



AUGUST 2024 NEWSLETTER

Sonora United Methodist Church



The nation's focus has been on the surprising event of Joe Biden passing the torch to Kamala Harris. Those who hold great power rarely willingly decide not to run for re-election. The feeling of wanting to complete what they have begun is powerful. Whether you believe Joe Biden acted selflessly placing what was good for the nation before his own desires, or believe other factors came into play, it was a historic moment. While this is a rare moment in politics the church is all about passing the torch.

The Olympic games provide a better metaphor. One of the important events leading up to each Olympics is carrying the flame from the site of the original games, Athens, to the site of that year's competition. Torch bearers handed to flame from one another all the way to Paris this year. We carry the flame from the apostles into our world today. We recount the testimony of the witnesses of Jesus' life, teachings, death and resurrection to new people in new places. We carry the light of God's love to bind up the wounds of our hurting neighbors. We carry the flame of hope when we proclaim the gospel and share the stories of God's people. We transform lives as we bring others into relationship with Jesus the Christ. Passing the torch is basic to Christian discipleship.

I am sure before the Olympics are over, we will see some teams pass the baton well, and share in the agony as others mishandle the crucial moment. Church leadership requires lay people and pastors to pass on

the responsibilities of leadership on a regular basis. It is my hope that Bishop Sandy Olewine will appoint me to be your pastor for several more years. Our new bishop begins her term September 1st. David Niu has changed his leadership to the Los Rios District and our new District Superintendent is Mary Maaga.

Over the last two years, we worked hard to have many people step up and fill offices and roles held by Gail and Lorraine. It is time to begin prayerfully thinking about our leadership for 2025. There are several who are ready to pass the torch to others. One position that would be good to address early so we can work on a smooth transition is Treasurer. If you hear a calling to serve in any way, please talk with me or the Nominating Team. Like the running of a relay race, how we hand off affects how well we function as a team.

That is my musing on passing the torch. I hope we will continue to run our race well.

Shalom,

Pastor Kevin

Sermon titles and scripture readings for August:

We continue the series with David and parts of the worship service.

Aug 4: "The Weight of the Word"
2 Samuel 11:26--12:13a

Aug 11: "Prayers of the People"
2 Samuel 18: 5-9, 15, 31-33

Aug 18: "Benediction"
1 Kings 2: 10-12, 3: 3-14

Aug 25: "Sent Out to Live"
1 Kings 8: 1-6, 10-11, 22-30, 41-43

Women's Fellowship



Greetings All,

I hope everyone is doing well and surviving the heat of summer.

QiGong and Bible study are on hold for August. We will resume in September.

Please think about when we might want to hold another **rummage sale**. Either this Fall or wait until Spring.

Looking ahead, we will once again participate in the **Operation Christmas Child. Gift boxes to be collected the week before Thanksgiving.** Be watching for more information. School supplies are on sale right now for those interested in starting to gather items for boxes.

We will also plan to do the **Haunted Hallway** and hot dog dinner during **Trick or Treat Street** in October.

The monthly **all church potluck breakfast** will be on **Sunday the 25th at 10:00 am**. Mark your calendars and consider how you are able to help.

Blessings,
Karla Wasson

**NUTS
& BOLTS**
TOOLS FOR THE
CHURCH TODAY



August Birthdays

Shawn Barnes 8/2

Angie Hursky 8/3

Gavin Williams 8/12

Ann Whitlach 8/21

Jim Nuzum 8/31

Anniversaries

Roger & Kathy Francis 8/21

I have decided to try a new feature in our newsletter each month. This will give us a chance to introduce ourselves to other church members. It will be called **WHO'S IN THE PEWS?** I will ask 2 or 3 of you to write a brief paragraph each month. You will be introducing yourselves to our other church members. I think this will be great for the new

members to become acquainted with us old timers. It also gives us common ground with our other members. If asked to write something brief for the newsletter, I hope you will do it cheerfully. I will give you at least a week's notice, if your name has been picked.

For this month, I have chosen to use a brief biography of our Rev. Mary Maaga of Galt UMC, just to show you the kind of information I'm looking for:

Growing up in a home with a staunchly anti-Christian agnostic father, her curiosity about Christianity began when she was eight years old after the annual family tradition of viewing of Ben Hur. Afterwards, she gave her life to Christ in a simple prayer. As an avid reader, Maaga asked her dad what book she could read to know more about the Ben Hur story. Surprisingly, her father gave her the family Bible which she immediately read cover to cover.

Dr. Maaga has a PhD with distinction from Drew University in Religion and Society. She trained as an anthropologist in West Africa and has an expertise in new religious movements teaching several years as a professor at the University of Stirling in Scotland. Maaga wrote several books including *Hearing the Voices of Jonestown: Putting a Human Face on an American Tragedy*, *The Alabaster Orphan: A Mystic Girl's Journey with Jesus*, and *Cultivating Courage*. She was married to the Rev. Boikanyo C. Maaga, a native of South Africa, who passed away in 2003. They have two children, John Desmond Tutu Maaga, age 26 and Zola Mary Magdalene Maaga, age 24

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WORSHIP  WITH US!

