

P I N E S P R E S B Y T E R I A N C H U R C H

The Pines Press, December 2023 12751 Kimberley Ln, 77024 713-467-2234 www.pinespc.org



Beginning November 30 & December 3
Advent Study | Thursdays - 5:30pm or Sundays - 9:15am

December 3-17:
Christmas Joy Offering Collection

December 6:
"Blue Christmas" | A Service of Wholeness | 11:30am

December 8:
Parent's Night Out | 5:30-8:30pm

December 10:
Second Sunday Lunch | Cafe Express | 12:00noon

December 17:
Christmas Cantata | "Night of the Father's Love" | 10:45am
Followed by Christmas Luncheon | 12:00noon

December 24:
Sunday Worship | 10:45am
Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship | 5:00 & 7:00pm
Holy Communion at Both Evening Services

December 25:
Breakfast | 10:30am
Worship on Christmas Day | 10:45am

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.



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 and she'll get back to you with details.



Please hold the family of Norma Bender in your prayers. Norma passed away on November 12th. A service will be held on November 30th at 4pm in the George Lewis Funeral Home located at 1010 Bering Drive. A reception will follow from 5 to 7pm. Thank you to those that visited and prayed for Norma during her illness.



It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas! Well, almost. It's time for our annual Sign-ups for **Poinsettias** that we will be ordering from Brookwood Community to decorate our Sanctuary for the Christmas Season. The cost is \$12.00. You can either sign up in the Fellowship Hallway before the service on Sunday mornings through December 3, OR you can email or call Linda or Melissa with your information. Please designate whether the **Poinsettias** are "In Honor Of" or "In Memory Of" when you make your selection and you may order as many as you like. The **Poinsettias** may be taken home after the last service on Christmas Eve.

Linda Aldred lindaaldred1@aol.com or Melissa Gravett mgravett0123@gmail.com



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.

**Second
Sunday
Lunch**

...will be December 10th, right after church at Café Express.



Merry Christmas

Pastor's Page

Advent greetings to you,

The season of Advent and Christmas is upon us. This time of year is supposed to be a time where we are to wait with joyful anticipation of what is to come on what we now call Christmas day. For many, this season is full of joy and happiness as we anxiously await the celebration of the birth of the Prince of Peace, but for some it only brings up memories of lost loved ones, or it is a reminder of joy lost due to financial, health, and/or physical and emotional problems.

The great gift of Christmas brings hope to all of us no matter where we are in life. The abundant hope that is given to us by God in the grace of Jesus is a gift of love that is poured out for all. I pray you can share this gift of love and abundant hope with others as Jesus has called us to do. We have great opportunities to do this as a church family this season. Our Sherwood Christmas Angel Tree project continues to share hope with children at Sherwood Elementary as we provide some Christmas gifts for the children. The wrapping party for these gifts will be held on Saturday, December 2nd beginning at 9:00AM in the Fellowship Hall. I feel the Sherwood Christmas Store is one of the greatest service projects we hold here at Pines. Not only is our time of wrapping filled with joy and excitement, but the paper, tape and bows we use create packages of hope and love that are shared with some very special families.

Sharing hope comes in many forms and opportunities. You may also invite friends, neighbors, and families to worship with us during this wonderful season. Advent Thursdays (5:30-7pm in Fellowship Hall) are a wonderful occasion to come and bring friends for dinner and a study on the message of John the Baptist as he prepared the way of our Lord. Another opportunity is the annual Children's Christmas Pageant on Dec. 3rd during worship. The choir Christmas Cantata will take place during worship Sunday, December 17th followed by our annual Christmas Dinner. This beautiful music will surely be uplifting and a great reminder of the One true hope we all have. We will once again offer a service known as "Blue Christmas" to help those who are struggling to find joy and hope in this season. The service will be held on Wednesday, December 6th at 11:30AM with lunch to follow. I also encourage you to invite all you know to our Christmas Eve Candlelight & Communion Services at 5:00 and 7:00PM.

I pray this season brings you abundant hope and that you can share that hope with others!

Merry Christmas,




Family Ministry Calendar for December

PLEASE HELP!

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

Family ministry calendar for December:

1-3 Pines Youth Retreat

3 Family Advent Play during Service (rehearsal in Sunday School hour)

8 Parent’s Night Out 5:30-8:30pm

10 Youth help lead Raise Up Families Party then have their own! 3:30-7:30pm

24 NO Sunday School- services 10:45am 5pm 7pm

25 Christmas Service- Blessing of the Gifts – 10:30am

Pines Youth RETREAT!! Dec 1-3rd \$50 cost. Beach time, Worship, Bible Study, Movie, Advent Play, Apartment Outreach (this retreat counts as 5 hours of service)

Youth Christmas Party- On December 10th we will gather at 3:30pm to help lead Raise Up Family party (songs, crafts and games and have dinner with them!) THEN we will go to the youth rooms to have our traditional Saran Ball of Goodness and our SOCKS AND SWEETS gift exchange! Bring a wrapped pair of new socks with a yummy treat!

Parent’s Night Out At Pines!



WHY: *Play and care for kids | Free time for parents*

WHEN: *Friday, December 8th from 5:30-8:30 pm*

Drop off - Fellowship Hall | Pick-up - Youth Rooms

COST: *FREE! BUT MUST REGISTER*

WHAT: *CHRISTMAS FOOD and CHRISTMAS GAMES*

WHO: *Nursery - 5th grade welcome!
(number of children will be limited to volunteers available)*

RSVP or questions to Kristin - kristin@pinespc.org



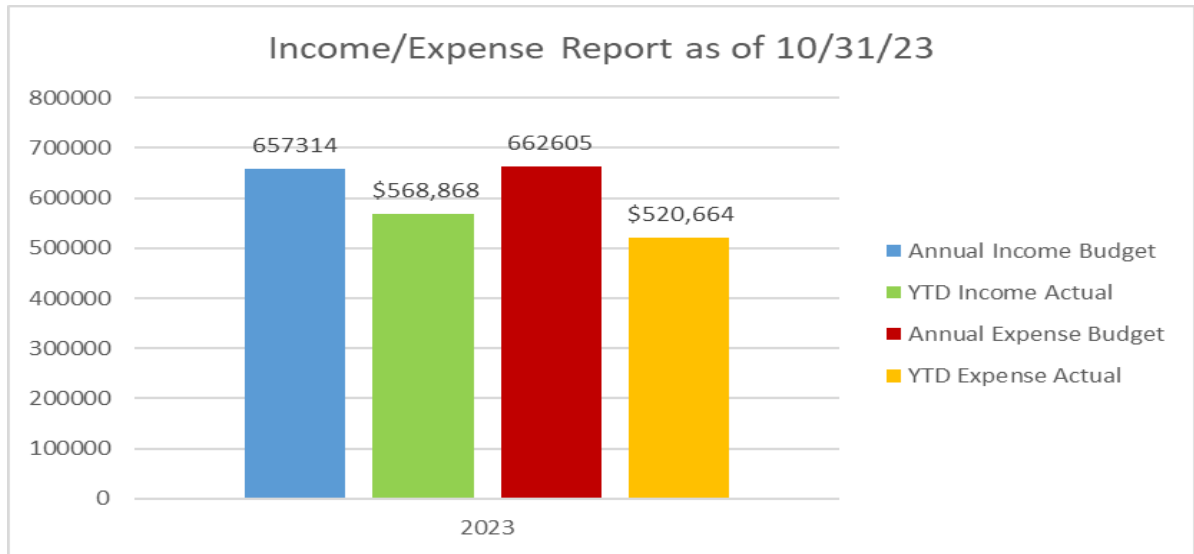
Can you add one more person to your prayers?

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

Stewardship



STEWARDSHIP NOTES:

The October, 2023 financial statements can be summarized as follows:

1. Pledge income for 10 months continues slightly ahead of budget. Non-pledge income received through October is well ahead (95%) of the year's budget due to unexpected early gifts and continued strong giving.
2. Overall expenses were underbudget for ten months. Property expenses are well controlled and under budget. Recent plumbing repairs will increase costs in November. Staff committee expenses are right on target. Missions spending is well below budget and expected to catch up in November when grants are distributed and holiday giving is recorded.
3. Total Income was \$568,868; total expenses were \$520,664; leaving a Net Income of \$48,204 for October, continuing our very strong performance this year.
4. Mark your calendars! The Trustees and the Stewardship committee will host Pines' representative, Jake Wilson, from the Texas Presbyterian Foundation on Sunday, January 21, 2024, for a lunch following worship. Jake will discuss and answer questions about the importance of leaving a lasting legacy with a planned gift and how to do that.



Session **The Session met for its regular stated meeting on November 27.**

Here are some highlights:

- Session approved a funeral service in January 2024 for non-member Doris Hutchinson, who often visited Pines' services with her daughter Darlene Brown.
- Session approved the Christian Education Committee's motion to conduct an Easter Egg hunt in Bendwood Park on March 30, 2024.
- Session received an update from Sharon Dotson about the Pines' History Project. Sharon is collecting memories from Pines' members about their time at Pines. Everyone is encouraged to submit a brief paragraph to Sharon at sharondotson@gmail.com.
- Session committees reported on upcoming events at Pines:
 - December 2 is Wrapping Day for the Sherwood Christmas Store;
 - also on December 2, decorating the Church for Christmas will start at 9 am;
 - December 6 is the Blue Christmas service in the Sanctuary at 11 am; and
 - December 17 is the Christmas Luncheon following the Christmas Cantata, *Night of the Father's Love*.
 - The Stewardship Committee will be hosting a luncheon following Worship on January 21, 2024 to hear a presentation on legacy giving by Jake Wilson of the Texas Presbyterian Foundation.

Craig Walker, clerk



Service of Wholeness and Healing

Wednesday, December 6, 2023

11:30

Sanctuary



Advent is not always a season full of joy and light. Trauma and loss may darken the festive feelings that are expected during the season of waiting, decking the halls and sipping eggnog. Often there are pressures to be happy and stuff painful feelings that may surface during the holidays.

The Blue Christmas Service of Wholeness and Healing will help you come out of the darkness as you honor memories of *what was* and use your faith to confront the fears of *what may be*. Come share space with others that are looking for God to hold us close and be near until the light returns.

Bring a friend. All are welcome. Lunch to follow at Café Express. Contact Ann Guerra or Phil Wetz for more information.

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)





Memorial Service Coordinator -

The Worship Committee is searching for someone who would like to serve as Memorial Service Coordinator. This person would work directly with Andy, Cindy, Chris Wolfe, Fellowship Committee and the family of the person for whom the memorial service is honoring. If you are interested, please contact Connie Sipp, Worship Moderator.



A festive poster for the Sherwood Christmas event. The background is yellow with a blue banner at the bottom. The text 'Sherwood Christmas' is written in a large, yellow, cursive font. Below it, a blue banner contains the text 'Come help wrap presents! December 2 | 9:00am Fellowship Hall'. At the bottom of the poster, there are six wrapped gifts in various colors (red, black, blue, red, black, blue). To the right of the gifts, the text 'questions? KARI WORK' is written. On the far right, there is a vertical blue banner with the text 'Mission @PINES+' and a vertical yellow banner with the text 'OCTOBER & NOVEMBER AGAPE'. The poster is decorated with red ribbons and green pine branches on the left and right sides.

Sherwood Christmas

Come help wrap presents!
December 2 | 9:00am
Fellowship Hall

questions? **KARI WORK**

OCTOBER & NOVEMBER AGAPE

Mission @PINES+



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.

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

Your help is needed for next year's *Feed My Starving Children MobilePack*. We are looking for a few people who can help us research for grants to help pay for our Mobile Pack. This task will NOT include writing the grant, just looking on the internet for suitable grant opportunities. You will be trained on how and what to look for. This is needed quickly so, if you are interested in researching grant opportunities please contact Tony Samper or Pastor Andy.

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. We have the privilege of giving fresh breakfast tacos to folks who might have missed breakfast, or who might not have any other food for the day, or are just hungry for a taco and maybe a prayer. Our cheerful team members bring smiles and warm food to our neighbors in the name of Jesus Christ. We are rewarded with smiles, occasional cash donations, tears of gratitude, and sometimes even songs (from a school bus driver)! Join us December 1st!

For more information contact the church office or Margaret Schafer.



and a





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

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!

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.



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!



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 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!

Please mark your calendars with the NEWSLETTER DUE DATE: December 22 (for the January 2024 issue)