

THE Penn Street LETTER

First Presbyterian Church, Fort Worth

DECEMBER 2019 | Volume 19, Number 12

FPC Christmas Toy Store

Saturday, December 14 (Setup day December 13)

The Christmas Toy Store is gearing up for another year of serving our families at Community Crossroads. The Toy Store will take place on Saturday, December 14 in the gym. Setup day is Friday, December 13 if you are available to help.

Please come by the Toy Store table outside of the worship areas to pick up stars and purchase toys, books and games for the age and gender on the stars, then return the toys to the boxes in front of the Great Hall or Narthex. You may also donate money and we'll do the shopping for you (checks may be made out to FPC with "Christmas toy store" in the memo line). We are asking for toys



for ages 3 to 10. We have an increase in families registering this year, so we anticipate we will need 850 toys, 420 books and 120 games. We provide two toys and one book per child, and one board game per family. As in the past, we'll have a suggestion list based on our experience in past toy stores. Also, remember that we are not providing socks, underwear, diapers, or any clothing. We ask that you bring the toys back to the marked boxes in front of the Great Hall or in the Narthex by Sunday, December 8.

Thanks in advance for helping with this very meaningful and valuable program!

Walk to the Nativity this Advent Season

Sunday, December 8 from 5:30-7 p.m.



Follow the star to the manger! After being assigned to a guide with a group of 10-15 others, you will walk a path lit by luminarias and stop along the way to visit Mary and Joseph journeying to Bethlehem, the Innkeeper, and the Holy Family. Live animals will complete this beautiful nativity experience. Finish with hot chocolate and cookies outside the

Great Hall. Please park in the lots across from the Sanctuary and Great Hall. Come to the tent in front of the Sanctuary doors where you will meet your guide. This free event is open to all; bring your family and friends!

Advent Labyrinth Walk

Sunday, December 1 from 6-7:30 p.m.

Gather at the FPC outdoor labyrinth as we await the advent of the Light of the World. Journey together as pilgrims to the center of the labyrinth while evening light fades to dark. We will celebrate a brief litany, beginning and ending with prayer. Latecomers are welcome to join the journey in progress.

The labyrinth is located at the northwest corner of the Penn St. campus. Enter from Texas St. using either of the memorial garden gates. In case of inclement weather, this event will be moved indoors to the gymnasium. Members of the Labyrinth Guild will be on hand to assist.



*A Light
Shines*

THE ADVENT ISSUE

In this issue, learn about the many ways to remember, reflect, and celebrate at FPC during the season of Advent that begins Sunday, December 1. See pages 4-5 for a December ADVENT & Christmas Calendar.



PASTOR'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

As we turn the calendar to December and our liturgical calendar to Advent, I pray that you are able to find some time this season to prepare for Christ's coming in meaningful ways. Advent and Christmas remind us that God makes a home within us, and we also remember that God makes a home in the world. So, to grow in Christ, we must travel both the inward and the outward journeys. The journey inward--which includes such practices as prayer, meditation, reflection, and keeping Sabbath--leads us to the indwelling God. The outward journey--expressed in acts of service, kindness, and justice--opens us to the God of compassion who loves all creation and especially identifies with the powerless and poor. A healthy spiritual life balances and integrates the inward and outward journeys, and there is no better time to cultivate this balance than in the season of Advent. Where can we nurture and offer hope, peace, joy and love in the world?

Our congregation offers many opportunities to practice these inward-outward disciplines together, in the context of a community of disciples. Journey inward each Sunday morning or Wednesday night in one of our worship services. Attend the Wednesday noon MidDay Prayer Service followed by an organ concert. Walk the labyrinth on December 1; come to Follow the Star on December 8; or enjoy the Advent Taize service on December 15. Journey outward by extending hospitality at Room in the Inn (starting December 9); being a driver for Christmas Party for the Blind on December 5; bringing toys and books for the Christmas Toy Store by December 9; or volunteering in the many ministries at Community Crossroads.

Advent is a beautiful season of both silence and service, worship and witness, for the inward-outward balance is, in fact, God's word incarnate in our lives and our world.

Blessings on this journey together,
Peace,

Prayer During the Pastoral Search

The Session commends the following prayer written by the Spiritual Formation Subcommittee for our use during the pastoral search. Please pray it frequently in your own personal prayer time and in committees and gatherings of the church.

Holy God,

We praise and thank you for your steadfast love of our church and humbly ask your guidance and blessing as you lead us to the pastor you are calling to this place.

Nurture and guide your servant for sharing ministry among us. Prepare our hearts to receive his or her gifts.

Give us the courage to speak truthfully and compassionately, so that we might be a building up of Your church. Teach us all the way of Jesus: to walk humbly with you, seeking justice and mercy.

Joyfully, we thank you for your Holy Spirit who enlightens and enlivens the path for each of us. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.

SUBMISSIONS

Submissions for the JANUARY issue of the Penn Street Letter are due **Wednesday, December 18**. Submissions for the weekly Penn Street Online emailed newsletters are due the Wednesday prior to each week's issue. Please send to Kathryn Breitbarth at kbreitbarth@fpcfw.org or bring by the church office.

PUBLISHER INFO

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2020 PLEDGES

If you have not yet turned in your pledge card, following Generosity Sunday on October 27, you may do so in the following ways:

ONLINE: Visit fpcfw.org/give and submit the form.

BY MAIL: Complete the pledge card you received in the mail and return it using the provided envelope. Extra cards are available in the Narthex outside the Sanctuary and at the Welcome Desk outside the Great Hall.

AT CHURCH: Bring your completed pledge card to church on Sunday and place in the offering plate at worship or drop by the church during regular business hours (M-F, 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.)

Advent Afternoon Organ Concerts

Wednesdays, December 4, 11 and 18

Advent Afternoon Organ Concerts return during December. They will be held immediately following the Noon Advent service in the Sanctuary, on Wednesday, December 4, 11, and 18 at 12:30 p.m. Featured organists are Bryan Anderson from Houston, TX, on December 4, Sunny Yoo from Killeen, TX, on December 11 and Joseph Arndt from Tulsa, OK, on December 18. A light lunch will be served after each concert on the West Concourse. Come listen to great organ music and stay for lunch to chat with the performers.

Join Team FPC for the Jingle Bell Run

Saturday, December 7 at 4 p.m.



Join Team FPC at the Shops at Clearfork (5188 Monahans Ave) for the Jingle Bell Run on Saturday, December 7, 2019. Pre-race festivities begin at 3 p.m. Team meets at 4 p.m. One mile run starts at 4 p.m. 5K starts at 4:30 p.m.

Activities and food to follow. This event is stroller-friendly and dog-friendly for dogs on leashes. Race cost is \$40. The Wellness

Committee will pay the entry fee for children 17 and under when accompanied by an adult. Registration closes December 4.

For more information or questions, stop by the Race table outside the Great Hall on Sundays through December 1, or contact Mary Kay Roberto at marykay.roberto@sbcglobal.net. Registration instructions for the team can be found at fpcfw.org/jbr or you can pick them up at the race table.

Christmas Party for the Blind

Thursday, December 5

Our 75th annual Christmas Party for the Blind will be on Thursday, December 5 in the Great Hall. This unique mission event welcomes the blind and visually impaired community of Tarrant County and those who assist them. Youth volunteers are needed starting at 5:30 p.m. for setup, hosting our guests, serving dinner, and cleanup (planning to finish by 7:30 p.m.) Parents and siblings of youth are encouraged to help as well, younger siblings of youth need a parent present. Come help for an hour or stay for all the fun, either way hope to see you there! Adults from the congregation are also needed as drivers for our guests who need transportation to the party. Please contact Josh Stewart or Jayne McFarland at 817.335.1231 if you can volunteer.

Highlights from the November Stated Session Meeting

At its Stated Meeting of November 17, the Session:

- Sustained the examination of elders-elect and set the date for ordination/installation for January 12, 2020.
- Elected commissioners to the December 7 meeting of Grace Presbytery at Trinity - McKinney.
- Approved \$45,835 in grants from the Mission Outreach Committee to six ministries locally, nationally, and internationally.
- Approved Adult Church School teachers for the Winter Quarter (December- February).
- Elected Efton Park as Clerk of Session for 2020.
- Received a stewardship update that celebrated increased generosity from the congregation and began writing thank you notes.
- Heard an update from the Susan Beaumont Task Force that the December meeting will include a time for discussion of upcoming recommendations.
- Called a Congregational Meeting for December 8 following the 11 a.m. service to approve Clergy Terms of Call as recommended by the Personnel Committee.
- Received a common prayer from the Spiritual Formation Subcommittee and endorsed its use by the congregation and committees during the pastoral search.
- Prayed for church members and for former pastor Dana Jones and his family on the death of his wife, Kathy.

Year-End Giving

Please keep the following guidelines in mind when planning your year-end giving to First Presbyterian.

You must deliver or mail (and postmark) checks on or by December 31, 2019, to claim a charitable contribution deduction for 2019. Although checks in the offering on the first Sunday in 2020 can be recorded to fulfill a 2019 pledge to the church, they will not qualify for an IRS charitable contribution deduction for 2019, even if the check is predated to 2019 or actually written in 2019. However, checks that are written, mailed, and postmarked in 2019 will be deductible, even though they were not received by the church until 2020. To ensure the deductibility of your church contributions under current IRS guidelines, please do not file your 2019 income tax return until you have received a written acknowledgement of your contributions from the church. Some of your contributions may not be tax deductible if you file your return before receiving a written acknowledgement of your contributions.

Note about Online Gifts: Online gifts will be credited according to the date and time the online gift is submitted.

ORDER POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS

This Christmas, the FPC Worship & Music Committee will be placing live poinsettia plants in worship spaces from December 15– 29. Call Celeste in the church office (817.335.1231 or cfaller@fpcfw.org) by Sunday, December 8 to purchase a plant (\$20 per plant) in honor or memory of loved ones, with a check made out to First Presbyterian Church and "Poinsettias" marked in the memo line.



FPC'S STAINED GLASS, PART 3: THE SEVEN AISLE WINDOWS

Seven single lancet windows, each containing three sections, portray the main events in the life and ministry of Jesus. They are located on the south side of the sanctuary, under the south clerestory windows, and read from left to right as one faces them, with the subjects starting at the bottom and reading up.



Aisle Window 1 – The Advent

a. The Nativity – Shown is the infant Christ child in the manger, watched over by his mother Mary and by Joseph holding a lantern, while surrounding him are the ox and ass of the stable and a small lamb and two birds who have come in from out of doors.

b. The Shepherds – Tending their flock in the fields, the shepherds are frightened by the glory of the Lord who shone about them, and by the voice of the angel of the Lord proclaiming to them Christ's birth.

c. The Magi – The three wise men from the east are shown presenting their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to the Christ child who is seated on his mother's lap.

Aisle Window 2 – Childhood of Jesus

a. In the Temple – As a child Jesus was brought up in the traditions of the Jewish faith. Here, Mary and Joseph are bringing him to the Temple at Jerusalem at the age of twelve.

b. In the Temple with the Doctors – Here the twelve year old Jesus amazes the learned doctors with his understanding and answers their questions. This scene symbolizes the sanctity of learning.

c. In the Carpenter Shop – The boy Jesus is shown learning a trade under Joseph, while Mary his Mother sits in the background sewing. This scene symbolizes the dignity of labor.

Aisle Window 3 – Preparation and start of Ministry

a. Baptism – Our Lord is shown receiving baptism from John the Baptist, who is pouring water on his head as they stand in the river Jordan. Radiance from heaven streams down as the voice of God proclaims, "Thou art my beloved son, in whom I am well Pleased."

b. Temptation – The devil offers Christ all the kingdoms of the world and, having seated Him on a pinnacle of the temple of Jerusalem, tempts Him to cast Himself down and prove that He, as the Son of God, will remain unharmed.

c. Call of the Fishermen – Peter and Andrew are shown heeding the words of Jesus as he says, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men."

Aisle Window 4 – Intimate Ministry

a. Christ and Nicodemus – They are shown on the rooftop at night as Nicodemus tries to comprehend Christ's words, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

b. The Woman of Samaria – Christ is shown talking to the woman at the well of living water that quenches all thirst.

c. In the Home of Lazarus at Bethany – Shown listening to Christ's words are Lazarus and his sisters, Martha who "was cumbered about much serving" and Mary who "hath chosen the good path, which shall not be taken away from her."

Aisle Window 5 – Public Ministry

a. The Sermon on the Mount – Christ is shown seated on the mountain, teaching his disciples the beatitudes and many other sayings.

b. Christ Blessing the Children – Our Lord is shown surrounded by adoring children as he says "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God."

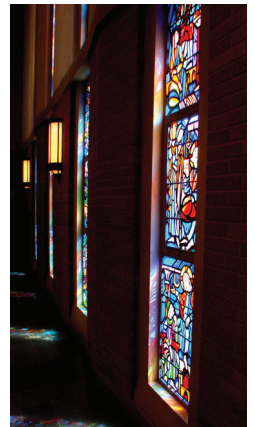
c. "Zaccheus, Come Down" – Zaccheus, chief among the publicans, is summoned down from the tree which he has climbed in order to see Jesus better, and told that he is to have Jesus as his guest.

Aisle Window 6 – Ministry of Healing

a. Healing a Man – Jesus is shown restoring sight to the blind beggar Bartimeus, whose faith made him whole (Mark 10.46-52).

b. Healing a Woman – Shown is the woman with an issue of blood whose faith was so great that merely by touching the hem of Jesus' garment in the crowd, she was healed.

c. Healing a Child – Jesus is pictured raising to life the daughter of Jairus, while her mother and father look on in astonishment.



Aisle Window 7 – Ministry of Miracles

a. The Marriage at Cana – In the presence of the bride and groom and of his own mother, Jesus turns the water into wine for the wedding feast.

b. Feeding the Five Thousand – The miracle is accomplished with the aid of a small lad who had brought five barley loaves and two small fishes. Jesus feeds the multitude and there are twelve baskets of bread fragments left over.

c. The Transfiguration – Jesus is pictured with his face shining "as the sun, and his raiment...white as the light" (Matthew 17.2). With him in glory are Moses and Elijah, talking of Jesus' approaching death. Not shown are the three disciples Peter, James and John, who witnessed the event.

CALLING ALL CRECHES

For the Display Cases outside the narthex for Advent, we would like to do a display of various creches, or Nativity scenes. Beautiful creches exist in all kinds of art forms, from wooden to porcelain to glass. If you have a nativity scene that you would be willing to share during advent, please bring them to the Communications office (across from the main office) by December 2. Please be sure to label them with your name and phone number. We will take very good care of them and they will be displayed in a locked cabinet.

JOYS & CONCERNS

Following are the joys and concerns shared as of November 21, 2019. To respect the privacy of those listed, names are included only when the individuals grant their permission.

Our loving sympathy to...

Family and friends of **Wally Hutchison**, who died on November 17.

Family and friends of **Dave Herfel**, who died on November 7. Survivors include his wife, Moddy Herfel.

Marty and **Lesley McCoy** on the death of his father, Martin McCoy, on November 4 in Shreveport, Louisiana.

Family and friends of **Joe Orr**, who died October 29.

Family and friends of **Deanie Valder**, who died October 29.

Tim and Kelly O'Connor on the death of his father, William O'Connor III, on October 26 in Richardson. FPC family also includes **Claire O'Connor**, **Molly O'Connor**, and **William O'Connor**.

Our loving thoughts and prayers are with...

Francisco Menchaca, **Jay Dickson**, **Mary Farmer**, **Diane Satterlee**, **Brent Comstock**, **Bob Wilson**, **Jerry Brownlee**, **David Nation**, **Paula Robertson**, and **Judy Gasch**, who are recovering from surgery or injury.

Sue Barham, **Frank Stewart**, **Bob Gorham**, **Karl Travis**, **Rush Hart**, **Marilyn Wilson**, **Vera Kendall**, **Phyllis Propes**, **Emma Coley**, **Corinna Nation**, **Lisa Shiner**, **Elizabeth Bean**, and **Frances Blake**, who are dealing with illness or undergoing treatment.

Our caring prayers for extended family include...

Patrick Denton (nephew of **Bill and Pat Gordon**), Lynn Prater (daughter of **Harlene Satterfield**); Bill Neil (brother of **Marilyn Love**), Janet Laminack (cousin of **Julie Sphar** and **Vance Laminack**), John DeMore (son-in-law of **June Sprott**), Lisa Koenig (niece of **Wanda Williams**), Kathy Kline (**Maxine Kruse's** daughter), and Susan Chenault (**Frances Chenault's** daughter).

Prayers for peace in our world, for the safety of Nathan Gunter (**Russell and Vivian Norment's** nephew) who is stationed in Korea. Also for the safety of **Diego A. Saldivar**, who is serving in the US Navy; Diego is the son of **Becky and Rene Saldivar**. And for the safety of **Thomas Shelby**, who is serving in the US Navy, deployed in Japan. Thomas is the son of **Ellen Buck** and the grandson of **Vance and Donna Laminack**.

Prayers for Cindy Corell, our mission co-worker in Haiti. Prayers for peace and resolution for political strife, unsafe conditions, and people unable to get food and basic necessities due to riots.



cultivating roots,
bearing endless fruit

DECEMBER ALL CHURCH BRUNCH
Sunday, December 8 | Seatings at 11 a.m. and noon

Join us as we gather with our church family in celebration of our roots and the fruit we bear! Through your generosity our mission work spreads far and serves many. This event is hosted by the Stewardship Committee and is free of charge.

Come Celebrate FPC Staff!

Reception for Amy Parker, Director of Children's Ministries and Outreach Sunday, December 1 at 12 p.m.

On Sunday, December 1, a reception will be held in the West Concourse at 12 noon to thank Amy Parker for her nearly 20 year ministry at FPC. Amy has accepted a position with the Grapevine-Colleyville school district where she will lead the district's Early Childhood Education program for employees. During Amy's ministry at FPC, she has ushered in the Trinity Trail Rotation model for Church School, overseen the expansion of FPC early education programs to the Early Education Center (Day School and full time childcare), increased mission and outreach engagement for children and families, and partnered with hundreds of families and children in faith development. We are grateful for her ministry among us.



At the reception, we will celebrate Amy's ministry, pray for her as she begins a new chapter in her professional journey and give thanks that she is a member of First Presbyterian and will continue to worship and serve with us! A basket for cards and letters of appreciation to share with Amy will be available at the reception.

Reception for Ruth Cantu, Ministry Assistant Wednesday, December 11 at 4 p.m.

On Wednesday, December 11, a reception will be held in the Parlor at 4 p.m. to celebrate Ruth Cantu's retirement and thank her for her 20 year ministry at FPC. During Ruth's time in the FPC administration office, she not only managed the church's scheduling calendar and supported many of FPC's ministries, but also worked with vendors and organizations throughout the community. Ruth is known as the "go to" in the FPC office, and we are grateful for her 20 years among us. A basket for cards and letters of appreciation to share with Ruth will be available at the reception.





First Presbyterian Church
1000 Penn Street
Fort Worth, TX 76102

PERIODICALS

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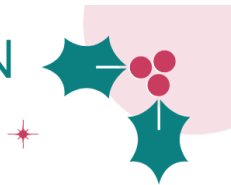
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THE
penn street
LETTER

PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN'S



*Celebration
of Christmas*

Tuesday, December 10

10:30 a.m. Wassail

11 a.m. Worship

12 p.m. Lunch



**Come celebrate the season
with festivities and friends!**

**Please RSVP by Monday, December 2 to
Celeste Falter in the church office at
cfaller@fpcfw.org or 817.335.1231, ext. 261.**



Sunday, December 15

**Members and friends of FPC are invited to enjoy
a Taste of Christmas on Sunday, December 15.**

The Fellowship Committee will be packaging and distributing holiday treats, made by the FPC community, to the congregation after the 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. services. The Fellowship Committee invites everyone to bring a dozen or more of their favorite holiday cookies to share. Sign up at fpcfw.org. Donations may be dropped off December 12 & 13 in the church office or Sunday, December 15 in Room 312.



DECEMBER ADVENT & CHRISTMAS CALENDAR

The month of December is one bursting at the seams with opportunities for connection, celebration, and worship at First Presbyterian Church. From once-a-year special services, which are part of your family traditions, to new and fun fellowship events with church friends, there's something for everyone. But don't let this full calendar add to the season easily overwhelmed with to-do's and checklists. Let FPC be a place for respite, reflection, and renewal this season. A time to remember the familiar yet powerful story of God's love for us in the gift of Jesus' birth. We can't wait to celebrate with you. Details on these events and more can be found on the other pages of this newsletter.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 First Sunday of Advent Morning Worship at 8, 9, and 11 a.m. Advent Labyrinth Walk, 6-7:30 p.m.	2	3	4 Midday Prayer Service, 12 p.m. Organ Concert, 12:30 p.m. Beacons Christmas Party, 5:30 p.m. WOW (Worship on Wednesdays) Advent Worship, 5:30 p.m.	5 Christmas Party for the Blind, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.	6	7 Team FPC @ Jingle Bell Run, 4 p.m.
8 Second Sunday of Advent Morning Worship at 8, 9, and 11 a.m. All Church Brunch, 11 a.m. and 12 p.m. Circles of Christ Christmas Lunch at Mount Moriah, 1 p.m. Follow the Star, 5:30 - 7 p.m.	9 Room in the Inn, 5-7 p.m.	10 Presbyterian Women Celebration of Christmas, 10:30 a.m. EEC Christmas Concert, 6 p.m.	11 Midday Prayer Service, 12 p.m. Organ Concert, 12:30 p.m. WOW (Worship on Wednesdays) Advent Worship, 5:30 p.m. WOW Christmas Caroling at Downtown Rehab, 6:45 p.m.	12	13	14 Christmas Toy Store, 8 a.m.-3 p.m.
15 Third Sunday of Advent Morning Worship at 8, 9, and 11 a.m. Special choral sermon at 11 a.m. Taste of Christmas, after worship WHAM Christmas Party, 2 - 3:45 p.m. Youth Christmas Parties, 4:30 - 7 p.m. Advent Taize Service, 6:30 p.m.	16 Room in the Inn Christmas Party, 5-7 p.m.	17	18 Midday Prayer Service, 12 p.m. Organ Concert, 12:30 p.m. WOW (Worship on Wednesdays) Advent Worship, 5:30 p.m.	19 Men's Breakfast, 7 a.m.	20 Youth Group's Christmas Progressive Dinner, 5:45 p.m. - 10:30 p.m.	21
22 Fourth Sunday of Advent Morning Worship with Baptisms at 8, 9, and 11 a.m. Youth Ski Trip Meeting, 12:15 p.m.	23 Youth Group Reunion Christmas Party for College Students and Young Adults, 5 - 6:30 p.m.	24 Christmas Eve Brunch at Community Crossroads, 10:30 - 11:30 a.m. Lessons and Carols, 12 noon Family Service, 5 p.m. Candlelight Service, 7 p.m. Communion & Candlelight Service, 9 p.m.	25 Merry Christmas! Church Offices and Early Education Center Closed	26 Church Offices and Early Education Center Closed	27	28
29 Morning Worship at 8, 9, and 11 a.m. Youth Ski Trip group departs (through January 2)	30	31	WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES Tuesday, December 24 <div><div>12 noon</div>Lessons and Carols (Sanctuary)<div>5 p.m.</div>Service for families with children (Great Hall)<div>7 p.m.</div>Service with candlelight (Sanctuary)<div>9 p.m.</div>Service with communion & candlelight (Sanctuary)</div>			