

September
2025

**THERE IS NEITHER
JEW NOR GREEK
SLAVE NOR FREE
MALE NOR FEMALE
FOR YOU ARE ALL ONE IN
CHRIST
JESUS
GALATIANS 3:28**

The News

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Newsletter Team

Talita Gottmann, Editor

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Arlington, TX 76010

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Organic Diversity

I received an email recently from an organization I subscribe to. This group works with lots of research and statistics and every now and then, that kind of stuff can actually be pretty interesting! The title was, “Are Churches Still Racially Segregated Today? (What Has Changed Since the 1960s). The author, Ryan Burge, opened with: “The most segregated hour is at 11am on Sunday morning” is a widely recognized statement concerning race and religion in the United States. While often linked to Martin Luther King, Jr., variations of this expression predated his popularization of it... But has anything changed around race and religion since those ideas were injected into mainstream discourse in the 1950s and 1960s? It’s a very hard question to answer... The recent Pew Religious Landscape Survey is an exception, as it included a question for regular attendees: “When you attend religious services in person, what is the race or ethnicity of most other people attending?”

This caught my eye/ear/heart because this is a topic and a lament I have heard often in our denomination. To be fair, this is not unique to Presbyterians, but I’ve been to enough conferences and gatherings to confirm this sentiment is out there. I was curious what this research had to say so I followed the link to the article. Boom. The dreaded paywall. Ok, I guess I didn’t want to know that much. But it brought to mind several conversations recently about FPCA.

I often say that I believe we have to be one of the most diverse PC(USA) congregations in the country. Most churches talk about striving for diversity and finding ways to try and manufacture it, but nothing really changes. But when I look across our sanctuary on a Sunday morning, when leading a staff meeting, when moderating the session, all of these places display an incredible diversity I have not seen in any other Presbyterian church. And perhaps my favorite aspect of this is that it is not forced. It just happens. And I believe it is a beautiful glimpse of what we will see and experience in the Kingdom of God.

Yes, there is much diversity. But what also warms my heart is that we gather for a united purpose. We worship with a unified purpose. We bring all of our backgrounds and traditions and lay them at the feet of Jesus and worship together. And in that moment, nothing else really matters.

With this gift of diversity, we are intentional of reflecting that in our leadership and our staff. And I believe we are much richer in faith because of it. FPCA is a special place for many reasons. All of you are a major part of what makes this congregation incredible.

A Labor of Love

Here's a fun "Labor Day" week activity for you that is no labor for you at all, except a labor of love. In fact, you can enjoy doing it from the comfort of your own air-conditioned surroundings.

Take a moment to look at the following scripture references that are missing two key ingredients: they are missing all the vowels (including y) and the specific scripture reference as recorded in the New Revised Standard Version. For everyone finding at least one scripture reference correctly, Prayer Ministry will mail you a gift. (No fair using AI!!) No need to send the actual quote; just note the book, chapter and verse(s).

Now, for those of you getting ALL THREE right, or even TWO, guess what? You get the same gift as those getting only one, but you get extra "bragging rights," right? Let's keep the right spirit! It's an opportunity to stay cool and have fun - and it offers both a good chance to be in God's word and an opportunity to gain a meaningful gift you will find purposeful.

OLD TESTAMENT:

SNG PRSS T TH LRD, FR H HS DN GLRSL; LT THS B KNWN N LL TH RTH.

NEW TESTAMENT:

RJC N HP; B PTNT N FFLCTN; PRSVR N PRR.

PSALMS:

LFT P M YS T TH MNTNS – WHR DS M HLP CM FRM?

Send responses to prayer@firstprestexas.org

The Living Stone

The Living Stone is the Cornerstone. Are you the cornerstone of your life? So often we put ourselves in that position. Are there decisions to be made; directions to be decided? We are good at that; until we are not. We are not the cornerstone. We are Building Stones; built into a spiritual house; to be a holy priesthood; offering Christ approved lives; chosen to be a holy people; God's instruments to do his work. Prayer is the path to understanding.

(drawn from I Peter 2 in The Message)

prayer@firstprestexas.org



Prayer Ministry

Beginning in July, Prayer Ministry began a series of weekly e-News inserts that directly relate to a larger insert in the Newsletter. Each of these monthly endeavors is intended to encourage and edify toward a deeper more meaningful prayer life. Please join us each week and each month as our church moves toward developing a culture of prayer.

Prayer Ministry

prayer@firstprestexas.org

Monthly Food Bank

Join us Saturday, September 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 is 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.

With heartfelt thanks

I'm deeply grateful to FPCA for the opportunity to serve as your Newsletter Editor over the years. It has truly been a blessing—one filled with learning, connection, and growth. I've gained so much from each of you, and I carry those lessons with me.

Though it's bittersweet to step away, the time has come to pass the torch. Please join me in warmly welcoming Tricia Regalado as she steps into this role. I know you'll support her with the same kindness and encouragement you've shown me.

With appreciation and blessings,

Talita Gottmann

Finance Update

General Fund for July 2025:

	<u>Monthly</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Income & Funds Released:	53,737	726,149
<u>Expenses:</u>	<u>(81,231)</u>	<u>(685,366)</u>
Variance	(27,494)	40,783
Donors Income:	48,664	558,964
<u>Budget:</u>	<u>75,085</u>	<u>525,595</u>
Variance	(26,421)	33,369



Comments:

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

- continue and conclude our Pentecost series on the Holy Spirit. The symbols of the Spirit that were taught were the Dove, Fire, Wind, Oil, Chief Counsel, Seal, & Tree.
- provide an exciting youth camp this summer at Mo-Ranch in Hunt, Texas.
- continue with the Summertime Literary and Potato Chip Snack Society, hosted by our Women's Ministry Team, to explore the award-winning book, Find Your People, and to discover exactly how to dive into the deep end and experience the full wonder of community.
- hear about the experiences from our mission trip team who recently served in Hendersonville, NC.
- provide opportunities to serve our community by donating needed items to Arlington Charities, and by distributing food at the mobile food bank.

As of July, our Capital Campaign fund balance is \$157,919.

We are doing well and, because of you, we can 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, Elementary, and KFC



Each season—fall, winter, spring, and summer—brings something unique and wonderful. From leaves changing colors to flowers blooming or animals hibernating, the changing seasons remind us that no matter what, God is with us through it all. In this 4-week series, kids will discover how we can respond to God in every season of life. They'll learn that **God's words are always in season, God leads us in every season, God hears us no matter the season, and we can thank God for every season.**

BIG IDEAS & BIBLE STORIES

God's words are always in season. (Delight in God's Ways: Psalm 1; Mark 13:28–31)

God leads us in every season. (The Lord Is My Shepherd: Psalm 23; Luke 15:1–7)

God hears us no matter the season. (Create in Me a Pure Heart: Psalm 51; 1 Timothy 2:1–7)

We can thank God for every season. (Give Thanks: Psalm 100; 1 Timothy 6:6–16)

WEEKLY CURRICULUM SUMMARIES:

1. This week, kids can grow by learning how to delight in God's ways. From Christmas lights to summer pool days, every season has something unique and special about it. This week, we'll hear how the Psalms describe the unique characteristics of those who follow God closely. From these words, we'll discover that **God's words are always in season**, offering us guidance and wisdom whether the sun is shining or the snow is falling.
2. This week, kids can grow by learning that God is our shepherd who leads, protects, and cares for us. Fall is a time of crunchy leaves, pumpkin patches, and a bit more darkness as the days get shorter. This week, we'll explore a psalm from David that helps us see how God stays near

us even in the dark. No matter what seasons of life we experience—the bright or the dark—David's words remind us how **God leads us in every season**.

3. This week, kids can grow by learning that God can make our hearts clean. When the winter snow falls, the world can feel so still and quiet that you feel like you can hear for miles. This week, we'll hear how David wrote a psalm, asking for forgiveness, knowing God was listening. His prayer helps us know that **God hears us no matter the season**, whether we're asking for forgiveness, giving thanks, or just sharing what's on our minds.
4. This week, kids can grow by learning how to have thankful hearts that praise God. From snow-packed winters to cluttered closets, spring is a time for clearing out the old to make space for something new. This week, we'll explore a psalm that invites us to make space to show our gratitude to God. These words help remind us that **we can thank God for every season** because it's not about our circumstances—it's about who God is.

MEMORY VERSE: “The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever.” — Isaiah 40:8 (NIV)

Upcoming Activities

Family Magic Show and Pizza: September 6 at 4 p.m.

Family Game Night and Pizza: September 19 at 6:30 p.m.

Youth and Children's Music Ministries

Sunday, September 7

Children's Music Ministries and Youth Music Ministries resume Sunday, September 7th from 12:45-1:45! Children and youth meet for lunch (provided) in the Fellowship Hall at 12:15. Contact russell@firstprestexas.org or Laura.Farnell@gmail.com for more information.

Fall Women's Bible Study

September 10

The Women's Wednesday Bible Study will begin their new study September 10, 2025. This group meets the second Wednesday of each month, September - May at 1 p.m. At FPCA. Currently meeting in the Fellowship Hall, but this could change. Members volunteer to lead a lesson and/or bring a snack.

This will be the 25th anniversary of this group meeting. It is open to all women. The Study guides will be ordered on July 15, so if you would like to join and have a book, please reply to Debbie Richardson (der817@gmail.com) or Sheri Quick (sheriq@aol.com). Cost is \$14 plus \$1 to help defray the cost of shipping. When the order arrives, an email will be sent on where to pick up your book and make payment (a check or cash).

Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity in Jesus Christ

by Rhashell D. Hunter

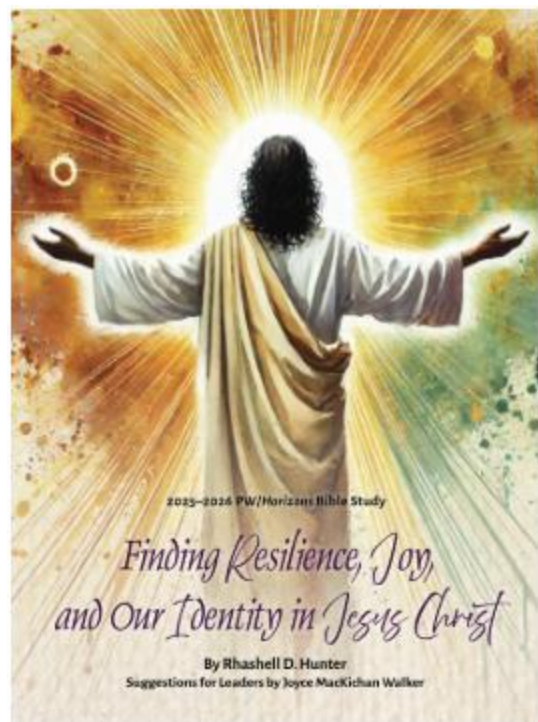
In this Bible study, we will explore resilience. This is modeled for us by several biblical characters, gospel and epistle writers, as well as Jesus. So, what exactly is resilience?

Resilience is the ability to spring back into shape and to adapt well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or stress—such as from family, relationships, health, workplace, and financial stressors. People who survive and thrive well in change are resilient.

The Bible study is also about joy. How do we find joy in a chaotic world? Christian joy may be different from how a lot of people define joy.

Joy is sometimes confused with happiness. For Christians, joy can occur while we are in the midst of difficult circumstances. Joy is the second fruit of the spirit, preceded by love and followed by peace (Gal 5:22-23). Trusting in God when we are in trying times can fill us with glorious joy and peace. We have joy in our suffering, because ultimately our joy is found in Jesus Christ.

We will also seek to rediscover our identity. Identity is more than who we are or who we show ourselves to be. At its core, it points to our humanity. Our core identity is not found in our titles, our positions, our spouses, our partners, or our possessions. For Christians, our identity is found in Jesus Christ.



Questions about the little Prayer Room

Here are answers to some of the questions that have come to Prayer Ministry:

- Where is the Prayer Room located?
Enter the Chapel; move to the front left corner to enter the Prayer Room.
- When is the Prayer Room open?
Anytime the church is open.
- Do I need to contact someone to ask to use the Prayer Room?
No, you may use it whenever you choose.
- Are there any rules for using the Prayer Room?
We only ask that you leave it as you found it.
- For what reason would someone need a “Prayer Room”?
It is a nice quiet room away from the noise of the day to focus. Come and enjoy! You can close the door and be alone with God.
- Can I ask a person to pray with me inside the Prayer Room?
Yes, with some restrictions for security reasons. See posting in the Prayer Room.
- Is there someone available to pray with me?
Of course, we can arrange for someone from staff or Prayer Ministry Team to pray with you. Send your request to prayer@firstprestexas.org and you will be contacted to set a time suitable to you.
- Is there a restroom in the Prayer Room?
Yes, this assures your total privacy until you are ready to leave.
- May I bring a Bible or books on prayer to the room to use?
Of course! There are also Bibles and books to help with prayer, along with pens and notepads for your time of meditation.
- May I burn a candle?
No, for safety reasons, flames are not allowed, however, there are battery operated candles for your use in creating environment. Please turn them off when you leave the room.

The Prayer Ministry hopes that many of the questions you have asked are answered here. Please feel free to reach out on any subject. Our hope is that this uniquely wonderful Sacred Space will serve all of our members seeking a quiet place for an intimate time with our Lord and to intercede for the needs you will find posted there.

The Prayer Council

prayer@firstprestexas.org

Fall Word Search

O D I U C R I S P M T N B O V J N B Q Q Z G P U
G E Z E M J Z T M K W O K A P P L E A L X Q O U
A S H Y A I P Q Z J I C Q B A U T U M N U I X W
V H B A C C H I L L Y T U F N M W A Q J C K E N
O R P G O Q G J O E H O M R O Y D D S D G C B Z
X M D C Z H R Q Y F N B Y P V M Z R V J A F O O
A V P F Y I W N E D Z E A G E V W S M B K H U R
U D S E E I K D L S I R K Z M U N Q C I N I N A
P L S E E A G V L B L Z P W B O V U O Z G H T K
U K F S W C B H O U G O L D E N Q A B B B F I E
M V D K U F P Z W J G G Y D R B E S F Y U L F W
A R U C C C V J Z Y Q S D J V V N H A H M A U J
P P S S R S B V J N M C W V C L E B H Q H N L J
U H Z E U U R B S O V A M G Z I Q R N B V N E F
M A H P N S E D Y N O R C H A R D I F T W E Y T
P L D T C B E K X C N C I Q C Z B S N G D L Q A
K L Z E H E Z Z E O V O Y M C T X K K C I D E R
I O P M Y K Y D V L Y C B K R G D R O F T L M Z
N W X B U E T F T O U P E A R S E Q H J I J M B
C E V E D N K V X R K N L Y S P D H S N H Z P E
Z E K R P T R E E S T D E J O R A N G E D J X H
K N I K Z I C J U B T G B Z Q Z G K M H Z I T M
L E A V E S F K D G Z N M M R U I B Z J C Z H Q
S S W Y Q I E F A L L Y F L Q V V G E E S E V E

BOUNTIFUL	HALLOWEEN	SEPTEMBER	NOVEMBER	CRUNCHY
FLANNEL	OCTOBER	ORCHARD	PUMPKIN	AUTUMN
BREEZY	CHILLY	COLORS	GOLDEN	LEAVES
ORANGE	SQUASH	YELLOW	APPLE	BRISK
CIDER	CRISP	GEESE	PEARS	TREES
COZY	FALL	RAKE		

This Month



Bible Studies

Men's Bible Study

The Men's Bible Study group meets every Wednesday morning at 8:00 a.m. in room 204. 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 resumes on the second Wednesday of September at 1:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. 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 Fellowship Hall every Tuesday morning at 10:30 a.m.

CWF Women's Bible Study

The CWF Women's Bible Study group meets virtually every Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. EXCEPT the last Wednesday of the month when the group meets at FPCA in the parlor.



Music Ministries

Chancel Choir

Meets on Wednesdays from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. in the Chancel Choir.

Ring of Praise Handbell Ensemble

Resume September 3rd Wednesdays, at 6:00 p.m. in the Handbell room.

Youth Choir

Resume September 7th Sunday, from 12:45 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. (lunch for participants 12:15 p.m.).

Children's Music Ministries

Resume September 7th Sunday, from 12:45 p.m. – 1:45 p.m. (lunch for participants 12:15 p.m.).



Church Leadership

Deacon Meeting

Thursday, September 4, the Diaconate meets.

Team Meeting Night

Thursday, September 11, at 7:00 p.m., all teams meet for ministry planning and coordination.

Session Meeting

Thursday, September 25 at 7:00 p.m., the Session meets 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 Thursday from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

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

Saints Alive

This will be a recurring luncheon on the last Thursday of each month- January to May; and September to December. We will take the months of June, July, and August off.

We look forward to seeing you in Fellowship Hall.

Jodie Schenck and Becki Briggs, Co-Chairs.

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: The family of Joe Glenn, Nancy Guerry, Drew Stephenson, Charles Arnold, Nancy Brown, Carol Browning, Judy Crowell, Cyprain Engwenyi, Betty Farrell, Ken Floyd, Bobbie Fowler, Ivone Franzolin, Margaret Landolt, Shawn LeBlanc, Pat May and her son Tim Karnes, Judy Reck, Lisa Scrabeck, Tonya Scrabeck, David Spencer, Susie Thurston, Donna Vickers, Nancy Welborne, Patrick Welborne, Sherry and Shelby Wolfe, Danny Womble.

Prayers for our family serving in the armed forces: Christopher Young, Wolfgang Van Wie.

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: Bettye Burdett, Madge Casselman, Ann Scarr, Betty Snowden, Leonard & Mary Jane Tibbetts, 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.

