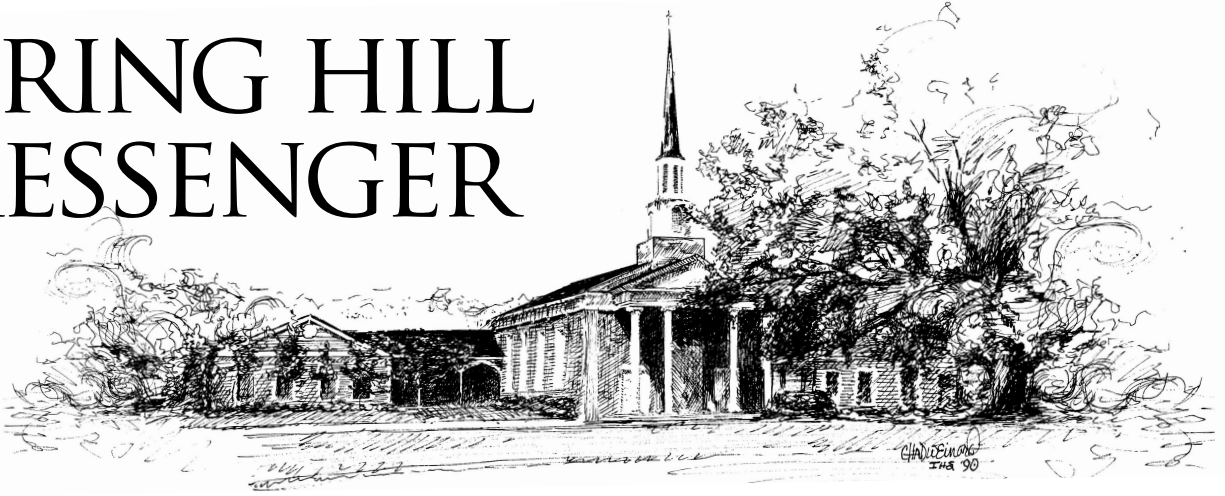


SPRING HILL MESSENGER



Spring Hill Presbyterian Church, Mobile, Alabama

April, 2019

LENT: NO EXPRESS LANE

DEAR SPRING HILL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FAMILY,

As we begin the month of April we near the end of the season of Lent, our forty day journey that leads to the cross and then to the empty tomb. I have a confession to make...I've never really been a big fan of Lent. Maybe it's because through the years I've seen the "giving up" pattern used more for individualistic self-care or empty ritualism than for genuine spiritual growth (though certainly not by all people). Maybe it's because I've seen places where the 40-day season seems to eclipse the importance of each Sunday as the Lord's Day (the day of resurrection). Maybe it's because I've been in worship services in other locations on Maundy Thursdays or Good Fridays that were so somber and downcast, that it felt almost like we were being asked to pretend we didn't know how the story was really going to end. Maybe it's all the pollen. Who knows?

Don't get me wrong, it's not that I think Lent is bad, or wrong, or trivial. Certainly, we all need reminders that our faith is a journey, one that doesn't have short-cuts or express lanes. We can all benefit from reflecting on the deep deep mystery of Jesus' death on the cross, and not always jumping so quickly to the triumphalism of Easter. The truth is there cannot be resurrection without going through death first.

But in many ways, this Lent has been different! It's been special. Our focus on Sabbath (in all its biblical richness) has been exactly what I needed to hear. Rev. Anna Fulmer Duke has designed this year's Lenten journey around the theme "Be Still and Know." And

though it's not been easy, I've been working on being still—on not filling—filling time, filling space, filling to-do lists, filling every ounce of my days. And here's the thing, when we aren't full to the brim with all our own "stuff" have room (we make room) for God to enter into our emptiness. When we take Sabbath FROM the addiction

to activity in our world (rooted in the sin of self-idolatry) the result is that we make

Sabbath FOR transforming

encounters with the Holy Spirit through our faith. (Maybe in truth, that's what all the "giving up" of Lent is supposed to be about). When we slow down enough to focus on where we are (not just where we are going) our eyes become attuned to the joy and the suffering around us. We can see the pain of

the cross more clearly, so that we may one day see the glory of resurrection light all the brighter.

So, this year, this Lent, I am full of gratitude. I'm thankful for the gift of Sabbath. I'm thankful to Anna for guiding us through this journey. I'm thankful to all of you at SHPC for being willing companions on this path. I'm thankful for the call to Christian discipleship that leads us to let go of all that holds us back. I'm thankful that each of us are already enough, more than enough, through the gift of God's grace, made real for us in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. But I'm not thankful for pollen.

Grace and Peace,

Opportunities for Fellowship, Service and Study

Current Issues Sunday School Class Schedule

MARCH 31 and April 7 -

Special Sunday School Class Combining Young Adults and Current Issues

One of this year's goals for the Christian Education Committee is "To strengthen our core as a faith community that learns together." Although our Young Adults are always welcome and encouraged to attend either the Current Issues or the Bible Discovery Class on Sundays, the C.E. Committee wants to be more intentional by promoting specific opportunities for combining age groups in ways that might be especially appealing to all.

On March 31 and April 7, selected quotes from two books by Parker Palmer will be the focus for conversation around our multiple perspectives on vocation (*Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation*) and on aging as a passage of discovery (*On the Brink of Everything: Grace, Gravity, & Getting Old*). You do not need to have read either book to join the conversation! Your own life experiences and the quotes from Palmer's books will be a reference point. Gain a new appreciation for the insights and wisdom of those in our congregation from 25 to 95, as we share what we have learned on life's journey. Class meets at 9:00 in the Terry Room in the Edington Building. Co-facilitated by Molly Wagner and Dale Hair.

Art In The Library

Art in the library during March and April will feature worship teaching aids for children made by Wanda Lawrence and her friend Dianne Davidson. The soft sculptures represent the sacraments, the liturgical year, and prominent Bible stories. These aids are child friendly and give the children an opportunity to have "hands on" as they begin their faith journey. Expect to see some of the aids in support of future Children's Sermons and as our young people are taught in classes about our church and sacraments. Visit the library occasionally over the next two months to view new sculptures as they are created!

Church-wide Events Spring 2019 Calendar in Brief	
APRIL	
11	Easter Egg Hunt 5:30-7 pm
28	Senior Breakfast (High School) and Graduation Sunday
JUNE	
2	Summer Series Begins
24-27	Vacation Bible School

Call for Volunteers!!

VBS at Spring Hill Presbyterian is one of my favorite parts about summer! It's so fun to watch these children learn and grow closer to God while doing His great work. Volunteering is a breeze because you are able to give in anyway you feel led. Providing snacks, supplies, and especially time and talent are among a few. The music, art, community service, and team building activities blow me away year after year. It's truly a fun time for all ages and we hope to see you there! —Mary Katherine Martin

If you are interested in volunteering for VBS this year, we want you! Sign-up by talking or emailing to Anna Fulmer Duke-
anna@springhillpresbyterian.org
or Mary Katherine Martin,
MKmartin416@gmail.com, or phone 251-454-4516.

We Rejoice!

We rejoice with Andrew and Allison Snelling in the birth of a son, Andrew Edward Snelling, on March 26. Grandparents are Ashton and Michele Hill.

"FISH CAMP"

- **Men's Sunday School Series:** Join other men in the church for a special short-term Sunday school series during Lent. Check the bulletin announcements and weekly email news for more details.





Presbyterian Women

Presbyterian Women's Coordinating Team will meet on April 3 in the Conference Room. Circles will meet on April 10.

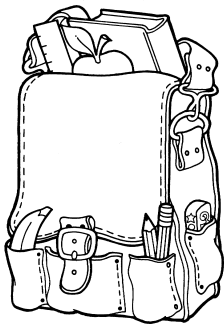
Important Dates

May 8 Birthday Offering and Installation of Officers. Budget presented. Birthday Offering received.

June 13-15 AL/MS Women's Conference and Synod Gathering (see flyer in this issue for details)

KEEP ON PACKIN'

Backpack for Kids Ministry has been a great success at Austin Elementary, Philips Prep, and Davidson High. We are supplying a total of 27 backpacks per week to these schools. Through your generosity, students in need are given



nutritious, easy-to-prepare weekend meals. Food for Kids targets homeless children and children showing signs of chronic hunger. The project will continue throughout the school year. We meet to assemble the backpacks on the first Saturday of the month at 9:00 a.m., room 215 in the Bullard Building.

Food donations may be dropped off in the bin that is located in the Bride's Room. If you wish to make a monetary

donation, make your check out to Spring Hill Presbyterian Church with a note that is for the Backpack Program. You may drop off your check at the office or place it in the collection plate on Sunday. **Thank you!** to everyone who participates in this worthy project!

Church calendar: APRIL 2019

2	Religious Arts Committee 5:30 p.m. Worship Committee, Plant Services, and Mission 6:00 p.m. Christian Ed Committee 6:30 p.m.
3	Congregational Care 11:00 a.m. Lenten Service 12:00 p.m. Presbyterian Women Coordinating Team 9:30 a.m.
4	Writing and Spirituality 4:00 p.m.
6	Back Pack for Kids 9:00 a.m.
7	Blood Drive 8:00 a.m. New Members Welcomed 10:30 a.m.
8	Out Reach 4:00 p.m.
9	Welcoming and Belonging Committee 1:00 p.m.
10	Day Circle 10:00 a.m. Night Circle 6:00 p.m.
11	Easter Egg Hunt 5:30 p.m.
14	Communion
15	Newsletter Deadline
16	Breakfast Bible Study 7:00 a.m.
18	Maundy Thursday
19	Good Friday
20	Yeoman Workday 8:00 a.m.
21	Easter
23	Session 6:00 p.m. Diaconate 7:00 p.m.
25	Christus Lecture 7:00 p.m.
28	Senior Breakfast 9:00 a.m. Graduation Sunday 10:30 A.m. Trolley Pilgrimage 3:00 p.m.

Memorials have been received for the following:

Stan Thurston
John Morrisette
Bill Fox
Norman Walton

From the following:

Emily Foster
Mr. & Mrs. Brooks Milling
Ginny McCrory
Esther Fox
Richard and Lila Pennington
Dick and Sherry Coats

4/14
4/18
4/19
4/21

Holy Week

Sabbath in the Garden (Palm Sunday)
A Sabbath Meal (Maundy Thursday, 7:00 p.m.)
Sitting in Sabbath's Shadow (Good Friday, 12:00 Noon)
Living in the Light
of Sabbath Resurrection (Easter Sunday)



“Sabbath: the Gift of Presence”

Dear Friends,

This Lent has felt like a whirlwind! I am a few weeks into our daily practices for Lent, and I have to say that it is getting harder to be consistent. It is easy to rush out the door on a Monday morning without taking one breath, forget five minutes of breathing! Yet, when I do a few minutes of our daily practices, I find myself noticing things I gave little attention to before. Most Tuesdays, I have been going outside to look at a tree in my yard. The first few weeks I went outside, it looked dead. It has big circular marks on the bark that I thought for sure must be some sort of disease. Many Tuesdays have been gray. Sometimes it has been a little drizzly, but slowly I have started to notice tiny buds appear on my tree. My tree never really flowered like the others. It gave off a few blooms, but nothing like the others in the neighborhood. Yet, it continued to sprout leaves. Before this, I had never taken the time to notice how symmetrical and beautiful the leaves laid on my tree's branches. How life burst forth in some of the most surprising places: buds springing forth next to a gnarled knot. Our Tuesday practice of journaling outside has helped me discover the ordinary beauty around me that I can forget to see.

Some of the daily practices feel more natural than others. At the end of a day sometimes I am surprised to realize that Sabbath was there when I ignored my phone and tuned into the people around me. Sabbath was there sharing a coffee with a friend. I am realizing that turning off my phone isn't just a Sabbath practice for me. It is a gift to the people around me too, a way to be present to life. At times, I am realizing just how much I use my phone as a coping mechanism to shut myself off or ease the suffering of my life. Instead of helping, these distractions eventually hurt.

My favorite practice (probably because I am a helper on the enneagram), is the practice of giving Sabbath to another. It has been fun to hold a friend's new baby for a little while, so she could have a break. I have done a few extra chores to give Brian some rest. I have tried to make an effort not to shop too late, so that maybe, just maybe others have a break. The latter practice is difficult because I do not necessarily know who my actions impact. I just hope that my resistance allows God's peace, rest, and hope to fill broken spaces and places. As I practice Sabbath, I am becoming more and more convicted that our Sabbath, our rest has the potential to touch our family, friends, community, and world. Maybe it's just a drop in the bucket. Yet as the song "Drop in the Bucket" proclaims, those drops and buckets can fill ponds, spill into rivers until their power can't be stopped. What becomes a mighty ocean, starts with a drop. How is your Lenten journey going? Are there drops of hope in your bucket? Where are you finding Sabbath rest? Resistance? Love?

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Anna Fulmer Duke

Children's ministry news

- The children's Sunday school class and children's church time will begin April by hearing the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son. We will also talk about how God welcomes and forgives sinners.
- On April 14, we will learn about Palm Sunday, and discuss the events of Holy Week. The children will have activities to do at home for each day of Holy Week.
- Children will celebrate Easter on April 21. We will learn about ways to share the joy of Easter with others.
- We will end the month of April, by hearing the story from the book of Luke about how Jesus's followers saw him after he had risen. Children will talk about how happy Jesus's followers were, and how they spread the amazing news that Jesus was alive!

Spring Hill Presbyterian's Easter Egg Hunt

- Thursday, April 11, 5:30-7 pm
- Story-time at 5:45 pm.
- Hunt begins promptly at 6 pm.
- Food available for purchase at food trucks.





Spring Hill Presbyterian Church
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Mobile, AL 36608

www.shpc.us

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