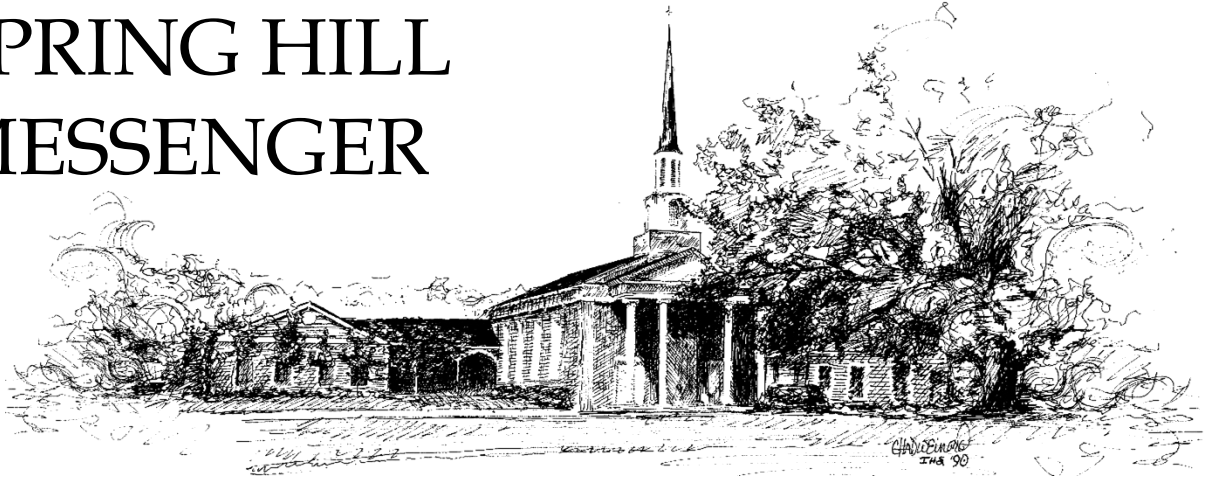


SPRING HILL MESSENGER



Spring Hill Presbyterian Church, Mobile, Alabama

May 2020

Faith Through the Roof!

DEAR SPRING HILL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FAMILY,

The second chapter of the Gospel of Mark begins with a powerful story of healing that speaks a truth we need to remember in our world today amidst this COVID-19 season of separation. It's the story of a group of four friends who carry a man who cannot walk to see Jesus. When they arrive at the house where Jesus is, the crowd is so large that there's no way for them to get their friend into Jesus' presence. But their persistence leads to creativity, and they end up going up to the roof. They cut a hole in the roof and lower their friend down on his mat into the center of the room so that he can be healed by Jesus. The scripture tells us that "When Jesus saw their faith" he turned to the man, forgave his sins and healed his body. Their faith! It was the faithfulness of the friends, the communal commitment to one another, the willingness to risk and reach out on the part of their friend in need that impresses Jesus so much and leads to a life-changing encounter for the man on the mat.

This sacred story reminds me that we need one another. It reminds me that we each play a part in the healing and wholeness of one another. It reminds me that community is essential to the life of faith. To be sure, it was Jesus alone who performed the miracle of healing, but that would not have been possible without the prior miracle of friendship. There's not a whole lot we can do on our own to heal our friends, our family, our community, our world during this time. But you know what we can do? We can pick up our small corner of the mat! If we aren't acting alone, we can carry our own particular part of the load along with others to bring our broken world into the healing, transforming, redeeming, reconciling presence of Jesus Christ. And when we find ourselves in times like we face today (where the circumstances make our work of caring seem impossible) we can go to the roof! We can cut through boundaries and remove barriers as we participate in God's saving mission to the world.

During this difficult time, when we are unable to be together, when the pressure may feel ramped up for some, where some are near their tipping point, where the circumstances are far beyond our ability to control, my hope and prayer is that we can continue to be a community of "mat carriers" for one another and that we will continue to find new "holes to cut in the roof" for our world that needs it now more than ever.

Grace and Peace,

Buz

A Word from Pastor Anna

Dear Friends,

Our family of faith is continually in my thoughts and prayers. I hope each of you is staying well, safe, and healthy during these difficult times. It is amazing that a month has passed since our last newsletter update, and we have been socially distancing for five to six weeks at this point. While so much has happened, so much is still unknown, isn't it? It is this unknown, this waiting that can be so hard for me, at least. I like to have plans and know the future. When will we be able to gather again in person? What changes after this? There is much I do know, but it is rooted in the present, not the future. I really can only see this moment, and the next. I must take one moment at a time and that's tough—maybe you feel the same.

In some ways, this time is probably preparing me for motherhood. Right now, I have to hold so many questions all at once: is this baby a boy or girl (that's a fun one to think about!)? What will life be like? How will I handle not sleeping? Who will this child be? When will I go into labor? What will the hospital be like? The list of questions I have about the next few weeks is staggering, but what I do know is that God is present.

God is with us, right here, right now. While there is much I want to do to prepare for the future, God is here. God will be with me when those future struggles and gifts come too. Throughout Scripture, God repeats: "I will be with you." Jesus is even named, Emmanuel, "God is with us." This promise of God's presence means more to me now than ever before. Within Christ's name, Christ's character is the promise that Christ is with us here and now. In the Great Commission in Matthew—the very end of the Gospel, we hear Christ promising, "I will be with you always, to the end of the age."

In these trying times, as you navigate the uncertain, as you look to the unknown, may you hold the promise that God is with you now. Through the storms and fire, the grief and pain, in the tomb and three days later in resurrecting hope, Christ is with us. I am so grateful for a community that walks with me in the unknown, that challenges me to look for Christ in this present moment, and that is connected, even when we are apart. I look forward to the future when maybe I will know more, and we all get to meet Baby Duke. But am also grateful for this moment, where God is present.

Grace and Peace,

Anna

Prayer List

Kaye Bradshaw, David Cox, Myles Cox, Payton Cox, Amelia Daugherty, Vivian Fulmer, Bobby Gewin, Gwen Greer, Norma Haas, Andy Harper, Robert Hennig, Lauren Henson, Andrea Wiik Hinton, Wayne Hinton, Charlotte Phillips Hocutt, Ashford Kettler, Kay Korb, Norma Magee, Nancy McCrummen, 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, 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.

WE REJOICE with Bob and Diana Oatsvall in the marriage of their daughter, Stacy Hack, to Stephen Fasanello on March 14 in the Chapel of Spring Hill Presbyterian Church.

THE PRAYERS AND SYMPATHY of the congregation are with:

- ❖ Dick and Norma Baymiller on the death of their son, Mike Baymiller, on March 2.
- ❖ Pat Stoll and the Stoll family on the death of Jeff Stoll on March 7.
- ❖ Janice Britton on the death of her brother, Bobby Pittman on March 22.
- ❖ Don Fry on the death of his Brother, Bernie Fry, on March 22.
- ❖ Daniel McGough on the death of his father, Jim McGough, on April 3.
- ❖ The family of Delmar Diamond upon her death on April 23.
- ❖ Ginger Otts on the death of her brother-in-law, Jim Carroll, on April 25.
- ❖ Ernestine McElroy on the death of her daughter, Lynn, on April 29.

A Word from Randy: Sing Like No One's Listening

In these days of physical separation, the members of our musical groups and indeed, all the members of our congregation are affected by not being able to make music together. People who sing together are affected in particular ways, since the body IS the instrument.

Making music is part of what it means to be human and because of the fully-embodied nature of singing, singing is particularly human. We identify, to a greater or lesser degree, with our voices; countless people were told, as children, that they couldn't sing--- and so they haven't sung since. Singing is personal.

Because singing is part of what makes us human, singing is an important part of worship. There is nothing quite like singing with other people. The mere act of breathing together in rhythm can bind us together; a recent study showed how the heart rates of singers in a choir came almost into sync during rehearsal.

In a recent sermon, Buz encouraged the congregation to sing, and told how he regaled his neighborhood with Jimmy Buffet while grilling in his yard. In this time of separation, I have encouraged our choir singers to keep on singing at home and some of them have shared stories of their singing: one singer sings Southern Gospel loudly in his car, drawing the attention of fellow motorists; one singer sings songs on Facetime with her young granddaughter; one singer, while walking in the sunny spring mornings, sings hymns that celebrate the beauty and wonder of God's Creation.

Just as the beauty of nature gives praise to God, so does our singing, even when the songs come from mourning or lamentation. Let's all sing. Sing out loud, hum, sing silently while the music resonates in your body and spirit. Sing like no one's listening--- in other words, sing even if you think you "can't sing." Sing for the love of it, the fun of it, the playfulness of it. Sing to express what is in your heart. Don't let media-music replace your own singing--- if you haven't sung out loud recently except at church, enjoy singing at home. Reclaim this quintessential human activity, singing any songs you want, any song that comes to mind. Remind yourself of your favorite music and sing it (sing songs from those favorite 10 albums you are posting on Facebook); when you don't remember the words, sing "la" or hum. Sing duets with the birds in your yard – when you sing your part and the birds sing theirs, the harmony will be beautiful. When we worship together virtually, sing along--- we will be breathing together and singing together –connected across distance. In singing, no matter how trained or untrained our voices, we join with creation in giving praise to the Creator, who loves us and blesses us with music throughout life.

Grace and Peace,

Randy



Sing like no one's listening!

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OUR 2020 GRADUATES!

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

Ruth Kelly Harper

Graduating from W.P. Davison High School; Attending Auburn University

Tyler Michael Hack

Graduating from St. Paul's Episcopal School; Attending Auburn University

Patrick Paul Hurley

Graduating from W.P. Davidson High School; Attending the University of Montevallo

James Gates Kaufman

Graduating from St. Paul's Episcopal School; Attending the University of Alabama

Charles Brandon Rice

Graduating from Baker High School; Attending the University of Montevallo

Mary Lyman Rivers

Graduating from St. Paul's Episcopal School; Attending the University of Alabama

HIGHER EDUCATION GRADUATES

Hunter Michael Avery

Graduating from The University of Mobile with a Bachelor of Science in Accounting

Sarah Katherine Clarke

Graduating from the University of South Alabama with a Master of Science in Nursing

Ashley Nicole Forwood

Graduating from Mississippi State University with a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Economics

Samantha Dawn Fry

Graduating from the University of Alabama at Birmingham with a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy with a concentration in Ethics

Alexandra Meg Fry

Graduating from the University of Alabama School of Medicine with a Doctorate of Medicine

Hayley Elizabeth Hack

Graduating from University of Mississippi with a Bachelor of Science in Communication Sciences and Disorders

Daniel Aven Hall

Graduating from Mississippi State University with a Bachelor of Science in Aerospace Engineering

Frances White Hurley

Graduating from Troy University with a Bachelor of Science in Global Business/Marketing

John Mark Morris

Graduating from the University of Alabama at Huntsville with a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering

Sara Anne Stringfellow

Graduating from University of South Alabama Medical School with a Doctorate of Medicine

Katherine Claire Sweeney

Graduating from the University of Alabama with a Bachelor of Arts in Communication as Art Director Advertising

