



First Presbyterian Church

The Cross and Crown



October 2019

Extending God's Grace throughout Northeast Texas

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

Ronny Knight

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PASTOR'S PAGE: REV. DR. JERRY CARPENTER

Everyone probably has a favorite month of the year. Perhaps it is the month when your birthday happens. Maybe it is the month when Christmas falls. October is my favorite month of the year. It is not my favorite because Halloween comes at the end of it. It is not my favorite because leaves fall that must be raked. October is my favorite month because I can feel a change in the air in October. The hot oppressive months of summer are in the past and the cold of winter is still to come. The cool gentle air of autumn settles in around me as I walk or drive or just sit in the backyard and enjoy the feeling of autumn once again.

When I was a boy growing up in southeast Texas, we used to have what we called "Blue Northers". Maybe you had those too where you lived. That was when a cold front was coming and you could see it before it reached you by the way the sky went from a nice light blue color to a dark blue/black color. You could see the cold front coming and we could smell it coming too as we lived south of a paper mill and the cold front would bring in cold air and smelly air also. Once the air settled in and the smell dissipated, then you could be outside and enjoy the crisp cool feeling of autumn all around you. I loved that when it happened. I wish we could have it happen where I live now.

A change is in the air at First Presbyterian Church of Winnsboro. It is evident in the people who visit here often and are greeted with friendliness that can be seen on their faces. Some of the visitors return time and again and are now part of our congregation. Others have visited and for whatever reason, only come now and then or have never returned. It is not because they were not greeted in a friendly manner. It may be because they are on a search and they will know the place where they belong when they find it.

A change is in the air also because faithful people continue to be faithful and to give their time, talent, and treasure to support this congregation. The talents offered weekly sustain the church as a whole and members individually. The talents represent each person and what they possess and when offered freely bring about sustenance that is needed in order for this church to continue to be alive and well, as it is.

Be a part of the change. If you ever made a commitment to this church, then you are needed. We cannot continue to be the inviting, loving place we are without help from all. God calls you to be here every time you can and to join in worship and fellowship because that is what the life of the church is about. We want to be a lively, friendly, welcoming voice in this community and abroad and we need all in order to make this a reality. Join us this Sunday as we once again gather to worship at 11 a.m.

Noisy Offering

Iglesia Maranatha in the town of Salama, Guatemala



General Fund Summary - Jan - August 2019			
	Actual	Budget	Variance
Income	\$38,323.58	\$40,833.32	\$2,509.74
Expense	\$ 46,244.04	\$51,604.54	\$5,360.50
Net	(\$7,920.46)		

Note: Bank balance 8/30/2019 was \$45,026.09. Restricted funds totaled \$16,997.18, while unrestricted funds totaled \$28,028.91. Uncleared checks total \$2,609.82, leaving \$25,419.09 available for normal bills.)

SERMON TITLES FOR OCTOBER

October 6	World Communion Sunday Luke 17: 5-10 "Gathered at the Table"
October 13	Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost Luke 17: 11-19 "Saying Thanks"
October 20	Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost Luke 18:1-8 "Unwavering Prayer"
October 27	Reformation Sunday Luke 18:9-14 "Arrogance and Humility"

October birthdays & anniversaries:

(Please notify the office if I do not have your birthday)

1—Olivia Holloman

4—Billie Bennett

13—Beaven Els

21—Debbi Elmer

21—Hannah Horstman

25—Jerry Poe

Attendance:

September 1—33

September 8—37

September 15—28

September 22—30



Jane's Journey

I went to a Spiritual Practices retreat about a month ago at Gilmont. It's an annual event that I look forward to for rejuvenating my soul. Some people call it "soul-tending." You might think living in the piney woods like most of us do is good enough for the soul in itself but sometimes it's good to add a little structure, some music, and have somebody add some words of guidance. I highly recommend it and would love for you to join me next year.

Rev. Clay Brantley led this year's retreat and the theme was Listening. Ever since I've been thinking of all the different ways we listen for God in our daily life.

I can sit outside or take a walk and listen for God in nature. From birds and animals to insects and the wind, God calls to us. We are reminded of a Creation as old as time. If we relax our minds we can allow it to stretch back and realize that we don't know where time begins or ends. It's like lying on the ground and looking up at the stars. Nobody really knows where it all ends, do we?

Our old cat died last week. He was 14 years old and had a good life. The whole family came to help us bury him. After they had gone home and Beaven and I were alone we thought of all the ways the cat had been part of our lives we realized how much and in how many ways we had communicated with that cat. A cat! How do you communicate with a cat? Yet, there was *something* there between us. Something that didn't need words.

Beaven and I are a good match: the poet and the engineer. After all these years we realize that we see things differently because of our basic natures. But on this one thing we agree. There is something out there that we can't see. We can't hear it, or see it, or smell it, taste, it, touch it. It goes beyond the five senses.

God is out there. As the season changes I hope to spend more time outdoors in the fresh air to listen. Sometimes God speaks very softly so I listen carefully. I tried once to hear two pine needles rubbing together make a sound but I couldn't. But I know the sound the wind makes when it blows. And that sound simply comes from the thousands of individual pine needles rubbing together. My goal is to be able to hear two pine needles rubbing together. Maybe then I will be able to hear God. Maybe that is the sound of God's voice speaking.

Notice of Congregational Meeting

There will be a Congregational Meeting on October 20 immediately following worship for the purpose of 1) hearing the nominating committee report for church officers and 2) electing two members to serve as elders on the session and one to serve as trustee for the class of 2022. Nominations will come from the nominating committee and will also be open from the floor. If you plan to make a nomination, please make sure in advance of the meeting that the person is willing to serve and understands the duties he/she will be accepting.

October 2019 Revised Common Lectionary for Sundays and Festivals

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost October 6

Lamentations 1:1–6

Lamentations 3:19–26 or Psalm 137

2 Timothy 1:1–14

Luke 17:5–10

Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost October 13

Jeremiah 29:1, 4–7

Psalm 66:1–12

2 Timothy 2:8–15

Luke 17:11–19

Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost October 20

Jeremiah 31:27–34

Psalm 119:97–104

2 Timothy 3:14–4:5

Luke 18:1–8

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost October 27

Joel 2:23–32

Psalm 65

2 Timothy 4:6–8, 16–18

Luke 18:9–14

News from the Session

The Session met on September 8 for a regular stated meeting. The following are highlights of that meeting:

- Treasurer Ronny Knight presented the Treasurer's report and addressed the Session concerning the upcoming pledge drive for 2020. The Session proposed that a letter be sent along with pledge cards and that October 13 be the final date that pledges need to be returned.
- The Session set a budget committee workshop for October 20.
- At the Reid committee's suggestion, the Session moved to allocate money from the unspent Reid Session Discretion budget for disaster relief associated with the recent hurricane to be sent to Presbyterian Disaster Relief.
- In order to enhance evangelism, the Session moved to purchase equipment for streaming our worship service using money from the memorial fund.
- The Session approved a proposal by Olivia Holloman for the collection of food and used clothing for the poor to be donated to the Blessing Box. (Olivia and Jane Els made a presentation during announcements at the Sept. 15 worship service.)
- The Session approved the creation of a meditation labyrinth on the church lawn to be open to the community. This will be done simply through marking the grass with paint. Jane Els will donate the paint and facilitate this.
- The Session approved a memorial gift donation in memory of Marianne Wilson of a communion pitcher to match the new chalice.
- The next stated Session meeting will be November 10.



Music Notes

The Ringers and Singers will go back to work on October 13, the second Sunday of the month. Although we have all the stands covered in the Chime Choir right now, seems we ALWAYS need a sub, so if you are interested in learning how to play chimes, you are certainly welcome to join the group. And, of course, we can never have too many singers.

Please join us if you would like to make a joyful noise through music in worship.

Ringers - 9:00 - 9:30 a.m. on Sundays

Singers - 9:45 - 10:30 a.m. on Sundays

Lunch Favorites!

Each of our Carolyn's brought a super tasty dish to lunch last month and we knew you would want the recipe!

Salsa/Hot Sauce by Carolyn Hylton:

3 28 oz cans of whole tomatoes, including juice
8-12 fresh jalapeno peppers
8-12 fresh green onions, including a portion of tops
3-5 LARGE cloves of garlic
salt to taste

Chop peppers, onions & garlic in food processor until very fine. Mash tomatoes in processor but do not puree. Mix with pepper mixture and thoroughly mix well. Chill in frig for at least 4 hours. ENJOY!!



From Carolyn Stewart:

PICO DE GALLO in Spanish means "rooster's beak". The bite of the peppers supposedly is like a rooster's bite. Since I took OUT the peppers, my recipe is titled:

PICO-LESS DE GALLO

1 large onion
6 firm avocados
8 ripe tomatoes (plum or cherry tomatoes will work; I used 3 containers of cherry tomatoes, cut up.)
1 bunch cilantro
1 clove minced garlic
1 Tbs. olive oil
2 Tbs. lime juice
1/4 tsp. ground cumin
Salt to taste

1. Chop onions, avocados, and tomatoes. Combine. Leave avocado seeds in mixture to keep green.
2. Mince cilantro, add to avocado mixture with olive oil and lime juice. Stir gently.
3. Add the cumin and salt. Stir in, adjust to taste.
4. If folks want the beak back on the rooster, they can add picante salsa to theirs!

Our church is truly blessed with a wonderfully warm and caring congregation at this time in our history. Since you've become a member of this church (or when you've simply been around long enough to be one of us) we are inviting you to contribute your time and financial resources. With many talented individuals sharing their time and money, we're sure to grow and progress.

Both time and capital are important. Churches exist because friends and members do the necessary volunteer work and pay the bills. If everyone does a little of the work it gets done in good order. Some teach, share musical talents, cook, visit homebound members, and other critical tasks. Others serve on committees or come to work parties. It becomes a way to not only help the church, but to get to know others.

If everyone makes a responsible financial contribution our church can expand and grow, with new programs and community outreach. So how much is enough? While the Bible states 10 percent of income is best, we ask that you consider 3 to 5 percent of income.

We know that people are in varying life circumstances. Some are caring for elderly relatives or have health concerns or medical bills of their own. Others are between jobs. We do not ask that you place undue hardship upon yourself. Neither should your pledge be easy. Rather it should reflect a serious commitment to the place you have chosen as your spiritual home and the place where you will continue your own search for religious meaning.

And this commitment works both ways. We have an obligation to help you become connected to your community and to maintain a safe, welcome environment where your religious questioning and searching is respected and nurtured.

Our church year runs from January 1 to December 31. We hold an every-member canvass in the early fall when members are asked to make a financial pledge for the year which starts the following January 1st. Most friends and members find it convenient to pledge a monthly amount.

We're looking forward to another year of growth for our members and church.

Best Wishes,
The Membership Committee



Mark your calendar! Tuesday, October 1st will be our first Presbyterian Women's meeting after our summer break. The program for this meeting will focus on supporting the MISSION of the church, both locally and worldwide. Carolyn Stewart and Becky Poe will present Marj Carpenter's (Carolyn's mother) lesson for "Grace-Filled Living; The Great Commission" based on Matthew 28:16-20. Our meetings are open to all the women of our church, and your friends have always been welcomed.

We feel it's very important to "build a caring community of women in our church" and pray you will feel led to be a part of PW. Hoping we will see you October 1st at 10:00 a.m. in the Russell Annex Conference Room (church office). Our next meeting will be Tuesday, December 3rd.

Meditative Reading

Many folks are seeking new ways to develop their spirituality. "New Age" practices such as meditation have become mainstream today with millions engaging daily or twice daily sessions to gain confidence, focus, and other benefits. I have encountered some Christians who are hesitant to adopt these practices, seeing them as too new of an idea.

But meditation is not "New Age". Meditation isn't Buddhist, Hindu, or some new invention that has been adopted from other cultures... the practice is present even in the very first book when Isaac meditates in the desert in Genesis 24. The Bible states many places to pray, contemplate, and meditate to gain a closer relationship with God and to understand the Word.

What is confusing to me, though, is that the words meditate and contemplate are used differently in mainstream and Christian practices. Historically, in Christian practices, meditation means actively thinking about the word of God while contemplation was used to describe becoming still in the mind. Conversely, today's meditation methods teach the opposite – contemplation is actively thinking, while meditation is becoming still.

In Christian practices, there are four steps to a meditative session of scripture reading. These steps form a sort of progression to help bring about stillness so that God can be felt and heard without our own ego's chatter. They are:

1. **Reading (study)**. Prayerful reading of the Bible – also known as Lectio divina or devotions depending on the denomination.
2. **Meditation (thinking/pondering)**. In this step you actively think about the scripture passages you've read. Mentally digesting the Word until an understanding of it is reached within.
3. **Prayer (opening oneself)**. After you've gained your own understanding of the Word, you approach God in prayer – asking for insight and opening yourself to his guidance on the topic. Since our own experiences may not allow us to have complete understanding, we need to be open to God's guidance.
4. **Contemplation (stillness)**. "Be still and know that I am God" best sums up this step of the process where we seek a stillness in trust. There are many techniques that help us still the thousands of thoughts that run through our head on a daily basis. **It is never possible to completely still the brain, but using techniques to silence some of the chatter can allow God to be heard.**

It isn't easy to create a practice without guidance. I would be willing to lead some meditative reading sessions – either online or at the Church. A time or two with guidance should have anyone ready to go it alone, but you may find that group sessions have a special sort of quality to them that you can't get by yourself. If you are interested, let me know on Sunday or via phone and I'll set up a time and place that works the best.

(Submitted by Sandy Corder)

October 2019

First Presbyterian, **Contacts**, **Holidays in United States**

Oct 2019 (Central Time - Chicago)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29 Nolsy Offering	30 2pm - Bible study	1 Olivia Holloman 10am - Presbyteri	2	3	4 Billie Bennett	5 12pm - Al-Anon
6 Communion	7 2pm - Bible study	8	9	10	11	12 12pm - Al-Anon
13 Beaven Ele 9am - Ringers 9:45am - Singers	14 Columbus Day 2pm - Bible study	15	16	17	18	19 12pm - Al-Anon
20 Congregation Family Lunch 9am - Ringers 9:45am - Singers	21 Debbi Elmer Hannah Horatman 2pm - Bible study	22	23	24	25 Jerry Poe	26 12pm - Al-Anon
27 Nolsy Offering 9am - Ringers 9:45am - Singers	28 2pm - Bible study	29	30	31 Halloween	1	2 Patricia Fields 12pm - Al-Anon