

The Parish Caller

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

March 18, 2016

First Congregational
Church, United
Church of Christ,
Prescott



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March Spring Schedule

- **Woman's Fellowship Coffee:** Saturday March 19 at 10 am. Join us ladies as we get together to fellowship and organize the woman's/deaconate closet.
- **Palm Sunday Worship Service:** March 20: at 10:30 am.
- **Cabinet Meeting:** Moved to Wednesday night March 23rd at 6:30 pm.
- **Maunday Thursday, Passover Seder Meal:** March 24: 6:00 pm at the Dewey UCC. Car pooling will be available for those that would like a ride. Sign-up sheet is in Perkin's Hall.
- **Good Friday:** March 25 we are invited to attend the Dewey Church's communion service at 5:30 pm.
- **Easter Sunday Worship Service:** March 27th: at 10:30 am.
- **Jazz Vespers:** March 30th at 6:30 pm. Alber Sarko Jazz Quartet will be playing.
- **Safe, clean like new or new baby and toddler toys are needed for the nursery, as well as baby blankets, and crb sheets. Please drop off at the church office.**
- **Shelter/Homeless Items needed:** Toilet and facial tissue, dish and laundry detergent, bar soap, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes and paper towels.

From the Pastor

Greetings as Holy Week approaches! Join us on Palm Sunday as we enjoy waiving the palms and reliving this annual tradition. The title of the sermon is "Palm Sunday: A Planned Political Demonstration" based on an interesting idea put forth by Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan. In this season of political demonstrations, it will be interesting to see how Jesus chose to do one.

Thursday of Holy Week we join with the Dewey church as they host a Seder meal.

And on Easter Sunday, we gather at 10:30 a.m. in worship to celebrate the resurrection. The title of the sermon will be "Three F's On Your Report Card." I hope that did not happen for any of us in school, but come Easter Sunday to hear how the resurrection takes care of three F's on our human report card!

As I write this, we have received word from his daughter that John Harper has entered Hospice care. John has been an amazing individual, faithfully attending worship each Sunday into his 99th year of life. Now at 99 ½, he needs our prayers as well as his daughter Diane.

Barbie Beeson is in the hospital undergoing tests. Pray for her and Al during this time.

Grace & Peace, Jay

**Heart Song Center
for Grieving
Children**

By: Adam Bissell

HEART SONG CENTER FOR GRIEVING CHILDREN

In the corner of a room there is a small circle of children.... One child is holding a talking stick and telling the others what is on her heart. When the talking stick is set aside, the different circles (littles, middles, tweens, & teens) breakout into their own play and activities.

What's the meeting all about? Well, it starts with a meal and ends with a song and in between...*it's all heart!* The group is called The Heart Song Center for Grieving Children. It is for children who have recently lost a parent, sibling, grandparent or caretaker in their life.

State statistics show that there are over 1,000 children that are actively grieving in the quad-cities area on any given day of the year. Heart Song is the only grief support group in Yavapai County that focuses primarily on children & youth.

It's a safe, supportive environment where a parent or guardian and child go to grieve. A hallowed place for children to play and parents to share. The program

is free of charge and meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month here at The First Congregational Church, 6PM-8PM. We are so thankful to be housed here! If you would like more information, or are interested in volunteering, please call Adam Bissell at 928-710-5532. Look for Heart Song on the web: www.heartsong4kids.org



**From the
Southwest
Conference by
Connie Larkman**

A Word to the Church by Connie Larkman

The leadership of the United Church of Christ, concerned with the political rhetoric aimed at the marginalized people of society in this election cycle, spoke out in support for and solidarity with a Holy Week statement released by The Episcopal Church. The UCC national officers and Council of Conference Ministers, in testimony to the ecumenical relationship between the two churches, expressed gratitude to The Episcopal Church for "the courage to speak, and for granting us the kindness of joining them in this statement."

Here is the text of "A Word to the Church" from The Episcopal Church House of Bishops.



"We reject the idolatrous notion that we can ensure the safety of some by sacrificing the hopes of others.

"On Good Friday the ruling political forces of the day tortured and executed an innocent man. They sacrificed the weak and the blameless to protect their own status and power. On the third day Jesus was raised from the dead, revealing not only their injustice but also unmasking the lie that might makes right.

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"In a country still living under the shadow of the lynching tree, we are troubled by the violent forces being released by this season's political rhetoric. Americans are turning against their neighbors, particularly those on the margins of society. They seek to secure their own safety and security at the expense of others. There is legitimate reason to fear where this rhetoric and the actions arising from it might take us.

"In this moment, we resemble God's children wandering in the wilderness. We, like they, are struggling to find our way. They turned from following God and worshiped a golden calf constructed from their own wealth. The current rhetoric is leading us to construct a modern false idol out of power and privilege. We reject the idolatrous notion that we can ensure the safety of some by sacrificing the hopes of others. No matter where we fall on the political spectrum, we must respect the dignity of every human being and we must seek the common good above all else.

"We call for prayer for our country that a spirit of reconciliation will prevail and we will not betray our true selves."

Immediately after this was released Wednesday, March 16, the United Church of Christ officers and Council of Conference Ministers unanimously and enthusiastically expressed support for the statement from the House of Bishops.

"This clear, powerful statement written by our friends and partners in The Episcopal Church expresses something that we, too, feel very strongly about," said the Rev. John C. Dorhauer, UCC general minister and president. "Rather than write our own statement, we affirm the unity of our vision and voice and join them in making our feelings known. What we are seeing unfold across the landscape of America in this election cycle frightens us; and requires those of us with the agency to do so to lift up those concerns and remind ourselves that our faith asks bigger things of us."

"In the eloquent and faithful word from the Episcopal Bishops, the UCC Council of Conference Ministers discerns a prophetic and gospel-based message with which we resonate," said the Rev. Rich Pleva, Iowa Conference minister and chair of the Council of Conference Ministers. "The CCM is deeply concerned that a spirit of division and disparagement in public discourse threatens the fabric of our diverse society. We are especially mindful that as people of faith – particularly Christian faith – we are enjoined to attend to the welfare of 'the least of these.'"

The Most Rev. Michael Curry, Presiding Bishop of The Episcopal Church, and his staff -- the Rev. Margaret Rose and Canon Chuck Robertson -- appreciate this ecumenical affirmation.

"In this Word to the Church I believe that we are speaking as followers of the way of Jesus and as those who love this country and the deepest and most noble values of it," said Curry. "Times of great testing, times such as these, must summon forth not the lowest and the worst within us, but the highest virtues and the "better angels" of our nature."

The Episcopal Church and the United Church of Christ are part of Churches Uniting in Christ. At a recent CUIC plenary in St. Louis, these communions re-committed themselves to challenging racial injustices and the myriad of issues that come as a result.

"Taking this action in concert with sisters and brothers in The Episcopal Church demonstrates that this concern is not merely that of a single church," said Pleva. "We hear the voice of God's spirit in the letter and are proud to add our voice to theirs in commending this message to the whole of the UCC and to people beyond our respective churches."

"The United Church of Christ continues to live into the ecumenical and justice commitments that are a core part of our identity," said the Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson, UCC minister for ecumenical and interfaith relations. "We look forward to finding ways to lend the bold public voice of the UCC to these and other social injustices as we seek to ensure that all can live with human dignity."



Wednesday, March 30, 6:30-8:00 PM	Albert Sarko Jazz Quartet
Wednesday, April 27, 6:30-8:00 PM	TBD
Wednesday, May 25, 6:30-8:00 PM	Opus Jazz
Wednesday, June 29, 6:30-8:00 PM	Steve Annibale Jazz Quartet

More to come – every last Wednesday of the month!

These informal events are open to everyone of all faiths. The focus is on the music and the opportunity to hear it in an “acoustically alive” historic sanctuary. Admission is free – an offering will be taken for the benefit of the musicians.

First Congregational Church
216 East Gurley Street
Prescott, AZ 86301

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.