



News & Notes

FROM

First Presbyterian Church

Vicksburg, MS

May 2024

Feed My Sheep

Jesus, knowing he was soon to ascend to his rightful place beside his Father in heaven, sought out Peter on the beach by the Sea of Galilee and implored him to “*feed my sheep*”* asking not just once but three times. Christ knew that his beloved people, given to him by his Father before creation and purchased with his own blood, must be nurtured, and instructed and protected. His infant Church, soon to be born into a dangerous and hostile world, must have stalwart shepherds if it were to survive. Accordingly, Peter, in his first epistle, writes,

“So, I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you, not for shameful gain, but eagerly, not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.”

1 Peter 5:1-3

Paul too was driven without ceasing to secure the health and safety and welfare of Christ’s fledgling churches once planted. Every one of his Epistles held dire warnings against those things that would seek to destroy the flock. Foremost among them the danger of false teaching. Before leaving Ephesus, Paul calls the Elders together with this message of caution,

“Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore, be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish everyone with tears. And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.” Acts 20:28-32

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But do these ancient warnings and pleadings for strong and faithful shepherds grounded in the word of God hold the same significance for us today? After all, those first churches of Jews and Gentiles were isolated islands surrounded by a brutal and debauched 1st century pre-Christian world. I contend that though we are physically safer and more financially secure, there exists a clear parallel between that 1st century pre-Christian world and our 21st century post-Christian one. Western Europe, once known as Christendom, now counts only 4% of its population as identifying Christians. Its once great churches have been transformed into upscale apartments, restaurants, and night clubs. America has not yet suffered such a devastating decline, but we would be foolish to not take heed.

There is good news. The war is won. Jesus said, "...I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."** Yes, Jesus has won the war, but there are still battles to be fought. Ephesians 6 tells us, "Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil." Our 21st century congregation, more than ever, needs strong, resolute shepherds—shepherds grounded in the word, led by faith, and ever relying on Christ's strength to oversee their flock. Never be foolish enough to think wolves no longer exist; they simply updated their garb.

As we enter our officer nominating process, I encourage all members to be in earnest prayer for our church and pray that God's loving grace and wisdom be granted to all who participate in this process. Pray for the gift of discernment for those who choose to nominate, and pray that those who desire to serve will find courage in the knowledge that it is Christ's wisdom and strength and not their own that will guide and uphold them. Lastly, I ask that each of you, both nominators and nominees, consider very carefully what it means to take on the responsibility of overseeing and protecting Christ's people.

In Christ,

Sharon Penley

*John 21:17

**Matthew 16:18

As we as a congregation prepare our hearts and minds for this process I would respectfully request that each church member carefully review the Westminster Shorter Catechism and the Westminster Confession of Faith. The EPC requires that all ordained officers take a vow to sincerely receive and adopt both documents as containing the system of doctrine taught in Holy Scripture.



Summer Sunday School Video Series by Dr. R.C. Sprout

When:

Every Sunday Starting May 26 through August 11, 2024

Where:

First Presbyterian 1501 Cherry Street
Ward Hall at 9:00 for Coffee, juice, and Snacks
9:30 in the Chapel for Discipleship

We are excited to announce a special opportunity for our flock to come together and study God's Word this Summer.

During this twelve-week period we will enjoy two classic video series by Dr. R.C. Sproul: *The Holiness of God* and *Chosen by God*. Dr. Sproul (1939-2017) is considered one of the most influential theologians of the 20th and 21st centuries. He was a pastor, a professor, an author, the founder and president of Ligonier Ministries, and Dr. Sproul's contributions in the areas of biblical studies, theology, worldview, culture, Christian living, and church history continue to have an impact today. These two teaching series have been especially transformative in the lives of thousands of Christians, and it is our hope and prayer that God will use them to grow us spiritually as one body under the headship of Christ Jesus. Each class period will consist of a thirty-minute lesson followed by a brief discussion of the major theme.

It is the hope of your session that this might be a season of refreshment and revival as we recommit ourselves, one to another, and celebrate the person and work of our triune God.



In Christ,
The Session

Upcoming Events

May 2024

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

			1 4:00 Davis Small Group	2	3 10:45 Meals on Wheels	4
5 9:30 Sunday school 10:30 Worship 11:30 Simple Sunday	6 6:00 Choir practice	7 7:15 Men's Bible Study 12:00 Al-Anon 5:15 Deacons	8 4:00 Davis Small Group	9	10	11
12 9:30 Sunday school 10:30 Worship	13 6:00 Choir practice 10:30 Martha 3:00 Dorcas	14 7:15 Men's Bible Study 12:00 Al-Anon 9:45 Ruth 12:00 Hannah / Lydia	15 4:00 Davis Small Group	16	17 Newsletter deadline	18
19 9:30 Sunday school 10:30 Worship	20 6:00 Choir practice	21 7:15 Men's Bible Study 12:00 Al-Anon 5:15 Session	22 4:00 Davis Small Group	23	24	25
26 9:30 Summer Sunday school 10:30 Worship	27 6:00 Choir practice Office Closed Memorial Day	28 7:15 Men's Bible Study 12:00 Al-Anon 10:45 Meals on Wheels	29 4:00 Davis Small Group	30	31	

First Presbyterian Church
Financial Report Summary - March 2024

	2024 Mar	2024 YTD	2024 Budget	2024 YTD %
Regular Fund Income:	58,624.58	148,144.23	697,904.00	21.23%
Regular Fund Expenses:				
Salary & Benefits	28,650.99	81,981.65	368,129.00	22.27%
Building and Property	500.00	9,638.40	42,900.00	22.47%
Operations	18,370.31	48,509.30	168,600.00	28.77%
Christian Education	83.17	485.97	35,375.00	1.37%
Worship	36.00	743.81	7,750.00	9.60%
Renewal & Fellowship	(408.19)	1,794.43	29,450.00	6.09%
Evangelism & Communications	0.00	365.00	0.00	
Outreach and Benevolence	5,000.00	5,512.35	36,500.00	15.10%
Denominational Relations	0.00	0.00	9,200.00	0.00%
Total Regular Fund Expenses:	52,232.28	149,030.91	697,904.00	21.35%
Total Regular Fund Income/(Loss)	6,392.30	(886.68)		
Kindergarten Net Income	4,066.32	8,149.16		
Total Financial Report Income/(Loss)	10,458.62	7,262.48		



<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Marilyn Corley Merit Finney, Jr. 2. Dottie Tillman 3. Mason Downey Penny Downey 4. Daniel Chausse' Morgan Teller 5. Zeki Demirbilek Ryan Doyle Liz Henshaw 6. Kerney Waites Monette Ward 7. Randy Sherard Cole Butler 10. Jim Chaney Katie Fairley William Gilliland 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. April Harris Alexander Tingle Lofton Varner 14. Blaine Butler Richard Hunt Sydney Mathis Mary R. Montgomery 15. Garrison Grey Libby Tower 16. Marla Bonelli Paul Ingram 17. Elizabeth Grey Suzanne Means 18. Jude Walker 19. Ben Brown 20. Laura Kay Peyton Nathan Thames 21. Tim Brown Alex Downey 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 22. Katie Ferrell Zach Grey 24. Natalie Boland Audrey Newman 25. Eddie Buckner 26. Dot Fenwick Lachlan Lampkin Lauren Rohrer 27. Bob Grau Linda Lewis 28. Colton House Margie Johnson Lee Giffin 29. Kathe Lawton 30. Bert Carraway Ada Lauderdale 31. Kelle Barfield Anna C. Finney
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April 2024 Session Meeting Highlights

Session met for its stated meeting on April 16, 2024 at 5:15pm in the office conference room.

Operations: March 2024 finances were received and approved.

Endowment: End of March \$321,580. Beginning of March \$582,600. Beginning of 2024 \$568,007. Committee approved the expenditure of \$2,872.31 for Phyllis Gebhart to pursue a certificate in Biblical Studies from Belhaven University.

Building & Property: Committee is addressing leaks and broken windows.

Adult Discipleship: Unified Sunday school is set for May 26, 2024 through August 11, 2024 in the chapel. Adults will study *The Holiness of God & Chosen by God* by RC Sproul. Information on the class will be shared through all communication methods.

Youth Discipleship: High School Graduates will be honored with a brunch in Mansell Hall on Sunday, April 28, 2024 and recognized in worship. Youth will attend Unified Sunday school class.

Communication & Evangelism: Have provided more up to date and accurate content via Facebook. Feedback has been great.

Mission & Outreach: Prayerfully considering dates for Witness Season.

Kindergarten: Registration is almost filled for next year. Art Fund Raiser will be held in Mansell Hall at 5:30pm on April 23, 2024.

Officer Nominating: Proposed an officer nomination calendar.

Old Business: Session reviewed church rolls and took action to move some active members to inactive status.

New Business: Ruling Elder Sharon Penley was elected as a FPC's Presbyter for Presbytery meeting April 26-27, 2024 at FPC Pascagoula.

Session voted to support Stop Hunger Now ministry at Crawford Street UMC with a gift of \$2,000 and encourage participation.

Session will review Deacon minutes at the May Session meeting.

Session will continue to discern the role of Ruling Elders as spiritual leaders.

Congratulations to Patrick and Jane Border on the birth of their son, Joachim Benedikt "Benny" Border. Benny was born February 29, 2024. He is welcomed by big sister Bethel.

Congratulations
on Your
New Baby!



Youth News



Youth Sunday School: Beginning on Sunday, May 26th, the Youth are welcomed to join our joint Sunday School Class in the Chapel. Sunday School will begin at 9:30 but the Youth are also encouraged to enjoy our congregation-wide time of fellowship from 9:00 to 9:30, in Ward Hall.

Plans for a weekend youth retreat at the end of the summer are being evaluated. We will keep you updated on further developments.

The Youth Ministry Team earnestly requests your continued prayers for our youth ministry. Please pray that the Lord might fill their hearts with the Holy Spirit, convict each soul of their need for Christ, encourage them to rest in His one, perfect sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins, and order their lives unto service in His Kingdom, giving thanks for his immeasurable grace.

Confirmation

Congratulations to our Confirmation Class

May God's love guide and protect you always,

Audie Marie Evans

Evelyn Kate Gattle

Lily Marie McLean

Mary Ruth Montgomery



Celebrate our graduates

May you look toward your future and rejoice in your accomplishments

Addison Evelyn Averett

Joshua Cade Fairley

Anna Catherine Finney

Christian Josephine Harris.

One of the greatest gifts of love is prayer

REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

Carmine Bell

Dan Hall

Bill Harris

Donna Ingram

Wynette McBeath

Hal Morgan

Mary Reed

Ann Vessell

OUR CONTINUING PRAYER MINISTRY for May lifts up the names of these within our congregational family, giving thanks to God and asking for His blessings to fill their lives:

May 7— Ken, Susan, Melissa, April, and Jay Herrle; Porter and Ashleigh Holliday; and Bob, Courtney, Grey and Sarah Jacobs Houser

May 14—Richard and Rebecca Hunt; Chris, Jennifer, Lane and Vaughn Hynum

May 21— Paul and Donna Ingram; Kaleel, Carmen Jabour, Joseph Michael, and John Robert Jabour; and Betty (Haraway) Jackson



May 28—Don and Jennifer Jackson; Jerry and Margie Johnson; and Sarah Johnson

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH PRAYS FOR OUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY MEMBERS IN THE MILITARY.

First Lieutenant Robinson Bash Brown, Army, son of Rev. and Mrs. Tim Brown

Corporal Christopher Harris Wilkinson, Marine Corp, nephew of Anne Gee

Captain Jimbo Bodron, Army, son of Jim and Donna Bodron

Staff Sergeant Kyle Butler, Army, cousin of Suzanne Means

Lieutenant Colonel Sam Berryhill, Air Force, nephew-in-law of Jim Chaney

Diplomatic Security Special Agent Clifton Jeffery, Jr., Diplomatic Security Service, friend of Dale and Cindy McClung

Staff Sergeant Eric Roberts, Air Force, nephew of Marianne Floyd

Captain Cailin Penley Console, Air Force, niece of Sharon Penley



May Schedule of Duties

USHER SCHEDULE

May 5— C&D Peacock, B. Teller, D. Coulter,
J.Thames, J. Mooney
May 12—G. Denton, T. Boolos, C. Martin-Nez,
P&A Stone
May 19—D. Miller, J. Freeman, G. Fulcher,
B&J Kamman, D&J Bottmiller
May 26—D. Smith, K&C Jabour, S&S
Upshaw, K. Klaus

NURSERY COORDINATOR-STACEY TELLER

Shell White & Sharon Harris

May 5— Addison/Annslee Averett
May 12—Christian Harris
May 19—Ryan Hadley Grey
May 26—Sydney Sullivan

SUNDAY MORNING OPENING

May 5— K. Jabour
May 12—W.Montgomery
May 19—G. Ruff
May 26—K. Klaus

CHURCH FLOWERS

May 5—Marianne Floyd
May 12—Mary Sullivan
May 19—Betty Kamman
May 26—Cindy McClung

MEALS ON WHEELS

Friday, May 3

Mac N Cheese

Beth Hall
B. Kamman
C. McClung
D. McClung
R. Gay

Cookies

B. Gage
S. Lambiotte
S. Penley

Tuesday, May 28

Casseroles

D. Bodron
M. Corley
D. Fenwick
M. Floyd
J. Morgan
D. Mounger
L. Rodgers
P. Teller

Cookies

P. Gee
A. Brewer
L. Beard

****Stay Connected With Your Church Family****

****Website:**** Discover more about us at [www.fpcvicksburg.org]

****Facebook:**** Follow our page on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/share/npgTmtNzJXUBn815/?mibextid=ox5AEW>

****News and Events Reporting:**** Share your news and events with us! Contact the church office at 601.636.1200 or email Kari at [kari@fpcvicksburg.org]

****Email Notifications:**** Keep up-to-date with email notifications. Send your current email address to [kari@fpcvicksburg.org]