



The TOWER

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH • TUPELO, MISSISSIPPI

400 Jefferson Street • P.O. Box 1725 • Tupelo, Mississippi 38802 • (662) 842-5681 • www.fpc.tupelo.ms

News for April 2009

Volume 39 • No. 4

From the Pastor...

Christian churches for over a decade have been seeking and experimenting with more diverse forms of worship. While FPC has been grounded meaningfully within our own Reformed Tradition, 36% of surveyed members through the January 2007 planning survey indicated a desire to explore how others were worshipping. In January 2008, the session approved the formation of a Contemporary Worship Service Steering Committee for the purpose of gathering information, attending varied worship services, and assessing the need and feasibility of providing additional opportunities for worship. The task has proved to be, and still is, daunting.

The Contemporary Worship Steering Committee later changed its name to The Alternative Worship Steering Committee because of the connotation that the word “contemporary” brings with it. We have learned that some youth, young adults, families, and the unchurched are seeking new forms and ministries in worship. Our future growth and relevance rely on these groups who often grow better in faith within more informal and relaxed settings.

From the outset we have stood firm in the knowledge that true worship must always focus on God, not ourselves, and project offerings to God rather than fulfillment of individual feelings and needs. Consequently, we all agreed that any new worship offerings must be theologically based, not bland or self-centered, and musically sound, not superficial. Our consensus asserted that worship cannot be as spectators, nor should it become entertainment.

The Alternative Worship Steering Committee enthusiastically has concluded that sound reasons and adequate needs do exist for offering a genuine, alternative worship experience. The session has concurred, and some essential initial planning has already begun.

On April 19 at 10:00 in the Sanctuary, more detailed information will be presented at a congregational meeting, as well as opportunities for participation and service. Hopefully such a challenging new ministry for FPC will become validated for everyone by the Holy Spirit as together we seek to fulfill God’s will.

From The Alternative Worship Steering Committee: Chauncey Godwin, Chris Rousseau, Hollie and Joe Moffatt, Holly Rogers, Julie Gibens, Kim Burlison, Lee Reeder, Mitzi Moore, Richard Hastings, Barry Walker, Bill Young and Tom Groome.

See you in church and bring a friend,

Tom

Information about Spring happenings at First Presbyterian Church is included in this edition of *The Tower* or check our website at www.fpctup.org

Restoration

It is not uncommon these days to see workers demolishing old buildings to make room for some new construction. This is certainly occurring monthly, if not weekly, in various parts of Tupelo. I read or hear about more to come. A recent Sunday School lesson I taught was on the theme of restoration. This was identified as a common theme of our faith tradition which is in reference to the story of God's renovating, renewing, and restoring activity in the world. This tradition actually began at the time of creation. God's intention from the beginning was for us to be in fellowship with God and one another. After the Fall, described as a distortion (demolition if you may) of God's creation, was the beginning of a process of renovation, renewal, and restoration. Demonstrated in this process is the faithfulness of God in spite of the faithlessness of God's people. We find in II Corinthians 5:19 that "In Christ God was reconciling the world to himself." The church today, including the young and old, is called to be an active participant in God's renovating, renewing, and restoring activity in the world until "every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:10-11). Any demolition is a good reminder that our faith tradition is a story of restoration.

– Ron Richardson, Pastoral Visitor

Library Lines

"I am of certain convinced that the greatest heroes are those who do their duty in the daily grind of domestic affairs whilst the world whirls as a maddening dreidel."

– Florence Nightingale

Forgiveness – now, that is definitely a word that can, as John Keats said, "tease us out of thought." I mention forgiveness because, before I left the library Sunday morning, I was chatting with members of the The Thoughtful Christian Sunday School Class, who had as the subject of their lesson, forgiveness. I immediately thought of the Peter Marshall sermon entitled "Letters in the Sand." As usual, this down-to-earth preacher lays it on the line. I also thought of a portion of *The Reason for God* entitled "Real Forgiveness Is Costly Suffering." If you find forgiveness rather difficult – or, at times, almost impossible – I believe you will find these writings very interesting.

Clans and Families of Scotland is a beautiful new book in the church library. It contains a short concise history of Scotland, the clans, and the family tartans. There are wonderful pictures and maps; there is also a section on tracing one's Scottish ancestry. The library would like to thank Gayle Carlisle who gave the library this lovely gift.

Margaret DeMerville has placed in the library a copy of *The Bible's Buried Secrets*, a VHS tape of material used in The Seekers Sunday School Class. The tape will be available for members of the class as well as other church members.

"The truth is that our lives are made up of the sum of the small decisions, the little turnings, the minute choices. If we do not let God into these everyday details, practically speaking we are not letting Him in at all."

Peter Marshall wrote these lines, and there is a little book in the library that has practically the same subject: *God Is in the Small Stuff and It All Matters*. I think you will just love this book that says "He cares about even the seemingly ordinary little details of your life... because those 'small things' really matter."

YOUTH! The library has books that are written just for you! The teenage years can be wonderful years, but they can also present a few hundred problems. Michael W. Smith has written a book entitled *Old Enough to Know*. His comments are based on Scripture; and he discusses premarital sex, drugs, alcohol, peer pressure, parental conflict, responsibility, and materialism. Do you run into any of those things? Also, you might want to check out *The Art of Playing 2nd Fiddle: Encouraging Teens Who Never Place First*. Well, we cannot all pretend that we are first every time. I was once a teenager, I was a mother to two teenagers, I taught about six thousand teenagers, and I am now a grandmother to one teenager. I think you will find good things in these books.

HILL T.O.P 2009

Home evaluations are the focus of Hill T.O.P. at this time. Please contact First United Methodist Church at 690-8100 if you know of someone who would qualify as a homeowner in need. Typical projects include house painting, yard work, minor exterior repairs, or overall clean-up. Hill T.O.P. provides help to homeowners in Lee County unable to maintain their homes due to physical or financial limitations. Any work provided is at no expense to the homeowner... Time will become a factor, so please notify us as soon as possible. Sign-up sheets for team leaders and teen workers are available in the church office and in the breezeway. This mission effort is our way of assisting our local needy.

Easter Brunch

Plan to join friends and guests on Easter morning at our second annual Easter Brunch, beginning at 9:45 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. Refreshments will be served until 10:40 a.m., allowing time for all to make their way to the sanctuary for the 11 a.m. service. Sunday School participants are encouraged to serve themselves before going to their classrooms.

Easter Services

Maundy Thursday, April 9, 6:00 p.m.
Good Friday Tenebrae, April 10, 6:30 p.m.
Easter Sunday, April 12, 8:30 & 11 a.m.

Preschool News

Spring has sprung in the Preschool and Kindergarten. The two, three and four-year-olds and Kindergarten classes have been excited to get back on our playground. We have enjoyed flying kites, blowing bubbles, whirly birds and picking flowers for our mothers. Spring will also bring a study of insects, pets, farm animals, zoo animals, ocean animals and, of course, Easter parties with egg hunts! It is hard to believe we only have two months left. We have really enjoyed working with these children.

Miss Sandy and the children completed a delightful season of Kindermusik. I do think we have some budding musicians and singers. We always look forward to our music camp this summer. A date for camp will be posted soon. Camp is open to all students, members of the church and friends.

Session Digest

- Time and Talent Sheets will go out mid-April.
- The Alternative Worship Service will be called The Journey.
- Congregational Meeting April 19 – 10:00 a.m. to elect an Elder to the Class of 2012 and for the Alternative Worship Service Committee to share information about The Journey.
- All efforts to move the Stevens House have failed. A company has been hired to demolish the structure.
- Cameron White will go on a Mission Trip to Honduras with a group from Emory University. She is asking for financial support from our congregation. Donations toward this cause may be made through the church office.

Confirmation Class

This year's Confirmation Class is nearing its apex. Once again, the process has been very rewarding for both students and teachers. Abby Bruce, Josh Chrestman, and Ann Clark Lockett have given a lot of time and effort. They have shown an intellectual understanding and practical demonstration of key theological concepts. The teachers (Donita, Tom, Ron, and Forrest) have enjoyed leading the sessions and continuing to learn themselves. Each student selects a Covenant Partner to help them complete a service project and aid in writing a Statement of Faith. A big "Thank You" is owed to this year's group: Alice Rogers, Hank Boerner, and Elizabeth Arnold.

Please join us on Wednesday night, April 1, as we give the three students a chance to articulate what they have learned. This will be a perfect opportunity for the congregation both to get to know our youth and encourage them as they continue to grow and mature. In addition to the reading of their Statement of Faith, the students will answer some questions and go before the session. We also invite the congregation to celebrate the students officially joining First Presbyterian Church on Sunday, April 5.

Fond Farewell

We bid a fond farewell to Keith and Dot Randle who are moving to Greenwood, MS to live near their daughter, Gloria. We also say farewell to Renee Ballard who has moved to Greenville, MS.

- Keith and Dot Randle
2921 Hwy. East Apartment 7B ,Greenwood, MS 38930
- Renee Ballard
574 Wildwood Road, Greenville, MS 38701

Women's Book Study

The Women's Weekly Book Study will finish J. Gonzalez's *An Introduction to Christian Theology* in early April. The group meets in the Fellowship Hall from 10:00-11:30 a.m. with child care provided by the church. One more book will be read and discussed before summer break begins. Please contact Aubre Wells for more information (842-7543 or abjw@bnmpoles.com).

We can never live in the past as if it were our true home... And it is a good thing that God draws this veil over the past even without our asking. In so doing, He allows us to live today for tomorrow with just the few memories we need of what was.

– Karl Barth

From Our Kitchen to Yours:

Penne with Bacon, Asparagus, and Parmesan
6 servings

- 1 lb. asparagus, cut into 1 in. pieces
- 1 lb. penne pasta
- 1 T olive oil divided between pasta and cooking
- 5 strips lower sodium bacon, cooked crisp and crumbled
- 2 cloves garlic, sliced
- 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese, freshly grated
- 1 can 98% fat-free condensed cream of mushroom soup
- 1 c. reduced fat sour cream
- 1/2 to 3/4 c. skim milk
- 1/3 to 1/2 c. water
- 1 t. freshly cracked black pepper

Cook penne according to package directions, omitting fat and salt. Toss with 1 t. oil. While pasta is cooking, sauté asparagus in 1 t. olive oil just until crisp. Sauté garlic and onions in last t. olive oil. Combine soup, sour cream, milk, water, cheese, and pepper. Add bacon, sautéed onions and garlic, and asparagus to mixture. Toss this mixture in the pot where penne was cooked. Heat through. Serve with a green salad and crusty bread.

Thank You

A very special Thank You to Dr. Tom Groome and Dr. Ron Richardson. Also, for all the cards, phone calls and expressions of support during the loss of my brother-in-law, Percy C. Grubbs.

– Mildred Grubbs

Gifts, Memorials & Honoraria

In memory of

Tom Overly

Britt & Alice Rogers
Tom & Susan McDonald
Robin & Cindy Faucette
George & Wanda Dent

Catherine Sadler

Britt & Alice Rogers
Mr. & Mrs. Fred Bush, Jr.
Malcolm & Beth McAuley
Robin & Cindy Faucette
Presbyterian Women
Leighton & Jean Pettis
Dan & Frances Brasfield
Glen & Bonnie Davidson
Dr. & Mrs. Richard L. Blount
Ray & Annette Thornton
George & Wanda Dent
Mike & Daintry Thomas
Ed & Susan Nelson

Winnie Latimer

Britt & Alice Rogers
Tom & Susan McDonald
Malcolm & Beth McAuley
Mr. & Mrs. Michael B. Gratz, Sr.
Robin & Cindy Faucette
Presbyterian Women
Dan & Frances Brasfield
Glen & Bonnie Davidson
Ray & Annette Thornton
George & Wanda Dent
Pete McMurry & Kathy Aycock
Mike & Daintry Thomas

Phyllis Harper

Britt & Alice Rogers
Journal Publishing Company
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of North Mississippi Medical Center
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Robin & Cindy Faucette
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Harris & Margaret Robinson
Evelyn Croxton
Dr. & Mrs. Eugene Murphey
Dan & Frances Brasfield
Glen & Bonnie Davidson
Ray & Annette Thornton
Bill & Camille Caples
Pete McMurry & Kathy Aycock

Mike & Daintry Thomas
Paul, Theresa, Cameron & Will White
H.M. Ray
Judy Griffie
Mrs. Jess Mark
Ed & Susan Nelson

Jackie Rivers

Britt & Alice Rogers

Mary Elizabeth Dickerson

Dan & Frances Brasfield
George & Wanda Dent
Bill & Sarah Young
Bill & Camille Caples
Malcolm & Beth McAuley
Margaret DeMerville
Jackie Haguewood
Pete McMurry & Kathy Aycock
Presbyterian Women
Judy Griffie
Frances Joyner
Freddie & Mary Ann Chiles
Billy & Judy Hodges
Perry & Judy Thomas
Leighton & Jean Pettis
Anne M. & H. B. Wilder III
Donald & Vicki Kitchens
Jim Jones
Mitchell, McNutt & Sams, P.A.
Henry & Martha Dodge
Ed & Susan Nelson

Margaret Dean

Malcolm & Beth McAuley

Percy Grubbs

George & Wanda Dent
Rev. Mildred Board Grubbs

Mildred Thomas

George & Wanda Dent

Mike Martin

Ray & Annette Thornton
George & Wanda Dent
Malcolm & Beth McAuley
Dan & Frances Brasfield
Billy & Judy Hodges
Marion Linde
Margaret DeMerville
Perry & Judy Thomas
Bill & Sarah Young
Jackie Haguewood
Greg & Debra Davis

Travis Taylor

Ray & Annette Thornton

Dit Johnson

Ray & Annette Thornton

Juanita Butner

Ray & Annette Thornton

James Alvis Walker

George & Wanda Dent

Walter Rhodes

George & Wanda Dent

Bob Williford

Bonnie Williford

Mabel Harris

Betty Nash

Elizabeth Ballard

Betty Nash

Lottie Payne

Betty Nash

George McLean

Betty Nash

Aubrey Haney

Betty Nash

In honor of

Edith Thomas

Tom & Susan McDonald

Bill & Romaine Dickson

Tom & Susan McDonald

Eugene & Margaret Anne Murphy

Tom & Susan McDonald

Prayer Partners

Paul & Theresa White

Toni Martin

Ray & Annette Thornton

Margaret Durham

Ray & Annette Thornton

Forrest Foxworth

Mark & Helen Monts

George Dent

Mark & Helen Monts

Barry Walker

Mark & Helen Monts

Spouses of Clean Water Mission Team

Anonymous Gift

Concerns

We extend sympathy to:

- Paul and Teresa Thomas on the death of his mother Mildred Thomas, March 1.
- Bill, Lori and Bill Dickerson on the death of his mother, Mary Elizabeth Dickerson, March 2.
- Mildred Grubbs on the death of her brother-in-law Percy Grubbs, March 3.
- Toni, Eli and Magalie Martin on the death of her husband and their father Mike Martin, March 9.
- Buddy McCarty and Ginger Arnold on the death of their uncle Walter Clyde Rhodes, March 12.
- Jim and Judy Armentrout on the death of his mother Ruth Armentrout, March 25.

Celebrations

Births

- Michael Blakely Gratz, III, son of Michael and Mary Margaret Gratz, grandson of Michael and Margaret Gratz, March 25.

Birthdays

April

- 2 Haley Burks
- 4 Elizabeth Arnold • Daisy Aycock
- 7 Magalie Martin
- 9 Patrick Lowery • Mary Jane McCullough
- 11 Daniel Crotnell
- 12 Andy Crotnell • Bob Henson
- 13 Lila Bailey • Jacob Rousseau
- 14 Chip Barber • Sara Crow
- 15 Van Thomas • Charlotte Wilburn • Julie Gibens
- 17 Ruth Standefer • Dr. Paul White • Bettie Fellows Nancy Brown Milam
- 18 Gatlin Farrar • Angelia Thomas • Elizabeth Johnson Alice Stine
- 19 Jala Caldwell • Pam Lowery • Ginny Foxworth
- 20 Morgan Walker
- 21 Susan Nelson • Suzanne Crow
- 22 Kimmel Monts • Michael Gratz Jr.
- 23 Robert Jenkins • Ralph Shultz
- 24 Becki Depew • Emily Henson • Julie Walsh Seiler
- 25 Hannah Bruce • Jamie Geoghegan • Dr. Dan Brasfield
- 27 Ella Barber
- 28 Keri Camp
- 29 Peggy Ray
- 30 Dot Randle • Anita Thompson • Dr. Bobby Kennedy

May

- 1 Lisa Johnson
- 2 Drake Cobb • Eli Martin
- 4 Ginger Arnold • Adam Armour • Norma Price

Anniversaries

April

- 9 Pete McMurry & Kathy Aycock • Wade & Silvia Spires
- 12 Mark & Helen Monts • Bill & Romaine Dickson
- 16 Eric & Lynne Johnson
- 18 David & Frieda Carlisle
- 23 Chris & Meg Curtis • Jim & Julie Seiler
- 25 Mark & Sallie Kate Ray
- 28 Glen & Bonnie Davidson

May

- 2 Jeff & Lee Reeder
- 7 Larry & Geri Moyer

March Visitors

Please welcome our visitors every Sunday and encourage their return. Should they desire information about our church, please direct them (if possible, escort them) to the Elder of the Day after the service.

Emily Graw Baker • Ryan Bolton • Ty Bost • Lauren Briscoe
 Jane Burks • Steve & Kathy Corban • Emily Corbin • Gale Clidry
 Deborah Crosby • Tommy Doty • Ray Lynn Drews • Debbie Esham
 Sarah Fisher • Jerry & Helen Gable • Stephen Gordon
 Chelsea & Christopher Gregg • Tim & Stacie Hutchison
 Jerri Lamar, Emma & Keith Kantack • Danny & Ann Kelly
 Roger McCurry • K.K. McNally • Janiece Martin • Wanda Miller
 Faye Moreland • Jody Patterson • Breton Phillips • Stacy Powers
 Pam, Emma & Jessie Roellgen • Kristin Richburg • Hayden Ramer
 Sue Clayton Russ • Krista Stenmark • Missy & Frankie Sullivan
 Mel Whitfield • Dennis Wilson

The Church Calendar • April 2009

On-going Events/Recurring Programs

Sundays

8:30 & 11 a.m. Worship Service
9:45 a.m. Sunday School
4:00 p.m. Dave Ramsey Course
4:30 p.m. Youth Choir
5:30 p.m. Youth meets

Mondays

2:00 p.m. Prayer Partners
6:00 p.m. Cub Scouts
7:00 p.m. Boy Scout Troop 3

Tuesdays

11:00 a.m. Mary & Martha's Bible Study
8:00 p.m. AA 12 & 12 Group Mtg/Al-Anon

Wednesdays

10:00 a.m. Women's Book Study
4:45 p.m. Faithbuilders
5:15 p.m. Tower Ringers
5:30 p.m. Supper Fellowship Hall
6:15 p.m. Bible Study
7:15 p.m. Chancel Choir

Thursdays

7:30 a.m. Men's Meeting at Joe Joe's

Fridays

Church Office Closed
Noon A.A. 12 & 12 Group Meeting

Special Events/Programs • April 2009

Monday, April 6 • 5:30 p.m. PW Coordinating Team Meeting

Thursday, April 9 • 6:00 p.m. Maundy Thursday Service

Friday, April 10 • 6:30 p.m. Good Friday Service

Sunday, April 12 • 9:45 a.m. Easter Brunch

Monday, April 13 • 9:30 a.m. Circle 2 in the home of Margaret Gratz

Tuesday, April 14 • Noon Circle 5 in the Fellowship Hall * 3:00 p.m. Circle 6 at Traceway

Wednesday, April 15 • 6:15 p.m. Circle 4 in Stewart Clayton Classroom

Sunday, April 19 • 10:00 a.m. Congregational Meeting • 4:30 & 5:30 p.m. Committee Meetings • 7:00 p.m. Session Meeting

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