

A Message from Christian

October 2025

A Season of Joy, Remembrance, and Commitment

Dear Beloved in Christ,

As October graces central Arizona with cooler evenings and sunlit days, our hearts are warmed by the promise of gathering together in faith, fellowship, and service. This month, we're invited into a vibrant season of worship, outreach, and gratitude, rooted in the love of Jesus Christ and the timeless truth of God's Word. I hope you'll join us—and bring your family and friends—to share in these special moments that draw us closer to one another and to God. This month's photo captures a new day dawning on the Oregon Coast, where the warmth of the sun alights on silent sentinels—those steadfast rock formations—reminding us of God's faithful presence and the hope of each new beginning.



We're in the heart of our stewardship season, a joyful opportunity to reflect on how we can support the beautiful work God is doing in and through our church. In 2 Corinthians 9:6–8, Paul writes, "The one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully... for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work." Your pledge is a heartfelt "yes" to joining Jesus in His mission, a step of discipleship that strengthens our shared calling. As you prayerfully consider your commitment this month, know that your generosity breathes life into our worship, outreach, and ministries, touching countless lives with God's love.

This stewardship season is enriched by our sermon series, "In Christ's Footsteps: The Heartbeat of His Church." As we explore the Great Ends of the Church—proclaiming the gospel, nurturing faith, seeking justice, and more—we gain a clearer vision of what Jesus calls us to be: a community radiating His love and grace. This understanding fills us with purpose and urgency to support our church, ensuring we can live out this sacred mission together. Let this series inspire your giving, as we step boldly into the heartbeat of Christ's church.

Continued on next page...

INDEX

<i>A Message from Christian.....</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Mission</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>From the Clerk's Desk</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Fellowship</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Worship.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Presbyterian Women.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Music Ministries</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Upcoming Events.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>October Birthdays.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Address Change</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Calendar Notes.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Calendar.....</i>	<i>website</i>

continued...

Next, we open our doors wide for the Fall Festival, a celebration of community and God's love! Jesus calls us in Matthew 5:14-16, "You are the light of the world... Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven." This joyful event is the perfect chance to invite your family, friends, and neighbors to join in the fun, laughter, and fellowship. Whether you're serving, sharing stories, or simply enjoying the day, your presence helps us shine Christ's light and build lasting connections. Let's make this a warm welcome for all!

We close October with Reformation Sunday, a beautiful moment to celebrate our Presbyterian heritage and God's enduring faithfulness. Psalm 46:1-5 sings, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble... The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge." This special service will lift our spirits with soul-stirring music and offer a tender moment to honor our beloved church members who have passed into God's eternal care through the reading of the Necrology Report. Invite your loved ones to join us as we give thanks for these lives, the Reformation's legacy, and the Holy Spirit's ongoing work in our hearts.

This October, let's come together with open hearts to celebrate, serve, and give. Bring your family and friends to the Fall Festival and Reformation Sunday, and let's share the joy of being Christ's body, shining His light in our community and beyond. I can't wait to see you there, as we grow in faith, love, and fellowship, inspired by the dawn of each new day.

With Warmest Blessings,
Pastor Christian

Mission



The Fall Festival is coming up on Saturday, October 18th, from 4:00-7:00 p.m. There will be new games and activities this year and all of it will be free! At 6:00 the Wizard of Fun, who was on America's Got Talent, will be performing magic in Fellowship Hall along with his cockatiel! You can get selfies with the cockatiel after the show. Trunk or treat will then be in the parking lot following the show. How can you help? Sign up in Fellowship Hall or call the office to volunteer to help at the festival at one of the many stations and decorate your trunk to hand out candy during trunk or treat. You can also donate candy to hand out that evening, just drop off bags at church on Sunday or in the office during the week. Hope to see you there with your families and friends.

The silent auction will be in November, with bidding on items November 9th and November 16th in the Fellowship Hall after church. If you have any items or baskets to contribute, please bring them to the church during the month of October. You can drop off items during the week in the office or in Fellowship Hall on Sundays.

We will need volunteers to cook or bring in dinner for January - May 2026 on the first Wednesday of the month for the community dinners. If you are willing to help, please sign up in Fellowship Hall or call Susan Chesko. Thank you to everyone for helping to serve our community.



FROM THE CLERK'S DESK

Session Meeting on September 21, 2025

AUGUST Statistics

Membership: 178

Removed from membership: Sheilah Dye, Dylan Hickey, Monte Nelson

August 2025 Avg. Attendance: 66 in-person + 63 online = 129

August 2024 Avg. Attendance: 69 in-person + 52 online = 121

AUGUST Finance Numbers

Actual Income \$34,245	Budgeted Income \$45,177
Actual Expense \$41,061	Budgeted Expense \$44,142
YTD Actual Income \$279,845	YTD Budgeted Income \$339,583
YTD Actual Expense \$302,502	YTD Budgeted Expense \$338,548
YTD Capital Income: \$10,862	YTD Budgeted Capital Income \$14,313

2025 Per Capita

\$40.20 per member (\$24.36 to Presbytery, \$5.00 to Synod, \$10.84 to General Assembly) based on our ending 12/31/2023 membership of 194

Motions approved by Session:

- Trustees - new members Jack Oliver, Class of 2027 and Dennis Sitzler, Class of 2028
- Personnel - Personnel Handbook for Shared Staff
- Worship – Xmas Eve Worship Service times 2:00 and 6:00 p.m.

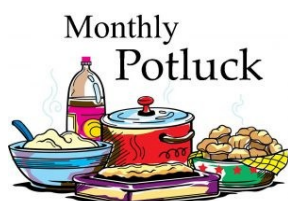
My term as Clerk ends May 31, 2027. I cannot re-up. I'm looking for someone who knows how to take meeting minutes and would like to talk to me about being a Clerk in-training to contact me. There is more to being Clerk than taking minutes and anyone interested in doing it would need to attend Session meetings well in advance of June, 2027.

ETC:

REACH UP AND OUT IN FAITH AND LOVE

(Mission Statement approved by Session 8/25/2024)

Carol Gerlach, Clerk



Monthly Potluck

Fellowship

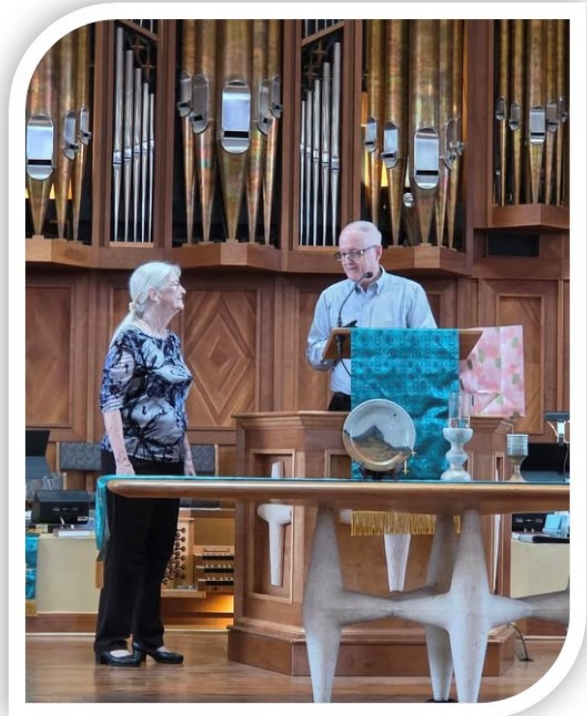
Everyone is invited to a potluck lunch after worship October 26th! Please bring a dish to share. A good time will be had by all!

Worship

On Sunday September 21st, Bea Towe was recognized for her many years of contributing to our music ministry, which enriched our worship services. Thank you, Bea! We are grateful for everyone who gives of their time and talent in helping us worship God each week.

On October 5th we will be celebrating World Communion Sunday with the congregation of Gilbert Presbyterian Church. They have been invited to join us in worship. A display of artifacts from around the world will be featured in the back of the sanctuary, honoring this day of Christian unity.

Be sure to come to worship on Reformation Sunday, October 26th, when we will be treated to the special music of a bagpiper! Presbyterianism has roots in the Scottish Reformation, and bagpipes are a well known instrument from Scotland.



In October, First Mesa's Presbyterian Women will enjoy a joint potluck luncheon. Three times a year, women join together for fellowship and worship/mission programs. All our circles will meet in Fellowship Hall at 11:30 a.m. on Tuesday, **October 14th**, to share food, friendship, and Bible study. We are especially excited this year to welcome Gilbert PW ladies to our get-together.

Our program this time will be Lesson 2 of our Horizons Bible study, *Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity in Jesus Christ*, authored by Dr. Rhshell Hunter. This lesson, "Mary 'of a Certain Village'" presents yet another unique interpretation of the Mary-Martha story. Dr. Hunter is an insightful theologian with thought-provoking views!

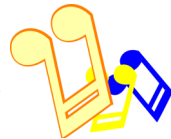


All women are invited to join us, whether this one time or as your schedule allows in other months.

Music Ministries

Fall Highlights

October 5th: During our shared worship with Gilbert Presbyterian, you will hear a collaborative performance of 'As the Deer' with both choirs as well as the Dei Gloriam Handbell Choir!



October 26th: Following the fellowship potluck, One Voice will give a short performance! Stick around to hear what they've been working on!

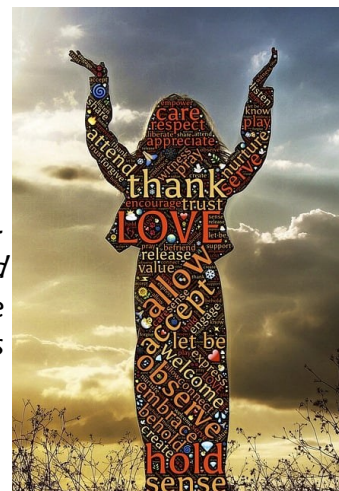


Handbells Ringing Loud and Clear

Mark your calendars! Our Handbell Choir will be offering beautiful worship music on **Sunday, October 5th** and again on **Sunday, October 19th**. Hear Dei Gloriam perform 'As the Deer' and 'Morning has Broken' First Ringers will be playing a meditation on 'Let us Break Bread Together' as part of our celebration of World Communion Sunday.

Choir Anthems That Inspire

The Chancel Choir has been lifting hearts and voices with powerful anthems. This month, they will present *"You Are My All in All, Fairest Lord Jesus," "Light of Mine,"* along with several other titles. As we move through our 'Great Ends of the Church' Sermon series, these anthems celebrate God's love in the world.



I'd like to thank the music department and the congregation of First Presbyterian for the kind words of appreciation and the gifts given to me last week for service in our church music program. My heartfelt thanks also go to Ann Harbin and Bev Goff who assisted me over the years with the handbell choirs. And, of course, I thank all of the eager participants of the various youth and adult groups. It couldn't have happened without you. It has been an enjoyable and satisfying time.

Thank you, Bea

Mark your
calendars for
these upcoming
events!



In Concert

First Presbyterian Church
161 N. Mesa Dr., Mesa
Sanctuary

ONEVOICE

*Sunday, October 26, 2025 at 1 PM † ADMISSION FREE**

Including: One (Singular Sensation), from A Chorus Line; Smile, from the 1936 movie Modern Times; You'll Never Walk Alone, from Carousel; and Gospel Favorites I'll Fly Away, Swing Down Chariot, and Oh, Happy Day!

*Donations to FPC Artist Series gladly accepted!

October Birthdays



Jennifer Martin	1st
Carter Buck	3rd
Rita Scriba	5th
Steve Wylie	8th
Connie Chisholm	11th
Brooks Newbry	12th
Bob Mallia	14th
Dale Gibson	15th
David Woods	19th
Philip McGrath	10th
Dan Reeves	23rd
John McNary	25th
George Montgomery	26th
Diane Brause	27th
John Couillard	27th
Kate McMichael	27th
Cary Preston	29th
Janet Verch	29th

Editor's Note: If your birthday is missing or we have the wrong date, please call the office so we can update our records. We wish a special day to anyone we have missed.

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

Christian Johnson: pastor@fpcmesa.org
 Bridget Mitchell: musicdirector@fpcmesa.org
 Mark Ramsey: music@fpcmesa.org
 Chris McKee: chris@fpcmesa.org
 Linda Reeves: pubs@fpcmesa.org
 Rob Kjar: business@fpcmesa.org

ADDRESS CHANGES/CORRECTIONS

Karen & Mike Eberhardt
 2982 S. Holguin Way
 Chandler, AZ 85286

Calendar Notes

October

Worship every Sunday at 10:30 a.m.
 in the Sanctuary 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.

October 1

Community Dinner

October 5

World Communion Sunday
 Joint Worship with GPC @ FPC
 Deacons meet

October 11

Officers' Retreat

October 14

PW Luncheon

October 18

Fall Festival

October 19

Stewardship Sunday

October 26

Dedication Sunday
 Reformation Sunday
 Monthly Potluck
 One Voice Concert



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

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 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Closed Friday

Christian Johnson, Pastor
Bridget Mitchell, Director of Music Ministries
Mark Ramsey, Music Associate
Chris McKee, Director of Operations
Linda Reeves, Office Manager/Publications
Rob Kjar, Bookkeeper