



First Presbyterian Church

The Cross and Crown



December 2016

Extending God's Grace throughout Northeast

CONTRIBUTOR'S PEN: JULIE ADKINS

I've stayed in touch with only a few of my college friends . . . actually, those who ended up going into the ministry! . . . with one exception. Harry intended to go to seminary, but for reasons I'm not altogether sure about, he never quite got there. One of many things I liked about Harry was that every year, he designed and made his own Christmas cards, and they were like nothing else I had ever seen. Since his death from AIDS several years ago, December just hasn't been quite the same.

Harry's most memorable Christmas card had on its cover pictures of the following people (much to my initial puzzlement): Julius Caesar, Genghis Khan, Adolf Hitler, Josef Stalin, Napoleon, and several others I have since forgotten. At the top, it said: "History is full of men who would be God . . ."

Inside was a simple drawing of a baby in a manger, ". . . but only one God who would be man."

Ultimately, that's what all the Christmas stories are about: a God who refuses to act like everyone thinks a God should act. Weak rather than strong. Simple rather than wise. Of humble parents, not royalty. Resting in a stable, in a manger; not a gilded crib in a palace. Surrounded by barnyard animals, not servants to wait on him. Who is this God?

This is Immanuel, God-with-us. God-as-one-of-us. Not merely in human "form," but real flesh-and-blood human. Born, living, and dying as we do . . . so that some day we shall be raised as he was. *Gloria in excelsis Deo.*

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, either write it on the back of your offering envelope (please make sure your name is on the envelope) 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 2016

Jane Els, Larry Pendergrass

Class of 2017

Bob Kelm and Chris Holloman

Class of 2018

Rick Drennan, Ralph Gore and Leeann Moos

Treasurer

Jerry Poe

Contact us:

Tina Hammer, Secretary

PO Box 493

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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 30—33

November 6—50

November 13—27

November 20—27



Noisy Offering
December: Winnsboro
Resource Center

FPC-W Family News

Tidbits of news about our church family

Marianne Wilson's mother, Mary Ruth Darnell, celebrated her 91st birthday on Nov 1st. She still lives alone and drives herself in Marble Falls, Texas. Dan and Marianne's son, Jacob is attending Austin Theological Presbyterian Seminary in Austin. He lives in a dorm on campus.

John and Patricia Clark are anticipating being first time grandparents! Their son and daughter-in-law, Nathan and Kristin, are expecting a baby, due December 10th. They live on the USAF base in Altus Oklahoma.

Ed and Marabeth's granddaughter, Molly, is a graduate of Clemson in microbiology engineering and has worked the past three years with the Peace Corps in Zambia, Africa. She returned to the US on November 18th. If you'd like to read about her many adventures, her blog site is "Ramblings of Outlier Molly Russell" (Word Press).

And a reminder that Becky Poe still collects the following items. Thank you for your contributions!

Box Tops for Education

Campbell's Soup UPC strips

Pop tops off aluminum drink cans

Proof of purchase from Community Coffee bags and commercial boxes

Dead batteries to keep out of landfill

Empty printer cartridges



From the Desk of Ruth Shelton

THE FOLLOWING IS THE ORIGINAL WORDS OF LONGFELLOW'S POEM:

(Later became known as *Christmas Bells*)

I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old, familiar carols play'
 And wild and sweet
 Their words repeat
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Till ringing, singing on its way,
The world revolved from night to day,
 A voice, a chime,
 A chant sublime
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Then from each black accursed mouth
 And with the sound
 The carols drowned
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

It was as if an earthquake rent
The hearth-stones of a continent,
 And made forlorn
 The household born
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And in despair I bowed my head;
"There is no peace on earth," I said;
 "For hate is strong,
 And mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!"

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
God is not dead, nor does He sleep;
 The Wrong shall fail,
 The Right prevail,
With peace on earth, good-will to men."

*Read more about the origin, etc. on Wikipedia,
The free encyclopedia!*

CHRISTMAS SONGS BY ANOTHER TITLE

See how many of the following songs of the season you can identify by their mangled titles. First set of correct responses emailed to Julie (drjadkins@aol.com) wins a prize! (NOTE: one of these is nearly impossible. If you get stuck, send an incomplete list; you might still win if no one figures it out!)

1. My Sole Desire for the Yuletide Season Is Receipt of a Pair of Central Incisors
2. Celestial Messengers from Splendid Empires
3. The Event Occurred at One Minute After 11:59 p.m. with Good Visibility
4. Ornament the Enclosure with Large Sprigs of Berry-Bearing Evergreen
5. Testimony of Witness of Maternal Parent's Infidelity with Kris Kringle

6. In a Distant Bovine Diner
7. Village Expectations of a Yuletide Emissary
8. The Antlered Quadruped with the Cerise Proboscis
9. Miniature Nazarene Village
10. Twenty-Five Letter Alphabet, Initially Speaking

11. The Approach of the Holiday Commemorating the Birth of Christ is Becoming Evident
12. May Jehovah Grant Unto You Hilarious Males' Retirement
13. Those of You Who Are True Return Home
14. Are You Detecting the Same Aural Sensations As I Am?
15. Sir Lancelot with Laryngitis

16. The Lad Is a Diminutive Percussionist
17. Jubilation to the Entire Terrestrial Globe
18. Personal Hallucination of an Alabaster December 25
19. A Chocolate for the Psychiatrist
20. Heavenly Cherubs Announce in Song – Listen

21. Duodecimal Enumeration of the Passage of the Yuletide Season
22. Depart and Do an Elevated Broadcast
23. Who's the Mystery Kid?

General Fund Summary Jan - Oct 2016			
	Actual	Budget	Variance
Income	\$61,808.33	\$71,433.33	\$9,625.00
Expense	\$ 51,879.00	\$71,433.33	\$19,554.33
Net	\$9,929.33		

Note: Bank balance 10/31/2016 was \$28,961.08 Restricted funds totaled \$8,713.05, while unrestricted funds totaled \$19,398.71.

Operation Christmas Child

Many thanks to Tricia Clark, Carolyn Stewart, Ryan Burdett, Leeann Moos and Jane Els who gathered last week to pack your donations for Operation Christmas Child. After a hearty chili dinner we laughed our way through the Reid building assembling 20 boxes for an assortment of kids in an unknown country. The packages have been dropped off and are on their way. When we find out what country they went to we'll let you know.

For a small congregation this was an ambitious project but every box was full to the brim. (And, yes, a soccer ball WILL fit in a shoe box--once you deflate it.) Thanks again for making 20 kids a very Merry Christmas!



Thank you all, so much, for the cards, caring words and "casseroles" (gift card) in honor of my dad, George. I am truly blessed to be a part of First Presbyterian Church, even though I am not an actual Member. He did not want a service of any kind, however, Georgla at Ganny's Pie Shop has expressed that she would like to have a lunch honoring dad and Suzanne Daniel, another regular customer who was killed earlier this week. I'll let you know.

Tina Hammer



For those of you who did not hear the post-Christmas-In-the-Park report at church, let us again thank the members and FPC-W friends who gave their "time & talents" to make this year's effort a great success for the Presbyterian Women and Youth. We counted nearly 30 "saints" who helped make things, donate things, buy things and/or work to set up and run our five tables. For all your efforts on behalf of the Presbyterian Women and Youth, we have deposited \$1,257 from our sales.

Our left-over inventory will be available one last time on Sunday, Nov 27th in the connecting room between the Sanctuary and the Reid Building.

Sincerely, Presbyterian Women & Youth

First Presbyterian Church sanctuary is the place to be December 12th.

Come Monday, December 12th at 2:00 and hear the Quitman Rings play Christmas music.

Then we all get to join them with chimes as Christmas carols will be played.

Quitman Rings is a handbell choir whose purpose is to play for schools, community groups, nursing homes, etc. Most of our ringers live in Wood County; most in Quitman or at Holly Lake Ranch. Quitman Rings has been in existence for about 4 years. Most of this group has played together for the past 2 years.

JoAn

Jerry & Cathy Hibbs (HLR); Ann Sparks (HLR); Becky McPherson; Dick & JoAn White; Anna Wilkins (HLR); Barbara Ford (HLR?); Andy (Mrs. Charlie) Smith (HLR); Becki Wimp; Lou Ann Farrell

First Presbyterian Church

Birthdays/Anniversaries

December 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3 Noon Al-Anon Aniv. Werner/Rounseville
4 2nd Sunday Advent COMMUNION	5 10 AM PW 2-4 pm Bible Study	6 Becky Poe	7 6 pm Supper & Bible basics	8 Stevie Brown	9	10 Presbytery @Westminster PC, FW New Officer training Noon Al-Anon
11 3rd Sunday Advent	12 2 PM Quitman Rings Hand Bell choir, Sanctuary (instead of BS)	13	14 1:30 PM Finance Comm. Mtg. 6 pm Supper & Bible basics	15	16	17 Noon Al-Anon
18 4th Sunday Advent CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING taken Family Lunch	19 2-4 pm Bible Study	20	21 6 pm Supper & Bible basics	22	23	24 CHRISTMAS EVE service 6 PM & Communion Janie Walenta
25 CHRISTMAS Noisy Offering: Winnsboro Resource Center	26 Cross & Crown articles due by 9AM no Bible study today	27	28 6 pm Supper & Bible basics Chris Holloman Carrie Russell	29	30 Catherine Spurgeon	31 Noon Al-Anon