



Dove of the Desert

# *Dove Tales*

Vol. XXXII Issue 7  
May 2021

“Increasing Love for God and Neighbor by Going Deeper, Reaching Farther, Transforming Lives”

## It's May!





**Last year I read a book called, “Take this Bread: A Radical Conversion”.** It is written by Sara Miles, a journalist who was born and raised as an atheist, but found faith when she walked into a church and received communion for the first time.

Here is what she has to say about the Christian faith:

*“But this is my belief: that at the heart of Christianity is a power that continues to speak to and transform us. ... It proclaims against reason that the hungry will be fed, that those cast down will be raised up, and that all things, including my own failures, are being made new. It offers food without exceptions to the worthy and unworthy, the screwed-up and pious, and then commands everyone to do the same. It doesn’t promise to solve or erase suffering but to transform it, pledging that by loving one another, even through pain, we will find more life. And it insists that by opening ourselves to strangers, the despises or frightening or unintelligible other, we will see more and more of the holy, since, without exception, all people are one body: God’s.”*

Miles reminds us that the Christian faith is not something that has happened; it is something that is still happening. And even more than that it is something that is happening to all of us. All people are worthy of God’s grace and presence; and even more than that, all people are able to experience it on an individual and personal level as well.

One of the great blessings of being in ministry is having the opportunity to hear people’s stories. People welcome me into their lives and invite me to be part of their journeys of faith. I walk with them through the good and the bad; I get to see God’s grace and presence burst into their lives in the most unexpected ways and places.

Ministry has taught me that there is no one universal way that God enters our lives. God speaks to us through moments of chaos and confusion as well as moments of stillness and silence. God comes to us when we are experiencing both tragedy and joy. God’s presence knows no barriers. There is no formula that grants us access to God’s grace; it is just available to us always.

We remember moments in our religious tradition where God entered the lives of ordinary individuals. God appeared to Moses on Mount Sinai and Moses entered the cloud and went up the mountain for 40 days. And then God appeared to some of the disciples – Peter, James, and John – on a high mountain when Jesus was transformed in front of them, appearing with and speaking to Moses and Elijah. These moments not only defined who these individuals were, but also who God was and who God was calling them to be.

I guess we could call it their “mountain top” experience.

If there is one thing that these stories teach us, it is that Christianity is not about believing alone; it is about experiencing it as well. It is about living with God in our midst, on a personal and transforming level.

We may never literally experience something like the mountain tops of Moses and the three disciples; but I can say with certainty that at some point in our lives we will all find ourselves on a metaphorical mountaintop. We will all experience a moment when God comes into our midst and boldly proclaims the Good News to us. This moment may happen in the distress of a hospital room, in the quiet of the desert during a morning hike, or in a room full of laughs and friends. It may happen in the liturgy of a private benediction, or it may happen in an outdoor Easter worship after being apart for over a year. It may happen as we put our children to bed and sing to them, as we care for an elderly family member or as we gather around a table and share a meal with others. It may happen in the noisy commotion of a crowded place or it may happen in the peaceful silence of an empty space.

But it will be your mountaintop.

So, this – the lives that we lead, the people that we touch, the ministry that we take part in – this is our mountaintop. And it is on this mountaintop that God comes into our lives and shines divine light on us. It is on this mountaintop that God is revealed to us, boldly declaring holy love for us and calling us into ministry.

May this season lead you to experience God in new ways.

Grace and Peace,  
Pastor Dave



**As I begin writing this article I am still on a “high” from yesterday, Easter Sunday.** It was so wonderful to be together with my brothers and sisters in Christ again “in-person.” It has been over a year for many of us as you know since we had experienced in-person worship together. Yes, it wasn’t our “old normal”, but it was still wonderful, wasn’t it? The theme that kept flowing through my mind was, “Jesus has overcome death so what does that mean for us?”

Easter is a New Beginning; it is not just one day. So “What’s Your New Beginning?” Prior to my retirement at each church I served, I had printed in the weekly worship bulletin the names of the church staff. When it came to the Ministers it said, “The Congregation, the people of the church were the Ministers.” Dear ones, the clergy are the facilitators and YOU, each of you are the “Ministers,” because without you, the ministry of Jesus Christ would not get done. You might be asking just about now why I am writing this in this month’s Dove Tales article. Let me explain in what follows...

I cannot count the number of people that came up to me recently to thank me for keeping in contact with them and praying with them and for them and their loved ones this past year during our time apart because of COVID-19. As Dove’s Pastoral Care Pastor, I have been blessed to have this opportunity to be available to folks. What they were not always aware of is what a blessing it has been for me to be there and to be of support and help to anyone in need of prayer or presence. Do you remember, how I said, “YOU ARE THE MINISTERS? That means that each person who receives the daily Dove Prayer Chain and lifts up in prayer those on the prayer chain are Ministering and being the Jesus that someone needs. The blessing to you comes when you realize how YOU are helping others through your prayers. But it is more than that. Dear Ones, let me share an example with you how checking up on someone and offering prayer to them can be a blessing to you both. Your founding pastor, the Rev. Mike Pearson and I have been friends since the founding of Dove. I followed Mike at the church he left to start up Dove. We had kept in contact and years later he became my District Superintendent. When I first heard that Mike had been diagnosed with cancer, I called him to offer a word of prayer and share some words of encouragement. For almost two years calls and texts became a regular thing to check on Mike and offer encouragement. It blessed me to be able to do this and I learned it was also a great blessing to him. Dears Ones, “Who can you be an encouragement to?”

At the beginning of our COVID-19 lock down many folks volunteered to be in touch with our shut-ins who were not allowed to leave their assisted living apartments or to have visitors. Well, it has been over a year and some of you have continued after all this time keeping in touch with those who I gave you to contact periodically. That is being in ministry and being the Jesus that someone needs to see and hear from. Well, Easter has come again, it is “A New Beginning.” What are you going to do for YOUR new beginning? The Tomb is empty, “Praise God!”

So, all this leads to this question, “How are YOU going to Serve God and God’s Community of Faith at Dove of the Desert? Many of the folks that we had serving in positions prior to COVID-19 and the shutting down of in-person worship are no longer here or able to continue in their previous positions. Is there something you might be led to do to be in ministry to your church? Pray about it, if you have any questions, give me a call...

Shalom,  
Pastor Louie

## Office Hours



We want to share with you that beginning in April, Dove of the Desert will be changing our campus office hours:

**Monday-Thursday 9:00 am - 3:00 pm**  
**Friday - 9:00 am - 12:00 pm**

This shift will let us better serve our membership and community at large as we begin the process of reopening the campus. We are grateful to them for their desire to adjust the office hours to best meet our current needs, and we know you are as well. This shift in hours will not affect any of our staff’s overall hours or compensation, and it is intended to help maximize their time with the numerous tasks they regularly manage.

We are blessed to have such a passionate, loving, and highly effective administrative staff at Dove. Make sure you let them know how much we appreciate all they do!

Pastor Dave



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## RETIREMENT

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*celebration!*

After serving the Desert Southwest Conference for 28 years, our District Superintendent **Rev. Nancy Cushman** is retiring.

We will be celebrating her ministry in two unique and different ways.

**April 25 – 2:00-4:00 PM**

Decorate your vehicle for a drive-by event at Dove of the Desert UMC, 7201 W Beardsley Glendale, AZ. There will be a place for you to give a card to Nancy. We ask that you have a 3x5 card or a piece of paper with your name so your presence can be announced.



(Don't forget to wear your mask.)

**May 23 – 2:00-3:00 PM,**

Join us in a Zoom celebration honoring Nancy. You won't want to miss this interactive time of sharing. [Click Here](#) to register.

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the Celebration.

Nancy requests no gifts, instead you are invited to contribute to a fund to purchase medical equipment for [Hope for the Hopeless](#) in her name. Donations, payable to Desert Southwest Conference with Hope for the Hopeless in the memo line, may be sent to the Desert Southwest Conference, West District, P.O. Box 32830, Phoenix, Arizona 85064

*Hope for the Hopeless* rescues, rehabilitates, reconnects abandoned and orphaned children in *Ethiopia*.



**West District**

Desert Southwest Conference

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Contact Carla Whitmire, [cwhitmire@dscumc.org](mailto:cwhitmire@dscumc.org), for more information.



# Fellowship Opportunities



We will let you know when Fellowship Opportunities Resume



The **LUNCH BUNCH** meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of each month for good food and fellowship. Please call: 623.931.4283 for reservations or information. Newcomers are always welcome! *(Currently not meeting)*



**DOVE MEN'S BREAKFAST** meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month for a time of devotion, prayer, and fellowship. Please join them at **8:00 am on Saturday, May 8** via Zoom!

Please R.S.V.P. to Louie Lyon, 623.238.8455 or e-mail address:

CarePastor@doveofthedesert.com and he will send you the Zoom information you will need to join the event. Don't forget to have your coffee and breakfast ready along with your Bible!!



## PRIME TIME LIVE!

is the Dove of the Desert adult fellowship group and includes all Dove adults: married, single, young and young at heart. We meet the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of each

month at a member's home and enjoy the evening together with food, fun and Christian fellowship. The host supplies a main course, attendees bring sides and dessert. *(Currently not meeting.)*

## OTHER FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Many other opportunities exist for fellowship at Dove, including Adult Sunday School classes, Women's Bible Studies, and Dove's musical groups including Celebration Singers, Dove Notes, Folk Group, and the Bell Choirs, Prime Time Live! plus many more. Please check the calendar found on the Dove website.

## Special Prayers



### Condolences to:

The Worden Family on the death of Ginger's cousin, Pat

Christine Klepacki and Alex on the death of husband and father, Jim

### For these churches:

First UMC, Phoenix  
First UMC, Sun City  
First UMC, Yuma



## PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> of each month from 9:00 - 10:00 am in Room 7. The group knits or crochets shawls, baby blankets,

lap blankets, prayer squares, and other items to be given to Dove members and others in need of comfort. For information, please call *Mimi Griffiths* at 602.762.6709 or at [mimig7852@gmail.com](mailto:mimig7852@gmail.com). *(Currently working on projects from home.)*

## Rev. Mike Pearson



Rev. J. Michael "Mike" Pearson passed away on Saturday, March 20, 2021 after a two-year struggle with lymphoma. He was a devoted husband, brother, father, father-in-law and friend to many, and will be missed by all. Mike was born in Middlesboro, Kentucky on November 21, 1948 and grew up

in Monroe, Michigan. He attended Albion College, where he met his wife, Bethyl. He attended United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio, where he facilitated the development of a pottery studio and taught ceramics classes. He and Bethyl were also instructors at Ewha Woman's University in Seoul, Korea from where they later adopted their daughter, Kyla. He was then appointed to Owosso First United Methodist Church, followed by Laingsburg UMC. He obtained a Master of Fine Arts degree in ceramics at Michigan State University before he and his family moved to Arizona in 1986. He served at Scottsdale: Scottsdale UMC; Glendale: Dove of the Desert UMC, where he was the immensely successful founding pastor; Mesa: Velda Rose UMC; Phoenix: Director of Connectional Ministries; Tucson: South District Superintendent; and Phoenix: First UMC.

He retired in 2018 after more than 40 years in the ministry. He was a director for the United Methodist Development Fund, Path I, and the Western Jurisdiction Korean Ministry. He was also Director of Connectional Ministries. Mike was especially appreciated for his keen sense of humor and his quick wit. He used his humor to lift people's spirits during difficult times. He also enjoyed writing and kept a daily journal for the last 17 years as well as being a published author. He gave lectures on Bible history, studied book restoration and binding as well. He thrived on the love of his wife of 52 years, his daughter, Kyla, and son-in-law, Cody, and his two precious grandchildren, Mason and Landon, whom he adored. He was never more joyful than in their presence.

Please keep Mike's family in your prayers.

## Prayer Line

For a daily prayer and devotion with Rev. Louie please dial **602-375-PRAY (602-375-7729)**

Please send all prayer requests to Rev. Louie at [carePastor@doveofthedesert.com](mailto:carePastor@doveofthedesert.com)

## Missions

### Please deliver directly to the Mission

**Donations for St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance  
Pet Food & Supplies to Animal Shelters  
Justa Center Donations  
UMOM Donations**

## Graduating?

### **Are you graduating from high School or College?**

We want to help celebrate your accomplishment and honor you on Sunday, May 9, at all three services.

Please submit your pictures and information to the Dove office no later than Sunday, May 2.

We pray for all of our graduates and look forward to having them with us in worship on May 9.

Disclaimer: By sending us the information, you are also providing us with your unwritten consent to publish the picture, information and name of the graduate which will appear publicly to anyone watching the worship service. (If you do not consent to having your graduate's picture and information included in the YouTube service, please do not send any information.)

## Mothering Day

**During the 16th century**, people in the UK used to return on the 4th Sunday in Lent for a service to their 'mother church' - the main church or cathedral of the area. This was either the church where you were baptized, or the local parish church or more often the nearest cathedral. Anyone who did this was commonly said to have gone "a-mothering", although whether this term preceded the observance of Mothering Sunday is unclear.

In later times, 'Mothering Sunday' became a day when domestic servants were given a day off to visit their mother church, usually with their own mothers and other family members. Eventually, the religious tradition evolved into the Mothering Sunday secular tradition of giving gifts to mothers.

Read more at:

<https://www.fromyoutome.com/blog/the-story-behind-mothering-sunday-and-mothers-day/>

## Board of Church and Society

**Dove Board of Church and Society Criminal Justice Webinar** ~ The economic inequality task force of the Board of Church and Society is working on the next webinar event scheduled for May 6 from 7:00 to 8:00 pm. This will look at our criminal justice system and it's relationship to economic inequality.

We have previously presented events on racism and its relationship to economic inequality, and the last one looked at education as it relates to economic inequality. These have been well attended and well received.

We have another great panel of well informed members that are involved with improving the criminal justice system. Three of the task force members attend Dove. We are so proud of the support the Dove Congregation has given our quest to identify and resolve the injustices within our society. Mark your calendar and join us once again. Here's the link to register: <https://dscumc.org/blog/2021/03/24/economic-inequality-and-prison-reform-event/>

## Zoom Groups



**Thursday Morning Women's Bible Study** ~ meets weekly on Zoom. We have a time of fellowship from 9:30 to 10 am, study begins at 10 am to 11 am. Join us as we dive into timely, relevant, scripture, based book studies. Please contact Nannette Carr at 602-621-1665 or nannettecarr@gmail.com, for the zoom link.

## Care Ministry



**The Dove of the Desert Pet Care Ministry** would like to thank all the people who have continued to support our work during the last year. During 2020 we collected \$ 1,372.49 for our beloved animals. Our donations have gone to the Arizona Humane Society, Animal Benefit Club, Animal Rescue Friends, and Sun Valley Animal Shelter. We also collected food and other dog/cat items in the beginning of 2020, while the church was still open.

In the first quarter of 2021, we collected \$511.09, which will go to the Arizona Humane Society. On Valentine's Day we had a food and supplies drive at church which was very successful. We collected 194 pounds of dry dog food, over 40 pounds of dry cat food, and assorted canned cat/dog food, treats, toys, beds and blankets. The collected items go to Animal Rescue Friends, which is a foster group. Thank you!!!

Please continue to support us with financial help. We are hoping to begin in-church donations again on the first Sunday of the month, beginning in May. Look for our table!! We also hope to have the Blessing of the Pets again in November.

We would like to thank Jan Smith for her leadership of this ministry for over five years. Mary Clark is now leading the ministry, and if you have any questions about the ministry or would like to be a part of it, contact: budandmary2002@gmail.com.



## Finance



**Reporting on Dove's financials** through March, we continue to maintain a positive trend with year to date income higher than expenses by \$5,944. March income of \$53,566 was only slightly lower than planned from a budget perspective, however. Our March expenses of \$52,787 were also less than planned due to reduced operational expenses. We are grateful for your faithful giving in support of Dove's ministries. Your generosity continues to make a difference in the mission, ministry, outreach and support to your Dove brothers and sisters as well as the local community. Thank you for being a blessing through your continued support.

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# *Dove of the Desert*

**United Methodist Church  
7201 W. Beardsley Road  
Glendale, AZ 85308**

**Return Service Requested**

**Sending May Blessings to:**

**Happy**



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