



First Press

Living to Make Jesus Visible



REMEMBER

in

November



November 2013

Your monthly connection to First Presbyterian Church of San Antonio

Pastor's Pondering

Remember in November

By Rev. Trey Little, Senior Pastor



"Remember the Alamo!"

My hunch is, you have heard that battle cry before—in fact, perhaps you have even said it yourself.

Hearing that statement again today, does it cause you to remember the 189 brave men who took refuge in the Alamo as they stood against Santa Anna's army—for 13 long

days valiantly fighting to the last man. Perhaps you remember that this same battle cry proved to be a source of strength for Sam Houston and his army as they engaged Santa Anna in the Battle of San Jacinto. Under the cries of "Remember the Alamo" Santa Anna's army was defeated. There is something about remembering that encourages us and provides us the courage to carry on in the battle.

As followers of Jesus Christ, I think it is important that we "Remember the Lord." I know that may seem like an obvious battle cry for a pastor to suggest, but I sincerely mean it. We are not in a battle for independence, but instead we are in a battle for dependence. We continue to struggle with how to truly depend on the Lord for our strength, courage, and provision.

Over and over again in the Bible we are told to "Remember." **Hebrews 2:1 says, "We must pay more careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away."** Remember! **Exodus 14:13-14 says: "Moses answered the people, 'Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still.'"** Remember!

I am absolutely convinced we need to "remember" more. Therefore, I would like to challenge you to "Remember in November." I want to encourage you to spend some time each day in November, remembering the promises of the Lord in and over your life. Remember that He has a plan for your life. Remember to be still and know that He is God. Remember that He gave His life for your redemption. Remember that He is not finished with you yet.

But also, remember the blessings He has poured into your life; family, friends, your church family, the very breath you are breathing at this moment. Remember when you learned to ride a bike and how empowered you felt. Remember the first touchdown pass you caught (that is not a memory I have). Remember the long walk on the beach, or the sunset in the mountains. Remember, remember, remember.

The other day I ran across a quote from Archbishop Oscar Romero, a quote that I think encourages us to step back, every

now and then, and take a long view.

"The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is even beyond our vision. We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work. Nothing we do is complete, which is a way of saying that the kingdom always lies beyond us. No statement says all that could be said. No prayer fully expresses our faith. No confession brings perfection. No pastoral visit brings wholeness. No program accomplishes the church's mission. No set of goals and objectives includes everything."

This is what we are about. We plant the seeds that one day will grow. We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise. We lay foundations that will need further development. We provide yeast that produces far beyond our capabilities.

We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something, and to do it very well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest. We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the Master Builder and the worker.

We are the workers, not Master Builders; ministers, not Messiahs. We are prophets of a future not our own. AMEN."

Will you "Remember in November"?

Keep smilin' and keep lovin' and keep rememberin'.
Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Trey".





Director of Children's Ministry Sought

FPC seeks a fulltime Director of Children's Ministry. This position will develop, coordinate, and administer the ministry to children, birth through fifth grade, and their families. It will also supervise: Children's Ministry Program Staff, Summer Interns, Day Camp Counselors. For a copy of the detailed ministry description or to be considered, please submit a faith statement, cover letter and resume to: YvonneT@fpcsat.org. Deadline: Wednesday, November 6. You may also read the job description at www.fpconline.org.

Session Minutes in Seconds

The Session at its regularly Stated Meeting on 10/14:

- ◆ Approved the Consent Agenda (approval of minutes from previous session meetings, received the Deacon's minutes, approved changes to the Church Register, approved April's financial statements, and received committee minutes).
- ◆ Broke into small groups to respond to questions 5 & 6 on the Narrative on the Health and Mission and Ministry (Fellowship of Presbyterians).
- ◆ Received the Clerk's Report.
- ◆ Received report from Stewardship and Finance noting that Benevolences for second quarter will be paid. Also discussed initial budget issues for 2014.
- ◆ Received and approved a report from Personnel regarding the reinstatement of the position of Director of Children's Ministry.
- ◆ Received an update on the work of the Sunday Morning Task Force.
- ◆ Under New Business –
 - ◆ Received a report regarding Per Capita in the PC(USA)
 - ◆ Approved an offsite fund-raiser for the Children's Center
 - ◆ Approved the celebration of Holy Communion at an offsite wedding
 - ◆ Reviewed information on worship statistics
- ◆ Adjourned with prayer



Church Register

DEATHS:

Thomas Schmitz
September 12, 2013

Col. James Phillips
September 14, 2013

Frances Atkinson
September 21, 2013

MARRIAGES:

Steven Jerrod Bedingfield and Julie Marie Shussler
September 21, 2013

Mason Robert Anders and Courtney Jordan Baker
October 5, 2013

BAPTISMS:

Noah Benjamin Hart, son of Benjamin and Jennie Hart
October 13, 2013

David Henle Rall, son of Aaron Matthew and Jill Elizabeth Henle-Rall
October 13, 2013

Eli Wayne Rall, son of Aaron Matthew and Jill Elizabeth Henle-Rall
October 13, 2013

Aaron Matthew Rall
October 13, 2013

Matthew Erik Alderman
October 13, 2013

FINANCIAL SUMMARY September 2013

OPERATING FUND BUDGET	ACTUAL YTD	BUDGET YTD	OVER/ (UNDER)
TOTAL REVENUES	\$2,912,365	\$3,206,251	(\$293,887)
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES	\$2,636,186	\$2,758,776	(\$122,591)
TOTAL BENEVOLENCES	\$462,823	\$628,748	(\$165,925)
FUND TFR FROM OPERATING RESERVE	(300,000)	0	300,000
NET INCOME/LOSS	\$113,356	(\$181,273)	\$294,628

We had a better month in September but still have a long way to go. The ministries and benevolences of FPC depend on your gifts so that we can fulfill our obligations to our mission partners. If you have questions or concerns, please contact Janet Slayden, Church Business Manager, at 210-271-2751, or Butch Gerfers, Church Treasurer, at 210-862-9998.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

SAN ANTONIO

Living to Make Jesus Visible

Project 240 Goes to Trinity University



First Presbyterian Church University Ministry and Trinity InterVarsity partnered to hold a Habitat for Humanity Joshua Build (like Project 240) on Trinity University's campus Sunday, September 29, from 1:00-5:00 p.m. It was a wonderful way to make Jesus visible!

To learn more about University Ministries, contact Chris Via at chrsvia@fpcsat.org.



Youth Ministry

Youth Retreat Focuses on Jesus

By Matt Fricker, Director of Youth Ministry

What an amazing time of the year time of the year it is, especially for youth ministry! As you can see by the pictures we have just returned from our middle school retreat. It was an amazing time of fun and fellowship. We played games, sang songs, laughed a lot, and joined in fellowship to learn more about Jesus Christ!



As youth workers, we are always looking for that great analogy to get people to better understand the Bible. In this story Jesus makes it very clear for us to understand what happens when we lose focus of him. We pray that we are all able to focus more on Jesus and his incredible love and grace.

The central focus for the retreat was “being focused on Jesus” and we went through a number of scriptures (Matthew 19:16-22, John 21:1-8, Matthew 14:22-33, and Mark 2:1-12). Matthew 14 tells the story of Jesus walking on the water and Peter calling out to him and joining him on the water. While Peter is on the water he becomes afraid and begins to sink. His doubts and fears had taken his focus away from God and Peter started sinking. Jesus reaches out his hand and pulls Peter out of the water.

If you are looking to join us there are still have so many awesome things for youth in the month of November. We have youth group every Wednesday from 5:00-7:30 p.m. here at FPC and dinner is included. It is a lot of fun and everyone is welcome (you can bring friends, no sign up needed)! Small groups are going strong and we would love for you to join us (email me for more info mattf@fpcsat.org). We are also beginning to plan the mission trips for the summer which are always amazing. We really hope you join us in friendship and fellowship!

Friday Singers Minister Through Music

By Charlotte Hains



Just what is it that our FPC Friday Singers do? To help in understanding, following is a letter that came to the singers from one of the retirement communities where they sang.

“Charlotte, the residents just loved the performance. All they wanted to know was when you all would be coming back; that’s a sure sign of a successful visit. I did get some pictures and video so I’ve attached those above. Please feel free to come back when you can, thank you again for doing such a fantastic job; you have a great team!”

A program of the Friday Singers consists of a few minutes of old favorite songs, some accompanied with humorous motions and actions. This is followed by a special solo or duet and next

comes our personal involvement time with the residents as familiar hymns they know are passed out. The singers move among the residents and all join in together in singing; a special good-bye song ends the program..

Performances are started with a prayer offered for all in attendance.

Rehearsals for this 2013-14 year have been underway since mid-August and visits to city retirement communities and rehab centers will begin the latter part of September. Rehearsals and performances are held on Friday mornings. The joy of this ministry in music is open to all who are interested in singing! Come one come all! For information, call Charlotte Hains at 210-828-2048 or 210-710-7173.



Grow Ministries

1st Wednesdays @First Pres

On the first Wednesday of each month, come share a meal, make new friends, celebrate one another, grow in discipleship, and worship in song, prayer, and spoken word.

Schedule:

- Children's Choirs 5:00-5:45 p.m. (meeting weekly)
- Full-meal dinner 5:30 p.m. in Westminster Hall
- Special program 6:30-7:30 p.m.
- Tadpoles (preschool ages) 6:30-7:30 p.m. following choir rehearsal and dinner
- First Kids (1st-5th grades) 6:30-7:30 p.m. following choir rehearsal and dinner
- Youth group for all 6th-12th graders in the First Presbyterian Church Student Center 5:00-7:30 p.m.

Childcare for birth-2 years available throughout the evening during program times. Childcare for birth-5th grade available weekly for small groups who meet at the church Wednesday nights.

For more information on First Wednesdays, contact Rev. Ruthie Seiders (ruthies@fpcsat.org / 210-271-2714).

Future Adult Programs for

1st Wednesday @ First Pres:

Here's what's coming up at future adult programs at 1st Wednesdays @ First Pres. All programs are from 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Dateline: Malawi

1st Wednesday @ First Pres

November 6, 2013

Covenant Hall, Third Floor

Take a trip to Malawi through the stories and photos of our very first Malawi Mission Team. Hear testimonies directly from FPC members returning from the community of Mutendere. Learn about the lives of sponsored children and the team's experiences of visiting families in their homes. You will also find out updates for how you can be involved in transforming Malawi through prayer from right where you are in San Antonio!



Our team is returning from Malawi the day before their presentation, so in case of a change in their arrival date, a different, exciting 1st Wednesday @ First Pres will be announced.

For more information, contact Claire Plantenga at clairep@fpcsat.org.

December 4 – Home for the Holidays with Minister of Music Tom Dooling. This will be a wonderful mix of sacred and secular Advent and Christmas music with some carol singing.

Midday Noels

Thursdays in December

Dec. 5, 12, 19

12:10-12:45 p.m.

Our annual Christmas Gift to the City features great performances and a seated or "grab-and-go" lunch.

Contact Tom Dooling at tomd@fpcsat.org for details.

Order Poinsettias to Honor, Remember, Beautify

Each year the Sanctuary Flower Committee spearheads the church's Christmas beauty by offering members and friends the opportunity to order poinsettias in memory of or to honor others. Order forms will be available in the Narthex and Mauze Lobby.





Advent Christmas Festival Celebrates “Christmas Around the World”

Sunday, Dec. 1, 2013
3:00-5:00 p.m. in Westminster Hall

“Christmas Around the World” is the theme for our annual Advent Festival. This event is open for all ages to come and make an advent wreath of fresh greens to use in your home through the advent season, as well as get your “passport” stamped in all the different booths as you visit different countries and make a craft reflective of that culture. We’ll have red and white Scandinavian Christmas hearts, German gingerbread house, Bethlehem manger scenes, Guatemalan angels, Swedish candle wreaths, cards to send to our children in Malawi, among others. In addition we will have our

regular stations for decorating Christmas cookies, play-dough, and reindeer games. At 4:00 we will pause from our activities to gather together to hear our children’s choirs sing, light the first advent candle, and see a video of our Malawi team speaking with our new friends about how they celebrate Jesus’ birth in Mutendere, Malawi!

Come early and visit the Market of Hope, which will be open from 2:30-3:30 p.m. for you to be able to support our missionaries around the world as well as purchase some fair trade gifts for friends and family. Be sure to invite your neighbors and friends to this intergenerational kickoff to the holiday season!

Presbyterian Women

A Fabulous Fall

By Susan DeKoch, Presbyterian Women President



Beautiful, clear blue skies, cool breezes, pumpkins and falling leaves are some of the blessings we are receiving as we head into the Thanksgiving season. I am especially thankful for the wonderful women who are always making Jesus visible around our church, in our homes and in our community.

I have had the honor of visiting many different Circles over the past two months and I continue to be amazed by the women of FPC. The precious pajamas, stuffed animals and bibs that are hand-sewn and given to children in need every single month and the White Cross bandages sent from our FPC in the name of Jesus are visible reminders to our world that we love and serve a mighty God. It is with great joy that I have visited our Bible study Circles and the Moms' Group. The lessons are beautifully done and the moms' activities make me wish I were still a "young mom."

We have had a fun-filled and busy fall. Our Ladies Night Out was a huge success. Fifty ladies gathered around two beautifully decorated, festive tables and heard tips on entertaining and decorating. Many, many thanks to **Meredith Park** for opening her heart and her home to us as we hosted author and event planner Elizabeth Stone. Elizabeth's tablescapes were outstanding and the fun and fellowship will be a warm and loving memory for all who attended. Many thanks to our Evening Events Chairman, **Julie Walthall** and to her committee, **Susie DeKoch** and **Leila Sirotiak**.

Our Christmas Craft project was on October 23. The Moms' Group and other volunteers assembled precious Christmas nativity ornaments for Chandler and Morningside nursing homes. Thank you to Chairmen **Brenda Leonard** and **Sara Parish** as well as to **April Kuper** for their inspired ideas! Make plans to attend both Christmas parties. Morningside Manor



will celebrate on Thursday, December 5 and Chandler will have their party on Thursday, December 12. Both parties are at 3:00 p.m.

We are giving great thanks for a joy-filled Fall Luncheon, featuring guest speaker, Sharon Glasgow. Our wonderful staff was honored for all they do. We are so thankful for each and every one of them. **Cheri Stith**, **Robin Hudnall**, and **Blair Perry** are to be hugged and congratulated for their beautiful and creative centerpieces. **Candy Wagner** and **Suzanne Thomas** took care of our reservations and waitresses. These ladies worked tirelessly to give us a beautiful luncheon. They also had many opportunities along the way to testify to the love of Jesus.

I am thankful for you and for a God who is stronger than ANYTHING!

"Enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him and bless His name. For the Lord is good. His mercy is everlasting and His truth endures for all generations." Psalm 100: 4-5



The Gift of Christmas 2013

By Willie Willming

The "Gift of Christmas" is a mission project coordinated by the Presbyterian Women at First Presbyterian Church.

This Christmas project is an opportunity for individuals or groups in our church to share Christ's love with others by giving food, clothes and gifts to families in need. Each family is referred by House of Neighborly Service. Some are large, multi-generational families, while others are smaller family units. All are appreciative of the gifts and the givers.

HNS is a non-profit, multi-service neighborhood center founded in 1917 by Presbyterian missionaries, serving 900 families on San Antonio's west side. HNS has provided a wide range of social, educational, and health-related programs throughout its 96-year history, with an emphasis on helping families move toward independence and self-sufficiency. Our church and PW has been actively involved in supporting Sus Hijas and other programs.

We encourage PW circles, Sunday School classes, small groups, various church organizations, families and individuals to share in this effort to include these HNS families in your Christmas giving this year. We will provide all the information on the family and attempt to match family sizes with your request. You might even consider sharing with an extra family or two if your groups collections are always large! Your caring outreach and

expression of Christian love will make an enormous difference for these families.

Gift of Christmas Family Request Forms will be available in the Mauze Lobby throughout November and December 1. Please return the completed form to the Gift of Christmas mailbox in the church workroom, or mail to:

Ruth Chapman
29713 No Le Haze Dr.
Fair Oaks Ranch, TX 78015-4562
830-981-8450

or

Willie Willming
56 Courtside Circle
San Antonio, TX 78216
210-495-2209

This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. (2 Cor. 9:12)



PW November Circle Meetings

Circle 112
Monday, Nov. 18, 10:30am
FPC Geneva Rm
Chair: Ann Nelson, 824-5182
Co-Chair: Suzanne Thomas, 820-3245

Circle 2 and 4
Monday, Nov. 18, 1:30pm, FPC Rm 226
Chair: Char-An Witten, 341-1856

Circle 5, Shawl Ministry
Friday, Nov. 22, 12pm, FPC Rm 228
Chair: Caryl Gaubatz, 651-0208
Co-Chair: Jane Ann Temple, 828-7542

Circle 6
Tuesday, Nov. 19, 1:30pm, FPC Geneva Rm
Chairs: Martha Pigeon, 828-8993
Betty Anderson, 828-8838
Jane Warren, 493-5187

Circle 7
Tuesday, Nov. 19, 9:30am
Home of Ruth Chapman
29713 No Le Haze Dr.
Chair: Meredith Park, 373-8180
Circle 8, Mom's Group

Wednesday, Nov. 6, 13, 20, 27
9:30-11:30am, FPC Rm 108
Chair: Brenda Leonard, 910-578-7104
Co-Chair: Sara Parish, 394-0865

Circle 9
Tuesday, Nov. 19, 10am
Home of Ann Smith, 2626 Country Hollow
Chair: Pat Brannen, 735-4415

Circle 11
Monday, Nov. 25, 6:30pm
Home of Sheila Figueroa, 335 E. Melrose Dr.
Chair: Jean Swanson, 826-0766

Circle 13
Literature Circle
Tuesday, Nov. 12, 1:30pm, FPC McCullough Rm
"Fiddler on the Roof" by Sholem Aleichem
Reviewed by Bill and Patrice Hensley
Chair: Becca Price, 824-2603

Circle 14
Monday, Nov. 18, 12pm, FPC St. Andrew's Rm
Chair: Suzie Simpson, 455-7410

Circle 16
Marjorie McLernon Sewing Circle
Wednesday, Nov. 20, 9:30am, FPC Rm 228
Chairs: Lee Pressly, 735-0978
Corie Barlow, 481-1337

Circle 17, Edna Ralston Sewing Circle
Wednesday, Nov. 13, 9:30am, FPC Rm 309
Chairs: Jeanne Baker, 494-0972
Gigi Duke, 695-4363

Circle 18, Care and Concern
(no date)
Chairs: Char-An Witten, 341-1856
Paula Bondurant, 736-6632
Georgia Heath, 695-9511

Circle 19, White Cross Circle
Wednesday, Nov. 6, 9:30am, FPC Rm 309
Chair: Janet Beauch, 673-3251

Circle 20, Circle of Service
Wednesday, Nov. 13, 7:00pm
Home of Leslie Little
1400 Bluff Park Dr. 78216
Chair: Shannon McKelvey, 455-4520

Circle 21
Monday, Nov. 18, 6:30pm
Home of Sallie Riesters, 31 Villa Verde
Chair: Andrea Taylor, 403-9442



Remembering

By Len Martin

Veterans Day (November 11) will soon be with us. Originally it was called Armistice Day because on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, World War One ended. It is now called Veterans Day to honor all who have served in our Armed Forces for the defense of freedom in all wars. This is a day of remembrance.

Memorial Day has past, as well as June 6th and July 4th. These are also days of remembrance. In October of last year, Mary Ann and I visited Normandy, France, and in particular the D-Day landing beaches. We visited the American military cemetery and also the German military cemetery. The rows of white crosses and Stars of David will be etched in my memory forever. The German cemetery had only flat grave markers but there were many crosses on view around the cemetery. There were no Stars of David of course. I could not escape the thought that on this battlefield, which might be the greatest accomplishment in military history, Christians were trying to kill each other. I have a family connection with this battle. My aunt was an Army nurse who landed at Utah Beach on D-day plus three, to set up one of the first field hospitals in Normandy.

After this visit, we went to the Holocaust museum in Caen, France. It was primarily about the imprisonment and execu-

tion of French Jews. However it was a graphic depiction of "man's inhumanity to man".

We later visited the village of St Mere Eglise. This was the place where many U.S. paratroopers landed (in error) in the early morning hours of June 6, 1944. As depicted in the film "The Longest Day" Pvt. John Steele (played by Red Buttons) of the 82nd Airborne Division landed on the roof of the church and his parachute caught on one of the steeples. He hung there for hours and watched as the Germans killed his fellow paratroopers. When he was finally liberated and brought down from the steeple, he had lost his hearing for hours from the constant ringing of the church bells. I walked through the church and saw two beautiful stained glass windows depicting the paratrooper landings. I also noticed a tract rack and picked up a couple to read. One had some of the beautiful traditional prayers of worship in many Christian churches. The other was a list of Bible verses with a theme of PEACE. A few emphasized reconciliation of nations but most emphasized the peace that passes all understanding when we accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. I have quoted some of them here.

When a man's ways please the Lord, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him. (Prov 16:1)

You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you. (Isaiah 26:12)

Peace I leave with you: my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. (John 14:27)

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Phil 4:7)

Let the peace of Christ rule in hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. (Col 3:15)

Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in every way. (2 Thes 3:16)

Powerful Tools for Caregivers Training

You are invited to attend an educational program designed to equip family caregivers with effective self-care tools. This program focuses on the caregivers, not the care recipient. You will benefit from this class whether you are helping a parent, child, spouse, friend, neighbor, or someone who lives at home, in a nursing home or across the country.

2013 Class Leader Training
November 6-7, 2013
8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
First Presbyterian Church

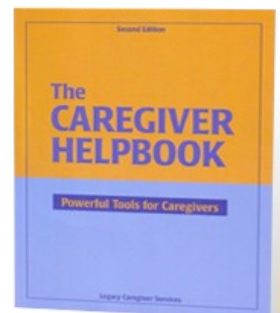
How do you know if you are a caregiver?

If you are responsible for assisting a family member, loved one, or friend with meeting the demands of a chronic illness or disability.

What does the six-week class cover?

This class will give YOU, the family caregiver, tools to: help you reduce stress; communicate effectively with other family members, your doctor, healthcare and service providers; take care of yourself; reduce guilt, anger, and depression; Help you relax; make tough decisions; set goals and problem-solve

Class size is limited. Contact Susan Dullnig at susand@fpcsat.org or 210-271-2753. You may also contact Michele Shultz Hendrix for additional information on the Class Leader Training at 832-731-6127 or terryhendrix@earthlink.net.



Deacon Ministry

Deacon's Home Visitation Ministry

By Linda Ruhmann, Deacon, Home Visitation Committee Chair

For many reasons, some members of our First Presbyterian Church congregation are not able to attend worship services or other church activities like they once did. Some are home-bound due to a long-term chronic illness or to a short-term health issue. Some are undergoing chemotherapy or recovering from an accident. Some have mobility issues or just find it harder to get up and out. Some have moved to an assisted living or a nursing facility. Whatever the circumstances they are still a part of our church family and we do not want them to become "out of sight, out of mind." For this reason Deacons reach out to these special members through the Home Visitation Ministry.

Home Visitation does not necessarily mean that a Deacon will always visit a person at their residence. Some members may not feel up to, or want, a face-to-face visit. They would, however, like to know that their church still cares about them. Often Deacons check in with "at-home" members using brief phone call, written notes, or even email. The purpose is to let the member know that they are being thought about and prayed for. It also gives the member an opportunity to share



any requests or prayer concerns that they may have.

As part of the Home Visitation Ministry, Deacons can also arrange for Communion to be brought to at home members on a quarterly basis if the member so desires. In addition Deacons bring seasonal flowers to at home members at Christmas and Easter.

Generally each Deacon is assigned an "at-home"

member with whom they "touch base" at least once a month. Sometimes these assignments last only a few months while others may last for several years. Most Deacons agree that the relationships formed with their "at-home" members are one of the most rewarding aspects of being a Deacon.

If you or someone you know might benefit from the Home Visitation Ministry of the Deacons please contact Susan Dullnig, Administrative Assistant for Congregational Care at 210-271-2753, or susand@fpcsat.org. She can give you more information and/or begin the process of getting an "at home" Deacon assigned.



Moments to Hold Close

Rear-wheel Horsepower

By Manuel Rodriguez

Anyone who remotely knows me understands that I am not at all mechanically inclined. I mean, I still have to remind myself "righty tighty, lefty loosey" to remember which direction to turn the water faucet. For that

very reason it makes my fascination with engine horsepower all the more bizarre.

Muscle cars, big block engines, exotic foreign sports cars, all of which brag about very high horsepower. Here is the deal, it doesn't matter. It doesn't matter because high engine horse-

power does not necessarily equate to a fast or strong car. How can that be? Certainly the biggest and strongest athlete on the field is the best. The reality is horsepower is lost between the crankshaft, gears, and other aspects of the vehicle prior to transitioning into power at the rear wheel, and that is, as they say, "where the rubber meets the road." If the car is not efficient in transferring horsepower from the engine to the rear wheel it is utterly useless and wasted.

What horsepower has our Heavenly Father given you in terms of gifts and talents? The truth is, it doesn't matter. What does matter is how much horsepower are you exhibiting at your rear wheel?



Market of Hope Returns December 2013

During the month of December, look for banners in the hallways guiding you to the FPC Market of Hope. The room will be filled with a variety of handmade treasures sure to delight everyone on your shopping list for Christmas.

- Purchase Gifts that Offer Hope
- Support Fair-Trade
- Encourage Local and Global Ministries

On December 1st, our FPC Market of Hope will be open for you in the Geneva Room. Enjoy the opportunity to shop for Fair-Trade items that will not only bless the gift recipient, but also bless the artisans and producers of each product. Fair Trade is a model rooted in people-to-people connections, justice, and sustainability. Your purchase provides hope and encouragement for Christian ministries in San Antonio and around the world. The Market will be held on all Sunday mornings before Christmas. In addition, the Market of Hope will be available during certain FPC Christmas events, such as Midday Noels. We're also bringing back the extremely popular free Fair-Trade coffee catered by Starbucks for our shoppers! *For more information, or to find out how you can serve as a volunteer with this great event, please contact Claire Plantenga (210) 226-0215, or email clairep@fpcsat.org.*

Presbyterian Church of Toms River extends gratitude to FPC



As the Jersey Shore approaches the -year anniversary of the storm that forever changed our coastline and our lives, we take a moment to focus on the positive things Hurricane Sandy left in her wake. In those first hours after the wind began to die down, neighbors emerged from their homes to begin the process of restoration, not only of their own property, but their neighbors as well. Homes with electricity stretched power cords to the curb so those without could recharge their mobile devices. Local fitness centers opened their locker rooms so that those without safe water and power could shower and recharge. Relief networks swelled with tangible donations to replace what was lost to the storm. In the days, weeks and now months that have followed Hurricane Sandy's wrath, those of us here at the shore have seen that community support encompasses not just our fellow Jersey Shore resi-

dents, but also our friends from across the country. Such support reminds us that we are in God's hands and that He is working amongst us through those who work in His name. It is a great comfort to see His love so clearly.

In that vein, I'd like to extend our heartfelt thanks to your congregation for the time spent over the course of the last year to help us rebuild and to lift our spirits. God has been on the ground with us through the hearts and hands of the individuals who have reached out and offered their time, talents and resources to those impacted by Hurricane Sandy. On behalf of the Outreach Commission, our congregation and our communities, I thank you for the prayers and support over the course of the last year. There is still much work to be done along the New Jersey coast, but we have come a long way from where we were on November 1, 2012 because of the love expressed through service by congregations like yours.

Sincerely,
Sandra Potts
Member, Outreach
Commission, Presbyterian
Church of Toms River



Habitat House Dedication



Habitat for Humanity hosted a House Dedication for families on October 5, 2013. The Local Missions Committee would like to thank the congregation of First Presbyterian Church for blessing local families with housing through Habitat for Humanity.

Last spring, our whole church worked as a team to raise funds for Habitat and build the frames of five houses in our church parking lot. We prayed

together over the stacks of boards signed with our words of blessing and encouragement. Over the past few months, recipients of the house frames have attended home ownership courses and have contributed over 300 hours of their own construction work toward the goal of completing their home build. With the partnership of volunteers, the boards that were in our parking lot have now been transformed into simple, decent houses. Thank you, FPC for living to make Jesus visible through helping five families to reach their goal of having a place to call home!



A Thank You to the Congregation

By Rich Lounsberry

Ann and I want to thank you for all the nice things you said at our reception on September 29. We really appreciated your wonderful comments. You have all blessed our lives, and hopefully, you will feel the same blessing.

We, also, want to thank you for the thoughtful cards and gifts that you gave to us. You are like family to Ann and I.

It has been my pleasure to serve as your parish associate for a year. The year went too fast, but our good memories remain.

We will be praying that God blesses you as you make Jesus visible, and please pray for us as we try to discover what the next chapter is on our journey.

Blessings always,

Rich and Ann Lounsberry



Grow Ministries

Friendship in Christ

By Frank and Jacque Patton

Many groups exist at First Presbyterian and they have consistently been a part of our church life. Committees are groups. Sunday School classes, PW Circles, Bible study groups on Thursday morning, and Dinner 8s are groups. Lenten series studies often meet in groups. During our years at FPC we have had the privilege of being members of many types of groups.

Two groups stand out as having had considerable impact on our Christian walks. They both resulted in some truly focused study of God's Word, spiritual growth, understanding and appreciation of fellow members, compassion and concern for one another, accountability, and faithfulness. We call these *Our Small Groups*.

The first such group began at the invitation of some friends and fellow church members who were hosting a weekly Bible study in their home. There were about ten of us (numbers varied over the years) who met weekly to study, share, and pray. We completed several service projects together and shared many times of fellowship. Without consciously realizing it, we were participating in a "small group" begun out of one couple's Christian faith and commitment to community.

Fast-forward several years with lots of life changes, including a move to the greater-north part of the city. We found ourselves ready to be a part of a small group again; however, we were geographically removed from any existing groups. We joined the group that was the closest to our home and committed to spend approximately one and a half hours of weekly travel to do so. We didn't know how long we would continue that commitment, but we did know that we wanted to experience the blessings of meeting regularly with fellow believers to study and pray together. As members of this small group, we grew in our relationship with God through the study of his word and through listening to group members as they reflected on how his words spoke to them, viewing God's words through the lens of each member's life experiences and spiritual journey. Trust grew as each week our fellow members shared personal challenges and joys. Faith grew as we prayed earnestly for one another, for our church and for others God placed on our hearts. We experienced the renewing of strength to face difficulties, the joy of celebrating all types of blessings, and the growth of deep friendships. In fact, our group became a family of believers to us—individuals that we hold dear because of our brotherhood and sisterhood in Christ.

After nearly three years with our group, we felt called to start a small group in our part of town—well, actually it is not "in town," but out in the Bulverde area. We knew there were



other members of FPC who lived in our area, but there were no small groups nearby. We knew specifically of one other couple who were interested in being part of a small group. We were motivated to share the blessings of our small group experience (well, at least to try—the bar was set pretty high!) with others. It was a "Pay-It-Forward" commitment.

In Hebrews 10:22-25a, Paul calls on the believers to persevere in their faith:

Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another...

Our group began over a year ago and God has blessed us in many ways through our fellowship and study. We have grown nearer to God, been held to accountability, experienced tears of thankfulness and joy as well as pain and sadness, and gained clear insights into the faith of our group members. As a result of our study, insights and faith and been called to serve group members as well as others outside the group. As a result, we have grown deeper friendships. Not the same kinds of friendships that develop out of shared hobbies, interests, child rearing, or vocations; these friendships are the special, deep friendships that develop when they are fed by the Word of God and lit by the light of His love and faithfulness. (We now are blessed to have a third group to include in our list of *Small Groups*.)

Small groups give us hope for a connected church, a like-minded church, filled with compassion and understanding for one another, where we can truly hear each other and respond with care in ways that strengthen all of us in our faith, agreeing at times to disagree, ready to pray for each other, hold each other accountable and to serve with a generous heart.

Do you share this hope? Join a small group or start a small group. Receive the blessings that Jesus Christ has for us. Be strengthened and encouraged by fellow believers as you *Live to Make Jesus Visible*. For more information contact either Stacie Rodriguez 210.226.0215, ext. 259, small-groups@fpcsat.org, or Kay Gerfers, 210.479.9773, kgerfers@flash.net.

KEYS Two-step to Texas Capitol

By Joe Rust

Bus trips sponsored by Keeping Everyone Young in Spirit (KEYS), our older adult ministry at First Presbyterian Church, not only are adventurous and educational, but also build personal relationships.

The latest trip, traveling to Austin to tour the 1840s Texas Governor's Mansion, restored after a devastating fire, and then to tour the private quarters at the state capitol of Julie and Joe Straus, certainly was no exception. Joe Straus, a San Antonian, is the speaker of the Texas House of Representatives, and his wife, who invited KEYS to tour their Austin quarters, is a member of our church. The speaker's apartment (a hidden jewel) is the only Capitol building in the United States with overnight accommodations.

Docents at the Governor's Mansion included some of the descendants of the original 300 Anglo families whom Moses Austin brought from Missouri to Texas in the 1820s.

Forty-two people went on the trip, including a dozen FPC members not currently KEYS members, 25 who are regular or occasional KEYS attendees, and five non-FPC people from other churches as guests. The camaraderie of all these attendees was nothing short of spectacular, both at the mansion and as the group toured the Straus quarters and the capitol itself, including the House chamber. The lively discussions continued at lunch at the historic Green Pastures restaurant in artistically trendy south Austin.

Join the crowd for another adventure in good fun and lively Christian relationships as KEYS hosts the next bus trip December 13 for shopping in Salado, Texas. See more details elsewhere in *First Press*. Susan and Henry Holloway plan KEYS tours. Henry is a former interim music director for FPC.

Finally, KEYS offers its profound thanks to Julie Straus for hosting us in Austin. She is an angel to all of us.





KEYS (Keeping Everyone Young in Spirit)

Join November Programs and Count Your Blessings

By Pat McCleary, Director, Older Adult Programs

Tour of the New FPC Student Center

Friday, November 1, 11:00 a.m.

Rev. Ruthie Seiders, Associate Pastor for Family and Student Ministry will give a tour of the new Student Center, previously the New covenant Building which has extensively been remodeled and houses the staff of Youth Ministry, University and Young Adult Ministries. New Directors are Matt Fricker, Director of Youth Ministry and Chris Via, Director of University & Young Adult Ministry. Don't miss out on this opportunity to see the beautiful new Student Center that opened on Kick-Off Sunday! We'll meet in the Mauze Lobby and go over as a group. Lunch will be served at noon.

Veterans' Day Program

Peter Baron on *The Evolution of the Continental Army*

Friday, November 8, 11:00 a.m.

We will celebrate Veterans' Day this year by learning about the building of the Continental Army by General George Washington. This army, by the way, gave us our very first Veterans. As a Historian and lecturer on the American Revolution and the Colonial Period, Peter Baron is well qualified to explain in detail the trials and tribulations of trying to raise an army from farmers, merchants, sailors, cabinet makers, etc., many of whom still felt some allegiance to England. **As an added attraction, members will be able to fire Mr. Baron's musket in the courtyard after lunch.** Mr. Baron will appear in historic dress!

In addition to his talk the Sons of the American Revolution Color Guard will present the Colors. Invite all your Veteran friends to join us for this inspiring program and lunch (\$7).

November Birthday Celebration

Friday, November 15, 11:30

Details to be announced.

Bexar County Sheriff Susan Pamerleau on the State of the Sheriff's Office

Friday, November 22, 11:00 a.m.

In this highly anticipated KEYS program, Sheriff Pamerleau will give us insight into her first term as Bexar County's chief law enforcement officer. From the beginning of her tenure, she has enacted guiding principles to ensure that our Sheriff's Office is run professionally and with operational excellence. Now we will have the latest word on the successes and challenges and perhaps some of the future plans for Bexar County law enforcement. Susan is a member of FPC and an ordained elder. Her presentation will be in Westminster Hall. Contact Nancy Berger at 210-226-0215 to RSVP.



November 28 – Happy Thanksgiving!

Now Our God, We Give You Thanks, and Praise Your Glorious Name – 1 Chronicles 29:13

November 29 – No program – church closed.

Game Days

Bridge will be played after lunch on November 1, 8, and 22

Mah Jongg will be played on November 8 and 22 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

RESERVATIONS – Reservations are extremely important! Based on the number of reservations, we order sufficient food items from suppliers. Please make lunch (\$7) **reservations by 5:00 p.m. the Tuesday before Friday programs** to ensure you will have a space and food. If you are unable to attend, please cancel or you will be responsible for paying for your meal. If you don't like calling every week for a reservation, you might add your name to the permanent list – it will save you lots of telephone calls, and you'll only have to call if you cannot attend. Call Nancy Berger for reservations and/or cancellations at 210-226-0215.

SAVE THESE DECEMBER DATES:

KEYS Annual Christmas Party

Friday, December 6

This is always a special day filled with the holiday spirit! Come join the **Cox Family Singers** as they sing in the Christmas Season. Watch for details.

Watch for date for Elf Louise Wrapping Party!

Salado Christmas Stroll Trip

Friday, December 13, 8:00 a.m.

You'll want to bring your Christmas list on this visit to one of Texas' artiest and craftiest villages! From its' incorporation in 1867 Salado grew around the Sterling C. Robertson home and plantation. Salado retains its small town flavor (boasting a population of just over 2,000) but offering a marvelous variety of shops, art galleries, antique shops, crafts and clothing stores.

Take your time on the stroll while listening to Christmas Carolers—our coach will cruise the street offering a lift when you need it.

Lunch is at the Range Restaurant in the historic Barton House.

After lunch, your stroll might take you to the remaining walls of the 1860 Salado College. There are 20 sites with state and national historic markers including Salado Creek, which was the first Texas Natural Landmark to be designated by the Texas Historical Survey Committee

All in all, a delightful way to jump start your Christmas Spirit!

Cost is \$70 for members and \$75 for guests and includes Regent Coach transportation, morning coffee, lunch, driver tip and escorts Susan & Henry Holloway. Your check is your reservation—don't delay and not have a space. Please make check payable to FPC and mark Salado Trip in the memo line and send to the attention of Pat McCleary no later than December 1 (unless trip is filled earlier).

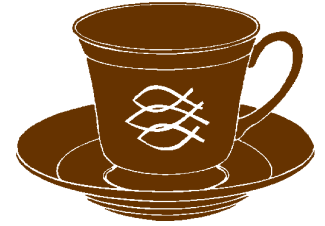
First Cup Readings — November, 2013

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 Avery



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

Open my eyes that I may see glimpses of truth Thou hast for me: Place in my hands the wonderful key that shall unclasp and set me free. Open my ears that I may hear voices of truth Thou sendest clear; and while the wave notes fall on my ear, everything false will disappear. Open my mouth, and let me bear gladly the warm truth everywhere; open my heart, and let me prepare love with thy children thus to share. Silently now I wait for Thee, ready, My God, Thy will to see. Spirit divine! (The Hymnbook, No. 390)

- 1 Luke 18:31-34; Psalm 41:9; 22:16-18; Isaiah 53; Psalm 16:9-10; Matthew 16:18-21
- 2 Luke 18:35-43; John 9; Psalm 146

Oh, I love to walk with Jesus, like the publicans of old, when He gathered them about Him and the blessing tidings told: How He came to bring deliverance to the captives in distress; take away our every burden, giving perfect peace and rest. Oh, I love to walk with Jesus like the man of long ago, who had tarried by the wayside near the gates of Jericho. Jesus heard his cry for mercy, gave him back his sight that day and immediately he followed Jesus all along the way. Oh, I love to walk with Jesus all the way to Calv'ry's brow, gaze upon that scene of suffering while my tears of sorrow flow. There He tells me how He loves me, takes my every sin away; so I follow Him so gladly, lead me anywhere He may. (Worship in Song, No. 119)

- 3 Psalm 14; Mark 2:13-17; Luke 19:1-10; Proverbs 8:17; Jeremiah 29:13; Isaiah 55
- 4 Luke 19:11-27; Proverbs 27:18; Matthew 25:31-46
- 5 Luke 19:28-44; Matthew 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-11; Zechariah 2, 9:9; Psalm 118
- 6 Luke 19:45-48; John 2:13-22; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:19-20; Ephesians 2
- 7 Psalm 118; Luke 20:1-19; Acts 4:1-12; 1 Peter 2:1-10
- 8 Luke 20:20-26; Romans 13; Colossians 3:12-14; 1 Peter 5:5-12
- 9 Luke 20:27-40; John 11:1-45; Romans 6:8-14; 1 Corinthians 15:20-58

Beneath the cross of Jesus I fain would take my stand—the shadow of a mighty Rock within a weary land; a home within the wilderness, a rest upon the way from the burning of the noontide heat and the burden of the day. Upon the cross of Jesus mine eyes at times can see the very dying form of one who suffered there for me: and from my stricken heart with tears two wonders I confess—the wonders of redeeming love and my unworthiness. (The Hymnbook, No. 190)

- 10 Malachi 2:1-9; Matthew 23; Luke 20:41-47; 1 Peter 5:1-4
- 11 Luke 21:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8:1-15; 9:6-15; 1 Kings 17:1-16; Proverbs 3:27-28

- 12 Luke 21:5-38; 2 Timothy 3; 2 Peter 3
- 13 Luke 22:1-6; Matthew 26:1-16; Matthew 10
- 14 Luke 22:7-71; John 13:13-38; Titus 1:10-16; Jude 3-4; 1 John 2:20-23
- 15 Matthew 27:1-56; Luke 23; John 19
- 16 Matthew 28:1-15; Luke 24:1-53; 1 Corinthians 15

Depth of mercy! Can there by mercy still reserved for me? Can my God His wrath forbear? Me, the chief of sinners, spare? I have long withstood His grace, long provoked Him to His face; would not hearken to His calls, grieved Him by a thousand falls. Still for me the Savior stands, shows His wounds, and spreads His hands. God is love! I know, I feel; Jesus weeps, and loves me still. (The Hymnbook, No. 273)

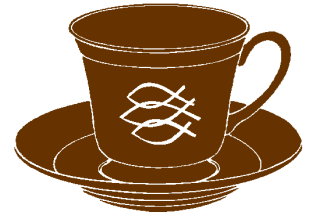
- 17 Judges 1-2; Deuteronomy 4:1-14; 6:10-7:6; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18
- 18 Judges 3; Deuteronomy 8-9; Psalm 50
- 19 Judges 4-5; Psalm 89
- 20 Judges 6; Exodus 34:10-14; Ezekiel 13:13-23; Colossians 3:5-11; Ephesians 5:3-6
- 21 Judges 7-8; Deuteronomy 20:8; Psalm 76; 2 Corinthians 4:7-18
- 22 Judges 13-14; Proverbs 12:4; 16:9; 18:22; 20:24; 22:6; Jeremiah 10:23
- 23 Judges 15-16; Proverbs 6:20-26, 34; 14:1; 16:4, 9; 31:30; Ecclesiastes 7

Now thank we all our God with heart and hands and voices, Who wondrous things hath done, in whom this world rejoices; Who from our mothers' arms, hath blessed us on our way with countless gifts of love, and still is ours today. O may this bounteous God through all our life be near us, with ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us; and keep us in God's grace, and guide us when perplexed, and free us from all ills in this world and the next. (Worship in Song, No. 88)

- 24 Deuteronomy 31:30-32:47; Isaiah 65
- 25 Psalm 103; Exodus 34:5-7; Hebrews 1:14; Psalm 150
- 26 Psalm 145; Matthew 6:19-34; Philippians 4:4-20
- 27 Psalm 107; 115
- 28 Psalm 100; Colossians 3:1-17
- 29 Psalm 84; Matthew 10:29-31; Proverbs 3; Psalm 56:3
- 30 Psalm 106; Revelation 7:9-17



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).

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First Pres Staff Recognized

On Tuesday, November 19, at the monthly staff luncheon, FPC Staff will be publicly recognize and thanked for diligently serving the congregation and the larger Body of Christ. The Personnel Committee proudly recognizes all staff members—both full- and part-time—on significant anniversaries of their service to the church. Recognition begins on the fifth anniversary, and additional recognition takes place on each five-year anniversary following. We invite you to express your own appreciation to these individuals:

10 years:



Jae Ha
Assoc Minister of Music and Organist



Lisa Snow
Admin. Asst. to the Senior Pastor

5 years:



Anthony Garant
Chamber Singer



Carrie Jowers
Dir. JOY & Nursery Ministries



Delia Martinez
Children's Center Lead Teacher



Nancy Chavarria
Children's Center Asst PM Teacher



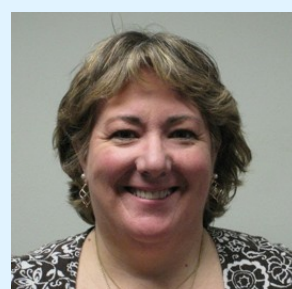
Maria A. Gutierrez
Children's Center Asst Teacher



Tracy Hinchcliff
Dir. of Facility Operations



John Seiders
Executive Associate Pastor



Ruthie Seiders
Associate Pastor of Family Ministry



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Pastor Trey Little's Twitter Handle: @treyhlittle

First Presbyterian Church's Twitter Handle: @FPCSanAntonio



Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/FirstPresbyterianChurchSanAntonio

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Thanksgiving Eve Worship and Dinner

Wednesday, November 27

5:30 p.m. dinner, Westminster Hall—plated buffet \$7

(Turkey dinner with dressing, sweet potatoes and other delectables)

This is a wonderful opportunity to invite friends and family who might be visiting you from out of town. To be good stewards, we ask for your prepaid check to secure your reservation; no refunds, please. Call Nancy Berger (210-226-0215) to confirm your reservation. Deadline to RSVP: Monday, November 25, 2013.

6:45 p.m. Traditional Worship, Sanctuary

Rev. Ruthie Seiders preaching



Fiddler on the Roof Reviewed Musically

Tuesday, November 12, 1:30 p.m., McCullough Room

The Presbyterian Women Literature Circle presents their musical book review, *Fiddler on the Roof*, featuring none other than our own Bill Hensley accompanied on piano by Patrice Hensley. Based on Russian Jewish life, it is a story of Tevye, who, with his wife and six daughters, live an insulated and protected life surrounded by Orthodox traditions. Yet Tevye is faced with a combination of humor, sorrow, and acceptance when his three eldest daughters marry in a series of increasingly unacceptable unions. How far can tradition be bent? The story features such music as "Traditions," "Matchmaker," "If I Were a Rich Man," and "To Life."

Refreshments served prior to the meeting. Everyone is welcome!