

The Parish Caller

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

November 20, 2015

First Congregational
Church, United
Church of Christ,
Prescott



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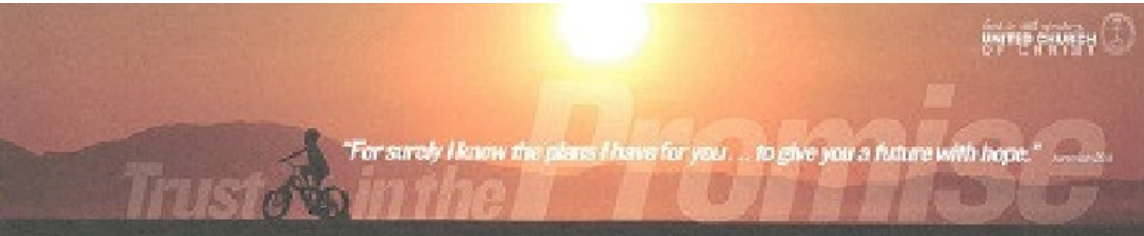
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This Week at a Glance...

- ◆ **Exploring Faith** Sunday Discussion Group 9 am
- ◆ **Turn in Pledge Cards** This Sunday
- ◆ **"Greening the Church"** This Sunday after worship service
- ◆ **Exploring Faith** Monday Night Discussion Group 6:30 pm
- ◆ **Bell Choir Rehearsal** at 11 am Thursday
- ◆ **Prescott Light Parade** Saturday 6 pm



This Sunday we gather your pledges and time and talent commitment cards...

"For surely I know the plans I have for you . . . to give you a future with hope." — Jeremiah 29:11. Each household should have received a 2016 budget packet by now. Reprinted on page 2 is a the 2016 Proposed Budget. There are extra pledge and time and talent cards in Perkins Hall. After prayerfully considering your pledge and time offerings, place your completed cards in the treasure box in Perkins Hall, or mail them to the church office. Thank you! —Julie Jaquette

Holiday Schedule

This Sunday is "Greening of the Church"

The long-time tradition of the "Greening of the Church" will take place today after the worship service. You don't have to be an interior decorator to help, it's a large task and every pair of hands are welcome will makes it quick and easy. Coffee time and refreshments will be waiting for us in Perkins Hall after. Please join us!

"Paris to Prescott" November 29, 3 pm, Northside Courthouse Square

Join in solidarity with the Global Climate March demanding serious action from world leaders at the December 2015 Paris Climate Summit. Speakers, Music, Open Mic and what each one of us can do to bring climate justice home to Prescott!

"From Grief to Grace" and World AIDS Day Commemoration December 1, 5:30 pm

Join us for a healing service for those who are grieving and lonely this time of year and also to commemorate World AIDS Day. This is a time to express personal grief and hope, to unite with people worldwide in the fight against HIV/AIDS, and remember those who have died. A soup supper will be served afterwards. Rev. Marti Garrison and Julie Jaquette will lead.

Agape Soup December 9, 5:30 pm

Agape Soup Supper is back! Join us for soup and fellowship December 9th at 5:30 pm. Sign-up sheet in Perkins Hall.

Holiday Schedule
continued

Advent Readers

Advent is a season of waiting, expecting, and hoping. Beginning four Sundays prior to Christmas and ending on Christmas Eve, Advent helps us prepare for the coming, or “advent” of the Christ child at Christmas. Starting next week during the worship service before Christmas we will light a candle and have a special reading. If you would like to be a special reader, let Pastor Jay know.

Acker Night December 11, 5:30-8:30 pm

This year our church is hosting musical performance by “The Prescott Opry” in the Acker Night “Tips for Scholarships” event. We need volunteers to act as hosts, Sign-up sheet in Perkins Hall or please let Julie in the office know if you would like to help us out. 928-445-4555

Christmas Family Dinner December 20, after Worship Service

You wont want to miss this Christmas Family Dinner! Bring a festive dish or desert to share! This is your chance to get decked out and wear your favorite Christmas sweater, or holiday outfit! More information to come!

Christmas Eve Service December 24th, 7 pm

We will be having a Christmas Eve Candle light service here at the church at 7 pm! This service is well attended by our local community.

November Outreach Ministry

Thinking about Christmas? We begin to plan for our own families this time of year. We have the privilege of reaching out now to help less fortunate families with a few gifts for their loved ones by participating in Coalition for Compassion and Justice. Choose a gift for a child or adult from their Christmas Wish List. A list of gift suggestions are posted in Perkins Hall. Bring to the church by December 20th. You will be helping others share the joy of Christmas with their loved ones. Thank you. —Outreach ministry.

November Food Donations to Prescott Community Cupboard

This month we are asking for canned soup. Baskets are available at each entry for your donations. Thank You!

2016 Budget Proposal

2016 Proposed Budget

Harry Gamble, Treasurer

One year ago, the First Congregational Church (UCC) of Prescott’s governing body— called the Cabinet-- forwarded to the congregation the 2015 Budget that represented a bold new vision. The vision called for growing our congregation in many ways, not only by encouraging others to join us but by offering each of us rich opportunities to grow deeper spiritually as we walk a Christ-like path.

Our congregation embraced the vision and approved the budget, which allowed us to take the first step toward realizing our vision: The Cabinet searched for a leader who would be able to take us forward, a leader who was highly educated, highly experienced and who held a deep conviction that our goals for church and congregation could be realized. We selected as pastor The Rev. Dr. Jay Wilcher, who holds a doctorate of divinity. After the half year since Pastor Jay’s appointment, we believe we have chosen well. Things are taking shape and are moving forward.

Year 2015 is nearing its end, and the Cabinet has proposed a 2016 budget for

**2016 Budget
Continued**

approval by the congregation at its annual meeting in January. The 2016 budget allows us to take further steps to continue the growth that the Cabinet and Congregation set in motion a year ago.

2016 Budget Expenses

The 2016 budget totals \$272,234 in both spending and projected revenue—that’s \$18,485, or about 7%, more, than 2015. Since young people are the greatest hope for the long term future for our congregation, our Children’s Education program will see the largest increase in spending in 2016. Late this year, the Cabinet hired two employees to oversee the children’s program. For the remainder of 2015, we are paying for the new employees’ salaries with unappropriated carryover education funds provided by the First Congregational Church Foundation in 2014.

The 2016 funding will provide class materials and curriculum, furniture and field trips. With expected growth of young people, the budget also shows a \$1,900 increase (from \$1707 to \$3,600), for summer camp tuition for youngsters. To support the anticipated increase in Education spending in 2016, we will ask the Foundation to provide all Education funding totaling \$21,650.

Almost \$50,000 is earmarked in the Physical Resources line to make significant improvements to our wonderful historical building. Projects include replacing the Alarcon Street Door, installing a lift for persons experiencing disabilities, and staining floors in the recently remodeled basement. These projects will be funded through the Ashenfelter Investment Fund.

The Outreach budget has increased from \$1,000 to \$1,500 as we begin a long term effort to increase our donations to worthy community programs for persons in need. To increase our national outreach efforts, we are proposing doubling to \$2,000 funding to the South West Conference for its Our Church’s Wider Mission. The budgeted funds of course are augmented with donations from individual members of the church during various fund raising campaigns throughout the year, as announced by our church’s outreach ministry.

The budget proposes more than doubling existing funding for hiring more guest musicians (from \$1,200 to \$2,600 in 2016) to increase a greater variety of music to worship services. It also covers an increased rate charged by local musicians.

The Marketing line in the Administrative budget is proposed to be increased from \$3,000 to \$5,000, allowing the church to make a greater presence in the Prescott community. In addition a financial audit of 2015 books is budgeted at \$3,000. All other Administrative expenses either remain static or have been budgeted in anticipation of largely inflationary increases.

The Congregational Care budget has been reorganized and shows an increase from \$1,410 to 4,560 to improve services to our congregation, including homebound members. Much of the increase is attributed to transferring Called to Care (\$600) and Fellowship (\$2,000) to Congregational Care. Banners have been increased from \$200 to \$600.

All employee salaries are budgeted at 2015 amounts.

2016 Budget Funding Sources

If we First Congregational Church of Prescott members were called upon to fund the 2016 \$272,235 proposed budget out of our pockets, each man, woman and child would have to contribute \$2,231.44 annually. Fortunately, that doesn’t have to happen this year. Many member give more than that amount; some much more. Others for a variety of reasons give less. For now, we have several other sources of income.

The church has three major sources of funds.

Our church **Members** provide significant funding through pledges and other giving.

The church has several investment accounts gifted by bequests from now deceased members.

The Ashenfelter Fund, about \$180,000. This is a restricted fund that can be used only for church building improvements. This fund is invested in the United Church Funds.

The Payne Fund, about \$200,000. This is an unrestricted fund that can be used for any activity. This fund is invested in the United Church Funds.

The Favour Fund, about \$10,000. This fund has been held in a checking account for two years and can be used only in event of cash flow difficulties.

First Congregational Church (UCC) of Prescott Foundation. The Foundation is a separate non-profit entity run by its own board and officers. The board is selected by church members, but there is a firewall between the church and the foundation. The foundation holds major investments derived as gifts from individuals. Some gifts are restricted as to use; some are unrestricted. The Foundation also holds real property. The church Cabinet can and does make requests for funds to help fund specific church programs. The Foundation has granted funds to the church consistent with specific purposes and restrictions laid out by the persons who gifted the funds to the Foundation. You can learn more about the Foundation and its investments in our annual reports.

We are deliberately making major withdrawals from the church's investments for the next few years to fulfill our vision explained in the opening paragraphs. If successful, our efforts will result in a richer church life for us all and will attract others to join us. This will result in a deeper well of available funding.

Our current funding sources are one of our church's major strengths. We have used large infusions of funding from the Payne Fund (\$57,000) and the Foundation (\$70,000) to balance the 2015 budget. For 2016 we are taking a major withdrawal of \$50,125 from the Payne Fund to supplement our general operations across a number of budgeted categories. For 2016, we are asking the Foundation to fund our entire new Education budget of \$21,650 and contribute \$49,500 (more than half) to our Minister's salary and budget. As mentioned earlier, we plan to draw \$22,900 from the Ashenfelter Fund for major improvements to the church building.

We also derive income from passing the plate on Sundays, the coffee kitty in Perkins Hall after service and other sources. We have budgeted \$1,000 for fees collected from weddings and funerals, and \$8,000 from 12-Step and other groups that meet in our church.

Our greatest single source of income comes from our church members. We are asking more in 2016 and are increasing from \$108,470 to \$110,000 the amount of pledges. That's a 1.4% increase. We hope our members are able to step up. Many members already give significant amounts of their income to the church. And we recognize everyone's financial situation is different, and that everyone has other financial commitments, including giving to other worthy causes. But we call on each of you to contribute at a level meaningful to you and that fits within your budget. Please know that your pledge will help us reach our vision and goals...and the greater opportunities your church can support and offer as we walk the Christ-like path together.

Harry Gamble
Treasurer