



PINES

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Pines Press, July 2023

12751

Kimberley Ln, 77024 713-467-2234

**Tasty
Treats!**

Happy Hour Hymn Sing!

**Fellowship
Hall!**



**Sing Your Favorite Hymns
with Laurie and the
Chancel Choir**

July 23 | 4:30pm

Pines Family News & Current Events

The church office is open Monday - Thursday 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM. On Fridays, the office staff work from home. If you need assistance on Fridays, call Cindy at 832-489-5989.



Welcome to the world Willa Marie Garrett! Willa is the daughter of Daniel and Lauren (Patterson) Garrett. She is the granddaughter of Pines members Jim and Beth Patterson. Willa was born on June 5th, 2023 in Birmingham Alabama. Congrats to the new grandparents!

Volunteers Needed – Would you like to get more involved in a Church activity but don't feel you have much available time? The Worship Committee has just the spot for you to serve. The committee is looking for someone (or several people) to be responsible for preparing the communion elements for a three-month period. Our available period is the months of July – September. Duties entail, filling 80 – 100 communion cups with juice, prior to the Sunday morning Communion Service. This can be done Friday or Saturday and the trays stored in the kitchen refrigerator. The Communion gluten-free bread is being prepared by Linda Aldred and Laurie Connors and will be stored in the freezer. Enough bread to serve 100 people should be taken out and placed in the refrigerator to thaw prior to the Sunday service. Prior to Sunday, you need to purchase a round loaf of bread for the Communion Table. On Communion Sunday, the bread is put in the trays, the juice is added to the pitcher and the loaf of bread is lightly scored on the bottom so Andy can rip it apart easily. The juice and bread trays are placed on the front table with the top covered; tongs are placed behind the bread trays; the loaf of bread is covered with a white cloth napkin and the pitcher and chalice are also placed on the table along with the bread. The church circles assist with cleaning up Communion after the service. If interested, please contact Connie Sipp. All expenses incurred will be reimbursed and training and printed instruction will be provided.



Please mark your calendars with the
NEWSLETTER DUE DATE: July 21 (for the August 2023 issue)

Second Sunday Lunch

...please join us for lunch at Café Express on July 9, right after Worship. Please come and join in the fellowship!

Church Seeking Nursery Workers: \$12-15 per hour based on age and experience.

Contact kristin@pinespc.org for more information. Pines is looking for people ages 13 and up who are willing to be trained and cleared for childcare in the nursery. Most hours are on Sunday mornings, but special events are also available.

Pastor's Page

Peace of Christ be with you,

This is such a wonderful month as we celebrate our independence as a country. We are thankful to God for the independence we have as Americans to move about this land freely, to speak freely, and the independence we have to worship freely. This is not a gift to be taken lightly. There are millions of people, including Christians, around the world who cannot worship the way they want without fear of ridicule, imprisonment, or death. It's hard for us to really understand what it means to not be able to worship the way we desire. I believe we often take this freedom for granted.

Freedom is a gift that, unfortunately, comes with a price. Thousands of men and women have given their lives for us to enjoy the freedoms we so lovingly embrace here in this country. But it is one person who gave their life for us so that we might enjoy a gift that no longer needs to be fought for and can never be taken away. That gift is grace and it is a gift from God through Christ Jesus. The gift of grace is the greatest freedom the whole world can enjoy.

As we celebrate our freedoms as a country, let's not forget the freedom we have to respond to God's gift of free and amazing grace. This is a gift that all faithful believers share. It is a gift that sets us free from the bondage of sin allowing each one of us to boldly step out and serve our mighty God.

This Independence Day, celebrate our freedom as a nation but more importantly celebrate the freedom we find in the wonderful gift of grace known as Jesus Christ, for it is Christ who gives us true freedom.

May everyday be independence day,



Andy



Family Ministry Calendar for July

PLEASE HELP!

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

July Family Ministries:

July 1 Youth Depart Summer Mission Trip 8am

Youth serving for a week in Tulsa Oklahoma with Praying Pelican Missions! July 1-7th

Ministry with children’s programs, meal services (to both homeless and low income families) , worship, and food banks. There will also be time working at a new arts center for those families unable to afford things such as painting, music lessons, or drama productions for their children. Fourth of July will include supporting a church outreach enjoying fireworks! Please pray for our students as they serve in many unique ways to the community in Tulsa.

Do you feel like you are constantly looking for a phone number for one of your fellow church members?

How would you like to have access to that information right on your phone or computer?

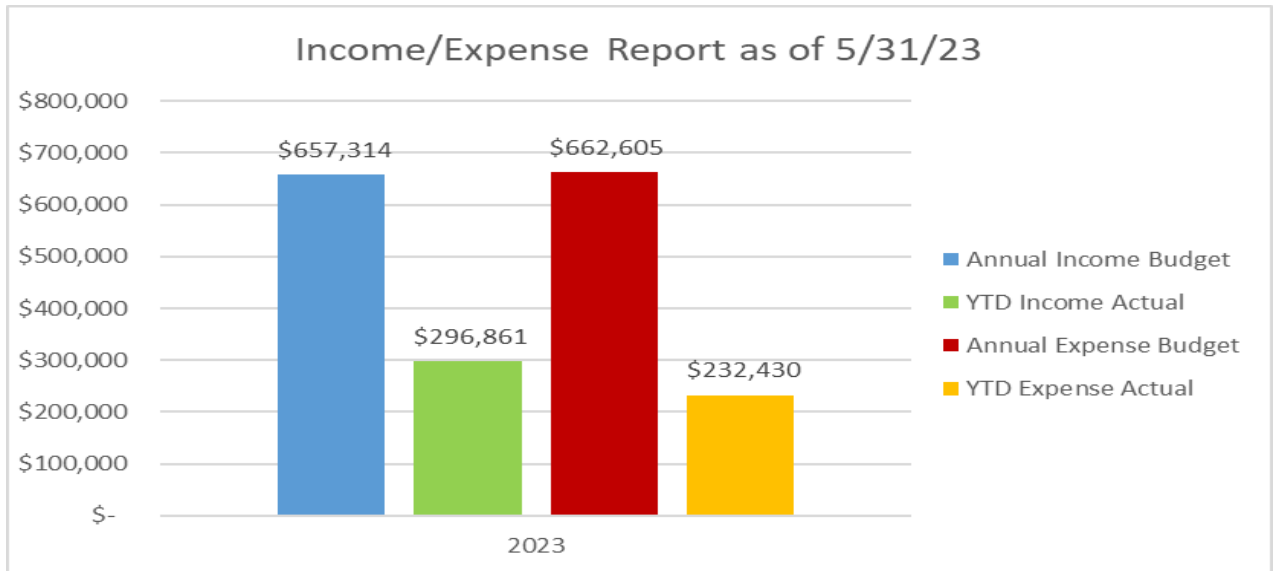
Call Alexis and she can assist you in adding the Breeze app to your phone or computer. The Breeze app will give you the full directory of member names, phone numbers, and addresses so that you have them at your fingertips! To obtain this information, you must be a Pines member.

Any questions, give Alexis a call. She is in the church office on Mondays.



A note from the high school mission group from 1st Presbyterian in Highpoint North Carolina (here to do Harvey clean up with TRT)... “Thanks for a great stay. It was a blessing to have your welcoming church to come “home” to each night. We were unable to attend church this morning because we just couldn’t get the timing to work. Hated not to thank members personally, but please pass along our thanks for your ministry.”

Stewardship



STEWARDSHIP NOTES:

1. Pledge income for 5 months continues slightly ahead of budget. Non-pledge income received through May is well ahead (55%) of the year's budget due to unexpected early gifts and continued strong giving.
2. Overall expenses were underbudget for five months. Property income is ahead of budget offsetting well controlled property expenditures. The Preschool annual building use payment (\$24,743) was received in May. Staff committee expenses are right on target.
3. Total Income was \$296,861; total expenses were \$232,430; leaving a Net Income of \$64,431 for May, continuing our very strong start for the year.

Session Highlights from the June meeting

The Session met for its regular stated meeting on June 19. Here are some highlights:

- Session elected Linda Aldred, Judy Shamp, and Connie Sipp as Ruling Elder Commissioners to the Presbytery of New Covenant meeting on July 15 at Spring Branch Presbyterian.
- Session approved the Missions Committee's application for grants from Presbytery to support (1) Sherwood student food and snack bags distribution, and (2) the Feed My Starving Children ministry in 2024.
- Session also approved the Property Committee's application for a grant from Presbytery for capital projects identified by the Committee.
- Session approved Val Aldred as a new member of the Property Committee, and Ian McClintic as a new parent member of the Preschool Committee.
- The Christian Education Committee reported that it will conduct a planning meeting for the next 6 months in August. Vacation Bible Camp starts June 26!
- The Congregational Fellowship Committee reported that it is planning an indoor Potluck Picnic for August 13 after Worship.
- At the March Session retreat, many ideas for community evangelism and outreach were suggested, with committees to further develop specific items. Christian Education is planning and soliciting ideas for another all-church study program, and is planning an ice cream party in Bendwood Park on Saturday, August 5 (if park construction is finished). Other committees will be discussing other ideas in their August meetings, for review and coordination at the September Session meeting.

Craig Walker, clerk



Children at Play Simulating Stephen Ministry

Several months ago in this space, I “introduced” you to my two grandchildren – Wilson, who will be four in August and Avery, who was one in April. That article was entitled, “Helping Others to Walk” and discussed Wilson’s efforts to help his then four-month-old sister learn to walk. I used this example as a metaphor for the help a Stephen Minister provides a care receiver in working with the Holy Spirit to help the care receiver learn to “walk” again.

In that article, I wrote, “As the relationship and trust between the Stephen Minister and the care receiver grows, the support provided will also evolve just as it will between Wilson and Avery. The support may evolve beyond listening into providing encouragement or sharing experiences.” With that lead-in, I will update you on Wilson and Avery based on a recent video of them.

As these two photos from the video show, Avery is struggling to climb the steps leading to the top of a platform so that she can go down a slide. Wilson is waiting at the top to come alongside her and give her the needed encouragement to take the risk to go down the slide. Avery has learned to trust Wilson’s love for her and, after watching him go down the slide, she follows and concludes this adventure with a large grin on her face.



I joyfully watched these two children emulate what I believe the Stephen Minister-care receiver relationship brings about. Even though Wilson knows that Avery is struggling to climb the stairs, he lets her do the work needed to develop these new skills while shouting encouragement to her. He patiently waits for her arrival at the top of the slide so that he can be with her to encourage her to try something new that he feels will bring joy into her life. After they “connect” at the top of the slide, Wilson models the desired behavior for Avery by going down the slide and then encouraging her again to take a new step in her life that he feels will bring her joy. Once she does, he affirms and rejoices in what she has done.




The Stephen Minister knows that the care receiver has to do the needed work to bring about the desired life changes. Sometimes that process is a struggle as it was for Avery. During that time, the Stephen Minister will be present and provide prayer and encouragement. At the appropriate time, the Stephen Minister may suggest new things to try as well as strive to model the desired behavioral traits. And finally, the Stephen Minister will provide prayer, affirmation and encouragement as the care receiver works on building a new life.

I am thankful that the Holy Spirit can use a one-minute video of children at play to illustrate what can occur in Stephen Ministry. If you are interested in exploring the possibility of working with a Stephen Minister, please reach out to Ann Guerra or Phil Wetz or call the church office. And you can contact me at any time for a private viewing of my favorite video!

Phil Wetz

Are you looking for something you can do from home for the church? We are looking to start back up with the Sojourners Group. This volunteer position would look for places for people in or connected to our church to go on trips in the Houston and surrounding areas. All participants must be over 50 years old. You pick the place you want to go, schedule it, and then schedule the county bus to come to the church to pick up the group for the days journey. If you would be interested in doing this, please give Cindy in the church office a call. This is a wonderful opportunity to do fun things with your Pines family. Been to the Blue Bell Ice Cream Factory lately, to the Painted Churches, to one of the many museums in the Houston area? There are so many fun things that can be done on a group trip. Again talk to Cindy (713-467-2234 x110) and she will guide you through the process. Please prayerfully consider being our Sojourners Planner!

PLEASE help us conserve energy by remembering to turn off lights and AC when you leave the building. If you turn it on, please turn it off.
Thank you SO MUCH!
Your Property Committee

 **Do you have any** orchestra or band instruments taking up space in your closet? Want to find a safe place to keep them where they will be used and appreciated? Call Laurie or the church office and they will help you with that.

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, or sent to the church office. Include "Back to School" with your donation.

PINESPC.ORG

Mission@PINES+



26-Feb-2023 to 27-May-2023
21 Households \$48.47 in donations to Pines!



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

Service Beyond The Walls

How are you active and serving in God's Kingdom? Send your thoughts to cindy@pinespc.org.

A REMINDER TO GIVE THANKS

During a recent "run", a woman stopped me and asked if she could talk to me. I agreed and expected her to do what so many have done who have watched me exercise, which is to ask if I am in pain and need to go to the ER! To my surprise, she told me that she felt I had made great progress in how well I was running versus what she saw prior to my Nov 2022 ankle surgery.

She explained that she had been inspired by seeing my progress because it gave her hope that she could also make progress in strengthening her body after spending a year in bed following several eye surgeries. I thanked her for following the Holy Spirit's nudge to enrich my day.

For several days, I reflected on her kind words and kept asking myself how God wanted me to respond. I finally thought of 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18 which reads, "Rejoice always, **pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances**, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus". Those words helped me conclude that I needed to do three things:

The first was to thank God that, after six months of PT, I was able to exercise again. I had been so focused on my PT regimen that I had never taken time to thank God for the gift of being able to be active again. I now try to make that part of my daily workout.

I also realized that I had failed to thank the Pines family for their prayers and words of encouragement after my surgery which were vital components of my recovery. They were especially needed when I was frustrated with my apparent lack of physical progress.

Finally, I decided to share this story to encourage us to say thank you for those who quietly do so much work to make the ministries of Pines a reality. Of course, that includes our talented and dedicated staff who work hard every week to bless so many through these ministries. I also think of those who are less visible, such as: the volunteers who staff the receptionist desk; the Fellowship Committee who prepare meals and refreshments that facilitate fellowship; the Property Committee who keeps our physical plant functioning; our Mission/Outreach and Pre-School volunteers who carry our ministry into the community; all of those involved in Christian education which provides opportunities to continue to grow in our faith; the Caring Committee, Prayer Team and Stephen Ministers who provide support for those facing challenging times; those who help us be good stewards of the funds needed to support our ministries; and those in the choir, liturgists, ushers and greeters who make worship a meaningful experience.

Writing this was a powerful reminder that our church family has **SO MUCH for** which to be grateful so I close with thanking God for the gift of being able to serve and work with so many talented and dedicated people. As Andy said on June 11, we indeed have been blessed and are faithfully working to be a blessing to others. Thanks be to God!

Phil Wetz

The church office is looking for volunteers to answer phones: Monday through Thursday. We have volunteers for some days currently, but we also want to create a list of substitutes. No experience necessary. We will train you. Bring a book or something to work on while sitting at the front desk. If you can help, please give Cindy a call to get on the list. By the way, one of our long ago male members (Jack Long) used to answer the phones on occasion...just to give you gentlemen out there something to think about!

Do you get our weekly prayer list? If not, please call Cindy in the church office at 713-467-2234 to get on the list. If you would prefer to send an email for prayer, you may send it to Bethel at prayer@pinespc.org. Cindy can also help you sign up to receive our newsletter or our weekly publication "This Week at Pines". So give us a call, we would love to get you connected to what is happening at Pines!