Penn Street LETTER

First Presbyterian Church, Fort Worth

NOVEMBER 2021 | Volume 21, Number 11



Due to the pandemic we were unable to gather in person for the annual All Saints Service last year. This service is a special moment in the life of the congregation as we gather and remember aloud the names of all church members who have died as a bell is rung. While we were able to gather online last year, it was not the same as gathering in the Sanctuary in person.

Since the pandemic began, families of many FPC church members who died were not able to travel or schedule in person services at the time. Gathering at gravesides or facilitating online gatherings provided some comfort, but it was not the same as gathering together in person, surrounded by the community of faith.

This year's All Saints Service will be especially meaningful as we gather again in person in the Sanctuary at 7 p.m. on Monday, November 1, to remember by name all First Presbyterian members, and to name in our hearts other family and friends who have died since our last All Saints Service in 2019. Scripture, prayers, special music led by the Chancel Choir, the reading of names, and the celebration of the Lord's Supper will speak to us in our grief and in our gratitude for God's faithful love for us. A reception in the West Concourse will immediately follow the service. For many families who were unable to have a public service for their loved one, this will be an opportunity for us all to offer our support and encouragement. All are encouraged to attend this very special service.

As we prepare to gather on November 1, may the words from the hymn For All the Saints bring us comfort and peace.

O blest communion, fellowship divine! We feebly struggle, they in glory shine; yet all are one in thee, for all are thine. Alleluia! Alleluia! (William Walsham Howe, 1864)





Donations Collected November 7 and 14

Once again FPC invites you to help prepare and contribute food bags with items for a Thanksgiving meal given to those in need. The church provides the turkeys, but we need your donations for the rest of the meal!

Please bring donations to the red carts outside the Great Hall and in the Narthex on November 7 and 14. You may also drop donations off at the church office (Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.) during the week of November 8-12.

Donations of money are also appreciated; checks can be made out to First Presbyterian Church with "Thanksgiving Baskets 2021" in the memo.

SHOPPING LIST:

- □ 15 oz. can yams
- □ 15 oz. can cranberry sauce
- □ 15 oz. can corn
- □ 15 oz. can green beans
- □ 15 oz. can fruit
- □ 15 oz. can chicken broth
- □ 5+ oz. box instant mashed potatoes
- □ 6 oz. pkg. Jell-O
- □ 14 oz. bag stuffing mix (or 2 boxes Stove Top Mix)
- □ 1 box cake mix
- □ 1 can cake frosting
- □ 1 container Crystal Light, Koolaid, or small box tea bags

Please stay with sizes requested.

Note: Health regulations require that the food
be in the original packaging/containers.



PASTOR'S LETTER

Dear friends,

For a moment, I want you to imagine two pictures that I'll describe to you. These two scenes come from an American tourist who spent time in Italy many years ago, and he later shared about his experience.

The first picture is of a mother and daughter. They are crawling on their knees, working their way up the stairway of the Fourth Lateran Church in Rome. At the top, waiting for them, is an image of Jesus with his arms outstretched. The tourist remarks that he can't help thinking it looks like those arms are ready to embrace people who make themselves worthy by offering up their exhausted bodies with their bruised, maybe bloody knees.

The second picture, from the same trip, is from the city of Genoa. Here, the tourist learns of an eight-ton bronze statue of Jesus that was lowered into the sea there. This Jesus, too, has arms outstretched and is called, "Christ of the Deep." As the story goes, this statue was lowered into the water where no one could see it. What good could possibly come from a deep-sea, sunken statue of Jesus Christ? Well, as the tourist listened, he learned why: by faith, we throw ourselves upon the mercies of God - like sailors throw themselves upon the mercy of the seas.

Will you think about these two images of Jesus with me? The first image leads one to think you can climb the stairway to heaven on your knees. That there are things you can do to become worthy. But, of course, that image of Jesus does not hold true to the Gospel. We don't make ourselves worthy. We don't earn worthiness. Spend your life on your knees in the temple...and that does not make you any better in God's eyes than the sinner who stands far away and confesses their countless mistakes before the Creator God.

On the other hand, the second image of Jesus - the "Christ of the Deep" - speaks to me. It speaks to me of the real Jesus I discover in the Gospel.

After my mother-in-law died suddenly last month, I found myself in a receiving line outside our Great Hall. Before I knew it, two strong arms wrapped around me. I looked up and saw the face of one of our former youth, who is now a young adult. He didn't say a single word to me but, with tears in his eyes, he embraced me in a massive bear hug. It was so meaningful to me because, sometimes, there are no words that can make everything OK. At the same time, in those moments, we can follow the lead of our "Christ of the Deep" by diving in and showing up and keeping at it. So, as we come near to a holiday when there will be a new empty chair at our family table, let us give thanks for all the ways God enters our lives and is present with us - not just on the mountaintop of life, but in the valley of our deep suffering too.

Corrie Ten Boom was once told by her dying sister, Betsie, in the concentration camp: "Remember Corrie, there is no pit that God is not deeper still."

Today...do you find yourself in a pit? Is your own personal sense of sin, grief, or missed opportunity wide and deep. Remember that the mercy of God is wider and deeper still.

Keep on keeping on,

Rev. Dr. Josh Stewart, Associate Pastor for Youth

P.S. I must also extend a heartfelt thanks for all the amazing love and support you have given my family during this time. From a basket of



cards for our twins from our Youth Group ("Are ALL those cards for us?!" -Sippi) to meals and hugs and tears and shared stories and unexpected support of all kinds, we cannot thank you enough for being the incredible church family that you are!

SUBMISSIONS

Submissions for the DECEMBER issue of the Penn Street Letter are due Wednesday, NOVEMBER 17. Submissions for the weekly Penn Street Online emailed newsletters are due the Wednesday prior to each week's issue. Please send to Pam Burkholder at pamb@fpcfw.org.

FOLLOW US

Do you follow First Presbyterian on social media? If not, find us on the following sites and follow along for photos, reminders, encouragement, and more.



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WELLNESS CORNER

Monthly tips from FPC's Wellness Committee



November is National Diabetes Month, and the Wellness Committee would like to use this opportunity to raise awareness about prediabetes and diabetes prevention.

According to the CDC, more than 1 in 3 adults in the U.S. have

pre-diabetes, a condition in which blood sugar levels are higher than normal, but not high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes. The majority of people don't know they have prediabetes, which can progress into diabetes over time if not addressed. The good news is that prediabetes can be prevented or reversed through simple lifestyle changes!

From the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, here are some tips to help manage prediabetes and prevent diabetes:

- Take small steps. Making changes to your lifestyle and daily habits can be hard, but you don't have to change everything at once. It is okay to start small.
- Move more and sit less. Limit time spent sitting and try to get at least 30 minutes of activity 5 days a week. Start slowly by being active where you can, like a 15-minute walk after meals.
- Choose healthier foods and drinks. Pick foods that are high in fiber and low in fat and sugar. Build meals that include a balance of vegetables, protein, and carbohydrates. Drink water instead of sweetened drinks.
- Lose weight, track it, and keep it off. You may be able to prevent or delay diabetes by losing 5 to 7 percent of your starting weight.
- Seek support. Making a plan, tracking progress, and support from a health care professional and loved ones can help you make the necessary lifestyle changes.

You can check your risk for diabetes online at diabetes. org/socrisktest.



YOUR GENEROSITY AT WORK: QUAIL TRAIL UPDATE

In 2018, members of FPC joined with others in our community to form New Leaf Community Services. New Leaf works to provide permanent supportive housing, paired with supportive services, for persons who have been chronically homeless. Quail Trail, a self-sufficient 48-unit project in northwest Fort Worth, is New Leaf's first permanent supportive housing project.

As of October 2021, 24 of the 48 apartments have been rented, with 12 more residents set to move in before the end of December. The Community Building is complete, and the remaining 12 units will be ready by February 2022. New Leaf is currently evaluating sites for the next permanent supportive housing project!



CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

Below are some highlights of special events happening in November. For a complete calendar, visit fpcfw.org.

SUNDAYS IN NOVEMBER

8 a.m. Worship in Chapel9 a.m. Worship in Great Hall10 a.m. Church School for All Ages

11 a.m. Worship in Sanctuary & Livestream2 p.m. WHAM Worship Arts Classes

2:45 p.m. Children's Choir3:30 p.m. Children's Bell Choir

4:30 p.m. Middle School Youth Group

5:30 p.m. Youth Dinner

6 p.m. High School Youth Groups

WEDNESDAYS IN NOVEMBER

10:45 a.m. Bible In-Depth: Daniel

5:30 p.m. WOW! Worship and To-Go Meal at

Community Crossroads (will not meet Nov. 24)

7:30 p.m. High School Bible Study

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 1

7 p.m. All Saints Worship Service and Reception

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 9

7 p.m. Young Adult Study & Discussion

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 14

1 p.m. Youth Group Top Golf Party

5:30 p.m. Children's Ministry Grace, Gratitude, and Grub

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16

10:30 a.m. PW Tuesday Together at Community Crossroads

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18

5:30 p.m. Tasty Third Thursdays Cooking Class

at Community Crossroads

7 p.m. MOMS Charcuterie Boards Class

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 21

All Day Peanut Butter Sunday (donations collected)
9 a.m. Peanut Butter Sunday (donations collected)
Jazz Sunday in Great Hall (livestream at 11 a.m.)

6:30 p.m. Taize Worship in Chapel

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23

7 p.m. Young Adult Study & Discussion

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 25 AND FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 26

All Day Church offices, Early Education Center,

and Community Crossroads closed for Thanksgiving

BE INSPIRED...

Below are some upcoming opportunities for being inspired into a life of discipleship through church events and education opportunities.



The Spiritual Formation Subcommittee of Adult Christian Nurture is inaugurating a new venue for adult education, The School of Spiritual Formation.

Classes offered in the School of Spiritual Formation will be 1.5 hours long, a time frame that will allow for experiential learning and in-depth reflection. They will be offered on Sunday mornings. Participants will covenant to worship together at one of the three worship services and will attend class for 90 minutes during the time the other two services meet.

SHALOM: This course traces the theme of shalom as it was introduced in Genesis, fulfilled in Revelation, and developed through God's covenants, the law, the prophets, Jesus Christ, and the early church. This study not only clarifies God's intentions for how we are to live with one another and within Creation, but also reveals the urgency behind God's consistent, persistent message to God's people, both then and now. It is about bringing in God's kingdom values within our own hearts and its fruition here and now on earth.

This class runs December 5 through January 30, from 10-11:30 a.m. in Room 240. We will covenant to worship together at the 9 a.m. service. To register, visit fpcfw.org/ spiritualformation or contact the church office.

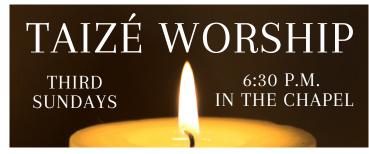
LECTIO DIVINA COVENANT GROUP: Lectio, or devotional reading of scripture, is a time-honored way of allowing God to speak to you directly through the words of scripture. All of us have experienced reading the same scripture at different times in our lives and hearing it altogether differently. This is because God's word is an Incarnate Word which meets us where we are.

In this covenant group, members will be encouraged to: Notice God's action in their life. Pay attention to signs of God's grace in life's ordinary events. Respond to God's invitations to be about the Spirit's work of love and justice in all of life's dimensions. This is done through the reading of scripture in which one focuses on a word or phrase in the Bible passage that speaks to their heart. By slowing down and following the four steps of lectio: reading, meditating, praying, and resting in God, we allow God to touch us in our depths.

This class runs December 5 through January 30, from 10-11:30 a.m. in Room 240. We will covenant to worship together at the 9 a.m. service. To register, visit fpcfw.org/ spiritualformation or contact the church office.

BETSY'S BOOK PEOPLE

Betsy's Book People meet on the second Monday of selected months at noon in the Church Parlor. The books for the next months are: November 8 The Midnight Library by Matthew Haig, and January 10 The Queen of Paris by Pamela Binnings Ewen. If you have questions about Betsy's Book People or would like to join the group, contact Ellen Peck (ecrowl7672@aol.com) or Barbara Reece (reecebk@aol.com).



by Barbara Boardman

"My soul is at rest"

Welcome to Taize worship at First Presbyterian Church, held on the third Sunday evening of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the Chapel. This service is an opportunity to leave your gadgets and devices in the car, enter the restful and quiet Chapel, and just be

"Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me into light"

Taize worship is the only Sunday evening worship service offered at FPC, and why I began to attend. When I joined this church 8 years ago, I could not get a work schedule that allowed Sunday mornings off.

Taize quickly became my service and my lifeline after my tragic loss of two family members in quick succession a few years later.

"Within our darkest night..."

Taize, pronounced Tay-ZAY, is a meditative form of worship developed in France during WWII. The movement's primary purpose has always been to promote ecumenism, the principle of promoting unity among the world's Christian churches. Worldwide it is a movement of youth, with pre-pandemic attendance at annual pilgrimages numbering in the thousands.

"Jesus, remember me..."

Taize is a simple service; a meditative, contemplative, soothing, and healing time to approach God or simply sit in God's presence. It is a combination of repetitive singing, readings from the Bible, prayer, and silence.

"Eat with me. Drink this cup. Come to me and never be hungry." The Lord's Supper is offered every other month, with a time of

pastoral prayer for healing offered on the alternate months. The simple songs may be sung in the language of your heart. Indeed, I've heard three languages sung and sometimes there is harmony and the verse sung as a round. I like that.

"Holy Spirit, come to us..."

At FPC, the chapel lights are dimmed throughout this short service. The musicians and cantor sit at the back of the room so as not to be a focus. There is no preaching. The room is quiet when you enter. I've always preferred to sit alone, and even before the pandemic, I noticed people sitting a respectful arms' length apart so as not to distract. It feels private. No one rises to the pulpit. Casual clothes are the norm. Phones are turned off and there are no microphones. You can just sit and be still.

"In the Lord I'll be ever thankful..."

I really hope to see more friends in attendance. Consider giving Taize worship a try on November 21. Arrive around 6:25 and leave your troubles behind.

ENGAGE THE WORLD...

Below are a few ways we engage with others through church events and outreach opportunities.



It's time to get ready for the Christmas Toy Store! Each December, the Mission Outreach Committee of FPC hosts a Christmas Toy Store. This annual outreach event provides parents and guardians the opportunity to "shop" with dignity through a donation-provided store of new children's toys and books for a small fee per child. The store benefits people connected to FPC ministries through Community Crossroads. Each year, over 300 children are served!

How You Can Help:

SHOP! Tables will be set up outside the Great Hall and in the Nathex to collect new toys and books for children 10 and younger. (Maximum \$40 per toy.) Parents select two toys and one book per child, so we need to collect over 700 toys. Please drop off toys on Sundays, November 7, 14, 21, 28, and December 5, or drop off in the church office during the week.

GIVE! Not a shopper? You may also give check donations (payable to First Presbyterian Church with Christmas Toy store in the memo line) on the following Sundays: November 7, 14, 21, 28, and December 5, or drop off in the church office during the week. Other church members who love to shop can purchase gifts to stock the store.

VOLUNTEER! Please consider volunteering to help on December 10 for setup and/or December 11 at the store. Sign-up sheets will be on the tables at the Great Hall and Nathex.

Let's make this a very special Christmas for many Community Crossroads families!



MINISTRY SCHEDULE:

MONDAYS

- 9–11 a.m. Drop off your clothing donations
- 9–11 a.m. FAD (Formula and Diaper Ministry) and Groceries by Choice
- 9:30-10:30 a.m. Hot breakfast and coffee served
- 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Sack lunches and clothing distribution

WEDNESDAYS

- 9–10:30 a.m. ESL (English as a Second Language) class
- 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Sack lunches and clothing distribution
- 5:15–7 p.m. WOW! (Worship on Wednesdays) Worship at 5:30 p.m., to-go dinner 6 p.m. until gone

THURSDAYS

• 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Sack lunches and clothing distribution

MONTHLY

- 6:30–8 p.m. 1st Tuesday of each month: Choice Pantry
- 5:30–6:30 p.m. 3rd Thursday of each month: Tasty Third Thursdays nutrition and cooking class
- Fridays: Salt & Light Dental Clinic (appointments are available by referral from local agency/case manager)
- Food pantry donations are picked up from area grocery stores
 Monday Friday every week

Interested in volunteering? Contact Dori Al Hammami, Director of Community Crossroads (dalhammami@fpcfw.org).







On Sunday, October 3, Community Crossroads Outreach Center celebrated the building's reopening and dedication. Friends, visitors, and neighbors from the community explored the newly-renovated and expanded building, learned about the many outreach ministries that take place there, and enjoyed food and fellowship.

STAYING CONNECTED

From a youth meal packing project to children's fellowship events and sourdough bread-making at Tuesday Together, pictured here are some of the recent ways the FPC family has been staying connected to the church and one another. If you have photos of an FPC event or gathering that you'd like to see included here, send them to Pam Burkholder, Communications Coordinator, at pamb@fpcfw.org.













JOYS & CONCERNS

Following are the joys and concerns shared as of October 21, 2021. To respect the privacy of those listed, names are included only when the individuals grant their permission. Are you in the hospital? Let us know by contacting Parish Visitors Jennifer Pettey or Jennifer Regen in the church office. Let us keep the following persons in our thoughts and prayers this week...

Our loving sympathy to...

Friends and family of **Wilma Bradford**, who died August 28, in Richland Hills.

Cheryl and Joe Mireles on the death of her father, Myo Cantu, on September 12. Other FPC family includes Antonio Mireles.

Mike Turner on the death of his mother, Margaret Turner, on September 16 in Plano, Texas. Other FPC family includes **Reed Turner** and **Parker and Angela Turner**.

Cheever and Anna Farley and their son, Cheever, on the death of his father, Jim Farley, on September 21 in Richmond, Virginia.

Lisa and Curtis Priddy on the death of her nephew Daniel Williams Orr, on September 26 in Austin, Texas. Janet and Gary Melton on the death of her father, Warren Moody, on September 27. Other FPC family includes Chris Melton.

Karl and Jaci Travis on the death of his father, Murray Travis on October 1, in Amarillo. Other FPC family includes **Audrey Travis**, **Madelene Travis**, and **Ian Travis**.

Friends and family of Maureen Mathias, who died October 1, in Fort Worth.

Randy and Carol Toombs on the death of his mother, Polly Toombs, on October 7 in Overland Park, Kansas.

Annie and Josh Stewart on the death of her mother, Suzi Shepard, on October 8 in Fort Worth. Other FPC survivors are Shep Stewart and Sippi Stewart.

Friends and family of **Elaine Logsdon**, who died October 9, in Fort Worth.

Friends and family of **Hellen Cook**, who died on October 9, in Fort Worth. Surviving FPC family are **Scott and Sharon Hendricks**.

Friends and family of **Marilyn Wilson**, who died October 17, in Fort Worth.

Our loving thoughts and prayers are with...

Mike Bailey, Bill Holmes, Bettye Kinard, Susie Kuipers, Jere Robertson, Paula Robertson, Janet Ragsdale, Bill Gordon, and Mike Millar, who are recovering from surgery or injury.

Marilyn Love, Paul Campbell, Catherine Elkins, Glynda Coffey, Sarah Graham, Jim Goble, Jerry Brownlee, Janelle Eklund, Frank Stewart, Karl Travis, Emma Coley, and Frances Blake, who are dealing with illness or undergoing treatment.

Our caring prayers for extended family include...

Jo Gordon (daughter-in-law of Pat and Bill Gordon), Travis Gordon (son of Pat and Bill Gordon), Sue Quinn (mother of Jaci Travis), Tahji Hoffman (great niece of Rachele Williams), Ross Gordon (son of Pat and Bill Gordon), David Sloan (father-in-law of Murray Hilyard), Victoria DeLay (niece of Jamie Downing), Cora McCoy (mother-in-law of **Lesley McCoy**), Paula Perkins (sister of **Susie Kuipers**), Audrey Hart (great-granddaughter of **Bob and Jane Trask**), Ann Welch (sister of **Andrea Frankenfield**), Mike Bryan (son-in-law of **Mary Alice Dobesh**), Nancy Hatfield (mother of **Sarah Haddock**), Lynn Prater (daughter of **Harlene Satterfield**); Bill Neil (brother of **Marilyn Love**), John DeMore (son-in-law of **June Sprott**), Kathy Kline (**Maxine Kruse's** daughter), and Susan Chenault.

Prayers for peace in our world and for the safety of Lt. **Rolf Tilley** (son of **Katie and Jaret Tilley** and the grandson of Janelle Eklund), who is serving in the US Air Force in Japan. Prayers for the safety of Pape Russell (grandson of Barbara Russell), who is serving in the US Navy. Prayers for the safety of Thomas Shelby (son of Ellen Buck and the grandson of Vance and Donna Laminack), who is serving in the US Navy in Japan. Prayers for the safety of Diego A. Saldivar (son of Becky and Renee Saldivar), who is serving in the US Navy. Prayers for the safety of Cpt. Andrew Reece (son of Ralph and Barbara Reece), who is serving in the US Army in Qatar. Prayers for the safety of Nathan Gunter (nephew of **Russell and Vivian Norment**), who is stationed in Korea. Prayers for the safety of Cullen Cline (grandson of Bill and Glinda King) who is serving in the US Navy.

Prayers for those affected by the coronavirus pandemic including medical professionals and healthcare providers.

Prayers for Cindy Corell, our mission co-worker in Haiti. We pray also for those affected by disasters and political turmoil.

Our congratulations and best wishes to...

Alex and Sarah Simmons on the birth of Audrey Emma Simmons on September 7. Audrey joins big sister Chloe. Proud FPC family are grandparents Mike and Ellen Peck and great-aunt Margaret Campbell.

WELCOME, NEW MEMBER!

Josias Bororing joined FPC on Sunday, October 17, by reaffirmation of faith. Josias is originally from Indonesia, and comes to us from Marturia Presbyterian Church in Rochester, New Hampshire. Josias lives in Cresson and works in Weatherford, and is looking forward to making new friends and connections in Texas. Please be sure to welcome him!





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PERIODICALS
POSTMASTER:
Send address changes to
The Penn Street Letter,
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Fort Worth, TX 76102

Church Office Ph: 817.335.1231 Fax: 817.335.5663

WWW.FPCFW.ORG

Children's Ministry families, you're invited to

Grace, Gratitude, and Grub

We'd be so thankful if you'd join us!

We will feast together, assemble manna bags, give thanks, and have interactive learning stations about gratitude.

November 14 | 5:30-6:30 p.m. Great Hall driveway



Register your family at fpcfw.org/children



NOVEMBER CALENDAR

November 2, 6-8 p.m.: Young Adult Hosted Choice Pantry Community Crossroads

November 7, 14, 21 at 10 a.m.: Young Adult Church School First Pres Room 234

November 9, 7 p.m.: Young Adult Study & Discussion Panera on University

November 20, 7 p.m.: Young Adult Social Gathering Backyard Campfire & S'mores @ Eric's House

November 23, 7 p.m.: Young Adult Study & Discussion Salsa Limon (White Settlement Road Location)

November 28, 9:30-11 a.m.: Last Sunday Brunch Hot Box Biscuit Club

> For more information about FPC's Young Adults, contact Eric Varnon, Director of Young Adult Ministry, at evarnon@fpcfw.org or 817.335.1231.