# First Presbyterian Church EPISTLE

Our Mission: Connecting with God and sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with the community.

November 2010

Vol. 1 8. No. 11

#### FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

543 East Freeman St. Duncanville, TX 75116 (972) 298-3043 fax: (972) 298-5312 info@fpcd.org www.fpcd.org

#### CHURCH STAFF:

**Rev. Ginger Hertenstein,**Pastor

**Steve Netniss**, Youth Pastor

Andrew Dittman, Choir Director

Sandy Gaskins,
Administrative
Assistant/Bookkeeper

**Sean Russell,**Sound Room Technician

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What drives your life? What do you live for? What is most important in your life? The Book of Acts clearly shows us what became most important to the earliest believers in Jesus. I say became most important because none of them were that way at first. None of them were filled with dedication when initially following Jesus. In fact, many of the people we have talked about in Acts actually fled from Jesus. Huge crowds came out to listen to Him, but many often later shrank back and turned away. They let other things remain front and center in their lives.



However, the Book of Acts clearly defines a new normal in the disciples' lives. When I say disciples, there's not much delineation between Jesus' apostles and all other believers. They were together in devotion. Together they all prayed, worshipped, gave generously, studied Scripture, and testified about Jesus. They said, "We cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20). The Bible says they were "all of one heart and mind." Each one dedicated themselves to Jesus, front and center. That defined them.

What defines you? What do you value most? It's important as Christians that we sort that out because when Jesus Christ is our first priority, it helps us determine how to allocate our time and our resources. When our lives align with our priorities, we find a huge sense of personal satisfaction, and our lives are fruitful. We impact those around us in a life-changing way. We accomplish things for God in this world. I believe that is one reason the disciples were so passionate about their faith. They stood on it. They tested it. And they found that God was sure; God could be trusted. God came through. And, the world was changed.

Living out our faith might seem like a difficult requirement because in our culture we do everything we can to NOT have to live by faith. We build our assets to take care of ourselves, and we plan out our future. But God says "Put me first in all things." The believers in Acts did just that. They made God the defining value of their lives. It changed them and they were driven by a passion they had never before experienced. Their devotion changed the world forever.

What about you? Consider it now and begin to stake your life on devotion to Jesus Christ. No decision is more important. Living for God fills life with passion and meaning. To embrace it means a world of possibilities as God is able to use you and all of us together to bless the world through FPCD in magnificent ways.



Pastor Ginger

# Words from Worship What's so Amazing About Christmas?

Consider this: God loved the world so much that He came visiting. God slipped into the world as a helpless baby, without fanfare or heraldry. Think of it: the baby, born of humble parents, the man a carpenter, the woman still in her teens, scholars say.

Jesus was born in a backwater town called Bethlehem, in a stable reeking with animal smells. It took years before people fully comprehended God's self-revelation. Even John the Baptist, sitting in Herod's prison, sent a message to Jesus asking, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" (Matt. 11:3 NRSV). Jesus then pointed out that he was working miracles and bringing good news to the poor. It all became even clearer when Peter concluded that Jesus was "the Messiah, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:16 NRSV). What's amazing about Christmas is that it began in a manger, and today more than 2 billion people around the world celebrate Jesus' birth.

# Advent Activities

Advent is just around the corner. Here is a tentative schedule of activities....for weekly updates, please note announcements in the weekly bulletins. This year's focus will be on Mary and Joseph.

Saturday, November 27 - decorate sanctuary (exact time TBD)

Sunday, November 28 - 1st Sunday of Advent - skit about Joseph

Sunday, December 5 - 2nd Sunday of Advent - skit TBD

Sunday, December 12 - 3rd Sunday of Advent - Choir Program

Sunday, December 19 - 4th Sunday of Advent - Youth Play

Friday, December 24 - Christmas Eve - Candlelight/Communion Service



Reading ahead (sermon texts for No-

**Nov.** 7 - Acts 5:33-42; The world resists Jesus Christ but the apostles suffer for The Name (Steve Netniss preach-

Nov. 14 - Acts 6-7, excerpts; Paul's Conversion. Part One: Steven's Role. (THE LORD'S SUPPER)

**Nov. 21** - Acts 8:4-24; The Difference Between God and Magic: Conversion of Simon the Sorcerer

Nov. 28 (1st Advent) - Matthew 1:18-25; Joseph, A Good Man

We will be looking for folks to participate in all these events. If you have a particular interest, please contact one of the Worship Team: AnnaMurphy, Andrew Dittman, Steve & Marna Bayless, Dub Guthrie, Scott Hartless, Brenda Everett or Connie Steger.

## Symbols of our Faith...The Violet



The violet, symbol of humility, is most often used in reference to the Virgin Mary. St Bernard described Mary as "the violet of humility". The flower is also used to express Christ's humility in assuming human form.

## From Our Missionaries





In his hand are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to him.

Psalm 95:4

For the last ten years in serving with Wycliffe, I have been training and encouraging the Latin America church in Bible translation. Often I visit Latin countries for several weeks. On more than one occasion my plans called for a visit to Chile, but something always happened and I had to postpone the trip.

Let me tell you that personally I have good feelings toward Chile. In one way or another that country has been an influence in my family and in my personal life. This is the story. Back in 1910, my father was a young cadet in the Colombian army, and part of his training came from Chilean officers that came as diplomats to advise the incipient Colombian army. As a result of this, my father became the first Colombian General that graduated from the military academy. Later on, by the 1930's, when my father was minister of defense, he again invited Chilean friends to help in the process of establishing the naval academy in Colombia. Later I remember seeing the Chilean military attaché and people from the Chilean embassy at my father's funeral.

Finally last August I went to Chile for the first time, as a representative of Wycliffe. I arrived a few days after the disaster in the mine at Copiapo. Then news came that the miners were alive and that it would be possible to send them food and other things. While I was in church and getting ready to preach, an idea came to my mind. Why not send them some "spiritual food"? I shared my idea and others in the Christian community accomplished it. I'm sure I was not the only one that had this idea, but in a few days each one of the miners had a Bible to read while waiting for the rescue.

Later the youngest miner talking to his father said, "We are 34 down here, 33 miners plus the Lord Jesus Christ that is visiting and protecting us." God's timing for my visit to Chile was perfect. Adelmo Ruiz

### Some Recent Prayer Requests from Paul & Jen Schaefer in Ghana

(Watch this space next month for a longer letter about the Schaefers' work.)

Schaefers have recently completed seven chapters of <u>Joshua</u>, five of <u>Judges</u> and all of <u>Ruth</u>. They are now preparing for these to be checked by a translation consultant at the end of this month. Please pray that this process will provide a good translation of these portions.

They are meeting with Safaliba co-translators to translate <u>Luke</u>. They have completed the first third of that gospel and will go on to <u>John</u> when Luke is finished.

Pray for four Safaliba <u>mother-tongue translators</u> who are drafting portions of the Old and New Testaments. Schaefers are also doing some work in the area of <u>audio scriptures</u>, recording Bible portions on cassettes that can be played on hand-powered players. Pray for their decisions regarding this project and for funds to support it.

Paul recently became ill, experiencing chest pains and general weakness while taking part in a linguistics conference at the University. He had tests that showed no problems and has felt well since then. Pray for <u>Paul's health</u> and wisdom in this area of their lives.

Amaaliya, a Safaliba co-translator, is experiencing pain from a recently healed wrist fracture. Although he is able to write and do most things as before, he still has <u>significant pain</u>. A surgeon in Accra advised that it is probably due to the metal implant used in the original surgery. It appears to be near nerves and should be removed now that the bone has healed sufficiently. Pray that Schaefers will know how to handle this and for the funds for the surgery if it is to be done.

# Presbyterían Women News

# PW CHRISTMAS AUCTION AND SPAGHETTI SUPPER

Please mark your calendars now for **Saturday evening**, **December 4**, when we'll have our annual PW Christmas Auction at 6 pm in the Fellowship Hall!

We are combining our PW Christmas Auction again this year with a Family Night Spaghetti Supper which will be sponsored by PW with support from the Congregational Life Committee. PW will provide the dinner which will consist of Spaghetti and Meat Balls, Salad, Bread, and Dessert. Come and bring your appetite and after dinner we will move on to our Auction, which is always a lot of fun. Everyone is invited to participate in the auction. Please bring Christmas/Seasonal items to be auctioned as well as any other craft or homemade items (food, floral, decorative) that you may have. And, if you wish, just plan to come and shop for Christmas gifts for family, friends, teachers, etc. as well as enjoying a great evening of good food and fun with your church family. A sign-up sheet will be in the Narthex closer to the date.

# \*Circle Gatherings for November:

Agape Circle: We will meet Thursday, November 11 at 1 p.m. at the home of Ruth Yingst, 926 Springwood Lane, Duncanville. We are studying Lesson 3.

Sarah Circle: We will meet Thursday, November 11 at 7:30 p.m. at the home of Brenda Everett, 1061 Magnolia Lane, Cedar Hill. We are also studying Lesson 3.

\*Circles are currently studying together Journeys Through Revelation: Apocalyptic Hope for Today by Barbara R. Rossing

What comes to mind when you think of the book of Revelation? Scary images? The four horsemen come to unleash destruction? Mysterious numbers such as "666"? The endtime battle of Armageddon? In recent years, an enormous prophecy industry has marketed frightening images of Revelation, leaving many people intimidated by this amazing and often misunderstood book. Although brimming with mysterious symbolism, Revelation ultimately is a book of hope that throughout history has sustained people who are oppressed. It is a wonderfully Christ-centered book, full of worship and praise.

In this study Barbara Rossing guides us on a journey to meet the crucified Lamb, Jesus. In a journey reminiscent of the ancient Israelites' exodus from slavery, we are led from an unjust empire and its system of domination, through mythic battles and plagues, until, ultimately, we find ourselves in a renewed creation where God comes to live with us n earth. This brilliantly hope-filled vision speaks to us in the midst of the urgent crises of our day. In a time when all of creation stands at a turning point, a kairos moment, Revelation can help guide the choices we make each day as we seek to live into the renewal that God has for the whole world.

# **FPCD Youth Group!**



# **Every Sunday in November:**

FPCD Sunday School class—9:15

October will soon have come and gone. Kingdoms rise and kingdoms fall but October wears on. The Youth Group has had an eventful October. We've enjoyed some different outings for Sunday night youth group. A couple of weekends ago we went to Buffalo Wild Wings and ate together while watching football. This was the first time I've ever done an event like this with the students. It was like to get out of the church and be with one another in some "real life" settings.

One of the students at Youth Group made a comment that got me really excited. We had a couple of new boys at Sunday School and I began the lesson by posing some questions—our normal way to start Sunday School. One of the boys commented, "He makes us work here." I was very pleased with this statement because it means that there is a new culture beginning to form among the students. They are starting to understand that they can't come to church and "play church." I try to constantly remind the students that what we're learning is about life. I want them to be able to think about the regular world from a Christian perspective. Many students flip a switch when they walk into church, but our students are learning that church is about reality. This was a good first step in my opinion.



In November we will be finishing our "Why Jesus" series. This is a series where we explore why we choose to follow Jesus. I want to challenge the students to challenge themselves about whether or not following Jesus is the best option.

Until they understand that for themselves, my job is incomplete.

We've got 3 females on staff at this point and definitely would like some men to step up and contribute. However, Allison, Anna, and Lori are excellent people to work with. They have been incredibly supportive of me over the last two months. These students are cared for.



# DeaConGoLife

The summer has flown by beginning with the spring Baseball Game and while the Rangers didn't win that night, look where they are now—World Series! Go Rangers! About that time we started our lemonade on the lawn - a very successful time for fellowship after Sunday worship. As the leaves turn, and the weather grows cooler, we have put away the table and the cooler until next spring. We would like to thank all the wonderful volunteers who participated in set up, clean up and giving of their time and talents. Those homemade cookies were delicious.

In August we had the Progressive Dinner followed by Bingo Night. Didn't Tom Harmon do a good job in organizing that portion of the evening? He eventually got help reading the selection balls but his prizes were funny and clever. Thanks, Tom! To the host and hostesses who were gracious enough to open their homes for this event, another thank you, you all did yourselves proud.

The entire DeaConGo Life Team participated in the Deacons' Dinner in September and all who attended had another great time participating in the sing-a-long and just enjoying each other's company.

We've still been busy - behind the scenes for the Fall the annual **Thanksgiving Dinner on November 21**.

**Fest** and now out front starting the preparations for... But don't let anybody fool you, we love doing it.

Well, that about does it for now, talk to you next month.

Yours in Christ,

Dave Bolles

PRAISE GOD for all who came to our *Fall Fest*, for the spirituals brought by our choir and the UNT Men's Quartet, for stories of Elijah and of Paul brought alive by our three storytellers, for the games and food together beforehand, for the many who came from outside our FPCD family! And our deep *thanks* to the many who contributed in all sorts of ways to make this such a successful event!

It's time to celebrate that time of year when our nation sets aside a day to count our blessings and give thanks to their Source...although most of us do this daily, it's nice that we can do it together. Our church will do it together on **Sunday, November 21, 2010, beginning at 6 p.m. in the Sanctuary.** Here're our plans for this year:

- \* Turkey and drinks will be provided
- \* Every family is asked to bring two of the following to feed 10-12 people...salad, vegetable or dessert
- \* For everyone who attends, **please bring one non-perishable food item** that we can give to someone who doesn't have enough food
- \* We'll have a musical program and special thanksgiving exercise that everyone will enjoy.





Please set aside this date and time to join us in this special celebration...you'll be glad that you did—and you'll be able to sit on **our new very comfortable folding**chairs!

Tom Harmon



# From the Stewardship Team

Stewardship is managing all we have—time, talents, money, possessions, relationships—on behalf of their Source and Owner. As your Session develops the 2011 budget, we are guided not only by the mission and needs of the church (including the various projects that are needed to maintain the facilities), but by the overall needs of the congregation as well. The various social events put on by the DeaConGoLife Team cost money, in spite of all the generous volunteers. The Deacons' projects of helping us reach out to the needy and infirmed cost money. Mission giving and salaries are all an important part of the budget. Sunday school materials and items needed for our worship services bring other ongoing expenses. Planning cannot always be done on the "hope" that the money will come in. The Lord has blessed this church with generous people who have always come forth to meet the needs.



As we start the stewardship/budget planning meetings, we would ask you to once again review your pledge for 2011. Commit to giving to the Lord who has made us His stewards the tools the Session needs to continue our church's vibrant growth and accomplishments of 2010.

Dave



Bolles

Scott



Hartless

# 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.

Mary Huttar—11/3 Albert Teel—11/3 Tonya Jespersen—11/4 Teresa Reed—11/6 Dave Bolles—11/9
Dub Guthrie—11/9
Armelia Jimmerson—11/11
Bill Farish—11/12

Charlie Glover—11/15 Rylee Reed—11/16 Bob Moore—11/28

# ATTENDANCE

September 2009	September 2010
6 Sept 95	5 Sept 88
13 Sept 80	12 Sept 80
20 Sept 74	19 Sept 72
27 Sept 93	26 Sept 88
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# BOOKKEEPER'S REPORT—September 2010

<b>Receipts</b> *\$6,692	Expenditures \$16,188
YTD income: YTD expenditures: YTD deficit: Total Annual Budget: * This includes	\$153,346 \$160,850 < \$7,504> \$203,100 memorial giving.

# **Property News**

# UPDATE ON PROPERTY ACTIVITY





The folding chairs have already arrived at a cost of about \$3,600. They are 13% larger and sturdier than the existing folding chairs. These chairs will be used a lot more and in many more situations than the older ones. They will replace the 40-year-old heavy brown chairs that we have been using in the Fellowship Hall.

#### To recap planned improvements:

At our recent session meeting, we decided that the focus of our current building improvements should be the renovation of the Fellowship Hall restrooms to be handicap-accessible. All gifts given for renovation will be dedicated to this purpose. The total cost of the project is

\$17,885, of which \$8,500 has been donated so far. The details of the restroom renovation will be available in the narthex, on the large table, if you would like to look them over.

All of the other improvement projects planned for the Fellowship Hall will be considered at a later time.

May God guide each of us as we prayerfully consider our part in meeting these needs. And may God be honored as we respond to His love, and show it to others, in these endeavors.

Helen Barton

# Adult Sunday School

Join us on those new chairs in Fellowship Hall around 9:20 each Sunday morning as we continue going deeper on Pastor Ginger's current teaching on Acts in morning worship. Leadership of our discussion is shared by Darrel, Dean, Kathleen, and many others as we consider the Acts text with the help of the background and probing questions provided in Phyllis J. Le





Peau's Acts: Seeing God's Power in Action. Recognizing God's Spirit at work in His followers in Acts, we go on to explore and share together how He has been at work in our own lives and how His power can help us keep "connecting with God and sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ with the community." Coffee and doughnuts seem to always be there!



# November

C	M		Note all and a	<b>T</b> I	r ·	6 1 . 1 .
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 6:30 Prayer Hour 7:30 Choir rehearsal	4	5	6
		Pastor	Ginger-vacati	on, November 1	-7	
7 9:15 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship – Steve Netniss 4:30 PM Youth Group 6:00 Small Group Study	8 7:30 PM DeaConGo Life meeting	9 4:30 Deacons' meeting	10 6:45 Finance Team meeting 7:30 Choir rehearsal	11 1:00 Agape Circle at Ruth Yingst's 6:45 Worship Team meeting 7:30 Sarah Circle at Brenda Everett's	12	13
14 9:15 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship— Communion 4:30 PM Youth Group 6:00 Small Group Study	15 Newsletter deadline	16	17 7:30 Choir rehearsal	18 7:00 Session meeting	19	20
21 DOM Food Sunday 9:15 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship 4:30 PM Youth Group 6:00 Thanks- giving Dinner	22 By 7 PM: Sandwiches for Austin Street Centre	23	24 7:30 Choir rehearsal	25	26	27 9:00-12:00 Decorating the sanctuary for Advent ("Hanging of the Greens")
28 1st Sunday in Advent  9:15 AM Sunday School  10:30 AM Worship  4:30 PM Youth Group  6:00 Small Group Study	29	30				PW Christmas Auction & Spaghetti Supper

# **WORSHIP VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE**

# November 2010 10:30 A.M. SERVICE

November 7 Greeters: Tom Harmon, Doris Metzger

Ushers: Irving Kezar, Jack Pegues

Liturgist: Leo Skinner

Children's Church: Savannah Baker-Teel

Nursery Volunteer: Helen Barton Tech Team: Sean Russell

Tellers: Jocelyn Bolles, Margaret Lewis

November 14 Greeters: Helen Barton, Bob Moore

**Ushers:** Bob Moore, Eddie Cowand

Liturgist: Scott Hartless
Children's Church: Margaret Lewis
Nursery Volunteer: Joan Brown
Tech Team: Sean Russell

Tellers: Mickey Jespersen, Leo Skinner

November 21 Greeters: Lori Glover, Bob Harrison

**Ushers: Albert Teel, Bob Moore** 

Liturgist: Helen Barton
Children's Church: Gail Haynes
Nursery Volunteer: Anna Murphy
Tech Team: Sean Russell

Tellers: Lori Glover, Bob Harrison

November 28 Greeters: Eddie Cowand, Sharon Ingram

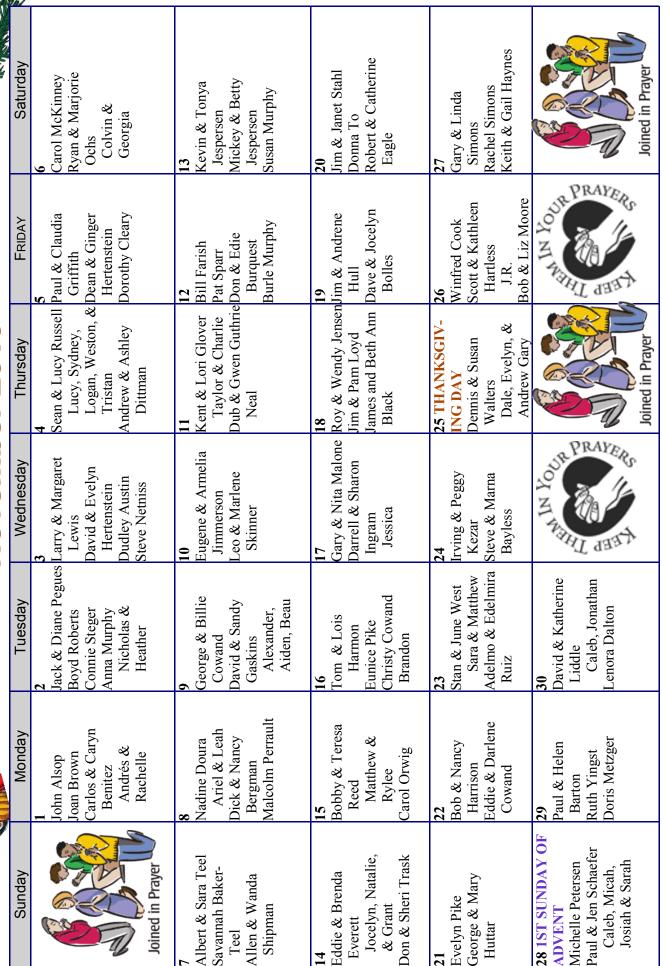
**Ushers: Dub Guthrie, Jack Pegues** 

Liturgist: Tom Harmon
Children's Church: Helen Barton
Nursery Volunteer: Gail Haynes
Tech Team: Sean Russell

Tellers: Paul Barton, Tom Harmon

# **FPCD PRAYER CALENDAR**

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Monday	70,	Thecday	Wednesday	Thursday	Feinay	Cott





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.m.s 21:9 — .m.s 06:01 — .m.q 00:3-06:4 Christian Education Worship Service Youth Group

#### SOUDAY SCHEDULE

#### **KELURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHURCHURCHURCHURCHOUS 743 EAST FREEMAN STREET Weds) / fax: (972) 298-5312 Website: www.fpcd.org

# 12 The Epístle

# Children's Sunday School - Do you have something to share from God's Creation?

A poster in our Sunday School room for children reads: "God saw everything that He had made and it was very good!"

Shelves near this poster hold some sea shells but there is more space for items that will remind the children of God's creation....Do you have any natural items to donate? For example, you may have a special rock, some seed pods, or bones. These are things you will give for children to examine, not expecting them to be returned.

