

# TWENTY FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST



## THE SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

November 15, 2020  
10:45 a.m.

First Presbyterian Church, Bryan, Texas  
Link to worship videos available at: [www.fpcbryan.org](http://www.fpcbryan.org)

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

Give Thanks

arr. Anthony Burger

### WELCOME

We welcome you to worship today. Let us read responsively words of Psalm 103:  
Bless the Lord, O my soul.

**May all that is within me, bless God's holy name!**

Do not forget all of God's benefits and gifts!

**God's steadfast love and mercy are from everlasting to everlasting,  
renewing and lifting us up like an eagle is enabled to fly.**

HYMN No. 2

Come, Thou Almighty King

ITALIAN HYMN

**Come, thou almighty King, help us thy name to sing; help us to praise:  
Father, all glorious, o'er all victorious, come, and reign over us, Ancient of Days.**

**Come, thou incarnate Word, merciful, mighty Lord, our prayer attend.  
Come, and thy people bless, and give thy word success; Spirit of holiness, on us descend.**

**Come, holy Comforter, thy sacred witness bear in this glad hour.  
Thou who almighty art, now rule in every heart, and ne'er from us depart, Spirit of power.**

**To thee, great One in Three, eternal praises be, hence evermore!  
thy sovereign majesty may we in glory see, and to eternity love and adore.**

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Text in **bold face type** is to be read by all.

PRAYERS OF PRAISE AND CONFESSION

Let us pray together . . . **To you, O God, our thoughts turn in reverence and honor. We praise and glorify you. We also both realize and acknowledge our failings in thought, word, and deed, related to you, to others, and to ourselves. We have turned from your paths and wandered to dwell where and how we prefer. Forgive us all our sin, and hear us seeking your mercy . . .** *(pausing in silence for prayer)*

Make us whole in your love, Blessed One. Reconcile all brokenness, even if not instantaneously, over time, from the capability of your Spirit. Bring your new life among us for serving you every day in the way of Jesus Christ . . .

Friends, let us hear and share with gladness the blessed news of the Gospel:

**In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Thanks be to God!**

HYMN OF RESPONSE NO. 606

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

OLD HUNDREDTH

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him all creatures here below;  
praise him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

SCRIPTURE READING

I Timothy 6:10; Luke 21:1-4

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL PROCLAMATION

Four-fold Faithful Living (3) – Financial Fruits:  
Many Characters in Search of Financial Stewardship

HYMN NO. 8

Eternal Father, Strong to Save

MELETA

**Eternal Father, strong to save, whose arm has bound the restless wave, who bade the mighty ocean deep  
its own appointed limits keep: O hear us when we cry to thee for those in peril on the sea.**

**O Savior, whose almighty word the winds and waves submissive heard, who walked upon the foaming deep,  
and calm amid its rage did sleep: O hear us when we cry to thee for those in peril on the sea.**

**O Holy Spirit, who did brood upon the chaos wild and rude, and bade its angry tumult cease,  
and gave, for fierce confusion, peace: O hear us when we cry to thee for those in peril on the sea.**

**O Trinity of love and power, all travelers guard in danger's hour, from rock and tempest, fire and foe,  
protect them wheresoe'r they go; thus evermore shall rise to thee glad praise from air and land and sea.**

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING, INTERCESSION,  
AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Let us pray . . . From the rising of the sun to its setting and all through the dark of each night, O God, we give you thanks for your presence and grace. We are grateful that you bring us through adversity, and that you grant commitment and courage in the face of threat and in the seeking of peace, even when and where conflict has arisen with weapons loaded and firing. Especially this week, receive our immeasurable appreciation for those who have served this nation through the armed services, in defense of democracy and in the maintenance of peace.

Bring us through the calamity of a pandemic. Build up community life through an enhancement of caring, each for the other. Create healing for those ill or injured, emotionally or physically. Relieve hardship and supplement basic needs. Give us your wisdom every day, with your support for important and needed change.

Also, hear us praying, as Jesus taught the community of faith to believe and give voice:

Our Father, who art in heaven; hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

HYMN NO. 697 (st. 1,4,5,6)

Take My Life

HENDON

Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee;  
take my moments and my days; let them flow in ceaseless praise; let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my silver and my gold; not a mite would I withhold;  
take my intellect and use every power as thou shalt choose, every power as thou shalt choose.

Take my will and make it thine; it shall be no longer mine.  
Take my heart, it is thine own; it shall be thy royal throne, it shall be thy royal throne.

Take my love; my Lord, I pour at thy feet its treasure store;  
take myself and I will be ever, only all for thee, ever, only, all for thee.

DISMISSAL AND BLESSING

POSTLUDE

Holy, Holy, Holy

arr. Joyce Jones

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**{Copies of the 2021 Challenge/Asking Budget are available on the Welcome Table in the Narthex.}**

**ASSISTED LISTENING DEVICES** are available in the narthex. Please help yourself or ask an usher for assistance.

**CHILDREN ARE WELCOME IN WORSHIP.** Worship related activity sheets and markers are available on the tables in the Narthex. Room 108 is available for your nursery needs. If you are unfamiliar with our building and need assistance, an usher will be pleased to help you. Also, two rocking chairs are located in the narthex, where the worship service can be heard via a ceiling speaker.

***To continue worshipping safely and COVID-19 friendly, thanks to each of YOU for physical distancing and wearing face masks when you are interacting with others inside the building.***

The red rose in the chancel symbolizes our thanksgiving to God for the birth of Charlotta Alexandra to Stephanie & Anton Leontyev on November 5. Big sister is Francesca.

*"I am fearfully and wonderfully made..."* —Psalm 139:14

The prayerful support and sympathy of the congregation are extended to Christy & Aaron Becker, and their children, Emily & John, following the death of Christy's mother, Barbara Lee Gentle, on November 12.

*"I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord."* —John 11:25

**THE UNITED STATES FLAG  
IN THE SANCTUARY ON THIS SUNDAY FOLLOWING  
VETERAN'S DAY SYMBOLIZES OUR THANKSGIVING TO GOD FOR ALL WHO  
HAVE SERVED IN THE U.S. MILITARY FORCES IN PEACE TIME AND DURING WAR.**



## A WARM WELCOME!

*We are delighted that you chose  
to worship with us today.*



### WORSHIP NOTES

#### PREACHER

Rev. Ted Foote

#### LITURGISTS

Rev. George E. Klett  
Sally Kate Morse

#### USHERS | GREETERS

Dave Haverland; Adam Hartman;  
Roger Reese; Debe Shafer;  
Scott Shafer

#### MUSICIANS

Michelle Lassiter, *piano*  
David Kipp,  
*Director of Music Ministries*

#### AUDIO-VISUAL | SOUND

Nicole McKinley; Bill McKinley;  
Jerry Norris

#### COVER ART

The Widow's Mite Statue  
gifted by Dr. R.H. Harrison, Sr.  
located in parking lot  
on Gordon Street side  
of First Presbyterian Church, Bryan

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### THIS WEEK AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

#### TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST, NOVEMBER 15, 2020

9:00am Youth (GR 6-12) participate (via Zoom) in  
Presbytery VIRTUAL Youth Rally-FH

9:20am Church School: Seekers Class-P/via Zoom

9:20am Church School: The Word Class-303/via Zoom

9:30am Church School: Loose Leaf Class-via Zoom

#### 10:45am WORSHIP (livestreamed)-Sanctuary \*

12:00pm NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

3:00pm VIRTUAL 2020 Crop Hunger Walk-Choose your starting point:  
your neighborhood, a park, church parking lot,  
Texas A&M campus, etc.

#### MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2020

#### TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2020

9:30am Circle V-P/via Zoom

5:00pm Stewardship & Finance Committee-CCF/via Zoom

6:30pm Children's Center Ministry Committee-via Zoom

#### WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2020

#### THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2020

#### FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2020

#### SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2020

9:00am Presbytery Meeting-via Zoom

#### CHRIST THE KING SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2020

#### "Stewardship Dedication Sunday"

9:20am Church School: The Word Class-303/via Zoom

9:20am Church School: Seekers Class-P/via Zoom

9:30am Church School: Loose Leaf Class-via Zoom

5:30pm Youth (GR 6-12) Friendsgiving (POTLUCK)-FH

\* *During COVID-19, Room 108 is available for your nursery needs*

## MISSION OPPORTUNITIES



Now through Sunday, November 22, FPC's youth invite you to give to a "Thanksgiving Offering" for Brazos Church Pantry to help the hungry in our community. Make checks payable to: FPC-Bryan, MEMO: "Thanksgiving Offering." *Thank you!*

### PAPER DRIVE FOR STILL CREEK RANCH



During the month of November, Mission Committee sponsors a **PAPER DRIVE** for **STILL CREEK RANCH** welcoming your donations of **PAPER TOWELS, TOILET TISSUE, WHITE COPY PAPER,** and **KLEENEX.** Place your donated items on the marked table in the indoor patio.

### CROP HUNGER WALK

It's here! The 2020 BCS CROP Hunger Walk is **TODAY** at **3:00pm.** Join us as we walk "together but apart" to raise funds to end hunger one step at a time, worldwide through Church World Service and in our own community through Brazos Church Pantry. Register to walk and/or donate online at:



[www.crophungerwalk.org/bryantx/fpcbryan](http://www.crophungerwalk.org/bryantx/fpcbryan).

### VIRTUAL OPENING on Facebook Live

<https://tinyurl.com/y3zkuj77>

For more information, contact:

FPC's CROP Hunger Walk Coordinator Judy Hughson, 979.777.9662 or [jfhughson@gmail.com](mailto:jfhughson@gmail.com).

A graphic for a "Coat &amp; Blanket Drive" event. It features a circular logo for "Twin City Mission" with a cross and the text "19 63". Below the logo is the text "GIVEAWAY EVENT November 19th 9am - 4pm at 2505 S. College, Bryan, Texas". The main text "COAT &amp; BLANKET DRIVE" is in large, bold, blue letters. To the right is a small image of a child in a winter hat. Below the main text is a photo of five children in winter coats. At the bottom, it says "New &amp; used coats, hats, scarves, gloves, blankets, etc. are needed for those in need in the Brazos Valley." and "IF YOU DONT WEAR IT, SHARE IT!".

Place your donations in the marked box on the Patio thru **MON, NOV 16!**

**NEW MEMBERS** may be received any Sunday by profession of faith, reaffirmation of faith, or transfer of membership. If you feel led to inquire about becoming a church member or deepening your commitment as a disciple of Jesus Christ, please indicate your desire on the fellowship folder. You may also call the church (979.823.8073) or email Pastor Ted Foote ([tfoote@fpcbryan.org](mailto:tfoote@fpcbryan.org)) or Associate Pastor Emily Béghin ([ebeghin@fpcbryan.org](mailto:ebeghin@fpcbryan.org)). They will be glad to arrange a mutually convenient Sunday when you can be received by the Elders and introduced to the congregation.

**Visit us on the web!** [www.fpcbryan.org](http://www.fpcbryan.org)

for the newsletter, announcements, worship bulletins, updates, etc.

**Check out "The Good Samaritan Bites the Dust" on Facebook** [www.facebook.com/FPCBryan](https://www.facebook.com/FPCBryan)

**NEW!!! on Instagram** [www.instagram.com](https://www.instagram.com) Search for and follow **fpcbryantx1867** and/or **fpcbryan\_youth**

**BE THE FIRST TO KNOW** when **WORSHIP** and **ACTIVITY** videos are uploaded to our **YouTube channel!**

Go to [www.youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com), search for First Presbyterian Church of Bryan, Texas, then click **SUBSCRIBE**

**Share prayer needs and church group news with fellow FPC participants on Church Updates!**

is FPC-Bryan's online tool for YOU to post church-related announcements, ways to serve, and your current prayer needs. While users receive a weekly reminder email on Thursdays to view new posts, this online tool is "REAL

TIME." Contact Karen in the church office, 979.823.8073 or [office@fpcbryan.org](mailto:office@fpcbryan.org) to set up your account.

Then, login at <https://fpcbtch.churchupdates.org/login> to create your password-protected account.

**ADVENT SCHEDULE COMING SOON!** The deadline for our next newsletter is Noon today and will be distributed on Wednesday, November 18. This newsletter will cover news from November 26 thru December 23.

## Four-fold Faithful Living -3

First Timothy 6:10; and Luke 21:1-4

Ted V. Foote, Jr.

## Many Characters in Search of Financial Stewardship

November 15, 2020

First Presbyterian Church, Bryan, Texas

This is the third Sunday in our Stewardship Emphasis season with the theme, “Four-fold Faithful Living.” This morning: “stewardship through financial fruits.” Our Scriptures begin with First Timothy, chapter 6, “The love of money – not money, but the love of money – is the root of all evil.” Then there’s the story of the widow with two small coins placing both of them in the temple offering for ministry; and they were the entirety of her financial possessions: she pitched all she had into the collection for ministry.” All she had. Don’t you wonder if perhaps Jesus pointed out that widow’s extravagant and sacrificial giving because he sensed that his own life represented God’s extravagant, sacrificial giving to the world of all the love God could muster through Jesus’ life? In 1921, Italian playwright Luigi Pirandello wrote “Six Characters in Search of an Author.” It is an absurdist-style tragi-comedy. Today, instead of absurdist, tragi-comedy, I’ll introduce you to several characters I’ve known in my life who have been models with respect to how they have lived and what I have learned from them related to finances and the ministries of Jesus Christ. Not one of them taught me with an imperative: “You must contribute this amount/ you should pay this percentage/ you ought to donate this much,” etc. They simply exercised financial stewardship in multiple ways, and mentored and tutored me from what they exemplified with their own giving. So, “Many Characters in Search of Financial Stewardship.”

When I was seven years old, on Sunday mornings at the Presbyterian Church in Gatesville, Texas, my family often shared a pew with Ms. Grace Kelso and Ms. Bertie Chambers. Both about 70 years old, Ms. Kelso was a widow and Ms. Chambers had never married. I often sat in the middle of the pew, and, as the offering plate was passed, I noticed how the two of them each put in three dollars or so in cash. At the other end of the pew, my dad or mom would place a check in the offering plate. My dad and mom both had outside work of 40 hours or more a week. All of them consistently, regularly were contributing financially to the ministries of Jesus Christ through the church. Real-life characters practicing financial stewardship regularly.

When I was 23 years old and a second year student at Austin Presbyterian Seminary, I heard the Reverend Carter King and Dr. Bob Shelton say to our class: (1) “A church budget makes both a theological statement and a mission statement. It illustrates the priorities of the congregation in any given year. Of course sometimes – maybe often – the money to spend is limited. Finances are a finite resource. So whether an individual or family or institution has much or little or somewhere in between, always – every year, every week – what we do with what has come our way makes a theological or mission statement. Is outreach important – locally? regionally? nationally? globally? Are people and members valued? Is the building suffering? Are other ministries suffering because the building is the highest priority? Is the church too reliant on paid staff? Is the church understaffed? Are paid staff – from custodians to clergy – paid fairly? Carter and Bob: real-life characters asking real-life questions about theology and mission priorities directly related to church budgets and financial stewardship. (2) Carter and Bob also taught me that there are two general approaches of pastors to church giving: the pastors who know what members give and the pastors who make a point not to know. This church and I operate from the second practice. I don’t know, and the church doesn’t want me to know. Beyond my dad and mom, Ms Kelso, Ms Chambers, Carter King, and Bob Shelton, let me tell you what several additional church member characters have taught me about financial fruits without me ever knowing the amount of anyone’s annual giving.

When I served as an associate pastor in north San Antonio, C.A. Fagan was an adult Sunday School class leader. C.A. worked for Bell Telephone as a personnel analyst. He was about 5’3” tall and stooped with severe rheumatoid arthritis. Before moving to San Antonio he had been a member of Presbyterian Church which, in his opinion, relied too much on income generated from a set of oil wells once upon-a-time bequeathed to that church. “Tom, Ted,” he would say to Tom Schmid and me, “the church here may not have enough funds to do everything desired, or to do everything easily, but be careful what you wish for; because over-reliance on something like productive oil wells can make the membership’s giving lazy.” It would be a quarter of a century before I served a church with oil and gas wells. Fortunately this church does not depend on oil and gas production for the essentials of the church’s basic ministries’ budget. C. A. Fagan was a real-life character imparting real-life wisdom about any church’s financial stewardship. (2) There in San Antonio, I also encountered Sister Pearl Ceasar of the Catholic Sisters of Divine Providence, who worked with us northside Presbyterians in alliances with Roman Catholic and with United Methodist congregations for economic development and equity of city services in our own neighborhoods and across the city. The church had to pay organizational dues to belong.

Mission and outreach efforts sometimes require financial investment. In the early 1980s, the Session of that church believed financial stewardship testifies to how invested we are with others in the near and wider community.

When I moved to Henderson in east Texas, (1) I moderated a few debates between one group of elders who believed that any remaining dollars at the end of the church's budget year should be spent on additional mission outreach, so that the congregation would begin the new budget year with a zero balance. The other group of elders believed that – after annual mission commitments were fulfilled – any dollars remaining in the budget at year's end should be carried forward – to help in the next budget's ministries. Both groups believed mission outreach was important; one wanted to spend any remaining assets on additional mission; the other did not. (2) Also, in Henderson, a man named James Barry managed the Interchurch Ministry. James could coax more money out of tight-fisted east Texas conservatives for the poor of that community because he was one of those east Texas conservatives himself – just not a tight-fisted one. Having worked many years with the DuPont Corporation in employee mutual funds, he believed in investments for a person's future. He also believed and practiced how the money we are given in any chapter of life is a gift from God partly for the relief of suffering which others experience. James could get folks to give for those local charitable-relief ministries, because the givers trusted James to be a faithful steward in helping others who needed food-pantry and utility payment assistance. (3) Also in east Texas, a retired oil-and-gas “landman” or “lease-hound” – Wayne Fahle – dropped by my office once a month to bring me a devotional and to share prayer. Wayne's oft repeated mantra was: “You can't out-give God.” He spoke those words, and he believed and lived by them. “You can't out-give God.”

When I moved to Tulsa, Oklahoma, (1) I came to know Harry Nelson, a retired aircraft mechanics instructor. For years a Presbyterian in Pittsburg, PA, Harry wanted the church always to have funding both for the daily operations of local church – paying the light bill, etc., as well as for local outreach as a source to meet people's basic needs, yet also for worldwide relationships in economic, medical, educational, and faith development. A Meals-on-Wheels volunteer in Tulsa and a leader in Eastern Oklahoma Presbytery's global partnership with Presbyterians in southeast Africa in Malawi, Harry used to say, “A church that does not reach past ‘cultural correctness’ and comfort where it is – whatever is viewed as ‘cultural correctness’ and comfort – is not a church practicing the life of Jesus Christ, who always reached beyond ‘cultural correctness’ and comfort.” (2) Also, in Tulsa, Joe Dempsey was a Marine veteran of the South Pacific and a retired petroleum geologist and engineer. Joe taught me that financial investments can be managed by what are called “socially responsible investment firms,” also known as “values-based investment firms.” Investments can be maintained in support of corporations that receive “good report cards” related to environmental care, educational and economic development, employee profit-sharing, etc. “Socially responsible” or “values-based” investments.

I moved to Bryan in 2007. (1) In 2011, a man who was a member of another church in town but who sometimes worshiped here walked into the church office one day about noon. He handed me a check face-down for the church bookkeeper. He said it was his tithe to God from selling a plot of family land in a nearby county. He thought First Presbyterian might could put it to good use in ministry. Then he turned and departed. Envelopes in the church office are in a lower cabinet. As I bent over and reached for the box, I dropped the check, and it floated to the floor, landing face up. I saw that it was for ten thousand dollars. At that point, church expenses were running ahead of income. His gift was a huge lift. From God's grace, he had confidence in this church for a practice of stewardship in the way of Jesus Christ with the dollars he had promised to God for ministry. That year, FPC finished with income \$11,000 ahead of expenses. That gift helped us finish “in the black.” (2) Of course, from investments carefully managed, the Foundation of this church generates funding for ministry-needs and mission outreach. The substantial original financial gifts for our Foundation were initially donated by a few members in the mid-1980s, and others have added contributions since then. Dollars given previously, earning interest, continue to generate funding for Jesus' ministries through this church – which is “a mission station.”

The love of money is the root of all evil. That widow put in/ she gave everything financially which had come her way on that day in her life. Many characters in search of financial stewardship, occurring from many angles to serve God's caring, life-changing outreach in Jesus Christ. You are – and I am – among those characters: learning to risk, invest, and share from and with others – fellow-stewards today, but not alone and by ourselves! Rather, we are sharers, collaborators, and partners with others – near and far, of past, present, and future – together called to share by God; because God eternally is the Author and extravagant, sacrificial Giver of all gifts with love for all people – including us. – All honor and praise be to God.