



First Presbyterian Church

The Cross and Crown



May 2017

Extending God's Grace throughout Northeast Texas

CONTRIBUTOR'S PEN: JULIE ADKINS

Several years ago I received a phone call from the women's organization of a Presbyterian church in Dallas – not the one I was serving as pastor, one “north of the river” – asking if I would lead a day-long retreat for them. Did they have a topic in mind? I asked. “Finding time for spirituality in the midst of a busy life,” was the response. Gulp. I don't know *anyone*, except maybe for members of cloistered religious orders, who feels that they have adequate time set aside for their spiritual life. I certainly don't claim to “have my act together” in such a way that I would want to be pointed out as a role model for everyone to emulate . . . ! And yet . . .

The invitation, and my subsequent acceptance of it, got all kinds of eventually-useful thoughts dancing through my head. *Of course* all of us need to find time that we can take away from our busy-ness to nurture our own inward life, our own spiritual journey, our own one-on-one connection with our Creator. But it seems to me that *another* part of our spiritual journey ought to involve finding God *within* the muddle of our lives, rather than *apart from* it.

In the beginning, God created order out of chaos. Does it ever occur to us that, in the middle of some hated house-cleaning task, we are doing the same thing? When we make clean something that was dirty . . . when we put things back in their proper place . . . when we make lovely again something which had become ugly . . . we are doing God-like work. Even the busy-ness of housework (which, if you've been to my house, you can tell I hate!) can be the occasion for nurturing our spirituality and connecting with God.

The last time you cut the grass, or pruned a tree, or planted flowers; you participated in God's plan for humankind to “till and keep” the garden. When you prepare a meal for your family or friends, you nourish them in the same way that God provided food for the Hebrew people in the wilderness. When you create a piece of music, a poem, a work of art; you have a hint of what the Divine creative power must be like. When you spend time with someone you love, you are also spending time with the divine spark within that person, that piece of God's image which they hold. When you care for a child, you nurture and protect in much the same way that God nurtures and protects us, God's own children.

No part of our lives can be lived apart from God. “Nothing can separate us from the love of God.” (thank you, Paul!) While we *do* need time away from “daily life” every now and then, we also – most of us, anyway – need also to be more deliberate about finding God in the very midst of daily life. God is not only on the mountaintop; God is also down in the valleys where we seem to spend most of our time. God is not only to be found in splendid isolation; God is also in the midst of God's people. God is not only heard in the midst of peace and quiet; God also speaks through jumble and chaos.

Your daily life, my daily life, is full of God. We only need to open our eyes.

May 4 is National Day of Prayer

ATTENTION: NEW PRAYER REQUESTS MONTHLY

In order to keep our prayer requests current, our prayer list will start fresh at the beginning of each month. To keep your prayer request in the bulletin, write it on the back of an offering envelope, the attendance sheet or a piece of paper (please make sure your name is on it) or contact the church office, firstpres@peoplescom.net or 903-342-3011. We do not need the reason, unless it is death or an accomplishment, which go under a different heading. Also, please give relationship to you so others know who they are praying for. And PLEASE WRITE LEGIBLY.

As our prayers are answered, we give God thanks. For those with continued needs, we continue to pray.

Pastor

Session members:

Class of 2017
Bob Kelm and Armel Crocker
Class of 2018
Rick Drennan and
Class of 2019
John Clark and Rhonda Thomas
Treasurer
Jerry Poe

Contact us:

Tina Hammer, Secretary
PO Box 493
301 S. Walnut St.
Winnsboro, TX 75404
Office: 903-342-3011
Fax: 903-342-3011
Email: firstpres@peoplescom.net
Office hours: M-Th, 9-noon

FPC Website:

www.easttexasgrace.org

Cross and Crown articles:
firstpres@peoplescom.net

Attendance:

April 2—28

April 9—38

Easter, April 16—59

April 23—37



Noisy Offering

May: Blessing Box

**June: Winnsboro Summer
Lunch program**

July: Camp Gilmont



From the Desk of Ruth Shelton

When prayer leads to Peace:

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you.
I do not give to you as the world gives.
Do not let your hearts be troubled
And do not be afraid. - - John 14: 27

When President Lincoln prayed for peace, it wasn't the sweet hand-holding peace young people would sing about one hundred years later, It was God's peace---a lasting peace in the hearts of all people. It behooves us again today to humble ourselves before God, confess our sins, and pray for clemency and forgiveness--and for peace.

Here we see the prayer of President Lincoln, in 1863, designating "a day of national humiliation, and prayer." His observation of our nation was eerily similar to what we see in America today:

We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of Heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth, and power as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us.

It behooves us, then, to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness.

We must pray for the president as our nation's leader and a professing member of the Church, the body of Christ. "Who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?" (Esther 4: 14).

As brothers and sisters in Christ with our president, we pray not only for him, but also alongside him.

Taken from: In God We Trust-- *When Patriotism Is Not Enough*; Jim Riemann, with Dick Parker; Tyndale House Publishers, 1996.

When mailing to the church please use:

P. O. Box 493

Winnsboro, TX 75494

Mail sent to Chestnut address will be "returned to sender" starting in May



SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

There is no doubt we have the most loving and caring church family! Jane Els has volunteered to teach the *Children's* Sunday School class. She is wanting to share this responsibility with another teacher, either alternating every other Sunday or every other month. We sincerely appreciate Jane's commitment to serve in this capacity and pray for another volunteer or two to come forward to help out.

The *Youth* continue working on their project for Christmas in the Park along with their teacher/mentor Becky Poe. They also continue with outreach missions via the Noisy Offering.

The *Adult* Sunday School is being taught by volunteer Sunday School members on a rotating basis, which allows Rev Dr. Akins to be involved in other activities of the church that occur at the same time as Sunday School.

All of these volunteers deserve our admiration and appreciation as we are very grateful for their dedication and generosity. Please let them know how much they are appreciated.

NOTICE: As in the past, there will be no Sunday School during the summer. Therefore, Sunday School for all ages will not be in session June, July, or August. It will resume September 3, 2017.

Submitted by the Christian Education Committee

Dear Friends,

(Becky and Jerry, Beth, Carolyn H, Carolyn S, Debbie, Judy, Della, Laquita, Nyla & Don, Susan & Ann, Tricia & John)

Under Becky Poe's orchestration, we all made a GREAT team at Marabeth Russell bereavement luncheon! Our Russell Family Dinner clearly demonstrated to the Russell/Rollins families how much we loved and admired Marabeth.

Thank you for the great food you prepared (the leftovers were delivered to the house by Becky and Laquita), the dishes you washed (so we didn't have to use paper/Styrofoam), the tables and chairs you moved (so we could sit them at round tables), and the personal attention you showed to our guests so they could relax and have a few minutes of pleasant family time before Marabeth's service.

Well done, good and faithful servants.

General Fund Summary - Jan - Mar 2017			
	Actual	Budget	Variance
Income	\$18,918.06	\$21,624.94	\$2,706.88
Expense	\$ 12,367.03	\$20,242.26	\$7,875.23
Net	\$6,551.03		

**Note: Bank balance 3/31/2017 was \$61,919.69.
Restricted funds totaled \$34,213.10, while unrestricted funds totaled \$27,706.59.**

Obituary for Marabeth Russell



Marabeth Rollins Russell, 84 of Winnsboro, TX a good and faithful servant went to be with her Lord on April 7, 2017. She leaves behind her husband of 62 years Ed Russell; her daughter Deborah Miller and husband Bill of Portsmouth, VA, son Ed Russell, Jr and wife Lori of Fairhope, AL, son John Russell of Carrollton, TX and daughter Carrie Russell of Morrilton, AR. Grandchildren Leanne Marshall (husband David), Molly Russell, Jake Russell and Garnett Russell. Two brothers - Jim Rollins (wife Jackie) of Tyler, TX and Ed Rollins (wife Kay) of Corinth, TX. Many treasured cousins, nieces, nephews and extended family. And countless friends. A Native Texan, she was born in San Angelo, TX to the late James Daniel Rollins and Carrie Belle Kelpen Rollins, and raised in Terrell, TX. A graduate of Terrell High School she attended TCU where she was awarded a Bachelor of Science in Math. Shortly after graduation she married her college sweetheart on a hot September afternoon and began a family. They shared their lives from TCU to Virginia, back to Texas and to eventually retire in Winnsboro, TX. Along the way she accumulated many friends and touched so many lives. She was an active member of First Presbyterian Church in Winnsboro, Lyons College President's Council, Women's Bible Study Group, P.E.O. Sisterhood and Order of The Eastern Star Chapter #967. She supported and participated in many Presbyterian outreach programs and projects. Her love of people and doing for others, filled her life with many volunteer jobs. She never learned to say "No". For Marabeth, family was everything. She epitomized what was good in this world and was a lady in every sense of the word. Her absence will be felt by many and we are truly grateful for the years we had. Visitation was held on Tuesday April 11, 2017 from 6pm to 8pm at Beaty Funeral Home in Winnsboro, TX. A funeral service will follow on Wednesday April 12, 2017 at 2pm in the Beaty Funeral Home Chapel. Rev. Dr. Julie Adkins, Rev. Peggy Rounseville and Rev. H.P. Hosey will be conducting. A private Interment will be held in Terrell, TX. The family would request in lieu of flowers that a donation be made to First Presbyterian Church of Winnsboro (PO BOX 493, Winnsboro, TX 75494), Morgan's Mercy Mansion or a charitable organization of your choice.

Have You Looked at the Church Website Recently?

Armel Crocker (armel@armel-crocker.com) and Becky Poe (rspoe52@gmail.com) have been working on updating the Church website (easttexasgrace.org). There is still some “cosmetic” work to be done and some content to be added, but you are invited to visit the website and email your suggestions to them for additional ideas and improvements. Also, please let them know if you have church-related photographs that they can use on the website.

To access the password-protected online MEMBERSàDIRECTORY, call the Church Office (903.342.3011) to get the password.

The early use of REMIND (a free communication tool that is designed to help Julie and the Session connect instantly with members and friends of the church) has been very successful. If you would like to get these real-time messages from First Presbyterian Church (FPC), follow the instructions below:

To receive **text** messages: text **@fpc316** to the phone number **81010**.

If you would rather get your messages via your email address, type the following URL in your internet browser: <https://www.remind.com/join/fpc316> and follow the instructions on the screen (full name + email address).

Note: You can sign up to receive both **texts** AND **emails**; and you have the option of opting out later on if you decide not to continue receiving REMIND messages from the church. The REMIND tool will be used primarily when the church office is closed and our normal email messages or phonetree announcements cannot be sent.

If you have any questions, contact Tina (903.342.3011) or Becky Poe ([903.850.8203](tel:903.850.8203)).

PW will meet Monday, May 1 at 10 a.m. in the yellow house. We will honor our mentor, Marabeth, by continuing to meet with this organization that was so dear to her heart. We will study the last lesson in our book and briefly discuss lesson 8 since we missed that month.

Look for more information to come about a luncheon in early June for ALL the women of the church.



First Presbyterian Church

Birthdays/Anniversaries

May 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 10 AM PW office 2-4 pm Bible Study	2	3 6 pm Supper & Bible basics Louis Bond	4 National day of prayer	5	6 Noon Al-Anon
7 COMMUNION	8 2-4 pm Bible Study Bob Kelm Lanny Wren	9	10 6 pm Supper & Bible basics	11	12	13 Noon Al-Anon
14 Mother's Day	15 2-4 pm Bible Study	16	17 6 pm Supper & Bible basics Debra Gaines	18	19	20 Noon Al-Anon Armel Crocker
21 Family Lunch	22 <i>Cross & Crown articles due by 9AM</i> 2-4 pm Bible Study	23 <i>Session reports due by 11 AM</i>	24 6 pm Supper & Bible basics	25 Ruth Appleby	26 Annv. Baber	27 Noon Al-Anon
28 Noisy Offering: Blessing Box Session	29 Memorial Day Office closed	30 Ruth Shelton	31 6 pm Supper & Bible basics	No ringer or choir practice in May, unless contacted		