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## Sundays at Faith

Sunday School & Bible  
Study begin at  
9:15 a.m.  
Worship begins at  
10:30 a.m.

Childcare is provided

# FAITH TIMES

Our Vision – A Community where people are FINDING, GROWING, LIVING,  
AND EXTENDING the love, grace, and compassion of Jesus Christ.

Volume 5, Issue 67

December, 2008

## *A FRIENDLY REMINDER: CHRISTMAS IS NOT SANTA'S BIRTHDAY!*



As you think about those special children on your list, it's also nice to think about the child's birthday we're celebrating. Join us for the 4 weeks of Advent and help us celebrate the birth of Jesus. Christmas is a hectic season. But it's important that we don't forget what it's all about. You can be certain that at Faith Presbyterian even though we're not sure what a "holiday tree" is, we do know what a Christmas tree is. And, we don't say "season greetings" when we mean Merry Christmas. If you tend to agree about these things please join us and celebrate the holidays and the birth of Christ—the Christmas holidays. Because it's one of the best times to celebrate the birth of Christ—On Christmas... during the Christmas holidays. By the way, Merry Christmas!

**COME TO FAITH**  
for CHRISTMAS

## FAITH Presbyterian Church of East Parker County

invites you to be with us

### Advent and Christmas

#### Sundays:

9:15 a.m. Church School  
10:00 a.m. Coffee Fellowship  
10:30 a.m. Worship

#### Nov. 30-Advent Evening

5:30 p.m. Service-Communion  
Dec. 6-ChristmasTyme in  
5-9 p.m. Aledo

#### Dec. 14-The MESSIAH

7 p.m. Musicians of Faith

#### Dec. 17-Santa Comes to Faith

6:30 p.m.-All children welcome

#### Dec. 24-Christmas Eve

6 p.m. Carols, Candlelight,  
Communion





You can contact  
The Rev. Jim Witherow  
by e-mail,  
pastor@faithaledo.com  
or call 817-441-6262.)

## Message from Your Pastor

There is a wonderful story we are invited to participate in every year around this time. I am fascinated by the many ways I see people 'respond' to this invitation. The usual responses involve decorating our homes, gift buying, partying, eating, and getting together with friends and loved ones. Most of this is good, joyful stuff, but some of it leads to pain and heartache. Every year, and especially this year, there seem to be lots of people measuring our participation in this story by how much money we're spending. Whether we like to admit it or not, the truth is, our Christmas spirit is very dependent on our personal economic health and feelings about our financial security and prospects. I like the new expression that has become popular in describing the recent decline in gas and oil consumption in response to the spike in prices at the pump and our other energy bills--*demand destruction*. I like the expression because I believe many of the ways we participate in this

story actually result in *faith destruction*. I believe that participation in the Christmas story should always be faith building. I wish there was a way to measure our Christmas spirit by our faith building rather than our holiday spending. I wish our Christmas spirit depended less on our ability to meet the financial demands of the shopping and partying. I wish our Christmas spirit was more dependent on the amount of time we spend together with that humble couple from Nazareth looking for a safe warm place for the expectant mother to rest after a long pilgrimage to Jerusalem. I wish God would find a way to show us how much joy we're missing by spending our money on stuff we don't need, destructive behaviors, and depending on (demanding) others for our happiness. Maybe God should be in the demand destruction business. Oh, that's right--maybe God has shown us His way of demand destruction. His name is Jesus and he has a birthday coming up. Now there's a story. Merry Christmas!

*Jim Witherow*

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## **CONGREGATIONAL MEETING SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7**

**Business Items: ELECTION OF ELDERS/TRUSTEES and DEACONS CLASS of 2011  
NOMINATING COMMITTEE for 2009**

**APPROVAL OF 2009 TERMS OF CALL FOR PASTOR JIM WITHEROW**

The Nominating Committee is pleased to place in nomination the following officers to the Class of 2011 at the Congregational Meeting that will immediately follow worship on Sunday, December 7:

**Office of Elder/Trustee:**

**Melinda Lary-Smith**—Melinda is being re-nominated for an additional term after serving 2 years on our first Session. She was a member of the initial team that started this fellowship 5 years ago hosting many of those first gatherings in her home. Melinda is a nurse practitioner in the neo-natal critical care unit at Baylor. She has been a very active leader in our Day School ministry, Personnel Team, and does a lot for the Youth of Faith among many other things at the church. She and Bill live in Weatherford and have two daughters in the Youth of Faith, Spencer and Shelby

**Don Kissner**—Don, Jennifer and their daughter, Clara moved to Aledo over a year ago from Nashville, Tenn. Don is a self-employed software contractor specializing in barcode technology. The Kissner's have a history in the Presbytery church, as Don has been previously ordained as an Elder in another church. He is leader in the Rising Disciples youth ministry, has taught adult Sunday School, and is always there when a project needs to be done at the church.

**Office of Deacon:**

**Trayce Allen**—Trayce, Jeff and their daughter and son, Kayce and Cameron, have lived in Aledo for several years and joined our church about a year ago.. Trayce is a paralegal with Alcon Labs. The Allen family have been long-time Presbyterians. Trayce is very active in our children's ministries and was a key leader in our VBS this summer.

**Rick Sheets**—Rick and Alison and their children, Erin and John have been members of Faith for about 2 years. Rick is another one of those people who is always willing and able when there is something to be done at Faith. Rick is a regular participant in our Musicians of Faith Vocal Team. Rick is an Engineer with Lockheed.

**2009 Nominating Committee Members at Large: Bill Smith, Bill McCall, Robin Davis, Mary Sommers, Allen Dobbins**

Note: You may make nominations from the floor at the Congregational Meeting. You must have previously asked your nominee and confirmed his or her willingness to be nominated and serve, if elected.

# December 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b> Women's Morning Bible Study 9:30a.m.	<b>2</b> 6:30 a.m. - Coffee & the Bible 9 a.m.—2p.m. FPDS	<b>3</b> 9a.m. Staff Mtg  Wednesday Together Wed 4 Kids 6:15 p.m. Dinner Theme: Mexican Choir—7:15 p. m We will be decorating the church for Chri- masTyme in Aledo	<b>4</b> 9a.m.-2p.m. FPDS	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> 8a.m. Men's Breakfast R&K  5-9p.m. ChristmasTyme In Aledo
<b>7</b> Communion Sunday 9:15 Church School 10:15 Coffee Fellowship 10:30 Worship <b>First Sunday Fellowship Lunch</b>	<b>8</b>  Women's Evening Bible Study 7:15 p.m.	<b>9</b> 6:30 a.m. - Coffee & the Bible 9 a.m.—2p.m. FPDS	<b>10</b> 9a.m. Staff Mtg  Wednesday Together Wed 4 Kids 6:15 p.m. Dinner Theme: Salads Choir—7:15 p. m	<b>11</b> 9a.m.-2p.m. FPDS  6:30 p.m. Board of Deacons	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>  6-8:30 p.m. 3rd An- nual Young at Heart Christmas Party.
<b>14</b> 9:15 Church School 10:15 Coffee Fellowship 10:30 Worship  6:30 Children's Christmas Recital 7p.m. The Messiah	<b>15</b> Women's Morning Bible Study 9:30a.m.	<b>16</b> 6:30 a.m. - Coffee & the Bible 9 a.m.—2p.m. FPDS  6:30 p.m. Session	<b>17</b> 9a.m. Staff Mtg  Wednesday Together Wed 4 Kids 6:15 p.m. Dinner Theme: Italian 6:30 Santa Comes to Faith Choir—7:15 p. m	<b>18</b> 9a.m.-2p.m. FPDS	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> Communion 9:15 Church School 10:15 Coffee Fellowship 10:30 Worship  6-7:30p.m. All Church Christmas Caroling	<b>22</b>  Women's Evening Bible Study 7:15 p.m.	<b>23</b> 6:30 a.m. - Coffee & the Bible	<b>24</b>  6p.m. Christmas Eve Service	<b>25</b>  <b>CHRISTMAS DAY</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> 9:15 Church School 10:15 Coffee Fellowship 10:30 Worship  5:30 Evening Communion Service	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>  <b>NEW YEAR'S EVE</b>			



**Our New Home**  
**301 Bailey Ranch Rd.**  
**Estimated Completion**  
**March 2009**

## A CHURCH FOR EVERYONE

Things are taking shape quickly now on Bailey Ranch Rd. In the next few weeks we will have an opportunity to put our names, messages and prayers inside the walls of our new church building—and the we will celebrate the placement of the 21' cross on the top of the front of the building. These events will be announced at worship services during Advent

### FAITH SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

- ⇒ SUNDAY MORNING GREETERS—We're always looking for new smiling faces to welcome our Sunday morning guests. Please let Natalie Peak know if you are able to serve as a greeter on Sunday mornings.
- ⇒ CENTER OF HOPE SFS DRIVE—We are making regular deliveries to the Center of Hope. You will need to be able to lift tubs that weigh 50 lbs. or so. See Deacons Janette Hahn or Jeff Shook if you are able give a hand with this.
- ⇒ LANDSCAPE MINISTRY—We can always use help with our weekly landscape upkeep. Pastor Jim and/or Don Kissner can always be found at work on Friday mornings beginning at 9 a.m.
- ⇒ CENTER OF HOPE—Every few months we prepare and serve meals at the Center of Hope. Please see Betty Putnam if you would like to help with this important ministry.

### *Music at Faith Presbyterian...*

Messiah - Dec 14 6:30 Children of Faith recital 7:00 Musicians of Faith and Friends present Messiah, reception following

Santa Claus is coming to Faith ~ Wednesday, Dec 17 at 6:30

Do you enjoy singing Christmas Carols ? please come and join us Sunday, Dec 21, the morn the merrier, as we go door to door to some members homes and sing your favorite Christmas Carols ...

*Johna beth*



### Growing Our Family of Faith

We want to welcome all who were our guests this past Sunday. We hope that you experienced the Faith Hospitality that we want to extend to all God brings our way. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to fully participate in everything we do at Faith—membership is not required—but if you are looking for a church home, we encourage you to consider our Faith family. We set aside the last Sunday of each month to bring in New Members. Information about becoming a member, Journey to Faith, is available at the Hospitality Table. Please contact Pastor Jim if you are interested in joining our Faith family!

Next joining Sunday is **December 21**

## JOYS AND CONCERNS

We continue to pray for Mike and Jill Birdwell's granddaughter, Amber. We celebrate the birth of Analee Swan's new grandson and Melinda Lary-Smith's nephew. We celebrate the birth of twins—grandson and granddaughter to Bill and Mary Sommers and nephew and niece to Tracy Dobbins and pray for the twins continued progress after being born premature. We celebrate M.G. and Sheila Ames 50th Wedding Anniversary! We pray for the economic health of our country, wisdom for those working on solutions for bringing back stability to the marketplace, and new hope for those who have lost employment and homes. *If you have joys, concerns, or prayer requests please let us know. Call 817-441-6262 and leave messages on Pastor Jim's voice mail or send an email to Pastor Jim at: [pastor@fpcepc.org](mailto:pastor@fpcepc.org).*

### DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS\*

Patty Maddox	12/1	Erin Sheets	12/12	Shelby Smith	12/20
Ron Davis	12/5	Lee Vasquez	12/17	Spencer Smith	12/28
Anthony Edwards	12/5	Judith Alexander Priest	12/18	Parker Ferrell	12/29
Chris Demers	12/9	Katherine Mazade	12/20	Tatiana Mohr	12/29
Hayden Poynter	12/9	Ariana Mohr	12/20	Janette Hahn	12/30

\*We have manually converted our member data to a new system this year. If there is an error or omission in birthdays or any other member info please let us know by email: [faithtimes@faithaledo.com](mailto:faithtimes@faithaledo.com)

### ADULT ACTIVITIES

#### **YOUNG AT HEART**

Mark your calendars for Sat., Dec. 13. from 6-8:30. The Putnam's are hosting the third annual Chinese gift exchange. Bring a wrapped gag gift and an hors d'oeuvre to share. Drinks will be provided. The address is 8911 FM 1187. Phone number for directions-817-443-3525

**Sunday Mornings** -Please join us at 9:15 a.m. every Sunday morning for "A Contemplative Walk Through the Synoptic Gospels." During this time, we will explore the unique witness of the Gospel writers to Jesus Christ. We will step back in time to learn about the 1st century Mediterranean world of the early Christians. Just as important, we will explore how these unique Gospels have shaped our understanding of the Risen Lord. Our study leaders will be Dr. Bob Peak.

**Women's Morning Bible Study** - This group meets the first and third Monday mornings of each month and is open to any interested women in our community. We hope you will join us. Childcare is provided.

**Women's Evening Bible Study** - This group meets at the church on the second and fourth Monday evenings of each month. Please consider joining us. We find that each person brings unique thoughts and blessings.

**Men's Breakfast** - **Saturday, December 6**, we will meet at R&K at 7:55 a.m. All of our Men of Faith are encouraged to join us for a great morning of fellowship and sharing events of our lives, our faith, and a great meal. We meet the first Saturday of each month. It's a great way to get to know each other a little better.

### **COFFEE AND THE BIBLE**

TUESDAY MORNINGS AT 6:30

Meet with Pastor Jim and other Faith early risers every Tuesday morning for a guided Bible Study and devotion. We will be studying books of the Bible, what the Bible says about topics on your minds and issues of the day, and how the Bible can feed our souls with the grace of Jesus Christ. Join us for a refreshing pause in your week for that much needed time in the Word of God. Previous experience in Bible study or knowledge of the Bible is not necessary to participate. We will end each session promptly at 7:30 a.m. We hope you will come and enjoy Coffee and the Bible with Pastor Jim.

## CHILDREN AND YOUTH MINISTRIES

### What Really Matters

Usually the things that really matter aren't what the world tells us are important. You know what is truly important – our relationship with God, living a life of faith, honoring God in our relationships with family and friends. Why is it so easy for us to get swept up into the holiday frenzy and succumb to the pressures of the world around us? Instead, let's help each other by offering encouragement and support. Below are some things I've come across that may be helpful this season. Lastly I offer some suggestions for our prayers. Together, let's stay focused on what *really* matters.

Grace and peace,

*Judith*



For more information about any of our Children or Youth Ministries, contact Judith Alexander Priest at 817-441-6262 or email [children@faithaledo.com](mailto:children@faithaledo.com)

### Loosen the Grip of Materialism (from Group Publishing's Parent Link)

During the Christmas season, our efforts to honor the holiday's true meaning do battle with the consumer culture. But the temptation to overindulge our kids isn't limited to De-

cember. All year long, children and youth are bombarded by ads for "must-have" items that promise fun, excitement, and popularity. Parents often give in, either because they can or because they don't want their kids to be deprived.

Research shows that overindulged children and teens are less able to cope with stress, often lack self-control, and are at risk for being self-centered and depressed. From a spiritual standpoint, materialism shifts our priorities from heavenly things to earthly things.

Consider these ways to tame the monsters of materialism and overindulgence:

**Emphasize the importance of nonmaterial values.** Place a priority on spending time as a family, doing things other than shopping. Also watch what kind of example you set.

**Help children and teens explore their values.** Instead of just saying "no" to every request, use the moment to discover what's important to them.

**Realize that overindulgence comes in many forms.** Avoid indulging your child or teen emotionally by expecting too much or too little of them. Children crave boundaries and teens need them, so don't feel guilty about setting limits. Also, resist the temptation to do chores and tasks that they should be doing themselves. Teach them self responsibility.

### An Overload of Overindulgence

- The average American family spends \$800 on Christmas gifts every year but only nine minutes playing together on Christmas morning. (Washington Dept. of Parks & Recreation)
- More children go shopping every week than read, go to church, play outdoors, or talk with their family. (Born to Buy, Juliet Schor)
- America's 27 million preteens (kids ages 9-14) directly or indirectly influence \$170 billion in sales each year. (Journal of Consumer Psychology)

### Ask God

1. To give your children a joyful, Christ-centered Christmas.
2. To help your children feel satisfied with what they have.
3. To help your children place value on spiritual things, not material things.

**Kids of Faith (PreK) Upcoming Events**

**Christmas Tyme in Aledo** – Come join the fun on Saturday, Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> from 6-9:00 pm. There will be crafts, refreshments and a love nativity at the church!

**Come See Santa Claus** – December 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.

**Caroling** – Come join all ages on December 21<sup>st</sup> at 6:00 p.m. as Faith goes caroling.

**Club 3:16 (Grades K-5) Upcoming Events**

**Christmas Tyme in Aledo** – Come join the fun on Saturday, Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> from 6-9:00 pm. There will be crafts, refreshments and a love nativity at the church!

**Christmas Party** – Sunday December 7<sup>th</sup>; time TBA.

**Come See Santa Claus** – December 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.

**Rising Disciples (Grades 6-8) Upcoming Events**

**Christmas Tyme in Aledo** – Be part of the Live Nativity on Saturday, Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> from 6-9:00 p.m.

**Caroling** – Come join all ages on December 21<sup>st</sup> at 6:00 p.m. as Faith goes caroling.

**Christmas Party** – Date and time TBA.

**Youth (Grades 9-12) Upcoming Events**

**Christmas Tyme in Aledo** – Saturday, Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> from 6-9:00 p.m. please help volunteer with kids' crafts and serving holiday cheer!

**Christmas Party** – On Saturday, December 13th we will go ice skating at the Parks Mall and see a movie. Time TBA; movie suggestions encouraged!

**Caroling** – Come join all ages on December 21<sup>st</sup> at 6:00 p.m. as Faith goes caroling.

**SHYC** – Senior High Youth Connection at Austin College is January 30-February 1st. This is always a lot of fun. The cost is \$40 to attend for the weekend plus the cost of meals/hotel. We need a headcount ASAP in order to book our hotel. Please let Robin know by December 10<sup>th</sup> if you plan to attend.

## December Volunteer of Faith

Many hands are involved in making sure our Sunday morning and other occasion worship services glorify Jesus Christ as the Perfector of our faith (Hebrews 12:2). This month's Volunteer of Faith, **Leah Larson**, joyfully does one of those special tasks that makes our worship experience so special. We have Leah to thank for the wonderful bread we enjoy each time we celebrate Holy Communion. Leah also sets the Communion table, cleans the linens and the serving pieces, and keeps our supply of the fruit of the vine plentiful. We can also count on Leah to be one of those quiet helpers at almost every significant event at Faith—especially when it comes to sharing her culinary skills with us. Leah and Greg, Byron and Celeste were one of the first families to join our Faith community when we started worship services in Aledo. Byron and Celeste are Rising Disciples and we can always count on Leah and Greg to help out with our youth activities and just about anything else going on at Faith. Leah works in Information Technology for Lockheed. Thank you Leah for all that you do for our church family and worship experience!

**Faith Presbyterian Church  
E-mail Directory**

**Pastor Jim Witherow: [pastor@faithaledo.com](mailto:pastor@faithaledo.com)**

**Children's Ministry: [children@faithaledo.com](mailto:children@faithaledo.com)**

**Youth Ministry: [youth@faithaledo.com](mailto:youth@faithaledo.com)**

**Music Ministry: [music@faithaledo.com](mailto:music@faithaledo.com)**

**Faith Times Newsletter: [faithtimes@faithaledo.com](mailto:faithtimes@faithaledo.com)**

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