



December 2023 Volume 40 No. 12

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Kilgore, Texas

FROM THE PASTOR

On our way back to Texas after the Thanksgiving holiday, Abby and I visited one of my cousins on my father's side of the family, who lives in Chattanooga, TN. Before our visit, I had not seen this cousin in at least 25 years. My childhood memories of him are scattered, but I knew he lived on our route back home, so I decided to visit. And I am glad I did.

On our last evening of the two-night visit, my cousin pulled up a file that had 4,000 pictures of the Wilson family, most of which I had never seen before. These were pictures of my grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts and uncles, great-aunts and great-uncles, dozens of cousins, and photos of my dad as a teenager. The time frame of these photographs stretched from the mid-40s to the present. It was a treasure to behold.

I've reflected on the experience of looking at pictures of family members taken decades ago, and it has left me with a greater sense of identity—who I am and the people I come from. It reminded me that who I am today did not come out of thin air but is an identity I was born into and passed on from generation to generation. This is also true in the life of faith.

Reading the Bible can be like looking at a collage of family photos. Our faith identity is not self-constructed, and neither is it a novel invention. Abraham and Sarah, Isaac, Moses, Joshua, Rahab, David, Mary, Peter, James, and John are more than just historical figures; they are our ancestors in the life of faith. Reading about their lives and histories shapes and informs our identity as a people whose God is the Lord, and their struggles and triumphs are part of our faith family history.

Why is this important? We can often be flooded with questions of identity and purpose. Who am I, and what is my God-given purpose? The world would have us believe that we have to answer this question by ourselves and for ourselves, as if identity and purpose were matters of choice. That's not how faith works. Our identity and purpose are given to us. We're born into it by the power of the Holy Spirit through the waters of our baptism. Thanks be to God.

In Christ,

Will



Notes from the Session

The Session held the Stated Meeting Sunday, November 12, 2023 at 11:35 a.m. in the Parlor following worship. The meeting began with scripture and prayer.

Clerk's report:

* Communion was served November 5, 2023 in the sanctuary during worship. We had the baptism of Perri Alexis Santora on October 22, 2023. The clerk called for discussion on the security we currently have during Sunday morning services. The Session is satisfied with our current arrangements.

Pastor's report:

Will has a journal article that will be published next year. He will finish course work in April. He will be off the Sunday after Thanksgiving, November 26, and also December 31.

Administration

* Staff reviews were conducted, and raises were requested, along with continuing to provide scholarships for Will's PhD program.

C. E.-Missions

* The Fall Festival in October was a success, as well as the booth at the November 11 Derrick Lighting. The Advent Festival will be in Fellowship Hall December 3.

Worship-Fellowship

* Plans are underway for the Candlelight Service on December 17 at 5:00 p.m.
* A fellowship supper will be held in Fellowship Hall immediately after the Grace Notes Christmas Program on December 13.

New Business

* The Session postponed the presentation of the Budget until the December meeting.

Old Business

* There was discussion on changing the Session meetings back to Wednesday evenings. It will be decided at the December 10 meeting.



Tithes and Offerings for Month of October

Anticipated Tithes/Offerings	\$ 33,500
Actual Monthly Tithes/Offerings	\$ 28,659
Actual Monthly Expense	\$ 49,569
Overage/ (Deficit)	\$ (20,910)

For the Year 2023

Anticipated Tithes/Offerings	\$ 402,000
Actual YTD Tithes/Offerings	\$ 313,040
Actual YTD Expense	\$ 460,951
Overage/ (Deficit)	\$ (147,911)

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

A request to replace the broken glass on one of the Fellowship Hall windows will be referred to the Property Manager.

Communion will be served at the morning worship service on Christmas Eve.

The Consent Agenda was approved, which consisted of the minutes, and the financial report for August.

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

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned with prayer.

Sarah Camp Clerk

December 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 Sat. Bread St. Paul's Episcopal
3 Communion 9:30 Sun School 10:30 Worship 11:30 Choir 12:00 Officer Tr. 4:00 Advent Festival	4 9:30 P W Coord. Team	5 6:00 Handbells	6 3:30 Grace Notes 6:00 Night Circle Fellowship Hall	7 5:30 Admin. in the Parlor	8	9 Sat. Bread Bill Terrell
10 9:30 Sun School 10:30 Worship 11:30 Choir Rehearsal Session mtg 5:00 Youth	11	12 12:00 Noon Circle Parlor	13 3:30 Grace Notes 6:00 Grace Notes Christmas Prog. Dinner to follow Fellowship Hall	14	15	16 Sat. Bread Forest Home Baptist Youth go to Six Flags
17 9:30 Sun School 10:30 Worship 11:30 Choir Rehearsal 5:00 Candlelight Service	18	19	20	21	22	23 Sat. Bread Jim Griffin
24 Communion 9:30 Sun School 10:30 Worship 31 8:00 NYE- F.H.	25	26	27	28	29	30 Sat. Bread Church of God in Christ



Thoughts and prayers Family and friends of FPC

- * Tom Ansley
- * Regina Baker
- * Gary Boyd
- * Elizabeth Collins
- * Jimmy Culp
- * Susie Pelham Davis
- * John Fout
- * Ashley Haden
- * Guy Harrison
- * Joan Harslett
- * Kenzie Hvatt
- * Cheyenne Kirkpatrick * Rita Knox
- * Nikki Lafitte
- * Michelle Lemming
- * Dianne Lyle
- * Carolyn Martin
- * Mike McCollum
- * Rex McCubbin
- * Carla McKnight
- * J Mitchell
- * Doris Newton
- * Amanda Preslev
- * Margaret Roberts
- * Vivian Sharp
- * Katie Wylie Stovall
- * Cindy Venable
- * Ann White
- * Larry Willis
- * Carolyn Wimberley

In Service to our Country

- * Jacob Conner
- * Robert Grav
- * Stone Smith



PW News



Your PW Coordinating Team will meet on Monday December 4, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. in the church parlor. Plans for our December events and Evergreen gifts are being made.

Our circles will be meeting soon. Watch the church bulletin for reminders! The Noon Circle will meet on Tuesday, December 12, 2023 in the parlor for lunch.

The Night Circle will meet on Wednesday, December 6, 2023, at 6 pm in the Fellowship Hall for their Christmas dinner and gift exchange.

Please stay well and remember to check on your friends and neighbors during this holiday season. Have a great December!!

Jackie Fout Moderator



Reminder to turn in your pledge card for 2024.

Cards are available in the sanctuary, narthex, and church office.

- * Chester Hardy * Lucy Harrison
- * Mike Holbert

* Gary Atchley

* Linda Curkan

* Laura Guzman

* Kenny Ferro

* Joe Brown

* Raymond Bazinet

* Shauntell Copeland

- * Zoe Kelt
- * Shirley G Latham
- * Jason Lopez
- * Donna Marshall
- * Alee Mata
- * Ward McCollum
- * David McElrov
- * Abbi Melton
- * Dayne Neal
- * Larry Perkins
- * Jerry Richardson
- * Ken Rucker
- * Chris Spinks
- * Henry Thompson
- * April Watson
- * Stewart White
- * Linda Willis

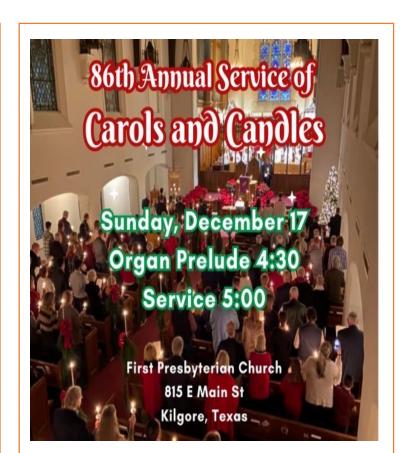
Monthly Missions



Saturday Bread Christmas Baskets will be delivered on December 23.

The sign-up sheet will be sent out soon.

Please bring your items to the church office by December 20.





The poinsettias in the sanctuary for Advent are given:

In memory of:

Frank Brown Joel Camp Jack & Nelwyn Collum Kent & Yvonne Colvin Winston & June Gardner George & Elsie Gause Burke Green Bill & Jean Hughes Gore & Betty Kemp Lance Harlan Laird Autrey & Nita Monroe The Jeff Moore Family Tom & Waurine Nixon Caroline Ross Sam & Ruth Ross William R. & Katherine Smylie Betty Spradlin Dr. William R. & Jane Terrell J. B. & Dorothy Watson David Wylie

In honor of:

Jack & Claire Aboussie Charlotte, Emma & Grayson LaCroix Sophie Leppert Bru Crew Mauldin's 1st Birthday Rett Jett Mauldin's 3rd Birthday Blake & Katie Wylie Stovall Jimmy Thrower





Please join us Wednesday, December 13, at 6:00 p.m. in the Chapel.

After the program, we will all have dinner together in Fellowship Hall hosted by the Worship-Fellowship Committee.

Grace Notes Christmas







Fall Youth Connection at Camp Gilmont





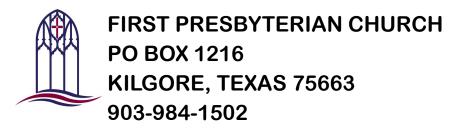






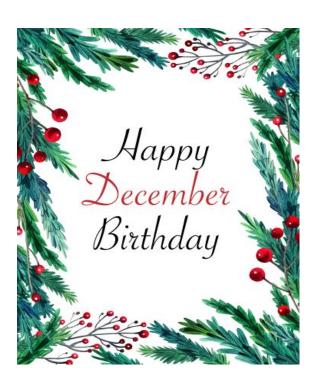






Email: firstpreskilgore@gmail.com Web page: firstpreskilgore.org Facebook: First Presbyterian Church of Kilgore





December Birthdays

- 1 Michael Long
- 2 Taylor Nixon
- 4 Lyndsay Richard
- 9 Trey Crim Rett Mauldin
- 10 Sylvia Nelson
- 12 Lila Currin
- 14 John Ingersoll
- 16 John Dickerson Stephen Phillips
- 17 Terry Stembridge, Sr.

- 21 Coleen Clower Hattie Griffin
- 23 Kristina Galvan Robert Lightfoot
- 26 Alice Laird
- 27 Andy Bates Tonya Brown
- 29 Alice Lowery Jimi Mankins Carolyn Wimberley
- 30 Canon Gorman