



Where everybody is somebody, and Jesus Christ is Lord Beginning 2021

Woody's Wit & Wisdom

by Dr. D.M. "Woody" Woodward



Your FPC Council met on retreat January 15-16 to pray and strategize for the coming year. All members were present (Rodney Fischer, Herb Schneider, Chris Beabout, Jeff Albrecht, Kaia Schroeder, Carol Burr, Monte Good, Mike Jaroszewski, Woody Woodward), even Mike Jaroszewski who has been ultra-cautious about quarantining. Mike showed up because he nevertheless got COVID-19 some weeks before. Rodney came down with the virus after the retreat, which made the rest of us rather nervous, but he shook it off and is back in circulation.

We talked about what we learned from FPC's first interim pastor's excellent assessment report. We agreed that we pretty much ignored Don Turner's report because the Pastor Search Committee was presenting their candidate at that same moment. (By the way, that report is available to you in digital format. Just email church secretary Melanie Gillum, melanie@firstprotestant.com)

We spent a good deal of time talking about our church's strengths and weaknesses. How can we know whom to hire to replace the 2.5 staff we lost in the past year unless we know what we look like as a church?

We all agree we have much to celebrate as a church. Here are some of the enumerated strengths: German heritage. Stability—many members descended from founding families. First church in NB and Comal County. Loving and caring people. We offer more than one service in terms of time and style, thus giving options to reach more people. Best day care center in town. We are ready for change. Music is excellent in both services. Magnificent facility. Great, downtown location. New interest in missions. Lay ministers.

Then we looked at our weaknesses: We are old. We've been unable to keep our youth and attract young families. Experiencing numerical decline. We are on the downside of the sigmoid curve of church effectiveness. We've waited too long to renew vision. Hurt feelings over the failed candidacy of Jason Epps. We are not friendly to Auslanders. Inward focus. We don't use our connection to First Protestant School to attract young families. Few opportunities to get to know people (compounded by COVID-19). Lack of growth by conversion. Church splinters in past 30 years (Rich Carse, Timothy Judkins, Jason Epps). Children's ministry is small, hard to staff.



FIRST PROTESTANT CHURCH OF NEW BRAUNFELS

172 West Coll Street
New Braunfels, Texas 78130
Church Office (830) 609-7729
First Protestant School (830) 606-4110

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-------|
| WOODY'S WIT AND WISDOM - BY DR. WOODY WOODWARD..... | 1,3 |
| THE SPRINGS AND THE STREAM AT FPC - BY PASTOR TYLER REED..... | 4-5 |
| MEMBERSHIP HAS IT'S PRIVILEGES - BY DR. WOODY WOODWARD..... | 6 |
| HELP WANTED: CHAMPIONS! - BY SUE SAUR..... | 7-8 |
| WOMEN'S MINISTRIES - BY DAPHNE SPRAITZER..... | 9-10 |
| FIRST PROTESTANT SCHOOL - OUR UPDATED STAFF..... | 11-12 |
| . SAYING GOODBYE TO SHEENAE HERNANDEZ-GARCIA..... | 13 |
| . ADULT CONNECTION GROUPS | 14-15 |
| HELP US HELP YOU..... | 16 |

First Protestant Church Staff Directory Church Office Phone (830) 609-7729

*Please note that some of our extensions have changed.

The Church Staff can be reached by email using the addresses below.

| | | |
|---|------------------|-----------------------------|
| Dr. D.M "Woody" Woodward - Interim Senior Minister | Ext. 116 | woody@firstprotestant.com |
| Tyler Reed - Director of Youth and Children's Ministries | Ext. 114 | tyler@firstprotestant.com |
| Christian de la Cruz - Choir and Handbell Director | (c) 956-821-5391 | Cdelac4@neisd.net |
| Joey M. Martin - Director of Music/Organist/Pianist | (c) 512-787-2269 | JoeyMartin512@gmail.com |
| Debbie Caraway - FP School Director | 830-606-4110 | debbie@firstprotestant.com |
| Doreen Schaeffer - Business Manager | Ext. 121 | doreen@firstprotestant.com |
| Jerald Schroeder - Director of Operations | Ext. 119 | gerald@firstprotestant.com |
| Melanie Gillum - Administrative Assistant | Ext. 110 | melanie@firstprotestant.com |

Church Office Hours:

Monday - Thursday 9-12 & 1-4, Friday 9-12 & 1-3

Where Everybody is Somebody, and Jesus Christ is Lord

Please enjoy your newsletter in full color online at firstprotestant.com.

What does the above mean in terms of staff, board and congregation? We agreed that it doesn't make sense to hire a CCE (Children's Christian Education) Director because we have so few children. It makes better sense to "dance with who brung us", to address our strength of seniors. We decided to hire a part-time Director of Congregational Care, who will not merely call on shut-ins & the hospitalized, but would build care teams. He or she would create meaningful ministry for seniors (socials, trips) and venues for them to serve. This would be an "early win." He or she should be a developer, not a doer.

The next staff to hire should work with the whole church, not just a segment (children, youth, young marrieds). This person needs to be an executor, someone who can get things done, who can put a plan into place. He is not just an administrative pastor, but one who strategizes AND can implement. He should be savvy about change management, conflict resolution, mobilizing people, and who has a pastoral focus, especially to volunteers. He needs to drive the church boards forward, market our church, communicate well to the church and New Braunfels. He should have over 20 years of experience, a seasoned pastor with business moxie.

We noted that some people are anxious to start the pastor search process. How do we respond? What is our message? When questioned about the hiring of the next Senior Minister, we agreed to respond in this manner: "We, too, are anxious to find our next permanent Senior Minister, however, we have come to understand that FPC must address many issues prior to this happening as the expectation of hiring a pastor to solve all the problems is unrealistic." In short, "We have some business to take care of first." We estimate the interim period at 24-36 months. We agreed that, "The kind of guy who would come to this church at this present time would be dysfunctional."

In sum, it was a great working retreat and a great time for fellowship! Let's believe God for a bright future for First Protestant as each of us in the church act as ministers of reconciliation. Let us especially pray for our Transition Team who will assist me in R&R (Research & Recommendations) on moving our church forward. The members of the Transition Team include Rodney Fischer, Monte Good, Carol Burr, Celeste Salge, Sue Saur, Sally Voges, Rob Miller, Jay Brewer, and Lynn Herr.

Thank you for entrusting me as your Senior Minister. Tracie and I close on a house in Buda on February 26. If our seller has not found a house, we will lease the home back to them. We might not be moving until March or April. The shorter commute will be a blessing.

I hope you have enjoyed this update. With the ongoing COVID lockdown, communication can be a challenge. I want you to know what is happening so that you can be encouraged by our progress and so that you can pray more intelligently.

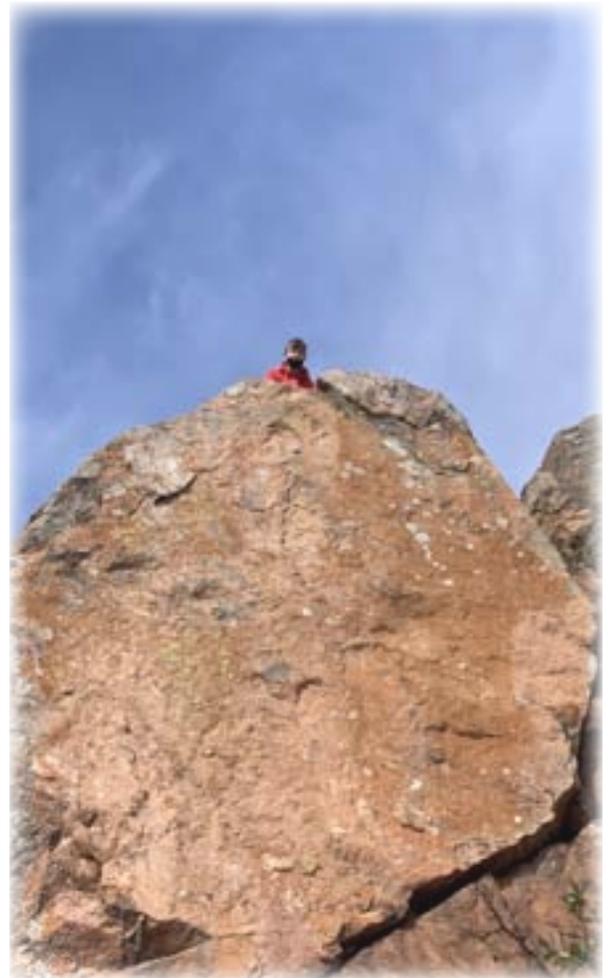
The Springs and The Stream at FPC

by Pastor Tyler Reed

Director of Children and Youth Ministries

It's been a fun start to 2021 for our youth and children's ministries! In January, The Stream youth group took a trip to Enchanted Rock and spent the day hiking. Our students were all relieved that they didn't help make another sermon illustration for the blind leading the blind, as we did last year when we all got lost. We were also leading a group of unsuspecting hikers along with us who assumed, we knew where we were going. If you haven't been seeing the youth as much on Sunday mornings, it's not because they are lost on campus. The youth have become an integral part of our children's ministry each Sunday as they volunteer to help lead games, serve snacks, and teach Bible studies during our "Guadalupe Hour" from 11-12. Our kids get so excited to play games with them on our church's front lawn each Sunday such as, "Cops and Robbers" or "Tackle the Teen!" They have been an example to us all, as to how you can both





Membership Has It's Privileges . . .

Active members have a voice and a vote. But how do you determine if you are an active member or an associate? According to our constitution, "The duties of members are to live a Christian life, to seek the spiritual well-being of the congregation and all people, to regularly attend worship services of the Church and the celebration of the Lord's Supper, to contribute financially to its support, and to share in its organized work." What if I am unable to give or attend services? We hope the following clarifies how to apply the constitutional requirements to your situation:

- It is obvious that upon death, a person joins the eternal church and their name will be removed from our rolls, but not from our hearts.
- If a person moves out-of-state, they become associate members.
- A member forfeits their membership for not living a Christian life. As leaders, we seriously grieve when a member engages in unrepentant, significant sin that besmirches the reputation of Christ and our church.
- A member may forfeit their membership by not seeking "the spiritual well-being of the congregation" by gossip, by a factious spirit (Titus 3:10), or by attending another church.
- A member may lose active status by not attending services. This is not to suggest that a person can legalistically interpret the policy that they need only attend once a quarter. We can certainly make allowance for people with significant health issues who cannot venture into the public due to a chronic health condition or fear of contracting the COVID-19 virus.
- A member may lose active status by not giving. We can certainly make allowance for people suffering financial hardship, but please recall that Jesus praised an impoverished widow who was able only to offer two copper coins (Mark 12:41-44). Everyone can give something. Attitude is more important than amount.
- A member may lose active status by not serving the church in some capacity. Again, we can make allowance for a member's age and health.

If you have not received a packet in the mail to send in your membership status choice, you can:

- ***go on our website, www.firstprotestant.com, click on the 3rd box on the front page and it will take you to the page to register your choice.***
- ***email your choice of membership status to melanie@firstprotestant.com***
- ***call Melanie at 830-609-7729 X110***

Help Wanted: Champions!

by Sue Saur



I recently came to you representing the Missions Outreach Team to relay the impact that reducing the funding to Missions creates. We made the decision to “lay it all out there” because we were confident our congregation would respond. And we were right. With very few exceptions, when the people of First Protestant Church are made aware of a need, they respond by filling it. That’s just the kind of people we are. Thank you for being that kind of people. We ask that if you haven’t already considered making or renewing your pledge to missions that you prayerfully consider it. May God continue to challenge and grow us as we say Yes! to opportunities to serve others with and through our missionaries!

The year I graduated from high school, a band called Queen released a single, “We Are the Champions.” Because melody is so powerful, many of you are now humming that tune. (I’ll give you a moment to reminisce—flick your Bic and wave it in the air...) And... back.

I figured if I were going to talk about champions, and I am, I would need to acknowledge that tune. And while I will argue vigorously that one of his “few bad mistakes” included his wardrobe choice—the song lives on in our brains all these many years later.

The first and most obvious definition of a champion is—the winner. The biggest winner, even. That’s the one the song refers to, but that’s not the one I will be using. The fourth definition for champion is “a person who defends or supports a person or a cause.”

The underlying premise that drives the structure of the Missions Outreach Team and the Global Impact Celebration—is relationship. It is the way we choose new ministries to support and the way we stay connected to our existing ministries. Relationship is how we connect with them, first just as people—people who claim the title “Christian”, and then through ongoing opportunities to serve with them. We know that the more people in our congregation who are involved in these relationships, the stronger they will become. A passion for that ministry, and mission in general develops organically through this kind of relationship. And passion produces champions!

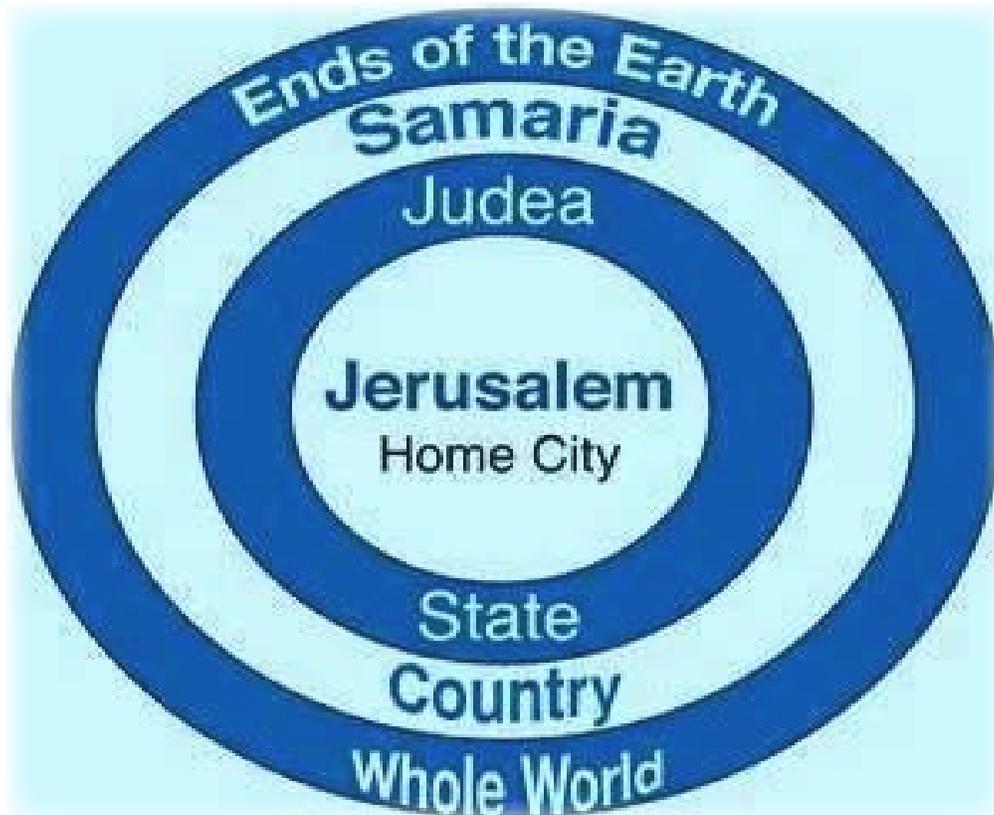
...Champions! cont.

We have champions who have enlisted to maintain contact with each of the missionaries and ministries we support at First Protestant Church. Their “job description” is just that—to be the point of contact with the missionary for our church: to send monthly greetings and encouragement to that person or ministry, and to relay news and prayer requests back to our Missions Outreach Team. They to “champion” the missionaries by keeping their work in front of us. The stories they share excite us and remind us in an ongoing way why it is so important to support missions.

Included below, we have the organizational chart for the Missions Outreach Team. Listed are several opportunities for you to foster a relationship, dare I say friendship with a missionary partner. We have included a bit about each missionary needing a champion-- and their mission—perhaps you already share a passion in one of these areas. We ask you please prayerfully consider pairing up with a missionary as their First Protestant Church Champion. Contact the Area Leader for more information.

If your passion lies more in the area of organization or event hosting—I would like to encourage you to consider coming on board the GIC—Global Impact Celebration team. This team is in charge of all the arrangements, meals, décor, marketing, etc. involved in the GIC each year.

Again, thank you so much for stepping up for the mission of the church—to tell those who haven't heard-- the great news of Jesus Christ!



Women's Ministries

From the Desk - of Daphne Spraitzer
President Women's Ministries



Women's Ministries Activities November 2020-January 2021.

Officers for 2021:

The Women's Ministries elected officers at their December meeting. Officers for 2021 are: Daphne Spraitzar, President; Sally Voges, Vice President; Debbie Williams, Secretary; Kim Recio, Treasurer; and our 3 At-Large Representatives, Jennifer Graham, Charlene Johnston, and Cristabell West.

Meetings:

Women's Ministries meetings are held each 2nd Monday of the month at 10:00 am at The Well. Due to the resurgence of COVID in the community, the Women's Ministries postponed our January meeting. We will meet March 8th at 10:00am at The Well. All Women of First Protestant Church are invited to attend these meetings. We offer a Zoom option for those not available to attend in person for whatever reason.

Eden Hill Gift Bags:

Women's Ministries traditionally hosts a January Birthday Party for Unit 5 at Eden Hill. We play bingo and provide prizes in addition to bringing cookies. Birthday gifts are also brought for residents who have birthdays in January. Unfortunately, the pandemic did not allow us to continue with the in person party this year, but the WM still purchased and delivered birthday gifts for 11 residents. We had a small number of leftover snacks which we provided to SOS Food Bank.

Christmas Gift Bags:

Women's Ministries put together approximately 75 gift bags for FPC seniors not able to attend in person services. Volunteers delivered the bags during early to mid-December.



Potato Soup Sales:

Women's Ministries held our annual Potato Soup Sale in the church courtyard after each service on Sunday, November 15th. We made a total of approximately 125 pint and quart sized portions. Quart size portions were sold at the Nov. 15th event and pint size portions were provided to selected seniors not able to attend services. Proceeds from the sales will be provided to ministries of the church.



Christmas Party:

Sally and Bobby Voges hosted the Women's Ministries Annual Christmas Party on December 4th. We thank Sally and Bobby for their gracious hospitality and for providing the perfect place to relax and enjoy delicious home cooking and desserts. It was wonderful to see so many friends and be able to catch up and enjoy the fellowship, friendship, and faith that strengthens us. Thanks also to Woody for joining us!



FIRST PROTESTANT SCHOOL

Meet Our Updated Staff



Debbie Caraway
**First Protestant School
Director**

We are happy to announce that Debbie Caraway has been named Director of First Protestant School, that became effective January 15, 2021. Sheenae was able to spend time with Debbie, preparing her for the new leadership role, along with the new assistant director and office manager. The preparations done ahead of time made the transition a very smooth one for not only the teachers, but the students and their parents, as well.

Debbie began her career with FPS as a preschool teacher in 1983 and in 1996 moved to the Dallas area where she continued working in the childcare business. In 2006, she returned to New Braunfels and FPS. In 2009, she was appointed Assistant Director and has been in that position until this last promotion to Director.

Over the years, Debbie has taught and loved on so many children. We have a lot of 2nd generation children at FPS. Several are parents that were taught by Debbie years ago. She's earned a special place in the heart of so many families in our school.

We pray that First Protestant School will continue to be what is has been created for, to be a faith based school that will create an environment full of learning experiences that will meet the spiritual, physical, mental, social, and developmental needs of each daycare, preschool and school-aged child.

You can reach Debbie at 830-606-4110 or email her at debbie@firstprotestant.com.



Karley Crawford
First Protestant School
Asistant Director

Karley Crawford has been promoted to Assistant Director of FPS. Karley began her career at FPS in 2016 as a co-teacher and later obtained her CDA. While working at FPS Karley also obtained her Bachelor of Science Degree in Public Relations and Mass Communication from Texas State University in 2019. Upon her graduation Karley was promoted to Office Manager where she has taken care of all aspects of the day-to-day operations of FPS with an emphasis on communication. Karley maintains positive communication between parents, school administration and staff; and handles all aspects of social media. Her creativity has been a huge asset in organizing events and designing appropriate materials for FPS's faith-based program.

Karley brings a creative, fresh approach to her new responsibilities. She will be assisting and bringing all her talents and gifts into the Assistant Director position. She excels in communication between the staff and parents and has computer, photography, and digital media skills. To reach Karley directly, her email will be karley@firstprotestant.com.



Rene Juarez
First Protestant School
Office Manager

Rene Juarez has been promoted to our new Office Manager. As with Karley, Rene came to us in 2016 serving in the role of Lead Teacher for our summer program and as an office assistant; a position which familiarized him with the day-to-day operations in the business end of FPS. He answered calls and directed them appropriately, handled online office responsibilities with expertise in several programs used in the school, while handling parent-teacher relations, and handling sensitive, private information.

Rene also received his CDA while serving as a Lead Teacher, which included lesson and curriculum planning, tutoring, keeping the lines of communication open with parents and booking field trips. Rene graduated from Northeast Lakeview College in December 2020 with his Associate of Arts Degree. His strengths lie in organization and planning, multi-tasking, and familiarity with the computer programs.

FIRST PROTESTANT SCHOOL

With Heavy Hearts We Say Goodbye to Sheenae Hernandez-Garcia

After 19 years of service to First Protestant School, Sheenae Hernandez-Garcia has made a decision a lot of mothers face at one time or another...if they're fortunate enough to have the choice. She has chosen to resign and be home with her children during these early years; putting her family first. When Sheenae came to First Protestant School, she began as a teacher, which may be the reason she has excelled as the School's Director since 2008. She saw and continues to see things through the eyes of a teacher, which gave her an advantage through love and determination to make the school into the facility that now stands. She was with us providing leadership from the school's perspective throughout the designing, planning, building and opening of the new First Protestant School building. Her knowledge of state regulations and needs of the teachers and children, were invaluable as we moved forward in the different phases of this process. Through the pandemic, she has stood strong for not only the safety of the children, but for all of her teachers and their jobs. She has a love for these children and this staff that is formidable. While her shoes are difficult to fill, we have every confidence in the team that has been put into place. Our new Director, Debbie Caraway served as Sheenae's Assistant Director and Karley Crawford and Rene Juarez were two employees Sheenae actually brought on board. Each have brought a very special skill set into their new positions that will only continue to make the school the success that Sheenae worked so hard to achieve.

We send our love and appreciation for a job so well done, to Sheenae. We always wish her success in every aspect of her life and pray that this time with her family will create memories that will carry throughout the years.



FIRST PROTESTANT CHURCH OF NEW BRAUNFELS

Adult Connection Groups

Sundays, 9:30am

Light, Life & Love ABF (The Well) - Rodney Fischer

This new ABF (Adult Bible Fellowship) is studying "Relevant Biblical Topics."

Sundays, 10:50am

C.A.L.M. – Chris & Kristi Beabout

The Christian Adult Learning Ministries class meets in the Heritage House. Topical studies focus on giving Biblical perspective to marriage and family concerns.

Faithful Servants (The Well room 4) – Lynn Herr

The Faithful Servants Bible study class will be reading and discussing the Gospel according to Mark. All adults welcome!

Kingdom Seekers (The Well room 5) – Wayne Wise

The Kingdom Seekers class is studying the book of Romans, at this time.

Legacy Builders (The Well room 7) – Celeste Salge

The Legacy Builders class will be discussing world events that relate to adults (60+) from a Christian perspective.



Band of Brothers / B.o.B.s – Rob Miller

The B.o.B.s meet offsite on the third Tuesday of each month at 6:30pm. They are currently studying “From Jesus to the Gospels.” Contact Rob Miller at 210-573-5253 for more information.

GriefShare (The Well room 2) – Marilyn Challenner

GriefShare is a 13-week faith-based grief recovery course. Meetings will be held on Wednesdays from 6:00-8:00pm. A new group will be starting up in January, 2021. Contact Marilyn Challenner at 830-624-5440 for more information or to sign up.

PB&J / Pizza, Beer & Jesus – Brian & Caressa Vajdos, Rodney & Cathy Fischer

PB&J is a small group primarily made up of parents of teens. Meeting schedule and study topics are flexible. Contact Caressa Vajdos at 210-274-5938 or Rodney Fischer at 830-708-8101 for info.

Sole Prayers – Judy Borger

Sole Prayers exists to bless our community through our prayers. We meet on Saturday mornings at 9:00am at local NB assisted living facilities, areas where our shut-in members reside, parks and neighborhoods to walk / jog / run and pray. Watch for notifications in the bulletin as to where we’ll be meeting each week. For more info, contact Judy Borger at 830-629-1859 or judyab0701@gmail.com

Women’s Bible Study – Sue Saur

This group meets at the Saur home on Thursday evenings at 6:45pm. Studies rotate between topical and those focused on a book of the Bible. Contact Sue Saur at 830-708-0302 for more information.

Young and Young-at-hearts / Ya-yahs – Marilyn Challenner

The Ya-yahs meet in the well each Monday from 6:00-8:00pm using the Precept Upon Precept inductive Bible study method. Contact Marilyn Challenner at 830-624-5440 for more information.

Moms in Prayer (The Well room 2) — Carol Burr

Tuesdays at 2pm.

**STAY
CONNECTED**



Help Us Help You

Will you please fill out the form below with your information so that we can make sure you don't miss any communication from the church. We're communicating more through email and text and don't want anyone to be left out. You can tear this out, drop it in the offering plate or bring it by the church office. Thank you!

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____

CELL #: _____