



The Messenger

Reflecting God's Love - March 2024

CHURCH OFFICE:
105 SALADO PLAZA
DRIVE - P.O. BOX 865
SALADO, TX 76571
(254) 308-2023

PRESBSALADO
@GMAIL.COM

WEBSITE:
PRESBSALADO.ORG

PASTOR:
REV. MARI LYN JONES
MINISTERS:
THE CONGREGATION

SESSION MEMBERS:
DENICE KEMP -
Clerk of Session
JEANETTE WEST -
Worship
DEBBY ALDRIDGE
Personnel/Finance
MIKE HART -
Education
EVELYN MATTHEWS-
Congregational Care
MIKE HART -
Benevolence/Outreach
CHRIS GENGLER
Building & Grounds

TREASURER:
PAT HART

ORGANIST:
JEANETTE WEST

CHOIR DIRECTOR:
SHAY VANWINKLE

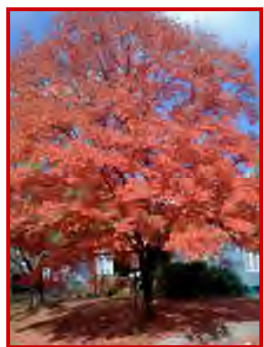
**COMMUNICATIONS &
MESSENGER EDITOR**
#144 PETE STEBBINS

* ARTICLES NEED TO
BE SUBMITTED TO
PETE BY THE LAST
SUNDAY OF THE
MONTH - FOR THE
NEXT MONTH'S
PUBLICATION.

On the Journey with Pastor Mari Lyn

I grew up in Southeast Texas where the weather was pleasant, temperatures were warm, and rainfall was plentiful. The St. Augustine grass was thick and green, and flowers bloomed year-round.

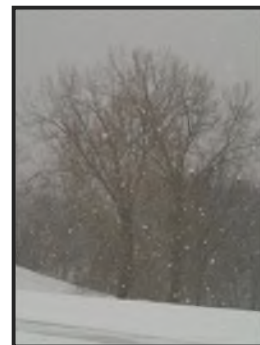
After seminary, Kevin and I were called to churches in small towns outside of the Kansas City metropolitan area. When we arrived in that part of the Midwest it was summer. We found lush, green grass; wonderful shade trees whose thick branches were heavily laden with green leaves; and lots of flowers growing in our neighbors' yards. Summer there felt and looked like summer (and fall and spring) in my hometown.



In early October, we began to experience something new (to us)—a separate, distinct season—fall! The air cooled, and leaves began to turn red and gold and yellow. As October ended and November began, the leaves fell from the trees. In every yard there were big piles—tempting children, youth, and pets to jump into the fallen, raked leaves.

In December, as the days grew shorter and the nights grew noticeably longer, the trees were bare, the landscape stark, the skies gray, and the temperatures cold. We were experiencing yet another distinct season—winter. Each night during January and February, burrowing inside our home and covered with blankets, we sipped hot tea, read, and wrote.

Then in March, as the temperatures began to warm a little, and the sun began to shine brighter and longer, we emerged from



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Calendar of Events

- Sunday Worship at 10:00 a.m.
- Communion on First Sunday each mo.
- Sunday School 9:00 a.m.
- Men's Prayer Breakfast Tues. @ 8 am.
- Chair Yoga 1pm Tues and 10:30am Thurs
- Choir Practice Wednesdays 3:30 to 4:30
- Mar. 6, 13 & 20 - Lenten Experience (LE) (2:00 to 3:00 PM each day)
- Mar. 21 - Women's Monthly Devotional
- Mar. 28 - Maundy Thursday 5:30 PM
- Mar. 31 - Easter Sunday Celebration

2024 MARCH						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4	5	6 LE	7	8	9
10	11	12	13 LE	14	15	16
17	18	19	20 LE	21 WD	22	23
24	25	26	27	28 Maundy Thurs.	29	30
31 Easter						

The Journey Continued

our semi-hibernation to find little shoots of green peppering the landscape. As I drove to and from the church I served 40 miles away, I was greeted by a new color palette weekly; for different wildflowers were blooming and covering the fields I passed.

After a cold, stark winter, the warm, bright days of spring revived not only the landscape but also my spirits. After the grays of winter skies, barren trees, and stark landscape, the multi-colored fields dazzled my eyes and stirred my soul.

The Christmas message proclaiming Christ's birth as light shining in the darkness took on deeper meaning amidst the dark, cold winter days and nights in the Midwest. Recalling the Easter event amidst the renewal of land; the blooming of plants; and the births of calves, colts, kids, and lambs deepened my joy of the Resurrection. Living through 4 distinct seasons each year in the Midwest, I experienced a greater appreciation for light in the darkness, for warmth in the cold, and for new life springing forth from what seemed to be a lifeless landscape.

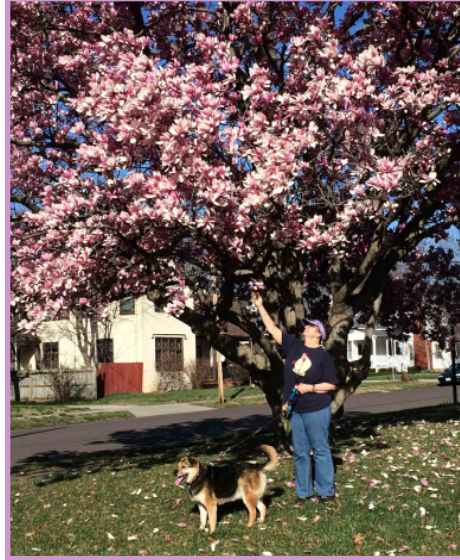
In the 43 years I have been Presbyterian, I have

found that I experience a greater appreciation of the Easter event when I accompany Christ to the cross. One way to do this is to worship with one another during Holy Week—to read and ponder together the stories of the events in Christ's life during his last week in Jerusalem.

When we continue the journey with Jesus beyond his triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday—when we sit at the table of the last meal he shared with his disciples, when we “keep watch” as he prays in the Garden, when we hover in the shadows as Peter denies him, when we observe his trial, and when we witness his crucifixion—we experience the Easter event, the Resurrection, more vividly, more profoundly, perhaps more faithfully.

I hope you will choose to worship with us on Thursday, March 28 and journey with Jesus all the way to the cross. We will begin at 5:30 with a simple supper; we will share the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; and

we will read and reflect on the Passion narratives found in Mark's gospel.



Grace and Peace, *Mari Lyn*

March Birthdays



Bob	Kerr	8
Ron	Miller	15
Brad	Rehm	28

About Our Members (and Prayer Requests)

As **Bob Todd's** bone cancer progresses, we pray for his comfort and peace. We give thanks for the Hospice team sharing their expertise, experience, and compassion with Bob and his family. We pray for energy, strength, and peace for Gidget, her daughter Jeanine, and her son Brian as they lovingly tend to Bob and keep him connected with family and friends.

Rip VanWinkle and son, **Richard**, are recovering well from their surgeries. They are active and say thanks for the prayers.

We continue to pray for healing, comfort, and peace for **Joan Ray's** sister **Jean** and her brother **Bob**.

Renita and Carl Menyhert are both recovering from surgeries (knee and hip).

Priscilla Pinkston, Bill and Shirley's daughter-in-law, is having heart issues and has spent time in BS&W. Please pray that

the rhythm and strength improves.

Jerry Matthews's sister, **Donna Kramer**, had the cancer removed and she is doing great. She appreciates all of the prayers from our church.

We pray for healing for **Ralph Castor's** brother **Eddie**, who is at MD Anderson and has been included in a new drug trial.

Missie Lanham still comes to Salado a couple of Saturdays a month. If you would like to visit with her here, please call her daughter, Claire, at 254-931-0596 to schedule the visit.

We continue to pray for healing and wholeness for **Susan Carroll** as she deals with cancer and cancer treatment. The fact that she has had COVID for several weeks has not helped, but she is getting better and now looks forward to her last Chemo treatment on Friday.

Sunday School Update

The Sunday School class continues our study of Luke: Jesus and the Outsiders, Outcasts, and Outlaws by Adam Hamilton. The first two chapters discussed how God has used the elderly, the childless, and the young for his great purposes, in spite of how the culture viewed them. We also looked at the vital role women played in Jesus' ministry and the focus Luke gave women in his Gospel.

In the coming weeks we will be reading about the parables of Luke, what we learn from Jesus' healings on his road to Jerusalem, and the final weeks leading up to his crucifixion and resurrection. Our study will be completed on Sunday, March 24th. There will be no Sunday School on Easter Sunday, March 31st, so we can spend that time with our families.



Easter Blessings!

Church Finances

February offerings were \$ 5219.

February expenses were \$ 7211.

This deficit of \$ 1622 is in part due to a very large electric bill for the period mid-January to mid-February (\$ 1155). Other expenses were in the normal range for the month.

Woman's Devotional

The "Third Thursday" devotional and social gathering for the women of our church is on Thursday, March 21st, and Debby Aldridge will be the leader.

You are invited to gather in the classroom after chair yoga, about 11:30 a.m. Feel free to bring your lunch or just come to chat and enjoy friends before the devotional. The devotional begins at noon.

Sign-Up

The signup sheets are in the foyer for flowers, greeters, and liturgists between now and the end of the year.

THE MESSENGER

♪ Not Just Musical Notes ♪

Please welcome our newest choir members...Jeanie Miller and our pastor, Mari Lyn Jones! What a blessing to have these ladies join the choir to help lead our congregation in worship through music! We still have room for more members, so feel free to talk with Shay VanWinkle or me, or even better yet, join us for choir practice on Wednesdays from 3:30-4:30. No special voice training required. The Bible encourages us in Psalm 100:1, "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord ALL ye...," and that includes Y-O-U!

Thank you for allowing me to represent our Presbyterian Church of Salado at the quarterly meeting of Grace Presbytery this past Thursday, at 1st Presbyterian Church, Fort Worth. This is the first time I had the opportunity to attend a meeting of Grace Presbytery and was so grateful I did! What a blessing to worship with fellow Presbyterian Christians from our area of Texas, celebrate communion, sing hymns of praise, and listen to inspired preaching. One of the highlights of the afternoon was church members sharing how God is at work in their congregations!



What an opportunity to meet different denominational leaders from across the state, as well as pastors, elders, and lay people as we shared in this day of worship, business, and a chance to develop relationships which will be shared in days, months, and years to come. There were also displays on the different programs from children, to adults, including Camp training, special offerings and how used. Information on seminary training, mental health support, caregiving programs for persons with special needs as well as senior adults was also included.

In talking with several of the Presbyterian denominational leaders, how refreshing to hear how interested they are in each congregation and their eagerness to talk and even meet our people as they minister and serve the people and churches in Grace Presbytery. Be sure to add to your "Bucket List" to attend a future gathering of Grace Presbytery. Come fall, it will be held in Woodway, the Waco area, and is open to church members to attend as well ruling elders and pastors. I encourage you to make plans now for a day that can give you a renewed perspective of the people who worship as Presbyterian Christians.

Sharing in Christ's Service, *Jeanette West*

Favorite Verses or Hymns

In the coming months we will solicit other members to provide stories around their favorite Bible Verses or Hymns. We hope this is a restart in a series of stories from our congregation. (This was included in the Messenger some 10 years ago.)

Favorite Bible Verse – Evelyn Matthews

My favorite Bible verses is from **Philippians 1:3** "Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God."

When I think of this verse, I think of two special women who were a very important part of my life. One was my Mom and the other was Jeanie Reed, my best friend for 55 years. Both of them are no longer with us, but the lessons I learned from them will always be a part of me.

I am the person I am today because of the lessons I learned from them. They taught me to love unconditionally, to help others whenever I can, and to always be grateful for what I have. They were strong, resilient women who loved their families and friends and they loved and trusted God. My Mom has been gone for twenty-three years and Jeanie has been gone for a year, but I still think of them every day and I give thanks to God for placing them in my life.



Favorite Bible Verse - Betty Gengler

I read this each day and I try & live my life accordingly.

2 Corinthians 13:11 "I close my letter with these last words: **Be happy. Grow in Christ. Pay attention to what I have said. Live in harmony and peace. And may the God of Love and peace be with you.**"



Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes - Sunday, January 28, 2024

Call to Order / Opening Prayer at 10:57 AM - Rev. Mari Lyn Jones

Status of Congregational Quorum – Motion was made by Debby Aldridge and seconded by Pat Hart that Pat Rehm be elected to serve as secretary, due to the illness of new clerk Denice Kemp. The motion was passed, and Pat Rehm reported that a quorum was present.

New Business -

Rev. Mari Lyn Jones introduced the presenter's of 2023 annual reports:

Randy Kemp (Class of 2023) named repairs and maintenance items made last year and introduced Chris Gengler as the new elder for Building and Grounds Committee.

Jeanette West (Class of 2024) mentioned different elements of the Worship Committee responsibilities and invited members of the congregation to help with various tasks in the coming year.

Mike Hart (Class of 2024) reviewed first the Christian Education groups which meet regularly: Women's Devotional, on 3rd Thursday at Noon, with social time at 11:30 AM (excluding summer months); Summer Bible study for nine Thursdays at 11:30 AM, based on the *Horizon* materials from Presbyterian Women; Sunday School with various leaders (excluding summer months); and Men's Prayer Breakfast with continuing Bible studies on Tuesday mornings at 8:00 am.

Then he reported that the 2023 Benevolence contributions totaled \$18,750, which was 20 percent of our Sunday offerings. That amount included \$2,164 for the One Great Hour of Sharing and donations distributed among various charitable agencies. A poster identifying the various organizations will be displayed in the narthex.

Debby Aldridge (Class of 2025), as Personnel/Finance Committee Chair, worked with the Pastoral Search Committee to arrange the hiring of the Rev. Mari Lyn Jones as Interim Minister on August 1st. She thanked Laquita Arner and Pat Hart, Treasurer, for helping her conduct the annual audit in April, as well as 2023 Nominating Committee members Sara Pettijohn and Laquita Arner for finding new elders. Cindy Pennington and John Pettijohn were recognized for handling the weekly offerings after worship. She also mentioned that Randy Kemp & Pat Rehm had served on the Session for six years and that Shay VanWinkle had led the Fellowship Committee for the past two years.

Shay VanWinkle (Class of 2024) had led the Fellowship Committee, which presented nine luncheons during 2023, with approximately 35 people each time. She thanked the ladies of the church, who put the food on the tables and had everything in place, and the men who jumped in when needed without being asked. She greatly appreciated their help.

Pat Hart, who was reelected Treasurer at last Sunday's Session meeting, presented information on page six in the 2023 Annual Reports booklet distributed at today's meeting. She explained the lower income amount in the 2024 Budget column, which necessitated cutting the payment to Presbytery to \$2,000, lowering the Christian Education amount to \$1,000, and restricting the Benevolence donations to 10 percent this year.

Rev. Mari Lyn Jones thanked all who had served on the Session in 2023 and named the three new elders for 2024 in the Class of 2026: Chris Engler, Denice Kemp, and Evelyn Matthews.

Adjournment/Closing Prayer at 11:25 AM - Rev. Mari Lyn Jones

Ash Wednesday Service - February 14



Rev. Mari Lyn and Joan Ray



Rev. Mari Lyn and Trish Stebbins



Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Lenten season and takes place 46 days before Easter.

Rev. Mari Lyn and John Booher

