



# PINES

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

*The Pines Press*, January 2024 12751 Kimberley Ln, 77024 713-467-2234 [www.pinespc.org](http://www.pinespc.org)

FEED MY  
STARVING  
CHILDREN



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

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.

**Sign ups will begin January 2nd,  
so be on the lookout in the Fellowship Hallway!**

# 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.**



## **What a wonderful Christmas Luncheon on December 17th.**

Thanks to all the hands that put this together!

Pictured are: Cindy Coles, Violet O'Brien, Marsha Deison, Ann Guerra, and Linda Carlson. Also a huge help and are not pictured are: Judy Shamp, Shirley Bollich and Marsha Welsh. Thanks ladies, it was a beautiful luncheon!!



## **Please hold the family of Barbara Liles in your prayers.**

Barbara passed away on December 5th. A service will be held in 2024. As soon as a date is set for the service, we will let you know. Barbara joined Pines in 2010. Her son Ben sings in the Pines choir and her grandchildren attend Pines. She was a sweet soul whose smiling face will be missed.



**Please join us** as we gather for more Bingo in the Fellowship Hall on January 18th at 6:30. There will be food and drinks provided and of course...lot's of fun with BINGO! Don't miss the fun! Contact Linda Aldred or the church office if you plan to attend so we can make sure there is plenty of food for all.

## **Shirley, Kristin, Andy, Laurie and ALL!**

I was thrilled to the deepest part of my heart watching the Advent Play. I laughed and cried and just felt all warm inside. The age range of participants was spectacular and the LOVE in the sanctuary was heartfelt. I pray others could feel the presence of God in the room. I am appreciative that it was performed as the sermon. One dear Pines member always reminded me- we are walking sermons. This one was a true gift of JOY! Thank you and the families for all the time, energy and love that went into this incredible gift!  
Peace, Ann

## **To All Pines members and others:**

To quote a line from a movie or Tv channel I was watching, "I am Back". All prayers, telephone calls, visits and meals, helped with the healing process since Aug 15, 2023. Challenges during this period have been excruciating, physically/mentally, but with all support, I am recovering. Thankful for a quality medical team with knowledge. Lynda has been my main support through all the challenges during this period. She continues to be my faithful companion through sickness, and a healthy recovery. I could not do it without her. Recovery is slow. I am learning to walk again. One day, one step at a time is my motto, as time will heal all. I am blessed for my position in life considering the journey I have travelled in the past few months. Psalm 23. Psalm 46:10, Hebrew 11:1 have always been my steadfast companions to keep me focused on tomorrow not yesterday. My beautiful face will appear around church, no time known but it will happen. Blessings from My Lord & Savior, Jesus Christ and our heavenly Father God for what they have given to me and my family. Bob Barr

***Second Sunday Lunch*** ...will be **January 14th**, right after church at Café Express.

## Grace and peace in Christs' name,

I hope you are getting excited about all that God has instore for us in this new year! One of the great things God has been planning for us is our community wide outreach and mission project, Feed My Starving Children, happening February 23<sup>rd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>! As many of you know, our FMSC MobilePack™ is geared towards welcoming people to Pines while also serving those in need. This year our goal is to package over 100,000 meals for starving children and bring over 500 community volunteers onto our campus.

This year I am excited that we get to celebrate our 4<sup>th</sup> MobilePack™. I have been so thankful for the way our family of faith has responded to this project. Each MobilePack™ has been tirelessly supported by you. You've come to believe in the project and the organization. FMSC is a Christian non-profit that provides nutritionally complete meals specifically formulated for malnourished children around the world. Their mission is, "Feeding God's starving children hungry in body and spirit." As we've learned, every year millions of children die from preventable causes such as pneumonia, diarrhea, malaria and undernutrition. Even today, hunger still causes nearly half of deaths in children under 5 years old. This is heartbreaking. But we have, and we can make a difference!

As you may know, their process is simple. Financial contributions given by people just like you fund the meal ingredients. Volunteers hand-pack the meals at MobilePacks™. Meals are donated to FMSC food partners around the world, where kids are fed and lives are saved! Since its inception in 1987 over 4 BILLION starving children have been fed a nutritious meal.

Through our FMSC MobilePack™ here at Pines, our church and community will be responding to the cries of those in need by producing over 100,000 nutritious meals for children around the world. You, your family, your co-workers, fellow students, social club, scouting group, team, whomever are invited to join 500 volunteers to pack meals for this MobilePack™ event. Please share with them that during a two-hour shift, adults and children 5 years and older will label bags, measure and scoop ingredients, seal bags and prepare boxes for shipping. If you'd like to learn more about what happens at a MobilePack™ click this video link or type it into your web browser address bar: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ech5XOryipM&t=84s> .

We need you to make this a successful outreach event, so please consider volunteering. To volunteer for our MobilePack™ look for the FMSC announcement each week in This Week at Pines, or go directly to [www.pinespc.org/fmsc](http://www.pinespc.org/fmsc) . If you are unable to attend, we can still use your help in raising some of the funds needed to pay for the meals. Remember \$106 feeds a child for a year, \$424 feeds a family for a year. To make a donation online please go to [www.pinespc.org](http://www.pinespc.org) and click the "Give" button in the upper left had corner, or write a check to the church and note FMSC in the memo line.

Scripture reminds us in Psalm 146, "He *upholds* the cause of the oppressed and *gives food* to the hungry." This will again be an amazing time at Pines as we welcome the community and feed the hungry. I hope you'll pray about being part of this amazing day!

Until all are fed,



# Family Ministry Calendar for January

## PLEASE HELP!

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

### Family ministry calendar for January:

7 Pines Youth- Apartment Outreach noon-2:30pm  
 14 Pines Youth Council/Group- 6-7:30pm  
 21 Pines Youth 6-7:30pm  
 31 Pines Youth 6-7:30pm

### Sunday School each Sunday in January:

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, (2<sup>nd</sup> 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!

### Youth Praise Report!

Our Youth have started their Hand to Hand Apartment Outreach ministry! We go the first Sunday of each month and would LOVE to have anyone interested join in! We try to take food or supplies for the residents and always have things to interact with the kids there. Just asking someone their name and hearing how they are doing can be ministry. If you'd like to help make this happen with either a cash or food donation that would be awesome as well. A full grill meal costs about \$250 but it is helpful to have different people willing to give different elements- meat, buns, chips, drinks, etc. This is a work in progress by the Holy Spirit. Come be a part!



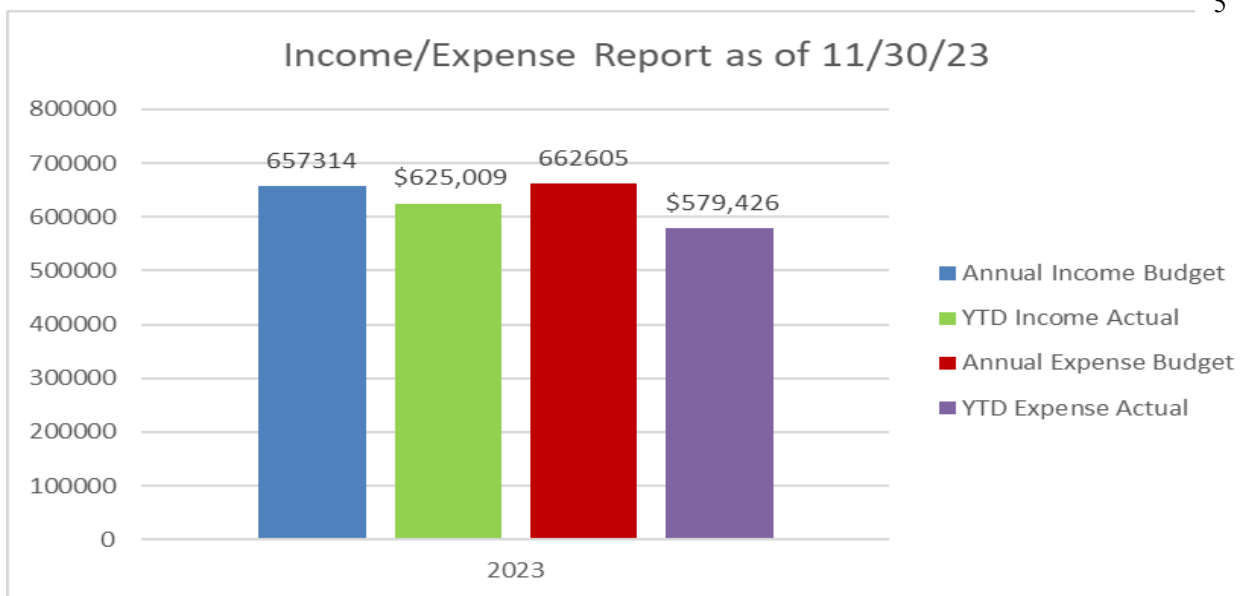
### Can you add one more person to your prayers?

Looking for adults 18 and older to ‘adopt’ a student age 4-18 to be a prayer pal. Prayer is the only requirement, though we know it’s a bonus to follow one another in life events. Gifts for special occasions are appreciated but not required. We know prayer is the special gift and a card every so often (we encourage at least quarterly notes) is one way the Holy Spirit time and time again shows up in our kids lives reminding them they are thought about, supported and loved.

Pines commits to assigning all active kids a partner beginning at age 4. We do have some new students as well as those who just turned 4 ready to receive a partner. Are you willing?

We have a special dinner in April for spending time all together and I can send out gentle reminders to all partners to pray/send a card out. Thank you for considering this important ministry. Contact Kristin for more information or to commit: [kristin@pinespc.org](mailto:kristin@pinespc.org)

# Stewardship



## STEWARDSHIP NOTES:

1. At the end of November, \$484,508 pledge income has been received of the \$526,700 pledged for 2023, leaving just slightly over \$42,000 remaining to come in during December to meet our pledge income goal. In addition, we have already received \$105,312 in non-pledge income exceeding our goal of \$101,000.
2. Expenses for 2023 are currently underbudget, resulting in a net income of \$45,583 through November.
3. December is usually an active month financially both for expenses and income. We anticipate ending the year in a positive net income position, helping to strengthen Pines' financial position and fund new or expanded programs in 2024.
4. The Stewardship campaign for 2024 has resulted in pledges of \$560,102 from 80 pledging families, an increase of over \$9,000 in the total pledge amount and 1 additional pledging family. We are immensely grateful for every family that participated in this campaign.

## Session

**Although Session did not have a stated meeting in December,**

Session approved the following by electronic voting:

- the baptism of Marley Stephens, the daughter of Morgan Gravett Stephens, on January 21, 2024, with Rev. Gans officiating.
- the memorial service for Doris Hutchison on January 7, 2024, to be officiated by Rev. Gans.

Craig H. Walker, Clerk



### 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](mailto:mgravett0123@gmail.com) or Linda Aldred at [lindaaldred1@aol.com](mailto:lindaaldred1@aol.com) to sign up.

**Thank you!** How do you say thank you for a thank you? I can't begin to express how grateful I am for the generous gift to celebrate my 25th year at Pines. You, my Pines family, have walked with me through sickness, death, joys, and celebrations. You have truly been my family. Thank you for standing beside me all of these years and loving on me not only this past weekend, but every week since the day I walked into Pines. I look forward to the years we have left together to celebrate the victories and to hold each other through the difficulties, as we traverse this crazy, beautiful world together. I feel blessed from knowing each and every one of you! Thank you again for loving me so much! I love you too, Cindy ♥

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](mailto:cindy@pinespc.org) and we will update your record.



Christ caring for people through people

## BEGINNING THE NEW YEAR

# STEPHEN MINISTRY

As you read this, you may be working on New Year's resolutions to improve your life. Many focus on taking steps to improve their physical health or find better employment opportunities or adopt better financial practices or achieve a previously elusive goal. We often work by ourselves to achieve these goals because we are embarrassed to seek assistance.

I admit that I am often among those "solo practitioners" who attempt to improve as a person without reaching out for help and/or support. Ironically, when I evaluate my life, I recognize that I have accomplished very little without the involvement of others who have supported, encouraged, mentored and prayed for me. In addition, I now realize that, allowing people to help me has often created or strengthened meaningful relationships. I have been so fortunate to have so many people come into my life to help and support me in ways I never dreamed could be possible.

As you evaluate the year ahead, if you are facing a challenging time in life when you feel a Stephen Minister could help (e.g., any type of loss – loved one, relationship, self-esteem, job, lack of purpose, or health, etc.), feel free to contact Ann Guerra or me to discuss whether working with a Stephen Minister might be beneficial. There is NO implied obligation in evaluating this alternative and any inquiry is CONFIDENTIAL. Stephen Ministers are not professional problem solvers but are caring people who have been trained to walk alongside others in need in of support.

One of the beauties of this offer is that it DOES NOT have an expiration date. It will be available whenever you and the Holy Spirit decide it is time to explore this possibility. Regardless of your progress on your resolution(s), the Pines Stephen Ministers hope that 2024 will be a year filled with blessings, joy and personal growth.

Phil Wetz

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR LUNCH ON JANUARY 21, 2024

Several of our members in the past have chosen to leave a legacy for Pines via the Texas Presbyterian Foundation (TPF) and the Pines Sustaining Gift Fund. **The Trustees and the Stewardship Committee have invited** Jake Wilson from the Texas Presbyterian Foundation (TPF) to speak about and answer questions regarding legacy giving through the TPF for all who might be interested in learning about this opportunity. A sandwich lunch will be provided.

Your faithfulness continues through all generations;

## YOU ESTABLISH THE EARTH AND IT ENDURES.

PSALM 119:90 (NIV)



What kind of footprint do you  
want to leave behind in this world?



## WILL YOUR LEGACY IMPACT FUTURE GENERATIONS?

YOUR GENEROSITY CAN ENSURE  
THAT THE MINISTRIES  
AND MISSIONS OF THE CHURCH  
CONTINUE TO SHAPE AND  
CHANGE THE LIVES OF OTHERS.

READY TO GET STARTED?  
TPF CAN HELP!

USE THIS QR CODE TO SCHEDULE A MEETING TODAY!



You can always find us at [www.tpf.org](http://www.tpf.org).

The following note is from one of the participants that attended the RaiseUp Families Event in December...

*“I wanted to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude for the wonderful Christmas event you organized for us. It was a truly special evening filled with joy and warmth, and I can't thank you enough for your generosity and thoughtfulness.*

*The gifts that were provided were not just presents; they were tokens of love and care that brightened our hearts. It meant so much to us to receive such thoughtful gifts, and it made our Christmas truly special.*

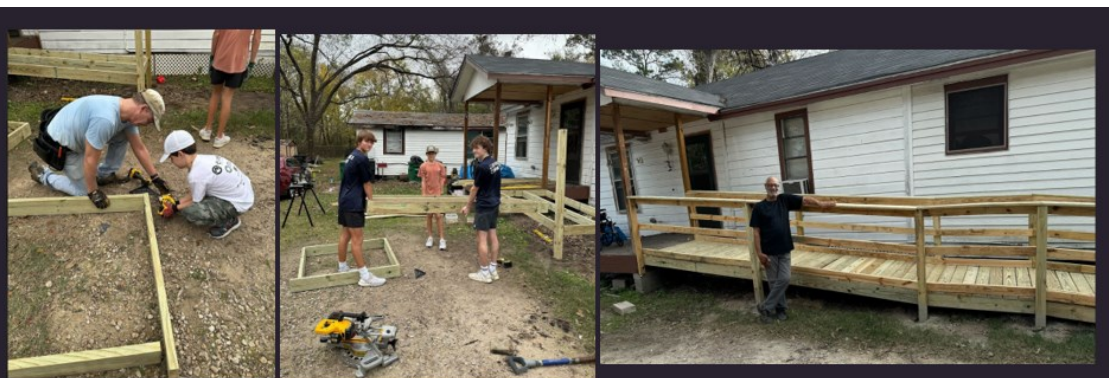
*We enjoyed every bite, and the shared meal created a sense of togetherness and unity that warmed our souls.*

*The fun craftwork activities were a delightful addition to the evening. They allowed us to tap into our creativity, share laughs and create beautiful memories together. It was a wonderful way to bond with my daughter and me after years of challenges.*

*We want to express our profound gratitude for the unwavering support of RaiseUp Families, Pines Presbyterian Church, the Boy Scouts, our dedicated volunteers, and our generous sponsors during this holiday season. Your collective commitment has filled our lives with immense joy, and we are profoundly thankful for your boundless kindness and compassion. Thank you once again for making our Christmas unforgettable. Your nonprofit's commitment to making a difference in our lives is truly heartwarming. Wishing you all a Joyful and Shalom-filled Merry Christmas.”*



THE RESTORATION TEAM



**This past Saturday, during our second Saturday serve for December, we had 12 volunteers join us from across Houston. With their help we were able to provide a new wheelchair ramp to the Francis family. Before Ms. Francis struggled to get in and out of the house on her own. She routinely had to wait for her Husband or son and sometimes it would require both to get her back inside with the old ramp. With work completed on Saturday she now has more independence! Just in time for Christmas!**

## 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 January 12th! For more information contact the church office or Margaret Schaf-



and a



# 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

## PINES NEEDLES UPDATE...

Judy Shamp and I took Pines Needles' donations to Mission of Yahweh on Monday [Dec. 4].

We delivered the following knitted and crocheted items: 4 baby blankets, 4 pairs of baby booties, 47 children's hats of various sizes, designs and colors, 70 adult hats of various sizes, designs and colors, 78 scarves... within the hats and scarves are 5 matching hat/scarf sets.

Tammie took a picture of Judy and me with the items you made and donated, which is attached. Her message to all of you is...

"Thank you--this is great! They are going to love these gifts so much. Merry Christmas to all of you wonderful Pines Needlers! We love you so much!"

I want to add my thanks for everything all of you have done to make this possible.

A very Merry Christmas to everyone!

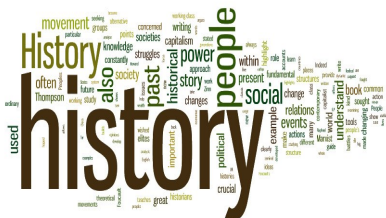
Valerie



**The Explorers class** just finished the Footsteps of Peter course and has started a 12-week series that will take us on a spectacular and dramatic twelve thousand mile journey of a lifetime, traveling the ancient roads to the very places where Christianity began. *Ancient Roads from Christ to Constantine* is a captivating adventure through four centuries and seven countries in the Middle East, North Africa, and Europe.

The class is DVD-based (no homework) and will feature author and distinguished history professor Jonathan Phillips of Royal Holloway, University of London.

**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!



## IF YOU LIKE HISTORY....

**YOU'LL LOVE CONTRIBUTING TO THE PINES HISTORY BOOK.**

If you have pictures from past Pines events (digital is best) you'd like to share or fond memories you know others would enjoy, we'd like to know about them. Email Sharon Dotson at [sharondotson@gmail.com](mailto:sharondotson@gmail.com) and she'll get back to you with details.

**Please mark your calendars with the  
NEWSLETTER DUE DATE: January 19th (for the February 2024 issue)**