



First Press

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August 2022

From the Pastor's Desk



Don't Fear, Little Flock

"Don't fear, little flock!" Jesus lovingly told us,
"For it is your Father's good pleasure to give."
While fear, greed and hatred might seem now to hold us,
God offers a kingdom — a new way to live.
So sell your possessions, give gifts to the needy,
Make purses that nothing on earth can destroy.
God's treasure can never be bought by the greedy;
It's made out of justice, compassion and joy.
Don't fear, little flock, don't be filled with distraction,
When powerful people cause suffering and hurt.
Light lamps for God's kingdom, be ready for action,
Seek new ways of serving; O Church, stay alert!
Show kindness to all and show love to your neighbor,
Help children who need you and cherish the old.
God gives us the kingdom and calls us to labor
In ways that are fearless and loving and bold.
Don't fear, little flock, but take notice around you,
For right where you are, there is work you can do.
So sell what you have! With no wealth to confound you,
You'll find, undistracted: God's claim is on you!
In this world of suffering beyond human measure,
In this world of lying and violence and strife,
God gives us the kingdom; God gives us the treasure.
God gives us the Way and the Truth and the Life.

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"Don't Fear, Little Flock" is a hymn based on Jesus' teaching, "Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32).

Pastor's Desk (cont.)

The Rev. Ms. Winfrey is a contemporary hymn writer whose music provides thought-provoking settings for this New Day. New Day is not a website or e-publication but rather a way I have chosen to label the present times. Today we might feel that we live into an uncertain future with record setting heat, inflation, and the continuing war on terrorism, to name a few of our social ills.

Just when we thought we were cleared of a pandemic, a new version of COVID emerged and will continue to evolve, as is the nature of viruses (so my pharmacist tells me). The disease has reached some of us locally and amongst our families. When, O Lord, are you going to give us the promised kingdom?" Some believe the Kingdom of God is already present in and through us, ushered in through the life and resurrection of Jesus.

I love the opening verse of this new hymn for a New Day:

*Don't fear, little flock!" Jesus lovingly told us,
"For it is your Father's good pleasure to give."
While fear, greed and hatred might seem now
to hold us,
God offers a kingdom — a new way to live.*

An often-used sacramental liturgy shadows the words of scripture: "Know that the promises of God are for you and for your children." God promises to hold our hands through the joyful and the challenging moments and to bring us into glory at last.

"Fear not, little flock." God is holding near and dear even in the heat waves, crime waves, hunger pangs, evolving viruses, financial worries and all the rest of life. God is daily lifting us up with glimpses of glory in the morning songs of birds, colorful sunrises, sacred song and the love of one another.

May you live this New Day in the New Way.

Rev. Kathy Vineyard, H.R.

Body of Christ Community Clinic Together We Heal Banquet October 11, 2022



**University of Mary Hardin-Baylor
Bawcom Student Union - McLane Great Hall
Doors open at 5:30 pm - Come early
to view Silent Auction Items**

FINANCIAL DATA

JANUARY - JULY

Total Income	\$45,195.67
Total Expense	\$50,744.71
Net Income	-5,549.04

PROJECT
APPLE TREE

FPC Belton donated \$605 this year.

Thank you to our generous
congregation!

A Stated Meeting of the Session was held on August 16, 2022. Highlights include:

Clerk of Session--Penny presented the Treasurer's Report, which was approved. A Fall planning retreat for the Session was scheduled for September 24th to be held at Terry Coyne's home. This will include the next stated meeting of the Session. It was noted that it is time to activate the nominating committee to identify 2 candidates for Elder and 1 for Trustee. Their report will be on the agenda for the October Session meeting.

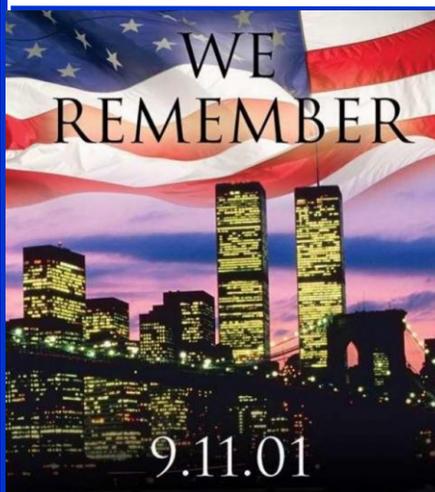
Worship & Welcome--Kay reported that attendance for July was good with 53 people there for our July 3rd Patriotic Service and indoor picnic. There were close to 40 attendees for the other July services. We had glorious music from all the folks playing, singing or both during the Choral Choir's break. We enjoyed James Flowers and his violin talents, Julie, Arthur and LaVerne delighted us with their wonderful voices, and Nicolette was amazing as she sang "Swimming to the Other Side" while accompanying herself on the ukulele. The Chime Choir continued to practice and play for us during the month. We appreciate all of our talented musicians. Kay also, in her report, noted that there is a team of women working to replace some of our banners that have seen better days. Judy Kintner has designed and made quilts and is providing her expertise to this project along with Julie McPhail, Penny Worley, Kathy Vineyard and Kay.

Buildings & Grounds--Terry has purchased and put together a cabinet for Erin where she can store educational materials and secure them. Mac Hickerson has shown some of the men of the church where the cut-offs are for outdoor watering systems. The ground wire going to the steeple has also been more closely secured to the building.

Congregational Care--Melinda reported that she has received a much-needed update on congregational names, addresses and dates for birthdays and anniversaries.

Missions--The Mission Committee planned and delivered a meal for the Body of Christ Clinic and provided a devotional for the mostly volunteer staff before they began seeing patients. Thank you to our cooks and devotional leaders. We also continue to collect items for Helping Hands and the congregation contributed a little over \$600 to Project Apple Tree.

Moderator's Report--Rev. Kathy is working toward the creation of a Women's Group, similar to that of the newly formed Men's Group. It would not be a Presbyterian Womens group, but more loosely organized. She's looking into the possibility that one of our congregation might be willing to share her hobby of making prayer bracelets from recycled jewelry that she gives to women that she meets on trips, etc. There may be an "organizational" meeting in November.



PATRIOT DAY SEPTEMBER 11

**GOD IS OUR REFUGE AND STRENGTH
A VERY PRESENT HELP IN TROUBLE...**

WE WILL NOT FEAR.

Psalm 46: 1-2

More July 31st





Men of the Church Mtg

