

# Press Bytes



## Life Together

Back in the 1930s, the Rev. Thornwell Jacobs (what a cool name!) was president of a Presbyterian college in Atlanta called Oglethorpe University. Rev. Jacobs got an idea intended to get Oglethorpe University in the national news. He decided to prepare a massive time capsule and seal it in the basement of the campus administration building. He called it a “*Crypt of Civilization*” and received a hearty endorsement for his plan from *Scientific American*. This special room was meant to record life in the early 20th century by sealing up encyclopedias, newspapers preserved on microfilm, miniature models of cars, and a complete model of the U.S. Capitol Building. Along with these things – Jacobs wanted to include everyday items – like a set of Lincoln Logs toys, a sheet of aluminum foil, model trains, chewing gum, and phonograph records bearing the voices of world leaders like Franklin Roosevelt and King Edward VIII.

On May 25, 1940, the crypt was loaded, dedicated, and had its stainless-steel door welded shut. The plan was to keep this time capsule closed until the year 8113. Why that date? It’s a convoluted story; suffice to say that Jacobs treated his idea as the midpoint of all human history and decided that all the years that had already elapsed (based on ancient Egyptian calendars) should be added to his current date – meaning the time capsule would be opened again at the end of history in 8113.

Even if you are skeptical about the feasibility of Rev. Jacobs’ plan, you have to admire his visionary thinking. When was the last time you thought about the year 8000 AD? When was the last time you thought about the 22nd century – something only 81 years in the future? In our fast-paced world today, I’d wager that we have trouble thinking about next year or next month – much less spending any time contemplating the next millennia.

We do a disservice to the Christian season of Advent if we think it’s only meant to help us focus on Christmas Day in late December. The purple-colored, candle-commemorated, 4 weeks of Advent were never intended as countdowns to Christmas. This season encourages us to lift our eyes to a distant horizon – to hear again the ancient promise that Christ, the One Who came once upon this earth – has promised to come again.

That theological idea shouldn’t prompt us to pull out our calculators, and like Rev. Jacobs, try to determine when God will pull down the final curtain on human history. Advent isn’t about tucking away things in a time capsule until the vaults of civilization can be unsealed – and we step into God’s future with the baggage, knickknacks, and trinkets of our day and age. Advent is about a promised change that finally frees us from our past and moves us into a new reality – an eternity shaped by God’s love, Christ’s compassion, and the Spirit’s joyful creativity. It builds on the Good News of Christmas (God made flesh), Easter (Christ defeating death), and Pentecost (Spirit leading us into communities of love) and then goes further – further than we can see or imagine. So take time this month to look towards a very far horizon. And know that the God of “there” is also the God of “here and now.” No need to wait for time capsules to be unsealed. Let the journey of faith begin today!  
Peace,

Craig



## December Issue

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December Calendar

**NEW  
SECRETARY  
OFFICE HOURS:  
MON-FRI  
8:30AM-2:30PM**



“Glory to God  
in the  
highest, and  
on earth  
peace among  
those with  
whom he is  
pleased!”

Luke 2:14



## ALVIN MINISTERIAL ALLIANCE

### ANNUAL WALK A CHRISTMAS MILE

The Alvin Ministerial Alliance will once again host the annual Walk-A-Christmas Mile on Monday, December 10, 2018, beginning at 6:30 p.m. The event will begin at The First United Methodist Church on South Street. We will then proceed to First Christian Church, First Presbyterian Church, Grace Episcopal Church, and end at New Hope Church. Along the way, you will be treated to the Christmas Story in word and song. Following the last stop, you are invited to stay for a time of fellowship and refreshments at New Hope Church. Please join us for this annual pilgrimage of joy and celebration.

## MISSION CHRISTMAS SALE

The Christmas Sale is scheduled for Saturday, December 8, 8 am – 2 pm in the Fellowship Hall. We ask that everyone bring their donations to the church by Wednesday, December 5. Items include kitchen ware, household objects, toys, bags and purses, furniture and small electronics in working condition. We kindly ask that you do not donate clothes, shoes, books or VHS tapes. Please call the church office, 281-585-3406, before dropping off your donations. As in the past, proceeds from this sale will supplement the offerings collected for our local and world outreach efforts which, among others, consist of Campus Crusade for Christ, Clothing Outlet/ School Supplies, Heifer Project, Hope Dental Clinic, Relay for Life, the Women's Center of



Brazoria County, Youth Reach, Joy Gift Offering, One Great Hour of Sharing Offering, Peace and Global Witness Offering, and Pentecost Offering. Thank you for your help.

## CHRISTMAS COOKIES

Don't you love the smell of fresh cookies baking in the oven? When you are baking your Christmas cookies this season, please bake an extra batch for the special church events happening during Advent. We need cookies for the Christmas Walk A Mile and the Christmas Eve service. We also need cookies and fruit for the trays we prepare for the elderly and shut-in. If you are willing to provide 3 dozen cookies for any of these events, please contact Barbara Bennett at 281-703-0445 or [tebeb@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tebeb@sbcglobal.net). There will also be a sign-up sheet in the Narthex of the church.



## ALVIN FOOD PANTRY

The Food Pantry has been in need of donations since the hurricane. Please do not forget your donations for the first Sunday in December. Monetary donations are welcomed also.

Donations needed most are:

peanut butter, cereal, ramen soup, and canned meats.



**A Perfect Gift this Advent Season**

In the lead up to Christmas, many of us spend time in search of the *perfect gift* — the gift that communicates to friends and family how much we know and love them. We search our memories for indications of what gift might cause the faces of our loved ones to light up. We scour the stores and shops, hoping to come across the thing that will communicate a depth of love that our words cannot.

As important as gifts to loved ones are, we have an opportunity to give gifts that help many people we do not know through the Christmas Joy Offering. These gifts in particular draw us back to the manger and God’s perfect gift to us — Jesus Christ.

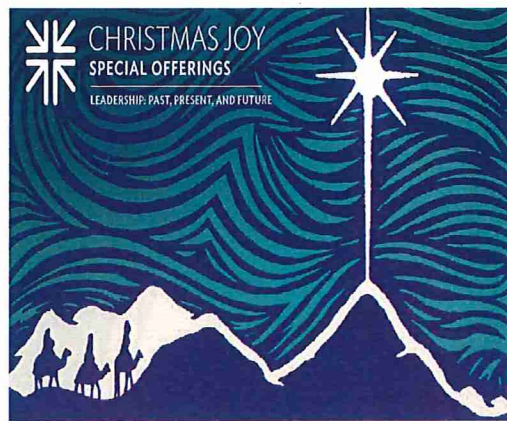
Jesus came to live among us, bringing light into darkness, and reconciliation to God and to one another. A perfect gift from a gracious God.

During this Christmas and Advent Season, we celebrate leadership; past, present and future through support of the Christmas Joy

Offering. We do so because church leaders greatly impact our lives of faith, walking with us down the path to be more like Jesus. We want those church leaders and their families who find



themselves grappling with a critical financial need to have the resources they need which are provided



through the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions. We also support the offering to help our future leaders in the church and world, like those educated at our Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. Supporting these students helps the whole church develop leaders who reflect the wideness of God’s intended diversity.

For those supported through the Christmas Joy Offering, this help is truly a gift from above. May our gifts, and the leaders who receive them, point us always to the truth of

**DID YOU KNOW?**

✦ The Christmas Joy Offering has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s.

✦ The Offering distributes gifts equally to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and to Presbyterian-related racial ethnic schools and colleges.

✦ The Assistance Program provides critical financial support to church workers and their families.

✦ 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.



“A MERRY HEART DOES GOOD LIKE MEDICINE”

PROVERBS 17:22



## CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE

*At Presbytery of New Covenant*

Christmas  
Open House



You are invited to the Presbytery of New Covenant

Thursday, December 6, 2018 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Presbytery Center 1110 Lovett Blvd., Houston, TX 77006

Bring a favorite dessert or holiday treat. Visit with friends or make new ones. We look forward to seeing you.

RSVP to Patricia Brantley by December 1 to 713-526-2585, ext. 101 or [pbrantly@pbyofnewcovenant.org](mailto:pbrantly@pbyofnewcovenant.org)



**VOLUNTEER  
BELL RINGERS  
NEEDED!**

*Ring a bell...Take a Stand Help Others*



## Bell Ringing

The bell ringing season starts each November and runs through Christmas Eve, when the red kettles are packed away for the season. Volunteers are the difference between an empty kettle and one that raises about \$30 per hour – enough to provide a family with two bags of groceries, or shelter an individual for a night. We have the opportunity to be a part of this tradition, Saturday, December 15th. A sign up sheet will be in the Narthex.

## SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

## NOVEMBER 2018

The Stated Session meeting was held on Monday, November 19, 2018 in the church library.

Treasurer's Report: All records have been reconciled and are in good order. There is some concern that the overall giving is down, along with church attendance. The Session is looking for ways to address these issues. The Session is also looking to meet with a prospective candidate who can serve as a Stated Supply Pastor following the departure of Rev. King in January. A Stated Supply Pastor is simply a part-time pastor who will fill the pulpit each week, along with other duties during the week. This will insure that our church is still getting the necessary pastoral care and worship leadership.

Session heard reports from committees and projects that are in progress. The Mission Sale is scheduled for Saturday, December 8 from 8 am to 2 pm in the fellowship hall. Salvation Army bell-ringing is Saturday, December 15. Plans for worship during Advent and Christmas are finalized. The Hanging of the Greens Service will be December 2. Food will be served at 5 pm, followed by an informal service. The Education Team will have a special visitor following the service. The Christmas Cantata will be presented on Sunday, December 23 during the regular worship service. The Christmas Eve service will be Monday, December 24 at 7:30 pm. Congregational Care reported 89 contacts during the month of October. Congregational Life is looking to have more opportunities for fellowship in the months to come.

Session action items:

Approved building usage of the Fellowship Hall on January 19, 2019.

Charged Rev. King to contact Medical Inflatables, Inc. to see if there is any interest in buying back the MEGA Brain.

If there are any questions, please contact Martha Phipps.

## PRAYER CONCERNS

**Ongoing Prayers** Julie Thompson, Mary Leah Miller, Lewis & Edith Rockwell, Jeanine Richey, D. J. McClendon, Kay Tucker, Sofia Muzzafar, Oliver Cochran, Tina Moore, Evelyn Monk, Linda Allen, Bill Pannell, Freddie Keene, Ruth Anderson, Dianne Howard, Daniel Vaughn, Louisa Vera, Jimmy Abney, Danny Arena, Jean Barrow, Lacey Famil, Lee Syrett, Danielle Kline, Estelle Blackwell, Terri Bell, Barrett Blackwell, Janet Brown, Dianne and Bill Murff, Cathy Carvin, Dana Shackelford Evans, Cathy Gross, Charles Harrison, Chris Henry, Gayle Cross, Diane Howard, Shelly Jenkins, Ima Jane King, Dave Krauskepf, Bobby Loveless, Paige LeJune, Margie Martin, Traci Owens, Marie Petersen, Lupe Rodriguez, Jason Poole, Joan and Joe Rossano, Don Roy, Elsie Smith, Clyde Scott, Theresa Stegman, Winona Temple, Karen Van Horne, Kathy Veigt, Barry Ward, Stephanie Wilson, John White, Heidi Young, Bill Steckert, Nancy Williams Roles Family, and Bill Von Restorff, Terry, Mary, & Sam (friends of Faye), Allie & Lexi Roles.

**Immediate Concerns** : Lee Regotti, Kaye McDonald, J.D. Stephens, Sharon Roberts, Travis Tidwell, Bill Howell, Jim Hilton, Gary Miloradovich and Bill Steckert.

*Please call the church office with updates.*

### December Birthdays

- 2 **Nicholas Cunningham**
- 11 **Natalie Stinson**
- 12 **Caden Petty**
- 13 **Tony DeLeon**
- 14 **Bryce Pannell**
- 15 **Paul Cunningham**
- 16 **Ron DeWalt**
- 18 **Linda Byrd**
- 20 **Tom Bennett**
- 29 **Jean Vance**
- 29 **John Myers**
- 31 **Megan Rowsey**



The gift tags for our Christmas Families and 58 children enrolled in Head Start

### Adopt-a-Family



are now available. This year the tags will be placed on the walls around the Sanctuary. When you choose a tag, be sure to write your name on the card directly below that tag. Also, because the gift tags only identify the recipient's gender and age, the family is identified by the color of the ribbon attached to the tag. So it is very important to **leave the ribbon fastened to the tag** to make the task of sorting the gifts easier. The wrapped gifts should be placed under the Christmas tree in the Sanctuary by **Wednesday, December 12<sup>th</sup>**. Thank you for participating in this outreach opportunity to bring joy to families who need assistance by providing Christmas



Elder of the Month - Randy Phipps

Refreshments - Missions & Outreach

## REMEMBERING AND HONORING OUR LOVED ONES

### Barbara & Tom Bennett

#### In Memory of

Earl & Natalie Bennett  
Joe & Viola Klinkovsky  
Chad Marek  
Georgia & Perry Marek  
Mike Neff

### Cathy & Greg Copeland

#### In Memory of

Allen & Bobbie Copeland  
Camille & Charlie King

#### In Honor of

Alyssa, Madizen, Isabella, Emma, Lilliana, Adam, Max, Nolen, & Evan

### Sheila Follmar

#### In Memory of

Chris Cordova  
Marty Cordova  
Rachel Cordova  
Steven Cordova  
Randy DeLeon

### Audrie & Scott Gondeszen

#### In Memory of

Donald & Margie Carson  
Dick & Emilie Harrison  
Camille & Charlie King  
Theodore Peterson  
John & Meg Pierce

### Gina Gregory

#### In Memory of

Jerry L. Gregory, Sr.

#### In Honor of

Donna J. Gregory

### Ingrid Holdorff

#### In Memory of

C.B. (Larry) Holdorff  
Steve Holdorff

### The Hoon Family Children

#### In Memory of

Jack & Jane Hoon

### Cathy & Craig King

#### In Memory of

William Lloyd Bridges  
Camille & Charlie King  
Alice & Harbin Bridges  
Bessie & Joe King, Sr.  
Josephine & Steve Kotlarich, Sr.  
Charlie & Virginia Meyer

#### In Honor of

Shirley Bridges  
Steven King  
Key, Meredith, Soren, Camille, & Dani Hasselmeier

### Nancy Lucke

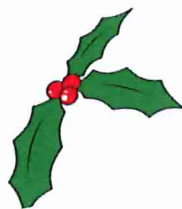
#### In Memory of

Grace Harby  
Melba Passmore  
Darline Petersen

### Joan McNabb

#### In Memory of

The Canady & McNabb Families  
Jessie Williams



### Gloria & Ron Mercer

#### In Memory of

Bowman Family  
Mercer Family

### Henrietta Meyer

#### In Memory of

Wayne Meyer

### Herb & Jo Myers

#### In Memory of

J.H. & Miriam Boyd  
Maryellen D. Myers

### Rhonda Burks Newell

#### In Memory of

Dolores & George Burks  
Mary Burks Marek  
Cheryl Burks Proctor

### Mandi Odom

#### In Memory of

William R. Bowers

### Betty Ovalle & Luisa Vera

#### In Memory of

Raun Prill  
José R. Vera

### Nora Richardson

#### In Memory of

Edna Adams  
James P. Adams  
G.D. Allen  
Marie Allen  
E. Floyd Richardson

### Alice Sloan

#### In Memory of

Bill Duesing  
Ashley Hicks

### Bill & Cindy Waggoner

#### In Memory of

Darline & Lee Petersen  
Wayne Petersen  
Reba Russell  
Johnnie Waggoner  
William "Dub" Waggoner

#### In Honor of

All Men and Women Who are serving or have served in our military.

### Carolyn Warych

#### In Memory of

SGM. Louis Warych

### Barbara Whitfield

#### In Memory of

Clara Carnicom

### Kathryn Wilkerson

#### In Memory of

Rebecca Sue & Roy Wilkerson  
Parents & Family

### Pastor Craig

#### In Memory of

Gordon Davenport  
Donna Rae Harris  
Camille King  
Elizabeth McQuarrie  
William Bowers  
Bill Duesing  
Ashley Hicks  
Steve Kotlarich  
Mary Mezzino  
Wayne Petersen  
Dorothy Spoerhase  
Johnnie Waggoner  
Jessabell Williams

## Presbyterian Youth Evangelists (PYE)

### News and Upcoming Activities

On Sunday, November 11, 2018, youth and sponsors, attended the Fall Youth Rally at Pines Presbyterian church in Houston. They worshipped that morning with a “youth –style” worship followed by lunch, games, and a hands-on mission project. The mission project is Comfort Cases. A Comfort Case is a small backpack or duffel bag with the purpose to provide comfort for youth as they enter the foster care system. The backpacks are full of essentials for the first few days in a new place as well as comfort items to help ease a scary transition.



## DECEMBER PYE ACTIVITIES

(Please confirm activities with your  
Remind 101 or Brandi Bowers)

- December 2            Hanging of the Greens  
                                 Led by Youth and children
- December 9            Christmas Caroling
- December 16           Christmas Caroling
- December 24           Christmas Eve Worship

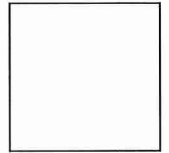


Our guest judges enjoyed the warmth and kindness of our congregation, and they really enjoyed the great chili, cornbread, and desserts. Many thanks to those who provided all the food.

Our prize winners were **Helen Escobedo** and **Cindy Waggoner**. Congregational Life thanks all of you for your continued support. Look for more new fellowship opportunities in the future.



**First Presbyterian Church**  
**302 South Johnson Street**  
**Alvin, TX 77511**



**Address Service Requested**

Please notify the church office  
of any change of address or  
telephone number.



*"The First Presbyterian Church of Alvin has been called by God and organized to share the Gospel message of Jesus Christ in our community and world."*

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