



THE GOOD NEWS

The Good News is published twice
each month by the
First Presbyterian Church
of Commerce, Texas.

December, 2016

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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

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A Message From the Pastor

Dear FPC family and friends,

"Prepare the way for the Lord" cries out Isaiah and John the Baptist. And that's just what we have been doing this past week at FPCC. We have been preparing our hearts and minds, as well as our church and worship services, for the coming of the Christ child in our lives.

We have decorated the church with the symbols of advent and Christmas, which we have blessed. On Wednesday evening this past week, we walked the Labyrinth that had the added bonus of stations set throughout, reminding us of the journey of Mary, Joseph, the shepherds and the Magi. The Labyrinth that is out in the back lawn of the church is made with Christmas lights and will be on every evening through Christmas.

There is still plenty to participate in at the church and with you church family, as well as many opportunities to serve your community. Don't forget to come to worship!

The focus of this year's Advent worship services will be "Your Journey to Christmas." It will all revolve around this year's Advent devotional, *Walking the Road to Bethlehem: Your Journey to Christmas*, written by Adam Hamilton. They will be a time of journeying spiritually to prepare our hearts and minds for the in-breaking of God not only into the world but also our own hearts and lives.

I invite you to join your friends and family at FPCC as we journey together towards Christmas through these other events and worship services as well:

- Sunday, Dec. 4, 6 p.m. – TAMU-C Chamber Singers with a reception to follow.



(Continued on page 7)



**PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN**

By Toni Deaton

FPC PW Moderator

Christmas Concert and Reception

On Sunday, Dec. 4 at 6 p.m. the **University Chamber Singers**, a group of 23 singers under the direction of **Dr. Randy Hooper**, will present a Christmas concert at FPC-Commerce. Each year, their program of Christmas favorites and new renditions ushers in the Christmas spirit. This is the fourth year we have hosted this Christmas Concert for the enjoyment of our members and the entire community and the attendance is increasing.

Following the performance, everyone is invited to the reception in Fellowship Hall. Members are asked to bring a generous quantity of their favorite finger foods. The sign-up sheet is located on the table in the rear of the sanctuary. Your help is greatly appreciated.

Tea and Crumpets, anyone??

Again this year, **Helon Razniak and Martha Clevenger** are hosting a **Christmas Tea** at Helon's home on Saturday, Dec. 10, at 10 a.m. All women are invited to attend and guests are welcome.

Various special teas will be served along with pastries. If you would like to bring a favorite pastry or some other treat, you are welcome to do so.

Due to limited parking, Helon has suggested that attendees meet at the church parking lot at 9:45 a.m. and "carpool" to her home.

Circle Meeting

The PW Circle will meet on Monday, Dec. 12, at 10 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. Leader for the lesson, which will cover the Gospel of *John*, is **Nila McQuary** and hostess is **Toni Deaton**. All women are invited to attend.

Condolences to the Family of John Paul Rhodes

Thanks go to all our members who helped with the visitation for the **family of John Paul Rhodes**. **John Paul** passed away on Saturday, Nov. 19, and the visitation was held here at FPC the following Tuesday evening. We send our sincere condolences to **Jim Rhodes and his family**.



Sunday School News

Sorry, we don't have any Sunday School news at the moment. However, you can remedy that.

Got some news about what your Sunday School Class is doing? Let everyone know. Want to invite others to be a part of your class? Send out the invitation.

Got a special project going on that needs support? Tell us about it.

Prayer List Addition

Odeana Stewart has been added to our prayer list. She has been diagnosed with a non-aggressive form of lung cancer called non-cell carcinoma. Please keep Odeana and all those on our list in your prayers.

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 Byr	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	John Miller Family
Family of John Paul Rhodes		Odeana Stewart

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

FPC Is Online!

www.facebook.com/fpcccommerce

www.facebook.com/group/fpcccommerce

<https://twitter.com/fpcccommerce>

www.fpc-commerce.com





Artist Walt Davis at The Nave Museum

FPC's **Walt Davis** has his own art show in Victoria, Texas, at the Nave Museum, which opened Nov. 18 and will close Jan. 7, 2017. Forty-four of his works are on display. For more information about the museum and the exhibit go to navemuseum.com.

There are 44 works in the show. They range in size from 3 X 5 inches to 3 X 5 feet. The three largest paintings are displayed as tapestries without frames.

Subject matter varies from traditional landscapes and architectural pieces to over-sized insect portraits and acrylic collage abstracts. Four are pencil drawings that became illustrations for the book, *Exploring the Edges of Texas*, co-authored by **Walt and Isabel Davis** and published by Texas A&M University Press in 2010.

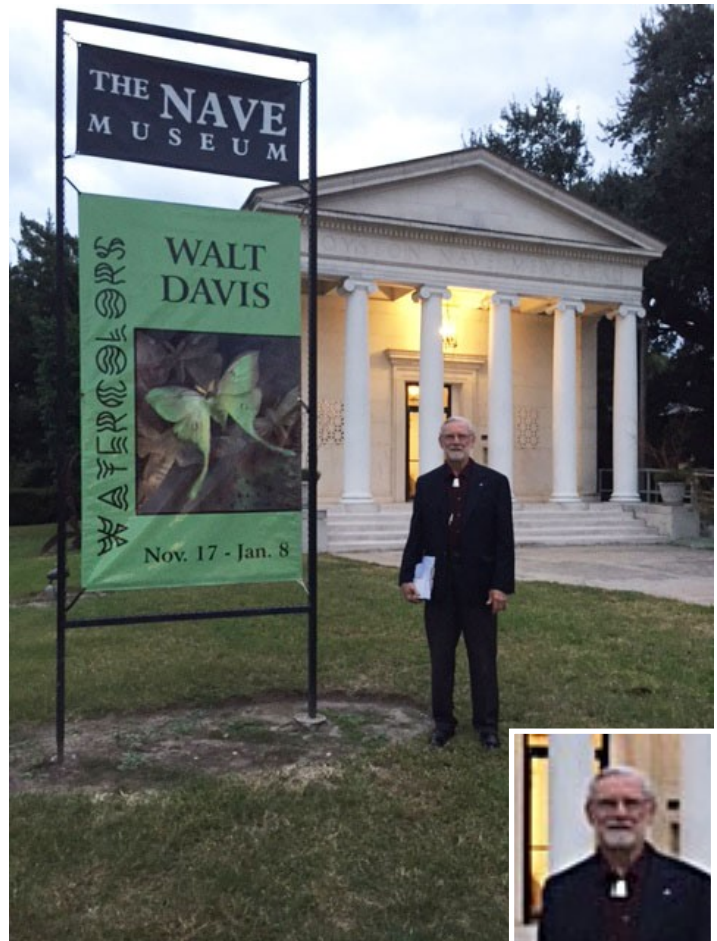
"It has been wonderful to see 40 years of work gathered together in one place at one time. Several paintings were borrowed back from their owners, and one I had not seen for at least 20 years," said Walt. "I could not help but wonder what would have happened if my mother and an uncle, both gifted artists, had had the same opportunities to pursue their passion as I was afforded."

Some of his paintings can be seen on the museum website, as well as a long press release, which details biographical and other information about the artist. We've taken the liberty of lifting the following (not necessarily word for word) from that press release:

Walt is a signature member and past president of the Southwestern Watercolor Society. His work has been accepted into exhibitions of the American Watercolor Society, Southwestern Watercolor Society, Texas Watercolor Society, Richardson Civic Art Society, Greenville Art League, and Western Federation of Watercolor Societies. His painting, Katy-did, Katy-didn't, won the Margery Soroka Memorial Award in the 2013 American Watercolor Society competition in New York and was included in the Society's traveling show.

Note: The Nave Museum is located at 306 W.

Commercial in Victoria, TX and is open to the public 12-6 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and 12-4 p.m. on weekends. The Nave Museum is closed on Mondays and between exhibits. Admission is Pay What You Want, and donation-based.



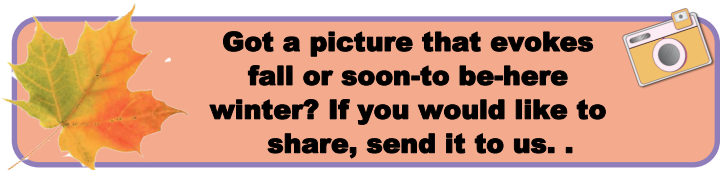
Above and inset, Walt Davis poses in front of The Nave Museum where his works are currently on display. Above, middle, is one of his insect water colors. At right, Walt the artist is busy at work.





has created a wonderful problem—the occasional need for extra volunteers to help organize, stock, and distribute food. If you would like to volunteer, let Isabel or the church secretary know.

FPC's **Nancy Green** made the Dec. 1 edition of the The Commerce Journal when she and Louis Biggs, president of the Psychology Club, were pictured at a club meeting where Nancy won a drawing as part of the group's fund-raising project to, among other things, give a Commerce High School student a scholarship to Texas A&M University at Commerce. Way to go, Nancy!



Food Pantry Blessed by Generosity of Others

A lot of giving during this holiday season has benefitted the Commerce Food Pantry. Food drives at TAMUC and generous individuals have provided food and funds.



"The pantry is well stocked and the storage room is full," said **Isabel Davis**, president of the Commerce Food Pantry board.

Food pantry volunteers Maria House and Marley Garcia have a little hat fun while working.

A recent contribution of fresh vegetables and fruits from the food pantry in Cooper was so overwhelming that all of the food could not be given out.

But all this generosity has required more work and



Jim Deaton captured just what we were looking for—a picture of Encore Azelias and a Christmas Camellia bush which are just outside his kitchen window. He said, "The encores will be gone in just a few days, but the Christmas Camellia is just starting to attain full bloom. Seemed like

Advent Hymn of the Month

Page 97 — *Watchman, Tell Us of the Night*



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



Please note there are some slight changes in the requested donation items to emphasize protein.

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 AttendantCarolyn McFarland
 SecretaryRoger McKenzie

Session Members

2016

Ric Estes
 Rick Selvaggi
 Scott Stewart

2017

Walter Davis
 Helon Razniak
 Petra Strassberg

2018

Martha Clevenger
 Jordan Conner
 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

Upcoming Bible Readings

This Sunday (Dec. 4) is the
 Second Sunday of Advent.

It is also Communion Sunday.

Gospel: Matthew 3:1-12 *The Proclamation of John the Baptist*

Psalter: Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19 *Prayer for Guidance and Support for the King*

Epistle: Romans 15:4-13 *Please Others, Not Yourselfes / The Gospel for Jews and Gentiles Alike*

Old Testament (and sermon focus): Isaiah 11:1-10
The Peaceful Kingdom

Next Sunday (Dec. 11) is the
 Third Sunday in Advent

Gospel: Luke 1:46b-55 *Mary's Song of Praise*

Epistle: James 5:7-10 *Patience in Suffering*

Gospel: Matthew 11:2-11 *Messengers from John the Baptist*

Old Testament (sermon focus): Isaiah 35:1-10
The Return of the Redeemed to Zion

Come See the FPC Advent Labyrinth

Seven people inaugurated the Advent Labyrinth on the back lawn at FPC on Wednesday, Nov. 30. The labyrinth is a symbol of our journey to Christmas and all its meaning. It was constructed by **Rick Selvaggi, and the Rasco's—Rev. Krista and Jason.**

It will be lit from 5:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. from now through Christmas.



Make the Advent Labyrinth a part of your journey to Christmas.



***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.

December Worship Leaders

December 4

Host Elder:.....Rick Selvaggi
Head Usher:.....Bob Johnson
Candle Lighter:Cal Conner
Liturgist:Tina Selvaggi
Elements:Scott Stewart

December 11

Head Usher:.....Walt Davis
Candle Lighter:Evie Conner
Liturgist:Lily Selvaggi

December 18

Head Usher:.....Mason Howard
Candle Lighter:Matti Ritchie
Liturgist:Keith McFarland

December 25

Head Usher:.....Neal Stewart
Candle Lighter:Sally Walker
Liturgist:Martha Clevenger

December Calendar

Worship Schedule

- 4 *Second Sunday of Advent***
Morning Worship Service 10:50 a.m.
Sermon focus on Isaiah 11:1-10
- 11 *Third Sunday of Advent***
Morning Worship Service 10:50 a.m.
Sermon focus on Isaiah 35:1-10
- 18 *Fourth Sunday of Advent***
Morning Worship Service 10:50 a.m.
Sermon focus on Isaiah 7:10-16
- 21 *Wednesday, 6 p.m.—Longest Night Service***
- 24 *Saturday, 5:30 p.m.—Christmas Eve Service***
- 25 *Christmas Day***
Morning Worship Service 10:50 a.m.
Sermon focus on Luke 2:1-7

Other December events

- 4 *Sunday , 6 p.m.—University Chamber Singers***
Christmas Concert, reception to follow.
- 6 *Tuesday, 5 p.m.—Food Pantry board meeting***
- 8 *Thursday, 5-7 p.m.—Holiday Open House at***
the home of Bob and Sherry Johnson
- 10 *Saturday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.—Grace Presbytery***
Stated Meeting at Westminster Presbyterian
in Ft. Worth
- 10 *Saturday, 10 a.m.—Christmas Tea for all***
women of FPC at home of Helon Razniak.
- 12 *Tuesday, 10 a.m.—PW Circle meets.***
- 14 *Wednesday, 6 p.m.—Session meeting.***
- 28 *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.

December Dates to Remember

Happy Birthday to:

- 1—Barbara Tucker
2—Martha Clevenger
4—Charles Elliott
8—Susan White
10—Isabel Davis
10—Ken Miller
12—Mark Pullen
14—Nancy McFarland
19—Sherry Johnson
23—Steve Costa
24—Sharon Sanders
28—Beverly Murphy
28—Jack Duncan Pierce
29—Kathy Miller
30—Jane Cox

Happy Anniversary to:

- 14 – Debbie & Monty Howard
19 – Christy & Chris Jenson
31—Jason and Krista Rasco

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

Community Events

Thursday, Dec. 1, 7:30 p.m.—TAMUC Music Department's Choral Candlelight Holiday Concert in Finney Concert Hall, featuring university singers and guest choirs from North Mesquite High School and Commerce High School and Middle School.

Saturday, Dec. 3

9-11 a.m.—Recycle Day, university parking lot at Cambell and Walnut.

9:30-11:30 a.m.—*Brunch with Santa* at the Northeast Texas Children's Museum in Commerce. For ticket and other information, call the museum at 903-886-6055.

10 a.m.-3 p.m.—Merry Market Place and Lunch for Missions at First United Methodist Church in Commerce.

4:30-6 p.m.—Commerce Library Open House. Refreshments, crafts and free books for children.

Sunday, Dec. 4, 6 p.m.—The University Chamber Singers will perform their annual Advent season concert in the FPC Sanctuary for the entire Commerce community. A reception in Fellowship Hall will follow.

Friday and Saturday, Dec. 9-10—TAMUC Music Department's Annual Holiday Gala. Call 903-886-5303 for more information and tickets.

Saturday, Dec. 10, 2 p.m.—*North Pole Fantasy*, Bois d'Arc Christmas Celebration & Parade, Commerce. Activities at 2 p.m., parade at 6 p.m.



Thursday, Dec. 8, 2016
5 to 7 p.m.*

A "Holiday Open House"
in the home of
Bob & Sherry Johnson
1505 Bonham Street
Commerce, TX

* At 5:30 PM there will be a presentation made in honor of Dr. Mary Hendrix for her invaluable service to C-CAP and to the community at large.

Spirits and heavy hors d'oeuvres will be served.

Please make plans to attend!

RSVP 903-886-2700



Home Alone for the Holidays?

Petra Strassberg is inviting anyone who will be by themselves on Christmas Day to have dinner at her house on those holidays. Dinner will be from 12-2 pm on Christmas Day.

Please contact Petra at 903 274-9444 or at petrakirsten1@gmail.com for directions and to let her know you are coming.

A Message From the Pastor (Continued from page 1)

- Sunday, Dec. 11, 6 p.m. – Making of Chrismon Ornaments by our youth
- Wednesday, Dec. 21, 6 p.m. – Longest Night Worship Service
- Saturday, Dec. 24, 5:30 p.m.— Christmas Eve Worship Service
- Sunday, Dec. 25th at 10:50 a.m.—Christmas Day Worship Service

Grace and peace be with you, hope and joy as well, throughout your journey this Advent Season.

Rev. Krista Rasco