

La Palabra

August 2024

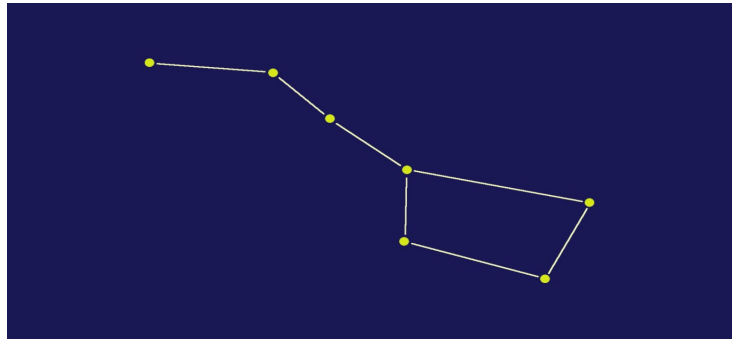
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A Message from Christian

Our Need for a Pole-star

During June, I served as the chaplain at Montlure Camp. I had the opportunity to teach the young people about finding the North Star using the two stars at the end of the Big Dipper's cup. We also discussed how to navigate using the North Star and how to tell time based on the Big Dipper's movement around the North Star, accounting for the season. The campers understood the value of having a reliable polestar.



Amid the tumultuous news cycles this summer, I keep coming back to the concept of having a polestar that we can rely on; something that helps us navigate and understand the times.

Many things compete for that central place in our lives: politics, ideology, material possessions, wealth, knowledge, health, comfort, security, family, friends, and more. However, if we consider Solomon's words in Ecclesiastes, we realize that chasing after these things is like chasing after the wind; it is "vanity of vanities." So, what can truly be relied on?

The person and ministry of Jesus provide a fixed point by which we can navigate even the most chaotic times. Through him, we gain clarity about the world, understanding that it was created by him and for him (Colossians 1:16-17). By remembering that he is working to unite everything in him (Ephesians 1:10-12), we can see that he is the King of everything. Just as the stars in the Big Dipper point toward the North Star, all of Scripture points to and testifies to Jesus (Luke 24:27, 44-47). It is clear that Jesus is the great polestar.

As we anticipate continued chaotic times while we transition from summer to fall, we should remember that Jesus is the centerpiece of history, our lives, and eternity. We must continually recalibrate our souls by focusing on Jesus, our Pole-star, as we pilgrims journey towards our ultimate destination.

Blessings,
Pastor Christian

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Discipleship

On Friday, July 19th, the FPC Young Adults volunteered to help fill and pack bags of food at Feed My Starving Children, a Christian non-profit in Mesa! Donning gloves and hairnets, they assisted in putting together Rice Manna Packs for hungry children abroad. In 90 minutes, and with other volunteers in attendance, the Young Adults filled and packed away 68 boxes worth of food, each containing 36 packs, which makes over 2,400 nutritious meals!

The boxes were shipped on July 22nd to International Care Ministries and July 25th to Convoy of Hope, both located in the Philippines.

In attendance, from left to right, were Ian Harding, Andrew Frederick, Kyle Harding, Aaron Frederick, Lauren Harding, Karelle Reidhoefer, Fernando McCune, Ines McGrath, and Michael McGrath.



Join us for **10:00 a.m.** worship on **September 8th** as we:

- Kickoff a new Sunday school year,
- Present third grade Bibles,
- Commission our Christian Educators
- Participate in a Ministry Fair following worship in Fellowship Hall

Please contact the church office if your child is entering the third grade so we can present a Bible to them.



I would like to thank you all so much for the many cards, phone calls, visits and good wishes you have given me during my hospitalizations and transition to my new home. I appreciate all of you so very much!

Laura Bruening

Worship



Well, it's been quite the adventuresome-mer (see what I did there?) with our Worship Adventure in Fellowship Hall. Each of you has pitched in to make it a success, too. Who'd have thought we could worship from a high-top table, or a sofa.....or even a bean-bag? We're able to enjoy beverages and snacks during and after the service, thanks to the Fellowship Commission's coffee hosts. And the Young Adults are helping with renewed interest in espresso drinks. You may or may not have noticed the recent addition of a new digital keyboard, which has allowed us to effectively retire the ailing acoustic piano and experience much improved sound in the Hall and over the livestream. We've had a few glitches here and there, but overall it's been a pretty good ride considering we're doing it all with mobile phones and a laptop! Thank you Greg Gerlach, Bob Schulz, Dave & Renita Jurgensen and Mark Ramsey for making that happen every week.

Based on reaction and overall feedback, it seems this summer's "experiment" is a success. We'll continue the fun through the month of August and Labor Day weekend. Last August's La Palabra article highlighted the exciting change our new Baptismal Font brought to the Sanctuary. This year, let us just say be on the lookout for more exciting changes when we return to the Sanctuary Sunday, September 8th.

The Worship Adventure continues!



Mission



The next community dinner will be a fried chicken dinner on Wednesday, August 7th, at 5:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. For more information, contact Susan Chesko.

We are still collecting school supplies for the preschool through the end of August. You can drop off donations in the office during the week or after church on Sundays. See the wish list on page 4.

Upcoming events:

- The fall trunk or treat will be Saturday, October 26th, from 4:00-7:00 p.m. Please let the office know if you would like to be on the festival committee.
- There will be a silent auction during the month of November. Baskets being made and donations from around your house should be brought to the church the first two weeks of October.



As the new school year approaches and school supplies go on sale, please remember that August is the time for the Preschool School Supply Drive. There will be a container in Fellowship Hall on Sundays and in the office during the week in which to put your donated supplies. The Preschool wish list is below. Thanks for your support of First Presbyterian Preschool!

School Classroom & Supply Wish List

- 64 oz Bottle of Bubbles
- 5oz paper Dixie Cups
- Snacks - individually wrapped & healthy
- Small Paper bowls
- Small Paper plates
- Washable markers
- Sidewalk Chalk
- Paper towels
- Glue sticks
- White school glue
- Card stock (white or colored)
- 8x11 white copy paper
- Magic Eraser Sponges
- Colored pencils
- Colored Dry-erase markers
- Watercolor paint trays
- Facial tissues



Fellowship



A fan favorite is returning! The Ice Cream Social is making a come back during coffee time right after worship on August 25th. Our very own HolyGrounds Praise Band will be providing some music for our entertainment, maybe even including some sing-a-long songs. Please plan to stay and enjoy some delicious ice cream, with all the fixin's and experience some great music and fellowship!

Also, mark your calendars for the return of our Monthly Potlucks on September 22nd immediately following worship. A good time will be had by all!



August Birthdays



Frank Thompson	1st
Shiloh Murillo	3rd
Charlotte Roberts	3rd
Verna Green	5th
Todd Verch	6th
Susan McMichael	7th
Ayden Hickey	8th
Mike Chesko	10th
Jo Beth Walstrom	11th
Carol Webster	12th
Susan Chesko	14th
Declynn Reeves	19th
Lynette Belew	20th
Robert Gerlach	20th
Tricia MacDonald	25th
Doug McInelly	26th

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

ADDRESS CHANGES/CORRECTIONS

Bruening, Laura
7311 E. Oasis St., #124
Mesa, AZ 85207

Calendar Notes

August

Worship every Sunday at 10:00 a.m.
in Fellowship Hall or online

Christian Education:
Children are on a break until September
Adults at 11:30 a.m.

Food Donations taken every Sunday
Clothing Closet donations taken 1st and 3rd Sunday

Preschool Supply Drive

August 1

Preschool Meet the Teacher Night

August 4

Deacons meet

August 5

First Day of Preschool

August 7

Community Dinner

August 9

Diamondbacks Faith & Family Night

August 25

Ice Cream Social
Session meets



First Presbyterian Church
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**