

Newsletter  
First Presbyterian Church  
Gainesville, Texas

# December 2018



On Sunday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, there will be a congregational meeting after worship. The purpose of the meeting is as follows:

- \* To elect representatives from the congregation to serve on the 2018-19 Nominations Committee.
- \* To hear a report from this year's Nominations Committee regarding the incoming Ruling Elders for the Class of 2021.

Regarding the Ruling Elder election, the Session feels with Rev. Hare's retirement, it is important that our church have experienced Elders serving in the incoming class. Therefore, the Session will be presenting a motion to the congregation that the Elders who are rotating off the Session this year be eligible to be nominated to serve for one more term with the congregation's approval.

As always, nominations from the floor are always in order.

If you have someone you'd like to nominate, please get their consent before December 2<sup>nd</sup>.



The Outreach Committee is sponsoring four activities during the upcoming Christmas Season:

- \* Christmas Cards—continuing the card ministry that we started last year, we will be collecting Christmas cards for residents of the nursing homes. We are expanding it this year to also provide a Christmas card for each of the individuals that we deliver DASH meals too. A basket will be set up in the windowsill of the sanctuary for you to leave the cards. If you would like to help with this ministry, please have your cards to the church by December 16.
- \* Little Angels—in conjunction with the Boys and Girls Club, we have adopted 10 children to provide Christmas presents for. Their first names, ages, and wish lists are posted on the bulletin board. If you would like to assist with this, please have the presents for the children back to the church by December 5 so they can be delivered to the Boys and Girls Club.
- \* Book Drive for Edison Elementary School—a tree has been set up in Tyler Hall. On the limbs of the tree you will find tied together a packet containing an envelope; slip of paper with the name of a book, the teacher who has requested it, and the cost of the book; and a sticker with the title of the book and the teacher's name with a space for anyone who picks that book to sign their name under Given By. If you would like to purchase a book, please take the envelope, slip of paper and sticker off the tree. Sign the sticker and place it, the slip of paper, and your check or cash into the envelope and either place it in the offering plate or return to the church office by Sunday, December 16. Please make the check out to the church.
- \* Open House-on December 8 from 3:00 until 6:00 p.m.

***Thank you in advance for your support of these Christmas projects.***

*First Presbyterian Church*  
*Presents*  
*J.S. Bach's "Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme"*  
*("Wake, Awake, A Voice is Calling")*  
*With Orchestra and Soloists*  
*Followed By*  
*A Special Christmas Carol Sing-a-long!*  
  
*Saturday, December 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 P.M.*  
*401 S. Denton Street*  
*Gainesville, Texas*  
  
*A Nursery Will Be Provided*  
*Call 940-665-5153 for Information*

## December Session Meeting

The regular meeting of the Session will be held on Sunday, December 16<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 noon in the Seekers' Classroom. This meeting will focus primarily upon

- 1) Acting on the proposed 2019 budget
- 2) The examination of the incoming Ruling Elders of the Class of 2021.

All written committee reports are due in the office by Thursday, December 13<sup>th</sup>.



*Christmas Eve*  
SERVICE

## 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!

***All Women are invited!***

to the Annual Presbyterian Women's Christmas Coffee

When: December 8th @ 9:30am

Where: Tyler Hall

What to bring: Goodies to share and extra for the "Goodie Plates" we put together for our friends who can't make it to Church anymore and to our wonderful church staff.

Type of Goodies: Muffins, Danish, Cookies and Bars, Brownies, Wrapped Hard Candy, and some Sugar Free items.

**Bring a friend, too.**



On Saturday December 8<sup>th</sup> from 3:00 until 6:00 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.

## Happy Retirement!

A reception for John Hare will be held in Tyler Hall, Sunday December 30, following morning worship. John will be retiring FPC after serving as our pastor for the past 18 years. Members, family and friends are invited to wish John and Angie well as they set out on a "new adventure" in their lives.



What's you doing on the third Tuesday each month? Join us in Tyler Hall for our small

Bible study group with a light meal and a Bible lesson.

We meet at 5:30 for our meal followed by our lesson for the evening. This Spring's lessons will be: "The Story of the Bible" from the Great Courses. Our lessons will be brought by Professor Luke Timothy Johnson. He will guide us through how our Bible came to be. January's lesson is "Telling the Story of a Book". So mark your 2019 calendars for the third Tuesdays each month and come be a part of our study group...and you will be asked to share your favorite dish with willing tasters.

Sylvia and Earl



On behalf of the congregation, welcome to Jim and Judy Nehib who joined our church on Sunday, November 18<sup>th</sup>, on a "Reaffirmation of Faith!"

Jim and Judy live in Lake Kiowa and have long-time connections to both our church and our community.

Their mailing address is:  
120 Comanche  
Lake Kiowa, TX 76240.



## Joyful Sharing...*Did You Know?*

- \* The Christmas joy Offering has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930.s?
- \* The Offering distributes gifts equally to the Assistance Program of the board of Pensions and to Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.
- \* Presbyterian-related schools and colleges provide education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage. This has been a Presbyterian commitment for nearly 140 years.
- \* Thank you for your support of the *Christmas Joy Offering!*



There's a story about a man in a small town in South Dakota who tried to give some money back to the Social Security Administration but couldn't. It seems that this man had retired at the age of 65 from his work as a farm laborer and moved into town. His retirement home was extremely modest, sparsely furnished, and simply kept. Most folks would not have been able to manage on this man's minimum security check – but this guy did.

At the end of the first month of collecting on his Social Security, the man went to the bank with five dollars in cash and told the teller that he wanted to return some money because the government had given him more than he needed. And let's just say that the teller was shocked.

She tried to explain to him that he couldn't do that, that the government could give out social security money but there was no means to take any of that money back. There was no category for folks who wanted to give any of their government money back to the government.

The story ends with the folks in the bank laughing about that man and his request. Yet, the bank has never been quite the same after that man's visit. Strange, isn't it, how receiving is sometimes a cause for embarrassment, and not so much for giving?



Advent is an in-between time of year – and this year it's not just between Thanksgiving and Christmas. This year, with my retirement on December 31<sup>st</sup>, Advent is all about what has been and what will be – about what has already happened and what will happen next. This year, Advent is all about transitions – moving from what has become all too familiar towards what is not familiar at all.

In some very important ways, Advent has always been about that - about living fully in two worlds. Our faith journeys together have always been about experiencing the joys and the sorrows and the victories and the set-backs. We have loved together – laughed together – gotten tired together – made mistakes together – hurt and rejoiced and grieved together. And through it all we have found ourselves moving from places we know well into places we don't know at all.

And that's always been a theme of Advent. We, as God's people, have always lived with appreciation of our past and anticipation of our future. And we have always lived those things in the "in-between" – that small moment in time we call the "present." So – this Advent season I'm going to preach a series of sermons called, "Living In-Between." What can the Christmas story teach us about living faithfully as all of us move from where we've been to where God is taking us. I hope that you will join me on this "transitional" journey. Peace, John

## 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! You can also find Rev. Hare's sermons on the church Facebook page!



First Presbyterian Church's "Adopt-A-School" Ministry - "T.E.A.M." which stands for "The Edison Adopt-A-School Ministry" – has been busy and hard at work. And here's the latest from TEAM:

On Friday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>, TEAM members provided some much needed help as Edison Elementary hosted a "Cultural Awareness Day." Almost a dozen of our folks were there to assist the school staff in numerous activities. Way to Go, TEAM!

*Cheers!*

On Monday, November 5<sup>th</sup>, we provided breakfast for the teachers and staff during their "Staff Development Day." Donuts, muffins, fruits and yogurt were on the menu – and a big "Thank you very much" to everyone who provided the food and who helped host that breakfast! The teachers were very grateful – as noted in the "Thank you!" card on the TEAM bulletin board!

*Cheers!*

Beginning on Sunday, November 18<sup>th</sup>, TEAM began a "Reading Tree" Christmas project in Tyler Hall. Each "leaf" on the "tree" includes the name of a book, the cost of the book and a return envelope. Folks are being asked to pick a "leaf" – put money or a check (made out to the church) to purchase the book in the envelope – and return it to the church by December 16<sup>th</sup>. The school will do all the ordering and paying – and the books will be placed in the school library.

*Cheers!*

Edison School has been overwhelmed by your prayers, your presence, and your support! Keep up the good work! Remember – this is a TEAM effort!

## Stewardship Minute for Mission

While the giving of monetary resources is a part of Stewardship, this minute for mission is not about "money". It involves so many more aspects of life. Mostly Time and Talents.

### Time

By far the most wasted non-renewable resource. Day in and day out, we are consumed with the things that we deem important. The world slowly conditions us to take on more and more. Pretty soon, there's no room to deal with the unexpected. So, when an issue comes up that needs our immediate attention or if we're asked to do something out of the ordinary, we're inclined to say, "I'm too busy". We must stop and ask ourselves, "What are we busy about"? Is our busy-ness being a blessing to someone, or is it becoming a burden.

### Talents

God has given us all at least one. Some find their talent early on. Others may "uncover" it later in life. Either way, they are an extension of ourselves that, when used as He intended, reveal who we are and what we believe in. Furthermore, they cause others to notice and become curious. Curious about how to get what we have in Him who we serve, ultimately leading them directly to Christ himself.

As 2018 draws to a close, we say goodbye to John as our minister. This is and will be an emotional time for all of us. We will be ok. John and Angie will be ok. I believe through this God is making us ready for 2019 and onward. As we begin the search for a new minister, I encourage you to pray about how your time and gifts may be used.





- That June Sherrill and Corie Autry did great jobs as December’s pulpit assistants?
- That Ruthie and Matt Chalmers really appreciate your continued prayers?
- That it was great to see John Carr and his kids and grand-kids on Halloween night?
- That Joy Hague got married on November 25<sup>th</sup>?
- That our “Ghouls, Goblins, and Groceries” Halloween event collected lots of food for VISTO?
- That Holly Stenger’s new mailing address is 1507 Anthony in Gainesville?
- That nobody went away from our annual Thanksgiving dinner hungry?
- That Carla Waters is now home after too long in the hospital – and that she is doing well?
- That Linda Seal is still recovering from her recent shoulder surgery?
- That it was wonderful to see Olivia Rivoire and Ginger Walker back in church?
- That our “Prayer Quilt” ministry might be making a come-back?
- That the folks who stayed after church on November 25<sup>th</sup> to decorate the church for the Christmas season did a great job?



## MEN’S BREAKFAST

The Men’s Breakfast will be held on Tuesday, December 18<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!



With the holidays approaching more products will be used that have “Labels for Education”, Box Tops for Education” and “Baby Coupons”.

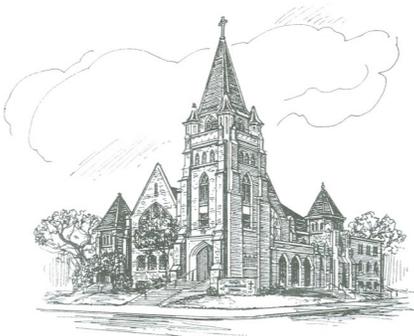
- Box Tops for Education go to our local schools to help in purchasing supplies.
- Labels for Education are for the Presbyterian School in Hugo, OK.
- Baby Coupons are given to Child Protective Services here in Cooke County.

There are lists of the products on the bulletin board by the Seeker’s Classroom as well as envelopes for you to place your coupons.

This is an on-going project and your support is greatly appreciated.

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

## “Live Nativity”

The corner of South Denton and East Church Street will once again come alive with the wonder of Christmas as we present our annual “Live Nativity” on Saturday, December 8<sup>th</sup>, from 6:00 PM — 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!