

# 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.*

February 2009

Vol. 17 No. 2

### FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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#### CHURCH STAFF:

Rev. Ginger Hertenstein

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Administrative Assistant/  
Bookkeeper  
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Accompanist

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

### Inside . . .

- 2 – Worship Committee
- 3 – PW News
- 3 – Property
- 4 – PW News continued
- 5 – January '09  
Calendar
- 6 – January '09 Worship  
Volunteer Schedule
- 7 – Scouting Recognition
- 7 – Birthday's
- 7 – Attendance
- 7 – Bookkeeper's  
Report



*St. Luke Painting the Virgin, 1602, by  
Maarten de Vos, Koninklijk Museum  
voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp*

The other day I saw a picture by an artist named Maarten de Vos called St. Luke Painting the Virgin and discovered that legend has it that Luke was an artist. I read that there are seven paintings attributed to him. After spending several weeks with the stories in Luke's Gospel, that legend does not surprise me. He paints vivid pictures with the words of the stories we have studied. Don't you feel like you have walked the road with Jesus thus far?

One of our goals at First Presbyterian Church in 2009 is to develop the habit of walking with Jesus every day through Bible study and prayer. As we venture more deeply in the story of Jesus' life through the eyes of Luke, searching between the lines to see how people of ancient times related to our Lord, faith becomes a greater reality in our lifestyle. As we contemplate the actions of Jesus – like his courage and generosity – we become more and more like him. It just kind of rubs off, because implanted within each of us by our Maker is a desire to know God. And, when we express Christ-like qualities such as generosity, courage, and joy, our witness becomes much more attractive to others.

Take a look at the picture. Luke represented himself with a symbolic bull and a book. In the same way, I believe as you read The Book, it will make you strong.

Blessings for a Happy New Year!  
Ginger

**WORSHIP COMMITTEE**

## *Reflections on Ash Wednesday*

### Worship Committee

**Ash Wednesday** is the first day of **Lent**. It is a somber day of reflection on what needs to change in our lives if we are to be fully Christians. It was not always the way we know it today. Ashes marked on the forehead of worshippers were not given to everyone, but only to the public penitents who were brought before the church. Much like Hester Prynne bearing her scarlet letter, these open and notorious sinners were marked publicly with the sign of their disgrace.



As time went on, others began to show their humility and their affection for the penitents by asking that they, too, be marked as sinners. Finally, the number of penitents grew so large that the imposition of ashes was extended to the whole congregation in services similar to those that are observed in many Christian churches on Ash Wednesday.

We who will bear the ashes upon our foreheads stand with those whose sins may be more public, but not, according to the Scriptures, more grievous to the heart of God. And so we make our confessions. . . . If you only knew the secrets of my heart, if you only knew the sins that I am capable of contemplating, if you only knew some of the schemes I have considered – and of course God does know – then you would know that I, too, am a sinner.

Ashes are signs that we are all in this sin business together, and that the difference between the good in us and the bad in us is sometimes frightfully thin. We so often fall short of the Faith we claim. We have treated people as things and we have treated things as if they were valuable people. And so we look into our hearts and make the ancient prayer of one notorious sinner our own: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10; see Psalm 51 and the Language of Transformation).

Lent is a season that reminds us to repent and get our lives centered, our priorities straight, and our hearts clean. This holy season offers us a new chance to say, "yes" to the Lover of our Souls who created us, who made us in his own image. Lent is the time for a restoration project that will reveal the beauty of God's design for us, showing once again the scale, proportion, and priorities intended by our Maker.

Further, Lent is a season of hope and with ashes on our foreheads and hope in our hearts, we go forth to love and serve. For by God's grace in Christ, we do not have to stay the way we are.

Stay tuned for more information about Lenten activities, beginning with Ash Wednesday services, Wednesday, February 25.

-Stuart Malloy, Copyright ©, Christian Resource Institute  
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## PW NEWS

### PW Family Supper and Christmas Auction

Thanks to the generosity of all who attended and participated in the Auction, bringing items and/or purchasing items!! PW was able to raise approximately \$1200!



The proceeds of the Auction will be used in three areas: to cover our National PW Mission Pledge; to fund projects and improvements within our church; and also to help support our PW mission outreach for the past year, which has focused on the children of Haiti. Through the Outreach Foundation of the PCUSA, we have been able to help with scholarships for Haitian children to be educated and learn of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The

Haiti Education Foundation was established by a group of American volunteers who have a heart for the people of Haiti. They report that when missionaries first went to Haiti there was no need for Bibles or hymnbooks because very few people could read. This has changed and many are eager for education, but lack the money needed for school expenses, such as tuition and textbooks. When available, Bibles are also used for textbooks. Children often take their Bibles home and teach their parents to read, and, in doing so, expose them to the Good News of Jesus Christ. We are happy to report that through your generosity and support, PW is contributing \$500 for these scholarships, which will go towards tuition, food, clothing, and Creole Bibles and textbooks for these children.

### 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, February 5 at 7:30 pm at the home of Helen Barton, 6820 Shalloway Drive, Grand Prairie, 817-477-2164.

***Agape Circle:*** Meeting Friday, February 13 at 10:00 am at the home of Catherine Eagle, 115 Willowbrook, Duncanville, 972-298-2303.

## Property

Has anyone noticed anything unusual about our Wheatland Road church sign during the time since it was repaired in May or June of last year? Is the Devil in these details?

**Hint: It rhymes with crutch!**

(By the way, after a good laugh by all involved, it will be corrected by the sign company.)



**PW  
News**

PW  
News  
continued

**PW News continued**

## **PW MINI RETREAT IS COMING!!**

**FRIDAY EVENING, MARCH 6 AND SATURDAY MORNING MARCH 7 AT THE  
HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS IN WAXAHACHIE**

Some people are a joy to love, some are difficult to love, and we all have to deal with some people who are humanly impossible to love. And in every relationship one truth endures: We will never be able to love others well until we have been loved well. Only God can ultimately give us the complete love we so desperately need.



Our **Loving Well Retreat** will feature four heart-to-heart DVD messages from Beth Moore taped at a Living Proof Live event. These messages include hard-hitting truths as well as humor, all designed to help women embrace the biblical mandate to love and to develop skills for loving others.

### About Beth Moore

Beth Moore is an acclaimed Bible teacher, best-selling author of dozens of books and Bible studies, and speaks to thousands of women each year at her Living Proof Live events. Beth is passionate about the life-transforming power of God, and her messages are straight from God's Word.

There will be a sign-up poster in the Narthex. Please sign up with a roommate no later than Sunday, March 1. The cost will be approximately \$50 per person, with 2 people in a room. Breakfast will be provided at the hotel, and as always, please bring snacks to share for Friday evening and Saturday and don't forget your Bible. The Retreat will end at noon on Saturday. There are lots of fun things to do in Waxahachie on Friday or Saturday, if you wish to go into town.







## Scouting Recognition

At the recent Annual Recognition Dinner of Wisdom Trail District of Circle Ten Council of Boy Scouts of America, Neal Guthrie was honored for achieving his Eagle Scout Rank. Neal, along with 26 other scouts were recognized by the council for achieving scouting highest rank during 2008. Neal is a member of Troop 1141, chartered at 1<sup>st</sup> United Methodist Church in DeSoto.

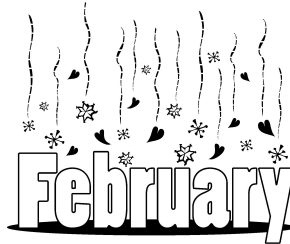


Also at the dinner, Anna Murphy was one of three adults to be awarded the "Daddy" Wisdom award. This award is specific to the Wisdom Trail District and is presented to an individual who has rendered outstanding service to their unit or to youth within the district. This award honors the spirit of John S. "Daddy" Wisdom, who donated his land for Camp Wisdom "...to be enjoyed by the Boy Scouts for "the next thousand years." Anna is an Assistant Scout Master with Troop 493, chartered at 1<sup>st</sup> United Methodist Church in Duncanville.

**Congratulations Neal and Anna!**

## 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.



Carol McKinney—2/4  
Christy Coward—2/6  
Triston Russell—2/8  
Helen Barton—2/10  
Billie Coward—2/10  
Paul Griffith—2/12  
Leo Skinner—2/15  
Claudia Griffith—2/16  
Susan Walters—2/22  
Nadine Doura—2/23

## Scouting Recognition

## Birthdays

## ATTENDANCE

January 2008	January 2008
6-January-74	4-January-73
13-January- ?	11-January-89
20-January-64	18-January-70
27-January-76	25-January-85

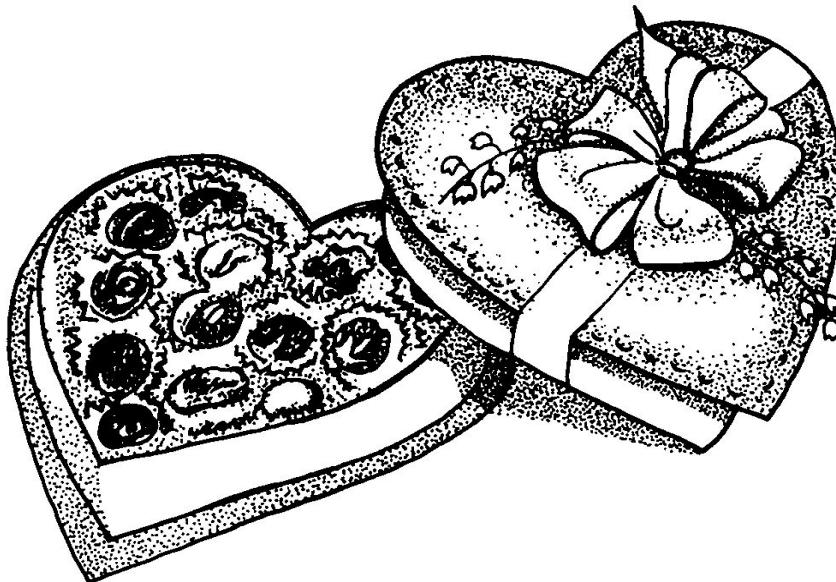
## Attendance

## Bookkeeper's Report

### December 2008

Receipts	Expenditures
\$19,843	\$13,955

## Bookkeeper's Report



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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>

**WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE**

<b>Youth Group</b>	<b>— 7:30-9:30 p.m.</b>
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