

DECEMBER 2019

Join AMO  
in bringing  
Christian  
Education  
to Latin  
America.

*[See article page 6-7]*

A fun and  
fufilling fall  
for **Children's  
Ministry.**

*[See articles pages 10-11]*

# Christmas at First

**Christian  
Dental Clinic**  
honors grad-  
uates at FPC.

*[See article pages 8-9]*

We welcome  
**Emmanuel, God with Us,**  
this Christmas season.

*[See Pastor's article pages 2-3 & feature article pages 12-13]*

# O Come, O Come Emmanuel



Rev. Dr. Bob Fuller  
Senior Pastor

The Great Hymn of the church, “O Come, O Come Emmanuel,” is a prayer of anticipation. It is a prayer we sing asking God to fulfill the promise He made to the prophet Isaiah in the Old Testament.

*<sup>14</sup> Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. (Isaiah 7:14. I know, traditional spellings vary)*

In the telling of the Christmas story, the Apostle Matthew tells us that the name “Immanuel” means “God with us.”

This hymn, and the whole celebration of Advent underscores one of our key beliefs about God, that the real God is not a God who keeps His distance—but who gets involved—in our lives, in the lives of people around us, and in the events of human and even natural history.

This is not simply the foundation of Christianity. This conviction was the core and beating heart of Israel's faith. One of the most consistent promises God made to his people was that He would be “with” them. Not that he would be “with them” in the sense that he would go along with everything they did or wanted to do; rather, that He would always be present, attentive and, most importantly, involved in their lives.

To encourage the people, God gave physical signs as proof of His promise and supernatural presence. One of those signs was the Temple. When the people of Israel were finally home and settled in the promised

land, God ordered King Solomon, the Son of David, to build a permanent temple. And God told Solomon:

*<sup>12</sup> “Concerning this house that you are building, ... I will dwell among the children of Israel and will not forsake my people Israel.” (1 Kings 6:12a,13)*

To paraphrase, God was saying, “I will occupy this temple and I will live with you.” The temple was a reminder that God was real, that He loved them and was involved in their lives.

When the people were conquered and deported to a foreign land, God sent his word through His prophets. They reminded the people that God was still real, that He still loved them, and that He was still involved in their lives.

In time, the Lord allowed the people to go home. But the people wondered, “Is God still with us?” Then, one evening an Angel came to a young girl named Mary and said,

*...behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David,<sup>33</sup> and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.” (Luke 1:31-33)*

This is “Immanuel” (God with us).

No matter how bad things got, God was still *with* Israel.

We celebrate Advent, and the Coming of Christ, because we believe that



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God is still with His people. It's not just the hope of Israel, It's our hope too. And people need to know.

Nowadays, there are a lot of people asking the same questions as the Israelites: "Is God still with us? Does He care? Can He make a difference in our lives?"

Jesus Christ was born, lived, and gave his own life to prove that God is with us: that God is real, that God cares, and that God has the power to make a difference in our lives. Additionally, Christ appointed his people, the church, to be the physical sign that "God is still with us." **As the Body of Christ, our job is to be the hands and feet, the eyes and ears, the arms and back, and heart of Christ in the world.** If we want people to believe that God cares about them, that God is involved in their lives, that God is with them, they need to see that God's people are with them.

Just as God got personally involved, we must be a sign of God's presence in the world by getting involved in their lives; the lives of our sisters, our brothers, and our neighbors. They need to hear His hope! We have to show them that we do not take their lives, or their struggles, or their problems for granted.

How are we showing people that God is alive, that He is in His Temple, that He is on His throne and that He is still with us?

**SOLI DEO GLORIA,  
- REV. DR. BOB FULLER**

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## Christmas at First

### Sunday, Dec. 1

Advent Festival, 3:00 - 5:00 PM,  
Westminster Hall

### Thursday, Dec. 5

Midday Noels - Keyboard Rings and  
Violin Sings, 12:10 PM, Sanctuary

### Saturday, Dec. 7

Children's Christmas Pageant  
Rehearsal, 9:00 - 11:00 AM

### Sunday, Dec. 8

Children's Christmas Pageant, 11:00  
AM (Combined Service - no 11:02)

### Thursday, Dec. 12

Midday Noels - Shimmering Sounds  
& Sparkling Singers, 12:10 PM,  
Sanctuary

### Thursday, Dec. 19

Midday Noels - I'll Have a Blue,  
Bluegrass Christmas, 12:10 PM,  
Sanctuary

### Tuesday, Dec. 24

Christmas Eve Services: 3:00 PM,  
5:00 PM, 7:00 PM, 9:00 PM, & 11:00  
PM.

More information on activities this  
month on pages 12-13.

## Rock & Roll Marathon Road Closures

**Dates:** Saturday, December 7 and  
Sunday, December 8

**Time:** 6:00 AM - 3:30 PM

**Location:** Downtown, various roads  
each day

Due to the Rock & Roll Marathon  
on this weekend there will be several  
roads closed in the area, including  
parts of Broadway. Please plan to  
approach and leave the church from  
Highway 281 to avoid these closures.  
For more information visit <https://bit.ly/2qpQQUW>.

## Loaves and Fishes

**Date:** Saturday, December 21

**Time:** 11:00 AM - 2:00 PM

**Location:** Student Center  
Downstairs

Our next opportunity to serve  
our under-resourced neighbors is  
Saturday, December 21. Setup begins  
at 8:30 AM, doors open for guests at  
10:30 AM, and serving begins at 11:00  
AM. All are welcome. Please contact  
Lindsay Selli ([lindsays@fpcsat.org](mailto:lindsays@fpcsat.org))  
with questions or to volunteer.

## Living Waters Mexico Trip

**Dates:** February 15 - 22

**Location:** Leona Vicario, Mexico

Help support healthy communities  
in the Yucatan, Mexico, by joining the  
FPC Living Waters Project Mission  
Trips this Spring. Please contact  
Lindsay Selli ([lindsays@fpcsat.org](mailto:lindsays@fpcsat.org))  
with questions or to register for the  
trip. (For more info see ad page 11.)

## Literature Circle

**Dates:** Tuesday, December 10

**Time:** 1:00 PM

**Location:** McCullough Room

If laughter is the best medicine,  
the book, *"The Dog That Wouldn't  
Be,"* by Farley Mowatt should be  
prescribed frequently. Set in the  
Canadian prairie in the 1920-1930  
Depression era, it tells the story of  
Farley's boyhood best friend, Mutt,  
the dog. The pedigree was uncertain,  
madness indisputable. Mutt could  
climb trees & ladders, displayed  
hunting skills near genius, and wore  
goggles riding as the passenger in an  
open car!

The FPC Literature Circle will  
meet Tuesday, December 10, at 1 PM  
in the McCullough Room when the  
Rev. Scott Simpson will review this  
amusing tale. It's all about "a boy and  
his dog." Men and women, church  
members and non-members are  
invited to attend.

## KEYS Upcoming

**Wednesday, Dec. 4**

Elf Louise Wrapping, 10:00 AM -  
12:00 PM, Lunch on your own at  
Acadiana Cafe

**Friday, Dec. 6**

KEYS Christmas Party, 10:30 AM,  
featuring Seguin High School Choir,  
Lunch \$10

**Sunday, Dec. 8**

Dicken's "A Christmas Carol" at  
Woodlawn Theater, Show starts 3:00  
PM, Tickets \$24

**Friday, Jan. 10**

KEYS Spring Kick-off with music by  
Little Beverly and the Shades

Make your reservations through  
Alice at the reception desk, (210)  
226-0215 or [alicem@fpcsat.org](mailto:alicem@fpcsat.org). More  
information on pages 20-21.

## Man Night: Fall Edition

**Date:** Sunday, December 8

**Time:** 4:00 - 7:00 PM

**Location:** Mickler Home

Join us for a manly night of food,  
fellowship, and the spiritual fight  
at the home of Bobby Mickler (121  
Laburnum Dr, 78209.) All ages of men  
are welcome! Visit [fpcsanantonio.org/men](http://fpcsanantonio.org/men)  
for more information.

Contact: Bobby Mickler, ([bobby.mickler@gmail.com](mailto:bobby.mickler@gmail.com)), Trebes Sasser,  
([tsasser@rpitx.com](mailto:tsasser@rpitx.com)), Eric Schluter  
([schluter.eric@gmail.com](mailto:schluter.eric@gmail.com)), or John  
Brooks ([jhb Brooks1979@gmail.com](mailto:jhb Brooks1979@gmail.com)).

## Church Offices Closed

**Dates:** Wednesday, Dec. 25 -  
Wednesday, Jan. 1

**Time:** All day

Please note that the church will  
be closed Wednesday, December  
25 through Wednesday, January 1,  
in observance of Christmas and  
New Year's. The offices will resume  
a regular schedule on Thursday,  
January 2, 2020.



# Youth Ministry

## Jr. High Guys

### Sunday Shenanigans: Christmas Edition

**Date:** Sunday, December 15

**Time:** 4:00 - 5:30 PM

**Location:** Mickler's House

Calling all guys from the grades of 6-8! Sunday Shenanigans is coming your way with the Christmas Edition! This a time before your week begins to unwind, laugh, and hang with the boys. Includes Christmas themed games, snacks (not dinner), a short lesson, and time for discussion/prayer. For more info, contact Mac Taylor ([mccalebt@fpcsat.org](mailto:mccalebt@fpcsat.org))

## Youth Upcoming

**Friday, Dec. 6 | 7:00 PM**

High School Spurs Game | \$25

**Sunday, Dec. 8 | 6:00 - 8:00 PM**

Youth Christmas Party

**Thursday, Jan. 16, 2020 | 6:00 PM**

Youth Rampage Game | \$25

**March 7-11, 2020**

High School Big Bend Camping Trip

Make your ticket reservations through Mac Taylor at [mccalebt@fpcsat.org](mailto:mccalebt@fpcsat.org). More information coming soon for spring 2020.

Check us out at [Facebook.com/FPCSAyouth](https://www.facebook.com/FPCSAyouth). For more info contact Emily Yergler at [emilly@fpcsat.org](mailto:emilly@fpcsat.org).

## Team World Vision

### Run the Alamo 2020

**Marathon/Half Marathon Date:**

Sunday, March 8, 2020

Looking for a way to build community while helping transform communities around the world? We're building our team for the 2020 Run the Alamo Half and Full Marathon, and we want YOU to join us! All shapes, sizes, ages, abilities, paces welcome (80% of the team is completely new to this). For more info, contact Christy Manacapilli at [fpcteamwv@gmail.com](mailto:fpcteamwv@gmail.com).

## One Sunday Service Notice

**Sunday, December 29 | 10:00 AM | Sanctuary**

A special Sunday schedule, with only one Traditional service at 10:00 AM, will take place the Sunday after Christmas.

A poster for the 'Alternative Gift Market'. At the top, a green ribbon banner contains the title 'Alternative Gift Market' in a dark, serif font. Below the banner, the background is a light, textured surface with green star-shaped cutouts on the left and right sides. The text is centered and reads: 'Do you want to give Christmas gifts that will make a difference in San Antonio and the world?' followed by 'Purchase a gift that will help impact the people and the work of several of our Local and Global missions partners.' Then, 'We will have a table with shopping lists in the Mauze Lobby on December 1, 8, 15, & 22. You can pick up a shopping list or print one from the church website and submit it along with a check or cash to Lindsay Selli in the church office.' Next, 'New this year, you may also fill out your shopping list online and pay with a credit or debit card.' Then, 'For more information, please contact Lindsay Selli ([lindsays@fpcsat.org](mailto:lindsays@fpcsat.org)).' At the bottom, it says 'Visit [www.fpcsanantonio.org/agm](http://www.fpcsanantonio.org/agm)'. At the very bottom, a pair of hands is shown holding a small, square gift wrapped in a blue and white patterned paper with a blue ribbon bow. The gift's design features a map of the world.

**Alternative Gift Market**

Do you want to give Christmas gifts that will make a difference in San Antonio and the world?

Purchase a gift that will help impact the people and the work of several of our Local and Global missions partners.

We will have a table with shopping lists in the Mauze Lobby on December 1, 8, 15, & 22. You can pick up a shopping list or print one from the church website and submit it along with a check or cash to Lindsay Selli in the church office.

New this year, you may also fill out your shopping list online and pay with a credit or debit card.

For more information, please contact Lindsay Selli ([lindsays@fpcsat.org](mailto:lindsays@fpcsat.org)).

Visit [www.fpcsanantonio.org/agm](http://www.fpcsanantonio.org/agm)



LOVING  
THE WORLD

# AMO

Promotes Christian Character & Principles Throughout Latin America



**T**he AMO seminar taught me how to view education from a Christian point-of-view. Growing up, I used to view my schooling as a primarily secular topic; looking at history, the arts, or even literature as all “worldly.” God did not have a role in these spheres of humanity, and that was what I was taught. On the flip side of my life, I had my spiritual relationship with the Lord. Reading the Bible allowed me to see from the lens of how God’s involvement with creation brought about his masterful plan. AMO has allowed me to mesh my education, together with my relationship with the Lord; allowing me see the role of God being played out in history, the arts, literature, and education as a whole.

JACOB GRAY

## What is AMO?

The AMO program is an approach to education that is rooted in Biblical principles and teachings. Students in AMO learn the basis of Christian character, while growing in their imagination and understanding of God's design for creation (Youmans, 2016). In addition to learning about Christian character, other Christian principles taught include: "The Christian principle of self-government...God's principle of individuality...[and]...the principle of property and stewardship" (Youmans, 2016, p. 3-4). Altogether, the AMO curriculum equips children to understand their importance in God's kingdom; helping to foster individual growth and development, so that they may ultimately love God and the world around them (Youmans, 2016).

## Applications for AMO

On a practical level, the AMO program can be implemented in afterschool programs, Sunday School classes, or even in classrooms. The program has different sets of curriculum that can be purchased in the subject areas of classic literature, Christian history, and the arts; while additionally offering other interactive, Christian enrichment programs. The target age range is for students in elementary school. However, programs can be modified to fit older age groups if one desires. Recently, AMO has been implemented in Latin America and Mexico by our Global Ministry Partners (Youmans, 2016).

AMO equips individuals to serve both on a local and global scale by providing the framework to teach a Christian educational curriculum to both children and adults. In addition, the AMO program provides scripture and spiritual principles that one can abide in and grow from on a personal level, and



furthermore share with other Christian brothers and sisters. Finally, AMO has taught me how to approach students and people altogether when sharing my faith. Learning the important skills of asking questions and expressing concerns in a gentle manner, rather than making accusatory statements, can universally equip Christians for being the salt and light of the world.

## How to Get Involved

The best way to get involved with AMO is to contact our global ministry partners Chris and Francelia McReynolds or Cristina Inchaustegui. These ministry partners work throughout Mexico and Latin America to train AMO teachers and trainers, and to equip families and the local Church to share the Gospel and transform their communities.

## To contact our partners:

Chris and Francelia McReynolds:  
<https://amomexico.org/> or  
email [mexico@amoprogram.com](mailto:mexico@amoprogram.com)

Cristina Inchaustegui:  
<http://www.amoprogram.com> or  
email [rd2@amoprogram.com](mailto:rd2@amoprogram.com)



# CHRISTIAN DENTAL CLINIC HONORS GRADUATES

**G**raduation ceremonies were held in Covenant Hall on November 2 for sixteen excited young women, as they received their diplomas for completing the San Antonio Christian Dental Clinic's program that prepared them to become dental assistants. More than 130 guests, from babies in strollers to proud grandparents attended the event.

The ministry was founded in 1979 by members of First Presbyterian Church and has served our community for 30 years. The clinic is now located on the Haven for Hope campus, and has grown from one chair

to sixteen modern and well-equipped stations.

The clinic's primary program is aimed at restoration of body and spirit through charitable dental care. A person is eligible for treatment at 100% of federal poverty thresholds. The services are provided by volunteer and community partnerships and this clinic, only in San Antonio, provides no cost to low-income and homeless adults.

In addition, the clinic provides a Dental Assistant training program to disadvantaged young adults to learn professional skills to move from below-subsistence





.....  
**The Christian  
 Dental Clinic  
 was founded  
 in 1979 by First  
 Presbyterian  
 Church and  
 has served our  
 community for 30  
 years!**

to self-sufficiency. The program is fully underwritten and teaches the students how to work in dental clinics, both in classroom settings as well as clinical training held on-site at the clinic. Graduates of this program become Registered Dental Assistants who are eligible to be licensed by the state of Texas. Once they graduate and pass the licensing exam, they typically are employed at a salary of approximately \$40,000 annually.

These graduates are often the first in their family to complete an educational training program.

Congratulations to the Class of 2019 and looking forward to a new class in 2020!



## Fall Fellowship for Children's Ministry



**O**n Oct 19th, Children and their Families gathered for a fun day trip out in Hondo, Texas to the South Texas Cornmaze! Aside from the beautiful weather that this time of year brings, the sweet fellowship with other believers was a real treat. In the book of Philemon, we are reminded that as we gather

together, we encourage one another, and because we walk in the love of our Lord Jesus, fellowship expands our growth in the faith we share. It's my prayer that the ministry to the children and their families grow, not only in numbers but in the nurturing of Christ's love. May it be said of those who come out of FPC that the light of Christ is seen in our

living wherever we go. It's my absolute honor to serve the families and the children of FPC.

### **Philemon 1:6**

*"and I pray that the fellowship of your faith may become effective through the knowledge of every good thing which is in you for Christ's sake."*



## The Mission of Christmas

**I**n the Christmas story, Luke tells us that the Lord came to the world in humble circumstances. There was no room for our Savior in the inn. Yet a host of heaven's angels proclaimed the Holy Child, the King of Kings, was among men, and the angels couldn't help but sing about how favored we as a human race were to have God almighty in the flesh. His mission was clear, to make way for mankind to once again have fellowship with God, and despite his meager beginnings, He would conquer death to do just that. What a tremendous God we serve!

On November 17, the children of FPC had "Christmas Wrap Sunday," where they gathered in their Christmas PJ's and wrapped fuzzy socks for local nursing home residents





at Retama Manor Nursing Home, here in downtown SA. Over 100 socks were wrapped and will be distributed as gifts for the holiday. The children also gathered around the piano to practice the upcoming pageant song, followed by the Christmas story from Luke chapter 2, read aloud. We finished this special time of worship by praying over the Operation Christmas Child boxes that were to go to Samaritan's Purse for children around the world. We topped off our Sunday morning with bacon and pancakes and enjoyed our fellowship together. Needless to say, the time was well spent as a beautiful picture of the mission of Christmas was being lived out!

Our thanks goes out to countless parents and volunteers who helped make this morning go so well. Thanks to our Youth Ministry for lending us hot plates for our pancakes, to the men outside for grilling fantastic bacon, and to all teachers who gave their time with the children and helped them wrap. Also, thanks to the ladies in the kitchen for cooking, to Meagan Martin and Kathy Jamison for working with the

Children's Choir, and to the wonderful Children's Committee who showed up and participated with a smile. There were many more involved, and I personally would like to say that events like this wouldn't happen without you. You are all valued and loved!

Let the mission of Christmas be what we continue to live out every day.

**Rozlyn Miller**  
- Ministry Director  
to Children and their  
Families



**Living Waters for the World**

**Yucatan, Mexico Mission Trip**  
February 15-22, 2020

For information or to apply contact [lindsays@fpcsat.org](mailto:lindsays@fpcsat.org)  
or visit [fpcsanantonio.org/mission-trips](http://fpcsanantonio.org/mission-trips)





# Christmas at First

## Advent Festival

**A CHURCH-WIDE EVENT TO WORSHIP  
THE BIRTH OF OUR LORD & SAVIOR**

**DECEMBER 1 | 3:00 - 5:00 PM | WESTMINSTER HALL**

Come join your church family in celebrating the start of Advent; a time for reflection and to celebrate all that the Lord has done for you this year. And... its the perfect time to come act like a KID! Whether you are 5 or 95, come treasure the innocence of a child and see this Spirit-filled event through the eyes of children. You won't leave empty-handed or empty in Spirit! Come be filled with Joy!

Advent is also the season to bless others. We invite you to donate items for our neighbors in the KRL. Please go to the KRL's Wishlist on Amazon (<http://bit.ly/KRLList>).

## Christmas Pageant

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8 | 11:00 AM**

A joyous celebration of Christ's birth during our sanctuary service, where kids of all ages participate as sheep, angels, shepherds, Magi and the Holy Family! There will be a mandatory dress rehearsal on December 7 in the Main Sanctuary from 9:00 - 11:00 AM. A light snack will be provided.

On Sunday, December 8, the Pageant performance will start promptly in 11:00 AM Traditional Worship Service.

*\*\*Due to the Rock & Roll Marathon races on both Saturday & Sunday of this weekend there will be several roads closed in the area, including parts of Broadway. Please plan to approach and leave the church from Highway 281 to avoid these closures.*

## Alternative Gift Market

**DECEMBER 1 - 24 | SUNDAYS IN MAUZE LOBBY AND ONLINE**

Purchase a gift that will make a difference to others in need in San Antonio and the world through our Local and Global Mission partners. For more info, visit our table on Sundays mornings, or go to [www.fpcsanantonio.org/agm](http://www.fpcsanantonio.org/agm).



# Midday Noels

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5, 12, 19**

We offer our holiday "gift to the city" through a variety of free, creative musical offerings. Each of these 30-40 minute concerts is followed by your choice of either "Grab and Go" lunch (\$4) or full hot lunch (\$10).

## KEYBOARD RINGS AND VIOLIN SINGS

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5 | 12:10 PM**

Our highly skilled organist, Dr. Jae Ha, is joined by Andrew Small, violin soloist and founder of the Monte Vista Strings and Jazz, to present a delightful offering of Christmas favorites. Jae's musical presentations are always a highlight of our series and not to be missed!

## SHIMMERING SOUNDS AND SPARKLING SINGING

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12 | 12:10 PM**

Highly skilled singers, including our Professional Section Leaders, form a small women's ensemble to present music of the season that will both inspire and entertain.

## I'LL HAVE A BLUE, BLUEGRASS CHRISTMAS

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19 | 12:10 PM**

We are pleased to welcome for their first appearance at Midday Noels the bluegrass ensemble, Steel Betty Band, from Austin, Texas. Their lively concert will include flavors of bluegrass, folk, blues, Tex-Mex and classic country, mixed with a pinch of Christmas to end our Midday Noels series!

# Christmas Eve

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24**

Celebrate the birth of our Savior with family and friends at any of our five services!

**3:00 PM** - Communion Service

**5:00 PM** - Family Service

**7:00, 9:00, 11:00 PM** - Candlelight Services

## Order your **POINSETTIAS** for Christmas

Each year during the Advent season the congregation has an opportunity to remember a loved one, honor an individual or recognize an occasion by purchasing a poinsettia to be placed in the Chancel by the Sanctuary Flower Committee. If you would like to participate, the cost is \$15 to reserve a plant for one individual or one couple. Proceeds have enabled the Sanctuary Flower Committee to make many special gifts to beautify the church over the years. Your check should be made payable to the Sanctuary Flower Committee. Mail to First Presbyterian Church, c/o Sanctuary Flower Committee, 404 North Alamo, San Antonio, 78205-1918, or placed in the Sanctuary Flower mailbox in the workroom.

**Requests received later than Sunday, December 15, 2019  
will miss the insert printing deadline**

**PLEASE RESERVE ONLY ONE PLANT  
PER INDIVIDUAL OR COUPLE**

In honor of \_\_\_\_\_

OR

In memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Given by \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_







# CARE Cluster Corner

## In An Instant

**C**are Cluster small groups are formed to provide a thoughtful and loving presence in our members,' visitors' and neighbors' lives. They will provide ongoing intergenerational connection, congregational care, and support to families and individuals in a personal and compassionate way. They provide the opportunity to meet regularly and create a caring and welcoming atmosphere where people care for one another, experience the power of the Gospel, and are transformed through discipleship.

We see the members of the group creating a sense of belonging and fellowship so that everyone feels welcomed home and, on occasion, will include large and small group fellowship times. The vision also includes improving communication about needs of members and most important, improving care in the congregation. This model will also help maintain updated status and information through expedient communication to our congregation. We are caring for our congregation together, connecting them together, and building a caring culture together with Christ in the center of it all. In effect, we are living out our mission statement; to Love Christ, Love One Another, and Love The City.

We recently became the recipient of that care unexpectedly when my sister was involved in a serious accident with an 18-wheeler outside of Houston on her way home to Alabama. When I received that phone call, life as we knew it changed in an instant. She was in ICU for days, later transferred to a room, and eventually discharged with multiple injuries. There was no way she could travel home, so naturally we brought her back from Houston to our home in New Braunfels. Movement for her was extremely limited with all her injuries, so I instantly became her caregiver.

With her limitations, I was providing for almost all of her needs. She is/was a great patient. Her injuries were serious but all will eventually heal, and we were just overjoyed that she had survived the serious accident. Since she was so limited I was





at home with her every day. Because of that, in the early weeks it never occurred to me to reach out to my small group Care Cluster. However, almost immediately upon our return, they reached out to me. They called and began to bring food so that I would not have to prepare meals, offered to sit with her when I needed to leave the house, and offered to drive her to the doctor and/or physical therapy. All the while praying for her healing and for Dale and me as we cared for her needs. As it turns out, we were all recipients of their care – a real role reversal for me as I am usually the one providing care.

We are extremely blessed to have a loving, caring, compassionate, considerate, and faithful group of friends in the Gleneagles small group Care Cluster. What a joy and comfort it is to be connected to such a family of faithful shepherds and servants. If you are not connected to a small group or Care Cluster, I encourage you to contact Lisa Snow in the the office of Congregational Care at (210) 226-0215 or [lisas@fpcsat.org](mailto:lisas@fpcsat.org). We would love to connect you to one because, as I stated in the beginning, our circumstances can often change – in an instant!

**MICHELE HENDRIX**

## Welcome **New Youth Leadership!**



### **Alex Clary**

Ministry Director to Youth and their Families

Alex is from Columbia, South Carolina and is excited to serve alongside the staff to disciple students and parents at First Presbyterian beginning next month! He graduated from Columbia International University with a Bachelor's Degree in Youth Ministry, Family, and Culture, as well as a Bachelor's Degree in Biblical Studies. Alex and his wife, Miranda, have been married since January 2018 and love spending time with their two dogs, being outdoors, and cooking. Alex loves all Carolina sports teams and will watch any form of football. He is passionate about preaching, small groups, evangelism, and serving those in physical and spiritual need. His goal is to see that every student hears the gospel, responds to God's grace, begins the lifelong journey of discipleship, and goes out into the world to share the good news of forgiveness through the cross.



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## THANK YOU ALL!

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# THE Gift OF Christmas

**T**he Gift of Christmas for the 2019 holiday season is well underway. This program is FPC's partnership with House of Neighborly Service to adopt the children of a needy family for Christmas by providing gifts for these children and sharing the love of Jesus Christ with them and their families. HNS screens families from the west side neighborhood and submits the screened applications to us. Then, we match these children with FPC covenant partners, small groups, Circles, Sunday school classes or others who want to participate.

This year, HNS has given us 15 families with the names and ages of children and their gift wishes. All 15 families have been matched with FPC individuals or groups who have submitted family request forms to me!

What a joy for these children, whose parents often struggle to provide the most basic needs, to have wrapped gifts on Christmas day to open. It is often humbling to read the needs/wishes of these children and their families. Many items on their wish list are things that most of our church members take for granted...warm clothes, a blanket, a doll. The opportunity to bring a smile to a child's face is what Christmas giving is all about.

As always, the generosity of FPC covenant partners exhibits the power of the Holy Spirit that dwells in the hearts of our membership. Gift of Christmas is not only about delivering gifts to children, but also spreading and sharing the love of Jesus Christ with our neighbors by sitting down with them, praying and perhaps singing a Christmas carol or hymn. As Christians, we are called to love our neighbor and GOC is a wonderful way to connect with our brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ.

Thank you to all FPC covenant partners who have chosen to adopt some of these children this year. When we love others, we are following the example and command of our Savior, and First Presbyterian Church has always been known for answering the call of those in need. Indeed, we are a generous church.

If you would like more information about the Gift of Christmas program, or would like to make a cash donation or gift card to be added to gifts for a family with special needs, please contact me at [cassiehager39@gmail.com](mailto:cassiehager39@gmail.com) or 210-254-8558.

Blessings to all for a wonderful Christmas,

*Cassie*



**JUDY KRUGER**

President, Women of the Church

## WOMEN OF THE CHURCH FALL & HOLIDAY FUN & UPCOMING



**O**ur sixth annual “Ties That Bind” Legacy Luncheon was a glorious day to praise the Lord for His faithfulness to First Presbyterian Church. I hope that you were able to join us and also hope that you will plan to attend the Spring Luncheon on March 23.

On October 23, Nina Jordan and Lellen Lane organized a delicious lunch for our church staff. Their “First Family Reunion” theme was wonderful, and they carried it out perfectly in every detail. Thank you to all the Circles who contributed food and to everyone who helped make our FPC staff feel loved and appreciated. We were also able to honor Stacie Rodriguez during the luncheon and thank her for her years of faithful service to our church.

We will begin the Advent season on December 1 with the Advent

Festival, an annual church-wide event to worship the birth of our Lord and Savior. Food is organized by Circle Chairman Bunkie Shed and provided by members of Circle 20, while other WOC volunteers assist at the Christmas craft tables. This is an afternoon of fun for all ages, and everyone is welcome!

We will be hosting two Christmas parties again this year at Morningside: the first one on Thursday, December 5 at 3:00 p.m. at Morningside Manor Skilled Nursing; the second one on Thursday, December 12 at 3:00 p.m. at Morningside Kaubach Center (Assisted Living). Please join us as we spread cheer among the residents, enjoy entertainment from both the Friday Singers and the children of the FPC Children’s Center, hear the Christmas story told by one of our pastors, and serve delicious cookies provided by WOC Circle members. Each resident will receive Christmas

## LOVING ONE ANOTHER

cards created by the children as well as a colorful redbird craft made by our Circle 8 Mom's Group. Many thanks to Janet Wernli and Janice Wilson, our dedicated Christmas Party Chairmen, and to Sara Parish and Lilly Gretzinger for our Christmas crafts.

Cassie McMillan, Gift of Christmas Chairman, has been working with House of Neighborly Service (HNS) as they identified 15 San Antonio families in difficult circumstances. Members of FPC (individuals, groups, or families) are encouraged to "adopt" these families and share the hope of Jesus by providing them with Christmas gifts and food. A sincere thank you to all individuals and Circles who will be blessed by loving families in our city during this Christmas

season. If you would like to participate, look for the sign up table in the Mauze Lobby on Sunday mornings or email Cassie McMillan at [cassiehager39@gmail.com](mailto:cassiehager39@gmail.com).

On December 24, WOC will honor our ministers, choir, and staff by providing a delicious dinner during their busy Christmas Eve schedule. Karin Gabrielson has very generously and graciously chaired this ministry for many years. We thank Karin for her service and all the WOC volunteers who help her host this event and provide the food. We wish joyful Christmas blessings to our wonderful church staff and choir. If you would like to help, please contact Karin at [karin\\_gabrielson@hotmail.com](mailto:karin_gabrielson@hotmail.com).





# WOMEN OF THE CHURCH

## December Circle Schedule

Circle Number	Circle Theme	Meeting Info	Additional Info
Circle 1/12	Bible Circle	December 16   10:30 AM FPC Geneva Room	Optional Lunch: \$8
Circle 5	Shawl Ministry	December 13   10:00 AM FPC Room 228	
Circle 6	Bible Circle	December 17   1:30 PM FPC Geneva Room	
Circle 7	Bible Circle	December 17   11:30 AM Contact Cynthia Robinson or Candy Wagner for location	
Circle 8	Mom's Group	December 17   7:30 PM Dough (6989 Blanco Road)	
Circle 9	Bible Circle	December 17   10:30 AM FPC Geneva Room	
Circle 11	Bible Circle	December 16   6:30 PM Home of Linda Ruhmann (127 W. Elmview Place)	
Circle 13	Literature Circle	December 10   1:00 PM FPC McCullough Room	Open to women & men; December Book: <i>The Dog Who Wouldn't Be</i> by Mowart
Circle 14	Bible Circle	December 16   12:00 PM FPC St. Andrew's Room	Optional Lunch: \$8
Circle 18	Circle of Concern	No formal meetings: Opportunity for service throughout the year	
Circle 20	Circle of Service	No formal meetings: Opportunity for service throughout the year	



# KEYS

REV. DR. JOE MOORE  
Minister for older adults and  
congregational care.



## ..... **Keeping EVERYONE Young in Spirit** .....

**To make your  
reservation  
for all KEYS  
events contact  
Alice Morales at  
[alicem@fpcsat.org](mailto:alicem@fpcsat.org)  
or 210-226-  
0215. The cost  
for meals at FPC  
is \$10. Birthday  
luncheons  
are \$12 unless  
otherwise noted.**

**N**ovember was a month filled with history, celebration and of course, good eating!

Vincent Michael from the San Antonio Conservation Society, along with Butch Gerfers and Gayle Spencer, project manager and author of "Haunting the Graveyard: Unearthing the Story of the Coker Settlement," gave us a glimpse of rich San Antonio history. The Cox Family Singers lead us in celebration of the legacy of service attributed to every branch of our armed services, and at the Longhorn Café we experienced comfort food at its best.

This month, the celebration continues as we come together with family and friends to proclaim our Savior's Birth. Following His example of service, we will join the team at Elf Louise to wrap gifts for children and families who will benefit from the generosity nurtured through this program for years.

Special guests at our Christmas party will be Choir Director

Leonardo Garcia and students from Seguin High School. We are excited to hear all of our favorite Christmas songs and sing along with the choir.

We will also enjoy a presentation of Dicken's "A Christmas Carol," performed at the Woodlawn Theater.

On behalf of the Leadership team, I want to wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

There will be no regular KEYS programs or lunches on Fridays after December 6. We resume in the New Year on January 10, with Little Beverly and The Shades, a 50's & 60's style Rock and Roll Band that you will not want to miss!

**Remember, KEYS is not an exclusive club for older adults. Everyone is welcome to attend on Fridays and to join us on other activities as well, "Keeping EVERYONE Young in Spirit."**



### Elf Louise Gift Wrapping Wednesday, December 4

10:00 AM - Noon

Plan now to join us to wrap gifts for Elf Louise. This is a popular service project every year as we join together to wrap gifts to be distributed to families throughout San Antonio. Van service from FPC will leave at 9:00 AM. Plan to join us for a lunch (on your own) afterward at the Acadiana Café.

### KEYS Christmas Party Friday, December 6

10:30 AM | Westminster Hall

In addition to the hors d'oeuvres and a great lunch from our famous FPC kitchen, we are excited to hear a special presentation from select members of the Seguin High School Choir under the direction of Leonardo Garcia.

### Dickens "A Christmas Carol" Sunday, December 8

3:00 PM | Woodlawn Theater

Show time is 3:00 PM. Tickets are \$24. Limited parking in front of the theater. A Van Shuttle is available from the FPC parking lot leaving at 2:00 PM.

### KEYS Spring Kickoff Friday, January 10

We will host Little Beverly and the Shades, a group of friends who have been playing together for 25 years. They cover songs from the 50s to the early 60s. Nona & Barry Hall discovered them at the Wimberley Market Days. Get ready to relive the Happiest Days of our lives.

### Bridge and Mah Jongg

Bridge and Mah Jongg players meet immediately following lunch on the second and fourth Fridays of the month. Join in on the fun!! New players are welcome and someone will help you learn the game. If you have other games that we could play, then let us know and we will see that you have a place to play.

### SA READS

SA Reads needs your help to sort, categorize, and clean donated books that are used in local schools to provide reading material to children who may not have the opportunity to own books of their own. Jane Warren (210-493-5187) is the person to contact with any questions about this program. The work is done at Firstmark Credit Union, 10730 Gulfdale Drive, on the first Tuesday of each month. Join in on this great service project, as well as the fellowship of working together.



# FIRST CUP READINGS DECEMBER, 2019

Dear Family in Christ,

*First Cup* is designed to assist you in the habit of daily Bible reading and prayer. The name is to remind you that as you reach for your first cup of morning coffee or tea, reach also for your Bible and prayer list. The prayers at the beginning of each week are taken from hymns, sometimes found in obscure hymnals in my library. They are intended to be read as your beginning prayer, to focus your mind on the daily readings that follow. May this spiritual discipline strengthen you as you face each day.

Blessings and love in Christ, Sandy Sturch



Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you. Show me the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul.— Psalm 143:8

*"Thy Kingdom come," on bended knee the passing ages pray;  
and faithful souls have yearned to see on earth that Kingdom's  
day. And lo! Already on the hills the flags of dawn appear. Gird  
up your loins, ye prophet souls, proclaim the day is near! The day  
in whose clear-shining light all wrong shall stand revealed; when  
justice shall be clothed with might and every hurt be healed; when  
knowledge, hand in hand with peace, shall walk the earth abroad;  
the day of perfect righteousness, the promised day of God. (The  
Hymnbook, #484)*

- 1 Isaiah 40; Matthew 3:1-3; Mark 1:4
- 2 Matthew 24
- 3 1 Thessalonians 4-5
- 4 2 Peter 3
- 5 2 Thessalonians 2; 1 Corinthians 1:18; John 3:16-18
- 6 Luke 1:37-80; 3:1-6
- 7 Matthew 3; 11:1-19

*Come, Thou long-expected Jesus, born to set Thy people free.  
From our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in Thee.  
Israel's Strength and Consolation, Hope of all the earth Thou art;  
Dear Desire of every nation, Joy of every longing heart. Born Thy  
people to deliver, born a child and yet a King. Born to reign in us  
forever, now Thy gracious Kingdom bring. By Thine own eternal  
Spirit rule in all our hearts alone; by Thine all-sufficient merit raise  
us to Thy glorious throne. (The Hymnbook, #151)*

- 8 Mark 6:6b-29; Luke 14:26-27; Matthew 10:17-23
- 9 Isaiah 9:1-7; 11-12; Micah 5:2-5
- 10 Psalm 23; 28:6-9; Ezekiel 34:1-16; Zechariah 13:1-7;  
John 10:1-18
- 11 Psalm 46; Psalm 91
- 12 Psalm 143; 121
- 13 Isaiah 7:13-14; Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38;  
Hebrews 11:6
- 14 Psalm 89

*O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie; above thy  
deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by. Yet in thy dark  
streets shineth the everlasting Light; the hope and fears of all the  
years are met in thee tonight. O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend*

*to us, we pray. Cast out our sin and enter in, be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell; O come  
to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel. (The Hymnbook, #171)*

- 15 Hebrews 1-2
- 16 Hebrews 3-5:10
- 17 Hebrews 5:11-7
- 18 Hebrews 8-9
- 19 Hebrews 10
- 20 Luke 1:38-56; Psalm 138
- 21 Luke 1:57-80; Joel 2:28-32; Jeremiah 31:27-34

*Rejoice, the Lord is King! Your Lord and King adore! Rejoice,  
give thanks, and sing, and triumph evermore. Lift up your heart,  
lift up your voice! Rejoice, again I say, rejoice! His Kingdom cannot  
fail, He rules o'er earth and heaven. The keys of death and hell are  
to our Jesus given. Lift up your heart, lift up your voice! Rejoice,  
again I say, rejoice! He all His foes shall quell, shall all our sins  
destroy, and every bosom swell with pure seraphic joy. Lift up your  
heart, lift up your voice! Rejoice, again I say, rejoice! (Hymnbook,  
#140)*

- 22 Romans 10-11
- 23 Romans 12
- 24 Luke 2:1-20; Colossians 1:15-23
- 25 Psalm 47; Colossians 1:24-2:5
- 26 Isaiah 55
- 27 Isaiah 9:2, 6-7; Luke 2:21-40
- 28 Luke 2:41-52; Proverbs 3:1-6

*Come, we that love the Lord, and let our joys be known; join  
in a song with sweet accord, join in a song with sweet accord  
and thus surround the throne, and thus surround the throne. The  
hill of Zion yields a thousand sacred sweets before we reach the  
heavenly fields, before we reach the heavenly fields, or walk the  
golden streets, or walk the golden streets. We're marching to  
Zion, beautiful, beautiful Zion. We're marching upward to Zion, the  
beautiful city of God. (Worship in Song, # 75)*

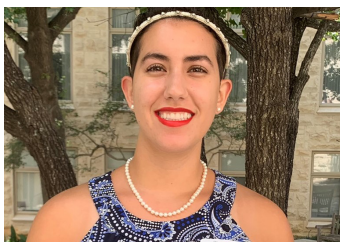
- 29 John 1:1-34; Ephesians 1:1-14
- 30 John 3; 5:24; 1 John 3
- 31 Psalm 90; 2 Corinthians 5:1-10



# FIRST CUP PRAYER LIST

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. (Romans 8:26).

[illegible]



**Alexandra Dawood**

Alexandra joins by Reaffirmation of Faith. She is a Data Analyst for EOG Resources. She is an identical twin to Nicole. Alexandra interned with the Internet Evangelism team at the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association in Charlotte, NC. She is looking forward to being part of a church family that upholds biblical values and proclaims the gospel in San Antonio and the world.



**Josephine Sisto**

Josephine joins by Reaffirmation of Faith. She is a stay at home mom for their child Titus. Josephine spent over a year living in Thailand working with Pakistani refugees. She is looking forward to growing within her faith and serving her community.



**Nicole Dawood**

Nicole joins by Reaffirmation of Faith. She is an IT analyst at Marathon Petroleum. Nicole is an identical twin and is younger by 1 minute. She was born in Mobile, Al. Her parents are Egyptian Christians who immigrated to the USA in 1991. She is looking forward to joining a wonderful community of believers growing in Christ, and serving God through church ministry partners.



**Roman Sisto**

Roman joins by Reaffirmation of Faith. He is a purchasing coordinator for Sitterle Homes. He and his wife have a child named Titus. Roman's favorite sport is water polo. He is looking forward to being a part of the FPC community.

## CONNECT WITH US!

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