

### Welcome to Song of Life!

A church with Open Hearts, Open Minds, and Open Doors that Loves God, Loves Others, and wants to Change the World.

Get connected with any of our bible studies, small groups, or social activities you see here! We have a new Groups page on our website—you can find out about all the small groups, social events, and service teams at SoL! Also, check us out on our Facebook page!

### Worship Service Times >> 9:30 & 11:00am

### Holy Communion, Batman!! Why Didn't They Sanitize Their Hands??

As often occurs whenever there's a pastoral change, my first Sunday at Song of Life was also a Communion Sunday, and it was an absolute joy to celebrate communion for the first time with my new church!! But I also heard there were some rumblings about...wait for it...hand sanitizer!!! Apparently some folks in the congregation thought that the communion servers, including me, didn't sanitize our hands before serving communion to the rest of the congregation. So this article is to put your minds at ease: we did indeed sanitize our hands...we just did it very discreetly so as not to disrupt the overall ambiance of the liturgy.



Although the fundamental idea of hand sanitizer was conceived in the 1940s by Goldie and Jerry Lippman, it wasn't until 1966 that a nurse from Bakersfield, California named Lupe Hernandez actually invented it. What's more, it took another 30+ years for Purell to make it available for purchase by the general public.

The first time I remember seeing a pastor use hand sanitizer before serving communion was in the early 2000s after a rather hairy flu season. In fact, many churches have made hand sanitizing part of the communion "ritual," even to the point of having gigantic bottles of the stuff prominently placed next to the bread and cup. And even though I believe in being cautious, it always rubbed me the wrong way, seeing that bottle of hand sanitizer right next to the body and blood of Christ.

When "they" invented the hand sanitizing wipes, I literally praised God!! Here was a way for us as communion servers to discreetly sanitize our hands before serving our fellow church family members this symbolic and holy meal!

And here's how we do it: before the worship service, those scheduled to help serve communion will be given a little packet with a hand sanitizer cloth inside. They will be instructed to hold onto it until right before they come forward to help serve, at which time they will open the packet and use the cloth to sanitize their hands. Easy Peasy!!

We all know how important it is to be cautious about our health, but I believe it is also important for us to honor our rituals within the context of worship. We also want those attending worship to know we are doing our best NOT to spread those tiny little microbes all around. So next time we receive communion, rest assured: your servers have done their part to protect you against potential disease. And as always, if you have any questions or concerns, please let me know.

P.S. For a rather humorous look at hand sanitizing in church, check out this video clip...it's hysterical!!  
<https://youtu.be/Wzxlv5vdN9I>



Grace and Peace,  
Pastor Jody

### The Pastor's Perspective

It is with great joy and anticipation that I write this first newsletter article as the new pastor at Song of Life United Methodist Church!! As many of you know, I was appointed by Bishop Bob Hoshibata to serve as your pastor effective July 1, 2018, after serving as pastor at Faith UMC in West Phoenix for the last four years.

If we've not met yet, you might want to check out my biography on the Song of Life website, at [www.songoflifeumc.org/staff/](http://www.songoflifeumc.org/staff/). Or, you can come meet me for coffee at one of the local Starbucks locations where I'll be "setting up shop" beginning August 1 (see the article "Where in the World is...Pastor Jody!!" included in this newsletter).

My husband, David, and I are both looking forward to becoming actively involved here at Song of Life, not only in the worship service but in as many other events and opportunities as we possibly can. As long-time United Methodists, we're used to being involved in the life of the church. We know you will put us to work and immerse us in the day-to-day activities...and we are ready to do just that.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank Rev. Sarai Case for her love and care in helping make this transition go as smoothly as possible. I met with Pastor Sarai shortly after my introductory meeting with your Staff/Parish Relations Committee so I could learn about the inner-workings of this church. I feel very blessed to be following her as pastor at Song of Life. Her ministry here was an important part of SoL's history in ministry in Queen Creek, and you were very fortunate to have had her as your pastor. I know she is missed by many of you, but I also know you wish her well as she embarks on a new adventure during her leave of absence from active ministry.

Over the last few weeks I've been meeting with members of your congregation, leaders as well as congregation members, to get to know you better and hear from you what God has laid upon your heart for the future of Song of Life. These Listening Sessions are not only a great way for us to get to know each other, but they are providing me with valuable information as we prepare to move into the future as Christ's church in this place. And although, by the time you read this, our first round of Listening Sessions will be over, rest assured: there will be another opportunity later this fall and possibly again after the first of the year. But in the meantime, if you have an interest in meeting with me, come find me during the week at one of the locations listed in this newsletter! I'm looking forward to getting to know each and every one of you, so if you can't be at one of the future listening sessions, I hope you'll come visit me during my "off-site office hours" out in the community.

As we move forward as a church, I ask you to keep David and me in your prayers as we settle back into the house we've owned since the 1990s after having lived in rental houses for the last four years. We are excited to be back in the East Valley, but moving all of our "stuff" is painful...so please do keep us in your prayers.

### Listening Tour: I'm Listening

During the month of July, Pastor Jody has been meeting with various members from Song of Life UMC as a way of getting to know each other and to also share each other's hopes and dreams about the future ministries of Song of Life church. These listening sessions have been well attended and have also been very helpful. Some of what we've learned from these sessions were things we already knew: like the fact that different people have different ideas about worship styles and pastoral expectations. We also have different ideas about what God has in mind for this church in this place. We all have concerns about the future of the United Methodist Church, and even closer to home, the future of Song of Life. But what's really exciting is that we all know that God has placed this church in Queen Creek for a reason...and our job is to figure out what that reason is and more importantly, figure out how we make it a reality.

In addition to meeting with her new church family members, Pastor Jody has also been meeting regularly with church leaders and gathering ideas for ways we can and will move into the future as the church. She has also had a conversation with Jim Griffiths, the consultant who was recommended by the Conference and hired by the Song of Life to help steer us in the right direction. She's also been studying the church's history – where we've been – and considering the future – where we're going – so that hopefully very soon, we can start making some concrete plans for new ministries and new ways of being in ministry with each other and with those in the community of Queen Creek and beyond.

If you weren't able to join Pastor Jody for one of the listening sessions, rest assured! She wants to hear your voice. Here are a few ways you can join the conversation:

- Plan on attending one of the listening sessions that will be scheduled later this Fall or after the first of the year. Your leaders understand that a lot of you high-tailed it out of Phoenix during the summer when the temperatures were at their highest. So we're already making plans to hold another set of listening sessions this Fall, probably in November, to accommodate those who have been away for the summer. Furthermore, we are planning yet another set in January or February, at the peak of the "winter visitor" season so our winter residents can participate as well. So watch this space for more information and dates of upcoming sessions.
- Visit with Pastor Jody during her "Offsite Office Hours" out in the community. Starting August 1, Pastor Jody will be "setting up shop" at various locations within about a 5 mile radius (and also in San Tan Valley) so she can not only meet with folks from the church but also folks from the community. In fact, the first set of "offsite office hours" is included in this newsletter. So if you weren't able to visit with Pastor Jody during one of the listening sessions, come visit with her at one of her Offsite Office locations for a one-on-one conversation.
- "Chat" with Pastor Jody via email, by phone, or by text. If meeting in person isn't possible, send Pastor Jody an email at [pastorjody@songoflifeumc.org](mailto:pastorjody@songoflifeumc.org) or call or text her at 480-766-9272. She'll be happy to "chat" with you using one of these methods...even though she prefers chatting in person.
- Make an appointment for a one-on-one home visit. If none of these methods will work for you, contact Pastor Jody by email or phone and make an appointment for her to visit you at your home.

To those who have already participated in one of our listening sessions...thank you for taking the time to meet with Pastor Jody so she can get to know you and you can get to know her...and thank you for also sharing the ways God has spoken to you about the future of Song of Life UMC. Together we can live out our mission as United Methodists: to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world!

### Special Announcements

Have a special church event or special announcement to put in our newsletter. Be sure to email it to [info@songoflifeumc.org](mailto:info@songoflifeumc.org)!

#### Sunday School Starting Up

Sunday School starts in September for children (kindergarten through 12th grade). There will be special announcements each Sunday in August filled with all the pertinent information.

#### Mother Of PreSchoolers (MOPs)

MOPs will begin their second year here at Song of Life starting August 3rd. They meet first and third Friday's from 9:30-11:30am. If you are interested in joining or volunteering, please reach out to Casey DeWitt, 480-250-5285 or Ashley Luther, 480-868-0134. All moms are welcome!

## New Sermon Series: Summer Fruit

On Sunday, July 22, Pastor Jody began a new sermon series called "Summer Fruit" during which we are exploring the "nine jewels of character" shared by the Apostle Paul to the Galatian church. During this series, we are considering how these character traits reflect the ways we ought to behave as followers of Christ, and how we can cultivate these "fruits" in everything we do as Christ-filled people. We know you won't want to miss this series of sermons, so join us for worship (9:30am & 11:00am) as we discover together our own Summer Fruit: The Fruit of the Spirit.



### Sunday topics include:

- July 22\* - Summer Fruit: What's in Your Basket
- July 29\* - Summer Fruit: Love
- Aug. 5 - Summer Fruit: Joy
- Aug. 12 - Summer Fruit: Peace
- Aug. 19 - Summer Fruit: Patience
- Aug. 26 - Summer Fruit: Kindness
- Sept. 2 - Summer Fruit: Gentleness
- Sept. 9 - Summer Fruit: Faithfulness
- Sept. 16 - Summer Fruit: Gentleness
- Sept. 23 - Summer Fruit: Self Control

\*If you missed the first two sermons in the series – or any sermons, for that matter – they will be available on our YouTube Channel within a few days after each Sunday's service. Simply click on the YouTube icon at the top of the SoL website's home page.

## Thinking Theologically | Jody Topping

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.* – Galatians 5:22-24



When we moved to Arizona back in 1988, we bought a house in Tempe that had a rather barren backyard, and since our children were quite small, we decided we needed to redo the yard so the kids would have someplace to play. So we tilled the soil, installed a sprinkler system, planted some grass along with a couple of trees, including a small orange tree in the corner of the yard. The first year we had that tree, it didn't give us a single orange, and in the years that followed, I think our crop amounted to less than a half a dozen pieces of fruit...total! If I remember correctly, it took 5 or 6 years before that little tree matured enough to produce a bumper crop of oranges!

It also takes us awhile as followers of Christ before we are able to bear the fruit of the Christian Spirit. Like our little orange tree, our faith has to mature, and that happens when we read our Bibles, engage in theological study, attend worship on a regular basis, and most importantly, be in conversation with God through a regular and consistent prayer life. When we

do these things, we start to exhibit the true life of a believer: the fruit of the spirit, which is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

On July 22, we began exploring the fruit of the Spirit as outlined by the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Galatians through a sermon series called "Summer Fruit." And through our study we are learning how we can develop and incorporate the characteristics of a spirit-filled people into our lives as followers of Christ. Since the series began before this newsletter was published, you can watch the sermons from July 22 and 29 on our Facebook page, at [facebook.com/songoflifeumc](https://www.facebook.com/songoflifeumc), or on YouTube at [www.youtube.com/channel/UCYWFKxbwQIAZ\\_oOYBSLlEQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYWFKxbwQIAZ_oOYBSLlEQ).

Our hope is that, by the end of this series, we will all understand more fully what it means to be filled with the fruit of the Spirit, and that these "fruits" come as a package deal: in other words, we can't just choose the fruits we like and cultivate those into our lifestyles. When it comes to the fruit of the Spirit, it's an "all or nothing" proposition...and I know in my heart we will all choose "all."

## Song of Life Leadership Board Members

**Stuart Blair:** [sfblairusa@yahoo.com](mailto:sfblairusa@yahoo.com)

**John Campbell:** [campbell51jc@gmail.com](mailto:campbell51jc@gmail.com)

**Sean Claypool:** [sclaypool2009@gmail.com](mailto:sclaypool2009@gmail.com)

**Casey DeWitt:** [cdewitt@songoflifeumc.org](mailto:cdewitt@songoflifeumc.org)

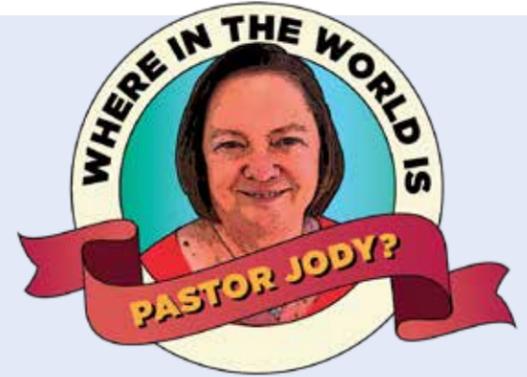
**Mckenzie Gillean** (Youth Representative)

**Scott Luther:** [scottluther2525@gmail.com](mailto:scottluther2525@gmail.com)

**Laura Hauer:** [hauerla@cox.net](mailto:hauerla@cox.net)

**Carl Chasse:** [cchasse\\_az@yahoo.com](mailto:cchasse_az@yahoo.com)

**Betty Ranney:** [b.ranney@cox.net](mailto:b.ranney@cox.net)



## Where in the World is... Pastor Jody?

As promised during her second sermon at Song of Life on July 8, Pastor Jody has set up on-site and off-site office Hours in various locations in the Queen Creek & San Tan Valley communities. Folks from the congregation and community can meet with her and get to know her. Here's her schedule for the month of August:

- Mondays (starting 8/6), 9am - 12pm: Song of Life Church Office
- Mondays (starting 8/6), 1pm - 4pm: Starbucks at Ellsworth & Rittenhouse
- Tuesdays (starting 8/7), 12pm - 3pm: Terrace Restaurant at 30761 W. Golf Club Dr., San Tan Valley
- Wednesdays (starting 8/1), 1pm - 4pm: Starbucks (in Safeway at Power & Queen Creek Roads)
- Thursday 8/2, after Joy Circle at 1pm: Village Inn (Queen Creek Marketplace)
- Thursdays (starting 8/9), 9am - 12pm: Starbucks at Higley Pointe (on Power Rd. south of the 202)

In addition to these times, Pastor Jody will also be available during the week (except Fridays\*) to meet either at the church or in your home. Simply make an appointment by calling her cell phone at 480-766-9272.

\*On Fridays, Pastor Jody's is fortunate enough to spend her day off with her grandson, Anderson, and won't be available for visitations, except for emergency situations.

## Online Giving

Did you know that you can give to SoL online? Our general budget is funded 100% by the gifts of people just like you who Love God, Love Others, and want to Change the World.

**Give today at**  
[songoflifeumc.churchcenteronline.com/giving](https://www.songoflifeumc.churchcenteronline.com/giving)

## Dual Membership

Do you spend part of the year with SoL and part of the year at another church? We understand and would love to have you as a Dual Member with Song of Life UMC! Keep your membership back home, but make a commitment that reflects your love of SoL as well! Please attend ONE of our New Member Classes, held every 2nd Sunday of the month at 9:30am, to get more information about this great opportunity.

**NEED TO ADD SOMETHING TO THE SoL NEWS???** Email your content and any graphic request to [info@songoflifeumc.org](mailto:info@songoflifeumc.org) two weeks prior to the month it needs to be published. You can also request news and events to be added to our website, so be sure to email for those requests as well. Thank you!

### SoL Campus

Worship 9:30 & 11:00am  
SoL Kids 11:00am

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Queen Creek, AZ, 85142

480.641.1200



### Come & Follow Us!

Here's what you'll find on our Facebook:  
- weekly LIVE sermons  
- articles that go deeper on this week's topic  
- comments & insights from SoL members  
- up-to-date info on coming events  
(Be sure to invite your friends!)

[@songoflifeumc](https://www.facebook.com/songoflifeumc)

### Our Staff

Rev. Jody Topping, Lead Pastor  
Carrie Claypool, Youth Ministries  
Thomas Murphy, Music Ministries

[www.songoflifeumc.org](https://www.songoflifeumc.org)