



Keeping Christmas by Gerrit Dawson, Senior Pastor

There's a rule in our house about Christmas movies. We *must* start with *A Christmas Carol*. And it has to be the 1951 version with Alastair Sim (who, by the way, taught speech to divinity students in Edinburgh!). The final lines of Dickens' classic

always choke me up:

"And it was always said of Scrooge, that he knew how to keep Christmas well, if any man alive possessed the knowledge. May that be truly said of



us, and all of us! And so, as Tiny Tim observed, 'God bless us, every one!'" Keeping Christmas well. Isn't that what we long to do every year?

That's a passion I see in our staff and leadership. In every way, we are trying to keep Christmas well for our beloved congregation. We want church to be the place where you get taken back to the wonder of the first Christmas. To see the Live Nativity and imagine that holy night. To hear the Scriptures recounting the story explored through messages and music. To feel the festive welcome of the

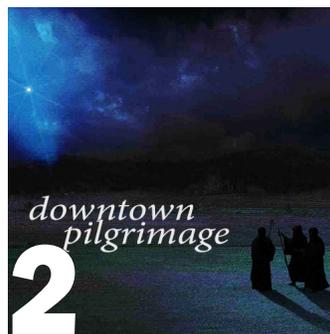
season whenever you step on campus. To find gatherings of cherished FPC friends here and around the city. To be given opportunity to focus outwards on our city through our Christmas offering. To feel like church brings you fresh joy rooted in the warmth of cherished memories. I see that commitment at every level. From the guys who clean the building to the team that creates bulletins. From the team decorating the Sanctuary to the folks organizing events to those planning music. From the assistants who greet you to the pastors studying for messages to the coordination of care for those who are grieving this season. We're all in.

We don't take it lightly that we're planted in the heart of the city on a uniquely beautiful campus with a faithful history undergirding us. We are keenly aware how many will have family and friends visiting from far away. We know Christmas brings once a year an opportunity to share and to show the gospel of Jesus. Pray for endurance for your staff. Pray for the Spirit to draw many to this house. And pray that we might keep Christmas well for the sake of the world and the glory of the Lord!

Especially in this season, I love being your pastor,

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

First Sunday in Advent	Dec 2
Live Nativity	Dec 2
rEcess	Dec 7
Women's Advent Brunch	Dec 8
Pilgrimage	Dec 9
"Silence and the Sound" Cantata	Dec 16
Church Office Closed	Dec 24 & 25
Christmas Eve Worship, 4 and 6 pm	Dec 24
Combined Worship, 10.30 am	Dec 30
Church Office Closed	Dec 31

ONGOING EVENTS

"12 Steps with Christ Jesus"

Sunday Evening Prayer

Dates and times for these events are subject to change during the holiday season. Please contact the church office (387.0617) for scheduling information for these events.

UPCOMING JANUARY EVENTS

Polar Thang Youth Retreat Jan 18-20

BIRTHS:

October 20, 2018

Gregory Welton "Wells" Boyd III

Parents are Caitlyn and Gregory Boyd

November 19, 2018

Macy Hope Vincent

Parents are Quincy and John Vincent

Grandparents are Libby and Bobby Adams

MARRIAGES:

October 12, 2018

Tracy Munson married Felipe Martinez

IN MEMORIAM:

October 28, 2018

Katherine Tanner

November 3, 2018

A. Phelps Madison

November 6, 2018

Helen Tull - mother of Howard Tull

November 9, 2018

Barbara Guillot - mother of Laura Shaw

November 17, 2018

Bettye Butler - aunt of Joy Butler

SANCTUARY FLOWERS:

You are invited to contact Sherry in the church office (387.0617 or sherry@fpabr.org) to purchase a December poinsettia in memory or celebration of a loved one. Poinsettias will be placed in the Chapel and Sanctuary. \$35 each.

The Sanctuary flowers serve to honor a departed loved one or celebrate with thanksgiving cherished people or events. If you would like to donate flowers for a particular Sunday in 2019, please contact Kathy Mullins at 291.3095.

Keeping Christ in Christmas: Advent at First Presbyterian



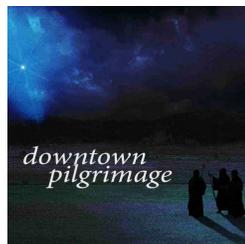
Live Nativity: December 2

Special Live Nativity Cast on Sunday, December 2. There will be two shows: 5 pm and 6 pm. Our Church staff and their families will be presenting these shows! Bring the whole family and join us in the terraced garden. Children's petting zoo, also.



Women's Ministry Advent Brunch: December 8

Celebrate the season and join us for our annual Women's Ministry Advent brunch! On Saturday, December 8 at 10.30 am we will enjoy warm fellowship and delicious food at the home of Rosemary Beall (1452 Glenmore Ave.). Because the brunch is off campus, we are not able to provide childcare but we hope you will leave the kids with dad and sneak away for an hour and a half or so! Feel free to bring a friend or two. RSVP online at fpabr.org by Tuesday, December 4. \$5 per person.



Downtown Christmas Pilgrimage: December 9

The First Presbyterian Church Worship Team and Chancel Choir are pleased to have the Abounding Love Ministries Praise Team join them for this year's Pilgrimage. The Downtown Pilgrimage begins at 5.30 pm at Mt. Zion Baptist Church.

5.30 pm	Mt. Zion First Baptist
6.00 pm	First United Methodist
6.30 pm	First Presbyterian
7.00 pm	St. Joseph Cathedral
7.30 pm	St. James Episcopal
8.00 pm	First Baptist



A Concert Exploring the Mystery of Christ's Birth: December 16

Experience the awe of silence, the humility of redemption, and a shout of Christmas joy with the Creative Arts Ministry in a special presentation of "The Silence and the Sound" to be performed at the 9 am and 11 am services on Sunday, December 16. Regular 7.45 worshippers are invited to the 9 and 11 am services.



Christmas and New Year's Worship

On Sunday, December 23, First Presbyterian will have its regular three worship service schedule:

- 7.45 am Chapel Communion
- 9 am Contemporary
- 11 am Classic Reformed

On Monday, December 24 at 4 and 6 pm we will

have our usual Festival Services of Christmas Worship. Candles. Communion. Gorgeous music. Everyone dressed in their Christmas best for a cherished tradition.

We will have one, combined 10.30 am worship service on December 30.



More First Presbyterian Happenings

Christmas Poinsettia Orders

Members are invited to contact Sherry in the church office (387.0617 or sherry@fpcbr.org) to purchase a poinsettia in memory or celebration of a loved one. Poinsettias will be placed in the Chapel and Sanctuary. \$35 each.



2018 Christmas Offering

Our annual Christmas offering goes directly to support two of our key ministry partners, both of which are making possible meaningful, long-term transformation in our city: The Christian Outreach Center and Gardere Community Christian School. We receive this offering from December 16-30. Envelopes will be provided in the pew racks. In the joy of the season, we support those who are bringing Christ and his love in tangible ways to others. Donations can be made by check (write Christmas Offering in the memo line) or online at fpcbr.org.



FPC Notecard Sets Available

Need a stocking stuffer? We commissioned an artist to paint the Sanctuary and Chapel to have them made into notecards. Boxed sets are available at the Connection Center for \$20. They'll go fast so don't wait!



All They Want for Christmas Is an Encourager

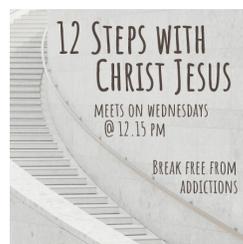
We have FIVE teachers left who are still hoping for an Encourager! Consider adopting Chyna Barges, Mary Leach, Gloria Brooks, Chasity Penn or Tabitha Anderson at Buchanan Elementary and show them Christ's love through this ministry. The commitment is small but the reward is great! Sign up at the Connection Center or contact Laura Shaw at laura@fpcbr.org.

Christmas Bags for Malachi Dads

Items are being collected for Christmas bags to be distributed to the Malachi Dads (prisoners) at Angola Penitentiary. Please consider making a donation and dropping it off at the Connection Center: soap, antiperspirant, toothpaste/toothbrush, shampoo, lotion, body wash, socks or baby powder. Cash donations also accepted.

Break Free from Addiction!

Break free from addictions through our 12 Steps with Christ Jesus group led by Bruce Stone and Jim Solomon. If you or someone you love struggles with addiction, whether alcohol, drugs, pornography, gambling or food, this group may be for you. We are discussing and praying through the book, "The Twelve Steps for Christians." Join us Wednesdays from 12.15 to 1 pm in EB 301. There is a \$10 fee for the book.



Contact Jim Solomon if you have any questions.

SUNDAY WORSHIP

7.45 Chapel Communion
9 am Contemporary
11 am Classic Reformed

DECEMBER SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

Texts are subject to change.

DECEMBER 2, 2018
Matthew 1: 1-11

DECEMBER 9, 2018
Matthew 1: 18-25

DECEMBER 16, 2018
Please come enjoy *The Silence and the Sound* Christmas Cantata at 9 and 11 am.

DECEMBER 23, 2018
Matthew 2: 1-12

DECEMBER 30, 2018
Matthew 2: 13-15

PASTORAL STAFF

GERRIT DAWSON
Senior Pastor

WHITNEY ALEXANDER
Associate Pastor of Missions

BARRY PHILLIPS
Ministry Executive

JIM SOLOMON
Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care & Prayer

DARIN TRAVIS
Director for Discipleship,
Men's Ministry & Young Adults



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fpcbr.org

763 North Boulevard
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Mother's Day Out and Preschool
225.620.0245

Baton Rouge Christian Counseling Center
225.387.2287

brchristiancounseling.com

Polar Thang: January 18-20, 2019

Polar Thang is our annual middle school winter retreat to Twin Lakes Camp in Florence, MS. We invite all of the youth ministry (high school students can come and be a part of the work crew) to join us for a long weekend of fellowship in the outdoors. We will play games, worship, learn and even take the dreaded polar plunge into one of the lakes. Come join us for a weekend in God's creation! Further information is online at fpcbr.org or contact Paula Walker (paula@fpcbr.org).



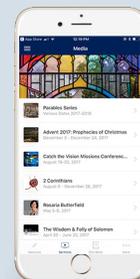
Help Fill Courtney's Pantry

We want to help our Habitat for Humanity homeowner, Courtney Richard fill her new home's pantry. Barrels are around the church all of December where you can donate non-perishable items. Some ideas are flour, sugar, cereal (Cheerios or Corn Flakes), laundry detergent, fabric sheets, stain remover, dishwashing supplies, paper towels, napkins, toilet paper, cooking oil, salt, pepper, different kinds of seasonings, kitchen towels, mayo, mustard, ketchup, peanut butter, jelly, salad dressing. Items may also be brought to the church office. Thank you for your love for the Richard family.



FPC Church App

ESV Bible.
Past Sermons.
Livestream Link.
Calendar of Events.
There is a lot to discover in the church app. Download it by visiting iTunes and search FPCBR.



Care to Share?

The Congregational Life Committee is collecting art to display for one year in our FPC Art Gallery on the 2nd floor of the Education Building. Artwork will swap out in July of each year. Contact Meagan Greene (meagan@fpcbr.org) with any questions.