

J J White Memorial Presbyterian Church

March 2019



*The Lord, your God, is in your midst,
... he will rejoice over you with gladness,
he will renew you in his love; ... Zephaniah 3:17*



a word from our pastor...

Reverend Bob Phelps

Why Lent?

Some of you will remember several years ago now when Mel Gibson shocked a lot of people, including many Christians, when he produced the movie THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST. I will confess up front that I have still not seen it. Many have found it meaningful, including our younger son, with whom I've promised to watch it several times, but haven't yet. I don't have any problems with the graphic scenes of the movie which depict the brutality of the crucifixion of Christ. I suspect it was worse than whatever the movie shows. I haven't seen it for the same reason I have never visited what we often call the Holy Land. I don't need concrete images to strengthen my faith. The way God has shared grace with me through Christ and the Church is enough. That is not to discredit any who find either the movie or the travel helpful. Back when the movie was all the news, I remember hearing people rant and rave on both sides of the issue. Many people who saw the movie seemed never to have thought about what actually happened when Jesus died. I remember talking with a friend from the Episcopal Church about the issue then. She was as baffled at why people were so caught up in the movie and asked, "What's the big deal? Don't these people do Lent?"

Of course many do not. Some worship traditions talk about the cross all the time. I've heard way too many Easter sermons go back through the painful images of Good Friday just in case someone missed church that day. Other worship traditions minimize their emphasis on the cross and its injustice and pain. Neither way is altogether right, of course, but I won't tell them if you won't. Those of us who follow the liturgical year when planning worship focus on the cross and the discipleship it makes

possible for us during these days before Easter. Our emphasis during this season is intended to help us prepare for a joyful celebration on Easter. That doesn't mean, of course, that we don't talk about the cross or about the Resurrection at other times of the year. These days before Easter, however, provide a natural opportunity for us to remember the sacrifice that Jesus made that makes our salvation as a gift possible

We don't require particular sacrifices during Lent, but some find it meaningful to give up something or to take on a new or extra discipline during the season. Some study more; others eat less. Some pray more, others try to hold their tongues. I had a friend who gave up all unnecessary speech during Lent one year. Most of us could benefit from that one.

We will offer several opportunities to focus on Lenten themes this spring. As we watch the earth come back to life after this wet and dreary winter, we can also watch our spirits find new expressions of the life that Jesus calls forth from them. There is a full schedule of activities between now and Holy Week (April 14-20) in this newsletter. I hope that you will find helpful opportunities for both corporate and private devotion during this season.

No one will ask you for an accounting of your time during Lent. But we hope that in worship, in study, and in prayer, you will find opportunities to experience God's presence in your life in meaningful ways.

Grace and Peace,
Bob



The Lenten season brings opportunities for us to focus on our faith and ways to grow in our relationship with Christ. We hope you'll take advantage of all these opportunities:

Lenten Schedule for Worship, Study, and Prayer for 2019 Worship During Lent

March 3, 6:00 pm Ash Wednesday Worship in the Sanctuary (Plan to join us for this service to begin the Lenten season. Worship will include the imposition of ashes for those who find it meaningful.)

Text: 2 Corinthians 5:20--6:10 Sermon: "Today's the Day!"

March 10, First Sunday in Lent Text: Romans 10:8-13 Sermon: "Near!"

March 17, Second Sunday in Lent Text: Philippians 3:17-4: Sermon: "A Bold Call"

March 24, Third Sunday in Lent Text: Isaiah 55:1-9 Sermon: "While He May Be Found"

March 31, Fourth Sunday in Lent Text: 2 Corinthians 5:16-21 Sermon: "New Creation!"

April 7, Fifth Sunday in Lent Text: Isaiah 43:16-21 Sermon: "Remember What?"

April 14, Palm Sunday Text: Luke 19: 28-40 Sermon: "The Lord Needs It!"

(Watch for news about a special Palm Sunday gathering.)

April 18, Maundy Thursday Text: John 13:1-17, 31b-35 Sermon: "A New Commandment"

April 19, Good Friday Text: John 18:1-19:42 Sermon: "Finished!"

Sunday afternoons, March 10, 17, 24, 31, April 7, 14, 5:30 pm

A Service of Evening Prayer Join us for a time of contemplative prayer on Sunday afternoons during Lent. No sermon, but Scripture, hymns, and prayers.

Wednesdays, March 13, 20, April 3, 10, and 17 at 6:00 pm - following supper

Wednesday Study for Adults during Lent

"Were You There? A Conversation Based on Spirituals"

We'll sing, pray, and reflect on these important texts together and learn about Christ's sacrifice for us.

3-13 Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel

3-20 O Mary, Don't You Weep

4-3 Listen to the Lambs

4-10 Soon I Will Be Done With the Troubles of the World

4-17 Were You There?

Watch for news about Holy Week and Easter worship opportunities as the time draws nearer.

Plan to join us for every opportunity to share God's grace during Lent.



Lenten Devotional Reading Guide - *I heard the Voice of Jesus Say*
Pick up a copy of this devotional reading guide from Luther Seminary and plan to spend some time in Scripture each day during the season.

Remember, too, that copies of ***The Upper Room*** and ***These Days*** devotional reading guides are always available.



Music Notes

from Deanna Phelps, Music Director

Lent is not a season without joy. While it's true that much of the music in this season is more somber than we sing at other times of the year, all of our singing about the cross and Jesus' death and all that lead up to them is meant to help us know God's matchless love for us. The choir has been hard at work on some beautiful music for the season. We will enjoy a couple of Sundays featuring solos during Lent this year, but the choir has much to contribute to the season, too. We are working on our annual Maundy Thursday service when we will sing several pieces that will lead us to the Table and to the Cross. Mark your calendars now for Thursday, April 18, and plan to bring a friend and join us for this special celebration. Of course, we will also sing on Palm Sunday and most of the Sundays leading up to it, and we will offer joyful praise for all of us on Easter morning!

Along with all the opportunities for worship, prayer and reflection during Lent this year, remember your friends in the choir as we offer our gifts in praise and service to God.

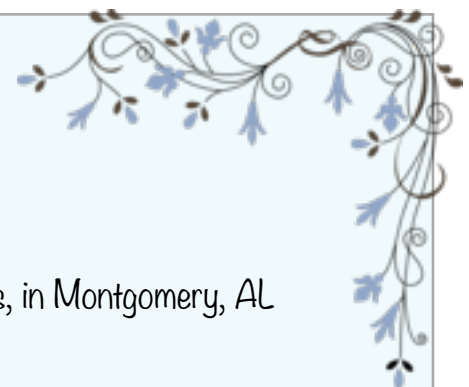
With Compassion -

We extend heartfelt Christian sympathy to:

Cathy Salter, upon the death of her father, Jim Morton, in Florida on January 16.

Whitney Rawlings and Susan White, upon the death of their brother, Ray Rawlings, in Montgomery, AL on January 7.

Please remember these friends and their families in your prayers.



Mission Trip Update



The dates for our Mission Trip to Puerto Rico to help repair damages from Maria (2017) have changed a bit. The final dates are May 31-June 7. This change helps us save some money on travel. We will fly out of NOLA on May 31 and route through Tampa to San Juan. We will return by the same route on June 7. We need to firm up participation numbers immediately. Please send Kennon Singley your full

name (first, middle, last) and current age by Monday, March 4 at 5 pm. We will need a \$50 deposit from each participant by Tuesday, March 5, at noon.

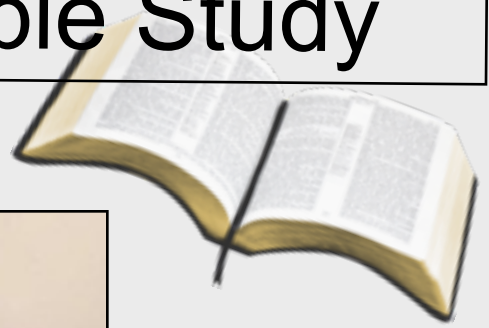
We will be conducting a couple of fund raisers this spring to defray costs for the trip. We DO NOT want cost to be a reason for anyone not participating. Kennon has more details. Please keep this trip in your prayers.

Boy Scouts of America Troop 124

Boy Scouts of Troop 124 and their leaders joined us for worship on a recent Sunday. JJ White MPC has a long history of supporting this troop, and we pray for their continued success.



Thursday Morning Bible Study



Reading
the Bible
Together



You are invited to join this group for Bible study each Thursday morning at 10:30 a.m. Our pastor leads the discussion as the participants read and respond to scripture. The current study is on Luke. This is a casual and friendly group with no requirements except an interest in exploring the Bible together. You are welcome to add to the discussion or just listen.

So drop by to give this gathering a try - Thursday mornings in the classroom right off the sanctuary on the second floor.



You are invited to join the
celebration of our dear members
who have reached the age
of 90 years or more!

Wednesday, March 27, at 5:15 p.m. in the JJ White Fellowship Hall
We will enjoy a meal together followed by cake and ice cream.

It will be a joyful event to honor these special friends:

Emily Austin
Ralph Brock
Eileen Cato
Libby Robinson



Presbyterian Women of JJ White will meet for their regular monthly meeting on Tuesday, March 12, at 11:30 a.m. The meeting will include mission planning and Bible study (lesson 6 in The Promise of God), followed by a time of friendship and a light lunch. All women are welcome to be a part of this group.

Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery of Mississippi will meet for their spring gathering at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Hattiesburg on Saturday, March 23. Plan to attend this meeting for a time of worship and connection with women from throughout the Presbytery. Transportation is planned.

More Dates to Remember

- * Saturday, March 9 - Remember to set your clocks AHEAD one hour before you go to bed so you'll be sure to be at church at the right time on Sunday, March 10. We'll all be ready for some extra sunshine this spring.
- * Friday - Sunday May 17-19 - JJ White MPC Mission Conference 2019 with guest speaker Ray Jones, who serves as Acting Director of Theology, Formation, and Evangelism for the Presbyterian Mission Agency.
- * Sunday, May 5 - JJ White Church Picnic - Watch for more details as the date nears.

The Session held its regular meeting for February on the 10th at noon in the Ewell Martin Room. All Session members and the Moderator, our Pastor, were present. Actions taken at the meeting include:




**Session Report
February 2019**

- ◆ approval of minutes and financial statements.
- ◆ received a report from the meeting of the Presbytery of Mississippi in Mobile on February 8 and 9 from Whitney Rawlings and our Pastor, who attended.
- ◆ received a report from the meeting of the Synod of Living Waters in Franklin, TN on January 18 from Bob, who attended as a representative from our Presbytery.
- ◆ noted the rescheduling of this year's Mission Conference to May 17-19.
- ◆ heard updates on the Organist search and new church membership software in the church office.
- ◆ noted that the Salvation Army will hold its annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner in the Fellowship Hall on Friday, March 8.
- ◆ approved Lenten schedule and plans
- ◆ approved disbursement of funds from the Foundation.
- ◆ heard reports from Christian Education, Mission and Evangelism, and Worship Committees.
- ◆ set Boy Scout Sunday for February 24.

The Session meets monthly. The March meeting will be on Sunday, March 10, at noon. Please keep these who plan and direct the ministry of our congregation in your prayers.

Report from Presbytery



The Presbytery of Mississippi shares a staff position and participates in joint ministries with the Presbytery of South Alabama. The two presbyteries met jointly for the first time on Friday and Saturday, February 8-9, at the Spring Hill Church in Mobile, AL. Whitney Rawlings from our Session and our pastor attended. The Rev. Dr. Rodger Nishioka from Kansas City was the preacher and resource person for the meeting. The two presbyteries met together for worship, presentations, and meals and then retired to separate parts of the church for their business sessions.

Actions taken by our Presbytery include:

- elected the Rev. Phillip Williams from the Vernal Church as Moderator
- elected our pastor, Bob Phelps, as Vice Moderator. Bob will become Moderator in 2020.
- approved the 2019 Budget
- heard reports from the Mission and Christian Nurture Committees and the Commission on the Ministry.
- voted on Constitutional Amendments referred from General Assembly.

Presbytery will meet again on August 10 at the Prospect Church in Meridian.

March Schedules

Flowers

3 Communion
10 Ralph Brock
17 Spike and Martha Simmons
24 J C and Linda Johnson
31 Maxine Brock

Children's Church

3 Ally Allred
10 Carol Rawlings
17 Sara Beth Williams
24 Susan White
31 Lee Williams

Sunday Morning Breakfast

3 Mary Ann Ratcliff
10 Beth Wild
17 Lee Williams
24 Hutchison Crew
31 Linda Miller

Ushers/Greeters

Tommy Ratcliff, Captain
Robbie DeCoux
John Drummond
Stacey Moak

Men's Interdenominational Breakfast

6 Kennon, Joseph
13 Renan, Buddy
20 Rick, Jim
27 Bob, Clem

Elder of the Month

Margaret Ann Macloud



March

6 Natalie Simo
8 Jim McElwee
11 Charles Ray
12 Dolores Duczer
15 Angie Simmons
Randy White
18 Alan Howell
19 Taylor Gatlin
23 Betty Penick
25 Dixie Fouche'
29 Karen Sanders

April

1 Meredith Singley
Dominic Cotton
3 Sue White
16 Kay Robinson
17 Tommy Catchings
18 Bill Catchings
19 Lee Williams
20 Kennon Singley
21 Kathleen Harbour
23 Nicky Barr
27 Tom Warren Wild
Cole Jackson
Avery Jackson

March

2019

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

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<p>3</p> <p>9:00 light breakfast 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Morning Worship Sacrament of Communion</p>	4	5	<p>6</p> <p>7:15 am Men's Breakfast Ash Wednesday</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Bible Study with Rev. Phelps 10:30 am Knutty Knitters 7:00 PM</p>	8	9
<p>10</p> <p>9:00 light breakfast 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Morning Worship</p>	11	<p>12</p> <p>PW Meets 11:30 a.m.</p>	<p>13</p> <p>7:15 am Men's Breakfast Wednesday Night Activities for all ages with supper at 5:15p.m.</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Bible Study with Rev. Phelps 10:30 am Knutty Knitters 7:00 PM</p>	15	16
<p>17</p> <p>9:00 light breakfast 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Morning Worship</p>	18	19	<p>20</p> <p><i>Spring Begins</i> 7:15 am Men's Breakfast Wednesday Night Activities for all ages with supper at 5:15p.m.</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Bible Study with Rev. Phelps 10:30 am Knutty Knitters 7:00 PM</p>	22	<p>23</p> <p><i>PW Spring Gathering Westminster Hattiesburg</i></p>
<p>24</p> <p>9:00 light breakfast 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Morning Worship</p>	25	26	<p>27</p> <p>7:15 am Men's Breakfast 90+ Birthday Party 5:15p.m. FH</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Bible Study with Rev. Phelps 10:30 am Knutty Knitters 7:00 PM</p>	29	30
<p>31</p> <p>MICA 9:00 light breakfast 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Morning Worship</p>						