



# First Press

## *Living to Make Jesus Visible*

March 2013 Your monthly connection to First Presbyterian Church of San Antonio

Pastor's Pondering

### "Double-click" to Be a Blessing to Others



Some of you may remember a sermon I preached a while back (then again, some of you may wish to *forget* a sermon I preached a while back!) where I mentioned a list that provided insight into how to care for introverts. The list was "life-giving" for me, due to the reality that I have two introverts in my household.

Well, wishing not to neglect those of us extroverts in the world, I am delighted to now provide you with a list of how to care for extroverts:

1. Respect their independence.
2. Compliment them in the company of others.
3. Accept and encourage their enthusiasm.
4. Allow them to explore and talk things out.
5. Thoughtfully surprise them.
6. Understand when they are busy.
7. Let them dive right in.
8. Offer them options.
9. Make physical and verbal gestures of affection.
10. Let them shine.

Now, some of you may be wondering why I would be so delighted to provide you with this list. For one reason, I hope this list will provide for you some insight into what makes me tick. I have come to realize, as an off-the-charts extrovert, that my personality and actions can, at times, leave some people scratching their heads, in wonder.

But there is another reason I chose to provide this list to you: I think it is incredibly important for us to learn how to care for one another. Whether we are introverts or extroverts, as Christians, we are called to care for one another. We are called to be people of blessing. And I am convinced that we should spend more time deliberately caring for others than we do trying to figure out one another's quirks and imperfections. Let's face it: we have different personalities but we have been saved by the same amazing grace and it is that grace that we have been called to shower on others—no strings attached.

I recently read about something that has been a source of curiosity for me: the need to double-click the mouse on my computer. Wikipedia explains that the first click helps you to

select an action and the second click allows you to execute the action. If you think about it—when it comes to many of the most important transactions of life, we live between the "clicks." With relative ease, we make the selection, but we often fail when it comes to execution. However, life moves at the speed of the second click. When it comes to caring for others—in other words, being people of blessing—we must select an action but we must also execute the action; we must "double-click."

*I want to challenge you to a 31-day challenge.* I challenge you to approach March as a "double-click" month. Imagine if you and I, for 31 days, would not only select an action to bless another person but we also executed that action. Imagine what a difference we could make in another person's life while at the same time making a difference in our own lives. This is not just an invitation to a month of service; it is an invitation to a life of service. However, it is not just an invitation to a life of service; it is an opportunity to get a life *through* service.

You see, I am convinced that is how Jesus intends for us to live as Christians. I believe He meant what He said when He said, "Love your neighbor as yourself." What will you do in the month of February that will exhibit your love for neighbor? How will you bless someone with the unexpected?

I leave you with a wonderful prayer from St. Francis:

*Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love. Where there is injury, pardon. Here there is doubt, faith. Where there is despair, hope. Where there is darkness, light. Where there is sadness, joy. O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled, as to console; to be understood, as to understand; to be loved, as to love. For it is in giving that we receive. It is pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life. Amen.*

Friends, whether an introvert or an extrovert, join me this month as we "double-click" for the glory of God!

In the meantime, keep smilin' and keep lovin'.

## Church Register



### DEATHS:

Jane Reser  
January 28, 2013

Albert Seaver  
January 28, 2013

William Collier  
January 30, 2013

Bradley A. Pigeon  
January 31, 2013

Emily Jackson  
January 31, 2013

Terry J. Dunklin  
February 1, 2013

### BIRTHS:

Reed Altgelt Powell  
Son of Virginia Frnka Powell and Walter Powell III  
January 8, 2013

### BAPTISMS:

Joe Carroll Rust III, son of Joe C. and Joan Rust, Jr.  
January 20, 2013

John McCullough DeKoch, Jr., son of John McCullough  
and Annie Rothe DeKoch  
January 20, 2013

Callum Robert Campbell, son of Scott and Meredith Campbell  
February 10, 2013

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY JANUARY 2013

OPERATING FUND BUDGET	ACTUAL YTD	BUDGET YTD	VARIANCE
TOTAL REVENUES	\$431,907	\$570,990	(\$139,083)
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES	\$409,132	\$414,088	(\$4,956)
TOTAL BENEVOLENCES	\$43,920	\$39,642	\$4,279
NET INCOME/LOSS	(\$21,146)	\$117,260	(\$138,406)

**Giving was well below expectations in January.** This may be due to January having only four Sundays compared to five last year, or timing issues of gifts and payables. We are hopeful that February will see us return to the level of giving consistent with our 2013 operating budget. We continue to be thankful for this generous and faithful congregation of believers who are living to make Jesus visible every day. If you have any questions, please contact the Finance Office at 271-2755 or any member of the Stewardship and Finance Committee.

## Worship Service Schedule for March

Mach 3	Rev. Trey H. Little
March 10 (Daylight Saving)	Rev. Trey H. Little
March 17	Rev. Trey H. Little
March 24	Rev. Trey H. Little
March 28 Maundy Thursday	Rev. Ruthie Seiders
March 29 Good Friday	Rev. Scott Simpson
March 31	Rev. Trey H. Little

## Holy Week and Easter 2013

### Palm Sunday – March 24

Traditional Worship Services: 9:00 and 11:15 a.m. – Sanctuary  
Contemporary Worship Service: 11:00 a.m. – Westminster Hall

### Wednesday – March 27

Passover Seder Dinner: 5:30 p.m. – Westminster Hall  
Dinner - Adult, Youth and Children (grades 1-5): \$7 per person.

Reserve by sending a check to Nancy Berger at the church by Wednesday, March 20. Make check payable to FPC with "Seder dinner" noted on memo line. Childcare (with optional \$3 dinner) for ages 3–Kinder, in the First Floor Assembly Room. Nursery care is available for infants and toddlers; please indicate your needs when you RSVP.

### Maundy Thursday – March 28

Luncheon: 11:00 a.m. - Westminster Hall  
Worship Service: Noon - Sanctuary  
Service of Prayer and Meditation including Communion 5:30-6:30 p.m. You are invited to come to the Sanctuary anytime between 5:30 and 6:30 for personal prayer and meditation on Scripture. There will be pastors available to serve communion throughout the hour. Those in attendance are invited to come forward to receive communion when they desire.

Lunch - \$6 per person; Reserve by sending a check to Nancy Berger at the church by Wednesday, March 20. Make checks payable to FPC with "Maundy Lunch" noted on memo line.

### Good Friday – March 29

6:45 p.m. – Sanctuary  
Tenebrae Worship Service with liturgy drawn from the seven last words of Christ from the cross. Music provided by the Sanctuary Choir Chamber Singers.

### Saturday – March 30

Children's Easter Program: 10:00 a.m. – Westminster Hall



### Easter Sunday – March 31

Sunrise Worship Service with Communion:  
6:45 a.m. – Location to be announced  
Traditional Worship Services: 8:00, 9:30  
and 11:15 a.m. – Sanctuary  
Contemporary Worship Service: 11:00 a.m.  
– Westminster Hall

Childcare is available for all the events listed above. For reservations, contact Carrie Jowers (carriej@fpcsat.org / 210.226.0215, ext. 220) no later than two days prior to the event. Unfortunately, drop-ins cannot be accommodated. No Sunday School.

## Session Minutes in Seconds

The Session on Monday evening, 2/11:

Approved and received the items in the Consent Agenda (approved previous minutes, received Deacon's minutes, approved changes to the Church Register, approved financials, received committee minutes)

Received a report from the Clerk

Moved to go into Executive Session and then come out of Executive Session

Received reports from Committees and/or Task Forces

Reviewed status of Sunday morning schedule changes

Approved the 2012 Statistical Report

Set dates for the Congregational Meeting to Elect Officers and vote on Pastors' Terms of Call (4/7) and Officers' Ordination and Installation (6/2)

Adjourned with Prayer

## Blessed to Pray with You

by Deacon Lynn Thompson

For many of us, the thought of praying “in front of others” becomes a daunting task – but then we remember ... we focus ... we appreciate ... we aren’t praying *in front of you* but *with you* to our most holy and loving God. That’s when it starts to get right. We know it is not a task, but a privilege to be able to approach God with concerns and praise.

Is that always how we view it when called upon to pray aloud? Do we get just a little nervous? Do we want it to be “a good prayer”? Do prayers at family gatherings get batted about in your family and falls to the person who didn’t say “not it” in time? It may be time to take a look at this simple guide.



Acts is an inspiring book in the Bible calling us to action, but it is also a wonderful acronym for guiding our prayers:

**Adoration.** Take time to think about the characteristics of God. Which parts of God do I particularly need today?

**Confession.** Tell God about what is standing in the way of an honest relationship with Him, or with others. Am I hurt, sad, angry, neglectful?

**Thanksgiving.** God blesses us every day. For what blessings can I articulate and thank God within my current circumstances?

**Supplication.** Trust that God supplies us when ask. This is not just a list of what I want or think should happen. If I truly pray “Thy will be done”, then I depend on God to show me what I need and then to supply it. Hey, maybe then I’ll even recognize the answer to my pray and give glory back to Him!

### Adore \* Confess \* Thank \* Supply

*As Deacons, caring for our congregation is our mission, and praying with you is our privilege.* Deacons pray with you in homes, hospitals, and rehabilitation centers during our visits. We are available to pray with you after every worship service in the Griffith Chapel or near the Acts stained glass windows in Westminster Hall. We pray daily over the struggles, difficulties, and praises shared on the FPC Care and Concern line. We pray with our congregation family in worship. We pray coming in and we pray going out.

*We want to be your prayer warriors.* We want you to know the power of our God Almighty, to understand the forgiveness we have through Jesus Christ, and to feel the comfort of Holy Spirit in every situation. So, join us in prayer—for this is the way in which we will all be changed. To God be the glory.

\* The ACTS acronym structure for modeling prayer has been around for years and information is available all over the internet. There is even a YouTube video. Most recently, FPC officers discussed it using *Discipleship Essentials* by Greg Ogden, chapter 5, pages 46-53.

## Blessed to Bring Holy Communion to You

Each month, using a Jesus-given memorial, our church family celebrates God’s greatest gift to humankind. That precious communion event is something we prepare for and something that can carry us into the mystery and assurance of God’s omnipotence and inexplicable love.

I know we try to put it into words, but for practiced believers, there is something possible during communion that is unique and transcendent. It’s unlike any other experience.

As you read this, you may recall someone in our church who hasn’t been in the pew recently. Maybe he’s in rehab, or she’s recovering after surgery or a debilitating illness or accident. For whatever reason, this person has not been able to celebrate Holy Communion in corporate worship. Maybe that person is you.

*Our deacons and elders would be honored to bring communion to you or to that other church member,* just as our church officers serve the members during our Sunday worship services.

Sunday, April 7, will be the next occasion for the Home Communion Ministry to serve. Elder/deacon teams will also bring home communion on Sundays, June 2, and October 6 (Worldwide Communion Sunday).

The ministers bless the bread and juice during the first worship service of that Sunday. Then the elements are taken from our chancel and placed in communion travel kits which are carried by the elder/deacon teams to the members.

If this is a Sunday afternoon appointment that you would want, contact Susan Dullnig, Pastor Scott Simpson’s administrative assistant (susand@fpcsat.org or 210-226-0215, ext. 253). Maybe you want to let us know about other members who would like to receive communion at their residences.

When members can come to church, we can celebrate communion together. When they can’t for an extended period of time, we can reach out to them.

It’s like taking the elements to the last rows of our sanctuary.



(Ed. Note - FPC's Home Community Ministry was featured in the November 2012 issue of *First Press*. In addition to home communion offered by Elder/Deacon teams, Rev. Scott Simpson offers communion to members who live at The Towers on the same dates.)



## The Ladybug Casts A Long Shadow

From a collection of essays entitled: *Fireside Chats, Meditations on Faith* by Susan Kerr. This story will be included as a chapter in a book scheduled to be published in October 2013 by Material Media.

*Living to Make Jesus Visible*

**"Be doers of the word, and not merely hearers." (James 1:22)**

**"What good is it if you say you have faith but do not have works? (James 2:14)**

**"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." (Galatians 5:22-23)**

Anna Quindlen's novel *Every Last One* is about an ordinary family whose lives are shattered by an unthinkable act of violence. The theme centers on the consequences that stem from actions that appear to be inconsequential. A quote from the novel lingered in my mind for weeks. The mother sits in the backyard enjoying the evening breeze when her child wonders if "the beating of [butterfly] wings in Mexico could cause a breeze in our backyard." *The butterfly effect.* Although Quindlen explores the far-reaching consequences of an evil act, the same idea can be seen in a positive light. Deeds of kindness that we deem insignificant and unremarkable can reverberate and ripple into the future. "We flap our wings in the kitchen and a wind blows through the future."

My ruminations on this idea were given a visual component several years ago in October when we were inundated with ladybugs at our vacation home in the Blue Ridge Mountains. They were in the house, on your clothes and in the fur of the dog. Because they could not be ignored, they became a topic of conversation. Did their numbers forecast an impending weather system or were the swarms simply the result of a rainy autumn?



I asked my husband how it would feel to be a guy ladybug? While he was pondering his response, something caught our eye. With the sun shining on one of these tiny, spotted oval shaped domes, it cast a shadow nearly ten times its size.

Because I was giving weekly devotionals to my Bible Study group at the time, called "fireside chats," I was always attentive to new ideas. My "fireside" alert signal went off! The sunlight created the elongated shadow of the ladybug. In a similar way, if we live in the light of the Son, the deeds we consider to be insignificant and unremarkable might cast a shadow of blessing into the future. We are "blessed to be a blessing." (Genesis 1:20-23, Revelation 22:12-14, 2 Corinthians 8-9) If we are to be a blessing in the life of another person, is it the result of faith alone? Simply the result of believing that Christ is Lord and accepting that we are saved by undeserved grace? Or is the blessing "paid forward" only as we become "doers" of the word, by living out the "works that God has prepared for us."

Christians have a "complex relationship with the idea of work." As soon as a new believer gratefully embraces the truth that he is "justified by faith alone, apart from the works of the law," he might be confused to hear James' exhortation that faith without works is "barren," "worthless" and "dead." "Holding these two claims together can be a tough balancing act." We err on the side of legalism if we focus too much on works. But we risk being called lazy and unfruitful if we have too little focus on works.

You just can't get away from the fact that in order to bless others, Christians must do something. If the evidence of our faith is works, what does this look like in our lives? When I became a Christian 30 years ago, eager to serve God and others, I worried that "doing the word" might involve packing up the family and moving to Africa as missionaries. Thankfully, a Christian friend, more mature in her faith, told me simply to "bloom where you are planted."

Two people have helped me to understand the "works" that please God.

Birdie Lasater was an OLD friend, who had known five generations of my family. She died at the age of 102. "Well done, good and faithful servant" was on the program at her funeral service. What had Birdie done in her life? Nothing big, nothing that made the newspapers. She was not a prominent member of the community, with a multi-columned obituary listing numerous boards and civic organizations. What Birdie had "done" was goodness, kindness and love. Birdie "bloomed where she was planted," for years as a weekly volunteer with "Meals on Wheels," serving hot meals to the home-bound elderly. She was a greeter in her small Presbyterian church for fifty years and continued "greeting" people after she moved into the nursing home in her 90s. As one speaker at her funeral commented, she is probably "greeting people in Heaven." We would do well to shape our lives around the hymns sung at Birdie's funeral: "My Hope is Built on Nothing Less," "Near to the Heart of God," and "Jesus Thy Boundless Love to Me."

Birdie made an impact on the character of my children in the many visits we made to her simple home when they were young. Unable to attend her funeral, my son Jeff emailed me: "Thanks for making Birdie a part of our lives." Jeff had "worked" with a big box of tools that had belonged to Birdie's late husband, Frenchie. We enjoyed many tea parties at her dining room table and many Christmas seasons when Jeff and Millie helped decorate her home. On the shelf above her nursing home bed were seashells my children had given Birdie 26 years ago. When Jeff became an Eagle Scout, Birdie attended the ceremony and presented him with the Silver Beaver Award that had been given to Frenchie as a long-time Scout leader. Birdie knew that God was the basis of her hope and strength, she lived close to the heart of God and knew of His boundless love. "Stream of living water" flowed from her as she touched many lives. Her gentle character and joyful spirit will be remembered.

A young Marine, sent to fight in the Pacific in World War II, was seriously wounded at Guadalcanal, and then spent several months recuperating in a U.S. Navy hospital in Auckland, New Zealand. Although the other soldiers in his hospital ward were sent home to the U.S., this was not his fate. In fact, after he recovered he returned to his Marine battalion and fought in the bloody battles of Tarawa, Kwajalein, Saipan, and Tinian.

One Sunday during his convalescence in New Zealand, homesick and lonely, he walked on crutches to St. Andrews Presbyterian Church in downtown Auckland. A local family, the McDonalds, members of the church, took this young soldier under their wings, inviting him to their home, welcoming him into their family, and showing him all around the beautiful North Island of New Zealand.

Sixty years later, this Marine, now an old man in his mid-eighties, spent months sharing his war memories with his son, resulting in the publication of his memoir as a book titled *Only a Khaki Shirt*. After all the years, he clearly remembered the kindness of the McDonalds. The old man decided to make a significant financial donation to St. Andrews Church in their memory, his only condition that the church would display a plaque honoring the McDonald Family "for their kindness and generosity to the Second Division of the US Marine Corps during the Second World War." Since the old man could no longer travel, he asked his 26-year old grandson to make the long trip

## God's Water for God's People - How/What Are We Doing?

by Kay Kutchins

In the beginning . . . among God's creations was water.

Since the beginning . . . water has been a foundation of creation, of life, of civilization, of plenty and want, of war and peace, of food and famine.

And continuing today . . . water is taken for granted, used and abused, available and in short supply.

In *The Hole in the Gospel*, our Lenten study book by Richard Stearns, the author quotes a voice from Kenya: "Water is life, and because we have not water, life is miserable." He also notes the omnipresence of water in our lives and encourages us to imagine what our lives would be like without both the resource and its convenience.

An FPC Intersection Class on Christian Living is currently examining the broad subject of water and what it means in our lives and our witness.

In recognition of World Water Week in March, FPC will offer opportunities to learn Biblical teachings that recognize God's creation and explore our Christian responsibilities in stewardship of water. And we'll have available resource information so that families and individuals can begin to assess. World Water Day (March 22) marks international recognition of the importance of clean water with respect to public health and economic and environmental stability.

Worship services will include special music and information to promote awareness of a resource most of us take for granted, but which is in short supply (and often not available) both in the United States as well as throughout the world).

A special workshop gathering at 9:00 a.m. **Saturday, March 23** in Westminster Hall will focus on Christian stewardship of water. Members from Presbyterian congregations throughout Mission Presbytery have been invited to attend the workshop which will include:

A presentation by Chris McRae, executive director of Synod of the Sun's "Solar Under the Sun" program.

Through this program solar-powered clean water systems can be available to provide safe and sustainable drinking water supplies in areas where water resources often are contaminated.

An on-site demonstration of solar-powered clean water systems, part of a cooperative effort with Living Waters for the World.

A discussion of water needs in Texas to gain a greater understanding of the Texas Water Plan and San Antonio's Water Management Plan.

A perspective on how God's people may translate Biblical perspectives on water into tangible responses that sustain life, impact public health, and contribute to economic and environmental improvement.

Please participate in our recognition of water and discussion of its impact on our lives.



### Continued from page 4 .... The Ladybug

to New Zealand to dedicate the plaque on New Zealand's Day of Remembrance, an annual commemoration of the many New Zealanders who died in the First and Second World Wars. The young man stood before a full congregation and honored his grandfather by telling the story of the generosity of the McDonalds, who had long since died without any surviving family in Auckland.

The old man was my father-in-law, Baine Kerr, who died in 2008. The young man was my son Jeff.

Birdie and the McDonalds were "blessed to be a blessing." They were the "hands and feet" of Christ, heeding the advice of D.L. Moody that "every Bible should be bound in shoe leather." They "walked the walk," and when they "talked the talk," the words they spoke were in alignment with the Word they followed. They bore the fruits of the Christian life because they remained connected to Jesus, the source of the harvest of fruit. Their hearts were the good soil that Jesus spoke of in His parable; hearts that were well tended and prepared so they could receive the word and "bear fruit, a hundredfold," (Matthew 13:23) the fruits of the Spirit: "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self control." (Galatians 5:22) Each of these is a "work" that pleases God.

On a hike in the Blue Ridge Mountains, we encountered a couple, who live in North Carolina. They were delighted to find Texans who loved the magnificent view from this ridge. We all agreed how blessed we were to be there. When they walked off, the man turned around and said, "You are already a good memory." And then I realized the thread that connects these stories. Kindness is a good memory, a story that is told and retold.

Two months after the autumn of ladybugs, my family spent Christmas in England. Wandering into an antique store, I purchased a book that fits in the palm of my hand, "Bible Gems." Inscribed on the front page: "To Miss Goddard from Edith J. Nelson, X-Mas 1906." How many people have been blessed by this book? What other hands have held this little volume? Who else has begun their day reading the Scripture verse, one for every day of the month? One thing I know is that 106 years later, it is the gift that keeps giving.

Thank you, Birdie, for showing me the value and impact of small acts of kindness, simple virtues, concern for others and gratitude. Thank you, Mr. and Mrs. McDonald, for reminding us not to grow weary doing good even though we may never see the results of our actions. Thank you Edith Nelson for choosing this book as a Christmas gift in 1906. It blesses me today.

The butterfly effect. The shadow of the ladybug. They exemplify the philosophy of St. Theresa, "the Saint of the little way." – doing the little things in life well and with great love. Their lives show that the "butterfly effect" that casts a shadow of blessing into the future emanates from bearing the fruits of the spirit – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness.

*Prayer:* Father, your word does not suggest that we bear fruit, but rather commands it and expects it. Help us remember that apart from an abiding relationship with you, we will not bear the fruit of the Spirit. Only if your word is implanted in our hearts, will it grow into the behavior and action that pleases you. Let us not grow weary or discouraged with doing good even if we don't see the result. We may plant a tree whose shade we will never sit under. But we hope to hear the words one day, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

## San Antonio Presbyterians Work Together to Bless the Quiroga Family

by Louise Peters

Each year FPC joins with other San Antonio Presbyterian Churches to build a Presbyterian Cluster house, and we are now in the building process with the Quiroga Family.



Our Habitat Presbyterian Cluster family is known for its hard work and their quick response to opportunity. Not too long ago, a family decided to postpone its building process, and the Quirogas took the opportunity to "move up" into the

open slot. From that moment forward they began working every spare hour (outside their regular jobs) to earn 300 "sweat equity" hours. Since the opportunity for their home came almost three months sooner than they had anticipated, "catching up" the necessary work and required class hours has been a challenge.

To earn their 300 hours they must work on another house, in the Habitat warehouse, home store or office, and on their own house. They also must take 12 classes that prepare them for home ownership—learning everything from maintenance to conflict mediation to landscaping. The Quirogas tell us they feel very blessed to have their home under way, are enjoying their classes, and have made new friends as they've worked alongside Presbyterian Cluster Build volunteers.

And excitement is the operating work for each child: Liliana (6), Giovanni (5), and Aidne (4). Habitat staff told us that "The oldest

daughter delivered a beautiful picture to HFH offices of what she thinks her new home will look like! She is quite the artist and their new home will have plenty of room for her to make many happy memories."



Now we need **YOUR** help. There are plenty of ways we can help **Habitat** as it strives to improve housing opportunities in San Antonio.

**Project 240, Sunday, March 3, 1:00-5:00 p.m. will build framing walls for five Habitat homes.**

**Our FPC work days at the Presbyterian Cluster home—and your opportunity to meet the Quiroga family—are March 1 and 22 (Fridays) and March 2 and 23 (Saturdays). The work site is at 1001 Harriman Place, San Antonio, Texas 78207**

The Quiroga's home will be dedicated and blessed on March 23. You are invited to attend!

Make Jesus visible by joining the building crew by contacting Alyssa Payne, Director of Missions at [AlyssaP@fpcsat.org](mailto:AlyssaP@fpcsat.org) or 226-0216, ext. 242. (For information on weather and work status: 210-223-5203, ext. 184.)

## Claire Plantenga Joins Mission Team to Be a Blessing

by Kay Kutchins



Claire and Derek Plantenga, along with their two young children Noelia and Micah, are a family of First Presbyterian Church members who endeavor to make Jesus visible wherever he may ask them to serve. Their heart for mission has taken them to a variety of places around the world, including to the Dominican Republic with this church, where they began to feel called to go out

into the world and serve as cross-cultural missionaries.

After nearly three years of working with Food for the Hungry in Bolivia and building relationships with families, churches, and leaders, they discovered that their son Micah needed to return to the U.S. for immediate medical care. "The sting of getting on an airplane and leaving behind a thriving ministry and many friends in addition to the pain of having a child diagnosed with a chronic medical condition led to great heartache for us" Claire says, "but we remained confident that God always has a plan, even when it does not seem to make sense in that moment."

Upon returning to San Antonio, God provided for their family and blessed them in so many unexpected ways. Derek was hired to work at UTSA in a position that allows him to encourage, teach, and guide

San Antonio's future social workers as they complete an internship within a community agency. Meanwhile, Claire has had the privilege of providing full-time care for their kids and has participated in FPC activities including the Mom's Group. Both kids are in great health, enjoying preschool, and their daughter even has a teacher who happens to be from Bolivia!

"I always understood 'going' on mission trips," says Claire, "but now I also understand that God may have been using my experiences in Bolivia to prepare me for the role of 'sending,' which is, of course, equally vital to the process of reaching out to others with the love of Jesus Christ."

In February, Claire was hired to be the Administrative Assistant to the Director of Missions, Alyssa Payne. "Witnessing firsthand the many ways in which God can work through the local church to transform entire communities has been absolutely thrilling," Claire says. "I'm embracing my new role of sending and I am honored to be a part of facilitating all aspects of FPC's local and global outreach. My greatest joy would be to assist in helping each member of the church to discover the unique abilities that God has given them to serve, and that we would work together as a team and as a church family to bring Him glory as we strive together to make Jesus visible in San Antonio and beyond."

Contact Claire at [clairep@fpcsat.org](mailto:clairep@fpcsat.org) or 226-0215, ext. 224.



## FPC Blesses Hurricane Sandy Victims



On Sunday, January 13, five adults from First Presbyterian Church flew from San Antonio to Newark, New Jersey, where they rented a vehicle to travel to Toms River. Tom's River is located on the Jersey Shore and is one of the communities that sustained significant damage and loss at the hands of Superstorm Sandy this past fall. The purpose of the trip was for the people of FPC to bless the people of Toms River and the surrounding area. As God would have it, our own John Seiders has had a long-standing friendship with the Senior Pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Toms River (PCTR), David Joynt. Just after the storm slammed into the Jersey Shore, John contacted David and offered assistance, both financially and in terms of sending teams to help in the recovery and the rebuilding of people's homes.

Through the contacts at PCTR, the team was able to work at a home in the town of Brick in partnership with a new not-for-profit organization "We Are Team Jersey." The home had been damaged by flood waters and needed significant work. The team removed belongings that were undamaged by the flooding and then went to work ripping out sheetrock as necessary and damaged subflooring. Over the course of four days, they were able to install new subflooring and insulation in exterior walls. After learning how to use some power tools, they also hung sheetrock in three rooms and the main hallway of the home.

In addition, the team helped to unload trucks of supplies at a United Way staging center and literally moved several couches as well as a dining room set from a home where the furniture was unused to a family of five who are now in their third home since they were flooded out of their house in October and lost all their possessions.

This is one way in which five people were able to bless others because of the grace of God. Many thanks to Jim Carsow, Teresa McCaleb, Mike Munroe, John Seiders and Candy Wagner for serving in New Jersey.

We are planning two more trips in the coming months. If you are interested in blessing others through serving others, please contact Claire Plantenga, Administrative Assistant for Missions [clairep@fpcsat.org](mailto:clairep@fpcsat.org) or 226-0216, ext. 224.

### THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF TOMS RIVER

1070 Hooper Avenue · Toms River · NJ 08753

Tel. 732-349-1331

Fax 732-349-3315

Rev. John Seiders  
1st Presbyterian Church of San Antonio  
404 N. Alamo Street  
San Antonio, TX 78205

To our friends at 1st Presbyterian Church of San Antonio:

On behalf of the Session and congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Toms River, and the residents of the Jersey Shore, I want to thank you for your generous gift to help in our ongoing recovery.

In 2012, we worked on 30 homes, largely helping with deconstruction due to flood damage. We have been distributing food and clothing. We have also been staging teams of volunteers from other congregations and we've hosted the Red Cross for 6 weeks. In 2013, the reconstruction efforts will begin in earnest.

Your partnership and prayers are a source of hope and encouragement as we work toward recovery and witness to God's love and compassion. Blessings and thanks to you.

Yours faithfully

Rev. Dr. David M. Joynt  
Senior Pastor

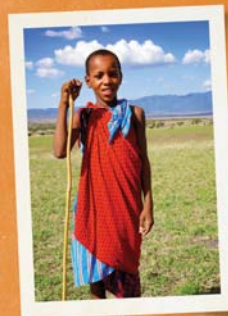
### WORLD VISION EXPERIENCE



#### KISONGO TREK

Take a virtual journey to Africa and experience an astonishing story of change.

Kisongo Trek, the new World Vision Experience, will take you and your family to Tanzania to meet 13-year-old Babayetu. You will hear the real-life story of how his village moved from poverty to hope with help from World Vision and people like you.



This immersive experience brings the sights and sounds of Africa to life using innovative technology, state-of-the-art cinematography, and captivating imagery.

Step outside yourself and be a part of God's work by helping to create lasting change.

**Bring the whole family. We'll see you there!**

**COMING TO FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
HOPE SUNDAY, MARCH 24**



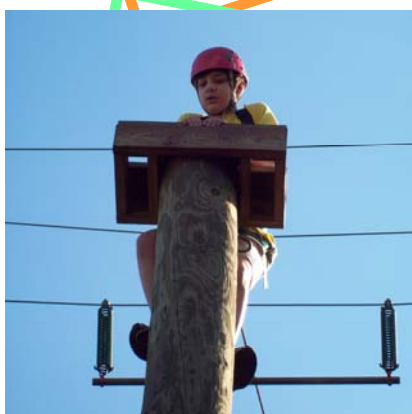
## Middle School/Confirmation Retreat – Fun and Learning at Camp T Bar M!



Phyllis Monroe leads her small group in a discussion.



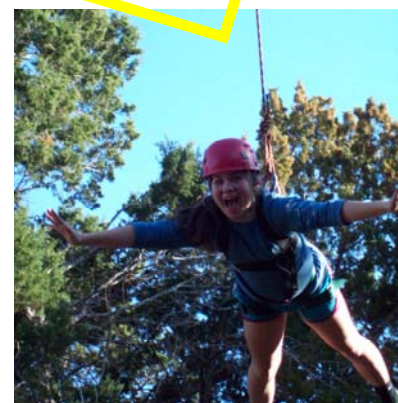
Students & mentors team up to get everyone to safety!



One of our 7<sup>th</sup> grade JOY students makes a big accomplishment!



Mentors and students are challenged to find "the light." The key lesson was listening to the instructions, "If you need help raise your hand."



The thrill of setting a personal goal and accomplishing it!

Sometimes we walk through life blindly and do not ask God for the help we need.



Confirmation mentors join their boys for lunch!



Steve Monroe and Stuart Seal lead a conversation with their small group boys and their parents on Sunday morning of the retreat.



Nothing better than s'mores around the campfire!



## Thank You Katy Evans, for Being a Blessing to Youth

by Ruthie Seiders



Katy Evans first joined the First Presbyterian Church youth staff during her senior year at Trinity University. Katy served as one of two college interns in partnership with Kellen Smith, our Director of Youth Ministry. Kellen then moved on to Princeton Seminary and Katy

was invited to apply for the position of Director. Her maturity and wisdom beyond her years immediately shown through as she responded, "I think I'll apply for the Assistant Director position, because I am young and there is more I need to learn."

Katy grew up attending Highland Park Presbyterian Church in Dallas where Rev. Ron Scates was her pastor and her mom was employed as a Christian Educator. Katy was raised volunteering in the classes always just a few years behind her. She grew in her knowledge and passion for ministry within the church. It was there she met and began dating Todd Evans who would become her husband after college graduation.

One week after their wedding, Katy began her ministry with us by going on the Urban Plunge mission trip with over 30 middle schoolers. Soon after, we said goodbye to Kellen and Coby Cagle joined our staff as the Director of Youth Ministry.

For four years Coby and Katy worked out a marvelous partnership, each complimenting the other's gifts and balancing one another in

ministry vision and programmatic planning for our youth. Katy excelled in planning retreats and mission trips—right down to the minute details of where to exit off a highway for a good rest stop on our way to Mendenhall, Mississippi. When Coby decided that stop was too soon, he quickly regretted it, for it was the last convenient stop in about 100 miles. Katy had done her homework.

Katy grew in her abilities to speak in front of students as well as in engaging in deep visioning conversations—whether with the staff team, the Family Ministry Vision team, or their youth leaders. Katy and Coby both invested not only in our youth but in our adult leaders, leaving a strong infrastructure of leadership to carry on the ministry in the absence of a director.

In August, Coby left us as Director of Youth Ministry to relocate with his family to the northwest, and Katy agreed to move from 20 hours to 30 hours and assume the role of Director. However, in these six months, it has become clear to Katy and Todd as they have prayed over the coming of their second child that this is more than Katy wishes to be working outside the home. We will celebrate with them the arrival of their baby girl to join their 2-year-old son Camden, but we will miss Katy's daily presence with us as part of our staff team. We give thanks to God that they are staying in the area as Todd is a school teaching in San Antonio. So Katy and Todd will move into a supportive role as volunteer youth leaders when the time is right.

Please be sure to write Katy a note of thanks for all that she has meant to our staff, our youth, their parents, and the church these five-and-a-half years. Katy was celebrated at a congregational reception after worship on February 24.

### Parent's Day Out

Saturday, March 23 10 am-2:30 pm

\$10 per child

\$20 max for a family

Contact Carrie Jowers at 210-226-0215 ext. 220 or [carriej@fpcsat.org](mailto:carriej@fpcsat.org)

Reserve your spot no later than Thursday, March 21



### Children's Easter Program

**Saturday, March 30, 10:00 am at FPC**

There will be an Easter Presentation, egg hunt, and other fun activities for children and their families!



### Are you expecting?

Hi Parents,

If you are expecting or know of someone who is please let us know  
Email [carriej@fpcsat.org](mailto:carriej@fpcsat.org) with the family's name and due date so we  
can welcome God's little angel into our church family!

## Presby Profile . . .

## Nancy Johnson's Mission: Growing a Resource Center for All

by Kay Kutchins

You don't need a library card, but you'll find an assortment of books and audio visual programs. In the FPC Library. And you'll continue to find Nancy Johnson, since she'll won't quit volunteering.

Nancy resigned as FPC's Librarian at the end of January, but "I've been a volunteer or a staff member since 1994, and I imagine that you'll continue to see Jim and me as volunteers," she says. "I guess it's like printer's ink for newspaper folks: it gets in your blood."

Nancy's library experience began in the resource center for teachers which was located in the basement. It offered lesson plans, books, pictures, videos, and Nancy began volunteering in 1994. She joined the staff as church Librarian in 2004.

"After Jim retired in 1995, he started as a volunteer and the library began a journey towards professional status, with accurate cataloging and a computer database.

"The children's library and the main library were combined and moved to the second floor, and we now have between 15 and 16 thousand items in the children's and main library catalogs.

"Actually, the church librarian sits on a three-legged stool - the library, the bookstore adjacent to the library, and now the major project efforts to gather, catalog, and archive important church records," she continues. (Ed. Note: An article about the archiving project appeared in the July issue of *First Press*.)

The FPC Library has many users of all ages. During the week, people attending Bible study or Small Groups often stop to find a book. Week nights you'll find students in the library doing homework. Sunday mornings you'll see the regulars: adults who find a quiet corner to read a book or study a Bible lesson; parents and their children selecting books to take home to read; people passing through and just stopping to see what is displayed on a table or in the information kiosk; and others who sit and enjoy a quiet moment.

"We did some research a few years ago and found that, though it doesn't appear to be a busy location, 10-15 percent of our congregation makes use of the library on a regular basis," Nancy continues. "We purchase some titles, but most books are donated by members and friends of the congregation. And keeping books and audio-visual materials checked in and in good condition requires time and effort.

"New books? They don't just go on the shelf. They have to be added to our database, put in protective covers and—possibly one of the

big challenges—we have to find shelf space which may mean relocating a lot of other books so they are put in the right order."

What has been the most satisfying moments during her years of shepherding the Library? "First there was a large donation that enabled us to buy books and CDs for our youth and children's areas—and you just have to watch a dad and a couple of children selecting books to take home to read," Nancy notes. "Then we've had the opportunity to support a church in North Texas that was starting a library by sharing our knowledge and supplies, and that's been a continuing friendship and growth area.

"And a third 'a-ha experience' was receiving a large donation that allowed us to engage in this massive archiving effort—records, correspondence, personal histories . . . we're now working through massive amounts of information and members continue to find items that we didn't know existed and that we're adding to our collections."

And what has been a drawback? "Not enough volunteers who have the time for training and/or are willing to put in a few hours to help this segment of the FPC ministry. We can always use additional assistance in the bookstore, in the library, in the archiving, in answering questions people have about the church, in locating documents and records such as births, marriages, confirmations . . . the whole gamut of church life.

And you'll still find her and Jim volunteering in the Library and bookstore. "Well, there are a few things at home that have to be taken care of: the Church Library is organized, but my dining room table needs some serious attention," she laughs.

Does she have a particular wish for the Library ministry?

"I'd like to see a crowd of people all the time, but I'd be happy if 20 people (who don't know how many treasures we have) tried out the Library's resources each week from now until summer begins. And I wish we could expand the children's section - our shelves are stuffed full. I'd love to see more parents bring their children in, show them how to use the library and continue to help them grow in their faith through the wonderful resources we have available."

Anything else?

"Volunteers," she emphasizes. "WE NEED LIBRARY VOLUNTEERS!"



## Literature Circle

Reviews: *The Outside Boy*

Literature Circle member Pat Wood, will review the novel *The Outside Boy* March 12, at 1:30 p.m. in the McCullough Room.

Set in Ireland in 1959, young Christy Hurley, a Pavee gypsy travels with his father (mother died in childbirth) and extended family town to town. All their worldly possessions are carried in the wagons. This is the only life Christy has known until his grandfather dies and his father decides to settle in a town temporarily so he and his cousin can attend mass and receive proper schooling. They are treated as outsiders but a long buried family secret could change Christy's life.

Bring a friend and join us for refreshments prior to the meeting.

March Pastor's Sunday School Class  
Ruthie Seiders**What is Happening on the Cross?**

The cross is a focal point of history. People throughout the centuries have asked questions about this event that occurred on a dark Friday afternoon in a remote section of the world. Why did Jesus have to die? Why do we need a Savior if God is a forgiving God, couldn't he just benevolently forgive us? Why would a loving God ask his Son to die? During this Lenten season, you are invited to explore these and other questions you may bring to this class about what really is happening on the cross. We will also look at the major theories of the Atonement which when taken together give us a better understanding of what God accomplished the day the sky turned black and the curtain was torn in two. Come join us as we journey to the cross together. 10:00 a.m., Room 224



## Sanctuary Choir to Offer Messiah Concert March 24

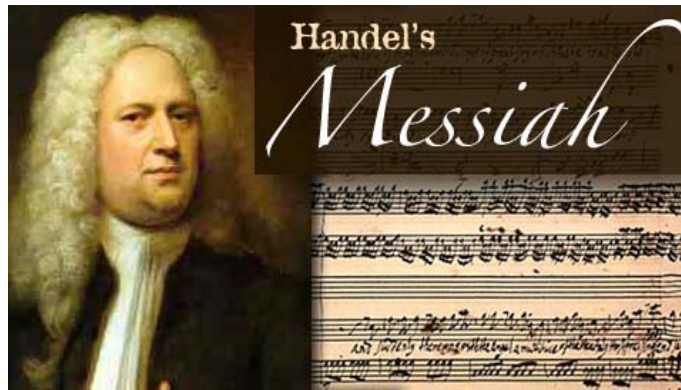
by Tom Dooling, Minister of Music

Our Sanctuary Choir invites FPC everyone to join us in the church Sanctuary at 4 p.m. Sunday, March 24, for Parts II & III of the "Messiah" by George Frideric Handel.

"The Messiah" is well-known and widely performed. It was composed in 24 days: August 22-September 14, 1741. Its first performance was at a charity concert in Dublin, Ireland on April 13, 1742, with the composer conducting orchestra and chorus.

Our journey through Handel's "Messiah" actually began during Advent 2012. You may recall that we featured several movements from the Christmas portion of the "Messiah" each Sunday morning in our traditional Advent worship services.

For Parts II and III, the Choir will be accompanied by an ensemble of players using instruments similar to those used during the Baroque period in which the "Messiah" was composed. These instruments produce a warmer sound than modern instruments. Soloists are drawn from many familiar voices in our Sanctuary Choir. The intimacy of a small instrumental ensemble, combined with choir and soloists, results in a performance offering new tonal vistas to both singers and listeners.



Our concert presentation on March 24 begins with the instrumental Overture and then moves to Part II, in which Handel presents the most basic idea found in the oratorio—the redemption available to

us through Christ's personal suffering. This section culminates with the familiar "Hallelujah" chorus. (As an interesting side note, FPC honors the tradition of refraining from the use of "Alleluias" or "Hallelujahs" throughout our Lenten worship. However, as this is a concert presentation, we will be sure to include it in our performance!)

Following Part II, we will segue into Part III with the lovely soprano aria "I Know that My Redeemer Liveth." As this title suggests, the entire focus of Part

III is a thanksgiving for the defeat of death by our Redeemer.

Our concert is made possible by the Mary Jean Rogers Choral Endowment of First Presbyterian Church, established in 2004 in memory of Mary Jean Rogers, the mother of choir member Jean Rogers Winchell, as a lasting legacy to her mother and their shared love of sacred choral music. Each year, the Endowment supports a major choral presentation at FPC. We are indeed blessed that this Endowment offers us the opportunity to sing to the glory of God.

### Shining Light in Song . . .

## Mwangaza Children's Choir Concert is March 6 in Sanctuary

Mwangaza is the Swahili word for shining light. And at 6:15 p.m. Wednesday, March 6, the FPC Sanctuary will be awash in rhythm and song as the Mwangaza Children's Choir a group of 8-12-year-olds bring an inspiring message and presence, colorful costumes, and the joy of making music to the glory of God to our Sanctuary.

We want to encourage you to bring a friend or a neighbor and the whole family to this free concert as this special group visits San Antonio and cities in the area.

These young people represent the orphaned and poverty-stricken youth of Uganda, bringing a special message of hope through original Ugandan song and dance. They have spent over seven months in residence in Gaba, Uganda preparing for this, the group's fifth tour of the United States. Their songs will primarily be in English, but will also offer lyrics in their native Swahili language.

The Mwangaza Choir is part of Africa Renewal Ministries, founded in 1990. The group strives to build awareness of and support for ARM's churches, schools, hospitals, and orphanages in Uganda. During their five-month tour, the children interact with families and church groups, telling about their country and themselves and learning about the communities and people they visit while on tour.

To prepare for the tour, the children were auditioned for their drumming and dancing skills, as well as their composing and vocal

skills and ability to learn new songs quickly. In addition to daily practice, they attend academic classes at Maranatha Christian School next to the house where they reside. Beginning last September they toured churches and ARM development centers throughout Uganda.

The choir began its 2013 tour in Houston on January 13, then journeyed through East Texas and also performed in the Dallas area before coming to San Antonio. In addition to its FPC concert, the choir also will perform in Bulverde, Charlotte, Boerne, Lytle, Converse, and New Braunfels. It will also perform in central and west Texas, in Louisiana and Alabama, and in Colorado before returning to its home base in Gaba, Uganda in late June.



Africa Renewal Ministries takes special care of the choir children when they return to Uganda, helping them to re-acclimate to their home country after having been exposed to many new and exciting places, people, churches and schools during their tour. The Mwangaza Fund assists the children in re-acclimating to their homeland, as well as continuing to develop the leadership potential gained from their exposure to the U.S.

Throughout their tour, children and their chaperones stay host families in each city, learning more about the communities and experiencing life in various parts of the U.S. Each morning they return to sponsoring locations to attend school and rehearsals each day.

## Spring Ahead with Presbyterian Women

President – Bonnie Diehl (210-647-8924)  
 Vice President/Circles – Janet Wernli (210-828-1043)  
 Vice President/ New Members – Judy Kruger (210-857-0122)

Spring is nearly here and Presbyterian Women invite you to “spring” into action with us. We continue our study of *The General Epistles – Dispatches to God’s Household* in our study Circles. The Mom’s Group will be meeting for study and fellowship. The Shawl Ministry continues to provide evidence of God’s love through their beautiful shawls. The White Cross Circle will meet the first Wednesday of each month to roll bandages. On the second and third Wednesday of each month, the Sewing Circles meet to provide toys and clothes for children at the Children’s Shelter and bibs for adults at Mission Road Development Center. Our Care and Concern Circle will continue to coordinate receptions following funerals.

We invite you to join us for some special occasions in March. We’ll be involved in Project 240 on March 3. The Literature Circle meeting will be March 12. The book to be reviewed is *The Outside Boy* by Jeanine Cummins and will be reviewed by Pat Wood. On Monday, March 18, we will have our annual PW Spring Luncheon honoring our Moderators and Circle Chairs. We are blessed to have our own Jerry Hardwick as our speaker. His talk will be “Blessed Assurance.” Please join us for an inspirational time leading up to Holy Week. You will find details in the invitation information below. Finally on March 30, join us at the Family Easter Celebration.

So many opportunities for fun, fellowship, growth and service. Want to know more? Please contact Vice President for Circles Janet Wernli at 828-1043; Vice President for New Members Judy Kruger at 857-0122; PW President Bonnie Diehl at 647-8924.

Members and Friends are invited to attend the

### PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN SPRING LUNCHEON

Monday, March 18, 2013 at 12 Noon  
 Westminster Hall

Speaker – Rev. Jerry Hardwick

Your \$7.00 check made payable to FPC  
 (PW Luncheon on memo line) is your reservation.

You may put your check in the PW box  
 in the workroom or mail it to

Candy Wagner - 703 Larkwood Dr. (78209)  
 Reservations deadline is Tuesday, March 12, 2013

## Presbyterian Women Circle Meetings March 2013

### Circle 112

Monday, March 18, 10:30 a.m.  
 FPC, Geneva Room  
 Chair: Ann Nelson, 824-5182  
 Co-chair: Suzanne Thomas, 820-3245

### Circle 2

Monday, March 18, 1:30 p.m.  
 FPC, Room 226  
 Chair: Char-An Witten, 341-1856

### Circle 3

Monday, March 18, 1:30 p.m.  
 FPC, Room 228  
 Chair: Ann Fryburger 490-3566

### Circle 4

Monday, March 18, 1:30 p.m.  
 FPC, Room 226 (with Circle 2)

### Circle 5 - Shawl Ministry

Friday, March 15, Noon-1:00 p.m.  
 FPC, Geneva Room  
 Chair: Caryl Gaubatz, 651-0208  
 Co-chair: Jane Ann Temple, 828-7542

### Circle 6

Tuesday, March 19, 1:30 p.m.  
 FPC, Geneva Room  
 Chairs: Patsy Johnson, 828-3852  
 Joan Stratton, 826-0965  
 Jane Warren, 493-5187  
 Edwyna Yarbrough, 822-3053

### Circle 7

Tuesday, March 19, 11:30 a.m.  
 Home of Jeannie Dullnig  
 4 Dorchester Pl 78209  
 Chair: Jane Ann Temple, 828-7542

### Circle 8 - Moms' Group

Monday, March 4 & 18, 9:30 a.m.  
 FPC, Room 108  
 Chair: Julie Walthall 829-8332

### Circle 9

Tuesday, March 19, 10:00 a.m.  
 FPC, St. Andrew's Room  
 Chair: Pat Brannen, 735-4415

### Circle 10

Monday, March 11, 1:30 p.m.  
 Towers at Park Lane, The Club (22 Floor)  
 Chair: Janice Magnus, 829-5866

### Circle 11

Monday, March 25, 6:30 p.m.  
 Home of Pat Brodeen  
 2307 Oak Trace St 78232  
 Chair: Jean Swanson, 826-0766

### Circle 13 - Literature Circle

Tuesday, March 12, 1:30 p.m.  
 FPC, McCullough Room  
*The Outside Boy*, author Jeannie Cummins  
 Chair: Becca Price, 824-2603  
 Reviewer: Pat Wood

### Circle 14

Monday, March 18, Noon  
 FPC, St. Andrews Room  
 Chair: Suzie Simpson, 455-7410

### Circle 15 - Talking, Sharing Circle

Sunday, March 17, 11:00 a.m.  
 FPC, St. Andrews Room  
 Chair: Melody Hull, 821-5211

### Circle 16 - Marjorie McLernon Sewing Circle

Wednesday, March 20, 9:30 a.m.  
 FPC, Room 228  
 Chairs: Lee Pressly, 735-0978  
 Corie Barlow, 481-1337

### Circle 17 - Edna Ralston Sewing Circle

Wednesday, March 13, 9:30 a.m.  
 FPC, Room 309  
 Chair: Jeanne Baker, 494-0972  
 Gigi Duke, 695-4363

### Circle 18 - Circle of Concern

Chairs: Paula Bondurant, 736-6632  
 Georgia Heath, 695-9511  
 Char-An Witten, 341-1856

### Circle 19 - White Cross Circle

Wednesday, March 6, 9:30 a.m.  
 FPC, Room 309  
 Chair: Janet Beauch, 673-3251

### Circle 20 - Circle of Service

Chairs: Sabrina Rios, 822-5707  
 Leah Butler, 804-1934

### Circle 21

Monday, March 18, 6:30 p.m.  
 Home of Sallie Riester  
 31 Villa Verde 78230  
 Chair: Karen Gabrielson, 333-4239  
 Andrea Taylor, 403-9442



# First Cup Readings — March, 2013

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 & Claire Averyt

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

*The Great Physician now is near, the sympathizing Jesus; He speaks the drooping heart to cheer, Oh! hear the voice of Jesus. His name dispels my guilt and fear, no other name but Jesus. Oh! how my soul delights to hear the precious name of Jesus! Sweetest note in seraph song, sweetest name on mortal tongue, sweetest carol ever sung; Jesus, blessed Jesus! (William Hunter, Songs of Devotion, 1859)*

- 1 Mark 1:1-13; Matthew 4:1-11; 2 Corinthians 11:14-15; 1 Peter 5:8; Romans 16:20
- 2 Mark 1:14-20; Luke 4:43; 17:20-21; Luke 5:1-11; John 1:35-51; Matthew 10:37-39

*What a Friend we have in Jesus, All our sins and griefs to bear! What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer! O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pains we bear, all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer! Are we weak and heavy laden, cumbered with a load of care? Precious Savior, still our Refuge—take it to the Lord in prayer. Can we find a friend so faithful, Who will all our sorrows share? In His arms He'll take and shield thee, Thou wilt find a solace there. (The Hymnbook, # 385)*

- 3 Mark 1:21-45; Luke 4:14-44; John 20:29-31; 1 Peter 1:3-16
- 4 Mark 2:1-17; Jeremiah 29:13; Matthew 11:28-30; 1 Timothy 1:12-17; Psalm 91
- 5 Mark 2:18-3:6; Exodus 20:8-10; Jeremiah 17:19-27; Matthew 5:17-20
- 6 Mark 3:7-34; Matthew 12:22-37; Romans 8:12-17; Galatians 3:26-29
- 7 Mark 4:1-34; John 15:1-17
- 8 Psalm 18; Isaiah 43:18-19
- 9 Mark 4:35-41; 2 Samuel 22; Psalm 65

*Shackled by a heavy burden, 'neath a load of guilt and shame; Then the hand of Jesus touched me, and now I am no longer the same. Oh! since I met this Blessed Savior, and since He cleansed and made me whole, Oh! I'll never cease to praise Him; I'll shout it while eternity rolls. Oh! He touched me! Oh! He touched me! And oh, what joy that floods my soul. Something happened and now I know, He touched me and He has made me whole. (Bill Gaither, 1964)*

- 10 Mark 5:1-20; Matthew 4:23-24; 8:16-17; Acts 19:11-20; Revelation 20:1-10
- 11 Mark 5:21-43; Psalm 103
- 12 Mark 6:1-29; Luke 9:7-9; 14:25-33; Acts 21:10-14
- 13 Mark 6:30-56; Ephesians 3:20-21; Psalm 37
- 14 Mark 7:1-23; Jeremiah 17:9; Micah 6; James 1:21-27
- 15 Mark 7:24-8:10; Colossians 1:15-23; Ephesians 1:2-23
- 16 Mark 8:11-38; John 10

*Fear not, little flock, from the cross to the throne, from*

*death unto life He went for His own; All power in earth, all power above, Is given to him for the flock of His love. Fear not, little flock, He goeth ahead, your Shepherd selected the path you must tread; The waters of Mareh He'll sweeten for thee, He drank all the bitter in Gethsemane. Only believe, only believe, all things are possible, only believe. Only believe, only believe, all things are possible, only believe! (Paul Rader, 1921)*

- 17 Mark 9:1-13; Malachi 4:5-6; Matthew 11:7-15; 17:1-13
- 18 Mark 9:14-29; James 5:13-20; Philippians 4:6-7; Ephesians 6:18
- 19 Mark 9:30-41; Matthew 5:27-30; 18:1-9
- 20 Mark 9:42-50; 1 Corinthians 5; 1 Peter 1:13-25
- 21 Genesis 2:18-25; Mark 10:1-16; 1 Corinthians 7; 1 John 1:9-10
- 22 Mark 10:17-31; 2 Chronicles 1:1-12; Proverbs 11:24-28; 1 Timothy 6:17
- 23 Mark 10:32-45; Philippians 2:1-18; John 13:1-17

*'Twas on that night when doomed to know the eager rage of every foe, That night in which He was betrayed, the Savior of the world took bread; "My broken body thus I give for you, for all. Take, eat and live. And oft the sacred rite renew that brings my saving love to view." Then in His hands He took the cup He raised, and God anew He thanked and praised, while kindness in His bosom glowed, and from His lips salvation flowed. "With love to man, this cup is fraught; Let all partake the sacred draught; Through latest ages let it pour, In memory of my dying hour." (The Hymnbook, # 448)*

- 24 Mark 10:46-52; Hebrews 11:6; Matthew 7:7-12; Luke 19:1-10; Psalm 27
- 25 Mark 11:1-19; Jeremiah 7; Romans 12:12; Colossians 4:2
- 26 Mark 11:20-33; Luke 17:1-4; Matthew 5:21-24; Matthew 18:21-35
- 27 Mark 12; Proverbs 25:14; Matthew 6:1-4; Psalm 37:25-26; 112; Proverbs 11:25
- 28 Mark 13; Luke 12:13-48
- 29 Mark 14:1-42; John 17; Mark 14:43-72
- 30 Mark 15; John 19:38-42 (see John 3:1-21 regarding Nicodemus)

*I serve a risen Savior. He's in the world today. I know that He is living whatever men might say. I see His hand of mercy; I hear His voice of cheer; And just the time I need Him He's always near. Rejoice, rejoice O Christian; lift up your voice and sing eternal hallelujahs to Jesus Christ, the King! The Help of all who seek Him; the Hope of all who find; none other is so loving, so good and kind. He lives, He lives, Christ Jesus lives today! He walks with me and talks with me along life's narrow way. He lives, He lives, salvation to impart! You ask me how I know He lives? He lives within my heart! (Hymns in American Protestant Theology).*



# 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).

[illegible]



## KEYS Senior Adult March Happenings



February started with another memorable performance by **Rick Cavender and His Band**. This is the seventh year that he's entertained us with an unofficial Rodeo kick-off. Once again we had a delightful time celebrating our annual February birthdays and Valentines' Day at the beautiful Oak Hills Country Club. Our month was completed by Mary Jane Hardy reviewing her book "*Spiritual Treasure of Downtown San Antonio*" which, of course, includes our beautiful church. Also, your KEYS Leadership Committee has been working hard to complete our spring programming!



## KEYS Adults to Sponsor Walls For Project 240 Build

by Nancy Black

Our senior adult members have their hats, gloves and hammers ready to participate in the upcoming March 3 Project 240. The value of working hard and providing a safe place for a family is not lost on this 55-plus group.

During last year's Project 240, several members of KEYS joined in the various phases of construction. Being a "go-fur" was for some and squaring up joints was for others. Many brought willingness to be shown how to help while others came with years of woodworking experience. Right alongside these workers were those who brought water to thirsty members and words of encouragement.

Giving of our gifts and talents is one of the happiest commandments because it's tied only to what we have at the time to give. It's giving and sharing with our neighbors and asking nothing in return.

This year KEYS will also give the funds to build the walls for one of the Habitat houses. It's what we have at this time to give.

We hope every 55-plus FPC member, and any friend who can join us, will come out on Sunday afternoon, March 3 and help build up the Kingdom through work and encouragement for our neighbors.

## Come and Join Our March Events

### March 1 (Friday) – 11:00 a.m. – State of the Church Address

Come and hear Rev. Trey Little deliver the annual State of the Church Address. He is keeping up the annual tradition that began many years ago by Rev. Louis Zbinden. Be sure to make your reservation for this excellent program, as this is the only meeting where it will be presented. KEYS Leadership Committee will meet after lunch.

### March 3 (Sunday) – Don't forget Project 240 Build

Lunch Noon – 1 p.m. Work begins 1:00 p.m.  
Come to church in work clothes.



**March 8 (Friday) – 11:00 a.m. – Ambassador Sichan Siv, international best selling author of *Golden Bones***, published in four languages and telling his story of an escape from Cambodia in 1976 and resettling in Connecticut as a refugee with his mother's scarf, an empty rice bag and \$2 in his pocket. He went on to become a United States Ambassador to the United Nations. He has served under President George

W. Bush and President George H W Bush and has now written a new poetry book *Golden Words*. His wife, Martha, will have a display of South China Seas beautiful handcrafted items from women's groups and community development groups such as small gifts, toys, scarves and other silk items, purses and purse accessories, jewelry, etc., from Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam. Proceeds go towards skills training for the disabled and other marginalized groups to increase their economic livelihood.

Bridge will be played after lunch.

### March 15 (Friday) – 11:30 a.m. - March Birthday Celebration

Celebrate March Birthdays with a delicious Lenten Lunch at St. Mark's Episcopal Church. Again this year, we will enjoy a private room and the \$10.00 cost includes an entrée, drink and dessert. Lunch is complimentary for members celebrating their birthdays. We must pre-order so please choose your meal at our March 1 or March 8 luncheon. Van transportation will be provided as requested, and walking is also an option and a way to get your exercise! As we must prepay, your check is your reservation and due by Tuesday, March 13. Please make payable to FPC with Lenten Lunch in the memo line.

**March 22 (Friday) – 11:00 a.m. – Program to be announced – Watch Sunday bulletins.** After lunch Mah Jongg will be played, and we will also fill Easter Eggs for the FPC Easter Egg Hunt.



### Wanted Candy & Volunteers

KEYS once again have the opportunity to work with the Children's Ministry to help with the Children's Easter Egg Hunt. We are responsible for providing individually –wrapped Easter candy for filling approximately 1500 plastic Easter Eggs.

If you would like to donate candy or money to purchase candy, please bring it to the KEYS meetings or leave at the receptionist's desk. The eggs will be filled after lunch!

**March 29 (Friday) – Good Friday – No Speaker Program today**

### WANTED: VOLUNTEERS for SA READS BOOK BANK COME FOR A MORNING OF FELLOWSHIP

SAReads is a campaign coordinated by Literacy San Antonio, Inc. dedicated to making grade level reading a reality for all students in Bexar County. The Book Bank effort is designed to increase access to books for students in Bexar County.

Come join FPC members who meet on every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month and spend the morning (9:30 a.m. – 12:00) labeling books, freshening them up and sorting for distribution to children in needy schools and in after school programs. Enjoy the fellowship of working around the table and visiting and browsing the books as they are being prepared for young people to own.

Please call Jayne Warren at 493-5187 for detail and location.

**Step and Stretch Class** will be held each Friday morning at 9:45 a.m. unless indicated. Wear comfortable clothes so come join your friends for an hour of fun!!!

Reservations are very important. Please make lunch (\$7.00) reservations by the Tuesday before Friday programs, unless otherwise specified, by calling the church office at 210-226-0215. If you are on the permanent lunch list, you only need to call if you cannot attend.



404 North Alamo Street  
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210-226-0215 [www.fpconline.org](http://www.fpconline.org)

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## Connect with Us Sundays

### March

Worship Times:  
Traditional worship in the Sanctuary at 9:00 and 11:15 a.m.  
Contemporary worship in Westminster Hall at 11:00 a.m.  
Sunday School for all ages 10:00 a.m.



Full calendar online—[www.fpconline.org](http://www.fpconline.org)

Mar 3 - Project 240—Casual Sunday  
Mar 6 - Mwangaza Children's Choir Concert  
Mar 10 - Daylight Saving Time  
Mar 11 - Officer's Meeting  
Mar 12 - Literature Circle  
Mar 18 - PW Spring Luncheon  
Mar 24 - Palm Sunday  
Mar 24 - Kisongo Trek  
Mar 27 - Passover Seder Dinner  
Mar 28 - Maundy Thursday Luncheon and Worship  
Mar 29 - Good Friday Worship  
Mar 30 - Children's Easter Program  
Mar 31 - Easter—No Sunday School



### *It's time to order your Easter Lily*

The Sanctuary Flower Committee reminds you that Easter Lilies may be ordered to remember and/or honor loved ones. Lilies are \$15.00 and order forms are in the Narthex and in Mauze Lobby. Deadline for receipt of your order form and check is March 17. Make checks payable to FPC and note "Easter Lilies" on the memo line. Orders should be addressed to the Sanctuary Flower Committee, First Presbyterian Church, 404 N. Alamo St., San Antonio, TX 78205 or may be placed in the Sanctuary Flowers box in the church workroom.

## Touchdown!

by Manuel Rodriguez



Recently our family witnessed an event at the AT&T Center. After the game we stopped to look at a mural located at the entrance of the building. The mural depicts all aspects of life covering Texas history. Beautiful, colorful, action packed scenes that truly seem larger than life. My wife Stacie informed us that the artist had hidden the image of Christ within the mural. As we looked through the mural my wife exclaimed, "There, right by the cowboy." We all excitedly gathered around to see the image of our savior hidden amongst the mural. Soon the kids shouted, "We see Him too!" Now I was the only one who could not locate Jesus. Despite my family's assistance, I just could not find Him. All I could see were the scenes depicting life and the hustle and bustle of society, but the Messiah, I could not see it.

Then, it happened, when I least expected it, His image came to me. I found Him! And you know what is crazy, once I found Him the rest of the image melted away. I could not take my eyes off of Jesus, He is right there in front of me. How did I not see Him before? I also noticed that once I found him, my attention could focus on nothing else.

Isn't this true of our own lives when trying to find our Savior. People can try to point Him out, but until we have a personal relationship with Him, we just don't see it. And you know what else, once we do, nothing else matters. The concerns of everyday living pale in comparison to the mission sent to us from God and we can no longer focus on anything else. If you have already found Him, you know what I mean. And if you haven't, I encourage you to look at the busy mural that is your own life and you will be shocked to discover that Jesus is right in front of you, waiting to be found. Once you do, the sweet freedom of salvation will overwhelm you and everything else will just melt away.