



A Message from Christian November 2024

Every desirable and beneficial gift comes out of heaven. The gifts are rivers of light cascading down from the Father of Light.

— James 1:17 (The Message)



Turkeys I encountered in
Walla Walla, WA summer 2024

I remember when my parents brought home a live turkey in a cage in the back of our Pinto station wagon. I only have a few memories that took place in the home that I moved out of when I was 3 and a half years old. However, a live turkey showing up that day in November made a lasting impression on me.

What are the lasting impressions you have around this season of giving thanks? It is easy to default to the smells and flavors associated with a feast or leftover-turkey sandwiches, or throwing around the old pigskin. Still, what many people savor the most is the quality time spent with family and friends while recounting our blessings from God.

The Bible encourages us to have an attitude to thankfulness in our character as well as our worship of God. The virtue of thankfulness helps temper vice of pride that can come so easily to us. It also reminds us that we are recipients of God generosity in so many

different ways, both common and special in quality. It reminds us that we are connected to God in even our most granular and tangible necessities.

This month I encourage us to bask in the undulating radiance of the “river of light” that flows from the Father of Light. It is good to count our blessings all the time, but it never hurts to embrace this cultural tradition of thankfulness during the season of harvest. May the Spirit open wider our minds and hearts to our Abba Father’s generosity all around us.

Blessings,
Pastor Christian

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News from the **OCTOBER** Session meeting

Clerk's Statistics for **September**

No weddings, births, baptisms or member deaths.

Membership: **192**

Average Attendance for August: 69 in-person & 63 online = 132

September income \$35,799; Expense \$41,987

YTD income \$279,207; Expense \$344,094

Carol Gerlach, Clerk

Reports/Motions

Session spent time discussing four areas of concern provided by the Strategic Planning Committee based on topics presented at the August Retreat. We will take these issues back to our committees and spend more time on these items at our January meeting.

Session approved the Minutes of the August meeting.

Finance Committee members are still meeting with staff regarding the 2025 Budget.

Personnel is still looking for a music director.

Session approved a request from Lois Hildenbrand to sell her jellies on Sunday, December 1st and 8th.

None of the committees presented a motion for Session to approve.

Et cetera

Don't forget - **PER CAPITA** for 2024 is \$38.51 (unchanged from 2023). \$23.71 for GC Presbytery, \$5.00 for the Synod of the Southwest and \$9.80 for GA. The apportionment payment we owe, based on our 12/31/22 membership of 240, is \$9,242.40.

Come and get into the Holiday Spirit by helping with our "All Church Clean Day." Join us on **Saturday, November 23rd, 9:00-Noon** in the sanctuary. There will be something for everyone to do! Donuts will be provided. Please sign up with our Director of Operations via email if you plan to lend a hand: Chris@fpcmesa.org



Worship

The end of Summer and entry to Fall have brought subtle yet noticeable changes to the Sanctuary. Since the architectural design didn't include a Narthex - an area where visitors and congregants alike can pause for a welcome and to visit before entering the Sanctuary - Cheryl Gregory and the Worship Commission found a way to create a similar space. To open the southeast entrance to the Sanctuary, the credenza was moved to the side wall adjacent to the Quiet Room. Additionally, the Usher desk and benches on that side were removed, and a conversation grouping with wingback chairs and a table were put in their place. Thank you to The Crew for their hard work removing and moving the old furniture, and to Cheryl Gregory and Renita Jurgensen for setting up what we can now refer to as "The Narthex." It's both welcoming and comfortable!



Hanging of the Greens will be held on Tuesday, November 25th, 4:00—7:00 p.m. If you would like to join us for decorating, please contact Mark Ramsey at 480-203-5430 or Dan Reeves at 480-229-8527.

Mission

The fall festival was a huge success! Thank you to all who helped and donated items. See page 6 for some fun photos!

This month the silent auction is happening! The final day will be Sunday, December 1st, and bidding will close at 11:30 a.m. If you are the highest bidder, you may pay and take the item then or you will be called so you know that you bought that item. All proceeds go to mission, helping others in our community.

Here is how the silent auction bidding works:

Each item has a number and a sheet on which to write bids. The items will be in Fellowship Hall after church every Sunday in November.

1. If you want an item, write your name on that sheet of paper and the amount you want to bid.
2. You may write your name under someone if your bid is higher.
3. If you are bidding online, you must text or call in your bid to 480-380-2980. You will receive a text back to let you know your bid was written down.
4. You may call or text 480-380-2980 at any time to check on an item and what the highest bid is at that time, so you can decide if you want to bid higher.



Exciting Announcement!

Introducing: Salome Circle
Second Tuesday of the month, 7:00 p.m.
at
1053 E Hope St., Sara McWhorter's home

Study: Women of the Bible
All ladies are welcome!

Meanwhile,...

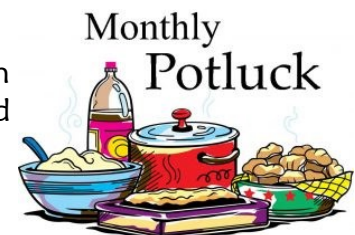
- Some of FPC Mesa's PWs were honored to be guests at a luncheon hosted by Church of the Master PW ladies. The guest speaker was Janice Walker from Helen's Hope Chest, a philanthropy that supports foster children's needs up to age 18. They invited us to join them for a tour on November 20, 11:00 a.m. Let us know, if you'd like to join and learn more about this worthwhile organization.
- Another opportunity available to all (men and women) is volunteering at Feed My Starving Children in Tempe to pack food for areas of the world in need. PW ladies are going on November 19, noon to 2:00 p.m. Sign-ups are necessary; please contact Susan Durand or Carol Anderson, if you would like to join us!
- Circles using the current study, Let Justice Roll down, God's Call to Care for Neighbors and All Creation, will study Lesson 3, "Food Justice" this month.

All ladies are invited to any circle; please come join us!

Eve	Monday, November 11, 10:00 a.m. in the Parlor
Deborah	Tuesday, November 12, 9:30 a.m. in the Parlor
Rachel	Tuesday, November 12, 1:00 p.m. in the Parlor
Salome	Tuesday, November 12, 7:00 p.m., 1053 E. Hope St.

Fellowship

Everyone is invited to a potluck lunch after worship on November 24th! Please bring a dish to share. A good time will be had by all!



Hi! My name is Pearl Blair, and I am the new Preschool Director. A little about myself. I was born in California and moved a lot as a child but settled back in California from sixth grade on. I graduated from Point Loma Nazarene University, which is located in beautiful San Diego. The campus is literally on the beach. If you ever have a chance to visit, I recommend you take a tour.



I have four beautiful children and am married to a very kind, giving husband. On my off time, I love spending it with my family. We are active members of our church. We are also a big sports family. We love football, college softball, basketball and a new loved sport of pickleball. Since my kinds and I were born in the San Diego area, the beach is our home. We love to go to the beach whenever possible. We also love the mountains if we can't make it all the way to the beach.

While living in San Diego, I was a Center Director for 11 years and a Pre-K teacher for five years. When I moved out to Arizona, I became a Quality First Assessor and assessed preschools for almost four years. I became a fourth grade teacher for a short amount of time and realized my passion is leading and supporting teachers in their teaching journey. I am excited to get to know everyone and see what God has in plan for this new chapter in my life.

Pearl Blair, Preschool Director

IT'S ALMOST ANGEL TREE TIME AGAIN! The Angel Tree will be up on Sunday, December 1st, and decorated with angel gift ideas for the families we have chosen. Please wrap and return your gifts under the tree by Sunday, December 15th. That's only a two-week time period this year! We will be delivering them on that date.



FALL FESTIVAL 2024



November Birthdays



Aaron Frederick	1st
Rosa Befidi-Mengue	3rd
Chris McKee	5th
Jack Fitzpatrick	6th
Carol Gerlach	6th
Kay Harding	12th
Erin Skarphol	14th
Fernando McCune	15th
Lubna Dent	22nd
Lois Hildenbrand	26th
Flinn Lund	26th
Karyn Weaver	27th
Jade Fleener	29th
Bob Free	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
Mark Ramsey: music@fpcmesa.org
Chris McKee: chris@fpcmesa.org
Linda Reeves: pubs@fpcmesa.org
Pearl Blair: preschool@fpcmesa.org
Rob Kjar: business@fpcmesa.org



ADDRESS CHANGES/CORRECTIONS

Dent, Lubna
550 E. McKellips Rd., #1134
Mesa, AZ 85203

Calendar Notes

November

Worship every Sunday at 10:00 a.m.
in the Sanctuary or online

Christian Education:
Children's Sunday School at 11:20 a.m.
Adults at 11:30 a.m.

Food Donations taken every Sunday
Clothing Closet donations taken 1st and 3rd Sunday

November 3

Deacons meet

November 6

Community Dinner

November 6 & 20

Women's Bible Study

November 6, 13, 20 & 27

Men's Fellowship

November 10

Stewardship Sunday

November 11 & 12

Circles meet

November 16

Mesa Interfaith Handbell Festival

November 17

Dedication Sunday
Session meets

November 23

All Church Clean Day

November 24

Potluck Sunday

November 25

Hanging of the Greens

November 26

Preschool Thanksgiving Feast

November 28

Happy Thanksgiving!

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

LA PALABRA

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**First Presbyterian Church
161 North Mesa Drive
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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
Mark Ramsey, Director of Music Ministries
Chris McKee, Director of Operations
Linda Reeves, Office Manager/Publications
Pearl Blair, Preschool Director
Rob Kjar, Bookkeeper**