

Celtic Cross

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Editor: Joshua Cossette

Dear FPC Denton Church Family,

This month we will take a look at the “last part” of The Apostles’ Creed. Adam Hamilton wrote a book called *Creed—What Christians Believe and Why—Exploring the Apostles’ Creed*. Let’s review this part of the creed:

“...the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.”

Here are some points that Mr. Hamilton lifts up:

The holy catholic church:

The church is holy? When many people view the church, it looks neither holy nor catholic. It seems filled with hypocrites and judgmental people. We are not saying the church is filled with righteous people who are nearly perfect. The word “holy” in the biblical context means “belonging to God”, “sacred to God”, or “set apart for God”. The church, then, is holy when those who are a part of her recognize that she belongs to God and not to her members. She is holy when those who consider the church home don’t ask, “What do we want our church to do for us?” but rather “What does God want his church to do for him?”

The church is catholic? As used here, “catholic” is an adjective. It does not refer to the Roman Catholic Church. “Catholic” comes from a compound Greek word that means, in essence, “everywhere” or “universal”. This is a reminder of the church’s unity—that means unity with all churches that follow Jesus Christ—not just one denomination. What is meant by the word “church”?

The church is not a building although we refer to buildings as churches. The Greek word for “church” that is used more than eighty times in the New Testament is *ekklesia*, a word that means “called out”, as in a gathering of people called together. In other words, an assembly. The church is specifically a community or assembly of people who belong to Christ. The idea of the church as a family comes with responsibilities: families care for one another, work for the good of each other, and support one another. The Greek word for this kind of caring for one another is *koinonia*, meaning “communion”, “sharing”, or fellowship.

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The communion of saints:

Who are you calling a saint? It is important to realize that the “saints” in the New Testament were not those who had been canonized by the church after death; rather, this was Paul’s preferred way of referring to all Christians. The calling to be saints and the process of becoming saints are what is meant by the term “sanctification”. All Christians are called to belong wholly to Christ, to become like him. It is the call to love God with all that is within us. It is the call to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. It is not something we can simply try harder to do, though we should desire it and pour ourselves into the task. But ultimately the process of being transformed or “saint-ified” (sanctified) is only possible by the work of the Holy Spirit.

Communion”—what’s that? This is one of the most beautiful ideas in Christian theology. The idea is that those who are becoming saints here on earth, and those who have become entirely sanctified in heaven, still commune together. When Christians gather for worship, we enter one of those “thin spaces” where heaven and earth meet. Perhaps that is what Charles Wesley was thinking of when he penned his well-known hymn, “O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing”.

The forgiveness of sins:

Who needs forgiveness? Belief in the forgiveness of sins is only good news if we first understand that we need forgiveness. The primary word for sin in the New Testament is a word used by archers that meant “to miss the mark.” Just as an archer’s arrow might miss the intended target, we as human beings miss the target in our thoughts, words, and deeds. The word points to a truth: there is an ideal we’re meant to live up to as human beings (holiness, sanctification) but we all fall short of this ideal, mark, or target. The theological word for missing the mark is sin, and because we daily miss the mark—saying, thinking, or doing things we should not have done, or failing to say, think, or do things, we should have done—we find ourselves in need of forgiveness.

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Will God forgive my sins? Jesus came to reveal God's character and will. From his birth to his resurrection, Jesus offered grace for sinners. Jesus told parables about God's willingness to forgive sins. Jesus was known by his critics as a "friend of sinners." When we say in the Creed, "I believe in...the forgiveness of sins," we are affirming the truth of Scripture that God is willing to forgive us and wants to release us from our burdens. God's desire is that we repent and turn away from the sins we've committed and the burdens of sin and guilt that weigh us down.

Must I forgive others? When we say that we believe in the forgiveness of sins, we're not only confessing that we are sinners, not only that God is willing to forgive us; we also are expressing what is taught throughout Scripture, that we are called to forgive the sins of others. Jesus teaches this over and over again in the Gospels. Remember, forgiving others is not the same as saying that what the individual did was okay; rather, it's choosing not to hold on to the wrong done to us, nor to hold it over the head of the one who wronged us. Forgiveness also doesn't necessarily release the one who sinned from all consequences. Forgiving is not the same as forgetting, at least not for us as humans.

The resurrection of the body:

What is God's response to death? Christians believe that in Jesus' death and resurrection, God gave a definitive answer to the existential questions of death and life beyond death. We believe in life beyond death because Jesus rose from the dead, the disciples bore witness to it, and those who came later had profound experiences with the risen Christ. As important as Jesus' Continued on page 4

Love Notes from Pastor Debbie:

The countdown until we get to the "ber" months has long begun. We do have to give thanks for not as many "100 degree days" as we have had in previous years. God blesses us in so many ways. Each season has much in it to enjoy! So give thanks, be a grateful child of God—and know that you are blessed!

Here are the readings for September:

September 7, 2025 13th Sunday after Pentecost. Communion.

Readings: Psalm 139: 1-6, 13-18; Jeremiah 18: 1-11; Luke 14: 25-33; Philemon 1-21.

Sermon Text and Topic—To Be Determined.

September 14, 2025 14th Sunday after Pentecost.

Readings: Psalm 14; Jeremiah 4: 11-12, 22-28; Luke 15: 1-10; 1 Timothy 1: 12-17.

Sermon Text and Topic—To Be Determined.

September 21, 2025. 15th Sunday after Pentecost.

Readings: Psalm 79: 1-9; Jeremiah 8: 18-9:1; Luke 16: 1-13; 1 Timothy 2: 1-7.

Sermon Text and Topic—To Be Determined.

September 28, 2025 16th Sunday after Pentecost.

Readings: Psalm 91: 1-6, 14-16; Jeremiah 32: 1-3a, 6-15; Luke 16: 19-31; 1 Timothy 6: 6-19.



Left: First Day sign outside Denton Christian Preschool entrance.

Right: Hallway with classrooms for DCP. Look at all the cool things that the staff put up!



We've had a great start of the school year at Denton Christian Preschool, with an enrollment of 29 kids total! The classrooms are filled with the hustle and bustle of young minds, ready to learn and have fun while doing it!

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death is for Christians, it was his resurrection that demonstrated his triumph over evil, hate, sin, and death.

What is meant by “resurrection of the body”? Does this phrase mean that this body we have will be resurrected? How is this possible given that our bodies decompose, starting within minutes of our death? When we read about Jesus’ resurrection, we learn that his body had changed. Jesus had the ability to eat; there were scars from his crucifixion on his hands and side; he had flesh they could touch but he also walked through walls. God does not require what was rotting in the ground to give you a new body, but somehow, according to Paul, your “spiritual body” is connected to that fleshly body. The bodies of most Christians throughout history have been completely absorbed back into the earth.

The bodies of most Christians throughout history have been completely absorbed back into the earth. In our modern DNA studies, we now know that our physical bodies are the result of an amazingly complex sequence of DNA.

Essentially this is our software, and it’s different in every individual. Surely God, who wrote the software that makes up life, has our DNA sequenced and “on file” and can use it to create whatever kind of “heavenly body” God intends. He does not need our mortal body to raise us from the dead.

And the life everlasting. Amen:

Life everlasting? The Creed and the gospel it bears witness to helps us remember God’s answers to the deepest wounds, longings, and questions of our hearts. It reminds us of what is true. It captures many of the foundational convictions upon which our lives are built. And it gives

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From upper left, clockwise:
 Look at all that delicious food!
 (Upper Left)
 Following along in Worship with
 Hand Chimes (Upper Right)
 Taking in the meal and fellow-
 ship (Lower Right)
 The never ending Ice Cream
 Bar!
 (Lower Left)

Our 4th Annual Ice Cream Sundae was a huge success! Following the service, the crowd enjoyed traditional American fare, such as hot dogs and chili.

Of course, don't forget about the amazing ice cream, which has more toppings than you can think! It was an excellent opportunity for fellowship and we look forward to the next time we get together!

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us hope. It's been said that what you believe about death changes how you face life. It leads us to face death with courage. It puts this earthly life and what we do with it in perspective. And it helps us to grieve as those who have hope.

What do you believe? In the end we make a choice to believe. That's how the Creed begins, credo in Latin: I chose to believe these truths; I chose to build my life upon this foundation. Amen.

Blessings! Debbie

September 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 Terry Nobles Birthday	2 Women's Bible Study 10:00 AM	3 Bible Study 10:00 AM Paul Mehaffey Birthday Gerald and Cheryl Briggs Anniversary	4	5 Grief Share 2:00 PM	6
7 Disciples Class 9:30 AM Worship 11 AM Ron Shenberger Birthday 	8	9	10 Bible Study 10:00 AM	11	12 Grief Share 2:00 PM	13
14 Disciples Class 9:30 AM Worship 11 AM Mike Steinel and Beverly Hoch Anniversary	15 Session 7:00 PM Clay and Kelly Briggs Anniversary	16	17 Bible Study 10:00 AM	18	19 Grief Share 2:00 PM	20
21 Disciples Class 9:30 AM Worship 11 AM Mission Committee 12N Celtic Cross Deadline	22	23	24 Bible Study 10:00 AM Women's Lunch 11:30 Luke Briggs Birthday	25	26 Grief Share 2:00 PM	27
28 Disciples Class 9:30 AM Deacons 10:30 AM Worship 11 AM Jann Sanders Birthday	29	30				

From Katherine Mehaffey:

On July 27-31, 2025, I served on the Care Team for the Presbyterian Youth Triennium. The Presbyterian Church (USA) welcomed 2000+ high school age youth and adult youth advisors to Louisville, Kentucky for four days of worship, recreation, bible study, outreach, and faith formation around the theme of “As If We Were Dreaming.” Based on Psalm 126, the theme was broken up into 4 sections:

1. Born to Dream, 2. Collective Dreaming, 3. Face the Nightmares, and 4. Wake Up and Dream.

It is often through dreams God speaks to us. It is always a reminder we are never alone; God sees us and is with us.

The Care Team provided support and assistance to participants at the event. We were available to help with illnesses, injuries, emotional issues, and any other challenges participants faced throughout the Triennium. It was an amazing experience to be a part of the Care Team. We witnessed youth from all over the country worship, sing, play, connect, form relationships, laugh, cry, hug, and share their hurts, joys, dreams, and most importantly their faith. God is at work!



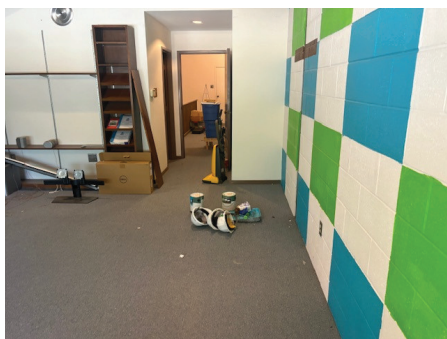
Left: Poster board at PYT Conference



Right: The Care Team for the PYT 2025 Conference

There has been quite a bit noise being made here at First Presbyterian! Recently, there was a proposal that was approved to make the Pastor's study a consolidated location for historical church records, photo albums and other miscellaneous files related to FPC Denton.

Take a look at the before and after pics here! This is the start of something new and exciting!



Mission News:

Our back-to-school initiatives include funding for backpacks, which have been sent to Interfaith Ministries, as well as a supply drive for Denton Christian Preschool.

Other local fundraisers are North Texas Giving Days on September 18th and a pickle ball event on August 23 with Direction 61:3. This organization provides housing for foster children who have aged out of the system, with two homes located right here in Denton.

In the Kitchen

In 2002, Presbyterian Women at First Presbyterian Church published the revised edition of “In the Kitchen,” their favorite recipes. The first edition was published in 1993. The ladies of the church, and some men, provided their favorite recipes.

I hope you enjoy looking back at these glimpses of times past.

Jim Welborn

Double Corn Muffins

(page 188)

- 1 c. yellow cornmeal
- 1 (8¾ oz.) can cream style corn
- ¼ c. buttermilk
- 1½ c. flour
- 1/3 c. sugar
- 2½ tsp. baking powder
- 1½ tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 egg
- ¼ c. light corn syrup
- 1 (4oz) can diced green chilies
- 1 (7oz) can Mexicorn, drained



Mix cornmeal, cream style corn, and buttermilk in bowl. Let stand 20 minutes. Preheat oven to 400°. In separate bowl, stir together flour, sugar, baking powder, soda, and salt. Stir in egg, corn syrup, chilies, Mexicorn, and reserved cornmeal mixture just until blended. Grease 12 muffin cups. Spoon mixture into cups. Bake 15 to 20 minutes or until golden brown and muffins are baked through. Remove to wire rack and cool slightly.

Makes 12

Eileen Curry Resnik

Households for Prayer

Let us continue to uphold our households in prayer with these members for

September 2025

John Pinder
Pat and Hal Reed
Irene Rodriguez
Judy Royal
Jann Sanders
B.K. Schlesinger
Diana and Ron Shenberger
Carolyn and Steve Smith

CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Debbie H. Spangler, Pastor
Joshua Cossette, Office Manager
Beverly Hoch, Music Director
Dr. Joan Hubbard, Pianist/Organist
Mike Steinel, Trumpeter
John Pinder, AV Technician - Irene Rodriguez, Church Caretaker

Office Hours: Office Manager, Mon-Fri 9—2 PM
Pastor Tues/Thurs 9—2 PM
Emergencies/after hours: 940-300-9748 (Elder Mike Steinel)
CCLI #1859917

Friend us on Facebook

FPC: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/FPCDentonTX/>

FPC Presbyterian Women: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/PWDentonFPC/>

Find us on the web: <http://www.fpcdenton.org>

facebook





Prayer Concerns

Health Concerns: Cheryl B, Gerald B, Helen B, Jan C, Lynda E, Valorie F, Pat H, Larry H, Jim K, Martha M, Loretta N, Irene R, David S, Jann S, Scott S; Benny, Dennis and Lorri, Dirk, Emma, Jess, Sarah C, Shirley and Mike C, Kristin C, Lisa C, Larry C, Sherman C, Mr. Cox, Mary F, Mary G, Maya M, BL J, John K, Clarice M,

Brad S, Charles and Sharon V

Continuing Prayers for those in long-term care residences: Pat and Hal R (Austin)

Sympathy for the family and friends of Annemarie Villaret

Other Prayer Needs: Phylliss C, Elizabeth M, Cathy T, Gladden W.

Birthdays

Anniversaries

- 1 Terry Nobles
- 3 Paul Mehaffey
- 7 Ron Shenberger
- 24 Luke Briggs
- 28 Jann Sanders



- 3 Gerald and Cheryl Briggs
- 14 Mike Steinel and Beverly Hoch
- 15 Clay and Kelly Briggs

Directory Update

The Mission Committee will be updating the church directory in September. This year, we will be creating labels with updated information that will be distributed to members. These labels are to be inserted into the existing directory covering the current listing for individuals with new information. This should be completed by the end of September.

If you have had any change in name, address, phone number or email address in the last year, please notify the church office manager so that the database can be updated. The new update labels will be created from information in the database.

If you have any questions, you may contact Jim Welborn, Mission Committee Chair

Bible Readings
September 2025

- 1 Mark 14:53–65
- 2 Mark 14:66–72
- 3 Mark 15:1–11
- 4 Mark 15:12–21
- 5 Mark 15:22–32
- 6 Mark 15:33–39
- 7 John 10:31–42
- 8 Mark 15:40–47
- 9 Mark 16:1–8 (9–20)
- 10 Matt. 2:1–12
- 11 Matt. 2:13–23
- 12 Matt. 3:1–12
- 13 Matt. 3:13–17
- 14 John 11:45–57
- 15 Matt. 4:1–11
- 16 Matt. 4:12–17
- 17 Matt. 4:18–25
- 18 Matt. 5:1–10
- 19 Matt. 5:11–16
- 20 Matt. 5:17–20
- 21 Luke 3:7–18
- 22 Matt. 5:21–26
- 23 Matt. 5:27–37
- 24 Matt. 5:38–48
- 25 Matt. 6:1–6, 16–18
- 26 Matt. 6:7–15
- 27 Matt. 6:19–24
- 28 Luke 5:1–11
- 29 Matt. 6:25–34
- 30 Matt. 7:1–12

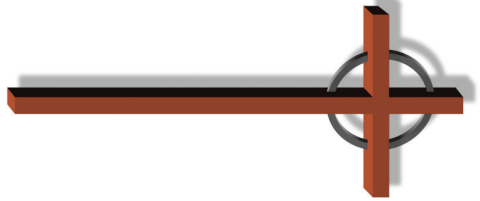
Source: PC(USA) Common
Lectionary

Aerobics

Monday, Wednesday, Friday
Erwin Hall - 8:30 am

Office Hours

Office Manager M-F - 9:00 am - 2:00 pm
Pastor T/Th 9:00 am - 2:00 pm
Office Phone - 940.387.3894
Fax - 940.387.3877
Emergency - 940.300.9748
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Or current resident