

# La Palabra

May 2021

www.fpcmesa.org

480-964-8606

## *A Message from Ann*

*“Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?” (Isaiah 43:18-19)*

From Genesis to the prophets to the culmination of Scripture in Revelation, God is always at work “making all things new.” (Rev. 21:5) Renewal and restoration are foundational for our faith! This is surely a season of renewal for our congregation as we gradually move out of this pandemic period.

As we move forward together in ministry, seeking to be faithful to our call as disciples of Jesus, it will be exciting to see where we are led by the Holy Spirit. Some things may look a little different as we move into God’s good future. We hope to revive a Wednesday evening intergenerational ministry, though it may be shaped a little differently than it was in the past. A group has been gathering to discern what our worship service might look like as we move into the fall. A marketing committee has been meeting regularly to improve the methods by which we communicate to our congregation and community all of the ministry that happens regularly through our congregation. Lots of exciting things are happening at FPC Mesa!

Though we aren’t tied to our past, we are grounded in our past and the faith of our forebearers. I have been sharing with you portions of our Book of Order from the Foundations section and below I have continued this, highlighting the truths that that Jesus Christ our Lord gives the Church its life, is the Church’s hope, and is truly the foundation of the Church. Thanks be to God!

### *Christ Gives the Church Its Life*

Christ gives to the Church its faith and life, its unity and mission, its order and discipline. Scripture teaches us of Christ’s will for the Church, which is to be obeyed. In the worship and service of God and the government of the church, matters are to be ordered according to the Word by reason and sound judgment, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. (F-1.0203)

### *Christ Is the Church’s Hope*

In affirming with the earliest Christians that Jesus is Lord, the Church confesses that he is its hope, and that the Church, as Christ’s body, is bound to his authority and thus free to live in the lively, joyous reality of the grace of God. (F-1.0204)

### *Christ Is the Foundation of the Church*

In Christ all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through Christ God reconciles all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of the cross (Col. 1:19–20). In Christ’s name, therefore, the Church is sent out to bear witness to the good news of reconciliation with God, with others, and with all creation. In Christ the Church receives its truth and appeal, its holiness, and its unity. (F-1.0205)

Let us celebrate our heritage even as we open ourselves up to the new things that God is doing within and among us! To God be the glory! ~ Ann

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## WORSHIP

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

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

### 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**

We were born to give thanks! What a joy and blessed opportunity to focus our thanks upon the essence of life and God's eternal presence. We live and breathe sharing God's love, and that is the most beautiful of gifts. As we focus our lives upon the author of each new day, may we offer thanks for abundant blessings.

Pure Praise Singers Director Karen Rudin has been operating her Starshine School of Music for many years. All are invited to her upcoming music studio recital, which will be held on Tuesday, May 4th, at 6:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. The recital will also be livestreamed. If you or one of your friends or family might be interested in guitar, piano, or vocal coaching, be sure to see Karen at the church.

"Fling wide ye heavenly gates!" The annual Preschool Spring Fling will be held on Thursday, May 6th, at 10:30 a.m. The "Fling" will be in Fellowship Hall, and the congregation is invited to attend!

On Mother's Day, May 9th, we'll celebrate in worship by honoring those who have shared the joys of motherhood for the longest and shortest periods of time. There will be prizes! Join us in worship as we share God's Word and honor the love and joy of Mother's Day!

The 2021-22 Artist Series will (hopefully!) include The First Players' production of *Singin' in the Rain*. Artist Series concerts are made possible with the support of our donors. Please consider helping to underwrite the concerts by making a tax-deductible contribution to the Artist Series. We have five notable levels of donation:

Whole Note - \$500 & Up  
Half Note - \$200-\$499  
Quarter Note - \$100-\$199  
Eighth Note - \$50-\$99  
Sixteenth Note - \$25-\$49

Artist Series concert fees range from \$300 - \$2,000. If you would like to contribute financially, checks should be made payable to "First Presbyterian Church," with memo notation "Artist Series" and sent to: Mark Ramsey, First Presbyterian Church, 161 N. Mesa Dr., Mesa, AZ, 85201-6794. Contributors will be listed in future concert programs or, if requested, will remain anonymous. For more information on our Artist Series, please contact the Music Office, (480) 964-8606 or visit [www.fpcmesa.org](http://www.fpcmesa.org).

### Coming Events

- 5/6 National Day of Prayer
- 5/9 Happy Mother's Day!
- 5/23 Pentecost Sunday: Ordination and Installation of Officers



### Humoresque

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

The old Scot calls his son in London the day before Christmas Eve and says, "I hate to ruin your day, but I have to tell you that your mother and I are divorcing; forty-five years of misery is enough." "Dad, what are you talking about?" the son gasps. "We can't stand the sight of each other any longer," the father

says. "We're sick of each other, and I'm sick of talking about this, so you call your sister in Leeds and tell her." In panic the son calls his sister, who explodes on the phone. "Over my dead body they're getting divorced!" she shouts. "I'll take care of this!" She calls Scotland immediately, and admonishes her father. "You are NOT getting divorced," she says. "Don't do a single thing until I get there. I'm calling my brother back, and we'll both be there tomorrow. Until then, don't do a thing, DO YOU HEAR ME?" and hangs up. The old man hangs up his phone and turns to his wife. "Sorted! They're coming for Christmas – and they're paying their own way."



This month, PW Circles will be studying Lesson Nine: The End of Lament. The author, P. Lynn Miller, explains that this study began with the assertion that at its heart, all lament is about the perceived absence of God. Here at the end of the study, God is exactly what, or who, fixes everything and lives with us...the real end is when we are in God's presence. God's promise is: He is always with us.

We encourage all members to actively participate in the Care Portal by contacting Ellen Hickey by e-mailing her at [hickeyaz@cox.net](mailto:hickeyaz@cox.net). The needs are great, and this is a wonderful opportunity to help others. Another opportunity to fulfill our mission is to volunteer at Feed My Starving Children by signing up at [fmsc.org](http://fmsc.org). There are sitting positions as well as the regular standing jobs and each shift is 2 hours, 30 minutes of which is classroom/orientation time.

Sara McWhorter, PW Moderator

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### News from the April Session Meeting

#### Administration Commission:

Solar for the Church – David Frederick will be getting bids from contractors soon.

#### Personnel Committee:

Session approved two updates to the Child Protection and Sexual Misconduct Policy and its Procedures: (1) To the Policy Statement - All persons who work with children, youth and/or vulnerable adults are required to have a periodic background check and (2) To the Policy and Procedures Agreement Signature Page – I agree to submitting to a background check if required by my volunteer position.

#### Worship:

Session approved the following recommendations:

- The outside door of the Sanctuary by the restrooms will be open so people can enter and exit from that location
- Ushers will no longer seat or dismiss people at the end of worship
- The pew racks will be restocked with bibles, hymnals and supplies
- The mask requirement will remain in effect, but singing softly will be permitted

#### Fellowship Commission:

With the relaxation of some of the worship guidelines, Session approved a motion from Fellowship that the courtyard will be open after worship for 15 or 20 minutes of Conversation in the Courtyard. There will be no refreshments except for bottled water as the temperatures escalate.

# DISCIPLESHIP

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

Children's Ministries (E) — Stephanie Gerlach  
Family Ministries (E) — Kristen Hull

Youth/Young Adult (E) — Kyle Harding  
Youth Elder — Ben Gerlach

## May Faith Formation Happenings Spring Fling Picnic Pics!



**Space Limited for Day Camp.** FPC Mesa is hosting Montlure Traveling Day Camp (TDC) with other East Valley churches **JUNE 21-25, 2021**. TDC is for children completing K-5th grades. Space is very limited, so please sign-up today. Register: [Montlure.org](http://Montlure.org)

Partial camperships **up to \$50.00** for church members are available on our church website. That is only \$25 for an entire week of camp! What a deal!



### Montlure Overnight Camp Tentative Dates Summer 2021

Senior High: June 6-11

Junior High: June 13-18

Juniors: (grades 4-6) July 5-9

Register at [Montlure.org](http://Montlure.org). Members can apply for partial camperships of at least \$350 on our church website. Please contact Chris for further details!

**Gift Card Request & Volunteers Needed for Traveling Day Camp.** Traveling Day Camp is quickly approaching, and we are requesting: Volunteers for the Clean-up Crew on June 21-25, 3:30-5:30 p.m. FPC will share in the meal cost for the Montlure staff and we are looking for gift card donations from Costco to cover the cost. Please contact Chris if you want to help out.

**Weekly Youth Gatherings.** Our junior high and high school teens gather most Sundays at 11:15 a.m. in the youth room. Join us for God talk, prayer and fellowship! Youth will not meet Sunday, May 30th, due to Memorial weekend.

Blessings,

Chris McKee, Minister of Faith Formation

[chris@fpcmesa.org](mailto:chris@fpcmesa.org)



Are we still in these strangest times or what?! We, here at the preschool, have enjoyed our kiddos and families, even with all of the restrictions! We know that there is no replacement for those sweet little hugs and seeing the delight in their faces each and every day! We are focused on Spring gardening, bugs/insects, flowers, Children around the World and family pets. Our little garden has the most beautiful flowers right now!

We will welcome our families to an end of the year Spring Fling Celebration and Picnic on May 6th, and we will be ending our school year on May 19th. It will be a special treat to be together for this celebration of the children.

Speaking of which, we are now ready to open the Fall 2021 Registration for our classes, and we need your help getting the word out. There is an \$85 Registration fee upon enrollment. Please tell everyone you know that registration is now open. We will be taking applications for both the 3-year-old class and the Pre-K class. Our tuition rates are not changing this year and remain an affordable option to our community. Please check out our website for more detailed information. [www.fpcmesa.org/preschool](http://www.fpcmesa.org/preschool) We also have scholarships available for those who qualify. Please email me at [preschool@fpcmesa.org](mailto:preschool@fpcmesa.org) or call me direct at 480-835-7877. We will be open during the month of June for a 3-days a week program (Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays only). We will then be closed from July 1st-August 6th. The new school year starts on Monday, August 9th! I look forward to hearing from you and your friends or family soon! God bless each one of you and may you stay safe and healthy during this unusual time of change.

Sincerely,  
Shiloh Murillo, Director

## MISSION

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

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

**Pentecost** has started and we are now collecting this special offering now through Sunday, May 23rd. Psalm 71 testifies that a foundation of faith established during childhood helps ensure lifelong faith and service. The patterns and lessons established during these formative years continue to bear fruit throughout a person's life. By receiving the Pentecost Offering, you are nurturing the faith of those who are the church to come — children, youth, and young adults. (PC USA) Forty percent of the offering stays with our congregation to support a youth initiative of our own choosing. Twenty-five percent supports Young Adult Volunteers (YAV). Twenty-five percent supports ministries of youth. And 10 percent supports Child Advocacy “Educate a child, Transform the World.”



## SPECIAL OFFERINGS

**One Great Hour of Sharing** special offering raised \$3055.16 in contributions. Thank you all for your support for this important offering.



**2021 Mission 2021** – Please save the date for our Care Portal Mission Week, July 7th – 11th. This year we are going to focus on our Care Portal Ministry. *CarePortal exists to help vulnerable children and families. Requests submitted through CarePortal come from caseworkers at government child welfare agencies or other child-serving organizations approved by CarePortal to vet needs ([careportal.org](http://careportal.org)).* We would love it if the whole church could participate. From praying for everyone involved, donating items of need, or being a part of a delivery team, there are plenty of ways for everyone to get involved. We as a church can see if we can help families with as

many needs as we can. Each family may need something different (beds, car seats, diapers, child safety locks and baby proofing items are among the most common requests). We will have a commitment letter coming the week of May 24th with more details. Please prayerfully consider how you can help.

**The Food Pantry** continues each week to provide food bags to the people who come on Fridays. We still need cereals and canned meats (chili, ravioli, Spam, chicken). We have plenty of tuna, pasta and sauce. Thank you for your donations and prayers.

~ Sandy Clark



## ADMINISTRATION

Property (E) (Chair) — Dave Frederick  
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

Recently, a local church shared some information that your endowment committee thought would be useful to the congregation:

If you're in the 70 ½+ age group—and fortunate enough to have an IRA account, there's something we'd ask you to consider.

- Retirees over 70 ½ must withdraw a specified amount from their IRA accounts every year. This Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) is based on the size of the portfolio and is taxable. An easy way to minimize the tax “hit” and do some real good at the same time is to make a direct contribution to a 501(c)(3) charitable institution—such as FPC Mesa—from that account.
- The main benefit that this qualified charitable distribution (QCD) provides is that it is not included in the adjusted gross income of your IRS Form 1040, so making this kind of contribution can lower your taxable income. (Your tax advisor can help you determine how lowering your adjusted gross income might benefit you.)
- If you have check-writing capability attached to your IRA, that's the easiest way to go about this, or you can have your financial brokerage firm transfer funds directly from the IRA to the organization. Sending it directly to the desired institution by check or transfer will allow that donation to be treated as a QCD. The key here is that the funds must not go through your personal account and then re-directed.
- FPC could really use this help. The pandemic, with all its attendant consequences (no in-person worship for months on end, lessened attendance once we were able to meet for congregant worship in the parking lot, etc.), has impacted our finances. It has affected our ability to serve our community's most needy as well as contributions to capital and operating budgets. Many of you have been faithful in your giving of tithes and offerings during this difficult time, and we are deeply grateful for your continued support.
- However, our ongoing obligations continue unabated—Covid or no. Making a contribution from your IRA is a painless, beneficial and greatly-appreciated way to help keep our ministry and mission on track. Your financial advisor can answer your questions about this process.
- Whether you support the church's main operating budget, a ministry, or one of our endowment funds such as the Solar Power Project, we urge you to give this some thoughtful and prayerful consideration.

Please contact me or another member of the Endowment Committee if you would like more information about the activities your contribution can support: Brent Gregory, Jack Gunter, Renita Jurgensen, Ron Payton, or Skeets Throckmorton. (Our thanks to Central United Methodist Church of Phoenix for the concise summary.)

Warm regards,  
David Frederick, Endowment Secretary

## May Birthdays



Jan Peterson	1st
Joy Schulz	2nd
Raul Flores	4th
Grace Njoku	4th
Brent Gregory	6th
Robert Nobis	6th
Everleigh Reeves	8th
Fran Gunter	11th
Christina Dzodzomenyo	12th
Suzie Payton	12th
George Wagner	12th
Jon Lokensgard	14th
Sue Eisenklam	16th
Jennifer Smith	17th
Mihret Gerlach	19th
Graham Walker	22nd
Vivian Buck	23rd
Lynne Harding	24th
Karen Eberhardt	25th
Yvonne Oliver	25th
Maggie Cronenberg	28th
Patricia Wyse	28th
Jo Godfrey	29th

**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

### May

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

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

### May 4

PW Coordinating Team

### May 5, 12, 19 & 26

Men's Fellowship

### May 5 & 19

Women's Bible Study  
Fellowship Hall

### May 6

Preschool Spring Fling Program

### May 9

*Happy Mother's Day!*

### May 10 & 11

Circles meet  
In person or Zoom

### May 16

Session meets  
Sanctuary

### May 23

Ordination and Installation of New Officers

### May 30

Monthly Food Drive

FPC Staff emails are listed below. Staff cell phone numbers are listed in the church directory.

Ann Conklin: [pastor@fpcmesa.org](mailto:pastor@fpcmesa.org)  
Mark Ramsey: [choirs@cox.net](mailto:choirs@cox.net)  
Chris McKee: [chris@fpcmesa.org](mailto:chris@fpcmesa.org)  
Linda Reeves: [pubs@fpcmesa.org](mailto:pubs@fpcmesa.org)  
Don Krill: [buildings@fpcmesa.org](mailto:buildings@fpcmesa.org)  
Rob Kjar: [business@fpcmesa.org](mailto:business@fpcmesa.org)



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**Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.**

**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**