



PINES

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Family Fun for All!

When? Sunday, August 17th
3-5 PM in the Fellowship Hall

Activities? A variety of games in the Fellowship Hall and water balloons for the playground

Refreshments? Ice Cream Sundae Station, Lemonade, and Water

Come join in the fun!
Hope to see you there!



Pines Family News & Current Events

Hymn Sing on August 3rd. Mark your calendars for 4pm in the Fellowship Hall. All welcome to come join in!



Welcome
New
Baby!



Welcome to Caroline Elizabeth Sibley. Proud parents are Matthew and Katherine Sibley. Proud grandparents are David and Beth Sibley. Caroline was born on April 19th here in Houston. She was born weighing 6 pounds, 14 ounces. Pines offers a hearty welcome to this new baby with prayers for health and happiness. We look forward to meeting her soon!



Our thoughts and prayers go out to Valerie and Tiffany Sandstrom in the loss of their mom, Pines member Melissa Sandstrom. Melissa passed away on July 17. She had been very involved with children and youth over the years, answered the phones in the church office, ushered, helped with memorial services and weddings, helped with needlework on bookmarks given to our young people, and rarely turned down any pleas for help. Please keep her family in your prayers as they navigate through this difficult time.

CHURCH WIDE STUDY- Starting August 17 Pines CE is hosting a church wide study of Bob Goff's book- Everybody Always. What if we stopped avoiding the difficult people in our lives and committed to simply loving everybody? What happens when we give away love like we're made of it? Bob teaches you that the path toward the outsized, unfettered, liberated existence we all long for is found in one simple truth: love people, even the difficult ones, without distinction and without limits. Kids will have this as their lesson on Aug 17. Youth, Explorers, and Foundation classes plan to do this study Sunday mornings as well as there is an opportunity on Thursdays at 6:30pm via Zoom. To sign up for the zoom class email Kristin to receive the link. If you aren't familiar with Zoom or need help also let me know. kristin@pinespc.org If you'd like your own book these can be purchased for \$10 (was \$13 but found a better price) which also can be paid any way you normally pay the church making sure to note in comments it's for the book, but ALSO email Kristin you did this as some of the online giving doesn't show up until the end of the month statement.

Kristin Beall, Director of Family Ministries
713-467-2234



Next BINGO...

September 18, 6:30 pm
SAVE THE DATE!

Come join us in September when we start Bingo back up again!

Brown Bag Book Club

If you would like to join us for an interesting discussion of some good books, plan to attend our next meetings. We will meet on Tuesday, August 12th, from 12:00 noon to 1:00p.m. for a review of *The Rosie Project* by Graeme Simsion. This is a heartwarming novel that follows the story of a genetics professor on a project to find the perfect wife!

Mark your calendar for our fall meeting which will be held on Sunday, October 5th, following our worship service. Linda Crowl will be leading us in a discussion of the book, *The Train to Crystal City*, by Jan Jarboe Russell. This book summarizes a secret FDR approved American internment camp in Texas during WWII, where thousands of families, many U.S. citizens, were incarcerated.



Mark your calendars and come to these Brown Bag book club meetings! Happy Reading!!!

Pastor's Page

Summer Grace & Peace,

I pray your summer has gone swimmingly and you've been able to escape some of this Houston heat. Although the temperatures won't be heading down for a couple of months, it's hard to believe that our "summer" is almost over. Soon traffic will build as schools open back up, and our students head back for another year of learning and growing. Where has the time gone?

Our young students aren't the only ones headed back for more learning and growing, all of us are. I'm really excited that Pines will be kicking off the church program year with an all-church study using the book *Everybody, Always* by Bob Goff. I was blessed to read this book earlier this year and was so excited about its content I thought we all should read it together as a church family. This book has so many great insights in how we engage, react, and respond to all people... even the difficult ones. Bob says that the key to responding well to everyone, including the difficult folks, is committing to love everybody. During our study we will learn that the path toward the outsized, unfettered, liberated existence we all long for is found in one simple truth: love people, even the difficult ones, without distinction and without limits. Bob will take us with him as he learns to love even the most difficult people, such as a tribe of witch doctors.

I found this book hard to put down, and I hope you'll feel the same way. Our church wide study will begin with all Sunday school, including children and youth, on August 17th. There will also be an opportunity on Thursday evenings at 6:30 via Zoom. I really hope you'll join us for this wonderful book that, I think, has so much to teach us about being faithful, loving followers of the one who loves us all, Christ Jesus. I look forward to learning and growing with you all this year as we explore our faith together.

Loving everybody,



Andy

If you are in need of ordering a book, please contact Kristin at kristin@pinespc.org

Family Ministry Calendar for August

PLEASE HELP!

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

August Calendar:

- 3 Youth Missions Sunday; Hand on Hand ministry 7pm
- 10 Blessing of the Backpacks 10:45am/ Worship Training 12noon
- 17 Kick Off Sunday, Sunday School 9:15am and Bible Sunday 10:45am, 3-5pm Family Ice Cream Social (summer celebration) FH
- 17 Youth Council Luncheon noon Youth Rooms
- 31 Pines Youth (PY) noon-1:30pm

Thank you for an amazing summer! Now it's time to start the new school year off right! Youth will share their summer mission during the service on August 3 and we'll also celebrate VBC with stories and photos during our Ice Cream Social on Aug 17. Bring yourself and backpack for a blessing on August 10 and stay after service for pizza lunch and worship training!

ALL Youth and youth sponsors are invited to rsvp for a lunch on August 17 for a council planning meeting! Hear about the whole year and vote for next year's summer mission!!

Youth group restarts officially August 31 at noon and Children's next Parent's Night Out is scheduled for Friday September 12- save the date and RSVP!

Blessing of the Backpacks- start your new year off with a blessing. You can bring a bag on August 10 to Worship. Open to all students and those working with them! Worship training with pizza lunch will take place that day after service. If your child has been or is now interested in acolyting, ushering, or reading a scripture please come!

Church Family Ice Cream Social- August 17- 3-5pm -Fellowship Hall- All Pines families are invited to come play games inside at table, on the playground weather permitting, build an ice cream bowl, and celebrate summer- VBC show and stories! ALL new Sunday school classes begin this morning AND it's Bible Sunday during service! Such an exciting



Pictures from
the Vacation Bible Camp and
Pines Youth Mission Trip
2025



The church office is looking for volunteers to answer phones:

Monday through Thursday. We have a couple of volunteers currently, but we **need** more and 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 713-467-2234 x110.

Corny jokes for the month...



Did you hear about the fire in the circus? It was intense (in tents).

Why don't I trust trees? They are shady!

Where do you learn to make banana splits? At Sundae school!

Have a relaxing August!

Contact Us

Sanctuary flowers: Melissa Gravett or Linda Aldred

Make a donation: Alexis Graham at alexis@pinespc.org or donate on our website at pinespc.org

Add a name to the prayer list: Bethel Strawser at prayer@pinespc.org

Request a bulletin announcement: Laurie Conner at laurie@pinespc.org

Request a newsletter announcement: Cindy Houlihan at cindy@pinespc.org

Request an announcement for This Week at Pines: Dan Schafer at communication@pinespc.org

Update contact info in our database: Cindy Houlihan at cindy@pinespc.org

Plan a wedding: Linda Aldred

Add something to our calendar: Cindy Houlihan at cindy@pinespc.org

Question about our kitchen: Ann Guerra

Question on the Preschool: Connie Pike at connie@pinespc.org

Pickleball Program: Kristin Beall at kristin@pinespc.org

Anything else? Just give the office a call at 713-467-2234 x110



I recently visited with a hospital patient who I have gotten to know because he continues a multi-year battle with cancer. At the end of our visit he said, “Phil, thanks for the authentic dialogue today.” The patient’s description of our time of sharing reminded me of the Stephen Minister continuing education session on April 24 where we listened to a TED TALK on Effective Communication. As I researched various descriptions of “authentic dialogue”, I discovered several similarities between those definitions and the effective communication steps

which were discussed on April 24, including the following:

LISTEN to understand and not to reply to something that is shared by another. Remind yourself that every conversation is an opportunity to learn because everyone knows something you do not.

LISTEN in a non-judgmental way so that the other person will feel free to express themselves openly and candidly.

When **LISTENING**, let go of the thoughts which come into your mind because they will lead you to stop listening.

When **LISTENING**, be open to different viewpoints and perspectives rather than framing comments to convince the other person that your views are correct.

One cannot **LISTEN** and multi-task, so decide which activity you will focus on.

Use open-ended questions beginning with Who? What? When? Where? How? and Why? The more in-depth responses you will receive will enrich your learning/**LISTENING** experience.

It is obvious that the most important key to Effective Communications is **Effective Listening**. This is one of the key tenets of the Stephen Minister training program. Stephen Ministers are trained to use all of these effective communication tools to create an environment where “authentic dialogue” can take place on a regular basis. And when that happens, healing can occur and hope for a better future can be regained.

Each of us treasures those people in our lives with whom we can enjoy authentic dialogue, and sometimes that is with a family member, a long-time friend ,or sometimes we need someone who is willing to make a longer term commitment to listen and have authentic dialogue in order to help with a challenge. If you think a Stephen Minister could serve in the latter role, feel free to contact either Ann Guerra or Phil Wetz for a **confidential** discussion on what that would entail. In the meantime, take advantage of the opportunities for authentic dialogue as they will enrich your life.

Phil

OPPORTUNITIES TO BE THE HANDS AND FEET OF CHRIST PINES IS AT WORK IN OUR COMMUNITY – JOIN US!

Pines Monthly Agape Offering (next page)

What is the AGAPE Offering? The Greek word Agape (ag-ah-pay) is used in the New Testament to refer to a kind of love that is not necessarily a feeling but a motivation for action, a sacrificial love that voluntarily gives without expecting anything in return. We are called to Agape love through Christ’s example.

To bring greater awareness of and participation in Pines’ “outside our walls” ministry projects throughout the year, the **Agape Offering** of small, tangible goods or financial donations are scheduled each month. Families are encouraged to participate together in selecting items to donate and bring to the donation bin. Watch the monthly fliers in the bulletin, newsletter, and This Week at Pines email for more information.

Together, we are the hands and feet of Christ!

Thank you! Your Pines Missions Committee

Mission Partner	Activity	Date	Location	Contact (for phone numbers contact Church Office)
The Restoration Team	Assist with storm recovery efforts and other community assistance	Ongoing	TBD	www.therestorationteam.org
Taco and A Prayer	Make tacos for and share prayers with neighbors	1 st Fridays– (anytime between 6:30-7:30am) Begins in Sept.	Pines	Margaret Schafer
Sherwood Elementary	Deliver Monthly Food Bags (requires lifting 20 lb. bags)	Fall/Spring	Pines to Sherwood	Cindy Coles
	Reading Buddies	Fall/Spring	Sherwood	Cindy & Dave Coles, Val Aldred
	Bulletin Board Team	Fall/Spring	Sherwood	Cindy Coles
Montrose Street Reach	Shop for and deliver food to street ministry	Every other month Thursday evening	Pines to Montrose location	Kathy Ropshaw
Church Office	Answer phones	1 day/week	Pines	Cindy Houlihan cindy@pinespc.org
Youth Hand on Hand Apartment Outreach	Assist with preparing food and other activities	Monthly	Pines/nearby apartment complex	Kristin Beall kristin@pinespc.org

BACK TO SCHOOL DRIVE

SHERWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



THE MISSION OF YAHWEH

Mission Backpack Blessing

MEMORIAL ASSISTANCE MINISTRIES (MAM)

Back to School Clothing Drive

JULY/AUGUST AGAPE

Donations can be placed in the offering plate,
made online at pinespc.org/giving or on Zelle,
or brought to the church office.

PINESPC.ORG
Include "Back to School" with your donation.

Mission@PINES+

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 September 5th!

For more information contact the church office or Margaret Schafer.



and a



“Friends Night Out” (which was formerly known as “Date for Eight”) was a huge success last Spring as over 50+ people participated. This event has been a long-standing tradition at Pines usually involving a potluck type of experience with a small group of 6 – 8 people.

We have been enthusiastically asked to continue, so sign-ups will begin in August 2025.

The timeline for the Fall Friends Night Out will be September, October and November.

Sign-ups will be right outside Fellowship Hall or you can look for Chris, Linda or Patsy. Emails will be sent to those who participated in the Spring to see if they wish to continue and participate in the Fall.

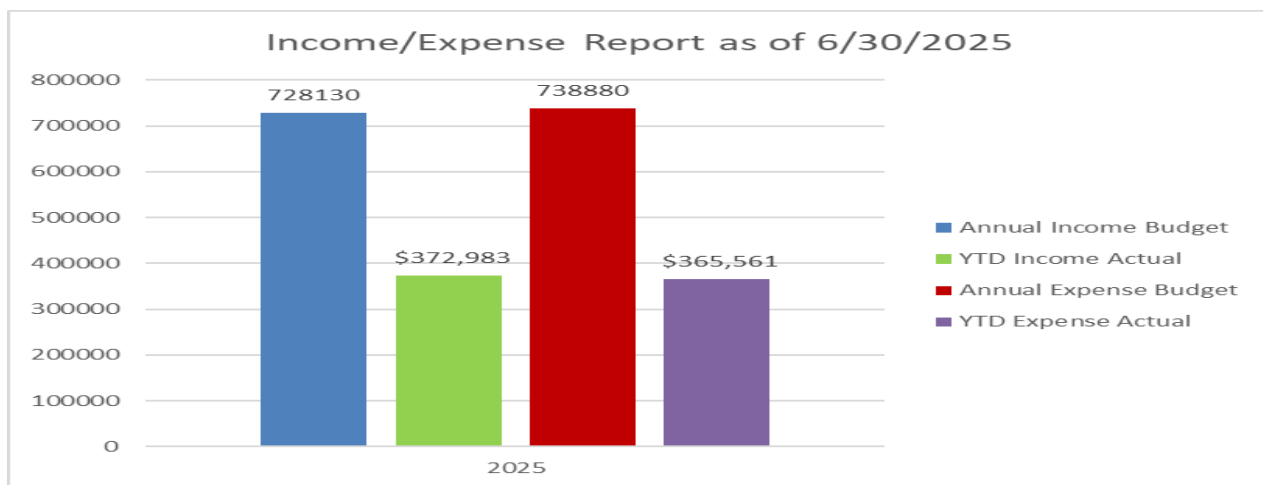
If you have any questions please reach out to Linda Aldred, Patsy Jackson, or Chris Wolfe.

Session

Session did not meet in July.

Please look for the next report in the September newsletter.

Stewardship



STEWARDSHIP NOTES:

1. Total Income is just slightly ahead of 50% of the budget with 50% of the year underway. Pledge income exceeds expectation by \$30,000, while non-pledge income is almost \$23,000 under budget through the first half of the year.
2. Total expenses are right on target at the halfway point.
3. Net Income is a positive \$7,422.
4. The Sustaining Gift Fund endowment balance (held at Texas Presbyterian Foundation) at the end of second quarter is \$966,600.

Are YOU Storm Ready?

Preparation now can protect your home, your family, and your peace of mind later.

Don't wait for the storm to make landfall — prep now, stay ready, and protect what matters most.

Looking to get ready for Hurricane Season? Go to Hurricane Preparedness | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration at <https://www.noaa.gov/hurricane-prep>.

June Agape Offering for CanCare

Beth Patterson and I delivered Pines' Agape offering to Beatrice Arbuckle at CanCare on July 23. Most of the knitted and crocheted items were created by members of Pines Needles stitch ministry. Some items were donated by Pines' church members.

We were able to donate: 36 "lapghans" / lap blankets, 85 hats, 29 scarves, and 28 hat / scarf sets.

CanCare volunteers will package the items into individual bags. The bags will be given to people in October as they receive cancer treatment. Beatrice was very grateful for Pines' contribution that will help make cancer patients a little more comfortable as they go through chemotherapy and radiation.

Thank you very much to everyone who contributed to the June Agape offering for CanCare.

Valerie Harelson



Second Sunday Lunch Bunch...

Join us on August 10th at Lupe Tortillas right after church for the next Second Sunday Lunch!



Want to learn to play Mahjong, or are you already a seasoned player? Suzy Wolfe has begun a Mahjong group in the café, near the receptionist desk each month at 7pm. The next night is August 14th. If you would be interested, please email Suzy.

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.

RENOVATIONS

The end is in site! Work is being done and things are proceeding. We beg your patience for a bit longer as we hope to have completion on the new Fellowship Hall restrooms soon. Thank you for your patience up to this point. The committees have worked hard to make this a renovation you will be pleased with. More updates to come soon.

A way you can help...

Dear Pines family of faith,

During the predawn hours of July 4th the Texas Hill Country was hit with devastating floods that wiped out camps, homes, businesses, and took the lives of over 100 children of God.

Although, over 4 hours away this tragedy strikes us here in Houston as well. Many of you have connections to that area and to victims of the flood. I can't imagine the pain you and those along the Guadalupe River are experiencing right now. It is in times like these when we lean into our faith and plead with God to help us. That help from God comes in many forms. We witness God's love and support when hundreds of first responders descend on the area to make an immediate impact. We witness God's love and support with the countless volunteers who come to provide food, counseling, willing arms and legs to move things and muck out homes. We especially see God's love and support when faith communities gather together to pray and send financial support. The Session and I want Pines to be part of God's love and support for our Hill Country brothers and sisters by collecting a Special Offering specifically for Hill Country recovery.

The Session has decided to designate Team Rubicon as the recipient of our collected funds. We became very familiar with Team Rubicon when we housed 40 team members for over six weeks following Hurricane Beryl. This wholly volunteer group is one of the first on the ground following a disaster and they stay many weeks following to make sure their work is done.

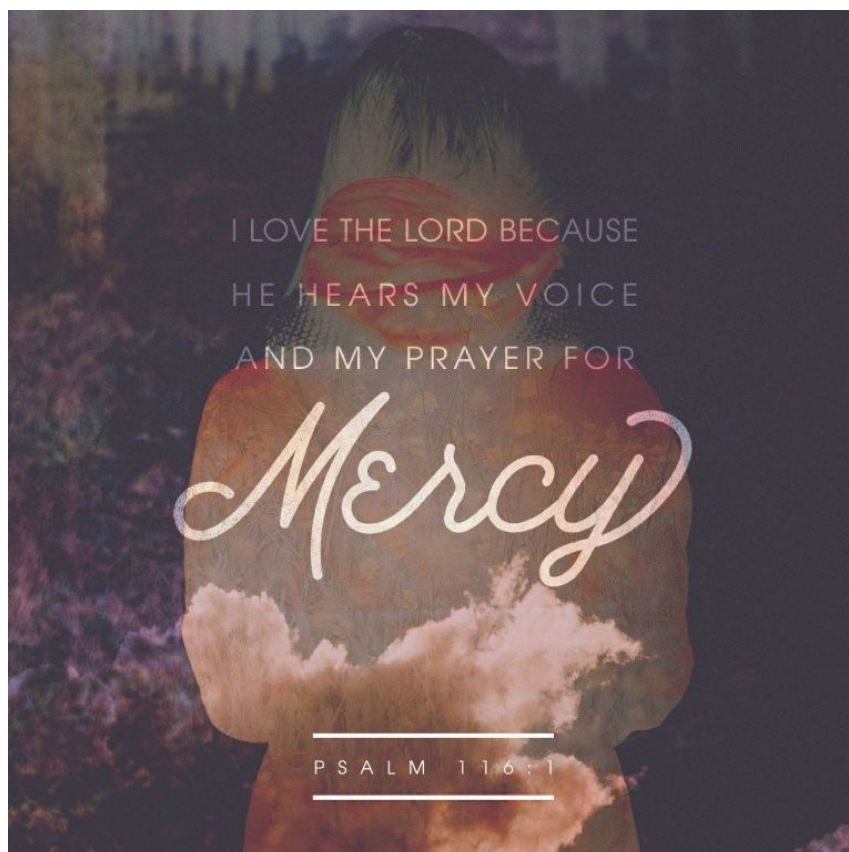
If you'd like to provide financial support please use this link to the Pines Giving page:

<https://www.pinespc.org/giving>. If you'd like to find out more about Team Rubicon, please visit their website <https://teamrubiconusa.org/>.

May we keep all those impacted in our prayers.

With faith, trust and hope in our Lord and Savior,

Andy



Searching for some new ideas to do with the family or friends this summer?

How about...

Explore the Wonders of the Universe

Saturday night stargazing at the George Observatory, located in Brazos Bend State Park

Explore the night sky on the upper deck of the Observatory with constellation laser tours, a combination of deck and dome telescopes, and captured camera feeds. Amateur and staff astronomers will guide you on your journey through the heavens, whether you are looking at planets in our solar system or deep sky objects out in space. Don't miss our Milky Way Exhibit area inside, featuring the moon, meteorites, and more!

Visiting the George Observatory can be the experience of a lifetime!

Hours of Operation: Open Saturday Nights Year Round, weather permitting. Ticketholders will be emailed parking & check-in details, and contacted in the event of inclement weather.

If the skies are overcast, we will present our Cloudy Night Program, featuring previously acquired images, telescope dome tours and talks by expert docents. We only cancel for rain and will contact ticketholders by email and phone with next steps.

General Admission: Adults \$13, Children \$13 go to: <https://george.hmns.org/visit/> for more info.



**Please mark your calendars with the
NEWSLETTER DUE DATE: August 22 (for the September 2025 issue)**

Want to share a favorite recipe? Send Cindy an email and she will publish it in the next newsletter. This one was sent in by an anonymous Pines member. Bon Appetit!

Lunch Lady Brownies

Ingredients:

For the Brownie Base:

- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, melted
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 4 large eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 cup milk

For the Frosting:

- 1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 4 cups powdered sugar
- Pecans (optional) to taste

Instructions:

1. Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C). Grease or line a 9×13-inch baking pan with parchment paper.
2. Prepare the brownie base: In a large bowl, whisk together the melted butter and granulated sugar until smooth. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Stir in the vanilla extract.
3. In a separate bowl, combine the flour, cocoa powder, salt, and baking powder. Gradually add the dry ingredients to the wet mixture, alternating with the milk, and stir until well combined. The batter will be thick.
4. Bake the brownies: Pour the brownie batter into the prepared baking pan and spread it out evenly. Bake for 25-30 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Allow the brownies to cool completely in the pan.
5. Prepare the frosting: In a medium saucepan, melt the butter over medium heat. Stir in the milk and cocoa powder, and bring the mixture to a simmer. Remove from heat and stir in the vanilla extract.
6. Gradually add the powdered sugar, mixing until smooth and creamy. Adding pecans here is good too!
7. Frost the brownies: Once the brownies have cooled, spread the frosting evenly over the top of the brownies.
8. Cut and serve: Slice the brownies into squares and serve. Enjoy the rich, fudgy texture and sweet, creamy frosting!

Important Info...

In the event that the doors are not open for your group, please leave a note on the door to ask group members 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.

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.