

**MARCH
2008**

Church of the Beatitudes
United Church of Christ



The Grapevine

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A Few Short Moments

"Easter is early this year!" "Seems like it was just Christmas!" Time, for many of us, does seem to keep flying by. For many, as well, time seems to drag on. With 24-hour stores and 24/7 news and 24/7/365 lives, we are always reminded that there is never enough time and there is all the time we need.

How long does it take to stop and write a note to cheer someone up?

How long does it take to buy someone else's groceries while you buy your own?

How long does it take to stop and welcome the stranger, speak a hello to someone who is standing by themselves?

Lent and Easter are a special kind of time. They are times when we pay particular attention to our spiritual journeys. They are measured not by chronological time (minutes, hours, weeks) but more by Kairos (καιρός) time. Kairos time is the right or opportune moment. It is the time in between in which something special happens.

For the women in Matthew's Gospel who were coming to see the tomb, the Kairos time was hearing and seeing an angel who told them Jesus was going on ahead of them to Galilee. The Kairos time was the time when they expected to experience the death of one that they loved and they ran away with news of new life, ran away to tell others.

I heard Kairos time when we gathered on Discovery Day in our Appreciative Inquiry time. As we listened to how people have experienced Christ in their lives, from their experiences in this church, all the stories were different. The church touched their lives at different times, through mission, through relationships, through music, through preaching, through giving, through receiving. Those are the transformation moments we are called to share with others, not only at Easter, but at all the times of our lives.

~Pastor Nancy

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 **God is still speaking,
DURING THE JOURNEY OF LENT**

SERVICE

Habitat for Humanity

Many thanks to Ron Caputo and all those who helped at the Habitat House in Apache Junction. There will be a dedication of the house on March 15 and all are welcome.

Palm Sunday ICM Food Drive

Let's break all records with our annual Food Drive for Interfaith Cooperative Ministries. Pick up a grocery sack March 2 or 9 at church. There will be a list of needed items attached. Fill up your sack and bring it to church on Palm Sunday, March 16.

ICM is dedicated to "providing an immediate response to basic human needs." ICM has been helping the working poor, disabled and seniors with emergency food, clothing, toiletries, household items and financial assistance for 25 years. Your contributions of food, clothing and cash are always appreciated!

Public Forums

Ministry of Service hopes to present Public Forums at Taste & See in May. Suggested topics include: Immigration, Environmental Issues and Health Care. If you or someone you know would be interested in serving on a panel on any of these issues, please contact Betty Nelson at 602-841-8649.

The Compassionate Friends

Thursday, March 20, is the next monthly meeting of the Compassionate Friends, a support group for parents who have lost a child of any age. Grandparents and older siblings are also welcome. Meetings are at 7:00 p.m. in the Bride's Room next to Britt Chapel. For further information, contact Betty Nelson at 602-841-8649.

Welcome Tents

Our Welcome Tents need more volunteers. The Ministry of Nurture is looking for folks to make, bake and/or serve the refreshments on Sunday mornings after the services. We all love to snack and engage in fellowship after the service, so please help us out here and sign up for the food prep, the setting up of the food and drinks, and of course a little clean-up afterward. Karen Shannon is waiting for your call or your e-mail at mat.shannon@cox.net or 602-997-2956.

CareWays

Many of our homebound church members would appreciate having regular contact with more active people in this congregation. If you would like to be paired with one of these older persons, contact Parish Nurse Sandy Marion (602-264-1221) or Dosia Carlson (602-995-4134).

Also call them if you can help with the occasional CareWays communion/luncheon gatherings. This could include assisting with a meal, providing transportation, or conversing with folks during the gathering. Our next CareWays event will be Monday, March 10.

Trip to ICM

Week after week many of us bring food and clothing for Interfaith Cooperative Ministries. But have you ever visited their headquarters at 501 South 9th Avenue? Our Ministry of Service has arranged for a tour on Friday morning, March 14. After the on-site visit, we will have lunch together. Sign up at church on Sunday, March 2 or March 9.

Also, everyone is invited to the community-wide ICM Open House on Thursday afternoon, March 6. For details check the ICM website

Thank you . . .

A thank you was received from the United Church of Christ for the prayer journal sent from our church. Thanks to Susan Thompson-McHugh for facilitating this project. Prayer journals from around the nation will be sent to servicemen and women in Iraq and Afghanistan.

PEOPLE IN THE PEWS

Nicaragua Mission Trip Proposed

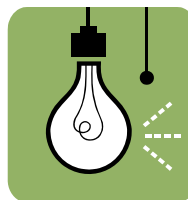
Our Ministry of Service is exploring the possibilities of participating in a JustHope mission trip to Nicaragua. Members of our ministry were impressed in meeting UCC pastor Leslie Penrose, who directs JustHope. For 20 years, she has helped groups from the United States develop global partnerships that nurture charity and justice. Hands-on tasks vary in terms of location.



July 26 to August 3, 2008, are the tentative dates for a few people to go from our church. Approximate cost is \$1400. If interested, contact Pastor Nancy Elsenheimer or Dosia Carlson by mid-March.

“Green” Reminder

Switch off lights when they’re not in use. Rather than leaving a light on when you exit a room, simply switch it off!



The less time you spend with the lights on, the more energy you save. A normal bulb will use 60 watts of energy an hour, meaning that you could conserve 22,000 watts of energy per year by just switching off one bulb for one hour every day. That’s enough energy to power one month’s worth of evening TV viewing!

Go to www.biggreenswitch.co.uk for more “green” tips.

Joys and Concerns

On the loss of

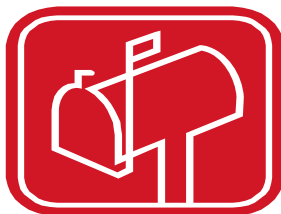
Mitzi Keefe, friend of Lois Elliott

Tom Peeler, brother of Pat Grant

Ruth Andrews

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ADMINISTRATION

Operations Corner

2008 will be an exciting and vibrant year for Church of the Beatitudes. Many people worked diligently and faithfully on the 2008 budget that was approved at the end of January. With this collaborative effort, we have ended up with a budget that will provide funds to further the ministries and mission of this church. In an effort to provide more communication about our financial picture to the Ministry of Administration and the congregation, Ken Porter, director of operations, will provide weekly financial snapshots to the Ministry of Administration, detailed summaries at the monthly MOA meeting, and summaries in the monthly Grapevine. The budget will be reviewed again in May.

The news is good. Although we have received a smaller number of pledges than last year, the amount per pledged has increased 15 percent. We have increased the number of people who do not pledge but contribute regularly. To keep a strong handle on our finances, we have moved the accounting function in-house. We think this will better serve the church by not outsourcing the accounting. We are also streamlining our accounting to be more efficient by maintaining fewer "accounts" and consolidating several budget lines. On February 1, the value of the endowment and the Flynn Lane property purchased with endowment funds is more than it was when the endowment was gifted to the Church.



Have you taken a close look at our landscaping and buildings lately? Hopefully, you have noticed all the improvements. Phase I of the lighting project is completed, the landscaping has been cleaned up, weeded and trimmed.

Enrique and Ernesto have started to clean all of the carpets and strip all of the floors in our buildings. We also have been cleaning closets and shelves and have almost filled a dumpster with broken and unsalvageable items.

Annual Budget Meeting

The annual meeting took place after the 9 a.m. service on January 27. It was lively and well attended. Lou Jennings, president, Brad Stouffer, treasurer, and the entire Ministry of Administration along with Ken Porter, director of operations, fielded questions from the floor. Thanks go to the Ministry of Administration for compiling the handouts for the attendees. The information and discussions demonstrated that many exciting activities and ministries are in the "works" for 2008 and the years to come. The 2008 Budget was adopted for the Church of the Beatitudes.

It's good to know...

There is a sign-in register at the front desk. Please make sure you sign in and sign



out when you are visiting or volunteering at the church or on church grounds. Doing this will help us keep apprised of visitors, just in case we have to find you. Dawn Bailey, our receptionist, and the rest of the church staff, appreciate knowing who is around!

Help save paper and postage

The Grapevine is available online! To help save postage and paper costs, consider receiving the Grapevine by e-mail instead of snail mail.

Please call the Church office to be put on the e-mail list.



CHILDREN AND YOUTH



Bowling Night



National Youth Event

**July 24-28, 2008
University of Tennessee
Knoxville, Tennessee**

The UCC National Youth Event (NYE), held every four years, provides an opportunity for more than 3,000 youth (ages 13 to 18) to gather for worship, workshops, faith, fun and fellowship. Check out the video about the NYE at www.ucc.org/youth.

If you are interested in being part of this dynamic event, please see Pastor Ted.



UCC Senior Highs

Senior High Youth from area UCC churches have been meeting the one Sunday evening a month for food, worship, education, and fun! The meeting tonight is at Scottsdale Congregational UCC from 5:30-8 p.m. Any and all are welcome. Upcoming meetings are:

Sunday, March 9 at Shadow Rock UCC

Sunday, April 13 at Church of the Beatitudes

Sunday, May 18 at Shepherd of the Hills UCC

One Great Hour of Sharing

Lent is the season for One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS), the special mission offering of the UCC that carries God's message of love and hope to people in more than eighty countries. Every gift to this offering serves people with needs resulting from natural disasters and political or



economic crises. The UCC works with international partners to provide sources of clean water and food, education and health care, small business micro-credit, emergency relief, and advocacy and resettlement for refugees and displaced persons. OGHS also supports domestic and international ministries for disaster preparedness and response. We have cool fish banks for the kids and an intriguing kind of calendar of consumption that helps us look at our own wealth from a different perspective. We'll be receiving this offering on March 1 and 2.

WORSHIP

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SCHEDULE

Maundy Thursday, March 20

Simple Soup and Bread Supper

Nelson Hall, 5:30—6:30 pm

Maundy Thursday Worship Service

Sanctuary, 7:00 pm, "Shadows"

This service remembers the Last Supper of Jesus with his disciples, their betrayal and desertion, their falling away as Jesus faces his arrest and crucifixion. We will have the opportunity to reflect on our "falling away" from God as well as share communion.

Good Friday, March 21

Women's Worship in the Park

Steele Indian School Park, 7:00—8:00 a.m.

Women of the church are invited to attend a Good Friday worship service and breakfast at Steele Indian School Park on Good Friday. We will meet at the park from 7 to 8 a.m. (so you can get to work on time). Come and worship with us as we mark the sad day of the crucifixion of Jesus. Please bring something to share for breakfast.

How to get there: The service will be held at Steele Indian School Park which is at the corner of Indian School Road and Central Avenue. Enter the park from the intersection of Third Street and Indian School Road. Park in the very first parking lot on your left (parking lots on the right are for the VA hospital). Enter the park on foot though the gate—follow the signs. You may not see us from the parking lot because this part of the park is a beautiful labyrinth that winds down below street level to a peaceful reflective pool.

Good Friday Reflection

Britt Chapel, 5:00—8:00 p.m.

Good Friday or Holy Friday is a solemn day when we remember the story of Jesus' death on a cross. But we also look forward with hope to the great Easter celebration. Come anytime between 5:00 and 8:00 p.m. and walk a labyrinth laid out on the Chapel floor. You can walk and pray at your own pace, reflecting on your spiritual journey.

Easter Vigil

Sanctuary

Friday, 8:00 p.m. through Saturday, 8:00 p.m.

An ancient liturgy of the church, our Easter Vigil will be a time for meditation and prayer. We invite anyone to sign up to be in prayer in the sanctuary, alone or with one other person, for an hour between 8:00 p.m. Friday and 8:00 p.m. Saturday. Symbolically, we are "in the tomb" with Jesus before the time of the resurrection. Head ushers will also be present. There will be quiet music and candles. It will be safe as the doors will be locked and only opened to the next person or persons entering to be in vigil.

Holy Saturday, March 22

Holy Saturday Worship Service

Nelson Hall, 5:00 p.m.

Easter, March 25

Easter Sunrise Service

Royal Palm Park (Butler Park)

15th Avenue and Butler, 6:30 a.m.

Ride your bike, bring your dog, bring your neighbor and come to the dewy park to greet the sun and the Son, the risen Christ.

Pancake breakfast

Nelson Hall, 7:30—10:30 a.m.

Breakfast will be served by youth 7:00 to 10:30 a.m.

Easter Worship Services

9:00 and 10:30 a.m.

Celebrate the risen Christ. Enjoy the music of the Brass Quintet and explore the beauty of the Flowering Cross. Bring flowers from your garden or place a flower in the cross on the courtyard as you enter worship. Watch the bare cross flower with new life.

Child care is available at the church with a 72-hour advance notice. Please call Dana Bender at 602-264-1221.

HEALTHY TIPS FOR HEALTHY BLOOD PRESSURE

Most experts consider optimal blood pressure to be at or below 120/80 mmHg.

Do you know what yours is?

Do you know that you can have dangerously high blood pressure (hypertension) for years and never have a single symptom? This is important to know, since high blood pressure is one of the leading causes of death and disability; it can cause damage to the arteries, heart attack, stroke, heart failure, dementia, poor vision and damage to the kidneys and internal organs.

However, there is good news in all of this. Here are some simple steps you can take to keep your blood pressure at an optimal level.

Have your blood pressure checked on a regular basis. If you are on a blood pressure (BP) medication prescribed by your doctor, make sure you take it as prescribed.

Eat healthy foods. The National Institute of Health has developed the DASH eating plan (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension). This plan is rich in fruits, vegetables, low fat, low sodium (salt), rich in protein, fiber and healthy nutrients. Followed closely, this diet can lower blood pressure in as little as two weeks. Particularly good foods to eat are skim milk, spinach, unsalted sunflower seeds, beans, baked potatoes, bananas, soybeans, and most deliciously, small amounts of *dark chocolate*.

Limit sodium/salt intake. Salty snacks such as potato chips, jerky, and bullion, are the most obvious offenders. However, there is hidden salt in soups, sodas and many canned and processed foods. When possible, choose fresh, unprocessed foods.

Maintain physical activity for at least 30 minutes a day.

Don't smoke.

Limit alcohol intake, no more than one drink daily. A drink is considered an ounce of hard liquor, one beer, or five ounces of wine.

Maintain a healthy weight.

Replace stress and anxiety with calming practices. Rest, quiet reading, meditation, yoga, prayer, slow deep breathing, and listening to relaxing music are just a few. You may want to try the *Taste and See* yoga class on Wednesday nights.

Of course, the most important FIRST step is to have your BP checked. The Health Cabinet nurses do blood pressure screenings on the first and third Sundays of the every month at the church immediately after the 9 a.m. service. If Sundays are inconvenient and would like to have your BP taken at a different time, or if you'd like further information on diet and healthy lifestyle, please call me, Sandy Marion, Parish Nurse, to schedule an appointment. Office hours are Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1 to 3 p.m.



Blankets of Love

Our 2-year-old son, just spent a week at Banner Desert Medical Center with severe pneumonia. He is developmentally delayed and was extremely scared and upset about his surroundings. Blankets are always a source of comfort for him and he enjoys being able to "hide" under them. We were so tickled to be given a blanket from your church to help with a very stressful and scary time at the hospital. Thank you so much for your generosity in providing such an appropriate gift to children in need. Keep up the great work and thank you again.

EDUCATION

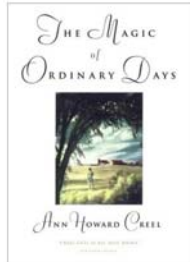
March Book Club Selection

The Magic of Ordinary Days, by Ann Howard Creel (copyright 2001)

Please join us on March 27 in the Lounge at 7 p.m. to discuss this poignant book.

Publishers Weekly puts it this way (paraphrasing):

This is the first adult novel by an author who has written two well-received Y.A. books. Livvy Dunne, a thoughtful 24-year-old with yearnings toward archeology, becomes, in a rash moment in WWII Colorado, pregnant by a dashing officer and is forced into a marriage of convenience by her sternly puritanical minister father. She goes off to Ray Singleton's remote farm knowing nothing about him except that he is lonely, utterly inexperienced around women and touchingly devoted to her. The relationship between the two, graced by some delicate, perceptive and *fine-boned* writing, is at the heart of the book, and Creel gets it all just right. She's also skilled at evoking the peculiar remoteness from the war of the high plains country, where farmers were regarded as an integral part of the war effort and even got enough gas to drive around for pleasure, a rare privilege in 1944. Lonesome Livvy yearns for more communicative companionship, however, and grows close to a pair of charming Nisei sisters at an internment camp and this is where plot devices begin to play an unwarranted role. For Rose and Lorelei, it turns out, will do anything for love and involve Livvy in what develops into a dangerous (and inherently improbable) exercise in deceit and manipulation. The book recovers its stride for an intense if rather hasty finish, but the calm spell cast by the tale of Livvy and Ray, which would have been perfectly satisfactory to maintain the book, may have been broken.



Movie Night

Movie Night, the third Thursday of each month, meets in the Lounge at 6:00 p.m.

You're invited to bring your dinner (or warm it up in the microwave) or a snack, and stay for the movie and a discussion afterward. Suggestions for future movies are always welcome.

March's selection is *Blood Diamond*. In parts of Africa, diamond mining fuels civil warfare, killing thousands of innocents and drafting preteen children as vicious soldiers. Danny Archer, a white African soldier-turned-diamond-smuggler, gets wind of a large raw jewel found by Solomon Vandy, a native fisherman recently escaped from enslavement by a brutal rebel leader.

Archer offers a deal: he'll help Vandy find his war-scattered family if Vandy will share the diamond with him. Drawn into this web of exploitation is journalist Maddy Bowen, who agrees to help if Archer will tell her the details of how conflict diamonds make their way into the hands of the corporations who sell them to the Western world.



Inclusion Coffee House

The Inclusion Coffee House is open Sunday, March 16, 2008 at 6:30 p.m. in Nelson Hall. This month's offering will be a jazz great Delphine Cortez with Jazz Alive. Invite a friend and join the fun. Tickets are \$8 at the door and \$5 for students. For information contact Jeff or Carol Morse at 623-933-7202.



HAPPENINGS

College Chorale to Perform

The Monmouth College Chorale, under the direction of Dr. Sarah J. Graham, will be performing in the Sanctuary on Tuesday, March 11. The Chorale is a highly selective, auditioned, mixed choral ensemble that performs regularly on and off campus. The Monmouth College Chorale engages students of nearly every major offered at Monmouth College. It serves to offer students well-rounded musical experiences with high expectations for performance and competency.



Over the last three years, the Chorale, under the direction of Dr. Sarah J. Graham, and in conjunction with Monmouth's instrumental ensembles, has begun a major works series each spring. Recently performed works include the Levin completion of Mozart's *Requiem* in 2006 and Orff's *Carmina Burana* in 2007. J.S. Bach's Cantata No. 4 "Christ lag in Todesbanden," will be featured this coming spring. These major works are interspersed with traditional unaccompanied sacred and secular choral works as well as some accompanied works.

Congregation members are needed to provide housing on Tuesday night after the concert for these talented singer students. If you have a spare room and could accommodate any of the students, please contact Joel Rinsema at joel@bachchoir.org.

The Ministry of Welcome invites you to the Bridging Brunch at Church of the Beatitudes

Do you want to learn more about Church of the Beatitudes? Do you want to feel connected? Do you want to hear about how God is still speaking at Church of the Beatitudes United Church of Christ? Enjoy the spirit of fellowship, great door prizes and new friends at our Bridging Brunch. We'll have "extreme homemade lasagna."

Join us on March 2 at 11:30 am in the Patio Room. We hope to see you there! Call Michele Mellott at 602-617-4356 if you have questions.

Arizona Bluegrass

Make your plans to attend the Arizona Bluegrass concert on Saturday, March 8 at 7:30 p.m. World-renowned banjo player, Ross Nickerson will perform with the Canadian band he has toured with for the past three years. The band is well known in Canada and they just recorded a CD of original material. Ross has toured with them extensively in their back yard and is eager to give them a big welcome in Arizona. Tickets are \$10. For more information, contact Joel Rinsema at joel@bachchoir.org.



Taste & See

New classes are being offered for the Spring! We'll have classes on Scrapbooking and Stampology, Cooking, Strengths Training, and Finding Your Sacred Space at home.

A new cooking class with Barbara Fenzl, author and owner of Les Gourmettes Cooking School, will teach us to identify and use fresh and dried chilies. The class will meet one time on March 5. Spaces are limited, so reserve your spot now at 602-264-1221



It's good to be back

Wa-hoo! I received straight A's for my first semester of seminary! To tell the truth, I'm surprised. I worked really hard but you never know....And now, the rush has begun again; school is back in session. My New Testament professor has said he expects us to read the Gospel all the way through three times this semester. All that and the other required texts for the class!

During the break between semesters, I was privileged to visit Israel on a Peacemakers Tour sponsored by our sister denomination the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The trip was for seminary students and faculty of the UCC and the Disciples. I received a partial scholarship from the Disciples in order to take the trip. Unfortunately, as soon as I got back to Phoenix, I came down with a terrible sinus infection which was really tough to shake. As a result, I haven't been able to get my trip pictures printed and make a travel book in a timely manner. More about my trip when my sinuses feel better!

Also on arrival home, I was honored to preach the evening worship services at the Campus. Since I was sick, I was really glad that I had prepared ahead of time and wrote my sermon prior to going to Israel. I'm very grateful to Chaplain David for giving me the privilege of preaching to our Campus congregation.

~Judy Green-Davis

ROMEO Lunch Group

Enjoy great fellowship with the men's lunch group called ROMEOs (Retired Older Men Eating Out). Co-hosts Don Thatcher and Pastor Ted invite you to join this distinguished group! They meet every Thursday from 12 noon to 1:30 p.m. at Denny's, 3205 E. Bell Road. All men are welcome. Contact: Pastor Ted, 602-264-1221 or telsenheimer@beatitudeschurch.org for more information.



On mentors, listening and preaching

Well it's back to Class! Please remind me later that I love being in seminary! My field study class is you, dear congregation; you are my classroom. Pastor Nancy is my professor. I could not ask for a better mentor. Pastor Nancy really cares for her congregation! We meet for one hour each week and it's a time I cherish.

I also have a mentor on Claremont campus. His name is Jake Pomeroy and he co-pastors a church with his wife in Southern California. He has just led several sessions of a seminar on Church Vitality, in Ontario, California, that Brent Smith, Dave Mellott and Karen Shannon attended with me. It was an inspiring weekend full of hope for UCC churches of all shapes and colors. At one breakout session Jake led us in an African Bible study that lifted up every member of the small group. Every voice was heard. Every voice was valued. Every voice was unique! I was very moved by the experience. The "lesson to listen" to each and every one of you came through loud and clear.

I am also enrolled in a class on Church Leadership. This is taught by Karen Dalton, an expert in the subject who has been working with our Phoenix seminarians. I am taking UCC policy with another classmate, and my guess is I will have the undivided attention of the minister leading us.

Last but not least: PREACHING! My professor is a student of Fred Craddock. We are telling life stories right now, and are being "pushed" out of our comfort zones. He's helping us — read *forcing us* — to stretch our preaching wings. It's the scariest class I have ever been in, and it's also the most rewarding. We are all striving for honesty and authenticity. This month we'll be walking through Holy Week, and I feel so blessed to be on this journey with you.

Thank you for letting me walk beside you.
Yours in Christ,

~Michele Mellott

ARTS & MUSIC

The Bach Choir Grammy Nominations: THEY WON!

Following up on the article in the January 2008 *Grapevine*, you aware of the Grammy Nominations and Awards for the famous Phoenix Bach Choir, held in Los Angeles on February 10. Church of the Beatitudes is proud to include in our choir roster five members of this distinguished choral group: Joel Rinsema, Dana Bender, Joshua Hillman, Laura Inman and Timothy Leffler.

The Phoenix Bach Choir with the Kansas City Chorale received final nominations for four awards on their recording of Alexander Grechaninov's "Passion Week" Album: *Best Classical Album – Best Choral Performance – Best Engineered Album, Classical - Best Surround Sound Album*. They WON for Best Engineered Album, Classical.



This album was released in March of 2007 and is the second of three joint recordings for Phoenix Bach and Kansas City Chorale. The first was "Shakespeare In Song" in 2004, another, "Eternal Rest" featured the music of Swiss, Finnish and American composers in 2006, and this release of the Russian composer's thirteen Passion Week pieces.

Gramophone's comment: "A milestone in Russian choral music delivered in thrilling style here." *International Record Review* said: "Luxuriant textures, sumptuous harmonies, mouth-watering melodies, all beautifully conveyed with ravishing choral tone; this is a simply gorgeous disc." And one more (of many), *James Manheim of All Music Guide* stated: "The performances by the Phoenix Bach Choir and Kansas City Chorale (separate organizations, often combined as they are here for double-choir music) are superb ... conductor Charles Bruffy performed with Robert Shaw and has inherited his tendencies toward seamless blends and a warm, rounded tone."

Congratulations to Conductor Bruffy, the Phoenix and Kansas City choirs, and our choir members. Wow! Check out the Bach web site at www.bachchoir.org.

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**Church of the Beatitudes
United Church of Christ**

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www.beatitudeschurch.org**

THE LOST BOYS CENTER MINISTRY:

Ann Wheat Honored For Arizona

Long-time church member, Ann Wheat, was honored as the Founder of the Arizona Lost Boys Center at a special benefit dinner in February.

As Recreation Supervisor and grant writer for the City of Phoenix, Ann is known for her innovation, persistence, and charismatically positive spirit, raising money and putting into place pilot programs for children, youth, and adults with disabilities and illness. In 2003, with Church of the Beatitudes sponsorship, Ann successfully wrote for a federal grant to establish what is now the only center in the country to support refugee young men from war-torn Sudan.

Putting together an amazing array of resources and people, Ann and the Center have helped over 450 resilient young men--who suffered "mind-numbing horrors and intense hardships"--find their way to a new life in Phoenix, by providing support for everyday life, education, jobs, health, integration into new community, and maintaining connection to their brothers from Sudan.

Their success stories are many; graduation from high school; college and job training programs; effective additions to the workforce, especially at the Beatitudes Campus; beginning new families; celebrations with music and dance, and lots of pride and smiles. However, many of the young men are plagued by the debilitating post traumatic stress syndrome. Thus Ann and the Center are looking for new ways to provide connection and treatment for them; another demonstration of Ann's persistence. Thank you, Ann, for this ministry in our community, and for providing members of our congregation the opportunity to contribute gifts of time and money to these wonderful young men.

