



PINES

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Pines Press January 2024 / 12751 Kimberley Lane 77024 / 713-467-2234 / www.pinespc.org



Fat Tuesday Pancake Supper

Donations Support Our
Feed My Starving Children
MOBILEPACK!

Tuesday, February 13 @ 6:00pm
Pancake Supper
Followed by BINGO!

Ash Wednesday

Drop-in | 12:00-1:00pm

Worship &
Communion | 6:30pm

February 14



PINESPC.ORG

12751 Kimberley Ln | 713-467-2234

It's our 4th Annual **Feed My Starving Children MobilePack!**
February 23th and 24st

As we prepare for our big day we need a team of volunteers to help organize this amazing event. If you'd like to be on the organizing team or to learn more about how you can help, please contact Pastor Andy or Tony Samper. Remember, we need YOU to make this another huge success for our community and the hungry around the world.

FEED MY
STARVING
CHILDREN



Pines Family News & Current Events

The church office is open Monday - Thursday 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM. On Fridays, the office staff work from home. If you need assistance on Fridays, call Cindy at 832-489-5989.

Calling all Taco Makers and Prayer Warriors!

Come join our Taco and a Prayer Team and see first-hand what a fun, rewarding, and precious ministry this is.

Join us for our next TAAP on February 2nd!

For more information contact the church office or Margaret Schafer.



and a



Wondering how to order flowers for the Sanctuary or Narthex?

—cost for Narthex flowers is \$50 and the Sanctuary is \$75. We offer the option to give to a benevolence or order a live arrangement. Please email: Melissa Gravett at mgravett0123@gmail.com or Linda Aldred at lindaaldred1@aol.com to sign up.



Do you feel like you are constantly looking for a phone number for one of your fellow church members?

How would you like to have access to that information right on your phone or computer?

Call Alexis in the church office and she can assist you in adding the Breeze app to your phone or computer. The Breeze app will give you the full directory of member names, phone numbers, and addresses so that you have them at your fingertips! To obtain this information, you must be a Pines member. Any questions, give Alexis a call. She is in the church office on Mondays.



Do you get our weekly prayer list? If not, please call Cindy in the church office at 713-467-2234 to get on the list. If you would prefer to send an email for prayer, you may send it to Bethel at prayer@pinespc.org. Cindy can also help you sign up to receive our newsletter or our weekly publication "This Week at Pines". So give us a call, we would love to get you connected to what is happening at Pines!

Second Sunday Lunch ...will be February 11th, right after church at Café Express.

The church office is looking for volunteers to answer phones: Monday through Thursday. We have volunteers for some days currently, but we also want to create a list of substitutes. No experience necessary. We will train you. Bring a book or something to work on while sitting at the front desk. If you can help, please give Cindy a call to get on the list. By the way...one of our long ago male members (Jack Long) used to answer the phones on occasion...just to give you gentlemen out there something to think about!

Important Info...

In the event that the doors are not open for your group, please leave a note on the door to ask them to call your cell phone for entry. Every group leader should have an entry card to come into the building. If you do not, please contact Cindy in the church office to assist with getting one for you. Propping the doors open not only wastes electricity, but also is a danger to those in the building in case of intruders. Please treat your church as your home. **And please, NEVER prop open the doors at any time!** Thank you.

PLEASE help us conserve energy...by remembering to turn off lights and AC when you leave the building. **If you turn it on, please turn it off!** Thank you so much! Your Property Committee

Grace, Love & Peace to you,

Welcome to February, the month of little heart shaped candies with cute sayings on them, unending Hallmark advertisements, red roses and of course the words... "Will you be my Valentine?" This month is dedicated to reminding us all to show our love and appreciation to others. What a great reminder it is to share love. Sharing love is what Jesus' life and ministry were all about. Jesus not only taught, but he also modeled what true love really meant and looked like.

This year we have a very special opportunity to remember that love and share it with others as we celebrate Valentines Day. This year the reminder of God's love for us, the reminder of God's creation of us, is on February 14th. Yes, Valentines Day is also Ash Wednesday, the beginning of the Lenten season. What better way to remember God's amazing love for us than for Ash Wednesday to fall on Saint Valentine's Day. There are several stories of St. Valentine and why we might celebrate his life on February 14th. The legend that seems most confirmed over several traditions and readings is that St. Valentine was imprisoned in Rome for ministering to Christians persecuted under the Roman Empire in the third century. According to an early tradition, Saint Valentine restored sight to the blind daughter of his jailer. Numerous later additions to the legend have better related it to the theme of love: tradition maintains that Saint Valentine performed weddings for Christian soldiers who were forbidden to marry by the Roman emperor; an 18th-century embellishment to the legend claims he wrote the jailer's daughter a letter signed "Your Valentine" as a farewell before his execution on February 14th.

No matter which legend is true, there seems to be a theme throughout all of the traditions that St. Valentine was all about spreading the Good News of the Gospel wherever he could and to whom ever would listen. How appropriate then on this Ash Wednesday, that we dedicate ourselves for forty days to remembering what God created us for, to do all we can to share God's love and hope wherever... however... and to whomever we can. What will that look for you this Lenten season? What will you take on, or give up, to draw you closer to God's love.

The ashes we will place on our heads this Valentines Day should humble us and be a reminder that we are God's creation. A creation that is made to share love, share hope and grow in faith every day of our lives. May this year's Valentines Day hold a different meaning and purpose for you as the ashes are placed on your forehead and the invitation to "Be My Valentine" is extended to each of us in the sharing of the bread and the cup at The Lord's Table.

Let us all live into the hope and love that is Ash Wednesday, Lent and Valentines Day.



Family Ministry Calendar for February

PLEASE HELP!

To keep growing and supporting our small but “growing” youth group we need help!

Family ministry calendar for February:

4 Youth Apartment Outreach 12noon-2pm

10 Youth Lock-In 6pm

11 Youth BAKE SALE 10am-12:30pm

16 Parent’s Night Out 5:30pm-8:30pm

23-24 Feed my Starving Children in our gym! Sign up online!

23-25 Conclave Youth Retreat! 4:30pm Friday

PARENT’S NIGHT OUT Friday February 16

5:30pm-8:30pm

Dinner (spaghetti), Dog and Valentine games and crafts, Movie: Lady and the Tramp

FREE but MUST RSVP

Youth have TWO big events plus their regular outreach this month!

1) Saturday February 10th starting at 6pm with dinner is a Lock In- we will be searching the building for lost keys in a game to win prizes (top prize \$50 Amazon card) as well as late night baking/ decorating for the next days bake sale (and we likely will then also eat some of said baking!). This event will end at the end of the bake sale at 12:30pm on Sunday.

2) Youth Conclave is Feb 23-25. This is our Presbytery event and does unfortunately conflict with our Feed my Starving Children but either choice is worthy! The retreat is \$150 (scholarships are available so don’t let money be why you don’t go!) and includes transportation, lodging, all good and activities for the weekend. We always have so much fun at this retreat and this year have four students helping lead it!

Sunday School each Sunday in February:

Kids 9:15-10:15am rooms W13 and W14

Youth 9:30-10:30am Senior High Room

If any children are interested in being an acolyte, (2nd grade and up), see Kristin for training.

If any children are interested in singing OR ringing the chimes see Laurie (all ages!)

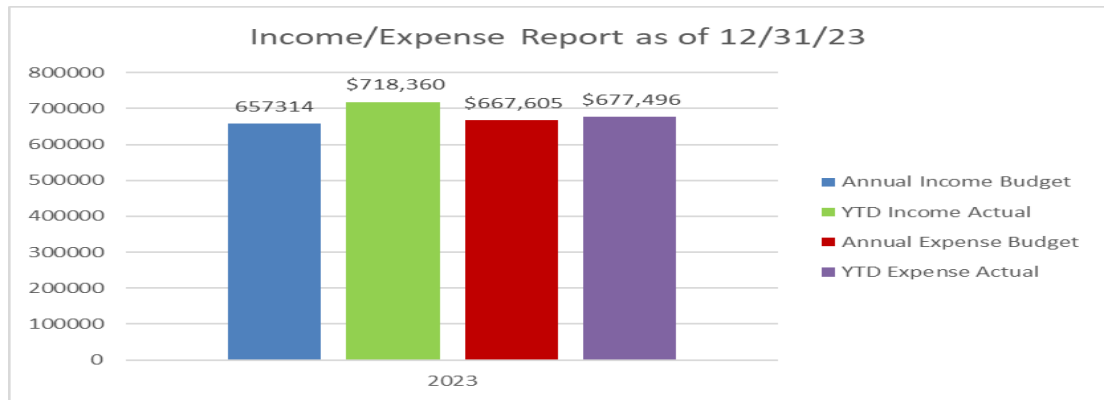
If any children are interested in greeting or ushering see Kristin or Chris Wolfe!

We love our kids leading us in worship!

**Bake Sale- the youth will again host their annual bake sale!
Sunday February 11th from 10am-12:30pm in the hallway in
front of the fellowship hall .**

Need a treat for your Super Bowl party? Sweet for your Valentine? Party for your tummy?? Come pick up something and support youth missions! We will be heading to Belize this summer to work with several community ministries! If you’d like a donate something to sell, contact Kristin or see the sign up genius online. Thank you for your support!

Stewardship



STEWARDSHIP NOTES: The December, 2023 financial statements can be summarized as follows... Pines is a blessed church!

1. Pledge income for 12 months ended slightly (1%) ahead of budget. Non-pledge income exceeded budget by 50%! Both results are certainly an answer to prayer. Total income exceeded the budget by \$61,046.
2. Overall expenses were over budget for the year by 2% or \$10,203. An unplanned, unbudgeted plumbing repair costing over \$20,000 is the reason for the overage. Other committees were mostly underbudget for the year. The Missions committee chose to defer their spending of the Lovejoy/Kroger funds and those 2023 funds will be added to the 2024 budget for Missions.
3. Total Income was \$718,360; total expenses were \$677,496; leaving a positive Net Income of \$40,864 for 2023, a very strong performance for 2023.
4. As of year end, 2024 pledges received total \$560,102 from 80 families, an increase of 2% over pledges received for 2023.
5. The Sustaining Gift Fund, held at the Texas Presbyterian Foundation (TPF), rose to a value of \$781,135 by year end. The 1/1/2023 value was \$493,139. This increase reflects market gains, plus the addition of ERTC funds and a \$50,000 undesignated donation, both temporarily directed to the TPF fund by the Trustees, and a \$25,000 designated gift by a donor. This fund is an important asset for the church.
6. The Session approved a balanced budget for 2024 on Monday, January 22 with total income of \$718,700 and total expenses of \$718,610.

Session **The Session met for its regular stated meeting on January 22.** Here are some highlights:

- Session approved conducting the Annual Meetings of the Congregation and the Corporation after Worship on February 11, 2024. At the meetings, the Congregation will be asked to vote on terms of call for Rev. Gans, to elect a new trustee for a 3-year term, to elect members from the Congregation to serve on the 2024 Nominating Committee, and other actions that will be presented in a formal notice next week.
- Session approved the budget for 2024. The budget will be reviewed with the Congregation at the Annual Meeting.
- Session elected Shirley Bollich and Patsy Jackson as Ruling Elder Commissioners to the meeting of the Presbytery of New Covenant on March 16. A third commissioner will be elected at the February Session meeting.
- Dan Schafer was elected as Clerk of Session for a one-year term commencing March 1, 2024.
- Session approved the Christian Education Committee's proposed curricula: *Stranger Safety* for children's classes, *Twenty-Four Hours That Changed the World* as the Lenten Study, and a daily devotional titled *Local Pilgrim, A Wandering, Wondering Daily Devotional* for adults.
- Session approved the Worship Committee's nomination of Valerie Harelson to serve as Memorial Service Coordinator, and approved amendments to the Memorial Service Guidelines.

Craig Walker, clerk

If you would like to opt out of receiving this newsletter, or if your email is going to change, please send a note to cindy@pinespc.org and we will update your record.



Shine

By Ann Guerra

I can't help thinking about Andy's sermon on January 14. You remember the one. We all took our phones out and found our flashlights. Then we flipped to the camera mode to take a selfie. The light was on, the light was off. On. Off. Try it again- ON. OFF.

My pew partner said, "look at that ugly guy staring back at me." I secretly said, "I hate my double chin." Criticism- our first thoughts. And don't forget- our lights went out.

This silly little exercise has really worked on me. It was one more reminder that I can be so much healthier and happier when I am looking OUT for others than looking IN at me. My joy comes from seeing, knowing, serving...

Of course, we need to take care of ourselves before we can be any good to others. Once we have done that, DO we share our light? Do we allow ourselves to be God's hands and feet? I encourage you to shine your light. Jesus is the Light of the World and we, his brothers and sisters, are here to shine with him!

If you need someone to help you find your light, please reach out to your Pines Stephen Ministry Team.

We are here to support you. Contact Phil Wetz or Ann Guerra



Ring in the New Year With Your Fondest Memories of Pines

Participating is easy. Just jot down a few paragraphs and your memories will become part of the upcoming Pines History Book. We have pictures of most of our members and we'll include those, too.

Please tell us:

Your name, and the names of family members, along with the number of years (or months or weeks) you've attended Pines.

What attracted you to Pines and any volunteer work, and maybe a little about friendships made along the way.

Tell us your email address or phone number so we can be in touch with any questions that might arise. We have recent pictures of most of our members that we'll include.

As an example, check out a couple of examples below. Thanks to Leslie Friedrich, and Susan and Mark Babineck for sharing their memories. See below:

Ten years ago, **Leslie Friedrich** came to Pines because of her interest in the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). The DAR's Alexander Love chapter meets several times a year at Pines. "I ended up joining because I liked what I saw, and also because our church is so close to my home. I found I had lots of ties at Pines. There was Kari Work, also Janice Pannell, Cathy Bankhead, Sue Barry and Morriss Partee who, like me, graduated from Hendrix College in Conway, Arkansas. Memories go on and on and so do the splendid friendships I've made at Pines Presbyterian Church."

Susan and Mark Babineck moved to the west side of Houston in 1998, a few months after their marriage. Susan began looking for a neighborhood church to join, and after several weeks of searching, narrowed down to three. Mark was working most weekends but was able to attend services at those three. They decided on Pines, as it felt the most welcoming and homelike. Wayne Eberley was minister at the time, and made them feel a part of Pines. They realized this was a church that calls all its members to be active in faith, and truly wants to help them grow. They officially joined in 1999.

Submit your memories to sharondotson@gmail.com or call her at 346-242-9504 with any questions. She's here to help. In advance, thanks for your memories. They'll be featured in the 2024 Pines' History Book.

Sherwood Elementary READING BUDDIES

Are you an approved volunteer?
We Need YOU!



Program Purpose

Provide one-to-one support to a student with the specific focus on increasing their literacy level and developing a lifelong love of reading.

Targeted Students

Only for 2nd graders in the "mid-level" based on their individual reading level.

If you are interested or would like more information, please email Mayra Onofre, and use the link below to register for a Reading Buddy District Training: January 26 at 2:30-3:30 pm

<https://www.springbranchisd.com/engage/partnerships-volunteers/readsbisd/reading-buddies>



Mayra.Onofremorales@springbranchisd.com



713-251-6937

If interested, you can also contact Dave Coles at Pines for more information.





PRIORITY REGISTRATION IS OPEN AT THE PRESCHOOL

The Preschool is entering its 54th year of learning through play and we would love for you to join us. Priority registration for church members runs through February 2! You may enroll via the online registration link or by downloading the application form and turning it into the school office along with the Application Fee of \$75. Both may be found at our website: www.pinespresbyterianpreschool.com. Questions? Please call the front office at (713) 467-9358 and ask for Connie or Karen.

Are you looking for something you can do from home for the church?

We are looking to start back up with the Sojourners Group. This volunteer position would look for places for people in or connected to our church to go on trips in the Houston and surrounding areas.

All participants must be over 50 years old. You pick the place you want to go, schedule it, and then schedule the county bus to come to the church to pick up the group for the days journey. If you would be interested in doing this, please give Cindy a call in the church office.

This is a wonderful opportunity to do fun things with your Pines family. Been to the Blue Bell Ice Cream Factory lately, to the Painted Churches, to one of the many museums in the Houston area? There are so many fun things that can be done on a group trip. Again talk to Cindy (713-467-2234 x110) and she will guide you through the process.

Please prayerfully consider being our Sojourners Planner!

PINES YOUTH bake sale

Sunday February 11 | 10:00am

Support our summer mission trip to Belize!
Want to donate goodies for the sale?
Contact Kristin or click the link in This Week at Pines

Mission @ PINES+

Feeling the winter blues??? See below for some activities to do with the family in February to brush off those blues...

- Go see a musical,
- Try out a new restaurant,
- Try the Zoo on a cooler day,
- When is the last time you went to a museum?
- Visit one of our local missions, they can always use an extra hand! Giving back is a sure way to get rid of those blues!



We need items for the FMSC (Feed My Starving Children) auction. If you have a vendor, beauty shop, have a shop that you frequent often, please ask if they would be willing to donate something for our event to feed children. They can call Cindy for a donation certificate at 713-467-2234 x110. Thank you!

February Agape offering is in support of our Youth Missions!

Please mark your calendars with the
NEWSLETTER DUE DATE: February 23rd (for the March 2024 issue)