

December 2013 First United Methodist Church – Palacios

When you experience this time of year through your five senses, you see scenes of the nativity; you hear the sounds of Handel's Messiah and "Hark the Herald Angels Sing"; you smell the fragrance of fir trees ready to be decorated; you taste those holiday baked goods; and you feel the cool temperatures on your skin. This is a season that makes you glad to be alive.

And when you look at this time of year through the eyes of faith, all of the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and sensations remind you of the love of God who created us to enjoy all of these things, to receive them as tangible gifts from God's heart of love.

And above all of these gifts is the greatest gift of all--Jesus. The gift of the Father's love to us, all of us. No one has ever given a better gift...not your first puppy, or your first bike, or car. This gift tops all electronics and internet gadgets by far. This is the gift to beat all gifts! But like so many gifts, this one is received with a lot of excitement but all too soon the excitement dies down and eventually it is taken for granted.

Occasionally we need to be reminded of just what this gift really means to us. Just think about it for a minute, Jesus left his exalted place in Heaven to be born as one of us. He lived a life as a model for how we can and should live in relation to God. He died a death as a substitute for us and satisfied the penalty for sin that we deserve. And then he rose from the dead having conquered it so that we don't have to fear it. The bonus is that he now can live in us with his energy and vitality to enable us to live a life far beyond what we can think or imagine!

I don't think any video game, iPhone, or internet device can top that, do you?

I am so pleased and proud to be your pastor,

David

****Our December Fellowship Luncheon will be on Sunday, Dec. 15.****

Those assisting in worship in December are:

	Greeter(s)	Ushers	Liturgist:
Dec. 8	Shelly Johs	Kyle & Zach Seaman	Halcy Dean
Dec. 15	Lowell & Carolyn Johnson	Kyle & Zach Seaman	Halcy Dean
Dec. 22	Leland Singer	Kyle & Zach Seaman	Carol Singer
Dec. 24	Janie Gulley	Bill Law	Barney Gulley
Dec. 29	Carol Cotlenler	Robert Bari & Chae Neimeyer	Open

Celebrations!!!

December Birthdays & Anniversaries: 2 - Kent Mayfield, 3 - Parker Dean, 8 - Bob Colura, 10 - Carol Singer, 12 - Barbara Curtis, 16 - Dean Kubecka, Gene Kubecka, Sherri Seaman, 17 - Isabel Greenawalt, 19 - Marvin Curtis, 22 - Nellie Rockenbaugh, 23 - Morgan Ryan, 25 - Betty Koontz, 28 - Channing Harvey, 30 - Lauren Kubecka Massey, Lennie Kunefke

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The Youth from Bethany UMC in Austin and St. John's UMC in Richmond were in Palacios from Nov. 23-25. Due to the unseasonably cold and nasty weather they were limited to mostly indoor jobs. We thank them for their presence in our community and in worship. And we look forward to them coming back again this summer. We are hoping they will be able to help us with our Vacation Bible School!

The Children's & Choir Christmas program will be on Sunday, December 15.

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Andy & Janell Blair of First Presbyterian Churches of Palacios & Collegeport are moving in mid-December. Andy has accepted a call to the First Presbyterian Church in Canyon, Texas. There will be a reception for them on Sunday, Dec. 8 around noon at First Presbyterian Church of Palacios. All are invited and welcome to come to show your appreciation for all that the Blair's have done for Palacios and Collegeport over the last 16 years. Light refreshments will be served.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

The United Methodist Women served a chicken spaghetti dinner after church on November 17. The UMW thanks everyone for their appetites and support. Thanks to you the UMW raised over \$2,600. They were very enterprising and had pledged \$5 for every one of Carolyn Kubecka's apricot or cream cheese rolls they sold. And thanks to the UMW for the gift to the church of \$200.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

The **Adult Sunday School Class** The fun, interesting, and inspiring class meets in the Parlor of Weimer Hall at 9:00 AM. Josh Harper is leading the class through a study of the book of Acts.

The **Tween & Youth Sunday School Class** The class meets in the back classroom of Weimer Hall at 9:00 AM. Amy Kubecka and Pastor David teach this class. The December theme is: Christmas is All About...Hope; Trusting God; Faith; God Being with Us; Worshipping Jesus. All 6th-12th graders are welcome and encouraged to attend.

We are looking for a new co-teacher for this class. Amy has been teaching for several years and is ready for a break. If you would like to help teach this great class, please contact Pastor David or Amy.

We are starting a Confirmation Class in January. If you are interested in helping or have a youth in the 6th grade or higher who has not been confirmed, please contact Pastor David.

The **Children's Sunday School Class** continues to meet in the Children's Classroom. DeeDee and Betty Stork teach this class for children.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service -- Tuesday, December 24 Begin thinking and praying about who you could invite or who you could help come to the Christmas Eve Service. Maybe there's someone you know who has not been able to come to church for a while, or someone who does not have a church home. The most effective way to get someone to church is to invite them and to offer them a ride.

Methodist Church to host Pat Allen Memorial Christmas Dinner

The First United Methodist Church of Palacios will be offering a free "Pat Allen Memorial Community Dinner" from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm on Dec. 25, Christmas Day, at the Friends of Elderly Citizens Center. Everyone is invited to join in the good fellowship and eat a delicious turkey dinner with all the trimmings. We will be delivering dinners to those unable to travel to the center. Call 972-3013 or 920-1517 and leave a message or call the center at 972-2715. We are in need of cornbread, desserts, and money to purchase the turkeys and supplies. Contact Carolyn Kubecka @ 361-920-1517.

In the Victoria District

The dates have been set for the **Crossroads Walks to Emmaus for 2014**. The Men's Walk #1739 will be February 20-23 and the Women's Walk #1756 will be July 24-27. Both Walks will be held at the Spiritual Renewal Center south of Victoria. For more information or an application, please see Pastor David or, Janie or Barney Gulley.

In the Annual Conference

A special session of the Annual Conference has been called to meet in San Antonio on Saturday, February 8. The purpose of this conference is vote on the details of the unification of the Southwest Texas and Rio Grande Annual Conferences. The Lay Members of the Annual Conference from Palacios UMC are Becky & Ken Johnson, and the Clergy Member is Pastor David.

There are a couple of new ways that you can help support the church. One is by doing your online shopping through **UMCMarket.org**. Through this United Methodist website you can do your online shopping with some of your favorite retailers and those retailers will donate a percentage of your purchase to our church. The other is by signing up for **Stream Energy**. This is an electric utility provider that will donate \$5/month to the church for each household that switched from their current provider to Stream Energy. If you would like more information on either of these, please talk to Barney Gulley or Pastor David.

There's good news on our church's finances and there's bad news. The **good news** is that we've had a renter in the rent house since this summer. The **bad news** is that we have just had to replace most all of the plumbing under the house. The **good news** is that we've been paying a tithe of our undesignated offering toward our apportionments and we are ahead of where we were this time last year. The **bad news** is we are still about \$7000 short of paying 100%. The **good news** is you are very generous and supportive people who like to see your church pay its fair share of support to the United Methodist Church, the Victoria District, and their ministries. If you would like to help us meet our apportionment goal of 100%, please do so before the end of the year.



December AT FIRST UMC – PALACIOS

- 1 -- Youth Hand Bells in Sanctuary -- 8:30 AM
-- 1st Sunday of Advent – Communion Sunday -- Christ, Our Hope
-- Isaiah 2:1-5; Psalm 122; Romans 13:11-14; Matthew 24:36-44
-- Youth Fellowship in Weimer Hall -- 6:00 PM
- 4 -- Handbells in Sanctuary -- 5:30 PM -- Choir in Sanctuary -- 6:30 PM
- 5 -- Ladies Bible Study in Weimer Hall – 9:30 AM
- 8 -- Men’s Breakfast in Weimer Hall – 7:30 AM
-- Youth Hand Bells in Sanctuary -- 8:30 AM
-- 2nd Sunday of Advent -- Christ, The Way
-- Isaiah 11:1-10; Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19; Romans 15:4-13; Matthew 3:1-12
-- Reception for Andy & Janell Blair at First Presbyterian -- Noon
-- 4-H Christmas Party in Weimer Hall -- 6:00 PM
- 9 -- Trustee Meeting in Weimer Hall -- 6:00 PM
- 10 -- Finance Committee in Weimer Hall -- 6:00 PM
-- Administrative Council in Weimer Hall -- 7:00 PM
- 11-15 -- Pastor David & Family in New Orleans
- 11 -- Handbells in Sanctuary -- 5:30 PM -- Choir in the Sanctuary -- 6:30 PM
- 12 -- Ladies Bible Study in Weimer Hall – 9:30 AM
- 15 -- 3rd Sunday of Advent -- Christ, Our Joy -- Barney Gulley, Preaching
-- Youth Hand Bells in Sanctuary -- 8:30 AM
-- Isaiah 35:1-10; Luke 1:47-55; James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11
-- Fellowship Luncheon after Worship
-- Youth Fellowship at 1st Presbyterian Church -- 6:00 PM
- 18 -- Handbells in Sanctuary -- 5:30 PM -- Choir in Sanctuary -- 6:30 PM
- 19 -- Ladies Bible Study in Weimer Hall – 9:30 AM
-- United Methodist Women meet in Weimer Hall -- Noon
- 20 -- Crossroads Emmaus Gathering at Webster Chapel UMC in Victoria -- 6:30 PM
- 22 -- 4th Sunday of Advent -- Christ, The Prince of Peace
-- Isaiah 7:10-16; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25
- 24 -- Christmas Eve Candlelight Service -- 6:00 PM
-- Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-20
- 25 -- Christmas Day -- Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 98; Hebrews 1:1-4 (5-12); John 1:1-14
-- Pat Allen Memorial Christmas Dinner at Senior Center
- 29 -- 1st Sunday after Christmas
-- Isaiah 63:7-9; Psalm 148; Hebrews 2:10-18; Matthew 2:13-23
- 31 -- New Years Eve -- Watch Night
-- Ecclesiastes 3:1-13; Psalm 8; Revelation 21:1-6a; Matthew 25:31-46

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