

SUNDAY WORSHIP 10:30 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL & NURSERY 10:30 AM

From the Pastor

Epiphany is Saturday the 6th of January. This Sunday we will focus on epiphanies as we prepare to begin the new year. As the Magi went home by another way (Matthew 2:1-12), so we need to go down some new paths in 2024. But if you have made new year's resolutions or wish to lose weight or make other changes in your life, and you find it is not working very well, then this is the sermon for you. Resolve to be here Sunday, and I promise to provide an answer to this problem: "A recent study showed that when doctors tell heart patients they will die if they don't change their habits, only one in seven will be able to follow through successfully. Desire and motivation aren't enough: even when it's literally a matter of life or death, the ability to change remains maddeningly elusive. Given that the status quo is so potent, how can we change ourselves and our organizations?" (Robert Kegan and Lisa Lahey). We always start every new year with the fourteen frog illustration and the man ordering three shots at the bar every day after work story. And James Taylor's song "Home By Another Way." It's always one of my favorite services and topics.

We are still receiving estimates of giving for 2024. These are needed to help us prepare a budget for 2024. You can place it in the offering plate or mail it to the church office: 216 East Gurley Street, Prescott, AZ. 86301. The estimates are kept confidential and known only to our treasurer and financial secretary. Thank you to everyone that has turned in an estimate of giving for 2024. Because of you, we will live into our 144th year. And because of you, our church changes lives!

Come one, Come all, to our FCC COFFEE HOUSE! Last Friday of every month - December 29 - 4 to 6 pm - Perkins Hall - Serving: good conversation, light beverages and snacks, lots of games, music of all kinds, dancing if you want it, and any other creative ideas you can come up with. Please use the Alarcon St door to enter. See you then!

**HELP TAKE DOWN THE CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS JANUARY 10TH
AT 9AM**

**THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION WILL
TAKE PLACE AFTER WORSHIP ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 28**
There will be a congregational potluck lunch as we gather to vote on
church officers and a budget for 2024.

VIDEO SERIES

**"When Black Female Preachers Speak - Seven Important Discussions
with Black Female Theologians"** A part of our decentering whiteness efforts
(not to mention patriarchy)

The next gathering will be Friday, January 19 at noon in the church office conference
room. Bring your own lunch / snack and drink.

When black female preachers speak, we should all listen. The insight and intention
provided by black theologians illustrate their ability to bring the history of black culture
and religious experience into the life of Christians and the liturgical life of the church.
For centuries black mothers have passed on wisdom – in the white world, in the black
community, and with men. This wisdom has illustrated how God reveals prophetic word
and action for Christian living.

We have brought together some important themes coupled with visionary insights from
Rev. Jacqui Lewis, Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson, Rev. Dr. Kelle Brown, Rev. Dr.
Kelly Brown Douglass, Rev. Traci Blackmon, Rev. Canon Stephanie Spellers, and
Bishop Yvette Flunder.

**CHURCH DIRECTORIES ARE ON OUR WEBSITE
FCCPRESCOTT.ORG
UNDER THE RESOURCES TAB – PASSWORD PROTECTED
EMAIL THE CHURCH OFFICE FOR PASSWORD
fccprescott@gmail.com**

**SATURDAY FAITH FORUM OPEN TO ALL
SATURDAYS AT 10AM ON ZOOM
A NEW TOPIC EACH WEEK - BIBLE, CURRENT EVENTS,
THEOLOGY, ETC.
A LIVELY DISCUSSION
EMAIL PASTOR JAY TO BE ADDED TO THE ZOOM INVITE
jayfccprescott@gmail.com**

Watch Worship Services Here



Martin Luther King Committee

'Love in Action'

Prescott Martin Luther King Jr. Day Events:

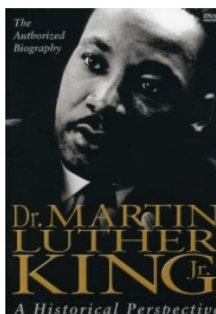
Monday, January 16th

10:00 am: March around the Courthouse
Square ~ Prescott College Welcome Center

11:00 am: Celebration Program ~ Prescott
United Methodist Church

Tuesday, January 17th

5:00 – 7:00 pm: Viewing
and discussion of
'Dr. Martin Luther King,
Jr.: A Historical
Perspective' ~ Prescott
Library Founders Room



FACEBOOK UPDATE

"We have a new Facebook group, First Congregational Church Prescott FCC - which you can join. We will be posting events, and meetup information for the community, as well as exploring ways to bring back our outreach partners; the LGBTQ community youth, AA, etc. and other groups who have used the church pre-Covid for meeting spaces. Please join the group, and join in the discussion! If you have any questions, you can email Brit and Mike Flores at bafwriter@gmail.com, our current group admins. All event questions and suggestions should be directed to the church email at FCCprescott@gmail.com.

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.

Recent mission disbursements of \$400 each have been made to: People Who Care, The Launch Pad Teen Center, Giffords, St Luke Ebony Church, CC&J, Museum of Indigenous People, and Temple B'rith Shalom.

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.

SUNDAY WORSHIP BULLETIN

EPIPHANY SUNDAY

December 31, 2023

10:30 a.m.

**Those who are able may stand*

GATHERING TO WORSHIP GOD

Epiphany (“manifestation”) is both a day, January 6th, and a season of the church year that ends at the start of Lent. Epiphany Day celebrates the coming of the Magi to visit Jesus, and these Gentiles illustrate how the revelation of Christ will come to all nations. As we begin a new year and a new journey together, we will ponder the Magi deciding to return home by another way. Sometimes life forces us to go down roads we did not expect, and sometimes we decide in January to get out of our rut and venture down some new paths. Either way, we need God to enlighten us, to help us have needful epiphanies to change our minds and ways. The Magi remind us to avoid Herod and all the schemes that would return us to darkness. Sometimes it is best to “go home by another way.”

Prelude: "Home By Another Way"

James Taylor

Words of Welcome – Announcements - *Passing of the Peace

Gather Song: "There's a Spirit of Love in This Place "

Alter-Notes

A Time for Children of All Ages – JJ & Ziggy

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

*Hymn: "Many Are the Lightbeams"

New Century Hymnal #163

Call to Worship

Tom Macy

One: Arise! Shine! Your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you!

Many: We have seen the star in the east, and we are following.

One: We have remembered God's wonder and promise, and we are worshiping.

Many: We have come not to get presents, but to give them!

One: Lift up your eyes and look around; God's people now gather together, to open our hearts and sing out our praise.

All: The mystery of God's wonder and grace is here: Come, let us adore!

Unison Opening Prayer

Tom Macy

God of wonder and mystery, today we remember how you surprise us in every age. Into the gloom of fear and want, you bring light; into emptiness, you bring abundance; into the cold, you bring warmth. Into the hardness of the world, you bring the greatest power we have known, in the seemingly powerless form of an infant. Enter now, Holy One, among us and within us, and move us to joyful adoration of your mystery and wonder.

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD

Gospel Reading: Matthew 2:1-12

Tom Macy

*Hymn: "As with Gladness Those of Old"

New Century Hymnal #159

Sermon: "Resolutions and Assumptions"

Pastor Jay

RESPONDING TO GOD'S GRACE

Anthem: "Tiny Miracle" by Pepper Choplin Alter-Notes - Djambe Elizabeth Gates

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

Offering of Ourselves and our Gifts

Offertory:

*Epiphany Doxology

Praise God the source of life and breath;

Praise Christ, now born to conquer death;

Praise Holy Spirit's mystery:

One God, pure grace, who sets us free. Amen. (Tune: Old Hundreth)

*Prayer of Dedication

Tom Macy

God of every good gift, here we present our offerings. There is money here, fulfilling our pledges to support the ministries we do in your name. And there are other gifts, not physically on this table but held in the altar of our hearts. God, we offer them all to you. We ask your blessing on all that we give, so that your loving care reaches into us and out to all the world, ever more deeply and gracefully. Amen.

*Hymn: "Go Tell It on the Mountain"

New Century Hymnal #154

*Benediction

Pastor Jay

*Postlude:

TREASURER REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 2023

A NOTE FROM THE TREASURER – JULIE MCCURDY

Financial activity, year-to-date as of November 30, 2023

Income: \$169,487

Expense: \$179,635

Net shortfall: \$10,148

\$12,843 of reserve funds have been used to pay for repairs to organ and parking lot.

ESTIMATES OF GIVING FOR 2024 NOW TOTAL

\$120,244! THANK YOU ALL! – WE ARE STILL RECEIVING THEM

UNTIL JANAURY 7TH – THE CABINET WILL MEET JANUARY

8TH TO MAKE ADJUSTMENTS TO THE BUDGET FOR 2024.



Because of You our church changes lives.

STEWARDSHIP SEASON IS HERE!

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.

ESTIMATES OF 2024 GIVING ARE BEING RECEIVED THESE ESTIMATES ARE NEEDED TO PREPARE A CHURCH BUDGET FOR 2024

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.

IMMEDIATE NEED

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.

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 2024 with so many unknowns? How do you decide what to give to this church for 2024? 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 2024 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 144th 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!

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

Use the QR Code below:



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United
Church of
Christ

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