

First Presbyterian Church

Tidings

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

One all-important word

Sometimes one word makes all the difference. In John 14:16, when Jesus promises the disciples that God will send the Holy Spirit, he doesn't say "the" Helper or "a" Helper but "another" Helper. For there to be "another" of something, we must already be familiar with a first of that thing. Jesus has been, for the disciples, their first Helper. They already "know him for he dwells with [them]" (verse 17, ESV).

When my infant son was to start full-time daycare, the transition went quite smoothly. That's because his new at all: She was

Grandma! The sense that my son would be in the hands of another family member he already knew eased the handoff for Mama and baby alike.

Not all parents have access to that type of situation, but the caregiving arrangement Jesus provided his disciples is available to all. Even when Jesus is no longer physically with us, another who loves us just as much — another we already know and whose truth we've seen in Jesus — is here. We're in good hands.

—Heidi Mann

Special Dates

- **Sep 6th - Communion Worship Service**
- **Sep 7th - Labor Day**
- **Sep 8th – Mission Committee Meeting, 11 a.m., FH**
- **Sep 10th - Session Meeting, 5 p.m., FH**
- **Sep 13th – Pastor Joe's last Sunday**
- **Sep 18th – *Tidings* articles due**

Witnesses at work

It is at work more than at church that the real moral — and immoral — decisions are being rendered about the health of our planet, our bodies, our children, our very souls.

Work is the adult arena for spiritual decision-making, whether we are talking about the waste our species spews into the earth, or the violence and titillating sex that dominates our television programming, or the inane political issues that get raised to fever pitch in order to drown out the real issues. It is in our work ... that the moral issues of our lives play out. And ... it is in our work that spirituality itself will be redeemed.

—Matthew Fox, *Confessions*

Dear Friends and Family of First Presbyterian Church,

A huge “Thank You” to First Presbyterian Church for continuing to provide support to the children in need of shoes and clothing as they look forward to returning to school and hopefully cooler weather! We are following health protocols to protect the families and our volunteers. No children are allowed in the shop at this time, so parents

must know the sizes of clothing and shoes needed for their children.

In spite of all the changes this year, we are joyfully surprised that FPCL has been able to provide some shoes, socks, undies, and financial assistance for whatever clothing the children need to feel good about themselves

as they go back to school in such changing days. We have been blessed by the participation of about 300 children the last 4 weeks, and we look forward to more as the word spreads that we are open and have hoodies!

Thank you again for helping us share God’s blessings with His children.

Bonnie Laverty—
President Kids Free Clothing Exchange,
Onalaska

God’s surprises

Don’t assume that God will always work in your life the way he always has. A sunset is proof that God colors outside the lines. He has no status quo. Even the laws of nature are his to interrupt. As many times as you’ve prayed before, today may be the day when God sends the answer so swiftly — so divinely — that you’re wind-burned.

—Beth Moore

Administration Committee

Your Administration and Worship committees are excited to share some terrific news with you. Margie Tolls has stepped forward and has volunteered to be the church’s choir director. Before she is able to “step forward,” however, she will be having hip surgery sometime during the first half of September. After rehab, it is estimated she will be ready to start on or about November 1st. Thank you Margie!!

And how about the job Jo Ann Hogg has been doing leading up to and during this awful COVID

-19 pandemic! She had spent countless hours preparing songs for the choir during the March, April and May period – but, of course, there was no choir to sing them during that time. Jo Ann has graciously agreed to be the accompanist for Margie who very much looks forward to working with her.

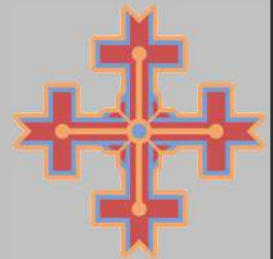
Also, many thanks go out to Ginger who has been playing the piano for our church services during the last several months.

Jay Walrath,
Administration Chair

+Christian Symbol+

Cross Crosslet

This cross is formed of four smaller Latin crosses joined at their overlapping bases.



The cross as a whole represents the spreading of the gospel to the four corners of the earth. This cross is often used in connection with missions.





Endurance

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." -Galatians 5:23,24

That word endurance is not one of my favorite words, is it yours? For me it conjures up the idea of putting up with something or someone that you dislike for a long period of time. I can't help but see in my mind the poster with the little kitten hanging by its front paws from a branch with the caption "hang in there, baby." It is almost like a long term prison sentence or a long term sentence to any circumstance or situation of which you have no control, and having to "stick it out" whether you want to or not.

But did you realize that endurance is listed as one of the facets of the fruit of the Spirit? It is variously called forbearance, endurance, or long suffering. The scripture is clear that there will be situations in life that will demand of all of us endurance. In fact, we have all been enduring the limitations of the current pandemic for a long time and we are all wondering how much longer these limitations will continue or, worst case scenario, whether this will be a new normal. We ask ourselves, in the quiet moments, if life will get back to "normal" or, at least, to where it was before we all became controlled by a virus. The longer we endure, the more we question whether the control is simply from a serious virus or from the manipulation of the fear of the virus to impose unnecessary limitations on our freedom.

Regardless of the above possibilities, God says that His Spirit is the one who produces that endurance within us. When we look at the history of Christianity and realize how many Believers have endured unspeakable circumstances including torture, suffering, and even death. Especially when we think that our Savior Himself endured the worst of those sufferings, we realize that if we did not have the spiritual gift of endurance we would not survive. The apostle Paul made it clear that we would face nothing that we would not be able to endure, but that we would be provided a way of escape (I Corinthians 10:13). During this time of forbearance and any time of endurance He has promised to never leave us or forsake us. As Paul says, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Phillippians 4:13). We need to make sure our focus is on the promise of the Spirit and not on the circumstance to be endured. So, "hang in there, Baby".

Blessings, Pastor Joe MacDonald



Your Mission committee plans on meeting September 8th (Tuesday), at 11 a.m., in the Fellowship Hall. Anyone may attend. We will be working on our budget for 2021 as well as fall collections of items for seamen, children, and possibly the Empty Stocking program.

Effective immediately we will be placing shoeboxes in the parlor for you to take home and fill for the men who bring goods to the Port of Houston. Since we will not have any more luncheons this year, we will also not have a shoebox filling event in November, thus the "take home a box, fill it, and return it" push. A listing of potential items along with a thank-you card will be in every box. While the Seafarer's Center prefers to deliver boxes wrapped as Christmas gifts, if you cannot wrap but want to fill one, please do so and just return the shoebox.

We have sent to Guatemala all of the left-over children's items from last year, and do plan on continuing to collect items for future usage. Keith and Maria Becker have a fantastic ministry and they are most appreciative of the great support shown by our members. We also continue to collect non-perishable food items for the Center of Hope, along with eyeglasses for Lions International, and craft items for the Indian Head Start program.

If you have an interest in Mission or might consider future involvement, please let any of the current members know as some major changes lie ahead. Active members are: Bonnie Laverty, Doug and Karen Palmer, Susie Nobles, Joe MacDonald, Ron Tolls, and Beverly Davidson. My thanks to each of them plus others for their past support, and hopefully future interest.

Chuck Davidson, Mission Chair

Port of Houston Seafarer's Shoeboxes

Please pack a shoebox filled with new items for men such as these:


| | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Hairbrush/Comb | Band-Aids (fabric) | Baseball Caps |
| 2021 Calendar | Magnets | Dental Floss |
| Deodorant | Disposable Razors | T-Shirts |
| Kleenex | Lip Balm | Lotion |
| Nail Clippers | Gold Bond Powder | Hot Chocolate |
| Gold Bond Cream | Q-Tips | Needle / Thread |
| Shaving Cream | Soap / Shampoo | Toothbrush |
| Toothpaste | Gum / Hard Candy | Key Chains |
| Pocket-Size Notebook | Mechanical Pencils | Pens |
| Playing Cards | Popcorn | Socks |
| Flashlight w batteries | Texas Souvenirs | Headphones |
| USB Flash Drives | Personal Note | Earbuds |
| Word Search / Sudoku / Fill-in Books | | |

Wrap box as one unit in Christmas paper (if possible); no bows or plastic boxes.

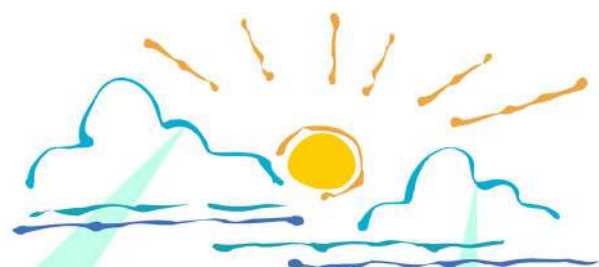
??? **Bible Quiz** ???

Which of these was not one of the 10 plagues God brought against Egypt to persuade Pharaoh to let the Hebrew people go?

A. an abundance of frogs
B. the Nile River turned to blood
C. the collapse of the pyramids
D. thick darkness



Answer: C (See Exodus 7:14-12:32.)



This too shall pass.

Many parts, one body

Through the teaching, support, sacrifice, worship and commitment of the



church, utterly ordinary people are enabled to do some rather extraordinary, even heroic acts, not on the basis of their own gifts and abilities, but rather by having a community capable of sustaining Christian virtue. The church enables us to be better people than we could have been if left to our own devices.

—Stanley Hauerwas and William Willimon, *Resident Aliens*

Thank You Lord

by Tommy Fluker

Thank you Lord for giving me another day
For the glory of sunrise
The serenity of dusk
Smile of a stranger
A lone hawk circling high in a clear blue sky
The innocence of a child
Joy of children at play
A flower waving gently in the breeze
The chorus of crickets in the night
A full moon rising slowly above the tree tops
Of lovers hand in hand
The never ending bond of family love
The gift of friends
Wonder of a child's birth
A cool summer's breeze
Splatter of raindrops on a parched earth
Perfumed scent of flowers in bloom
The blessing of knowledge and those who serve
A mother's love
The list is endless
Most of all my Lord, your never ending love

Task Force Recommendations Approved by Session on August 13, 2020

1) Reduce the number of standing committees from nine (9) to five (5):

- a. Administration:
Finance, personnel, stewardship
- b. Congregational Care:
Communication, Christian education,
fellowship, luncheons, special events
- c. Property:
AV system, buildings, equipment, grounds
- d. Outreach:
Discipleship, evangelism, mission, service,
special offerings
- e. Worship:
Communion, greeters, music, service,
ushers

2) Eliminate the position of Deacon and increase the number of Elders from nine (9) to ten (10). Move from a bicameral to a unicameral structure:

- Class of 2021 (3)
- Class of 2022 (3)
- Class of 2023 (4)

Effective January 1, 2021

Approved by task force on August 9, 2020.

Members present: Chuck Davidson (chair), Paul Laverty, Doug Palmer, Janet Linn, Patty Harrell, plus Clerk Kathy Nobles, and Pastor Joe MacDonald.



To: First Presbyterian Church

I am so thankful to everyone who put money in so I could go to my wonderful Camp Cho—Yeh. I had an awesome time, I made new friends, and most importantly, I got closer to God. I'm really bad at writing letters, and it may not look like it but I actually tried on this. Thank you so much. Love you all.

Love, Kelsey Farwell



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—Matthew Fox, Confessions

Celebrate!

SEPTEMBER Anniversaries

- Gene & Gina Jensen, 09/xx
- Robert & Marilyn Green, 09/15

SEPTEMBER Birthdays

- Glenn Drumm, 09/01
- Dave Harrell, 09/05
- Robert Green (Elder), 09/07
- Mary Lou Anderson, 09/09
- Max Smith, 09/15
- Jim Stoops, 09/15
- Steve Davis, 09/19
- Kash Cooper, 09/21
- Judy Bristol, 09/24
- Sheri Grounds, 09/24
- Kerry Wheeler, 09/25
- Jane Nye, 09/28
- Madden Heredia, 09/29

QUOTES

“Every tomorrow has two handles. We can take hold of it with the handle of anxiety or the handle of faith.”

—Henry Ward Beecher

“When we long for life without difficulties, remind us that oaks grow strong in contrary winds and diamonds are made under pressure.”

—Peter Marshall

“Youth is the gift of nature, but age is a work of art.”

—Stanislaw Jerzy Lec

“Develop a passion for learning. If you do, you will never cease to grow.”

—Anthony J. D’Angelo



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Our Worship Schedule

Sundays - 10:00 a.m.