

September 2019 **NGMS**

Table ofContents

Walking with the Lord in the Holy Land 2
This is part 5 of a 5 part series 7
Pray for Carter Jr. High! 7
Children's Ministry 8
Youth Ministry10
Presbyterian Children`s Homes Lunch and Rangers Game11
Update on Carter Jr High Teacher Appreciation Breakfast11
July 2019 Finance Update 12
Live With Passion. Run with Purpose12
Prayer and Praises from the Shideler's13
Seen Around the Church14
This Month15
Prayer Ministry16

Newsletter Team

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The News is a publication of First Presbyterian Church of Arlington 1200 South Collins Arlington, TX 76010

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Walking with the Lord in the Holy Land

By Pastor Rich McDermott (Rich and Betsy's trip to Israel/Palestine - Part 4 of 4)

In this final installment of our Holy Land excursion, we visit some of the most sacred sites of the Christian faith, where worshiping Christians and Jews come for inspiration and an encounter with the Holy One who visited these places.

Bethlehem: I have to confess that I had forgotten some of the amazing Biblical events that occurred in and around the town of Bethlehem, now under Palestinian control. When reading the Bible, the names of places sometimes slip through, unnoticed. Bethlehem is famous for being the birthplace of Jesus, of course. But did you remember that Bethlehem was the destination near where Rachel, the wife of Jacob/Israel, died in childbirth with her son, Benjamin (Gen. 35:16-20)? Did you remember that the story of Ruth and Boaz takes place in **Bethlehem** (Ruth 2-4)? Did you remember that David was born there, and later was anointed as king by Samuel there (1 Sam. 16:4-13)? You should remember that the prophet Micah prophesied the birth of the Messiah at Bethlehem (Micah 5:2, Matt. 2:6), and that Jesus was indeed born there in some sort of cave, barn, or stable with a manger (feeding trough), since there was no room at the inn (Luke 2). If you go to Bethlehem, be sure to visit the beautiful Chapel of the Shepherd's Field,

commemorating the Savior's birth announcement to the shepherds (2 photos). And the most important site in **Bethlehem** is the Church of the Nativity, established by Constantine's mother, Helena, in A.D. 327, on the traditional



Chapel of the Shepherd's Field

Announcement to shepherds



site of Jesus' birth, perhaps the oldest site of an existing Christian church in the world (2 photos). It was built over a grotto or cave called the "holy crypt," said to be the place where Jesus was born. This underground crypt was also where the great scholar, Jerome (A.D. 347-420), spent 30 years translating the Bible into the language of the people, the Latin Vulgate, which served as the Christian Church's main Bible for over 1000 years.





The Grotto of St. Jerome

The Western Wall (two photos): The Western Wall is Judaism's holiest prayer site because of its



Vall is Judaism's holiest prayer site because of its connection to the Temple Mount beyond it, which is the site of the first and second Jewish temples (1st: Solomon's – circa 957 B.C. and 2nd: Zerubbabel's/Herod's – circa 516 B.C./19 B.C.). The Temple Mount (the trapezoidal plateau atop the hill) is now under Muslim control and is home to both the Dome of the Rock mosque and the Al Aqsa mosque. Muslims revere this as the site of Muhammed's ascent to heaven. The Temple Mount is not now accessible to tourists generally, and to Jews and Christians in particular. A plaza connected

Prayers in the Wall

to the **Western Wall** was created as an area for prayer after Israel captured the Old City of Jerusalem in the six-day war of 1967. Prayers are often written on slips of paper and placed in the cracks of the wall.

In around 19 B.C., Herod the Great extended the Temple Mount's natural plateau by enclosing the area with four massive retaining walls and filling the voids. Huge blocks of stone were somehow moved to form the foundations of these walls. The largest stone (see photo) has been excavated in a tunnel below the existing Western Wall. This stone weighs 570 tons (!) and measures 44 feet long by 10 feet high and 12-16 feet deep. The largest stone in the Great Pyramid at Giza, Egypt, weighs a mere 11 tons. Except for these largest stones below ground, indeed, "not one stone [was] left





upon another," after the destruction of Jersusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70, as predicted by Jesus (Mk. 13:1-4, Mt. 24:1-3, Lk. 19:44).

<u>The City of David</u>: The ancient city of Jerusalem was originally built around a water source, the Gihon Spring, on the southeastern hill to the south of the Temple Mount. Jerusalem has been continuously inhabited since at least 3000 B.C. but it was only in the time of Solomon (circa 960 B.C.) that the city limits expanded beyond the southeastern spur, known today as the "**City of David**." It is a very narrow strip of land, only about 80-100 meters wide, with a steep slope (60 degrees) on its eastern side leading down to the Kidron Valley.

<u>Hezekiah's Tunnel</u>: In 701 B.C. King Hezekiah of Judah was preparing for an attack by the Assyrian king, Sennacherib and his army. He knew that he would have to protect his water source from the Assyrian invaders, so he began a remarkable, almost miraculous project that was stunningly successful. (See 2 Chronicles 32:1-8, 2 Kings 20:20) King Hezekiah had his workers carve a tunnel beneath the **City of David** from the Gihon Spring to the Pool of Siloam. With the invaders marching toward them, his men started at opposite ends and carved from solid rock a tunnel that met in the middle without any modern surveying tools. They then built another wall to protect the Gihon Spring from exploitation by the Assyrians. After losing most of his army to disease, Sennacherib and the Assyrians eventually gave up, and the southern kingdom of Judah survived to live in relative peace for another 114 years. You can visit the Gihon spring and walk through the water in **Hezekiah's tunnel** today, and a few from our group did just that.

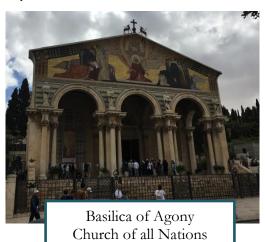


900 year old olive tree in Gethsemane Garden

<u>The Mount of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane:</u> Just across the Kidron Valley from the Old City of Jerusalem (less than 1000 yards) is the **Mount of Olives**, with many olive trees, even today. The oldest olive trees are in the **Garden of Gethsemane**, some of which are 900 years old (see photo). Jesus spoke to his disciples about many things there, especially in his final days, and prayed his agonizing prayer in the Garden. Today, next to the **Gethsemane Garden** is a beautiful church called the *Basilica of Agony*, also known as *The Church of all Nations* (see photo). The church was completed in 1924 using money donated by 12 different countries – thus the

name *The Church of all Nations*. It was built over the site of a 4th century Byzantine church,

and a 12th century Crusader church. It was here that Jesus prayed, and by God's power and mercy, mustered the courage to accept the cup of suffering required to die for the sins of the world. It was also here that Judas ushered Jesus into the hands of his enemies, betraying him with a kiss (Mt. 26:30-56, Mk. 14:26-52, Lk. 22:39-53, Jn. 18:1-11). Later, it was also here that Jesus ascended to heaven after appearing to his followers in his resurrection for forty days (Acts 1:3, 6-12).



<u>The Church of the Holy Sepulcher and the Garden Tomb:</u> Helena, the mother of Constantine, established the **Church of the Holy Sepulcher**, or Church of the Resurrection, consecrating it on September 13, A.D. 335. It contains the oldest traditional sites of the crucifixion and burial tomb of Jesus. Today, lines of people wait to be able to see and touch the rock below the altar where Jesus was believed to be crucified (see photo), and, in a separate shrine/chapel, to see the burial place believed to be Jesus' tomb, from which he rose from the dead (see photo, with Betsy). Hundreds of thousands of Christians and others visit this site each year.



Site of crucifixion, Church of the Holy Sepulcher



Site of Jesus' tomb, Church of the Holy Sepulcher



Golgotha: Place of the Skull, Garden Tomb area

A different location, outside the walls of the Old City called the **Garden Tomb**, gives a visually more satisfying experience to tourists. It was discovered in 1867. A nearby cliff looks a bit like a skull (see photo), and the tomb itself is in a garden with an

entrance (see photo) and tomb slab (see photo) like we might imagine it from the first century.



Alternate site for Jesus' burial: Garden Tomb



View inside Garden Tomb

<u>Conclusion:</u> In a trip to the Holy Land, anyone can be deeply impressed by both the sites and the witness of the Bible, reminding us that the events that took place there are among the most profound, transforming and best attested events in all of history. We Christians worship, not a god who has been invented by wishful-thinking people over many years, but a God who has unmistakenly revealed Himself in history and in experience. Christians believe that from Abraham to Moses to David and to the prophets, the Lord, the God of Israel was preparing the world and his people for His own incarnation in the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus was born, he ministered, he died and was raised in a particular place at a particular time, and now lives to bring that good news of his redemptive work to the world. A person that is open to the Spirit of God, by a visit to the Holy Land, can grow deeply in faith and so experience "the full wealth of conviction" (Col. 2:2 NEB), that the Lord desires for each of us. May it be so for you and for all of us.

This is part 5 of a 5 part series

We are concluding our discussion around the article I read called "5 Beginner Mistakes – Advice from a Seasoned Pitmaster" and how I believe these relate to ministry. Each month we will look at a different one.

- 1. Not Branching Out Early Enough
- 2. Over-Seasoning
- 3. Overloading The Cooking Chamber
- 4. Impatience
- 5. Taking It Too Seriously: Yes, you read that right. There is such a thing as taking things too seriously. If you catch yourself stressing about cooking times, ingredients, what someone said about your food, et cetera you're doing it WRONG. Smoking meat in your backyard is supposed to be fun. Whether it's with friends, family, or by yourself, remember that you have nothing to prove. Crack open a cold one, and enjoy the process.

By a cold one, he obviously meant communion grape juice. Yes, kingdom work is serious work but it can be done through lots of fun ways. Smoking meat and inviting neighbors over is a great way to do that! Throw a party. Get a group and help a widow on your street. Go serve at a local charity and get lunch afterwards. Deliver and slice a brisket at the local fire station. God will build his Church at times with us, and at other times in spite of us. We can relax that God's got this and we are invited to participate in his mission. Don't sweat the small stuff. Keep



things in perspective. And when an experiment doesn't work, like sometimes pork ribs don't work for me, throw some metaphorical sauce on it and make the best of it. Keep it fun!

Thanks for indulging me on this. Now let's take these tips and go indulge on some yummy burnt ends, I mean burnt offerings!

Pastor Chris

Pray for Carter Jr. High!

Please pray for:

- 1. Our Principal, Claudia Morales Hererra, that God will continue to bless and guide her.
- 2. The search for excellent teachers:
 - a. 2 Language Arts teachers
 - b. 3 Math teachers

3. The students, that this will be a year of great progress and accomplishment for them and for the school.

Children's Ministry

Monthly Overview



MONTHLY OVERVIEW

When is the last time you took the time to really look at everything God made? Taking a moment to take a walk outside or look up the wonders of the world online will totally change the way you share this month's Bible stories with preschoolers. We need that WONDER dial turned way up! ALL the way up! And the best way to do that is to experience some of that wonder! When we take the time to look at this amazing world God made, we are filled with awe and wonder. It's that feeling of wonder we want our preschoolers to have as they learn about God's creation. We are going to do a lot of counting together this month—one, two, three, four, five, six, seven—pausing to learn what God made on each day of creation. Through our fun and exciting activities and stories we want our preschoolers to learn God made everything, and IT IS GOOD!

	BIBLE STORY Light and Dark; Sky and Water Genesis 1:3-8	STORY FOCUS On days one and two, God made the light and dark and sky and water.	
TWO	BIBLE STORY Land, Plants, and Sea Genesis 1:9-13	STORY FOCUS On day three, God made the land, plants, and sea.	
THREE	BIBLE STORY Sun, Moon, and Stars Genesis 1:14-19	STORY FOCUS On day four, God made the sun, moon and stars.	
FOUR	BIBLE STORY Birds, Fish, and Animals Genesis 1:20-25	STORY FOCUS On days five and six, God made the birds, fish, and animals.	
WEEK FIVE	BIBLE STORY People; God Rested Genesis 1:26–2:25	STORY FOCUS On day six, God made the most special thing: people. Then He rested.	
MEMORY VERSE	KEY QUESTION	BOTTOM LINE	
"GOD SAW EVERYTHING HE HAD MADE. AND IT WAS VERY GOOD." GENESIS 1:31. NIFV	WHO MADE EVERYTHING?	GOD MADE EVERYTHING.	



MONTHLY OVERVIEW

GOD VIEW: THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE TRUST AND GOD'S CHARACTER, AS SHOWN THROUGH GOD'S BIG STORY first-hand what it means to trust God. This month, we focus on two of them: Jacob and Joseph. Through their stories, we'll discover how we can trust Him no matter what we face.

Throughout history God has proven His faithfulness to us, especially in keeping His promise to send Jesus to save us. God will continue to be dependable. The Bible is filled with examples of people who knew

ONE	BIBLE STORY: Jacob's Dream Genesis 28:10-22 (Supporting: Genesis 25:19-34; 27)	BOTTOM LINE You can trust God no matter what.
TWO	BIBLE STORY: Joseph Sold by His Brothers Genesis 37, 39:1-2	BOTTOM LINE When you think you're alone, you can trust God is with you.
THREE	BIBLE STORY: Joseph in Jail Genesis 40 (Supporting: Genesis 39)	BOTTOM LINE When life doesn't make sense, you can trust God is with you.
FOUR	BIBLE STORY: Joseph Interprets Pharaoh's Dreams Genesis 41	BOTTOM LINE When the pressure is on, you can trust God is with you.
FIVE	BIBLE STORY: Joseph Forgives His Brothers Genesis 42–45	BOTTOM LINE You can trust God has a plan.
	MEMORY VERSE	

 "TRUST IN THE LORD WITH ALL YOUR HEART. DO NOT DEPEND ON YOUR OWN UNDERSTANDING."
 PROVERBS 3:5, NIRV

 TRUST
 Putting your confidence in someone you can depend on

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Save the date from Children's Ministry

- September 1 Luncheon for families with Children in 6th grade or younger.
- September 6 Kids Night Out from 6:00-8:00 p.m.
- September 20 Kids Night Out from 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Youth Ministry

Power of an Apology

Dear Parents,

This month we are going to talk about harnessing the Power of an Apology.

Teenagers learn by watching their parent's example more than anything else. There is no better way to teach your teenager important life skills than to model them each day. One of the life skills that marks maturity the most is when your teenager learns to accept responsibility for what they have done.

In Jesus' first public sermon recorded in Matthew 5 there is a hidden gem that might be easily missed. It is nestled between two scandalous statements about murder and lawsuits. You might skim past it if you're not looking for it.

In Matthew 5:23-24 Jesus said that if you come to worship to leave an offering and are reminded of a conflict against a friend, go seek reconciliation with urgency. Then return to the altar and offer the gift of worship.

My question for you today is how could you live the truth of that Scripture today in your home? Here are some thoughts to get you started answering that question:

- **Forgiveness Matters-** Jesus prioritized forgiveness and reconciliation in this passage. It is essential to healthy relationships and families.
- **Don't Wait-** There is a sense of urgency in this passage. Jesus placed importance on pursuing reconciliation quickly.
- **Forgiveness Unleashes Worship-** After reconciliation takes place there is an invitation to return to worship God in freedom.

Here are some quick questions to end with:

- Is there conflict in your home that you are concerned about right now?
- Are you seeking reconciliation with urgency?
- Are you prioritizing forgiveness in your relationships?
- Would your teenager say that your home is a place of grace?
- Let Jesus' words inspire you today to experience peace in your home and pursue reconciliation in your family.

Feel free to share with me your thoughts about our monthly newsletter topics. I look forward to connecting with you next month. Please know that our student ministry has your back in this parenting adventure. If you need someone to talk to, pray with, or someone to just listen please let us know.

Blessings in Christ,

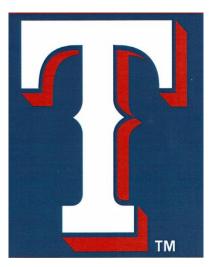
Adrian Rodriguez

Important Upcoming Youth Ministry Dates

2019 Events:

- September 19 The Well at the Youth Hut 6:00-8:00 p.m.
- September 26 WyldLife Dodge Ball at Carter Jr High 4:00-5:30 p.m.
- September 29 Confirmation Class at The Well Lounge (Cross Café) at 9:45-10:45 a.m.
- October 2 All City Worship 6:00-8:00 p.m.
- October 2 All City Worship Service Day starting at 8 a.m. at Carter Jr High.

Presbyterian Children`s Homes Lunch and Rangers Game



You are invited, as 1st Arlington hosts (for the 35th time) PCHAS youth and foster families for the last regular season game in the Ballpark, Rangers vs Yankees - Sunday 9/29/19 at 2:00 pm. The youth will be here for 9:40 a.m. Sunday School, 11:00 a.m. worship followed by lunch and then off to the game. PCHAS foster parents and single parents join with the Itasca youth as our guests.

Tickets are \$25 (group ticket price of \$15 is marked up to cover the cost of tickets for 60-70 PCHAS staff and youth) and we'd like to have firm reservations by **September 1, 2019**. See you then! Contact Bob Dawson (txt 214-415-5396)

Update on Carter Jr High Teacher Appreciation Breakfast

The Mission and Evangelism Team sponsored the Carter Junior High School Teacher Appreciation Breakfast for over 100 staff and teachers at 8:00 a.m. on August 13th. Food and volunteers were provided by the Friendship Class. Donations were great appreciated. McDonalds, Shipley Donuts and Starbucks were generous donors. It was a heartwarming time for our church and greatly appreciated by the Carter faculty.



July 2019 Finance Update

Budget (Operating and Funds Released)

Income: \$ 96,331 Expense: (\$ 106,623)

Income - Expense for month: Income - Expense for 2019 Year to Date: (\$ 10,292) (\$ 49,190)



Comments:

Total Income is under budget for the month by (\$ 8,293) and under for the year by (\$61,115). Funds Released is over budget for the month by \$12,845 and over for the year by \$ 73,072. Donors – Under budget for the month by (\$ 8,481) and under for the year by (\$ 56,982) Total Expenses were over budget for the month by \$13,070 and over for the year by \$65,733.

Session Discretionary Funds (not designated or reserved) -	\$ 41,487
Cost to operate church for one month -	\$ 75,000

Live With Passion. Run with Purpose.

The Perspectives class runs through December 8, 2019

Experience 15 powerful lessons that have equipped thousands of every day believers with greater vision, hope, and passion. In Perspectives, scripture, history, culture, and strategy converge to reveal the unfolding of God's redemptive purposes. He is on a mission to bless the peoples of the earth, and you're invited to join Him.

Arlington, TX. Perspectives Fall 2019

When: August 18 - December 8, 2019 Sundays 5:00-8:00 pm
Where: Lake Arlington Baptist Church 2912 Little Rd Arlington, TX 76016
Contact: Lezlie Langford// (817) 681-6179
Cost: \$250

Prayer and Praises from the Shideler`s

This month we have two special items for your consideration.

Have you ever wanted to pray for those who have just celebrated a New Testament dedication but weren't quite sure what to actually pray for? Wycliffe has a wonderful article that includes praise points as well as prayer points for the Church and local leaders.

YOU ARE INVITED!

You're invited to join us for the installation of Dr. John Chesnut as Wycliffe USA's seventh President/CEO! It will be held in Orlando, FL at the Wycliffe Discover Center, at 3:00 - 4:30 PM EDT and it will be live-streamed.

We praise God for the incredible things He's done over Wycliffe's 77-year history and are excited to celebrate His goodness with you! We hope you'll join us for this important event as we look toward the future with hope and anticipation.

Worship for the installation will be led by singer and songwriter Christy Nockels. RSVP to attend the event in person, or receive reminders to join us via livestream.

Praises: Rejoice with us that...

- Brett's meetings in Orlando last month went well. It was a grueling schedule but God sustained him through it.
- The workflow revision Marla's working on is making good progress. She and the team she's working with are about 1/3 of the way through the process. While much remains to be done, it's getting "easier" as the processes begin to settle a bit.

Requests: Pray with us that...

- John's installation goes well and that God would be honored in it. That John and the Leadership Team would be led by the Holy Spirit in every decision that is made so that Bible translation will be facilitated around the world.
- Brett, other members of the Leadership Team, and their spouses will be present for John's installation. This will be a quick trip for us (we'll be in Orlando from 3-5 Sept). Pray for safety and protection for all of us including for Marla's dad while we're away.

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (ESV)

Seen Around the Church



Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." Matthew 19:14





Prayer for the Teachers



This Month

WBible Studies

Men's Bible Study

The Men's Bible Study group meets every Wednesday morning at 8:00 a.m. in the parlor. Men of all ages meet and enjoy great fellowship and a prayer session. All men are invited to join this study.

Women's Bible Study

The Women's Monday Night Bible will meet on Monday, September 16, at 6 p.m. in the parlor.

Tuesday Morning Bible Study

Men and women of all ages are invited to meet in the Bride's Room every Tuesday morning at 10:00 a.m.



Chancel Choir

This is the primary worship leadership ensemble for the 11:00 service. The choir also sings for special services around Christmas and Holy Week. It is more than just a great choir, it is a caring fellowship. Rehearsals are on Wednesdays from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. *Nursery care is provided during rehearsals.*

Ring of Praise Handbell Ensemble

This intergenerational handbell group rehearses Wednesday evenings from 6:15 until 7:15 p.m. If you are interested in ringing, please contact Russell Farnell (fpcamusic@yahoo.com or 817-274-8286).

Agape (Youth) Choir

During the school year, this group of youth in grades 6 to 12 meets on Sunday, 4:30 to 6:00 p.m., in the choir room.

Children's Music Ministries

The children's choirs meet from 12:45 to 1:45 p.m. on Sundays during the school year. Children ages 4 (when school starts) through grade 5 participate in activities including music/singing and bells/chimes, instruments, and listening activities. There are two sections, divided by age, and both participate in the 11:00 worship service twice per year, usually in December and April.



Deacon Meeting

Thursday, October 3, at 6:30 p.m., the Diaconate meets in the parlor to oversee the Congregational Care, Facilities, Hospitality, and Fellowship ministries.

Team Meeting Night

Thursday, September 12, at 6:45 p.m., all teams meet for worship in the chapel with subsequent gathering into respective teams for ministry planning and coordination.

Session Meeting

Thursday, September 26, at 7:00 p.m., the Session meets in the parlor to oversee the ministry of the church. The work of the Diaconate, church administration, and all Discipleship, Worship, Facility Management, and Mission and Evangelism ministries will be discussed.



Library Team

The library team works the first Wednesday of each month, from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. Anyone interested is welcome. No particular skill is required, the work is easy, and we always have a good time as we process books to be added to our inventory. If you would like to be involved in library work but cannot come at that evening time, please contact Sandy Thomlinson at (817-460-8050) and special daytime work sessions can be arranged.



Happy Quilters

This group meets Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. to quilt, sew, knit, crochet, embroider, and just enjoy being together. Bring your project and join in!

Saints Alive!

Church seniors will meet for a potluck lunch on Thursday, September 19, at 11:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Bring a casserole, salad, or dessert and enjoy a fun and interesting afternoon.

Contact Bev Koch (817-261-3202) for details.



First Presbyterian Church 1200 S. Collins Street Arlington, TX 76010

Deadline for the October issue of The News is September 15!

Prayer Ministry

Prayers for those with health and other concerns: Apana Agha, Elaine Bahn, Jack Bos, James (Andrew) Bridges, Vannah Caylor, Frank and Allena Coburn, Edna Collins, Lee Carol Copeland, Michael Deardorff, The Farnell Family, The Gifford Family, Joe and Lila Glenn, Andrew Hydock, Bob Johnson, Tim Karnes (Pat May`s son), Gary Lindley, Pat May, Barbara Mooers, J.D. Paulk, Betsy Pense, Nita Price, Jim L. Quick, Jillian Reynolds, Joan and Homer Reynolds, Bud Smith, Donna Vickers, Nancy Welborne, Karl Winter, Shelby Wolfe.

Prayers for our family serving in the armed forces: Ben Boughton, Riley Curnutt, Austin Curran, James Dailey, Eric Dill, Jeff Grimes, Nathan Haerer, Damien King, Mike Manci, Amie Murtha, Stephen O'Neil Sosa, Colin Peden, Jason Polk, Ryan Powell, Ryan Regalado, Peyton Steeno, Christopher Young, Robbie Wallace.

Prayers for our home-bound members: Esther Albright, Suzette Armstrong, Polly Baugh, Shirley Bragg, Renabel Clutz, Bobbie and Tom Fowler, Jack Gray, Marge Harrand, Barbara Hughes, Barbara Kraemer, Jeanne Malone, Allen and Charlene Miller, Cary and Ruth Moore, Carrie and Cosme Pacot, Ann Pitstick, Al Smithson, Betty and Jack Snowden, Lorraine Swanson, Brooks and Connie Taylor, Dee Uhrui, Richard Whitenight, Mary Jane Wright.

Pray for our homebound members.

Pray for those who do not know Christ!

Please contact Pastor Rich McDermott at the church office at 817-274-8286. For questions about specific concerns listed above. If you have any congregational care needs, please contact Pastor Rich McDermott at 817-274-8286.