

# JJ White Memorial Presbyterian Church

May 2020



## A Word from Our Pastor - The Reverend Bob Phelps

### **The Importance of Checking In**

I know this time of confinement is wearing on all of us. Recent storms didn't help things much for many of us, either. As we begin the process of reopening our state, I encourage you to continue to practice safe practices and to do what you think is best about leaving home. Your Session has met by video conference call during this time and stays in touch by email. For now, we are still not able to give you a date when we can gather for worship again. As soon as we know that the restriction on numbers is lifted, we will announce a plan for reopening.

In the meantime, we continue to broadcast Sunday worship on Facebook Live from Beth and Noggin's back porch. We hope you're tuning in. It stays on the church's Facebook page, so you can watch when it's convenient. We also post a printed copy of the sermon and prayers for each Sunday on the church's website ([jjwhitememorial.org](http://jjwhitememorial.org)). In addition, we continue to distribute daily reflections on Scripture from the Daily Lectionary. We post these to Facebook each Monday through Saturday, and distribute to our email list on those days, too. We hope that this helps us to stay in touch and to unite around God's Word during these strange days.

We also hope that you are checking in with friends and family with whom you are probably not spending as much time as you usually do during this time. An email or a phone call (or maybe an old-fashioned written note if you're getting out to the Post Office) may be just the thing to brighten someone's day.

Of course, pray for one another and for our church family each day. We are thankful for the tireless and dedicated service of Suzi Drummond and Beth Wild who make all this communication possible.

Acts 2 tells the story of Pentecost, which is approaching on the calendar whether we get to celebrate it or not. After all the strange story of flames and tongues and all the other things that happened on that day, Acts 2:42 says, "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers." We have decided not to try to do Communion online during these days and to postpone that celebration until we can be together again. The other things the early Christians did are things we can do in these days: devoting ourselves to the teachings of the Church (even if they come from email or video instead of the pulpit), maintaining the fellowship that binds us together even if that's different, too, and prayers for one another and for all believers who struggle with this confinement as we do.

Reach out to someone today to let folks know you're thinking about them. Our community has expanded as our online and video presence has reached people we might not have otherwise. Continue to share these gifts with others and give thanks for the opportunities we have to share Good News in new ways.

Grace and Peace,  
Bob

A Humorous Look at Reopening  
Bob and Deanna's friend Frances, from Alabama, sends this:



Mrs. Jones got a little too used to watching online worship from home.

### MICA Is Open Again

MICA, our local food pantry, was closed at the first of our current situation but has opened again on a limited basis. While we are not worshipping, we are not gathering food for the MICA pantry. If you would like to continue to support the pantry, you can drop off food donations on Mondays, Wednesdays, or Fridays from 10 am until 1 pm. You do not have to enter the building. You can leave donations on either the front or rear porch. MICA can also use an additional volunteer during this time if someone has time to commit on Monday, Wednesday or Friday mornings. Whitney Rawlings is the Treasurer for MICA and can provide additional information. Thank you for helping these who help us help others.

### Session Report for April



The Session met on April 1 and again on May 3 by video conference call. This is new technology for us, but we are grateful that it gives us opportunity to see and hear one another as we meet. Some actions taken during these meetings include:

- \* approval of minutes and financial statements.
- \* decisions to continue to pay staff members during the time we are not meeting together.
- \* voting to continue to keep the church buildings closed to all groups during the pandemic.
- \* received and distributed several pieces of helpful information from the Presbytery about life and ministry during pandemic times.
- \* voted to reschedule the church picnic.
- \* noted that the Youth Mission Trip scheduled by our Presbytery for this summer has been cancelled and that summer camping opportunities are on hold.

The Session will meet again as soon as information comes about reopening. We will be in touch as there is information to share. Please keep the members of our Session in your prayers as they guide us through these strange days.



## Congratulations to Graduates

We know this is not the end of the year and end of school celebration any of our seniors had planned or hoped for, but we want to extend our congratulations and best wishes to:

Aubree Arnold, Bogue Chitto High School  
Megan Arnold, Bogue Chitto High School  
Phillip Nance, Discovery Learning Center  
Gracie Senner, Parklane Academy.

We look forward to good things as you continue your academic careers, and we keep you in our prayers. We will celebrate with you when we are able to worship together again.

On Thursday a parade of about 20 cars of JJ White MPC friends visited the homes of our four graduates to celebrate with them during this time of social distancing!!





**FYI: Picnic Rescheduled**

**We had scheduled our annual church picnic for Sunday, May 31, at Percy Quinn State Park. Under current circumstances, the Session has decided to postpone that event until sometime this fall. We will announce a new date for that event when we can.**



*These lilies are reminding all of us of the joy of Easter - even through pandemics and tornadoes.*

*These lilies were planted over the years from potted lilies that decorated our sanctuary on Easter Sundays and are blooming now in the Drummonds' yard.*

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**MAY**

- 1 Vicki Brill
- 2 Pat Randall
- 5 Greta James Barr
- 7 Helen Ray
- 8 Janell Herring
- 9 Vicki Craghead
- 12 Haleigh Estes  
Will Ratcliff
- 13 Kathy Parker
- 14 Andrea Simo
- 18 Howard Allred
- 21 Katie Walman
- 24 Jay Johnson
- 30 Mike Belote  
Ridge Barr



**JUNE**

- 1 Deb Richardson
- 6 Sharon White
- 7 June Moak  
Florence Sigman
- 10 Steven Allred
- 13 Beth Wild
- 14 Debbi Brock
- 16 Alison Allred  
Jackie Russell
- 17 Rusty Whittington
- 23 Van Simmons
- 28 Andrea DeCoux

