

FROM THE PASTOR

It had been a particularly stressful December. Family illnesses, financial pressures, and loads of extra church programs and social invitations. The day before Christmas I came down the stairs to discover that our two half-grown cats had toppled the Christmas tree. There were glass shards and pine needles everywhere. I managed to salvage some of the ornaments and the lights, then faced with the thought of starting over, I chose to drag the tree out to the curb. Before Christmas.

I was ready to throw in the towel. But God was not. Even without the tree, there was still the birth of Jesus. Even without the lights, there was worship and family. Even when everything seemed so overwhelming and so sad, there was laughter when the family gathered.

The Joy of Christmas isn't found in the circumstances of our lives. Joy is found in knowing that God loved us so much that God came looking for us when we were lost. We are never alone. Even in our darkest moments, the God who became flesh reminds us that we are loved.

May joy and grace fill your Christmas!

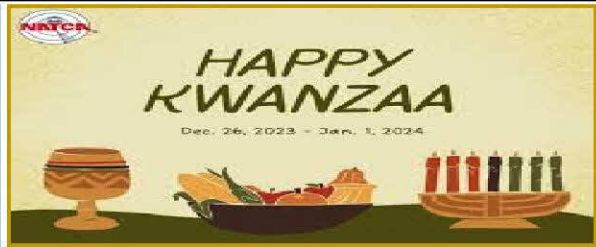
Pastor Ray

125th Anniversary Dinner





Dec 1	"Hope in a Mad World"	Luke 21:25-36
Dec 8	"Making a Way for Peace"	Luke 3:1-6
Dec 15	This Is Joy?	Luke 3:7-18
Dec 22	"Loving the Teen as Much as the Baby"	Micah 5:2-5a
Dec 24	"Christmas in a Barn"	Luke 2:1-20
Dec 29	Guest preacher	



Kum Ba Yah aka Kum Ba Zoom

We meet every Wednesday in person or on ZOOM for fellowship, study and prayer at 7:00 PM. The link to the Zoom Meeting is sent in the Wednesday email each week.

Kum Ba Yah topics:

- Dec 4** They Met Jesus: Peter
- Dec 11** They Met Jesus: Pilate
- Dec 18** They Met Jesus: Philip and Thomas
- Dec 25** Merry Christmas! No KumBaZoom

Adult Sunday School Sundays at 9:30am

- Dec 1** Royal Priests of Eden
- Dec 8** Abraham and Melchizedek
- Dec 15** Moses and Aaron
- Dec 22** David the Priestly King
- Dec 29** Jesus the Royal Priest

BACKPACK PROGRAM

We are grateful for the leadership of Dave Foster and Janice Johnson who organize our weekly food program with children at Roosevelt Elementary School. We are currently serving 32 students by providing weekend “backpacks” of simple, nutritious food.



We would like to thank all the volunteers for their hard work and dedication. From helping pack the backpacks, to their generous donations. With out you, we couldn't make this ministry what it is today. We have given **1150 backpacks** since the beginning of January through November.

MISSION COMMITTEE

The Mission Committee met on November 19th and decided to make a Local Mission Giving of **\$300 to New Life Nazarene and \$300 to Efforts of Hope.**



The Mission program is sustained in part by gifts from the Myers Sisters bequest and gifts from you. You can designate gifts to “Local Mission” or “Global Mission”. The Deacons Shoe ministry has delivered **31** pairs of shoes in the year 2024. 8 pairs in November alone.

The Food Pantry distribution average for last year (2023) was 54 bags/month. So far, in 2024, we have given out **639** bags of food, as of **November 20, 2024. 76** Bags just in the **month of October.** Your contributions of food and dollars makes a world of difference in many lives.

Thank you for surprising me on my 93rd birthday. My church family is very important to me.
Nancy Gee



If you would like to order a Poinsettia for the sanctuary, return completed form to the church office by December 17th. Poinsettias costs will be \$20.00

From: _____

Quantity: _____ In memory of: _____

In honor of: _____



_____ I will be taking my poinsettia after worship on the 24th.

_____ I will be leaving my poinsettia at the church to be delivered to shut ins.



DECEMBER 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Advent Begins 9:15 am Breakfast 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 11:30 Fellowship Hanging of greens	2 10-12 Food Pantry	3 10-12 Food Pantry	4 10-12 Food Pantry 7:00 pm KumBaZoom	5 10-12 Food Pantry 2:30pm Backpack 7:00 pm GA	6 10-12 Food Pantry	7
8 9:15 am Breakfast 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 11:30 Fellowship 11:30 Deacons Mtg	9 10-12 Food Pantry	10 10-12 Food Pantry 11:30 am Ladies Luncheon	11 10-12 Food Pantry 7:00 pm KumBaZoom	12 10-12 Food Pantry 2:30pm Backpack 7:00 pm GA	13 10-12 Food Pantry	14 9am -1pm Deacons Christmas Baskets 
15 9:15 am Breakfast 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 11:30 Fellowship	16 10-12 Food Pantry	17 10-12 Food Pantry 11am Mission Mtg 7pm Session Mtg	18 10-12 Food Pantry 2:30pm Backpack 7:00pm KumBaZoom	19 10-12 Food Pantry 7:00 pm GA	20 10-12 Food Pantry	21
22 9:15 am Breakfast 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 11:30 Fellowship	23 10-12 Food Pantry	24 Office Closed Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 7pm	25 Office Closed	26 10-12 Food Pantry No Backpack Holiday Break 7:00 pm GA	27 10-12 Food Pantry	28
29 9:15 am Breakfast 9:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 11:30 Fellowship	30 10-12 Food Pantry	31 NYE 10-12 Food Pantry 	1 New Year's Day Office Closed 			



Jeraldine Wilcox	12/2	Bill Neil	12/7
Richard Whalen	12/6	David Prince	12/12
David Foster	12/7	Diana Schmiedeke	12/13

Should your name be here?
 Please let the office know your birth date so we can include you!

Advent Devotional from ChurchArt.com



1 Luke 1:1-4	2 John 1:1-5, 18	3 John 1:1-5, 18	4 Isaiah 9:6-7 & 11:1-5	5 Micah 5:2-4
6 Matthew 1:1-17	7 Luke 1:5-25	8 Luke 1:26-38	9 Luke 1:39-45	10 Luke 1:46-56
11 Luke 1:57-66	12 Luke 1:67-80	13 Luke 2:1-7	14 Matthew 1:18-25	15 Luke 2:8-21
16 Matthew 2:1-12	17 Luke 2:22-40	18 Matthew 2:13-15	19 Matthew 2:16-18	20 Matthew 2:19-23
21 John 1:6-8, 15	22 John 1:9-14	23 John 1:16-17	24 Isaiah 52:13-53:12	25 Revelation 21:1-8

Servers in the Lord's House		
	Coffee Host	Backpack
Dec 1	Tim & Ross	Thur Dec 5 Clyde & Karin
Dec 8	Cari & Shawn	Thur Dec 12 Open & Open
Dec 15	Dave F.	Wed Dec 18 Dave F. & Janice J.
Dec 22	Open	Thur Dec 26 Holiday Break!
Dec 29	Open	

Please call the office to sign up for server slots!

Advent Devotional

Phillips Theological Seminary has provided a daily Advent devotion for use by individuals and families. As we prepare to welcome Jesus on Christmas day, let us make room by spending a few moments every day to contemplate God's presence in our midst. To access the devotional, use the camera on your smart phone to scan the QR code and download the file.

FPC Miami Ladies Luncheon Tuesday, November 12, 2024

We had another wonderful time of fellowship at the Ladies Luncheon. Karin made a German pork roast and everyone else brought a side. YUMMY!!

WOMEN'S LUNCH will include a study from "Badass Women of the Bible"



**Next Luncheon -
Tuesday,
December 10th
at 11:30 am**



Online Devotional

ptstulsa.edu/devotionals



Pastor Ray and Ross at the Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma.

Good things are coming soon!

We will be implementing some new things into the Food Pantry since we are now a partner with Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma (FBEO). Pastor Ray and Ross will be learning a couple of new computer programs that the FBEO uses. These programs help keep information on the “Neighbors” (Customers, people who receive a bag of food from the food pantry) who come to the Food Pantry with more in-depth data being collected on the individuals. We will also be turning the Food Pantry into a Choice Pantry. This means that our "Neighbors" will be able to pick their own items from the pantry shelves, just as if they were at the grocery store.

Partnering with FBEO also means that we will be able to purchase food at a much better price as well as even getting some free food for the pantry. If you volunteer at the Food Pantry, or would like to Volunteer at the Food Pantry, we will soon be having a meeting to discuss the changes and what is needed to be done with the new info we must collect from our “Neighbors”, as well as how they can choose food from the shelves and how many items they can choose.

CHRISTMAS JOY
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
LEADERSHIP: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

Start on December 1, 2024

Prepare the Way
ISAIAH 40

A graphic for Christmas Joy Special Offerings. It features a purple star-like logo at the top left. Below it, the text reads "CHRISTMAS JOY SPECIAL OFFERINGS" and "LEADERSHIP: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE". A white box contains the text "Start on December 1, 2024". The background is a dark, starry night sky with silhouettes of figures on a path leading towards a distant city or castle. At the bottom, the text "Prepare the Way" is written in a large, white, serif font, with "ISAIAH 40" in a smaller font below it.

Pledge Cards

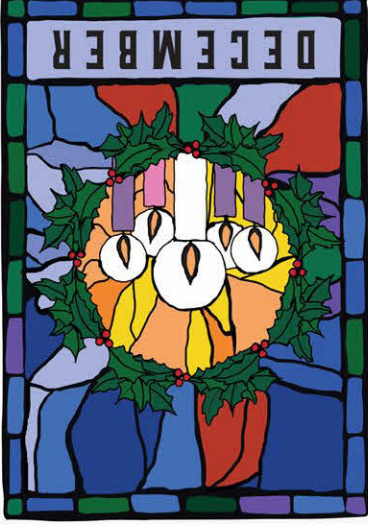
Pledge cards for 2025 will be in the mail soon. Your financial commitment to the ministry at First Presbyterian Church is vital as we plan for the year ahead. The budgeting process is underway and we already know that insurance and Food Pantry costs will see significant increases. Pray for us and with us as we discern God's direction for the coming year



Sweet Street 2024
620 Bags of candy handed out this year
and we still ran out of candy about 30
minutes before Sweet Street ended.



Dec 1	Grace Goodeagle
Dec 8	Melinda Thiesing
Dec 15	Tim Keith
Dec 22	Ross Tomlinson
Dec 29	Clyde Shaffer



*The First Presbyterian Church
1410 N.E. Veterans Blvd.
Miami, OK 74354*