

A Message from Pastor Jay

WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS SOUTHWEST CONFERENCE COMBINED WORSHIP

On Sunday, October 4th, we will have these offerings for worship and fellowship:

Sunday 9am Conference-wide worship on Facebook Live

All churches of the Southwest Conference are invited to join together online for worship during our Annual Meeting! This is NOT just for delegates. EVERYONE is invited to worship together as ONE conference.

We'll go "live" on our [Facebook page](#) at 9 am Arizona time/10 am New Mexico and El Paso time. If you don't see the live video at that time, please refresh your browser or app until it appears for you. Website: swcucc.org

We encourage churches to share the video to their own church's Facebook page to make it easy for congregants to find the live stream.

Sunday 10am Zoom fellowship & Communion

Ralph will send this invite out on Saturday.

Sunday 10am church parking lot World Communion and blessing of the animals

Communion elements will be provided by Tom and spread out on tables - juice cups and bread on toothpicks. Bring your pet for the St. Francis Day blessing! Socially distanced pets and owners - owners with masks! The parking lot will be open with some spaces to park.

Stay safe, and give and receive grace,

Jay

**EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY**

October 4, 2020

On this Sunday we are joining with all the churches of our conference – The Southwest Conference of the United Church of Christ – in a collective virtual worship service. It is live at 9am on Facebook and then should be available as a recording on the Southwest Conference UCC website – swcucc.org

For our recorded service, I am including a short homily on Joshua chapter 5 and a celebration of the Lord's Supper.

GATHERING TO WORSHIP GOD

Words of Welcome – Announcements - Passing of the Peace

Scripture – Joshua 5

Homily: "Spiritual Preparation" – World Communion Sunday

Pastor Jay

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper (Communion is open to all)

God of all creation: pour out your Spirit of grace and peace upon these, your simple gifts, which become the Bread of Heaven and the Cup of Salvation for us. May our eyes be opened to the oppression and injustices the world would keep us from seeing. As the rich wine of hope and joy refreshes our hearts and souls, may we be ready to share all we have been given, to speak up for the voiceless, to gather the broken into our family. And when all time has stopped moving and we sit down at the feast prepared for all, we will join hands to sing the eternal anthem of your vision of hope and peace for all creation.

Holy Communion

Benediction

**First Congregational Church of Prescott
United Church of Christ**
216 E. Gurley Street
Prescott, AZ 86301
www.fccprescott.org

OCTOBER MISSION NEWS

Mission Outreach Update:

Each month throughout the year, your mission outreach team identifies particular mission project/programs to which we might choose to donate. This month's mission emphasis is our denomination's Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM). Most of what is donated to OCWM remains within our Southwest Conference. Donations support staff expenses, conference meetings, educational programs for adults and youth, summer camps, new church development, and ecumenical endeavors. Your check may be made payable to the church, with the memo line note, OCWM.

As we do each month, volunteers pack food bags for those served by the Community Food Bank (CFB), and prepare monthly meals for women/children staying at the PASS shelter. From the beginning of the COVID 19 pandemic in March to September 25, CFB volunteers from our church and other faith communities have packed 64,675 pounds of food serving 9,345 people. Thanks also to the generous response of our PASS volunteers, all of this month's meal needs are met except for the need for desserts and bread rolls. We will deliver this month's meal on Wednesday, October 21. If you can help provide a dessert or bread rolls, please advise our PASS meal coordinator, Patty Gard (928-460-3042). Remember, there will be an Open House at the PASS shelter on October 28th, 1:00-4:00 PM. Appropriate COVID precautions will be observed.

A special word of thanks to Staci Robbins. Staci has faithfully served for years on our Mission Outreach Team. New callings in life have led her to a new home in New Hampshire. Along with missing her, our love and prayers go with her.

As always, thank you for remembering that we have been blessed to be a blessing. (Genesis 12:2) Your mission outreach team is: Becky and Bill Bryant, Helaine Berman, Patty Gard, Linda Moore, Staci Robbins, and Gary Gard, Chairperson.

Special Request from Prescott Community Cupboard for large brown shopping bags (i.e., Trader Joes) or regular shopping bags (i.e., Frys, Safeway, etc.) It has been particularly difficult during the pandemic to obtain bags for packing purposes. Please deliver your bags directly to the Cupboard at 313 W. Goodwin Street (SE corner of Goodwin and

McCormick). It's directly across the street from EL Gato Azul in the small strip mall of offices (the perpendicular building). It may be best to go there between 1:30 and 4:30, Monday thru Friday, when the packers are there. If you also have an excess of fresh fruits or veggies available, a donation would be welcome (as would a monetary gift).

Thanks,
Angela Imbierowicz

JOSHUA SERMON SERIES

Preaching Through Joshua

- Sept 6 - Joshua 1 - "Crossing Over
- Sept 13 - Joshua 2 - Dealing with Uncontrollable Circumstances
- Sept. 20 - Joshua 3-4 - "We Have Not Passed This Way Before"
- Sept 27 - 140th Anniversary - Rev. Bill Lyons Preaching
- Oct. 4 - Joshua 5 - "Spiritual Preparation"
- Oct. 11 - Joshua 6 - "When God Doesn't Make Sense"
- Oct. 18 - Joshua 7,8,9 - "Deceiving Ourselves"
- Oct. 25 - Joshua 10 - "Choosing to be on God's Side"
- Nov. 1 - Joshua 13-19 - "Saint Caleb"
- Nov. 8 - Joshua 20 - "Finding Refuge"
- Nov. 15 - Joshua 22 - "Opportunities & Obstacles in Times of Change"
- Nov. 22 - Joshua 23-24 - "The Importance of Conviction"

[Text Link](#)

ADVENT WORSHIP SERIES THE PROBLEM WITH LIGHT/DARK AESTHETICS

DARK IS GOOD & GODLY

- Nov. 29 - Dark is Good & Godly - "The Via Negativa"
- Dec. 6 - Dark is Good & Godly - "Dealing With White Fragility"
- Dec. 13 - Dark is Good & Godly - "Light Burns & Blinds"
- Dec. 20 - Dark is Good & Godly - "Beyond White Jesus"

ZOOM BOOK STUDY OCTOBER 11

You are invited to join in a book study of

“White Too Long” by Robert P. Jones

To be held every Sunday Evening at 5:30
For six weeks beginning on October 11th
And ending on November 15th.

The Study will be by Zoom
And led by Ralph Wagner
If you are on the Church email list
You will receive a weekly invitation

You may purchase the book on Kindle for 13.49 and hard cover for 20.91. The book is also available on audiobook for free and can be purchased on audio CD on Amazon.

140TH ANNIVERSARY OF OUR CHURCH

140TH ANNIVERSARY SERMON FCC HISTORY

On the Leading Edge
Prescott 140th Anniversary
Isaiah 43:1-3, 10-12, 18-19.
Philippians 1:3-6
John 15:1-17

September 27, 2020 Rev. Dr. William M. Lyons, Conference Minister

Leading edge: something that is or represents the most advanced or innovative aspect of a field, activity, profession, etc.; forefront; vanguard: *the leading edge of technology.*^[1]

In 1879 a local church closed just three years after it had been established leaving behind an undeveloped lot across the street from the territorial capitol. The property had been entrusted to T. W. Otis. Less than a year later Rev. Dr. Warren, Missionary Superintendent for the Southern California Conference of the Congregational Church and a member of the New West Educational Commission, visited Prescott. Despite the recent church closing and a thriving whiskey row, Warren convinced 13 townspeople to charter the First Congregational Society and your local church was born. T. W. Otis hosted that founding gathering, and he deeded the property to the new church. As their first church established in the American southwest you were the leading edge of Congregationalism in 1880.

Your 140 old year success story owes itself to your founders vision for more than a worshipping community. The mission of First Congregational Church included public education free of religious domination for Prescott. Church member Moses Hazeltine Sherman built the territory's first graded school

and the second school building in Prescott. Angeline Mitchell developed the territory's graded curricula and served on the Territorial Board of Examiners for teachers. From its very beginning members of this congregation sought to make their community "a well-planned, civil place to live and raise a family. They did it by positioning themselves on the leading edge of education.

Youth rights emerged as a leading-edge issue in the U.S. in the 1930s. As youth movement was taking root back east, this church, in 1937, proved themselves on the leading edge of listening to and meeting needs of youth in this community when they built a youth center. FCCP's commitment to young people expanded when Head Start found a home with you. You are still home to Troop 1 of the Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts. Thank you for affording kids the opportunity to go to Camp!

If you've been around Prescott or this congregation for any length of time you've heard the leading-edge-story of Rev. Charles Franklin Parker's 1962 founding of Prescott College. Dr. Parker envisioned a "pioneering, even radical experiment in higher education...to graduate society's leaders for the 21st century who would be needed to solve the world's growing environmental and social problems."² But maybe you haven't heard how Dr. Parker and this local congregation were on the leading edge of evangelism across the north country. In 1947 with church support Parker organized the Yavapai Cooperative Parish. Through it churches in Humboldt, Chino Valley, Crown King, Cottonwood, Sedona and Flagstaff were founded.

For 140 years you have been the leading edge of progressive Christianity in Prescott, including your passion for and commitment to extravagant welcome. The roots of your extravagant welcome can be traced to T.W. Otis's and Rev. Thomas McLean's school for Chinese men living in the area. When Jun Moy, a young Chinese woman escaped from her owner and ran to T.W.'s wife for refuge, Pamela Otis took her in. The Women's Fellowship collected clothes and money to get her started in her home. "The Otises put away funds to provide for her education."

Your extravagant welcome today is strong and vibrant as you host events like last year's a community-wide racial diversity gathering, and as you live into your Open and Affirming identity, expressed not only in a statement on your website, but by displaying the rainbow banner on your front steps. In the era when Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act was passed, banning discrimination on the basis of disability by recipients of federal funds, this congregation built a ramp to their front door providing access to the church building to anyone for whom a flight of stairs was a barrier. Yet again, First Congregational Church was on the leading edge of a movement unfolding across the country.

'Leading edge' is another way of saying 'new thing.' 'New thing' is the term the prophets used in today's Scripture reading. Each time, God was doing something new, the people who were FCCP perceived³ it. Today I celebrate how this congregation, individually and collectively, has kept listening for God's voice. The members of this local church have a pattern of receiving new information, imagining the possibilities, acknowledging and honoring what was happening even when it seemed to contradict what they had formerly been taught, letting human experience not just knowledge or

Sacred texts guide you, choosing engagement, nurturing new relationships, and inviting people to join you. In short the people who are First Congregational Church of Prescott answer, “Yes!” when God calls them to new things.

Today’s Old Testament reading comes from a section of Isaiah “filled...with encouragement for God’s people to reflect on their past with an eye toward their future.”^[2] The first few verses of Isaiah 43 invite God’s people, who are suffering a low point in their community life and a turning national and international tide, to see themselves differently.^[3]

When I arrived in the Southwest Conference, I received a book of self-descriptions from congregations accompanied by notes from the conference staff for each church. In part, your notes read like this:

“This church should record their story of transformation and let the entire world know. ...this church found a new life.”

Within recent memory you’ve passed through a challenging time much like the people to whom the prophet Isaiah preached. Every local church experiences exile moments. For some it’s knowing or worrying that theirs will be the generation that will close the building. And on the most intimate scale possible, many among us grapple with lost opportunities, lost relationships, lost jobs, lost homes, lost hope, wondering what or who COVID might take from us next. The new experiences of exile that we face are both widespread and personal.”^[4] Our text doesn’t promise we won’t encounter fire and flood – exile moments – but rather, that God’s people won’t face them alone, and they will not overpower God’s faithful Ones.”^[5] Whatever new things or leading edges your future holds, God is with you! “Because you are precious in my sight and honored,” says God, “and I love you!” (v. 4) With God it’s never about what happened. It’s always about what’s happening or about to happen. That’s the essence of what “God is a living God” means (contra a God who lived), that no other god is like this God, or has ever done what this God does. With God the best is always in the making. God is an ever-present help. The challenge is whether we perceive it.

When I was raising children, it was hard to see how they’d grown. But each time I visit my grandchildren, I am amazed at how they’ve changed, and at what new things are happening in their lives.

Serving in a local church setting I admit it was sometimes hard to see God at work doing new things. Traveling from church to church, and being at the table with colleagues from across the country and around the world, seeing what’s happening in our churches, what new things God is doing in the world is amazing and energizing! You are a part of that energy.

The ‘new thing’ God is bringing forth for First Congregational Church of Prescott could not take place without the last 140 years of work and witness, learning and growth, risk and relationships. Will what’s next build on your strengths in education, extravagant welcome, and evangelism? Or will it be something radically different as each of *those* new things were in *their* day? Whatever the new thing will be, it will include flood and fire – water and flame – refreshment and refinement – God working them together to accomplish something new in and through FCCP in the world.

While these past 140 years have all been leading to this moment, they

are...

¹ *“...nothing compared to what I am going to do.*

¹ *For I am about to do something new.*

*See, I have already begun! Do you not see it?*⁸

Beloved,³ *Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God.*⁴ *Whenever I pray, I make my requests for all of you with joy,*⁵ *for you have been my partners [partners with the Southwest Conference, the United Church of Christ, our ecumenical partners here in town, missionaries and the wider church] in spreading the Good News about Christ from the time you first heard it [from the time you were first formed] until now.*⁶ *And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue that work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.*⁹

Many blessings on the journey ahead as we travel the future together.
Amen.

³ **3359** *נָתַן* (*yā·dā'*): v.; ≡ Str 3045; TWOT 848—**1.** LN 28.1–28.16 (qal) know, i.e., possess information about (Ge 4:9); (nif) **2.** LN 27.1–27.26 (qal) find out, i.e., **acquire information** by whatever means (Dt 13:4[EB 3]); (nif) be aware, **discovered** (Lev 4:14); **3.** LN 28.28–28.56 (nif) revealed, i.e., what is well known (Eze 20:5); (hif) reveal, make known (Ge 41:39); (hitp) make oneself known (Ge 45:1; Nu 12:6+); **4.** LN 87.19–87.57 (qal pass.) **respected**, formally, known, i.e., pertaining to having a high status and honor (Dt 1:13, 15+); (nif, Pr 31:23); **5.** LN 27.1–27.26 (qal) familiar with, i.e., **to acquire information by experience** (Isa 53:3); **6.** LN 32.1–32.10 (qal) **understand**, i.e., to comprehend a situation through observation (1Sa 24:12[EB 11]); **7.** LN 31.26–31.28 (qal) **acknowledge**, i.e., to indicate that one knows an object (Dt 33:9); **9.** LN 30.39–30.52 (qal) concern, i.e., **think about objects or events, with a focus on responding** (Ge 39:6); **10.** LN 30.86–30.107 (qal) **choose**, i.e., to select an object for special favor (Ge 18:19); **11.** LN 31.14–31.25 (nif) **agree**, i.e., come to a mutual affirmative position on a subject, based on knowledge (Am 3:3); **12.** LN 34.1–34.21 (pual ptcp.) **close friends**, formally, ones known, i.e., persons closely associated, implying a fondness and regard (2Ki 10:11); **13.** LN 33.189–33.217 (hif) **tell**, make known, i.e., give information to another (Jos 4:22); **14.** LN 33.224–33.250 (hif) **teach**, i.e., provide instruction in a formal or informal setting (Dt 4:9)

[1] <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/leading-edge> ² Prescott College website

[2] Patricia Tull https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1550

[3] Callie Plunket-Brewton

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2747

[4] Patricia Tull https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1550

[5] Patricia Tull https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1550

[6] Tyndale House Publishers. (2013). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Is 43:18–19). Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

[7] Tyndale House Publishers. (2013). *Holy Bible: New Living Translation*

(Php 1:3–6). Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

CHURCH CLOSED THROUGH OCTOBER

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The church Cabinet decided at its September 24 meeting to remain closed through October and continue to worship virtually. Parking lot gatherings may continue as weather permits. Check the Parish Caller each week for details. Toward the end of October, decisions will be made based on the spread of the virus.

[Text Link](#)

SUPPORT YOUR CHURCH DURING CORONAVIRUS!

- 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 mail will mail it for you! You can set up a one-time check or recurring scheduled check amount.
- Mail a check out to the church and mail it to 216 East Gurley Street, Prescott, AZ 86301

The church office is closed going forward, however, someone will pick up the mail on a daily basis to place checks into the safe.

Visit our website

Watch Services

Here



Celebrating YOU!!!

Anniversaries

WAGNER, Ralph & Susan Lemons	09/05
GILGES, Ralph & Cheryl	09/09
BRYANT, Bill & Becky	09/22
JAQUETTE, Julie & Sandra Johns	09/24
FONE, DJ & Marita Callaway	09/28
GESSERT, Jeni & Ben	10/21
JORDAN, Bruce & Jennifer Cortez	11/11
OSBORN, Alex & Jane	11/11
STEVEN, Ritch & Janet	11/23
MCCOLLOUGH, Dennis & Barbara	11/27

Birthdays

BROUSSARD, Suzanne	09/06
DINSMAN, Christy	09/07
MCCOLLOUGH, Dennis	09/09
MACY, Tom	09/14
MATSUMOTO, Yoichi	09/18
RELTH, Arlene	09/22
WILSON, John	09/28
KAUL, Linda	09/29
GILGES, Ralph	10/09
GATES, Melissa	10/13
MONSKA, Paul	10/13
DEVILLE, Dave	10/15
FOOTE, David	10/17
GATES, Elizabeth	10/21
LOBAUGH, Hal	10/22
LOBAUGH, Suzy	10/23
MCFADDEN, Michele	10/24
LANTRIP, Patty	10/25
GARRISON, Marti	11/01
JOHNS, Sandra	11/01
MCCURDY, Julie	11/01
STAATS, Debbie	11/01
GALE, Nancy	11/03
PROHASKA, Carolyn	11/10
ELY, Judy	11/11
ROUSE, Bill	11/15
WALLACE, Andrew	11/18
HUFF, John	11/23
WILSON, Fay	11/24
TAYLOR, Josh	11/25
BRADSTREET, Bob	11/28
LINSON, Bill	11/28
CICHON, Patti	12/03
MCCURDY, John	12/03
WILDMAN, Tommie	12/06
LINSON, Carole Sue	12/08
BERMAN, Helaine	12/15
WILCHER, Jay	12/17
NORUM, Pete	12/18
EBY, Jay	12/24
STEPHENS, Don	12/25