



The Good News

MID-MONTH EDITION



No. 22

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Thanksgiving: a Special Time to Show Our Thanks

After a miserable 66-day voyage, the ship Mayflower completed its crossing of the Atlantic Ocean, dropping anchor near the end of Cape Cod in September, 1620. Its 102 passengers, forever since known as Pilgrims, had a variety of reasons for leaving England, but the chief motivation was the opportunity to freely worship in their own way.

The ship later sailed across Massachusetts Bay and the settlers established a village they called Plymouth. Only about half of the settlers survived the first winter in their new land. They were ill equipped to deal with the harshness of their new environment. In a strange land among people who were unlike any they had dealt with and spoke an unknown language, the survival of the remaining settlers was in question.

However, miraculously, one of those Native Americans suddenly appeared speaking English. He soon introduced the settlers to Squanto, who belonged to the Pawtuxet tribe. Squanto had been kidnapped by an English sea captain and sold into slavery. He escaped and lived in London before returning with New World explorers.

Squanto taught the Pilgrims survival skills, including how to grow and harvest corn, and helped them live peacefully with the Native Americans, particularly the Wampanoag tribe whose chief, Massasoit, was also a source of valuable information and friendship. The outlook for the Pilgrims and their survival was now much brighter.

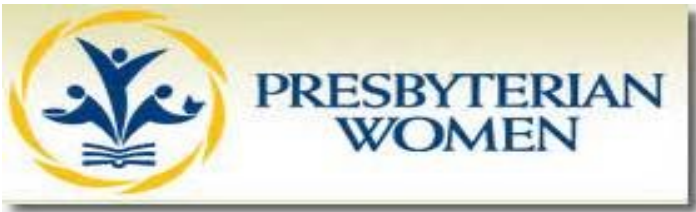
After planting and harvesting their first corn crop, the Pilgrims' leader, Governor William Bradford, called for a community celebration. The feast, which has come to be popularly known as America's first Thanksgiving, included the Pilgrims' new Native American neighbors. Just what was on the menu is not certain, but it likely included venison, fowl (which may or may not have included turkey), and, of course, corn. Not likely, however, were many sweets. There was not much sugar for Thanksgiving pies.

Some historians point to some earlier declarations of Thanksgiving, including one in Florida in 1565 involving a local tribe and Spanish explorers, and another in Virginia in December, 1619. However, much earlier than those, although on another continent, the Old Testament references the Jewish festival Sukkot. Even further back the Greeks and Romans held celebrations for their fall harvests.

However, we are talking about the American version of Thanksgiving, complete today with family gatherings, a typical feast of turkey and dressing and all the trimmings, including lots of pies/desserts, and prayers of thanks for our blessings for ourselves and our nation bestowed on us by our God. In that sense, the Pilgrims will have to remain the source for this uniquely American holiday—which in typical American fashion we have embellished with parades and football games.

While President George Washington and other early presidents called for days of Thanksgiving, and some states (led by New York in 1817, established an official Thanksgiving holiday, it took years of campaigning by individuals and groups before Thanksgiving became a national holiday. That came in 1863 by the hand of Abraham Lincoln.

May we all give thanks to our God for blessings and guidance we have received and continue to enjoy..



By Toni Deaton
Moderator

Circle Meeting November 13

We welcomed several guests to our circle meeting this month. Our guest speaker was **Rev. Angie Mabry-Nauta**, Development and Marketing Coordinator for Presbyterian Pan American School in Kingsville, TX. In addition to informing us about special programs and the students at PPAS, Rev. Angie presented Lesson 3 from our current Horizons Bible Study, *Cloud of Witnesses*.

Other guests were **Paula Adams, Sue Mudie and Kay Stuth**, all from UPC-Greenville. Those from our circle who attended were **Martha Clevenger, Jane Cox, Toni Deaton, Brenda Estes, Tina Fletcher, Nancy McFarland, Pastor Krista Rasco, Helon Razniak, Mona Towne and Bettina Zvanut**.

Thanks to all who attended and to all who provided food for the luncheon.

Reception Follows Christmas Concert

All FPC-Commerce members, as well as members of our community, are invited to the Chamber Singers Christmas Concert scheduled for Sunday, Dec. 3' at 6 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Following the concert, there will be a reception in Fellowship Hall.

We are requesting that members of our congregation bring "finger foods" for this reception. There is a Sign-Up Sheet on the table at the back of the Sanctuary for your convenience. Each year, attendance at this concert has increased and we will need lots of food. Thank you for your assistance as we seek to continue our tradition of "generous" hospitality.

December Circle Meeting

The next Circle meeting is scheduled for Monday, Dec. 11, at 10 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. **Nila McQuary** will lead Lesson 4, in the Horizons Bible Study, and **Toni Deaton** is hostess. All women are invited to attend. This month, all circle members are asked to bring a can of meat (tuna, chicken or Spam) to donate to the Commerce Food Pantry.

Annual Presbyterian Women Thank Offering

At our December Circle Meeting, we will be collecting our **Thank Offering**, "For the Healing of the

(Continued on page 3)



Rev. Angie Mabry-Nauta was the guest of honor and speaker at FPC's Presbyterian Women's Circle meeting on Monday, Nov. 13. Several women from churches in FPC's cluster also attended the luncheon meeting.



(Continued from page 2)

Nations,” (from Revelation 22:2b: “on either side of the river is the tree of life...and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.”)

Presbyterian women have been making grants to creative ministries through the **Thank Offering** since 1888 when Eliza Clokey of Springfield, Ohio, urged each woman to give one dollar over and above her usual contribution to the Women’s General Missionary Society of the United Presbyterian Church in North America as a “thank offering to our Lord.” Since then, Presbyterian women have granted support to thousands of ministries worldwide and raised millions of dollars for mission.

Last year’s **Thank Offering** will provide grant money for fifteen projects, ten of which are

ministries that serve people in need in the U. S. Five of the projects are international. More than half the funded projects are health ministries.

In 2016, our own PW Circle donated \$269.09 to the Thank Offering! If you would like to help with this project, please see **Brenda Estes or Toni Deaton.**

Baby-Caps Mission Project

This year our PW Circle made 600 fleece baby caps for the newborn nursery at Hunt Regional Medical Center in Greenville. Thanks to all the women who have traced, cut, pinned and sewn the caps. This project was begun in May of 2013 and since that time we have made 3,370 caps.

*Designs of the
PW’s baby
caps produced
since 2013.*



In Our Prayers at First Presbyterian

Our Troops	Gordon Hunter	Bruce Campbell	Sara Grace Pullen
Melba Blount	Amy Lopez	Joe Yeakley	Grace Byrd
Gayle Shumate	Gladys Gray	Pat Skauge	Mildred Miller
Gaye Furry	Preston Helton	Loretta Kibler	Donald R. Smith
Catherine King Robertson	Bennie Neve	Ron Davis	Jan Burns
Kristen Rueb	Janice Hale	Dub Holcomb	Family of Bob Lube
Family of Chris Hubbert	Jackie Book	Martha and Dan Reynolds	Ruth Green
Audrey Hucks	Larry Ratliff	Martha Clevenger	Jack Gray
Jean Angotti	Family of Carole McFarland	Joyce Isaacs	Jim Calvert
Deryl McKenzie	Family of Natalie Salisbury	Petra Strassberg	

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

Addition to Prayer List

We’ve recently added **Petra Strassberg** to the FPC Prayer List. She is recovering from a surgery.



Please pray for all those (and their families) on our list. If you would like to add someone to our list, contact the church secretary.

Hymn of the Month

Page 616— *Our God Is an Awesome God*



Assisting with Worship

November 19

Head Usher: **Walt Davis**
Candle Lighter: **TBD**
Liturgist: **Matthew McFarland**

November 26

Head Usher: **Bob Johnson**
Candle Lighter: **TBD**
Liturgist: **Bettina Zvanut**

Please let our worship leaders know how much you appreciate them. If you would like to help with worship,, or someplace else at FPC, please contact Rev. Rasco or the church secretary.



Summer Camp for Christmas?

There are two camps associated with the Presbyterian Church: Camp Gilmont, near Gilmer and Mo-Ranch Assembly in the Hill Country west of Kerrville.

A summer camp experience at either of these camps might make a great Christmas gift for a child or grandchild. To find out about summer camp and any early bird specials they might have, check out their websites or call:

Camp Gilmont: 1-903-797-6400 (a variety of camps to meet different needs)

Mo-Ranch Assembly: 1-800-460-4401, ext. 253 (ask for Camp for Christmas Discount)

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V O L U N T E E R

all that's missing is U!

Bible Readings for this Sunday and Next Sunday

Nov. 19 is the 24th Sunday after Pentecost

Gospel: Matthew 25:14-30 *The Parable of the Talents*

Psalter: Psalm 123 *Supplication for Mercy*

Epistle: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 *The Coming of the Lord*

Old Testament: Judges 4:1-10 *Deborah and Barak*

Nov. 26 is Christ the King Sunday

Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46 *The Judgment of the Nations*

Psalter: Psalm 100 *All Lands Summoned to Praise God*

Old Testament: Ezekiel 34:11-16 *God, the True Shepherd*

Epistle: Ephesians 1:15-23 *Paul's Prayer*

Notice of Meeting

The Christian Education Committee will meet Wednesday, Nov. 29, at 6:30 p.m.

You are invited to our First Annual Holiday Party

Saturday, December 2
3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Petra Strassberg's Home
3010 Charlinda Street
Commerce, TX.

Please R.S.V.P. to
petrakirsten1@gmail.com
or phone 903-274-9444

Co-hosts: Arlene Allen,
Jerry Ann Harris
And Petra Strassberg

Fall Pictures



Left, Pecos and Kaitlyn decorated cakes at the recent cake contest here

Right, Lily Selvaggi shows off her winning photos entered at the State Fair of Texas.



Kaitlyn Rasco was among a few students selected to represent her school for an exciting ride to school on a fire truck on Nov. 3. Above, her dad Jason watches as she poses with firefighters on the truck. At left, she befriends what might be the firehouse cat and, at right, she snuggles in with her fellow students before their ride begins.



Don't Forget Food Pantry Items

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, chicken

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



Upcoming Community Events



Come One, Come All

11 a.m.-1 p.m., Nov. 23— Free Community Thanksgiving Dinner at the First United Methodist Church of Commerce.

After a bountiful Thanksgiving meal, get ready for Christmas because December 2 in Commerce is a full day of fun and enjoyable activities for all ages.

9:30-11:30 a.m.—Brunch with Santa at the Texas Northeast Childrens' Museum. Take pictures with Santa and join him for a pancake breakfast. \$8 in advance, \$10 at the door.



10 a.m.-3 p.m.—Merry Marketplace and Lunch, benefiting missions at the First United Methodist Church in Commerce. Homemade stew and cornbread, \$5; children's choir performs at noon; find Christmas decorations and gifts.

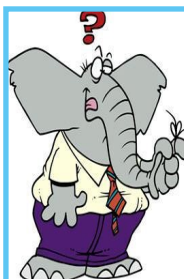
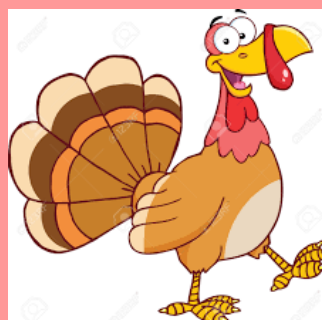
2-6 p.m.—Bois d'Arc Christmas Celebration & Parade. Vendors, food, music, pictures with Santa; parade at 6 p.m.

Be thankful for what you have.
Your life, no matter how bad you think
it is, is someone else's fairy tale.
— Wale Ayeni



Closed

The FPC office will be closed on both Thursday and on Friday, Nov. 23-24, in observance of the Thanksgiving holiday.



Help Us Remember

We don't want to forget things, but we do. You can help us by letting us know about your news before we publish The Good News.