



December

# First Presbyterian Church

## EPISTLE

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

### **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. Dr. Ginger Hertenstein,**  
Pastor

**Jennifer Johnson**  
Administrative Asst

**Nyadia Thorpe,**  
Choir Director

**Dameron Growe**  
**Brittany Haywood**  
**Susan Walters**  
Accompanists

**Sean Russell,**  
Sound Room Technician

**Ana Ortiz**  
**Liliana Ortiz**  
Nursery

### *Inside . . .*

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Schedule
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### **The Best of Times**

"It was the best of times, it was  
the worst of times, it was the age  
of wisdom,  
it was the age of foolishness, it  
was the epoch of belief, it was  
the epoch of incredulity,  
it was the season of Light, it was  
the season of Darkness, it was  
the spring of hope,  
it was the winter of despair, we  
had everything before us, we had  
nothing before us,  
we were all going direct to  
Heaven, we were all going direct  
the other way—  
in short, the period was so far  
like the present period . . ."

This was the opening sentence of Charles Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities*. As you can see, I even cut it short, lest it rob me of necessary room for this Christmas article! We can certainly make the connection with the year 2020. "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times." I need not elaborate. Perhaps the only way to describe it is to stand in extended silence.

Contrasts fill the sentence: wisdom-foolishness; belief-incredulity; light-darkness; hope-despair. Yet Advent arrives to announce good news of great joy. There is no contrast in that, even though conditions might be the worst of times. At the time Jesus was born, God's people were subject to the rule of an unbelieving nation. While they had permission to follow their own religious customs, Scripture tells us they often had to "walk on eggshells" lest Roman authorities get upset with them. Nevertheless, accompanying the announcement of Jesus' birth are the

words "Fear Not." Unto you is born (new life) in the city of David, (Bethlehem, which means house of bread) a Savior (rescue), who is the Messiah (Promised One), the Lord (King of Kings). Good, excellent, extraordinary news.

How is your fear these days? Advent calls us to cast off all fear, even though times were deathly fearful when Jesus was born. Stand silent (in awe) before the honor of what God has done for us.

There's a Christmas Carol that goes like this:

*Let all mortal flesh keep silence,  
and with fear and trembling stand;  
Ponder nothing earthly minded,  
for with blessing in His hand,  
Christ our God to earth  
descendeth, our full homage to  
demand.*

As we bow before him, let us cast our fear aside. The worst of times—ultimately that is death itself—has been conquered by the life of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

In this season my prayer for you is that you would see in the midst of trouble, the Best of Times. My hope for you is that you worship the Lord with gladness, knowing He's got this. Come before him singing with all of your heart. Enter his courts with praise to give Him the Glory. Show your faith to Him, and to the world.

*Happy Advent, Pastor Ginger*



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																	
<div>Nov 2020</div> <table> <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>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td></tr> <tr><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td></tr> <tr><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td></tr> <tr><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td></tr> <tr><td>29</td><td>30</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	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							<b>1</b>  7:00 PM Deacons Meeting	<b>2</b> <b>Deadline to place orders for Spaghetti Dinner</b>	<b>3</b>  6:30 PM Worship Planning Meeting	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> <b>PW Spaghetti Dinner Order Pick Up 5:30-6:00 PM</b>							
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<b>6</b> 9:15 AM Adult Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service in-person and ONLINE <b>2nd Sunday in Advent</b>	<b>7</b>  7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal on ZOOM	<b>8</b>  7 PM Sarah Circle	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> <b>Angel Tree Gifts due at the church</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 6:30 PM Staff Christmas Dinner																																																	
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<b>13</b> 9:15 AM Adult Sunday School 10:30 AM Worship Service in-person and ONLINE <b>3rd Sunday in Advent</b>	<b>14</b>  7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal on ZOOM	<b>15</b>  Newsletter Articles Due!	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 6:30 PM Session/Deacon Christmas Party	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>																																																	
<b>20</b> 9:15 AM Adult Sunday School <b>10:30 AM Lessons &amp; Carols</b> <b>4th Sunday in Advent</b>	<b>21</b>  7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal on ZOOM	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 6 PM Christmas Eve Service	<b>25</b> <b>Merry Christmas! (Office Closed)</b>	<b>26</b>																																																	
<b>27</b> <b>10:30 AM Hymn Sing</b>	<b>28</b> <div>The Sandwich Project</div> <div>Bring your Sandwiches for the Homeless</div> 7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal on ZOOM	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<div>Jan 2021</div> <table> <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>1</td><td>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>29</td><td>30</td></tr> <tr><td>31</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>		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						
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## **PW Christmas Auction Online**

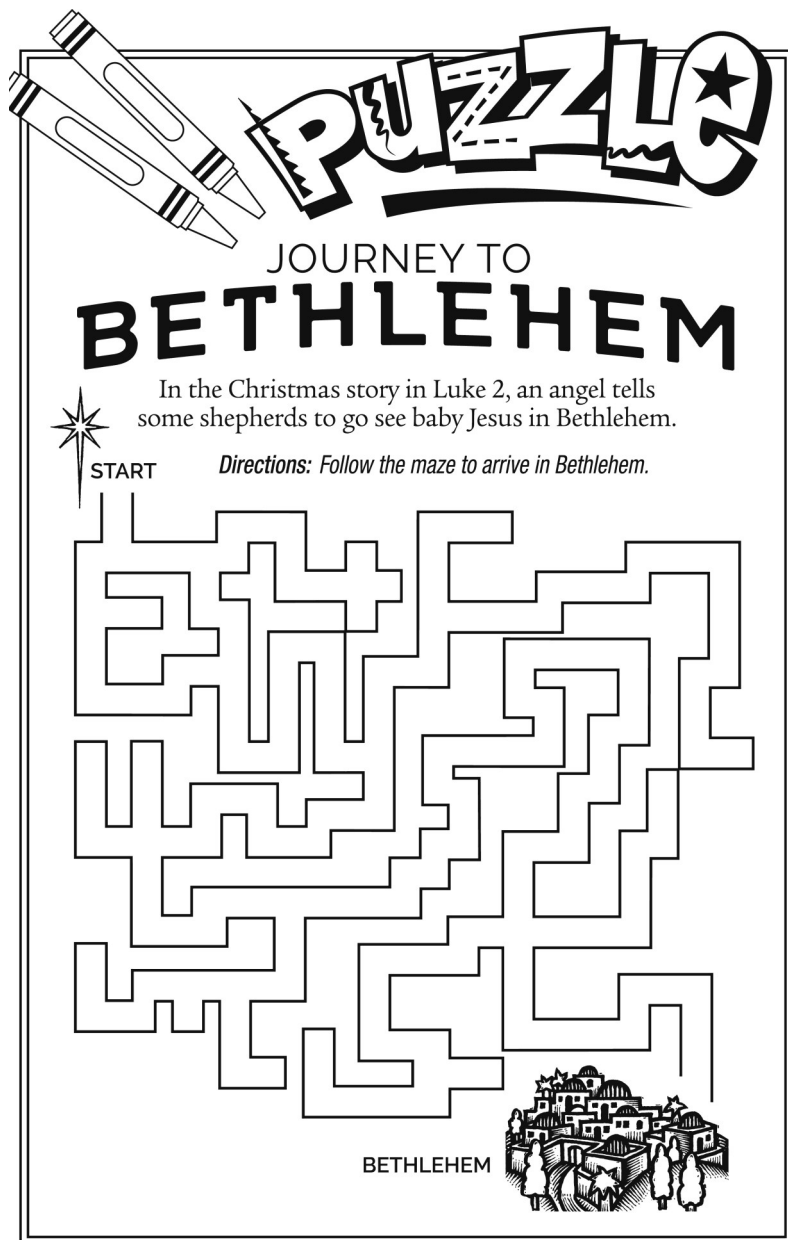
Just a reminder that our online Auction will begin on Tuesday, December 1 and close on Saturday, December 12 so that winners may pick up their items on Sunday, December 13 or thereafter. You can access the auction here: [www.fpcd.org/pw-auction](http://www.fpcd.org/pw-auction).

Where feasible, auction items will be displayed in Fellowship Hall during this time period so that you may come and peruse in case you want a first-hand look!

*Jocelyn Bolles and Joan Brown*



# Family Fun Page



**PUZZLE**

JOURNEY TO  
**BETHLEHEM**

In the Christmas story in Luke 2, an angel tells some shepherds to go see baby Jesus in Bethlehem.

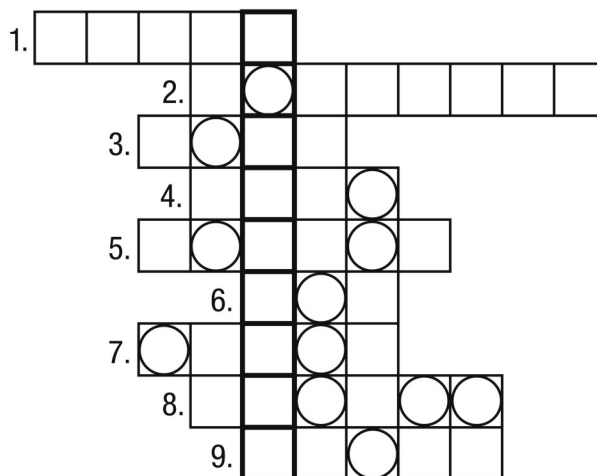
START *Directions: Follow the maze to arrive in Bethlehem.*

BETHLEHEM



## Puzzle!

Use the clues to fill in the blanks. Then write the word from the boldface vertical column. Also unscramble the circled letters to reveal a seasonal phrase.



1. Carolers and instrumentalists make this
2. What happens at malls
3. The angel Gabriel appeared to her
4. You'll find this under a Christmas tree
5. He was a carpenter
6. Joseph had to pay this in Bethlehem
7. The "ship of the desert"
8. Cattle eat out of this
9. Shepherds tend this

**Bold word:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Seasonal phrase:** \_\_\_\_\_



Answers: music, shopping, Mary, gift, Joseph, tax, camel, manger, sheep, Christmas, peace on earth



**Worship Volunteer Schedule  
December 2020**

<b>December 6</b>	<b>Tellers</b>	Joan Brown & Teresa Reed
<b>December 13</b>	<b>Tellers</b>	Lori Glover & Jaime Cordova
<b>December 20</b>	<b>Tellers</b>	Brenda Everett & Linda Simons
<b>December 27</b>	<b>Tellers</b>	Jocelyn Bolles & Margaret Lewis

We saw his star when it rose  
and have come to worship him.

*from Matthew 2:2*

**WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE**  
Impact Youth  
Fearless Youth Group

— 5:30 p.m.  
— 6:30 p.m.

**SUNDAY SCHEDULE**  
Christian Education  
Worship Service

— 9:15 a.m.  
— 10:30 a.m.

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

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543 EAST FREEMAN STREET  
DUNCANVILLE, TX 75116  
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## December Birthdays

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. Thank you.

Darrell Ingram, December 4	Darlene Cowand, December 25
Caryn Benitez, December 15	Joan Brown, December 26
Eddie Everett, December 21	Lucy Russell, December 26
Valerie Cordova, December 22	Janet Stahl, December 28
Christian Laurent, December 24	Dameron Growe, December 30



### 2020 MINISTRY RECEIPTS UPDATE

	Receipts	Expenditures
October	\$13,691	\$27,677
Jan - Oct	\$226,788 + \$28,541*	\$234,689

\*PPP loan from government