

First Press



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
SAN ANTONIO

Worship Times

Traditional worship in the Sanctuary at 9:00 and 11:15 a.m.
Contemporary worship in Westminster Hall at 11 a.m.

January 2013

404 N. Alamo St. San Antonio, TX 78205 210-226-0215 fpconline.org firstpress@fpcsat.org

Pastor's Pondering

New Perspective for the New Year? Here's Something to Think About



I recently received a letter from a friend, Steve Cooper, in Houston, Texas. Steve is a wonderful man of God who has a burning desire to "wake the passion" for Christ in men across the country. I have known Steve and his family for many years and have been blessed by them and their love for the Lord.

Steve writes: "Sitting at our daughter Laura's rehearsal dinner, her soon-to-be father-in-law, Jody, gave the final toast. He said, 'A marriage can be successful if a husband and wife practice four things.' Then came the four things: 'Lie, steal, drink, cheat.' What? My heart raced. I glanced at Karen. Why would he say this? What was he thinking!? Jody's follow-up answered my questions. Lie...in each other's arms. Steal...time to be together. Drink...from the cup of love. Cheat...death beyond fifty years of marriage."

I couldn't help but chuckle when I was reading Steve's letter but then I also couldn't help but reflect on what wise and timely advice Jody provided. As we enter into this New Year, I know many of you have already made New Year's resolutions—and even more of us have already broken the resolutions we have made! But I want to encourage you to join me in making 2013 a year that we will "Lie, Steal, Drink, and Cheat."

Consider the joy that can fill your heart in the coming year if you would simply take time to Lie...in the everlasting arms of Jesus Christ. Imagine if you would Steal...time out of your busy schedule to be with Jesus in a one on one devotional time. Savor how your life might be filled up if you would Drink more...from the cup of love and salvation that Jesus so freely offers. Embrace the hope that would come in your life if you spent 2013 living to Cheat...death, because you welcomed everyday as an opportunity to live in the eternal grace that comes through a relationship with Jesus.

I know, I can hear some of you already saying, "What? Why would he say this? What was he thinking!?" But before you think I've lost my mind, consider for a moment--and be honest --is there not a place in your life for a little more "lying, stealing, drinking, and cheating" for the Kingdom of God? Are there not opportunities for each of us to fall deeper in love with our Lord and Savior? Do we not plan so many other things in our schedules that all too often what is really stolen is our spiritual treasures? Do we not live in a mindset that

convinces us that we have all kinds of time on this earth, so we put off our time with the Lord until tomorrow or perhaps even the next day?

Friends, today is the day you have been given. Today is the day you and I have the opportunity to savor the wonder of Jesus Christ. Today is the day we have been given to be blessed in order to be a blessing. As the Psalmist writes: "Today is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it" (Psalm 118:24). So I encourage you to make the most of today!

Not long ago, NASA launched its feeblest spacecraft ever, called Dawn. Its target was deep space. The great challenge the scientists faced was providing enough fuel. Conventional rocketry would require an impossible amount of fuel to travel such a great distance. So the scientists devised a new kind of engine and an alternative fuel. Once the spacecraft escaped earth's gravity, it switched to a booster that accelerated at the nearly immeasurably slow rate of 15 mph per day. That's why NASA described it as its feeblest spacecraft. But if you do the math, you discover that by continuing to accelerate at 15mph/day, you will eventually reach Dawn's cruising speed of 24,500 mph, making it one of NASA's fastest spacecrafts. Small deeds sustained over long days have astonishing potential. (Dave Peterson, Receiving and Giving—Unleashing the BLESS Challenge in Your Life, 22)

Friends, as we embark on our journey into the New Year, I want to encourage you to be energized and fueled by the love of Christ. Likewise, I want to challenge you to be people of blessing in all aspects of your life—remembering that "small deeds sustained over long days have astonishing potential." I am convinced, with your help, First Presbyterian Church has astonishing potential to make Jesus famous in the city of San Antonio and throughout the world.

Therefore, I wish you a Happy New Year—a year that, for many of us, will include more "lying, stealing, drinking, and cheating" with the hope that we too will be fueled up and unleashed to be the people of blessing we have been called to be. That is a resolution worth keeping, don't you think?

In the meantime, make the most of TODAY, and keep smilin' and keep lovin'.

Make Note of the Important Things This Season . . . by Manuel Rodriguez



My grandmother was the youngest of 13 children and grew up smack in the middle of the Great Depression. Reading that, I am sure you can envision what she was like—thrifty, cutting corners when possible, maybe even "tight." If this was what you pictured, you are wrong.

One of my grandmother's older sisters had a passion for pecans. During the depression, pecans were somewhat of a delicacy and an extravagance. Their family was fortunate enough to have picked a large bag of pecans just prior to the holidays. The pecans were to be saved for a special occasion, and not to be eaten for fun. My grandmother's sister kept attempting to sneak just a few, in the face of huge repercussions from their mother. My grandmother's older sister became ill and died prior to the holidays, never getting to enjoy a single pecan. As my great-grandmother dressed herself for the funeral, she pointed to the bag of uneaten pecans and stated, "I want every one of those gone before I return so that I don't have to see them again."

Because of this my grandmother believed in enjoying life to the fullest, never losing an opportunity to tell someone she loved them. She did not hold grudges, and she made each day a great day. My thought and wish for you this holiday season as we get so caught up

in buying the perfect gift, getting on each other's nerves, finding a good parking space, and tolerating substandard cooking: Remember the Reason for the season. Make the most important thing, the most important thing. And don't save your pecans.

I love you all and Merry Christmas!

Market of Hope . . . Our Aspirations Realized

Thank you all for supporting the inaugural – and what we hope will become annual – Market of Hope at FPC! We raised over \$10,000 to support our local and global mission partners! A special thank you to the congregation and wider community who visited and shopped. This was a church wide effort—we thank all the staff and volunteers who made it happen! Your participation transform the lives of people in our own neighborhood and around the world. May God continue to bless the makers of all our handmade items as well as bless all those that will receive these special presents this holiday season!

Stewardship Campaign Update

As of Monday, 12/10/2012 we have received a total of 456 commitments in excess of \$2.654 million.

Adult Commitments	433	2,653,330.00
Youth Commitments	4	218.00
Children's Commitments	19	1,019.00
TOTALS	456	2,654,567.00

In order to continue our ministry and our mission in the community and the world our elders have approved the 2013 Budget in the amount of \$4,793,200. This represents an increase of 5.6% (\$245,263) over the 2012 Budget. In response to how richly you have been blessed, how will you faithfully give to the life and ministry of FPC?

FINANCIAL SUMMARY NOVEMBER 2012

OPERATING FUND BUDGET	ACTUAL YTD	BUDGET YTD	VARIANCE
TOTAL REVENUES	\$3,532,151	\$3,790,817	(\$258,667)
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES	\$2,925,250	\$3,051,628	(\$126,377)
TOTAL BENEVOLENCES	\$686,437	\$675,732	\$10,705
NET INCOME/LOSS	(\$79,537)	\$63,457	(\$142,994)

If you have any questions, please contact the Finance Office at 271-2755 or any member of the Stewardship and Finance Committee.

Session Minutes in Seconds

The Session at its regularly stated meeting on Monday evening, December 10 . . .

Approved the Consent Agenda including the approval of the minutes of previous Session meetings, reviewing the minutes of previous Deacon's meetings, approval of changes to the church register, approval of November financial statements and receiving the minutes of Session committees.

Heard the Report of the Clerk

Dealt with business in Executive Session

Received an update on pledges for 2013

Received and acted on a report from the Membership Rolls Task Force

Worship Service Schedule for January

January 6	Rev. John Seiders
January 13	Dr. Reggie McNeal
January 20	Rev. Trey H. Little
January 27	Rev. Trey H. Little

Church Register



DEATHS:

Margaret Antonoli Slimp Russell
November 23, 2012

Ralph Whistler Reser
December 12, 2012

Jerry McAllister Totten
December 17, 2012

MARRIAGES:

Cameron Ray Carnes and Elizabeth Ann Carrigan
November 17, 2012

BAPTISMS:

Cara Marie Mustol, daughter of Anna & David Mustol
October 26, 2012

Daniel and Grace Vasquez (twins), son and daughter of Tamara and David Vasquez
October 17, 2012

William Wallace McCullough, III "Walt", son of William "Will" Wallace and Kristin Vackar McCullough, Jr.
November 18, 2012

Charlotte Harper Jackson, daughter of Charles Horatio and Jenny Lee Jackson, IV
November 25, 2012

Riley Marshall Foster, daughter of Cameron and Claire Foster
December 9, 2012

Anna Knighten Nichols, daughter of John and Elizabeth Nichols
December 9, 2012

Funding the Work of the Kingdom: Budgeting and Stewardship at FPC

In late May we begin the church year planning process – ministries, missions, program components, budgets all are subject to staff review and careful assessment of resources allocated, used and projected future needs. Our goal is to present a preliminary estimate of the human, physical, and program resources we anticipate we'll need to Worship, Grow, and Serve as First Presbyterian Church of San Antonio.

It's not an easy process – determining priorities is never a slam-dunk effort, especially in a church with many different ministries, programs and outreach efforts, each of which has funding and staffing needs.

A draft budget, prepared and presented to the Budget Subcommittee of our Stewardship and Finance Committee for discussion and refinement, is just the beginning. Discussions and refinements continue through the early fall, with a goal of having the budget before the Session for review in October and for adoption in November. In the middle of this process, we begin our annual stewardship campaign – that time in which we ask FPC members and friends to prayerfully consider their support for the church's ministries and programs.

This year, the Session received the report of the Budget Committee on the first draft of the 2013 Budget, presented by Stewardship and Finance at its October meeting. At its November meeting, the

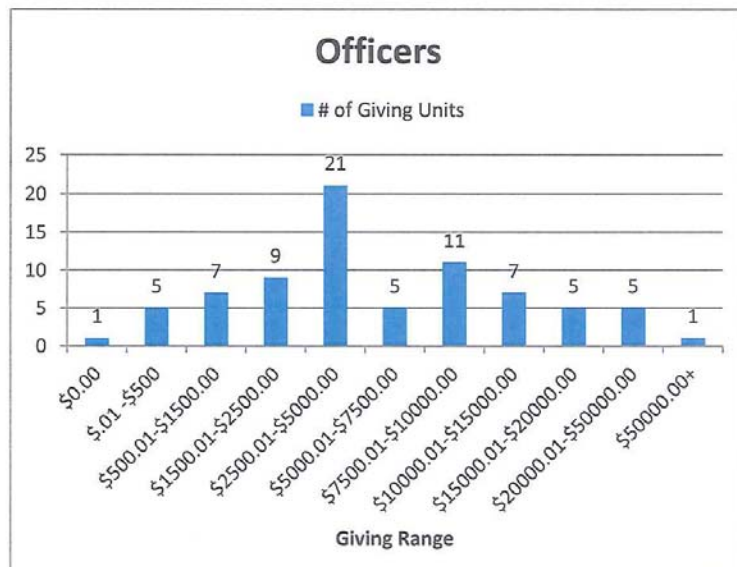
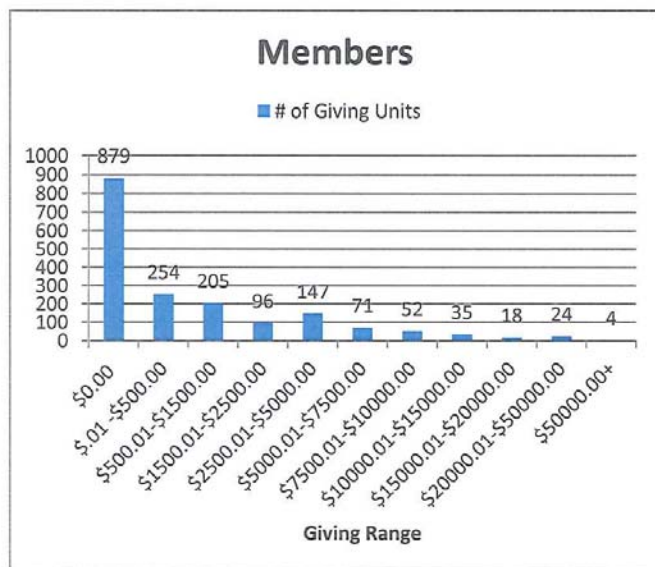
Session received and approved a \$4,792,200 budget for 2013, representing a 5.6% increase over the 2012 budget. Prior to approval, discussion centered on the reasons for proposed increases in funding, updates on pledge and unpledged giving patterns, and the budget process. The 2013 budget continues and expands our ministry and our mission in the community and the world.

More importantly, we want to share with you information about where and how our church's financial resources are derived. Our most current financial summary information and Stewardship Campaign Update appear on Page 2 of this newsletter.

The following charts are a snapshot of financial giving in the life of FPC over the past 12 months. Church officers are a part of the overall "Members" data, but we also believe it is important to show that their giving units are well-represented in our financial picture.

As you look at the following charts, we hope you will take some time to pray about your current commitment and consider how God may be calling you to commit to giving in the coming year. Each of us has been blessed in our lives. Each of us has an opportunity – a calling, if you will – to respond to those blessings by faithfully giving to the life and ministry of FPC. Please consider, as we approach and enter the New Year, whether your time, talents and contributions reflect the value of those blessings.

Number of Giving Units per Range of Giving



Giving Range	# of Giving Units	% of Total Giving Units	
\$0.00	879	49.24%	50%
\$0.01-\$500.00	254	14.23%	25%
\$500.01-\$1500.00	205	11.48%	
\$1500.01-\$2500.00	96	5.38%	
\$2500.01-\$5000.00	147	8.24%	
\$5000.01-\$7500.00	71	3.98%	
\$7500.01-\$10000.00	52	2.91%	
\$10000.01-\$15000.00	35	1.96%	
\$15000.01-\$20000.00	18	1.01%	
\$20000.01-\$50000.00	24	1.34%	
\$50000.00+	4	0.22%	
TOTAL	1785	100.00%	25%

Giving Range	# of Giving Units	% of Total Giving Units	
\$0.00	1	1.30%	
\$0.01-\$500.00	5	6.49%	28%
\$500.01-\$1500.00	7	9.09%	
\$1500.01-\$2500.00	9	11.69%	
\$2500.01-\$5000.00	21	27.27%	27%
\$5000.01-\$7500.00	5	6.49%	
\$7500.01-\$10000.00	11	14.29%	
\$10000.01-\$15000.00	7	9.09%	
\$15000.01-\$20000.00	5	6.49%	
\$20000.01-\$50000.00	5	6.49%	
\$50000.00+	1	1.30%	
TOTAL	77	100%	45%

Men's Ministry Outreach . . .

Discipling Program Plans To Expand In 2013

"Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others." (2 Timothy 2:2 NLT)

Men at FPC will be discipling each other through 2013, using as a study guide, "Four Priorities," by Rev. Dr. John Tolson, according to Men's Ministry coordinator Doug Beach. Meeting in pairs, they will explore what it means to become a man of Christ and will how to disciple others.



Mike Wood, Mitch Huffman, Doug Beach discuss 2013 discipling plans.

This year's discipling effort begins in January and will meet for 28 weeks. There will be periodic gatherings of all the men who are participating to share fellowship and lessons learned. The Men's Ministry team hopes to have 18-20 newcomers to join with those who participated in the 2012 program launch, and many already have expressed interest. "Our goal is to reach every man at FPC in a discipling relationship," Doug says.

Men's Ministry seeks to build a greater sense of community and involvement by strengthening bonds of friendship and faith. If you're interested in learning more about becoming a disciple or about discipling others, contact Doug (210 247-2616—doug.beach@gmail.com).

The book is secondary to what this is all about, according to Mitch Huffman and Mike Wood who have put the book to work in their lives and in their relationship to Christ during the past year. They agree that there's an accountability to each other that has developed over the past year as they have studied, prayed with, confided in and encouraged each other on a weekly basis. And they'll tell you that "going down the road together keeps you going forward."

The discipling effort grew out of Men's Ministry gatherings for breakfast at The Quarry each month and out of a realization that forming deeper relationships with other men made the walk with Christ more meaningful. Last year, 24 men - 12 pairs - began the journey through the Tolson book and through their own lives. Through a creative mix of relevant case studies and scriptural illustrations, they found an easy-to-understand and practical "tool kit" for balancing the four priorities - Christ, self, relationships, and commitment to the world.

"It's an ideal way of strengthening our church family from within," Mitch says. "A year ago I didn't know Mike; now we have a lasting friendship founded solely on our shared faith. Some of the questions that you are asked to consider force you to really search yourself - some are easy, others become more difficult. When you have a person who you can trust and talk with honestly, it's very beneficial. Finally, being involved in the Discipleship Study has helped me apply my faith outside of church, both at work and at home. And the upshot is that a life of faith is a way of life, not a ritual."

Mike echoed that, saying "I thought I was doing a pretty good job - I grew up in this church, went to Sunday School, followed all the standard practices, but the more I considered and participated in discipling with Mitch, the more I realized there was so much to learn that I couldn't afford to not become immersed. Now it's my turn - and Mitch's turn - to disciple two other FPC men who are seeking to focus on these priorities."

Both Mitch and Mike say that their year together—the application of what they've learned and the accountability to practice their faith—has strengthened family relationships and friendships. And they agree that talking with others about their faith is much easier after having explored it together. "Now we welcome the opportunity to talk with anyone," they say.

Women's Bible Studies Groups Resume

Tuesday Women's Bible Study

Priscilla Shirer's One in a Million

Every week millions of believers fill the pews of the church and hear about the greatness and power of God. They are told that they can experience it, yet few ever do. If you hunger to experience His power, hear His voice, and live in the abundance promised to you, then this seven-week study is for you. Participants meet on Tuesday mornings from 9:30-11:30 a.m. in Covenant Hall (3rd floor) beginning January 15 and continuing to February 26. A workbook (suggested donation \$13.00) is available to prepare for weekly small group meetings and video sessions. Child care is available by reservation. Women of all ages are encouraged to attend. If you have questions or want to register, call Judy Kruger at (210) 857-0122.

Wednesday Ladies Bible Study

Lisa Harper's Malachi: A Love That Never Lets Go

This Spring session of the Wednesday night Ladies' Bible Class devotes eight sessions to the Old Testament book of Malachi—a study of God's mercy. A time for fellowship precedes video and class discussion. The class meets at 6:30 p.m. in Room 302 January 9—March 6, but doesn't meet on February 13. It offers a fresh perspective on Malachi which is more than a book about tithing. On our worst day, God doesn't walk away from us. And His love for us is not determined by our performance. "I the LORD do not change" Malachi 3:6.

Sessions include topics such as "When Your Tara's Trashed and Your Dog Is Dead (Study Background & Introduction); Going Big or Going Home; Our Creator is a Committed Family Man; When Divine Grace Masquerades as Discipline; God's Miraculous Return on Our Meager Investments; and The Promise of Pirouetting Livestock.

On The Radar . . . Upcoming Events

YoungLives Luncheon Tuesday, January 29

YoungLives (part of the Young Life ministry) is hosting a fundraiser and awareness luncheon from Noon to 1 p.m. January 29 at FPC. Reserve a seat with FPC friends of YoungLives - and become a new friend of these teen moms and their children who are learning about and growing in Christ. There is no set charge for the luncheon, but **reservations ARE necessary and donations to support the program ARE welcomed.**

YoungLives participants meet from 3-5 p.m. each Tuesday, and FPC mentors and Young Lives director Chris Shipman invite interested persons to visit them to learn more about this Kingdom-building ministry. Need more information or to make reservations for the luncheon? Contact Nina Jordan (210 219-9111 - ninajordan@satx.rr.com).

FPC Welcomes Dr. Reggie McNeal at all January 13, 2013 Worship Services



Dr. Reggie McNeal enjoys helping people, leaders, and Christian organizations pursue more intentional lives. He currently serves as the Missional Leadership Specialist for Leadership Network of Dallas, TX.

On Sunday, January 13, FPC worshippers will hear Dr. McNeal's message of inspiration and transformation at all services. He also will lead the annual FPC Church Officers Retreat on January 11-12.

Reggie's past experience involves over a decade as a denominational executive and leadership development coach. He also served in local congregational leadership for over 20 years, including being the founding pastor of a new church. He has lectured or taught as adjunct faculty for multiple seminaries, including Fuller Theological (Pasadena, CA), Southwestern Baptist (Ft. Worth, TX), Golden Gate Baptist (San Francisco, CA), Trinity Divinity School (Deerfield, IL), Columbia International Columbia, SC), and Seminary of the Southwest (Austin TX).

In addition, Reggie has served as a consultant to local church,

New Adult Sunday School Class

The Bereans, a new Adult Sunday School class, begins Sunday, January 6, in the St. Andrews Room. Taught by Dr. Jerry Hardwick, it will cover the foundational doctrines and concepts of Christianity.

The name, "Bereans" comes from Acts 17 where we read: "*Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.*" (v.11,NIV) The Bereans' eager dedication to the guidance of scripture has inspired Bible study groups, Sunday school classes, churches and even denominations to adopt the name.

"The class format will include lecture and discussion methods conducive to interactive fellowship and is open to all ages," Jerry says. "Your Bible is our resource, and we will follow the topical outline of the Westminster Confession of Faith which begins with, 'Of The Holy Scripture'."

A graduate of Austin Presbyterian Seminary (M.Div., '85) he led The Bereans class at FPC some 20 years ago in the same St. Andrews Room. Jerry and Maggie have been associated with First Presbyterian Church since 1985. He is a former USAF Chaplain, and they served with Campus Crusade for Christ, Military Ministry.

150 Years of FPC – the Book, the Ministry

Do you have coffee table books that you never read? If [Adobe Walls to Stone Edifice](#) happens to be one, you'll be interested in Rev. Dr. Louis Zbinden's review at the January 8 Literature Circle at 1:30 PM in the McCullough Room. The book was written by retired Trinity University professor Donald E. Everett to celebrate First Presbyterian Church's 150th Anniversary.

History comes to life with the arrival in San Antonio of the Rev. John McCullough to establish First Presbyterian Church in 1846. The narrative details many parts of our history in San Antonio: the construction of the first church and forward to the present campus, the original church families who are still represented today, the building that occupied the space which is now the Westminster Hall addition, the pastors who have served over the years, and even what pastor launched the Literature Circle 40 years ago!!

denomination, and para-church leadership teams, as well as seminar developer and presenter for thousands of church leaders across North America. He also has resourced the United States Army Chief of Chaplains Office (the Pentagon), the Chaplains' Training School (Ft. Jackson, SC), Air Force chaplains, and the Air Force Education and Training Command. Reggie's work also extends to the business sector, including The Gallup Organization.

Reggie has contributed to numerous publications and church leadership journals. His books include [Revolution in Leadership](#) (Abingdon Press, 1998), [A Work of Heart: Understanding How God Shapes Spiritual Leaders](#) (Jossey-Bass, 2000), [The Present Future](#) (Jossey-Bass, 2003), [Practicing Greatness](#) (Jossey-Bass, 2006), [Get A Life!](#) (Broadman & Holman, 2007), [Missional Renaissance: Changing the Scorecard for the Church](#) (Jossey-Bass, 2009), and [Missional Communities: The Rise of the Post-Congregational Church](#) (Jossey-Bass, 2011).

Although his latest book, [Get Off Your Donkey](#), is not scheduled for release until February, we are pleased that we will have a limited number of copies available for sale on Sunday morning, January 13.

Reggie's education includes a B.A. degree from the University of South Carolina and the M.Div. and Ph.D. degrees both from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife Cathy make their home in Columbia, SC.

January Pastor's Sunday School Class

The Practice of Sabbath

The second Pastor's Sunday School Class convenes January 6 and continues through January 27. Rev. Scott Simpson will lead the class as it considers **The Practice of Sabbath Time**. During that four-week period, the class and Scott will explore



1. **The Trust of Ceasing**—Experience of freedom from and repentance for work and worry.
2. **The Faith of Resting**—Renewal of life in grace-full faith.
3. **The Joy of Embracing**—Intentional commitments and lifestyle.
4. **The Hope of Feasting**—Fun and festivity of a weekly eschatological party.

"In this time of economic uncertainty, the church has the opportunity to declare a message of hope, Scott notes. "While serving the poor and the needy of San Antonio and the world we, the people of God, have the opportunity to witness to an alternative way of life, a simpler lifestyle that is not dependent on worldly success. Indeed, the quiet revolution of God's love and forgiveness in Jesus Christ may be easier for people to hear as they realize that they cannot secure their own material well-being."

Sabbath appears in the Bible—"The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath." and "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy" are among the many phrases we remember as parts of our religious heritage. And we and many others consider the Sabbath as a day of rest and worship.

The practice of Sabbath time holds promise as a way to begin experiencing and experimenting with what it means to live a simple life, a life of discipleship, trusting in and waiting upon God. "Most of us don't allow ourselves 'Sabbath time,'" Scott says. "This is an opportunity to reflect on both the concept and how we apply it to our Christian lives."



Operation Christmas Child--Shoeboxes Bring Joy

Shoeboxes can hold so much more than shoes! We have packed them with toys, school supplies, hygiene items, flashlights, watches, socks, but most importantly, with the hope and love of Jesus Christ! We've done that through the ministry of Operation Christmas Child.

For the past several Novembers, the children and youth of FPC have participated in Operation Christmas Child, a ministry of Samaritan's Purse. The mission of Operation Christmas Child is to demonstrate God's love in a tangible way to needy children around the world, and together with the local church worldwide, to share the Good News of Jesus Christ.

We ask that children, youth, and others take a simple shoebox, decide whether their gift will be for a boy or girl and mark the box, fill it with gifts, send a check for \$7, and bring their shoebox to church! We collect and wrap them together, and then we pray for our boxes. We pray for the children who will receive them, that they may know the love of Jesus! Lastly, we take the boxes to the drop off location to be shipped to children around the world!

This year we sent 157 boxes! Parents and friends joined us in wrapping boxes. This year Operation Christmas Child shipped the 100 millionth box!

We are thankful to be a small part of that ministry!

KEYS and the ABC Sunday School Class

Once again, these two groups gathered to renew friendships and celebrate the season. From the initial reception to the program by Music Ministry's Friday Singers a sumptuous meal prepared and served by our kitchen staff it was clearly a great start to the season.



Scene During Advent . . . We

Worship times changed . . . Loaves and Fishes began five consecutive S contemporary bands practiced and Friday Singers visited rehab and nu the City came to our Midday Noels programs and there were regular S services on Christmas Eve.

His Name Shall be Called . . . Wonderful Counselor . . . Mighty God . . . into our lives yet again.

Advent Festival—A Great Beginning

Families made Advent wreaths. The combined Children's Choirs sang. The gingerbread house was decorated and faces were painted.



And Our Children Retell the Christmas Story

Everyone in our Children's Sunday School classes had a part and a costume. There were sheep and shepherds, Magi and guiding stars, angels, the manger and a choir of children's voices raised in joyful song, and proud families and friends enjoying the roles their children played, the welcoming them back to the pew to worship together.



Celebrated the Season at FPC

Sundays of food and fellowship with our guests . . . choirs and singing centers with their sounds of Christmas . . . people from all over Sunday morning worship services, one with the Children's Pageant, five

Everlasting Father . . . Prince of Peace. We welcomed the Christ Child



in the choir loft and poinsettias and greenery are in the Narthex. The crèche is centered in the Towers, the poinsettias are in the chancel, and new banners, flowers, and greenery are in Westminster Hall for contemporary worship services.

Hanging The Greens . . . Our Christmas Decorations

Like clockwork each year the wreaths and red bows appear. The Christmas tree is in the Mauze Lobby. Garlands festoon the railing



Shelly Harrell Reminisces . . .

A Bit of the Story of Our Nativity Scene

A number of years ago – 12-15 or so – Mary Pat Stumberg called me and asked if I would like to help her put up the Nativity Scene at the church . . . the one in the area called "The Tower" lobby. Mary Pat had been in charge of the crèche for at least that many years. I was happy for the opportunity to help, and she showed me where the items were being stored.

We used an old stable and some all-white china figures that, we understood, Kip Zbinden had purchased at a garage sale – and we were amazed that the grouping included an elephant!! The figures were nice and were used for years. A few years later Mary Pat "retired" from the crèche responsibility and turned it over to me, we thought it would be a good time to "spiff up" the scene.

By that time the Baby Jesus figure was truly wrapped tightly because he had been broken to pieces. We think a curious child may have held it and accidentally dropped it – it was found in many pieces on the floor. The Baby Jesus figure was patched up and is still in use.

I asked a friend of mine, John Barnhill III, who designs and makes furniture to make a proper manger out of wood – and insisted that he sign it. After that, I made a few trees and found a lovely ceramic Nativity scene set to replace the all-white set we had been using.

A number of years ago I asked Katy Zbinden Farrimond to help me set up the creche at the same time the flower committee members and friends are decorating the halls. We decorate the table, place the crèche and try to protect it as a viewing site. When it has been up for a couple of weeks, we hang the star over the scene to announce the approaching Birth of Christ.



After the holiday season, we put each item back in the same large box it has been stored in for many years, carefully wrapping baby Jesus, Mary and Joseph, the Wise Men and the Shepherds so that they will be ready for next year's Advent and Christmas. We always appreciate the church staff members who help us in so many ways – lifting the heavy box and bringing it from storage to the Tower area, hanging the star, helping us to place the components, and then assisting us with properly storing it for the next year.

We have a special feeling for the crèche and hope that you do also. We think it will be cherished and used during Advent and Christmas for many years to come.



It's a New Year for PW

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

New Year . . . New beginnings . . . and a large helping of THANK YOU!

To PW members who baked and served at our annual Christmas parties at Morningside Manor and the Chandler Center.

To PW members who prepared and served the sumptuous foods that sustained our pastors and our music ministry team between the Candlelight Christmas Eve services.

To the PW team that, again, oversaw our congregation's efforts in behalf of the families our mission partners at House of Neighborly Service identified for "A Gift of Christmas."

To our Circle Chairs and Moderators who have studied, hosted, facilitated, and enjoyed the first four months of this year and to the members of the FPC staff whom we honored in November.

To our wonderful "Garland Girls" and the Sanctuary Flower Committee who so beautifully decorated the entire FPC campus.

And to the members of our wonderful FPC staff.

With January 1 occurring during the middle of the week, some PW circles adjusted their meeting dates—be sure to check below to know with certainty when and where your group will meet.

I always look forward to the spring months of PW. There are many events—both within PW and throughout the church where we can bear witness to our faith and fellowship with others. Happy New Year, everyone—may it be the best ever!!

Need A Ladies' Night Out? Here's How!!



Presbyterian Women invites all FPC women to our annual Ladies Night Out at La Fonda Oak Hills.

You don't have to be a member of PW, but you DO have to want to make new friends from First Presbyterian Church (and, quite possibly some of their friends). And you'll want to enjoy some great enchiladas, too. We call that combination the best way to start a new year. "Our goal is to have a great evening of fellowship, good conversation, a few laughs, and a lot of great food," says Suzanne Thomas, event planner extraordinaire.

Join us on Thursday, January 31, 2013 at 6:30 p.m. at La Fonda Oak Hills for dinner and fun. La Fonda Oak Hills is located at 350 Northhaven Street. Your check is your reservation. \$15 payment (payable to FPC, memo PW dinner) may be given to Suzanne Thomas or Lynn Thompson, 7619 Vinewood Court, SAT, 78209. Questions? Give us a call! Suzanne 210-820-3245 or Lynn 210-824-2815. See you there!!

Presbyterian Women Circle Meetings January 2013

Circle 112

Monday, January 28, 10:30 a.m.
 FPC, Geneva Room
 Chair: Ann Nelson, 824-5182
 Co-chair: Suzanne Thomas, 820-3245

Circle 2

Monday, January 28, 1:30 p.m.
 FPC, Room 226
 Chair: Char-An Witten, 341-1856

Circle 3

Monday, January 28, 1:30 p.m.
 FPC, Room 228
 Chair: Ann Fryburger, 490-3566

Circle 4

Monday, January 28, 1:30 p.m.
 FPC, Room 226 (with Circle 2)

Circle 5 - Shawl Ministry

Friday, January 18, Noon-1:00 p.m.
 FPC, Room 228
 Chair: Caryl Gaubatz, 651-0208
 Co-chair: Jane Ann Temple, 828-7542

Circle 6

Tuesday, January 15, 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, January 15, 11:30 a.m.
 Home of Pat Johnson
 13807 Bluff Top (16)
 Chair: Jane Ann Temple, 828-7542

Circle 8 - Moms' Group

Monday, January 14 and 28, 9:30 a.m.
 FPC, Room 108
 Chair: Julie Walthall, 829-8332

Circle 9

Tuesday, January 15, 10:00 a.m.
 FPC, St. Andrew's Room
 Chair: Pat Brannen, 735-4415

Circle 10

Monday, January 14, 1:30 p.m.
 Towers at Park Lane, The Club (22 Floor)
 Chair: Janice Magnus, 829-5866

Circle 11

Monday, January 28, 6:30 p.m.
 Home of Suzanne Sturdivant
 13503 Hollowview Street (32)
 Chair: Jean Swanson, 826-0766

Circle 13 - Literature Circle

Tuesday, January 8, 1:30 p.m.
 FPC, McCullough Room
Adobe Walls to Stone Edifice 1846-1995
 Chair: Becca Price, 824-2603
 Reviewer: Rev. Louis Zbinden

Circle 14

Monday, January 28, Noon
 FPC, St. Andrews Room
 Chair: Suzie Simpson, 455-7410

Circle 15 - Talking, Sharing Circle

Sunday, January 19, 11:00 a.m.
 FPC, St. Andrews Room
 Chair: Melody Hull, 821-5211

Circle 16 - Marjorie McLernon Sewing Circle

Wednesday, January 16, 9:30 a.m.
 FPC, Room 228
 Chairs: Lee Pressly, 735-0978
 Corie Barlow, 481-1337

Circle 17 - Edna Ralston Sewing Circle

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

Circle 18 - Circle of Concern (No Date)

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

Circle 19 - White Cross Circle

Wednesday, January 2, 9:30 a.m.
 FPC, Room 309
 Chair: Janet Beauch, 673-3251

Circle 20 - Circle of Service

Circle 21

Monday, January 21, 6:30 p.m.
 Home of Rosemary Engstrom
 3630 Sugarhill Drive (30)
 Chair: Karen Gabrielson, 333-4239
 Andrea Taylor, 403-9442

First Cup Readings — January, 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

If thou but suffer God to guide thee, and hope in Him through all thy ways, He'll give thee strength what-e'er betide thee, and bear thee through the evil days; Who trust in God's unchanging love builds on the Rock that naught can move. Only be still, and wait His leisure in cheerful hope, with heart content to take what-e'er thy Father's pleasure and all discerning love hath sent; Nor doubt our inmost wants are known to Him who chose us for His own. (The Hymnbook, #344)

JANUARY

- 1 Isaiah 43:18-19; Psalm 1; 112
- 2 Job 1; 1 Peter 5:8-11; Psalm 37:23-40; Revelation 12:10-12
- 3 Job 2:1-10; Matthew 4:1-11; 2 Corinthians 12:7-10; Psalm 88
- 4 Job 2:11-13; Psalm 22:1-11; Proverbs 17:17; 18:24; 27:6-10
- 5 Job 3; Jeremiah 20:14-18; Psalm 63

In shady green pastures so rich and so sweet, God leads His dear children along; where the water's cool flow bathes the weary one's feet, God leads His dear children along. Though sorrow befall us and evils oppose, God leads His dear children along; through grace we can conquer, defeat all our foes, God leads his dear children along. Some thru the waters, some thru the flood, some thru the fire, but all thru the blood. Some thru great sorrow, but God gives a song in the night season and all the day long. (Hymns for the Family of God, #579)

- 6 Job 4-5; 1 Corinthians 3:18-20; Hebrews 12:1-13
- 7 Job 6-7; Lamentations 3:1-26; Psalm 38
- 8 Job 8; Jeremiah 29:11-13; Psalm 25
- 9 Job 9-10; James 5:7-20
- 10 Job 11; Proverbs 3:5-8; Psalm 23
- 11 Job 12-13; Jeremiah 32:17-19; Hebrews 9:27-28
- 12 Job 14-15; Psalm 37; 116

O gracious God, forsake me not when I am old and gray, that unto those that follow me I may Thy might display. Thou who has sent me many griefs wilt yet my soul restore, and out of sorrow's lowest depths wilt bring me forth once more. O turn again and comfort me, my waning strength restore, and for Thy faithfulness, O God, my praise shall never cease. (The Hymnbook, #396)

- 13 Job 16-17; Psalm 31
- 14 Job 18-19; Psalm 41
- 15 Job 20-21; Proverbs 11:28; 23:5; 20:7-9; 1 Timothy 6:6-10; Luke 18:18-30
- 16 Job 22-23; Psalm 116; Proverbs 8:17
- 17 Job 24-25; Psalm 139:11-12; John 8:12; Ephesians 5:8-14

- 18 Job 26-28; Psalm 51:6; Proverbs 2; James 1:2-8
- 19 Job 29-31; James 1:9-26; Ephesians 2:8-10

He leadeth me; O blessed thought! O words with heavenly comfort wrought! What-e'er I do, wher-e'er I be, still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me. Sometimes 'mid scenes of deepest gloom, sometimes where Eden's flowers bloom, by waters calm, O'er troubled sea, still 'tis His hand that leadeth me. Lord, I would clasp Thy hand in mine, nor ever murmur or repine; Content what-e'er lot I see, since 'tis my God that leadeth me. (The Hymnbook, #338)

- 20 Job 32-33; 1 Timothy 4:12; 2 Corinthians 10:12; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31
- 21 Job 34-35; Ecclesiastes 12:14; Romans 2:5-11; Psalm 103:8-18
- 22 Job 36-37; Jeremiah 46:27-28; Hebrews 12:4-11; Isaiah 40:17-31
- 23 Job 38-39; John 1:3; Colossians 1:15-17; Isaiah 29:13-16; Isaiah 49:9-14
- 24 Job 40-42:6; Romans 14:4; Matthew 7:1-6; Proverbs 20:27; Psalm 139:23-24
- 25 Job 42:7-17; Matthew 5:21-24; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Peter 5:6-11
- 26 Psalm 139; 132

We dedicate this temple, O Father, unto Thee, the God of ancient ages, and ages yet to be; That here our hearts may worship, and here our songs ascend, in loving adoration and praise that knows no end. We dedicate this temple, this labor of our hands, to Father, Son, and Spirit, whose temple always stands in hearts that learn to love Thee, and minds that comprehend; in wills empowered to witness Thy Kingdom without end! (The Hymnbook, #519)

- 27 1 Chronicles 28-29:1-25; Proverbs 3:1-10
- 28 2 Chronicles 1-3:2; Ephesians 2:19-22
- 29 2 Chronicles 5-6; 1 Corinthians 3:10-17
- 30 2 Chronicles 7; 1 Kings 9:1-9; Romans 12:1-2
- 31 2 Chronicles 33; Galatians 5:16-21; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18



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]

WISHING YOU HEALTH, HAPPINESS, AND GOD'S BLESSINGS IN 2013

by Pat McCleary



The holidays have come and gone, and it's time to reflect, give thanks and plan for the coming year. It's been a great year and here we are at the beginning of another year having wrapped up December with a wonderful Christmas party for both KEYS and the Adult Bible Class. Entertainment was by the wonderful **Friday Singers**, an integral part of our Music Ministries Team and directed by Charlotte Hains. A delicious lunch was prepared by Chef Maurilio Garza Jr. and his staff, and it was KEYS' great pleasure to "gift" them for their culinary contributions to our meetings. Wrapping for Elf Louise gave us the opportunity to select and wrap gifts for the children of our city. Also, we provided a family of five, headed by grandparents, with a Christmas basket including presents and food.

Start the New Year off by joining KEYS for many excellent speakers, programs, trips and special activities planned for the coming year. KEYS is a great way to join together to service, join in fellowship and meet new people! It is my privilege work with such a special group of people.

I want to take this opportunity to say "thank you" to everyone who generously donated money, gifts, and their time in preparing and delivering the Gift of Christmas Basket to our Christmas family. Also thanks to members of the KEYS Leadership Committee and their dedicated work in planning and implementing our events and programs. It truly is a team effort! Blessings to each and everyone!

Coming up in January

Step and Stretch Class – January 4 (Friday) 9:45 a.m. Get in shape for the New Year—if you haven't tried this class, now is the time to "get moving" and improve your core strength, flexibility, toning and cardiovascular conditioning. There is NO CHARGE and you can wear comfortable clothes. Our excellent leader is Gale Buchanan. It is said that exercise is the "fountain of youth."

No speaker or luncheon January 4 as the KEYS Leadership Committee will meet at 11:00 a.m. to finish planning the Spring Programs. Please let me know of any speakers, movies, trips, volunteer ideas, etc. that you would like to see in the KEYS Plan.

Divine Organization – Peaceful Order Where You Live & Work -- January 11 (Friday) 11:00 a.m. Don't know what to do with all of last year's paperwork—tax records, home records, bank statements, ATM receipts, bank deposit receipts, monthly credit card statements, monthly utility bills, cable, internet, stock records? If so, come and hear **Kat Jacoby of Divine Organization** who specializes in working with seniors to simplify their environments. Find out about all that paper: what to keep, how long to keep it; what to toss! Stay and play bridge after lunch!

Celebrate January Birthdays at Fort Sam Houston Golf Club – January 18 (Friday) 11:30 a.m. This will be a good time to catch up with everyone after the holidays! Cost is \$12/person except for our birthday-month guests who will receive a complimentary meal. Reservations must be made by noon on Monday, January 14, by calling Nancy at 210-226-0215. Menus to make your selection will be available in the Mauze Lobby and at our January 11 meeting. Cancellations must be made no later than Monday, January 14, or you will be responsible for payment.

Author Leila Meacham – January 25 (Friday) 11:00 a.m. This is a return visit for local author of the epic novel, Roses. Come and hear Leila discuss her newest work, Tumbleweeds, told with all of what's called "Meacham's signature drama, unforgettable characters, and plot twists...readers will be turning pages, desperate to learn how it all turns out." You won't want to miss this delightful speaker.

PLAY MAH JONGG? COME JOIN THE FUN!! It's a new year. Good winds are blowing our way. Come join other FPC members as we play Mah Jongg and enjoy the fun. All levels of ability, from complete novice to crafty player, enjoy this tile game. An individual's skill, or lack of it on any given day, doesn't adversely affect anyone. Everyone has fun and we learn as we go. Instruction is provided. We're playing Wright-Patterson rules. Once you know the basic play of the game, you can easily pick up other popular versions of Mah Jongg. Currently the group plays one Friday a month from 1-3 p.m. Contact Nancy Black at whythere@swbell.net or (210) 493-1609. for further information



February 1 (Friday) 11:00 a.m.

Rick Cavender and his band return for another memorable performance. We've packed the house on his last visits so don't delay in making your reservation and inviting your friends. His theme this year is "Great Country Performers of All Time" and, of course, a little Elvis too!

According to reviews, "For over 20 years, Rick has livened up many a party on the local, national and world scene. He and his band provided memorable entertainment for the largest convention ever to visit the city and performed with the hottest stars in the music scene. Rick is also a respected community leader and known to many as the voice and personality behind the Cavender Auto Family of dealerships."



Your check is your reservation, should be made payable to First Presbyterian Church with "Rick Cavender" notation on memo line, and mailed to the attention of Pat McCleary. \$15/per person includes the performance and lunch—what a deal! Make reservations by noon on Monday, January 28.

Y'All Come and Enjoy !!!



404 North Alamo Street
San Antonio, Texas 78205-1918

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS
PERMIT NO. 169

JANUARY



Full calendar online—www.fpconline.org

Jan 1 - Church Offices Closed
Jan 8 - Literature Circle
Jan 9 - Intersection begins
Jan 9 - Ladies Wednesday Night Bible Study begins
Jan 11-12 - Officer's Retreat
Jan 14- Mom's Group
Jan 15 - Tuesday's Women's Bible Study begins
Jan 28 - Mom's Group
Jan 29 - Young Lives Luncheon
Jan 31 - PW Ladies Night Out

Feb 1 - Rick Cavender Concert
Feb 3 - Blood Drive Registration

Spring 2013 Series of Mental Health Ministry Classes

FPC's Mental Health Ministry's partnership with the National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) will continue two classes during the Spring. The *Family Support Group* will meet the first and third Tuesdays of each month from 6:30-8 p.m. beginning January 15. The *Family to Family* class meets from 6:30 to 9 p.m. each Wednesday in Room 310, beginning February 6 and continuing through April 24. Further information is available from Doug Beach (210 247-4616 – doug.beach@ymail.com). Also meeting each month at FPC is the Bexar County Mental Health Task Force, striving to develop ongoing strategies for improving the lives of people living with mental illness."

INTERSECTION BEGINS JANUARY 9

Dinner, fellowship and worship is in Westminster Hall at 5:30 p.m. Dinner is served family style and costs \$4.00 per person or a maximum of \$20.00 for an entire family. In addition to dinner, these Wednesday Night Gatherings are planned:

Children's and Youth Choir Rehearsals	5:00 p.m.	Rooms 125, 126k, 127, 128 and 318
Westminster Ringers Rehearsal	5:45 p.m.	Room 309
Youth and Children's Ministry Gatherings	6:30 p.m.	As Posted
Small Groups	6:30 p.m.	As Posted
NAMI Family to Family Class	6:30 p.m.	Room 310 (Beginning Feb. 6)
Adult Classes Caring for Aging Parents	6:30 p.m.	Covenant Hall
Heart of the Matter	6:30 p.m.	Room 224
Ladies Bible Study Malachi	6:30 p.m.	Room 302
Contemporary Worship Team	6:30 p.m.	Westminster Hall
Orff and Rhythm Instruments	6:30 p.m.	Room 126
Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal	7:00 p.m.	Room 318