

Newsletter 2010

It was late June, we were about to move and I was given the command to start throwing away "junk". I had to say farewell to some old memories.

I am not the type of person that abandons something at the drop of a hat. Things that have taken a part of my life I remain loyal to. It's like a marriage, you know, through thick and thin, good times and bad.

To see my "junk" you would quickly realize that I am the type of person that likes to save everything. Some people call that being a pack rat. My wife says it's stupid. I just have a hard time parting with stuff, take for example my pillow. It is over twenty years old, torn and ragged and according to my wife, it reeks with some strange odor. But it is my smells and her smells and smells from Gentry when she spit up on it. It's my pillow. I love my pillow. But, maybe I should wash it.

As I started throwing things away, my mood changed. The more boxes I packed the more I realized that it all wasn't priceless heirlooms, some of it was useless junk. A lot of it was useless junk. Some of the really, really, useless junk I began to throw away. And you know what? It felt good.

This reminded me of a story I read the other day about Italians and one of their customs. As midnight on New Year's Eve approaches, the streets are clear. There is no traffic; there are no pedestrians; even the policemen take cover. Then, at the stroke of 12, the windows of the houses fly open. To the sound of laughter, music and fireworks, each member of the family pitches out old crockery, detested ornaments, hated furniture and a whole company of personal possessions which remind them of something in the past year they are determined to wipe out of their minds.

I also read that the Koreans have a curious New Year's custom. Wanting to forget unpleasant things and make a fresh start, each person determines what bad habits they would like to eliminate and past deeds they want forgiven. Then they write the names of these evils on a kite and fly it high into the air. When it is almost out of sight, they cut the string. As the "paper bird" disappears from sight, the people believe that all their faults and previous transgressions are forever removed.

It is not always easy to throw out our past or cut the cords and let float away our former lives. But at times this needs to be done. If you had a bad year, forget about it and start new. If there were projects that you wanted to do but never did them, don't dwell on them. You have a beautiful new beginning waiting for you. So, throw out some junk in your life and begin this year with a clean slate.

Isaiah 43:18 "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past."

Tom





News from Session

Session has completed budget for 2010. The budget for 2010 is \$108,325, which is \$13,125 less than 2009. Session has arrived at a lower budget because \$17,500 has been taken from reserve in 2009 to meet expenses. There are reductions in most of the budget items except Outreach and Christian Education. Outreach is done by percentage of income which is 5% for Presbytery Missions and 8% for local mission and assistance. Christian Education budget remains at 3,700 dollars.

The Pastor Salary has been entered to match the terms of call approved in June of 2009. Other staff items include reduction of budget item for Choir Director, Organist and Contemporary Music Leader to match actual spending which is quite lower than the 2009 budget amount. The position of paid janitor will not be funded for 2010. This is unfortunate but Session feels necessary because of the income reduction that has occurred in 2009. Property and Maintenance will arrange for volunteers to help perform the janitorial duties.

There are reductions in other areas that will require everyone's help. Session is asking for your help to conserve and cut back, but also consider your contributions in time and money to help with the finances of our church. Session request that all join together in prayer and support and with God's help; we will meet the 2010 budget.

*Bob Audas
H.D."Dicky" Coulter
Marilyn Diver
John East
Marvin Evans
Lavonne Gilleland
Tom & Velma Groves
Amanda Jones
Sue & Jack Kimbrough
Bud & Kathy Miller
Ken Ramby
Dale Sandlin
Kay & Jimmy Smith
Dorothy Stanley
Scotta Stanley
Ruth Surovec
Roger Sweeney
Bill Thirtle
Bill & Lois Tidwell
Sue Toomer
Thelma Warny
William Watson*



Once again the Out and About Group invites the Congregation to place flowers on the altar in celebration of an anniversary, birthday, graduation or in memory of a loved one. The flower Calendar is posted in the narthex and the person in charge of that month is identified at the top.

Flower Calendar

Jan	Gwen Griffin
Feb	Alice Fosdick
March	Catherine Henry
April	Velma Groves
May	Sue Kimbrough
June	Irene Coulter
July	Beverly Nixon
August	Alice Pena

We welcome everyone to bring flowers.

If you care to provide flowers please contact the person in charge for that month and tell them which Sunday you wish to bring flowers, so they can get the information into the weekly bulletin, if in Memory or in Honor of a loved one.

Outreach

We need food for the pantry.
PLEASE!!!

Donations have been down, please contribute cash to the pantry fund or bring canned goods.

Happy New Year!!!

Thank You to the Girl & Boy Scouts for all the canned goods collected in December. They will go a long way to feed those in need. Also thanks to S.F. Austin school for the many boxes of canned food they collected
Good Job!!

Big thank you to Stacey Coulter for all the hard work on the Christmas Families from S.F. Austin elementary. We helped 9 school families and a local family. Also her helper Callie was good to work with. It must run in the family.

Welcome to the New Year 2010.
Don't forget to help someone this year if you can. It will make you feel so good.

God Bless
Scotta



Many people put in lots of time and work to make the

Thanksgiving dinner a success. The food was delicious and so many came to help. It was very disappointing that the public other than our church members didn't come to share the meal. By one o'clock when so few had come to eat, carry out boxes were filled and different ones took them out to different areas. The people who received them seemed to appreciate the lunches. Thanks to all who took part. It was a wonderful day for those of us who were there.

Bob Audas had day surgery Dec. 2nd. We hope he's feeling better and getting relief from his back pain.

The Cantata done by the Choir was very well done. The music was beautiful. And then that evening was the Christmas Program by our very young people and then the films, some were of very long ago, with popcorn and coke or root beer. A fun evening for all that attended. Our congregation can be very proud of our young people and the adult leaders.

Several members of our church family are ill. Jack Kimbrough is in the nursing home following his knee surgery. He is due to have more surgery in about 6 weeks. His daughter Terry Springer received her 2 organ transplant. They both need our prayers. Also Bob Audas,

Bill Thirtle & Ruth Surovec. There are probably others.

There were 9 ladies at circle Dec. 16th. We are enjoying reading and studying the Bible study together. Thanks to Gwen for the delicious cake and nuts she served. Mary will bring the refreshments for our meeting January 20th at 9:30 AM at the Educational building.

There were about 25 on the hayride Saturday night. The riders had fun but it was cold. A big thank you to Steve Barrera for furnishing the decorated trailer and pickup to pull the trailer.

Tom Wessman has been at Gulf Prairie four months. He has had two memorial services and one funeral. All the families of the deceased have expressed a sincere appreciation for the way the services were conducted and compassionate way Tom took charge of everything.

Happy New Year and God's Blessings to all.

Catherine Henry

January 2010 Pastoral Care Ministry Team General Meeting Report

Today, December 27, marks "the third day of Christmas, and my True Love (God) gave to me three French hens (Faith, Hope, and Love)." Recalling last January's column, THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS was written in England as one of the "Catechism Songs" to help secret young Roman Catholics learn the tenets of their faith. Roman Catholics in England were prohibited from practicing their faith by law for almost 300 years (1558-1829). The song's 'me', who receives the gifts, refers to every baptized person. The partridge in a pear tree is Christ Jesus, and the two turtle doves are the Old and New Testaments..." We have only just begun to celebrate Christmastide-- nine days remain-- which will end on the Eve of Epiphany, January 5. "God rest ye merry, Gentlemen (and Ladies)", during this, our twelve day Christian festival: Happy Birthday, Jesus! There is, indeed, a reason for the season.

Epiphany, observed on January 6 in Western Christian Churches, celebrates the coming of the Magi or Wise Men to Bethlehem: "and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh." Matt. 2: 9-11 Epiphany is a Christian Feast, celebrating the manifestation of the divine nature of Jesus to the Gentiles, represented by the Magi.

Pastoral Care organized two meals for Roger, Amanda, and Matthew-- Amanda recovering from surgery since the birth of Baby Nick. One meal was delivered on Sat., Nov. 28 and another on Tues., Dec. 1.

Our Sunday, November 29, 2009 Blood Drive was very successful. The Blood Drive Rep. commented that we had a good turn out for a small drive. Eighteen people presented. There were 11 donations and 7 deferrals. Six out of the seven

ladies who were deferred were low in iron. We ladies will have to start "pumping iron", in more ways than one, for our next drive. One unit of blood helps save three lives. Our contributions will help save 33. Thank you once again to all those who were able to participate. We could not have done it without you. No GPPC Blood Drives have yet been scheduled for 2010.

On Monday, Dec. 7, 2009, Sharon assisted Reverend Tom in serving Holy Communion to Thelma at Plantation Care. Ruth has not felt well enough to receive the elements since July.

Please pray for healing for those in our congregation undergoing cancer treatments, having had surgery and other medical procedures...

Telephone/Computer Prayer Requests were few this past month. To initiate a prayer request, please contact Sharon at (979)-258-0083 or one of our Prayer Chain Callers:

Alice Pena A-E
Sue Kimbrough F-K
Betty Bradshaw L- Serna

Alice Fosdick Smith-Z

Transportation requests, too, were minimal during November and early December. Please remember, if you need a ride to your doctor's or the grocery store, we can help. Contact Sue Kimbrough for more info' at 979-849-2736.

Thank you to all those who help us on a daily/weekly/monthly basis to fulfill our pastoral care duties. All is possible with God working through you!

At this time, Pastoral Care would like to wish everyone a very Blessed New Year! May your family and friends continue to be touched by His grace in 2010.

The tending of His sheep continues in '010 (and the "bleat" goes on...),

Your Pastoral Care Ministry Team
Sharon Oswald, Leader
979-258-0083



NEXT MEETING DATE will be January 3rd.

Thanks to our church family who helped donating cans to our LACKS TRIM ATREE. We collected over 1,200 can goods!

SPCA – Next date to volunteer is Feb. 7 at the SPCA. Meet there from 10:30-12:00. We will have lunch after we get finished. Please wear Sparks t-shirts!

Road Adoption: Jan 17th - **Please be ready to start cleaning around 11:00 am.**

Conclaves – Mar. 5-7th....please sign up by the next meeting...talk to your parents!

Acquire the Fire – Mark your calendars for Jan 22 & 23 (plans to attend are tentative).

2010 Nursery Schedule

Jan 3 Gabriel
Jan 10 George
Jan 17 Hayden
Jan 24 Kevin Michael
Jan 31 Robin

Feb 7 Stephan
Feb 14 Stephanie
Feb 21 Amanda
Feb 28 Andrew & Will

Thanks to all of you!!
Stacey



THANK YOU TO THE CHOIR!

I would like to thank the choir members for their dedication and hard work throughout the year and especially over the past 2 months. They have worked tirelessly to prepare for the Advent season to be ready for the Cantata by December 13. I would also like to express my appreciation for all the "elves" who joined us to decorate the sanctuary in November. Diann and Kevin East, Amanda and David Jones, Jimmy and Melissa Smith, Shanna Toomer and the choir members worked together to make our sanctuary a special place to worship during this special time of year. Thank you to Gwen, Peggy, Kay, Cathy, Sue, Dolores and Tommy! I also appreciate the help of our "guest Singers" last Sunday, Shanna Toomer and John Galaznik. Our little church choir is small in number, but big in Spirit! We miss you Bill, and look forward to seeing you at practice and hearing your voice in song soon.

Thank you all and May God Bless you with the Spirit of Christmas!

Next Choir Practice is Wednesday, January 6, 2010!!!

Susie

From Property and Maintenance

As the end of the year nears so does the end of my term as ruling elder. I would like to take this opportunity to say thanks for all the support that has been given me in my work around the church and other property. It is so rewarding to hear the compliments and encouragement while we were working on anything, from the congregation. I tried my best to make all happy, but as you know that was impossible, so I would like to take this time to say sorry to those people. I leave you with a new floor to remind you that we are all in this church together, there are no standouts, or completely solitary people doing anything in this church, everything done is a reflection on everyone.

Yours faithfully in Christ

John A. East



Out and About

Schedule of Events

Jan 7	Bingo / Luncheon at Beverly Nixon's
Feb 4	San Jacinto Monument
March 4	Visit Mary Currie
April 1	Painted Churches
May 6	Santa Fe Winery's

We will meet at 9 O'clock in church parking lot unless advised differently.

If you have questions call Alice Ramby at 798-1722 or Sharon Oswald at 258-258-0083.

From Property and Maintenance

Good Happy New Year 2010!

I want to say Thank You for intrusting me to lead Gulf Prairie as the Property/Maintenance Chairperson! Now... for the news...

As we look ahead to 2010 and the Budget for Gulf Prairie, the Session has tried to make adjustments to accommodate the proposed income. The position of paid janitor will not be funded for 2010. This is unfortunate but Session feels necessary because of the income reduction that has occurred in 2009. As the Property and Maintenance "leader", we will arrange for volunteers to help perform the janitorial duties. Please be in prayer about our maintenance needs, and either volunteer or when called upon, please respond in a positive way. We are tentatively planning quarterly workdays with additional "deep cleaning" days.

If you would enjoy working on the property needs for Gulf Prairie, we would love to have you on this project. Please email me... calicocatssewing@sbcglobal.net or call me... 979-285-9277 or 979-292-6810.

I look forward to a fabulous 2010...

Carol Ann Adam



9:00 AM

- 3rd Betty Bradshaw-Sharon Oswald
- 10th Dicky & Irene
- 17th Kevin Coulter & Family
- 24th John & Diann East
- 31st Sue or Karen

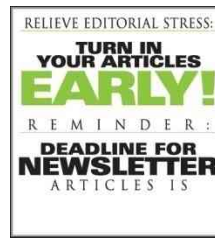
11:00 AM

- 3rd Jim & Jane Coulter
- 10th Roger Sweeney
- 17th Mary Thirtle
- 24th Barbara Lettiere
- 31st Jimmy Smith

To sign-up to be an usher call
Sue Kimbrough 979-849-2736



Men's breakfast will be January 24th
7:30 AM
Hope you can be there.



Newsletter Deadline

I have to have the submissions
for the February
newsletter by:
Sunday, January 24th

Submit articles to:

newsletter@gulf-prairie.org



Fellowship Meals

Sunday Luncheon

Will be **Sunday,**
January 17th

If your last name begins with
A-C bring salad or vegetable ... D-K
bring dessert and clean-up ... and L-Z
bring meat ... or bring whatever you
can, but come!!!

Can You Spare A Drop?



Commit for Life

Every donor helps to save the lives of three people.

Blood Drive 2010

Check later for dates

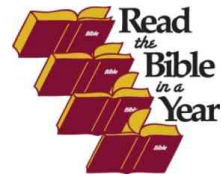
Register at www.giveblood.org
Don't forget to sign up



QUILTING GROUP

The Jones Creek Quilting Bee will meet in the fellowship hall on the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30 PM

Sue Kimbrough 1-979-849-2736



Scripture Reading for January

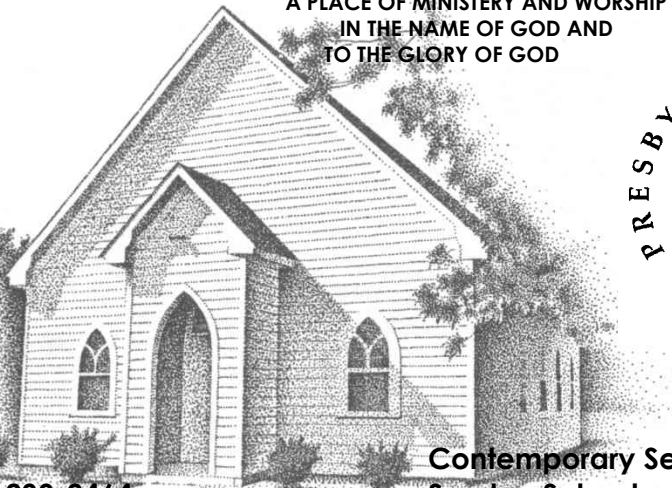
1	Luke 5:27-39	Genesis 1-2	Psalm 1
2	Luke 6:1-26	Genesis 3-5	Psalm 2
3	Luke 6:27-49	Genesis 6-7	Psalm 3
4	Luke 7:1-17	Genesis 8-10	Psalm 4
5	Luke 7:18-50	Genesis 11	Psalm 5
6	Luke 8:1-25	Genesis 12	Psalm 6
7	Luke 8:26-56	Genesis 13-14	Psalm 7
8	Luke 9:1-27	Genesis 15	Psalm 8
9	Luke 9:28-62	Genesis 16	Psalm 9
10	Luke 10:1-20	Genesis 17	Psalm 10
11	Luke 10:21-42	Genesis 18	Psalm 11
12	Luke 11:1-28	Genesis 19	Psalm 12
13	Luke 11:29-54	Genesis 20	Psalm 13
14	Luke 12:1-31	Genesis 21	Psalm 14
15	Luke 12:32-59	Genesis 22	Psalm 15
16	Luke 13:1-17	Genesis 23	Psalm 16
17	Luke 13:18-35	Genesis 24	Psalm 17
18	Luke 14:1-24	Genesis 25	Psalm 18
19	Luke 14:25-35	Genesis 26	Psalm 19
20	Luke 15	Genesis 27:1-45	Psalm 20
21	Luke 16	Genesis 27:46-28:22	Psalm 21
22	Luke 17	Genesis 29:1-30	Psalm 22
23	Luke 18:1-17	Genesis 29:31-30:43	Psalm 23
24	Luke 18:18-43	Genesis 31	Psalm 24
25	Luke 19:1-27	Genesis 32-33	Psalm 25
26	Luke 19:28-48	Genesis 34	Psalm 26
27	Luke 20:1-26	Genesis 35-36	Psalm 27
28	Luke 20:27-47	Genesis 37	Psalm 28
29	Luke 21	Genesis 38	Psalm 29
30	Luke 22:1-38	Genesis 39	Psalm 30
31	Luke 22:39-71	Genesis 40	Psalm 31



Gulf Prairie Presbyterian Church
231 Gulf Prairie
Jones Creek, TX 77541

**GULF PRAIRIE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
SINCE 1877**

**A PLACE OF MINISTRY AND WORSHIP
IN THE NAME OF GOD AND
TO THE GLORY OF GOD**



**Church 233-2464
Manse**

**Contemporary Service
Sunday School
Morning Worship**

**9:00 A.M.
9:45 A.M.
11:00 A.M.**