable gardens, and you see more people out and about because the weather is getting so nice. Our winter visitors return to the valley, and in general, fall is a time of growth and anticipation of the long period of good weather and economic prosperity to come. In most parts of our country, it is the spring that brings people out of the bad weather and there is an excitement about the good summer weather to come. Since we don't look forward to summer, fall is our season of anticipation and excitement.

I am excited about our fall season at Shepherd. Our winter residents are returning and it is so much fun to see them and catch up with them. Our choir and many committees become stronger with our members returning from long summers away. We also have many good things at Shepherd to anticipate.

With the church's blessing, we will hire a church growth consultant and coach to help us to be a growing, thriving church. We have a lot of intelligent, hardworking dedicated members, lay leaders and clergy who are excited about new ways of being a valuable church in our community, serving God and being a force for good.

Patti and Chuck have been here for over a year, and as clergy and congregation have gotten to know each other better, we have become better at working together to learn, love, and serve God and our community. We have a new Sunday school curriculum that will help our children to learn more about God. New programs like the Friday morning coffee klatch and the book club have taken off, and other groups like the Wednesday Wanderings group are thriving with new energy and ideas. With Nola Enge working hard with Pastor Patti and the council, we are developing more joint preschool-church projects like our Trunk or Treat event, which was just held on Halloween. We are excited for more ways for the church and preschool to grow together.

Fall is a great time at Shepherd. Please come and participate in the life of this church. Please come on Sunday, and also find a group – the Good Earth Group, the Choir, VIP, Wednesday Wanderings, Adult Sunday School, the Book Club, the Friday Coffee Klatch, or others - that helps you feel connected to this wonderful community of faith.



IT'S A BOY!

Congratulations to Scott and Audra (Shackelford) Graham on the birth of their son,

Benjamin Scott. The bundle of joy arrived on October 15, 2014. Proud grandparents include Brian and Missy Shackelford and proud great-grandmothers include Sally Shackelford and Connie Archer.

CALLING ALL YOUTH!

THANKSGIVING ALIVE 2014:

"Giving Hospitality to Strangers"

(Romans 12:13)

Nov. 28-30, 2014

The Good Shepherd UCC in Sahuarita, AZ

Thanksgiving Alive! is back! This service-focused retreat for Junior and Senior High youth will be held in Southern Arizona with a focus on welcoming the stranger. There will be education, service projects, food, fun, worship, and fellowship (and a chance to use your passport!).

Program Staff & Adult Advisors are needed! If your church is sending kids, please help us by sending an adult advisor.

The cost for everyone is \$50. Scholarship funds can be requested. **WE DO NOT WANT ANYONE TO MISS THIS RETREAT DUE TO LACK OF FUNDS!** Please call the office with any concerns. We will do all we can on a case by case basis.

Transportation will be provided from Phoenix at a round trip cost of \$40. Some travel assistance is also available for those from New Mexico or El Paso. Please call the office.



RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

Sunday, November 23

10:30am – 3:30pm

**Shepherd of the Hills UCC
Parking Lot**

INTERDEPENDENCE AT ITS VERY BEST

*By Rev. Randy J. Mayer
(An EPIC article from the SW Conference)*

Sometimes when I listen to people talk about Jesus, I get the sense that they honestly believe that he dropped out of the sky and landed like wet ink on the pages of the Bible. God help us, I hope it wasn't so neat and tidy. I prefer a Jesus that learned his wisdom through the school of hard knocks and lots of mistakes that brought him to the more perfect way. That Jesus found his elegant voice by putting his foot in his mouth and saying really stupid things often enough that his peers confronted him. That Jesus learned his ways of justice and peace by spending time on the other side of the sword and experiencing first-hand how empty and futile it was.

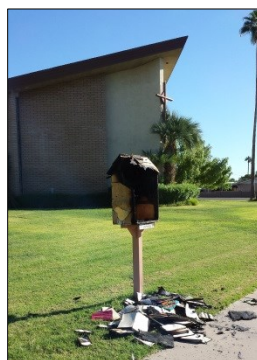
I am proposing that Jesus learned his wisdom and ways from a community that loved all of his imperfections and gently guided him and carefully polished the rough edges enough that he eventually became the person and prophet that we have come to love and follow. It took a village to raise Jesus and he understood that perfectly well---that is why he always deflected attention and credit---it was the community that he wanted front and center, not himself. He knew in his heart that he would have been absolutely nothing if the community hadn't taken interest in him and showed him the way. Which might be a better focus for our churches, "To become like the community that raised up Jesus."

I have always felt fortunate that I was raised from a young age in the community of the United Church of Christ. In fact you might say I am nothing without the UCC. I went to a UCC church school, participated in a UCC youth group, went to a UCC college and a UCC seminary, and in my wild and crazy years, spent three of them as a UCC Young Adult Volunteer both in the United States and in Latin America. While I still have plenty of rough edges to be smoothed, you should have seen the lump of coal I was before the UCC got a hold of me.

The United Church of Christ is far more than one local church or one particular issue and definitely more than a conference or the national denominational structure. It is a broad community that reaches into every nook and cranny of our country and beyond, taking people in and if you stay long enough it will have such an effect on you that when you look back you will say, who was that person I used to be.

On a whole other level, I honestly believe that our towns, cities, states and country might not be the same if the United Church of Christ wasn't present in those places too. I say that today, as Arizona joins New Mexico and the more than 30 states that have become

"Marriage Equality" states--- finally people can marry the one they love. The United Church of Christ was an early leader in shaping the discussion and taking a stand on Marriage Equality, our presence has made a difference and our communities will forever be changed. But it could have never been done by just one person, or one church---it has taken a whole denomination in all of its expressions to make this happen plus a whole lot more. This to me is a great example of interdependence is at its very best.



LITTLE LIBRARY TO BE RE-DEDICATED NOVEMBER 9, 2014

Sometime between 6:30pm on Saturday, October 4 and 9:00am Sunday, October 5, our community's Little Library was the victim of arson. This library, a shared project between Shepherd of the Hills United Church of Christ and The Hills Preschool and Atelier, has inspired reading and community-building in the Arcadia Neighborhood in recent years.

Shepherd of the Hills Church and The Hills Preschool invites the Arcadia Community to the Re-dedication of the new and improved Little Library (courtesy of our talented Bill Janiga) on Sunday, November 9 at 9:00am.

Those participating are invited to bring a favorite book to restock this neighborhood treasure. The Little Library is located at 5524 E. Lafayette Blvd. in Phoenix.

NANCY SPLAIN RECOGNIZED FOR "BUILDING BRIDGES"

On October 25, Nancy Splain was recognized by the Islamic Speakers Bureau of Arizona for her work in Building Bridges among interfaith groups.

During ISBA's 15th Anniversary Celebration, Nancy was one of four individuals recognized for their dedication to interfaith/intercultural dialogue and understanding especially among those in the Muslim community.

The event also featured notable theologian Lesley Hazelton and comedic entertainer Omar Regan.





**Shepherd of the Hills
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Phone: 602.840.3130

Email: sohucc@gmail.com
www.learnloveserve.org

Office Hours:
Monday through Friday
9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
(and by appointment)

November 2014

is a great time to learn, love, and serve!

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Sundays - 3:00pm Marshallese Worship in Hall Sundays - 4:00pm Meditation Group in Parish House Mondays - 8:00pm AA Group/Al-Anon Group, Hall			Tues & Thurs - 6:00am Tuesdays - 6:30pm Wednesdays - 8:00pm Mon-Sat - 7:00am	Early Bird Exercise Class in Hall AA Group, Hall; Al-Anon, Library AA Group, Hall First Light AA Group, Fireplace Rm.		1 7:30am Habitat Build Day 9:00am Set up for Baked Potato Lunch
2 Stewardship Sunday 9:00am Choir 10:00am Family Worship & Communion 11:15am Potato Bar Lunch in Hall	3 Pastor's Day Off	4 6:00am - 7:00pm Shepherd Hall serves as Polling Place 	5 9:00am Wednesday Wanderings in PH 10:30am Open House Group in Library 6:30pm-8:00pm Choir	6 5:30pm Girl Scouts in Fireplace Rm	7 9:00am – 10:30am Coffee Klatch in Parish House 10:00am Bridge	8 8:30am Hatha Yoga in Hall 10:30am Second Saturday Covenant Group in Fireplace Rm.
9 Library Rededication 9:00am Choir 10:00am Worship & Sunday School 11:15am Adult Study/Membership Mtg.	10 Pastor's Day Off	11 Veterans' Day 7:00am Men's Breakfast at Randy's Restaurant 6:30pm Council Mtg. 7:30pm Wise Guys Covenant Group	12 9:00am Wanderings 10:30am Open House Group (No Choir tonight)	13 5:30pm Girl Scouts in Fireplace Rm	14 9:00am Coffee Klatch 10:00am Bridge	15 8:30am Hatha Yoga 10:00am Dan Sposito Memorial Service
16 9:00am Choir 10:00am Worship & Sunday School 11:15am Adult Study/Worship & Music Mtg.	17 Newsletter Deadline Pastor's Day Off	18 10:45am Staff Mtg. Noon Truth Seekers Group in Hall 6:00pm Pastor/Parish Committee Mtg.	19 9:00am Wanderings 10:30am Open House Group Noon-Sandwich Seminar 6:30pm Choir	20 11:30am Book Club in Library	21 9:00am Coffee Klatch 10:00am Bridge	22 8:30am Hatha Yoga 3:00pm Monty Sennett Graveside Service
23 Turkey Day ☺ 9:00am Choir 10:00am Worship & Sunday School 11:15am Adult Study 11am-3pm Blood Drive	24 Pastor's Day Off	25	26 9:00am Wanderings 10:30am Open House Group (No Choir tonight)	27  Thanksgiving Day	28 Offices Closed for Thanksgiving	29 8:30am Hatha Yoga
30 Advent Begins 9:00am Choir 10:00am Worship & Sunday School 11:15am Adult Study		A Friendly Reminder☺ November 8 th is an outdoor "Work Day" from 8:00am to 10:00am. November 9 th is the Rededication of the Outside "Free" Library at 9:00am. November 23 rd is Dan Kurek's last Sunday with us☺. Join us for a Farewell Luncheon after Worship as we give thanks for Dan and wish him the best in his new ventures.				

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Church Council:
Mary Benin, Moderator
Laura Minnick, Vice-Moderator
Joe Colman, Treasurer
Austin Shackelford, Clerk
John Schneeman, Buildings and Grounds
Nancy SplainCari Trickett, Worship and Music
Joan Reynolds, Diaconate
Chad Stevens, Stewardship
Bill Janiga, Membership
_____, Outreach
_____, Education
Joel Johnson, At Large

Shepherd of the Hills Congregational
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Address Correction Requested



LOOKING FORWARD TO SUNDAYS AT SHEPHERD

In November, we look forward to:

Nov. 2 ~ Opening Doors to New Life (Rev. 7:9-17)

Nov. 9 ~ Tending God's Light (Matt. 25:1-13)

Nov. 16 ~ Reigning Compassion (Matt. 25:31-46)

Nov. 23 ~ With Praise and Thanksgiving (Psalm 100)

First Sunday of Advent:

Nov. 30 ~ Looking for God (Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19)