



*"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

**Matthew 28:19-20**

October  
2023

# The News

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## Newsletter Team

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The News is a publication of  
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# Neighborhood Church

*Church Answers* is a website, resource hub, marketing tool (to be completely honest), and a great place for some articles based on church resource. Founded by Thom Rainer, who has spent decades researching the church, he and his son, Sam, are the main contributors. I am on their email list and receive at least one email every day. So many that it takes an interesting subject line to catch my eye and open it. That happened this month and I want to share some snippets of a blog post called “The Neighborhood Church Returns: Making the Comeback a Reality.” If you want to read the whole thing, just Google “church answers” and head to their blog. I will italicize Sam’s words and add a few comments afterwards.

*Neighborhood churches tend to be small or midsize and well-established. For years, we have dismissed the potential for a significant move of God in these churches. I believe they are primed for a comeback... But what might it look like if such a comeback were to occur?*

## 1) *The Stigma Must Become the Advantage*

*Some have bemoaned the “on every street corner” of the established church... But a shift is already underway. The megachurch movement is waning... The neighborhood church has a long way to go before we can talk about a movement, but the stigma of small and local is fading... If these churches step up and begin to reach into their surrounding communities, that stigma might shift to an advantage.*

## 2) *Local Pastors Must Work Together for the Kingdom*

*When pastors in a community become friends, tenures become longer, and churches stop competing and start cooperating. The comeback of neighborhood churches will hit its stride when the pastors spend more energy working together than trying to compete.*

## 3) *Congregants Must Expect Growth and Invite Guests*

*Many, if not most, smaller neighborhood churches do not have a culture or expectation of growth. And when you don’t anticipate guests or invite people to church, it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy... This entrenched mentality creates an unhealthy comfort with smallness and even ambivalence toward any new people who might upset the comfortable environment. When neighborhood churches make a comeback, it is often preceded by a cultural shift in the church – when the people start inviting others and expecting guests.*

4) *Community Revitalization Must Become Part of the Mission*

*Revitalizing the church should include revitalizing the community. The way to better church health is through outward movement, not inward focus.*

5) *Selfless Service Must Replace Selfish Preferences*

*Selfish preferences are the death of selfless service. When you place your personal desires above another person's salvation, you're putting the mission of the church in great peril. Neighborhood churches will come back when the members elevate service above preference. A revitalized church will have more going and telling and less griping and yelling.*

6) *The Church Culture Bubble Must Pop*

*The insular church bubble will pop when your church pushes outward with the gospel. The church was never designed to be a shield protecting Christians from the world in a bubble of safety... Jesus doesn't call us to serve the most deserving, but he does call us to serve the most desperate.*

7) *The Church Must Become a Neighborhood Hub*

*Church facilities are one of the most expensive, yet vital, tools church leaders use to shepherd God's people... Uninviting church buildings make it difficult for church members to invite their friends and family to worship with them.*

Naturally, Sam has just published a book explaining all this. And being the book hoarder that I am, I'll probably get it! These articles do a couple things. First, it affirms certain things we are doing that are in line with this article: serving our community, my participation in the ministerial alliance; emphasizing the difference between guests and visitors; and working to make our building more accessible, friendly, and safe. It also pokes me to not get too comfortable. This work never ends and in the life of the church, there is always more to do. There is no room for complacency.

But I think what drew me to this article has been our feeling of worshiping in the Fellowship Hall for about 6 weeks now. It feels like a closer, more neighborly experience, mostly because we are closer physically! As the kids say these days, the vibes are different and it's great! That is the sense of neighbor and community we can continue to strive to share with others and perhaps be part of a great comeback!

Pastor Chris

# Finance Update

**For the month of August 2023:**

Budget (Operating and Funds Released)

Income: \$ 54,616

Expense: (\$78,311)

Income - Expense for month: **(\$23,695)**

Income - Expense for 2023 Year to Date: **(\$54,136)**



**Comments:**

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

- continue our sermon series on The 12, studying the 12 disciples plus Paul.
- kick off the start of our school year with Children and Youth ministries with training and luncheons.
- prepare opportunities to volunteer to be a Mentor or Prayer Partner through Kids Hope USA at Blanton Elementary.
- provide opportunities to serve our community by distributing food at the Arlington Charities mobile food bank.
- As of August, our Capital Campaign fund balance is \$1,597,916.

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](mailto:jeanne@firstprestexas.org).

# Children`s Ministry

Preschool



## MONTHLY OVERVIEW

Now is the time for our preschoolers to begin learning that God can help me be brave because the need to be brave—God-brave—will only grow throughout their lives.

What is God-brave? God-brave is . . .

- ... the kind of brave that does the right thing even when others don't,
- ... the kind of brave that stands up to seemingly impossible circumstances,
- ... the kind of brave that trusts God during the darkest of times,
- ... the kind of brave that looks to God to help us be strong and courageous,
- ... the kind of brave that makes us SUPER KIDS—not because of what WE can do but because of what GOD can do.

<b>WEEK ONE</b>	<b>BIBLE STORY</b> Rahab and the Spies Joshua 2:1-24, 6:24-25	<b>STORY FOCUS</b> I can be brave because God is powerful.
<b>WEEK TWO</b>	<b>BIBLE STORY</b> David and Goliath 1 Samuel 17:1-50	<b>STORY FOCUS</b> I can be brave because God is with me.
<b>WEEK THREE</b>	<b>BIBLE STORY</b> Daniel and the Lions Daniel 6:1-23	<b>STORY FOCUS</b> I can be brave and trust God.
<b>WEEK FOUR</b>	<b>BIBLE STORY</b> Esther Esther 2:21-8:17	<b>STORY FOCUS</b> I can be brave and help others.
<b>WEEK FIVE</b>	<b>BIBLE STORY</b> Miriam Exodus 2:4-10, 15:20-21; Micah 6:4	<b>STORY FOCUS</b> God can help me do brave things.

MEMORY VERSE	KEY QUESTION	BOTTOM LINE
<p>"BE STRONG AND COURAGEOUS. DO NOT BE AFRAID...FOR THE LORD YOUR GOD GOES WITH YOU." DEUTERONOMY 31:6, NIV</p>	<p>WHO CAN HELP YOU BE BRAVE?</p>	<p>GOD CAN HELP ME BE BRAVE.</p>
<b>GOD MADE ME.</b>		

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## Elementary and KFC



**ELEMENTARY**  
OCTOBER 2023

### MONTHLY OVERVIEW

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

God is always good. Since the very beginning, God has been faithful and true. If God makes a promise, God keeps that promise. We are created in God's image . . . and when we live with integrity, we reflect God's integrity. When Jesus lived on earth, He lived a perfect life and showed integrity in ways we can't because of our sin. Jesus makes it possible for us to live as new creations. Through the Holy Spirit, we are being transformed into people of integrity. Who we are in private should match who we are in public. When we trust in God, we can make the wise choice and be truthful in whatever we say and do.

<b>WEEK ONE</b>	<b>BIBLE STORY</b> A Tree and Its Fruit Luke 6:43-45 (supporting: John 15:1-17)	<b>BOTTOM LINE</b> Be truthful with your whole life.
<b>WEEK TWO</b>	<b>BIBLE STORY</b> Naaman and Elisha's Servant 2 Kings 5	<b>BOTTOM LINE</b> When you're not truthful, you lose trust.
<b>WEEK THREE</b>	<b>BIBLE STORY</b> Daniel's Integrity with Food Daniel 1	<b>BOTTOM LINE</b> Do what's right wherever you are.
<b>WEEK FOUR</b>	<b>BIBLE STORY</b> Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego Daniel 3	<b>BOTTOM LINE</b> When you do what's right, others can see God.
<b>WEEK FIVE</b>	<b>BIBLE STORY</b> Think About These Things Philippians 4:8	<b>BOTTOM LINE</b> Focus on what's true.

<b>MEMORY VERSE</b>	<b>"ANYONE WHO LIVES WITHOUT BLAME WALKS SAFELY. BUT ANYONE WHO TAKES A CROOKED PATH WILL GET CAUGHT."</b> PROVERBS 10:9, NIRV
<b>INTEGRITY</b>	<b>CHOOSING TO BE TRUTHFUL IN WHATEVER YOU SAY AND DO</b>

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### Save the date.

**October 6:** Kids Night Out from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

**October 20:** Kids Night Out from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

**October 28:** Trunk or Treat from 3:00 – 5:00 p. m..

**October 29:** Luncheon for Families with Children or Youth.

# Youth Ministry

## *The Secret Ingredient For Having a Close Relationship With Your Kid*

by Ted Lowe

We've all been there: we look at our kid or teen and think things like:

I can't believe you just acted like that!

I can't believe you got so upset about something so small!

I can't believe that was such a big deal to you!

Sometimes, we just don't understand our kids no matter how hard we try. Maybe your kid has been frustrated with the same friend for years. Maybe your teenager feels defeated by others' Instagram profiles or TikTok followers. Maybe your kid gets super excited about Fantasy Football. Whatever it is, our kids' emotions can leave us feeling confused, yet how we handle them has far-reaching implications.

So, what's the secret?

Empathy.

Psychologist Dr. John Gottman defines empathy as, "The capacity to identify and share someone else's emotions and experiences." Empathy is like a radar—it picks up what is going on with our kids, and then steps into that emotion with them.

Celebrating with our kid is one of the areas many of us are missing out on. I often see parents, myself included, responding to excitement with rolled eyes, disinterest, or outright contempt. Don't be a killjoy. Smile when they smile. Laugh when they laugh. Be interested in what interests them.

Another dynamic of empathy, or being with our kids in their emotions, revolves around the tough stuff. When it comes to the tough emotions, I think my wife said it to me best when she said, "I don't want you to fix it, I want you to feel it." In the same way, oftentimes our kids don't want us to fix what they're going through, they want us to feel it with them.

You may be thinking, "But isn't honest, helpful advice essential?" Yes, but there is a time and place for it. And if your kid is emotional, that is not the time or place for advice. If we get the timing wrong, we can end up making relational withdrawals, keeping our kid from even hearing our advice, even if it's good. Because advice can be both good and helpful and still cause harm if the timing is off. In fact, when your kid is emotional, they are being driven by the emotional part of their brain. The logical part of their brain has greatly decreased in activity. So, no matter how logical your advice, it won't matter because it will be received emotionally. That's not necessarily a bad thing. In my experience, I have found **most of us give way too much weight to the power of our advice, and way too little to the power of empathy.** So, choosing to be with them in their emotions isn't doing **nothing**. Instead, it's doing **something** really powerful. It's being empathetic, and empathy is a relational connector.

That's why I want to give you just two words to remember: Choose empathy.

When your kid has a moment of excitement, say to yourself, “Choose empathy.” When they get frustrated, angry, or sad, say to yourself, “Choose empathy.” When they are displaying an emotion for a reason you can’t understand at all, choose empathy. The next time your kid is expressing frustration, feeling overwhelmed, or articulating a problem—even if you think you have the best solution in the world to fix it, save it for a better time and choose empathy in that moment instead.

Our kid needs to be seen figuratively and literally. Studies show simple eye contact produces empathy in you. That means, when you make eye contact with your kid, it tends to create more empathy in you for them. You can also mirror their emotions. Mirroring (not mocking) their emotions means matching the look on their face with yours. When you mirror their emotions and maintain eye contact, it brings the logical part of their brain back online. It helps them to feel less distress. When we see our kid is in emotional distress, we want them to think more logically. But **your logic doesn’t make them more logical, empathy does.**

Often, your kid will feel you understand them by your non-judgmental, sincere, patient presence and nothing more is required. But, depending on how your kid is wired, they may need you to verbally acknowledge you understand the topic and the emotion. For instance, you can say some things like:

“You were frustrated at baseball practice today because of the lack of teamwork. That’s understandable.”

“You feel your teacher misunderstood you in class and that made you feel embarrassed.”

“You are discouraged with how you are doing in school despite all the time you spent on homework.”

You don’t need to be a psychologist or a counselor. You just need to be a student of your kid. Practice presence with them and watch your relationship begin to change. Empathy is the start of hope and the protector of close connections.

Blessings in Christ,

Adrian

## Monthly Food Bank

Join us Saturday, October 14, 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.





# Thanksgiving Basket

## THANKSGIVING BASKET PROGRAM

October 22 through November 12, First Presbyterian Church is again joining *Arlington Charities* in feeding those needing a little help during Thanksgiving. The Mission and Evangelism Team has set a:

### 210 Baskets Goal

Please sign up outside the Fellowship Hall or the Chapel to fill one or more of the Baskets (grocery sacks). You can sign up as an individual, a family, or a group. After you sign up, please pick up the numbered sack, which has a list of the needed items attached. The following items are needed:

Turkey...Donation of \$20 (Optional)

Stuffing Mix...1 package

Corn...2 Cans

Cranberry Sauce...1 Can

Green Beans...2 Cans

Chicken Broth...1 Can

Evaporated Milk...1 Can

Yams...1 Can

French Fried Onions...1 Can

Mac & Cheese...1 Box

Instant Potatoes...1 pkg

Cream of Mushroom Soup...1 Can

Brown Gravy Packet

Foil Roasting Pan...(Optional)

Canned items need to be 15-oz or smaller. No "family-size" packaging

Please make checks payable to *Arlington Charities*, designate "*Thanksgiving 2023*".

Please return all sacks to the 100 Hall by: **Sunday, November 12**

Thanks ~ The Mission and Evangelism Team

# Update from the Transform Team

Here is a summary of current status and recent activity as of September 30th.

- Permit for the Fire Suppression System has not been released.
- First response from the city was received this week regarding the civil (water line installation) portion. The permit was not released but should be close.
- Phase 1 ceiling demo is complete.
- Pews have been removed and stored.
- Sanctuary and Chancel flooring abatement begins Monday October 02 - 5 day duration.
- Session approved expansion of Transform Team scope of responsibilities to now include study and evaluations regarding additional opportunities relative to FPCA building renovations.

## Did you know?

Did you know that we have an abundance of medical items that you can borrow or have if you need them either for a little while or a longer time?

Below are listed what items are available:

1. tray table
2. wheel chair (s)
3. shower chair (s)
4. crutches
5. canes
6. reachers or grabbers
7. wedge pillow
8. bedside commode
9. forearm crutch
10. tripod cane with seat

Please let me know how we can help you.

Thanks,  
Marge Dawson  
mdawsonarltx@gmail.com 817-980-6825

# 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 Wednesday Women's Bible Study will meet on the second Wednesday of each month at 1 p.m. in the parlor. 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 parlor every Tuesday morning at 10:30 a.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**

Meets on Wednesdays from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

### **Ring of Praise Handbell Ensemble**

Meets on Wednesdays at 6 p.m. in room 106.

### **Youth Choir**

Meets on Sundays, from 12:45 to 1:45 p.m. (lunch for participants 12:15).

### **Children's Music Ministries**

Meets on Sundays, from 12:45 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. (lunch for participants 12:15)



## *Church Leadership*

### **Deacon Meeting**

Thursday, Oct 19, at 7:00 p.m., the Diaconate meets in the parlor to oversee the Congregational Care, Hospitality, and Fellowship ministries.

### **Team Meeting Night**

Thursday, Oct 12, teams meet for ministry planning and coordination.

### **Session Meeting**

Thursday, Oct 26, 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 on Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. to quilt, sew, knit, crochet, embroider, and just enjoy being together. Bring your project and join in! Bring a sack lunch and join the ladies for lunch at noon.

### **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 November issue of The News is October 15!**

## Prayer Ministry

**Prayers for those with health and other concerns:** The family of Mary Jane Wright, the family of Helen Moulton, Tina Paulk, Jack Bos, Carol Browning, Bettye Burdett, Edna Collins, Jennyfer Delgado, Cyprian Engwenyi, Betty Farrell, Ivone Franzolin, Mary Lou Garrison, Joe and Lila Glenn, Jo Ann Hanson, Gary Lindley, Pat May and her son Tim Karnes, Graciela Lopez Montero, Mathias Mbeng Ndip, Aileigh Rodriguez, Tonya Scrabeck, David Spencer, Alecia Street, Esther Teboh, Susie Thurston, Donna Vickers, Nancy Welborne, Patrick Welborne, Danny Womble, Carlos Zamora.

**Prayers for our family serving in the armed forces:** Amie Murtha, Colin A. Peden

If you are a member with a family member who is on active duty in the armed services, please contact the church office at [info@firstprestexas.org](mailto:info@firstprestexas.org) with the name and their relationship to you.

**Prayers for our homebound members:** Polly Baugh, Madge Casselman, Lucy Cleaver, Barbara Hughes, Betty Snowden, Dee Uhri, Richard Whitenight.

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.

