



# *First Press*

## **HELPING IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

**MAY 2015 ISSUE • FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS**





# DO YOU BELIEVE IN MIRACLES?!

BY REV. DR. RONALD SCATES • INTERIM SENIOR PASTOR

Some of you know that I am an avid War Between the States (the “official” name of the American Civil War) buff, and was somewhat misty when the WBTS Sesquicentennial came to an end on April 12. Though you’re reading this in May, I am writing this two days after the 150th anniversary of what is possibly the most costly shot fired in that war’s aftermath—when Marylander John Wilkes Booth put a bullet through the President’s brain.

Had that not happened, my hunch is that Reconstruction would have been much more amicable and effective. There would have never been a Ku Klux Klan, and we would be at a different place, as a nation, in dealing with the sin of racism.

I want you to consider, above all, Lincoln’s faith. Many take delight in trumpeting that Abraham Lincoln was not a Christian (the only President to have never joined a church). But is this true?

Certainly, President Lincoln never did join a church, but I am quite convinced that he was a believer. Often-times, tragedy draws people toward Christ rather than away from Him.

In 1841, Lincoln suffered from a severe depression that sent him on a journey looking for a personal faith that could bear the weight of life’s infirmities. In 1850 his son died, and this propelled him to search out his wife’s pastor at the First Presbyterian Church of Springfield, Il. He began to attend worship with his wife Mary, and the pastor’s sermons ultimately led Lincoln to write, “I am now convinced of the truth of the Christian religion.”

In 1862, during the war, another son died. By this time, Mary had joined the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church near the Whitehouse, and Lincoln was by her side nearly every Sunday. A relationship formed between the President and Dr. Phineas Gurley, the church’s pastor. My recollection, from having attended that church for awhile, is that there are records that Dr. Gurley kept where he states that Lincoln professed his faith in Christ to him, and that they both agreed that Lincoln would be baptized and received into the New York Avenue Church on Easter Sunday 1865. Unfortunately, Booth pulled the trigger that Good Friday.

That said, bullets cannot stop miracles. The regeneration of Abraham Lincoln’s heart, or your heart, or my heart, is nothing less than a miracle. Joining a church in and of itself saves no one, but the miraculous gift of Faith does.

Next time you see a \$5 bill, give thanks for the miracle in Lincoln’s life, and your own. And fully expect to see him in Eternity.

Ron

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

PG.

4-5

SAVE THE DATE

4

HABITAT FUND RAISER

4

LITERATURE REVIEW

4

PW BIRTHDAY COFFEE

5

HABITAT HOUSE DEDICATION

5

LITERATURE REVIEW

5

VBS

5

MO-RANCH CHURCH RETREAT

PG.

6-9

SPECIAL STORIES

6-7

HELPING CHRISTIANS IN IRAQ

8-9

CHILDREN’S EASTER PROGRAM

PG.

10-19

MINISTRIES

10-11

MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS

12-13

OLIVE ORCHARD PLANTING

14-15

KEYS

16-17

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

18

PRAYER MINISTRY

19

HISTORY CORNER

PG.

20

CHURCH UPDATES

20

FINANCIALS

PG.

21

INSPIRATION

21

MOMENTS TO HOLD CLOSE

22-23

FIRST CUP

First Press is published monthly by the First Presbyterian Church San Antonio Communications Team. Deadline to submit content: the 10th of the previous month.

Brian Fitzgerald: Director of Communication  
Sarah Clower: Graphic Designer  
Richard Flores: Press Manager & Production  
Taylor Brandesky: Media & Technology Coordinator

Contact Brian Fitzgerald at 210-271-2728 or [brianf@fpcsat.org](mailto:brianf@fpcsat.org) if you have questions.

HOLY SMOKE 2015  
FUND-RAISER FOR HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Join us for a fund-raiser for the Presbyterian Cluster Habitat for Humanity on Sunday, May 3, 2015 at Forest Hills Presbyterian Church (13200 Bandera Road, Helotes, TX 78023-0257). Dinner will be from 5:30 to 6:30 PM. There will be a raffle at 5:00 PM, a silent auction at 6:45 PM, and program featuring musical entertainment from 6:45 to 7:45 PM. Tickets are \$12 for adults (\$15 at the door) and \$5 for children ages 3-6 (free for those under three). They are available through your church Habitat Representative.

Can't attend? Donations are appreciated (Make checks payable to "SA Presbyterian Cluster Habitat"; write "Holy Smoke" on memo line.)

MAY 3 • FOREST HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

LITERATURE REVIEW

If you are a Texas history buff and would enjoy learning more about the pioneer women who helped shape the state, you are invited to attend the FPC Literature Circle when member, Ann Smith, will review former Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison's book, "Unflinching Courage." We will meet Tuesday, May 12, at 1:30 PM in the McCullough Room with refreshments served prior to the meeting.

This book brings to life the incredible stories of brave and spirited women who exhibited strength and bravery through their many accomplishments. They claimed a stake in the land, contributed to the Civil War effort and became ranchers and entrepreneurs who helped Texas thrive.

MAY 12 • 1:30 PM • MCCULLOUGH ROOM

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S BIRTHDAY COFFEE

May is finally here and we will celebrate the end of the PW Calendar Year with the annual Presbyterian Women's Birthday Coffee. This year's coffee will be held on Wednesday, May 6th from 10:30 AM to 12:30 PM at the beautiful home of Susan and John Kerr, 401 Terrell Road in Terrell Hills. All women of First Presbyterian Church are invited to attend. You won't want to miss the opportunity to enjoy fellowship and celebrate with each other before summer begins. This year the 2015 PW Birthday Offering will benefit The Community of St. Therese of Lisieux in Memphis, Tennessee and The Bethesda Christian Community Center in Barranquilla, Columbia. The first recipient addresses the needs of women seeking a new way of life after surviving prostitution, human trafficking and addiction. The second recipient ministers to women and children fleeing brutality related to the drug trade. If you are unable to attend the coffee but would like to contribute to the offering, PW Birthday Offering yellow envelopes can be found in the pews during late April and early May. For childcare provided at the church during this event, please contact Sonya Wright at 271-2720 or sonyaw@fpcsat.org. No advance reservation is required.

MAY 6 • 10:30 AM-12:30 PM

HOUSE DEDICATION CELEBRATION

Please join us as we celebrate and congratulate the following families on the completion of their homes:

- Epifanio Perez & MA de Lourdes Arellano
- Pedro Morales
- Adriana Gonzalez
- Tony Galaviz, Jr. & Elizabeth Galaviz
- Generoso & Araceli Gutierrez
- Maria Alonso

Their homes were built through generous donations of time and funds by: The San Antonio Presbyterian Cluster, St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church, and made possible by friends like YOU!

Directions to J.T. Brackenridge: (from east/south sides of San Antonio) Going west on I-10, exit S. Laredo St./Cevallos St., turn left onto S. Laredo St., turn right onto S. Brazos St., take the 2nd right onto Vera Cruz, take the 1st left onto Guadalupe Ybarra St., follow the parking signs. Limited parking available at J.T. Brackenridge Elementary School. For GPS use 1022 Guadalupe Ybarra, 78207.

NOTE: Directions may vary slightly depending on web mapping service used.

Special thanks to: City of San Antonio Councilwoman Shirley Gonzales, City Manager's Office and Deputy City Manager Peter Zanoni, Department of Planning and Community Development, Office of Grants Monitoring and Administration.

MAY 2, 2015 • 11:00 AM • J.T. BRACKENRIDGE

VBS 2015 IS COMING!

Join us this summer for Vacation Bible School as we study God's Word, learning Biblical truths to guide kids through life's challenges and display God's power! Children ages 2 through incoming 5th grades are welcome!

Online Registration is NOW OPEN! Visit [www.fpcsanantonio.org/ministries/children](http://www.fpcsanantonio.org/ministries/children).

Contact Becky Prichard at [beckyp@fpcsat.org](mailto:beckyp@fpcsat.org).

THIS YEAR WE WILL BE OFFERING VBS AFTER CARE!

WHEN: Monday, June 22-Friday, June 26 (After VBS!)

TIME: 12:00PM-5:30PM

WHO: Anyone participating in VBS from ages 2 years old-5th grade.

COST: \$25/day or \$100 for the entire week.

VISIT: The website to register your children!

JUNE 22-26

MO RANCH ALL-CHURCH RETREAT

Join us on the All-Church Retreat to Mo-Ranch Conference Center in Hunt, Texas! Ron Scates will be our speaker this year and he will be discussing "The Three Ordinary Means of Grace," while we discover some practical ways of deepening our walks with Christ. Housing is decided on a first come, first served basis so sign up soon to reserve a spot for your family!

Sign up at: [www.fpcsanantonio.org/church-retreat](http://www.fpcsanantonio.org/church-retreat) or contact Lindsay Blackmon at [lindsayb@fpcsat.org](mailto:lindsayb@fpcsat.org).

AUGUST 7-9 • MO-RANCH CONFERENCE CENTER



## A MISSION MOMENT: HELPING CHRISTIANS IN THE MIDDLE EAST



### IN AUGUST OF LAST YEAR...

ISIS marched through central Iraq brutalizing the ancient Yazidis people and forcing thousands of Christian families (mainly Assyrian Orthodox and Chaldean Catholic) from their villages in the Nineveh valley, where they have faithfully followed Christ since Christianity was brought to Iraq in the first century AD by the Apostles Thomas and Thaddaeus. Many showed up on the doorsteps of the churches in Northern Iraq, including the Presbyterian Church in Kirkuk. Answering an urgent request from The Outreach Foundation, First Pres gave significant financial support to this local Presbyterian Church as they served as the hands and feet of Jesus to their Christian brothers and sisters. My trip this past month with The Outreach Foundation was to visit this small Presbyterian Church, to bring encouragement and a sense of solidarity to those who have been displaced by the conflicts in the region.

Our team was in northern Iraq for seven days, visiting displaced families and their priests, and meeting with leaders of the Iraq Presbyterian Church who were coordinating our relief efforts. We first visited the Presbyterian Church in Kirkuk, meeting the families now filling the church building and worshipping with the congregation that is doing so much to serve the displaced Christians all over northern Iraq. On other days we traveled three and a half hours, both ways, to visit displaced families and their priests; always hearing praises and gratitude for what this small Iraq church was doing to confront this crises. On one trip we were able to visit a camp of 23,000 Yazidis, and see first-hand an amaz-

ing in-camp bakery project being instituted there that is helping the Yazidis people feed themselves, while also allowing for Christian discipleship to young people in the camp. Everywhere there was great need, yet great joy and hope.

### HOW, YOU MIGHT ASK, DID AN “09 BUBBLE” REAL ESTATE LAWYER END UP IN NORTHERN IRAQ?

I have been involved in missions since I first traveled to Kenya on a First Pres mission trip 25 years ago. There were other mission trips through the years and I now currently chair our Global Missions committee. Just two months ago, on February 2nd, Alyssa Payne forwarded me an email from The Outreach Foundation asking that a First Pres church leader go with them on this solidarity trip to Northern Iraq. Her email stated simply, “you should go!” I immediately felt that “I should go.”

Although Teresa and I both were at peace with the decision “to go,” we were immediately engulfed in a whirlwind of fear and concern from family and friends—all of it heartfelt, some of it very logical. At this point, a friend gave me Psalm 91, and that became my “verse” for the trip. That psalm reads, in part:

#### Psalm 91

- <sup>1</sup> Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty...
- <sup>9</sup> If you say, “The LORD is my refuge,” and you make the Most High your dwelling,
- <sup>10</sup> no harm will overtake you, no disaster will come near your tent.
- <sup>11</sup> For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways;
- <sup>12</sup> they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.

So I did something a logical “09” lawyer doesn’t usually do, I “let go of the steering wheel” and trusted God.

### WHAT DID I LEARN IN IRAQ AND HOW DID THIS TRIP AFFECT ME?

My eyes were opened and I became more knowledgeable about this unknown land, its people and politics. I was reminded once again what it felt like to be “proud to be a Presbyterian” during this trip. This small Iraq denomination, about as old as our church here at 4th & Alamo, is the only Protestant denomination in Iraq and it is reaching out, with financial support from our church and others, to serve thousands of displaced Christians in northern Iraq in an amazing (and I might add, effective, efficient, decent and in order... thoroughly Presbyterian) way.

I was also blessed to witness, in a time of great need, Christians helping Christians—with no thought of denominations. No Presbyterians had really been displaced, so this outreach was to congregations of various other traditions, and all of the denominations caught the vision that “we are all one in Christ.”

I saw something more that I had not anticipated. During awful situations, there is hope, joy and optimism. Evangelism in Iraq is difficult, even illegal, but due to what has happened and how Christians have responded, tiny openings for evangelism have occurred. Moderate Muslims are disgusted with ISIS and perhaps a bit more open to faith questions; Kurds are gaining respect and trust for Christians; and, perhaps most exciting, younger, disillusioned displaced Yazidis in the camp are both open to the Gospel and having an unprecedented opportunity to be discipled.

Over and over, I was amazed by the hope and joy I witnessed in the children, priests and families. The sweetest example of this came in my very first meeting with a displaced family of eight who had been living in

a classroom at the Kirkuk church since being forced from their home by ISIS in the middle of the night. I teared up listening to their story, while at the same time witnessing their profound hope and real joy. As we left their makeshift “home,” the mother hugged me and whispered, “Don’t cry for us; though we have lost everything, we still have Jesus.”

I am still processing how all this affected me but I can say:

- Before, I understood about God’s protection, but now I BELIEVE it...I felt it...I never feared!
- Before, I understood about Prayer, but now I BELIEVE in the Power of Prayer...I felt it!
- Before, I understood about community and that it was a vital aspect of a healthy church, but now I BELIEVE personally in the strength and comfort that flows from being part of true Christian community!

### MY PRAYER FOR FIRST PRES

My prayer from this experience is:

- That we here at First Pres join with our Christian brothers and sisters in Iraq, both in prayer and in some concrete ways—hopefully renewing our partnership from last year, supporting displaced Christians there, and perhaps, really stepping out as a congregation and raising the \$28,000 necessary to sponsor another bakery outreach project in the camp of 23,000 displaced Yazidis.
- That we in the West know, in our very safe place, the joy and hope that our Iraq brothers and sisters have, in their very dangerous place.
- Finally, **that others here at First Pres will be bold.** When you feel a nudge, explore it. When you sense a call, listen. And when you hear “you should go,” answer: “Here I am Lord, I will go Lord...if you lead me.”







### CHILDREN'S EASTER PROGRAM RECAP

The Children's Easter Program that took place on Saturday, April 4, the day before Easter, was a huge success! The children of FPC, along with their friends and families, gathered to worship Jesus, hear the story of the resurrection, and of course hunt for Easter eggs! The KEYS ministry and PW Circle 8 helped to stuff almost 2,000 plastic Easter eggs with toys and candy, and they were spread out all across the church for the kids to hunt and collect in their Easter baskets.

It was a joyful time of celebration as the kids clapped and sang, "He is Alive!" and celebrated the empty tomb and the Risen Lord with their friends and families.

The Children's Ministry staff is thankful for all those who helped to make this event happen and who serve the children and families of FPC with grace and love.



### FELLOWSHIP AND GRAFFITI!

As part of our Children's Ministry, FPC and Childress Memorial Church will be joining forces to clean graffiti on the city's south side.

**Families are encouraged to join us as we have fellowship with the kids and youth of Childress Memorial and clean up our city!**

- May 2
- 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM (meet at FPC at 8:30)
- Wear clothes that can be painted!

Childress Memorial is the east side church whose building was destroyed by fire a few years ago. A tour of their new church that is under construction will be provided after the graffiti cleanup for those that are interested. For more information and to sign up please e-mail Lindsay Blackmon at [lindsayb@fpcsat.org](mailto:lindsayb@fpcsat.org).



- One in four adults will experience a mental health disorder in a given year.
- One in seventeen adults live with a serious mental illness such as schizophrenia, major depression or bipolar disorder.
- One in ten children live with a serious mental or emotional disorder.
- Fewer than one-third of adults and one-half of children with a diagnosable mental disorder receive mental health services in a given year.\*

## THERE IS HOPE!

At FPC we teach the NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Family-to-Family class to individuals and couples from all over our community who want to learn how to help a family member who suffers from a mental illness. Please visit [www.FPCSanAntonio.org/MentalHope](http://www.FPCSanAntonio.org/MentalHope) for additional details.

Each time we teach we hold a session called “In Our Own Voice,” where we invite two people to share their personal stories about living with mental illness and achieving recovery. What makes this class special is that, for the first time, class members get to hear the success stories of persons living with a diagnosis. For many in the class who have a family member who in crisis, hearing someone speak compellingly of their own recovery gives hope for the recovery of their own family member who is ill.

This past year, in one class, our presenters were Beth and Dianne—friends who are both living with mental illness, and who encourage and support each other. Beth went first, and then Dianne - each describing the initial onset of her illness, the impact on her life (when she had first sought help), her diagnosis, treatment and therapy, and recovery. They talked about the initial successes of treatment and then the “dark days” that occurred when they stopped taking their medication, or when the stresses of life caused them to experience a new period of symptoms.

The most exciting part of the presentation was hearing each of the ladies talk about their aspirations, and how they had made progress toward their life goals. In one case, Beth had always wanted to be a chaplain, and through training provided by SAMMinistries, she was going to realize her dream.

Beth and Dianne lovingly shared their struggles and successes, and how they had persevered to reach

recovery - leading full and productive lives no longer defined by their illness. Each story was moving, incredibly exhilarating and hopeful to the class. Throats were tight and eyes were moist as we celebrated Beth and Diane’s successes, imagining the possibilities for our own family members struggling with mental illness. It gave each of us more hope than we had had in a long time.

As the session began to draw to an end, Beth and Dianne took questions from the class. The wife of a man who suffers from bi-polar disorder raised her hand as she leaned her head on her other hand, tired from her day’s work of nursing at the Medical Center. She asked Dianne, “How can I get my husband to take his medication? I am tired of always being the ‘bad guy’ to make my husband comply.”

Dianne gave several quick suggestions, and then paused and said, “and you can always pray. In fact, I pray about everything. I pray all the time.” She paused again, “why don’t we pray together right now! Let’s all stand and hold hands and I’ll pray.”

The entire class (many not professing a faith) stood up and reached out their hands to the person next to them, and held hands as Dianne prayed a beautiful and special prayer for the nurse whose husband wouldn’t take his meds, and for people in the class who needed to find new hope and strength to deal with the often chaotic days of caring for their family member.

## IT WAS A POWERFUL MOMENT.

You could feel the presence of the Holy Spirit as people prayed together, led by this person who had been through the depths of her own mental illness and who had found recovery and had learned to turn to the Lord and to Jesus Christ to help her. Dianne knew God was the source of her strength, her Healer and Savior, and she shared her love for the Lord with everyone else in the class—authentically and simply asking her Father to help them and to help their loved ones as well.

It was a night we will always remember. It was a night when God was made visible to many by the faith of one who had suffered much and yet could be the giver of amazing grace and hope. Amen.

\*National Institute of Health, National Institute of Mental Health, ‘13

# MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

BY DOUG BEACH





# OLIVE ORCHARD PLANTING

DO YOU WANT TO BE A PART OF SOMETHING EXCITING, MEANINGFUL AND INSPIRED BY GOD? Well then, the Olive Orchard Planting at Mission Road Developmental Center is where you need to be on Saturday, May 2, 2015.

Mission Road Ministries (MRM) offers care to over 800 children and adults with Intellectual Developmental Disabilities such as autism, Downs Syndrome, Shaken Baby Syndrome, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, closed head injuries and more. Our mission is to give our clients the opportunity to reach their full potential for independence, productivity and inclusion in the community.

Eleven years ago a beloved MRM client, Brandon Smith who had experienced the caring environment of Mission Road’s residential services for 54 years, passed away at age 71. His loving friend, Virginia Munroe donated an olive tree to be planted in his memory. Ten years later, Virginia visited the Mission Road Campus and, while touring, she spied the olive tree. It was thriving and stood at over 20 feet! Virginia was immediately inspired to plant more olive trees at Mission Road. She shared her dream with her dear friend, Lou Womack which set in motion miracle after miracle! Lou was inspired to fund the orchard and together with Virginia garnered the support of Sandy Winokur of Sandy Oaks Olive Orchard. Gifted sculptress Donna Dobberfuhl was commissioned to create a bronze sculpture of our special children with their therapy dog, Oreo. Author Brooke Negley was then inspired to write a children’s book about Oreo and the olive orchard. The project has developed a life of its own! It caught the attention of video production artist, Jeff Horny who is now filming a documentary about the remarkable story.

The prayerful partnership of Lou, Virginia and their team will provide beauty to the campus of MRM, offer meaningful work for clients, develop a new source of sustainable revenue for the organization, and design a peaceful garden area of respite with a beautiful work of art depicting hope and peace to honor the special needs of those served every day by MRM. The Mission Road Family is going to learn all about planting, tending, harvesting and selling olives. The clients and caregivers will have sweat equity in the project...personal investment which should bring them great satisfaction at harvest time when they sell their olives.

DON'T MISS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO BE INVOLVED.

## DIRECTIONS

TO THE MISSION ROAD DEVELOPMENTAL CENTER CAMPUS FROM DOWNTOWN:

- Take Hwy 281/I-37 South
- Exit #135 Military Drive/TX-13 Loop
- Go West (right) on Military
- After 2.9 miles, turn left at the signal onto Mission Road
- The campus is 1.2 miles on the left

OR...

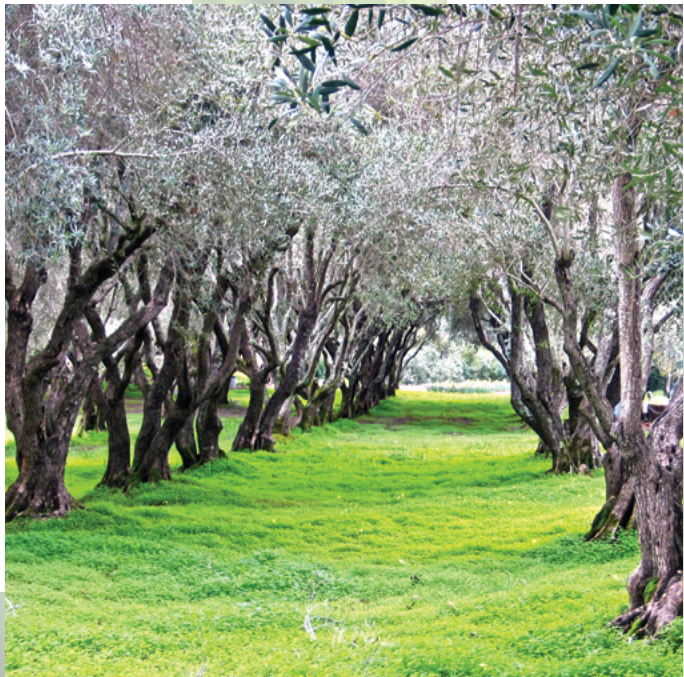
- Take I-35 South
- Exit Military Dr./TX-13 Loop
- Go East (left) on Military
- After 3.1 miles, turn right at the signal onto Mission Road
- The campus is 1.2 miles on the left

## JOIN US

- Saturday, May 2, 2015
- Mission Road Developmental Center Campus
- Training for Team Leaders: 8:30 – 9:30 AM
- Planting: 9:30 AM – 4:30 PM
- Lunch provided
- What to bring:

Shovel	Measuring cup	Spade
Wagon	Pail	
- RSVP: Suzanne Letch (sletch@mrmsat.org/210-334-2453)

MISSION ROAD MINISTRIES  
Address: 8706 Mission Road, SA, Texas 78214  
Phone: (210) 924-9265  
Website: missionroadministries.org







# KEYS NEWSLETTER - MAY 2015

BY PAT MCCLEARY, DIRECTOR KEYS OLDER ADULT MINISTRY

## VIVA FIESTA!

April ended with a grand and glorious FIESTA @FIRST where we sang and danced to the Mariachis, welcomed the Texas Cavaliers' King Antonio XC111 and the Commander of the Cavaliers — both members of FPC. King Antonio made a short presentation on the history of Fiesta and the Cavaliers' contribution to it. The celebration ended with one of Maurilio's delicious Mexican lunches.

A BIG thank you to all who “made the day” and helped to foster fellowship. Prizes for the best Fiesta attire were awarded to Carrie Davison and Harold Black. Congratulations!

## OLDER ADULT WEEK • SUNDAY, MAY 3 – 10

Each year, the Presbyterian Church (USA) sets aside the first week in May to acknowledge older adults in our congregation and community. Honor older adults and their commitment to the life, witness, and ministry of the church. “Aging is for everyone; aging is what happens as we journey from birth to death.”

A few years ago, Rev. Ed Walthall wrote a special prayer and an excerpt follows: “Almighty God, ageless and unchanging, hear the prayer of one whose life began a long time ago. The older years are a demanding race to be run, a tough test to pass, a baffling puzzle to solve. Thank you for each day and for each chance to love, laugh, lighten someone's mood, and lift someone's spirit, we ask courage and faith for the living of these later years... In your might, O God let us fight the good fight, finish the race, and keep the faith, in Jesus Christ. Amen.”

## JOIN OUR “MERRY MONTH OF MAY” EVENTS

Our Friday Programs begin at 11:00 AM unless otherwise indicated; however, we encourage you to arrive by 10:45 AM in order to have time to park, pay and find your seat.

## FRAUD AWARENESS FRIDAY, MAY 1 • 11:00 AM

Come and hear Sandy Sullivan, Senior Vice-President over Fraud Management at Frost Bank. Fraud awareness/education is the absolute best tool to have against being a fraud victim. Come learn about some of the new scams the fraudsters are using in hopes of making themselves wealthy. Educate yourself and then go out and educate others.

## SCENES FROM AUNTIE MAME FRIDAY, MAY 8 • 11:00 AM •

The Extended Run Players, in cooperation with the Theatre Arts Department at the University of the Incarnate Word, present Scenes from Auntie Mame. The readers' theatre production will be done with sound effects to support the delightful comedy of



orphaned Patrick Dennis growing up under the care and influence of his gloriously unconventional aunt, Mame Dennis. A unique feature of this production includes the appearances of three UIW theatre majors, one of whom plays the young Patrick Dennis. Another student will play Mame's Japanese butler, and a third student will perform the role of Michael Dennis, the son of the Adult Patrick.

The Extended Run Players were founded in 1996 and are a group of theater-lovers ranging from seasoned veterans to stage-struck tyros, all still growing and learning from each other.

As this is a two-act play, it will run past noon – so arrive early (10:45 AM) and have a snack and a drink, and find your seat to be ready to enjoy the play at 11:00 AM.

## AARP SMART SAFETY COURSE TUESDAY, MAY 12 • 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM • ROOM 302

Come and join Kay Kutchins as she instructs the new and improved AARP Driver Safety Course that was launched a year ago. For AARP members, the course fee is \$15. For non-members, it is \$20. For a reservation please call Pat McCleary at 210-271-2726.

Please check with your insurance company about the amount of discount. As we have a limit of only 25, please do not delay in making your reservation.

## MAY BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION AT CARRIAGE HOUSE BISTRO FRIDAY, MAY 15 • 11:30 AM

We will sing Happy Birthday to our May birthday members at the Carriage House Bistro at the San Antonio Botanical Garden, 55 Funston at North New Braunfels Avenue. Cost of lunch is \$12/ person, except for birthday honorees. Reservations are due by Tuesday at noon, May 12, by calling Phyllis Griffin at 210-226-0215. Please designate your lunch choice when you make reservation:

1. Quiche du jour w/soup or salad\*
  2. Meatloaf with soup or salad\*
  3. Carriage House turkey club with pasta salad\*
- \*served with your choice of beverage and birthday cake.

This is always a delightful day! Luncheon cost must be prepaid.

## MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND FRIDAY, MAY 22

NO speaker program today, but join us for our “Keep Moving” Fitness Class” at 9:45 AM with our excellent trainer, Linda Osborne. Classes will also be held May 1, 8, and 29. There is no charge.

## PROGRAM TO BE ANNOUNCED FRIDAY, MAY 29

## REMEMBER RESERVATIONS

Please make reservations by the Tuesday before each Friday program by calling the church office at 226-0215. If you are on the permanent list for lunch, you need to call if you cannot attend. Regular programs begin at 11:00 AM unless otherwise specified. However, we encourage you to arrive by 10:45 AM in order to have time to park, pay and find your seat.

## BRIDGE & MAH JONGG

Bridge will be played on Friday, May 8 only. Mah Jongg will be played on Friday, May 8 and 22. Watch bulletin announcement for details.

## LOOKING BACK KING WILLIAM WALKING TOUR MARCH 31, 2015

It was a perfect spring morning in San Antonio's King William district as KEYS members joined Bill Perryman for his guided walking tour. Bill is an outstanding teacher and guide. Hearing about the persons behind the great homes was as fascinating as the architecture of the homes themselves. Bill kept up a steady stream of entertaining stories and facts about the early movers in San Antonio — their strong, colorful lives and the families' lasting legacies to contemporary San Antonio.

Spring flowers were decorating the landscapes and signs of continued restoration were quietly in process as the group walked down the quiet, Tuesday morning streets. An outdoor lunch at the Guenther House was the satisfying ending to another great KEYS outing. Physically, mentally and personally stimulating — today Keeping Everyone Young in Spirit was right on!

Nancy Black





What a year, Presbyterian Women have done so much for our church and the community! It is time to celebrate and reflect on this wonderful year.

#### SOME OF THE THINGS THAT PW HAS DONE THIS YEAR:

- Studied two Corinthians at monthly Circle Meetings.
- Assisted with registration and refreshments for the Presbytery Meeting in the fall.
- Hosted two wonderful luncheons for FPC members and as an outreach to their guests.
- Hosted two PW Ladies' Night Outs.
- Served FPC Staff and Choir Christmas Eve Dinner.
- Invisible Angels hosted three brunch/lunches for the FPC Staff.
- Hosted Christmas Parties at Morningside Manor and the Chandler Home.
- Arranged with volunteers to adopt families for the Christmas Family Ministry "Gift of Christmas."
- Assembled and donated a "Gift Basket" to the House of Neighborly Service Annual Gala Raffle.
- Arranged with volunteers to adopt families for the Christmas Family Ministry "Gift of Christmas."
- Circle 5 Knitted/Crocheted/Wove and prayed over shawls for people in transition.
- Circle 8 made ornaments for the Chandler Home and Morningside Manor residents.
- Circle 13 reviewed 9 books at the Literature Circle meetings.
- Circles 16 and Circle 17 made pajamas, bibs, dresses, layette items, and stuffed animals for residents of The Children's Shelter, The Children Center (bibs) and Mission Road (adult bibs).
- Circle 18 hosted and provided refreshments for Memorial Service Receptions.
- Circle 19 rolled bandages for mission hospitals.
- Circle 20 provided 5 dinners for YoungLives, helped provide food for the Vacation Bible School teacher snacks, care packages for college students, the Advent Festival, The Invisible Angels Staff Appreciation Luncheons, the Memorial Service Receptions, and the Presbytery Meeting.

And, we are looking forward to the Birthday Coffee on May 6. The offering will benefit the Bethesda Christian Community Center and the Community of St. Therese of Lisieux. Please see the Birthday Coffee information in the Save the date section for additional details.

What an exciting day March 23 was as Presbyterian Women enjoyed a festive "Fiesta of Faith" Luncheon with guest speaker Kelly Minter. The current Officers and Chairmen were recognized and the new Officer and Chairmen were elected for the 2015-2016 term. Kelly presented an encouraging message.

#### THERE ARE A LOT OF PEOPLE TO THANK:

- The Luncheon Committee and Luncheon Decorating Committee: Judy Kruger, Chaney Stuart, Holly Youngquist, Robin Hudnall, Blair Perry, and Cheri Stith. These women worked countless hours organizing, planning, writing articles, designing the table decorations, and making more paper flowers than I could count. All six of these women worked together as an amazing team. I am so grateful to them for all of their hard work to make the Luncheon such a success.
- The Kitchen Staff who prepared the delicious and beautiful meal.
- The Housekeeping Staff who set up and removed furniture, set the tables, and worked after the Seiders' Reception to get everything done quickly.
- The Communication Staff, especially Sarah Clower and Taylor Brandesky, for all of their help.
- All of the staff of FPC who helped in numerous ways.
- Representatives from Sus Hijas and the Guatemalan Connection, who offered their items for sale.
- All of the Presbyterian Women volunteer waitresses.
- Jeanne Douglas and Barbara Wood, who welcomed guests at the registration table.
- Karin Gabrielson, who helped Kelly Minter with the sale of her books and CDs.
- All of the other wonderful volunteers who helped in numerous ways.
- All attendees who helped make the day so special.

Many thanks to all of you!

Thank you to all of the Presbyterian Women Officers, Chairmen, Circle Chairmen, and Moderators that helped make this year such a success. I have been humbled and blessed to serve as the PW President this year, and thank you for this amazing opportunity. The 2015-2016 PW Officer and Chairmen are already planning an incredible year. There will be a special installation for them at the 11:00 Traditional Service on May 10.

## PW CIRCLE MEETING INFORMATION | MAY 2015

#### CIRCLE 112

MONDAY, MAY 18 • 10:30 AM • GENEVA ROOM  
CHAIR: SUZANNE THOMAS (210) 820-3245

#### CIRCLE 2/4

MONDAY, MAY 18 • 1:30 PM • ROOM 226  
CHAIR: CHAR-ANN WITTEN (210) 341-1856

#### CIRCLE 5

FRIDAY, MAY 15 • 12:00 - 1:00 PM • ROOM 228  
CHAIRS: CARYL GAUBATZ (210) 651-0208  
JANE ANN TEMPLE 414-9945

#### CIRCLE 6

TUESDAY, MAY 19 • 1:30 PM • GENEVA ROOM  
CHAIRS: MIMI HART 822-0809; ALICE NICHOLS 826-4385;  
LINDA RITTENHOUSE 824-2877

#### CIRCLE 7

TUESDAY, MAY 19 • 11:30 AM • THE BOTANICAL GARDENS (LUNCH, GROUP, TOUR GARDENS)  
MODERATOR: NANCY PUCKETT  
CHAIR: MEREDITH PARK (210) 373-8180

#### CIRCLE 8 (MOM'S GROUP)

WEDNESDAY MAY 13 • MAY 27 • 9:30-11:30 AM • ROOM 108  
CHAIR: SARA PARISH (210) 394-0865

#### CIRCLE 9

TUESDAY, MAY 19 • 10:30 AM • OAKWELL FARMS CLUBHOUSE  
HOSTESSES: JOYCE CLARK AND LUCILLE LAMMERT  
CHAIRS: LUCILLE LAMMERT 832-8414; B.J. NEAL 492-3188

#### CIRCLE 11

MONDAY, MAY 18 • 6:30 PM  
HOSTESS: SUZANNE NORTON  
CHAIR: SUZANNE NORTON 344-7333

#### CIRCLE 13

TUESDAY, MAY 12 • 1:30 PM • MCCULLOUGH ROOM  
CHAIR: JEANNE BROWNING 824-3921

#### CIRCLE 14

MONDAY, MAY 18 • 12:00 - 1:00 PM • ST. ANDREWS ROOM  
CHAIR: LADY ROMANO 828-5313

#### CIRCLE 16

WEDNESDAY, MAY 20 • 9:30 AM • ROOM 228

#### CIRCLE 17

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13 • 9:30 AM • ROOM 309  
CHAIR: JEANNE BAKER; CO-CHAIR: GIGI DUKE

#### CIRCLE 19

WEDNESDAY, MAY 6 • 9:30 AM • ROOM 309  
CHAIR: JANET BEAUCH 673-3251

#### CIRCLE 21

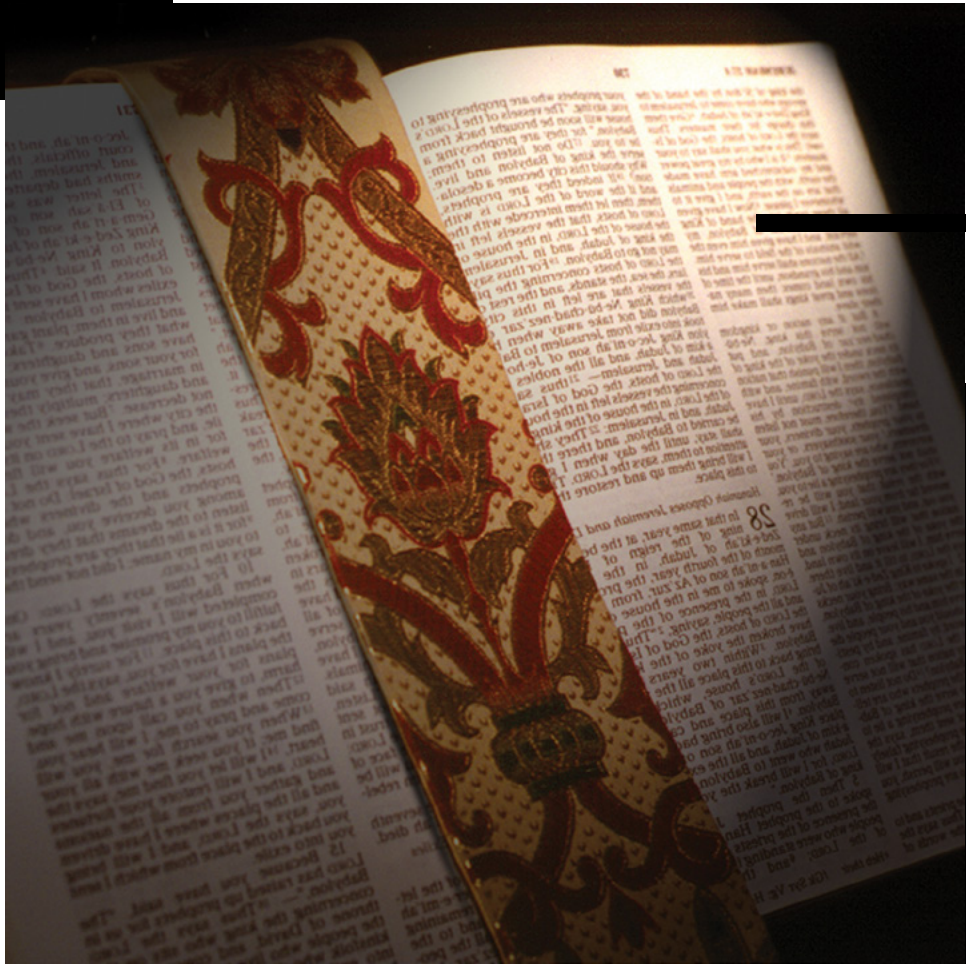
MONDAY, MAY 18 • 6:30 PM  
HOSTESS: CYNTHIA STEPHENS  
CHAIR: ANDREA TAYLOR 403-9442





A PRAYER FOR HUMILITY WORDS AND MUSIC

BY MARK PATTERSON



Mighty God and gentle Lamb, Lord of all creation, how we long to know you, how we strive to serve you, help us now to love you even more.

Give us humble hearts to praise you and list'ning ears to hear your voice, willing hands to serve you, thankful sprits to rejoice.

Lord of all, we adore you, and we bring this prayer before you: Create in us humble hearts.

When our thoughts turn proud, remind us of the grace you freely give. When we lose our way, Lord, find us, draw us close to you again.

Give us humble hearts to praise you and list'ning ears to hear your voice, willing hands to serve you, thankful spirits to rejoice.

Lord of all, we adore you, and we bring this prayer before you: Create in us humble hearts.

Amen.

HISTORY CORNER: WHERE IS OUR HISTORIC BELL?

BY BILL COGBURN



Martha Hill, teenage daughter of Rev. Dr. P. B. Hill, year 1927

Our early church records make reference to a bell that was acquired by San Antonio's young Presbyterian congregation but at 250 pounds, the bell was apparently too heavy to mount atop the "old adobe". According to the March 31, 1927 edition of San Antonio Light, First Pres' "lost bell" was found in a pile of scrap iron in the yard of Alamo Iron Works.

The Light article goes on to say that sometime before the Civil War, the church donated the bell to the city and for years it was used by San Antonio's first fire company to call volunteer firemen to action. After the fire department developed a more sophisticated fire alarm system, the bell hung on a pole in Military plaza for many years where it called people to barbecues and watermelon feasts at tables set up in the plaza.

Rev. Dr. P. B. Hill, who served as First Pres pastor from 1922 to 1940 was one of the church's most popular and best loved ministers. In 1927, he evidently took it upon himself to investigate the bell's history fearing that it might have been melted into cannonballs during the Civil War. Hill sought out W. B. Krempkau, a San Antonio pioneer who happened to know the bell's history. Krempkau took Hill to Alamo Iron Works where it is believed that the bell's mystery was solved.

How the bell was initially acquired and what happened to it after it was found may be lost to history. If anyone has knowledge of this mystery, please let me know at [bcogburn@satx.rr.com](mailto:bcogburn@satx.rr.com)

Source: *San Antonio Light*;  
*UTSA Libraries Special Collections*; *First Pres Archive*



FINANCIAL SUMMARY | MARCH 2015

OPERATING FUND BUDGET	ACTUAL YTD	BUDGET YTD	OVER/(UNDER)
TOTAL REVENUES	930,086	1,144,981	(214,895)
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES	722,636	854,914	(132,277)
TOTAL BENEVOLENCES	20,465	24,160	(3,695)
FUND TFR FROM			
OPERATING RESERVE	0	0	0
NET INCOME/LOSS	186,985	265,907	(78,922)

Giving for the month was less than budget, and expenditures were below budget. The ministries and benevolences of FPC depend on your gifts. 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.

MOMENTS TO HOLD CLOSE | SPRING HAS SPRUNG | BY MANNY RODRIGUEZ



Spring is a magical time of year; everything awakens. One of my favorite aspects is the wildflowers. We reside in an area where everyone possesses around five acres, so the wildflowers are especially abundant. Such incredible colors and shapes, they can be viewed from so far away to bring joy to so many. And while I am basking in the beauty I hear the familiar sound of destruction, my neighbor's industrial strength riding lawnmower. I watch in horror as he mows down all of his bluebonnets, until not a single wildflower remains.

How could you destroy God's gift? How could you waste the beauty that has been given to you?

Observing this made me ask the same questions on a more global scale, what gifts have I been given by my Father that I have utterly destroyed and removed all the beauty from them for the world to enjoy? I think it is a question worth pondering by all of us...











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