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SEPTEMBER 2019

FIRST PRESS

PASTOR'S ARTICLE

More than a Motto: Loving Christ. Loving One Another. Loving the City.

PART 1: LOVING CHRIST

Rev. Dr. Bob Fuller
Senior Pastor

We believe that God has designed and designated this community of believers together to *Love Jesus Christ, Love One Another, and Love the City.* That is our motto. But, it is more than a motto. It is our mission. Although these words are printed on our handouts and literature, on our website or coffee cups, they are empty if they are not burned on our hearts.

We believe that the God of the universe is bending us toward a new, restored relationship with Him, with one another and with the world and people around us.

The Apostle Paul wrote,

> *God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*
> -Philippians 2:9-11

The "name" of Christ is mentioned three times in these three verses. Why is the name of Jesus Christ so important?

The name of Jesus is important because, in the days of the Bible, there was no shortage of "other gods" in the neighborhood of Israel. Paul highlights the "name" of Christ because the name of Jesus is about specificity. It specifies which "God" we worship and serve. It's about acknowledging this specific God, this specific reality, this supernatural person, and renouncing all the others. Period.

To exalt the name of Jesus Christ, is to acknowledge that there is no other truth apart from His truth. There is no other way apart from His way, and there is no other life apart from His life and the life that He gives. He has total authority and victory, and one day even those who denied, opposed or ignored him will bow down before Him.

I was recently reminded of the importance of the name of Christ on August 28, my anniversary. On August 28, 1993, I made my marriage vows to my extraordinary wife. I did not make my marriage vows to all women, or to any woman. I made them to Morgan.

When we make our marriage vows, we do not make our vows generically to *a spouse, a husband* or *a wife: any husband* or *any wife.* We make our vows to a specific person. I take you Morgan, to be my wife, forsaking all others.

Our Motto begins with Christ because, the people of Christ's church are not married to a generic higher power. Revelations tells us that we are the Bride of Christ! To exalt the name of Jesus Christ is to say that He is not simply one name among many names, one path among many paths, one method among many methods. He alone is Lord.

To be Christian is to have all of your eggs in one basket. It is to say (and mean) that, *"I not only believe in Jesus Christ,"* but also that "*I am totally dependent on Him and I'm betting my entire life on Him, forsaking all other possibilities and strategies."* Not Jesus and something else, but Christ alone.

That is why the mission of our church begins with Loving Jesus Christ.

He loves us so much that He gave His life to prove it. No matter what chains, baggage, fears, guilt or unfulfilled expectations we carry, He bet His own life on God to prove that God is infinitely greater, higher, better and stronger than everything that traps us, threatens us, beguiles us, tempts us, scares us, or confuses us.

To quote one of our favorite songs of praise, by Keith and Kristyn Getty,

> *"In Christ alone, my hope is found; He is my light, my strength, my song."*

Our devotion to Jesus Christ must inspire and challenge every decision we make. Loving Christ should pull us back to the person who is not only real, but is non-negotiable. Our top priority and the first point of our motto is to tell people the truth and to show people the love and compassion of Jesus Christ. We want everyone to know who He is and what He has done for us.

Grace and Peace,
Bob Fuller

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First Press is published monthly by the First Presbyterian Church San Antonio Communications Team. Deadline to submit content: the 15th of the previous month.

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Church Offices Closed

Date: Monday, September 2

Please note that the church will be closed Monday, September 2, in observance of Labor Day.

CDO Registration Deadline

Date: Sunday, September 1

The Children's Day Out program fall enrollment deadline is September 1 for new 18 month olds through four year olds. CDO is on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM. For information contact Jill Peavy at jillp@fpcsat.org.

Loaves and Fishes

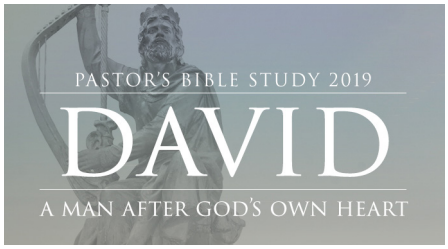
Date: Saturday, September 21
Time: 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Location: Student Center Downstairs

Our next opportunity to serve our under-resourced neighbors is next Saturday, September 21. Setup begins at 8:30 AM, doors open for guests at 10:30 AM, and serving begins at 11:00 AM. All are welcome. Please contact Lindsay Selli (lindsays@fpcsat.org) with questions or to volunteer.

KEYS September Fridays

Friday, Sept. 13
KEYS Fall Kickoff, River Walk Alumni Band Jazz Concert at FPC, $15
Friday, Sept. 20
Birthday Lunch at Grimaldi's Pizza
Friday, Sept. 27
SA City Manager, Eric Walsh

Make your reservations through Alice at the reception desk, (210) 226-0215 or alicem@fpcsat.org. More information on pages 18-19.



Pastor's Bible Study (PBS)

Date: Wednesdays & Thursdays September 11 - November 21
Time: Wednesdays | 7:00 PM; Thursdays | 9:30 - 11:15 AM
Location: Covenant Hall

This fall the Pastor's Bible Study (PBS), led by Rev. Dr. Bob Fuller, will dig deeply into the life of David. King David played a pivotal role both in the history of Israel and in God's redemptive plan for the world. How did this man become king, how did his human weaknesses shape his relationship with God, and why did God call him "a man after my own heart?"

New Wednesday Evenings!

Unable to attend on Thursday mornings? The lecture of each week's Bible Study will be presented on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 PM in Covenant Hall.

For more information contact Stacie Rodriguez at stacier@fpcsat.org.

Thursday Mornings

The lecture of each week's Bible Study will be presented from 9:30 - 10:15 AM in Covenant Hall and the Small Groups will meet from 10:15 - 11:15 AM.

Thursday Small Groups

Each Bible Study participant will be placed in a small, cohesive discussion group to allow time for answering Bible Study questions and personal sharing.

Sign up with Lellen Lane at 210-860-1395 or lellenlane@aol.com to be placed in a group.

Childcare by Reservation

Reserve childcare for either time by emailing childcare@fpcsat.org.

Women's Fall Bible Studies

Tuesday Morning Ladies Bible Study

Dates: September 10 - November 19
Time: 9:30 AM
Location: Covenant Hall
Contact: Catherine Miller, grcjmiller@sbcglobal.net, 210-394-2045

Seat yourself on a mountainside to learn at the feet of Jesus! In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus utters some of the most familiar passages in all of Scripture. In this study, led by author Jen Wilkin, we will navigate these chapters as they were originally heard: as one cohesive, well-ordered message, intended to challenge the disciples, and us, to think differently about what it means to be a citizen of the kingdom of Heaven. Bring a friend. Childcare is available on request.

Wednesday Evening Ladies Bible Study

Dates: September 4 - October 30
Time: 6:30 - 8:15 PM
Location: Room 302
Contact: Sheila Figueroa, shefig@earthlink.net, 210-822-4082

When life hits hard and you aren't sure what to do, it can be confusing, lonely and seemingly hopeless. Psalm 40 is the good news that God hears our cries and delights to rescue us. We will examine Psalm 40 and learn how to stay faithful to God amidst painful and hard times. We will be studying *Psalm 40, Crying Out to the God Who Rescues Us* by Sarah Mae.

There is weekly homework.
Cost of the study book is $14.00.
Please contact Sheila Figueroa by email or phone to reserve a study book.

5 Love Languages Marriage Conference

Date: Saturday, September 7
Time: 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM
Location: FPC

Whether you've been married six months or sixty years, every marriage can use a boost. In this popular one-day conference led by Dr. Gary Chapman, author of the #1 New York Times bestseller *The 5 Love Languages®*, you and your spouse will experience what's sure to be the highlight of your marriage and the beginning of many positive changes. With wisdom and a healthy dose of humor, Dr. Chapman gives valuable tips on breaking unhealthy patterns and choosing to develop a more intimate, happy marriage.

Cost is $47 per individual; $75 per couple (lunch included in cost). Register soon! This conference is selling out fast! Register at moody.regfox.com/5LL-texas.

DiscoverFirst! Class

Date: Sunday, September 15
Time: 12:00 - 4:00 PM
Location: Room 234 (Geneva Room)
Contact: Heather Beltrame, heatherb@fpcsat.org, 210-271-2721

First Pres is a community of people who love Christ, love one another, and love the city. Consider becoming a covenant partner and making this your home. Our next DiscoverFirst! Class will be Sunday, September 15 from 12:00 - 4:00 PM. Contact Heather Beltrame for more information.

Family Life Sunday

Sponsored by L.O.V.E. Initiative and STAFO

Date: Sunday, September 8
Time: 11:02 Service & Lunch
Location: Westminster Hall

Through His L.O.V.E. the Lord welcomes us as His children, so we seek to extend the love of our Heavenly Father through Loving Orphans Via Everyone (L.O.V.E. Initiative.) We will have special highlights of ministry partners in the 11:02 Contemporary Worship Service, followed by lunch celebrating our FPC foster and adopt ministries.

Jennifer Smith, Executive Director of South Texas Alliance for Orphans (STAFO), will provide a special lunch presentation at 12:15 PM in Westminster Hall of our ministry partners' efforts to provide foster, adoption, and other support services to the south Texas region. Representatives from various related organizations will also be on hand to provide information and materials.

Join us on Family Life Sunday to learn the role God has called you to play. The love of the Father is for all, and we all have a role in sharing His love with others. To RSVP for lunch or if you have additional questions, email Lindsay Selli at lindsays@fpcsat.org. To reserve childcare, please email childcare@fpcsat.org.

Freedom Sunday

Date: Sunday, September 22
Time: All Services & Lunch
Location: FPC
See More on Page 8

One of the great themes of the Bible is that of release for the captives and redemption from slavery. The Hebrews of the Old Testament were led out of bondage by God to a new land and were blessed to be a blessing. Through Jesus' death and resurrection, we are set free from the slavery of sin and death.

When we think of the practice of enslaving people, we may be tempted to consider it a historical vestige, but that would be wrong. There are more than 40 million slaves globally, and one in four is a child. First Presbyterian partners with International Justice Mission in rescuing modern-day slaves around the world. IJM has networks of lawyers and advocates working to rescue slaves and prosecute those who enable slavery. Would you like to learn more? Come hear IJM's Regional President for Latin America, Pablo Villeda, speak in all three worship services and at a special lunch afterwards. For more information contact Lindsay Selli at lindsays@fpcsat.org.

CARE MINISTRY UPCOMING DATES

For more information on these Care Ministry opportunities, contact Scott Simpson at scotts@fpcsat.org or 210-271-2712.

Care Cluster Leaders Training Class

Dates: Sundays, September 8 - September 29
Time: 9:30 - 10:30 AM
Location: Room 226

Learn to prepare Covenant Partners to be leaders of Care Cluster Small Groups. Develop leadership, pursue spiritual growth, learn to lead meetings, measure progress, and how to facilitate care for members of the Care Cluster Small Groups.

Care Cluster Coach Training Event

Date: Saturday, September 14
Time: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Location: Westminster Hall

What does it mean to be a coach? This training will give you a vision for coaching, coaching's core practices, and the coach's toolbox.

Stephen Ministry Information Meeting

Date: Sunday, September 15
Time: 12:15 - 12:30 PM
Location: St. Andrew's Room

Stephen Ministers are members of First Pres who are trained to care for others in times of personal need for as long as needed. This meeting will provide information for anyone interested in joining this important ministry.

Stephen Ministry Training

Dates: Tuesdays, October 8 - March 10
Time: 6:30 - 9:00 PM
Location: Geneva Room

A 20-week class for those training to become Stephen ministers. Class will be closed after the first session.

Literature Circle

The Literature Circle meets from September through May, the second Tues. at 1:00 PM in the McCullough Room. Men and women, church members and non-members are invited to attend.

September Literature Circle

SEP 10

Tuesday, September 10
1:00 PM
McCullough Room

The novel, *The Girl They Left Behind*, by Roxanne Veletzos, will be reviewed by Louise Peters. The setting is Bucharest, Romania, during the brutally cold winter of 1941 when a three-year-old Jewish girl is abandoned on the steps of a building. The Nazis have occupied the city and the Jewish population is being persecuted. It is a story of little Natalia's survival and life during the war and Soviet occupation. Men and women of all faiths are invited to attend this circle each month.

Sanctuary Handbells Rehearsals Resume

Date: Wednesday, September 4
Time: 5:45 - 6:45 PM
Location: Room 309

Bell ringing is fun, therapeutic and develops musicianship and teamwork while at the same time adding an exhilarating dimension to worship services. Handbell ringers should have the ability to read music, as well as basic hand/eye coordination. Contact Jae Ha at jaeh@fpcsat.org or 210-271-2729 for more information.

Youth Wednesday Bible Studies Resume

- MS 5:30 - 6:30 PM (contact Emily for location)
- HS Guys 7:00 - 8:30 PM in the Student Center
- HS Girls 7:00 - 8:30 PM at the Scheifele's home
- For more information, contact: Emily Yergler (emilyy@fpcsat.org) or Becky Prichard (beckyp@fpcsat.org)

DivorceCare

Date: Wednesdays, September 4 - December 11
Time: 6:30 PM
Location: Room 226

Most people will tell you that separation and divorce are the most painful and stressfull experiences they've ever faced. It's a confusing time when you feel isolated and have lots of questions about issues you've never faced before. DivorceCare groups meet weekly to help you face these challenges and move toward rebuilding your life. Contact Pastor Joe Moore for more information at joem@fpcsat.org.

University Ministry "The House" Resumes

Fridays | Begins Sept. 6 | 7:00 PM
Student Center

Evenings of fun, fellowship, and formative teaching every Friday night! Check us out at Facebook.com/2TenSATX. For more info contact Alex Solorio at alexs@fpcsat.org.

FPC Children's Choir First Fall Rehearsal

Date: Wednesday, September 4
Time: 5:00 - 5:45 PM
Location: NEW LOCATION! Assembly Room

FPC Children's Choir rehearses every Wednesday from 5:00 to 5:45 PM. A light dinner is served after choir in the Nutrition Center. To register your age four to 5th grade child for this year go to www.fpcsanantonio.org/childrens-choirs. For more information, contact Kathy Jamison at kathyj@fpcsat.org.

Parents' Night Out Kids Movie Night

Date: Friday, September 20
Time: 6:00 - 9:00 PM
Location: Assembly Room
Price: $5 per child

Parents, drop off your children to watch a movie while you are having a date night. We will supply bean bag chairs and popcorn. Children can bring their own blanket and pillow and also wear your PJ's. Childcare will be provided. Children must be picked up at 9:00 PM, no later. If children are picked up later than 9:00 PM, late fees will be charged. Register online at fpcsanantonio.org/parentsnightout.

One By One: New Mom Mentoring Ministry Training

Date: Saturday, September 28
Time: 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Location: KRL | Kingdom Resource Lab

It's a mission to mentor and educate new moms to parent well so that their children will flourish and a positive impact will be made upon the next generation against poverty, neglect and abuse. Register now by contacting Anne Scates, annescates@gmail.com, or online at www.fpcsanantonio.org/1by1 for training that will allow you to serve as a mentor and share God's love with these women and their families.

GRIEF COMMITTEE

KAY BETH BARR
Grief Committee

As part of the diaconate, the grief committee seeks to comfort those covenant partners who are grieving the loss of a mother, father, sister, brother, son or daughter. Members of the diaconate (both current and sometimes those on rotation) are assigned (or volunteer) to minister to a grieving covenant partner for one year. The grief deacons reach out to those who are grieving through phone calls, visits and cards. To aid in their ministry they may also give their assigned covenant partner a set of books called *Journeying Through Grief,* as well as a wooden comfort cross, a prayer shawl and/or flowers from Sunday worship.

The members of the grief committee for 2019-2020 are Kim Smith, Lellen Lane, Deborah Rogers, Harold Black, Kay Weber, Cassie McMillan, and Kay Beth Barr. Scott Simpson is our pastoral support, Lisa Snow is our staff support, and we will work closely with Michele Hendrix who will be moderator of the diaconate this year.

We ask for your prayers for those grieving and for the grief committee as we seek to make good matches when assigning grief deacons. If you know of someone who has lost a loved one, but it is not on the Care and Concern Line or Prayer Wall, please let one of the grief committee members know so that we can reach out and serve those grieving in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

LOVING THE WORLD

FREEDOM SUNDAY

TO ADDRESS GLOBAL SLAVERY, HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Every July our First Presbyterian tradition is to gather on the Sunday nearest the July 4 holiday to celebrate the freedoms we enjoy. That celebration is all the more poignant because throughout history, members of our church have risked their lives—and many have laid down their lives—in defense of freedom.

As Christians, we are rooted in Biblical themes of slavery and redemption, thankful that Jesus has rescued us from our own darkness, freeing us to the fullness of life in Him.

What does it mean to be unfree? As Americans in the 21st century, do we really understand what slavery feels like? For much of the world today, and for dark corners in our own country, slavery is not a hypothetical issue. Today, there are over 40 million enslaved people around the world. That is more than at any time in history. Human trafficking is a $150 billion global business. One in four victims of slavery is a child.

What is the human face of slavery? It could be a 15-year-old girl in Southeast Asia who is forced into prostitution, or entire families in India forced to work long hours in garment factories or brick kilns. It could be abused and hungry children forced to work on fishing boats in Africa.

First Presbyterian Church is in the fight to end global slavery through our partnership with International Justice Mission. IJM is the largest international anti-slavery organization, working in 19 program offices in 11 countries across the developing world to combat slavery, trafficking, and other forms of violence against the poor. IJM works to rescue and restore victims, hold perpetrators accountable, and help transform broken public justice systems.

On **Sunday, September 22**, we will celebrate Freedom Sunday and will have a special opportunity to hear about IJM's work from Pablo Villeda, Regional President for IJM in Latin America. Pablo will be speaking in all worship services, and we will have a special luncheon with him following the 11:00 a.m. services. Please pray for this upcoming event and please join us for the lunch! RSVP online at: http://bit.ly/FPCFreedomSunday.

If you have questions, please email missions@fpcsat.org, or Mike Munroe at mcmunroe@gmail.com.

LAUNCH Success: Children's Ministry

ROZLYN MILLER
Ministry Director to Children and their Families

Hello First Presbyterian Church!! What an amazing LAUNCH we had on Sunday August 18th! I'm so grateful to all the volunteers from the Children's Committee as well as our wonderful greeters who made the first encounter with the children coming back for the fall semester a pleasant one!

The children themselves were able to prepare hygiene bags for the KRL and it was a blessing for me to watch these kids assemble a kit that would eventually touch the life of someone God will bring to our church home who is in need.

With the fall approaching I want to encourage you all to pray for the second half of this year for the Children's ministry. I myself am going through another season of firsts with you and I'm excited to see what the rest of this year brings!

One large need in the Children's Department is the placement of teachers as well as committee members. Because I'm new at FPC I always value members who reach out with helpful suggestions on how I can connect to potential members that would like to volunteer or feel led to teach. Will you pray about how you may be involved?

I would be most grateful to hear from you and let you know what our needs are. Specifically, I would like to have four more teachers downstairs who will commit to a nine month Sunday school commitment at 9:30 AM for our 1st - 5th grade classes.

In addition, the Children's Committee also needs more volunteers who are willing to be part of a fun and busy working committee. I pray that as you read this your heart is stirred by the Holy Spirit and you would be filled with trust and peace to obey His leading!

Let's move forward together FPC, it takes a village and I'm so glad to be part of this one!

Praying for one another teaches us to love one another: **The Prayer Wall**

REV. SCOTT SIMPSON - Associate Pastor of Congregational Care

Six years ago, one of our deacons gave a speech during a monthly deacon's meeting. She said, "As Deacons, we talk a lot about prayer and its importance, but if the rest of you are like me, you probably don't pray as much as you ought to. Three or four times a year, I make a resolution to pray for other people on a regular basis, and then it slips through the cracks and I don't do it. It's so important that we pray for one another. Praying for one another teaches us to love one another."

I say, "Right on!" The Apostle Paul, in his letter to the Philippians, writes, *"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God."* (Philippians 4:6, ESV). For many years, First Presbyterian Church has faithfully prayed for one another in many venues. One in particular is through the Care and Concern Line. The Care and Concern Line has been a lifeline for many members over the years who desire care through a hospital visit and who also want to be prayed for under a variety of circumstances.

During their year and a half long vision work to develop the new congregational care ministry called the Care Cluster ministry, the Care Cluster Leadership Team that includes: John Carter, Michele Hendrix, Charlotte Milner and Dr. Joe Moore reflected on the importance of building on and enhancing communication about care in the congregation through prayer. The team believed it was vital for the entire congregation to pray for everyone in need as disciples of Jesus Christ. Even more important, prayer is one of the first steps, as my partner Dr. Joe Moore eloquently wrote in his July article entitled, *"Identifying the Depth of Congregational Care at FPC"* to

www.fpcsanantonio.org/prayerwall

reach the entire congregation, deepen the depth of care and develop a "culture of care" in and through our new Care Cluster ministry. Prayer is indeed the way we learn to love one another.

Therefore, in an effort to build on the tradition of the Care and Concern Line, enhance communication about care, push out and reach the entire congregation, deepen the depth of care, and continue to develop a "culture of care" through praying for one another in and through the Care Cluster Ministry, I am announcing a change to the Care and Concern Line. On Thursday, September 5, 2019, the Care and Concern Line will become the FPC Prayer Wall.

How will the Prayer Wall work? Covenant partners will be invited to share their prayer concerns or joys on the new FPC app, ***on our website under "Prayer Wall"*** or directly with Lisa Snow at ***prayerwall@fpcsat.org*** or 210-226-0215. Your name and the area of need will be added to the Prayer Wall. The Prayer Wall will be sent out every Thursday along with the weekly First Look email blast and everyone receiving the email is invited to pray for the people on the Prayer Wall.

Praying for one another is how we learn to love one another.

Thanks be to God!
Rev. Scott Simpson

FPC rings in the fall season with **new media and equipment upgrades**

HANK CHERRY
Director of Communications

Summer is normally a time of relaxation, recharge and getaways. But when it comes to the FPC ministries and communications—not this summer!

Throughout the season, we continued with a series of capital improvements across the FPC campus, which your property committee approved late last year, and included upgrades to the Sanctuary, Westminster Hall, Covenant Hall, as well as the Launch of our brand new FPC App!

Sanctuary

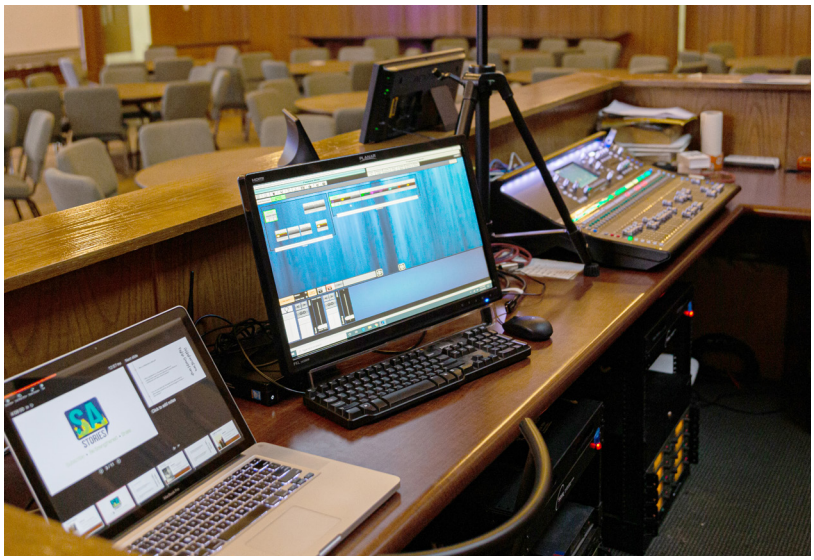
Earlier this year, two new state-of-the-art projectors were mounted to each side of the sanctuary, projecting on each side wall at the front and formatted for maximum dimension, sharpness, and visibility to the entire congregation, and directly connected to and controlled through our A/V Booth. The permanent rafter installations also removed clutter at the front left floor of the sanctuary, where we had stored the previous portable unit. Look for increased use of this projection equipment for sermon presentation support, videos, and congregational meeting presentation support in the future!

Covenant Hall

Though a somewhat lesser profile than our larger venues, Covenant Hall remains a very important resource for large classes, meetings and other gatherings. A new projection and speaker system was installed this summer, to go along with last year's remodel, providing optimal audio and visual support as needed for any scheduled events and meetings, as well as an improved overflow seating resource if needed.

Westminster Hall

Perhaps the biggest thrill this fall is the numerous, remarkable media renovations in Westminster Hall, including a new digital soundboard, new audio speaker system, new stage screen displays and mounted projectors, and a new track lighting system for stage performances! Attendees at the 11:02 service the past few weeks have no doubt been blessed and inspired as a result of these improvements, as we enable our contemporary worship ministry to spread Jesus' Word in an unmistakably enhanced setting, both visually and audibly. Our many additional events in Westminster Hall this year will benefit from these upgrades as well.



New FPC App

If you have not downloaded our new App, please do so! We launched the App last month to lead to up to our Kick-off, and the response has been excellent. This will be a key resource for covenant partners to stay on top of upcoming events, media streaming, study tools, mobile giving, sermons and sermon notes, ways to stay connected, and more!

McCullough Room

In addition, improvements are almost completed for the facelift to the McCullough Room, with new flooring, paint, and kitchen upgrades!

These additions and upgrades reflect our ongoing commitment to make, and keep, our church home a true beacon for all covenant partners to come, and be involved and engaged in ministries, activities and events—for years to come!

LOVING OUR CITY

A Testimony from the **San Antonio East Side Local Mission Trip**

During the week of July 25 - 29, our church participated in a local mission trip. This trip took place on the east side of San Antonio in conjunction with one of our local mission partners, Servant Partners, and a couple of other local churches: First Baptist and La Luz en el Barrio. Our mission was to go door-to-door with groups of three-to-four people sharing our personal testimonies, the gospel, and offering prayer to people in the neighborhood and then to end the week with a block party with free food and games to further reach people with the gospel. The east side is an economically depressed area and according to Servant Partners' website, 50% of the community is only Spanish-speaking. I'm not great at math, but that means I have a 100% chance of not being able to communicate with 50% of the people in the neighborhood to begin with. Many people in the community do not attend church despite the neighborhood being full of churches. They have lost any hope that God cares for them in the midst of poverty and crime all around them.

The only type of evangelism—if you can call it that—I've ever done has been passing out water bottles with Bible verses on them when I was about 14 years old at the church I grew up going to during an annual festival in my hometown. Needless to say, this door-to-door evangelism was completely out of my comfort zone. Thankfully, Servant Partners conducted a training for people, like myself, who had never evangelized in this way. They had us write and practice a 15-second testimony with questions at the end to prompt further conversation and they showed us a dummy-proof way to share the gospel called "three circles." We practiced at our tables at the training house before we went out to our respective locations with our groups. To be honest, I was skeptical about how this type of evangelism would work. Would it be effective? I figured we would have a lot of slammed doors in our faces or we would not be able to communicate with Spanish-speaking families. This was the devil telling me lies because let me tell you—God showed up!

I was in a group with Mitchell Moore, Jacob Gray, and Katie Shute. We all rode to our first location together eager to share what we had practiced at the house and what we believed in our hearts. To say I wasn't nervous would be a lie, but I knocked on the first house's door. We introduced ourselves, shared what we were doing there, and we prayed for a sweet lady getting ready to attend a wake. We also invited her to the block party. I took that as a win! I was just glad someone came to the door and actually talked to us. But when I think God is big, He shows me just how big He really is.

The next door we knocked on, a young lady walked out and hesitantly opened the door about halfway. She did not open the locked screen door, and was talking to us through that. Mitchell introduced all of us and told her we were from First Presbyterian, a nearby church. He asked if she had anything she wanted us to be praying for her for, and she quickly said, "No,"

as she then began to back away from the door and close it. Mitchell asked her what her name was, and she told us. He asked how long she'd lived in this house, and she said, "About a month. I moved here from another part of town." So, I asked, "Where did you move from?" She said, "Converse." I said, "No way! I work in Converse. I teach at Woodlake Hills Middle School!" It was at that moment that she opened the screen door and her face lit up because she graduated from Judson High School in 2009. We chatted a few minutes about that and how her sister went to Woodlake Hills Middle School where I teach. She told us more about her life and how she had two sons, Kimari and Kevonte. They were two and four. Katie chimed in and told her how she helps teach the four-year-old Sunday school class at church and would be excited to see her oldest there if they decided to visit our church.

Mitchell then asked her if she loved Jesus and had Him in her heart. She said she grew up going to church with her grandma, feels like she's mostly a good person, but that she messes up sometimes. And that she doesn't really go to church anymore. Mitchell shared his 15-second testimony with her. After that, he said, "And my friend Laurel really wants to share with you about the gospel and what that means." I was a little taken aback since this was my first time ever sharing the gospel with a complete stranger, but something came over me. I know it was the Holy Spirit because I am the furthest thing from eloquent or well-spoken, but I shared the gospel. I told her that we live in a broken world full of problems and try to escape it by substance abuse, good deeds, perfectionism, relationships, and more, but we always end up back in the broken world. I told her that this world was not designed by God to be that way. It was originally designed out of love to be in perfect relationship with God, our Creator, and to have perfect relationships with others, but our sin brought us to this broken world because we turned against God with our human nature. I shared with her that Jesus came to this earth to live a perfect life that none of us could ever live. He died on the cross to save us from our sins and rose from the grave. If we repent and believe this, we can be new creations in relationship with Christ and share that love with others in the world. Mitchell asked if she wanted to accept Jesus into her heart, and she did. She repeated the prayer of salvation after Mitchell, and Jacob prayed a beautiful prayer of thanksgiving over her. He described the scene of a thousand angels rejoicing in heaven for this young woman who had just received Christ. It was a beautiful moment. We passed out some gospel bracelets for her boys, and we gave her a few resources and a Bible for her to use and learn from.

The CRAZIEST part about this story of the young woman accepting Jesus as her Lord and Savior is that the entire time we were sharing with her and praying, there was an endless flow of traffic in and out of that drug house where she lived. With her two sons. We walked away from that home just completely broken-hearted for the dealings that went on there and the environment her sons were growing up in. We hurt for the brokenness all around and the dark places in which those people's hearts dwelt. As we walked away, I simultaneously felt so blessed by how God used all of us and our gifts to share with her. And that God allowed her to be receptive to our words. Mitchell sharing his testimony, me having a connection with her to school and sharing the gospel, Katie sharing her connection with children's ministry at the church, and Jacob praying over her. Walking to the next house, Mitchell said, "It's like Psalm 110: "Rule in the midst of your enemies!"

The rest of the night, every door we knocked on got an answer, they all spoke English, and Jacob prayed the prayer of salvation with an 84-year-old man dying of cancer. If you're hesitant to do this type of mission work, you can do it! God can, and will, use you.

LAUREL BROCKSCHMIDT
Local Mission Trip Participant

BACK TO SCHOOL

PRAYER INITIATIVE

JEANNIE DULLNIG
Prayer Ministry Committee

God was honored and local schools were lifted up in prayer on Sunday, August 18. These informal gatherings took place at the flagpole at 5:00 PM on the day before most schools started, and several schools in our City were covered in prayer for safety and protection of all who enter them.

The Prayer Ministry Committee would like to thank all of those who participated and it is our hope that this event will spread to all schools in San Antonio in the years to come. What better way to send our youth and faculty back to school?

The following poem was used to open the prayer sessions:

Bless this school, O Lord we pray
Make it safe by night and day.

Bless these walls so firm and stout
Keeping evil and trouble out.

Bless the roof and chimney tall
Let your peace lie over all.

Bless these doors, that they may be,
Open for all to learn and to be free. Amen

KEYS

REV. DR. JOE MOORE
Minister for older adults and congregational care.

September is KEYS' opportunity to LAUNCH into a new year of activities!

We were saddened to hear of the passing of Jim Cullum, our prayers are with his family and friends. However, we are thankful for John Sheridan, who played piano with Jim Cullum for 40 years. John will bring with him musicians who have also been with the Jim Cullum band for years, and our **KEYS Kickoff Event will go on with the "River Walk Alumni Band," Friday, Sept. 13**. The cost is $15 per person.

Our **September Birthday Lunch will be at Grimaldi's Pizza on Sept. 20**, and the cost will be $12 for pizza and fountain drinks. **Erik Walsh, our new City Manager, will be our speaker on September 27**. We are working on an October trip with Holloway Tours.

Remember, KEYS is not an exclusive club for older adults. Everyone is welcome to attend on Fridays and to join us on other activities as well, "Keeping EVERYONE Young in Spirit."

Bridge and Mah Jongg
Bridge and Mah Jongg players will return to immediately following lunch on the second and fourth Fridays of the month. Join in on the fun!! New players are welcome and someone will help you learn the game. If you have other games that we could play, then let us know and we will see that you have a place to play.

UPCOMING BIRTHDAY LUNCHES
11:30 AM | $12/person, RSVP required

Sept. 20	Grimaldi's Pizza
Oct. 19	Picnic at McNeel's Ranch
Nov. 15	Longhorn Cafe
Dec. 6	KEYS Christmas Party

KEYS Fall Picnic
We are excited to return to the McNeel's ranch on October 19 for our fall picnic this year. Judith is excited to have us. We appreciate her hospitality and her sharing this beautiful property with us.

SA READS
SA Reads needs your help to sort, categorize, and clean donated books that are used in local schools to provide reading material to children who may not have the opportunity to own books of their own. Jane Warren (210-493-5187) is the person to contact with any questions about this program. The work is done at Firstmark Credit Union, 10730 Gulfdale Drive, on the first Tuesday of each month. Join in on this great service project, as well as the fellowship of working together.

Keeping EVERYONE Young in Spirit

To make your reservation for all KEYS events contact Alice Morales at 210-226-0215 or alicem@fpcsat.org. The cost for meals at FPC is $10. Birthday luncheons are $12 unless otherwise noted.

Women of the Church have been far from lazy over the summer!

JUDY KRUGER
President, Women of the Church

People often refer to the "lazy days of summer." However, Women of the Church have been far from lazy over the summer! Here are a few highlights of our activities:

- We have a beautiful new WOC directory. I would like to express my sincere thanks to Barbara Dorsey and Holly Youngquist for working tirelessly throughout the summer to ensure its accuracy. Huge thanks also to Dorothy Hecimovich for her graphic design expertise and to Richard Flores for production. Circle Chairmen will distribute the new directories at the September Circle meetings.
- Under the leadership of PCHAS Program Co-Chairman Marilyn Etheredge, members of Circles provided school supplies for Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services.
- Treasurer Mary Wofford and Assistant Treasurer Sherry McCann worked with last year's treasurer Nancy Black to prepare the annual budget.
- Vice President for Circles Pat Krueger is preparing a monthly summary of Circle meeting dates and locations for all FPC publications. Circles will resume meeting in September. I encourage all women who have not yet joined a Circle to find one on the list and visit. You will find friendly groups of women who will welcome you.
- Barbara Winship and Rev. Becky Prichard have been preparing Bible study materials for Circle Moderators. Becky is adapting information from the Bible study, *"The Promised One: Seeing Jesus in Genesis"* by Nancy Guthrie.
- Corresponding Secretary Judith McNeel has written comforting notes to FPC members and their families who are sick or grieving.
- Women in DiscoverFirst! classes often express interest in WOC. Vice President for New Members Candy Wagner is contacting them and helping them find places to participate.
- Program and committee chairmen are making plans for our Fall Evening Event, Fall Legacy Luncheon, Gift of Christmas, and House of Neighborly Service scholarship raffle. We have even begun making plans for Christmas parties at Morningside Manor!

Please plan to attend the **Fall Evening Event on October 15** at the home of Lellen Lane. It will be a wonderful evening with food and fellowship, and all women are invited to attend. Another event that you will not want to miss is the **Fall Legacy Luncheon on October 28.** Our speaker will be former FPC pastor (and mother of Rev. Becky Prichard) Kristin Huffman.

As you put away pool floats and beach umbrellas, I hope that you look forward to a new season of WOC activities. May we eagerly look for ways to love Jesus, love each other, and love our city.

WOMEN OF THE CHURCH

September Circle Schedule

Circle Number	Circle Theme	Meeting Info	Additional Info
Circle 1/12	Bible Circle	September 16 | 10:30 AM FPC Geneva Room	Optional Lunch: $8
Circle 5	Shawl Ministry	September 20 | 10:00 AM FPC Room 228	
Circle 6	Bible Circle	Third Tuesday | 1:30 PM FPC Geneva Room	
Circle 7	Bible Circle	September 17 | 11:30 AM San Antonio Botanical Ctr.	
Circle 8	Mom's Group	September 3 | 7:30 PM Sichuan House (3505 Wurzbach Road)	
Circle 9	Bible Circle	Third Tuesday | 10:00 AM FPC Geneva Room	
Circle 11	Bible Circle	September 23, 6:30 PM Home of Pat Brodeen (2307 Oak Trace)	
Circle 13	Literature Circle	September 10 | 1:00 PM FPC McCullough Room	Open to women & men; September Book: *The Girl They Left Behind* by Roxanne Veletzos
Circle 14	Bible Circle	Third Monday | 12:00 PM FPC St. Andrew's Room	Optional Lunch: $8
Circle 18	Circle of Concern	Second Wednesday | 9:30 AM FPC Room 309	
Circle 20	Circle of Service	Opportunities for Service throughout the Year, no formal meetings	

WOMEN OF THE CHURCH UPCOMING EVENTS:

Please mark your calendar!

Sept. 9 - 9:45 AM
WOC Moderators and Council Meeting

Oct. 15 - 6:00 PM
Fall Ladies' Night Out at the home of Lellen Lane

Oct. 28 - 11:30 AM
Fall Legacy Luncheon

FIRST CUP READINGS SEPTEMBER, 2019

Dear Family in Christ,
First Cup is designed to assist you in the habit of daily Bible reading and prayer. The name is to remind you that as you reach for your first cup of morning coffee or tea, reach also for your Bible and prayer list. The prayers at the beginning of each week are taken from hymns, sometimes found in obscure hymnals in my library. They are intended to be read as your beginning prayer, to focus your mind on the daily readings that follow. May this spiritual discipline strengthen you as you face each day.

Blessings and love in Christ, Sandy Sturch

Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you. Show me the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul.— Psalm 143:8

1 Luke 17:20-37; Genesis 7:6-24; 19:1-29; Revelation 6:12-17
2 Deuteronomy 14:28-29; Isaiah 1:16-17; Luke 18:1-8; Isaiah 58
3 Luke 18:9-14; Matthew 18:1-14; 23:1-12; 2 Timothy 3:10-17; Proverbs 22:6
4 Luke 18:15-17; 1 Peter 2:2; 1 John 2:28-3:10
5 Luke 18:18-30; Exodus 20:1-17; Job 34:16-19; 1 Peter 1:3-9

Oh, I love to walk with Jesus, like the publicans of old, when He gathered them about Him and the blessing tidings told: How He came to bring deliverance to the captives in distress; take away our every burden, giving perfect peace and rest. Oh, I love to walk with Jesus like the man of long ago, who had tarried by the wayside near the gates of Jericho. Jesus heard his cry for mercy, gave him back his sight that day and immediately he followed Jesus all along the way. Oh, I love to walk with Jesus all the way to Cal-v'ry's brow, gaze upon that scene of suffering while my tears of sorrow flow. There He tells me how He loves me, takes my every sin away; so I follow Him so gladly, lead me anywhere He may. (Worship in Song, #119)

6 Luke 18:31-34; Psalm 41:9; 22:16-18; Isaiah 53; Psalm 16:9-10
7 Luke 18:35-43; John 9; Psalm 146
8 Psalm 14; Mark 2:13-17; Luke 19:1-10; Proverbs 8:17; Jeremiah 29:13; Isaiah 55
9 Luke 19:11-27; Proverbs 27:18; Matthew 25:31-46
10 Luke 19:28-44; Matthew 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11; Zechariah 2; 9:9
11 Luke 19:45-48; John 2:13-22; I Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:19-20; Ephesians 2
12 Psalm 118; Luke 20:1-19; Acts 4:1-12; I Peter 2:1-10

Beneath the cross of Jesus I fain would take my stand--the shadow of a mighty Rock within a weary land; a home within the wilderness' a rest upon the way from the burning of the noontide heat and the burden of the day. Upon the cross of Jesus mine eyes at times can see the very dying form of one who suffered there for me: and from my stricken heart with tears two wonders I confess--the wonders of redeeming love and my unworthiness. (The Hymnbook, #190)

13 Luke 20:20-26; Romans 13; Colossians 3:12-14; 1 Peter 5:5-12
14 Luke 20:27-40; John 11:1-45; Romans 6:8-14; 1 Corinthians 15:20-58
15 Malachi 2:1-9; Matthew 23; Luke 20:41-47; 1 Peter 5:1-4
16 Luke 21:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8:1-15; 9:6-15; 1 Kings 17:1-16; Proverbs 3:27-28
17 Luke 21:5-38; 2 Timothy 3; 2 Peter 3
18 Luke 22:1-6; Matthew 26:1-16; Matthew 10
19 Luke 22:7-71; John 13:13-38; Titus 1:10-16; Jude 3-4; 1 John 2:20-23

Marvelous grace of our loving Lord, Grace that exceeds our sin and our guilt. Yonder on Calvary's mount outpoured, there where the blood of the Lamb was spilt! Dark is the stain that we cannot hide. What can avail to wash it away? Look! There is flowing a crimson tide; Whiter than snow you may be today. Marvelous, infinite, matchless grace, Freely bestowed on all who believe! You that are longing to see His face, will you this moment His grace receive? Grace, grace, God's grace, Grace that will pardon and cleanse within! Grace that is greater than all our sin! (Worship in Song, # 213)

20 Matthew 27:1-56; Luke 23; John 19
21 Matthew 28:1-15; Luke 24:1-53; 1 Corinthians 15
22 Romans 1; Leviticus 18; Psalm 106
23 Romans 2; James 1:19-25; Matthew 7:1-5
24 Romans 3; Psalm 14; 5; Ephesians 1:3-14
25 Romans 4; Ephesians 2:8-9; John 6:28-40
26 Romans 5:1-11; Colossians 1:21-23; 1 Peter 4:12-19; James 5:10-11

O Love that will not let me go, I rest my weary soul in Thee; I give Thee back the life I owe, that in Thine ocean depths its flow may richer, fuller be. Oh Light that follows all my way, I yield my flickering torch to Thee; My heart restores its borrowed ray, that in Thy sunshine's blasé its day may brighter, fairer be. Oh cross that liftest up my head, I dare not ask to fly from Thee; I lay in dust life's glory dead, and from the ground there blossoms red, life that shall endless be. (The Hymnal, # 400)

27 Romans 5:12-6:23; Ephesians 1:3-10; 1 Thessalonians 3:11-4:8
28 Romans 7; 2 Samuel 11; Mark 14:26-38; 51-71; Psalm 32
29 Romans 8:1-17; 2 Corinthians 5:1-10; Isaiah 25:6-9; 1 Corinthians 15:35-58
30 Romans 8:18-39; Deuteronomy 31:6; Joshua 1:5; Psalm 118

FIRST CUP PRAYER LIST

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. (Romans 8:26).

Date	Name of Person	Request	God's Answer

KINMART A GREAT SUCCESS!

FPC was one of the host sites for KinMart, an event designed by South Texas Alliance for Orphans to help local foster families. On August 3, we welcomed families to Westminster Hall for an enjoyable and cost-less "shopping" experience for school supplies. Thank you FPC for your help in donating school supplies and volunteering for the day of the event.

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