



# First Presbyterian Church Newsletter

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

## **FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

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### **Church Staff:**

**Rev. Rachael McConnell**  
Pastor and Head of Staff

**Nyadia Thorpe**  
Director of Worship & Music

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

**Sean Russell**  
Sound Room Technician  
**Jaime Cordova**  
Sound Room Volunteer

**Ana Ortiz**  
**Kira Sewell**  
Nursery

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## **From Wish Lists to Worship**

*"The best gifts of God aren't wrapped in  
paper but in people. And the most  
beautiful season is that of a praying  
and hopeful church."*



### **A Note from the Pastor**

It's official: October has become the unofficial start of the holiday season. The candy corn hits the shelves before the neighborhood pools close, and the flavor of pumpkin is added to anything and everything you can imagine, from lattes and cookies to [car washes](#) and [toilet paper](#)! And before the Thanksgiving turkey-flavored cough drops arrive on the shelves, someone's humming "Jingle Bells" in the grocery store. The calendar turns to October, and so do our expectations. We start making lists—of things to buy, plans to make, people to see. And if we're honest, those lists can sometimes slip into our spiritual lives too. We start wishing God (and maybe even the pastor) would deliver everything just the way we'd like—a pumpkin-spiced church, if you will.

### **Her Confession**

Which brings me to this month's confession: **I'm not Santa Claus. (Bet that was not on your bingo card as a confession.) Do not let the 4X4 SUV, full of small people, their toys, and papers that inevitably fall out the door, fool you.** I don't have a sleigh, elves, or a list (though if I did, you'd all be on the "nice" one). My calling isn't to deliver a wish list on demand but to help us listen for what God is giving.

Pastors aren't in the church as Amazon.com business—we're in the good-news business.

Sometimes we treat faith like a list we hand to God—asking for comfort without change, blessings without burden, joy without the journey. But the Gospel doesn't work that way. God invites us into a story far richer than our requests: one where generosity grows our hearts and service stretches our faith. The best gifts of God don't always come wrapped the way we expected—they come disguised as opportunities to love, forgive, and build something beautiful together.



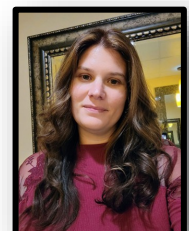
### **From Wish Lists to Worship**

As we head toward stewardship season, that truth matters. The church isn't a department store, and ministry isn't a wish list. It's a shared calling—one where every person brings their gifts, creativity, and heart so that together we become a living sign of God's love in Duncanville and beyond.

So, thank you for your prayers, laughter, and partnership in ministry. You remind me every day that God's best gifts aren't wrapped in paper but in people. And that, friends, is far better than anything that fits under a tree, in a pumpkin, or in a turkey.



*Pastor Rachael  
McConnell*



## GLOBAL FOCUS

### Reminder of our FPCD Global Focus Sundays

You don't want to miss this! You will hear how global workers supported by FPCD are sharing the love of Christ across cultures and continents.

The following Sundays will each feature **SPECIAL MUSIC**, plus a **MOMENT FOR MISSION** report from another part of the world.

**October 12<sup>th</sup>** (Youth Sunday) There will be a video report from Eva Walters, serving in Cambodia. Learn what she is doing there.

**October 19<sup>th</sup>** (International Sunday) Join our international flavor potluck!

You will **HEAR** something of global interest on each of those Sundays

You will **SEE** a display of things from faraway places.

On International Sunday (potluck Sunday), you will **TASTE** some new foods,

*Plan to attend each of these services, invite a neighbor or a friend, and celebrate what God is doing through FPCD around the world!*

*Nancy Bergman*

### Presbyterian Women

REMINDER: **The annual PW online auction** is scheduled for **December 3** through **December 14**. Time to start planning ahead. Items can be hand-made, home baked, brand new, gently used, a service to be provided, gift certificates, etc. When donating an item, please provide, where feasible, a photo of the item and a description. We'll begin collecting items at the church after November 15. We'll remind you again and provide further details in the November newsletter.

Thank you!



## **October: Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month**

October is **Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month**, a sacred time to honor the lives of children who were gone too soon. Throughout this month, families and friends come together to remember, grieve, and celebrate the lives of their little loved ones in meaningful ways.

This observance reminds us of the importance of walking gently with those who carry, what can be for many, invisible grief. By breaking the silence around pregnancy and infant loss, we create space for compassion, prayer, and healing—for parents who mourn, and for those who may not know how to express their sorrow.

Each year, far too many families experience this heartbreak. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about **1 in 4 pregnancies end in miscarriage**, and **1 in 160 births result in stillbirth**. These numbers remind us that such loss is more common than we might realize—and that no parent should ever have to grieve alone.

Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month began in **1988**, when President Ronald Reagan issued a national proclamation, recognizing that there are no words for parents who lose a child (in English). He wrote:

*"When a child loses his parent, they are called an orphan. When a spouse loses her or his partner, they are called a widow or widower. When parents lose their child, there isn't a word to describe them."*

In addition to the month-long observance, **October 15** is recognized as **Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Day**, when families across the nation participate in candlelight vigils and remembrance walks to honor their children's lives and stand alongside one another in love.

As a church, may we continue to be a community where grieving families find comfort, prayer, and a safe place to remember.

*"The Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit."* — Psalm 34:18

### **How We as a Body of Christ Can Participate (October 15)**

**Light a candle at 7:00 PM** for the global *Wave of Light*, remembering babies gone too soon and praying for their families.

**Share a name for prayer.** If you'd like your child's name included in our congregational prayers, please contact the church office or note it on a connection card.

**Remembrance table.** You're welcome to bring a small note or symbol to place on our table of remembrance this month.

**Pastoral care.** If you're grieving, you're not alone. Reach out to Pastor Rachael or the church office for prayer and care.



## *The Epistle 4*

### A Few Photos from our Family Fall Bash held in September





FIRST PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH  
DUNCANVILLE  
CALENDAR

October 2025

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.
			1	2	3 7:00 PM Women of the Bible Friday Night Study	4 9AM Men's Fellowship
5 9:15 AM Sunday School, Choir Reh. 10:30 AM Worship Service, WW Communion, GF video Liddles 12:15 PM Worship Planning	6	7	8	9	10 7:00 PM Women of the Bible Friday Night Study	11
12 9:15 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Youth Sunday, GF video E. Walters 12:15 PM Choir Reh.	13	14 7:00 PM Sarah Circle @ Diane Pegues's home	15 Newsletter articles due!	16 4:00 PM Parking Lot Ministry (PLM)	17 7:00 PM Women of the Bible Friday Night Study	18 9AM Men's Fellowship
19 9:15 AM Sunday School, Choir Reh. 10:30 AM Int'l Sunday Worship, Rpt. D&S Walters Int'l Potluck	20 7:00 PM MCT	21	22	23	24 7:00 PM Women of the Bible Friday Night Study	25 8AM - 2PM D'ville Women's Club Garage Sale
26 9:15 AM Sunday School, Choir Reh. 10:30 AM Worship Service 12:15 PM Session Meeting	27 Sandwiches Due!	28	29	30	31 7:00 PM Women of the Bible Friday Night Study	

**As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as  
good stewards of God's varied grace.**

## October Volunteer Schedule

Oct 5	<b>Greeter</b>	Jocelyn Bolles
	<b>Tellers</b>	Jaime Cordova & Volunteer needed
	<b>End of Service Prayer</b>	Nyadia Thorpe & Brenda Everett
	<b>Communion Service</b>	Jeff Thorpe & Brenda Everett
	<b>Communion Preparer</b>	Gwenn Guthrie
	<b>Liturgist</b>	TBD
Oct 12	<b>Greeter</b>	Connie Steger
	<b>Tellers</b>	Jocelyn Bolles & Margaret Lewis
	<b>End of Service Prayer</b>	Dub Guthrie & Connie Steger
	<b>Liturgist</b>	Youth
Oct 19	<b>Greeter</b>	Sharon Ingram
	<b>Tellers</b>	Brenda Everett & Linda Simons
	<b>End of Service Prayer</b>	Sharon Ingram & Nancy Bergman
	<b>Liturgist</b>	TBD
Oct 26	<b>Greeter</b>	Dudley Austin
	<b>Tellers</b>	Darlene Cowand & Teresa Reed
	<b>End of Service Prayer</b>	Alvarez Nzoundja & Darlene Cowand
	<b>Liturgist</b>	TBD

And what does the Lord require of you?  
To act justly and to love mercy  
and to walk humbly with your God.

From Micah 6:8

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

## SUNDAY SCHEDULE

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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543 EAST FREEMAN STREET  
DUNCANVILLE, TX 75116  
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## October 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.

Zephyr Lewis, October 2	Sean Russell, October 14
Diane Pegues, October 3	Doyce Smith, October 15
Carlos Benitez, October 8	Brandon Cowand, October 24
Grant Everett, October 9	Lorraine Cordova, October 30



## 2025 MINISTRY RECEIPTS UPDATE

	Receipts	Expenditures
August	\$ 19,345	\$ 16,810
Jan-Aug	\$ 130,573	\$ 173,270