

## 2026 Call Committee Nominees

### Deede Baum

Deede is a native Texan, baptized and confirmed in the Methodist Church. She met her husband, Fred, while he was in seminary, and she was an undergraduate at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, where her faith in Christ grew while attending a college group at Highland Park United



Methodist Church. The Baum's have been married for 44 years and have 3 children: Sarah, Amy, and Kevin. Amy is married to Austin, and they have blessed them with two grandchildren. Fred is now a retired Methodist pastor. While Fred served his churches in Mesa and Tucson, Deede served as children's and youth choir director, Bible Study facilitator, and VBS/music camp worker. Because of the distance from their home during his last pastorate, it was difficult to get involved in weekly activities. She eventually sought out a Bible study closer to home and found the Thursday Women's Bible Study at Desert Hope. She started to attend once she retired. She has grown to love the ladies in the group and admire their dedication to Christ so much.

Once Fred retired, Deede encouraged him to attend Desert Hope, and he has grown to love it, too. At Desert Hope, Deede is fortunate enough to be part of the praise team, still attends the Women's Bible Study, is part of the Jesus Shaped Way Group, and assists with children's Sunday school. Deede is so inspired by the people of this church and is thankful to God for leading them here. For the past few months, Deede has been asking God to speak to her and use her as He sees fit. She decided to become a member at Desert Hope, and shortly thereafter the invitation to serve on the call committee was given. She brings a unique perspective as a pastor's wife to the call committee and is humbled to be asked to serve, and is looking forward to seeing God work!

### Kent Kloepping

Kent will be 88 years old in June 2026, an 81 year survivor of polio in 1945. His Christian Journey began in rural Midwest as a member of the Evangelical United Brethren Church.

He was married in 1963 in the Missouri Synod Lutheran Church in South Branch Minnesota. When their son was born in 1972, they joined Tanque Verde Lutheran Church in Tucson where he served one term as congregational president.

When Desert Hope was founded, he and his wife joined as they felt this congregation more accurately and authentically represented the fundamental biblical values of Christianity. At Desert Hope he has limited experience serving on church committees, rather focusing on church services, and attending men's Bible studies.

He sees his primary responsibilities on the call committee as understanding more fully the goals and needs of our church for the future; and especially to discern the guidance of the Holy Spirit in how we can achieve these objectives.



## Jim Kress

Hi, I'm Jim Kress. My wife Linda and I are founding members of Desert Hope Lutheran Church. We have been married for 28 years. We are a blended family and have 4 children and 13 grandchildren between us.

I have been active in the congregation since the start, serving on the Praise Team as a singer and guitar player, helping to run slides and sound, leading and participating in bible studies and serving on the Leadership Council. I look forward to serving on the Call Committee as we seek God's guidance in leading us to our next pastor.



## Dorothy McClean



Dorothy McClean was born in Chicago, IL, and moved to the northern suburb of Wilmette at the age of 6. She was raised in the Lutheran Church, attended Sunday School, Confirmation classes, and church services weekly. She was also active in the children's choir, and youth groups. She knew Jesus as her Lord and Savior around age 3 and has tried to serve Him since then. Dorothy had three children - two daughters and one son. Her son passed away at age 56 in 2023. Her daughters are both in Arizona, one in Green Valley and one in Tucson. Three of her five grandchildren live in Tucson, and the other two are in Washington, D.C. & Idaho. She has three great-grandchildren in Tucson, all of whom are in high school. Dorothy has been retired from Underwriters Laboratories for over twelve years.

Dorothy has been very active in the 3-day retreats, serving on Cursillo, Via de Cristo, and John 17 weekends. She finds that serving on the weekends brings more love and blessings to her life than she could ever imagine. Dorothy has lived in Tucson for more than 40 years and finds it the most desirable place to call home this side of Heaven. She enjoys travelling and especially going on cruises. As age brings about

foreseeable restrictions, she has settled on more sedentary ways to serve in the church. She is active with the Prayer Ministry and enjoys attending Bible studies.

When asked to serve on the call committee, Dorothy was quick to say "yes", as she believes that the ones leading worship have a huge influence on the faith growth of the congregation. Having previously served in many positions of leadership in the churches she has attended before joining Desert Hope, she feels that God can use her in this important position. Through prayer, Dorothy feels that she can bring insight and discernment to the committee commissioned to call another pastor to Desert Hope.

## LeeAnn Sample



LeeAnn was born and raised in Tucson (5th generation Arizonian), except for one year when she moved to Nashville. She had several jobs before starting at Raytheon in 2014, where she is very proud to work. She met her husband, Jarret Sample in 2014. They have been married 8 years. She has two step-sons, Isaac (26) and Dominic (24).

LeeAnn has been a member of Desert Hope since 2018, even though she has been attending since the very first service in May of 2010. She served 4 years on the council, one of those years as Vice President. She has also been a member of the DHLC Alpha team. After moving home from Nashville, LeeAnn had a new found appreciation for Tucson, its beautiful scenery, amazing weather, and of course, its birds.

## Dave Strong

Dave and his wife Judy of 60 years grew up in Ohio. They have lived on the east and west coast as well as Colorado. They moved to Tucson in 2000 and joined Tanque Verde Lutheran Church where Dave ushered and served on the church council until 2009. They are charter members of Desert Hope.

At Desert Hope Dave is currently a communion assistant and a member of the Agua Prieta shelter building team. In the past, Dave served on the youth ministry team.

In 2014 Dave felt the Lord's call to be an answer to Jesus' prayer in the 17<sup>th</sup> chapter of John for unity



within the body of Christ here in Tucson. Dave worked closely with Pastor Dave Drum to start John 17 weekends. John 17 weekends are 72-hour retreats that encourage a closer relationship with Christ, provide Christian leadership training, and promote Christian unity. John 17 weekends have involved clergy and laity from over 70 Christian congregations in our city of diverse ethnic, age, and denominational/non-denominational backgrounds.

Other activities that keep Dave busy include hiking and bicycling. He is also a frequent blood platelet and plasma donor.

Dave is honored to have been asked to consider serving on the pastoral call committee.

## **Todd Sander**

My wife Vicky and I are charter members of Desert Hope and life-long Lutherans. I am currently retired and I am a former public sector information technology executive. During my career, I served in the State of Washington, City of Tucson and with a large public sector electric utility in Austin, Texas. My previous church leadership experience includes serving Desert Hope as President and Vice President, leader of the Personnel Committee and as Treasurer and council member for Fountain of Life. Vicky and I have two married children and one grandchild spread between Albuquerque, NM and Cape Town, South Africa.

