

Pastor
John Johnson
Cell: 312-933-3494
Johnjohnson1010@icloud.com

Session Members

Clerk of the Session

John Guy
520-858-3322

Treasurer

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

Finance/Administration

Art Colley
209-840-1359

Property /Building

Pat Reed
520-868-4658

Congregational Care

Donna Studer
520-868-3931

Evangelism/Newsletter

Heidi Lowe
520-221-5676

Mission

ShaRon Liedl
520-430-0883
Mary Palmer
480-299-1372 or 928-580-2030
Margie Lewis
Heidi Lowe 520-221-5676

Worship

Katrina Guy
623-3340402
Mary Palmer
480-299-1372 or 928-580-2030

Christian Education

Margie Lewis

Stewardship

John Guy
520-858-3322

Personnel

Ray Hyyppa
303-941-4893 – Cell
520-251-5588 - Home

Fellowship

Laura Hofman
520-858-2945

Bookkeeper

Jane Whitaker

Prayer Chain

Patty Hyyppa 303-941-4893

Church Secretary

Beth Harmon

Prayer Chain

Patty Hyyppa
303-941-4893 – Cell
520-251-5588 – Home

Church Hours

Tuesday--Thursday
8:30 – 1:00 am



January 2020 Issue 1

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
225 East Butte Avenue
Florence, AZ 85132
Ph: 520-868-5634
Fax: 520-868-3053

Email: FlorencePresby1@icloud.com
Website: www.florenceazchurch.org

Sunday Church Service
10:30 am

2. From the Pastor
4. Church Information
5. Prayers, Birthdays & Anniversaries
6. Book Review
7. Mission Moments/ Important Dates
8. Contribution Statements Notice
9. Calendar of Events
10. Church Information Form
11. Instructions.

From the Pastor

In my communion meditation of January 5, I used a quotation that some asked me to reproduce, so here it is:

"A religious man is a person who holds God and man in one thought at one time, at all times, who suffers harm done to others, whose greatest passion is compassion, whose greatest strength is love and defiance of despair."

The quote is from Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907-72), and I received it in an email from the *Israel Bible Center*, from whom I receive daily emails, and while many of these are promoting the online courses or publications they offer, from my perspective, the Center offers some incredible insights into both the Hebrew Scriptures – the "Old Testament" – and, somewhat surprisingly and delightfully, into the *New Testament* as well.

And at a time when for whatever reason (and on some I can only speculate) there appears to be an increasing tolerance for anti-Semitism, it is worth emphasizing that on a religious level, Christians and Jews (and to a reasonable extent hard to appreciate in this political and social climate, Muslims) are closely related. After all, Jesus was a Jew, and the foremost writer of epistles within the New Testament, Paul, was a Jew as well. And if the Christian – Jewish relationship was not central to Christianity, why would our Bible be dominated in volume by our "Old" Testament, the Jewish Bible?

While I fancy myself reasonably well versed (no pun intended) on the Hebrew Bible, I am not knowledgeable on the rabbinic tradition at the time of Jesus, though there are certainly those who say it is remarkably familiar with Jesus' teaching, which would be no surprise since Jesus' teaching in so far as it did *not* concern the idea of His coming again and our resurrection was in fact wholly consistent with Jewish teaching.

Let me repeat that: *What Jesus taught was consistent with, indeed, was, Jewish teaching.* Some would go so far as to point out that the idea of life after death was consistent with at least some of then Jewish teaching.

I say this for two reasons: first, there is no inconsistency in morals taught by these two great religions, and if we look objectively at our Jewish brothers and sisters, we see that they tend to be driven to act charitably, to support charity; secondly, we can learn from others.

. . . and for what it is worth, one of the pillars of the other great Abrahamic faith, Islam, is charity, though too readily understood as charity toward fellow Muslims (as though we Christians were any different), and Muslims are called to a moral code perhaps even stricter than what we as Christians consider ours to be.

In fact, I would say that at least with respect to life on earth, there is more that unites the children of Abraham (Christians, Jews, Muslims) than what divides them. Without question, there are serious theological differences that matter to each, various issues about the nature and role of Jesus being foremost among them, of course: Jesus plays no role in Judaism, but is a major prophet, though not God, in Islam.

But division seems to be endemic to religious people; the recent step toward break-up (strictly speaking, break-away) within Methodism being the latest, and perhaps saddest, example.

On its surface, like problems in the PCUSA (and, some tell me, within the ELCA – the main Lutheran denomination), the precipitating issue appears to have to do with the homosexuality related issues:

marriage and ordination, as well as the broader issues described by the acronym, *LBGTQ*, or whatever. Yet, as the Methodists and others say, it is really about how to treat the authority of Scripture.

Wait! *Authority* of Scripture? I have not space here, though I always invite anyone interested to speak directly with me, about the central issues as to how we understand and read Scripture, but let me close with two more or less central questions that I would answer from Scripture itself:

Is the Bible “the Word of God”?

For Christians, the answer must be “No! Jesus is the Word of God.” *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God.* (John 1:1-2)

What role does Scripture claim for itself?

Please understand that when the New Testament was written, what was considered Scripture would have been only the Hebrew Bible, but the writer of 2 Timothy says this:

¹⁴ *But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, ¹⁵ and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.* (2 Timothy 3:14-17)

It is a fairly limited claim. *Inspired by God* (sometimes interpreted, and not incorrectly since there are several possible meanings of the Greek word: *God breathed*), but it does not say “to infallible human beings” because there are not and have not – with one exception – been “infallible human beings.” And the term “useful for,” well, you can read the rest.

Which leaves me to say this: *When we let things divide us yet agree upon Jesus, are we really following Him?*

But as we follow Him, let us never tolerate unfairness or hatred toward anyone, whether anti-Semitism toward our Jewish cousins nor Islamophobia toward other children of Abraham.

And let us apply that same standard to all of God’s children, whether children of Abraham or not.

Blessings,

John

ATTENTION PLEASE!!

**IF YOU WISH TO HAVE
SOMETHING PUT IN THE
NEWSLETTER, PLEASE SEND
IT TO
newsletter225@yahoo.com**

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.

Please be careful of copyrighted material.

Church Information:

Church Website:

Please use our new website: www.florenceazchurch.org Check it out and let us know what you think of it.

Help Needed:

Assistance is needed following Sunday's fellowships to help clean up. Please let Laura know if you are willing to help. Clean up goes much faster with helping hands.

Ladies Luncheon:

Friday, January 10th 11:00, Old Pueblo

Men's Breakfast

Wednesday, January 8th 900, Florence Cafe

Wednesday < January 15th 900 Florence Cafe

Bible Study

Tuesdays at 930

Session Meeting:

January 14th at 11:00



Pray for: Candy Walker, Pete, Rose and family, Hilde Major, Grace Gorman, Donna Studer, Art & Shirley Colley, Dave Baier, Kurt Brummage, Michael Whitaker, Ernie Smith, brother of Joyce Smith, Ray Hyyppa, Lew and Delores Moon, Lew's sister and family, Bob Sherman, Allen Saunders, Erin Young (Janice Cockrill's niece), Ethel, David, Ira Cohen, Mindy, and granddaughter, Kaylie, Pete, Rose, Elizabeth, Pauline, Phyllis Mikles, Bob and Doreen, Phyllis Carlson's niece, Virginia very serious condition, Skip, Maria, Chris Gardner, Ann Schneider, BJ, John Buttram, Connie Stephens, Mark Stephens, Miriam Reid, Verna Boyle, Karen Anderson, Barb Newman, Margie's cousin, Melissa, Pat Vucson, Bonnie Brunner, Sean, Myrna Leef, Muriel Marsteller, Lois Kuder, Joann and JL Hooper, Denise and Larry Kollert, Joyce and her family, Joann Serra, Chad and Angel and their daughter, Patricia's friend, Mary Kay Wysham, Russ, Ashton Thomas, Kay Carbonari, Peggy Lowe, Flory Bondelid's grandson Jeremy, Art and Shirley Colley, Linda Ernst..



- | | | | |
|-----|----------------|-----|---------------------|
| 6. | Katrina Guy | 23. | Tom & Beth Harmon |
| 10. | Annabel Ortiz | 30. | Edgar & Carol DeMar |
| 11. | Murl Linke | | |
| 20. | Maureen Baier | | |
| 23. | Bill Zwanziger | | |
| 27. | Mike Palmer | | |
| 30. | Laura Hofmann | | |

**Please let me know if I missed your Birthday or Anniversary or have the wrong date. Also, If I have added someone's name to the list please let me know. I'm working off 2 different spreadsheets and I am unfamiliar with some of the older members. Thanks.

**Agnes Eeg, please accept my apologies for consistently spelling your name wrong. I will not be doing that again.

Book Review

Keep It Moving

Lessons for the Rest of Your Life
by Twyla Tharp - 2019

Tharp uses lightly humorous, deadly serious verbal nudging of the reader toward an attitude adjustment about aging, verses getting old, to stop the sluggish decline into becoming a boring and decrepit old person.

No ambiguous statements, Tharp, a world class choreographer, dancer, lecturer, and writer, still keeping it moving at age 79, references persons of renown who excelled in their various fields, experienced some form of brokenness, and then rebounded with new directions and new successes in their later years.

Tharp asks the reader to move beyond some simple goals (e.g. I will lose 15 pounds by Christmas) and make life-long pledges (e.g. I will eat 3 balanced meals every day and skip junk and fast foods). Suggested gentle exercises for stretching, bending, breathing, balancing, or thinking round out the intent of each chapter, and the slow-paced, thought-provoking writing can also serve as a daily meditation.

Judith Johnston

In a Different Voice

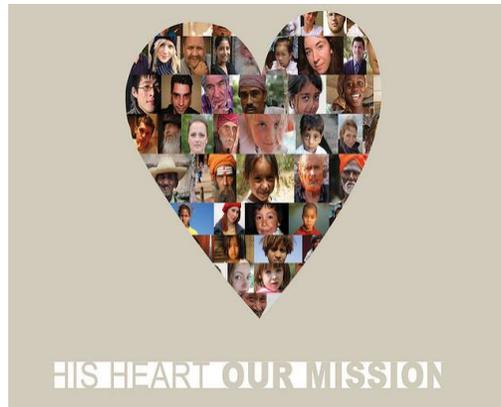
(A monthly column written and submitted by Judith Johnson)

Strang, 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.

No article this month.

Mission Moments



IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

Feb 8, 2020 - Florence Historic Tour will be held on Sat. Feb. 8 2020. First Presbyterian Church of Florence has once again been selected as one of the stops on the tour. We will be needing volunteers to be at the church to answer questions (information will be provided for you), to bake cookies or other goodies and to show hospitality by serving cookies and drinks.

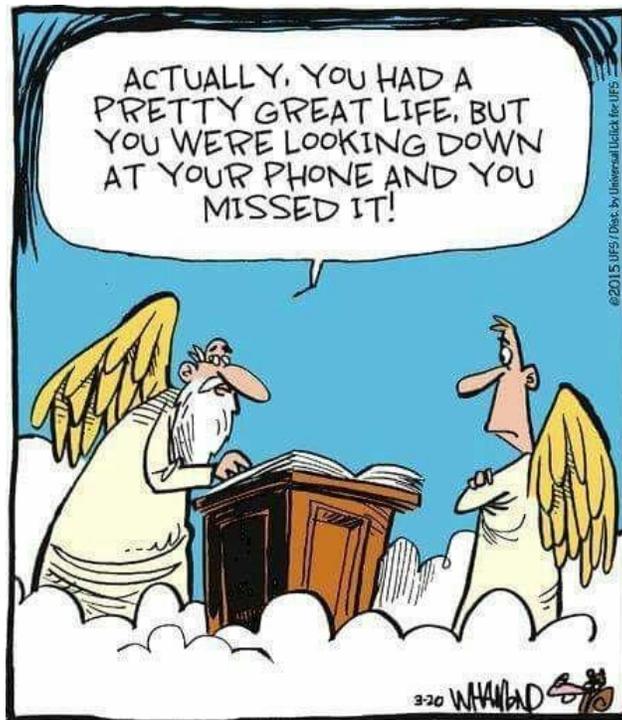
March 14, 2020 - Annual First Presbyterian Church of Florence yard sale is fast approaching, so start thinking and sorting as you clean your closets, make room for Christmas presents, reorganize your space upon your return to Florence for the winter or start spring housecleaning (yes, it will warm up and be spring before you know it). Please set your donation items aside for the sale. Since we are on the Historical Tour, we ask that you hold on to those items until after the tour and if the items can be placed in boxes it will help with storage until the sale. Volunteers will be needed the week preceding the sale for pricing and the day of the sale for set-up of the tables and merchandise, keeping things neat, helping to carry items, check-out and clean-up afterwards. As the proceeds of this sale are used entirely for the funding of the live nativity this coming December, we hope you will contribute in some way, whether you contribute, buy or help – or even better all three ways!

Contact ShaRon Liedl if interested in helping with either of the events. More information will be available closer to the events.

2019 Annual Contribution Statement Coming Soon

Annual Contribution statements will be emailed by the end of January. Per Federal regulations only annual contributions greater than \$200.00 are required to have statement sent. If you contributed less than that amount, but wish to have a statement emailed, please notify Beth Harmon at the church office phone number 520-868-5634 or email to Florencepresby1@icloud.com. If when you receive your statement you believe there is a discrepancy between your records and the statement, please contact Beth Harmon by one of the above methods.

“ I see now that the circumstances of one’s birth are irrelevant; it is what you do with the gift of life that determines who you are”. Hope New Year brings better things for you - stay healthy and happy.
Miriam



HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!!

January

2020

1st Presbyterian Church of Florence, Arizona

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5 2 nd Sunday of Christmas	6 Epiphany of the Lord Katrina Guy B/D	7 Bible Study 9:30	8 Men's Breakfast 9:00 AM Florence Cafe Hygiene Bank 1-2:00 pm	9	10 Ladies Luncheon 11:30 Old Pueblo Annabel Ortiz B/D	11 Murl Linke B/D
12 Baptism of the Lord	13	14 Bible Study 9:30 Session meeting 11:00 am	15 Men's Breakfast 9:00 AM Florence Cafe	16	17	18
19 2 nd Sunday after Epiphany 2 nd Sunday in Ordinary Time	20 Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration Maureen Baier B/D	21 Bible Study 9:30	22	23 Bill Zwanziger B/D Tom & Beth Harmon Anniversary	24	25
26 3 rd Sunday after Epiphany 3 rd Sunday in Ordinary Time	27 Mike Palmer B/D	28 Bible Study 9:30	29	30 Laura Hofmann B/D Edgar & Carol DeMar Anniversary	31	

CHURCH INFORMATION SHEET

To all who are reading this newsletter. With a new year approaching, the church office is in the process of updating records of all attendees. The church information sheet will allow us to do this. Please complete the form even if you are not a member or even a regular attendee. If you would like to have your information included in the new church directory, please mark the form accordingly. If you do not wish to be included in the directory, we ask you to please complete the form and return to the church, so that we have current information on you and your family. If you do not wish to have your phone number(s) included in the directory please write in "unlisted." If you need additional space, please use the back side of the form. If you have any questions please feel to contact the church office 520-868-5634. Office hours are Tuesday and Thursday from 8:30 am - 1:00 pm or you may leave a message. I look forward to hearing from you and rest assured this information will not be sold.

Yours in Christ,

First Presbyterian Church of Florence Information Form

Hello everyone, I need information from you to update/verify our **Church records**.

Please complete the information and return the form no later than December 15, to the box on the secretary's office door, by email, mail to First Presbyterian Church of Florence, PO Box 950, Florence, AZ 85132 or give to Beth Harmon.

1) Your name: _____

Spouse or significant other's name: _____

2) Do you want to be in the Church Directory: _____yes _____no

3) Use the picture that is in the current directory: _____yes _____no

If no - please supply a picture you would like to have used. (You may email it to the church FlorencePresby1@icloud.com) or mail to First Presbyterian Church of Florence, PO Box 950, Florence AZ 85132. Some of you who either do not have a picture or a current picture in the directory – PLEASE email one or have Beth take your picture.

4) Your name as you wish it to appear in the directory. _____

Winter home phone #: _____ Cell phone #: _____

Summer home phone #: _____ Email address: _____

Spouse or significant other's name. _____

Cell phone #: _____ Email address: _____

5) Birthday (You do not have to include year) _____ Name _____

(You do not have to include year) _____ Name _____

(You do not have to include year) _____ Name _____

6) Anniversary (You do not have to include year) _____

7) Local address (please include both street address and mailing address if different)

Mailing: _____

Street: _____

8) Summer address: _____

Thank you for your assistance in updating our records

First Presbyterian Church
P.O. Box 950
225 East Butte
Florence, AZ 85132

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Is to share Jesus Christ through word and action
with all those whose lives we can touch.**