



First Press

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL AT FPC

AUGUST 2015 ISSUE • FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS



THE JOY OF EMPATHY

BY REV. SCOTT SIMPSON • ASSOCIATE PASTOR FOR CONGREGATIONAL CARE

Once and a while I officiate a wedding that is simply beautiful. I was Senior Pastor of Westminster Presbyterian Church of Topeka, Kansas. The place was Laura Conyers Smith Municipal Rose Garden in Kansas City, Missouri. It was a beautiful June night for a wedding. The temperature was cool. A breeze was blowing. And there were 3,000 roses in full bloom everywhere!

The bride and groom were dazzling. There were 250 guests seated in the Rose Garden near a flowing million-dollar fountain where I stood and led the wedding. The guests were happy for the couple. Many couples who were walking

through the park stopped to witness, to listen, to experience the joy. But I almost missed this event.

When the mother of the bride and the bride first asked me if I would officiate, if I would serve at this wedding only months before, the words “my family vacation” almost rolled off of my tongue as an excuse. But I did not say the words. I chose not to say the words. Instead, I said yes as I looked into my friend’s eyes that were full of joy and expectant hope.

“Will you officiate, please, please, please?” the mother of the bride asked.

“Yes,” I replied without hesitation while flashing my biggest Texas grin.

My friend was so elated that she screamed and gave me a big hug!

And with that yes came the gift of empathy, the capacity to share another’s emotions or feelings. Empathy is that necessary ingredient for any relationship to work—especially a marriage! Empathy says to another person, “I want to participate, I want to share, I want to feel, I want to understand, I want to imagine what something feels like” in another person.

So when are the times in our lives when we are called to be empathetic with one another? One example is when a death happens in a family. That’s where I have witnessed empathy. Yet I have also witnessed empathy when a person loses their job, or their health, or even a friendship. That makes sense to me. But what about at a wedding where people are rejoicing? Is there such a thing as the joy of empathy?

The Apostle Paul would say yes! Paul urged the early Christians in Rome to “Rejoice with those who rejoice” (Romans 12:15, NIV). How do we rejoice? Go and offer your bodies as a living sacrifice when someone is hurting, ill, loses their job, angry, and also when people are celebrating with joy.

Showing empathy is the key to a person’s healing, the key to a person’s joy. The moment a person’s emotions are affirmed, they begin to feel loved and whole.

I’m grateful I said “yes” to my friend and officiated at that wedding. By the way, on that beautiful night in Kansas City, I witnessed a small miracle. At the beginning of the wedding there were 250 guests. By the end of the wedding, there were between 600-700 people witnessing the joyous event. They were sitting everywhere—on chairs, on the grass, even in a tree! To this day, I still wonder and marvel why. Paul said, “Rejoice with those who rejoice.” Experience the joy of empathy. Experience the joy of Christ’s love.

Scott Simpson

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Sarah Clower: Graphic Designer
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Contact Sarah Clower at 210-271-2777 or sarahc@fpcsat.org if you have questions.

THURSDAY BIBLE STUDY COMING SOON!

Christians often have a tendency to favor the New Testament over the Old Testament, and that is understandable. As Presbyterian-type Christians, though, we believe the Old Testament is as equally “inspired” (literally “God-breathed”, 2 Timothy 3:16) as is the New Testament. Thus, historically, Presbyterians have emphasized the preaching and teaching of the Old Testament more than most other denominations.

In that spirit, this Fall, we will be looking at two of the “minor prophets”—Jonah and Habakkuk. They are classified as “minor” not because they are unimportant, but because of their size. These two small books have “major” messages, especially for Christians attempting to stay true to the Biblical Gospel of grace amidst a culture that is increasingly antithetical - even hostile to such a Gospel. Jonah is missiologically-oriented, providing fuel for following Jesus by answering God’s call to embrace a mission-driven lifestyle.

Habakkuk weaves theodicy (how God’s goodness and provision works itself out in the face of evil), prayer, and hope together in a way that encourages Christians to trust and remain faithful no matter how great the odds. Get ready for a great adventure!

Starts: September 10 - November 19
Small group: 9:30-10:30 AM
Lecture: 10:30-11:15 AM
Note: This time schedule is reversed on the first meeting date.

SEPTEMBER 10 • 9:30-11:15 AM

WOMEN’S RETREAT AT LAITY LODGE

Read more about this exciting opportunity on pages 18-19.

SEPTEMBER 25-27

YOUNG LIVES SERVE OPPORTUNITY

Young Lives and Young Life are relationally driven ministries that allow adult mentors and leaders to develop meaningful relationships with teens and share the love of Christ with them, regardless of their response. Young Lives specifically pairs female mentors with teenage mothers who share the hope of Jesus with both mother and child and walk along side them as they learn to be mothers. Over the past couple of years Young Lives Healey Murphy has led to the non-parenting youth on this campus seeking out the same adult friendships that the teen mothers have developed with caring adults. The need for adults with a heart for such teens is great, as we begin to grow a more targeted ministry to our Young Life kids.

Young Lives San Antonio currently has the following needs for the 2015-2016 school year:

- Men or women interested in being a Young Life Leader at Healey Murphy
- Female Young Lives mentors interested in serving teen moms at Healey Murphy or Seton Home
- Childcare workers, able to commit to at least once a month, to care for children while mothers attend club (at either Seton Home or Healey Murphy)

Healey Murphy Young Lives/ Young Life meets every Tuesday from 3:30-5:30 at First Presbyterian Church. Seton Home Young Lives meets on the second and third Thursday of each month from 7:00 pm-9:00 pm at Seton Home.

Please contact Chris Shipman, Area Director at (817)-907-1233 or Tracy Yates, Staff Associate at (865)-293-9192 if interested.

EVERY TUESDAY • 3:30-5:30 PM • FPC

MEXICO CONSTRUCTION MISSION TRIP

First Presbyterian is excited to announce a new mission trip, in partnership with Grace Presbyterian Church in Houston this coming October. We will partner with Yucatan Peninsula Ministries. The main focus will be working with our hands through construction as we make Jesus visible to the local community. We are looking for 6-8 men or women that are physically fit and not afraid of a little hard work. No construction experience is necessary. Come join the first ever Mexico Construction Crew and lay the foundation for a future tradition at FPC.

The trip will be October 28-November 2, 2015. The cost is \$500, but scholarships are available if needed. For questions or sign-up, please contact Alyssa Payne at alyssap@fpcsat.org or call 210-226-0215.

OCTOBER 28-NOVEMBER 2

SERVANT PARTNERS SERVE OPPORTUNITY

Servant Partners sends teams of missionaries to urban poor communities to share their lives and live out the Gospel among their neighbors. Several missionaries supported by FPC San Antonio are working on the east side of the city and one aspect of their neighborhood ministry is an after-school program. Volunteers are needed to tutor and lead/support various activities in the after-school program, including homework help, reading programs, math drills/games, outside games, snacks, and bible teaching. No teaching experience necessary, but a love for kids is helpful! Background check and training will be provided/required. Bilingual abilities are helpful but not required.

When: Wednesday afternoons from 3:30-6:00 PM (September - May)

Where: Mt. Zion First Baptist Church, 333 Martin Luther King Dr., San Antonio, TX 78203

Contact: sarah.lane@servantpartners.org

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOONS • 3:30-6:00 PM

CHRISTIAN-THINKERS SUNDAY SCHOOL

Course Topic: Celebration of Discipline, by Richard Foster

Class Leaders: Doug McNeel, Jill Hernandez, Michael McMains, Raley Marek and other class members

The book we will be studying, Celebration of Discipline by Richard Foster, has been cited by many as the best modern book on Christian spirituality and praised by Christianity Today as one of the ten best books of the twentieth century. Mining from the treasures of Christian writers through the ages Foster explores how the spiritual disciplines of the Christian faith, instead of leading to a lifeless legalism, are doors which open us up to a deeper, richer life in God.

With clarity and grace, Foster challenges us to consider the benefits of Meditation, Prayer, Fasting, Study, Simplicity, Solitude, Submission, Service, Confession, Worship, Guidance and Celebration—disciplines which we are invited to practice (as the song from Godspell says) in order “to see Thee more clearly, love Thee more dearly, follow Thee more nearly day by day.”

We invite you to join us for this rich study, stimulating discussion and warm fellowship.

STARTING SEPTEMBER 13 • 9:30 AM • ROOM 308

DENTAL CLINIC SERVE OPPORTUNITY

The San Antonio Christian Dental Clinic relies entirely on the support of individuals like you who believe in their mission to extend Christ’s healing by providing charitable dental care. They are always in need of dentists, dental hygienists, registered dental assistants and computer-savvy personnel.

If you or someone you know might be interested in volunteering or supporting them financially, please contact Susan Quick at 512-757-5945 or susan@sachristiandental.org.

VBS 2015



BY BECKY PRICHARD, DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

First Presbyterian Church was transformed into an Everest "winter wonderland" during Vacation Bible School in June! Despite rising temperatures outside, the snowy mountain atmosphere inside brought a sense of fun and adventure for the kids attending VBS. It was a fantastic week filled with fun, singing, lessons, games, crafts, snacks, mission projects, and much more.

Over 140 kids of all ages from, 2 years-old up through 5th grade filled the hallways of FPC as they journeyed from Everest Base Camp to Mountaintop Treats to Glacier Games to Bible Expeditions and back to Summit Celebration! Throughout the week, the kids learned that God provides even through the biggest challenges we face in our lives. Not only does God provide for us when we are in need, but God also comforts, heals, and forgives us in our lives. When we hold on to God and trust God, we have a helper to walk with us through the tough things that we face in life. Kids learned that God sent Jesus for our forgiveness and that God will love us forever and ever...like a hula hoop that does not have a beginning or an end but goes on and on forever!

Throughout the week, kids brought money each day so that kids in India can attend Children's Bible Camps (much like VBS) in their own country through Mission India! One dollar sends one kid to Children's

Bible Camp! Each day, for every dollar a child brought, they were given a balloon to blow up and put in our Mission India blow up tumbler. As the week progressed, we watched the balloons pile up and by the end of the week, we had balloons everywhere! The kids exceeded all expectations and generously raised over \$500.00 for Mission India by the end of the week.

In addition to that, the kids had a mission project they participated in each day which included putting together hygiene bags for refugees, making "Bags of Grace" for our street friends in and around San Antonio, learning about our friends in Malawi, and bringing books from their own homes to donate to children at Seton Home (one of FPC's local mission partners).

The best part about VBS is watching the kids discover who God is and how to trust God with their own lives. It was such a joy to see FPC filled with rambunctious and contagious life and energy throughout the week as the kids celebrated God and God's great power in our lives!

Many thanks to all who graciously volunteered to help during VBS. Whether it was teaching a class, decorating the church, serving snacks, or helping behind the scenes, we could not have done it without you! On behalf of the Children's Ministry Department at FPC, THANK YOU!



THANKING



OUR

USHERS

BY ISAAC OLIVARES



Every Sunday morning, in downtown San Antonio, people can be seen gathering for worship at First Presbyterian Church. As you enter the Sanctuary or Westminster Hall, there is always someone waiting to greet and welcome you to our services. Walking through the Sanctuary narthex or worshipping in Westminster Hall, you admire the inviting atmosphere and take your seat, ready to worship.

Throughout the years, many faithful members have dedicated their service as ushers at First Presbyterian Church. On June 30th of this year, those who have served and those currently serving as ushers were invited to an Usher Appreciation Banquet, held in their honor.

Ed Moore, master of ceremonies for the event, welcomed the honorees and guests. Dr. Jae Ha enriched the program by providing the music. Rev. Ron Scates offered words of appreciation to our ushers, expressing the prominent role and significance of ushers. He also offered inspirational thoughts and blessings to our faithful and dedicated servants.

Our ushers are usually the first people a visitor encounters when they enter our church. They also provide assistance to those who are handicapped or those who just need a helpful set of eyes to find their families seated in the pews. Ushers are also responsible for the offertory and other duties that take place before, during, and after each service.

If you are interested in serving as an usher, please contact: Phyllis Griffin at 226-0215 or phyllisg@fpcsat.org. We would welcome and appreciate you joining one or more of our usher teams!

ODE TO THE GATEKEEPERS

POEM BY BEAUX GILLIAM
A FIRST PRES USHER

From 1846, when Church began,
Families came and the devil ran.
The Ol' Adobe was our first place.
Soon we found this our home base.
We are the Gatekeepers of First.

Pastor McCullough in the Pulpit, stood tall.
He sought others to meet their call.
Our History is no mystery.
Doors opened to a city, we grew from little bitty.
We are the Gatekeepers of First.

Pastors Jones, Hill and Mauze preached.
The Bible was taught, Souls were caught.
Rev. Zbinden, 32 years leading us strong,
With many new to come along.
Now Rev. Scates is catching all the curves.
Never from the Scripture does he swerve.
We are the Gatekeepers of First.

Many have through the decades walked the aisle.
Each Usher meeting and greeting with a joyful smile.
We are blessed to Honor the Usher's Call,
Because of Love which enthralls.
Each Man or Lady is a model so true,
Allows the Holy Spirit to break through.
We are the Gatekeepers of First.

Tonight we show the deepest respect
To those that have had a celestial effect.
They have filled the pews, passed the plates on many dates.
And through the years have seen many tears.
We honor You that have served.
A special home in Heaven is reserved.
The King of Kings has anointed and appointed your days.
To Him we raise your praise.
We are the Gatekeepers of First.

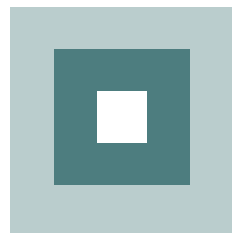
The winds of destiny do blow.
Sometimes in a fury they do go,
They do display the attributes of Glory.
Thru us do we tell of a heavenly story,
Rich in mercy from Grace above.
We trust solely our Father's love.
Our Author, Sustainer and Source of all
Becomes our Friend, Champion Redeemer
Of any fall.
He is the Way and Truth bypassing any hate
On the path to the Heavenly Gate.
We are the Gatekeepers of First.





THE BREAD OF LIFE FOR THE YAZIDIS IN NORTHERN IRAQ

Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty." John 6:35



My trip last March representing you with The Outreach Foundation to northern Iraq has been life-changing. I have spent a lot of time since talking with many of you and writing and talking some more about my Christian brothers and sisters there...who I did not

even really know existed ten months ago. I have also spent a good bit of time trying to explain how a Texas real estate lawyer ended up in northern Iraq...telling folks to "listen" for that call...and then "go". I have been truly blessed and it has been an exciting time for me.

I am pleased to be able to tell you that a few months ago our church again came alongside our Presbyterian brothers in Iraq as they reached out to all of the displaced Christians there. Utilizing the portion of your tithes and contributions allocated to benevolences, your Global Missions Committee has again sent \$25,000 to assist in this ministry to our brothers and sisters in Christ displaced all over northern Iraq.

While that ongoing ministry to Christians in Iraq has been my focus, it has been the bakery outreach to the Yazidi people that really caught my heart and would not let go. This one young girl's face has haunted...and *blessed* me ever since my return to the States.

The Yazidis are a Kurdish religious community whose ancient religion is neither Christian nor Muslim but, instead, is linked to Zoroastrianism and ancient Mesopotamian religions. In Iraq, they live primarily in the Nineveh Province, near the ancient Christian villages that were the homes of many of the displaced Christians we have been assisting. During my Iraq trip, we took a three hour drive north of Erbil, not far from Dohuk, to visit a camp set up for some of the 23,000 Yazidis who had been driven from the city of Sinjar, north of Mosul, by ISIS. You can all probably remember the scenes of these beleaguered souls—almost 50,000 of them—who had sought refuge at the top of a mountain last August awaiting rescue. Several thousand men had been killed and young girls were taken as sex slaves...it is a staggeringly evil story.

Late last fall The Outreach Foundation was contacted by Rev. Wagih Abdulmassih, a London-based pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Egypt who was working with a local pastor setting up small bread making facilities in the camps. Through the generous gifts of First Pres and other churches to the "Iraq Appeal," Outreach was

able to fund one of these bread making facilities, which we visited. Aptly named the "Bread of Life Bakery", it employs mostly women from the camp and efficiently churns out thousands of flatbreads every day with flour supplied by aid organizations. Families are registered and send their exuberant children to pick up a daily supply which is based upon the number of people in their respective tents. Because of this much needed humanitarian work, the local church has also been allowed to offer sports ministries and other outreach (even Bible study!) which is quietly and effectively making Christ known among the Yazidi people...something that, but for this tragedy, might never have happened! Last month, on behalf of your Global Missions Committee, I brought my desire to help The Outreach Foundation in this particular project to your Session. I told them something like this:

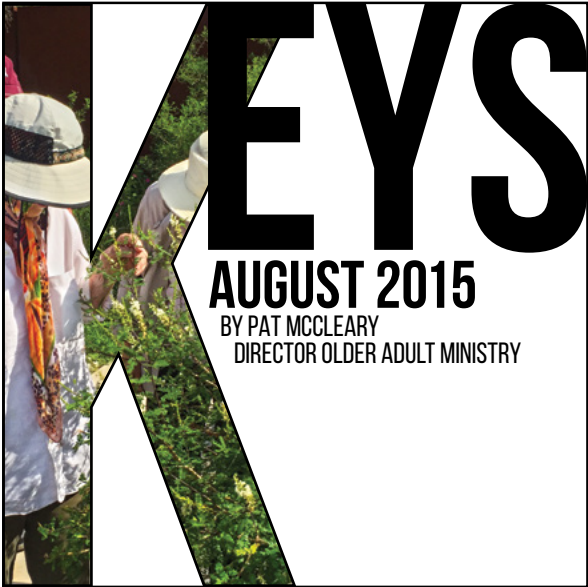
This camp bakery project is amazing, in three ways:

- *The expanse of Christianity making each bakery happen....the concept was originated by Egyptian Presbyterians out of London, funded by American Christians from all four major Presbyterian denominations through The Outreach Foundation, with each individual bakery being built and implemented by local Iraq evangelical Christians.*
- *The humanity of respectfully helping these people forced to live in a camp to make and provide their own daily bread.*
- *The "glass half full" aspect....out of this awful situation, we have an unimaginable opportunity to assist in discipling the Yazidi people about the "Bread of Life"...Christ.*

Due to denominational issues, your Session has had to spend a lot of time over the past several years with "*us looking inward*". I saw this as an opportunity for the Session to remind our congregation that our focus is (or should be) "*us looking outward as the eyes, hands and feet of Jesus*"...I am so pleased and blessed to be able to tell you that your Session turned down my request to help fund one bakery...and, instead, stepped up to fund the \$60,000.00 required to build *two* bakeries. The check has been sent to the Outreach Foundation and they will keep us all updated on how things are progressing.

We here at First Presbyterian Church in San Antonio are blessed to come alongside of The Outreach Foundation in this effort to bring both daily bread...and the Bread of Life to the suffering Yazidi people.

BY BEN MCCALED



IT'S AN AWESOME AUGUST!

Even though this is our “slow time” of year, we are still getting together for fellowship events and are busy planning for our upcoming “busy time” that begins in September.

KEYS OFFICERS FOR 2015-2016

Co-Presidents	Nancy and Harold Black
Vice President	Joe Rust
Treasurer	Don McCorkindale
Assistant Treasurer	Jane Warren
Secretary	Geri McCorkindale
Board Members	Janet Beauch, Jane Warren, and Bud and Ginger Davenport
President Emerita	Dottie Crane
Members-at-Large	Carley and Evelyn Meadows
Special Event Planners	Virginia Nilsson (w/ Ginger Davenport, Janet Beauch, and Mary Kincaid)
CHAIRPERSONS	
Elder	Chuck Bunn
Bulletin Board	Suzanne West
Calling Committee	Virginia Nilsson and Liz Wright
Bridge and Games	Katy BeDunnah
Prayers	Jim and Nancy Johnson
Introductions	Bud Davenport
Membership	Geri McCorkindale
Care and Concern	Elza Crump
Movies	Liz and Jack Wright
Telecare	Karin Gabrielson

A LOOK BACK AT JULY | HARDBERGER PARK WALK

Monday, July 6, was a beautiful summer morning for our first Hardberger Park Walk. We were greeted by Susan Campbell, Education Coordinator and tour guide in the Urban Ecology Center classroom, who showed photos and gave a trails map presentation before starting on the walk. To sum up the day, let me quote Lynn Thompson “... The boardwalk tour of all the eco-friendly architecture was informative and beautiful. And then, our guided walks around the butterfly garden, savannah, and trails through the trees learning about what’s edible or not made our day so fun. Our picnic under the trees on the cool stone tables made for a perfect end.” We plan to take another tour in the fall when the Voelcker Homestead is opened to the public. Be sure to watch for more information!



LEARN @ LUNCH HEB CENTRAL MARKET

Friday, August 7, 2015 • Noon–1:00 PM • \$25 per person
Includes recipe packets, chef instruction and lunch

Director Mary Martini selected the following menu for demonstration:

- Greek-Style Baked Potato Salad
- Phyllo-Wrapped Salmon with Dried Tomatoes, Olives, and Capers
- Greek-Style Stuffed Zucchini
- Walnut Cake in Honey Syrup

Make your reservation by calling Pat McCleary at 210-271-2726.

KEYS LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING

Friday, August 14 • 11:00 AM
Members will meet to finalize fall events, speakers, birthday lunches, day trips, special programs, etc. Please let any member of the committee know if you have any suggestions for speakers, restaurants or excursions to nearby places of interest. We like to have everyone’s input. Please contact one of our officers or me (patm@fpcsat.org) or 210-271-2726.

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

Friday, August 21 • 11:30 AM
We’ll celebrate August birthdays at the Riverwalk Hyatt Hotel where we will enjoy their Famous Pasta Lunch Buffett including choice of salads, soups and dessert. Cost is \$12/person and your check is your reservation. RSVP by noon on August 18. As always, our birthday honorees will enjoy a complimentary lunch. Please indicate if you will need transportation from the church to the Hotel.

LUNCH & SUMMER MOVIE

Friday, August 28 • 11:30 AM
Come have lunch and a movie—it’s a cool place to spend a hot summer day! Thanks to Liz & Jack Wright for providing our movie entertainment. If you have a favorite movie you would like to see, please call Liz (826-8580) and let her know. Movie to be announced—watch the Sunday announcements.

KEEP MOVING FITNESS

August 7, 14, 28 • 9:30 AM • Second Floor of Student Center
Come and enjoy the fellowship of others while also improving your health. This is a no-cost program and daily exercise is highly recommended!

KEYS GAME DAYS

Enjoy fun, laughter and keep your brain active!

BRIDGE — Friday, August 14 • 11:00 AM–2:30 PM
Please contact Katy BeDunnah at 210-994-5998

MAH JONGG — Friday, August 14 and August 28 • 11:00 AM–3:00 PM
Please contact Nancy Black at 210-493-1609



SAREADS — NEWS FLASH!

SAReads, a division of Literacy San Antonio, is again operating at full speed and needs help from KEYS and any other folks who would be interested in volunteering with this worthwhile cause.

Join a group of FPC members who on every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month will be spending the morning (9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.) labeling books, freshening them up, and sorting for distribution to children in needy schools and in after-school programs. For children whose parents do not or cannot place high priority on reading or books, and therefore do not have them in their homes, SAReads has opened up a whole new vista for them.

Call Jane Warren at 493-5187 for further details. This is a great, fun project, and we need helpers!

SAVE THE DATE FOR ANTIQUES SHOW!

The Marburger Farm Antiques Show
Thursday, October 1
The Marburger Farm Antiques Show near Round Top, Texas is a lovely way to spend an early fall day. Located on an old farm in Fayette County they provide a location where the most talented antique dealers from across the United States and the world come together to offer shopper’s fresh vintage finds not reproductions. Over 350 vendors show their wares in 10 tents and 12 historic buildings. You can shop or just enjoy browsing. Morning coffee and lunch are on your own in the Café on premises. Choose from offerings from Blacks BBQ, Legal Tender, the Righteous Bros and Coffee Roasters PLUS a dessert bar.

Depart FPC at 8:15 AM • Return 5:30 PM
Cost \$68.00 includes charter Regent Coach, entry fee, driver tip and guides Susan and Henry Holloway.

WOMEN OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

BY ANN DENNIS, PRESIDENT

Welcome to a new year with PW! It is an honor to serve as the 2015 - 2016 President of Presbyterian Women; a privilege to welcome new members; and a joy to serve alongside each of you.

As our summer progressed and we transitioned from one year to the next, it was evident that our last year's PW members and officers under the capable leadership of President Ann Bunn and Treasurer Jeanne Douglas had an amazing year. Through the generosity of our members, we were able to donate funds to the following recipients: Young Lives, Circle 5 Shawl Ministry, House of Neighborly Service, Presbyterian Children's Home, and the FPC Children's Center Scholarship Fund.

We also contributed funds to the recipients of the Birthday Offering which included the Community of St. Therese of Lisieux in Memphis, Tennessee and the Bethesda Christian Community Center of the Seventh Presbyterian Church in Barranquilla, Columbia. A very special thank you to Susan Kerr for allowing us to host the Coffee in her lovely home. PW is also grateful to our capable chairmen, Linda Rittenhouse and Amanda Williams, as well as their committee. It was a beautiful day and a memorable event.

On May 14, our Invisible Angels ushered in the summer by providing a staff appreciation picnic style luncheon which was very much enjoyed. Many thanks to Holly Youngquist, Candy Wagner, Judy Kruger, and Pat Krueger for serving as the Committee Chairs for the



Invisible Angels and a special debt of gratitude to all the PW members who generously participated. In late June many PW members provided love and support to the children of VBS. It was rewarding to see our members teaching classes, providing snacks, and lending support wherever they were needed. Each day the VBS adult leaders and helpers were treated to delicious snacks provided by Bunkie Shed and the members of Circle 20.

As we turn our eyes to the fall, we are excited about this year's Bible Study, The Liturgical Calendar. We are very blessed to have as our moderators, Kay Case and Pat Brodeen, who will prepare lesson plans for the circle moderators, using, as their primary study material, notes and lessons written by Sandy Sturch. We very much appreciate the use of Sandy's comprehensive and in-depth material.

As our PW Brochure states, "If you are a woman and a member of this church, you are a member of Presbyterian Women". We would love to welcome each of you to our activities, which include circle meetings, Bible Study, sewing ministries, young mom's group, literature circle, evening events, luncheons, prayer shawl ministry, and a women's retreat. Please see our 2015 - 2016 calendar, save the dates, and plan to attend our PW functions.

For further information, please feel free to contact me at eacd100@att.net; our Vice-President for New Members, Linda Delano, ldelano@sbcglobal.net; or our Vice-President of Circles, Georgia Heath, gkhymheath@earthlink.net.

As the year approaches, I pray that we may grow strong in our seasons of life as we faithfully strive to make Jesus visible and as we study The Liturgical Calendar, thanking our Lord for the gift of each day, "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." Ecclesiastes 3:1

Blessings,
Ann

2015 - 2016 CALENDAR



August 31	Monday	9:45 AM 10:00 AM	Refreshments - Council & Moderators Council & Moderators' Meetings
September 25-27			Laity Lodge Retreat
October 5	Monday	9:45 AM 10:00 AM	Refreshments - Council & Moderators Council & Moderators' Meetings
October 8	Thursday	7:00 PM	Fall Ladies' Night Out
October 26	Monday	11:30 AM	Fall PW Luncheon
October 28	Wednesday	10:00 AM	Christmas Craft Project
November 2	Monday	9:45 AM 10:00 AM	Refreshments - Council & Moderators Council & Moderators' Meetings
December 3	Thursday	3:00 PM	Morningside Manor Christmas Party Circles 6, 7, 9, 11, 14, 21
December 7	Monday	9:45 AM	Refreshments - Council & Moderators Council & Moderators' Meetings
December 10	Thursday	3:00 PM	Chandler Home Christmas Party Circles 112, 2/4, 5, 8, 20
December 24	Thursday	7:00-9:00 PM	Christmas Eve Dinner
January 4	Monday	9:45 AM 10:00 AM	Refreshments - Council & Moderators Council & Moderators' Meetings
January 28	Thursday	6:30 PM	Winter Ladies' Night Out
February 1	Monday	9:45 AM 10:00 AM	Refreshments - Council & Moderators Council & Moderators' Meetings
March 7	Monday	9:45 AM	Refreshments - Council & Moderators Council & Moderators' Meetings
March 26	Saturday	10:00 AM	Children's Easter Program
April 4	Monday	10:30 AM 11:30 AM	Council & Moderators' Meetings Spring PW Luncheon
May 2	Monday	10:45 AM 11:30 AM	Council & Moderators' Meetings President's Luncheon
May 4	Wednesday	10:30 AM-12:30PM	PW Coffee

A SUMMER REFLECTION ON THE SACREDNESS OF TEACHING

PART 2 OF 2

God does amazing things through the teaching and education of children.

Many years ago a member of First Presbyterian Church felt a strong calling to become a home schooler so she could teach her children every subject using the Bible. When math exceeded this brave mother's skills, she and her husband enrolled their children in an out of state private school that also used the Bible in every class. Some of the children finished high school there and some finished back in public schools in the San Antonio area.

The biblical focus this family had not only helped nurture their children's reasoning and worldview, and helped them to excel academically, but it nurtured the parents too. The Mom and Dad developed deep, missional relationships with two faculty couples from the Christian School, and later with fellow public school parents associated with FPC. God forged from these relationships new mission initiatives such as the AMO Program that became critical to First Pres mission efforts in Mexico, Dominican Republic, and now Haiti. This parent and the teachers she befriended made a huge and still growing difference in the nations.

When another FPC member attended a Christian education conference hosted by the same distant school, on the plane back he heard a remarkable story about a man named Marcus and his fourth grade student teacher, Tracie. Marcus was a difficult, disruptive student, but something about him always made "Miss Tracie" smile. One of the hardest things she had to do that semester was make a stand for discipline, respect and high expectations,

by taking Marcus to the principal's office. Marcus begged her not to take him there, but she knew it was essential to maintain class order and to help him avoid trouble again. After the semester, young Marcus called Tracie's father and asked if he and his friends could rake their yard. When their work was complete, Tracie and her mother fixed the boys lunch and paid them for a job well done. Later that day, Marcus surprised Tracie by returning with a wrapped gift containing a candy jar that he had purchased for her with the money he had earned. Marcus appreciated that Tracie saw something in him that he had not seen in himself.

When Marcus became a teen his life went from difficult to dangerous, eventually landing him in prison. After he was released, his and Tracie's paths crossed again at an ice cream shop. They recognized one another and struck up a conversation. Tracie told Marcus how she had been looking for him and praying for him for many years. That encounter led to an exchange of phone numbers and an invitation for Marcus to join Tracie and her family one Sunday for church. A few weeks later, Marcus took her up on that invitation, and she had the privilege that same day of seeing him accept Jesus as Savior.

Three years later—in 2006—Marcus and Tracie partnered at her church to host a Day of Prayer for Teachers and Educators—public, private, and home school—throughout their city. Their desire was to share their story in an effort to make a positive impact on the lives of other teachers and their students. This teacher made a huge difference in the life of her student and this student had a tremendous impact on shaping this young student teacher. Their story continues today.

The teachers who serve our students and the many members of our church who are teachers in our community likewise inspire First Presbyterian Church. Teaching is a serious and sacred calling, and our teachers need our prayers

and our commissioning of their work. Teachers throughout the city also need our prayers. Our parents overseeing and preparing for the education and home Bible study of the children of this church need our prayers as well.

FPC Prayer Ministry is therefore sponsoring two shows of Hill Country Institute Live on KSLR radio, airing on Saturday mornings from Aug. 1 through Aug. 22 at 11:00 AM, featuring interviews of Christians who are leading educators of children, reflecting on how their faith in Christ affects their work and the students they serve, and clarifying the significance of prayer to the challenges and blessings of teaching. FPC's Prayer Ministry is coordinating First Pres support and participation in these shows.

On Sunday, August 23, the day before schools start in San Antonio, we will have a special Moment for Mission during our Sunday Worship Services. At that time, our pastors and congregation will consider, commission, and pray for the many teachers among us, and lift up those who teach us, our children and grandchildren at colleges, public, private, and home school settings, and pre-schools. Plan to be there!

Members of the congregation are also encouraged to invite a teacher to listen to the HCI Live radio shows on KSLR and join one of our worship services on Sunday, August 23. Ask teachers you know if they have special requests for prayers, so that you can lift these up in Sunday school classes before the Fall semesters kicks off in the days that follow.

San Antonio's Teachers have a Huge Impact. Let's Pray for them!

A SUGGESTED PRAYER FOR TEACHERS

Our Heavenly Father, as this school year is beginning it is our privilege to pray for all teachers—those who serve in churches, as well as public, private and home schools. Bless and anoint the teachers of our city's children for their calling. We pray that you shape their hearts and character with a desire to know and follow your Word. Give them also gifts of wisdom and knowledge to share with each student. We pray that you would fill the teachers with deep love and compassion for every student. Give them discernment so that they may see stamped in each child the image of Christ, and may relate to each child as You would.

Lord, help our teachers create an atmosphere of encouragement, respect and responsibility so each student may learn to full ability and achieve full potential for your purposes.

We pray God's blessings on all teachers throughout the school year, in Jesus' name. Amen.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Retreat Refresh Renew

FALL RETREAT AT LAITY LODGE

September is a perfect time to retreat to the beauty and tranquility of Laity Lodge! We will be “Kicking Off” at church, getting the kids back in school, getting back into our Fall routines—and it’s too early for any holiday stress. It is a perfect time to “take a breath”, to take some “me time”. It is a perfect time to Retreat, Refresh and Renew.

The FPC Women’s Retreat at Laity Lodge will be held Sept. 25-27, 2015. Begin with a beautiful drive through the serenity of the Texas Hill Country. Check in at the Lodge and join in the fellowship and sharing with new and old friends and sisters in Christ and get ready for a great and inspirational speaker, Lisa Burkhardt Worley.

The retreat is a FPC sponsored event but registration is open to all women of all ages. Make it a Mother/

Lisa Burkhardt Worley is an author, speaker, and founder of Pearls of Promise Ministries, (www.pearlsofpromiseministries.com) a ministry that helps women overcome life’s trials through sharing the strength and love of Christ. Her books include the Pearls of Promise devotional, and *If I Only Had...Wrapping Yourself in God’s Truth During Storms of Insecurity*. *If I Only Had...* is the winner of three national and regional writing awards. Her articles have also been published in numerous national periodicals.

Lisa spent nineteen years in television as a sports anchor and reporter, appearing nationally on both HBO Sports and ESPN. She was also an anchor for the Madison Square Garden Network in New York City as well as San Antonio’s KENS-TV, but midway through her career, God got her attention through a

Daughter weekend, invite a friend from another church or choose a roommate that you would like to know better. Scholarships are available and Lindsey Selli has that information. Lindsey can also help with any other questions you might have or go directly to the Laity Lodge website for information and registration (see sign-up instructions). Also, look for an information table in the Mauze Lobby on the first three Sunday’s in August.

Just don’t wait too long! Reservations are limited and the deadline is Aug. 31. Laity Lodge will be going through a major renovation right after the Fall schedule and will be closed until late Summer 2016. That’s even more reason to sign up now!

Come Retreat. Get Refreshed. Leave Renewed!

devastating job loss. At that point, she rededicated her life, and her television career to him.

Lisa, who endured a troubled childhood, is a living example of how the Lord “restores what the locusts have eaten.” Her father, a Jewish doctor, died suddenly two months before she was born. Her mother never recovered from his death, struggling with mental illness the rest of her life. Lisa praises God for his loving care of her during this period of her life, and shares her story to encourage others.

Lisa has been married for 28 years to Jeff and has two sons, Kyle and Bret.



Sign-up online. Follow the steps below to sign-up. If you have further questions, contact Lindsay Blackmon at lindsayb@fpcsat.org

1. Go to www.laitylodge.org/make-a-reservation/schedule/
2. When the list of upcoming retreats appears, scroll down until you see the retreat marked, “Women’s Retreat for First Presbyterian Church San Antonio” (date on left will say September 25-27).
3. Click on the green button marked. “Register Now”
4. Never registered before? Under the headline: “I would like to create an online account”, click on the green button marked “Start now”.

5. Answer the question by clicking on the appropriate “Yes” or “No” circle and then click “Submit”.
6. Enter the appropriate information in each white text box and click on the “Submit” button.
7. Under “Thank you for Completing your Online Account” click “Continue”.
8. When information on “Women’s Retreat” appears. Scroll down to “Participant Information” and check the appropriate participant information.
9. Continue to the payment page and enter your information (This site is completely safe! You will not be scammed).
10. Continue to the confirmation page. You’re all set!

NEW HEALING SERVICE WITH COMMUNION

Beginning August 16th, FPC will offer a Healing and Wholeness Service with Communion on the third Sunday of each month at 12:15 pm in the Guthrie-Bryant Chapel. The service will normally be led by Pastor Ron Scates, and include an opening prayer, a time of worship and praise, a time of confession and silent prayer, and blessing of the communion elements. Attendees will then be invited to come forward for healing prayers (if desired) and communion, or given the option to only take communion. The Prayer Ministry Committee is coordinating the service.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS TO DISCUSS DENOMINATIONAL ISSUES

August 9 | 12:15 PM | FPC Sanctuary
Speaker: Paul Detterman (Representing the Fellowship)

August 23 | 12:15 PM | FPC Sanctuary
Speaker: Dana Allin (Representing ECO)

MOMENTS TO HOLD CLOSE | A FAMILIAR STORY! | BY MANNY RODRIGUEZ



Several weekends ago we had a discussion with my son. He had failed Algebra, in response we elected to take his iPhone away from him during school because phone records revealed he was playing on it during class and not focused on his education. We woke up the next morning to find him missing, we learned that he had departed in the middle of the night with my ex-wife and falsely reported to CPS that I had choked him. He has since recanted his claim of abuse and acknowledged that he was simply angry that his cellular phone was going to be taken from him. He has elected to reside with his mom, refus-

es to return home, and has cut off all communication with us. He knows his father’s love, he knows his father’s love is unconditional, but right now he refuses his father’s love in place of worldly possessions. I watch the hummingbirds feed through the kitchen window, but this is only partially true. I use them as an excuse to search the horizon, praying to see him once he has realized that material possessions are no comparison to a father’s love. And when that day comes, the world will see how fast an old man can run through the door and up the road to hold his missing child. Because on that day I will finally be able to say my son was lost, but now he is found.



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