



HAPPENINGS

ON THE HILL

MARCH 2017



GIVE THANKS FOR GOD'S AMAZING BLESSINGS ON (AND THROUGH) FPC IN EARLY 2017,...

Dear Church Family and Friends,

In the first two months of 2017, the Lord has continued to bring miracles of joy and renewal to the FPC Starkville's congregation and ministries. I give thanks to Him for joyful Sundays of worship, wonderful celebrations of baptisms, new ministries, and new and renewed professions of Christian faith among members and visitors to FPC. I further rejoice in the ways God has inspired a revival in FPC's vision, prayers, and giving for ministry and mission. Through your faithfulness, I see a renewed commitment to evangelical mission at home and overseas. Moreover, I believe the Holy Spirit is expanding with powerful possibilities vision for participating in Good News outreach to the Starkville and Mississippi State University communities *and* to our nation and many nations of the world [see Page 3].

Meanwhile, I further thank God for the Christian commitment of our many parents participating in the resource we have offered on Wednesday nights this winter: **Parents Are Pastors**. I have been so impressed by our parents who directly acknowledge their calling from God to be Christian parents, and who want to learn Biblical truths, spiritual wisdom, and practical realities (understood from a faith perspective) about how to be more faithful and effective in their parenting.



Train up a child in the way he should go,
And when he is old he will not depart from it

Proverbs 22:6



Photo at left: Under the direction of Kathy McGill, Vivian Cade and Ashleigh Murdock -- FPC's Children's Choirs prepare to sing in worship (Feb. 12, 2017) about God's love.

Photo at far left of page: I speak a gospel Word at the baptism of Ashlyn Rose Simmons on February 19.

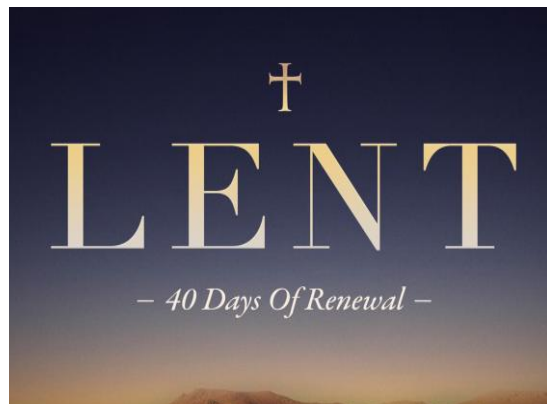
... and BEGIN the SEASON of SPIRITUAL RENEWAL Called "LENT" – MARCH 1 (ASH WEDNESDAY) AND CONTINUING THROUGHOUT THIS MONTH.

Come begin the season with us at our **Ash Wednesday Service at 6 p.m. on March 1** – remembering the consequences of our sin (our mortality) and the total need for our repentance and God's grace., and receiving the gospel assurance of that grace and share the Lord's Supper.

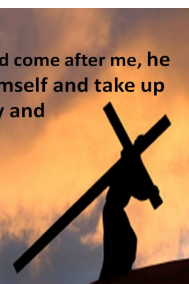
On each subsequent Sunday of this month, while celebrating Jesus' ultimate victory over sin and death, we'll remember our call to deny ourselves, to take up our cross, and to follow Him.

Join us for this meaningful and powerful season of worship and spiritual renewal!

Your Pastor and friend in Jesus the Christ,
Martin W. Lifer III



If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.
Luke 9:23



CHURCH FAMILY

MEMBERSHIP NEWS —ACROSS THE GENERATIONS AT FPC

In February, we celebrated the Call of the Church Triumphant for longtime member, elder, and teacher **Estel Wilson** (February 5, 2017), as well as (on February 12) for **Rev. Dr. Sam Laine**, who served as our Interim Pastor during the summer and fall of 2013.

We also celebrated on February 19, 2017, the baptism of **Ashlyn Rose Simmons** – the second daughter of members **Lane and Emily Simmons**.



Photo above left: Honor Guard (foreground and background) at Estel Wilson's Services on February 8, 2017.

Photos at right, above: The baptism of Ashlyn Rose Simmons.

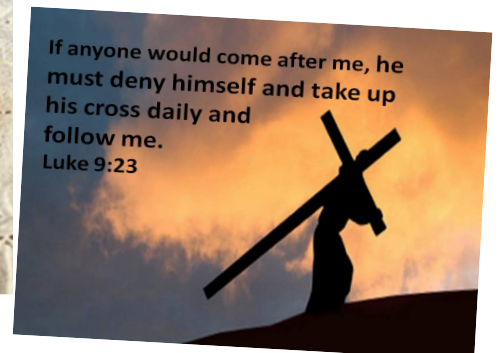
Photo at far right of page: **Beverly Robinson**, at the time recovering in Eupora, was thrilled to receive from Pastor Lifer during one of his visits Valentine's Cards to her from many FPC members.

WORSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP AT FPC

Our March and Lenten Season Celebrations of the Lord's Supper (Holy Communion) will be:

During our Ash Wednesday Service on March 1 at 6:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary – as we turn from repentance to celebrating the Lord's redeeming grace for us; and

During our 8:30 and 11:00 a.m. Services on Sunday, March 26.



WORSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP AT FPC

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Photo below: Craig and Jack Aarhus present Trail Life Pledge on February 12, 2017.

Photo at right: God blesses us through the playing of Jennifer Blackburn on the organ and on piano.



Thank You, Fellowship Committee, for a Wonderful Covered-Dish-Dinner Fellowship on Sunday Night, February 12!

Margaret Cook and Elizabeth Ryder showed us on February 12 (and show us in these photos) the way truly to enjoy our times together!

Photo at left: Margaret with husband, Jay, and Elizabeth with her father, Jason, enjoy dinner conversation with each other and with John Michael Van Horn .

Photo below right: Margaret and Elizabeth enjoy a moment of fun with Mary Gresham Henry and Lillian, Lucille, and Henry Downey.



Remember to join us each Sunday, 10:30-10:50 a.m., for our Fellowship Gathering – with coffee, juice, milk, and sweet treats, AND, most importantly, time for meeting or catching up with members and friends of FPC!





FPC MISSION – RENEWING AND EXPANDING OUR GOSPEL OUTREACH AND SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

INCLUDING OUR CURRENT SEASON OF DISCERNMENT REGARDING POTENTIAL CONNECTIONS WITH THE VIBRANT EVANGELICAL MISSION OF THE EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH DENOMINATION (EPC) AND THE COVENANT ORDER OF EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIANS DENOMINATION (ECO).

We continue to learn more about - and focus our prayers for – God’s exciting mission through the EPC, ECO, and related mission partners in equipping many new Christians and congregations in the Middle East and North Africa. At the same time, we are continuing to pray for EPC pastor and missionary, Rev. Andrew Brunson – imprisoned by the Turkish government since late 2016, after his more than 20 years of mission work in Turkey without legal problems. We also give thanks for the following update, and hope that all of FPC members and friends will consider signing the current petition for Rev. Brunson:

The Foreign Affairs committees of the United States House and Senate issued a press release on February 16 calling for the immediate release of EPC teaching Elder Andrew Brunson. The press release urging Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to grant Brunson’s freedom was signed by 78 members of Congress and includes both Republicans and Democrats. <https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/press-release/congressional-leaders-see-release-american-pastor-unjustly-detained-turkey/> [...]

For the third consecutive year – under the leadership of FPC Elder and retired MSU Professor Dr. Bob Daniels – FPC is a Co-Sponsor of The Veritas Forum at MSU.

Join fellow FPC members, together with the MSU Christian Faculty-Staff Forum (and Rev. Grant Arinder from Calvary Baptist) in helping us host this important outreach for Christian truth to the MSU campus:

Dr. Tim O’Connor (Professor of Philosophy, Indiana University) – “Is Truth Available Today?”
Thursday Night, March 2, beginning at 7 p.m., in MSU’s Bettersworth Auditorium.

THEN, BREAKFAST & DISCUSSION on MARCH 3:
In addition, all FPC members and friends are invited Friday Morning, March 3, beginning at 7:30 a.m., in Fellowship Hall, for a **Breakfast hosted by our Men of the Church, followed by a Conversation with Dr. O’Connor.**

March Sponsors of our Tejas Meal Ministry for Impoverished Children in Tejas, Honduras:

March 1: A member of our congregation
March 3: Wesley, Emily, Tate and Hayes Ferguson
March 8: A member of our congregation
March 10: Greta and Dolph Bryan
March 15: Anne and Rex Buffington in honor of Catherine’s birthday
March 17: Ginger and Shelton Jones in honor of Giles Jones’ 11th birthday
March 22: Open
March 24: Murry Mullenax
March 29: Supporter of Honduras mission outreach
March 31: Open

The VERITAS FORUM
AT MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY PRESENTS

Is Truth Available Today?

A DISCUSSION AND Q&A ON
CONTEMPORARY IDEAS OF
TRUTH AND REASON

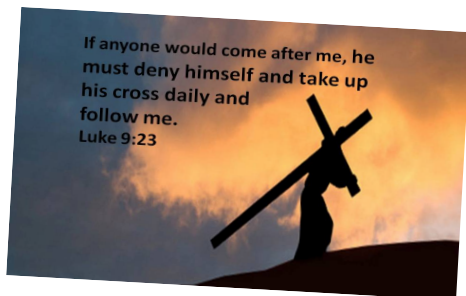
TIM O'CONNOR
PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY
INDIANA UNIVERSITY

THURSDAY, MARCH 2, 2017
7:00 PM

BETTERSWORTH AUDITORIUM

veritas.org/msstate

Sponsored by: Mississippi
State Christian Faculty-Staff
Forum, First Presbyterian Church,
Calvary Baptist Church



FPC MISSION — RENEWING AND EXPANDING OUR GOSPEL OUTREACH AND SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

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HELP WITH OUR CHURCH GROUNDS ON SATURDAY MORNING, March 4!

Calling all landscaping volunteers —
Members, Guests, Men and Women!

The FPC Property Committee and FPC Childcare Center are having a joint **Work Morning for the Church Grounds Saturday, March 4 from 7:30 a.m. till 10:30 a.m.** We will be sprucing up our beautiful campus grounds in preparation for spring and Easter. Biscuit Breakfast and coffee served at 715am. For more information, please contact Myles Carpenter (662-312-4628), Edward Kemp, or Zack Harrington.



It is always a joy to see FPC members out in the community helping lead key mission fundraising opportunities for helping agencies, scholarship funds, and worldwide health issues. In February, under the leadership of FPC's Briar Jones. President of the Starkville Rotary Club, many FPC and Rotary members — such as Nancy Lifer and Caitlin Rackley (each pictured below) — joined Scouts and many others to greet and serve record crowds for the Starkville Rodeo, raising much funding for causes with worthy needs and goals. Meanwhile, FPC members such as Zack, Hunter, and Grace Harrington showed their support by coming and enjoying the show (see photo on the lower-left of this page).

[We also give thanks for Zack's service and leadership as Chairman this year of the FPC Childcare Center Board of Directors.]

PARENTS' NIGHT OUT!

Friday, March 3, 5:30-8:00 p.m. (in the Fellowship Hall) — our Children's Ministry will provide childcare at no charge **for younger children in the age-range of infants through 2d Graders.** *Enjoy a night out, and let your kids enjoy time with us — including pizza, crafts, and fun!! Please contact Ashleigh Murdock by this Wednesday at aabmurdock@gmail.com or 662.312.9884 to reserve a spot for your child.*



HAPPENINGS ON THE HILL MARCH 2017

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. 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

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

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

Jennifer Blackbourn, *Organist* jenniferblackbourn@hotmail.com

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

Ellen Mauldin, *Church Librarian* mem3@bellsouth.net

Amanda Corley, *Child Care Director* fpcccdirector@fpcstarkville.org



Being a FAITHFUL PRESBYTERIAN & FIRST PRESBYTERIAN in 2017.

For First-Connect Sunday, Pastor Lifer will provide basic and essential updates about what it means to be a faithful Presbyterian and 1st Presbyterian follower of Jesus in these changing times. We will meet in **The Chapel (which is behind the Chancel of the Sanctuary)** on March 5, 9:45-10:30 a.m. *Dr. Lifer's discussion is open to members, as well as to guests who are interested in learning more about key faith, ministry, and Presbyterian basics for FPC in 2017.*