



# HAPPENINGS

## ON THE HILL

### FEBRUARY 2017

*Photo at right: I invite the newly-baptized James Skinner – and all of us – to enjoy the Lord's grace and fellowship at FPC.*



*Photo at left: FPC's Carson Mullen leads the way for fellow FPC children Madeline Rackley, Hayes Ferguson, Cline Kemp, and Tanner Chance to glorify God and look ahead to his future for our congregation!*

### ***FPC LOOKING AHEAD IN THE JOY OF SINGING A NEW SONG!***

Dear Church Family and Friends of FPC,

God's Word in Psalm 96 commands us to sing a new song to the LORD. This accords with the spiritual truth that anyone who is not rejoicing every day in new mercies *from* God and new ministry *for* God – even in hard times (Lamentations 3:22-23) – is failing to know the LORD's Joy as our strength (Nehemiah 8:10) and likely is not participating in the fruitful life Christ bestows on his faithful church. As we are learning in this winter's sermon series, ***Start Strong with Heart Songs***, our Father wants to put new songs in our hearts. I pray that we will together – *not only on Sunday mornings but also throughout the week* – continue to grow in his Word as blessed children of his Kingdom. In that Good News invitation, which we continue to highlight on Sundays this month, I give thanks for the joyful hope of our young people. They are looking forward to how Christ is calling our congregation into a living future.

Likewise, God enriched and inspired me to look ahead as I attended:

- (1) the National Gathering of my Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians (ECO) denomination (January 24-26); and then
- (2) the winter meeting of my Central South Presbytery of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (EPC), January 27-28. *[See Page 3 for more a few mission notes from each meeting, and stayed tuned to the highlights I will continue to include at Friends & Family Fellowship and on Sundays.]*

It was a joy to be in fellowship with my colleagues in each denomination and, most definitely, to hear updates on each denomination's new-song mission efforts in Africa and the Middle East. Now, back at FPC, I also look ahead to the work of FPC's new 36-member discernment group and to the upcoming meetings that group will have this month with representatives from the EPC and ECO, respectively. Pray for the Lord's inspiration and guidance to the group, and pray for his will to be done as our congregation looks forward to forthcoming recommendations.

Your Pastor and friend in Christ,  
*Martin*

*Photo below left: Catching up at FPC with one of our many fast-growing-up children, Wade Luke, and his mother, Betsy Luke. Photo below right: The wonderful adult, youth, and children's choirs of FPC Greenville, South Carolina, lead all of us in worship at the ECO National Gathering in singing a medley of the contemporary songs "In Christ Alone" and "Cornerstone."*



# WORSHIP, FELLOWSHIP, AND CHURCH FAMILY NEWS & CELEBRATIONS



**AS A SPECIAL SUNDAY IN OUR CURRENT START STRONG WITH HEART SONGS EARLY 2017 WORSHIP SERIES, ON JANUARY 29 WE REMEMBERED THE INSPIRING PERSONAL STORIES AND SCRIPTURES BEHIND SEVERAL OF OUR GREATEST HYMNS AND CONTEMPORARY SONGS. AT THE 11:00 A.M. SERVICE, DR. CRAIG AARHUS, JENNIFER BLACKBOURN, AND THE CHANCEL CHOIR PRESENTED MOVING RENDITIONS OF SOME OF THOSE GREAT HYMNS AND SONGS.**

Congratulations to Army **Colonel (Ret.) Jack Wallace** of FPC. The Greater Starkville Development Partnership (GSDP) presented to Jack this year with the GSDP Award for Military Service. *See photo at right: Nancy and Martin Lifer with Jack and Mary Jo Wallace.* We give thanks for **Jack and Mary Jo** and, thank the Lord specifically for Jack's superb service and leadership in the military, in our community (including with the GSDP), and in our church family. Thanks, as well, to FPC's **Heath Barrett** (Interim Director of the GSDP) and all of the GSDP staff and volunteers for all that they do to serve our community.



On January 22, we celebrated the baptism of **James Breter Skinner**, the second son of Kyle and Kristen Skinner. *See photos at left and the additional photo on Page 1.*

**Remember Each Week to Join Us for Our Sunday Morning Fellowship Gathering (after Sunday School and before the 11:00 a.m. Service)  
... and for Wednesday Friends and Family Fellowship!**

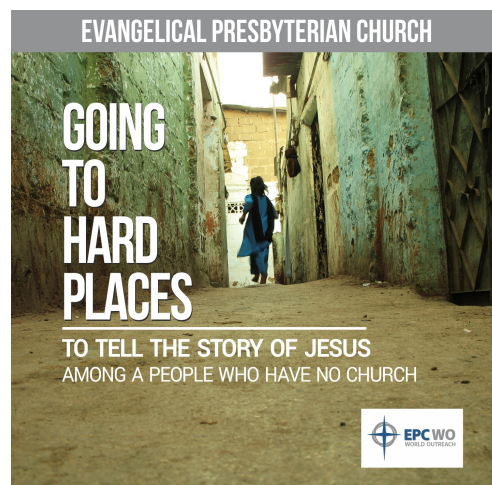
*Photo below left: Dr. Larry Anthony, Dr. Jimmy Dodd, and Sylvia Love enjoy listening to a lively discussion between Jack Forbus and new member Wallace Cade. Photo below right: Chloe Hardin and Lydia Vinson enjoy the fellowship time of our Friends and Family Dinner.*





# FPC MISSION

AND OUR DEVELOPING CONNECTIONS TO THE VIBRANT EVANGELICAL MISSION OF THE EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH DENOMINATION (EPC)  
AND THE COVENANT ORDER OF EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIANS DENOMINATION (ECO).



*Photo above left:* My Central South Presbytery worshiped at the Highland Heights Presbyterian Church in Cordova, TN – hearing updates about the presbytery’s local and international mission work. That international mission work includes the equipping of new pastors and churches in Kenya and – *see photo above right corner* – the presbytery’s support of a medical and evangelical mission in Beirut, Lebanon, to Syrian refugees who have flooded into Lebanon over the past several years.

... At the same time, we continue to pray for my EPC colleague, the Rev. Andrew Brunson (the EPC missionary imprisoned in Turkey).

*Photos at middle right:*  
Our ECO National Gathering rejoiced in updates from ECO’s partnerships in mission efforts to the predominantly-Islamic world, including in Egypt and in several other nations in the Middle East.



## TEJERAS MISSION MEAL PROGRAM

Donors for February 2107 meals for the children in Tejas, Honduras:

February 1: A member of our congregation

February 3: Paul and Tracey Millsaps

February 8: Ellen Mauldin in honor of Mary Higbee Mauldin Cook on her birthday

February 10: A member of our congregation

February 15: Pat and Laura Bryan in honor of Laura's mother, Mary Ann Maddin, on her birthday

February 17: A member of our congregation

February 22: Murry Mullenax



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First Presbyterian Church  
307 University Drive  
Starkville, MS 39759

Contact or leave a message for Pastor Martin Lifer or Secretary Beckie Miller in the Church Office -Monday through Friday - at the Church Office Number (662) 323-1994, or via email to [Office@fpcstarkville.org](mailto:Office@fpcstarkville.org). In addition, you may reach the following ministry staff via their direct email addresses listed below:

### FPC and FPCCC Ministry Staff- email addresses

Rev. Dr. Martin Lifer, *Pastor* [mwlifer3@gmail.com](mailto:mwlifer3@gmail.com)  
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