

VOLUME 50, ISSUE 7

July, 2020

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

Greetings!

I wanted to take a few moments to send a note to everyone who is part of the First Presbyterian Church family thanking you for your efforts during this challenging time.

There have been so many health workers who have gone above and beyond the usual duties involved with taking care of and ministering to the sick.

Not only are the physical aspects of care “front and center,” but without a doubt, many of the emotional issues as well. Many families have experienced separation from loved ones, even if the illness is not associated with Coronavirus. Many nursing homes, hospices, and hospitals are closed off to visitors, often leaving doctors and nurses as the only ones to provide much needed emotional support. Without a doubt, this can be overwhelming for so many who are in these professions of caring for others.

Then, there are the needs you have in your own life. Somehow, you are tasked with things we've already referred to, yet your family and loved ones need your attention. You assure them the best you can that you're safe and taking all the precautions, but the uncertainty most likely lingers a bit. You push that out of your mind and forge ahead.

There's a beautiful scripture that I pray will be an encouragement to you as you continue to care for others, your family, and of course, yourself. Matthew 25:40 (NIV) *“The King will reply, I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.”*

When you look into the eyes of that one who is sick, I pray you will see Jesus. As you look into the eyes of your loved ones, I pray you will see Jesus. Looking in the mirror, I pray you will see Jesus.

No one **IS** Jesus other than Jesus, but we can sure minister to others as if we were ministering to the Lord Himself.

Rest assured, you are appreciated, and YOU are in my prayers.

Blessings in Christ,

Olin

THESE DAYS

Daily Devotions for Living by Faith

These Days devotional booklets for July through September are here. If you would like one, please come by the church, ring the bell, and we will meet you at the door. If you would like us to mail a copy, please call the office or send an email to: churchsecretary@firstprestupelo.org.

**First
Presbyterian Church (USA)**

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Tupelo, MS 38804

www.firstprestupelo.org

662-842-5681



Ministerial & Program Staff

The Reverend Olin McBride, Pastor

The Reverend Ron Richardson

Dr. Bob Taylor

Helen Curtis

Melissa McDuffie

Dr. Ray Harris

Danielle Ratliff

Kay Stanford

Eddie Baker

Racism

Following a group discussion with older adults about racism, a member sent me the following story:

A pastor asked an older farmer to say grace before sharing with him a breakfast meal. The farmer began, "Lord, I hate buttermilk." The pastor opened one eye to glance at the farmer wondering where he was going with his prayer. Next came, "Lord, I hate lard." The pastor was growing concerned. The farmer continued, "And Lord, you know I don't much care for raw white flour." The pastor again opened an eye to glance around the room to see that he was not the only one feeling uncomfortable. The farmer then added, "But Lord, when you mix them all together and bake them, I do love warm biscuits. So Lord, when things come up that we don't like, when life gets hard, when we don't understand what you're saying to us, help us to just relax and wait until you are done mixing. It will probably be even better than biscuits. Amen."

It is true; we are experiencing some complicated situations in the world today including race relations. We want to have the assurance that God is at work bringing good from the mix of things and to know something even better will occur when all is done.

It might be helpful to practice a partnership with God and look at our own unconscious, ingrained racism. To do so is to hold ourselves accountable and admit the times in which we are being racist. As the Oxford Mayor Robyn Tannehill put it recently, "It is much harder to look at ourselves objectively than it is to blame our political enemies for all our ills. But until we do, the hate will continue to eat us—and our country—alive." As the scripture from Exodus 14:14 says that Olin shared recently: "The Lord himself will fight for you. Just stay calm."

Ron Richardson

Parish Associate for Pastoral Care



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:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChRsd9_u5JZ1SEV5LsUnJUQ

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.firstprestupelo.org

Or First Presbyterian Church, Tupelo, MS on Facebook

Session Digest

1. **Admin** has approved purchasing hand sanitizer and dispensers, masks, and other safety items to be used when worship resumes, with an anticipated July date to be determined.
2. **Christian Education Committee** will be hosting an ice cream social and drive through parade on Tuesday, June 16 for children K-5th grade. Activity packets, goodies and a Popsicle will be given to everyone. This is just an activity to keep everyone in touch.

Heather Crotwell has been hosting weekly "WeeKids lessons" that are being aired weekly on YouTube and broadcast on Facebook.

Melissa McDuffie has begun meeting with youth on Sundays. They are meeting outside and playing games, sharing a simple meal, and sharing a devotional.

We have begun registration for a "Backyard Bible School" to take place on July 15th. This will take place in the backyard of host homes and will include swimming, devotional and an easy meal.

3. **Property and Grounds Committee** reported that the Scout Hut is finally being torn down and will hopefully be completed soon.

Crepe Myrtles were treated for life-threatening parasites.

Bids are being obtained for light fixture refurbishment, which will bring overall utility costs down.

Bids are being obtained for work on the south sanctuary wall.

The sidewalks will be power washed soon.

Youth

The youth continue to meet outside on Sunday nights for fellowship, dinner and devotions. All are invited to join us! If you know of someone who would like to receive information about these gatherings straight from me, please let me know. It is very laid back and it is just good to see each other! I plan to continue these meetings through the summer.

Montreat Youth Conference has been cancelled for this summer due to COVID-19 concerns. The youth are disappointed and so am I! I always look forward to this time with our youth, and this summer was going to be especially meaningful having 19 of our youth on this trip. I am most sorry for our seniors. Senior year at Montreat is very special, and I hate the fact that these youth will not have this experience. Please continue to keep our four graduates in your prayers!

Though we were unable to host a traditional Vacation Bible School, we will offer a Backyard Bible School on July 15 from 5:30-7:00. Please contact me if you would like to join us at 662-871-2046 or mcduffiemel18@gmail.com. We would love to have you!

Melissa McDuffie
Youth and Christian Education

Presbyterian Women

Presbyterian Women's Council met Monday and discussed plans for the 2020-2021 year. We will be introducing our new book study next month. Lucy Nash will be Presbyterian Women Moderator for the 2020-2021 year.

News from the Reopening Task Force

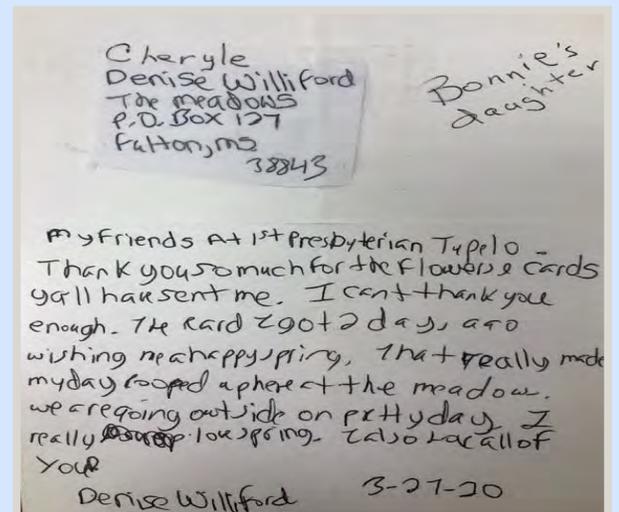
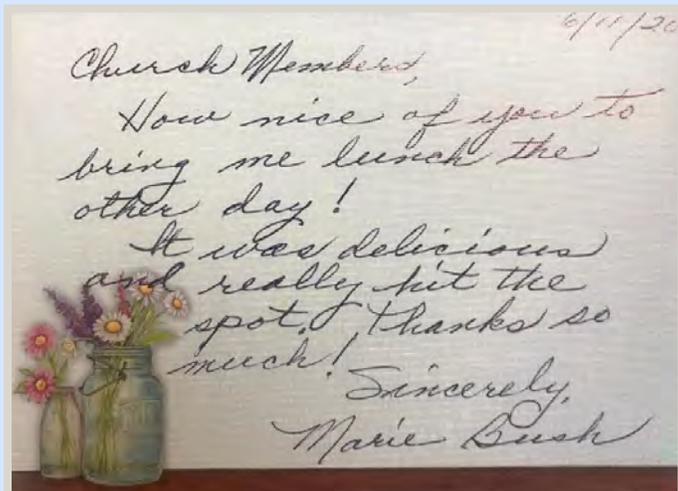
The reopening committee has been hard at work in the last month to determine what's best for our church, as we decide how and when to return to "in-person worship." There are so many different opinions about what to do and the speed at which we implement our safe return to the sanctuary. One thing we have done recently is a survey, and we thank everyone for taking the time to answer the questions. We learned that people definitely want bathrooms open, and we definitely will have a couple of them available when worship resumes. We also were reminded that many of you enjoy watching the streaming of services and are perfectly content to continue watching at home for a while longer, and that is also perfectly fine. Many thanks to Seth Shelnut for being instrumental in bringing FPC's streaming service to you in the convenience of your own home. We had tentatively set the date of resuming worship in the sanctuary for July 19. As we write this, however, the Covid cases continue to rise at a rapid pace. We will monitor the situation, consult with the medical community and try to determine if we need to keep the July 19 date or move it further out. Please pray for us to make the right decision.

One plan that we would like to try in the near future is to open the sanctuary on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:00 until 4:00 p.m. for prayer and meditation time. This plan is still being discussed, so stay tuned for an announcement coming soon. We would restrict this to no more than 8-10 people at a time with social distancing and no socializing being practiced. Masks are required for anyone entering the building, and they will be required for prayer time in the sanctuary, as well. We would also ask you to avoid visiting in the office with the staff. If there is little interest in "quiet time" in the sanctuary, we will know after a couple of weeks and may decide to adjust the schedule or simply end it. Our thought is that it would be a good chance for people to reconnect with one of the special things here at FPC Tupelo. We will make an announcement soon when we finalize plans regarding prayer time in the sanctuary.

Unfortunately, there is no handbook on how to handle a church "reopening" from a pandemic. Our committee is trying to balance the desires and wishes of members' various thoughts and attitudes with the overriding concern for everyone's safety. Patience is a virtue, and we want to thank everyone for their virtue.

Richard Hastings
Chairman

Thank you!



Memorials, Gifts, & Honoraria

IN MEMORY OF:

Betty Black

Robin & Cindy Faucette (Cherub Choir Fund)
Sarah Young (Memorial Garden Fund)
Travis & Gay Abney (Music Fund)

Billy Burks

Travis & Gay Abney (Undesignated)
Robin & Cindy Faucette (Cherub Choir Fund)
Sarah Young (Memorial Garden Fund)

Elizabeth Faison

Robin & Cindy Faucette (Cherub Choir Fund)

Margarete Flowers

Robin & Cindy Faucette (Cherub Choir Fund)

Jenny Hewitt

Robin & Cindy Faucette (Cherub Choir Fund)

Shirley Quay Joiner

Robin & Cindy Faucette (Cherub Choir Fund)
Theresa White (Undesignated)

Gray Megginson

Travis & Gay Abney (Undesignated)
Robin & Cindy Faucette (Cherub Choir Fund)
Jean Magee (Youth Fund)

Penny Nichols

Travis & Gay Abney (Undesignated)
Carlock of Tupelo (Pastors' Discretionary Fund)
Robin & Cindy Faucette (Cherub Choir Fund)
Judy Griffie (Undesignated)
Buddy & Mary Stubbs (Undesignated)
Sarah Young (Memorial Garden Fund)

Wilson Simmons

Sarah Young (Memorial Garden Fund)

George Knox White

Robin & Cindy Faucette (Cherub Choir Fund)

Marie White

George & Wanda Dent (Guatemala Water Fund)

Barbara Wilbur

George & Wanda Dent (Guatemala Water Fund)

IN HONOR OF:

Travis Abney

George & Wanda Dent (Guatemala Mission)

Bill Autrey

George & Wanda Dent (Guatemala Mission)

Tom Billups

George & Wanda Dent (Guatemala Mission)

Bill & Doyce Deas

George & Wanda Dent (Guatemala Mission)

Cindy Faucette

Hodges Orthodontics, P.C. (Cuba Mission)

John Fleming

George & Wanda Dent (Guatemala Mission)

Jean Magee

George & Wanda Dent (Guatemala Mission)

Taylor Neal

George & Wanda Dent (Guatemala Mission)

Glenn Thomas

George & Wanda Dent (Guatemala Mission)

Judy Thomas

Jackie Haguewood (Fellowship Fund)

Sarah Young

Jackie Haguewood (Fellowship Fund)



Backyard Bible School

Wednesday, July 15

5:30 - 7:00 pm

Ages 2 year old - 5th Grade

Held at host homes to be announced
Swimming, playing, dinner, Bible study

To register or for questions,
contact Melissa McDuffie (662) 871-2046 or
mcduffiemel18@gmail.com

Register by July 11

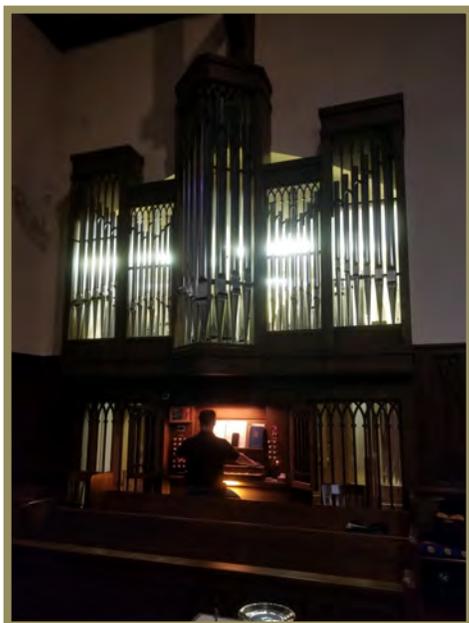
New elders were ordained and installed during worship on June 7. Pictured are Kirk Biddle, Susan Boone, Amy Fagan, Mitzi Moore, Aubrey Patterson, Jr., Grayson Robbins, and Debra Robison.



Last week, members of the Lee County Sheriff's Department and Tupelo Police Department were happy to receive lunch from Honey Baked Ham, compliments of FPC. Thanks to all who delivered the box lunches.



Our organ needs periodic "tune ups." Last week, two organ specialists came in to do the work, with supervision by Dr. Ray Harris, our organist.



Meetings on the Grounds

Groups of 20 or less are welcome to meet in the church's garden area. Please be sure to call the church office to place any meeting or event on our calendar. That allows us to know who is here at any given time and more importantly, it will keep everyone safe with 20 or less gathering at a time. Please bring your own chairs if needed. Church office hours are 8:00 A.M. until 5:00 P.M. Monday through Thursday.

The Fellowship Committee met on June 7 to begin plans for fall projects. The first one is on August 21 with the feeding of the Tupelo High School Football team. This is the opening game for the team at South Panola. Next comes Trunk or Treat in October. More information concerning these events will be in the bulletin and in the Tower.



The Seekers Sunday School Class had a picnic on the grounds recently.



The Marys and Marthas are thankful that Mildred Grubbs is feeling stronger.

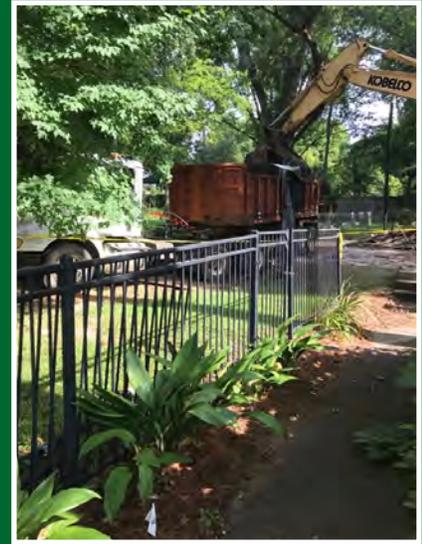


Need a Mask?



Cindy Faucette has been busy sewing some useful and fashionable masks. Lots of FPC members have enjoyed their protection as they are out and about. She also has some cute, printed fabrics that are especially for children! If you would like a mask, please call Cindy at 662-231-6827 or Robin at 662-401-4510, or you can email Cindy at cfaucette@bellsouth.net. CDC guidelines recommend wearing cloth face coverings in grocery stores, pharmacies, and other public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain.

The dilapidated scout hut is being torn down this week. Over the years, lots of boys made great memories as they worked through the ranks, and many of them went on to earn the rank of Eagle Scout. While we are still uncertain about a new scout hut, plans are being discussed.





July Birthdays

1	17
Deanna Richardson	Lori Robertson
Frances Sheffield	19
2	Retta Maxwell
Melonie Counce	20
Tony Tannehill	Robert Moss
3	Jeffrey Tannehill
Sally Threldkeld	22
Al Wallace, IV	Lucy Hilbun
4	23
David Henson	Doug Maxwell
6	24
Louis Armour	Maureen Miller
Kyle Rogers	26
7	Rob McAuley
Olivia Hastings	Kristin Whitten
9	28
Michelle McAuley	Larry Hazel
10	Sam Pace
Shep Collins	29
Allan Smith	Isaiah Barbour
Rochelle Wallace	Susan Boone
12	Heather Ingram
Beverly Chappell	30
Joanne Posey	Steve Bryson
14	31
Jackson Cayson	Kelby Cobb
Emory McBride	Leslie Hastings
15	Ashton Posey
Byron Fellows	Zac Zimmerman
Leath Johnson	

July Anniversaries

8	20	28
Andy & Heather Crotwell	Clarence & Sue Shepherd	Bill & Lori Dickerson
9	25	30
Hank & Garra Owens	Britt & Alice Rogers	Butch & Tricia Cockrell
19	26	
Barry & Ginger Mark	Bill & Camille Caples	