

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

Pat Reed 520-868-4658

Congregational Care

Donna Studer 520-868-3931

Fellowship

Laura Hofmann 520-858-2945

Evangelism

Heidi Lowe 520-221-5676

Mission

ShaRon Liedl 520-431-0883

Worship

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

Christian Education

Rosanna Ringer 520-868-3056

Stewardship

Connie & Mark Stephens

Church Personnel

Anita Van Wagoner
520-868-4671 Cell: 520-709-2771

Bookkeeper

Jane Whitaker

Treasurer

Connie Stephens 520-705-2307

Assistant Treasurer

Roger Hiestand 520-868-0343

Joan Phillips 520-868-0507

Anita VanWagoner

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

Prayer Chain

Jessie Laing 520-868-9585

Newsletter

Heidi Lowe

newsletter225@yahoo.com

Deadline is 20th of month

Church Secretary

Joyce Martinez

Church Hours

Tuesday-Wednesday-Thursdays
8:30 – 11:30 a.m.



First Presbyterian Church of Florence
September 2017 Issue 9

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.



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
9:30 a.m.
Fellowship after worship

2. From the Pastor
4. Prayer, Birthdays and Anniversaries
5. Book Review/ Special Thanks
6. In a different voice/ An Atheist's View of Life
7. The Rev. Dr. William F. Dean
8. Father's Love Letter
9. Avocado Ice Cream
10. Calendar of Events

. . . *from the Pastor*

Because of current events, in both Charlottesville and Barcelona (and not yet knowing what might transpire in Boston), I had contemplated using an oft-quoted statement by the German Protestant minister, Martin Niemöller, with which many are already (and long) familiar:

First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out — Because I was not a Socialist.

Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out — Because I was not a Trade Unionist.

Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out — Because I was not a Jew.

The quote is inscribed at the National Holocaust Museum, I found out, and I found that out because God works in mysterious ways: As I sat down at my computer trying to complete things before Patricia and I leave for the longest vacation I have ever taken, a headline in an online newspaper caught my attention about complications behind the quote: Niemöller had at one time been a Nazi supporter and had no problem with the cultural intolerance of many (most?) Germans toward Jews. It was only after he had turned against Hitler's involvement with the Church in Germany and been imprisoned in a concentration camp because of that turning that he realized that, whether the other individual recognizes Jesus or not, Jesus Christ is to be found in every person.

Niemöller was no saint in his personal history any more than any of us are saints – if by “saint” we mean perfect, perfect at all times in our lives and in everything we say or do.

This is also interesting because of disputes over Confederate memorials, but most specifically about those to Robert E. Lee. Lee was, after all, essentially a “traitor”; Lee left the U.S. Army to fight against the United States. Yet, look up what Lee did *following* the Civil War, and the image changes, or at least softens. Lee did not minimize the negativity of the War nor the evils of slavery, and would not have agreed with a memorial to himself; from a New York Times article of August 18: [it would be wiser] “not to keep open the sores of war but to follow the examples of those nations who endeavored to obliterate the marks of civil strife.”

But I am not writing about memorials or concentration camps; instead my point is this: *It is never too late!* It is never too late for us to “come to Jesus,” as in a more real sense did Niemöller in a concentration camp than had he ever come as a pastor, or to come to a realization that slavery had to end (not that slavery was the cause of the Civil War) than did Lee. Indeed, *that* Niemöller did “come to Jesus” led him to make his statement that motivates – no, more than “motivates,” *illuminates the choices we need to make* – for all of us.

Niemöller's greatest contribution to history and the world arises because he was open to change in his perception of his fellow children of God.

I have spoken before (and will undoubtedly do so again) of my parents' discomfort and disapproval of the out-of-wedlock conception of their first great-grandchild when one of my nephews fathered a son to an African American woman to whom he was not married. The nephew ended up with sole custody almost immediately because of abandonment. How and that my parents grew to love, and I mean *to love*, that great-grandson is a beautiful story.

But it is a story that needs to be lived out for all of us on a grander scale. I frequently turn up my nose at what seems to me to be the self-righteousness of so many of my fellow clergy and others on “racism”; it seems too easy a target on which to vent their moral spleen. Yet they are right: racism is perhaps not evil but ignorant in its origins, but it is “evil” in the sense that it is distinctly *not* Christian, *not* in keeping with, in fact, in direct violation of, God's commandment to love our neighbors as ourselves.

And racism and Islamism (a name that I understand followers of Islam would apply to the extremists) have something in common: failing to see the other as a child of God. (Muslims do, indeed, believe in the God of Abraham, even if they do not see God so completely as we are privileged to see God through the lens of , and in the person of, Jesus Christ.)

And I want to draw a bit of a distinction that can get me into some trouble with purists: *prejudice* is not the same as *racism*, even though I am against both and we should want to overcome both. *Prejudice* is a *disposition*, a *pre-judging* that can be positive (I was prejudiced *in favor of* graduates of the College of Engineering at the University of Illinois when I was in business), or benignly negative (basketball coaches are prejudiced against vertically challenge people like me), it can be cautionary (I am leery of some motorcycle riders), or it can be self-condemning (as prejudice against Catholics or Jews or Muslims or gays or African Americans), self-condemning and evil as when it results in *racism*. But the main difference is this: *prejudice* is laziness when we use it to prejudge a class or group of people, but it turns to *evil* when it turns to rejection or hatred of a class or group of people, to racism or anti-Semitism or similar hatreds.

Few of us, I trust, are in fact racist, but we are easily inclined to have our prejudices, and the story of Martin Niemöller in the concentration camp, the story of my parents (my father was in his 80's and my mother in her 70's when my great-nephew was born) show us that *prejudices* can be overcome, that we can come to see Christ in the other person despite previous prejudices, that we can accept others – and groups and classes, *all others* -- as being what we are, children of God. *It is never too late for this to happen!*

I do believe that the vast number of people whom some would label as “racist” are not so much “racist” as “prejudiced”; for them change is easier, but as a Christian, I have to believe that even those who are racist can come to see that those against whom they are racist are in fact children of God, and to help them do so is one of the tasks every Christian faces.

We detest and hate the *sin* of racism, but to quote a famous individual, “Let he who is without sin cast the first stone.” Let us condemn the sin and and pray to change the sinner’s – and our own – ways that are short of fulfilling the commandment, “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

Blessings,

John



Pray for: Charles Askov, Skip Blanchard (Coolidge), Nancy, Clancy, Carrie Bohlander, Dick and Florey Bondelid, B-J Brown-Ferguson and her sister, Sue, Bonnie Brunner, John Buttram, Phyllis Carlson's niece, Virginia, Art Colley, Libby Gratz, Rose, Pete, Elizabeth Holded (Coolidge), JL and Joanne Hooper, Wayne Jackson, Kathy Jordan, Denise and Larry, Lois Kuder, Cliff Kuhns (on new marriage), Margie Lewis's cousin, Muriel Marsteller, Phyllis Mikles (Coolidge), Lew Moon, Vera (Joyce) Schell, Ann Schneider, Maggie Schulz, Connie Stephens, Pat Vucson, Julie Wurtz (Coolidge), Shanna Martinez (Coolidge).

Our Church and our Country in these troubled times



August



August

- 8. Maria Hielstand
- 11. Jean Askov
- 12. Kathleen Beduhn

Please let me know your anniversary.

Please let me know if I missed your Birthday or

ATTENTION PLEASE!!

IF YOU WISH TO HAVE SOMETHING PUT IN THE NEWSLETTER, PLEASE SEND IT TO newsletter225@yahoo.com DO NOT SEND IT TO MY PERSONAL EMAIL ADDRESS. THANK YOU!!!!!!

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, I would be happy to include them in the newsletter. All shared or written articles will be attributed to the person who sent them in.

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by William Paul Young

You're a Trinitarian. You're not a Trinitarian. What's a Trinitarian?

The Shack, by William Paul Young, will have you twisting your head around these theological concepts that Christians have debated and struggled with for centuries. But most importantly the story asks you to twist your heart around forgiveness, love, redemption, and freedom, also what Christians have debated and struggled with for centuries.

How can Mack forgive the killer who kidnapped and brutally murdered his tiny daughter? How can Mack forgive the brutality inflicted on him as a child by his drunken father? *The Shack* wrestles with the timeless question: *Where is God in a world so filled with unspeakable pain?*

In an extraordinary meeting with God in the Eagle Gap Wilderness area of Oregon, in the shack where his daughter was murdered although her body was not found, Mack discovers that "Forgiveness is not about forgetting...It is about letting go of another person's throat." "Forgiveness in no way requires that you trust the one you forgive." "Forgiveness does not excuse anything" and..."forgiveness is an incredible power."

Mack's mind-boggling weekend spent with God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit in forms that are totally surprising and more than a little unsettling, opens Mack's eyes to the enormity of God's love and the peace that awaits those who choose to open their hearts to it.

Judith Johnston

Again this year, Community Presbyterian Church of Coolidge and First Presbyterian Church of Florence will be sharing in summer worship.

All services will be at 9:30 a.m.

September through October 1 (World Communion Sunday) will be held in Florence.



SPECIAL THANKS

Some folks at church have said how nice the church yard looks and wonder who is doing the work. They were told Bill and Cathy Foster are taking care of most needs - Bill in charge of lawn watering (on a timer) and Cathy doing trimming, raking, some other watering and hauling most brush off to our ranch – most equipment used belongs to Fosters. Cathy also mows lawns and Sprays or hand pulls weeds as needed. There is no cost for this service as Fosters are dedicating this work to God and His place of worship. It should be noted that the Session is aware of this arrangement and gave approval for such.

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.

- 3) If Thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?
- 4) But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared.

Jewish, *Psalms 130:3,4*

...surely Allah forgives all sins; He is Most Forgiving. Ever Merciful.

Muslin, *Koran 39:54*

- 12) And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;
- 13) bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.

Christian, *Colossians 3:12,13*

An Atheist's View on Life

I will live my life according to these beliefs
God does not exist
It is just foolish to think
That there is a God with a cosmic plan
That an all-powerful God brings purpose to the pain
and suffering in the world
Is a comforting thought, however
It is only wishful thinking
People can do as they please without eternal consequences
The idea that I am deserving of Hell
Because of sin
Is a lie meant to make me a slave to those in power
“The more you have, the happier you will be”
Our existence has no grand meaning or purpose
In a world with no God
There is freedom to be who I want to be
But with God
Everything is fine
It is ridiculous to think
I am lost and in need of saving.

A Christian's View on Life

(Now...read the exact same words, but this time from bottom to top)

" The Rev. Dr. William F. Dean"



Rev Bill, as he liked to be called, graduated from McCormick Seminary in 1957, was ordained a Presbyterian Minister and served as Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Florence.

He was Honorably Retired from this church in June, 1996. Rev. Bill thought it was a very unique and satisfying experience to start his ministry in First Presbyterian Church and retire from this same Church.

Because he enjoyed choral singing, he also conducted the choir at First Presbyterian for many years. With the assistance of many church members, he directed cantatas at Easter and Christmas.

Rev. Bill married Derry L. Mills in 1951 and had six children, three daughters and three sons. The Rev. Timothy W. Dean, the youngest son, serves as Co-Pastor of the McFarland Lutheran Church in McFarland, Wisconsin. Rev. Bill died on August 27, 2016 after a long battle with cancer. He was a one-of-a-kind minister who filled many needs in our church and was well liked by all who met and worked with him. His outstanding work for his Lord and Saviour spanned almost 20 years all in our little Florence church.

Father's Love Letter

My Child,

You may not know me, but I know everything about you. *PSALM 139:1* I know when you sit down and when you rise up. *PSALM 139:2* I am familiar with all your ways. *PSALM 139:3* Even the very hairs on your head are numbered. *MATTHEW 10:29-31* For you were made in my image. *GENESIS 1:27* me you live and move and have your being. *ACTS 17:28* For you are my offspring. *ACTS 17:28* I knew you even before you were conceived. *JERAMIAH 1:4-5* I chose you when I planned creation. *EPHESIANS 1:11-12* You were not a mistake, for all your days are written in my book. *PSALM 139:15-16* I determined the exact time of your birth and where you would live. *ACTS 12:26* You are fearfully and wonderfully made. *PSALM 13.9:14* I knit you together in your mother's womb. *PSALM 139:13* And brought you forth on the day you were born. *PSALM 71:6* I have been misrepresented by those who do not know me. *JOHN 8:41-44* I am not distant or angry, but am the complete expression of love. *1 JOHN 4:16* And it is my desire to lavish my love on you. *1 JOHN 3:1* Simply because you are my child and I am your Father. *1 JOHN 3:1* I offer you mo0re than your earthly father ever could. *MATTHEW 7:11* Fore I am the perfect Father. *MATTHEW 5:48* Every good gift that you receive comes from my hand. *JAMES 1:17* For I am your provider and I meet all your needs. *MATTHEW 6:31-35* My plan for your future has always been filled with hope. *JEREMIAH 29:11* Because I love you with an everlasting love. *JEREMIAH 31:3* My thoughts toward you are countless as the sand on the seashore. *PSALM 139:17-18* And I rejoice over you with singing. *ZEPHANIAH 3:17* I will never stop doing good to you. *JERAMIAH 32:40* Fore you are my treasured possession. *EXODUS 19:5* I desire to establish you with all your heart and all my soul. *JEREMIAH 32:41* And I want to show you great and marvelous things. *JEREMIAH 33:3* If you seek me with all your heart, you will find me. *DEUTERONOMY 4:29* Delight in me and I will give you the desires of your heart. *PSALM 37:4* Fore it is I who giver you these desires. *PHILIPPIANS 2:13* I am able to do more for you than you could possibly imagine. *EPHESIANS 3:20* Fore I am your great encourager. *2 THESSALONIANS 2:16-17* I am also the Father who comforts you in all your troubles. *2CORINTHESIANS 15:4* When you are brokenhearted, I am close to you. *PSALM .34:18* As a shepherd carries a lamb, I have carried you close to my heart. *ISAIAH 40:11* One day I will wipe away every tear from your eyes, *REVELATIONS 21:3-4* And I'll take away all the pain you have suffered on this earth. *REVELATIONS 21: 3-4* I am your Father and I love you even as I love my son, Jesus. *JOHN 17:23* Fore in Jesus, my love for you is revealed. *JOHN 17:26* He is the exact representation of my being. *HEBREWS 1:3* He came to demonstrate that I am for you, not against you. *ROMANS 8:31* And to tell you that I am not counting your sins. *2 CORINTHIANS 5:18-19* Jesus died so that you and I could be reconciled. *2 CORINTHIANS 5:18-19* His death was the ultimate expression of my love for you. *1 JOHN 4:10* I gave up everything I love that I might gain your love. *ROMANS 8:31-32* If you receive the gift of my son Jesus, you receive me. *1 JOHN 2:23* And nothing will ever separate you from my love again. *ROMANS 8:38-39* Come home and I'll throw the biggest party heaven has ever seen. *LUKE 15:7* I have always been Father and will always be Father. *EPHESIANS 3:14-15* My question is...will you be my child? *JOHN 1:12-13* I will be waiting for you. *LUKE 5:11-32*

Love, your Dad.

Almighty God

AVOCADO ICE CREAM

This ice cream is packed with bright avocado flavor. It's also incredibly easy to make — no churning required. Top it with some flaky sea salt for a sweet and salty bite.

Total: 4 hr 35 min Prep: 15 min

Yield: 12 servings (1/2 cup each)

Level: Easy

Ingredients

- One 8-ounce avocado, halved, pitted and peeled
- One 14-ounce can sweetened condensed milk
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice (from 1 lemon)
- Pinch fine salt
- 2 cups cold heavy cream

Directions

- Special equipment: a 9-by-5-by-3-inch metal loaf pan
- Chill the loaf pan in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes.
- Puree the avocado, milk, lemon juice and salt in a blender until smooth, about 1 minute; transfer to a large bowl.
- Whip the cream in another large bowl with an electric mixer on medium-high speed until firm peaks form, about 2 minutes. With a rubber spatula, fold about 1 cup of the whipped cream into the avocado puree until combined. Fold the lightened mixture back into the whipped cream until well blended. Pour into the chilled loaf pan, and place in the freezer until firm, 4 hours or overnight.

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September 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 22 th Sun in Ordinary Time Ex. 3:1-15 Ps. 105:1-6, 23-26, 45b Rom. 12:9-21 Matt. 16: 21-28	4 Labor Day 7 pm Al-Anon	5	6	7	8	9
10 23 th Sun in Ordinary Time Ex. 12:1-14, Ps. 149, Rom. 13: 8-14 Matt. 18: 15-20	11 7 pm Al-Anon	12	13 1:00-2:00 Hygiene Bank	14	15	16
17 24 th Sun in Ordinary Time Ex. 14: 19-31 Ps. 114 or Ex. 15:1b-11, 20-21 Rom. 14:1-12 Matt.18: 21-35	18 7 pm Al-Anon	19	20	21	22	23
24 25 th Sun in Ordinary Time Ex. 16:2-15 Ps. 105:1-6, 37-45 Phil. 1:21-30 Matt: 20: 1-16	25 7 pm Al-Anon	26	27	28	29	30

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

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