

# DECEMBER 2017

Newsletter  
First Presbyterian Church  
Gainesville, Texas



Sunday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, is the First Sunday of Advent, and there are lots of special things happening at First Presbyterian Church that day! Here's the schedule:

\*We will be celebrating the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper during worship. If you would like to have communion brought to your home, please contact the church office.

\*It will be "Consecration Sunday" and we will be dedicating all the 2018 pledge cards that have been returned by that date. Extra cards are available in the sanctuary windows for your use.

Come celebrate the beginning of the Advent Season at First Presbyterian Church!



Has the Christmas season become more a season of stress than a season of spiritual joy? Are you looking for some help so you can truly celebrate Christmas and not just survive it? Well – this Advent season Rev. Hare will be leading a four-week Advent study entitled, "Spiritual Practices for the Season."

There will be two opportunities for you to be a part of this study. One group will meet on Tuesday evenings beginning on November 28<sup>th</sup> 7:00 PM at the Hare's home. The second group will meet on Wednesdays at noon in Tyler Hall beginning on November 29<sup>th</sup>. Everyone is encouraged to come and learn how to make this Christmas more meaningful and joyful!



## December Session Meeting

The regular meeting of the Session will be held on Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 noon in the Seekers' Classroom.

This meeting will focus primarily upon 1) Acting on the proposed 2018 budget, and 2) the examination of the incoming Ruling Elders of the Class of 2020 – and will be followed by a reception for the Session and their guests at the Hare's home.

All written committee reports are due in the office by Thursday, December 14<sup>th</sup>.

## "Minute for Mission"

On Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, Ginny Lynch from the Presbyterian Children's Home will be joining us to share information about this important ministry of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. – and about our church's ministry with some of the agency's college youth who we are supporting.

Mark your calendars!



## “Live Nativity” and Open House

The corner of South Denton and East Church Streets will once again come alive with the wonder of Christmas as we once again present our annual “Live Nativity” on Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup>, from 6:00 PM until 9:00 PM.

Our evening will begin with the “Posada” in which Mary and Joseph will walk to the stable from the court house, the shepherds and the sheep will come from the historical district, and the Magi will arrive from the depot. Folks are welcome to walk along with their favorite manger characters – or just wait at the manger.

Two sets of cast members – nine each - are needed to help make this scene all it can be. Each cast will have three 30-minute shifts. A sign-up sheet is on the church bulletin board. Someone is also needed to make sure that the costumes are ready and coordinated on that Saturday night.

Be a part of our church’s longest Christmas tradition!

### Open House

On Saturday December 9<sup>th</sup> from 3:00 until 7:00 p.m. the outreach committee is sponsoring an open house at the church. Both the Live Nativity and the Christmas Homes tour will be going on that day so it will be a great opportunity to welcome people into the sanctuary and tell them about the history of the church and showcase our beautiful stain glass and organ. If you would like to help greet people please let a committee member know.



The holidays are here! What a joy to celebrate and give thanks and prepare for the birth of the Christ child. And what an added blessing is the glorious music of the season. As we hear the wonderful melodies let us also sing the words and be reminded of the wonderful joy, blessings and Gift of the season. Let Us Rejoice! Barbara



On Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup>, our sanctuary choir will be performing a special Christmas cantata entitled, “Christmas Canticles.” This piece features a number of favorite Christmas carols as well as scripture reading. Invite your friends and neighbors and come celebrate Christmas season!

### Poinsettias for the Sanctuary



You may like to honor someone or remember a loved one with a Poinsettia plant for our Sanctuary, If so, please fill out a form along with your donation of \$15.00 toward the flowers. Forms will be available in the church bulletins, or you may pick one up in the church office.

We will need all the forms into the church office by Sunday, December 3, 2017.



TO THE ONLY  
WISE GOD BE  
*glory*  
FOREVERMORE  
THROUGH  
*Jesus  
Christ!*  
ROMANS 16:27, ESV

Our church will again be volunteering to ring the Salvation Army Red Kettle bell on Saturday, December 16<sup>th</sup> at Walmart from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. A sign up sheet is posted on the hall bulletin board for volunteers for one hour time slots. Various volunteers from the community have been participating in this Red Kettle Campaign for about 20 years.



**VOLUNTEER  
BELL RINGERS  
NEEDED!**

*Ring a bell...help change a life*



Locally, all monies raised in the kettles here in Cooke County stay in Cooke County. Funds are distributed through the local Salvation Board via VISTO (Volunteers in Service to Others). First Presbyterian Church is proud to continue our participation for our community.



## Upcoming Christmas Outreach Projects

\* Presents for College students-the Christmas list for the 5 college students that the church is sponsoring is posted on the bulletin board. If you want to help with this project, please check the list and put your name in the space next to the item that you would like to purchase. Gifts should be brought to the church by Friday, December 8<sup>th</sup>.

A basket will be in the hallway by the red wagon for you to leave the items. Ginny Lynch, the representative from the Presbyterian Children's Home who first contacted us about sponsoring the students, will be with us in church on December 10<sup>th</sup> to give a Minute in Mission concerning the program. The presents for the students will be given to her then.

\* Christmas cards-Continuing the program begun during Faith in Action of taking cards to the nursing homes from the congregation, we would like to continue that ministry by delivering Christmas cards from the church members to the residents of the nursing homes in town. If you would be interested in participating in this ministry please bring your signed Christmas cards to the church by Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup>. Please sign them From The Congregation of First Presbyterian Church. A basket will be in the windowsill in the sanctuary where you may leave the cards.



## SPECIAL OFFERINGS CHRISTMAS JOY

On Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup>, our church will be collecting our denominational "Christmas Joy Offering." This offering goes to support

Presbyterian ministers past, present and future who

have special financial needs. It also supports racial-ethnic Presbyterian colleges around the country. Special offering envelopes will be available on that Sunday, or you can make your contributions anytime just by designating a gift for the Christmas Joy offering. Thank you for your support!



## Christmas Eve Service

First Presbyterian Church is once again hosting a Christmas Eve Candle-light Service at 11:00 PM in the sanctuary. Celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ with an evening of wonderful music, a special Christmas message and our traditional lighting of the candles at the end of the service!







On behalf of the congregation, a special “Thank you very much” goes out to the Ruling Elders of the Class of 2017 who are rotating off the Session. They are Amanda Warren, John Powell and John Warren. Thank you for your service to our church over the past three years!



At the congregational meeting held on November 5<sup>th</sup>, the following folks were elected to service in our church!

Ruling Elders of the Class of 2020:

- Tommie Newman
- Mary Estill
- Carol McBride

Congregational Representative to the 2017-18 Nominations Committee:

- Ruthie Chalmers
- Reynolds Ansley
- Clyde Bond

Thank you for your willingness to serve – and welcome aboard!



- That Amanda Warren and John Powell did a great job as November’s pulpit assistants?
- That it has been wonderful to have Barbara Brady back leading the choir and playing the organ?
- That Carla and Charlie Waters appreciate your prayers?
- That Reynolds Ansley was selected at “Mentor of the Year” at the State School?
- That it was great to see John Carr and his family at our Halloween event?
- That Merle Currie is doing really well at the Bonham V.A. Facility?
- That Sheri Raney appreciates your prayers for her sister in California?
- That it is good to have Ginger and Jack Walker back in Texas?
- That we wish Robert and Alyse Hokamp all the best in California?
- That our church members have a lot of different spiritual gifts?
- That the movie “The Greatest Story Ever Told” part 2 has been postponed until January 2, 2018.
- That we collected 137 pounds of food for VISTO at our Ghouls, Goblins & Groceries event?
- That the Book Club will be meeting on Tuesday, November 28<sup>th</sup> @ 7:00pm @ Braums?



From the Minutes of Regular Meeting of Session May 17, 1992:

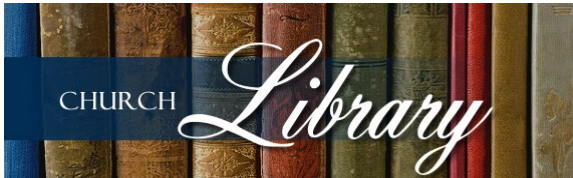
“The shaft for the elevator is almost complete. The building inspectors have been very impressed on the construction of the shaft. Hope to have the elevator ready for operation in a couple of months.”

## MEN’S BREAKFAST

The Men’s Breakfast will be held on Tuesday, December 26<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 AM at the Fried Pie on the square! All the men of the church are encouraged to come and enjoy a great time of food and for solving all the world’s problems!

## SERMONS ONLINE!

Rev. Hare’s Sunday sermons are available on the church webpage! Just go to [www.fpcgainesville.net](http://www.fpcgainesville.net) – click on the “Sermons” link at the top of the page – then click on the dropdown tap – and you’re there!



The Christian Education Committee has voted to bring the church library underneath its wing. The plan is to bring in some newer materials for the benefit of the congregation. Keep an eye out for an upcoming Christmas display and other changes. With Christmas fast approaching, please

consider donating a book or money to the library in honor or in memory of someone. Donations are tax deductible. If you have any suggestions for the library or materials that you would like to see included, please contact Shana Powell.



What is our Advent wildernesses? Busyness is one. Our holiday busyness can be as unrelenting as Death Valley and just as barren – keeping us spiritually thirsty and without rest. In the waste of too great busyness, we fight rage and exhaustion.

Noise is an Advent desert, too. We cannot escape frivolous stretches of clatter and clamor in the shopping uproar. Someone’s iPad blaring out “Christmas music” can be as stabbing as a desert storm.

We can easily recognize other Advent deserts – the pressure to be happy and bright during the season; the wilderness of alcohol, which somehow seems so central to celebrations, along with other mood-altering drugs.

But listen! Do you hear that voice crying in these wildernesses? Our mission in these miseries is to listen for it, pay attention to it, and to acknowledge that – yes - we do hear that Voice – that Voice that we know by heart!

Peace, John



STEWARDSHIP Moment

In this season of giving it’s important to remember that your gift to Christ through the Church is:

- \* Bread in a hungry child’s stomach!
- \* Communion for a member of the military far from home!

- \* A visit at a hospital bedside!
- \* A place to camp in God’s nature!
- \* Advice and guidance for a confused marriage!
- \* Hundreds of missionaries preaching and teaching and serving!
- \* Tender loving care for an unwanted baby!
- \* A nurse’s loving touch on a fevered brow!
- \* A Bible translated into 1,326 languages!
- \* Theological education for a future pastor!
- \* New hope for thousands in suffering an earthquake or hurricane!
- \* A warm blanket on a refugee’s bed!
- \* Putting your money where your faith is!



The 2018 Flower Chart will be on the bulletin board the week after Thanksgiving.

PEACE LOVE HOPE JESUS PEACE LOVE HOPE JESUS

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
401 S. DENTON STREET  
P. O. BOX 751  
GAINESVILLE, TX 76241  
Phone: (940) 665-5153  
Fax: (940) 665-1306



E-mail: [fpcgaines@sbcglobal.net](mailto:fpcgaines@sbcglobal.net)  
First Presbyterian Church

## Presbyterian Women's Christmas Coffee

Saturday, December 2, 2017

9:30 AM

It's time for our annual Presbyterian Women's Christmas Coffee. We'll have some good eats, chat, catch up with friends and help spread some holiday cheer. All women are invited. Bring a friend!

Bring a favorite Christmas goodie to share plus extra for our goodie plates we put together for our special members who have to stay home bound and our very special church staff. (Items to bring: finger foods like cookies, muffins, brownies, specialty bars, hard candy, etc.)