

A Message From Pastor Jay

SUNDAY WORSHIP 10:30 AM

Nursery and Sunday school at the 10:30 am service

YAVAPAI COUNTY IS AT MEDIUM LEVEL FOR COVID. MASKS AND SOCIAL DISTANCING ARE GOOD OPTIONS!

The fourth Sunday of Advent is Sunday! The gospel of Matthew introduces us to Joseph in the Christmas story (Matthew 1:18-25). And also Jesus, who saves us, and is Emmanuel - God with us! Joyful Noise provides music; Thomas, Ying, Timo, and Gigi light the Advent wreath and serve as liturgists; Edie shares a personal connection to the UCC Christmas Fund; and JJ & Ziggy introduce the children to the Chrismon tree and the menorah.

**STEWARDSHIP SEASON
ESTIMATES OF 2023 GIVING ARE NEEDED
TO PREPARE A CHURCH BUDGET FOR 2023**

IF YOU ARE PART OF OUR ONLINE CHURCH FAMILY OR A FRIEND OF THE CHURCH, YOU MAY SHARE WITH US YOUR ESTIMATE OF GIVING FOR 2023 BY MAILING IT TO:

**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
216 EAST GURLEY STREET
PRESCOTT, AZ 86301**

Looking ahead, we face the same headwinds that all churches are dealing with – an uncertain COVID and flu winter; the costs of most everything rising from inflation; a predicted economic downturn as the Fed works on reducing inflation; and around fifty percent less worship attendance after COVID re-opening.

The good news for our church includes having no debt and a church Foundation to help, if needed. Some other positive items for us include a large number of new members and attendees post-COVID lockdown, almost making us a new congregation in many ways, and more children attending than we have had in a long time. We made tough decisions at the start of COVID to significantly reduce our budget and return to a volunteer

operating model. It has served us well through the last two years. As stewards of our building, we have the opportunity to host recovery groups once again or offer a non-profit organization space in our basement. We need your estimates of giving for 2023 to help us decide what is possible. Thank you for your support during 2022! Pastor Jay

Our past worship services are now on the website! Click on the "past worship services" link on the opening page of the website and you will find all the services back to January of 2020! Thanks to Jim for letting us use his YouTube channel for easy access.

[Watch Worship Services Here](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS
DECEMBER 24 AT 7:00 PM**

**CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP 10:30AM
NO NURSERY OR SUNDAY SCHOOL**

**NEW YEARS DAY WORSHIP 10:30AM
NO NURSERY OR SUNDAY SCHOOL**

**TWO DONATION BOXES ARE ALWAYS PRESENT AT THE FRONT OF THE
SANCTUARY FOR THE COMMUNITY CUPBOARD AND DISCOVERY
GARDENS PRESCHOOL**

Musical Guests Sunday - Joyful Noise

The Office Is Open Most Mornings and By
Appointment. Call Prior To Visiting for Confirmation: Pastor
Jay 928-899-9066

DECEMBER MISSION NEWS

DECEMBER MISSION NEWS

MONTHLY FOCUS: Each month throughout the year, our mission outreach team identifies particular mission programs to which we might choose to donate. This month we're highlighting the Christmas Fund—an annual UCC special offering. The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, and Christmas “Thank You” gift checks each December to our lower-income retirees. If you would like to show your continued gratitude to our UCC clergy needing support, please make your check payable to the church, with the memo of Christmas Fund. Mission donations which do not specify a particular project will be disbursed as determined by our Mission team members. As always, thank you for remembering that we are blessed to be a blessing (Genesis 12:2).

Mission Outreach Committee members are Patty Gard, Carolyn Christians, and Becky Bryant, chairperson. If you would like to serve with us, or have any other outreach matters to discuss, please contact Becky at (928) 910-2820 or beckybryant2255@gmail.com.



CHURCH VISION 2023

What do you wish us to be:

I love the Sat. classes, but don't have time right now. Linda Moore

Always still be open to all- James Olney
The sermons are awesome- keep up the good teaching
Loving, open community
Continue to be open to all. Maybe host community events with live music in Perkins, soup kitchen, coffee house, coat/clothing drive
Continue "before church" Sunday School for adults
Find ways to welcome young people from Launch Pad intentionally/ Plan activities & gatherings with other churches

What do you want us to do:

Service opportunity, Vibrant prayer ministry, Some newer & more contemporary worship songs- more variety of old and new
Nurture relationships with other/minority congregations or other faiths (eg Jewish, Muslim, Indigenous
Does CCJ need support in furnishing the living spaces they find for folks?
Coffee House- Melissa
Rent out rooms to outside groups
Car wash
More community involvement, better use of kitchen- use more often for various groups
Rummage sale/donate what is left
Clothing drive
Pancake breakfast
Do we support any local social worker or social service groups with giving critical times off like Christmas, Birthday, or the children of families
"Eat with Eight" where couples/individuals sign up to host dinners- David and Edie, Linda and Laura
July 4th pancake breakfast
Small group get-togethers for dinner or other meet ups
More activities for kids, music, performances, Christian education, youth group, Sunday school for older elementary age
Sandbags for 2 downstairs classrooms, fallout shelters, water and snacks for 7-10 days for 20 people- JD
Sponsor an immigrant family
Adult class at 9:30am Sunday mornings
Sandbags for basement windows
More involvement with CCF and PCCFP
Consider partnering with Great Hearts school in rural communities- Aimee Anderson (573) 298-5466
Christmas Pageant with kids
Painting workshop and/or art tour
I'm wanting to re start a prayer group that meets maybe twice a month/ no financial impact – Sandy Z.
In home small group bible study
½ day retreats for women, men and kids
More mid-week gatherings
Rent kitchen to local people for use as commissary
I'd like to see more Christian in the form of weekly classes. Subject matters like forgiveness, spirituality, grieving
More outreach to find ways to invite more kids/ young people/families

Secret Santa – people can sign up if they want to participate and then get assigned to get someone a gift. Andrea will organize!

Outreach focus and organization through volunteers

Find ways to connect with people in need to offer help directly (food, clothing, housing)

I would like to have communion before Sunday school so kids can have communion- Winnie

More small group/weeknight fellowship or study discussions/ or just for fun

Start looking forward to the kids growing. More education/service based activities

Game night

SUNDAY BULLETIN

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 18, 2022

10:30 a.m.

**Those who are able may stand*

GATHERING TO WORSHIP GOD

Prelude: “Joy to the World” arr. Frances Callahan

The Ringing Bells

Words of Welcome – Announcement - **Passing of the Peace*

Gather: “O Tannenbaum” arr. Robert Stuart

The Ringing Bells

Lighting of the Fourth Advent Candle

Thomas, Ying, Timo, and Gigi Creen

One: Love. Everything begins with Love.

Many: From the beginning of creation to the end of time, God’s love colors everything. (The candle of Hope is lit)

One: Love. Everything continues with Love.

Many: From strangers across oceans to neighbors next door, God’s love dwells in everything. (The candle of Peace is lit)

One: Love. Everything ends with Love.

Many: From the most challenging struggle to the most wondrous delight, God’s love flows through everything. (The candle of Joy is lit)

One: Love. Everything leans toward Love.

Many: From the greatest ruler to the tiniest baby, God’s love changes everything.

One: Prepare the way for love and you will find love shining
in each and every breath that whispers “Emmanuel” –

God is with us! (The candle of Love is lit)

*Hymn: "O Come, All Ye Faithful

Pilgrim Hymnal #132

A Time for Children of All Ages – JJ & Ziggy

(Children are welcome to go downstairs for Sunday School after the children's time)

Children's Dismissal: "Hanukkah, Hanukkah"

Opening Prayer

Thomas Creen

God of dreams and visions: Forgive us for making this holy season of anticipation a whirlwind of lists and activities, a flood of joyless obligations, looking through people, obsessed with the next thing. Help us to take a deep breath this morning. Help us to notice that at every turning point in Joseph's life You spoke, directing him to safety and refuge. As You spoke to him, You speak to us. Your voice sounds in the depths of our being. We need only to become still to hear it. In this hour, still the voices that distract us, that we may hear clearly your divine intent for our lives. Amen.

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD

Gospel Reading: Matthew 1:18-25

Thomas Creen

*Hymn: "Silent Night, Holy Night

Pilgrim Hymnal #138

Sermon: "God With Us"

Pastor Jay

RESPONDING TO GOD'S GRACE

Anthem: "See How the Virgin Waits" by J.F. Jabusch (Slovakian Folk Melody)
Joyful Noise

Prayers of the People / The Lord's Prayer

Offering of Ourselves and Our Gifts – Minute for Mission: Edie Diel

Offertory: "Mary Did You Know" (Recorded)

Deana Wilson and Francesca

*Doxology for Advent (Peter A. Norum, 2012)

Tune: New Century Hymnal #17

**Sing! Praise the Source of love and grace; Thanks for our lives in time and place!
Singing Praises! Alleluia! Look for the Gift of Truth and Light. Be new! Be bold!
Walk forth with sight! Singing praises! Singing
promise! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

*Prayer of Dedication

Thomas Creen

One: Into the stable, they straggled – the poor and dirty – hardly suitable for polite society. Had we been Joseph, we might have feared robbery. Had we been Mary, we might have feared the cold and germs. Had we been God, we might not have picked shepherds as the Welcoming Committee.

**All: Thank you, God, for knowing better.
Thank you, God, that your ways are higher and wiser than ours.
Forgive us our short-sightedness –
And THANK YOU for trusting the church and the world with us.
May these gifts be the seeds of the Kingdom on earth that you are planting.
Melt us – mold us – fill us – use us – be born in us anew today. Amen.**

*Hymn: "What Child Is This"

Pilgrim Hymnal #140

*Benediction

Pastor Jay

TREASURER REPORT

A NOTE FROM THE TREASURER – JULIE MCCURDY

Treasurer's Report on financial activity as of **November 30, 2022**

Income vs Expense:

Income is \$141,660

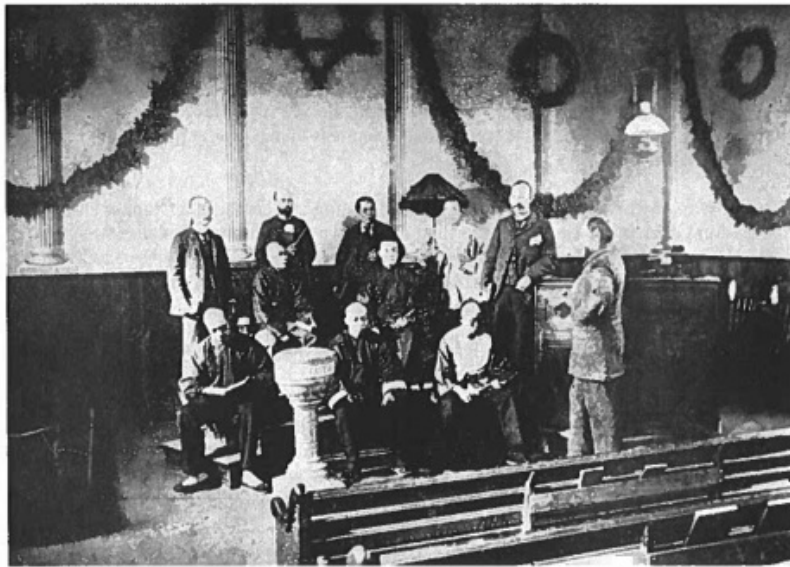
Expenses are \$140,218

Net INCOME is \$1,442

CHRISTMAS 1895

This photograph taken in 1895 is of a Christmas program presented by the young Chinese men from the school organized by Rev. McLean and T. W. Otis to teach the Chinese residents the English language.

We can also date the photo to 1895 since the baptismal font that was dedicated to Rev. Stephen Dubois Demarest was not delivered until just after the school was established. The kerosene lamps are still in place and the Women's Fellowship replaced them in 1896 with electric lamps. It is Christmas time and the greens are hung and they include a Star of David. The church pews that are still in use around our church are in the photo also.



SUPPORT THE CHURCH

Online – go to our website: www.fccprescott.org and look for the tab on the front page You can set up regular, ongoing giving or one-time giving.

Use your credit card and get some points!

Your bank may have free online bill pay. You find the tab on your online account, fill in the details of the check as you would a regular check, and the bank will mail it for you! You can set up a one-time check or recurring scheduled check amount.

Make a check out to the church and mail it to: 216 East Gurley Street,

Prescott, AZ 86301

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