



First Presbyterian Church

The Cross and Crown



February 2017

Extending God's Grace throughout Northeast

CONTRIBUTOR'S PEN: JULIE ADKINS

"It is so like adults not to be able to tell the difference between a vision and a mirage." Macrina Wiederkehr in A Tree Full of Angels. (One of my all-time favorite books!)

At some point in our lives – or, perhaps, at many points! -- we run head-on into the pain of learning that “the way things are” is a long way off from “the way things ought to be.” Unless we have mastered the art of denial (!), sooner or later we have to come to terms with the gap between our dreams and visions on the one hand, and cold hard reality on the other. And once we have seen the gap, we have to decide how we are going to deal with it.

Too many of us, I think, decide that it's simply too painful to live with the distance between the “real” and the “ideal.” Since there's a limit to how much we can change our reality, we cope with the problem by giving up on the vision of the ideal. We claim that it's just a fantasy . . . a mirage . . . foolishness. From now on – none of that nonsense! We will live with our feet firmly planted in the Real World and refuse to waste our time dreaming about how things could be, or should be.

I remember – with some embarrassment, now – a brief period of time almost thirty years ago now (!) when I dated someone a number of years older than I. At one point he informed me, somewhat loftily and condescendingly, that when I reached his age I would be just as cynical as he was (is!), and that would be how I would know I was mature. I sensed he was wrong at the time, but it was useless to argue. What I saw as visions, he saw as mirages. Needless to say, that relationship didn't last long. (Thank goodness.)

Of course, cynicism is a common reaction/response to the world we live in. When our hopes and dreams are shattered time and again, it's tempting and it's very easy to become jaded, skeptical, mistrustful. Better to give up the vision than to risk getting hurt again. Better to quit reaching than to try again and fail.

But there is also another option. We can choose to continue to dream dreams and see visions, knowing that others will call them mirages and delusions, but continuing just the same. We can choose to believe that “the way things are” is not the way things must always be. When Martin Luther King, Jr. said “I have a dream,” he knew all too well that there was a lot of nightmare to be fought through before the dream could become a reality. Nevertheless, he chose to continue to dream. And so must we.

The hope we have in Jesus Christ is not just a hope for our own eternal lives, although it includes that. We also have hope for this world . . . a vision of what it would look like transformed by the power of God working through us and in us and even in spite of us. It is not a mirage. It is more real than any of the everyday “reality” that causes us so much grief. And if enough of us will believe it and continue to dream it . . . someday, the vision will become the reality. We have God's word on it.

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 Ralph Gore
Class of 2018
Rick Drennan and Leeann Moos
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:

January 1—30

January 8—24

January 15—24

January 22—36



Noisy Offering

**February: Winnsboro Meals
on Wheels**

**March: N.E. TX. Children's
Advocacy Center**



From the Desk of Ruth Shelton

Praying in the name of Jesus

Two thousand years ago Jesus promised his disciples, "If you pray in my name, I will do it" (John 14: 14 NKJV). If we consider ourselves as Christ's people, we probably would agree that we pray in Jesus' name. "If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you" (John 15: 7 NKJV). The apostle John gave us some additional clarification: In his first New Testament letter, John urges readers to continue believing in the name of the Son of God, and immediately adds, "Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, He has the petitions we have asked of Him" (I John 5: 14-15).

Here we have then promise of answered prayer, yet we see different conditions mentioned also: How can we be sure that we are "abiding in Him", and "asking according to His will"? there are clarifications of what it means to "pray in Jesus' name."

What's in a name? In the ancient Middle East, names were chosen for their meaning, and a name was regarded as a reflection of a person's character. The meaning of Jesus' name, therefore, did much more, giving His disciples access to His father. When He said, "If you ask anything in My name, I will do it." He was saying that when our requests line up with His own heart and will, He gives us what we ask for.

What does asking in the name of Jesus look like? The answer comes to us in that well-known model prayer that mirrored our Lord's own heart. When His disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray (Matthew 6; Luke 11), He showed them how to pray in His name.

Over time, we may actually discover more confidence in our requests as we learn to leave with Him the "hows" and "whens" of His answers.

Taken from: Been Thinking About, by Mart De Haan; Sept. 2010.

The annual meeting of the congregation of First Presbyterian Church has been called for Sunday, February 5, immediately following the morning worship service. The Clerk and various committee chairs will make their annual reports to the congregation.

By order of the session; Julie Adkins, Moderator

Note: PW will be held in the church office building (the yellow house) this month.

We will discuss lesson six from our study, Who Is Jesus? This month we will take a look at knowing Jesus through the lens of the book of Hebrews.

At Family Lunch in January, the Presbyterian Women renewed the practice of giving towards the Birthday Offering. Each month those who celebrate a birthday that month may choose to donate according to her age whether it's in pennies, dimes, or dollars. (62 years old? You may choose to give 62 cents, 62 dimes, or 62 dollars.) The Birthday Offering provides funds to worthwhile mission programs that are not included in General Assembly mission support. Read more about it at <http://pma.pcusa.org/ministries/pw/>.



Last month we continued our growth in welcoming a new woman to our study. Even if you can't come every month, you are welcome to join us when you are able.

It's a new year. Is one of your resolutions to spend more time in the Word? Joining PW will be a great way to achieve that goal. Everyone is welcome!

General Fund Summary Jan - Dec 2016			
	Actual	Budget	Variance
Income	\$74,261.37	\$85,720.00	\$11,458.63
Expense	\$ 63,797.70	\$85,720.00	\$21,922.30
Net	\$10,463.67		

Note: Bank balance 12/31/2016 was \$49,956.18 Restricted funds totaled \$27,710.55, while unrestricted funds totaled \$22,245.63.

Breaking Bread

Our January Family Lunch was a huge success! We enjoyed each others' company and food, and the Presbyterian Women renewed the practice of giving towards the Birthday Offering. (You do not need to be a regular PW attendee in order to participate. See the PW article for details.) A big thank you goes to everyone for bringing plenty of food. Last time we suggested bringing a main dish and a side or dessert. For February, let's try bringing any two dishes that you wish. It's always such a treat to sample the variety of food set on our table and to have a chance to visit with each other. Let us break bread together!



Inreach and Outreach Committee. (OR Care Committee) Due to the fact we have no full time minister, we need more people to help with hospital visits for members. We have several folks doing a great job, however we need backup. If you are interested, please contact either of us.

Thank you, Leeann Moos, Chairman & John Clark, Helper

This key was found in the street by the office. Please contact the office, if it is yours.



To All Women of the Church
Please join us for the "Pattycake Shower"

Date: Monday, February 6, 2017
Time: 11:30am
Location: Yellow House (FPC Office Building)

Light snacks and finger foods will be served.

Please come and enjoy the fun!

To RSVP or for any questions:
Becky Poe rspoe52@gmail.com or 903-629-3460
Rhonda Thomas hrthomas@suddenlink.net or 903-638-6484



This is for Tricia Clark

A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU!

I would like to express my sincere gratitude for all of the prayers, cards, support, and love that all of you have so graciously shared with me for the loss of my brother, Ernie, and especially to those that attended the viewing and funeral service. This degree of love is more comforting than words can possibly express, at a time when it is needed the most.

I would also like to thank all that have supported me during my term as Building and Grounds Elder, especially Beaven, Dan, Ralph, Bob, Hurschel, John Clark, Jerry Poe, Tina, and all in the congregation that have volunteered when needed. I look forward to future service as a committee member.

Sincerely,
Larry Pendergrass

First Presbyterian Church

Birthdays/Anniversaries

February 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 6 pm Supper & Bible basics	2 Kelli Conradson	3	4 Noon Al-Anon
5 COMMUNION Annual congregation mtg.	6 10 AM PW office 11:30 Pattycake shower-office 2-4 pm Bible Study	7	8 6 pm Supper & Bible basics	9	10	11 Noon Al-Anon
12	13 2-4 pm Bible Study	14 Marianne Wilson	15 6 pm Supper & Bible basics	16	17	18 Noon Al-Anon
19 Family Lunch	20 Presidents' Day Cross & Crown articles due by 9AM 2-4 pm Bible Study Gene Ash	21 Session reports due by 11 AM Helen Poteet	22 6 pm Supper & Bible basics LaVerne Baber	23	24	25 Noon Al-Anon
26 Session Noisy Offering: Winnsboro Senior Center/Meals on Wheels	27 2-4 pm Bible Study	28				