



# ATASCOCITA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

# THE COMMUNICATOR

## DECEMBER 2025 EDITION

### **This Month from Pastor Wayne** ***Wise Men Still Seek Him***

The Magi did not make it on time to the birth of Jesus. We have no idea exactly how far they traveled or how long it took, but we do know this: they got there late. Jesus had already been born.

We also know they got their directions wrong. They ended up in Jerusalem, the typical place where the king of the Jews would be expected to be born. It took the chief priests and teachers of the law to clarify that the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem. Bethlehem is roughly nine miles from Jerusalem. Not too bad, when all things are considered. Some estimate the Magi might have traveled some 800 to 900 miles if their home was in Persia. Without benefit of satellite technology, GPS, or an iPhone, they were off by only nine miles. Still, in the words of Maxwell Smart, they missed it by "just that much."

People have fun at the expense of the Magi. Have you heard the one that goes like this: Do you know what would have happened if it had been three wise WOMEN instead of men? They would have asked for directions, arrived on time, helped deliver the baby, cleaned the stable, made a casserole, and brought disposable diapers as gifts!

Maybe Matthew is poking fun at the Magi as well. They are a pretty easy target. One writer acknowledges that within the biblical record there is the slimmest of information about the Magi. There is no mention that there were three or that they were kings. But, "What can be said with some certainty is that these Magi were the ancient equivalent of 'magicians'—they were astrologers and stargazers who tried to get the hang of present and future events by what was in the stars. These were the Jeanne Dixons of old Persia, writing the daily horoscopes for the Baghdad Gazette based on the movements of the heavens. The Magi were what many today would call quacks and maybe even charlatans." Was Matthew letting us have a laugh at the expense of these so-called "wise men"? For all their wisdom, they missed it by just that much.

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Walter Brueggemann takes a different approach. He thinks Matthew might be pointing a finger at all the insiders—those who stand firmly within the circle of belonging, all the chosen people of Israel, from the chief priests and scribes and Pharisees right up to Herod, the king of the Jews—and saying, “You all missed it...by just that much.” Brueggemann plays with the idea of the biblical text in Isaiah 60 that tells about Jerusalem being rebuilt after the disastrous times of the exile. The prophecy tells how Jerusalem would once again be glorious and radiant and swelling with riches, basking in wealth and reigning in power, and that kings and rulers from foreign lands would flock to Jerusalem in worship and adoration. Of course the Magi show up at Jerusalem. If a king is to come and rule the world, the best place to look is in Jerusalem.

But what if the plan of salvation was more humble? What if the castle would be nothing more than a stable and the throne a lowly manger? What if the king were an infant, and even when he grew to be a man he was the son of a carpenter and a servant who was not above washing feet? Isaiah 60 is a prophecy that leads Magi to seats of power in cities like Jerusalem. The prophet Micah points in a different direction: “It is only nine miles away, but Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come one who will be ruler over Israel.” (Micah 5:2)

Say what you will about the Magi, but we all have something to learn from those wise guys from the east. From the Royal City they looked up to the sky and saw the star moving toward the little town just nine miles south of Jerusalem. And they followed the star. When it came to rest over the place where Mary was holding her baby child, they were overjoyed. They bowed down and they worshiped. Missed it by just that much? No—these wise guys got it just right.

With love in Christ,

*Wayne*



# Messages for December

## **December 7**

"The Stump of Jesse" | Isaiah 11:1-9

## **December 14**

Chancel Choir Cantata "Wonderful Counselor"

"A King Sized Bed" | Isaiah 9:2-7

## **December 21**

"Jesus" | Matthew 1:18-25

## **December 24**

Christmas Eve "Gift Wrapped"

## **December 28**

Waffles and Worship

The winter solstice marks the shortest day and longest night of the year, occurring twice annually, once in each hemisphere around December 21st and June 21st. The name "solstice" comes from the Latin for "sun stands still," referring to the sun's apparent reversal in its path across the sky.



## Office Hours

**Pastor Wayne Eberly**

Mon-Wed  
9 AM – 2 PM

**Rhonda Blake**

Mon-Fri  
9 AM – 2 PM

## Church Staff

**Pastor** - Reverend Wayne Eberly

**Office Coordinator** - Rhonda Blake

**Director of Music** - Joe Weir

**Pianist** - Carl Braden

**Director of Creative Learning Center** - Cathy Gerald

# Financial Matters 💰 Year-End Information

As you prepare for the busy holiday season, please keep in mind the following:

## 📄 Giving Statements

- During the first week of December, you will receive an emailed **Giving Statement** showing your contributions to APC through November.
- Full-year **Giving Statements for your 2025 tax preparation** will be emailed in early January.

## 📅 Final 2025 Giving

- Please ensure we receive your **final 2025 giving by Sunday, December 28.**
- Contributions may be made by check or online giving and must be received by this date to be recorded correctly.

## 👉 2026 Pre-Paid Pledges

- If you wish to prepay any amount of your 2026 pledge, please make sure it is clearly marked "2026 Pledge" so it is recorded correctly.

## 📈 Stock Transfers

- If you are considering a **gift of mutual funds or appreciated securities**, please review the information on the church website: [apchumble.org/give.php](http://apchumble.org/give.php).
- Contact **Forrest Craig (finance@apchumble.org)** with questions and to let us know to watch for the transfer.

## 🏠 RMD Distributions

- If you are over 73 and own an **Individual Retirement Account (IRA)**, you may gain a significant tax advantage by directing your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) to APC as a **Qualified Charitable Donation (QCD)**.
- Your **distribution would be tax-free** and would have no tax implications for APC.
- This provision may be especially beneficial since many people no longer realize a **tax benefit from itemizing charitable contributions** due to the increased federal standard deduction.
- By making the RMD a **direct charitable gift, your reportable income is reduced**, resulting in tax savings. Please consult your tax professional if you are interested in accessing this **benefit for both you and APC** during 2025.



**Thank you for your continued support of the work of Atascocita Presbyterian Church.**

## November 2025 Attendance & Offering Summary

2025 Worship Attendance and Offering Summary		
Date	Attendance	Offering Total
2-Nov	110	\$8,549
9-Nov	84	\$4,938
16-Nov	85	\$2,413
23-Nov	109	\$1,682
30-Nov	109	\$806
Total Offerings for Year-to-date		\$267,629
Budgeted Offerings for Year-to-date		\$333,545



# DECEMBER EVENTS



## Sleep in Heavenly Peace

Bed Delivery is departing at 8:30am from the APC parking lot. Volunteers are needed to deliver & assemble beds for children currently sleeping on the floor. No experience, tools, or skills required, just a desire to help!

SATURDAY

6

DEC



## Christmas Shoeboxes

Houston International Seafarers Center will deliver around 11,000 gift-filled shoeboxes to seafarers often away from loved ones during the holidays. Please return shoeboxes to the Narthex display by Sunday, December 7.

SUNDAY

7

DEC



## Poinsettia Orders

Each order is \$15.00, in honor of or in memory of your loved ones - sign up in the Narthex. Payment can be made on the APC website or in the church office on or before December 7. Poinsettias may be picked up after Christmas Eve worship.

SUNDAY

7

DEC



## Advent Festivities

Celebrate the season on Sunday, December 7, 4-6pm with family crafts, food, a Nativity Walk, \$20 Cookie Boxes for the Youth Fundraiser, and the Madrigal Singers live at 5:30pm.

SUNDAY

7

DEC

# DECEMBER EVENTS



## Empty Nesters

Will meet next on December 9 at 6:00pm for a Christmas celebration at the home of Allan and Janet Griffin. Sign-up in the Narthex or RSVP to Nancy Anderson at [nancy.anderson56@yahoo.com](mailto:nancy.anderson56@yahoo.com) or by text at 281-831-4920.

TUESDAY

9

DEC



## PW Horizons Bible Study

Study *Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity in Jesus Christ*, over lunch on Thursday, December 11 @ 11:30am in the home of Shelley Craig. A sign-up sheet is available in the Narthex. Contact Linda Andrus at [harley3064@aol.com](mailto:harley3064@aol.com) for questions.

THURSDAY

11

DEC



## Chancel Choir

Experience the beauty of the Chancel Choir Cantata "Wonderful Counselor" as voices lift up in celebration of Jesus.

SUNDAY

14

DEC



## Seniors & Friends

Seniors & Friends Luncheon will be on Thursday, December 18 at 11:30 a.m. at Italiano's in Atascocita. A sign up sheet is available in the Narthex to reserve your spot. For more information, please contact Bonnie Carr at [bncrr1@gmail.com](mailto:bncrr1@gmail.com).

THURSDAY

18

DEC



# DECEMBER EVENTS



## Christmas Eve

Join us Wednesday, December 24 at 7:00pm for a joyful evening of worship. This special service, "Gift Wrapped," invites us to unwrap the true meaning of Christmas together.

WEDNESDAY

24  
DEC



## Waffles & Worship

Join us for a relaxed time on the Sunday after Christmas. We will have a fun breakfast - waffles and other treats, followed by an informal worship service. Pastor Wayne's sermon will be, "A Christmas Story".

SUNDAY

28  
DEC

# BLESSING BOX UPDATE

The Blessing Box at APC is up and running! The box is checked regularly to ensure no expired items and that it is not overfilled. The community has been generous, and inventory rotates quickly showing we are meeting a real need! *Reminder: Please do not place expired items in the box.*

## Popular Donations

- Easy mac
- Rice
- Soups
- Canned Beans & Proteins
- Peanut Butter
- Toilet Paper, Travel-Size Toiletries
- Pasta
- Cake & Cookie Mix
- Grab-and-Go Snacks



## Additional Suggestions

- Spices
- Dried / Shelf-Stable Milk

🙏 *Thank you for supporting this growing ministry at APC!*

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## SAVE THE DATE

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Everyone is invited to take part in a meal packing event at APC on February 22, 2026 following worship. We will have lunch and then work as a community to pack 10,000 meals, or enough to feed 47 children for a full year, with Rise Against Hunger.

More details to follow!

There are jobs for children as young as 3 and adults of every age.

Childcare will be provided as well.

We will pack for about 1.5 to 2 hours depending on how quickly we move and how many volunteers we get. Many hands make light work!

For more information about Rise Against Hunger, you can check out their website here:

<https://riseagainsthunger.org>

If you have questions, or want to help with set up or tear down (5-6 volunteers needed), please contact Jamie Hannan at [jameshannanjr@gmail.com](mailto:jameshannanjr@gmail.com).

# HAAM

## Humble Area Assistance Ministries 2025 Seasons of Sharing

### Supporting Thanksgiving & Christmas Holiday Meals & Gifts


#### **Thanksgiving Update**

Thank you to the congregation and CLC parents who donated mashed potatoes and gravy—**over 600 lbs.** of food were delivered to HAAM!

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#### **Christmas Giving**

Our church has been asked to provide \$25 gift cards (Target, HEB, or Walmart) for older children ages 15–17, a group often overlooked in toy donations.

 If you prefer to **donate a new toy**, you're welcome to place it under the **Christmas Tree in the Narthex.**

 **Gift cards should be hand-delivered to George Williams or Rhonda in the Church Office.**

 **Deadline: Sunday, December 14, 2025**

 **Questions? Contact George Williams at 281-772-4706.**

 Thank you for your continued support of HAAM!





*farewell*

*We will  
miss  
you*

**In November, we bid farewell to Gail Mayers-Tran, who has faithfully served as Office Coordinator since May 2025. Gail is retiring to spend more time with her mother and to embrace life's simple joys. We are deeply grateful for her dedication and will miss her in our daily work together.**



**Welcome Rhonda Blake as our new Office Coordinator. Please extend a warm greeting as she begins this new role!**





REMINDER FROM THE

***earth care team***



sarah L. com

THE BUYERARCHY  
of NEEDS  
(with apologies  
to Maslow)



## Get a Clean Start

One way to clean up and reduce your carbon footprint is by cleaning using a “plastic-free” system. There are several companies that offer a line of innovative, eco-friendly cleaning and personal care products that use refillable, reusable containers and small, dehydrated tablets to significantly reduce plastic waste and shipping weight. Brands like Blueland, Cleancult, and Branch Basics are praised for their effective, aromatic, non-toxic formulas free from harsh chemicals like parabens and ammonia, as well as their sustainable practices, including compostable packaging and numerous environmental certifications.

### How Plastic-Free Systems Work

1. **Starter Kit:** You purchase a reusable, durable bottle (glass or plastic) for a specific product, such as a multi-surface cleaner, hand soap, or laundry detergent.
2. **Refill Tablets:** When you run out, you order small, dehydrated refill tablets or powders. You may set up a scheduled delivery service at time intervals that work for you. Blueland products can also be purchased at Target, Whole Foods or Costco stores.
3. **Mix with Water:** You simply drop the tablet into the reusable bottle and add warm water to create a full-sized cleaning product.

By choosing to use one of the planet-friendly alternatives to traditional, conventional cleaners, you will greatly **REDUCE** the unrecyclable plastics that end up in landfills, oceans, and waterways, contributing to pollution. One small change to clean up your act today can make a huge difference for our planet and its future.

### Key Benefits & Features

- **Reduces Plastic Waste:** Eliminates the need for single-use plastic bottles in cleaning and personal care.
- **Effective Formulas:** Reviewers find the cleaners perform as well as traditional brands, tackling mold and leaving surfaces streak-free.
- **Non-Toxic & Safe:** Products are made without PVAs, parabens, ammonia, chlorine bleach, triclosan, and phthalates, making them safer for families and pets.
- **Eco-Conscious:** Uses water-based inks, paper tape, compostable refill packaging, and is a certified B Corp.
- **Space-Saving:** The small tablets and compact system are ideal for small living spaces.
- **Affordable Refills:** Individual refill tablets are an inexpensive way to keep products stocked.

### Availability

While originally online-only, Blueland has expanded to brick-and-mortar retail, including Target, Whole Foods, and Costco.

*Contributed by Lizzy Frye*



# November Highlights



Frying the Turkey  
For Thanksgiving



Children's Moment  
Where does God live?



Pastor Wayne  
Blessing the meal



Blood Drive!



Adding to the  
Blessing Box



HAAM Donations  
Thank you!



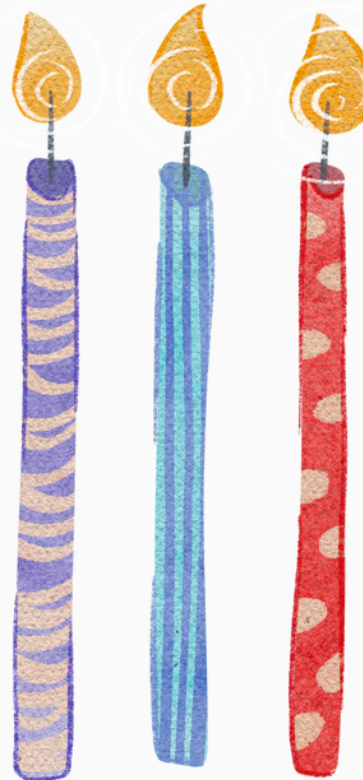
Church Supper Nov 12th  
Happy Thanksgiving

# NOVEMBER



# December

Jada Akrong	Nov 02
Eric Mills	Nov 03
Bill Mumford	Nov 04
Judith Anderson	Nov 05
Sandra Lee	Nov 06
Claudia Nelson	Nov 08
Michael Cruz	Nov 09
Lisa Herrington	Nov 09
Brian Lemer	Nov 09
William Nelson	Nov 14
Linda Lebsack	Nov 16
Michelle Vance	Nov 16
Craig Smith	Nov 18
Sarah Olson	Nov 20
Dorothy Jane Casas	Nov 21
Jenna Hlavaty	Nov 23
Casey Ingram	Nov 23
Donald Wilkerson	Nov 23
Elroy McHenry	Nov 26
Sarah Bennett	Nov 28
John Sheridan	Nov 28
Liz Epie-Tchussen	Nov 29
Julie Fisher	Nov 30
Monica Garcia	Nov 30
Alicia Taylor	Nov 30



Jimmy Humlick	Dec 01
Angel Melo	Dec 01
James Hannan	Dec 03
Travis Harshaw	Dec 03
Susan Phillips	Dec 03
Wayne Eberly	Dec 04
Joe Weir	Dec 06
Evelyn Beard	Dec 07
Debbie Becker	Dec 08
Abigail Hannan	Dec 08
Jane Frieders	Dec 10
Sue Grawl	Dec 10
Brian Clary	Dec 11
David Gerald	Dec 11
Jackson Clary	Dec 12
Frank Fitzpatrick	Dec 14
George Williams	Dec 15
Harry Brookby	Dec 21
Gary Denmon Jr.	Dec 21
John Parmerlee	Dec 24
Dolly Smith	Dec 24
Shelley Atkinson	Dec 26
Dick Bruns	Dec 26
Richard Munoz	Dec 26

## Happy Anniversary



Kristi & Jasper Stanley	Nov 09
Tchana & Chinelo Fangtang	Nov 14
Sharis & Scott Mayer	Nov 24
Dolly & Craig Smith	Nov 27