



SPRING HILL MESSENGER *February 2021*

Let the Journey Begin

Dear Spring Hill Presbyterian Church Family,

During this month of February, we begin the season of Lent, a 40 day period of prayerful preparation. The practice of Lent grows out of various biblical stories of journeys: the 40 years that the Hebrews wandered through the wilderness on their way to the Promised Land and the 40 days that Jesus sojourned through temptation before beginning his ministry. The concept of Lent as a journey rather than just a period of time may take some stretching of our imagination. Many of us, after all, do not physically go on a Lenten journey or pilgrimage. No, most of the time we stay put during Lent. We go about our regular routines: to work and home, to the grocery store and the doctor's office. During the era of COVID-19 we are less able to visit even some of the most ordinary locations in our lives. With the limitations on travel and other activities, perhaps the concept of Lent as a journey has even more significance this year. You see, the Lenten journey is not a physical one, but a spiritual one. We journey with Jesus and his disciples; we journey through sin and temptation; we journey through prayer and practice; we journey through justice and righteousness. Throughout these 40 days, we journey to the cross, and then to the empty tomb!

This year for the season of Lent, our spiritual journey will follow a particular map: the Lord's Prayer. The foundation for our prayer life as Christians is the prayer that Jesus taught us to pray. Each Sunday morning and Wednesday at noon during Lent our worship services will focus on a different phrase from the Lord's Prayer. We will connect the prayer to other stories from the gospel narratives that show how Jesus put the prayer in action. For instance, he taught us to pray "Our Father..." and he modelled a new way of understanding who we consider "family." He taught us to pray "Give us this day our daily bread..." and he provided a meal to more than 5,000 so that they would not go hungry in the wilderness. Over the course of this journey, we'll be exploring the landscapes of our prayer life and learning how the Lord's prayer can over time mold and train our wants and desires more and more toward the goal of God's kingdom "on earth as it is in heaven."

Speaking of journeys, I also want to share with you about an upcoming journey for myself and my family. On December 1 of this past year, I celebrated my 7th anniversary as Senior Pastor of SHPC! It's hard to believe it's been that long (and that short) already. As is the case with most ministers in our presbytery, my original terms of call approved by the congregation in 2013 included the plan for a sabbatical after seven years of ministry. So, now that we have journeyed together to this point I am excitedly and nervously making plans for a summer sabbatical in 2021 with my family. This will be a time for recharging my spiritual batteries, for some study, some travel, and some rest. I'll share more in the months to come about what a sabbatical is and what it is not. But for now, I just wanted to make sure you all know that its coming so that you can keep me in your prayers and help me plan for how this time can also be a journey of exploration for our whole church family.

Grace and Peace,

Buz

Dear Friends,

Today, I cannot get the book of Esther out of my head, probably because we have been studying Esther in the Word in the Week Bible Studies at noon on Wednesdays. It is one of my favorite stories in Scripture. Esther is an orphan, raised by her cousin Mordecai, and a Jewish woman living in Persia as an exile. After the old queen is de-throned, the king orders a beauty contest. Esther wins. After her cousin refuses to bow down to Haman, a royal official as the king's law decreed, Haman hatches a plan to kill not just Mordecai but all of the Jews. Mordecai puts on sackcloth and mourns. He appeals to Esther to do something. She is afraid; the last time a queen stood up to the king, the position became open. Mordecai implores, "Do not think that in the king's palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews. For if you keep silence at such a time as this, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another quarter, but you and your father's family will perish. Who knows? Perhaps you have come to royal dignity for such a time as this." (Esther 4:13-14). Timing matters in Esther; timing matters in our world. We do not see God directly in the book of Esther; instead as the reader, we are left to wrestle with how God is at work in the story and in our world. Perhaps, God called Esther as queen for that moment in history.



"For such a *time* as this;" we have been living with this pandemic for over a year now. Now, that's a long time! It is amazing and heart-breaking that it has been almost a year since we have gathered "like normal" in our building. I am not sure we could have imagined that we would still be struggling with a pandemic a year later. It has been a difficult year, and yet, I believe that God has called each one of us for "such a time as this." I have been amazed at the leadership and dedication of this congregation, who stepped up to support one another, reached out to each other even when apart, and prayed for one another. I have been amazed at how adaptive we each have been, moving to online and outdoor worship, learning how to spend time together being the body of Christ in new ways.

This Lent we are being adaptive and responsive to the health of our community "for such a time as this." We will be studying in worship the Lord's Prayer, pairing the prayer with other passages that bring to light what the words we pray each week mean in Jesus own life and ministry. I am working on a "40 Days of Prayer" challenge for our children, youth, and adults. Each day during the season of Lent, I hope you will join me in praying in different ways, for different people and circumstances. I hope that this season of Lent will strengthen our individual and corporate prayer lives weaving us closer to God and one another. Copies of our 40 Days of Prayer challenge can be mailed, emailed, or picked up at the church. Each week our prayers will be focused on a different part of the Lord's Prayer.

Maybe this season, you have been wrestling with where God is at work. Prayer is a place we can share our worries, thoughts, gratitude, and lives as well as listen for God's response. I hope God uses this letter, this sermon series, this practice of praying to speak to your heart and in your lives during this moment "for such a time as this."

Grace and Peace,

Dr. Anna Fulmer Duke

ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP

FEBRUARY 17 AT NOON

OUTSIDE OF THE SHPC SANCTUARY & ONLINE

This year we are very excited to be hosting a combined Ash Wednesday worship service at SHPC that will welcome all the PC(USA) congregations in Mobile. Leadership in worship and liturgy will come from all the churches participating, and the sermon will be preached by Dr. Cary Speaker, the Interim Regional Presbyter for the Presbytery of South Alabama. There will also be an online version of our Ash Wednesday service that can be accessed at any time that day on SHPC's YouTube channel or Facebook page.



Lent 2021

Clear the Cluttered Heart: The Lord's Prayer

In Lent our worship services on Sundays and Wednesdays (noon) will walk through Lord's Prayer.

Wednesday, February 17	ASH WEDNESDAY (see description above)
Sunday, February 21	"Our Father, Who Art in Heaven"
Wednesday, February 24	"Hallowed Be Thy name"
Sunday, February 28	"Thy Kingdom Come"
Wednesday, March 3	"Thy Will Be Done"
Sunday, March 7	"Give Us This Day"
Wednesday, March 10	"Our Daily Bread"
Sunday, March 14	"Forgive Us Our Debts"
Wednesday, March 17	"As We Forgive Our Debtors"
Sunday, March 21	"Lead Us Not into Temptation"
Wednesday, March 24	"Deliver Us from Evil"
PALM SUNDAY, March 28	"Thine Is the Kingdom & the Power"
Thursday, April 1	MAUNDY THURSDAY
Friday, April 2	GOOD FRIDAY
Sunday, April 4	EASTER SUNDAY

2021 Annual Budget (Session approved)	
A full budget is available in the church office.	
Contributions	\$ 772,787
Building Rent	\$ 33,200
AL COVID Grant	\$ 20,000
Total Income	\$ 825,987
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Benevolences	\$ 59,7000
Salaries & Services	\$ 490,475
Programs/Worship	\$ 41,075
Office Expenses	\$ 23,262
General and Plant Services	\$ 266,720
Other	\$ 7,750
Total Expenses	\$ 888,982
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Excess Receipts over (under) Expenses	\$ (62,995)
Note: The 2021 budget was prepared for 12 months of regular expenses. However, we do not yet know when the church will return to regular activities.	Therefore, we anticipate that the difference between income and expenses will likely be much less than what is budgeted above.

The Prayers and sympathy of the congregation go out to Buz Wilcoxon and his family on the death of his grandfather, Dudley Wilson on January 12, 2021.

The Prayers and sympathy of the congregation go out to Sallie Connell on the death of her sister-in-law, Marion Haskell.

The Prayers and sympathy of the congregation go out to the family of Donna Goff following her death on January 4, 2021.

The Prayers and sympathy of the congregation are shared with Leslie Sweeney on the death of her mother, Carla Krause, on January 20.



Prayer List

Kaye Bradshaw, Edith Cox, Bobby Gewin, Robert Hennig, Lauren Henson, Burton Hoitt, Kay Korb, Norma Magee, Sue McLean, Marilyn Michel, Margaret Miller, Betty Minto, Cort Schlichting, Susan Schlichting, William Shreve, Gladys Sheets, Ransome Sheets, Nicholas Vrakelos, 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.

Memorials

- Andy Harper Ashley Brown Dick Bradley
 Barbara Funderburk Dick Coats Dot Chambers
 Michael Baymiller Jeff Stoll Pat Ray
 Robert Edington Sally Morrissette

 Karen & William Blaylock Chad & Patricia Brown Susan Herndon Caples
 Fred & Nancy Coats Sherry Coats
 Danielle, Susan & Dennis Dubose
 Charles & Rita Hall Mary Lena Harper
 Virginia Holmes Sandra & Ashley Hudson Vernon & Sallie Hunter Betty Jackson
 Michael Kenny Jain Ann Lane Charles & Linda Langston Caron & Frank Lassiter
 Griffin & Marsha Lassiter Sara Long
 Matthew & Amy Patterson Royce Ray
 Randy & Vera Lynn Sheets Judy Stout
 Century Book Club The Moses Foundation
 USS Alabama Battleship Commission

SHPC YOUTH MINISTRY SUNDAYS AT 4:00 PM OUTSIDE BRING A MASK AND CHAIR

- Feb. 7: Youth Sunday Planning in Small Groups
- Feb. 21: Youth Sunday Planning in Small Groups
- Mar. 7: Youth Sunday Finale Practice
- Mar. 14: Youth Sunday Dress Rehearsal
- Mar. 21: Youth Sunday Vespers (evening)
- Apr. 11: Youth Small Groups
- Apr. 25: Youth Small Groups
- May 2: Graduation Sunday and End of the Year Celebration
- May 23: Commission Youth Trips at 10:30 am

To Sign-Up for trips, Youth Sunday, and etc.

contact Anna at

anna@shpc.us, 803-517-7444

Children's Ministry

BLAST: Bible Learning and Sharing Time is for children ages 3-5th grade. We hope that you will join us at 4:00 on Sunday evenings outside near the front of the church with a mask (and a parent) for a story, craft, games, and music!

CHILDREN'S CHOIRS: Will be meeting the opposite weeks of BLAST outside with masks (the same weeks as Vespers) at 4:00 pm. Pick-up and drop-off is outside the Edington Building. We hope that you will join us as we make a joyful noise!



- Feb. 7: BLAST
- Feb. 21: BLAST
- Feb. 28: Children's Choirs Sing (Children's Vespers)
- Mar. 7: Children's Choirs
- Mar. 14: BLAST
- Mar. 21: Youth Sunday Vespers
- Mar. 28: Children's Choirs Sing (Palm Sunday)
- Apr. 4: Easter
- Apr. 11: BLAST
- Apr. 18: Children's Choirs
- Apr. 25: BLAST
- May 2: Children's Choirs

Church Calendar February 2021

- 2- Committee Meetings
- 3- Presbyterian Women Coordinating Team
 - Word in the Week Bible Study
- 6- Backpack for Kids Packing Party
- 7- Blast/Youth Group
- 10- Presbyterian Women Circle Groups
 - Word in the Week Bible Study
- 15-16- Church Office Closed- Mardi Gras
- 17- Ash Wednesday Service (outdoors at SHPC) for all PCUSA churches in Mobile
- 20- Presbytery Meeting (online)
- 21- Blast/Youth Group
- 28- Children's Vespers Service

Exploring Relationships
For the Alphabet Generations and Millennials Too! 9:00 a.m. on Sunday Mornings
(20s-40s Group)

This Winter, we hope that you will join us as we explore Relationships. All of us have relationships and hope to strengthen the bonds we have with our friends and family. Join us on Sunday mornings in January and February on Zoom for fellowship, support, and conversation.



Feb. 7: The Enneagram (with Anna or Buz)

Feb. 14: The Enneagram (with Anna or Buz)

Feb. 21: Marriage with Ryann Wilcoxon

Feb. 28: Self-Care with Marian Boteler

Mar. 7: Looking Ahead, a Planning Meeting

Montreat Trips: Save the date and reserve your spot for our 2021 Summer Trips! Our trips are for completed 5th-8th graders (Montreat Middle School) and completed 8th-12th graders (Montreat High School). Montreat High School will be June 5-11 and Montreat Middle School: July 15-18. To sign-up please email Anna at anna@springhillpresbyterian.org. Cost is \$280. A \$100 deposit is due Feb. 1. Scholarships are available.

A Word of Welcome to Susan Tomlinson, our new Coordinator of Nursery and Children's Ministry!
You might be wondering why we are welcoming Susan Tomlinson, a life-long member of Spring Hill Presbyterian Church. Susan needs no welcome; however, she is adding a new "hat" to the gifts and skills she shares with SHPC. Susan is our new Coordinator of Nursery and Children's Ministry. After a wonderful five years of service, Lynn Hennig retired from the position, and we are so excited Susan accepted the offer to serve in this capacity. A few fun facts you may not know about Susan: Susan has Bachelor and Master degrees in Elementary Education. She founded the Spring Hill Weekday School on our campus. Susan has five children and 13 grandchildren. Susan has already hit the ground running starting a few weeks ago helping to put together our BLAST, Bible Learning and Sharing Time for our children. Be sure to say, "welcome!" and "congrats" next time you see Susan!

Health and Safety Update

Be on the lookout for updates from our Coronavirus Commission about changes to our current safety protocols. We plan to return to our "hybrid" worship model with both in-person and live streaming options once Mobile County has been in the "moderate" or "low" risk category as defined by the Alabama Department of Public Health for 2-3 weeks.