



First Presbyterian
MIDLAND

Life

news to grow on

Edition 11 - December 2010

God With Us

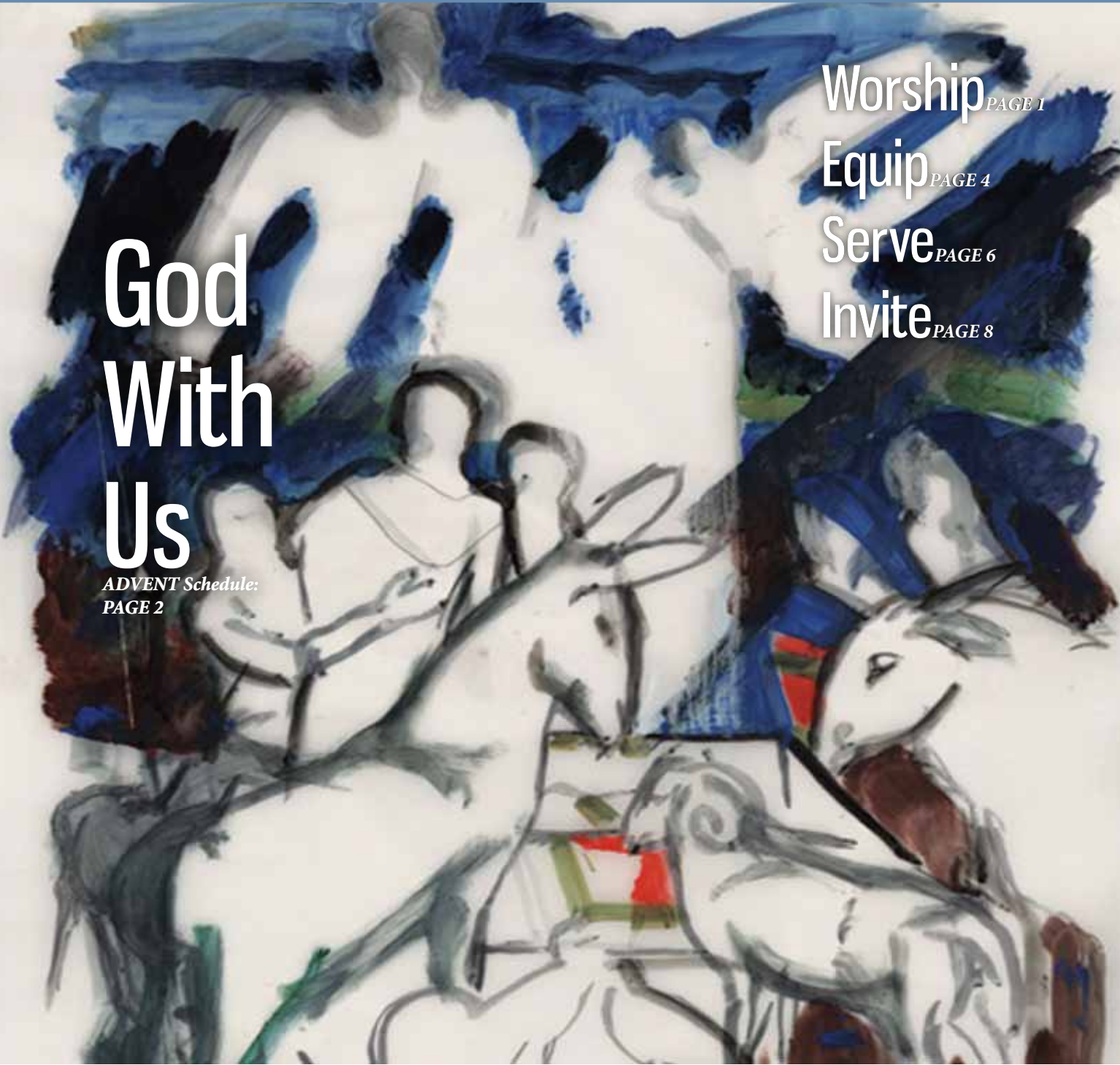
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Dear Friends,



Cover:
*Preparatory Sketch for
St. John's Bible
Birth of Christ*
by Donald Jackson

God With Us

We are about to enter the season of Advent, perhaps the most misunderstood season of the church year. It seems that our culture makes the approach to Christmas a peculiar mixture of materialism and sentimentality. Of course, while we try to live up to lofty expectations and feelings for the season, there is the messiness of the holiday. We get frantic and busy, fight with our families, and grieve our losses more deeply. For what are we really looking, hoping?

Most years there are at least a few people who ask, "Why aren't we singing Christmas carols sooner? Why are the sermons from Old Testament passages – isn't Christmas about Jesus? How come the decorations come out little by little?" Here is my response. This advent, let's live with Old Testament prophecies, wait, slow down, meditate and contemplate because so many of us are living lives in which *the wonder has leaked out*. It's a phrase from Eugene Peterson who has a great appreciation for what artists, musicians, architects, theologians, and the early church had in mind when they set aside the season of Advent.

We don't recover wonder in a day. There's a mystery afoot, something beyond biology, economics, and politics, but we miss it in the midst of the messiness of school, work, play, and family. There is something that would help us recover not only a sense of who God is, but also who we are as human beings . . . but for many of us the wonder has leaked out.

So, on Sunday mornings this Advent we will focus mostly on one Old Testament prophecy from Isaiah 9 and spend some time "wondering" about the names assigned to the Child: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. On Wednesday evenings at our Come to Quiet services we'll wonder about the names Emmanuel, Savior, Alpha and Omega. Join us with the hope that as we prepare to celebrate the Incarnation, the wonder of *God with Us* might leak back in.

Blessings and peace,

The Bridge "sermon only" CDs are available

Order forms are available at the church reception area or call Rhondy at 684-7821 to place an order.

DVDs now available upon request

of 11:00 a.m. worship in the Sanctuary.

Cost of each DVD is \$5.



Prayers for...

Prayers of Intercession are requested for John Asdo, Jered Groner, Paul Latham, Bonnie Van Husen, Ruth Cole, Sarah Porter, Larry Mills, Evelyn Cowden, Francys Walker, Montez Johnson, Randy Storie.

Please pray for military personnel deployed for Operation Iraqi Freedom (Iraq) and Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan): Chris, Michael, Casey, Daniel, Carlos, Megan, Drew McKelwaith, Michael Wood, Chris, Miles, Aaron French, David Thornhill, Hank Hortenstine, Adam Graham, Tom Wolters, Mike Neu, Edwin Gaston, Matt Sullivan, Zach Frisbie, Eric Van Dyke, Kristian Kirkland, Jake Hall, Hunter D. Martin, Clayton Slover, Damon Darnell, Danny Wakefield, Dean Forest, Joe Banner, Morgan Cruthirds, Justin Galan, Stanley Najar.

Congratulations to...

Congratulations to Herd and Shannon Midkiff upon the birth of their daughter, Caroline Marie Midkiff, on October 30, 2010 in Dallas; granddaughter of Toni and Bob Midkiff; niece of Kris and Randy Stevens; cousin of Robert Stevens.

Louisa and Brendan Fikes upon the birth of their daughter, Henrietta Lee Fikes, on November 1, 2010 in Midland; granddaughter of Melinda and Henry Musselman and Amy and Lee Fikes; niece of Julie and Luke Musselman, Molly Musselman, and Katie and Pierre Lavie; cousin of Max.

Heather and Wesley Faris upon the birth of their twins, James Walker Faris and Logan Bryan Faris, born November 3, 2010 in California; grandsons of Kathy Faris and Daryl Faris; nephews of Bobby Faris and Marcy and Bruce Carl.

Christen and George Wommack upon the birth of their daughter, Caroline Hadley Wommack, born November 8, 2010 in San Antonio; granddaughter of Kathy and Tripp Wommack; niece of Trevor, Wright, and Will Wommack.

Condolences to...

Connie and John Morrow upon the death of Connie's grandmother, Evelyn Brown, on October 14, 2010 in Houston, Texas; great grandmother of Trace and Gage Morrow.

The family of Dolly Hooks upon her death on October 21, 2010.

Chris and Jennifer Hightower upon the death of Chris' father, Jack Hightower, on Saturday, November 6, 2010.

Newnie and Charlotte Ellis upon the death of Newnie's sister, Kathryn "Kitty" Donnell on October 25, 2010 in Austin.

Mayra and Walter Thompson upon the miscarriage of their baby on November 1, 2010.

Jim Elkin upon the death of his wife, Jean Elkin, on November 13, 2010.

Thank you for your nice letters...

Please stop by the information center at the Texas street reception area to read the lovely thank-you notes we have received from Ruth Cole and her family, and Safe Place of the Permian Basin.

Sunday Music Schedule for December

December 5

The Agape Ringers will ring "*Emmanuel, Savior of the Nations*" at both services, and the Celestial, Carol, Cherub, and Sanctuary Choirs will sing at 11:00 worship.

The Children's Choirs Christmas Concert will be presented at 5:30 pm, featuring the musical "*Wise Guys and Starry Skies*" by Kathie Hill.

December 12

Our annual Service of Lessons and Carols, featuring the Sanctuary Choir accompanied by full orchestra, at both services.

December 19

The Sanctuary Choir will sing music for the season by Poston and Chilcott at both services.

December 26

Soloist Raenell Diffie Champaign will sing at the 11:00 worship service.



God With Us Advent 2010

Sunday, November 28, First Sunday in Advent

8:15 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Sanctuary Worship Services
11:00 a.m. Bridge Service – Chapel

Wednesday, December 1

6:30 p.m. - Chapel *“Come to the Quiet”* Advent Worship Service

Sunday, December 5, Second Sunday in Advent

8:15 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Sanctuary Worship Services
11:00 a.m. Bridge Service – Chapel

5:30 p.m. – Sanctuary Children’s Musical – *“Wise Guys and Starry Skies”*
by Katie Hill

Wednesday, December 8

6:30 p.m. - Chapel *“Come to the Quiet”* Advent Worship Service

Sunday, December 12, Third Sunday in Advent

8:15 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Sanctuary Worship - Service of Lessons and Carols
11:00 a.m. Bridge Service – Chapel

Wednesday, December 15

6:30 p.m. - Chapel *“Come to the Quiet”* Advent Worship Service

Sunday, December 19 – Fourth Sunday of Advent

8:15 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Sanctuary Worship Services
11:00 a.m. Bridge Service – Chapel

5:30 p.m. – Lynn Hall *“Round the Table Carol Sing”*

Wednesday, December 22

6:30 p.m. - Chapel *“Come to the Quiet”* Advent Worship Service

Friday, December 24

5:30 p.m. - Sanctuary Family Christmas Eve Worship Service

9:00 p.m. – Sanctuary Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with Communion

Sunday, December 26, First Sunday of Christmas

11:00 a.m. – Sanctuary One Worship Service – No Sunday School



Skywatching by Dawn Eggenberger, 2004

“Come to the Quiet”

Wednesday Evening Worship during Advent

December 1, 8, 15, 22

6:30p.m. – 7:00p.m.

The Chapel

This service will include praise, Scripture, reflection, prayer, and silence... an opportunity to focus on the Coming of Jesus into the world and to us.

In an often busy and harried season ... *Come to the Quiet.*

A Thanksgiving History Lesson for America

Worship



Much more was written about the subject on the Internet, but somehow the words of George Washington encapsulated the true meaning of a nation being thankful. As President, on October 3, 1789, Washington made the following proclamation and created the first Thanksgiving Day designated by the national government of the United States of America. Many feel that we have strayed considerably since the holiday was set in motion. This proclamation reminds us of the vision our forefathers had for the future of America, and the place given to God in this plan. See if you agree.

“Whereas it is the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey his will, to be grateful for his benefits, and humbly to implore his protection and favor, and whereas both Houses of Congress have by their joint Committee requested me “to recommend to the People of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many signal favors of Almighty God especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness. Now therefore I do recommend and assign Thursday the 26th day of November next to be devoted by the People of these States to the service of that great and glorious Being, who is the beneficent Author of all the good that was, that is, or that will be. That we may then all unite in rendering unto him our sincere and humble thanks, for his kind care and protection of the People of this Country previous to their becoming a Nation, for the signal and manifold mercies, and the favorable interpositions of his providence, which we experienced in the course and conclusion of the late war, for the great degree of tranquility,

union, and plenty, which we have since enjoyed, for the peaceable and rational manner, in which we have been enabled to establish constitutions of government for our safety and happiness, and particularly the national One now lately instituted, for the civil and religious liberty with which we are blessed; and the means we have of acquiring and diffusing useful knowledge; and in general for all the great and various favors which he hath been pleased to confer upon us. And also that we may then unite in most humbly offering our prayers and supplications to the great Lord and Ruler of Nations and beseech him to pardon our national and other transgressions, to enable us all, whether in public or private stations, to perform our several and relative duties properly and punctually, to render our national government a blessing to all the people, by constantly being a Government of wise, just, and constitutional laws, discreetly and faithfully executed and obeyed, to protect and guide all Sovereigns and Nations (especially such as have shown kindness unto us) and to bless them with good government, peace, and concord. To promote the knowledge and practice of true religion and virtue, and the increase of science among them and us, and generally to grant unto all Mankind such a degree of temporal prosperity as he alone knows to be best. Given under my hand at the City of New York the third day of October in the year of our Lord 1789.”

– Prayer & Spirituality Ministry,
Sally Green

“But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly”. Matthew 6:6

(King James version)



The Prayer Closet is there for YOU. PLEASE feel free to step in and close the door and PRAY.



Spirit Walk

I once knew a woman who knew *The Man*.

Don't get me wrong – I knew this guy too, but my friend Dolly lived with Him day in and day out; spoke with Him at will; drew minute-by-minute strength from Him, and told everyone she knew about this man who had transformed her life. By comparison, the Lord and I were merely acquaintances.

I was Dolly's "ride" for about three months of this year. But what I learned driving her around Midland in that short time has re-shaped my relationship with Christ for a lifetime.



Dolly Hooks

It was at a prayer luncheon here at the church that I first encountered Miss Dolly – the only black person in a room full of white folks; the only one with her arms in the air; the only one whispering "yes, Jesus," whenever the Spirit moved her. I thought to myself, "I've absolutely got to meet this woman and find out why she's here."

Following her down the hallway after the luncheon, I found out that Dolly not only had a ministry to students at Midland High School, but that our church had opened its doors for her to walk across the street and pray for the students she had been counseling. I asked her on that very first meeting, after she had given three or four of us "church ladies" a very tearful and heartfelt testimony of her life and where she went to church. She named one, but crooned that she had been "craving a word from Pastor Schorr, because I know that he is filled with the Holy Spirit and speaks the truth!" Well, what, I wanted to know, was stopping her?

Dolly didn't have a car, I found out, and the bus didn't head this way on Sunday mornings. If she attended a different church, there were plenty of friends who would give her a lift, but none of her cronies were clamoring to attend services at First Presbyterian Church! Thinking the situation was relatively simple to set straight, I offered to pick her up the following Sunday morning and bring her to church.

"But if you come," I told her, "you'll have to stay afterwards and eat." Just when I was about to explain that we would be having a luncheon for the youth who'd just been on a mission trip, she cut me off with a rainbow wave in front of my face: "It don't matter what we're gonna do after church! If the Lord's in it, I'm there!"

Driving to Ranchland Apartments, already late for Sunday School, my husband questioned, "Now *who* is this stranger we're picking up?" I told Craig about my new friend Dolly, an amazing woman who just needed a ride to church. We waited and waited for Miss Dolly to appear. I had no idea which apartment was hers, so we had no door upon which to knock. I tried calling her repeatedly, to no avail. No answer, no voice mail – my personal pet peeve! Frustrated and about ready to pull away, Miss Dolly finally came waddling down the stairs, apologizing as she plopped in the backseat, ringlets on her head bouncing like miniature Slinkies. She apologized profusely for her tardiness – "Our God is a God of order, and we are called to be on time if at all possible!" Apparently, in this case it was *not* possible, because she said she'd been engulfed in deep conversation with a friend on the phone, praying with someone who "needed a word from the Lord."

It was our first ride together and I was just getting a glimpse of how Dolly ran her life.

During the church service, I worshipped wearily, fearing that Dolly felt out of place or was bored with our formal style of preaching and singing. *Why couldn't the choir do an African Spiritual this Sunday*, I moaned inwardly, *instead of a classical number sung in Latin?* I only heard a couple of quiet whispers from her to the Lord, and no hands were raised that first Sunday. I was just sure she'd never come back, no matter how much she adored Pastor Schorr!

At lunch, as the parents of the youth oohed and aahed over every photo in the Mission Trip video, I again fretted on Dolly's behalf, sure she desperately desired a seat on the first ride home, away from boring pictures of other peoples' kids. But during the slide show, I heard her voice, slightly louder than a whisper, speaking to a young man at the



neighboring table, someone I had never seen before: “I’m a minister of the Lord,” she said gently, “and I need to talk with you when this is over.”

Horrified, I couldn’t imagine what in the world Dolly had in mind for that young man, and quite frankly, I very selfishly worried that she may very well embarrass me in front of my friends who had obviously invited this boy to lunch. The room cleared quickly after the event – naps and chores awaited -- but Dolly planted her behind firmly in a chair not four feet from the previous one she’d occupied and didn’t waste a minute launching into conversation with the young man.

I stood around on one foot and then the other, teasing Steve Schorr, “No one told me that if I brought Miss Dolly to church, I wouldn’t be able to go home!!” Shortly thereafter, Dolly called us over to join the intimate meeting, and we discovered that the clean-cut, nicely dressed young man, named David, had walked to our church from the Salvation Army where he had slept the night before. He’d landed in the Bridge sitting adjacent to our friends, and, upon discovering he was new in town, they innocently inquired where he was living. It was then he’d admitted to being homeless. My friends had graciously invited David to lunch – to simply feed him a meal.

But Dolly and God had bigger plans! Dolly had discerned during the slide show that the boy was deeply troubled, and it wasn’t long into their conversation that she began to suspect the reason – drug addiction, which had led to his homelessness. An hour after lunch was over, my husband was texting me wondering what in the world could be taking so long. In that time, Dolly had picked up her phone and secured a bed for David at Journey Home, where, we found out later, she was on the Board of Directors. She looked him square in the eye, and in no uncertain terms informed David that he would not be doing drugs or smoking there, and that he would be expected to be in Bible Study morning, noon and night, with hard labor in the in-between times. Miraculously, he agreed to her terms, and that wayward boy began his new life that day.

As we *finally* got in the car to head home, Dolly asked me to stop at a convenience store so she could get some bottles of water. “I’ve got to fast and pray for that boy,” she exclaimed with an interesting mixture of exhaustion and exhilaration. “He’s about to meet the Lord.”

Sure enough, David’s life did turn around, slowly but surely, because Dolly was in tune to the Lord that day. You see – as I now see – God didn’t have her there for the beautiful music or for the preaching; he didn’t have her there for the food or the slick slide show. He had her there to minister to David.

In the following months, I witnessed countless scenes like this one, as Dolly allowed the Spirit to determine her path. I would pick her up at whatever was our pre-determined time and locale, and the rest of each “driving Miss Dolly” adventure was completely undetermined. I waited for painfully long minutes while she witnessed to a man in Church’s Fried Chicken, and while she counseled a teen in her apartment complex who was addicted to sniffing paint. I drove aimlessly down Lamesa Road trying to find Dolly’s location in a run-down house after a counseling session about which she informed me was none of my business. I drove her through Rosa’s and Whataburger and Walgreen’s and I watched her engage clerks and pharmacists, all of whom greeted her affectionately, usually by name.

You see, *I* lived by a carefully-thought-out to-do list; *Dolly* lived by the whim of the Spirit. *I* lived by a clock; *Dolly* lived by the timing of the Lord; *I* lived by propriety and decorum; *Dolly* lived by a smile, a tear and an open heart.

When Dolly got her own car after I’d driven her around for several months, I actually grieved the loss of that time with her. She’d taught me to abandon myself to the Lord and to look at people’s hearts, at their potential. In reality, *she’s* the one who had taken me on a ride.

The ride of my life.

Now if I can just keep God in the driver’s seat.

– Susan Atchison

Note: Dolly Hooks passed away on October 21, 2010, at the age of 51, with the uncannily appropriate diagnosis of an enlarged heart. She was only a member of our church for a scant few months, but her heart beats there still.

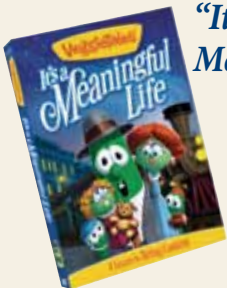


From Mee to You

Children's Ministry Newsbrief

Children's Prayer Group:

This ministry seeks to find people who love to pray for children...birth through 6th grade. We meet in the Prayer Closet on the third Wednesday of each month at noon. No special skills are necessary, just a heart for the Lord and a desire to talk to HIM about our children. Praying aloud is not necessary if that is uncomfortable for you. After all, HE knows our every thought! If you have special prayer requests, please call Chrissie Mee at the church. Please join us whenever you can!



"It's a Meaningful Life"

Coming December 11th from 9:00 a.m. -2:00 p.m. for Nursery children through 2nd graders.

God has given us the marvelous but challenging opportunity to guide our children into a worshipful life every day. Sundays, of course, are one of those days. The morning gets started as most mornings do with our checklist to complete for each person in the family: eat breakfast...check, get dressed to go to church...check, brush hair...check, brush teeth...check, check. Unfortunately it is always busy and seldom do we get to accomplish these items without a hitch. There is the inevitable...my shoes are too tight or I don't know where my shoes are.

Of all days of the week, I hear from parents that for some reason Sundays are the hardest. Maybe it is because we have all been going so fast all week long and then there are sports on Friday and Saturday. It is just difficult to find time to slow down. We want to help our children become good servants and strong Christians, but often by Sunday we have run out of "nice," as a friend of my mom says.

The small group book that many of us have been reading has talked about setting margins. The author, James Bryan Smith, said this about worship: *"Simply getting to worship with the right attitude is a challenge for many of us. The culprit is not our lack of desire but our lack of temporal margin."* He goes on to say that we all need to have the right attitude for worship and that it cannot be cultivated in the ten seconds we spend walking through the narthex. *"We must prepare for worship long before that. One way is to go to bed early on the evening before worship. This will allow us to awaken earlier, which will create some margin in terms of time. We need a few hours to eat and dress and prepare our hearts for worship. Time margin is thus necessary in order to create heart margin."*

Wouldn't it be a blessing to arrive at church early enough to visit with friends or visit with your child's Sunday school teacher before you head to your class?

Find some margin in your week to prepare for worship and help guide your child spiritually. I look forward to continuing to partner with you in loving and leading all of our children to a deeper life with Jesus Christ.

Weekly opportunities for children:

Sunday School – 9:30 - 10:30, helps equip your child for the week ahead.

5:55 Club – (starts back up in January on Gathering Wednesdays)

Choir – 6:30 to 7:30 Wednesdays

Some of the other opportunities for children throughout the year:

Sacraments class for 1st/2nd graders

Special Sunday events where the parents are invited to join the children

5th and 6th grade Bible Study once a month during the school year, weekly in the summer including a retreat planned just for them.

Acolytes for 5th and 6th graders

Vacation Bible School – for those turning 4 in September through those entering 3rd grade

Adventures with Christ – for those entering 4th – 6th grade

CLER classes for 5th/6th graders with their parents

– Chrissie Mee

Director of Children's Ministry



Success...An Answered Prayer?

At a staff meeting back in August, Steve Schorr asked us to consider how we measured success in our particular ministry area. I wrote the request down and continued to reflect on it over the months.

How *do* I measure success in a ministry that is based on such an abstract, intangible thing like prayer? How do I measure it in a ministry that deals with such difficult, heart-breaking issues and where feedback is sporadic?

Is success adding up the number of Faces of Children prayer partners we have in this community, our state and country, and around the world? Is it the number of speaking engagements, workshops, retreats, and conference exhibits I've done over the last six years, or the number of cities, states, and countries we've visited while representing Faces of Children since its inception in 1999? Or is success measured by the thousands of prayer requests I've written and sent out or the hundreds of prayer concerns that come into this office?

Those are all number-driven, quantitative details, but I don't think they are a true measure of real success. To me, real success is when someone really "gets" this ministry...when someone understands that prayer for children is powerful and effective in helping God with Kingdom work!

Real success is an audience that grasps the concept of prayer for children and then owns it, lives it, shares it, runs with it! Real success is measured by the tears of women and men whose hearts reach out to hurting children and whose compassion leads them into prayer for those children. Real success means others have learned they can love and serve the at-risk and suffering children of this world through their prayers! Real success is being able to share God's answers to those prayers.

Through my time with Faces of Children, I've been given magnificent glimpses of God's answers to so many prayers. A child is totally healed of cancer...her doctors cannot find any trace of the tumor that threatened her life. Vulnerable ethnic hill tribe children are now off the nighttime streets of a bar and brothel area in Chiang Mai, Thailand since a drop-in center opened there. In Uganda, a baby girl was rescued from an open latrine and is now the adopted daughter of a U.S. doctor who was working there at the time.

Prayer for children is powerful and effective in helping God with Kingdom work!

Since a Massachusetts church began intentional prayer for children, a village in Malawi has become self-sustaining and prosperous and 640 children around the world have been sponsored through World Vision. A foster child has a forever family with a mom who can properly care for his health and emotional needs. A woman realized the purpose of her job at a school cafeteria...to pray for the children who came through the line, especially for a disabled child named Matthew.

The women, men, young people, children, prayer groups, organizations, churches, Sunday schools, Bible study classes, and women's circles who prayed these prayers understand what it means to love and serve through prayer...to be instruments of God through prayer. They understand that God responds to our prayers in many different ways and they give God thanks for answering those prayers.

In the end, I suppose the true measure of the success of this ministry comes in the form of a smile on the face of a child for whom prayer has been answered. Thanks be to God.

- Chris Laufer

Serve



Faces of Children...a ministry of prayer for children at risk

www.facesofchildren.net

Faces of Children prayer group meets at 11:30 a.m. Wednesdays in the Bride's room at FPC Midland

Operation Bless the Children

United with friends, families, churches, schools, and organizations the **Hope Box Project** has been able to touch the lives of thousands of children during the Christmas season. Children of different ages, backgrounds, and a diversity of needs have been helped through this life impacting outreach. By giving a small portion of the many blessings we have received, we are able to see smiling faces and happy hearts in the lives of needy children. You are invited to join the **Hope Box Project** by picking up an empty, pre-wrapped shoe box located outside the Chapel or wrap your own shoe box and fill it with gifts for a child. Instruction sheets are in the pre-wrapped shoe boxes or you may find one at the reception desk. Together we will proclaim the true meaning of the birth of Jesus Christ and His love for the world. For additional information, call Terry Miller at 556-6492.





Round the Table

I have been caroling ‘round the table at FPC to celebrate Christmas for as long as I can remember. It is as much a part of the Chalfant family holiday traditions as turkey and the tree, spanning at least 35 years with nary an absence! I honestly cannot imagine December without it.

For those unfortunate enough to have never experienced RTTCS, it is a raucous family affair held annually the Sunday evening before Christmas in Lynn Hall. Hundreds of church members – with relatives and friends in tow – come together dressed in their festive finest for a scrumptious meal, caroling and fellowship.

I get nostalgic remembering Hyle Doss waddling into Lynn Hall, draped in red velvet and snowy fur, handing out candy canes to eager-eyed children as the adults belt out Here Comes Santa Claus. And I giggle thinking of Skeet Doss’s First Baptist youth group introducing us to their version of the Hallelujah Chorus, a skit FPC has since copied and made our own. The staff graciously entertains the masses every year with some version of a skit or video that is always tear-jerking in hilarity.

The joy of the evening is enhanced by families or groups of friends who add their own personal style by wearing antlers, Christmas sweaters or the traditional elf hat. Our family shakes sleigh bells to the beat and proudly dons flashing light necklaces. There is no doubt that a prospective mate is ready to marry into our clan when they willingly attend and participate in the revelry we have come to treasure like an heirloom.

No Carol Sing is complete without the Twelve Days Of Christmas, and our congregation has managed to elevate the song from music to aerobic activity. You must be willing to jump, dance, squawk, and possibly pirouette, depending on which “day” your table is assigned to represent. The Chalfants have a plan to pull off any day of the week, but we are especially thrilled when bestowed the honor of depicting the Five Golden Rings!

Even though I do not know the exact year I first experienced the holiday spirit of Round the Table Carol Sing, I do know that I have never missed a single one since. I have never gone because my mother made me – as a child or adult – but simply because it would not be Christmas without this long-standing tradition.

I encourage everyone to join my family on Sunday, December 19th. After experiencing the fellowship, food and caroling it might just become your family’s new Christmas tradition.

Remember to bring a new children's book to Santa on that Sunday evening – he will take them to children in need.

– Emily Ware

Round the Table Carol Sing

Sunday, December 19

5:30 p.m.

Lynn Hall

Tickets will be on sale beginning Sunday, November 28, between services in Lynn Hall.

During the week they will be available at the reception desk.

\$5 - adult, \$3 - Children 12 and under,

Free - Children 3 years and under.

LOOPS (Loved Ones of Prisoners) Christmas Party

December 9, 7:00 p.m. in Lynn Hall.

Come by outside Lynn Hall on Sundays or to the front desk during the week to pick up angels’ names and information. Call the church office or Stuart Beal (682-3753) for more information.

What is Christmas without... *Music?*

Come and be a part of the Sanctuary Choir for the Christmas Season!

As Advent and Christmas are almost upon us, we would invite your prayerful consideration to join the Sanctuary Choir for the Advent/Christmas season. Music is such an essential part of “*this wonderful time of the year*”, and the Choir would love to have you join us! For more information, please contact Greg at 684-7821, ext. 139, or gpysh@fpcmid.org.

Round the Table Carol Sing Band

If you would like to join in the rollicking “*Round the Table Carol Sing*” band on December 19, please contact the music ministry office. Even if you haven’t taken your clarinet out of its case in a year or two (or three), we want you to join us! For more information, please call Greg at 684-7821, ext. 139, or e-mail gpysh@fpcmid.org.

Post-Holiday Blahs Lifted at January Women's Retreat

Invite



When we think of fall, images of football games, piles of leaves and Christmas trees pop to mind. It is unquestionably a wonderful time of year, albeit hectic and harried. However, it was not an ideal time for ladies to slow down and get away. The Women's Retreat, which used to be in October, was lacking in ladies, so in 2010, the getaway got a face lift and a new format, moving to January when women were ready to slow down and be spiritually renewed.

Attendance at last year's retreat was incredibly diverse, with ladies ranging in age from 22-90, thus fostering fellowship and friendships across generations and allowing us to disconnect from the distractions of life and refocus on our relationships not only with others, but also with our God.

"The joy of experiencing the Holy Spirit with 'old' and new friends enriches my spiritual growth," said Jean Kiker. "And besides that, it's tons of fun!"

Proverbs 31 Ministries has an amazing complement of talented and spiritually rich women whom God has placed in our presence. This year, we will welcome Amy Carroll, who comes to us from North

Carolina, drawing us closer to the Lord with *"King of Hearts; Jesus, Lover of a Woman's Soul"*.

Warren Ranch in Coleman, Texas has been a welcome setting for the retreat atmosphere, offering accommodations that are "ranchy chic" with plush beds, fabulous food, a huge great room with plenty of comfy seating, and a grand fireplace that is ALWAYS burning. For those who are unable to drive or simply don't care to, the church bus is offered as an alternative.

This year's retreat will be January 28-30, concluding before noon on Sunday to allow an early return to families at home. And for those nervous daddies, a nursery will be provided at the church on Saturday January 29, from 9 am. - 2 p.m., free for children 0-5 years old.

Leslie Chupp, first time retreator last year, summed it up: "I was new to town and to the church, so it was a great way to meet new people and develop new friendships. I will definitely be going back again this year!"



Sign up for the Women's Retreat
December 5,
9 a.m.-12:30 p.m. in
Lynn Hall.
Space is limited.
Scholarships are available
and confidential.
\$170 per person



Invite

Children's Choir to Present Christmas Concert

As adults, our hearts and minds are fully ingrained with the traditional Christmas Carols that bring such warmth and familiarity during the holiday season. But to a four year old, "Noel" holds no meaning whatsoever; "Bethlehem" is a mouthful; and if "beasts" lived in the "stable," then it must have been a very scary place!

Our younger choirs are "decking the halls" already, learning not only the lyrics to our most cherished Christmas tunes, but also diving into the meaning behind all the strange words being sung.

The Children's Choir Ministry (age 4 through sixth grade) is committed to loving and leading all children to deeper life in Jesus...through singing! We make a JOYFUL NOISE at 6:30 p.m. every Wednesday night that the Gathering meets and sing approximately once a month in the traditional service. Best of all, we require absolutely no musical talent! We believe that all music offered to the Lord is beautiful to HIM, and we seek to praise HIM through our worship.

This year we will memorize LOTS of Scripture through the songs we sing (including the books of the Bible, Jeremiah 29:11-13, Isaiah 9:6, Psalm 8, 1Peter 5:7...), and we learn Bible stories

about Jesus by watching wonderful skits (written by our very own Jane Moore). We sing, dance, laugh, play outside, play in the Gym (some of our dads shoot baskets with us!), eat snacks, and then sing some more!!

We will celebrate the birth of Jesus with a **Christmas concert on Sunday, December 5 at 5:30 in the sanctuary.** The familiar carols will be performed by the four-year-olds through first grade, followed by a musical entitled "Wise Guys and Starry Skies", put on by our second through sixth graders. This is a story about the Magi ("wise guys") that follow a star to Bethlehem. Jessie (a fictional "camel jockey") becomes the mouthpiece for many Old Testament prophecies as he travels with the kings and cooks while searching for the Christ child. Through this musical, we learn the many names of Jesus, the significance of the three gifts given by the wise guys, the importance of faith, and the need to give our lives to Jesus. And through it all, we see the wisdom of God.

Children may join the choir at any time. Call Carolyn Price at the church to join in the fun!

CDC Bake Sale

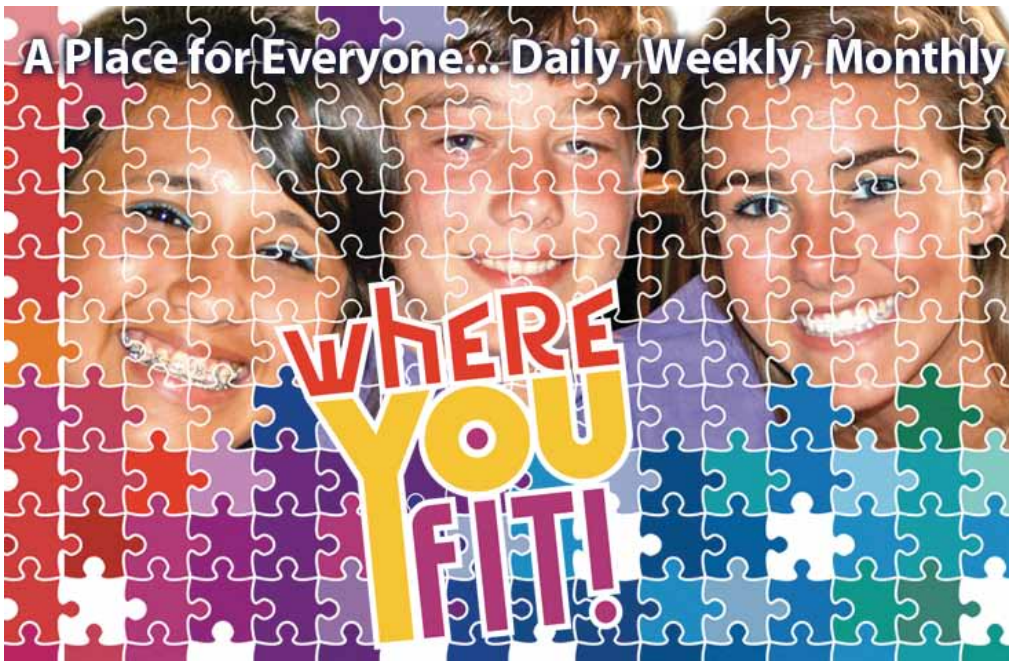
If the air smells extra sweet at FPC, there's a good reason! Volunteers for the Child Development Center are baking up all sorts of delicious treats in preparation for their annual bake sale on Sunday, December 5, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m in front of Lynn Hall.

All bake sale items are sold for donations only. This irresistible fundraiser is to raise money to purchase equipment and supplies for the FPC Children's Day Out and Preschool programs. Make plans to stop by and see all the delightful treats available this year!



A Place for Everyone... Daily, Weekly, Monthly

Invite



Sunday School

All youth join us every Sunday at 9:30 SHARP in Room 228 for Sunday School! We will start out as a big group with fellowship and announcements and break into grade-level classes to dig into Scripture and life and how they intersect!

JOLT

All youth meet together with guys or girls your own age in a small group environment where it is safe to share, ask questions, and simply “do life” as a family together. This is a great place to grow in your faith while growing in relationships with others.

Most groups will meet on Wednesdays from 6:30-7:30 -- for details about your group, contact Becky at bholmes@fpcmid.org.

Christmas Parties

Sunday December 5 will be the day for youth Christmas Parties. There will be one for those in junior high and one for those in high school. Time and place will be nailed down soon so watch for details about the party for your age group!!! It will be a wonderful time for fellowship and food!! Plan to hang out with us — mark your calendar for December 5.

Youth Prayer Group:

This ministry seeks to find people who love to pray for our Youth...7th graders through College students. We meet in the Prayer Closet on the first Wednesday of each month at noon. We meet for about thirty minutes and pray over our kids, the choices they make, their friends and teachers, and that they will have a heart for the Lord. Praying aloud is not a requirement...just a desire to lift up our Youth to the One that loves them even more than we do!! If you have special prayer requests, please call Todd Wyrick at the church. Join us whenever possible!



What better way to bring in 2011 than in Winter Park, Colorado! That's Right! “Collide” Ski Escape 2011 is hitting the road for Winter Park December 29, 2010-January 1, 2011. It will be a great time for fun, fellowship, and SNOW!



Invite

**Welcome November
New Members**

Elton Cole

James Gripp

Brent and Courtney Lunsford

Meddie and Sarah Mugoya

Perry and Lauren Robinson

Tom and Kelli Woodside

Primetimers Events

Primetimers Christmas will take place Friday, December 3 at 5:30 p.m. in Lynn Hall at First Presbyterian Church. We will have beef tips and all the fixins prepared by our own Angelo McCoy. The cost will be \$12 and your reservations will be made with prepayment of the \$12 before Wednesday, December 1. We will also have our traditional White Elephant gift exchange so bring an item that you can share with someone else or a gift not valued over \$5. These gifts need to be wrapped so they can be easily unwrapped. The bus will pick up at Manor Park to help individuals who would like a ride. Call the church office to reserve your seat on the bus - seats will be limited. This is always a fun event and we will have lots of surprises.

Tuesday, December 14 - Men's Lunch Out - 11:30 a.m. We will meet at Michael's Grill on the corner of Wadley and "A " Street. Come for fun and fellowship with good friends.

Come help dress Prayer Bears on Wednesday, December 8 at 1:30 p.m. in the Koinonia Room. Plan to stay and watch the movie at 3:00 p.m.

Relax and enjoy the Movie Matinee scheduled for Wednesday, December 8 at 3:00 p.m. in the church parlor. The movie, *Eat Pray Love*, is based on an inspiring true

story from a book of the same name. The story proves that there really is more than one way to let yourself go and see the world. It stars Julia Roberts, Javier Bardem, Viola Davis and Billy Crudup. Come enjoy the movie!

Scrapbooking and Jewelry- Thursday, December 9 - 10:00 a.m. - Koinonia Room - Bring your photographs to organize, crop or just visit about them. Come and work until 2:00 p.m. and we will pick up something for lunch. Joyce Watts will help with jewelry ideas and repair. Sharla Somers will show you fast and easy shortcuts to get your pictures in albums ready to enjoy. Nursery will be available. All ages are welcome.

The purpose of the Angels in Aprons ministry is to provide food for a small fee in individual frozen servings. The January menu will be Turkey Pot Pie, Cranberry Chicken, Spinach Artichoke Casserole, Taco Soup and Banana Split Salad. This is an outstanding menu and you can place your order by calling Rhondy at the church office. Your order must be placed by Thursday, December 16, 2010. The small individual portions can be picked up and paid for on Thursday, January 6 from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the Family Life Center foyer.

MAAS Client Christmas Party

Midland/Odessa Area AIDS Support, Inc. (MAAS) is preparing for its Client Christmas Party coming up December 10th, 2010. For many of our clients this will be the only Christmas they will have. We provide them with gift bags full of gifts and homemade goodies. If you could help with this endeavor we, as well as the MAAS clients, would greatly appreciate any help you can give. We will have approximately 60 clients that will be attending this year. If you need more information about this, please call the MAAS office and speak to Renue Batula.

Do your Christmas shopping at the Mission Marketplace

Remember Mission Marketplace as you make out your gift list. It's a wonderful way to shop for that "hard to buy for" person and help those in need at the same time. We will be selling Mission Marketplace gifts starting after Thanksgiving on Monday, December 1, until Christmas. For additional information, contact Cynthia Howard at 684-5803 or Cynthia.c.howard@gmail.com



Celebrating the Advent of FPC

A time to reflect and remember. This Advent we remember the founding of our own church in Midland. Midland became a town in 1885. The Holy Spirit led ten Presbyterians to start what has grown into the First Presbyterian Church we know today.

It was much different then....

There was no church building and no full time pastor. There were very few wooden buildings and of course the only way to get somewhere was on or behind a horse....or by steam train. No telephone, television...or even radio! Of course there was no running water or indoor toilet.

Away from the Midland scene in 1885: Dr. Pepper was invented way over in Waco, Pastuer administered the first successful rabies vaccination, Van Gogh painted "The Potato Eaters" in the Netherlands, Louis B. Mayer of MGM was born in Minsk, Russia, General George Patton was born and President and General U.S. Grant died. Grover Cleveland was the President, Queen Victoria ruled England and John Ireland was governor of Texas. Midland did not even have a sheriff until November of 1888, when W.D. Allison took office!

I wonder how much the world events affected the fledgling town. Growing a garden must have been really hard and putting food on the table a great challenge. Not to mention washing clothes by hand! It must have been even dustier with the dirt roads and clapboard houses... daily life must have taken all their time! But the Holy Spirit was there through it all, guiding our ancestors.

Harriet Hanna Caldwell wrote:

"The Presbytery of Dallas October 19, 1885, appointed The Rev. O.F. Rogers, the Rev. E.P. Palmer, Dr. P.C. Coleman, and J.C. Peoples as a committee "to organize churches in Midland and Big Spring and anywhere in the region adjacent to these, if the way be clear."

On December 22, 1885, the way was clear and the First Presbyterian Church of Midland was established, with nine members, three elders and two deacons. Five members of the Peoples family, J. C. Kerr, J.C. Shear, Lee Thompson and Mrs. M.E. Thompson were the entire congregation! The worst part is that for the next eleven years, membership declined to 2!

The Methodists were first to organize a church, in August before the Presbyterians. Then the Baptists in January of 1886. In March of 1886, the Baptists built the first building on the southeast corner of North Baird and West Illinois, which they let any orthodox denomination use, so the Methodists and Presbyterians met there. The Rev. Rogers came from Colorado City almost every month to hold services for the Presbyterians.

Thus, began our church. As we contemplate the coming of the Lord this Advent, let us celebrate the birth of our own church. Give thanks for those early settlers who heard the Holy Spirit in a dusty and remote new town called Midland, laying the foundation for the work of the Spirit through each of us.

- Sherry Bell





Art and Music Classes

Spring Semester Begins January 17th

Suzuki Violin and Cello continues this Spring
with instructors Aliza Bowcutt and Sarah Wilson



Music

Musikgarten
with instructor
Becca Sawyer

Piano Lessons all ages

Art with instructor Kathy Schorr

Art for Children

KinderArt
Art from A to Z
Adventures in Art

Art for Adults

Art 101
Art 102

Artistic Excellence in a Christian Environment

Registration materials coming soon.

Contact Kathy Schorr for more information at 684-7821, ext.122, katschorr@suddenlink.net

First Presbyterian Church • 800 West Texas, Midland • www.fpcmid.org

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