

PRES PRESS



Spring Branch Presbyterian Church
1215 Campbell Rd | Houston, TX 77055



Nothing Is Normal

As we entered the past new year, none of us could have imagined all the changes we would experience this year. Many things are not currently happening, others have been transformed. Who would have thought terms such as “social distancing” would have become part of our mainstream vocabulary? Who would have thought masks would become a fashion statement? Will 2021 be better? What will the “new normal” be like?

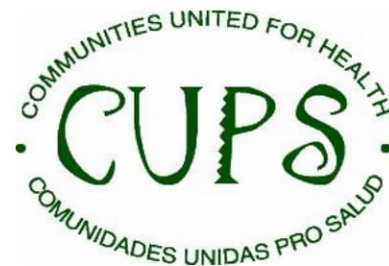
As we recounted the Christmas story, not much was normal then either. The shepherds, near the bottom of the social system, were chosen to announce the birth of the Christ child. Mary and Elizabeth both had pregnancies that were far from the norm. Joseph was asked to take the word of an angel and stay with Mary, his betrothed. The wise men followed a star in the East precisely because whatever happened was something unusual. The horrific story of Herod slaughtering children hardly gets a mention. We have heard the story of Christmas and Epiphany so often that it has become normal to us. But it certainly wasn't. It was a year like no other.

Most of us would certainly consider 2020 an abnormal year. And yet, it seems to be the case that God acts most powerfully to bless the world in abnormal years. While 2020 was a surprise to us, it certainly was not a surprise to God. And even though it will still take a bit of time in 2021 to achieve any status of life that we consider “normal,” please know that we should remember that we serve a living Christ who promised us, “Behold, I am making all things new.” (Rev. 21:5). So whatever this “new normal” is for us and for our church, I believe it will be filled with the presence of Christ. It will indeed be something new. That is all we know at this time. But it is enough. Rejoice!

In Christ's Service,
Pastor Kevin

Missions of the Month

The "Mission of the Month" for January is **Comunidades Unidas Pro Salud (CUPS)**! CUPS is a Christian organization founded in 1989 to improve the quality of life in rural communities along the Mexico-U.S. border. Maximizing the use of capital and human resources, CUPS unites mission trip volunteers with the people of Mexican and U.S. communities in projects that touch the lives of thousands of



people. Health and education projects are a primary focus, and these are designed to meet community defined needs. Other humanitarian projects and programs, such as disaster relief, are also important in the work for CUPS.

CUPS provides school supplies, computers and durable medical equipment to impoverished communities throughout Mexico. Throughout the year, SBPC collects durable medical supplies and school supplies to send to CUPS.



Our own Nina Rach is a board member for CUPS!

Considering how 2020 has been disrupted for all of us by COVID-19, CUPS is doing well, and continues to pursue its mission in Tamaulipas Mexico in the customary fashion. Here is a list of Project Updates completed by CUPS in 2020: Work on Playa Bagdad Techado, Delivery of school supplies, Delivery of medical supplies, Techado at Mexico Unido Primaria in Ejido Rancho Viejo, Techado for Campo Pesquero preschool in Playa Bagdad, Border fence for Flores Magon kindergarten, and Techado for Jose Delgado Primaria.

January Mission Updates & Opportunities

Mission Trip Update – Through our Presbytery and partners like Houston Responds, we have been identifying ways we can continue to help our neighbors in Louisiana who have been impacted by Hurricanes Laura and Delta. The Mission Team is partnering with Fuller Center for Disaster Recovery to plan a mission trip to go help our neighbors with rebuilding their homes. All skill levels are welcome, and we are hoping to send a team the weekend of January 15th-18th. If you are interested in attending, please let Pastor Kevin or Miguel know.

FairBees Holiday Toy Drive – The FairBees Square Dancing Club that meets at SBPC once again collected toys and monetary donations for the MAM Christmas Share Program. A special thanks to FairBees for their support of MAM!

SBPC Hot Meals on Weekends – The current COVID-19 restrictions have made this service opportunity possibly more important than ever. The 4th Saturday of each month we look for individuals to deliver meals to shut-ins. We have 2 routes with about 14 people on each route, so we usually need a total of 4 volunteers each month. Please contact Lu Taylor if you are interested in volunteering to deliver meals one month. The Saturday for this month will be January 23rd.



Souper Bowl of Caring on February 7 – the NFL Super Bowl is in early 2021, so we wanted to remind you that we will once again be participating in the annual Souper Bowl of Caring on February 7th. Bring a dollar or a canned good to drop in the soup pots. Donations will go to a local food pantry.

Drive-Thru Wednesday Night Supper



Jan. 13 — Menu TBA

Jan. 27 — Menu TBA



You will drive through the main entrance, past the port-cochere to where you will see Kevin loading dinners. You do not have to get out of your vehicle, just roll down the window or unlock the passenger side door. Kevin will also be offering prayers for all who wish. Please try to arrive between 6:00-6:20 PM. All sanitary precautions will be strictly observed during preparation and delivery. *Watch your email for placing orders!*

The dinners will be free, but we are accepting donations. We are also accepting donations for the Fair Haven Food Pantry (non-perishable food items, cleaning supplies, and paper products). *The food pantry is also in need of plastic grocery bags—they go through at least 300 a day!* We are also continuing to accept thank you cards for our dedicated Houston healthcare workers. Please do not seal the envelopes.

Worship With Us

SBPC has resumed in-person Worship and Sunday School. If you would like to attend Worship and/or Sunday School, you will need to register each week. By registering, you are agreeing to follow the guidelines set forth for a safe return. The guidelines for Worship and Sunday School are available at www.springbranchpres.org/worship-registration.



You can register for Worship and Sunday School each week by completing the online form at www.springbranchpres.org/worship-registration. You may also register via email to secretary@springbranchpres.org. If you register via email, please include if/which in-person Sunday School Class you will attend.

Every week, the service is being streamed live to the SBPC YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCK-MbvQ1TkJiUmDq1Psswg>.

Epiphany Presbyterian Women this Month

PW at a Glance

PW MODERATORS meet on 1/6 at 9:30 a.m. (via Zoom)

PW BOARD MEETING meet on 1/6 at 10:15 a.m. (via Zoom)

PW CIRCLE meeting on 1/13 at 9:30 a.m. (via Zoom)



THE HORIZONS Evening Bible Study using **ZOOM** will be on Tuesday, 1/19 at 7:00 p.m.

Lessons 4 & 5: www.springbranchpres.org/adult-education/presbyterian-women/into-the-light/

Contact Carol Davis to receive a Zoom Invitation for both the Day Circle and the Evening Bible Study.

There will be no **ZIP TRIP** or **HAPPY HANDS** in January.

PW BIBLE STUDY books are available in the Church Office, or can be picked up from Sarah Dikeman's House. The cost is \$10.

PW DIRECTORIES are available in the Church Office or for pickup from Sarah Dikeman.

Bible Study Using Zoom: January 19th at 7:00 p.m.

Lessons 4 & 5 of *Into the Light* will be discussed by the group of women using Zoom on Tuesday, January 19th, at 7 p.m. All SBPC women are welcomed in this Bible study group through videoconference! Contact Carol Davis at caroldavis@entouch.net to receive the Zoom invitation to join the meeting.



SBPC Scholarship applications are now available for interested students! Completed applications are due May 1 for the year applying and should be turned in to Sarah Dikeman for the women's scholarship and Ken Crawford for the men's scholarship.

**Spring Branch Presbyterian Church
Women's/ Men's Scholarship Application
2021-2022 Academic Year**

Name: _____ DOB _____

Permanent Address: _____

School Address: _____

Phone cell: _____ home: _____

Are you employed: FT _____ PT _____ Work Study _____ N/A _____

Name of College, University, or Technical School: _____

Level: Freshman _____ Sophomore _____ Junior _____
Senior _____ Post- Grad _____

Degree Program: _____

Years Attended: _____ FT/ PT student _____

GPA: _____ Honors Program: _____ Year of Graduation: _____

On a separate piece of paper, in paragraph form, please describe:

1. Your goals
2. Extracurricular activities
3. Community service
4. How your faith and belief in God affects your studies
5. Your membership and involvement in Spring Branch Presbyterian Church
6. Use of Scholarship money
7. Any other information you'd like to share
8. Optional Photograph

**Applications are due the 1st of May for the year applying and should be turned in to Sarah Dikeman for the Women's Scholarship and Ken Crawford for the Men's Scholarship. Applicant must be enrolled or accepted at a college, university, technical school, or certification program. Scholarships will be awarded in the summer of the year applying. Recipient must maintain a minimum GPA of 2.0/C average. Applicant must be an active member in good standing of Spring Branch Presbyterian Church. Reapplication may be made each year beginning January 1.

The Gathering Place What Have We Done Lately?

Our face-to-face Gathering Places have been cancelled temporarily, but we are delivering monthly packages in an effort to lift spirits and make contact with our usual guests.

In November, we delivered delicious pumpkin bread made by Lu Taylor, a cute turkey craft, a Thanksgiving card with a special message and a small magnetic advent wreath for their refrigerator along with word puzzles and coloring sheets. We also mailed out a copy of SBPC's Advent Devotional in time for the beginning of Advent.

In December, we delivered Snowman Soup, Christmas cookies made by Lisa Schultz, a Christmas greeting card with a hopeful message and two cute crafts from Sarah Dikeman, along with word puzzles and coloring sheets (pictured below).



Our guests enjoy the bags, but also the physical checking in on them is appreciated. Phone calls and virtual meetings do not blend well with dementia.

The Gathering Place is an ecumenical partnership with CarePartners® which provides memory care activities, lunch and a respite for caregivers of people with dementia.

2021 WOMEN'S AND MEN'S RETREAT POSTPONED

The Faith Development Team decided in their December 7 meeting to postpone the Women's Retreat, scheduled for Feb. 27, and the Men's Retreat, scheduled for Feb. 28. Continuing issues of Covid-19 that are predicted to extend through February, and the unknown availability of approved vaccines make the February dates potentially unsafe for our members. We want to schedule the retreats that are safe, fun, and that promote fellowship. So look for future announcements in *PresPress* when conditions improve. Rev. Rose Niles has agreed to be flexible with dates for being retreat leader at the Women's Retreat, and further information will be coming about a retreat leader for the Men's Retreat. Something to look forward to in 2021!!

Carol Davis
Women's Retreat Coordinator

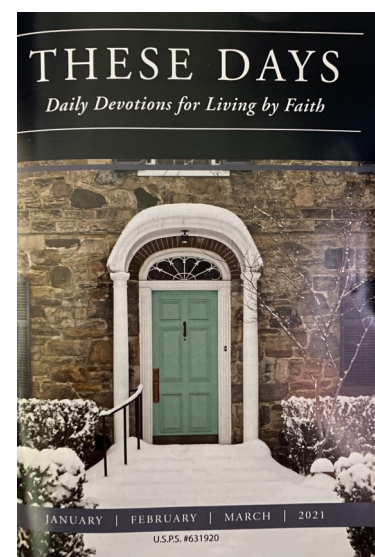
Donald McDaniel
Men's Retreat Coordinator



Although the **Explorers Sunday School Class** is meeting in-person on Sunday mornings, you can still join virtually via *Zoom*! The group gathers at 9:30 AM, both virtually and in-person. If you would like to participate via *Zoom*, please contact Linda Crawford.

The January | February | March Edition of the *These Days* daily devotionals have arrived!

If you would like a copy of this devotional mailed to you, please contact secretary@springbranchpres.org, or call the Church Office (713-464-7659) and leave a voicemail.





The Pastor's Bible Study with Kevin is continuing to meet online at 11:00 AM on Tuesday mornings. Here is the information to join the study:

Meeting ID: 897 7951 2452 | Password: 754888 | Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89779512452?pwd=VU1VZVBByeFI1MEwxNmhrR090S0JVQT09>

January 3, 2021; 2nd Sunday of Christmas; Communion

First Reading: Jeremiah 31:7-14

Text: Ephesians 1:3-14

Title: To Heir is Divine

Focus: We have been given the incredible gift of being heirs to God's Kingdom.

January 10, 2021; Baptism of the Lord

First Reading: Genesis 1:1-5

Text: Mark 1:1-11

Title: Guess Who's Coming to Church?

Focus: We constantly underestimate the greatness of Christ.

January 17, 2021; 2nd Sunday after Epiphany

First Reading: John 1:43-51

Text: Psalm 139:1-18

Title: Looking Good!

Focus: Our Lord knows more about us than we can perceive.

January 24, 2021; 3rd Sunday after Epiphany

First Reading: Mark 1:14-20

Text: Jonah 3:1-5, 10

Title: Floating Gold

Focus: God's love extends far beyond our borders.

January 31, 2021; 4th Sunday after Epiphany

First Reading: Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Text: 1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Title: How Free is Free?

Focus: Christians are called to make difficult decisions keeping our neighbors in mind.

SBPC'S Store at Lands' End is back up and running!

SBPC Logo shirts are a great way to represent our church in the community.

Now SBPC has its own store: business.landsend.com/store/springbranchpres

From there you can choose from men's and women's polos, shirts, t-shirts, pullovers, jackets, totes, caps, aprons, and much more – all with the church logo!

You can choose from a multitude of colors as well as different thread colors for the logo.



To Order:

1. Go to: business.landsend.com/store/springbranchpres
2. Hover over *My Account* and select *Create Account* when the window pops up.
3. Select a category to start shopping, or use the search tool (Men, Women, Promotional Products).
4. Click on the item you would like to purchase and choose the color and size of the item. **Then select *Apply Logo(s)* to continue.**
5. Select the church logo (Logo 1). It will let you preview it on the left side of your screen.
6. If you would like to change the color of the Logo, select *Change Logo Color(s)* and pick from the provided options. Note: The church logo is made up of 3 separate pieces. To change the color, please make sure that you change the color of all 3 pieces of the Logo. You can see this in realtime in the preview on the left side of your screen.
7. Select the location where you would like the logo, and **click *Apply Logo*.**
8. Push *Add to Bag* and continue shopping or checkout.
9. Once your items are ready, they will ship to the address you provided when you setup your account. If you have not setup an account, please do so now so you do not lose your items.

Contact Ethan Mitchell at ethan@springbranchpres.org if you have any questions.

Happy Birthday!




Barbara Tremble	1/9	William Stockton	1/20
Alexandria Balli	1/10	Bunnie Lezon	1/21
Susan Heitshusen	1/11	Byron Goodrum	1/23
Lucile Pringle	1/12	Dr. Denise Wilborn	1/24
Kaitlynn Turney	1/12	Marc Bik	1/25
Nora Wright	1/16	Virginia Miller	1/26
Arthur Qualls	1/19	Hazen Ballesteros	1/27
Adam Tutt	1/19	Ben Dethloff	1/27
Lauralai Caldera	1/20	Derek Dees	1/29
Gerald Fitts	1/20	Delia Nix	1/30
Clayton Glen Powell	1/20	Paul H. Laverty, Jr.	1/31

Happy Anniversary!



Kip and Margaret Rouse 1/29

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
9:30am - Sunday school 10:50am - Worship	7pm - Worship Team	9:15am - Cong. Care Mtg. 11am - Pastor's Bible Study	Epiphany 9:30am - PW Moderator 10:15am - PW Board		New Year's Day 	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Baptism of the Lord 9:30am - Sunday school 10:50am - Worship	5pm - Academy Board	11am - Pastor's Bible Study	9:30am - PW Circle 6pm - Drive-Thru WNS			
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
9:30am - Sunday school 10:50am - Worship	11am - Pastor's Bible Study 7pm - Horizon's Bible Study	11am - Pastor's Bible Study 7pm - Session	PresPress ARTICLES DUE			11am - Hot Meals
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
9:30am - Sunday school 10:50am - Worship		11am - Pastor's Bible Study	6pm - Drive-Thru WNS			
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
9:30am - Sunday school 10:50am - Worship						



Sponsored By:

Spring Branch Presbyterian Church
1215 Campbell Road
Houston, Texas 77055
(713) 464-7659
www.springbranchpres.org

relationships matter 

GOD • ONE ANOTHER • WORLD

*“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ,
the new creation has come: The
old has gone, the new is here!”*

~ 2 Corinthians 5:17

