

Our Mission: **TLC**
Trust God, **L**ove People, and **C**arry Christ into the World

FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY:

I read something the other day that surprised me. "Now when the sun was going down a deep sleep fell about Abram and behold **terror and great darkness fell upon him.**" (Genesis 15:12) This reminds us that, just because you are a follower of Jesus Christ, a born-again believer, a true blue Presbyterian, doesn't mean you won't face seasons of darkness. You will. We all do. **Being "in Christ" means that know that the darkness is temporary, and it won't overwhelm you.** In Christ, God dealt decisively with sin and evil and darkness and demons and everything that tries to rob us of our joy and separate us from our God. The victory has been won. The outcome is assured. In the meantime, we wait, we work, we pray, we hope, we worship, and we do our part to honor the covenant God has made with us. God is faithful. Therefore, we will not give up. We will call upon the Lord, our refuge and our strength.

I love what Sister Joan Chittister says about this: The God who made us what we are knows what we desire to be and waits with infinite patience while we become what we can. We, on the other hand, know that whatever we need to become all that we can be, this same great and loving God will supply. For all of that, we are **THANKFUL**. From that **GRATITUDE** grow love and commitment, faith and trust, wonder and worship. Amen.

It is a privilege to be your pastor and partner in faith.

Steve

WORSHIP NEWS:



The 40 days of **Lent** start with **Ash Wednesday** on February 17. On that day we will eat a very light meal together at 6 pm (provided by the Diaconate, not potluck), and then assemble in the sanctuary for a solemn service that ends with the imposition of ashes. Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return.

Throughout Lent, on Wednesday evenings we will eat simpler meals (you are encouraged to cut back and give up some calories for the sake of your relationship with Jesus) and worship in the sanctuary.

We have ordered a Lent calendar and devotional for you to use during Lent to center your thoughts and prayers. Please use these for your daily devotional time.

David and Susan Finch are working hard to get our new organ operational. We are hoping to hear some notes from the organ in February. We are in the process of planning a wonderful organ dedication sometime after Easter. Stay “tuned.” We appreciate your financial support for this project. It is possible that we will finish this with less than \$100,000 in bank debt, thanks to your generous support. We want to retire the debt quickly, so we continue to need your help.

**December attendance average: 103
114**

Dec 6 - 99

Dec 20 - 113

Dec 13 - 107

Dec 27 - 90

January attendance average (to date):

Jan 3 - 115

Jan 17 - 104 Jan 31 - TBD

Jan 10 - 115

Jan 24 - 119

BELONGING:

The Youth will collect donations for the **Souper Bowl of Caring** on Sunday, February 7 as you exit the sanctuary. 100% of the funds collected will go to the **Domestic Abuse Family Shelter**. Following the worship service, help us celebrate this event by staying to enjoy a steaming bowl of soup for lunch. A sign-up sheet is in the narthex for volunteers to provide salads and desserts

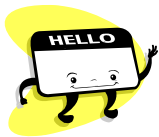


**Men of the Church's
Valentine's breakfast** is
Saturday, February 13 at 9 am.
All women (and men) of the
church are invited. So that we
can plan enough food, please
sign up on the registration
sheet in the narthex if you
plan to attend.



The Youth will host a
Valentine Spaghetti Lunch
on Sunday, February 14
following the worship service.
The cost is \$5.00 per person;
children ages 3 and under eat
for free. This is a fundraiser
for the youth trip to Mexico.

BELONGING: (continued)



Sunday Greeters are an important part of Westminster's ministry requiring only 15-20 minutes welcoming those attending the service. Please switch with someone if you cannot serve on a specific date, and notify Kay (584-7574) of the change so she can prepare the nametags.

Feb. 7	Bruce Hacker & Frank Whitesell	21	Janeil Harris & Sunny Davis
14	Richard & Sharon Potin	28	Gene & Brenda Owens
Mar. 7	Grayson & Jane Rayborn	21	Sam & Pam Dossett
14	Harry & Carol Hickman	28	Eric & Karen Reidenbach

January birthdays:

2	Margaret Lochhead	19	Sheila Gaudet
2	Sam Ruff	19	Sarah Hogrefe Mabary
4	Anthony Cafalone	24	Dean Cromartie
9	Ann Aldridge	25	Nancy Johnson
10	Brenda Owens	29	Richard Potin
10	Rachel Owens	30	Betty Garraway
13	Mary Hannah Ruff	30	Margaret Pearson
15	Andrew Gaudet	31	Gene Owens
15	Wesley Owens		
15	Lavon Smith		
17	Pat Davis		
17	Margaret Little		

We want to include ALL members' birthdays. If you know of one we missed, let us know ASAP!

February birthdays:

5	Gordon McDonald
7	Cindy Nobles
7	Margaret Roberts
8	Merle Meek
9	Neal Gregg
12	Judy Harrell
12	Harry Hickman
12	Ann Johnson
14	Mary Clare Shaw
15	Holley Johnson
16	Carolyn McLarnan
24	Marsha Taylor

GROWING SPIRITUALLY:

Westminster is very involved in the **Cursillo** spiritual renewal movement. The next retreat is at Paul B. Johnson State Park on April 22-25. **Steve Ramp, Gene Owens, Larry Royals, Butch Nobles, and Sharon Potin** are on staff this time. If you feel God is leading you to attend this, please see one of them ASAP. It's free, but space is limited. Last time all the spots were taken.



If you have attended Cursillo or would like to know more about Cursillo, we are hosting an **Ultreya** (reunion) on Saturday, February 20. Potluck is at noon, followed by worship at 12:45 pm in the sanctuary.



Mark the date! **Vacation Bible School** is scheduled for June 7-11. More details later!

GROWING SPIRITUALLY: (continued)

Attention High School Sunday School Class: Mary Dayne Gregg will resume her role as lead teacher and Audra Cummings will be her faithful substitute, as needed. We are thrilled to welcome Mary Dayne back and are very appreciative of Audra's willingness to step in during her absence. You can contact Mary Dayne at 601-264-3139 or you can call or text Audra at 601-516-0417.

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Mary Clare Shaw's merry band of kids (PreK-2 Sunday School class) finished up with Christmas ornament making during December. We crafted for weeks on end so now we're back to studying the Word and talking about creation, this time about how God taught us to share from the beginning. The sun shares time with the moon. The light shares time with the night. The seasons share time - Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall. Cool idea! Keep the kids coming.



Kaleidoscope 2010: Rooted and Grounded in Love. This year's Kaleidoscope (February 12-13) features keynote speaker Dean Thompson, retiring President and Professor of Ministry at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Also, back by popular demand, Brett Valliant will play First-Trinity's Aeolian-Skinner organ during the screening of the silent film "Safety Last" starring Harold Lloyd. Brochures are available in the narthex or online at www.presbyteryofms.org.

INVITING:

How many times this past week did you share your faith in Jesus Christ with someone? OK, let's try an easier question: how many people do you know who aren't active in a church? What is preventing you from INVITING them to come with you to Westminster? "I'll pick you up." "Let's meet in the fellowship hall and sit together." What prevents you? Answer: NOTHING prevents you from doing this. Our responsibility as followers of Jesus is to invite others to "come and see." We don't need to save them. We don't need to get them on their knees. We DO need to give them an invitation to "come and see." Hey, we can do that! Let's do it!



SERVING CHRIST IN MISSION:



Pinebelt Christian Women's Job Corps (PCWC) helps prepare women to find and keep jobs. Applications for 12 week spring session (February 16 - May 6) are now being taken. Classes meet in the mornings, Monday through Thursday. This **FREE** program offers a loving environment where self-image is restored and women learn to set personal and career goals and develop a specific plan for their life. Classes in computer training, money management, conflict resolution, communication skills, Bible study, and decision making/responsibility are offered. If you or someone you know might be interested, please contact 601-544-4855.

Thanks to your generous donations, \$635 (enough to purchase **127** blankets) was given to the **Blankets+ Offering** in January.

Haiti Relief

The Session has committed \$1,500 plus all additional donated funds received the last three Sundays of January to three agencies that are involved in relief to Haiti following the earthquake on January 12. These agencies are the **Presbyterian Outreach Foundation, Family Health Ministries, and Global Outreach Ministries**. We encourage the congregation to continue to pray for the victims in Haiti and to support these causes.

The Presbytery of Mississippi will be asked by its Mission Committee to support Outreach Foundation and Medical Benevolence Foundation, which has lots of people in Haiti. In addition, the Disaster Assistance Commission is completing its work in March and intends to donate its equipment and supplies to the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) organization that is working in Haiti. The Presbytery is also investigating the possibility of a mission trip to Haiti later this summer. Several of the churches in Hattiesburg are planning a prayer service for Haiti, to take place at Main Street United Methodist Church on January 25. Watch the newspaper for details.

The semi-annual **Westminster Blood Drive** runs now through February 5 at United Blood Services, 805 South 28th Avenue. You can go online to www.bloodhero.com or call 264-0743 to make an appointment. Please indicate "Westminster Presbyterian" when you sign in. Give the Gift of Life! The UBS office is now open 7 days a week:

Sunday: 1 - 4:30 pm

Thursday: 8 am - 4 pm

Monday: noon - 6 pm

Friday: 8 am - 2 pm

Tuesday: 8 am - 4 pm

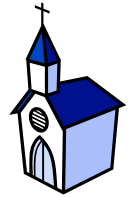
Saturday: 8 am - noon

Wednesday: 8 am - 2 pm



SERVING CHRIST IN MISSION: (continued)

Last year the **Agape Sunday School Class** adopted a mission project to help in the repair and rebuilding of the historic First Presbyterian Church in Galveston, Texas, after Hurricane Ike devastated that entire community. Floyd and Iola Cannedy's daughter serves a church in the Houston area, and they visited the Galveston church last year while they were in Texas with their daughter. The Galveston church suffered extensive damage from water, and needed funds to repair and restore the Sunday school classrooms as well as the sanctuary. The Agape class decided to provide funds to repair one classroom, and reached their goal by the end of 2009. We are grateful for all the contributions, and have sent our prayers as well as financial help with the hope that that beautiful church can continue in its service to Christ for many years to come.



ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP:

The **Diaconate** and **Session** have rescheduled their monthly meetings to Sunday, February 21 at 12:15 pm and 1:30 pm respectively.

Congratulations! For 2009, we took in \$335,000 in regular gifts and we spent \$319,000, giving us a slight surplus of \$16,000. We also took in over \$112,000 in non-budgeted giving, most of which went to mission and for the organ renovation project. In a tough economy, this is very strong giving. Thanks for your continued generosity and support of God's work here at Westminster.



In January, the Session established a **Long Range Task Force** to pray and think and look into the future and discern God's plans for our congregation for the next five years. We did this in 2004 and are still harvesting the fruit of that group's work. **Gene Owens** will chair and the following persons have agreed to serve on this important Task Force: **Mac Forsyth, Ginny Graham, Mary Dayne Gregg, Cindy Nobles, Eric Reidenbach, Robin Roberts, and Mary Clare Shaw**. As you can see, the Session chose people who have faith, intelligence, imagination, good judgment, and who love Westminster. The Task Force will get started in February, do its work in the spring and summer, and make a report and recommendations to the Session by September. This will allow us to build our 2011 budget reflecting the recommendations that are adopted. Please pray for this task force to lead us faithfully into the future that God has prepared for us.

The Youth will have a **Super Bowl Party** at the home of **Margaret Shaw** on Sunday, February 7 beginning at 4:30 pm. Please bring plenty of food to share.



ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP: (continued)

There are still some Westminster cookbooks available. They are \$25.00 each and help fund the youth mission trip to Mexico.



A Presbytery Jr./Sr. High Lock-in will be held at First-Trinity Presbyterian Church in Laurel on February 12-13. The cost is \$30.00. Money is due to Amy Ruff by February 7.

Dear WPC Family,

Thank you so much for your help and support throughout 2009 while my mother and I coped with the passing of her life. Your prayers, cards, and visits helped us both so much.

I also want to thank Steve for being able to come to my aid so quickly after Mom died. His strength and compassion helped me stay focused at a time when it was the most difficult to be so. His prayer for the ascension of her soul helped me cope with my grief because I knew she was at peace with her Lord.

Sinclair Lundy

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Still love Westminster and the church family. It will always seem like home to me.

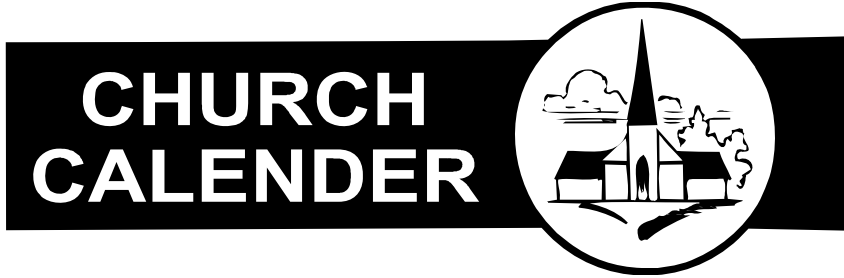
*Take care. Sandra McLaurin
email samac2067@aol.com
mailing address PO Box 616,
Liberty, MS 39645
physical address 224 Clinton
Drive, Liberty, MS 39645*

*I wanted to let everyone know that Jay and I have relocated to Lexington Park, MD. Jay is now at the Test Pilot School at Patuxent River Naval Air Station. We may be contacted at 46486 Midway Drive, Lexington Park, MD 20653, phone 601-307-0900, kesrivers@gmail.com. I hope that everyone at Westminster is doing well and I miss y'all.
Kathryn Smith-Rivers*

We are very sad to say goodbye to **Jeff, Judy, Sam, and Henry Haydel**. Jeff has accepted a great new job in Mobile, Alabama but has expressed the desire to return to Hattiesburg "sooner than later." Westminster's adult co-ed softball team will certainly take a big "hit" by losing Jeff as co-captain.



Other members of Westminster who have recently moved are **Lori, Shane, Shaylee, Aiden and Eli Burnham**. Their new address is 1031 Lott Town Road, Sumrall, MS 39482. Congratulations on your new home!



To view Westminster's calendar of events, go to www.WPCHattiesburg.com and click on the "calendar" tab.

Westminster Presbyterian Church
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