



First Presbyterian Church

The Cross and Crown



March 2018

Extending God's Grace throughout Northeast Texas

PASTOR'S PEN: REV. DR. JULIE ADKINS

I found this poem several years ago ... The author is Brian Wren, one of the best known contemporary hymn writers. It seems appropriate for the journey of Lent:

A Stranger Knocking on a Door

*A Stranger, knocking on a door
that opens only from inside,
our withered spirits can restore
if only we will open wide
our hearts, ourselves, and give the key
to love that longs to set us free.*

*A Shepherd, dying for the sheep,
will gather others to the fold
with love unstinting, wide and deep,
and tales of faith as yet untold.
Each lamb, embraced, shall taste and know
safe pasture, sun, and room to grow.*

*A Savior, risen from the dead,
with marks of pain in hands and feet,
is known to us in breaking bread,
and draws us closer when we meet:
majestic love most humbly bends
to raise us up, and make us friends.*

*The Spirit makes an open door
and calls us, gathered here today,
to praise the past that's gone before,
then go along our pilgrim way:
with Christ alive, and at our side,
we'll take the future in our stride.*



Music Notes

Ringers (9 a.m.) and Singers (9:45) will begin meeting again on Sunday, March 4 to put together special music for Lent, Palm Sunday, and Easter.

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 2018
Rick Drennan and Becky Poe
Class of 2019
John Clark and Rhonda Thomas
Class of 2020
Louis Bond and Armel Crocker
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 28—26
February 4—26
February 11—24
February 18—27



Noisy Offering
March: NE TX Children's
Advocacy Center
April: Meals on Wheels



From the Desk of Ruth Shelton

THE FULL AND FINAL REVELATION OF GOD

**JOHN I: 16-18 "FROM THE FULLNESS WE HAVE ALL RECEIVED, GRACE UPON GRACE. FOR THE LAW WAS GIVEN THROUGH MOSES; GRACE AND TRUTH CAME THROUGH JESUS CHRIST. NO ONE HAS EVER SEEN GOD; THE ONLY GOD WHO IS AT THE FATHER'S SIDE, HE HAS MADE HIM KNOWN."*

Grace---the kindness and favor that God shows to undeserving people---is such a commonly mentioned concept that we can miss its inherent wonder. In the Christian church, we frequently refer to the "grace of God," and in doing so we run the risk of making it into a common and ordinary thing. But when we have a proper estimation of our own condition as sinful creatures who deserve only the wrath of the Lord, and when we understand that *God does not give his grace to everyone* (Romans I: 18-3:20; 9 - 11), we will be much less likely to take grace for granted. And once we understand the truth of our condition, knowing the sheer abundance of grace in light of our sin will keep us marveling at the kindness of our Creator.

The abundance of grace is John's theme as the Evangelist concludes His prologue. We find in today's passage an emphasis on God's grace in sending the Word, Jesus Christ (John I: 16-18). "Grace upon grace," has been given to us in the Savior, not merely "grace". Interestingly, this phrase may be better translated "grace instead of grace," suggesting the exchange of one kind of "lesser" grace, for "greater" grace. This would be supported by John's contrast between the law given through Moses and the grace and truth given through Jesus Christ (vs 17). John does not mean that era of law preceding Moses was entirely devoid of grace and truth. After all, the Mosaic law includes the sacrificial system through which old covenant saints could experience the grace of forgiveness. Furthermore, in John's gospel we read that if Jesus' opponents really believed Moses, then they would have believed in Jesus as the Christ (5: 30-47). If we receive grace and truth through Jesus and if to truly believe Moses' testimony in the law is to believe in Jesus, then grace and truth were available under the Mosaic administration. It is not the absence and presence of grace that are contrasted, but the lesser measure and greater measure of grace. John Calvin writes of the new covenant believer that *"what is ascribed to us is not simply or absolutely denied to {old covenant saints}, but that a comparison is made between the less and the greater, as we say; because they had nothing more than little sparks of the true light, the full brightness of which daily shines around us"*.

We receive a greater measure of grace under the new covenant because the new covenant features the zenith of God's revelation of Christ, God's incarnate Word (I: 18). In Him we see God most clearly (Heb. I: 1-4). Taken from *Tabletalk*; **LIGONIER MINISTRIES**; January 2018,, page 41.; (author not revealed).

General Fund Summary - Jan 2018			
	Actual	Budget	Variance
Income	\$2,849.46	\$4,449.96	\$1,600.50
Expense	\$ 5,568.67	\$5,188.74	\$379.93
Net	(\$2,719.21)		

Note: Bank balance 1/31/2018 was \$51,150.11. Restricted funds totaled \$17,536.14, while unrestricted funds totaled \$33,613.97. (Uncleared checks total \$509.20 leaving \$33,104.77 available for normal bills.)



Presbyterian Women

Nurture Faith, Support Mission, Work for Justice & Peace, & Build Community

Join us on Monday, Mar 5th @ 10:00 a. m. for Bible Study
Cloud of Witnesses: the Community of Christ in Hebrews
Lesson 7: In Community with the Hope of the Future

Join Jane Els and Sandy Corder at this Saturday workshop on March 3rd from 10 am to 2 pm here at the church in the Reid Building. We'll explore how to deepen our spiritual life starting with a brief reminder of how Jesus developed his own prayer habits, then an overview of several spiritual practices and finally how meditation and contemplation can enrich your spiritual life. We already have some members of the congregation signed up as well as some from the community so we anticipate a great day. Lunch will be provided but please register so we'll know how much to plan for. Email: jels@peoplescom.net.

GET IN THE SPIRIT
A SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

EXPLORING CHRISTIAN SPIRITUAL PRACTICES
Jane Els
How to pray like Jesus * Basic spiritual practices and how they benefit us
How to relax and listen to God * How to let God be in charge.

EXERCISES TO BRING YOU CLOSER TO GOD
Jane Els and Sandy Corder

JOIN US FOR LUNCH
Provided free of charge to participants, but donations will be accepted!

Jane Els is a certified Spiritual Director and an ordained elder at the First Presbyterian Church 

Sandy Corder is a First Presbyterian Church member and an Ayurveda Lifestyle Educator 

TO REGISTER EMAIL JANE: JELS@peoplescom.net

SPACE IS LIMITED, SO LET US KNOW YOU ARE COMING!
SATURDAY MARCH 3 - 10 AM - 2 PM
1ST PRESBYTERIAN WINNSBORO

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

March

Sun 25	Mon 26	Tue 27	Wed 28	Thu Mar 1	Fri 2	Sat 3
<p>Congressional Meeting</p> <p>Noisy Offering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12:30pm Session after meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2pm Bible study 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6pm Supper & Bible basics: "Hov 	Annv. Wilson		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10am Spiritual Development worl 12pm Al-Anon
<p>4</p> <p>Communion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9am Ringers practice 9:45am Singers practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10am PW 2pm Bible study 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6pm Supper & Bible basics: "Hov 	Judy DeWees		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12pm Al-Anon
<p>11</p> <p>Daylight Saving Time starts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9am Ringers practice 9:45am Singers practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2pm Bible study 		<p>14</p> <p>Marianne Wilson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6pm Supper & Bible basics: "Hov 	Ann Dunn		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12pm Al-Anon
<p>18</p> <p>Family Lunch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9am Ringers practice 9:45am Singers practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9am C & C articles due 2pm Bible study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9am Session reports due 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6pm Supper & Bible basics: "Hov 		<p>23</p> <p>Jacob Wilson</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Elder training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12pm Al-Anon
<p>25</p> <p>Noisy Offering</p> <p>PALM SUNDAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9am Ringers practice 9:45am Singers practice 12pm Session 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2pm Bible study 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6pm Supper & Bible basics: "Hov 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6pm MAUNDY THURSDAY servic 	<p>30</p> <p>Good Friday</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12pm Al-Anon

