

# La Palabra — 2017 Annual Report Edition

February 2018

[www.fpcmesa.org](http://www.fpcmesa.org)

480-964-8606

## *A Message from Ann*

**“I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?” ~ Isaiah 43:19**

2017 was a year of God doing a new thing! God has been at work in my life and in the life of our congregation at FPC Mesa doing all sort of new things! It has been a year of change for all of us as I have been called to serve as pastor here at FPC Mesa. There is much excitement in the newness of it all; yet transformation is not without difficulty as God calls us into new areas of ministry and new ways of being God’s servants in the world.

The congregation said a (hopefully temporary) good-bye to Lois Hildenbrand who served faithfully and well during the interim time between pastors. I know you miss her and hold her in your prayers, even as you look forward to her return to our congregation in the future.

As you were saying your good-byes, I said good-bye to family and friends in the Midwest as Peter and I ventured out across the country to begin this new adventure in life and ministry with all of you. We also faced the transition of becoming “empty-nesters.” Life is full of change and through it all, God is faithful and present with us to guide us along the way.

Arriving in Mesa, I jumped right in to this new pastoral call by participating in the mission trip to Tseyi Bidaa. It was a great joy to get to know the other mission trip participants as we lived and served with the Native American congregation on the Navajo Reservation. Having a passion for mission and outreach, this seemed a very fitting way to begin my ministry here!

As I have adjusted to a new region of our beautiful country and the culture of the Southwest, as well as a new congregational culture, it has been wonderful to come to know this vibrant, caring, faith-filled congregation. It has been a time of learning, listening, and letting go. Learning your names, your stories, your expression of worship, your experiences of life, and the desires of your hearts has been a great privilege and joy. Thank you for the way you have welcomed me into your lives and into the life of this congregation. I look forward to many more years of leaning together as we grow in our faith and our life of discipleship.

Listening to God’s voice requires time to be still in God’s presence as well as an openness of heart, mind, and spirit. The beautiful mountains and (almost) daily sunshine provide a wonderful opportunity for reflection and prayer as I seek to be faithful to God’s leading and guidance. As I listen, I sense God forming us together so that we might be a vibrant, strong, and faithful witness to God’s love for all the world and God’s care for all people.

As we listen and learn, we may become aware of some things God is calling us to let go of ~ it may be programs, events, or simply “the way we have always done” something. We will discern this together as we move forward in ministry, and I fully trust that God will lead us in the way we should go as we bear fruit for God’s coming kingdom.

2018 is already off to a wonderful start as I get to know our teens better through leading a confirmation class, as I get to know the young adults better through hosting them in our home, and as I prepare for the season of Lent and Easter that is almost upon us. Easter celebrates the new life we are offered in Christ Jesus our Lord and for that I am eternally grateful. To God be the glory!

~ Pastor Ann

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## WORSHIP

Dir. of Music (Chair) — Mark Ramsey  
Worship (E) — Nate Robinson  
Prayer Chain (D) — Joy Schulz

Funerals/Memorials (D) — Karyn Weaver  
Worship (D) — Carol Gerlach

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### Worship Commission: Staff Report

Submitted by: Mark Ramsey, Director of Music Ministries

Each of our choirs participated in our worship services about once each month during the spring and fall. In addition, several events highlighted our year in ministry:



- Weekly Preschool Chapels, with Pastor Lois, Pastor Ann, and Preschool Director Shiloh Murillo
  - Created new FPC website
  - Combined Worship Service on New Year's Day
  - Servicing of our second set of Handbells
  - Music for FPC's Meeting of the Combined Presbyteries
  - Grand Canyon University Critical Mass Ensemble in worship
  - Guest Marcia Whitehead leading our 9:00 a.m. worship music
  - First Players' 21st Annual Dinner-Theater Production (Peter Pan), with four performances over two weekends
  - Organ Concerts for Gold Canyon United Methodist Church and Church of the Master
  - New arrangement for four FPC trombonists
  - Assisted with local organ guild auditions
- Maundy Thursday Seder Supper, led by Pastor Lois
  - Good Friday, Sanctuary Choir & Soloists offering Dale Wood's "A Service of Darkness"
  - Pastor Ann's Installation Service & Reception
  - Artist Series events, including Arizona Cantilena Chorale "Frostiana" and Stephanie Ball & Tom Sitzler "Animal Art Songs"
  - Music for PW Spring Luncheon and Concert at Friendship Village, each with Joan White
  - Music for Fellowship Potluck, with Accordionist Sandra Clark
  - Piano Quartet/Organ at Valley Presbyterian Senior Service Awards and Mission del Sol's Mu Phi Epsilon, each with Barb Walker, Bea Towe, and Alice Edwards
  - All Choirs & Families Season-Ending Potluck
  - Vacation Bible School Music led by Miki Newbry
  - Summer Study Leave, including West Region Convention of the American Guild of Organists, in Salt Lake City
  - Ice Cream Social and Fatigo, with Dan Sitzler
  - Dei Gloriam "Mickey and Meatballs" Disney Concert & Spaghetti Dinner Fund-raiser
  - 25-year servicing of our Visser-Rowland Organ
  - Wednesday WRAP Music, with Karen Rudin, Linda Hayball, Lanai Mills
  - Mesa Make-a-Difference Day
  - Music Sunday "Away in a Manger" and Sanctuary Choir "Jingle Bells Through the Ages"
  - Special Service organists and directors included Jim Norris, Tricia MacDonald, Karen Rudin, Dick Baird, Bea Towe, and Barbara Walker, with summer music led by the First Ringers, Summer Singers, Vacation Bible School, Youth Choir, Men's/Women's Ensembles, Sundays of Soloists/Instrumentalists, Trombone Quartet, Summer Ringers, One Voice, and a Hymn Festival with Dei Gloriam Handbell Choir.



We are blessed to have about a quarter of our congregation participating in our music program. I continue to be thankful for each singer, ringer, signer, and instrumentalist, and I pray for God's richest blessings upon each of us as we share in the joy of ministry and offer our gifts of worship and music. Special thanks go to our choir leaders: **SUNDAY SCHOOL/WEDNESDAY WRAP WORSHIP SKILLS**, Directors John Couillard, Anita Ramsey, Karen Rudin, Linda Hayball, and Lanai Mills; **FIRST RINGERS**, Bea Towe, Director; **HEARTS HANDS AND VOICES**, Karyn Weaver, Director; **ONE VOICE**, Anita Ramsey, Director; and

**SANCTUARY CHOIR.** Bea Towe, Accompanist. Many thanks also to our **PRAISE BANDS** for providing musical leadership for both worship services: Karen Rudin, Erin Skarphol, and Rev. Paul Soderquist (9:00 a.m.) and Preston MacDonald, Tricia MacDonald, Kevin Reeves, Dan Sitzler, and Sean Snitzer (11:00 a.m.).

## Worship Commission Report

The Worship Commission serves our congregation through the planning of weekly worship services, by facilitating the church Prayer Chain, by celebrating with families as they welcomed new life, and by supporting families in times of grief. Items accomplished by the Worship Commission during 2017 include:

- Presbytery Worship Service
- Ash Wednesday Service, with Wednesday WRAP Children & Youth
- Ninth-Annual Worship in the Park, at Pioneer Park, followed by a BBQ (Fellowship Commission)
- Easter Sunrise Service followed by a pancake breakfast prepared by our Scouts
- Mother's Day and Father's Day Celebrations, with special Worship Flowers/Gifts
- World Communion Sunday with breads of the world and ethnic readings of scripture
- Created new Homebound Communion Pamphlet
- Created new guidelines/forms for prayer requests
- Reorganized Communion Server Procedures
- Forwarded to the Ministry Commission an early picture of Fellowship Hall. Recommended consideration of uncovering and restoring the original ceiling.
- "Nursery" and "Restrooms" signs added in the Sanctuary
- Encouraged shorter verbal announcements and directing the congregation to written announcements/flyers in the bulletin.
- Advent Decorating with Carols by Candlelight and a catered supper
- Candlelight Communion Services of Lessons & Carols
- Planned for 2017 Special Worship Services (Youth Sunday, Winter Visitor Sunday, Women's Sunday, Ministry Fair, Pledge Sunday) and Special Offerings: One Great Hour of Sharing (Easter), Pentecost, Mesa Presbyterian Ministries (World Communion Sunday), and Joy Gift (Christmas Eve).
- Recommended 10:00 a.m. Combined Worship Service in the Sanctuary on Christmas Eve and Combined Worship Service in Fellowship Hall on New Year's Eve. APPROVED.
- Recommended that communion during June, July and August be served by intinction. APPROVED.
- Recommended announcements/director for Hymnfest 2018. APPROVED.
- Recommended having Marcia Whitehead lead worship music on February 19. APPROVED.
- Recommended having Social Time outside on the first Sunday of each month (Communion Sundays), November - April. APPROVED.
- Supported the families of church members who entered the Church Triumphant during 2017: Gary Clark, Spencer Hoff, Gabe Homolya, Ellie Koch, Jim Norris, Alma Oberly, Alice Peterson, Andrea Schultz, Wayne Scriba, Dorothy Shearin, Alyene Trimble, Bob Trimble, Fran Watson, and Ruth Yurich.



### Items for Session Approval

- Recommended 2018 Communion Dates: the first Sunday of each month, plus Maundy Thursday and Christmas Eve. APPROVED.
- Recommended one combined worship service in the Sanctuary on Christmas Day and New Year's Day. APPROVED.
- Recommended a change in our Sunday morning schedule, to begin on August 20, Kickoff Sunday. Proposed Schedule: 9:00 First Service, 10:00 Fellowship, 10:15 Christian Education, 11:00 Second Service. APPROVED.



Respectfully Submitted,  
 Mark Ramsey, (Chair) Director of Music Ministries  
 (Deacon) Carol Gerlach, Worship  
 (Elder) Nate Robinson, Worship  
 (Deacon) Joy Schulz, Prayer Chain  
 (Deacon) Karyn Weaver, Funerals/Memorials

Dan Reeves, Worship — HolyGrounds  
 Susan Durand, Greeters  
 Don Wilson, Ushers  
 Dan Davenport, Liturgists

# DISCIPLESHIP

Director of C.E. — Jasmine Couillard  
Adult (E) — Karen Rudin

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

Youth/Young Adult (E) — Bill Rummeler

## Discipleship Commission: Annual Report

Submitted by: Jasmine Couillard, Director of Christian Education



**Sunday Christian Education** continues to thrive for all ages: preschool through adult. We have five classes meeting each week on campus. The elementary age classes are meeting together in one room. Adults are always invited to join us each week for a hands-on lesson that is custom written for our program! Jasmine Couillard, Deborah Rosen and Lanai Mills are teaching the preschool through sixth grade students, which meets each week at 10:15 a.m. in Jackson B. This month the children will be exposed to:

- February 4 – Faith Basics – the attributes of God
- February 11 – Valentine's Day
- February 18 – President's Day
- February 25 – Lent

**Wednesday WRAP** continues to meet from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. in six week blocks during the school year. In May 2017 we closed out our year with a laser tag game put on by the game truck. In September we kicked off our new year with fun changes and additions to our weekly themes. Wednesday WRAP is open to families and individuals of all ages. We have fellowship, music classes, dinner, crafts, games and Bible study. There is an adult Bible study class that meets after dinner. This class would love to have visitors or new members! We are currently studying Ask It by Andy Stanley. Wednesday WRAP is meeting three times this month. Themes will be:

- February 7– What I want to be when I grow up
- February 14 – Jesus Loves Me
- February 28 – Circus



**Grief Share** is a support group of those currently grieving the loss of a loved one. Grief Share kicked off their fourth 13 week session of classes this year and they start each week with dinner in Fellowship Hall, joining the rest of the Wednesday WRAP attendees.

**The church Nursery** continues to be staffed each Sunday from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The nursery is located inside the sanctuary (in the quiet room) for the 9:00 a.m. service. (Did you notice the new beautiful sign alerting new families of its location?) This allows flexibility to parents training their young ones to sit in the pew, as well as the opportunity for these children to participate in the children's sermon! The 11:00 service is staffed each week by Tanya Snitzer and Isobel Letizia.



**Vacation Bible School 2017** was a bit different than the previous year. We met for five DAYS in June and learned about Jesus in a program called Maker Fun Factory. We had a customized adult program running side by side. We also had the help of the teens escorting the children from center to center and interacting as older siblings would. A handful of our VBS volunteers and children then brought our program on the road to the Tseyi Bidaa Presbyterian congregation on the Indian Reservation in Del Muerto, Arizona. VBS 2018 is already in the planning stages and will be Group's Shipwrecked. Plan now to join us June 11th – 15th from 9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

**Montlure Presbyterian Camp** was held at Camp Colton in Flagstaff in summer of 2017. Three youth attended through our church and we were able to sponsor them with \$525 in scholarship funds! Registration for the 2018 camp season is currently underway. Montlure has the dates published for 4th – 12th grade overnight camp in summer 2018. FPC offers a \$200 discount on camp fees for any student that attends as long as a request form is submitted.

## Discipleship Commission: Youth Report

Submitted by: Anita Ramsey

2017 was a very active year in the life of the FPC Youth Group under the direction of Anita Ramsey. The Junior and Senior High students grew in faith as they studied the Word of God, served their community, and socialized with friends.

### STUDY:

During the spring the youth would gather on Sunday morning and Wednesday evening each week to learn about God's plan for them through the study of His Word. Sunday mornings during the spring semester was spent with curriculum centered around various stories of the Bible. During the summer and fall months the class continued to meet using a curriculum that covered biblical solutions for common problems teenagers encounter. Robert Harding assisted Anita each Sunday morning.

On Wednesday evening, many youth participated in FPC's midweek program, Wednesday WRAP. During the Bible Study portion of the program, Anita led the kids through devotionals, study, and prayer.



### SERVICE:

The year also brought many opportunities to serve the church and the community. One of the ways the youth served the church was by presenting the annual youth service. This was held the last Sunday in April. It was a service devoted to the Apostles Creed and what it means. Other forms of church service included serving on the youth cook team for Wednesday WRAP and serving dinner for the Dinner Theater in the spring.

In July, several of the youth participated in the all-church mission trip to Chinle under the direction of Sue Eisenklam. The youth acted as group leaders for the VBS that was being provided for the local church. When they weren't working with VBS, they were busy building relationships with the Native Americans at the church.

The youth participated in the annual Mesa Make a Difference Day and helping other church groups with their projects such as the Annual Parking Lot Sale.

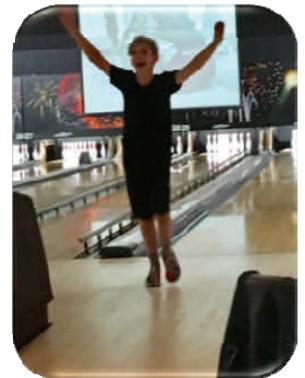


The youth have an ongoing mission to support the organization Feed My Starving Children by packing food and by raising funds to donate. During the Lenten season the youth distributed small plastic tubes and requested that the congregation members keep these on their dining table and each day give thanks for their food and place a quarter in the tube to pay for a meal for a starving child. On Easter Sunday, the members returned their quarter-filled tubes. Over \$700 was raised for the FMSC organization.

### SOCIALIZING:

The youth enjoyed many different activities throughout 2017. We went rock climbing, bowling, spent a day at Sunsplash, and hosted game nights. Several of our event evenings have been spent enjoying the amenities of the youth room. We have watched many movies on the projection system, played numerous games of pool, ping pong, air hockey and foosball.

In the fall the parents were called on to plan and host some of the social events for the youth. The families planned frisbee golf, a trip to the Arizona Science Center, a pool party and a Christmas Party. The Holy Rollers bicycling group has continued this year when the weather has permitted. The group includes the general congregation and is one of our multi-generational activities.



2017 has been a good year for the youth group. We continue to experience God's grace and blessings as we study, serve and socialize here at FPC.

## Discipleship Commission: Preschool Report

Submitted by: Shiloh Murillo, Director



We truly feel blessed with our preschool as we look back at what 2017 has given us! We started out 2017 in the preparation phase for our Quality First Assessment Cycle at the Preschool. **We are thrilled to announce our results earning the 4-Star Rating and Distinction, which is an increase in quality from our last assessment in 2014!** Congratulations to all of our teachers and the overall program for earning such high distinction in the Early Childhood community and the State of Arizona!

At the end of the 2016-2017 school year, we said farewell to Rachelle Schuster who had been with us since 2012. She went on to full time employment that suited her family's needs at the time. We will miss her! We would like to introduce our newest staff member, Sara Wheat. She comes to us highly qualified in infant/toddler and special needs experience. She has worked in the early childhood field for ten years and has joined Debbie Warneke in the 3-year-old classroom. They make a great team!

In the fall of 2017, we started a professional development plan that focuses on utilizing the unique skills of each teacher by pairing them with another teacher for mentoring and support. Some of the things that we focused on were classroom management, routines, lesson planning, transitions, curriculum development and powerful interactions with the children. This has proven to be a huge success, and we have seen each one of our teachers share their expertise with each other. We will be continuing this practice over the 2018 year as we prepare, once again, for the Quality First Assessment in the spring of 2019.



This year we started a Parent-Teacher partnership training program. We invited different presenters from throughout Maricopa County to share their expertise and insights into the unique needs that children between the ages of 0-5 years old have. Some of the topics included daily health checks, knowing the signs of illness, proper handwashing, the importance of early literacy and reading to your child, and the LakeShore Learning Store gave us a special store tour and talked about STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) to promote early exposure to them.

At the end of the school year in May 2017, there were 31 kids enrolled. For the second year our program kept its hours from 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. At the start of the 2016-2017 school year in August, we only had 18 children enrolled. Within the first two weeks of school, enrollment jumped to 29 children! As of the end of December 2017, there are 31 kids enrolled. We are working with the Preschool Board to devise a plan for the next school year to consider what the needs truly are for our program and families.

Our funding from the Quality First Grant was increased for the 2016-17 school year! We were previously allotted eight full-time slots. Then, that was increased to 11 full-time scholarships which can serve up to 22 children. This is great news! However, we have had the hardest time filling all of those scholarships with families who qualify and who maintain the attendance requirement. As of the end of December, we still have availability for 2 more children to attend on the scholarship. If we do not fill all of the spots, we run the risk of the state taking



away the unused scholarships and giving them to other programs who can use them.

In the fall our staff and program participated in a national research project for the US Department of Health & Human Services Assessing the Implementation and Cost of High Quality Early Care and Education. Only 36 centers nation-wide were chosen for the study. We feel honored to be a part of such important work. We also were invited to showcase a collaborative art project from both classrooms at the Herberger Theater in downtown Phoenix in the spring.



These pieces of art are now part of a touring art exhibit for the First Things First Early Childhood Education community outreach at the Department of Education.

There have been a few physical changes around the preschool as well. We are pleased to announce the purchase and use of brand new child-sized tables and chairs for our 3-year-old classroom. You may have noticed a few subtle changes on our playground, too. Did you notice the colorful chalkboard flowers or the garden boxes around our yard? We were able to purchase these things through the use of the Quality First Incentive funds as part of our participation in the Quality First program. It is a refreshing feeling to see the improvements and know that our children and families will be able to enjoy the benefits of that for a long time!



This year we welcomed our new pastor, Rev. Ann Conklin in the summer of 2017 and have been enjoying her spirit during our chapel time with the families. We love the creativity that Pastor Ann brings to the children during each sermon! She encourages the children to grow in their faith and love of God. Dr. Mark Ramsey is also a huge blessing because he shares his great musical talents with us and the kids really enjoy it! Our attendance by the parents has slightly increased this year, and we have enjoyed having those parents stay with us during that time. The energy that we foster with these children is unmeasurable! We would like to see many more families join us as we worship each week, but sometimes the needs of the parents at drop-off time differ from the experiences that we offer to them. Here's to next year's parents and welcoming them to our weekly chapel time!

As we look forward to 2018, we are hopeful that the Lord will continue to bless us by bringing the children of this community to our program. We know that God has good things in store for all of us. We know that He is present in all that we do here, especially in the hearts of these little children!

Lastly, we appreciate all of your love and your willingness to continue to make the Preschool a ministry of the church. We are very blessed and know that God has so much in store for these children, families and the staff that work with them.

Respectfully submitted,  
Shiloh Murillo

## MISSION

Pastor — Ann Conklin  
Mission (Chair--E) — Sue Eisenklam  
Hunger Action (D) — Sandra Clark

Assimilation (D) — Alice Shlak  
Evangelism (E) — Tammy Miller

Seasonal Ministries (D) — Darlene Sitzler  
Mesa Presbyterian Ministries (D) — Jane Potyka

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### Mission Commission: Annual Report

Submitted by: Sue Eisenklam, Mission Chair

#### Marketing (formerly known as Evangelism)

We continue to maximize our online presence. The congregation has been encouraged to “check in” on Facebook Status. This is one more way that we continue to increase our Facebook presence as a way of getting the word out about FPC. We conducted another campaign to invite neighbors to the church. In October, three local apartment buildings distributed postcards of upcoming events. One of the events was to invite them to participate in a neighborhood yard sale event by signing up for a table to sell their stuff as well as shop the event. FPC mission commission had several tables of donations from the congregation to sell to raise money for the 2018 Mission Trip. Presbyterian Women also joined the event with their annual bake sale. \$439.90 was raised for the Mission Trip. PW also did well. While the event was successful in fund raising and interacting with neighbors who shopped, no one from the neighborhood had a table set up to sell their stuff.

#### Mission Trip

In June seventeen youth and adults (6 youth, 11 adults) went to the Tseyi Bidaa Presbyterian Church in Del Muerto, Arizona. With the main objective of the trip to build relationships among ourselves and with our mission partners, the mornings working together to prepare for afternoon VBS, as well as to have different cultural experiences. The afternoons were very busy with between 22 and 32 children each of the four days! We finished our time with a community dinner. When we left this year, it felt like we were leaving family. We have been invited back in 2018, and they are hoping to grow the numbers of children up to 50. That means we will need more FPC participants!



#### Assimilation

There was one new member class in January of 2017. There were five new members as a result.

#### Seasonal Ministry

Angel Tree: We sponsored three families this year. One family was from the Preschool. One family was from the FPC neighborhood. One family was from the FPC Congregation. As is our tradition, we provided gifts to each of the family members, as well as a holiday meal, other food stuffs and an assortment of household and personal items.



#### Mesa Make A Difference Day

On October 28th, a team of 11 FPC volunteers painted house numbers on curbs as part of the city-wide Make A Difference Day.

#### Mesa Presbyterian Ministries

Mesa Presbyterian Ministries (MPM) had a busy year in 2017. We receive as many as 70 calls a week for rental assistance while funds are available. 174 people received assistance. 136 received rental assistance and 38 received utility assistance.

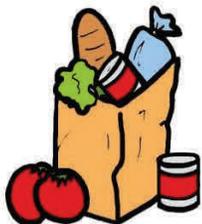
#### I Help

For the year 2017, our many awesome volunteers at FPC have hosted 20-25 women three Sundays per month. This includes dinner, showers, a safe place to sleep, movies, sack lunch for the next day and a full breakfast on Monday mornings...and they are all so grateful. Janet Verch, the program coordinator, attends the church sponsor meetings every other month (with Lutheran Social Services). She learns what works and what doesn't and re-

ceives suggestions on how we can improve the program. In the January meeting, she learned from the women's caseworker that five clients obtained permanent housing in December alone! Thank you to our congregations and all the I-Help volunteers for all your support for this program. Thank you, Janet, for coordinating it all. We truly make a difference right in our own back yard.

From Robert Sanders, Regional Director of Lutheran Social Services we learned the following information about 2016-2017: There were 231 first time women at I Help. Forty I Help women obtained permanent housing. Sixty seven women found employment. Overall, with all the churches involved, the women received 7,777 shelter nights. Wow! We are certainly part of a bigger picture!

### Deacon's Food Cupboard



The Food Cupboard continues to have a high demand, with approximately 65 bags given out each week. Since we were only closed three weeks this year, we distributed 49 weeks for a total of 3,185 bags in 2017. We served 9,605 people in 2,161 households. The value of each bag is \$32.00 x 3,185 bags equals a value of \$101,920. The dollar value from the United Food Bank was \$43,000. The dollar amount from FPC congregation and Sagewood donations was \$44,000. Contributions totaled \$87,000. We are always thankful to be blessed with wonderful workers who bag the groceries and who give them out. We have strong workers who unload many pounds of heavy boxes to help keep the pantry stocked. Our church can be very proud of our ministry in feeding the needy. Thank you, Sandy Clark for all you do to coordinate all these efforts, a huge job!

### Mesa Adult Literacy (formerly known as Laubach Literacy)

This past year Mesa Adult Literacy had 55 active volunteer instructors/tutors. There were 1,310.5 hours of instruction. Tutors and support staff spent another 2,207 hours in preparation, training, travel, meetings, etc. There were 64 active students. 56 students received one-to-one instructions. Eight participated in small group instruction. There were 13 students on the waiting list. Many students met goals. Five students got a better job; 10 advanced levels in curriculum series; 1 obtained citizenship; 1 registered to vote/voted for the first time; 1 obtained a driver's license; 41 increased involvement in community activities; and 12 increased involvement in children's educational activities.

### Special offerings – Thank you for your continued generosity!

*One Great Hour of Sharing:* 2016 giving was \$3,040. 2017 giving was \$3,107

*Pentecost offering:* 2016 giving was \$2,466 with \$990 of that going toward 2016 FPC Mission Trip. 2017 giving was \$2,233 with \$893.20 going toward the 2017 FPC Mission Trip.

*Global Peace and Witness Offering:* 2016 giving was \$1,594 with \$398 going to the work of Leslie Vogel, FPC Mission Co-worker. 2017 giving was \$1,227 with \$386.75 going to work of Leslie Vogel.

*Christmas Joy Offering:* 2016 giving was \$3,508.02. 2017 giving was \$2,711.



### Mission Co-Worker

Leslie Vogel, our Mission Co-worker with CEDEPCA in Guatemala came to visit FPC Mesa in March. Mission Commission hosted a meet and greet. She then was the guest pastor for Women's Gifts Sunday.

### Peacemaker visit

Rev. Phares Nuaga Mithamo, a PCUSA peacemaker visited FPC Mesa and spoke on Friday, September 29th. Eleven people participated.

### Shoe Drive

FPC Mesa joined with Trinity Presbyterian Church in Prescott to provide new and gently used shoes to send to our Mission Partners Tseyi Bidaa Presbyterian Church. We collected 10 trash bags full of shoes which Pastor Ann took to give them at the November Presbytery meeting.



## MINISTRY

Clerk of Session (Chair) — Linda Hayball  
Property (E) — Robert Harding  
Personnel (E) — Jeanne Partida

Personnel (D) — Susan McMichael  
Nominating (E) — Barbara Walker

Nominating (D) — Steve Post  
Stewardship/Finance (E) — Bob Gerlach

### Property

After the Sanctuary roof was replaced, the church experienced quiet necessary maintenance and minimal projects, like any other home. Our church encountered the usual catching up by correcting deferred preservation items from the previous year and only day to day repairs, such as carpet cleaning, pest control, door repairs, landscaping, and toilet issues.

We did have to address a few unexpected air conditioning problems, such as replacing the Fox Chapel Air Conditioning unit at a cost of \$4,865.00 and the A/C motor for Head Start at \$475.00. Property also made some improvements regarding our church campus lighting.

We replaced the parking lamps with LED lighting, installed three standing light poles from the Southside of the Sanctuary to the office, and a light that shines from the top of the entrance to our sanctuary into the east parking area for more security. The steeple lighting has been an on-going issue, but I believe that problem will be rectified in the very near future.



tain this campus.

### Session

During 2017, session met in ten Stated Meetings and one Called Meeting. In addition to the Annual Congregational Meeting in February, there were two Called Congregational Meetings. One in March was to approve the call to Reverend Ann Conklin. In November, we approved her 2018 call. We met with the Deacons and church staff for our Annual Retreat in September. Three new members were added to the Active Roll and 16 members were transferred or removed. Membership as of December 31, 2017 is 279.

The following members were transferred to the Church Triumphant: Ruth Yurich, Aylene Trimble, Elinore Koch, Alma Oberly, Fran Watson, Gary Clark, Wayne Scriba, Alice Peterson, Jim Norris, Spencer Hoff, Robert Trimble, Andrea Schultz, Patricia Woodrum and Gabe Homolya.

### Endowment

The members of the Endowment Committee are Jack Gunter, David Frederick, Brent Gregory, Renita Jurgensen, Ron Peyton, and Skeets Throckmorton, with Bob Gerlach, stewardship elder, serving as an ex-officio member. The committee met three times during 2017 and approved the following actions:

- Continued oversight of the investments for the Endowment Funds including the Kissinger, Mehlhop, Stubblefield, and Montlure funds with a total value of \$132,412.06 as of December 31, 2017. In addition,

### **Robert Harding**



the General Endowment value was \$109,956.00 and the Capital Endowment was \$18,768.12. The end-of-year value of the Worship Arts fund was \$16,047.19, the Organ Maintenance fund was \$5,234.44, and the Columbarium fund was 22,515.19.

- Received contributions of \$2,847.34 for the General Endowment and \$1,000.00 for Montlure camp scholarships.
- Dispersed \$525 of the Montlure fund for camp scholarships. Used \$600 from the Kissinger fund for the Grief Share class. Contributed \$42,000 toward the new roof for the sanctuary. Allocated \$18,041 to refurbish the pipe organ. Spent \$5,500 on improvements to the prayer garden.
- Used the Endowment brochure and Minute for Mission to convey to the congregation the need for future contributions to the endowment funds.



### Personnel

**Jeanne Partida**

The Personnel Committee consists of Personnel Elder, Jeanne Partida, Personnel Deacon, Susan McMichael, Brent Gregory, Renita Jurgensen and Marcy Snitzer. The committee has hired Bryan Hickey as the set up custodian for Sunday mornings and Wednesday WRAP. We hired Rob Kjar for the position of bookkeeper. Anita Ramsey has given notice that she will be stepping down as Youth Director no later than May of 2018. We are actively looking for her replacement. We have developed a new Child Protection and Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures. This policy was approved at the November 2017 Session meeting. We are in the process of developing a new Code of Conduct and Ministry Standards. All three of these documents are to be reviewed annually as required by Grand Canyon Presbytery.

### Nominating

**Barbara Walker**

Our committee is composed of Michael Gerlach, Renita Jurgensen, Chuck Michel, Steve Post (Nominating Deacon), Helen Thielke, Janet Verch, and Chairperson, Elder Barbara Walker. In June, Janet Verch's term will expire and Anita Ramsey will be the new committee member. Michael will stay on for another three year term. Our responsibility is to fill all the elder and deacon positions, plus nominating committee positions. They are for a three year term with the ability to serve a second three year term. When there is a resignation, it is our responsibility to fill the unexpired term. At this time we have filled all positions except the new designated Moderator of the Deacons. We always appreciate the prayers of the congregation as we work year round to fill positions. We will present a new slate at the February congregation meeting.

### Stewardship and Finance

**Bob Gerlach**



Thanks Be To God: A lot of great accomplishments in 2017. First and foremost we called our new Pastor, Reverend Ann Conklin, who arrived from Grand Rapids, Michigan, in June. We want to thank the Pastor Nominating Committee for all their hard work and dedication.

The Contractor completed the new Steel Roof on our Sanctuary in April. In the process, the existing asbestos roof was removed, finding the underlying wood was in excellent condition after fifty four years, requiring no repair work. Last but not least, the cost was \$155,196.18, way below the original estimate of \$250,000.

As far as Stewardship is concerned we closed the year with a surplus of \$16,930, the first in many years.

Mesa Presbyterian Ministries added Brent Gregory to the Staff and are in the process of adding new members to the Board. We look forward to 2018 with renewed Faith.

**Financial Reports are not published but are available for pick up at the kiosk or church office beginning February 11th.**

## FELLOWSHIP

Fellowship (E) (Chair) — Dennis Sitzler  
Cards (D) — Cindy Davenport  
Older Adult (E) — Dave Jurgensen

Transportation (D) — Doug McInelly  
Fellowship Deacon — Mark Waters  
Fellowship Deacon — Dan Sitzler  
Fellowship Deacon — Ruth Danaher

Fellowship Deacon — Ruth Rummel  
Fellowship Deacon — Kyle Harding  
Presbyterian Women — Suzanne Engman  
Youth Elder — Sedona Verch

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### Fellowship Commission: Annual Report

Submitted by: Dennis Sitzler, Fellowship Elder

The Fellowship Commission puts on, or assists with, many social activities during the year. This provides opportunities for our congregation to enjoy each others' company and provides some fun events to attend. This also encourages our congregation members to invite their friends to come and meet our church family, while having fun participating in the events with us. We encourage everyone to wear NAME BADGES, which we provide upon request, so everyone can easily know/learn each others' names. We also coordinate Coffee Hosts & Baked Goodies teams which provide refreshments during Coffee Time after first service each Sunday in Fellowship Hall.



- Fellowship sponsored a Western Hoedown BBQ dinner with Square Dance caller Bill Kanai - January 21st.
- Fellowship sponsored a "Chili Cook-off" dinner associated with the Annual Congregational Meeting – February 26th.
- Fellowship helped the Mission Commission with the Meet & Greet Luncheon for Leslie Vogel – March 4th.
- Fellowship worked as dinner servers/cleanup during the four dinner theater plays put on by the First Players on March 24th, 25th, 31st and April 1st.
- Fellowship held a BBQ following the Worship in the Park at Pioneer Park – April 9th.
- Fellowship sponsored an Ice Cream Social with Fatigo (Dan Sitzler's band) in concert – August 27th.
- Fellowship sponsored a German Potluck dinner with music provided by Sandy Clark and Mark Ramsey -September 24th.
- Fellowship held a kitchen clean up on October 14th. Lots of workers made for light work.
- Fellowship sponsored a Thanksgiving Dinner in the Fellowship Hall on November 23rd at noon.



### Fellowship Plans for the future

Your Fellowship Commission members are busy making plans for the events we'll hold in 2018:



- We've already held a Western Hoedown BBQ dinner with Square Dance caller Bill Kanai on January 20th.
- The annual Chili Cook-off Dinner will be held in conjunction with the Congregation Annual Meeting February 25th.
- We'll assist with the Dinner Theater on March 23rd through the 25th.
- We'll have a BBQ following "Worship at Pioneer Park" on April 8th.
- We will host our Salsa Challenge Dinner on May 6th, where contestants vie for prizes for the best home-made salsa.



## Ice Cream Social



- We plan on hosting an Ice Cream Social in August, with some type of entertainment provided.
- We will put on another Road Rally in October where teams receive clues and travel the city to locate their destinations and next clues on the route. Prizes are awarded for the team finishing closest to the average course navigation time, with a dinner at the end of the event where teams can exchange “war stories” of the event.
- Fellowship is planning on sponsoring the Thanksgiving Dinner again this year.



FPC Mesa is blessed to have a fully functioning coordinating team with 11 members. In this time of diminishing church numbers, there has been a trend in some churches to not have circles or a coordinating team. Not only do we have a full slate of members on the coordinating team, but we have four circles. Eve Circle has 11-12 active members and meets on the second Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the parlor. Deborah Circle has 17 active members and meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 9:30 a.m. in member’s homes. Lydia Circle has 10 active members and meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 12:00 noon in the church parlor. Rachel Circle has 7 active members and meets at 1:00 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month in the church library.

On Women’s Gift Sunday, which was the first Sunday in March, Leslie Vogel, FPC Mission Co-worker, was the guest pastor and spoke on Gratitude. Carol Gerlach was given the annual award of Honorary Life Membership. This award has been given out every year since 1962. Congratulations, Carol.

The women of PW had their annual bake-sale fundraiser as part of the community yard sale in November. They were able to successfully raise funds to support the work of PW in mission. Thank you for your support of this event.



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## DEACONS

Coordinator — Carol Gerlach  
Transportation — Doug McInelly  
MPM — Jane Potyka  
Fellowship — Dan Sitzler  
Seasonal Ministries — Darlene Sitzler  
Food Pantry—Sandy Clark

Personnel — Susan McMichael  
Nominating — Steve Post  
Fellowship — Ruth Rummier  
Prayer Chain — Joy Schulz  
Fellowship — Mark Waters  
Funerals/Memorials—Karyn Weaver

Fellowship — Ruth Damaher  
Cards — Cindy Davenport  
Fellowship — Kyle Harding  
Contact Lists — Jan Montgomery  
Assimilation — Alice Schlak

The Deacons are making a concerted effort to be in quarterly contact with members and friends of FPC, Mesa. At their May meeting, the Deacons welcomed the incoming Deacons with a potluck. In September the Deacons hosted a Staff Appreciation Luncheon in Fellowship Hall.

We are currently hard at work planning for our Mother-Daughter Tea, scheduled for Saturday afternoon February 10, 2018 from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.

Thank you to all our Deacons. Special thanks to our two Individually Commissioned Deacons: Sandy Clark, Food Pantry, and Karyn Weaver, Funeral and Memorial Receptions. Both of these dedicated ladies have served in these positions for over ten years each.

*Carol Gerlach, Deacon Coordinator*

## February Birthdays



<i>Peggy Anderson</i>	<i>1st</i>
<i>Patty Carnes</i>	<i>1st</i>
<i>Alma Post</i>	<i>1st</i>
<i>Kara Gregory</i>	<i>2nd</i>
<i>Will Snitzer</i>	<i>2nd</i>
<i>Nate Buck</i>	<i>9th</i>
<i>Jean Chappell</i>	<i>9th</i>
<i>Isobel Letizia</i>	<i>9th</i>
<i>Ginny Mallia</i>	<i>11th</i>
<i>Garrett Hull</i>	<i>12th</i>
<i>Karen Williams</i>	<i>12th</i>
<i>Kate Buck</i>	<i>14th</i>
<i>John Peterson</i>	<i>15th</i>
<i>Bob Schulz</i>	<i>15th</i>
<i>John Goings, Jr.</i>	<i>16th</i>
<i>Brock Hoyman</i>	<i>16th</i>
<i>Sharon Brause</i>	<i>19th</i>
<i>Richard Schroeder</i>	<i>19th</i>
<i>Gavin Mallia</i>	<i>21st</i>
<i>Clara Padelford</i>	<i>21st</i>
<i>Kim Roberts</i>	<i>21st</i>
<i>Bryan Hickey</i>	<i>25th</i>
<i>Elly Weinel</i>	<i>26th</i>
<i>Lee Tobey</i>	<i>27th</i>
<i>Linda Free</i>	<i>28th</i>
<i>Bob Strader</i>	<i>29th</i>

***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

Tordai, Nancy  
1865 S. Sombrero Rd.  
Apache Junction, AZ 85119

### *Calendar Notes*

#### February 2-4

Choir Retreat, Sedona

#### February 4

Souper Bowl of Caring  
Scout Sunday

#### February 5

Deacons meet

#### February 10

Mother-Daughter Tea

#### February 11

Commissions & Session meet

#### February 12 & 13

Circles meet

#### February 14

Ash Wednesday

#### February 19

Presidents' Day — Office closed

#### February 25

Monthly Food Drive  
Chili Cook Off  
Annual Congregational Meeting

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# SCENES FROM 2017!



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

See calendar on website:  
<http://www.fpcmesa.org/about-us/current-events>

**LA PALABRA**

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**Website: [www.fpcmesa.org](http://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**  
**Jasmine Couillard, Christian Education Director**  
**Linda Reeves, Office Manager/Publications**  
**Shiloh Murillo, Preschool Director**  
**Don Krill, Buildings Supervisor**  
**Anita Ramsey, Youth Director**  
**Rob Kjar, Bookkeeper**  
**James R. Bruening, Pastor Emeritus**  
**Robert Martz, Pastor Emeritus**