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Happy New Year!

Worship with us this Sunday!

"A Christian Community
of Faith"

9:45 a.m.
Sunday School for all ages
10:50 a.m.
Sunday Worship

Rev. Krista Rasco – Pastor

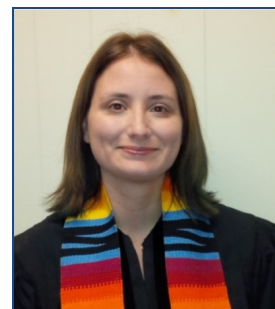
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A Message From the Pastor



This past Sunday was Epiphany Sunday on which the story of the Magi's visit to Jesus is retold, again. We also received new "Star Words".

I introduced "star words" last year on Epiphany Sunday after learning about them from my fellow colleagues in ministry. Paper stars with different words printed on them were passed out. Each person who received one was instructed to take your word home, place it somewhere you would be reminded of it often, and reflect on it throughout the next year.

"Star words" are another tool to use to direct your spiritual discipline and thoughts towards God and Jesus, just as the Magi were guided by a star to find Jesus. If you received a word, you may have looked at it and thought "I know what this means! This word is so simple. How could it ever change its meaning or value throughout the next year?" I thought that very thing because I received the word "patience" last year.

As a mother of a toddler, and a newly ordained pastor who went through the long and tedious (but important) call process, have I anything more to learn about patience?

Well, you can imagine that the word did guide me some this past year. Maybe not in my own private meditations on the word, but through the voice of wise and discerning members of this very church, from colleagues who were able share that the first two years of ministry are sometimes the hardest. And of course, any parent can tell you a child (no matter their age) always has more to teach adults about patience.

The last verse in the scripture lesson this past Sunday, from Matthew 2:1-12 said, "They left for their country by another road."

I wonder if whoever originally came up with the "star words" idea
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A Letter from Grace Presbytery

Editor's note: This lengthy letter, dated Dec. 28, 2015, has been edited slightly to fit our space. However, a complete, non-edited version can be found on the Grace Presbytery website.

Dear Grace Presbytery friends,

As we move through this season of Christmas, we are all deeply concerned about people in Garland, Rowlett and Rockwall whose families, friends, and colleagues have been devastated by the tornadoes two days ago. Many of you have already inquired directly to these communities or to our office about how you can best respond in solidarity and faithfulness.

Early Sunday morning, I received a phone call from Presbyterian Disaster Assistance in Louisville asking if we would like to have a PDA team come to be with us and to help us respond. That team, headed by Joan Otto, is on its way and will arrive on Tuesday. I will meet with them on Wednesday. I was in touch with both Rev. Cheryl Taylor at First Presbyterian Church in Rockwall and Rev. Paul Burns at First Presbyterian Church in Garland to learn about the particular issues with which they were aware. Paul has been through this before in another pastorate. Cheryl reported that two families in the Rockwall Church have lost their homes and are staying with others. Joan Otto of the PDA team has spoken with both pastors. She and two others from PDA will be working with us....

...In the circle of our family of faith, you will want to know that Chris Holloman (son of Ronnie and Wanda and clerk of session at Winnsboro) is part of the Rowlett Fire Department and was on duty on Saturday night and worked lots of shifts responding to this crisis. Keep him and all responders in your prayers as you pray for those who have been most directly affected by the devastation. Pray also for children who may not be able to fully comprehend what has happened and whose lives went from Christmas delight to such unexpected loss.

Grace Presbytery will set up an immediate account to receive gifts you may wish to direct through our offices. Send them to the attention of Vicki Roberts, Financial Coordinator, Grace Presbytery, 6100 Colwell, Irving, TX 75039. Or you may wish to send your contributions through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. Visit the [Presbyterian Disaster Assistance website](#) of the PCUSA to make donations. Use designated account DR00015 and mark it for Texas Tornado Relief so that it gets directed to the proper account.

As the PDA team is on the ground, they will take pictures and no doubt Paul and Cheryl will as well. We will do our best to keep you informed through emails and through my Facebook (Jan DeVries, which also has my picture to make sure you've got the right "Jan"), and through the Grace Presbytery Facebook page. Those are likely to be the most direct way to stay updated. The Presbytery offices are closed this week. Should you need to call me directly, please reach me on my cell phone at 817-505-9194.

This is a season of God coming into the world, incarnation, through the birth of child. It is a retelling of the Word become flesh, the invitation to welcome Jesus Christ again, and to live the incarnation in our own lives....Join me in prayer for our brothers and sisters and for the world into which Christ comes – this year closer to home than we imagined it would be.

May the blessings of this Christmas-tide be yours,

Jan

Rev. Janet DeVries, General Presbyter



Want to Do More?

At this time, there may be enough volunteers to do what is needed. However, if you want to inquire about helping, one place to look is the Disaster Resource Center, located in the Granger Recreation Center, 1310 W. Avenue F., in Garland. It serves both Garland and Rowlett. Volunteers have been registering there to be referred to local agencies to assist with relief efforts. However, it will only be open until 3 p.m., on Sunday, Jan. 10.

In Our Prayers at First Presbyterian

If you have anyone you would like to add to the Prayer List, contact the church office.



Our Troops	Diane Little	Gordon Hunter
Jace Carrington	Bruce Campbell	Sara Grace Pullen
Melba Blount	Amy Lopez	Billy Marshall
Joe Yeakley	Randy Roberts	Barbara Frey
The Hines Family	Penny Belcher Muecke and family	
Edith Baker	Friends and family of Kathy Benton	
John Paul Rhodes	Wendell Edwards	Royal Conal
Kade Daniel Campbell		Grace Byrd
Family of Dale Bedgood	Family of Virginia Holley	
Betty Holloway		Odeana Stewart
Family and friends of Joe Fred Cox		Tyrus Dolese
Dana Ryer		Frances Robinson
	Family of Kathleen Dickerson Smith	



PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN

• PW Circle Meeting in January

The PW Circle will meet on Monday, January 11, at 10:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. **Bettina Zvanut** will present Lesson 5 from the 2015-2016 PW Horizons Bible Study *Come to the Waters* and **Martha Clevenger** is the hostess.

• Making more Baby Caps: One of our on-going Mission Projects

Circle members will also meet in January to trace and cut out baby caps for our on-going project for the nursery at Hunt Regional Medical Center. Members will receive an email notifying them of the date for this. During 2015, the third year we have made this one of our mission projects, our PW Circle made 598 fleece caps for this facility. Thanks go to all who assisted. "Many hands make light work!"

• Christmas Tea a Success!

Ladies from our congregation and guests were invited to the home of **Helon Razniak** on Saturday, December 12, for fellowship, refreshments and special teas. Co-hostess was **Martha Clevenger**. More than a dozen women attended. Thank you, Helon and Martha for hosting this event.

• Cox Family Reception: Thanks to All Who Assisted

A special thanks also go to all persons who prepared and/or helped serve food at the reception for the Cox family on Saturday, December 26.

Bible Readings for this Sunday's Worship Service

This Sunday we celebrate the Baptism of the Lord

Old Testament: Isaiah 43:1-7

Restoration and Protection Promised



Psalter: Psalm 29

The Voice of God in a Great Storm

Epistle—Acts 8:14-17

Peter and John Preach in Samaria

Gospel—Luke 3:15-17, 21:22

Don't Forget Food Pantry Items

The Commerce Food Pantry serves between 35-45 different families in need each week—over 150 families each month. Donations are a major source of its ability to help these people. Remember to help out the food pantry with a donation of food each Sunday.

1st Sunday—Peanut butter and/or jelly

2nd Sunday—Bag of pinto beans and/or rice

3rd Sunday—Box of cereal or oatmeal

4th Sunday—Cans of tuna, spam, chicken

5th Sunday—Cans of fruit: peaches, fruit cocktail

Elder Ordination and Installation

Part of this Sunday's worship service is the recognition of outgoing elders—**Dennis White, Sherry Johnson, Neal Stewart, Jim Deaton, and Dean Calvert**—followed by the ordination and installation of new elder Class of 2018—**Martha Clevenger, Jordan Conner, Walter Tucker, and Bettina Zvanut**

Please take time to thank all of our elders—outgoing, current, and incoming—for their service to FPC.

Congregational Meeting after Worship Jan. 17

Budget and finances are the topics of an important congregational meeting next Sunday. Be sure to attend!

January Dates to Remember

Happy Birthday to:

1 - Lydia Shatney
7 - Tara Pearce
14 - Christine Byrd
16 - Janet Duncan
17 - Kaitlynn Rasco
19 - Caden James Costa
21 - Joel McIntier
22 - Kimberly Stewart
24 - Jim Deaton
24 - John Paul Rhodes
27 - Blake Madewell

Happy Anniversary to:

16 – Brenda & Ric Estes

If we overlooked you, please let us know.

A Message From the Pastor

(Continued from page 1)

truly knew that these “star words” would take the person down another road than they had originally expected?

The same is true about discipleship. Sometimes, actually, almost always, our plans and life don’t always go the way we plan or expect. Yet, the journey is important. I have heard a few stories about the “star words” people received last year. I would be grateful to hear more! If you did not receive a “star word” and still want one, we have more!

May you always be able to follow the light that guides you on the path to God.

*Grace and peace be with you all,
Rev. Krista Rasco*

January Calendar

Worship Schedule

- 10** *Baptism of the Lord*
Morning Worship Service 10:50 a.m.
Sermon focus on Luke 3:15-17, 21-22
Elder ordination and installation
- 17** *2nd Sunday after Epiphany*
Morning Worship Service 10:50 a.m.
Sermon focus on John 2:1-11
Congregational meeting after worship
- 24** *3rd Sunday After Epiphany*
Morning Worship Service 10:50 a.m.
Sermon focus on Luke 4:14-21
- 31** *4th Sunday after Epiphany*
Morning Worship Service 10:50 a.m.
Sermon focus on Luke 4:21-30

Other January events

- 11** Monday, 9 a.m.—Presbyterian Women’s Circle meeting
- 12, 26** Tuesdays, 9 a.m.—Teach the Preacher
- 13** Wednesday, 6 p.m.—Session meeting

January Worship Leaders

January 10

Head Usher:..... Ric Estes
Candle Lighter: Sally Walker
Liturgist: Wally Tucker

January 17

Head Usher:..... Bob Johnson
Candle Lighter: Cal Conner
Liturgist: Barbara Tucker

January 24

Head Usher:..... Monty Howard
Candle Lighter: Matti Richie
Liturgist: Bettina Zvanut

January 31

Head Usher:..... Dennis White
Candle Lighter: Jack Walker
Liturgist: Keith McFarland

*Thanks to these folks and those who have helped in the past.
If you would like to take part in the worship service in some way,*

Did We Forget Something?
Let us know about news items (and pictures) we can use for our next newsletter. Thanks for your help!