



# First Presbyterian Church

## The Cross and Crown



October 2020

Extending God's Grace throughout Northeast Texas

**Session members:**

Class of 2020

Jane Els and Dan Wilson

Class of 2021

Sandy Corder and Kelly Holloman

Class of 2022

Patricia Fields and Slade Weaver

Treasurer

Ronny Knight

**Contact us:**

Tina Hammer, Secretary

**PO Box 493**

301 S. Walnut St.

Winnsboro, TX 75404

Office: 903-342-3011

Fax: 903-342-3011

Pastor: 979-733-6938

Email: [firstpres@peoplescom.net](mailto:firstpres@peoplescom.net)

[revdrjerry@peoplescom.net](mailto:revdrjerry@peoplescom.net)

Office hours: M-Th, 9-noon

**FPC Website:**

[www.easttexasgrace.org](http://www.easttexasgrace.org)

**Cross and Crown articles:**

[firstpres@peoplescom.net](mailto:firstpres@peoplescom.net)

**We are saddened to announce that Pastor Jerry Carpenter has resigned. In an email he sent out, he shared that he and Doris want to be able to travel freely and enjoy being fully retired. We are working with Grace Presbytery to have an interim moderator provided for us, and your worship committee is working out plans to fill the pulpit and continue providing for Sunday worship.**

**This month the "Pastor's Pen" will feature what's happening in Sunday worship and congregational life.**

**Notice of Congregational Meetings**

- A congregational meeting has been called for October 4 following worship to elect a Nominating Committee to serve September 2020 - August 2021. This committee will nominate two church members to recommend to the congregation to serve on the Session and one member as Trustee all for the class of 2023. As per the Book of Order and our own Manual of Operations, the Session appointed two elders, Jane Els and Dan Wilson, to this committee. Three additional members from the congregation at large will be elected. This is only a one year commitment and after September/October the committee will only meet if a Session member or Trustee is unable to fulfill his/her term and needs to be replaced. Please consider serving your congregation in this way.
- A congregational meeting has been called for November 8 following worship for the purpose of hearing elder and trustee nomination recommendations from the Nominating Committee and for electing 2 elders and 1 trustee to serve for the class of 2023. Nominations will be recommended from the committee, but nominations from the floor will also be heard. 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. Current Session members, Jane Els and Dan Wilson, and Trustee Molly Lennon will roll off this year.

**Both meetings will be moderated by Grace Presbytery commissioned lay minister, Jimmy Chapman.**

## Sunday Worship Schedule

September 27 - Lessons and Hymns (no sermon)

October 4 - Jimmy Chapman in the pulpit, congregational meeting, session meeting

October 11 - Jane Els in the pulpit

October 18 - Lessons and Hymns (no sermon)

October 25 - Outdoor Service with Jane Els in the pulpit to be followed by  
bring-your-own picnic lunch and Living Room Conversations

*Periodically, we have sought your favorite hymns. Once again, we're asking if you have a favorite that we haven't sung lately, please let Tricia Clark know. We want the October 18 service to feature congregational favorites!*

## October 2020 Revised Common Lectionary for Sundays and Festivals

**Sunday, October 4 (Proper 22)**

**Exodus 20:1–4, 7–9, 12–20**

**Psalms 19**

**Philippians 3:4b–14**

**Matthew 21:33–46**

**Sunday, October 11 (Proper 23)**

**Exodus 32:1–14**

**Psalms 106:1–6, 19–23**

**Philippians 4:1–9**

**Matthew 22:1–14**

**Sunday, October 18 (Proper 24)**

**Exodus 33:12–23**

**Psalms 99**

**1 Thessalonians 1:1–10**

**Matthew 22:15–22**

**Sunday, October 25 (Proper 25)**

**Deuteronomy 34:1–12**

**Psalms 90:1–6, 13–17**

**1 Thessalonians 2:1–8**

**Matthew 22:34–46**

### **October birthdays & anniversaries:**

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

**1 Olivia Holloman**

**4 Billie Bennett**

**13 Beaven Els**

**21 Debby Elmer**

**21 Hannah Horstman**

**25 Jerry Poe**

### **Attendance:**

**August 30—15**

**September 6—16**

**September 13—15**

**September 20—16**



# Jane's Journey

The time has come for small churches to shine! When the pandemic hit it became dangerous for people to meet in large crowds and so people are avoiding them. The big churches with hundreds of people in attendance have closed their doors and remain empty. One of the largest Presbyterian churches in Dallas expects to stay closed until after 2021. We reopened a month ago with about 17 people. We wear masks the whole time we're in the building. We sing wearing a mask. Yes, it muffles the sound but we're singing! Yesterday we got to sing one of the Easter hymns we missed by not having worship on Easter morning. It was a little late but we finally got our Easter!

We're not touching each other and I really long to hug each and every one of you. I noticed that the words, "I love you" come more easily and more often now and wonder if this is because we're not hugging. Maybe what we can't do with our arms we are now doing with our words. The other thing I miss is smiles. I know there is a smile behind every one of those masks but it would make a huge difference if I could see it.

But good things have been added to our worship service in the meantime. Slade and Sandy have figured out how to broadcast our worship on Facebook as well as inside the sanctuary. We're also projecting the lyrics to the hymns on a screen. This way we don't need to hold a hymnbook (germs passed back and forth from the last user and to the next user) and we noticed the very first week that faces turned upwards looking at the screen instead of down at a hymnal projected sound better. So, we have been brought into the 21<sup>st</sup> century by a virus so small it takes a electron microscope to see and it seems like our "adjustment period" was about five seconds. Get ready for some awesome sermon illustrations because Slade told me that we have the ability to show photos and video clips now.

October 4<sup>th</sup> will be World Communion and there is one scene in my mind that rests purely in my imagination. It would be a communion of all the people I know from around the world sharing Christ with each other. I have come close a few times. Singing the Doxology in both Spanish and English at the same time in Guatemala was truly a Pentecost moment. I would have bet money that it wouldn't work but it did and sounded beautiful. And another time I took communion in a congregation with Christians from Cameroon dressed in festive colors from their country dancing down the center aisle of the church to take their offering to the Lords Table while a congo drum beat out the rhythm.

Both times I was vividly reminded that Jesus, a middle-eastern Palestinian Jew, is the Christ of the whole world. He came for all who believe in him. I remember when Carolyn Stewart's mother, Marj Carpenter went around the world visiting every Presbyterian she could get her hands on and other assorted Christians. Then she came home and wrote two books and went around the US to talk about what she saw. I heard her speak a couple of times and was always in awe listening to her stories. But the bottom line was that Marj went to remote places to visit people because Jesus had made an impact on the **whole** world in a way no one else had ever done before. And Marj didn't do all this because Jesus was a great travel guide. It was because there is no place on earth that hasn't felt his love. Nothing has affected the entire world like Jesus has. Not even a pandemic. Think about that when we celebrate communion October 4<sup>th</sup>.

The Session met for a Stated Meeting on September 13 with Jimmy Chapman moderating. Highlights of that meeting include the following:

- Accepted the resignation of the Rev. Dr. Jerry Carpenter as pastor.
- Admin and Bldg/Grounds committees have installed a large screen TV in the sanctuary to facilitate online and in-person worship. Our Internet has been upgraded to accommodate multimedia capabilities in the sanctuary and church as a whole. The upgrade included phone service and internet through Suddenlink.
- The Worship committee is exploring ways to use the new multimedia options during worship. They also discussed how we will fill the pulpit until a new pastor is found. Some of those options are that occasionally Jane Els and/or other willing elders will fill the pulpit; we will have a "Lessons and Hymns" service (no sermon) periodically; we are exploring the idea of having a guest speaker via video; and ordained ministers will be sought for Sundays when we celebrate communion. Jimmy Chapman is working on providing a list of pulpit supply and stated supply from Grace Presbytery.
- Voted to celebrate communion quarterly with the option to celebrate monthly when an ordained minister can be secured.
- The InReach/OutReach committee plans to initiate a program titled "Living Room Conversations" which strives to facilitate discussion of difficult topics. The plan is to start on October 25 after worship.
- Discussed names of people possibly willing to fill the vacated member, moderator, and treasurer positions of the Reid Committee. Slade Weaver will be contacting those people.
- Voted to reopen the building to Al-Anon and the Monday Community Bible Study groups with the expectation that they will do the necessary Covid cleaning upon leaving.
- Congregational Meetings to elect a nominating committee and to elect officers were rescheduled for Oct. 4 and Nov. 8 respectively with Jimmy Chapman moderating. Stated Session meetings will also be held those two days. (See more complete notice in newsletter)

**Laverne Baber (Saxon)**  
**February 22, 1928-September 2, 2020**



Laverne Saxon Baber, 92, of Tyler and previously of Winnsboro, passed away after a lengthy illness on September 2, 2020. Laverne was born on February 22, 1928 in Winnsboro, Texas to Grady and Dessa McAlister Saxon. She married Jack Sidney Baber in 1950 and the two of them enjoyed 70 years of wedded bliss. Laverne was an educator for many years in Winnsboro and Hawkins. She and Jack had been members of the First Presbyterian Church in Winnsboro. Mrs. Baber was preceded in death by her parents and survived by husband Jack Sidney Baber; son Brian S. Baber and wife Janice; grandson Grant Baber and grandson Avery Baber. The family will receive friends for a time of visitation on Saturday, September 5th from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Beaty Funeral Home in Winnsboro. Following the visitation, the committal service was conducted at Lee Cemetery.

## ***Yoga as a Spiritual Aid***

Yoga has been a crucial tool for me in becoming a better Christian. I've found it immensely useful to apply the practice in its entirety in my personal quest to live a fuller, more meaningful life of serving others. As I've deepened my practice, my faith has ripened.

Many people only think of yoga as a way of becoming physically fit. But, the physical aspect of yoga is only a small part of the whole. Patanjali wrote one of yoga's foundational texts – the Yoga Sutras. In it, he describes eight distinct parts of yoga, which he calls "limbs".

The first limb, the Yamas, actually are a set of practices that enable people to live in a society of some sort. Basically, if everyone did these simple things, crime would pretty much vanish. If we could all 1) stop hurting each other, 2) tell the truth, 3&4) keep our hands to ourselves (no stealing or diddling), and 5) stop worrying so much about getting more stuff, we would all be a lot happier in our little people groups today. It is fascinating that we STILL can't do these simple things as a society after 5000 years of practice.

The second limb, The Niyamas, are a set of practices that enable an individual to refine his or her own behavior. By striving for purity of thought, contentment, discipline, and constant devotion to God while seeking to better themselves, people would be too dang occupied to worry about what is going on in someone else's life. Frankly, the Niyamas are more needed now than ever with Facebook, the invasive news media, and other avenues that allow people access to other's lives (from thousands of miles away, no less). People are looking for meaning everywhere on the internet instead of looking in the only places they can find it – within and above.

The third limb, Asana (stilling the body for meditation) is the piece most people associate with "yoga" today. The funny thing is that this portion of the practice is used to release the energy of the body so that you can "be still" enough to meditate and pray. People are needing to still their bodies and minds today more than ever, hence the surge in practicing yoga. I find I can pray better if I've burned off my fidgets. It sure is hard to send up a meaningful prayer when I have ants in my pants and a racing mind. Moving my body (and testing its limits) helps me settle into a better frame of mind for prayer and contemplation.

The fourth limb, is Pranayama or breath control. The technology, jobs, and social structures of today create stress equivalent to being stalked constantly by a lion on the Serengeti. This stress speeds up our heart, raises our blood pressure and quickens our breath. Being able to slow our nervous system with breath control is a critical skill in our spiritual toolbox. Biologically, many of the breathing techniques activate our vagus nerve, which calms us. When we are stressed, it is really hard to give our worry over to a higher power. But, when we are able to breathe properly, we can calm ourselves and worry less.

The fifth limb, Pratyahara, withdrawal of the senses, can help in our sensory overloaded surroundings. Today, our homes have bright colors, multiple textures, a loud TV with bright, flashing pictures, and a very strong scent of Fabreze. This is a recipe for complete sensory overload. A few minutes of introspection in silent stillness can do wonders for our spirit.

The sixth limb, Dharana, or concentration, is necessary for any real growth. Our attention spans are shrinking daily with the use of our cell phones and electronic devices. Think about how things happened just a few decades ago... in 1970, when you went to visit a friend or went to work, you were expected to be able to concentrate your entire attention on the people you were with. Today, our cell phone keeps us tethered to the outside world, even while we are at work or visiting someone. Being distracted by everything going on around you isn't conducive to a fruitful prayer. Concentration is vital to having a meaningful conversation with God.

The seventh limb is Dhyana, or meditative absorption. I like to think about prayer and meditation as two parts of a whole... prayer is when I am speaking to God, and meditation is when I am SUPPOSED to be listening. I am really good at talking, but am still working on my listening skills. It is much, much easier if I attempt to listen after I've practiced some of the previous steps.

The eighth and final limb, Samadhi, is enlightenment. This limb is sometimes described in mystical terms, but there is a more grounded and realistic way of describing it. Simply put, it is finally letting go of all the silly things you, your parents and peers, and your society has taught you in order to see life as it really is. We can observe without likes or dislikes, attachment or aversion, desires, habits, or impressions. Basically, we can see how things truly are. This state is very hard to reach. Several people in the Bible obviously reached this stage, but not many. They are the ones who gave us our most profound pronouncements and beautiful poems.

Yoga isn't just a way to get fit physically, although there are many who only use it this way. It isn't tied to any religion... it is a toolbox of tools and a method of application. For me, it is pretty simple - the Bible is the guide and yoga is the toolbox.

# October 2020

First Presbyterian, Contacts, Holidays In United States

Oct 2020 (Central Time - Chicago)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27 Donna Campbell	28 Mony Lennon	29	30	1 Olivia Holloman	2	3
4 Billie Bennett Communion Congregation	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12 Columbus Day	13 Beaven Eis	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21 Debbi Elmer Hannah Horstman	22	23	24
25 Jerry Poe	26	27	28	29	30	31 Halloween