



FIRST PRESS

December
Christmas Music
Tradition with
Midday Noels
(see page 6)

Children
Celebrated
Shoebox Sunday
& Advent Festival
(See page 7)

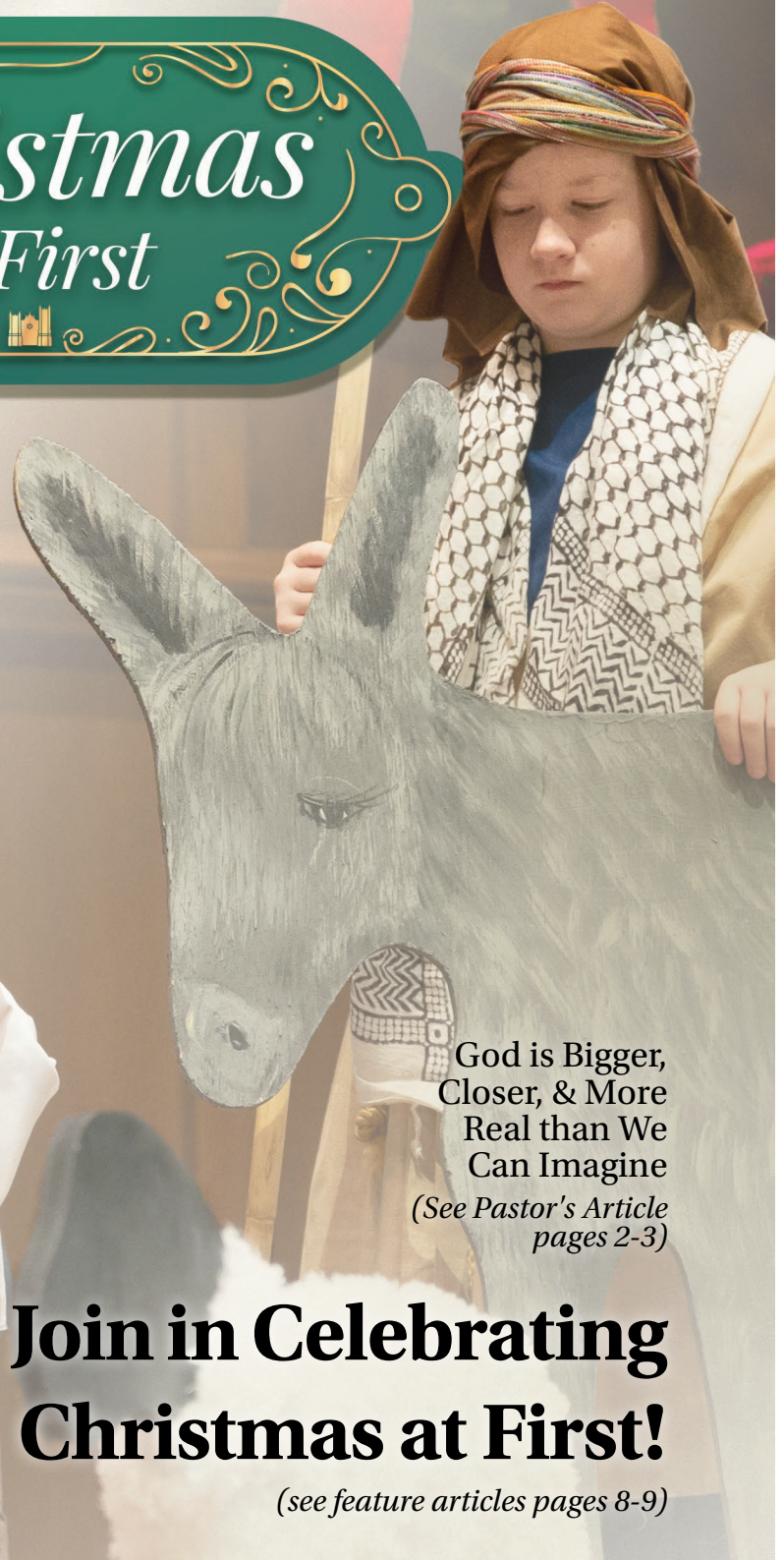
DECEMBER 2022

Pray Together
Online for
Global Missions

It's Christmas
Party Season!

Order a Poinsettia
to Honor or
Remember
Loved Ones

(See these events and
more in *Save the
Dates* on pages 4-5)



God is Bigger,
Closer, & More
Real than We
Can Imagine
(See Pastor's Article
pages 2-3)

Join in Celebrating Christmas at First!

(see feature articles pages 8-9)

Pastor's Article

Bigger, Closer, & More Real

REV. DR. BOB FULLER

During November, Morgan and I joined 70 members of our FPC family on an adventure in Israel.

Since we returned, a lot of people have asked me, "What was it like to be there...to be in the places where it all happened?" And my answer is that *"being there changed my perception of the world of Jesus."* The land of the Bible is much smaller, bigger and more real than I imagined it.

On the one hand, the country seemed smaller than I imagined it and everything seemed ***closer*** together. Israel is a small country and everything seems very "compact." In Galilee, one could easily visit all of the towns that Jesus visited in a day, and it takes longer to get to Alamo Heights from Castle Hills than it does to get from Bethlehem to Jerusalem.

In San Antonio, we get frustrated when visitors come to our city and say *"the Alamo is smaller than I imagined it would be."* And yet, when we arrived at the shore of the sea of Galilee I remember thinking, *"everything is much smaller than I imagined it would be."* While we were on a boat in the sea of Galilee, looking towards Capernaum, our leader Mike Fanning held up his hands towards the shoreline and said, "90% of Jesus' ministry took place between here and here (his left hand and right hand)." So, everything in the holy land seems much smaller and closer than one imagines.

On the other hand, there were things that just seemed ***bigger*** and more



grand than we imagined. The hills of Galilee were bigger than I envisioned them. Standing atop the *Mount of the Precipice* in Nazareth feels like standing on top of the Blue Ridge Parkway. The Dead Sea is the lowest point on earth, and the Judean wilderness is much more desolate than I expected.

Jerusalem is big and busy. The holy city commands the highlands of Israel and one can understand why the ancients always said that they were going *"up to Jerusalem."* The scale of the Temple Mount and complex would humble most professional sports stadiums today, and even the ancient Jewish historian Flavius Josephus wrote that the heights of the temple could make one "giddy." (*Antiquities*, Chapter 15).

In some ways, Israel was smaller than I pictured it. In other ways, it was bigger. But more than anything else, being there made everything more ***real***.

I have always believed that the stories were true, but having been there, *I have a whole new level of conviction that*

these things REALLY HAPPENED! Bethlehem, Nazareth, the Sea of Galilee, Golgotha, the empty tomb, Capernaum are all real places, and visiting the places described in God's word makes the reality of those places more vivid. The effect is that now I take the reality of those stories even more seriously than before.

The stories we read in the Bible, the stories about David and Isaiah, about Solomon and Sampson, about Joseph and Mary and Peter and Paul and Jesus are all true. They are real stories about real events involving real people who lived real lives in that real place in real time.

So, what does this have to do with Christmas? The Christmas story declared that the Lord is ***Bigger, Closer*** and ***More Real*** than we ever imagined. The theological heart of the Christmas story is a concept called the ***incarnation***. The Gospel of John says:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ...¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us....

The theological term for the ***"word becoming flesh"*** is the word ***incarnation***. It literally means "to be made flesh."

Christmas is all about remembering that the truth, the person and promises of God are not just true, they are real. The existence of God is not just a superstition. The love of God is not

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just a sentiment. The power of God is not just a metaphor. The truth of God is not just an idea. The promises of God are not just propositions. *"The Word became flesh."*

The Christmas story is not a myth. It is a declaration that the existence, truth, love, power, and promises of God became visible, tangible, and real—in the real world and in real time. *The Word became flesh* and was born in Bethlehem, grew up in Nazareth, was baptized in the Jordan river, was tempted in the wilderness, ministered in Galilee, worshipped in Jerusalem, was crucified on Golgotha and was raised from the garden tomb.

In the Christmas story, the Angels remind us that God is bigger than we can imagine. The Shepherds remind us that he is closer than we imagined. And the whole story is given to remind us that He is real.

"Go to Bethlehem and See."

Grace and peace,



SAVE THE DATE

- 4** Children's Christmas Pageant; Congregation Meeting; Road Closures Dec. 4; Youth Christmas Party; YAC Christmas Party; Global Missions Virtual Prayer Room; Christmas & New Year's Holiday; Discover, Know, & JoinFPC; Praying with the Ministers
- 5** Pastor's Bible Study; Men's Ministry Retreat; FPC Children's Center Hiring & Taking Registrations; December Literature Circle, Poinsettias

MINISTRY ARTICLES

- 6** Music Ministry Presents Free Midday Noels Concert Series
- 7** Children's Ministry Celebrates Shoebox Send-off and Annual Advent Festival
- 8-9** Christmas at First & Missions Alternative Christmas Market 2022
- 10-11** WOC Circles and Letter from the President
- 12-13** KEYS Upcoming

FIRST CUP

- 14-15** Readings and Prayer List

BACK COVER FEATURE

- 16** New Photos from LoveSATX
Information on Year-End Giving

First Press is a monthly publication from the FPC Communications Team.

Want to be featured in FIRST PRESS?

Deadline to submit content: the 15th of the previous month.

Hank Cherry: **Director of Communications**

Dorothy Hecimovich: **Graphic Designer**

Sam Simpson: **Media Coordinator**

Nona Hall: **Volunteer Photographer**

Questions? Contact: Hank Cherry (210-271-2728/hankc@fpcsat.org)

Save the Date

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Sunday, December 4 | 11:00 AM | Sanctuary
(Mandatory Rehearsal on Dec. 3)

A Savior has been born! He is Christ the Lord! Come hear the story of God's love told through our FPC children during the 11:00 AM Traditional Service. There will not be an 11:00 AM Contemporary Service on this day so that all may attend the pageant. (9:30 AM Traditional Service will still meet.) Contact: Becky Prichard, beckyp@fpcsat.org for more information.

CALLED CONGREGATION MEETING

Sunday, Dec. 4 | Sanctuary | After each service

Called Congregational meeting to approve proposed officer nomination committee members will be held immediately after each service in the Sanctuary.

ROAD CLOSURES

Sunday, Dec. 4 | Before & after services

Due to numerous downtown road closures with this year's Rock n' Roll Marathon, we ask all patrons to use Highway 281/37 to and from Services that morning. For more info: <https://www.runrocknroll.com/san-antonio-road-closure>

YOUTH CHRISTMAS PARTY

Sunday, Dec. 4 | 5:00 PM-7:00 PM | Student Center

Students, kick off the holiday season by making Christmas crafts, playing games, & participating in a White Elephant gift exchange. Contact Kerri Napoli, kerrin@fpcsat.org.

YAC CHRISTMAS PARTY

Monday, Dec. 5 | 6:00 - 8:00 PM | Chris Madrid's

Join other Young Adults and University Students for our annual Christmas Party! Free dinner from Chris Madrid's, games, prizes, ugly Christmas sweater contest, and more! You won't want to miss it! Bring a donation for the KRL/YoungLives or send directly to FPC from the wishlist - tiny.cc/christmas-giving-KRL. For more information and updates contact Carrie Everson at carrie@fpcsat.org or join the YAC text group by texting the code "YAC" to 210-981-3339.

GLOBAL MISSIONS VIRTUAL PRAYER ROOM

Wednesday, Dec. 7 | 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM | Zoom

Prayer is effective, not because of the great men & women who pray well, but because of a great God who in Christ graciously hears his people. Register online at fpcsanantonio.org/virtual-prayer-room to receive the ZOOM meeting link & phone number. Zoom Meeting ID: 826 9365 7302 | Password: 727274.

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR'S HOLIDAY

SEE FULL HOLIDAY SCHEDULE ON PAGES 8-9

Church Offices will be closed **Monday, December 26 through Friday, December 30** as well as **Monday, January 2** for the Christmas and New Year's Holiday. Special Holiday Service Schedule on December 25 & January 1 (See page 8.) Office hours will resume Tuesday, January 3, 2023.

DISCOVER, KNOW & JOIN FPC!

DiscoverFPC! - Jan. 8 | 12:15 PM – 2:00 PM

KnowFPC! - Jan. 29 | 8:30 AM – 2:30 PM

Are you interested in learning more about FPC or becoming a Covenant Partner? Sign up and attend a DiscoverFPC! class where you can then decide whether you are ready to join as a Covenant Partner or wish to wait. Ready to join? Register for both the DiscoverFPC & KnowFPC classes. More info on joining FPC at fpcsanantonio.org/join. Contact Sheila Figueroa, sheilaf@fpcsat.org, 210-271-2759 to sign up or register online by going to fpcsanantonio.org/register-discover-fpc.

PRAYING WITH THE MINISTERS

The Deacons, Elders, and Covenant Partners are encouraged to sign up to pray with the ministers before the Traditional Services. The person is to be in the Robing Room, Room 227, 10 minutes prior to the service (9:20 AM and 10:50 AM). A short prayer with the Pastors starts when all are present or the Pastor gives the go-ahead. To sign-up please go to this link for Praying with the Ministers: bit.ly/pray-with-ministers-fall22.

JOIN THE FRIDAY SINGERS

Sing favorite hymns and carols to retirement and rehab communities for the Christmas Season. Friday Singers continues through May. Contact Brittanie Salazar at brittanies@fpcsat.org or 210-271-2730 for more information.

PASTOR'S BIBLE STUDY (PBS)

Spring Session Begins

Wednesday, Jan. 11 | 6:30 PM | Covenant Hall
and Thursday, Jan. 12 | 9:30 AM | Covenant Hall

The Spring Session will begin the second week of January 2023. Contact Sheila Figueroa at sheila.f@fpcsat.org for more information or Lellen Lane at lellenlane@aol.com for small group placement.

MEN'S MINISTRY RETREAT

Friday - Sunday, January 20-22 | LoneHollow Ranch
Register at bit.ly/fpcmen-retreat

A weekend together as men in the Hill Country join to sharpen one another and be with the Lord. LongHollow Ranch is a 3,000 acre property in the middle of beautiful Utopia, Texas. The cost is \$150 and includes all housing, meals, program, and content. (Please don't let cost stop you from participating in this incredible weekend, reach out to a pastor or member of the Men's Ministry committee to discuss scholarships.) Visit fpcsanantonio.org/men or contact Cody Heffron at codyheffron@yahoo.com for more information.

FPC CHILDREN'S CENTER HIRING & TAKING REGISTRATIONS

Accepting toddlers and preschoolers (2.5 - 4 years of age). Hiring afternoon teachers and substitutes. Contact Laura Ortiz at laurao@fpsat.org, call (210) 225-0960, or visit fpsanantonio.org/childrens-center.

LITERATURE CIRCLE

The Rev. Scott Simpson will review the historical fiction book, *THE LEOPARD IS LOOSE*, by Stephen Harrigan, on **Tuesday, December 13, 2022**, in the McCullough Room at 1:00 PM (social) & 1:30 PM (review).

The title reveals that a leopard escaped its' pit in the Oklahoma City zoo in the 1950's, a true story, but branches out from there. Told from the viewpoint of a 5- year-old boy, Grady, it not only involves his family—an older brother, a widowed mother & 2 uncles with PTSD—but other issues of that post-war era.

Men and women are invited to attend. The circle meets the second Tuesday of each month. Two copies of each book are available in the church library to be checked out. Delayed streaming and the full reading list are available on our FPC website: fpcsanantonio.org/lit-circle

Grace Clouse, Chair
Willie Willming, Publicity

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 place in the Sanctuary Flower mailbox in the workroom. **Requests received later than December 11, 2022 will miss the insert printing deadline.**

Poinsettias

\$15 PER PLANT - PLEASE PRINT WHEN FILLING OUT FORM

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EMAIL

PHONE

ADDRESS



A Seasonal Celebration of
Merry Melodies and Holiday Harmonies

THURSDAYS, DECEMBER 1, 8, 15, 2022 FROM 12:00-12:45 PM

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN SANCTUARY & ONLINE LIVE AT [FPCSANANTONIO.ORG/NOELS](https://fpcsanantonio.org/noels)

*Merry Organ Pipes
Celebrate the Season!*

Thursday, December 1

Our highly skilled organist, Dr. Jae Ha, and trumpeter Brandon Pauley provide musical and seasonal inspiration from the choir loft of First Presbyterian Church. Jae will conclude the concert with excerpts from "The Planets" by Gustav Holst, a highlight you will not want to miss!

*Shimmering Songs
& Sparkling Singing*

Thursday, December 8

Our FPC Chamber Singers present four beautiful choral pieces of the season, interspersed with captivating vocal solos that span diverse genres including opera and popular song.

*Christmas with the
Monte Vista Strings*

Thursday, December 15

We are pleased to welcome the Monte Vista Strings, a string quartet featuring some of the finest professional musicians in the San Antonio area. Founded in 2003 by violinist Andrew Small and a trio of colleagues from the San Antonio area, Monte Vista Strings and Jazz has evolved into one of the Austin – San Antonio – Texas Hill Country region's most respected musical performance and entertainment companies.



Following each concert, we will be offering a hot lunch (\$15) in Westminster Hall or 'Grab and Go' lunches (\$5), available in the lobby just outside the Sanctuary.



Celebrating Shoebox Send-Off & Advent Festival



Sunday, November 13, the children had a “Woo-hoo” of a morning as we celebrated the Operation Christmas Child box collection while wearing pj's and eating breakfast tacos!

We watched a video about the Samaritan's Purse Ministry where we saw the joy on the faces of children from around the world as they opened their shoeboxes full of wonderful toys and gifts. But, this is only the beginning for these children as they are given the opportunity to hear the gospel and be discipled. A simple shoebox is changing the world one child at a time and I am so glad we were able to be a part of this. Operation Christmas Child Overview 2022 (samaritanspurse.org)

Drum roll please... With the generous support of this wonderful congregation—the children collected 176 BOXES! Thank you all for allowing us to be a part of this wonderful ministry. God Bless you all.





Christmas at First

We welcome you to celebrate the birth of Christ
with FPC during this Christmas Season.

fpcsanantonio.org/christmas

DEC
1, 8 & 15

MIDDAY NOELS

Thursdays, December 1, 8, 15
12:00-12:45 PM | Sanctuary

We offer our holiday "gift to the city" with three free concerts followed by a choice of a hot lunch (\$15) in our Westminster Hall or "Grab & Go" (\$5). Concerts also livestreamed at fpcsanantonio.org/noels.

December 1 | Merry Organ Pipes
Celebrate the Season!

December 8 | Shimmering Songs and
Sparkling Singing

December 15 | Christmas with the
Monte Vista Strings

Reserve free childcare for babies through 3 yrs.
by emailing rebeccas@fpcsat.org.

DEC
4

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

11:00 AM Traditional Service
Sanctuary & fpcsanantonio.org

A Savior has been born! He is Christ the Lord!
Come hear the story of God's love told through
our FPC children during the 11:00 AM service.

DEC
24

CHRISTMAS EVE

2:30 PM | Communion Service
5:00 PM | Family Service
7:30 PM | Candlelight Service
10:00 PM | Candlelight Service

Celebrate the birth of Christ at your choice of four services. We hope to see you, your family & friends during this most wonderful time of the year. Reserve free childcare for babies through 3 yrs. by emailing rebeccas@fpcsat.org.

DEC
25

CHRISTMAS DAY

11:00 AM Combined Service Only
Sanctuary | No Sunday School
Streamed at fpcsanantonio.org

JAN
1

NEW YEAR'S DAY

Regular Sunday Morning
Service Schedule (see below)
No Sunday School

Regular Sunday Morning Service Schedule:

- 9:30 AM (Traditional Service in the Sanctuary & Online)
- 11:00 AM (Traditional Service in the Sanctuary)
- 11:00 AM (Modern Service in Westminster Hall & Online)



ALTERNATIVE Christmas Market

This Christmas, help make a difference in San Antonio and around the world.

Online Alternative Christmas Market:

- Participate by purchasing a gift to empower the work of our ministry partners through the online Alternative Christmas Market at fpcsanantonio.org/christmas-giving from December 4 – 23.

Local Missions

- Donate items to serve our neighbors in the KRL through SA Hope Center, Any Woman Can, SA Life Restored, One By One Ministries, and YoungLives. Items will be collected in the Mauze Lobby throughout December or you can purchase them to be shipped to FPC from the Amazon Wishlist at tiny.cc/christmas-giving-KRL.

Global Missions

- “Adopt” a Global Missions Partner. Learn about the prayer needs of a ministry partner and commit to pray for them through the month of December. Additionally, pick up a postcard to write an encouraging letter to that ministry partner and return it to the Mauze Lobby by Friday, December 23. All postcards will be mailed to our ministry partners in January.

Alternative Christmas Market tables and donation boxes will be available in the Mauze Lobby on Sundays, December 4, 11 and 18th.
For more information, please contact Lindsay Selli at lindsays@fpcsat.org.

SCAN ME



Scan the QR Code to visit fpcsanantonio.org/christmas for more information, live streamed services, and links to the Alternative Christmas Market.

WOMEN OF THE CHURCH

Dec. 2022



Circle Chairs & Bible Moderators

(Circles meet September through May, except for Circles 18 & 20, who provide service all year)

- Circle 1/12 Suzanne Thomas, Chair (210-846-3240)
Grace Labatt, Moderator
DECEMBER 19, Third Monday, 11:30 am, Geneva Room
(with lunch)
- Circle 5 Kay Weber, Co-Chair (210-288-5290)
Mary Fruge-Medford, Co-Chair (210-823-7054)
SHAWL MINISTRY
DECEMBER 21, Third Wednesday, 1:00 pm, Room 228
- Circle 6 Jean Parsons, Chair (210-240-7483)
Members of Circle, Moderators
DECEMBER 20, Third Tuesday, 1:30 pm, Geneva Room
(with lunch)
- Circle 7 Mary Ellen Mauze, Chair & Moderator (210-844-5549)
DECEMBER 13 (date change), 11:30 am, in member homes
Mary Ellen Mauze, 203 Primrose Pl., byo lunch & Gift of Christmas gifts
- Circle 8 Nancy Turnbull, Chair (210-606-5420)
Members of Circle, Moderators, Circle for mothers of young children
DECEMBER 2 (date change), 11:45 am, St. Andrews Rm
(byo lunch or buy at KEYS)
- Circle 9 Grace Clouse, Co-Chair (734-718-7057)
Janice Wilson, Co-Chair (210-492-0333/210-260-4157)
Ann Smith, Moderator
DECEMBER 20, Third Tuesday, 10:00 am, Breakfast Room
- Circle 11 Jean Swanson, Chair (210-826-0766)
Members of Circle, Moderators
DECEMBER 19, (date change), 12:30 pm, Jean Swanson, 122 Medford Dr. 78209, 210-826-0766
- Circle 13 Grace Clouse, Chair (734-718-7057)
LITERATURE CIRCLE
DECEMBER 13, Second Tuesday, 1:00 pm, McCullough Room
- Circle 14 Karen Carawan, Chair (210-213-4589)
Suzie Simpson, Moderator
DECEMBER 5 (date change), 12:00 pm, Geneva Room
(with meal)
- Circle 18 Char-An Witten, Chair (210-341-1856)
Pat Brodeen, Email Contact (pat@brodeen.com)
CIRCLE OF CONCERN
Small home baked cookies always needed for receptions
Volunteers for help with receptions needed
- Circle 20 Muffin Camp, Chair (210-789-1808)
CIRCLE OF SERVICE - volunteers to make/take meals when needed

President's Letter Dec. 2022

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6

I love this time of year! I love the festive decorations, the music, the parties and family gatherings, and the remembrance that God loves us so much, that He came to dwell with us. He has loved us with such an extravagant love, and we are called to share that love with each other. I see that love in everything that Women of the Church does.

I have been very humbled by the extraordinary generosity I have witnessed in Women of the Church this Fall. All that we do is self-funded, and we do not carry over funds from previous years. This is only a partial list of what we have done this year:

- Collected items for goody bags to give to teachers for the School Connect program
- Donated decorations for all PCHAS residents' front porches and pumpkins for all the resident children
- Sponsored a wonderful luncheon for our church staff
- Collected \$1,000 to supply 100 Thanksgiving food boxes for HNS families (everything but the turkey!)
- Purchased Bibles, devotionals, and gift books to give to each Gift of Christmas family. We even have some dual language Bibles in both Spanish and English, donated by a generous member.
- Provided meals for families with new babies or other needs
- Hosted memorial receptions
- Helped with the Advent Festival

And that is just what we have done so far this Fall! Coming up in December we will be hosting two Christmas parties

at Morningside Manor Skilled Nursing Center and the Kaulbach Center. The Friday Singers will be joining us along with children from the Children's Center to sing Christmas carols and eat cookies. We will be purchasing and delivering gifts for our Gift of Christmas families. And finally, Women of the Church will be hosting a reception on Christmas Eve for all the pastors, choir members, and musicians who will be part of all the worship services that evening. Many of the things we do are traditions from years past, and every year it is a blessing for us to once again participate in sharing love with others – *"We love because He first loved us" 1 John 4:19.*

May you and your family enjoy a Blessed Christmas!

In His Love,

Linda Delano

President, Women of the Church



KEYS

KEEPING EVERYONE YOUNG IN SPIRIT

fpcsanantonio.org/keys



"And the angel said to them, 'Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!'"

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them."

This message to shepherds from the angels in Luke 2 is meant for us as well!!

Merry Christmas!!

Rev. Dr. Joe Moore

Assistant Pastor for Older Adults
and Congregational Care

All onsite KEYS lunches begin with our speaker at 11:00 AM, followed by lunch at Noon. Cost is \$13, make your reservations by signing up or calling into the church office.

KEYS Upcoming:

December 2022

Dec. 2 Christmas Party
Dec. 4 White Christmas at
Woodlawn Theater

January 2023

Jan. 6 Food Bank
Jan. 13 Rev. Dr. Kristin
Huffman
Jan. 20 Birthday Lunch
Jan. 27 Israel Trip Report

February 2023

Feb. 3 Rodeo
Feb. 10 Birthday Lunch
Feb. 17 Rick Cavender

December 4, we have 20 tickets to see White Christmas at the Woodlawn Theater. Show time is 3:00 pm, there will be a shuttle from FPC leaving at 2:15 pm.

January 6, we will learn about how to eat healthy on a budget from Xavier Vara of the San Antonio Food Bank.

January 13, we will hear from former FPC associate pastor, and Rev. Becky Prichard's mom, Rev. Dr. Kristin Huffman.

January 20, the birthday lunch will be at La Hacienda de los Barrios - 18747 Redland Rd San Antonio, TX 78259. Meet at the restaurant at 11:30 am or join us on the shuttle from FPC leaving at 10:30 am.

January 27, several travelers from the church's Israel trip will share their experiences and pictures.

Mahjong players are meeting on the **1st and 3rd Fridays** (only in December). In January, Mahjong will resume play on 2nd & 4th Fridays in the Geneva Room, immediately after lunch. We are also recruiting Bridge Players as well. You don't have to be a seasoned player and if you have a game you would like to play, let us know and we will make room for you!





FIRST CUP READINGS

DECEMBER, 2022

Blessings and love in Christ,

Sandy Sturch

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.

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

- 1 1 Thessalonians 4; 1 Corinthians 15:35-58
- 2 1 Thessalonians 5; Ephesians 6:10-20;
1 Corinthians 1:8
- 3 Isaiah 5:18-19; 2 Peter 3; Ezekiel 12:21-28;
Isaiah 14:24; 45:18-25

Season of Advent: Four Sundays focusing on Hope, Peace, Love, and Joy

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness; I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name. His oath, His covenant, His blood, support me in the whelming flood; when all around my soul gives way, He then is all my hope and stay. When He shall come with trumpet sound, Oh, may I then in Him be found, dressed in His righteousness alone, faultless to stand before the throne. On Christ, the solid Rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand. (The Hymnbook, No. 368)

- 4 2 Thessalonians 1-2
- 5 Isaiah 9:6; 11; Micah 5:2-5; Romans 15:1-13
- 6 Psalm 62; 4
- 7 Luke 12:13-34; Philippians 4:6-7
- 8 Psalm 46; 9:7-10; 100:3; 4:8; John 14:26-27
- 9 Psalm 143; 27:11; Romans 5:1-5; 8:6; 12:17-21; 14:19
- 10 Proverbs 29:17; Hebrews 12:1-14; James 3:17-18;
Ephesians 4:3; 6:14-15

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee." When the shadows come and darkness falls, He giveth inward peace. O, He is the only perfect resting place, He giveth perfect peace! "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee." 'Tis the promise of the Holy One, "My peace I give to thee." Tho' the storms of life in fury rage, Thy Refuge sure is He. Oh, He is the only perfect resting place! He giveth perfect peace. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee." (Worship in Song, No. 418)

- 11 Matthew 10; Ephesians 2:14-22; Romans 5:1-11
- 12 Psalm 25; Jeremiah 3:25; Ephesians 2:1-10;
Psalm 32
- 13 Psalm 86; Exodus 34:6; Joel 2:13; John 15:8-17
- 14 John 13:1-17; 1 John 1; 2

- 15 1 John 3; John 13:34-35
- 16 John 3:16-18; Romans 5:8; 1 John 4
- 17 1 John 5; Psalm 36; 106:1

Love divine, all loves excelling, Joy of heaven, to earth come down. Fix in us Thy humble dwelling, all Thy faithful mercies crown! Jesus, Thou art all compassion, pure, unbounded love Thou art. Visit us with Thy salvation, enter every trembling heart. Come, Almighty, to deliver; let us all thy life receive. Suddenly return, and never, never more Thy temples leave. Thee we would be always blessing, serve Thee as Thy hosts above. Pray, and praise Thee without ceasing, Glory in Thy perfect love. (Worship in Song, No. 16)

- 18 1 Corinthians 13; Psalm 118:1; 1 Corinthians 10:24;
Romans 15:1-2
- 19 Psalm 96; Hebrews 1:1-12
- 20 Isaiah 52; Psalm 98; Psalm 126
- 21 Psalm 2; 24; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Psalm 89:35-36
- 22 Isaiah 7:14; 8:5-10; 9:2-6; 11:1-5; 53
- 23 Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-56; Genesis 17:19;
Psalm 132:11-18; Galatians 3:16
- 24 Luke 2:1-20; Colossians 1:15-23; Isaiah 43:1-3; 45:22

From God's heaven to a manger, from great riches to the poor, came the holy Son of God, a little Child. From the azure halls of heaven to a lowly manger stall, Jesus came, and here He gave his life for all. From a loving heavenly Father, to a world that knew Him not, came a man of sorrows, Jesus Christ, the Lord. In my wandering Jesus found me, touched my life with His great love, and this Babe has grown to be my sovereign Lord. (Hymns for the Family of God, No. 199)

- 25 John 1:1-34; 3:14-21, 36; 6:35-51; 12:44-45
- 26 Leviticus 12; Luke 2:21-40;
Isaiah 42:1-9; 8:13-17; 40:1-11; John 10:11; Psalm 23
- 27 Micah 5:1-5; Matthew 2
- 28 Luke 2:41-52; Proverbs 3:1-6
- 29 Luke 3:1-23a; Isaiah 58:6-14
- 30 Psalm 1; 32; 119:1-16
- 31 Ecclesiastes 3:1-11; Psalm 90; 2 Corinthians 5:1-10;
Romans 12:1-2

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

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Photos from LoveSATX
Local Missions projects
on Saturday, October
22: Westminster Hall
Packing Party and
Morningside Fall
Festival at the Meadows.



Year-End Giving

As the year ends, many are starting to think about year-end charitable giving. We are here to ensure your gift is received in plenty of time to include in the current tax year. If you are planning to send a gift from a retirement account, stock, or mutual fund, please remember that these gifts take extra time and effort to process. We ask that you notify the finance office if you are planning on giving one of these types of gifts so that we can make sure your gift is processed in a timely manner and applied to the appropriate account.

Please check with your broker as many take time off for the holidays and will not be available. You may also need extra information from the finance office to complete these transactions--and we are here to help! Keep in mind that the church offices will be closed December 26, 2022 - January 2, 2023, but there will be someone available by phone in the finance office December 28-30, 2022. You can reach our team at the following:

Christi Burrell: 210-271-2755 or christib@fpcsat.org
Marie Nipp: 210-271-2756 or marien@fpcsat.org

Due to office closures during the holidays, we request that you begin processing these gifts prior to December 15, 2022. We recommend an even earlier date if you are giving shares of a mutual fund, as they take much longer to complete the transfer.

As always, we thank you and thank God for your generosity as together we follow God's call for First Presbyterian and its ministries.



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