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FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
1028 S BELT LINE RD
MESQUITE TX 75149

Return Service Requested

SERVING THIS SUNDAY

December 17, 2006

USHERS

8:45

Jerry Dressler - Head Usher
Ron Smith Cora Dugan Joanne Boudreaux

11:00

Andy Cummings - Head Usher
Leslie Hornsby Teresa Farr
Clark Windle Melody Wright

PARKING LOT GREETERS

Eric Schwartz Derek 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
Richard Edwards, brother of Philip Edwards
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
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 . . .

The moderator of the General Assembly of our church, Joan Gray, in commenting about the shopping frenzy currently going on in regard to Christmas, recently said: "Christmas – as it is generally celebrated by our culture and by the overwhelming majority of Christians – must make the angels weep." Whether that is true or not, she went on to say something that certainly is true, and that is that "Christmas is about the transformation of our world into the world God wants it to be, about God's love poured out on a world desperately in need of a savior." And she adds: "Somebody please tell me what this has to do with parents fighting to purchase the latest toy fad."

I read a fascinating story recently about a National Geographic program about the Lost Boys of Sudan. As a result of the terrible war that has been going on in the Sudan between the Muslim north, the government, and the Christian Animist south, millions of people have been killed. A remarkable thing began to happen. Thousands of boys, twelve years old down through infants, separated from parents – most of whom had been killed – began to walk across Sudan, older boys taking care of the little ones. They walked 1,000 miles into Ethiopia, and when the Ethiopian government was overthrown, all the way back through Sudan, a second 1,000 mile march to Kenya, where they are in U.N. refugee camps, more than 25,000. The United States agreed to accept and settle some of the Lost Boys of Sudan. From the starkest poverty, no running water, no electricity, constant starvation, the boys were put on a plane, flown to New York and then to cities cross the country and then placed in their own apartments. They had never seen a refrigerator, running water, packaged food, a light switch. Their first trip to an American supermarket was surreal. They were wide-eyed in wonder and disbelief as they walked past mounds of fresh vegetables, counters with meat, bread, canned goods, and a bakery counter.

(continued)

We in this country really are a blessed people. The greatest blessing is Jesus Christ whose birth we are now celebrating. May our worship each Sunday remind us of our blessings and help us to focus more on the manger than the mall.

Tom Wilbanks

Service of Lessons and Carols

This Sunday evening, December 17, at 5:00 p.m., the youth and children of our church will lead us 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 with us.

*Soli Deo Gloria,
Verlyn Smoker*

This Sunday



On this third Sunday of Advent the Ladies Ensemble will sing at 8:45, and the Chancel Choir, Jubilate Ringers, and Cherub Choir will provide music at 11:00. Dr. Wilbanks will give the sermon "Choosing the Right Gifts for Christmas."

Welcome New Members!

We are happy to welcome the following new members who joined our church on November 19th.



BRIAN and BETH BRIDGES



MINNIE MATHEWS



KARL, DENISE and KEVIN KUTCH



ANDREW and BRYANY NEWLAND



BILLIE STONE

Our Church Family . . .

Our sympathy is extended to MARGARET PRUITT whose sister died, to PEGGY MAYFIELD, whose mother died, and to JIM COLLINS whose mother died.

On December 3, ADRIEN DEAN NEWLAND, son of Andrew and Bryany Newland was baptized.

Our best wishes are extended to ANDY LEAKE and TISH BARTON who were married December 2.

BUD DERRICK is still at Baylor Hospital and is now under Hospice care. We will want to continue to keep Bud and Frances in our prayers in this difficult time.

BILL WHITEHURST underwent surgery at Baylor on Monday, December 11.

Our Chancel Choir presented a beautiful program of Christmas music during both of our services last Sunday. We appreciate their hard work in preparation for the program.

Our church is beautiful this Christmas season and we want to give a big thanks to those who helped decorate for Christmas under the leadership of Ronda Scott. Others who helped were Debbie Bealmear, Marianne Twomey, Ben Williams, Roger Samuels, Patrick Garver, Marshall Alford, Ferne Porter, Joyce Murdock, Harriet Jones, and Earlayne Martin. And thanks to Larry Thomas, Billy Mark Gillispie, Charles Schandemeier, and Patrick Garver who put up the nativity scene last Saturday in front of the church on a cold, windy morning – and to Ben Williams who put up the Christmas Eve banner.

LOST & FOUND: A child's leather jacket belonging to Robin Brown was lost at the church Wednesday, December 6. If you have seen it please call the church office. In addition, a ring and a gold bracelet were found at the church recently. Please call the church if you are missing one of these items.

Looking Ahead

We will have ONE worship service on Sunday, December 24, at 11:00 and two Christmas Eve services that evening at 5:30 and 7:30. There will also be one worship service on December 31, at 11:00. New church officers will be ordained and installed during that service, and we will observe Christian Student Sunday by recognizing our college students.

Thanks for Your Pledge!

As we seek to complete this year's stewardship commitment effort, we continue to be grateful that pledges are still being received. We now have 166 pledges for \$472,876, and 95.98% of the budget is pledged.

Ron Smith, Chair of the Church Budget and Stewardship Committee expressed his gratitude to the congregation and said: "The church budget for 2007 is over 95% pledged, and I am grateful to all who have made a financial commitment. The stewardship theme, "Walk in His Ways," from Deuteronomy is a simple, straight-forward message, yet imagine the changes in the world if followed."

In keeping with the stewardship theme for this year 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!

New Church Cookbook

A new church cookbook has been compiled by the Women's Retreat Committee, and will be available for sale this Sunday after both worship services, just in time for Christmas giving. The cost is \$10.

Cookies Needed!!

After the Service of Lessons and Carols this Sunday, December 17, we will go to the fellowship hall for a reception, and a visit with Santa. Cookies are needed for the refreshment time. If you can provide cookies, please leave them in the fellowship hall.

Mesquite Symphony Christmas Program

The Mesquite Symphony Orchestra will present "Music of the Season" this Saturday, December 16, at 5:30 and 8:00 at the Mesquite Arts Center. Two of our members, Jonathan Graham and Nickie Wilbanks are in the orchestra.