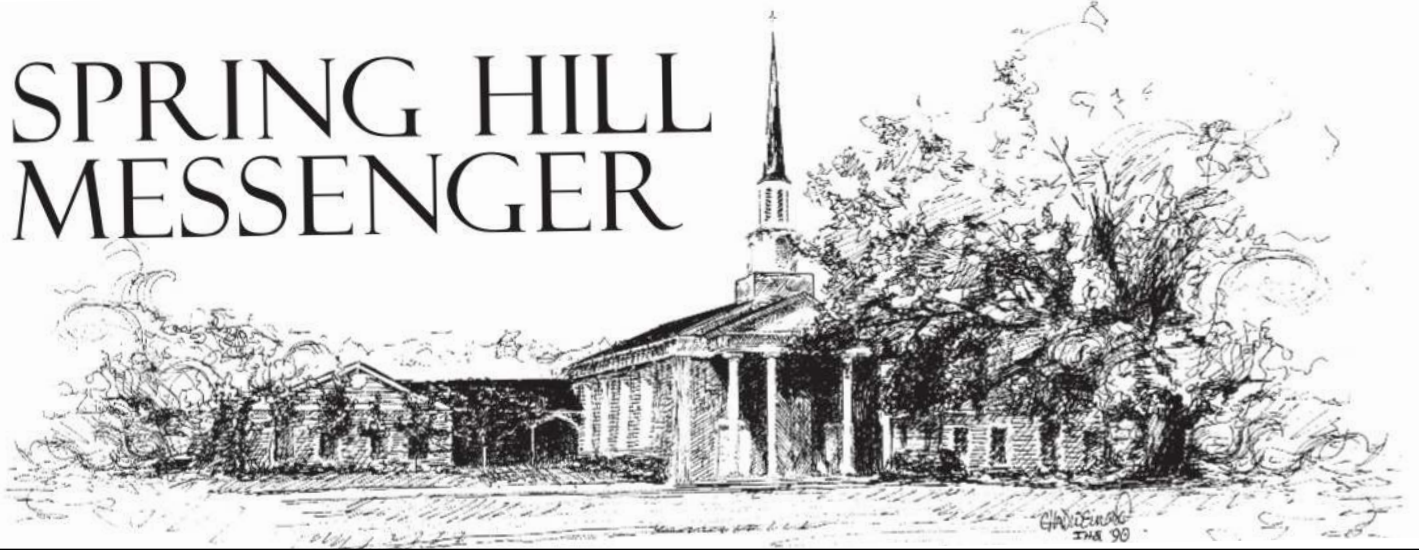


SPRING HILL MESSENGER



Spring Hill Presbyterian Church, Mobile, Alabama

Volume 83, Number 16, August, 2018

Transformed Minds: In the World, but not of the World

Dear Spring Hill Presbyterian Family,

This summer our church has been engaged in a study of the letters (or epistles) of the New Testament through a variety of different formats. We've had wonderful Sunday School presentations from an amazing array of local speakers; we have used different passages from these letters to form our liturgy in worship each Sunday; we've had a fun sermon series based on the story behind each letter; we have issued a letter writing challenge to the congregation each week for a different way of connecting with the scripture; and we've even had a special children's message series (and take-home devotional) to teach our kids the ABC's of faith. By using all these tools, the hope has been to enable us as a church family to receive the good news of the gospel contained within each letter. While there are a variety of unique stories behind each correspondence among the epistles, the one story of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection serves as the foundational narrative in each of them. This story, the Gospel story, is all about God's work in Christ reconciling the world to God's own self, a message which has the power to lead us into reconciliation with our neighbors.

In the months of June and July we have primarily studied the letters of Paul, the last of which was the epistle to the Romans. In the 12 chapter of that book Paul writes **"do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your minds."**

Paul calls the Roman church to be different than the world around them—transformed by the love of God so that they might be transforming in their community. The same call is issued to us centuries later for our church family.

For the month of August, we will examine other letters in the New Testament, not written by Paul. Sometimes these are referred to as the "general epistles." In one of them, attributed to Peter, the author explains that as Christians our identity is marked by a kind of dual citizenship. We are both citizens of the kingdom of God and residents of the community, the nation, the world in which we live. How we navigate between these two claims is what the practice of discipleship is all about. The author suggests that we are to live as "aliens and exiles" in our struggle to serve our neighbors in this world without serving the broken powers of this world.

As the summer days begin to wane and the school year quickly approaches, I find myself thinking about these two calls from Romans and 1st Peter. What did it mean to be a Christian in those first decades after Christ? It meant living as an alternative community oriented towards transforming the world through Christ's reconciling love. What does it mean to be a faithful Christian community in our polarized and divided world today?

Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1

The answer is still the same. These ancient letters speak a new word that we need to hear. As so many students, teachers, parents, grandparents, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, friends, supporters, and volunteers prepare for the start of another school year—where there will be ample opportunities for “the renewing of our minds”—may we go into this next season with the charge to be “in the world but not of the world”. May we see our ultimate mark of identity as those who belong to Christ, and may we let that sense of belonging send us out into the world to welcome others—all others—in the name of Christ, the one who is reconciling the world!

Grace and Peace,

B

SAVE THIS DATE!
Sunday,
August 26,
9-10 am

Sunday, August 26, 9-10 am,
Bullard Building **Children's
Sunday School and Children's
Church Teacher Training—**
Unable to come?
Email Anna at anna@shpc.us

High School KickOff Retreat

Aug. 10-11—We know your lives get busy in the fall, so we thought we would try an overnight retreat! We will meet at 5 pm at the church on Friday evening and return before lunch on Saturday. To reserve your spot, email Anna at anna@shpc.us

Back to School Sunday!

Education has long been an important focus for Presbyterians and for Spring Hill Presbyterian Church in particular. On Sunday, August 12, we will celebrate the beginning of another school year with a very special day at SHPC. During worship at 10:30 AM in the Sanctuary, we will pray for and commission all teachers, administrators, and staff who work in the schools, colleges, and universities in our community. **We will also have a special message and blessing for all students (of all ages) who are beginning another year.** We will hear about ways that we can be involved and serve in our church's many school partnerships. And then, we'll join together for a special church-wide lunch and fellowship opportunity in the Bullard Building immediately after worship. Please make plans to attend this special Back to School Sunday. You don't want to miss it!

Children's Sunday School

August, children's Sunday school will continue our summer schedule. We will have a quick lesson followed by an activity, then children may play games or do an activity of their choice.

The children's church lesson will be a Bible story from "Growing in God's Love- A Story Bible." We are hearing stories of strong men and women of the Bible.



Middle School Lunch, Fellowship and Bowling: August 5, 11:45 am - 5:30 pm.

Join us for this afternoon retreat as we get to know each other and have fun! Bring \$20 with you for lunch and bowling. Please let me know you are coming, so we can arrange transportation and bowling reservations! Rising 6-8th grades are invited!

This year we will split up twice a month in middle and high school groups, so this will be a great way to get to know each other. We will have our kick-off with parents on Sept. 9 at 6 pm where you will get more information about Youth Group and Sunday school.

IT'S THE MOST IMPORTANT MEAL OF THE DAY!

Breakfast Bible Study. 7:00 AM on Tuesday, August 14, in the Fellowship Hall. Wake up! and be filled with the Word. Everyone Welcome!

...BE THERE OR 'GO HUNGRY'...JUST SAYIN'

The God Who Rests

Dear Friends,

As we enter this Fall season, I am still thinking about the Old Testament Theology class I took this summer. In the class, we talked and read about how the language of the Old Testament (and for that matter the entire Bible) is dying. We have assumptions about the Old Testament that cause us to avoid it. We assume it is outdated or that Jesus came to abolish it. We ignore the Old Testament because we are sure it is all about an angry, judgmental god or just full of thou shalt and thou shalt nots, or full of dietary restrictions that are not valid today. But if we picked up our Bibles and began at the beginning, we would also find some rich Scripture to wrestle with. One principle I have been thinking about is the gift of the Sabbath.

We have a distorted view of Sabbath—often we think of Sabbath as just Blue laws, Sabbath as another word for going to church, or Sabbath as a second Saturday or catch-up day. But Sabbath is something altogether different. It is probably one of the most needed, most important principle from the Old Testament in our epidemic of busyness. We long for rest! The command for Sabbath is throughout Scripture. Sabbath receives more time throughout Scripture than any of the other 10 Commandments—obviously the Bible thinks its important.

So what is the Sabbath? Sabbath is created when God creates the world in Genesis 1. On the seventh day God rests from God's work. God could have kept creating, but God doesn't. God takes a break. Later when we receive the 10 Commandments in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5, we are told to keep the Sabbath day holy and not to do any work. Exodus reminds us to keep the Sabbath day holy because "God rested and was refreshed"—this verb, refreshed, in Hebrew means "to be resouled." I love that image of God's soul returning through resting, and the image of our souls returning to us when we enter the weekly ritual of rest. For us, what does it mean to be made in the image of a God who rests, who is not a task-master? Sabbath reminds us that we are not human doers we are human beings.

Remember, Sabbath is not just about our personal rest. It's not just about sleeping late and going to brunch. It is also about the work of worship. God calls us to "keep the Sabbath day holy" and part of keeping Sabbath holy is about the work of worship. Often, we think about holiness applying to places like churches, mountains—but time can also be holy. What if we created time for holiness, divinity, and inspiration one day a week? This is the hope of Sabbath—to be resouled.

If we choose to keep Sabbath, to rest one day a

week, the affects would be profound on us and on our communities. We would say no to the idols of performance and production. It would be a profound form of cultural resistance. And yes, we would experience resistance and consequences. We would have to face the fact that our worth is not based on our work. Our worth is not based on the accolades and how much we can get done. But being children of a God of rest. We would experience a deep form of rest and renewal that God shows us. We would become more connected to God and to one another.

I hope you don't hear these musings about Sabbath as something to feel guilty about not doing. Instead, I hope you hear this as an invitation to engage in a new spiritual practice that could change you and change our community. Find rest. Be resouled.

Peace,

Rev. Anna Fulmer Duke

P.S. One of my favorite poets, Wendell Berry takes Sabbath each week and writes a poem each week about his experiences. Enjoy one of his poems from [A Timbered Choir: The Sabbath Poems, 1979-1997](#).

1985 II

By Wendell Berry

A gracious Sabbath stood here while they stood
Who gave our rest a haven.
Now fallen, they are given
To labor and distress.
These times we know much evil, little good
To steady us in faith
And comfort when our losses press
Hard on us, and we choose,
In panic or despair or both,
To keep what we will lose.

For we are fallen like the trees, our peace
Broken, and so we must
Love where we cannot trust,
Trust where we cannot know,
And must await the wayward-coming grace
That joins living and dead,
Taking us where we would not go—
Into the boundless dark.
When what was made has been unmade
The Maker comes to His work.

Opportunities for Fellowship, Service and Study

Signed, **SEALED** **DELIVERED**

Our Adult Summer Sunday School Series continues through August 26. Be sure to join us for these excellent presentations on Sundays at 9 AM, in the Fellowship Hall.

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| July 29 | Elwood "Woody" Hannum. <i>"Letters As Historical Sources: Can The Author Control The Reader's Interpretation?"</i> |
| August 5 | Matthew Patterson. <i>"Magnum Opus"</i> |
| August 12 | Linda Parker. <i>"Letters in Literature and History"</i> |
| August 19 | Harvie and Margaret Jordan. <i>"For Better or Worse: A Discussion of Marital Bliss & Blunders."</i> |
| August 26 | Sarah & Scott Wright. <i>"Then Sings My Soul"</i> |

PW Presbyterian Women

Circles #1 and # 3 have joined to become Circle #1 which will be the daytime Circle. Circle #2 will remain the evening Circle.

Circle 1 will continue their collecting paper, laundry goods and magazines for the Ronald McDonald House. Circle 3, traditionally the Gardening Circle, will help fund the Yeomen by creating a Sunshine Fund for plants, memorial gifts, etc. This collection will continue to be separate from Least Coin and Pledges.

Watch for more details in the bulletins and September Newsletter regarding meeting places and the Co-ordinating Team and Circle Chairs.

Reminder – PW Churchwide Gathering – August 2-5, Louisville, MS

Music Notes

Randy Sheets, Director of Music Ministries and Organist



Sing and Play in a New Season!

Our new musical season will begin soon and we are eager to invite all persons to explore how they might get involved in music ministries. Participating in music at our church provides unique opportunities that cannot be duplicated elsewhere, simply because they are rooted not only in the Christian faith, but in the traditions and theology of our own church. You are invited to investigate the opportunities at SHPC in music! Contact Randy Sheets for more information (rsheets@shpc.us), 342-1550 ext 15.

Chancel Choir (adult choir) begins its new season with rehearsal on Wednesday night, August 8 (7:00-8:30). and with our Saturday, August 11 Christmas in August retreat, where we begin our Christmas music. If you love singing and would like to explore the possibility of Chancel Choir membership, contact Randy Sheets at the church. Previous musical experience in choir, instrumental ensemble, or musical instrument study, including basic music reading skills, (and the ability to sing harmony parts) is needed.

Spring Hill Ringers is an auditioned group of adults and advanced youth who practice handbells on Wednesday nights at 6:00 p.m., beginning after Labor Day. Strong music-reading skills are needed. Interested? Contact Randy Sheets.

Choirs for Children begin on Sunday afternoon, September 9. Keep an eye out for more information in the bulletin, at www.shpc.us, and in your mailbox.

Instrumental Ensemble: intergenerational instrumentalists who play concert band instruments will be playing under the leadership of Buddy Porter. Keep your eyes open for more information.

SOUND TEAM MEMBERS NEEDED. You don't see them, but they are there, stationed in the balcony sound booth, running the sanctuary sound system, recording our worship services and special events. Positions are open for new team members, who receive the needed training and who serve approximately one Sunday per month. High School upperclassmen/women and adults who are interested, contact Randy Sheets at the church.

Art in the library



The Library Art exhibit for August will highlight the glass art of Matthew Patterson. Matthew is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Visual Arts at the University of South Alabama. His current work is inspired by the natural wonders of the gulf coast region.

Be sure to take a look at this intriguing work.



We Share in Sorrow.

The prayers and sympathy of the congregation are with Kim Peterson in the death of her mother, Barbara Frazier Peterson, on June 5 in Petersburg, Virginia.



Memorials have been received for the following:

Bob & Mary Byrd
Mary Byrd
Paula Johnson
Barbara Frazier Peterson
Liz Hill

From the following:

Rebecca & Chip & Chip Tait
Jerry & Lynn Hennig
Mary Lou Busby & "Doodle" Crumpton
Chris & Michele Nichols, Elizabeth & John Charles
James & Cecile Fibbe
Jerald & Janice Gallagher
Charles & Linda Langston
Bob & Debbie Hartwell DeLacey
Janie Sims
Mary Clare & Bernard Kearse
Barbara Drey
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Forbes Sirmon
Lucy & Buddy Boykin
First Baptist Church of Vincent, AL
Schley & Laura Rutherford
The Minor Group (Grant, Ben & Will Minor)
Murray & Anne Meador
Charles & Rita Hall
Susan Abrams
Roy & Sue Martino



We Rejoice

We rejoice with Hilda Gewin on the birth of her great grandson, William David Harbison, born on July 12 in Arab, Alabama. The parents are Will and Claire Gewin Harbison.

Church Calendar August 2018

1	Congregational Care – 12:30pm
2-4	PW Churchwide Gathering
5	Communion Middle School Afternoon Retreat
7	Committees
8	Choir practice resumes
10	Preschool Open House
11	Chancel Choir Retreat
12	Back to School Sunday Church picnic (tentative)
13	Mom's Day Out Starts
14	Breakfast Bible Study – 7:00 am
18	Mobile Singing Children Workshop: 9:00 am – 4:00 pm High School Kick-off Overnight Retreat 4:00 pm (Begins)
19	High School Kick-off Overnight Retreat (Ends)
20	Newsletter deadline
21	Presbytery Meeting – Cottage Hill Presbyterian Church Session – 6:00 pm Diaconate – 7:00 pm
24	Officer Training Retreat – 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm
26	Teacher Training

Statement as of June 2018

Total Budgeted Revenue	\$886,720
Year to date received	375,870
Other receipts	15,620
Total Receipts	\$391,490
Benevolences	26,882
Salaries and services	275,383
Programs	18,050
Office expenses	12,672
General & plant services	104,903
Other	15,827
Total Expenses	\$453,717
Excess receipts over expenses (deficit)	-\$62,227



Spring Hill Presbyterian Church
10 Westminster Way
Mobile, AL 36608

www.shpc.us

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August 12 is Back-to-School Sunday!



AUGUST 2018