



The Bridge

First Presbyterian Church of Granbury

February, 2022

From the pastor

Rev. Drew Travis
revdgtravis@gmail.com



I love the honesty of kids, their willingness to say what comes to mind, the way they see the world. During the Children's Sermon a few weeks ago on the Sunday when we recall Jesus' baptism (The Baptism of the Lord), I gathered the children around our baptismal font. I asked them all to peer in as I splashed about in the water and asked questions. The kids watched with eyes wide and listened very attentively. On this particular Sunday, Elliott Graham was the vocal one who had an answer for most every question. (I think they must draw straws before worship to decide who gets to be the vocal one that day). Elliott's go-to-answer during worship that morning was "Oh wow!" Just "Oh wow!"

What a marvelous response to proclaim during worship! It seemed so fitting that morning as we shared the story of Jesus' baptism. It seems such an appropriate response to much of what happens in worship. "Oh wow!" And it should be heard in the high-pitched exuberance of a three-year-old's voice. Not just a reiteration of a liturgical line, but a spontaneous utterance of sheer joy. That's what I heard that morning as we gathered around the baptismal font. I was moved by it. It caused me to close our prayer with the children that morning in a new way. The kids and I and several in the congregation all repeated it together: "Oh Wow! Alleluia! Amen!" I think we'll keep using that together and I'm going to call it the "Elliott Benediction."

I thought about that scene with the children this past week as I preached a bit about these sacred words from Nehemiah 8: "The joy of the Lord is your strength." These words from Ezra were intended as a reminder for God's people to wipe their tears, to eat the fat and drink the sweet wine, and to share God's goodness with those who had come unprepared. Ezra's words were a reminder to celebrate. As they worshipped and listened to the Word read on their home turf in Jerusalem, having struggled to sing the Lord's song in a foreign land, they were reminded to be joyous in the gifts of God and to find that joy in sharing the goodness of God with others. "Oh wow!" What a wonderful scene.

Joy and strength. I think we need a double portion of both these days. COVID is long. Isolation is real. Fear is palpable, and it runs deep. We seem to be unable to *divide and conquer*. Rather, it seems we have simply decided to *divide*. We need a break from it all. It's somewhat akin to being held hostage in a foreign land, and it seems more and more difficult for us to sing the Lord's song. Yet, that is what we are called to do, and it is in that singing that we will find the joy and the strength that is ours in God. I think that's true. Let's raise our hands, and find our joy, and gather strength from it, and reach beyond ourselves into the community about us to share the same with others. It will make a difference. And then in our joy, let us proclaim, "Oh wow! Alleluia! Amen!" It'll do our hearts good, and my heart needs a little goodness right now.

See you Sunday,

Drew



Associate Pastor

Rev. Brenda Church
rev.brenda.church@gmail.com



I really enjoyed my class last month. We studied the idea that God is beyond our ability to understand. Some of the writers whose works we read spent many, many words and pages explaining that God is unknowable, and to even speak of God was to commit sin. This led to the inevitable question, “Weren’t these writers sinning by speaking of God as they warned us not to speak of unknowable God?” It really was a bit mind-boggling.

The idea that God is not to be named or spoken of goes back to Judaism. The Jewish people would not speak the name of God (YHWH) out of reverence for God. The name YHWH was too holy to be spoken. Even today, the Jewish people often use indirect descriptors for God rather than naming God. God is sometimes viewed as transcendent...unreachable.

We spent time in class discussing whether or not God is personal or relational. We discussed whether God is involved in our lives or is only concerned with running the cosmos...whether God is transcendent or immanent. The responses from the class were varied...some believing that God is high above and unreachable...and others believing that God is relational and present with us. Most, like me, believe both to be true.

I believe that God is transcendent. I have no doubt that my limited human mind is incapable of grasping God. I’m very thankful for that, because if I could understand God...if I could explain God...that would put me on an equal-footing with God. I know the many ways I have failed and fallen short, so a God like me would be no God at all. I am comforted in knowing that God is so very much not like me.

Then again, I believe without a doubt that God is immanent...that God is with us...that God desires to reveal Godself to us. This is evident in the truth that God sent God’s own Son, essentially, God’s own Self, to become human - to walk, and talk, and weep, and laugh, and live as we do. God sent Godself to us in a form that was like us, so that we might begin to have an inkling about the nature of God.

In Christ, we are given assurance. We get to know the end of the story. We are made aware that we are loved completely and unconditionally by God who is Love. We are reminded that we are co-heirs with Christ, children of God...and that we are indwelled by the Holy Spirit. I am thankful that God is immanent, because that is the only way we can begin to know God...and immanent God, Jesus, is our only hope for eternity!

What does it mean to you that transcendent God would stoop down from the heavens to show something of Godself to you? What does it mean that God would sacrifice and forgive all of your sins and shortcomings? Surely our God is big enough to manage the entire universe, even as God is also big enough to care about your life...your joy, your tears, your pain, your accomplishments, your regrets... who knows, maybe even your parking space. God is big enough to grant you grace even for that sin that you think is surely too big to be forgiven. God is with you...God is for you.

What does it mean to you that you are loved like that? Ponder that kind of grace for a moment. Know that you are known by unknowable God who has somehow managed to make Godself knowable and known by you!



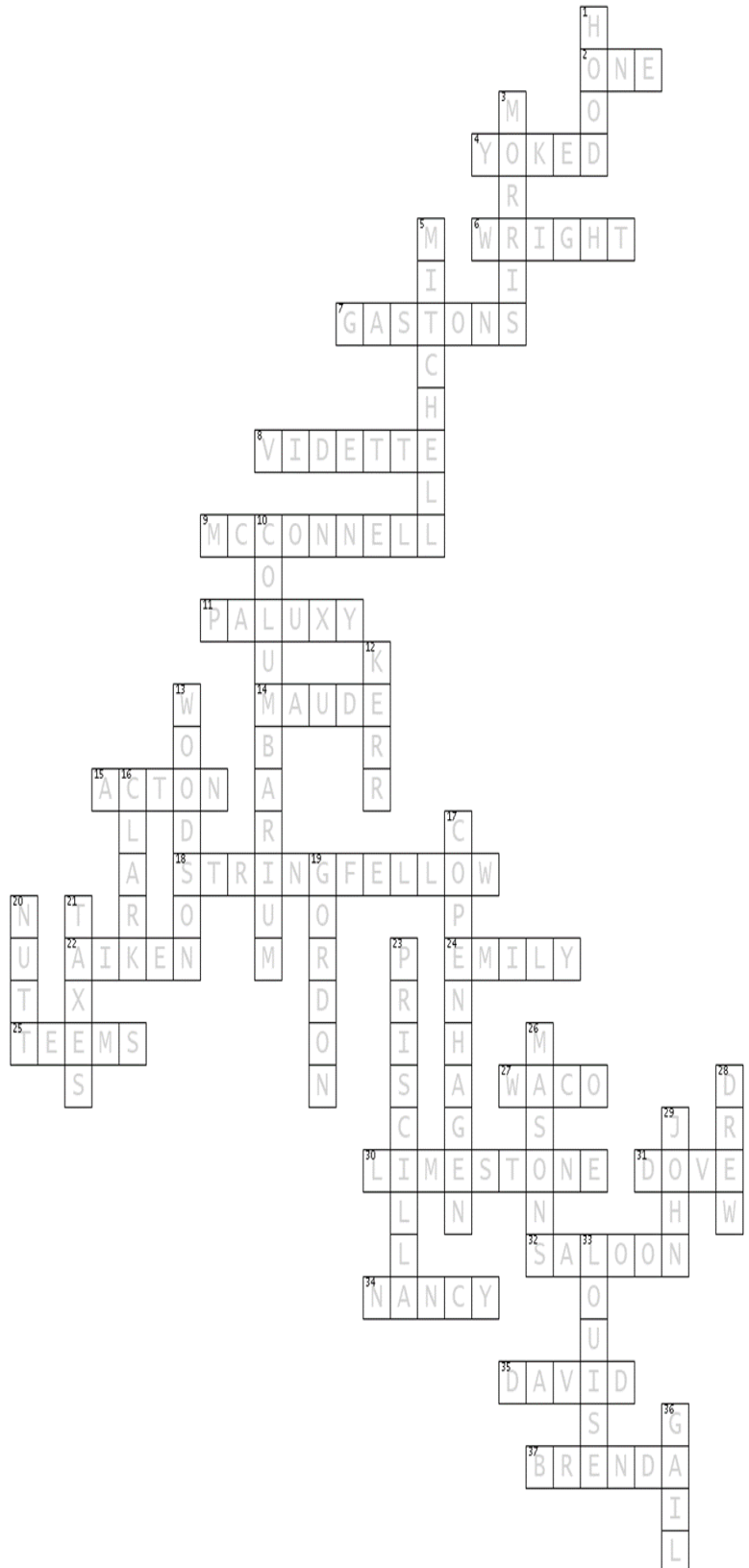
Here are the answers to last month's crossword puzzle.
 Did you get it completed? Let us know!
 We'd love to find out who our true historians are!

ACROSS

2. First courthouse (1867) was a ___ room log cabin
4. _____ Pres preachers, the Austins, were circuit riding preachers.
6. Politician who spoke on the church's 100th anniversary
7. Charter member of FPC
8. HCN was the successor to "Granbury _____"
9. FPC's first full time pastor
11. River that merges with the Brazos River east of Glen Rose.
14. Lees-Bryan House owner's daughter
15. Oldest community in Hood County
18. A widow with 3 children, migrated to area in 1871
22. Acquired Holderness-Aiken House in 1926
24. Social Media – ah the love of bits and bites
25. Made hand-made stole in Fellowship Hall
27. Where was General Granbury a lawyer
30. FNB-Granbury is made of
31. A famed Indian Battle was name after a creek
32. The Hardware and Tin Shop was once a
34. Puppeteer's alter ego Waco
35. Elizabeth Crockett's husband's name
37. Never was afraid of spreadsheets

DOWN

1. "The Fighting General" and West Point grad
3. "If God does not want a Presbyterian Church in Granbury, He will let it die with us."
5. Convicted of a murder in 1874 and hanged 1 year later
10. Ashes to ashes
12. The Opera House was once know as _____ Opera House
13. Folk legend: Jesse _____ James, is buried here
16. Headed college at Thorp Spring, which became TCU
17. Birthplace of Carl Severin Schultz, village blacksmith
19. Owner of large business on the Square
20. Donor of 40 acres--original Granbury town site
21. Samuel Hancock Smith collected this in 1883
23. Ivory of a different kind
26. Prior owner of Church of the Good Shepherd
28. 14 and counting
29. _____ St. Helen was in fact John Wilkes Booth
33. Cry me a river and she comes running
36. Makes office work look like a ministry

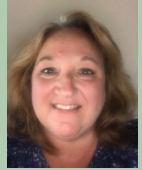




Worship

Julie Dean, elder

juliebutlerdean@gmail.com



GOD'S LOVE LETTERS



Dear Friend, this is a love letter; a love letter to you. It's a love letter from the lover of our souls – the lover of your soul. Read on and discover how much you are loved by the One who gave it all ... just for you.

A TESTAMENT TO THE HISTORY OF THAT LOVE “Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love; with unfailing love and kindness, I have drawn you to myself.” Jeremiah 31:3. God has loved you... a love that has endured with an everlasting love... a love that will not come to an end. With that unfailing love, God gently and tenderly draws us in. There's no coercion; no demands... only kindness and perfect love.

RECALLING WHEN YOU FIRST MET “I knew you before I formed you in your mother's womb.” Jeremiah 1:5. God has known us from the start. He's always known us.

THE DEPTH OF COMMITMENT “I will never leave you. I will never abandon you.” Hebrews 13:5. Commitment. Loyalty. Faithfulness. If you've ever been betrayed, abandoned, disappointed, left or left out by people in your life, knowing that there is someone who will NEVER disappoint you, leave you, or abandon you is HUGE. We all need this.

THE LENGTHS HE WILL GO TO FOR THAT LOVE “For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16. God loves us – LOVES YOU – so much, that He was willing to sacrifice his own son in order to have a relationship with you.

WHAT WE MEAN TO THE ONE WHO LOVES US “See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!” 1 John 3:1. We are precious to God – just as children are precious to a parent. God calls us his own children.

OUR LOVE IS SECURE “Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:38-39 “Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. His love endures forever.” Psalm 136:1.

If you ever doubt that you are loved, read the love letters He's written you. They're in the Bible. The history of His love, the depth of His commitment, your worth – how much he values you and cherishes you, the lengths He went to in order to have a relationship with you. It's all there. Just for you. Maybe this Valentine's Day, it's time you rediscover your greatest love.

Happy Valentine's Day!



Excerpts from “A Love Letter from God” by author, Lori Anderson of Extravagant Hope, a ministry for women, by women, offering hope in an uncertain world. (www.ExtravagantHope.com)



Congregational Care

Susan Younk Kidd, elder
susanyoung@gmail.com



- 7 Frank and Carol Hengles
Christopher and Kathy Smith
- 14 Robert and Betty Werbung
Nancy and Steve Wilmeth

- 1 Sandy Haberkamp
- 3 Greg Gifford
Jack Gilmore
Kay McMillan
Paul Holmes
- 7 Howard Hafner
- 8 Ted Dolan
- 9 Laneal James
Stephanie Mosley
- 11 Kathy Smith
Kelton Conner
- 13 Linda Bowlin
- 14 Wayne Delyea
- 18 Vanessa Faulkner
- 19 Hal Marlar
- 21 Trish Goller
- 23 Joanne Wallis
Lloyd Sigrist
Maureen Walker
- 26 Beverly Williams
- 27 Drew Travis
- 28 Bill wood

AT HOME AND/OR RECEIVING TREATMENT

Diann McHaney, Edith George, Ed Smith, JD Finlay, Dave Barnett, Barbara Buffalow, Rita Hart, Rene Metcalf, Lorraine Schmitz, Sheila Higgins, Rita Hart, Jim and Theda Deaver, Karen Stahlman, Bill Wood, Susan Higginbotham, Maureen Walker.

CONCERNS FOR OUR CHURCH FAMILY

- Susan Higginbotham as she recovers from a severe automobile accident requiring multiple surgeries.
- Reneé Metcalf as she recovers from spinal surgery.
- Barbara Buffalow as she recovers from hip surgery.
- Dave Barnett as he deals with multiple health issues.
- Rita Hart as she deals with the effects of her brain tumor.
- Margaret Gulinson as she recovers from knee surgery.
- Derek and Vanessa Faulkner as they mourn the death of Derek's father, Euel Faulkner.
- Debbie and Greg Schneider as they mourn the loss of Debbie's father, Jerry David.
- Pat Collins as she mourns the loss of her beloved aunt, Dee Turner.
- Carol Gadbois as she faces serious surgery at the end of the month.
- C.H. Tubbs as his health continues to decline.

Several of our members (and their families) have tested positive for COVID this month. We keep them in prayer and ask for complete recovery.

CONCERNS FOR OUR EXTENDED CHURCH FAMILY

- CJ Cluck, grandson of Beverly McKusick, on his continued treatments for cancer.
- Jim Dean's parents and sister as they navigate multiple health issues.
- Ruth Ray's daughter, Michelle Ray, as she recovers from a major stroke.
- Rhonda Travis' father as he navigates failing health.

AT CARE/RETIREMENT FACILITIES

Courtyards at Lake Granbury: Mary Skinner

Waterview at Lake Granbury: Ted Dolan, Nita Collinsworth

The Cove at Waterview: Jean Haight

Quail Park: Dolores Groom, John Cheney

The Oaks: CH Tubbs, Betty Werbung

Prestonwood Court, Plano: Linda Reed

Town Village Crossing, Arlington: Linda Bowlin

Rosemont, Humble TX: Betty Dean

Weatherford: Dee Holt

Granbury Care Center: Ed Smith

Harbor Lakes: Maureen Walker

Bridgewater Memory Care: Bill Lowe

Donna Barden is now living with her son in Burleson. Mailing address remains the same but her new phone number is 817 578-6235.

WE NEED YOUR HELP: There are times we get calls from members needing transportation to church, doctors, or other appointments. If you could help with this, please let Susan Younk know (817 573-9153 or Susanyounk@gmail.com) or contact Gail at the church office.

SPECIAL BLESSINGS

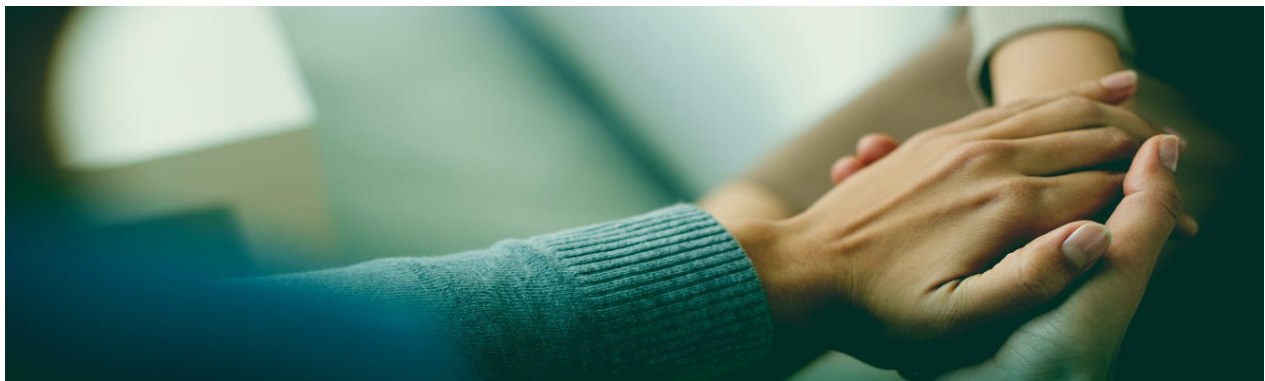
Joyce Higginbotham on her 90th birthday.

Susan Higginbotham: Home after months in the hospital and rehab! Welcome home!

I want to take this opportunity to thank Pat Collins for her devotion as Prayer Chain Coordinator! Pat has touched the hearts of all with her beautiful prayers and kept the prayer chain going for those who were sick, grieving or in need. We are saddened to hear she is resigning from this position, but we are so pleased that Wanda Moon has agreed to take over as the Chair. Pat, you will be sorely missed. Wanda, we are delighted to have you on board!

(If you would like to participate in the prayer chain, please email or call Gail at the office to be added to the list.)

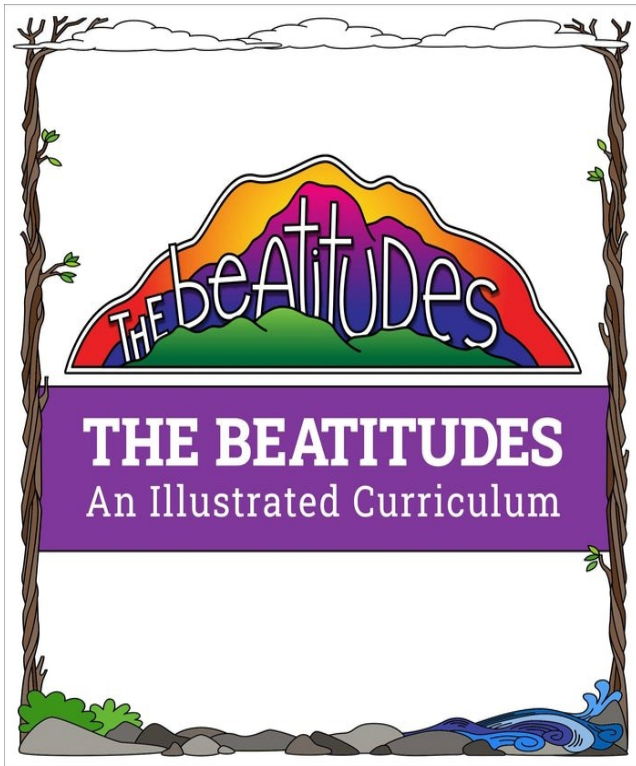
Heavenly Father, we ask your blessing and your comfort for our loved ones that are hurting and in pain. We also ask your blessing for the caretakers, struggling to help their loved ones with patience and perseverance. Give them strength for the days ahead and help them to feel your love and grace. In Christ we pray.





Christian Education

sylvia.hickey1969@gmail.com



The Children are currently learning about the **The Beatitudes: An Illustrated Curriculum**. It is a verse-by-verse study of the Beatitudes from the Gospel of Matthew.

This study explores Jesus' timeless teaching through art, reflection, and discussion.

Each lesson's format is as follows:

- **Welcome and Chat:** Includes a Welcome Question that you can use to engage in informal conversation
- **Beatitude Reflection:** A script that is meant to be used for leading each session. It will walk participants through the Beatitude that is the focus of the session.
- **Blessing:** Gives you a chance to offer a blessing to the participants that ties in the focal scripture and/or Beatitude.

- **Imagining and Coloring:** There is a coloring page and discussion questions for imagining, coloring, and discussing.
- **Activity:** There is a possible activity for each session that inspires a deeper understanding and practice of the Beatitudes.
- **Prayer:** A simple way that you can close each of the sessions with the participants.



FPC Granbury partners with Ministry Safe for background checks and training for those who work with children here at FPC. We have approximately 9 volunteers that need to update their Background Checks and Training, which is only required every 2 years. We also have a number of new members who we thought might be interested in becoming active volunteers with the children's ministry.

If you are interested in taking the training and having a background check, please call our office and speak with Gail Deckert - 817-573-2337 - as soon as possible.
Christian Education Committee, Sylvia Hickey



Fellowship

Linda Allen, elder
lindaallen33047@gmail.com



If you need a recipe for a quick and easy dessert that everyone loves, try Cherry Cheese pie. I have made so many of these when my daughters were young and needed bake sale items for our church youth group. We could sell as many as I could make.

CHERRY CHEESE PIE

- 1 8oz package cream cheese (softened)
- 1 14oz can Eagle Brand Milk
- 1/3 c lemon juice (or bottled lemon juice)
- 1 t vanilla
- 1 graham cracker pie crust
- 1 can cherry pie filling (chilled)

Beat cream cheese until light and fluffy with mixer. Add Eagle Brand Milk and beat thoroughly. Stir in lemon juice and vanilla. Pour into graham cracker pie crust. Chill 3 hours. Top with pie filling.

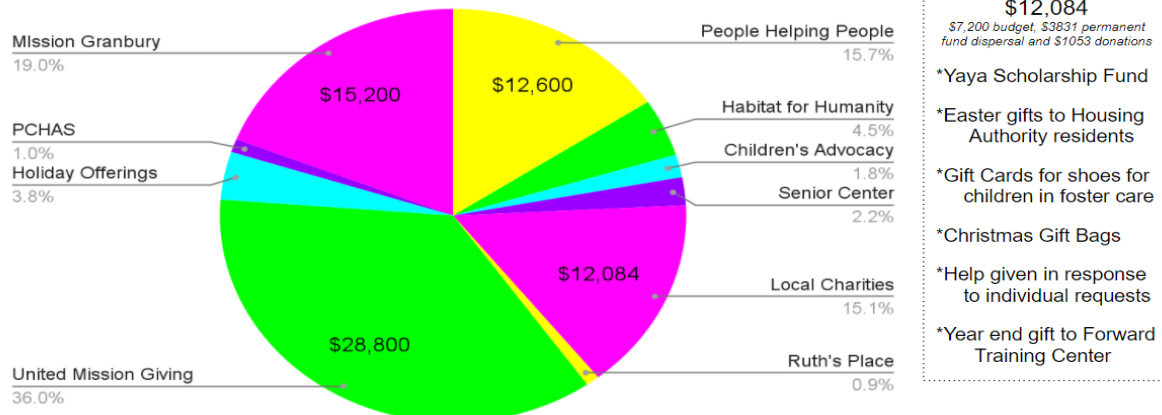


Outreach and Mission

Bianca Brownfield, elder
biancabrownfield@gmail.com



Outreach and Mission 2021 Gifts = \$80,038



\$12,084
\$7,200 budget, \$3831 permanent fund dispersal and \$1053 donations

- *Yaya Scholarship Fund
- *Easter gifts to Housing Authority residents
- *Gift Cards for shoes for children in foster care
- *Christmas Gift Bags
- *Help given in response to individual requests
- *Year end gift to Forward Training Center



125th Anniversary



Dear Friends,



Mark your calendars for a Hymnfest on Sunday, February 27th. We will have one service at 10:00 as we enjoy singing our old and new hymns. After the service we will adjourn to the Fellowship Hall for soup and more.

Our roundup for the 125th will be a service with guest speaker/preacher Dr. Ted Wardlaw on Sunday, March 27th. Please come join us for the final celebration on that date.

As we reflect on our church, the people and its history, it is also a time to reflect on what we want our legacy to be. How can we reach out to our members? How can we serve our community? What can we do to make this world a better place?

When we ask, "What is your 125?", please think about what God would have us do. Small actions can have big ripples.



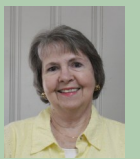
Blessings and peace,

Susan and the 125th Team



F.U.N. Circle

Gloria Mitchell, F.U.N. circle coordinator
gwmitch@sbcglobal.net



Wednesday, February 23 at 10 am FUN Circle will be making drawstring bags for **both** the younger and older children CPS has removed from homes.

We need people to sew, (and bring machines) others to cut fabric and attach drawstrings, and others to fill the bags.

Come join us and stay for pot-luck lunch.





Prayer of the Month

Wanda Moon Prayer chain coordinator

wanda1az18@gmail.com



Lord, you alone are God and we adore and worship you with our whole hearts.

Please guide the leaders of our country and our the church leaders to make decisions that are best for the people. Always we pray for peace in the world and understanding among men of differing lives and faiths.

Please lead those members in the families of faith who have not sought out and acknowledged your Son as their Savior who can help them through the vagaries of life to come to the realization that you exist and want to love them unconditionally.

For those in need or in pain, if we do not anticipate the need in their hearts or bodies, please reassure them we do care. Keep them in your loving arms so they feel Your love in the deepest part of their souls. Even when we do not understand and we blame You for letting ourselves or those we love hurt deeply (*or* feel pain), help us to know (*or* feel) Your great love as witnessed by the gift of your Son to who was born a human and died on the cross to make amends for our sins. Thank you for the indwelling in our beings of the great gift of the Holy Ghost. Make us always conscious of His presence in our lives.

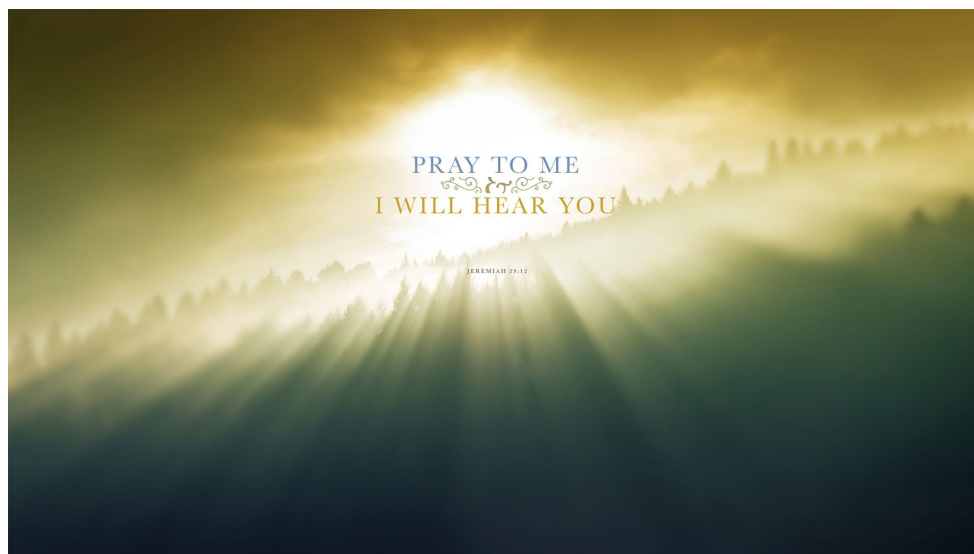
We know you love us even when we miss the mark and do not demonstrate love as we should.

Please help us make decisions that are pleasing in your sight. When we don't know what to do next may we take a deep breath and humbly ask You to show us guidance in a way (a manner) we can understand. Although we do not know what tomorrow will bring, we do know you will always be there with and for us.

Lord, be especially with those of us who have lost loved ones and are hurting deeply. Help them to know that – in time – the pain will ease and they will remember the blessings the loved ones brought into our lives. At the same time we acknowledge the loved one will never be forgotten.

Help those who face crisis in their lives. And help us do the things that promote spiritual growth with our understanding ways and words.

We pray all this in Your son, Jesus's name.



February 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 8:45 AM Worship 11:00 AM Worship - Live Stream and Face Book	31	1 3:30 PM Communion Guild Meeting - Session Room	2 10:00 AM Staff Meeting 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM Men's Study 4:00 PM Choir Practice - MH 5:30 PM Handbells Rehearsal	3	4	5 Session Retreat - All Day - Glen Lake Conference Center
6 8:45 AM Worship 11:00 AM Worship - Live Stream and Face Book	7 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM Bridge Circle - FH	8 10:00 AM PW Coordinating Team - Admin Building 11:30 AM Clergy Group - FH	9 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM Men's Study 4:00 PM Choir Practice - MH 5:30 PM Handbells Rehearsal	10	11 10:00 AM PW Meeting - FH	12
13 8:45 AM Worship 10:00 AM Annual Congregational Meeting 11:00 AM Worship - Live Stream and Face Book	14 9:00 AM Monthly Property Meeting - Square Cafe	15 3:00 PM Worship Committee Meeting - Admin Building 5:30 PM Session	16 10:00 AM Book Circle - This Tender Land by William Kent Krueger 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM Men's Study 4:00 PM Choir Practice - MH 5:30 PM Handbells Rehearsal	17	18	19
20 Bridge Articles Due 8:45 AM Worship 11:00 AM Worship - Live Stream and Face Book	21	22 11:30 AM Clergy Group - FH	23 10:00 AM FUN Circle 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM Men's Study 4:00 PM Choir Practice - MH 5:30 PM Handbells Rehearsal	24	25	26
27 10:00 AM Hymn fest - One service - Part of our 125th Celebration 11:00 AM Soup and More Luncheon - 125th Celebration	28	1 Trinity Mission Party 10:00 AM PW Bible Study - FH	2 8:30 AM Ash Wednesday White Breakfast - FH 10:00 AM Staff Meeting 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM Men's Study 4:00 PM Choir Practice - MH 5:30 PM Handbells Rehearsal	3	4	5

Watch this space for changes to our calendar. View current calendar on website <http://fpcgranbury.org/> Click on calendar at the top of the page.



To celebrate your birthday (or that of a family member or friend), and in thanksgiving for God's gift of grace, please consider making a gift of your own, in the amount of \$1 for each year of your (or your honoree's) life, to sustain the permanent endowment funds of the church.

Please notify the church office when you make your gift that it is a birthday offering. If honoring someone else, please so note. If giving online, please provide this information in the "Notes."

Any announcements for inclusion in the bulletin need to be received by Thursday noon.

The Bridge deadline is the 20th of each month.



To:

First Presbyterian Church of Granbury
202 W. Pearl St.
Granbury, TX 76048