

La Palabra

September 2020

www.fpcmesa.org

480-964-8606

A Message from Ann

As Paul writes to the church in Philippi, so I share the same sentiments about all of you, dear congregation of FPC Mesa: “I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you!” Like Paul, I too am confident that the One who began a good work among us will bring it to completion. Indeed, God is not done with us yet! Thanks be to God!

As we “gear up” for fall, we recognize that our programs and other offerings will continue to look and feel different from previous years. For the time being, we continue to meet online per the discernment of our session. Our congregational leaders are acutely attuned to and supremely concerned about the weight of the decisions they are making for our congregation, and I am very grateful for the level of gravitas with which they take their responsibility. It has not been easy for any of us and your continued prayers are very much needed and appreciated. It is surely our hope that the metrics which have all been trending in the right direction will continue to do so and that we will be able to gather in our sanctuary for worship in the somewhat near future!

Many of you have “zoomed in” for a time of fellowship following worship, and it has been delightful to see your beautiful faces and hear your voices. It is truly balm for the soul to be gathered in this way, and I give thanks to God for God’s ongoing provision.

Beginning Wednesday, September 2nd, from 6:00-7:00 p.m. we will launch an online, casual, fun version of Wednesday WRAP that we have playfully named “Wrappy Hour!” We hope it will be fun for all ages and will offer a variety of games, music, and fellowship. If you’ve never participated in WRAP before, now is an excellent opportunity to check it out! We hope you will join in this adventure of faith formation and community building with our congregation. Look for the information in the weekly email update.

The Nominating Committee will begin their work soon as well. Please be thinking and praying about who you might recommend for consideration by the Nominating Committee to serve as a Deacon or an Elder. Please see the ministry descriptions printed in this newsletter and also consult with anyone you are led to recommend prior to submitting their name for consideration. The Elders comprise our governing board, our session, and the Deacons are those who lead our ministries of care and compassion, as well as keeping in touch with their “flock.”

My friends, God is with us and will guide us through this challenging time. May God grant us patience and grace to be loving, kind, and gentle as together we make our way into God’s good future!

In the love of Christ our Lord ~ 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) — David Miller

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

Fall is just around the corner, and hope and so much anxiety abounds. As we prepare and anticipate, may God's love and timing continue to fill us with abundant blessings and guiding grace, and may He continue to move us in new directions which will even more powerfully impact the lives of our congregation and community.

The in-person WRAP program will be replaced initially by a new "Wrappy Hour." The new format will offer a Casual, Online Christian Fellowship Full of Fun for All Ages. We might have music, Bible, prayer, or games, or just lots of time to both catch-up with friends and make new friends. We'll meet at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesdays throughout September (September 2, 9, 16, 23, 30). We'll hope to return to campus soon, but until then, join us for "Wrappy Hour," and let's see what special blessings God has in store for each of us and for FPC! [HERE'S THE LINK](#).

Our annual Hymnfest will be held virtually during worship on Sunday, September 6th. The theme will be "Gospel Music," and we'll be led in song by Dr. Glenn Bennett. We'll sing and hear stories about the great songs of our faith, so come prepared to be blessed in word and in song as we seek to be a blessing for others.

In addition to the virtual re-gatherings of our choirs, the Sanctuary Choir will record live as we move into the fall season. We'll begin on Wednesday, September 16th, at 7:00 p.m., and as a part of our virtual rehearsals, we'll record anthems in the comfort of our own homes. If this sounds all too challenging, please at least be a part of the fun as we support one another in ministry. The more homes and recordings, the merrier! For information about the choirs and other worship and music activities, please visit our church website (www.fpcmesa.org) and select the Worship drop-down menu. Numerous worship stories and songs are also included for individual and group devotions.



Finally, the FPC All-Church "Grin-Again-Games" Game Afternoon is almost here! On Sunday, September 27th, at 5:00 p.m., we'll play games via Zoom, and our leaders will be guiding us from Fellowship Hall! Maybe we'll play some America Says, maybe Common Knowledge, or maybe we'll just Get a Clue. Come and see, and join the fun! A game link will be provided when we get closer to game time. In the meantime, brush up on your trivia knowledge!

Coming Events

- 9/2 Wrappy Hour Begins
- 9/16 First Sanctuary Choir Online Rehearsal
- 9/27 Grin-Again-Games Game Afternoon
- 10/4 World Communion Sunday

Humoresque

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

I know I shouldn't have done this, but I am 83 years old, and I was in the McDonald's drive-through this morning, and the young lady behind me leaned on her horn and started mouthing something because I was taking too long to place my order. So when I got to the first window I paid for her order along with my own. The cashier must have told her what I'd done, because as we moved up she leaned out her window and waved to me and mouthed "Thank you," obviously embarrassed that I had repaid her rudeness with kindness. When I got to the second window I showed them both receipts and took her food, too. Now she has to go back to the end of the queue and start all over again. Don't blow your horn at old people, they have been around a long time. [from Marj Burgan]



The 2020 -2021 Bible study is "Into the Light, Finding Hope Through Prayers of Lament," by P. Lynn Miller. In all that we have experienced within just a few months, it is hard to believe that this study was not written this year. Lament might mean different things to different people. Following is a quote from the introduction:

"WHY BOTHER TO LAMENT? BECAUSE LAMENT

- is communication with God,
- broadens our prayer lives,
- connects us to the world and the God who loves it and us,
- helps us focus on the actual situations that lead us to lament,
- is an opportunity to confess our faith in God whose promises are trustworthy.

When we lament, we move from suffering to faith. In our faith there is hope. We lament in order to hope."

We will start the year, with Lesson One, in **October**. More information will be coming, as we get closer, to what Circle Meetings will look like then. Whether Circle looks like what we all have known in the past or virtually, these lessons about lament cannot help but reach out to each of us. Please join us in this timely study.

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

Ann Conklin: pastor@fpcmesa.org
Mark Ramsey: choirs@cox.net
Chris McKee: chris@fpcmesa.org
Linda Reeves: pubs@fpcmesa.org
Don Krill: buildings@fpcmesa.org

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

September Faith Formation Happenings

Wrappy Hour: Casual, Online Christian Fellowship & Fun for all ages! Our midweek WRAP program is gearing up to launch with a new online format for at least the first block (September 2, 9, 16, 23, 30). Wrappy Hour is an intergenerational gathering for all ages with fun games, songs, God talk and prayer in a family friendly format. Join us at 6:00 p.m. and unwind from a busy day. Is it a worship? No! Is it Bible study? Not really. Then what is it? We call it Wrappy Hour, and it is still under construction. Come and discover the fun for yourself!

Wrappy Hour Zoom Meeting Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83126715351?pwd=S1BPWlpMSVFFSnFRUOp3clYrNIRldz09>

Meeting ID: 831 2671 5351

Passcode: 939231

Faith Formation Resources. During this time of physical distancing we have provided numerous resources including written and video devotions for all ages to enjoy on our church's website: <https://fpcmesa.org/discipleship>.



Children's Church Care Packages Now Available! We miss worshipping together in person as well as seeing the children in church every week. Children's Church care packages are now available to enjoy Christ-centered activities at home. Please contact Chris McKee to make arrangements to get one.

Christian Education Sunday. September usually marks the start of fall programming in the life of the church. Session continues to follow the direction of the presbytery by having worship and many of our Christian Education programming online, until it is safe to return in-person. With that said, Christian Education Sunday is on September 13th when we will present third grade Bibles and commission our Christian Educators. Please contact Chris if your child is entering the third grade, and we can plan to present their Bible in a safe and creative way.

Sunday Youth Gathering. Our FPC youth group is for Junior and Senior High students. We meet most Sundays at 10:30 a.m. via Zoom. Our Sunday Youth Gathering is a time to check in with new and old friends, play fun games, talk God stuff and prayer. Please email or text Chris to get the invite link or if you have any questions. Wednesday youth is currently on a temporary hold because of the busy online school schedules of our youth.

In Christ,

Chris McKee
Minister of Faith Formation
chris@fpcmesa.org





Every August FPC has held a school supply drive for the Preschool. This year is going to be very different! We are not asking for the typical things because of the COVID changes. We are asking for things like individual pencil boxes, hand sanitizer, Clorox wipes for surface spot cleaning, tissues, copy paper, and individually wrapped snacks for the children since they will need to be served individually wrapped items for snack time. Thank you for your continuing support of the Preschool.

Where: Please drop off donations at the FPC Office

When: Thursday, September 3th between 1:00-3:00 p.m.

We are now scheduled to open on Tuesday, September 8th. Please keep the students and teachers in your prayers.

~Shiloh Murillo, Director

The FPC Mesa Nominating Committee seeks disciples of Jesus Christ who are members of our congregation to serve as Elders and Deacons for an upcoming 3-year term to begin June 2021. The ministry descriptions given in our Book of Order are as follows:

G-2.02 DEACONS: THE MINISTRY OF COMPASSION AND SERVICE

G-2.0201 Deacon Defined

The ministry of deacon as set forth in Scripture is one of compassion, witness, and service, sharing in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ for the poor, the hungry, the sick, the lost, the friendless, the oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies or structures, or anyone in distress. Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, sincere compassion, and sound judgment should be chosen for this ministry.

G-2.03 RULING ELDERS: THE MINISTRY OF DISCERNMENT AND GOVERNANCE

G-2.0301 Ruling Elder Defined

As there were in Old Testament times elders for the government of the people, so the New Testament church provided persons with particular gifts to share in discernment of God's Spirit and governance of God's people. Accordingly, congregations should elect persons of wisdom and maturity of faith, having demonstrated skills in leadership and being compassionate in spirit. Ruling elders are so named not because they "lord it over" the congregation (Matt. 20:25), but because they are chosen by the congregation to discern and measure its fidelity to the Word of God, and to strengthen and nurture its faith and life. Ruling elders, together with ministers of the Word and Sacrament, exercise leadership, government, spiritual discernment, and discipline and have responsibilities for the life of a congregation as well as the whole church, including ecumenical relationships. When elected by the congregation, they shall serve faithfully as members of the session. When elected as commissioners to higher councils, ruling elders participate and vote with the same authority as ministers of the Word and Sacrament, and they are eligible for any office.

The Nominating Committee: Allan Schultz, Hal Engman, Anita Ramsey, Tammy Miller, Helen Thielke, David Jurgensen, Barbara Walker.

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

Peace and Global Witness Special Offering - “Through participation in the Peace & Global Witness Offering, our church is extending Christ’s peace throughout our community and our world” (PC USA). Starting September 6th and going through World Communion Sunday on October 4th, we celebrate the season of peace through the Peace and Global Witness offering. This offering will help equip peacemakers in congregations and around the world. For more information look at PCUSA special offerings website. 50% of the offering will go to PCUSA for supporting those who are working actively for peacemaking efforts around the world. 25% will go to mid council to support regional ministries of peacemaking and reconciliation. 25% FPC Mesa gets to designate for supporting the same causes. Please prayerfully consider your giving to this special offering.



Café Justo has unfortunately been cancelled for this quarter. If you would still like to purchase some delicious coffee, you can do so at www.justcoffee.org and have it delivered straight to your home. Thank you for your understanding.

The Food Pantry continues each week serving those in need. A special thank you to our congregation living in Friendship Village. They collect food and even bring it down to the church on a regular basis. We have a lot of blessings in filling this mission. Thank you all!

~ Sandy Clark



September Birthdays



| | |
|---------------------|------|
| Monte Nelson | 1st |
| Mark Ramsey | 3rd |
| Ruth Rummler | 5th |
| Ron Wright | 5th |
| Diana Johnson | 7th |
| Gregg Gerlach | 10th |
| Suzanne Engman | 13th |
| Sam Smith | 13th |
| Skeets Throckmorton | 13th |
| Beverly Snitzer | 14th |
| Paul Green | 15th |

| | |
|-------------------|------|
| Miki Newbry | 16th |
| Nuha Ghubril | 17th |
| Bill Rummler | 17th |
| Mildred Kimbrough | 18th |
| Helen Thielke | 18th |
| Kyle Harding | 21st |
| Rediet Newbry | 21st |
| Paul Harding | 22nd |
| Steve Post | 25th |
| Sandra Clark | 26th |
| Don Wallen | 26th |
| Jeanette Chaney | 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.



IN MEMORIAM

Jack Odiorne — July 13, 2020
 Marie Robb — August 13, 2020
 Jackie St. Louis — August 15, 2020
 Bill Smith — August 21, 2020



Calendar Notes

There are no events scheduled on our campus. If this changes, we will let you know as quickly as possible. Please read the Weekly Update or listen to the announcements during Sunday worship for updated information.

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

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161 North Mesa Drive
Mesa, AZ 85201
Phone: 480-964-8606**

E-mail: pubs@fpcmesa.org

Website: www.fpcmesa.org

Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Friday 8:30 - 12:00 noon

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