

2021 NEWS LETTER

FirstPresbyterian
Church
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FPCMISSION.COM
(WEBSITE)

Thanksgiving



As I wander the aisles of Walmart, I see two themes, Halloween and Christmas. For Halloween, there is a costume aisle and a candy aisle. For Christmas, aisles with red and green decorations, lights and ornaments are ready for those who want to get a head start. In our consumer culture, Halloween and Christmas are very popular, because, for many, they are about getting. In Halloween, we "get scared" and we "get candy." At Christmas, we "get presents" and we "get a Savior." These are times of excitement, especially for children who love to get things.

Lost in the excitement of getting, is the wonderful time of Thanksgiving, a brief break from our labors, a time for reflection, for family, and for God. I remember in my college years, getting up early on Thanksgiving morning, and driving the 360 miles home to Brownsville, and my grandmother's house where my parents, my brother, my cousins, aunts and uncles, great aunts and great uncles gathered together to be family, to give thanks to God, to feast on turkey, traditional family casseroles, and pumpkin, mincemeat and pecan pie, then watch the Texas vs. Texas A&M football game and the Dallas Cowboy game, needing the excitement of the events to keep us awake after the feast. A lite supper of turkey sandwiches would accompany us on our way home. Thanksgiving is about being together, sharing food, stories, entertainment, the company of loved ones, and gratitude to God, the giver of life and all good things. I remember, my mother carrying on this family tradition around her table, with Sheri and I and our children, with Mark and Kathy and their children, with aunts and uncles and friends with nowhere else to go. My father cooks and slices the turkey. My mother lovingly prepares all the traditional family casseroles, recipes she has passed on to Sheri and I.

Thanksgiving is always a very special time for our family. During the pandemic time of social distancing, we miss the closeness that holiday gathering brings. Thanksgiving is a great time to restore the family dining tradition. Too often, today, we hastily put together a meal and eat it on the couch or at the desk, in the car, on the go, in-between other tasks. At Thanksgiving, a meal is carefully planned, sometimes days in advance (it takes that long to thaw a turkey). At thanksgiving, the meal is an occasion in itself, a gathering of family, enjoying the company of one another, leisurely feasting on God's blessings of food and fellowship and family, rejoicing in the truth that here, we belong, here, we are loved, here, we find God's peace, love and joy together. Too often, we take for granted the availability of family and friends in our lives. This year, our children will be celebrating Thanksgiving in their own homes. Hilary lives in Oklahoma City with her husband, Al, and our grandchild, Amelia. Ashley and Carmen live in Seattle, Jonathan in Sherman, and David in San Antonio. We will miss them this Thanksgiving, and Advent (excitedly wait) to see them all at Christmas

In the church, we have struggled with a way to celebrate Thanksgiving dinner on Sunday, November 21, and have resolved to make food available to dine in the Fellowship Hall, or take home, because not everyone is comfortable gathering unmasked indoors, yet.

Worship on November 21 is Thanksgiving in three very important ways; Jesus is Lord, we give thanks by our commitment to share through Stewardship, and we share in the feast of the Lord's Supper. Jesus is Lord. At Christmas we declare, Christ the Savior is Born! On Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, we remember that Jesus lived and died to free us from Sin. On Easter, we rejoice that He is Risen! The door is open for our Salvation. During Christmas and Easter, we celebrate that Jesus is Savior. In our profession of faith, we affirm Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. On Christ the King Sunday (November 21), we proclaim Jesus as Lord; Lord of our Church, Lord of our lives. As Savior, Jesus has freed us from slavery to sin of self-concern and self-centered behaviors. As Lord, Jesus calls for us to exercise this freedom by giving up our own free will, surrendering to God's will, Jesus' Lordship of every aspect of our lives, of our time, of everything that we think is ours. When Jesus is Lord, we say, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." When Jesus is Lord, we devote our lives to sharing the Good News in word and in deed, sharing all God's blessings with those in need. Because Jesus is Lord, we love God by loving our neighbor as ourselves.

Because Jesus is Lord, we are free to return to God's first covenant with humankind, Stewardship of God's creation. God has given us life. God has given us all we have. God has given us a purpose to our lives, caring for one another, caring for creation, and giving thanks for all God's blessings by sharing them with everyone in need. In Stewardship, we know that we are blessed to be a blessing to all the nations, loving God by loving our neighbors as ourselves. At this time of year, in Thanksgiving, we reflect on God's blessings in our lives. As we take account and give thanks, we consider how we are to be faithful Stewards, and commit ourselves to share our time, our talents, and our money with this church, where Jesus is Lord for the glory of God and for the exhibition of the Kingdom of God in the world. In Stewardship, we give thanks to God by sharing God's blessings, because we are not lords of our own possessions, but Jesus is Lord of our lives and all things in God's creation. On November 21, we will give thanks by dedicating our pledges of time, talent and money for God's work through First Presbyterian Church of Mission, Texas, the church where love makes all the difference, because Jesus is Lord.

On Thanksgiving Day and every day, let us all make an accounting of everything God has done for us, has given to us, for everyone God has placed in our immediate and extended families, and Give Thanks. Let us give thanks by sharing God's love, and God's creation with anyone and everyone, to love our neighbors as ourselves, saying, praise be to God, Jesus is Lord of all! In Christ, Eric.

Advent, the Coming of Jesus

The Christian calendar is filled with special days and special seasons with their own particular colors.

The seasons for the coming year are:

Advent	Color: Purple/Blue	
Christmas	Color: White	
Lent	Color: Purple	
Easter	Color: White	
Ordinary Time	Color: Green	
	Christmas Lent Easter	Christmas Color: White Lent Color: Purple Easter Color: White

The special days of the coming year are:

December 25	Christmas Day	Color: White
January 6	Epiphany of the Lord	Color: White
January 9	Baptism of the Lord	Color: White
February 27	Transfiguration of the Lord	Color: White
March 2	Ash Wednesday	Color: Purple
April 10	Passion/Palm Sunday	Color: Purple
April 14	Maundy Thursday	Color: None
April 15	Good Friday	Color: None
April 17	Easter	Color: White
May 26	Ascension of the Lord	Color: White
June 5	Pentecost	Color: Red
June 12	Trinity Sunday	Color: White
November 1	All Saints Day	Color: White
November 20	Christ the King Sunday	Color: White
November 27	Advent 2022 begins a new year	Color: Purple/Blue
		-

The Church year begins with Advent, which means "coming," when we celebrate the first coming of Jesus on Christmas and look forward to his coming to reign on earth in the 2nd Advent of Christ. The Church year ends with Christ the King Sunday when we celebrate the reign of Christ today, in our hearts, in our lives, and in the Church through the Holy Spirit, as we anticipate his coming again to reign in person on earth when the new heaven and the new earth will be as one under His rule and "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Advent declares that Christ has come and Christ will come again. It is both a time of celebration and a time of anticipation, or waiting. Waiting and anticipation can be experienced in a number of ways, including; with worry and dread, with hope, with wonder and mystery, and with faithful assurance. Those who hear Christmas songs on the radio right after Thanksgiving are often frustrated when the Church lives through the Advent time of waiting for a Christmas that begins on Christmas Eve.

On the first Easter morning, Jesus' disciples were locked in the upper room waiting for their demise. Their anticipation of the unknown to come was filled with dread and worry. Their leader was dead. They were lost and alone. They didn't know what to do. Because of our faith in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we celebrate Easter with hope and joy, and faithful assurance of our own bodily resurrection.

Because of the Hope brought to us by Easter, we do not await our own death with worry and dread, but with hopeful anticipation. Well, maybe the wait includes the worry and dread of the process of dying mixed with hope, joy, wonder, mystery and faithful assurance of the life to come in the advent of a new heaven and a new earth through Jesus Christ.

Throughout the gospel, Jesus tells us not to worry as we live this life in anticipation of the next. We are not to worry, but to live in faith and trust that God's love for us is so great the he will provide all we need, freeing us to focus on what we can do to spread God's hope and love to those in need.

Waiting can be difficult time for us. Those in school, after taking a test, wait with mixed dread and hopeful anticipation for the results after the teacher reveals the test results. When we go to a doctor for a diagnosis, we wait impatiently for test results. Not knowing test results can cause us to experience worry and dread while we wait. During those times of waiting we pray for patience, and the peaceful assurance of God's presence with us.

The waiting experience of Advent has no element of worry or dread, for not only do we anticipate Christ's coming, but we celebrate that Christ has already come. The victory has already been won, we are just waiting for the trophy to be awarded, the fullness of the presence of God with us forever in the second Advent. The in-between time in which we live, then, is a time of hope, and faithful assurance. Though we are not all-knowing, we live in faith and in trust of the One who is! Because God's love and grace has been revealed to us in the first Advent of Christ, our anticipation of the second Advent is filled with joy.

Often, what we await is the unknown. We don't know what tomorrow will bring. We don't know our future. We don't know when Christ will come. Though we wonder exactly what eternal life will look like, though the future may be a mystery to us, we do know that our salvation, and our future of eternal life is assured because of the first Advent of Christ two millennia ago. God's presence with love and grace is with us forever, and will be fully present in the second Advent.

The message of Advent is summed up in the 14th chapter of John:

John 14:1-6 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. 2 In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. 4 You know the way to the place where I am going." 5 Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" 6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Advent – Coming – Jesus has come, Jesus comes to us today in the person of the Holy Spirit, and Jesus will come again to take us to be with Him. Do not live in worry or fear, but in sure confidence with faith and trust in God, for through His love and grace we inherit the joy of eternal life together with Him. In Christ, Eric.

I want to tell a story. It's not a Bible story, but a faith based story of sorts. We all have one. And each of us is unique. So, rather than Scripture, (which I have to look up on the internet to rapidly find the proper verses), or waxing philosophically, I will tell my story. I hope you find it entertaining and similar to your own in some ways as I'm sure you have a story you could tell me.

Having parents who were teenagers during the depression years of the '30's, I, like many of my friends, was raised with a distinct upbringing of the value of money. I don't recall the exact age when an allowance was initiated at home, but it was in the single digit years. At my stage in life now and in looking back, I believe this is the best time to teach kids responsibility. They want to do things right, they want to impress their parents, (it's still important at this stage!) and they want to learn correctly to get Mom and Dad's approval. One of the first things I learned with an allowance was that as you receive you should also tithe and darn if they didn't collect that tithe in Sunday school and Mom made sure I knew how to calculate 10%! It started modestly and grew somewhat and never was a lot, but you could buy gum and cheap plastic toys that came out of Japan at Wynn's, (the equivalent 5 & dime). But, I was also never happy with having to cough up that 10% either.

Animated cartoons started to become available on early television on Saturday mornings. That's the closest we can compare to sitting on your rear and just watching; I believe referred to these days as zoned out in front of the tube. Disney was one of the main contributors back then in this space and had a myriad of characters, Mickey and Minnie Mouse, Donald Duck, Goofy and so on. We also had lots of comic books: Superman, Batman, Sgt. Rock, (there were more, but these are the ones I liked and could afford to buy with my allowance. Of course I wished I could fly, but even for a kid that didn't really seem possible/plausible? But, the thing we all do is find someone or somebody to pattern ourselves after; somebody we admire. Our parents maybe, somebody else in the family that seems larger than life, and uncle or aunt? And of course this is an ongoing thing as we grow older and have second thoughts about somebody we used to look up to, but eventually disappoints us. And we find lots of life along the way through those teenage years and become largely the person we want to be and are today with a general direction. Now we have all had modifications along the way, but for me, the early years were the most formative.

Now, perhaps you noticed I didn't mention Jesus Christ in the previous paragraph. I just want to be candid and honest. He had His wins, but they were short-lived and He died horribly and in my opinion lonely. A stark contrast to the never die characters in the cartoons and comic books. I will suffice it to say my teen years were not my best and I was all about myself and generally aimless. My life after high school was a time of observation of the world and how I and everybody else fit in it. I tried to tithe, more out of "brow beating" than from my willingness through faith, but when push came to shove I still looked out for number one, (me).

In conclusion, I have been blessed and knowing: undeservedly blessed. I have been given perspective and time to witness this journey in spite of my selfishness. I don't always want to go to church, but I am generally glad when I do. I get to see you; I see Christ. I get to visit with you; I am talking with Christ. I hear again that Jesus suffered for me and you so that we could have this fellowship and serve and help each other. And I am extremely grateful and now grateful to give. I sincerely hope you have been a faster learner than me and are grateful to God and give gratefully also. God has blessed you in your own story. Perhaps we can share more stories together. I would like to hear yours. (And don't forget God wants to hear from us too in words, deeds and giving of ourselves.)



6- Laurel Watkins

8- Robin Premus

9- JoAnn Allen

10- John Ingram

12- Jonathan Dittman 28- Murle Bloodgood

13- Phyllis Lau

14- Nicole Cruz

21- Judy Mayes

27- Lori VanKekerix

Ryan Watkins

29- Sam Gray



03 Lester & Peggy Cruse



07 ARLENE BENEGAS 23 DAVID DITTMAN
KATHY BURESH EMMA ELBERS
MEGAN MACIAS 25 JESUS ZARATE
10 MISTY MARTIN 30 DALE ZELINGER

13 STANLEY MCINTYRE

14 EDDIE PENA

19 JOE ERTMAN



08 JOHN & LAUREL WATKINS VERN & ARLENE RISIUS

18 BILL & ELLEN REICHHOFF

28 MARVIS & NORM RISIUS



THANKFUL CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

Plates featuring pork medallions and sides will be prepared by Shannon and Charlie Perales on Sunday, December 12, 2021. We are offering "to-go" plates or you are invited to enjoy them at tables outside or in the Fellowship Hall. Call or text Susan North at 612-913-2646, if you wish a "to-go" plate.

S.P.A. (Study. Pray. Act) Men are Welcome

Spa continues to meet weekly on Wednesdays at noon in the church kitchen. Bring your own brown bag lunch. Join us for study of Our Daily Bread.

P.T.O. (Presbyterian Take Over)

We meet for breakfast on the first Tuesday of each month at 9:00a.m. at the Downtown Cafe located on Conway Avenue in Mission.Call Gloria Dietrich 956-416-2935.



"New Beginnings"

Presbyterian Women's Spring Gathering

March 18-20, 2022

Mo Ranch, Hunt TX

Host: PWMP Coordinating Team

Please contact Mo-Ranch directly to reserve your housing and meals by calling 1-800-460-4401 or reserving online at www.moranch.org

Use code number: 9307

***Make your room reservations NOW; lodging & meals deadline for Mo-Ranch is February 1, 2022.

Rec'd Age 15-25?		 Ck#	\$

Presbyterian Women's Gathering March 18-20, 2022 Registration Closes March 1, 2022

Name				
As you want	it to appear on your name bad	dge		
Home Phone	: <u></u>	Cell:		
Address:				
	Number	City	State	Zip Code
Email:				
	please print clearly - this	is for confirmations and information		
Church:	1,2			
	Name	City		7
Emergency	Contact Information	n:		
Name		Relationship		Phone with area code
Primary Care Ph	ysician			Phone with area code
By signing	below, I give permis	ssion for medical treatment in case of	emergency:	
Printed name		Signature	_	Date

HOUSING and MEAL COSTS ARE NOT INCLUDED IN YOUR REGISTRATION FEE AND ARE DUE TO MO RANCH!

Contact Mo Ranch directly at

1-800-460-4401

or complete the lodging request form at: https://www.moranch.org/stay-at-mo-ranch/lodgingrequest-form/ for the 2022 PWMP Spring Gathering

Code for housing is 9307

Lodging deadline is February 1, 2022. Priority will be given in Wynne/Flato and Pheasant run using the code prior to this date. After this date there is no priority housing. Please note: Mo-Ranch will only be taking reservations; you will be given a room number upon arrival and not at the time of the reservation.

Registration **

65.00

Make check payable to:

PW of Mission Presbytery Mail to: Melanie Petru, Treasurer 108 CR 333 Shiner, TX 77984

Questions?

Contact Lori Black or Sheri Dittman pwmpct@gmail.com

** See page 2 about scholarships

Check for updates on the gathering on Facebook at Presbyterian Women of Mission Presbytery and on the website: PresbyterianWomenofMissionPresbytery.org

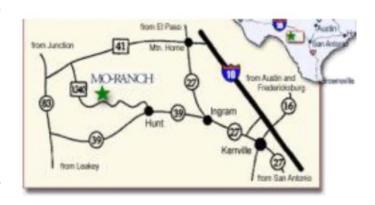
About Mo-Ranch

Mo-Ranch, the 475-acre conference and retreat center of the Synod of the Sun, is on the

Guadalupe River in the beautiful Texas Hill Country.

The mission of Mo-Ranch is to provide a special place and an enriching program in a living, learning, Christian environment to enable people to grow in God through Jesus Christ.

Complete driving directions, photos, and an interactive map can be found at www.moranch.com.



Mileage to Mo-Ranch from: Kerrville 23 miles

Gathering Information:

Check-in: Opens at 4:00pm on Friday
Check out: No later than 10:30 AM Sunday

The Gathering begins with dinner at 6:00pm on Friday and concludes at approximately 11:30am on Sunday.

Registration Fee: \$65

Make checks payable to:

"PW of Mission Presbytery" with "PW Gathering" in the memo section.

Mail check and Registration form to: Melanie Petru, Treasurer

Presbyterian Women

108 CR 333

Shiner, TX 77984

Scholarships: Limited funds are available. First come--first served. Maximum of 2 scholarships per church. Use the application included in this packet to apply for the Spring Gathering Registration Scholarship. Scholarships are also available for Younger Women ages 15-25, are \$65 each, and are also limited to 2 scholarships per church. **Unused funds must be returned.**

More Gathering information is available at www.presbyterianwomenofmissionpresbytery.org

What to bring: Bible, pen, jacket, casual clothing, walking shoes, alarm clock, drinking cup, umbrella, and flashlight. FOR YOUR SAFETY, CLOSED-TOE WALKING SHOES AND A FLASHLIGHT ARE ESSENTIAL!



Worship committee reports that we will continue to worship in person as well as live stream on You Tube and upload to Facebook.

Sunday School begins at 9:00am in the Fellowship Hall followed by 10:30am Worship service in the Sanctuary. Please remember that we currently have a mask mandate in effect. Masks

are required when entering the Church Sanctuary and during worship service as well as social distancing.

Fellowship and visiting may take place outside in the prayer garden or in the front.

Thanks for your cooperation.



PLANS ARE IN THE PROCESS FOR A "ONE-ROOM SUNDAY SCHOOLHOUSE" FOR OUR CHILDREN. WE WILL RING THE SUNDAY SCHOOL BELL STARTING ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2021

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL IS CURRENTLY MEETING IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL FROM 9:00A.M. TO 10:00A.M.

COME AND SEE WHAT YOU ARE MISSING!



Bells of Faith

Bells of Faith under the direction of Pat Hudsonpillar started practice sessions on October 17, 2021. After months of no contact and practice, it took us the second practice to decide we will be playing in Worship on Sunday, December 12, 2021 at the 10: 30A.M. service. Please come and join us!



MEETINGS

7th - After Worship / Service Committee in Fellowship Hall.

10th - 6:00 P.M. Admin Committee meets in Garden Room.

13th - Noon / Worship Committee meets in Fellowship Hall.

14th - After Worship / Nurture Committee meets in Fellowship Hall.

15th - 7:00 P.M. Session Meeting in Fellowship Hall.





November 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 T.O.P.S. 9:00 A.M. TO 10:00 AM.	2 P.T.O. 9:00A.M. DOWNTOWN CAFE	3 S.P.A. NOON CHURCH KITCHEN	4	5	6
7 S.S. 9:00A.M. WORSHIP 10:30A.M. DAYLIGHT SAVING END	8 T.O.P.S. 9:00 A.M. TO 10:00 A.M.	9	S.P.A. NOON CHURCH KITCHEN	11	12 GIRLSCOUTS 6:00 P.M. TO 7:30 P.M.	13
14 S.S. 9:00A.M. WORSHIP 10:30 A.M.	15 T.O.P.S. 9:00A.M. TO 10:00A.M.	16	17 S.P.A. P.W./CIRCLE NOON CHURCH KITCHEN	18	19	20
21 s.s. 9:00A.M. worship 10:30 A.M.	7.O.P.S. 9:00A.M. TO 10:00A.M.	23	S.P.A. NOON CHURCH KITCHEN	25 THANKS- GIVING DAY	26 GIRLSCOUTS 6:00 P.M. TO 7:30 P.M.	27
28 s.s. 9:00a.m. worship 10:30 a.m. advent begins	29 T.O.P.S. 9:00A.M. TO 10:00A.M.	30				



December 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 S.P.A. NOON CHURCH KITCHEN	2	3	4
5 SS 9:00AN WORSHIP 10:30A.M.	то	9:00AM	8 S.P.A. NOON N CHURCH KITCHEN	9	10 GIRLSCOU 6:00PM TO 7:30PM	11 TS
12 SS 9:00AN WORSHIP 10:30AM BELLS			15 S.P.A. PW/CIRCLI NOON CHURCH KITCHEN		17	18
19 SS 9:00AN WORSHIP 10:30AM			22	23	24 CHRISTMA: EVE SERVIC 6:00P.M.	
26 SS 9:00AN WORSHIP 10:30AM			29	30	31 NEW YEARS EVE	