



Please join us for worship this Sunday, the Third Sunday of Advent, at 10:30 a.m. Our Scripture readings will be Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 (“The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives ...”) and 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 (“The One who calls you is faithful, and he will do this”). The title of the sermon is “God is Faithful,” and a copy of the bulletin can be found here: <https://fpcovictoria.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/2023-12-17-Bulletin-2-PDF.pdf>

A Special Musical Note

Dawn Neel will be singing our Anthem this Sunday, "Sing Noel: A Christmas Fanfare." Also, with respect to our worship services this Sunday and on Christmas Eve, music lovers will want to take special note of Robert Wyatt's selections for the Prelude, Offertory, and Postlude. Robert has chosen some magnificent Advent music to enhance our worship services during this holy season. It is worth coming to church early and staying late just to hear Robert play such magnificent compositions on our wonderful organ!

Lighting of the Advent Candles

During each Sunday of Advent, we will be lighting the appropriate candle on our Advent wreath. Since Christmas Eve also falls on the Fourth Sunday of Advent this year, we will be lighting both the candle for the Fourth Sunday of Advent as well as the Christ Candle during our worship service on Sunday, December 24, at **10:30 a.m.** Please remember that this year we will **not** have our traditional evening Christmas Eve service at 7:00 p.m.



Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these". Matt 19:14

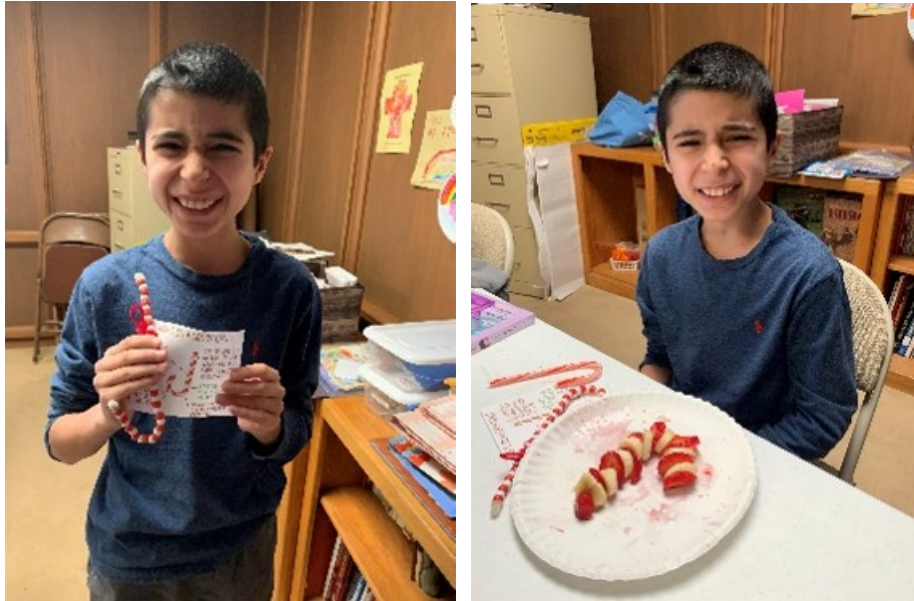
This past Sunday we read the story of the birth of Jesus and the story of the candy cane. For our craft, we made our own candy cane using pipe cleaners and red and white beads. Our snack was also in the shape and colors of a candy cane, using alternating strawberry and banana slices to shape our "J".

If you have never read the story of the candy cane, we highly recommend it; it will change the way you look at a candy cane. There are many sources which explain the story; here is but one example:

<https://www.thebettermom.com/blog/2013/12/13/teach-about-jesus-with-the-legend-of-the-candy-cane>.

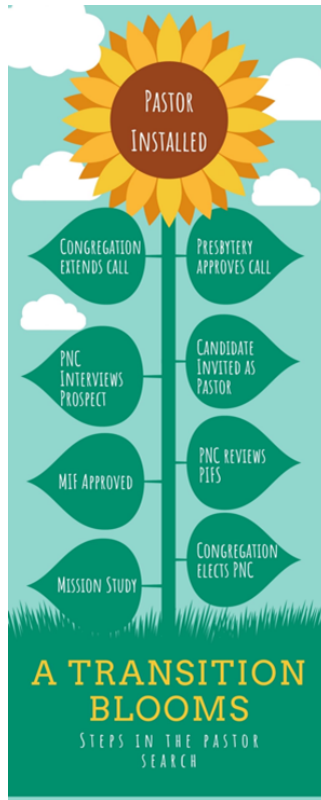
We are on break until January 7th. Join us then to learn all about David and Goliath.

Contact Leila Galvan at 956-367-2234, or the church office, if you have questions or would like to participate.



PNC News

The Pastor Nominating Committee is pleased to report that the profile narrative we have written for our congregation has been submitted to Mission Presbytery's Commission on Ministry and *approved!* It's called a Ministry Discernment Profile (called MIF on the "*A Transition Blooms*" graphic which appears below). This profile contains the information we have compiled about our church that will be posted online for candidates to read—a critical step in the process of discerning the person God has already prepared to become our next pastor.



Your response to the question *‘What do you think is a pastor’s most important role in the church?’* provided valuable information as we completed our church profile. After the profile is posted nationally, pastoral candidates will learn who we are as a congregation and what we are looking for as we plan for the future and *Our Journey Forward*.

We will have more exciting news to share as the PNC continues to meet each week and as we move into the next phases of this search process. And always, we ask you to pray for our committee and our beloved congregation. Blessings of Advent and peace to all—

Pastor Nominating Committee

Billy Leske, Dawn Neel, Patrick Patterson, Bonnie Wilkinson, Robert Wyatt



**POINSETTIAS ARE ONCE AGAIN
AVAILABLE DURING ADVENT
TO HONOR OR MEMORIALIZE
SOMEONE YOU LOVE**

This Sunday, you will once again find a leaflet in your Bulletin providing you with an opportunity to purchase a Poinsettia in honor of someone you wish to honor or memorialize. The cost of a Poinsettia will be \$15.00, and you will be able to designate whether you want your donation to be forwarded to VCAM or Promise Pointe or to be retained as a gift to FPC. Regardless of which organization you specify for your gift, however, please make your check payable to "First Presbyterian Church." We will make sure that your gifts are forwarded to the appropriate organization.

The Poinsettias that we purchase will adorn our Chancel for our combined Fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas Eve service.

**FPC'S OWN HARPER EDWARDS
SIGNS COLLEGE LETTER OF INTENT
WITH BELMONT UNIVERSITY**



Harper Edwards, a senior at Victoria West High School and a member of our church, recently signed a College Letter of Intent to play golf at Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee. Lucky Belmont! Harper won the TAPPS 5A South Regional when she was a sophomore at St. Joseph High School, and more recently she just barely missed the 5A State Tournament in 2023.

In golf, and in all of life, Harper has a bright future ahead of her. Strong in her faith, knowing that she is loved by family, friends, and all of us at FPC, Harper will leave for college next year well equipped to face the challenges and opportunities that await her in her academic life and her chosen sport!

The members and friends of First Presbyterian Church congratulate Harper, and we will keep her in our hearts and our prayers now and when she heads off to Nashville! Please keep in touch, Harper!





VETERANS FAIR

First Presbyterian Church of Victoria, Texas hosted a Veterans Resource Fair on December 6, 2023, in our Fellowship Hall. The Fair was sponsored by the Military Veterans Peer Network and the Texas Veterans Commission. Fourteen veteran resource organizations including South Texas Veterans Health Care System, Texas Veteran Leadership Program, Vet Center, Warriors Weekend, Hero's on the Water, Golden Crescent Workforce Solutions, DAV and DAV Auxiliary, Senior Helpers, Endeavors, New Century Hospice, and Dignity Memorial were available to answer questions and provide services to more than thirty local veterans who attended the Fair. Five veterans from our congregation learned about important benefits available to them and their families.

Paw Bites

We continue our support and contribution of cat and dog food to the Meals on Wheels Paw Bites program providing free cat and dog food to the

Meals on Wheels senior citizen clients who cannot afford to buy food for their pets. We delivered thirty-three (33) pounds of cat food and 135 pounds for dog food to these desiring senior citizens in November.

The cat or dog is usually the only friend, companion, and love the person has on a daily basis. The staff reports those individuals far go purchasing food and medicine for themselves to provide for their cat or dog. Please continue your faithful support of this important outreach of our congregation. Our continued support is appreciated by the staff of Meals on Wheels South Texas.



**PDS YOUNG DISCIPLES
CELEBRATE SIX YEARS OF CHILDREN'S CHAPEL
WITH PASTOR JIM**

On Tuesday, December 12, 2023, during what was not only the last Children's Chapel of 2023 but also the last Children's Chapel at FPC-Victoria for Pastor Jim, the young disciples at PDS surprised Pastor Jim with posters, signs, and other mementos to thank him for leading them in worship these past six years.

The only thing harder for me than writing this article was to accept the hugs and best wishes of these beautiful children who, with crayon, fingerpaint, and glitter, gave Pastor Jim a warm and loving "thank you" for being their pastor. Moments such as these humbly remind a minister of the privilege and the beauty of working in God's kingdom.

And, I would add, this is also an occasion for the saints of FPC-Victoria to be reminded that their continued support of PDS is a ministry (an “outreach,” if you will) that impacts young children and their families in ways we cannot always understand and certainly in ways we cannot measure.

If the children for whom we make PDS possible learn nothing else but that Jesus loves them, and if they learn how to share that love with others, then what a great Christian ministry that is for us to support! The fact that they *also* learn their colors, their ABC’s, their Bible verses and Bible songs, and how to walk quietly in single file-- that is all the more wonderful and a greater blessing for us all!





CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

- This Sunday, December 17, the *Nellie Hudson Adult Sunday School Class* will continue their study in the familiar series of publications entitled “Being Reformed, Faith Seeking Understanding.” On this occasion, and just in time for this holy season, the subject is “Illuminating Advent,” by Donald K. McKim. As always, Dawn Neel will have copies of the study material for all who wish to participate.
 - *Kid’s Kingdom, Sunday, 9:30 a.m.*: Kingdom Kids are now taking a Merry Christmas break. Stay tuned for further news about their activities when they return after the New Year.
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Thank You

Class of 2023!

A HUGE thank you to Bonnie, Lynn and John who have faithfully served on our church session these past 3 years. We are humbled by your dedication and commitment to our church and congregation.

Peace, grace, and mercy,
Pastor Jim

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First Presbyterian Church · 2408 N Navarro · Victoria, Texas 77901 · USA

