



First Presbyterian Church

The Cross and Crown



February 2019

Extending God's Grace throughout Northeast

Pastor

Rev. Dr. Jerry Carpenter

Session members:

Class of 2019

John Clark and Molly Lennon

Class of 2020

Jane Els and Dan Wilson

Class of 2021

Sandy Corder and Kelly Holloman

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

revdrjerry@peoplescom.net

Office hours: M-Th, 9-noon

FPC Website:

www.easttexasgrace.org

Cross and Crown articles:

firstpres@peoplescom.net

PASTOR'S PEN: REV. DR. JERRY CARPENTER

A cartoon featuring that often ill-tempered cat "Garfield" once featured him saying, "February is the Monday of months." As I recall, Garfield had a rather grim look on his face and maybe was holding a hot cup of coffee to help him cope with the cold, gray, wintry days of February. His view toward February is the prevailing attitude toward the month. February is often one of our coldest months and has more gray days than many of the others on the calendar. I suppose it being the shortest month makes up for some of its gloomiest.

February is also the month that contains Valentine's Day smack dab in the very middle of the month. The holiday helps soothe some of the pain of our cold month by bringing some emotional warmth to many. Some of us remember Valentine's Day as a festive day to look forward to when we were children in school. We had craft projects that featured hearts to color or cut out or decorate. We often decorated sacks to hang up in our classrooms so our classmates could put Valentine cards in them on that day as we had our class party with refreshments. Valentine's Day was only second to Christmas for school day excitement as we all looked forward to it and wanted to share in the fun of it.

Valentine's Day is a very big commercially profitable day for business in the United States. The Valentine's Day decorations and cards and gifts and candy arrive on the shelves right after the Christmas ornaments and wrapping paper reach the sale racks in the department stores. The merchants want us to get excited about the big day early so we will buy more and see more to buy each time we visit for necessary items.

Some people love Valentine's Day and some hate it. Many see it as a commercial venture by big business to get us to buy more so they will make a profit. Some see it as a holiday begun by the manufacturers of cards and candy and flowers so that they will sell much more. I do not know how long people

have been celebrating the holiday in the United States but the explanation of why we have this special day goes back to the ancient world when a man named Valentine was imprisoned in the Roman Empire because of his Christian faith. By tradition, he was locked in a dungeon with only one window to allow in light and air. Those of his faith community who supported him and prayed for him would send messages to him by carrier pigeon or a brave person who would drop the notes of love and concern to him through the one window. These notes were to give him hope even in the midst of a dark situation. Supposedly, Valentine was executed for his faith but remembered because others cared about him and expressed their feelings of love to him. He later was named a Saint of the Roman Catholic Church and now we call him St. Valentine when we remember him on his feast day, February 14.

St. Paul penned the famous "Love Chapter" of the Bible when he wrote to the church at Corinth. They were a fragmented group of Christians who did not know how to work together for the common good of the Early Church. Paul told them in chapter 12 that the Body of Christ was like the human body and that each part was necessary so that the

entire organism would function. At the end of chapter 12, he tells them “But strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a more excellent way.” (v. 31) The more excellent way was the way of love that he described in chapter 13.

Paul told the Church at Corinth what love was and what it was not as he described all that one could do to show one’s love and what one should not do or love would truly not be known. He said that true love for others overlooks their faults and works to find unity and peace wherever conflict is known. Paul taught that love “bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things.” (13:7) So love is always present to help us know how to live with and among others even when we may not know exactly how to act in certain situations.

Jesus taught a similar lesson when he told people to love God with one’s entire being and to love our neighbor as ourselves. Jesus emphasis was on the idea that one cannot love God whom one cannot see unless one loves the neighbor whom one can see. Loving in the abstract is always easier than loving in reality. Expressing love in February on a single day seems easy and maybe even fun but doing it every day of the year is a harder task. It is the task to which we are called by the one we call Lord who calls us to love each day and in each way we love. It takes creative energy and patience to fulfill but it is necessary.



Noisy Offering **Suspended until further notice**

Attendance:
December 30—23
January 6—25
January 13—21
January 20—24
January 27—35

February Sermon Titles:

Feb 3	Fourth Sunday after Epiphany I Corinthians 13 “Love is...”
Feb 10	Fifth Sunday after Epiphany Luke 5: 1-11 “The Summons”
Feb 17	Sixth Sunday after Epiphany Luke 6: 17-26 “The Other Beatitudes”
Feb 24	Seventh Sunday after Epiphany Luke 6: 27-38 “Love Your Enemies?”

February birthdays and anniversaries:
(Please notify the office if I do not have
your birthday)

22—LaVerne Baber



Jane's Journey

Pastor Jerry has started telling us stories of Jesus' ministry and the miracles he performed. I've seen this in my day and it was a grand feeling. Jesus was probably there and I may have even seen him but I think he blended in with the crowd. All in all, it was one of the best days of my life. In August of 2006 I took a group of kids from my church to Waco to help out with Church Under the Bridge. they have a website: [//www.churchunderthebridge.org/](http://www.churchunderthebridge.org/)

It's called Church Under the Bridge because they hold worship services on Sunday morning in a spot in Waco where two high bridges intersect and form a canopy—a kind of concrete cathedral.

We took about 17 teenagers who shopped, cooked and served a meal for about 150 homeless folks. I learned some things about cooking for homeless people... like making sure we offered something they could take with them to eat later in the day, something that didn't have to be refrigerated, and offering something healthy and sweet like fruit. We took what looked like a massive amount of hot food. When we arrived the kids opened up what they had cooked and started dishing it out: breakfast burritos kept so warm that steam rose when people opened the aluminum foil, hot beans, sandwiches, cookies and fruit. We had quite a spread and I was feeling pretty good. But then the line formed and people started putting the food on plates. Two burritos, a sandwich, a spoon of beans, a brownie and a banana filled most of the plates I began to worry that we would run out. Each time I looked out at the line of people it didn't seem to get any shorter. But I also noticed that there was still a layer of food in our coolers. As fast as the food disappeared, it seemed to me that it magically reappeared. Finally, the line ended and there was still food. We encouraged everyone to come back for seconds and there was still food. The food was multiplying right in front of my eyes. I couldn't see the food actually growing but the accountant in me was counting people, subtracting burritos on plates and counting burritos left in the cooler and none of it added up. Somehow the limited amount of food we prepared was holding out. At the end, when the last people had come through for seconds, when folks had gone to sit down and prepare for worship, there was still food left. I couldn't believe it.

But then I remembered that Jesus had fed 5,000 people on five loaves of bread and two fish. Actually, there were over 5,000 people but they didn't count the women and children back in those days. I never paid much attention to that tiny detail. If you estimate the number of women and children the number increases dramatically.

We packed up everything and stayed to worship with them. They were going to have a party later that month so they took some time during worship to practice dancing. I think the guy I danced with might have been Jesus. I like to think so. Everybody should have a chance to dance with Jesus once in their life.

News from the Session

- The January Session meeting was postponed until February so new members can be ordained and installed.
- The annual contribution reports are ready. If you did not receive yours at church, it has been mailed to you. Contact the treasurer, Jerry Poe, if you have any questions.
- The Annual Session Committee Reports were given on Sunday, January 27th and will be uploaded to the "Members" page of our church website (EastTexasGrace.org). Contact the office if you would like printed copies.

More Session News next month.....

General Fund Summary - Jan - Dec 2018			
	Actual	Budget	Variance
Income	\$62,344.39	\$55,900.00	\$6,444.39
Expense	\$61,758.58	\$62,748.67	\$990.09
Net	\$585.81		

Note: Bank balance 12/31/2018 was \$43,236.68. Restricted funds totaled \$3,071.67, while unrestricted funds totaled \$40,165.01. Uncleared checks totaled \$3,861.82, leaving \$36,303.19 available for normal bills.)



Our Presbyterian Women's Bible study continues on Monday, February 4th in the Russell Annex conference room (office building) at 10:00 a.m. Our lesson is #6 "God With Us Through Our Trials." As in previous lessons, the recurring promise "I will be with you" conveys the depth of God's love for us. The primary scripture for this lesson is: Isaiah 41:8-13, 43:1-7 and Psalm 46:1-11. Please join us even if you have been unable to attend previously.

February 2019 Revised Common Lectionary for Sundays and Festivals

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany—February 3

Jeremiah 1:4–10

Psalm 71:1–6

1 Corinthians 13:1–13

Luke 4:21–30

Fifth Sunday after Epiphany—February 10

Isaiah 6:1–8 (9–13)

Psalm 138

1 Corinthians 15:1–11

Luke 5:1–11

Sixth Sunday after Epiphany—February 17

Jeremiah 17:5–10

Psalm 1

1 Corinthians 15:12–20

Luke 6:17–26

Seventh Sunday after Epiphany—February 24

Genesis 45:3–11, 15

Psalm 37:1–11, 39–40

1 Corinthians 15:35–38, 42–50

Luke 6:27–38



From the desk of Jacob Wilson

(written in December)

This week I'm taking time off to see family in North East Texas and one of the many things I like to do while I'm here: aside from visit with old friends, fish, barbecue and work outside, is to jog the backcountry roads where my mom and dad live.

I realize that these roads aren't the prettiest, the most well-kept or the safest roads for jogging, but these are the roads that I remember walking with my dad, riding the bus to and from school, and are where so many good friends and neighbors once lived.

And yeah, I do a fair bit of reminiscing as I jog along passing by so many places where my family, friends or neighbors used to live; by dead ends, bends, twists and bridges where memories live like yesterday, and all the countless homes, farms and businesses that used to be that aren't any more. And yeah, I see new things too: new homes, barns clearings, fences, fields, farms and businesses, but I also see how the new is no different than the old.

None of it lasts: no different than how every oil top road gives way to time, weather and travel until fading into the shifting sand and clay beneath; no different than how each homestead, farm, field and business is eventually reclaimed by vines, trees and seasons of growth until only memories remain; no different than the generations of family that come only to go, the economic progress that advances only to recede, and memories made only to be forgotten no different than the spring rains disappearing in summer drought.

None of it lasts, but the trees, rocks, vines, sand, clay, seasons and weather somehow do. Both land and nature withstand the test of time and human intentions beautifully bearing witness in collective silence, symphony and panorama to their lasting presence on the earth all the while testifying to the fact that this world is their home, not mine.

Note to self: when I return to town I hope to jog my memory and remember that this world is not my home and that no matter what I do in this life my footprint will always be temporary in it, and that it is what I do in preparation for the life and the world to come that will truly last and matter most.

Pastor Jerry conducts the Service of Ordination and Installation for our incoming Session members Dan Wilson, Molly Lennon, Kelly Holloman and Sandy Corder.



On Sunday, January 27th Session members presented their annual committee reports during a Congregational Meeting after worship. These reports can be read on our church's website: EastTexasGrace.org-->Members-->Annual Reports

(This IS password protected, call the office if you don't know password)

If you wonder across the coming year if your life can make a difference, remember this reflection by theologian Michel Quoist:

If each note of music were to say: one note does not make a symphony, there would be no symphony.

If each word were to say: one word does not make a book, there would be no book.

If each brick were to say: one brick does not make a wall, there would be no house.

If each drop of water were to say: one drop does not make an ocean, there would be no ocean.

If each seed were to say: one grain does not make a field of corn, there would be no harvest.

If each one of us were to say: one act of love cannot save mankind, there would never be justice and peace on earth...

The whole of humanity needs you as and where you are.

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.

February 2019

First Presbyterian, Contacts, Holidays in United States

Feb 2019 (Central Time - Chicago)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27 Ordain/install new 12pm - Congregati	28 Cross & Crown 2pm - Bible study	29	30	31	1	2 12pm - Al-Anon
3 Communion	4 10am - PW 2pm - Bible study	5 Session reports	6	7	8	9 12pm - Al-Anon
10 12pm - Session	11 2pm - Bible study	12	13	14 Valentine's Day	15	16 12pm - Al-Anon
17 Family Lunch	18 Presidents' Day 2pm - Bible study	19	20	21	22 LaVerne Baber	23 12pm - Al-Anon
24	25 2pm - Bible study	26	27	28	1 Annv. Wilson	2 12pm - Al-Anon