



First Presbyterian Church

Tidings

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER |

910 N WASHINGTON AVE | LIVINGSTON, TEXAS

DECEMBER 2024

YOUR LIGHT HAS COME

In the introduction to his book *For All God's Worth*, theologian N.T. Wright says, "Christmas is God lighting a candle, and you don't light a candle in a room that's already full of sunlight. You light a candle in a room that's so murky that the candle, when lit, reveals just how bad things really are. The light shines in the darkness, says St. John, and the darkness has not overcome it."

For that reason, Wright explains, Christmas isn't a dream or a momentary escape but reality.

And the same is true for Christianity.

"Either Jesus is the Lord of the world and all reality makes sense in his life, or he is dangerously irrelevant to the problems and possibilities of today's world," he adds. "There is no middle ground. Either Jesus was, and is, the Word of God, or he, and the stories Christians tell about him, are lies."



CHRISTIAN SYMBOL



ROSE — This flower, often shown as stylized artwork, is a symbol for Advent, the promise of the Messiah and Jesus' nativity. A white rose represents the Virgin Mary, and a red rose stands for martyrs. A wreath of roses symbolizes heavenly joy.

Special Dates

- **Dec 1st - 1st Sunday of Advent; Communion Worship Service, 10 a.m., Sanctuary**
- **Dec 8th – 2nd Sunday of Advent; Fellowship Luncheon after the 10 a.m. Service, FH**
- **Dec 9th - PW Circle Meeting, 1:30 p.m., FH**
- **Dec 12th - COSI Event: "Star of Bethlehem" lecture by Cary Purdy, 5 p.m., FH**
- **Dec 15th - 3rd Sunday of Advent**
- **Dec 20th - *Tidings* articles due**
- **Dec 22nd – 4th Sunday of Advent; Christmas Joy Offering**
- **Dec 24th – Christmas Eve Service, 5 p.m., Sanctuary**
- **Dec 25th – Christmas Day; church office closed**

Mission Team Update

Your Mission team met on Nov. 6th and will not meet in December.

In October, you donated to the Peace special offering \$590, of which 25% (\$147.50) will be sent to Kids Free Clothing Exchange. We also solicited disaster assistance funds due to the flooding on the east coast, and you donated \$803.00, all of which has been sent for relief use in the Carolinas.

In November, you contributed items for the filling and wrapping of 73 shoeboxes to be taken to the Port of Houston by Doug & Chuck. Your next opportunity to give will be the Center of Hope's "Christmas of Hope" with details to be sent out prior to this being published. Volunteers to wrap and donations of new (unwrapped) toys are needed.

December will find Cary Purdy providing a COSI lecture on Dec. 12th at 5 p.m. in the FH, focused on the "Star of Bethlehem: Astronomical Phenomenon, Myth, Miracle or Aliens from Outer Space"; be prepared to think, ponder, and comprehend. We will also have the Joy Gift special offering during this month, culminating on Dec. 22nd.

I want to thank all who have been part of your Mission team this year:

Beverly Davidson, Bonnie Laverty, Edna Melton, Susie Nobles, Elizabeth Clark, Doug and Karen Palmer, Debra Purdy, plus Carolee Day & Nina Dobyys with a special "thanks" to all who have contributed food, clothing, shoebox items, Guatemala donations, funding, headstart items, time, etc. to allow us to serve our God in the Polk County community and beyond.

Chuck Davidson, Chair

Yikes Bikes!

If you know of a child who needs or would like a bike and helmet for Christmas, please contact Debbie or Cary Purdy. We are excited to offer a free bicycle to a child!



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

"Happy Almost Christmas"

Our next meeting will be December 9th at 1:30 p.m., in the Fellowship Hall. You will need to read chapter 5, Jewish Literature, in the blue book, *Jewish Culture & Customs*, page 95. In the brown book, *More Jewish Culture & Customs*, read chapter 21 on page 127, Aliyah For The People Of The Book. Bonnie still has books if still needed.

This year our study will be a "Sharing" Lesson. As you read your chapters use your sticky notes to mark any questions or thoughts you would want to share or ask during the lesson.

-Beverly Davidson

Food Pantries supported by FPC, Livingston: 2024

Center of Hope (COH): open T & Th (8 times per month)
 Revival (Onalaska): open T & Th (2 times per month)

COH	J	F	M	A	M	J	July	A	S	O	N	D
Families Served	781	793	801	828	870	818	774	787	824	965		
Individuals Served	2364/2354/2267/2359/2488/2309/2260							2190/2300/2772				
Revival	J	F	M	A	M	J	July	A	S	O	N	D
Families Served	158	181	447	223	197	492	209	483	526	453		
Individuals Served	444	518	1246	597	537	1345	575	1205	1294	1234		
Total families:	939	974	1248	1051	1067	1310	983	1270	1350	1418		
Total Individuals:	2808	2872	3513	2956	3025	3654	2835	3395	3594	4006		



Shoeboxes for Port of Houston Seamen



End result: 73 filled and wrapped shoeboxes from November 10th event.



Workers (Julie, Charlotte, Scott, Jay, Dan and Debra) filling shoeboxes.



Spirit of Xmas Be

By Tommy Fluker

Don't force it, let it come, easy, easy now
Coming on a star perforated night
Piercing pristine air
Timeless, stillness never ending
Perceived alone in the universe
It comes with gentle caress, warmth flowing
Soul seeking apex, Your God so ever near
Filled with love's glowing mantle
Restive thoughts need ne'er appear
Angelic voices, ringing clear
Wafted through void, perceived to be
Love encompass, malice none
Memories past, more to come
Crackling coals, flicker of flame
Spiral of smoke, skyward seeking
Pungent, though sweet, pleasing yet
Myriad lights, dancing fro
Kaleidoscope to senses swirl
Filled with Him, let never veer
Spirit same, shall ever be

Advent meanings

During Advent, which begins this year on December 1, many churches and families use wreaths to symbolize watchfulness and increasing joy as Christmas approaches. Colors for the candles vary, with some traditions using blue (for hope or creation) and others preferring purple (for royalty, humility or penitence).

The four candles that each represent a week in Advent also signify hope, peace, joy and love. (The third candle is often pink.) In the center is the white Christ candle, representing Jesus as the light of the world. That candle is lit on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

The round, green Advent wreath has special meaning of its own. It symbolizes eternal life and the unending love of God, who sent his only Son to earth to die in our place.

Celebrate!

- Scott & Katie Ferguson, 12/04
- Chris & Katie Longoria, 12/27



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

- Susie Gearing, 12/05
- Ray Gearing 12/07
- Carol Gunter, 12/09
- David Sessums, 12/14
- Harry Bristol, 12/29



Congregational Care

Please join us after the service on Sunday, December 8, 2024, for our Christmas Fellowship Luncheon. The luncheon will feature finger foods and hors d'oeuvres, so if you have a dish, dessert, sandwich, etc., that you would like to bring, please contact Virginia Key of Congregational Care Committee.



CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON



Website:
www.fpclivingston.com
Email:
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Phone: (936) 327-8381
Fax: (936) 327-4719
Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. - 12 p.m., M-F

Sunday Schedule
Friendship Bible Class - 9 a.m.
Worship - 10 a.m.
Adult Bible Study - 11 a.m.
Wednesdays
Prayer Group - 1 p.m.
Adult Bible Study - 2 p.m.