

A Message from Pastor Jay



MERRY CHRISTMAS!

**Christmas Eve Virtual Service of
Lessons & Carols On Our Website Under
"Watch Worship Services Here."**

SUNDAY DECEMBER 27

The staff is taking the Christmas weekend off, The Southwest Conference has produced a worship service for our churches to use on this Sunday. The "Members in Discernment" have produced it - these are individuals on a path toward ordination in the UCC. It will be on the Southwest Conference website and Facebook Sunday morning the 27th:

SWCUCC.org

This virtual worship service is brought to us by our Southwest Conference Members in Discernment, those who are exploring, discerning, and preparing for ordained ministry in the UCC, together with SWC Associate Conference Minister Barb Doerrer-Peacock. We're also grateful to the Albuquerque band, Entourage Jazz, for their offerings. We're focusing on gifts...Gifts being revealed, gifts of this season somehow embedded in the chaos and the mystery that has been this year 2020. Gifts of this threshold moment of a new year, and gifts that each of us have to offer in our hurting world.





BULLETIN



DECEMBER 27 ORDER OF WORSHIP

Music: "Joy to the World" -Entourage Jazz
Greeting & Introduction – Rev. Dr. Barb Doerrer-Peacock
The Call to Worship – Kelly Kahlstrom & Carson Hawks
Opening Prayer -Kelly Kahlstrom
Contemporary Reading - Debby Stinton
Music – Shea Darian and daughter Morgan Darian "Fire of Heaven"
Children's Time - Chris Wickersham & Company
Gospel Reading (Luke 2:22-38) Alice Goss
Sermon – "Revealing the Gift" Rev. Dr. Barb Doerrer-Peacock

Music – “Mary Did You Know” – Entourage Jazz

Prayer – Andrew Ponder Williams

The Gifts – Jill Pawlowski

Music - “Glory Hallelujah” Shea Darian and Morgan Darian

Blessing - Rev. Dr. Barb Doerrer-Peacock

Music – “Go Tell It on the Mountain” – Entourage Jazz

Acknowledgment and Thanks - Rev. Dr. Barb Doerrer-Peacock

First Congregational Church of Prescott

United Church of Christ

216 E. Gurley Street

Prescott, AZ 86301

www.fccprescott.org

www.facebook.com/FccUccPrescott

928-445-4555

Founded September 26, 1880

DECEMBER MISSION NEWS

Mission Outreach Update:

Following our November mission emphasis project, a check is being sent to the Coalition for Compassion and Justice (CCJ) for \$530. Additionally, a check for \$1,150 from our on-going DACA Fund has been given to our “adopted” DACA college student, Franceny, to assist with her Prescott College tuition and with the expense of applying for her DACA renewal.

Our December mission emphasis is the UCC national Christmas Fund Offering. Donations to this Christmas Fund will help provide financial support for active and retired clergy and church lay employees needing financial assistance. Checks can be made payable to the church, with a note on the memo line, Christmas Fund. Undesignated mission checks will be used at the discretion of the Mission Outreach team.

Prescott Community Cupboard (PCC):

Since the beginning of the Covid 19 pandemic in March, our team of volunteers has helped 13,262 people receive food bags. Besides being our team captain, Angela Imbierowicz is now also serving as a new member on the PCC Board of Directors. Our thanks for Angela and for all those serving as food bag packers.

PASS Update:

An update on the Prescott Area Shelter Services (PASS) activities includes

the following excerpt from the PASS November newsletter submitted by Carmen Frederic, PASS Executive Director.

Thank you for receiving our newsletter, we are so grateful for your support! As we look back on our 2020 year, especially during this month when we celebrate gratitude, we are in awe of the support we have received, especially during these challenging times!

PASS has maintained an 87% transition rate, even with the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. We continue to make adjustments that allow us to support women and families in need. Maintaining healthy housing per the CDC COVID-19 recommendations is a priority. Our integrated programming allows us to work with guests and create a plan for their successful move to permanent housing. Current programming includes: Case Management and Advocacy Program; Wheels to Work; Homeless Transition Project; Education to Employability Program; and PASS Transitional Housing Program. Our recent challenge is that it is taking additional time and resources to stabilize our guests as they face the challenges of today's world. We envision a community without homelessness and continue to strategically work towards that goal, but it is because of YOU that this is possible and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

We wish you and your family nothing but the best this Thanksgiving and throughout the holiday season.
Thank you!

Carmen Frederic

We are blessed to be making a difference.

Currently, we are in need of volunteers to help with our next PASS meal to be delivered on Wednesday, December 16th. As most of you know, we prepare and deliver a monthly meal to the PASS shelter on the third Wednesday of each month. Typically, the shelter runs at full capacity with 25 guests (women and children). We meet in the church parking lot at 5:00 and the food items (3 main courses, 2 salad dishes, rolls and 2 desserts) are collected and taken to the shelter.

If you would be able to help, please contact Patty Gard at 928-460-3042.

Thank you...

Our Mission Outreach Team, Becky & Bill Bryant, Helaine Berman, Linda Moore, Patty and Gary Gard
thank you for remembering that we have been blessed to be a blessing.
[Genesis 12:2]

TREASURER'S REPORT

DECEMBER UPDATE

The year is winding down, and we're on track for reaching our budget goals for 2020. Income as of the end of November is over \$169,000. This already exceeds the budgeted income amount by nearly \$1,500! Expenses to-date are at \$162,000. This is \$12,000 less than the expense budget. At this point, income is greater than expenses by \$7,000.

Thank you for your continued support of our church.
Julie McCurdy, Treasurer

As the end of the year approaches, you may be thinking ahead to planning for filing your tax returns. Here are answers to some frequently asked questions about contributions.

What Every Church Member Needs to Know about Contributions -

- Question: If I make a contribution in early January 2021, can I claim it on my 2020 taxes? Answer: No, contributions must be claimed in the year in which they are delivered.
- Question: If I mail my contribution in December 2020 but it doesn't reach my church until January 2021, for which year should I claim it? Answer: You would claim it on your 2020 tax return. A check that is mailed to a church or charity is deductible in the year the check is mailed (and postmarked), even if it is received in the next year.
- Question: I decided I wanted to designate \$1,000 to my church. I insisted that this money be spent to purchase some new microphones for my church sound room, which the church had not even thought about purchasing. Is the money a contribution? Answer: No, an individual cannot designate money to a fund of his/her choosing, but if the fund is already in existence then this gift would be a contribution.
- Question: Is there a limit to the amount that I can contribute to my church and still count it as a contribution on my tax return? Answer: Yes, a contribution usually cannot exceed 50% of the donor's adjusted gross income for the year. Donors who exceed this limit may be able to carry over their excess to future years, but you need to consult a tax lawyer for clarification on this.
- Question: I'm a volunteer in my church. Can I deduct the value of the volunteer work I do for my church? Answer: No, the value of volunteer work

you do for your church can never be a contribution.

□ Question: I purchased some items to paint the Sunday School classroom and then did the labor myself. Can I just ask them to add these expenses and my labor costs to my contribution statement at the end of the year?

Answer: No, the church is not allowed to add this amount to your contribution statement at the end of the year but they can cut you a check for the materials and labor and then you can give that money back to the church. It's better to cash the check you received from the church and then write a personal check to the church, but you can just endorse the church check back over to the church.

JANUARY WORSHIP SERVICES

Jan. 3 - Epiphany Service - "Home By Another Way"

Jan. 10 - Baptism of Christ - Rev. Gary Gard Preaching

Jan. 17 - MLK, Jr. Remembrance - Pastor Kendra Hobson, Liturgist

Jan. 24 - "Jonah: A Message to Privileged Christians"

Jan. 31 - "Modern Demonic Actions of Injustice"

STEWARDSHIP

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 2021 with so many unknowns? How do you decide what to give to this church for 2021? 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 2021 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 140th year here, in Prescott, by completing the enclosed gift card indicating your estimate of giving, be it weekly, monthly, or annually.

LEGACY ANSWERS THE LONG TERM 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 indicate so on the enclosed gift card 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,

140TH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR CHURCH

FCC History - by Jay Eby

It seems to me that the current popular history of Prescott would like to emphasize the wild west, Indian wars, mining boom town, and of course Whisky Row. All of these are of course a part of our history. But, as the Capital City of the new Territory of Arizona, there was within our community a concerted effort to make our town a well planned civil place to live and raise a family. In spite of all the sin and distractions of Whisky Row, they did just that. Our predecessors in the faith at First Congregational Church worked hard to make this happen. They did it by example and action to bring churches, schools and

culture to what was then a wilderness Capital in the Wild West. First Congregational Church was not the first Christian fellowship in Prescott. The persons that formed this congregation had been in fact a part of other fellowships before. All of the written histories of First Church start with:” First Congregational Society of Prescott, Arizona was organized with thirteen charter members on September 26, 1880, at the home of T. W. and Pamela Otis. This church is the oldest Congregational Church in Arizona and what is now the Southwest Conference.” Most church histories, including ours, highlight the buildings built, the Ministers that served, and the numbers of persons in the membership. These are important, but I would like to celebrate those men and women that built and sustained our City of Prescott as a great place to live and raise our families. Least we get to prideful we must recognize that our beginnings were with the cooperation and assistance of other congregations of faith that existed in Prescott before us. We know that Bishop Lamy from Santa Fe held at least Christmas Mass in Prescott in 1863. That that has been described as Sunday School classes were held in several buildings in Prescott from the beginning. The teaching was often augmented by Army Chaplains from Fort Whipple. The first building in town specifically built for worship was on Marina Street by those that called themselves Methodists. A Baptist congregation shared this building for some time as well as a Catholic and Presbyterian congregation.

COVID-19 UPDATE FROM CABINET

We will continue to worship remotely into 2021. We will monitor virus spread and vaccine distribution and determine what month we will open.

SUPPORT YOUR CHURCH DURING CORONAVIRUS!

- 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 mail will mail it for you! You can set up a one-time check or recurring scheduled check amount.
- Mail a check out to the church and mail it to 216 East Gurley Street, Prescott, AZ 86301

The church office is closed going forward, however, someone will pick up the mail on a daily basis to place checks into the safe.

[Visit our website](#)

[Watch Services Here](#)