



AUGUST 2023

THE NEWSLETTER

A Publication of First Presbyterian Church, Brazoria, Texas

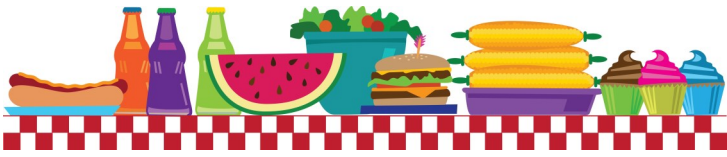
What do you think that we could do to draw people into our church building? It's a question I spend a lot of time thinking about. The first step to getting more people in the sanctuary on Sunday morning can be getting them into the fellowship hall during the week. Here are some insights from Mission Insights.

RELIGIOUS PROGRAM OR MINISTRY PREFERENCES MODESTLY OR VERY IMPORTANT

Personal Growth	40.20%
Addiction support groups	31.90%
Health/weight loss programs	29.70%
Membership and leadership training	36.70%
Opportunities to develop personal relationships	62.80%
Practical training seminars (money management, computer skills, etc.)	39.70%
Family Support and Intervention Services	38.50%
Daycare/After School Programs	23.00%
Crisis support groups	46.90%
Family oriented activities	49.80%
Marriage enrichment	37.40%
Parenting development	29.10%
Personal/family counseling	45.50%
Community Involvement and Advocacy Programs	51.40%
Adult social activities	60.80%
Involvement in social causes	56.20%
Mission trips and global outreach	32.10%
Opportunities for volunteering in the community	60.20%
Social justice advocacy work	47.60%
Community Activities or Cultural Programs	46.10%
Cultural programs (music, drama, art)	51.10%
Holiday programs/activities	60.20%
Senior/retiree activities	55.70%
Singles or college-age groups	27.20%
Size of church congregation	40.30%
Small groups (i.e., life groups, personal interest gr)	27.20%
Youth social activities	35.70%
Religious/Spiritual Programs	49.60%
Bible or Scripture study/prayer groups	39.80%
Celebration of sacraments	44.50%
Contemporary worship experiences	47.90%
Online or virtual worship experiences	41.70%
Quality sermons	61.60%
Religious education for children	37.70%
Spiritual discussion groups	45.40%
Traditional worship experiences	53.90%
Warm and friendly encounters	74.70%

What do you think? Last week you had a visitor in the congregation. I was standing outside waiting to talk to Lynn Hargrove. The visitor approached me and welcomed me and said she had been greeted so warmly by the congregation that she just wanted to pass it along. Good job!

Tracy



What we prayed for in July:

Prayer Focus:

Keep in Prayer: Bill Clarke, Fred Green, Barbara Peterson, Tabitha Orr Degges, DeAnna Reistino, Melodie Kacal, Mary Alice Ingalls, Junior LaBreck, Linda Matheson, Junior Boykin, Judy Bernard, Nancy Oertli, Michael Cammack, Norma Peterson, Susie Campbell, Cole Buchanan, Jesse Abbott, Chase Richburg, David McRae, Cheryl Bobbitt, Marbella Hooper, Alvis Jacks, Joey Welboan, Terrell Lanier, Holly Chrysler, Shawn Scott, Pat Shadden, Leo Taylor, Peggy Badders, Britney Shurtz, Barbara Ferrell, McKenna Buchanan, David Marcum, Faith Peavler, John Jones and family, Earl and Nelda Gragert, Michelle Ebinger, Barbara Sullivan, Thomas Kopecky, Beth Burke, Jamie LeBouef.

Comfort and Hope: Family and friends of Zeke Cavazos (at his passing). Family and friends of David Richardson (at his passing). Family and friends of Dorothy Stanley (at her passing). Families in Vermont, New York, New Hampshire whose homes and businesses were flooded by excessive rainfall. Protection for volunteers and emergency crews. Loved ones coping with grief. Family and friends of Lottie Sanders (at her passing). Family and friends of James "Bubba" Fink (at his passing). Families who have lost their homes due to extreme weather. Peace of Christ in our country and the world.

Other Prayers: Viviana, Helen, Nathan Dowlen and his family, Helen, Charlotte, Sue Ellen, safe travel for The Rev. Tracy Williams and her sister, safe travel for Andrew Bailey (USAF) and all families this holiday week, rain, those working in extreme heat, Feed My Lambs, missionaries, family and friends, elderly, homeless, hungry, mental health, city workers, elected leaders of our government, military and our veterans, First Responders, EMT, firefighters, police officers and their families, our church and communities of faith.

Sharing the Joy: "The Lord bless you..."

Numbers 6:24

How can we pray for you today? If you have a prayer request, please call the church office, Rev. Tracy Williams, Ginny Raska or Linda Matheson.



Angel Mini-Market

The Angel Mini-Market will be on November 4, 2023, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Any questions, contact Nancy (R) McLaren 979-248-1283



PRAYER GROUP MINISTRY

You are invited to our Prayer Group ministry
Tuesday, 10:00-11:00
James 5:16 "...pray for one another..."

Jesus is always teaching us. When we take time for intercessory prayer, we are taking our petitions to Jesus. Praying for others helps us to be more compassionate. Why Greeting Cards Are Better than Emails: We send greeting cards to let our loved ones know that they are cared for - Get Well, Thinking of You, Praying for You, to make someone feel better, Congratulations, Birthday, Anniversary, ...

Linda Matheson
Congregational Care
Prayer Group



Presbyterian Women

**VACATION
During August**

See you in September

CHURCH DINNER

SCHOOL DAYS SCHOOL DAYS

Hope everyone enjoyed the hamburgers and hot dogs at July's lunch. Thank you Tom Gragert for cooking them for us and thanks to everyone who prepared sides and did clean-up. Also a shout out to Linda Taylor and Kristen Gragert for helping do set-up. (Grady Gragert usually helps with this too.)

August is upon us already and time for Back to School. For our August church dinner, 3rd Sunday of the month, August 20th, we will be having a regular pot luck. We are encouraging folks to bring school supplies to help children going back to school or to help with the children's Christmas boxes that we will be filling soon. Supplies or a monetary donation would be greatly appreciated but we definitely hope that you will join us for church service and lunch.

Thank you all for all that you do and may God bless all of you.

Nelda
979-799-7681



FEED MY LAMBS

Feed My Lambs will conclude on August 3, and is on target to serve over 1500 lunches, about the same as last year. We have had participation from 28 volunteers serving a total of over 250 hours. Some volunteers were able to come only a few times, but others have come every day. Eleven of the volunteers are from our church, with the rest coming from other churches and the community. We have received over \$2,000 in donations from civic organizations, other churches, and individuals. We give thanks for all who have donated their time, talents, and resources to provide for hungry children in Brazoria.



SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Summertime is when School Supplies are at rock bottom prices. Any donations for the School or Operation Christmas Child will be appreciated. A table will be set up in the Fellowship Room to receive donations. Thank in advance for whatever help you can provide for the the education of young people.

Pencils
Markers
Pencil Sharpeners
Colors
Notebook Paper
Spirals
Composition Books
2" Notebooks
Dividers
Hand Wipes
Tissues
Hand Sanitizer
Pens - Black and/or Red
Dry Erase Markers
Highlighters
Other school supplies
are also welcome.

PROPERTY

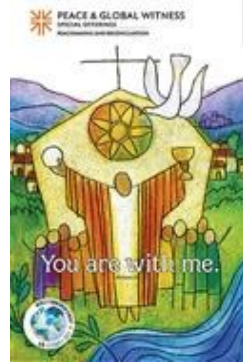
Watch for the addition of mini blinds in the Fellowship Building. Installation will start on the road side first.



Blessing Box

The Blessing Box is in need of flip-top canned items that do not require cooking and/or packaged tuna, beans, fruit cups, cookies, breakfast bars, ... and bottled water.

Every day we are blessed by God, life is not always easy to live, but YOU can share a blessing.



Peace & Global Witness Offering

will be starting in September with the offering collected on World Communion Sunday, October 1, 2023.



HEY, YOU! YES, YOU.

Make a difference in someone's life. INVITE A FRIEND and/or a NEIGHBOR to church to worship with you on Sunday.

"And he said to them, 'Go into all the world and proclaim the good news...'"
Mark 16:15



SUNDAY SCHOOL

YOU are INVITED to JOIN US for Sunday School

Come, Every Sunday 9:15. Enjoy a light breakfast.

"I wait for the LORD... and in his word I put my hope."
Psalm 130:5

Linda Matheson
Christian Education



Operation Christmas Child Boxes

It is time to fill boxes for the children for Christmas. A table will be set up in Fellowship Hall on July 31st to collect items and/or boxes available for you to fill yourself. Paperwork will also be available on this table that has complete instructions and suggestions.

ATTENDANCE

	Total	Elders	Facebook
7/2/23	17	4	62
7/9/23	23	4	142
7/16/23	21	6	42
7/23/23	13	4	64
7/30/23	12	2	83

Lectionary Gospel Readings for July

Sunday's Date	Gospel Passage
August 6, 2023	Matthew 14:13-21
August 13, 2023	Matthew 14:22-33
August 20, 2023	Matthew 15:(10-20) 21-28
August 27, 2023	Matthew 16:13-20



*** TREASURER REPORT ***

June Income \$6,537.20
June Expenses \$6,429.80



Dear Ones:

For over 30 years you have generously supported my efforts in some of the neediest village schools in Guatemala. Thank you. The delights and convulsions of opening schools in January have been welcome and successful, and the children have shown up in droves. Your gifts of supplies make their education possible. As you know, a lost year almost certainly results in a childhood in the cabbage and strawberry fields.

I will begin revisiting each of the schools in August, and am asking that you continue to partner with me to provide the basic school supplies for reading, writing (in Spanish), and basic mathematics. This also provides playtime, friendships, hygiene, and a simple but joyful childhood. The hardest part to get across to these children is the idea...the very idea that someone else, somewhere else, cares enough to give them a chance for an education. Guatemala has serious problems, but the answers will not come from an uneducated populace. Notebooks and crayons get used up, and this is a project without end, but so worthwhile.

For the last 8 years, I have been able to negotiate 2 notebooks, crayons, 6 pencils, 3 pens, a vinyl eraser a ruler, and a pencil sharpener for \$2.04. Most vendors are ready to sell to me in bulk at 50% off, including free delivery to our warehouse. I will not waste a cent you send, and these children will not waste the opportunity you can give them. Will you partner with me in this transformational project? It's the gift that gives forever.

Please us the go fund me or mail to Douglas Rhodenbaugh at 812 W. 10th Street, Austin, TX 78701.

Thank you,
Love,
Douglas

<https://gofund.me/Oec3a169> or Venmo Douglas Rhodenbaugh 9793192410

Donations may be sent to First Presbyterian Church, P.O. Box 70, Brazoria, TX 77422. Please clearly mark your check for Guatemala Mission.



Who, me? Yes, you!

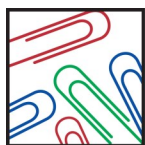
The Bible is filled with people who don't feel up to the challenge of serving God, speaking for God or leading his people. But God always knows what he's doing. Pastor Haviland Houston issues this challenge: "When you are hesitant to act, or feel a failure of nerve coming on, when courage lags, or even if laziness and the 'I don't care' blues get you down, may the

words of Mordecai to Esther burn in your hearts and minds: 'And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?'" (See Esther 4:14.)

Max Lucado offers a similar reminder in *You Were Made for This Moment*. "God always has his person," he writes, also citing the book of Esther. "When we feel as though everything is falling apart, God is working in our midst, causing everything to fall into place. He is the King of quiet providence, and he invites you and me to partner with him in his work."

Lucado continues: "[God] has a Joseph for every famine and a David for every Goliath. When his people need rescuing, God calls a Rahab into service. When a baby Moses needs a mama, God prompts an Egyptian princess to have compassion. He always has his person. He had someone in the story of Esther. And in your story he has you." —ChurchArt Pro, 9/2023.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Every Sunday 9:15 Breakfast 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship		1	2	3 10:00 Feed My Lambs ☺ William Clarke	4 10-Noon Food Pantry	5 ☺ Tom Gragert
6 Communion ☺ AnaLucia Sanchez	7	8	9	10	11 10-Noon Food Pantry ☺ Mildred Cammack	12
13 ☺ Jada Tischler	14 ☺ Jesse Abbott	15	16 First Day of Instruction Columbia- Brazoria ISD	17	18 10-Noon Food Pantry ☺ Scott Glick	19
20 Church Dinner Session	21	22	23	24	25 10-Noon Food Pantry ☺ Meredith Clarke	26
27 ☺ Nancy LaBreck	28	29	30	31 ☺ Kristen Gragert	Every Tuesday 10 a.m. Prayer Group 6 p.m. Game Night	



Office Hours

The church office will generally be open Monday - Thursday, 9 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. The exception will be holidays.