



## **Christmas At Pines**

### **SUNDAYS IN ADVENT**

**November 27 Sermon: "The End of the World?"  
(Scripture)**

**December 4 Sermon: "He Who Began A Good Work"  
Philippians 1: 3-11**

**Celebration of the Lord's Supper**

**December 11 Sermon: "The Well of Salvation"  
Isaiah 12: 2-6**

**CHANCEL CHOIR CANTATA "Sing We Now of Christmas"**

**Arranged by John Purifoy  
at 9:30 and 11:00 Services**

**December 18 Sermon: "O Little Town of Bethlehem"**

### **CHRISTMAS EVE AT PINES**

**5:00 Family Service**

**7:00 and 11:00 Candlelight and Communion Service**

### **DECEMBER 25 and January 1**

**ONE WORSHIP SERVICE at 10:00**

**Micah 5: 2-5**

### **November 27 at 5:00 in the Fellowship Hall**

**Join us for a production of "Not So Silent Night".**

**We will have dinner together in the Fellowship Hall and make a Christmas craft before moving into the Sanctuary to see our Pines Youth in the courtroom as the judge decides the fate of the noisy shepherds. This is for the whole family of Pines to enjoy and give us a delightful kick off to a wonderful Advent season together.**

### **The Sherwood Christmas Store**

**Thursday, December 15**

**See page 6 for more details.**

## Stephen Ministry



**Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of Heaven. (Mat 18:4 NIV)**

While sharing our faith journeys, one of my professors told of the heart-wrenching experience of losing his baby daughter. As you can imagine, it was a difficult and painful experience. As he shared, he said that only one person knew the right thing to say to them that seemed to make any difference...their four year-old son. One day he came to his father, crawled in his lap, hugged him, and said, "We need to talk with Jesus about this". My professor said that while others came with advice or comments about God's will, fancy theology, or platitudes, his son came with Christ. His son came with honesty and openness and faith, but no answers or explanations. Our Stephen Ministers know what it is to come alongside others with that kind of faith and care...they know they do not have the answers...they know that they must come to God as a child...and they are more than willing to walk with you through whatever you may be facing...a loss, illness, unemployment, relationship struggles, questions of purpose or faith, etc. If you would like a Stephen Minister or if you would like to know more about this caring ministry, call (713-467-2234) or stop by to see Barbara Retzloff.

**Our Friday Boys** come in every week to take care of miscellaneous repairs to our preschool, gym area, adult classrooms and Sanctuary. We thought you'd like to see how hard they work!



They are putting a toy set together for the preschool.



### From Your Stewardship Committee

We have had a great response to our 2012 Stewardship Campaign. We continue to give thanks for the faithful giving at Pines, and rejoice in the dedication and commitment of our members. We are still receiving pledges from many of you, and they can be brought to church during the week, mailed in, or put in the offering plate on Sunday morning. For the 2011 year, we recently mailed out the current giving statements. The end of the year is always an especially important time for Pines, as a significant amount of our income is received in November and December. Please pray that God will once again supply our needs as we seek to serve Him and celebrate the love of Jesus Christ in the ministries of our church and in the world around us.

### MAM Could Use Your Help

**Toys are needed!** All toys should be new and unwrapped. All loose toys should be delivered between Nov. 28 and Dec. 3 to the Emergency Services Entrance at MAM (and not the Resale Store).

**Adopt-A-Child** A paper label and toy bag with a child's age, sex and suggested toys will be available at MAM. Each toy bag should have a \$50 retail value. All toy bags should be delivered between Nov. 28 and Dec. 3 (location as noted above).

**MAM's address** is 1625 Blalock Rd., Houston, TX 77080 just north of LongPoint.



# A Message From Our Pastor

## NEW CREATION

I had the privilege of conducting a wedding for a wonderful young couple. They met and fell in love at Purdue University, and since the bride was from our part of town, the wedding was held in Houston. We felt especially privileged that they chose to be married at Pines, as it represented years of friendship we had with the family through the band programs at Spring Forest Middle and Stratford High School

I love the hopes and dreams people bring to a wedding. As the young couple stands facing one another, answering questions and exchanging vows, it is as if the whole world is open before them. They are entering a life filled with opportunities and possibilities and options and choices and hopes and vision. It is a time to dream of the future.

One of my favorite images is from John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*. The travelers who left the desolation of the dust bowl cross the mountains of California and catch a vision of a valley that is green and luscious and fertile and full of possibility. Their hopes rise as they see the land of hope and dreams spread out before them. I often think of couples on their wedding day as standing on just such a summit, gazing out with eyes that are longing to rush into the fullness of the new life before them.

As Christians, we are very familiar with the image of new beginnings. Paul wrote in II Corinthians, "In Christ Jesus, there is new creation. The old is gone, and behold, the new has come." The image of a life full of hope and dreams is one that is offered to each and every one who is Christ Jesus. We are not bound by our past. We are not limited by our shortcomings. The promise of new creation is spread before us and Jesus invites us to follow him and live life abundantly.

I pray the image of new creation, of new beginnings, of an opportunity to step into a future full of promise and hope is one you will embrace this Christmas Season. Advent prepares our hearts for the birth of Jesus with an emphasis on new beginnings. We wait in anticipation of our Lord. We put aside the old and tired ways of living. We let a longing for the deep joy of discipleship well up within our weary souls. We watch with eyes of faith for the new thing God is doing in our midst. We meditate upon the incredible blessing of being in relationship with the God who comes to be with us in the birth of the Christ Child.

This past year has brought plenty of challenges. The worldwide economic situation continues to teeter on the brink. Natural disasters have wreaked havoc on places near and far. The gridlock in politics has set us all on edge. As a denomination, the Presbyterian Church has faced difficult times as we wrestle with the question of ordination. Many individuals have suffered loss on a variety of different levels.

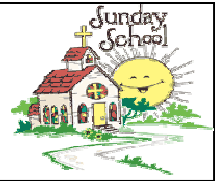
It is into the very darkness that so often surrounds us that God shines the bright light of Jesus Christ. It is into the dead ends and worn out paths we walk that a miraculous new way opens up before us. It is out of wanderings in the desert and times of exile and loneliness that God spreads out a valley with lush paths and promises of abundant life. It is out of death that God brings life.

I look forward to walking with you on our Advent journey. Please make plans to be with us each and every Sunday as we light candles, as we sing songs of good news and great joy, as we celebrate the beautiful and sacred music of our choir. And plan now for which service you will attend Christmas Eve, whether it is the Family Service at 5 pm or the Candles and Communion services at 7 and 11. And as we walk this journey together, may we be reminded again and again of our sure and certain hope. "In Christ Jesus, there is new creation. The old has gone and the new has come."

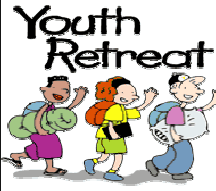
Wayne



Come join us for the Youth Sunday Schools at 9:30 am! For the 6th-8th graders, meet in the Jr. high class (W-13), and for the 9th-12th graders in the Sr. high class (W-14).



**Dec. 17-18: "Youth Christmas/Year-End Retreat" at Pines**



The youth and their families are all invited to go on this trip to celebrate the blessed year of 2011 and to welcome the new year of 2012. We will do a service project on Saturday, Dec. 17, and go to "Jump Sky High" for a fun outing, and come back to church to stay in the (possibly) new youth area that night. The retreat will end in the morning on the next day with the Sunday school. The sign-ups will be posted in the youth area. For more questions, please talk to pastor Sam Jun

Things to do: a service project at Mission of Yahweh, Jump Sky High, Vespers, and Movies (Dec. 19)  
 Things to bring: a bible, a sleeping bag (and pillow), a swim suit, and towel, and toiletries'.

The trip cost: \$20 per person.



**Dec. 18: "Christmas Caroling & Youth Christmas Parties"**

- **The Jr. High Christmas Party:** 1:30-3:30 PM at Kevin & Lou Ann Timmreck's (Tel: 713-647-9303, 623 Diamond Leaf, 77079)
- **The Youth Christmas Caroling:** 4:00-6 PM (carpooling from the church parking lot at 4 pm)
- **The Sr. High Christmas Party:** 6:30-8:30 PM at Barbara & Steve Retzloff's, Tel: 713-463-5733, 2 Raydon Houston TX 77024

**Happy Birthday to all who are born in December, and especially, to**



**Jesus, and to all the youths and youth leaders,** Christopher Work (12/10), Steven Sanders (12/11), Emily Kaestner (12/7), Tyler Gravett (12/4), Katherine Allison (12/31), Connor Peoples (12/30), Kristen Williams (12/12), Andrea Wetz (12/16), Sam Turner (12/3), Hannah Dunn (12/20), Kristen Bundy (12/10), Joey Hays (12/12), Leigh McElroy (12/30), and James Davis (12/1)

**Keeping our kids on T.R.A.C.K.**

We hope you will join our Family Advent Night on November 27th from 5:00-6:30 for dinner and the show, "The Not So Silent Night". Pick up your family Advent Materials - they are in the Narthex by the children's worship bags.

Come to the Cantata on Sunday, Dec. 11th and hear the adult and children's choir make the season very special with a wonderful musical experience. The children will again sing at the first Christmas Eve service on December 24th for our family service. Babysitting is provided for the first two services that special evening.

Godly Play will have special stories during the Lenten season as we all travel to see the baby King. Please know that you are invited at any time to come to observe these special stories and our time together in Godly Play.



The preschool children have had a very busy fall with Pumpkin Patch, Donuts with Dad, and exploring the new playground. The first day on the playground, the children made a circle and thanked God and then, they ran through the ribbon on to the playground. It was so sweet watching them explore the new slides, riding toys and new sand. The preschool is so thankful to you, the church members, for supporting us through your prayers, time and tithes. We give thanks to YOU. Dorothy Hobbs



**A Great Gift For The Upcoming Holiday Season!**

**HELP SUPPORT THE WOMEN'S HOME**

On Sunday, Nov. 27, Boxes of Pecans of all flavors and hand-knit gifts will be on sale in the Fellowship Hall from 9:00 - 12:30 p.m. Come by and do some of your Christmas shopping and help support these wonderful women. See you there!

**COME WITH YOUR POCKETS FULL OF GREEN AND GO HOME WITH BAGS FULL OF GOODIES.**

Small Box - 1-lb. \$20 5x3x5  
 Medium Box - 1.5-lb. \$25 6x3x6

Large Box - 2-lb. \$30 7x3x7  
 All 3 boxes - 4.5-lbs. \$75 7x7x9



**Customer Letter**

The Neighbor to Neighbor program presents 501(c) (3) non-profits, churches, and schools (K-12) the opportunity to receive a percentage of the \$1 million that Kroger awards annually to charity groups in Texas and Louisiana.

**STEP 1:**

To link your Kroger Plus card to our organization, take the letter (found in the church office) with you the next time you go shopping at your neighborhood Kroger store.

**STEP 2:**

Request for the cashier to scan your Kroger Plus card and then the barcode at the bottom of the letter to link to our organization. Once the process is complete, you will be enrolled as a supporter for the remainder of the current program year. Every time you shop at Kroger, a portion of your eligible purchases will be contributed to our Neighbor to Neighbor fund. Our organization will be awarded a percentage of the \$1 million pay-out that reflects our number of qualifying purchases made within the program year.

### PINES FAMILY NEWS

The following folks have new addresses. If you would like this information, please contact the church office at 713-467-2234.

Shirley and Nick Bollich  
 Suzi and Dick Grbac  
 Pat Bersuder  
 Kathy and Andy Dearman



Geneva Quigley has moved to California but we do not have a forwarding address for her yet.

Also, Bob Smith has a corrected e-mail address.

Dave Sibley has a new e-mail address.

### E-Mail Addresses

In order to keep our members up to date on the most current Pines notices, it would be helpful if the church office has your most recent email addresses in our data base. If you have changed your email within the last month, please let us know by sending an email to [genny@pinespc.org](mailto:genny@pinespc.org) with your new address. Thanks for your help!

### SHERWOOD CHRISTMAS STORE

Pines is once again sponsoring the Christmas Store at Sherwood Elementary School. There are many opportunities to volunteer, from shopping and transporting gifts to gift wrapping and helping in the craft area for children. If you would like to support the Christmas Store but are unable to volunteer, monetary contributions are always welcome. Sign-ups begin today in the Fellowship Hall. The Christmas Store will be held on Thursday, December 15, from 3:00 PM - 8:00 PM. This year more than 50 of the neediest families at Sherwood will be invited to shop at the store.



### Joy's Newsletter

Would you like to know more about Joy Kreider's ministry among incarcerated youth and youth in gangs in San Francisco? If so, please send Joy an e-mail at [kreider05@gmail.com](mailto:kreider05@gmail.com) and she will include you on her newsletter e-mail list. Additionally, if you would prefer to receive the newsletter by mail, please call her at 415-407-4386. Feel free to leave a voice mail if she is unable to answer her phone. Newsletters come out about every other month.



### PINES CHRISTMAS PROJECT

Each year, Pines sponsors a Christmas project to help the women and children at the **Mission of Yahweh**. Because these are so greatly appreciated, again our request is: bath towels, knit shirts for women and children, sweat-shirts, t-shirts, and sweaters. Adult sizes are medium, large and extra large. Children's sizes are 2 thru teen.

Please gift wrap all packages and place the size on the outside of the package. Place your gift in the Yahweh Cart in the Fellowship Hall by December 11. Cash gifts, payable to Pines and marked "Yahweh" may be left in the church office or placed in the Sunday offering plate. These monies will be used to pay Mission bills such as utilities, medicine, food, diapers, etc.

### Brookwood Community Christmas Open House

is on December 2 and 3. The Open House will include refreshments, entertainment and the opportunity to tour the facilities and observe residents at work. You can also visit the Gift and Garden center and Christmas Shop. Hours are 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Brookwood is a residential community for functionally disabled adults near Brookshire and is a service project of Pines.

**DIRECTIONS:** West on I-10 to the second Brookshire exit (Koomey Rd / Simonton) and turn south on FM 1489. Brookwood is one mile south of I-10 on the right.



Special music for Thanksgiving Sunday, Advent , Cantata Sunday and Christmas Eve is being prepared to make these special seasons more meaningful for you. The Chancel Choir will present "Praise God in His Holiness" and "Let All Things Now Living" as special anthems for you on Thanksgiving Sunday November 20th. The Pines Pealers will also play that Sunday.

The following Sunday, November 27th begins our Advent season with anthems focused on the coming of our Lord. Cantata Sunday is December 11 and the Chancel Choir, Soloists, Children's Choir, Orchestra and Narrators will present "Sing We Now of Christmas". You will join in the singing of many of your favorite carols on that Sunday also.

The Chancel Choir will present special music for you on Christmas Eve at the 7:00 PM and 11:00 PM services. There will be many individuals also presenting seasonal music for you during these two services.

Please try to support our musicians as we all worship together throughout this most meaningful season. With Love and God's Blessings to each of you.....Walter



### ***Help The Women's Home Residents celebrate Thanksgiving in their "Home" away from home.***

Many of our residents will not be celebrating Thanksgiving with their families this year. Donations are requested by or before Friday, November 18th so that the ladies can plan their meal and cooking activities accordingly. Items can be dropped off weekdays 9 AM - 5 PM at our administrative building, 607 Westheimer Road (77006).

For any questions, please contact Janet Soto at 713-328-1950 or [jsoto@thewomenshome.org](mailto:jsoto@thewomenshome.org).

Thank you very much for considering a donation to our residents' Thanksgiving celebration! We appreciate your kindness during this holiday season. Sincerely,



Janet Soto, Manager of Volunteer Services and Community Outreach



#### **Ingredients needed:**

2 Turkeys	12 Bxs Jiffy corn bread mix (8 yellow and 4 white)
8 to 12 large onions	Chicken Broth 4-5 large cans or 8 small cans
Macaroni (2 to 3 lbs)	1 (#10 size can) whole berried cranberry sauce
6 to 8 lbs sweet potatoes	4-6 cans water chestnuts
6 large apples	1 5-lb bag of flower
Rice (2 lbs)	2-3 one-gallon cans of sliced peaches
6 oranges	Assortment of fruit (watermelon, cantaloupe, pineapple and some berries)
1-lb bag of brown sugar	2 to 3 bags Pepperidge Farms Seasoned bread dressing
2 lbs margarine	Sage, poultry seasoning, garlic, salt, black pepper
2 lbs butter salted	
Cinnamon and Nutmeg	



The Tuesday night Boys and Girls bible study group celebrated their annual Thanksgiving feast here at Pines. A big THANK YOU to Bob Lewis and Janet Calhoun for helping cook and serve this fabulous meal. The youth filled out leaves listing things they were thankful for. As you can see from the tree, these youth are thankful for the things all of the rest of us can appreciate: family, friends, life, food, a home, bible study, etc.

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