

## A Message from Christian

### Following Jesus' Path in August

Dear Church Family,

As we step into August 2025, Isaiah 43:18-21 speaks powerfully: *"Forget about what's happened; don't keep going over old history. Be alert, be present. I'm about to do something brand-new."* This promise finds its fulfillment in Jesus, our guiding light. The winding stone labyrinth in my recent photo from the Boyce Thompson Arboretum reflects this journey—surrounded by trees and bathed in light, it draws us to trust each step under His care.



Labyrinth at Boyce Thompson Arboretum

Jesus, the One who walked the stormy seas and calmed the waves, now leads us through our deserts. He carves new paths where none seem possible, turning barren ground into rivers of grace. The labyrinth's turns remind us that He holds the plan—every twist is part of His purpose for us. As He said, "I am the way" (John 14:6), guiding our steps with love and intention. This month, we joyfully welcome Bridget, our new shared Music Director, as part of this fresh path Jesus has laid out, bringing her talents to unite our worship in song. Additionally, our continued sermon series, *The Parables of Jesus*, will unfold God's heart for His people and His Kingdom, revealing His love and purpose through these timeless passages of Scripture.

This August, as life shifts with new routines, let's release the past and follow Jesus' lead. Be present to His work—perhaps in a renewed call to serve, a moment of peace, or a deeper connection with Him through the music and sermons. Excitingly, part of this change includes returning to worship in the sanctuary after Labor Day weekend, following our summer in Fellowship Hall. The stillness of the scene invites us to pause and praise, trusting He's preparing rivers of blessing for His people. Join me in prayer: "Jesus, guide my steps and reveal Your new plan for me."

With hope,  
Pastor Christian

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## Welcoming Our New Shared Music Director: Bridget Mitchell

We are thrilled to announce an exciting new chapter in the musical life of First Presbyterian Church of Mesa (FPC) and our sister congregation, Gilbert Presbyterian Church (GPC)! After a dedicated search process, we have hired Bridget Mitchell as our new Music Director. This innovative shared position will allow Bridget to bring her talents and passion for music ministry to both churches, fostering collaboration and enriching our worship experiences together.

At FPC, we've been prayerfully seeking a new music director for the past year and a half, and at GPC, the search began in mid-May. It's been a time of anticipation and discernment, and we are grateful to God for leading us to Bridget, who will officially begin her role in August. Mark your calendars: she will join us in worship for the first time on August 10, and we can't wait to introduce her to the full congregation!



Bridget is no stranger to many in our communities, especially our children and youth. For the last five summers, she has served at Montlure Presbyterian Church Camp, where her joyful spirit and musical gifts have touched countless young lives. It's a delight to know that so many of our families already have fond memories of her from those formative camp experiences.

A violinist, conductor, and teacher from Tucson, Arizona, Bridget was raised in the Presbyterian church, attending St. Mark's Presbyterian throughout her childhood. She has been an active musician since the age of five, exploring everything from handbell choirs to picking up the string bass on a whim! Bridget's philosophy centers on providing an education tailored to each person's age, learning style, and unique lived experiences—a approach that aligns beautifully with our commitment to inclusive, faith-nurturing ministries.

Bridget recently earned her Bachelor of Music in violin performance from Arizona State University, where she studied under Dr. Katherine McLin and performed with the ASU Symphony Orchestra and Opera under Dr. Alejandro Gomez-Guillen. She is a contracted member of the Sedona Symphony and frequently gigs around town. Her impressive performance history includes collaborations with organizations such as the Phoenix Chorale, Arizona Music Fest, Arizona Broadway Theater, Southern Arizona Symphony Orchestra, MusicaNova, West Valley Symphony, and the Green Mountain Chamber Music Festival in Vermont. Notable mentors in her journey include Dr. Katherine McLin, Dr. Julie DesBordes, David Rife, Dr. Jeffery Meyer, Dr. Suzette Battan, and Dr. Alejandro Gomez-Guillen.

Beyond her professional accomplishments, Bridget is deeply excited about this ministry opportunity and the sense of community it will foster. She looks forward to making music with us,



exploring faith together, and building lasting connections. In her free time, she enjoys hiking, camping, and hunting for vintage vinyl records—hobbies that reflect her adventurous and creative spirit.

We extend heartfelt thanks to the search committee, composed of dedicated members from both First Presbyterian Church of Mesa and Gilbert Presbyterian Church, who generously gave of their time searching

this summer, and guided by the wisdom of the Elders of the

Personnel Committees, for their tireless efforts in bringing Bridget to our communities.

Please join us in extending a warm welcome to Bridget as she steps into this role. We are confident that her gifts will inspire our choirs, enhance our worship, and draw us closer to God through the power of music. If you see her around, be sure to say hello and share your own musical stories!



### **“Service of Commissioning for Shared Ministry”**

This service will be at Gilbert Presbyterian Church, 235 E. Guadalupe Rd., Gilbert, AZ 85234 on Sunday, August 24, at 4:00 p.m.

This will be the service that makes Christian’s involvement in ministry at Gilbert Presbyterian Church official. We will also mark the commitment of the two churches to collaborate in ministry.

## Worship

The summer is moving right along, with just a few more weeks of worship in Fellowship Hall. Thanks to all who have participated and helped make everything run smoothly! We've also been blessed to have special music during the summer, which I am sure everyone has enjoyed. And the BIG news that most of you now know, is that we will be welcoming Bridget Mitchell to worship as our new Music Director in August. Please give Bridget a warm FPC welcome when you see and meet her. Thanks be to God!



Summer Bells, July 20

Summer Choir, July 27



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## Mission



The Fall festival will be Saturday October 18th. There is a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall on the mission bulletin board if you would like to help plan that event. Sign-up sheets to help will be out later in September.

The silent auction will be in November. Please bring any donations you have in October to the office or to church each Sunday. The money raised during the silent auction helps us with missions in our community throughout the year.

Angel tree will be in December with presents being delivered the Sunday before Christmas.

There is now a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall on the mission bulletin board for the community dinners in the fall. We need volunteers to sign up and make or buy dinner. Remember you can be reimbursed for any cost of the meal.

## August Birthdays



Frank Thompson	1st
Charlotte Roberts	3rd
Todd Verch	6th
Susan McMichael	7th
Ayden Hickey	8th
Mike Chesko	10th
Jo Beth Walstrom	11th
Carol Webster	12th
Susan Chesko	14th
Declynn Reeves	19th
Lynette Belew	20th
Robert Gerlach	20th
Tricia MacDonald	25th
Doug McInelly	26th

**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

#### August

Worship every Sunday at 10:30 a.m.  
in Fellowship Hall or online

Adult Christian Education at 9:30 a.m., Library

Food donations taken every Sunday

Clothing Closet donations taken every Sunday

Food Pantry & Clothing Closet open every Friday  
between 8:00 and 9:00 a.m.

#### August 3

Deacons meet

#### August 6

Community Dinner

#### August 13-16

Officers' Retreat at Montlure

#### August 24

Christian's GPC Installation

#### August 31

Hymn Sunday

Last Summer Worship in Fellowship Hall

#### September 1

Office Closed — Labor Day

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

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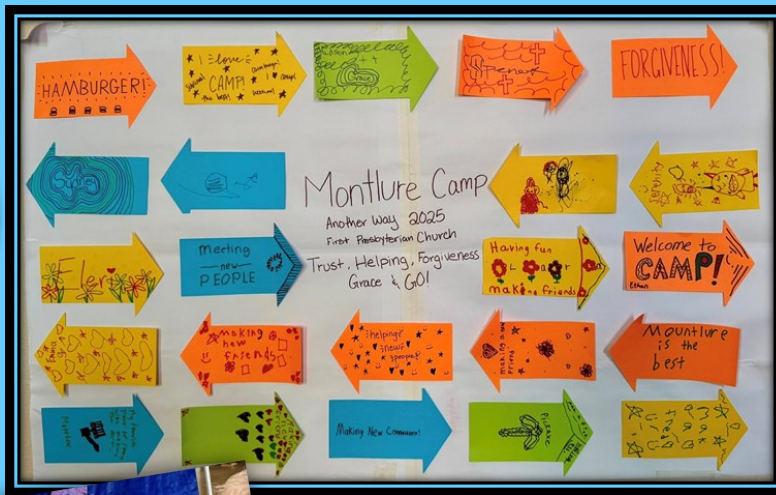
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# TRAVELING DAY CAMP — 2025



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**LA PALABRA**

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

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