



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 31, 2017

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ANNIVERSARIES

Julie & John McCurdy	04/18
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BIRTHDAYS

Kristin Steele	04/04
Wesley Bradstreet	04/05
Sandra Palacios	04/09
Steve Landkamer	04/12
Ron Solt	04/13
Cindy Feuerriegel	04/17
Tom Lloyd	04/28

This Week at a Glance...

- ◆ **Choir Rehearsal:** Sunday 9:00 am
- ◆ **Sunday Lenten discussion:** 9:30 am
- ◆ **Sunday Worship Service and Fellowship time:** 10:30 am
- ◆ **Alter-Notes Rehearsal:** 12:00 pm
- ◆ **Wednesday Lenten soup and discussion "Simon of Cyrene":** 5:30
- ◆ **Bell Choir Practice:** Thursday 11:00 am

FROM PASTOR JAY

Sunday texts: Ezekiel 37:1-14 (focus); Psalm 130; Romans 8:6-11; John 11:1-45

Sermon Title: Hope in a Time of Loss. Strange stuff this Sunday! How often do we wander into Ezekiel's scroll? Not much. Who wants to hear about judgment? But the latter part of the prophecy, after judgment has fallen and the Israelites were exiled to Babylon, shifts to words of hope based upon God's covenant of love with God's people. Those in exile had completely given up all hope.

Here is what they said as stated in Ezekiel 37: *They say, "Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely."*



The Vision of The Valley of The Dry Bones by Gustave Doré, 1866



Maybe you can relate either in the past or maybe even now.

What do we do when our hope dries up?

What did these Israelites do?

What helps to make hope come alive again?

Here is a hint: *ruach* (רוּחַ). We will say it together Sunday so start practicing your guttural "ch." And have fun singing "Dem Bones" (Toe bone connected to the foot bone...). I will see if the children know it on Sunday.

See you then, Jay

APRIL MISSIONS FOCUS: ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

COMPASSION is a theme common to both the Old and New Testaments. Compassion wears many faces. Kindness, justice, and acts of mercy describe a few of those faces. Showing compassion begs the question, "To whom do we demonstrate kindness, and acts of grace and mercy?" In his parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus speaks of loving our neighbor. He makes it clear that "neighbor" is anyone in need. No matter what land people call "home", or what religious beliefs they hold, or what describes their economic or social status, everyone is our neighbor.

The Book of Acts is replete with narrative describing God's Holy Spirit breaking down the walls which artificially divided people. When Peter contemplated limiting God's love-n-mercy to those judged "worthy" by tradition and religious law, God's Holy Spirit provided a mind-n-heart to see things differently. Ultimately, Peter is led to declare; "God has shown me that I should call no one unworthy" (of God's love-n-mercy) and "I now perceive that God shows no partiality" (Acts 10:28 & 34). In today's world where so much emphasis is placed upon building walls and highlighting differences, we are called to hear the voice of our God as heard by our faith ancestors. We are to be "lights shining in the darkness." We are to be agents of compassion; showing kindness, doing acts of grace and mercy.

One of the opportunities we have to do this is to participate in the Church's **ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING**. The One Great Hour of Sharing reaches out to neighbors who have suffered the ravages of war, of violence, of famine, of natural disasters. When a hurricane hit the Philippines, a young boy asked his father, "Why didn't God stop the rain and wind?" We can hear other young children asking, "Why doesn't God stop the bombing?" Or, others asking, "Why doesn't God hear our prayers for food and for shelter?" We can't pretend to speak for God, but we can act for God. We can show compassion. We can support actions which show the love, grace, and mercy of God. The One Great Hour of Sharing is



this month's mission emphasis. In anticipation of your support, thank you!

MARCH MISSION OUTREACH

Know that from your support of last month's mission emphasis, a check for \$365 is being sent to the Prescott Area Habitat for Humanity. This money will help a 27th family transition from the world of dreams to the real world of living in their own home. Also, from last month's activity, we helped enable a young homeless mother and her 4-year-old daughter. The mother had just found employment as a maid working in a local motel. What about her 4-year-old daughter? Thankfully, Prescott's Head Start program welcomed her to their morning program. A safe and structured environment was still needed for the afternoon. The Discovery Gardens Preschool made room for her in their afternoon session. However, the last of their scholarship money had been expended. They have 4 other homeless children in their preschool. We received a call from the preschool's director. Could we help to cover the expense of their enrolling a 4-year-old homeless child? The need was immediate. Our response was immediate. YES! As you read this, picture a mother and her young daughter smiling some REALLY BIG SMILES. We now have new neighbors to hug. Thank you for your support of our outreach to a world in need of compassion and justice.

Gary Gard, Mission Outreach Chairperson



ANNOUNCEMENTS

"GETTING TO KNOW THE UCC AND OUR CHURCH"

Marti Garrison and Barb McClure will meet with interested, new, and seasoned members in back of the sanctuary after you have time to get coffee after the service. We will take a short tour of the building and then land in the Library downstairs for discussions and insights.

Please join us no matter who you are! April 2 and 9, approximately 11:45

STUDY GROUP FOR SUNDAYS DURING LENT

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

- 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

APRIL 5 - 5:30 to 7:00 pm

Wednesday we will gather at 5:30 pm for soup and then watch a video of Rev. Harry Strong portraying a character, Centurion, from the passion narrative, (Rev. Harry & Marilyn Kirstine)

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

CHAR TARR MEMORIAL

April 9th, 2 pm in the Church Sanctuary.

MAUNDAY THURSDAY MEAL

Communion and Tenebrae Service April 13 at 5:30—7:00 pm

EASTER SUNDAY— CHURCH BRUNCH

April 16—we will gather in Perkins Hall for a potluck brunch after Easter Worship Service. This is for those who do not want to fight the crowds at restaurants or who do not have family gatherings that day. Plan to join us!

HOLY HUMOR SUNDAY

April 23, get ready for a good laugh!

JAZZ VESPERS

April 26 at 6:30— Bluegrass with Sugar in the Mint

ALARCON STREET COMMUNITY GATHERING

April 28th, Friday 5:00— 6:30 pm, come for a breather after work, for a wine tasting from Prescott Winery and art displays from Mountain Artists' Guild. Join us as we meet the neighbors on Alarcon Street. There will be music and light refreshments!

ALTER-NOTES

A new, alternative music group, to sing on occasional Sundays needs singers and instrumentalists. If you don't have time to commit to every Sunday but like to and want to sing or play an instrument, come and join us. Folk, pop, Celtic, spirituals and anything else. Rehearsal at noon on Sundays. Contact Melissa Gates, 207-391-3276

CORY PAINTING

Thank you to those who have made contributions to the Cory Replica. We have received \$650 so far to go towards the final cost for the digital copy, printing on canvas and framing, is \$1,026.68. If you would like to contribute to the expenses, please designate Cory on your gift. Thanks to all!

Parish Stewardship

Offerings

	March	YTD
Offerings	\$ 8,528	\$28,131
Facility	\$ 935	\$ 2,032
Foundation	\$ 2,608	\$16,030
Other	\$ 503	\$ 5,503
Total	\$12,574	\$51,696

Expenses

	March	YTD
Expenses	\$19,038	\$69,962

Outreach Gifts

	2016	2017
Jan	\$ 135	\$ 270
Feb	\$ 170	\$ 265
Mar	\$ 949	\$ 490
Apr	\$ 165	\$ 1,410
May	\$ 279	\$ -
Jun	\$ 415	\$ -
Jul	\$ 4,373	\$ -
Aug	\$ 215	\$ -
Sep	\$ 240	\$ -
Oct	\$ 1,009	\$ -
Nov	\$ 625	\$ -
Dec	\$ 1,492	\$ -
Total	\$10,067	\$ 2,435

Attendance

1-Jan	78
8-Jan	105
15-Jan	104
22-Jan	92
29-Jan	128
5-Feb	114
12-Feb	82
19-Feb	77
26-Feb	81
1-Mar	31
5-Mar	94
12-Mar	93
19-Mar	91
26-Mar	75

Cory Replica

Cost	\$ (1,026.68)
Gifts	\$ 650.00
Balance	\$ (376.68)

