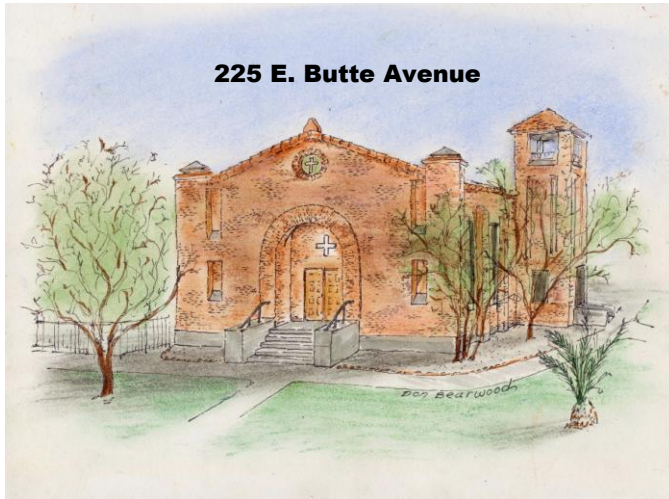




Newsletter

First Presbyterian Church of Florence May 2015 Volume 10 Issue 05



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Sunday Church Service
10:00 a.m.
Fellowship after worship

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

Pastoral News

From the pastor . . .

I do not enjoy being in ill humor, but as I set out to write this, to some extent, I am, although perhaps “disappointment” or “frustration” better describe my mood than “ill humor.” Please allow me to explain.

Many of our winter family come from communities where churches are struggling to survive, and from churches doing the same; it is a problem that crosses denominational lines and knows no geographic limits – and it is a problem that we face, as well.

. . . *crosses no denominational lines.* I love to make the comment that the *theological* differences between Lutherans and Calvinists (such as Presbyterians) are probably understood only by some clergy and most of them do not care, which while a bit of an exaggeration, is true; our meaningful difference is in church government, yet that is a practical, earthly issue even if grounded in some theology. When I ask people to explain why there are Presbyterians and Methodists and Lutherans and Episcopalians, most struggle, which is perhaps why there are indeed communities where people from these differing denominations do come together.

I am not ignoring the *historical* reasons for denominations, but with the most recent relevant separation going back almost three-hundred years, when John Wesley was a reformist within the Church of England (“Episcopal Church” in the U.S.) and began his “Methodist” movement. Episcopalians do have one major difference from the others, I suppose, in that the rules for how to handle the elements remaining after communion or dropped during communion differ, yet though the Sacrament is the center of the Episcopalian worship, Episcopalians do not insist on any single concept of the Sacrament and allow other Protestants to partake of it in their worship – as do Lutherans, in their principle denomination, the ELCA (the Missouri and Wisconsin Synod churches are more iconoclastic).

What I am attempting to say is, *what unites Christians – Jesus Christ – should be able to overcome what divides us, and the denominations into which we are divided.* The frequent multiplicity of churches too small to survive (being what a church is called to be -- which is more than a people gathering together for Sunday worship) longer term in communities that might only sustain one church weakens the Church of Jesus Christ *and is not faithful to the Great Commission to which followers of Christ are called (Matthew 28)!*

The Session of this church recognizes this, and has invited three churches in neighboring Coolidge to consider shared worship during the lowest attendance months of the year – from early June through early September. One of those churches has responded, “We’re in for whatever you want to try”; another has indicated it might be fine for one or two times a month; but in the other, the answer is “no,” because of a concern that people would not venture from their own (as I understand it, weak and struggling) church to attend regular worship at another.

My frustration is not with that church; its “leaders” are responding to the sense they get from their fellow parishioners. My frustration is that *people define a church by where they worship!*

There are many reasons churches (mainline Protestant in particular, though not exclusively) are doing poorly, but high on the list is human resistance to change, what economists might call “risk aversion,” what I suppose behavioral scientists might call, “comfort factor.” Whatever it is called, it is helping kill Christ’s Church.

Friends, we have a wonderful congregation that is less than a fourth the size it really would need to be to be economically sufficient over the longer term – and while we have less in the bank than one of the other three churches, we are far and away the most vibrant of the four and probably the largest of the four. We cannot save these others on our own, though leadership must come from somewhere.

With that in mind, what I hope we hear from all of you if we do half our summer worship services in Florence and half in Coolidge will not be, “I won’t go to Coolidge,” but rather, “How can I help this succeed and lead to a brighter future for us?” If someone needs a ride, offer a ride; in Coolidge, so swamp people there with friendliness that they will look forward to coming to our church.

I was pastor at a church – the church I left before coming here because of this attitude – where some people did not care whether the church died so long as it survived long enough for their funeral to be held there. OUCH! When I was a student, I read part of a paper by a 1930’s economist who wrote, “the rational labor union will arrange for the employer to go bankrupt on the day the youngest employee retires.” Think of where the economy would be if all businesses had been so organized!

Do we really want to be indifferent to how the Good News of Jesus Christ is carried to our communities in the future, whether we are alive or not? The true Christian lives for tomorrow, not today, and not necessarily for *here*; should not the true member of Christ's Church, the earthly body of Christ, live similarly?

We love having the kids in our worship; are we indifferent to whether there will be a church for them when they are in high school?

The question is that straight forward. The old cliché, "in union there is strength," is true for the Church. It is not a matter of agreeing on all issues, it is a matter of saying there is something far more important than points of doctrine or of church polity, and that is, faithfully following Jesus Christ and the Great Commission we have been given.

Blessings and peace,

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*

May Birthdays
9. Margie Thompson
18. Phyllis Carlson
21. Alice Winn



*Happy
Anniversary*

May Anniversaries

Administration/Finance (Bob Woodhull)

	Mar. 2014	Mar. 2015	2014 YTD(Jan-Mar)	2015 YTD(Jan-Mar)
Expense	\$8,719.00	\$11,110.00	\$29,979.00	\$32,858.00
Income	\$10,099.00	\$14,185.00	\$35,080.00	\$33,141.00

Shortfall



Papago United Presbyterian – Mission Project

Our church has as one of its mission projects supporting our sister church on the Tohono O’Odham reservation, Papago United Presbyterian. Its Santa Rosa chapel has some repairs that need done; are there any able bodied men (or women) with modest handi-person skills who might be interested in a Saturday excursion to help them?

The Santa Rosa Chapel is located about 40 minutes south of Casa Grande off Indian 15.

Pastor John

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.

Thank you, Larry & Denise Kollert Newsletter Editors

Newsletter input to: 225butte@gmail.com

Recent Copyright Issues

“We have often published items sent to us — poems, jokes, *etc.*, — but we have encountered an issue that is making us hesitant to publish such items. A member innocently submitted an item found in another church newsletter where it appeared without any indication of its source or original writer. Unfortunately, that item turned out to be an item for which someone claims copyright ownership (strictly speaking, everything created has such protection whether or not a declaration of copyright appears physically or not). This particular copyright owner trolls the Internet to see whether this item is being used, and since our newsletter is posted on our website, found it, and is threatening suit against us.

“If there are items of particular interest that any of you believe should be shared, do not stop submitting, but please submit from whence it comes, and if it would be of interest to our church family, we can try to see whether permission is needed, and if so, available, for us to use it.

“Thanks for your understanding. Not everyone who writes something with a Christian message is interested in spreading the Good News; some just want to gather the gold.

Pastor John

Palm Sunday - 2015



Happy 'Tall Kid'
Palm Wavers



Nancy Bolander leading the children
and doing a great job – Makes you
want to be a kid again.

Thanks Nancy!

Ruth Smith at the piano.
Thank you Ruth for your
excellent music!



Maundy Thursday – 2015

The Maundy Thursday service was a little different this year as members from the Coolidge churches joined us for the meal and foot washing experience. There were 51 of us attending.



The Builder vs The Wrecker

“I watched them tearing a building down –
A gang of men in a busy town;
With a ‘Ho heave Ho!’ ‘and a lusty yell,
They swung a beam and the side wall fell.

I asked the foreman: ‘Are these men skilled,
And the kind you’d hire were you to build?’
He laughed and said: ‘Why no, indeed;
Just common laborers is all I need;
They can easily wreck in a day or two
What has taken the builders years to do.’

So I said to myself as I went on my way:
What part in the game of life do I play?
Am I shaping my deeds to a well-made plan,
Carefully measuring with a rule and square,
Patiently doing the very best I can;
Or am I a wrecker – who walks the town –
Content with the labor of tearing down?”

(Author Unknown) -- The Editor



Think where the world would be if
this guy hadn't kept trying to invent
the wheel. Then, sit down and create
something great to share in the
newsletter. Yes, you can !!!!

The Editor

When You Haven't Got A Prayer

Some sincere believers hesitate to recite second-hand conversations with God. They feel that repeating such words can become mechanical and thoughtless. Paradoxically, Jesus had a different opinion, and He taught His disciples a model prayer that has enlightened Christians for twenty centuries.

Experience has shown me that it can be difficult to get my ideas organized as I try communing with God. At times, I'm too distracted to compose my pleas and my worship. Praying is always the right thing to do, but it's not always easy.

Then, it can help to "prime the pump" with thoughts that have been passed down over the years by wise and faithful saints — contemplations that are honest and reverent.

Two of my personal favorites are "before-and-after" holy resolutions — first at the start of a new day, and then, repentance for my inevitable failures after. They're both simple, eloquent heart-cries that acknowledge important realities of our souls.

Here's a wonderful daybreak expression by a renowned Bible teacher and author, the late John Stott:

*Good morning, Heavenly Father;
Good morning, Lord Jesus;
Good morning, Holy Spirit.
Father, I worship You, Creator and Sustainer of the universe.
Lord Jesus, I worship You, Savior and Lord of the world.
Holy Spirit, I worship You, Sanctifier of the people of God.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever.
Heavenly Father, I pray that I may live this day in Your
presence and please You more and more.
Lord Jesus, I pray that this day I may take up my cross and
follow You.
Holy Spirit, I pray that this day You will fill me with Yourself
and cause Your fruit to ripen in my life: love, joy, peace,
patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control.
Holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three persons in one God,
have mercy upon me.
Amen.*

Another example comes from the Roman Catholic faith community. It's appropriate for all believers, at the end of a day when we've failed in our goal to become more like our Savior, and surrendered to our sinful nature instead. It's one modern language version of the classic "Act of Contrition," and contains these admissions and plea for forgiveness:

*My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart.
In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned
against you whom I should love above all things.
I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more,
and to avoid whatever leads me to sin.
Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us.
In His name, my God, have mercy.
Amen.*

A couple of things must be said about using prayers like these. First, you don't need to be limited by their written forms. Remember, the Lord's Prayer as He taught it to His disciples didn't include "...Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory..." This addition may make the prayer more dignified, but it doesn't detract from its main thrust: reverence and dependence on God for *everything* that matters.

Try to think of new ways to apply the words of these prayers to your own soul. There's an almost infinite range of creative possibilities. For example, in Stott's prayer, how would you want the Spirit's gifts (love, joy, peace, etc.) to be actually put in practice in *your* life?

Finally...and most important, you must say any prayer with total sincerity. Your Creator knows your heart, your secrets, and your real motives. He loves you anyway! Give Him the respect you owe Him by being completely truthful.

And thank Him for revealing these authentic expressions of faith. So you can always have a way to start your conversation with Him, even when pride or shame put you at a loss for words.

Richard Woike

10 Questions To Ask Before Hiring a Health Aide

Many of our congregation are likely AARP members as well so may have seen the following in the March AARP Bulletin. If not, you may find it helpful in the future. I rekeyed it here to make it fit our format. Thanks Joan for suggesting it. (The editor)

No one with a need for a home health aide should be afraid to seek necessary care. But how do you ensure that your loved one is in safe hands? Lee Lindquist, M.D., chief of geriatrics at the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, offers these 10 questions to ask when vetting home-care agencies.

1. How do you recruit home health aides, and what are your hiring requirements?
2. Do you do criminal background checks on prospective aides? How about drug screening?
3. Are health aides certified in CPR, or do they have any health-related training?
4. Are the aides insured and bonded through your agency?
5. What competencies are expected of the aide? Lifting and transfers? Personal care skills (bathing, dressing, toileting)? Training in behavioral management, cognitive support?
6. How do you assess what the aide is capable of doing?
7. What is your policy on providing a substitute home health care aide in the event a regular care provider cannot perform the services in your contract?
8. If there is dissatisfaction with a particular home care provider, can he or she be replaced "without cause"?
9. Does the agency provide a supervisor who is responsible for regularly evaluating the quality of home care?
10. Does supervision occur over the telephone, through progress reports or in person at the home of the older adult?

AARP's Caregiving Resource Center offers information on hiring home health aides, as well as a tool to help find providers in your area. Go to aarp.org/caregiving.

With A Thankful Heart

Dear friends,

I am writing to let you know, using a favorite term of my son's, how AWESOME you all are.

We hit you pretty hard for donations this last month, and not only did you, as John might say, load the bases, you hit a grand slam both times. Thanks to you, we have enough money to stock our hygiene pantry with enough product to get started for 60 families. We will be giving out our first products some time in May, and once each month thereafter. So if you think of us over the summer and would like to send us a little gift for restocking purposes, we would greatly appreciate it.

We also took a special offering to help our beloved choir director, George Oberdorf with medical expenses since he is not able to work at this time. The weekend we chose turned out to be very fortuitous because an anonymous person offered to match dollar for dollar any donations made to George over a 24 hour period. Well, my friends, we took in just over \$2000, \$1850 of which was matched. George was so overwhelmed by our generosity he was speechless and we all know that is just about impossible to accomplish.

So I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart. You are all true christians and people I strive to be in my own life. And, once again, you are AWESOME!!!!!!

Sandra

Riders on the Orphan Train
by Alison Moore
Roadworthy Press (2012) 441 pages

This is, indeed, what one critic said, a book of “striking imagery, passages of dense, passionate writing and scenes of gut-wrenching emotion.”

I had a maternal grandmother, who at around age 14 was sent from Ukraine to friends of her family in America where she met and married a man 10 years her senior, reared 10 children, was highly successful at raising chickens, cows, many vegetables in large gardens, sewing, cooking, laundering on a scrub board countless loads of coal miner clothing along with the family wash, and passing on Ukrainian crafts and customs to her family, yet never learning to read or even write her name. This personal history made every page of this book touch my heart as I reflected on Grandmother’s good fortune, despite her status as a peasant immigrant, of always having family support and a permanent home, and never having to experience the wounds of separation and the scars of abandonment that thousands of American orphans experienced.

Between 1854 and 1929 over 250,000 orphaned, abandoned, and homeless children between the ages of 4 and 18 were moved on trains from urban tenements in the east to rural America and Canada to live with, and work for, mainly farming families. The majority moved on to a normal adulthood with education, jobs, marriage, and families of their own.

Moore’s fictional riders, 11-year-old Ezra Duval and 12-year-old Elizabeth Farrell ride the same orphan train in 1918 and are then separated. This novel follows their separate lives into adulthood with alternating chapters revealing the hardships each endured. Ezra lives a comfortable life in New York City with his father until his father abandons him for a position in Egypt. Elizabeth, first known as Maud, sails to America from Ireland in the over-crowded steerage compartment of an old ship, eager to be reunited with her widowed father.

Both children exhibit extraordinary resilience and motivation as they move through their respective childhoods. Moore’s account of their adventures, their hopes and fantasies, their triumphs and crushing disappointments, and their desire for reunion with each other are described with the sensitivity of poetry and the tension of a mystery plot. Many sentences invite re-reading just to feel again the power of her descriptions.

Judith Johnston



With A Thankful Heart – Part II

Dear friends,

Here I go again.

A couple of months ago, I spoke to you all about our children not having a Sunday School in our church and many of you immediately volunteered to get this underway and keep it going. Summer is just about to happen and now that we have children, we also have Montlure Church Camp. We have 7 children who would like to go to camp June 1-5. Unfortunately, it is rather expensive for the parents to try and pay for out of pocket. The children will be asking family and friends, perhaps businesses to help sponsor them and we will also be doing some fundraising projects this next month. If you would like to help send these children to camp, please send your donation to the church with the memo Church Camp or Kids. We will get it to the right place.

Many many thanks to you all.

Sandra

In a Different Voice

(A monthly column written and submitted by Judith Johnston)

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.

Fathers, do not provoke your **children** to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Deuteronomy 4:9

Those who consume the orphans' properties unjustly, eat fire into their bellies, and will suffer in Hell. **Koran 4:10**

The Muslim law does not recognize adoption.

Henry Yabah, 80, of Corpus Christi, Texas, who was orphaned at age 2, is looking for his Navajo family. He remembers nothing about losing his mother at the age of 2, or where exactly he lost contact with his siblings, or even how many siblings he has. He remembers only bits and pieces of his formative years at the Good Shepherd Mission Orphanage in Fort Defiance, AZ.

At the urging of his wife of over 30 years he is making an attempt to find out where he comes from and who his people are. So far the search has only turned up a few scraps of paper and the census numbers of his long-lost siblings who have remained lost.

In 1955 Harry Holt, an Oregon farmer, was so moved by the plight of orphans from the Korean War that he and his wife, Bertha, adopted 8 children from South Korea.

Harry and Bertha Holt created what has become the largest agency in the U.S., specializing in Korean children - Holt International Children's Services - which has placed some 60,000 Korean children into American homes. Initially, the majority were mixed-race children of American (and other United Nations) military fathers and Korean women. Then, the children were called "dust of the streets" in Korea.

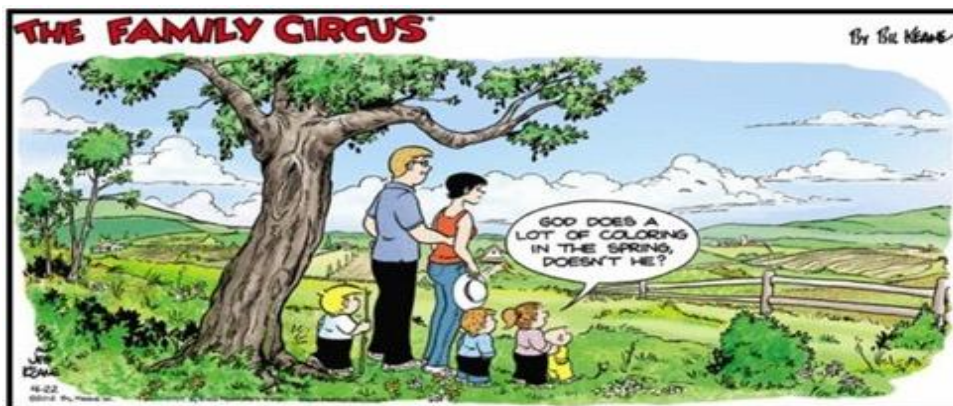
An old saying in Vietnam: "Children without a father are like a home without a roof."

Hindu child adoption in India has been a prevalent social practice from ancient times. In the past, a childless couple would "adopt" a child from one's own family. Now, adoption is not limited to the children of relatives.

He called a little child and had him stand among them. And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus

Matthew 18:2, 3



Sandra Saunders

May 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>This is the day the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Psalm 118:24 NIV</p>					1	2
<p>3</p> <p>Acts 8:26-40 Ps. 22:25-31 1 John 4:7-21 John 15:1-8</p> <p>Deli Delight</p>	<p>4</p> <p>7 p.m. Al-Anon</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Tutoring</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Tutoring</p> <p>9 a.m. Men's breakfast @ Old Pueblo</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8</p> <p>11:30 a.m. Women's Lunch @ Fudge Shop</p>	<p>9</p>
<p>10 Mother's Day</p> <p>Acts 10:44-48 Ps. 98 1 John 5:1-6 John 15:9-17</p> <p>Cake & Ice Cream</p>	<p>11</p> <p>7 p.m. Al-Anon</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Tutoring</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Tutoring</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16</p>
<p>17</p> <p>Acts 1:15-17,21-26 Ps. 1 1 John 5:9-13 John 17:6-19</p> <p>Fruit, Cheese, Crackers</p>	<p>18</p> <p>7 p.m. Al-Anon</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Tutoring</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Tutoring</p> <p>9 a.m. Men's breakfast @ Old Pueblo</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p>
<p>24</p> <p>Acts 2:1-21 Ps. 104:24-34,35b Rom. 8:22-27 John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15</p> <p>Soup & Salad</p>	<p>25 Memorial Day</p> <p>7 p.m. Al-Anon</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Tutoring</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Tutoring</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>
<p>31</p> <p>Isa. 6:1-8 Ps. 29 Rom. 8:12-17 John 3:1-17</p> <p>Beef Stew Lunch</p>	<p>“Somebody has said there are only two kinds of people in the world. There are those who wake up in the morning and say, “Good morning , Lord,” and there are those who wake up in the morning and say, “Good Lord, it’s morning.”</p>					<p>BJ</p>

**First Presbyterian Church
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**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.**