



**WORSHIP SERVICE,
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT,
DECEMBER 12, 2021, 10:30 A.M.**

Our Scripture readings for our next Sunday-morning worship service, December 12, 2021 (the Third Sunday in Advent) are: Isaiah 12:2-6; and Luke 3:7-18. The title of the sermon is "What Should We Do?," and a copy of the Bulletin for this service can be found here: <https://fpcovictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/12-12-2021-bulletin-pdf.pdf>.

During our worship service, we shall also mark a happy occasion in the life of our church, namely the installation and ordination of our new Session Class of 2024: Frances Byrne and Patrick Patterson, who will be ordained as new Ruler Elders; and Becky Richter, who will be installed as a returning Ruling Elder. Please join us this Sunday for our Service of Ordination and Installation as we welcome our new leaders.

Presbyterian polity is founded upon the simple principle that faithful Christians shall choose from their midst those individuals of wisdom and discernment whom they believe are well qualified to strengthen and nurture the congregation's faith and spiritual life (Book of Order G-2.0301). Let us pray for the new and returning members of our Session as they lead this church into its 181st year of witness and service to the kingdom of God.

**ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL
ANGEL TREE PROJECT
TO BENEFIT CHILDREN IN THE
KINSHIP PROGRAM OF THE
TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES**

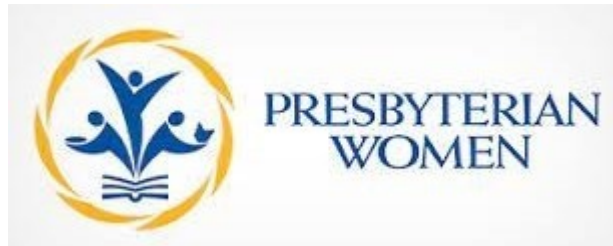
This Advent Season, First Presbyterian Church was once again asked to participate in an Angle Tree Christmas project to benefit children in the Kinship Program of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

Our church was originally provided with the names of 20 children in the Kinship Program, a number which was quickly increased by eight. Never fear, however, the generous congregation of this church has stepped up and purchased appropriate gifts for all 28 of the children referred to us! Sunday, December 12th, is the deadline for delivering those gifts to the church office or to Frances Miller. The gifts will be delivered to Texas Family and Protection Services on December 13th.

Also, after our worship service on December 12th, the Presbyterian Women will gather in the Parlor to wrap any undecorated gifts that have been turned in. If you have a moment, please plan to stay and help. This is such a rewarding project, so satisfying to givers and recipients alike, that you will be glad to have participated in bringing joy to those children and their families who

are less fortunate than so many of us. What a wonderful way to honor Christ during the Advent Season!

For more information, please contact the church office (361.575.2441; info@fpcofvictoria.org) or Frances Miller (361.578.4679).



The Presbyterian Women have cautiously resumed their regular in-person activities. Here is a schedule of those activities in the coming weeks:

- Thursday, December 9: The Adele Carsner Young Circle meeting at 9:30 a.m., with a salad luncheon to follow to celebrate the Christmas season. Please bring your favorite salad! Dessert will be provided.
 - Monday, December 13: Mary and Martha Circle meeting at 2:00 p.m.
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COMMITMENT CAMPAIGN 2022

First Presbyterian Church Commitment Campaign 2022	
<i>Understanding that all we possess is a gift from God, and that God delights in the generosity of His children, I/we rejoice in pledging to First Presbyterian Church:</i>	
\$ <input type="text"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Weekly	OR <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly
\$ <input type="text"/>	
Name(s) <input type="text"/>	
Signature <input type="text"/>	
Address <input type="text"/>	
<input type="text"/>	
Phone: <input type="text"/>	E-mail: <input type="text"/>

During our Congregational Meeting after our worship service last Sunday (December 5th), our Treasurer, Jim Stokes, acknowledged how full our mailboxes get this time of year with envelopes stuffed with solicitations for a

myriad of charitable causes. Often in self-defense from the deluge of so many solicitations, we simply toss those envelopes, unopened, into the trash.

As Jim cautioned, however, be careful! You will soon be receiving from the church your Pledge Card for the coming year. Among other things, our envelopes will have real stamps on them, in the full amount of first-class postage, and we hope that alone will help you distinguish our letter from all the rest.

The members of First Presbyterian Church have a long history of solid, dependable, and generous giving to support the ministries of this church. Such habits have been challenged by the effects of the COVID pandemic, but our members have remained faithful and undaunted.

Beyond surviving, our goal is to thrive in the work of the Lord, and the Session hopes you will prayerfully consider the amount you will be able to pledge to support the work of First Presbyterian Church in the coming year. Equally important, we hope you will faithfully complete your 2022 Pledge Card and return it to the church office as quickly as possible. Pledge cards are the only reliable means the Session has to responsibly plan our annual budget. We cannot plan our expenses if we do not know how much income to anticipate!

When you receive the letter with your Pledge Card, please recognize the envelope as important, and please, after prayer and contemplation, complete and return it as soon as you are able. God bless you for your support and generosity!



Starting in January 2022, our Mission and Outreach and Christian Education Committees are coming together to offer a book study to all interested readers. Leila Galvan and Dawn Neel will lead this nine-week study from 9 to 10 a.m. on Saturday mornings beginning January 8 and running through March 5, 2022.

“Do It Afraid: Embracing Courage in the Face of Fear,” by Joyce Meyer is the book chosen by Leila Galvan and a group of her colleagues who will be joining us. Books and study guides can be purchased at H-E-B and Hobby Lobby and online at Amazon for around \$10 each.

In *“Do It Afraid,”* Ms. Meyer argues powerfully that you do not have to allow fear to dictate your decisions or determine what you will or will not do. You are free to be led by the Holy Spirit and to do everything God calls you to do. God has an amazing plan for your life, a plan our enemy, the devil, tries to keep you from fulfilling, often through fear. There may be times when you feel fear, but if you learn to do it afraid, whatever it may be in your life, you will break fear’s hold over you and find freedom to live a life of peace, strength, joy, and great fulfillment.

Come explore this and other themes with friends interested in reading and interested in intellectual exploration, friendly fellowship, and a time for conversation about Christian topics will help and inspire us in our daily struggles.

For more information, contact Dawn Neel at dawnspaur@yahoo.com.

VCAM

Thank you again, dear FPC members, for so generously donating Thanksgiving food during November. As we celebrate this blessed season of Advent and Christmas and the birth of our Savior, please help us again fill the VCAM pantry with ingredients for tasty holiday treats—

- Baking powder, baking soda
- Brown sugar, granulated sugar
- Cake and cupcake mixes

- Flour
- Ground cinnamon, ginger, salt, spices
- Ready-made icing
- Sprinkles for decorating

Collection baskets are in the Narthex and the hallway outside the church office.

A SPECIAL VCAM NEED

Marc Hinojosa, VCAM executive director, adds a special request this month for beanies, gloves, hoodies/jackets, towels, and underwear, saying, "Let's help our homeless population stay warm during the cooler months."



2021 PDS CHRISTMAS PARTY THURSDAY DECEMBER 9, 2021, 6:30 PM

What would Christmas be without a PDS Christmas Program?! Last year our hearts were lonely as the pandemic prevented our young disciples at the Presbyterian Day School from singing and celebrating the Christmas Season with all the joy and abandon with which they are blessed.

Cautiously this year, however, the children will perform the happy songs of Christmas in our Sanctuary for their extended families FPC members. If you need an overflowing dose of Christmas cheer, if your heart needs to be reminded of the special season that Christmas becomes for children, please

join us on Thursday evening, December 9th, at 6:30 p.m., for the joy and delight of the annual PDS Christmas Program.



**CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2021**

Each year during the Advent and Christmas seasons, we celebrate with joy the wondrous gift of Jesus Christ, our Savior.

The **Christmas Joy Offering** has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930's. This special annual offering provides critical financial support to church workers in need and their families, while also supporting Presbyterian-related schools and colleges in education and leadership development. This year we will be collecting the **Joy Offering** on **Sunday, Dec. 19**. Please look for the special offering envelope included with your bulletin for our worship service that Sunday.



Under Linda Patterson's talented direction, we will once again create the traditional-- and always spectacular-- poinsettia Christmas tree to decorate our chancel during this Advent Season. As is our custom, members and friends of FPC are being offered the opportunity to purchase a poinsettia for \$15 per plant. You can take your poinsettia(s) home, or you can designate your payment to be used to support VCAM or another local charity. In each instance, your gift can also be designated in honor or in memory of one or more people who are special to you. A list of all the names thus designated will be acknowledged in our Christmas bulletin.

For more information, look for the "Christmas Poinsettias" leaflet which will be inserted in our worship service bulletins during the coming Sundays, or click here to be able to read and, if you wish, print the form: <https://fpcofvictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/POINSETTA-ORDER-FORM-2022.pdf>

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL

The annual Advent Devotional ("*Glimpses of God Incarnate*"), compiled by the faculty, staff, students, and alumni of Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary has arrived, and copies have been placed around the church, particularly in the Narthex and outside the church office. They are yours to take, without cost, for yourself, family, and friends.

There is a one-page devotional for each day of Advent, and I want to

encourage you to start, end, or refresh your day by pausing a moment and, aided by the devotional for the day at hand, reflect on the excitement, the wonder, the glory that accompanies the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Your mind and your heart will thank you for the rest and reflection; your soul will be restored by the remembrance of why we celebrate Christmas!

If you are unable to pick up a copy of this devotional from the church, please contact our Office Administrator, Erica Colding (361.575.2441; info@fpcovictoria.org), and she will gladly arrange to send you a copy.



**CHRISTMAS EVE
CANDLELIGHT SERVICE,
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24TH, 7:00 P.M.**

Please plan to join us (and bring family and friends!) for our annual Christmas Eve Candlelight Service on Friday, December 24th, at 7:00 p.m. As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, we will also celebration the Lord's Supper. We will sing the familiar, sacred carols, and we will raise our candles high as we sing "Silent Night" and then dismiss ourselves in silence.

For our church, this evening service is the pinnacle of the Advent Season. Be with us for this joyful celebration!

And please be mindful of this: even though our Christmas Eve service will be live-streamed over our usual social media outlets (www.fpcovictoria.com and www.facebook.com/fpcovictoria), the Session does not want anyone to miss this service who would like to be present in person. Therefore, the Session is prepared to arrange a ride for any member of our church who is apprehensive about driving at night. We understand, and we want you to be

safe. Nevertheless, if you want to experience the beauty of our Sanctuary and the grandeur of the music you will hear there, please let us help make that possible for you. Simply contact the church office (361.575.2441; info@fpcofvictoria.org), and let us know of your needs.

Peace, grace, and mercy,

Pastor Jim
