



SPRING HILL MESSENGER JANUARY 2025

A Covenant for the New Year: Renewing Our Commitment to God and One Another

As the calendar turns to a new year, many take stock of our lives and make resolutions. These commitments—whether to nurture healthier habits, deepen relationships, or explore new opportunities—are rooted in a desire for renewal. As a church community, we have the unique opportunity to align our aspirations with a sacred tradition: the Covenant Renewal.

Historical Foundation

The Covenant Renewal Service traces its roots to John Wesley, the founder of Methodism. In the 18th century, Wesley introduced this liturgy as a way for Christians to recommit themselves to God's work. Drawing inspiration from biblical covenants—like those made with Abraham, Moses, and Christ—this Covenant invites us to acknowledge God's enduring faithfulness and reaffirm our dedication to God and one another.

The Heart of the Covenant

At its core, the Covenant Renewal invites us to say "yes" to God anew. One of its most beloved prayers reflects this spirit:

"I am no longer my own but yours. Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will; put me to doing, put me to suffering; let me be employed for you or laid aside for you, exalted for you or brought low for you; let me be full, let me be empty, let me have all things, let me have nothing. I freely and heartily yield all things to your pleasure and disposal."

This prayer challenges us to surrender ourselves fully to God and trust in God's plan for our lives, both individually and as a congregation.

Christ Emmanuel: God With Us

The timing of this covenantal act is no coincidence. Coming on the heels of Christmas, when we celebrate the birth of Christ Emmanuel—"God with us"—we are reminded that God's presence changes everything. Just as the shepherds and magi were called to respond to the miracle of Jesus' arrival, we, too, are called to respond to Christ's transformative power in our lives.

As a congregation, this renewal reminds us that we are not just a collection of individuals but a community knit together by God's love. In committing ourselves to one another, we reflect the unity and joy that Christ brings into the world.

A Covenant for Spring Hill Presbyterian Church

This January, let us embrace the Covenant Renewal as an opportunity to ground ourselves in faith and hope. As we consider our resolutions, let us also reflect on how we, as Spring Hill Presbyterian Church, can move forward together into a new year with joy and purpose.

- How might we embody Christ's love in our community?
- How can we support one another in deepening our faith and discipleship?

What commitments can we make to grow in our worship, service, and fellowship?

The new year offers us a fresh start and reminds us of our enduring covenant with God—a relationship built on grace, love, and faithfulness. As we step into 2025, may we do so with renewed hearts, ready to embrace the work God has called us to do, both within and beyond the walls of Spring Hill Presbyterian Church.

Together, we can face the coming year with hope, courage, and joy grounded in the promise that Christ Emmanuel is always with us.

Rev. Brandon E. Miles



Please welcome our new members.

Lindsey Reid
Will Reid
Josh Crammer
Clarkie Reid
(They joined November 17.)

Kathleen F. Ronek joined on December 15.



Star Words Devotional Returns January 5th

The use of star words—a prayer practice connected to Epiphany and the new year, has been growing in popularity in Protestant churches for nearly a decade now. For the next four weeks, Jan. 5 through Feb. 2, we will invite you to choose a star word and to use that word as a guiding word throughout the year.

There are many reasons behind this tradition. First, we know that the Magi followed a star, which ultimately led them to Jesus. Therefore, we too use all the resources we have available to us—including creative prayer practices and intentional words for the new year—to move closer to Jesus.

Secondly, we trust that God uses multiple ways to guide us and speak to us. Star words are one such lens that might provide us with a way to look for God in our midst, both actively and in hindsight.

Finally, We trust that it is often easy to miss God in our daily midst. Having an intentional word to consider both in present days, as well as to reflect on at the end of the year, allows for us to see God in ways we may not have seen God before.

By not looking or sorting through the star words at their selection, we practice the spiritual task of receiving. It is not we who are in control in this moment. Instead, we trust that God is present, and we let go of our desire to cultivate or control.

We look for the ways you guide us forward. We pray that you would speak to us through these star words we receive. Let them be light in the sky that guides us home.

A Prayer after Receiving your Star Word

God of open horizons and open roads,
Like the Magi so many years ago,
We are here, seeking you.
Step by step, we have wandered into this space
With the hope of feeling you in our midst.

Step by step, you have claimed us, loved us, and fed us.
Today we have drawn star words.
For some, these words are full of
Meaning, challenge, and invitation already.
For others, these words are
A blank canvas—inviting you into our lives.
So as a new year dawns, we pray that just as you have
Spoken to the generations before us,
You would speak to us again.
Allow us to use these star words as a tool
That might help us hear you more clearly.
May they guide us, as the star guided the Magi.
And in a year, may we find ourselves here, together again,
With mouths full of praise for the ways
In which you have been present with us.
Amen.

Star Words: Ways to Use in Prayer and Practice

A star word is a word that we invite you to use as a guiding word throughout the year to follow, reflect on, and ponder. Much like the Wise Men followed the star in the sky, we hope this word will help you to reflect and see where God is calling you. Here are some ways you can use your word:

- 1) Look up the definition of your word, even if it is a word you know well. You may even look into the etymology of the word and how its meaning has changed throughout history. If you drew a non-English word, do as much research as you can into the meaning of the word in its original culture.
- 2) What does this word remind you of? Does it recall any memories or experiences? How might God be speaking to you through this word?
- 3) See if you can find your word—or a synonym—in the Bible. What scripture passages can you find? How is the word used in these passages? Are there other scripture passages that remind you of your word?
- 4) Write or speak aloud a prayer using your word. This is a fun challenge for children using the stars words.

After you draw your daily star word, you might display it in your life. Get creative—seek beautiful ways to add your daily star words to spaces around you so that you will continue to see it and think about it throughout this year.

Religious Arts

Sunday January 5 - Religious Arts will lead a field trip to the History Museum of Mobile to see the Samurai exhibit. We will meet in the church parking lot behind the Chapel to carpool downtown at 1:30 or meet at the museum at 2:00. After touring the museum, a Dutch treat dinner at Shiso (6945 Airport Blvd.) will complete the tour. Please sign up in the hall so that we know you are coming. Guests are welcome.

Saturday, January 25 - Religious Arts will sponsor a tour of the Mobile Museum of Art led by its director Jon Carfagno. We will carpool from our parking lot behind the chapel at 9:30 am or meet at the museum at 10:00 am for the tour. We will eat lunch as a group if there is interest. Please sign up in the hall so that we know you are coming. Guests are welcome.

Children's Sunday School

In January our children will be learning about Jesus and John the Baptist, Jesus' first miracle and that he is the Messiah. Please come help us celebrate the new year and meet new friends!

Youth and children save
February 1, the Mardi Gras
Parade on Dauphin Island!

The Communications Committee is looking for a couple of photographers!

Photographers are needed to capture events at SHPC! If you're a 'shutterbug' and would like to help your Communications Committee by taking photos, please contact

Fay Wright

(251) 321-2062

or Melissa Root (251)
281-4303.





JAN 5

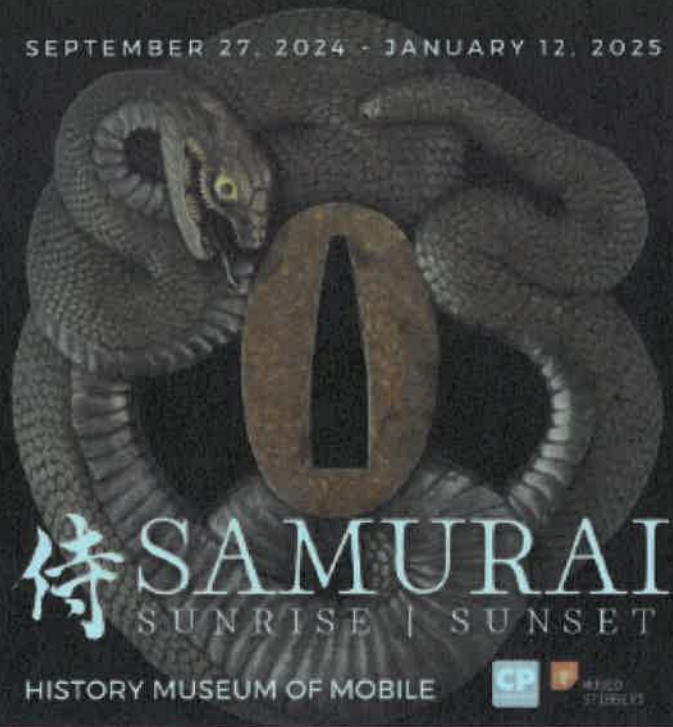
SUNDAY 2:00 PM

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HISTORY MUSEUM OF MOBILE
111 SOUTH ROYAL STREET
MOBILE, ALABAMA 36602

SEPTEMBER 27, 2024 - JANUARY 12, 2025



10 WESTMINSTER WAY
MOBILE, ALABAMA 36608
251-342-1550



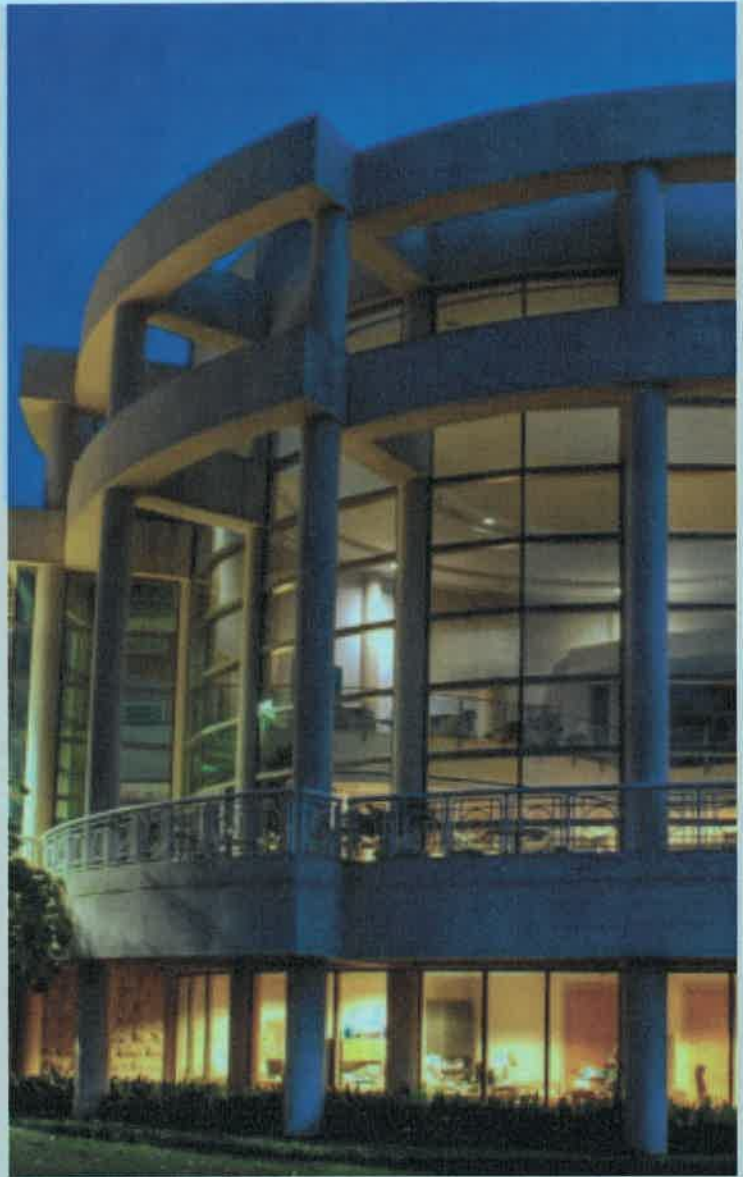
JAN 25

SATURDAY

10:00 AM

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MOBILE MUSEUM OF ART
4850 MUSEUM DRIVE
MOBILE, ALABAMA

10 WESTMINSTER WAY
MOBILE, ALABAMA 36608
251-342-1550

MEMORIALS

George Barton Sallie Connell Paul Ismand
Steve Ledbetter Kay Mims Dick Pennington
Loretta Turner Kenneth Wear Jr

Nancy Adams	Brook & Kerry Mallory	Marriner & Jane Smith
Dick & Norma Baymiller	Anne Meador	Sam Strada
Ernest Bulwinkle	Mr. Mrs. John Murphy Jr	Mark & Judy Weaver
Jane Callahan	Oscar & Blanch Parsons	Sylvia & Bruce Weinard
Sherry Coats	David Peller	Carolyn & Tad Wikle
James Crawford & Cindy Wilson	Kimberley Peterson	Deborah Williams
George & Dianne Davidson	Presbyterian Women	Cindy Wilson
Jimmie Hatcher	Randy & Vera Lynn Sheets	
Jain Ann Lane	Lewis & Barkley Shreve	
Sara Long	Jane Sims	



THE PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY of the congregation are with Jo Barton and family upon the death of her husband George Barton on November 22, 2024.

THE PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY of the congregation are with Celia Ledbetter and family upon the death of her husband George Stephen Ledbetter on November 29, 2024.

THE PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY of the congregation are with Ruth Fitzgerald upon the death of her sister Norma Haas on December 18, 2024. A service will be held at St James Episcopal church in Fairhope on January 17 at 10:00 am.

Statement as of November 30, 2024

Total Annual Budgeted Revenue	\$	784,994
Year-to-date Received	\$	653,679
Other Receipts	\$	67,296
Total Receipts	\$	720,975
Benevolences	\$	44,909
Salaries and Services	\$	410,608
Programs	\$	24,022
Office Expenses	\$	23,452
General and Plant Services	\$	304,465
Other	\$	22,859
Total Expenses	\$	830,315
Excess Receipts over (under) Expenses	\$	(109,340)

Prayer List

Coco Anderson, Ted Autterson, Barbara Beach, Cammie Belue, John Carr, Lanier Cauley, Janet Clarke, Deneen Massa Cook, Sherry Coats, Jamie Crawford, Kathi Dagley, Bron Dixon, Chrisy Ennen, Ruth Fitzgerald, Mary Lee Franks, Gwen Greer, Charles Hall, Ann Hafner, Bill Harris, Marcy Harris, Lauren Henson, Betty Jackson, Bill Layfield, Celia Ledbetter, Paula Letterman, Becky Lord, Kay Korb, Jacque Marrero, Lynn Martin, Ernestine McElroy, Betty Minto, Mary Owen, Susan Schlichting, Margie Spaulding, Jean Stevens, Pat Stoll, Carol Sumrall, Gayle Underwood, Johnny Walton, Babs Warren, Marcia Willett, Ann Wilson, Andy Wharton, Ronnie Wright and all our military members: Ashton Rubio, Stuart Rubio.

January 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Office is Closed	2	3	4
5 Star Words Worship History Museum	6 Outreach Committee	7 Committee Meetings	8 PWCT Day Circle Night Circle	9	10	11
12 Sunday School Worship Communion Installation/ Ordination	13	14 Finance Com- mittee	15 Children's Chapel Congregational Care Chancel Choir	16	17	18
19 Sunday School Worship Youth Group	20 Church Office Closed	21 Session Diaconate	22 Children's Chapel Chancel Choir	23	24	25 Mobile Muse- um of Art
26 Sunday School Worship Youth Group	27	28	29 Children's Chapel Chancel Choir	30	31	