



# *First Press*

## **CONGRATULANDS CONFIRMANDS**

**JUNE 2016 ISSUE • FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**





# DO YOU BELIEVE IN MIRACLES?!

BY REV. DR. RONALD SCATES • INTERIM SENIOR PASTOR

James K. Polk was President. Ulysses S. Grant got his first taste of battle in The Mexican War. The phrase “Manifest Destiny” was coined. The first Texas State government was installed in Austin. Antoine Sax had just patented the saxophone. The first ever baseball game took place (the New York Nines defeated the NY Knickerbockers 23-1). The Smithsonian Institution (“America’s Attic”) was chartered by Congress. All land west of the Mississippi River was referred to as “The Great American Desert”...and in the wildly raucous town of San Antonio, a Presbyterian missionary—John McCullough—planted a church in a rather honky-tonk environment. The year was 1846. The church

would become the First Presbyterian Church of San Antonio...still going strong after 170 years.

So, let's celebrate! We're the "newest/oldest Presbyterian church" in town. We've been around for a long time, but we've also been reborn into a new denomination: the Evangelical Covenant Order Of Presbyterians ( ECO ). Your Session has called for a celebration to begin in September...not to just celebrate a glorious past...but, more importantly, to celebrate a new open door that has been set before us as a center-city, Christ-centered, Biblical, holistic Gospel congregation. The \$170 million question we need to be asking ourselves as we celebrate is this: what kind of faith compelled the Rev. John McCullough to leave his comfort zone, risk life and limb, take residence in a pretty wild frontier town, and plant a church in the midst of a rather raucous honky-tonk populous? The answer: the exact same Biblically Orthodox, Jesus-Centered, Great Commission/Great Commandment faith that bids you and me to move forward into the 21st century with vibrant worship that propels us into holistic ministries that make Jesus visible across our city, and around the world. We are going to celebrate the reality that FPC's greatest days are still before us.

In September, your Session is planning a church-wide celebration to mark both our 170th anniversary, plus the new open door of being a part of ECO. This means the field is wide open for planting new churches, preaching and teaching the Gospel of grace unfettered, and holding forth what is God's best for all people as an alternative to what's being championed by the current surrounding culture. Just like John McCullough did. The Lord is calling us to move forward with joy and expectancy as an ever-more-intentional evangelistic, reformed, entrepreneurial (thinking outside the box, taking faith-driven risks) congregation—and doing so with excellence and undergirded with prayer. Look for 170th Celebration details to be coming soon.

To God be the glory,



+ Ron

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

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LITERATURE CIRCLE

FOR YOUR SUMMER READING  
FPC Literature Circle announces the book selections for 2016-2017:

- September 12   Titans by Leila Meachem
- October 11     Cinderella the musical
- November 11    The Silent Shore of Memory  
by John Kerr  
(meets Friday with the KEYS group)
- December 13    In Other Words by Bonnie Lyons
- January 10      The Broken Circle by Daniel Bridges
- February 14     The Summer Before the War  
by Helen Simonson
- March 14        All the Light We Cannot See  
by Anthony Doerr
- April 11         News of the World by Paulette Jiles
- May 9            Delayed Legacy by Conrad Netting

The circle meets the second Tuesday of the month from September through May in the McCullough Room at 1 PM except for the November meeting in 2016. Reviewers will be announced later.

For further information call Jeanne Browning, chair at 210-824-3921.

MO-RANCH RETREAT

Registration is now open for the annual Mo-Ranch Retreat on August 5-7! Join us for the All-Church Retreat with guest speakers, Steve and Twyla Lee. This is sure to be a weekend you won't want to miss! Housing will be first come first served, so make sure to get your registration in quickly! Learn more or sign up by printing out a form online at [www.fpcsanantonio.org/grow/retreats-and-events](http://www.fpcsanantonio.org/grow/retreats-and-events).

AUGUST 5-7

URBAN PLUNGE

Each summer the middle school blocks out a week and dedicates it to serving others in the loving name of Jesus Christ. The week is filled with service, fun, games, studying scripture, great speakers, and more fun and games. Our Urban plunge this year will be Saturday, June 11-Thurs- day, June 16. Drop off will be 11:00 AM on Sat- ursday, and pick-up will be Thursday at 8:30 AM. Cost is \$150. We will be serving with local mis- sion partners such as:  
Christian Assistance Ministry (CAM)  
Servant Partners—East Side Ministry  
Mission Road Ministries  
San Antonio Metropolitan Ministries (SAMM)  
The San Antonio Food Bank

JUNE 11-16

SAVE THE DATE FOR VBS 2016!

Join us from Monday, June 20 through Friday, June 24 as we “Dive Deeper into God’s Word”! Throughout the week we will be finding truth below the surface as we learn how Jesus taught people about the Kingdom of God. Vacation Bible School is open to children from four years old through 5th grade. Contact Lindsay Selli at [lindsays@fpcsat.org](mailto:lindsays@fpcsat.org) for more information and go to our website to register online! Deadline to register is June 1.

JUNE 20-24

170TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION!

Mark your calendars for Sunday, September 18, as First Pres will celebrate 170 years since its found- ing in San Antonio, as well as our new affiliation with ECO! In addition to a special luncheon that day, look for more information to come regarding worship and activities for the whole family.

As the “oldest, newest” Protestant church in San Antonio, we welcome everyone to join in this event as we continue to make Jesus visible to our com- munity and to grow in His Word.

SEPTEMBER 18

MEN’S RETREAT

October 21-22, 2016 at T Bar M Resort/Conference Center, 2549 Hwy 46 West, New Braunfels, Texas.

The men’s retreat is a time of fellowship, building up the body of Christ through large groups, small breakout groups for discussion, “downtime,” and worshipping together. The time away, the solitude, and the great setting for this special retreat will help renew you in a special way. The cost of the re- treat will be \$120 per person (double occupancy). More details to come.

For more information or to register contact Stacie Rodriguez at 210-271-2759 or [stacier@fpcsat.org](mailto:stacier@fpcsat.org).

OCTOBER 21-22

LUNCHEON TO HONOR REV. ZBINDEN, HEMINGWAY TO SPEAK!

The Ecumenical Center for Religion and Health, located at the Medical Center, will host their annual Legacy of Hope Luncheon to be held on Thursday, October 6, 2016.

The guest speaker will be actress and author Mariel Hemingway, and we are excited to announce that this year’s honoree is our very own Rev. Dr. Louis Zbinden!

Many of you may have already received an invitation to this wonderful event, but if you don’t and would like to join in celebrating Louis’s dedication to The Ecumenical Center, please e-mail Suzanne Terry with your name(s) and mailing address to [suzanne.terry@sbcglobal.net](mailto:suzanne.terry@sbcglobal.net), or call her at (210) 828-4518.

Either method of contact will ensure you’re placed on the invitation list.

Thank you!  
Suzanne and Ted Terry, Chairs  
Carol and Dave West, Co-Chairs

OCTOBER 6



# PATHWAYS TO HOPE

H

elp FPC Local Missions meet the challenge to support this free community-wide event on the role of the faith community in mental health.

On August 26 and 27, FPC's Mental Hope Ministry and the San Antonio faith community will facilitate a city-wide conference at the Tobin Center to address mental health in our community. For the first time, the faith community will come together with the health care community and broader San Antonio community to discuss this issue.

When 70% of all people impacted by mental illness first approach a pastor, priest or rabbi for help, regardless of any religious affiliation, we know the faith community must play a role. Specifically, the conference will look at how the faith community can become engaged in providing support for families and individuals impacted by mental illness.

The keynote speaker for the conference will be Kay Warren, who along with her husband Pastor Rick Warren, are co-founders of Saddleback Church in Orange County, CA. In 2014, the Warrens lost their son Matthew to suicide. Since then Kay and Rick Warren have become national spokespersons for improving our mental healthcare system and for eliminating the stigma of mental illness.

Along with Kay Warren, the conference will feature Dr. Dan Morehead of the Samaritan Counseling Center in Austin, and Dr. Matthew Stanford, CEO of the Hope and Healing Center in Houston, Texas. Dr. Morehead combines psychiatry, neurology and theology in his award winning presentations on mental health. Dr. Stanford, formerly on the faculty at Baylor University in the Department of Neurosciences, has written extensively on faith and mental illness.

In addition, community leaders in mental health care, social services and supportive housing and employment will speak about how San Antonio is working to improve the mental health care system and the path to recovery for people living with a mental illness. The conference will focus on building new partnerships with the faith community to

break the stigma of mental illness and to provide hope. The conference will be free for all attendees by registering on the conference web site [www.pathwaystohope.net](http://www.pathwaystohope.net).

In order to help ensure this ground-breaking event will happen, the Local Missions Committee of First Presbyterian Church is providing a \$50,000 Challenge Grant to help raise the funds necessary for the conference. The Conference Organizing Committee is reaching out to churches and individuals throughout the city to ask them to participate in this special opportunity.

If you would like to help match this grant with your own contribution you may do so through the church website [www.fpcsanantonio.org/serve/missions/local-missions](http://www.fpcsanantonio.org/serve/missions/local-missions). Also, if you would like to volunteer to help at the event, please contact Doug Beach, FPC Mental Hope Ministry Leader and President of NAMI San Antonio, at [dougbeach7897@gmail.com](mailto:dougbeach7897@gmail.com) or at 210-602-5733. For more information on the conference and to register to attend, go to: [www.pathwaystohope.net](http://www.pathwaystohope.net)



Kay Warren, wife of Rick Warren, to Keynote "Pathways to Hope Conference" at the Tobin Center

## ABOUT THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

Kay Warren is a passionate Bible teacher and respected advocate for those living with HIV&AIDS, orphaned and vulnerable children, as well as for those affected by a mental illness. She founded Saddleback's HIV&AIDS Initiative and has become a national spokesperson for improving mental health care in our country.

Kay is the author of *Choose Joy: Because Happiness Isn't Enough, Say Yes to God* and coauthor of *Foundations*, the popular systematic theology course used by churches worldwide. Her children are Amy and Josh, and Matthew who is in Heaven, and she has five grandchildren.







## LIVES TRANSFORMED IN MALAWI

In April, we were blessed to be co-leading a short-term mission visioning team to Malawi, Africa. The team was composed of an amazing cross-section of the members of our church...young and old(er)...leaders from across the congregation. In addition to the two of us, Ben (Elder) and Teresa (Deacon), the team included our Senior Pastor, Ron Scates, the Clerk of our Session, Tripp Stuart, Tripp's 13-year old daughter Jennings, Ericka Picard and four other Deacons...Charlotte Milner, Debra Sirakas, Barbara Winship and Sammy Verheul. The trip was sponsored by World Vision, "an international partnership of Christians whose mission is to follow our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in working with the poor and oppressed to promote human transformation, seek justice, and bear witness to the good news of the Kingdom of God." As you know, for several years, members of our congregation have sponsored children in a specific region of Malawi through World Vision, and this trip gave us the opportunity to go visit this supported area of Malawi and build a deeper relationship with the villages we are sponsoring as a church.

We had an exceptional opportunity to accompany and be briefed by the local staff and leadership of World Vision in Malawi, our partners on the ground here. We traveled out into the countryside to the villages in the area where First Presbyterian Church is partnering and had a chance to see first-hand these programs in action. Among the programs and sites supported by First Presbyterian Church through World Vision we visited were the following:

- a village-based, member-funded savings and loan coop
- a community-operated AIDS/HIV health clinic and youth education outreach
- a primary school with a classroom, sanitation facilities and a water pump constructed by locals with materials and expertise provided by World Vision
- a WASH (water & sanitation) Project in a remote village where we saw first-hand what life was like before and after a water well and related sanitation and hygiene

components were brought to the community

- a meeting with the village smallholder farmer's association and a visit to a representative farm to better appreciate the advances brought by cooperative efforts, small loans and better farming techniques
- and last but not least...visits with a number of children sponsored by members of the church (including a visit with our own sponsored child, Lonjezo...see top right)

At every stop we saw two things....

- **Transformational Development** (see attached explanation) that effectively and economically empowered the local community to improve their community themselves....and
- **Joy**...at every stop we were amazed by the joy exhibited by our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ there in Malawi. Even in their great need, these people exhibited a kindness and joy we found ourselves longing for.

Now that we are home, we wanted to thank you for your support and **especially thank you for all of your prayers.** They were answered beyond what we could have imagined...our team was amazingly unified and worked wonderfully together...our hearts were indeed softened...we maintained our health and our travels went off without a hitch...and we saw the "fruits of the spirit" throughout.

After visiting these villages and programs supported by First Presbyterian Church through World Vision, we are confident that we have built a deeper, lasting relationship with our brothers and sisters in Christ there and, in the process, came home changed. We want you to know that we have been humbled and blessed by the amazing manner you have come along side of us for this journey. Thanks again for helping us "make Jesus visible" in Malawi.

In Christ,  
Teresa and Ben McCaleb



### WORLD VISION'S TRANSFORMATIONAL DEVELOPMENT MODEL

- Transformational development is a process through which children, families, and communities move toward fullness of life with dignity, justice, peace, and hope. It is integral to World Vision as we work together with some of the poorest communities to help them address physical, social, and spiritual concerns. Our holistic approach to tackling the root causes of poverty and helping children grow physically, emotionally, and spiritually, is Christ-centered, child-focused, community- and values-based, and sustainable.
- Communities partner with World Vision through Area Development Programs (ADP), which are clusters of communities in close proximity. Working closely with communities to tap into their potential, World Vision empowers those we serve to achieve significant and sustainable progress.
- The ADP model encourages communities to determine what their greatest needs are and develop appropriate responses. The needs typically fall into categories such as water, sanitation, and hygiene; health; agriculture and food security; education and literacy; capacity building; peacebuilding and conflict resolution; and economic development. HIV and AIDS responses are integrated into our projects as appropriate, with a focus on caring for the needs of orphans and vulnerable children.
- In all contexts, World Vision seeks to demonstrate the love of Jesus Christ through word and deed so children and their families experience the love of God and their neighbors.





## PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

### BY LINDA RITTENHOUSE, PRESIDENT



The 2015-2016 year for Presbyterian Women has come to an end with some final significant events!

The Invisible Angels Committee chaired this year by Pat Krueger, Judy Kruger, Candy Wagner and Holly Youngquist honored the staff of FPC in April with a fabulous Fiesta luncheon. These ladies and other PW members provided a Mexican food feast that was greatly enjoyed by all and will honor the staff again in the fall with another fun luncheon. Thank you, ladies, for helping us express PW appreciation for the wonderful staff of our church!

Also, the Presbyterian Women of First Presbyterian Church held their annual May Coffee honoring Past Presidents on Wednesday, May 4, 2016 at the beautiful home of Amy Robinson. Many ladies of the church attended the event which was full of fun and fellowship on a perfect spring day. The donations collected at the coffee were divided evenly between the FPC Children's Center Scholarship Fund and the Christian

Dental Clinic. PW extends a heartfelt thank you to the May Coffee Chairmen Jane Buchek, Mills Buchek and Laura Page as well as to their dedicated committee for a lovely event. We also are deeply grateful to Amy Robinson for her gracious hospitality and to our valet parkers, Bill Chandler, Bill Dennis and Jean Mauze.

As another year for Presbyterian Women comes to a close, we reflect on the outstanding leadership of President Ann Dennis and the hard work of so many PW members. We achieved much in terms of service to the church, the community and beyond and also experienced the fulfillment and joy of working together in friendship for the benefit of others. Now, we look forward to a new year of service in 2016-2017 and the opportunity to continue celebrating the many blessings of Christ's love.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." Matthew 5:16





# KEYS DIRECTOR JOE MOORE TO BEGIN AT FPC JUNE 1

Joseph T. Moore will be Director of KEYS Older Adult Ministry starting June 1. Joe is coming from Essex Alliance Church in Essex Junction, Vermont. With 39 years in full time ministry (28 in Youth Ministry and 11 in Care Ministry) he has felt for the last year or so that he was being lead to find a new way to serve.

Joe says that the relational aspect of ministry is what he enjoys most and he is delighted to bring his experience and focus to directing the Older Adult Ministry at FPC San Antonio. Joe and his wife Sandy (see top left) have two daughters and two grandchildren who live in Texas.

Joe, Sandy and their younger daughter visited us during the week of Project 240 and attended both Traditional and Contemporary Services that Sunday. When asked about the difference in Vermont and Texas summers,

Joe smiled as he related helping his son-in-law put up a fence in Austin during the heat of summer. "We're looking forward to the year-round weather in South Texas."

In 2010, Joe completed his Doctor of Ministry in Congregational and Family Care from Bethel Seminary, St. Paul, MN. His Bachelor of Arts in Biblical Studies is from Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, VA and his Master of Divinity is from Seminary of the East, Dresher, PA.

Well aware, personally, of the desire and need for continued growth and social interaction, Joe understands what the mission of KEYS has been—to keep everyone young in spirit. He is eager to bring himself fully to this program of Christian fellowship, service, fun and joy.

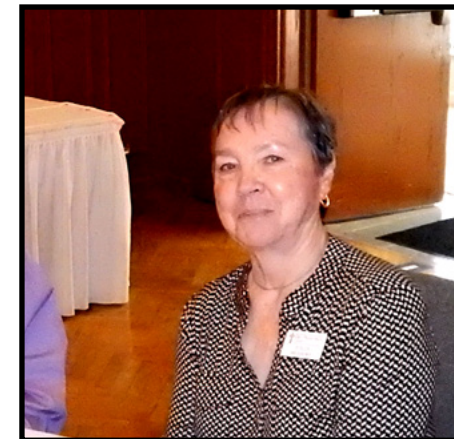
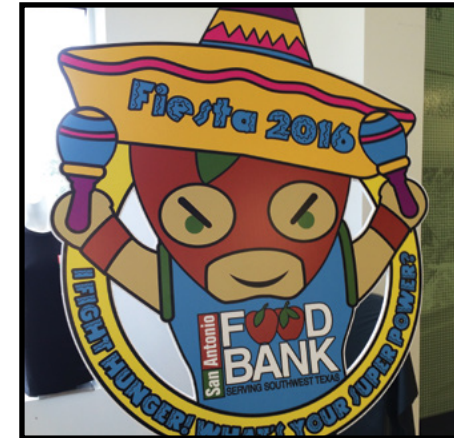
## MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR JUNE

**JUNE 3 9:45 AM FITNESS**

**JUNE 17 11:30 AM BIRTHDAY EVENT AT SPAGHETTI WAREHOUSE**

**JUNE 10 9:45 AM FITNESS  
11:00 AM BRIDGE AND MAH JONGG**

**JUNE 24 9:45 AM FITNESS  
11:00 AM BRIDGE AND MAH JONGGAM**

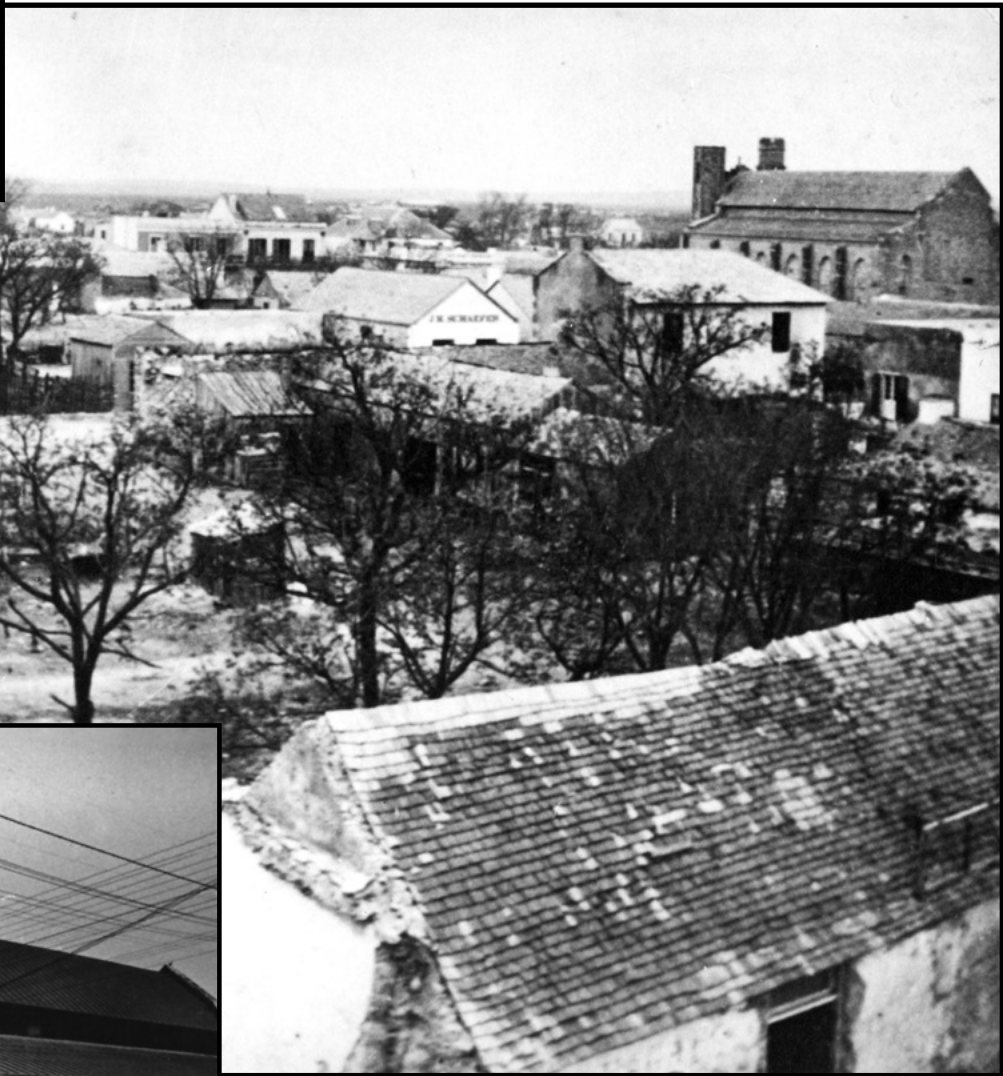




# THE HISTORY CORNER | BY BILL COGBURN | THE CHURCH ON FLORES STREET



(Left Photo) c. 1877. View from bell tower of San Fernando Cathedral. Acequia St. (later Main), in middle of photo running north/south. Note the open acequia on the west side of street. First Pres is in the distance on left. Chas. Noyles Saddlery in center. Wolfson's Dry Goods and clothing is on right fronting on Main Plaza.



(Above photo) c. 1872. A snow day in San Antonio. Looking northwest from Plaza House on Main Plaza. First Pres is on upper right. Roof at lower right is J. Henry Schaefer Groceries & Provisions.



(Left photo) c. 1870. First Pres at Flores & Rivas (later Houston St.).

If you have occasion to visit Frost Bank Tower on Houston Street at N. Flores, before you approach the doors, stop and turn around. You'll be looking straight at a statue of banker Thomas Clairborne Frost (1833 – 1902). Where the statue stands is very near the location of the altar of the former First Presbyterian Church which stood on this site fronting on N. Flores Street. About one-half block further west on Houston Street, on the north side of the walk, you'll see a high, limestone block wall which is the back side of the Frost Motor Bank.

Between the wall and the sidewalk a historic marker reads:  
“The hand-chiseled native limestone used in the walls on both ends of the Frost Motor Bank was taken from the former First Presbyterian Church located on W. Houston and N. Flores. The walls were laid in 1860 but the Gothic Revival-styled building was not dedicated until November 1879. After the congregation moved, the old structure was converted to a variety of businesses until it was dismantled in 1982. These stones were stored for reuse and the motor bank was completed in July 1989.”

Having outgrown the Old Adobe on Commerce Street, Rev. Robert Bunting and his building committee began looking for a place to build a new church. In the spring of 1859, a site was selected at the northeast corner of Rivas (now Houston) and N. Flores Streets. The Committee recommended a building at a “minimum cost of \$12,000”. This venture was quite an audacious undertaking for a congregation of only 146 members.

The architect's plans accepted in May 1859 anticipated a total cost of \$20,000. A vigorous fund raising effort netted \$8,000. Feeling that he had exhausted his resources in San Antonio, Rev. Bunting proposed a bold venture. He would make a trip through New England and make appeals for his new church on the frontier. After ten months, his famous “begging tour” raised \$6,600. The cornerstone of the new church building was laid February 29, 1860. The walls, roof, windows and doors were finished that year at a total cost of \$15,000.

Rev. Bunting presided as moderator over his last session meeting on September 25, 1861. The next month, he rode away to become a Confederate Chaplain for Terry's Texas Rangers. For the rest of the Civil War and the few years afterward, First Pres was served by itinerate ministers, if at all. It would be a decade before First Pres would have another permanent pastor.

The Civil War left San Antonio and the entire state of Texas in turmoil. The unstable and weakened economy in the city stifled any growth of the local church. During the 1870s, San Antonio began to prosper as a cattle, mercantile and military center serving the border regions and the Southwest. It also became a southern hub and supplier of cattle drives. With the coming of the Galveston, Harrisburg & San Antonio Railway in 1877, San Antonio, formerly without a viable transportation system, entered a new era of economic growth. By 1880, the population had grown to 20,000. The church at Flores and Houston Street was finally finished and dedicated on November 30, 1879.

By the 1890s, the congregation began to feel that the busy intersection at Flores and Houston Streets was no longer an appropriate place for their church. They were surrounded by taverns and saloons which had proliferated along the once quiet, respectable street said to be the prettiest street in San Antonio. The famed Buckhorn Saloon was just across Houston Street and the Saturday night patrons often had not finished their revelry by Sunday morning worship time. Church leaders received little help from the City in enforcing noise ordinances.

By 1905, the congregation felt they had no choice but to move. At a congregation meeting on June 24, 1907, approval was given for the sale of the church building on Flores Street for \$30,000.

In retrospect, one might say that the decision to build the new church in the first place was a case of unfortunate timing. While the church began its building program in 1859 with great optimism, it soon turned to despair as the city and the nation slogged through the Civil War. During those awful war years and for several years afterward, the church did not thrive but merely treaded water. But they persevered – they didn't give up. As we celebrate 170 years to the month of our church's founding, that's the important lesson we learn from this bit of church history. They kept moving forward, and we are here today because they never gave up!

Source: *First Presbyterian Church, One Hundredth Anniversary*, by Muriel Forbes; *Texas Historical Assn – Handbook of Texas*, *First Pres Archives*; photos courtesy UTSA Libraries Special Collections.



# CONFIRMATION

2015-2016

**HARRISON ANTHIS** | MENTOR: ED HOWIE



Harrison is the son of Rick and Neel Anthis. He is a student at Alamo Heights Junior School and his interests include basketball and spending time with friends and family. Harrison was looking forward to confirmation so he could strengthen his relationship with God. Harrison looks forward to being involved in the life of FPC by participating in mission trips.

**JOSIE MCGARRAUGH** | MENTOR: BECKA BYRD



Josie is the daughter of John and Anne. She is a student at Alamo Heights Junior School and enjoys softball, swimming, and volleyball. She was looking forward to confirmation so she could grow closer to God and become a member of the church. After confirmation, she plans to stay involved in the life of the church by participating in mission trips and volunteering in the nursery area.

**ANDREW FLESHER** | MENTOR: COLBY PRICHARD



Andrew is the son of Clare and Josie Flesher. He attends St. Mary's Hall and his hobbies include football, lacrosse, and reading. Andrew was looking forward to confirmation so he could learn more about the church and grow closer to God.

**JOSHUA SIMPSON** | MENTOR: KATIE FARRIMOND



Joshua, son of Scott and Suzie, is a student at Bradley Middle School. His hobbies include biking, basketball, and video games. Joshua was excited to understand God in a deeper way through confirmation. He plans to stay active at FPC through mission trips and youth group.

**FAITH BULEN** | MENTOR: LINDSAY SELL



Faith, daughter of Stacy and Bekah, attends Briscoe Middle School and enjoys singing and playing the piano. Faith looked forward to confirmation so she could grow closer to God. She plans to remain active in the life of the church by continuing to sing in the Sanctuary Choir.

**ANNIE MEADOWS** | MENTOR: HOLLY YOUNGQUIST



Annie is the daughter of Mike and Ellen Meadows. She attends Lopez Middle school and enjoys turtles, reading, and music. Annie looks forward to being involved at FPC, through mission trips, helping at VBS, and attending worship and small groups.

**JAMES JOHNSON** | MENTOR: LOUIS ZBINDEN



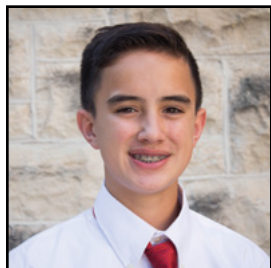
James, son of Laura Johnson, is a student at the San Antonio Academy. He enjoys golf, reading, basketball, video games, and tennis. James wanted to join confirmation because he loves his church and God. He will continue to be active at FPC by volunteering as an usher.

**SAMUEL STORM** | MENTOR: DAVID YOUNGQUIST



Samuel is the son of Richard and Kim. He is a student at Alamo Heights Junior School and enjoys Boy Scouts, lacrosse, hunting, and fishing. Samuel joined confirmation to grow in his faith and looks forward to participating in the life of FPC through Sunday school and worship.

**TRAVIS BYRD** | MENTOR: BOB ESQUENAZI



Travis, son of Bobby and Becka Byrd, is a student at Tex Hill Middle School. His hobbies include reading, basketball, and tennis. Travis is excited to be confirmed so that he can become a member of the church and have a voice in the decisions made at FPC.

**HARRISON NORTINGTON** | MENTOR: DAVID YOUNGQUIST



Harrison is the son of Tom and Kristan and attends the San Antonio Academy. He enjoys all sports, fishing, and golf. Harrison looked forward to confirmation so he could learn more about God and the church.

**JOSEPHINE MAUZE** | MENTOR: TOM BENKE



Josephine, daughter of George and Rhae Chell, is currently a student at Alamo Heights Junior School. Her hobbies include music, and teaching and helping others. Josephine plans to continue her involvement at FPC through mission trips and volunteering with Children's Ministry.

**LUCY WILLIAMSON** | MENTOR: CORY STEPHENS



Lucy is the daughter of Reagan Williamson and Hillary Conrey. She is a student at Alamo Heights Junior School, and her hobbies include traveling and music. Lucy plans to continue her involvement at FPC through mission trips, attending worship, and assisting in Children's Ministry.



# A LITTLE HELP FOR THE HEARING IMPAIRED



Most of our congregation is unaware of the supplemental hearing devices that are available for anyone who may need a little extra boost of sound in the Sanctuary here at First Pres.

The devices consist of a battery-operated receiver that picks up the wireless transmission of any microphone that is being used during a service or event. Based on the need of the user, they are able to adjust the volume to the earpiece that is provided. These are recent upgrades that are smaller and offer a much longer run time than our previous devices.

In response to members' with hearing aids that utilize T-coil technology, Morgan Ford, our Media Coordinator, also purchased ten hearing loops. With this new technology, the T-coil picks up the sound and amplifies the transmitted sound directly into the ear. This is an inconspicuous way for our guests and members to easily utilize the hearing devices they use on a daily basis.

There are twenty-four hearing assisted devices available for check out in the Narthex. Our goal is to help our members and guests get the most out of our services and events here at First Pres. We are always open to any suggestions in how to best meet the needs of our congregation.

Jeff Carawan  
Facility Maintenance Manager



**BEYOND THE STAINED GLASS**  
BY BECKY PRICHARD, DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



People often joke that I was “born in the pew” because both of my parents were Presbyterian pastors at the time I was born. I did not have a chance of escaping the typical church childhood filled with Sunday school, children’s choir, Vacation Bible School and many hours waiting for my parents to finish shaking hands at the back door of the Sanctuary. As a “preacher’s kid” or “PK,” I had many opportunities to see the good and the not so good things that happen in the church world. Getting a front row seat at the behind-the-scenes version of church allowed me to realize at an early age that people are broken, even pastors and church leaders.

This realization ultimately shaped my understanding of the gospel of grace. I always enjoyed my experiences at church as a child and I learned all of the Bible stories just like I was supposed to and knew all of the words to “Jesus Loves Me.” But it was not those experiences that solidified my faith in God. It was the interactions I had with people in the church, the broken and sinful people just like me. Watching them make mistakes and ask for forgiveness, watching them walk alongside one another through the tough times and seeing them love me no matter what I did, right or wrong.

It was these relationships that continued to impact my faith and carry me through high school and college. It was through these broken “church people” that I was reminded of the unconditional love of Christ and the

grace that is so undeserved. I think that without these relationships, I would have gone off to college and looked back at my time in the church as a nice memory of fairy tale stories and cute rhyming songs. But instead, I saw the reality of living in a sinful world and how even the most religious and godly people struggled to remain faithful in the midst of sin and darkness. This was real to me. I was able to grab hold of Christ in my personal struggles because of people being honest with me about their own struggles. For me, church truly was a place for all the messed up and hurting people. It was a place to find comfort and strength. It was a place to find peace and hope. It was a place to walk the journey together, linking arms with those beside me to hold one another up.

Now that I myself have been through seminary and entered into a life of vocational ministry, I recognize the importance of living out the truth of grace and being the church for one another. That does not mean it is all good all the time, but it does mean that we can show the love of Jesus to each other when we feel the most unlovable. This means actually making Jesus visible to those around us in a real and authentic way. If we can be honest with our children and youth, if we can be honest with one another, we can encourage and foster a “sticky faith” that goes beyond knowing truth in our heads to truly believing it in our hearts. This type of faith in Christ will far outlast the sweet memories of childhood and stick with us throughout our entire lives as we help to spread light in the darkness.

**FINANCIAL SUMMARY | APRIL 2016**

OPERATING FUND BUDGET	ACTUAL YTD	BUDGET YTD	OVER/(UNDER)
TOTAL REVENUES	1,137,031	1,343,029	(205,997)
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES	963,216	1,067,947	(104,732)
TOTAL BENEVOLENCES FUND TFR FROM	218,883	227,250	(8,367)
OPERATING RESERVE	0	0	0
NET INCOME/LOSS	(45,067)	47,831	(92,899)

The operating budget deficit for April primarily reflects a growing shortfall in monthly revenues compared to budget. Because of several staff vacancies, actual expenses through April are also less than budgeted. However, overall expenses will increase as the positions are filled. Thus, your continued support remains essential to fulfill the ongoing work of this part of God’s church.

**MOMENTS TO HOLD CLOSE | MAKE THE PLAY | BY MANNY RODRIGUEZ**



I love watching baseball. I watched a game the other day and at a crucial juncture the short stop committed back to back errors loading the bases. The manager called time and ran on the field, everyone was expecting him to discuss strategy with the pitcher, but instead he conversed with the short stop. Play resumed, although frustrated with the situation the pitcher got the team out of the inning. Heading into the ninth, a batter hit a line drive which was destined to win the game but the same short stop that had blundered so poorly just an inning before made the play of his life with a diving catch saving the game. The media interviewed the manager after the game asking what he had told the short stop after the errors. He said, “I told him listen, I know you are better than that, and you do too. So I want you to forget about it, that’s over. I want you to concentrate on the next play and being your best.” Wow, isn’t that the type of boss you want? Isn’t that the type of Father we have? We sin, we fail, and we are embarrassed and angry at ourselves over it. And how does our Father respond when we go to Him, he says I know you are better than that, and you do too. Forget it, you are forgiven and that sin has been wiped clean. I want you to go forward, sin no more and be the best you can be. Brothers and sisters, I encourage you to make the next play in your lives, the very best.









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