

# SPRING HILL MESSENGER



Spring Hill Presbyterian Church, Mobile, Alabama

August 2020

## “In Life and In Death We Belong to God.”

DEAR SPRING HILL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FAMILY,

Like all of you I am ready, so ready for this season of the coronavirus to be behind us. Thousands continue to suffer and die from this deadly disease. Our church still cannot safely return to so many of the important practices that form us as a family of faith. Schools and colleges are to begin the academic year--some online only and some in person with extra safety protocols. Sports teams at the professional, college, and local levels are trying to navigate possibilities of playing while balancing the risks of infection to athletes. Some who were already experiencing loneliness feel even more isolated than they did before. The impact of this pandemic has reached into all areas of life. Like the psalmist, I find myself praying sometimes, “**How long, O Lord?**”

But from my perspective as a pastor, perhaps the most distressing and disorienting effect of this season of separation has been the ways in which the virus is keeping us from grieving the way we need to. Since March, I have officiated at 14 funerals/memorial services, with 2 more scheduled in the coming days. All of them have occurred during the time of pandemic, but none of those who passed away died from COVID-19. Some were church members, some relatives of church members, one in my own family. Some were members who died months ago but now was the time to bury their ashes. Some were small family-only graveside services, some were large socially-distance and live-streamed services. Some were tragic surprises others were peaceful passing's after long lives. Amidst this diversity of circumstances, however, all of these funerals, memorial services, or gravesides over the last five months shared a common theme: everyone who was supposed to be there couldn't be present. Because of coronavirus some family who would have traveled to Mobile weren't able to do so. Friends from around the community had to stay home, especially if they were in high risk categories. The church family couldn't gather to practice hospitality with the most tried and true medicine in the face of grief: cookies, punch, and pimento cheese sandwiches. In other words, all of us as family, friends, and a church family have not been able to grieve **together**. Grieving in community, walking together through the valley of the shadow of death, holding each other up when our own strength fails us, gathering to sing, pray, and celebrate the good news or the resurrection—this is how we navigate the rough waters of loss and the storms of sorrow.

The coronavirus pandemic has isolated us in our grief, and this is not as it should be. But we know the truth of the gospel, that though we are not physically together, we are ultimately not separated from each other or from those we have lost, because we are not separated from God. Paul reminds us in Romans, “Neither death nor life...nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Or as Presbyterians often say, “In life and in death we belong to God.” And no pandemic can separate us!

Grace and Peace,

**Prayer List**

Kaye Bradshaw, Elizabeth Britton, David Campbell, David Cox, Myles Cox, Payton Cox, Amelia Daugherty, Muriel Donald, Vivian Fulmer, Bobby Gewin, Gwen Greer, Norma Haas, Robert Hennig, Lauren Henson, Andrea Wiik Hinton, Wayne Hinton, Charlotte Phillips Hocutt, Kay Korb, Norma Magee, Sue McLean, Marilyn Michel, Betty Minto, Ernest Moses, Jack Murphy, Danny Parker, Art Powell, Ann Russell, Janie Sage, William Shreve, Gladys Sheets, Ransome Sheets, Patricia Stimson, Pam Thompson, Lorretta Turner, Dusty Walton, Helen Wells, Buddy Wilder, all our military members: Haley Harrell, Susanna Hedrick, Stuart Rubio; **the children in our Big Brother/Big Sister program:** Krystyn, Maylasia, Makenzie, Milaishia, Morgan, Taliah & Xayvion.

**PLEASE NOTE: On September 1 we will clear all the current names off of our prayer list in order to keep it accurate and up-to-date. If you would like to add names to the list please contact Marcia Wear in the church office.**

**WE REJOICE** with Tim and Ann Holston on the birth of their granddaughter, Lucy Louise Holston born June 30, to Brad and Amber Holston.

**CONGRATULATIONS** to Bruce and Sylvia Weinard on their 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary, celebrated on August 1, 2020.

**THE PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY** of the congregation are with:

- ❖ Steve Forward on the death of his sister, Brenda Vick on July 19.
- ❖ Pat and Virginia Edington on the death of Robert Edington on July 26.
- ❖ Al and Virginia Martin on the death of their daughter, Kimberly Robson on July 19.
- ❖ Chris, Mary Stirling, and Madelyn Brown on the death of Ashley Brown on August 5.

<b>Statement as of June 30, 2020</b>	
Total Annual Budgeted Revenue	\$ 860,365
Year-to-date Received	\$ 432,335
Other Receipts	\$ 17,348
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>\$ 449,683</b>
Benevolences	\$ 27,393
Salaries and Services	\$ 239,812
Programs	\$ 5,014
Office Expenses	\$ 11,646
General and Plant Services	\$ 95,615
Other	\$ 17,022
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 396,501</b>
<b>Excess Receipts over Expenses (Deficit)</b>	<b>\$ 53,182</b>

**Save the Dates:**

Sunday, August 16—  
Outdoor Evening Vespers  
Service @ 7:00 PM

Sunday, August 23 -  
Online Kirkin' o' the  
Tartans Service

Sunday, August 30 --Back  
to School Sunday ---  
Outdoor Evening Vespers  
Service @ 7:00 PM