



# St. Francis in the Foothills newsletter

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March 2021



3/1 Diane Wilson  
3/1 Jim Yancey  
3/2 Pat Fox  
3/2 Susan Morgan  
3/4 Elizabeth Davis  
3/6 Mike Harris  
3/9 Karen Sparks  
3/10 Steve Barclay  
3/11 Dixie Siegel  
3/12 Michele Dixon  
3/15 Andrea Robson  
3/17 Patrika Murphy  
3/17 Greg Falk  
3/19 Amelia Uhrlaub  
3/19 Ted Gemoets  
3/19 Claire Sweeney  
3/20 Joseph Chambers  
3/21 Grace Reuther  
3/21 Nancy Buchanan  
3/23 Renee Manogue  
3/23 Sue Alexander  
3/24 Shelby Greider  
3/25 Mickey Dixon  
3/25 Joy Mills  
3/25 Meg Lee  
3/26 Kris Masalsky-Gougen  
3/26 Marita Stith  
3/26 Wynn Houtkooper



**Beginning Monday, February 15th through Easter Monday, April 5th, join Doris Morris and Sue Gemoets for a Lenten study using the book *Pauses for Lent: 40 Words for 40 Days* by Trevor Hudson. We will meet Mondays on Zoom from 11:00 am to noon.**

**OVERVIEW:** In the book, there is a word for the day, a short reading and a daily practice with emphasis relating to the word. We hope you will join us so we can reflect together on your experiences with the daily practice, relating to how the Divine is speaking to you through the word for the day.

**SAMPLE: DAY 8**

**WORD: SEE** "Though I was blind, now

3/26 Karen Kennedy  
3/26 Amy Barron-Gafford  
3/26 Kate Sweeney  
3/26 Jan Holub  
3/27 Lorelei Neiburger  
3/27 Holli Kent  
3/29 Sarah Tomassetti



**Saturday, March 20th,  
8:00 - noon**

Take advantage of the gorgeous Spring weather and help us tidy up our beloved campus!

We have all kinds of tasks from easy to a little more challenging. Even if you can only come for an hour, every little bit helps!

For more information, contact Steve at 299-9063, Ext. 103 or email [facilities@stfrancisumc.org](mailto:facilities@stfrancisumc.org)

Or just show up!  
Wear a mask, bring a water bottle, gloves and any tools you might want to share!



Spring cleaning is a great time to include earth-friendly practices!

I see." John 9:25  
READING (partial): "Christian faith involves a new way of seeing. When Jesus becomes part of our lives, we see people and things more clearly in our world. John Newton, the converted slave owner and hymn writer, described his inner transformation with these words, 'Was blind, but now I see.'"

DAILY PRACTICE: "Look out your window today at God's creation. Let your eyes focus on something of beauty. Look at the people you meet today and see in their faces the beauty of their God-given uniqueness. Give thanks throughout the day for the gift of new eyes that Christ gives us."

Questions? Please contact Sue ([suemckgem@gmail.com](mailto:suemckgem@gmail.com)) or Doris ([dorisjmorris@gmail.com](mailto:dorisjmorris@gmail.com)). We hope you'll join us.



### **Are you interested in Christian Mystics and Mysticism?**

Join us for a four week class on *Christian Mystics and Mysticism* led by St. Francis in the Foothills member, John Wilson.

Each class will meet two times each week, Tuesdays from 3:00 to 4:30 pm and Thursdays from 7:00 to 8:30 pm on the following dates - March 9th and 11th, March 16th and 28th, March 23rd and 25th, and March 30th and April 1st.

De-cluttering can produce a bonus load for your charity thrift store, allowing reuse of items you no longer need, but are desired by a thrift shopper.

In making a new item, up to 90% of the energy and materials that go into producing that item end up as waste before getting to the end user. This waste is eliminated when you donate (or shop at!) charity thrifts.



Don't forget our Daily Prayers/Meditations that go out by email and on our Facebook page every day at 10:00 am!



Check out the St. Francis Facebook page for inspirational sayings, Daily Prayers & Meditations and much more!

[Saint Francis in the Foothills United Methodist Church | Facebook](#)

These will be lively lectures and discussions exploring the history of how Christian mysticism was shaped by philosophers and mystics over the centuries, from St. Paul to Richard Rohr, Hildegard of Bingen to Teilhard de Chardin, and St. Francis of Assisi to us!

To sign up, email John at [jmwilson3557@gmail.com](mailto:jmwilson3557@gmail.com)

**Zoom link: 821559673**  
**Password: love**



**Join us for our series of Lenten services which will be on Wednesday nights at 7:00 pm on these dates: March 3, 10, 17, 24 and 31.**

**Zoom Meeting Information**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87010925548>

Meeting ID: 870 1092 5548

***A Heartfelt "Thank You"***

Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!  
To all those who bought my calendars this year – over 70 of you? – and to those who made donations at the office.



Your generosity has greatly helped me with my alternative-health cancer treatments. I feel so cared for by your heart-felt concern and generosity. St. Francis continues to be the greatest, most giving congregation on Earth! Blessings to all!

Jim Palka



### *A Message from Our Pastor*

#### *Why Aren't You On This Bus Already?*

I don't know why I was late...probably talking to Raul and Jack. We had run our high school cross-country and track races against each other almost every week for the last three years and knew each other well. But when my friend Isaac came running up and spoke the fateful words, I knew I was in trouble – "Why aren't you on the bus already?" Coach had called the team together and as the captain of the team, I should have been the example for my teammates... and yet here I was...missing the bus.

Because of that day, I've tried to be aware of when people were calling me to "get on the bus." So a few years later when my friend Pat invited me to join the early Phoenix Martin Luther King marches, I said "yes" even though I lived at the time in an area of Arizona that had very few black people and I knew relatively little about civil rights issues.

A few years later I happily walked with a half million or so Arizona Hispanics through the streets of our State's Capitol because many of my students and their families were in that March and I cared deeply about their future.

Yet in one area of life, it took me a long time to recognize that a bus was present, let alone that I needed to be on it – LGBTQ rights. It's not that I wasn't interested; I had plenty of books to read and films to watch, and lectures to attend...all of which I did. And it's not as if I didn't have friends that invited me – Rich in particular invited me again and again to participate...which at times I did. And it's not that I didn't use the knowledge I gained (and been given) to bring up the issue in the classes I led.

But I was focused on other things...or I had other responsibilities...or I knew that people would object if I pushed too hard...or...a million other reasons why I left the bus waiting for me.

And then I got the call asking me to come to St. Francis in the Foothills and I heard the voice asking me, "Why aren't you on this bus already?"

And I thought about Rich who had invited me so many times...

And I thought about my beloved students, some of whom have come out...

And I thought about Pat who taught me to protest, and who we lost in the 1990's AIDS crisis...

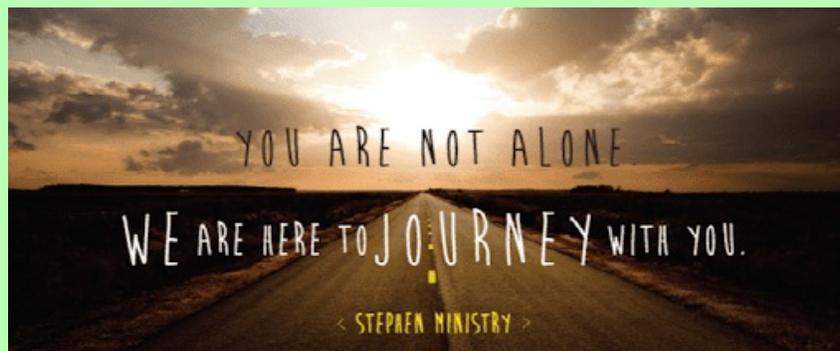
And I thought about my high school friend Raul who also died of AIDS during that period...

And I thought to myself, "Why aren't I on this bus...? My whole life has prepared me for it."

And I stepped up, beyond my hesitancy, and my fear, and whatever I thought someone else would think...

And I haven't regretted it for a moment!"

**Why aren't you on this bus already?**



***Are you having a difficult time during COVID or do you know someone who is?***

***Did you know we are a non-denominational group who serves all people in our extended community?***

Stephen Ministers provide emotional and spiritual support and listening care to those dealing with a crisis or chronic situation, such as:

- Loss of a loved one (death or divorce)
- Hospitalization, chronic, or terminal illnesses
- Loneliness or discouragement
- Spiritual crisis
- Unemployment or job crisis

Stephen Ministers come under the supervision and care of Stephen Ministry Leaders and Pastor Jim who help to continue our caring education throughout our ministry. Qualified candidates have initially received 50 hours of group education in learning to provide confidential, emotional, and spiritual care.

*If you, or someone you know, might benefit from a Stephen Minister,  
please contact Pastor Jim @ 520-299-9063 or  
Joyce Leissring @ 520-404-1691.*

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