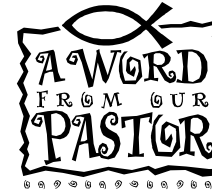




The Open Door

First Presbyterian Church
1410 NE Veterans Blvd.
Miami, Ok. 74354

Pastor: Reverend Dr. Helen Hutchison
Phone: 918-542-3388



As we begin a new year it is always time to think back to the year before. A couple of weeks ago Josh Gray shared with me a paper he had written for English about his experience of serving a snack at a homeless shelter in Tulsa. As we begin planning and scheduling for the coming year, listening to Josh Gray's experience helped me to be thankful that we can provide an opportunity to reach out, to think theologically about the experience and to also have some fun. Here is the paper Josh wrote:

When I woke up on the morning of October 25 it was like any other morning. Except for this morning I was going to Tulsa! I was going to Tulsa to feed over 300 homeless men, women and children.

Now this might sound a bit crazy but it was really fun. So it started out when I went to church and we started to make about 325 tuna-fish sandwiches. As soon as we were done making the sandwiches we packed up the sandwiches and had worship. Then after worship we packed up all of the sandwiches and headed off for Tulsa!! It was about an hour and a half drive to the homeless center. When we got to the homeless center they were so happy to see us. Probably because we had the sandwiches. They probably were just happy to see us. After we unloaded all of the sandwiches we washed our hands and went off to work!!

We were done after about 2 hours. It was hard work but it felt good to know that you can be homeless and still have God watching over you. So after we were thanked we loaded up the remaining sandwiches. After loading up the sandwiches we headed off back to Miami!!

I hope I can go on another church mission trip like this one.



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

Christmas Joy Offering

Thank you for your generosity. Our church is sending \$764 to the Presbyterian Church USA for this worthwhile cause. This offering goes to small minority colleges and to the Pension Fund for ministers who retired quite a few years ago and have small pensions.



Presbyterians in the NEWS —

- Kyle Sommer graduated from Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology with a degree in construction technology—high voltage electricity.
- Michael McManigal was pictured with Santa when Michael was less than 2 years old. It was in a Christmas Memories section of the paper.

The Kruithof Family

Those of us who have been members of our church many years remember fondly the Kruithof family. Don and Marge were very important in many of our faith journeys. We remember the boys growing up in the church. It is hard for some of us to believe that two of the boys are retired now!! It has been longer than we think!! David retired from the Tulsa Police Department and lives in Florida now. He drives a bus for a Gifted Program in one of the schools. Dan is retired and lives in San Antonio. Marge has lived in Florida since moving from Miami many years ago but in the past year she has moved to San Antonio also. Dean is the City Administrator of Branson, Missouri. His son, Marshall has already graduated from OSU. Can you believe that!!

Marge's address is: 9139 Meadows
San Antonio, Texas 78254

Your support of the Youth is Critical!

Happy New Year everyone! I want to thank all of you for coming out to the Christmas dinner and watching the youth perform their drama. For some of these youth, this was their first experience with the scriptures, and they learned a good deal about the Bible by performing some of the stories. We hope even more youth will join the drama group this coming semester of school. Both boys and girls love drama and it is a wonderful way for them to see what the scriptures really tell us. But it is much more!

Drama performances are also opportunities for you to love and encourage the teens. Several of these teens attend our church without their parents. As I mentioned in a previous Open Door, many of you are the only spiritual grandparents any of these youth will have. That puts a great responsibility upon your shoulders. If they receive the love and encouragement they are looking for, they will become the future of this congregation. If they receive no love, encouragement or friendship from the adults, it may only be a matter of time until they move on to some other group or activity looking to fill the void in their hearts.

Speak to the teens every chance you get. Thank them for coming to church. Tell them you are so glad to see them again. Ask them questions about their lives and take a real interest in them. Reach out and touch their shoulders, squeeze an arm. Say, "See you next week!"

The group is growing in numbers and in spiritual understanding and I will need more of you to truly practice your Christianity with these youth. Thank you in advance. God bless you all!

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In His love,
Pastor Kim



Gingerbread Houses

Can you imagine making the parts from scratch and assembling 14 gingerbread houses. HELEN DID !!!! Then she invited families to her house to decorate the houses. You would not believe that not only the grown-ups but also the children had an unbelievable attention span. They all worked on their houses between 1 ½ and 2 hours. There was much creativity, much icing snow and thousands of candies placed carefully on the houses. It is a wonderful tradition Helen started soon after she came to our church. This is her fourth party. Thanks Helen.

The Evening of Biblical Drama

I hope you attended our church Christmas Dinner and saw the dramatic production presented by the Presbyterian Drama Group. Kim Wenzel was the director assisted by his wife, Kathy. Helping with the production were Nancy Gee and Mike Chitekwe. Members of our church who were members of the cast were Priscilla Wenzel, Carmen Rabel, Josh Gray, Dulcinea Wenzel, and Ariel Wenzel. Other members of the cast who are members of the Drama Group are Olivia Fairbanks, Cera Livingston, Hanna Jones, and John Zimmerman. Some of the parts of the production were skits involving several cast members and some members of the cast gave solo presentations. Charlotte Glaze provided musical interludes between the scenes. The Drama Group meets each Monday after school. We are grateful to Kim Wenzel, the Youth Director, for all he does to make this possible.



**Thanks from
the Staff**

Many thanks to the congregation for the gifts that were given to us for Christmas. We truly are thankful to be a part of First Presbyterian.

Staff,
Helen, Pam, Barbara, Kim, Chris, Ron and Kim

Christmas Decorations

Thank you to everyone who bought Poinsettias for the sanctuary. The church looked so beautiful! And thank you to Jeanne Fleming and her daughters for setting up the lovely Manger Scenes which are a part of Jeanne's collection.

Mission

Our church is so blessed to have money from the Myers sisters to be generous with our mission dollars. At our last meeting we were able to allocate money to the American Red Cross, The Harbor, the Community Disaster Recovery Coalition, and the Ottawa County Health Coalition which sponsors the Community Health Center, and the Boys and Girls Club. We also have three Mentors at Washington School and we are helping a few families from the school with Christmas baskets.

The Goodland boys will be here February 7th and 8th. The committee will need extra help that weekend.

Ways to start off the New Year!

According to historians, the celebration of the New Year is the oldest holiday. Ancient Babylonians first observed it in the spring about 4,000 years ago. In 153 B.C., the Roman Senate declared January 1 as New Year's Day.

The early church started to hold religious observances that coincided with pagan celebrations. Some denominations still mark Christ's circumcision on New Year's.

The tradition of making resolutions dates back to the Babylonians, who often promised to return borrowed farm equipment. Using a baby to symbolize rebirth and the new year dates back to the ancient Greeks and Egyptians.

Modern-day New Year's customs of ten focus on prosperity. In Spain, people eat 12 grapes at midnight, hoping to have 12 happy months to come. The Dutch eat donuts because another year has come full circle. One of the best ways to start off the New Year is by spending time in prayer. Look back on God's many blessings during the completed year and ask for his guidance in the one to come. Also consider starting the tradition of praying for people around the world on New Year's Day.



1st—Tom Bomford
 5th—Kyle Sommer
 12th—Angel Russell
 15th—Mary Freeman and
 Ron Forkum
 17th— Bob Kelley
 19th—Bernice Barnes
 20th—Laura Whalen and
 Michael Whaley
 21st—Logan Zabel
 22nd—Helen Hutchison
 24th—Bob Linton
 28th—Becca Bolton
 29th—Chris Rabel

**Usher Responsibilities
 for January**

Ushers: Diane Martin and
 Victoria Vazquez

Coffee Host:
 Harold Price



▶ January 2009



Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

					1 NEW <u>YEAR'S DAY</u> Church Office Closed	2	3
4 9:30-Sunday School 10:00-Choir 10:30-Worship/Ordination and Installation	5	6 10:00-Tuesday morning class	7 3:45-Youth Power 6:00-Kum ba yah 7:00-Choir	8	9	10	
11 9:30-Sunday School 10:00-Choir 10:30-Worship 11:30 Session Mtg.	12 3:45—Drama Group 6:30-Women's Com- munity Group	13 10:00-Tuesday morning class	14 3:45-Youth Power 6:00-Kum ba yah 7:00-Choir	15 12:00- Mission Committee meeting	16	17	
18 9:30-Sun. Class 10:00-Choir 10:30-Worship 11:30— Annual Congregational mtg. 12:00-Lunch	19 Martin Luther King <u>Jr. Day</u> 3:45—Drama Group	20 10:00-Tuesday morning class 7:00- Session mtg.	21 3:45-Youth Power 6:00-Kum ba yah 7:00-Choir	22	23	24	
25 9:30-Sunday School 10:00-Choir 10:30-Worship 11:30-Ushers mtg.	26 3:45—Drama Group 6:30-Women's Com- munity Group	27 10:00-Tuesday morning class	28 3:45-Youth Power 6:00-Kum ba yah 7:00-Choir	29	30	31	

