



Press Bytes

To the Saints at First Presbyterian

Greetings. I'd like to share with you a story of a plan for life that God gives us. It's called "A Sand, A Stone and A Seed".

A sand, a stone and a seed argued to see who was the greatest. "I am so small, I can hide in a seashell" laughed the tiny grain of sand dancing with the blowing wind.

The heavy stone spoke in a loud voice, "I come from a mighty mountain that no man or giant or man can move.

The seed was bigger than the grain of sand but it could not move and it was smaller than the stone so the seed was silent.

The stone spoke, "Let me tell you a story of a famous stone". The stone began: Goliath was a huge man, a giant of a man who said to the people of Israel, 'No one is stronger or braver than I am.' "David, a small shepherd boy heard Goliath's words. He was not very big for he was only a boy. He had no weapons, only a slingshot he used to keep away the wild animals from his sheep. But he was brave. "I will fight the giant" David declared." Bring on your boy", laughed Goliath the huge man. "Bring on a billion boys!" shouted Goliath the huge giant. "Bring on your battle and I will destroy you all", boasted Goliath.

David, however, said not a word but stooped to choose a small, smooth stone from the stream. He placed the stone carefully in his sling. He lifted his arm and swung the sling over his head. The small stone sailed through the sky and the wicked giant fell to the ground. The sand and the seed stared at the stone. They were amazed. The small sand could make a precious pearl. The small stone could kill a wicked giant. The seed was silent for the seed was sad and the seed began to cry, for the seed thought it could do nothing.

Shyly, the seed crawled into the wet hole in the ground that it had watered with its tears and stayed there alone, expected to wither and die.

But in the Spring, when on that very spot, a white lily bloomed to fill the world with color and perfume, the small grain of sand and the sturdy stone agreed that the silent seed was the greatest of all, because God had given the seed the gift of life.

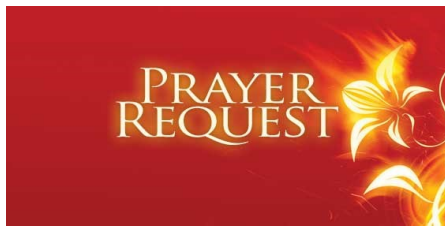
Jesus tells us "I have come to give you life and life abundantly". He tells us, He is the Life. God tells Jeremiah, "choose life". God is a God of life, not death our scriptures teach. We carry that life of Christ within us. We are the small seed! As the world continues on what I call its "death spiral", we can offer our world, life, real life, with our faith and commitment to the Life, Jesus Christ our Lord. Our world needs to know that there is a choice. We can be that choice.

Peace,
CO

November Issue

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Insert
November Calendar



Ongoing Prayers

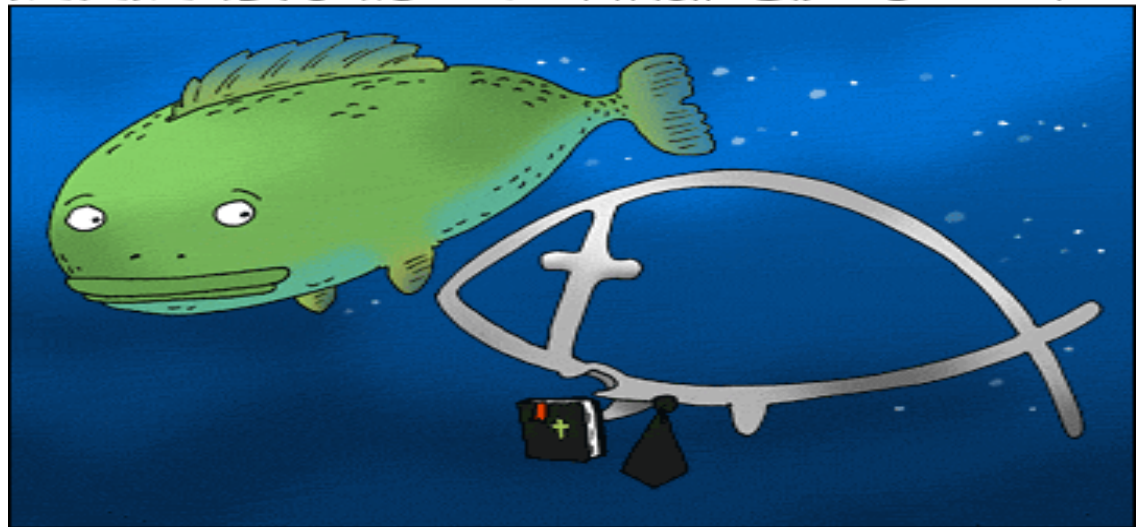
Jill Wheatley, Dixie Clark, Belinda Busscher, Rachel Grimmett, Mark Clark, Martha Phipps, Helen Escobedo, Betty Montgomery, Harold Petersen, Dean Putnam,

Tony & Janet DeLeon, & Wanda Cunningham, Kim Hill, Lisa Shaw, & George Maxim.

Immediate Concerns : All those infected by Covid-19.

Please call the church office with updates.

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Thanks to Daniel Goodman 11-19-2010

HELLO FRIEND, HAVE YOU HEARD THE GOOD NEWS OF THE GOSPEL?

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!

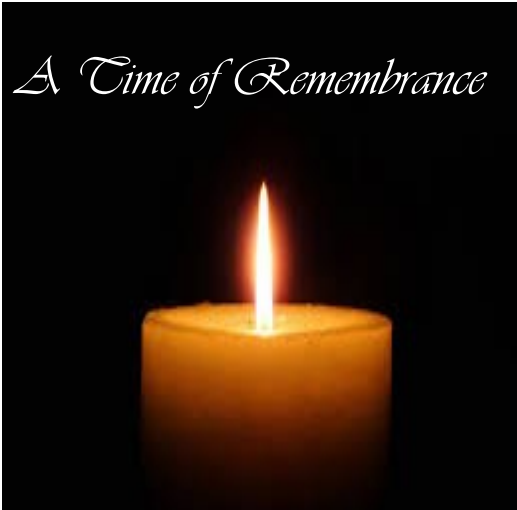
Psalms 30:11-12



Thank you

Janet & Tony would like to thank everyone for their kind words, phone calls and offers of help. Being on the receiving end is very humbling.

Sunday, November 1, 2020 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:

Karen Hering

Lewis Rockwell

Those close to us:

Bill Lewis



Presbyterian Youth Evangelists (PYE)

Fall Youth Rally is November 14th through a virtual presentation. All Youth (6th grade and up) is encouraged to attend.

Dinner & Devotions will resume on November 11th, and continue on each 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month.



“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 1st**



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. Monetary donations may also be given.



Thank You!

Elder of the Month - Brandi Bowers

Refreshments for November - Congregational Care

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

OCTOBER 2020

The Session met on Sunday, October 25, 2020 after church. Discussed were some budget items with at least one Committee Chair, Janet DeLeon, offering that the Mission and Outreach Committee could cut some costs from the 2021 budget. We need to hear from all committees about their budget needs for the coming year. The Session spent a while discussing ideas; Cindy Waggoner will meet with Mandi on Tuesday and they will come up with suggestions for the new budget. The 2021 Budget will need to be in place by the beginning of December.

Discussion about the Christmas Walk-A-Mile took place, and it was decided that we cannot open our sanctuary to the walkers who may participate. Our part may be done virtually and pre-recorded. Our Hanging of the Greens Service will be on November 29th, the First Day of Advent. The Christmas Eve service will be at 6p.m.

The Session voted for a Personnel Committee to be created. Also, a Sub-Committee was formed to work with the Clothing Outlet and produce a working relationship that reflects their concerns. On this sub-committee are Cindy Waggoner, Brandi Bowers, and Randy Phipps.

Building and Grounds Committee will meet in two weeks to review projects and set their calendar.

The Officer Training was set for November 14th or 15th, depending on who can attend which day. Installation will be December 14th.

The Church roll was brought up to date. PYE Fall Rally will occur virtually this year.

Season of Advent

We will begin this festive season in preparation of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ during worship on Sunday, November 29th. 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 20, we will celebrate the 4th Sunday of Advent with our choir sharing a Cantata. On December 24th, we will have our traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service at 6pm.



UPCOMING DATES !

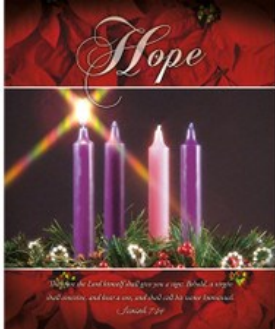


November 1	Remembrance Sunday
November 8	Have your Poinsettia Ordered
November 14	PYE Fall Youth Rally (Virtual)
November 15	Session Meeting
November 29	Hanging of the Greens
December 19	Bell Ringing for Salvation Army

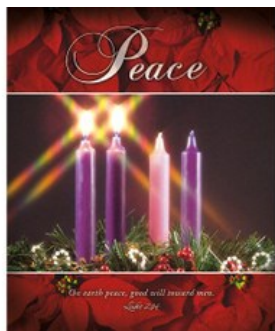
SHARING OUR TIME, TREASURE, AND TALENTS WITH THE MISSION & OUTREACH TEAM

during this Season of Love, Peace, Joy & Hope

Christmas Families

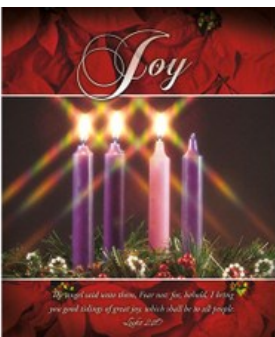


We would like to help families for Christmas again this year. Instead of picking a request tag from the church wall, the Mission and Outreach committee is requesting monetary donations in anticipation of helping at least 3 families. In the past, we have actually helped 5 families at Christmas. We will be collecting money through December 6th. We have put special Christmas Families offering envelopes in the pews. This is an awesome opportunity to bring joy to those who would otherwise do without at this time of the year. Thank you!



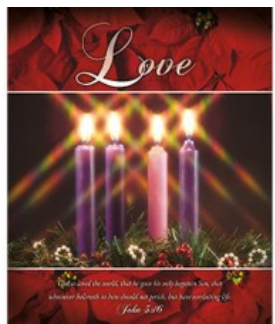
Christmas Sale

Unfortunately, due to Covid-19 Mission & Outreach was unable to have any mission sales this year. In the past, proceeds from this sale have supplemented 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.



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 19th, between 10:00 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.



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?
SUPPORT 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, 2020

By: Chris Lo

On September 9, the journalist Krys Boyd interviewed a psychologist, Dr. Christopher Ryan (b. 1962) on the NPR program “Think” (think.kera.org). At the beginning of this interview, Dr. Ryan made this observation:



“You want people to love you, that is what keeps you alive. It is the respect and love of the people that you live with. Which is why today it is so devastating that so many of us live alone. I think it is about twenty-five per cent of Americans [who] live alone right now. In this fractured world where most Americans who have been surveyed say they have no one in which they could confide in, no one who has their back. This is the number one factor that predicts longevity and life satisfaction is whether or not you feel embedded in a community of loving people.”

The cross did not become prevalent in Christian art and symbolism until a century after Christ’s resurrection. One of the earliest Christian symbols

was the ichthys (ΙΧΘΥΣ), the “Jesus fish” that we can see on so many fridge magnets and bumper stickers today.

The ichthys was an acronym in Greek, with each letter representing a word. The whole acronym stood for “Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior.”

This past September, Dean Barkley Thompson informed his parishioners at Christ Church Cathedral in downtown Houston that:



“The simple drawing of the ichthys was made up of two curved lines that met to form the shape of a fish. In a time when it was at least socially unacceptable to follow Jesus and at worst an invitation for the Romans to abuse, Christians used the ichthys as a secret symbol. When two Christians met, one would draw the first line, and the other would complete the fish with the second line, letting both know that they could trust one another in their

shared faith.”

Recently, I sang the “First Song of Isaiah” by Jack Noble White (b. 1938) in a Virtual Choir performance (vimeo.com/464299299). After countless rehearsals to perfect my rendition, the text finally sank into my psyche:

“Surely, it is God who saves me; I will trust in him and not be afraid. For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense, and he will be my Savior.

Therefore you shall draw water with rejoicing from the springs of salvation. And on that day you shall say, Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his Name; Make his deeds known among the peoples; see that they remember that his Name is exalted.

Sing the praises of the Lord, for he has done great things, and this is known in all the world. Cry aloud, inhabitants of Zion, ring out your joy, for the great one in the midst of you is the Holy One of Israel” (Isaiah 12:2-6).

On Sunday, November 29, we begin twenty-five days of Advent, our Ecclesiastical New Year. The theme of Advent is “Emmanuel – God With Us.” What “ichthys” will you offer to those in your orbit that our God indeed is with us?

