

THE Penn Street Letter

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, FORT WORTH

APRIL 2024 / VOLUME 24, NUMBER 4

New to First Pres? Been here a while? You're invited! First Connections begins April 7

The First Connections class is an opportunity for new members and guests to learn about First Pres and opportunities for discipleship and connection. Even if you have been at First Presbyterian for a while, you're invited to join for a refresher, and enjoy getting to know our new members and guests. Everyone is invited!



Sunday, April 7: Life at First Pres

Join members of the Evangelism Work Group for a brief presentation on church life at First Pres, including notes on our history and how we are organized. We will discuss the many ways in which we inspire discipleship through the ministries of the church, and how you can get involved. This meeting will include ample time for conversation and Q&A. This class will meet at 10 a.m. in Fahrenkamp Music Room, across from the Coffee Cart, near the Great Hall entrance.



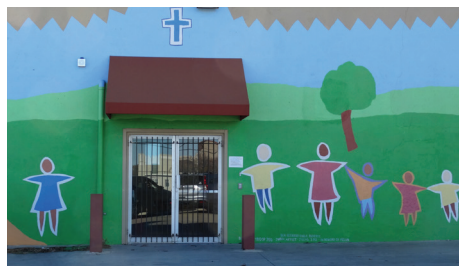
Sunday, April 14: Walking Tour of Penn Street Campus

Did you know that First Pres has a movie theater? Have you ever visited the church kitchen, the library or the labyrinth? Join members of the Evangelism Work Group for a comprehensive tour of the Penn St. campus. We will visit all three worship spaces, the History Wall and other disciple-inspiring sites. Be sure to wear comfortable shoes. This tour will depart at 10 a.m. from the Coffee Cart, near the Great Hall entrance.



Sunday, April 14: All Church Picnic and Meet Pastoral Staff

Look for tables with the "First Connections" sign during the All Church Picnic in the Great Hall. Join the group for informal conversation with members of First Pres pastoral staff including Brian Coulter. And have fun! Adults and kids alike will enjoy excellent food courtesy of chefs Heath and Norbert. Billy Buttons will be there, along with a balloon artist and a face painter, and the DFW Ice Cream Man will provide special treats. Enter the bounce house if you dare. The picnic will begin after the 11 a.m. service concludes. Come to the Great Hall and look for the "First Connections" sign.



Sunday, April 21: Tour of Community Crossroads Outreach Center

Board the First Pres bus for the short ride to Community Crossroads on Hemphill St., south of downtown Fort Worth. This tour will include an overview of the numerous Mission and Outreach ministries at Crossroads, including the dental clinic, food and clothing pantries, formula and diaper distribution and many others. Learn special terms like "First HAND" and "WOW." Unlock the mystery of why we call our neighbors "neighbors." This tour will depart at 10 a.m. from the Coffee Cart, near the Great Hall entrance. We promise to get you back to the Sanctuary in time for worship at 11 a.m.

Remember, everyone is invited, and everyone is welcome! If you plan to attend any or all of the meetings, please let us know by registering at fpcfw.org/adulted. Questions? Call the church office (817.335.1231) or contact Chris Bartley (cbartley@fpcfw.org).

Pastor's Letter



Dear friends,

As we move through Holy Week toward Easter many of you are likely making preparations for some sort of celebration on

Sunday. Whether that is to attend worship and have brunch with church friends, to gather with family for an elaborate meal, or to indulge in an egg hunt or two, the day will surely be filled with excitement and joy at the news that Christ is Risen!

The day of Easter is a joyous occasion in the life of the church in which we remember that death does not have the final say, that in Christ we are risen to new life. The *season* of Easter that follows the *day* of Easter is also a good reminder of what it means to live as resurrection people, those who trust that Christ has died, Christ is risen, and Christ will come again.

I always find it helpful to be reminded of the words from the Book of Common Worship about the meaning of this season:

“As with Christmas, Easter refers not only to a single day, but to a whole season of celebration in the Christian year. The season of Easter spans the fifty days between the Resurrection of the Lord and the Day of Pentecost, and encompasses the Ascension of the Lord...The seven weeks of the Easter season make up a ‘week of weeks’ (seven times seven): a symbol in time of the fullness and abundance of God’s grace.”

After the season of Lent, where we have focused our attention on spiritual disciplines that bring us nearer to God, we spend the next fifty days basking in the great mystery that Christ is risen from the dead. If you have spent Lent abstaining from a favorite food, or integrating a new daily devotional I pray that discipline has brought to light your relationship with God and God’s creation. Whatever Lent has been for you I pray that this Easter season may draw you into the fullness and abundance of God’s grace.

Submissions

Submissions for the next issue of the Penn Street Letter are due Wednesday, April 24. 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@fpcf.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



@fpcf

First Presbyterian Church's Session

2024 CLASS OF ELDERS

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

2025 CLASS OF ELDERS

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

2026 CLASS OF ELDERS

Julia Bradley
Al Comeaux
Emily Hadley
Jane Mathis
J.B. Smithson
Jay Stepp
Brian Wharry

Publisher Info

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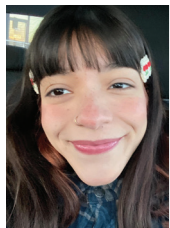
Editor: Pam Burkholder

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Each month we'll highlight First Pres staff team updates, including new hires, anniversaries, and more.

WELCOME, OMIKA CLAUDIO!



First Pres welcomed **Omika Claudio** to the Sunday Nursery Caretakers in March.

Omika is 23 years old and moved to Texas last year from Puerto Rico. She loves reading, art, and writing, and aspires to complete a degree in children's psychology.

During the workweek, Omika is a Lead Teacher for Kiddie Academy for ages infant to 12 years and is passionate about

advocating for children and mental health. Omika strives to be a kind, safe, and fun presence for all the children under her care and cultivates an environment that celebrates all of our children's differences.

Please take a moment to welcome Omika to First Pres the next time you see her on Sunday morning.

MARCH AND APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

We celebrate the following members of our staff team on their years of faithful service with First Pres:

- **March 14: Becky Quick**, Ministry Assistant, 2 years
- **March 21: Marisa Pinon**, Director of Finance & Accounting, 8 years
- **April 3: Keydy Kawas**, Assistant Teacher Infant, 1 year
- **April 12: Brian Coulter**, Pastor/Head of Staff, 3 years
- **April 13: Christina Nicholson**, Assistant Teacher Pre-K, 1 year
- **April 15: Becca Sawyer**, Music Associate, 9 years
- **April 16: David Gallegos**, Maintenance Assistant, 3 years
- **April 18: Wes Hogue**, Staff Accountant, 7 years
- **April 25: MeLin Bartlett**, Lead Teacher Threes, 8 years

AND, JUST FOR FUN...



Richard Massey, Video/Livestream Coordinator, prepares for a Lent service and concert, and Ministry Assistants Becky Quick, Deneice Allen, and Keri Casciari represent First Pres Children's Ministry with spirit shirts on a casual day.

Calendar Highlights

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

SUNDAYS IN APRIL

- 8 a.m. Worship in the Chapel
- 9 a.m. Worship in the Great Hall
- 10 a.m. Church School
- 11 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary & Livestream
- 11:20 a.m. Younger Children's Choir
- 2 p.m. Kids Worship Arts Classes
- 2:45 p.m. Older Children's Choir
- 3:30 p.m. Children's Bell Choir
- 4:30 p.m. High School Bells
- 4:30 p.m. Middle School Youth Group
- 5:30 p.m. Youth Dinner
- 6 p.m. Middle School Bells
- 6 p.m. High School Youth Group

MONDAYS IN APRIL

- 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 APRIL

- 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 (off campus)

MONDAY, APRIL 1

All day Church offices, Early Education Center, and Community Crossroads Outreach Center closed

FRIDAY, APRIL 5

7 p.m. Young Adult Backyard Cookout

SUNDAY, APRIL 7

6 p.m. College of Elders Dinner and Gathering

MONDAY, APRIL 8

1:30 p.m. First Pres Staff Eclipse Watch Party (until 1:50 p.m.)
Church offices will temporarily close during this time.

SATURDAY, APRIL 13

- 8:30 a.m. Victory Over Violence Walk/Run
- 9:30 a.m. Circles of Christ Circle Up for Coffee
- 5:30 p.m. Circles of Christ Movie Night

SUNDAY, APRIL 14

- Youth Sunday
- 9 a.m. Blood Drive outside Great Hall (until 1 p.m.)
- 11 a.m. All Church Picnic (until 1 p.m.)

THURSDAY, APRIL 18

- 5:30 p.m. Tasty Third Thursdays @ Community Crossroads
- 7 p.m. Young Adults Thirsty Third Thursday Fellowship

SUNDAY, APRIL 28

- 5 p.m. Youth Ping Pong Tournament

Be Inspired



Enjoy Storms and fill a Flood Bucket for Disaster Relief

You're invited to an afternoon of singing, acting, drumming, and an emphasis on mission as the First Pres Children's Choirs present the musical drama, *Storms* by Mark Burrows, on Sunday, April 28 at 2 p.m. in the Great Hall.

In coordination with the musical, the children have also been working on a mission project by collecting donations of items to fill flood buckets for the Disaster Assistance Center operated at Ferncliff Conference Center in Little Rock, Arkansas. Ferncliff works with Presbyterian Disaster Relief to provide direct relief to communities impacted by disasters. Empty buckets and a list of needed supplies will be available outside the Great Hall and in the Narthex each Sunday during April. You are invited to pick up and fill a bucket and return it when you attend the musical on April 28 (or before!) You may also make a monetary donation through First Presbyterian (please designate "Flood Buckets").

Presbyterian 101 begins April 8

Led by the Rev. Dr. Michael Waschevski, Presbyterian 101 is designed for both those new to the Presbyterian Church as well as those seeking to understand the Presbyterian tradition more fully. Over the four sessions, participants will understand the place of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Christian history, explore major biblical and theological affirmations of Presbyterians, and come to appreciate the polity of our denomination in relation to other forms of church polity. The course meets Thursday evenings April 18 through May 9 from 7-8 p.m.

Register at fpcfw.org/adulted or by contacting Deneice Allen in the church office (dallen@fpcfw.org or 817.335.1231, ext. 261).

**JOIN
TEAM
FIRST
PRES
APRIL 13**

**VICTORY
OVER VIOLENCE**

Join Team First Pres for the annual Victory Over Violence Race on April 13. Victory Over Violence is an all-ages annual fundraising event benefitting many of The Women's Center's anti-violence initiatives, consisting of a 5K walk/run and 1K fun run.

**Learn more and register at
fpcfw.org/wellness**

Registration deadline is April 1
and race packets will be distributed on April 6.

Engage the World

Ways to Engage Locally

HABITAT FIRST PRES BUILD DAY: MAY 4

It's that time of year again - the annual First Pres Habitat Build day! First Pres has 24 volunteer spaces reserved for Saturday, May 4 for the build at 5900 Whittlesey Road, Fort Worth. Reserve your volunteer spot today at vhub.at/1stpresbyterianchurch

FILL GOODIE BAGS FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN NIGHT SHELTER: MAY 9

All men and women are invited to help create goodie bags for the Presbyterian Night Shelter. You can participate in this event by bringing donations (new pairs of black socks or small 8 oz. water bottles) to the church office through April 19. Our goal is 300 pairs of socks and 500 water bottles. We will then gather on Thursday, May 9 at 5:30 p.m. in the First Pres gym to assemble and fill the bags and enjoy a pizza and salad meal together. We look forward to this event as we gather with friends to make something special for those in need. Register by May 3 by contacting the church office (817.335.1231).



At the wall raising for Opal Lee's new Habitat for Humanity home, Robyn Michalove presented her with a t-shirt from First Pres' 2022 Civil Rights pilgrimage trips. Opal's Habitat home is being built on the lot where her family home was burned by a mob in 1939.

Engaging the World...

First Pres partners with three congregations in Cuba: Buen Pastor, Resurrection, and Cidra Presbyterian Churches.

Pictured here, a mission for senior adults called "Smiles of Hope" at our sister church in Union de Reyes, Cuba. Your generosity allows this mission to be funded by First Pres. Each Wednesday the group enjoys a Bible study, a meal, games, and light exercises.



Pictured above, Susana and Adriana, the pastors of our sister churches in Cuba.

Recently around First Pres

From a Circles of Christ coffee gathering to a Youth lock-in and Bible study dinner, a Fellowship Ensemble rehearsal to Early Education Center Sunday and Wellness Together at a local race, 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@fpcfw.org.



Joys & Concerns

The following prayer concerns are those we have received as of March 20. 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 or Parish Visitors Matt McGraw or Rev. Lynda Dinsdale. Let us keep the following persons in our thoughts and prayers this month...

With Joy, we Celebrate...

The birth of Harrison Montgomery Thompson, son of **Stefan** and Heather Thompson February 14, 2024. Harrison is the grandson of **John and Irene Thompson** and joins big brother Mark.

Our Loving Sympathy to...

Family and friends of **Ann Kinscherff** following her death on Tuesday, March 18.

Friends and family of **Mary Farmer** following her death on Wednesday, February 28.

Family and Friends of Catherine Long following her death on February 21. Surviving First Pres family members include daughter and son-in-law, **Denise and Paul Conner**, grand-daughter and grand-son-in-law, **Ashli and Brandon Smick**, and great-grandchildren, **Everett, Graham, and Finley Smick**.

Friends and family of **Dean Holloman** following his death.

Our Loving Thoughts and Prayers are with...

Luke Davis, Martha Brooks, Steve Christian, Nancy Gillis, Janet Ragsdale, Jackie Taylor, Jo Ann Johnson, Elizabeth McCartney, Elizabeth Richardson, Ronnie Sherwood, Capt. Rolf Tilley, Pat Richardson, Gail Davis, and Irene

Howard, who are recovering from surgery or injury. We also pray for their caregivers.

Janelle Eklund, Liz Barber, John Patterson, Henrietta Bailey, Larry Kinard, Amanda Deitz, Levi Deitz, Tad Delgado and parents **Emily and Bryan Delgado, Ronnie Clinkscale, June Sprott, Fred Wilson, Frances Blake, Phyllis Propes, Chuck Sullivan, Susie Kuipers**, and **Karl Travis**, who are dealing with illness or undergoing treatment. We also pray for their caregivers.

Our Caring Prayers for Extended Family include...

Lucy Redrow (daughter of **Leigh Ann and Grant Redrow**), Katie Loudon (sister-in-law of **Jaci Travis**), Michael Kibby (friend of **Mary Brooks**), 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**), 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 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.

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 Manilla. 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.



SUMMER
children's camps
and more

Learn more and register for
summer activities at
fpcf.org/kidsummer



FIRST PRES
KIDS

First Presbyterian Church

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PERIODICALS POSTMASTER:

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Church Office

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WWW.FPCFW.ORG

ALL CHURCH PICNIC

**Sunday, April 14
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
FREE**

Don't miss the All Church Picnic! Enjoy worship led by our youth that morning, and gather for delicious barbecued chicken and pulled pork, fun attractions like a bounce house, ice cream truck and Billy Buttons, balloon artist, and face painting! There will also be an opportunity to give back with a blood drive outside the Great Hall from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. To sign up for a donation time (28 slots available), visit fpcfw.org/wellness.

