

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



From the Pastor

Parable of the Talents, artist unknown, circa 1360, Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Darmstadt, Germany

Sunday's text is the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30. A parable is a story that usually makes one point, but often it is open to several interpretations and layers of meaning. And parables can be startling, disturbing, or challenging. This one has it all. The artistic rendering of the parable shown here has an interesting take on the parable. It does not look good for the poor fellow on the bottom of the picture. Come Sunday to find out how he got there. The title of the sermon is "extravagant opportunity" so there is a positive side of the parable as well. :) Joyful Noise are musical guests; Linda is liturgist; and JJ hides his talent.

ZOOM FAITH FORUM SATURDAY, NOV 18 AT 10AM

THANKSGIVING IN HISTORY AND ITS MEANING IN SCRIPTURE

Let Pastor Jay know if you would like to be added to the Zoom invite each week. A lively discussion each week – no requirements to speak. The group includes attendees from Florida, New York, and Wisconsin. Topics range from the Bible, spirituality, history, theology, and current events. Future subjects include the Dead Sea Scrolls, understanding Trans issues, and the prosperity gospel.



RADIO PLAY - NOVEMBER 20 AT 7PM CHURCH SANCTUARY

A RADIO DRAMA! On Monday, November 20, at 7:00 p.m., First Congregational Church will perform the Radio Drama version of Frank Capra's "**It's a Wonderful Life**". This is a fun and easy way to put on a play because *nobody needs to memorize any lines!* Step back in time and imagine listening to the radio - and watching the performers "live" on the radio.

HELP DECORATE THE CHURCH FOR CHRISTMAS MONDAY, NOV. 20, 9AM

Join us for "Friendsgiving" in Perkins Hall!

On Friday, November 24 at 3:00 PM, we will be hosting a Thanksgiving dinner and fellowship. The meal will be at 3:00 and will be followed by our monthly Coffee House event! So please plan to stay if you wish for pie, music, and board games.

All are welcome to attend our Friendsgiving (and bring guests if you'd like!). In order to get an accurate headcount for servings, please add your name to the sign up sheet in Perkins Hall by 11/19/23.

You DO NOT have to bring anything but yourself (and an appetite!). If you're interested in sharing a dish, please contact Andrea (928-897-1235, Rahmona287@yahoo.com)

Thank you!
Andrea

**Come one, Come all, to our FCC
COFFEE HOUSE!
Last Friday of every month
November 24 - 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!

**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.

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)

**OUR THANKS TO CHOIR MEMBERS WHO REPRESENTED US AT THE
COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING SERVICE THURSDAY NIGHT!**



Watch Worship Services Here

John Robinson, pastor of those who left Holland to come to America on the Mayflower, spoke the words that encircle the window: "Remember God hath more light and truth to break forth from his holy word."

John Wycliffe, a 14th century English reformer, first translated the Bible from Latin to English

From the open Bible radiates the word of God into the lives of free people and documents of freedom

Martin Luther declared his strong leadership of the Protestant Reformation

The United Nations Charter states freedoms encompassing all

By the invention of the printing press, John Gutenberg freed the Bible for all to read

The Magna Carta of 1215 was the first charter of freedom in the English world

By the donation of his own personal library, John Harvard assisted in the creation of Harvard University

The U.S. Constitution symbolized by the Liberty Bell

Transitions Issue 2017 13

EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY

A SMALL GROUP EXPERIENCE

Beginning Sunday, October 1: 9:15-10:15, in the meeting room downstairs, join us to view and discuss the popular and valuable “Embracing an Adult Faith” series (featuring contemporary Christian scholar and speaker Marcus Borg) followed by selections from the “Living the Questions” video series.

Topics:

Borg

October 1 - - God

8 - - Jesus

15 - -Salvation

22 - -Practice

Living the Questions

October 29 - - an invitation to journey

November 5 - - taking the bible seriously

12 - - stories of creation

19 - - lives of Jesus

26 - - a passion for Christ: Paul

Each session is self-contained, come for one, a few, or all of them!

Questions? and child care needs: Pete Norum at handle32pan@gmail.com.

Thanks to Jean M. for copying the sand painting explanation from the wall in Perkins Hall-

THE SAND PAINTINGS

The Sand Paintings that you see here in Perkins Hall were executed by Russell E. Insley with the assistance of Douglas Auld. When Perkins Hall was added to the First Congregational Church in the mid 1950's many Church Members felt that recognition should be given to the original inhabitants of our area. Thus, the Sand Paintings were conceived as a decoration in the new facility to honor the Native Americans who lived in Northern Arizona. It was decided to tell the story of the beginning people.

WHERE THE TWO CAME TO THEIR FATHER (A Navajo Ceremonial)

This story is the beginning of The People. East, South, West, and North - - it goes everywhere, and it is full of good power. It starts when the Earth Mother, the Sky, the Sun and the Stars, the Winds and the Mountains could talk; They talked about the making of the Earth. The myth proceeds with the adventures of two grandsons of First Man and Woman. The figures in the ceremonial and painting represent Twelve Holy

People - from left to right facing the stage - they are:

1. The Sun
2. Talking God
3. Call God
4. Female Corn
5. Male Corn
6. Corn - Beetle Girl
7. Pollen Boy
8. The Moon

The remaining characters are not shown here, since they are depicted only by colors: yellow = Earth, blue = Sky, black = Darkness, white = Dawn and yellow = Sunlight.

The mural on the back wall of the stage might well be the mountain described in the myth, since it is descriptive of the magnificent Monument Valley country, beloved mystic land of the Navajo People.

In the Navajo way, the myths explain the world and life portraying all sorts of everyday behavior. Often, they point out a moral.

Mythology is the response of man's imagination to the uncharted areas of human experience. Since the Navajos have not rationalized their Mythology into Theology there are some inconsistencies among various versions of the origin myth and between the origin myth and other myths. Navajo rituals are composed of symbols, and each may differ in kind much as in phonetics, psychological concepts, and individual significations. The body of Navajo Mythology is to the Navajo what the Bible is to our Theologians.

The Navajo Religion tries to demonstrate through symbolism that there is much more to the dance, song, and sand painting than the primitiveness that meets the casual eye; that there is a religious system which for years enabled the Navajo to retain their identity in a rapidly changing world. To the Navajo, religion means ritual. Each ceremony has its myth. A more precise explanation than religion would perhaps be that the Navajo way provides the People not only with most profound theological mysteries but also with rules for everyday social behavior. It also protects them against diseases, hunger, and hardship. Indeed, it answers all their questions about every aspect of Life. The following Navajo poem expresses their feelings about the environment around them.

With Beauty before me I walk; with Beauty before me I walk.
With Beauty behind me I walk; with Beauty below me I walk.
With Beauty above me I walk; with Beauty all around me I walk.
I will be Happy forever; nothing will hinder me.

Russell Insley, the creator of the Sand Paintings had a great background in the study of Indian Lore, particularly that of the Navajo and Hopi. While many times the sand painter's work is his own creation, each individual item on it has its own meaning. In creating these paintings, Russell felt that his renditions had special meaning for the First Congregational Church of Prescott and its work. Some parts of the paintings pertain to goals to which we all strive such as harmony, purification, human frailty, generosity, protection, respect, and repentance. Every part of the sand paintings has a special meaning, the way the arms point for example, colors used, size of parts of the sand painting in relation to each other.

The Sand Paintings, then, are part of the history and heritage of the First Congregational Church of Prescott. The plastic overlays are designed to protect the

Paintings from the elements and the various uses which we make of Perkins Hall. The Paintings were restored during 1990 by Robert Flack, a member of our congregation. The explanation given above is a compilation of information furnished by many of the older member of our Church. It is hoped that the above information will answer many of the questions which new members ask when they see the paintings for the first time.

LOOK AT THE LARGE MURAL BEHIND THE STAGE!

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.

NOVEMBER MISSION NEWS

MONTHLY FOCUS: Each month throughout the year, our mission outreach team identifies particular mission projects/programs to which we might choose to donate. As the holiday season approaches, this month our focus turns to the **Coalition for Compassion and Justice (CCJ) AND Yavapai Food Bank**.

CCJ has transitioned from primarily being an emergency shelter for those who are homeless to now helping clients find permanent affordable housing. **CCJ** has helped dozens of clients into mobile homes, cottage homes, apartments and lodge style facilities. Additionally, they work with other agencies to help provide rental assistance and programs for job opportunities.

The **Yavapai Food Bank (YFB)** provides food boxes for approximately 400 families weekly. Serving the area since 1992, **Yavapai Food Bank** is the largest food bank in our county, distributing tons of food each year to thousands of families and individuals living in poverty.

If you would like to donate to either project, please make your check payable to the church, with the memo of **CCJ** or **YFB**. Mission donations which do not specify a particular project will be disbursed as determined by our Mission team members. Recent mission disbursements have been made to: Prescott College's Freedom Education Fund (\$350) plus UCC's Strengthen the Church (\$350), Neighbors in Need (\$375), and Sow the Seed (\$250) funds.

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

TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY

November 19, 2023

10:30 a.m.

**Those who are able may stand*

GATHERING TO WORSHIP GOD

Prelude: "Faith of Our Fathers arr. By Robert Stuart

The Ringing Bells

Words of Welcome – Announcements - Passing of the Peace

Gathering Song: "Thank You, Lord" by Diane Davis Brian Moore & Thomas Porter

A Time for Children of All Ages - JJ & Ziggy

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

Opening Prayer

Linda Foote

O God of steadfast love, we entered this space today to worship you in gladness. We come into your presence singing your praises. You are our creator; we are your people. Be with us, O God, as we celebrate all of creation: We give thanks for the sun, water, air and winds that nourish your earth which provides the bounty we enjoy. Bless us as we bless your name. Amen.

*Hymn: "We Gather Together"

New Century Hymnal #421

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD

Prayer of Confession

Linda Foote

L: Thanksgiving Day provides an opportunity for us to take stock of God's blessings, and to reflect on our response to those blessings. Let us join in prayer:

L: Our Creator, you have made an intricate and diverse world, and set us to cultivate it reverently and responsibly.

P: When we forget our connection with all of creation: Forgive us

L: Our Creator, you have made a world of abundance and intend for us to share so that all may have their "daily bread".

P: When we lose the sense of hospitality and community: Forgive us

L: Our Creator, you have sent us Jesus, the “Bread of Life” to satisfy our spiritual hunger and thirst.

P: When we do not respond to his justice and mercy: Forgive us

L: Every day and all day let us celebrate your goodness.

P: When we fail to turn to you in prayer: Forgive us

Assurance of Pardon

Linda Foote

We have offered to God the concerns of our hearts and minds. We trust that God not only hears our prayers but in God’s almighty wisdom and awareness of our needs does answer our prayers. We are a forgiven people. Thanks be to God! Amen.

Gospel Lesson: Matthew 25:14-30

Linda Foote

*Hymn: “Come, O Thankful People Come”

New Century Hymnal #422

Sermon: "Extravagant Opportunity"

Pastor Jay

RESPONDING TO GOD’S GRACE

Anthem/Special Music: “Simple Gifts” Early American Shaker Song Linda Foote & Brian Moore

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

Stewardship Minute

Offering of Ourselves and our Gifts

Offertory: “Gott Sei Dank” (God be Thanked) 1704

Thomas Porter & Brian Moore

*Doxology (tune: Old Hundredth)

Let earth and heaven’s saints proclaim; the pow’r and might of God’s great Name; Let us exalt on bended knee, now and throughout eternity. Amen.

*Prayer of Dedication

Linda Foote

God, we thank you for this place we have to worship you. We so easily take for granted the church building, the members who keep things clean and who keep things going, the lights and plumbing and all the other things it takes to hold our worship services each week. Help us to realize that while it may not be what we consider to be an exciting cause, it is one that is important to your cause. Bless this offering. Amen.

*Hymn: “Great Is Your Faithfulness”

New Century Hymnal #423

*Benediction

Pastor Jay

*Postlude: “Endless Song” Attrib. to Robert Lowry 1869
Moore

Thomas Porter & Brian

TREASURER REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER 2023

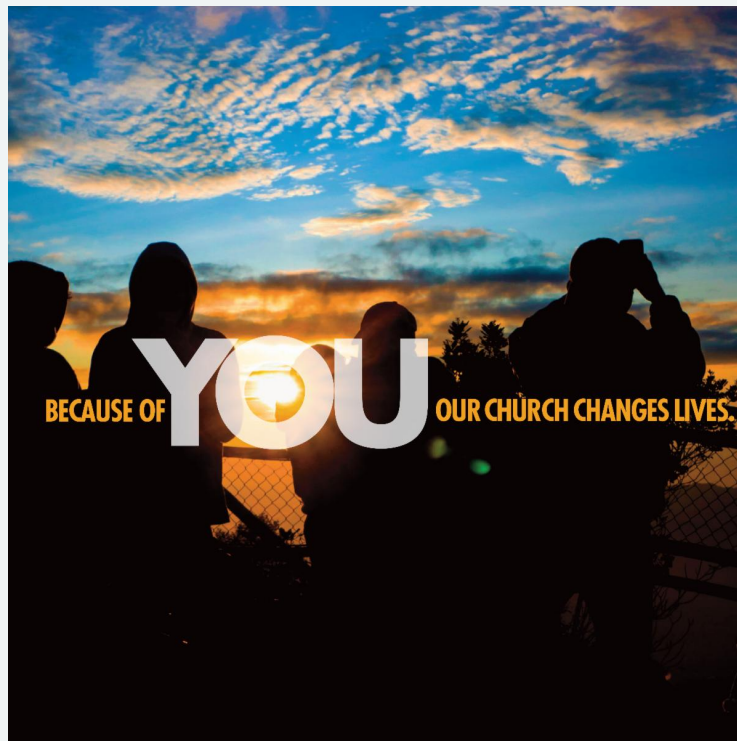
A NOTE FROM THE TREASURER – JULIE MCCURDY

Financial activity, year-to-date as of October 31, 2023

Income: \$155,720

Expense: \$164,267

Net shortfall: \$8,547



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.

STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY IS NOVEMBER 19 ESTIMATES OF 2024 GIVING WILL BE RECEIVED THESE ESTIMATES ARE NEEDED TO PREPARE A CHURCH BUDGET FOR 2024

We are in the process of developing our church budget for 2024. If you are new to church, or this church, our stewardship Sunday is November 19. We need to ask for estimates of giving for the next year. We try to live within our means, so having an idea of how much income to expect helps us plan accordingly.

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:





United
Church of
Christ

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