

The Breezeway



This is the day!

Each February we celebrate the gift of love. On Valentine's Day we remember the people we love and send them cards and gifts. Then on February 26, Ash Wednesday arrives, the day we begin the season of Lent and look toward the love that God has for us in sending God's son Jesus to live and die for you and me.

Traditionally, the season of Lent is a time when we give something up. Some people might give up a vice like eating or drinking too much. Some might give up something we like to indulge in, like ice cream or chocolate or even broccoli. 😊 Other people celebrate Lent by taking on a spiritual discipline like fasting, meditation, or journaling.

What if this year we did something different? How about we take 10 minutes each day to do something that we really enjoy?

I'm reading a book on spiritual direction, and I came across something that grabbed my attention. The authors say that people beginning a spiritual journey to learn about and love God more "usually find that intensity and effort in looking at or listening to God are not very helpful." I know that experience in my personal prayer life. Trying harder or more frequent efforts don't necessarily bring better results or rewards. The authors recommend instead that people "would benefit more from spending time at first in some activity they enjoy that has a contemplative aspect to it" and asking God to be there with us. The examples cited include bird watching, admiring the architecture of a city, listening to the surf, or reflecting on the music of Bach. Actually, the options are countless: "Any receptive experience that helps [us] forget [ourselves] and become absorbed in something else."

I always said, partly in jest, that motorcycling is a spiritual discipline for me. Now I have proof. So I'm going to celebrate Lent this year by taking 10 minutes each day to do something that I really enjoy and that helps me forget, for a few moments, myself and all the demands I pile on myself. It may be taking a walk or watching the sunset. It may be riding my bicycle or motorcycle. Some activity whose beauty and joy remind me of God's presence and creative power. How about you?

After all, God has been with us in the past. And God promises to be with us in the future. But God's presence is mostly in the present. This is the day the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Blessings,
Pastor Dick

News of Circle Gatherings in February



The Morning Circle will gather at 10:00 AM in the Activities Room at church on Wednesday, Feb. 12. Their study will be Lesson 6 of the book *Love Carved Out of Stone*. The Saturday Circle will meet at the church Saturday, Feb. 8 at 9:30 AM for breakfast and the same study.

The Evening Circle is studying C.S. Lewis's book *Mere Christianity*. They will meet Monday, Feb. 10 at 6:30 PM for dinner and discussion at Marlann Negron's home.

All women are welcome to join any of our meetings!

Session Highlights

The Session met on Tuesday, Jan. 21. Here are highlights of actions taken by the Session:

- Approved a Scout project to relocate and improve the Boy Scout shed, at no cost to the church.
- Approved the updated Session Manual prepared by Patty Clark
- Volunteered to help Nick Roberson and NPC Youth sell tickets for and conduct Fiesta Parades April 24/25
- Approved Sarah Barrientes request to host Camp Gladiator (fitness classes) in Church parking lot early mornings (4:45 AM) three days per week. Session approved a three-month trial to begin.
- Received updates on the Pastor Search Process, which will be shared at the annual congregational meeting. We are approximately half way through the process to welcoming a new pastor.
- Approved a balanced operating budget of \$317,900 for the year 2020. Pledges for 2020 increased significantly over last year, to a total of almost \$150,000.



Worship +2: Where will you connect in 2020?

The New Year is a good time to resolve to be more connected to Northwood, and Worship +2 is an approach to meeting that challenge.

The Worship +2 challenge is to nurture yourself, reach out, and imagine. To grow your connection with your Northwood family, begin with regular attendance in worship, add participation in an activity that benefits you or that you enjoy, and commit to participation in an activity that benefits the church.

Time and talent sheets for 2020 are headed Worship +2 and offer dozens of volunteer opportunities and interest group activities. If you haven't turned in a form, pick one up in the Narthex (foyer) and choose your Worship +2 for this year.



News from Northwood Presbyterian Day School

Martha Sherrod

Calling all families!! OPEN REGISTRATION for the summer and 2020-2021 school year starts Feb. 18. We fill up quickly so if you or a family you know is looking for top-quality faith-based early childhood education for their child, call us now!

In January we got a chance to shower our parents and grandparents with some love!

We had a Parent Appreciation coffee: our parents are the BEST! We also had a breakfast for our Grandparents. And guess what? Not one, not two, but three of our grandparents have volunteered to be Reading Buddies!! (If you would like to be a Reading Buddy as well, give us a call).

The Day School has received a grant to upgrade our technology: laptop, etc. This will continue to help our teachers prepare their lesson plans, research new ideas, and keep in touch with parents electronically.

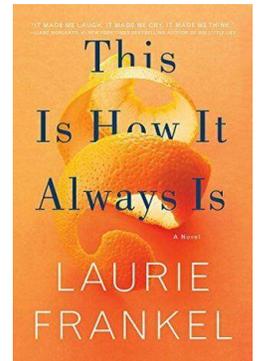
At the end of February, we will celebrate Rodeo Day!! Our little buckeroos will get into the spirit of the Rodeo with some fun activities while learning a little about San Antonio history.

As always, we invite you to come on down and visit. See what great things are happening in your Day School, and perhaps find a way you can share a gift or talent with our students!!

February Book Club

February's book will be *This Is How It Always Is* by Lori Frankel. Everyone is invited to enjoy a potluck supper followed by discussion of this month's book.

Watch eNotes and the bulletin for an announcement of the date and location.



Advent Gift

Sheron Antczak, chair

Donations to the Advent Gift totaled \$1482! These donations allowed the Congregational Care Committee to help two individuals who are experiencing day-to-day struggles due to unforeseen circumstances.

Thank you for donating to this special offering. This Christmas gift was indeed a blessing and the recipients have asked us to express their heartfelt thanks.

Northwood Women's 2020 Spring Retreat



Searching for Wisdom of the Heart

a day of worship, singing, creating,
praying, and learning

Saturday, February 22, 2020, 9:30 AM-2:30 PM

led by Robin Atiyeh at her home,
9503 Collier Flats, Helotes TX 78023

To register give form and \$25 check made out to Northwood PW
to Gail Clowe, Anne Little, or Libby Overholt in the church office by Feb. 16

IF YOU NEED CHILD CARE, register by Feb. 9
AND call Anne Little or Gail Clowe

BRING your Bible, coffee cup, and four favorite scriptures to the retreat

Robin's home, 9503 Collier Flats, Helotes, is off Hausman Rd
north of 1604. Use online directions or call Gail or Anne

Name _____

Email _____

_____ I need a ride _____ I can drive

Carpools meet at 8:30 AM and leave Northwood by 8:45