

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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irina@willowbrookumc.org

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



Do you remember the first time you came to Willowbrook?

What were first impressions when you walked through the door? Who talked to you? Did you feel welcome? Did anybody invite you to come back? Did anybody follow up with you? Did you feel like the people at Willowbrook cared about you?

Most congregations believe that they're a friendly church, but in their book *Boomerang: The Power of Effective Guest Follow-Up*, Tyler Smith and Allison Hofmeyer say that people aren't looking for a friendly church; they're looking for a friend.

When someone honors us by visiting Willowbrook, our job is to help them connect so that they can find a friend or two or ten.

Pastor Doug and the Discipleship Committee will be working to enhance our hospitality ministry so that our congregation is doing the very best job we can of welcoming and following up with guests effectively. They are asking some questions posed by Smith and Hofmeyer's book:

- When guests walk through the door, do they think "They were hoping I would be here!"
- When guests leave our worship service, do they think "They hope I come back!"
- When the church follows up with guests in the days and weeks after they visit, do they think "They care about me!"

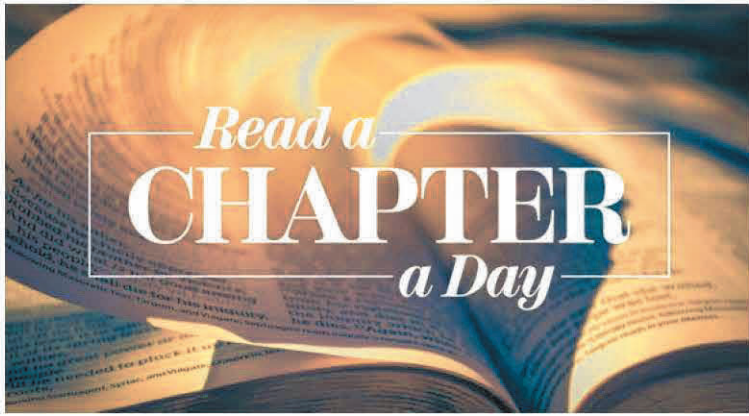
If the answers to these questions is 'Yes!' then Willowbrook can be the kind of Church where people can find a friend or two or ten.

Willowbrook is a wonderful congregation where people come to grow in faith and to love & serve their neighbors. If you think it's important to welcome and follow up with guests so that more people can experience God and find Christian community here, please let Pastor Doug or me know. If you love God and love people, there's a way for you to help!

Thank you for being a friendly Church – and thank you for being a friend to someone.

See you at church and on livestream!

Pastor Matt



Read a Chapter a Day 2026

September 8 – October 19, 2026

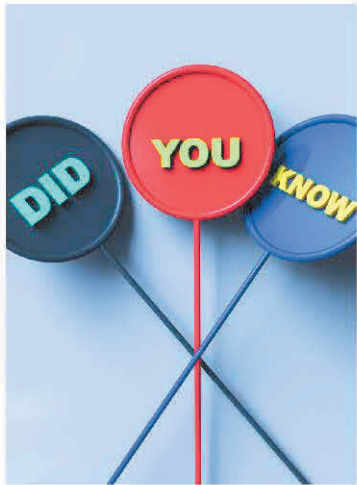
Join us for Read a Chapter a Day, a 42-day journey through Galatians, Ephesians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, and Philemon. Whether you're new to Bible reading or have studied Scripture for years, this is an opportunity to develop a daily habit of spending time in God's Word.

Each week, participants will receive a reading plan, reflection questions, and simple tools to help engage with Scripture through prayer, reading, study, writing, and reflection. Small-group discussions and weekly Zoom gatherings are also available for those who would like to go deeper.

We invite you to grow in faith, discover fresh insights, and experience God's Word in a meaningful way during this six-week journey. Register today to receive the weekly emails and reading resources:

newsletters.umcdiscipleship.org/fall-racad

Willowbrook Foundation



The Willowbrook Foundation helps us celebrate our past, sustain the present, and preserve our future. Through its support, the Foundation protects the history, traditions, and stories of Willowbrook UMC while providing resources that strengthen the church and its ministries today.

You can be part of this important mission. Whether through a donation, a planned gift, or by sharing the Foundation's vision with others, your support helps ensure that Willowbrook UMC remains a vibrant place of worship, fellowship, and service for years to come. Every contribution, no matter the size, helps preserve the church's legacy and supports its ongoing ministry.

For more information about the Willowbrook Foundation, please contact Gene Ambrosen or Sam Haroz.

Youthful Seniors

Friday, September 11th | 5:00 p.m. | \$10 per person

Is Summer Over Yet?!?

Let's continue to stay cool together for a while longer! Join us for tacos, refried beans, dessert & the movie, **Sister Act**.

Sit back and enjoy the wild antics of Whoopi Goldberg as she dons the habit and brightens up the lives of her fellow "sisters". This is an oldie but goodie with lots of laughs and good music. **Sign up: August 29th & 30th and September 5th & 6th.**



United Women in Faith Mission

Linda Borton and Karen Stark spent a wonderful long weekend at United Women in Faith Mission U in Flagstaff, from Thursday afternoon through Saturday, where women from across the Desert Southwest Conference came together for learning, reflecting, and enjoying fellowship. This year's study, *A Deep Knowing: Emmanuel Through Every Part of Our Lives*, led by facilitators Becky Cowart and Phyllis Murray. Grateful for the experience and time together, and the reminder that God is with us in every season of life. Pictured are Linda Borton, Clair Hart, 2027 Mission U Dean-Designate, and Karen Stark.



Winsome Widows

The Winsome Widows enjoyed a wonderful lunch together at Tivoli Gardens! It was a sweet time of fellowship, laughter, and encouraging one another. Our group meets on the second and fourth Saturday of each month, and we'd love to welcome new friends. If you're interested in joining us, please contact Arlene Davidson for more information. We look forward to seeing you!



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.



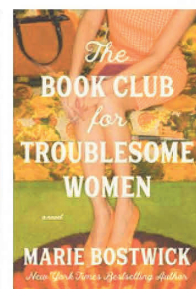
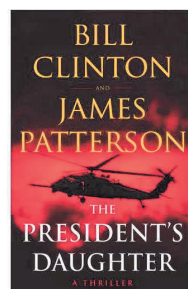
Hooked on Books

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:

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

October 23: *The Book Club for Troublesome Women*
by Marie Bostwick



HOLIDAZE CRAFT FAIRE

With the arrival of September, we know all we have to do is blink and the holidays will be here!

Knowing that, many are busy getting ready for Willowbrook's annual Holidayze Craft Faire on November 6 and 7. This fair features over 70 vendors and is not to be missed. We are excited that Pastor Steve will have a booth, offering his beautiful art work for sale. He is just one of a limited number of new vendors joining us this year. Look for more details on others in the eNews and the October Good News. Many beloved and familiar vendors are returning, as are our own Kris Krafters, Patio Café, and Sweet Shoppe. The Holidayze Craft Faire specializes in hand crafted items, many of them one of a kind. Whether you are looking for something to add to your décor or your jewelry box, to brighten your kitchen, or to give as a gift for an adult, a child, a pet, or yourself, Willowbrook's Faire is a great place to shop!



CRAFT FAIRE SWEET SHOPPE

Everybody has one: that favorite cookie recipe that disappears from the serving trays at Fellowship time before all the others, the special treat that just says, "Holidays," the recipe you turn to when you need the familiar comfort of home, the ethnic specialty you create for special occasions. Whichever of these speaks to you, pull out that recipe, make a note on your calendar, and plan to bring some to tempt and satisfy the palates of shoppers at the Holidayze Craft Faire when they encounter our Sweet Shoppe. Janet Sjoberg will be heading the volunteers contributing to and working in the Sweet Shoppe again this year. We will be announcing sign-ups for donating baked goods and candy, as well as, for helpers to package and price the items and sell them at the Faire November 6 and 7 a little later. For now, we're just reminding you of ways you can be a part of this fun and very special event!



First Tuesday AT NOON

First Tuesday at Noon in October will be on the 6th. We will be blessed to hear from Jesse Ramirez, Jr. as he discusses the positive impact the Valley View Food Bank has on many of our neighbors.

OUR LUNCH WILL BE HANDLED DIFFERENTLY. Please bring your own brown bag lunch. We will provide a dessert of apple crisp with ice cream. We are also suggesting that you bring a food donation of cereal, peanut butter, jelly, canned beans, tuna or spaghetti sauce.

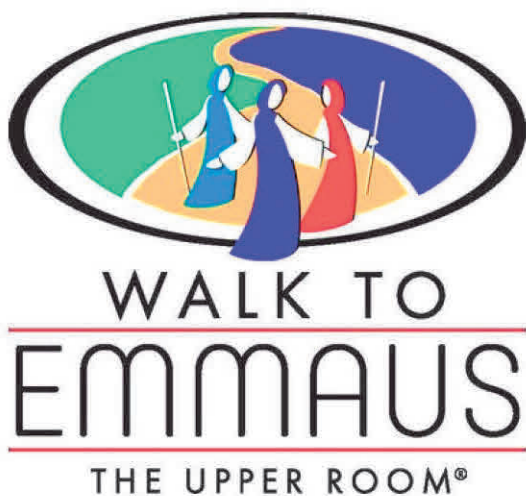
All monetary donations that day will be given to Valley View. **Please SIGN UP September 19/20 or 26/27** so we can prepare enough dessert for everyone.



Emmaus REUNION GROUP

HAVE YOU completed a Walk to Emmaus or Cursillo in the past? No matter how long ago, 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. The next grouping is September 8th! Christ is counting on you.

ANYONE INTERESTED in more information about completing a future Walk to Emmaus is encouraged to contact Pastor Lois or Debb Pearson.





GIVING PLATE

Have you been the recipient of a giving plate? How did it make you feel? Were you given it by someone you knew? Was it given anonymously? If you have a story to tell - let the front office know. You can email something to irina@willowbrookumc.org or maybe drop a note to the office. Better yet - snap a picture of yourself with someone that gave you the plate and submit that to the office - you might just see your faces in the next newsletter.



FEED THE HUNGRY

Our next food drive is September 5th – 6th .

Please bring your non-perishable food donations to the Chapel or Fellowship Hall. In addition to food, water is always needed, especially this time of year.

The food donations we 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.



ALL CREATURES GREAT & SMALL

Willowbrook continues to collect used towels on the second weekend of the month for the Wildlife World Zoo. Please place your donations in the marked brown container in Fellowship Hall and your Outreach Committee will take them to the zoo.



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, September 18th**. Due to the ongoing 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.

Good News from **KRIS KRAFTERS**

Kris Krafters enjoyed special events at both the beginning and ending of August.

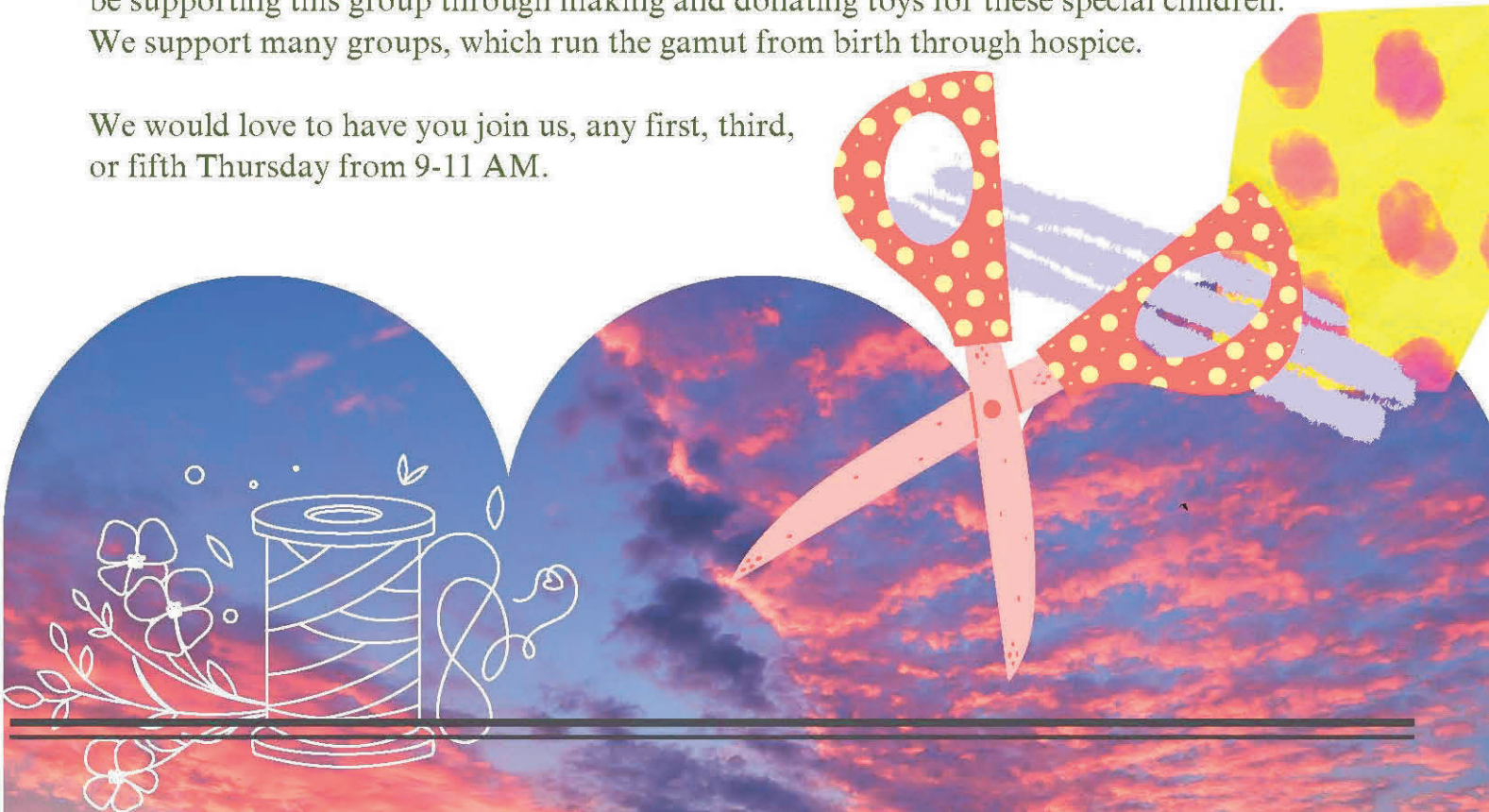
On August 4, we were able to share information during First Tuesday regarding Comfort Cases, a national group that supports foster children through donations of items used to stock the backpacks they deliver to children entering foster care.

We were very happy to have Kim Maher, who previously spearheaded donation drives at a local elementary school, highlight the presentation. If you were not able to attend but are interested in contributing to this effort, see Gerri Joncas, Diane Perez, or Gloria Schilling.

With August marking the beginning of school in Arizona, it was appropriate that our other special event also focused on children. Janna Mortensen, mother of Miles, and head of “Smiles for Miles” spoke to our group on August 20. Miles passed away from cancer when he was in kindergarten, and Janna later created her organization, which sponsors a toy closet for children dealing with cancer at Banner Thunderbird. Kris Krafters are happy to be supporting this group through making and donating toys for these special children.

We support many groups, which run the gamut from birth through hospice.

We would love to have you join us, any first, third, or fifth Thursday from 9-11 AM.



Willowbrook Women



Pastor Doug will be offering a five-week Bible Discussion on Tuesday's at 2:00PM beginning September 1st! The topic to be studied is '5 Marks of a Methodist, The Fruit of Living Faith, a book by Steve Harper! The book is available on Amazon.com. If the cost is too much...come anyway and enjoy the fellowship! If you can't make it every Tuesday....again, come anyway! Sign-up sheets will be available during fellowship time during the last 2 weeks of August!

Fellowship Groups



Your Church Council is working on developing various "small group" Fellowship Groups. Maybe some will have started by the publication of this Good News. Suggestions include such activities as a Game Day, including Mahjong, bridge, Mexican Train, Bowling, etc.? Or perhaps a hiking group as the weather cools? Six to eight dinner group? Shuffleboard? Movies? Theater? If you have suggestions or are interested in forming a group, please contact Debb Pearson.

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 **September 13 or September 20** and sign up to make peanut butter & jelly sandwiches 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.

GriefShare®

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.

- September 2 - Hope & Resilience
- September 9 - What do I live for now?
- September 16 - Is this normal?
- September 23 - Your grief journey
- September 30 - Loneliness & Sadness

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 September

September 6, 2026

- Exodus 12:1–14
- Psalm 149
- Romans 13:8–14
- Matthew 18:15–20

September 13, 2026

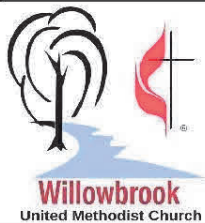
- Exodus 14:19–31
- Exodus 15:1b–11, 20–21
- Romans 14:1–12
- Matthew 18:21–35

September 20, 2026

- Exodus 16:2–15
- Psalm 105:1–6, 37–45
- Philippians 1:21–30
- Matthew 20:1–16

September 27, 2026

- Exodus 17:1–7
- Psalm 78:1–4, 12–16
- Philippians 2:1–13
- Matthew 21:23–32



**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

september 

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

Closed Fridays

Deadline

for October 2026 issue is **September 4th**
irina@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 Ierley, Pastor Emeritus

Dr. Robb Butler, Director of Music

Carol Manley, Worship Musician

Debb Pearson, Lay Leader

Russ Koan, Lay Leader Emeritus

Nicholas Capatch, Livestream