PINES
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

THE PINES PRESS

NOVEMBER 2026



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NOVEMBER AT A GLANCE

11/01	All Saints' Day - Daylight Savings Time Ends
11/03	Voting @ Pines
11/06	Taco & A Prayer
11/07	Houston Food Bank Service Opportunity
11/08	Thankfulness Luncheon
11/11	Veterans Day
11/14	Pines Property Work Day
11/19	Stephen Ministers' Meeting
11/21	New Covenant Presbytery Meeting
11/22	Advent Decorating
11/26	Thanksgiving Day
11/29	Advent Family Night

Welcoming the Barr Babies

Bob and Lynda Barr are delighted to welcome two new great-grandchildren!

Lilah Josephine Vazquez was born September 30, 2026, weighing 6 pounds. She is the daughter of Meegen and Brandon Vazquez and little sister to Walker.

Matthew Shane Barr was born October 12, 2026, weighing 8 pounds, 7 ounces, and measuring 21 inches. He is the son of Jeremiah and Stacy Barr and grandson of Terry and Kim Barr.

Congratulations to the Barr family on these precious new additions!

Remembering Those We've Lost



As we grieve the loss of Patrick "Tim" Timmons & Patrick Workman, we hold their families and loved ones close in our hearts and prayers. May God surround them with comfort and peace in the days ahead, and may they feel the love and support of their Pines family as we grieve alongside them.

"Rejoice with those who rejoice, mourn with those who mourn"

Romans 12:15

A MESSAGE FROM THE ISAIAH TEAM

Greetings,
The Isaiah Project team continues to reach out to area organizations and entities that provide critical services aimed at communities in need, across all age groups. We're listening to both their successes and challenges as we keep praying about where Pines might fit into an evolving Houston in the future. We're hearing that people need connections and support, not just services, and there is strong demand for volunteers, mentors and community partners. Please continue to pray for this process.

Blessings,

The Isaiah Project team

Mark Babineck - Terrie Cardwell - Andy Gans
Linda Johnson - Mike Lade - Beth Patterson
Dan Schafer - Phil Wetz

SEEING EACH OTHER

I am in the middle of "Theo of Golden." I won't finish reading it in time for the newsletter deadline, but that's okay. Right smack in the middle of his journey I found my topic for this month's article.

Theo spends time with people. You will need to read the book to know how and why! As he listens to one particular man, he hears a story of how that man changed his opinion of someone because he looked into the other man's eyes. He paused for a moment to realize that no matter how different they seemed (and what tragedy had transpired), they shared a common bond. In an instant, there was forgiveness and understanding. I haven't read any further, but I have our nugget of wisdom for this month.

If we pause, open our heart, share space, realize that we all have a story (most often untold), and allow the Holy Spirit in, LOVE takes over. It doesn't have to mean everything works out the way we want it to, but we can allow ourselves to be kinder, more compassionate and transparent with one another.

If you want to visit about having a Stephen Minister, reach out to me or Phil.
Take care out there,
Ann

Thriving into Stewardship Season 2027

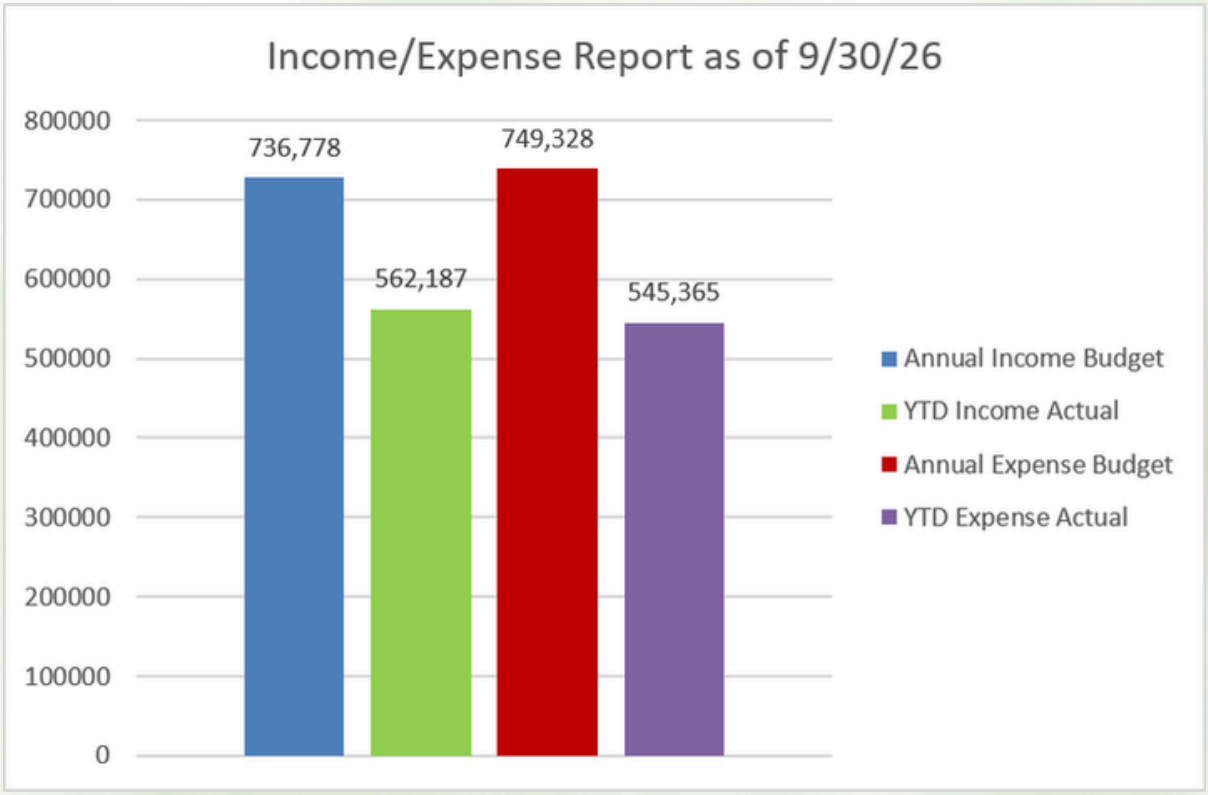
Pines friends,
Our 2027 Stewardship Campaign went live on Commitment Sunday, October 11th, and we are building momentum thanks to your generosity toward an exciting 2027. Your gifts of time, talents and treasure are the lifeblood of this community of faith, and we are grateful.

For those who have not yet pledged, please either fill out a pledge card you got in the mail or grab one from a pew and submit it in an envelope to the church, or reach out directly to our accounting manager Alexis Graham (alexis@pinespc.org). Getting an accurate look at our 2027 pledges allows us to budget for all of the things we want and need to do in 2027 to continue to THRIVE.



Blessings,
Mark Babineck
Stewardship Committee Moderator

Stewardship



STEWARDSHIP NOTES:

1. Total Income through September 30 is right on target at $562,187, 76% of the $736,778 budget. Both pledge and non-pledge income are on track or slightly ahead of target and interest income is also ahead of budget.
2. Total expenses through September 30 are under budget at $545,365 vs a budget of $749,328 (73%). Staff, CE, Congregational Fellowship and Worship committees are all under budget at this point of the year. Property expenses are somewhat offset by higher than expected building use income.
3. NET INCOME IS $16,822.

Session

Your Session met for its regular stated meeting on October 26. Here are some highlights:

- **Prayed for the Pines family, especially those in mourning.**
- **Received Amy Deutsch into membership. She will be welcomed during worship on November 8.**
- **Approved a mid-week brown bag mother/child Bible study.**
- **Approved a Blue Christmas service on December 3 at 11:30am.**
- **Heard positive reports on the stewardship campaign and finances year to date.**

In Christ,
Dan Schafer - Clerk of Session

a note from

our pastor

Grace, peace & thanksgiving,
"Don't forget to set your clocks back one hour." These words seem to launch the unofficial start of winter. This is the month our daylight gets less and less, the temperatures begin to finally change, and our minds begin to shift to thinking about Thanksgiving and Christmas. November is a wonderful month as it is the season that reminds us of what we are and should be thankful for. It also is the month that starts off reminding us of those saints, those loved ones and friends, who have gone onto their heavenly reward.
I often find this time of year as a time to remember and give thanks for all God has blessed me with. Each year I try to make a list of those things that I'm thankful for and use that list as a prayer tool throughout the year. This year I thought I'd share a portion of my list with you as a starting point for you to begin your list of blessings and thankfulness.

This year:
·I give thanks to God for all those who have gone before me to create a church that is welcoming and loving.
·I give thanks to God for the blessing of Bill Willis and Tim Timmons who were champions for justice, welcome, perseverance and sharing the Gospel message in their own special ways.
·I give thanks to God for those who give of their time, energy and soul to keep Pines moving forward.
·I give thanks to God for the elders of Pines who spend countless hours creatively serving God and this congregation, shepherding us and leading us into the future.
·I give thanks to God for our committees and their members as they share their gifts of study, food, creativity and caring.
·I give thanks to God for each of our staff, for those who have moved on, those who remain with us, and those who have just arrived.
·I give thanks to God for each member of this church who has lifted me up with their prayers and their love.
·I give thanks to God for my health and home, even though there are some challenges at times.
·And most importantly, I give thanks to God for my family who faithfully loves me, supports me and brings me joy.

I pray you will join me in making a list of things you're thankful to God for and use this list as a reminder of how God is at work in your life each and every day!
Giving thanks!

Andy



"THEREFORE GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS"



FAITH IN PRACTICE JOHNSON II MEDICAL CLINIC 920

In late September, Led by Pines' members, Phil and Linda Johnson, this group of dedicated Faith in Practice volunteers and staff joined with Guatemalan volunteers to bring compassion, hope & healing to a remote community in northern Guatemala. This group of doctors, nurses, PTs, non-medical personnel, local community volunteers, and even the local military worked together to set up a temporary medical clinic offering services in general medicine, orthopedics, mobility, OB/Gyn, pharmacy, and more. The team saw close to 1,000 patients over the course of 4 days and filled over 900 prescriptions! Most importantly, the team brought dignity, compassion, and God's love to these people who have very little access to medical care. If you want to learn more about Faith in Practice, contact Phil & Linda Johnson, Beth & Jim Patterson or visit faithinpractice.org

MISSIONS SPOTLIGHT SUNDAY & THANKFULNESS LUNCH

Join us on Sunday, November 8th, for a special day celebrating our volunteers and mission partners!

- Before Worship: Meet our partners in the Sanctuary lobby.
- During Worship: Active Pines volunteers and mission representatives will lead the service.
- After Worship: Join us for a Thankfulness Lunch, complete with info tables and stories of their exciting work.

Bonus: Wear a T-shirt spotlighting an organization you love and support!

FOOD DONATIONS FOR MISSION OF YAHWEH

In the season and spirit of Thanksgiving, we are collecting non-perishable food items for the Mission of Yahweh. Beginning November 2, items can be placed under the communion table in the Sanctuary.



Property Work Day

We need your helping hands!
Join us as we care for our church home! We'll work together on property projects and spruce up the spaces we share. Whether you can lend a hand for a little while or stay the whole morning, every helping hand makes a difference. Come enjoy some fellowship while helping keep Pines looking its best!

Saturday, November 14
9:00 AM–Noon



Alternative Gift Market

Do you need a Christmas gift for the person who has everything? Sometime this is an impossible decision. Pines has an idea for that person – an alternative gift!

An alternative gift is a donation made in the name or memory of a loved one, given to benefit one of Pines mission partners instead of giving a traditional gift. The donations are made in the name of your recipient to the organization of your choice. Once received, that organization will include an acknowledgment of the donation made in their name. Please consider giving an alternative gift, as it emphasizes giving back to the community and supporting local and global initiatives rather than simply exchanging material goods.
This is a list of Pines Mission Partners along with a link to their donation page.

Feed My Starving Children
https://www.fmsc.org/ways-to-give

Brookwood
https://brookwoodcommunity.org/donate/

MAM
https://www.mamhouston.org/donate

Mission of Yahweh
https://give.missionofyahweh.org/campaign/565243/donate

Books Between Kids
https://www.booksbetweenkids.org/give-money/

Raise Up Families
https://give.raiseupfamilies.org/checkout/27739

Faith in Practice
https://www.faithinpractice.org/give/

CanCare
https://cancare.givecloud.co/fundraising/forms/PYEVM6DX

preparing for

Christmas at Pines



Advent Devotional

Believe it or not Advent is around the corner, which means we will soon be producing our own Advent Devotional guide. This year's theme is Seeking Faith, and we need your story and your reflection (up to 250 words) on a verse of scripture to make this devotional come to life. If you'd like to write a brief devotional to be included in this year's guide, please let Pastor Andy know, and he will help guide you to a scripture if needed.
The deadline for submission is November 11th



Decorating for Christmas

It's that wonderful time of the year again: the hanging of the greens! Please join us as we decorate the church for Christmas, immediately following service on November 22. Many hands make this fun and quick!

Make this Season Bloom

Now is the time to place your order for Poinsettias for Christmas. The Poinsettias are grown at Brookwood, one of our benevolences. There is a sign-up sheet outside the Fellowship Hall for your convenience. Please designate whether the Poinsettias are "In Honor Of" or "In Memory Of" when you make your selection.

The cost is $12.00, and you may order as many as you wish. Please place your check or cash (in a marked envelope with your name on it) in the offering plate at church and write on the notation line "Poinsettias". You may also pay electronically using Breeze or Zelle.

The poinsettias may be taken home after the latest Christmas service.

Thank you in advance for helping to beautify our Sanctuary during the Advent Season.

Linda Aldred & Melissa Gravett

Faith Family Fellowship



Trunk or Treat: A Spooktacular Success



Thank you to everyone who helped make this year's Trunk or Treat a success! With around 10 decorated trunks, face painting and temporary tattoos provided by our Mosaic teens, and a parking lot full of families, it was a wonderful evening of fellowship and fun. We were excited to see participation from our preschool families, Mosaic families, and the Pines congregation. We even had very little candy left over! Thank you to all who volunteered, donated candy, and helped make this event such a success.







Pines Family Survey

We Want to Hear From You!
We invite all Pines families to complete our family survey! Your feedback will help us better understand the needs and interests of our congregation as we plan future events, programs, and opportunities for fellowship. Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts and help us continue growing together as a church family.

Click here or scan the QR code from your mobile device to access the survey.

Let the little children come to me

Pines Presbyterian PRESCHOOL

Pines Presbyterian Church and Pines Presbyterian Preschool recently came together to provide Bibles to preschool families. This special partnership reflects a shared desire to support families and share the love of Christ with our community.
By placing God's Word into the hands of families, we hope to encourage meaningful conversations about faith and provide opportunities for children and parents to grow together in their understanding of God's love.
We are grateful for the opportunity to partner in this meaningful way and to share the hope of Christ with the families of Pines Presbyterian Preschool.



"We don't have a children's Bible right now. So this is such a sweet thing to have! She carries it everywhere, asks to read it constantly, tells me how special it is that her name is in the front cover, and she is able to retell me the stories after we've read them just once.
...and our son participates with us some and knows Adam as "Adaman" (I assume a combo of "Adam and") 😂.
A huge hit and such a blessing! "
-Preschool Family



Discover Something New

ZOOM LECTURE– SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7 – 10AM

The Dead Sea Scrolls: Geography, Faith & Discovery

The Dead Sea Scrolls will be on display at Houston's Museum of Natural Science from November 20 – December 17, 2026. In preparation for your museum visit, St. Cecilia Tours invites you to learn more about one of history's most profound archaeological revelations with our Biblical Scholar in Israel, Aviv Herzlich. We will offer a Zoom presentation on Saturday, Nov. 7 at 10 AM (Central,) where we will investigate the impact of the scrolls and what we can learn regarding the context of geography, history, theology, and the language of the scriptures Jesus would have known.



Register Here

DID YOU KNOW

that a 67-year-old woman solo hiked the entire Appalachian Trail in 1957? If you read the book, "Grandma Gatewood's Walk" by Ben Montgomery, you will learn all about this remarkable true story. Not only did Grandma Gatewood walk this rugged path wearing Keds sneakers, carrying a denim sack with few supplies, and a plastic sheet to protect from rain, she brought national attention to the neglected trails which sparked modern preservation efforts.

Mark your calendar for January 13, 2027 when we will gather for Brown Bag Book Club and discuss this book!

Questions?
Call Shirley Bollich



A Special Feature from our very own Bethel



Flexible Bell Tree Ensembles, Bethel Strawser, Overtones Magazine, Spring 2026

My bell choir has been playing bell tree ensembles for a flexible number of ringers for a number of years.

Why bell tree ensembles?

Bell Tree Ensembles were born out of the perennial problem of not enough ringers. One year, all of the youth in my bell choir – over half of the bell choir – quit handbells during the first week of school, having encountered increased school demands. What music do we play with only 5 ringers who mostly don't want to learn solo-style ringing? My handbell contacts advised me to buy a bell tree. A bell tree ringer can easily cover an octave or more of bells as melody or countermelody while table ringers play additional bells in the traditional style.

Barbara Brocker organized the demonstration of this concept at Into The Forest 2025, using various pieces, including a Linda Lamb arrangement of "While By The Sheep" and my arrangement of "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee." She pointed out the added benefit of the ensemble for the bell tree ringer who doesn't want to play a solo, who is more comfortable having other ringers playing along.

Continued on page 11

The next step is bell tree ensembles for a flexible number of ringers, addressing another common problem: when the number of ringers can change at the last minute. This happened in my bell choir. We were preparing a piece for April with 7 ringers – and one ringer fell and broke a leg. No problem. We dropped one stand and played the piece anyway. Then, we were preparing the May piece for 6 ringers – and one ringer was called out of town on business. Again, we dropped a stand and played the piece anyway. I suspect many bell choirs have encountered similar situations. The pieces sound better with the additional bass parts but can still sound nice with as few as 3-4 ringers.
Since handbell directors who are short of ringers are constantly recruiting, the situation can also go the other way. I've had to fold in a new ringer with little or no notice. A ringer showed up for rehearsal with no warning, no opportunity to plan ahead. It's nice to have a piece with extra bass stands available.

How flexibility is achieved
Many of the bell tree ensembles I've arranged put the melody all on the bell tree. The table ringers play chordal accompaniment with rhythmic overlay. "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee" will provide most of the examples for this discussion. A bell tree ringer plus two table bell ringers can make pleasing music with a reasonable amount of harmony. These table ringers are designated in Example 1 as "core" ringers. A third table bell ringer (designated "helpful") can complete the chords. Four additional bass stands are designated as "optional." The more bass bells played, the better the music sounds, but it is doable with a minimum of ringers. The arrangement can be played with 3-8 ringers: 1 bell tree ringer plus 2-7 table bell ringers. As suggested by Barb Brocker, the bells used chart is marked to help a director see at a glance how many ringers are needed.

Chordal Accompaniment
The use of chordal accompaniment makes this music accessible, even to ringers of moderate level talent and training, including beginning ringers, youth and children. On the other end of the scale, the awesome musicians at Into the Forest prepared this piece in one 20-minute rehearsal! Maggie Tucker is my inspiration for writing chordal accompaniment, although many directors undoubtedly use it. Perhaps my prior background playing guitar also influences use of chordal accompaniment.
The chord patterns generally repeat with each verse, so, once the chord progressions are learned, the ringers can easily apply a different rhythmic pattern in each section. In some pieces, more complicated rhythms in later verses may call for more granularity in the chord progressions.

Rhythmic Overlay
The rhythmic overlay can add energy and excitement to old favorite hymn tunes. Since many of our favorite hymn tunes started out as folk songs or even drinking songs, modernizing them in this manner seems appropriate. Perhaps these arrangements can help foster the "blended worship" (mix of traditional and contemporary) that resonates with various age groups.
In "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee," the table bells are malleted throughout, emphasizing the rhythms and making bell changes and rhythmic changes easier for the ringers. My ringers enjoyed the accessibility of the all-malleted arrangement, fostering confidence to later welcome new challenges.
In Example 2, the eighth notes on beat 4 drive into beat 1 of the following measure, energizing the music. In Example 3, the triplets can add a majestic flavor. In Example 4, the music switches into 6/8 time to simulate a swing beat, adding a jazzy feel to the hymn. These are just a few of the many possibilities.

Articulations
The chordal accompaniment with rhythmic overlay approach also lends itself to use of articulations – which the congregation usually loves! As one previous director used to say, "It's loud and it has shakes. They'll love it!" In "Great Is The Lord" (arranged under CCLI license), the bell tree ringer often uses mallet rolls and the table ringers go from ringing to thumb damping, to martellato lift to shaking to a final emphatic martellato. The last part is shown in Example 5. The congregation usually finds the growing excitement contagious.

Extracted Parts
By providing extracted parts, ringers can enjoy fewer page turns. The bell tree part can often fit on only two pages, eliminating page turns entirely for that ringer. The page turns in the table bell part can often be managed to fall in more convenient places and often only one page turn is needed. I usually also provide the full score for use in the initial introduction of the piece, so ringers can see how the parts fit together. Most of my ringers then choose to play from the more convenient extracted part. It remains to be seen whether a publishing company will be willing to print the extracted parts along with the full score.

Conclusion
Bell tree ensembles for a flexible number of ringers have been the mainstay of my bell choir for several years as we have built back up to enough ringers to play more traditional music. The ensembles provide fresh, energetic arrangements of old favorite hymns, accessible to ringers of moderate talent and training and appealing to the congregation. It's nice to see a growing body of this type of music!



THE ROLODEX

HOW CAN WE HELP?

SANCTUARY FLOWERS

Contact Melissa Gravett m or Linda Aldred

MAKE A DONATION

Contact Alexis Graham
alexis@pinespc.org
or donate through our website at pinespc.org.

PRAYER LIST

Contact Bethel Strawser
prayer@pinespc.org

BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENT

Contact Laurie Conner
laurie@pinespc.org

NEWSLETTER ANNOUNCEMENT

Contact Theresa Perales
theresa@pinespc.org

THIS WEEK AT PINES ANNOUNCEMENT

Contact Dan Schafer
communication
@pinespc.org

UPDATE CONTACT INFO

Contact Theresa Perales
theresa@pinespc.org

PLAN A WEDDING

Contact Linda Aldred

BOOK THE CALENDAR

Contact Theresa Perales
theresa@pinespc.org

INQUIRE ABOUT OUR KITCHEN

Contact Ann Guerra

PINES PRESCHOOL

Contact Connie Pike
connie@pinespc.org

ANYTHING ELSE?

Contact Theresa Perales
theresa@pinespc.org