

THE penn street LETTER

OCTOBER 2017 | Volume 16, Number 10

The official monthly newsletter of First Presbyterian Church, Fort Worth

What We Can Celebrate

By Our Central Asia Mission Coworker

My eye caught a glimpse of a student walking with a pronounced limp down the village school's hallway past the principal's office where we were having tea. His gait seemed familiar – so we asked to have the boy come in. We realized it was Amriddin whom we'd filmed 6 years earlier for a video prompting inclusive education. He just finished 9th grade in June. His progress is just one example of community partnership bringing hope to a youth! We know this only because of being present in the same community over time. We hope that the boy will follow in his older brother (who also has a physical disability) and pursue further education.

I hope you've heard the news: I'm ending my service in Central Asia later this year. One reason that I have peace in leaving is that two local managers have grown so much. Mrs. Fair is an exceptional teacher who can mentor people and plan projects. Mr. Pat can manage a budget, do PR with a cranky government official, or talk kinds with a teen with a learning disability. Both were talented young staff in 2004 when I arrived, and became managers within a few years. I, along with others, have mentored them since 2008. They have the capacity to continue to a well-selected group of projects – serving local communities of often excluded rural women or persons with disabilities! I thank God for their gifts, their compassion, and their growth – and pray that God will bless their work!

Looking back over 15 years of service in Central Asia with Presbyterian World Mission (PWM): The people, prayers, and provisions have come together again & again – guided by the Holy Spirit, people acted in faith and petitioned God for me to go half way around the world and to stay; generous folks provided funds for projects and God filled in whatever else was necessary for efforts to have a positive impact. The energy from you while sharing the stories over the years as I've come back to the USA periodically – all are signs of God's hand at work in Central Asia and among US Presbyterians!

Let's pause, be grateful and celebrate all this: Amriddin still in school; my two local colleagues continuing the work; and partners like you still engaged with PWM's work around the world. Amen.

Youth Aim to Pack 25,000 Meals for the Hungry



The FPC Youth Group's "Kids Against Hunger" Meal Packing Mission Project is Sunday, October 1 at 3:30 p.m. in the Youth Center and Gym. All youth and their families (younger siblings must have a parent present) and friends are encouraged to come and help us meet our goal to pack 25,000 meals for children who are hungry around the world.

Adult volunteers are needed to help unload the trailer at 2:30 p.m., so please contact Josh Stewart in the church office if you can help or have any questions. More details at fpcfww.org/youth.

PASTORS' LETTER



Dear Friends,

We know it to be true that words matter. Words matter in how we speak and in what we write. It is also true that context matters. Context shapes understanding of what we hear and what we read. We know that in the church perhaps better than most because we pay such close attention to the words and context of scripture. The Bible is central to our faith and informs our everyday living as scripture deepens our faith in God.

Given the recent destructive hurricanes, building-crumbling earthquakes, flying missiles, frightening nuclear tests, threats of war, political rancor at home and abroad, and all that is going on very personally in our lives, scripture again points us to the source of our ultimate trust and hope. God. Of course, God.

Psalms 46 is an especially important psalm for me. Its words matter. Its context matters. I encourage you to read the whole psalm. From the opening verses "*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble*" to the concluding verses of trust in God, it is a powerful psalm. One of the most familiar verses (46.10a) says, *be still and know that I am God*. Words and context matter. The Hebrew word that has so often been translated "*be still*" isn't a particularly good translation. Too often that has been understood as a sense of meditation or contemplation. Nothing wrong with meditation or contemplation, for sure. But biblical scholar J. Clinton McCann, Jr. suggests that perhaps a better translation would be "*Stop!*" *Stop! and know that I am God*.

Stop! and know that I am God. Words matter and context matters. The preceding verse (46.9) says this, *(God) makes wars cease to the ends of the earth; he breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the shields with fire*. Who is more powerful than the most powerful army on earth? God. Who has the ability to change human hearts and end wars? God. Who can bring forth a future we can't imagine? God.

Stop! and know that I am God. In other words, McCann says, "Depend on God instead of yourselves." Important words from scripture that speak to our very lives. My prayer for all of us is that we trust God's faithful love for us and for the world. *Stop! and know that I am God*.

God's peace to you.

Michael



Generosity Sunday

The people rejoiced, for they had given whole-heartedly to the Lord. 1 Chronicles 29.9

During the month of October, we are discussing generosity as a lead up to Sunday, October 29 -- or Generosity Sunday -- when you are invited to prayerful consider your 2018 pledge to FPC and bring it to worship with you. Watch your mailbox for materials detailing this emphasis, celebrating FPC ministry and mission (which we will also do in a special way in worship on Sunday, October 22), and looking to the future and how we can dream together. Pledge cards will also be mailed in October, so look for that too. If you'd rather, pledges are also being accepted online at fpcfw.org/give.

Observing All Saints Day: November 1

All Saints Day, Wednesday, November 1, is designated for the remembrance of departed sisters and brothers in Christ, who having lived this life in faith, inspire us to live as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ. Held in God's faithful and eternal love, we gather to remember those dear to us, and especially FPC members, who have died during the previous year.

Worship Service: 7 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Labyrinth Walk: 3-6:30 p.m. on the Memorial Garden stone labyrinth

If you are unable to walk the labyrinth yourself, Labyrinth Guild members will gladly walk in your place as you sit near the labyrinth. Watching another walk the labyrinth in remembrance of your loved one(s) can be a moving experience, while being less physically taxing on you. Members of the Labyrinth Guild will be available at each labyrinth to provide information and to assist attendees upon request. Note: An indoor labyrinth will be provided in event of bad weather.

SUBMISSIONS

Submissions for the November issue of the Penn Street Letter are due **Wednesday, October 18**. Submissions for the weekly Penn Street Online emailed newsletters are due the Wednesday prior to each week's issue. Please send to Teresa Tysinger at ttysinger@fpcfw.org or bring by the church office.

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Needed for New Single Women's Facility at Presbyterian Night Shelter

First Presbyterian Church continues to support the Presbyterian Night Shelter and the newly renovated Lowdon-Schutts Women's Shelter. This fall, 160 single women will move out of the Main Shelter and into a space designed to address the unique needs of homeless women providing them with increased safety, security and dignity.

The opening of this additional shelter comes with additional needs. Thanks to you for coordinating a drive to provide our women guests with the following items (all items must be new):

Twin Sheets: Neutral colors, top and bottom
Towels, Wash Cloths, Hand Towels: Any color
Feminine Hygiene Products
Bras (all sizes) and Underwear
Shampoo/Conditioner/Soap
Razors/Shaving Cream/Lotion
Toilet Paper/Tissues
Over-the-Counter Medications
Hair Products

Please bring items to marked collection bins around the church by October 12. Thank you!

COWTOWN BRUSH-UP



**SATURDAY,
OCTOBER 7
8 A.M. - 3 P.M.
AGES 12 AND UP**

The Cowtown Brush-Up is an annual Trinity Habitat for Humanity event during which volunteers help paint and re-paint 30+ homes in need of a touch-up. Hundreds of volunteers participate every year! FPC always brings a team -- be part of our team.

REGISTER AT FPCFW.ORG/HABITAT



Pave the Path to Homeownership!



443 Million

school days are missed each year as kids haul water for their families or they become sick after drinking unsafe water.

BUT YOU CAN DO SOMETHING.

Travel with FPC Team to Central America to Drill Water Wells and More!

Safe water is a basic need for children everywhere. Yet millions of girls and boys in developing countries lack what our children take for granted. Don't miss the opportunity to learn how FPC members can drill a water well in 2018. Join us on **Sunday, October 15 at 10 a.m. or noon in Room 235.**

Our church partner, Living Water International, will help coordinate this exciting short-term mission trip in Central America. Becky Morris, one of the organization's founders and an experienced trip leader, will be our guest. Plan now to hear water news updates from Living Water International and discover how easy it is to join FPC's mission team to drill a well and teach hygiene to children next year. Questions? Contact Larry or Carol Long at 713-927-5185.



CHEF KATIE'S RECIPE CORNER

Here's the recipe for the entree served at the September All Church Brunch. Katie Seelye, FPC's Director of Food Service and Hospitality, also prepared this in a demo that day. Enjoy cooking at home!

Beef Sirloin with Wild Mushrooms and Vegetables

Ingredients:

1 lb. beef sirloin, trimmed/cubed
1/2 tsp. salt, divided
1/2 tsp. freshly ground pepper
Flour, as needed for coating beef
1 tsp. vegetable oil
2 garlic cloves, minced
7 oz. wild mushrooms, thinly sliced
1/2 cup dry red wine
1/2 cup beef broth, divided
2 cups mixed vegetables, frozen

Instructions:

Sprinkle sirloin evenly with 1/4 tsp. pepper and 1/4 tsp. salt and flour, set aside.

Heat oil in a large non-stick skillet over medium-high heat. Add sirloin, cook 1-2 minutes on each side or until browned on each side. Remove from pan and set aside.

Reduce heat to medium; add garlic and mushrooms. Saute 2 minutes. Add wine, 1/2 cup broth, remaining salt and pepper. Increase heat to medium-high and cook 7 minutes, stirring occasionally and scraping pan to loosen browned bits.

Return sirloin to pan and cook 5-7 minutes or until thoroughly heated.

Makes 4 servings.

BE INSPIRED...

Below are some upcoming opportunities for being inspired into a life of discipleship through church events in the coming weeks.

Presbyterian Women's Next Tuesday Together

The next PW Tuesday Together on October 17 at 10:30 a.m. welcomes Ginny Lynch, Senior Development Officer for Presbyterian Children's Home and Services (PCHAS) located in Waxahachie.

Ginny will provide an overview of their programs and share stories of what is being done for children who have been traumatized by Hurricane Harvey in south Texas. At this time, 24 children are in their care and, since PCHAS buys generic items in bulk, we would like to provide some special items for these children.

For Girls: Body wash and soap from Bath and Body Works

For Boys: AXE products (found at Target, Walmart, Walgreens)

You may collect these items at your circle meetings and bring them on October 17. Join us for the program and lunch (\$7) that day by RSVP'ing with Celeste in the church office at 817-335-1231.

The FPC Chili Cook Off is Coming Back!

On Sunday, November 5 at the All Church Brunch (seatings at 11 a.m. and Noon), the Fellowship Committee will bring back the popular Chili Cook Off! The actual meal will be provided (\$7 per person; \$25 family max) and will be chili, cornbread, salad, and dessert. You are invited to bring a crockpot(s) of your best chili recipe for the competition! Others are invited to sample and vote! Judges will also give awards. Don't miss this fun fall festivity at FPC.

MOMS Schedule

MOMS (Mothers Offering Mothers Support) meets the 1st Thursdays and 3rd Wednesdays from 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. in the Parlor for lunch (\$7), discussion of the book of Ruth, and friendship. Next meetings are October 5 and 18. Please RSVP for one week prior at fpcf.org/moms. Childcare available.

Book People

Book People Book Club meets October 9 at 12 p.m. in Room 304 to discuss *The Nazi Officer's Wife* by Edith Hahn-Ber. All are welcome.

From the Planned Giving Committee

A donation to the Early Education Center Scholarship Fund will provide money to assist families with young children receive a quality early education experience in the church's program that might otherwise be unable to afford to attend. If you have questions about Planned Giving, contact Dana Fickling, Church Administrator, in the office at dfickling@fpcf.org or 817-335-1231.

Dancers Needed for Christmas Eve

Those interested in participating in dance during the morning worship service on Christmas Eve (10 a.m.) to "O Holy Night" are encouraged to attend an initial gathering with Margo Dean on Sunday, October 22 at 12:15 p.m. in the Sanctuary. For more information or additional details, please contact Margo Dean at 817-738-7915 or Karen Steffler at 817-313-5169 or karen@stefflerdesign.com.

ENGAGE THE WORLD...

Below are some upcoming opportunities for engaging the world through church outreach mission efforts in the coming weeks.

Give to PDA for Hurricane Relief

FPC is still collecting donations for Presbyterian Disaster Assistance to benefit those affected by recent hurricanes. If you'd like to give, please make a check out to First Presbyterian Church with "PDA" in the memo. As of September 22 when this issue went to press, a total of \$32,274 had been collected from FPC! Thank you!

Harvey Mission Trips

We hope to send Harvey relief mission trips soon to the coastal areas, and we need volunteers from First Pres! We are working out the details with our partners in those areas. Once we have the detailed information, we will post it at fpcf.org/harveyresponse/.

Peanut Butter Sunday

The next Peanut Butter Sunday is October 15. Bring donations of peanut butter (regular sized jars only, please) to marked boxes outside worship spaces. These help stock the food pantry shelves at Community Crossroads and helps feed the hungry in the Hemphill community and beyond.

Current Community Crossroads Needs

The following needs are current at Community Crossroads. Can you help?

- 2 people to serve dinner Wednesday night at WOW (5-6:30 p.m.) Contact Kathy Parr.
- 1 person for third Wednesday sack lunches (11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.) Contact Dori Davis at ddavis@fpcf.org.

Cookies Needed for Prison Ministry

Homemade cookies are a tangible expression of love! Kairos Prison Ministry needs 30 dozen cookies for the Mountain View Women's Prison Retreat October 19-22. **Cookies are needed by October 18 in the church office.**

Chocolate chip, oatmeal, peanut butter, and those made from cake mixes are all favorites! Here are some guidelines to please keep in mind.

- Cookies should be between 2 and 2 1/2" in diameter and not over 1/2" thick. (Over or undersized cookies can be used, just bag and label separately.)
- Do Not Use: Icing or any other topping or decoration on the outside of the cookies (including sugar).
- Do Not Use: Any fruits, nuts, raisins, M&Ms or coconut. Flavored chips are ok (chocolate, butterscotch, etc.)
- COOL each cookie thoroughly! Cookies packed even slightly warm will stick together, are difficult to separate, and tend to break easily.
- PACK the cooled cookies in quart zip lock freezer bags (not the "slide zipper" type) in groups of 12. Cookies are best protected from breaking if they're stacked inside the flat zip lock in 2 layers of 6 cookies. If the cookies will not be turned over to your Kairos contact within 3 days, you may freeze the cookies to preserve freshness.
- PRAY individually, as a family, or as a group as you prepare the pack the cookies. Ask God to use your cookies as a source of God's love for the inmates during the weekend and that participants will become part of the family of God.



Are you active in a FPC Care Team? If so, the Congregational Care Committee would like to invite you to be our guests at our annual Care Team Appreciation Dinner. Join us for Cousin's BBQ and fellowship with all our outstanding Care Teams.

Date: Tuesday, October 17
Time: 6-8 p.m.
Where: FPC Great Hall
RSVP: Please call or email by October 9 to Celeste in the church office at 817-335-1231 or cfaller@fpcf.org



The Ice Cream Social on September 18 with some of our newest members and visitors was a great time of visiting and we received 4 new folks into the FPC membership. Sponsored by the Evangelism Committee.

5 Things I Didn't Expect at a FPC Session Meeting

by Teresa Tysinger, FPC Director of Communications

When Michael Waschevski, my supervisor, suggested I find a Session meeting to attend sometime this year, I was on board but not particularly excited. Don't get me wrong – I very much see the importance of committee meetings within the church. Meetings allow us to plan ministry, evaluate events, brainstorm future possibilities, and get to know one another better. But maybe you're like me and imagine the Session to be a stoic room full of quiet church leaders listening to a rap sheet of motions and reports from a lengthy and formal docket.

However, when I attended the September 17 meeting of the FPC Session, my experience was quiet different than I imagined. Maybe you've made your own assumptions, too. Here are five things I didn't expect at a FPC Session meeting.

- 1. I didn't expect to cry.** Each Session meeting opens with a devotion given by a Session member. At September's meeting, Herd Midkiff delivered an emotionally moving devotion about the power of faith, hope, and love in the midst of tragedy. His heartfelt words follow the loss of his wife and FPC member Shannon in early 2016. My own tears mixed with those around the room; it was a moving and sacred moment.
- 2. I didn't expect to laugh.** Michelle Goodwin, chair of the Property Committee, reported on the committee's work this year that includes a great deal of exterior building cleaning and renovation, or as she aptly named it, "2017: The Year of Drone Readiness." This is in response to a video the church received months ago from someone in the community who flew their drone over the church, exposing a telling visual of unsightly stains

on our roofs! The Session erupted in laughter at Michelle's clever humor. FPC is now "drone ready"!

- 3. I didn't expect to witness teamwork.** FPC is approaching its annual emphasis on stewardship. Mary Kay Roberto, chair of the Stewardship Committee, came to the Session meeting with hundreds of invitations to upcoming Generosity Gatherings. Members of your session teamed up to hand address and stuff these invitations. When you receive yours in the mail, know it was touched by and prayed over by your thoughtful Session.
- 4. I didn't expect to be inspired.** At each Session meeting, reports are made on the progress of church projects, programs, and goals. Amy Parker, Director of Children's Ministry and Outreach, delivered a report on the Prairie Valley Camp Fund, which FPC now manages – telling the Session about the 105 children and youth from our Presbytery and region who were able to attend camps on scholarships totaling \$25,000. So inspiring!
- 5. I didn't expect to want to go back.** Within my capacity as Director of Communications, I am always welcome at Session meetings. But before the suggestion from Michael, I hadn't considered the full value of doing so. Since my office hours tend to be during the week, attending this Sunday Session meeting felt a little bit like a chore. I now feel very differently. Given the chance again, I'd consider the opportunity to watch FPC's elders and staff in action a true honor and privilege.

Well done, good and faithful servants.



ABOUT THE SESSION

Following the PC(USA)'s Book of Order, FPC's Session is made up of the ruling elders elected by the congregation. Its primary role is to spiritually guide the congregation to become a community of faith, hope, love and witness through providing regular preaching and teaching of the Word of God, administering of the Sacraments, and nurturing the covenant community of disciples of Christ (G-3.0201). FPC's Session meets monthly.

JOYS & CONCERNS

Following are the joys and concerns shared as of September 21, 2017 (due to printing deadlines). To respect the privacy of those listed, names are included only when the individuals grant their permission.

Our loving sympathy to...

Mike and Andrea Pavell on the death of his father, Dave Pavell, who died September 16. Other surviving family include granddaughters **Whitney and Delaney Pavell**.

Family and friends of **Patricia J. Brown**, who died September 18.

Family and friends of **Edith Anderson**, who died September 11.

Mary Susan and Scott Farrar on the death of her mother, Ethel "Toonie" Daigle on September 6 in Houma, Louisiana.

Ralph and Ellen Benson on the death of his grandmother, Marjorie Benson on August 26 in Bryan, Texas. Other survivors include great granddaughters **Clayton Sue, Clarke, and Charlotte Benson**.

Our loving thoughts and prayers are with...

Donald Deshauters, Dwight Mason, Rush Hart, Phyllis Propes, Jane Drew, Lisa Priddy, Emma Coley, Sara Swift, Marilyn Love, and Marjorie Lewis, who are recovering from surgery or injury. **Rev. Floyd Kinser, Dorothy Kinser, Indi Butler, Nona Cobden, David Nation, Corinna Nation, Lisa Shiner, Jacquitta White, Marge Shiner, Elizabeth Bean, Frances Blake, Bill O'Grady, Gene James, Carolyn Lischio, Mac McCoy, Nancy Nelson, Ed Martin, and Dalia Scott**, who are dealing with illness or undergoing treatment. **Jane Watson**, who is on hospice.

Our caring prayers for extended family include...

Don Laminack (brother of **Vance Laminack**), Robert Bull (son-in-law of **Bob and Jean Gorham**), Warren Brown (son-in-law of **Betty Tefft**), Bess Hunt (mother of **Martha Zaborowski**), Melissa Denton (cousin of **Pat Gordon**), Evan Wilson (grandson of **Henrietta Bailey**), Glenda Burger (sister of **Vance Laminack**), Janet Laminack (cousin of **Julie Sphar and Vance Laminack**), Susan Williams (cousin of **Pat Gordon**), John DeMore (son-in-law of **June Sprott**), Mary Krueger (sister of **Wanda Williams**), Lisa Koenig (niece of **Clark Williams**), Kathy Kline (**Maxine Kruse's** daughter), Marty Kinard (**Larry and Bettye Kinard's** daughter-in-law), Mark Bryant (**Joanne Sarsgard's** son), and Susan Chenault (**Frances Chenault's** daughter).

Prayers for peace in our world, for the safety of Nathan Gunter (**Russell and Vivian Norment's** nephew) who is stationed in Korea. Also for the safety of **Diego A. Saldivar**, who is serving in the US Navy; Diego is the son of **Becky and Rene Saldivar**.

Our congratulations and best wishes to...

Brian and Katie Wharry on the birth of Thomas Lynn Wharry on September 1. Proud grandparents are **Bob and Susan Wheeler**.



CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

Below are some **highlights** of special events happening in October. For a complete calendar, visit fpcf.w.org.

SUNDAYS IN OCTOBER

- 8 a.m. Worship in Chapel
- 9 a.m. Worship in Great Hall
- 10 a.m. Church School for All Ages
- 11 a.m. Worship in Sanctuary

WEDNESDAYS IN OCTOBER

- 5:30 p.m. Dinner & Worship on Wednesdays at Community Crossroads

THROUGHOUT OCTOBER

- Various Generosity Gatherings

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1

- 3:30 p.m. Youth Kids Against Hunger Meal Packing Event

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7

- 8 a.m. Habitat for Humanity Cowtown Brush-Up

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15

- All Day Peanut Butter Sunday (donations collected)
- 6:30 p.m. Taize Worship in Chapel

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 17

- 10:30 a.m. Presbyterian Women's Tuesday Together
- 6-8 p.m. Care Team Appreciation Dinner

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 19

- 7 a.m. Men's Monthly Breakfast

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 22

- 8, 9, 11 a.m. Celebrating FPC Ministries and Mission

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 29

- All Day Generosity Sunday



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PERIODICALS

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Send address changes to
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WWW.FPCFW.ORG

Relief Buckets for Hurricane Victims



FPC Staff Delivers 155 Flood Relief Buckets from 6 Churches

FPC staff Robyn Michalove and Amy Parker delivered a total of 155 flood relief buckets donated from FPC families and 5 other churches for those still recovering from recent hurricanes to the Disaster Assistance Center in Ferncliff, AR. The buckets will go to restock the depleted supply of buckets that resources Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. These photos show many FPC children with several of the buckets as they were blessed before being loaded for delivery. Thank you for your generosity.