

**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2020 10:32 AM

**Subject:** Emily Wood: An Invitation to Community

Hi!

Happy January, everyone! Can you believe it? Welcome to a new year, and a new decade. I believe God has great plans for us as women, and I'm excited to see it all unfold. I know He wants us to realize every day how much we are loved, valued, seen, and known.

Do you ask God to give you direction coming into a new year, or even a "word" to help define your focus for the year? Last week as I prayed for direction, I wrote the word "slow" in my journal. It's not the most exciting word (ha!), but for me it is very good direction. It is confirmation I'm supposed to focus on the following verse: *"Know this, my beloved brothers (and sisters); let every person be quick to hear, SLOW to speak, SLOW to anger."* (James 1:19). I want to keep meeting with you ladies and listening to you. Will you reach out to me to set up a time for coffee or lunch? My contact info is below.

What are you longing for this year? I'm longing for community. As a church, community is what we bring to this world as it grows more and more connected online and disconnected in person. We are the hands and feet of Christ, meeting each other's needs in the flesh. Praise God! He wants us to live in community – not isolation. So, I'm so grateful we have one another, and I can't wait to dream with you about how God wants to use you, and all of us, to share the love of Christ with a hurting world.

One great way to experience community is through a Bible study. Visit [www.firstpres.com/women](http://www.firstpres.com/women) to see what we have to offer. I would also like to grow this list. Is there something you would love to study or a time you would prefer to meet? Would you like to lead a study, prayer group, walking group, or something new? Or host a group in your home? I'd love to talk to you more about this. And I want to leave you with one thought – sometimes community doesn't look like what we thought it would. Consider showing up anyway. What do you have to lose?

May God give you vision for 2020,

Emily Wood

First Pres Director of Women's Ministry

Office: Room 201, I'm here Monday-Thursday, 8:30-3:00

Phone: 350-5218

Email: [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com)

Please call, email, or stop by for a visit anytime! I would love to see you!



P.S. Thank you to the lovely ladies who showed up Sunday night for IF:Pray. It was a wonderful night of prayer, worship, and community. Special thanks to Sarah Amstutz for leading us in worship!





**Sent:** February 11, 2020 1:35 p.m.

**Subject:** An Invitation to Love (and to our Retreat)

Hi all!

Happy February! I hope you are somewhere warm and cozy on this snowy, winter day. I don't know if any of you can relate, but it bothers me that "love" has become a cheesy word in our culture, celebrated with chocolates and flowers on Valentine's Day...or not at all. For us as believers, love is the foundation of everything (John 3:16). Can we take a minute and get excited about the true meaning of the word "love" and just how powerful it is?

- "Your love, O Lord, reaches to the heavens, Your faithfulness to the skies." Psalm 36:5
- "And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity." Col. 3:14
- "Above ALL, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins." 1 Peter 4:8
- "Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God...God IS ...**We love because He first loved us.**" 1 John 4:7-21 (read all of it)
- "The greatest of these is love!" 1 Corinthians 13. Please read it today – it is SO good.

I could go on and on! What is your favorite verse about love? These verses are not just for weddings. They are the basis of our faith and truth for us today as children of God, daughters of the most High King. Lord, will You remind us this week how much we are loved and how lovely we are to You? You have put Your Spirit and Your beauty within us – thank You for this great gift!

Do you know what I'm getting excited about? Our Women's Retreat is coming up on Sept. 11-13 in Santa Fe, and it is going to be amazing! You can register now by clicking on this link: <https://firstpres.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/343193>. Please reach out to me if you have questions, if you aren't sure you will know anyone going, and/or if you want to help with the retreat! Will you please pray about joining us, even if you are afraid? "Perfect love drives out fear" (1 John 4:18). So, step out in faith, sign up, and come! What have you got to lose?

May God wrap you up in His love this week,

Emily Wood



First Pres Director of Women's Ministry

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Email: [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com)

Please call, email, or stop by for a visit anytime! I would LOVE to see you!

**Sent:** March 10, 2020 1:07 p.m.

**Subject:** An Invitation to Gather (March 31)!

Hi!

Happy March! Is anyone else ready for spring? Even though the early morning darkness has been hard with the time change this past weekend, I'm ready to "spring forward"! I came across a verse this morning and want to share it with you: *"Let us know; let us press on to know the Lord; His going out is sure as the dawn; He will come to us as the showers, as the spring rains that water the earth"* (Hosea 6:3). We know the dawn is coming, and what a gift to think of God coming to us as the spring rain. Come, Lord Jesus!

We are also in a season of Lent, and I must confess I have not been very disciplined in what I've given up. Thankfully His mercies are new every morning, and each day we are given the opportunity to begin again (Lamentations 3:22-23). Sometimes I get confused and think Lent is about my performance or self-discipline, but in my weaknesses and failures I experience my need for God even more. We all need reminders that this life is really all about Him, don't we?

On that note, I'm so excited to tell you about something new we have planned for the end of March! Will you join me Tuesday evening, March 31, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. for The Gathering, a night of fellowship, story, and prayer? We will meet at my house – 3011 South Hayden Street. We will have snacks and drinks and lots of fun!

I've talked to many of you who are hungry for time together with other women – time to get to know each other, time to pray, and time to have fun! So, we are going to get together and fellowship, our very own Shauneen Hatfield will share her story with us, and we are going to pray. And if you need to feed your family dinner first, come at 7:15 to hear Shauneen's testimony. Please reach out to me if you have questions, want to know more about this, or if you want to bring a snack, drink, or dessert! I hope you will step out of your comfort zone and come! What have you got to lose?

May you see God everywhere every day,

Emily Wood



First Pres Director of Women's Ministry

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Phone: 350-5218

Email: [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com)

Please call, email, or stop by for a visit anytime! I would love to see you!

P.S. Don't forget to sign up for the Women's Retreat on Sept. 11-13 in Santa Fe! You can register now by clicking on this link: <https://firstpres.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/343193>.



**Sent:** March 24, 2020 1:47 p.m.

**Subject:** An Invitation to Hope

Hello ladies,

I know I just wrote to you two weeks ago...but didn't life feel different two weeks ago? I did not even mention the coronavirus (COVID-19) at the time. I guess I was *hoping* it would end up not being such a big deal. Well, today I think it has never been more important for us to come together and make sure we are putting our hope in the right place.

In times like these, where we place our hope makes all the difference. This morning I was walking outside listening to these incredible words from Paul as he preached in Athens:

*"And He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward Him and find Him. Yet He is actually not far from each one of us, for 'In Him we live and move and have our being.'"* Acts 17:26-28

I can't claim to understand much these days, but God's Word is truth we can hold onto, and one of these truths is this – it is no accident we are living through the coronavirus right now. God put you on this earth at this time, and you are supposed to find God in the midst of this. If you, like many of us, are wondering what you should be doing each day, find God and share Him with the rest of us! Bring hope, light, and love to the people God has placed around you. Even if it is just one phone call a day, it is needed for that one person you call. We all need community and one another even more than we did before!

Three updates:

1. We will not hold The Gathering at my house next Tuesday, 3/31, but we are not canceling it! I will keep you updated as we can determine a new date.
2. What is feeding your soul right now? Please respond back to me and share! I have loved walking outside in this beautiful spring weather and listening to the Bible through the Dwell app. Right now, Dwell is offering a free 60-day subscription to churches! All you have to do is click on this link, create a free account, and download the app: <https://dwellapp.io/signup/with/FirstPres%20>
3. Prayer is how we fight this battle so let's join together in praying for God's will to be done in this time and for all who are sick or helping those who are sick. Let's pray together and believe in faith for many to come to know Him during these trials.

I will be in touch by email more regularly for a while because we need God, and sometimes we need each other to help find Him in each day! I thank God for how He reveals Himself to me through so many of you. Please, please respond if you have a specific need or a prayer request. Our church body exists in part for times like these, and it is okay and even good to admit we need each other!

May God fill you with hope today,



Emily Wood

First Pres Director of Women's Ministry

I'm working from home right now. I'd still love to hear from you!

Phone: 418-0404 Email: [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com)

P.S. While our church is not meeting in person on Sunday, we are live streaming our worship service! Go to [www.firstpres.com](http://www.firstpres.com) for more info.

**Sent:** March 31, 2020 1:24 p.m.

**Subject:** An Invitation to Receive (and no Gathering tonight!)

Hello all!

Another week has passed, and life continues to change dramatically. Is anyone else feeling humbled by all the words you are "eating" now? ("I could never homeschool my kids", or "I would never go X days without visiting my grandkids", or "I never miss a Sunday at church", and on and on!) What words are you "eating" these days? And I haven't even gotten to all our canceled plans! Thank you, God, for reminding us every word, plan, and promise we make hangs on Your will.

I've talked to many of you (and by talk I also mean texting or emailing!), and I must share the encouragement I've received about what is feeding your soul these days! But I also want us to be real here. Along with the moments where we experience God's presence, we also have moments where we wonder where God is and why He is allowing this. It is okay to not be okay sometimes. We are here for the hard days too. On those days we especially need the encouragement from others! It is hard for all of us (me included) to admit we need some help. But what if the most beautiful part about this coronavirus is us fully depending on God and each other as the body of Christ every single day?! May it be so, Lord.

*"Ask, and it will be given to you, seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks RECEIVES, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened." Matthew 7:7-8*

God is so near. Will you RECEIVE the love of God in every form it is offered to you today? That may be answering the phone when a friend calls, letting others bring you groceries, or receiving prayer. God is near, but He won't force Himself on you. You must RECEIVE Him. Here is how some of our sisters in Christ are receiving God in this time:

1. Music – Sharissa in our church office shared this awesome song with me, and I must pass it on! Click on the link below and let God's love flow over you:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1vUhwyjdk8A&list=PLODGvTXbsj\\_SyI07Sn0e\\_Yju\\_wU2NM2yU&index=11](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1vUhwyjdk8A&list=PLODGvTXbsj_SyI07Sn0e_Yju_wU2NM2yU&index=11)
2. Diane Dabney shared this great quote by Max Lucado: "If we feed our faith, our fears will starve; if we feed our fears, our faith will starve".
3. Getting outside and practicing gratitude! Amy Laur and others
4. Prayer! Stacey Chambers, multiple
5. Listening to wonderful sermons! Nancy Williams
6. Staying connected to people! Sonya Letson and others
7. Reading/Listening to the Bible! Allison Silvertooth and others

Announcements:

1. Do you feel led to move your existing Bible study or prayer group online, or to create a new one? First Pres wants to help! We have Zoom accounts for our Women's groups, and I'm happy to train you on how to use it. If I can do it, I know you can too! You can use your phone or computer to get video and audio of the women in your group. No, it's not as good as meeting in person, but let's embrace where God has us right now and try new things together!
2. We will not hold The Gathering at my house tonight, Tuesday, 3/31, but we are not canceling it! I will keep you updated as we can determine a new date.
3. Don't forget you can listen to the Bible through the Dwell app for free for the next two months! All you have to do is click on this link, create a free account, and download the app:  
<https://dwellapp.io/signup/with/FirstPres%20>

Please let me know if you need prayer or specific help of any kind...I know you will RECEIVE it with joy!

May you fully receive the love of God today,



Emily Wood

First Pres Director of Women's Ministry

I'm working from home right now. I'd still love to hear from you!

Phone: 418-0404

Email: [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com)

P.S. While our church is not meeting in person on Sunday, we are live streaming our worship service! Go to [www.firstpres.com](http://www.firstpres.com) for more info.



**Sent:** April 7, 2020 12:53 p.m.

**Subject:** An Invitation to Holy Week

Hi!

How is everyone doing this week? I hope you are staying home, staying healthy, and finding joy in the small things. And if you are in a position where you still go to work, I pray you are sensing God's presence with you. I know some days are easier than others. Who am I kidding? Some moments are easier than others! Yet God is still good, even when it doesn't seem like it. And God is still near, even when I struggle to find Him. Sometimes I call a friend and ask for help, truth, and perspective when these hard moments hit, and that always helps me.

On that note, I have some exciting news to share! We are going to feature different women in our church sharing a brief testimony of how God is meeting them in this season. I'm praying it puts a face to some of our emotions and shows us ways to find God in the midst of them. Check out our Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/firstpresamarillo](http://www.facebook.com/firstpresamarillo)) and our website where all of our online connection is happening ([www.firstpres.com/first-pres-live](http://www.firstpres.com/first-pres-live)) to see these encouraging stories starting this week.

It is Holy Week! Thank you, Jesus, for what you did this week so many years ago. We want to remember Your great sacrifice and worship You, the Giver of eternal life because You gave up Your own life. Need some encouragement on how to experience God's presence this week? Here are a few ideas:

1. I like these Lent devotionals because they include music, art, and poetry along with scripture and a written devotional. You can find them here: <http://ccca.biola.edu/lent/>
2. Want to read/listen to what the Bible says Jesus was doing each day of Holy Week? Author and speaker Annie Downs is sharing these verses daily on her podcast: <https://www.anniedowns.com/podcast/>
3. Check out all the great Holy Week services First Pres will be holding online at <http://firstpres.com/first-pres-live>: a Maundy Thursday service with communion (I'm excited to try this!), 4/9 at 7 p.m.; a Good Friday service, 4/10 at 7 p.m.; and then Easter Sunday traditional service at 8:30 a.m. and contemporary at 11 a.m. Lord, please transform our homes into holy and reverent places of worship.
4. Get outside, walk, and listen to the Bible through the Dwell app for free now through June 8! All you have to do is click on this link, create a free account, and download the app: <https://dwellapp.io/signup/with/FirstPres%20>

Please let me know if you need prayer or specific help of any kind. Our church is here for you!

May you worship God in spirit and in truth this Holy Week,



Emily Wood

First Pres Director of Women's Ministry

I'm working from home right now. I'd still love to hear from you!

Phone: 418-0404

Email: [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com)

P.S. Don't forget to watch for our women's testimonies this week – you may see some familiar faces!

**Sent:** April 14, 2020 12:39 p.m.  
**Subject:** An Invitation to Reflect

Hello ladies,

How was your Easter Sunday? I know it was a *different* Easter for all of us – thank you, God, that the miracle of the resurrection is our hope and reality no matter how we experienced it this past weekend! (If you did have a powerful experience, please email me back and share. I'd love to hear!)

My Lent devotional ended with this powerful call to action: *"You have been given an opportunity to reveal the character and nature of God to the world. Let the light shining in your heart scatter its rays into other hearts around you."* Yes! May all of us to scatter light to those around us. Lord, would you give us divine appointments to reflect You and the grace to do it well? I love these verses on reflecting the image of God:

*"I appeal to you therefore, [sisters], by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."* Romans 12:1-2

*"To put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness."* Ephesians 4:22-24

*"Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God."* Ephesians 5:1-2

*"For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known."* 1 Corinthians 13:12

*"And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another."* 2 Corinthians 3:18

Thank you, Lord, that we get to reflect You – what a high calling for us all! Speaking of reflecting God, have you seen our women's testimonies yet? We are featuring different women in our church sharing a brief testimony of how God is meeting them in this season. So far you can see Kelli Glass (<https://youtu.be/4dJCJ-wtV0>) and Virginia Maynard (<https://youtu.be/IELn5hwhwNI>) and 18 year old Anne Kathryn Currie should be up later today! Check out our Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/firstpresamarillo](https://www.facebook.com/firstpresamarillo)) and our website where all of our online connection is happening ([www.firstpres.com/first-pres-live](https://www.firstpres.com/first-pres-live)) to see more of these encouraging stories in the weeks to come.

Just a couple of announcements:

1. Would you like a way to connect with women right now through a small group for Bible study and prayer? We can meet by conference call if you prefer no video or by Zoom or Facetime if you like. Please email or call me (info below) if you are interested.
2. Please let me know if you need prayer or specific help of any kind. Our church is here for you!

May we all reflect the image of God this week,



Emily Wood

First Pres Director of Women's Ministry

I'm working from home right now. I'd still love to hear from you!

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Email: [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com)

P.S. Don't forget you can listen to the Bible through the Dwell app for free through June 8. My favorite voice is David's with the piano and cello music in the background! It sounds nice, doesn't it? Click on this link <https://dwellapp.io/signup/with/FirstPres%20>, create a free account, and download the app.



**Sent:** April 21, 2020, 2:09 p.m.

**Subject:** An Invitation to Hold On

Hi! How are you feeling about our COVID-19 reality today? At five weeks into it are you still on a rollercoaster of emotions and thoughts, going from feeling okay, to good, to sad, to mad, to who knows what?! Me too. I keep asking God to explain all of this to me!

Are you surprised to know He hasn't explained any of it to me in an audible voice? I want specifics, and answers, and clarity, and unity of thought among believers, and a clear ending tied up with a pretty bow. (If any of you have figured all of this out please let me know so I can share!) Instead of those things, He has given me His Word. He has given me the Holy Spirit living within me. And He has given me other believers to lean on. And guess what? Even on the hard and frustrating days, it is enough. What about you? How are you coping? Here are some important verses to HOLD onto:

*"And He is before all things, and in Him all things HOLD together."* Colossians 1:15

*"For I, the Lord your God, HOLD your right hand; it is I who say to you, 'Fear not, I am the One who helps you.'" Isaiah 41:13*

*"Fight the good fight of the faith. Take HOLD of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses."* 1 Timothy 6:12

If you have a few minutes, look up each of these verses and read each of these three chapters. There is so much to be found in them! Thank you, God, for holding us all together, for holding us in Your right hand, and for giving us eternal life to hold onto. Will You help us to hold tight to You when we feel like we are losing our way?

Speaking of holding tight to God, have you seen our women's testimonies from last week? We are featuring different women in our church sharing a brief testimony of how God is meeting them in this season. Last week we featured 18 year old Anne Kathryn Currie (<https://youtu.be/ci0dQADhXXI>) and our Women's Ministry moderator Beth Throckmorton (<https://youtu.be/2Cj05Q17Tfw>)! This week you will hear from Denise Carter and 18-year-old Allie Proffer. Check out our Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/firstpresamarillo](http://www.facebook.com/firstpresamarillo)) and our website where all of our online connection is happening ([www.firstpres.com/first-pres-live](http://www.firstpres.com/first-pres-live)) to see more of these encouraging stories in the weeks to come.

Announcements:

1. Would you like a way to connect with women right now through a small group for Bible study and prayer? We can meet by conference call if you prefer no video or by Zoom or Facetime if you like. Please email or call me (info below) if you are interested.
2. Please let me know if you need prayer or specific help of any kind. Our church is here for you!

May we rest in the knowledge that God is holding everything together this week,



Emily Wood, First Pres Director of Women's Ministry

I'm working from home right now. I'd still love to hear from you!

Phone: 418-0404

Email: [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com)

P.S. Don't forget you can listen to the Bible through the Dwell app for free through June 8. This is something I listen to daily to HOLD onto God's truth and goodness and love for me. Click on this link <https://dwellapp.io/signup/with/FirstPres%20>, create a free account, and download the app.

Subject: An Invitation to Look Up  
Sent: April 28, 2020, 1:03 p.m.

Hello!

Happy Tuesday everyone! How are you doing this week? I am praying for God to bring refreshment to your souls and a lightness to your spirit. I'm praying the same thing for me! Life can feel pretty heavy right now, can't it? I'm still holding onto the verses we talked about last week and one I missed but our lovely Michal-ann Bell shared with me, —*"Let us HOLD unswervingly to the hope that we profess, for He who promised is faithful."* Hebrews 10:23.

This morning as I walked and listened to the Bible, I felt a little numb. None of the words were sinking in, and I was having trouble holding onto the meaning. And it wasn't because the words were not powerful! My mind was elsewhere, and I realized I have been fixing my attention too much on the news and Netflix. So, while I'm still feeling a little numb, I know what to do, and I think you do too. We have to fix our eyes on Jesus!

*"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith..."* Hebrews 12:2

*"I lift up my eyes to the mountains — where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth."* Psalm 121 (read all of it!)

Our faith is not based on a feeling, but our feelings so often dictate our actions and our outlook on life. Will you join me in LOOKING UP today? Lord, we know our help comes from You so help us to fix our eyes on You even when we are surrounded with distractions. The enemy would love for us to squander these days, but do not let him! Look up! Check out Lauren Daigle's song, "Look Up Child" here [https://youtu.be/7NAYz0zh\\_Es](https://youtu.be/7NAYz0zh_Es) for a little musical inspiration.

Speaking of keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, have you seen our women's testimonies from last week? We are featuring different women in our church sharing a brief testimony of how God is meeting them in this season. Last week we featured Denise Carter (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XPgEMhwE6MM>) and 18-year-old Allie Proffer (<https://youtu.be/bCl7qyMQe4o>). Be on the lookout this week for Sarah Cline and Laurie Pinkston! Check out our Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/firstpresamarillo](http://www.facebook.com/firstpresamarillo)) and our website where all of our online connection is happening ([www.firstpres.com/first-pres-live](http://www.firstpres.com/first-pres-live)) to see more of these encouraging stories in the weeks to come.

Announcements:

1. I'm working on a small group Bible study we can do using Zoom while we are social distancing. More to come on that this week. Please email or call me (info below) if you are interested.
2. Please let me know if you need prayer or specific help of any kind. Our church is here for you!

May we LOOK UP and fix our eyes on Jesus this week,



**Emily Wood**  
**First Pres Director of Women's Ministry**  
I'm working from home right now. I'd still love to hear from you!  
Phone: 418-0404  
Email: [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com)

P.S. What verse is helping you keep your eyes fixed on Jesus right now? Please email me back and share!



Sent: May 5, 2020, 2:51 p.m.  
Subject: An Invitation to Worship

Happy Tuesday, everyone, and Happy May!

Praise God we have made it to today! I don't know if you have noticed, but the news continues to become more anxiety-inducing, especially on a local level. We have over 1,000 active COVID-19 cases in Potter and Randall County, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is here in Amarillo to help us with the outbreak. It is certainly a time for prayer. And it is especially a time for praise. Yes, I said praise! Let me explain.

As I listened to Lezly Welch's testimony today on our First Pres Live page (<https://youtu.be/jPBm1Gka9mo>), I was curious about her mention of Habakkuk so I looked it up. I needed the reminder so thank you, Lezly – we are supposed to praise God in the midst of difficult times! There is POWER in praising God. We see it throughout the Old and New Testaments – check out 2 Chronicles 20 or Acts 16. God wants us to praise Him when times are hard so let's get to it! Check out these verses to help you start singing:

*"Through Him [Jesus] then **let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God**, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name."* Hebrews 13:15

*"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, **singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.**"* Colossians 3:16

*"About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and **singing hymns to God**, and the prisoners were listening to them."* Acts 16:25

*"Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on its vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, **yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.**"* Habakkuk 3:17-18

I think we all know we are supposed to be praying, but are you singing? For some more inspiration, have you seen our women's testimonies from last week? We featured Sarah Cline (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9gORsqUSagU>) and Laurie Pinkston (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FmUkj8kSJ7Q>). Now that we have a growing number of these wonderful videos, we put them all in one place so you can catch up on any testimonies you have missed on our Women's Page (<http://firstpres.com/women>).

Announcements:

1. Thank you to those who have expressed interest in an online small group Bible study while we are social distancing. I'm still working on it so stay tuned! Please email or call me (info below) if you are interested.
2. Please let me know if you need prayer or specific help of any kind. Our church is here for you!

May we worship God in spirit and truth this week,



Emily Wood, First Pres Director of Women's Ministry  
I'm working from home right now. I'd still love to hear from you!  
Phone: 418-0404, Email: [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com)



P.S. Here are a few of my favorite worship songs right now. What are yours?

*Way maker* [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SE\\_M9noEhNE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SE_M9noEhNE)

*Another in the Fire* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BDZD1SMz6tY>

*Raise a Hallelujah* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G2XtRuPfaAU>

Subject: An Invitation to Seek Truth (and Service Opportunities)

Sent: May 12, 2020, 2:48 p.m.

Hello again!

I have to be honest – I am not a very patient person. I'm ready for this whole thing to be over! How about you? I keep hearing people share how they are enjoying their time, and I'm just done. (: I have to keep reminding myself I don't have control over the timing of the coronavirus, and as I pray and praise God, I also need to seek truth. God's word is full of it. As I walked this morning (in the cold and mist!) listening to the Bible, I heard these words:

*"Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand."* James 5:7-8

And just a few moments ago, I was reading this:

*"Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me."* Philippians 4:11-13

Thank you, Lord, for reminding me You've got this. I would love to hear how you are doing these days if you want to email me back or give me a call (info below)! Be sure to listen to our very own Shelley Chaloupka's amazing words of truth here <https://youtu.be/LWuMw5R26iU>. Also have you seen our women's testimonies from last week? We featured Lezly Welch (<https://youtu.be/jPBm1Gka9mo>) and Hannah Moore (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BCpOJVThdNU>). And you can find all of our women's testimonies in one place on our Women's Page (<http://firstpres.com/women>). We have some very wise women in our midst – what a blessing and an encouragement!

Service Opportunity: We have a special opportunity to serve this week from Kim Zimmer (<https://youtu.be/YwYe2Vs3dmY>). This week First Pres is supporting two amazing organizations that love and support single women, Eveline's Sunshine Cottage ([www.evelinessunshinecottage.com/](http://www.evelinessunshinecottage.com/)) and the Gratitude House of Downtown Women's Center (<https://dwcenter.org/>). We want to offer encouragement to the ladies they serve. The ladies at the Sunshine Cottage are all single moms, rearing children and attending college. The ladies of the Gratitude House are all women conquering addiction, some have kids with them, some have kids who are grown, some have kids elsewhere and a few have never had children.

Ready to love and serve and be a light? For this challenge you have three options: Bronze, Silver and Gold.

1. Bronze: Write a letter to the ladies at the Gratitude House cheering their commitment to make a better life for their kids and themselves.
2. Silver: video yourself with a message of encouragement to the ladies of Downtown Women's Center. They will share this through their private alumni page.
3. Gold: make a salad, casserole, and a dessert for one of the 8 moms and their 2-5 children living at Eveline's Sunshine Cottages. You are more than welcome and highly encouraged to partner with a friend to make this meal.

Please contact Kim Zimmer ([kimz@firstpres.com](mailto:kimz@firstpres.com)) with questions or to share how you want to serve!

Announcements:

1. Be on the lookout for another email this week about an online Bible study!
2. Please let me know if you need prayer or specific help of any kind. Our church is here for you!

May we seek God's truth daily this week,



Emily Wood

First Pres Director of Women's Ministry

I'm working from home right now. I'd still love to hear from you!

Phone: 418-0404

Email: [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com)



**Subject:** An Invitation to Something New

**Sent:** 5-19-20, 12:38 p.m.

Hi!

Happy Tuesday, everyone! Can you believe Memorial Day is less than a week away? And then it is summer! Is anyone else ready for a NEW season? This morning I was drawn to these verses that may be familiar to you, but they are so good as we pray and yearn for the end of this season of COVID-19.

*But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, His mercies never come to an end; they are NEW every morning, great is Your faithfulness. 'The Lord is my portion,' says my soul, 'therefore I will hope in Him.' The Lord is good to those who wait for Him, to the soul who seeks Him. It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord."* Lamentations 3:21-26

Speaking of God's faithfulness, take a few minutes to listen to a special group of young ladies, including our new summer youth intern Dannie Hoving along with her friends Brooklyn Priest and Channing Burney in this week's Women's Testimony: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pzf-QhRqI0c>. Also be on the lookout for the Keister women sharing together later this week! You can find all of our wonderful women's testimonies in one place on our Women's Page (<http://firstpres.com/women>).

On that note we have a couple of exciting announcements for NEW things coming up:

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

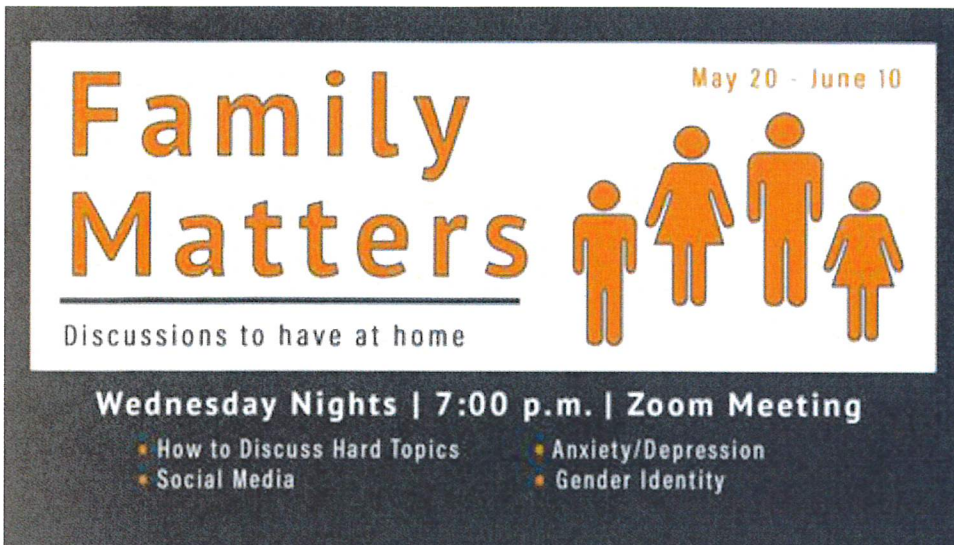
**First Pres Online Summer Book Club/Bible Study on Jennie Allen's latest book *Get Out of Your Head* – Choose one of two weekly Zoom options:**

**Monday, June 1 at 5:30 p.m. OR Wednesday, June 3, at 10 a.m.**

(<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2880130600?pwd=endHc2JrdE1jS0hML21SbUpuN0dKQT09>, Meeting ID: 288 013 0600, Password: firstpres)

I will be leading this online book study group, and we are offering two different times to accommodate our working women and moms. You can order the book at this link ahead or First Pres can order for you, and you can download the free book club kit PDF when you click on this link and scroll down – <https://www.jennieallen.com/gooyh>. You can also subscribe to the Made for This podcast by Jennie Allen. Please let me know if you have questions or want to be involved. We have a great group of women already committed! And go to <http://firstpres.com/women> for more online women's Bible study options.

And starting tomorrow night:



**Family Matters** May 20 - June 10

Discussions to have at home

**Wednesday Nights | 7:00 p.m. | Zoom Meeting**

- How to Discuss Hard Topics
- Social Media
- Anxiety/Depression
- Gender Identity

The poster features a family silhouette icon consisting of two adults and two children, all in orange. The text is primarily in orange and white, set against a dark blue background.

## This is something you will want to be a part of!

You are invited to join the **Family Matters** series, **5/20-6/10 at 7 p.m.** on ZOOM. Facilitator Kim Talley will lead the group through lessons from AXIS.org and help parents navigate conversations on valuable topics, such as social media or anxiety and depression. Download ZOOM on your smart phone or computer, then click this link to join in: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89388095742> Please pass this email along to invite your family and friends with kids of all ages. The First Pres Family Ministry Team invites anyone to be a part.

Please email Debbie, Michal-ann or Kim with questions about the series and/or topics.

With summer coming up, we will shift back to monthly women's emails, but I will be in touch when we have news to share, and as always, I would love to hear from you and pray with you anytime you want to reach out!

May we wait with expectancy for the NEW things you are doing, Lord,



Emily Wood

First Pres Director of Women's Ministry

I'm working from home right now. I'd still love to hear from you!

Phone: 418-0404

Email: [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com)

P.S. The Beth Moore Living Proof Live event at the Civic Center Coliseum on July 24-25, 2020 is still on at this point! If a cancellation happens, we will notify you and provide refunds for tickets purchased.



**Subject:** An Invitation to Mature

**Sent:** 6-2-20, 3:28 p.m.

Hi ladies!

Happy Tuesday, everyone, and happy summer! I know we seem to go from one heavy thing to the next right now in our country, and we are all trying to figure out how to help. I want to share with you a few verses we read last night in our First Pres Zoom Book Club/Bible study meeting because I think we can find a lot of answers right here. I'll start with the Message version, which Dena Lopez beautifully read to us:

*"So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what He wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed **maturity** in you."*

And here it is in the ESV version:

*"I appeal to you therefore, [sisters], by the mercies of God to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."* Romans 12:1-2

I bet you feel the same way I do as I read that – I want that kind of maturity! I want God to bring out the best in me, and I want to be transformed by the renewal of my mind so I can discern the will of God! May it be so in all of us, Lord. Please grow us this summer so we can respond well to the hurting world around us.

Speaking of spiritual maturity, LuLu Cowan is someone I have always looked up to so I'm thrilled to share with you her testimony from last week: <https://youtu.be/zHhNabrlzJo>. And don't forget you can find all of our wonderful women's testimonies in one place on our Women's Page (<http://firstpres.com/women>).

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

### **First Pres Online Summer Book Club/Bible Study on Jennie Allen's latest book *Get Out of Your Head* –**

You get to choose one of two weekly Zoom options: **Monday (started yesterday but still not too late to join), June 1 at 5:30 p.m. OR Wednesday, June 3, at 10 a.m.** Just download Zoom to your smartphone or computer for free, and click on this link to join our meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2880130600?pwd=endHc2JrdE1jS0hML21SbUpuN0dKQT09>, Meeting ID: 288 013 0600, Password: firstpres

- Monday and Wednesday studies are identical so you only need to attend one. Feel free to switch between from week to week depending on what works for your schedule, or you can jump in on Wednesday if you miss Monday!
- Please do NOT stress if you need to multi-task (like cooking dinner or watching your kiddos) while you take part – that is the beauty of Zoom! You can keep yourself muted and even turn off your video at any time. We are going to keep this casual, and we are all women – we understand.
- This study is 10 weeks, through the 1<sup>st</sup> week of August. Meetings should last one hour.
- You can order the book at this link ahead, and you can download the free book club kit PDF when you click on this link and scroll down – <https://www.jennieallen.com/gooyh>. You can also subscribe to the Made for This podcast by Jennie Allen.



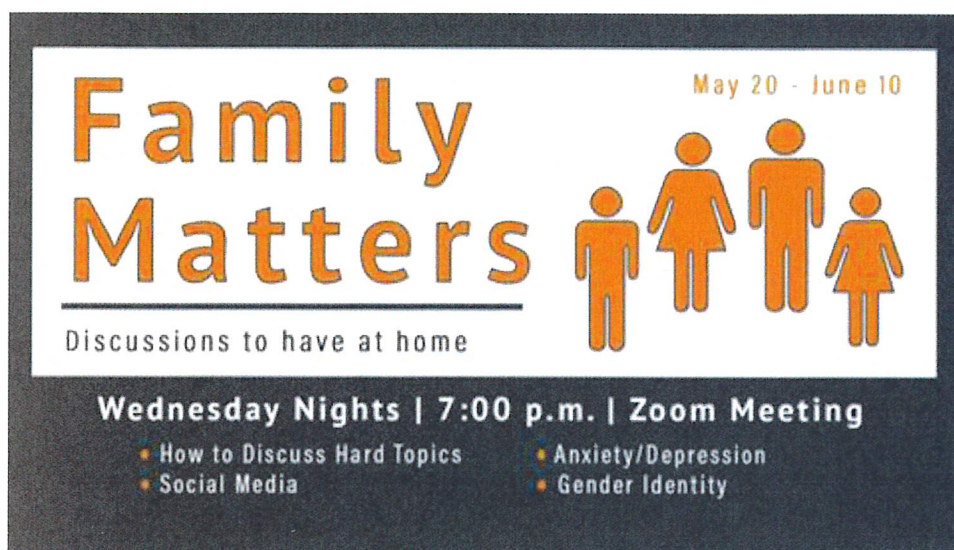
### Another Bible Study options: Encounter with God

Mondays @ 5:30 p.m., Library Northwest branch

Led by Virginia Sicola, 353-6204 - ongoing study

This group is meeting via Zoom until the library opens - contact Virginia for info.

And tomorrow night we have another Family Matters Zoom meeting on Anxiety and Depression. I hope you will join us:



This is something you will want to be a part of!

You are invited to join the **Family Matters** series, **5/20-6/10 at 7 p.m.** on ZOOM. Facilitator Kim Talley will lead the group through lessons from AXIS.org and help parents navigate conversations on valuable topics, such as social media or anxiety and depression. Download ZOOM on your smart phone or computer, then click this link to join in: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89388095742> Please pass this email along to invite your family and friends with kids of all ages. The First Pres Family Ministry Team invites anyone to be a part.

May we grow in our knowledge and love for the Lord this summer,

Emily Wood

First Pres Director of Women's Ministry

I'm working from home right now. I'd still love to hear from you!

Phone: 418-0404

Email: [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com)

Subject: An Invitation to Kindness and Beth Moore Event Cancelled

Sent: 6-30-20, 2:32 pm

Hello!

Is anyone else excited 2020 is now halfway over?! I am only joking because Psalm 118:24 tells us *"This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it,"* and we also know God's mercies are new every morning (Lamentations 3:22-23). Even though it has been a hard season, many of us realize good comes when we must recognize what is truly important in life and when we have difficult but important conversations about race...but nonetheless it has been quite a year! As I've discussed this crazy time we are living in with several of you, a common topic has been sadness over the division in our country and our judgement of each other. In this season I am drawn deeply into God's kindness and encouraged greatly by the kindness of others. I bet you are too! Here are a few of my favorite verses on kindness:

*"Or do you show contempt for the riches of His **kindness**, forbearance, and patience, not realizing that God's **kindness** is intended to lead you to repentance?"* Romans 2:4

*"She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of **kindness** is on her tongue."* Proverbs 31:26

*"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, **kindness**, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."* Colossians 3:12-14

Lord, help us to *shine as lights in the world* (Philippians 2:15) by showing kindness to others. Help believers come together in unity during this time of unrest in our country. May Your kindness lead us to repentance as well, Lord. Speaking of wisdom and kindness, have you heard our wonderful testimony for the month of June by Phyllis Fields? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n7LEaVBxVZc> And don't forget you can find all of our wonderful women's testimonies in one place on our Women's Page (<http://firstpres.com/women>).

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

##### **Women's Retreat Rescheduled for September 2021**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have rescheduled the September 2020 Women's Retreat in Santa Fe for the same weekend and location next fall – September 10-12, 2021. We are thrilled the Drury Plaza Hotel in Santa Fe can commit to the same great deal a year from September, and our speaker, Sharon Glasgow, has also committed to next year's retreat! Please join us in praying for the Women's Retreat 2021 to be a great success!

##### **CANCELLED: Beth Moore "Living Proof - Live" in Amarillo July 24-25, 2020**

Unfortunately, Beth Moore will no longer be coming to Amarillo in July. We expect to receive the refund for our First Pres block of tickets soon, and we will make arrangements for refunds to each of our ticket holders ASAP.

Please let me know if you need prayer, would like to join a small group, or if you need specific help of any kind. Our church is here for you!

May our kindness draw others to Jesus today,



Emily Wood

First Pres Director of Women's Ministry

I'm working from home right now. I'd still love to hear from you!

Phone: 418-0404

Email: [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com)



Subject: An Invitation to Testing – and Training Opportunities

Sent: 7-28-20, 5:09 p.m.

Hi ladies!

Testing – this is not the invitation any of us wanted, is it? Yet all of us have been required to attend, and the party is lasting so much longer than we thought it would, don't you think? (: I know this season of testing with COVID-19 and unrest in our country isn't funny at all, but sometimes humor helps! And funny or not, we need to dig into what God says to us about seasons of testing.

*"Consider it a sheer gift, friends, when tests and challenges come at you from all sides. You know that under pressure, your faith-life is forced into the open and shows its true colors. So, don't try to get out of anything prematurely. Let it do its work, so you become mature and well-developed, not deficient in any way. If you don't know what you're doing, pray to the Father. He loves to help."* James 1:2-5 MSG

And here it is in the ESV Version:

*"Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him."* James 1:2-5

Did you catch that line in the Message version *"So don't try to get out of anything prematurely"*? Eek. If you are anything like me, a desire for life to get "back to normal" is a pretty common emotion! But we don't want to miss what God is working in and through all of us. Lord help us to embrace this season of testing that You have allowed in our lives in this season. Will you develop faith, maturity, and wisdom in us?

Speaking of wisdom, faith, and maturity, have you heard our wonderful testimony for the month of July by Sarah Griffin (our senior pastor's wife)? Click here to view: <https://youtu.be/qKINDnkBMxU>. And don't forget you can find all of our wonderful women's testimonies in one place on our Women's Page (<http://firstpres.com/women>).

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. I'm exploring hosting an IF:Lead watch party on Saturday, August 15 for interested women. For more detail, click here: <https://www.ifgathering.com/iflead2020/>. If this is something you are interested in, please let me know. It will be awesome!
2. Our church is hosting the Global Leadership Summit next week – August 6-7. For more detail, click here: <https://youtu.be/PJMBYCfm9VI>. This is a Livestream event Thurs. 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. and Friday 8:30 am – 3:30 p.m. Please let Anita know if you can come [anitag@firstpres.com](mailto:anitag@firstpres.com) or (806)350-5202 since seats are limited. Lunch will be served both days.
3. We are in planning mode for fall study and small group opportunities! If you have a need or desire for small group studies or discipleship, please reply and let me know!
4. We are looking at creating some small groups/triads who can meet in the evenings for working women. Please let me know if you are interested in an evening option!

God is good! I'm thankful for each of you lovely ladies and your faithfulness in times of trial and testing. It will produce good fruit in us! Please let me know if you need prayer, would like to join a small group, or if you need specific help of any kind. Our church is here for you!

May our testing refine us to become mature and complete women of God,

Emily Wood

First Pres Director of Women's Ministry

I'm working from home right now. I'd still love to hear from you!

Phone: 418-0404

Email: [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com)



Subject: An Invitation to Peace  
Sent: August 25, 2020 5:07 pm

Hi ladies!

Isn't peace a beautiful word? Just saying it out loud calms me down. I learned some powerful things about peace at the IF:Lead conference a couple of weekends ago, and I want to share these with you:

*"Finally, [sisters], whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things." Philippians 4:8*

### The Six Stepping Stones on the Pathway to Peace

- True – Use wisdom when deciding who to listen to and always start with the Bible. Anxiety is greedy and always wants more information.
- Honorable/Honest – Avoiding feelings doesn't help. Before you pray, watch – see Matthew 26:41 – spirit is willing, but flesh is weak. Jesus watched and prayed in the garden, but the disciples were sleeping for sorrow.
- Just – Choose compassion – it is the opposite of judgement.
- Pure – Don't give any good ground to the enemy. Don't retreat!
- Lovely – Surround yourself with and cultivate lovely things and lovely people.
- Good report – Talk about good stuff. Pay attention to the good!

Speaking of peace, loveliness, and wisdom, have you heard our wonderful testimony for the month of August by Nancy Turner? Click here to view: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ReU7--f9nEE>. And don't forget you can find all of our wonderful women's testimonies in one place on our Women's Page (<http://firstpres.com/women>).

### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. **Women's Fall Bible Studies** – We are so excited about all the wonderful Bible study and small group options available to First Pres women this fall! We will mail out a brochure detailing all these options around the first week of September. We will also share this list by email. New studies will begin the week of September 13. Please be on the lookout and reach out to me if you have questions or need more information at [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com) or 418-0404.
2. **Triads** – We are creating more small groups/triads that can meet in the early mornings (7 a.m.) and evenings for working women. Please let me know if you are interested in an early morning or evening option!
3. **Yearbooks** – Are you interested in a 2020 yearbook/directory? We are taking orders and will be selling these at the Welcome Center soon!
4. **First Pres Fall Schedule** – Wednesday night programming begins September 9, and we are offering home groups meeting throughout the city. I'm hosting one with my husband here in Wolflin! Please let me know if you are interested in learning more. All three services and Sunday school will start back up on September 13.

God is at work in the world even when we don't see it. Give us peace as we trust in You today, Jesus! Please let me know if you need prayer, would like to join a small group, or if you need specific help of any kind. Our church is here for you!

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him,

Emily Wood

First Pres Director of Women's Ministry

I'm working from home right now. I'd still love to hear from you!

Phone: 418-0404

Email: [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com)

Subject: An Invitation to Fall 2020 Women's Bible Study Small Groups!

Sent: 9-3-2020, 10:27 a.m.

"She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue." Proverbs 31:26

Hi ladies!

We have news to share about Bible study small groups for Fall 2020 starting soon! We are thrilled to offer you the following study options Mondays through Thursdays with daytime and evening options available as well as in person and remote options available.

\*If you are interested in any of these studies and need childcare, please contact me!

### **Encounter with God**

Led by Virginia Sicola, 353.6204

Mondays @ 5:30 p.m.

Library (NW branch), year-round

Meeting via Zoom until the library opens- contact leader for Zoom info.

### **Get Out of Your Head by Jennie Allen**

Led by Emily Wood, 418.0404 & Mary McWhorter, 679.2736

Mondays @ 5:30 p.m. starting Sept. 14 via Zoom

Zoom meeting ID: 288 013 0600,

password: firstpres

### **Book of "Revelation"**

Led by Mary Mullin, 382.7735

Tuesdays @ 10:00 a.m.

Contact leader for start date

6406 Grantham Drive

### **Studies for Working Women**

Led by Jill Goodrich, 355.1924

Tuesdays @ 12:00 p.m. via Zoom

Contact leader for start date & Zoom info

### **Trustworthy, A Study of I & II Kings by Lysa TerKeurst**

Led by Shauneen Hatfield, 626.9419

Tuesdays @ 1:30 p.m. Starting September 15

Room 209 at First Pres

(With masks and socially distanced)

### **Book of Genesis (in depth)**

Led by Holly Haines, 949.939.0094

Tuesdays @ 6:30 p.m. via Zoom

Started Aug 18 – join anytime!

Zoom meeting ID 832 4028 0064

Contact leader with questions.

### **Community Bible Study: Book of "John"**

Wednesdays @ 10:15 a.m. via Zoom starting September 9

Register online at <https://www.communitybiblestudy.org/john/>

Questions? Call Shelley Chaloupka, 433.7453

### **Get Out of Your Head by Jennie Allen**

Led by Emily Wood, 418.0404 & Peggy Smith, 674.0486

Thursdays @ 10:00 a.m. Starting Sept. 17 via Zoom (in person and childcare available if needed)

Zoom meeting ID: 288 013 0600,

password: firstpres

### **The Invisible War by Chip Ingram**

Led by Tracie Brooks, 679.2658

Thursdays @ 11:45 a.m.

Starting September 10

Room 304 at First Pres

(With masks and socially distanced)

Don't see what you are looking for? I would love to talk to you about what we are missing or can include to better meet the needs of each of our women! Please reach out to me to discuss or if you have questions or need more information at [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com) or 418-0404.

### **OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

1. **We have only one church service this Sunday at 10 a.m. with lunch to follow!**
2. **Triads** – We are creating more small groups/triads that can meet evenings for working women. Please let me know if you are interested in an evening option or another time!
3. **Yearbooks** – Are you interested in a 2020 yearbook/directory? We are taking orders and will be selling these at the Welcome Center starting this Sunday, Sept. 6!
4. **First Pres Fall Schedule** – Wednesday night programming begins September 9, and we are offering home groups meeting throughout the city. I'm hosting one with my husband here in Wolflin! Please let me know if you are interested in learning more. All three services and Sunday school will start back up on September 13.

May God fill us with wisdom and kindness as we study His Word together,

Emily Wood

First Pres Director of Women's Ministry

I'm back in the office Mon-Thursday!

Phone: 418-0404

Email: [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com)

P.S. Moms who sent kids back to school or are schooling from home, we are praying for you! We are also working on a remote learning hub at First Pres – let me know if you are interested! Interested in volunteering to help with this? I would love to talk to you about it!



Subject: An Invitation to Fall 2020 Women's Small Group Bible Studies and Childcare Update

Sent: 9-10-20, 11:35 a.m.

Hi ladies!

Now that it officially feels like fall, I want to remind you Fall 2020 Bible study small groups start next week! We are thrilled to offer you the following study options Mondays through Thursdays with daytime and evening options available as well as in person and remote options available.

**\*CHILDCARE UPDATE:** We want to provide childcare for our Thursday at 10 a.m. Get Out of Your Head study, now meeting on Zoom and in Room 304. Will you reach out to me ASAP if you would like to take part?

**Encounter with God**

Led by Virginia Sicola, 353.6204

Mondays @ 5:30 p.m.

Library (NW branch), year-round

Meeting via Zoom until the library opens- contact leader for Zoom info.

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Questions? Call Shelley Chaloupka, 433.7453

**Get Out of Your Head by Jennie Allen**

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password: firstpres

**The Invisible War by Chip Ingram**

Led by Tracie Brooks, 679.2658

Thursdays @ 11:45 a.m.

Starting September 10

Room 304 at First Pres (with masks and socially distanced)

Don't see what you are looking for? I would love to talk to you about what we are missing or can include to better meet the needs of each of our women! Please reach out to me to discuss or if you have questions or need more information at [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com) or 418-0404.

May God fill us with wisdom and kindness as we study His Word together,

Emily Wood

First Pres Director of Women's Ministry

I'm back in the office Mon-Thursday!

Phone: 418-0404

Email: [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com)

*"She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue."* Proverbs 31:26

Subject: An Invitation to Choose (and volunteer opportunities!)

Sent: 9-24-20, 11:52 a.m.

How are you holding up these days? I pray we are all placing our hope in God. It seems hard to put our hope in much else right now, doesn't it?! I've talked to many of you who agree this may not be such a bad thing. With a year full of uncertainty and our election coming up so soon, there may never be a better time to dwell on the words of Joshua below reminding us we have a choice:

*"Now therefore fear the Lord and serve Him in sincerity and faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt and serve the Lord. And if it is evil in your eyes to serve the Lord, **choose** this day whom you will serve...But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."* Joshua 24:14-15

We get to choose Who we will serve! We also get to choose how we will live! We also get to choose what we think about, dwell on, and what comes out of our mouths...help us with this, Lord! As we choose to serve You again today (and every day), will You fill us with peace, wisdom, and kindness so we can speak life and truth and grace to a confused and hurting world? We put our hope in You again today, and we thank You for making it so clear to us in this season You are our Only Hope!

Speaking of hope, please be on the lookout tomorrow for our next wonderful testimony for the month of September from our very own Youth Director Anna McCay. You can also find all of our wonderful women's testimonies in one place on our Women's Page (<http://firstpres.com/women>).

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. **Volunteers needed for pumpkin painting at Pumpkin Roundup Oct. 4** – please email or call me if you can volunteer for a shift of overseeing our pumpkin painting table at the Gilmour Ranch on Oct. 4 from 4-7 p.m. It's going to be a fun fall afternoon!
2. **Volunteers needed for The Place** – Our church is opening our doors to be the hands and feet of Jesus to families doing school at home during this pandemic! We are seeking volunteers to help with this brand new ministry every Tuesday and Thursday from 8a-1p. See specific needs at the end of this email, and let me know if you want to help!
3. **Women's Fall Bible Studies and Triads** – If you have not connected with a Bible study, triad, or small group and are interested in one, please reach out to me at [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com) or 418-0404.

God has given us a choice. Isn't that amazing? Today may we choose God, may we choose to see the good in others, and may we choose to bring the hope of Christ to the people God places in front of us. He is with us to help us in our times of need! Please let me know if you need prayer, options for Christian community, or if you need specific help of any kind. Our church is here for you!

May we choose God every time and every day,

Emily Wood

First Pres Director of Women's Ministry

Phone: 418-0404

Email: [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com)

P.S. Please pray about where the Lord might be leading you to serve at First Pres through **The Place**, our new virtual learning hub at First Pres on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8-12. Some needs include:

- **CHECK IN STATION:** Someone to greet families, hand out a simple registration sheets, take temperatures and log info in notebook. This person will give direction for first timers. (At first staff will help with directing people.)
- **FLOATER:** Someone to walk around to make sure everyone is in good shape.
- **CRAFT/ACTIVITY:** Someone to organize, sanitize, reset the craft or S.T.E.M. bin area.
- **SANITATION:** Someone to clean tables/chairs after each use.
- **TUTORS:** Someone to be on hand to assist students with schoolwork.



- **TECHNICAL SUPPORT:** Someone to manage extension cords & power strips and to help students with computer trouble. Please know that AISD is running a help desk for those supporting virtual learners. We'll have that phone number on hand.
- **READING BUDDY:** Someone to read books aloud to kids needing a break, maybe in a designated reading area.
- **BACKGROUND MUSIC:** Someone to find the right music to place quietly in the Parlor, learn setup and make it happen.
- **SHARE JESUS' LOVE & LIGHT:** Someone who just wants to be present to help create that atmosphere of hospitality. Someone who is willing to do things as they come up.

Subject: In Invitation to Believe (and First Pres Advent Workshop)

Sent: 10-20-20, 4:49 p.m.

Hello,

Do you believe in the goodness of God today? I don't know about y'all, but every hour or so I have to turn my thoughts again to God and remember He is in control! So today is the perfect day for us to consider what we are believing in, isn't it?

*"I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living! Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!" Psalm 27:13-14*

*"But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that He is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me." 2 Timothy 1:12*

I can't share the 2 Timothy verse without sharing this beautiful hymn: ["I Know Whom I Have Believed"](#). Listen to it today, and let it remind you we believe in a great and mighty God.

Speaking of believing, did you watch the wonderful testimony for the month of September from our very own Youth Director Anna McCay? You can find it by clicking [here](#). And be on the lookout for October's testimony from Michal-ann Bell! You can also find all of our wonderful women's testimonies in one place on our Women's Page ([www.firstpres.com/women](http://www.firstpres.com/women)).

#### **ANNOUNCEMENT:**

#### **Women: You are invited to "And Heaven and Nature Sing" Advent Workshop 2020!**

Gather with First Pres Women to focus on the advent of our Lord Jesus. Enjoy creating beautiful reminders of the season for yourself and your loved ones as you prepare your heart and home for the Christmas season. Coffee and refreshments will be provided. For the class you choose, please bring small sharp scissors if you have them. All other supplies will be furnished. All classes will run simultaneously, so only one choice is needed.

Saturday, November 14 from 9 a.m. to noon

Register at: [www.firstpres.com/women](http://www.firstpres.com/women)

Cost: \$5

Childcare is also available by reservation when you register for your workshop. Children will take part in Advent activities as well through First Pres Children's Ministry!

Three workshop options to choose from:

- Advent Journal Class - Skill level: easy to moderate. Using collage techniques, you will embellish a plain kraft-colored journal, transforming it into a beautiful Advent journal. You will receive ideas about how to use your journal through the season.
- Christmas Card Class - Skill level: easy. You will collage a beautiful Christmas card to send to someone special that will even have a special pocket for a tea bag to enjoy! Ideas will be presented on writing a note about Advent to enclose with the card.
- Christmas Gift Tags Class - Skill level: easy. You will spend time making 3 or more embellished gift tags with collage and ribbons (they can also be used as tree ornaments). As you ponder Advent, you will learn how to make a small book with these, too.

\*This event is subject to COVID condition changes in the City of Amarillo. Please check back for any changes to the status of the event.

Today it may seem like the world is falling apart, but I'm thankful we believe and put our hope in God, not this world. Who is God calling you to share your spiritual beliefs with today?

May we believe in the goodness of God,

Emily Wood

First Pres Director of Women's Ministry

Phone: 418-0404

Email: [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com)



Subject: A Special Invitation from First Pres Women – Take a Look!

Sent: 11-4-20, 2:04 p.m.

Hi!

Who is happy we have made it to November? And who could use some good news today? Well you are in luck! Some of our lovely ladies at First Pres have prepared a special gift for you.

**Who:** Women of all ages (children's activities included as well)

**What:** “And Heaven and Nature Sing” Advent Drive by – pick up “Take Home” advent bags with activities, treats, and Advent devotions inside

**When:** Saturday, November 14, between 10 and 11 a.m.

**Where:** First Presbyterian Church South Doors (turn into parking lot from Harrison and drive through)

**Why:** Because we all need an extra dose of Jesus, Christmas cheer, and holiday spirit this year, don't we?!

**How:** Register by Nov. 11 on the First Pres Women's Page by clicking [here](#)

Our theme this year is “And Heaven and Nature Sing”, which you probably recognize from the song *Joy to the World*. We want to celebrate Christ coming into the world by preparing our hearts and our homes with joy. While we can't gather together for the workshop this year, our prayer is the experience will be even more special as you prepare at home with your family and loved ones. Each bag contains more information on advent, crafts to create an advent journal and gift tags, holiday snacks and treats, an advent devotional, and more. Children's activities are also available upon request. You will find a video devotional as well as instructions for the craft on our [First Pres women's page](#) and [First Pres Live](#).

Please get out your favorite Christmas music and sign up today! There is no cost involved, but a love offering is welcome. And please thank our wonderful Advent Workshop Chair, Lezly Welch, and our Advent Workshop Activities Coordinator, Linda Warrick!

God is near,

Emily Wood

First Pres Director of Women's Ministry

Phone: 418-0404

Email: [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com)

Subject: Three Invitations from First Pres Women – Take a Look!

Sent: 11-10-20, 5:07 p.m.

Hello!

**1. IMPORTANT SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES:** Help us meet the needs of our sick and/or quarantined members by restocking the freezer! We are asking for help from anyone who is willing to do the following:

- Cook small portion freezer meals at home. The meals can be brought to the church, or we will come get them from you. We have simple recipes to get you started.
- On a budget? We can reimburse you for the ingredients. Bring receipts up to the church (tax cannot be reimbursed).
- Deliver meals.
- Donate food or money to help provide meals.
- Call sick or quarantined members to check on them and pray for them.
- Call the church and let us know about needs of members.
- Pray!

Please contact Michal-ann Bell at 806-570-5244, text Tamala Gurevitch at 806-223-3380, or call Emily at the church for more information and to let us know how you want to help. THANK YOU!

**2. ALMOST FULL! Women's Advent Workshop 2020 at Home:** We only have a few take home bags left so hurry if you want one! Register by 5:00 tomorrow, Nov. 11, on the First Pres Women's Page by clicking [here](#). We are making as many bags as we can and apologize in advance for running out. Women of all ages (children's activities included) are invited to "And Heaven and Nature Sing" Advent Drive by – pick up "Take Home" advent bags with activities, treats, and Advent devotions inside. Saturday, November 14, between 10 and 11 a.m. First Presbyterian Church South Doors (turn into parking lot from Harrison and drive through). You will find a video devotional as well as instructions for the craft on our [First Pres women's page](#) and [First Pres Live](#).

**3. NEED PRAYER?** I would love to pray with you over the phone or in person. Call me at 806-418-0404 to pray or set up a time to come to my office and pray. *"For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them."* Matthew 18:20

God is near,

Emily Wood

First Pres Director of Women's Ministry

Phone: 418-0404

Email: [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com)

Subject: An Invitation to Give Thanks (and ways to do it!)

Sent: 11-20-20, 11:31 a.m.

Thanksgiving is a little different for all of us this year, isn't it? You are either going to miss that family gathering you were looking forward to, or you are gathering with family and just praying no one gets sick, or you may be frustrated at everyone else for worrying about getting sick! Whatever situation you are in, chances are you didn't expect this kind of Thanksgiving. This year may require extra effort to give thanks during Thanksgiving. Are you up for it?

*"Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our 'God is a consuming fire.'" Hebrews 12:28-29*

*"Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise; give thanks to Him and praise His name. For the Lord is good and His love endures forever; His faithfulness continues through all generations." Psalm 100:4-5*

*"Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise — the fruit of lips that openly profess His name. And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased." Hebrews 13:15-16*

Here are three practical ways to practice gratitude:

1. Try waking up and immediately stepping outside – even if it's freezing – feel the fresh air on your face, look up, and say, "Thank you, God, for this day."
2. Worship and giving thanks go hand in hand. Make extra time to listen to hymns and songs this next week. If you haven't heard the song, *The Blessing*, first shared in March 2020 and now recorded by well over 100 virtual choirs worldwide, listen to it this next week in multiple languages! Below are a few versions, all based on the well-known benediction found in Numbers 6:24-26. Proclaiming blessings in this year of the pandemic and so much hardship is powerful! May this remind us all how BIG and great is our God!

[The Blessing in Hebrew \(filmed in Jerusalem\)](#), [The Blessing Zimbabwe](#), [Latin America \(The Blessing\)](#), [The Blessing Japan](#), [The Hawaii Blessing](#), [The New York Blessing: 100 Churches Singing Over NYC](#), [The Blessing Singapore](#), [The Greater Middle East Blessing](#) (use captions by clicking on CC), [The Blessing Nigeria](#), [The UK Blessing](#), [The Blessing \(Global Choir\)](#), and [more!](#)

When it seems like we are surrounded by division, this kind of unity is healing to our souls, isn't it? Do you think God might be doing something powerful in the Body of Christ if He is bringing different churches and even nations together to sing His praise?

3. Try making a list of all you are thankful for, starting with the small things like hearing the geese honking as they fly overhead. Watch your perspective change as you see each item you write down as a gift from God just for you today. If you would like to join me in this practice, there is a free online Bible study starting this week based on Ann Voskamp's best-selling book, *One Thousand Gifts* – Go to [www.faithgateway.com/obs](http://www.faithgateway.com/obs) to sign up and get started!

Speaking of gratitude, did you watch the wonderful testimony for the month of October from our dear Michal-ann Bell? You can find it by clicking [here](#). And be on the lookout after Thanksgiving for next testimony from Virginia Sicola! You can also find all of our wonderful women's testimonies in one place on our Women's Page ([www.firstpres.com/women](http://www.firstpres.com/women)).

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- A big thank you goes to our Advent Workshop Coordinator Lezly Welch and Linda Warrick! They did an incredible job improvising and making the Advent "take home" bags so special. If you haven't watched



Lezly's devotional video and Linda's journal making video, check them out [here](#). It was such a blessing to see all of your smiling faces in our drive thru this year!

- During this pandemic, First Pres will continue worship services in person and online. This Sunday, 11/22, will be our last in person Sunday school until January 10.

Happy Thanksgiving, everyone! *"May God bless you and keep you, make His face shine upon you, and give you peace,"* Numbers 6:24-26.

May we give thanks in all circumstances (1 Thess. 5:16-18),

Emily Wood

First Pres Director of Women's Ministry

Phone: 418-0404

Email: [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com)

Subject: An Invitation to His Presence this Christmas from First Pres Women

Sent: 12-18-20, 10:17 a.m.

Hi everyone,

Christmas is one week from today – can you believe it?! All those months we could not wait for 2020 to be over, and here we are. A few weeks ago, I was sure this would be an easy year to focus more on Jesus because there would be less distractions. Turns out distractions are all around us even though there are less parties and gatherings...has Amazon been calling anyone else's name every time you sit down to spend time with God?!

The good news is every day provides a new opportunity to begin again (Lamentations 3:21-23). The best news is the greatest gift we will ever receive is available for our taking every day of the year – the presence of God.

Will you pause, take a deep breath, and say out loud to yourself, "Jesus, You are my gift." Remember again the Good News:

*"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by His grace as a **gift**, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."* Romans 3:23-24

*"For the wages of sin is death, but **the gift of God** is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."* Romans 6:23

*"But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved! And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages He might show the incomparable riches of His grace, expressed in His kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, **it is the gift of God**."* Ephesians 2:4-8

Wow! What else can compare? Speaking of great gifts, did you watch the powerful testimony for the Advent season from our dear Virginia Sicola? You can find it by clicking [here](#). You can also find all our wonderful women's testimonies in one place on our Women's Page ([www.firstpres.com/women](http://www.firstpres.com/women)). Upcoming women's Bible studies will also be posted soon!

Will you join me today in starting again? God is right in front of you and I, waiting for us to pause, notice, and enjoy Him today. *"Thanks be to God for His inexpressible **gift**!"* 2 Cor. 9:15

May God surround you with the **gift** of His presence this Christmas,

Emily Wood

First Pres Director of Women's Ministry

Phone: 418-0404

Email: [emilyw@firstpres.com](mailto:emilyw@firstpres.com)

P.S. Need a resource to enjoy God's presence this Advent season? I highly recommend the Center for Christianity, Culture, and the Arts Advent Project. Go to. <http://ccca.biola.edu/advent/2020/>. You can experience artwork, music, scripture, and a devotional each day of Advent.