

La Palabra

January 2016

www.fpcmesa.org

480-964-8606

A Message from Lois

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.” John 3:16-17

Jesus was the first missionary in the kingdom of God. Out of love for the people of the world, God sent Jesus to live among us and give Himself for us. The purpose of this mission was to reconcile us to God (having been separated by self and sin) so that we could be God’s sons and daughters.

God is a sending God. Jesus is the first missionary. Christmas was the launch of the mission after years of preparation. God is still a sending God. All followers of Jesus are called to be missionaries. Being a missionary is not optional. It is the essence of following Jesus.

After conquering death and the grave, what is the first thing the risen Lord said to the gathered disciples? He said, “As the Father has sent me, so I send you....receive the Holy Spirit.” The followers of Jesus are sent. Who are we sent to? The answer...Look around you...to family, neighbors, work and school, friends... and yes to strangers in your midst. You are sent to your community.

Every morning when you put your feet on the ground, your mission begins. Your life is the only Bible many will ever read. To truly have life... it has to be more than about you. True life is found when it is given away in God’s mission.

I believe the Holy Spirit is calling FPC (remember: a church is its people not a place) and sending us to live the Gospel in our communities. Do you accept the mission? If not, what is your mission? Christmas was a decisive move by God to send Jesus into the community as a necessary prelude to sending us.

“And the Word became flesh and lived among us,”
John 1:14

*Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born,
And God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn.
Go, tell it on the mountain over the hills and everywhere;
Go, tell it on the mountain over the hills and everywhere
That Jesus Christ is born!*

**Please plan to join me for a Prayer Walk on
January 1st at 10:00 a.m. here at the church.**

Blessings...Lois

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WORSHIP

Dir. of Music (Chair) — Mark Ramsey
Worship (E) — Nate Robinson
Prayer Chain (D) — Bev Goff

Funerals/Memorials (D) — Karyn Weaver
Worship (D) — Carol Webster

Mark's Remarks

(480) 964-8606, EXT. 103; MUSIC@FPCMESA.ORG

“The final aim and reason of all music is nothing other than the glorification of God and the refreshment of the spirit.” - Johann Sebastian Bach

Announcements

The First Players will presented their 20th annual production, *Mary Poppins*, this April! Tickets are already on sale online at fpcmesa.org, and they will be available in the Church Office beginning March 1st. This year, the First Players will be raising funds to replace the stage front drape, which no longer has a fireproof rating. The Players plan to purchase a burgundy drape to match the existing Hall curtains, and half of the funds have been received. The remainder will be raised via ticket sales and program ad sales. Ad sale forms are available in the Church Office and on the “First Players” page of our church website (see the “Worship” drop-down menu). Our *Mary Poppins* production cast will include Kate Buck as “Mary Poppins,” Brooks Newbry as “Bert,” John Couillard as George Banks, Joy Schulz as Winifred Banks, Tanya Snitzer as “Jane,” and Carter Buck as “Michael.”



Artist Series Soprano Marcia Whitehead will offer special music for both worship services on Sunday, February 28th. Marcia’s ministry, “Embraced By God – Sometimes The Journey Is The Destination” is an honest reflection on the highs, the lows, the heartaches, the brokenness and the triumphs of taking a risk and following a calling from God. “Embraced By God” tells the story of Marcia’s pursuit of her calling to sing, including some unexpected turns as her dream of a professional career in music detours and finds her living a life she would never have imagined. You will be challenged, encouraged, and inspired by this multi-media worship experience as Marcia shares her journey of faith and how her dreams of success are redefined and reshaped as she learns to lean into and accept the embrace of God.

Coming Events

- February 27 (Saturday), 7:00 p.m., Mesa Interfaith Chorale Festival, St. Luke's Lutheran Church, 807 N. Stapley Dr., Mesa, FPC Sanctuary Choir, Grace United Methodist Church Chancel Choir, St. Luke Lutheran Church Chancel Choir, Mesa North Stake Choir
- February 28 (Sunday), 9:00 & 11:30 a.m., Artist Series: Marcia Whitehead, Soprano
- Palm Sunday, March 20, 9:00 a.m., Théodore Dubois’ “The Seven Last Words of Christ,” presented by our Sanctuary Choir
- April 1, 2, 8, 9 (Fridays & Saturdays) Dinner-Theater, First Players Community Theater 20th Annual Production, *Mary Poppins*. Tickets are now available online and will be available in the Church Office beginning March 1st.

Humoresque

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

An old geezer became very bored in retirement and decided to open a medical clinic. He put a sign up outside that said: "Dr.Geezer's clinic. Get your treatment for \$500, if not cured, get back \$1,000." Doctor "Young," who was positive that this old geezer didn't know beans about medicine, thought this would be a great opportunity to get \$1,000. So he went to Dr.Geezer's clinic. Dr. Young: "Dr.Geezer, I have lost all taste in my mouth. Can you please help me?" Dr. Geezer: "Nurse, please bring medicine from box 22 and put 3 drops in Dr. Young's mouth." Dr. Young: Aaagh !! -- "This is Gasoline!" Dr. Geezer: "Congratulations! You've got your taste back. That will be \$500." Dr. Young gets annoyed and goes back after a couple of days figuring to recover his money. Dr. Young: "I have lost my memory, I cannot remember anything." Dr. Geezer: "Nurse, please bring medicine from box 22 and put 3 drops in the patient's mouth." Dr. Young: "Oh, no you don't, -- that is Gasoline!" Dr. Geezer: "Congratulations! You've got your memory back. That will be \$500." Dr. Young (after having lost \$1000) leaves angrily and comes back after several more days. Dr. Young: "My eyesight has become weak --- I can hardly see anything!!!! Dr. Geezer: "Well, I don't have any medicine for that so, " Here's your \$1000 back" (giving him a \$10 bill). Dr. Young: "But this is only \$10! Dr. Geezer: "Congratulations! You got your vision back! That will be \$500." *Moral of story -- Just because you're "Young", it doesn't mean that you can outsmart an "old Geezer".* [from Norma Anweiler]

DISCIPLESHIP

Director of C.E. — Jasmine Couillard
Adult (E) — Martha Bienert

Children's Ministries (E) — Anita Ramsey
Family Ministries (E) — Alice Schlak

Youth/Young Adult (E) — Jennifer Martin
Youth Elder — Dylan Hickey

Wednesday WRAP meets weekly in Fellowship Hall from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. Join us for fellowship, music, dinner, Bible Study and more. The themes this month are:

January 6 – Circus
January 13 – Beach Party
January 20 – Western Ho Down
January 27 – Tie Dye



Happy New Year from our little preschool! We hope that you and your family were able to celebrate the grace of our Lord's birth together. It has been a beautiful time for us to share our joy with you and the families of the preschool. We were able to bring Mrs. Claus in to read the story of Jesus' birth the children for chapel and have a pajama party, too! It's been fun.

We would like to say thank you to Pastor Lois for all that she has done for our Preschool! We love what she brings to this community, and we look forward to celebrating Chapel together with the children of the preschool for the remainder of the school year. We also want to give a special thank you to Mr. Mark Ramsey for all that he does to make each chapel ring with beautiful music. It makes our little voices sound so full!

This month we will be learning about Outer Space, Transportation, Community Helpers and the Ocean. If you would like to come and share how you contribute to our community, please let me know. We would love to have you as our guests! We are also underway with the remodel of the playground bathrooms. They should be completed very soon. Thank you to the Finance committee and Commission for making this dream a reality this year!

We want to thank all of the families for their sweet gifts that helped to make the teachers feel special. We feel blessed to have such a wonderful community here at FPC. We love being with all of you!

Sincerely,
Shiloh Murillo, Director

FELLOWSHIP

Fellowship (E) (Chair) — Dan Davenport
Cards (D) — Gretchen Frederick
Older Adult (E) — Steve Muth

Transportation (D) — Doug McInelly
Parish Deacon 1 — Mark Waters
Parish Deacon 2 — Suzanne Engman
Parish Deacon 3 — Dale Gibson

Parish Deacon 4 — Erin Skarphol
Parish Deacon 5 — Heidi Blincoe
Presbyterian Women — Susan McMichael

As part of a larger network of Presbyterian Women nationwide, PW Circles use the Horizons Study Guide, *Come to the Waters*, for the basis of their 2015-16 Bible study. The rich imagery of water throughout the Bible helps us understand and articulate our faith.



Four circles meet monthly and welcome new members:

- ❖ Eve Circle meets second Monday, 7:00 p.m., parlor
- ❖ Deborah Circle meets second Tuesday, 9:30 a.m., members' homes
- ❖ Lydia Circle meets second Tuesday, 12:00 noon, parlor
- ❖ Rachel Circle meets second Tuesday, 1:00 p.m., library

If you need help connecting with a circle contact Susan McMichael, 480-969-6482.

PW Coordinating Team will meet Tuesday, January 5th, at 1:00 p.m. in the library.

MINISTRY

Clerk of Session (Chair) — Linda Hayball
Property (E) — Alan Schultz
Personnel (E) — Kate Buck

Personnel (D) —
Nominating (E) — Jim Schwartzmann

Nominating (D) — Miki Newbry
Stewardship/Finance (E) — David Frederick

Stewardship Update

Did you get your pledge in? Most of you have submitted your green form. Thank you! FPC's budget is planned a year in advance by your Finance Committee. It is extremely helpful if you could let them know how much you plan to give in 2016 and the best way to do this is by filling out the green pledge card. Just let us know the amount per week, month, or year for the general and capital fund. If you wish to discuss it in person you can call me at 602-859-8046. This will help us spend the money responsibly.

RAISE THE ROOF

November's numbers are in and thanks to your generosity we have over \$106,000 in the capital fund for the roof replacement project. Remember that our goal is to raise \$250,000 by the end of 2016. This means that we have already achieved 56% of that goal. This is truly wonderful news!

Lest we become overconfident, don't forget about the General fund. This money is used to pay salaries, utilities, and repair broken things around the campus. Right now we have a YTD deficit of \$15,000. It is your continued faithful giving that will help us erase that deficit by the end of 2015. Thank you!

TAXES

As the tax year comes to an end you might wish that you could reduce your taxable income from salary and bonuses. Here are some ways an additional contribution to the church will help:

- It will assist FPC with our mission work.
- It will increase our endowment fund for long-term projects.
- It will help pay the amount that the Presbytery charges FPC for being part of the Presbyterian church. This per-capita assessment is now \$34.

Have a joyous Christmas and a prosperous year!

David Frederick, Stewardship Elder

MISSION

Pastor (Chair) — Lois Hildenbrand
Mission (E) — Sue Eisenklam
Hunger Action (D) — Sandra Clark

Assimilation (D) — Scot Logan
Evangelism (E) — Bill Anderson

Seasonal Ministries (D) — Darlene Sitzler
Mesa Presbyterian Ministries (D) — Jane Potyka

Uncharted Waters

When I tried to write this article for the La Palabra I was coming from my head. After about one and a half hours, I knew I needed to walk away. I prayed more about it and trusted I would get the thoughts and words if I gave it to God. He apparently wanted my attention, as is often the case, at 3:30 in the morning. I got two things. Share my testimony and “uncharted waters.” As the new Mission Elder praying for direction in leading our church to examine, perhaps even rethink our mission and practices, I do find myself in “uncharted waters.” Sure, others have served in this capacity before me, but I want to be open to where the Holy Spirit is leading us now.

I grew up in the Presbyterian Church in Franklin, Pennsylvania. I was actively involved in the Youth group. It was my relationship with the church that helped me survive the turmoil of my blended family. I had images cross my mind of being a missionary. I thought about serving in the Peace Corps. That required a college education. We had limited resources and I couldn't wait to leave home. I decided to join the military, serve my country and see the world. I served three and a half years in the Marine Corps. While I didn't see the world, I did get the GI Bill which allowed me to ultimately get my education. I got married at nineteen and over the next few years had two children, six years apart. I became absorbed in the secular world with no church involvement for many years. There were two or three years in my early thirties that I went back to church but then drifted away again. I was caught up in life, running the show, doing what I thought was right most of the time, not being honest with myself when I wasn't. I never lost my belief in God. I just lost my way. Then eight years ago in a personal struggle with food addiction, I found myself at a bottom in my life, weighing 270 pounds, helpless and hopeless. I was ready to surrender, to turn my food and my will over to God. I got help. I began to pray and meditate. Still it was another four years in my recovery/faith journey before the desire to be involved in a church again became stronger and stronger. Peter and I searched and settled at FPC Mesa.

It is here at FPC Mesa that I opened my heart to the redeeming love of Jesus Christ once again. I jumped in with both feet. First I got involved with PW Circle Bible Study. God kept leading me to service, first as Seasonal Ministries Deacon, then PW Vice- Moderator. I went to the PW Triennium Church Wide Gathering in Minneapolis this past July. I was led to take my head out of the sand of comfortably not knowing about the troubles of the world to opening my eyes to issues around: poverty, sex trafficking, violence to women and children, racism, lack of clean water and other environmental issues. Around this same time I received a call to ask if I would serve as Mission Elder. I took time to be quiet in prayer and meditation and got a very clear yes.

With no experience and a heart for mission, I have steeped myself in continued quiet time with God about where the Holy Spirit is leading me, leading us. I have been learning about all we do and have done in the area of mission. I have been reading magazine publications of *Presbyterian Today*, *Horizons*, and *Mission Crossroads*. I just finished reading a book called *Sailboat Church* by Joan S. Gray. It is a powerful book which I plan to share about with you. I have learned more about the mission work of Presbyterian Women and of the Presbyterian Mission Agency. We as a denomination have a strong presence partnering with countries to address basic needs and carrying the message in the world. I intend to share that with you as well.

I am so excited about where God is going to take us. Already we are planning a spring Habitat for Humanity event where we will be helping to rebuild a house on two different work dates in March and April. Furthermore, we have begun the process of partnering with a mission need through our Presbytery for a summer mission trip. Please join me in daily prayer inviting the Holy Spirit to fill us and guide us where God would have us serve, carrying the message of Jesus Christ, charting these waters together.

May all glory be to God!
Sue Eisenklam

January Birthdays



<i>Stephanie Gerlach</i>	<i>1st</i>
<i>Jenna Towe</i>	<i>1st</i>
<i>Elaine Weatherford</i>	<i>1st</i>
<i>Ryan Posthumus</i>	<i>2nd</i>
<i>Alyene Trimble</i>	<i>3rd</i>
<i>Robert Stickney</i>	<i>5th</i>
<i>Miron Webster</i>	<i>7th</i>
<i>Tammy Miller</i>	<i>8th</i>
<i>Joan Still-Woods</i>	<i>8th</i>
<i>Nate Robinson</i>	<i>9th</i>
<i>Kelly Woods</i>	<i>10th</i>
<i>Susan Logan</i>	<i>14th</i>
<i>Stan Snitzer</i>	<i>15th</i>
<i>Jan Montgomery</i>	<i>16th</i>
<i>Dan Davenport</i>	<i>17th</i>
<i>Helen Letizia</i>	<i>18th</i>
<i>Cameron Hee</i>	<i>20th</i>
<i>Bill Anderson</i>	<i>21st</i>
<i>Bea Towe</i>	<i>23rd</i>
<i>Laura Cone</i>	<i>25th</i>
<i>Ashlyn Newbry</i>	<i>25th</i>
<i>Alma Oberly</i>	<i>25th</i>
<i>Patricia Miller</i>	<i>26th</i>
<i>Charles Gibson</i>	<i>29th</i>
<i>David Jurgensen</i>	<i>29th</i>

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.

Calendar Notes

January 1
Happy New Year!
Prayer Walk

January 4
Office Closed

January 6
WRAP begins

January 9
Play Rehearsals begin

January 16
Western Dinner & Dance

January 11 & 12
Circles meet

January 17
Commissions & Session meet

January 31
Monthly Food Drive



IN MEMORIAM

Kay Lutman — November 19, 2015
Ruth Pomeroy — December 12, 2015



See calendar on website:

<http://www.fpcmesa.org/about-us/current-events>