



# TOWER TIME

## Mark Your Calendar

### Mothers of Preschoolers

Saturday, May 4 at 9:00 a.m. in Kleberg Hall.

### Memorial Service for Norris Stricker

Saturday, May 11 at 10:00 a.m.

### 2nd Monday Women's Bible Study

Please join us on May 13th at 2 p.m. in the Chapel to continue our Bible study of women of the Bible from the New Testament. This month we will examine the life of Mary, Mother of Jesus (Joseph)

### Pentecost Sunday

Sunday, May 19.

### Church Pool Party

Sunday, May 19, 6-8 p.m. at Santa Fe Swim Club.

### Christian Women's Book Club

Monday, May 20 at 10:00 a.m. in the chapel.



May 12th will be a very special worship service for First Presbyterian Church. First, it is Baccalaureate Sunday, when we honor our graduating students. Baccalaureate services offer a quieter, more intimate opportunity to pause and reflect on this rite of passage for students as they leave the confines of school and emerge into the world. This year we will celebrate by honoring five students graduating. Erin Harl, Leah Tiner, Walter Sheckells, John Vaughan, and Rufino Medado will receive Bibles from Women of the Church as a guide for lives.

May 12th is Mother's Day, when we honor the influence of mothers in society. Anna Jarvis held the first celebration of Mother's Day service at Andrews Methodist Episcopal Church in Grafton, West Virginia. In 1907. Jarvis was a peace activist who cared for wounded soldiers on both sides during the American Civil War. Jarvis wanted to stop killing husbands and sons through the violence of war. It was not until 1914 when Woodrow Wilson signed a proclamation designating Mother's Day, held on the second Sunday in May, as a national holiday to honor mothers.

Finally, May 12th is the 157-year anniversary of the chartering of First Presbyterian Church. The event is

described in *On This Bluff...Centennial History 1867-1967*, the book on the history of our church published for the 100th Anniversary. "Finally, on May 12, 1867, the church was organized in connection with the Old School General Assembly. The group gathered at the home of Dr. and Mrs. E.T. Merriman on Chaparral Street. With the Rev. William Mitchell as pastor of the flock, one man and six women presented themselves for membership."

Following the service, refreshments will be served in Kleberg Hall.



# Chip's Thoughts

Let me ask you something. Why do you go to church? Why are you a member of First Presbyterian Church? Sadly, many people even today attend a church for what they can get out of it. When that happens, church becomes all about “me,” – my needs, my feelings, my preferences.

It turns out that Jesus never told us to “go to church.” Instead, he commanded us to BE the church. The church is not a building it’s people – people worshipping, learning, caring for other people, and inviting people to get to know Jesus; people who are transformed by their relationship with Jesus and their relationships with other people.

So the church is where we go to be transformed, to be changed to become more like Christ. If that’s the case, we probably need to know what that transformation looks like. But the problem is that spiritual transformation is something that God is doing on the “inside.” However, a few years ago Pastor Gordon MacDonald, the chancellor of Denver Seminary, recently came up with twelve outward signs of a transformed Christian.

1. **An undiluted devotion to Jesus.** This means your devotion to Jesus is a part of every decision you make, every word you say, everything you do.
2. **Pursuing a biblically informed view of the world.** This means aiming to know the Bible well: its content and its imperatives.
3. **Intentional and disciplined in seeking God's direction in life.** A transformed Christian prays a lot and has an active spiritual life.

4. **Worships.** A transformed Christian worships regularly and has a continuous spirit of repentance.
5. **Healthy human relationships.** “we are talking about a person in whom others delight because, wherever he goes, he brings ‘loads of Christ’ with him.”
6. **Knows how to engage the larger world where faith is not necessarily understood.** A transformed Christian is someone who intentionally takes Christ with him into everyday life.
7. **Aware of personal "call" and unique competencies.** God has given each of us unique abilities and we are to use them for Him.
8. **Merciful, encouraging, and generous.**
9. **Appreciates that suffering is part of faithfulness to Jesus.**
10. **Eager and ready to express the content of his faith.** “The transformed Christ-follower seeks, even prays for, opportunities to communicate his devotion to Christ.”
11. **Overflowing with thankfulness.**
12. **A passion for reconciliation.** Mature Christians work to bring people together.

Take a look at this list and honestly ask yourself if this describes you. If not, how about making a commitment to making some changes in your life. Come to worship, join a Bible study, attend the Wednesday night dinners, give sacrificially, find somewhere to serve, and invite a friend.

## ECO NEWS

Our denomination, ECO: A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians, recently held the ordination retreat-intensives at the ECO office in Irving, Texas. Candidates attend two of these events during their journey to ordination in ECO. At the first retreat-intensive, the candidates participate in a battery of assessments to help them learn more about themselves and how they interact with others.

A group of assessors interviews them and then develops a personalized “map” that the candidate must complete before attending the second retreat-intensive where they are evaluated for their readiness for ordination.

Our own Amy Smith attended the first retreat-intensive this past April and has received her own map to ordination. Amy is currently a seminary student at the Flourish Institute of Theology, ECO’s new seminary.

## PRAY FOR YOUR CHURCH

“...by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” - Philippians 4:6

Please pray regularly and boldly that God will:

- draw over 120 people to worship each week
- send 30 new Covenant Partners this year
- double our children’s Sunday School (again!)
- provide additional children’s Sunday School teachers
- show us how to better serve our community

Please include the following in your prayers: Luis & Julie Añil, Susan Anderson, Roy Daniels, Chris Duncan, Susan Hawn, Maribeth Pierce, Bill Quinton, Linda Pinion, Liz Ramon, Eddie Sanchez, April Sanchez, Dale Stewart, Cliff Taylor, Margaret Tuley, April Vaughan, Robert Vaughan, Mark Wemer, Sarah Gill, Thomas Cameron, Clayton Johnson.

Please try to call the church office at 884-4057#100 if you are in the hospital.

## WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

“Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another.” Hebrews 10:24-25a

04/07/24.....	104
04/14/24.....	97
04/21/24.....	103
04/28/24.....	109

It really makes a difference when you're here!



- 5/7** Darrell Burditt
- 5/9** Damean Duncan
- 5/15** Chuck Lockett
- 5/19** Mike McLain  
Eli Hodges
- 5/20** Carrie Sheckells
- 5/22** Sinae McMann  
Jane Boone
- 5/24** Chris Vaughan
- 5/25** Nancy Burditt
- 5/29** David Henny
- 6/3** Cathy Bowlin



## CHURCH FAMILY NIGHT AT SANTA FE POOL

Please join us on Sunday, May 19th from 6 - 8 p.m. at the Santa Fe Swim Club, located at 4134 Santa Fe St. Dinner will be provided. You do not have to swim to attend. Contact Amy Smith, amy@firstprescc.com, to RSVP.

Thank you to Keith & Becca Smith for making the pool arrangements and Terry Smith for cooking.



## DINNERS FOR EIGHT

Dinners for Eight takes fellowship beyond the walls of Kleberg Hall and helps bond adults in a relaxed atmosphere. A project of the Connecting Committee, this activity has no agenda except to have fun and get to know one another sharing a meal in a more meaningful way than the usual church activities.

If you would like to become involved with this activity, contact Cathy Bowlin or any member of the Connecting Committee.



## WOMEN OF THE CHURCH ANNUAL MEETING

*By Rebecca Pinion*

The Women of the Church Annual Meeting and luncheon will be held on Saturday, June 8 at 11 a.m. in Kleberg Hall. The meeting will feature a guest speaker followed by a brief business meeting.

Our speaker this year is ViAnn Hermann. She is going to talk to us about her experiences in Viet Nam as a Donut Dolly. This is a little-known story of the small group of American women who volunteered to serve in the Vietnam War through the Red Cross Supplemental Recreation Activities Overseas (SRAO) program. They were better known by our brave military men as "The Donut Dollies" (a nickname from WWII and the Korean War). Armed only with smiles and hand-made games, the Donut Dollies risked their lives every day to achieve their mission of cheering up and bringing a sense of home to the U.S. troops. Ms. Hermann spent 3 years serving with the American Red Cross.

The luncheon will feature quiche from Sugarbakers. This event is open to all women, but we do need to know so that enough food is prepared. Please RSVP to Rebecca Pinion at robertson52@gmail.com

The brief business portion of the meeting includes voting on the annual budget and installing new officers. Additionally, we will honor Lisa Clark as our Merci Award recipient.

Invite a veteran to come enjoy ViAnn's fascinating stories.



## DISCOVERY SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

*by Ryan Barbato*

The Discovery Sunday School will begin a study the Book of Jonah this month. Jonah was one of the one of the 12 Minor the prophets in the Old Testament.

The class meets at 9:30 a.m. in the Chapel. Breakfast will be provided.

Opportunities to  
**SERVE**



Diapers, diapers, diapers! We need to help the Pregnancy Center provide diapers to the young families. An average baby will go through six to 10 diapers in one day.

The Diaper Drive begins on Mother's Day, May 12th and runs until Father's Day, June 16. Any size of diaper is greatly appreciated, but the Pregnancy Center has a tremendous need for sizes 4, 5, and 6. Diaper wipes are always appreciated as well. Our church is an official KBNJ drop-

off location, and church members can also participate by bringing diapers until Father's Day.

Last year we collected 4,240 diapers. Help us increase our donation this year. Collection receptacles will be available both in the Narthex and the entry by the Living Room.

Not in the mood to shop? The Serving Committee members will shop for you. Just deposit a check noted "diaper drive" or cash in an envelope noted "diaper drive" in the collection plate or give to the church office.



benefiting



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