

THE Penn Street LETTER

First Presbyterian Church, Fort Worth

MARCH 2020 | Volume 20, Number 3



FACE TO FACE

with Jesus

LENT AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Ash Wednesday, February 26, marked the beginning of Lent - the 40 days, plus Sundays, leading to Easter Sunday. The forty days leading to Easter Sunday provide an opportunity for preparation, study, and meditation on Jesus' final days and the meaning of his ministry - then and now. Below are ways you can observe Lent with the First Presbyterian Church community.

Midday Prayer Services

Wednesdays, March 4, 11, 18, 25, and April 1 at 12 p.m. in the Sanctuary

These 30-minute services offer reflection on the season with prayer, music, and message.

Lent Afternoon Organ Concerts

Wednesdays, March 4, 11, 18, 25 and April 1 at 12:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Enjoy a 30-minute organ concert immediately following the Noon Lent services in the Sanctuary. A light lunch will be served after each concert. The concerts and lunch are free and no reservations are required.

Lenten Prayer Groups

Wednesdays through April 8, 1-2 p.m.

Learn and practice fresh ways to pray from your day on Wednesdays during Lent. Learn more at fpcfw.org/examen.

Lent Encounter Groups

Sundays, Mondays, and Thursdays through April 6

The Encounter Groups are weekly one-hour small group experiences that delve deeper into the preaching texts and our encounter with them as individuals and a community. Learn more at fpcfw.org/encounter.

Sunday Sermon Series

The Sunday morning preaching series and Encounter Groups will focus on six face-to-face encounters people have with Jesus in the gospel stories.

Week 1: Matthew 4.1-11; Jesus and the Tempter

Week 2: John 3.1-7, Jesus and Nicodemus

Week 3: John 4.5-42, Jesus and the Woman at the Well

Week 4: John 9.1-41, Jesus and the Blind Man

Week 5: John 11.1-45, Jesus and Lazarus

Week 6: Palm/Passion Sunday: Jesus faces Jerusalem

HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday, April 5

8 a.m. in the Chapel

9 a.m. in the Great Hall

11 a.m. in the Sanctuary

Monday-Wednesday, April 6-8

Midday Prayer Services at 12 p.m. in the Chapel

Maundy Thursday, April 9

12 p.m. in the Chapel

5:30 p.m. in the Great Hall

7 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Good Friday, April 10

12 p.m. in the Chapel

7 p.m. Tenebrae Service in the Sanctuary

Easter Sunday, April 12

7 a.m. Sunrise Service in the Memorial Garden

8 a.m. in the Chapel

9 a.m. in the Great Hall

11 a.m. in the Sanctuary

To learn more about any of these opportunities, visit FPCFW.ORG/LENT



PASTOR'S LETTER

Dear Friends,

With the month of March comes the season of spring and, also, this calendar year, the beginning of the liturgical season of Lent, the forty days in which we prepare ourselves for Holy Week and Easter. Each week in Sunday and Wednesday worship, we will gather with our praise and prayers, our songs and hymns, and listen for God's Word to nourish us through this journey.

This year our scriptural focus is "Face with Jesus," and each Sunday we will think about particular encounters that Jesus had in Matthew and John. During our half-hour Midday Prayer services on Wednesdays at noon, we will consider encounters Jesus had with unnamed characters or groups of people in the gospels. What do we learn about God and about ourselves through these encounters?

Additionally, you can reflect on our Lenten theme of "Face to Face with Jesus" during Lent through Encounter Groups. (Sign up at fpcf.org/encounter.) Encounter Groups are small groups that meet weekly for six weeks to engage in reflection on Sunday's scripture and our lives as disciples of Jesus. These groups provide a way to get to know other church members in our congregation and deepen our faith.

In whatever ways you devote time and attention during this season of Lent, may it deepen your commitment to love God and neighbor as you are strengthened through God's grace and mercy. May we meet Christ face to face and see the face of God in one another.

Peace in the journey,

P.S. Be sure to stay after our Lenten Midday Prayer services for an organ recital in the sanctuary, followed by a lunch.

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 APRIL issue of the Penn Street Letter are due **Wednesday, MARCH 18**. Submissions for the weekly Penn Street Online emailed newsletters are due the Wednesday prior to each week's issue. Please send to Pam Burkholder at pamb@fpcf.org or bring by the church office.

FOLLOW US

Do you follow First Presbyterian on social media? If not, find us on the following sites and follow along for photos, reminders, encouragement, and more.



@firstpresfw



@firstpres_fw



@firstpres_fw

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A LOOK AT SOME RECENT CHURCH ACTIVITIES...



Kirkin of the Tartans, February 2. Above: Tartan bearers prepare to process into worship. Below: Jack Walker presents the haggis at lunch.



Above: WHAM Ukulele Class had a wonderful time learning and making music during February. Below: The Boomers enjoyed an evening of fellowship and dinner on January 16 and helped pack over 200 sack lunches for day laborers.



WHERE'S YOUR TREASURE?



Celebrating 10 Years of the All Church Retreat! You're Invited to the All Church Lunch on Sunday, March 29

On Sunday, March 29, at 12:15 p.m., come to the Great Hall to celebrate and see the history of the last 9 years of First Pres's annual All Church Labor Day Retreat. We'll enjoy lunch with a dessert that takes you back to the campfire, share stories and pictures of past retreats, and have a multi-generational panel talking about how this ministry has impacted them over the years. We'll enjoy a slideshow (if you have pictures from previous retreats, send them to Scot Latta at scot@thelattas.net) and you can pick up some fun Mo Ranch swag! If you have a previous Retreat t-shirt, please wear it that day. To RSVP for our March 29 lunch, visit fpcfww.org/allchurchretreat.

This year's theme is "Where's Your Treasure?" and is a wonderful way to enjoy God's beauty at Mo Ranch while connecting across the generations in our congregation. Online registration for the retreat will open that day on our website.



CHILDREN'S SUMMER MINISTRY

Mark your calendars now for these exciting summer camps for children. Registration details will be coming soon.

ECO CAMP:

June 14-19

Ferncliff Camp in Little Rock, AR
For Completed 1st-5th Graders

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL:

June 22-25

9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

For Entering Kindergarten through Completed 5th Graders

PRE-K MUSIC & ARTS CAMP:

June 8-12

9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

For Ages 4 through Entering 1st Graders

MO-RANCH CAMP:

July 12-18

Overnight Camp at Mo-Ranch in Hunt, TX

For Ages 8-15 Years

ELEMENTARY MUSIC & ARTS CAMP:

July 20-24

9 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.

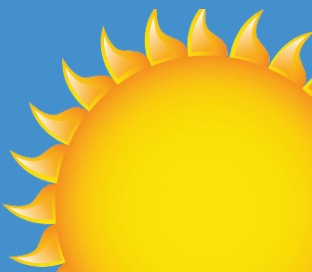
For Entering 2nd through 6th Graders

MISSION ON THE MOVE:

July 27-31

9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

For Entering 4th through 8th Graders



BE INSPIRED...

Below are some upcoming opportunities for being inspired into a life of discipleship through church events in the coming weeks.

Drawing 101 Class for Children

An exciting new Worship Arts Class will begin on March 1 for children ages 2nd-5th grades. Drawing 101 will be taught by Austin Stubblefield from March 1-29 at 5:15-6 p.m. In this fun and informative class, children will learn the fundamentals of drawing. Please reserve your spot at an easel today at fpcf.org/wham (there's a limit of 12 students). For more information, contact Rebecca Sawyer (rsawyer@fpcf.org) or 817.335.1231, ext. 253).

Grief Group

**Sundays, March 1 - April 5
4 - 5:30 p.m. in Room 312**

First Presbyterian Church is offering a six-week Grief Support Group led by the Rev. Dawn Hood-Patterson. The group offers a supportive and encouraging space in which to experience God's presence, comfort, and strength.

Dawn is a Chaplain at Cook Children's Medical Center, and is completing her PhD in Pastoral Theology, at Brite Divinity School, TCU. We are delighted to welcome her to First Presbyterian Church.

This group is free and open to members and friends of FPC and the community. To register, contact Celeste in the church office (817.335.1231 or cfalter@fpcf.org).

Men's Breakfast

The men of First Pres gather on the third Thursday of each month for intentional conversation or a special speaker, a shared meal (\$5 per person), and prayer with other FPC men. You'll find connection here! For reservations or more information, visit fpcf.org/men.

Why You Need a Will

You're invited to learn "Why You Need a Will" at a free dinner and panel discussion on Friday, March 6 in the Great Hall. Dinner will be served at 5:45 p.m. and the discussion begins at 6:15 p.m. The panel includes James Miller, Karen Gordon, and Randall Johnson. Childcare will be provided. Reservations are required. Sign up at fpcf.org/will or contact Hannah (hwarren@fpcf.org or 817.335.1231) in the church office.

Boomers Night Out: March 26

Come enjoy an evening with Hard Days Night, a Beatles tribute band, at The Shops at Clearfork (5188 Monahans Ave, Fort Worth) on Thursday, March 26. We will gather at 6:30 p.m. for the 7 to 9 p.m. concert. This event is free, but food and drink vendors will be available on site. Questions? Contact Eric Varnon (evarnon@fpcf.org or 817.335.1231).

MOMS Meetings

1st Thursdays & 3rd Wednesdays

11-12:30 p.m. in the Parlor

MOMS (Mothers Offering Mothers Support) is a ministry of FPC for all mothers. Gather with other mothers for support, encouragement, Bible study, fellowship, and friendship. For working moms, stay-at-home-moms, and all moms in between! Come as your schedule allows, no need to attend every meeting or the whole meeting. Lunch included (\$7). Free childcare available. RSVP at fpcf.org/moms.

ENGAGE THE WORLD...

Below are a few ways you are invited to serve others through First Presbyterian Church mission and outreach efforts in the coming weeks.

FPC Forming Refugee Welcome Team

**Orientation Meeting:
Sunday, March 1 at 12:15 p.m.**

FPC is forming a Refugee Welcome Team in partnership with Refugee Services of Texas. A Welcome Team is a group of 6-12 people who work together for 3 – 6 months to welcome a refugee family to Fort Worth. Mentors assist refugee families by working towards self-sufficiency in several areas, including practicing English, providing extended cultural orientation, assisting with community integration, and short-term goals such as applying for learner's licenses and Texas state IDs, opening bank accounts, and enrolling children in Head Start programs.

A required orientation led by RST will be held on Sunday, March 1 from 12:15 - 2 p.m. in room 237. For questions or to register for the orientation, contact Robyn Michalove (robynm@fpcf.org or 817.335.1231).

Healthy Eating for Diabetes Class Coming to Community Crossroads

**Tuesday, March 17 from 5:30-6:30 p.m.
Community Crossroads, 1516 Hemphill**
Come learn about the basics of healthy eating for diabetes management in this interactive class with a Certified Diabetes Educator. Topics will include:

- Learning which foods and portion sizes affect blood sugar
- Learning how to read food labels
- Learning how to plan meals that keep blood sugar under control

To register for this free class, contact Mary Kay Roberto (marykay.roberto@sbcglobal.net) or Andrea Frankenfield (amfrankenfield@hotmail.com).



Cuba Partner Trip: June 2020

We will take our sixth Cuba Partner Trip this summer, June 12-19, 2020, to visit our partnership churches in Union de Reyes, Sabanilla and Cidra. As a partner trip, the emphasis is on building relationships with our sisters and brothers in Christ in Cuba. We will visit our three partner congregations, and worship with them. We will meet church members at various events for the elderly and young. We will learn about the Presbyterian Church connection in Cuba. We will enjoy some time at the beach, and see a few historic sites. While it is helpful to speak Spanish, it is not required as other trip members can translate. Other helpful skills include working with children and youth; a flexible outlook and a desire to engage in relationship.

Kristin Glass will lead the trip of 10-12 people. We will fly from DFW to Havana (through Miami) on American Airlines. We will stay in nice, safe hostels for five nights in the city of Matanzas (the same hostels where church members of the two previous FPC trips stayed). The cost of the trip will be around \$800-1000 a person, depending on the final cost of lodging and airline flights. We will stay two nights in Havana, most likely in the accommodations of a local congregation. We will travel by bus in country.

- There is an informational meeting on March 8 at 12:15 pm in Room 312.
- Trip applications are due to Robyn Michalove (robynm@fpcf.org) by March 15, in order to have time to obtain our visas for travel.
- You must have a valid US passport that expires after December 20, 2020.
- Those going to Cuba should plan to attend all pre-trip planning meetings.



Calling All Volunteers!

The 2020 Homeless Connect will be Thursday, April 23 from 8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. at FPC. Volunteers are needed to assist 300+ people experiencing homelessness as they come to FPC for this annual event. This event is a way for the homeless to *connect* with social services and supportive help. Full or partial volunteer shifts are available. For more details or to get involved, please contact Donna Laminack (dlyn22@hotmail.com or 817.927.3090).

Session Highlights

At its Stated Meeting February 16, 2020, the Session:

- Opened its meeting with prayer led by Elder Brian Hocker
- Heard an update on the Community Crossroads Renovation progress
- Approved the 2019 Church Statistical Report to the General Assembly which shows a net gain in membership to 1,821
- Received an introduction to the Matthew 25 General Assembly Initiative and voted to become a Matthew 25 congregation <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/>
- Updated the Child Protection Policy
- Acted on the request of the Pastor Nominating Committee to approve the Ministry Information Form
- Accepted an invitation from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary to welcome a two year Pastoral Resident to First Presbyterian beginning in summer 2020*
- Acted on the Susan Beaumont Task Force recommendations, including a reduction in the size of the Session*
- Voted to call a Congregational Meeting for Sunday, March 22 following the 11 a.m. service to act on recommended changes to the Congregation's Bylaws

**see articles below for more detailed information*

Pastoral Residency Program at FPC

Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary received a significant grant to create a Post-Graduate Pastoral Residency Program beginning in 2020 and the Session voted unanimously at its February 16 stated meeting to accept the seminary's invitation to become one of two host congregations for a Pastoral Resident beginning in June 2020. The Session celebrated the health and vitality of our congregation and staff by recognizing that we were invited to become a residency site even in the midst of a pastoral transition.

The Pastoral Resident will be a new graduate of Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary (May 2020) who is cleared for ordination as a Minister of Word and Sacrament. As an ordained Minister, the Pastoral Resident will serve a two year term on the staff of First Presbyterian, during which time they will experience the broad ministry of the congregation, sharpen their ministry skills, engage in specific learning goals, and complete a residency project. The Pastoral Resident will work collegially with our current pastors and will be supervised by the Rev. Dr. Michael Waschevski.

The Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary Post-Graduate Pastoral Residency program funds the salary for the Pastoral Resident during the two year residency. First Presbyterian will provide the benefits package for the Resident. (Medical, pension, social security offset, continuing education, and professional expenses.) Interviews with potential Pastoral Residents will begin soon. Future editions of the *Penn Street Online* and *Penn Street Letter* will introduce the Pastoral Resident once they have been selected.

Changes to the Session of FPC

In 2018 the Session engaged the services of church consultant Susan Beaumont to review our governance and leadership structures at First Presbyterian. After receiving her report in the fall of 2018, the Session appointed a Task Force to evaluate her report and lead the session in a process of making decisions on her recommendations. The Task Force began its work in late 2018.

At the January 2020 meeting of the Session, the Task Force made a report with potential recommendations for Session consideration at its February Stated meeting. Their recommendations focused primarily on the size and function of the Session and expanding leadership in the committee structure of the congregation.

The Susan Beaumont Report noted that the size of the Session at First Presbyterian Church (currently 45-47 elders) is too

large for strategic thinking and in-depth discussions to occur at Session meetings. In fact, our Session is one of the largest in the Presbyterian Church USA. Currently all committees of the church are chaired by Elders serving on Session, which demands a great deal of an elder's time and energy that is needed for strategic thinking outside of committee business. Elders chairing all committees limits the broader involvement and development of church members in leadership in the ministries for which they are passionate and committed. Allowing most committees to be chaired by members not serving on the Session expands involvement of members in the fuller life and governance of the church. Session members would serve as liaisons to the committees to ensure good communication with the Session.

The Session voted at its February 16 meeting to reduce the size of the Session to 23 elders. (Three classes of seven elders, and a provision that allows up to two elders under the age of 21 to serve a two-year term.) The Congregational Bylaws grant authority to the Session to increase or decrease the size of the Session. This transition in size will occur over a three-year period, as no incumbent elder elected by the congregation may have their term altered.

The Session voted to keep the Board of Trustees at nine members. Six shall be Ruling Elders in active service on the Session and three may be Ruling Elders not in active service on the Session. (This action requires a change in the Congregational Bylaws, which will be presented at a March 22 meeting of the Congregation following the 11 a.m. service.)

The Session voted to organize its leadership to allow Session committees to be chaired by active members of the congregation, at Session's invitation, except for the Board of Trustees, the Nominating Committee, and the Finance Committee, which shall be chaired by Ruling Elders in active service on the Session.

The Session also voted to authorize the Task Force and the Nominating Committee to report to Session by their June 2020 meeting with a plan for populating Session committees and selecting committee chairs for 2021 and beyond.

JOYS & CONCERNS

Following are the joys and concerns shared as of February 20, 2020. To respect the privacy of those listed, names are included only when the individuals grant their permission.

Our loving sympathy to...

Dick and Betty Landers on the death of his sister, Nancy Walker, on February 10 in The Woodlands.

Tim and Kelly O'Connor on the death of his mother, Connie O'Connor, on February 7 in Dallas. Other FPC family includes Clayton and **Claire Armstrong**, **Molly O'Connor** and **William O'Connor**.

June Wright on the death of her grandson, Luke Wright, on February 2.

Judy Stricklin on the death of her brother-in-law, Jerry Willis, on January 18, in Glen Rose.

Mary Kay and **Matthew Roberto** on the death of her sister, JoAnn Rice, on January 31 in Peoria, IL. Other FPC survivor is **Katherine Roberto**.

Our loving thoughts and prayers are with...

Lynda Hamilton, **Joel Salazar**, **Ann Florsheim**, **Francisco Menchaca**, **Jay Dickson**, **Mary Farmer**, **Diane Satterlee**, **Brent Comstock**, **Bob Wilson**, **Jerry Brownlee**, and **David Nation**, who are recovering from surgery or injury.

George Sullivan, **Ann Chappell**, **Janelle Eklund**, **Elizabeth Johnson Pense**, **Sue Barham**, **Frank Stewart**, **Bob Gorham**, **Karl Travis**, **Rush Hart**, **Marilyn Wilson**, **Phyllis Propes**, **Emma Coley**, **Lisa Shiner**, and **Frances Blake**, who are dealing with illness or undergoing treatment.

Our caring prayers for extended family include...

Walter Daniel (father of **Raymond Daniel**), Nancy Hatfield (mother of **Sarah Haddock**), 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 the people of Haiti.

Our congratulations and best wishes to...

Clayton and **Claire Armstrong**, who were married on February 1 in the sanctuary. Claire is the daughter of **Tim and Kelly O'Connor**.



CALENDAR

Below are a few highlighted events in March. More at fpcfw.org/calendar.

SUNDAYS IN MARCH

- 8 a.m. Worship in Chapel
- 9 a.m. Worship in Great Hall
- 10 a.m. Church School
- 11 a.m. Worship in Sanctuary
- 4:30 p.m. Youth Group Activities and Dinner

WEDNESDAYS IN MARCH

- 9:30 a.m. Wellness: REFIT Class
- 12 p.m. Lent Midday Prayer
- 12:30 p.m. Lent Afternoon Organ Concert
- 1 p.m. Lenten Examen Prayer Group
- 5:30 p.m. Worship On Wednesdays (+ dinner, classes) at Community Crossroads
- 7 p.m. Middle School Girls Group
- 7:30 p.m. High School Bible Study

FRIDAYS IN MARCH

- 10:30 a.m. Wellness: Tai Chi

SUNDAY, MARCH 1

- 11 a.m. Pancake Brunch begins
- 12:15 p.m. Refugee Welcome Team Orientation

SUNDAY, MARCH 8

- 12:15 p.m. Cuba Partner Trip Informational Meeting

SUNDAY, MARCH 15

- 6:30 p.m. Wholeness & Healing Service

SUNDAY, MARCH 22

- 12:05 p.m. Congregational Meeting

FRIDAY, MARCH 27 - SUNDAY, MARCH 29

- All Day KidQuake Children's Spring Camp



THE
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LETTER

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WWW.FPCFW.ORG

ALL CHURCH PANCAKE BRUNCH



**SUNDAY, MARCH 1
11 A.M. & 12 NOON
GREAT HALL**

ALL ARE INVITED AND EVERYONE EATS FOR FREE!

HOSTED BY THE EVANGELISM COMMITTEE

