

GOOD NEWS

Willowbrook United Methodist Church

"Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors"



Address:

19390 North 99th Avenue
Sun City, AZ 85373-1102

Office Hours:

8:30am—3:00pm
Monday thru Thursday
Closed Fridays

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www.willowbrookumc.org

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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

From the Pastor



From its earliest days, Methodism has placed lay people at the center of ministry. John Wesley appointed lay people to lead classes and bands - small group ministries) that helped transform lives. Most of the circuit riders – traveling preachers who went from town to town sharing the gospel – weren't ordained pastors. They were lay people who were trained to preach.

Lay people continue to be the heart of Methodism today, and Willowbrook is no different. Pastor Lois, Pastor Doug, and I are happy to walk along side you, but ministry only happens because you are willing to share your prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness through the ministries of the Church.

Over the next few months the Committee on Nominations & Lay Leadership Development will be working to identify and invite lay people to serve as leaders in the Church. The committee will consider the spiritual gifts, practical experience, skills and abilities in identifying church members who will be invited to serve in various roles at Willowbrook in 2027.

Along with church officers we will be looking for people to serve on our boards & committees:

- Church Council – determines the overall mission and ministry of the congregation;
- Staff-Parish Relations – supports the pastors and staff;
- Trustees – oversees the church property and protects the Church's legal interests;
- Finance – oversees the budget and oversees financial policies and procedures;
- Stewardship – raises funds and encourages generous giving;
- Discipleship – guides membership, evangelism, and spiritual formation ministries;
- Outreach & Missions – coordinates all mission efforts.

We will also be discerning new board members for the Willowbrook Foundation.

If you are interested in serving on one of these essential leadership teams, please talk with lay leader Debb Pearson or one of our pastors.

If you receive an invitation to serve in a servant leadership role, I hope that you will prayerfully consider it. God works through those who serve to transform lives. God will work through you.

See you at church and on livestream!

Pastor Matt



Pastor Doug's faith story

God's plan for our lives is filled with hick-ups, bumps and diversions.

I was fortunate to have had the opportunity to go to college. College was where I found a passion for both theatre and my future wife, Ethel (who was born and raised in the Bronx, New York City). Ethel had a deep commitment to children and teaching. Upon graduation from university and returning to the upper end of the Appalachias, I found the job market significantly limited. After working construction, I took a position as a teacher of ADD-ADHD high school age youth while Ethel completed her masters degree..

After three years of teaching, the birth of our first child and the death of my father (my closest male friend), we set out for the University of Iowa where I would pursue a graduate degree. We settled in West Branch, Iowa and the local United Methodist Church became our second home. Ethel was able to get a job as a reading specialist and we developed life long friendships with other young families.

With a degree in counseling/psychology, I secured a teaching position with a local college. After three years I spent the next 15 years working for the State of Iowa, Department of Education, Bureau of Colleges and Universities. I wish I could say that was the most exciting period in my life. My gift mix, however, included renovating and building houses. In 1980, our family moved into a log house (3100 sq ft)(Dominion Acres) which I planned and put together piece-by-piece; a faith journey. The objective was to raise our sons in the country with lots of critters - horses, cows, sheep, and goats.

Dominion Acres was a living testimony of my trust in God and our belief that we are to follow His leading.

Fast forward, I was blessed to be CEO of Capstone Center (a mental health and substance recovery agency). Using God's gifts and a desire to make a difference in our world, Ethel and I were open to God's call. I formed a consulting firm with a focus on mediation. Calls started coming in, not for mediation, but to ask if I would share my Christian witness. Churches, needing a pastor, called and over a five year period I served a variety of Christian churches part time. Finally, being a lifelong Methodist and doing pulpit supply for three United Methodist Churches, I called the District Superintendent and suggested that I could serve a country church that only needed a Sunday supply person. The DS said he would get back to me.

Two weeks later he called and offered me a fulltime position at minimum salary in an inner city area where the church was on it's last ropes. We accepted. We served that church for 13 years and the next church for five years.

Both of our sons and families ended up in Arizona. Ethel was ready to watch the grandchildren grow and prosper. I retired and we moved to Phoenix. God, however, was not done with my call. We served Mountain View for 9 months. My DBA was helpful pulling Mountain Views proverbial fat out of the fire. Then Neil Leftwich asked if I would service at Mission Bell UMC. After 9 years, we are leaving Mission Bell to become a part the Willowbrook UMC family. I look forward to Reverend Matt Ashley's leadership and the opportunity to be a part of the team at Willowbrook UMC.

Good News from Kris Krafters



Kris Krafters are not just prolific creators, they are softies at heart! We are delighted to have been able to have ten of our cancer caps taken last month to go to local individuals receiving care for cancer. In addition to that, 20 quilts, 5 flannel blankets, and over 30 knitted and crocheted items were sent to Comfort Cases, the company helping foster children. These items will be paired with donations from other groups and returned to bless local foster children.

We are also excited about our newest partnership with Smiles for Miles, a toy closet for children with cancer, headquartered at Banner Thunderbird. We are continuing projects for hospice patients, veterans, the homeless, and more.

If any of these touch your heart or you just want to be a part of the fellowship and creativity that define Kris Krafters, find us in Fellowship Hall from 9-11 AM on the first, third, and fifth Thursdays of the month.



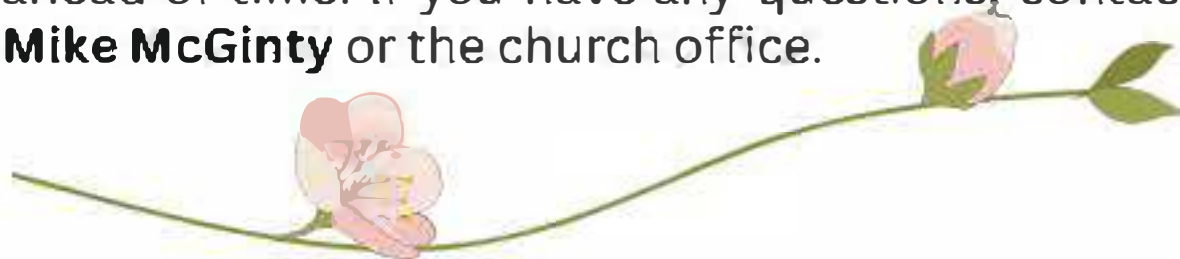
Chancel Flowers

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. Following the service, you can take the flowers home or give them to that special someone.

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.



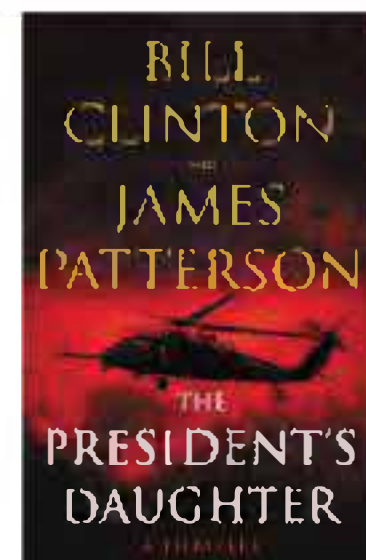
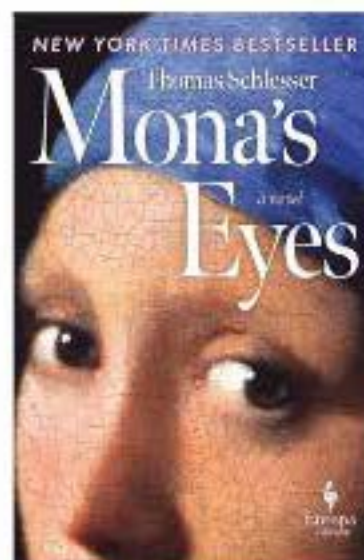
Hooked on Books

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 2:00p.m.

UPCOMING BOOKS:

August 27: *Mona's Eyes*
by Thomas Schlessler

September 24: *The President's Daughter*
by James Patterson & Bill Clinton



HART

As school is currently out for summer break, we are preparing to restock the pantry for the 2026/2027 school year.

Our next collection for small food items will take place on **August 30** (the fifth Sunday) in Fellowship Hall.

Let's start to gather items below!

Hygiene/toiletry items (travel size are collected continuously in the black bins in Fellowship Hall)

Requested items include:

- Lotion and deodorant
- Shampoo and conditioner
- Body wash and bar soap
- Small tissue packs
- Toothbrushes and toothpaste
- Mouthwash

Please ensure these items are travel-sized so they can easily fit into the students' backpacks.

Per the request of HART Fundraising Chair Mickey Foster, we are also seeking the following small-sized food items:

- Ramen noodle packages
- pop tarts
- Protein bars (3 gms. + protein)
- Breakfast bars
- Instant oatmeal packages
- Jif-to-Go
- Ritz cheese and crackers
- Individual cereal boxes
- Pudding/applesauce/fruit cups
- Austin/Lance crackers
- Premier protein drinks

Please remember to check for expiration dates. These items will be collected on **Aug. 30 the 5th Sunday**.

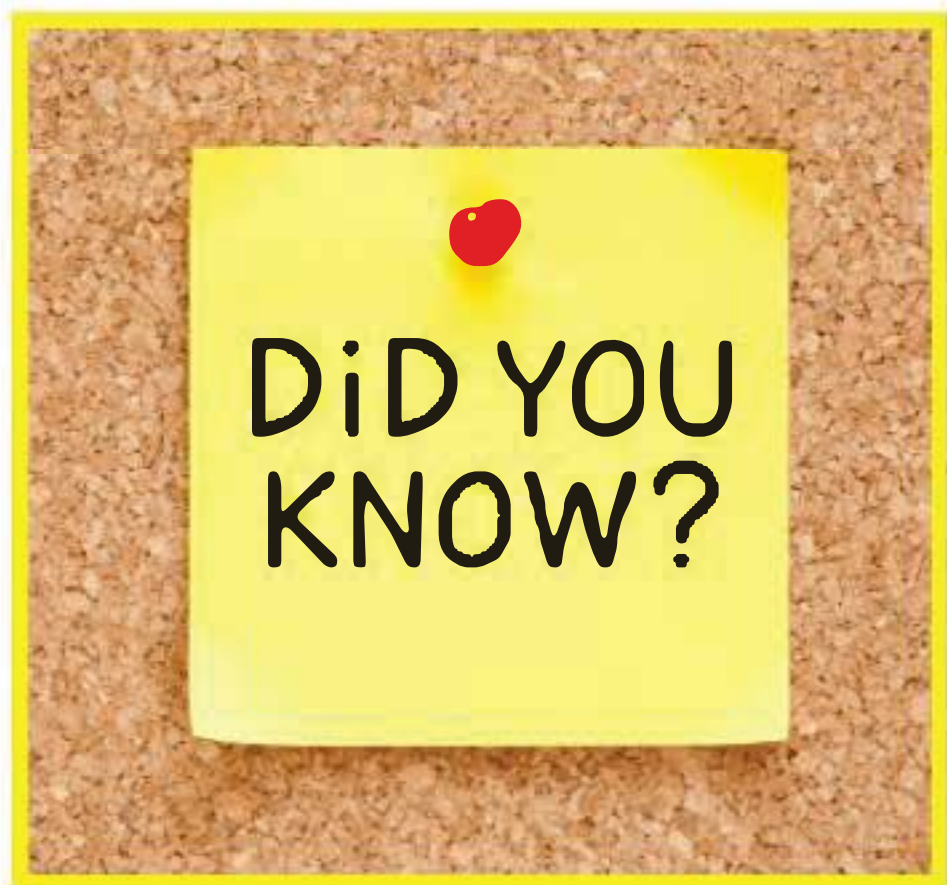
When I visited the HART site everyone was enthusiastic, encouraging, friendly, very efficient, and organized. Serving for the children was their goal!

It is a blessing to serve these children. Thank you for your continued support.

Helping At Risk Teens



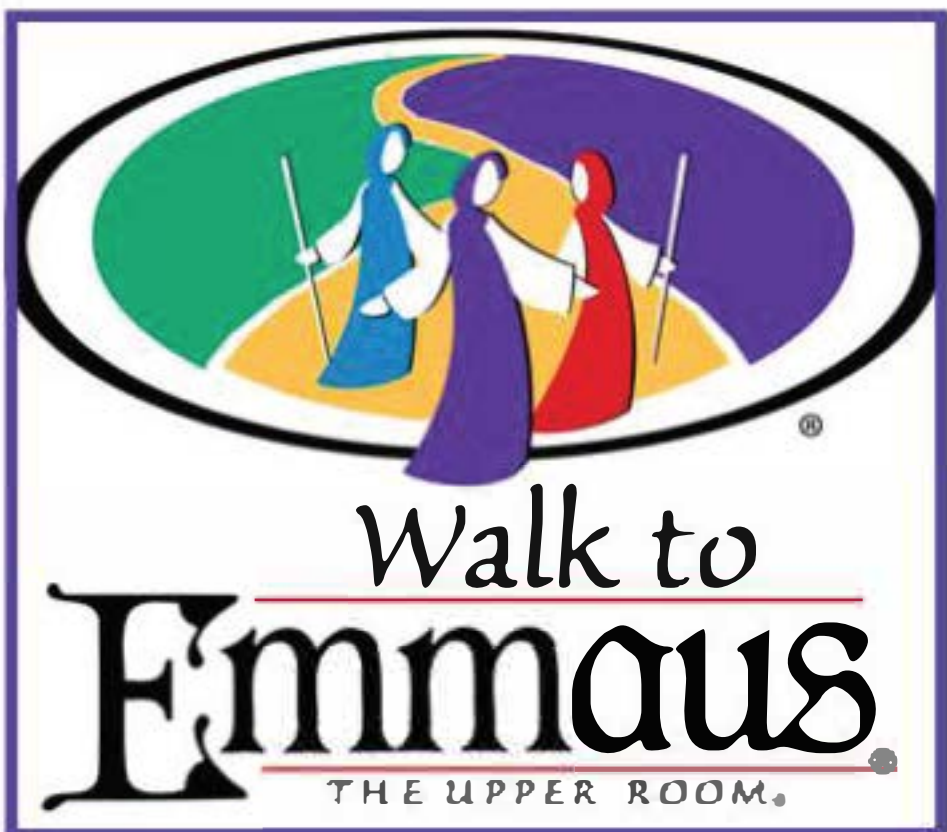
Carol Widney



WILLOWBROOK FOUNDATION

In June 2026, the Trustees of Willowbrook United Methodist Church replaced the kitchen air conditioner, an entirely unplanned capital expense.

The Willowbrook Foundation provided a grant of \$13,000 to Willowbrook to cover the cost. This support was made possible through income generated from the Foundation's investments. You too can be a part of the Foundation's pursuit of keeping Willowbrook strong! For more information about the Willowbrook Foundation, please contact Gene Ambrosen or Sam Haroz.



EMMAUS REUNION GROUP

HAVE YOU completed a Walk to Emmaus or Cursillo in the past, no matter how long ago? Then you are welcome to join in Willowbrook's Emmaus Reunion Group, which meets in the conference room the **second Tuesday** of the month at **11:00 a.m.**

See you August 11th! Christ is counting on you.

ARE YOU INTERESTED in completing the Walk to Emmaus, a three-day spiritual retreat?

The next available walk for women is October 8th through 11th at Lakeview United Methodist Church, Sun City. Applications are limited. For more information, contact Pastor Lois or Debb Pearson.



YOUTHFUL SENIORS

The Dog Days of Summer continues

Friday, August 14th | 5:00 p.m. | \$10 per person

Escape the heat with us for our final movie of the summer. The delightful antics of The Secret Life of Pets is sure to fill Wilson Fellowship Hall with smiles and laughter!

And the menu is sure to please:
Pizza, Salad & Root Beer Floats!

Sign-up: August 1st & 2nd and August 8th & 9th
See you there!



GIVING PLATE

The giving plates do not have to be passed on with food. If you are not a cook or a baker, fill the plate with words of encouragement or a piece of art. Maybe a poem that you created. What about a plate full of prayers? Use your imagination, and just let the love show. (or you could just buy some chocolates or hard candy and put it on the plate) - just keep it going!



FEED THE HUNGRY

Our next food drive is **August 1/2**.

Bring your non-perishable food donations to the chapel/Fellowship Hall. In addition to food, water is always needed, especially this time of year.

Food donations that are received are given to the Salvation Army and monetary donations are given to Valley View Community Food Bank. If donating by check, make your check payable to Willowbrook and write Valley View in the memo section.



JUSTA CENTER “TO GO” MEALS

The Outreach Committee is having a monthly sandwich and brownie drive throughout the summer months because Willowbrook is preparing “to go” meals for the Justa Center clients.

Drop by the Outreach table in Fellowship Hall on August 9 or 16 & sign up to make peanut butter & jelly sandwiches, or brownies, or to make a monetary donation. Contact Liz Peck if you have any questions. And as always, thank you for supporting the work of the Justa Center.



ALL CREATURES GREAT & SMALL

Willowbrook continues to collect used towels for the Wildlife World Zoo. Please place your donations in the marked brown container in Fellowship Hall.



St. Mary's
Food Bank

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Come join Willowbrook volunteers at St. Mary's Food Bank in Surprise. This month we will be volunteering at the food bank on Friday, August 21st. Due to the heat, we will be working the first shift from 7:15 to 10 AM. Currently, St. Mary's provides food to 700-900 families each day. To volunteer or to learn more about St. Mary's, drop by the signup table in Fellowship Hall or contact Liz Peck.



FIRST TUESDAY AT NOON

September's First Tuesday at Noon will be on September 1st. Ever wonder what the difference between hospice and palliative care is? Then please come to hear Joshua Pleasant, Solace Hospice and Palliative Care answer your questions.

First Tuesday's signature chicken casserole will be served along with coleslaw, bread and dessert. **SIGN UP** is **August 15/16** and **22/23**. Although there is never a charge, donations are always appreciated to defray costs.

Thank you

for Making Our July 4 Potluck a Success

Heartfelt thanks on behalf of Youthful Seniors and Staff-Parish Relations Committee to all who celebrated America's 250th at our July 4 Potluck!

Special appreciation to Judy McGinty for doing the slide presentation, to Diane Perez for being our accompanist, to Peter Lee and Russ Koan for taking care of audio visual and sound.

Huge thanks to Norma Hamilton, Austin Tingley, and Esther Lloyd who shared the histories of the colonial ancestors with us.

We also appreciate Kris Krafters' donations of door prizes as well as prizes for the trivia winners. It was a Wonderful Willowbrook celebration of food, fun, and fellowship!



United Women in Faith

Summer is coming to an end???

Well, not here in Sun City but our summer lunches will end in August and then we'll be back to our regular schedule.

Our last luncheon will be **August 16 at The Links 18823 N Country Club Peoria at 12:30**. All ladies of Willowbrook and friends are invited to join us for lunch.

Plans are in the works for great programs starting back up in September. Jan Whelan is doing the September program on Sole to Soul. We will be having a potluck lunch and inviting other Sun City area churches.

The Adult Virtual Mission U - Opens Tuesday, August 5th, at 2:30pm, Wednesday, August 6th at 3:00pm and Thursday, August 7th, at 3:00pm - on Zoom

REGISTER:

Virtual Study for Adults: [Mission U 2025 Virtual Event | Desert Southwest Conference](#)

The Adult Study is:

A Deep Knowing: Emmanuel Through Every Part of Our Lives by Linda L. Furtado - We will study the times in the Bible when people experienced Emmanuel, or "God with us." How do we discern God's presence and call on our lives in times of joy and in times of sadness, fear, or anxiety? The book is available on Amazon.



Sandwich and Brownie Drive for Justa Center



During the summer months, May through September, Willowbrook is providing 80 "Brown Bag To-Go Meals" for Justa Center clients. Each brown bag contains two sandwiches, a bag of chips and a brownie.

Can you help? We are looking for volunteers to make 10 peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and/or brownies.

Recently, the Health Department ruled that peanut butter and jelly sandwiches can be made at home and brought to the church but, the ham & cheese sandwiches need to be made in Willowbrook's kitchen.

That being said, the Outreach Committee will make the ham & cheese sandwiches but we do need your help. Please consider making a donation to cover the cost of the ham/cheese sandwiches.

Come by the Justa Center table in Fellowship Hall on August 9 or August 16 and sign up to make sandwiches, brownies, or to donate funds. If you wish to donate by check, make the check payable to Willowbrook UMC and in the memo section, write JUSTA CENTER.

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 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.

- August 8 - Grief & Your Household
- August 12 - Grief & Your Friendships
- August 19 - Questions for God
- August 26 - Stuck in Grief

BIBLE STUDY

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 to read the following Sunday's lectionary and talk about it. We stop at noon.

The Weekly readings for July

CLASS DATE	DATE USED
July 27	August 2
Genesis 32:22-31	Psalms 17:1-15
Romans 9:1-5	Matthew 14:13-21
August 3	August 9
Genesis 37:14, 12-28	Romans 10:5-15
Psalms 105:1-6, 16-22, 45b	Matthew 14:22-23
August 10	August 16
Genesis 45:1-15	Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32
Psalms 133	Matthew 15:10-20, 21-28
August 17	August 23
Exodus 1:8-2:10	Romans 12:1-8
Psalms 124	Matthew 16:13-20
August 24	August 30
Exodus 3:1-15	Romans 12:9-21
Psalms 105:16, 23-26, 45b	Matthew 16:21-28



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

>>> Sunday Worship
In person and Live Stream
Saturday Worship
In person only



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>

Office Hours:

8:30am—3:00pm

Monday thru Thursday

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Deadline

for September 2026 issue is **August 4th**

Irlna@willowbrookumc.org

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. Doug Reynolds, Associate Pastor

Rev. Lois Hedden, Pastor of Visitation

Rev. Jon Lerley, Pastor Emeritus

Dr. Robb Butler, Director of Music

Carol Manley, Worship Musician

Debb Pearson, Lay Leader

Russ Koan, Lay Leader Emeritus

Nicholas Capatch, Livestream