

THE Penn Street LETTER

First Presbyterian Church, Fort Worth

NOVEMBER 2023 | Volume 23, Number 11



Warm up those singing voices and join us for an evening of free food, music, and fun at our first ever Karaoke for Cans! The Circles of Christ Fellowship Committee is hosting Karaoke for Cans night at First Pres. Meet in the First Pres Youth Center on Saturday, November 4 at 6 p.m. Bring canned goods and other items to help fill Thanksgiving Baskets (see shopping list on this page). Donations can be made at or prior to the event in the basket outside of the Great Hall. Stay to eat and enjoy an evening singing karaoke with our friends from Mount Moriah Missionary Baptist Church. Register at fpcf.w.info/karaoke4cans.



The First Pres Chili Cookoff is back again! The Fellowship Committee invites you to put together your best chili recipe and come enjoy a variety of flavors on Sunday, November 12 in the Great Hall beginning at 11 a.m. In addition to the entries in the Chili Cook-off, a free chili lunch (meat and vegetarian), condiments, and dessert will be prepared by the First Presbyterian Church kitchen.

To enter your chili into the cook-off, go to fpcf.w.info/chili and sign up by Wednesday, November 1. An entry is not necessary to attend. Come enjoy lunch and vote for your favorite chili!



Help First Presbyterian Church Fort Worth prepare and contribute food bags with items for a Thanksgiving meal for those in need. The church provides the turkeys, but we need your donations for the rest of the meal!

Please fill a bag with the shopping list items below, then bring filled bags to the red carts outside the worship spaces on Sundays, November 5 and 12. You may also drop donations off at the church office (Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.) November 6-10.

Donations of money are also appreciated; checks can be made out to First Presbyterian Church with "Thanksgiving Baskets 2023" in the memo.

SHOPPING LIST:

- 15 oz. can yams
- 15 oz. can cranberry sauce
- 15 oz. can corn
- 15 oz. can green beans
- 15 oz. can fruit
- 15 oz. can chicken broth
- 5+ oz. box instant mashed potatoes
- 6 oz. pkg. Jell-O
- 14 oz. bag stuffing mix (or 2 boxes Stove Top mix)
- 1 box cake mix
- 1 can cake frosting
- 1 container Crystal Light, Kool-Aid, or small box tea bags

Please stay with sizes requested. Health regulations require that the food be in the original packaging/containers.



PASTOR'S LETTER

Dear friends,

The psalmist long ago wrote, "One generation shall laud your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts." (Psalm 145.4)

When the psalmist first penned those words, God's people had been declaring God's mighty acts for generations already. They had passed on through oral tradition the stories of God's faithfulness from creation, through covenants after the flood and with Abraham and Sarah, through the exodus journey, and the through the journey of exile and return. As the stories were recorded and the scriptures were collected, they became central to the worship life of Israel in Temple, synagogue, and at home. "One generation shall laud your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts."

The early church added its witness as new generations experienced and declared God's mighty acts even as they remembered and celebrated the witness of God's people who came before them. To this day, when the church gathers for worship and engages in service to one another and the world, we engage in acts of memory and witness. "One generation shall laud your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts."

This week the acts of remembering and declaring are especially powerful. This past Sunday, October 29, we presented our pledges in worship as an ongoing act of participation and commitment to God's mission in the world. Our gifts declare God's mighty acts in concrete ways locally, nationally, and internationally. Our pledges and contributions are joined with the witness of those generous First Presbyterian members who left legacy gifts that continue to transform lives and impact the world. "One generation shall laud your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts."

Wednesday, November 1, is All Saints Day. We gather to worship as a community of faith at 7 p.m. to remember by name First Presbyterian members who have died in the past year, as they have now joined the great cloud of witnesses that surrounding us in our own lives of faith. In this service, the psalmist's words are especially poignant. "One generation shall laud your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts."

What a profound gift that God has called us all together as the community of First Presbyterian Church at this time. God has woven our journeys together with one another, and with those who have gone before us. And God is continually at work forming new relationships in our community of faith. Take a moment this week to voice your own prayers of thanksgiving for God's leading and guiding in your life that has led to being part of First Presbyterian Church and its legacy of faithful witness. And, if you have not yet made your pledge for 2024, consider doing so as a sign of your gratitude for God's call on your life through this community of faith.

"One generation shall laud your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts."

God's peace to you,

Michael

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH'S SESSION

2023 Class of Elders

Terry Adams
Audrey Ballew
Patty Biggers
Katy Hobbs
Bob Peak
Bill Rhule
Jack Walker

2024 Class of Elders

Mary Elizabeth Austin
Sarah Clingman
Lillie Doze
Martha Newman
Ralph Reece
Claire Schmid
Dawn Shepard
Austin Stubblefield
Steven Zaborowski

2025 Class of Elders

Brian Cunningham
Jimmy DeFoor
Mary Susan Farrar
Vic Letbetter
Linda Northern
Lynda Richey
Amy Ryan

SUBMISSIONS

Submissions for the **DECEMBER** issue of the Penn Street Letter are due **Wednesday, NOVEMBER 15**. Submissions for the weekly Penn Street Online emailed newsletters are due the Wednesday prior to each week's issue. Please send to Pam Burkholder at pamb@fpcfww.org.

FOLLOW US

Do you follow First Presbyterian on social media? If not, find us on the following sites and follow along for photos, reminders, encouragement, and more.



@firstpresfw



@firstpres_fw

PUBLISHER INFO

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Penn Street Arts presents A Night of Silent Film & Organ Music: November 17

On Friday, November 17, you are invited to A Family Night of Silent Film and Organ Music at 7 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Watch the silent film adaptation of *The Phantom of the Opera*, with live musical accompaniment by organist Peter Krasinski.



Peter Krasinski is a conductor, organist and music educator, whose imaginative and energetic performances elevate and inform diverse audiences. Along with regular concert appearances, he specializes in live improvised silent film accompaniment. He has premiered the art in major venues in North America, Europe and Asia. He is the recipient of a number of

prizes including the First Prize in Improvisation from the American Guild of Organists National Competition.

House Organist of the Providence Performing Arts Center, Mr. Krasinski was past Dean of the Boston Chapter AGO. He is Organist at First Church of Christ, Scientist in Providence RI, accompanist at Beth El Temple Center in Belmont, MA and recently presented Master Classes at the Sibelius Academy, Helsinki, Finland. He holds both a Bachelor of Music Degree in Music Education and Organ Performance, and the Master of Sacred Music Degree from Boston University.

This event is free and open to the public, and is co-sponsored by Fort Worth Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. All age groups are invited to come and enjoy an evening of silent film and popcorn!

MEN'S VISITATION TEAM

The Men's Visitation Team is beginning again! We are currently compiling a list of homebound men in the church who would welcome a short visit from a fellow church member. We are looking for a few caring men to make a visit once a month. As we rotate through the list you will probably go back to visit the same person once every four or five months.

If making such visits is something you would like to explore contact Ashley Drake Mertz at the church (adrakemertz@fpcfw.org or 817.335.1231, ext. 264) or Murray Richey at 817.851.7874.

NOVEMBER

CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

Below are some highlights of special events happening in November. For a complete calendar, visit fpcfw.org.

SUNDAYS IN NOVEMBER

- 9 a.m. Worship in Great Hall
- 10 a.m. Church School for All Ages
- 10 a.m. Bible in Depth
- 11 a.m. Worship in Sanctuary & Livestream
- 11:20 a.m. WHAM Younger Children's Choir
- 2 p.m. WHAM Worship Arts
- 2:45 p.m. WHAM Older Children's Choir
- 3:30 p.m. WHAM Children's Bells
- 3:30 p.m. Youth Choir
- 4 p.m. Spiritual Formation: Follow Me
- 4:30 p.m. Middle School Youth Group
- 4:30 p.m. High School Bells
- 5:30 p.m. All Youth Group Dinner
- 6 p.m. High School Youth Group
- 6 p.m. Middle School Bells

MONDAYS IN NOVEMBER

- 6:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study
- 10 a.m. Wellness: Tai Chi
- 11:30 a.m. Busy Women's Bible Study

WEDNESDAYS IN NOVEMBER

- 10:45 a.m. Bible in Depth
- 5:30 p.m. WOW! Worship and Dinner at Community Crossroads
- 6 p.m. Grace Notes Rehearsal
- 7 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal
- 7:30 p.m. High School Bible Study

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1

- 7 p.m. All Saints Worship Service & Livestream

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4

- 6 p.m. Circles of Christ Cans for Karaoke

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12

- 11 a.m. Chili Cookoff
- 2 p.m. Youth Turkey Bowl
- 4:30 p.m. Grace, Gratitude & Grub Children/Family Dinner

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17

- 7 p.m. Family Night of Silent Film & Organ Music

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 20

- 6 p.m. Family Outdoor Movie Night

THURSDAY & FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 23-24

- All Day Church offices, Early Education Center, and Community Crossroads closed
Happy Thanksgiving!

BE INSPIRED...

Below are some upcoming opportunities for being inspired into a life of discipleship through church events and education opportunities.

Join Team First Pres at the Jingle Bell Run, Nov. 25

The next Team First Pres run is the Jingle Bell Run on Saturday, November 25, 3:30 p.m. at the Shops at Clearfork.

Be part of the original festive race for charity and signature Arthritis Foundation holiday event! Wear your favorite holiday attire and together, we'll jingle all the way to a cure! Come to run, walk or stroll, and spread the good cheer. The Jingle Bell Run raises funds to support research for arthritis treatment and a cure, as well as life-changing arthritis resources and local programs.

Register at fpcf.w.info/jinglebell. When you sign up, click "join a team" and either type in or choose "Team FPC."

Advent Devotional Groups begin November 30

I know a man of such mildness and kindness it is trying to change my life. He does not preach, teach, but simply is. It is astonishing, for he is Christ's ambassador truly, by rule and act. But, more, he is kind with the sort of kindness that shines out, but is resolute, not fooled. He has eaten the dark hours and could also, I think, soldier for God, riding out under the storm clouds, against the world's pride and unkindness with both unassailable sweetness, and consoling word. (from Devotions: The Selected Poems of Mary Oliver; p. 134.

Mary Oliver's brilliantly crafted words have provided respite and inspiration to many people in our frantic world. The Salt Project has produced a companion to Mary Oliver's poetry for Advent. Each week of Advent, the study offers scripture, poetry, reflection, prayer, hymns, and daily practices. You are invited to join a group to share in this Advent preparation for Christmas.

Groups will meet on Thursdays, November 30, and December 7, 14, and 21. You will need to purchase or borrow Mary Oliver's book *Devotions*. The book is available on Amazon or copies will be available on loan from Elizabeth Boulware or the church library. Study guides will be provided. Please register at fpcf.w.info/adventgroup. When you register, please select which group works best for your schedule: Trinity Terrace chapel at 9 a.m. led by Ann Hoch and Elizabeth Boulware; First Presbyterian Church room 100 at noon led by Carol Toombs; or First Presbyterian Church room 100 at 5:30 p.m. led by Karen Hosch and Jimmy Defoor.

Spiritual Direction: "A Lamp Unto My Feet..."

"Spiritual Direction has led me to greater clarity and focus. My SD has been able to take my many threads of swirling words and thoughts and bring them together, most often in a way I am too close to see. She has helped me discover particular spiritual disciplines that have helped lead my mind to a calmness, clarity and focus. When I find I am in the midst of a confusing wilderness, my SD is a gentle attendant on the path with me, enabling me to see Christ's presence."

"During a difficult time in my life I have found comfort, love, encouragement, strength, hope, and healing in gathering with another who seeks God's presence in all peoples and circumstances. It has been life affirming and life changing. I am so grateful!"

"Each month since 1998, I have seen the same spiritual director. With her gentle smile, her loving spirit, and her welcoming eyes, she has listened and reflected and prayed with me. That gift of listening - just listening - continues to be an exquisite gift for which I am deeply grateful. She exemplifies the phrase, "at the service of the directee."

So what is this spiritual direction these church members speak about? Simply put, it is "the opportunity to intentionally reflect on one's relationship with God in the presence of another who listens with compassion." Although all facets of one's life are fodder for direction, the primary focus is always on discernment of Spirit's presence and work in the directee's life. The question is, "And where do you see God in all of this?" And this can mean a specific event or situation, or the entire trajectory of one's life - past, present, and future.

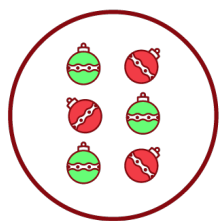
Prayer is a cornerstone of direction. It is always included as part of a session and as an integral part of the relationship between sessions. Generally, one meets with their director once a month, and the spiritual director covenants to pray for the directee during their time apart. The directee seeks to create a discipline of prayer so as to deepen and broaden his or her own prayer life.

It is understood by both that when they come together in session, there are always three in the room. The Christ-spirit is the third, and both the director and the directee attempt to listen for His voice and be guided by His heart-nudgings. Their desire is to transcend their reliance on their own understandings and seek his wisdom and will instead.

If such a relationship calls to you, please contact the Rev. Ashley Drake Mertz at adrakemertz@fpcf.w.org or 817.335.1231, ext. 264.

ENGAGE THE WORLD...

Below are a few ways we engage with others through church events and outreach opportunities.



Christmas Party FOR THE BLIND

The annual "Christmas Party for the Blind" is on Sunday, December 3 at 6 p.m. in the Great Hall. FPC has hosted this special event for our city's blind community for over 70 years! We need volunteers to drive guests to the party, so contact Becky (bquick@fpcf.org or 817.335.1231, ext. 265) or Josh (josh@fpcf.org or 817.335.1231, ext. 251) if you are willing to help. Youth are asked to meet at 5:30 p.m. to help set-up for the party, and we plan to end by 8 p.m.



FOOD HANDLER'S CLASS: NOVEMBER 14

There will be a food handler's class for all Community Crossroads Helping Hands/volunteers who handle food on Tuesday, November 14, from 9-11 a.m. To sign up for the class, contact MaLinda (mmorehead@fpcf.org or 817.921.3955).

THANKSGIVING HELP NEEDED AT CROSSROADS

Additional help is needed to distribute Thanksgiving baskets at Community Crossroads on Monday, November 13 from 9-11 a.m., and on Wednesday, November 15 and Thursday, November 16, from 11:15 a.m. to 1:45 p.m. Questions? Contact Dori (dalhammami@fpcf.org or 817.921.3955).

Would you like to help set up and distribute Thanksgiving dinner to neighbors at WOW (Worship on Wednesdays) on Wednesday, November 22 from 5:15 to 6:45 p.m.? Contact Dori (dalhammami@fpcf.org or 817.921.3955).

SAVE THE DATE! CHRISTMAS EVE BRUNCH AT CROSSROADS

On Sunday, December 24, you are invited to ride the bus from Crossroads to First Pres for the 10 a.m. Christmas Eve worship service, then return to Crossroads and help serve a Christmas Eve Brunch to our neighbors from 11:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (with clean up until 1 p.m.) You may also come only for the brunch. Questions? Contact Dori (dalhammami@fpcf.org or 817.921.3955).

5TH SATURDAYS AT



Fifth Saturdays are a busy time at Community Crossroads! On September 30, the Tarrant Area Food Bank Red Bus visited Crossroads for the Railroad Project and Choice Pantry. Inside the Red Bus, families get assistance applying for SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families), and other benefits. Emergency food is also available inside the big Red Bus.

Inside Crossroads was busy as well, with the Railroad Project and Choice Pantry! The Railroad Project greeted 135 households and provided medical screenings, clothing, free phones with free phone service, and connections to various agencies. The Choice Pantry, staffed by the First Pres Young Adults, provided groceries for 99 families.

CPR/AED TRAINING: DECEMBER 9

The Wellness Committee is pleased to offer a CPR/AED training and certification class for church members on Saturday, December 9, 2023 from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in Fahrenkamp Music Room. The class will be taught by church member Aubrey Kurz and will include the necessary training and testing to become certified. Knowing how to perform CPR and use an AED can save lives! Register at fpcf.org/cprtraining by November 22.

**Obtaining the CPR/AED certification is solely for your benefit and does not require you to be available for worship services or church events.*

RECENTLY AROUND FIRST PRES...

From a youth Bible study pumpkin carving & s'mores party, to a visit from Rev. Dr. Margaret Aymer, a solar eclipse, a children and youth family camping trip, and a 5k with Team First Pres, pictured here are some recent First Pres happenings. If you have photos of an event or gathering that you'd like to see included here, share them with Pam Burkholder at pamb@fpcf.org.



JOYS & CONCERNS

The following prayer concerns are those we have received as of October 24. In an effort to respect the privacy of those listed below, names are only printed once permission from the individual is obtained. Are you in the hospital or dealing with an illness? Let us know by contacting Parish Associate for Pastoral Care Rev. Ashley Drake Mertz, Parish Visitor Rev. Lynda Dinsdale, or Parish Visitor Matt McGraw. Let us keep the following persons in our thoughts and prayers this month...

Our loving sympathy to...

Family and friends of **Bill Sommers**, following his death on Thursday, October 19. Surviving FPC family members include Bill's wife, **Mary**, daughter and son-in law, **Holly and Wes Melton**, and grandchildren, **Maggie and Thomas Melton**.

Family and friends of Joanne Kelbert, following her death on Wednesday, October 18. Surviving FPC family member is Joanne's sister, **Margaret Miller**.

Family and friends of **Vivienne Wilson**, following her death on Friday, September 29.

Our loving thoughts and prayers are with...

Jane Rhule, Pete Van't Slot, Henrietta Bailey, Elizabeth McCartney, Elizabeth Richardson, Ronnie Sherwood, Capt. Rolf Tilley, Pat Richardson, Gail Davis, Irene Howard, Jody Buening, Karl Kuipers, and Susie Kuipers, who are recovering from surgery or injury. We also pray for their caregivers.

Mary Kay Roberto, Gaylon Peyton, Larry Kinard, Lou Hammett (husband of **Carol Sue Hammett**), **Amanda Deitz, Levi Deitz, Tad Delgado** and parents **Emily and Bryan Delgado, Ronnie Clinkscale, Velma James, June Sprott, Fred Wilson, Frances Blake, Phyllis Propes, Dean Holloman, Chuck Sullivan, Lucy Redrow** (daughter of **Leigh Ann and Grant Redrow**), **Betty Dunham, and Karl Travis**, who are dealing with illness or undergoing treatment. We also pray for their caregivers.

Our caring prayers for extended family include...

Pam Burkholder (First Pres Director of Communications), **Anja Dangelimer** (family friend of **Lauren Black**), **Claudia Masser** (daughter-in-law of **Carol Toombs**), **Melanie Carpenter** (sister of **Paula Robertson**), **Peggy Moore** (sister of **Mary Brooks**), **Cameron Parmelee** (granddaughter of **Sally and Bob Parmelee**), **Jack Barber** (son of **Liz Barber**), **Andy Hedrick** (brother of **Patti Bradley**), **Jolie Paprskar-Mozingo** (daughter of **Joy Paprskar**), **Walter Williams** (husband of **Rachele Williams**), **Caleb James Baker** (great-grandson of **Betty Tillman**), **Terry James** (nephew of **Rachele Williams**), **Jo Gordon** (daughter-in-law of **Pat and Bill Gordon**), **Tahji Hoffman** (great niece of **Rachele Williams**), **Paula Perkins** (sister of **Susie Kuipers**), **Audrey Hart** (great-

granddaughter of **Bob and Jane Trask**), **Ann Welch** (sister of **Andrea Frankenfield**), **Nancy Hatfield** (mother of **Sarah Haddock**), **Lynn Prater** (daughter of **Harlene Satterfield**); **Bill Neil** (uncle of **Kenda, Nancy, and Ron Love**), and **John DeMore** (son-in-law of **June Sprott**).

Prayers for peace in our world and for the safety of **Capt. Rolf Tilley** (son of **Katie and Jaret Tilley** and the grandson of **Janelle Eklund**), who is serving in the US Air Force in Japan. Prayers for the safety of **Pape Russell** (grandson of **Barbara Russell**), who is serving in the US Navy. Prayers for the safety of **Diego A. Saldivar** (son of **Becky and Renee Saldivar**), who is serving in the US Navy. Prayers for the safety of **Nathan Gunter** (nephew of **Russell and Vivian Norment**), who is stationed in Korea. Prayers for the safety of **Cullen Cline** (grandson of **Bill and Glinda King**) who is serving in the US Navy.

We pray for safety and peace for those affected by conflict.

We pray for our mission coworkers: **Cindy Corell** in Haiti, **Jed and Jenny Koball** in Peru, **Cathy Chang and Juan Lopez** in the Philippines. We pray for our partner congregations: **Mount Moriah Missionary Baptist** in Fort Worth and for the congregations of **Buen Pastor, Resurrection, and Cidra Presbyterian Churches** in Cuba.

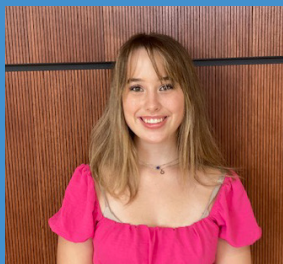


ALL SAINTS DAY

at First Presbyterian Church

Wednesday, November 1 at 7 p.m.
in the Sanctuary and at fpcf.org/livestream

WELCOME, NEW MEMBER!



Please join the Evangelism Committee
in welcoming this new member.

Matilda Flowers is a 9th grader at Trinity Valley School and was baptized shortly after joining First Pres on September 17. Please offer her the warmest of welcomes.



First Presbyterian Church
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Send address changes to
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WWW.FPCFW.ORG



GRACE, GRATITUDE, AND GRUB

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12 | 4:30–6 P.M.

First Pres Children's Ministry invites you to Grace, Gratitude and Grub.
Invite your whole family (grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc!)

We will feast together, give thanks,
and have interactive learning stations about gratitude.

REGISTER AT FPCFW.INFO/GRACEGRATITUDEGRUB



OUTDOOR FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 20 | 6-8 P.M.

Bring your lawn chairs and blankets and meet in
the Memorial Garden for a movie and hot cocoa.

REGISTER AT FPCFW.INFO/OUTDOORFAMILYMOVIE NIGHT