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Worship With Us on 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

Email: revkristarasco@gmail.com

www.facebook.com/krista.rasco

Roger McKenzie – Church Secretary

And Editor, *The Good News*

Office: (903) 886-3783

E-presence

fpc-commerce@embarqmail.com

www.facebook.com/fpccommerce

Website: www.fpc-commerce.com

A Message From the Pastor

As we start a new secular year we continue into the season of epiphany of the church calendar. It is not long until we will be entering the season of Lent.

Below is an excerpt of a poem about the church year and what its seasons mean. I hope you find the poem as inspiring and thought provoking as I did.



"The Church Year"

by Ann Weems

From Kneeling in Bethlehem. (c)1987 Ann Weems. Used by permission of Westminster John Knox Press.

The church is Epiphany.
 We are the Magi, searching,
 resplendent in this world's accouterments
 of knowledge and wealth and achievement.
 But we search for something more.
 And – of all unlikely places –
 in a stable
 the Deity appears.
 The birthing of our Lord
 bursts in upon our ordinary lives
 like fireworks in the snow.
 Only God would send a little baby King,
 and we are on our knees,
 where we are within reach of our full personhood.

(Continued on page 7)



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

By Toni Deaton

FPC PW Moderator

PW Circle Meeting

PW Circle will meet on Monday, Jan. 9, at 10 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Members are asked to be prepared to discuss Chapter 5 in our study of *Who Is Jesus? What a Difference a Lens Makes*. We will be looking through the “lens” according to the apostle Paul. **Martha Clevenger** is hostess for the meeting and all women are invited to attend.

Baby Caps Project

Our PW Circle will be pleased to know that the work we do in making the fleece baby caps is truly appreciated. In January, when 100 caps were taken to the newborn nursery at Hunt Regional Medical Center, several nurses who were working at the nursery station commented on how soft and pretty the caps were and how they, as nurses, loved them as do the parents of the newborns. We can be sure that the work we do on this project is truly worthwhile and making a difference in our greater community. Thanks to all who help make this possible!

New Year: New Jobs

On Jan. 1, both **Bettina Zvanut** and I assumed new roles with Presbyterian Women of Grace Presbytery, having been installed at the Fall Gathering in October of 2016.

Bettina is now serving as Co-Vice Moderator – Programs and I am filling the role of Moderator. We will serve a two-year term and ask for your prayers and support as we step up to these leadership positions in PW at the Presbytery level. We will both be attending their first meeting of 2017 on Saturday, Jan. 14, at Westminster PC in Fort Worth, as planning begins for the Spring Workshop Meetings that will be held during April.

Recommended Reading

(As printed in the January/February 2017 issue of *Horizons Magazine*)

A book by former president Jimmy Carter,

entitled ***A Call to Action: Women, Religion, Violence and Power***, is recommended as “pages worth turning”. Jimmy Carter’s peacemaking efforts on the world stage are well-known. He is perhaps the best-known proponent of the two-state solution in the Middle East. But his concerns are not only nations’ rights; he is concerned with individual human rights, especially those of women.

Molly Worthen of *The New York Times*, says his book “grimly surveys the oppression and violence suffered by the world’s women---mistreatment too often justified . . . by an ‘outmoded’ interpretation of Christian, Jewish and Muslim scriptures.”

The former president writes in his book that “Jesus Christ was the greatest liberator of women in a society where they had been considered throughout biblical history to be inferior.” This is a clarion call from one of the most powerful but upright moral leaders of our times.

Mystery Quilt Update

By Bettina Zvanut

The Presbyterian quilt top, which was found in Fellowship Hall two years ago, has been quilted. It was shown to the Cotton Blossoms Quilting Group. They dated it to the late 1920's to early 1930's.

I oversaw its completion and it has been donated to First Presbyterian's Presbyterian Women's group to raise funds for projects. The Presbyterian Women's Circle will meet Monday, Jan. 9th and make a decision on how to sell the quilt.

Brenda Estes is keeping it in storage at this time. Anyone wanting to get a closer look at the quilt can call her for an appointment to view it.

I was provided with excellent help and advice on antique quilting from **Carol Dodd, Joyce McCord, and Isabelle Davis**.

Many thanks to these ladies!



Got News?

Our next mid-month edition of *The Good News* will be published on Jan. 18. Deadline for submissions is Monday, Jan. 16. Don't be late

Prayer List Additions

Odeana Stewart, who is already on our list after a fall, will have surgery on Jan. 26 at UT-Southwestern Medical Center to remove a spot doctors found on her lungs.

Frieda Branom is recovering from a bout with dehydration.

Kay Davis's husband, Ron Davis, has been diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease.

Janice Sigure, who is the **mother-in-law of Martha Clevenger's niece**, has been diagnosed with breast cancer.

Please pray these people, and all those on our prayer list.

In Our Prayers at First Presbyterian

Our Troops	Gordon Hunter	Jace Carrington
Bruce Campbell	Sara Grace Pullen	Melba Blount
Amy Lopez	Billy Marshall	Joe Yeakley
Grace Byrd	Gayle Shumate	Gladys Gray
Pat Skauge	Mildred Miller	Amanda Swanson
Gaye Furry	Preston Helton	Loretta Kibler
Joan Walvoord	Brad Rollins	Donald R. Smith
Catherine King Robertson	Family of John Paul Rhodes	
Odeana Stewart	Bennie Neve	Frieda Branom
Ron Davis	Janice Sigure	

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

FPC Is Online!

www.facebook.com/fpccommerce

www.facebook.com/group/fpccommerce

<https://twitter.com/fpccommerce>

www.fpc-commerce.com.



Confirmation Class Trip

As part of **Matthew McFarland's** confirmation class activities, he was introduced to the Museum of Biblical Arts in Dallas recently. **Rev. Krista Rasco**, museum expert and artist **Walt Davis**, **Carolyn McFarland** (Matthew's aunt), and **Bettina Zvanut** joined Matthew on Dec. 22.

Below, Walt Davis (foreground) and Carolyn McFarland (background) explore some of the works at the museum. Walt is looking at the 12-foot by 40-foot long Resurrection Mural by Ron Di Cianni.





Holiday Pictures



Breakfast with Santa at the Children's Museum here was popular with FPC folks—some as visitors and some as museum workers. Pictured above surrounding Brenda Estes are Evie and Cal Conner, their cousin Hazel, and Kaitlynn Rasco. In the picture at left are Nancy McFarland, Kaitlynn and her dad, Jason Rasco.



Candles, poinsettias, and the Chrismon tree made for a beautiful sight at the Longest Night Service



Speaking of the beautiful Chrismon tree, making Chrismons was part of the season's activities. At left, Brenda Estes oversees the artistic efforts of Sally Walker and her friend LBJ as they create Chrismons.

One More Holiday Picture



Looking like a Norman Rockwell painting is this picture taken by Jordan Conner of Jason and Kaitlynn Rasco during FPC's Candlelight Christmas Eve Worship Service.

You Are Invited to a Birthday Party at FPC

On Saturday, Jan. 14, from 2-4 p.m. in Fellowship Hall, Rev. Rasco invites you to help the Rasco family celebrate Kaitlynn's fifth birthday!

You are asked to RSVP (text, phone, or in person), so that plans can be made to accommodate those attending.



Christmas Donation—A lot of people and organizations rallied in the spirit of Christmas to help the Commerce Food Pantry with donations. This mother and daughter, Meghan and Bella Regodan, brought by food collected by Commerce Girl Scout Troop #7791 on Dec. 12. Over 30 donations were received during the month.

Don't Forget Food Pantry Items

The Commerce Food Pantry serves many families in need each week. 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

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

3rd Sunday—Can of chili or beef stew

4th Sunday—Can of tuna, spam, or chicken

5th Sunday—Can of fruit: peaches or fruit cocktail



January Worship Leaders

January 8

Head Usher:.....Nancy McFarland

Candle Lighter: Evie Conner

Liturgist: Keith McFarland

January 15

Head Usher:..... Monty Howard

Candle Lighter: Sally Walker

Liturgist:Toni Deaton

January 22

Head Usher:..... Mason Howard

Candle Lighter: Cal Conner

Liturgist: Martha Clevenger

December 25

Head Usher:..... Walt Davis

Candle Lighter: Evie Connier

Liturgist:Susan Reeves

Note: There will be no communion service during January.

January Calendar

Worship Schedule

8 **Baptism of the Lord**

The service will include a reaffirmation of the baptismal covenant.

Morning Worship Service 10:50 a.m.

Sermon focus on Matthew 3:15-17

15 **Second Sunday after Epiphany**

The service will include the installation of new session members.

Morning Worship Service 10:50 a.m.

Following worship there will be a congregational meeting.

Sermon focus on 1 Corinthians 1:1-9

22 **Third Sunday after Epiphany**

Morning Worship Service 10:50 a.m.

Sermon focus on Matthew 4:12-23

29 **Fourth Sunday after Epiphany**

Morning Worship Service 10:50 a.m.

Sermon focus on Matthew 5:1-12

Other January events

Note: There will be no session meeting this month.

9 Monday, 10 p.m.—PW Circle meeting

24 Tuesday, 5 p.m.—Food Pantry board meeting

25 Wednesday, 6:30 p.m.—Christian Education committee meeting

Something Missing?

Did we leave out something? Please call the church office at least two weeks before your church-related event and have it put on the church calendar.

January Dates to Remember

Happy Birthday to:

1 - Lydia Shatney

7 - Tara Pierce

14 - Christine Byrd

16 - Janet Duncan

17 -Katlynn Rasco

19 - Caden James Costa

21 - Joel McIntier

22 - Kimberly Stewart

24 - Jim Deaton

27—Blake Madewell

Happy Anniversary to:

16 – Ric and Brenda Estes

Is our birthday and anniversary information up-to-date? Report any errors, please.

Congregational Meeting on January 15

Immediately following the worship service on Sunday, Jan. 15, there will be a congregational meeting to (1) approve changes to Rev. Rasco's terms of call (salary), (2) accept the annual report of the Budget Committee, and (3) accept annual committee reports.

VOL NTEER

all that's missing is U!

A Message From the Pastor *(Continued from page 1)*

The church is Good Friday.
Darkness burnt into blackness,
abysmal absence of anything good.
We acknowledge that death is real
and we tremble for a world that would kill
its God.

Our feet stand in quicksand;
our voices echo sterile silence.
We huddle together to meet the dark and
the death,
forgetting what was taught us,
forgetting that somewhere
a seed is sprouting,
somewhere
a child is growing.
All we see is Christ crucified.

The church is Easter.
Out of death: Life.
Out of darkness:
a lush green world
flowers in the ice
sunrays in the storm
mustard seeds galore.
Our souls enter a spiritual springtime,
our bodies given over to leaping and
dancing,
our very beings saturated in hosannas.
Our shouting crashes in upon this world:
The Lord lives!
We live!
Resurrection resounds throughout our
community.

The church is Pentecost.
The Holy Spirit is poured out upon us
and sends us out together
afame with new life,

inheritors of the wealth of God:
life abundant.
We are liberated from the prisons of
pettiness,
jealousy, and greed,
liberated to be the church.

We are freed to free others.
We are affirmed to affirm others.
We are loved to love others.
We are family;
We are community.
We are the church triumphant –
you, me, anyone who would come unto the
Lord –
renewed, redirected, empowered
to change things and lives
together in love and wholeness.
We are the Lord's church,
the church of justice and mercy,
the people sent to open prisons,
to heal the sick
to clothe the naked
to feed the hungry
to reconcile
to be alleluias when there is no music.

The mantle is upon our shoulders.
Joy is apparent in our living.
We have been commissioned to be the
church
of Jesus Christ.

Grace and peace be with you all
Rev. Krista Rasco

First Presbyterian Church
Staff, Session, and Committees

Staff

Pastor Rev. Krista Rasco
 Clerk of Session Wally Tucker
 Music Director Kim Nolen Wheelock
 Pianist David Vergara
 Nursery Attendant Carolyn McFarland
 Secretary Roger McKenzie

Session Members

<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>
Ric Estes	Walter Davis	Martha Clevenger
Rick Selvaggi	Helon Razniak	Jordan Conner
Scott Stewart	Petra Strassberg	Wally Tucker
		Bettina Zvanut

Session Committees

Worship:

Chair Helon Razniak
 Co-Chair Martha Clevenger

Christian Education:

Chair Walt Davis
 Co-Chair Jordan Conner

Membership and Pastoral Care:

Chair Ric Estes
 Co-Chair Bettina Zvanut

Mission/Evangelism:

Chair Bettina Zvanut
 Co-Chair Petra Strassberg

Buildings and Grounds:

Chair Scott Stewart
 Co-Chairs Rick Selvaggi
 Wendell Linton

Stewardship and Finance:

Chair Jordan Conner
 Co-chair Scott Stewart

Personnel:

Chair Wally Tucker
 Co-Chairs Brenda Estes
 Keith McFarland

Note: *There will be changes in the listings as new session members and committees come on line.*



We would like to use them!

Thanks to all those who help lead worship, our elders and committee members who work to improve FPC, and volunteers who make our events successful.

If you would like to fill a larger role in the life of FPC, please contact Rev. Rasco or someone you see working hard for FPC.

Upcoming Bible Readings

This Sunday (Jan. 8) is the
Baptism of the Lord Sunday.

Old Testament: Isaiah 42:1-9 *The Servant, a Light to the Nations*

Psalter: Psalm 29 *The Voice of God in a Great Storm*

New Testament: Acts 10:34-43 *Gentiles Hear the Good News*

Gospel (and sermon focus): Matthew 3:13-17 *The Baptism of Jesus*

Next Sunday (Jan. 15) is the
 Second Sunday after Epiphany

Old Testament: Isaiah 49:1-7 *The Servant's Mission*

Psalter: Psalm 40:1-11 *Thanksgiving for Deliverance and Prayer for Help*

Gospel: John 1:29-42 *The Lamb of God*

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1:1-9 *Salutation*

Upcoming Events



Jan. 7 Saturday, 9-11 a.m.—Recycle Day
 University parking lot at Cambell and Walnut

Jan. 14 Saturday, 9:30--11:30 a.m.—Children's Health Fair, Northeast Texas Children's Museum, free admission

Thursdays, 6-8 p.m.—Family Night, Commerce Public Library

We Need Your Help

Have you received an honor or a blessing?

Do you have a photo to share?

Is your committee meeting? Let us know.

Whatever it is, be sure to send it in early!

Did we forget something? Let us know!