



The

TOWER

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH • TUPELO, MISSISSIPPI

400 Jefferson Street • P.O. Box 1725 • Tupelo, Mississippi 38802 • (662) 842-5681 • www.firstprestupelo.org

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A NEWSLETTER FOR THE CONGREGATION AND FRIENDS OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, TUPELO, MS

Something to Think About

I was reading a pastor's column in a newsletter recently and it dealt with a pastoral search report: "We have been unable to find a suitable candidate for this congregation though we have one promising prospect. This is a confidential report on the prospective candidates:

ADAM: Good man but has had problems with his wife and children. He and his wife have been known to walk around outside without wearing clothes.

NOAH: Former pastorate of 120 years with no converts. Prone to unrealistic building projects.

ABRAHAM: References reported that he once offered to share his wife with another man.

JOSEPH: Big thinker, but brags, believes in dream-interpretation and has a prison record.

MOSES: Modest and meek man but a poor communicator. Stutters. Known to blow his stack and act rashly. Left an earlier position under a murder charge.

DAVID: The most promising leader of all. Very musical. We discovered he had an affair with his neighbor's wife.

SOLOMON: Great preacher but our parsonage wouldn't hold all his wives and children. Has grandiose tastes.

ELIJAH: Prone to depression; collapses under pressure.

HOSEA: A tender, loving pastor but his wife is a floosy or worse.

DEBORAH: Pushy female.

JEREMIAH: Emotionally unstable, alarmist, negative, always lamenting things.

ISAIAH: Claims to have seen angels. Has trouble with his language.

JONAH: Refused God's call until he was forced to obey when he was swallowed by a fish. He said the fish spit him out on the shore. We hung up.

AMOS: Backward and unpolished. Would only fit in a poor rural congregation.

JOHN: Says he is a Baptist but doesn't dress like one. Has slept outdoors for months on end, eats a weird diet. Doesn't work well with others—we suggest he become a camp director instead of a pastor.

PAUL: Powerful CEO type and fascinating preacher. Short on tact. So long-winded he has been known to preach all night.

JESUS: Popular at times, but once his church grew to 5,000 he managed to offend them all and his church dwindled to 12 people. Seldom stays in one place every long. And of course, he is single.

JUDAS: His references are solid. A steady plodder and good money manager. Conservative and well-connected with the community and religious leaders. This is the candidate we recommend to the congregation..."

Olin

**First
Presbyterian Church (USA)**

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Tupelo, MS 38804
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Ministerial & Program Staff

The Reverend Olin McBride, Pastor

The Reverend Ron Richardson

Dr. Bob Taylor

Helen Curtis

Melissa McDuffie

Dr. Ray Harris

Danielle Ratliff

Sunny Waters

Kay Stanford

Eddie Baker

REMINDERS

While having a phone conversation with one of our homebound, we were talking about the restrictions coming with the coronavirus. The word “reminders” was used by the homebound with reference to these restrictions. This person was saying it would be so easy to forget about not shaking hands, putting on a mask, staying six feet apart, not touching your face, what is essential and nonessential, washing hands so frequently, and just making special efforts to stay healthy. It has occurred to me since this conversation how concerned homebound are for others in the church. I have received several calls from them asking about particular members and wanting a report on their condition. It seems that the isolation necessitated by the disease became a reminder of the need to make use of whatever means available to stay in touch with one another.

Before coronavirus, our calendars were full of reminders about meetings and other commitments that were a part of our daily lives. We were often asked, “Did you remember...” For many people, this has most likely not changed. With coronavirus, the list has become longer with all the restrictions to keep in mind. For sure, we need all the help we can get to keep our lives in a decent order. We need to be reminded of birthdays, anniversaries, approaching holidays, and other special days of the year. We want to be reminded because relationships are important to us. Everything we do is connected in some way with relationships.

Our church has done an excellent job of keeping us mindful of our relationship with God. It has been easy to bring a cup of coffee to my desk on Sunday mornings, make copies of the bulletin, bring a chair for Deanna to sit by me, and listen to the live streaming of the worship services led by Olin on my computer. I did not have to shower, dress in my “Sunday-go-meeting-clothes”, and drive to our church building on Jefferson. I was only enlightened about what I missed when I called a homebound during the week and heard a familiar voice. I would find myself being reminded of what was missing as I said to this person, “I miss seeing you” and then hear back, “I miss seeing you too.” One-on-one relationships are an important part of our lives. We have a church family and we miss seeing each other. We are reminded together of our relationship with God. Indeed, as Paul reminds us, “since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such hostility against himself from sinners, so that you may not grow weary or lose heart (Hebrews 12: 1-3).” We are reminded here that the joy of being reunited will occur. We persevere.

Ron Richardson
Parish Associate for Pastoral Care

Session Digest

1. The Session met via Zoom on April 22, 2020. This was certainly a new experience for several members.
2. Frank Baker, Jr. joined by transfer of letter from All Saints Episcopal Church, Tupelo, Mississippi on Sunday, April 12, 2020.
3. Envelopes for our tithes will go out again shortly as this proved to be both convenient and necessary in this environment.
4. Our maintenance reserve fund remains similar to past years.
5. "Attendance" has averaged well over 400 for Sundays.
6. The office remains closed with Helen working mostly from home, Olin from his office thru the back door and Kay thru another entry.
7. First Presbyterian Church Preschool officially closed at the end of the day on April 24, 2020.
8. Alice Rogers has sent one packet to our children and with the help of Leslie Geoghegan, Kathy Wallace and Taneille Barbour is working to send another.
9. Melissa McDuffie is working on ways to use technology to send out links, online Bible games, etc. to the Youth. She is also using Zoom, email and text to keep in touch with the Youth.
10. Heather is videoing "WeeKirk Lessons" and they will go out periodically. One was made available this week.
11. Youth Sunday/Senior Recognition/Baccalaureate Sunday was planned for first weekend of May. Melissa is in conversation with parents and trying to come up with what a "Plan B" might look like. Not knowing exactly when we will be back together makes it difficult!
12. Olivia Reynolds is a representative to the Presbytery Youth Council.
13. Locks on the church doors have been changed.
14. Church staff has been given key fobs.
15. Key fobs for those requesting them will be distributed when the church is reopened.
16. We have not discussed or determined what we will do for a summer schedule. That will be discussed as soon as we have information about when we can return to worship.
17. Seth Shelnut has been hired to operate our Audio/Video equipment during this time.
18. Thank you everyone and especially Eddie Baker for keeping things running smoothly during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

First Presbyterian Church

Invites You to Join Us Each Sunday Morning at
10:00 A.M.

for Our Online Worship Service

Streaming on Our YouTube Channel

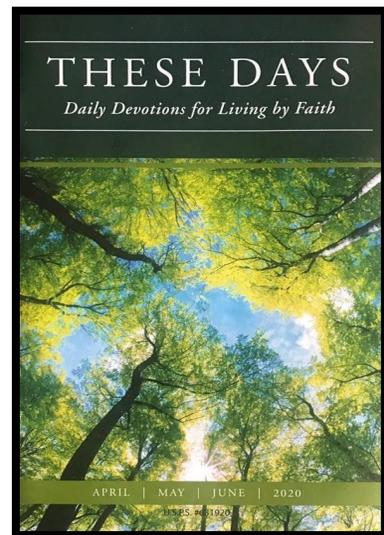
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UCrRsd9_u5JZ1SEV5LsUnJUQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrRsd9_u5JZ1SEV5LsUnJUQ)



If you would like a ***These Days*** devotion-
al booklet, please call the church office
or email:

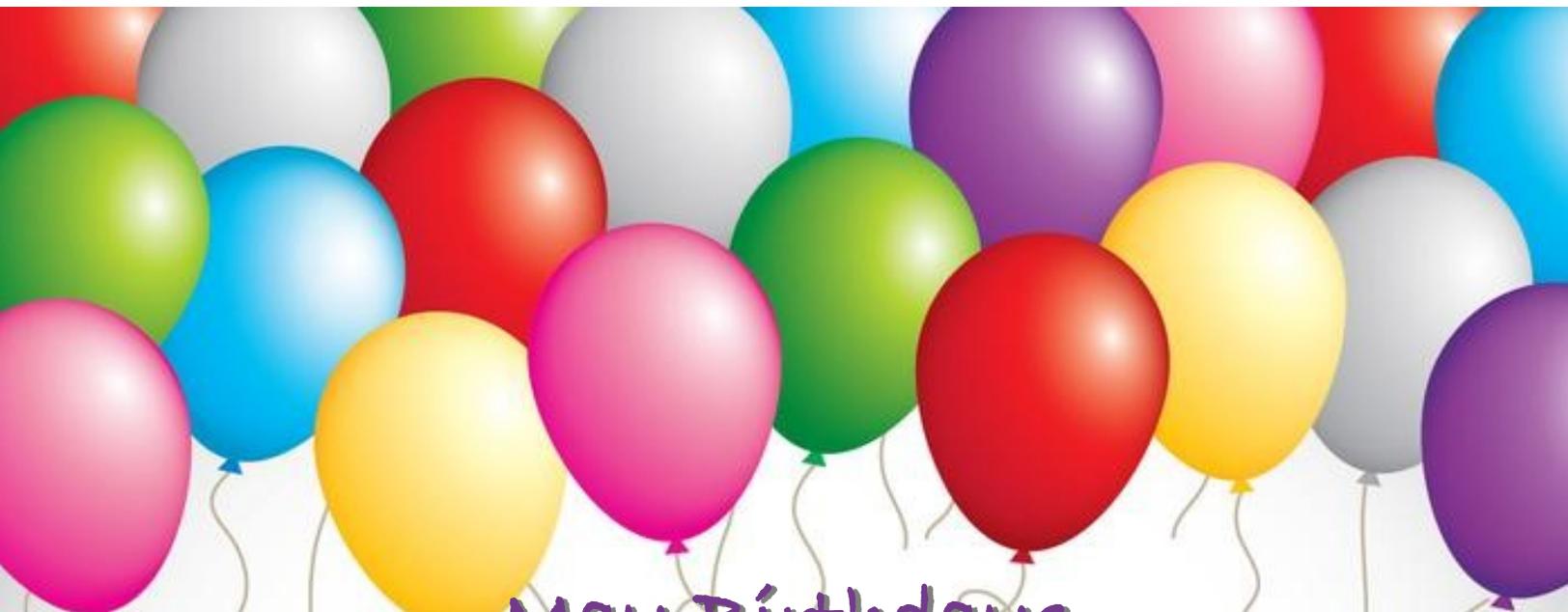
churchsecretary@firstprestupelo.org,

and we will be glad to send one to you.
We have plenty of regular print copies,
and we also have a few large print edi-
tions available. Just let us know which



**KEEP
CALM
AND
CHECK OUT
OUR
WEBSITE**

FPC's website has new, fun
links for everyone! As we
"shelter in place", site users can
send a card to church members,
family, and friends with an
online greeting card. You can al-
so test your knowledge of the
Bible and First Presbyterian his-
tory with an online quiz, or even
hunt for Easter eggs!



May Birthdays

1

Lisa Johnson

2

Drake Cobb
Eli Martin

4

Cordie Dabbs
Elizabeth Fulgham

6

Duncan McDaniel

7

Kim Burleson
Martha Dale
Martha Jo Patterson

8

Bill Caples
Ron Richardson

9

Jerry Burkett
Heather Crowell
Anne Marie Goad
Mike Gratz
Jack Wells
Witt Wells

11

Ben Hunter
Allie Randle
Mike Thomas

14

Amy Thomas

16

Cam Thomas

20

John Hazel

21

Teresa Biddle
Elise Jones
Jon Smith

22

Jim Fisher

24

Jackie Haguewood
Aubre Wells

25

Gay Abney

26

Mark Burleson

31

Sarra Godwin

May Anniversaries

2

Jeff & Lee Reeder

6

Kimmel & Julia Monts

10

Louis & Pam Armour

14

Bob & Terri Moss
Charles & Betty Reece

15

Buddy & Mary Stubbs

17

Bryan & Amy Fagan

21

Ruff & Angelia Thomas

25

Mark & Sallie Kate Ray

26

John & Vivian Fleming

28

Jason & Melissa McDuffie

29

Joe & Frances Sheffield

30

Bob & Jan Taylor

31

Neil & Jill White

“Being the Church” During a Global Pandemic

Serving lunches to staff members at medical clinics in the area has been a wonderful way to give back to the community during this time of uncertainty. The church isn't a building. The church is the people...a community of faith serving one another with love.



Memorials, Gifts, & Honoraria

IN MEMORY OF:

Betty Black

Kirk & Teresa Biddle (Handbell Fund)
Susan Boone (Music Fund)
Glen & Bonnie Davidson (Music Fund)
Ed & Rita Deuschle (Columbarium Fund)
Mark Monts (Pastor's Discretionary Fund)
Betty Nash (Flower Guild Fund
and Spring Bulb Fund)
Presbyterian Women (Columbarium Fund)
Buddy & Mary Stubbs (Handbell Fund)

Hank Boerner

Helen Boerner (Spring Bulb Fund)

Becky Franklin

Betty Nash (Spring Bulb Fund)

Jenny Hewitt

Betty Nash (Spring Bulb Fund)

Ethan Hutto

Hank & Maddin Hutto (Spring Bulb Fund)

Nancy Ingram

Betty Nash (Spring Bulb Fund)

Bea Ann Lockett

Betty Nash (Spring Bulb Fund)

Paul & Louise McCullough

Buddy & Ellie Prude (General Fund)

Gray Megginson

Kirk & Teresa Biddle (Chancel Choir Fund)

Loretta Monts

Betty Nash (Spring Bulb Fund)

Keith & Dot Randle

Buddy & Ellie Prude (General Fund)

Virginia Wood

Betty Nash (Spring Bulb Fund)

IN HONOR OF:

Eddie Baker

Betty Nash (Property & Grounds Fund)
Sam & Mary Pace (Spring Bulb Fund)

Mike Black

Sam & Mary Pace (Spring Bulb Fund)

Dan & Frances Brasfield

Sam & Mary Pace (Spring Bulb Fund)

Chancel Choir

Betty Nash (Music Fund)

Nanette Comer

Betty Nash (Library Fund)

Doyce Deas

Betty Nash (Spring Bulb Fund)
Sam & Mary Pace (Spring Bulb Fund)

Lori Dickerson

Sam & Mary Pace (Spring Bulb Fund)

Chauncey & Ann Godwin

Sam & Mary Pace (Spring Bulb Fund)

Ray Harris

Betty Nash (Music Fund)

Michelle Hutto

Hank & Maddin Hutto (Spring Bulb Fund)

Olin McBride

Betty Nash (Pastor's Discretionary Fund)

Olin & Jim McBride

Neil & Jill White (Pastor's Discretionary Fund)

Melissa McDuffie

Betty Nash (Elementary Education Fund)

Joyce Richardson

Betty Nash (Property & Grounds Fund)

Ron Richardson

Betty Nash (Congregational Care Fund)

Britt & Alice Rogers

Sam & Mary Pace (Spring Bulb Fund)

Bob Taylor

Betty Nash (Music Fund)

Urbano

Sam & Mary Pace (Spring Bulb Fund)

Youth

Our youth are looking forward to being back together as much as we all are! We all miss eating together, laughing together, working together and just enjoying each other's company. In the meantime, we are at least able to see everyone's smiling face on weekly Zoom calls and texts.

I am currently planning what our Senior Recognition might look like given the current circumstances. We will NOT forget them! Our seniors are invaluable to our group and having called them mine for four years, I've grown attached! These youth are **Walker Gibens, John Michael Herman, Bennett Mark and Lucy Wells**. Please remember these youth with cards and gifts as we usually would! I've said it before and I'll say it again and again, these youth make us proud both with who they are and the way they represent us!

Hang in there! There are things about this that we might even miss one day, but I guarantee there will be even more things we don't fail to take for granted as we once did! See y'all on the other side!

Melissa McDuffie
Director of Youth and Christian Education

Safety Committee Update

During the Governor's shelter in place order, we have proceeded with the changeover with locks on church doors. The key fob/card readers have been installed. We will begin distributing the key fobs and cards after the shelter in place order has been lifted. If you need to enter the church in the meantime, please contact Eddie or Buddy Stubbs at 662-231-1442. Thanks for your patience and understanding. We look forward to "Normal Church".

Buddy Stubbs
Chairman, Safety Committee

Several members of our congregation have expressed their willingness to run errands or make deliveries for members of our community. If you or someone you know needs this type of assistance, please contact the church office.

A Note from the Office

Our community remains on a "stay home" order from our local, state and national governments. The church office is open from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday. The office is closed on Friday. If you need to get into the church, call Eddie Baker or Buddy Stubbs to make arrangements. Olin, Kay, and Helen are continuing to work every day—in the office at times and also from home—and remain available by phone, email or text. The office phone is answered daily, but should we be unavailable to answer, the phone goes to voicemail with contact numbers listed. Please do not hesitate to call us! Thank you for your patience and understanding.

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Address Service Requested

