

First Presbyterian Church
117 S. Pearl Street
(Mailing address: 400 State Street)
Natchez, MS 39120 601-442-2581
fpcnatchez@bellsouth.net www.fpcnatchez.org
THE LINK ~JUNE, 2019

From the Pastor:

Francis of Assisi, who lived in Italy many centuries ago, may be best known today for his love of animals and creation. But Francis loved best being a pastor to the people he served. That was his heart.

I once read a story that provides delightful insight into the heart of Francis. The story tells us that one day he visited a monastery, and, when he arrived, the monk in charge told him that thieves had just come and run off with armloads of bread. Francis said, "I must go after them."

And he did. But when he found them, he did not accuse them. He invited them to come back to the monastery, telling them that they could find there plenty more to eat -- all the bread they could desire and even more.

The thieves were surprised. But they did return with Francis to the monastery. They learned from Francis what it means to have enough bread; that is, they learned about grace.

Bread is a splendid metaphor for grace. Jesus says clearly, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty" (John 6:35). Jesus is grace given by God to the world.

And to bring into the discussion one of the small but powerful parables we have studied in recent weeks: In Matthew 13, Jesus says that the kingdom of heaven is "like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened" (Matthew 13:33). We learned that three measures of flour equal about fifty pounds! Dozens of loaves of bread might result from the baking going on in the kitchen in the parable.

"Bread enough for all," the sign on the woman's door might have read. I believe the Bible tells us: "Grace enough for all: Come and get it!" There is no ending for the parable about the yeast. We do not know why the woman had such an abundance of leavened dough. But we do know that in Jesus Christ, God has given us abundant grace and we know that it is because God loves us; it is because God loves the world.

And maybe the parable is as simple as that: There is enough for all. Do we understand that? Have we shared this good news gladly? Well, what are we waiting for? A holy man named Francis showed the world long ago what to do -- to chase down the road after every hungry person we can find -- hungry for bread; or hungry for grace. Francis shows us how to chase down, to love, and to feed every hungry heart.

May our gracious, generous God send us to share with all who need to be fed; and may God bless us on this journey together as we seek to fulfill his call,

Joan

PARABLE STUDY CONTINUES

The eight-week study of parables from the Gospel of Matthew continues through June 23, with studies centered in sermons, Wednesday evening program, Sunday school, and a make-up class on Sunday evenings. Here are your opportunities to participate:

1. Wednesday Bible study at 11 a.m.
2. Wednesday evenings at 6 p.m.
3. Sunday school classes at 9:30 a.m.
4. Sunday sermons, 8:15 and 10:30 a.m. services
5. Three devotionals prepared for your use at home

All the materials used in the study are being posted on the church web site for your use each week, including the three devotionals for each week. Go to www.fpcnatchez.org; choose "Events" and then "Congregation-Wide Study."

Again for your use, here are the parable lessons in the order that we will study them. This month, we begin Week Six on June 5; Week Seven on June 12; and Week Eight on June 19. Please take part as fully as you are able!

1. Parable of the Sower: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23
2. Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds: Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43
3. Parable of Mustard Seed: Matthew 13:31-32; Parable of the Leaven: Matthew 13:33
4. Parable of Hidden Treasure: Matthew 13:44; Parable of the Pearl: Matthew 13:45-46
5. Parable of the Lost Sheep: Matthew 18:10-14
6. Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard: Matthew 20:1-16
7. Parable of the Ten Maidens: Matthew 25:1-13
8. Parable of the Sheep and the Goats: Matthew 25:31-46

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Monday, June 3

Noon Worship Ministry meeting

Thursday, June 6

5:30 p.m. Coordinating Council

Monday, June 10

5:30 p.m. Session

Monday, June 17

5:30 p.m. Deacons meeting

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

PW June Calendar:

PW Coordinating Team Meeting—Wednesday, June 5, 9:30 a.m.

Rebecca Circle—Tuesday, June 11, 10:30 a.m.

Ruth Circle—Tuesday, June 11, 2:00 p.m.

June Luncheon--Wednesday, June 19, 11:30 a.m.

Presbyterian Women's meeting and luncheon will be on Wednesday, June 19, at 11:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. Leigh Anderson will speak about the *Acts of Kindness* project. The Birthday Offering will be collected. Join us for an interesting program and delicious lunch.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN CALL FOR "KINDNESS MONTH"

In celebration of their 30th anniversary, the Presbyterian Women have designated June as "Kindness Month." As a congregation, we will work together on a community project. We'll announce the details for it soon. We will also have a "clean the church" day, working in Stratton Chapel, the Sanctuary, the Photo Gallery, and the grounds. As an individual or a family, you are asked to pledge to do one good deed each day of the month and keep a daily journal of your acts of kindness.

Here are a few ideas for you. Add your own ideas to this list.

1. Smile at everyone you meet.
2. Bake cookies. Take to a police or fire station with a thank you card attached.
3. Recycle. Reuse. Repurpose.
4. Hold the door for someone behind you.
5. If you use Facebook, post only positive, kind and uplifting comments.

As a church, a family, or an individual, we can make the world a better place!

DAY OF PENTECOST

On the Day of Pentecost, June 9, we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit descending in a mighty rush of wind and flame to inspire the church's proclamation of the risen Christ and to empower its mission and ministry to the world.

On Pentecost Sunday, we will collect a special offering at both services. Your gift helps the church encourage, develop, and support its young people, and address the needs of at-risk children. Forty percent of the Pentecost offering is retained by this congregation to be used to impact in the lives of young people within our community. The remaining sixty percent is used to support ministries of the Presbyterian Mission Agency.

COVERED DISH LUNCHEON

After the 10:30 service on Sunday, June 9, we will have a Birthday Celebration with covered dish luncheon in Fellowship Hall. Bring your favorite dish to share. Come enjoy the food and fellowship.

YOUTH RETREAT

Teens in the church will travel to Gulf Shores, Alabama, June 12-15, for fun, fellowship, and study. Dr. Chuck Borum, Helen Smith, and Joan Gandy will accompany the teens. Katie Borum will also attend as a chaperone/study guide.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL COMING IN JULY

Save the date! First Presbyterian's Vacation Bible School for children from age 4 years old through 5th grade (rising 6th graders) will be July 29-August 2, from 9 a.m. until noon in Fellowship Hall. The 2019 theme is "Who's My Neighbor: Learning to Love like Jesus." Bible verses, stories, songs, crafts, and games will center on that theme as children learn about loving neighbors through lessons about God's love. The program is free and open to all. For on-line registration form, go to www.fpcnatchez.org. Forms are also available in the church office.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

Tuesdays, June 4, 11, 18, 25

2 p.m. Prayer Shawl Ministry meets at the Natchez Coffee Company the first and third Tuesday and at The Crafted Gallery on the second and fourth Tuesday.

MEN'S PRAYER BREAKFAST

Tuesdays, June 4, 11, 18, 25

7 a.m. — Men's Prayer Breakfast in Fellowship Hall

FPC CHOIR REHEARSALS

The Sanctuary Choir meets on Wednesday evenings at 6 p.m. The Handbell Choir meets on Thursday evenings at 6 p.m.

PASTOR'S BIBLE STUDY

You are invited to join Rev. Gandy every Tuesday at 11 a.m. in the church library for Bible study. Scriptures to be studied are announced each Sunday in the bulletin.

NOON PRAYER GROUP

This group meets every Monday at noon in the Prayer Room of Stratton Chapel. Come each week, or as you are able. Pray for our church, members, friends and community.

WONDERFUL WEDNESDAYS

Join us for Wonderful Wednesdays. Supper is at 5:15 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. The adult Bible study; children's activities, and Sanctuary Choir begin at 6 p.m.

CHILDREN AND WORSHIP

A nursery is provided for young children and infants, from 8 a.m. until noon on Sundays and at appropriate times for all other church functions. We do, however, welcome children of all ages in our services! Activity bags are provided during worship services for older children.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Natchez Children's Services meets the second Wednesday of each month from 10-11:30 a.m. in the church library.

The Festival of Music Board meets the second Thursday of each month from 6-7 p.m. in the Westminster Room in Stratton Chapel.

Boy Scout Troop 157 meets Monday at 7 p.m. in the gym.

The Natchez Women's Book Club meets at 6 p.m. in the Parlor on the fourth Monday of each month. For more information, contact Leigh Anderson (601-442-0116).

The Natchez Civic Chorale rehearses in the sanctuary every Tuesday, at 6 p.m. If you are interested in singing with a community choir, please contact Darrell Day at 727-483-2835 or darrell@fpcnatchez.org.

FPC's Stewpot Service Fellowship will serve lunch at the Stewpot this month on June 23. If you would like to be part of this ministry, please contact Nicole or Lance Harris, Joanna Brumfield, or Donna Ball.

Habitat for Humanity June plans will be announced soon. Watch for details.

The Women's Mat Pilates Class, led by Sandra Burkes, meets in Fellowship Hall from 8:30-10 a.m., Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays. Classes are free and open to all. Bring your own mat. For more information, contact Sandra at 662-816-5459.

PRESBYTERIAN PLAYSCHOOL

"Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it." ~ Proverbs 22:6

Call Aretha Davis (601-445-0700) if you need enrollment information or if you wish to volunteer.

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

(If you have corrections/additions, please contact the church office-601-442-2581.)

June 2	Elise Mophett	June 22	Ginny Benoist
June 4	Sherry Hanson	June 24	Charles Hall
June 7	Mary Ann Spell	June 27	Amelie Harris
June 10	Butch Brown	June 30	Will Godfrey
	George Rutherford		
June 17	Linda Bates		
June 21	Everett Washington		

Rev. Joan W. Gandy, Pastor
Darrell Day, Music Director
Deon Buford, Sexton
Aretha Davis, Playschool Director
Pam McNeil, Office Administrator
Mary Ann Peoples, Financial Secretary

FPC OFFICERS

ELDERS:

Class of 2019:

Rosemary Hall, Bobby Meason, Danna Mooney, Helen Smith

Class of 2020:

Hal Hicks, Leigh Anderson, Phyllis Mashburn, Ken Andermann

Class of 2021:

Chuck Borum, Stratton Bull, Cara Serio, Anne Willett

DEACONS:

Class of 2019:

Sandra Burkes, Denise Seale, Sarah Smith

Class of 2020:

Eddie Christian, Ryan Sharp, Gwen Washington

Class of 2021:

Spencer Holder, Frances Meason, Everette Ratcliffe

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

117 South Pearl Street (Mailing Address: 400 State Street)

Natchez, Mississippi 39120

601-442-2581

fpcnatchez@bellsouth.net

www.fpcnatchez.org

Sunday services: 8:15 and 10:30

Wednesday: 5:15 in Fellowship Hall