



First Presbyterian Church

The Cross and Crown



July 2017

Extending God's Grace throughout Northeast Texas

CONTRIBUTOR'S PEN: JULIE ADKINS

Given the distance between Winnsboro and Waxahachie, few if any of you will have the chance to visit my home office, much less to see the "mouse pad" sitting next to my computer. So let me tell you about it! It features Curious George, standing on one foot with arms outstretched, balancing a large ball on his head. I can't tell whether the smile on his monkey face is smart-alecky or blissful – either one would be in character! His presence reminds me never to take myself too seriously. (For example, I choose not to nitpick the fact that George is an ape, not a monkey ... he has no tail. This is what comes of studying anthropology ...)

I loved the Curious George books as a child. Like him, I have always been curious; but entirely unlike him, I've always been a bit cautious. A psychologist might say that George represents my "shadow side": aspects of my personality which have always been there but are largely untapped. He was braver than I, but also more reckless. He got in trouble more than I ever did, but also had adventures I would never have attempted. Well, yes, it was easy for him; he's a fictional character – and a monkey (I mean, ape)! But George also gives me a glimpse of another side of myself that sometimes begs to be let out to play.

We spend most of our adult lives trying to be competent, responsible, dependable. Like the "man in the yellow hat," we are sometimes left cleaning up the messes left behind by the Curious Georges around us. And while we don't always enjoy doing that, we understand it to be part of what it means to be "grown up" and in charge. If we don't take responsibility, who will? Certainly not George, balancing the ball on his head or floating away with the helium balloons or off on one of his other adventures. If the work is going to get done, if tasks are to be accomplished, if progress is to be made; then someone has to Be Responsible and be sure that it happens.

Of course, there is nothing in this world wrong with being competent, responsible, or dependable! But inside each of us (sometimes, way down deep inside!), there is also a fun-loving, curious, rebellious little monkey who needs to break the rules, explore the world, show off, test the limits, balance a ball on our heads while others are working. When we suppress him completely, we miss out on a piece of what it means to be human. Some days, we do have to be serious and responsible. Other days, what we really need is to cut loose and play. I mean, even God took it easy on the seventh day!

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While the PW does not meet during the summer, the members are looking ahead to our new study, *Cloud of Witnesses: The Community of Christ in Hebrews* by Melissa Bane Sevier. We are exploring ways that we might make our meeting day and time more accessible to more women of the church. Look for more information in August. Meanwhile, we continue to collect the Birthday Offering during Family Lunch each month. If you have missed the opportunity to honor the birthday of a friend or loved one and would like to add to that collection, see Becky Poe, our treasurer, or any of the members of PW. We can get that money to the right spot.

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:

May 28—35

June 4—26

June 11—31

June 18—32

June 25—30



Noisy Offering

July: Camp Gilmont

August: back to school

supplies for MMS (held for Jan. semester)



From the Desk of Ruth Shelton

THE MOST POWERFUL TRUTH

PSALM 103: 19:

"His sovereignty rules over all."

The single most powerful, liberating, peace-giving truth I've ever learned in God's Word is the fact that He is sovereign! It has been a mainstay in my life. Resting in the sovereignty of God has held me through all the trials, all the pain--everything. God is in control, and therefore in everything, I can give thanks--not because of the situation but because of the One who directs and rules over it.

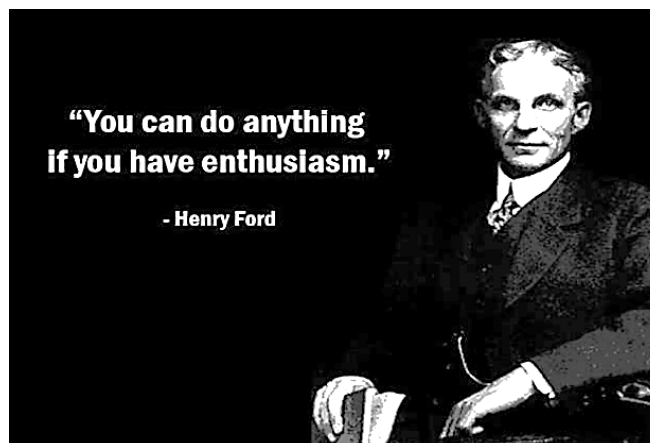
We find our joy not in the heat of the flame but on the fact that the Refiner is right there controlling it. The fire is controlled fire. It isn't a purposeless fire, and it isn't a fire to destroy us. It's a purifying fire.

Therefore we don't focus on the flames or stare at the fuel being added to make the flame hotter. If we did, we would only want out of the situation. But by keeping our eyes on the Refiner, who never leaves the silver and the crucible unattended, we can endure, because we trust Him.

I can look back at every single trial and tragedy, at every hurt and every suffering in my life, and say, "God, You've used this to make me more like Jesus." From the picky little things like having to standing in line when some salesclerk is inefficient, to the piercing pains like my husband's committing suicide or my father's death---I can hold on to those things in the light of the knowledge of God's sovereignty. I can walk in meekness in submission to God, knowing He has used these disappointments and will use them to make me more and more like Jesus.

Taken from: AS SILVER REFINED/Learning to Embrace Life's Disappointments; by Kay Arthur; pgs. 117-118

P.S. Can you relate? I can, and I know that in my disappointment, pain, and wondering, my God has worked out His plan for me (and for you)! R. S.





CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

If you have any of your Sunday School, PW, or Bible Study books or curriculum that you no longer want to try to find a place to store at your home, please bring to church. The CE committee is wanting to start gathering curriculum to keep, and perhaps use with another group or at another time. It's a cost saving way to recycle our study material among ourselves and get the most out of the curriculum.

Thank you.

Submitted by the Christian Education Committee



From Armel Crocker and John Clark:

With the help of 13 hard-working members, we ran a well-organized and successful garage sale despite the heat, humidity and threat of flash flooding. We had a great time fellowshipping with each other and with our shoppers. Of course, it was also very nice to do well financially.

Everyone's efforts really paid off so many thanks to those who contributed sale items, worked to set up and showed up early to sell! Note: All unsold items have been donated to local charities.

In Appreciation

Much appreciation to the Inreach/Outreach Committee, of which Becky Poe and Armel Crocker are co-chairpersons. We recently had an all church garage sale, which entailed extensive planning, organizing, and implementing. Becky and Armel achieved success with hard work and commitment to not only the church, but to their responsibilities on the Session. The garage sale was well attended by the public and well-staffed by church members. Armel, John, Carolyn, Becky and Jerry worked in the humidity and heat for several days in preparation, and Patricia, Julie, Molly, Tricia, Hurschel, Rhonda and others, joined them to work the actual day of the sale. It was a collaborative effort by all, and enjoyed by everyone. The camaraderie was like no other. If you missed it, then you missed a blessing. We can look forward to more "unity building" events by this *Fearsome Twosome* of the INreach/OUTreach Committee!



Thank you, Becky and Armel and your hardworking crew.

God bless America with.....

Peace for all who are troubled
Grace for all who are needy
Courage for all who fear
Strength for all who are weary
Faith for all who are seeking
Hope for all who are uncertain
Protection for all who serve
Wisdom for all who lead



Celebrating our great nation this 4th of July

"Blessed are the people when God is the Lord."
Psalms 144:15 NIV

PNC

Just what is the PNC doing? I recently came across a poem from a publication titled *On Calling a Pastor: A Manual for Churches Seeking Pastors*. This is an older manual put out by the PCUSA for PNC's. The poem made me realize that we at First Pres, Winnsboro, are not alone in the amount of time it is taking to find a minister, and that this is nothing new. The poem was written as a "PNC Report to Session" by Susan E. Roesch of First Pres, Marietta, OH. I would like to quote excerpts from it. It really says it all.

Your PNC's been faithful. (No question of that.)
Through forty-plus meetings we've faithfully sat.
We've read two hundred PIFs and we've ordered some more.
(And thinking of them makes my eyeballs quite sore.)

...

We heard from three candidates we liked a lot.
We asked them to visit and all said "Why not?"

...

But none was just right, none was just the right fit
(though we wavered and argued and threatened to quit.)

...

We've tried to be faithful.
We've tried to be true.
And patience and prayers are what we need from you.
For there is a minister awaiting our call.
It might be tomorrow. It might be next fall.
The one of God's choosing is yet to appear,
but we'll stop all this PIFing when God's will is clear.
(and not one day sooner)

We are so aware of our responsibility to bring the right person to this congregation. I've said it before and will say it again. Pray for us and the person whom God is calling to us.

General Fund Summary - Jan - May 2017			
	Actual	Budget	Variance
Income	\$32,263.82	\$36,041.67	\$3,777.85
Expense	\$ 21,946.91	\$39,229.02	\$17,282.11
Net	\$10,316.91		
Note: Bank balance 5/03/2017 was \$67,674.76. Restricted funds totaled \$35,687.85, while unrestricted funds totaled \$31,986.91.			

Our New Church Website is Almost Ready to Launch!

Armel Crocker and Becky Poe are putting the finishing touches on our updated easttexasgrace.org church website.

Users will find version 3.0 much easier to navigate. You can access each of the 6 main pages of the website using the Main Menu at the top of the HOME page or by using the links in the FOOTER section at the bottom of each page. Scrolling down the length of each page will make it easier for folks to find information regardless of the device they are using: PC, laptop, tablet or smartphone (both horizontal and vertical orientation).

On the new website, you will find a Google calendar which can be updated continually throughout the month, copies of our Cross & Crown, an up-to-date church member directory, and even a copy of the Sunday bulletin before worship on Sunday. For privacy reasons, our DIRECTORY will be password protected, and updates to the directory will no longer be published in the Cross & Crown. You can contact the church office if you do not have internet access and need a copy of the current directory.

Under the CONTACT US tab, you will find a contact form which can be used to send a message to the church. And, at the bottom of each page you will find a link to our FACEBOOK page where we post news and photos about First Presbyterian Church.

Questions and/or concerns about the website should be directed to Becky Poe and Armel Crocker.

The calendar on the next page has a different look. I am now creating it in Google; therefore, I do not have to re-create the entire birthday calendar every December. And I don't have to create the calendar from scratch every month. Please bear with me as I learn how to use this new program and its limitations.
Tina

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
25 Noisy Offering 12pm - Session	26 Charlie England 2pm - Bible study	27 Holly Clark-Porter	28 6pm - Supper &	29	30	1 Michelle Anglin 12pm - Al-Anon
2 Communion	3 2pm - Bible study	4 Independence Day Office closed	5 6pm - Supper &	6	7	8 12pm - Al-Anon
9	10 2pm - Bible study	11	12 Annv Bond LilyMae Holloman 6pm - Supper &	13	14	15 12pm - Al-Anon
16 12pm - Family	17 2pm - Bible study	18 12pm - Session	19 6pm - Supper &	20	21	22 12pm - Al-Anon
23 Annv. Clark	24 Sadie Vander 2pm - Bible study	25	26 6pm - Supper &	27	28 Larry Pendergrass	29 12pm - Al-Anon
30 Noisy Offering 12pm - Session	31 Nathan Clark 2pm - Bible study	1 John Clark	2 6pm - Supper &	3 Brad DeWees H. P. Hosey	4	5 12pm - Al-Anon