



January  
2020

# The News

Hold My hand and walk joyously  
with Me through this day. I know  
every step of the journey ahead  
of you, all the way to  
Heaven...Devote yourselves to  
prayer, being watchful and  
thankful.

John 14:6, Colossians 4:2

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## Epiphany: Celebrating Christmas for 12 Days

The Greek word *epiphania* means "manifestation." The feast of the Christian Church called "Epiphany" has been celebrated on January 6 in the Eastern tradition (Orthodox, Coptic) of the Church from the third century onwards. It was originally celebrated in honor of the Baptism of the Lord, where Jesus' identity as God's Son was made manifest. In Matthew 3:16-17, John baptizes Jesus in the Jordan River, and we read, *"And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.'"* In the third century, this feast of Epiphany ranked with Easter and Pentecost as one of the three principal festivals of the church.

Epiphany was introduced into the Western Church in the fourth century, but here lost its character as a feast of the Baptism of Christ, which the Eastern Church has retained to the present day. Instead, it became associated with the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles in the story of the Magi or the wise men. The Magi were a learned class of people from Persia, who came to pay homage to the child "who has been born king of the Jews" bearing the gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, in Matthew 2:1-12. For this reason, many Christians around the world still celebrate this special day with great feasting, parades, and the giving of gifts. It is also called the Feast of the Three Kings, although the scripture does not indicate the number of wise men who came bearing the three gifts. Nevertheless, names were given to three men in a Byzantine tapestry in the sixth century, to further cement the tradition of three kings bearing the gifts.



It is sometimes suggested that the wise men came a bit later than the shepherds who were immediately invited by the angels to the birth of the Messiah. For one, it appears that Mary, Joseph, and Jesus have moved from the stable or the cave where the animals were kept (with the manger or feeding trough, mentioned in Luke), and the wise men now enter "the house." Also, Herod estimates the age of the child from the time when the star appeared, and attempts to eliminate this possible threat to own children's inheritance of his throne, by killing newborns in Bethlehem up to two years of age. So, significant time may have elapsed before the wise men actually arrived at Bethlehem. Epiphany helps us celebrate all 12 days of Christmas.

Taking at least 12 days in the reflecting on and the celebration of Christmas is a good idea in my view. Not only does it connect us with Christians around the world, but it also reminds us that the incarnation of the Lord, God's putting on of human flesh, is as important as any teaching of the Christian faith. God loved us so much that he came to visit us and show us that love in the person and work of Jesus the Messiah. That love was made manifest not only in Jesus being born "the king of the Jews," but also as that "light for revelation to the Gentiles," symbolized by the recognition and the coming of foreign dignitaries in the story of the wise men. The offering of gifts is important to remind us that Jesus is worthy of the giving of our entire lives to him. The Christmas narratives are wonderful ways for the gospel of Jesus Christ to touch lives.

May our lives be changed by the manifestation of the One revealed as Savior, Messiah, and Lord, the light of revelation to us Gentiles. Have a blessed Epiphany!

## Knowing, Following, and Transforming

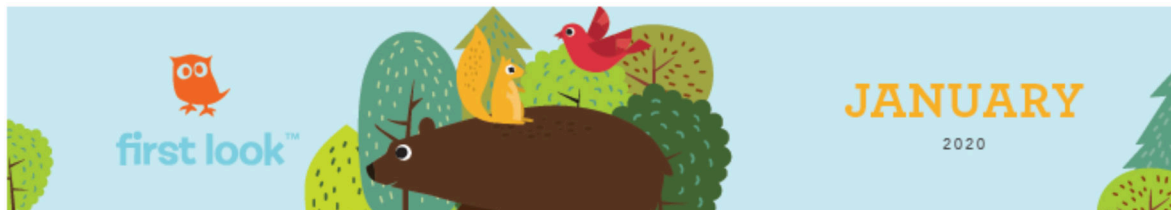
Hopefully you have noticed an intentional change with our offering time during worship. We still include the traditional call for the offering, but we want to do more in that time. First, we always make sure to say thank you for your giving. Second, we want to connect the dots of where your giving goes. Church budgets can be pretty bewildering. Often, we get more caught up with account names and numbers, and we miss the ministries and lives connected to each line. So each week we want to highlight one area where your giving equips FPCA to Follow Jesus and Transform Life.

Why this shift? We hope it is informational. We know that most people in worship do not know the width and depth of all of FPCA's ministries. And that's totally normal! So these moments provide a glimpse into ministries you and our guests may not be aware of. We hope it is inspirational. Our members and regular attendees should rejoice in how God is working through FPCA and transforming life. Maybe you will be inspired to learn more or possibly participate in a new ministry effort. We hope this is building trust between you and our session and staff as we operate through our general budget. There has been a purposeful effort to consolidate and reduce the number of special funds the past couple years. In many churches, a plethora of funds have been established because they directly supported a ministry that members were passionate about. And we are thankful for your passion! We believe, though, that most of those passions can and should be supported through our general budget. So when we highlight the variety of ways your giving is used, we want you to be assured that the session and staff are stewarding those gifts wisely and purposefully to fulfill our mission.

We are constantly looking for examples to share in worship. If you have seen or been part of an effort of transforming life, big or small, please let us know! We want to share your stories and celebrate God's work! Thank you for your generous support of FPCA!

# Children's Ministry

## Preschool



### MONTHLY OVERVIEW

It's time for a Beach Party—sand, sun, and a whole lot of fun! Jesus spent a great deal of time on or near the beach. In fact, He performed **MANY** miracles near the water. So, the beach is the perfect environment for our preschoolers to learn that Jesus can do anything.

is God's Son, He can do anything! With God all things are possible! Throughout their lives, children will encounter things they can't do. But, in Jesus, they have a friend who can do it all. There is no better friend than Jesus, and He wants to be our friend forever.

Our preschoolers learned that God gave us Jesus in December, and now they will learn that because Jesus

#### WEEK ONE

**BIBLE STORY**  
Water to Wine  
John 2:1-11

**STORY FOCUS**  
Jesus can do anything.

#### WEEK TWO

**BIBLE STORY**  
Catching Fish  
Luke 5:1-7

**STORY FOCUS**  
Jesus can do things we can't.

#### WEEK THREE

**BIBLE STORY**  
Feeding 5,000  
Mark 6:31-44

**STORY FOCUS**  
Nothing is too hard for Jesus.

#### WEEK FOUR

**BIBLE STORY**  
Walking on Water  
Matthew 14:22-33

**STORY FOCUS**  
Jesus can do what is impossible.

			
MEMORY VERSE	KEY QUESTION	BOTTOM LINE	
"WITH GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE." MATTHEW 19:26, NIV	WHO CAN DO ANYTHING?	JESUS CAN DO ANYTHING.	
JESUS WANTS TO BE MY FRIEND FOREVER.			

## Elementary and KFC



### MONTHLY OVERVIEW

**GOD VIEW: THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE KNOWLEDGE AND GOD'S CHARACTER, AS SHOWN THROUGH GOD'S BIG STORY**

God is the author of knowledge. Everything we know to be true about the world is because of God. Knowing God is the most important Person to know. And while we may never know all there is to know

about God, God gives us lots of ways we can know Him. We can know Him best through Jesus, who showed us how much God loves us. We can pursue knowing more about God through Jesus, who showed why knowledge is so important. The more we know God, the better we can live His way each day.

#### WEEK ONE

**BIBLE STORY:**  
The Boy Jesus at the Temple  
Luke 2:41-52

**BOTTOM LINE**  
Knowing God is the most important thing.

#### WEEK TWO

**BIBLE STORY:**  
Jesus' Baptism  
John 1:19-42, John 3:22-36  
(Supporting: Matthew 3)

**BOTTOM LINE**  
If you want to know God, start with Jesus.

#### WEEK THREE

**BIBLE STORY:**  
Jesus Is Tempted in the Desert  
Luke 4:1-13 (Supporting: Matthew 4:1-11)

**BOTTOM LINE**  
Discovering what's in the Bible can help you make the wise choice.

#### WEEK FOUR

**BIBLE STORY:**  
Jesus and John the Baptist  
Matthew 11:1-6 (Supporting: James 1:5)

**BOTTOM LINE**  
If you don't understand something about God, ask.

### MEMORY VERSE

**"THE LORD GIVES WISDOM. KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING COME FROM HIS MOUTH."**

PROVERBS 2:6, NIRV

#### KNOWLEDGE

Learning something new so you can be better at whatever you do

## Save the Date

<b>January 5</b>	Luncheon for families with children in 6th grade or younger
<b>January 10</b>	Kids Night Out
<b>January 24</b>	Kids Night Out
<b>April 4</b>	Spring Festival
<b>June 8 to 12</b>	Vacation Bible School

## New Year, New Beginnings



Please join the Women's Ministry Team for brunch and start 2020 off right by learning how to develop the discipline of daily quiet time with the Lord.

Feel free to bring a friend!!

**When:** Saturday, January 11, 10:00 a.m. to Noon

**Where:** Parlor

**Register By:** Sunday, January 5 (Chapel Hall at 9:30, Red Hall at 10:45 and Noon)

**Cost:** \$10

Registration forms are also available on the church website: [www.firstprestexas.org](http://www.firstprestexas.org).

Childcare will be provided upon request.

# Kids Beach Club Activities



# Youth Ministry



## HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF... NEW YEAR'S

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What do you do with New Year's? After the last two months of hurry, the idea of "nothing" may seem appealing. But New Year's is a great time to create some family memories you'll remember for the rest of the year. But other than staring at your TV screen waiting for a large ball to drop, what can you do?

Here are a few fun ideas to spark your creativity:

**2019 HIGHLIGHT REEL.** Have each family member think of one favorite memory from the last year. Without using words, have each family member act out their memory and see who can guess what it is.

**MAKE NEW YEAR'S POP.** Write 5 family fun ideas (play a board game, have a dance party, make cookies, etc.) on strips of paper. Put the strips inside 5 balloons and pop one balloon every hour from 7pm to midnight.

**MAKE A FAMILY FUN LIST.** Instead of resolutions, gather your family together and make a list of all the fun things you want to do in the upcoming year. Save the list and refer back to it throughout the New Year.

**NEW YEAR'S MOCK UP.** Families with little kids have a hard time making it to the midnight ball drop. Throw a family dance party, complete with a countdown between 7 and 8pm. Happy New Year and good-night!

**CRAZY DINNER.** Start (or end) the year off with a little FUN by giving each family member \$3-\$5 to buy one item at the grocery store. Come home, cook it all, and enjoy your crazy dinner by candlelight!

## An Invitation

# You Are INVITED!

Join us for a meal and conversation as we share and celebrate the change to which Jesus calls us at FPCA. At these important capital campaign gatherings, you will learn more about what has led us here, our next steps, and how we will move forward together.

Choose a date  
and time that  
works best  
for you:

*Lunch on Thursday*

January 16

11:30am to 2:30pm

*Dinner on Saturday*

January 18

5:30pm to 8:30pm

*Brunch on Saturday*

January 25

9:00am to Noon

**We look forward to seeing you  
in the Fellowship Hall!**

*Yours in faith and God's ministry together,*

Pastor Rich & Pastor Chris

As soon as possible or at least 5 days  
before your chosen date, **RSVP** to  
**[kim@firstprestexas.org](mailto:kim@firstprestexas.org)** or by calling  
the church office, **817.274.8286**.

*Childcare provided January 18 & 25 if requested.*

# Finance Update

For the month of November 2019

Budget (Operating and Funds Released)

**Income:** \$ 89,716

**Expense:** (\$ 86,121)

**Income - Expense for month:** \$ 3,595

**Income - Expense for 2019 Year to Date:** (\$ 71,989)



## Comments:

- Total Operating Income is under budget for the month by (\$10,469) and under for the year by (\$108,815).
- Funds Released is over budget for the month by \$10,050 and over for the year by \$113,506.
- Donors were under budget for the month by (\$2,750) and under for the year by (\$ 96,102).
- Total Expenses were over budget for the month by \$9,933 and over for the year by \$90,567.
- Session Discretionary Funds (not designated or reserved) \$ 16,284
- Cost to operate church for one month \$ 75,000

# This Month



## Bible 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 study is open to all women. The next meeting is at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, January 13, 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.

## Music Ministries



### 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.



## Church Leadership

### Deacon Meeting

Thursday, January 2, at 6:30 p.m., the Diaconate meets in the parlor to oversee the Congregational Care, Hospitality, and Fellowship ministries.

### Team Meeting Night

Thursday, January 9, 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, January 23, 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.

## Discipleship



### 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.



## Fellowship

### 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 on Thursday, January 16, at 11:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Lunch will be furnished as we gather to hear about the capital campaign.

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



First Presbyterian Church  
1200 S. Collins Street  
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Deadline for the February issue of The News is January 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, Marge Dawson, Michael Deardorff, the Farnell Family, Don Farrell, the Gifford Family, Joe and Lila Glenn, Andrew Hydock, Bob Johnson, Tim Karnes (Pat May's son), Gary Lindley, Pat May, Barbara Mooers, Betsy Pense, the Family of Craig Poindexter, Nita Price, Jim L. Quick, Jillian Reynolds, Joan and Homer Reynolds, Donna Vickers, Nancy Welborne, and Karl Winter

**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 Mancini, Amie Murtha, Stephen O'Neil Sosa, Colin Peden, Jason Polk, Ryan Powell, Ryan Regalado, Peyton Steeno, Christopher Young, and Robbie Wallace

**Prayers for our homebound members:** Esther Albright, Suzette Armstrong, Polly Baugh, Shirley Bragg, Renabel Clutz, Tom and Bobbie 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, Jack and Betty Snowden, Lorraine Swanson, Brooks and Connie Taylor, Dee Uhri, Richard Whitenight, and Mary Jane Wright

Pray for those who do not know Christ!



If you have any congregational care needs, please contact Pastor Rich McDermott at 817-274-8286.