

First Presbyterian Church of Alvin

Press Bytes



To the Saints at FPC Alvin:

Greetings. Sunday night, October 27 at 5 pm we had a pumpkin carving contest here at the church. Folks brought pumpkins and Mrs. Froberg donated 20 for folks to use to enable us to have the event. Men, women and children came ready to carve, watch and/or to eat chili dogs prepared by church members who donated their time, provided the food and the cleaning up afterwards. It was a great success. Forty-nine (49) folks attended. Lots of visitors came. We even had a delegation of kids from Trinity Lutheran in La Marque. Pumpkins were carved, Brandi gave out prizes with raffle tickets and good times were had by all. At the end of the event, we put all the pumpkins on a table and lit them up with a candle. They came to life as the candle lit the work of each person. You couldn't see the actual results until the light showed the reality of what the pumpkin really looked like. It somewhat took our breath away. They all looked really great.

In thinking about what we did, I thought the event was a reflection of who we are as people.

We are like the pumpkins. We all look pretty much the same on the outside. Different shapes, sizes, color tones, define us but still orange pumpkins.

Life begins to shape us. We start getting different faces, different styles and coloration. The pumpkins begin to take a shape of their own, all different. We see the carvings but it's not real clear what they actually look like. That's like us, we have a face to the world but what do we really look like? Who are we really? We can look great, act great, and be great. That's ok, but is there more to us than just what we see externally?

Then something happens that transforms us. The light comes to us and we see more clearly who we are and what we appear to be to those who see us. We become more than the initial appearance. For us to be who we really are, it takes the light to illumine us. For Christians, that light is the light of Christ. It brings out our beauty. Even those pumpkins that initially didn't look all that great had a beauty about them that couldn't be seen without the light, even with a few flaws.

Jesus is the light of the world says John. Let your light so shine Jesus tells us, the light of Christ in our lives.

There were no "ugly" pumpkins that evening. All looked so great. All carved with love and anticipation. It would be so great if we could see each other as we saw the pumpkins. There is something beautiful about each of us and it takes the light of Christ to bring that life out and for the world to see. The Star of Bethlehem is heading our way to arrive next month over a stable. May that light shine on and within each of us.

Peace,

C. O.



November Issue

Message from the Pastor
C.O. Magee
(on Cover)

Prayer Concerns **2**
Memory Screenings
Adult Choir Festival

Remembrance Sunday **3**
PYE News
Daylight Savings Ends

November Birthdays **4**
Alvin Food Pantry
Elder of the Month
Session Highlights

Pumpkin Carving Contest **5**
Mark Your Calendars
Season of Advent

Mission & **6**
Outreach
At FPC Alvin

Organist's Musings **7**
Thank you

Insert
November Calendar
and
Poinsettia Order Form



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, Frances Bowers, Lilly Hursyz, Brooke McGowan, & Lyzette Ruiz.

Immediate Concerns : Joe Rossano & Family, The Case Family, & The Family of Ray Garza.

Please call the church office with updates.

You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; you have loosed my sackcloth and clothed me with gladness, that my glory may sing your praise and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever!

Psalms 30:11-12

BRAZORIA COUNTY ALZHEIMERS AWARENESS PROJECT (BCAAP)

November is Alzheimer's Awareness Month! Each November BCAAP offers Memory Screenings at the Library's in our county. Screenings will be offered at the Alvin Library on Gordon Street, November 13-17. These screenings are very important due to the fact the earlier this terrible disease is discovered the better treatment plan can be developed.

Each of the past five years, BCAAP screenings have identified more than 60 people who had severe cognitive deficits and were able to share that with family members so they could seek professional help. The BCAAP Memory Screenings have been the largest community-based screenings in the United States.

If you have not been screened please plan to go on the dates listed above. If you have time to volunteer to be a Screener please call the church office. The more volunteers there are, the less time involved for everyone.

YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BE A TRAINED GATHERING PLACE VOLUNTEER TO BE A SCREENER.

Adult Choir Festival

By: Chris Lo

On Saturday, October 26, Helen (& Robert) Escobedo, Chris Lo, Henrietta Meyer, and Faye Steckert, ventured to Christ Church Episcopal Cathedral (built in 1894), in downtown Houston, to sing in the Diocesan (Adult) Choral Festival. Dr. Marty Wheeler Burnett, the Canon Precentor at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Omaha NE, was this year's guest conductor. Dr. Burnett holds Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degrees in organ performance from the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University and a Doctor of Ministry degree from The University of the South.

Choirs gathered for a day of rehearsals, learning, and fellowship. The Choir Festival concluded with a closing service at 3:00 p.m. followed by a reception in Reynolds Hall. The music chosen for the 2019 festival was all composed by a prolific composer of church music, Dr. David Ashley White. Dr. White is the C. W. Moores, Jr. Endowed Professor of Music at the Moores School of Music, University of Houston. Dr. White was also Chris Lo's Music Theory professor. 2019 marks the seventy-fifth birthday of David Ashley White.

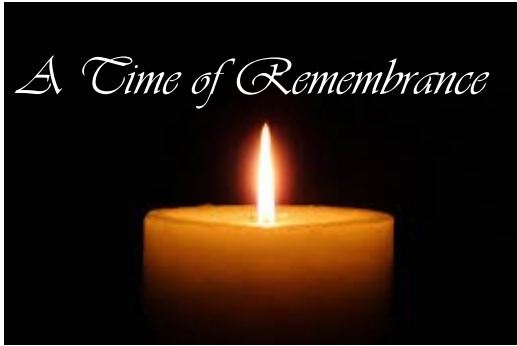
The choral festival included the following anthems by David Ashley White: "Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven," "Away in a Manger," "Without the fire, there is no burning," "Fairest Lord Jesus," "No More a Stranger," and "This Glimpse of Glory."

After the choral festival, Helen (& Robert) Escobedo, Chris Lo, Henrietta Meyer, and

Cont. on pg. 3



Sunday, November 3, 2019 is All Saint's Sunday



During the morning worship service we will have a time of remembrance for those church members, and those close to our church members, who have passed away this past year.

Members:

*Dianne Murff, Billy Steckert,
Marie Petersen, Dave Powledge,
& Joan Rossano*

Those close to us:

Tina Moore (Kaye McDonald's sister), Carrie Beth Ammons Nebgan (Susan Ammons' daughter), William H. Bowers (Brandi & Mandi's grandfather), Roy Case (Mike's father), Susan Armstrong (Jill Wheatley's Mother-in-law)



Presbyterian Youth Evangelists (PYE)

Fall Youth Rally is November 10th at Northwoods Presbyterian Church. All Youth (6th grade and up) is encouraged to attend. Please have permission slips turned in by November 3rd. It is great to see the Youth Group active, serving and involved in our church's mission. We have a great group of youth. They are ready to rock and roll or maybe serve and evangelize! Brandi will be seeking volunteers to help her with off campus events. Be sure to stay up to date on the PYE events because there might be one that you enjoy or would like to be involved in, Please do not hesitate to request the nursery if you would like to help but have small children.

PYE hopes to involve mission and outreach within their activities and events. If you know of a need in the community please share this with Brandi so she can communicate to PYE. PYE meets in the fellowship hall on second and third Sundays after Fellowship.



Adult Choir Festival cont.

Faye Steckert, attended a performance in the Miller Outdoor Theater, by the Houston Chamber Choir entitled "Jukebox Saturday Night." The choir paid tribute to the carefree days of Rock 'n Roll with classic hits by Elvis Presley, Chubby Checker, Pat Boone, The Platters, Connie Francis and so many more!



Pictured Left to Right: Chris. Lo, Helen Escobedo, Henrietta Meyer, Faye Steckert and Dr. Marty Burnett, the Festival Conductor at Christ Church Cathedral in Houston on October 26, 2019. During her undergraduate days at Rice University. Dr. Burnett was Organist at the now closed St. Peter's Presbyterian Church in Houston.

"And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.

Colossians 3:15

Daylight Savings Time ends November 3th



NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Debbie Nance**
- 2 Barbara Bennett**
- 4 Max Gondesen**
- 4 Scott Gondesen**
- 6 Morgan Stanley**
- 9 Clayton Ruskey**
- 16 Sara Pannell**
- 20 Cathryn Watkins**
- 21 Annette Williams**
- 23 Cathy Copeland**

ALVIN FOOD PANTRY

The first Sunday of every month we ask for a donation from the congregation for the Alvin Food Pantry. The next two months please remind yourself to bring a few items from your pantry to help fill this need. Items can be canned meat, cereal, canned vegetables, or peanut butter. The first Sunday in November is on the 3rd. Monetary donations may also be given.



Thank You!

Elder of the Month - Brandi Bowers

Refreshments for November - Congregational Care

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

OCTOBER 2019

The Stated meeting of the Session was held on Monday evening at 6:30pm, October 21, 2019 in the church library. Eight Elders were present, Rev. C. O. Magee as moderator, and Mandi Odom subbing as clerk for Martha Phipps.

Treasurer's report: Cindy Waggoner reports all records have been reconciled and are in good order.

Session listened to Eric Andreas with Edward Jones explain his findings and how to move forward with transferring the Payte Endowment Fund from Securian to Edward Jones.

Session heard reports from the church officers and committees. The Fellowship class will be starting a DVD series. The Youth will be attending Youth Rally on November 10th with a mission to help domestic animals. The Mission Sale is scheduled for Saturday, November 23rd 8a-2p. Communion will be moved to the second Sunday in December, due to the Hanging of the Greens service.

Session also approved the budget for 2020, the transfer of membership of David Gonzales, chose December 7th for Bell Ringing at Walmart with the Salvation Army.

The meeting was closed in prayer by C. O. Magee at 8:30p. The next Stated meeting will convene November 18th in the Library.

Pumpkin Carving Contest Fun



Winners, L to R: Lauren Anderson, Evan Gonsen, Ella Stafford, Kelsey Del Basso, and Sophie Klyng.



UPCOMING DATES !

November 3	Remembrance Sunday
November 11	PYE meets / attends PYCC Fall Youth Rally
November 12-16	Memory Screenings at Alvin Library
November 15	Have your Poinsettia Ordered
November 18	Session Meeting
November 23	Mission Christmas Sale
December 2	Hanging of the Greens
December 7	Bell Ringing for Salvation Army

Season of Advent

We will begin this festive season in preparation of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ during worship on Sunday, December 1st. The sanctuary will be adorned with the beginnings of the seasonal decorations, and we will complete the decorating with our Hanging of the Greens throughout service. It is a joyful time when we, as a church family, decorate the tree with Chrismons and remember and honor loved ones with the poinsettias. Be sure to be a part of these services.

We will continue with the Advent worship services each Sunday as we approach Christmas. On December 22, we will celebrate the 4th Sunday of Advent with our choir sharing the Cantata: *Jesus, There's Something About that Name* and a Baptism. On December 24th, we will have our traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service at 6pm.



SHARING OUR TIME, TREASURE, AND TALENTS WITH THE MISSION & OUTREACH TEAM

during this Season of Love, Peace, Joy & Hope

Christmas Families



As has become our custom, FPCA is reaching out to families who need assistance by providing Christmas gifts. We plan to have the gift tags for the Christmas Families available beginning Sunday, November 24th. 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 Sunday, December 15th. If you need additional information or have any questions, contact Cathy King (cell) 979-583-6726 or (email) lumagi01@sbcglobal.net. This is an awesome opportunity to bring joy to those who would otherwise do without at this time of the year.



Christmas Sale

The Christmas Sale is scheduled for Saturday, November 23, 8 am – 2 pm in the Fellowship Hall. We ask that everyone bring their donations to the church by Wednesday, November 20th. 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 Heifer Project, Hope Dental Clinic, Relay for Life, the Women's Center of Brazoria County, Joy Gift Offering, One Great Hour of Sharing Offering, Peace and Global Witness Offering, and Pentecost Offering. Thank you for your help.



Salvation Army Bell Ringers Needed

Our congregation has committed to stand beside the Salvation Army red kettle in front of the Alvin Walmart and ring the bell on Saturday, December 7th, between 8:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm. in shifts of one hour. The sign-up sheet is available in the church narthex. Sign up as soon as possible to guarantee that you get the spot you want. Thank you for committing one hour of your Saturday for this outreach ministry.



VOLUNTEER BELL RINGERS NEEDED!
Ring a bell...help change a life



JOY GIFT OFFERING

Over the recent months we have seen first hand the real hands-on things that our special offerings do and the people they help! As a church family we responded to the Peacemaking & Global Witness Offering with commitment. Now as we approach the Season of Advent we focus on the Joy Gift Offering.

*WHAT DOES THE CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING DO?
SUPPORTING OUR PAST AND PRESENT LEADERS*



Each year during the Advent and Christmas season, we turn our eyes to Bethlehem and celebrate the wondrous gift of Jesus Christ, our Savior. By giving to the Christmas Joy Offering, you honor this gift by providing assistance to current and retired church workers in their time of need and developing our future leaders at Presbyterian-related racial ethnic schools and colleges.

"Moses said, 'Show me your glory, I pray.'" — Exodus 33:18

Organist's Musings for November, 2019

By: Chris Lo

This is the third article on the "History Of Congregational Singing In Presbyterian Worship." It is a continuation of some scholarly writing by the Reverend Dr. James W. Thornton, the Senior Pastor of the Carmel Presbyterian Church in Glenside PA.

Although there are still Presbyterian and Reformed denominations who carry on with the "Regulative Principle," it is obviously a far cry from the practices of Carmel Presbyterian Church. What happened and when? First, with literacy on the upswing, around 1720 many began to advocate "continuous singing" — that is singing verses all the way through without a "precentor" although having a soloist lead and the congregation respond is still a part of our hymnal today.

Second, after singing Psalms exclusively since Calvin's day, the Church of Scotland first formally adopted hymns with extra-biblical wording in 1861 (although the thoughts were still expected to paraphrase scripture, without being overly emotional).

Third, a couple years later, the Rev. Robert Lee defended instrumental music at the 1864 General Assembly. The Assembly subsequently declared that "such innovations should only be put down when they interfered with the peace of the Church and harmony of congregations." Hence, a pipe organ was first installed at a Scottish church in 1865, marking a major shift in Presbyterian worship.

Groups of people who were trained singers then began to sit in groups near the organ to lead congregational singing, marking the beginning of choirs in Reformed worship. Eventually, hymns found their way into these churches and grew to a place of prominence. Thus, the "Regulative Principle" for Presbyterian corporate worship was greatly loosened and, in some cases, abandoned altogether.

There were two primary factors in non-scriptural hymns becoming prominent in Presbyterian Churches. The first was that, as Horace Allen said, "Presbyterians can blame their departure from the

psalter on the excellent hymns of Isaac Watts and the Wesleys." These new "hymns of human composure" became so popular that by the end of the nineteenth century the churches acknowledged what had already become evident: Watts, Wesley, and the whole English hymn tradition had simply enticed Presbyterians away from the Psalter.

The second was the Great Awakening which began in 1738 and introduced this English hymnody into American churches. When the stirring British pulpiteer George Whitefield made his first preaching tour of the American colonies he championed Watts's hymns, which were more suited to his fervid style of preaching and the wildly emotional responses of the hearers, than were the metrical psalms. In the five years after Whitefield's arrival, at least six reprints of Watts's hymnic works appeared from American presses. Calvin's greatest fears were coming true!



Reverend George Whitfield



Reverend Isaac Watts



The Case and the Wheatley Families would like to thank the congregation for all of the thoughts, prayers, cards, and calls as they have been mourning the loss of their loved ones.