

## A Message From Pastor Jay

### SUNDAY WORSHIP 10:30 AM

Nursery and Sunday school at the 10:30 am service

**YAVAPAI COUNTY IS AT MEDIUM LEVEL FOR COVID. MASKS AND SOCIAL DISTANCING ARE GOOD OPTIONS!**

Sunday is about that odd pink/rose candle in the Advent wreath – Gaudete (Latin for “Rejoice”) Sunday. Advent used to be a more penitential season, so by the third Sunday some relief was in order! Everyone was given a break to experience some Christmas joy. We no longer experience Advent in this way, but a few vestiges remain, such as not singing Christmas carols during Advent. I love the carols so much I could never do that.

The sermon Sunday is titled “How Can We Rejoice?” and is based on Isaiah 35:1-10 and Matthew 11:1-11. I will be using Handel’s Messiah as an interpretive lens through which to look at these texts and the hope they provide in tough circumstances. I invite you to refresh your understanding of the Messiah, particularly Part III where Handel seeks to provide Biblical grounding for how we live between “the already and the not yet.” Thanks to YouTube, there is a full version from Kings College, Cambridge on the Web.

**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](#)

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

**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 - Mark, Alter-Notes & Pageant Members

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

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**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).



## CHURCH VISION 2023

### What do you wish us to be:

I love the Sat. classes, but don't have time right now. Linda Moore  
Always still be open to all- James Olney  
The sermons are awesome- keep up the good teaching  
Loving, open community  
Continue to be open to all. Maybe host community events with live music in Perkins, soup kitchen, coffee house, coat/clothing drive  
Continue "before church" Sunday School for adults  
Find ways to welcome young people from Launch Pad intentionally/ Plan activities & gatherings with other churches

### What do you want us to do:

Service opportunity, Vibrant prayer ministry, Some newer & more contemporary worship songs- more variety of old and new  
Nurture relationships with other/minority congregations or other faiths (eg Jewish, Muslim, Indigenous  
Does CCJ need support in furnishing the living spaces they find for folks?  
Coffee House- Melissa  
Rent out rooms to outside groups  
Car wash  
More community involvement, better use of kitchen- use more often for various groups  
Rummage sale/donate what is left  
Clothing drive  
Pancake breakfast  
Do we support any local social worker or social service groups with giving critical times off like Christmas, Birthday, or the children of families  
"Eat with Eight" where couples/individuals sign up to host dinners- David and Edie, Linda and Laura

July 4<sup>th</sup> pancake breakfast  
Small group get-togethers for dinner or other meet ups  
More activities for kids, music, performances, Christian education, youth group, Sunday school for older elementary age  
Sandbags for 2 downstairs classrooms, fallout shelters, water and snacks for 7-10 days for 20 people- JD  
Sponsor an immigrant family  
Adult class at 9:30am Sunday mornings  
Sandbags for basement windows  
More involvement with CCF and PCCFP  
Consider partnering with Great Hearts school in rural communities- Aimee Anderson (573) 298-5466  
Christmas Pageant with kids  
Painting workshop and/or art tour  
I'm wanting to re start a prayer group that meets maybe twice a month/ no financial impact – Sandy Z.  
In home small group bible study  
½ day retreats for women, men and kids  
More mid-week gatherings  
Rent kitchen to local people for use as commissary  
I'd like to see more Christian in the form of weekly classes. Subject matters like forgiveness, spirituality, grieving  
More outreach to find ways to invite more kids/ young people/families  
Secret Santa – people can sign up if they want to participate and then get assigned to get someone a gift. Andrea will organize!  
Outreach focus and organization through volunteers  
Find ways to connect with people in need to offer help directly (food, clothing, housing)  
I would like to have communion before Sunday school so kids can have communion- Winnie  
More small group/weeknight fellowship or study discussions/ or just for fun  
Start looking forward to the kids growing. More education/service based activities  
Game night

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## SUNDAY BULLETIN

### THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 11, 2022

10:30 a.m.

*\*Those who are able may stand*

## GATHERING TO WORSHIP GOD

*During the third week of Advent the mood changes to more expectant delight. Joy is on its way. The readings speak to anticipated reversals of the world order. God is coming with a vengeance to save God's people. Things are going to be turned around. Advent is a spiritual journey for individuals and for congregations; a time for introspection that is part of preparation for the receiving the gift of God's Son.*

*It is during Advent that we acknowledge that Christ has come, Christ is present and Christ will come again.*

Prelude: "The First Noel" arr. Ellen Foncannon.  
Carole Sue Linson and Mark Achuff

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

Gather Song: "Emmanuel" by Steve Angrisano

\*Hymn: "Joy to the World"

Pilgrim Hymnal #130

Lighting the Third Advent Candle  
Smith

Aron, Andra, and Henry

One: There are some blessings that are only revealed to us when the day is darkest.

**Many: There are some mercies that only shine when the shadows are deepest.**

One: There are some graces that are only glimpsed when the night is the longest.

**Many: O come, O come Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel. The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing.**

One: In Advent, we remember the darkest days

**Many: and await the brilliant light of hope.**

(The candle of Hope is lit)

One: In Advent, we remember the thirsty days

**Many: and await the quenching light of peace.**

(The candle of Peace is lit)

One: In Advent, we remember the silent days

**Many: and await the singing light of joy.**

(The candle of Joy is lit)

One: Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God...who will come and save you."

**Many: Our souls magnify the Lord and our spirits rejoice in God, our Savior.**

Children's Christmas Play

A Time for Children of All Ages – JJ & Ziggy

Call to Worship

Leader: The joy of the season is upon us. The time is almost here. We are here to sing praises to God, the Holy One in whom we place our trust.

**People: We have come to praise the Lord! God opens our eyes and lifts us up. who reigns forever.**

Opening Prayer

**We gather, O God, in this worship space mindful of your presence. We are here to rejoice as we wait to see your glory. Help us proclaim the joy you promise. In this hour of worship, we ask that you bless us through the inspiration of your Holy Spirit and through Christ's ministry among us. Amen.**

### **PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD**

Hebrew Scripture Reading: Isaiah 35:1-10

\*Hymn: "Angels We Have Heard on High"

Pilgrim Hymnal #116

Sermon: "How Can We Rejoice?"

Pastor Jay

### **RESPONDING TO GOD'S GRACE**

Anthem: "Carol of the Bells" arr. Mark Hayes

Mark Achuff

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

Offertory: "Away in a Manger" (Recorded)

Deana Wilson

Offering of Ourselves and our Gifts

\*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

**We present to you, O God, our gifts. May they be used to make a difference in the lives of people where hope is scarce. May our gifts be a reminder to those who receive them of your love. Amen.**

\*Hymn: "The First Nowell"

Pilgrim Hymnal #141

\*Benediction

Pastor Jay

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

Mark Achuff

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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



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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