

La Palabra

September 2023

www.fpcmesa.org

480-964-8606

A Message from David

I am borrowing this image from the Girl Scouts to illustrate that our church is also ready for a Great Roundup!

In preparation for calling a new pastor, we have been very busy behind the scenes ~ and sometimes *in front of the scenes* ~ with vision clarification, structural reorganization, and staff realignment. Now comes the fun part: moving the church to a heightened sense of anticipation and commitment.

The reason is as simple as it is profound. When we call a pastor, we will be asking of him or her to commit to the future of the church. That is a very significant event in a new pastor's life, and the best way to prepare for it is to demonstrate that we are also committing ourselves, and recommitting ourselves, to the future of our church!

I was approached on Sunday with a great gift of enthusiasm from a former member. She said, "I've been inactive for some time, but I'm ready to once again become part of the church!" You could have knocked me over with a feather!

Therefore, I am wondering how many others may have been brought to the same threshold of commitment, or recommitment, and are ready to stand up and say so ~ not necessarily to the church, but to God! It is highly probable, that as the Spirit is moving to prepare a new pastor for our church, so also it is moving among us to prepare us to receive him or her!

When I spotted the Girl Scouts' artwork, I realized that we are at the same place at the same time. We need a grand fall roundup of new members and former members and on-line members to demonstrate to God, and to the new pastor, that we are being gathered in for sacred purpose.

I've heard it said that leading a church is a lot like herding cats. That doesn't apply to my experience. And maybe rounding up cattle doesn't either. But the spirit of a fall roundup resonates with me, and I would love to know if it resonates with you. If it does, know that if one decision to return thrills me this much, just imagine what a class of twelve will do to the spirit of our congregation!

Our blessings are abundant,
David



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From the Clerk's Desk

News from the AUGUST Session meeting.



The Annual Officer/Staff Retreat was held Wednesday, August 16, at 5:30 in Fellowship Hall. Session met with the Board of Trustees, the Deacons and church staff. Our speaker was Ted Taylor, a member of Mission del Sol, and CEO of Family Promise Shelter. Following the Retreat, each of the boards met separately.

Carol Gerlach, Clerk

Last month I listed the members of Session. This month I am listing the members of the **Board of Trustees**.

Corporate Officers: David Frederick, President; Carol Gerlach, Secretary; Brent Gregory, Treasurer.

At-Large Members: Susan Durand, Jan Montgomery, Dave Woods.

Clerk's Statistics for June and July (there was no July meeting):

June	July
No weddings, births or baptisms	No weddings, births or baptisms
Deaths – Jon Lokensgard, June 5	No deaths – our membership is 234
Attendance – 79 in-person; 77 online = 156	Attendance – 73 in-person; 93 online = 166

Presbyterians Love to Eat

4th Sunday of the month following worship	Fellowship potluck
1st Wednesday of the month at 5:30	NEW – Community Dinners – join us on 9/6 for a PNC PowerPoint presentation at 5:00, dinner at 5:30 followed at 6:00 by Preschool Open House

Mission Projects

Clothes Closet and Food Pantry	The Deacons have combined these two projects. The Clothes Closet has moved down the walkway and are having a grand opening on Sunday, 9/10.
3rd Quarter Mission Project	Thanks for a very successful Preschool Supply Drive!
4th Quarter Mission Project	Angel Tree
Fall Festival	Saturday, October 28 – more news later

Session Approved the Following Motions:

- The PNC's Mission Study
- PW's request to serve Communion at their Fall Gathering on October 7

Property

Giving by good people always releases a special kind of joy.

Hitting some of the highlights:

- A roof to keep the Fellowship Hall dry
- The parking lot shows our faith in the neighborhood, plus lighting to increase safety
- The 1950s electrical system modernized to safely handle more power, and more powerful air conditioning in the library and youth area to keep our meetings comfortable
- Not to mention new thermostats to keep us from freezing or baking, or both, in those meetings.



Behind the numbers:

Roundly speaking this is about \$500,000 (and that doesn't even include work done at the preschool, which was almost a quarter million dollars.) That's a lot of money, but the VAST majority of it has already been raised.

- Some of these projects were planned well in advance
- Some were surprises
- All were necessary
- All were completed on time, and on budget
- All are investments in the future of our church, and they continue our mission to serve downtown Mesa

Improvements like we've done continue a tradition of using the gifts we have been given to their best and highest use.

Tradition of faith:

Since the original chapel was first constructed at the end of the 1940s, the congregation has tackled big projects over the decades.

- During the 1950s we built Fellowship Hall, the office, and education wing
- The 1960s saw the completion of our sanctuary
- Throughout the 70s and 80s we started several valley churches. Some of you reading this were part of those lasting missions.
- To embrace the musical side of spirituality we installed a PIPE ORGAN
- The decades of the 1980s and 90s saw the preschool sprout, grow, and then flourish
- After that we built the Trinity Building

When the need was there, we stepped up to the plate and DELIVERED.

The need:

Once again, the need arises. The work we have done this year costs money. But fundraising has fallen short during this summer of heat and vacation travel, so we need your help closing the gap.

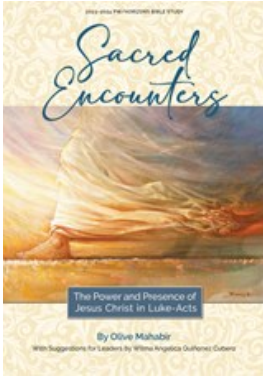
Look around the campus now, and see that the property is well cared for. Donations given for the church's capital projects will also be well cared for.

If anybody would like to talk with me privately, you can contact me. Or, come find me and we can sit down over a cup of coffee.

Dave Frederick, Property Elder

Presbyterian Women

Presbyterian Women at all levels are anticipating an exciting and productive year!



FPC PW circles will explore a thought-provoking study entitled, Sacred Encounters, The Power and Presence of Jesus Christ in Luke-Acts by Olive Mahabir. We look forward to our Thanksgiving Bake Sale. Women's Gifts Sunday will let us hear about our border ministry from our friend, Joca Gallegos! Our holiday and spring luncheons are always blessed events. ALL women are invited to drop in to any circle any month! **Just come!** Or ask any PW friend, and she'll provide additional information. Our monthly meetings are at set times, always announced in La Palabra and the "Weekly Update."

On a Presbytery level, the Fall Gathering will be hosted by our church on October 7th, 8:30-3:00. See Carol Anderson, if you might be interested in attending, even if you're not currently in a circle. Registration by September 22 is required. The Gathering will be filled with fellowship, food, learning and joyful worship.

And, finally, 2024 is the year to return to our PC(USA) Church-wide Gathering in St. Louis in August after a six-year hiatus due to Covid. So looking forward to that!

But wait...there's more!

Coming in September: **The PW Bookmobile**

Did you know that for the past ten years PW has been adding to a collection of general reading books in the church library? These books are from a recommended reading list assembled by PW at the Presbytery level.

Fiction. Nonfiction. Best Sellers. Classics. Wide variety of topics.

Beginning September 10th, the PW Bookmobile will be in Fellowship Hall on Sundays during coffee hour. A sampling of these books will be available to check out.

You are invited to take a book home for a couple of weeks and immerse yourself in a good read. If you don't find a book on the cart, check the PW shelves in the library.

Honor System Checkout and Return. Presbyterian Fashion. Decently and in order.



PW Circles Schedule

All groups meet in the Parlor.

Eve – Second Monday of the month at 4:00 p.m.

Deborah – Second Tuesday of the month at 9:30 a.m.

Rachel – Second Tuesday of the month at 1:00 p.m.

Preschool



Wow, what a wonderful start to the new school year! This is our 37th year, and we have 28 families enrolled. With that being said, the Preschool is so excited to invite you to our Grand ReOpening celebration, and we hope you will join us! Please come to our open house on Wednesday, September 6th, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Light refreshments will be served. This is our time to showcase all of the beautiful upgrades and modernization projects but more importantly to share great stories of progress through the years. Please RSVP to preschool@fpcmesa.org or 480-835-7877 Hoping to see you there!

Shiloh Murillo, Director

Mission

Community dinners will be at 5:30 on the first Wednesday of the month in Fellowship Hall. The dinners are free and all are welcome! The first one will be on September 6th. The PNC committee will be showing a power point at 5:00, if you would like to come early. Preschool will be having their open house after the dinner from 6:00 to 7:30.

Save the Date! The Fall Festival will be on Saturday, October 28th, from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. in the church parking lot. Activities will include trunk-or-treat, face painting, cake walk, games, food, and more!

Just for Laughs...

A teacher was helping one of her kindergarten students put his boots on. He asked for help, and she could see why. With her pulling and him pushing, the boots still didn't want to go on. When the second boot was on, she had worked up a sweat. She almost whimpered when the little boy said, "Teacher, they're on the wrong feet." She looked and sure enough, they were. It wasn't any easier pulling the boots off then it was putting them on. She managed to keep her cool as together they worked to get the boots back on - this time on the right feet. He then announced, "These aren't my boots." She bit her tongue rather than get right in his face and scream, "Why didn't you say so?" like she wanted to. Once again she struggled to help him pull the ill-fitting boots off. He then said, "They're my brother's boots. My Mom made me wear them." She didn't know if she should laugh or cry. She mustered up the grace to wrestle the boots on his feet again. She said, "Now, where are your mittens?" He said, "I stuffed them in the toes of my boots..."

Worship

Shortly after we moved our Sunday morning worship from Fellowship Hall back to the Sanctuary, Mark Ramsey and Dan Reeves met with the company who configured and outfitted the Sanctuary for the large screen monitors and live-streaming. Our purpose was for the company to assess the current equipment in Fellowship Hall, and to make recommendations to equip the Hall for in-service and live-stream technology comparable to the Sanctuary. While the representative was on campus, we also visited the Sanctuary to review the performance of our equipment there. As a result, several proposals were submitted. These were reviewed, prioritized and approved by the Worship Committee for submission to Session. In its August 16th meeting, Session approved the proposals as presented. Here's a summary of what we currently have in process, as well as what we hope to be working on over the course of the next several months.



The Sanctuary visit revealed that two units of the older “behind the scenes” audio equipment were either not functioning properly, or in the case of one unit not functioning at all. Updating the connection from the Sound Booth to the equipment closet behind the Quiet Room from analog to digital was deferred from a previous project for cost considerations. To address these, as well as some other minor technology issues we're facing in our online/in-person worship services, these items were prioritized first, and we're excited to let you know that funding was identified and approved for the following projects:

Update the Live-Stream firmware and further stabilize two of the three cameras, as well as install two new audio sequencers with related equipment and digital snake from the Sound Booth to the Sequencer Closet. We hope to have this project completed within the next couple of months, but certainly before the beginning of the holiday season.

Improvements to Fellowship Hall will include a new digital projector, two monitors flanking the stage on either side, a new sound board, and upgrades to make the room more technology smart and Live-Stream ready. Because the Fellowship Hall projects will benefit future worship services, stage productions and outside groups who rent the Hall, we would like to complete those by the end of the first quarter 2024 prior to the next First Players' Production and the return of worship to Fellowship Hall for Summer 2024. Due to the more complex nature of certain elements, we're still working to identify potential sources and/or methods of funding those projects. If you or someone you know are interested in helping with these projects, please contact Dan or Mark for additional information.



September Birthdays



Monte Nelson	1st
Mark Ramsey	3rd
Ron Wright	5th
Diana Johnson	7th
Greg Gerlach	10th
Skeets Throckmorton	13th
Beverly Snitzer	14th
Paul Green	15th
Miki Newbry	16th
Mildred Kimbrough	18th
Kyle Harding	21st
Rediet Newbry	21st
Paul Harding	22nd
Steve Post	25th
Sandra Clark	26th
Rylee MacDonald	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.

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

David Hodgson: pastor@fpcmesa.org
 Mark Ramsey: music@fpcmesa.org
 Glenn Bennett: scubasinger7@gmail.com
 Chris McKee: chris@fpcmesa.org
 Linda Reeves: pubs@fpcmesa.org
 Rob Kjar: business@fpcmesa.org
 Shiloh Murillo: preschool@fpcmesa.org

Calendar Notes

September
 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

September 3
 Deacons meet

September 6
 Community Dinner
 Preschool Grand Reopening Open House

September 10
 Kick Off Sunday
 Presentation of Third Grade Bibles
 Children's Sunday School begins

September 11 & 12
 Circles meet

September 17
 Session meets

September 24
 Potluck Sunday

September 30
 Pedals, Pipes & Pizza


IN MEMORIAM

Jack Fooks — August 20, 2023



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

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A publication for members and friends, published monthly.

**First Presbyterian Church
161 North Mesa Drive
Mesa, AZ 85201**

Phone: 480-964-8606

E-mail: pubs@fpcmesa.org

Website: www.fpcmesa.org

**Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Closed Friday**

**David Hodgson, Interim Pastor
Mark Ramsey & Glenn Bennett,
Co-Directors of Music Ministries
Chris McKee, Director of Operations
Linda Reeves, Office Manager/Publications
Shiloh Murillo, Preschool Director
Rob Kjar, Bookkeeper**