



Spring Hill Messenger

Vol. 63

February 2007

No. 2

From the Pastor ...

Just to remind you: Ash Wednesday is February 21. We will have a noon service with communion on that day. Throughout the Lenten season we will have Wednesday noon services of 30-minute duration with an outside speaker for each service. I hope you will be able to attend.

Lent has always been a time of intense self-examination. Without such we are prone to allow certain harmful attitudes to simmer and others to solidify. As Christians we're on a journey of faith to which we've been summoned by our Savior. The purpose of the journey is to deepen our knowledge of God and to strengthen our relationship with Christ. To do that requires our being honest with ourselves; in other words, to look inward and to name those attitudes, opinions and proclivities which are not holy, and then to relinquish them to the saving grace of Christ. That's the true purpose of Lent; and by it we are also prepared to celebrate with the whole of our being the Resurrection of Our Lord.

In His grace,
Norman



*The Lord's Supper will be celebrated
in worship on Sunday, February 25,
the first Sunday in Lent.*

Lent begins on February 21st, a day called Ash Wednesday. Traditionally on this day Christians gather for worship and may mark themselves on the forehead or the back of the hand with the sign of the cross made from ashes mixed with oil. The ashes are often made by burning the palms from last year's Palm Sunday. Ashes are an ancient symbol of repentance, or a way of saying "I'm sorry." People would sometimes put on clothes made of sack cloth and cover themselves in ashes as a way of showing God that they knew that they had done something wrong, and they were sorry. Oil is an ancient symbol of blessing and healing. The ashes of Ash Wednesday are a way of saying "We know we sometimes do things wrong. We're sorry God." The oil reminds us that God loves us and forgives us.

Molly's Musings
"When the Journey is Arduous"

Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Molly Broders, and I am your new and recently hired Administrator of Christian Education. What exactly does a person with such a title do? To put it simply, if you have an idea, question, concern, need, or complaint that pertains to our Christian Education program, I'm your girl! It seems that now is the appropriate time to list all the hopes and dreams and goals I have for this department of our church, but I'd rather write about something you might find more interesting.

I've been thinking about Mary a lot lately. I've been thinking about that ride on the donkey to Bethlehem and how every bump along the way must have brought her discomfort. I can't even imagine being 9 months pregnant and having to endure such a journey – and I thought I was uncomfortable in Chris' car on the way to visit his family on New Year's Day. Thinking about Mary brings my present circumstances (I am 35 weeks pregnant) into perspective. When I feel like the next 5 weeks are going to last a lifetime, I am just thankful I have a car to drive and that I will have a room in a hospital in which to bring new life into the world. I could go on with a list of ways my circumstances are easier than they were for Mary, but I'm sure you can too. As the title of Dr. McCrummen's sermon stated last week, it was a troubled beginning for the holy family.

There are times that I get a bit anxious about the new chapters in my life that are beginning or on the brink of beginning: a new baby, a new job, a house renovation, financial burdens, family responsibilities. On occasion, these are the things that keep me up at night. Am I making the right choice going back to work? Are my children going to suffer because I don't stay home with them? Can I juggle it all? Wouldn't life just be easier if we had decided to only have one child and I had stayed home?

Then my mind wanders back to the holy family. Did Mary ask such questions? When Joseph knocked on inn door after inn door for a room for his pregnant fiancé, did Mary dare think, "Maybe I should've just told that angel I wasn't interested in participating in God's plan"? When word came that Herod was seeking the Christ child's life and her family would have to flee to a foreign country to hide, do you think she asked, "Should I have just said no, gotten married, and lived a life of relative ease?" I doubt Mary had such doubts and questions, but I'll admit the selfish side of me has.

There are many times I do desire that life of ease. I desire to play it safe. I desire the perpetual vacation, the daily nap on the couch, and the smooth sailing. I want to relax, to kick-back, and to do what I want to do when I want to do it. Then I realize that to pursue such a lifestyle is the same as saying no to God's call in my life. I must accept the fact that if I am going to participate in His plan to be a godly mother, wife, and a spirit-filled Administrator of Christian Education, then the journey is going to be arduous. If he didn't spare the holy family of such trials, I can rest assured that there will be as many for me. I must trust that His plan is perfect and the difficulties grow and transform me into His image. Deep down I know that there is no better life than to serve my God despite the hardships doing so might bring. After all, I Corinthians 6: 19 – 20 reminds me of this truth, "You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body."

May your 2007 be filled with arduous but life-transforming journeys for God.

In Christ,
Molly

Mark's Remarks

At the Student Life conference this summer, we, the youth, had the opportunity to hear Louie Giglio, a renowned speaker. Towards the end of the week, he spoke about the desperate needs of the poor in our world, and challenged the audience to search our hearts to discern how God was calling us to serve the very poor. He mentioned several programs, including Compassion's Child Survival Centers. In a powerful discussion later that night, we discovered that each of us had independently come to the conclusion that this was the ministry to which God was calling us. With this charge, we returned to Mobile, excited to be used by God.

In third world countries, prenatal care is nonexistent, and infant mortality is 27-30%. In fact, children are not even named before age 5, because the chance of survival is minimal. Compassion's Child Survival Centers were started to provide prenatal care, nutritional information, and spiritual support to both expecting mothers and newborns. It requires \$30,000 to fund a center, the amount our youth group has pledged to raise. Over 80% of the money goes directly to the children, and the other 20% funds administrative costs. Once the program is in place, we will have the opportunity to actually visit the center. We are passionate about this ministry and determined to change the lives of women and children in this desperate situation.

We have already learned a great deal about raising money, and we need your help! Our first major fundraiser will be a silent auction on Saturday, March 3. In order to buy items to auction, we need start-up money. Most retailers will need to cover the wholesale cost of an item before they can donate it. If you feel led to assist in this ministry, please consider contributing to the fund. Time is limited, and this money is essential to the success of the auction. If we receive more money than we need to buy items, it will go directly toward our \$30,000 goal. In addition, we need (new!) items to be donated! Please look around... be creative! Football tickets, gift baskets, books, golf clubs, paintings- *not* yard sale items! If you have a service or talent you can donate (cooking a candlelight dinner for two, for example) that would be appreciated, too! Both start-up money and donations will be tax deductible.

We appreciate your help more than you know! We are super-excited to see where God is going to take us, and we look forward to the results of His faithfulness!

In His love,
SHPC Youth Group

Attention Sunday School Teachers:

We are going to put together a G.O.L.D Catalogue for Summer 2007 which will outline all of our summer CE opportunities. Please be thinking now about what you would like to teach/cover this summer in your CE class. If you already know and want to send Ann Jung a summary of your summer class, please email her at poatjung@comcast.net. **The deadline for your information to be included in the catalogue is March 10, 2007.**

MUSIC NOTES

By Randy Sheets

Director of Music Ministries and Organist

Knowing God through Listening

Here is an excerpt from an email devotional I received recently from a church musician's organization.

"The art of hearing as a path of knowing God is a central component of designing and leading empowering worship. Frederick Buechner states, 'If I can't see you for some reason but can only hear you, you don't exist for me in space, which is where seeing happens, but in time, which is where hearing happens.' He concludes that 'it is no surprise that the Bible uses hearing, not seeing, as the predominant image for the way human beings know God' We come to know the unknowable through listening."

Many historical works of art show the Holy Spirit, in the form of the dove, symbolically entering a person through the ear—that is, by hearing.

In this visual age, it can be very difficult for us to truly listen. In many churches, the projection of images on screens is a prominent part of worship—it seems important not just to hear the Word, but to see the preacher or worship leaders' faces, hairstyles, and dress very closely, as if at home in front of the television. Sometimes the projections include live images of congregation members, drawing attention to them and setting them apart by their few seconds of celebrity on the big screen.

The noise level of contemporary life also makes it hard to listen--- we are bombarded not only with visual images, but with constant sound and noise. A Michael Creighton novel about time travel describes a 20th century person's first reaction to his arrival in medieval times--- his first impression was of the pervasive quiet--- without motors, electric hummings and buzzings, the peaceful soundscape was worlds away from contemporary noisy life. The sheer volume of noise in our society, with constant access to recorded music and talk, can make it hard to hear God's thundering voice, much less God's "still, small voice of calm."

During worship and at other times, it sometimes takes conscious effort for me to switch into "listening" mode ---it is not always easy to calm myself, to slow down, and tell myself that I have to listen, not just with ears, but also with mind and spirit. And yet, if we would know God, we *must* listen to God's voice. Of course, God speaks through sound (speech and music), but can also speak through the printed word and visual images, so that persons who are hearing impaired can also hear.

When we enter worship, I hope that we enter a time different from everyday life, a time that is set aside by God's people to gather in God's name to worship and to listen, so that we hear what God is saying to us. As God's people in worship, we put aside our likes and dislikes, the distractions that enter through our eyes, knowing that God speaks to those who truly want to hear.

Important Notice

A Change to Tuesdays

Beginning in February, the Diaconate and Session will meet on Tuesdays as will most (not all) of the committees. Because of Mardi Gras, the Diaconate and Session will both meet on February 13, committees on February 6. In March committees will meet on the first Tuesday, the Diaconate on the second Tuesday, the Session on the third Tuesday. This schedule will be followed through June. July is our "off" month; in August the schedule resumes.

The change has come about after an examination of the pastor's schedule. The Personnel Committee found that Fridays and Saturdays are used by Dr. McCrummen for sermon preparation which means there has been no day off (except on rare occasions) in seven-and-a-half years, vacations excluded. The pastor has agreed that it is neither healthy nor holy to maintain such a schedule. A Sabbath is given by God to every person, in fact commanded; therefore, beginning in February, our senior pastor will take Mondays off, including Monday evenings; hence the change to Tuesdays as a meeting date.

This proposal was presented to the Session by the chair of Personnel at the December meeting and unanimously passed.



*Stillman College Choir
In Concert,
Sunday, February 25
3 pm*



*The Birmingham-Southern
College Concert Choir
In Concert
Friday, March 16, 7:00 p.m.
Reception following*

Global Missions Committee

The Global Missions Committee is pleased to announce the total contributions given in December, 2006 to help our church's annual financial support of the Heifer Program were greater than \$9,000. This outpouring of support and confidence in the Heifer International Program is testimony to God's will in our lives and His work in countries where the poor and underserved live. Thank you to all who participated in this wonderful program. We will look forward to serving you and God's children next year.

Spring Hill added two projects in 2006. Helping the deaf in the Gaza Strip, the Atfaluna Society for Deaf Children has been working in the field of deaf education and allied services since 1992. Currently there are 270 children in the school beginning with kindergarten. Jennifer Cole is our correspondent with this group.

The Bethel McKane Yesus School in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia is the second new project. This school for girls enrolls about 800 day students, has daily Bible study and chapel. English as a second language is taught. Naomi Turner is our correspondent.

The Service Committee would like to thank all the volunteers who helped deliver poinsettias to our shut-ins and sick.



The total received for the Joy Gift Offering taken during the Advent and Christmas season was \$784.50.



First Thursday Luncheon February 1

The 1st Thursday Lunch Group will tour the Mobile Medical Museum on February 1, 2007. Of interest will be "Mobile: Cradle of Organized Medicine in Alabama." A tour of the Ronald McDonald House will also be included.

The bus will leave the church at 8:30 a.m. and return to the church by noon for lunch.

Please call the church office to make reservations for the tour and the lunch.

Valentine Lunch

Plan now to attend our Valentine lunch on Sunday, February 11 following the 11:00 a.m. service. Cost is \$6.00 adult; \$3.00 child; \$20.00 family maximum. Watch the bulletin for more details and reservation information.

"There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of every man which cannot be filled by any created being, but only by God, the Creator, made known through Jesus."

*—French mathematician and philosopher
Blaise Pascal*

Presbyterian Women's Activities

Presbyterian Women's Coordinating Team will meet on Wednesday, February 14 as follows:



- #1 at 10:00 a.m. in the Bullard Building Dining Room (Janie Sims, hostess)
- #2 at 9:30 a.m. at Mendy Turnipseed's (17 Ashley Drive). Please bring items to fill shoeboxes for the college students (ideas: Valentine's candy, Mardi Gras trinkets). Childcare will be provided at the church beginning at 9:15 a.m.
- #3 at 9:30 a.m. in the Parlor
- #4 at 7:15 p.m. in the Parlor

Circle #3 would like to give a special thanks to the people who participated in the "hanging of the greens" and the decorating of the sanctuary and Fellowship Hall for Christmas. It was more beautiful than ever.

Mark your calendars for Thursday, March 15 – PW Spring Gathering. It will be at Spanish Fort Presbyterian Church. More information about this and making reservations will come soon.

Stewardship

Because of our spirit of giving and the increase in our pledges, we have ended the 2006 year in the rare position of being \$53,000 in the black. Our church family is to be congratulated for their show of faith and spiritual courage demonstrated by the giving of their tithes. The money we collected in excess of our debts has been placed in a building and maintenance fund that can be used for upcoming repairs to our air-conditioning system and church building.

We should all be humbled by what we have been able to do through our giving and the support of God's work. The Session of this church is committed to the responsible stewardship of these financial gifts.

Respectfully,
R.Gordon Mowry



Please mark this important date on your calendar – March 11, 2007. This is the date of our next BLOOD DRIVE. Please consider giving the gift of life. Call the church office if you can donate or help at the drive. There will also be a tear off in the Sunday bulletins for signing up.

From the Library:

Where do Librarians learn about new materials? Answer: Usually in and through other materials.

Recently three books have been added to our collection because they were reviewed in a quarterly publication called REFORMED WORSHIP.

With the Lenten period on the horizon (February 21st), these three can prepare us for the proper understanding of this liturgical season.

Smith: *A Holy Meal*, the Lord's Supper and the life of the church

Jensen: *The Substance of Things Seen*: Art, faith, and the Christian community

Peterson: *The Message, the Psalms*, an artist's impression via Anneke Kaai

NOTE:

- Smith has a reputation for capturing the theology of "hunger and thirst for the gift of the Lord's Supper."
- The Jensen book is a part of the Calvin Institute Christian Worship Liturgical Study Series.
- And anything by Eugene Peterson is well-worth considering, as would Brueggeman or Peterson.

Welcome to our new members

Dean and Ashley Brown
305 Ridgelawn Drive West
Mobile, Alabama 36608
344-4794

Charles (Charlie) Hess
24 Country Club Road
Mobile, AL 36608
340-8071

Linda Hess Cooper
24 Country Club Road
Mobile, AL 36608
342-5256

Trip to Ireland

Frank and Sylvia Beall invite you to join them on a trip to Ireland next September, enjoying the beautiful countryside and learning about the land where much of our Presbyterian heritage originated. Brochures are available on the hall table. Questions? Call Bealls at 850-439-6862.

Hold this paragraph close to your nose and blow on it. If it turns green, call your doctor. If it turns brown, call your dentist. If it turns purple, call your psychiatrist. If it turns red, see your bank manager. If it turns black call your lawyer and make a will. If it remains the same color, you are in good health and there is no reason on earth why you should not be in church next Sunday.

Worship Committee News

Have you ever wondered how to make the Lenten season more prayerful and meaningful? One way to accomplish this goal is to set aside the time each **Wednesday during Lent at 12:00 noon** for the worship services at the church. We have a special treat this year because the homilies will be provided by visiting pastors from area churches. Mark these dates on your calendar now so you won't miss a single Wednesday service: **February 21st (Ash Wednesday-communion by intinction), February 28th, March 7th, March 14th, and March 28th.**

On Maundy Thursday, April 5th, the church will provide a communion service at **12:00 noon.**

You won't want to miss our special **Good Friday worship service on April 6th at 7:00 p.m. at the church.** Special readings from the Gospel of John and music by our wonderful choir will provide the basis for this meaningful service.

Easter worship services on April 8, 2007 are scheduled at the usual times of 8:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. on Sunday morning.

There are so many opportunities for us to focus our hearts and minds on the true meaning of Easter. How much greater is our appreciation of Christ's suffering, death and resurrection when we set aside time for prayer and reflection throughout Lent!

Thanks to outgoing officers



The thanks of the congregation is expressed to the Officers in the outgoing class of 2006:

Elders: Kendall Dexter, Allen Jones, Linda Langston, Margaret Miller, Kaye Mims, Luann Rice, Robert Weaver

Deacons: Michelle Dudley, Gaillard Hamilton, George Hamilton, Ashford Kettler, Rita Langus, Becky Lord, Bob Oatsvall, Vera Lynn Sheets, Amy Walton, Christie Wing

A little girl, whose church did not have a choir, was taken by her mother to a neighboring church where there was a surpliced choir. She whispered in dismay to her mother. "They are not all going to preach, are they?"

STEPHEN MINISTRY



We are excited; two of our Stephen Ministers, Nancy Adams and Ellen Johnston, have just returned from Leadership Training and we are very anxious to begin training a new class of Stephen Ministers. We have a good group already in the class and would welcome new members. Those in our new class are Jane Bulwinkle, Ruth Fitzgerald, Cassie Steele, Elizabeth (Cissy) Crowe (Overlook Presbyterian), Loretta Turner, and Corinne Atkinson. If you would like to be a member, please let us know.

Thank you.
Margaret Miller, Stephen Leader

A Thank You Note to SHPC

From Mary Lena and Andy Harper on behalf of the Hancock County (Mississippi) Middle School and Gulfview Elementary School.

Your generous gifts of money and garments to the "Calling All Khaki's" Program have helped and are appreciated.

The program has made the general spirit of Matthew 26:36 "clothe the naked" into a very specific "size 10 slacks needed for this third grader."

Families living in FEMA trailers face daily struggles, and having appropriate school clothes available is one problem. The few open stores in Hancock County have limited supplies, there are no thrift stores, and catalog stores require more money.

Initially, we were moved to address the problem when our son Steve, a teacher at Gulfview School, asked us to find khaki pants for a child whose family FEMA trailer had burned. Later we were given a specific clothing needs list generated by the Pearlinton Relief Center. As we made successive deliveries, we were given requests which had "just come in": a shed fire had destroyed the family washer, dryer and school clothes; a child had torn her only pair of slacks on the school playground; and a wheel-chair bound student needed a larger size, easier to manage slacks.

Being able to fill the listed needs was very satisfying. Additionally, we have left dress-code approved clothes in various sizes as well as a supply of "hoodies", coats, and gloves for the school counselors to distribute as needed.

We didn't see every child who received something, but the look on the faces of those we did see confirmed that they were grateful. The parents we have met have expressed gratitude, and have said that without the help of "church people" they couldn't have made it through the awful times since Katrina left them homeless in 2005.

On behalf of all those who have been helped, we offer our grateful thanks to the Church "Katrina Fund", the Current Issues Class, the Choir, and all those individuals who have donated clothing and cash gifts (more than \$2600) to the School Uniform Program.

Sincerely,
Mary Lena and Andy Harper



We rejoice with Margaret Braswell who has adopted Helen McKinley Braswell. Helen was born in Guatemala on May 28, 2006 and arrived in the United States on December 22, 2006. Grandparents are Mary Hazen Braswell and Moren and Louis Braswell.



The prayers and sympathy of the congregation are with Steve Newberry in the death of his father, Ralph Newberry, on November 25 in Cincinnati, OH; with Norman Davis, in the death of his wife, Grace, on November 26; with Edith Abrams, in the death of her brother, Leon Anderson, on November 28 in Birmingham, with Lynn Locklin-Hatch in the death of her mother, Sue Locklin on December 5; with the family of Dorothy Bowers in her death on December 11; with Sallie Connell in the death of her brother, Marty Sullivan, on December 14 in Dyer IN; with Bobby Wilson in the death of his mother, Grace Wilson, on December 15; and with Judy Stout and Babs Wright in the death of their father, William Robert Pollard, on December 27.



We rejoice with Ted and Marcia Autterson in the marriage of their daughter, Amy, to Michael Long on December 2 in the sanctuary.



We rejoice with Bill and Marcy Harris in the celebration of their 60th Wedding Anniversary on December 21.

Memorials

Memorials have been received for the following:

Betty Huckabee
Faye Cauley
Grace Wilson
Ralph Newberry
William Robert Pollard
Jean Seely McCool
Anne Reeves
Susanne Weaver
Burt F. Taylor III
Betty Wolfe
Jim Andress

From the following:

Jane and Louis Williams
Nathan and Margaret Miller
Joe and Wilma Croom
Pat and Royce Ray
Ree Scott
Robert and Mary Ann Donnell
Carolyn Hembree
Sam and Judy Strada
Charles and Linda Langston
Buck and Joelyne Trehern
Duncan and Frances McDonald
Jack and Elaine Morgan

Randy and Vera Lynn Sheets
Leonard Rogers
Mr. and Mrs. George McIntosh
Virginia Guy
John and Susan Leach



Honoraria

*Honoraria have been received
for the following:*

Greta and George Massing
SHPC Staff
Mrs. Joe Bullard, Sr.
Mr. and Mrs. Tim Gaston
Mr. Richard Weavil
Mr. and Mrs. Joel Manley
Mrs. Sharron Luce
Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Peterson

Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Palmer
Mr. and Mrs. Ramsey Stuart
Mr. and Mrs. Joe Dunnam
Mr. and Mrs. Ben Ladner
Mr. and Mrs. Joe Bullard

From the following:

Edith Cox
Sarah and Tom Damson
Torch and Linda Hollingsworth

Spring Hill Presbyterian Church 2006 Statistics

Total membership:	1,304
Active membership:	866
Membership Gain in 2006:	44
Losses:	13
	4 by transfer
	9 by death
Average attendance:	445
Age distribution:	
25 & under	219
26-45	319
46-55	119
56-65	130
Over 65	79
Total:	866

Lectionary for the Lord's Day

February 2007

- 4 *5th Sunday in Ordinary Time*
Isa. 6:1-9 (9-13); Ps. 138; 1 Cor. 15:1-11
Luke 5:1-11
- 11 *6th Sunday in Ordinary Time*
Jer. 17:5-10; Ps 1: 1 Cor. 15:12-20
Luke 6:17-26
- 18 *Transfiguration of the Lord*
Exod. 34:29-35; Ps. 99; 2 Cor. 3:12-4:2
Luke 9:28-36 (37-43)
- 25 *1st Sunday in Lent*
Deut. 26:1-11; Ps. 91: 1-2, 9-16
Rom. 10:8b- 13; Luke 4:1-13



February 2007

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28			

Church Calendar

February 2007

- 1 Tour and 1st Thursday Lunch
- 6 Committees
- 7 Presbyterian Women Coordinating Team – 9:30 a.m.
- 8 Presbytery Meeting – Cottage Hill Presbyterian
- 9 Meals on Wheels – 10:30 a.m.
- 13 Men's Breakfast – 7:00 a.m.
Diaconate – 7:00 p.m.
Session – 7:00 p.m.
- 14 Circles
- 17 Yeoman Day
- 19 Newsletter Deadline – 9:00 a.m.
- 20 Office closed – Mardi Gras
- 21 Ash Wednesday – noon communion service
- 25 Stillman College Concert – 3:00 p.m.



God loves you as if you were the only one in the world to love. And he loves everybody the way he loves you.

—St. Augustine

Editors: Dan and Laura Sellers and
love bites from Ti Amo and
Al E. Cat.

