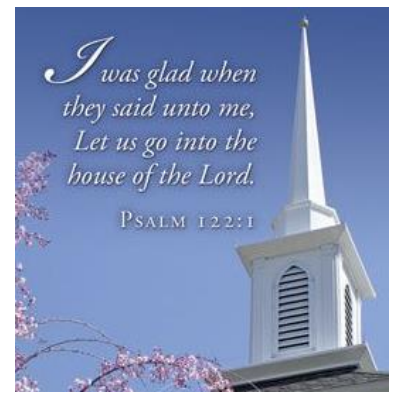




Happenings on the Hill June 2020



Starkville's First Church Re-Opens This Month for Public Worship:

9:30 & 11:00 a.m. Lord's Day Services on June 7, 14, 21 & 28!



All who are physically and spiritually prepared – **Join us on the Hill**, as we follow God's command for us to **BE the BODY**, gathered in his Spirit for corporate worship.

Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.
Hebrews 10:25

The Sanctuary Building has been professionally cleaned and sanitized, and we will continue this cleaning regimen each week.



However, we encourage all who have health concerns to "stay safe at home" and continue to join us online for worship. Persons who are ill with, have recently been exposed to, OR have significant medical vulnerability to the COVID-19 virus (or to other infectious diseases) should seek medical care and self-quarantine. *Please let us know of your health concerns and prayer requests!*

We Will Continue to Broadcast Worship Services
Each Lord's Day on Our
FPC Starkville EPC YouTube Channel *and* to Our
FPC Starkville Facebook Page.

We will also follow a number of other recommended protocols each Sunday this summer – including "social distancing" in seating, refraining from physically close interaction, eliminating common-use printed materials from the services (e.g., there will be no bulletins, or books or materials in the pews racks), sanitizing of Sanctuary "touch points" after each service, requiring the use of face masks for worshipers at the 9:30 a.m. service and encouraging the use of face masks at the 11:00 a.m. service. *We will provide masks for all worshipers who request them.*

Please read the further details in the letter on Page 2. Then plan to be with us, if God makes the way for you to do so physically, faithfully, and wisely.



Dear Church Family and friends,

Our Session and our other officers and ministry leaders set the goal of **reopening the FPC Sanctuary for public worship this month – under a Phase 1 Plan**. The Phase 1 Plan will begin with a return to public worship on Trinity Sunday, June 7, 2020 and will continue thereafter **weekly** with **two Lord's Day Services**:

- **A 9:30 a.m. Lord's Day Service, in which all worshipers [other than worship leaders on the Chancel] will be required to wear protective facemasks.**
- **An 11:00 a.m. Lord's Day Service, in which the wearing of masks will be optional (though encouraged), and for which we will provide small-scale babysitting for infants, toddlers, and other pre-school-age children, so that all parents will be able to attend worship.**

For both services each Sunday:

(1) We will maintain every-other-pew seating, and individuals and/or household groups will follow **further social distancing guidelines & protocols**. *Consequently, we will limit ourselves to well under 50% seating capacity in the Sanctuary.*

(2) If attendance at any service presses these protocols or limits, we will ask later-arriving worshipers to be seated in overflow areas such as the Fellowship Hall, in which the day's service will be live streaming on a TV screen.

(3) We will ask all **worshipers to refrain from handshakes, hugs, and other close contact with anyone outside their immediate household group.**

(4) We will ask worshipers [who are not part of the volunteer post-service "Sanctuary sanitizing" team] **to depart promptly at the close of each service when their pew-group is "released" by an usher.**

(5) There will be **no congregational singing**. **(6)** The Chancel Choir will not be singing as a group.

(7) **There will be no bulletin or use of pew Bibles or Hymnals. Please bring your own Bible – whether in book form or in app format on your phone or other PDA; we will also project the Sermon Scripture, liturgy notes, and ministry announcements on a screen in the Sanctuary.**

(8) There will be no gathering of children on the Chancel steps, though we will have a message for children.

(9) There will be no TLC program for children.

So our Phase 1 reopening will basically be for Lord's Day Worship Services only. We will not resume Sunday School this month. There will also be **no Fellowship Gatherings** with food and beverages served between worship services *In fact, the main Fellowship Hall area will be closed, as will most Sunday School areas – except for use, if and when necessary, for as overflow seating areas for live streaming/projection of the service.*

At the same time, we will continue to broadcast our Sunday Worship via FPC Starkville Facebook and via our FPC Starkville EPC YouTube Channel.

Furthermore, we ask members or friends of FPC who fit within any of the following profiles on any given Sunday to stay safely at home and worship via the live stream: (a) anyone who is possibly ill, whether with COVID-19 symptoms or other symptoms or concerns; (b) anyone who has received "positive" test results for having COVID-19 or other viruses or illnesses; (c) anyone who has been in contact with a confirmed case of C-19 within two weeks of the given Sunday; (d) all who have particular vulnerability to C-19 and higher morbidity rates as a result of advanced age or any of the CDC-listed medical conditions of high concern; and, of course, (e) any who because of other schedule conflicts cannot be with us in person.

With all of the foregoing understood, I thank God for inspiring and guiding FPC leadership in prayerful planning for members and guests who are medically and spiritually able & ready to return to public worship at 307 University Drive in June. Yes, Phase 1 will introduce at least an interim "*new normal*" for summer 2020 Sundays. In light of the challenges with which we have been dealing, and in light of the health concerns we need to take very seriously – I rejoice in David's opening line for Psalm 122, *a Psalm of Ascents*: **I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD!"**

Your pastor and friend in Jesus,

Martin

*Longtime Faithful & Beloved FPC Starkville member
Carol Fultz Mobley*

joined the Church Triumphant on May 19, 2020.

God's Word calls for and commends believers who steadfastly trust, love, and serve the Lord – including through loving and serving God's family in the church, as well as in the believers' own households. Carol Mobley for nearly a century answered that call, and, by God's grace, she warrants that commendation. We will greatly miss Carol's fellowship (and service!) in her beloved congregation here. Further, please continue to pray for God's comfort to Joe and family, and reach out to Joe with cards, calls, and personal help. However, we rejoice that the Lord called Carol so quickly and beautifully into his heavenly communion not much more than an hour after she rejoiced in faith with me and vibrantly joined in praying the Lord's Prayer with me on Tuesday afternoon, May 19.

Your pastor and friend in Christ,
Martin

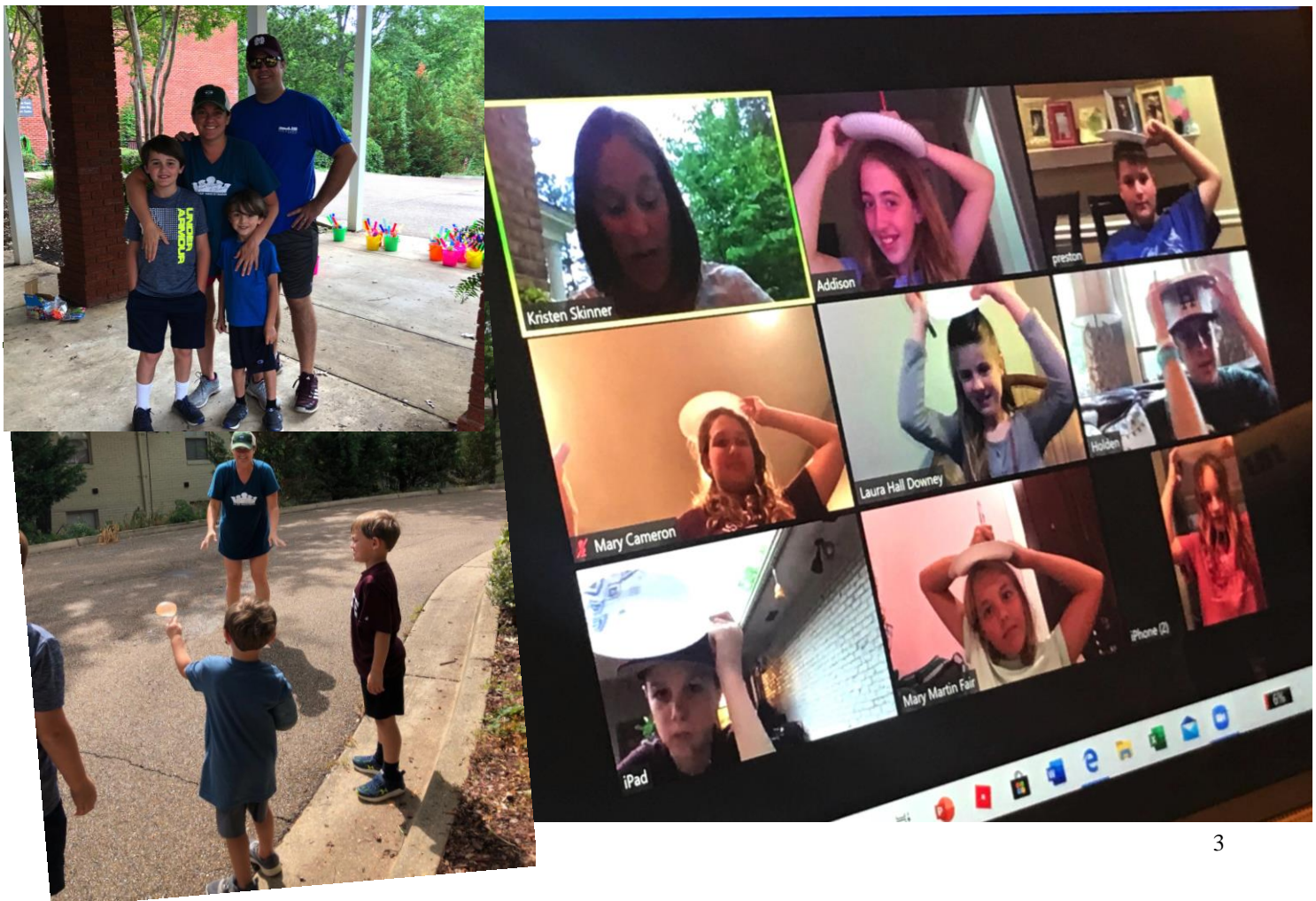


On December 16, 1949, "daughter of the church" Carol Fultz married Joe Mobley in her home Sanctuary. On December 15, 2019, following our Lord's Day worship – on the eve of their 70th Anniversary – I took the photo (appearing above- right) of Joe and Carol up on the Chancel where they had made their vows to God and to each other 70 years earlier.

FPC Children's Ministry & Youth Ministry Are Alive & Well. Join us!

Families,... and All Adults of All Ages Willing to Volunteer to Serve God by Sharing his love and gospel with children and youth – Join Us This Summer!

Contact Ashleigh Murdock (for Children's Ministry) and Reid Roberson, Faith Lifer, or Kirk Kinard (for Youth Ministry).





Happenings on the Hill

June 2020

Contact or leave a message for Pastor Martin Lifer, or speak with Kathy Wright in the Church Office (662) 323-1994, or via email to info@fpcstarkville.org. In addition, you may reach the following ministry staff via their direct email addresses listed below:

Rev. Dr. Martin Lifer, Pastor mwlifer3@gmail.com

Kathy Wright, Pastoral Administrative Assistant info@fpcstarkville.org

Cheryl Ewing, Church Financial Secretary (part-time in office) cheryl@fpcstarkville.org

Dr. Craig Aarhus, Music Director aarhus@bellsouth.net

Ashleigh Murdock, Children's Ministry Coordinator aabmurdock@gmail.com

Kirk Kinard, Co-Director of Youth Ministry kirkkinard@gmail.com

Reid Roberson, Pastoral Ministry Intern, and Co-Director of Youth Ministry reidrob97@gmail.com

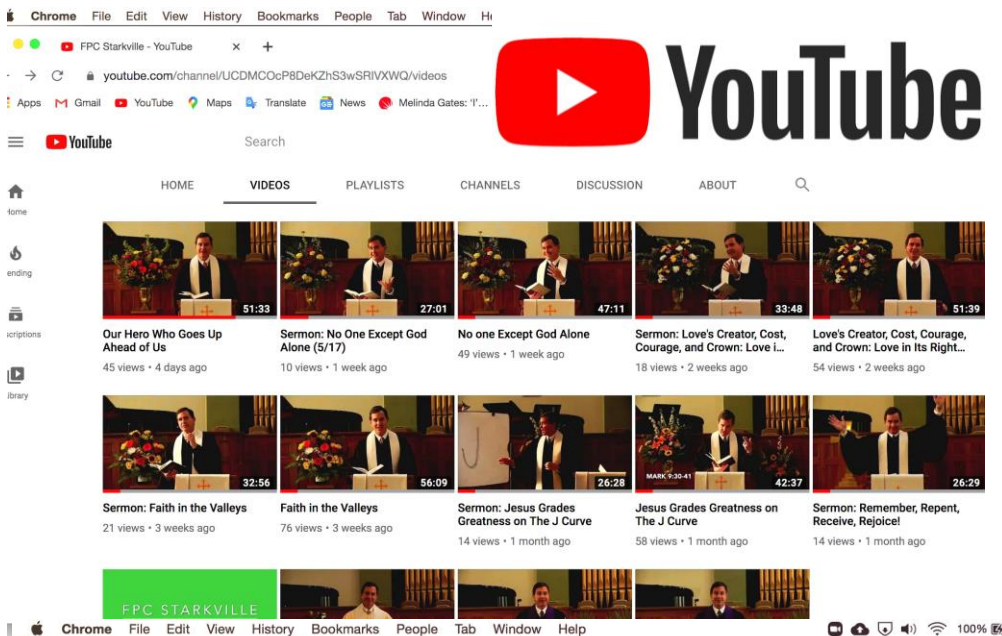
Jennifer Blackburn, Organist jenniferblackburn@hotmail.com

Kathy McGill, Children's Choir Director katherinemcgill@hotmail.com

Noa Hardin, Communications & Social Media Facilitator noahardin@gmail.com



If you cannot be with us in-person on Sunday, worship God with us as you participate through our broadcast of Lord's Day Worship – via **either our FPC Starkville EPC YouTube Channel or the post on the FPC Starkville Facebook Page.**



GIVE FAITHFULLY TO GOD THIS SUMMER:

AT FPC: Bring your Offering

(checks or cash) to the Sanctuary's new offering

baskets on Sunday, ...

or bring or mail

your offering to the Church Office.

OR by DRAFT: You may also give via Draft or Disbursement Means....

OR YOU MAY GIVE ONLINE:

Simply access the FPC Starkville Website Homepage, and select & click the GIVE Icon/Heading. On the Giving Page, select & click the second heading – Click Here to Give Online. Then provide the very basic information; your giving is private and secure via the service FPC has chosen.

