

# First Presbyterian Church of Alvin



## Press Bytes



To the Saints at First Presbyterian:

Greetings!

As we approach Christmas, we gear for the craziness of the season. The shopping, parties, preparations for family or travel. TV specials, church functions; it's a lot to squeeze into a month.

Ann Weems, author of several books of poetry/prose writes of Christmas and much of its meaning in her book entitled, *Kneeling in Bethlehem*. One of her poems is entitled, "O Lord, You Were Born". I would like to share it with you.

"Each year about this time I try to be sophisticated and pretend I understand the bored expressions relating to the 'Christmas spirit'. I nod when they say 'Put Christ back in Christmas.' I say yes, yes when they shout 'Commercial' and Hectic, hectic, hectic. After all I am getting older and I've heard it said that 'Christmas is for children' But somehow the fa-la-la keeps creeping out... so I'll say it: I love the Christmas tinsel and angel voices that come from the bed upstairs. And I say three cheers for Santa Claus and the Salvation Army bucket and all the wrappings and festivities and special warm feelings. I say it is good, giving, praising, celebrating. So hurray for Christmas trees and candlelight and the good old church pageant. Hooray for the shepherd boys who forget their lines and Wise Men whose beards fall off and a Mary who giggles. O Lord, you were born! O Lord, you were born, and that breaks in upon my ordered life like bugles blaring and I sing, 'Hark the Herald Angels' in the most unlikely places. You were born and I will celebrate.

I rejoice for the carnival of Christmas! I clap for the pajama clad cherubs and the Christmas cards jammed in the mail slot. I o-o-o-oh for the turkey and a-h-h-h for the Christmas pudding and thank God for the alleluias I see in the faces of people I don't know and yet know very well.

O Lord, there aren't enough choirboys to sing what I feel. There aren't enough trumpets to blow. O Lord, I want bells to peal, I want to dance in the streets of Bethlehem! I want to sing with the heavenly host! For unto us a Son was given and he was called God with us! For those who believe, the whole world is decorated in love."

Christmas is a time for joy. God entered our world in human form, just like us, redeeming and saving us from ourselves, showing us the Way, Truth and Life. The story begins in an out of the way village called Bethlehem, "House of Bread" in Hebrew. The Star is rising, the Angels are singing, the Wise are seeking. O Lord, You were born!

Peace,  
C.O.

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## 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 9, 2019, beginning at 5:30 p.m. The event will begin at New Hope Church this year.

#### \*\*\*NEW THIS YEAR\*\*\*

#### 5:30-6:30 PETTING ZOO AND CHILDREN'S GAME ZONE AT NEW HOPE WITH REFRESHMENTS

1st Church **New Hope Church - Alvin Campus,**  
221 S Gordon St, Alvin, TX 77511

Opening Prayer/Welcome. - Isaiah 9:6-7.

Special Music: "O Come, o come Emmanuel" (or other song)

2nd Church **Grace Episcopal Church,**  
200 W Lang St, Alvin, TX 77511

Luke 1:26-38.

Special Music: "Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming"

3rd Church **First Presbyterian Church,**  
302 S. Johnson St. Alvin, TX 77511

Luke 2:1-7.

Special Music: "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

4th Church **First Christian Church,**  
1212 S Durant St, Alvin, TX 77511

Luke 2:8-20

Special Music: "Angels We have heard on high/ Silent Night."

5th Church **First Methodist Church (with Templo Cristo Para Todos),**

611 W South St, Alvin, TX 77511

Matthew 2(1-12)

Special Music: "For unto Us a Child is Born"

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

Luke 2:14



**GOD IS WITH US**

What was the most perfect gift you ever received? A bike or doll when you were a kid? A video game, perhaps? Maybe it was the day you met your husband, your wife — or looked into the eyes of the newborn baby that someone laid in your arms. For most of us, the most perfect gift is not necessarily a thing, but something else. Something bigger, deeper, more meaningful. One of the most powerful things that Christians claim is that God saw the great needs of the world and offered a perfect gift, a gift that brought God and humanity closer together. God’s perfect gift to us, Jesus Christ, offered the power of being with us. According to Matthew’s Gospel, one of the names given to Jesus is Emmanuel, which means “God is with us.” In Jesus, we receive the perfect gift of God being with us, and of being with those who are often overlooked, left out, vulnerable, or in need. “God is with us,” we proclaim. What a powerful gift, a perfect gift, the gift of ... being with. Being with ... think about it. This is one of the reasons we share gifts during Christmas. We, too, want to share the power of being “with” those we love and those in need, by offering gifts like those we give to the Christmas Joy Offering. When we give to the Christmas Joy Offering, we step forward to be with the young people attending Stillman College, Presbyterian Pan American School, and the Menaul School, recognizing their potential and rejoicing in their talents. We offer the gift of being with them in



support of their education and leadership development, knowing that the students of color who attend these schools will soon lead the church and world, receiving our gifts and offering their gifts in return. We also step forward to be with church workers and their families who have faithfully served the church but find themselves in critical financial need because of changing health situations or an emergency. We offer the gift of being “with” them by giving a gift to the offering to help restore hope through the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions. We give these gifts because God shows us how powerful it is to “be with.” The power of “with” is the power God shows us in Jesus Christ. God’s perfect gift: Emmanuel, God is with us. Let us share our gifts and celebrate our church leaders — past, present and future.



“A MERRY HEART DOES GOOD LIKE MEDICINE”  
  
PROVERBS 17:22



COME JOIN US FOR A  
HOLIDAY CRAFT

# MARKET

First Presbyterian  
Church in Alvin 801 W  
Lang, Alvin Tx 77511  
SATURDAY 14 DEC 9:00 AM  
-3:00 PM

HANDMADE CANDLES -SOAPS -CANDIES  
-JEWELRY-WREATHS -UNIQUE GIFTS &  
MORE! FOOD WILL BE SOLD ON SITE BY JUST A  
FAMILY AFFAIR. ALL PROFIT WILL GO TO AMERICAN  
CANCER SOCIETY.. ALL BOOTH RENT GOES TO  
AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY FOR MORE INFORMATION  
ABOUT THIS EVENT CONTACT

JILL WHEATLEY@Jew1462@gmail.com

Angela Reckard @ANGELA.RECKARD@YAHOO.COM

*"Alvin ISD has approved the distribution of this non-school literature  
at campuses in accordance with the established procedures.  
This organization and its activities are not related to or  
sponsored by Alvin ISD."*



### MISSION CHRISTMAS SALE

The Christmas Mission Sale, held on Saturday, November 23, brought in over \$799. This will be used to supplement the offerings collected for our local and world outreach efforts. All this would not have been possible without the combined efforts of all those who volunteered their time to sort, and arrange the items that were donated, and those who spent a portion of or all of the 8+ hours on Saturday assisting shoppers with their purchases and helping box up the unsold items and deliver those boxes to a resale shop in Santa Fe. We, of course, appreciate all of you who cleaned out your attics, closets and drawers to supply us with your unneeded treasures. There were even some of you who purchased some of those treasures. A great big **"THANK YOU!"** goes out to everyone for your part in making this such an awesome sale.

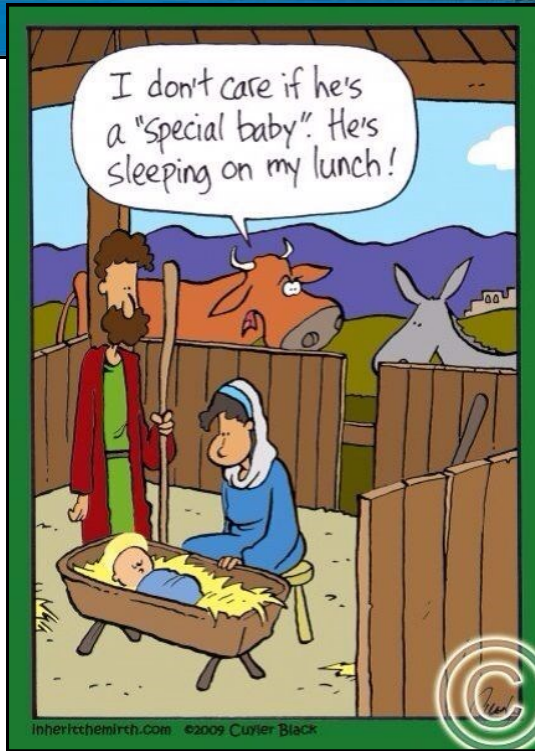


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Thanks to Dad Hengeveld (See Luke 2:1-16) 12-20-2001

**SORRY FOLKS, WE'RE BOOKED SOLID ... GOD HIMSELF COULDN'T GET A ROOM HERE TONIGHT**



inherithemirch.com ©2009 Cuyler Black

## Organist's Musings for December, 2019

By: Chris Lo

This is the fourth and final article on the History of the use of music in the Presbyterian Church. It is the conclusion of some scholarly writing by the Reverend Dr. James W. Thornton, the Senior Pastor of the Carmel Presbyterian Church in Glenside PA.

After the Civil War, the use of non-biblical hymns in worship proliferated. The Presbyterian Hymnal, published in 1874, had hymns mixed in with the psalms. The Hymn book of 1955, which had allusions to the Psalms in far less than half of its songs, became the official hymnal of the United Presbyterian Church (USA) denomination after the merger in 1958.

Additionally, with the rise of ecumenism, many Protestant denominations began to lose their more distinctive characteristics. As people moved to new locations, they freely joined different denominations but wanted to continue the worship practices with which they were familiar.

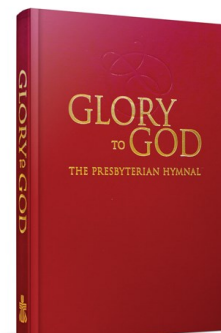
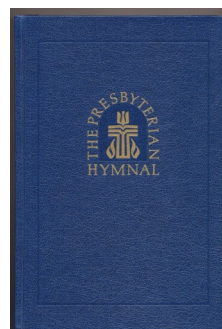
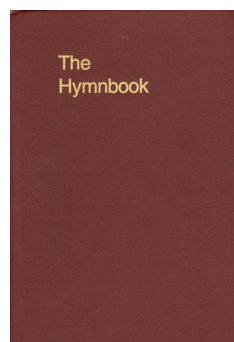
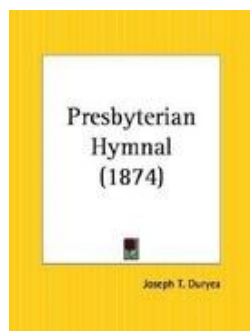
To its critics, these hymnals and other worship changes promoted non-scriptural ideas, let alone non-scriptural language. The music itself became considerably more important than the text and many songs were about the believer's subjective experiences than they were a glorification of God. Choirs were used in worship primarily as performers, rather than as leaders of congregational singing. Scripture no longer regulated anything. A counter-movement was on the horizon.

Although liturgical renewal has happened many times in the church, perhaps the most global example of one was in the 20th century. The theological, musical and liturgical drift in the wake of evangelical revivals and the secular effects of the Enlightenment led many Protestants to turn back to history and tradition to find a basis for greater theological and liturgical worship identity, integrity, unity, stability, and beauty. Liturgical cooperation among denominations opened many Protestant eyes to reconsider the biblical, theological, and historical foundations of traditions they had largely forgotten.

In Reformed and Presbyterian churches this renewal included a restoration of many worship traditions of the early Reformation: more active participation of the whole congregation, a liturgical calendar promoting a more Christ-centered framework, the systematic reading of the whole Bible which stands at the center of the worship experience, and the praising of God in congregational singing with songs or scripture, or with strong scriptural allusions.

The promotion of the Revised Common Lectionary encourages the singing of Psalms, as one is listed each week with several other scripture lessons. The Presbyterian Hymnal (1990) reflects this historic recapturing by including a significant section dedicated to the music of the Psalter, as well as leaving out popular hymns of a particularly subjective nature (e.g., In the Garden).

It is unlikely that we will ever go back to the exclusive singing of Psalms without instrumentation, liturgical renewal of Presbyterianism, with its central position and normative quality of scriptural worship, allows us to keep key components of our historic identity alive. This certainly includes the singing of Psalms – which, as we've seen – is very Presbyterian!



## Special Musical Guests at the Gathering Place

The guest and volunteers of our November Gathering Place enjoined a mini concert, performed by a singing group called, "Together In Voice". The choir, designed for those suffering from Memory Loss and their caregivers, sang many familiar Thanksgiving and Christmas carols. The choir is directed by Jenny Hackney, and our organist, Christopher Lo accompanied on the electric keyboard.

Pictured below: "Together In Voice"  
Ocie, Della, Meredith, Victoria, Judy,  
Kendall & Ralph

## 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 Homebound. 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. The Christmas goodie trays for our isolated members will be prepared and delivered on Saturday, December 14 at 9:00 am in the fellowship hall. If you are able to help, please come. Thank you.



## 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 7th. A sign up sheet will be in the Narthex.



**VOLUNTEER  
BELL RINGERS  
NEEDED!**

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



### SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

**NOVEMBER 2019**

The meeting was opened in prayer by C.O.; Martha Phipps served as Clerk. Seven Elders were present. We had lots of agenda items to discuss including a new contract with Sharp Business Systems for our copier. Thank you to Mandi Odom for pursuing this, which will save us considerable money throughout the year! Buddy Ruskey has offered his animals again for a live Nativity on Christmas Eve. Relay for Life requested and was approved for use of the facilities for several dates in the Spring of 2020. Session approved the addition of a Dinner and Devotional Youth activity on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month. Two donations were approved: one to the AVFD and the other to the Port Aransas Community Presbyterian Church which was destroyed by Hurricane Harvey and hasn't been able to complete the new construction. The Clothing outlet will have a sale of purses, shoes, and Christmas wreaths and items on November 30 th in the Fellowship Hall. Officer training was set for Dec. 21 st . Dates for all of the Advent season activities were approved. Meeting was closed in prayers by Janet DeLeon.



## PRAYER CONCERNS

**Ongoing Prayers** Jill Wheatley, Dixie Clark, Kathryn Wilkerson, Belinda Busscher, Barbara Passmore, Lewis & Edith Rockwell, DJ McClendon, Nancy Williams, Bill Pannell, Louisa Vera, Pat Carpenter, Cheryl Martin, Margie Martin, Lucille Beasley, Lisa McCalla, Lisa Polinard, Lane McGee, Emily Day, Evelyn Robison, David Howard, Susan Klinkovsky, Rebecca Bennett, Dorothy Howard, Earlene McGehee, Carol Haines, Dick & Sue Logsdon, Jo LaNoue, and Becca Blanchard.

**Immediate Concerns** : Megan Alegria, Brenda Magee & Family, & Evelyn Robison

*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**



## Adopt-a-Family



The gift tags for our Christmas Families and 30 children enrolled in Head Start 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 tag. So it is very important to **return 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 11<sup>th</sup>**. Thank you for participating in this outreach opportunity to bring joy to families who need assistance by providing Christmas gifts.

**Elder of the Month - Sheila Follmar**

**Refreshments - Congregational Life**

# REMEMBERING AND HONORING OUR LOVED ONES

**Ingrid Holdorff**

**In Memory of**  
C.B. (Larry) Holdorff  
Stephen Holdorff



**The Hoon Family Children**

**In Memory of**  
Jack & Jane Hoon

**Joan McNabb**

**In Memory of**  
The Canady & McNabb Families

**Mandi Odom**

**In Memory of**  
William R. Bowers  
William H. Bowers

**In Honor of**

Dorothy & Ronald  
DeWalt



**Louisa E. Vera**

**In Memory of**  
Rev. José R. Vera

**Nora Richardson**

**In Memory of**  
Edna Adams  
James P. Adams  
G.D. Allen  
Marie Allen  
E. Floyd Richardson

**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  
John & Elizabeth Warych  
Charles, Sr. & Betty Miller  
Charles Miller, Jr.  
Norman Miller



**Kathryn Wilkerson**

**In Memory of**  
Rebecca Sue & Roy Wilkerson  
Parents & Family

**Bill Murff**

**In Memory of**  
Mr. & Mrs. L. W. Murff  
Shirley Murff-Selman  
Dianne Murff  
Mr. & Mrs. Wm. Pemberton  
Linda Hand

**Kathy Miller**

**In Memory of**  
Chuck Miller  
Mary & Leno Regotti  
Virginia Kernaghan  
**In Honor of**  
Lee Regotti  
Judson Jarboe

**Fay Steckert**

**In Memory of**  
Bill Steckert, Sr.  
Bob Steckert  
Mae & John Steckert  
Olive & Ben Frantz  
Chris & Betty Frantz  
Ann & Wilson Lord  
Bill Lubinsky  
**In Honor of**  
My Children  
Billy, Bobby, & Wendy  
My Grandchildren



**Sheila Follmar**

**In Memory of**  
Rachel Cordova  
Marty Cordova  
Steven Cordova  
Chris Cordova  
Eric Puente  
Virginia Kernaghan  
Dianne Murff  
Dave Powledge

## Presbyterian Youth Evangelists (PYE)

### Youth Rally

On Sunday, November 10, 2019, youth and sponsors, attended the Fall Youth Rally at Northwoods 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 for Animeals on Wheels. Animeals on Wheels is exactly like it sounds. Volunteers with Meals on Wheels take animal food and sometimes toys to the recipients to prevent them from giving their furry family member(s) the food meant for them. Many of the Clients were on the verge of losing their pets due to failure to provide the basic necessity, food.



## DECEMBER PYE ACTIVITIES

- 1 Hanging of the Greens 11a
- 4 Dinner & Devotional 5p-8p
- 7 Ringing of the Bells 6p-8p
- 21 Assist Alvin HOPE 9a-12p
- 24 Christmas Eve Worship 6p



**The Youth is excited to announce the start of a new program!!!**

**Dinner & Devotions  
2nd & 4th Wednesdays**

**We will start at 5pm with dinner and a short devotional. We will then proceed to work on a mission project which will include working in the Clothing Outlet. We welcome all youth in grades 6-12.**

**\*\*No meeting on Christmas Day\*\***

email - [fpcalvin@fpcalvin.org](mailto:fpcalvin@fpcalvin.org)

281-585-3406 www.fpcalvin.org

302 South Johnson Street, Alvin, Texas 77511

First Presbyterian Church of Alvin

*"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."*



Address Service Requested

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

First Presbyterian Church  
302 South Johnson Street  
Alvin, TX 77511

