

# La Palabra

May 2023

www.fpcmesa.org

480-964-8606

## A Message from David



Our Pastor Emeritus bid us all farewell in April because the Lord had work for him to do in Glory, and suddenly the memories that Jim Bruening left behind become priceless. I consider them priceless because we cannot experience any more of them, and because the ones we have continue to bless us and become more treasured with the passage of time.

By his continued presence in the church he helped us to remember what the church used to be when he was the installed pastor. But even more, by his continued encouragement and participation and guidance and inspiration he stirred among us the awareness of what the church is yet able to become.

When pastors work on earth is done, the presbytery often declares that they have *entered the Church Triumphant*. But Jim didn't wait until the end of life to experience the triumphant nature of the church, for in the Lord's church on earth Jim demonstrated time and time again how to face every obstacle with confidence, how to set the cadence for every moral struggle, and how to lead on the threshold of every adventure.

In his ministry he knew some tough times, but he knew the Lord would never set before him a challenge that he and the Lord could not handle together. And in the memories we have of him, the influence of the Lord is clearly evident to all.

Traces of glory in the here and now, and on into forever more!

David

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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  
Worship (D) – Sheilah Dye

### Mark's Remarks

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

“Everything must be possible.” - J. S. Bach



Karen Rudin correctly guessed Gail Soderquist as the April mystery band member. Congratulations, Karen! Here is the May Mystery Band Member. Send guesses (one per customer) to [music@fpcmesa.org](mailto:music@fpcmesa.org), and if you can dust off some of those old band photos, send one to the same email address, and we'll include it in an upcoming issue.

On May 14th, we'll celebrate Mother's Day! We'll honor and recognize our mothers, and we'll have a special gift for all women joining us for worship on campus! Join us as we share God's Word and honor the love and joy of Mother's Day.

Presbyterian Heritage Sunday will be observed at the end of this month, and we will celebrate with a special anthem on Sunday, May 21st. The music will feature our One Voice ensemble in an "Anthem of Praise." Composer Richard Smallwood said, "He's worthy of the glory, he's worthy of the honor, every time I think of the goodness of Jesus and alllllll he's done for me. Let everything that has breath praise the Lord . . . and Lift Him Up."

Our Preschool Children will have their own songs to share during the first week of May! The annual Preschool Spring Fling (Concert) will be held on Wednesday, May 10th, at 10:30 a.m. The big event will be in Fellowship Hall, and the congregation is invited to attend and join in the song!

Our summer choir schedule is once again rapidly approaching. Copies of the schedule will be available on Sunday, May 28th, in the Church Office, Choir Room, and Information Kiosk and at [fpcmesa.org/worship-planning](http://fpcmesa.org/worship-planning). We'll enjoy our summer music schedule June 4th through Labor Day Sunday!

The triennial [International Choral Festival in Missoula, Montana](#) will be held this July 19-22. The Festival is produced by volunteers in a beautiful mountain setting that connects musicians of diverse cultural traditions with regional audiences and local hosts. Several members of our congregation will be attending. If you would like Festival information, please contact Mark in the Church Office.

### Coming Events

- 5/7 National Day of Prayer
- 5/13 Presbyterian Women Spring Luncheon
- 5/14 Happy Mother's Day!

### Humoresque

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

An elderly woman died last month. Having never married, she requested no male pallbearers. In her handwritten instructions for her memorial service, she wrote, "They wouldn't take me out while I was alive, I don't want them to take me out when I'm dead." (from Barb Walker)

## DISCIPLESHIP

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

Children's Ministries (E) — Susan Chesko  
 Youth/Young Adult (E) — Ian Harding

### May Faith Formation Happenings

#### Sunday School Opportunities

AGE	LOCATION	CURRICULUM
Children (Summer break is May 28-September 3)	Jackson	Growing in Grace and Gratitude
Adults	Library	Bible Discussion

**Preschool Teacher Appreciation:** As the school year is winding down, we would like to take an opportunity to thank our incredible Preschool Teachers. On Sunday, May 7th, we will recognize our amazing Preschool teachers in worship. We will be collecting money during Coffee and Fellowship to get them gift cards to show our appreciation. Please contact Susan Chesko or Anita Ramsey for further details.

**Sunday School Teachers & Bible Study Leaders Appreciation Sunday.** Join us in worship on Sunday, May 21st, as we say thank you to our Sunday School Teachers and Bible Study leaders.

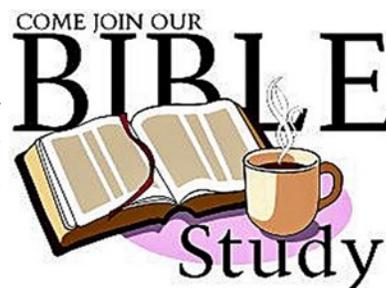


#### Wednesday Afternoon

Pure Praise Voices (Grades 2-8)  
 Wednesdays 4:45- 5:25 p.m., Choir Room  
 Focus on singing basics and theater

The Pure Praise Voices will be putting on a children's musical called Make A Joyful Noise this fall, with a theater camp in June. We need more child singers/actors, also people who can help with the stage set, props, and costumes. Please contact PPV Director Karen Rudin, 480-233-1043, if you can help.

**Koinonia Women's Bible Study:** The Koinonia Women's Zoom Class meets on Thursdays from 2:30-4:00 p.m. Koinonia is studying the book Overcomer, by Dr. David Jeremiah, which describes 8 ways to live a life of unstoppable strength, unmovable faith, and unbelievable power. Women, if interested, contact Karen Rudin, 480-233-1043.



#### Montlure Overnight Summer Camp

Senior High Camp	June 20-25, 2023
Junior High Camp	June 27-July 1, 2023
4-6 Grades	July 5-9, 2023

Register at [Montlure.org](http://Montlure.org). Partial campership available on our church website. Applications must be submitted 2-weeks prior to camp.





# TRAVELING DAY CAMP

**JUNE 26-30**  
 @ MISSION DEL SOL  
 9am - 3pm\*  
 \*FRIDAY 9:00-12:30

**\$125** USE CODE **FPC2023**  
 FOR **\$75 OFF**

FOR CAMPERS  
 ENTERING 1-6TH GRADES  
**REGISTER NOW**  
 Montlure.org



Blessings,  
 Chris McKee  
 Minister of Faith Formation  
[chris@fpcmesa.org](mailto:chris@fpcmesa.org)



Well, the school year has zipped by so quickly. What a challenging but wonderful year we have had at the preschool! It is now the last month of school, and we have been very busy getting the children ready for kindergarten. 😊 Some of the many things we have been up to include art expressions, and welcoming family pets as visitors, too. We are looking forward to our next adventures with the children as they sing songs for their families at our annual Spring Fling and Family Picnic on May 10th at 10:30 a.m. Also, please join us in recognition of our superior teachers and staff! During the week of May 8-12, we will be celebrating with a week-long Teacher Appreciation. Please stop by and show your gratitude for all of their hard work this year! Ms. Nicki, Ms. Sara, Ms. Chantal, Ms. Cece and Ms. Shiloh would love to see you!

Lastly, we are currently offering Early Registration for the new school year. The preschool will be celebrating its 37th year and expect that many families will be joining us. Please help us spread the word about our little school and share the registration information with them. There are flyers in the church office or you can visit our website for more information. [www.fpcmesa.org/preschool](http://www.fpcmesa.org/preschool) Please email or call the preschool office for more information. 480-835-7877. We offer tours by appointment and welcome all children who are at least 2.5 years old and who are potty-trained. The registration fee is \$100 per child. We will be open on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays in June to offer tours to interested families!

Shiloh Murillo, Director

# Children's & Youth Sunday Highlights





Eight FPC PW ladies attended the Presbytery's Spring Gathering at Desert Palms Presbyterian Church in Sun City West. We regretted that it conflicted with the Family Fun Day on March 25th, and we weren't able to do both, but we tried to compensate by donating for the Mesa event.

About 99 women from all over Grand Canyon Presbytery were in attendance and participated in worship, informative break-out sessions, and a lovely lunch with lots of fellowship. Many exhibits demonstrated the wealth of mission work occurring among the different PW groups. The Fall Gathering will be held at our church on October 7, 2023!

Our final Bible Study in May is "Sabbath and Community." Circles take a hiatus during the summer and will resume in September.

Please join us at our Spring Luncheon on May 13th! Lunch is a salad and dessert potluck. The program will be important and beneficial with some special surprises, too. All are welcome, men and women, PW or not!

# Spring Luncheon

Hosted by FPC Presbyterian Women

**May 13, 2023**

Lunch - 11:30 Program - 12:15

**161 N. Mesa Drive Mesa, AZ 85201**

**Special  
Presentation**

*Protect Yourself from Fraud and Scams!*

By Joan Campbell, Coordinator of Community Affairs  
Maricopa County Attorney's Office

**You are invited to bring a  
salad or dessert to share.**

**Everyone is welcome!**

RSVP to Carol Anderson by phone, text, or voicemail 480-272-5517  
or email: carolboydanderson@gmail.com

## MISSION

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

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

**Pentecost Offering** has officially begun and we are collecting for this special offering now through May 28th. 40% of this special offering will go towards the 2023 Mission Trip. 25% supports Young Adult Volunteers (YAV). And 10% supports Child Advocacy “Educate a Child, Transform the World.”



**One Great Hour of Sharing** special offering raised \$3095.50. Thank you so much for your generous support of this special offering.

### 2023 Mission Trip

We are very excited to be able to partner with Tseyi Bidaa Presbyterian Church in Del Muerto, AZ (near Chinle) once again this year. Our primary purpose is to continue to praise Jesus as we build relationships. The main focus of the trip is to put on a Vacation Bible School in the mornings with the help and excitement of Montlure. The afternoons will be for preparation and cultural experience/interactions. Please see Shelley Cronenberg if you are interested.

Upcoming Dates to be aware of:

- |      |           |  |
|------|-----------|--|
| Date | May 14:   | Application with \$50.00 deposit is due  |
|      | May 28:   | Background checks need to be done  |
|      | June 25:  | Commissioning of all going   |
|      | June 25:  | Participant Training/ Trip Orientation (Final Payment is due)  |
|      | July 2:   | Travel to Tseyi Bidaa, Montlure Informational Training over dinner   |
|      | July 3-7: | Mornings: Montlure Day Camp 9-1<br>Afternoons: Preparation for next day, cultural experience/ interactions |
|      | July 7:   | Family Evaluations and Travel Home   |
|      | July 11:  | Potluck Gathering to Celebrate and plan for Sunday Presentation  |



**Clothing Closet** is currently open the same hours as the Food Pantry which is the 1st and 3rd Friday from 8:00-9:00 a.m. We plan to expand the hours in the Fall, but need more volunteers to do that. Please let Shelley Cronenberg know if you are interested in volunteering.

## ADMINISTRATION

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

Personnel (D) — Roma Naccarato  
Nominating (E) — Marcy Snitzer

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

### Property Update

#### The Roof

- The chapel/fellowship hall roof replacement project was completed successfully.
- We added air conditioning mounts to the Christian education wing so we can cool the library and youth areas more efficiently.
- Everyone is very happy with the results – and no more leaks!

#### The Parking Lot

- The roofing job highlighted the weak condition of the parking lot pavement. Heavy trucks dug out some good potholes which had to be filled.
- Everyone has noticed the many cracks and holes, faded parking lines, and lack of lighting. Time to do something about it.
- It has been discussed for a long time, but now it is a safety issue. Plus it looks unwelcoming to visitors. The job would involve completely removing the existing pavement and replacing it with a new layer of asphalt.

#### The Cost

- The ballpark figure is \$250,000. A few paving companies have come out to look at it and are providing detailed bids, although no bid has been chosen yet.
- We are starting a capital campaign to raise these funds and ask you to prayerfully consider helping us pay for this.
- Checks can be mailed in or dropped off at the church office. Remember to specify “capital campaign” on the memo line.

We will keep you posted on how we're doing toward our goal. Thank you again for supporting this beautiful church. — Dave Frederick



#### From the Clerk's Desk — News from the APRIL Session meeting

- Paul Soderquist moderated the meeting in David's absence.
- Session approved the March Session Minutes.
- Paul asked for comments/reviews of the March 25 Neighborhood Fun Event. Everyone felt it was a successful first event. So successful that Event Chair Susan Chesko is planning on another at Halloween!
- The Clerk reported that our Annual AZ Corporation Commission report has been filed.
- Our membership decreased by one, to 239, when we learned from her brother earlier this month that Lanai Mills passed away on February 6. Average worship attendance for March was 85 in-person and 95 online. For March 2022 the average was 118 and 123.
- On March 26, with online participation from her home church in Baltimore MD and online witnesses watching from her family in Kenya, Pastor David and the Maryland pastor baptized Gabriel Gachao, born on June 22, 2022 to Ruth Gachao. Can't resist saying with pride that my grandson, Gregg, coordinated the video of the service!

#### COMMISSION NEWS

**Administration** – The March financial reports were received. The Financial Audit Team finished their 2022 audit. No improprieties were found.

**Discipleship** – Wednesday Wrap's final meeting at Organ Stop Pizza on April 26 at 5:30 is open to the entire congregation. A Wrap Survey will be given out soon.

**Pastor Nominating Committee** – Is meeting every Monday. Remember them in your prayers. They are working on a mission survey which will go out in the next couple of weeks.

## May Birthdays



Jan Peterson	1st
Joy Schulz	2nd
Grace Njoku	4th
Brent Gregory	6th
Robert Nobis	6th
Everleigh Reeves	8th
Fran Gunter	11th
Christina Dzodzomenyo	12th
Suzie Payton	12th
George Wagner	12th
Michael McGrath	13th
Jon Lokensgard	14th
Sue Eisenklam	16th
Mihret Gerlach	19th
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.

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

David Hodgson: [pastor@fpcmesa.org](mailto:pastor@fpcmesa.org)  
 Mark Ramsey: [music@fpcmesa.org](mailto:music@fpcmesa.org)  
 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)

## Calendar Notes

### May

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

Christian Education at 11:20 a.m.

Food Donations taken every Sunday

Clothing Closet donations taken first Sunday

### May 3 & 17

Women's Bible Study

### May 7

Preschool Teacher Recognition in worship  
 Deacons meet

### May 8 & 9

Circles meet

### May 10

Preschool Spring Fling

### May 13

PW Spring Luncheon

### May 14

Happy Mothers Day!

### May 19

Last day of Preschool for 2022-23

### May 21

Sunday School Teacher Appreciation in worship  
 Session meets

### May 29

Memorial Day — Office closed



## IN MEMORIAM

Jim Bruening — April 5, 2023  
 Sharon Schroeder — April 6, 2023  
 Carol Stirling — April 12, 2023  
 Gail Wylie — April 23, 2023



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

**LA PALABRA**

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

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Closed Friday**

**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**