



# The Newsletter

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Kilgore, Texas

*January 2022*

*Volume 39 No. 1*

## FROM THE PASTOR

As I reflect on the past year in the life of our church, I feel a mix of sorrow and deep gratitude. Obviously, we continue to grieve the loss of Blake. He was such a vital part of our ministry, and he was deeply loved and respected by everyone. Grief takes its time, and we have certainly had our time of sadness these past few months. Yet, by God's grace, I know we are healing.

Even though we had our storms last year, I have also seen God working among us in many ways. First, let's talk numbers. By my armchair estimation, average worship attendance increased the second half of 2021. In fact, a couple of Sundays in December the number of people in worship inched close to our pre-pandemic average. We also added seven new members in 2021, which is the largest increase in membership in one year since I have been the pastor of this church. Not only have we seen signs of growing attendance, but we also finished 2021 with the most successful stewardship campaign in years. The pledges for fiscal year 2022 are around \$50,000 more than for year 2021. Now, I don't want to become one of those preachers who measures success only by the number of people in the pew and the amount of money the church receives. However, numbers do tell us something. I find it quite amazing, in fact, to be headed in this upward direction given what we have been through as a church. It is a reminder that God has not abandoned us, and that God is not finished with First Presbyterian Church!

I've recognized God at work among us not only by the numbers, but through our conversations, our fellowship, our love for each other and for our church. I have seen God work among us through people sharing one another's burdens. I have seen God work among us by people praying with and for one another. I have seen God in the joy we have shared, and the love and compassion we have offered. We have truly been blessed to be a family of faith together.

I am looking forward to seeing what God has in store for us in 2022. At the end of the month, January 30<sup>th</sup>, we will re-dedicate the Opus 1173 Aeolian Skinner which, as you know, has been in the process of refurbishment and restoration for the last 11 months. I want to thank publicly Gala Strunk for her oversight of this project, and I want to thank her for her patience and flexibility in maintaining, with excellence, our music ministry in the organ's absence. The re-dedication on January 30<sup>th</sup> at 5pm will consist of a hymn festival led by acclaimed organist Bradley Welch who plays for the Dallas Symphony and is artist in residence at Preston Hallow Presbyterian Church in Dallas.

Hopefully, in this new year we will have an additional installed pastor on staff. The work of the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee (APNC) will begin in earnest this month. Please keep the committee in your prayers as they discern who God is calling to serve our congregation.

May God grant you his peace, blessing, and direction in this new year, 2022.

With Gratitude,  
Will



## P W News



We are excited to begin this new year. Our Bible study—learning about Jesus' grandmothers—has been most interesting.

We sent our Thank Offering in December—thanks for those who contributed. Poinsettias were profitable this year, and we will be soon begin collecting for Easter lilies.

We provided a hot chocolate bar for the teachers at Kilgore High School in December.

We plan to get together soon to clean out the drawers of the furniture in Fellowship Hall.

The treasurer will send gift cards to the college students.

Make a New Year's resolution to come join one of our circles beginning in January—everyone is welcome. The morning/noon circle meets on the second Tuesday at noon in Fellowship Hall. The night circle meets on the second Wednesday at 6:00 pm in Fellowship Hall. Call the church office if you would like more information.

PWCT will meet again January 3, at 9:30 am in Fellowship Hall.

## Saturday Bread Schedule:

January 1 : Bill Terrell

January 8 : St. Luke's

January 15 : Robert Lightfoot

January 22 : First Christian

January 29: Vision 20/20 Ministry



Communion January 2, 2022

## Grace Notes Children's Program

Will start back Wednesday  
January 12, 2022. Contact  
Jo Little for more details.



## **Tithes and Offerings for Month of November**

Anticipated Tithes/Offerings	\$ 28,669
Actual Monthly Tithes/Offerings	\$ 29,014
Actual Monthly Expense	\$ 43,643
Overage/ (Deficit)	\$ (14,629)

### **For the Year 2021**

Anticipated Tithes/Offerings	\$ 343,669
Actual YTD Tithes/Offerings	\$ 303,071
Actual YTD Expense	\$ 456,724
Overage/ (Deficit)	\$(153,653)

Thank you for your tithes and offerings!  
Without your faithful giving, ministry and missions would not be possible.



## **Thoughts and prayers**

### **For our Members**

\* We are saddened in the death of Burke Green and Charlotte Reed.

\* Avery Gorman \* Roland Johnson \* Tom Waldo

### **Family and friends of FPC**

* Raymond Bazinet	* Sylvia Bolding
* Chantal Braly	* Patrick Braly
* Joe Brown	* E J Chowdhury
* Elizabeth Collins	* Van Craddock
* Lynda Crittenden	* Linda Curkan
* John Fout	* Ashley Haden
* Kenzie Hyatt	* Rose Janke
* Shirley G Latham	* Donna Marshall
* Heather Martin	* Rex McCubbin
* David McElroy	* Dayne Neal
* Larry Perkins	* Bill Pybas
* Nancy Pybas	* Glenda Reid
* Shari Solomon	* Butch Squier
* John Squier	* Larry & Linda Willis
* Carley Wimberley	

### **In Service to our Country**

* Jacob Conner	* Brent Duvall
* Robert Gray	* Gavin Jackson
* Stone Smith	

# **It's Pledge Time**

Reminder to turn in your pledge card for 2022.

Stop by or call the church office if you need a new card.

# **Monthly Missions**





## Session Highlights

The Session held it's Regular Stated Meeting December 15, at 5:30 pm in Fellowship Hall.

The meeting began with a devotion and prayer.

Officers elect Carl Clower, Debby Leppert, and Jan Wylie were examined after they gave their statements of faith. Terry Thrower is returning for another term. A motion was approved to accept these officers elect. They will be installed on January 9, 2022 during morning worship.

Will expressed his concerns about a lecturer, who is an atheist, that is to speak at the mid winter lecture series at Austin Theological Seminary in January. The Session agreed and a motion was passed to withhold our 2021 contribution to them. Will will send a letter to Austin Seminary explaining his concerns and our action. Next year we will revisit whether we want to continue with our support.

Administration Committee: Submitted the new committee rosters for 2022.

CE-Missions Committee: Reported that Camp Gilmont will be able to help again with VBS for the Summer of 2022. They are working on recruiting another Saturday Bread Team to replace the KHS Class of '66 Team. They announced the Monthly Mission for January will be "Souper Bowl of Caring."

Property Committee: Is waiting on painters to come and touch up the walls in the parlor. The replacement of the air handler in the basement is complete. The owner of Air Cybernetics is trying to solve the problem of what is causing the heat to shut off in the sanctuary. He is securing someone to be on

stand-by for Sunday mornings.

Stewardship-Budget Committee: Presented the updated Pledge Report for 2022. As of December 15, there were 48 pledges totaling \$326,450.

Pat Watson reported that the Associate Pastor Search Committee will begin meeting in January, 2022.

Session members shared joys and concerns, and prayed together for those on the prayer list, and members of our congregation.

Sarah Camp  
**Clerk of Session**

### Session Committees 2022

#### Christian Education / Missions

Sarah Garasic, Robert Lightfoot, Carolyn Martin, Maryanne Harris, Jo Little, Pat Watson (M), Amy Bates, Connie Field, Nancy Smith

#### Administration

Francye Phillips, David Castles, Janie Terrell, Carl Clower, Terry Thrower (M)

#### Visitation / Evangelism

Coleen Clower, Ouida Smylie, Jackie Fout (M), Dan Phillips, K Castles, Sharon Nestleroad

#### Stewardship / Budget

Jerry Camp, India Stroope, Sarah Camp, Tom Sartor, Ann Thrower, Jan Wylie (M)

#### Worship / Fellowship

Suzie Anthony, Janie Dickerson, Cheyenne Savony, Leah Gorman (M), Ashton Griffin, Kim Lightfoot, Debby Leppert, Linda Sartor, Bill Terrell

#### Property

Jim Griffin, John Leppert, Mike Anthony (M), Trey Hattaway, Jeff Nestleroad, Gene Smith

#### Helping Hands Board

K Castles, Maryanne Harris

#### Church Treasurer

Jerry Camp



# YOUTH MINISTRY

## Schedule of Events

January 2: Game Night

January 9: Plan for Youth Sunday/Handbells

January 16: Practice Youth Sunday/Handbells

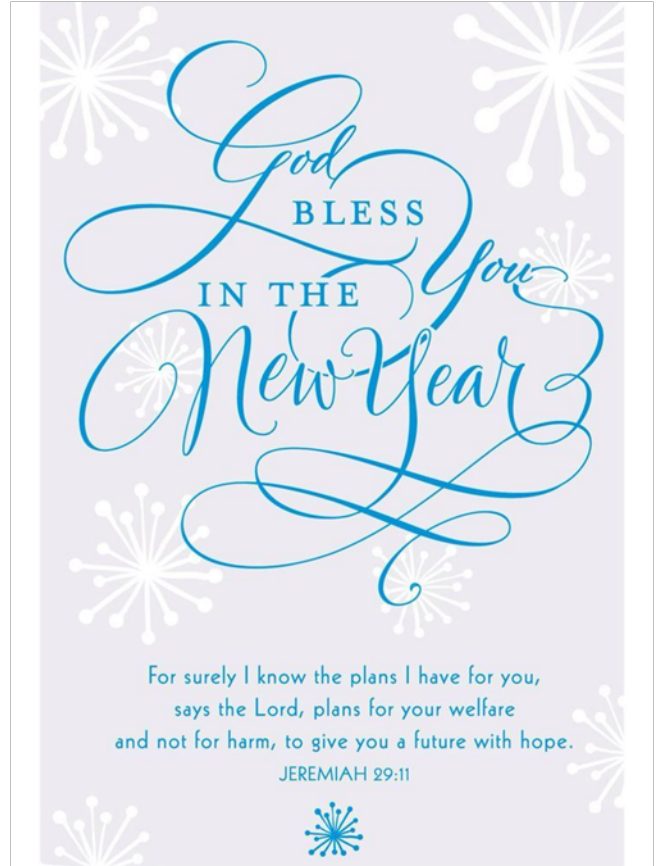
January 23: Practice Youth Sunday/Handbells

January 30: Practice Youth Sunday/Handbells

February 6: Youth Sunday

## Invite a Friend!

**We need more youth for upcoming services, plus, let's grow in the new year!**



## Carmela's Magical Santa Land



## Call for Helpers!

Provide Dinner – January 9

Provide Dinner – January 16

Provide Dinner – January 23

Provide Dinner – January 30

If you are willing to help with youth activities, contact  
Cheyenne Kirkpatrick.

903-399-5810

[ckirkpatrick@kisd.org](mailto:ckirkpatrick@kisd.org)









## Notes from Gala



### Local church bell choirs Christmas Bell Ring at “Tis the Season” downtown Kilgore.

In December, we worshipped together, blessed by the beauty of our sanctuary, the wonderful sounds of music offered by our church musicians, and the word brought to us in sermon and song. We are putting the finishing touches on the organ and will celebrate its return in a Hymn Festival on January 30 at 5:00 p.m. Following the festival we will have a reception hosted by the church. This organ will be rededicated for the glory of God and the ministry of this church.

Make plans to join us in this event led by Concert Organist Dr. Bradley Hunter Welch. Dr. Welch has performed here in the past. He is Artist-in-Residence at Preston Hollow Presbyterian Church in Dallas. In addition, he is Resident Organist and holder of the Lay Family Chair, where he performs with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra and oversees the Meyerson Symphony Center’s Lay Family Concert Organ.

Joining us will be the choirs of St. Luke’s Methodist Church and First Baptist Church of Kilgore, along with other local singers.





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Facebook: First Presbyterian Church of Kilgore

# January



## January Birthdays

- |    |                             |    |   |
|----|-----------------------------|----|---|
| 3  | Leo Lowery                  | 21 | Graham Tyra                                 |
| 7  | Melody Ansley               | 22 | James Murphy<br>Jennifer Stanley            |
| 8  | Elliot Brown                | 25 | Suzie Anthony<br>Jackie Fout<br>Kamryn Mann |
| 10 | Chris Thrower               | 26 | Laci Laird                                  |
| 12 | Jayden Mankins              |    |   |
| 18 | Bobby Jack Huey             |    |   |
| 20 | Jenny Baggett<br>Jan Warren |    |   |