



“Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.”

Matthew 2:2

January
2024

The News

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Newsletter Team

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The News is a publication of
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"Penny for Your Thoughts"

An article caught my eye recently called, "What Pastors Actually Think About While They Preach," by Sam Rainer. He shared his top five but encouraged readers to think of their own. In doing so, I found myself chuckling at myself and also recognizing how distracted I can get – but it is probably not the distractions you are thinking of.

I started taking piano lessons from Mrs. Alexander in first grade. Each spring, all of her students put on a spring recital. To prepare us for sudden disruptions or distractions, each year she gathered students from the same grade for a practice run-through. While each student played their pieces, all the other students sat behind him or her. And each student was allowed to make two noises. This could be a cough or a sneeze. Picture a group of fourth-grade boys and imagine what other noises they might like to make... This was a great technique to teach us to stay focused. While I could never block the noises out completely, it continues to help me keep those noises in the background. I'm just glad we didn't have cell phones back then!

I think I have heard a great number of noises while preaching, cell phones definitely being one of them. I have even heard some snores. Can you believe that? I'll share a few of Sam's top five and share some of my own thoughts.

He wrote, "First, I don't notice who is getting up... Unless you're doing jumping jacks in a leotard, it's not likely to bother me."

"Second, I've always got something on my mind, even when I'm mid-sentence."

"Fourth, I probably heard your child crying, but it doesn't anger me. In fact, I believe it's a beautiful sound. A church with no children is dead. The sound of a baby is as powerful as a choir anthem. It means the church is alive." AMEN!

"Fifth, every week I think while I'm preaching how much I love the people who are sitting and listening. It's a privilege to preach."

The other one he shared had to do with not seeing some people because of their lights. I rather enjoy I have the ability to see your faces, unless you're in the choir. While I'm preaching, I might be struck by, "I haven't seen that person in a while. I'm so glad they're here!" Or sometimes I might notice who is not there in their usual seat and wonder if they're okay. And yes, I'm always

curious and thinking about who in the world might be on the other side of our camera streaming our service.

Most of those things are unavoidable. Where I kick myself is when my mind tries to think down the road of the service, stressing over how communion is going to flow in the Fellowship Hall. It is really difficult for pastors and leaders to truly worship on Sundays because we are focused on the next part of the service. Most of the time, when I'm preaching, that is when I am most focused because it is just me, you, the Word, and the words I have prepared. And thanks to Mrs. Alexander's training, fighting through noises and things isn't a big deal. It would be pretty unrealistic to expect a couple hundred people to remain perfectly still and quiet. That would be a whole other distraction in itself! I'll leave you with the closing to Sam's article.

“So, I'll gladly hear your apologies about taking a phone call, getting sick and needing to leave, or quickly sliding out of a pew to take a wailing child into the lobby. But there's no need to apologize. I'm just glad you care about God's Word. However, if your kid does light his hair on fire during the Christmas Eve candlelight service, please tell me about it. I love hearing those stories. They make me smile.” As long as everyone's ok!!

Pastor Chris

Prayer Request cards

“Make your requests known unto God...” Philippians 4:6

Have you seen the new Prayer Request cards that are now available for you?

Check out the two prayer stations in the lobby of the Fellowship Hall. There you will find prayer request cards, a depository box to place your card, and a Q and A that should answer any questions you may have.

If you have a prayer request, please take a card, write your request, and drop it in the wooden box or on an offering plate. Our Prayer Team collects the cards regularly and prays for each request. If your request is confidential, just mark the card as such and your request will be honored.

If you are a shut-in, please contact Jim Shroyer at 682-445-0155 for cards.

Our church is happy to extend our prayer ministry with you!

Finance Update

For the month of November 2023:

Budget (Operating and Funds Released)

Income: \$ 79,335

Expense: (\$80,621)

Income - Expense for month: **(\$637)**

Income - Expense for 2023 Year to Date: **(\$88,146)**



Comments:

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

- have an exciting Commitment Sunday, concluding our annual generosity campaign, BELIEVE.
- enjoy an awesome Family Retreat at Lakeview Camp and Retreat Center in Waxahachie, TX.
- celebrate and fellowship with our church family with our annual Thanksgiving Dinner.
- host a very successful Embrace Grace Baby Shower.
- conclude our annual Thanksgiving Basket program joining Arlington Charities in feeding those who, otherwise, may not be able to enjoy a Thanksgiving dinner.
- provide an opportunity to serve by providing a ride for those who need a ride to church.
- As of November, our Capital Campaign fund balance is \$1,469,573.

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

Preschoolers are learning a lot of important things. How to put away their toys. What is wrong. What is right. When to say please, thank you, and I'm sorry.

But learning important things doesn't stop after preschool. It never stops! That's why we want to make sure preschoolers know that they have the BEST Teacher teaching them important things—the MOST important things—for the rest of their lives. And He wants to be their friend forever! Yes, it's Jesus! So get ready to search for some **CLUBHOUSE CLUES** and help preschoolers discover that **Jesus teaches me important things.**

WEEK	BIBLE STORY	STORY FOCUS
ONE	Jesus Teaches a Crowd Mark 6:30-34	People came to hear Jesus because He teaches important things.
TWO	Birds and Flowers* Matthew 6:25-34	Jesus teaches that God cares for us.
THREE	Bigger Barns Acts 2:45; Luke 12:16-23	Jesus teaches us we can share.
FOUR	Prodigal Son Luke 15:11-24	Jesus teaches us that God loves us no matter what.

**Monthly Story for Toddler Curriculum*

MEMORY VERSE	KEY QUESTION	BOTTOM LINE
"THE PEOPLE WERE AMAZED AT HIS TEACHING." MATTHEW 7:28, NCV	WHO TEACHES YOU IMPORTANT THINGS?	JESUS TEACHES ME IMPORTANT THINGS.
JESUS WANTS TO BE MY FRIEND FOREVER.		

Elementary and KFC



ELEMENTARY
JANUARY 2024

MONTHLY OVERVIEW

GOD VIEW:

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

In Psalm 24:1, David wrote, "The earth belongs to the Lord. And so does everything in it." (NirV) God is the author of creation, and God has entrusted us to care for and cultivate the world we see around us. We do that by taking responsibility. From work we need to accomplish, to people we meet, to the words we use, life is filled with moments where we can decide to reflect God's character, take responsibility, and use what we have wisely. When we follow through and do what needs to be done, we can point others to Jesus, the One who took the ultimate responsibility for us and made it possible for us to be with God forever.

WEEK ONE

BIBLE STORY
Greatest Commandment
Matthew 22:36-40

BOTTOM LINE
Love God and love others.

WEEK TWO

BIBLE STORY
Bigger Barns
Luke 12:13-21

BOTTOM LINE
Share what you have.

WEEK THREE

BIBLE STORY
Ant and Sluggard
Proverbs 6:6-8

BOTTOM LINE
Work hard.

WEEK FOUR

BIBLE STORY
Use Words Wisely
Ephesians 4:29

BOTTOM LINE
Use your words wisely.

MEMORY VERSE

"SUPPOSE YOU CAN BE TRUSTED WITH SOMETHING VERY LITTLE. THEN YOU CAN ALSO BE TRUSTED WITH SOMETHING VERY LARGE."
LUKE 16:10A, NIRV

RESPONSIBILITY

SHOWING YOU CAN BE TRUSTED WITH WHAT IS EXPECTED OF YOU.

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Save the date.

January 12: Kids Night Out from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

January 26: Kids Night Out from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

January 28: Luncheon for Families with Children or Youth.

Youth Ministry

The Question Your High Schooler Is Asking You

by Parent Cue

Ah, the teenage years.

Without saying more than that, every teen parent reading this blog post felt exactly what that phrase meant on a soul level. Every phase in a kid's life has its challenges, but the years your kid is in high school will test every bit of patience you have in you.

But this phase is not only overwhelming for you, but for your teenager too. Once your kid enters high school, they start developing a sense of purpose—one they will likely use to navigate their future direction. This sense of purpose will guide them as they choose their community, the things they value, and what they choose to pursue. Talk about a big deal, right?

Behind it all, your teenager is asking a certain question right now, and it's up to you to use your influence in the right way to answer those questions in the most loving and patient ways.

Ninth graders start high school asking this critical question: "Where do I belong?" The answer may determine the direction of the next four years for them. Freshmen are looking for a new tribe, a place to belong. Maybe they'll find a group that has similar interests, maybe they'll gain some new interests and find a group that way. No one knows what will happen. So, what do they need to hear from you? They need to hear they are accepted no matter what. You can put your words into action by being the chauffeur to all of their extracurricular activities and opening your home to their friends.

Once your kid becomes a **sophomore**, they become keen on challenging limits. While this may seem rebellious, at the heart of it, your tenth grader is asking, "Why should I believe?" and "Why can't I?" It may not feel so great being on the opposing side of their questions, but trust us, it's a good thing. This is a time when they're defining and clarifying their values. So, listen carefully to them and encourage their questions with phrases like, "I'm listening," "I trust you," "I am for you," and, "I love you no matter what."

When **junior year** rolls around, your teenager is ready to take action. They want to lead something. They want to be a part of something bigger than themselves. The question they're asking in this phase is: "How can I matter?" You can answer this question by leaning into their desire to lead and make choices for themselves. Give them responsibility on a consistent basis, step back, and watch how they handle the situation they're in.

In the final phase of parenting a school-age kid, the question being asked by **high school seniors** is: "What will I do?" It's pretty scary to be a senior, if you think about it. They're about to head off alone into a world they've been hearing so much about for their whole lives, and that realization can be daunting. During this time of transition, your teenager needs to hear, "I love you today," "We can handle tomorrow," and "Let's think together about your best next step."

Blessings in Christ,

Adrian

Monthly Food Bank

Join us Saturday, January 13, 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.



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

Music Ministry

Music Ministry

Interested in leading worship through music?
Join the Chancel Choir,
Ring of Praise Handbell Ensemble,
Agape Youth Choir, or Children's Music Ministries!

Contact Russell Farnell for information:
817-274-8286 or
russell@firstprestexas.org

Women's Ministry

ATTENTION, LADIES!

Saturday, January 27

10:00 a.m. to 12 p.m. Parlor

It's said that a new year brings 365 opportunities to develop new habits. Join us for brunch, and start 2024 off right by learning how to develop the spiritual discipline of Sabbath and rest. Once again, our speaker will be Martita Lynch, a great favorite. Feel free to bring a friend!!



\$10 Registration Online

To register, visit the FPCA website (firstprestexas.org)

Our Ministries- Adult Ministries - Scroll to Women's Ministry

You can pay online, on the FPCA app, or by check.

Questions? Please call Jamie at 214-674-7821 or e-mail womensministry@firstprestexas.org

Women's Ministry Team

Youth Cue

youth ||:cue February 23-25, 2024



Our Youth Music Ministries will be attending the YouthCUE choir festival in February. Registration is now open! Please contact AJ Baker for more information about this transformative music ministry event.

aj.tx85@gmail.com 817-676-5175

Family Living Class

Family Living Class members enjoyed a joyful Christmas lunch on December 8th at a long-time Arlington favorite, Moni's restaurant.

Fellowship, fun, and a grateful joy for our class that has continued to serve one another, and our church was evident.

The tradition of collecting toys to deliver to Mission Arlington was a success with 19 new toys being delivered.



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

Team Meeting Night

Thursday, Jan 11, teams meet for ministry planning and coordination.

Session Meeting

Thursday, Jan 25, 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 February issue of The News is January 15!

Prayer Ministry

Prayers for those with health and other concerns: The family of Carol Moody, Eleanor Schernbeck, Ken Floyd, Jerry Tees, Harold Thomlinson, Sherry Wolfe, Sheri Quick, Charlie Nieman, Jack Bos, Carol Browning, Bettye Burdett, Edna Collins, Cyprian Engwenyi, Betty Farrell, Ivone Franzolin, Mary Lou Garrison, Joe and Lila Glenn, Jo Ann Hanson, Pat May and her son Tim Karnes, Graciela Lopez Montero, Mathias Mbeng Ndip, Tina Paulk, Aileigh Rodriguez, Tonya Scrabeck, David Spencer, Alecia Street, Susie Thurston, Donna Vickers, Nancy Welborne, Patrick Welborne, Danny Womble, Carlos and Jennyfer Zamora.

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

