

# La Palabra — 2019 Annual Report Edition

February 2020

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Annual Report for First Presbyterian Church of Mesa  
Rev. Ann Conklin

“On God rests my deliverance and my honor; my mighty rock, my refuge is in God.” Psalm 62:7

It is a continuing joy in my life to serve as the pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Mesa! As I approach the mark of three years serving among you, I feel such a sense of gratitude that God saw fit to put us together. You have stretched me and challenged me in ways that have led to spiritual growth and strength, and I hope that experience is mutual. My heart’s desire is that together we continue to grow deeper in our relationship with God and one another.

The year began hosting the combined Presbytery meeting in which our own Carol Gerlach was installed as Moderator of Grand Canyon Presbytery. Following this, there was much excitement and a bit of apprehension about the international mission trip to our southern border with Mexico. Guided by the very capable leaders of Frontera de Cristo, we learned a lot about the many complex issues all who live near the borderlands face and also saw first hand the many beautiful and effective ministries serving this region on both side of the border. It was an enlightening and enriching time for all of us.

We then set our sights on hiring a new staff person, and God provided very well for us in sending Chris McKee to serve as our Minister of Faith Formation. This has been a true blessing to me as Chris’ role is serving in ministry with our children, youth, and young adults. Our gifts complement one another, and we work well as a ministry team.

Throughout this time, the personnel committee and I were surreptitiously planning a celebration to mark Mark’s 25 years of service with FPC Mesa as our highly gifted and gracious music director. The celebration in November was a highlight of the year for me! It will long serve as an example for me of what is possible when dedicated servants of the Lord come together to show gratitude and experience deep joy!

Watching our children and youth engage in worship and learning more about God together during the Montlure Traveling Day Camp hosted at Gilbert Presbyterian was also a source of joy. I was able to get to know the director and counselors better by hosting them for dinner in my home and offering much desired showers for them!

Throughout the year we have continued to update some of our gathering spaces and the campus as a whole has a refreshed look to it, offering several warm and welcoming areas for small groups, classes, and meetings. We also have improved the security of our campus by installing an electronic locking system in our offices and replacing many of our doors. These security upgrades will continue into 2020 as we seek to do everything in our power to keep those on our campus safe.

I continue to participate in and be very encouraged by monthly For Our City Mesa meetings which include a variety of community and religious leaders. So many good things are happening in this area, and it is inspiring to learn about all the upcoming developments in the city and innovative approaches to some of the ongoing challenges we face. Though we deal with serious and complex issues, each month I leave the meeting uplifted and encouraged.

At the Presbytery level, I began serving on the Committee on Ministry this year and am currently the liaison for two congregations actively in the pastoral search process. This summer I will serve as a commissioner for the 224th General Assembly to be held in June in Baltimore. I look forward to being a part of the work of the denomination!

As I look towards 2020, I give thanks to God for this congregation and all of the dedicated volunteers and devoted staff who contribute significantly to our shared ministry. Gratitude abounds for committed leaders serving as Elders and Deacons who give selflessly of their time and talent for the glory of God and the benefit of our congregation. It is truly a gift to worship with you each Lord’s Day, to serve among you, and to grow in faith together!

May God’s grace and peace be with us all in the coming year. In Christ’s love ~ Pastor Ann

## INDEX

<i>A Message from Ann</i> .....	1
<i>Worship Report</i> .....	2
<i>Discipleship Report</i> .....	4
<i>Preschool Report</i> .....	5
<i>Fellowship Report</i> .....	7
<i>Presbyterian Women</i> .....	8
<i>Mission Report</i> .....	9
<i>Administration Report</i> .....	11
<i>Deacons</i> .....	13
<i>February Birthdays</i> .....	14
<i>Calendar Notes</i> .....	14
<i>Scenes from 2018</i> .....	15
<i>Calendar</i> .....	Website

## WORSHIP

Worship (E) – Dan Reeves  
Dir. Of Music Ministries (Chair) – Mark Ramsey  
Prayer Chain (D) — Joy Schulz

Funerals/Memorials (D) — Renita Jurgensen  
Worship (D) — David Miller

### Annual Reports 2019: Staff DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES

Each of our choirs participated in worship services at least once a month during the spring and fall. In addition, several events highlighted our year in ministry:

- ◇ Hosted combined Grand Canyon and de Cristo Presbyteries
- ◇ Mary Beth Carlson in Worship, Piano & Testimony
- ◇ Weekly Preschool Chapels, with Pastor Ann, Chris McKee, and Preschool Director Shiloh Murillo
- ◇ Dei Gloriam Handbell Choir performances at Phoenix ZooLights
- ◇ Sanctuary Choir sang in the Third Biennial Mesa Interfaith Choral Festival (Grace United Methodist Church)
- ◇ Duet Concert with Joan White, Nunnenkamp Center at Friendship Village
- ◇ Organ Demonstration for Preschool and MCC Music History Classes
- ◇ First Players' 23rd Annual Dinner-Theater Production (*Annie Get Your Gun*), with three performances, including a Sunday matinée
- ◇ Accompanied Dubois Seven Last Words at Gold Canyon UMC
- ◇ Pure Praise Singers Musical: Colby's Missing Memory
- ◇ Karen Rudin Student Recitals, with Pure Praise Singers
- ◇ Music for Senior Service Award Luncheon, Valley Pres., with Tubist Paul Green
- ◇ Potluck with Sanctuary Choir & Spouses
- ◇ Music with Preschool Spring Fling
- ◇ Organ Concert at Shepherd of the Pines Lutheran Church, Payson
- ◇ Study Leave: International Choral Festival, Missoula, Montana, with Anita Ramsey, Marj Burgan, and Paul & Mary Carlson
- ◇ Ice Cream Social, with John Couillard's band, Vintage Rocket
- ◇ Faith and Family Night at the Arizona Diamondbacks, with musical guests For King & Country
- ◇ All-Church Stewardship Celebration, with special music by the Pure Praise Singers
- ◇ 25th Anniversary Celebration of Director of Music Ministries, with catered dinner, piano concert, and newly commissioned anthem, "One Faith, One Hope, One Love" by Joel Raney.
- ◇ Music Sunday "O Come, All Ye Faithful"
- ◇ FPC Christmas Caroling
- ◇ Special Service Leaders Tricia MacDonald, Dr. Glenn Bennett, Larry Lathom, Karen Rudin, Bea Towe, Alice Edwards, Barbara Walker, and Jan Peterson, with summer music led by the First Ringers, Summer Singers, HolyGrounds Band, Men's & Women's Ensembles, Soloists & Instrumentalists, Summer Ringers, a Handbell Duo and a Women's Trio, One Voice, Dei Gloriam Handbell Choir in a Hymn Festival, and a service of scripture and song.

We continue to be blessed with about a quarter of our congregation participating in our music ministries. I am very thankful for each singer, ringer, signer, and instrumentalist, and I pray for God's richest blessings upon each of us as we share in the joy of ministry and offer our gifts of worship and music. Special thanks go to each of our choirs: **WEDNESDAY WRAP WORSHIP SKILLS**, Karen Rudin, Director; **FIRST RINGERS**, Bea Towe, Director; **HEARTS HANDS AND VOICES**, Karyn Weaver, Director; **ONE VOICE**, Anita Ramsey, Director; and **SANCTUARY CHOIR**, Bea Towe, Accompanist. Many thanks also to our **PRAISE BANDS** for providing musical leadership for both worship services: Karen Rudin, Erin Skarphol, and Rev. Paul Soderquist (9:00 a.m.) and Preston MacDonald, Tricia MacDonald, Kevin Reeves, Dan Sitzler, and Sean Snitzer (11:00 a.m.); and to our **SOUND LEADERS**, Bob Schulz and Dan Reeves and **SOUND ASSISTANTS**, Peter Conklin, Greg Gerlach, and John Couillard.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Mark Ramsey

#### COMING EVENTS:

- 2/23 Chili Cook-Off and Annual Meeting
- 2/26 Ash Wednesday
- 3/15 Women's Sunday
- 3/27-29 Singin' in the Rain Dinner-Theaters

## Annual Reports 2019: Commissions WORSHIP

The Worship Commission serves our congregation through the planning of weekly worship services, by facilitating the church Prayer Chain, by celebrating with families as they welcomed new life, and by supporting families in times of grief. Items accomplished by the Worship Commission during 2019 include:

- Planned for 2019 Special Worship Services (Youth Sunday, Winter Visitor Sunday, Women's Sunday, Ministry Fair, Pledge Sunday) and Special Offerings (One Great Hour of Sharing - Easter, Pentecost, Mesa Presbyterian Ministries - World Communion Sunday, and Joy Gift - Christmas Eve)
- Intinction vessels (bread/cup) purchased by Gail Soderquist and Carol Gerlach
- New purple and emerald green paraments purchased by Michael & Stephanie and Bob & Carol Gerlach
- Paul Carlson to create a new Sanctuary pulpit
- Sanctuary WiFi network, created by Dan Davenport
- Eleventh Annual Worship in the Park, in FPC Courtyard, followed by a BBQ (Fellowship Commission)
- Planned worship services for Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, and Christmas Eve
- Easter Services at 9 and 11, with Pancake Breakfast prepared by our Scouts
- Mother's Day and Father's Day Celebrations, with special Worship Flowers/Gifts
- World Communion Sunday with hymns from around the world
- Advent Decorating with Carols by Candlelight and a catered supper
- Candlelight Communion Services of Lessons & Carols
- New schedule of HolyGrounds baristas
- Plans to implement summer service suggestions brought to Session by Nate Robinson's Sunday School Class
- Recommended a one-service schedule during the summer months: Memorial Day Sunday through July 14 in the Sanctuary and July 21 through Labor Day Sunday in Fellowship Hall. [APPROVED]
- Recommended that communion during June, July, August, and September be served by intinction. [APPROVED]
- Recommend one-combined worship service at 10:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary on December 29th. [APPROVED]
- Recommend that January 5 Communion be served by intinction. [APPROVED]

### Items for Session Approval

- The Worship Commission recommends approval of the following 2019 Communion days: the first Sunday of each month plus Maundy Thursday and Christmas Eve. [APPROVED]
- Renita recommends adding crosses to Fellowship Hall (for HolyGrounds, Summer Services, et al). Pastor Ann will invite a local woodworker to construct two crosses, which will be displayed to the left and right of the stage. [APPROVED]
- Recommend using Endowment funds to purchase a new Christmas Tree for the Sanctuary. [APPROVED]

Respectfully submitted,  
Mark Ramsey, Director of Music (Chair)  
Dan Reeves, Worship (E) 2021  
& Worship - HolyGrounds  
David Miller, Worship (D) 2022  
Joy Schulz, Prayer Chain Coordinator  
Sandra Clark, Food Pantry Director  
& Worship Decorations  
Susan Durand, Greeters  
Renita Jurgensen, Funeral/Memorial/Reception Coordinator  
& Liturgists  
Don Wilson, Ushers

### Humoresque

"The One whose throne is in heaven sits laughing." - Psalm 2:4

Hale Business Systems, Mary Kay Cosmetics, Fuller Brush, and W.R. Grace Co. have merged and are now known as "Hale, Mary, Fuller, Grace."

# DISCIPLESHIP

Min. of Faith Formation — Chris McKee  
Adult (E) — Karen Rudin  
Discipleship (D) – Anita Ramsey

Children’s Ministries (E) — Stephanie Gerlach  
Family Ministries (E) — Ellen Hickey

Youth/Young Adult (E) — Kyle Harding  
Youth Elder – Will Snitzer

## Discipleship Commission Annual Report Submitted By: Chris McKee, Minister of Faith Formation

Discipleship takes many forms at FPC Mesa and consists of faith forming activities across the ages including children, youth and adults. Faith building opportunities are available throughout the week from our Sunday School classes to Wednesday WRAP. Our programs are centered upon becoming faithful disciples of Christ and living out the way God loves us.

### Sunday Christian Education

Our Sunday Christian Education programs spans the ages, preschool through adult. During worship the children are invited to participate in the Time with Young Disciples where the kids have an opportunity to engage the text through the children’s sermon. Immediately following Time with Young Disciples, the younger children (3 years old through 3rd grade) gather for Children’s Worship, where the youngsters sing praise to God, hear the stories of God, pray together and respond to God’s word creatively. Children’s Worship is designed to help the kiddos understand what worship is about. Our Sunday Christian Education time gathers at 10:15 a.m. at various locations depending upon age group. Lanai Mills, Deborah Rosen and Stephanie Gerlach teach the elementary ages in a one-room class format with the PC(USA) curriculum, “Growing in Grace and Gratitude.” Our youth meet at the same time in the youth room, led by interim Youth Director, Kyle Harding through June 2019 and our new Minister of Faith Formation, Chris McKee, who started July 1, 2019. The youth discussion usually centers upon the focal text in worship. FPC’s Adult Sunday School meet weekly. There are over ten adult small groups to choose meeting at various times throughout the week. Please contact the Elder of Adult Education, Karen Rudin for further information on adult programming.



### Children’s Ministry Highlights

- Easter Egg Hunt and Crafts
- Bible Presentation: September 22, 2019 to Penelope and Adalyn Sitzler
- Pumpkin Patch, Vertuccio Farm’s Fall Festival, October 19, 2019
- Christmas Pageant

### Wednesday WRAP

WRAP continues to meet from 5:00-7:00 p.m. in six week blocks during the school year on Wednesdays. WRAP provides a mid-week opportunity for Christian Education, fellowship, food and fun for children, youth and adults. Choir rehearsal opportunities were available for our children and youth. Our fall 2019 programming highlighted stories in Genesis (Creation, Noah, Abraham, Jacob and Joseph). We concluded 2019 by exploring some of the Fruits of the Spirit (Love, Generosity, Peace, Honesty, Forgiveness and Joy). WRAP consist of young elementary, older elementary, youth and adult class options.

### Youth & Young Adult

FPC has a very active and vital youth ministry, which strives to keep a healthy balance of Bible study, extracurricular activities and service. Our youth gather on Sunday mornings, Wednesday evenings and other times throughout the year as they grew together in faith.

### Our 2019 Youth highlights included:

- Youth led worship service in April,
- Attended Montlure Presbyterian Camp
- Helped with the Montlure Traveling Day Camp, along with various East Valley congregations.
- Will and Tanya Snitzer attended Youth Triennium last July at Purdue University.





- Activities included: scavenger hunt, laser tag, rock climbing, coffee runs, Christmas Party
- Assisted with Mark Ramsey's 25 Anniversary Dinner
- Young Adult Escape Room Trip
- Volunteered at Midwest Food Bank

### Looking Ahead at 2020

- Youth Confirmation class begins on Sunday February 2, 2020, using the new Presbyterian program, "Big God Big Questions."
- Youth Sunday Worship, April 19, 2020
- FPC will host Montlure Traveling Day Camp June 21-26.
- Montlure Overnight Camps
  - \* Senior High: June 7-12, 2020
  - \* Junior High: June 14-19, 2020
  - \* Juniors (elementary): July 5-9, 2020



### Youth Notes —

**Confirmation Class Starting!** Confirmation is starting on **Sunday February 2nd, at 1:00 p.m.** We will meet on select Sunday afternoons for 12 sessions using the new Presbyterian USA curriculum "Big God Big Questions." We will confirm the confirmands on Pentecost Sunday, May 31st. Please email Chris McKee to have your youth included. [Chris@fpcmesa.org](mailto:Chris@fpcmesa.org)

**Souper Bowl of Caring Collection.** Our youth will be collecting funds for the Souper Bowl of Caring on Sunday, February 2nd, following worship.

**Miniature Golf!** Join us for an afternoon of miniature golf at Golfland on February 9th at 1:15 p.m.. Permission forms are now available.

### Preschool Annual Report 2020

We truly feel blessed with our preschool as we look back at what 2019 has given us!

At the end of the school year in May 2019, there were 34 kids enrolled. By the start of the 2019-2020 school year in August we had 31 children enrolled, our highest number on the first day of school yet! As of the end of December 2019, there are 32 kids enrolled. We had four children leave the program by the end of December because parents moved or got full-time jobs that took them away from our part-time program. However, we did enroll five new children during this time. We are working with the Preschool Board to devise a plan for the next school year to consider what the needs truly are for our program and families. Speaking of the Preschool Board, we want to thank all of our representatives who sit on the board: Ginny Mallia (Chair),

Stephanie Gerlach, Pam Godfrey-Robles, Nicki McInnelly, Chris McKee, Bonnie Castillo (parent rep), and Anita Ramsey.

At the end of the 2018-2019 school year, we said goodbye to Ms. Debbie Warneke and wished her well. Over the summer we hired a new teacher, Chantal Howell. We discovered the great partnership in the 3-year-old class that Ms. Sara Wheat and Ms. Chantal Howell are building! They make a great team! The children enjoy the calm friendship and professionalism that they share together in the classroom with the children. It's a lot of fun to watch!

We started out 2019 getting ready for the unannounced Quality First Assessment review at the Preschool in the spring. The window opened for our assessment, and we waited each day for the process to begin. It was stressful at times but in the end, our preschool team pulled off another high score and earned the 4-Star Quality Plus distinction again! This distinction is a state-wide level of quality recognition that is very challenging to accomplish. I am so proud of our team and the hard work and dedication that the teachers gave to the process and continue to give every single day! Congratulations Nicki McInnelly, Kristy Biggs, Sara Wheat and Rachelle Schuster! Additionally, we are working with our Quality First Health Nurse Consultant to train three of our staff to be Health & Safety Specialists on site. This training series takes a year to accomplish, and we have already got a good start on it!







Our funding from the Quality First Grant was maintained at 10 full-time scholarships, which can serve up to 20 children. The 2018-2019 school year was pretty consistent with our enrollment, and we were able to keep the scholarship slots full. The 2019-2020 school year so far has been a challenge to fill and maintain attendance for all of the Scholarship slots that we have. We continue to seek out those that are qualified and will be able to meet the attendance requirement.

There have been a few exciting physical changes around the preschool as well. We are pleased to announce that we were able to install ceramic tile throughout both classrooms, which brought a fresh look and modernized feel. We were able to share the cost through the use of the Quality First Incentive funds as part of our participation in the Quality First program. It is a refreshing feeling to see the improvements and know that our children and families will be able to enjoy the benefits of that for a long time!

This summer FPC welcomed Mr. Chris McKee as the Minister of Faith Formation. He is also here to help share the love of God with the families during chapel time. We love the creativity that he brings to the children during each sermon! He encourages the children to grow in their faith and love of God each and every week. He is a natural fit with Pastor Ann Conklin and Dr. Mark Ramsey. He is a huge blessing! Speaking of Mr. Mark, we continue to rejoice and sing praises to God when Mark shares his talents each week with us at chapel. He shares his great musical talents with us and the kids really enjoy it!



The energy that we foster with these children is unmeasurable!



As we look forward to 2020, we are hopeful that the Lord will continue to bless us by bringing the children of this community to our program. We know that God has good things in store for all of us. We know that He is present in all that we do here, especially in the hearts of these

little children!

Lastly, we appreciate all of your love and your willingness to continue to make the Preschool a ministry of the church. We recognize that you are an integral part to the success of our program, especially through prayer and with the school supply drive in the summer each year! Thank you!

We are very blessed and know that God has so much in store for these children, families and the staff that work with them.

Respectfully submitted,  
Shiloh Murillo, Director



*FPC Preschool Class of 2024*



## FELLOWSHIP

Fellowship (E) (Chair) — Dennis Sitzler  
Cards (D) — Gretchen Frederick  
Transportation (D) — Steve Muth

Fellowship Deacon — Jennifer Martin  
Fellowship Deacon — Todd Ramsey  
Older Adult (E) — Dave Jurgensen

Moderator (D) – Jack Oliver  
Liaison (D) – Jan Montgomery  
Presbyterian Women — Suzanne Engman

### Fellowship Commission Annual Report Submitted by: Dennis Sitzler, Fellowship Elder

The Fellowship Commission puts on, or assists with, many social activities during the year. This provides opportunities for our congregation to enjoy each others' company and provides some fun events to attend. This also encourages our congregation members to invite their friends to come and meet our church family, while having fun participating in the events with us. We encourage everyone to wear NAME BADGES, which we provide upon request, so everyone can easily know/learn each others' names. We also coordinate Coffee Hosts & Baked Goodies teams which provide refreshments during Coffee Time after first service each Sunday in Fellowship Hall.

- Fellowship sponsored a “Chili Cook-off” dinner in conjunction with the Annual Congregational Meeting February 24th.
- Fellowship worked as dinner preparers/servers/cleanup during the three dinner theater plays put on by the First Players - March 22nd, 23rd and 24th
- Fellowship held a BBQ following the Worship in the Courtyard – April 14th.
- Fellowship sponsored an Ice Cream Social with Vintage Rocket as our musical entertainment August 25th.
- Fellowship sponsored a Faith and Family Night event with the Arizona Diamondbacks – September 13th.



### Fellowship Plans for the future

Your Fellowship Commission members are busy making plans for the events we'll hold in 2020:



- The annual Chili Cook-off Dinner will be held in conjunction with the Congregation Annual Meeting February 23rd. Contestants compete for prizes for the best chili.
- We will assist with the Dinner Theater on March 27th thru the 29th.
- We will have a BBQ following “Worship in the Courtyard” on April 5th.
- We are looking at sponsoring another Faith and Family night with the Arizona Diamondbacks on August 21st. They will be playing the San Francisco Giants.
- We are planning a Feather Party (Bingo) in November before Thanksgiving.
- We are planning a Gingerbread House contest late November or early December.

LOTS of fun events will be happening at your church this year. Are there other events that you would like to see us sponsor this year? If so, LET US KNOW. New ideas are welcomed and needed. We are always looking for new events to provide an opportunity for our congregation and their friends to get together, socialize, and have some fun in the name of our Lord Jesus!

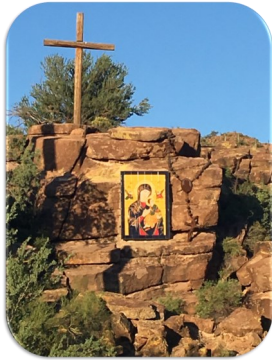
# FELLOWSHIP



Presbyterian Women of FPC Mesa is comprised of four circles, a coordinating team and a total membership of 50+ women. Throughout the year we participate in different missions, come together for Bible study, enjoy the fellowship of different gatherings and support each other in concerns and joys.



Pastor Amy Poling Sutherlun, the author of our Bible Study for the 2018-2019 year, was our guest pastor for Women's Gifts Sunday, on March 3rd. Sue Eisenklam was awarded the Honorary Life Membership for 2019. Thank you, Sue, for all you do throughout the year.



Susan Durand and Suzanne Engman attended the PW Synod Triennial Gathering on October 4-6, at the Redemption Center, in Tucson. A wonderful time in a beautiful retreat center surrounded by mountains, while joining together in fellowship, workshops, music and prayer.

Grace Groups (Sewing fellowship time): The ladies made baby gifts for church members, Belles's dresses for the play, "Beauty and the Beast," a stole for Pastor Ann and personalized pillowcases to children affected by Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico. They also contributed two Christmas Banners to the Church's holiday decorations and assisted in the Communion Banner.



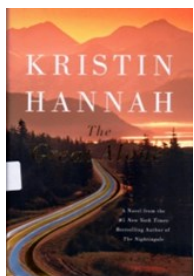
The PW Holiday Bake Sale was a success again, not only in funds, but in fellowship and fun. Thank you from all the Presbyterian Women for your baking, buying and donations. This enables us to continue with our mission work in the upcoming year.



The Holiday Luncheon was a time of enjoying each other's company with special salads and desserts, while hearing from our guest speaker Carol Main. Carol is our 2019 Synod USA Mission Experience representative, who went with a group to Finger Lakes Region, New York; "Standing on the Shoulders of Empowered Women."



Books from the 2019-20 reading list are on the PW shelf in the library.



***The Great Alone*** by Kristin Hannah

Thirteen-year-old Leni Allbright's volatile father, Ernt, moves the family to Alaska, where he believes they will live off the land and prosper. Totally unprepared for life in the wilderness, the family survives with the help of neighbors until Ernt's mental state puts Leni and her mother in danger for their lives.



## MISSION

Mission (E) (Chair) — Shelley Cronenberg  
Pastor – Ann Conklin  
Hunger Action (D) — Sandra Clark  
Assimilation (D) — Alice Schlak

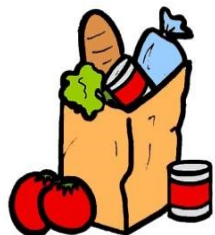
Fellowship (D) – Carol Strouse  
Seasonal Ministries (D) — Dale Gibson  
Mission (D) – Sue Eisenklam

### Mission Commission Annual Report Submitted by: Shelley Cronenberg, Mission Elder

#### Assimilation

There were two new member classes in 2019. There were three new members in May. Four more became part of our congregation in November for a total of seven new members in 2019.

#### Food Pantry



The Food Pantry has averaged approximately 36 bags of food per week. Since we were closed for three weeks this year, we distributed 49 weeks for a total of 1,788 bags. In addition to the 1,788, another 124 miscellaneous bags were distributed for a total of 1,912 bags. Each bag is valued at \$32 for a total value of \$57,216.00. We served 7,059 people in 1,498 households. The dollar value of United Food Bank contribution was \$30,272.84. The dollar value of what the congregation gave was \$26,943.16 for a total of \$57,216.00 in contributions. The Food Pantry was blessed to move into a larger room. It was designed for efficiency and organization, by Ben Gerlach for his Eagle Scout project. We thank him for a beautiful facility. We continue to need canned meats, pasta and snacks. We do not need canned fruits and vegetables at this time.

#### I Help

For the year 2018, FPC volunteers have hosted 20-25 women two Sundays per month (approximately 25 volunteer hours per week). This includes dinner, showers, a safe place to sleep, movies, sack lunch for the next day and a full breakfast on Monday mornings. Janet Verch, the program coordinator, attends the church sponsor meetings every other month (with Lutheran Social Services), where they discuss what works best and how to improve the program at each site. Also, a huge thank you to Paul Harding for picking up the I-Help laundry Monday mornings for 10 years!

#### Seasonal Ministry

Angel Tree: We sponsored three families this year. Two families were from the FPC Preschool. One family was from the FPC neighborhood. As is our tradition, we provided gifts for each family member, as well as a holiday meal, other food stuffs and an assortment of household and personal items.



#### Mission Co-Workers

Our mission co-workers, Rev. Mark Adams and Miriam Maldonado Escobar, are our mission co-workers with Frontero de Cristo with whom we have partnered. Their ministry sits on the US/Mexico border in Agua Prieta. To summarize their ministry, the Presbyterian Mission website states it best “In his role as U.S. coordinator of the binational ministry Frontera de Cristo, Mark partners with Rev. Angel Valencia of the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico in coordinating the six ministry areas of Frontera de Cristo: church development, health, family counseling, the New Hope Community Center, mission education, and the Just Trade Center. Miriam connects people and organizations across borders and serves as a liaison of Frontera de Cristo with the Center for Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation and Recuperation (CRREDA in Spanish), DouglaPrieta Trabaja, and the Lirio de los Valles Presbyterian Church. She works with DouglaPrieta to help the community, schools, rehabilitation centers and families of the church grow their own food, increasing their nutrition possibilities and connection with God’s creation and one another.” (<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/the-rev-mark-adams-and-miriam-maldonado-escobar/>)

**Special Offerings** –Thank you for your continued generosity!

- ***One Great Hour of Sharing:*** Giving was \$2,763.96.
- ***Pentecost Offering:*** Giving was \$1,150.00 with \$288.00 going toward the FPC Mission Trip account and \$288.00 going to the Youth Triennium account.
- ***Global Peace and Witness Offering:*** Giving was \$1,630.00 with \$203.75 going to the work of our mission partners Rev. Mark Adams and Miriam Maldonado Escobar and the people at the U.S.-Mexico Border and \$203.75 going to A New Leaf Mesa for domestic violence programs.
- ***Christmas Joy Offering:*** Giving was \$1,851.00.

### **Mission Trip**

In March ten participants (four youth and six adults) crossed the border to go to Frontera de Cristo ministries in Aqua Prieta, Mexico. There, they listened to stories, built relationships and were there in a ministry of presence. Joca Gallegos, the coordinator of delegations, introduced them to and guided them through experiences with: CAME, the hospitality center, Café Justo ministry, CREDDA, the drug rehabilitation program, the Children’s Enrichment Center, the Borders Prayer Vigil and daily Biblical reflections related to the experiences. The delegation also visited the homes of a church member and of FPC mission partners Mark Adams and Miriam Esquibel Maldonado and their children. The team had an opportunity to experience what it must be like to live on the salaries of factory workers through a team shopping activity. Building relationships and gaining an understanding of the realities of life with our brothers and sisters at the border, the delegation team was able to come back and share those experiences with the congregation and with the Presbyterian Women, giving presentations to both.



### **Peacemaker Visit**

International Peacemaker, Thang Van Lian, was the keynote speaker in FPC’s Fellowship Hall on September 24th. He was able to share his experience growing up in Myanmar. He spoke about the Rohingya crisis, the current civil war on ethnic minority groups, the silence of the Myanmar churches and what a faithful response of Christians and the Christian church might look like to a humanitarian crisis such as the one being faced in Myanmar today. He also shared the current peace, justice and development work of the Presbyterian Church of Myanmar.

### **Taylor Junior High Coat Drive**

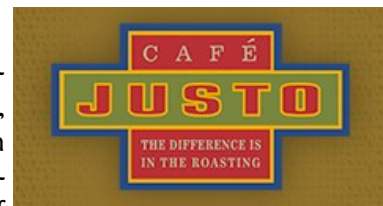
FPC had a drive for new and gently used coats for Taylor Junior High students. This drive was near and dear to FPC member Heather McKee who works at Taylor Junior High. Approximately 30 coats were donated. Thank you all who donated for this wonderful event.

### **Mesa Love Your City Day**

Mesa Love Your City Day (previously Mesa Make a Difference Day) was officially on Saturday, September 28th, but FPC had two days of participating. On Saturday, September 21st, volunteers gathered in Fellowship Hall to stuff bags with information about Mesa’s resources. Then the next weekend on Saturday, September 28th, volunteers gathered to hang the bags on house doors in a designated neighborhood. Thank you to all who participated!

### **Café Justo**

FPC supported one of the ministries of Frontera de Cristo where our mission co-workers serve. The ministry of Café Justo is a non-political, humane, Christian way to address immigration issues at their roots. By buying coffee from them, we not only get great coffee, but we help coffee growers to have a sustainable way to live and help their communities. We, together, bought 161 bags of coffee with all the proceeds going back to the cooperative of Café Justo. We plan to continue to have coffee sales quarterly.



## ADMINISTRATION

Property (E) (Chair) — Robert Harding  
Clerk of Session — Carol Gerlach  
Personnel (E) — Jeanne Partida

Personnel (D) — Carol Anderson  
Nominating (E) — Barbara Walker

Nominating (D) — Michael Gerlach  
Stewardship/Finance (E) — Brent Gregory

### Administration Commission Annual Report

ADMINISTRATION is the business arm of the church and includes Property (President of the Corporation), Clerk of Session (Corporation Secretary), Stewardship and Finance (Corporation Treasurer), Nominating Committee and Personnel Committee.

#### PROPERTY

During 2019, Property brought to the Administration Committee these concerns and needs of the church. Property addressed upgrades to our campus, specifically the Parlor, the Youth Room, the Library, moving the Christian Education office, and the Food Pantry. Property also reduced our Gas usage by eliminating gas lines, and replacing AC/Heating with electric. To prevent potential damage, trees were removed. We have upgraded Wi-Fi, and our server for the office, and our campus. We are currently taking on security concerns with changing doors and adding security cameras. We are also continuing to rectify our Sanctuary Roof issue. Property is committed to make our campus safe, efficient, and functional.

Robert Harding



#### CLERK OF SESSION

During 2019 Session met for ten Stated meetings, one Called meeting and met for the Annual Officer/ Staff Retreat in August. We began 2019 with 276 members, welcomed eight new members and transferred one member to another church. Six members joined the Church Triumphant. Our membership as of December 31, 2019, is 277.

Carol Gerlach

#### NOMINATING

Our committee is made up of the following persons: Hal Engman, Tammy Miller, Anita Ramsey, Allan Schultz, Helen Thielke and Barbara Walker. We have almost completed the slate of officers, elders and deacons who will begin their work in June of this year. When there is a resignation, it is our duty to fill the position. Please keep our committee in your prayers as it chooses persons willing to serve in the various capacities.

Barbara Walker

#### STEWARDSHIP AND FINANCE

The members of the Finance Committee are Stewardship and Finance Elder Brent Gregory, Property Elder Robert Harding, Clerk of Session Carol Gerlach, Endowment Committee chair Jack Gunter, and at-large members Peter Eisenklam, Bob Gerlach, Jan Montgomery, and Sam Thielke. Pastor Ann Conklin and bookkeeper Rob Kjar also attend meetings. The committee met monthly to review the church's financial reports and has undertaken the following actions in 2019:

Brent Gregory

- Recommended the 2019 budget to the Session
- Completed a financial audit for the year ending 12/31/2018.
- Recommended a Financial Peace University class be offered to the congregation.
- Completed a successful stewardship campaign with pledges totaling \$303,300 for the general fund and \$20,466 for the capital fund.



## MESA PRESBYTERIAN MINISTRIES

Mesa Presbyterian Ministries is a qualified charitable organization with the mission to keep families in their homes. Congregational members Bob Gerlach, Jane Potyka, Jack and Yvonne Oliver, and Brent Gregory volunteer to call, meet, and interview clients who need help paying their rent and utilities. Over one hundred families received assistance from MPM in 2019.



## ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

The members of the Endowment Committee are Dave Frederick, Jack Gunter, Renita Jurgensen, Ron Payton, and Skeets Throckmorton, with Brent Gregory, Stewardship and Finance Elder serving as an ex-officio member. The committee met twice during 2019 and has undertaken the following actions:

- Continued oversight of the Endowment Funds investment with a 2019 beginning balance of \$285,423.03 and of a year-end balance of \$407,409.49.
- Received a gift of \$3,675.00 to invest in the Montlure Fund in addition to \$2,325.00 used for camp scholarships during the summer of 2019. A gift of \$57,870.00 was received and evenly divided between the Worship Arts Fund and the newly created Education Fund.
- Disbursed \$1,838.35 for new metal doors for the Youth Room and the Youth Room Office and \$1,278.43 for a new Christmas tree for the Sanctuary.
- Continued to interpret the endowment concept to the congregation through the Endowment Funds brochure and a Minute for Mission.

**Brent Gregory**

## PERSONNEL

The Personnel Committee consists of Personnel Elder Jeanne Partida, Personnel Deacon Carol Anderson, and three at-large members Brent Gregory, Renita Jurgensen and Susan McMichael. The committee took the following actions this year: Interviewed and hired Chris McKee for the position of Minister of Faith Formation, conducted annual reviews for all FPC staff, recognized Linda Reeves for her service as Office Manager and coordinated the 25th Anniversary Celebration of Dr. Mark Ramsey's Music ministry at FPC. Our church is blessed with a wonderful staff, and we ask for your continued prayers and support as we move forward in 2020.

**Jeanne Partida**



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## THE FIRST PLAYERS' 24TH ANNUAL PRODUCTION

Dinner-Theaters March 27-29 (Friday-Sunday)

Tickets & Show Info: [fpcmesa.org/firstplayers](http://fpcmesa.org/firstplayers)



The "Greatest Movie Musical of All Time" is faithfully and lovingly adapted by Broadway legends, Betty Comden, and Adolph Green, from their original award-winning screenplay in *Singin' in the Rain*. Each unforgettable scene, song and dance is accounted for, including the show-stopping title number, complete with an onstage rainstorm! Hilarious situations, snappy dialogue and a hit-parade score of Hollywood standards make *Singin' in the Rain* the perfect entertainment for any fan of the golden age of movie musicals. *Singin' in the Rain* has all the makings of a Tinseltown tabloid headline – the starlet, the leading man and a love affair that could change lives and make or break careers! In silent movies, Don Lockwood and Lina Lamont are a hot item, but, behind the scenes, things aren't always as they appear on the big screen! Meanwhile, Lina's squeaky voice might be the end of her career in "talking

pictures" without the help of a talented young actress to do the talking and singing for her.

## DEACONS

Co-Moderator — Jack Oliver  
Co-Moderator — Jan Montgomery  
Transportation — Steve Muth  
Fellowship — Todd Ramsey  
Seasonal Ministries — Dale Gibson  
Worship — David Miller

Personnel — Carol Anderson  
Nominating — Michael Gerlach  
Fellowship — Jennifer Martin  
Prayer Chain — Joy Schulz  
Funerals/Memorials—Renita Jurgensen

Fellowship — Carol Strouse  
Cards — Gretchen Frederick  
Fellowship — Anita Ramsey  
Contact Lists — Jan Montgomery  
Assimilation — Alice Schlak  
Mission --- Sue Eisenklam

### Annual Report: Deacons

In this past year Jack Oliver and Jan Montgomery (Co-Moderators) have been working with the Deacons to create an atmosphere of connectivity. We have encouraged the Deacons to work with one another in supporting our congregation. We continue to stress how important it is to be visible to members and visitors by introducing ourselves to individuals not known to us and to be praying for our “flocks.” Each Deacon has a “flock” to watch over and pray for throughout the year. These “flocks” (lists) may change throughout the year due to change or shift in membership rolls of the church.

The Deacons are responsible for flower delivery by following a schedule set up at the first of the year.

Jan has made “business” cards for each Deacon with their contact info to hand out to visitors and/or members, which has proved to be a valuable tool.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jack Oliver Moderator  
Jan Montgomery Co-moderator



Wow! This was a bad one! Please know that your prayers and cards help a weakened body heal faster.

Many thanks to all of you and special love to my daughter, Kelly, who was an angel to nurse me back to health. We are blessed by God.

~ Sandra Clark

Dear members and friends of FPC Mesa,

Thank you for your prayers, cards and calls during my hospital stay and recovery last month. It is a blessing to know your love and concern. God has been good to me, and I am doing much better. It is a blessing to be a part of such a loving and serving community.

~ Laura Bruening

## February Birthdays



Peggy Anderson	1st
Patty Carnes	1st
Will Snitzer	2nd
Jean Chappell	9th
Isobel Letizia	9th
Aaron Chesko	10th
Ginny Mallia	11th
Garrett Hull	12th
Kate Buck	14th
Cortney Bever	15th
John Peterson	15th
Bob Schulz	15th
John Goings, Jr.	16th
Brock Hoyman	16th
Richard Schroeder	19th
Bryan Hickey	25th
Elly Weinel	26th
Lee Tobey	27th
Linda Free	28th

**Editor's Note:** If your birthday is missing or we have the wrong date, please call the office so we can update our records. We wish a special day to anyone we have missed.



## ADDRESS CHANGES/CORRECTIONS

Buck, Kate 10501 E. Natal Ave Mesa AZ 85209	Couillard, John 2208 W Lindner Ave. #10 Mesa, AZ 85202
Cline, Caroline 6945 E. Main St., #3338 Mesa, AZ 85207 602-818-7557	Preston, Cary 7311 E. Oasis St., #115 Mesa, AZ 85207 480-677-9254

### Calendar Notes

#### February 2

Souper Bowl of Caring

#### February 3

Deacons meet

#### February 10 & 11

Circles meet

#### February 14

Happy Valentine's Day!

#### February 16

Commissions & Session meet

#### February 17

President's Day — Office Closed

#### February 23

Monthly Food Drive  
Chili Cook Off  
Annual Congregational Meeting

#### February 26

Ash Wednesday

Financial Reports are not published but are available for pick up at the kiosk or church office beginning February 9th.



# SCENES FROM 2019!



FREE LATTE! 11AM SUNDAYS  
**HolyGrounds**  
Small, Intimate Worship



 SPECIAL OFFERINGS

*First Presbyterian Church  
161 N. Mesa Drive  
Mesa, AZ 85201*

See calendar on website:  
<http://www.fpcmesa.org/about-us/current-events>

**LA PALABRA**

**A publication for members and friends, published monthly.**

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Mesa, AZ 85201**

**Phone: 480-964-8606**

**E-mail: [pubs@fpcmesa.org](mailto:pubs@fpcmesa.org)**

**Website: [www.fpcmesa.org](http://www.fpcmesa.org)**

**Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.**

**Friday 8:30 - 12:00 noon**

**Ann Conklin, Pastor  
Mark Ramsey, Director of Music Ministries  
Chris McKee, Minister of Faith Formation  
Linda Reeves, Office Manager/Publications  
Shiloh Murillo, Preschool Director  
Don Krill, Buildings Supervisor  
Rob Kjar, Bookkeeper  
James R. Bruening, Pastor Emeritus**