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FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
1028 S BELT LINE RD
MESQUITE TX 75149

Return Service Requested

SERVING THIS SUNDAY

December 3, 2006

USHERS

8:45

Billy Mark Gillispie - Head Usher
Les Olson Jerry Williams Jerry Jones

11:00

Earlayne Martin - Head Usher
Jennifer Gardner Jerry Patterson
Chris Orr Tracey Okafor

PARKING LOT GREETERS

Larry Thomas Eric Schwartz

Please remember in prayer

Johnny Adams, brother of Ron Adams
Gary and Nancy Black
Esther Boatman, Kathy Uzzle's mom
Jennie Childress, friend of Paula Kusewitt
Charla Corder, friend of Shannon Crelia
Bud Derrick
Karen Dixon
Frank Fischer, Susan Mathews' father
Adam Fort, son of Doug and Jan Fort
Dorothy Graham, friend of Ken & Judy Johnson
Joe Hammer, father-in-law of Sheila Hammer
Michael Haninger
Carla Haynes and son Caleb, friends of Dave Rumbeck
Taylor Howry, friend of Diane Marshall
Brandon Izzarelli, nephew of Robbie & Janice Robinson
Tom Kidd, brother of Beverlee Witty
Lesia Koday, friend of Susan Mathews
Virginia Ledbetter, friend of Hope Sheppard
Pam Lee, mother of Lauren Martin
Cheryl Lydick
Karen McCardell, friend of Laura Virgil
Ken McClure
Geraldine McDonald, friend of Laura Virgil
Clara and Raymond McLaughlin, sister & nephew of Wayne
Thompson
Malcolm Marsden, friend of Laura Virgil
Linda Miller, mother of Jan Fort
Jimmy Dan Montgomery, Len McCurdy's brother
Michelle Nall, sister of Karen Carboni
Vivian Richardson, mother of Peggy Mayfield
Frank Ruiz, friend of Jim & Hope Sheppard
Don Sheppard, brother of Jim Sheppard
Jim Sheppard
Velia Sheppard, mother of Neill Sheppard
Gary Shields, brother of Ray Shields
Art Sikes, brother of Marilyn Saams
Clay Smith, son of Bob and Beth Smith
Steve Tyler, friend of Bob & Maurine Robinson
Laura Virgil
Garret Whitaker, grandson of friend of Melba Jeffus
The Whitlow family, friends of Chris and Paula Nelms
Ben Wynn, friend of Bernie & Lois DeRoo
Linda and John Young, cousins of Jimmy Gray



First Presbyterian Church

Mesquite, Texas

(972) 285-5602

www.fpcmesquite.org

From the Pastor . . .

At the Thanksgiving dinner Sunday evening, November 19, I mentioned that there is a lot to be said for tradition – and that dinner is a good example since that was the 82nd of those annual dinners. But another tradition we started many years ago is putting cards in the bulletins on Thanksgiving Sunday for people to list things they are thankful for. I never cease to be touched, moved, and amazed by some of the heartfelt expressions of thanks on those cards that are turned in. As most are aware, I always read a few of the cards as part of the sermon. Indeed, as the Psalmist said: “It is good to give thanks to the Lord.”

As the TV stations showed pictures of the shopping frenzy which started at some stores on Thanksgiving Day, I thought about a TV program I saw last week on the History Channel entitled “Desperate Crossing,” which recounted the terrible hardships of the Pilgrims. Unfortunately, few probably think much about it. And while Christmas shopping seemed to be foremost on the minds of many, I thought about the people in Iraq facing persecution, starvation, battle, and murder, and those in our armed forces who have been killed and maimed as that country seems to spiral toward civil war. But as Christians we worship that One who came as the Prince of Peace. And that focus will come very much into view on this first Sunday of Advent.

The word “advent” literally means “coming,” and it includes the four Sundays leading up to Christmas. It is a time of spiritual preparation for the ever-old and yet ever-new coming of Christ. Unfortunately, it is easy for the real meaning of Christmas to get lost among shopping and other activities – to focus more on the mall than the manger. Let us not be too busy to worship that one for whom Christmas is named. Worship each Sunday reminds us of the true basis of our rejoicing – that unto us is born a Savior.

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Our church is always beautiful at Christmas, and I look forward to sharing the joy of worship with you each Sunday in the beauty of our sanctuary.

Tom Wilbanks

Thanks for Your Pledge!

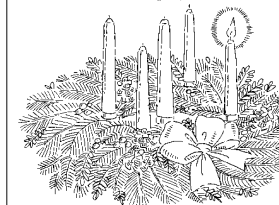
We are grateful for those who have made pledges of support for our church for the coming year. As of Monday, November 27, we have 157 pledges for \$453,496 toward next year's budget of \$492,234 and 92% of the budget is pledged. This compares with 142 pledges for \$467,376 with 100% of the budget pledged at this time last year.

“Thank you” letters have been sent out from Ron Smith, Chairman of the Church Budget and Stewardship Committee, expressing appreciation to those who have responded with their financial pledges to help good things continue to happen in our church.

The stewardship theme this year based on a Bible verse which says “Walk in His Ways.” In carrying out this theme, a “walkway” is on the wall near the church office with names of members who have pledged and are seeking to walk in God's ways. Take a look at it. It is an impressive sight!

This Sunday

First Sunday of Advent




This Sunday is the first Sunday of Advent. New Covenant will sing at 8:45, and the Chancel Choir will sing at 11:00. Dr. Wilbanks will give the sermon “The Best of Times – The Worst of Times,”

based on Matthew 2:1-12. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper will be observed at the 8:45 service.

From the Director of Music Ministries . . .

Chancel Choir Advent Celebration Service



The season of Advent is upon us once again, and it is a joyous time of anticipation, preparation and celebration. We look forward to the celebration of Jesus Christ's birth on Christmas day, we prepare our homes and hearts reminding ourselves of the purpose and significance of His coming, and we celebrate with gatherings of family and friends and special opportunities for worship. On Sunday morning, December 10, in both services, the Chancel Choir, accompanied by a professional string quintet, will present a program of music and worship celebrating the coming of Christ. The service will blend familiar carols with traditional seasonal choral music focusing upon the birth of the Blessed One, and the announcement of that most significant of events to the shepherds those many years ago. This special service presents an excellent opportunity to invite and bring friends and family to church, or to introduce someone to the Lord, Jesus Christ, through the avenue of seasonal music.

Service of Lessons and Carols

The following Sunday, December 17, at 5:00 p.m., will present another opportunity to celebrate the season of Advent and will be led by the youth and children of our church. In our annual service of Lessons and Carols each of our children's and youth vocal and instrumental ensembles will mark the occasion with the singing and ringing of Christmas carols and anthems. The service is built around the ancient, yet most relevant of stories as revealed in both the Old and New Testaments of Holy scripture—the incarnation of Jesus, Christ. This service is always a highlight of our Advent celebration at First Church, and we hope you will make it a priority to attend. As in past years, a reception in the fellowship hall will immediately follow the service with refreshments for all, and a visit from Santa. Come and celebrate the Advent season at First Presbyterian Church!

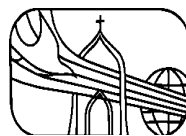
Soli Deo Gloria,
Verlynn Smoker



From the Mission Committee . . .

Thanksgiving Baskets

The Mission Committee has expressed appreciation to all who helped with the Thanksgiving Basket project. This was a huge undertaking, and 120 families in our community were able to enjoy a Thanksgiving feast thanks to your efforts. The baskets were distributed by Sharing Life Community Outreach.



Angel Tree

The white and red "Angel Tree" in the hallway between the north and south wings of the church has been set up to help clients of Sharing Life Community Outreach provide Christmas gifts for their families. We hope to provide gift cards for various stores which can be used by all ages of children and teens. If you would like to help, please take an angel from the tree which will list a requested gift card. If you did not pick up an angel you can still help by purchasing a \$10 gift card from Target, Walmart, Toys-R-Us, Old Navy, or Kohls, and place it in the box under the tree. All gift cards must be returned to our church no later than Sunday, December 10. They will be distributed by Sharing Life at their annual Holiday Faire on December 16.

In addition, red envelopes have been placed on the angel tree for donations to our church's Deacons Fund, which helps with needs within our own congregation. If you would like to make a monetary donation to the Deacons Fund you may place it in a red envelope and put it in the box under the tree, or place it in the offering plate on a Sunday morning.

Volunteers Needed

Sharing Life needs volunteers on Friday, December 15, to help set up for their Holiday Faire at Eastridge Park Christian Church, and then again on Saturday, December 16, to help at the Faire. Bilingual volunteers are especially needed, and junior and senior high youth volunteers are also wanted. For more information call Sharing Life at 972-285-5819.

Church Christmas Cards

Christmas cards with a picture of the inside of our sanctuary decorated for Christmas are available in the church office for \$10 a box. Proceeds go for the youth ministry program in our church.

Our Church Family . . .

It was good to see BRENT CRELIA back at church on November 19, following his hospitalization and to see LESLIE HORNSBY back November 26, after she was in the hospital. BUD DERRICK is still at Baylor Hospital and his condition remains serious. We are glad that JIM SHEPPARD is recovering from his knee surgery. KEN JOHNSON is recovering from a fall in which he cracked several ribs. We were sorry to hear that PEGGY MAYFIELD's mother, Vivian Richardson, is seriously ill.

MELBA JEFFUS' brother, James Wasson, died this past Sunday morning, November 27. The funeral was scheduled for Wednesday, November 29.

We were sorry to hear that Dallas, the half-brother of Neill Sheppard died November 26. Dallas has been on our prayer list since his birth about a year ago.

During our worship service on November 27, BENJAMIN SAMUEL MORRIS, son of Paul and Amy Morris, was baptized. Amy's parents are Randy and Karen Harris and her grandparents are Ben and Mary Williams.

A nice article and picture was in the *Mesquite News* on November 16, about ROBBIE ROBINSON and his son Ben in regard to the Mesquite High School playoff game at E. H. Hanby Stadium on November 19. Ben is a junior tight end, and the stadium is named for his great-grandfather, E.H. Hanby who played running back for Mesquite from 1917 to 1919 and was a faithful member of our church and is the father of Maurine Robinson. Ben's grandfather, Bob Robinson, played for Mesquite from 1948 to 1950. A copy of the article is on the bulletin board by the office.

Our thanks to RON BETTIS who planted some nice fall flowers on the south side of the church.

The *Mesquite News* on November 23, carried several letters which were submitted by high school students in observance of Thanksgiving. Two of the letters were by members of our church, BROOKS WILSON and JEAN-PAUL MARSHALL. The letter by Jean-Paul thanked the members of our church for their generosity and hard work in supporting mission work including the Addressing Mesquite Day and our support of Sharing Life Community Outreach. He concluded his letter by saying: "For these reasons and many more, I am proud to be a part of this church family." A copy of the article is on the bulletin board.

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The annual Thanksgiving Dinner sponsored by our Men's Council on November 19, was once again a big success. The dinner is a big undertaking, and we appreciate the work of the President, GREG FARR, and the many other men who helped continue this good tradition which began 82 years ago.

At the suggestion of one of our Session members, we are now audio-taping the 11:00 o'clock worship service each Sunday. If you would like a tape for yourself or to take to a shut-in, please contact Dr. Wilbanks.

Thinking about a Christmas present for someone? You might consider one of our church picture plates or the book that recounts the history of our church's first 100 years. Both items are \$10 and can be obtained in the church office. We also have DVD's and video cassettes for \$10 which recount our church's 125th anniversary which we celebrated this year.

A silver ring with blue stones, and a gold bracelet were found at the church recently. Please call the church if you are missing one of these items.

Presbyterian Women Circles December Meetings

The Morning Circle will meet at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, December 5, to enjoy Bible study led by Cora Dugan, a Christmas celebration, and a covered dish lunch. Please join us for this time of study and fellowship, and bring a covered dish to share and a gift to exchange (\$10 limit). (Please call the church office by noon on Monday, December 4, for child care reservations.)

The Night Circle will meet on December 19, at 7:00 p.m., at the home of Susan Farmer for their Christmas Party. A covered dish dinner is planned, along with a gift exchange (\$10 limit).

Poinsettias

If you would like to provide a poinsettia for our Christmas services, please fill out the insert in this newsletter and either return it to the church office with payment (\$10) or place it in the offering plate. Funds collected over the actual cost of poinsettias will be donated to the 2007 summer youth mission trip.

Deadline is December 19.