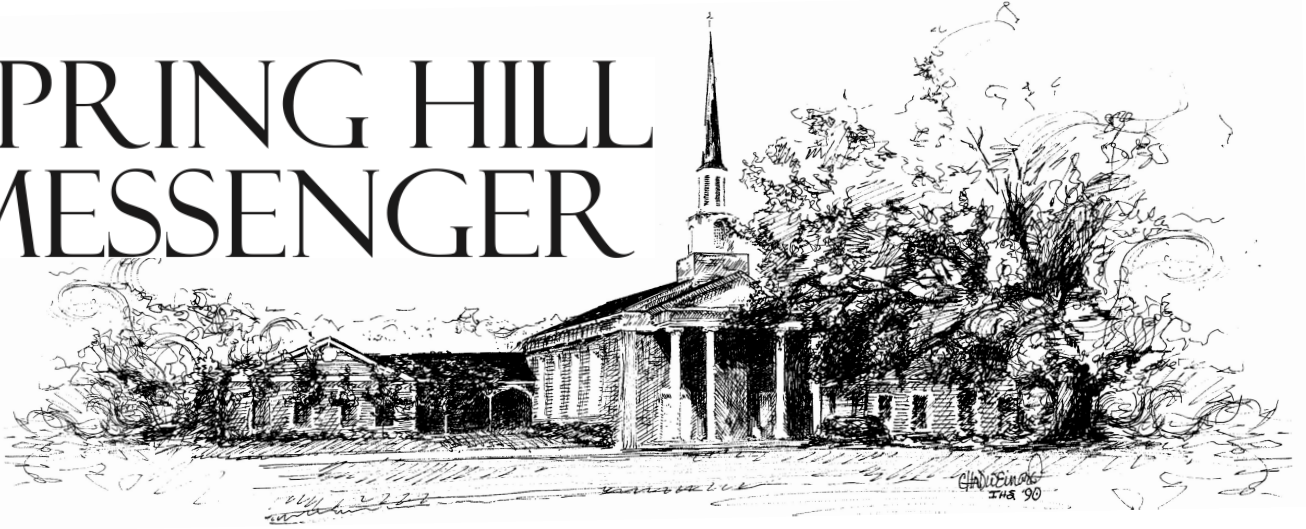


SPRING HILL MESSENGER



Spring Hill Presbyterian Church, Mobile, Alabama

Volume 82, Number 9, November 2017

THANKSGIVING IS SOMETHING WE DO!

DEAR SPRING HILL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FAMILY,

The medieval theologian, Meister Eckhart, once said, "If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life is thank you, it will be enough." Thanksgiving is a word that we hear many times in this month of November. However, in our season of sentimental, nostalgic, commercialism around the holiday, what passes for "thanksgiving" is often very passive, lukewarm, and fleeting. Thanksgiving is portrayed as a feeling we have when we look around and see everything we have and everyone we love happy, healthy, and under one roof. But in truth, many of us do not experience Thanksgiving Day as such an idealistic, Norman Rockwell painting kind of moment of family togetherness. For some of us, this holiday is a time of great stress and worry, of constant activity and failing to live up to unrealistic expectations. For some of us, the holiday is filled with great grief and mourning, enduring the first big holiday without a loved one or a reminder of relationships that have been broken. For some Thanksgiving Day is a reminder of our loneliness, lack of connection with friends or family, of our hunger both physical and spiritual for what is missing and absent in our life. How do we give thanks in the midst of such sorrow and sickness, longing and loss?

The first thing to remember is that the biblical concept of thankfulness is very different from the way we treat this idea in our world today. Biblically speaking, thanksgiving is not something we feel, it is something we

do! The Apostle Paul writes to his friends in with these words about Christian gratitude:

"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil." (1 Thessalonians 5: 16-21)

Thanksgiving isn't just an emotion that can come and go from one moment to the next. No, thanksgiving is characterized by particular actions: 1) worship, 2) giving, 3) service, and 4) sabbath.

In this month ahead, I invite you "do" Thanksgiving, to put your gratitude into action with your church family. In particular we will give thanks to God in worship for those who have died in the past year on All Saints Sunday (November 5). We will give thanks with the gift of music and song as we welcome Mobile's Singing Children on November 19.

Through acts of giving and serving we will put our thanksgiving to action through our Alternative Gift Market on November 19. On that Sunday, at 9:00 AM we will gather in the Fellowship Hall to meet with representatives from many local agencies that our church family supports. You can fill out an order form and purchase "gifts" in the form of donations to each of these organizations. The Order Form is included as an insert in this newsletter, and extra copies will be available each Sunday and at the market.

Continued on page 3.

Dear Friends,

Back to the Source: Sabbath



“Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord, your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.”

Exodus 20:8-11

We are getting close to finishing our series “Back to the Source.” As I was looking at all of the words we have studied: faith, communion, scripture, freedom, call, church, prayer, and more—I couldn’t help but think there are so many other words left to explore. If I got to choose one more word to add to our selection, I think it would be Sabbath.

Sabbath is one of the first things we learn about in Genesis. After God creates the world, God rests. Even God takes a break! And God calls us to take a break too. Throughout Scripture, we hear the command to keep Sabbath. Later, Jesus and the authorities have arguments about how to keep Sabbath. Jesus gets in a little trouble for healing on the Sabbath and letting his disciples pick grain on the Sabbath. Jesus challenges the way in which the authorities define Sabbath and the rigid way they make others keep Sabbath. He challenges them to think about what is work and why we have Sabbath.

I think we are called to have Sabbath to realize that the world does not end if we take a break. We rest to realize that God is God and we are not. We rest to realize that our worth is not based on our work and how much we produce. Our worth is based on the fact that we are children of God. We cannot earn God’s love or grace—those are free gifts. We take Sabbath to bask and relish in those gifts.

Before I went to seminary, I had never really taken a sabbath day. Sure, I went on vacations, but I would work 7 days a week to get my work done. But after two years of reading Scripture after Scripture about Sabbath in seminary, I thought maybe I should listen to what the Bible says. So my last year of seminary, I decided to commit to taking Sabbath once a week. I didn’t like it at first. I got antsy. My fingers twitched yearning to do the things piling up on my to-do-list. How was I going to find

a job if I took a day off? How was I going to get my work done for school, church, and life? I couldn’t relax. I would think, “Am I even doing this right? How is this supposed to work?”

I am not always perfect at keeping Sabbath, but what I have realized as I have practiced at Sabbath over the past few years is that when you take a break, things that you thought were crucial can wait until tomorrow. The world will not end if something does not get done. There is more space to breathe, more time to listen to God’s voice. In Sabbath, you are challenged to let go and trust. You might be thinking—well good for you. I wish I could take a day off! I have too many responsibilities and too much pressure! Maybe you can’t take a whole day of Sabbath—yet. Then take a few hours. Try taking a technology sabbath—no screens for a whole day. What happens when we shut down our computers, phones, and TVs? How does God change us through this practice of Sabbath? This November, as Thanksgiving and Christmas approach, I challenge you to build Sabbath into your regular weekly schedule. I know it’s busy. I know it’s hard. Breathe. Let go. Rest. See what happens and report back!

Anna Fulmer

PS: One of my favorite poets is Wendell Berry. He is a farmer and poet, and each week he takes sabbath. He walks on his land and writes a poem. He has two volumes of Sabbath day poetry, and here’s one I really like!

The Peace of Wild Things

By Wendell Berry

When despair for the world grows in me
and I wake in the night at the least sound
in fear of what my life and my children’s lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake
rests in his beauty on the water,
and the great heron feeds.

I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of still water.
And I feel above me the day-blind stars
waiting with their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

Finally, we give thanks to God through the practice of sabbath, through intentional times of resting from our constant activity. Sabbath isn't a time to be lazy; it is a practice of connecting with our Creator and with one another. Rather than living by the constant fear of not having enough, doing enough, or being enough, sabbath is rooted in gratitude for who God has created us to be and God's promise to provide. As the holidays approach and the frenzy of activity continues to increase, spend some time this month in intentional sabbath keeping.

As I look back on all we have done in this very busy fall and look ahead to what is coming this month and in the season of Advent that follows, I am filled with gratitude.

I am thankful to God for you, for this church family. I give thanks for the ways you have shouldered one another's burdens, for light of God's love you have reflected in your service, for the response of gratitude and generosity that you have shared. I give thanks to God each day in my prayers for who you are and what you do in service to God's kingdom. May we all, as one community of faith, put our thanksgiving to action!

Grace and Peace,



Opportunities for Service and Growth

CARE GIVER SERIES

Cottage Hill, Providence and Spring Hill Presbyterian Churches have partnered to sponsor a series of workshops that explore the legal and other resources that can assist you in getting your affairs in order. The third one of this Series will be held at Cottage Hill Presbyterian Church on November 5 from 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. and will focus on getting financial affairs in order. This workshop is open to anyone in the community and is supported through a Mission Grant from the Presbytery of South Alabama.

Flowers can make everything better!

Each Sunday after the worship service, the sanctuary flowers are delivered to members who are hospital patients or shut-ins (either at home or in a facility). It is a very rewarding experience and wonderful ministry of the church to reach out to members unable to attend worship.

We need volunteers to deliver the flowers in 2018. If you are available to do this on a Sunday, please call the church office (342-1550) or email Sallie at sconnell@springhillpresbyterian.org.

BACK PACK FOR KIDS MISSION

The Backpack Program has started the new school year off well. We are currently serving 19 students with nutritious, easy-to-prepare weekend food. Food for Kids targets homeless children and children showing signs of chronic hunger. These children depend on school meals during the week, but have little or nothing to eat on weekends. There is a flyer located in the hallway that explains the program and has a list of suggested food items. Please help us with the ministry by dropping off food in the barrel that is located in the Bride Room. If you wish to make a donation, write your check out to Spring Hill Presbyterian Church with a note that the check is for the Backpack Ministry. We assemble the backpacks on the first Saturday of the month at 9:00 AM, in the Bullard Building, room 215. Anyone that would like to help us assemble the bags is welcome, and it will only take ½ hour of your Saturday morning time. Thank you for your help!

Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service Supports Wheel-A-Meal

Spring Hill Baptist will host the annual Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service on November 16 at 7:00 p.m. This includes the congregations of St. Paul's Episcopal, Spring Hill Baptist, St Ignatius Catholic, Spring Hill Presbyterian and other churches in our community. The offering will go to support the Wheel-A-Meal Program. A reception will follow the worship service.

Children and Youth

Children's Ministries News:

Children's Sunday School and Church

The children's Sunday school class will begin November by continuing to learn about David.

We will review how the shepherd boy was chosen by God to become the King of Israel. For our lesson on November 5, we will also learn about King David bringing the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, and the celebration of this.

The lesson for November 12 will be about God's love for our families. We will also learn about God wanting the Ark kept in a tent rather than an elaborate palace.

November 19: Advent Devotional and Box Packing Party! After we explore the Alternative Gift Market, we will pack boxes for our advent devotionals. This year, we are creating a brown-box nativity. Each week we will add characters to our box in anticipation for Christ's birth! We will need many hands to make light work, so we hope you can make it!

Our last lesson in November will be about Jonah. We will learn about God's great love for us and the mercy he shows us.

In children's church, our children will hear the same story as Sunday school, but will have different activities that go with the story.



Youth Spring Retreat

CAMP LIVING RIVER:
FEBRUARY 2-4, 2018

Please See Anna for more information!

What's Been Happening in Youth Ministry: Youth Retreat Across the Bay

The youth gather each Sunday morning at 9 am for Sunday school and 6-7:30 pm for Youth Group. On Sept. 29-Oct. 1, we went on a retreat to Lynn Hennig's bay house. We did a ropes course, explored what the world says vs. what God calls us to, and worshipped with another congregation, Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church. Here's a post from our weekend by William Stoll!

It all started at church. We all gathered at church to get forms ready for the high ropes course. While at church we helped load the van, we said a quick prayer, and then we were off. While in the van we all talked and got to know each other better. When we arrived we all helped unload the van. We all got to pick our rooms and who we were going to sleep with. After all that was done we all got some snacks and sat down to do our lesson. We talked about who we are and how all people are consumers. God calls us his children though. After our lesson we started to play some games. First we played Mafia and it was a lot of fun. Then after Mafia we played spoons. We had to teach almost all the people how to play, and I was the winner over-all. We also played speed Charades there was no winner over all but we all had fun. While playing Mrs. Cindy made some amazing grilled cheese sandwiches for us to eat. Then we all started to get ready for bed. I woke up really early around 6:00 AM. I got up and went out on the pier. I was out there for a while then Anna and Mrs. Cindy came out and we all watched the sunrise and just hung out. We saw dolphins!

--William Stoll

WHAT??!! Summer Deadlines! Already!!!

Youth Summer Trip to Montreat: June 2-9

Deadline to Register: Dec. 1

The 2018 theme for the Youth Conference is "Lift Every Voice." We will explore what voices we tune out and the voices that we need to hear. Our youth (completed 8th-12th grade) will be going to Montreat this year June 2-9. Although it seems light-years away, the deadline to register is not far away—Dec. 1! If you are a youth who is interested—come with us! It is an experience that you will not regret.

Cost: \$270

Deadline to Register: Dec. 1

(Initial deposit of \$150 due)

Scholarships are available. Questions? Talk to Anna.



Music Notes

**Randy Sheets, Director of
Music Ministries and Organist**

November 19 is a day that is sure to be a musical highlight for SHPC--- not only will we have a guest choir at morning worship, but that choir will also present a short concert immediately following worship.

That guest choir is the Concert Choir of Mobile's Singing Children, under the leadership of our own Susan Hoitt. Mobile's Singing Children receives highly enthusiastic acclaim not only for its performances in our area, in concerts of their own and with Mobile Symphony and Mobile Opera, but in other prestigious venues, such as the venerable Carnegie Hall in New York City. This choir frequently wins competitive auditions to perform at conferences of the American Choral Directors Association and Music Educator's Associations in the southeastern region and beyond. And although they are our "guest choir" for the day, they really are ours in important ways--- and we are happy to be able to claim them as such!

MSC is ours, not only because we have the good fortune to have MSC's director, Susan Hoitt, as SHPC's Children's Choirs Coordinator, but also because, as a part of our mission and outreach, we can provide a home and rehearsal facilities for MSC; every Monday and Tuesday afternoon, our halls are full of positive energy and the wonderful singing of young people. These young singers from grades 4 through 12 come from SHPC and from all over our community-- as far away as the Eastern Shore.

On November 19, the MSC Concert Choir, which is the touring choir of the organization, will sing several selections in our worship service, and will immediately follow worship with a preview concert of their Christmas music. You will want to soak in every note that these young people sing on that day. Make your plans now to be here!



**MOBILE'S
SINGING
CHILDREN**



Calendar for NOVEMBER

NOVEMBER 2017	
1	Presbyterian Women's Coordinating Team – 9:30 a.m. Pastor's Bible Study – 12:00 p.m.
5	All Saints Sunday Communion Care Givers Series – Cottage Hill Presbyterian – 4:00 – 5:00 pm
7	Men's Breakfast Committees
8	Circles Pastor's Bible Study – 12:00 p.m.
10	Church Office closed
13	Committee Draft Orientation – 6:00 p.m.
14	Session - 6:00 p.m. Diaconate – 7:00 p.m. Pastor's Bible Study – 12:00 p.m.
16	Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service – Spring Hill Baptist
18	Yeoman Work Day
19	Alternative Gift Market
20	Newsletter Deadline
22	Church Office closes at noon
23 – 24	Church Office Closed for Thanksgiving
28	Prayer Shawl Ministry – 10:00 a.m.



Presbyterian Women Activities.

The honorary Life Membership was awarded to Vera Lynn Sheets during the worship service on October 22. Members, relatives and friends attended the reception in Fellowship Hall which followed

the service. Vera Lynn was honored for many years of service to Spring Hill. Also, on that Sunday The Thank Offering was taken. This individual gift is part of the Presbyterian Women's annual gift to Presbyterian mission.

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

November 1: Presbyterian Women's Coordinating Team meets in the Conference Room, 9:30 a.m

November 8 Circle Meetings

- #1 at 10:00 a.m. in the Bride's Room
- #2 at 6:00 p.m. in the Parlor
- #3 at 9:30 a.m. in the Parlor

Important Future Dates:

May 9 – Birthday Luncheon and Office Installation

June 13-15, 2018 – AL/MS Women's Conference, Brierwood PC, Jackson, MS

August 2-5, 2018 – Churchwide Gathering, Louisville KY

Statement as of September 2017	
Total Budgeted Revenue	\$882,285
Year to date received	590,090
Other receipts	29,771
Total Receipts	\$619,861
Benevolences	44,843
Salaries and services	418,814
Programs	26,104
Office expenses	19,673
General & plant services	164,830
Other	27,302
Total Expenses	\$701,566
Excess receipts over expenses (deficit)	-\$81,705

LECTIONARY FOR THE LORD'S DAY NOVEMBER 2017

Back to the Source

November 5 - SAINT: 1 Corinthians 1:2-9

November. 12 – SIN: Romans 6:1-14

November 19 – GRACE: Ephesians 2:1-10

November 26- SALVATION: Luke 19: 1-10



Notes and Notices



Dear Buz, Anna, and members
of Spring Hill Presbyterian Church,

I can't adequately express my sincere thanks for the morning of celebration in honor of my retirement.

The worship service was very special and personal including the prayer and blessing by Buz and Anna. The music was outstanding - Randy and the choir are incredibly talented and the brass instruments added so much to the worship experience.

It was fantastic being able to speak with so many people at the reception. The Fellowship Hall was perfectly set to enjoy the delicious food and punch but also to visit with the friends I've made at SHPC. Thanks to all of you who came that morning and to the many people who helped with the beautiful reception.

I really appreciate the incredibly generous retirement gift you all gave me. I am truly humbled by the outpouring of love you showed me, not only at my retirement but throughout my years at SHPC. Working at Spring Hill Presbyterian was a true blessing in my life and I'll always think of you with great love.

Sincerely,
Ginny Thompson



We Rejoice...

We rejoice with Bob and Diana Oatsvall in the marriage of their son, Brian, to Brittany Elizabeth Grab on October 28 in Mandeville, LA.

A note from the Lankfords,

Thanks so much to you, our church family and Buz and Anna, for your love, your thoughts and prayers. We have been overwhelmed at the outpouring of support from everyone and are thankful we are part of such a caring congregation. We miss you all and hope to be back in church soon.

Molly & Alex

Memorials have been received for the following:



Harriett Pennington
Joe Dan Dunnam



From the following:

Bruce & Sylvia Weinard
Caroline Burger
Norman & Nancy McCrummen
Dorothy Vaughn
Jo Harrison
Judy & Mark Weaver
Sara Long
Vernon & Sallie Hunter
Mary & Bob Byrd
Barkley & Lewis Shreeve
Dick and Lila Pennington
Janie Sims
Alan & Marilyn Michell
Ferd & Sue Zundel
Sam Strada
Dr. & Mrs. E. Russell March, Jr.



We Share in Sorrow.

The prayers and sympathy of the congregation are with Jo Anne Dunnam in the death of her husband, Joe Dan, on September 3.



Spring Hill Presbyterian Church
10 Westminster Way
Mobile, AL 36608

www.shpc.us

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit
Organization
US Postage

Paid

Permit No. 1252
Mobile, AL

In all things, Give Thanks



November, 2017