



First Presbyterian Church

The Cross and Crown



December 2017

Extending God's Grace throughout Northeast

PASTOR'S PEN: REV. DR. JULIE ADKINS

Have you seen the “Martha Stewart’s Holiday To-Do List” that seems to circulate around this time every year? I can’t remember everything that’s on it (and there isn’t space for it all anyway), but it includes some gems like:

December 1 – Blanch carcass from Thanksgiving turkey. Spray paint gold, turn upside down and use as a sleigh to hold Christmas cards.

December 10 – Decorate home-grown Christmas tree with scented candles handmade with beeswax from my backyard bee colony.

December 16 – Take Dog apart. Disinfect. Reassemble.

December 22 – Adjust legs of chairs so each Christmas dinner guest will be same height when sitting at his or her assigned seat.

Though I sometimes have difficulty with the Mary and Martha story, it helps me if I envision Martha as more of a Martha Stewart-type character: someone who isn’t merely trying to prepare her home for a guest, but who is a slave to perfectionism. How many times have I missed out on half the fun of a gathering I’m hosting because I’m still puttering around trying to get everything perfect? How many times have I decided not to invite anyone at all because the thought of trying to get the house perfectly clean was overwhelming? How many times has the “Martha” inside me prevented the “Mary” from finding the support, the nurture, the fellowship, that she needs?

It’s taken me a long time to learn – and I’m still learning, but doing better! – that my guests come to see me, not my house; that they come to share food and friendship, not to see whether I dusted the top of the refrigerator; that they probably do care if there’s dog hair in the pumpkin pie but they don’t care if there are paw prints on the windows. What matters isn’t being perfect. What matters is being together.

Mary had it figured out all along. God doesn’t expect that we be perfect, only that we be present. Shut off the vacuum cleaner, put away the Perfect Table Decorations, and celebrate God’s coming to us!

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 Becky Poe
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:

October 29—28
November 5—32
November 12—36
November 19—29
November 26—28



Noisy Offering
December: Salvation Army
Red Kettle



From the Desk of Ruth Shelton

REFLECTING GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS

This is how the birth of Jesus came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

Matthew 1: 18 - 19

Joseph, the husband of Mary, is a dim figure in the background of the Christmas drama. He drops offstage almost immediately and is never heard of again. Again he is known for one thing alone: He was "a righteous [good] man."

Joseph was a man in whom mercy triumphed over justice. When he discovered that Mary was pregnant, though he could have shamed her and saved himself a good deal of embarrassment, he chose to shield her from disgrace. (A good man would never humiliate anyone, especially the woman he loves.)

Joseph was a man who, though he could not quite grasp the immensity of what was going on around him, was quick to respond to what he perceived to be the will of God.

Joseph was a man whose mercy translated into a strong, enduring love for Mary that transcended self-interest; a man who left everything--home, country, and business--and fled to Egypt to save Mary and the baby Jesus.

In our Scripture record, Joseph never utters a word--not one word, not one syllable, not one sound--yet he speaks to us today.

Where are those Joseph-men today? Why are they so few? Good old boys come and go, but good men are much harder to find.

Finding work is more highly valued than being good these days, or so it seems to me. We hustle through life in the hope that if we do something long enough and well enough--and make enough money--we'll be worth something someday. That's why when we meet an individual for the first time, we usually ask, "What do you do?" For what a person does is what matters most, or so we seem to believe. The better question is the one we ask small children, "When you grow up, what do you want to be?"

Most of us want to be something, but first we have to do: We have a career to manage, money to make, a ministry to carry out---miles to go and promises to keep. That's our besetting, beguiling sin; always chasing after that elusive "something more." One more deal to make, one more hill to climb, one more challenge to overcome, one more program to enact. But as Thoreau would warn us, such preoccupation leads to a life of quiet desperation, be it healthy, wealthy, or otherwise.

The better course is to "seek first his [God's] kingdom and his righteousness," as Jesus said, for one quest leads inexorably to the other (Matthew 6:33).

When we design our days to make time for God, we reflect each day a little more of His righteousness. And the time to begin is right now.

From SEEING GOD/"Out of the Ordinary," pp65-66.--By David Roper



Hanging of the Greens

Saturday, December 2, 2017

9:00 am

Church Sanctuary

Please come and help decorate the Sanctuary

for Advent and Christmas

Refreshments provided

General Fund Summary - Jan - Nov 2017			
	Actual	Budget	Variance
Income	\$59,206.15	\$72,083.32	\$12,877.17
Expense	\$ 46,082.12	\$73,469.91	\$27,387.79
Net	\$13,124.03		

Note: Bank balance 10/31/2017 was \$54,604.48.
 Restricted funds totaled \$18,144.22, while unrestricted funds totaled \$36,460.26.



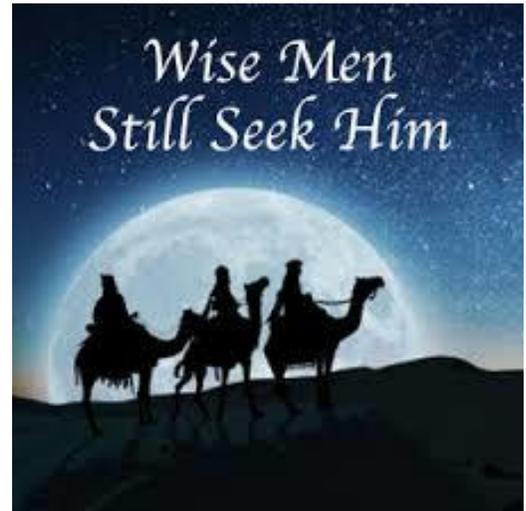
Reminder: PW Bible Study

Monday...December 4th
Chapter 4

10:00 – 11:00 a.m.
In conference room of
church office building

Merry Christmas

From the Worship/Christian Education
Committee



A meeting of the congregation of First Presbyterian Church, Winnsboro, Texas is called for Sunday, December 10, immediately following the morning worship service. The purpose of this meeting shall be for the congregation to vote to close the position of installed pastor, and to dismiss the Pastor Nominating Committee with thanks.

Session members and others with knowledge of the church's financial situation will speak briefly about the need for this action, and will be available to answer questions. Session members and the Moderator will also be able to answer at least some questions about what happens next.

**By order of the Session,
Julie Adkins, Moderator**

Ruth O. Appleby

(May 25, 1921 - November 24, 2017)

Ruth Owen Appleby, 96, passed away Friday, November 24, 2017 in Tyler, Texas. Born in Crafton, Texas, she was the last surviving child of the late William Oscar and Eunice (Early) Owen's 11 children. She had six sisters and four brothers. In 1940 she married J.D. Wise. He passed away in 1978. She later married Norman Appleby in 1980 until his death in 2002. She is survived by daughter Carolyn Wise Hylton of Winnsboro, Texas; two grandsons: Scott Steger of Dallas and Gary Steger of Orlando, Florida; great-grandchildren: Richard, Robert, Joshua and Johanna; one great-great granddaughter Cheyanne. Visitation and service will be Friday, December 1, 2017 at Donnelly's in Irving. Visitation at 1PM with service at 2PM. Burial at Oak Grove Memorial Gardens will immediately follow.

Visitation Friday, Dec 01, 2017 1:00 PM
Donnelly's Colonial Funeral Home
606 West Airport Freeway
Irving, Texas 75062



NOTE: For an updated calendar, please go to easttexasgrace.org

December

First Presbyterian, Contacts, Holidays in United States

Dec 2017 (Central Time)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
26 Jane Eis Nolsy Offering 9am - Chime 9:30am - Sunday 9:45am - Choir	27 Cross & Crown 2pm - Bible study	28 Cheyenne Brown	29 6pm - Supper &	30	1	2 9am - Hanging of 12pm - Al-Anon
3 1st Sunday of Anlv. Communion 9am - Chime 9:45am - Choir 12pm - Session	4 10am - PW 2pm - Bible study	5	6 Becky Poe 6pm - Supper &	7	8 Stevie Brown	9 Dan Mickel 12pm - Al-Anon
10 2nd Sunday of 9am - Chime 9:45am - Choir 12pm - Congregati	11 2pm - Bible study	12	13 6pm - Supper &	14	15	16 12pm - Al-Anon
17 3rd Sunday of Family Lunch 9am - Chime 9:45am - Choir	18 2pm - Bible study	19 9am - Session	20 6pm - Supper &	21	22	23 12pm - Al-Anon
24 4th Sunday of Christmas Eve 9am - Chime 9:45am - Choir 12pm - Session 5:30pm - Chrletma	25 Christmas Day OFFICE CLOSED 2pm - No Bible	26	27 6pm - Supper &	28 Carrie Russell Chris Holloman	29	30 12pm - Al-Anon
31 New Year's Eve Nolsy Offering 9am - Chime 9:45am - Choir	1 New Year's Day OFFICE CLOSED 10am - PW 2pm - Bible study	2	3 6pm - Supper &	4	5	6 12pm - Al-Anon