

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

FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY:

On Ash Wednesday we remembered the terrible curse from Genesis 3: "By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust and to dust you shall return." To a non-believer, this sounds very depressing. Do you mean to tell me that Christians believe that we are all earthlings (creatures of earth) and that sooner or later everyone dies - earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust? Exactly right. Then why aren't Christians depressed? We're confident because we know something else, something that transcends and reframes our mortality. A new Adam has entered the world and reversed the curse. Whoever is in Christ is a NEW creation! (I Corinthians 5) "We have been buried with Jesus through baptism into death in order that as Christ was raised from the dead . . . so we too might walk in newness of life. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is NEVER to die again; death no longer is master over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin, once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. So, consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting your body to sin . . ." (Romans 6) THIS IS WHY WE OBSERVE A HOLY LENT. It is an opportunity to remember who we are and what God has done for us in Jesus Christ. Lent invites us to let go and let God reign in our mortal bodies, minds, and spirits.





WORSHIP NEWS:

Daylight Savings Time begins March 14. Remember to set your clocks > **forward** > one hour or you'll be late for church!

Vespers, sometimes called Evensong, comes from Latin *vesper* (masculine), *vespera* (feminine) meaning evening star, evening, west. During Lent, we will share a simple meal at 6 pm, and at 6:40 we will meet in the sanctuary for a short Vesper Service that will include singing, praying, and sharing the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper by intinction (coming forward, tearing off a piece of bread, and dipping it in the cup). Please tear off a piece of bread that is large enough to dip in the cup! Pinching off a piece of bread so small it requires a microscope to see IS NOT proper. Taking half the loaf is not proper. Pinch off enough so you can taste the body and blood of Jesus.

Those of you who used **Bread for the World's** *Lenten Prayers for Hungry People* during Lent last year can obtain a copy of this year's resource at www.bread.org/lent.

The Sounds of Music:

On August 16 we vacated the sanctuary to allow our organ



builder, **David and Susan Finch**, room to work. And have they ever worked! The Kilgen-Reuter organ is almost ready. We are hoping to use it during worship on the first Sunday of March, if all goes well. Your continued support of this significant undertaking is greatly appreciated (and needed). We are planning to re-dedicate the organ on April 18. Let's have standing room only that day to celebrate what God has accomplished in our midst!

February attendance average (to date): 120

Feb 7 - 130

Feb 21 - 112

Feb 14 - 118

Feb 28 - TBD

BELONGING:



Forty-two members and guests attended the Valentine breakfast hosted by the **Men of the Church**. **Pam Dossett** created the decorations and gifts, and the men presented her with a special gift in appreciation for her work. The MOC received a thank-you letter from the Domestic Abuse Family Shelter for MOC's recent contribution. The next men's breakfast will be Saturday, March 13 at 8 am.

Many, many thanks to the adults and youth who helped with the **Spaghetti Lunch** on February 14. Special thanks to **David Young** for his *molto bene* spaghetti sauce. Everyone pitched in and worked hard. \$457 was raised and will be used for the youth mission trip to the jungles of southern Mexico this summer.

BELONGING: (continued)



It is always exciting to welcome babies into our church family! **Gary and Meredith West** are the proud parents of **Mary Clayton**, born February 3, and **Dudley and Alicia Westbrook** are the proud parents of **Ruby Mae**, born January 7.

It's time for a new **pictorial directory** of the members and friends of Westminster. Over the next few weeks don't be surprised (or offended!) if someone takes a picture of you on Sunday morning. We **NEED** digital images so we can create a current directory. We also want to get this in a digital format so it can be easily updated. In the past, it has taken a Herculean effort. Technology is our friend, and we want to take advantage of this so we can keep our church family in closer contact.



March birthdays:

4	Mary Dayne Gregg	17	Jerry MacNeil
5	Jessica Howell	22	Dutchie Bryant
8	Don Zillgitt	23	Betty Jo McDonald
11	Iola Cannedy	24	Bettye Arnold
14	William Wild	24	Charles Dennis
16	Jane Rayborn	27	Bill Pearson
17	Peggy Langnecker	28	Benjamin Buehler



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

Sunday Greeters: Please help us greet visitors and members at the front entrance on Sunday mornings. Please **switch** with someone if you cannot serve on a specific date, and notify Kay at 601-584-7574 of the change so she can prepare the nametags.

Mar. 7	Grayson & Jane Rayborn	21	Sam & Pam Dossett
14	Harry & Carol Hickman	28	Eric & Karen Reidenbach
Apr. 4	Betty Garraway & Ellen Ramp	18	Charles Brown & Margaret Buckley
11	Robert & Audra Cummings	25	Bobbye Bryant & Lori Burnham

GROWING SPIRITUALLY:

Presbytery of Mississippi **PW Spring Gathering** will be held at First Presbyterian Church in Natchez on March 13. Registration begins at 9 am and the meeting will start at 10 am. Those who want to attend this event should contact **Bettye Arnold**, **Jeanne Herring**, or **Martha Ann Hogrefe**. A copy of the Mississippi PW Newsletter for February can be viewed on our website at www.WPCHattiesburg.com/Newsletters.



GROWING SPIRITUALLY: (continued)

I just wanted to let you all know what is planned for spring. **Grades K-2** began a short study on the Ten Commandments at the end of February. This study will be a fun way for the kids to learn more about what God expects from us. Join us on Wednesdays at 6 pm! We are planning a short program on the ***Fruit of the Spirit***, tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, April 28. We will work on the program during Sunday school beginning March 28 to get full participation. Please let me know if you have questions or comments! Sarah Nobles,
Children's Ministry



Snack providers and on-site helpers will be needed June 7-11 for **Vacation Bible School**. We're planning ahead so everyone will have the opportunity to participate. Please see **Sarah Nobles, Ginny Graham, Jenny Maul, Amy Ruff** or **Mary Clare Shaw**.

Westminster continues to participate actively in the spiritual renewal movement known as **Cursillo**. Cursillo is a Spanish word meaning "short course." Twice a year Presbyterian Churches in our presbytery provide a three-day spiritual retreat at Paul B. Johnson State Park. In April, **Butch Nobles, Gene Owens, Brenda Owens, Larry Royals, and Steve Ramp** will serve on staff and five Westminster members (so far) have applied to attend as pilgrims. To date, 24 members of our church have participated. If you would like more information, please contact **Mary Clare Shaw, Mary Cromartie** or **Steve Ramp**.

INVITING:

On February 14 we received **Jennifer Corley** as a new member. Jennifer is a Special Education teacher who commutes daily from Hattiesburg to Hancock County to teach. She has been attending WPC for over a year. She is engaged and hopes to remain in this area. Her birthday is February 6. *Welcome Jennifer!*



If you are receiving this newsletter and are not yet a member of Westminster, what are you waiting for? **Come on in!** Joining the church couldn't be easier. You will meet with Steve Ramp and some session members about 10 minutes before church and answer three easy questions: do you hate sin, love Jesus, and desire to be a member here. If you say "yes" chances are 100% that you will be received as a member.

If you see someone in the sanctuary who is unfamiliar, greet them and ask them if they are a member here. If they say "yes", say "Great! I'm so glad." If they say "no" say "Would you like to join? I'll be happy to help you." Could it be any easier than that?

INVITING: (continued)

Invite a friend to the organ re-dedication service on April 18. Our organist **Randall Harris** and several other fine musicians will blow your socks off and impress your friends.

SERVING CHRIST IN MISSION:

ShareCare will complete its first year as a member-led time bank on March 15, 2010. It has been a very successful year! A lot of that success is due to the great support of Westminster. We are also indebted to the Presbyterian's *One Great Hour of Sharing* funds administered by the Self Development of People Grant.

We have grown from 29 members to 48 and provided over 1,924 hours of service without charging a single penny. We have attracted people from all around the area and from every walk of life, including international students. Memberships have been granted regardless of income, education, culture, race or circumstance. We are a very diverse group!

On March 10 we will have our first big community workshop at the Jackie Dole Community Center. The theme will be *Surviving Hard Times*.

Thanks to people of Westminster, the ShareCare group feels very much at home here. On the first Thursday of each month we come together for a potluck lunch in the fellowship hall. (Gee . . . wonder where we got that idea?) For more information, contact **Stella Fair** or **Tom McKegney**. You can also pick up a brochure in the narthex.

Haiti Relief: Thanks to your generous support, we raised \$4,135 which will go to the **Outreach Foundation, Family Health Ministries, Global Outreach Ministries, and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.**



Last March, the local **TOPS** chapter started meeting at Westminster at noon every Wednesday. **TOPS** stands for **Taking Off Pounds Sensibly**. If you need some encouragement in a proven way to drop some pounds, you are invited to participate. This non-profit group is open to everyone. This group meets at Westminster because of **Ann Johnson's** friendship with one of the members, **Cathy Sampson**, a Presbyterian transplanted to Hattiesburg from the coast.

Thirteen units of life saving blood were donated by Westminster during the **spring blood drive**. This was very impressive since the first week UBS mandated they not draw A positive blood and the second week A positive and O positive due to an unusual surplus of those blood types. These are the most common blood types, accounting for almost 3/4 of all donations. Thank you for going the extra mile to give the gift of life.



SERVING CHRIST IN MISSION: (continued)



Since 1949, Presbyterians have joined with millions of other Christians through **One Great Hour of Sharing** to share God's love with people experiencing need. The Presbyterian Hunger Program receives 36% of undesignated One Great Hour of Sharing gifts, while the Self-Development of People and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance each receive 32%. The children will receive their fish boxes for collections on March 7 which they will turn in on Easter Sunday when the OGHS offering is received.

ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP:

Schedule change: The Session and Diaconate will meet jointly on **Sunday, March 7** immediately following the worship service.



Orders for **Easter lilies**, in honor and memory of loved ones, will be taken by the Youth during March. The lilies will be arranged at the front of the sanctuary on Easter morning and can be taken home following the service. The honorees will be listed in the bulletin. Watch for the sign-up sheet in the narthex.

So far, we have borrowed \$100,000 on our line of credit for the **organ**. We are about to complete the construction phase of this project. It would be fantastic if we receive enough gifts this month to avoid making any further draws on the loan. This will allow us to retire the loan more quickly. Thank you for your generous support and commitments.



In January the Session appointed the following people to serve on a **Long-Range Planning Task Force** : **Gene Owens (Moderator), Mac Forsyth, Ginny Graham, Mary Dayne Gregg, Cindy Nobles, Eric Reidenbach, Robin Roberts, and Mary Clare Shaw**. They are reading a book chosen by Steve and will begin meeting soon to pray and seek God's will and blessing for our church. If you have ideas you would like the Task Force to consider, please write them down and send them to Gene Owens. And please pray for this Task Force regularly.

News of Former Members

Berniece Johnson recently moved in with her daughter Jerri Ann Stevenson when an individual came to her and asked to buy her house! Congratulations on your sale, Berniece. Her new address is 3309 Nancy Lane, Bartlett, Tennessee, 38134.

We are sad to hear of the death of former member **Margaret Little** on January 30. Her funeral service was held Wednesday, February 3. The family requests that memorials be made to First Christian Church, P. O. Box 606, Tullahoma, Tennessee, 37388.

A pastor had been on a long flight between church conferences. The first warning of the approaching problems came when the sign on the airplane flashed on: **Fasten Your Seat Belts**. Then, after a while, a calm voice said, "We shall not be serving the beverages at this time as we are expecting a little turbulence. Please be sure your seat belt is fastened." As the pastor looked around the aircraft, it became obvious that many of the passengers were becoming apprehensive. Later, the voice on the intercom said, "We are so sorry that we are unable to serve the meal at this time. The turbulence is still ahead of us."

And then the storm broke. The ominous cracks of thunder could be heard even above the roar of the engines. Lightning lit up the darkening skies, and within moments that great plane was like a cork tossed around on a celestial ocean. One moment the airplane was lifted on terrific currents of air; the next, it dropped as if it were about to crash. The pastor confessed that he shared the discomfort and fear of those around him. He said, "As I looked around the plane, I could see that nearly all the passengers were upset and alarmed. Some were praying. The future seemed ominous and many were wondering if they would make it through the storm."

"Then, I suddenly saw a little girl. Apparently the storm meant nothing to her. She had tucked her feet beneath her as she sat on her seat; she was reading a book and everything within her small world was calm and orderly. "Sometimes she closed her eyes, then she would read again; then she would straighten her legs, but worry and fear were not in her world. When the plane was being buffeted by the terrible storm when it lurched this way and that, as it rose and fell with frightening severity, when all the adults were scared half to death, the child was completely composed and unafraid."

The minister could hardly believe his eyes. It was not surprising therefore, that when the plane finally reached its destination and all the passengers were hurrying to disembark, our pastor lingered to speak to the girl whom he had watched for such a long time. Having commented about the storm and the behavior of the plane, he asked why she had not been afraid. The child replied, "Cause my Daddy's the pilot, and he's taking me home."

There are many kinds of storms that buffet us. Physical, mental, financial, domestic, and many other storms can easily and quickly darken our skies and throw our plane into apparently uncontrollable movement. We have all known such times, and let us be honest and confess, it is much easier to be at rest when our feet are on the ground than when we are being tossed about a darkened sky. Let us remember: Our Father is the Pilot. He is in control and taking us home.

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

To my Westminster family:

I may not remember my name, but last week [February 10] will stay in my mind and in my heart forever.

The Wednesday evening Birthday Bash celebrating my “30-year anniversary of my 59th birthday” was unbelievable. I was greeted at entry with a big white birthday cake with candles and my name engraved on it with pink icing. *Happy Birthday Judy* was strongly sung by all.

As we filled our plates and started eating, cards were hand delivered by my plate (and there were many) - all meaningful, and with sweet personal messages.

You also brought food to my home and I received more cards for the next three days.

I love my church, I love you, and I can never thank you enough for making me so happy at this time in my life. God bless each of you! Judy Harrell

Dear Rev. Ramp:

I greet you in the precious name of Jesus Christ, whom we all serve. I want to thank you for the welcome received from you [that] I felt in being there to officiate the funeral of Mrs. Jackie Coleman. Thank you and the members and staff of Westminster for everything you did in order for the service to be held there. Please express my appreciation to Westminster. The Rev. Dr. J. W. Rigsby,
Woodlawn PC (USA)

Westminster Presbyterian Church
115 N 25th Avenue
Hattiesburg, MS 39401