

Eastminster Eagle

Volume 36, Issue 12

December, 2019



For four weeks we will wait together, in this holy season we call Advent. Our sanctuary will be decorated. Prayers for peace, restored health, for warm shelter, for family, for snow on Christmas morning and so many more will be lifted to God. We will worship and fellowship together. And eventually all of our celebrations, our joys, our concerns will be placed before the manger. In the words of the familiar carol, “the hopes and fears of all the years are met in Thee tonight.”

The commercial world that has so captured our attention with its glitz and glitter will suddenly fade in the light of that bright star over Bethlehem as Christians around the world gather to sing, “joy to the world, the Lord has come!”

We know that the coming of the Christ child does not give us just one night to rejoice; his life gives us a lifetime to reflect on God’s decision to come to us, to earth, to make a home among us.

Our prayer is that all who gather during this blessed season will feel Christ draw near, not just for a day or even a season, but for a lifetime. May we embrace the truth that Christ wants to be with us always, at home in our hearts, in our nights of need and our days of joy.



Especially if you have been away from the church for some while, or have been searching for a community to pray with, we hope that you will gather with this faithful community called Eastminster. Through us, may all feel the love of Christ, in this season and in all the rhythms of the years. As Christ has made a home with us, may we make a home with each other.



Thanksgiving to God for all of you and for a child born so long ago!

Sherry, Gary, Ryan, Katy, Molly, Morgan, Brandi, Lorrie, Jordan and Katie



2020 Vision: Seeing Through Jesus' Eyes

What's your favorite season? Baseball? Christmas? Stewardship? Eastminster has just completed our stewardship season, but actually, giving is something we do all year! In the service on Sunday, November 17, we came forward with our commitments for 2020 and received a pair of fun glasses so we can see our way into a bright 2020 with the joy that comes from seeing through Jesus' eyes.



As of November 18, our generous members have pledged 91.4% of our budgeted 2020 pledge income. If you have not yet made a pledge, please continue to pray and send in your time and talent sheet. You can fill it out online at www.eastminsterdallas.org/time-and-committment.html. Our goal is to reach 100% of our estimated pledges, but wouldn't it be amazing to exceed it? Let's start the New Year with the faith that God will provide the perfect resources for our every need.

Our 2019 budget is not balanced yet, so let's finish 2019 strong and fulfill the pledges we made for this year. Sherry asked us to commit to be a prayer partner, praying intentionally for what God is calling us to do at Eastminster. I know God will bless us for our faithful, earnest prayers as we serve him together in these challenging, but exciting times.

Your stewardship committee
Cindy, Tony, Darlene, Dick & David

Christmas Joy Offering

We will receive the annual Eastminster Presbyterian Church Christmas Offering during the 4 Sundays in Advent (December 1 – December 22).

This year, our 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.), and to Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services.

Inserts explaining the denomination's Christmas Joy Offering will be included with each of the Sunday Bulletins during Advent (December 1st, 8th, 15th & 22nd). On December 8th and December 22nd, Speakers will give brief messages on the Christmas Offering.

Christmas Offering Envelopes will be provided in the pews 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 www.eastminsterdallas.org, and choose the Donate tab, then select the "Christmas Offering." Please give to the Eastminster Christmas Offering.



The promise of the future

A nursing home resident who longed for fresh Georgia peaches discovered a pit overlooked in his serving of canned fruit. In an old coffee can, he planted the stone, which sprouted! The man gave the small tree to friends to plant. Years later, the peaches were so abundant the neighbors had to give some away.

Lila Docken Bauman recounts this story for the Christian Century, saying the man who took that gamble "did not live to see [it] grow into the tree that ultimately produced this harvest. But when he looked at that pit years ago he saw the promise of fresh fruit. ... 'Who despises the day of small things?' asks the prophet Zechariah. It's in those small things that the promise of the future rests."

Just so, some 2,000 years ago, in a small baby born in a tiny town — both seemingly inconsequential — rested "the promise of the future" — the salvation of the whole world.

Realm Makes it Easy to Give!

Would you like to keep up with your own contribution report? Or update your own information? Well, you can! With our Realm program you can have all this information at your fingertips. You can have easy access at any time. Let the office know that you would love to have this convenience, and we'll send you a Realm invitation. You will set up your own account and you will have access to your own information.

Did you know that you can give by text? Text epcdallas general \$10 (or the amount you choose) to 73256 to give to General Fund using your text messaging. Standard text message rates do apply.





Notes From Fred

Last year in the December Newsletter, I wrote some about the origins of the Lessons and Carols Service, and our adaptation. I mentioned what makes this service unique and the power of the story of God's love for us as told through the lessons, and the carols and anthems. If you missed that and would like to read the December 2018 Note, I am happy to send it to you. Just give me your email or I can print you a copy and bring it to you at church.

Our Advent season will feature some Advent carols, and anthems using instruments on a few anthems you have heard before, and some new ones. I start sneaking a Christmas carol or two in on the second Sunday of Advent, and of course we do several during the Lessons and Carols Service, Christmas Eve, the first Sunday after Christmas, and Epiphany. So, if you come to all those services, you will more than likely sing your favorite Christmas Carol. Those are not to be confused with secular Christmas songs such as Rudolf the Red Nose Reindeer.

Many of the carols and anthems during this time come from a variety of cultures and nations. When we are singing them, you can look down at the bottom of the page in the hymnbook and read about the carol/hymn and see some of the places they came from to be incorporated over the years into our American services and homes.

The Advent services, the Lessons and Carols service, and Christmas Eve will feature you singing, the choir singing, and

joining to help us this year will be bells, flute, piano, organ, saxophone, various percussion instruments (including drums), and violin. The choral music, instrumental music, and carols are all chosen to reflect the themes and or quotes from the Scripture lessons in the Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany seasons.

Regardless of how you view the Christmas season, the power of the Scriptures and music telling the story of God's love for you can be a wonderful experience.

However, you must come, open your mind, sing as best you can, listen not only with your mind but your heart (soul) and, if you do, God will speak to you.



The Searchers Class is continuing their study of the Book of Genesis.

You are invited to participate Sunday Mornings at 9:30 am.

Continued on Page 5



An update from the Security Task Force

By now you've probably already noticed that the church has a new security system. The Security Task Force (Paul McLin, Jim Lee, and Bruce Turner) spent several months working through a very long list of recommendations provided by a consultant, Dr. Bruce Curran, who not only has career experience in safety and security consulting and who is our go-to guy for all things technology related, but is also a friend of the church. He and his wife, Pam, have been at several of our functions and we appreciate all that goes with their friendship.

One element of the task force's charge included the upgrading of our security system. A new security company has been hired to provide us with many new updates through a brand new security system. The new security provider is DFW Security. A great deal of research went into finding the right company for our security needs and we searched for a company that was local and not residential-centric. Several companies provided bids and we felt DFW Security had the most to offer in terms of what we were after. Their company also provides security systems to several churches in the DFW area.

Included in that upgrade are five panic buttons and two alarm panels. No longer does one have to enter only through the doors leading into the courtyard by the office. An additional panel was included and was to be placed at the east entry into the church. This should make entry and exit from the church somewhat more

convenient. Also included are glass-breakage and motion sensors along with new door sensors and all of the hardware and software that go to support the system. We will have access to the security system through smart phones and computers. Most of the equipment being provided will be wireless including cell service direct to their monitoring center. No more concerns about an evil-doer cutting the phone lines to bypass the system.

Yes, five (5) panic buttons. It is a sad reality that we live in a world where evil exists but we must deal with that reality as best we can. We pray that no harm should ever come to our congregation but the task force members felt we should prepare ourselves as well as possible. Panic buttons will be placed by the pulpit in the sanctuary, in the kitchen, in the nursery, in the choir loft and in the office. They will be directly connected to the security company who would alert police and/or fire departments in the case of an emergency.

There is much more to the new security system than we need to talk about here. More information is available to those who need to know how to use it and what it can do. We would encourage you to ask a task force member any question. Current session elders may also be able to answer a few questions as well. And, look for more to come from the task force.



What's new with the ADA Task Force?

If you were at the Stewardship Luncheon a couple of weeks ago, you got to hear some good news. The ADA Task Force has been hard at work much of this year trying to get moving on making the church and all its buildings more easily accessible for those with physical limitations. The task force is made up of Vicki Cook, Dave Anderson, Tim Kreger, Talat Robert and Bruce Turner and we want to thank them all for their contributions so far and for the work that lies ahead. This past October, the Session approved a contract between the church and an architect to guide us through the process and provide working blueprints and plans. The firm the church has hired is Y Designs Collaborative, PLLC. Young Chung is the architect and owner of the company. If you were at the luncheon you also heard that a capital campaign is in the works to help us pay for the improvements needed to make church life easier for all who have physical challenges.

What are the changes, you ask? Well, to start with, we will be doing the improvements in stages in order to keep the disruptions to a minimum. Here is a list of some of those improvements:

A ramp - or maybe two - that will lead from the front parking lot up to the sanctuary landing. Imagine a curved ramp(s) that begins at the sidewalk and ends at the side of the landing.

A wheelchair lift or possibly a switch-back ramp leading up the steps of the cloister. This will end the need for anyone in a wheelchair or using a walker

to have to go outside the building to get from the classrooms to the sanctuary.

Two coverings, or porticos, leading from the back parking lot to either the cloister or to the entry door between the parlor and the chapel. Entering from the east parking lot in wet weather will no longer be a necessity.

The plans are to include reworking the ramp and steps from the back parking lot into the building through the door between the chapel and the parlor. And, as mentioned above, the entry will be covered.

Automatic door openers will also be included in the plan. If one needs to get in the building, he or she can push a button and, viola, the doors will open automatically. These openers are planned for restroom doors as well as exterior doors.

Speaking of restrooms, part of the plan includes the remodeling and/or combining of four restrooms in the older portion of the church. The large men's and women's restrooms will be remodeled and will be made handicap accessible. The plan is also to include combining the men's room across from the east entry door and the ladies room that butts up against it and currently serves the fellowship hall. At this time, the plan is that combination will then become one large ladies room and the unisex restroom that also serves the fellowship hall would then become a men's room. That restroom is already handicap friendly.

This is an exciting time for Eastminster! We are expecting to have some graphics soon that will show some of the concepts of the plans. The architect has been working on this project for a few weeks and we should begin seeing some of his work fairly soon. If you have any questions or just want a little more information, please feel free to ask one of the task force members. You can also get some insight from one of the ruling elders. God has us going in a good direction!



Giving Thanks Luncheon

On November 9, the Eastminster family shared lunch with our Buckner Terrace neighbors, Saturday Breakfast volunteers, and our friends who call the streets home. It was truly a time of giving thanks for all the Lord has done for us. The Fellowship Hall was filled with delightful chatter while those seated at the festively decorated tables were served a wonderful meal. (Who can count all the positive adjectives in that sentence?) It was a perfect time to be together!

If you missed it, you missed our choir delivering our Thanksgiving prayers through song. Thank you Fred, Melody and the full choir. (They were even nice enough to let Pastor Sherry jump in and sing, too!). You also missed an absolutely delectable turkey, dressing, green bean casserole, mashed potatoes, gravy and cranberry sauce dinner. It was a platter of yumminess, for sure! But, the meal didn't stop there. We topped it off with whipped-cream-dolloped pumpkin pie and just-out-of-the-oven cherry cobbler. Oh! It couldn't have been any better.

The Outreach Committee is not only thankful for the blessing of Eastminster congregants who faithfully respond to God's call to put our church before the community and serve, but we are thankful for all our friends who provide additional support through their time, energy and monetary gifts.



Living in 2020

Outreach will be developing all sorts of activities to bring life onto the EPC campus in 2020. Keep your heart open to participating in your special ways. Your heart will be filled when you've responded to God's call.

Kicking it off in January, we'll be participating in Souper Bowl of Caring to benefit our emergency food pantry and the Pleasant Grove Food Pantry. Watch for details in the January newsletter. Let's have 2020 collections exceed previous records! Get ready... we'll give you the game plan at the Congregational Meeting luncheon on Sunday, January 26.





Where did the child Jesus and his parents flee for safety?

- A. Ethiopia
- B. Syria
- C. Rome
- D. Egypt

Answer: D (See Matthew 2:13.)

Q: What kind of Christmas music do elves like?

A: "Wrap" music

Q: How can Santa deliver presents during a thunderstorm?

A: His sleigh is flown by raindeer

Q: What do you call a snowman with a six pack?

A: An abdominal snowman

Q: What's St. Nicholas's favorite measurement in the metric system?

A: The Santameter! (By Briana, age 7)



"That's why I say, 'Fleece Navidad!'"

Scripture Readings for December

1 Luke 21:5–19	12 Matt. 23:13–26	23 John 3:31–36
2 Matt. 21:1–11	13 Matt. 23:27–39	24 Acts 7:59–8:8
3 Matt. 21:12–22	14 Matt. 24:1–14	25 John 13:20–35
4 Matt. 21:23–32	15 John 5:30–47	26 Matt. 18:1–14
5 Matt. 21:33–46	16 John 3:16–21	27 John 2:1–11
6 Matt. 22:1–14	17 Luke 1:1–25	28 John 4:46–54
7 Matt. 22:15–22	18 Luke 1:26–36	29 Luke 2:22–40
8 Luke 1:57–68	19 Luke 1:39–48a (48b–56)	30 John 4:46–54
9 Matt. 22:23–33	20 Luke 1:57–66	31 John 5:1–15
10 Matt. 22:34–46	21 Luke 1:67–80	
11 Matt. 23:1–12	22 Matt. 1:18–25	



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Eastminster Presbyterian Women

Everyone is invited to the EPW women's circle. Our study for this session is *Love Carved in Stone, A Fresh Look at the Ten Commandments*, by Eugenia Anne Gamble.

"Each lesson begins with an exploration of one of the Ten Words in its biblical context. From there we consider a moment from Jesus' life that shows us how he lived out that Word. We then consider the Word for our own lives and contexts. We conclude with an invitation to pray with the Word in our circles or study groups and in our personal devotions." - Eugenia Anne Gamble

Join us in room 16 across from the chapel at 7:00 p.m. on the following dates: Dec. 3, Jan. 7, Feb. 4, Mar. 3, April 7, and May 5. We hope you will consider joining us for EPW this year.

Coming Attraction

Advent, which marks the beginning of the church year, is "the first gleam of Christmas," writes W.E. Sangster. "It heralds the entrance of the Divine into human history; it is heaven descending to earth; it is a great event casting its brilliance before it." Sangster adds: "It is as though a trumpeter had taken his stand upon the turrets of time and announced the coming of the King. 'Get ready,' he seems to say. 'Get ready. He is coming!'"



"Be Born in Us Today"

In 1865, Phillips Brooks, an Episcopal preacher from Boston, went on a Holy Land pilgrimage. Riding horseback from Jerusalem to Bethlehem for Christmas Eve worship at the Church of the Nativity was so moving that he wrote "O Little Town of Bethlehem." The hymn's final stanza addresses the town's most famous newborn:

O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.

We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!

"Once in our world, a stable had something in it that was bigger than our whole world."

—C.S. Lewis

"Music acts like a magic key, to which the most tightly closed heart opens."

—Maria Augusta von Trapp

"The birth of Jesus is the sunrise in the Bible."

—Henry van Dyke

"That the Creator himself comes to us and becomes our ransom — this is the reason for our rejoicing." —Martin Luther

"More light than we can learn, more wealth than we can treasure, more love than we can earn, more peace than we can measure, because one Child is born." —Author unknown

What keeps the wild hope of Christmas alive year after year in a world notorious for dashing all hopes is the haunting dream that the child who was born that day may yet be born again even in us.

—Frederick Buechner

Who can add to Christmas? The perfect motive is that God so loved the world. The perfect gift is that he gave his only Son. The only requirement is to believe in him. The reward of faith is that you shall have everlasting life.

—Corrie ten Boom

December

Neighborhood breakfast every Saturday 7, 14, 21, 28

Choir Practice - Wednesdays 4, 11, 18

- 1 Communion Sunday – Intinction; Committee Meetings
- 3 EPW 7 p.m.
- 4 Longest Night Service, 6 p.m.
- 7 CCC Christmas Light Tour
- 8 Stewardship and Worship Committee Meetings; Senior Source Seminars, 1:00 and 2:00 p.m.
- 14 Eastminster Christmas Village, 8:30 am—1:30 pm
- 15 Stated Session Meeting
- 16 Newsletter Deadline
- 24 Christmas Eve Service, 7 p.m.
- 24 through January 1—the office is closed



January 2020—Happy New Year

Neighborhood breakfast every Saturday: 4, 11, 18, 25

Choir Rehearsal, Wednesdays: 8, 15, 22, 29

- 1 Office Closed
- 5 Communion – Intinction; Committee Meetings
- 7 EPW 7pm
- 10-11 Officer/Staff Retreat
- 12 Stewardship and Worship Committees meet
- 15 Year 2019 Committee Reports due
- 19 Ordination/Installation Sunday; Stated Session Meeting
- 20 Newsletter Deadline
- 26 Stated Congregational Meeting and Luncheon
- 29 Stated Administrative Committee Meeting

February 2020

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

Choir Rehearsal - Wednesdays 5, 12, 19, 26

- 2 Communion—Intinction; Souper Bowl of Caring
- 4 EPW 7p.m.
- 10 Stewardship and Worship Committee Meetings
- 16 Stated Session Meeting
- 17 Newsletter Deadline
- 26 Ash Wednesday

December Birthdays

Cheryl Gonzales	12-9
Melanie Little	12-10
Naomi Davis	12-12
Sue Bender	12-14
Denise Bennett	12-15
Christine Blair	12-15
Fred P. Watkins	12-16
Beverly Ridley	12-21
Juanita Swafford	12-24
Bobbe Brown	12-30
Ian Kelleher	12-31

December Anniversaries

Melody & Bill Davis	12-22
Kelsey & Drew Whitlow	12-28
Cindy & Blair Garrett	12-29

Those Who Will Serve in December



Ushers/Greeters—Team 3

Jim Fielding—Captain
Jan Anderson
Will Nixon John Sill

December 1

Advent Family: The Whitley Family

Liturgist: Kayla Dixon

Communion: Ronnie Dixon & Kathy Kreger

Acolytes:

Coy Whitley, Candles;
Jacob Whitley, Cross Bearer

December 8

Advent Family: The Thiebaud Family

Liturgist: Vicki Thiebaud

Acolytes:

AbbyGayle Flores, Candles;
Lewis Thiebaud, Cross Bearer

December 15

Advent Family The Knox/Kelleher Family

Liturgist: Elizabeth Kelleher

Acolytes:

Vivienne Kelleher, Candles;
Ian Kelleher, Cross Bearer

December 22

Advent Family: The Pappas Family

Liturgist: Daniel Pappas

Acolytes:

Lilly Pappas, Candles;
Tom Pappas, Cross Bearer

December 24

Advent Family: The Blair/Wood Family

Liturgist & Acolytes:

The Blair/Wood Family



Janice Bell

Denise Bennett

Tony Bennett

Ronnie Dixon

Cindy Garrett

Janet Muller

Michele Pappas

Evelyn Parker

Helen Randolph

Bruce Turner

Shirlene Watkins

Mason Gonzales, Youth Elder



Pastor

Sherry Holloman

Director of Music

Fred P. Watkins

Organist

Melody S. Davis

Administrative Assistant Chandra Anderson

Hostess/Housekeeper Minerva Hernandez

Child Care Provider Betty Crabtree

HIGHLIGHTS from the STATED SESSION MEETING, October 20, 2019

- ◆ Treasurer's Report: Total Revenues, year to date September 2019: \$235,816.32
Total Expenses, year to date September 2019: 270,041.35
Total Current Assets, year to date August 2019: 118,193.35
- ◆ The Treasurer reported that two (2) new bank accounts have been opened at BBVA and that there will be a gradual transition from Hancock Whitney (fka MidSouth Bank).
- ◆ The last of the MidSouth Bank certificates of deposit (CD) matured on 10/19/2019. Motion made, seconded and approved to move the maturing CD funds to the MidSouth checking account for distribution to the Texas Presbyterian Foundation ("TPF") Money Market Fund.
- ◆ From the Security Task Force, a motion with a second was approved (with one abstaining vote) to contract DFW Security to provide and install a security system for the EPC campus at a cost up to \$4600 to be paid from Account 3610-Capital Maintenance Fund.
- ◆ From the ADA Task Force, a motion with a second was approved (with one opposed) to enter into an agreement with Y Designs Collaborative to serve as the architect for ADA improvements on the EPC facilities at a cost not to exceed \$25,300 which will include all architectural, MEP and structural work and coordination. Motion made, seconded and approved to pay for the retainer fee of \$2500 to Y Designs Collaborative from Account 1016 (Money Market Fund).
- ◆ Motion made, seconded and approved to set Sunday, November 24, 2019 following worship for decorating the sanctuary for the Advent season.
- ◆ Motion made, seconded and approved to continue with the December 8, 2019, celebration honoring Fred Watkins' 80th birthday in the Fellowship Hall.
- ◆ The Nominating Committee chair (Cindy Garrett) brought to the Session the slate of officers. Motion made, seconded and approved to accept the election of Bruce Turner to fill Tom Whitley's Class of 2020 unexpired term. Motion made, seconded and approved to accept nomination the Class of 2022 Elders: Kayla Dixon, Kathy Kreger, Paul McLin, and Victoria Thiebaud. Motion made, seconded and approved to accept the nomination of the 2022 Trustee: Dick Knox. For the 2020 Nominating Committee, the following nominations were made: Congregational Members at-Large: Jim Lee, Charlotte Turner, and Chandra Anderson; EPW Member: Jan Anderson; and, Church School Member: Blair Garrett. These names will be presented for approval by the Congregation at the EPC Congregational Meeting on Sunday, November 3, 2019.

Special dates

- **First Sunday of Advent, December 1, 2019**
- **Second Sunday of Advent, December 8, 2019**
- **Third Sunday of Advent, December 15, 2019**
- **First day of winter, December 21, 2019**
- **Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 22, 2019**
- **Christmas Eve, December 24, 2019**
- **Christmas Day, December 25, 2019**
- **New Year's Eve/Watch Night, Dec 31, 2019**



December 2019