

La Palabra — 2018 Annual Report Edition

February 2019

www.fpcmesa.org

480-964-8606

Annual Report for First Presbyterian Church of Mesa
Rev. Ann Conklin

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight.” ~ Proverbs 3:5

In what has been described as an “odd and wondrous” calling, serving as a pastor requires trusting in the Lord and relying on insight and wisdom given from God. God is always faithful! It has truly been a joy serving alongside all of you here at FPC Mesa for my first full calendar year! I give thanks and praise to God for this honor and gift.

An important part of any pastor’s role is in preaching God’s Word and leading God’s people in worship. Sunday is my favorite day of the week when the fruit of our laboring together with God, wrestling with God’s Word, and giving birth to a message in which we can hear God speaking to us all comes together and we gather as one body to offer our praise and worship to our good and gracious God. We bring our whole selves into God’s presence, trusting that God can and will accept us, heal us, transform us, and send us out to bear God’s Light and Love to the world. What a wonderful privilege it is to be claimed as God’s own and used for God’s purposes.

As disciples of Christ, we also gather throughout the week to be formed in our faith and grow in our relationship with God and with one another as well as to participate in mission together. I had the wonderful opportunity to lead a group of teens in the process of claiming their faith as their own, a process we Presbyterians call Confirmation, as these teens confirmed for themselves the promises that were made on their behalf at baptism. This took place during Wednesday WRAP in the winter/spring sessions and seven teens were confirmed in their faith and became members our congregation at the end of April.

It was also my great joy to lead two other new member classes, helping those interested in membership at FPC Mesa become more familiar with Reformed theology and history, the polity and mission of the PC(USA), and the life and ministry of FPC Mesa. We welcomed 15 new members and 3 affiliate members into our faith family in 2018, and they have jumped right into life and ministry with us. Getting to know them and the many gifts they bring to us is both life and faith affirming!

Marking life’s many transitions with you is another part of my call as we bear witness to God’s faithful presence with us at the beginning of life, as lives are committed to another, and as life draws to a close. I had the privilege of presiding at three baptisms this year as well as uniting one couple in marriage. I sat with many as their loved ones lay in hospitals and homes, healing, recovering, and also dying; the hope and promise of eternal life in Christ carrying us through these challenging times. It is a deep honor to be welcomed into these spiritual moments and to walk with you during difficult days.

Rejoicing, recreation, and mission are also significant aspects of life in Christ, and I thoroughly enjoyed living and learning with the Navajo people at Tseyi Bidaa, leading adult study groups during Wednesday WRAP, traveling with Presbyterian women to Louisville for the Triennial Gathering, worshipping in Pioneer Park, as well as gathering for dancing and cook-offs and other opportunities to come to know one another better and have fun together. It has also been wonderful to envision new uses for some of our spaces and begin the process of refreshing and refurbishing our campus which will continue into 2019. Stay tuned!

2018 has been a year of transition for our staff as Anita Ramsey concluded her role as our Youth Director and Jasmine Couillard departed from her role as our Christian Education Director. It was with abundant gratitude that we thanked both of these women for their service to our congregation and wished them well in their next endeavor. These two part-time positions have been combined and re-envisioned as one full-time position, Minister of Faith Formation. I am grateful for all of the time, energy, wisdom, and patience of our personnel committee as we search for the person God has chosen to fulfill this role and lead us into God’s good

(Continued on page 13)

INDEX

<i>A Message from Ann</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Worship Report.....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Discipleship Report.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Preschool Report</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Fellowship Report</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Presbyterian Women</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Mission Report.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Administration Report</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Deacons</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>February Birthdays.....</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Calendar Notes</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Scenes from 2018.....</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Calendar</i>	<i>Website</i>

WORSHIP

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

Funerals/Memorials (D) — Renita Jurgensen
Worship (D) — Gail Soderquist

Worship Commission: Staff Report

Submitted by: Mark Ramsey, Director of Music Ministries

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



- Weekly Preschool Chapels, with Pastor Ann and Preschool Director Shiloh Murillo
- Dei Gloriam Handbell Choir performances at Phoenix ZooLights
- Artist Series, including the Valley Chamber Chorale, Organist Ilona Kubiacyk-Adler, and Glenn & Ellen Brown, two-piano jazz concert
- Sanctuary Choir Retreat to Sedona
- Combined Worship with *Iglesia de Dios El Gran Pastor*
- Concert with Joan White and Anita Ramsey, Friendship Village, Nunnenkamp Center
- Rex, The King of the Instruments, for Preschool Chapels
- First Players' 22nd Annual Dinner-

Theater Production (Disney's Beauty and the Beast), with three performances, including a new matinée

- Hal Hopson Tenebrae Cantata, with Sanctuary Choir, Narrators, Soloists, Organ, and Keyboard
- Accompanied Dubois Seven Last Words at Gold Canyon UMC
- Easter Services at 6:00, 9:00, and 11:00, with Scout Pancake Breakfast, and "The Great Surprise"
- National Youth Pipe Organ Encounter at FPC and other Valley venues
- Vacation Bible School
- Worship at Pioneer Park
- Karen Rudin Student Recitals, with Pure Praise Singers
- FPC to Faith and Family Night at the Diamondbacks, with Musical Guests "Mercy Me"
- Rededication of the Gammage Auditorium Aeolian-Skinner organ, featuring organist Richard Elliott
- All-Church Stewardship Celebration with music led by the HolyGrounds Praise Band, followed by lunch and the Sanctuary Choir in "A Good Old Vaudeville Show!"
- Bike & Breakfast group rides
- Music for PW Holiday Gathering
- Matsiko World Orphan Choir
- National Convention of the American Guild of Organists, in Kansas City
- Music Sunday "Christmas Glory"
- Special Service Leaders Tricia MacDonald, Larry Lathom, Karen Rudin, Bea Towe, and Barbara Walker, with summer music led by the First Ringers, Summer Singers, Vacation Bible School, HolyGrounds Band, Youth Choir, Men's & Women's Ensembles, Soloists & Instrumentalists, Summer Ringers, One Voice, and Dei Gloriam Handbell Choir in a Hymn Festival



We are blessed to have about a quarter of our congregation participating in our music program. I am very 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 each of our choirs: **SUNDAY SCHOOL/WEDNESDAY WRAP WORSHIP SKILLS**, Directors Karen Rudin, Karelle Reidhoefer, 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.); and to our **SOUND CREWS**, Bob Schulz, Peter Conklin, Dan Reeves, and John Couillard.

Respectfully submitted, Mark Ramsey

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 2018 include:

- Tenth-Annual Worship in the Park, at Pioneer Park, followed by a BBQ (Fellowship Commission)
- Planned for special worship services on Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, and Christmas Eve
- Easter Sunrise Service followed by a pancake breakfast prepared by our Scouts
- Ordered new Sanctuary Pulpit and Red Paraments
- Ordered Purple Paraments, a gift from Michael and Stephanie Gerlach and Emerald Green Paraments, a gift from Bob and Carol Gerlach.
- Mother's Day and Father's Day Celebrations, with special Worship Flowers/Gifts
- World Communion Sunday with breads of the world and world music
- Advent Decorating with Carols by Candlelight and a catered supper
- Carols by Candlelight and "cookie reception" offered for I-Help, with Janet Verch and Jan Peterson
- Candlelight Communion Services of Lessons & Carols
- Planned for 2019 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
- New online prayer chain service
- HolyGrounds barista training
- Youth prepared Christmas Eve Candles
- Recommended one service schedule during the summer: worship in Fellowship Hall June 17 & 24 and August 5 & 12 and in the Sanctuary all of July. APPROVED.
- Recommended one combined worship service at 10:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary on Memorial Day, Labor Day, and Stewardship Sunday. APPROVED.
- Recommended that defibrillators be purchased for the Sanctuary (1) and Fellowship Hall (1). APPROVED.
- Recommended the purchase of colored lights to supplement/replace the white lights on each side of the organ. APPROVED.
- Recommended that communion during June, July, August, and September be served by intinction. APPROVED.



Items for Session Approval

The Worship Commission recommends approval of the following 2019 Communion days: the first Sunday of each month plus Maundy Thursday and Christmas Eve.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mark Ramsey, Director of Music (Chair)

Gail Soderquist, Worship (D) 2021

Nate Robinson, Worship (E) 2021

Joy Schulz, Prayer Chain (D) 2019

Sandra Clark - Food Pantry Director & Worship Decorations

Dan Reeves, Worship - HolyGrounds

Susan Durand - Greeters

Renita Jurgensen - Liturgists & Funeral/Memorial Receptions

Don Wilson - Ushers

Humoresque

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

A blonde calls the airport, "Can you tell me how long it'll take to fly from San Francisco to New York City?" The agent replies, "Just a minute." "Thank you," the blonde says, and hangs up.

DISCIPLESHIP

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

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

Youth/Young Adult (E) —

Discipleship Commission: Annual Report

The Discipleship Commission consists of faith forming activities of all kinds for all ages! Its focus is on all that helps us become more faithful disciples of Jesus Christ throughout every stage of our lives.



Our Sunday Christian education continues to thrive for all ages, serving pre-school through adult. Many classes and small groups meet on Sunday mornings as well as throughout the week. Led by Deborah Rosen and Lanai Mills, the elementary age classes are meeting together in one room on Sunday morning at 10:15. The teachers are enjoying using the new curriculum of the PC(USA), "Growing in Grace and Gratitude." If you are curious about what happens here, you are always invited to join in or just observe! The youth meet at this same time in the youth room, led by our interim Youth Director, Kyle Harding, whose capable leadership we appreciate greatly.

Recognizing that young children experience God's presence and are capable of attending to worship, especially when designed with the needs of our youngest worshippers in mind, we developed and implemented a Children's Worship time which follows the Time with Young Disciples in our worship service. This is geared towards children 3 years old through 3rd grade, though is flexible depending on the needs of a particular child. The children are led by a Children's Worship Leader as they gather to sing praise to God, hear the stories of God, respond to God's word through art and creativity, and join in prayer together. This helps shape and form them in the ability to worship in our sanctuary as they grow.

Adult Bible studies and other small groups meet on Sunday morning and also during the week. Refer to the information in the Sunday bulletin for days and times or contact Elder for Adult Education, Karen Rudin, for further information or if you have an idea for a group you'd like to start. Look for a congregational survey which will be coming in February to gather information related to small group ministry at FPC Mesa. We value your input and ideas!

Wednesday WRAP continues to meet from 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. in six-week blocks throughout the year. We celebrated last spring with a superb magic show that had the attendees awed and mystified. Providing a mid-week opportunity for food, fellowship, and fun, Wednesday WRAP has something for everyone! The youngest among us listen to and learn Bible stories as well as engage in crafts, games, and music. There is choir for the Pure Praise Singers, as well as the newly formed Youth Choir. An adult Bible study class meets after dinner, which is enjoyed family-style in Fellowship Hall. All are invited and welcome to attend! (GriefShare has previously been a part of Wednesday WRAP, but is currently on a break until sometime in the coming year.)



Vacation Bible School was also a vital and vibrant ministry of the Discipleship Commission in 2018. We met for five days in June to learn about how Jesus is the anchor of our lives, guiding us even through storms, in a VBS program called Shipwrecked. An adult study met during this same time and teens were incorporated as assistants and guides for the younger participants. A handful of our VBS volunteers, including youth and children, then brought our program on the road to the Tseyi Bidaa Presbyterian congregation on the Navajo Reservation in northeastern Arizona. It was a great joy to bear witness to the love of Jesus and worship alongside our Native brothers and sisters in Christ.

Several of our youth attended Montlure Presbyterian Camp last summer and plans are currently underway to participate in a Traveling Montlure Day Camp in 2019 with other Presbyterian congregations in the East Valley. Look for information coming out soon!

Our youth gathered on Sunday mornings, Wednesday evenings, and other times throughout the year as they grew in their faith together. Led by Anita Ramsey, Youth Sunday was held in April and explored the Biblical concept of the Fruits of the Spirit. Our youth volunteer their gifts in many ways, enhancing our worship by sharing their musical gifts, serving and cleaning up dinner for our Dinner Theatre production, helping out with VBS, and wrapping Christmas gifts for the congregation as a fundraiser. They also meet for fun and during 2018 enjoyed activities such as bowling, going to a water park, eating pizza, movie nights, a paintball excursion, and a wonderful Christmas party with fun games, prizes, and a gift exchange. It is a great joy to see them connect with Christ and with one another, growing in the faith and in the life of discipleship into which they have been called.



had since I have been director. Within the first two weeks of school, enrollment jumped to 31 children! As of the end of December 2018 there are 37 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. Speaking of the Preschool Board, we want to thank all of our representatives who sit on the board and give us the guidance and counsel that helps us plan for our future. We welcomed a new parent representative, Bonnie Castillo, to the board. We are pleased that she is able to be a voice for our families that we serve.



At the end of the 2017-2018 school year we discovered a great partnership for our newest teacher, Ms. Sara, when Ms. Debbie joined her in the 3-year-old class. They make a great team! The children enjoyed the calm friendship and professionalism that they share together in the classroom. Unfortunately, Ms. Debbie has had to take a medical leave of absence during the 2018-2019 school year. We are planning to have her return for the 2019-2020 school year. While she is out, we have welcomed back Ms. Rachelle Schuster to be with Ms. Sara in the 3-year-old classroom. They are working well together and are bringing new experiences to the children every day!

We started out 2018 in the preparation phase for our Quality First Assessment Cycle at the Preschool in 2019. In the fall of 2018, we started a professional development plan that focuses on revisiting the tools that grow the relationships between the children and the teachers. We worked with our Quality First Coach, Kelli Holden, to practice the extension of learning that the children were engaged in. This also brought in a deeper awareness of the children's surroundings,

Preschool: Annual Report

We truly feel blessed with our preschool as we look back at what 2018 has given us! At the end of the school year in May 2018, there were 34 kids enrolled. For the third year our program kept its hours from 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. By the start of the 2018-2019 school year in August, we had 26 children enrolled. That is the best start of the school year that we have





knowledge and developmental milestones. The teachers really have been working closely together as teams to bring these concepts to life every single day!

Our funding from the Quality First Grant was decreased for the 2017-18 school year. We were previously allotted 11 full-time slots. Then, that was decreased to 10 full-time scholarships which can serve up to 20 children. But, good news! We have had no trouble filling all of those scholarships with families who qualify and who maintain the attendance requirement. As of the end of

December, we have 16 children on our waitlist who want to attend on the scholarship.

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 have been enjoyed Pastor Ann's spirit during our chapel time with the families. We love the creativity that she 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 2019, 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, Director



FELLOWSHIP

Fellowship (E) (Chair) — Dennis Sitzler
Cards (D) — Gretchen Frederick
Transportation (D) — Steve Muth
Older Adult (E) — David Jurgensen

Fellowship Deacon — Katie Masterson
Fellowship Deacon — Mark Waters
Fellowship Deacon — Todd Ramsey

Fellowship Deacon — Kyle Harding
Fellowship Deacon --- Carol Strouse
Presbyterian Women — Suzanne Engman
Youth Elder — Ian Harding

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 20th.
- Fellowship sponsored a "Chili Cook-off" dinner associated with the Annual Congregational Meeting – February 25th.
- Fellowship worked as dinner preparers/servers/cleanup during the three dinner theater plays put on by the First Players - March 23rd, 24th and 25th.
- Fellowship held a BBQ following the Worship in the Park at Pioneer Park – April 8th.
- Fellowship sponsored a Salsa Challenge - May 6th.
- Fellowship sponsored a Faith and Family Night event with the Arizona Diamondbacks - August 24th.
- Fellowship hosted a luncheon for Dedication Sunday - October 28th.

Fellowship Plans for the future

Your Fellowship Commission members are busy making plans for the events we'll hold in 2019:

- The annual Chili Cook-off Dinner will be held in conjunction with the Congregation Annual Meeting February 24th. Contestants compete for prizes for the best chili.

Ice Cream Social



- We'll assist with the Dinner Theater on March 22nd thru the 24th.
- We'll have a BBQ following "Worship at Pioneer Park" on April 14th.
- We will host our Salsa Challenge Dinner on May 5th, where contestants compete for prizes for the best homemade salsa.
- We are planning a Family Movie Night in June.
- We are planning an Ice Cream Social in August.
- We will sponsor another Faith and Family night with the Arizona Diamondbacks on September 3th. They will be playing the Cincinnati Reds.



LOTS of fun events will be happening at your church this year. Are there other events that you would like to see us sponsor this year? If so, LET US KNOW. New ideas are welcomed and needed. We are always looking for new events to provide an opportunity for our congregation and their friends to get together, socialize, and have some fun in the name of our Lord Jesus!

Older Adult Ministry

This year in the older adult ministry the continuing Befriender program is running strong and smoothly. A big thanks goes to Gana Martin and the wonderful volunteers that have made this year's Befrienders a big success.



The 34th Annual Senior Service Award went to a wonderful couple, Jack and Yvonne Oliver. The Olivers are so deserving of this honor as they continually stay active here at FPC. The various ministries are done by them with passion and love.

With the aging congregation, it has been my privilege to assist in the various funerals and memorials we've had this year. Volunteering at these affairs has allowed me to get acquainted with the families, which in itself is a ministry I consider to be extremely important.

David Jurgensen



Presbyterian Women of FPC Mesa is comprised of four circles, a coordinating team and a total membership of 50 women. Throughout the year we participate in different missions, come together for Bible study, enjoy the fellowship of different gatherings and support each other in concerns and joys.

At Women's Gifts Sunday, on March 4th, Deborah Kehle, a pastor for hospice, gave a sermon on Exodus 1:8-22. Flinn Lund was given the annual award for the Honorary Life Membership. Congratulations, and thank you Flinn for all you have done, and still do, in the church and in the community.

The gatherings this last year have had a common theme of celebrating 30 years together as Presbyterian Women. A special one was the Churchwide Gathering of Presbyterian Women in Louisville, Kentucky. It is held every three years, and we had six women attending. It was a time of fellowship, meeting new people, listening to wonderful speakers and honoring the women and accomplishments of 30 years. Our ladies who attended told us about their experiences and what was most special at our Holiday Luncheon in December.

We hosted the PW Presbytery Fall Gathering in October and had over 100 women spending a day enjoying breakfast, speakers, breakout sessions, a catered lunch and a special service in our beautiful Sanctuary. In



spite of Oregon-like rain, it was a wonderful time of fellowship and sharing our church home with others.

The year was capped off with a very successful bake sale at Thanksgiving to support PW's work in mission. This was thanks to all of our women's great baking, church members joining in on the baking and all the donations added.



MISSION

Pastor — Ann Conklin
Mission (Chair--E) — Sue Eisenklam

Assimilation (D) — Alice Shlak
Marketing (E) —

Seasonal Ministries (D) — Shelley Cronenberg
Hunger Action (D) — Sandra Clark

Mission Commission: Annual Report Submitted by: Sue Eisenklam, Mission Elder

Marketing

The marketing elder position has been vacant since March. FPC Staff and the congregation have picked up the slack the best that can be done. Thank you to those of you who faithfully check in on Facebook on Sunday mornings, keeping our presence there. Thank you to Pastor Ann and to Ellen Hickey, Family Ministries Elder, who regularly post about WRAP, Worship and Faith. The new FPC sign invites all to join us for worship and events. The position of marketing elder remains open. You are invited to lift this up in prayer for the next right person to fill the position, as well as opening your heart to direction from the Holy Spirit in case it is you! If you are so moved, please contact Barbara Walker, the Nominating Elder.

Assimilation

There were two new member classes and one confirmand class in 2018. Twenty new members, including the seven confirmands, joined the church in April. Five more became part of our congregation in December. That makes 25 new members for 2018!

Deacon's Food Cupboard



The Food Cupboard continues to have a high demand, with 50 bags given out each week. Since we were closed for two weeks this year, we distributed 50 weeks for a total of 2,500 bags. In addition to the 2,500, another 100 miscellaneous bags were distributed for a total of 2,600 bags. Each bag is valued at \$32 for a total value of \$83,200. We served 9,549 people in 2,085 households. The dollar value of United Food Bank contribution was \$27,299.06. The dollar value of what the congregation gave and what Sagewood contributed was \$32,000 for a total of \$59,299.06 in contributions. Sadly, our relationship with Sage-wood ceased in November. We were truly blessed to have had them supplying food to us for many years. We have many strong workers who bag and unload groceries who we are most grateful for. We also have regular volunteers who distribute the food on Fridays. Our church makes a difference in feeding the needy!

I Help

For the year 2018, FPC volunteers have hosted 20-25 women two Sundays per month (approximately 25 volunteer hours per week). This includes dinner, showers, a safe place to sleep, movies, sack lunch for the next day and a full breakfast on Monday mornings. Janet Verch, the program coordinator, attends the church sponsor meetings every other month (with Lutheran Social Services), where we discuss what works best and how we can improve the program at each site. Based on the yearly report from LSS (July 2017-June 2018) New Guests = 220, Participants Receiving Case Management = 156, Shelter Bed Nights = 8,311, Women Employed = 65, Moved into housing = 31

Seasonal Ministry

Angel Tree: We sponsored three families this year. Two families were from the FPC Pre-school. One family was from the FPC neighborhood. As is our tradition, we provided gifts for each of the family member, as well as a holiday meal, other food stuffs and an assortment of household and personal items.



Mesa Adult Literacy

This past year Mesa Adult Literacy had 40 active volunteer instructors/tutors. There were 2,172 hours of instruction. Tutors and support staff spent another 1,008 hours in preparation, training, travel, meetings, etc. There were 79 active students; 59 students received one-to-one instructions; 20 participated in small group instruction. There were 17 students on the waiting list. Many students met goals: three students got a better job; one student improved employability skills; three students entered other education and/or training; four students

advanced level(s) in curriculum series; four students obtained citizenship; one student increased involvement in community activities; three students increased involvement in children's educational activities; and seven students met other personal goals.

Mission Co-Workers

In June, Rev. Leslie Vogel had a reassignment within the Presbyterian Mission Agency to be the Liaison for Mexico and Guatemala and the United States. She has been FPC Mission Co-Worker for the last two years. She joined FPC for the Mission Trip to Tseyi Bidaa in July. There she talked about the need at the U.S.-Mexico border to build relationships and bridges. As a result, FPC session chose to adopt new mission co-workers, Rev. Mark Adams and Miriam Maldonado Escobar and the people at the U.S.-Mexico Border.

Café Justo

FPC supported one of the ministries of Frontera de Cristo where our mission co-workers serve. The ministry of Café Justo is a non-political, humane, Christian way to address immigration issues at their roots. By buying coffee from them, we not only get great coffee, but we help coffee growers to have a sustainable way to live and help their communities. We, together, bought 70 bags of coffee with all the proceeds going back to the cooperative of Café Justo. We plan to have coffee sales quarterly.



Special Offerings – Thank you for your continued generosity!

- ***One Great Hour of Sharing:*** Giving was \$2,613.
- ***Pentecost Offering:*** Giving was \$2,358 with \$943.20 going toward the 2018 FPC Mission Trip
- ***Global Peace and Witness Offering:*** Giving was \$2,070 with \$517.50 going to the work of our new mission partners Rev. Mark Adams and Miriam Maldonado Escobar and the people at the U.S.-Mexico Border.
- ***Christmas Joy Offering:*** Giving was \$2,902.

Mission Trip

In July twenty-two participants (eight youth and fourteen adults) once again went to Tseyi Bidaa Presbyterian Church in Del Muerto, Arizona. We averaged 29 children a day for the five days of Vacation Bible School. We did travel on Saturday so that we could worship with the community and join them for lunch. It was a joyous reunion with our extended faith family. We spent the rest of the afternoon preparing for Monday VBS. This year was different because we held VBS from 10-1 and finished each session with a mid-day meal together. We did let them know we would not be back in 2019 as we were planning an international trip to the border. We did invite them to join us. We, in fact, did ask if at least two people would like to join us for the 2019 spring break mission trip, but they declined. We continue to stay in touch through Facebook, by text and at Presbytery meetings.

Matthew 25 Offering for the combined August Presbyteries meeting in Tucson

FPC participated in a drive to collect socks, new men's and women's underwear in small sizes, and travel size deodorant and toothpaste. Pastor Ann took the several bags of items collected to the meeting. The items were going to be donated to Frontera de Cristo where our mission co-workers serve.

Peacemaker Visit

International Peacemaker, Mary Mikhael, was the keynote speaker at the Presbyterian Women's Presbytery Fall Gathering which was hosted at FPC.

October Coat Drive

FPC joined with Trinity Presbyterian Church in Prescott to provide gently used coats of all sizes and weights to take to the October Presbytery Meeting to give to Tseyi Bidaa Presbyterian Church. Robert Harding transported the many, many bags that were collected.

Mesa Make a Difference Days

While the actual Mesa Make a Difference Day was October 27th, FPC had two days of participating! It was the perfect assigned task for our faith community! On October 20th, thirteen folks gathered in Fellowship Hall to stuff bags with lots of information about resources available in Mesa. The following weekend, on the official Mesa Make a Difference Day, fourteen people gathered to hang the bags in a designated neighborhood. Thank you to all who participated!

ADMINISTRATION

Property (E) (Chair) — Robert Harding
Clerk of Session — Carol Gerlach
Personnel (E) — Jeanne Partida

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

Nominating (D) — Michael Gerlach
Stewardship/Finance (E) — Bob Gerlach

The Administration Commission is the “business arm” of the church. It oversees Property and Grounds, Stewardship, the Finance Committee, Personnel and Nominating.

Session

Carol Gerlach

During 2018, Session met in ten Stated Meetings. In addition to the Annual Congregational Meeting in February, there were two Called Congregational Meetings. We met with the Deacons and church staff for our Annual Retreat in August.

Twenty two new members were added to the Active Roll and 16 members were transferred and removed from the Roll. The following nine members were transferred to the Church Triumphant in 2018:

January 2 — Richard Lowe (RE)	May 14 — Rosalie Lowe (RE)	June 24 — Irene Lenke (RE)
March 9 — Joe Woods (RE)	June 8 — Allan Chisholm	July 17 — Charlene Raikes
March 18 — Charlie Golden (RE)	June 17 — Bettylou Edwards (RE)	September 2—David Tobey (RE)

Our membership as of December 31, 2018 is 276.

Property

Robert Harding

In 2018, the church experienced 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, although, make noticeable, and possibly, unnoticeable improvements.

I know you can't miss our improved street signage. An electronic, programmable sign was installed on Mesa Drive in front of Fox Chapel that has increased visibility and recognition to our church for all who travel north and south on Mesa Drive. It is a noticeable improvement.

In Fellowship Hall kitchen, we had to install a new ice maker which improved our facility for all the activity that is produced from this kitchen, such as I-Help, Wednesday WRAP, our HolyGrounds CoffeeHouse, and all the other activities that gather there.



The church also replaced over 100 incandescent/florescent light bulbs with LED bulbs in the Preschool, Fellowship Hall, the Office and the Jackson Building - places on our campus that consume the majority of our daily power. These LED panels have a five-year limited warranty and a general life expectancy of 50,000 hours, which will reduce our overall electric bill. We also addressed our Wi-Fi issues by improving our system through Cox Communications.

Another cost savings improvement, and addressing an aging gas line issue, was converting the Sanctuary and the Pre-School heating system to electricity. There are many benefits to this, our annual energy cost savings is debatable, but the liability of our aging gas line, and especially removing our church for the regulation of the Arizona Corporation Commission, in the long run, is extremely beneficial.

And finally, our Space Utilization Plan. Last year, a team of church members, with the guidance of Allan Schultz, went around our church's campus to evaluate the status and overall condition of our facilities. Many recommendations were made and prioritized into three phases. The first phase has been completed, as preparation for our church's hosting the first Presbytery Meeting of 2019.

I hope you have noticed what changes and improvements have been made in the Parlor, the Youth Room, Fellowship Hall women's restroom and in the Library. If you have not noticed, I encourage you to see for yourself.

The Space Utilization Plan is a continuing plan, with two additional phases and hopefully, as we go into this New Year, those additional phases will be realized. We will continue to make the necessary improvements, as well as continue to address the upkeep on our church family's home, our House of God. Thank you for all your support.

Stewardship and Finance

Robert Gerlach

The Finance Committee consists of Robert Gerlach who serves as Stewardship Elder, Church Treasurer and Chief Financial Officer; Property Elder Robert Harding; Endowment Chair Jack Gunter; and at-large members Peter Eisenklam, Brent Gregory and Jan Montgomery. Meeting records are kept by Carol Gerlach, Clerk of Session. Pastor Ann Conklin also attends our meetings as does the church bookkeeper, Rob Kjar, during discussion and review of the monthly financial reports. The committee meets monthly to review the church's financial reports and took the following actions in 2018:

- Responsibly disbursed the funds of the Charlene Raikes bequest and the Richard & Rosalie Lowe bequest.

In November, Robert Gerlach sent a letter to all members of the congregation for the 2019 Pledge Drive and noted that salaries, expenses and utility bills are supported by the **General Fund** while large projects, like maintaining/updating our campus structures and have a life of five years or more, are funded from the **Capital Fund**. The church uses the Building Fund as a reserve for Capital projects which are very important to sustaining a beautiful, functioning campus. We have tried to be faithful stewards of your gifts and ask that you continue giving at the same levels that you did last year, or even set a goal to pledge more than last year to help us plan a responsible budget for 2019.

Nominating

Barbara Walker

Our committee is composed of Michael Gerlach (Nominating Deacon), Renita Jurgensen, Chuck Michel, Tammy Miller, Anita Ramsey, Helen Thielke and Chairperson, Elder Barbara Walker. In June, Renita's term will expire and Allan Schultz will be the new committee member. Our responsibility is to fill all the elder and deacon positions, plus the nominating committee itself. Terms are for a three-year period 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 are trying to fill all positions to be presented at the February congregational meeting. We would appreciate your prayers as we work all year.

Personnel

Jeanne Partida

The Personnel Committee consists of Personnel Elder Jeanne Partida, Personnel Deacon Susan McMichael and three at-large members Carol Anderson, Brent Gregory and Renita Jurgensen. The committee took the following actions this year: developed a new Code of Conduct and Ministry Standards; conducted annual reviews for all FPC staff and recommended salaries for the 2019 fiscal year budget. In addition, we developed a fulltime position of Minister of Faith Formations, which is a combination of the CE Director and Youth Director, and we are actively looking for someone to fill this position. Anita Ramsey was recognized for her service as Youth Director and Rev. Ann Conklin was honored on Pastor Recognition Sunday.

Endowment

Jack Gunter

The Endowment Committee consists of David Frederick, Jack Gunter, Brent Gregory, Renita Jurgensen, Ron Payton, and Skeets Throckmorton, with Robert Gerlach, stewardship elder, serving as an ex-officio member. The committee met twice during 2018 and has undertaken the following actions:

- Continued oversight of the Endowment Funds including the Kissinger, Mehlhop, Stubblefield, and Montlure Funds with a total value of \$123,657 as of December 31, 2018. In addition, the General Endowment Fund value as of December 31, 2018, was \$103,101 and the Capital Endowment Fund value as of December 31, 2018 was \$17,598. The Worship Arts Endowment Fund value as of December 31, 2018, was \$15,047.
- No gifts were received into the General Endowment Fund or any specified funds in 2018.
- Disbursements consisted of \$700 from the Montlure Fund income for camp scholarships.
- Continued to interpret the endowment concept to the congregation in conjunction with an Endowment Fund brochure and Minutes for Mission.

DEACONS

Co-Moderator — Jack Oliver
Co-Moderator — Jan Montgomery
Transportation — Steve Muth
Fellowship — Todd Ramsey
Seasonal Ministries — Shelley Cronenberg
Worship — Gail Soderquist

Personnel — Susan McMichael
Nominating — Michael Gerlach
Fellowship — Katie Masterson
Prayer Chain — Joy Schulz
Fellowship — Mark Waters
Funerals/Memorials—Renita Jurgensen

Fellowship — Carol Strouse
Cards — Gretchen Frederick
Fellowship — Kyle Harding
Contact Lists — Jan Montgomery
Assimilation — Alice Schlak
Food Pantry—Sandy Clark

Annual Report: Deacons

Submitted by: Jack Oliver and Jan Montgomery, Co-Moderators

February 10, 2018:

The Deacons prepared a tea that was attended by over 100 people. Each deacon that was responsible for a table decorated it in Valentine's Day Theme. The event was a great success and every one enjoyed the fellowship. It was suggested to hold another one in 3-4 years.

October 7 and 21, 2018:

A "Meet and Greet" your Deacon was held between the two services. The event created a lot of conversation with our church members. The response was very positive and we intend do to it again in the spring of 2019. If a member does not know their deacon, the member should contact Jan Montgomery who maintains the lists. If you have been missed, we would like to hear from you.

During this past year Jack Oliver and Jan Montgomery (Co-Moderators) have been working with the Deacons to create an atmosphere of connectivity. We have encouraged the deacons to work with one another in supporting our congregation. We have stressed how important it is to be visible to members and visitors by introducing ourselves to individuals not known to us and to be praying for our "flocks" (lists). Each Deacon has a flock to watch over and pray for throughout the year. These flocks may change throughout the year due to change or shift in membership rolls of the church.

The deacons are responsible for flower delivery following a schedule set up at the first of the year.

(Continued from page 1)

future, especially as it relates to ministry with children, youth, and young adults. Beginning last fall, Kyle Harding has served as our interim Youth Director and is doing a great job! We are blessed with a fantastic, committed staff and many volunteers have stepped in and stepped up to help us through this time of transition. I am very grateful for all of you!

My call extends beyond the walls of our congregation, to our Presbytery and the wider Church of Jesus Christ, and I have truly been blessed by wonderful colleagues in ministry. Being part of the Grand Canyon Presbytery pastoral cohort has helped me build supportive relationships with other pastors in our area. We meet monthly and retreat together annually. The Synod of the Southwest sponsors a week of continuing education for its pastors, and in July I spent an intense and very valuable week at Ghost Ranch (a Presbyterian retreat center in New Mexico) thinking, praying, and wrestling with many of the more difficult texts in our Scriptures. Along with my colleagues and led well by Rev. Dr. Ann Carter Florence, we considered how to faithfully and fruitfully preach on these texts and unveil God's love and grace hidden within.

I have also had the privilege of forming and leading a pastoral peer group focused on preaching in conjunction with the Center for Excellence in Preaching at Calvin Theological Seminary. We gather quarterly to discuss the craft of preaching, read and discuss books on preaching together, and draw on one another's experience as we provide feedback for the seminary regarding adjustments needed in a seminary curriculum to address the changes necessary for preaching in our current culture and context.

I am ever grateful for your love and support, the opportunity to serve God and God's people alongside all of you, and the faithful support of my husband, Peter, without whom I would not be able to fulfill the call to serve God as a Minister of Word and Sacrament. To God be the glory!

~ Pastor Ann

February Birthdays



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

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

February 3

Souper Bowl of Caring

February 10

Pianist Mary Beth Carlson in worship

February 11 & 12

Circles meet

February 14

Happy Valentine's Day!

February 17

Commissions & Session meet

February 18

President's Day — Office Closed

February 24

Monthly Food Drive
Commissioning of Mission Team
Chili Cook Off
Annual Congregational Meeting

Financial Reports are not published but are available for pick up at the kiosk or church office beginning February 17th.



SCENES FROM 2018!



VAUDEVILLE!
A DAZZLING DISPLAY
OF
HETEROGENEOUS SPLENDOR
...MATE, EDIFY, AMAZE, AND UPLIFT



**montlure**
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CAMP



FREE LATTE! 11AM SUNDAYS
HolyGrounds
Small, Intimate Worship



 SPECIAL OFFERINGS



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

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

LA PALABRA

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 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Friday 8:30 - 12:00 noon

Ann Conklin, Pastor
Mark Ramsey, Director of Music Ministries
Linda Reeves, Office Manager/Publications
Shiloh Murillo, Preschool Director
Don Krill, Buildings Supervisor
Rob Kjar, Bookkeeper
James R. Bruening, Pastor Emeritus
Robert Martz, Pastor Emeritus