



PINES

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Pines Press January 2026 / 12751 Kimberley Lane 77024 / 713-467-2234 / www.pinespc.org



WHAT MAKES US DIFFERENT

ROOTED IN CHRIST

The Gospel drives everything we do. We follow Jesus' call to love and feed the hungry.

DESIGNED FOR IMPACT

MannaPack® meals are scientifically formulated to fight malnutrition and restore health.

LED BY LOCAL LEADERS

We work with trusted in-country partners who know how to get food where it's needed most, even in some of the world's toughest hunger hotspots.

FOCUSED ON LONG-TERM CHANGE Food is the foundation for so much more: education, health, opportunity and hope.

POWERED BY VOLUNTEERS Most FMSC meals are hand-packed by volunteers. While we use some automation, volunteers are at the heart of our mission and model.

DRIVEN BY STEWARDSHIP Your gift goes a long way: • Each meal costs less than 30 cents. • \$106 feeds a child for an entire year. • 88% of every donation goes directly toward feeding kids. • More than 99% of FMSC meals shipped have safely reached their intended destination. • FMSC consistently receives the highest awards for accountability and transparency from Charity Navigator.



Join the Pines MobilePack on February 20th and/or 21st, 2026.

Go to www.pinespc.org/fmsc (use code PPC26) to sign up for your spot today!

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 Fridays, call Cindy at 832-489-5989.

Second Sunday Lunch Bunch...

No meetings until March.

Please be sure to mark your calendars to come have lunch with the group in March after church!!

The word "thanks" is written in a colorful, 3D font with each letter in a different color (blue, green, red, yellow, purple, orange) and a shadow underneath.

Dear Pines family, I want to say thank you to all those that helped me as I recovered from my fall. Also for the rides, the visits and the cards. Thanks does not feel like enough and yet I do not know what would be enough. My love and appreciation to all of those who helped, volunteered their time, and to those that offered their time.
Marsha Deison

Do you get our weekly prayer list? If not, please call Cindy in the church office at 713-467-2234 x110 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 monthly newsletter "The Pines Press" 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!

Brown Bag Book Club

Questions linger about Theo, a pleasant but mysterious stranger, after his arrival in Golden, Georgia. Who is he and why is he here? **Mark your calendars for Thursday, February 5, 2026 (12:00 noon) in room C3**, as we discuss the book, Theo of Golden, by Allen Levi. This is a story of a generous and humble man who brings joy to a community through selfless acts and gifts of anonymous kindness. Questions? Contact Shirley Bollich.



BINGO...

January 15th, 2026 at 6:30 pm SAVE THE DATE!

Come join us to celebrate the New Year with dinner and a fun game of Bingo. Bring your friends and family. Be sure to let Linda Aldred know you are coming so she can have plenty of food ready!

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 January 8th. If you would be interested, please email Suzy.



Pastor's Page

Dear Pines family of faith,

I pray your Advent season has been filled with hope and joy as you anxiously anticipate the celebration of the birth of our Lord and Savior on Christmas day. This is a season that offers us the opportunity to reflect upon what we are thankful for and what our hopes are for the future. I'm thankful for the over 65 years that God's people who call themselves Pines Presbyterian Church have served faithfully as God's hands, feet and voice in West Houston. The leadership of our congregation, the Session and Trustees, have been paying attention to the changes in our culture and congregation that are impacting the future of Pines. We are seeing a confluence of events, from changing Christian practices in our country to shifting generational needs and wants and, closer to home, from declining membership, stewardship challenges, shrinking budgets, to increased operating costs of our aging facility.

We feel Pines today is at a unique inflection point. This convergence of events has led us to consider the need to take a deep, organized look at Pines' mission and call for the future, including our long-term financial picture. What is God calling Pines to do and be not just today, but 5, 10, 20 years from now? And what do we need to do to fulfill that mission?

Pines has the capacity to thrive, but as the leaders chosen by the congregation, we must be intentional now about planning for that future. The Session wants to seize this moment and focus with intentionality on discerning God's call for Pines and leading this amazing congregation in getting excited about and carrying out that call together. As a result, the Session has appointed an 8-person discernment team (Mark Babineck, Terrie Cardwell, Linda Johnson, Mike Lade, Beth Patterson, Dan Schafer, Phil Wetz and myself) to do the intentional work that is needed to plan for our family of faith's future. This effort will be based in prayer and scripture, and include listening to the congregation and seeking your wisdom throughout this process, and the possibility of working with an external, theologically trained coach to ensure strong progress, clear deliverables and skilled guidance for implementation. You will be kept in the loop as the Session and this team work together to ensure Pines' future.

The Session and this team are excited about the work that is ahead of us as we prayerfully seek God's will and wisdom in planning for our family of faith's next 65 years and beyond. I ask that you pray for this team's work and the Session's discernment as we move forward into the hope and joy our Savior promises His faithful.

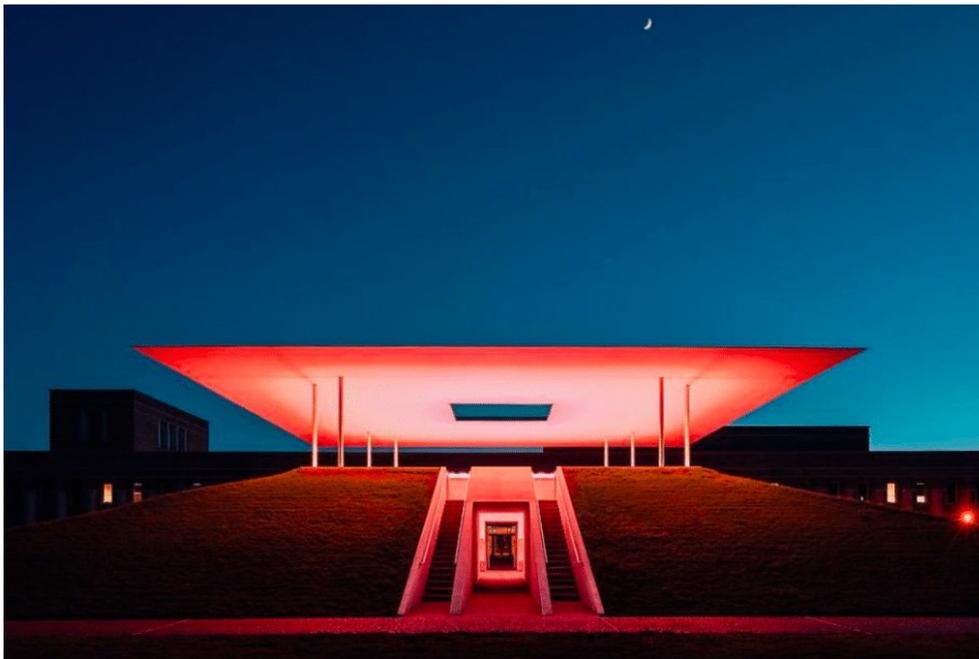
With the love of Christ,



Andy Gans
Pastor

Looking for *Things To Do...*

Stargaze at The Twilight Epiphany Skyscape In Houston



Experience the wonder, awe, and romance at James Turrell Twilight Epiphany at Rice Campus. Here, sunrises and sunsets are synchronized through a **sequence of colors and sounds** that elevate the sunset into an ethereal experience. Plus, entrance is completely free.



MobilePack registration will be open to Pines members on December 21st. Go to pinespc.org/FMSC (use code PPC26). Registration will be open to the public on January 1st, 2026.



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 at 713-467-2234 x110.



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 to order a live arrangement. Please email: Melissa Gravett or Linda Aldred to sign up.

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, your Property Committee

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

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



Founded in 1975, Stephen Ministries is celebrating its 50th year of equipping God's people for ministry! A celebratory event featuring Stephen Ministries' Founder and Executive Director, Dr. Kenneth Haugk, and other key teaching faculty from Stephen Ministries St. Louis is happening in Houston at St. John the Divine Episcopal Church on Saturday, January 24, 2026 from 9-4.

Everyone is invited! If you are or have been a Stephen Minister, have been a Care Receiver from a Stephen Minister or are just passionate about making the world a more caring place, reach out to Phil Wetz or Ann Guerra to register.

Interestingly enough- Pines celebrated 30 years of Stephen Ministry just last year in 2025!

If you are in need of someone to walk with you through a tough time, Pines Stephen Ministers are here for you. Reach out to Phil or Ann to get more information.



Dear Friends -- One of my favorite Pines-related activities is reading the Advent devotionals written by members of the Pines family. This year I decided to share that joyful experience with some Pines members who are unable to come to church as well as some former members who now live elsewhere. One of the recipients of the devotional booklets I mailed was former member, Dianne Harrington Swinney.

In the email below, Dianne asked me to share her "deep gratitude to those who wrote and assembled the devotionals". Thus I am sending this note to convey Dianne's gratitude for those who were involved in creating this wonderful gift which will bless the Advent journey for so many. **THANK YOU!**

I would also ask for help in conveying Dianne's gratitude to the children who contributed art work to the devotional booklet.

Sending this with gratitude for the privilege of being part of such a dedicated, talented and faithful group of Christian brothers and sisters.

Phil

Dear Phil,

What a delight to have this Devotional Guide, and find so many of the entries were written by friends I remember from Pines! The Holy Spirit is alive and working in the Pines congregation. I've already read the first 5 devotionals and will read the rest as I go through Advent. I have other devotionals, but this one will be the one I read first. Please express my deep gratitude to those who wrote and assembled the devotionals, and to the children who illustrated it.

*Blessings to all of you,
Dianne*

Missions

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/share prayers with neighbors	1 st Fridays- (anytime between 6:30-7:30am)	Pines	Margaret Schafer:
Sherwood Elementary	Deliver Monthly Food Bags (requires lifting 20 lb. bags)	Fall/Spring	Pines to Sherwood	Cindy Coles:
	Reading Buddies and Mentors	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 apt. complex	Ron Langston
Mission of Yahweh	Assist with leading Sunday evening Children's Church (2-11 yrs old)	Sundays 6:30-8:30 (seeking 1 Sunday/mo. commitment)	Mission of Yahweh	Janet Gay Janetolson@missionofyahweh.com
	Christmas on a Mission	Christmas Day	Mission of Yahweh	www.missionofyahweh.com

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 5! For more information contact Margaret Schafer or the church office.



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Dear PINES PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (EY017),

The Kroger Co. Family of Stores is committed to bringing hope and help to the local neighborhoods we call home. Our stores are on a mission to not just be part of, but to help create a stronger community. We recognize that every community has unique causes that need support. Thank you for being such an important organization in our community.

Giving totals from August 25 to November 25, 22 households, \$52.45
Thank you Pines for your support of our church! The Missions Committee



PreSchool News



The Preschool students and their families loved celebrating Christmas last month. We wish you all a very happy 2026!

Pines Presbyterian + CanCare “Wrapping Up Cancer”



On December 5th, CanCare presented Pines Presbyterian its **2025 Partner Congregation Award** for Pines' long commitment to CanCare and specifically, our focus on CanCare during cancer survivorship month each June with our Wrapping Up Cancer Agape offering. Each June since 2019, Pines has provided both hand-made and purchased scarves, shawls, blankets, caps, and more to wrap up those facing a cancer diagnosis with warmth and God's love. It was a great honor to receive this award!!

CanCare, founded and based in Houston, enjoyed its 35th anniversary this year, and celebrated that milestone with publication of a book *Hope in the Face of Cancer*, which is available on Amazon. CanCare offers one-on-one support to cancer survivors and caregivers, as well as in-hospital visitation. They report over 240,000 health care visits, over 55,000 one-on-one matches, and over 2500 volunteers trained in their 35 years!

What a blessing for Pines to receive this award and be able to continue to support this organization that gives hope to those facing cancer and assures them they are not alone!

Special screening package for \$129 for our members includes:

- ♥ Carotid Artery Disease Screening
- ♥ Atrial Fibrillation Screening
- ♥ Peripheral Artery Disease Screening
- ♥ Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening

Call to schedule an appointment near you!
800-324-9458 and use code: **HABC001**



When:
January 13, 2026

Where:
Pines
Presbyterian
Church in the
Fellowship Hall

Pines Needles Contribution to Mission of Yahweh Christmas

Judy Shamp and I delivered knitted and crocheted hats and scarves to Mission of Yahweh for their Christmas celebration. This year, they have seven babies so we included seven baby blankets and quilts. Heritage Presbyterian Church where Cheryl Gans was interim pastor contributed many colorful hats for the women. When we delivered the items, Helen Gay gave Judy and me a tour of the new dormitories that will be open soon to help the Mission serve more women and children. The rooms are very welcoming. She told us a little history of Pines' connection to Mission of Yahweh. The first crib at the Mission came from Pines and the first receptionists who volunteered at the Mission were from Pines. It was interesting to hear some of Helen's memories of the Mission from when she was a child. As we walked around the Mission, Helen pointed out some gingerbread house fronts. Kari Work donated the house fronts and the women at the Mission of Yahweh painted them. There are many ways that Pines helps to support Mission of Yahweh at Christmas time and throughout the year. It's a blessing that Pines Needles can be part of this ministry.

Valerie Harelson



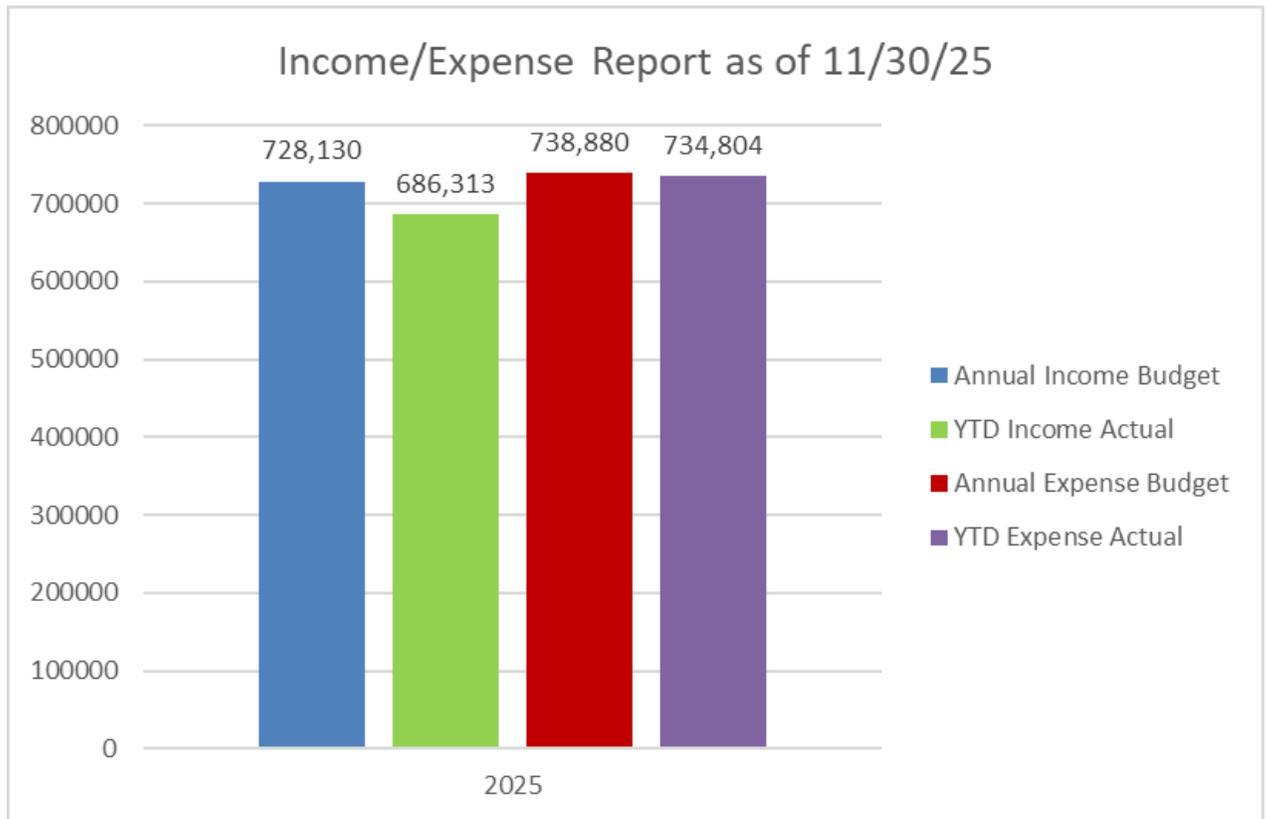
Corny jokes of the month...

What is the difference between black-eyed peas and chick peas?
Black-eyed peas can sing us a song, and chick peas can only hummus one!

What is one place you should not take a dog? A flea market!!!



Stewardship



Stewardship Notes:

1. As of November 30, Pledge income is \$506,679 vs Budget of \$537,000. Non-pledge income is \$102,040 vs Budget of 115,000.
2. Total Expenses are \$734,804 vs Budget of \$738,880. Property committee continues to exceed budgeted costs due to office and sanctuary air conditioning issues this year. All other committees are within or below budget expectations.
3. Net Income is (\$48,491) as of November 30.
4. If December continues as a typically strong month, we can hope to reduce the current deficit for year end 2025.

Session

The Session of Pines Presbyterian Church met for its regular Stated meeting on December 1, 2025. Here are some highlights:

- Approved the formation of a Discernment Team to look prayerfully at the mission of Pines, both now and in the future.
- Called a Congregational Meeting for December 21, 2025, following Worship, to elect ruling elders for the Class of 2029.
- Approved a resolution to pay expenses during January until a 2026 budget is adopted.
- Heard a positive report on income for 2025.

In Christ,
Dan Schafer - Clerk of Session

CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS TRAVEL SERVICES LIMITED

Footsteps of Faith Through Scotland and the Reformation

11 Days: September 1-11, 2026

Visiting

Edinburgh • Stirling • Inverness • Loch Ness • Oban
Isle of Skye • Iona • Glencoe • Loch Lomond • Pitlochry

Hosted By:
Rev. Andy Gans

\$5,585 from Houston

- 1st class hotels
- All tours, transfers and transportation according to the itinerary
- All tips, taxes, airfare included



Please mark your calendars with the
NEWSLETTER DUE DATE: January 23rd (for the February 2026 issue)



**What a night of
great
tidings and JOY!
Happy New Year
from your
Stephen Ministers!**



**The Pines
Annual
Christmas
Luncheon.**



**All had a merry
time. Hope you
will join us next
year!**



*Make it a point
to start each day of this
New Year with prayer.
It works wonders.*

Happy New Year!

TiredYetblessed.com