

# *The Alert* First Central Presbyterian Church Abilene, Texas

March, 2019

## *Cliff's Notes*



Dear friends,

Two people are at sea in a wooden boat. One of them begins drilling a hole under his seat in the boat.

"What in the world are you doing?!" says the other person in the boat. "Why are you doing this?!"

The person with the drill replies: "Mind your own business - this is my seat!"



I'm writing this on the eve of traveling to Kenya with our mission team. And, as I write to you, I am remembering that this world is much larger than my little "me" centered world. I need to stretch my boundaries.

As the world becomes more independent and complex, I am understanding how it is more important than ever to widen my eyes to include others.

A little child in our congregation asked a question of her parents one Sunday when she saw the table filled with bread and wine. Here is the question she asked: "Is it community today?"

Communion is not to be done alone. Apparently, there is a guy on the West Coast who is manufacturing communion for people on the go. What this is - is a two-sided, airtight, sealed container. One holds a cracker-like pellet (the Body of Christ); the other side holds 2 ounces of grape juice (the Blood). Now you can enjoy the Sacrament in the privacy of your home or car, without having to encounter anyone! Here we have the ultimate in individualized religion - Communion without communion! "This is my body, prepackaged for you alone!"

I pray that our mission trip will enlarge my concept of community and at the same time my understanding of Communion.

See you when I get back.



PS. At our Congregational meeting last month it was announced that our church in 2018 gave away to others 26% of what we received. Way to go, FCPC.

## Around First Central

Mary Preston in Concert March 31, 2019 at 4pm

### A Letter from Clell Wright, Director of Music



It is with deep sadness that I must tender my resignation as Director of Music at First Central Presbyterian Church, effective July 1, 2019. Deep cuts at Hardin-Simmons University, particularly in the School of Music, have necessitated that I seek employment elsewhere. I have accepted a position as Director of Choral Activities at Valdosta State University in south Georgia, and Angela and I will be moving there this summer to begin the next phase of our life.

This will be, by far, the hardest move either of us has ever made. FCPC has become our home church. We love the community of believers that define this church, and it is a very big part of our lives. Indeed we hope to come back home often and will always be back here to worship and fellowship the those friends who have become so dear to us.

We covet your thoughts and prayers as we begin this new chapter in our lives. FCPC will always be a part of us and we hold you close to our hearts.

With deep love,

Clell E. Wright

### “Spring Forward” This Sunday!

Daylight Saving Time begins this Sunday, March 10, so don't forget to set your clock forward an hour before you go to bed!



### Spring Break for FCPC Events



Next week (March 10-16) is spring break for AISD, and several of our FCPC events will also be on break. We'll see you again the week after!

- Logos will not meet March 10
- Phoebe's Friends will not meet March 11
- We will not have a Wednesday Night program March 13
- The Young Adult Bible Study will not meet March 14



### First Central Presbyterian Church Organ Recital

It is our honor to present the renowned Mary Preston in concert. Mary will be the first guest organist to be featured playing the new organ in the sanctuary of First Central Presbyterian Church, 400 Orange Street, Abilene, Texas 79601.

Mary Preston has served as a church musician for over forty-five years. She was the Organist and Choirmaster at St. John's Episcopal Church in Dallas, the Director of Artistic Ministries and Organist at King of Glory Lutheran Church, Dallas, as well as others in both Dallas and northern California. She held the position of Resident Organist, Principal/Lay Family Chair with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra for twenty-one years. She continues to perform with the Dallas Wind Symphony, and serves on the music staff of Highland Park Presbyterian Church in Dallas where she is the chapel organist.

Mary has been presented in recital throughout the U.S., and in Europe and Japan, to enthusiastic audiences. She has been a featured artist for numerous national and regional conventions of the American Guild of Organists. Her performances have often been featured on classical radio stations, including Dallas' WRR 101.1 and nationally-syndicated Pipedreams.

Along with performing concerti and other major works with the Dallas Symphony, Mary has performed with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, as well as Denver, East Texas and other orchestras. Her solo recordings have been produced on the Reference, Gothic and Naxos labels.

Mary and her husband Joseph are celebrating their fiftieth wedding anniversary this spring. They are the proud aunt and uncle of James and Linda—and Rachel and Bruce—Myers who are FCPC members as well as devoted fans!

The new organ at First Central Presbyterian Church was recently completed and celebrated during a service of Thanksgiving and Dedication on March 3, 2019. The organ was custom-built in 2018 by Garland Pipe Organs, Inc., Fort Worth,

Texas. Dan Garland has built some of the largest and most admired pipe organs in Texas. The three-manual instrument at First Central has 43 ranks of pipes (more than 2500 pipes) and features an English-style high pressure Festival Trumpet stop. For recitals the organ's movable console will allow audiences to watch organists much more closely in the center of the Chancel platform.

This concert is funded by the FCPC Sacred Arts Fund which is dedicated to celebrating faith in the arts. The community is invited. There is no admission charge. Come and enjoy wonderful sounds generated by a magnificent musician playing the church's new organ.

### Christian Education News

Lent is a time of preparation. As trees and flowers start to bud in preparation for Spring, Lent is a time for the growing pains the precede the new life of Easter. At First Central's Christian Education department, we are preparing for several activities that you might want to be aware of.



Just this week Janice, Kristen, and I are meeting to discuss a new format for Confirmation. Rather than having the class over several weeks, we are planning a one weekend confirmation retreat that we hope will mark a memorable time in the faith formation of our sixth graders. The dates for the retreat will be May 3-4. All sixth graders, and any older students who are interested in this retreat are encouraged to **SAVE THE DATE!**

Preparations are also beginning for Buffalo Gap Summer Camp. The theme this year is Callings, where students will consider how their great desires meet the world's greatest needs. The stories of God's callings in scripture are complicated. Isaiah says, "Here I am, Lord. Send me!" Jonah, on the other hand, knows he is called to Nineveh, but is thrown overboard into a tumultuous sea and swallowed up before he accepts what he has been called to do. The dates for camp are as follows:

<b>Mini Camp (1-3 graders):</b>	<b>June 11-14</b>
<b>Elementary (3-5)</b>	<b>June 16-21</b>
<b>Middle School</b>	<b>June 23-28</b>
<b>Sr. High Retreat</b>	<b>June 30- July 5</b>

Camps are determined by the last grade completed. Parents and campers completing the third grade may choose to attend Mini-Camp or

Elementary Camp.

As for preparing for Easter, would you consider committing to studying Practice Resurrection as part of the Wednesday Night Supper Study Series. Give up an hour a week to consider the book of Ephesians and how we can think about Christian maturity and how we grow in the ways we Practice Resurrection.

The signs of new life are all around. I hope you take the time to awaken to God's work in and around you.

### Save the Date for VBS



Save the date for Vacation Bible School at FCPC! This year, we'll be doing a weekend VBS on July 20-21 using the Yee-Haw Weekend curriculum. It'll be a real hoedown, so make sure and corral it into your calendar now so you don't miss out!

### Youth and Emerging Adults News

#### **IT'S TIME TO SIGN UP FOR YOUTH SPRING RETREAT**

Make sure to save the date for our annual All Youth Spring Retreat to Mo Ranch. We to the ranch on Friday, April 5 and stay until Sunday, April 7. The form to sign up is on the church's website: [www.fcpc.net/connect/youth](http://www.fcpc.net/connect/youth). The cut-off date for sign-ups is March 16 and space is limited. **SIGN UP NOW!**



#### **SAVE THE DATE! - Tuesday, March 19**

Emerging Adults will have their second "Table Church" meeting on Tuesday evening, March 19. We will gather in the kitchen and around the table to prepare and eat a meal together. We will also sing a few songs, pray, and study together. The cooking will start around 5 PM, dinner will begin around 6:30, and worship will begin around 7:15 PM. Text or call Kristen to RSVP at 325-260-5188 if you would like to attend!

### Meditation Garden Bricks



Honor someone you love with a personalized brick in the meditation garden. The bricks will be used to create a path that will lead past the waterfall and pergola on your way to the gazebo. "What waterfall, pergola and gazebo?" you may ask. The ones that are part of the master plan that will transform the corner of Beech St. and

N. 4th into a beautiful meditation garden for our friends in the community as well as ourselves. Proceeds from the bricks will be used to create this reality—starting with concrete sidewalks throughout the garden. Stop by the display in the foyer to see the master plan and consider who you will honor or memorialize with a commemorative brick.

### Garden News

Our Meditation Garden needs 8 volunteers to help maintain the garden during the winter months. Four volunteers, each taking a week during the month to walk the labyrinth ONE time during his or her week and pull anything growing on the path or among the stones. Also needed are 4 volunteers each taking a week during the month to pull any weeds growing on the grassy lawn around the chapel ONE time during his or her week. Estimated time: Less than an hour. The sign-up sheet is in the foyer at the information counter.



### Food Pantry News

Dear Friends of the Frances Buzard Presbyterian Food Pantry, thank you so much for your generous cereal and cookie contributions during the month of February. You could help us in March by providing a package of toilet paper, some toothbrushes, or toothpaste. These toiletry items are in high demand and are a big expense for our Food Pantry. We are privileged to serve and provide for nearly 40 or more families each week. As always, your prayers and support for our pantry are much appreciated.

In February, the Food Pantry served 111 families, for a total of 303 people—180 adults, 31 senior citizens, and 92 children ages 1-18.

### Breakfast on Beech Street (B.O.B.S.)

B.O.B.S. is serving a need! In February, 2019, 1195 people received breakfasts (48 were under 18 years old) and 1851 sandwiches for sack lunches were handed out.

If you want to be part of a FCPC Thursday team, please call the church office (677-3501) And your monetary contributions are always appreciated.



### Knit & Crochet Group



Our Knit and Crochet group welcomes you to stop by any Wednesday between 10 a.m. and noon. If you've ever wanted to learn to knit or crochet, this is a great group to show you how. Yarn and needles are available. A bonus is the delightful conversation, hot coffee and usually homemade cookies. Several participants are currently working on caps for the children served by N.O.R.O.C. in Tulcea Romania. The motto of the group is, "Come when you can. Leave when you must!"

### Bequests & Planned Giving

The Bequests & Planned Giving Committee oversees, for the Session, special gifts that have been given to the church that are not designated for a specific purpose. Each year the committee seeks mission oriented requests from members of our congregation. The Bequest Committee reviews the requests and makes a recommendation to the Session who approves the distributions. To apply for a portion of these funds, a one-page written request must be received from a member of the congregation, stating the suggested amount requested, along with an explanation as to how these monies will be used in the cause of Christ. Your written requests should be sent to the church office - Attention: Bequests and Planned Giving. **Requests due by March 31.**



## Gratitude

Dear FCPC,  
I want to thank you so much for the Christmas poinsettia. It brightened my apartment so much. It is wonderful to be remembered so by my church. And also a big thanks for the Christmas goodie sack from the PW. I enjoyed every morsel!

Mary Frances Townsend

## Sympathy

We extend our sympathies to Tom Rose and family on the death of his wife Beth Rose.