

The Parish Caller

"No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here."

April 1, 2016

First Congregational
Church, United
Church of Christ,
Prescott



FEATURED THIS ISSUE

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This Week at a Glance...

- ◆ PFLAG Funky Friday 7 pm
- ◆ Choir Practice Sunday 9 am
- ◆ Exploring Faith Sunday 9 am
- ◆ Knit Wits Tuesday 1-3 pm
- ◆ Bell Choir Rehearsal Thursday 11 am
- ◆ Woman's Fellowship Friday 12 noon

From the Pastor:

It was a wonderful Easter worship last week and a great attendance with many visitors! This Sunday is often called "low Sunday" or "cannon ball Sunday" because you can shoot down the middle of the sanctuary and not hit anyone. We hope we have a few more than that. We are going to join other churches around the country in observing "holy humor Sunday." Many American churches are resurrecting an old Easter custom begun by the Greeks in the early centuries of Christianity-"Holy Humor Sunday" celebrations of Jesus' resurrection on the Sunday after Easter. For centuries in Eastern Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant countries, the week following Easter Sunday, including "Bright Sunday" (the Sunday after Easter), was observed by the faithful as "days of joy and laughter" with parties and picnics to celebrate Jesus' resurrection. The custom was rooted in the musings of early church theologians (like Augustine, Gregory of Nyssa, and John Chrysostom) that God played a practical joke on the devil by raising Jesus from the dead. "*Risus paschalis* - the Easter laugh," the early theologians called it.

Bring Jokes With You This Sunday! There will be two "Joke Breaks" during the service to share brief jokes (clean them up, please!)

I hope this yearly tradition takes hold in our church. There are tons of resources and ideas on the web, and some funny ways congregations choose to create their worship service, like bringing in a "relief preacher." Here is an article I found from the *Joyful Newsletter*:

'It's good theology'

David Crumm, religion writer of *The Detroit Free*

Press, wrote a delightful article titled "Be of Good Cheer" about the Holy Humor Sunday service at First Congregational Church of Royal Oak, MI. Crumm noted that Holy Humor Sunday is "a modern adaptation of the ancient custom of Easter Monday, which still is a holiday in dozens of



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From Pastor Jay

countries,” featuring picnics, parties, practical jokes, joke-telling, and boys and girls drenching each other with water.

“Thanks to *The Joyful Noiseletter*, Americans need not worry about being drenched with water in the name of extending Easter joy,” Crumm wrote. “In hundreds of churches across the country, as at First Congregational Church of Royal Oak, everybody stays dry and the celebration is moved from the Monday after Easter to the following Sunday.”

The Royal Oak church staged a fully costumed series of baseball sketches in a nine-inning baseball service, complete with a chicken mascot cheering on the congregation.

Pastor John Miller, dressed in a baseball costume, pitched his sermon from the mound – i.e. pulpit while two relief preachers warmed up in a makeshift bullpen on the side. In the middle of his sermon, a young coach stopped the service, said loudly, “John, you just don’t have it today,” and called for a relief preacher. Rev. Miller insisted that Holy Humor Sunday “isn’t sacrilegious. It’s good theology.” Commented *Joyful Noiseletter* editor Cal Samra: “After all the pain of Holy Week – the crucifixion of Jesus and all the pain that led up to that – a lot of Christians feel that they should spend more time rallying around the good news of Jesus’ resurrection. A growing number of Christians feel that we should celebrate the joy of the resurrection for more than just one day.”

So, see you Sunday for some much needed humor and laughing. And for the sermon, I will try to follow the advice of the late George Burns: “The best sermons have a good beginning and a good ending, and not much in between.”

God bless,

Jay

Thank you to all who donated nursery items for our new nursery. We still need a few more toddler toys and books. Please drop off at the church office.

Check out our churches website:
www.fccprescott.org

Upcoming Events, Members Directory, Parish Caller, “Sign-Up Genius”, Weekly Calendar, Donate online and much more!

Church Members Directory Now On-Line!
www.fccprescott.org/directory/

You will need a password, call the church office at 928-445-4555. For the safety and privacy of our members and friends, the password will be given out to members and friends.

Sign-up for the various volunteer opportunities of the church.

"Sign-Up Genius"

Palm Sunday

April Announcements

- ◆ Women’s Fellowship Meeting Reminder – April 8th – 12 noon – bring your own lunch. Please remember to bring your red folders. We will be making many decisions on upcoming events. Everyone welcome!
- ◆ Our newly adopted local mission outreach project, Discovery Gardens Preschool, is a year long outreach mission. A donation box for needed supplies is in the front of the sanctuary. The children like graham crackers, goldfish crackers, etc.
- ◆ The Sunday morning study group will start again with "Embracing an Adult Faith", with Marcus Borg presenting five topics: God, Jesus, Salvation, Practice and Community. Borg presents traditional and 21st Century views to a small group on DVD, they react, and then we discuss what we have seen. Join us at 9:00-10:00 in the Library downstairs.
- ◆ For the month of April, our mission outreach project will address the needs of local shelters and the homeless. Those needs include: toilet and facial tissue, dish and laundry detergent, bar soap, deodorant, and paper towels. Donations may be deposited in the box displayed in the chancel area of the sanctuary.

CALLLED TO CARE TRAINING APRIL 14 AT 1:00 PM: CHURCH OFFICE

- ◆ Pastor Jay and Marilyn Kerstine would like to invite each of you to share our call and role as caregivers in our Called To Care program. Come to refresh and strengthen your skills and begin further training toward becoming Official First Congregational Church Caregivers. Pastor Jay will commission us during worship upon completion of this training, quite like Pastoral Care classes in Seminary and worth our time.
- ◆ Please RSVP to Marilyn Kerstine (771-1452 or mkerstine@icloud.com) so we have all the resources available for you.
- ◆ Bring your questions and experiences as we learn more together with God's love and help. If you prefer to audit the class without becoming official caregivers, we encourage that also!

SAVE THE DATE: WEDNESDAY, MAY 18, 5:30 PM PERKINS HALL

- ◆ Marilyn Skovgard will be presenting her workbook that brings peace of mind to families by helping them prepare all the necessary information in one place: “Household Matters A-Z” helps organize it all.

By completing this all-inclusive workbook you will:

Create an all-in-one record of your personal, household, benefits, financial and final wishes. **Possess** a grab-and-go book in the event of an evacuation or the unexpected. **Prevent** misunderstandings and communicate your wishes. **Provide** information needed to finalize your estate. **Have peace of mind** you have created a comprehensive record for you and your loved ones. It's the ultimate gift!

NEW MEMBERS RECEIVED SUNDAY, APRIL 17

This church welcomes into its fellowship any person who subscribes to the teachings of Jesus Christ. Membership is open to all without regard to age, race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender identity, faith, marital status, and personal ability. Members may participate in any activity of this church and may serve in an elected or appointed position of leadership. Members have the right to vote at any Annual or Special Meeting. Full rights and privileges of membership are granted to those members wishing to retain membership with other Christian Churches.

JOHN HARPER MEMORIAL SERVICE – WEDNESDAY, APRIL 20, 2PM

Holy Humor

Bulletin, noun;
1. something to read during the sermon;
2. a fan used in churches without air conditioning;
3. your receipt for attending church.



Ongoing & Weekly Events

CHOIR PRACTICE meets Sundays at 9 am in the Sanctuary. See Jane Osborn if you would like to join the choir!
BELL CHOIR PRACTICE at 11 am on Thursdays

KNIT WITS meets the 1st & 3rd Tuesdays of every month from 1-3 pm in the Office Conference Room.

LAS FUENTES
1035 Scott Dr., Prescott
SPIRITUAL LIVING Class is held the 3rd Thursday of every month at 10 am, led by Called to Care Ministry.
~And~
Worship Service is also held the 2nd Sunday of every month at 3 pm, led by Pastor Jay.

EXPLORING FAITH
Living the Questions Study Group
Sunday Mornings at 9 am in the Church Library
~And~
Monday Evening Discussion Group 6 pm in the Church Library

First Congregational Church, UCC
216 E. Gurley Street
Prescott, AZ 86301
928-445-4555
fccprescott@gmail.com
Administration Office Hours
Mondays: 9:00 - 4:00
Tuesday - Friday: 9:00 - 1:00
Pastor Jay
Monday - Thursday
9:00 - 1:00
Other times by appointment
Cell: 928-899-9066
jayfccprescott@gmail.com

PFLAG SUPPORT GROUP meets the 3rd Friday of every month at 6:30 pm in the Church Library. See Julie J. for more details.

PASS MEAL is a once-a-month ministry where we provide a meal for the Prescott Area Shelter Services the 3rd Wednesday of every month at 5:30 pm. Sign-up sheet is in Perkins Hall.

Funky Friday Game Night
Hosted by PFLAG
Everyone Welcome! 7-9 pm
1st Friday of every Month starting in November

CABINET MEETING meets the 4th Thursday of every month at 6:30 pm in the Office Conference Room.

CALLED TO CARE MINISTRY meets the 4th Tuesday of every month from 2-4 pm in the Office Conference Room. If you are interested in being part of this ministry, see Marilyn Kerstine.