

Focus

May 2020
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News of the Community of Faith

Youth Update from Heath:

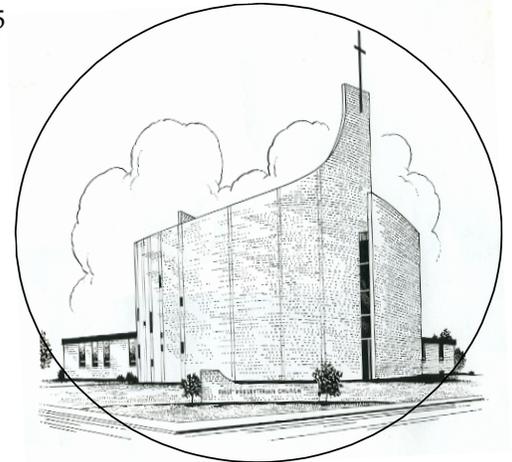
Since we are not meeting in person at our building, where I normally catch up with everybody, and share what the youth are doing, I felt an update through our FOCUS would be appropriate.

I wanted the congregation to know the youth are still having Sunday School. We have put Confirmation on hold due to the pandemic. We had originally scheduled the kids to be confirmed on Easter. My plan is to start back up in the fall and finish at a good time to confirm the class. We have been meeting on FaceTime for around an hour on Sunday mornings going over subjects the kids want to learn about. We finished up Ghosts and how they are talked about in the Bible. Ended up going over an Old Testament story in Samuel (1 Samuel verse 28) about Saul talking to Samuel's ghost. I had never read it before, and it is really a good story to be told around a campfire. We had a lot of fun with it (or least I did telling it 😊).

Our next subject will be Cults (You have to remember; the kids are picking the subjects... within reason). I have some good, age appropriate material to let the kids know what cults are, what makes up a cult and how they differ from general Christian faith and our Reformed Faith. I really hope it is as informative and fun as our last lesson.

The one thing we have not been able to do is Youth Group gatherings and activities that we did with First Christian. I am still in conversation with them, and we would like to team up and work at getting supplies to Paws. They have been impacted by the pandemic, like everyone and everything else. Right now, it looks like they need paper towels and bleach. The youth will be sending out a call in the future with Karen's help on things that they may need. We plan to gather the supplies and take them over there together.

If you have any questions or ideas for the youth, please let me know.



For an update from some of our former "Utes", please see page 3

Improv on Psalm 84 (with just a touch of 100 and 122)
A Lament for Worship in the Temple ...
By Maren Tirabassi



*With apologies to Jim

How lovely is your sanctuary,
our sanctuary, O God.
My soul longs for the pews or chairs
for the clear windows to the world around
or glass in sparkling color
that tells the sweet old stories.

My heart and my voice crack with tears
because I miss the music of a choir,
even an imperfect organist,
and, yes, even my own tune-in-a-bucket voice
singing concealed by a crowd --
for I am not going to open my mouth
and embarrass myself on Zoom
making a joyful noise to the living God.

Even the smallest children find
a second and holy home,
even babies brought in arms for baptism,
pets brought to Blessing the Animals,
guests who sit in the back pew
because maybe, just maybe,
they want a wedding here someday,
guests who sit at the homeless meal --
which is every bit as much
a nest at your altar.

Happy are those who worship in your home,
and don't want to see the inside of mine.

Happy are those who meet to plan mission
in the basements of a blessed place,
easily able to see who wants to talk
because hearts show in the eyes.
And happy are those who share
a common room
of prayer shawls and conversation

rather than crafting tenderness
with crochet hooks
while binge-watching television.

And they go from strength to strength
who drink coffee and eat cake
at coffee hour,
or just drink lots and lots and lots of coffee
at AA, NA, GamAnon meetings.

God, hear my whining prayer;
give ear, O God of the wilderness
who at least gave a design
for a beautiful traveling tent.
Accept my sadness,
missing the place of memories and love.

For I know that worship online,
and meetings, too
are precious in your sight,
and I would rather be a distance-keeper
in the virtual house of God,
than re-open too soon and risk the health
of even one of God's children.

I know that God bestows a blessing
on livestream and facetime
honor on Youtube and Zoom.
No good thing does God withhold
from those who worship digitally.

But, God of the temple in our hearts,
we trust you with our lament,
our discontent, our loss ... and our longing

to be glad when we hear them say --
Let us go to the house of God!

Thanks to Rev. Sandy Boyce of Pilgrim Uniting Church, Adelaide, South Australia who invited me to write a lament for a parishioner who was participating in virtual worship but deeply missing the church building with its memories and companionship ... as well as feeling odd having the whole congregation viewing their home. I think a lot of us feel this way and so it seemed like turning Psalm 84's celebration inside out was calling to me.

Words from Don

Karen said the newsletter was almost full so I could write a newsletter that was short and sweet. I told her I would try to be short but don't expect the sweet! If I had to pick one word that describes me it probably wouldn't be sweet. I want to challenge you to pick one word that describes how you feel during this unusually stressful time. If I could only pick one word for me; it is gratitude. I was so moved by watching a 60 minutes piece about what workers in a retrofitted Ford plant **felt** as they made masks, protective clothing and ventilators for others who needed it the most. I couldn't stop crying.



It is another story of compassion about how so many people including this congregation who are reaching in a variety of ways to care for others. I wondered, what I could do to be more helpful. Julie and I have been so blessed.

I think now that I can better understand how Jesus could look down on the city of Jerusalem and weep, because he couldn't do more to alleviate the pain of the people. There is so much injustice and suffering in the world. Not just now, but always.

That's why he came according to the famous text beginning in John 3:16. God so loved the world that he came to save the world, to care for the world not to condemn it. When this Pandemic is over, I hope we will continue to be grateful and try to be the helping hands, voice, feet, and heart of Jesus. That's how the world is saved!

Peace, Don

Update on some of our former "Utes"



Parker Adamson is graduating with a BS in Physics and Math from San Angelo State. He will attend Baylor in the fall.

Grayson Tirey is graduating with a bachelor's degree in business honors, accounting, and a master's in financial management from Texas A&M University. He is slated to go to work for PwC in Dallas in the fall.



Heather Bozeman & Ty Bain—May 23, 2020

Grayson Tirey & Michaela Bleggi—June 21, 2020



Morgan Sweeney—baby girl due in September

Logan Smith—due in October

We will have parties to celebrate them when we can gather again!

May Birthdays and Anniversaries

Kim Butler May 4
 Grayson Tirey May 4
 Scott Strovas May 10
 Rob Kinkaid May 15
 Noelle Garza May 18



Parker Adamson May 20
 Maxine Goree May 21
 Cyndy Walter May 23
 Glenna Butler May 25
 Taryn Garza May 26

David & Elise Adamson (30 years!!) May 11
 Kevin & Robin Sweeney May 19
 Wilburn & Polly Lackey May 26

BLESSING FOR AN INTERIM CONGREGATION

As you enter this place, may you find here every blessing and all peace for the journey. We are an interim congregation right now. Take joy! God is changing us! God is the Potter, and we are the clay. We have a past which has shaped us. We remember with humility the places of darkness and doubt that contained us, but we have learned that the Divine Presence shines in any darkness. We look back with gratitude, remembering the many leaders who have gifted us and who have helped us to run with perseverance the race that is always before us. We have a holy future which is still unfolding. We look ahead with eagerness to that future unknown to us but known to God. Meanwhile, we live in the present, in faith and in love, not knowing where we go, only knowing that God goes before us and will never let us go. We join hands and hearts in hope, knowing that hope grounded in God never disappoints. Though we are without an Installed Pastor, we will not be without forever. We are not without Guidance. We have the Sacred Presence of Word and Spirit to guide us. As Moses brought the children of Israel safely to the banks of the Jordan, so we will be brought safely to where we need to be. As congregations of old found blessing in the arrival of the itinerant Apostle Paul, so we will find blessing with the arrival one day of our Installed Pastor. May eternal love enfold you. May divine power sustain you. May everlasting faith uplift you. May the touch of the Great Physician heal you. Do not be anxious. Do not be afraid. Live in love. Practice patience. Remember the power of prayer. Be gentle with each other. Receive the kindness of others. Encourage one another. And don't forget to smile, because God isn't finished with us yet!

Paul F. Soderquist
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May 2020

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

					1	2
3 9:15 am – ZOOM: Sunday School 10:30 am – YOUTUBE: Wor- ship	4	5	6 11 am – Meals on Wheels	7	8	9
10 9:15 am – ZOOM: Sunday School	11	12	13 11 am – Meals on Wheels	14	15	16
17 9:15 am – ZOOM: Sunday School	18	19	20 11 am – Meals on Wheels	21	22	23 Heather Bozeman & Ty Bain Wedding 
24	25 Memorial Day Office Closed	26	27 11 am – Meals on Wheels	28	29	30
31 9:15 am – ZOOM: Sunday School						

Mission News from agencies we support!



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT

Thank you to all that gave to One Great Hour of Sharing. The Church not only reached the goal of \$1,500.00 but exceeded it! \$1,531.52 was given to OGHS. The money is now helping with the Easter 2020 weekend tornadoes in the Southern United States. Disaster teams are reaching out to the affected states for their assessment of the loss and for how they can support local congregations to extend help. The Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is also conducting virtual deployments and is ready to accept grant applications for a wide-range of needs, including housing, meals and vital services for those affected by COVID-19 in the United States and around the world.



The Faith in Sharing House is open Monday—Friday from 1:00 to 2:00 pm. The FISH board members are running the operation currently. Donations are still needed and can be taken to the FISH building, 5th and Joliet, during the time they are open and given to a board member. They are in need of ramen noodles at this time but would appreciate anything that you can give in the form of canned goods, soup, toilet paper and soap.

Meals on Wheels Route 9 is still being delivered by First Presbyterian Church each Wednesday. Please let Gaylan Goddard know no later than 10:00 am each Monday if you can deliver the meals. A few of our members are not leaving their homes at this time, so it is important for those that can help with this ministry to please do so. Gaylan's phone numbers are home 293-0464 or cell 292-2202



Paws will be selling small corsages for the ladies at the six Nursing Homes here in Plainview to make their Mothers Day a little brighter. They will also send cupcakes for the staff who are the only ones allowed to take care of our elderly right now. Each corsage and cupcake will be only \$5. If you would like to sponsor a lady or staff member, please PayPal to pawsply@gmail.com (select friends & family). You could also mail a check to P.O. Box 1605 or to the church or drop off cash with Karen.

Plainview Disaster Relief Fund

The Church building is basically closed. Karen Hawkins is working from home and Rev. Don McDonald is working from his home in Canyon. The church has had one call from a person that needed help and several of our members stepped up and helped this person out. Recently, several Plainview entities, including the City of Plainview, the United Way and the Plainview Area Endowment along with several people and businesses established the Plainview Disaster Relief Fund. The Plainview/Hale County Economic Development Corporation gave a donation of \$25,000 to start the fund. The goal of the Disaster Relief Fund is to raise \$160,000. The first thing that the fund will help with is food. It will help pay for essentials such as food, rent and utilities. The church benevolence fund has helped with food, utility bills, medical bills, as well as gas for cars and lodging expenses. In 2018 the church used \$1,071.45 from the benevolence fund. In 2019 there was \$1,404.57 given out of the fund. First Presbyterian Church has always referred people needing assistance with rent to the local Salvation Army and the Church donates funds through the Special Christmas Offering to the Salvation Army. The Mission and Ministry Team voted on April 14, 2020 to give \$500.00 from our Benevolence Fund to the Plainview Disaster Relief Fund and then refer people who would come to the Church for help to go there first. The information for the Disaster Relief Fund is posted on the Church Office door for those who would come to the church for help. People who call the church will be considered for help if we as a Church can safely meet their needs or they will be referred to the Plainview Disaster Relief Fund.

Brandon Ahrens called Sherry Thompson to thank her on behalf of the Church for this donation. He said that these dollars will help many people in our community. Brandon is a banker at Prosperity Bank and President of the Plainview Area United Way. If you know of anyone who is needing help please tell them to apply at www.plainviewareaendowment.org/plainviewdisasterrelieffund or <http://www.plainviewareaunitedway.org/>

If you would like to personally donate, any bank in town will take your donation at their drive-through window. Payments should be made payable to the Plainview Disaster Relief Fund.

Please remember when we can come together again and worship in the Church building all the loose change from the offering plate goes into the Benevolence Fund.



Focus

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MAY NEWS TO KNOW

Ushers

Focus

is published monthly by First Presbyterian Church, Plainview, Texas. Articles for inclusion in the FOCUS are requested by the 20th of the month.

Rev. Don McDonald, Interim Pastor
Dr. Charles Teykl, Pastor Emeritus
Karen Hawkins, Publisher

Be sure to note these important dates and jobs to be done during the month of May

May Liturgist

Wednesday Night Fellowship

April Attendance

Easter Sunday on YouTube: 132
Virtual Hymn Sing: 138

April Contributions

Apr 6 (online) \$2,330.00
Apr 5-12 \$2,436.61
Apr 19 \$1,055.65
Apr 26 \$3,800.00

Total Income: \$ 9,235.74
Total Expenses: \$ 7,661.73
Total: \$ 1,574.01

