

# First Presbyterian Church Sweetwater, Texas

December 2021

*The mission of our church is to make disciples for Jesus Christ  
Our vision is to be an oasis of God's love.*

1311 McCaulley Office hours: M ~ F, 9:00 am ~12:00pm

website: [www.fpcsweetwater.org](http://www.fpcsweetwater.org)

P. O. Box 956, Sweetwater, Texas 79556 325-235-5491

email: [fpcsweetwater@gmail.com](mailto:fpcsweetwater@gmail.com)

Pastor: Kathy Monroe 325-998-3353

email: [kdmonroe17@gmail.com](mailto:kdmonroe17@gmail.com)

Clerk of Session: Gayle Biggerstaff

Elder of the Month: Buddy Alldredge

I just want to take a moment to think about the real role of gifts in the Christmas story. There was a place for them and it wasn't about gimme, gimme, gimme.

The first gift came from a Jewish teenager named Mary. Her gift was one of selflessness, the complete surrender of will and ego needed to bring Heaven down to earth. The gifts of her fiancé, Joseph, were trust and faith. He trusted Mary was with child by a miracle of God and he stepped out in faith that there really was a divine plan to get them through this mess. The angel's gifts were tidings of comfort, joy and peace, plus the reassurance that there was nothing to fear. The Innkeeper's wife's gifts were compassion, and charity; a warm, dry, safe place to lay their heads. The wise men brought gold, frankincense, and myrrh. But that child.... that very special child brought the greatest gifts of all, forgiveness, wholeness, second chances, and last but not least, unconditional love.

The next time you hear someone say that Christmas is not about the gifts, please, reassure them, it is all about the gifts, nothing but the gifts! Gifts tied with heartstrings, Gifts that surprise and delight, gifts that transform the mundane into the miraculous, gifts that change people from the inside out!

Thanks be to God for the miracle of Christmas!  
Merry Christmas everyone!

Kathy

## Dates to Remember

- 1 Presbyterian Women~ 5:00am
- 4 Christmas Special Concert~ 7:30pm  
Sweetwater Municipal Auditorium
- 5 *2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent*  
Sweetwater Women Prayer & Praise~ 8:00am  
First United Methodist Church  
Hoyt Place Worship~ 9:00am  
Adult Sunday School~ 9:45am  
Worship~ 10:45am Reverse Offering  
Communion Class of 2021  
Special Music~ Southwestern University  
String Quartet  
Chime Practice~ 5:00pm  
Christmas Program Practice~ 5:30pm
- 12 *3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent*  
Adult Sunday School~ 9:45am  
Worship ~ 10:45am~Christmas Program  
Bell Orchestra
- 15 Session Meeting~ 5:30pm
- 19 *4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent*  
Adult Sunday School~ 9:45am  
Worship~ 10:45am
- 24 Church Office Closed  
Christmas Eve Service~ 6:00pm  
Christmas Joy Offering
- 26 Adult Sunday School~ 9:45am  
Worship~ 10:45am Noisy Offering
- 27 Church Office Closed



### ***Celebrating the Birth of our Savior in Song and Music***

*The Sweetwater Applause Christmas Special will be Saturday, December 4<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm in the Sweetwater Municipal Auditorium. Tickets are available at the door.*

We are so pleased to announce that on December 5<sup>th</sup>, the Southwestern University String Quartet which includes Chase Crouch, son of Rene and Joseph Crouch, will be playing his cello in worship. He and his quartet will also be featured at the Sweetwater Municipal Auditorium on Saturday evening, December 4<sup>th</sup>. We hope everyone will join us for a wonderful time of music and worship on that second Sunday of Advent.



**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent**  
**Michele Boswell, Callie Boswell,**  
**Ethan Boswell, Janice and Jim Gesin**

### **Advent Candle Lighting**

**Dec. 5 ~ Jessica and Aaron Cockrill**  
**Dec. 12 ~ Ann Shirley and Ben Monroe**  
**Dec. 19 ~ Boo Nemir and Hilary Brennan**  
**Dec. 24 ~ Buddy and Sherie Alldredge**



Presbyterian Women will meet Wednesday December 1st at 5:00pm, and we are going to share a meal together. PW will provide the turkey and you are asked to bring a side and or a dessert for 25 people. Please call, text or email Sherie with what you are bringing so there won't be duplicates. (325) 721-3339

We will study Chapter 3 of our study and you are asked to bring women's magazines for part of the discussion.



The Presbyterian Women Brick project is an Ongoing fund-raising project, and we will continue to take orders.

You can remember a loved one or give one in honor of someone by purchasing an engraved memorial brick to be placed in the Memorial Garden.

Two Sizes of brick are available:  
4"X 8"  
with 3 lines available for engraving \$55.00

8" X 8"  
with 6 lines available for engraving \$110.00

The order forms are in the church office.  
Call or come by for more information.



- |    |                        |
|----|------------------------|
| 3  | Richard Smola          |
| 4  | Max Nemir              |
| 6  | Michelle Maxwell       |
| 8  | Caroline Brennan       |
| 9  | Justin Wilburn         |
| 12 | Jessica Bond Cockrill  |
|    | Ben Monroe             |
| 20 | Kristen Shirley Peters |
| 25 | James Parker           |
| 26 | Robert Whitteker       |





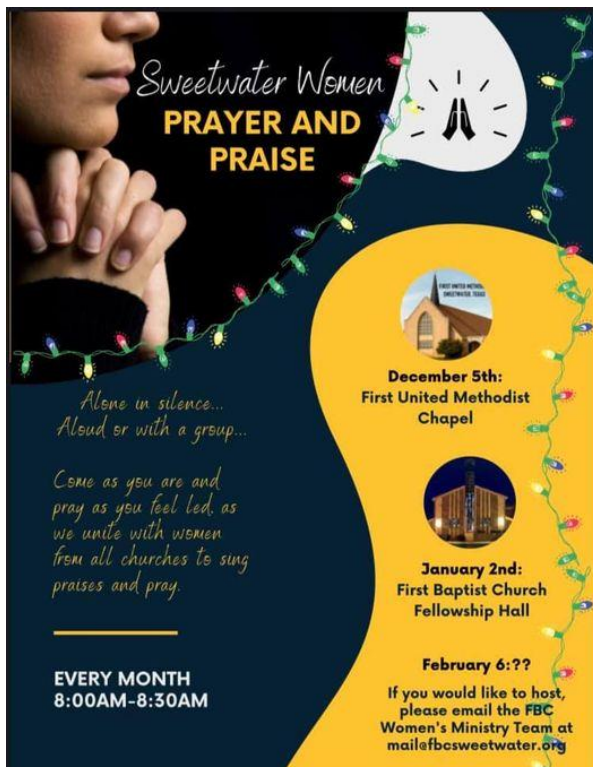
This year's **Angel Tree** is decorated in the narthex with Angels from the West Texas Child Advocacy Center. Each angel has the age and sex of a child along with their Christmas Wish and sizes.

Please bring your UNWRAPPED gifts with the angel affixed to the church by **Sunday December 12<sup>th</sup>**. The West Texas Child Advocacy Center strives to restore the lives of victims of child abuse, their families, and our community.

### **Sweetwater Women Prayer and Praise**

8:00am- 8:30am Sunday December 5  
First United Methodist Chapel

Join Women from all churches as we come together to sing praises and pray. Come as you are and pray as you feel led silently, singly, aloud, in a group.



### **Nolan County Food Pantry**

The Nolan County Food Pantry is no longer accepting clothes. They asked if you had clothes to donate to take them to the First United Methodist Church's Lily Closet.

The best time to drop off clothes in on Tuesdays and Thursday from 9:30am-11:30am through the 4<sup>th</sup> street entrance to the fellowship hall.

### **Blessing Box**



Thanks to Jim Gesin for the new Blessing Box sign.

### **Nurture Nolan**



**Our Mission Committee is requesting diapers, baby wipes, stuffed animals, and gently used or new coats for donation to Nurture Nolan.**



Mission Committee would like to thank our congregation for support of the Nolan County Food Bank, Nurture Nolan, and Blessing Box. Our contributions are helping change the quality of lives for many persons of all ages in Nolan County.

The Bible instructs us to "Share your food with the hungry, and give shelter to the homeless. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from relatives who need your help." Isaiah 58:7

First Presbyterian Congregation is lovingly sharing our mission of being an oasis of God's love through participation of these missions.



The Advent and Christmas Devotional for 2021 is now available for download.

The devotional is Come to Bethlehem and Be Nourished~ Advent's Hunger Gives Way to Christmas' Fulfillment by Donna Frischknecht Jackson.

Here is the [link](#) for the devotional and it can also be found on the PCUSA website. Please let me know if you would like a printed copy. Becky



Jessica and Aaron Cockrill  
1408 East 12<sup>th</sup> Sweetwater

Doris Nelms  
Ridgmar Plaza  
2151 Green Oak Rd. #3501  
Ft. Worth, TX 76116

## Christmas Joy Offering



The Christmas Joy Offering reflects that God is with us, through the generous gifts that support church leaders among us, retired, present and future, who have pointed us to God. Even as we support our current and former church leaders through the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions, God is calling new leaders for our Church and world, through the ministry of Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color — offering students the means for a brighter future and enhanced opportunities to use their talents and skills to serve God, the Church and the world for years to come.

***Special Christmas Joy Offering envelopes will be located in the pews Christmas Eve and collected during the service. Please write checks to First Presbyterian Church, memo Christmas Joy Offering.***

*Thank You*

Thank you so much for all the use of the church's pall, the delicious lunch on funeral day, and for being such a great church family to Jo and George and to all of us.

You will always hold a special place in our hearts.

Terrell Thompson



Thank You!

Hi Sweet Members of the First Presbyterian Church! Thank you for your continued prayers. Thank you for loving on my precious friend Boo!

I wanted to give you something special in appreciation for your thoughtfulness while I was sick, I painted several pictures while I was in rehab hospital.

Barbie Lekek



Christmas time is here! What a wonderful time of year! We have enjoyed practicing for the Christmas program and hope all of the congregation will be able to watch the program on December 12! All of our kids are in it, and we have special adults joining us: Candice and Justin Wilburn will be Joseph and Mary, Carla and Scott Lambert will be the inn keeper and his wife, and Mitch Moore will be a narrator! Wait until you see the hand bell performers; we have a huge group! All of the participation has been exciting! We are wishing you all a very merry Christmas season!

December 5: Christmas program practice 5:30 - 6:30, and we may have to stay late...

December 12: Dress rehearsal at 9:15am. Get costumes on at 9:15. Parents please come upstairs to help your child get dressed. Think about your

shoes, shirts, and pants that go with your costume. Some like to go barefoot, and that is ok. When the program is over, please return your costume upstairs and place your costume back on the hanger, with all of the pieces together.

December 12: Christmas program during worship

December 12 afternoon: Christmas carol, if people would like! We would love to have you join us! The more the merrier! If you have never done this, it is such a blessing to the ones we visit and to all who Christmas carol with us. We will go to the nursing homes too, if we are allowed in this year. Let LouAnn know if you would like to participate.

Blessings to all,  
LouAnn

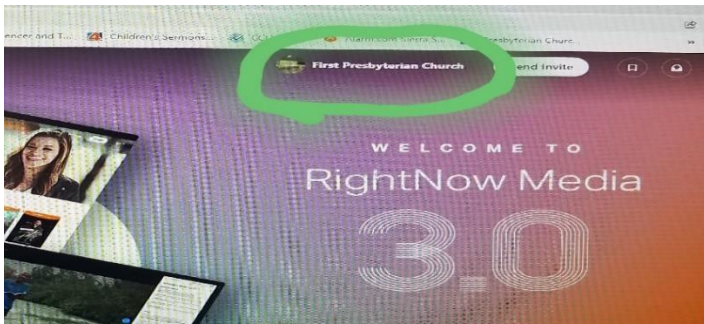


*To add to this year's Christmas festivities with our Christmas program, the Bell Orchestra will perform during services on December 12th.*

*We have been practicing diligently for several weeks, all the while having fun! Kirk has been our guiding force and we so appreciate his patience, talents, and leadership.*

*Our choir consists of church members and friends: Jim Gesin, Donella Parker, Scarlett and Robert Whittaker, Stacy Whittaker-Fritz, Jayde Alldredge, Mitch, Ryan and Aly Moore, Kathy Smartt, Tracy Wilburn, and Sherie Alldredge.*

*We are making a joyful noise! Glory to the Lord!*



Right Now Media has upgraded to RNM 3.0. All the content is the same, there is just a new look. The Icon for the First Presbyterian Church Library is at the top of the page instead of on the side.

Anyone can sign up and you are welcome to share this with family members and friends. The sign-up link is on the website [www.fpcsweetwater.org](http://www.fpcsweetwater.org)

## **Session Minutes**

**Stewardship and Finance:** Financial Report was unanimously approved. The Treasurer discussed some adjustments to the proposed 2022 budget. Session members approved the proposed budget for 2022.

**Building and Grounds:** Gary Brown of the Building and Grounds Committee informed Session members that he is expected to receive a bid in the next two weeks for work to be done in the garden area that will include a concrete pad, steps, and sidewalk repairs.

**Christian Education:** Sherie Alldredge of the Christian Education Committee reported that the youth will participate in the Worship Service on December 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Worship Committee:** Jim Gesin of the Worship Committee noted that Chase Crouch will provide special music at the December 5<sup>th</sup> Worship Service. Jim provided information on the harmonizer being used on one of the choir microphones. Session members approved the purchase of two additional harmonizers.

**Moderator's Report:** Session members discussed several organizations in need of donations. The Moderator agreed to do more research on this and discuss it at the next Session meeting. The Moderator reported that the Elder Nominating Committee is continuing to work on the Class of 2024 list of nominees.

## **Stewardship – from Presbyterian Foundation Stewardship Ministry News**

### **Exodus 16:11-16, 31 (God provides manna to the Israelites in the wilderness)**

The provision of manna to the Israelites wandering in the wilderness is a reminder that God provides abundantly for all of us. The details in this story of “meat at night and bread in the morning” and the delicious description of the manna offer a unique perspective that God doesn’t just give us the bare minimum, but provides abundantly. In turn, we are called to share abundantly in our response to God, not just offering the bare minimum, but offering our best.

<b>First Presbyterian Church</b>			
<b>2021 Financial Report</b>			
<b>2021 Budget</b> \$144,494.42		<b>Plate &amp; Pledge Needed</b> <b>Monthly</b> \$11,766.00	
<b>Month</b>	<b>Plate &amp; Pledge</b> <b>+</b>	<b>Dividends and Other Contributions</b> <b>+</b>	<b>Expenses</b> <b>-</b>
January	\$11,270.00	\$4,239.66	\$12,774.42
February	\$6,883.00	\$136.35	\$11,048.92
March	\$5,698.00	\$1,333.57	\$12, 223.45
April	\$8,093.00	\$4,060.96	\$11,143.30
May	\$13,935.00	\$1,221.00	\$10,042.64
June	\$8,178.50	\$274.01	\$17,353.07
July	\$10,746.00	\$2,212.92	\$10,762.42
August	\$8,742.00	\$585.16	\$12,120.19
September	\$7,471.00	\$3,148.74	\$11,042.00
October	\$13,118.00	\$2,700.33	\$11,617.54

<b>2021 Noisy Offering</b>	
<b>Designated to the Ministerial Alliance</b>	
<b>Received Year to Date</b>	<b>\$2,131.03</b>

<b>2021 Food Pantry</b>	
<b>Designated to the Nolan County Food Pantry</b>	
<b>Received Year to Date</b>	<b>\$1,885.00</b>



**Decorating Team**



**Christmas Program Practice**



**Kallen Moody and Caden Wilburn**





Katie Reed



Emily Hammit, Kirk Stroman, Owen Hammit



Tyler Toland, Kash Coe, Averi Moody, Brynlee Scott, Emily Hammit, Owen Hammit, Candice Wilburn, Justin Wilburn