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

From the Pastor

The second Sunday of Advent brings us face to face with John the Baptist each year. He prepares the way for Jesus with his message of repentance. The word “repent” seems ancient to us, but the biblical meaning of repentance is to turn or change one’s mind and actions. We all need to repent throughout life if we are to grow and mature. So, on our Advent journey toward Christmas, maybe encountering John the Baptist is the best preparation for a meaningful Christmas.

We will have a short Christmas pageant for children of all ages; Alter-Notes and Morgan provide music; and Edie is liturgist.

We are still receiving estimates a 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. I have maintained a stance of not knowing what anyone gives for 34 years in the pastorate. A few tried to challenge that through the years, but I stood my ground. Stubborn! 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!

**Womansong will be our musical guests for Acker
Night on Friday night.**

CHRISTMAS STOCKINGS FOR OUR STAFF

We have placed four large Christmas stockings on the wall by the pulpit so “Santa” can leave gifts of appreciation for Jeni, Audra, David, and Tom. We ran out of stockings, but you can also remember our other staff members - Melissa, Brian, Carole Sue, Mark, Mary Beth, Jean, Andy, and Thomas.



**VIDEO SERIES
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8 AT NOON
CHURCH OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM**

"When Black Female Preachers Speak - Seven Important Discussions with Black Female Theologians" A part of our de-centering whiteness efforts (de-centering patriarchy also). The next gathering will be Friday, December 8 at noon in the church office conference room. Bring your own lunch / snack and drink. The video is 33 minutes long with Rev. Dr. Kelle Brown, Senior Pastor at Plymouth Church of the United Church of Christ in Seattle. Discussion will follow. All are welcome.

ACKER NIGHT DECEMBER 8

Acker Night December 8 - The Welcoming Ministry will be providing coffee, hot chocolate and cookies to those stopping by to hear Womansong at FCC/UCC. Any cookie contributions for this event would be greatly appreciated. We look at this event as a way to show the Prescott community our beautiful sanctuary and feel welcomed. Thank you so much for your support.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING DEC. 17 AT 1PM

Caroling 12/17/23, 1:00-2:00 at the Pioneer Home.

Anyone is welcome to participate.

If interested, see Morgan after the service on 12/17.

I will bring caroling song books to use. We should meet outside the entrance at Pioneer Home so we can sign in and enter as a group.

(Morgan)

CHRISTMAS COOKIE/CANDY EXCHANGE

The Welcoming Ministry is planning a Christmas cookie/candy exchange following the **Dec. 17 worship service**. Please bring a dozen or 2 (or more) of your favorite holiday treats - homemade or store bought to share with your church community, and don't forget our gluten free folks, if you are so inclined. Please

take home only the amount of cookies/candy you have brought in exchange. Donated cookies are also appreciated. if you don't wish to take any home. Please bring baggies or plastic storage containers to take home your goodies! Thanks, as always, for your participation.

DECEMBER 10

THE ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PAGEANT WILL TAKE PLACE DURING WORSHIP

DECEMBER 17

**THE CHILDREN WILL PLAY CHIMES AND PERFORM A BRIEF SKIT
AND WE WILL DEDICATE THE GIFT FROM MANUEL LUCERO
OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE MUSEUM**

**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**

**MUSEUM OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLE
INDIGENOUS STORYTELLING
PUEBLO HALL**

**DECEMBER 27, 10:00AM -3:00PM
REFRESHMENTS & COOKIES**

Attendees will enter thru museum, pay museum rates, receive a ticket or sticker to go to Storytellers. Rates vary from high of \$10, children 12 or under free.

[Watch Worship Services Here](#)



*First Congregational
Church*

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

**Christmas Eve Morning
Worship Service - 10:30am**

**Christmas Eve Service
of Lessons & Carols - 7:00pm**

**Virtual Worship services are
recorded each Sunday**

fccprescott.org

**216 East Gurley Street,
Prescott, AZ
928-445-4555**



Don't Spend Christmas Alone!

Be Our Guest for Christmas Dinner!

JOIN US IF YOU CAN!

We will be serving food, fellowship, and fun from **11:00 AM to 2:00 PM** on Christmas Day (At no charge to our guests)

OR WE CAN DELIVER!

Home Bound Deliveries! To have your meal(s) delivered on Christmas Day, call the church office at **928-260-6300** by **Friday, December 15th**!

Get a Ride to and from the Church!

From Prescott

Leaving Sprouts Parking Lot
Pickup Every Half Hour: 10:30 - 1:00

Leaving Prescott United Methodist
Church Parking Lot
Pickup Times: 10:30, 11:30, 12:30

Leaving Coalition for Compassion
& Justice Parking Lot
Pickup Times: 10:45, 11:45, 12:45

From Chino Valley

Leaving Safeway Parking Lot
Pickup Times: 10:30 & 11:45

Leaving American Legion
Pickup Times: 10:45 & 12:00

From Prescott Valley

Leaving CASA Adult Center
Pickup Times: 11:00, 12:00, 1:00

Leaving Safeway Parking Lot
Pickup Times: 11:20, 12:20, 1:20



2000 Shepherds Lane
Highway 89 and Ruger Road
(1 block north of the Airport entrance on
Ruger Rd.)

QUESTIONS

Call 928-260-6300
10 am - 3 pm

If you would like to volunteer to help on Christmas day, during the dinner, please call 928-260-6300.

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.

Church Security

It has come to our attention that some people have concerns for their safety while at worship service here, on Sundays. Rest easy. Not all are aware but WE DO HAVE A SECURITY TEAM IN PLACE EVERY SUNDAY. Every Sunday we have a complete team consisting of highly trained current and retired law enforcement in addition to a retired emergency room medical care giver. Not only do we come to serve this church already trained but we continue to have current training sessions specific to responses in this particular church. Our intention is to carry out our function as low key as possible so as not to detract from your purpose of being here, to worship in peace, comfort and safety. (Melissa)

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

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 10, 2023

10:30 a.m.

**Those who are able may stand*

GATHERING TO WORSHIP GOD

Prelude: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"--arr. Don Phillips and David Carnes
Mark Achuff

Words of Welcome – Announcements - *Passing of the Peace

Gather Song:

Alter-Notes

Lighting the Second Advent Candle

Kiana & Maya Austin

One: We are God's gathered people -

Many: So we 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)

Christmas Pageant for Children of All Ages

*Hymn: "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

New Century Hymnal #133

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD

Call to Worship (*from Isaiah 40: 1-11*)

Eddie Diel

Leader: Listen! The voice of God calls out across the ages.

People: **We hear and respond. We rise up to worship God from the valleys, the mountains, and the plains.**

Leader: Like a shepherd God leads us and tenderly gathers us together.

People: **Comfort, comfort O my people, says our God of love.**

All: The grass withers and the flower fades; But the word of our God will stand forever!

Call to Confession (*Psalm 85: 1-2, 8-13*)

Eddie Diel

God is love; the compassionate parent that holds the world tenderly in a warm embrace. God desires that we love each other as a mother loves her child, as a father embraces his own.

Prayer of Confession

Eddie Diel

All too often we fail in our efforts to live as God would have us live. We push away, turning cold shoulders to God and each other. We express anger and resentment instead of compassion and grace. We seek revenge instead of reconciliation. In these moments, we ask you to forgive us and set us upon the right path; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Affirmation of Forgiveness

Eddie Diel

When we turn to God with faithful hearts, God hears and responds. Our failings and shortcomings are forgiven. Steadfast love and faithfulness meet; righteousness and peace kiss each other. God gives what is good and spreads the path of righteousness before us. Walk in confidence - forgiven and forgiving in Christ's name.

Hebrew Scripture Reading: Isaiah 40:1-11

Eddie Diel

Gospel Reading: Mark 1:1-8

Eddie Diel

*Hymn: "O Come, All You Faithful"

New Century Hymnal #135

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

Pastor Jay

RESPONDING TO GOD'S GRACE

Anthem: "In the Bleak Midwinter"--sung by Morgan Greenwald

Mark Achuff

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

Offering of Ourselves and our Gifts

Offertory: "Of the Father's Love Begotten"--arr. Gilbert M. Martin

Mark Achuff

*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

Edie Diel

Holy God, the love we receive from you is beyond our comprehension. Accept these gifts of love returned to you from grateful hearts. As your love has no limits, may this offering be infinite in compassionate outreach to others. Amen.

*Hymn: "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

New Century Hymnal #131

*Benediction

Pastor Jay

*Postlude: "Angels We Have Heard on High"--arr. Dale Wood

Mark Achuff



An offering plate inscribed in memory of Marilyn Eby was dedicated on All Saints' Sunday in November. Jay Eby has moved to Oklahoma. Jay and Marilyn faithfully served as ushers for decades in our church. Marilyn passed away in December of 2019.

TREASURER REPORT FOR OCTOBER 2023

A NOTE FROM THE TREASURER – JULIE MCCURDY

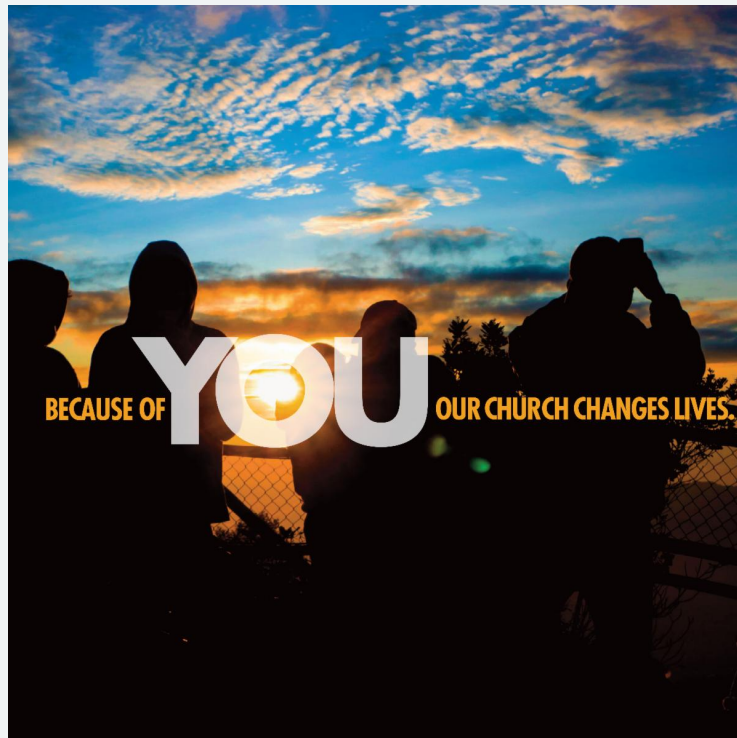
Financial activity, year-to-date as of November 30, 2023

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.



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

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