

Eastminster Eagle

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December, 2018

***For to us a child is born, to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6***



Just when I thought Christmas couldn't get any better than seeing it through the eyes of a child, two sets of eyes make it even better. Morgan Kate joins her big sister Molly Jane this year, taking in all the beauty of this holy season.

At barely a month old, Molly's first Christmas was more of an "event" for us than it was for her. Last year was a bit of a different story. Tear the bow off the package. Rip strips of paper off the box. Then...play with those. The "what was

inside" much less fascinating to her than the pretty packaging. This year, at two, she thinks it will be different yet again. And Morgan, or as Molly calls her, "Oh Morgie, Morgie, Morgie" is rolling and tumbling and taking in all of life. Watching her for her first Christmas at seven months, I think, will be like discovering the beauty of lights and sounds and warm smells!

Babies and Christmas. They go together. More beautiful and blessed...babies and God, and the Christ of Christmas go together. Understanding our human needs, God chose to come live among us—as a child! And it was a child, God's own child, that came to transform the world that we might once again see it as God sees it; as God created it to be. God came in love, as Jesus, and calls us to love one another.

In the blessed and crazy thing we call life, I fear before Molly and Morgan were born I didn't stop long enough to see the miracle of birth, the world through new eyes, or the power of unconditional love that comes from little ones. Too often, this past year, in particular, I found myself so caught up in the woes of the world that I would "forget" that God is always doing a new thing, always birthing goodness; always inviting us to discover the beauty of lights and sounds and smells, the hearts of others, and forever and always, discovering the one true Light of the World that we know as Jesus.

This Advent and Christmas season, I want to start anew, fresh, hit the reset button. I want to look at the world through Molly's and Morgan's eyes. And, I invite you to do the same. Go find a baby. Look into that baby's eyes and see that unconditional love that shines back at you through his or her eyes. Look, and hope that looking brings you a bit closer to that child. And as you look, remember the face of a tiny child born thousands of years ago, and I promise, you will feel closer to God.

From our family to yours, thank you for sharing your lives this past year with us and for allowing us to share ours with you. In your faces, we see the face of Christ and in your hearts, we feel the love of God. For you all, God's blessing for this holy and beautiful season in time and seasons of your lives: May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ child. Amen.

Pastor Sherry



Christmas Joy Offering

We will receive the annual Eastminster Presbyterian Church Christmas Offering during the 4 Sundays in Advent (December 2 – December 23).



One-third (1/3) of the Eastminster Christmas Offering will go to the denominational Christmas Joy Offering (e.g., to help retired pastors and church workers, racial/ethnic schools and colleges, etc.); one-third (1/3) of the Eastminster Christmas Offering will go to Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services (includes the facilities at both Waxahachie and Itasca); and one-third (1/3) of the Eastminster Christmas Offering will go to Presbyterian Community Services (includes Grace Presbyterian Village).

Inserts explaining the denomination's Christmas Joy Offering will be included with each of the Sunday Bulletins during Advent (December 2, December 9, December 16, and December 23). We will have speakers deliver brief talks about the Christmas Offering at the December 9 and December 16 Sunday services.

Christmas Offering envelopes will be provided for your use, or you may use a Pew Envelope and mark it as a Special Offering for the Eastminster Christmas Offering, or you may provide your contribution online at <https://onrealm.org/eastminsterdallas/Give>. Please give to the Eastminster Christmas Offering.

A Merry Balance

In Luke 10:38-42, Martha gets a bad rap. After all, we need Marthas to get things done and to show hospitality. (Note that Martha is the one who opens up her home to Jesus in the first place!)

Marthas are needed in December, but holiday preparations shouldn't shift our focus from the reason for the season. When we become "worried and distracted" as Martha did (v. 41, NRSV), we're tempted to trade God's "one thing" (v. 42) for the world's many worthless things. Yet if we're only like Mary, we may forget to let the world know who we're celebrating!

So this Christmas, keep a proper balance between your inner Mary and your inner Martha. Take time to "be Mary," kneeling at the manger, so that all the merry things you do as Martha have meaning and serve the newborn king.

Vulnerable Love

God throws open the door of this world — and enters as a baby. As the most vulnerable imaginable. Because he wants unimaginable intimacy with you. What religion ever had a god that wanted such intimacy with us that he came with such vulnerability to us? What God ever came so tender we could touch him? So fragile that we could break him? So vulnerable that his bare, beating heart could be hurt? Only the One who loves you to death. —Ann Voskamp, *The Greatest Gift*

The Perfect Gift

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry said, "Love does not consist in gazing at each other but in looking outward together in the same direction." At Christmas we celebrate God coming to earth to look outward with us in the same direction, from our perspective and experience.

Jesus was an ordinary person: He learned to talk and walk like any toddler, learned a trade from his father and acquired the habits of faith from his family. In adulthood, Jesus experienced life as we all do: the challenge of hard work, grief at a loved one's death, heartache over oppression and the world's great needs — but also joy in celebration, fellowship with neighbors and deep friendship.

God personally knows our every experience, emotion and need — because Jesus, while fully divine, lived as a full human being. He has gazed at the world, life and even death from our direction, giving us the perfect Christmas gift: love.

**Merry
Christmas**

THE SEASONS OF ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS AT EASTMINSTER			
December 2-16	Advent Sermons		11:00 a.m.
December 23	Lessons and Carols		11:00 a.m.
December 24	Christmas Eve Candlelight & Communion Service		7:00 p.m.



From time to time, I'm asked why the Pastor, the choir, and myself spend so much time on the Lessons and Carols Christmas

service. I have thought about that and will share some of my understanding and what it means to me. First it is not something that the Worship Committee or Staff at Eastminster developed. So perhaps a little history about this unique worship order developed in the early 20th Century is in order.

There may have been some types of similar worship services from 4th or 5th century on, but the one that is in world-wide use was developed and first used at the Kings College in England in 1918. If that year sounds a bit familiar, Christmas Eve was just 41 days after the armistice that ended the First World War. We just celebrated the hundredth anniversary this past November. Eric Milner-White, who at 34 had been appointed Dean of King's College after serving in WWI as an army chaplain wrote and developed the service. He based it on a worship order written by E.W. Benson in 1880. Benson's son called it "a little service for Christmas Eve – nine carols and nine tiny lessons." Benson later became the Archbishop of Canterbury. Eric Milner-White revised it somewhat and used more modern and traditional carols. Since 1918, it caught on and has been in use somewhere ever since. Its use was greatly increased, when sometime in early 1930's, BBC began broadcasting the service on overseas programs. It is still broadcast from King's College on Christmas Eve on BBC and television today. Once in a while you might catch a recording of the service on Public Broadcasting (PBS).

We did our first Lessons and Carols starting I think in the mid-1990s and continuing since.

We use some different Scripture lessons than the King's College Version more New Testament Lessons than Old Testaments. We also use several in common. Both ending with John 1: 1-14.

I think the power and Spirit of the service lies in the Scripture Lessons and in the music. The main theme in both versions is following the development of the loving purpose of God as seen through the glimpses through windows that The Word provides. Yes, many of these Scriptures are very familiar to most of us, and some of the carols and anthems are familiar or have familiar themes and words. The familiar strikes us on an emotional level that varies with each one depending on your openness to The Word and the words and music of the carols, hymns, and anthems.

To receive the power and the spirit of this service, one does not have to have grown up in a church or have any fond and warm memories of Christmas. I have met some people whose families did not celebrate Christmas. Nor does one have to love every carol, hymn, song, or anthem sung. Nor does one have to love the sound of the piano, organ, or in our tradition, the flute.

All one has to do is come with an open mind and heart (emotions) and consent to follow the story of God's love for us and accept that love made manifest through Jesus. If you haven't experienced the joy and blessings from participating in Lessons and Carols, or have never participated, follow the story and those joys and blessings will flow into you and out to others!



GOD'S PROMISE: I AM WITH YOU

By Amy Poling Sutherland

Lesson Four: *God with Us When We Seek God.*

“God summons God’s people, and especially God’s leaders, to walk in God’s ways and to seek God.”

Do you ever wonder and worry about God’s faithfulness? Sometimes it does seem that God turns away from his people, even though he promised to be with them, to be faithful to them. Read closer, while his people (and us) often turn away and begin to believe that God is not with us, he really is there.

Holding us, caring for us, even when we do not see or hear him. He didn’t forsake Solomon, even though Solomon betrayed his promise to God. Jeroboam may have received most of the Kingdom, but Solomon and the House of David were not shut out. God kept his promise and Solomon kept part of the Kingdom.

Our fourth meeting for this session will be Tuesday, December 4 at 7 p.m. Sherry will give the devotional and will also lead the lesson, and Vicki will provide the refreshments.

“Into this world, this demented inn in which there is absolutely no room for him ... Christ comes uninvited.”

—Thomas Merton

“Once we have seen [Jesus] in a stable, we can never be sure where he will appear or to what lengths he will go or to what ludicrous depths of self-humiliation he will descend in his wild pursuit of men.”

—Frederick Buechner

“Beautiful music ... is one of the most magnificent and delightful presents God has given us.”

—Martin Luther

“The world is round so that friendship may encircle it.”

—Pierre Teilhard de Chardin



Merry Christmas

*Eastminster Presbyterian Church
Seniors' Day Out in Plano
Friday, November 9, 2018*

Our fun started at the Mockingbird DART station trying to figure out how to operate the ticket machine. We asked almost everyone that walked by us. John Sils soon became our navigator. Then as we were getting off the train in Plano, John had to hold the door open until Darlene, who was caught in the door, was able to get out. She sure was howling.

When we reached the corner, there were some electric scooters lined up but no one in our group was interested. Helen suggested we drop bread crumbs to be able to find our way back to the station. (Thankfully, this wasn't necessary.)

Our first stop was at Dude Sweet Chocolates, Rachel gave us some free samples of difference dark chocolates. We were afraid it might ruin our appetite so we stopped at eight samples for each of us.



We had BBQ at Lockhart Smokehouse. Yes, Mikey (Nathan) ate the whole

thing, pulled pork, and pickled red onions! An antique shop with a lot of Texas items was our last stop. Jenelle bargained to get her purchase at a lower price, using the "old poor me" on Social Security income story.



*Eastminster Presbyterian Church
Seniors' Day Out
Friday, December 14, 2018*

Movie "Merry Christmas Mr. Lawrence"

During World War II, British soldier Jack Celliers (David Bowie) is captured by Japanese forces and held in a prison camp by the honor-bound Capt. Yanoi (Ryuichi Sakamoto). Yanai and gruff Sgt. Hara (Takeshi) become intrigued with Celliers open defiance in the face of their staunchly old-world ideas about cowardice and shame. Meanwhile, a translator Lt. Col. John Lawrence (Tom Conti) attempts to find common ground between British and Japanese beliefs.

We will also do a Christmas gift exchange with a \$5.00 limit. We will have lunch at Dugg Burger in Casa Linda.

Faith and feelings

During a Bible study on faith, Ney Bailey came up with this definition: “Faith is taking God at his word.” Furthermore, she was reminded that “the word of our God endures forever” (Isaiah 40:8, NIV).

In *Faith Is Not a Feeling* (WaterBrook), Bailey writes, “[Sometimes] I have felt afraid or lonely or depressed. My heart has literally ached in anguish over circumstances of life, and in those moments I have been the most tempted to doubt the truth of God’s Word. But instead I chose with my will to believe his Word. Thousands of times my prayers have begun, ‘Lord, I feel ... but, Lord, your Word says ...’”

Bailey counsels, “You and I can either grow accustomed to listening to our feelings, thoughts, and circumstances, letting them control us, or we can be in the habit of taking God at his word despite our feelings and life experiences. ... His Word is truer than our feelings.”

Thank you!

The Stewardship Committee would like to thank everyone for their participation and enthusiasm during the 2019 stewardship campaign, *Each Member Belongs*. The Stewardship luncheon was a success and thanks to our generous members we had plenty of stew and soup to freeze for our homebound families. We are still collecting commitment sheets, so if you have not submitted yours, you may send it to the office addressed to the financial secretary, bring it to church or submit it online. Go to [eastminsterdallas.org](http://www.eastminsterdallas.org) and click on the link 2019 Time and Talent commitments online form under the Resources heading. (<http://www.eastminsterdallas.org/time-and-committment.html>).

You can also see the 2019 Budget there. Thank you for faithfully demonstrating that each of our members belong!



Pleasant Grove Food Pantry October Report

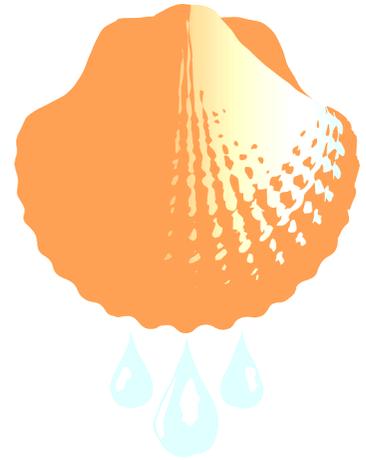


The number of people served in October:

Date	#Families	#Children	#Seniors	#Adults =	Total Individuals	Pounds
10-2	148	272	81	272	625	5,059
10-9	113	247	67	220	534	4,290
10-16	123	220	60	234	514	5,459
10-23	168	317	85	285	687	7,578
10-30	170	356	91	318	765	7,563
Totals	723	1,412	384	1,329	3,125	29,949

According to the fourth Gospel, “There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the _____.”

- A. love
- B. life
- C. light
- D. Lord



Answer: C (See John 1:6-7, NRSV.)

Bulletin Bloopers

Due to the Rector's illness, Wednesday's healing services will be discontinued until further notice.

On a church bulletin during the minister's illness: GOD IS GOOD; Dr. Hargreaves is better.

A worm welcome to all who have come today.

Barbara remains in the hospital and needs blood donors for more transfusions. She is also having trouble sleeping and requests tapes of Pastor Nelson's sermons.

During the absence of our pastor, we enjoyed the rare privilege of hearing a good sermon when J.F. Stubbs supplied our pulpit.



“Yes, it's beautiful — but can we talk about its placement?”

Scripture Readings for December

1 Zech. 14:12–21	12 Isa. 6:1–13	23 Isa. 33:17–22
2 Isa. 1:1–9	13 Isa. 7:1–9	24 Isa. 35:1–10
3 Isa. 1:10–20	14 Isa. 7:10–25	25 Zech. 2:10–13
4 Isa. 1:21–31	15 Isa. 8:1–15	26 2 Chron. 24:17–22
5 Isa. 2:1–4	16 Isa. 13:1–13	27 Prov. 8:22–30
6 Isa. 2:5–22	17 Isa. 8:16–9:1	28 Isa. 49:13–23
7 Isa. 3:1–4:1	18 Isa. 11:1–9	29 Isa. 12:1–6
8 Isa. 4:2–6	19 Isa. 11:10–16	30 Isa. 62:6–7, 10–12
9 Isa. 5:1–7	20 Isa. 28:9–22	31 Isa. 26:1–6
10 Isa. 5:8–17	21 Isa. 29:9–24	
11 Isa. 5:18–25	22 Isa. 31:1–9	

December

Neighborhood breakfast every Saturday (1, 8, 15, 22, 29)

Choir Practice - Wednesdays (5, 12, 19)

- 1 Stated Presbytery Meeting – North Park
- 2 Communion; First Sunday of Advent/Christmas Joy Offering
- 4 EPW 7pm
- 5 Longest Night Service – Communion - Intinction
- 8 Christmas Village
- 9 2nd Sunday of Advent / Christmas Joy Offering
- 10 Session Meeting, 7:00 p.m. Monday
- 16 Third Sunday of Advent/ Christmas Joy Offering (Joy Offering, PCHAS, PC&S)
- 23 Lessons and Carols
- 24 Christmas Eve Communion - Intinction
- 25-31 Office Closed

January 2019

Neighborhood breakfast every Saturday (5, 12, 19, 26)

Choir practice—Wednesdays (2, 9, 16, 23, 30)

- Remove Sanctuary Decorations
- 1 Office Closed
- 6 Communion Sunday - Intinction
- 8 EPW 7pm
- 11-12 Officer/Staff Retreat
- 13 Begin Souper Bowl Sunday Food Drive
- 16 Year 2018 Committee Reports due
- 20 Ordination/Installation Sunday; Stated Session Mtg
- 21 Newsletter Deadline
- 27 Stated Congregational Meeting and Luncheon
- 30 Stated Administrative Committee Meeting

February

Neighborhood breakfast every Saturday (2, 9, 16, 23)

Choir Practice - Wednesdays (6, 13, 20, 27)

- 3 Communion Sunday / Souper Bowl Sunday - food drive; Committee Meetings
- 5 EPW Night Circle (7:00 p.m.)
- 7 Seniors' Day Out
- 25 Newsletter Deadline



Diana Uche	12-2
Cheryl Gonzales	12-9
Melanie Litle	12-10
Victoria Veloz	12-12
Naomi Davis	12-12
Sue Bender	12-14
Denise Bennett	12-15
Christine Blair	12-15
Fred Watkins	12-16
Jackson Crouse	12-20
Beverly Ridley	12-21
Juanita Swafford	12-24
Heather Sisk	12-28
Bobbe Brown	12-30
Ian Kelleher	12-31



Glenda & Henry Owen	12-14
Melody & Bill Davis	12-22
Kelsey & Drew Whitlow	12-28
Cindy & Blair Garrett	12-29

Those Who Will Serve in December



Ushers/Greeters—Team 2

Jim Fielding—Captain

Jan Anderson

Will Nixon

John Sill

Lay Reader

Blair Garrett

Communion Teams

December 2

Jenelle Symns

Christine Blair

December 24

Chandra & Frank Karlen



Eastminster Session

Chandra Anderson

Janice Bell

Tony Bennett

Cindy Garrett

Frank Karlen, Sr.

Janet Muller

Tom Pappas

Evelyn Parker

Jenelle Symns

Bruce Turner

Shirlene Watkins

Tom Whitley



Pastor

Sherry Holloman

Director of Christian Education

Kathy Kreger

Director of Music

Fred P. Watkins

Organist

Melody S. Davis

Administrative Assistant

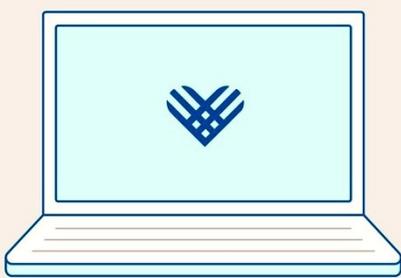
Chandra Anderson

Hostess/Housekeeper

Minerva Hernandez

Child Care Provider

Betty Crabtree



GIVE ONLINE

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*They who wait upon the Lord shall renew
their strength, they shall mount up with
wings like eagles; they shall run and not be
weary, they shall walk and not faint.*

Isaiah 40:31



Special dates

- First Sunday of Advent, December 2, 2018
- Second Sunday of Advent, December 9, 2018
- Third Sunday of Advent, December 16, 2018
- First day of winter, December 21, 2018
- Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 23, 2018
- Christmas Eve, December 24, 2018
- Christmas Day, December 25, 2018
- New Year's Eve/Watch Night, December 31, 2018