

La Palabra — 2021 Annual Report Edition

February 2022

www.fpcmesa.org

480-964-8606

Annual Report for First Presbyterian Church of Mesa

A Message from David



I was not part of your amazing congregation in 2021, but from what I've seen already in 2022, I am delighted to be able to say of your church what Paul said to the Philippians: *I am confident of this, that the One who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ.*

I say that because of what I've experienced of your love for one another, your faith in God, and the sincerity of your worship. This is truly a happy place, a faithful place, a missional place ~ a place in which the Life of Christ finds expression in all that you do and say. I am honored to be part of this church family during your season of transition!

It is also appropriate to note here that we are preparing to celebrate our 75th anniversary on Palm Sunday. Those seventy-five years are not only a sign of the journey that we have shared, but of the foundation that we have laid for the future. It is both a sign of endurance, and of anticipation ~ the Lord's way of providing support for the next seventy-five years.

It is important to imagine our present celebration that way because even though churches fail and denominations falter, the sacred tradition of the Life of Christ moves triumphantly onward. It is the Spirit of the Lord who will build on the foundation that we have laid.

Seventy-five years may be a small first step by some measures of time, but it is evidence that the Lord has found us faithful, that our faith is time-tested, and that our witness is useful for all that God yet intends.

My Prayer

Thank you, Lord, for the journey, and for the destination.
Grant us the courage to be faithful, the grace to be humble,
and the resilience of spirit to be effective in all
the settings and seasons of life. In the
footsteps of our Lord we pray,
Amen

Blessings, David

INDEX

| | |
|------------------------------------|---------|
| <i>A Message from David</i> | 1 |
| <i>Worship Report</i> | 2 |
| <i>Discipleship Report</i> | 5 |
| <i>Deacons</i> | 7 |
| <i>Preschool Report</i> | 8 |
| <i>Fellowship Report</i> | 9 |
| <i>Presbyterian Women</i> | 9 |
| <i>Mission Report</i> | 10 |
| <i>Administration Report</i> | 12 |
| <i>February Birthdays</i> | 14 |
| <i>Calendar Notes</i> | 14 |
| <i>In Memoriam</i> | 14 |
| <i>Scenes from 2021</i> | 15 |
| <i>Calendar</i> | Website |

WORSHIP

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

Funerals/Memorials (D) — Renita Jurgensen
Worship (D) — Cheryl Gregory
Worship (D) – Sheilah Dye

Annual Reports 2021: Staff DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES

During 2021, our congregation came together in-person and online to lift God's light. With the superb guidance of our Church Session, highlights during our year together included:

- Preschool Chapels, with Rev. Ann, Chris McKee, and Preschool Director Shiloh Murillo
- Virtual solos and virtual/in-person choirs
- Men's Fellowship, via Zoom on Wednesday mornings
- Communion Anthem "You Are My Hiding Place," arranged by Grace Reid, daughter of Nate & Ruth Robinson. Commissioned and Sung by Soprano Jan Peterson
- Weekly Worship Planning
- Parking Lot Worship Service and Annual Meeting
- Restart of Sanctuary Choir in-person rehearsals, followed by anthem recordings
- Praise Band offered special music on Youth Sunday
- Maundy Thursday Service, including Hal Hopson's "Tenebrae: A Service of Darkness"
- Purchased new street banners for our Easter Celebrations
- Worship-Concert with Dr. Glenn Bennett and Violinist Elizabeth Wong
- Karen Rudin Music Studio Recital, online and in-person
- Officers' Retreat
- Cornerstone Gospel Quartet in worship
- Dr. Glenn Bennett directed the choir virtually or in-person once each month.
- Livestreamed our FPC Ministry Fair!
- Hosted Staff/Spouse Christmas Party
- The Gospel According to Scrooge, presented by Theatrical Ministries, Inc. Gifted by our Church Artist Series Patrons.
- Music Sunday: FPC singers, signers, ringers, and band, virtual and in-person, presenting "Celebrate the Day!"
- Setting of a poem ("The Stockings Danced") to music, for Jean Chappell
- Dei Gloriam Handbell Choir four-hour! performance for Las Noches de las Luminarias 2021 at the Desert Botanical Garden
- Candlelight Communion Services of Lessons & Carols, 5:30 & 8:00 p.m. (with live and virtual music)
- Created virtual accompaniments and edited virtual choir anthems.
- 100 year old Steinway piano received from Fran & Jack Gunter, with plans to host a concert pianist for the re-inauguration of the instrument during 2022, our 75th anniversary year!
- 24th annual theater production, Singin' in the Rain, re-scheduled for Fall 2022 (with permission to advertise after April 3, 2022!).
- New Video Worship Resources added to our church website.

We are blessed with faithful congregational participation in our music & drama ministries, and I am very thankful for each singer, ringer, signer, actor, and instrumentalist. I pray for God's richest blessings upon each of us as we continue to share in the joy of ministry and offer our gifts of worship and music. Special thanks go to each of our music groups, who have continued to share virtually and in-person: **FIRST RINGERS**, Bea Towe, Director; **HEARTS HANDS AND VOICES**, Karyn Weaver, Director; **ONE VOICE**, Anita Ramsey, Director; the **SANCTUARY CHOIR**, Bea Towe, Accompanist and Dr. Glenn Bennett, Co-Director; **DEI GLORIAM HANDBELL CHOIR**; to our **PRAISE BANDS** for providing musical leadership for our worship services: Anita Ramsey, Kevin Reeves, Karen Rudin, Erin Skarphol, Rev. Paul Soderquist, Dan Sitzler, and Sean Snitzer; and to our **SOUND/VIDEO LEADERS**, Bob Schulz and Greg Gerlach.

Respectfully Submitted, Mark Ramsey

Annual Reports 2021: 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 welcome new life, and by supporting families in times of grief. Items accomplished by the Worship Commission during 2021 included:

- Planned special worship services for Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday (virtual), and Christmas Eve (5:30 & 8:00 p.m.).
- Began a Concordia Supply subscription for our small communion chalices.
- Planned for Special Offerings during the Church Year (One Great Hour of Sharing - Easter; Pentecost; Mesa Presbyterian Ministries - World Communion Sunday; and Joy Gift - Christmas Eve) and planned for Women's Sunday, Youth Sunday, Winter Visitors Sunday, Ministry Fair, and a Season of Stewardship.
- Sanctuary pews and pew racks were restocked with worship supplies, and bookplates were offered for our Glory to God hymnals.
- Plans for our Parking Lot Service and Annual Meeting.
- Outdoor Easter Service, with in-person Bells, Choir, Band, and Organ! And, Discipleship Easter Egg Scavenger Hunt.
- Mother's Day and Father's Day Celebrations
- Sanctuary decorated with Easter Lilies and Christmas Poinsettias. Additional decorations for Pentecost, World Communion Sunday, and other seasonal services.
- Offered our old hymnals to congregation members and friends.
- Supported the families and friends of our loved ones who passed away during the past year.
- Dedicated our new Glory to God hymnals and new chancel furniture (paraments, pulpit, communion vessels, and bell table pads/covers).
- Bob & Joy Schulz repaired our decorative, wooden Christmas trees.
- Reorganized our usher teams, with plans to combine ushers and greeters.
- Plans for our annual Hymn Festival.
- Dave's Crew to repair/strengthen the Sanctuary communion table base.
- Worship Leader position to be advertised at ASU, MCC, and Hillsong.
- Glow sticks were used for our Christmas Eve services.
- A small group met to adorn our Sanctuary with Advent & Christmas Decorations.

Items for Session Approval

- Worship recommends purchasing a digital soundboard, to facilitate remote monitoring/controlling of our Sanctuary sound system - to be funded by a designated gift and the "Worship Arts Endowment" [APPROVED]
- The Worship Commission recommends approval of the following 2022 Communion days: the first Sunday of each month, excluding April, plus Maundy Thursday, Easter, and Christmas Eve. (APPROVED)
- Plans for an Easter Sunday Outdoor Service [APPROVED]
- Recommend Audio Visual Experts, Phoenix to provide and install a third Sanctuary camera. Funded from the Alice Peterson Memorial and designated gifts. [APPROVED]
- Afternoon Artist Series Concert in our Sanctuary: The Gospel According to Scrooge (to be presented unmasked and to a potential audience of 200) [APPROVED]

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark Ramsey, Director of Music Ministries (Chair)
Director of Music Ministries (Chair) - Mark Ramsey
Dan Reeves, Worship (E) 2024
Sheilah Dye, Worship (D) 2022
Cheryl Gregory, Worship (D) 2024
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

WORSHIP



COMING EVENTS

- 2/27 Celebrating Black History Month with Special Music from Gospel Artists Derek Rushing, Piano and Audrey Rushing, Soprano, 10:00 a.m.
- 3/2 Ash Wednesday Service, online and in our Sanctuary, 7:00 p.m.
- 3/13 Women's Sunday
- 3/27 Worship in the Courtyard, followed by our annual Barbecue
- 4/9 & Palm Sunday 4/10 - 75th Anniversary Celebrations of FPC

Humoresque

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

Smith goes to see his supervisor in the front office. "Boss," he says, "we're doing some heavy house-cleaning at home tomorrow, and my wife needs me to help with the attic and the garage, moving and hauling stuff." "We're short-handed, Smith," the boss replies. "I can't give you the day off." "Thanks, boss," says Smith, "I knew I could count on you!"

DISCIPLESHIP

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

Children's Ministries (E) — Susan Chesko
Family Ministries (E) — Kristen Hull

Youth/Young Adult (E) — Kyle Harding

Discipleship Commission Annual Report

MINISTER OF FAITH FORMATION

Despite a worldwide pandemic, the Discipleship Commission had a very eventful 2021 with both online and in-person quality programs. God has blessed us with many faith formation opportunities in the past year. In the fall the children, youth and adults returned to in-person Sunday school. The Children's Sunday school program continued using the Presbyterian USA's Growing in Grace and Gratitude. We also recruited four additional Sunday School teachers for our children's program.

Our online programs consisted of kid friendly devotionals called "Bedtime Stories with Chris." These devotionals ran throughout Lent and Advent. Our largest in-person program was hosting Montlure Traveling Day for the East Valley Presbyterian Churches, June 21-24. The day camp had 23 campers, 12 Montlure staff and 5 youth counselors. In August we unveiled the Pray and Play space in our beautiful sanctuary. Pray and Play is



a kid friendly space where children can be themselves during worship. The kiddos can enjoy games, puzzles, crafts, Bible stories within a comfortable environment specifically designed with kids in mind. Jesus said, "let the children come to me" and the Pray and Play space along with the children sermons



reflects how important children are at FPC.

Wednesday WRAP was reimaged and relaunched last fall. WRAP is a midweek program that includes dinner, worship and Christian education for children, youth and adults. We are using the intergenerational curriculum "Follow Me Biblical Practices for Faithful Living." The Follow Me units centers around practices Jesus taught his followers to do.

Worship
Revive
And
Praise



Wednesdays
5:30 -7:00 p.m.
www.fpcmesa.org

Discipleship sponsored multiple family friendly events such as the Easter Egg Scavenger Hunt on Easter Sunday, Spring-Fling Family Picnic on April 14th and Trunk or Treat; a safe and sane trick or treating event on October 31st.

Looking Ahead at 2022

- Youth Sunday, April 24, 2022
- East Valley Traveling Day Camp at Mission del Sol Presbyterian Church June 20-24, 2022
- Montlure Overnight Camps
 - Senior High June 19-24, 2022
 - Junior High June 26-July 1, 2022
 - Juniors July 5-9, 2022

Respectfully Submitted,
Chris McKee, Minister of Faith Formation

ADULT EDUCATION SMALL GROUPS

During the Pandemic, adult small groups continued to meet. Some met in-person, and some on Zoom. Spring of 2021, there were 4 Bible Study groups that met (3 Women's, 1 Men's). The WRAP Adult Bible Study was on Covid Pause. There was also the pastor's prayer group that met on Zoom. In the Fall of 2021, there were 6 Bible Study groups that met (2 Women's, 1 Men's, and 3 Adult Bible Study Groups). Also, the pastor's prayer group continued to meet on Zoom. In the Fall of 2021, there were more Bible Study Groups (3) that met on Sundays. This description does not include the FPC Circles, who continued to meet in 2021.

Respectfully Submitted,
Karen Rudin, Adult Education Elder

YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS

The FPC youth group has maintained a similar attendance in 2021 as it did in 2020 after we reopened in-person worship. We have consistently had 2 or 3 youth participate when we have been able to hold a youth group session, with one or two new faces popping in every once in a while. We had Youth Sunday on April 11th, and they performed a memorable skit "A Day in the Life of Israel." On Pentecost Sunday Aaron Chesko was confirmed. We have also held a few successful outings including miniature golf in the spring and bowling at Fat Cats in the fall. We had a volunteering opportunity at the Midwest Food Bank in November. Though we have seen several of the same youth consistently, we have also maintained communication and a relationship with other youth members as well. On a related note, we approved sending Tanya Snitzer and Ayden Hickey to the 2022 Youth Triennium. Isobel Letizia also expressed interest in going, so we partnered with another local church to sponsor/adopt her in order for her to go. We are hopeful that when we begin to exit this pandemic phase, we will begin to see our numbers grow further.

For the FPC young adults, a few attempts have been made for outings, but have largely fallen through due to conflicting schedules and the pandemic. However, communication has been maintained and is consistent with several members, including Jade Fleener, Andrew and Aaron Fredericks, Greg Gerlach, Ian Harding, and Todd Ramsey. The Young Adult group has more or less held together as a loose coalition of communication and support between each other, and future plans are not out of the question in the near future.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kyle Harding, Youth & Young Adult Elder

Youth & Young Adult Year in Pictures



Youth Sunday Skit



Golfland



Confirmand, Aaron Chesko



Bowling at Fat Cats



Midwest Food Bank



Christmas Party

DEACONS

Co-Moderator — Sue Eisenklam
 Co-Moderator — Robert Harding
 Seasonal Ministries — Dale Gibson
 Worship — Cheryl Gregory
 Worship — Sheilah Dye

Personnel — Carol Anderson
 Nominating — Anita Ramsey
 Fellowship — Todd Ramsey
 Prayer Chain — Joy Schulz
 Funerals/Memorials—Renita Jurgensen

Assimilation — Deborah Rosen
 Mission --- Sue Eisenklam
 Fellowship — Kate McMichael
 Fellowship – Jo Beth Walstrom

Annual Report: Deacons

This year has brought a paradigm shift with the Deacons. In the past, an emphasis had been placed on what commission each Deacon serves on with a lesser emphasis on serving the people in the congregation. That has flip-flopped now. Deacons are called to serve as the “caring arm of the church.” That has always been so, but now in this time of pandemic and isolation, it is even more so. Deacons have been reaching out through phone calls, text messages, letters, cards, and visits. In November, they were commissioned to be able to take communion to those who can’t get out anymore. By now every member of the congregation should know who their Deacon is and have heard from him or her. If you do not know who your Deacon is, please contact one of the co-moderators, Sue Eisenklam at 480-993-6512 or Robert Harding at 480-766-2315. Deacons continue to participate in the vital work of the commissions. The current roster of Deacons is Carol Anderson, Anita Ramsey, Sheilah Dye, Todd Ramsey, JoBeth Walstrom, Deb Rosen, Dale Gibson, Cheryl Gregory, Kate McMichael, Robert Harding, and Sue Eisenklam.

Preschool Annual Report 2022



Well, what a year we've had! We are all grappling with the reality of how the COVID-19 pandemic has changed our lives over the two years. We had many challenges, but God is good and has helped us along the way!

In January 2021 we had 18 children enrolled. These families were consistent and enjoyed having the Mesa Fire Department visit as well as celebrating Valentine's Day with us. We enjoyed our family Carnival Day just before we went on one week Spring Break in early March. We were also able to bring in Carter's Petting Zoo and pony ride for the kids. What fun! A very cherished and fond memory!

Over the course of the pandemic, we have worked closely with our Quality First Nurse Health Consultant to keep us up to date on the fast-changing Health & Safety protocols needed. We have seen many children come to our school with challenging behaviors, family issues, developmental delays and personal problems that have needed additional support from our Quality First Coach and our Mental Health consultant for early childhood as well. Their support is immeasurable and helped navigate so many unknowns that we face with these families.

The opening day was so exciting! We had 20 kids on the roster with hopes of more enrollments as the first weeks began. The 4 teachers (Nicki McInnelly, Kristy Biggs, Sara Wheat & Ms Chantal Howell) were thrilled to have them back and welcome them to our new program.

Many of the changes that had to be made around the preschool to reopen have been maintained this year. These things include meeting the families at the front gate to drop off their child and the teachers walking them individually into the classroom, the use of hand sanitizer, taking daily temperatures, more frequent washing of hands, and social distancing whenever possible. All of these things contributed to the increased health and safety within our program. We have found our groove and are really making the best of it with great success! Over the course of the beginning of the school year through the end of December 2021, we were able to enroll a few more children to have 23 children on the roster!

I want to celebrate the Preschool Board. We want to thank all of our representatives who serve: Pam Godfrey-Robles (Acting Chair), Anita Ramsey (Acting Secretary), Nicki McInnelly, and Chris McKee as current members. And we welcomed in two new Parent Reps, Lindsey Augeri and Kelly Quirke. We also had a Commission Elder change – Susan Chesko and lastly, welcomed David Frederick as a member at large. All eight members have been instrumental in helping navigate the challenges that the Pandemic has brought for the preschool. When things have been as challenging as they have, it is such a blessing to have this group of individuals who represent the voice of the community and give weight and knowledge to the issues at hand. Thank you!

There have been a few exciting physical changes around the preschool. We partnered with the Head Start program to have all of the sand removed! The project included installing new artificial turf and concrete in that area. Yay! No more cat problems! 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!

As we look forward to 2022, we are hopeful that the Lord will continue to bless us by bringing the children of this community to our program in spite of challenging times. 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!

Respectfully submitted,
Shiloh Murillo

FELLOWSHIP

Fellowship (E) (Chair) — Dennis Sitzler
Fellowship (D) — Jo Beth Walstrom

Fellowship (D)— Kate McMichael
Fellowship (D) — Todd Ramsey

Moderator (D) – Sue Eisenklam
Co-Moderator (D) – Robert Harding
Presbyterian Women — Sara McWhorter

Fellowship Commission Annual Report

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 the service each Sunday in Fellowship Hall.

- In September, Fellowship was able to resume the Coffee Fellowship after the church service.
- All other Fellowship activities were canceled due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Fellowship Plans for the Future

Your Fellowship Commission members will be busy making plans for future events that we will hold in 2022 once the session has authorized such activities.

LOTS of fun events will be happening at your church in the future. Are there events that you would like to see us sponsor? 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.

Presbyterian Women of FPC Mesa is composed of four Circles, Deborah, Lydia, Eve, and Rachel with a total active membership of 31 women. We gather together monthly, sharing fellowship and Bible study. In May, we completed the study entitled *Into the Light* by P. Lynn Miller. Currently we are enjoying Meryl Blair's *What My Grandmothers Taught Me; Learning from the Women in Matthew's Genealogy of Jesus*. Early in the year, Circles met both in-person and by Zoom, but by September, all meetings shifted to in-person thanks in part to the available vaccines.

Our annual Bake Sale was re-established after a year off and held just before Thanksgiving. These proceeds, along with member pledges, assist us in continuing to support the missions of the church worldwide and locally. Locally, these missions include New Leaf Autumn House, Child Crisis Center, Montlure Camp, Church Women United, Salvation Army, FPC Preschool and FPC Sewing, and Mesa Presbyterian Ministries.

This year, Carol Anderson was awarded Honorary Life Membership status for her overwhelming contributions to our church. Celebration of Women Sunday service (in lieu of bringing in a speaker during Covid restrictions) was presented by our own Circles and offered up an interesting and enlightening group of Biblical and contemporary women for contemplation. Sewing completed several quilts which were given to Pastor Ann for her discretionary distribution.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sara McWhorter, FPC PW Moderator



MISSION

Mission (E) (Chair) — Shelley Cronenberg
Assimilation (D) — Deborah Rosen
Hunger Action (D) — Sandra Clark

Mission (D) – Sue Eisenklam
Mission (D) – Robert Harding
Seasonal Ministries (D) – Dale Gibson
Youth Elder – Aaron Chesko

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

Food Pantry

The Food Pantry has continued to stay open during this last year. The pandemic has significantly dropped our members, but it is strong and building up again. We gave out 1,100 bags and will be serving those in need for another year. Many thanks to those who unload and help to make this mission a success.

Sandra Clark



I-Help - For the year 2021, FPC volunteers have hosted approximately 10 women (up to 15 approved by session) four/five Sundays per month (approximately 10 volunteer hours per week). This includes dinner, showers, a safe place to sleep, movies and a sack lunch for the next day. Janet Verch, the program coordinator, attends Zoom church sponsor meetings every other month (with Lutheran Social Services), where they discuss what works best and how they can improve the program at each site. Based on the yearly report from LSS (July 2020-June 2021) New Guests = 58, Moved into housing = 12, Women that found Employment = 17, Shelter Bed Nights = 2,661. The numbers have decreased significantly, in part due to Covid-related issues. There are several churches that have opted out of hosting this program at their location. If you know of a church that might be interested in participating, please contact Janet Verch. I also want to thank all the dedicated volunteers who host and prepare meals for the ladies once a month, we couldn't do it without you! I would also like to acknowledge the FPC I-Help mission has recently received very generous donations from the congregation, it is so appreciated!

Seasonal Ministries – Angel Tree: we sponsored three families this year. In total we gave about 100 gifts. Additionally, we also gave each family a frozen turkey, food boxes, personal items, cleaning items, and paper items. Everything was delivered on Sunday, December 19, 2021. A big thank you to everyone who participated!



Mission Co-workers - Rev. Mark Adams and Miriam Maldonado Escobar are our mission coworkers again this year with Frontero de Cristo. Their ministry sits on the US/Mexico border in Agua Prieta. 25% of the Peace and Global Witness Offering went to our partners at Frontero de Cristo.

Special Offerings - Thank you for your continued generosity!

- One Great Hour of Sharing: Giving was \$3,055.16.
- Pentecost Offering: Giving was \$1,944.57 in donations of which \$388.91 went to the triennium fund and \$388.91 went to Montlure to help them open up in Greer.



- Global Peace and Witness Offering: Giving was \$1,820. Of that money, \$910 (50%) went to the Presbyterian Mission Agency and \$455 (25%) went to the Grand Canyon Presbytery, and the remaining \$455 (25%) went to Frontera de Cristo (our mission partners in Mexico).

- Christmas Joy Offering: Giving was \$1,646.00.

Mission Trip – Mission Possible 2021 Mission Trip. This year we partnered with CarePortal to help families in need. We had three teams, a prayer team, a donation team, and a delivery team. All the teams came together to help 10 families which included a total of 25 kids. The mission week went from Wednesday, July 7th – Sunday, July 11th and so many people came together to make this mission a huge success.

CarePortal – CarePortal is a new ministry that started in 2021 that helps kids stay with their families instead of going into foster care. Social Workers can enter the specific needs of children into the CarePortal system and local churches can offer to help a family by donating either new or used items that they need. This year we helped fill 21 requests, which served 55 children, and had an economic impact of \$27,863.00. If you are interested in being on the email list, please reach out to Ellen Hickey, who leads this ministry.

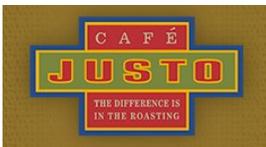


Clothing Closet – Renita Jurgensen leads this mission project with Mirasol Bronola, Susan Chesko, Christina Dzodzomenyo and Cheryl Gregory. Our mission is to be a resource for those who need clothing. We started in October 2021 and have serviced approximately 100 people. Currently we are open on Friday mornings along with the Food Pantry. We also open up the closet to the I-Help women on Sunday evenings. We have been blessed with donations, volunteers and financial backing, which will allow us to focus on expanding hours and reaching further into the community.

Mesa Presbyterian Ministries (MPM) - Mesa Presbyterian Ministries, started by Bob Gerlach, is a qualified charitable organization with the mission to keep families in their homes. Congregational members Jack and Yvonne Oliver, and Brent Gregory volunteer to call and interview clients who need help paying their rent and utilities. Over one hundred families received a total of \$45,024.00 in assistance from MPM in 2021.

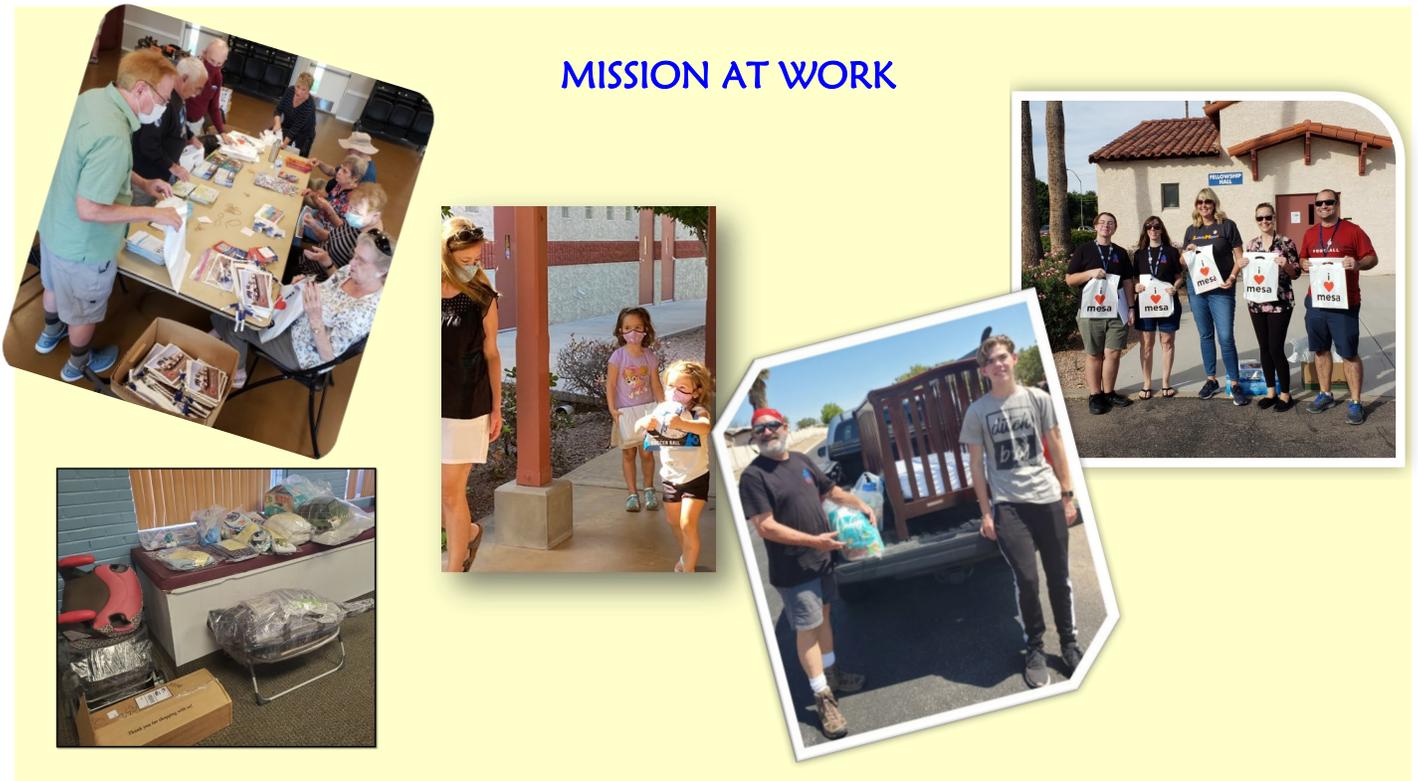


Assimilation – There were two new members in February, two new members in June, three new members in July, and a confirmand in May for a total of 8 new members in 2021.



Café Justo – We are again selling Café Justo quarterly. We started back up in September and ordered 20 bags of coffee. In December we ordered 23 bags of coffee.

Mesa Love Your City Day – FPC Mesa participated again in Mesa Love Your City Day (previously Mesa Make a Difference Day). On October 21st a group helped put informational brochures in bags and on October 23rd a group delivered the bags to a nearby neighborhood. Thank you to all who participated this year.



MISSION AT WORK

ADMINISTRATION

Property (E) (Chair) — Dave Frederick
Clerk of Session — Carol Gerlach
Personnel (E) — Jeanne Partida

Personnel (D) — Carol Anderson
Nominating (E) — Marcy Snitzer

Nominating (D) — Anita Ramsey
Stewardship/Finance (E) — Brent Gregory

Administration Commission Annual Report

PROPERTY

Dave Frederick

With the resumption of normal worship activities in the fall, outside groups began, or have resumed leasing space in FPC:

- Ghana Presbyterian worships in the Chapel
- Iglesia Gran Pastor worships in the Chapel
- Garden City Church worships in Fellowship Hall
- Rise Up Eastpointe used the Fellowship Hall but closed at the end of the year due to low enrollment.
- Alcoholics Anonymous is using the Parlor

To keep the campus beautiful, the property Committee has completed a number of capital improvement projects:

- Solar panels have been installed on the roof of the Trinity building. The system received final city approval and was connected to the grid the first week of December. These panels have the ability to generate 10 kW of electricity which will offset FPC's electric bill.
- New outside doors were installed in the pastor's office, Marks' office, and the business office. These are secure, insulated fiberglass doors with deadbolts.
- Mesa Literacy Council, a longtime occupant of the Laubach room has closed and vacated the room. It is currently being refurbished as an additional office or classroom.
- Several trees have been planted just off the parking lot outside the Trinity Building and Fellowship Hall.
- Pews removed from the Sanctuary to make room for the Play and Pray area, as well as pews stored in the "attic" above the cry room have been sold.
- Fellowship Hall has been painted in a fresh new color.
- New doors have been fabricated and installed in Fellowship Hall's under-stage storage area.
- Head Start paid for playground improvements including removing sand and replacing it with a soft rubberized play surface.
- Programmable thermostats were installed in the Jackson, preschool, and Head Start classrooms.
- We have terminated our use of SRP irrigation water due to unreliable deliveries. The landscaper has replaced broken sprinkler heads so we can use existing irrigation timers for more precise control of water use.

Property Committee continues to prioritize improving the look of the campus, energy-efficiency, and maintaining a secure facility.

CLERK OF SESSION

Carol Gerlach

The Book of Order defines the duties of the Clerk of Session: . . . a clerk shall record the transactions of the council, keep its rolls of membership and attendance, maintain any required registers, preserve its records and furnish extracts from them when required by another council of the church.

- **MEETINGS:** We were still under CDC Guidelines due to the Covid pandemic for meetings in 2021.
- Session met via Zoom in January, February, March and April.
- The Annual Congregational Meeting was also held in February. We held worship in the parking lot. Everyone stayed in their cars. The meeting immediately followed the worship service.
- In May Session met in person in Fellowship Hall.
- In June we met again via Zoom only.
- In July we met for a called meeting in the Church Parlor to receive new members.
- In August we met in Fellowship Hall and on Zoom with the Deacons for our Annual Officers Retreat after which the Session and the Deacons met separately for their monthly meetings.

- In September we met in the Library and on Zoom. Presbytery Pastor Rev. Dr. Brad Munroe met in person with us and we were joined on Zoom by John Kolman, PhD.
- In October and November we met in the Library and on Zoom.
- In December we met in a Called Executive meeting on Zoom only when Ann announced she had accepted a Call from another church. We also met on Zoom only at an Interim Pastor Search meeting moderated by Rev. Paul Soderquist, a member of the Committee on Ministry of the Presbytery.

ROLLS AND REGISTERS:

Here are the statistics for the Rolls I keep:

- On January 1 our membership was 252.
- We added 8 new members.
- Seven members joined the Church Triumphant.
- Two members were removed from the Rolls.
- On December 31 our membership was 251 (155 females).
- We have 8 Affiliate Members.
- We baptized 1 baby and 1 adult.
- There were no marriages.
- Our average weekly worship attendance was 76 in-person and 107 online for a total average weekly attendance of 183.

STEWARDSHIP AND FINANCE

Brent Gregory

The members of the Finance Committee are Stewardship Elder Brent Gregory, Property Elder Dave Frederick, Clerk of Session Carol Gerlach, Endowment Committee chair Jack Gunter, and at-large members Carolyn Barber, Peter Eisenklam, Bob Gerlach, and Jan Montgomery. 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 2020:

- Recommended the 2021 budget to the Session
- Completed a financial review for the year ending 12/31/2020.
- Completed a successful stewardship campaign with pledges and prepaids totaling \$259,729 for the general fund and \$19,515 for the capital fund.

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

Brent Gregory

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 once during 2021 and has undertaken the following actions:

- Continued oversight of the Endowment Funds investment with a 2021 beginning balance of \$439,160 and a year-end balance of \$552,931.
- Received a gift of \$50,000 for the General Endowment.
- Disbursed \$3,555 for new security doors from the General Endowment.
- Disbursed \$1,836 for sanctuary video equipment from the Worship Arts Endowment.
- Disbursed \$1,140 for camperships from the Montlure Endowment.
- Disbursed \$3,522 for the Pray and Play area from the C.E. Endowment.
- Continued to interpret the endowment concept to the congregation through the Endowment Funds brochure.

PERSONNEL

Jeanne Partida

The committee consists of Personnel Elder Jeanne Partida, Personnel Deacon Carol Anderson, and three members at-large Brent Gregory, Susan McMichael and Renita Jurgensen. We were saddened by Belinda Clark's need to take a leave of absence due to cancer surgery. It was hoped that she would be able to return as the custodian for both the Preschool and Church. We have been able to cover the cleaning needs but are looking for a more permanent custodian. Our annual staff reviews were conducted in November. In December Pastor Ann Conklin informed the congregation she had accepted a call to a new ministry with the congregation of First Presbyterian Church of Santa Barbara, CA. As we begin the search for a new pastor, we ask for your prayers that God will lead that person to us.

February Birthdays



| | |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| <i>Peggy Anderson</i> | <i>1st</i> |
| <i>Will Snitzer</i> | <i>2nd</i> |
| <i>Jean Chappell</i> | <i>9th</i> |
| <i>Isobel Letizia</i> | <i>9th</i> |
| <i>Aaron Chesko</i> | <i>10th</i> |
| <i>Ginny Mallia</i> | <i>11th</i> |
| <i>Garrett Hull</i> | <i>12th</i> |
| <i>Kate Buck</i> | <i>14th</i> |
| <i>Cortney Bever</i> | <i>15th</i> |
| <i>John Peterson</i> | <i>15th</i> |
| <i>Bob Schulz</i> | <i>15th</i> |
| <i>John Goings, Jr.</i> | <i>16th</i> |
| <i>Peter Conklin</i> | <i>19th</i> |
| <i>Richard Schroeder</i> | <i>19th</i> |
| <i>Bryan Hickey</i> | <i>25th</i> |
| <i>Elly Weinel</i> | <i>26th</i> |
| <i>Matthew McKee</i> | <i>27th</i> |
| <i>Linda Free</i> | <i>28th</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.*

ADDRESS CHANGES/CORRECTIONS

| | |
|--|---|
| Martz, Shirley 2851 N. Boulder Canyon Mesa, AZ 85207 | Stirling, Carol 5037 E. Broadway Rd. Mesa, AZ 85206 |
|--|---|

Robinson, Nate & Ruth
2081 Garden Valley Glen,
#216
Escondido, CA 92026

Calendar Notes

February

Worship every Sunday at 10:00 a.m.
In person or online

Youth meet at 11:15 a.m.
Youth Room

Christian Education at 11:20 a.m.

February

Men's Fellowship every Wednesday
ZOOM

February 13

Souper Bowl of Caring
Blackwood Brothers in worship
Session meets

February 14

Happy Valentine's Day!

February 16

Women's Bible Study

February 21

President's Day — Office closed

February 27

Monthly Food Drive
Guest Gospel Artists Derek Rushing, Piano
and Audrey Rushing, Soprano in worship
Annual Congregational Meeting



IN MEMORIAM

Jan Smith — January 19, 2022



Financial Reports are not published but are available for pick up in the Sanctuary or church office later this month.

SCENES FROM 2021!



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

LA PALABRA

A publication for members and friends, published monthly.

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**David Hodgson, Interim 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**