

*And now these three remain: faith,
hope and love. But the greatest of these
is love.*

1 Corinthians 13:13



February
2023

The News

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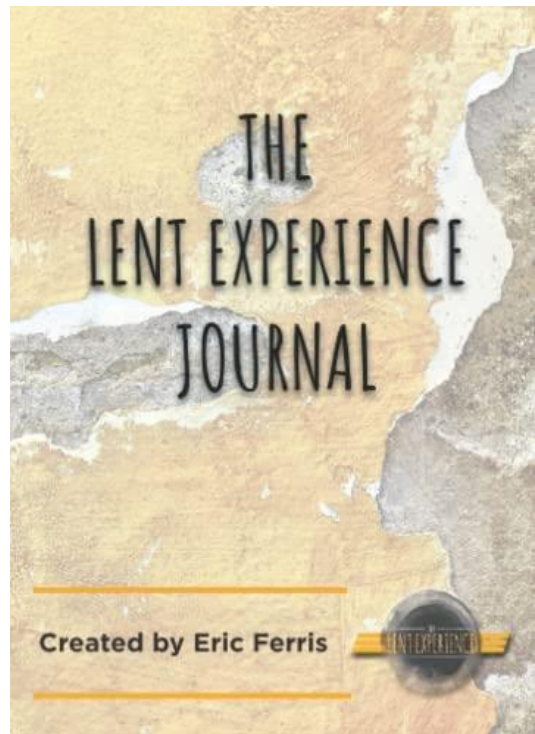
The Lent Experience

In the coming weeks, you will hear more about our upcoming Lenten study. The season of Lent will begin on Ash Wednesday, February 22nd. Throughout the season, I want to encourage you to participate in The Lent Experience created by Eric Ferris. Each week, we will share links to a short video available on Right Now Media. Watch those in preparation for the upcoming week and accompanying sermon series. And as you work through each week, there is a journal you can purchase for your thoughts. I purchased my copy on Amazon for \$7.99. Just search for “The Lent Experience Journal” by Eric Ferris and you will be all set. If ordering online is not your cup of tea, just contact us at the church office and we will help take care of that.

Ferris describes the experience this way: The Lent Experience is designed to help people, both familiar and unfamiliar with the liturgical calendar practices, to observe Lent and rediscover the significance of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. I wanted to help those of us who grew up observing Lent ritualistically to discover the meaning and heart behind Lent. And for those who grew up in evangelical churches or no church at all, I wanted them to discover how valuable it is to get in touch with some of these practices that Christians have observed for hundreds of years.

Your Sunday school class may want to do this as a group as well. It is completely up to each class. But I hope as many of us will participate and grow in new, ancient ways in this season of Lent.

Blessings,
Pastor Chris



Finance Update

For the month of December 2022:

Budget (Operating and Funds Released)

Income: \$117,910

Expense: (\$109,542)

Income - Expense for month: **\$8,368**

Income - Expense for 2022 Year to Date: **\$59,760**



Comments:

We are always so grateful for your generous donations. Because of your support we were able to:

- celebrate a beautiful Advent Festival service of worship featuring our choirs of children, youth, adults, and handbells, along with readings and congregational carols.
- have a beautiful and meaningful Christmas Eve Candlelight Service.
- provide several ways to give through Gifts of Hope, Christmas Joy Offering, and the Christmas Eve Offering for Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services.
- share ways to serve and help families, along with our homebound members through our Mitten Tree and Dove Tree ministries.
- share a great time together at our "Family" Christmas Party for our children and youth families, celebrating all that God has done for our children, youth, and families throughout the year.
- enjoy fellowship with our sisters in Christ, at the Advent event hosted by the Women's Ministry Team, celebrating the start of Advent – a time of anticipating the coming of our Savior.
- As of December, our Capital Campaign fund balance is \$1,529,676.

We are doing well, and, because of you, we are able to carry out the ministries that are calling to our FPCA family. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns, at jeanne@firstprestexas.org.

Children`s Ministry

Preschool



MONTHLY OVERVIEW

Have you noticed any heart-shaped candy boxes or giant teddy bears in stores yet? It's that time of year when we do extra special things to show people how much we love them. One sweet way to do that has always been with candy hearts. Candy hearts are such a fun way to show someone you love them, which goes perfectly with what we are teaching preschoolers this month. After all, everything Jesus did while He was on earth was to show us how much He loves us. And if there's one thing we really want preschoolers to know, it's that Jesus loves them.

WEEK ONE	BIBLE STORY Jesus and the Children Luke 18:15-16	STORY FOCUS Jesus loves me.
WEEK TWO	BIBLE STORY Mary and Martha Luke 10:38-42	STORY FOCUS Jesus loves me and wants to spend time with me.
WEEK THREE	BIBLE STORY The Centurion Matthew 8:5-13	STORY FOCUS Jesus loves me and wants to help me.
WEEK FOUR	BIBLE STORY The Thankful Woman Luke 7:36-50	STORY FOCUS Jesus loves me no matter what.

MEMORY VERSE	KEY QUESTION	BOTTOM LINE
"HOW WIDE AND LONG AND HIGH AND DEEP IS THE LOVE OF CHRIST." EPHESIANS 3:18, NIV	WHO LOVES YOU?	JESUS LOVES ME.
JESUS WANTS TO BE MY FRIEND FOREVER.		

Elementary and KFC



ELEMENTARY
FEBRUARY 2023

MONTHLY OVERVIEW

GOD VIEW:

THE CONNECTION BETWEEN RESPECT AND GOD'S CHARACTER, AS SHOWN THROUGH GOD'S BIG STORY

We often think about respect in terms of vertical relationships with have with others—respect for parents, teachers, and people in authority. Those are important, but equally important are the more horizontal relationships we have with people, like siblings, friends, and even people we may not get along with. This idea of valuing others and having mutual respect is seen all throughout Scripture and is a necessary way to communicate with others and demonstrate God's love with them.

We see throughout Scripture that all people have value because they were created in God's image. God values us and wants a forever relationship with us. God sent Jesus to make that possible. We follow God's example when we show others that they have value too.

WEEK ONE	BIBLE STORY Calling of the Disciples Luke 5:1-11, 27-32	BOTTOM LINE Include people who are left out.
WEEK TWO	BIBLE STORY Love Your Enemies Matthew 5:43-47	BOTTOM LINE Show respect even when you don't get along.
WEEK THREE	BIBLE STORY Mary and Martha Luke 10:38-42	BOTTOM LINE Take time to show others they are important.
WEEK FOUR	BIBLE STORY A Roman Commander Has Faith Matthew 8:5-13	BOTTOM LINE Remember God is most important.

MEMORY VERSE	"DO TO OTHERS AS YOU WANT THEM TO DO TO YOU." LUKE 6:31, NIRV
RESPECT	SHOWING OTHERS THEY ARE IMPORTANT BY WHAT YOU SAY AND DO.

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Save the date:

February 10-Kids Night Out from 6:00-8:00 p.m.

February 24-Kids Night Out from 6:00-8:00 p.m.

February 26-Children's Ministry Luncheon for Families with Children in 6th Grade and Younger and YMM.

Youth Ministry

What Parents Need to Know About Kids Who Self-Harm

by Dr. Chinwé Williams

Discovering that someone you love is self-harming is frightening. It is also very confusing. As a parent, it is difficult to comprehend that no matter how much love you give to your child, it may not be enough to prevent him or her from hurting themselves.

Who self-harms?

Approximately 15% of young people self-harm. 34% begin between the ages of 17 and 20, although it can start as young as 12 or even younger. Self-harm is particularly associated with girls, but boys do it also.

Self-harmers typically look like the child who sits next to your child in math class, the popular teen who just became prom queen, or the star athlete. Many are perfectionistic, high achieving, and sensitive. Many self-harmers, on the outside, appear to have it all together. But on the inside, there is emotional unrest. Self-harm is defined as the compulsion to deliberately inflict physical pain on one's self. Professionals also call this self-mutilation, cutting, and non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI). Common methods are excessive scratching, scab picking, and burning. Many individuals engage in more extreme behaviors such as cutting or breaking bones. Sounds scary, I know. However, most experts agree that self-harm is not always associated with suicidal thoughts. Children who self-harm don't necessarily want to die. Rather, they just want the pain to end.

What causes self-harm?

For many parents, it is difficult to imagine why anyone would intentionally harm themselves. Young people are faced with a host of physical and emotional changes as well as external pressures such as academic, and social demands. Fear, hopelessness, and shame are just a few emotions that can drive one to self-harm.

Self-harm is a symptom of a larger problem, as well as a method for relieving extreme stress and overwhelming emotions. A young person who has difficulty expressing negative emotions could turn to extraordinary methods such as self-harm as an outlet. Studies show that self-harming releases endorphins in the brain that reduces tension and can result in a sense of calm. Simply put, the physical pain that results from self-harm alleviates the unbearable emotional pain. Self-harming offers your child the illusion that they are in control over their life circumstances. As a parent, you may not be able to stop their pain, but there are ways to help.

What should parents be aware of?

1. **Warning signs:** Self-harm is difficult to detect because it is primarily done in secret. Individuals hide it because they feel that no one could possibly understand. Signs to look for in your child include increased sad mood, withdrawal from friends and activities, and spending long periods of time alone. Also, notice if your child wears long sleeves and jackets in very warm weather. When you first discover it, it is natural to be shocked, worried, and even angry. Avoid barraging them with questions they may not know how to answer. Reassure him or her that you are there to help. Your child may even feel a sense of relief that the secret is finally out.

2. **Talk about difficult topics.** Major life transitions such as divorce, financial pressures, and death can take a toll on the entire family but may cause additional stress for children. It's easy for us as parents to focus on managing the day to day activities and lose sight of our children's emotional needs. Children worry and suffer too. They don't always have the ability to articulate their emotions effectively. Encourage emotional expression and help your child to better understand his or her triggers by periodically checking in particularly in the days leading to an upcoming event: "Hey, I know that big final (or dance) is coming up, how are you feeling about it?"

3. **Temporary relief:** My clients often share that when they self-harm, the pressure of bottled up emotions is suddenly gone. When talking to your child, it is important to note that the stress only goes away for a few hours or a few days. While there is temporary relief from the symptoms of the problem, the underlying core issue has not been resolved. Therefore, whenever pressures begin to resurface, the urge to cut returns. Professional help will enable your child learn effective coping strategies that will provide longer term relief.

4. **Quitting is not easy.** Some young people quit on their own, but many do not. Self-harm is a form of addiction and being unsuccessful at quitting can lead to feelings of discouragement and shame which can kick the self-destructive cycle back into gear. Celebrate your child's decision to quit. As a parent, you will desperately wish for things to be different. Know that your child has that same desire. However, the healing process will take time. Expect setbacks and inform your child that you are there and that you love them regardless.

5. **Art of distraction.** Parents cannot force a child to quit, but they can help provide healthy outlets. Ask your child what they believe that they need. Do they need to talk? Reduce a heavy academic load? Switch to another (less stressful) extracurricular activity? Studies show that many forms of exercise can minimize anxious and depressive feelings. In addition to physical activity, watching a funny movie, drawing, taking a bubble bath, or listening to soothing music are helpful distractions. Additionally, writing about feelings in a journal or talking to a trusted friend can do wonders for dissipating stress.

6. **Find the right professional.** If you notice signs of self-harm, immediately consult a counseling professional that has experience and training in this area. Don't be surprised if it takes several sessions to notice improvements. If your child is already seeing a professional for a while but the self-harm continues, it is probably time to find someone new. You and your child can love a therapist, but perhaps additional interventions are needed. Effective strategies vary depending on the professional. Some techniques help your child understand the root causes of the self-harm. Alternatively, other interventions focus on behavior change or understanding their reactions to events that trigger the need to self-injure.

If someone you love is self-harming, know that you alone cannot fix it. You can simply be a loving presence and point them towards help. Stay encouraged and don't give up! Expect that it may take several months—or longer—before your child eventually heals. The good news is that many children outgrow this. With good professional care, your child can learn more healthy ways to cope with pain.

Blessings,

Adrian

YouthCue Choir in Austin

Our Youth Music Ministries are active again, and we are excited about the opportunity to once again participate in the YouthCUE choral festival that is happening on the last weekend in February in Austin. Our youth will join other youth choirs from around the state to sing during the 11:00 worship service at Westlake Hills Presbyterian Church.

The service will be recorded, so we will be able to send out a link to that at a later date.

We are looking forward to a weekend of fun, fellowship, music, and ministry with the singers.

Monthly Food Bank

Join us Saturday, February 11, starting at 8:30 a.m. to distribute food, or bring your neighbors to receive food, at the Arlington Charities mobile food bank.

St. Andrew's United Methodist Church

2045 SE Green Oaks Blvd

Arlington, TX 76018

It's just east of New York Ave, so if you're coming from the west, make a U-turn at Sherry St. Volunteer parking is just south of the church and food is distributed on the west side of the church.



This Month

Some activities are postponed until further notice. Activities marked with * are happening.



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 Monday Night Women's Bible Study will resume Monday, September 19. The 2022-2023 study is *Celebrating Sabbath: Accepting God's Gift of Rest and Delight*. Questions? Contact Debbie Richardson at 817.675.2867 or Sheri Quick at sheriq@aol.com.

Tuesday Morning Bible Study *

Men and women of all ages are invited to meet in the Brides Room every Tuesday morning at 10:30a.m.

CWF Women's Bible Study*

Meet virtually every Wednesday at 7 p.m. EXCEPT the last Wednesday of the month they meet at FPCA in the Parlor.



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 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. in the Choir Room. *Nursery care is provided if requested.*

Ring of Praise Handbell Ensemble*

This handbell ensemble every on Wednesday, at 6 p.m.

Youth Choir*

The youth choir every Sunday, from 12:15 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.

Children's Music Ministries*

The children's choirs every Sunday, from 12:15 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.



Church Leadership

Deacon Meeting *

Thursday, March 9, at 7:00 p.m., the Diaconate meets in the parlor to oversee the Congregational Care, Hospitality, and Fellowship ministries.

Team Meeting Night *

Thursday, February 2, at 7:00 p.m., all teams meet for ministry planning and coordination.

Session Meeting *

Thursday, February 23, at 7:00 p.m., the Session meets in person in the Parlor to oversee the ministry of the church, indoor worship, budget, Generis, and other matters. The work of the Diaconate, church administration, and all Discipleship, Worship, Facility Management, and Mission and Evangelism ministries will be discussed.



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!

Senior Flexibility Class *

Come get fit with us! The Senior Flexibility Class will meet each week on Tuesday and Friday from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

If interested, contact Mary Spencer at 817-689-0526 for more details.

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

Deadline for the March issue of The News is February 15!

Prayer Ministry

Prayers for those with health and other concerns: The family of Lucille Boardman, Bettie Burdett, Jack Bos, Carol Browning, Billie Jo Campbell, Frank Coburn, Edna Collins, Cyprian Engwenyi, Betty Farrell, Bunny Floyd, Mary Lou Garrison, Joe and Lila Glenn, the Hydock Family, Tim Karnes (Pat May's son), Gary Lindley, Pat May, Mathias Mbeng Ndip, Jim L. Quick, Tonya Scrabeck, Esther Teboh, John and Donna Vickers, Nancy Welborne, Patrick Welbourne, Danny Womble, Beverly Johnson.

Prayers for our family serving in the armed forces: Ben Boughton, Riley Curnutt, Jeff Grimes, Nathan Haerer, Damien King, Amie Murtha, Stephen O'Neil Sosa, Colin Peden, Ryan Powell, Peyton Steeno, Christopher Young, and Robbie Wallace

Prayers for our homebound members: Bobbie Fowler, Barbara Hughes, Charlene Miller, Betty Snowden, Dee Uhri, Richard Whitenight, Mary Jane Wright, Polly Baugh, Lucy Cleaver, Madge Casselman, Elizabeth Harris.

Pray for those who do not know Christ!

If you have any congregational care needs, please contact either Pastor Chris Campbell or Parish Pastor Jim Shroyer at 817-274-8286.

