

**Innovations at
First Congregational Church, Flagstaff
Presenter
Pastor Kenneth McIntosh**



**This is our
church...**

Half-a-Century Old

**Strong, steady
leadership**

**Outstanding
traditional Music**

**Committed to Peace
and Justice**

**Even mix of long-
time and newer
members**



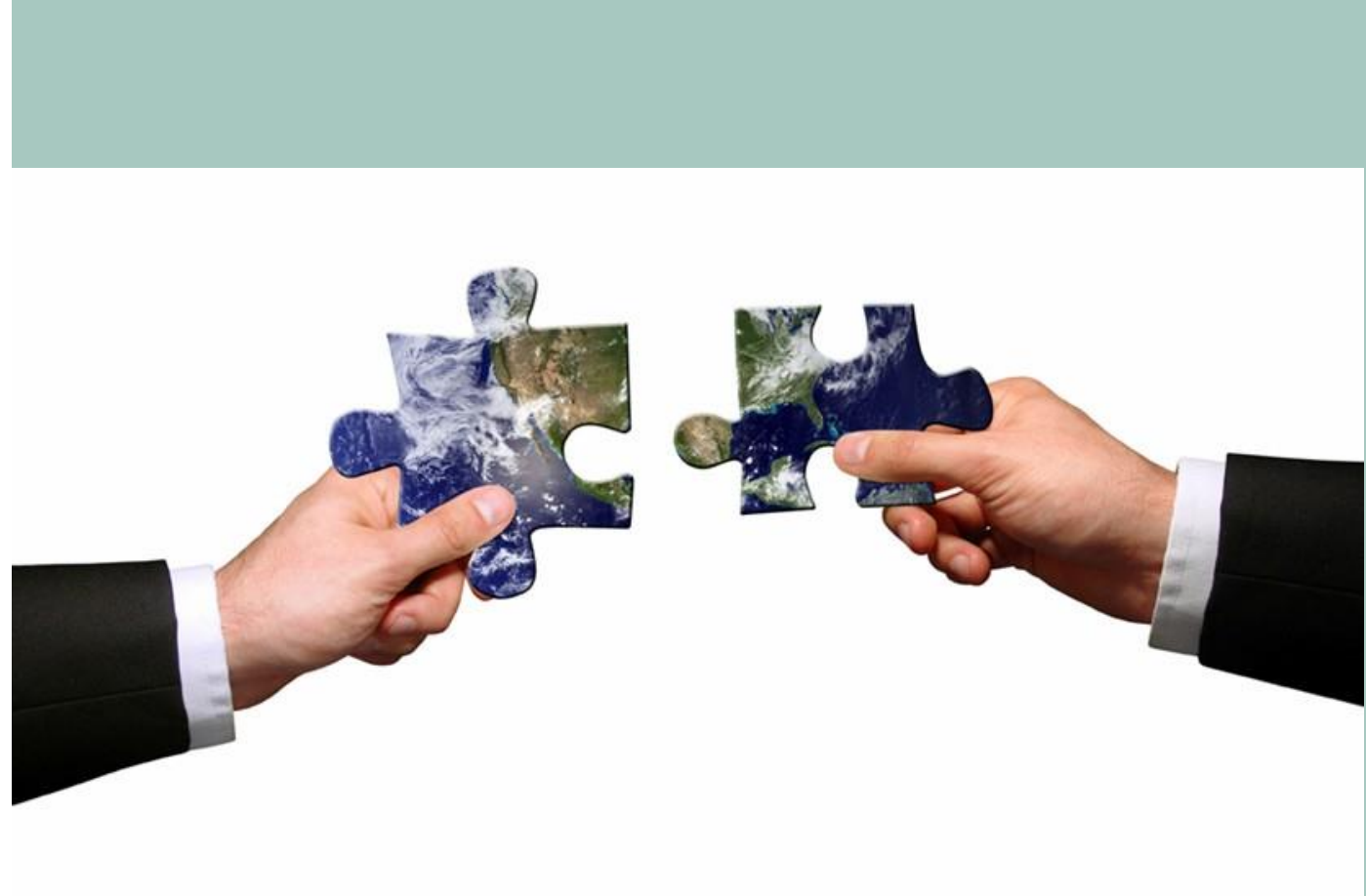
Participated in 2 Growth and Renewal Initiatives

Both sponsored by
Southwest Conference

Triads (3 Northern Arizona
Churches, met three times to
stimulate new ideas)

Innovation Workshop

Three Congregational
Leaders (Council
members)...Treasurer,
Secretary and Moderator
Elect



SERENDIPITY SUNDAYS

We love what we do with worship— Excellent Traditional music, thoughtful liturgy, comfortable traditions

Sometimes we like to “mix it up.”

Idea formed at the Innovation Lab: Why not surprise the congregation on occasional Sundays (“Serendipitous”) and try totally different, Out-of-Box ideas?



Synchronous Inspiration

Fall of 2015, several “Postmodern” services put together by a team of pastors and leaders in the Southwest Conference

Conducted at the Conference Office

A group from First Congregational Flagstaff came down for each of those

Inspired to try experimenting at our services—and idea that arose simultaneously with the “Serendipity Sunday” idea from Innovation Laboratory

Funny how the Spirit Works !



A Celebration of Light and Love

Our first “Serendipity Sunday”

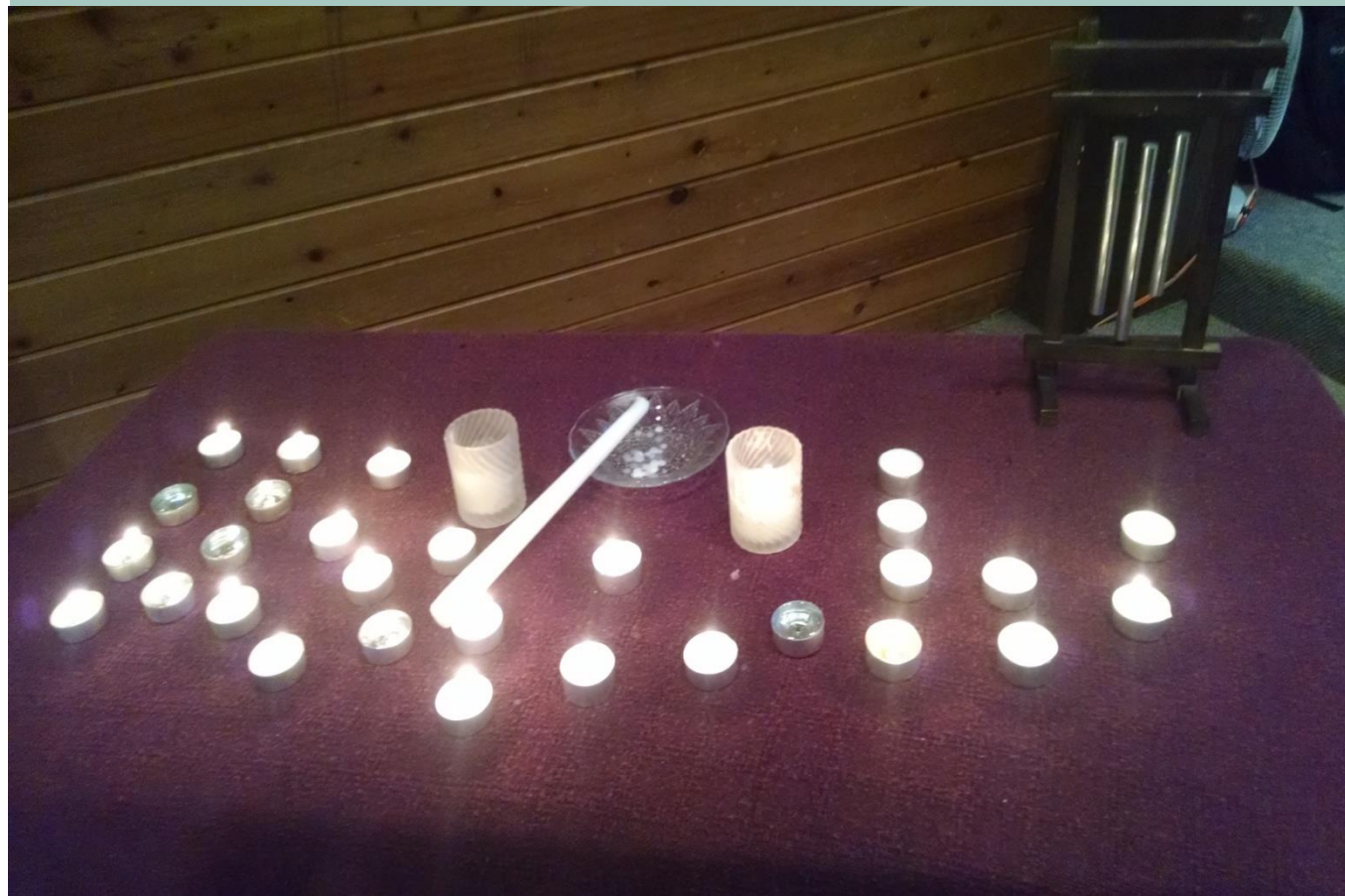
On January 31st, traditional Candlemas

Focus verse in lectionary was “Love Passage” from 1 Corinthians (continuity, using RCL)

First service without a bulletin— everything “off the wall” via computer projection

Prayer time: congregants came forward to a table, announced intention for prayer, lit a candle, a chime struck

Observers noted an unusual level of participation in the service by congregation



The Lord's Supper

Serendipity Sunday #2

Originally, Christians shared Communion in the form of an “Agape’ Meal”—which was an actual sit-down meal

Jesus established the Lord's supper in the context of an actual meal with his disciples

Decided on communion Sunday for worship we'd seat everyone in a “U” shaped table setting



Celebrating God's Extravagant Welcome

For “passing the peace” had simple rainbow stoles for everyone—passed a basket along the table, drape over the next person’s shoulder.

Passed communion elements like table serving

Very positive reception
“Let’s do it again.”



Balance: Innovation and Continuity

Retaining our Best Elements---
such as using the Choir in New
Ways

People still have their roles, but in
a new way—ushers serve
“menus” instead of bulletins

Involving both established
leadership and new people
together in planning and
execution



Faith Beyond Boundaries: Hosting Multi-Cultural Community Discussions

“Faith Beyond Boundaries”
panel discussions hosted by
our church, bringing people of
different faiths, cultures and
vocations together to discuss
topics of common interest

Our first one was “Spirituality of
the Seasons”

Here I am with Navajo Artist
Shonto Begay---a little Celt-
Dine’ discussion going on



The Courage to Make Peace

Our second event was a response to the gun killing on our NAU campus in Flagstaff

We hosted a panel discussion with peace-makers, from a variety of backgrounds, sharing practical ways to promote nonviolence.

Both panel discussions were “hits” in the larger community.

When Christian churches create dialogue with others in their community, it’s an effective form of outreach



Thank You

