

First Presbyterian Church of Alvin

Press Bytes



To the Saints at First Pres,

Greetings. At one of the Session meetings I mentioned the word Paraments. Paraments are those colored hangings from the pulpit, lectern and communion table or altar. These paraments change colors throughout the church year and have Christian symbols on them. They basically remind us what season we are in, Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter and Pentecost. The word parament comes from the Middle English word meaning a “decoration for a room” as a “tapestry”. Possibly the Latin “para” to adorn.

The church year is divided into seasons. We begin the Church year with Advent, meaning the “coming” or arrival of something new on the horizon. The four Sundays of Advent are the four Sundays before Christmas. We await the arrival of the Messiah. The liturgical color is Light Blue, the color of heaven and points us to the Star and Angels. We look to the heavens for signs of the coming of our Lord.

The season ends with Christmas and the color changes to White. White is purity, innocence, light. This season includes Epiphany, the coming of the Magi 12 days after Christmas. The Jews discovered Jesus on Dec. 25 and the Gentiles 12 days later with the Magi, tradition teaches. Western Christianity celebrates the 25th and Eastern Christianity Jan 6.

This season ends with Lent, ushered in by Ash Wednesday. Lent means “lengthening” Days are starting to get longer. Color changes to Dark Purple. This color represents royalty, passion, suffering, majesty wealth. Only the highest level of society and government could wear purple. It was always sought after, coming from mollusks. The word Canaan means “land of purple”. Jesus was dressed in a purple robe to mock him being “king of the Jews” by the Romans before his crucifixion.

Easter ends Lent and the color returns to White. Bright light, resurrection, empty tomb. This color is also the color of funerals, weddings and baptisms. Presbyterians never use black for funerals. That’s purely Roman tradition.

Pentecost is 50 days after Easter and the color is Red. This represents the fire that appeared over the disciples in the upper room empowering them to become the evangelist they became. Red is the color of the Holy Spirit. This color is just one day.

Finally the last color is Green. This represents life and growth and change, and empowerment, which is contained in the season of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit brings life to those who follow Jesus. This is the longest season, from Pentecost to Advent which starts the church year over again.

These colors are in the Paraments and in the Stoles the minister wears; those adornments worn around the minister’s neck draping down the front of the ministers robe.

We can’t have paraments on the pulpit or lectern because of their “V” shape, but we could have one on the communion table should there be interest. While not necessary, they add color and reminders of what season we are in, and what that season means to the Church.

Peace,

C.O.

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♥
 Every
 journey
 begins
 with
 just
 a
 single
 step

Organist's Musings

By Chris Lo

From Sunday, September 1 onwards, psalm singing will be part of our weekly liturgy of worship. For the next few months, I want to review the history of the use of music in the Presbyterian Church. I am indebted to the Reverend Dr. James W. Thornton the Senior Pastor of the Carmel Presbyterian Church in Glenside PA, for this scholarly reflection and others which will follow in subsequent months.

The History of Congregational Singing in the Presbyterian Church

I was asked recently, "Why do we sing Psalms?" It's a good question and asked often by contemporary Presbyterians who grew up in churches that did not do so. "History and tradition" was my answer.

During the Protestant Reformation, some 500 years ago, there was an intentional break from some of the Roman Catholic worship practices of that day. The Reformer John Calvin, our theological and liturgical forefather, differed from the Reformer Martin Luther in the way worship practices would be determined. Luther taught that Roman Catholic worship practices which were prohibited in scripture should be forbidden, but anything not prohibited in scripture should be allowed. Calvin was much more strict, teaching that only those things mandated by scripture should be done in corporate worship. This came to be called the "Regulative Principle." In contrast to the Roman Catholic Church in particular, the authority of scripture was seen as preeminent and strictly followed.

John Knox, who spent time with Calvin in Geneva, used this "Regulative Principle" to write a Book of Common Order, approved by the General Assembly in 1562, which was the standard of Presbyterian practices for the next 80 years, when it was updated and replaced by the Westminster Assembly. In his book, Knox made two major points which would be unusual by today's practices. These were: 1) Exclusive Psalmody — the doctrine that only the Psalms (from the Bible) were to be sung in corporate worship; the singing of other words was only to be done outside the corporate worship service, and 2) A Cappella Singing — the doctrine that no instruments were to be used in corporate worship other than the human voice. As scripture did not mandate singing words other than scripture, neither did it mandate the use of instruments in corporate worship, thus they were forbidden.

2019-2020 CHRISTIAN EDUCATION		
CLASS	TEACHERS	CURRICULUM
Preschool	Rachel Grimmett, Cindy Waggoner	Sermons 4 Kids
2 nd – 5 th Grade	Alice Sloan	Sermons 4 Kids
Junior High	Barbara Bennett	Youth Specialty "Talk Sheets"
Senior High	Steven King	Bible Lessons for Youth
Women Wondering Why	Barbara Whitfield (Marissa Whitfield, Ruth Frerking, Sara Pannell, Brandi Bowers)	Great Prayers of the Bible—Fisherman Bible Studies
Fellowship Class	Herb Myers (Pat Spiller)	1 Thessalonians, LifeChange Bible Study

"Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert."
 Isaiah 43:19





ONE IN EVERY THREE

Here is a statistic you may find shocking and sad, but when you think about what we know about our troubled world, even our own community, it may not be as surprising as it should be. The United Nations reports that violence against women and girls is one of the most prevalent human rights violations in the world. One in every three women worldwide will experience physical or sexual abuse in her lifetime. Gender-based violence knows no social, economic or national boundaries. These are our daughters, our mothers, our sisters. Not only are they hurting, but in many cases so are children exposed to this violence. And make no mistake, gender-based violence extends beyond the physical pain. Trauma can, and usually does, permeate every aspect of life. Our General Assembly encourages us to become active participants in the church's mission of healing and preventing sexual violence. God is calling us to act, to do what we can to ease this pain, and many are answering that call, encouraging peace at all times, in all ways (2 Thess. 3:16). Presbyterians at all levels of the church are involved in ministries that deal with the trauma inflicted by gender-based violence. They strive for the empowerment and equality of women and girls with help from the Peace & Global Witness Offering. At the national level, resources with the tools for effective and compassionate action were created to help congregations deal with this violence that can directly affect their members. *Striking Terror No More: The Church Responds to Domestic Violence*, includes background articles on the issue, material for group study, and worship resources. *Anguished Hearts*, another publication, focuses on healing after violence has occurred. Each year, the Presbyterian Ministry at the United Nations facilitates PC(USA) involvement in the UN Commission on the Status of Women, helping shape global standards on the empowerment of women. The National Presbyterian Church of Guatemala is facilitating men's groups called *Men in the Mirror*, encouraging men to challenge the prevalent machismo culture. The groups hope to build appreciation for women, thus diminishing domestic violence and creating better opportunities for women in church and society. The Presbytery of Western North Carolina has long been a partner of the Guatemala church and has an active role with *Men in the Mirror*. Every year, when asked about the locally retained portion of Offering funds, many congregations say they seek to address the abuse of women and children more than any other issue that affects — let me say this again — one in every three women. One in every three. Whose face do you see when you hear the words “one in every three?”

YOUR LOVE
NEVER
FAILS
NEVER GIVES UP
NEVER RUNS OUT
ON ME.

“All that the
Father gives Me
will come to Me,
and the one who
comes to Me I will
certainly not
cast out.”

John 6:37





Ongoing Prayers : Kathryn Wilkerson, Belinda Busscher, Barbara Passmore, Lewis & Edith Rockwell, Bill Pannell, Louisa Vera, Cathy Gross, Joe Rossano, Nancy Williams, John Shaw, Pat Carpenter, Janette Arterburn, Cheryl Martin, Margie Martin, Roy Case, Genie Hayes, Margaret Gibson, Shirley Brothers, Ashley Burns, Avery Jones, Alan Gray, Jill Wheatley & Family, Jackson Daniels, , Delia Carrillo, Julia Ferraro, Lisa McCalla, Susan Armstrong, Joy Dell DeWitt, Amy Shlensky, Tina Kennedy, and Taylor Bailey .

Immediate Concerns : Lucille Beasley, The Bowers Family, The Rockwell family.

Please call the church office with updates.

Elder of the Month - Randy Phipps • Refreshments - Mission & Outreach

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

August Meeting

The Stated Meeting of the Session was held on August 19, 2019 with six Elders present, Rev. C.O. Magee, and Martha Phipps, Clerk of Session. The meeting was opened in prayer by Janet DeLeon, who gave the devotional as well, based on Matthew 18:3, from Daily Wisdom for Women. C.O. talked about the Service of Healing and informed the Session that it will be sometime in September. Two new volunteers for the Gathering Place, Martha Phipps and Mandi Odom, attended a training for this. C.O. mentioned that Rev. Lynn Hargrove, from the Presbytery in Houston will be coming to preach on August 25th with her sermon based on Ephesians, and about compassion. A congregational meeting was scheduled for September 8 for the purpose of hearing from the nominations committee and electing two elders to take the places of Cathy King, who will be leaving, and David Gonzales, who has already left. The Session discussed a request by a local church who wants to use the sanctuary until their church is built, but it was decided that the time slot would interfere with our services on Sunday morning, plus parking would be an issue. Other items discussed were the purchase of a locking cabinet for the Youth program due to supplies meant for their fund-raiser being stolen. A Ring camera will be purchased to provide security for the clothing outlet, who have had some donations taken when the outlet wasn't open. The Payte Investment balance is \$392,662.56, an increase from last quarter's balance. The meeting was adjourned at 8:27, after closing in prayer.

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1	Aunnie Petersen	1	Emma Andersen	3	Marietta Benson
5	Jill Wheatley	5	Madizen Gondesen	5	Gina Gregory
9	Marisa Whitfield	12	Kaye McDonald	14	Butch Passmore
17	Gladys McKissick	19	Nancy Williams	19	Paul Froberg
22	David Pannell	23	Pat Spiller	24	Dinah Bupane
25	Henrietta Meyer	25	Sarah Thomas	26	Alfred Froberg
27	Gloria Mercer	28	Mary Aparicio		



Genesis Sunday - August 18, 2019

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

We look forward to learning new ways to incorporate the Lord in our lives and to be able to help others through our missions.

Barbara Bennett presents Chloe Davis with a bible from the church.



Musical visitors in August

On Sunday, July 11, we welcomed Barbara Waggett-Smith and William (Will) Henson who sang two duets at our worship service. Barbara graduated with an accounting degree from the University of Houston, and then spent the next forty-three years working as an accountant for Royal Dutch Shell in downtown Houston. She now runs her own company, Sunshine Bookkeeping. Will gained his undergraduate degree in psychology and history from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale IL, his Master's and Doctoral degrees in counseling from Ball State University in Muncie IN, as well as a Master of Divinity degree from Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore KY. Will currently works in Sales Training and Quality Assurance at Honda of Clear Lake. Both Barbara and Will sing in the choir of St. Christopher's Episcopal Church in League City TX.



Barbara Waggett-Smith

For the Anthem, Barbara and Will sang "Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now" - Thomas Keesecker (b. 1956). Thomas has served as a parish musician in both Lutheran and Roman Catholic settings in Virginia, Montana, and Maryland. During the Offertory, they sang "Make Me a Channel of Your Peace" (Prayer of St. Francis) - Sebastian Temple (1928-1997), arr. Martin Neary (b. 1940). Sebastian, a native of South Africa, moved to London in 1958 and then onto Los Angeles. This song was part of his first collection of liturgical music, "Happy the Man," songs about St. Francis of Assisi. From 1988 to 1998, Martin Neary was Music Director at Westminster Abbey, and made this arrangement of Sebastian Temple's song for Diana, Princess of Wales' funeral.



William "Will" Henson

On August 18, we welcomed Catherine Whitney as our guest soloist. Catherine graduated from Baylor University, summa cum laude, with a Bachelor of Music Education degree. She subsequently became a librarian and most recently worked as the Knowledge Solutions Research Analyst at the Houston law firm of Greenberg Traurig, LLP. Catherine's sister, Carolyn Ortiz, and brother-in-law, Lionel Ortiz resides in Alvin and are members of Grace Episcopal Church. Together with Chris Lo, Chloe (who sang at FPC on July 28) and Tim Vale, Catherine is also a member of the choir at Christ Church Cathedral in Houston.



Catherine Whitney,
CO Magee, &
Chris Lo

For the Anthem, Catherine sang "Come Unto Him" (Matthew 11:28-29) from "The Messiah" - George Frederic Handel (1685-1759). This aria is from Part One (sometimes called the "Christmas portion") and was written in 1741. During the Offertory, she sang "Panis Angelicus (Bread of Angels)" - César Franck (1822-1890). The words, by St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), were written for the Feast of Corpus Christi (the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ) and the music composed in 1872 and incorporated into César Franck's "Messe à trois voix (Three-voice Mass)."

SCHOOL SUPPLIES MINISTRY 2019 (AKA: OPERATION BACKPACK)

The Supplies have arrived!



Thanks to the Maintenance team at Alvin ISD for coming by to load up and transport the supplies to Harby Jr. High.



With the help of many volunteers from our church as well as teachers and students throughout Alvin ISD we were able to fill all the planned bags in just a few short hours.



SCHOOL SUPPLIES MINISTRY 2019 CONT.

TOTAL STUDENTS SERVED:

2,900+!



PYCC NEWS

Our Presbytery's Youth Council is back in the swing of things for the 2019- 2020 school year. We have 38 youth and 15 adults, totaling 53 people from 19 churches this year!

FALL RALLY!! Join us for Sunday morning worship "youth-style" followed by lunch, games, and a hands-on mission project. This event is an opportunity for youth groups of our presbytery to come together to worship, fellowship and make a difference through mission. Middle and High School youth and their adult sponsors are invited Sunday, November 10, 2019, from 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m., at Northwoods Presbyterian Church, 3320 Cypress Creek Pkwy., Houston. Free event! Mission project TBD.



2019-2020 PYCC