

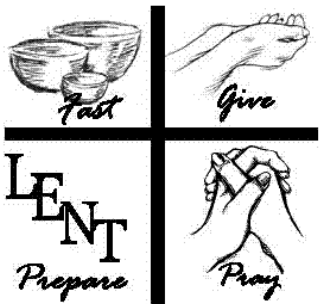


The Parish Caller

First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, Prescott Established 1880

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

March 3, 2017



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This Week at a Glance...

- ♦ **Choir Rehearsal:** Sunday 9:00 am
- ♦ **Sunday Worship Service and Fellowship time:** 10:30 am
- ♦ **Knit Wits:** Tuesday 1-3 pm
- ♦ **AltarNotes Rehearsal:** 12:00
- ♦ **Lenten Stroganoff Meal and Service:** 5:30 pm
- ♦ **Bell Choir Practice:** Thursday 11:00 am

FROM THE PASTOR

Lent has begun! On the first Sunday of Lent, we will focus on the traditional first Sunday theme of Jesus' temptation in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11). If you have visited St. Mark's Basilica in Venice, there is a mosaic in the church that illustrates the three temptations very well – see if you can remember what the three were from looking at the mosaic:



I have had some questions regarding what role our church can play in political activity. Here is a statement that helps clarify our position:

Religious organizations, as well as all other organizations exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, are prohibited from participating or intervening, directly or indirectly, in a political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for elective public office. This prohibition encompasses a wide array of activities. It precludes direct political campaign intervention, including the making of statements, whether oral, written or in an electronic medium, supporting or opposing any candidate, political party or political action committee ("PAC"); creating a PAC; rating candidates; and providing or soliciting financial support (including loans or loan guarantees) or in-kind support for any candidate, political party or PAC. It also precludes indirect political campaign intervention of a sort that reflects bias for or against any candidate, political party or PAC, such as distributing biased voter education materials or conducting a biased candidate forum or voter registration drive.

As a pastor representing our church in any official

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**CALLED TO CARE
NEW WEEKLY
PRAYER CHAPEL
OPEN FOR PRAYER**

Called to Care is meeting for weekly prayer at 10:00 am Mondays in the Prayer Chapel (downstairs). This is open to whomever wishes to pray with us. Please see the Prayer Box in Perkins Hall for open or anonymous requests. You may also contact Pastor Jay, Marilyn Kerstine, Rev. Shirley or another Called to Care minister to add your request.

capacity, and as a church, I/we have to be careful to not advocate for or against a particular candidate or politician. As citizens we are free to do as we wish as we represent ourselves. I have always felt the need to remain neutral as every church has members of both parties as well as independents. As a pastor, I am called to seek peace and justice for all, and to follow Jesus in care and concern for those on the margins of society regardless of who is in office. Confessing Jesus as Lord means I will always be in some tension with the state. I look to the Barmen Declaration as a reminder to be vigilant in the separation of church and state:

The Barmen Declaration, 1934, was a call to resistance against the theological claims of the Nazi state. Almost immediately after Hitler's seizure of power in 1933, Protestant Christians faced pressure to "aryanize" the Church, expel Jewish Christians from the ordained ministry and adopt the Nazi "Führer Principle" as the organizing principle of church government. In general, the churches succumbed to these pressures, and some Christians embraced them willingly. The pro-Nazi "German Christian" movement became a force in the church. They glorified Adolf Hitler as a "German prophet" and preached that racial consciousness was a source of revelation alongside the Bible. But many Christians in Germany—including Lutheran and Reformed, liberal and neo-orthodox—opposed the encroachment of Nazi ideology on the Church's proclamation. At Barmen, this emerging "Confessing Church" adopted a declaration drafted by Reformed theologian Karl Barth and Lutheran theologian Hans Asmussen, which expressly repudiated the claim that other powers apart from Christ could be sources of God's revelation. Not all Christians courageously resisted the regime, but many who did—like the Protestant pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer and the Roman Catholic priest Bernhard Lichtenberg—were arrested and executed in concentration camps. The spirituality of the Barmen Declaration profoundly influenced many of the first generation of pastors and laypeople who formed the United Church of Christ in 1957.

In view of the errors of the "German Christians" and of the present Reich Church Administration, which are ravaging the Church and at the same time also shattering the unity of the German Evangelical Church, we confess the following evangelical truths:

1. *"I am the Way and the Truth and the Life; no one comes to the Father except through me." John 14:6*

"Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold through the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved." John 10:1,9

Jesus Christ, as he is attested to us in Holy Scripture, is the one Word of God whom we have to hear, and whom we have to trust and obey in life and in death.

We reject the false doctrine that the Church could and should recognize as a source of its proclamation, beyond and besides this one Word of God, yet other events, powers, historic figures and truths as God's revelation.

2. *"Jesus Christ has been made wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption for us by God." 1 Cor. 1:30*

As Jesus Christ is God's comforting pronouncement of the forgiveness of all our sins, so, with equal seriousness, he is also God's vigorous announcement of his claim upon our whole life. Through him there comes to us joyful liberation from the godless ties of this world for free, grateful service to his creatures.

We reject the false doctrine that there could be areas of our life in which we would not belong to Jesus Christ but to other lords, areas in which we would not need justification and sanctification through him.

3. *"Let us, however, speak the truth in love, and in every respect grow into*

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From Pastor Jay Continued from page 2

NEW MEMBER / INQUIRER CLASSES APRIL 2&9

After worship, Moderator Marti will meet with those joining the church, and also anyone interested in learning more about the church for about 45 minutes. All are welcome. New members will be received on April 16.

EASTER SERVICES APRIL 16TH

Church Wide Family Potluck will follow the service. Signup sheet in Perkins Hall.

him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body is joined together." Eph. 4:15-16

The Christian Church is the community of brethren in which, in Word and Sacrament, through the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ acts in the present as Lord. With both its faith and its obedience, with both its message and its order, it has to testify in the midst of the sinful world, as the Church of pardoned sinners, that it belongs to him alone and lives and may live by his comfort and under his direction alone, in expectation of his appearing.

We reject the false doctrine that the Church could have permission to hand over the form of its message and of its order to whatever it itself might wish or to the vicissitudes of the prevailing ideological and political convictions of the day.

4. *"You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. It will not be so among you; but whoever wishes to have authority over you must be your servant." Matt. 20:25-26*

The various offices in the Church do not provide a basis for some to exercise authority over others but for the ministry [lit., "service"] with which the whole community has been entrusted and charged to be carried out.

We reject the false doctrine that, apart from this ministry, the Church could, and could have permission to, give itself or allow itself to be given special leaders [Führer] vested with ruling authority.

5. *"Fear God. Honor the Emperor." 1 Pet. 2:17*

Scripture tells us that by divine appointment the State, in this still unredeemed world in which also the Church is situated, has the task of maintaining justice and peace, so far as human discernment and human ability make this possible, by means of the threat and use of force. The Church acknowledges with gratitude and reverence toward God the benefit of this, his appointment. It draws attention to God's Dominion [Reich], God's commandment and justice, and with these the responsibility of those who rule and those who are ruled. It trusts and obeys the power of the Word, by which God upholds all things.

We reject the false doctrine that beyond its special commission the State should and could become the sole and total order of human life and so fulfil the vocation of the Church as well.

We reject the false doctrine that beyond its special commission the Church should and could take on the nature, tasks and dignity which belong to the State and thus become itself an organ of the State.

6. *"See, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Matt. 28:20 "God's Word is not fettered." 2 Tim. 2:9*

The Church's commission, which is the foundation of its freedom, consists in this: in Christ's stead, and so in the service of his own Word and work, to deliver all people, through preaching and sacrament, the message of the free grace of God.

We reject the false doctrine that with human vainglory the Church could place the Word and work of the Lord in the service of self-chosen desires, purposes and plans.

The Confessing Synod of the German Evangelical Church declares that it sees in the acknowledgment of these truths and in the rejection of these errors the indispensable theological basis of the German Evangelical Church as a confederation of Confessing Churches. It calls upon all who can stand in solidarity with its Declaration to be mindful of these theological findings in all their decisions concerning Church and State. It appeals to all concerned to return to unity in faith, hope and love.

***Verbum Dei manet in aeternum.
The Word of God will last for ever.***

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Administration Office Hours
Monday-Thursday 9:00 - 4:00
Friday: 9:00 - 1:00
Pastor Jay
Monday - Thursday
9:00 - 1:00
Other times by appointment
Cell: 928-899-9066
jayfccprescott@gmail.com

**Regularly
Scheduled**

PASS MEAL

Once a month we provide a meal for the Prescott Area Shelter Services the 3rd Wednesday of every month at 5:00 pm. Sign-up sheet is in Perkins Hall.

CHOIR PRACTICE

Meets 9 am before worship on Sundays. See Jane Osborn if you would like to join the choir!
BELL CHOIR PRACTICE at 11 am on Thursdays

CABINET MEETING

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

PFLAG SUPPORT GROUP

Meets the 3rd Friday of every month at 6:30 pm in the Church Library/Chapel. See Julie J. for more details.

KNIT WITS

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

EXPLORING FAITH

Discussion Group
Looking into new topics, please let Pastor Jay if you are interested
~And~
Monday Evening Discussion Group
6:30 pm in the Church Chapel.

**VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED!**

Called to Care
Music
Van Ministry
Congregational Care
Ministry of the Building

JUST ASK!!!

CORY PAINTING

Thank you to Pete Norum and Jim Christopher who graciously took upon themselves the task to preserve an important part of our history, by having a replica made of the Cory Painting. This replica was finished this week and is hanging in the foyer at the top of the stairs.

The original Cory Painting is safely on loan and hanging in Phippen Museum of Western Art where the careful precautions are being made to the lighting, security and atmospheric changes which are necessary for long term preservation. It is still to be determined if that will be it's permanent home.

The final cost for the digital copy, printing on canvas and mounting in a frame is \$1,026.68. If you would like to contribute to the expenses, please designate Cory on your gift. Thanks to all!

OUTREACH FOR MARCH

This month's mission emphasis is the Prescott Area Habitat for Humanity (PAHH). PAHH is entering its 28th year of serving working low income families. Thus far, 87 families have been helped to settle into their new homes. Construction volunteers may phone Gail Martin at 928 445 8003.

From last month's mission emphasis, a check for \$490 is being sent to the Prescott Area Shelter Services (PASS). PASS provides shelter and social services to women with children.

Thank you for your support of our outreach to a world in need of compassion and justice. Gary Gard, Mission Outreach Chairperson

OUR FELLOWSHIP TEAM IS BEING REFORMED FOR 2017

This Sunday March 5 after service at about 11:45 in the Chancel area of the Sanctuary, there will be a brief meeting of those who are interested in being part of the fellowship team for FCC. Men and Woman are invited to be part of this important function of our church. Thank you, Tom Macy.

STUDY GROUP FOR SUNDAYS IN LENT, STARTING MARCH 5

Meet in the downstairs large meeting room (former library), 9:30-10:15. Topics from the Series "Great Figures of the New Testament" by Amy-Jill Levine.

- March 5: Judas Iscariot
- March 12: Pilate
- March 19: Barabbas
- March 26: Centurions

These topics (parallel to those to be given the following Wednesday evenings by Rev. Harry Strong) are scheduled for those who prefer the Sunday morning time.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT LENTEN SERIES BEGINS MARCH 8 - 5:30 to 7:00 pm

Each Wednesday we will gather at 5:30 pm for a meal and then watch a video of Rev. Harry Strong portraying a character from the passion narrative.

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| March 8 — stroganoff | Judas (Rev. Harry & Rev. Marti Garison) |
| March 15 — chili | Pilate (Rev. Harry & Rev. Ralph Wagner) |
| March 22 — soup | Barabbas (Rev. Harry & Rev. Gary Gard) |
| March 29 — stew | Simone of Cyrene (Rev. Harry & Pastor Jay) |
| April 5 — soup | Centurion (Rev. Harry & Marilyn Kirstine) |

Please help with the meal by signing up in Perkins to bring meal items each week!