

The Peace of Christ ... be With You!

The First Presbyterian Church of Florence, AZ

Volume 10, Issue 07 (July 2015)



First Presbyterian Church of Florence

P.O. Box 950

Florence, AZ 85132

Ph: 520-868-5634

Fax: 520-868-3053

Email: FlorencePresby1@icloud.com

Web site: <http://florenceazchurch.co>

Sunday Church Service

10:00 a.m.

Fellowship after worship

Table of Contents

1. Pastoral News, From the Pastor
3. Prayer Corner, Birthdays, Anniversaries
8. Book Review, In A Different Voice
9. July Calendar

From the pastor . . .

When I wrote at the end of April, I was discouraged by the decision of Spirit of Joy Methodist Church in Coolidge not to join with us and two other churches in collective summer worship.

I still am, but I was overjoyed by the first worship service in our shared summer series. On June 21, at least most of the number of worshippers we would normally expect joined with the regular number of worshippers at Community Coolidge and an even larger number from St. Michael's Episcopal in Coolidge at Community, where we had a joyous worship in which we shared the Lord's Supper and, afterwards, fellowship. I think what impressed me as much as anything was the way people *did* remain at Coolidge for fellowship! People from Community expressed their pleasure with the worship (we did have some WiFi and microphone glitches), and I think, in short, that the summer worship program is off to a good start. The first service at our own church will be on July 5, then, following July 12 at St. Michael's beautiful building, we will return to our sanctuary on July 19 and 26.

This past week, joined by two children from St. Michael's, we have been experiencing the first Vacation Bible School during the time I have been at First Presbyterian and the first ever in which I have been a regular participant. This was the outgrowth of our earlier determination to have Sunday School, and just as a number of you have been willing to step forward to help with Sunday School, we have been blessed by efforts of a number of people who have made VBS possible. I do wish to single out Denise Kollert, but I am sure she would readily add that without Marge Thompson and Jessie Laing and the participation of Heidi Lowe and Amanda Young and Jennifer Fox, and some help also from Lisa Hoenig, this would not have been possible. There has been Bible Study, crafts, games (the kids so like a Bible-based variation on "duck-duck-goose" that I am almost worn out), and snacks – with a pizza party for our final day.

The theme of VBS and of what I am hoping comes through our community worship is that *we are all God's children*; if everything is created by God ("Yes," that was part of our first day's study), than *all people are children of God* no matter their nationality or color or the language they speak or their faith or lack thereof! We are all brothers and sisters.

And has that not been driven home by the horrible evil that occurred in Charleston, South Carolina, that led to the fantastic display of forgiveness by members of Emanuel AME Church. The contrast between that forgiveness and our frequent human desire for retribution was ("will be" at the time of this writing) part of my message on June 28.

Pastor
John Johnson
Cell: 312-933-3494

Session Members
Clerk of the Session
Nancy Blank 520-868-5538
Ministry of Management
Administration/Finance

Robert Woodhull 520-840-9740
Property
Roger Hiestand 520-868-0343
Building

Allen Saunders 480-656-8816
Congregational Care
Verna Boyle 520-868-8182

Fellowship
Laura Hofmann 520-858-2945

Evangelism
?????????

Mission
Denise Kollert 520-868-8177

Worship
Anita VanWagoner
520-868-4671 Cell: 520-709-2771

Christian Education
Sandra Saunders 480-656-8816

Stewardship
Dave & Lois Platt 520-868-8135

Church Personnel
Anita VanWagoner
520-868-4671 Cell: 520-709-2771

Bookkeeper
Judi Hyland

Treasurer
Vicky Bahme

Assistant Treasurer
B.J. Brown-Ferguson
602-989-2108

Anita VanWagoner
520-868-4671 Cell: 520-709-2771

Prayer Chain
Vera Schell 520-868-8720

Newsletter
Larry & Denise Kollert
225butte@gmail.com
Deadline is 20th of month

Church Secretary
Nancy Rodrigues

Church Hours
Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursday
8:30 – 11:30 a.m.

From the pastor . . . Cont'd

In this context I find it an interesting coincidence that our Hebrew Bible – Old Testament readings concern David the King, including (on July 26) the story of David and Bathsheba – and of Bathsheba’s husband, Uriah, -- and of the crimes of which David was guilty. God’s restraint tells us something about God, but if we really want to be God-like, it gives us an idea of how we must know an often unwelcome restraint. If we believe that God is in charge, sometimes we need to leave certain things to God – such as *retribution*.

And, oh, David committed what I suspect are the two worst sins – other than blaspheming God – that an individual could commit, yet God did not stop loving David!

At any rate, Scripture and current events will help me as I prepare sermons during July, which is almost an act of mercy on God’s part as the human part of me wants to hit the golf links – where, of course, God is always present, forcing me to learn humility!

* * *

“*And now for something completely different . . .*” By the time this newsletter has been printed by Larry Kollert, the US Supreme Court will have ruled on same sex marriage and whether or not it is unconstitutional *for states* to limit marriage to opposite sex couples. The unrepentant lawyer in me can see how the Court could rule in either direction. Marriage is not a federal issue, on the one hand, and to me it is hubris that anyone can redefine terms that have had long standing meanings . . . but (and please bear with me), while scientific evidence is anything but conclusive, it is highly, very highly, probable that sexual orientation (whether one is heterosexual or homosexual) is a matter of birth, and while sexual orientation is not an *enumerated* condition, both Amendments to the Constitution and Court decisions since the Civil War have tended to find that *a government’s* discriminating against individuals because of a condition of birth, such as race or national origin, is not acceptable. To the extent that marriage is an act of government – who issues marriage licenses? – I do not think that should the Supreme Court rule in that states cannot ban same sex marriages, it would mark any attempt to interfere with religious freedom.

When I spoke a month or so ago about issues that should not divide the earthly body of Christ, this is one of the issues (I was essentially speaking of political issues and belittling the idea that differences over politics should divide the Church) to which I was referring.

Because I cannot escape what I sought to teach the children at Vacation Bible School, where we would sometimes sing the very old song, “Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world.”

Jesus does love the little children – and the grown up children – of the world. “Yellow, black, or white,” the song says, but I think it is no stretch to say that there is no division humans can make that divides us into those Jesus loves and those Jesus does not love. And if Jesus loves everyone, than let us do so and leave those other matters in God’s hands.

I mean, does entering into a same sex marriage, even if one does not like the idea, begin to compare to the sins of David?

Blessings,

John



Pray For:

Gary Ellsworth, Mary Palmer, Junior Hiller, JL Hooper, Heidi Lowe, Maria, Kurt, Billy Bahme, Bob & Verna Boyle, Karen Smith, Dick & Flory, Larry Kollert, Barb Newman, Alma Yost, Lew Moon, Wayne Jackson, George Oberdorf, Agnes Eeg.

Prayers for our military: Lord hold our troops in your loving hands. Protect them as they protect us. Bless them and their families for selfless acts performed.

Don't forget to pray for our Police Officers and our Fire Fighters.

*Happy
Birthday*



July Birthdays

1. Gladys Hiller
9. Sue Landis
11. Barb Dressel
11. J.L. Hooper
12. ShaRon Liedl
13. Shirley Alberg
14. Lew Moon
14. Dean Rieffer
15. Farley Granger
19. Anita VanWagoner
23. William Johnston
26. Sue Webster
31. Denise Kollert

*Happy
Anniversary*



July Anniversaries

3. Dean & Betty Rieffer
9. Paul & Vicky Hackl
22. Mike & Mary Palmer
31. Junior & Gladys Hiller

Subject: Billy's Team ([this from Miriam Reed re. former pastor Bill Dean](#))

Hi to all you wonderful folks,

The visit to the hematology lab at the Cancer Clinic and to Dr. Patel went so smoothly. (first visit since May 11.) At 8 o'clock in the morning we were among the first so able to finish in record time. Blood work looks good, about the same levels as before. He has gained a few pounds (lots of ice cream) but his energy level these past few days has dwindled. I guess he (and I) should be walking more but once the day starts, it heats up fast. Have had 99+ the past four days and will be 108 by Thursday! He will start a 7th round of Xeloda on the 24th.

We hope all is going well for all of you. May God's grace and love be with you in Jesus' name. Thank you for all your support and prayers.

Blessings and love, Bill, Derry and Family



Five gifts from God

Love makes our friends a little dearer.
Joy makes our hearts a little lighter.
Faith makes our paths a little clearer.
Hope makes our lives a little brighter.
Peace brings us all a little nearer.

—Author unknown

NEWS RELEASE (Pastor John)



Combined Worship Services

Three area Protestant Churches are going to be sharing worship during the next three months. From June 21 through at least September 20, First Presbyterian in Florence and Community Presbyterian in Coolidge will worship together every Sunday, and on four occasions, St. Michael’s Episcopal in Coolidge will also participate.

The location for services will vary.

Except when the services are at St. Michael’s (July 12 and September 20), John Johnson (Florence) will preach. Services at Community Presbyterian will be at 9:30 (June 21, 28, August 2, 9,16) while those at Florence (July 5, 19, 26, August 30, September 6, 13) and at St. Michael’s will be at 10:00.

“This presents a wonderful opportunity to come together for meaningful and vibrant worship even though our individual numbers are seasonally smaller due to snow-birds and our own people’s vacationing elsewhere,” according to Anita VanWagoner, Moderator of Worship at Florence.

For further information contact Anita VanWagoner 520 709 2771

Enjoy Every Day

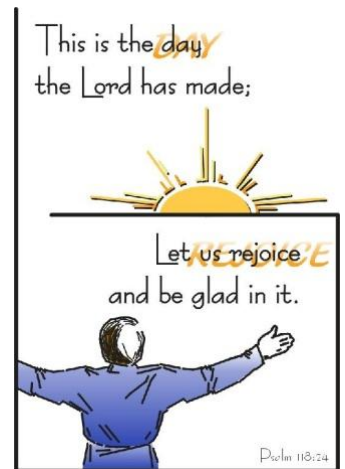
The other day I was in the barber shop and ran into someone I hadn’t seen in quite a while. Let’s just call him Frank. Well, Frank and I shared life (what’s been happening) for a bit and I said. I see so and so’s house has been sold, what’s the deal? He said, “oh you didn’t know; Wes left us last February.” We talked a little longer sharing his issues and mine and when we parted company Frank said with a faraway look in his eyes “enjoy every day.”

Later, after thinking about the experience, a scripture came to mind so I looked it up. It is Psalm 118:24 “This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.”

We all need to remember that each and every day is the day that the Lord has made; for us; because He loves us.

As Frank said, “enjoy every day.”

Larry Kollert



Seek First

- Seek first the kingdom of wealth, and you’ll worry over every dollar.
- Seek first the kingdom of health, and you’ll sweat every blemish and bump.
- Seek first the kingdom of popularity, and you’ll relive every conflict.
- Seek first the kingdom of safety, and you’ll jump at every crack of the twig.

But seek first [God’s] kingdom, and you will find it.

On that, we can depend and never worry.

—Max Lucado, *Fearless*





Administration/Finance (Bob Woodhull)

	May 2014	May 2015	2014 YTD(Jan-May)	2015 YTD(Jan-May)
Expense	\$13,943.00	\$14,203.00	\$52,021.00	\$57,182.00
Income	\$4,152.65	\$3,705.00	\$50,428.00	\$47,484.00
Shortfall	\$9,790.35	\$10,498.00	\$1,593.00	\$9,698.00

DISCLAIMER

Articles shared or written by individuals are not necessarily the views or opinions of the Church. If you have something you would like to share or something you have written, we would be happy to include it in the newsletter.

All shared or written articles will be attributed to the person who sent them in. Please do not violate the copyrights of others.

Thank you, Larry & Denise Kollert Newsletter Editors

Newsletter input to: 225butte@gmail.com

Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.

Colossians 3:23, NLT



The Light Turned Yellow

The light turned yellow, just in front of him. He did the right thing, stopping at the crosswalk, even though he could have beaten the red light by accelerating through the intersection.

The tailgating woman was furious and honked her horn, screaming in frustration, as she missed her chance to get through the intersection, dropping her cell phone and makeup.

As she was still in mid-rant, she heard a tap on her window and looked up into the face of a very serious police officer. The officer ordered her to exit her car with her hands up..

He took her to the police station where she was searched, fingerprinted, photographed, and placed in a holding cell.

After a couple of hours, a policeman approached the cell and opened the door. She was escorted back to the booking desk where the arresting officer was waiting with her personal effects.

He said, "I'm very sorry for this mistake. You see, I pulled up behind your car while you were blowing your horn, flipping off the guy in front of you and cussing a blue streak at him. I noticed the 'What Would Jesus Do' bumper sticker, the 'Choose Life' license plate holder, the 'Follow Me to Sunday-School' bumper sticker, and the chrome-plated Christian fish emblem on the trunk, so naturally....I assumed you had stolen the car."

Judith Johnston

Hygiene Bank Mission News

Our 2nd hygiene bank distribution went well. We had 17 come for help; 6 were new. Again, everyone was very grateful to the Church for doing this. I will need to shop before our next distribution in July to replace some of the items. So please, if you can, send in any size donation so we can keep our help to the community going.

Thank you – Denise Kollert

Copyright Issues

The Church is still troubled by an issue where we unknowingly and without malice violated the intellectual rights of the writer of a particular poem. I hesitate to even mention it again for fear that it will stop you folks from submitting material for the newsletter. While I don't think it is quite as serious as the following toon seems to say, we all do need to be extremely careful. If you wrote it, please take credit for it and affix your name. If someone else wrote it and you are merely passing it along, please be careful to credit the source. [Editor - Larry](#)



Casa Grande Dispatch 6/12/15

Unanswered prayer?

One day a little boy asked his pastor-mom why she always bowed her head for a moment before starting to preach. The mother, delighted that her son was so aware of what went on during worship, answered, "I pray for God to help me deliver a good sermon to the people."

Alas, her delight was short-lived and fizzled at the child's response: "So why doesn't God ever answer?"

[There's an app for that!](#)

These days, there's a smartphone app for just about everything. But what about spiritual concerns? Where can you turn?



Take Time to
Read the Bible

- Depressed? Try the joy app. Read Isaiah 51:11.
- Tired? Try the renewal app. Read Isaiah 40:30-31.
- Unsettled? Try the peace app. Read Philippians 4:7.
- Unloved? Try the love app. Read Romans 8:38-39.
- Worried? Try the refuge app. Read Psalm 46:1.
- Fearful? Try the power app. Read 2 Timothy 1:7.
- Guilty? Try the forgiveness app. Read Colossians 1:13-14.
- Praying? Try the prayer app. Read 1 John 5:14-15.

Think of the Bible as the iTunes Store of spiritual apps. Best of all, everything's free!

The Scriptures are God's storehouse of meaningful applications for what we face every day.

[Timothy Merrill](#)

READ ALL ABOUT IT!

One of my secret (innocent) pleasures is to enjoy the work of clever headline writers, who can tell a whole story dramatically in 10 words or less. If they do it right, they relate all the essentials in such a compelling way that you just *must* read the article that follows.

A former wife used to write for *The National Enquirer*, where the art of headline creativity was perfected. She once did a ho-hum story about the “good” bacteria that live inside us and combat harmful germs and disease. Nothing new or exciting about that. But one of the paper’s headline geniuses blasted this great teaser onto the front page:

BILLIONS OF BUGS BATTLE FOR THE BETTERMENT OF YOUR BODY!

Maybe the people who publish modern-language editions of the Bible should spice up those headings that introduce some of the sections and episodes. Instead of the rather bland “Jesus and the Money-changers” they could use a more arresting tabloid style, like:

NAZARENE DENOUNCES TEMPLE CORRUPTION—RIOT BREAKS OUT.

This could work to highlight some Old Testament events, as well...

RED SEA SHOCKER: EGYPT’S ARMY DROWNS IN HOT PURSUIT

UNEXPECTED FIRESTORM ZAPS SODOM, GOMORRAH

NOAH’S BOYS: DAD OBSCENELY DRUNK AFTER WINE TASTING

SWEET REVENGE: LAST SAMSON SHOW BRINGS DOWN HOUSE

EZEKIEL SEES BONE VALLEY REVIVAL

Back in the New Testament, we might have

WILDERNESS BAPTIZER DRAWS HUGE CROWDS, SPYS MESSIAH!

So, here’s a little summertime hobby for you, just to exercise your imagination. Try composing headlines that summarize stories you read in the Bible. Remember, 10 words is the absolute limit. A good one wins no money but gives you a lot of satisfaction. Count on it!

Richard Woike

Grin And Bear It

A preacher decided to skip worship services one Sunday and head to the hills to do some bear hunting instead. As the man rounded a corner, he collided with a huge bear and tumbled down the mountain, losing his rifle and breaking both legs in the process. The bear charged toward him, but the preacher couldn’t move.

“Oh, Lord,” he prayed, “I’m so sorry for skipping church today. Please forgive me and grant me just one wish: Please turn that bear into a Christian!”

Instantly, the bear screeched to a halt, fell to its knees, clasped its front paws together and began praying aloud at the preacher’s feet.

“Dear Lord,” the bear said, “bless this food I am about to receive. Amen.”

Children In Church

A little boy was attending his first wedding.

After the service, his cousin asked him,

“How many women can a man marry?”

“Sixteen,” the boy responded.

His cousin was amazed that he had an answer so quickly.

“How do you know that?”

“Easy,” the little boy said.

“All you have to do is add it up, like the pastor said,

4 better, 4 worse, 4 richer, 4 poorer.”

BJ

Book -- Review (Judith Johnston)

Erma Bombeck - Giant Economy Size: At Wit's End; Just Wait Till You Have Children of Your Own; & I Lost Everything in the Post-natal Depression

This *Giant Economy Size* contains three of Erma's books listed above. Erma had me laughing till the tears rolled when I was a young, overwhelmed mother trying to manage a house full of children, a husband, and a whole herd of animals. Today, while I no longer have a busy household to manage, the herd of animals is with their Creator, and the husband is getting more easy to manage, I still laughed till the tears flowed as I read this hilarious collection of stories about teens, appliance breakdowns, weight control, unpredictable children, illnesses, and other seemingly unrelated topics that families, and women in particular, have, and are struggling with.

How does a "simple housewife" become the writer of more than four thousand syndicated columns in 900 papers nationwide, 15 best-selling books, and one of the world's most beloved humorist columnists ?

Apparently suffering plus an indomitable spirit were the keys to her success. Her father died of a stroke when she was 9 years old, leaving the family in financial ruin. At age 20 she was diagnosed with polycystic kidney disease with the inevitable outcome of kidney failure. A graduate of the University of Dayton and longing to be a journalist, she was told by professors that she would never succeed in writing.

Three children and a happy marriage to Bill Bombeck were the fuel for the debut of her daily humor column, "At Wit's End." Her editor was reluctant to give a 37-year-old homemaker and unemployed journalist this opportunity but willingly paid her (in 1964) three dollars per column. She found a huge following of housewives in Ohio, and a year later the column became nationally syndicated, appearing in 500 newspapers.

She wrote and lectured for the next 30 years. In 1991 she was diagnosed with breast cancer and had a mastectomy. Two years later her kidneys began to fail, and following a kidney transplant she died of complications 2weeks later.

This illustrated collection of three of her books can be opened to any chapter, and as Erma says, "They will have hit home if they, in some small way, help you to laugh your way through while hanging on to your sweet sanity."

Experiencing both devastating personal losses and huge successes with the support of a loving husband of 47 years and a deep Christian faith, she viewed her life thusly: **"When I stand before God at the end of my life, I would hope that I would not have a single bit of talent left and could say, 'I used everything you gave me.' "**

<p><u>In a Different Voice</u></p> <p>A monthly column written and submitted by: (Judith Johnston)</p> <p>Strange, interesting, weird, charming, scary—as America becomes increasingly diverse, we are confronted by more & more people whose ways are not our ways. Yet, God seems to have spoken to His children in many different places at very different times. Some of these diverse views will be featured each month to encourage a healthy curiosity about other spiritual writings and to open us up to possibilities for a larger spiritual awareness.</p>	<p>"...that thou art happy, thou owest to God; that thou continues such, thou owest to thyself."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">John Milton: <i>Paradise Lost</i></p> <p>God alone knows the secret plan Of the things he will do for the world Using my hand: Toyohiko Kagawa, Japanese Christian social Reformer and pacifist</p> <p>In the darkest hour the soul Is replenished and given Strength to continue and Endure.</p> <p>Heart Warrior Chosa, Ojibwa artist, poet, author, and teacher of American Indian Culture</p> <p>Every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">James 1:17</p>
--	--

July 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			<p>1</p> <p>9 a.m. Men's breakfast @ Old Pueblo</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	
<p>5</p> <p>2 Sam. 5:1-5, 9-10 Ps. 48 2 Cor. 12:2-10 Mark 6:1-13</p> <p>Coffee & Cookies</p>	<p>6</p> <p>7 p.m. Al-Anon</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Hygiene Bank 1:00-2:00</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p> <p>11:30 a.m. Women's Lunch</p>	<p>11</p>
<p>12</p> <p>2 Sam. 6:1-5, 12b-19 Ps. 24 Eph. 1:3-14 Mark 6:14-29</p> <p>St. Michael's (Coolidge) 10:00 a.m.</p>	<p>13</p> <p>7 p.m. Al-Anon</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p>
<p>19</p> <p>2 Sam. 7:1-14a Ps. 89:20-37 Eph. 2:11-22 Mark 6:30-34, 53-56</p> <p>Coffee & Cookies</p>	<p>20</p> <p>7 p.m. Al-Anon</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>
<p>26</p> <p>2 Sam. 11:1-15 Ps. 14 Eph. 3:14-21 John 6:1-21</p> <p>Coffee & Cookies</p>	<p>27</p> <p>7 p.m. Al-Anon</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>	

**First Presbyterian Church
Box 950
225 E. Butte
Florence, AZ 85132**

**The Mission of the First Presbyterian Church of Florence
Is to share Jesus Christ through word and action
with all whose lives we can touch.**