An Open Letter on Worship
To the Church I Love

BY DR. JIM MILLER, CO-PASTOR

In ancient times we pastors were called “Curates of the soul.” The word comes from the Latin, curare, meaning “to take care of.” It’s one of the pastor’s most crucial responsibilities. As the Roman Catholic tradition puts it:

“Pastoral vigilance, or watch-care, is one of the most essential parts of pastoral obligation. It is not enough for the curate to preach the Word of God, to administer the sacraments, he must also be attentive to watch over the conduct of his parishioners, considering the welfare of all in general, and of each one in particular, that he may answer to God for their souls.” (Cyclopædia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature)

Some day, according to ancient church teaching, pastors will give answer to God for the souls of their people. This is a serious calling, and I’m confident that we all take it seriously.

So here’s my question to the beautiful Church family called First Presbyterian Church: How important do you think it is to make worshiping a weekly routine? Does it really make any difference if we’re not there? Can I deepen my faith, grow in my witness, be faithful as a Christian and be absent from worship more than I’m present?

Let me begin with a brief autobiographical reflection on the Church.

I love the Church: this messy, sin-ridden, limping-around group of people — called to live life together (as the Church) by Jesus himself. As “a son of the manse” (my dad was a Baptist pastor) I’ve had a life-long box seat when it comes to viewing the Church’s failures up-close and personal. I’ve glimpsed the “under-belly” a few times. You tell me your story of the brokenness of the Church, and I probably have seen it (and perhaps contributed to it!)

None of us should be surprised by this. We bring our sin, each of us, sin-laden as we are, right into the Church. Weighed down by both physical and spiritual addictions, the Church gathers broken hearts, desperate hurts, toxic habits, and a whole lot more every time we enter this House of Prayer.

So to say “the Church is full of sinners” is a bit like saying, “the hospital is full of sick people.” It’s to be expected. And just as sick people go to the hospital to find healing, we go to Church — by order of the Great Physician Himself — to be healed, liberated, saved, from our sin.

So back to my question. How important would you say it is to make worshiping a weekly routine?

Imagine a student violinist in the Tulsa Youth Symphony telling her conductor she’ll be present at every other rehearsal; or a football player for Booker T. Washington telling the coach he’ll miss two weeks of practice each month; or a medical student at OU-Tulsa informing her academic advisor that she can only make half of the classes.

In each case, the response would be exactly the same: “Sorry, but that simply won’t work — you can’t become the violinist (or football player, or doctor) we need you to be if you’re not faithful in your training.”

That’s precisely how early Christians understood worship. They saw it as a training ground, a rehearsal hall, a school for sinners being reformed into saints. Regularity (faithfulness) in worship is regarded as vital. As the author of Hebrews says,

“Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works — not neglecting to meet together as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another…” (Hebrews 10:24-25).

I speak in love, as one charged as a Curate within Christ’s Church, when I say that your faithful involvement in worship is not a luxury item to be considered against other Sunday options.

I speak in love to those who are periodic and once-in-awhile worshipers, to those who are drawn away from worship by other compelling interests on Sunday mornings, to those whose children’s sports take you away, to those who choose Starbucks and the New York Times over the sanctuary, to those who confuse Sunday school classes for worship, to each of you and all of you — for whom one day I will give account, please consider this:

Worship is God’s idea. It’s a training ground, a rehearsal hall, a classroom — where necessary learning and growth really happen. To dismiss it as optional is to miss the force of the third commandment on keeping the Sabbath holy; it’s to miss the power worship has to form and shape human life according to Christ’s Way.

C.S. Lewis had an aversion to going to church; he puts it this way:

“When I first became a Christian, about fourteen years ago, I thought that I could do it on my own, by retiring to my rooms and reading theology, and I wouldn’t go to the churches and Gospel Halls; ...I disliked very much their hymns, which I considered to be fifth-rate...
“Poems set to sixth-rate music.”

But Lewis grew into a deeper understanding of what worship is all about.

“As I went on I saw the great merit of worshipping together. I came up against different people of quite different outlooks and different education, and then gradually my conceit just began peeling off.

I realized that the hymns (which were just sixth-rate music) were, nevertheless, being sung with devotion and benefit by an old saint in elastic-side boots in the opposite pew, and then you realize that you aren’t fit to clean those boots.”

In corporate worship, God works on us. He uses the people gathered nearby to help. He cultivates humility; He fashions integrity; He shapes attentiveness to His will and purposes; He gives promptings by His Spirit.

You don’t want to miss this weekly gathering. There’s nothing else like it — nothing more formative for you and your children, nothing more important in your weekly calendar, nothing more mysterious. It is increasingly a radical choice in the Supermarket of Sunday options.

“As was his custom,” the Gospels report, “Jesus was in the synagogue on the Sabbath.” (Luke 4:16)

Did Jesus really need to gather with others for worship? Somehow, He believed He did. Why would we believe we don’t?

As we make our way into Advent, a new Christian year, why not make a brand new resolution:

“I resolve to be in worship regularly, week by week, insofar as I’m able, through the rest of my life. May the Lord be praised by my presence, and may I be shaped into Christ by His presence. Alleluia! Amen!”

“Where two or three are gathered, I am right there with you,” says our Lord. And we respond: “Even so come, Lord Jesus!” And to think that we’re privileged to meet with Him in worship every week. I look forward to seeing you there!

What should the next issue’s pastor’s letter address?
Email your own theological, biblical, or moral questions to communications@firstchurchtulsa.org (subject: Ask a Pastor).

**CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS DOWNTOWN**

**DEC. 18**
Christmas Music Sunday  
Carols with bells and orchestra  
11:00 a.m.

**DEC. 24**
Christmas Eve Services  
Candlelit worship services  
3:00 p.m. (with communion)  
5:00 p.m. (with Children’s Live Nativity)  
7:30 p.m. (with full choir)  
10:30 p.m. (with communion, ends at midnight)

**DEC. 25**
Christmas Day Service  
Jubilant Sunday worship  
11:00 a.m.

**DEC. 4**
Advent Workshop  
First Family Chili Luncheon after worship in the atrium ($3)  
Family Christmas crafts in the Powerhouse beginning at 1:00 p.m.

**DEC. 10**
Tulsa Christmas Parade  
Parade begins at 6:00 p.m.  
Cocoa and a carol sing-along after the parade at FPC!

**JAN. 1**
New Years Day Services  
Pancake breakfast at 9:30 a.m. ($3)  
Worship in Sanctuary at 11:00 a.m. and Great Hall at 11:00 a.m.
During this Advent season, many families will partake in a very special tradition at First Church. Each Sunday in every service, different families of all shapes and sizes will come forward to light the Advent candles.

The Waldies are one such family who lit the first advent candle last year during the contemporary worship service in Stephenson Hall. At the time, this family of five was still very new to First Presbyterian Church.

Jeff Waldie recalls, “...we had a huddle up group before the service, and we got to meet the musicians that were up there. They were there with us, getting to know our names, being very friendly and helpful. They made us feel welcome. Dr. Miller, I think, had me give the prayer over the group before we all went into Stephenson Hall for the service, and they were just very warm and including and invited us in. They had little printed out things for us to say. While the lighting of the Advent candle was very short and quick, they made it very memorable, at least for me. I found it to be a great experience.”

The Waldie’s youngest son, Caleb, also shared, “to me it is a very serious and important thing.” Mother, Susan Waldie summed up, “I loved having the opportunity to stand in front of a congregation again, this time with my whole family, and I had lots of joy that we were going to kick off the Advent season getting to know our new church community ... We had a new church, a new holiday season, a new beginning, and we got to start everything off with the light of Christ.”

For the Waldie family, the activity was much more than just lighting a candle, but rather a privilege and gateway to fellowship within the church.

Hanna Howard and her brother, Adam, lit the “joy” candle last year. Hanna shared that they “grew up at a different church, but when he is in town, Adam comes to FPC with me, and we are both very fond of the 8:00 a.m. service in the chapel — both for its smallness, which lends it familiarity, and its reverence, which gives it a touch of solemnity.”

She spoke about the loss of their father in September prior to last year’s Advent season, and how “Advent is a time of waiting — the sort of desperate waiting that seems to strain taut with our need for God. The joy we find in its fulfillment is a joy that overcomes even the profoundest griefs of this life. I can’t claim that Adam and I felt much joy last December, but nevertheless, it was a beautiful experience to stand with my brother in the promise of Christ’s presence, and light a candle as we read to our little 8:00 a.m. family that His arrival was indeed ‘good tidings of great joy.’”

For some families, lighting the Advent candle occurs more than once in the life of their family, but still holds the same closeness to the Lord each time.

Gary Casteel and his family first lit the Advent candle in the mid-70s when their children, Molly and Matt, were five and six years old, respectively. Last year’s lighting “was life coming full circle” as it again included their daughter, Molly, who is now a minister.

The Advent season has a way of bringing us physically and emotionally closer to God, to our immediate families, and to the bigger church family. So in whatever worship service you find yourself this Advent, take a moment to reflect upon those around you. Especially around Christmas, we all bring our own unique joys and concerns, challenges, and hopes together in worship.

You might say a short prayer for those around you, and perhaps they will be doing the very same thing. It’s our privilege to not just be observers, but to take an active role in adding to the joy of worship this Advent!
The dictionary defines exercise as “activity requiring physical effort, carried out especially to sustain or improve health and fitness.” About 500 years ago, a Spaniard named Ignatius of Loyola designed the “Spiritual Exercises” to help sustain our spiritual growth and fitness, and they are exercises indeed! Their goal is to bring individuals into a lively, personal relationship with the risen Christ in everyday life and, as grace allows, to live our lives for the greater glory of God.

Each year, a group at First Church begins this adventure in the fall and follows the church calendar through Easter and the weeks following. During this time of commitment, we pray at least 30 minutes a day with scripture readings and questions to consider. We meet with a small group once a week to share highlights from our prayer journals as we learn to discern how God’s grace is enacted in our lives. There is a guide to facilitate each group, but the Holy Spirit is the true Guide in the weekly prayers. New ways of praying are introduced as well as guidelines for discerning the Holy Spirit as we help each other listen for God’s presence and action in our daily comings and goings.

Although the Spiritual Exercises use scripture texts as the beginning point of prayer, they are not a Bible study in the traditional sense. The focus is really more on how God’s life is lived in and through us as individuals as we strive to “find God in all things,” or to look for God and receive the Lord in all of the events and moments of our lives.

Because the Spirit is the Director of this extended prayer retreat, every person will have a unique experience though praying the same scriptures. How people grow and change is as unpredictable and as individual as the people who participate.

One veteran of the Spiritual Exercises shared that, “the year changed my life, my prayer life ... So very much came out of our time together over the fall and spring. Trust. A time to open our hearts to God and to each other.”

Another described, “when I signed up for the group, I didn’t know anyone as I wasn’t a member of First Presbyterian. I was actually from another denomination, but I immediately felt the welcoming presence of the Holy Spirit. As we walked through the Spiritual Exercises together, I learned to trust each person in the group in a way that only God can orchestrate.”

One recent participant also described an extended meditation, fueled by the Holy Spirit and guided by the Spiritual Exercises:

“I decided to take a walk over my lunch hour one day. Almost immediately as I left my building, I saw a disheveled and disturbed man crouched on the sidewalk writing with his finger in the dust on a window of a building. What brought him there? What is his story?

Then [I noticed] a man carrying a walking billboard for a deli. What does he get paid? Where does he live?

I continued my walk and noticed that despite Tulsa’s downtown boom, many storefronts along Main Street are still empty. I thought of the financial loss and shattered dreams that have been suffered by many as I have seen many restaurants and businesses come and go over time.
I passed by the food kitchen at Iron Gate and the many people gathered there and walking away with their sack lunches. What a wonderful ministry. Why am I always so surprised by what great need there is? I also observed well-dressed and obviously prosperous people. I found myself thinking that they too have their own troubles and sufferings. I imagined thought bubbles coming from them expressing their concerns, their desires, their hurts.

I was embarrassed to suddenly become aware of how much I have sought to avoid even the most minor difficulties compared to what I was witnessing, and how much time, energy, and effort I put into maintaining my own personal comfort and well-being (frankly almost all of my time and energies). I realized how often I walk these same sidewalks without being impacted by the suffering I see or being too preoccupied to notice.

As I walked, I had a sense that in some small way I was now seeing the world the way Jesus would, were he to walk these same streets. His focus would be on the sufferings of others, not on himself or his needs. He would not fault the people for their failings and missteps which may have resulted in their difficult circumstances. I realized how very far from that mark I am! That realization was a gift for which I am thankful. I was given, albeit briefly, eyes and a heart to see, to truly see. I don’t think I would have had this experience but for having done the Exercises!

The Spiritual Exercises were developed during the Reformation and eventually published in 1548. They have been in use all over the world ever since. They are credited with contributing to the reform of the Church and bringing her back to her original calling. Next year is the 500th anniversary of the Reformation; perhaps you would like to honor that history by participating in this unique formation opportunity. If so, please talk to Kathleen Muller, Ken Cox, or Duff Points to let them know of your interest ... and let the adventure begin!

For more information, you can contact Kathleen Muller at 918-813-2659 or kamul@cox.net.
Moving from Chattanooga, Tennessee to Tulsa, Oklahoma about two months ago can only be described as one hundred percent God’s will for my life. I came to start a new chapter as an intern working for FPC’s college ministry and Sharp Chapel at the University of Tulsa.

Moving away from family, friends, and comfort, I found myself in a vulnerable place that reminded me a lot of my freshman year of college. Searching for a community of believers and church to call home, I realized my path wasn’t a path less traveled but a well worn path that many college students have walked before. The desire to be welcomed and accepted in a new place is a deep longing that college students share.

First Church understands this need and has done a great job of engaging and investing in the lives of its college students. Providing a weekly worship night centered around the student’s schedule helps the stressful week become bearable. Families opening their homes for Bible studies gives students a chance to leave campus and dorm life behind.

Steven, a fifth year senior who attends the University of Tulsa, reminisces on his freshman year and how he became connected at First Church: “I knew when I first moved to Tulsa I wanted to be plugged into a community of faith, so the first week of school I heard First Church was providing rides to church on Sunday from campus, and I took the opportunity ... I decided to keep going and was asked one Sunday by the Next Gen pastor if I wanted to help with Sunday school. Liking kids and feeling like I was a part of something, I decided to help.” Five years later, Steven is still helping with Awana and volunteers as a sound technician for contemporary worship every week.

Hope, a sophomore at Tulsa University, talks about how she discovered First Church through her older sister and college ministry. As a vocal performance major, Hope decided to join the church choir. “It’s nice having a church family away from home, I feel like I’m needed and appreciated by the choir. I also think Ukirk, the college ministry, does a great job in connecting college students to the community and church events.” Through UKirk and the First Church music ministries, Hope has been able to both serve and be served by a community she has come to love.

First Church members who have opened their homes and welcomed students in have made real impact in these young adults’ lives. College can be a very difficult place for Christians;
new freedoms, flexibility, and friendships make it easy to walk away from the faith. It is so important to help welcome students into a community of believers who can encourage and point them in the right direction when times get tough.

“There are many ways to invest in the lives of college students, but really it all boils down to relationships,” explains Next Gen pastor Rev. Dan Hutchinson. “College students are looking for a place to belong, a family who cares about them and who will invite them to do life together. So when you see a college student in church, say hi! Let them know you are glad that they are there. Listen to their stories. Ask questions about life and faith, friendships and goals for the future.”

Dan also encourages the congregation to “take some time to get to know them outside of Sunday mornings. This can mean taking them out to lunch, inviting them over for a meal, grabbing a cup of coffee, offering a place to do laundry, inviting them to a Habitat for Humanity build or any number of other things. College students are looking to the future and the church has a tremendous opportunity to come alongside and walk with them, encourage them, and even help equip them for the next steps.”

If you would like to learn more about connecting with college students, Dan’s “door is always open!” You can contact him at 918-301-1040 or dhutchinson@firstchurchtulsa.org.

Next Generation at a Glance

YOUTH AT THE FOOD BANK
Dec. 17 at 9:00 a.m. (Community Food Bank)
Help serve the Food for Kids program by packing supplies to go into the backpacks of needy school kids to give them food to eat over the weekends. This opportunity is open to all youth, both Exodus and Pathfinders.

YOUTH CHRISTMAS PARTY
Dec. 17 at 5:30 p.m. (Powerhouse)
Pathfinders and Exodus youth are invited to celebrate Christ together. Bring a gift that is under $10.

YOUTH NEW YEAR’S EVE PARTY
Dec. 31 at 7:00 p.m. until Jan. 1 at 9:30 a.m.
Plan to join us for a great evening of fun together including a Nerf War, games, a movie and food.

MACBA BASKETBALL 2017
Saturdays in January and February
9th-12th grade students are invited to come and join the FPC MACBA teams this season as they compete against youth from other local churches.

EXODUS SKI RETREAT
Spring Break, March 13-18, 2017 (Pagosa Springs, CO)
The Ski Retreat makes a great Christmas gift. Registration is now open online at the church website!

BELIEVE CONFERENCE
Jan. 27-28 (Tulsa Convention Center and Powerhouse)
Pathfinders will gather for a crazy fun weekend of teaching and worship with other youth from around the region. Register by Dec. 23 to receive the Early Bird price!

To learn more and register for Next Gen programs contact Laurel Baird at 918-301-1009 (lbaird@firstchurchtulsa.org).
"If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and filled,' without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that?" (James 2:15-16)

'Tis the season for giving, and First Church is expanding the opportunity to be mission-focused in your annual Christmas shopping. If you’re like me, it can be difficult finding the right gift for loved ones who simply don’t need more “stuff” in their lives. Giving a gift in their honor to those in need around the world can mean so much more, which is why the Gift Back Market is returning to a First Church Atrium near you.

Gift Back started years ago, brought forward by the Mission Committee as a way to allow our entire congregation to be involved in the mission field. When you purchase a gift, ranging from $1 to $100, one of our mission partners receives a much-needed item, and you receive a special card to insert into a Christmas card, gift, or stocking. Amy Tingleaf, who helped kick off the program, says, “we wanted to open an alternative gift market that assists with holiday shopping for family and friends and benefits those in need at the same time.”

“The program has grown and included many different charitable organizations throughout the years,” says Tingleaf. In fact, this season, you can now choose from 12 different missions connected with First Church. Your gifts can benefit mission partners around the world like REMM, our long-term ministry in Romania or The Outreach Foundation, which operates in the Middle East.

Closer to home, you can also purchase life-giving gifts for local mission partners like Helping Hand, Meals-on-Wheels, Crisis Pregnancy Outreach, Camp Loughridge, or Works of HeART.

There are the 12 days of Christmas, and now we’ve got a mission to support on every one of them!

Something else is new with the Gift Back Market this season: in addition to our usual inventory, you can also buy a cookbook or ornament that directly supports one of the First Church missions. All of the proceeds from the cookbooks go to local FPC mission partners, and the Christmas ornaments are special commemorative renditions of our very own church!

You’ll also find a revamped look to the Gift Back program. After the success of previous years, it is our hope to expand the reach of the Gift Back initiative and support our brothers and sisters in need like never before. It truly is the perfect way to bring the focus back to Christ at Christmas and fulfill our call to be “outwardly focused” Christians.

So after Christmas is said and done, what happens to our Gift Back purchases? What does it look like when these gifts are presented in the honor of our loved ones? The McEntires are a First Church family who serve in Romania, and they see the impact of our gifts and prayers firsthand.

Firewood is one of the simplest, but most impactful gifts for the girls we support at the Casa Josef orphanage, Jenette McEntire explained. “Every shower, every pile of dishes, every load of laundry — every day means fueling a constant fire in the boiler. It also means the expense is substantial and ongoing. In the winter, the requirement is doubled as the radiator heating system comes online.” Through this basic necessity, First Church can continue to bless these abandoned girls with something we easily take for granted. The girls also receive individual gifts funded by the Gift Back donors, and that always puts a big smile on their faces each Christmas.

That is just one of many examples of how we can use our Christmas budget to strengthen Christ’s kingdom. It’s heartfelt, it’s simple, and it’s a fantastic way to share how the works of the Lord are blessing a world in great need. You can purchase these gifts at their tables in the Atrium each Sunday of Advent or online at firstchurchtulsa.org/giftback.
At my house this week I was explaining the lyrics of traditional Christmas songs to our pre-k children: “Shepherds, why this jubilee, why your joyous strains prolong?” Just like the angels, we have some great good news to share, but if we aren’t attentive we might find ourselves stretched thin, wound tight, and weighed down by the extras of the season. Especially when other parts of life are messy, this beautiful season can be filled with stress, financial worries, and disappointment. But these feelings don’t have to define your holiday season. Let’s consider some simple things we can do to keep the holiday’s, ‘holy.’

A simple exercise is to speak up with gratitude. Frequently, we can go long stretches of time without telling those closest to us how we thank God for their presence in our lives. Think about the people you are grateful for and write someone a letter, take someone to coffee, or make a video selfie and tell them how special they are to you. Expressing that gratitude costs so little, yet gives so much.

Another way to keep perspective is to start new traditions. Welcome someone new into your rituals and rhythms this year, and let them contribute something. I especially encourage you to invite in someone from your larger family — the Church Family.

Finally, I encourage you to talk about what you, as a Christian, really want for Christmas. In Advent we desire more of God’s healing presence in our lives, families, and communities. This longing fills our Advent hymns: “Come, Thou Rod of Jesse, free Thine own from Satan’s tyranny …” Tyranny is never very far away.

We all know someone tyrannized by the false promises of money or sex; of status or position; of substance abuse such as alcohol, drugs, and food; or material possessions. We all struggle and are in need of constant reminders of the true promise of Christmas. God is not far away but has come near to us in Jesus the King. All tyrants will be overthrown, and justice and righteousness will be at home. This Kingdom of God is the one great gift to which all the others should point, and that is worth sharing!

**FAITH PARTNERS AND PARENTS HELPING PARENTS INFORMATION AND MEETING TIMES:**

Parents Helping Parents meets the third Thursday of every month from 6:30-8:00 p.m. in E102.

You are not alone. For a confidential contact, contact the church at 918-584-4701 or Steve McCormack at 918-851-8026 (sjmccormack61@gmail.com).

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**Mission at a Glance**

**NOONTIME YOGA**

*Wednesdays at 12:00 p.m. (Bernsen Center)*

All skill levels can sharpen their yoga skills while improving strength and flexibility. Cost is only $5 per session and first-timers are free!

**MEALS ON WHEELS**

FPC is prayerfully searching for a program coordinator, and drivers are needed to help deliver nourishing meals.

**WORKS OF HEART**

Works of Heart is an open art studio for clients at The Tulsa Day Center for the Homeless. We are looking for volunteers one Monday morning a month or more, and no formal artistic experience is needed.

**FOSTER PARENTS’ NIGHT OUT**

*Thursday, Dec. 8 from 6:00-8:00 p.m.*

Serve and say “THANK YOU” to foster parents by providing childcare so they can have a night out. We will have food, activities, and Christmas crafts for the kids.

**EMERSON ELEMENTARY MINISTRIES CHILI COOKOFF**

*Jan. 15 after 11:00 a.m. worship (Miller Atrium)*

Over 20 chili entries competing to be named the best. Funds raised will go toward the FPC hosted Community Nights held each month at Emerson.

**MISSION UPDATE: HELPING HAND**

In November, Helping Hand received a special check including the $30,090 raised at the 2016 annual golf tournament fundraiser. Thank you to all who participated and sponsored this great event!

**MISSION UPDATE: HABITAT FOR HUMANITY**

After many weeks of loving labor, FPC dedicated its 10th Habitat House on November 22 ... just in time for the holidays for TaNesha Branch and her adopted son!

To learn more and sign up for mission programs contact James Estes at jestes@firstchurchtulsa.org.
MEET OUR LATEST CLASS OF INQUIRERS

This winter, thirteen people have been learning more about the Christian faith, the Presbyterian tradition, and life at First Church. Like all Christians, they are seeking and asking questions as disciples. In this particular season, they are “inquiring” about membership at First Presbyterian Church, and pending their meeting with session, they will be eligible to become official members of this local expression of Christ’s body. When you see one of these individuals, be sure to extend a warm welcome and good cheer!

Brianna Banner  Joel Banner  Rachael Eraker  Timothy Eraker  Kathleen Kraemer  Mark Kraemer  Jonathan Martin

Kaycie Pella  Hyonjun (Henry) Rhee  Youhee Son  Brian Tacker  Lisa Tacker  Leslie Taylor

The next Inquirer’s Class begins on Sunday, February 12. Learn more about membership at First Church and what defines our church, the Presbyterian (USA) denomination, and the Christian faith. Meet the pastors, ask lots of questions, and get to know other newcomers! For more information, contact Patricia Hall at 918-301-1028 or phall@firstchurchtulsa.org.

Parish Register

THE JOY OF NEW LIFE! WE WELCOME
Hannah Brooke McQueen, born on October 5, daughter of Brooke and Kenley McQueen

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM
September 25 William Hutcheson Pugh, son of son of Nicole and Jason Pugh
September 25 Henry James Madsen, son of Stephanie and Michael Madsen
September 25 Lorraine Estelle Hawkins, daughter of Beth and Hunt Hawkins
October 9 Georgia Ruth Moore, daughter of Heather and Ryan Moore

CELEBRATION OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE
August 27 Angelica Hilst and Jonathan Martin
WITH GRATITUDE FOR THE RESURRECTION
Louise Ratcliff, a member since 1959, died on August 26
Donna Roblyer, a member since 1993, died on September 18
Robert (Bob) Herod, a member since 1996, died on September 24
Kathleen Beard, a member since 1947, died on September 25
William (Bill) Huckin, Jr., a member since 1951, died on September 29
Carolyn Wagner, a member since 1957, died on October 2
Mary Anne Knapp, a member since 1970, died on October 2
Stevendina (Dina) Tenzythoff, a member since 1963, died on October 26
William Harold (Hal) Wood, Jr., a member since 1997, died on October 28
Nadine Park, a member since 1978, died on November 6

NEW STAFF MEMBERS

Robert Downing
Robert a graduate of East Central High School. He has one daughter, Amber. Robert loves spending his free-time playing with his grandson, Elijah, and watching the Kansas City Chiefs.

Kristopher Ocho
Kris is another Tulsa native and a graduate of the Job Corps. He loves music, movies, and traveling, and spending time with his dogs. Kris is engaged to be married.

Kathy Saley
Kathy enjoys gardening. Her dream is to one day have a greenhouse in which to grow fruit and vegetables for needy families. She will be working in the Bernsen Center.

January Series

15 days of a free liberal arts education at First Presbyterian Church!
Join us for an engaging lunchtime lecture series live streamed from Calvin College. Incredible speakers will present on a variety of relevant topics, including the church Reformation, poverty, “psychology of vocation,” race equality, the gender gap in technology, global governance, and other engaging ideas.

Weekdays, Jan. 4-24 from 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
firstchurchtulsa.org/januaryseries

Optional lunch is available for $6
Reservations must be made by noon the day before, online or by calling 918-301-1039.