

First Presbyterian Church of Alvin



Press Bytes



To the Saints at First Presbyterian:

Greetings. By the time you read this we will be in Advent, which begins the Christmas season. Our services begin November 27th with the Hanging of the Greens. It's the service where we decorate the church for the Christmas season.

The rest of the schedule is in this newsletter. Can't forget the Healing Service December 4th after church at 2:00pm.

There is a book I read every year entitled Kneeling in Bethlehem, by Ann Weems. She is the wife of a Presbyterian minister. She describes Christmas in really creative ways. One of the ones I especially like is entitled, "The Plastic Angel". I would like to share this writing with you.

"Our creche set came complete with stable and a plastic angel. Small, not at all to scale, the white-garbed creature with uncertain wings was obviously an afterthought, thrown in to complete the set, otherwise ceramic and hand-painted...

Unless of course this angel was a last minute substitute for one that was irresistible to the packer. In that case, somewhere I have an irresistible ceramic angel dressed gloriously in red, kneeling or flying on somebody else's coffee table even now as I unwrap the plastic angel.

If I could ever bring myself to throw away an angel, it would be this one, this one with no redeeming features. And yet, each year as I unwrap the plastic angel, I hesitate again to pitch the celestial messenger. I'm reminded of my own lack of glory, my own plastic attempts at celebrating Christmas, my own feeble annunciations and once again I place this bit of plastic over the stable. If the plastic angel can get this far, perhaps there is a place in Bethlehem town for me."

With all the separation of people and division among us this reminds me of my own fallacies. There is always a place for us at the manger no matter who we are. We don't come in arrogance or because we think we deserve a place but because this Christ Child has invited us to come just as we are. It's in humility I approach the child who came for me and for you. Christmas is about humility and God's unconditional love. There is room for us, always!

Dona, Nobis Pacem,

C.O.

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Insert
December Calendar

Christmas Walk a Mile 2022

We are reinstating the annual Walk-A-Christmas Mile on Monday, December 12, 2022, beginning at 6pm. The event starts at New Hope Church.

1st Church New Hope - Alvin Campus

221 S. Gordon St

2nd Church Grace Episcopal Church

200 W. Lang St.

3rd Church First Presbyterian Church

302 S. Johnson St

4th Church First Christian Church

1212 S. Durant St.

5th Church First United Methodist & Templo Cristo Para Todos

611 W. South St.



Christmas Families

We would like to help families for Christmas again this year. Instead of picking a request tag from the church wall, the Mission and Outreach committee is requesting monetary donations in anticipation of helping at least 3 families. In the past, we have actually helped 5 families at Christmas. We will be collecting money through December 12th. We have put special Christmas Families offering envelopes by the bulletins. This is an awesome opportunity to bring joy to those who would otherwise do without at this time of the year. Thank you!

Children’s Christmas Pageant & Christmas Luncheon on Sunday, December 4

During worship on December 4th the church looks forward to seeing the talents of our youth and children as they present “A Christmas Nativity Play.”

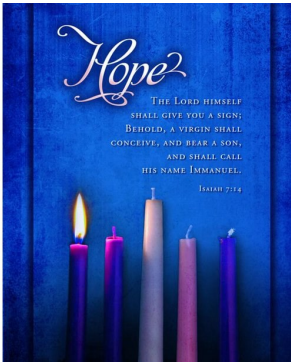
Following the worship service we will have a Christmas potluck luncheon. Please bring your favorite dish and enjoy wonderful fellowship and delicious food. The word is out that Santa will make a special appearance ready to listen to the children's Christmas wishes. He will probably be willing to listen to adults' wishes, too. There will be opportunities for pictures--so bring your cameras. You don’t want to miss it! We hope to see you there!

REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

Each day add an item to a box.

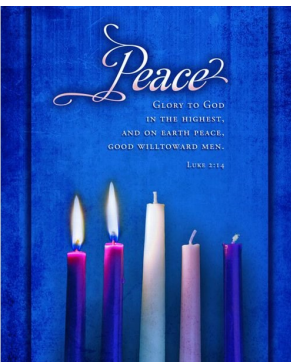
On Christmas Eve, donate the contents to a Food Bank.

12/1	Box of Cereal	12/13	Canned Beans
12/2	Peanut Butter	12/14	Box of Crackers
12/3	Stuffing Mix	12/15	Bag of Rice
12/4	Boxed Potatoes	12/16	Oatmeal
12/5	Mac & Cheese	12/17	Pasta
12/6	Canned Fruit	12/18	Spaghetti Sauce
12/7	Canned Tomatoes	12/19	Chicken Soup
12/8	Canned Tuna	12/20	Tomato Soup
12/9	Dessert Mix	12/21	Can Corn
12/10	Applesauce	12/22	Can Mixed Veggies
12/11	Canned Sweet Potatoes	12/23	Can Carrots
12/12	Cranberry Sauce	12/24	Can Green Beans



For unto you
is born this
day in the city
of David a
Savior, who
is Christ the
Lord.

Luke 2:11



 CHRISTMAS JOY
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
CHURCH LEADERS—PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

‘Sometimes we just need help’

The Rev. Sunjae Jung heard God’s call loud and clear. Although maybe not so clearly at first.

“When I heard about a Korean-American Presbyterian church in the Atlanta area, my first answer was, ‘I don’t think it’s my calling,’” he said. “Since I was living in Korea at the time, my first answer was no. Then, they contacted me again and told me the church was in a university city. I remembered being an international student in America when I was young and how much the church there helped me.”

He continued, “Serving as a minister in Korea, I remember praying that if I ever had a chance to help international students the way the church helped me when I was at Iowa State University, I would take it,” he said. “I talked with my wife and our senior pastor in Korea, who said they thought this was a good calling for me. After praying some more, we decided to come serve this church.”

The Athens Korean Presbyterian

Church’s mission is to welcome and serve the larger university and especially the Korean community. It is not a “big budget” congregation, as most of its members are young and transitory. But Rev. Jung couldn’t possibly have anticipated the impact that Covid would have on both the congregation’s and his family’s finances when they moved to Athens in December 2019.



With the arrival of the pandemic in March 2020, not only did the church cease all its in-person activities and move Sunday worship to a streaming platform, but the whole town practically shut down.

Because Rev. Jung serves the congregation on a religious visa, he is not permitted to earn income beyond that of his ministry and the family found itself struggling to make ends meet. In December 2021, Rev.

Cont. on pg 5

Cont. from pg 4 Jung sought and received an Emergency Grant split between the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and Northeast Georgia Presbytery.

This grant was made possible, in part, by the Christmas Joy Offering, which distributes gifts equally to the Assistance Program and to Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

Rev. Jung said, "I thank the denomination for the help from the Christmas Joy Offering. I can say that after going through such a difficult time last winter, the big burden on me and my family was lifted."

Sometimes we all could use a little help, and those who serve our Church are certainly no different. Please give what you can to the Christmas Joy Offering for when we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.

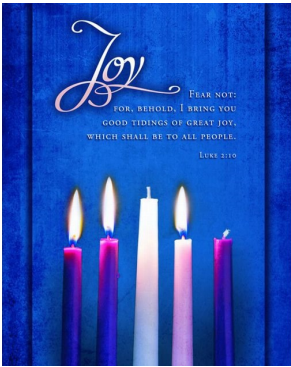
Handbar Choir

It's not too late to get involved!!



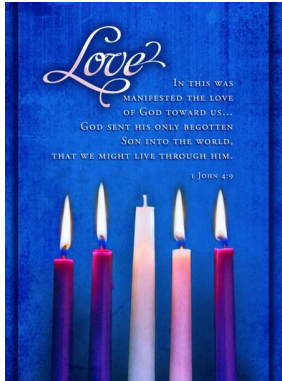
Handbars
Christmas Eve

If you are interested in performing with the hand bar choir at the Christmas Eve service, rehearsals are Sunday 9 AM in Fellowship Hall. Starts November 27th. Contact: Marisa



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

Luke 2:14



REMEMBERING AND HONORING OUR LOVED ONES

The Hoon Children

In Memory of
Jack & Jane Hoon



Bill & Cindy
Waggoner

In Memory of
Darline & Lee
Petersen
Johnnie & William “Dub”
Waggoner
Martha Phipps
Melba Passmore
Joan Rossano

In Honor of
Our Military who have
served & are serving.
Our First Responders

Kathryn Wilkerson

In Memory of
All my loved ones that have
gone to meet Jesus.



Nora Richardson

In Memory of
Edna Adams
James P. Adams
Marie Allen
G.D. Allen



Barbara & Tom Bennett

In Memory of
Viola & Joe A. Klinkovsky, Jr.
Georgia, Perry,
& Chad Marek
Natalie & Earl Bennett



REMEMBERING AND HONORING OUR LOVED ONES

Jeff & Marisa Pearce

In Memory of
William Whitfield
Mackensie Daleure

JoAnn Froberg

In Memory of
Kathy Froberg
Coon Froberg

Fay Steckert

In Memory of
Bill Steckert, Sr.
Mae & John Steckert
Olive & Ben Frantz
Robert Steckert
Chris & Betty Frantz



The Andreas Family

In Memory of
Bruce Ashcraft

Owen Wilson

In Memory of
Gene Wilson
Mark Wilson
Evelyn Miller



Mandi Odom

In Memory of
William R. Bowers
William H. Bowers
Michael Stanley



Joan McNabb

In Memory of
Jess & Ellen Canady

In Honor of

Dorothy & Ron DeWalt
Beverly & Charles Kimball

Our Congregation

In Memory of
Dorothy "DJ" McClendon



Poinsettias at Christmas



Poinsettia plants are native to Central America, especially an area of southern [Mexico](#) known as 'Taxco del Alarcon' where they flower during the winter. The ancient Aztecs called them 'cuetlaxochitl'. The Aztecs had many uses for them including using the flowers (actually special types of leaves known as bracts rather than being flowers) to make a purple dye for clothes and cosmetics and the milky white sap was made into a medicine to treat fevers. (Today we call the sap latex!)

The poinsettia was made widely known because of a man called Joel Roberts Poinsett (that's why we call them Poinsettia!). He was the first Ambassador from the USA to Mexico in 1825. Poinsett had some greenhouses on his plantations in South Carolina, and while visiting the Taxco area in 1828, he became very interested in the plants. He immediately sent some of the plants back to South Carolina, where he began growing the plants and sending them to friends and botanical gardens.

One of the friends he sent plants to was John Bartram of Philadelphia. At the first Philadelphia flower show, Robert Buist, a plants-man from Pennsylvania saw the flower and he was probably the first person to have sold the poinsettias under

their botanical, or latin name, name 'Euphorbia pulcherrima' (it means, 'the most beautiful Euphorbia'). They were first sold as cut flowers. It was only in the early 1900s that they were sold as whole plants for landscaping and pot plants. The Ecke family from Southern California were one of, if not, the first to sell them as whole plants and they're still the main producer of the plants in the USA. It is thought that they became known as Poinsettia in the mid 1830s when people found out who had first brought them to America from Mexico.

There is an old Mexican legend about how Poinsettias and Christmas come together, it goes like this:

There was once a poor Mexican girl called Pepita who had no present to give the baby Jesus at the Christmas Eve Services. As Pepita walked to the chapel, sadly, her cousin Pedro tried to cheer her up.

'Pepita', he said "I'm sure that even the smallest gift, given by someone who loves him will make Jesus Happy."

Pepita didn't know what she could give, so she picked a small handful of weeds from the roadside and made them into a small bouquet. She felt embarrassed because she could only give this small present to Jesus. As she walked through the chapel to the altar, she remembered what Pedro had said. She began to feel better, knelt down and put the bouquet at the bottom of the nativity scene. Suddenly, the bouquet of weeds burst into bright red flowers, and everyone who saw them were sure they had seen a miracle. From that day on, the bright red flowers were known as the 'Flores de Noche Buena', or 'Flowers of the Holy Night'. The shape of the poinsettia flower and leaves are sometimes thought as a symbol of the [Star of Bethlehem](#) which led the Wise Men to Jesus. The red colored leaves symbolize the blood of Christ. The white leaves represent his purity.

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 10th. A sign up sheet will be in the Narthex.



**VOLUNTEER
BELL RINGERS
NEEDED!**

Ring a bell...Take a Stand Help Others



CHRISTMAS COOKIES

Cookies Needed for Our Isolated Members

When you are baking your Christmas cookies this season, please bake an extra batch for our isolated members. The Christmas goodie trays for our isolated members will be prepared on Sunday, December 18 following the worship service. If you are able to provide 3 dozen cookies, please contact the church office at 281-585-3406 or fpcalvin@fpcalvin.org. There also is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex of the church. Please bring your cookies to the church fellowship hall on Sunday morning, December 18. If you are available to help prepare the trays and deliver them, we would appreciate your help. Thank you!!



THE RECTOR DROPS IN ON THE PAGEANT REHEARSAL



The Songs and Spirit of Christmas

Saturday, Dec. 3rd | 4 PM | [Villa de Matel](#)*
Sunday, Dec. 4th | 4 PM | [Gloria Dei Lutheran Church](#)

Merry Christmas from the Bay Area Chorus of Greater Houston! We hope you'll come along with us for a jolly good time and enjoy the sounds of the season. Saturday's concert will include guest choir Bay Area Youth Singers. Sunday's performance will feature the first movement of John Rutter's "Gloria," a festive opening to our concert accompanied by brass, percussion and organ.

*Due to limited seating and an expected sellout at the spectacular chapel at the Villa de Matel, tickets for the Dec. 3rd concert are available online only. No tickets will be available at the door. Season ticket holders [contact us](#) for instructions on how to reserve seats.

Please speak with Rhonda Ashcraft for more information.

Buy tickets here ↓↓

<https://search.seatyourself.biz/webstore/accounts/bayareachorus/buy-tix>



“Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”

John 1:29





Ongoing Prayers: Kristy Myers, Patty Costanzo, Abby Kincaide, Ron DeWalt, DJ McClendon, The Ermenc Family, Audrie Gondesens, Virginia Prieto, Janice Aberly, Atmore Baggot, Robert Bowers, Joanna Palavicini & baby Brooklyn Michelle, Irene Peltier and Keith Davis.

Immediate Concerns: The Family of Dorothy (DJ) McClendon.

Please call the church office with updates.

Elder of the Month - Sheila Follmar

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 |

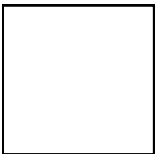


For to us a child is born,
 to us a son is given;
 and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
 and his name shall be called
 Wonderful Counselor,
 Mighty God,
 Everlasting Father,
 Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6



**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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