



First
Presbyterian
Church

P.O. Box 485 • Greenwood, MS 38930

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YOUTH NEWS

WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY

Jr. High and Sr. High @ 5:30 pm

July 6 The Cole's, 522 Crockett St.
July 13 The Camp's, 2703 W. River Road Ext.
July 20 No Bible Study - Montreat
July 27 The Fortenberry's, 401 Bell Ave.

PRESBYTERIAN YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

Jr. High and Sr. High @ 5 pm ▪ Dinner @ 6

July 3 No PYF - Independence Day
July 10 PYF @ Shed
July 17 No PYF - Montreat
July 24 No PYF - Montreat
July 31 PYF - Pool Party
(Time and Location - TBA)

SUMMER TRIPS

Sr. High to Montreat, NC — July 16-23
Youth Conference IV — "A World of Difference"

Those Attending: Thomas Burrus, Haynes Camp, Cavitt Cookston, Lucy Cookston, Sam Henry Farmer, Micah Crick, Swayze Pillow, Walt Pillow, Steele Robbins and John Hollis Tackett.

Chaperones: Thomas Gregory, Boyce Robbins and Rev. Steve Fortenberry.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

300 Main Street ▪ P.O. Box 485
Greenwood, MS 38935

Phone (662) 453-4680
Fax (662) 453-4699

Website: www.fpcgreenwood.org

EMAIL ADDRESSES

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T. Gregory: trgiii@gmail.com
A. McDonald: firstpres@bellsouth.net
C. Ewing: fpcbooks@bellsouth.net
L. Crawford: lcrawford3@bellsouth.net

CHURCH STAFF

PastorDr. Rusty Douglas
Associate Pastor..... Rev. Steve Fortenberry
Director of Music..... Rev. Ray Smithee
Christian Ed. Director..... Kelli Stainback
Youth Coordinator.....Thomas Gregory
Kindergarten DirectorNancy Tollison
Administrative Assistant.....Annette McDonald
Financial Secretary Cheryl Ewing
Bldg.& Grounds Supervisor.....Larry Crawford
Custodian.....Charles Covington
Clerk of Session..... Richard Oakes
Board of Deacons.....Mark Kimmel
Church TreasurerZach Luke
Presbyterian WomenJane Crump
Endowment Committee.....Mike Sturdivant, Jr.
Missionaries.....Dr. Rev. Sasan Tavassoli, Iran
Rev. Amos Yam, Campeche, Mexico
Mike Reinsel, Rivers of the World



First
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Church

GREENWOOD, MISSISSIPPI

JUNE 2016

OUR GRADUATES FOR 2016



Sarah Jennings Bramlett

University of Houston
Bachelor in Art
Cum Laude



Sam Henry Farmer

Pillow Academy 2016
University of Mississippi
Majoring in Engineering



Katherine Flautt

University of Mississippi
Bachelor in Exercise
Science



Anna Jennings Nix

University of Mississippi
School of Dentistry
D.M.D.
Omicron Kappa Upsilon
Honor Society



SAVE THE DATE!
Internationally Acclaimed Concert Organist
Stephen Tharp
First Presbyterian Church
September 22, 2016, 7:30 p.m.

On this evening we will celebrate the 25th anniversary of the refurbishment and reconfiguration of our sanctuary, and the expansion of our pipe organ, which left us with a beautiful and functional worship space, and the sixth largest pipe organ in this state. There will be a brief "re-dedication service" followed by the organ recital.

Stephen Tharp, artist-in-residence at St. James Episcopal Church, in Manhattan, will present an organ recital as part of the service that evening. Stephen, former organist at St. Patrick's Cathedral in NYC, is regarded by most organists around the world as the finest player of our time. He has won numerous national and international awards for his recordings. He is the most traveled concert organist in the world.

His program will be a mixture of works written for the organ and transcriptions of orchestral works that he was arranged himself. You will be amazed at what one man can do, and at what our sanctuary pipe organ is capable of doing! Please plan to be here, and please invite others to join you. There is no charge for this concert! A nursery will be available.

THE LORD'S DAY

(If you are unable to serve, please find a replacement)

July 3 — 7th Sunday after Pentecost

9:45 a.m. Sunday School
11:00 a.m. Worship
Scripture: Luke 20:19-26; Romans 13:1-7
Sermon: "Rendering to Caesar"
Dr. Rusty Douglas
"America the Beautiful"
"The Star Spangled Banner"
Children's Sermon: Elder Tommy Gregory
Prayer of Dedication: Elder Polly Henson
Children's Church: Kristin and Palmer Brock
Toddlers: Nursery

July 10 — 8th Sunday after Pentecost

9:45 a.m. Sunday School
11:00 a.m. Worship
Sermon: Rev. Steve Fortenberry
Children's Sermon: Elder Pat Gullede
Prayer of Dedication: Elder Dale Pillow
Children's Church: Shannon and Moss Melton
Toddlers: Nursery

July 17 — 9th Sunday after Pentecost/Communion

9:45 a.m. Sunday School
11:00 a.m. Worship & Communion
Sermon: Dr. Don Howie
Children's Sermon: Elder Cathy Jennings
Prayer of Dedication: Elder Jim Quinn
Children's Church: Lindsey and Zach Luke
Toddlers: Nursery

July 24 — 10th Sunday after Pentecost

9:45 a.m. Sunday School
11:00 a.m. Worship
Scripture: John 10:29; Isaiah 26:4;
Exodus 33:18-23
Sermon: Dr. Rusty Douglas
"Rock of Ages"

Children's Sermon: Deacon Bill Johnston
Prayer of Dedication: Elder David Camp
Children's Church: Claire and Shane Smith
Toddlers: Nursery

July 31 — 11th Sunday after Pentecost

9:45 a.m. Sunday School
11:00 a.m. Worship
Scripture: Luke 19:37; Rev. 5:11-13;
Psalm 145:10-12
Sermon: Dr. Rusty Douglas
"O for a Thousand Tongues"
Children's Sermon: Dr. Rusty Douglas
Prayer of Dedication: Elder Kathryn Pittman
Children's Church: Sarah Nell and Clifton Thach
Toddlers: Nursery

(Children's Church is held in Room 202 of the Ed Building)

July Ushers:

Mark Vemer (Head), Bill Crump, Charles Peel, John Pittman, Trish Rodgers and Mary Neff Stewart.

THANK YOU

Dear Church Members,

We would like to thank each and every one of you for helping with Vacation Bible School. It was a huge success thanks to all the helping hands of our congregation! We had so many great volunteers who helped us teach the Word and Love of God to the children in our church and community. We could not have done it without you. Thank you again for giving your time and using your talents to help make this Vacation Bible School a memorable one!

Thank you,

Ashley Scott and Kelli Stainback



Join Us for SALT Training!

Saturday, August 13

The participation in the first year of our midweek program (SALT) exceeded our expectations. Many, many people have commented that it meant quite a bit to them. Even so, we know that it can be even more of a blessing.

To that end, we are planning a training event for **Saturday, August 13**. We will be bringing in a person or two from the national staff of GenOn Ministries--the group that has been training and equipping churches across the country for over 50 years. They will share the wisdom they've accumulated through working with thousands of churches doing midweek programs.

This is an all-day training event. We know how precious Saturdays are to everyone, but we believe the investment in time will reap benefits in the lives of our children and adults for years to come. Our hope is to have at least 15 of our people in attendance (we're about half-way there). Other churches will be invited as well.

Nancy and I have been to these training events before and we can guarantee you that it will be a very enjoyable and inspirational experience.

Rev. Steve Fortenberry

CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY

The Christian sympathy of our congregation is expressed to **Jonbob Wise** at the death of his grandfather, Bobbie Baker, on June 5, 2016, in Greenwood, Mississippi.

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS JUNE 2016

1. Approved 5 set of minutes.
2. Received a thank you letter from Camp Hopewell for the Session's recent \$1,000 gift.
3. Was briefly reported that the General Assembly of the PCUSA is meeting now in Portland, OR. This 222nd General Assembly for the first time, elected Co-Moderators. The Rev. Denise Anderson and Rev. Jan Edminston, one black and one white. There are 594 commissioners, equal numbers of clergy and elders.
4. Elder Jim Becker will be moving soon to Memphis, and the issue of whether or not to fulfill his unexpired one year term, should he resign, was referred to the Administrative Committee for discussion and a possible recommendation.
5. The monthly financial reports showed that we are exactly on target and slightly ahead of last year's receipts at the end of May, but the summer months are when we historically fall somewhat behind in receipts. The Stewardship and Finance Committee will be contacting persons who recently joined this congregation and ask if they have questions about the pledging/budgeting process.
6. Approved the following persons as members of various committees:
 - Allyn Camp, Ashley Scott, Lisa Melton, Shannon Melton, Youth Committee\ Class of 2019
 - Chuck Conditt, Staff Support Committee\ Class of 2019
 - Meagan Litton, Kindergarten Board\ Class of 2019
 - Heston Powers, Sarah Nell Thach, Cheryl Thornhill, Witness Committee\ Class of 2019
 - Denominational Relations Task Force:
Ch. David Camp, Glenn Beckham, Pat Gullede, Timmy Lott, Moss Melton, John Pittman, Trish Rodgers, John Stewart III, Clifton Thach, Dr. Rusty Douglas and Rev. Steve Fortenberry.
7. A policy is being written for Session approval related to the use and maintenance of the church van.
8. The plaque for the re-dedication of the Jim and Ina Memorial Library has arrived and is installed.
9. Funds were approved to repair concrete capstones on the sanctuary roof. Larry Crawford and Wiley Dallas have saved the church multiple thousands of dollars by doing the scraping and painting on the bell tower, replacing old wood and painting the trim around the stained glass windows, using the lift belonging to the Melton Family, which they graciously loaned to the church.

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS, continued

10. Staff conferences are scheduled for July 27. Dr. Douglas will be taking a week vacation followed by a week of study leave in Montreat, NC in July.
11. Plans are in the making for publicizing the upcoming Stephen Tharp organ concert, Thursday 22, 7:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. He is arguably one of the three best organists in the country, having served as organist at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City.
12. Those individuals and organizations which receive benevolence funds from the church will be meeting in August/September in one of four meetings of the Witness Committee as it prepares to make benevolence recommendations to the Session for the 2017 budget.

NEW MEMBERS



Ryan and Caroline Strawbridge joined by transfer of letter from St. Matthews United Methodist Church in Madison. Caroline will start teaching in August at Pillow Academy. Ryan works at Planter Bank and Trust Company. They have two children, Rhodes (above) and Catherine.



Mark and Gina Hutson joined by reaffirmation of their faith. Mark enjoys boating, golf and tennis. Gina teaches and tutors at Pillow Academy. They have one son, Conner, who joined the congregation even before his parents!

NEW BABIES

Benjamin Byrd Johnson, son of Nancy and Ben Johnson, born June 6, 2016. **Lyla Loraine Shel Gary**, daughter of Dana and Lawson Gary, born June 9, 2016. **Hazel Fowler Pigott**, daughter of Samantha and Sam Pigott III, born June 13, 2016.



July 2016

First Presbyterian Church Monthly Planner

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 11:30 am Community Kitchen -FPC Servers	2
3 9:45 am Sunday School 11:00 am Worship No PYF	4 Church Office Closed Happy 4th of July	5	6 10:00 am Liturgy 5:30 pm Jr. High & Sr. High Bible Study, Cole's No Choir	7 6:45 am Mission Mississippi Breakfast, St. Johns United Methodist Church, 1001 Grand Blvd.	8	9
10 9:45 am Sunday School 11:00 am Worship 5:00pm Combined PYF @ Shed	11 9:35 am Staff Meeting 5:15 pm Christian Education Committee 5:15 pm Worship and Music Committee	12 5:30 pm Buildings and Grounds Committee	13 10:00 am Liturgy 5:30 pm Jr. High & Sr. High Bible Study, Camp's No Choir	14 5:30 pm Administrative Committee	15	16 8:00 am Youth depart from the Shed for Montreat Youth Conference
17 9:45 am Sunday School 10:35 am Communion Assignments 11:00 am Worship/Communion Dr. Don Howie, preacher 3:00 pm Indywood Sunday School No PYF-Montreat	18 9:35 am Staff Meeting 5:30 pm Deacons 6:00 pm Session Supper 6:30 pm Session	19	20 10:00 am Liturgy No Jr. High or Sr. High Bible Study No Choir	21 Newsletter Deadline	22	23 6:30 pm Youth arrive from Montreat Youth Conference
24 9:45 am Sunday School 11:00 am Worship No PYF	25 9:35 am Staff Meeting	26	27 10:00 am Liturgy 12:00 noon-2:00 pm Staff Conference 5:30 pm Jr. High and Sr. High Bible Study, Fortenberry's No Choir	28	29	30
31 9:45 am Sunday School 11:00 am Worship PYF- Pool Party (Time and Location- TBA)						



Member
In the
Spotlight
Charles Peel



Charles Peel has been a member of this church for 67 years! He was born in Greenwood, graduated from Greenwood High and Mississippi State University. He and his wife, Margaret, raised their children here, Billy (deceased), Hollis and Laura. Charles Peel was a Funeral Director and Manager for Wilson and Knight Funeral Home for some 54 years.

One of his favorite Bible stories is Noah and the Ark. Noah followed through with God's plan for him to build an Ark that would save his family.

Charles has been ordained as a Deacon and Elder of this church. He is active in the Irvine Memorial Sunday School Class. He attends the Men's Prayer Breakfast on Friday mornings and has been a part of it for a long time. As a child, his introduction to God and church began and has remained at this church. He feels very grateful and blessed to be a part of this church since a very young age. He appreciates all that FPC has provided for his family in his lifetime, all the opportunities for spiritual growth.

He enjoys hunting, fishing and working in his yard. He loves spending time with their six grandchildren and one great-granddaughter.



First Presbyterian Church VBS 2016



The Denominational Relations Task Force recommended sending to the congregation in the newsletter, both Dr. Douglas' report on the recent General Assembly meeting, and also the report of the "Presbyteries Outlook" magazine's summary. And the congregation is also encouraged to do their own research and make their judgments about this meeting.

1

The 222nd General Assembly of the PCUSA

The first General Assembly meeting of the Presbyterian Church in this country took place in 1789, three weeks after George Washington was inaugurated as our first President. The GA met annually up until fairly recently, when we decided to meet every other year. I think that decision was made due to the expense of the week long meeting –and the controversy that typically results from this meeting.

It is helpful to keep in mind, especially when you or I disagree with some position of a particular General Assembly, that the Assembly does **not** speak for "all" Presbyterians. It is speaking for that "particular" Assembly. This is not the same as the Pope speaking for "all Roman Catholics." As a Presbyterian, we are not bound by positions that the Assembly takes on a host of controversial social, economic, national and international issues. Presbyterians have always believed that God is at work in God's world and we are called to join God in His work –not doing God's work for Him, but seeking to discern what He is doing and joining Him in his work of proclaiming the gospel, exercising compassion, striving for justice, and working for peace. Presbyterians historically have wanted to try and make the world a little more like what we believe God wants it to be. But rarely can we all agree on exactly what that is!

The 222nd General Assembly met in Portland, Oregon the week of June 18-25, 2016, with 594 "commissioners", equal numbers of ministers and elders, elected by the 172 presbyteries in the denomination. Few will have ever served as a GA commissioner before.

It is my understanding that a computer randomly places commissioners on one of about 16 committees. In addition to worship, the GA acted on hundreds of items of business, which it received from these committees, from overtures made by presbyteries, or from commissioner's resolutions. You can go online to the denomination's website and other websites to see what took place –and what various people thought about what took place. There are those who believe that these are exciting days for the PCUSA –and there are others who believe the denomination is seriously ill, terminally so.

My personal struggles with recent decisions of the PCUSA are not new. No doubt they affect my "vision" of what happened at this GA. For the most part, I was not very pleased. Some who

were actually there will feel differently than I. I am going by reports from those on the left, the right and in the middle.

Here goes a brief summary. You can go online and make your own judgments.

1. Our Jewish friends won't be particularly happy about this Assembly's stance on the Israel/Palestine issues –but what was approved was better than what was on the table initially. This report still is quite pro-Palestinian, and asks Congress to review Israel's use of US –made military and police equipment, and review tax and trade policies that would discourage Americans from investing in or doing business with Israeli settlements. It also asked the US to drop any threat to veto full United Nations membership for Palestine. It does affirm a two –state solution.
2. Recommended returning to using “ministers of Word and sacrament” instead of “teaching elders,” when referring to clergy.
3. The PCUSA lost 95,107 members and 187 congregations between 2014 -2015.
4. The Assembly commissioned 8 new mission workers and 1 long term mission volunteer.
5. One of the controversial issues on the table involved the recommendation that this Assembly apologize to the LGBTQ/Q community for its past treatment, meaning not supporting their efforts to allow self-affirming, practicing gays and lesbians to be ordained as ministers and elders. A “statement of regret” was approved, rather than an outright apology.
6. The Assembly for the first time in its history elected “Co-Moderators”, and these were two women ministers, one black and one white, Rev. Denise Anderson and Rev. Jan Edmiston. The “Book of Order” recognizes only a Moderator, but in this day of “permissive polity”, it doesn't say the Assembly could not elect “Co-Moderators.” Rev. Denise Anderson created a stir on her blog before her election when she wrote about the recent shootings in Orlando, that many in our denomination “aren't too idealistically different from” the gunman in Florida. Is she saying that if you don't support the LGBTQ/Q movement, you are cousins to the Muslim who shot and killed 49 persons?! Wow.
7. Elected a new Stated Clerk of the GA, a 3rd generation black Presbyterian pastor, J. Herbert Nelson, who has in recent years been leading the denomination's Washington office of

public witness. He said, “I believe we are not dying. I believe we are reforming.... Led by God, we are transforming the world, one person at a time.”

8. The Assembly approved a re-write of the “Directory for Worship” in the “Book of Order.” This will have to be approved by a majority of the presbyteries before taking effect. This re-write did something that Presbyterians have never done before. It “de-coupled” baptism and the Lord’s Supper. Being a baptized believer would no longer be a requirement to come to the Lord’s Table in a PCUSA church. Such is the commitment to the ideology of “inclusivity.”
9. An overture was defeated asking the GA to restore the definition of marriage to “one man, one woman.” Two years ago the 221st GA voted to redefine marriage to be between “two persons.” That vote was 372-327. This GA voted 443-119 **against** restoring the definition of Christian marriage to what it has been for some 2,000 years.
10. This Assembly approved the “Belhar Confession” to be added to the “Book of Confessions.” It comes out of the Reformed Church in South Africa. Some celebrated this addition. It had been defeated years before.
11. Approved a resolution expressing deep sorrow for those who have felt it necessary to leave the denomination and affirmed those remaining in the PCUSA despite serious disagreement.
12. This last one offended some commissioners. I was 2400 miles away and it offended me. A Muslim leader was invited to pray at a plenary session of the Assembly where the shooting victims in Charleston and Orlando were remembered. He led the Assembly in prayer in Arabic from the Qu’ran, and then proceeded to pray a prayer to Allah in English, seeking the conversion of all there to Islam. In that prayer he “demoted Jesus” to a status equal to the other prophets like Abraham and Muhammad. Later the Stated Clerk received a letter written by a Korean Presbyterian, signed by 25 commissioners, drawing attention to the disgraceful judgment of those who had planned and permitted this act of casual blasphemy. The Stated Clerk later “apologized.” For insights into the apology itself, read the personal blog of Rev. Mateen Ellass, posted on June 25, 2016. He is an Arab, Reformed theologian and author, previously serving First Presbyterian Church, Edmund, OK.

Dr. Rusty Douglas

GOD IS TURNING THE WORLD:

THE 222ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.) » **Portland, Oregon** » June 18-25, 2016

BY **LESLIE SCANLON**, *Outlook* national reporter

Commissioners to the 2016 General Assembly sang “The Cantic of Turning” more than once while gathered in Portland to elect new leadership and consider business ranging from climate change to church confessions. They sang, “Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn.”

After the assembly took several historic actions — choosing female moderators; adding the Confession of Belhar from South Africa to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Book of Confessions; and electing the PC(USA)’s first African-American stated clerk — this felt to many like a time of turning for the church.

Themes of reconciliation and justice — particularly racial justice — were woven through the week. Plenary sessions began with personal testimonies — for example, Therese Taylor-Stinson, moderator of National Capital Presbytery, describing her rise in leadership in her church and then hearing someone say: “The little colored girl is in charge today.” Participants recited together almost as a litany sections from the Belhar confession, affirming the biblical mandate of unity won for us in Jesus Christ.

As the country struggled again in the wake of the violent massacre in Orlando, as floods devastated parts of the country, and as the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union, Presbyterians sang, “This saving word that our forebears heard is the promise which holds us bound, till the spear and rod can be crushed by God, who is turning the world around.” Prayerfully, the actions of the 222nd General Assembly are part of that transformation.

Some highlights of the assembly:

BELHAR. It took the PC(USA) two tries and more than six years to adopt Belhar — which was written in the heart of South Africa’s struggle against apartheid. It becomes the first PC(USA) confession from the global south. Godfrey Betha, vice moderator of the Uniting Reformed Church of Southern Africa, told the assembly: “Your decision affirms you say to your children, you say to all, ‘When you come to us looking for a glimmer of racism, don’t come to our church.’”

NEW AND DIVERSE LEADERSHIP. This assembly marked an historic change in leadership. On June 24, the assembly elected J. Herbert Nelson II, a third-generation Presbyterian pastor and the director of the denomination’s Office

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of Public Witness, to a four-year term as stated clerk, replacing Gradye Parsons, who is retiring.

Nelson becomes the PC(USA)'s first African-American stated clerk. The assembly also made history in choosing T. Denise Anderson and Jan Edmiston, both teaching elders, as its co-moderators. It's the first time an assembly has elected co-moderators (rather than a moderator and vice moderator) and the first all-female moderatorial team; Anderson — who is African-American — is, at 37, the youngest moderator ever elected.

2020 VISION TEAM. Responding to an idea from its The Way Forward committee, the assembly voted to create a 15-person “2020 Vision Team” to set a new vision for the denomination by 2020. The vision team will draft a guiding statement to “help us to name and claim our denominational identity as we seek to follow the Spirit into the future.”

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION. Responding in part to concerns raised by review committees for the Presbyterian Mission Agency and the Office of the General Assembly, the assembly voted to create a 12-member administrative commission with the power to determine the structure and function of General Assembly agencies.

MIDDLE EAST. The assembly adopted an amended version of a report called “For Human Values in the Absence of a Just Peace” — which addresses Israel's violations of Palestinians' human rights. The assembly also reaffirmed the PC(USA)'s long-standing call for a two-state solution in Israel-Palestine.

FOSSIL FUELS. Choosing an approach some described as a “middle way,” the assembly voted 391-161 to pursue a process of trying to influence energy companies through stockholder engagement rather than divesting comprehensively from fossil fuel companies. Some commissioners contended Presbyterians have a moral obligation to act swiftly and boldly to reduce their carbon footprint.

APOLOGY. By a vote of 463-51, the assembly stopped short of issuing an outright apology to people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, queer or questioning — but voiced the church's deep “regret that, due to human failings, any person might find cause to doubt being loved by God” and the denomination's “deep sorrow” over members and congregations who have left over disagreements regarding sexual orientation.

HOPE. The new leaders both challenged the PC(USA) to become more diverse and engaged with a hurting world, and sounded a theological vision of hope. Edmiston called on Presbyterians to “look at what breaks God's heart in your neighborhood,” and then to act.

“We are not dead. We are alive,” Nelson said of the PC(USA). Led by God, “we are transforming the world, one person at a time.” ●

Visit pres-outlook.org for more.

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