

## A Message From Pastor Jay

### SUNDAY WORSHIP 10:30 AM

Nursery and Sunday school at the 10:30 am service

ARIZONA IS THE ONLY STATE THAT IS AT MEDIUM OR HIGH LEVEL FOR COVID IN ALL COUNTIES - MASKS AND SOCIAL DISTANCING ARE GOOD OPTIONS!

As we continue our Advent journey toward Christmas, this Sunday we hear John the Baptist calling us to repent (Matthew 3:1-12). We will look at the more positive aspects of repentance. Brian, Sandy, and Morgan provide music; Morgan and the kids serve as liturgists; and JJ & Ziggy light the Advent candles.

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**

**ACKER NIGHT - DECEMBER 9, 5:30-8:30 PM  
OUR SANCTUARY  
5:30-7:00 PM - WOMANSONG  
7:00-8:30 PM - ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH CHOIR**

**TWO OPPORTUNITIES FOR FELLOWSHIP THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON:**

**FRIDAY ADVENT FELLOWSHIP – NOON - DEC. 2, 9, 16, 23 -  
PERKINS HALL  
*BRING YOUR OWN LUNCH OR SNACK OR JUST YOU!***

**SUNDAY ADVENT ZOOM FELLOWSHIP – DEC. 4, 11, 18 – 8:45AM  
*ZOOM INVITE COMING IN SPECIAL MAILING***

**CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT DECEMBER 11 DURING THE  
WORSHIP SERVICE - 10 MINUTES OR SO**

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

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

## Musical Guests Sunday - Brian, Sandy, and Morgan

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

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## 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](mailto:beckybryant2255@gmail.com).

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## CHURCH FOUNDATION

The Foundation was formed as a separate non-profit Corporation by the Church back in 1993 as a way to focus management of large donations and gifts for the benefit of the Church. Currently the Foundation manages financial assets and owns the building leased by our new tenant, Red, White and Brew. The majority of the financial assets are invested with United Church Funds in Balanced Mutual Funds. The funds are a result of Endowments and Memorial Gifts to the Foundation from past members of our Church or their families. The restaurant building was also a gift to the Foundation. In many cases the gifts list how the

donors wanted the monies to be used. Some examples are Christian education needs of the children, the youth, and young families of the Congregation and for capital needs of the Church. The Foundation By-Laws explain how the Foundation Board is to act in managing the funds for the benefit of the Church. When a need arises, typically the Church Cabinet will make a written request for funds and the Foundation Board will act on that request. The Board does not look to micro-manage Church finances, but it needs to determine which fund may be the most appropriate fund to provide the funding request. The Board also is responsible for taking a long-term view of the use and sustainability of the endowments for the future benefits of the Church. Substantial donations to the Foundation can be complex financial transactions involving donor taxes, restrictions on the use of the donations by the Foundation and may take several different legal forms. The United Church Funds has several very good brochures and videos on their web site that give good explanations of the process and choices that can be used to donate to the Foundation – [ucfunds.org](http://ucfunds.org)

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## SUNDAY BULLETIN

### SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 4, 2022

10:30 a.m.

*\*Those who are able may stand*

### GATHERING TO WORSHIP GOD

Prelude: "Lead us to Your Light" by Carol Browning

Words of Welcome – Announcements - *\*Passing of the Peace*

Gather Song: "Emmanuel" by Steve Angrisano

Lighting the Second Advent Candle JJ & Ziggy and Wyatt Greenwald

One: We are God's gathered people.

**Many: And so come to this moment filled with holy hope.**

(The candle of Hope is lit)

One: May justice roll down

**Many: And peace flow like a mighty river around the world**

One: May equity be the reality for generations yet to come

**Many: And may peace flow throughout humanity, as it did with the One**

One: The One who was sent here, the One who sent us, the One whose power never fails

**Many: Peace is possible and we are resolved today to believe. For if God be for us, then anything we dream of can be a reality. We light this candle as we proclaim peace around the world. We stand together, from one end of**

**the Earth to the other, knowing God is with us.** (The candle of Peace is lit)

Candle Lighting Song: "Advent Alleluia" by Michael Joncas

\*Hymn: "Angels from the Realms of Glory"

Pilgrim Hymnal #117

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: "Stay Awake! Be Ready!" by Christopher Walker

Call to Worship

Morgan Greenwald

The Reign of God is drawing near:

**The prophet calls us to change our lives!**

Prepare the way for the Lord:

**A just and peaceful path!**

Welcome one another, for Christ welcomes you:

**For the glory of God!**

### PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD

Prayer of Confession

Morgan Greenwald

O God, you call us to turn our lives around, and work with patience and diligence to prepare the way for your Reign, but we get discouraged and give up too soon.

**Holy One, Have mercy.**

O God, you call us to collaborate in community to prepare the way your Reign, but we neither trust nor honor the gifts of others.

**Christ, have mercy.**

O God, you call us to be full of joyful confidence to prepare the way for your Reign, but we burden ourselves with anxiety and fear.

**Holy One, have mercy.**

Forgive us, O God, and lead us in the ways of patience, community and joy.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper (Communion is open to all)

Please wait until all are served, and we will partake together.

Gospel Reading: Matthew 3:1-12

Morgan Greenwald

\*Hymn: "On Jordan's Banks the Baptist Cries"

Pilgrim Hymnal #115

Sermon: "Facing John the Baptist on the Road to Christmas" Pastor Jay

### RESPONDING TO GOD'S GRACE

Anthem: "A Voice Cries Out" by Michael Joncas

Prayers of the People / The Lord's Prayer (Use Trespasses)

Offering of Ourselves and our Gifts

Offertory: "Go Tell it on the Mountain" Arr. Patsy Simms

\*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

Morgan Greenwald

**With these gifts, dear God, accept the praise and thanksgiving of our hearts, which rejoice in your goodness and love. Let our gifts point to your presence in the world, and further your dream for the world through Jesus, Emmanuel, God-with-us. Amen.**

"Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

Pilgrim Hymnal #120

\*Benediction

Pastor Jay

\*Postlude: "People, Look East" Traditional French Carol

Brian Moore

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## TREASURER REPORT

### UPDATE FROM THE TREASURER

November 30 financial update from Treasurer Julie McCurdy

Income is \$141,660

Expenses are \$139,391

Net income is \$2,269

**Julie McCurdy, treasurer**

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## STEWARDSHIP

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 2023 ARE BEING RECEIVED THESE ESTIMATES ARE NEEDED TO PREPARE A CHURCH BUDGET FOR 2023**

#### **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 2023 with so many unknowns? How do you decide what to give to this church for 2023? 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 2023 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 143rd 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!

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## SUPPORT THE CHURCH

Online – go to our website: [www.fccprescott.org](http://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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United  
Church of  
Christ

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