

Our Mission:  
Connecting with God  
and sharing  
the Good News of Jesus  
Christ with the commu-  
nity.

# First Presbyterian Church EPISTLE

January 2013

Vol. 2, No. 1

## **FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

543 East Freeman St.  
Duncanville, TX 75116  
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### **CHURCH STAFF:**

**Rev. Ginger Hertenstein,**  
Pastor

**Sandy Gaskins,**  
Administrative  
Assistant/Bookkeeper

**Steve Netniss,**  
Youth Pastor

**Andrew Dittman,**  
Choir Director

**Deborah Titus,**  
Accompanist

**Sean Russell,**  
Sound Room Technician

**Susan Murphy,**  
Nursery

### *Inside . . .*

- 2 – Words from Worship  
, Finances
- 3 – Missions News
- 4 – Worship Volunteer  
Schedule, PW News  
insert – Event Calendar
- 5 – From “the Closet”,  
Birthdays,
- 6 – Just for Men, Missions  
(cont.), Finances
- 7 – Event Calendar

## From our Elders

Happy New Year !! May God’s Peace be upon you!

I was asked to pen something about my faith and faith journey for this January Newsletter.

Obviously our Pastor hasn’t heard of my non academic abilities and achievements or she wouldn’t have asked me to put pen to paper (actually MS Word to hard drive). But, I will give it the old academic try. Have you ever been asked “What is your favorite Bible verse?” Aside from “All of them!” I do have a favorite. Go get your Bible and follow along with me – turn to Psalm 19:1 (I use the NRKJ):

**The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork.**

I’ve been a very lucky boy – Fortunately God gave me the talent to be a pilot and fly throughout His heavens. Oh, by the way – did you look up the definition of “firmament”? (Go ahead, I’ll wait.) Yes, the vast expanse of all His sky!

Have you ever tried to chase a rainbow and get to the end finding a pot of gold? You never get there do you? As a pilot I have been witness to the secrete of the rainbow. I’ll share it with you. Flying high and looking down on the clouds you see a perfect circle – the rainbow has no end! Also, with the sun just right, I have been blessed to look down on the circle formed by the rainbow to see the shadow of my aircraft centered therein. I know that God holds me in the palm of his hand. I can see it! I have laughed and danced – I have done and seen things that truly sing the glory of God. I have rolled, climbed, dove and even flown the speed of sound in God’s home court - the sky. I have seen His handiwork in His sky! I have been blessed to have been able to share some intimate moments in what I truly call God’s home.

**The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork.**

Elder *Scott Hartless*



## Words from Worship ~ Epiphany



We've all heard people say, "I had an epiphany!"—meaning that they had an experience that made them suddenly realize something they hadn't realized before—it's usually something really important and life-changing, but sometimes the word is used for more trivial discoveries. In our church calendar, the 12-day season of Christmas is followed by Epiphany, January 6, commemorating God's revealing Jesus as the One He sent for all people of the world, Jew and Gentile alike, as seen in the magi who came to Jerusalem from a country to the east of Israel (perhaps Persia, or Iran), to worship the newborn King of the Jews, King of the universe.

In the poem below, Stuart McAlpine, a pastor at Christ Our Shepherd Church in Washington, D.C., focuses on the magi as seekers after wisdom, imaginatively following the literal and figurative journey of one of the magi in his search for wisdom from Eden to Calvary. You might want to read and ponder Matthew 2:1-12 along with this poem as a devotional exercise on Sunday, January 6.\*

### **"The journey of a wise (every) man"**

I fell for fork-tongued hissing wiles,  
Believing that the tree would make me wise.  
I sold my soul for what beguiles,  
That damned me darkly deep to folly's guise.

Thus east of Eden, banished, I  
Would scan for pin-prick light the pit-bull black,  
And curse the eyeless, deaf, mute sky  
That mocked remorseful heart-pleas to go back.

Until that "just another" night,  
When not just any natal star white-burned  
And bade me follow its pure light.  
To westward, homeward my steps turned.

I knew where this star-path would wend.  
Was that not the Euphrates that we crossed?  
Where could this mystery journey end,  
But in the glades of paradise once lost?

But where it halted, where it stayed,  
I tell you that no seer or sage could know.  
A child within a manger laid?  
Is this where wisdom would have bid me go?

In Bethlehem, not Eden's joy,  
But heaven's pristine glory come to earth;  
The second Adam as a boy,  
My paradise regained by this new birth.

They called me wise who saw me come,  
But I was altogether foolish, dim.  
Before I worshipped, I was dumb,  
I had no wisdom when I first found him.

I wide-eyed waited through the years.  
I followed his signs now, and not a star.  
Until the day when I once more wept tears,  
And watched a Roman gibbet from afar.

My mind raced back through centuries,  
To Eden's shame and Satan's lies.  
I fell again upon my knees.  
At last there was a tree to make me wise.

\*For the full article about the magi, from which this poem is taken, start at <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/dec/24/the-journey-of-the-magi/?page=1>.

## Missions News

It has been a while since we have heard from the Schaefer family. This fall they returned to the US for a furlough from their work among the Safaliba in Ghana. They are living in Marionville, Missouri, in the house where Paul's grandparents raised their two children. Since the Schaeffers have 4 children, they are short of bedrooms! So, while Jen and the children are busy with school, Paul is transforming the attic, adding rooms and constructing a gable and windows to give light to them.

Jen is working on a Doctor of Missiology degree. Due to the limited time they have in the US, Jen's supervisors are discussing special arrangements so that she can still hopefully get all her courses completed during this furlough time. Please pray that Jen will have all the time and other resources she needs in order to complete her coursework.

Caleb is doing well in his first semester as a high-school freshman. It has been a challenge for him to transition to public school, but he's stepped up to the challenge and is doing well. Micah attends the 6<sup>th</sup> grade at Marionville. He has also managed the transition very well, and is doing well in all his classes. Josiah is in 3rd grade. It has meant a lot of work for him, as there has been a steep curve to catch up on reading skills which weren't covered so well last year in the small school he enjoyed so much in Bole. But he's catching up well. Sarah has had a lot of fun this year in kindergarten. Her preschool in Bole was actually very rigorous so she had already learned her letters and numbers more thoroughly. And now they are moving into actual reading, which she is enjoying very much. Please pray for the kids to continue to have a good experience in school.

See p. 6 for more pictures.

As always, thank-you for praying for us and for the translation work among the Safaliba people. Our Safaliba co-workers in Ghana have continued to be faithful in the work during our absence. We are particularly thankful for God's protection of Elisha Dari's life during a recent motorcycle accident. Elisha (at left, dressed in High Priest garments while the team is translating Exodus; at right, helping baptize new believers) had a badly-fractured knee and a damaged hand, but his helmet had protected his head and he is expected to be okay pending surgery to the knee. Please pray for the funds to pay for the medical expenses (approximately \$1500). Pray also for Elisha's family (wife and many children), during this time, and that Elisha would be fully healed and return to his ministries.



Elisha has been very faithful in the translation work. He has used the translated scriptures in teaching Sunday school and Bible Study in his church, and has also been a leader in evangelizing communities outside Mandari. For the past year he has been planting and caring for a new church in a nearby Birifor village, and in March he and Stanley baptized about 40 new believers.



Gbenfu chief learning to read Safaliba

Elisha, Amaaliya, Nicholas, and the rest of our Safaliba co-workers have continued to work on the Bible translation and literacy work during our absence. Together we are working through some selections from the book of Numbers. It has also been printed it so that it could be available for people to read.

Amaaliya and Iddi (pictured at right) have continued to establish the literacy class in Gbenfu and Nsunua. These literacy classes have formed the core of the Christian church in each village.



As always, thank you for praying for us and for the translation work among the Safaliba people!

*Paul and Jen*

## WORSHIP VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

January 2013

10:30 A.M. SERVICE



January 6 Epiphany)	Greeters:	Eddie Cowand, Sharon Ingram
	Ushers:	Irving Kezar, Jack Pegues
	Liturgist:	Helen Barton
	Nursery Volunteer:	Lois Harmon
	Tellers:	Paul Barton, Tom Harmon
	Communion Servers:	Bill Jackson, Marna Bayless, Leo Skinner Vangie Jackson, Darrell Ingram, Helen Barton
January 13	Greeters:	Adelmo & Edelmira Ruiz
	Ushers:	Albert Teel, Eddie Cowand
	Liturgist:	Tom Harmon
	Nursery Volunteer:	Jocelyn Bolles
	Tellers:	Teresa Reed, Joan Brown
January 20	Greeters:	Eugene & Armelia Jimmerson
	Ushers:	Albert Teel, Irving Kezar
	Liturgist:	Joan Brown
	Nursery Volunteer:	Anna Murphy
	Tellers:	Jocelyn Bolles, Margaret Lewis
January 27	Greeters:	Donna To, Wendy Jensen
	Ushers:	Dub Guthrie, Jack Pegues
	Liturgist:	Darrell Ingram
	Nursery Volunteer:	Erin McGinnis
	Tellers:	Mickey Jespersen, Leo Skinner



### Women's Fellowship Groups Thursday January 10

*Come and visit!*



Agape Fellowship meets at 1 p.m. at the home of Lois Harmon, 207 N. Venice Drive, Duncanville, 75116. Our study will focus on 1 Peter 2:11-25, with the theme "The Help"

Sarah Fellowship meets at 7:30 p.m. at the home of Jocelyn Bolles, 619 Athenia Way, Duncanville 75137. The scriptural focus is I Peter 3, with the theme "The Ties that Bind."

A big **THANK YOU** for your support of the PW auction in December. **You raised over \$1,300!!** Some of that will go to national Presbyterian Women projects, some to specific projects in our own church, and some to the Douglas Carew Memorial Fund at Africa International University (see December 2012 *Epistle*, pages 2 & 4).



## From Our Youth—From “the Closet”

The Youth Group schedule is all but planned for much of the 2013 year. We look forward to once again attending Planet Wisdom in February as well as the Stewpot in Downtown Dallas during the summer.

Three of our students will be graduating this year, (Lucy, Courtney, Keanu). We are hoping to give them a great last semester of Youth Ministry here at FPCD.



During the month of January we will be studying the early church as we piece together different strands which have led to our current church situation. The students are interested in why there are so many different denominations. I am going to be tracing the last 2,000 years of philosophical, social and theological developments which have led to the varying church traditions. I hope the students will understand the Presbyterian tradition as well as the greater church world.

Also, keep in mind that we are planning our Spaghetti dinner for February! We know you'll love it.

Sincerely,

*Youth Pastor Steve*



Jocelyn Bolles – 1/1	Jim Stahl – 1/5
Andrene Hull – 1/2	Connie Steger – 1/16
Gwenn Guthrie – 1/4	Logan Russell – 1/25
Dorothy Cleary – 1/5	Don Burquest – 1/28

Lord, teach us to  
number our days!

If we've missed your birthday and you would like us to include it in this "birthday" section of the newsletter, please contact us at (972) 298-3043 or [info@fpcd.org](mailto:info@fpcd.org).

# 6 The Epistle

Dear FPCD Men,



On **Saturday January 12<sup>th</sup>** we will be launching a new Men's ministry here at FPCD. I've been at FPCD over two years and during that time I've grown fond of many of the men in our congregation. Recently it occurred to me that our men do not gather for fellowship on a regular basis and this spurred me in starting this ministry. We will gather for **breakfast** and afterward interact with a different speaker each month. I will be the speaker for our first gathering on January 12<sup>th</sup> and I am



thrilled to be giving this message. We will also be setting up some outings soon for our group. In May we will attend the Mo-Ranch retreat together. I look forward to spending more quality time with the men of our church. and contact me for more information (like, menu?)! [steve@fpcd.org](mailto:steve@fpcd.org)  
*Youth Pastor Steve*



Please plan on being there  
 What time does breakfast start? What's the

More photos from Schaeffers:



Jen gets some time for her own studies, when she's not busy...



...practicing reading with Josiah.



Caleb has plenty of homework, too,...



...as does Micah.



Paul & Sarah must be inside, transforming the attic!



November 2012

**Receipts**

\$27,572

**Expenditures**

\$23,077

YTD income: \* \$224,644

YTD expenditures \$214,157

Total Annual Budget: \$225,810

\*This includes memorial giving.

# January 2013

First Presbyterian Church, Duncanville, Texas

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Dec 2012</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td> </tr> <tr> <td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td> </tr> <tr> <td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td> </tr> <tr> <td>30</td><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> </tr> </table> </div>		S	M	T	W	T	F	S							1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31						<p><b>1</b></p> <p>Office Closed</p>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p>6:30 PM-7:15 PM Prayer Gathering</p>	<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>5</b></p>
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<p><b>6</b></p> <p>9:15 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship - Communion</p>	<p><b>7</b></p> <p>4:00 PM Deacons Meeting 7:30 PM Congo Life Meeting</p>	<p><b>8</b></p> <p>2:00 PM "New Beginnings" Grief Support Small Group 7:30 PM Property Team Meeting</p>	<p><b>9</b></p> <p>6:00 PM Youth Group 6:45 PM Finance Meeting 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p><b>10</b></p> <p>1:00 PM Agape Women's Bible Study 6:30 PM Worship Planning Meeting 7:30 PM Sarah Women's Fellowship</p>	<p><b>11</b></p>	<p><b>12</b></p> <p>8:00 AM NEW Men's Ministry</p>																																																	
<p><b>13</b></p> <p>9:15 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship</p>	<p><b>14</b></p>	<p><b>15</b></p> <p>Newsletter Articles Due</p>	<p><b>16</b></p> <p>6:00 PM Youth Group 6:30 PM-7:20 PM Youth Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p><b>17</b></p>	<p><b>18</b></p>	<p><b>19</b></p>																																																	
<p><b>20</b></p> <p>9:15 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship **Food Sunday**</p>	<p><b>21</b></p> <p>6:30 PM Thinktank Meeting</p>	<p><b>22</b></p>	<p><b>23</b></p> <p>6:00 PM Youth Group 6:30 PM-7:20 PM Youth Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p><b>24</b></p> <p>6:30 PM Session Meeting</p>	<p><b>25</b></p>	<p><b>26</b></p>																																																	
<p><b>27</b></p> <p>9:15 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship</p>	<p><b>28</b></p> <p>Sandwiches for Austin Street Centre Shelter</p>	<p><b>29</b></p>	<p><b>30</b></p> <p>6:00 PM Youth Group 6:30 PM-7:20 PM Youth Choir Rehearsal 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p><b>31</b></p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p style="text-align: center;">Feb 2013</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center;"> <tr> <td>S</td><td>M</td><td>T</td><td>W</td><td>T</td><td>F</td><td>S</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1 2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td> </tr> <tr> <td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td> </tr> <tr> <td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td></td><td></td> </tr> </table> </div>		S	M	T	W	T	F	S							1 2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28									
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Session Retreat

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**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

**SUNDAY SCHEDULE**

<b>Christian Education</b>	<b>— 9:15 a.m.</b>
<b>Worship Service</b>	<b>— 10:30 a.m.</b>
<b>Youth Group</b>	<b>— 4:30-6:00 p.m.</b>