



First Presbyterian Church

The Cross and Crown



November 2016

Extending God's Grace throughout Northeast

CONTRIBUTOR'S PEN: JULIE ADKINS

One of the milestones we reach as children is learning to “color inside the lines.” I can remember, though only vaguely, the sense of satisfaction I had when I could finally control my own hand and finger movements enough to keep my coloring within the black outlines of the pictures in my coloring book. Now my pictures really looked like something! No more scribbles and wild slashes of color going every which way. I could keep my colors inside the lines ... I had passed another hurdle on the way to being a grown-up.

I didn't know at the time that many of the greatest artists don't color inside the lines. They move the lines any way they like ... or they draw the lines in different places ... or they make their colors and then draw the lines around the colors ... or they never use lines at all. As a child, I didn't need to know that. I had to learn the rules and live by them for a while before I could decide whether I needed to break them in order to do something even better. (Unfortunately, I've never been much of an artist, but the analogy is still a good one!)

Science has often developed in much the same way. Einstein, though never an outstanding student during his school days, knew enough about mathematics and physics to know what the accepted wisdom was, the proven theories, the equations for solving problems. Yet his discoveries challenged the conventional wisdom, proved that Newtonian physics was not enough to explain the world we live in. Einstein colored outside the lines! He knew where they were, yet realized that the accepted lines were keeping us from understanding the world and advancing our knowledge. Of course, some of Einstein's discoveries were so far outside the accepted “lines” that they disturbed even him. He spent a fair amount of time in the middle of his life trying to disprove some of his own theories because they made him so uncomfortable!

I wonder if our faith journey isn't a lot like the journey of art, or science, or other of life's learnings. Part of our growing up and growing into the faith involves learning where the lines are, what the boundaries are, and how to stay inside them. We accept and even welcome the limits placed on us, because they teach us important things.

But without blurring the lines, we would never have had Monet. Without moving and bending the lines, there would never have been a Picasso. Without stretching the lines to the breaking point, there would be no quantum physics. Sometimes, lines get in the way. What happens then?

It seems to me that a part of what it means to be a mature Christian is that first we know where the lines are, we honor them for what they have taught us, and we respect the boundaries they define. However, we also know that the lines we have drawn may sometimes place limits on God and God's activity in the world. And so, sometimes we may discover that we need to blur the lines, or move the lines, or stretch them beyond the point where they have previously been stretched. We do so knowing that we could be wrong, and trusting God's grace to straighten us out if we are! At times in the past, we have rearranged the lines and found that we were right (think of the Reformation!). At other times, we moved them and turned out to be wrong. But without risk, there is no faith. And without God's grace, we are all without hope – inside or outside of the lines.

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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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 2—45

October 9—32

October 16—24

October 23—36



Noisy Offering

November: American Legion

December: Winnsboro Resource Center

New address:

Jennifer Zimmerman/

Nate Fitzgerald

405 Molly Lane

Lindale, TX 75771



From the Desk of Ruth Shelton

THE SEVENTH STANZA:

(READING: LUKE 2: 8 - 14)

In the summer of 1861, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's wife, Frances died tragically in a fire. That first Christmas without her, he wrote in his diary, "How inexpressibly sad are the holidays." The next year was no better, as he recorded, " 'A merry Christmas,' say the children, but that is no more for me."

In 1865, as the American Civil War was dragging on, Longfellow's son joined the army against his father's wishes and was critically injured. On Christmas Day that year, as church bells announced the arrival of another painful Christmas, Longfellow picked up his pen and began to write, "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day."

The poem begins pleasantly, lyrically, but then takes a dark turn. The violent imagery of the pivotal fourth verse ill suit's a Christmas carol. "Accursed" cannons "thundered," mocking the message of peace. By the fifth and sixth verses, Longfellow's desolation is nearly complete. "It was as if an earthquake rent the hearth-stones of a continent," he wrote. The poet nearly gave up: "And in despair I bowed my head: 'There is no peace on earth,' I said."

But then, from the depths of that bleak Christmas day, Longfellow heard the irrepressible sound of hope. And he wrote this seventh stanza.

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!"

The war raged on and so did memories of his personal tragedies, but it could not stop Christmas. The Messiah is born! He promises, **"I am making everything new!"** (REV. 21: 5).


OUR DAILY BREAD, (DEC. '15) TIM GUSTAFSON.



Music Notes

The chime choir is meeting from 9:00 - 9:30 Sunday mornings. We are preparing music not only for Advent and Christmas, but also to play during November. There always seems to be a stand missing a player, so if you want to dabble with ringing, come join us.

The choir meets from 9:45 - 10:30 on Sunday mornings. We're putting together some nice music and even using guitars! The choir has grown and we continue to welcome new singers.



CHICKEN
SPAGHETTI

The Presbyterian Women and Youth will be selling containers of **frozen** Chicken Spaghetti again this year in conjunction with their Christmas in the Park booth. Each container serves 2-3 generous portions and sells for \$10.

You can pre-order yours by filling in this form and giving it to Becky Poe at Church or mailing it to her at PO Box 937, Winnsboro, 75494.

Deadline for pre-orders will be Monday, Nov 7th.

Name _____ # Containers _____ @ \$10 each. Total: \$ _____

Please make payable to "Presbyterian Women."

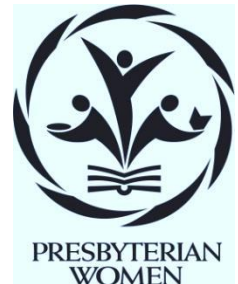


Pastor Search Update

The PNC continues to search for a pastor. There is no news to report. Please pray for wisdom and guidance for the PNC, the pastor God has chosen for us, and the role ALL our church members have in this process.

Monday, November 7th in the Reid Building at 10 AM our Bible Study will be looking at "According to Luke" - "Who is Jesus?". Reading Luke 4:16 -21; Luke 16: 19 - 31 and as much as you can of Luke, the key idea will be "Rejected by his own, Jesus, prophet of God turns the world upside down with his teachings."

Hope you will join us before all the busy activities in November and December.



Does anyone recognize this Toyota car key? It was found in the church parking lot several months ago and we have not been able to find the owner. Possibly a visitor at Morgan's Mercy Mansion? Please contact our office to claim it.

Session highlights from July and August (September/October minutes have not yet been finalized and approved):

- Accepted the resignations of Betty Ash and Darrell Wanker from the Reid Fund Committee; named Carolyn Stewart and Armel Crocker to fill the vacancies. Ed Russell is serving as temporary Moderator of the Committee until a new person can be elected and trained.
- Discussed the need for a greater variety of music within the worship service.
- Agreed upon the need for a Sunday school class for young children (pre-elementary through early elementary) and parceled out tasks to be sure this happens starting in September.
- Approved reorganizing the session's committee structure into three committees with multiple functions, with two session members serving on each. Details of this are still being worked out, but the major divisions of work are to be:
 - Church Administration: Personnel, Building and Grounds, Finance
 - Christian Education and Worship
 - Fellowship/Congregational Care and Outreach
- Received Molly Lennon into membership by Reaffirmation of Faith.
- Heard reports from Building and Grounds about work being done to prepare the manse for a new pastor, upgrade of the sanctuary sound system, and ongoing work on the playground; as well as the usual regular maintenance chores.

Christmas in the Park

Saturday, November 12, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Winnsboro City Auditorium, City Park

We are needing crafts, baked goodies, re-gifted items, plants, etc.
(Donations are now being collected in the Youth Building.)

Call or email Becky Poe (903.629.3460) if you can help
or if you have items you plan to donate.

Proceeds benefit Presbyterian Women mission projects and youth program.

| General Fund Summary Jan - Oct 2016 | | | |
|--|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Actual | Budget | Variance |
| Income | \$55,517.97 | \$64,290.00 | \$8,772.03 |
| Expense | \$ 48,423.88 | \$64,290.00 | \$15,866.12 |
| Net | \$7,094.09 | | |
| Note: Bank balance 9/30/2016 was \$26,315.29 Restricted funds totaled \$8,677.05, while unrestricted funds totaled \$17,261.61. | | | |



Meet Debbi Elmer, the Artist

If you've not had the opportunity to meet and talk with Debbi Elmer at church, you are really missing out!! She, along with her husband, Larry, and family, Judy and Brad DeWees, moved to Holly Lake Ranch and joined our church earlier this year. Debbi jumped in with both feet – chime choir, vocal choir, plays guitar and piano, and is active in PW. But what you might not know about Debbi is that she is an exceptional glass artist with a strong sense of style and extensive experience in

multiple art fields. Debbi is all about giving of her time and sharing her knowledge, and in fact exhibited great patience as she led several ladies of PW in a glass ornament making class (the products of which will be sold at our *Christmas in the Park* booth).

Debbi Elmer established *Timberidge Glassworks* in Texas in 2010 and has created original kiln formed glass ever since. Her studio is a short walk behind her home, and she travels several times a year to attend workshops and art shows. Every piece she creates has its own story or interpretation. She uses a variety of color blending and delicate layering to allow each piece to showcase different and detailed components

Debbi will have an exhibit at the *Winnsboro Art and Wine Festival* November 11th and 12th.

When you attend the Winnsboro Festival, you can't miss Debbi's welcoming smile and beautiful artwork. So, be sure you stop by and tell her "hello" and see what beautiful things she has created. Our church is blessed to have Debbi, Larry, Judy, and Brad.

Hanging in Debbi's studio is a plaque that reads:

"When I stand before God at the end of my life, I would hope that I would have a single bit of talent left and could say, "I used everything you gave me." ~ Erma Bombeck

<http://www.timberidgeglassworks.com/>

First Presbyterian Church

Birthdays/Anniversaries

November 2016

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|---|--|---|--------------------|---|
| | | 1 Claudia Moore | 2 6 pm Supper & Bible basics | 3 | 4 | 5 Noon Al-Anon Set clock back |
| 6 COMMUNION 9:00 AM Chime practice 9:45 AM Choir practice Congregation mtg. Daniel Wilson | 7 10 AM PW 2-4 pm Bible Study | 8 | 9 6 pm Supper & Bible basics Kelly Drennan | 10 Rhonda Thomas Bonnie Vander Schaaf | 11 Veterans Day | 12 Christmas in the Park Noon Al-Anon Vanessa Spurgeon |
| 13 9:00 AM Chime 9:45 AM Choir | 14 2-4 pm Bible Study | 15 | 16 1:30 PM Finance Comm. Mtg. 6 pm Supper & Bible basics | 17 | 18 Dinah Dennis | 19 Noon Al-Anon |
| 20 Family Lunch 9:00 AM Chime 9:45 AM Choir | 21 Cross & Crown articles due by 9 AM 2-4 pm Bible Study | 22 11 AM Session reports due to office Nyla Kettleson | 23 6 pm Supper & Bible basics | 24 Thanksgiving Day Office closed | 25 | 26 Noon Al-Anon Jane Els |
| 27 1st Sunday Advent Noisy Offering: American Legion 9:00 AM Chime 9:45 AM Choir SESSION | 28 2-4 pm Bible Study Cheyenne Brown | 29 | 30 Last day to order Poinsettia's 6 pm Supper & Bible basics | | | |