

# First Presbyterian Church *Tidings*

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER | 910 N WASHINGTON AVE | LIVINGSTON, TEXAS | FEBRUARY 2020

## IN OTHER WORDS

We're so accustomed to hearing the Bible's "love chapter," 1 Corinthians 13, at weddings and other occasions that we may not really hear its meaning anymore. It can help to listen to something familiar said in different words. What new understandings of love does this paraphrase from The Message Bible reveal to you?

"Love never gives up. Love cares more for others than for self. Love doesn't want what it doesn't have. Love doesn't strut, doesn't have a swelled head,

doesn't force itself on others, isn't always 'me first,' doesn't fly off the handle, doesn't keep score of the sins of others, doesn't revel when others grovel, takes pleasure in the flowering of truth, puts up with anything, trusts God always, always looks for the best, never looks back, but keeps going to the end. Love never dies" (1 Corinthians 13:4-8a, MSG).



## AWAITING THE CALL

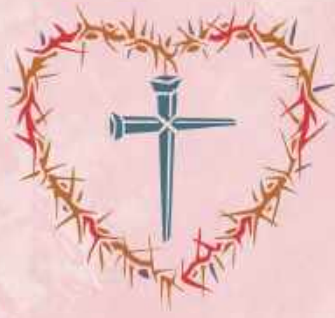
The question we must ask our heart is, "Am I comfortable under the eye of God? Or is God getting too close?" We are strange and lovely creatures. We can ache for God tremendously yet find ourselves getting nervous if God gets too close. After all, the closer God gets, the more we hear the call to be divinized. It is both exciting and frightening to hear that call.

—MacRina Wiederkehr

## Church Events

- Feb 2<sup>nd</sup> - Communion Worship Service; Souper Bowl of Caring; Christian Education Meeting after the Service, FH
- Feb 3<sup>rd</sup> - Mission Committee Meeting, 11 a.m., AB
- Feb 6<sup>th</sup> - Administration Committee Meeting, 1:30 p.m., AB
- Feb 9<sup>th</sup> - Fellowship Luncheon after the Service; Task Force Meeting after the Service, FH, Rm. 2
- Feb 10<sup>th</sup> - PW Circle Meeting, 1:30 p.m., FH
- Feb 13<sup>th</sup> - Session Meeting, 5:30 p.m., FH, Rm. 2
- Feb 21<sup>st</sup> - *Tidings* articles due
- Feb 23<sup>rd</sup> - Transfiguration of the Lord
- Feb 26<sup>th</sup> - Ash Wednesday Service, 5 p.m.
- Feb 29<sup>th</sup> - Men's Breakfast Meeting, FH, 8:30 a.m.

# Our Lenten Focus



Lent, the church-year season that begins on Ash Wednesday, is a time of penitence and spiritual renewal. Some people give up a luxury or vice during Lent as a form of self-denial; others undertake a project that benefits others.

The point isn't to denigrate ourselves or to see how much we can do without. Instead, Lent helps us reflect on Jesus' death. As Timothy Keller writes in *The Reason for God*: "The Christian Gospel is that I am so flawed that Jesus had to die for me,

yet I am so loved and valued that Jesus was glad to die for me. This leads to deep humility and deep confidence at the same time. It undermines both swaggering and sniveling. I cannot feel superior to anyone, and yet I have nothing to prove to anyone. I do not think more of myself nor less of myself. Instead, I think of myself less."

GUARD YOUR *heart,* FOR EVERYTHING YOU DO *flows* FROM IT.  
PROVERBS 4:23, NIV

## 2019 Seafarers Shoeboxes

*Chaplains at Port of Houston distributed 10,381 shoeboxes to seamen aboard 422 ships this December.*

**Bible Quiz**

The precise number varies depending on the Bible version, but roughly how many times does the word "love" occur in the Old and New Testaments combined?

- A. 200-300
- B. 400-500
- C. 600-700
- D. 800-900

**Love**

Answer: C

## Thank You From Presbyterian Women

Presbyterian Women would like to thank everyone who attended our Mission Lunch on January 12 of Taco Soup. Our mission projects for 2020 will benefit from your donations totaling \$946.

We were honored to share this lunch with the 70th Anniversary Celebration of Vi and Larry Ketterling. PW would also like to thank Chris Longoria for all his extra help with that lunch and for his recipe of bread pudding.

Again, thank you! -PW

## 70th Anniversary



Lawrence and Vi Ketterling celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary during the Luncheon on Sunday, January 5, 2020, at First Presbyterian Church of Livingston. They were married on January 7, 1950 in Fargo, North Dakota.





## Love Others When They Least Expect It and Least Deserve It

*“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord”.*  
-Romans 6:23

In 1993 Mary Johnson lost her son when the boy got into a fight with another boy named Oshea Isreal and was shot by Isreal. In spite of many unanswered questions Mary went to visit Isreal in prison. She said that after that first contact she felt “something” in her feet that began to move up across her body and left her. She recounts that from that moment all anger and hatred that she had held inside for twelve years left her and was replaced by total forgiveness. The two now live as neighbors in the same duplex and Mary has even referred to Isreal as her “son” in interviews. Isreal is so grateful for the bravery of this woman to take that step of forgiveness and says that that forgiveness is a constant motivation for him to stay on track and make his life count.

That is one of untold numbers of stories of forgiveness. In most cases forgiveness is that which happens when people least expect it or deserve it. However, it doesn't always have to be an act of forgiveness that offers unexpected or surprising love to someone who least expects it. It might be as simple as a call, email, text or visit to someone with whom you have had no contact for a long time. It might be a surprise check in the mail for someone that you know is in need. It might be the offer of temporary shelter in your home to a family who has recently experienced a natural disaster and has lost theirs. So many different examples will come to your mind just be creative with the above principle in mind.

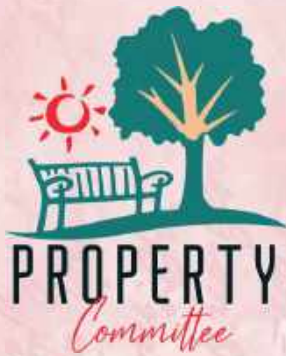
Just remember that the greatest example of loving others when they least expected it and certainly least deserved it was the offer of Christ of salvation and forgiveness of sin to all mankind. Even while we were yet sinners, even when our backs were completely turned on Him and we could care less; that is when He couldn't care more and the Cross is the proof. Love that is least expected and least deserved is really described by the word GRACE.

Blessings, Pastor Joe MacDonald

## MISSION PROJECTS/ PROGRAMS: 2020

- Advancing Inmate Ministry (AIM) Polunsky
- Center of Hope
- Camp Cho Yeh scholarships
- Campaign 300
- Empty Stocking: Polk County
- GODTEL Ministry
- Habitat for Humanity: Polk County
- Head Start: Alabama-Coushatta Indian Reservation
- Hechos Dos (Becker Ministry)
- Imagination Library: Reading Enhances Advanced Development (READ)
- Keep a Kid in School (Polk County Dept. of Health)
- Kids Free Clothing Exchange (KFCE)
- Lions International (eyeglasses collection)
- Our Father's House: Livingston
- Presbytery of New Covenant
- Pan American School
- Pastor's Discretionary Fund
- Pastors Outreach to Patients (POP)
- PC (USA) Special Offerings (4)
- Polk County Emergency Health Board
- Presbyterian Children's Homes & Services
- Presbytery of New Covenant
- Revival Food Pantry
- Seafarer's Ministry: Port of Houston





*For all things come from You, and of Your own we have given You. -Chronicles 29:14*

This frequently used invitation to worship by giving is from 1 Chronicles 29:14, by churches that follow The Book of Common Prayer. This prayer by David is following the overwhelming generous giving to fund the building of the temple. David becomes forcefully aware that the people's ability to

give is because God had first given to them. They were only giving to God what was already His. When we give to God, we don't give from our own to Him, we give from His own that which He gave to us. God owns everything—including all that we have. What impact should that have on our use of time, talent, and treasure?

*The steward needs an open hand to receive from God and then an active hand to give to God and to others. -Unknown*

There are several projects being worked on at the time of this issue of *Tidings*:

1. Waste water line has been repaired in the Act. Bldg. restroom. Sheetrock and tiles damaged by water will be replaced.
2. Installing conduit from sound booth to church office to run internet cables for better reception on computers.
3. Fascia board on Act. Bldg. southeast corner rotted out, and will be replaced.
4. Crape myrtles in parking lot have been trimmed. Will trim others around church.
5. Church mower has been repaired.

*And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men. -Colossians 3:23*

If we cut corners in our own life, we are admitting that we might think it's okay to cut corners when serving God. Whatever you do today, do it as if you are working, cooking, driving, playing or serving God Himself—for truly you are.

*Live your best, act your best, and think your best each day, for there may be no tomorrows. -Unknown*

Glenn Drumm, Property Chair

## Administration Committee

Your Administration Committee is forming for year 2020, and, up to this point, is comprised of the following members: Pastor Joe MacDonald, Mark Nye, Robin Sessums, Kathy Nobles, Mary Lou Anderson, Patty Harrell, and Jay Walrath. We would like to have another one or two congregants join us, and should any of you wish to do so kindly advise the undersigned.

Our plan is to meet once monthly, on the first Thursday of the month at 1:30 p.m., in the Activities Building. Thus, February 6th will be our first meeting when we will "get organized," i.e., review the Manual of Operations, discuss our mission statement, set yearly goals, assign duties to committee members, etc.

Jay Walrath, Administration Chair

## Heavenly Appearance

Our omnipresent God shows up in some unexpected places. People have "miraculously" seen Jesus' face on everything from junk food to a rusty water tank. We don't know what Jesus looked like, of course, but Scripture indicates his appearance was rather ordinary: "He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him" (Isaiah 53:2, NIV).

On one occasion, however, Jesus' face was majestically transformed. At his Transfiguration, observed by many churches on the Sunday before Lent, Jesus' "face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light" (Matthew 17:2, ESV). Some disciples witnessed Jesus' glory — which will be ours, thanks to his death and resurrection. As 1 John 3:2 (NIV) promises: "When Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

# Fellowship Committee

The Fellowship Committee met on January 16th. We planned the luncheons for February and March.

The February 9th luncheon will be beef pot roast and gravy, cooked by the Fellowship Committee. The congregation will please provide the "loaves and fishes."

For the March 8th luncheon, we will have chicken parmesan prepared by the Fellowship Committee. We are asking for sides to fill in the meal by the congregation bringing the "loaves and fishes."

Our committee requests that those who have food items in the Fellowship Hall freezer will please either remove it or indicate your name on the item and whether it is intended for a fellowship event. Thank you in advance.

We also discussed Lenten soup suppers in order to ascertain if the congregation wants to have them. Please speak with any of the committee members, or there will be notes in the bulletin to communicate with us.

Ash Wednesday is February 26th. If we do soup suppers, the first supper would be March 4th.

Jo Pavey, Fellowship Chair

# Burden Bearers

Bear one another's burdens, the Bible says. It is a lesson about pain that we all can agree on. Some of us will not see pain as a gift; some will always accuse God of being unfair for allowing it.

But, the fact is, pain and suffering are here among us, and we need to respond in some way. The response Jesus showed was to bear the burdens of those he touched. To live in the world as [Jesus'] body, his emotional incarnation, we must follow his example.

The image of the body accurately portrays how God is working in the world. ... We announce his message, work for justice, pray for mercy ... and suffer with the sufferers.

—Philip Yancey, *Where Is God When It Hurts?*



# Puzzle!

First, write the opposite of each listed word. Then transfer letters to the correct numbered blanks to discover Jesus' messages about love.

<b>cool</b>	1 2 3 4	<b>soft</b>	20 21 22 23
<b>under</b>	5 6 7 8	<b>old</b>	24 25 26 27 28
<b>out</b>	9 10	<b>after</b>	29 30 31 32 33 34
<b>large</b>	11 12 13 14 15	<b>false</b>	35 36 37 38
<b>quiet</b>	16 17 18 19		

" 14 5 6 7 35 20 7 15 17 36 23 24 5 18 8 28 17 23  
 1 9 35 20 2 16 14 24 5 18 3 20 7 13 8 35 2 10 23  
 1 9 35 20 13 14 16 24 17 37 36 11 5 18 14 2 27 19  
 1 9 35 20 21 15 16 24 17 18 36 11 35 3 30 10 28 35 20  
 2 10 23 1 9 35 20 21 14 16 24 5 37 8 4 9 10 23  
 " 21 27 23 16 32 6 7 24 5 18 22 10 34 9 28 20 29 17 33  
 " 13 11 24 25 26 22 11 7 14 31  
 "

Answer: warm, over, in, small, loud, hard, young, before, true; "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind" and "Love your neighbor as yourself." Luke 10:27, NIV



### OUR AWESOME CHOIR

has done an excellent job this year. I want to commend them for coming each Wednesday for choir plus Back Row Boys and God's Pearls practice. They really sound good on Sunday mornings.

**WE INVITE OTHERS** to come join us on Wednesday nights for rehearsal and sing with

us on Sunday. We are planning special songs for the Easter season starting with the 1st Sunday in March and concluding on Easter Sunday. We can always use more voices, so please pray about this and come join with us as we lift our voices in praise.

**LOOKING AHEAD** to summer fun. The choir

takes their break from June through August. We had so much fun with this last year that we are starting in June with **YOUR FAVORITE HYMN**. Sign-up sheets will be in the bulletins starting in May, so pick up one and pick your favorite hymn. It will be scheduled and used during those three months.

**2020 IS GOING TO BE FANTASTIC. COME JOIN WITH US!**

Jo Ann Hogg, Music Director  
(936) 223-7330

## Choir Schedule

**Back Row Boys:** Each Wednesday at 4:30 p.m.

**God's Pearls:** Each Wednesday at 5:00 p.m.

**Choir Practice:** Each Wednesday at 5:30 p.m.  
Each Sunday at 9:30 a.m.

**Special Groups:** Schedule a time with Jo Ann or your accompanist to practice.



The Nobles family deeply appreciates and gives thanks for your prayers and all of your expressions of compassion and love. We are blessed to be a part of His church.

In His name,  
Jennifer and Steven, Rick Jr. and Susie, Rick and Kathy

## A Prayer for Ash Wednesday

Lord of the winds,  
I cry to thee,  
I that am dust,  
and blown about  
by every gust  
I fly to thee.

Lord of the waters,  
unto thee I call.  
I that am weed  
upon the waters borne,  
and by the waters torn,  
tossed by the waters,  
at thy feet I fall.

—Mary Coleridge (1861-1907)

## +Christian Symbol+

### Shepherd's Crook

The shepherd's crook is a symbol for Jesus, the Good Shepherd. "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (John 10:11). The crook also symbolizes the shepherds who visited the baby Jesus in Bethlehem. It's also used in connection with King David, who worked as a shepherd when he was young.



# PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

THANK YOU to everyone for all the help and food that made the Mission Lunch in January a big success. At our January meeting, Mary Lou Anderson reported that \$946.00 had been donated to be used for our missions this year: Kids Free Clothing Exchange, 60%; Keep Kids in School, 20%; and Presbytery, 20%. At our meeting & lesson in January we were glad to have three visitors – Leah’s daughter, Midge, a friend of Lee, and Joyce Houck.

All women of the Church and all friends are welcome on February 10, at 1:30 p.m., in Room 2 of the Fellowship Hall, for our meeting and lesson. This sixth lesson will be *Love Carved in Stone – Words of Love: Hold Your Marriages Sacred*. We are continuing to look at the Ten Commandments this year.

The sign-up sheet to host snacks after our meeting for April will be at this meeting if you have not taken a turn this year. February hosts are Donna Swanson and Lee Waybright.

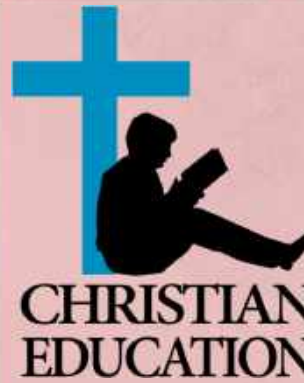
Call Beverly Davidson 936-969-3277/713-417-4958 or Bonnie Laverty 713-557-0410 with any questions.

## The Very Best Valentine

Almost everyone — at least of the female persuasion — knows the romantic meaning of the phrase “hearts and flowers.” Valentine’s Day is coming! What will I get from my boyfriend ... my husband ... my best friend? I’m hoping for some sort of bouquet, a card full of loving words and red hearts, candy or at least a sweet balloon.

Human beings may disappoint. That special someone may forget to check the calendar for February 14. But even if he doesn’t come through exactly as I hope, I can still be amazed and happy with the valentine I am sure to receive every day from my heavenly Father and his Son: words of delight and joy and caring — always surrounding me with love and more love. These are the best “hearts and flowers” I could ever have, and which I do have, on Valentine’s Day and throughout eternity.

—Sandy Hyland



I want to thank all those who helped with our children’s classes last year. I pray that God gives you the blessing that I see for working to train our future workers for God’s work.

However, we can’t stop there. There is still a lot of work to be done and so far it is falling on two or three people. We could use some more workers.

1. We need a man that will let God help him invest in the lives of some middle school boys.
2. Some that will volunteer to be teachers.
3. Some that would help just by being helpers.
4. Some to help with crafts or refreshments.

Please pray about how you might help. The rewards are great!

You can call the church office to volunteer at (936) 327-8381, or call Kerry Wheeler at (380) 760-0249. Let’s make this the best year yet by bringing more kids to know God.

We are having a planning meeting on Sunday, February 2nd, after the service, in the Fellowship Hall if you would like to help us plan, or just check us out. We’ll be watching for you.

Kerry Wheeler, Christian Education Chair



# Celebrate!

## FEBRUARY Birthdays

- Aidan Heredia, 02/20
- Rafael Heredia, 02/20
- Beverly Davidson, 02/21
- Carla Gore, 02/21

## FEBRUARY Anniversaries

- Rick & Susie Nobles, 02/14



## QUOTES

“A smile is the light in your window that tells others that there is a caring, sharing person inside.”

—Denis Waitley

\* \* \*

“Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes, including you.”

—Anne Lamott

\* \* \*

“There is only one happiness in this life: to love and be loved.”

—George Sand



Online:  
[www.fpclivingston.com](http://www.fpclivingston.com)

Email:  
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Phone: (936) 327-8381

### Our Sunday Schedule

- “Signs of the Times” (Pastor Joe’s Class)  
- 8:45 a.m., FH, Rm. 2
- Kid Zone - 9:00 a.m., Rm. 202, AB
- Middle School - 9:00 a.m., Rm. 206, AB
- Adult Bible Study – 9:00 a.m., FH, Rm. 1
- Worship - 10:00 a.m., Sanctuary
- Nursery available for children ages infant through 4