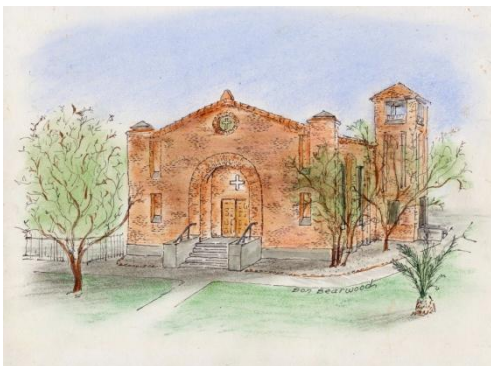


The Peace of Christ ... be With You!

The First Presbyterian Church of Florence, AZ

Volume 10, Issue 09 (September 2015)



First Presbyterian Church of Florence

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Sunday Church Service

10:00 a.m.

Fellowship after worship

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From the pastor . . .

The beginning of September, especially Labor Day weekend, always reminds me of when for so many years I would return to school. Back then, school usually began either the Tuesday or Wednesday after Labor Day, which marked the unofficial end of summer.

The messages of this coming annually to mind are two: the first is that we are always encountering new things, that whether or not we are open to learning, we should never stop learning! We should always be students, including students of the greatest teacher in our tradition, Jesus himself. How we do this may be as simple as having our minds engaged as we encounter Scriptures and sermons (boy, do I appreciate having to try to learn something new each week as I prepare sermons), or it may be more involved, such as Bible study, either in a class or by reading a book about aspects of the Bible. (I personally am not so big on "spiritual" reading as some, but that is not to discount its benefits as well; Clancy Bohlander brings some wonderful thoughts from Philip Yancey to our men's breakfast devotions.)

The second of the two concerns one of my favorite topics, *football*, but not my going to my University of Illinois games (the fired coach was a friend; I feel for him), but rather memories of how as a freshman wanting to play football I first encountered the practices that started a week before school with nothing but calisthenics and running. My gosh, like others, I thought I would die. It was the most difficult thing I had ever undertaken, and being more exuberant than wise, I did not dog those exercises. I certainly was pushed to my physical limits, and though the assistant coach who led them was saying, "It's more difficult getting into shape the first time than getting back into shape," my time horizon did not extend beyond the longed-for end of that particular practice.

We had two teams, the Varsity and the Junior Varsity, which broke down into Juniors and Seniors on the one team and Freshmen and Sophomores on the other. And as a freshman, especially since the sophomore star was the same position as I, left halfback, I did not get to play much that first year – despite being in the best physical condition I had yet been.

But freshmen usually become sophomores, and when that week before school began the next year and we again began our week of calisthenics and running, I was astounded: that assistant coach was

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Clerk of the Session

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Building

Allen Saunders 480-656-8816

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Verna Boyle 520-868-8182

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Laura Hofmann 520-858-2945

Evangelism

?????????

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Denise Kollert 520-868-8177

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Vera Schell 520-868-8720

Newsletter

Larry & Denise Kollert

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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

correct! Those exercises and that running were not the labor they had been that first year, and I am sure that all of the effort helped pay off as I was a starter the entire season. (The next year I was a senior [don't ask]; that "star" [a great guy, truly] still played ahead of me on offense, but I was the defensive starter!)

Conditioning for daily *Prayer* is sort of like that. It can take a lot of effort to establish the practice – mainly to take the time for it, -- but once established, it is not so hard, nor if one has fallen away from it, is it as difficult to start again as to start that first time. I know; I am human, and have at times let myself say that matters are too pressing to take the time and have let periods go by in which I have ignored that daily (for me, morning, with a cup of coffee in my hand, which I am sure God does not mind) ritual. But I have found that it is not so hard to re-establish.

I came across two wonderful quotes this week (Daily Christian Quotes e-mail) concerning prayer that I want to share:

One shall not neglect the times of prayer and psalmody (worship), whether he is on a boat, in the monastery, in the fields, or on a journey, or filling any service whatever.
Pachomius (292–348 A.D.)

The task is not to get God to do something I think needs done, but to become aware of what God is doing so that I can participate in it. Eugene Peterson

A point that I frequently try to make is that it is not so much that we talk to God, but that in the interstices of our own words and thoughts, we might hear God speaking to us.

It takes practice, but it is easier on our bodies and even more rewarding to our well-being than conditioning for football.

Oh that I could make half the effort for the one that I did for the other.

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, 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*



September Birthdays

- 6. Maria Hiestand
- 8. Jean Askov
- 8. Kathleen Beduhn
- 10. Larry Kollert
- 18. Maggie Froetschner
- 18. BJ Brown-Ferguson
- 25. Bob Phillips
- 30. Junior Hiller



*Happy
Anniversary*

September Anniversaries

- 20. Jerry & Donna Studer
- 21. Leslie & Berneice Kelm



Ron & Pat
Vucson's
Anniversary
was August 29.
Missed It !#&\$

Subject: Billy's Team (from Miriam Reed re. former pastor Bill Dean – August 25, 2015 Update)

Hi,

Bill had his first infusion of Avestin and everything went well. (only 27 minutes) He is also started the Xeloda again with pills. His blood chemistry is good, and has even gained a little weight. Energy level could be better, but all in all, he is doing well. Will continue with infusions every three weeks, Xeloda two weeks on and one week off, and then an MRI & CT scan in three months. We read this William Sloane Coffin quote at the Clinic: "Hope arouses, as nothing can arouse, a passion for the possible." A very hopeful one indeed!

Our summer continues to drag on but the monsoon has been beneficial. Thank you for all your prayers, thoughts, visits, and calls. They all are welcome!

Our love to all, Billy, Derry and family



NORFOLK, Neb. LeRoy J.E. Bring, 79, of Norfolk, died Thursday, Aug. 20, 2015, at Faith Regional Hospital in Norfolk.

LeRoy was a member of our congregation and was known and loved by many. We shall miss him.

The complete obituary may be found at website SiouxCityJournal.com

FLORENCE, AZ Violet 'Vicki' Kilvinger Florence's mayor from 2008 to 2012 and a council member for several years before that, died on the morning of Aug. 12, 2015.

Vicki was known to many in the Church and was active in the Florence Women's Club.

More complete information can be found at website trivalleycentral.com



[A Letter From Our Church Session](#)

Dear First Presbyterian Church (Florence) Family:

It is hardly news to anyone that churches are struggling to be faithful witnesses to our Lord. The well-documented decline in membership of mainline Protestant churches has been resisted to some extent during the past six years at our church, yet we are far too small to sustain ourselves and do what needs to be done in the larger community.

But we are not alone. As most of you know, our pastor, John, is part-time, which is the norm for mainline churches in the Florence-Coolidge area, all four of which are small: one of the other churches (Community Presbyterian) is currently without a pastor, Spirit of Joy Methodist has what we would call a "tentmaker," and St. Michael's Vicar, Rev. Carol Hosler, lives in Kearney and comes down Fridays and returns on Sundays.

That these churches could do more for the faith as one than the total of what they could do as individual churches was part of the inspiration for a "strategic idea" the Session considered in 2014, and lie behind the gathering at St. Michael's in February of this year and the joint worship proposal that has shaped our summer worship this year.

While things move slowly in the church world as elsewhere, the current situation presents an opportunity to build for the future that your Session feels must be pursued, and so we have proposed to Community Presbyterian that John would pastor both churches. This would require two changes: an increase in John's time commitment, and a juggling of Sunday worship hours. The plan as proposed would have an amount to be negotiated between the Sessions be paid partly for additional compensation to John and partly for a sharing of cost, and would have Community move its Sunday worship from 9:30 am to 9:00 am and First Presbyterian move its Sunday worship from 10:00 am to 10:30 am, both from about October 11 through April 30 (the end of the trial period proposed).

Summer worship has gone well. We shall continue to worship with Community through September. We shall end our shared summer worship experiences very appropriately on World Communion Sunday, October 4 (10:00 am) at St. Michael's Episcopalian in Coolidge.

As stewards of this particular congregation, we advocate this commitment both for reasons of necessity — without coming together, our congregations will die — and of opportunity — we can expand our reach into the communities we serve and, we hope, grow Christ's Church.

The downside? Well, during pro-football season some first quarters might be missed by die-hard fans.

This plan is not an "end game"; it is a second step on the path to a stronger mainline Protestant presence in the Florence-Coolidge-San Tan Valley community.

We hope that we shall have your support in this attempt to strengthen the church.

Blessings,
The Session



Administration/Finance (Bob Woodhull)

	July 2014	July 2015	2014 YTD(Jan-July)	2015 YTD(Jan-July)
Expense	\$7,373.00	\$8,036.00	\$71,660.00	\$75,198.00
Income	\$4,703.00	\$4,339.00	\$71,736.00	\$56,203.00
Shortfall	\$2,670.00	\$3,697.00	.00	\$18,995.00

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

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[A Letter From George Oberdorf \(Choir Director\)](#)

Please note the date of George’s letter (April 29, 2015). For some unknown reason George’s letter did not reach the newsletter mailbox and the congregation was not blessed with his comments in a timely manner. Thanks George for your kind words and I am truly sorry it did not get published when you intended.

The Editor

April 29, 2015

Florence Presbyterian Church family ...

What can I say. The love and support that all of you have shown me over the past 2 years has been amazing. I am so happy that I have been granted the opportunity to bring my gift and love of music to all of you in Florence. Even more so, I have been amazingly touched by your generosity during my time of need this past Spring. I can honestly say that in my thirty-six years of life, I have never encountered such kind, generous and wonderful people. Never. Your contributions have assisted me with food, medical bills and the many other costs that have built up due to my illness. There are no words to express to you how deeply, deeply grateful that I am. As I am currently on the mend and getting stronger every day, I attribute so much of my recovery to all of you. The prayers alone I could hear, no matter how far away you are. As I prepare myself to return to work in the coming weeks, I am reminded of how delicate our lives can be. Never take anything for granted, for you never know when it will be gone forever. It’s amazing when you are actually thankful to be able to work at all. I look forward to seeing you all again this coming Fall as I enter my third year as your musical director. Again, thank you all so very, very much. My heart is with you always.

Sincerely yours,

George W. Oberdorf

Mission Outreach --- 'The Closet' --- Mission Outreach

The Coolidge Community Presbyterian Church has a mission outreach project called 'The Closet'. They offer free of charge to the public clothing, household items, bedding and home décor.

If you have such items to donate, they are accepted on Tuesdays 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

The store is open every Thursday beginning Sept. 10th, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

If you would like to help either on Tuesday to sort & setup or on Thursday to distribute it would be greatly appreciated. If interested please contact Janice Cockrill at 520-431-1841.

In addition to 'The Closet', the church also offers computer classes, GED classes & job search assistance funded by United Way on Tuesday & Thursday 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

The University of Arizona extension offers workshops in nutrition & health on Thursdays when 'The Closet' is open.

These are very worthwhile ventures and a lot of work. Let's support them in any way we can.

Thank you – Denise Kollert

Hygiene Bank Report

Our monthly Hygiene Bank distribution was on August 12th. We are holding steady at around 18 people each month. We placed a flyer at the Senior Center recently so maybe this will add some more people. We did have 3 new people this month.

Thank you and God bless you for continuing to donate funds to keep this mission project going. It is much appreciated by those in need.

Denise Kollert

Box Tops --- Menaul School --- Box Tops

The congregation donates box tops which are then sent to help Menaul School. But, box tops have expiration dates. So, please check the expiration dates before you donate them.

Thankyou -- Denise

John Thompson Has A New Address

John Thompson has moved to an assisted living residential home. He now resides at 912 N John Way, Chandler, AZ 85225. The phone number to the residence is (480) 786-6008.

Book – Review

Holy Humor *Inspirational Wit & Cartoons* by Cal & Rose Samra

Not only a fun book but a good desk reference. While the jokes, cartoons and mini-essays are arranged in seasonal order, January – December, one can open the book to any page for a quick pick-me-up on a blue day.

However, if one is preparing a newsletter, a speech, a sermon, a toast, a public introduction, a visit to an ailing friend, or attending a dinner party at a friend's home, there is a plethora of choices to bring a smile, a chuckle or a guffaw to the listener or reader.

There are also inspirational entries that remind us that our God is a God of JOY, even if one's future seems bleak. Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, before his execution by the Nazis for his opposition to Hitler:

“God cannot endure that unfestive, mirthless attitude of ours in which we eat our bread in sorrow, with pretentious, busy haste, or even with shame. Through our daily meals He is calling us to rejoice, to keep holiday in the midst of our working day.”

On a lighter note: *After a pastor's wife took her overworked husband to the family physician, the physician took her aside and whispered, “I don't like the way your husband looks.”*

“I don't either,” she replied, “but he's always been a good father to the children.” George Goldtrap, Christian stand-up comedian.

When a pastor asked the class, “Why was Jesus born in Bethlehem?” a boy raised his hand and replied, “Because his mother was there.” Rev. Wm. Armstrong, S.J.

All the entries are clean and suitable for sharing with your clergyman, your mother, and your teen-age children.

Relax, kick back, and have a few laughs—they are supposed to be good for the immune system!

Judith Johnston

Blessings or burdens?

Interruptions can be viewed as sources of irritation or opportunities for service, as moments lost or experience gained, as time wasted or horizons widened. They can annoy us or enrich us, get under our skin or give us a shot in the arm, monopolize our minutes or spice our schedules – depending on our attitude toward them.

–William Arthur Ward

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.

He who attains Perfect Beauty and wanders in Perfect Happiness may be called the Perfect Man."
Taoism, Chuang Tzu 21

There is no limit to joy. Happiness has no end. When you are standing in the love of God, every cell in your body jumps for joy. You breathe in and out with the entire universe. In this state, your life is fulfilled. This is how God means us to live, intoxicated in love and joy. And through our joy, God receives His joy. The joy of man is the joy of God; and the joy of God is the joy of man.
Unification Church, Sun Myung Moon, 10-20-73

The Infinite is the source of joy. There is no joy in the finite. Only in the Infinite is there joy. Ask to know the Infinite.
Hinduism, Chandogya Upanishad 7.23

God has promised to believers... beautiful mansions in Gardens of everlasting bliss. But the greatest bliss is the good pleasure of God that is the supreme felicity. *Islam, Qur'an 9:72*

The Holy Spirit rests on him only who has a joyous heart.
Judaism, Jerusalem Talmud, Sukkot 5.1

To seek gladness through righteous persistence is the way to accord with heaven and to respond to men.
Confucianism, I Ching 58: Joy

These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.
John 15:11 JESUS

Job description for a Christian

As a follower of Jesus, you'll share his love and gospel with everyone. Kindness and humility are vital as you speak about your hope in him. To battle evil, you'll receive a complete set of armor. Use it to defend against attacks by a prowling lion or the temptation to place self above others.


Preferred qualifications:

- complete surrender to God
- a desire to follow his commandments
- a servant heart
- courage to face fiery furnaces or shipwrecks

Everyone's welcome, and training and support are provided. Though you can expect persecution and adversity, the rewards are life-changing — and eternal!

—MaryAnn Sundby

September 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 9 a.m. Men's breakfast @ Old Pueblo	3	4	5
6 Prov. 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23 Ps. 125 James 2:1-10 (11-13), 14-17 Mark 7:24-37 Florence	7  7 p.m. Al-Anon	8	9 Hygiene Bank 1:00-2:00	10	11 11:30 a.m. Women's Lunch	12
13 Prov. 1:20-33 Ps. 19 James 3:1-12 Mark 8:27-38 Florence	14 7 p.m. Al-Anon	15	16	17	18	19
20 Prov. 31:10-31 Ps. 1 James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a Mark 9:30-37 Community (Coolidge) 9:30 a.m.	21 7 p.m. Al-Anon	22	23	24	25	26
27 Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22: Ps. 124 James 5:13-20 Mark 9:38-50 Florence	28 7 p.m. Al-Anon	29	30			

Peace is Christ's distinctive gift — not money, not worldly ease, not temporal prosperity. These are at best very questionable possessions. They often do more harm than good to the soul. They act as clogs and weights to our spiritual life.

Inward peace of conscience, arising from a sense of pardoned sin and reconciliation with God, is a far greater blessing. This peace is the property of all believers, whether high or low, rich or poor.

—J.C. Ryle

**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.**

