

First Presbyterian Church

EPISTLE

Our vision: Seeking God first, who first loved us.

*Our Mission: Knowing & loving God; obeying & worshipping him together;
sharing Jesus & his love with everyone.*

January 2009

Vol. 17 No. 1

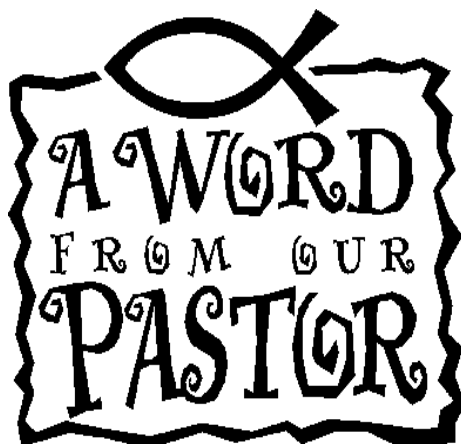
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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CHURCH STAFF: Rev. Ginger Hertenstein

Steve Bayless,
Choir Director
Sandy Gaskins,
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Tom Wylie,
Accompanist

*"The Epistle" is a monthly
publication of
First Presbyterian Church,
Duncanville, Texas.*



For several years a friend and I have made-up little ditties for the upcoming New Year. How's this one – *"Everything's Fine in 2009."* You might be unconvinced. The economy's bad; strife seems to be the rule nationally; and a new year calls for making those resolutions to "do better."

At First Presbyterian Church Duncanville we enter 2009 with some significant accomplishments under our belt.

- We baptized five people in 2008 and added four members.
- We had 100 people in worship in December.
- We've added new technology to enhance our worship.
- Giving is up significantly, allowing us to pursue calling a pastor.

Everything's Fine in 2009. Pat yourselves on the back and give yourselves a hand.

Now it's time to roll up our sleeves because there is much work to be done.

New growth means the church needs ways to facilitate becoming disciples of Jesus Christ. Thus, we begin the year investigating some of the possible ways to accomplish that. First we start with prayer. Are you praying? Remember 4+4+4 – four minutes at 4 PM for four months. We've still got six weeks to go. While you are praying for God's direction for FPCD, take a moment to ask God what your part will be for this next year. Working together equips us to become effective in using our gifts and skills. By the end of the year, with everyone actively involved, I predict we'll say *indeed, everything was fine in 2009.*

Blessings for a Happy New Year!
Ginger

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Report

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

The Twelve Days of Christmas

Worship Committee

The **Twelve Days of Christmas** is probably the most misunderstood part of the church year among Christians who are not part of liturgical church traditions. Contrary to much popular belief, these are not the twelve days *before* Christmas, but in most of the Western Church are the twelve days from Christmas until the beginning of Epiphany (January 6th; the 12 days count from December 25th until January 5th). In some traditions, the first day of Christmas begins on the evening of December 25th with the following day considered the First Day of Christmas (December 26th). In these traditions, the twelve days begin December 26 and include Epiphany on January 6.

In the Western church, Epiphany is usually celebrated as the time the Wise Men or Magi arrived to present gifts to the young Jesus (Matt. 2:1-12). Traditionally there were three Magi, probably from the fact of three gifts, even though the biblical narrative never says how many Magi came. In some cultures, especially Hispanic and Latin American culture, January 6th is observed as Three Kings Day, or simply the Day of the Kings Even though December 25th is celebrated as Christmas in these cultures, January 6th is often the day for giving gifts. In some places it is traditional to give Christmas gifts for each of the Twelve Days of Christmas.

The **Twelfth Night** is January 5th, the last day of the Christmas Season before Epiphany (January 6th). In some church traditions, January 5th is considered the eleventh Day of Christmas, while the evening of January 5th is still counted as the Twelfth Night, the beginning of the Twelfth day of Christmas the following day. Twelfth Night often included feasting along with the removal of Christmas decorations. French and English celebrations of Twelfth Night included a **King's Cake**, remembering the visit of the Three Magi, and ale or wine (a King's Cake is part of the observance of Mardi Gras in French Catholic culture of the Southern USA). In some cultures, the **King's Cake** was part of the celebration of the day of Epiphany.

The popular song "The Twelve Days of Christmas" is usually seen as simply a nonsense song for children. However, some have suggested that it is a song of Christian instruction dating to the 16th century religious wars in England, with hidden references to the basic teachings of the Faith. They contend that it was a mnemonic device to teach the catechism to youngsters. The "true love" mentioned in the song is not an earthly suitor, but refers to God Himself. The "me" who receives the presents refers to every baptized person who is part of the Christian Faith. Each of the "days" represents some aspect of the Christian Faith that was important for children to learn.

On the 1st day of Christmas my true love gave to me.... A Partridge in a Pear Tree
The "true love" represents God and the "me" represents the Christian. The "partridge in a pear tree" is Jesus Christ who died on a tree or cross as a gift from God for the whole world

2nd day of Christmas Two Turtle Doves... are symbolic of the Old and the New Testament

3rd day of Christmas Three French Hens...The Three Theological Virtues: 1) Faith, 2) Hope, and 3) Love

4th day of Christmas Four Calling Birds...The Four Gospels: 1) Matthew, 2) Mark, 3) Luke, and 4) John, which proclaim the Good News of God's reconciliation of the world to Himself in Jesus Christ.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE Continued

5th day of Christmas Five Gold Rings...The first Five Books of the Old Testament, known as the Torah or the Pentateuch: 1) Genesis, 2) Exodus, 3) Leviticus, 4) Numbers, and 5) Deuteronomy

6th day of Christmas Six Geese A-laying...The six days of creation

7th day of Christmas Seven Swans A-swimming...The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: 1) prophecy, 2) ministry, 3) teaching, 4) exhortation, 5) giving, 6) leading, and 7) compassion

8th day of Christmas Eight Maids A-milking...The eight Beatitudes

9th day of Christmas Nine Ladies Dancing...The nine Fruit of the Holy Spirit: 1) love, 2) joy, 3) peace, 4) patience, 5) kindness, 6) generosity, 7) faithfulness, 8) gentleness, and 9) self-control.

10th day of Christmas Ten Lords A-leaping...The ten commandments:

11th day of Christmas Eleven Pipers Piping...The eleven Faithful Apostles following the chief piper and becoming like HIM.

12th day of Christmas Twelve Drummers Drumming...The twelve points of doctrine in the Apostles' Creed:

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Our Thanks to each of you who “purchased” Poinsettias this year. \$462 was donated to the Poinsettia fund. This money will be going to Emmanuel PCUSA, our sister church in Galveston, who sustained heavy damage during Hurricane Ike. There was at least five feet of water in the sanctuary. The pews etc. will need to be removed and dried out. This small congregation will need significant help in restoring the building. Again, THANK YOU.

Saturday, January 10th from 9am to 12pm we will be taking down the Christmas Decorations. If you would like to assist, come on by, we would love to have your help.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

FPCD is looking for persons to join the Worship Team to help out with the following worship duties:

Maintain the children's worship packets, aka pizza boxes. These generally need to be organized once a month with activities related to the worship and/or seasonal calendar. Please contact Anna Murphy. (214.571.1312 or 972.296.4439)

Additional Ushers are needed. If you would like to become a part of the Usher Team, please contact Dub Guthrie. (972.223.3557)

*Blessing for a safe, healthy and happy new year....
Your Worship Team*

Worship Committee
Continued

Deacon's Doin's

Deacon's Doin's

In December we had the excitement of getting together a number of items to fill 15 Christmas stockings and delivering them to: the Andersons, Cooks, George & Billie Cowand, Lenora Dalton, the Eagles, Bill Farish, the McKinnneys, Melody Meistrell/Amy & Cody Slater, Burle Murphy, Evelyn Pike, Eunice Pike, Teresa Rodriques, Donna To, Anna Vegas (cleaning lady) and the Yingsts. It was also a special joy to visit with them.



Speaking of visiting, did you know the Deacon's have a Visitation Program? Some FPCD church members are housebound, or nearly so, and others have recurrent or occasional medical needs. These members would greatly appreciate a visitor once in awhile. If this is something you feel you are called to do please let us know by signing up at the Kiosk. One of the Deacon's will contact you shortly to let you know who might need a visit. If you already visit members regularly please let one of us know.

PW News



*Parking Lot
Attendants*

FPCD has a need for Parking lot Attendants. This is someone who can help those in wheelchairs or walkers get from their vehicles to the sanctuary & then back to their vehicles after the service. The attendant would also greet new 1st time visitors & direct them to the sanctuary. A sign up sheet for each Sunday has been placed on the Kiosk. Please sign up for one of these Sunday's & be near the Fellowship Hall side doors no later than 10:15am.

PW NEWS

PW CIRCLES

Our PW Circles meet monthly (except for the summer months of June, July and August), and the dates and places are below. If you do not currently attend a Circle, please consider doing so. The Circles meet in different homes each month and enjoy Bible Study, prayer, good discussions, desserts and fellowship. There is a daytime and an evening Circle. The study for this year will be the PW Horizon's Bible Study taken from the Gospel of Luke:

Jubilee!

Luke's Gospel for the Poor

by Dale Lindsay Morgan

Sarah Circle: Meeting Thursday, January 8 at 7:30 pm at the home of Diane Pegues, 302 N. Venice Drive, Duncanville, 972-298-4097.

Agape Circle: Meeting Friday, January 9 at 10:00 am at the home of Lois Harmon, 207 N. Venice Drive, Duncanville, 972-296-8224.

Ladies' Night Out—Tuesday, January 27 at 7:00 pm at the Macaroni Grill in Cedar Hill. All ladies are invited for an evening of good food and fellowship. We hope you plan to come!

FPCD's New Accompanist

Tom Wylie grew up in Oak Cliff and is a lifelong Presbyterian. He is a son of Oak Cliff Presbyterian Church, where he was ordained and served as a Deacon. He met his wife, Sandy while working at First Presbyterian Church, Dallas where Sandy was Office Manager for Community Ministries. Together, Tom and Sandy created a program for at-risk inner city youth in South Dallas. They were married in 1992, moved to Rowlett and joined First Presbyterian, Rockwall, where they worked with the youth program there. In 1994, the Wylies moved to Bedford and joined Westminster Presbyterian Church in Arlington. Tom was ordained as a Ruling Elder, and served that church until 2000, when he accepted a position at Trinity Presbyterian Church in Mansfield as Youth/Music Director.

Tom has served as Youth Choir Director at St. Barnabas Church in Arlington and Interim Chancel Choir Director at Ridglea Presbyterian, Fort Worth. He has been a self-employed musician since 1983. Tom holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in piano performance from the University of Texas, Arlington and a Master of Divinity degree from Brite Divinity School in Fort Worth. He is currently a Candidate for Minister of Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church, (U.S.A.).

Tom & Sandy currently live in Mansfield with their 3 children; Thomas (13), Katie (10) & Abby (5).

Thank You's

I would like to thank all the Deacons of our church for their thoughtfulness to our senior citizens (such as us). Your visit and your gift a of stocking full of "things" is a wonderful delight and a blessing to us all at this special time of the year.

George and Billie Cowand

Thank you so much for your gracious gifts during the holidays. You all can cook! We enjoyed everything you provided us and so did all our family members. You make us feel embraced and loved. Blessings to all this New Year.

Dean and Ginger

FPCD's New Accompanist

Attendance

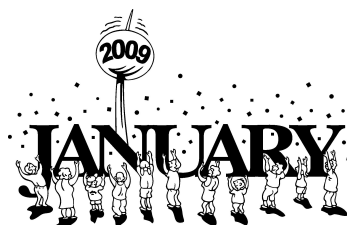
Thank You

Birthdays

Bookkeeper's Report

BIRTHDAYS!

If you think we might not have a record of your birthday and you would like us to include it in the "birthday" section of the newsletter, please contact the office (972) 298-3043. Thank you.



Jocelyn Bolles—1/1

Andrene Hull—1/2

Gwenn Guthrie—1/4

Dorothy Cleary—1/5

Carol Guthrie—1/11

Melisa Guthrie—1/11

Logan Russell—1/25

Don Burquest—1/28

ATTENDANCE

December 2007

2-December-78

9-December-48

16-December-73

23-December-69

24-December-92

30-December-73

December 2008

7-December-85

14-December-100

21-December-100

24-December-94

28-December-69

Bookkeeper's Report

October 2008

Receipts

\$8,202

Expenditures

\$17,873

November 2008

Receipts

\$12,034

Expenditures

\$12,391



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

| | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Christian Education | — 9:15 a.m. |
| Worship Service | — 10:30 a.m. |

WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE

| | |
|-------------|------------------|
| Youth Group | — 7:30-9:30 p.m. |
|-------------|------------------|