

First Presbyterian Church of Alvin



Press Bytes



To the Saints at First Presbyterian:

Greetings! The advent season is upon us and Christmas is very close. Unfortunately, it is a stressful time for so many people. Shouldn't be that way but it usually is.

It is a time though for families and friends to come together to celebrate what Christmas is all about. The church is usually very busy with worship services, choral presentations, meals for others as well as dinners in the fellowship halls. We know Christmas is coming but aren't always prepared when Christmas comes.

Christmas coming reminds me of a poem written by Mrs. Ann Weems. Ann is a wife of a Presbyterian minister in South Carolina. I really enjoy her writings in a book entitled, Kneeling in Bethlehem. I would like to share one of them entitled, "The Coming of God".

"Our God is the One who comes to us in a burning bush, in an angels song, in a newborn child.

Our God is the One who cannot be found locked in the church, not even in the sanctuary.

Our God will be where God will be with no restraints, no predictability.

Our God lives where our God lives, and destruction has no power and even death cannot stop the living.

Our God will be born where our God will be born, but there is no place to look for the One who comes to us.

When God is ready God will come, even to a godforsaken place like a stable in Bethlehem.

Watch, for you know not when God comes. Watch, that you might be found whenever, wherever, God comes."

The most of the world wasn't ready or wanting a king, a messiah, but God broke into our world with all his love and grace. Redemption was near, God came. May God come into all our lives in a new and refreshing way this advent. His presence is God's gift to us.

Peace,

C.O.

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December Calendar

Christmas Walk a Mile 2022

We are reinstating the annual Walk-A-Christmas Mile on Monday, December 11, 2023, 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 South Park Baptist Church

1718 S. Johnson St.

5th Church First United Methodist & Templo Cristo Para Todos

611 W. South St.



Christmas Families

The gift tags for our Christmas Families are now available. 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 shape 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 **Sunday, December 10th**. Thank you for participating in this outreach opportunity to bring joy to families who need assistance by providing Christmas gifts.

Children's Christmas Pageant & Christmas Luncheon on Sunday, December 3

During worship on December 3rd 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

Minute for Mission
Getting Ready to Run the World

If the life of faith is like running a race, Mikayla Rose Sierra is leading the field. A two-time state champion in the 300-meter hurdles — as well as a stand-out in volleyball and basketball — Mikayla is a 17-year-old high school senior who entered the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)-related Menaul School in the sixth grade. A member of the Navajo (Diné) [di-nay] Naʼon, Mikayla considers Menaul to be her home. “Menaul raised me in a way,” she says of the college preparatory day and boarding school in Albuquerque. “Since my mom worked full-time for the airlines, she was sometimes gone for four or six days at a time. My dad was going through his own challenges as he managed his business, causing him to be gone a lot due to work.” Mikayla’s life-changing experience at Menaul — both in the sports arena and in the classroom — is made possible, in part, by gifts to the PC(USA)’s Christmas Joy Offering, which helps the school provide scholarships to exceptional students. The annual Offering distributes gifts equally to Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color and the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions. Off the field, Mikayla has developed and matured into an amazing young woman. “Mikayla exemplifies the mission of Menaul School in that she is strong in mind, body and

spirit,” said Melanie G. Davis, director of Institutional Advancement. “Proud to be Navajo American, Mikayla embraces her classmates at Menaul and their cultures from around the world.” Mikayla shares that the Menaul community has helped her to grow in a variety of ways, including spiritually. “I have definitely noticed an increase in my prayer life in recent years,” she said. “Chapel at Menaul always gives us a moment of reflection when we get to pray and give thanks for what we do have rather than being annoyed at what we might not have. I’m Navajo American so we also have a spiritual connection to the earth.” When she graduates from Menaul, Sierra looks forward to becoming a lawyer because she wants to help people, just as her coaches, teachers and the Christmas Joy Offering have helped her. Her future is bright. And maybe one day she really will run the world; or at least a corner of it. When we give to the Christmas Joy Offering, we share our love with the leaders of our Church — past, present and future. Please share your gifts with those share their gifts with us. When we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.

Correction:

In our November edition of PressBytes, we mistakenly printed Gavin Pearce received a bible on September 24th. Gabriel Pearce received the bible from Ruth Frerking along with Sarah Thomas.

Our Newest Members

Welcome
Kyle and Kristen
Chambliss
and their children,
Annalise and Hadley.



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

Luke 2:14

Alvin ISD Serves

Members of the Fine Arts classes at Alvin High School came over to share their talents with the participants and volunteers of the Gathering Place. Everyone enjoyed the entertainment quite a bit.



Students from E.C. Mason Elementary School collected gently used clothing to donate to the Clothing Outlet.



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
E. Floyd Richardson



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
Dean Taylor
Julia Messer
Payten Alaniz



Fay Steckert

In Memory of
Bill Steckert, Sr.
Mae & John Steckert
Olive & Ben Frantz
Bob Steckert
Chris & Betty Frantz
Anne & Wilson Lord



Tony & Janet DeLeon

In Memory of
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Huser
Mr. & Mrs. Jose DeLeon

The Powledge Family

In Memory of
David & Martha Powledge
Nelda Purdm
Leonard & Irene Campbell
Bruno & Gracie Lee Lucherk
Glenwood Heins

Mandi Odom

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



Jean Vance

In Memory of
Wade Vance
Augrita Cash
Dessie L Simmons
Kathryn Little Kyte

In Honor of
Dorothy & Ron DeWalt
Beverly & Charles Kimball



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 9th. A sign up sheet is 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 17th 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 17th. 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 Joyful Sounds of Christmas

Sat, Dec 2nd | 4 PM | S Main Baptist Church Pasadena
Sun, Dec 3rd | 4 PM | Gloria Dei Lutheran Church



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

John 1:29



THE BAY AREA CHORUS OF GREATER HOUSTON
PRESENTS
The Joyful Sounds of Christmas
Saturday, December 2 | 4 PM
South Main Baptist Church Pasadena
Sunday, December 3 | 4 PM
Gloria Dei Lutheran Church
TICKETS AT
BAYAREACHORUS.ORG OR USE
QR CODE

Special Events in December

- 12/2 4pm Light Parade
- 12/3 11am Children's Christmas Pageant
- 12/11 6pm Christmas Walk-A-Mile
- 12/24 6pm Christmas Eve Service



Ongoing Prayers: Kristy Myers, Kathryn Wilkerson, Margie Hill, Arian Hunt, LaGwena Denney, Stephanie Elkins, Feliciano Soto, Alan Ratjen, Shelley Andreas, Amy Rowland, Betty Montgomery, Peter Torres, and those in conflicted areas abroad.

Immediate Concerns: The Family of Evan Imes.

Please call the church office with updates.

**Elder of the Month - Buddy Ruskey
Refreshments - Buildings & Grounds**

December Birthdays

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2 Nicholas Cunningham | 11 Natalie Stinson |
| 12 Caden Petty | 13 Tony DeLeon |
| 14 Bryce Pannell | 15 Paul Cunningham |
| 15 Irene Lemoine | 18 Linda Byrd |
| 20 Tom Bennett | 29 Jean Vance |
| 29 John Myers | |

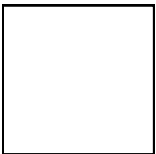


For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given;
and the government shall be upon his shoulder,
and his name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God,
Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace.

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."

First Presbyterian Church of Alvin

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