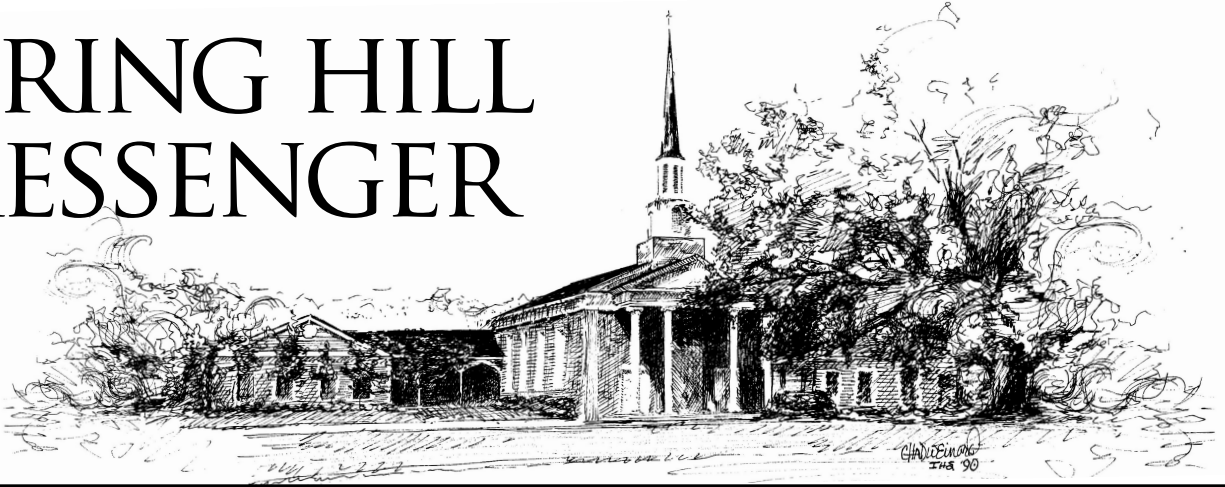


SPRING HILL MESSENGER



Spring Hill Presbyterian Church, Mobile, Alabama

December 2019/January 2020

“LET US GO NOW TO BETHLEHEM AND SEE!”

DEAR SPRING HILL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FAMILY,

Most of us have heard the story more times than we can count—not just once a year, but over and over and over. **“In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered...”**

THE Story, the Christmas story moves with a familiar cadence that seems to infuse these days with extra meaning, a certain mystery that we just can’t quite put our finger on. Maybe, for some of you or for someone you know, this year could be the first time to hear the Christmas story. For many others of us, though, it’s a narrative we’ve grown quite familiar with. Maybe we hear the story in our memory being read through the voice of an older family member, or perhaps a long-gone pastor of the church we grew up in as a child. Maybe for some of us, we hear these holy words in the voice of Linus from the Charlie Brown Christmas cartoon: **“In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night...”**

As I look forward to this coming Advent and Christmas season, there is a phrase from the old, old story that speaks a particular truth that I need to hear. It is uttered by the angel upon appearing to the shepherds: **“Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news...”** Do Not Be Afraid! This injunction is repeated throughout the entire biblical witness, but on that one night, that O Holy Night, somehow it seems sharper and more focused.

We live in a world of fear, and since the dawn of humanity that has been our lot. Our families, our jobs, our

communities, our natural environment, our fractured society and warring world can all fill us with fear. Circumstances foreseen and unforeseen feed our worries and anxieties, fuel our deepest doubts and insecurities. The fears that those shepherds were feeling seem so very different from the fears we may face in our own day and time. While the circumstances might appear worlds apart, the underlying root of all our fears is the same: loss and loneliness.

And through this web of fear cut the razor-sharp words of the angel: Do not be afraid! In the mystery of the Christmas story, the ultimate and victorious answer to our fears is provided. It is the good news! News that sounds too good to be true, and yet it is. News that the world has been waiting to hear throughout the generations and still waits for each day. The good news of the gospel: Emanuel! God is with us! We are not alone, but we are accompanied by the God who loves us enough to dwell among us in this newborn child. Death and destruction do not have the final word, for the Creator promises to usher in the new creation through this one whom we find **“wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.”** Because of him, and the news that points to him, our fears are dispelled and defeated.

And so, let us join the march of the shepherds; let us flock to the procession of the faithful through the ages.

“Let us go now to Bethlehem and see!”

Grace and Peace,

Advent Moments to Savor

Dear Friends,

For me, this Advent is unlike any other, because not only am I preparing for the arrival of Christ's birth. I now know what it looks like to count each week—to see milestones in ordinary moments. In case you did not hear in church a few weeks ago, Brian and I are expecting a child. Although we have many more months of waiting and expectation, I now have a new experience of the longing, fear, and excitement Mary and Joseph must have felt.

As we wait in eager expectation this Advent, I hope you will join me in counting down the days until Christmas using our Advent Labyrinth Game. Each day you get to draw a card and move your figurine (a sheep, star, crown, or baby) closer to the nativity scene. Each day there are questions and readings to inspire your journey. This take-home Advent project isn't just for children. Labyrinths are one of the most ancient Christian symbols, and our project—decorated by our children brings fun in our journey to the center, to Christ.

As we prepare for Christmas, I hope you will join me in preparing our church for Christmas too! I looking forward to our Advent Festival Dec. 14 from 9:00-11:00 am.

There, children will get to hear the Christmas story and create four fun crafts. Adults, we will need all hands on deck to create our Advent wreaths and decorate for Christmas. Advent comes alive for me watching the church get decorated in anticipation for Christmas. I hope you can come to join in on the fun!

Finally, Dec. 22, our children are invited to help us tell the story of Christmas through a Christmas pageant. We will gather in the sanctuary at 9:00 am to practice, then adults, come see the story unfold through our performance at 9:45 am. There is so much to be excited about this Advent. I hope you are able to savor these special moments and count down with gratitude day by day.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Anna Fulmer Duke

ALTERNATIVE GIFT MARKET: OUR GIFT FORMS MAKE GIVING EASY-PEASY!

Our Alternative Gift Market form features representative gifts of hope, benefitting local and international agencies selected by SHPC's Mission Committee. **Forms will be available in newsletters, bulletins, and in the church hallways and office.** Gifts may be selected, and donations made between November 3 and December 31 by submitting your "order form" and donation check to Susan Richardson in the church office.

Youth Ministry

Dec. 1. Montreat Trip Deadline: Just a reminder that the deadline to register for the Montreat Middle (July 15-19, 2020) and High School (June 6-13, 2020) Conferences is Dec. 1. Cost is \$290. A non-refundable deposit of \$150 is due by Dec. 1.

January 4-5: Youth Retreat at Baytrear Join us for a collaborative retreat with Government Street Presbyterian Youth. We will gather Saturday, January 4 at 10:00 am and return on January 5. Cost is \$25. Please RSVP by December 8, so we know how many people to expect! Questions? Contact Anna at anna@shpc.us

Jan 5: No Youth Group Just a reminder because of our retreat, we will not have Youth Group Jan. 5.

Jan. 12 MORNING Youth Group Event: Join us Jan. 12 as we cheer runners on at the First Light Half Marathon! Plan to meet at 9 am outside near the chapel. Afterwards, we will go out to lunch. Dress warmly! There will be no youth group that night.

March 20: Confirmation Retreat—This fun retreat will meet at 4:30 pm at the church and travel to the Baymillers for dinner, fun, preparation for your Faith Statements. We will return to the church at 9:00 pm. It is mandatory that you are there!

March 22: Youth Sunday

Children's ministry news



Children will begin Advent by hearing the story of Joseph. We will discuss how an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream, telling Joseph of Jesus greatness.

On **December 8**, our Sunday school class and children's church time will talk about thanking God for providing what Mary and Joseph needed. We will also talk about how God provides for our needs as well.

Children will discuss the excitement of the shepherds when the angel announced the birth of Jesus to them. Our lesson on December 15 will reflect on this excitement about the birth of Jesus even today.

The Sunday before Christmas, **December 22**, our children will put on an impromptu Christmas pageant in the church Sanctuary. Our children's church story will be from the book of Luke about the Magi following the star.

There will be no children's Sunday school on December 29.

To kick off a new year, children's Sunday school and children's church classes will begin a new curriculum. We begin "Jesus and His Followers" in January and we will focus on Jesus as God's special gift.

On **January 5**. We will learn that Jesus is a special child. Children will review the nativity story and identify many of the major people in the story.

We will retell the story of Jesus' baptism on **January 12**. Children will also discuss how babies are baptized in our church.

Children will hear the story from Luke chapter 4 on **January 19**. This story is when Jesus points out he is the Messiah, and wants his followers to serve the poor and outcast.

We wrap up January, by learning about Jesus' disciples. We will read scriptures from the book of Luke that talk about the first disciples. Children will also talk about ways they can do God's work.

Children's Ministry Save the Dates!

Children's Nativity Play--Sunday, December 22 at 9:00 am:

On Sunday December 22, our children will be in their own special nativity play. No dress rehearsals necessary! We ask that children show up at 9 am to pick costumes and practice. We will meet in the Sanctuary. Our big show will be at 9:40 am in the Sanctuary. Leave Sunday school a little early for this fun and festive event!

Feb. 2 Worship 101 for Kids (and parents too) at 9 am

Thursday, March 26 Easter Egg Hunt from 5:30-7 pm

June 1-4 Vacation Bible School



We Rejoice!

WE REJOICE with Sam Strada on the birth of his granddaughter, Evi Amelia, born on November 10, 2019 in Barcelona, Spain. Parents are Joe and Joanne Strada.

Opportunities for Fellowship, Service and Study



The Joy Gift Offering is taken once a year at Christmas by Presbyterian congregations to support the Board of Pensions for the Assistance Programs and for the Committee on Higher Education to support Presbyterian racial and ethnic schools and colleges. Special envelopes will be in the pews on December 22.

ADVENTFEST!!

Saturday Dec. 14 from 9-11 am. This year we are moving our Adventfest to Saturday morning from 9-11 am. Join us as we let the children and the adults make fun crafts, hear the Christmas story, and decorate our Sanctuary for worship. Many hands make light work, so please plan to help! Also, if you can bring fresh greenery from your house or a tree stand, please do! Please bring some brunch goodies as well to fuel our fun!



A Celebration of Creches

Nativity scenes will be set up on **Saturday, Dec. 7, 2019, between 9:00 a.m.-noon.** Bring them to the Fellowship Hall. Displays may be viewed by the congregation Sunday morning during the Sunday School and Worship hours, December 8. Indicate if you are willing share your creche for viewing beyond Dec. 8. Sets remaining will be displayed in the a library through Sunday December 22 and should be removed after church that day. Please provide the approximate size so display space can be allocated to accommodate each item. You will be contacted to provide a brief description and history of your family's Nativity set and a display placard will be prepared for you.

Gloria!

Mobile's Singing Children present their Christmas Concert Series

Sunday Dec. 8, 3 pm, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

Saturday, December 14, at 7:00 p.m.
Spanish Fort Presbyterian Church



ANGEL TREE GIFTS FOR CHILDREN/YOUTH AND ADULTS:

This year SHPC is sponsoring children/youth and senior citizens in Mobile who need our love and support during the Christmas season. We will provide gifts for twenty children and twenty senior adults who have been identified by Catholic Social Services. Please prayerfully consider sponsoring one or more of these people by selecting a name card from the Angel Tree bulletin board outside the Fellowship Hall, beginning in early November. WATCH FOR IT! The card lists the recipient's name and Christmas wish list. Select one or more items from the gift list you choose and bring them back to the church. **Gifts need to be returned no later than Sunday morning,** December 8. Specific instructions for gift delivery to SHPC will be on the bulletin board. This is a wonderful opportunity to talk with your family and think about the Christmas story as you select a special gift for someone you don't even know.

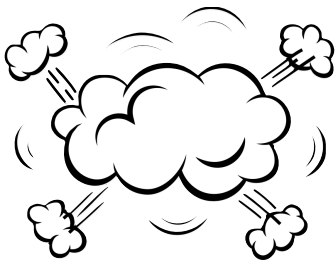


Adult Sunday Schools Continue

Current Issues Continues with Inspiring Series

“Unafraid: Living with Courage and Hope in Uncertain Times” by Adam Hamilton*

December 1	Crime, Race, Terrorism, and Politics (introduced by Rick Stout)
December 8	Failure, Disappointing Others, Insignificance, and Loneliness (introduced by Bill Layfield)
December 15	Apocalypse, Change, Missing Out, and Finances (introduced by Sue Martino)
December 22	Aging, Illness, Dying, and Fear of the Lord (introduced by Lawrence Hughey)



Theology 101 Pop-Up Sunday School Asks Tough Questions

Church-Wide Adult Sunday School Series, Jan. 5-26: Theology 101 This pop-up class led by Buz Wilcoxon and Anna Fulmer Duke will explore some of the great questions of faith that you maybe have had but didn't know how to ask! We will meet at 9:00 am on Sunday mornings in the Fellowship Hall for the month of January (Jan. 5-26).

Jan. 5: Are We Really that Bad?

Jan. 12: Why does Jesus Christ matter?

Jan. 19: Why do bad things happen?

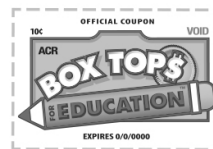
Jan. 26: Is there any hope in the end?



There will be no Sunday school on Dec. 30. Sunday school will resume Jan. 6.

Word in the Week-2020

Word in the Week: Join us Jan. 8-Feb.19 and again Apr. 22-May 13 as we explore the Gospel of Mark. This weekly engaging Bible study will meet from 12:00-1:00 pm on Wednesdays in the Fellowship Hall. You are welcome to bring your own lunch for this “brown bag” style study. Our class will break during Lent and resume Apr. 22-May 13.



Box top for Education for Presbyterian Home for Children and Mary B Austin

Traditional Box Tops clips are being phased out of production but may continue to be found on many products throughout the store. You can still clip and send them in. Eventually the Box Tops program will become digital-only. Participating brands are starting to change to the new looking Box Tops label seen above. Download the new Box Tops app from the app store on your phone, follow the directions and if you see the new label, use the app to scan your receipt within 14 days. The app will automatically find participating products purchased at any store and instantly add cash to the school's earnings online. If you do not want to download the app, there is an envelope on the Presbyterian Women's Bulletin Board that you can drop off receipts. The School's name is Hope Academy in Talladega Alabama.

Cantata Sunday

December 8, 10:30 a.m. worship service



The Hopes and Fears of All the Years

Presented by the Chancel Choir, Soloists, and Chamber Orchestra
Dr. Buz Wilcoxon, Rev. Anna Fulmer, and Dr. Wes Baldwin, readers

Music by Handel, Pergolesi, Rutter, Alice Parker, and Dan Forrest



Music in Advent and Christmas Worship Services

December 1: Chancel Choir

December 8: Cantata Sunday

December 15: Children's Choirs, Youth Chorale, and Spring Hill Ringers

December 22: Service of Lessons and Carols with Chancel Choir and soloists

Christmas Eve Family Service (5:00 p.m.): Children's Choirs and Alumni Singers

Christmas Eve Communion, Carols, and Candlelight (9:00 p.m.): Chancel Choir and soloists



Feast with Friends!

Supper Clubs are back! Supper Clubs meet monthly and are a great way to get to know other members in a smaller setting. Fill out the form below to sign-up for a Supper Club and turn it into the church office. You may also register online or on the Fellowship bulletin board in the Main building. The deadline to sign-up is December 17. We will have a Supper Club Potluck on Sunday, Jan. 26 after church in the Bullard Building. There you will have lunch with your Supper Club and plan for the Fall! Sign up for a Supper Club. We hope you will join one of these great fellowship groups! See the bulletin board in the hallway for signups!



2020 Supper Club Sign-Up

Supper Clubs are for anyone who would like to get to know others in our church family in a smaller, relaxed atmosphere. Each person hosts their supper club 1-2 times in a year. Supper Clubs can be hosted in your home, at church, or at a restaurant. **If you have questions please contact Jodi Morvant.**

I would like to join a Supper Club.

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone Number: _____

Would like a group that meets (circle one): **Day** **Evening**

Any Additional Information:

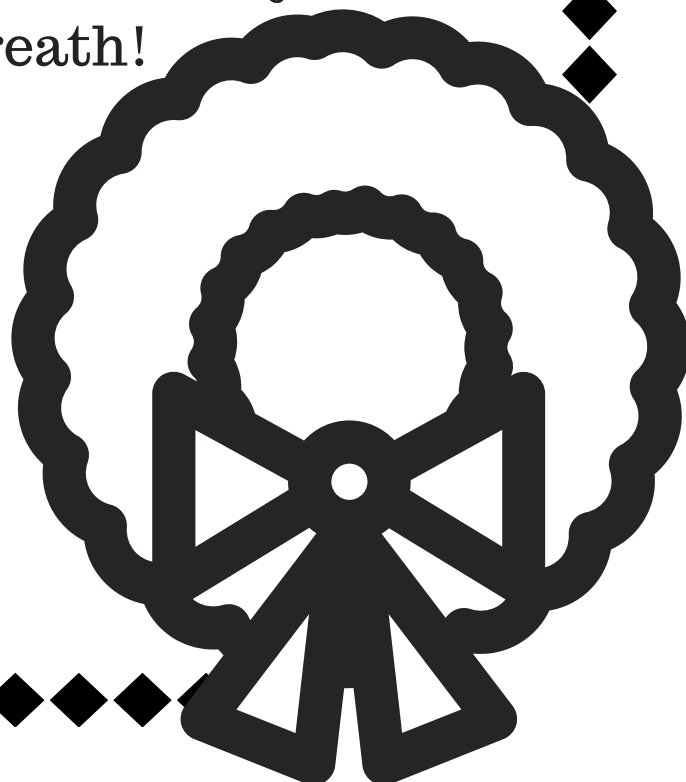
Supper Club Kick-Off Lunch is Jan. 26 after Church in the Bullard Building

SHPC invites you to an
Advent Festival
Saturday, Dec. 14

**9:00-11:00 am at the Church (begin
in the Bullard Building)**

- Help Decorate the Church
- Calling all kids! Come make fun Advent
crafts and hear the Christmas story!
- Learn how to make a wreath!
- Hear the Instrumental
Ensemble play carols.
- Eat yummy treats.

Questions? Contact
Anna at anna@shpc.us



PLAN AHEAD FOR CHURCH-WIDE EVENTS!



Jan. 5-26: Theology 101

Jan. 26: Supper Club Kick-off Lunch

Mar. 8, 15, 22: Festival of Faith at 9:00 am

Mar. 26: Easter Egg Hunt

April 12: No Sunday School (Easter Sunday)

April 19: VBS Work Party (After Church)

Apr. 26: Confirmation Sunday

May 3: Senior Breakfast (High School) and
Graduation Sunday

May 17: VBS Packing Party at 9 am

May 24: No Sunday School for Children,
Youth, and Current Issues (Memorial Day
Weekend)

May 31: Summer Series Begins

June 1-4: Vacation Bible School

Memorials have been received for the following:

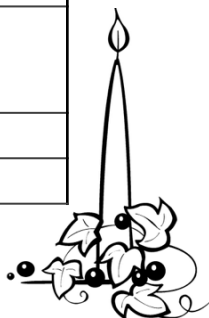
Anne Layfield
Peter Pearce
Sally & John Morrisette
Sally Morrisette
Gina Johnson-Lexie Barnett
John Hafner

From the following:

Ann Magee
Charles and Linda Langston,
N H McCrummen III,
Sam & Bailey Slaton,
Kit & Susan Mims Caffey,

CHUCH CALENDAR: December 2019	
3	Committees
4	Presbyterian Women Coordinating Team – 10:00 am Congregational Care – 11:00 am
5	Writing and Spirituality – 2:30 pm
8	Cantata Sunday Mobile Singing Children Concert – Cathedral - 3:00 pm
10	Breakfast Bible Study – 8:00 am Session – 6:00 pm Diaconate – 7:00 pm
11	Circles
14	Adventfest 9:00- 11:00 am
15	Children, Youth and Handbells in Worship
18	Pre-School Christmas Program – Noon
21	Yeoman Workday
22	9:45- Christmas Pageant Service of Lesson & Carols 10:30
24	Christmas Eve Candlelight Services Family Service - 5:00 pm Communion Service 9:00 pm
25	Church Office Closed
31	New Year's Eve- Office Closed

CHUCH CALENDAR: January 2020	
1	Church Office closed
4	Youth Retreat
5	Ordination & Installation of new Officers
7	Committees
8	Presbyterian Women Coordinating Team Congregational Care – 11:00 am Word in a Week – Noon
11	Officer Retreat
12	Communion First Light Marathon
13	Tai Chi - 10:00 am
14	Breakfast Bible Study – 8:00 am
15	PW Circles Word in the Week - Noon
20	MLK Office closed
21	Session - 6:00 pm Diaconate – 7:00 pm Newsletter Deadline
22	Word in the Week - Noon
26	Supper Club Potluck
27	Tai Chi - 10:00 am
28	Prayer Shawl Ministry – 10:00 am
29	Word in the Week - Noon





Spring Hill Presbyterian Church
10 Westminster Way
Mobile, AL 36608

www.shpc.us

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Merry Christmas from the Staff!

