

April 2026 Issue

GOOD NEWS

Willowbrook United Methodist Church
"Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors"
19390 North 99th Avenue
Sun City, AZ 85373-1102

Office Hours: 8:30 am—4:00 pm Monday thru Friday
(closed 12:00-12:30 pm for lunch)

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Office Hours: Monday-Friday—8:30 am—4:00 pm

Outside office hours leave a message on the main phone number, 623-974-5637, and we will get back to you.

Send prayer chain requests to prayerchain@willowbrookumc.org.



Welcome Louie!

Rev. Louie Lyon is our new Associate Pastor, responsible for our Discipleship Ministries. Louie is a retired UM minister, serving for 38 years.

Prior to entering the ministry, Louie was an elementary school teacher for 14 years before hearing a call to ministry. His experience has been mainly with Senior congregations. In that capacity, Louie learned that pastoral care, being there for "his people" is most important.

Throughout the years, in addition to local church ministry, Louie has served as both a hospice and hospital chaplain.

Louie is married to his wife of 32 years, Joyce. They have 3 grown children, 5 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren. Joyce and Louie first moved to Sun City in 1997 when he was appointed as the Senior Pastor at First UMC Sun City. He also served as the Supervising Pastor of the Greater Sun City Parish which consisted of First UMC, Lakeview UMC and Youngtown UMC.

Louie has now come full circle. While being a school teacher and Evangelism Committee member at Paradise Valley UMC, he was asked to come out to Sun City and "leaflet" the community inviting them to come and visit a new start up Congregation called Willowbrook.



Seder Service

Passover Seder Service

Join us on Maundy Thursday, April 2 at 4:00 pm for a Passover Seder Service. This service will commemorate two different religious traditions. Jesus, as a boy, joined with his family in remembering the Passing Over of the first-born males when

God's plague was placed upon the Egyptians. It also is a remembrance of the Hebrew wandering in the desert as they escaped from Egyptian slavery and captivity.

The Easter and Passover season often fall at the same time. The Jewish Passover lasts for 7 days and 8 nights, but the first two nights of Passover is when the Seder Service is observed. During a Seder Service, an outside door is left open so that when the Messiah returns, He will enter into our home. As Christians, we know that Jesus is our Messiah and we will remember Him as we conclude with the serving of Our Lord's Supper. The Passover Seder Service is the ritual that is gone through prior to the eating of a Seder dinner. We will have at each place settings the items that will be used to commemorate the Passover. We will not be serving a complete dinner so please do not expect a full meal at our service.

You are invited to join us in Wilson Fellowship Hall where our Maundy Thursday Service will be held. Each of your clergy staff will be leading us through this service.

A sign up sheet will be available in Fellowship Hall on March 29 to help us determine how many to expect.



Jesus could've fought back. Why didn't Jesus fight back?

He'd entered Jerusalem only days before, riding on a colt, the foal of a donkey, to a cheering crowd waving palm branches and shouting "Hosanna! Save us!" For years he'd been traveling and preaching and healing and working wonders. All the signs and wonders pointed towards this being the Messiah, the Anointed One, sent by God to liberate Israel.

The Chief Priests, the Scribes, the Pharisees, they didn't believe it—at least most of them. But the normal folks? They believed. And they would have fought for him.

All Jesus had to do was say the word and they would have joined him in fighting back against the coalition of Roman and religious leaders who conspired to arrest him. Why didn't Jesus fight back?

Peter wanted to fight back. There in the Garden of Gethsemane, John 18 tells us that Peter drew his sword (who knew the disciples carried swords?) and struck the ear of the High Priest's slave. I don't know why a slave had to be the one to suffer, but I guess that saved Peter from arrest—that he'd struck a slave rather than the High Priest himself.

And Jesus, instead of joining Peter in fighting back, stops him. "Put your sword back into its sheath," he says. "Am I not to drink the cup the Father has given me?"

Jesus has been praying. He's asked his Father to spare him that cup of arrest and trial and crucifixion and death if it's possible, but made it clear that even more, he wants to do his Father's will.

And it's his Father's will that Jesus not let anything disrupt his mission of loving the world. They can arrest him, they can try him, they can beat him, they can humiliate him, they can crucify him, they can take his life, but they cannot stop him from loving them.

He doesn't fight back because he loves us, and he has come to show us a different way. In our lives, in our world, we are quick to draw the sword—but there is a different way. There is love, and love is more powerful than any sword, any weapon, any military. God redeems the world by loving the world. And Jesus says, love even your enemies.

Jesus loves us, and there's nothing we can do about it. Jesus loves you, and there's nothing you can do about it. God loves them, and there's nothing you and I can do about it.

For God so loved the world, the whole world, that he sent his only Son, that all who believe in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

See you at the Empty Tomb. Hallelujah!

Rev. Matt Ashley

Willowbrook Strong



Lura Turner Homes

For Adults with Developmental Disabilities

Over the years, Willowbrook's Outreach Committee has developed relationships with different organizations—some international organizations, some US based organizations and others, local organizations such as HART, Veterans

Furniture Center, and the Justa Center.

This year, your Outreach Committee has decided to begin a new relationship with a local organization—Lura Turner Homes. Lura Turner's mission statement is "to provide adults with developmental and intellectual disabilities a safe, enriching, loving environment in residential, social and vocational settings. We strive to ensure the health, happiness, security and highest potential of those we serve. It is also our mission to reach out to men and women with special needs who are unserved and underserved."

Here's a brief history of Lura Turner Homes taken from their website:

"Imagine yourself as a young adult person who has developmental disabilities, and your home has always been The Arizona Children's Colony or some other institutional facility. Then, imagine being told you are leaving the Colony and your family cannot care for you because of various reasons. Where are you to go, and what are you to do? Lura Ann Turner saw this immediate need of housing and care for these special people. In 1965, with great faith, \$1,000, an open-door policy, and a vision of hope, Lura and a good friend opened the first home/learning center. Located in downtown Phoenix, it was named La Casa Para Arendices—The Home for Slow Learners."

"Today, caring for adults who have developmental disabilities continues to be achieved by emphasizing a family-style environment in their homes, developing a strong positive work ethic, and offering recreational and cultural activities, in addition to community involvement. Throughout the years, this shared vision is a reality because of the continuous support of individuals, members of various organizations and service clubs, and businesses in the community. This valued support ensures the continuation and expansion of Lura Turner Homes as we serve the special residents who currently call Lura Turner Homes "Home", and the future residents who will reside with us."

We hope that you are touched by the LTH story. Hopefully, sometime this year, we will have a LTH representative come to Willowbrook and tell us more about the work they do.

Partners in Bloom

KrisKrafters and Willowbrook Outreach



As a fitting completion to Willowbrook's six month celebration of our 50th anniversary, *Partners in Bloom Craft Community Open House and Craft Fair* is being co-hosted by Willowbrook Outreach and KrisKrafters on Saturday, April 11 from 9 am till 2 pm. This event will be open to the community as an opportunity to talk to leaders of local charities and obtain literature to find out what they do and how individuals can support them through contributions of time or money.

A member of Willowbrook will be partnered with each organization and will be able to elaborate how we collaborate with them. HART Pantry, UMOM, Benevilla, Veterans Furniture, Camp Genesis, and Solace Hospice are a few of the organizations that will be represented.

Kris Krafters will be offering many handmade items for sale at the event. They include bowl cozies, table runners, placemats, scrubbies, jar openers, Scrappy Dolls, Hardanger Embroidery made by Jane Hager, and much more. Come and shop for Mother's Day, Father's Day, decor items for summer and fall patriotic holidays as well as useful household items. We look forward to seeing you there!



Have you ever wanted to celebrate a special birthday or occasion with flowers in

the church service? Maybe a special person in your life could use a little recognition. The opportunity is there, for just \$50.00 you can pick a Sunday, and special flowers will be ordered and placed in the Sanctuary for Sunday services, with a note recognizing the event in the bulletin. You may then take the flowers for that special someone after the service is over. All you need to do is fill out the information in the flower notebook that is housed in the Narthex on the left hand side as you exit the Sanctuary. The calendar for the full year is there, so you can pick the Sunday that best suits you. The order just needs to be placed at least a week ahead of time. If you have any questions, contact Mike McGinty or the church office.



The Outreach Committee will be having a monthly sandwich drive from May through September when Willowbrook will prepare "to go" meals for Justa

Center during the hot months. For details and to sign up to make sandwiches please contact Judy Arkwright or stop by the Outreach table in Fellowship Hall, May 3rd or 10th, and sign up to help.



Rain: A Gentle Reminder of God's Care

A rainy day can be many things ...

It can be moisture for the farmer's garden,
Or the picnic that has to be postponed;
It can be the replenishing of a stream,
Or the overflow of a flood;

It can be relief from a hot summer day,
Or the chill of an autumn wind.

The rotating cycle of clouds to Earth
Is part of Nature's plan
For stability throughout the Universe,
As old as the hills,
And dependable as the seasons.
Rain and sunshine are equal partners
In the daily expression of God's love.

Jeanne D. Birrell
from NewsletterNewsletter



Spring Is In The Air!

Please join the Youthful Seniors for sub sandwiches and a movie.

Our featured movie is:
"Please Don't Eat the Daisies"
starring Doris Day and David Niven.

Friday, April 10
5:00 p.m. in Wilson Fellowship Hall
\$10 per person

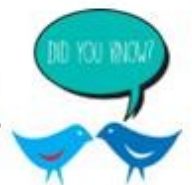
Signup March 28/29 and April 4/5



Willowbrook Foundation

Did you know? Willowbrook UMC has launched a new website! Visit <https://willowbrookumc.org/> to explore information about Willowbrook and its ministries.

The Willowbrook Foundation now has its own section under the "Home" tab. You can access it directly at <https://willowbrookumc.org/ministries/foundation/>. There, you'll learn who we are, what we support, and how we serve.



If you would like to support the Willowbrook Foundation, details on how to give are available on the Foundation page. Gifts of any size help our ministries, outreach efforts and support the future of Willowbrook. For more information about the Willowbrook Foundation, please contact Gene Ambrosion or Sam Haroz.



A *GriefShare* support group is a safe, welcoming place where people understand the difficult emotions of grief. Through this 13-week group, you'll discover what to expect in the days ahead and what's "normal" in grief. Since there are no neat, orderly stages of grief, you'll learn helpful ways of coping with grief, in all its unpredictability—and gain solid support each step of the way.

At Willowbrook, *GriefShare* meets each Wednesday from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. in the Library Lounge. You don't have to be a member, or attend the church, to be a part of the *GriefShare* program.

- ◆ April—1 Loneliness & Sadness
- ◆ April—8 Self-Care
- ◆ April—15 Fearful & Overwhelmed
- ◆ April—22 Anger
- ◆ April—29 Regrets



The Revised Common Lectionary—a three-year cycle reading through the Bible based on the synoptic gospels of (A) Matthew, (B) Mark and (C) Luke. If you read the lections for all three years, you will

read 85% of the Bible. Join us Monday mornings at 11:00 am in the library to read the following Sunday's lectionary and talk about it. We stop at noon.

The Weekly readings for	APRIL are:
CLASS DATE	DATE USED
April 6 Acts 2:14a, 22-32 1 Peter 1:3-9	April 12 Psalm 16 John 20:19-31
April 13 Acts 2:14a, 36-41 1 Peter 1:17-23	April 19 Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19 Luke 24:13-35
April 20 Acts 2:42-47 1 Peter 2:19-25	April 26 Psalm 23 John 10:1-10
April 27 Acts 7:55-60 1 Peter 2:2-10	May 3 Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16 John 14:1-14

Please join the United Women in Faith for their April meeting on April 19 at 12 noon in



United Women in Faith

Fellowship Hall. We will have a BYOL, (bring your own lunch) day and the hostesses will be the Dorcas circle. We will begin our meeting after lunch with the Prayer and Self-denial program as our devotional time. We are very pleased to have Lynn Koan present a program on the remarkable women's mission organizations at Willowbrook through the years. This will be a great addition to our 50th Anniversary celebration.

Looking forward to May 18, we will be having our sunset supper of pizza and salad and a special program. This will be held at 5 p.m. so it allows others to attend as well as spouses and guests.

During June, July, and August, we join in fellowship with other circles to enjoy lunch out. Details will be in the next newsletter.

Please join us for a time of creative worship, education and sharing.



HOOKED ON BOOKS

Do you enjoy reading? Do you like to discuss what you are reading with others? Come join us at "Hooked on Books." We meet in the church library on the fourth Thursday of each month at 1:30.

Upcoming books:

- Apr 23 "Queen of Crime" by Marie Benedict
- May 28 "Flowers for Algernon" by Daniel Kayes



UPDATES

BROOKSHIER, Jo
6650 E Mayo Blvd #1302
Phoenix AZ 85054-3146
Clearwater Mayo Blvd Senior Living

NEARING, Barb
Cell: 623-866-6751

McNEELY, Faye
9000 E San Victor Drive #112
Scottsdale AZ 85258-5060
623-680-1182
afaye60068@yahoo.com



(We celebrate 90 years or more)

21 Ann Bixby
28 Betty Beier



(We celebrate 50 years or more)

9 Ernie and Carole Pearce 66
12 Richard and Carol Jenkins 63
28 Jerry and Lorna Hermanek 64



Final Gratitude Bracelet Sales

After a year of sales and around \$1,000 for our 50th Anniversary Fund, the sale of Gratitude Bracelets is coming to an end. They will be available at our *Partners in Bloom Community Open House and Craft Fair* on Saturday, April 11, and the final date to purchase will be Sunday, April 12. We introduced some new beads and new designs last month for our last hurrah. These reminders to express our gratitude for all we have, are for men, women, and youth and come in a variety of sizes. The bracelets are \$10 each and make great gifts for Mother's Day, Father's Day, graduation, or just "I'm thinking of you!"

IN LOVING Memory

Our condolences to family and friends on the death of the following Willowbrook members and/or family & friends:

- Gerri Joncas son, Chris Hersom, February 21
- Regina Winemiller, March 10



First Tuesday at Noon

What better way to celebrate Cinco de Mayo than to join us May 5th for First Tuesday at Noon? Tom

Shepherd from The Grand Tech Club will discuss the basics of Artificial Intelligence ("AI"). Taco salad and sherbet will be served. Sign up is April 18/19 and 25/26. Although there is never a charge, donations are always appreciated to defray costs.



EMMAUS REUNION GROUP

All friends who have completed a Walk to Emmaus are encouraged to join Willowbrook's Emmaus Reunion Group, which meets in the conference room the second Tuesday of the month at 11:30 a.m. See you April 14th!

Christ is counting on you!



**WILLOWBROOK
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
19390 NORTH 99TH AVENUE
SUN CITY AZ 85373-1102**



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Saturday Worship
5:00 p.m.—Chapel

Sunday Worship
9:30 a.m.—Sanctuary AND
9:30 a.m. Sunday Live Stream
Worship available on
<https://willowbrookumc.org>



**DEADLINE FOR MAY 2026 ISSUE
is APRIL 4th**

OFFICE HOURS

Monday—Friday—8:30 am—4:00 pm



**Pray for the following
members in a
Group Home or Care Facility:**

- Mary Bailey Advanced Health Care, Glendale
- Donna Barr Avanti Senior Living
- Richard Ceser Highland Park Asst. Living
- Lois McCrea Carefree Assisted Living

**Willowbrook United Methodist Church
Our Ministry Together**

The ministers of this church are its members

Those who assist them are:

Dedicated Lay Ministry—Stephen Ministry
Rev. Matt Ashley—Senior Pastor
Rev. Louie Lyon—Associate Pastor
Rev. Lois Hedden—Pastor of Visitation
Laurie Lineberry—Director of Laity
Rev. Jon Ierley—Pastor Emeritus
Dr. Robb Butler—Music Director
Carol Manley—Worship Musician
Nicholas Capatch—Live Stream
Debb Pearson—Lay Leader
Russ Koan—Lay Leader Emeritus