

**The Good Shepherd United Church of Christ  
Annual Alternative Gift Mission Fair  
Sunday, December 4, 2022**

The Annual Alternative Gift Mission Fair is an opportunity for our church to support organizations in our region that share our mission and values, and who serve the people who need it most. This year we have three well-deserving charities from which to choose. On Sunday, December 4, we will have the opportunity to bring whatever financial gifts we may, for one, two, or all three of these amazing places where ordinary people do extraordinary things for those who are the least, last, over-looked, left-behind, and underserved in our world. *This year, to make things easier for bookkeeping, we're asking that you make a separate check made out to The Good Shepherd for each charity you're donating to. And put the name of the charity in the memo line at the bottom left of your check. If you write your checks online, please do the same, one, two or three separate checks, with the charity name on each check in the memo section noted. Although the final collection day will be December 4, you can send your offering anytime between now and then or bring it to church and place it in the offering plate.*

**Amado Youth Center, Amado Arizona**  
<https://facebook.com/amadoyouthcenter>

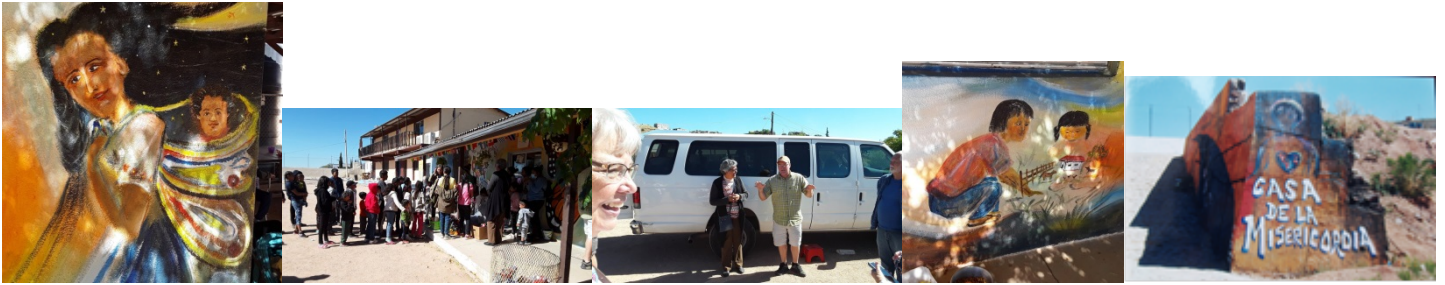
The Amado Youth Center strives to provide positive, fun, skill-building opportunities for youth. Their programs promote academic and career success for youth ages 8 to 18. The Amado Youth Center began as a place to help give kids in their rural community something to do with their time. It has quickly, through the generous support of volunteers and community partners, become a busy hub of activity. From gardening to earning a red belt in martial arts, the youth center offers opportunities at every age group and is continually growing in its understanding of area youth and how to best meet their needs. They offer a variety of programs at the youth center including an after-school session called "Too Good for Drugs" where the kids learn about the harms and consequences of underage drinking, drug use, and coping and resistance skills. Youth also learn how to set positive goals and work over time to achieve them. The after school program also provides a safe place to do homework, where caring adults show genuine interest in the child's schoolwork. In addition to its direct work with youth, the Center also provides support to the community with a food bank and clothing drop for those needing assistance of all kinds. *The photos below are from recent event at the Youth Center:*



**Casa De La Misericordia y de Todas las Naciones, Nogales, Sonora, Mexico**  
<https://facebook.com/Casa-De-La-Misericordia-y-de-Todas-las-Naciones-1045724705512316/>

The House of Mercy is a place of refuge for people migrating from all over Latin America, the Middle East, Asia and Africa. They are waiting for their asylum case to be called for their entry to the United States. It is an oasis in the desert, where adults and children can find respite from their journeys, from places they loved, but are no longer safe. It is a stopping point for those who would rather have remained in the lands of their ancestors but who no longer find it safe to live, work, and raise their families because of physical and economic terrorism. It is a place where children who have experienced the unimaginable to learn in peace, surrounded by loving adults free from immediate fear. Sister Lika and her amazing helpers have served at the House of Mercy for forty years. Randy Mayer has known her and the House of Mercy for twenty years. The Good Shepherd has been a faithful supporter of this miraculous garden of hope for many years. But the mission has never needed our support more than the present. Just this calendar year 700 people have been processed to enter the United States who were waiting at the House of Mercy. During a recent visit our Mission Team and guests made to the House, we witnessed a large family being turned away because the "Inn" was full. Because there were no beds available this family like hundreds of others must find refuge on the streets, cemeteries, parks, and ditches to wait. Rape, murder, robbery, and terror are what many will encounter. Some will attempt to cross over through the desert on their own or with Cartel Coyotes, who are as dangerous as the streets. But inside the walls of the House of Mercy, is mercy, hope, grace, and peace incarnate.

Photos below are art made by the migrants and pictures of the children being handed out coloring books and gifts from The Good Shepherd members and guests.



The Dee and Pres Johnson Memorial Probigua Scholarship Fund

<http://www.probigua.com/about.htm>

Probigua is a language learning school in Guatemala, where young people can learn languages improving their abilities to find better employment assisting themselves and their families. The late Dee and Pres Johnson, among others, began a relationship with Probigua and its volunteers over 20 years ago. Over that time The Good Shepherd has assisted the Probigua children and their families on a deep and intimate level. Our support not only deals with educating the children but in helping them with a level of support which makes learning easier. We also developed with its leader, Spanish language classes at The Good Shepherd every year as well as immersion experiences for Spanish learners in Guatemala with the people served by Probigua. Our donations and support are integral to the work being done there.

*The photos below are of the school bus that literally brings the school and library to the children, and a class of children together.*

