

## Living Out God's Call to Joy and to Justice

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### **THIS WEEK – December 7 - 13**

To submit a Prayer Request for the Monday Message:

- ✓ text or email Pastor Kathy (512-466-5662; [fpcpastorkathy@gmail.com](mailto:fpcpastorkathy@gmail.com)) by Sunday evening
- ✓ email the church office ([fpchurch@sbcglobal.net](mailto:fpchurch@sbcglobal.net)) by Sunday evening
- ✓ give Pastor Kathy a written prayer request on Sunday morning
- ✓ fill out one of the Prayer Request cards in the pews and place it in the Offering Plate

### **PRAYER REQUESTS AND UPDATES**

- Pat Rossow has been admitted to the Heart Hospital; she hopes to be discharged by the middle of this week.
- Lou Helt remains at the South Texas Health System hospital (former McAllen Medical) being treated for complications from a recent surgical procedure. She hopes to transfer to long-term rehab soon. 650-408-0062. Cards can be sent to Brookridge Senior Living, 1301 W. Ridge Road, Apt. 229, Pharr, 78577.
- Prayers of thanksgiving that Ixya Rivera Cortez, Caly Fernandez's granddaughter, had her oral surgery last week and it went well.
- Margie Karst reports that her sister Gail Keyes has been placed on some new medications that are causing side effects. Gail remains at home. 3334 Country Club Drive, Edinburg, TX 78542.
- Emmanuel Tabali reports that his father Bernard is doing very well following treatment for a chronic leg wound and expects to return to the Valley soon.
- Jesse Pena requests prayers for his grandmother, who is not doing well.
- Sher Wilkes requests prayers for her dear friend Sandra Gaulke, who has been diagnosed with lung cancer.
- Sher also requests renewed prayers for Jeff and Mary Ellen Schneider, both of whom are experiencing health challenges.
- Gale Ryan requests continued prayers for Jack Ryan, her former brother-in-law, who is hospitalized. She does not have an update on his condition.
- Gale Ryan requests prayers for Katie McConell, who is in Stage 4 kidney failure.

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### **THIS WEEK'S MOMENT OF BEAUTY**

[O Come, O Come, Emmanuel | Cinematic Christmas Cover – The Piano Guys](#)

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### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Sher Wilkes and her family extend their deep thanks to all who attended the December 6 memorial service for Drue Wilkes, and who assisted with the service and reception.

- Many thanks to all who selected one or more of the 40 Angels from this year's Su Casa de Esperanza **Angel Tree** project. **Wrapped gifts should be returned to the church by Sunday, December 14.** For more information or to arrange to have your gifts picked up, contact Ann Williams, 956-493-1425.
- Former FPC members **James and Vera Barnes** invite the congregation to a celebration of their **70<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary** on Sunday, December 21 following each of the morning worship services (9:00 and 11:00) at St. John's Episcopal Church on N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street. No gifts, please.
- **Advent Devotionals** based on this year's theme: *What Do You Fear? Insisting on Hope This Advent*, can be picked up in the narthex or requested from the church office. There are large-print versions available upon request.
- The Children's Bereavement Center is partnering with Hidalgo County Precinct 3 for their **5<sup>th</sup> Annual Toy Drive**. You can support that program by bringing new, unwrapped toys to the church this week and either leaving them in the church office or placing them in the collection box in the hallway by the Fellowship Hall Christmas Tree.
- **Sunday School** has resumed for Advent and meets at 9:00 each Sunday morning in the Parlor. Class discussions will center on Advent artworks from *A Sanctified Art*.
- The Session thanks all who attended the November 16 **Stewardship Program** regarding the church's current financial situation and 2026 plans and priorities. Further input can be sent to [fpchurch@sbcglobal.net](mailto:fpchurch@sbcglobal.net) or [fpcpastorkathy@gmail.com](mailto:fpcpastorkathy@gmail.com) or shared a Session member: Mike Hudler, Bernard Tabali, Dana Friedman, Caly Fernandez, Nadine Force, Lita Simpson, Joe Massey, and Kathy Garfield.
- **Space for God** is reading *How We Learn to Be Brave* by Mariann Edgar Budde. The chapter for December 11 is Chapter 4: Accepting What You Do Not Choose.
- To donate food items to either the RGV Food Bank or food pantries at local churches, bring items to church and place them on the shelves in the Narthex. Or make a monetary donation: <https://secure.givelively.org/donate/food-bank-of-the-rio-grande-valley-inc>
- The Congregational Care team, under the leadership of Kathryn Henry, oversees a **Congregational Card Ministry**. There are cards available in the Narthex; completed notes may be returned to the church to be addressed, stamped, and mailed.
- To join the **Chancel Choir**, contact Robert Garza, FPC Choir Director, at 956-720-2301 or [rob\\_grza10@yahoo.com](mailto:rob_grza10@yahoo.com). Practice is at 7:30 p.m. each Wednesday in the Choir Room.

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## **CALENDAR**

- Monday, December 8, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. – The Player's Studio rehearsals; Fellowship Hall
- Monday, December 8, 11:00 a.m.: Interment Service for Drue Wilkes; RGV Veterans Cemetery; Mission
- Wednesday, December 10, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.: Library open for Mid-Week Prayer
- Wednesday, December 10, 7:30 p.m.: Choir Practice; Choir Room
- Thursday, December 11, 10:00 a.m.: Space for God; Parlor
- Sunday, December 14, 9:00 a.m.: Sunday School; Parlor
- Sunday, December 14, 10:30 a.m.: Advent 3 Worship; Sanctuary and Facebook Live
- Sunday, December 14, 11:45 a.m.: December Stated Session Meeting; Fellowship Hall
- Sunday, December 21, 6:00 p.m., Studio 7 Winter Recital; Sanctuary – all are invited
- Wednesday, December 24, 6:00 p.m.: Christmas Eve Worship; Sanctuary and Facebook Live

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### **SESSION HIGHLIGHTS – NOVEMBER 9 STATED MEETING**

- The meeting was opened with prayer and began with lunch and fellowship.
  - Received reports from Treasurer Dana Friedman, Clerk Nancy Pruneda, and Moderator Kathryn Escandell.
  - The Session spent much of the November meeting discussing the current financial and building challenges facing the church, and making plans for the information to be shared at the November 16 Stewardship lunch and program
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### **December Anniversaries**

Dana and Mauricia Friedman (12/16)

Erik and Cassie (Vorbach) Vose

John and Melinda Wright

### **December Birthdays**

4 – Joyce Magee

10 – Doug Schneider

27 – Ann-Maree Freeland

6 – Rev. O’Quin Kelly

11 – Ansen Seale

28 – Jesse Peña

9 – Sadie Garza

13 – Felipe Salinas

29 – Amanda Wright

Jeff Schneider

14 – Carolyn Landrum

31 – Eng Parker

20 – Ezequiel Bautista

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### **FINANCIAL REPORT THROUGH OCTOBER**

2025	Revenue	Expenses	Net
MTD (Oct.)	\$18,735.21	\$37,475.55	-\$18,740.34
YTD	\$204,573.14	\$314,876.14	-\$110,303.00

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### **READINGS FOR DECEMBER 14 – ADVENT 3: *Even in our fear, we are called forward.***

#### **• Jeremiah 1:4-10**

Now the word of the LORD came to me saying,

<sup>5</sup> “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,  
and before you were born I consecrated you;  
I appointed you a prophet to the nations.”

<sup>6</sup> Then I said, “Ah, Lord GOD! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy.” <sup>7</sup> But the LORD said to me,

“Do not say, ‘I am only a boy,’  
for you shall go to all to whom I send you,  
and you shall speak whatever I command you.

<sup>8</sup> Do not be afraid of them,  
for I am with you to deliver you, says the LORD.”

<sup>9</sup> Then the LORD put out his hand and touched my mouth, and the LORD said to me,

“Now I have put my words in your mouth.

<sup>10</sup> See, today I appoint you over nations and over kingdoms,  
to pluck up and pull down,  
to destroy and to overthrow,  
to build and to plant.”

- **Gospel: Luke 1:26-39**

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." <sup>29</sup> But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup> The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> And now you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup> He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." <sup>34</sup> Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" <sup>35</sup> The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. <sup>36</sup> And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. <sup>37</sup> For nothing will be impossible with God." <sup>38</sup> Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

<sup>39</sup> In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country.

The Word of the Lord / **Thanks be to God**

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**POEM FOR THE WEEK –**

Our Advent series, "What Do You Fear? Insisting on Hope This Advent" includes poems by Rev. Sarah A. Speed for each week's theme and Scripture. These poems will be used as our Monday Message weekly prayers through Epiphany.

Week 3 Theme: **Even in Our Fear, We Are Called Forward**

**THE FIRST STEP**

Watch any parent. It starts with the first step.  
They kneel down. They smile with anticipation.  
They reach for their baby, calling and cooing them forward.  
And then before they know it, they're running behind a bike. They're yelling,  
*"Keep pedaling! You got it! I'm right here!"* And they're jumping up and down,  
because that little red helmet passed the mailbox.  
And then, just like that, they're driving circles in the church parking lot.  
They're giving instructions about easing on and off the pedal.  
They're having conversations about curfew and heartbreak.  
And then, before they know it, they're standing in a hospital room.  
Their heart is bursting. And they say, *"Put her head right here.*  
*Rock her gently. Do you remember the nursery rhymes?*  
*You were born for this."*

The first step is always the hardest,  
but you, beloved, were born for this.

Source: *Prayer* by Rev. Sarah A. Speed / A Sanctified Art LLC / [sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org)

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## **ON-GOING INFORMATION**

### **WORSHIP LINK: Link for Facebook Live streaming worship services:**

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=first%20presbyterian%20church%2C%20mcallen%2C%20tx>.

### **ZOOM LINK: Link for all FPC Zoom meetings:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86050357489?pwd=VkhqODg0NjlfS2VTSm91UFFOSjVjQT09>

Meeting ID: 860 5035 7489 Passcode: 912217

**CHURCH WEBSITE:** <https://www.mcallenfpc.org/>

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### **ON-GOING LIFE OF THE CHURCH**

- Many people come to the church for food and hygiene bags. To help with that ministry, make a financial contribution or purchase any of these food items for our cupboard:
  - peanut butter crackers
  - tuna packets
  - fruit cups / applesauce
  - potted meat / Vienna sausages
  - protein bars
  - cereal bars
  - beef jerky
  - bottled water
- **Face masks** are available in the Narthex for anyone who would like to mask up during worship.
- **“Leave a Prayer / Take a Blessing”**. A table in the Library has materials to write a prayer and post it on the bulletin board. Prayers can be shared or private. Printed blessings are available.
- The **church staff** holds weekly meetings on Monday morning. If you have an item for the staff to discuss, please send it to [fpchurch@sbcglobal.net](mailto:fpchurch@sbcglobal.net) or [fpcpastorkathy@gmail.com](mailto:fpcpastorkathy@gmail.com).
- There are 2025-2026 **Presbyterian Planning Calendars** available from the church office.
- **Presbyterian Disaster Assistance** serves people impacted by disasters of all types. If you would like to support the work of PDA, you can do so here: <https://pda.pcusa.org/>
- **Church Office Hours** are 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday - Thursday, or by appointment.
- How to reach Pastor Kathy: [fpcpastorkathy@gmail.com](mailto:fpcpastorkathy@gmail.com); 512-466-5662
- How to reach the church office: [fpchurch@sbcglobal.net](mailto:fpchurch@sbcglobal.net)
- All mail for the church should be sent to P.O. Box 1029, McAllen, TX 78505.

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### **ON-GOING PRAYER REQUESTS:**

- Spud Brown requests prayers for the well-being of the FPC congregation and the world.
- Estelle Davenport; The Gardens at Brookridge; 1201 W. Ridge Road, Apt. 214, Pharr, TX 78577.
- Crystal Simpson and her daughter Emi Williams; 13330 West Rd., Apt. 237; Houston, TX 77041.
- Mauricia Friedman; 7505 North 33<sup>rd</sup> Street; McAllen 78504.
- Nadine Force; 820 North 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, McAllen, 78501. Phone: 956-532-8978
- Lee and Mary Lou Anderson; 2600 S Finley Rd., Apt. 3609, Lombard, IL 60148.
- Amanda Snoke (Kathy Garfield's daughter).
- Jack Harrieff requests prayers for his brothers:
  - Jim, who has liver cancer. Jim has chosen not to pursue chemo and radiation treatments.
  - David, who has end-stage Parkinson's, his wife, Gaila.
- Prayers of continued healing and strength for Kathy Garfield's cousin, Dan Winn.
- Ellen Boyd; Brookridge Senior Living; 1301 W. Ridge Road; Pharr, TX 78577.
- Margie Karst; 3334 Country Club, Edinburg, TX 78542.
- Spud and Jan Brown; 208 E. Kiwi Street; McAllen, Tx 78504
- Ruth Groves; Brookridge Senior Living; 1301 W. Ridge Road; Pharr, 78577.

- Elizabeth Gearhart; 9601 Union Road; Plymouth, IN 46563
- Rita Cochrane
- Jesse Peña requests prayers for his sister Susan.
- Dick and Gwyn Kozma; 15 Hawthorne Drive, Newnan, GA 30263.
- Prayers for Chris and Kelly Leonard and their nephew Grant.
- Donna Rowland, David's mother who is experiencing health and memory challenges.
- Prayers for continued stroke recovery for David Massey, son of Joe and Jinny.
- Rev. Jacob Lee and First Korean Presbyterian Church, McAllen.
- Cassidy Joule, friend of Sher Wilkes, who has been diagnosed with breast cancer.
- Marilyn Travis, wife of Andrea Hudler's father Paul.
- Dan Eggers
- Melinda Wright
- Duke Dashbach
- Sharon Willets; 316 Hazlett Ave., Wheeling, WV 26003.
- Anna Finn, Mary Ellen Schneider's sister-in-law, has been diagnosed with lung cancer.
- Prayers that Dalton Moes might experience growth toward robust mental health.
- Carl Walborg, son of Shirley Pippin's good friend Mary Ann Walborg, diagnosed with cancer.
- Connor Magee, Mark and Joyce Magee's grandson.
- Mary Ann Walborg, good friend of Shirley Pippin, as she deals with health and cognitive issues.
- Prayers for peace in the Middle East.
- Cisco Villa
- Anthony Trevino
- Stephanie McCrory
- Prayers for all who are hungry or lonely or without shelter this day.
- The people of the *colonias*.
- Prayers for the people of Cameroon. PDA link: <https://pda.pcusa.org/situation/cameroon/>

#### **A DECEMBER BLESSING:**



May the God of hope  
fill you with all joy and peace in believing,  
so that you may abound in hope  
by the power of the Holy Spirit.  
Alleluia!

