

La Palabra

May 2024

www.fpcmesa.org

480-964-8606

A Message from Christian

Proverbs 3:5 — Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding

There is a significant difference between a closed hand and one that is open.

This was an insight shared with me when I was a youth, and I still find myself thinking about it, even this past weekend at Montlure Camp.

The concept is that when we are holding on to something tightly, insisting that what we have be used in a certain way, we might easily miss out on what God wants to do with us. Further, if God presents us with something new, how can we receive it with a closed hand. We miss out on what God has for us.

In contrast, when we hold what we have to offer with an open hand, it can be freely shared or added to. It is a matter of attitude that opens one up to opportunities.

I find that when I approach situations, like going to a work weekend at a camp, or a missions trip, a visit to a hospital room, or a move to a new church across the country, with an open hand, I am more ready to be used by God, as well as receive what he has for me.

I wonder what God has in store for us this month? I do know that approaching situations that we anticipate and ones that we don't with an open hand, where we hold onto things lightly, we will be better ready to respond. I am excited and optimistic about our shared future.

Blessings,
Pastor Christian

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From the Clerk's Desk

News from the **APRIL** Session meeting.

Clerk's Statistics for **MARCH**

No weddings, births or baptisms.

Pastor Christian officiated at former member Jack Shaw's memorial service and non-member Ed Borland's service.

Membership: **190**

Avg. Attendance: 137 in-person & 87 online = 224

Carol Gerlach, Clerk

Reports/Motions

Finance – The Trustees approved the March Financial Reports.
--

Following the April 6 Officer Training, Session met with the incoming officers and approved them to be ordained and/or installed in worship on May 12.
--

Pastor Christian will have a New Member Class on May 23 and May 30.

The Worship Committee decided on Christmas Eve services, and Session approved their motion to have a 3:00 p.m. service and a 6:00 p.m. service.

Et cetera

Don't forget - PER CAPITA for 2024 is \$38.51 (unchanged from 2023). \$23.71 for GC Presbytery, \$5.00 for the Synod of the Southwest and \$9.80 for GA. The amount we owe, based on our 12/31/22 membership of 240, is \$9,242.40. It would be greatly appreciated if everyone would be able to/could pay their own per capita.

I-Help

The I-Help mission is to stabilize people during crisis and transition, build a foundation where people can thrive, and preserve dignity and respect for the most vulnerable. It is a unique, cost-effective program that uses what churches have in abundance (space, volunteers, the desire to help the stranger) to provide overnight emergency shelter to those experiencing homelessness and case management to help them move from crisis to stability. The I-HELP Mesa program began in 2010, and FPC has been hosting guests since its inception. It was so successful that it has grown to include many other cities across Arizona including Avondale, Goodyear, Surprise, Peoria, Phoenix and future programs in Tucson and Casa Grande.

We need I-Help host volunteers! The host volunteer commitment is 2-4 hours on a Sunday night 5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. and involves providing a dinner meal for up to 10 guests, which can be prepared at home or store bought. Thanks to the very generous donations from members of our congregation, the host can be reimbursed for the cost of the meals provided. The guests are so appreciative and always willing to help with any clean up.

If you have any questions or feel this is something you would like to participate in, please contact: Janet Verch, I-Help Coordinator, at FPC at Cell: (480) 218-1357 / Email: jwowaz93@gmail.com

Worship

The International Day of Prayer is Thursday, May 2nd. We'll commemorate the day by hosting an Ecumenical Service of Prayer at 7:00 p.m. in our Sanctuary, followed by a reception in Fellowship Hall. Please plan to join us for this very special time in the life of our church.

On May 12th, we'll celebrate Mother's Day! We'll honor and recognize our mothers, and 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.

Our Preschool Children will have their own songs to share during the third week of May! The annual Preschool Spring Fling (Concert) will be held on Wednesday, May 15th, at 10:30 a.m. The fun will begin in Fellowship Hall, followed by a big potluck family-style picnic in the Courtyard. The congregation is invited to attend and join in the fun!

Summer Worship will be in Fellowship Hall from Memorial Day (May 26th) through Labor Day (September 2nd). Please join us as our Worship adventure continues, and we explore the ways in which we can praise the Lord and pronounce our faith in Him!

We'll observe Presbyterian Heritage Sunday May 26th. Our worship will include offerings from The Handbell Quintet, and Dei Gloriam Handbell Choir. One Voice's interpretation of "He's the Greatest" will be the Anthem for the day. We hope to see you as we celebrate all the goodness the Lord has done for us!

The summer choir schedule is once again rapidly approaching. Copies of the schedule will be available on Sunday, May 19th, in the Church Office, the Choir Room, and at fpcmesa.org/worship-planning. We'll enjoy our summer music schedule May 26th through Labor Day Sunday!



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 visitor, too.

Also, please join us in recognition of our superior teachers and staff! During the week of May 6-10, 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. Ellyn, Ms. Cece, Ms. Cena and Ms. Shiloh would love to see you!

Then, mark your calendars and plan to join us! 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 15th at 10:30 a.m. Please bring a dish to share after the show.

Lastly, we are currently offering Early Registration for the new school year. The preschool will be celebrating its 38th year in August 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 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 Monday thru Thursdays in June to offer tours to families interested!

Thank you for all of your support, love and prayers this year! It has meant so much to me and my teachers to have such a loving church community!

Shiloh Murillo

First and foremost, we hope you will join us at our Spring Luncheon for a delicious lunch and interesting program! Gentlemen and other guests are certainly included. You may bring a salad or dessert to share, if you wish, for our buffet at 11:30 on May 18. Our program will be presented by Chris Casanova, our Synod representative from our presbytery's PW. She will share reflections and insights from her participation in the national mission trip to our southern border, including time spent with Frontera de Cristo, our mission partner.

As a continuation of our December luncheon's charity, we will accept donations of leftover jewelry or craft items you're ready pass forward. Please let Carol Anderson know if you're coming so we can set a place and make you a name tag!

The Grand Canyon Presbyterian Women held its Spring Gathering at Orangewood Presbyterian on April 13. Six FPC ladies enjoyed the day with friends from other churches and interesting breakout sessions, including the 2025 Suggested Reading List and on next year's Bible study, *Let Justice Roll Down: God's Call to Care for Neighbors and All Creation*.

**FPC Mesa Presbyterian Women
invite you to our**

Spring Luncheon

**Saturday May 18, 2024
161 N Mesa Drive, Mesa, AZ 85201**

Lunch - 11:30 Program - 12:15

Everyone is welcome!

Chris Casanova presents:
**Reflections on the USA Mission Experience
Arizona and the Border Region**

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

Donations of used jewelry and crafts for Busted Broads will be collected.

Please provide first names of those attending
to Carol Anderson: phone, text, voicemail @ (480) 272-5517
or email: carolboydanderson@gmail.com



Mission

The next community dinner will be Wednesday, May 1st, at 5:00 p.m. The meal will celebrate Cinco de Mayo. Since it's on May Day, come make a may basket to take home or give away! Community dinners will continue through the summer months on the following Wednesdays: June 5th, July 3rd, and August 7th. If you are available to help with one of these dinners, please let the office know.

This quarter's mission project will be making and distributing Blessing Bags. Blessing bags have items to keep people healthy. The bags (which will have our church name and contact info printed on it) will be given out, with a bottle of water that has an inspirational bible verse on it, in the food pantry and delivered to homeless around the valley. We are accepting donations for items to be placed in the bags:

- nail clippers
- emery boards
- tweezers
- bath powder
- deodorant
- mints
- toothbrush
- sm. toothpaste
- band-aids
- granola bars (not chocolate)
- CASH - to purchase items

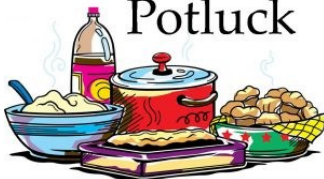


If you wish to donate, please drop these items off at church on Sunday, during the community dinner or in the office from now until mid-May. Please let Susan Chesko know if you would like to assemble these bags or go along to deliver them.



Montlure Camp in Greer will open this summer, and there is still work to be done. Some members of our church went up the last weekend in April to work, and there are still weekends in May to help too. Some from our church will go up May 17-19 but any weekend in May would be helpful to get ready for the opening! Let Mike Gerlach or Marcy Snitzer know, and they can help you sign up.

Monthly Potluck



Fellowship

Everyone is invited to a potluck lunch after worship on May 26th! Please bring a dish to share. A good time will be had by all!

Discipleship

Montlure Summer Camps

Overnight:

Senior High Camp June 2-7, 2024

Junior High Camp June 10-15, 2024

4-6 Grades June 25-29, 2024

Traveling Day Camp

June 10-14, Mission del Sol Church, Tempe

Register at Montlure.org. Partial campership available on our church website for Overnight and Traveling Day Camp. \$75 off TDC w/ code FPC2024.



montlure
Traveling Day Camp

June 10-14

Monday - Thursday
9am to 3pm
Friday 9am to 12:30pm
Extended Care Mon-Thur until 5pm

\$75 off with Code FPC2024
Lunch is included

INVITATION TO ONE AND ALL from your Strategic Planning Committee!

Be part of the conversations as we as a congregation dive deeper and joyfully into what makes FPC so great! Sharing began at the potluck on Sunday, April 28th. There was a good turnout with great food and lively dialogue! Discussions will be held in all Committees and Commissions. Still, some of you won't be involved in any of those. To have your voice heard, please reflect, and respond to the same prompts, which are stated below, and will be used in every venue. You may write your thoughts and send them to the Strategic Planning Committee at plan.fpcmesa@gmail.com.

- Reflect on a time when you felt most involved, spiritually touched, or excited about your involvement at FPC.
- What about FPC makes your heart sing?
- FPC's values that sustained that experience?
- What do you believe are FPC's core values?

Property Update

What a difference a year makes! Remember how our parking lot used to look, replete with cracks, chips, and potholes? And how dark it was at night in that “back forty” area to the east? It was about this time last year that the property committee took a hard look at our fund-raising and finances and decided to get it repaved. Our spirits were lifted by words of support from church members who agreed that the pavement was increasingly a hazard to people walking to their cars.

Now it is safe and smooth with better nighttime lighting. Freshly painted stripes clearly show where to park for smooth traffic flow. It is sloped properly for excellent draining of rains from our monsoons and atmospheric rivers.

However, in the year since we started work our General Capital Fund is still underfunded by \$90k. This doesn't affect church operations and salaries, but it slows down our schedule for other projects that need attention. Some items we are looking at are:

- Remodel Fellowship Hall restrooms
- Sanctuary foundation cracks
- New alarm system
- Replace front sign

Your faithful giving helped us raise most of that money, and thus we began work on the faith that the remaining money would come in. To do this we reallocated dollars from other accounts, which we are eager to repay as soon as possible.

Our church is greatly blessed with members who generously give of their time, talent, and treasure. Please help us continue our work to make the campus a wonderful place we can use for worship, fellowship, and community service.

If you choose to write a check, please note that it is for the General Capital Fund.

Thank you,
David Frederick, Property Elder

Just for Laughs...

A Federal Agent stopped at a ranch in Texas and talked to an old rancher. He told the rancher, "I need to inspect your ranch." The rancher said, "Okay, but don't go into that field over there..." The Agent verbally exploded and said, "Look mister, I have the authority of the federal government with me!" Reaching into his rear back pocket, the arrogant officer removed his badge and proudly displayed it to the rancher. "See this badge?! This badge means I can go wherever I want...on any land! No questions asked, no answers given! Do you understand, old man?!" The rancher kindly nodded, apologized, and went about his chores. Moments later the rancher heard loud screams, and he looked up and saw the Agent running for his life, being chased by the rancher's big Santa Gertrudis Bull! With every step the bull was gaining ground on the officer, and it was likely that he'd be gored before reaching safety. The officer was clearly terrified. The old rancher threw down his tools, ran as fast as he could to the fence, and yelled at the top of his lungs....."YOUR BADGE! SHOW HIM YOUR BADGE!"

May Birthdays



Jan Peterson	1st
Joy Schulz	2nd
Grace Njoku	4th
Brent Gregory	6th
Robert Nobis	6th
Everleigh Reeves	8th
Fran Gunter	11th
Karelle Reid-Hoefer	11th
Christina Dzodzomenyo	12th
Suzie Payton	12th
George Wagner	12th
Michael McGrath	13th
Sue Eisenklam	16th
Mihret Gerlach	19th
Vivian Buck	23rd
Lynne Harding	24th
Karen Eberhardt	25th
Yvonne Oliver	25th
Maggie Cronenberg	28th
Patricia Wyse	28th

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

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

Christian Johnson: pastor@fpcmesa.org
Mark Ramsey: music@fpcmesa.org
Chris McKee: chris@fpcmesa.org
Linda Reeves: pubs@fpcmesa.org
Rob Kjar: business@fpcmesa.org
Shiloh Murillo: preschool@fpcmesa.org



Calendar Notes

May

Worship every Sunday at 10:00 a.m.

In person or online

Christian Education:

Children at 11:20 a.m.

Adults at 11:30 a.m.

Food Donations taken every Sunday

Clothing Closet donations taken 1st and 3rd Sunday

May 1

Community Dinner

April 1 & 15

Women's Bible Study

May 2

National Day of Prayer Ecumenical Event

May 5

Deacons meet

May 13 & 14

Circles meet

May 12

Happy Mother's Day!
Presentation of Officers

May 15

Preschool Spring Fling

May 18

PW Spring Luncheon

May 19

Session meets

May 23 & 30

New Member Class

May 26

Potluck Sunday

May 27

Memorial Day — Office closed

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161 N. Mesa Drive
Mesa, AZ 85201

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Closed Friday

Christian Johnson, Pastor
Mark Ramsey, Director of Music Ministries
Chris McKee, Director of Operations
Linda Reeves, Office Manager/Publications
Shiloh Murillo, Preschool Director
Rob Kjar, Bookkeeper