

Press Bytes



To the Saints of First Presbyterian:

Greetings. The New Year is here and the Roman god Janus is looking at us as we venture forth. January is named for this god since Janus has two faces. One face looks back to the past, the other looks forward to the future. We can get a glimpse of the future by seeing where we have come from, and where we are headed if we continue in our present state and direction. If we need to change directions that is always a possibility.

New Year's resolutions are often made to make the new year a better year. These are usually personal changes we want to make within our own lives. The Houston Chronicle had a good article on resolutions that originated from Al-Anon. I'd like to share them with you. They read like this: "JUST FOR TODAY, I will live through this day only. I will not brood about yesterday or obsess about tomorrow. I know that I can do something for 24 hours that would overwhelm me if I had to keep it up for a lifetime. JUST FOR TODAY, I will be happy. I will not dwell on thoughts that depress me. JUST FOR TODAY, I will accept what is. I will face reality. JUST FOR TODAY, I will improve my mind. I will read something that requires effort, thought and concentration. JUST FOR TODAY, I will make a conscious effort to be agreeable. I will be kind and courteous to those who cross my path and I will not speak ill of others. JUST FOR TODAY, I will do something positive to improve my health. If I'm a smoker, I'll quit and I'll get off the couch and take a brisk walk even if it's only around the block. JUST FOR TODAY, I'll gather the courage to do what is right and take responsibility for my actions."

I know resolutions are made to be broken but these are lifestyle efforts to become a better person and as a result, a happier person.

Jesus said, "Don't be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself." (Matt. 6:34) Easier said than done, but with God's help we can become that new creation Paul talks about in II Cor.

Peace,
C.O.

January Issue

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Insert

January Calendar



January 28th



The Christmas Mission Sale, held on Saturday, December 8, brought in over \$900. 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, price 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.

This year, in addition to helping families who requested assistance for Christmas, our congregation took on 34 Headstart students. Even with the short turn around time, we pulled it together and were able to provide a gift for all 34 children by their party date. In total our congregation provided over 100 gifts for those in need this year.

The Clothing Outlet is in need of Volunteers to sort and hang clothing. Please see Sheila Follmar or Lisa McCalla to let them know what day(s) you are available.

PYE

The Youth started meeting each second and fourth Wednesday evening. They have traveled to the Presbytery Fall Youth Rally, participated in Hanging of the Greens, and Alvin HOPE's Gift Distribution. In January they hope to have a Lock-In, and go skating. In February/March the youth will attend Conclaves at Camp Cho-Yeh. Conclaves are fun, faith-filled weekends at Camp Cho-Yeh that will enable the kids to grow closer to God and connect with other young people from all over our presbytery. The youth will engage in Bible Study and small groups, experience dynamic worship, participate in a mission project, explore ways to connect with God in the Spirituality Center, and of course have a blast playing games, and making new friends. The cost is \$150.00 per youth. Adult sponsors will be Brandi Bowers and Mandi Odom. While the church can assist with the down payment for the event, further assistance will be needed to fund the entire \$150.00. The youth plan on hosting several fundraisers during 2020. If you would like to help the Youth now you may put a check in the offering plate and note "Youth Fund" on your check or you may adopt a "youth" member attending the event. All help will be appreciated.



“For I know the plans I have for you”, declares the LORD, “plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope”.

Jeremiah 29:11



ALVIN HOPE

Over the last two years, Alvin HOPE Charities has been using the library to conduct meetings. This year, we were privileged set up our Christmas Store in the Fellowship Hall, where parents could shop for their little ones. This

year 131 families were assisted with 321 children receiving gifts from our organization or private sponsors. We also were able to provide stocking stuffers, a bag of food and toiletries to each family. **THANK YOU FOR HELPING US HELP THOSE IN NEED.** A Volunteer Appreciation party will be held on Tuesday, January 14th at 7pm in the Fellowship Hall. All are welcome!! If you'd like to learn more about our organization, join us on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7pm in the library or check out our website www.alvinhope.com.

Mandi



“In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps.”

Proverbs 16:9

Good Deed Recognized

As everyone knows, volunteers are critical to the success of any organization sharing their time and talents without any compensation. Georgie Hayes has volunteered at the Clothing Outlet for many years doing whatever was needed without expecting anything in return.

On one of her volunteer days in January 2019, Georgie was sorting clothing and as she checked a pillowcase for defects a Christmas card fell out with \$600.00 in it. She was surprised to say they least. After coming back to earth, luck was with you because the donation boxes and card had the donor's name on them. With help from friends, she was able to meet and give the card back to the donor, Mrs. JoAnn Froberg. Mrs. Froberg was surprised and overwhelmed as she thought she had lost the money or someone had stolen it. She shared her good news with her family, friends, and church family about the lady from the Clothing Outlet finding and returning her lost money. We would like to take this opportunity to show our appreciation with this "Outstanding Service" award.

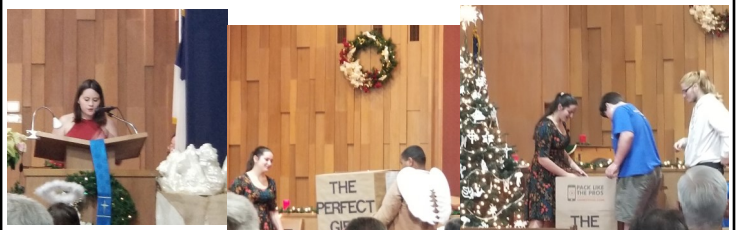
Georgie Hayes, you are truly an inspiration and definitely an important role to the Clothing Outlet team. There is no "I" in team, but we sure are glad there is a "u" in volunteers!

The Clothing Outlet would like to extend our gratitude and thank you for your contributions in helping provide inexpensive, serviceable clothing to school aged children and their families.



"The Perfect Gift"

The children of the church came together to put on a play called "The Perfect Gift". Thank you Barbara Bennett for directing. Alice Sloan, Cindy Waggoner, Jill Wheatley, and Rachel Grimmatt assisted with getting the kids clothed and prepared for their parts. The kids did a wonderful job. We look forward to more plays from them in the future.



SESSION HIGHLIGHTS**DECEMBER 2019**

A quorum was declared, and the December meeting was opened with prayer and Devotion. FPCA received a card from the Community Presbyterian Church in Port Aransas, thanking our Congregation and Elders for the donation we sent them to help fund the rebuilding of their church, which was destroyed by Hurricane Harvey. Mission and Outreach reported on a successful sale in November. The Session discussed the video about our church, made previously by CGI. All agreed that they were disappointed in the final product. Additionally, the price to produce a new one has gone up to \$2500, an increase of \$1500, so the Session decided to not contract with CGI at this time. The Education Building toilets were discussed; the Session approved the purchase of three new toilets. Also discussed was the installation of the new washer and dryer for the Clothing Outlet. A bid to complete this work will be obtained. Officer training was rescheduled for January. The meeting was closed in prayer.

Elder of the Month - Brandi Bowers**Refreshments for January - Buildings & Grounds**

Note to Congregation: Please remember that the Committee is only responsible for coordinating the refreshments. Please consider helping our committees in supplying refreshments for our after church fellowship. Its an easy and great way to be involved. Thank You, Your Session



Grace Episcopal Church, Alvin in collaboration with Manvel Community Outreach and Houston Food Bank will be distributing free food to anyone in need on **Thursdays in, January 2020**. A Mobile Food Pantry will be at Grace Episcopal Church **10:00 AM—1:00 PM**.



Please bring your own boxes or bags.

Thursdays in January 2020, 10:00 AM—1:00 PM

Grace Episcopal Church 200 W. Lang Street, Alvin, Texas 77511 281-331-5657

www.gracechurchalvin.org



La Iglesia Episcopal Grace de Alvin, en colaboración con Alcance Comunitario de Manvel y el Banco de Alimentos de Houston, distribuirá alimentos gratis a cualquier persona que lo necesite los **días jueves en enero, 2020**. Un Banco de Alimentos Móvil estará en la Iglesia Grace Episcopal de 10:00 a.m. a 1:00 p.m.



Por favor traiga sus propias cajas o bolsas.

Los días jueves en enero, 2020 de 10:00 AM—1:00 PM

Iglesia Episcopal Grace 200 W. Lang Street, Alvin, Texas 77511 281-331-5657

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CONGREGATIONAL CARE TEAM— 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 : The Family of Mike Enax and the Family of Kimberly Roberts.

Please call the church office with updates.

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Marcel Pannell	1
D.J McClendon	3
Dennis Ashley	3
Dick Tyson	3
Dave Powledge	4
Dustin Farris	6
Becca Farris	6
Barbara Passmore	9
Dick Frerking	15
Stephanie Meystedt	20
Susanne Wilson	20
Cheryl Case	21
John Melenric	30
Ron Mercer	30



Please share my sincerest appreciation to all who participated Saturday, December 7th at the Alvin Wal-Mart to ring the bell for the Salvation Army.



I am pleased to pass along the total funds brought in from the fruits of your labor.

First Presbyterian Church brought in a total of \$616.72!!!

Thank you for your efforts!

Remember, these funds stay in Brazoria County to help the Salvation Army help those in need.

God Bless All of You. Lorilyn

4 G's

The 4 G's met the 18th. of Dec. in Fellowship Hall. There was a gift exchange and refreshments were served. The gifts were interesting, and the food was delicious. We will meet the 15th of January in the fellowship hall for a very shrewd round of Chicken Foot.

Hope to see you there.

Kathryn Wilkerson

Epiphany

By Christopher Lo

“Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” – Matthew 2:2

On December 7, 2019, I saw Opera in the Heights’ production of “Amahl and the Night Visitor” by Gian Carlo Menotti (1911-2007). In this Historical Fiction narrative, the synopsis’ central character, Amahl, a disabled boy who walks with a crutch, encounters Three Kings – Melchior, Kasper and Balthazar. At the end of this opera, Amahl joins the Three Kings in their sojourn. Amahl declared that along with the Kings’ gift of Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh, he would offer his crutch to the Christ Child. Immediately, Amahl’s paralysis was cured.

In our church calendar, we celebrate the Epiphany on January 6. This feast commemorates the visit of the Magi to the Christ Child, and thus Jesus’ physical manifestation to the Gentiles. According to the Roman soldier and historian Ammianus Marcellinus, the earliest reference to Epiphany as a Christian feast was in A.D. 361.

From October 7-9, 2019, representatives from The Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) met at the Transfiguration Spirituality Center in Glendale, Ohio, for the Third Round of Bilateral Dialogues (2019-2024). The aim of these dialogues is encouraging closer relationships between congregations of both denominations.

The Dialogue representatives met with the pastoral leadership of the Indian Hill Church, a 72-year old federated Presbyterian and Episcopal congregation, two distinct ecclesial traditions living as one community with shared leadership, finances, governance, and worship. Members listened as clergy leaders shared both the joys and challenges of this ecumenical “experiment.”

On the final day, Dialogue representatives reviewed shared Presbyterian and Episcopal ministries, which include campus ministries, congregations, hospitals, retirement communities, creation care work, and food pantries. The Bilateral Dialogue will meet again from February 17-19, 2020, hosted by the Presbyterian delegation. May the Star which brought the Magi to the Christ Child, bring our church leaders into a deeper encounter of God’s will.

On November 30, 2019, the Houston Chronicle printed an article by Sarah Kaplan entitled “Alien comet soars through solar system.” This celestial object, now named 2I/Borisov, entered our solar system from the direction of the constellation Cassiopeia. Scientists do not yet know the origin of 2I/Borisov or how long it has flown through the desolation of interstellar space. Given its current speed, scientists estimate that it has traveled for millions, if not billions of years. On December 8, 2019, it made its nearest approach to Earth.

“O God, by the leading of a star you manifested your only Son to the Peoples of the earth: Lead us, who know you now by faith, to your presence, where we may see your glory face to face; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.”

Photo: Praying together on April 10, 2019, the Most Reverend Justin Welby, the Anglican Archbishop of Canterbury; Pope Francis; the Very Reverend Dr. John Chalmers, former Moderator of the Church of Scotland (Presbyterian); and Domus Sanctae Marthae (St. Martha’s House) in the Vatican.

