



SEPTEMBER 2025

Our Mission at Vista de la Montaña United Methodist Church

To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, and to reach out to others, help them, welcome them into our family of faith as we gather for worship, fellowship, education, and service.

Happy 35th Birthday, Vista de la Montaña United Methodist Church

First Service

New Fellowship meets in South District

Vista de la Montaña Fellowship held its first service of worship on Sunday, September 9 in northwest Tucson.

The services held at Coronado Middle School were attended by over 160 prospective members, supporters and friends.

Don Cooke, appointed pastor for the new church, used "Fresh Starts and New Beginnings" as his sermon topic.

Many interested parties helped prepare for the first service. Hand-

made altar covering and parchment were placed under the cross and candlesticks carved by members of Christ Church UMC. Christ Church also sent members from their choir and a pianist for the service. Banners were brought from other local churches as well as one made for the new Fellowship with a logo depicting the mountains surrounding the church location. Catalina, St. Paul's and St. Marks churches donated hymnals. First UMC, Phoenix and First UMC, Tucson, as well as indi-

viduals have promised funds to help establish the new church.

"This is a wonderful example of our connectional system," said Michael Nickerson, Director of Congregational Development. Dr. Nickerson as well as Bishop Galvan and South District Superintendent Anita Iceman participated in this first service.

Twin sons of the lay liturgist, Nancy Yob, served as acolytes.

"We've had wonderful support from St. Marks and Fountain of Life as well as other Tucson churches," said Rev. Cooke. "St. Marks has helped in numerous ways especially with office support and bulletin assistance. They joined Fountain of Life in the original 'Phones For You' effort where 243 families were found to be interested in a United Methodist Church in this area."

Rev. Cooke has been meeting with a core group of about 30 persons from the community of Oro Valley which presently has 8 to 9 thousand people and is growing. The church will serve the areas of Sun City, Cooper Creek, Rancho Vistoso, Catalina and Saddle-Brooke.

The new congregation plans to start a Sunday School in two months and they hope to certify by the end of the year.



TEXT AND PHOTO BY COLLEEN SANDERS-HATFIELD

The Rev. Don Cooke has a "Time for children" in the first service of Vista de la Montaña Fellowship. Bishop Galvan, South District Superintendent Anita Iceman, Congregational Development Director Michael Nickerson and Lay Leader Nancy Yob look on.

Vista's First Altar



Vista de la Montaña's First Confirmation Class

Jerilyn Kruger, Wyatt Bills, Ivan Jossem, Joleen Knox, Rev. Donald Cooke, District Superintendent, Anita Iceman, Tonja Verts, Jaci Kruger, Leasa DiPalermo, Morgan Bills

Ceremony at Coronado K-8, May 19, 1991

“Tuesdays with Pastor Mary”

Remember to tune into Vista’s Facebook page every Tuesday for a message from Pastor Mary. To access Facebook, go to our website: www.vistaumc.org and click on the Facebook icon.

Address for ALL Echoes articles!

The email address for all Echoes articles is Echoes@vistaumc.org
Please make sure that you send your articles to that address only! If you send it to another address, it is possible the article will not be published.

Nancy Yob, Echoes@vistaumc.org

Are you turning 90 or older during 2025?

Vista 90 Years Plus Birthday Club Celebration!

You are invited to the Vista 90 Years Plus Birthday Club celebration on Sunday, September 21, 2025, at 10 AM.

Please contact Delores Brindle, 520-907-5706 or email: deloresjb@gmail.com

Vista de la Montaña United Methodist Church

Celebrates 35 Years!

By Robin Conner and Nancy Yob

It's a known fact that Methodists love to eat. Yes, many United Methodists enjoy potlucks. This tradition stems from a long-standing practice of sharing food and fellowship within the church community. Food unites us, heals us, and sustains us, so whether the occasion is thanking volunteers, holidays, and other specific occasions, we look forward to sharing those important milestones. On September 14th, Vista UMC will enjoy another potluck, this time recognizing the 35th Anniversary of the Church, located on a hill overlooking Catalina and beyond just off Oracle Road.

On September 9, 1990, 160 persons met for worship at Coronado Middle School, located across the road from the previously purchased dismantled Mission site, consisting of 10 acres. Vista de la Montaña United Methodist Church ("View of the Mountain") had begun. The congregation eventually outgrew the original purchased three modules and on September 8, 2002, gathered for Consecration Sunday in the new adjacent Sanctuary. By 2018, Vista had completed fund raising for Phase 1 of their new Administrative Building campaign. Vista members consecrated the new building on Sunday, January 19, 2020. Shortly thereafter, the Pandemic closed live attendance, but Vista UMC remained strong through streaming services until they reopened in November of 2020.

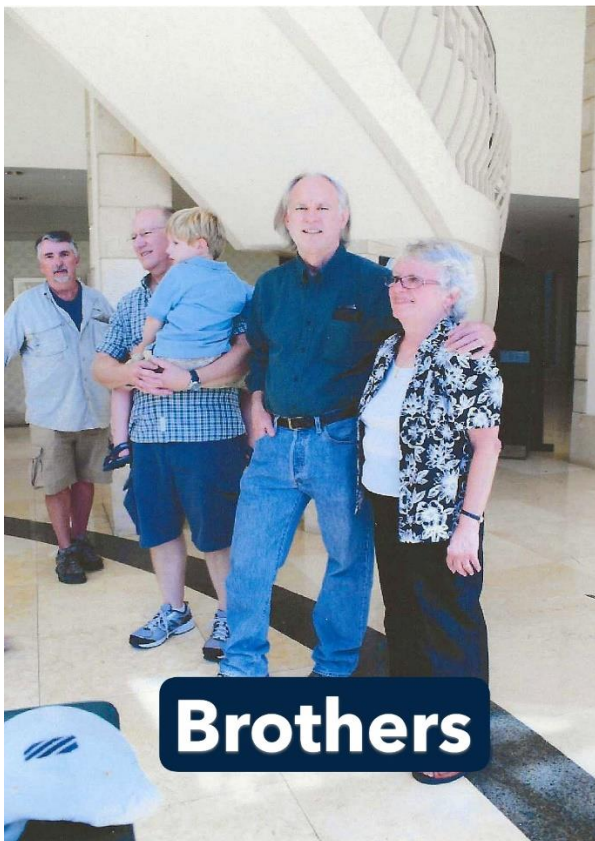
The 35 years since beginning Vista's journey have seen them grow into a beautiful oasis in the desert, including a Sun Wheel and Labyrinth on the surrounding grounds. They host a variety of Outreach and Mission projects, focusing on the surrounding communities. See the article about the Stephen Ministry at Vista in this issue. Their sister church, Fuente de Vida in Agua Prieta, México, is a recipient of Vista's School Supplies Mission Project and is part of their Mission Committee's Economic Development Program. Various onsite Adult Education classes are met with enthusiasm and growing in popularity. All of these projects are yet another demonstration of Vista's strong commitment to its community service and mission programs.

Please join the celebration on September 14th immediately following worship at 10:00 am. We are located at 3001 E. Miravista Lane, on the west side of Oracle Rd. just south of the Golder Ranch intersection. Questions can be answered by calling Vista's office: 520-825-1985, M-Th between 9am and 2pm.

www.vistaumc.org

"Once a Missile Site, Now a Church with a Mission"

FELLOWSHIP FOCUS – NANCY & LOU PHILLIPI





Prayer. It is one of the things Vista does best. It connects us. What better way than to be involved with the growing prayer chain that starts with a single email to Lou Phillippi, our “Vista Prayer Master”. More on this later.....

Lou Phillippi was born in Santa Monica, CA, where he joined his six-year-old sister, his dad, who was a makeup artist for Paramount Studios, and a mother who was a homemaker. In 1941, their lives changed when his father was called for active duty, serving with Douglas MacArthur in the

Pacific until 1946. During the war, his mom worked as a “body makeup person”, since only men were allowed to work on necks and faces. Lou’s early years consisted of being raised in the Missouri Synod Lutheran Church, where he sang in the variable stages of choirs as his voice changed. He attended parochial schools until the 8th grade when he was “thrown to the public school system”. As he attended Hollywood High School, he found himself in a “movie brat” community. Rickie Nelson was in his homeroom and he dated Johnny Crawford’s sister. He was nearly asked to leave his church when he became a DeMolay member. After graduation, Lou attended UCLA as a premed student, eventually switching to an English major and entering the teaching program. During his graduate year, he married his first wife, another movie industry brat. Her father was head of the Sound Department at Universal Studios. After teaching one year, he received his draft notice in 1963, serving as a military newspaper writer/photographer for 10 months, when the Army commissioned him directly. PFC one day and 2nd Lt. the next. He was released from active duty in 1966 after being stationed in Germany as a Postal Officer for the 3rd Armored Division. Their first daughter was born in Frankfurt, Germany.

Being under or over qualified produced challenges for him, and his father put him into the 20th Century Fox School for makeup apprentices where he worked on many interesting shows. Among them were Carol Burnett, Glen Campbell, Laugh In, Dean Martin, Kraft Music Hall, It is Written, I Believe in Miracles, Red Skelton, and many commercials. He was finally rehired by the Los Angeles School District and after three years he was accepted into a Master’s Degree fellowship. He taught during the week and worked TV shows on the weekends. During this time, he was in the Army Reserves, and the growing family now had two girls and one son.

Teaching in the Simi Valley Unified School District at a large continuation school brought a huge challenge to Lou. Some of his students were part of the Charles Manson colony at a ranch nearby. They lost 20% of their students to violent deaths due to drugs and gang-related activities. However, they managed to turn many of the troubled students around. At home, the couple was trying to salvage a troubled marriage by trial separation and counseling and decided to begin a new start in the Sierra Nevada part of Northern California. Lou was hired as an English teacher/part-time administrative substitute for a K-12 school, located in the Sierra County seat, Downieville. The geographic cure for his troubled marriage failed, and his wife went back to Southern California, leaving him with three children, two dogs and two cats.

Nancy was born in Los Angeles and raised by her mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother until her mother remarried, giving her a brother, 13 years her junior. Her childhood consisted of attending many schools as her stepfather was an accountant with a major Pipe and Construction Company and it required traveling to various locations, including attending school in Santiago, Chile. She completed high school and junior college in San Gabriel and Pasadena, CA. Her AA degree in Medical Assisting provided many different types of work, from admitting clerk in a small hospital, medical transcriptionist, insurance billing, coding diagnosis, to scheduling surgeries for a large medical group. In 1968 she married and moved to Sierra Vista, AZ, where her husband was stationed at Ft. Huachuca. They eventually moved back to Southern California where their daughter was born. They left the Southern California hustle and bustle for the peacefulness of the Sierra Nevada communities, but it wasn't meant to be. Nancy's husband moved on....and back to SoCal so she remained in the mountains, along with their daughter.

Sierra City, California, founded in 1850, is nestled in the Sierra Nevada Mountains and is a town steeped in gold rush history. In 1978, two souls were about to be joined by fate. Lou, accompanied by a friend helping him to move into his new home, stopped by the local pizza and bar where Nancy was sitting on a beer keg. They were introduced by another teacher who would be working with Lou. Eventually, their paths crossed again and often....at the medical clinic where Nancy worked...three young children on Lou's part brought him to the clinic often and the two became friends, followed by casual dating, and eventually ending up in a blended marriage with four children in beautiful Sierra City.

Lou states "when you live in a small town, anonymity is not possible. You become part of the community's fabric. A small community has the same needs as a large one, with fewer people to make things happen".

So...along with his teaching and parenting obligations, he became a volunteer fireman and later an elected commissioner, wrote for California's oldest, continuously published newspaper, joined the local Methodist Church, Lions Club, Food Bank, and Masons. Nancy did a lot of volunteer work as well and they worked together with the Lions, Food Bank and church.

Lou retired from the school district in 2001 and was recruited and hired as Principal/Superintendent of a small foothill school/school district. He retired a second time in 2005, and they concentrated on their volunteer activities until 2011 when they moved to Oro Valley, Arizona. That same year, Nancy's life changed dramatically just before she and Lou moved to Sun City.

Since her mother remarried, she knew very little about her biological father. She received a phone call from a gentleman in Bradford, PA, where

her mother was born. After a short chat and listening to a few events she could relate to, she discovered the man on the phone was her father's brother. She was over-come with emotion. The ensuing events included a trip for the Phillippis to Bradford where they attended a large family reunion and Nancy met her aunts and uncles for the very first time.

Lou and Nancy remain involved in their adopted community, including membership at Vista UMC, where in addition to volunteer activities, Lou has become Vista's "Prayer Master". "How did that happen?" you might be wondering. Back in the Sierra Nevada communities, their church was one of three circuit churches, led by one pastor, moving up and down the mountain preaching. One community: three churches. The Prayer Line was created to reunite all three churches in common prayer and information. Lou saw this need at Vista UMC as the long, hot summer months evidenced snowbird absences and a need to keep informed. The Prayer Chain was born. If you are not a part of this wonderful mission, please email the office administrator and ask to be added to Lou's list. Your message will be forwarded to him.

Robin Conner

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH



First Organizing Meeting for Vista's United Methodist Women (UMW) February 3, 1991

Upcoming Events for United Women in Faith

Meetings:

1. The Tuesday, September 16, meeting will be a demonstration provided by Chefs for Seniors beginning at 9:30 AM.
2. The Tuesday, October 21, meeting will be a tour of Wycliffe Ministries in Catalina.

Projects:

1. TMM (Tucson Metropolitan Ministries) in November will consist of a laundry basket filled with move-in items such as:

- bathtub curtains and liners, and rod hooks
- bath towels
- laundry detergent, dryer sheets
- soap, dish soap, cleaning supplies

Donations are readily accepted for any of these items.

2. Christmas stockings will be distributed before and after church on November 23, 30, and December 7. The congregation can pick up the stockings, fill them with toiletry items, (Dollar Tree) and return the filled stockings by December 14. United Women in Faith will distribute the stockings to local charities.

BAKE SALE December 14 before and after church.

It is important to have fund-raisers which helps United Women in Faith to purchase items for our charity projects.

Thank you for your continued support of United Women in Faith. (formerly United Methodist Women)

VISTA OUTREACH

Always giving thanks to God for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ephesians 5:20

Loose Change: Our Loose Change collection for September is Snak Pak. **Save your change!**

Communion Collection: Snak Pak The following article appeared in the Saddlebrooke "Saddlebags". Thanks, Sharon Scanlan.

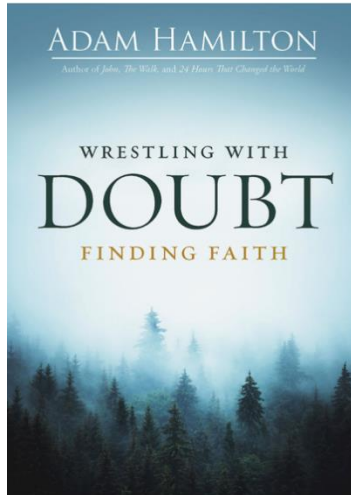
Vista de la Montana Methodist Church, along with the Santa Catalina Catholic Church, answers the call to feed hungry tummies. Our dedicated volunteers gather, typically, on the final Wednesday of each month to fill 240 bags of food for 60 eligible students, who are selected by the school's social worker based on need.

Each bag, tagged with a sticker indicating it is a gift from these two churches, contains carefully selected, nutritionally appropriate, non-perishable items intended for weekend sustenance throughout each month. Without this assistance, many children might risk going hungry on weekends when school breakfast and lunch programs aren't available.

Vista de la Montana and Santa Catalina Churches have always faithfully and wholeheartedly supported this valuable program, bringing joy to children's faces while nourishing them physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Both churches have also provided all the financial assistance necessary to sustain this program. The financial need is great to continue these efforts, as the costs of foodstuffs continue to rise dramatically. Monetary donations, as well as volunteer assistance, are always welcomed.

Communion Servers: If you are interested in being part of this ministry, please contact Linda Galka lindagalka65@gmail.com or speak with me at church and I will add you to the list. We need three servers the first Sunday of each month to serve bread and juice alongside Pastor Mary and the Liturgist and one server to serve gluten free wafers and juice. No advance training is required!

ADULT CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
Starting Wednesday, September 10, at 10:00 AM
“Wrestling With Doubt, Finding Faith”, by Adam Hamilton
Leader: Gail Parson



Our first fall Adult Education Wednesday Adult Christian Education Class begins September 10th and will include 6 sessions. We meet on Wednesdays at 10 AM in the Elizabeth Room in the Education/Administration Building at Vista de la Montana United Methodist Church in Catalina.

We will be discussing the book **Wrestling with Doubt Finding Faith, by Adam Hamilton**. Our class leader will be Gail Parson. Books may be purchased online and are available on-line at Amazon and at off-price book sellers.

Rev. Hamilton's books have been used for many of our classes and he is a very popular author. He is the senior pastor of the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in the Kansas City area.

ALL ARE WELCOME to attend our classes! We encourage members of our community to join us.



Stephen Ministers are lay members trained to provide one-to-one care to those experiencing a difficult time in life, such as grief, divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness, or relocation. We currently have 7 Stephen Ministers who serve Vista UMC folks by listening, caring, encouraging and providing spiritual and emotional support to those who are going through a difficult time. Stephen Ministers come from all walks of life, but they all share a passion for bringing Christ's love and care to people during a time of need. If you called to be a Stephen Minister or would like to meet with a Stephen Minister please contact Lisa Richardson or Pastor Mary. Your financial support of this vital ministry will help with the cost of training and



February 17, 1991 – There was a flu outbreak and the gyms were closed. Our brave members set up and met outside on the patio!

Compassion Connection

In Need of Continued Prayers for Healing

Eileen Carender, Dottie Lou Colby, Edith (Edey) Gallaher, Kay Gragg, Margaret Overman, and Carol Wilson.

Home Bound

Marlin Bolar, Jerry Browning, Orland Burbey, Rev. Alan & Kathy Campbell, Bill Gureck, Fran Hampton, Ken & Diane Podlasek, Lynn Duenkel, Jerry Eshelman, Marsha Hartz, Jo Ann Hubbard, Sharon Poole and Barb Rempel.

Prayers for our South District Churches

This month we pray for the pastors, congregation, and community of the following:

Grace UMC, Douglas

Sierra Vista UMC, Sierra Vista

Camping Program, South District

Opportunities to Connect, Serve & Support

LANDSCAPING

The Landscaping crew are now meeting on Thursdays at 7:00 instead of 8:00, due to the increase in temperatures. The guys are always seeking others to join them, and sometimes there are even donuts provided for those who show up, such a deal!

Agua Prieta greeting cards are available for 50¢ each in the Library during office hours.

Complimentary Prayer Beads are available in the Narthex and in the Library.

Upper Room booklets are available in the Narthex and the church office for \$2.00 each or online at upperroom.org. It is free to sign up for a daily devotional email.

A wheelchair is available during services in the Narthex.

Upcoming Events

Sunday, September 14th, Vista's 35th Anniversary Celebration & Potluck

9-20-2025 10:30 AM - Celebration of life for Mary-Ann Mehlhorn

9-21-2025 10:00 AM 90+ Birthday Celebration

How to contribute to the offering online:

1. Open the camera app on your cell phone.
2. Focus the camera on the QR code by gently tapping the code as it
3. Appears on your camera.
4. Tap on the yellow button—myvanco.com
5. Fill in the card, amount, etc.



Thank you for your donation!

SAVE THE DATE

An Installation Service For The District Superintendent Rev. Javier Olivares

**You are Invited to the
Installation service for
Rev. Javier Olivares**



Oct. 18 2025

**Saturday 3PM St. Mark's UMC
1431 W Magee Rd, Tucson, AZ 85704**

Desert Southwest Annual Conference

Jesus Asks

Stuart Watkins

Can you hear me
Whispering in your ear
Open your eyes and see
Your answer is so near

I know your troubles
They are small
I know your worries
I can solve them all

Give me your hand
Let me show the way
Peace is my command
Just kneel and pray

Believe in me
I am the way
Pray humbly and see
Your sins washed away