

# La Palabra

December 2019

www.fpcmesa.org

480-964-8606

## A Message from Ann



Heaven and Nature Sing!  
300 Years of  
JOY  
to the World

Joy to the World, the Lord is Come! The whole earth prepares again the coming of the Christ into the world. We pray that our hearts would be prepared to receive Christ; that God would enlarge our hearts and that we would be open to the receiving. In so doing, heaven and nature will sing a song of Joy! When our Savior truly reigns, all of creation will repeat the sounding Joy! For

Christ comes to make the blessings flow while ruling over all the cosmos with truth and grace. The glories of God's righteousness and the wonders of God's love are made known to all in Christ Jesus our Lord! Thanks be to God!

You may note a paraphrasing of the Christmas classic "Joy to the World" in the above paragraph. This beloved hymn turns 300 years old this year, and we thought it fitting to celebrate this occasion during Advent. Composer Isaac Watts interpreted Psalm 98 in the writing of this beautiful, uplifting Christmas hymn. It is a powerful reminder that all of creation, not just humanity, is being renewed and freed in the coming of Christ.

Rather than joy being just another word for happiness, we will discover that the depths of joy can be found even, and maybe especially, in the midst of suffering, the work of justice, and the presence of compassion. This is all part of the coming of Jesus to this world and a message the whole world still so desperately needs. May we all prepare room in our hearts and in our lives for Christ and for those whom Christ loves!

*"As we discover more joy, we can face suffering in a way that ennobles rather than embitters. We can have hardship without becoming hard. We can have heartbreak without being broken."*

~ Desmond Tutu, South African Anglican cleric and theologian

Merry Christmas!  
~ Ann

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## WORSHIP

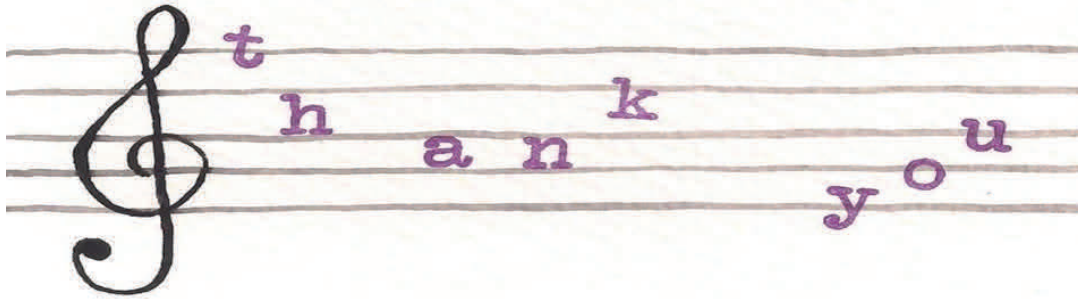
Worship (E) (Chair) – Dan Reeves  
Dir. Of Music Ministries – Mark Ramsey  
Prayer Chain (D) — Joy Schulz

Funerals/Memorials (D) — Renita Jurgensen  
Worship (D) —  
Fellowship (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**



Thank you in abundance to the 25th Anniversary Committee and our Congregation for a Totally AWESOME 25th Anniversary SURPRISE Celebration!! The event was so, so beautifully planned by Ann Conklin, Carol Gerlach, Renita Jurgensen, Susan McMichael, Jeanne Partida, Dan Reeves, Dennis Sitzler, Bea Towe, and Barbara Walker. I was blessed beyond words to just sit and enjoy it all: the flowers and decorations, the cards and the commissioning, the inspiring music of Joel Raney and Tom Sitzler, our Maestro Emcee Glenn Bennett, the catered dinner and youth servers, the concert and worship, the beautiful and tearful words of congratulations from my friend and unmatched mentor Jim Bruening, and the many expressions of love and kindness, all under the sly preparation of our Master Pastor Ann. I am blessed to minister with each of you and to have you as friends. I look forward to enjoying the video recordings, and as Jeanne Partida said, "Let's do it all again in 25 years"! As I continue to bask in the glow of this utterly overwhelming celebration, from the bottom of my heart, please accept my sincere thank you, again. — Mark

This year's Music Sunday, "O Come, All Ye Faithful," will be held on December 22nd. The service will include Christmas stories, choir solos, combined choirs, and congregational carols. There will be a Music Sunday rehearsal for all choirs on Wednesday, December 18th, from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Following the rehearsal, the Sanctuary Choir will adjourn to the Choir Room and rehearse for Christmas Eve from 7:00-8:00.

Dei Gloriam Handbell Choir will play at ZooLights on Thursday, December 5th. For information and tickets, visit [phoenixzoo.org/event-items/zoolights/](http://phoenixzoo.org/event-items/zoolights/).

The traditional Candlelight Communion Services of Lessons & Carols will be offered on Christmas Eve at 5:30 & 8:30 p.m. The 5:30 p.m. service will feature a "Celebration of Gifts" prelude. All of our children and youth (and youthful adult) musicians are invited to offer an instrumental or vocal solo. Please contact

Mark if you would like to participate. If possible, prepare pieces based on Christmas carols.

Join us for the All-Church Caroling Party on Sunday, December 8th, 5:00-7:00 p.m. We'll meet in the FPC Youth Room, go caroling, have treats at Friendship Village, and return to FPC at 7:00 p.m.

The First Players will present their 24th annual theatrical production on March 27, 28, and 29, including a matinee performance on Sunday. Join the First Players for SINGIN' IN THE RAIN. For production information and tickets, please visit the First Players webpage, [fpcmesa.org/firstplayers](http://fpcmesa.org/firstplayers). The "Greatest Movie Musical of All Time" is faithfully and lovingly adapted by



Broadway legends, Betty Comden and Adolph Green, from their original award-winning screenplay in *Singin' in the Rain*. Each unforgettable scene, song and dance is accounted for, including the show-stopping title number, complete with an onstage rainstorm! Hilarious situations, snappy dialogue and a hit-parade score of Hollywood standards make *Singin' in the Rain* the perfect entertainment for any fan of the golden age of movie musicals. *Singin' in the Rain* has all the makings of a Tinseltown tabloid headline – the starlet, the leading man and a love affair that could change lives and make or break careers! In silent movies, Don Lockwood and Lina Lamont are a hot item but, behind the scenes, things aren't always as they appear on the big screen! Meanwhile, Lina's squeaky voice might be the end of her career in "talking pictures" without the help of a talented young actress to do the talking and singing for her.

It's time to order poinsettias for Christmas. If you are interested in ordering a poinsettia in honor or memory of a loved one to be used in Fellowship Hall or the Sanctuary during the Advent season, order forms are available at the kiosk or in the Church Office. The poinsettias are \$10 apiece. Please return the form, with payment attached, to the church office. Deadline for response is December 16th.

### Coming Events

- 2/23 Chili Cook-Off and Annual Meeting
- 2/26 Ash Wednesday
- 3/15 Women's Sunday
- 3/27-29 *Singin' in the Rain* Dinner-Theaters

### Humoresque

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

I bought my wife a wooden leg for Christmas. It's not her main present, just a stocking stuffer. [from Miki Newbry]



### SAVE THE DATE!

Lifetouch Photography will be here on **January 7, 2020**, to take photos to update our pictorial directory. Sessions can be scheduled from 12:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

If you are happy with the picture that is in our current directory, you are under no obligation to have it redone. However, if you are a new member, missed out on the last photo shoot, have had a baby or some other life change, you are welcome to have a new picture taken. Lifetouch will reprint the directory with your picture and will also update address and phone changes. As always, you are under no obligation to purchase photos. You will receive a complimentary photo just for having your picture taken.

Sign-ups will begin December 4th, so schedule your photo shoot early! Watch for instructions in upcoming announcements.



## DISCIPLESHIP

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

Children's Ministries (E) — Stephanie Gerlach  
Family Ministries (E) — Ellen Hickey

Youth/Young Adult (E) — Kyle Harding  
Youth Elder — Will Snitzer

### Minister of Faith Formation Happenings

**Christmas Pageant:** We are inviting our Children and Youth to participate in a Christmas Pageant during the 5:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Family Service. The children actors will have nonspeaking roles, while the youth will narrate. We have scheduled two rehearsals dates to choose: Wednesday, December 18th, at 6:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall and Sunday, December 22nd, at 10:15 a.m. in the Sanctuary. Participants are not required to attend both rehearsals; however they are welcome at both. Please contact Chris McKee to sign-up and for further details.

**Montlure Traveling Day Camp Summer 2020:** Families with children completing K-5th grades: Mark your calendars now and SAVE THESE DATES! JUNE 22-26, 2020. FPC Mesa is hosting and partnering with other East Valley Presbyterian congregations to bring Montlure to the Valley! Watch the bulletins and La Palabra for more information and registration information as it becomes available. Contact Chris McKee if you're interested!

**Montlure Overnight Camp Dates Summer 2020:** Senior High: June 7-12; Junior High: June 14-19; Juniors: July 5-9. Please stay tuned for further details.

**Nursery Attendants Needed:** We are looking for volunteers to help in the nursery during the 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. worship. High School youth are encouraged to apply. Please contact Stephanie Gerlach or Chris McKee if you're interested.

**Young Adult Ministry:** Young Adults or YA's are college age and/or young working professionals. If you would like to discover their exciting activities, please contact Kyle Harding, our Elder of Young Adults. Kyle's email is [mrcheese113@gmail.com](mailto:mrcheese113@gmail.com)

#### FPC Youth Ministry (Middle and High School)

**Christmas Gift Wrapping Fundraiser:** FPC Youth will be gift wrapping after the 9:00 a.m. worship on December 8th, December 15th and December 22nd at the youth room. The funds will support our youth ministry program.

**Youth & Young Adult Christmas Party 2019:** Jingle and mingle at the Youth and Young Adult Christmas party on Sunday, December 15, 1:00-3:00 p.m. in the youth room. Enjoy a festive afternoon of fun games, incredible food and good friends. Please bring a white elephant gift under \$20. Food assignment: A-L drinks & M-Z appetizer or dessert.

**Youth Activities Calendar for January:** January 12th, at 10:15 a.m. will be our first Coffee Run of the year at Dunkin' Donuts and January 26th, Ice Skating

I wish you and yours a blessed and safe Christmas Season!

In Christ,  
Chris McKee, Minister of Faith Formation

Please contact Chris McKee, our Minister of Faith Formation with any questions: [Chris@fpcmesa.org](mailto:Chris@fpcmesa.org)

**Dave Ramsey Financial Peace University Program** will start January 9, 2020 from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. in the Library. This is a 9-week program at a cost is \$99 per family. If you have questions or would like to sign up, please contact Jan Montgomery, 602-618-6048 or [jan.montgomery47@gmail.com](mailto:jan.montgomery47@gmail.com).



What a wonderful time of year it is as we look forward to the cool weather, long winter days off and the warmth of being surrounded by our loved ones as we approach the Christmas Season. We just celebrated our annual Thanksgiving Feast with our families. There were 31 families and 89 people in attendance!

Christmas time has a magical spirit that the children love to be a part of. Christ, our Savior is born, and we are looking forward to showcasing our young stars for the Christmas Program on Thursday, December 12th, at 10:30 a.m. Please join us. You won't want to miss it! Oh, and Mrs. Claus is coming to the preschool for Chapel on December 4th at 9:00 a.m.! She will be reading a very special story to the children about the best Christmas gift of all!

The Preschool will be closed for the Christmas holiday and New Years from December 23rd -- January 3rd. School will resume on Monday, January 6, 2020. Before you know it, we will be starting our Spring early registrations and the school year will zoom by. Please help us get the word out there to keep our program full through the coming year!

We are running low on a couple of things. So, if you want to help, we have put together a Christmas wishlist for the Preschool: Christmas & winter stickers, 5 oz. paper cups, large bottles of bubbles, and Christmas Ribbon. Thank you for your support and prayers for our little school, especially to Mrs. Ellen Gillespie for donating our new puppet friend! The kids will love having him come out to visit!

Have a very sacred Christmas with your families! May it be filled with many new, joy-filled memories.

— Shiloh Murillo, Director

## FELLOWSHIP

Fellowship (E) (Chair) — Dennis Sitzler  
 Cards (D) — Gretchen Frederick  
 Transportation (D) — Steve Muth

Fellowship Deacon — Jennifer Martin  
 Fellowship Deacon — Todd Ramsey  
 Older Adult (E) — Dave Jurgensen

Moderator (D) – Jack Oliver  
 Liaison (D) – Jan Montgomery  
 Presbyterian Women — Suzanne Engman

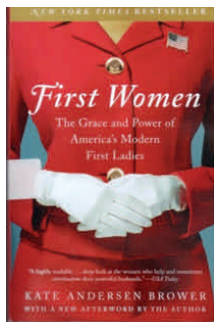
**The Fellowship Commission is in need of people to help serve as Coffee Hosts** on a rotating schedule. Each team prepares coffee, tea, punch and/or lemonade for the coffee time in the Fellowship Hall after the first service. If you are interested, there will be a sign-up sheet in the Fellowship Hall during the coffee time or you can contact Dennis Sitzler at (602)799-9090 or the church office at (480)964-8608.



The PW Holiday, Salad and Dessert Luncheon, will be Saturday, December 14th, at 11:30 a.m. Carol Main, our USA Mission Experience representative, will be our speaker.

### USA Mission Experience in the Finger Lakes of New York “Standing on the Shoulders of Empowered Women”

Learn about the struggles to gain rights for women that began in Seneca Falls, New York, in July of 1848. Famous people like Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, Susan B. Anthony, William H. Seward and wife, Frances, participated in the fight for women's rights and abolition of slavery. Many slaves sought freedom through the Underground Railroad that allowed them to escape into Canada. Elizabeth Blackwell became the first woman to become a medical doctor in the United States in 1847 from Geneva Medical College in Geneva, New York. On who's shoulders do you stand?



**Books from the 2019-20 reading list are on the PW shelf in the library.**  
*First Women, the Grace and Power of America's Modern First Ladies* by Kate Anderson Brower

How women from Jackie Kennedy to Michelle Obama have negotiated the personal and political challenges of being married to the President of the United States.

## MISSION

Mission (E) (Chair) — Shelley Cronenberg  
Pastor – Ann Conklin  
Hunger Action (D) — Sandra Clark  
Assimilation (D) — Alice Schlak

Fellowship (D) – Carol Strouse  
Seasonal Ministries (D) — Dale Gibson  
Mission (D) – Sue Eisenklam



**Christmas Angel Tree** – Once again this year FPC Mesa is sponsoring local families in need this Christmas. We will be providing gifts for each family. The Christmas Angel Tree will be set up in the Sanctuary on December 1st, and decorated with paper angel ornaments labeled with family names and designated gift items. Please take an angel from the tree and purchase the gift requested. Wrap your gift with holiday paper and attach the angel on the outside of the gift. Gifts will be delivered on December 15th after church. If you have any questions, please contact Dale Gibson at 480-834-3211. Thank you for your support of this long-standing Christmas tradition.

**Christmas Joy Offering** – The Christmas Joy Offering reflects that God is with us, through the generous gifts that support church leaders among us, retired, present and future, who have pointed us to God. Even as we support our current and former church leaders through the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions, God is calling new leaders for our Church and world, through the ministry of Presbyterian-related schools and colleges offering students the means for a brighter future and enhanced opportunities to use their talents and skills to serve God, the Church and the world for years to come. The offering will be received from December 1st - 22nd. December 22nd is when we will gather our gifts, but you are welcome to give your gift earlier if you know that you will be out of town.



**Thank You for your Peace and Global Witness Offering** – Thank you so much to those who donated to the Peace and Global Witness Offering. We were able to raise \$1,630. Of that money, \$815.00 (50%) went to the Presbyterian Mission Agency and \$407.50 (25%) went to the Grand Canyon Presbytery, and the remaining 25% was split so that \$203.75 went to Frontera de Cristo (our mission partners in Mexico), and \$203.75 went to A New Leaf in Mesa towards their domestic violence shelters. Without your help, this would not have been possible, so thank you so much!



**Café Justo** – Quarterly Café Justo coffee sales resume on Sunday, December 8th, during the coffee hour in Fellowship Hall. This delicious coffee would make a terrific Christmas gift and while it also raises money for a good cause. Treat yourself or a friend or relative to some delicious organic coffee.

**Coat Drive for Taylor Junior High School** - Please bring new or gently used coats/solid sweatshirts/or hoodies in sizes Pre-Teen and Teen (Medium and Large) to the Sanctuary by Sunday, December 15th. Donations can start being accepted anytime. Please place coat or jacket in the box in the Sanctuary which will then be given to Heather McKee (proud teacher from TJH) for collection. Thank you in advance for your generosity and kindness to our youth in Mesa this holiday season.



**Thank you for your donations** of spaghetti last month. We need more! Any pasta, tuna, canned meats or mashed potato packets would be appreciated. We never need canned fruits or vegetables. We have a wonderful food pantry that serves many thankful people.

~ Sandy

## December Birthdays



Frank White	1st
Denver Wyse	1st
Sheilah Dye	2nd
Linda Reeves	4th
Kay Herrera	5th
Sophia Letizia	5th
Karen Rudin	6th
Anita Ramsey	9th
Samantha Jo Woods	9th
Nancy Tordai	10th
Kevin Woods	13th
Carolyn Barber	14th
Myrna Olmstead	14th
Marie Robb	15th
Gana Martin	16th
Janice Williamson	16th
Bob Leonard	17th
Carole Baird	18th
Laura Bruening	19th
Ruth Robinson	20th
Barbara Walker	20th
Maurice Belew	21st
Jon Martin	21st
Virginia Perkins	21st
Michael Eberhardt	22nd
Steve Durand	23rd
Katie Masterson	24th
John Schlak	27th
Mirasol Bronola	29th
Rosemary Goings	29th
Nicki McInelly	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.

## ADDRESS CHANGES/CORRECTIONS

Kambak, Jackie 7290 Rosemount Circle, #203 Tacoma, WA 98465 253-565-2829	Stirling, Carol 7255 E. Broadway Rd., #238 Mesa, AZ 85208 602-614-8299 (cell)
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Lund, Flinn  
3027 James Ave.  
Manhattan, KS 66502

### Calendar Notes

#### December 2

Deacons meet

#### December 8, 15, 22

Youth Giftwrap Fundraiser

#### December 9 & 10

Circles meet

#### December 14

PW Holiday Luncheon

#### December 15

Commissions meet — no Session  
Youth/Young Adult Christmas Party

#### December 22

Music Sunday

#### December 24

Christmas Eve  
5:30 — Family Service  
8:30 — Traditional Service

#### December 25

*Merry Christmas!*

#### December 29

Monthly Food Drive  
One 10:00 service in Sanctuary



**Merry Christmas**



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

See calendar on website:  
[fpcmesa.org/calendar](http://fpcmesa.org/calendar)

**LA PALABRA**

**A publication for members and friends, published monthly.**

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

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**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**