

A Message From Pastor Jay

SUNDAY WORSHIP 10:30 AM

Nursery and Sunday school at the 10:30 am service

Advent begins! (Matthew 24:36-44) On this First Sunday of Advent, we always focus on hope and the second advent of Christ. As we prepare to celebrate Christmas, it is good to be reminded that it is the second advent that brings ultimate redemption, peace, and justice. We live in the tension between Christ's two advents, between the "already" and the "not yet." Our task is hopeful, active, alert waiting. The words of Jesus in this text are apocalyptic – a special type of biblical literature popular in his day. The cosmic nature of the language was meant to provide hope and assurance to oppressed people – this life is not all there is – God is coming with a new future. "Such thinking should keep our souls athletically trim, free from the weight of the excessive and useless. Such thinking should keep gains and losses in their proper perspective. Such thinking should chase away the demons of dulling dissipation and cheer us with the news that not only today is a gift of God, but also that tomorrow we stand in the presence of the Son of Man." (Fred Craddock) Alter-Notes provides music; Melissa is liturgist; and JJ & Ziggy join the children in lighting the first Advent candle.

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](#)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**ACKER NIGHT - DECEMBER 9, 5:30-8:30 PM
OUR SANCTUARY
5:30-7:00 PM - WOMANSONG
7:00-8:30 PM - ST. GEORGE ORTHODOX CHURCH CHOIR**

TWO OPPORTUNITIES FOR FELLOWSHIP THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON:

**FRIDAY ADVENT FELLOWSHIP – NOON - DEC. 2, 9, 16, 23 -
PERKINS HALL**

SUNDAY ADVENT ZOOM FELLOWSHIP – DEC. 4, 11, 18 – 8:45AM

**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 - Alter-Notes

The Office Is Open Most Mornings and By Appointment. Call Prior To Visiting for Confirmation: Pastor Jay 928-899-9066

NOVEMBER MISSION NEWS

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: Ukraine Relief (\$2,020); St Luke Ebony Christian Church (\$1,700); Prescott College's Freedom Education Fund (\$350); and UCC's Neighbors in Need (\$505).

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.

CHURCH FOUNDATION

The Foundation was formed as a separate non-profit Corporation by the Church back in 1993 as a way to focus management of large donations and gifts for the benefit of the Church. Currently the Foundation manages financial assets and owns the building leased by our new tenant, Red, White and Brew. The majority of the financial assets are invested with United Church Funds in Balanced Mutual Funds. The funds are a result of Endowments and Memorial Gifts to the Foundation from past members of our Church or their families. The restaurant building was also a gift to the Foundation. In many cases the gifts list how the donors wanted the monies to be used. Some examples are Christian education needs of the children, the youth, and young families of the Congregation and for capital needs of the Church. The Foundation By-Laws explain how the Foundation Board is to act in managing the funds for the benefit of the Church. When a need arises, typically the Church Cabinet will make a written request for funds and the Foundation Board will act on that request. The Board does not look to micro-manage Church finances, but it needs to determine which fund may be the most appropriate fund to provide the funding request. The Board also is responsible for taking a long-term view of the use and sustainability of the endowments for the future benefits of the Church. Substantial donations to the Foundation can be complex financial transactions involving donor taxes, restrictions on the use of the donations by the Foundation and may take several different legal forms. The United Church Funds has several very good brochures and videos on their web site that give good explanations of the process and choices that can be used to donate to the Foundation – ucfunds.org

SUNDAY BULLETIN

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

November 27, 2022

10:30 a.m.

**Those who are able may stand*

GATHERING TO WORSHIP GOD

Prelude: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" arr. Mark Hayes

Mark Achuff

Words of Welcome – Announcements - *Passing of the Peace

Gather Song - "Emmanuel"

Alter-Notes

Lighting the First Advent Candle

Jeni Gessert & Audra Dezube with the Children

One: God of justice and of peace — You color the world with mercy and kindness.

Many: We stand in awe and wonder before your marvelous artistry.

One: God of promise and of love — You illuminate the skies with rainbow and sun-ray.

Many: We rejoice in the majesty of your creation.

One: The spectrum of your love reveals light all around. The hues of your love warm our spirits. The vibrancy of your love saturates us with hope.

Many: Blessed is the God of love whose art expressed in Christ we anticipate.

One: We light this candle in abundant hope that the radiance of you, O God, will shine in our hearts, coloring us with hope, as we anticipate the coming of Jesus Christ,

Many: We who wait on the Lord are filled with hope.

(The candle of Hope is lit)

Candle Lighting Song: "Hallelujah"

*Hymn: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

Pilgrim Hymnal #110

A Time For Children Of All Ages – JJ & Ziggy

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

Call to Worship (Isaiah 2:1-5)

Melissa Gates

L: May Advent Hope and Joy be yours!

P: And also yours!

L: We begin by celebrating the truth that the Christ who came, and who comes to us now, will at the end come again in glorious finality to consummate the loving work he began at Bethlehem.

P: He shall judge between nations; they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, their spears into pruning hooks.

L: Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. That is our Advent hope!

Opening Prayer

Melissa Gates

Loving God, we give you thanks for the season of Advent that reminds us that your love stopped at nothing to save us and claim us as your own. □ Keep us awake during this season so that we may be able to receive all that your Holy Spirit wants to offer us. Speak to us now. □ Fill us with

your power and your grace. □ Let us leave here a changed people willing and ready to be your light in the world. Amen. □

PROCLAIMING GOD'S WORD

Gospel Reading: Matthew 24:36-44

Melissa Gates

*Hymn: "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

Pilgrim Hymnal #129

Sermon: "Waiting, Watching, and Wondering"

Pastor Jay

RESPONDING TO GOD'S GRACE

Anthem: "Emmanuel" arr. Larry Shackley"

Alter-Notes

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

Offering of Ourselves and our Gifts

Offertory: "Angels and Shepherds" arr. Patricia Lou Harris

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

Melissa Gates

God who calls us to live from and for your vision of justice and peace, we dedicate not only these offerings, but our lives this morning. Send us out that your songs of goodness and mercy would be known through each act of service offered in your name. Amen.

*Hymn: "Come, O Long-Expected Jesus"

Pilgrim Hymnal #103

*Benediction

Pastor Jay

*Postlude: "Angels From the Realms of Glory" arr. Robert W. Thygerson

Mark Achuff

TREASURER REPORT

UPDATE FROM THE TREASURER

Income vs Expense:

Income is \$131,449

Expenses are \$128,731

Net INCOME is \$2,717

Julie McCurdy, treasurer

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!

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



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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