

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 ~MAY, 2019

In preparation for the upcoming study:
Please Complete This Survey and Turn In To Office

(Bring it by the church office, mail it, or scan it and email it to fpcnatchez@bellsouth.net.)

1. Do you have a favorite parable that Jesus tells? What do you think it means?

a) Favorite parable: _____

b) Your description of the meaning:

2. Why do you think Jesus uses parables to teach his lessons?

3. Name three "themes" you believe might be found in the parables Jesus tells:

4. Think about the word *hospitality*. Can you think of a way Jesus uses parables to teach hospitality? If so, explain:

5. What are some ways First Presbyterian shows hospitality as a church?

6. What are some new ways you think we could be more welcoming?

7. What are some ways that you think Jesus might tell us to be more welcoming?

8. Will you try to take part in this parable study to the fullest possible participation?

From the Pastor

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

We at First Presbyterian are about to begin a new congregation-wide study!

With your commitment to join me in this project, we will seek new insights into our purpose as God's church here and now in the place where we live and worship together. Here is a question I ask you to consider:

How might First Presbyterian Church Natchez transform its practices to become even more welcoming, loving, and missional than it is today?

I believe the Bible has answers to that question. Do you?

The title I have given this study is: "Lessons of Love and Hospitality in the Gospel Parables: How Jesus Leads the Church to Welcome, Love, and Serve Our Neighbors."

In the next eight weeks, we will study in depth some parables of Jesus as told in the Gospel of Matthew. These parables will be sermon topics, Bible study topics, Sunday school lessons, and inspirations of our prayers for individual and church growth. Studies will include other biblical texts that complement the messages of the parables.

1. Tuesday Bible study at 11 a.m. beginning this week, April 30
2. Wednesday evenings at 6 p.m. beginning this week, May 1
3. Sunday school classes, beginning this Sunday, May 5.
4. Sunday sermons, also beginning this Sunday, May 5
5. Three devotionals prepared for your use at home, beginning this week.

Here are the parable lessons in the order that we will study them:

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 the Mustard Seed: Matthew 13:31-32; and Parable of the Leaven: Matthew 13:33
4. Parable of the Hidden Treasure: Matthew 13:44; and 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

It is my hope that we will center many prayers on renewing this church according to God's will and his leadership. How will your gifts lead us to exhibit his holy realm in our community in new ways? Let us begin this journey together. Jesus Christ is ahead of us. We have only to seek him and follow with his beautiful word as our guide!

Grateful to be journeying with you,

Joan

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Monday, May 6

Noon Worship Ministry meeting

Thursday, May 9

5:30 p.m. Coordinating Council

Monday, May 13

5:30 p.m. Session

Monday, May 20

5:30 p.m. Deacons meeting

NATCHEZ FESTIVAL OF MUSIC CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

FPC will host the Natchez Festival of Music Children at 10 a.m. in Fellowship Hall (the gym) each Saturday in May. Programs are free and open to adults and children alike!

May 4 *Goldie B. Locks and the Three Singing Bears*-a musical stage production.

May 11 *Fairy Tales in Music*-Songs from the greatest fairy tale musical movies

May 18 *A Musical Instrument Petting Zoo*-an interactive, hands-on musical experience

May 25 *Painting with Emotion*-draw and paint your own pictures inspired by music

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

The National Day of Prayer was created in 1952 by a joint resolution of Congress, and signed into law by President Harry S. Truman. In 1988, the law was unanimously amended by both the House and the Senate and signed into law by President Ronald Reagan, designating the first Thursday of May as a day of national prayer. The theme this year is "Love One Another." It comes from the words of Jesus in John 13:34: "Love one another as I have loved you." You are invited to attend the National Day of Prayer service at noon on Thursday, May 2. Rev. Gandy, and the Natchez Civic Chorale, directed by Darrell Day, will participate with others in the service in front of City Hall.

CHURCH PICNIC

Come one! Come all! Our annual church picnic is Sunday, May 5, 12 noon, at the home of Catherine and Everette Ratcliffe, 131 Winchester Road. Dress casually. The church will furnish fried chicken and drinks. Bring a favorite picnic food to share, a chair or blanket, family, and friends. All are welcome!

SENIOR RECOGNITION SUNDAY

On Sunday, May 12, at the 10:30 worship service, we will honor our graduating high school seniors: Colby Costa, Jackson Moody, Alina Sharp, and Everett Washington. Joining those graduates will be Sonya Faulknor, who graduates May 4 from Alcorn State University; and Bettina Coffey, who will receive her master's degree May 9 from the University of Southern Mississippi.

MOTHER'S DAY

Mothers will be honored on their special day, May 12, at the 10:30 service.

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

The church offices and Playschool will be closed Monday, May 27, for Memorial Day.

JUNE IS "KINDNESS MONTH" AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

In celebration of their 30th anniversary, the Presbyterian Women have designated June as "Kindness Month." As a congregation, the church will work together on a community project (details to be announced later). As a church, we will 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 random acts of kindness.

Here are some suggestions for you:

1. Give a compliment (and mean it!)
2. Drop off a donation to the Humane Society. No extra money to spend? No problem. Donate 15 minutes of your time instead. Pet a cat or two. Walk a dog.
3. Smile at everyone you meet.
4. Write a "thinking of you" note to a friend, a former teacher, or co-worker.
5. Bake cookies and take to the police or fire station with a "Thank you" card attached.
6. Recycle.
7. Hold the door for someone behind you.
8. Let someone into traffic ahead of you. Be a polite driver.
9. Bring up your neighbor's trash can.
10. Start dropping pennies in a jar. When it is full, donate to a favorite charity or church.
11. If you use Facebook, post only positive, kind and uplifting comments.
12. Donate items you don't need or use to a thrift store.
13. Visit a nursing home.
14. Offer someone--a friend, neighbor, relative—a ride to the grocery store or to run errands, etc.
15. Write to a deployed soldier, veteran, new recruit, or first responder. Go to www.operationgratitude.com.
16. Make someone laugh.
17. Listen. Don't interrupt. Sometimes people don't want a solution. They just want someone to hear what they're saying.
18. Speak to the "invisible" people. Those who stock shelves at the grocery store, the custodian, the security guard, the receptionist—people who do their work so quietly we may not notice them.
19. Post a positive note where others can see it (on a water cooler, a doorway, a bathroom mirror). Ex: Remember you are amazing! Or Don't Give Up. Or Be the change you wish to see in the world. Or Kindness matters.

20. Leave a big tip.
21. Pick up trash along 1 block—both sides!
22. Leave a bottle of water or Gatorade in the mailbox for your letter carrier. Attach a tag that says, “Thank you.”
23. If you get great service at a restaurant, the post office, a grocery store, etc., let the manager know! We can be quick to complain about bad service, but rarely let the boss know when someone is doing a good job!
24. Go to Freerice.com, a United Nations Food Program that will donate rice to hungry people around the world for every question in the game that you get right.
25. Tell a friend or relative that you love them.
26. Put your grocery cart back in its place.
27. Say “please” and “thank you”. Be polite.
28. Volunteer for a good cause.
29. Donate used books to a Little Library or a used book store.
30. Pray. Pray for those you don’t particularly like. Pray for those you love. Pray for the world. Prayer is powerful!
31. Work with Habitat for Humanity.
32. Volunteer at the Stewpot.
33. Be a docent at the Photo Gallery at FPC.
34. Help someone with some yard clean-up or upkeep.

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

Watch for more information on community and church projects in the bulletins and the June newsletter.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

Tuesdays, May 7, 14, 21, 28

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, May 7, 14, 21, 28

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; 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 Sunday mornings 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.

Community Choir

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

Stewpot Service Fellowship

FPC's next Sunday to serve lunch at the Stewpot is May 26. If you would like to be part of this ministry, please contact Nicole or Lance Harris, Joanna Brumfield, or Donna Ball.

Habitat for Humanity

Join other FPC members from 8 a.m. to 12 noon on Saturday, May 11, and Saturday, May 25, to help with final construction details at the Habitat house, 22 Hunt Circle. Share your love!

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

PW May Calendar:

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| May 1 | Coordinating Team Meeting 9:30 a.m. |
| May 14 | Rebekah Circle – 10:30 a.m.--contact Sue Ann Wilt for location
Ruth Circle – 1 p.m. – contact Pam McDonald location |

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.

The Playschool will be closed on May 27 for Memorial Day.

MAY BIRTHDAYS

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

May 3	Bryan Johnson
May 10	Bobby Meason
May 12	Denise Seale
May 13	Lennon Aldridge, Nicole Harris
May 17	Madeline Merritt
May 19	Dotty Stubbs, Sue Ann Wilt, Ruby Mooney
May 20	Dave Troutman, Pam McDonald, Elfriede Seyfarth
May 22	Joyce Borum
May 24	Tatum Brumfield
May 25	Everette Ratcliffe
May 26	Phyllis Mashburn

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 2121

Chuck Borum, Stratton Bull, Cara Serio, Anne Willett

DEACONS:

Class of 2019

Sandra Burkes, Denise Seale, Sarah Smith

Class of 2020

Edie Christian, Ryan Sharp, Gwen Washington

Class of 2021

Spencer Holder, Frances Meason, Everette Ratcliffe