



First Presbyterian Church

The Cross and Crown



August 2018

Extending God's Grace throughout Northeast Texas

PASTOR'S PEN: REV. DR. JERRY CARPENTER

"Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while." (Mark 6:31)

Rest... we all need it. Sometimes we live in such a rapid pace in this busy world that we neglect our physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. This summer we have been following Jesus in his ministry as he traveled throughout the region healing the sick, casting out demons, and teaching those who would listen to him. He often had compassion on them because they were "sheep without a shepherd." Last Sunday, we read the familiar Feeding of the 5000 passage and Jesus fed his hearers with bread and fish as well as feeding their spiritual hunger.

God cares about us and every aspect of what makes us complete humans. God cares about our spiritual wellbeing for sure, but God also cares about us when we feel weary and need rest in our souls. We often push ourselves to the limit and do not take the time to rest.

Where is the deserted place you need to be able to truly find rest? My wife and I have rented a cottage on the shores of the Bay of Fundy at a little village called Parkers Cove in the Canadian province of Nova Scotia three times. We love that little cottage and love sitting on the front porch looking out over the bay watching the sea birds fly around and catching glimpse now and then of an eagle or a pheasant. There are sea lions out in the bay and occasionally they too come near enough that one can catch sight of them using binoculars. Each time we have gone to this cottage for a week or more stay, I have sat on the front porch right after we have arrived with a cup of coffee and looked out over the pleasant scene before me and breathed a deep sigh and felt the tension leaving my body as I released it in favor of what surrounded me. I love that spot and want to return there each time I can.

Spending time looking out over the bay is the deserted place I need in my life. There is no television there, only a radio that picks up about 3 stations, the best of which broadcasts in French. Our cell phones do not work there and even if they did we could not afford to call out on them in Canada. I usually read a lot of books and journal a lot and work crossword puzzles (easy ones) and eat a lot of scallops and other seafood and just unwind. Since we have found that cottage we have fallen in love with it. A part of me wishes I could be there every summer all summer long. That is how therapeutic it is for me and my wife.

Many of us have places that speak to our spirits in such a way as this. The place may be far away such as Nova Scotia or the Pacific Northwest or even Europe. The place may be as close as your backyard as you enjoy nature and peace and tranquility and commune with God.

The admonition that Jesus gave to his disciples for the good of their emotional well-being was "Come away to a deserted place...and rest." Find rest for your spirits in places that will feed and nourish them.

Weekly worship with your church is one place that will nourish your soul. We need to communicate with God and fellowship with each other in order to feel connected wholly to the peace we seek. God is present each week with us and we are here as brothers and sisters in Christ to minister to one another. Do not forget to do what is needed for your soul and you will feel complete in God's care.

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

Rev. Dr. Jerry Carpenter

Session members:

Class of 2018

Ronny Knight and Becky Poe

Class of 2019

John Clark and Molly Lennon

Class of 2020

Armel Crocker and Jane Els

Treasurer

Jerry Poe

Contact us:

Tina Hammer, Secretary

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FPC Website:

www.easttexasgrace.org

Cross and Crown articles:

firstpres@peoplescom.net

Attendance:

July 1—27

July 8—24

July 15—36

July 22—29



Noisy Offering

August: WISD school supplies

September: Presbyterian

Children's Home

October: American Legion



Jane's Journey

Pastor Jerry preached a fantastic sermon about bread and the feeding of the 5,000 on Sunday. That story always reminds me of every church luncheon I've ever been to. Even last month, when we went from Becky worrying under her breath "I hope we have enough with all these visitors" to a couple of hours later her worry that "what are we going to do with all this leftover food?" I've heard the same thing, almost word for word, most especially at a big church wide Christmas spread, and sometimes you will hear some angel speak the truth from the crowd, "The Lord will provide." And, in those cases, there is usually an entire turkey left over.

Because when we trust in God to provide, things fall into place.

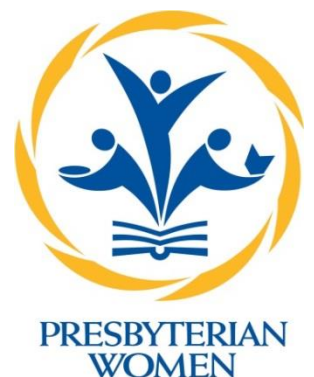
We like to think of this in terms of overabundance like leftover loaves of bread and fish and turkeys. But what if God turned everything upside down? God does that sometimes.

I once was called on to give the children's story on the subject of the feeding of the 5,000. As is my habit, my imagination got the best of me and I decided to bring real bread and real fish to the story. The bread was easy enough but where to get real fish that we could actually eat? I ended up thinking of sardines. They are small and edible right from the can. I thought it was a brilliant idea. Well, the kids didn't think so. I forgot that children, especially children of this day and age have never eaten sardines and found them repulsive on sight. I was having a wonderful time telling the story and when I got to the part where I passed around the loaves and fishes they politely refused bites of the fish. And right there in the chancel in front of God and everybody I had a spiritual epiphany and exclaimed under my breath, "So that's how he did it!"

What if Jesus didn't need to multiply the loaves? (I'm not saying that he didn't. He probably did. He was Jesus, after all.) But what if instead of feeding their bodies he took their hunger away? What if they were so enraptured by his sermon that a lot of them just weren't hungry and the five loaves and two fish were enough for 5,000 people?

There are a lot of different ways to look at bible stories. If you find my interpretation heretical – or if you enjoy the imaginative interpretation—grab a cup of coffee and a donut on Sunday morning and ask Pastor Jerry for a more educated opinion. There are about eight other adults who would welcome you. We meet at 9:30 in the Reid building.

Put it on your calendar! The Presbyterian Women will begin our new study on Monday, September 10. (Normally, we meet the first Monday of the month, but we are meeting later because of Labor Day.) We will meet for our start-up lesson at 10:00 a.m. in the Reid Building. Then we will enjoy a luncheon catered by Becky to kick start our year. Becky has the new study books if you would like to go ahead and get yours. Watch for more information about our new study in the September newsletter.





Music Notes

We will begin both Sanctuary Choir and Chime Choir rehearsals the first Sunday in September. As always, we are looking for new members in both choirs. **If you are interested in playing in the chime choir, please let Patricia Fields know.** The music choices and prep are conditional on how many players we have. You do NOT need to be able to read music to play chimes. If you can count to 4 and tell the difference between two colors, you are good to go! And as for singers, reading music is helpful, but we can work with anyone who can carry a tune and is willing to learn. Chime choir practices at 9 a.m. on Sundays, and Sanctuary Choir at 9:45. Hoping to see some new faces in both choirs!

General Fund Summary - Jan - Jun 2018			
	Actual	Budget	Variance
Income	\$27,263.74	\$26,699.96	\$563.78
Expense	\$ 28,434.56	\$28,491.08	\$56.52
Net	(\$1,170.82)		

Note: Bank balance 6/30/2018 was \$47,293.36. Restricted funds totaled \$11,880.32, while unrestricted funds totaled \$35,413.04. (Uncleared checks total \$552.88 leaving \$34,860.16.40 available for normal bills.)

Congratulation, Jacob Wilson!



Jacob Wilson, son of Dan and Marianne Wilson has added another college degree to his resume! Along with degrees from Northeast Texas community College and Texas A&M University (Texarkana), he now adds his Masters of Arts in Theological Studies degree from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. After graduation, Jacob served as a non-denominational pastor and CPE chaplain. Currently, he is volunteering as a summer Bible-study teacher at First Presbyterian Church, Mt. Pleasant under the mentorship of Pastor Shane Webb. In the fall, Jacob will be returning to school. He has been accepted at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania to pursue a Masters of Divinity and Ordination degree in the PC(USA) so he be ordained as a Presbyterian minister.

In a recent conversation, Jacob told us that his interests are varied. He likes to be involved in servant leadership and environmental stewardship projects, academic reading, and outdoor activities such as fishing, jogging and outdoor cooking. Various influences in his life are: spirituality and the Bible; focus on health and wellness, nature, friends and family.

On Sunday, August 12th, we will collect cards and notes from the Congregation to put in a gift basket for Jacob that includes a Book of Common Worship set from our church. This set includes an up-to-date Book of Common Worship along with the pastoral editions of the Book of Common Worship and BCW Daily Prayer to assist him in his ministry both now and with his future endeavors.

PENDY'S PEN WHO IS THE OTHER HELPER (JOHN 14:16)

We all need help at times, do we not? A helper is a necessary asset. Certain tasks, problems, & challenges are simply beyond our means to solve individually. John chapter 14 describes the dilemma that the Apostles faced upon learning that Jesus would soon be leaving them. For 3 years, He had been their source of power, strength, & wisdom. Even though there were times of doubt, they still embraced the hope that He was the Messiah. He was their loving leader & miracle worker. Now that He was leaving them, can you imagine the degree of despair & hopelessness they must have felt; the fear of being abandoned?



As we read on, however, Jesus assures the apostles that He would not leave them helpless, but instead would leave them another "Helper"; one that would be indwelling & abide with them forever. This "Helper" of course, is none other than the Holy Spirit. Other words synonymous to the Helper include Comforter & Paraclete, (a source of encouragement, counsel, & strength). Jesus makes a very important distinction in (Jn 16:17) by stating that the Holy Spirit dwells only in those that belong to Him in faith; whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees nor knows Him. Unfortunately, even today, there is much confusion concerning this subject. But how does the Bible define the Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit is not an "it", as some believe, but a "He" ; the third Divine Person of the Trinity, coequal with the Father & Son (1 Jn 5:6-8). Some of the characteristics of the Holy Spirit are as follows:

- He is the Spirit of Truth that guides us into all Truth (Jn 16:13).
- The Spirit glorifies Jesus (Jn 16:14).
- He speaks to us through the Word. The Spirit of God & the Word of God are inseparable (Acts 1:16), (Acts 10:19). He enlightens (Eph1:17), Regenerates (Jn3:5-8), sanctifies (Gal5:16-18), transforms (11Cor3:18), baptizes (Matt 3:11), (Acts 11:16).
- He convicts the world concerning sin, righteousness, & judgment (Jn16:8-11).
- He gives us strength & intercedes for us in prayer (Rom8:26-27).
- Paul reminds us in (1 Cor3:16) that we, as Christians, are the temple of the Holy Spirit that dwells within us.

CONCLUSION:

J. D. Greear, in his book, "JESUS CONTINUED ", focuses on the Biblical concept of why the Holy Spirit inside you is better than Jesus beside you. This, in no way minimizes the importance of Jesus' earthly ministry, but instead, points out the tremendous power of the Holy Spirit within the Church as millions of Christians proclaim the Gospel throughout the world. He describes by scripture, how our relationship with the Holy Spirit is an "eternal partnership" because we will be filled with all the fullness of God throughout eternity (Eph3:18-21). He also cautions us about 2 erroneous views of the Holy Spirit, neither of which conforms to Scripture.

The first is an extreme Pentecostal view that alienates the Spirit from the Word & claims to give special gifts to certain persons (speaking in tongues, faith healing, etc.). Paul warns against such practices, (1 Cor: 14). The second view is just the opposite: those that diminish the importance of the Spirit by denying Holy Spirit baptism. In essence they appear to be unaware that there is a moving, working Holy Spirit that dwells within all true Christians.

While the mystery & majesty of the Holy Spirit is far too immense to describe in human terms, God, in his loving grace, invites us to partake in them, now & throughout eternity!

SUBMITTED BY LARRY PENDERGRASS

Chrismons in September

You've heard of Christmas in July? Well, we are going to have Chrismons in September. We are planning another Chrismon fun-day to work on making additional ornaments for our tree. This time, we will have kits put together that we can work on either together or you can take home to complete. Look for more info in the September newsletter.



You are encouraged to regularly check out our church website: easttexasgrace.org where we post:

- Weekly worship bulletin (posted by Thursday)
- Monthly Cross & Crown (posted first week of the month)
- Up-to-date church phone directory (call office for password)
- Google calendar of church events, birthdays, etc.
- Lots of photos along with notices of Special Events
- Videos of choir and chimes performances

BE AN AMBASSADOR

I am convinced that God's Holy Spirit orchestrates our lives to touch others ----strangers, friends, work-related people, service-industry workers, and more if we would just open up and be ourselves. How? Be free to be in love with Jesus in front of people! Be an ambassador through whom He can introduce Himself. There is a world out there hungry and searching for Jesus and His love

Being approachable, inquisitive, and alert. These three actions are responsible, manageable responses to initiating conversations with people God brings along our paths!

LORD TEACH US TO LOVE:

It is easy, Lord, to mouth the word . . . to say "I love," but not to practice what it means.

When we see the true love of a lover, the extent to which such love is prepared to go for the beloved, to vault over mountains and under waves, we know our love is paltry. Self-seeking, a denial of the WORD.

When we consider your love, the love of the CROSS, the descent into the depths of hell in search of us, your forgiveness which overwhelms and heals us, we know our own love is cheap, our forgiveness empty, judgmental and graceless.

Teach us to love You with heart, soul and mind, to love our neighbor and our enemy. Teach us to forgive as you have forgiven .

Taken from #1: Wild Things Happen When I Pray; pgs.42,43/B. Tirabassi/Zondervan Publishing House; #2:A Book of Reformed Prayers, pg. 172; H. L. Rice & L. Williamson, Jr editors/Westminster John Knox Press. Louisville, Kentucky

Submitted by Ruth Shelton

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

August

Sun 29	Mon 30	Tue 31	Wed Aug 1	Thu 2	Fri 3	Sat 4
<p>Baptism</p> <p>Noisy Offering</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2pm Bible study 	<p>Nathan Clark</p>	<p>John Clark</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6pm Supper & Bible basics: "Hov 		<p>Brad DeWees</p> <p>H. P. Hosey</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12pm Al-Anon
<p>5</p> <p>Communion</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Rick Drennan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2pm Bible study 	<p>7</p> <p>session reports due</p>	<p>8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6pm Supper & Bible basics: "Hov 	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Peggy Rounseville</p>	<p>11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12pm Al-Anon
<p>12</p> <p>Basket for Jacob</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12pm Session 	<p>13</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2pm Bible study 	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6pm Supper & Bible basics: "Hov 	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12pm Al-Anon
<p>19</p> <p>Family Lunch</p>	<p>20</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2pm Bible study 	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6pm Supper & Bible basics: "Hov 	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12pm Al-Anon
<p>26</p> <p>Noisy Offering</p>	<p>27</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9am Cross & Crown articles due 2pm Bible study 	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6pm Supper & Bible basics: "Hov 	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p> <p>Ed Russell</p>	<p>Sep 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12pm Al-Anon

