

First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ
An Open and Affirming Congregation
216 E. Gurley Street, Prescott, Arizona 86301
Office: 928-445-4555 ~ Email: FccPrescott@gmail.com
~ Facebook: www.Facebook.com/FccUccPrescott ~



PFLAG IN PRESCOTT



If you are interested in joining PFLAG or need the support for yourself or a friend, contact Julie Jaquette in the Church office: 928-445-4555
Meeting: April 24th, 6 PM, Church Library

Prescott has a new Emergent Chapter of the National Organization, PFLAG

Vision: PFLAG envisions a world where diversity is celebrated and all people are respected, valued, and affirmed inclusive of their sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.

Mission: By meeting people where they are and collaborating with others, PFLAG realizes its vision through:

Support for families, allies and people who are LGBTQ

Education for ourselves and others about the unique issues and challenges facing people who are LGBTQ

Advocacy in our communities to change attitudes and create policies and laws that achieve full equality for people who are LGBTQ.

April



THE PARISH CALLER

First Congregational Church, UCC Prescott

“Passion-Palm Sunday”



Aisles strewn with Palms...



...to the moving Passion Reading.

50 Days of Celebration...

Easter actually begins a new liturgical season of 50 Days of celebration, a kind of counter balance to the solemn 40 days of Lent. The nature of faith involves a dynamic ebb and flow of solemnity and celebration, with the definite overriding emphasis on joy and celebration! The Fifty Days of Celebration concludes with the Pentecostal giving of the Holy Spirit. Dietrich Bonhoeffer noted this neglect, even by Lutherans, in his diary. As I seek to understand the Ascension of Christ, I am drawn to the mystery of his presence, though he is visibly absent. “While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them....” (Luke24:51) Perhaps the best human analogy is when we sense the encouraging presence, perhaps in a time of hardship, of someone much loved who is now dead. Well, more on “this presence in absence” later. - Rev. Ed

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The Rev. Ed Mendenhall, aka, “Rev. Ed,” is our short term, temporary pastor (beginning on Sunday, Feb. 22). Please contact him via his Cell # 480-297-9797 or Email – egmend45@msn.com .

Rev. Ed is here late Fridays – late Mondays. Feel free to contact him at any time.

PLEASE USE CELL # IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY. LEAVE A VOICE MESSAGE & he will return the call in a timely way.

DO NOT EMAIL in case of an emergency or an urgent situation.

“Some Thoughts on Healing”

Some years ago I spoke with a doctor about the role of a patient’s self-motivation and positive desire in the process of healing. He noted that he usually found two types of patients -- those who are not motivated, and those who are motivated in the extreme! (I admit most of us find ourselves somewhere in the middle!)

I called attention to a healing story as recorded in John 5:2 - 16, in which Jesus tries to engage the patient’s motivation in the healing process through a question. Jesus asks this man, lying on his mat, ill for some 38 years, this question: “Do you want to be made well?” Shockingly the man begins to make excuses – no one helps him to the pool of the healing waters, someone else always gets ahead of him, etc. But Jesus refuses to listen to these excuses. Jesus just commands the man to stand and to walk. It is as if God will not listen to excuses or validate inner blocks!

Individuals as well as churches sometimes become “stuck” in a negative past or in a debilitating despair. Maybe a past trauma immobilizes. Perhaps a broken relationship with a loved one or a past conflict has created a lasting hindrance or resistance. Perhaps some past grief creates a block. Maybe a present severe physical illness or disability drains us.

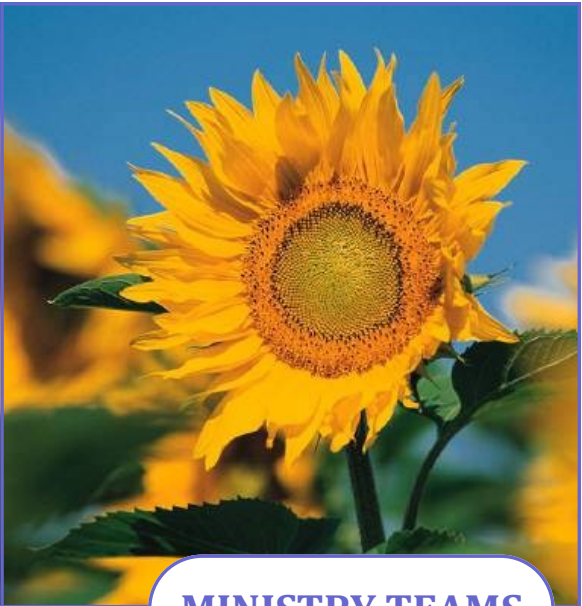
Whatever the block to healing, God

“*is still speaking*” and questioning us, “Do you want to be made well?”

Any of life’s transitions is a propitious moment to look at ourselves in careful reflection and to say “yes” to God and to healing. And real healing revives an optimism about the future. Hope grows. Generosity increases. Graciousness and love increase. People begin to set aside past grudges or negative issues.

These are some of the signs of healing. Granted, however, healing -- to be made whole and conformed to God’s redemptive pathway – takes time. We do not move forward all of a sudden but gradually. Still, to move forward, we must be committed to listening to God’s question, “Do you want to be made well?” We must accept in faith that God’s highest intention is to heal, to make whole, to grant peace (“shalom”). Finally, we must continually ask God to lead us by the Spirit. This requires hard work, patience, openness to God’s “light yet to come forth”[--from memory; see the rose window] and the acceptance of the measure of the peace God grants.

I discern God’s healing grace & power at work here at First Congregational Church UCC in Prescott. God is in our midst, beckoning us forward along the way of honest reconciliation, deeper understanding, greater faith, love abiding and a future of hope.



MINISTRY TEAMS

“Well Done My Good and Faithful Servant”

CABINET

Moderator	John McCurdy
Vice Moderator	Bret Ely
Treasurer	Harry Gamble
Clerk	Julie McCurdy
Trustee Chair	John Huff
Congregation Care Chair	Judy Ely
Ministry Education Chair	
Outreach Chair	Barbara McClure
Church Relations	
Member at Large	Sylvia Staats

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Marilyn Kerstine, Chair
Alice Kring

CONGREGATION CARE (DEACONS)

Judy Ely, Chair
Julie McCurdy
Ronny de Jong, Home Ministry
Merlin Christy, Assist w/ Home Ministry
Kathy Stephens, Receptions
Anne Solt
Lee Ruether

TRUSTEES

John Huff, Chair
Al Beeson
Don Stephens

WORSHIP

Judy Daly
Linda Foote
Marilyn Kerstine
Jane Osborne
Barbara Redmond

OUTREACH MINISTRY

Barbara McClure, Chair
Donna Bauman
Mike de Jong
Gary Gard
Patty Gard

CALLED TO CARE

Marilyn Kerstine, Chair
Donna Baumann
Barbara McClure
Jim Jackson
Dawn Sherman
Kathy Stephens
Lee Ruether

WOMAN'S FELLOWSHIP

Sylvia Staats, Treasurer

FOUNDATION

Dave Foote, President
Mike de Jong, Vice President
John Huff, Trustee Chair
Al Beeson, Treasurer
Angela Imbierowicz, Secretary

CHURCH STAFF

Pastor / Minister	Ed Mendenhall
Office Administrator	Julie Jaquette
Director of Music	Jane Osborne
Organist / Bell Choir	Carole Sue Linson
Custodian	Bill Linson
Child Care	
Coffee Coordinator	Debbie Staats



Easter Sunday, April 5th

- Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary - 9:00 am
- Worship Service, Sanctuary - 10:30 am

Monday, April 6th

- Exploring Faith, Church Library - 6:30 pm

Tuesday, April 7th

- Knit Wits, Church Conference Room - 1:00 pm

Wednesday, April 8th

- Agape Soup Supper, Perkins Hall - 5:30 pm

Thursday, April 9th

- Bell Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary - 11:00 am

Sunday, April 12th

- Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary - 9:00 am
- Worship Service, Sanctuary - 10:30 am
- Las Fuentes, 3:00 pm

Monday, April 13th

- Exploring Faith, Church Library - 6:30

Tuesday, April 14st

- Outreach Committee Meeting, Church Conference Room - 10:30 am

Thursday, April 16th

- Bell Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary - 11:00 am

Sunday, April 19th

- Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary - 9:00 am
- Worship Service, Sanctuary - 10:30 am

Monday, April 20th

- Exploring Faith, Church Library - 6:30

Tuesday, April 21st

- Knit Wits, Church Conference Room - 1:00 pm

Thursday, April 23rd

- Las Fuentes Spiritual Living Class, Las Fuentes - 10:00 am
- Bell Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary - 11:00 am
- Cabinet Meeting, Church Conference Room - 6:30 pm

Sunday, April 26th

- Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary - 9:00 am
- Worship Service, Sanctuary - 10:30 am
- Crop Walk, Mountain Valley Community Park Prescott Valley - 2:00 pm

Monday, April 27th

- Exploring Faith, Church Library - 6:30

Tuesday, April 28th

- Called to Care Meeting, Church Conference Room - 2:00 pm

Thursday, April 30th

- Bell Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary - 11:00 am

MODERATOR’S MESSAGE from John McCurdy

As part of the search process in calling a new minister we needed to create a profile of our church: who we are, what we do, and what we want to become. The Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer has also asked that we provide him with a description of our church as an introduction to the future Conference Minister for the Southwest Conference.

We are an open and affirming church, in action and in words. We strive to practice extravagant welcome to all. We are proud to have a long and rich history in the Prescott community. We are now, and have been throughout our history, very involved in our community, both as individuals and as a church. We are committed to outreach, to making a difference, locally and beyond. Our outreach is strongly rooted in our commitment to equality, peace and social justice.

Our community is both “old and new,” in both our thinking and in our practice. Theologically, we are diverse: conservative, traditional, middle of the road, liberal, progressive. We value and respect this spiritual diversity and welcome the opportunity for dialogue and learning. We are an intellectual, creative and talented group of people who

truly enjoy fellowship with each other.

We love children – the few we have among us today are well loved by all – a baby’s cry or a young child’s commentary in worship is never an interruption – these are sounds we love to hear and they make us smile.

Education is important to this church. During the late 1800s when Chinese immigrants were shunned and discriminated against, our church educated the men of our local Chinese community to help them create better lives for their families. Our church was instrumental in founding Prescott College, an environmentally-forward university which advocates for social justice. Still today, we seek out opportunities to learn and grow.

We are a center of community activity; we are host to Boy Scout Troop 1, Cub Scout Troop 1, more than 20 twelve-step programs, our local PFLAG organization, dance and theater groups, and community events and fundraisers. We have helped incubate churches of other faiths by sharing our facilities with them as they became established and grew to readiness for their own space elsewhere in the community.

While our strong inclination is to focus on spiritual growth, we recognize that we must also grow financially. We acknowledge that a key to this growth is in finding ways to make ourselves more known in our community. As such, we are looking to improve our internal and external communications, and to widen the reach and effectiveness of our extravagant welcome to all.

We are committed to investing our time, creativity and financial resources to the potential that God calls us to be. We know, though, that our efforts are only of value if we have something happening inside our walls that people want, that brings them to us, that engages them, that allows them to experience God in a very real and meaningful way.

In covenant,
John McCurdy

News From the Southwest Conference:



By: Al Beeson

On March 7 the Southwest Conference [SWC] held its Mission Planning Board meeting at the SWC Phoenix Offices.

As your FCC Prescott representative to that Board this report is being made to update every one of the happenings within the SW Conference.

As you can imagine the news that the SWC Minister the Dr. Rev J. Dorhauer name has been placed in nomination to serve as the General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ was almost the first order of business as well as the question.... of just how do we replace him?

Well, the SWC Executive Board announced a “fast track” program and effort to have a new “designated” SWC Minister aboard by September 1st 2015. That goal was determined to be feasible and most practical at this time for the SWC and its member churches. The SWC Churches are asked to help financially in any way possible to assist the SWC search efforts and its associated costs that were not in the original 2015/2016 budget.

The SWC Annual meeting 2015 will be held at The Church of the Red Rocks, Sedona on the weekend of April 17 Friday and the Saturday April 18 with a theme/topics that support the idea of “Restoring Creation” in our world by supporting environmental efforts that improve our world

for future generations. Guest speaker will be the Rev Jim Antal CM of the Mass Conf. and Rev Doug Bland who has chaired the “Earth Care Commission for the AZ Ecumenical Council and is Ex Director of the AZ Interfaith Power and Light: a religious response to global warming.”

Also discussed was the upcoming retirement of Barbara Decker and Holly Herman. They will remain doing so well what is needed for the SWC but efforts are underway to see to their replacements [hard to do] in the next 12-18 months. They will only retire after the new designated SWC Minister is well established and their retirements will be staggered. As members of the SWC we are encouraged and enlisted to help find the new SWC staff members that will be needed.

Camp this year is alive and well and is being planned for May 31 for juniors and June 14 for the younger campers.

As a MPB member I have been asked to participate in the SWC EX BOD retreat March 27 and 28th. That is an honor for me and for the FCC Prescott Church.



Lay Academy

Privilege

Fri, May 15, 2015, 5:00pm to
Sat, May 16, 2015, 4:00pm
First Congregational Church UCC, Prescott

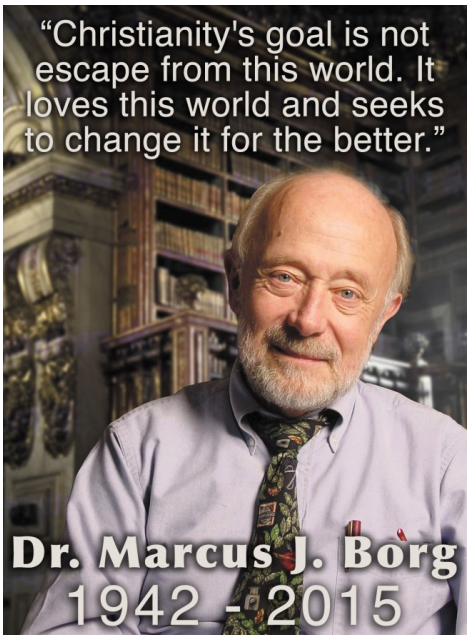
Facilitator: Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer

Privilege is defined as a right, immunity, or benefit enjoyed only by a person beyond the advantages of most. We will look at cultural conditions that authorize the extension of privilege to some because of their race, gender, or sexual orientation. We will test this cultural phenomenon of privilege using the standards of equality shaped by our walk with Jesus.



First Congregational Church will be hosting this Lay Academy, Please See Julie in the Church office about how you can help with meals.

In Memory of Dr. Marcus J. Borg



Dr. Borg, a prominent liberal theologian and Bible scholar who for a generation helped popularize the intense debates about the historical Jesus and the veracity and meaning of the New Testament, died on Wednesday (Jan. 21). He was 72 and had been suffering from pulmonary fibrosis.



History of First Congregational Church

Part 2, by Jay Eby

It seems to me that the current popular history of Prescott would like to emphasize the wild west, Indian wars, mining boom town, and of course Whisky Row.

All of these are of course a part of our history. But, as the Capital City of the new Territory of Arizona, there was within our community a concerted effort to make our town a well planned civil place to live and raise a family. In spite of all the sin and distractions of Whisky Row, they did just that.

Our predecessors in the faith at First Congregational Church worked hard to make this happen.

They did it by example and action to bring churches, schools and culture to what was then a wilderness Capital in the Wild West.

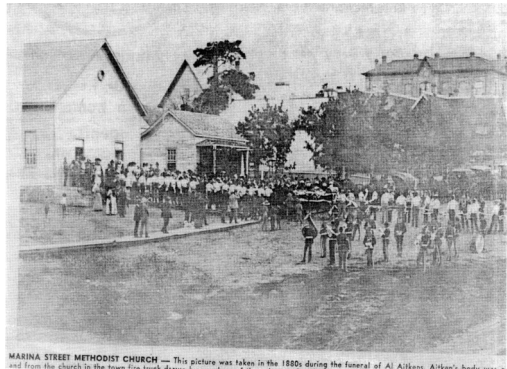
First Congregational Church was not the first Christian fellowship in Prescott. The persons that formed this

congregation had been in fact a part of other fellowships before.

All of the written histories of First Congregational Church start with: "First Congregational Society of Prescott, Arizona was organized with thirteen charter members on September 26, 1880, at the home of T. W. and Pamela Otis. This church is the oldest Congregational Church in Arizona and what is now the Southwest Conference."

Most church histories, including ours, highlight the buildings built, the Ministers that served, and the numbers of persons in the membership. These are important, but I would like to celebrate those men and women that built and sustained our City of Prescott as a great place to live and raise our families.

Least we get too prideful we must recognize that our beginnings were with



the cooperation and assistance of other congregations of faith that existed in Prescott before us. We know that Bishop Lamy from Santa Fe held at least Christmas Mass in Prescott in 1863. What has been described as Sunday School classes were held in several buildings in Prescott from the beginning. The teaching was often augmented by Army Chaplains from Fort Whipple.

The first building in town specifically built for worship was on Marina Street by those that called themselves Methodists. A Baptist congregation shared this building for some time as well as a Catholic and Presbyterian congregation.



Anniversaries

MCCURDY, John & Julie 04/18

Birthdays

STEELE, Kristin Ely 04/04

BRADSTREET, Wesley 04/05

LANDKAMER, Steven 04/12

SOLT, Ron 04/13

FEUERRIEGEL, Cindy 04/17

MARSHALL, Edythe 04/29

If your anniversary or birthday is missing, let Julie know in the office! 445-4555

Our Annual Church World Service Crop Walk for the Hungry is on April 26th with Faith United Church in Dewey AND several other churches in Prescott Valley.



CALLED TO CARE

NEXT MEETING APRIL 28, 2:00-4:00 PM Church

CROP HUNGER WALK
ENDING HUNGER ONE STEP AT A TIME

Walkers will gather in Prescott Valley at Mountain Valley Community Park at the Ramada at 2:00 P. M. There's loads of parking, paved walking paths, restrooms, playground and a dog park! Dogs on a leash are welcome. 25% of our dollars will go to Prescott Community Cupboard & Yavapai Food Pantry. A sign up sheet is also in Perkins Hall for walking and offering donations.

From The South West Conference

Rev. Tyler Connoley, Pastor, Silver City UCC
Immigrant Care Coordinator

Silver City, NM, is classified as "frontier" by government agencies -- that's one step beyond "rural." We love our remoteness. We love that we're not on the way to anything. And we especially love our independence. I've noticed that we have a lot of people in Grant County who moved here because they don't want anything to do with the socialist government (and they live right next door to people who moved here to drop out of the capitalist system).

In the southwest, with our live-and-let-live mentality, it's easy to forget how much we need each other. That's especially true when we live somewhere like Silver City, where our closest sister church is three hours away. So you might be surprised to hear that Silver City has taught me more about interdependence than anywhere else I've lived.

When I was in a larger city, it was easy to find my peeps. I had lots of people close by who shared my religious, political, and social perspectives. In frontier New Mexico, that's harder to do. So, I rely on the community of UCCers in other cities to be my community.

Seeing the work being done by folks around Arizona, New Mexico, and El Paso energizes me. It gives me hope to know that my sisters and brothers in Sahuarita are driving the backroads of Pima County, offering water and love. It makes me proud to see Pastor Sarah at the court-

We've learned from the examples of other post-modern communities, like Rebel & Divine, Desert View, and Sacred Space.

house in Bernalillo County, NM, standing on the side of love. It inspires me to action in my own community when I talk to Pastor Jessie at Iglesia Congregacional la Trinidad about the "non-churchy" ways she creates community for the women of her neighborhood. But it's more than inspiration that I get from my like-minded sisters and brothers in the Southwest Conference.

When our local church was going through tough times, our conference minister was a source of strength and wisdom, and clergy colleagues offered shoulders to cry on, and prayers for love to prevail. Then, as our new fledgling church began to grow, we found ourselves more-and-more relying on the moral support and guidance of folks from across the conference. Our members have been prodded, challenged, and inspired by Lay Academy events and Annual Meeting workshops.

Continued on next page...

From The SW Conference

Continued from page 6

We've learned from the examples of other post-modern communities, like Rebel & Divine, Desert View, and Sacred Space. We've participated long-distance in projects we never could have done on our own, like the Sanctuary Movement of 2014. I've personally benefited from bi-weekly phone calls with Pastor Alberta and Pastor Tina, visits from pastor colleagues, random "just checking in" phone calls, and annual Clergy Retreats -- all of which keep me grounded and provide a community of faith that I can't find in the clergy of Grant County.

In a town where Silver City UCC represents the only Christian community pushing the boundaries of what it means to be Christian in the twenty-first century, we are literally living frontier Christianity. However, we couldn't possibly do it without our sisters and brothers in the cities, the suburbs, and the rural communities throughout the Southwest Conference. You are our community on this journey, and we're grateful to be able to walk hand-in-hand with you.

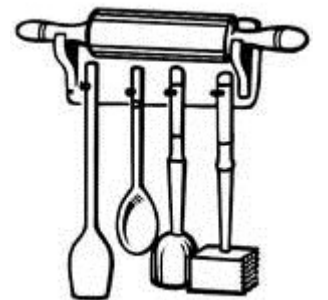


APRIL OUTREACH

TUNA!

We will be collecting cans of tuna for the month of April for the Prescott Area Woman's Shelter.

Kitchen
Items will
also be
collected



O Easter God, who shatters all the familiar tombs which we create, enable us to move beyond slavish conformity either to old understandings or to new fashions and with joy embrace your ever-changing, ever challenging future.