

## A Word From The Administrative Commission

It is the beginning of a new church year; you have elected new officers who have been preparing for ordination and installation. They will stand before you soon to take their vows; among them is this:

"Will you seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination and love?"

Many of you in this congregation have taken that vow as an elder or deacon, even if you are not in active service. Will you seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination and love? This is your vow to your church and to Jesus Christ.

You may have read some of Ruth together this fall. Do you recall how she put her welfare in with that of her mother-in-law, Naomi, who was none too excited about it? Yet Ruth devoted all she had and all she was to make sure they would be provided for in the land of Naomi's God. She gave fully of her energy and love. In turn, that encouraged Naomi to use her intelligence and imagination for their salvation, their future and the future of Israel through King David, the great-grandson.

Or you may recall the widow of Zarephath who gave her last bite of food to the prophet of God, Elijah. She gave her life. Or the widow at the Temple whom Jesus watched as she gave her 2 copper coins, all that she had-her livelihood.

This is what is expected of disciples who follow Jesus Christ. Will you seek to serve the people of God with energy, intelligence, imagination and love? Will you give your full measure to the gospel of Jesus Christ and use whatever gifts God has given you to this end. Will you leave room for the Holy Spirit between your ears and in your heart as you worship and serve in this church this new year beginning in Advent. And not just to keep things the way they are.

The Action Plan team and the elders and deacons are asking people to become prayer partners - listen for the project to be introduced. Will you use your energy, imagination and love to pray for one another this season?

When the widow gave her last morsel to Elijah, things changed. Because she had given in trust, reaching out beyond herself and her son, she had new life even at the risk of losing everything. Ruth and Naomi's creative approach to their situation make possible a life and name for everyone involved, a nation for Israel through King David, and a Savior for the world, Emmanuel.

We never see the widow from the Temple again, but we do see Jesus, who gives his whole living for us and for our salvation, and charges the church to emulate him in giving energy, intelligence, imagination and above all love, to whatever he has called us to do.

So find ways to reach out beyond yourselves into the wider world. Here is how I put it to my congregations. The gospel of salvation is ultimately not about you. It is not all about your salvation; that is, the moment that you embrace the grace that saves you, it is no longer about you but about Jesus and Jesus' kingdom. So the church and its ministry, your part in it, none of it is about you- it is about Jesus.

Once we realize it is all about Jesus, we realize that none of it is ours. All that we are and all that we give, we give away for the sake of Jesus Christ, in thanks for his gift of salvation, and for the purpose of showing provisionally, the kingdom of God to the world. John Calvin reminds us that "We are not our own. .. We belong to God. Therefore live for him and die for him....Let his wisdom and will therefore rule all our actions..." So we give away our energy, intelligence, imagination and love to God and God's purposes in our community, our church and the world. In the new church year, make sure your discipleship is not about you, but about Jesus Christ.

*Submitted by Ann Wasson*

## Update From Amy

Dear Church Family,

I'm sure you've heard by now but I still want to say it. I'm going to be a grandmother! If everything works the way I hope it will, then I will graduate from Princeton Seminary on May 22 and fly to Texas to be with Rebecca and Jason for the birth. I'm taking a crazy course load next semester so that I won't have to take summer classes because I want to be able to stay with them to help those first few weeks.

I had a strange feeling a few weeks ago when I turned in my application for graduation. In some ways it seems that I've been doing this for a long time, but in other ways it seems that I've just begun. The one thing I know is that it was because of my supportive family (which includes you all) that I've been able to accomplish this. Your prayers and encouragement have meant the world to me. Thank you so much.

Blessings and love, Amy

## Youth Food Harvest

The December "Food or Item of the Month" is **Canned Green Beans & Corn** (each month will have a new food or item). Please bring your donation to the church on the **third Sunday** of each month & the youth will take it to the Christians Concerned Food Pantry.



## Happy December Birthday!

*Let's Pray Prayers of Joy for These People on Their Special Day!*



12/04 Nancy Grantham

12/15 Rosella McQuain

12/06 Corey Helms

12/29 Bennie Drake

12/09 Ted Legg

12/30 Fallis Beall



12/13 Lonnie Helms

12/30 George Copland



*A lunch honoring December Birthdays will be held at El Palacio at noon on Wednesday, December 16th. Please call in your reservation to the church office.*

## Mission at the Cornerstone is a possibility for FPC!

Delta Headstart, which is the Headstart program for Stephens and two other counties, recently approached FPC about using our facilities for an Early Headstart program. Early Headstart serves pregnant moms and children up to age 3.

**What will it cost?** FPC will still own the building and will not receive rent for its use (it will be an in-kind donation). We will carry the insurance on the building just as in a tenant/owner relationship. Headstart carries the insurance on the program itself.

**Why the Cornerstone?** The building is ideally situated near the EDGE school. The program hopes to serve students who are new parents or expecting a child. This will enable them to finish school as well as learn important parenting skills.

**Isn't there too much that needs to be fixed in the Cornerstone?** We hope not. Headstart will put money into the building in order for it to meet the strict codes and guidelines for a childcare facility. This may include things such as additional sinks, plumbing, windows and flooring.

**How will this affect the church?** From a physical aspect, they will build a small playground on the Cornerstone property and will use some of the parking spaces near the building. As far as the membership of the church there may be some opportunities for volunteering with the program.

**When will the program begin?** We don't know yet. Session has approved the exploration, and Headstart will begin looking at the building requirements very soon. We will keep you informed through the Faith-at-work.

As one person said about this possible partnership, "We have been praying for children, and maybe this is God's answer to our prayers." We hope you will pray that if this partnership can become a reality that the partners find a way past any road blocks and that FPC will be able to carry out its part of this mission.

*Submitted by Rev. Tracy Evans*

## Leftover Pumpkin Recipe (Sure to Please)

**Place Pumpkins in the Pumpkin Patch  
for 30 days**

**Remove Leftover Pumpkins  
Deliver to Delta Head Start in Marlow  
and Edge Academy in Duncan  
Makes two bunches  
Happy and Grateful Kids!**

## A Quick Reminder About Lights

Flashing lights of any form can set off dizzy spells & epileptic seizures. Use care during this Holiday Season

## We Missed It

**Frank Gouin had a Birthday  
on November 26<sup>th</sup>.**

**Happy Birthday Frank!**

Hello from Mary Ann & Ron in Humble, Texas. New email is: [powell2.007@comcast.net](mailto:powell2.007@comcast.net) New phone # 281-973-9507

## Session Highlights

- The meeting was called to order at 6:34 pm
- The devotional and opening prayer was given by Peggy Gilchrist.
- Sharon Horton from Delta Head Start gave a presentation on the Early Head Start Program. This program needs a facility they can adapt for this program and they are interested in the Cornerstone Building. A motion was made and seconded to continue exploration of the Early Head Start program to use the Cornerstone Building. A vote was taken and the motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to approve the October 20, 2009 minutes with one correction. The minutes stand approved.
- The treasurer's report was received and accepted.
- A motion from the Stewardship/Finance committee was made to have the interest from the Endowment Fund to be deposited into the General Fund. A vote was taken and the motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to adjourn at 8:43 pm and the meeting was closed with prayer.

Submitted by Jenna Bentley, Clerk of Session

### John Calvin (and We) Celebrate 500 Years

A study of John Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion* presented by Princeton Theological Seminary continues through the end of the year (<http://www.ptsem.edu/calvin2009>). The axioms of John Calvin were: "...that there is one God, who is just and good by definition; that Jesus Christ is God's Son and the Bible is God's revelation (renewing and expanding what was made known in creation but lost to sight by the fall); that because the Bible is God's Word, it cannot materially contradict itself and must all fit together in such a way as to be practicable." (McKee, Elsie, "Reflections for the week of January 1-4". *Calvin 09 - Read the Institutes*. Princeton Theological Seminary. January 1-4, 2009. Web. 22 Jan. 2009. <[>](http://www2.ptsem.edu/ConEd/Calvin/archive/).)

### Book IV – Means of Grace: Holy Catholic Church Chapter 14-17.11

John Calvin briefly defines sacrament as: "...a testimony of divine grace toward us, confirmed by an outward sign, with mutual attestation of our piety toward him." (Section 1.14.1) Such attestation of our piety is "...in the presence of the Lord and of his angels and before men." (Section 1.14.1) The sacraments are signs of a covenant. "They confirm faith, not of themselves, but as agencies of the Holy Spirit and in association with the Word; and they are distinguishing marks of our profession of faith before men..." (Section 4.14.6)

"Baptism is the sign of the initiation by which we are received into the society of the church, in order that, engrafted in Christ, we may be reckoned among God's children." (Section 4.15.1) "More than a passing liturgical event, baptism provides the substance and the form for the Christian life." (Mikoski, Gordon, "Reflections for the week of November 2-7". *Calvin 09 - Read the Institutes*. Princeton Theological Seminary. November 2-7, 2009. Web. 19 Nov. 2009. <[>](http://www2.ptsem.edu/ConEd/Calvin/archive/).)

We are partakers [of Christ] by faith "...through the gospel but more clearly through the Sacred Supper, where he offers himself with all his benefits to us, and we receive him by faith." (Section 4.17.5) We are nourished, refreshed, strengthened, and gladdened. (Section 4.1.3) John Calvin refers to the Supper as "mystery"; it is a joyous mystery.

(Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Ed. John T. McNeill. Trans. Ford Lewis Battles. 2 vols. Louisville, KY: Westminster Press, 2006. Sections provided in text. Print.)

Note: Catholic is defined as universal.

Lynn Wienck

**REMINDER!**  
**Boy Scout Pancake Day**  
**December 6<sup>th</sup>**  
**6am - 1pm**

~ **Choir Practice** ~  
**Wednesday Eve.**  
**7:00pm**   
**Everyone Welcome!**

### You're Invited to Tracy's!

I'm having an **Open House** on Thursday, December 17th from 3:00 to 6:00p.m. 1800 Northridge Drive.

This is my opportunity to thank you for the hospitality and welcome you have shown me as your Interim Pastor. Stop by and have a bit of refreshment, but be warned I have animals (a friendly dog and two cats). I only ask that you bring a gift of socks or mittens that will be donated in Duncan.

Questions? Call me at 736-4170. Hope to see you on the 17th!  
Tracy

***DEADLINE FOR NEXT FAW  
ENTRY IS  
DECEMBER 26TH***

### Financial Update

The Session wants to financially update the Congregation on a routine basis. The figures below are as of November 16, 2009 and will be updated monthly.

Yearly Income to date	\$158,125.60
Yearly Expense to date	\$200,644.61

### ***LET US REMEMBER***

#### **Duncan Care Center 700 Palm**

Estella Trapp

#### **Alterra Sterling House 915 W. Plato**

Wylla Leonard

#### **Country Club Care 1904 Hwy 81**

Carroll McClellan

Beulah Calloway      Lavina Hofmann

#### **Wilkins Nursing Center 1205 S. 4th**

Ben Hill



Please plan to attend the  
**Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**  
at First Presbyterian Church on  
December 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm.

**The Sacrament of Communion Will be Observed**

~ **Lighting of The Christ Candle** ~

Friends and Family are cordially invited

Child care will be provided

### ***THANK YOU TO ALL THAT HAVE HELPED***

A big thank you for a successful worship year of 2009. A special thanks goes to the liturgists for the year. Those serving with our ministers this year have been a great help. The following have been liturgist for 2009: Dan Flanders, Beverly Moody, Margo Jones, LaJuan Fleming, Jerry Fleming, Robin Caldwell, Dennis Wienck, Joan Drake, Rosella McQuain and Lonnie McCain.

Also we wish to thank all our communion servers this year. Under the leadership of our interim pastor, Reverend Tracy Evans, our worship commitment has been fulfilled. Worship is complete with participation. If anyone would like to serve in any of these rolls, please let Reverend Tracy know. There are still choir slots left for any of you who would like to serve in that capacity. That will be under the direction of our new church musician, Holli Hill-Le.

*Your Worship Committee, Martha Coker*

### **Flowers for 2009**

It has long been a custom of our church for members of the congregation to furnish fresh flowers for the chancel. On behalf of the Worship Committee we would like to thank the members who have generously and graciously furnished flowers this past year:

Jim and Sally Barthell, Don and Beverly Moody, Pat Hammond, Charles and Martha Coker, Mike Grantham, Carroll Goss, Peggy Gilchrist, Chris and Vicki Zimmerman, Bob and Jenna Bentley, Jerry and LaJuan Fleming, Bennie and Joan Drake, Mary Ann Kaminski and Ron Powell, Elizabeth Flanders Pitts, Gladys Taylor, Bob and Eloise Hofmann, Dan and Jo Flanders, Jim and Helen Sue Lowe, Al and Janis Hurby, Daniel and Jon Bozard (the family of Geraldine and Roy Steigleder).

The flower book for 2010 will be on the coffee table during worship during the months of December and January. Will you please find a date that you would like to have to designate for flowers. Our flowers last two weeks. If you would like to share with another person (s) please indicate that also. The flowers come from Added Touch Florist and they bill you.

*Blessings, Martha Coker, Worship Committee*

**FYI** The Presbyterian Women's Circle I has a new meeting time. They will meet at 10:00am on the second Friday of each month.