

First Presbyterian Church of Alvin

Press Bytes



To the Saints at First Presbyterian:

Greetings. As we look at our world today we see so many negative things that they often overwhelm us. We often feel helpless and maybe hopeless to doing anything to make it better. Sometimes we may even feel all alone, that no one is near to talk with or just be with us. In light of these feelings, I am reminded of a Cherokee legend about their youth's rite of passage.

The legend goes like this: A father takes his son into the forest, blindfolds him and leaves him alone. He is required to sit on a stump the whole night and not remove his blindfold until the rays of the sun of the morning sun shine through it. He cannot cry out for help to anyone. Once he survives the night he is a MAN. He cannot tell the other boys of his experience because each lad must come into manhood on his own.

The boy is naturally terrified. He can hear all kinds of noises. Wild beasts must surely be all around him. Maybe even some human might do him harm. The wind blew the grass and earth and shook his stump, but he sat stoically, never removing the blindfold. It would be the only way he could become a man. Finally, after a horrific night the sun appeared and he removed the blindfold. It was then he discovered his father sitting on the stump next to him. The son shared his fears and wished he could have called to his father. His father smiled, put his arms around his son and said, "Son, I have been sitting beside you all night. You were never alone"

We are never alone, even when we don't know it. God is always with us, sitting on that stump of life besides us. Just because we can't see God doesn't mean God isn't there. We walk by faith, not sight. When we are "stumped" or "blinded" by the situation we face, remember who is sitting beside us. (Romans 8: 38-39)

Peace,

C.O.

August Issue

Message from the Pastor C.O. Magee (on Cover)	
Organist's Musings	2
School Supply Ministry	3
2020 Graduate	4
2020 Graduate	5
Prayer Concerns PYCC August Birthdays	6
Organist Musing's cont.	7

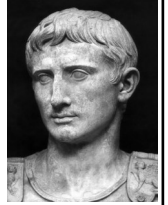




"The month of August, Emperor Augustus, Saint Augustine and the Reverend Professor Martin Luther"

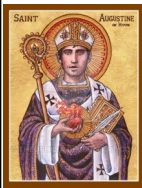
By Chris Lo

August is the eighth month of the year in the Julian and Gregorian calendars. In 8 BC, it was renamed in honor of Augustus (63 BC – 14 AD), the first Emperor of the Roman Empire, reigning from 27 BC until his death in 14 AD.



The Gospel of Luke tells us that Caesar Augustus ordered a census taken of the entire Roman world, possibly for tax purposes. Palestine was part of that world, so Joseph, the earthly father of Jesus Christ, took his pregnant wife Mary to Bethlehem to register. Joseph was from the house and line of David, who had lived in Bethlehem. There would have been no reason for Joseph and Mary to leave Nazareth for the birth of their baby except for Caesar Augustus' decree.

Augustine of Hippo (354 – 430 AD), also known as Saint Augustine, was a theologian, philosopher, and the Bishop of Hippo Regius in Numidia, Roman North Africa. His writings influenced the development of Western philosophy and Western Christianity, and he is viewed as one of the most important Church Fathers of the Latin Church in the Patristic Period (100 – 451 AD). His many important works include "The City of God," "On Christian Doctrine," and "Confessions."



St. Augustine imagined the Church as a spiritual City of God, distinct from the material Earthly City. His thoughts profoundly influenced the medieval worldview. The segment of the Church that adhered to the concept of the Trinity (see my article in the June edition of "Press Byte") as defined by the Council of Nicaea and the Council of Constantinople closely identified with Augustine's teachings on the Trinity.

St. Augustine is often quoted as having said "He who sings, prays twice." Historians and theologians have trouble finding this quote in anything of St. Augustine that has been passed down in history. History, however, credited St. Augustine as having written, "Singing belongs to one who loves."

Martin Luther, O.S.A. (1483 – 1546) was a German professor of theology, composer, priest, and a member of the Order of the Augustinian Eremites. This Order was founded in 1244 by bringing together several eremitical groups (i.e. hermits) in the Tuscany region who were following the Rule of Saint Augustine of Hippo in preeminence among early Church Fathers.



Augustine and Luther were similar in many ways. Both achieved fame and influence from the geographical and political edge of the known civilized world (Augustine in Hippo in North Africa and Luther in Wittenberg in Electoral Saxony). Both were self-confident and self-reflective at the same time. Both were well educated and exceptional in the use of language. Both enjoyed and even reveled in controversy, and a good bit of what each wrote was against something or someone. Both were troubled and sought a sense of self that would bring a measure of peace. Consequently, both thought in distinctive ways and had a negative appraisal of human effort and

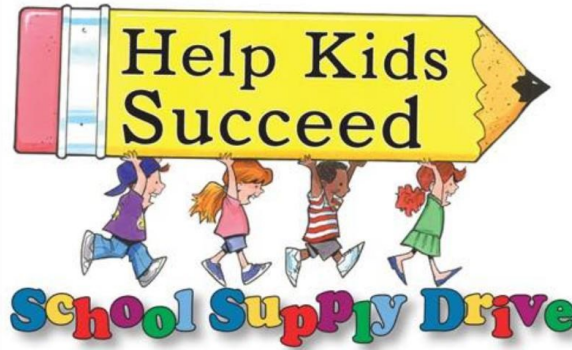
Cont. on pg 7

"I will look from
My dwelling
place quietly
like dazzling
heat in the
sunshine, like a
cloud of dew in
the heat of
harvest".

Isaiah 18:4



In 1967 Grace Ward Harby had a vision to provide inexpensive, serviceable clothing to school-age children and their families. What started as a ministry in her car evolved into what is now the Clothing Outlet, located on our church campus. As it was back in Ms. Harby's day, the proceeds from the Clothing Outlet still provide school supplies for children/families in need.



Now, over 50 years later, this ministry is still going strong, and we have joined with the Alvin Independent School District, and the Thelma Ley Anderson Family YMCA, to better serve our community. This year, will be a little different as we can not have a huge back to school bash like in previous years. On August 5th, we



will be stuffing supplies into paper bags to prepare for receiving the backpacks. The backpacks will be picked up by Alvin ISD and will be distributed to qualifying students with a drive through similar to food distributions throughout the area. Alvin ISD may need some additional help at the distribution during the week of August 17th, more details to come. If you are able to help, please let me know as soon as possible.

What a joy and privilege to continue this vital ministry to our community.
Blessings and peace.

“For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.”

Galatians 5:13

2020 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES RECOGNIZED

Madizen Gondesen

Dickinson High School

Activities: Photography & Working on upgrading her car

Plans: Attend U of H Clear Lake in the fall.



2020 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES RECOGNIZED

Emma Geiman (Granddaughter of Randy & Martha Phipps)

Alvin High School

Activities: Jockeers

Plans: Emma will be majoring in dance with a minor in business at Kilgore College as a World Famous Kilgore Rangerette! After graduating from Kilgore, she intends to continue her dance degree at Sam Houston State University. She hopes to be a Radio City Rockette one day and eventually start her own dance studio. She loves Jesus and spending time with friends and family!





Ongoing Prayers : Belinda Busscher, Brenten Dietrich, Rachel Grimmett, Mark Clark, Martha Phipps, Helen Escobedo, Maysa Martinez, Cathy King, Colton Rodgers, Shawn Petersen, Henrietta Meyer, Daina Petersen, Lane Jarboe and Our Military and their families.

Immediate Concerns : Our country, and people suffering from the COVID-19 Corona Virus

Please call the church office with updates.

Elder of the Month — Janet DeLeon

Presbyterian Youth Connection Council



Congratulations to Raia Stanley for being chosen to participate in the Presbyterian Youth Connection Council (PYCC). Mandi Odom will be an Adult Volunteer. PYCC is a team of youth, in partnership with mentoring adults, who work together to plan and lead events and activities for the youth of the presbytery. These young people develop leadership skills, grow in their spiritual life and their ability to articulate their faith, and experience the connectional church. They form close friendships with youth from other congregations while sharing and exploring their God given gifts. Meetings are typically held on the 2nd Saturday of each month.

Please keep these folks in your prayers as they attend a Planning Kick-off August 15 & 16.

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Adam Wells
- 2 Bill Pannell
- 3 Caitlin Melchor
- 3 Gabby Dantzman
- 3 Kim Froberg
- 8 Brendon BuPane
- 8 Violette BuPane
- 9 Alice Sloan
- 11 Lexi Hunt
- 12 Kathy Miller
- 14 Michael DeLeon
- 22 Emma Gondesen
- 23 Herb Myers
- 24 Brandy Carlson
- 26 Wayne Williams



Cont, from pg. 2

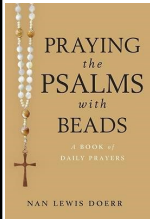
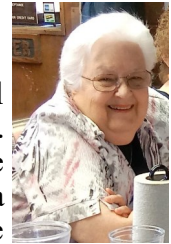
championed divine initiative or grace. One could say that both ended their lives embittered. All of this within an understanding of scripture and Christian teaching.

“Prayer to Know God” by St. Augustine of Hippo:

Eternal God, who are the light of the minds that know you, the joy of the hearts that love you, and the strength of the wills that serve you; grant us so to know you that we may truly love you, and so to love you that we may fully serve you, whom to serve is perfect freedom, in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Musical Visitor on Sunday, July 5, 2020.

For the Postlude on this Sunday, the Reverend Nan Doerr, a retired Episcopal priest, played “Fanfare for the Common Man” by Aaron Copland (1900 - 1990). This arrangement for solo trumpet and organ was made by Dr. Hyeok Lee, the present Music Director at Grace Presbyterian Church in Houston. Nan is a longtime resident of Alvin. In 2018, Nan served as the Interim Rector at Grace Episcopal Church in Alvin. Both Nan and her husband Sam play in the Alvin Community Band.



Nan’s latest book, “Praying the Psalms with Beads, A Book of Daily Prayers” will be published on August 25, 2020, by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company and is available in paperback both from online booksellers and in bookstores.

Cokesbury, the retail division of the United Methodist Publishing House, described Nan’s book this way: “Praying the Psalms with Beads guides the reader in a daily devotional habit that distills the entire book of Psalms into 182 five-minute prayers, allowing one to go through this whole cycle twice a year.”

Start date and social distancing guidelines will be announced in the September Edition of PressBytes. Thank you for your patience!

