

La Palabra

September 2021

www.fpcmesa.org

480-964-8606

A Message from Ann

To the **elders** among you, I appeal as a fellow **elder** and a witness of Christ's sufferings who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. (1 Peter 5:1-3)

In the same way, **deacons** are to be worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience... for those who serve well as **deacons** gain a good standing for themselves and great boldness in the faith that is in Christ Jesus. (1 Timothy 3:8, 9,13)

The quotes above are Biblical descriptions of the ministry of Elder and Deacon. These are essential leadership roles in our congregational life together. The Nominating Committee will soon begin its work of prayerfully discerning those called to serve First Presbyterian Church of Mesa as Elder and Deacon. As always, you are encouraged to pray for the Nominating Committee, as well as be in prayer about whom you might sense God is calling to serve. Lifting up one another's gifts for the building up of the body is the responsibility of the whole congregation. With that in mind, I encourage you to listen to the Holy Spirit and follow the Spirit's leading. If a person is called to mind to serve, check with them first regarding their willingness to serve and then submit those names to Marcy Snitzer, Nominating Committee Elder, or any member of the committee.

We have all seen throughout this pandemic period just how very important our congregational leaders are to our flourishing and spiritual growth. It is a true gift that our polity allows the congregation to elect its own leaders and this is something that ought to be prayerfully considered by all of us. Together, let us trust the committee to discern whom God has already chosen to lead us into God's good future! (*Please refer to page 2 of this newsletter for our Book of Order descriptions of the ministry of Elder and Deacon.)

I also want to take this opportunity to remind you about our Sunday morning schedule beginning September 12th, Kick-Off Sunday!

- 10:00 Worship
- 11:00 Fellowship Time
- 11:20-12:00 Education/Faith Formation for all ages

I will lead a class on "Nuts and Bolts of Being Presbyterian" on September 12th and 19th which will cover in more detail the ministries here at FPC Mesa, as well as an overview of Presbyterian theology and polity. Many have expressed a need for a refresher, and this class will provide that opportunity! Beginning in October, the Sunday morning adult class will focus on "Half Truths of the Bible." I look forward to some vibrant and vigorous discussion with you around this theme.

~ Continued on next page ~

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Finally, our Wednesday evening intergenerational program will launch on Wednesday, September 1st. The staff has been hard at work throughout the summer planning this re-launch with some modifications to our previous program. We are really excited about these changes and hope that many of you will choose to participate! The curriculum, Follow Me, is excellent and very applicable to how we live out our faith in our everyday life. It is based upon practices of Jesus and will help us all become more faithful in our spiritual walk with the Lord. The time frame has been shortened to 5:30 – 7:00 (with the children’s choir, Pure Praise Singers, meeting prior to that from 4:45- 5:25). We’ve added a time of worship which we hope will have a “camp-fire” feel in singing camp and praise songs together as an intergenerational group. We will also meet together intergenerationally at least once per 5-week block. Come and be filled with the Spirit in the middle of the week and enjoy a time of worship and fellowship with your faith family!

Recognizing how difficult this past year and a half has been for all of us, I hope and pray that we can come together as Christ’s body and you will be active participants in the life of our congregation!

May God’s grace and peace be with you all

~ Ann

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 2022. 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: Marcy Snitzer (Chair), Allan Schultz, Anita Ramsey, Helen Thielke, David Jurgensen, Dan Sitzler, Kevin Reeves

DISCIPLESHIP

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

Children's Ministries (E) — Susan Chesko
Family Ministries (E) — Kristen Hull

Youth/Young Adult (E) — Kyle Harding

September Faith Formation Happenings



WRAP Relaunch. FPC midweek WRAP program is starting **Wednesday, September 1st, at 5:30 p.m.**, in Fellowship Hall. WRAP is an intergenerational midweek program that includes supper, worship and Christian education for children, youth and adults. We are unveiling the new Presbyterian program “Follow Me, Biblical Practices for Faithful Living.” These are practices Jesus did and taught. Please sign-up at the door. You are also welcome to join us anytime throughout the block.

Kickoff Sunday on September 12th! Join us during our 10:00 a.m. worship on September 12th as we kickoff a new Sunday school year, present third grade Bibles and commission our Christian Educators and Preschool teachers. Please contact Chris McKee if your child is entering the third grade so we can present them a Bible. Our fall Sunday program for children, youth and adults starts the same day at 11:20 a.m. Kickoff Sunday is a big day at FPC and we hope you can be here!



Youth Fellowship Restarting. FPC Youth group kickoff is Sunday, September 12th, at 11:20 a.m. in the youth room Junior and Senior High students are encouraged to join us for Christian fellowship, games and God talk.



We have rescheduled the youth bowling to **Sunday October 17th, 11:30-3:00 p.m.** Enjoy two hours of bowling and food/drinks around \$28 at Fat Cats, Gilbert. Please turn in permission forms and money by October 3. Permissions forms are on the youth section of the website. Please contact Chris for further details. chris@fpcmesa.org

Trunk or Treat at FPC. Save-the-Date for a spooktacular event on **Sunday, October 31st, at noon.** Join us at our FPC parking lot as we decorate our vehicle trunks or tailgates with a family friendly theme for Halloween. We will create a safe place for the kiddos to trick-or-treat. Sign-ups begin on Sunday, October 3rd. Stay-tuned for more details.

Blessings,
Chris McKee
Minister of Faith Formation
chris@fpcmesa.org



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

**"Next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world.
It controls our thoughts, minds, hearts, and spirits." - Martin Luther**

Our annual Hymnfest will be held on Communion Sunday, September 5th. We'll have a prelude-hymnsing, organ solos, and hymns from our new "Glory to God" hymnal! Arrive early for our hymnsing, and let me know if you would like to assist as one of our service song leaders, playing a rhythm instrument or ringing handbells.

Are you ready for some football? "Kick-Off" Sunday will be held on September 12th. The new season of Christian Education and Music events will include a packed schedule of classes, rehearsals, and worship. During our kickoff event, we'll also dedicate our new pulpit, paraments, handbell table pads, and communion trays. Arrive early for front row seats, and remember that our season passes are always the best value!

Most of our choirs will begin this month; however, in light of safety concerns over unmasked chancel singing, choirs and worship song leaders will use masks until we can further discuss safety issues at the September Session meeting. Here are the choir start dates:

- 9/1 WRAP First Fall Gathering, with Opening Worship Songs at 5:30 p.m. (Fellowship Hall/Courtyard)
- 9/8 First Ringers, 6:00 p.m. (Sanctuary)
- 9/8 Sanctuary Choir, 7:00 p.m. (Choir Room/Sanctuary Recordings)
- 9/15 Pure Praise Singers, 4:45 p.m. (Choir Room Recordings)
- 9/16 One Voice, 6:00 p.m. (Choir Room Recordings)
- 9/16 Dei Gloriam Handbell Choir, 6:30 p.m. (Bell Room/Sanctuary)

The vocal groups will either record in advance or be masked during worship anthems. Our two praise bands will continue to offer their faithful song leadership and special music during most of our fall worship services!

A friend and colleague used to recommend a good walk as a way of putting new perspectives upon challenging times. Last week, I took that suggestion and went on a "Perspectives Walk" of our campus. I came across a single piece of sheet music, "The Battle Belongs to The Lord." There couldn't be a better perspective! Each of us has been navigating the highs and lows of life during the pandemic, and at times the many new challenges could become overwhelming. As we continue to experience God's endless love through a sweet balance of joys and sorrows, we can be greatly blessed by these comforting words from Helen Keller. They offer a beautiful perspective as we face even life's deepest challenges: "When it seems that our sorrow is too great to be borne, let us think of the great family of the heavy-hearted into which our grief has given us entrance, and inevitably, we will feel about us their arms, their sympathy, their understanding." That wraps all earthly struggles into a great, heavenly perspective!

Coming Events

- 10/3 World Communion Sunday/Hymnal Dedication
- 10/31 Reformation Sunday/All Saints' Sunday
- 2/13/2022 Worship led by The Blackwood Quartet, 10:00 a.m.
- 2022 75th Anniversary of FPC!

Humoresque

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



Attempting one of the most difficult plays in the game of baseball.
Stealing a bass.

[from Brent & Cheryl Gregory]

(Bonus Humor:)

Why do we tell actors to break a leg? Because every musical has a cast. [from Dick Baird]

Save the Date!!!

75th anniversary celebration

For

First Presbyterian Church of Mesa!!

April 9-10, 2022

Saturday 4:00 ~ 7:00 pm

The celebration will feature a reception in Fellowship Hall followed by a program in our Sanctuary.

Sunday will be a celebratory worship service on Palm Sunday (which is the same day as our very first worship service at FPC!!)

Please mark the date now and plan to join us for this celebratory occasion!!

MISSION

Mission (E) (Chair) — Shelley Cronenberg
Pastor — Ann Conklin
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

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 5th and go-



SPECIAL OFFERINGS

ing through World Communion Sunday on October 3rd, 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% of it is our decision and your mission commission decided that it will go to support our mission coworkers Rev. Mark Adams and Miriam Maldonado and the people of the US-Mexico Border and the ministry of Frontera de Cristo. Please prayerfully consider your giving to this special offering.



Café Justo is back! You can buy delicious, organic, coffee and feel good knowing that it also helps the coffee farmers in Mexico obtain a livable wage. Orders will be preordered online to make sure that we do not order too much or too little of all the different types of coffee. To order, please go to <https://forms.gle/Q8j1ASSPS9SUE8en9> by Sunday, September 12th, to submit your order. If you need help, please contact Shelley Cronenberg, who would be happy to help you

complete your order. The coffee will then be available for pickup on Sunday, September 26th, in Fellowship Hall during coffee hour.

Mesa’s Love Your City Day is coming soon. We need two groups again this year. One group will help stuff informational pamphlets into bags on Thursday, October 21st, at 1:00 p.m. and the other group will deliver the bags to a neighborhood the morning of Saturday, October 23rd. This has been a wonderful tradition where we can give back to this wonderful city, so mark your calendars.

A letter from our new clothing closet ministry.

Hello First Presbyterian Church!

We are happy to announce that the Clothing Closet will officially open in September. You can bring clothing, shoes, and accessories starting Sunday, September 5th, and the closet will be open to the public the following Friday, September 10th, from 8:00-9:00 a.m. It will serve all those in need of gently used clothing. That includes our church members as well.

For those that may want to donate to Clothing Closet we will collect the items you donate at the beginning of Sunday service. We ask that these items are gently used. Please no stained, torn, or threadbare items. No medical device-based clothing and no used underwear.

If you have any questions concerning Clothing Closet, please direct them to Renita Jurgensen or Christina Dzodzomenyo.

A big thanks to Dave’s Crew in prepping the Clothing Closet area. Thank you to the leadership that came together to approve the creation of this ministry, to our wonderful Pastor Ann for her guidance and to all those that sent prayers and positive energy for this new ministry.



September Birthdays



Monte Nelson	1st
Mark Ramsey	3rd
Ron Wright	5th
Diana Johnson	7th
Gregg Gerlach	10th
Skeets Throckmorton	13th
Beverly Snitzer	14th
Paul Green	15th
Miki Newbry	16th
Nuha Ghubril	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.

Calendar Notes

September

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

September 1

WRAP begins

September 5

Hymnfest Sunday

September 6

Office Closed — Labor Day

September 8

First Ringers & Choir begin

September 12

Kickoff Sunday
Youth Group Kickoff

September 16

One Voice & Dei Gloriam begin

September 19

Session

September 26

Monthly Food Drive

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

- Ann Conklin: pastor@fpcmesa.org
- Mark Ramsey: music@fpcmesa.org
- Chris McKee: chris@fpcmesa.org
- Linda Reeves: pubs@fpcmesa.org
- Don Krill: buildings@fpcmesa.org
- Rob Kjar: business@fpcmesa.org



IN MEMORIAM

Ruth Landers — August 1, 2021



Dear Friends,

Thank you for your concern and for your prayers for me and for my family during the time of my son's illness. We greatly appreciate you.

Marilyn Uithoven

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Shiloh Murillo, Preschool Director
Don Krill, Buildings Supervisor
Rob Kjar, Bookkeeper
James R. Bruening, Pastor Emeritus**