



## Congregational Life by Iris Hymel

Congregational Life is moving along. We held a successful Grandparent's Day Lunch. Everyone enjoyed the fellowship.

October brings Halloween and Trunk or Treat. A signup sheet will be posted. Please be thinking about how to decorate your trunk and provide lots of fun and treats for the children. This event is always a big success for both the children and the adults. I am looking forward to this as it will be my first time participating in Trunk or Treat. I have decided on Costumes, Treats, and Decorations for my trunk. Let's all work to make this a fun event for all. Ask your family and friends to join us and decorate their trunks. If the newsletter is published after Trunk or Treat, then I feel confident I would be saying thanks to all who participated and it was a great success.



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## PASTOR'S CORNER

November is upon us, and with it comes the holiday season. We just had Halloween, and now Thanksgiving and Christmas are on our mental radars. This is the time of year when we start thinking about turkeys, presents, and family gatherings. It is the season of happies, smiles, giggles, and joyfulness. The seasons are changing, and we are putting on comfortable clothing and going out.

Not everyone is joyful though. Not everyone is happy. Imagine that.

It was not that long ago that I heard a pastor doing his version of prayers of the people. He was listening to the faithful offer up their joys and concerns from the pews, and then taking them and praying for them either for mercy or gratitude. One elderly lady offered up that a grandchild had recently committed suicide. The pastor certainly prayed for the family who were suffering a tremendous amount of pain, but he also prayed for the shame of the situation.

Let me pause here to reflect a little. When a person makes a choice to take their own life, which is not a normal response to our survival instinct, something horrible has gone wrong. Imagine that Robin Williams, that brilliant comedian who one would think had everything, took his own life. Something inside him was terribly wrong, and no one could or would see it.

Let us take another step back. If someone were in a terrible accident, or suffering from some form of ailment that led them to the end of their life, we would not associate that with shame. They lost too much blood or suffered a horrible brain injury. It was a car wreck, a result of violence, or even a fire. All of these things can lead to an end-of-life event, and while there would be sadness, there would be no "shame." Their physical ailments would be visible and understood. It was not their fault.

Mental health brings a different dimension to the forefront. Many people suffer from a silent, invisible pain known as depression. Often, they appear happy. They laugh. They tell jokes. They function in life like we expect them to. Yet inside, they are hurting. And the mental pain they are enduring is more than they can stand. We see these people every day. They are in our offices, our schools, in the supermarkets, and in the streets. What's more, they are you, and they are me.

Mental health historically carries a stigma. People are shamed for enlisting the aid of a psychologist or a psychiatrist. They are called crazy and ridiculed for not being able to "handle it." Thus, when the pain becomes so bad, or they have been pushed beyond their limits with no help in sight, they get desperate. There is no shame, at least not for the victim. There is only pain, and in the end, there is plenty to go around. Mental health is just as painful, and dangerous as our physical health.

The holidays are not joyful for everyone, but we, you and I, can make them better simply by being better listeners. When you ask someone how they are doing, do not just hear their words, hear how they are spoken. If someone is withdrawn, check on them. They might be an introvert like me, or they might be struggling. If someone is avoiding their normal routines, hobbies, or friends, find out what is going on. Your efforts, your caring words, your listening ear might just save a life and make a merry Christmas for a family.

I know the holiday season is busy for everyone but take some time to be with the people you love and care about. It may be the greatest gift they receive.

Amen.



# Words of Worship

By LAVITA GOLIGHTLY  
WORSHIP ELDER



World Communion Sunday was celebrated October 1st with lots of color, pattern and types of bread. Hope you all enjoyed vibrant display!

Reformation Sunday is this Sunday, October 29th. Tartan plaids are decorating the communion table and lectern. Members are encouraged to wear your plaids. We'll be singing traditional hymns as we celebrate our reformed and reforming faith.

Halloween, October 31st, falls on Tuesday, with All Saints Day the following day, November 1st. All Saints Day is a day of remembrance for those who have preceded us this year into life after death.

## WORSHIP NEWS (continued)



Now for some really electrifying news! Only 58 more shopping days till Christmas!! That's counting all Sundays and holidays, because, of course, we can always internet shop, even on those days. Along with that news also comes a busy calendar for the end of November and December. If you haven't checked your calendar yet, here are some of the highlights:

Thanksgiving is early this year - November 23rd.

Christ the King Sunday follows on - November 26.

First Sunday of Advent is - December 3.

The Christmas Cantata is the 3rd Sunday of Advent - December 17

Christmas Eve is also the Fourth Sunday of Advent - December 24.

\*\*There will be NO morning worship. There will be a Christmas Eve service at 6:30 p.m.

Christmas Day is - December 25 - Monday



Don't forget to fill in all of your personal plans for holiday parties and family celebrations! Whew! I am tired already! Hopefully, we all will remember to carve out some time to slow down and prepare our minds and bodies for what Christmas is really about - the birth of our Savior, Christ Jesus.

One last thought - I will be contacting members asking you to be a reader for the Advent candle lighting, which occurs at the beginning of the service each Sunday of Advent. If you would like to be a reader, or would like your family or group to be readers, contact me, Lavita Golightly, with a text or e-mail. I am at 512-797-2340 and [lavita\\_golightly@yahoo.com](mailto:lavita_golightly@yahoo.com). The liturgy will be available for readers before the Sunday that you light candles.



## Presbyterian Women

By Iris Hymel, Moderator

Your Presbyterian Women remain very busy. We met on October 4, 2023, as a hybrid meeting. Three of our members, Becky Wieder, Cathy Bliton, and Laura Mann, met with us by Zoom and there were seven members in person. Laura was gracious enough to take minutes for Linda Owens as she was cruising.

Debra Caldwell led Lesson 2, "The Exorcism in Gersa" from the Horizon Bible Study Sacred Encounters.

Marla Endieveri asked to join us and give a presentation about Presbyterian Children's Homes and Services (PCHAS). We have been supporters of this organization for many years. She gave an interesting overview of what services they offer when children and families are in crisis. If you know anyone who may need help, please let Iris Hymel know and she will put you in touch with Ms. Marla. This will be totally in confidence. Iris can give you the information without asking names. Marla was an eloquent speaker and it was very clear how much she cares about the children and families in need.

NHPC is holding a clothing drive in October. The clothes will be donated to Clothed by Faith. A group of our women will volunteer to help at Clothed by Faith on the third Wednesday of each month from 10 am to noon. This month Helen Galer, Jennye Giles, and Iris went. It was quite enjoyable and the two hours went by quickly. Our church will begin collecting and assembling Seafarer's Boxes in November.

PW is sponsoring a CDC child in need by helping with tuition. The CDC is very appreciative.

We also cleaned up the refrigerator. We put bins in the fridge and labeled the bins. We ask that if you bring food to church and there is left over, please bring it home instead of putting the food in the fridge. It is a very generous thought to leave it for others, but the food just stays because no one is sure what to do with it.

Presbyterian Women is open to all women. If you are not a member of NHPC, you are still welcome to attend our meetings. Please consider joining and bring a friend. We have fun and help support not only our church, but our community.

## Building Congregational Vitality by Debra Caldwell



MATTHEW 25

Session voted to become a Matthew 25 church. What does that mean? PCUSA has developed the Matthew 25 Initiative to build “congregational vitality by challenging people and congregations to deepen their faith and get actively and joyfully engaged with their community and the world.” It also calls us to learn about and challenge the factors that lead to inequality, poverty, and oppression in our own neighborhood and around the world. <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/>

We had the honor and joy of sponsoring and hosting a booth at the first Katy Pride celebration on Saturday which was organized by First Christian Church of Katy. Thanks to the folks who put together New Hope's booth--Helen, Dave, Debra, Ron, Cathy, Barry, Jill, Jennye, and Soda.



To deepen and expand our faith community's journey of inclusion, celebration, and affirmation for all people and welcome them into the life and leadership of the church, Session also voted to affiliate with More Light Presbyterians <https://mlp.org/> and the Covenant Network <https://covnetpres.org/> These organizations seek full participation of LGBTQIA+ people in life, ministry, and witness of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and in society



## Building Congregational Vitality (continued)

Jesus calls us to serve with and for “the least of these” and become a church of action. New Hope Presbyterian Church is welcoming to ALL people but to be truly open and affirming, we need to compassionately view our neighbors and serve those who are marginalized and vulnerable. In doing so, we hope to grow in faith, make new disciples and revitalize our congregation as we reach out to people in our community and the world.



We plan to apply to become an Earth Care congregation to become more involved in being good stewards of God’s earth.

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/environment/earth-care-congregations/>

In the coming months we will explore ways to deepen and expand our faith community’s journey of inclusion, celebration, and affirmation of all people and welcome them into the life and leadership of the church.

**Please join the Congregational Vitality committee.**

**(we will meet November 8 at 10 am)**



# MISSION AND OUTREACH

## New Hope Clothing Drive October 1-31

PLEASE WASH ALL CLOTHING TO BE DONATED



Thank you to everyone who donated to our clothing drive. A total of 18 bags of clothes were delivered to Clothed by Faith by Terry Owens and the Galers! Thank you, Terry, for taking about \$130 of food to Katy Christian Ministries.

We are beginning to collect items for the Ministry to the Port of Houston HISC Christmas Shoebox Program. Pick up a shoe box or leave NEW items in the library. Boxes will be wrapped and delivered after Thanksgiving.



**Note: Full-sized items are much preferred over small travel size. Please no liquid soap, bar soaps or bottled water**

Stress Ball / Mini Games	Band-Aids (fabric)	Light Weight Work Gloves (M, L and XL)	Popcorn / Snacks
NESCAFE Instant Coffee	Lip Balm	Pocket-sized Notebooks	Gum & Hard Candy
Deodorant	Nail Grooming Kit	Cold Weather Caps and Balaclavas	Sewing Kit
Toothbrush/Toothpaste	Q-Tips	Ballpoint Pens	2024 Pocket Calendar
Multi-Vitamins / Fish Oil	Socks	Word Search/Sudoku/Fill-in books	USB Flash Drive
Razors / Shaving Cream	Small Bibles (NIV, RSV)	3-in-1 Shampoo/Conditioner/Body Wash	Texas Key Chains
Hairbrush/Comb	Baseball Caps / Beanie's (NEW)	Earbuds/Headphones	Playing Cards
Mini-First-Aid Kit	T-shirts (NEW) M, L, XL	Small Flashlight w/ batteries	Texas Magnets and Keychains Souvenirs
Insulated Tumblers	Small Whistle	Bible/Devotional materials – Daily Bread, Open Door, etc.	Signed Personal note or card





## MISSION & OUTREACH (CONTINUED)

Remnants of the spring planting were cleared from the Garden of Grace to prepare for fall. We planted a flat of vegetables from Urban Harvest on October 7. Thank you, Helen Galer, Helen's grandson, Bruce Hymel, and Kate Sadler. Helen and Debra planted seeds on October 11.

Join us on 7 PM, Tuesday, November 14

## **PLANTS OF THE BIBLE**

The monthly meeting of the Garden Club will include a short business meeting, refreshments, and a talk by Harris County Master Gardener, Jean Fefer



GREETINGS FROM THE C.D.C



“October was a whirlwind of excitement. We had a very nice turnout for our Open House. The Fall Festival was a hit and Trunk or Treat was a blast. It was so nice to see so many familiar faces dressed in their best Halloween scare wear!

November is a short month for us at our little school. We are celebrating the color yellow. We are gathering together to give thanks with our school wide Thanksgiving feast. The teachers and children are taking a much-needed break to be with

their own family and friends.

During November teachers are conducting phone conferences updating the parents on their child’s individual progress. This is a great opportunity for parents ask questions and communicate any concerns.

Upon our return we will be lifting our voices to prepare for the Christmas season.

Cheers



## **YOUR SESSION AT WORK**

**Linda Owens, Clerk to Session**

Session met on October 15, 2023.

We celebrated:

New Hope's booth at the first Katy Pride event held at First Christian Church

The CEC's fall fundraiser raised \$2,311.00.

Presbyterian Women are now volunteering once a month at Clothed by Faith.

And we worked on plans to:

Have Trunk or Treat on October 28, 2023

Potentially start an informal worship service on Wednesdays before choir practice

Participate in the Seafarer's Box program again this year.

To conduct a stuffed animal drive in December.

To have only one service (6:30 p.m.) on Sunday, December 24, 2023.

The session welcomes your prayers of support as we work to raise funds and build awareness of our church.

