The annual Congregational Meeting was held Sunday, January 26, after worship. Pastor David Schaefers asked for the joys this congregation experienced during 2013. (See his list on page 3, Pastor’s Page.)

Steve Bowen, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, presented the slate for the Elder Class of 2017: Bill Latham, Laura Houston, and Jim Rasley. There were no nominations from the floor and the slate was elected unanimously.

Steve Bowen then presented the slate for at-large members of the Church Nominating Committee: Sue Pochyla, Tiffany Troxell, and Don Freeman. There were no further nominations and these three were elected unanimously.

Pastor David announced the Officers of the Corporation that the Session had previously approved. They are: Cliff Way – President; Janet Kurka – Vice President; Harry and Lea Perkins – Co Treasurers; Lowell Long – Secretary. The congregation voted to affirm the election of these officers.

Co-treasurers Lea and Harry Perkins then presented the annual budget for 2014. A copy of the church budget is available in the church office if you were not able to be present at the Congregation Meeting.

The Book of Order requires a congregation to vote annually on the terms of call for its pastor. Lowell Long, Clerk, accepted a motion to approve the 2014 Terms of Call for Pastor David. The motion was seconded and passed. Another motion to affirm the budget for 2014 was passed.

A Spiritual Gifts Assessment was given to each person to complete. This is a private exercise for each member of the congregation. Reverend Schaefers will be leading a discussion about the survey in the near future. Copies of this questionnaire are available in the church office and will be available on the web site.

The meeting was closed with prayer at 12:30 p.m.

Lowell E Long
Clerk of Session

Responding to God’s love and grace, we worship with joy, nurture with faith, and serve others with love.
We are well into the New Year and I just now getting around to reading through some of the several books that were gifted me during the Christmas season. C. S. Lewis has always been one of my favorite authors and I’m grateful to my niece Rhonda for a book she found for me entitled, *A Year with C. S. Lewis, Daily Readings from His Classic Works*. I have read many of Lewis’ books and I truly love his down to earth, simple, and clear writing style.

I often dream of myself visiting Lewis at his country home in Cambridge. Upon arrival, the wintry air is chilly, but not bitter, and it feels exhilarating to take a long deep breath. Through the half moon’s light I can see that a hoary frost has lightly dusted the ground. I can detect the faint smell of fresh baked bread coming from some distant place. It’s one of those mysterious nights where the world finds itself in a perfect unison.

Having crossed over the threshold I now find myself sitting in a plushy, old wing-backed leather chair in front of a grayish cobblestone fireplace.

Lewis is sitting an arm’s length away in a chair with similar virtues, along with what looks like a favorite well-worn oval shaped ottoman under his feet. I’m suddenly aware that there is a cozy fire dancing across three or four carefully placed logs cradled by a thick iron grate. After a few moments of meditating on the fire in blissful silence, we watch the flames devolve into a perfectly soft, reddish-orange glow and the cracking of the supple oak reminds me of the clicking keys when trilling from the notes G to A on my old bassoon. We are both enjoying Meerschaum pipes and the aroma of fine English tobacco fills the room. A dirty bottle of Glenfiddich sits nearby alongside two appropriately filled glasses and I’m completely entranced by the uniqueness of the moment.

As the world slows down Lewis begins to speak. I listen intently to him expound on the virtues of Christianity, the problems of pain, his vision of heaven and hell, the role of the church in the modern world, and the necessity of prayer. He is a master of language. His words blanket me with a warmness that permeates my very clothing which causes my heart rate to rise, my feet to go numb, and my head to pound. I’ve so many questions, but do I dare ask? Do I dare interrupt one of the leading theologians of all times?

Lewis, sensing my angst, pauses and looks directly at me with an ancient wisdom that’s laced with compassion. He encourages me, “Go ahead and ask me anything. There are no unworthy questions when one chooses to draw closer to God.”

I’m now on fire! My joints ache and the follicles on my skin feel as though an electric current is surging through them. My palms are sweating and my throat is dry. I grab for the nearby shot of Glenfiddich and quickly down it as I try to collect myself. I quickly re-live all the evening’s events and I find them to be absolutely astonishing. There is so much I want to know! There is so much I long to know! My thoughts are beginning to coalesce and my words slowly come into focus. I find the entire encounter with Lewis to be unimaginable! It seems as if all time has come to a standstill.

Lewis, still awaiting my first question leans in further and says—and that’s when I wake up! Every time I have that dream I get to that point and I wake up! It is so utterly frustrating! Oh, well, life goes on and I’m looking forward to reading my new book.

Grace and Peace,

Ralph
Much to be thankful for!

On January 26, FPC held its annual congregational meeting. Call me a church-nerd, but I love annual meetings and all they entail. On that particular Sunday, we elected officers, shared the 2014 budget with the congregation, and lifted up many of the joys our congregation has experienced over the course of the past year. Our joys were numerous, and I would like to share some of those with you again.

At the top of the list, the First Friday (Parent’s Night Out) program is cause for much joy on the part of this congregation. This program has continued to see good growth over the course of the past year, both in participants and volunteers. We have opened our church building (and our hearts) up to the neighborhood and we have been blessed regularly through that program.

As we are counting our blessings, our new Parish Associates are also at the top of the list. Rev Bev and Rev Katy have been incredible additions to the FPC staff. Both of them missed the congregational meeting, as they provided pastoral care at the hospital during that time. So, if you see either one of them, you might just let them know how much they are appreciated.

At the congregational meeting, we also gave thanks for those who have served in the clothes closet over the years. As we mentioned, those volunteers are numerous and we are compiling a list of names. If you know someone who has been a volunteer, please let me know! We will have a formalized time of thanksgiving and appreciation in the near future.

We gave thanks for the church staff, and especially how well the staff works together. We recognized the number of children that participate in worship and in Sunday School, and gave thanks that the number keeps increasing. We gave thanks for the outgoing members of the session and the ministry that have nurtured over the course of the past three years. Along with that, we recognized those who have been elected to the class of 2017, and thanked God for the gifts and talents that they will bring to the church’s leadership.

Someone mentioned the Sanctuary Choir, and I had to brag just a little bit. After visiting one of the largest congregations in the denomination, early in January, I had to boast a little about how superior our Sanctuary Choir actually is. We were also treated to a wonderful handbell piece on that Sunday, and the congregation was quick to acknowledge the outstanding efforts of the handbell choir as well.

One of our joys was regarding Vacation Bible School. We had new volunteers this year, and many children. It was certainly a high point for 2013. We are also thankful for those who have volunteered to teach weekly Sunday School classes. And, we also added an early Chapel Service to our worship lineup in the past year. That has been a joy and a blessing. (Come and try it sometime!)

One of the joys expressed was in regard to the wonderful group of volunteers, the Sometimers, who take care of the church grounds. This place would not be the beautiful place that it is, if it were not for their efforts. We are thankful for all those who contributed and put together the devotional books that we used this Advent season. We also recognized those new members who joined in 2013.

As part of our financial information, we reviewed the FPC benevolences for 2013. We keep improving those numbers (as a percentage of our budget) over prior years. We ended the year about $7000 in the black (positively). And, in just the past few months, we have also added some new mission opportunities into the FPC mix. That is something to be especially proud of.

Now, I am sure that I am forgetting something that was said during the course of the meeting. But the simple truth is, we have a lot going on in the life of the church. We have so much to be thankful for! As we move ahead, into the new year, please keep these joys in your prayers. Saying thanks to God shows that we don’t take any of these blessings for granted.

Blessings,
Pastor David
Feeding the Homeless

Several weeks ago, Ernie Gotts and Katy Rigler asked me to go downtown to participate in a worship service in Thanksgiving Square for the homeless. I agreed. I know very little about the homeless situation in Dallas. Every Thanksgiving my son and I go downtown to participate in the Turkey Trot. There are always some homeless people in evidence. I always feel a little uncomfortable around them, but they never seem bothered by me.

On Sunday, January 12, after our 10:30 a.m. worship service, a group from FPC drove to downtown Dallas. I rode with Margaret Rogers. As we got closer to Thanksgiving Square, we talked about the homeless, mental illness, and the fact that it seems to be a very deep problem. It was a windy but nice Sunday afternoon.

Outside the chapel at Thanksgiving Square, there was a lady playing a guitar and singing some old familiar hymns. I enjoyed singing along. The Reverend Fran Shelton delivered a simple and short, but meaningful message. She then asked if anyone would like to add to her message. Several of the people in attendance added comments and I appreciated what they had to say.

Members of our congregation had prepared healthy sack lunches. We served about one hundred of those lunches and bottled waters. Most of the homeless I saw were young and male. As I looked at them, I wondered about their parents. Had they been there for these kids' early childhood? Had they done everything they knew to do, but for unknown reasons, things just got out of control? I became convinced as I watched the line of people receiving their food that, for many of them, circumstances beyond their control had led to their current situation. Those circumstances could have just as easily presented themselves to my loved ones or me. I was glad our congregation saw fit to help in one small, but extremely vital, way.

Reminder About Cents-Ability

Cents-Ability originated in 1976 as "Two-Cents-A-Meal," a project begun by Presbyterian Women to involve individuals and families in a corporate response to world hunger. Cents-Ability is a small first step in the battle against hunger and poverty.

Congregations invite every member — of all ages — to contribute a few cents at every meal. This simple act is an expression of thanks and is also a commitment to share with others in response to Jesus' command "You give them something to eat." When members bring their offerings to church on the appointed Sunday, all of those coins "make a joyful noise unto the Lord" as they are received and dedicated. These small acts of faithfulness can add up: One hundred persons in a congregation will contribute $180 a month at two cents a meal. That's $2,160 dollars a year. A 30,000-member presbytery has the potential of raising over $1.6 million annually at a nickel a meal.

The Princeton Forum on Youth Ministry, April 29-May 4

The Princeton Forum on Youth Ministry is a blend of theological and practical exploration of ministry with young people. Leading theologians, youth ministry veterans, engaging preachers, and innovative church leaders, all offer their gifts to strengthen the Church's ministry with young people.

Join us for the 2014 Forum as we explore the power of testimony. Young people often struggle to articulate their faith and subsequently don't identify strongly as Christian disciples. However, as young people become fluent in the language of faith they make meaningful connections that enable them to speak boldly of God's work in their lives and in the world.

Interested? Speak to Pastor David.
The Story of The Clothes Closet

Responding to community needs in the early 70s, Pastor Tom Mathews had a dream for a clothing operation. He shared his ideas with his wife, Patty, and with Virginia Maupin, Paula Dardaganian, Glenna Erb, and Janine Boyce. Tom challenged them to develop a clothing service.

At that time, there was no source of free clothing for the needy in the entire Dallas-Fort Worth region. The challenge was accepted and ladies of the church rapidly connected with Dallas area social workers, community agencies and other potential referral sources to determine clothing needs of people in the wider community. A closet was identified in the 1950s wing—now called Heritage Hall. George Ryzak was prominent among those building shelving, a sorting table, and other needed modifications. The Clothes Closet expanded yet again to annex part of Heritage Hall in early 2000 (thanks to work by the Somethimers) as donations and needs also grew. The congregation was honored by the State of Texas Department of Human Services for its outstanding community service several times by the end of the 1970s.

When the Richardson Network of Community Ministries was created in 1985, First Presbyterian Church of Richardson became the community partner which provided the clothing service for any needs that might arise within the boundaries of the Richardson Independent School District.

For the past 15 to 20 years, Evon Gibson has provided leadership for the Clothes Closet operation on behalf of the Mission Ministry. During that time, the Clothes Closet became, and has continued to be, an important part of our church’s ministry to people throughout the Richardson School District and beyond. Evon and the faithful volunteers who worked with her listened to countless stories, provided clothing, sometimes offered words of encouragement and understanding, and at other times just listened to a person who needed to be heard.

The clothing items distributed were not just anything handy of the right size, but carefully chosen, depending on the needs of the clients. Sometimes, it was clothing for an interview or a special event in the individual’s life such as a wedding or a new baby. The volunteers provided so much more than just a package of clothing. They communicated Christ’s love for the individual, counteracting attitudes that no one really cared about them. Many left the Clothes Closet with a new feeling of self-worth and confidence. The volunteers, through their service and ministry together, also became a support group for each other, with close and lasting friendships.

As this ministry ends, the congregation recalls and gives thanks for this wonderful ministry. If a list of all those who have participated in the Clothes Closet efforts were to be created, it would include most of the current membership and a host of those now a part of the Church Triumphant. The thousands of hours of volunteer time have meant so much for so many in the Richardson community and beyond.

Thanks be to God!
Events and Opportunities

PW Book Discussion
Our choice for February is the novel, Pope Joan. Author Donna Woolfolk Cross has written a fascinating tale of the legend that will not go away - a female Pope. A controversial person of historical record, Joan disguised herself as a man, Brother John Anglicus, and one day became Pope. Members will share in leadership of discussion for this unusual and gripping book. If you enjoy reading, discussing characters and plots, please join us in the church library on Monday, February 24, at 2 p.m. Questions, contact Anne Healy.

Sunday Book club
We’ll meet at 5 p.m. on February 16 in the church library to discuss My Name is Mary Sutter, by Robin Oliveira. Please join us for a lively discussion and lots of fellowship. Call Ginger (Doug) Anderson for more information.

Good Shepherd Paper Goods Shower
If it’s February, it must be time for the Good Shepherd Community Center (GSCC) paper goods shower. GSCC is a long time FPC mission outreach in West Dallas. The center not only provides a food pantry and financial assistance, but also operates a pre-Kindergarten and daycare service.

Paper goods donations help ease the budget needs in the face of dwindling support. This year the most critical needs are for baby wipes and paper towels.

Other paper products which will be useful include: Napkins, Paper Kitchen Cups, Thin paper plates (large and small), Coffee filters, Manila, construction, and copy paper, Lunch sacks, Kleenex. Toilet tissue is NOT a need.

Blue donation bins will be in the Visitation Area and by the Office entrance between February 2 and 23 (all Sundays in February). Please remember Good Shepherd Community Center in your prayers and donate as you are able.

Ring Into Spring 2014!
An 8-week Ringing Exploration for Children and Adults
Sunday Afternoons, 4:30 to 5:15 @ FPC Richardson
February 16 thru April 6
Adults and children (grade 2 and above) are invited to explore the art of ringing handbells and handchimes. No experience is necessary, but the following is requested:
• a desire to learn and have fun making music!
• a commitment to attend at least six of the eight weeks.
• advance registration BY FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14.

Forms are available on the FPC website (under News) and in the FPC Visitation Area.

Questions? Call or email Becky Lormor at blormor@tx.rr.com

Bill Warner is showing Bob Grimes the new dress code for Sometimers.
Happy Birthday!

Sunday, February 2
👩‍💻 Lilian Agwe
👩‍💻 Pat Hodges
👩‍💻 Virginia Stevens

Monday, February 3
👩‍💻 Bill Yeager

Wednesday, February 5
👩‍💻 James Arnold
👩‍💻 Carole Charriere-Ferrell
👩‍💻 Dan Colston

Thursday, February 6
👩‍💻 Sarah Core
👩‍💻 Sharon Core

Friday, February 7

Saturday, February 8
👩‍💻 Lyle Brewer
👩‍💻 Nettie Elliott
👩‍💻 Donald Wright

Monday, February 10

Tuesday, February 11
👩‍💻 James Hale

Wednesday, February 12
👩‍💻 Doris Carpenter
👩‍💻 Sandra Dyo
👩‍💻 Patrick Kane

Thursday, February 13

Friday, February 14
👩‍💻 Paul Long

Saturday, February 15
👩‍💻 Jim Morris

Sunday, February 16
👩‍💻 James Godecke
👩‍💻 Peggy Inman
👩‍💻 Edward Miller

Monday, February 17
👩‍💻 Betty Kastendieck
👩‍💻 Jim Rivers
👩‍💻 Karen Schaefer

Tuesday, February 18
👩‍💻 Colette Wraith

Wednesday, February 19
👩‍💻 Linda Kent
👩‍💻 Wilda Webster

Thursday, February 20
👩‍💻 Wayne Nelson
👩‍💻 Sue Rickman

Friday, February 21
👩‍💻 Eric Rice
👩‍💻 Alex Rotenberry
👩‍💻 Katherine Williamson

Saturday, February 22
👩‍💻 Evelyn Hale

Your Prayers Are Requested:

In the Hospital/Rehab:
👩‍💻 Bill Brown
👩‍💻 Bob Green
👩‍💻 Kay Rush (Penny Colbaugh’s sister)
👩‍💻 Jan VanAntwerp
👩‍💻 Jean Vestyck

Undergoing Procedure/Testing:
👩‍💻 Shirley Bridges
👩‍💻 Nancy Sullivan’s daughter, Susie
👩‍💻 Susan Bellah Starling

At Home:
👩‍💻 Dan Adamson (Anne Healy’s friend)
👩‍💻 Chris Berry
👩‍💻 Dona Blodgett
👩‍💻 Barbara Brewster
👩‍💻 Bill Frank
👩‍💻 Steven Nash (First Fri parent)

Our Sympathy and Prayers to:
👩‍💻 The family and friends of Stan Holcomb, who died on January 28.
👩‍💻 The family and friends of Jackie Way, who died on January 31.
👩‍💻 Jim and Evelyn Hale on the death of their friend, David Kauffman.

Other Concerns:
Those seeking employment.
Those preparing for ministry.
Those in the military and their families.
The congregation and Session members.

Notes and Notables

New Addresses
Mary Phillips and Rudy Hale have new contact information. Call the church office for details.

Think Celebration Fund!
## February 2014

### Sun
- 2
  - 8:00 Early Service
  - 9:00 Sunday School
  - ESL class
  - 10:30 Worship/Communion
  - 12:00 Worship Min. Souper Bowl Of Caring
- 3
  - 3:00 Veretta Cotham Memorial Service

### Mon
- 4
  - 6:30 Prayer Group
  - 10:00 Bible Study
  - 12:30 Sew 'n Tell

### Tue
- 5
  - 8:00 Sometimeers
  - 9:30 PW Circle
  - 12:00 Staff mtg
  - 5:30 Children's Choir
  - 5:45 Handbell Choir
  - 7:30 Sanctuary Choir

### Wed
- 6
  - 10:00 Art Therapy
  - 1:00 Twin Rivers Bible Study
  - 6:30 First Friday

### Thu
- 7
- 8
  - 2:00 Jackie Way Memorial Service

### Fri
- 9
  - 8:00 Early Worship
  - 9:00 Sunday School
  - ESL class
  - 10:30 Worship

### Sat
- 10
  - 11
  - 12
  - 13
  - 14
  - 15
    - 8:00 Men's Bible Fellowship
    - 11:00 Stan Holcomb Memorial Service
  - 16
  - 17
  - 18
  - 19
  - 20
    - 10:00 Art Therapy
    - 1:00 Twin Rivers Bible Study
  - 21
  - 22