

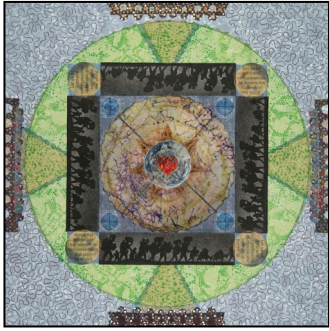


PINES

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

May 2020

Looking Upward, Growing Inward, and Serving Outward...



Pictures sent in by various Pines members. For more information on what and who the pictures are from, please go to Pines Facebook site and read all about how everyone is staying busy! Thanks for sharing everyone!

Pines Family News	pg 2
The Pastor's Page	pg 3
Current Events	pg 4
Youth Happenings	pg 5
Children's Ministry	pg 5
Music Department	pg 6
Prayer Partners	pg 6
Missions	pg 7 & 8
Pines Preschool	pg 8
Staying Connected	pg 9
Stephen Ministry	pg 9
A Little Bit Of Fun	pg 10
Stewardship	pg 11
Session	pg 11
Member Reflections	pg 12



Pines Family News



Congratulations to new 1st time grandparents Dana and Linda Harkey and great grandmother Ethel Kelly on the birth of Charles (Charlie) Webb Harkey. Charlie is the son of Brad and Melanie Harkey. He was born on April 12, 2020. Congrats to all!!

Do you have a son or daughter graduating from High School or College this year?

Be sure and let Cindy know in the church office so she can include them in the graduates bulletin!

**SHOW PINES WHAT YOU'RE UP TO
by sharing your HOME PHOTOS!**



What's everyone doing at home? Send us your photos!

As we've been spending our days differently, we would love to see photos of projects taking place at home -- Perhaps a gardening project, your pets, family, art or sharing your practice of meditation and prayer. All photos will be produced as a slideshow and shared on our website and social media (based on your permission to do so).

Email your photos to our communications coordinator, Micah: micah@pinespc.org.



Please keep Pines member Sharon Dotson and family in your prayers. Her husband John passed away on April 14th. We will keep you updated as to when services will take place.

Please keep Pines member Nancy Robinson and family in your prayers. Her husband Carter, passed away on April 15th. We will keep you updated as to when services will take place.

A note of prayerful thanks... Sharon Dixon (in Midlothian, VA where we live) called you back in January and asked you to let your longtime members know that my dad, Jack Barnes, had died. He and my mom Dot were very active members from 1978 to 1986 after my dad was transferred to Houston with Texaco. They loved Pines from the moment they first visited and made so many dear friends. We received so many cards from those friends following Dad's death. Please express our sincere appreciation. My mom has dementia now and only vaguely remembers Pines, but she was comforted to know that her Pines friends were thinking of her.

REMINDER: Please, if you move to a new address, change your phone number or your email address, please call or email the church office so that we can update our files. Thank you!

Please mark your calendars with
the **NEWSLETTER DUE DATES:**
May 22 (for June 2020 issue)

Pastor's Page

Greetings in the name of our risen Lord,

Those three words, our risen Lord, are so powerful. They are powerful not only because they celebrate the resurrection, but because they also offer incredible hope for each of us. We have experienced some of the most traumatic days in recent history. We have been separated, isolated, and left powerless because of COVID-19. Much of our focus has turned to how long we will remain at home and away from the people and things we know, how will this affect the economy and our savings, and how do we keep from contracting the virus. These questions, in many cases, have consumed us, caused great sorrow, and have stolen the joy we should have because of the hope given in the empty tomb of Easter.

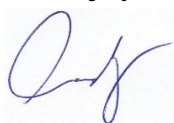
I was reminded by Sara, a Feed My Starving Children staffer, of a quote by Mother Theresa that said, ***"Never let anything so fill you with sorrow that you forget the joy of the risen Christ."*** Sara said she found this quote taped on her wall by her mother who was battling cancer. Sara said it has been this quote that has reminded her of the joy of Easter even in the midst of the sorrow and losses that come with this pandemic. FMSC, like many agencies, is struggling right now. The organization has had to cancel all Mobile Packs through mid-summer and is paying to outsource food packing to another organization to make sure starving children are still being fed. And much like other companies they have had to furlough many of their employees. There is definitely uncertainty, fear and sorrow circulating around FMSC and many other businesses.

In the midst of our fear, uncertainty, sorrow and anxieties what do we do? Do we allow those feelings to overtake us? Do we allow those feelings to fill us so much that we forget about the joy of the risen Christ? Just a few weeks ago we read the "Road to Emmaus" scripture in the Gospel of Luke. These two men allowed their sorrow and fear to overtake them and not see or experience the joy of the risen Christ in their midst. A result of the cancelation of FMSC Mobile Packs meant there would also be a reduction in sales in the MarketPlace which financially supports the creative artisans of the countries FMSC serves. The artisans could begin to worry and become fearful about what will happen next. They could, but Marcia one of the artisans, had this to say about the loss of income.

"So sad but we still have hope that the Lord is in control and is way ahead of us. I am comforted to be reminded that He is our provider — He is the provider! Not me! Not us! I am not the answer. We are not the answer. He is the answer. He is ABLE!! He will continue to carry them and all of the artisans worldwide into His loving care, His provision, and His plan." —Marcia

Marcia didn't let her fear fill her so much that she forgot about the joy of our risen Christ, and neither should we. You and I need to remember in the midst of our crisis that God is able, that God will provide, that our God broke the chains of death, and that there is joy in this world because of the empty tomb of Easter.

With joy in the resurrection,



Andy

Current Events



Wednesday Morning Bible Study: Join us on Zoom each Wednesday from 11:00 A.M. to 12 noon as we dig into and discuss this week's lectionary text. This is a great opportunity to get a jumpstart on understanding and learning about the scripture for the upcoming Sunday. To join us via Zoom please click this link <https://zoom.us/j/97547275569> or call 346-248-7799 and

enter 975 4727 5569 when prompted for a meeting ID. You will enter a "waiting room" as you enter the study.

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED NOW! We have several members in need of meals for various reasons. Some of our members are ill, some are injured, and some are recovering. If you can bake a small meal and bring it to the church, please call Shirley Bollich. Shirley could really use some help with this ministry. Pines has always had a caring heart and assisted their church family. Let's all pull behind Shirley and help her provide these meals to our members. If you need Shirley's phone number, please call the church office. Thank you!!



Time for Evening Prayer: Join fellow Pines family members as we gather for an evening Vespers Service each Thursday from 5:00-5:30 P.M. via Zoom. This is a wonderful opportunity for community prayer and reflection as we seek God's wisdom and peace during these unsettling days. Remember, prayer changes things! To join the service, click on the following Zoom video link:

<https://zoom.us/j/93550776312> or call 346-248-7799 and enter 935 5077 6312 when prompted for a meeting ID. You will enter a "waiting room" as you enter the service.



We need you! Loving grownups to watch over our little ones from birth to 4 years old on Sunday mornings from 9 to 12. If you could commit to once per month, it would be much appreciated. Or you could substitute, all are welcome. You will need a background check and will need to take a Protect My Child test online. Talk to Melissa or Cindy for more details. No worries, you do not need experience. We will have a lead teacher in the nursery with you. You will get plenty of hugs and laughter from our little ones!

ART IN THE PINES

Like to paint? Like to paint with others?

For several years Evelyn Shelton has had a group of artists who meet once a week at 1:00 pm on Thursday afternoons. They are watercolorists. The class will now be held here at Pines for anyone who would like to paint and join the group. There is no fee for this class. Evelyn is the facilitator and will provide suggestions and help when needed. Evelyn is a watercolorist and has been painting for about 40 years. Please call Cindy for more information or to get Evelyn's phone number to discuss the class. We would love to have you join in with this group!

Note: please call the church office to verify this group will be meeting in light of the virus situation.

Youth Happenings



Online Youth Ministry Schedule!

The Youth Ministry of Pines is offering weekly programs while our students stay at home! Join us every Tuesday and Thursday at 4:00pm on our Instagram page, @pinespcyouth for a Bible Study on Instagram Live! Then, every Wednesday at 7:00pm, join us for an online game night or other fun event over Zoom! The best way to stay up to date with all of our programs is in our Remind group! To join, just text @pinesyouth to 81010 and you will be signed up for our text alerts.

If you have any questions, please contact Jesse at jesse@pinespc.org!

Children's Ministry

To ALL LifeCamp (VBS) volunteers...The Christian Education Committee is following the COVID-19 situation closely and will abide by the state and national guidelines for gatherings. We will wait to make a determination on Life Camp (scheduled for June 22-25) until a later date, no later than May 20. Thank you for your understanding and patience.

The Music Department

Greetings from the Music Department!

During these uncertain times I am reminded of a song I learned from a travelling evangelist who came to our church when I was about 18 years old. I asked about the music and where I could purchase it. He replied that he had learned it from a friend, did not know the composer and if it was even published. He allowed me to record him singing the song on my cassette player, and that is how I learned this song. I have researched the song under many titles and lyrics, but have yet to find who wrote it.

After I learned it, and began singing it in church it became one of my Dad's favorites. If ever I asked what he would like to hear, his response was always "Hang on, Church."

The words are as true today as they were 50 years ago, and I will be singing it in the upcoming weeks in our streaming services. I just wanted you to have the words to "Under Control."

Men's hearts today are failing for fear, and it seems that the end is so very near.
My ship is leaning, and the storms, they blow, but My Father has everything under control.

The earthquakes and the wars, and problems of man, He holds them all in the palm of His hand.
I will fear no evil for I'm in His fold, and my Father has everything under control.

Under control though the night be cold. Though the earth may be raging, and billows round me roll.
I heard God whisper to my trembling soul, Child, fear not, for I have everything, Church fear not, for God has everything under control.

Always remember when times are toughest.....God has everything under control!

Keep a song in your heart!
Tim

Dear Prayer Partners,

Many of you are faithful to pray the weekly prayer list. That is one of the underlying strengths of Pines Presbyterian Church. Prayer ranks among the most important things any of us do. You are appreciated! Something special is added when we pray together in person, sharing that bond of prayer and caring, that peaceful and refreshing time. Would you like to join us for the praying of the weekly list, plus any other concerns or praises mentioned? The in-person weekly prayer team currently meets at 9:00 am on Tuesdays in room C-10, although during this time, in-person meetings have been postponed. It also coincides with the start time for Pines Preschool, for anyone who brings a child to the school. The exact day and time could be negotiable if that would enable someone to participate.

Contact Bethel Strawser by email BethelStrawser5@earthlink.net for further discussion.

Bethel Strawser

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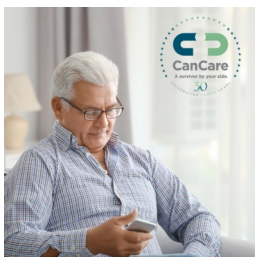
Beginning April 1st, Pines will have a new custodian.

Welcome to Patrick Peña!

Patrick is the father of 3. He has two boys and one girl. He also has 7 grandchildren! Patrick enjoys working and helping friends in his spare

time and playing board and video games. He was born in Houston and has lived here all his life. Please give Patrick a hearty "WELCOME" when you see him in the halls!

Missions



CanCare: A Survivor By Your Side through Cancer Treatment

Information about the Coronavirus is rapidly evolving causing concern that can make a cancer diagnosis even more challenging and scary. If you are going through cancer treatment or caring for a loved one through cancer, CanCare trained support volunteers are here for you. For free, immediate emotional support please call 713-364-1652 or 888-999-6959 Monday- Friday, 8:00 a.m.- 6:00 p.m. or email support@cancare.org. To request one-on-one support and to be matched with a CanCare volunteer by cancer type, treatment method, life stage, age, or gender, please visit <https://cancare.org/support/>



The Pines Food Drive was a Success!

Over 300 items were collected for Spring Branch Blessings in a Backpack for Sherwood families. Through a combination of Pines Youth's Souper Bowl of Caring and Missions Committee approval of emergency food funds for Blessings in a Backpack - Sherwood Elementary School, Kari was able to purchase items and fill food bags for our nearby friends. Sixty families received a bag of food last week filled with essentials for a number of meals. Ten bags were added to supplement larger families.

Special thanks to Monica Juarez with Communities in Schools and volunteers with Blessings in a Backpack who made the delivery while practicing social distancing.

Interested in assisting or have have any questions? Please contact

Kari Work: kwork@mgcinc.net

Thank you!



OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

DELIVER FOOD to Homebound Members and Neighbors:

Many congregations are canvassing their church family to see who needs groceries and/or prescriptions delivered to them. Additionally, members can also canvass their streets to see if they have neighbors in need. Your volunteers can then pick up and deliver, making sure to maintain a safe distance. You may find that even if those individuals/families don't need food, they might like someone to provide compassionate care (to be a listening ear and a calming voice in this chaotic time).

CROWD SOURCE RESCUE:

This is a FREE food delivery service of the Houston Food Bank for those who are elderly or homebound. Those in need can go to www.CrowdSourceRescue.com to register for a free delivery of groceries.

VOLUNTEERS can go to the same site to register to make home food deliveries. Once they are authorized, they can start picking up prepackaged food from a Houston Food Bank Pantry and deliver it to the pre-approved recipient.



Interested in assisting or have have any questions?
Please contact Kari Work: kwork@mgcinc.net

PINES PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

12751 Kimberley Lane | Houston, Texas

PinesPC.org



Pines Presbyterian
—PRESCHOOL—

Despite cancellation of preschool classes on March 12, the Preschool was very active in April. Registration for the 2020-2021 school year currently stands at 120 students, with all but two classes full and/or waitlisted. Although Governor Abbott's Executive Order of March 31 requires all schools to remained closed until May 4, our teachers have done an incredible job sending out weekly activities, calendars, videos and lesson plans to their students, to keep both students and parents engaged during the stay-at-home order. Ashley Sullivan led a wonderful Chapel lesson via a YouTube video, encouraging students and parents during this difficult time. The Preschool's April theme is Joy. A special Easter Chapel was conducted on April 7 for all students and parents using Zoom.



Staying Connected: You can now find upcoming opportunities to connect by visiting our website: pinespc.org. Join in on the next scheduled meeting, class or event by signing up for your free Zoom account: zoom.us/signup. View our archived videos anytime and also join in "live"!



Live Worship Services: Pines Worship Services on Sundays are now live streaming! 10:45 am worship services can be viewed by visiting our website: pinespc.org. You can also catch us on facebook for the same live streaming worship services.



Online Giving: As always, we thank you for your generous sharing of treasures in the spirit and practice of stewardship. Please visit our website for online giving: pinespc.org



UNDERSTANDING STEPHEN MINISTRY

What are Stephen Ministers?

Stephen Ministers are lay people who have completed 50 hours of training to equip them to provide one-to-one, Christ-centered care. They have a compassionate heart for those who are hurting, and they're equipped with caring ministry skills by their congregation's Stephen Leaders. A Stephen Minister typically has one care receiver at a time and meets with that person once a week to listen, care, pray, encourage, and offer emotional and spiritual support. ALL INFORMATION WHICH IS SHARED IS TREATED AS CONFIDENTIAL!

Why the name Stephen?

In Acts 6, Stephen was chosen to provide caring ministry to those in need. Since the time of the Apostles, caring ministry has been considered a hallmark of the Christian faith community.

In what types of situations do Stephen Ministers provide care?

Stephen Ministers provide care to individuals facing difficult times in life—grief, cancer, divorce, financial difficulties, hospitalization, chronic illness, job loss, disability, loneliness, a spiritual crisis, or other life struggles.

Do Stephen Ministers care for people outside their congregation?

Yes. Stephen Ministers often provide care for people in the broader community, enhancing and expanding a congregation's outreach in a powerful way.

What are Stephen Leaders?

Stephen Leaders can be the pastors, other church staff members, and lay leaders who have received additional training to become equipped to direct Stephen Ministry in their congregation. Stephen Leaders have gifts and skills in areas such as leadership, teaching, and organizing people, along with a heart for caring ministry.

If you would like to explore the possibility of working with a Stephen Minister, please contact Rev. Bill Willis at 318-548-4414 or bill.00.willis@gmail.com. Your inquiry will be treated as confidential.

A Little Bit Of Fun

How the Virus Stole Easter

~By Kristi Bothur

With a nod to Dr. Seuss ☺

And a thanks to Phil Wetz for submitting the poem!

Tw'as late in '19 when the virus began
Bringing chaos and fear to all people, each land.

People were sick, hospitals full,
Doctors overwhelmed, no one in school.

As winter gave way to the promise of spring,
The virus raged on, touching peasant and king.

People hid in their homes from the enemy
unseen.
They YouTubed and Zoomed, social-distanced, and
cleaned.

April approached and churches were closed.
"There won't be an Easter," the world supposed.

"There won't be church services, and egg hunts are
out.
No reason for new dresses when we can't go about."

Holy Week started, as bleak as the rest.
The world was focused on masks and on tests.

"Easter can't happen this year," it proclaimed.
"Online and at home, it just won't be the same."

Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, the days came and
went.
The virus pressed on; it just would not relent.

The world woke Sunday and nothing had changed.
The virus still menaced, the people, estranged.

"Pooh pooh to the saints," the world was
grumbling.
"They're finding out now that no Easter is
coming.

"They're just waking up! We know just what they'll do!
Their mouths will hang open a minute or two,
And then all the saints will all cry boo-hoo.

"That noise," said the world, "will be something to
hear."
So it paused and the world put a hand to its ear.

And it did hear a sound coming through all the skies.
It started down low, then it started to rise.

But the sound wasn't depressed.
Why, this sound was triumphant!
It couldn't be so!
But it grew with abundance!

The world stared around, popping its eyes.
Then it shook! What it saw was a shocking surprise!

Every saint in every nation, the tall and the small,
Was celebrating Jesus in spite of it all!

It hadn't stopped Easter from coming! It came!
Somehow or other, it came just the same!

And the world with its life quite stuck in
quarantine
Stood puzzling and puzzling.
"Just how can it be?"

"It came without bonnets, it came without
bunnies,
It came without egg hunts, cantatas, or money."

Then the world thought of something it hadn't
before.
"Maybe Easter," it thought, "doesn't come from a
store.
Maybe Easter, perhaps, means a little bit more."

And what happened then?
Well....the story's not done.
What will YOU do?
Will you share with that one
Or two or more people needing hope in this night?
Will you share the source of your life in this fight?

The churches are empty - but so is the tomb,
And Jesus is victor over death, doom, and gloom.

So this year at Easter, let this be our prayer,
As the virus still rages all around, everywhere.

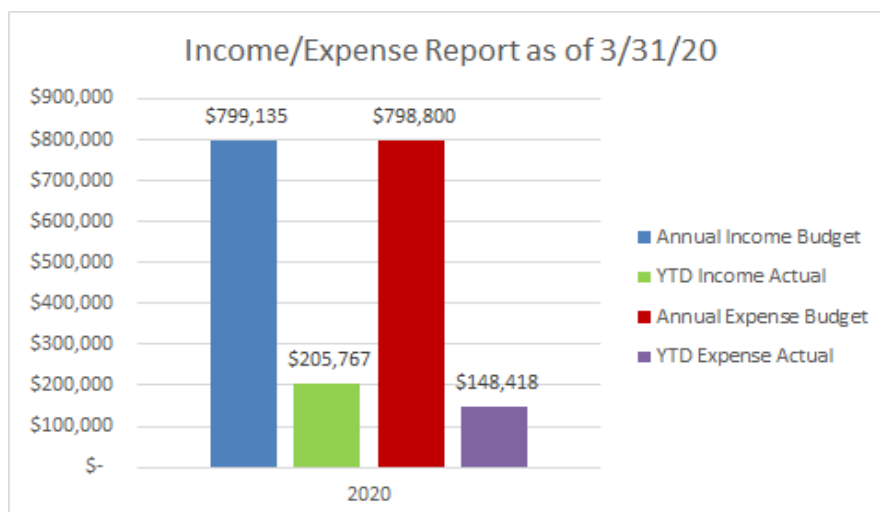
May the world see hope when it looks at God's
people.
May the world see the church is not a building or
steeple.
May the world find Faith in Jesus' death and
resurrection,
May the world find Joy in a time of dejection.
May 2020 be known as the year of survival,
But not only that -
Let it start a revival.

Stewardship

1. Through March 31, Income is on target for first quarter and expenses are below budget. The Session is carefully managing expenses. Thank you to the congregation for your gifts!

2. For the month of April, 2020, a time when Stay at Home orders have been in effect for the entire month, Pledge contributions for the month continue to be on target, i.e. 1/3 of the year completed with 33% of total pledges received through April.

Non-pledge contributions are below expectation however (21% received.) Our staff is working hard to maintain as much of church life as possible during these uncertain times. Please continue to make your gifts into the virtual offering plate by sending your check to the church, utilizing your bank's online payment system or visiting <http://www.Pinespc.org/Donate-2> We are receiving anywhere from 200-450 views of our online worship services each week. As you are watching the service, please make your contribution as you would if you were sitting in the pew. Our financial manager is coming in each Monday to deposit checks and record all donations.



Session Meeting Notes

The Session met via Zoom for its regular stated meeting on April 27. Here are some highlights:

- Agreed, out of an abundance of caution, to continue with online worship through the end of May.
- Approved at-home communion on May 3 using the same process that was followed on Easter Sunday.
- Received updates on ongoing activities helping the congregation to stay connected, including Christian education, missions and one-to-one outreach.
- Heard that *This Week at Pines* contains a growing list of online activities throughout the week; a special edition of *This Week at Pines* will outline opportunities to support our mission partners.
- Heard a favorable report on pledge income through the first third of the year. Non-pledge income is lagging, likely due to the lack of in-person worship.

Member Reflections

RESPONSE TO A “WEARY” EASTER PRAYER

If you are like me, you occasionally find yourself “weary”, not necessarily from an abundance of physical activity, but rather from an absence of proximity to people and the emotional boost which such interactions can provide, particularly those with one’s church family. Thus, I wanted to share my interpretation of God’s response to a “weary” prayer I offered to Him on Easter.

The occurrence took place during an afternoon walk in our neighborhood with my eight-month old grandson. During this part of the walk, I was offering what I call a “weary” prayer -- the words were there, but there was no passion nor energy behind them. I had missed gathering with the Pines church family in person that morning and was trying to get my grandson to stop crying, so I was not full of energy or spiritual focus.

As I was walking, I passed an abandoned home -- grass overgrown, mailbox in disrepair, home in need of paint, etc. It was not the place you would naturally look for spiritual inspiration. However, I glanced at the driveway and saw the piece of art work shown in the photo below. As is often the case, we find our inspiration from God in the most unlikely places. As I looked at the beautiful art work, I decided that this was God’s way of reminding me that He was walking with me on my journey, even if my acknowledgement of this had been half-hearted, at best.

I now have this photo stored on my phone as a reminder of God’s love for ALL of His children and His presence with EACH of us on every step of our respective life journeys, even when we are not sure He is nearby or listening. I do not know how He will choose to answer the prayers I was offering that day. However, I do know that He will always be by my side and have my hand in His, even when I try to shake loose because I foolishly believe I can handle things on my own.

For me, this is a large part of what we celebrate when we remember the Resurrection. When I focus on Easter, I tend to think of:

- (1) God’s unconditional love;
- (2) His willingness to forgive our sins; and
- (3) His promise of eternal life. However, in this year of pandemic and physical distancing, I am also giving thanks that there is no need for physical distancing from our Lord. In fact, even during pandemics, He walks alongside us with a firm grip on our hand as we are reminded in Psalms 27:10 -- *Even if my father and mother abandon me, the LORD will hold me close.*

Thanks be to God.
Phil Wetz

