

A Message From Pastor Jay

The fourth Sunday of Advent in Luke's gospel brings us Elizabeth and Mary, two marginalized peasant women who carry the future and proclaim the Messiah. Mary sings the Magnificat - "stands expectantly at hope's window and sings protest to the world turned upside down." (Craddock) She gives us a vision of the world turned right side up. Womansong will be our musical guests. Bill is liturgist. JJ brings Christmas gifts.

WOMANSONG WILL SING THIS SUNDAY

The sanctuary is now decorated for Christmas. If you are not able to attend worship this month, you can see some of the sanctuary on the video from last week's worship service. Thanks to Tom and helpers for decorating!

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.

WE ARE WEARING MASKS IN THE SANCTUARY.

HOWEVER, WITH THE GOOD WEATHER NOW, WE ARE ABLE TO BE IN PERKINS HALL FOR FELLOWSHIP AFTER THE WORSHIP SERVICE WITHOUT MASKS AS YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE. WE ARE ABLE TO HAVE THE WINDOWS OPEN AND FANS CIRCULATING THE AIR IN PERKINS HALL.

Nursery and Sunday school at the 10:30am service

ZOOM FAITH FORUM SATURDAY 10AM

ZOOM SUNDAY FELLOWSHIP 2:00 PM

Let us know if you want to be added to these Zoom invitations

**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE OF LESSONS & CAROLS
7PM, DEC. 24**

[Watch Worship Services Here](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Musical Guests Alter-Notes

CHURCH FOUNDATION UPDATE

There are several ways to structure your planned gift depending on your objectives. Some options include:

- A bequest in your Will (No minimum)
- A Charitable Gift Annuity (gift of \$10,000+)
- Structuring a Charitable Remainder Trust (gift of \$50,000+)
- Outright gifts of life insurance, an IRA, real estate or appreciated assets (No minimum)

The most important aspects in structuring a Planned Gift is the opportunity to identify the cause and mission that matters most to you and the appropriate accumulated asset to use to fund your gift. United Church Funds can help you determine which gift best meets your personal, spiritual and financial objectives.

To help you get started, visit

[Visit United Church Funds Resources](#)

Office Open by Appointment - Call Pastor Jay 928-899-9066

Due to COVID spread in Prescott, outside groups are still not able to meet in the church

The annual congregational meeting is January 23 after worship

WELCOMING --GREETERS AND FELLOWSHIP VOLUNTEERS

A list has been compiled and we already have sign ups for people contacted and/or have recently volunteered. I'm sure there are others that would like to serve in one or both capacities.

Greeter - Be there by 10am and say hi!!, glad you're here!!!
Give them a bulletin.....so fun and SIMPLE

Fellowship - Be there by 10:15am, put the goodies out you brought and other treats from cabinets in the kitchen. Tom will have coffee, tea and/or juice out.

Look in the fridge also. STAY during our fellowship time and towards the end, to gather up and put away excess and general clean up (minimal). THANK YOU !!!

Place your name on the current list started in Perkins Hall or call me
Patty Lantrip 480-227-2170

DECEMBER MISSION NEWS

Our December Mission Outreach emphasis is the UCC church's national Christmas Fund Offering. Donations to the offering will help provide financial support for active and retired clergy and church lay employees needing financial assistance. Checks may be made payable to the church with the memo, Christmas Fund.

Locally, we are sending a \$425 check to the Yavapai Food Bank in support of this year's Family Christmas program.

As always, thank you for remembering that we have been blessed to be a blessing (Genesis 12:2).

Grace and Peace,
Gary

STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

BOOK STUDY OPPORTUNITY

As a new member of Prescott UCC, I am inviting others to join me for a book read and discussion of Sacred Earth, Sacred Soul: A Celtic Guide to Listening to Our Souls and Saving the World. John Philip Newell shares the long-hidden tradition of Celtic Christianity, explaining how this earth – based spirituality can help us rediscover the natural rhythms of life and deepen our spiritual connection with God, with each other, and with the earth. Newell introduces some of Celtic Christianity's leading practitioners, both saints and pioneers of faith, whose timeless wisdom is more necessary than ever. We meet Fridays at 1:00 pm.

Please send a note to the church office if interested in joining in this discussion.

(Lisa Barnes)

ZOOM FAITH FORUM

The new faith forum will allow a variety of faith issues to be explored. During Advent, "Incarnation: Fleshing Out the Bible's Christmas Stories" will be explored each Saturday at 10am. Call or email the church office to be added to the weekly Zoom invitation: 928-445-4555; fccprescott@gmail.com.

SUNDAY BULLETIN

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 19, 2021

10:30 a.m.

**Those who are able may stand*

GATHERING TO WORSHIP GOD

Prelude: "We Three Kings" arr. by Martha Thompson

The Ringing Bells

A Time for Children of All Ages (*Jesus Loves Me, This I Know*)

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

Words of Welcome – Announcements - *Passing of the Peace

Gather Song: "Personent Hodie" arranged by John Rutter

Womansong

*Hymn: "The First Nowell"

New Century Hymnal #139

Lighting the Fourth Advent Candle

Bill Bryant

Leader: Who listens to the voices of the poor? Who shares strength with the powerless?
Who surprises with forgiveness, and makes all things new?

All: Where is your Power, O God? Where is the Love that transforms our world?

Leader: We remind ourselves of Mary's ancient song: sing out my soul, sing of the holiness of God who has delighted in a woman, lifted up the poor, satisfied the hungry, given voice to the silent, grounded the oppressor; who has desired the darkness of the womb and inhabited our flesh. Sing of the longing of God, sing out, my soul!

From Luke 1: 39-55, paraphrased by Janet Morley in All Desires Known © 1994

All: Let us light this fourth candle of Advent, a candle of Love.

In its light, let us think about our world. Let this candle of Advent love shine in our hearts all week and remind us to be midwives to Christ's birth in our work for justice, our practice of peace, our offering of forgiveness.

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD

Unison Prayer of Illumination

Bill Bryant

God of the Baby of Bethlehem, we come into your presence with praise and thanksgiving. We hear the glad tidings of the angel voices, we come to experience this good news of great joy for all the people. As the shepherds traveled to Bethlehem, we have traveled here – excited, expectant, hopeful; a bit skeptical. Let the words of sacred scripture seep into our hearts, to be treasured and pondered anew. We are here; we are ready, O God! Let the light of your love break forth! Amen.

Gospel Reading: Luke 1:39-56

Bill Bryant

*Hymn: "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

New Century Hymnal #133

Sermon: "Mary: Singing the World Turned Right-Side Up" Pastor Jay
"The goods of creation will fall from the inverted pockets of the hoarders and thieves and will rain down on the poor." (Richard Swanson, Provoking the Gospel of Luke)

RESPONDING TO GOD'S GRACE

Anthem: "I Saw Three Ships" arranged by David Willcocks Womansong

Prayers of the People / The Lord's Prayer (use trespasses)

Prayer Response: "Manx Lullaby" arranged by Amy Van Winkle Womansong

Offering of Ourselves and our Gifts

*Prayer of Dedication Bill Bryant

Christ comes! Our hearts are full, our joy is boundless. May this offering be a living message of peace, love, spirit, joy and hope to this church, to this community, to this nation and world. Amen.

*Hymn: "Silent Night, Holy Night" New Century Hymnal "134

*Benediction Pastor Jay

Let us go forth with eyes to see and ears to hear and voices to proclaim:

In the ordinary and the vulnerable: **God-with-us!**

In the challenge of the unexpected: **God-with-us!**

In love giving life in justice and mercy: **God-with-us!**

In the work of peace: **God-with-us!**

Postlude: "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" arranged by David Willcocks Womansong

TREASURER REPORT

Income as of November 30 is \$124,975.

Total expenses as of October 31 are \$131,547.

Total EXPENSE exceeds income by \$6,572.

This deficit has been offset by funds transferred from reserves.

Thanks to the \$5,000 grant from the Southwest Conference, the year-to-date income is at 102% of the income budget of \$122,450.

Year-to-date expenses are at 90% of the expense budget of \$146,905.

Julie McCurdy

STEWARDSHIP SEASON

Let us enter stewardship time prayerfully and with grateful hearts. Loving God, thank you for this opportunity to participate in the on-going mission of this church, your church. Help me to remember that everything I have comes from you. Open my heart and hands with generosity as I promise my support. Use my talents and financial commitments to continue your work in this church and in the world. Amen.

RIPPLES OF GENEROSITY

STEWARDSHIP SEASON IS HERE!

ESTIMATES OF 2022 GIVING ARE BEING RECEIVED

THESE ESTIMATES ARE NEEDED TO PREPARE A CHURCH BUDGET

**WHAT IS A STEWARD?
WHO IS A STEWARD?
HOW DO I BECOME A STEWARD?**

The answers to these questions are easy: A steward is a person who, with regard to a property both physical and functional, keeps it, cares for it, watches over it. As to who is a steward, well, we're hoping YOU are, or that YOU will want to become one.

How you become a steward involves the act of you giving to our church of your time, your skills and/or your finances.

There is another question to be answered. Why give to our church? First Congregational Church occupies a unique position in Prescott. We are the only historically rooted and progressive congregation in the city that follows the way of Jesus. We are both open and affirming to all. Our sanctuary evokes historic church connections and the presence of God. The God one finds here is the One Jesus modeled for us – a God of love and grace. Many have given testimony to finding healing here from other church experiences, where God was presented as judgmental and exclusionary. Other churches have retreated to locations out of town. We have remained here on Gurley Street, downtown, easily seen, accessible and welcoming to all.

IMMEDIATE NEED

Another answer to why you would want to give to your church revolves around need, both yours and this Church's. You obviously have any number of personal reasons or needs that lead you into church participation here, where you find those needs met. Your church also has needs and right now those needs are financial. We are in unprecedented times. How do we create a church budget for 2022 with so many unknowns? How do you decide what to give to this church for 2022? When will we be

able to fully open our church and return to worship? These questions have no immediate answers, so our church budget and your offer of financial giving are not set in stone. They are estimates. Your estimate of giving for 2022 will help us begin to understand what might be possible for the next year. So, with a thankful heart full of hope we are asking you to help us right now, to get through our 142nd year here in Prescott.

LEGACY ANSWERS THE LONGTERM NEED

Our church is blessed to have THE FOUNDATION as a safety net. It was formed in 1992 to manage legacy gifts from our members and friends. Legacy giving is not about death. It's about giving and continuing life. It's an affirming experience that celebrates the people, values, and goals that you cherish most. You don't have to be rich to make a bequest or legacy gift. With a will or legacy gift you can give the way you want to live, by making a better or sustained future for your loved ones and a lasting impact on your faith community. If you are interested in leaving a legacy to our church, or have questions or concerns, you can send a note to the church office and a member of the Foundation will contact you.

IT'S ALL ABOUT STEWARDSHIP - PLEASE BE OUR STEWARD!

May God bless you and our church

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



United
Church of
Christ

T: 928-445-4555
E: FccPrescott@gmail.com



First Congregational Church Prescott, UCC | 216 E. Gurley Street, Prescott, AZ 86301

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