

The News

The monthly newsletter of
First Presbyterian Church Arlington



*“O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever.”
- 1 Chronicles 16:34*

November 2025

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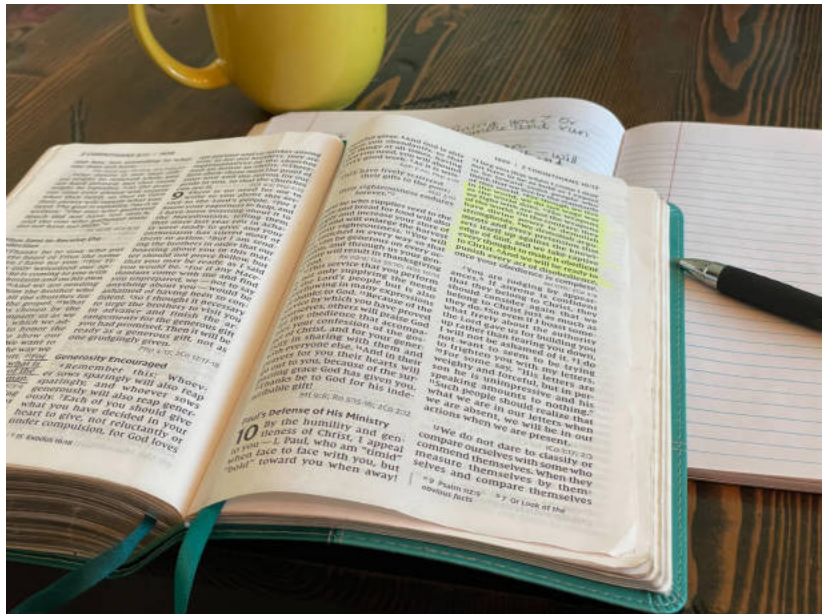
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Deadline for the December
newsletter is November 15.

God blesses preparation



In 2011, I watched an online webinar on preaching calendars. Through that year, I did what a lot of pastors do and that is relied solely on the Revised Common Lectionary. And I will say there is nothing wrong with that! I will also say, there is nothing that binds pastors to those selections.

For the record, I still use the Lectionary (occasionally) and have developed series based on Lectionary readings. But that meant coming to the office on Monday morning, opening up the readings for that week, and prayerfully discerning which direction to go.

I had heard of pastors taking some time to retreat and plan a year's worth of preaching but that always sounded so daunting to me. And I will admit, it is a bit daunting! But it is not impossible. That webinar taught me how I could do it and it is simpler than what I had made it out to be in my head.

I'm sharing this because towards the end of November, I will be taking a few days off to retreat and plan for 2026. I have been asked about this process so I thought I

would provide some insights.

One of the phrases I remember most from that webinar is, “God blesses preparation.” This was to justify, in some sense, the act of deliberate planning – because there are also some preachers out there who walk up to the pulpit without notes, an outline, definitely not a manuscript, and rely on the Holy Spirit to press play and off they go. Again, nothing wrong with that either!

But this sermon planning process invites the Holy Spirit to work and participate in a different way.

I have included this year’s calendar. This is the clean version. The one on my desk has many more scribbles and notes. My actual one has also been adjusted slightly to allow for a different date for the Advent Festival, for example. But what I first do is mark off the major seasons for the year: Lent, Easter, and Advent. There are also important annual days like Pentecost and All Saints Sunday. We have established a rhythm for our fall generosity series, so that has become predictable to block off.

The Campbells do have the travel bug, so I do my best to block off when I know we will be away for that, or when I am with the men at MO Ranch the first Sunday of May, and other continuing education opportunities. This leaves me with blocks of weeks.

I have also tied in massive world events like the Olympics and the World Cup.

Even the premier of Star Wars Episode VII prompted a fun series on some biblical themes that appear in that franchise.

I also keep another long running document of ideas for series. And for each one I note how many weeks it lasts. Some are as short as two; others could go for nearly a year. Some are seasonal as well. So at that point, it becomes a puzzle.

I distinctly remember plugging in the series on the 12 disciples of Jesus (plus Paul) to fill a big block in the summer. I had no idea how impactful that series would be.

There have been other instances I planned something a year out and that week’s theme, scripture, something connected with a world event on that Sunday. I always knew God was part of the process, but I sometimes wondered how much of this was just random or inspired.

The truth is, this process has required less time over the years because my trust in God’s guidance has grown. I used to really fret over choosing one series or book of the Bible over the other.

I still discern, but it is far less stressful. This may make a good prayer testimony as well one month.

I have come to believe that God does indeed bless preparation. I’ll ask for your prayers as well as I make my preparations for 2026.

Live Forever,
Pastor Chris

“This sermon planning process invites the Holy Spirit to work and participate in a different way.”

God blesses preparation continued from page 2

2025 Preaching Calendar

January

5 Eph. 1:3-14
12 Out
19 He Is Jehovah Nelson 1; Exod. 3:13-17
26 Jehovah 2; Gen. 22:1-14

February

2 Jehovah 3; Exod. 17:8-16
9 Jehovah 4; Exod. 15:22-26
16 Jehovah 5; Judges 6:1-24
23 Jehovah 6; Jer. 23:1-6

March

2 Transfiguration Out
5 Ash Wednesday
9 Ps. 91:1-2, 9-16; Rom. 10:8b-13
16 Capital Campaign 1
23 Capital Campaign 2
30 Capital Campaign 3

April

6 Capital Campaign 4 – Commitment Sunday
13 Palm Sunday Ps. 118:1-2, 19-29
17 Maundy Thursday
18 Good Friday
20 Easter Radical Living for Jesus 101;
1 Pet. 1:18-29
27 Living 2; Luke 9:23-26

May

4 Living 3; 1 Tim. 2:1-7
11 Living 4; Mark 10:35-45
18 Living 5; 2 Tim. 3:14-17
25 Living 6; 2 Cor. 9:1-15

June

1 Ascension Out
8 Pentecost Symbols of the Spirit Zon 13;
John 16:7-16, 32-33
15 Symbols 2; John 1:32; Matt. 3:13-17
22 Symbols 3; Acts 2:1-4; Isa. 4:2-4

29 Symbols 4; Acts 2:1-2; John 3:1-8

July

6 Symbols 5; Zech. 4:1-6
13 Symbols 6; John 16:7-14; 1 John 2:??
20 Symbols 7; Eph. 1:1-14; 4:30
27 Symbols 8; Gal. 5:1, 13-25

August

3 Out
10 Out
17 Qualities of Discipleship Zon 16;
Luke 18:9-14
24 Qualities 2; Luke 16:1-9
31 Qualities 3; Luke 16:19-31

September

7 Qualities 4; Matt. 18:21-35
14 Qualities 5; Luke 10:25-37
21 Qualities 6; Matt. 25:14-30; Luke 19:11-27
28 Qualities 7; Luke 7:36-50

October

5 Qualities 8; Matt. 25: 1-3
12 Qualities 9; Luke 12:13-21
19 Out
26 Generosity 1

November

2 All Saints Generosity 2
9 Generosity 3
16 Generosity 4 Commitment Sunday
23 Christ the King Out
30 A Look at Messiah 101; Isaiah 40:1-5

December

7 Messiah 2; John 1:14-18
14 Advent Festival Isa. 9:6-7
21 Luke 2:10-14
24 Christmas Eve
28 Rev. 19:6 / Jan 4 – Gal. 4:4-5; Phil. 2:5-11

Prayer ministry



Be on guard, grow in grace

2 Peter 3:17 - "But you, friends, are well warned. Be on guard lest you lose your footing."

2 Peter 3:18 - "Grow in grace and understanding of our Master and Savior, Jesus Christ."

Failure humbles. It strips illusion and invites honesty. Those who've stumbled and stood again walk with empathy and a clearer view of mercy.

Impulsive Peter! Yes – impulsive, outspoken, often wrong before he was right. And yet, Jesus saw in him not just potential, but foundation. He became the rock not because he was flawless, but because he was formed - through failure, forgiveness, and faith.

Peter didn't stay in shame after choosing the wrong path and denying Christ. He let grace do its work. And so must we.

Growth begins when we stop hiding our failures and start letting them teach us. That's the way to live. That's the way to get there, to the substance of forgiveness and faith.

That is discovered by discovering right focus through daily exploration.

So, as we step into November and the story of The Little Man, let Peter's journey remind us that the way forward is not through flawless performance, but through faithful love.

That's the way to live. That's the way to grow.

November news

Thanksgiving lunch to be served Nov. 16

Come one, come all to the Thanksgiving Lunch on Nov. 16, immediately after the worship service. The Fellowship Committee will provide all of the food for the meal. Please do not bring any side dishes. We look forward to celebrating this season of Thanksgiving with everyone.

Church offices closed Nov. 26-27

Our church offices will be closed Wednesday, Nov. 26 and Thursday, Nov. 27 for Thanksgiving. The office will re-open Monday, Dec. 1

Mark your holiday calendars

Advent Decorating - Saturday, Nov. 29 from 9 a.m. to noon - Your family is invited to help decorate the sanctuary for the Advent season. This is fun, fellowship time with your church family as well as a time to deck the halls with boughs of holly. Help prepare the church for the coming of Christ!

Advent Festival - Dec. 7 at 11 a.m. - The service will celebrate the four-week period of expectant waiting with a focus on preparation, reflection, and anticipation of Jesus's birth.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 7 p.m. - Celebrate Christ's light coming into the world with worship, reflection, and community.

Sign up for daily devotional texts

Start your day with uplifting, encouraging words. Sign up to receive daily devotional texts from FPCA and the Next Step series, through Nov. 16.



The texts will include spiritual reflections and practices related to prayer, service, giving, and discipleship. To sign up, scan the QR code above or fill in your cell number in the Friendship Pad in the pew.

Dove Tree available after Thanksgiving

The Dove Tree will be up in Westminster Hall Nov. 30. Each dove has a name and address of one of our homebound members. Advent is a great time to spread love and grace them this season with a small gift, card, poinsettia, and visit to brighten the holidays.

Mobile Food Market dates

Arlington Charities is hosting mobile food markets twice in November.

Distribution lines form early and distribution ends when the food is gone.

- Nov. 8 at 8:30 a.m. - St. Andrews United Methodist Church at 2045 S.E. Green Oaks Blvd.
- Nov. 20 at 9 a.m. - Tarrant County College at 2100 Southeast Parkway.

October joys



1. CWF dedicated new members in the Chapel Oct. 5, followed by a luncheon in Fellowship Hall.

2. Jim Quick and Rev. Chris Campbell show off their tartans Reformation Sunday, Oct. 26.

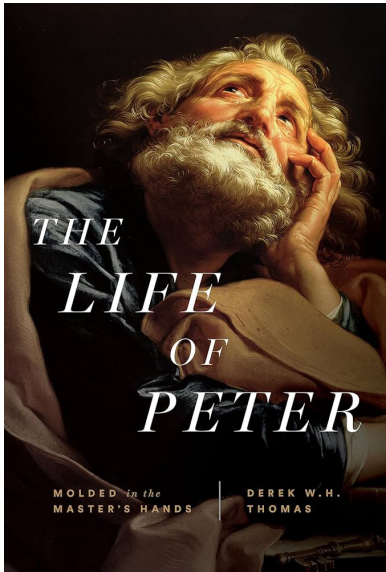
3. Juliette and Teresa Lee enjoy games and candy at Trunk or Treat Oct. 25. Rain and storms moved the party inside, but didn't dampen spirits.

4. Wyatt Annen, Nicolas Arredondo and Mathew Arredondo compete for prizes at the Malibu Jack's youth activity Oct. 26.

Bible studies and groups

Tuesday Morning Bible Study for Men and Women

Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. to noon in the Fellowship Hall



The new study is *The Life of Peter: Molded in the Master's Hands*. In this teaching series, Dr. Derek W. H. Thomas offers an encouraging portrait of Peter from the Gospels and the book of Acts, with insights from Peter's own writings later in

life. Understanding Peter's transformation from the brash fisherman into the bold Apostle can guide us in pursuit of our own growth in grace.

The study is written by Derek W. H. Thomas who served as a senior minister of the First Presbyterian Church in Columbia, S.C. He is Chancellor's Professor of Systematic and Pastoral Theology at Reformed Theological Seminary.

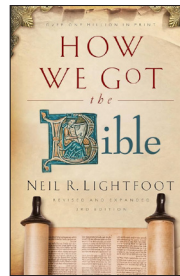
Study guides are provided. If you wish to buy one, the price is \$15.

Book studies coming to a Sunday School class near you soon



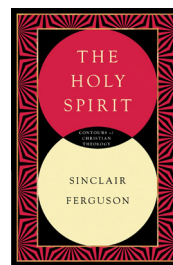
- **Basic Christianity**
by John Stott

Basic Christianity is a classic introduction to the Christian faith and a refresher course in Christianity's essentials. Stott explains Christian beginnings, beliefs, and behavior.



- **How We Got the Bible**
by Neil R. Lightfoot

A factual account of how the Bible has been preserved and handed down to our generation, including discussions on recent Bible translations.

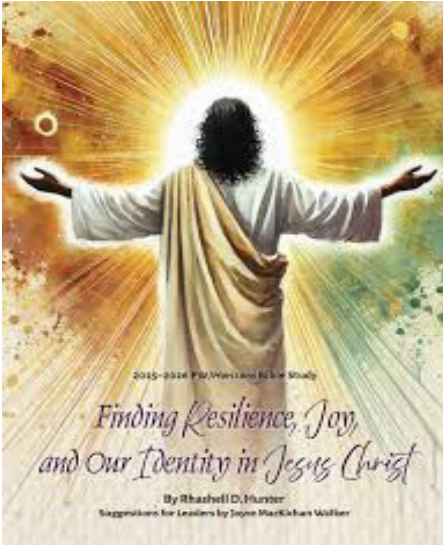


- **Who Is the Holy Spirit?**
by Sinclair B. Ferguson

A theological work that explores the identity and role of the Holy Spirit, focusing on the "who" of the Spirit as much as the "what" and "how" of His work. It aims to help readers understand the Holy Spirit as a person, tracing His presence and work throughout scripture from creation to the redemption of believers today.

Bible studies and groups

Wednesday Women's Bible Study Second Wednesday of each month at 1 p.m. in Fellowship Hall



The Wednesday Women's Bible Study resumes their Bible Study meetings. The study is the Horizon's Presbyterian Women's study *Finding Resilience, Joy, and our Identity*

in Jesus Christ. In this Bible study, we will explore resilience modeled for us by several biblical characters, gospel and epistle writers, and Jesus. The Bible study is also about finding joy in a chaotic world. Trusting in God when we are in trying times can fill us with glorious joy and peace. We will also seek to rediscover our identity in Jesus Christ.

We welcome all women. The group meets monthly on the second Wednesday of each month at 1 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

Questions? Please reply to Debbie Richardson (817.675.2867) or der817@gmail.com or Sheri Quick (sheriq@aol.com).

Men's Bible Study Wednesdays at 8 a.m. in Fellowship Hall

The Men's Bible Study group meets every Wednesday morning at 8 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.

CWF Women's Bible Study Wednesdays at 7 p.m. online/ last Wednesday of the month in the Parlor

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

Holiday Saints Alive Luncheon Thursday, Dec. 11 at 11:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall

Come one, come all: Please come and join with us for Saints Alive! We will not have Saints Alive in November due to Thanksgiving. We will have a Holiday Saints Alive in December on Thursday, Dec 11. Saints Alive is a bring-your-favorite-dish luncheon at 11:30. (Come early if you'd like to visit before lunch.)

Build connections

Bible and book studies

(see full descriptions of studies on pages 8-9)

Tuesday Morning Bible Study for Men and Women

- Tuesdays 10:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall

Wednesday Women's Bible Study

- Second Wednesday of each month at 1 p.m. in Fellowship Hall

Men's Bible Study

- Wednesdays at 8 a.m. in room 204

CWF Women's Bible Study

- Wednesdays at 7 p.m.

Church leadership

Prayer Ministry Council meeting

Nov. 13 at 1 p.m.

Team meetings

Nov. 6 at 4:30 and 7 p.m.

All teams meet for ministry planning and coordination.

Session meeting

Nov. 20 at 7 p.m.

The Session meets to oversee the ministry of the church, worship, budget, Generis, and other matters.

Music Ministries

Chancel choir

- Wednesdays from 7 to 9 p.m.

Ring of Praise Handbell Ensemble

- Wednesdays at 6 p.m.

Youth Choir

- Sundays 12:45 p.m. with lunch provided at 12:15

Children's Music Ministries

- Sundays 12:45 p.m. with lunch provided at 12:15

Fellowship and community groups

Senior Flexibility Class

Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:30 a.m.

Come get fit with us! We meet Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. If you're interested, contact Mary Spencer at 817.689.0526 for more details.

Quilting group - Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m.

This group meets on Wednesdays 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.

Holiday Saints Alive Luncheon

We will **not** have a November luncheon, but will meet Thursday, Dec. 11 at 11:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. See page 9 for details

HOPE Tutoring

Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.

Community outreach

Arlington Life Shelter Needs:

November is National Homelessness Awareness Month

• Food

Donation Pick Up Helper:

We need someone who can travel to food establishments in the area to pick up food items and deliver them to the shelter.

• **Provide a Meal:** Grab a team, faith group, or your family and friends and cook a meal for residents. We need Food Team Volunteers to purchase, prepare, and serve meals. Email alice.morris@arlingtonlifeshester.org for meal guidelines and available dates.

• **PALS:** Partners of Arlington Life Shelter is an auxiliary group that raises funds for the shelter and provides special events such as birthday and holiday parties for the residents.

For more information on how to volunteer, please contact alice.morris@arlingtonlifeshester.org.

Arlington Charities Needs:

We need your help! Rain or shine. We will be packing and distributing food for our drive-through mobile food markets. Please review the available slots below

Volunteers need to arrive an hour before distribution start time. Please dress for the



weather as this is an outdoor event. Visit arlingtoncharities.org to sign up.

Mission Arlington Needs:

Community Service volunteers are a blessing to Mission Arlington, and they form a substantial team

to help us accomplish

what we do here every day. Visit missionarlington.org for specifics.

Our hours are Monday through

Saturday: 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. No appointment necessary. Please come in whenever it works best for you. You will be working with the administration of food, clothes, household items and furniture – sorting, separating, carrying, and distributing.

Please wear clothes you don't mind getting dirty, and come with a flexible spirit, ready to work wherever you are needed.

PCHAS Gathering of Gratitude

Saturday, Nov. 22 from 3 to 6 p.m. at Foster Care Village in Itasca

Come down and visit the campus, meet staff and interact with our families. We'll have games in the gym with popcorn and cotton candy. Our favorite magician will be back!

We'll end the day with a brief service of worship and dinner together.

We are also looking for volunteers to lead a game or play station for kids and their families.

Finance update



FINANCE UPDATE

General Fund for September 2025:

	Monthly	YTD
Income & Funds Released:	63,119	875,060
Expenses:	(90,456)	(853,416)
Variance	(27,337)	21,644
Donors Income:	50,959	686,728
Budget:	75,085	675,765
Variance	(24,126)	10,963

Comments:

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

- continue our sermon series called Qualities of Discipleship where we are looking at characteristics or qualities of discipleship as shown in parables of Jesus.
- resume our Fall Music Ministries with Ring of Praise handbells, and Youth and Children Music Ministries.
- enjoy the Fall Festival Luncheon for our church family, hosted by the Fellowship Team, which include wonderful entertainment provided by our Music Interns as well as a live and silent auction fundraiser to support our Music Ministry Internship Program.
- welcome this year's recipient of the Kurz Scholarship, Miriam (Molly) Bolles.
- have fun at the Family Magic Show and Pizza, for children, families, and the young at heart, with Choo Choo the magical train conductor.
- kick off a bible study hosted by the Women's Ministry Team, called *Forgiving What You Can't Forget*, by Lysa TerKeurst which offers a process to find freedom, peace, and healing by understanding what the Bible teaches about forgiveness.

As of September, our Capital Campaign fund balance is \$142,270.

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

November KFC overview

During KFC in November we will be learning from the book of Esther.

Weekly Curriculum Summaries:

Nov. 2: The Bible passage will be Esther 2:1-18. This week, we'll hear the story of how Esther, an ordinary girl with no special status, became queen and found herself at the center of a hidden plan that God used to rescue an entire nation and protect God's people. From her incredible story, we are reminded that God gives me a mission.

Nov. 9: The Bible passage will be Esther 3:1-15. This week, we'll uncover the story of Haman's evil plot and how Mordecai's faith in God never wavered, even when he faced great danger. From Mordecai's unshakable trust in God, we are reminded that nothing will turn me away from God, no matter what challenges we face.

Nov. 16: The Bible passage will be Esther 4:1-17. This week, we'll hear about how Mordecai asked Esther to risk her life and approach the king to save her people. It could have cost her everything, but Esther's boldness reminds us that no matter the challenge, I can stand up for God and others.



Nov. 23: The Bible passage for this week will be Esther 2:21-23 and Esther 6:1-11. This week, we'll hear the story of when Mordecai uncovered a plot to harm the king and chose to protect him, even though he wasn't rewarded for it. His loyalty and faithfulness show us that I can follow God even when nobody's watching.

Nov. 30: The Bible passage for this week will be Esther 5:1-8, 7:1-6, and 8:1-8. This week, we'll learn about how Esther used wisdom, courage, and careful planning to approach the king and save her people, finding a peaceful way to stop a dangerous situation. Her bold actions remind us that no matter how hard the challenge, God can send me to make peace.

Memory Verse:

"The eyes of the Lord are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good." – Proverbs 15:3 (NIV)

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

Prayer ministry

Prayers for those with health and other concerns:

Charles Arnold, Carol Browning, Judy Crowell, Cyprain Engwenyi, Betty Farrell, Ken Floyd, Bobbie Fowler, Ivone Franzolin, Jay and Susan Graham, Nancy Guerry, Elaine Keefer, Bob and Beverly Koch, Lisa Landolt, Margaret Landolt, Shawn LeBlanc, Pat May and her son Tim Karnes, Judy Reck, Lisa Scrabeck, Tonya Scrabeck, David Spencer, Drew Stephenson, Susie Thurston, Donna Vickers, Nancy Welborne, Patrick Welborne, Sherry and Shelby Wolfe, Danny Womble

Prayers for family in the armed forces:

Jeff Grimes, Nathan Haerer, Wolfgang Van Wie, Christopher Young

Prayers for our home-bound members:

Bettye Burdett, Madge Casselman, Margaret Fite, Jay and Susan Graham, Teresa Hanson, Ann Scarr, Leonard and Mary Jane Tibbetts, Dee Uhri

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. 14