



Spring Branch Presbyterian Church

Who's Who:

Minister: All Members of the Church
 Pastor: Rev. Mark Plunkett
 Administrator: Jorida Vakiari
 Ministries Coordinator: C. Miguel Carlin
 Administrative Assistant: Ethan Mitchell
 Music Director: Gabriel Perez
 Accompanist: Jonathan Craft
 AV Director: Ethan Mitchell
 AV Technician: Ben Dethloff
 Academy Director: Renee Henry

Ministry Teams:

Administration Leader: Jacquie Ballesteros
 Congregation Leader: Kay Craig
 Faith Development Leader: Kathryn Dethloff
 Mission Leader:
 Worship Leader: Donald McDaniel
 Treasurer: Neal Dikeman

The Session

Clerk: Elizabeth Powell

Moderator: Rev. Mark Plunkett

Class of 2024

Charles Fairchild
 Glenn Lanan
 Donald McDaniel
 Jennifer Miller

Class of 2025

Jacquie Ballesteros
 Kathryn Dethloff
 Stephen Earnest

Class of 2026

Kay Craig
 Sarah Dikeman
 Ethan Mitchell

Academy Board

Laurie Mitchell
 Jani Shepard

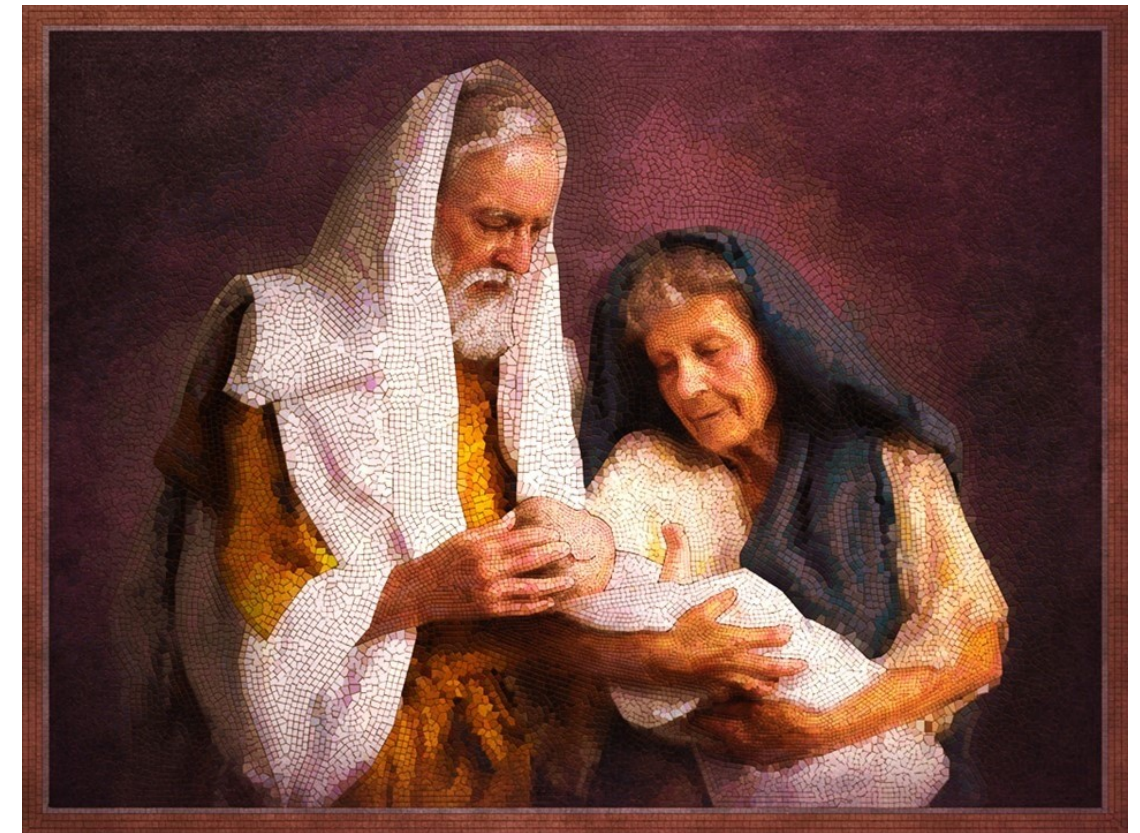
Jim Kunkel
 Web Trevathan

Neal Dikeman
 Ashley Powell

Serving today in Worship:

Liturgist: Web Trevathan
Children's Moment: Marguerite Priest
Usher Captain: Donald McDaniel
PowerPoint: Patty Blome

e-mail: churchoffice@springbranchpres.org
website: www.springbranchpres.org
www.facebook.com/springbranchpres
Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 9:00 AM-5:00 PM
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 713-464-7659



*“Voices From Bethlehem:
 Simeon and Anna Rejoice”*
 December 31, 2023

1st Sunday of Christmas

December 31, 2023

10:50 AM

**Those who are able please stand*

Gathering in God's Name

WELCOME AND NEWS OF THE CHURCH

(Please sign the Friendship Book located in the pew rack next to the center aisle.)

PRELUDE

THE LIGHT OF CHRIST ENTERS THE SANCTUARY

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: Praise the Christ-child, the newborn Prince of Peace!

People: We have been redeemed. We are no longer afraid!

Leader: Praise to the God who has come to us in the flesh!

People: We are being created. We are no longer afraid!!

Leader: Praise to the Spirit who calls us together to serve!

People: We will be sustained. We are no longer afraid!!!

ALL: Come, let us worship God!

***HYMN**

"Angels, from the Realms of Glory"

GTG, No. 143

Preparing for the Word

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

Leader: As we reach the end of one year and prepare to greet a new one, let us confess the ways we have fallen short of God's commandments.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(unison)*

(from Colossians 3:12-17)

Giver of Every Mercy, you call us to clothe ourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. However, we often clothe ourselves with different attire: apathy, hatred, arrogance, and brashness. Help us to bear one another and forgive each other, even as we ask forgiveness from you. Help us to don the clothing of love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. This we pray in the name of your Child, Jesus Christ. Amen.

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: Sisters and brothers in Christ, hear now the good news of the Gospel: through the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven.

People: Alleluia! Amen.

Calendar of Events

www.springbranchpres.org/church-calendar

December 31 — Sunday

9:15 am Church Nursery
9:30 am Sunday School
9:45 am Choir Practice (Choir Room)
10:50 am Worship

January 1 — Monday

Church & Academy Closed



January 2 — Tuesday

10:00 am Flexercise (GP)
6:00 pm PW Unwind: Kasra Persian Grill
6:00 pm Basketball (GP)
6:00 pm Cub Scouts: Wolf (GP 1 & 2)

January 3 — Wednesday

9:30 am PW Moderator (CR)
10:15 am PW Board Meeting (CR)
3:30 pm WOW (S)

January 4 — Thursday

10:00 am Flexercise (GP)
6:00 pm Fairbees Square Dance* (GP)

January 5 — Friday

7:00 pm CENTI Youth Program* (YR)

January 6 — Saturday

6:00 pm CENTI Church Service* (GP)

*Outside SBPC Reservations & Events

(CR) Conference Room

(FH) Fellowship Hall

(GP) Gathering Place

(L) Library

(P) Parlor

(S) Sanctuary

January 7 — Sunday

9:15 am Church Nursery
9:30 am Sunday School
9:30 am Children's Sunday School (GP 3)
9:45 am Choir Practice (Choir Room)
10:50 am Worship
12:15 pm Undecorating the Sanctuary
4:00 pm Cub Scouts: Tiger Cub (GP 1 & 2)

January 8 — Monday

7:00 am Meet the Pastor (Foyer)
5:30 pm Academy Board Meeting (CR)
6:00 pm Special Olympics: Volleyball* (GP)
6:30 pm Cub Scouts: Webelos II (GP 1 & 2)
7:00 pm Boy Scouts (Scout Hut)
7:00 pm Horizon's Bible Study on Zoom

January 9 — Tuesday

9:15 am Congregational Care Meeting (GP 2)
10:00 am Flexercise (GP)
6:00 pm Basketball (GP)
6:00 pm Cub Scouts: Webelos (GP 1 & 2)
6:30 pm Fellowship Meeting (CR)

January 10 — Wednesday

9:30 am PW Circle (CR)
3:30 pm WOW (S)
5:00 pm Girl Scouts (GP 1, 2, 3)
6:00 pm WNS!
6:45 pm Worship Team Meeting (CR)

January 11 — Thursday

10:00 am Flexercise (GP)
6:00 pm Cub Scouts: Bear (GP 1)
6:00 pm Fairbees Square Dance* (GP)

January 12 — Friday

6:00 pm SBM Arc Meeting* (CR)
7:00 pm CENTI Youth Program* (YR)

January 13 — Saturday

6:00 pm CENTI Church Service* (GP)

*Portions of today's worship service are taken from
stephenmfearing.com and davidsbell.org.*

Announcements & Events:

One of our long-time Missions in December is the **PCHAS Ornament Tree**. During Advent time, we hang ornaments on a Christmas tree. Each of the ornaments has a PCHAS tag attached with a suggested donation amount. You take the ornament home with you and leave the donation in the basket provided. *(If you pay by check, please make checks payable to SBPC and put "PCHAS Ornament Tree" in the memo line.)*

The **2024 Offering Envelope Books** are now available in the Narthex. Please sign your name by the number that corresponds to your book number. If you already have a book of offering envelopes, you can continue to use it since it doesn't correspond to specific dates. Thank you for your continued commitment!

Would you like to beautify the Sanctuary on Sunday mornings while honoring a loved one or commemorating a special occasion? **The 2024 Flower Sign-Up Calendar is located in the Narthex!** The cost per arrangement is \$65.00. Checks should be written to SBPC and mailed to the Church Office or placed in the offering plate on Sunday mornings.

The Unwind Dinner Group will meet in the New Year on Tuesday, January 2nd, at 6:00 PM at Kasra Persian Grill (9741 Westheimer, 77042). Please note that this is a Tuesday evening, not a Monday, due to the New Year's Holiday. As usual, please respond only if you are attending to Jacquie Ballesteros at 713-305-1114. This restaurant has been highly recommended by several church members. We hope you can join us!

Un-Decorating the Sanctuary: The Worship Team is seeking volunteers to help remove the Greens from the Sanctuary on January 7, 2024, immediately after the Worship Service. As usual, many hands make for light work. Pizza will be provided for volunteers before work is started. So that lunch can be planned, please contact Donald McDaniel at dmcdan77007@sbcglobal.net or 713-294-4005 to sign up.

The PW Day Circle will meet on Wednesday, January 10th, at 9:30 AM in the Conference Room. Please contact Patti Nanney if you'd like to attend via Zoom. The **Evening Bible Study** will meet on Monday, January 8th, at 7:00 PM via Zoom. Please contact Sarah or Ashely Powell if you are interested in attending. The Lesson 5 video is available at the following link: www.springbranchpres.org/adult-education/presbyterian-women/sacred-encounters.

Wednesday Night Supper will resume on Wednesday, January 10th, at 6:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall. We hope you can join us then!

We have a church-wide retreat in the works for March 14th-17th at Mo-Ranch in Hunt, TX! This is spring break week, so we're hopeful that we can have a big group go - including our families! This retreat will be Thursday-Sunday, with the option to stay with a small group into Monday. There will be lots of time for spiritual development, fellowship, recreation, worship, and good food! The total cost per person is \$185 for adults and \$120 for kids, for 3 nights, including all meals. We are asking those who would like to attend to please complete the registration form, reserve your room to secure the space you'd like, and pay \$75/person to the church. Copies of the registration form are available in the Narthex and in the Friday email. Please see Ethan Mitchell for any questions. We hope that you will join us!

*PASSING OF THE PEACE

*GLORIA

"Joy to the World" (v. 3, 4)

GTG, No. 134

*No more let sins and sorrows grow,
nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow
far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found,
far as, far as the curse is found.*

*He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.*

God's People Are Empowered

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Marguerite Priest

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION *(unison)*

(from Luke 2:41-52)

Holy Spirit, as did the people in the Temple that day long ago, may we gather to listen to the wisdom of the Christ-child through the reading of your Holy Word. Amen.

FIRST SCRIPTURE LESSON

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

Red Pew Bible OT 692

CONGREGATIONAL ANTHEM

"Go, Tell It on the Mountain"

GTG, No. 136

SECOND SCRIPTURE LESSON

Luke 2:22-40

Red Pew Bible NT 59

SERMON

"Voices From Bethlehem: Simeon and Anna Rejoice"

Rev. Mark Plunkett

Responding to the Word

*HYMN

"What Child Is This"

GTG, No. 145

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH *(unison)*

(The Nicene Creed)

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man.**

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son, he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP

PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS

OFFERTORY

***RESPONSE** *“The First Nowell”* (v. 6) GTG, No. 147

*Then let us all with one accord sing praises to our heavenly Lord,
that hath made heaven and earth of nought, and with his blood our life hath bought.
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.*

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (*unison*) *(from Luke 2:22-40)*

Lord of Peace and Hope, we thankfully give these generous gifts as an expression of all that you have given us. As the prophets foretold, your son was born for the redemption of our sins. We humbly acknowledge that of all the gifts we have received, your gift of a babe in a manger is the one that truly matters. We prayerfully ask you to increase our ability to help others discover anew the best Christmas message ever, the promise of salvation through Jesus Christ. In His name, we pray. Amen.

SHARING OF PRAYER CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory forever. Amen.

Departing in Joy

***HYMN** *“Good Christian Friends, Rejoice”* GTG, No. 132

***BENEDICTION**

***THE LIGHT OF CHRIST GOES OUT INTO THE WORLD**

***POSTLUDE**

Welcome Visitors

You are joyfully welcomed as you worship with us today. In the worship bulletin, you will see an asterisk (*) which invites you to stand as you are able throughout today’s service. If you have any questions about Spring Branch Presbyterian Church’s ministries and programs, you are invited to speak with Pastor Mark, an elder, an usher, or any other member of our church family. Also, the ushers have additional information for you as you leave today. We hope you will come back and that you consider Spring Branch as your church home.

Worship 10:50 am

Worship: Spring Branch Presbyterian Church welcomes families of all ages and sizes. For families with young children, relax! God put the wiggle in all children (and adults), we understand. You are invited to sit closer to the front so your children can hear, see, and experience worship with those around them. Remember, children and youth learn through what they observe. Participate and engage yourselves fully.

Nursery: Infants six weeks through Pre-K are welcomed in the nursery during worship. Kindergarten and older children will attend worship with their parents. The Church Nursery is available from 9:15 AM through shortly after Worship in the Bears classroom, Room 126, which is in the north hallway of the Education Building.

Sunday Morning Offerings at 9:30 am

Saints Under Construction: This class meets in the Sanctuary in the Garden Room. This discussion-oriented class focuses on what each of us can learn from the weekly Bible scriptures to build upon in strengthening our faith. Patti Nanney leads the class.

The Explorers: This class meets in the Conference Room in the Education Building. The class studies the Bible, book-by-book, using different translations which help the lively and thought-provoking discussions. Linda Crawford leads the class.

Children’s Sunday School Class: This class meets in the Children’s classroom in The Gathering Place on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month to learn more about the stories in the Bible by having crafts, stories, games, and other fun activities. The class is designed for elementary-age children, ages 5 to 10, but all are welcomed.

Children’s Chime Choir: The Chime Choir meets in the Sanctuary on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month. This is a chance for elementary aged children to get to ring chimes as part of Worship. We are excited to continue this new adventure! Megan Hogg leads the Chime Choir.

Other Faith Development Opportunities: Watch the monthly PresPress, weekly church-wide emails, and the worship bulletin for other opportunities throughout the year. It may be a short-term Special Topic or book discussions on Sunday mornings, a week night book study, or retreat.



SBPC offers the option to give a gift to the church using your laptop or any mobile device. Please see the “Giving” card in your pew for details and information on how to support the missions and ministries of SBPC from anywhere at anytime, or visit www.springbranchpres.org/give.