

*First Presbyterian Church
418 West Coolidge
Borger, TX 79007
~February 2010~*

A collection of decorated cookies in various shapes and colors. Some are rectangular with pink icing and yellow stripes, others are heart-shaped with red icing and green polka dots, and some are star-shaped with pink icing and yellow dots. The cookies are arranged in a cluster, overlapping each other.

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Organist and Music Director- Pat Petty



FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE

FEBRUARY 2010

PASTOR'S PEN

February 2010

On the last Thursday in January there was much anticipation about the predicted snow storm and the weather forecasters actually got it right. IT SNOWED!!! A LOT !!! Thursday at noon on my way home, I had to stop three times just trying to see out of my windshield to break the ice loose from my windshield wipers. And when I did get home my garage door wouldn't stay closed because the snow was filling up the entry area before I could get it closed. I stayed in my little house on Friday and when I finally tried to get my car out on Sunday, I got stuck in the alley. My front yard and steps were loaded with what appeared to about 15 inches of the white stuff with ice underneath. All I can say is what a beautiful mess! (I am sure that many of you also have snow stories and I would love to hear them.)

There's nothing like a big snow storm to remind of us of how unexpected and even difficult everyday life can be. We live every day expecting that it will be just like the day before and that we can control all of life's twists and turns. But then the interruption comes and we discover that we are at the mercy of others - snow plow operators, good Samaritans who deliver basic necessities, the caregivers that remember that we are home alone or without transportation. We simply can't do it alone.

On Saturday, the day before we were scheduled to have our Annual Meeting of the Congregation, our Session made the decision to cancel our church service on Sunday. It was the right thing to do. Not one of us needed to be out risking our safety because of weather. But, it was also sad to know that we weren't together for study, worship, fellowship, community and church business. The good news is that we will have another opportunity to gather on February 7th and many Sundays in the future.

During these *force majeure* events, God's presence becomes more real to us. I believe that it is an opportunity to recognize how truly dependent we are on the care and love of God in addition to our dependency on each other. We just can't do it alone no matter how hard we try or how much we want to. God tells us all through Scripture that we are never alone but we frail independent mortals seem to think we know better.

In the book of Exodus, Chapter 33, we hear Moses asking for God's direction. (Remember, Moses was leading a large community of people who were questioning God's presence and reality as they wandered in the desert.)

12 Moses said to the LORD, "You have been telling me, 'Lead these people,' but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. You have said, 'I know you by name and you have found favor with me.' 13 If you are pleased with me, teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you. Remember that this nation is your people."

14 The LORD replied, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest."

15 Then Moses said to him, "If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. 16 How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?"

17 And the LORD said to Moses, "I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name."

Our learning form this text is that God is leading us because God knows us and cares for us. We are not alone. We are each "Moses." We are surrounded by the love of God in all things and in all moments of our lives. Even when it snows and life is interrupted, God is present. May we all be aware of God's presence and trusting of God's leadership of us. On Sunday mornings when we sing "Surely the Presence of the Lord is in This Place," as our choral prelude, let us be confident and reminded that God is present at that moment and in the moments to come.

Georgia



The Treasurer reported the following figures for December:

Total Income	\$ 5,039.53
Total Expenses	\$10,770.83
Total	\$(5,731.30)
Year to Date	
Total Income	\$83,114.87
Total Expenses	\$92,320.39
Total	\$(9,205.52)



President's Day

Church Office will be closed
February 15, 2010

March Newsletter Deadline
February 19, 2010

First Presbyterian Church
ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATIONAL
is rescheduled for Sunday, February 7, 2010
Fellowship Hall following lunch

Please join us for our Annual Meeting as we gather together as God's people to review our 2009 church year and discuss our mission for 2010. We hope that you will bring your ideas as well as concerns in order that we might prayerfully continue our plans for ministry both inside our walls and outside.

Lunch will be provided following worship.
This is not a potluck.

This meeting is for **all** who are part of this church and we pray that **all** will attend.

Stated Session Meeting

December 20, 2009

The Stated Session meeting was held in the church Conference Room, beginning with prayer at 11:55 am. The following were present and constituted a quorum: Moderator, the Rev. Georgia King and Elders Phyllis Harmony, Harold Hebermehl, Hazel Howard, Julia Kasch, Pat Petty and Jerry Pool. No Elder was absent. Treasurer Pam Nicholas also was present.

CLERK:

1. Minutes of the November 15 Stated Session and November 18 Called meeting were presented. Motion made by Elder Pool and seconded by Elder Petty to accept the minutes, with a minor correction to the November 15 minutes. Motion passed.
2. Several items of correspondence were reviewed.
3. To bring the Memorial books in the sanctuary up to date, two spreadsheets have been prepared to document deaths of members over the past dozen years. The books have not been updated since mid-1998. Copies of these spreadsheets are available for Session members. Not addressed was what to do about major donors to the Memorial Fund, who are recognized in the other book but who were not members of the church.

TREASURER:

1. The year-to-date amount of Office Supplies was questioned. The reason(s) for the large deviation from budget was not immediately available but will be determined.
2. A motion was made and passed to accept the monthly financial statements.

STEWARDSHIP and 2010 BUDGET:

1. Elder Hebermehl reviewed the status of pledges on hand as of the Treasurer's December 19 report. The total is \$68,260, down a bit more than \$4,900 and 6.7% from last year. This will be the number used for the 2010 operating budget.
2. A comparison of pledges for the past three years to next year is shown below:

	<u>Number of pledges</u>			<u>Dollars pledged</u>	<u>Average</u>
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Estimated</u>	<u>Total</u>		
2007	25	5	30	76,150	2,538
2008	22	6	28	73,120	2,611
2009	21	6	27	73,180	2,710
2010	22	5	27	68,260	2,528

3. The 2010 preliminary operating budget will be presented to the Session at its January 17, 2010 Stated meeting. Cost of the parking lots repair will be shown as a separate line item, since it will be a one time line item and not repeated. Major deviations of 2009 actuals from budget, such as the above noted Office Supplies, will be explained. (Note that this will require a complete 2009 check run from the Treasurer's records to implement.)
4. We have a 90 day contract with the local temporary employee agency for our secretarial services. The cost is \$9.00 per hour plus 40% for a total of \$12.60 per hour and \$189 per week. We will determine the direction to go at the end of the contract period (is this period calendar or working days?).

5. The Annual Congregational meeting will be scheduled for January 31, at the regular Sunday School time. This will permit integrating the financial discussion of the 2010 operating budget with the beginning of our "Gift Conversation" and the morning worship service. Also, it is believed that scheduling the Annual Meeting during the daylight hours will increase attendance.

PASTOR REPORT:

1. Rev. King will be out January 10.
2. It appears that the Christmas eve service will be well attended, with visiting families for the holidays.
3. The December 27, 2009 service will be held in the Social Room and there will be no Sunday School.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

WORSHIP:

1. Elder Kasch noted that we need a new Communion schedule for the 2010 year.
2. Elder Kasch will be Duty Elder for January. A new Duty Elder list will be completed at the January Stated Session meeting. A refreshment list for the first quarter of 2010 will need to be prepared and placed on the volunteers counter.
3. Julia thanked those who made the December 20 morning fellowship successful.
4. The Christmas eve communion will be by intinction. The small candles need to be set out for the lighting service. The Joy Gift Offering will be taken.

PROPERTY:

1. Elder Pool has reviewed the cost options of replacing versus repairing the West entrance doors. He recommended repairing and repainting the doors at an approximate \$200 cost, rather than replacing them at about \$1,300.
2. The sanctuary heating/cooling system does not distribute treated air satisfactorily, a condition well known and with no easy solution. Being essentially a pipeless system, hot air collects at the peak, with as much as a 30 degree temperature differential between the top and bottom of the sanctuary. He suggested installing three ceiling fans to enhance air distribution. Some dissatisfaction was voiced (they're ugly) and the idea will be looked at further.

FELLOWSHIP:

1. The Morning Fellowship gathering went well.
2. Elder Harmony noted that we will need some sort of refreshment or other break for the January 31 Annual Meeting and worship service, due to the length.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION: "All is well."

NEW BUSINESS: None

OLD BUSINESS: None

Rev. King noted the very positive attitude of the congregation toward providing Christmas gifts for children of two families. These gifts will be distributed after this Session meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:10 pm.

Notes from the Music Department

The month of February is a month for reflection and love. Valentine's Day is February 14 and the first Sunday of Lent is February 20. Easter will be early this year.

Choir practice for February will be: February 3, 10, and 24. There will be no practice on February 17 as that is Ash Wednesday. We'll begin our practices at 6:30 pm as usual. We will begin working on Easter music on February 3 so plan to stay a little longer than usual. I have planned some old music with no new music. But not to worry! New music will be forth coming after Easter!!

I would like for all of February, March, and Easter Sunday to not have an opening response. We will begin again with a new response on the second Sunday in April. It will be an old hymn that most of us know (There's a Sweet, Sweet Spirit).

Closing response for February will be out of our hymnal. It will be posted in the bulletin for you to join with the choir.

As always, we hold Aleyene Watkins and her family, Scott Glenn, Mary Botkin, Jim & Bobbie Farrell, and Pat & Alice Harvey in our prayers and thoughts. We continue to hold all our members in our prayers and thoughts as we continue on our life's journey. With God's help and our listening to Him speak to us we will muddle through life together.

May the Lord bless you and keep you. Amen!

Pat Petty and Choir



PW NEWS



PW will meet on Thursday, February 4th at 10:00 AM in the coffee room. Be ready to cover both lesson five and lesson six in our Joshua bible study booklet.

Lesson five will discuss "Can War Be Holy", and Lesson six calls for acceptance as Rahab and the Gibeonites show signs of hope for all who are lost and outcast.

Come join us for this time of study and worship and fellowship

Leah Buckland



February is famous for President's Day as we remember George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. We can't forget Valentine's Day on the 14th; a day remembered every year. Martin Luther died on February 18th at the age of 62. This list of significant dates and historical facts are fairly well-known to us but many others elude us. Yet, on the 17th, Ash Wednesday, the Lenten season kicks off.

The palms Passion Sunday are burnt and mixed with olive oil then placed on our foreheads to remember that Jesus died for our sins. The black soot is difficult to remove and stands as a testament to the very reason for Jesus' birth in Bethlehem, his life and his death on the cross.

In Lent we consciously remind ourselves of our need to reorient in God's direction.

We know what we want; we know what the world tells us we should want, what we need. What is most often lacking is a sense of what God wants for us.

That's where Lent is a help. We'll use the season at FPC to gather in worship and study, we'll hear words that convict us of our sin, and yet hear words of consolation and mercy. Because that's who God is—the One who offers consolation and mercy to a needy and sinful world through Jesus. He is our map, our guide, our model—we'll study the life Jesus lives so that we might come closer to God's intention for us and for the world. Life goes by fast, but God is always there, in the midst of it, in joy, trial, sorrow, and elation. Through all that life brings, we remain God's people, called to serve, to praise, to witness to the power of love.

Lent means spring and invites us to tithes. Yes, for 40 days we recall the awesome love of God. The black soot reminds us that God calls us to repent and receive forgiveness through the blood of Christ. How shall we remember Jesus? Is Jesus a philosopher? Great teacher? Friend? Savior? We invite you to savor February as the month that Christ's church remembers the reason for Jesus' coming and life. Yes, we are called to see the love flow from the cross for our sake.

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

Wednesday, February 17th

6:30 p.m.