



First
Presbyterian
Church

GREENWOOD, MISSISSIPPI

DECEMBER 28, 2023



S. A. L. T.

Serving And Learning Together

Wednesdays: January 10—February 7

5:30 p.m. Dinner in Shuler Hall

6:00 p.m. S.A.L.T. Classes (will end at 6:45 p.m.)

6:00 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Children's Classes: The children will use the study "Kid's Travel Guide to the Fruit of the Spirit".

Youth Class: The youth will continue their study of "What Does It Mean to Be Chosen?" utilizing the popular series "The Chosen".

Adult Class: Dr. Andrew Chaney will teach the adult classes looking at how the faith of four theologians impacted our Presbyterian faith journeys.

1. The Medieval Spirituality of Thomas à Kempis—January 10
2. Confessing Christ in the City of God—St. Augustine—January 17
3. A Mighty Fortress is Our God—Martin Luther—January 24
4. The Sovereign Hope of God—John Calvin—February 7

A detailed description of each of Dr. Chaney's sessions can be found on the insert in this newsletter.

THE LORD'S DAY

January 7 — Epiphany/Baptism of the Lord

10:00 a.m. Sunday School
10:30 a.m. Fellowship Time
10:30 a.m. Communion Assignments
11:00 a.m. Worship/Communion
Scripture: Matthew 2:1-12
Sermon: "Lessons from the Manger"
The Wisemen Teach The Gospel is Better than Religion
Dr. Andrew Chaney
Children's Sermon: Elder Clint Guenther
Prayer of Dedication: Elder Dallas Baker
Children's Church: Alan and Margie Barger

January 14 — Second Sunday after Epiphany

10:00 a.m. Sunday School
10:30 a.m. Fellowship Time
11:00 a.m. Worship
Scripture: Ephesians 4:26-32
Sermon: "Defeating Anger? Be Joyful!"
Dr. Andrew Chaney
Children's Sermon: Elder Miller Arant
Prayer of Dedication: Elder Alan Barger
Children's Church: Emmie and Barrett Daugherty

January 21 — Third Sunday after Epiphany

10:00 a.m. Sunday School
10:30 a.m. Fellowship Time
11:00 a.m. Worship
Scripture: Philippians 3:18-19
Sermon: "Defeating Gluttony? Be Moderate!"
Dr. Andrew Chaney
Children's Sermon: Whitney Avritt
Prayer of Dedication: Elder Miller King
Children's Church: Thomas and Anne Marie Gregory

January 28 — Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

10:00 a.m. Sunday School
11:00 a.m. Worship
Sermon Scripture: Deuteronomy 14:22-26
Sermon: "Defeating Greed? Be Generous!"
Dr. Andrew Chaney
Children's Sermon: Elder Dallas Baker
Prayer of Dedication: Elder Reese Pillow
Children's Church: Walter and Anna Moses

December Ushers: Alston Avritt, Christine Chaney, Ashley Farmer, Robert Cole, Christopher Pickens, John Stewart III
Jan. Hospital Visitation Elder: Alan Barger



The Third Annual Soup for the Soul will be on **Sunday, February 4, at 5:00 p.m. in Shuler Hall.** Hosted by Presbyterian Women Council, this event is open to the entire congregation.

Anyone who wants to show off their favorite soup, stew or chili is welcome to participate. PW Council will provide salad, bread, dessert and drinks.

Sign up in the Narthex on Sundays. The congregation will taste-test all of the entries and vote by secret ballot.

The Church Office

is closed

Monday, January 1

for the New Year Holiday

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The Session has called a Congregational Meeting for **Sunday, January 21, 2024**, immediately after worship for the purposes of (a) electing corporate officers, and (b) hearing reports from the Stewardship and Finance Committee regarding the 2023 Budget and from the Stewardship Chairman on the results of the 2024 Stewardship Campaign.



*From
the
Church Staff*

December Thank Yous

December is a very special month for Advent and Christmas music here at First Presbyterian Church. All the extra events/music presentations do not happen because of any one person, but by a combined effort involving many persons. Thanks to Charles Covington and Lonnie Love who do so much in the background: assembling the SCT stand and control booth, and set ups for the various music programs in the Sanctuary the rest of the month, as well as helping to erect the Chrismon Tree along with Dink Strain.

Thanks to Timmy Lott, Richard Oakes, and Emilie Oakes for seeing to the lights and sound for the SCT. Thanks to Randy Clark for his enthusiastic conducting of the carols sung on the SCT. And also thanks to Tommy Gregory who recruits those who will be in the Living Nativity scene, and to Susan Smith, and her assistant Rick, for readying the costumes for the SCT. Thanks to Presbyterian Women for organizing food for after the SCT. Thanks to the numerous parents who see to the Children's Choir before and during the SCT performance. Finally, THANK YOU to the members of the congregation that support the SCT by singing on it!

The decorating of our sanctuary is a task the members of the Flower Guild take upon to do. Katherine Cole decorates our Advent wreath at least twice during December. Flower Guild Chair, Ann Litton, along with Kathryn Pittman, Toni Powers, and Nancy Walker decorate the Chrismon Tree with our beautiful ornaments and place the poinsettias in the Sanctuary. (Thanks to Bill Litton for actually coming in early on Sunday morning the 17th and placing them in the poinsettia tree stand!)

A personal thanks to the members of the Chancel Choir for their beautiful offering on December 10. The choir begins rehearsing music for the Christmas season in August. Their dedication to rehearsals, and the music ministry of this congregation, is very much appreciated by me. Thanks to Paul Brown and Caroline Chaney for being a part of that Sunday as they provided instrumental pieces.

A huge thanks to Kelli Stainback, Lorie Guenther, Shannon Melton, and Caroline Strawbridge for all they do to help make the Children's Nativity Pageant a success. Thank you parents for getting your children to rehearsals!

Thanks to Whitney Avritt for arranging confirmands to light the Advent Candles this year, and for getting youth together to assist with candle lighting during the Christmas Eve service.

Thank you to anyone I may have overlooked! Always a danger in a list like this.

Ray Smithee

TORNADO RELIEF FUNDS Sent from FPC to Clarksville, TN

On December 9, 2023, an EF-3 tornado with 150 mph wind speeds blew through the town of Clarksville, Tennessee. The path of the tornado had a width of 600 yards and was only ½ mile from one of our ECO churches, Clarksville Church. Four people in Clarksville were killed and many were injured.

The Presbytery of the South sent a prayer request to the all the churches in our presbytery. Many members of Clarksville Church were impacted as the area has been without power. Our Session immediately responded by sending the balance of our Uncommitted Benevolences and Pastoral Benevolence Discretionary accounts (\$2300) to the Clarksville Church, and we hope to send more once an assessment of the needs become clear. Please keep the Clarksville Church in your prayers this holiday season.

Dr. Andrew Chaney

Upcoming 2024 Dates to Note

Ash Wednesday - February 14

25th Annual Kirkin' O' the Tartans

Golf Tournament, Saturday, March 2
Kirkin' Lecture, Pipe Band Concert, Service
and Luncheon on Sunday, March 3

Dr. Ligon Duncan III, preaching
President of Reformed Theological Seminary

Maundy Thursday - March 28

Good Friday - March 29

Easter Sunday - March 31

News from First Presbyterian Kindergarten

Happy New Year from FPK! We had a fun-filled December: pancakes and pajamas, a gingerbread house event for the 3s and 4s with parents, and a Christmas program followed by crafts and a party!

Registration for the next school year for current FPK students begins January 3, and will end January 12. At that point registration will be opened to the public.

Caroline Strawbridge.
FPK Director



First
Presbyterian
Church

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Junior High and Senior High
November 15 Deadline

2024

January
EVENTS

FRIDAY, JANUARY 12 -
SUNDAY, JANUARY 14

Youth Winter
Retreat to
Polar Thang
at Twin Lakes
Florence, MS

WEDNESDAY 10

SALT

WEDNESDAY 17

SALT

WEDNESDAY 24

SALT

WEDNESDAY 31

SALT



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Pastor..... Dr. Andrew Chaney
Pastor Emeritus Dr. Rusty Douglas
Director of Music Rev. Ray Smithee
Director of Youth Whitney Avritt
Christian Ed. Director Kelli Stainback
Kindergarten Director Caroline Strawbridge
Financial Secretary..... Annette McDonald
Administrative Assistant Denise Gardner
Custodian Charles Covington
Custodian Lonnie Love
Clerk of Session Richard Oakes
Board of Deacons Rebekah Arant
Church Treasurer..... Mark Vemer
Presbyterian Women Mary Clyde King
Endowment Committee..... Mike Sturdivant III
Missionaries..... Bill Holland, Ahava Ministries
Bill & Bette Bryant Crisis Nursery, Zambia
Cistern Project of the Yucatan
Amos Yam, Yucatan
Potter and Clay Ministries of Haiti
Presbyterian Church of Aleppo, Turkey
Ivan Rusyn, Ukraine

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A Covenant Order of
Evangelical Presbyterians

GET INSPIRED BY FOUR INFLUENTIAL THEOLOGIANS!

The next semester of SALT- “Serving and Learning Together” – will be an examination of how the faith of four theologians impact our Presbyterian faith journeys.

January 10th- “The Medieval Spirituality of Thomas à Kempis”. C.S. Lewis once wrote that if reading books was like eating a piece of bread, reading Thomas à Kempis was like having a cough lozenge slowly dissolve. I’m not exactly sure what that means either, but the point is, Lewis was making a compliment! Thomas à Kempis (the last name means from the town of Kempis) was born in 1327 in the Netherlands. He joined a monastery that was devoted to living as closely as possible in the style of the early Christians. The monks worked together, creating beautifully illustrated Biblical manuscripts during the time when Europe suffered from the first wave of the bubonic plague and the One Hundred Years War between France and England. à Kempis spent his whole life copying and reflecting upon the holy words of the Bible. His book, “The Imitation of Christ,” was translated from Latin in 1949. Using selected excerpts, we will discover why his book is, after the Bible, the most read Christian devotional book in the world.

January 17th- “Confessing Christ in the City of God”. Augustine’s most famous quote is, “Our hearts are restless because you have made us for yourself and our hearts find no peace until they rest in you.” As a professor, Augustine of Hippo began to see flaws in his secular philosophy until the power of Jesus Christ captured his heart. Two influential books Augustine produced after his conversion were *Confessions* and *The City of God* which have been described as “a spelunker delving into the depths of the human soul.” Augustine lived from 354 AD to 430 AD during the twilight years of the Roman Empire. He wrote while the classical world’s culture was collapsing into what has been named, “The Dark Ages.” But on the edge of that darkness, Augustine was a primary source of light by which Christians were able to shine as the predominant influence. Like Augustine, we live in a time of change and moral confusion. We see a culture that needs to realize that no matter how much is learned, produced, and experienced, if Christ is not present, there is only emptiness. Augustine can inspire us to new depths of spiritual growth and a credible witness of the love of God that comes through faith in Jesus Christ.

January 24- “A Mighty Fortress is Our God”. One of the most well-known theologians from our Reformed heritage is Martin Luther who wrote that hymn. In the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century Luther challenged the morally bankrupt Catholic hierarchy by calling for reform. For instance, righteousness comes from Christ’s work on the cross and not by human effort. We take salvation by faith and not works for granted, but Luther was instrumental in moving theology back on track when the idea had been overshadowed by works-righteousness. Besides championing justification by faith and reforming the church, Luther also feverishly worked to get the Bible into the language of everyday people. He was instrumental in establishing universal public education for children. We have much to learn from one of the great heroes of the church.

February 7th- “The Sovereign Hope of God”. Born in 1509, John Calvin may be the theologian with the greatest influence upon our Presbyterian heritage. Calvin began the tradition of Deacons and Elders which reflects his understanding of Scripture. He is best known for his classic work, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, which began as a way for the King of France to understand what it meant to be a Protestant. Calvin believed so strongly in the will of God that he once set his wedding date before he was even engaged! He had to cancel the wedding when a suitable woman didn’t emerge. He was influenced by Martin Luther and Augustine (Calvin traced the idea of predestination to Augustine). The theology of Calvin has been immortalized by the acronym TULIP: total depravity; unconditional election; limited atonement; irresistible grace; and the perseverance of the saints.

I’m hoping you will join me in SALT this semester to get a whirlwind tour of these four influential theologians so your faith will deepen and grow by their inspiration!

Peace, *Andrew*

January 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Office Closed Happy New Year!	2	3 2:30 pm Liturgy 6:00 pm Chancel Choir	4 6:45 am Men's Bible Study/Breakfast	5	6
7 10:00 am Sunday School 10:30 am Fellowship Time 10:30 am Communion Assignments 11:00 am Worship/Communion	8 10:00 am PW Coordinating Team 12:00 pm PW Noon Circle 4:30 pm Christian Ed 5:00 pm Youth Committee 5:30 B & G Committee 6:00 pm Worship & Music Committee	9 8:30 am Women's Bible Study 12:00 pm Kirkin' Committee 5:30 pm FPK Board	10 2:30 pm Liturgy 5:30 pm S.A.L.T. Dinner 6:00 pm S.A.L.T. Classes 6:00 pm Chancel Choir	11 6:45 am Men's Bible Study/Breakfast 5:30 pm Administrative Committee	12 Youth Winter Retreat to Polar Thang 12th - 14th	13
14 10:00 am Sunday School 10:30 am Fellowship Time 11:00 am Worship	15 5:00 pm Deacons 5:30 pm Session	16 8:30 am Women's Bible Study 9:30 am Staff Meeting	17 2:30 pm Liturgy 5:30 pm S.A.L.T. Dinner 6:00 pm S.A.L.T. Classes 6:00 pm Chancel Choir	18 6:45 am Men's Bible Study/Breakfast Newsletter Deadline	19	20
21 10:00 am Sunday School 10:30 am Fellowship Time 11:00 am Worship & Congregational Meeting	22	23 8:30 am Women's Bible Study	24 2:30 pm Liturgy 5:30 pm S.A.L.T. Dinner 6:00 pm S.A.L.T. Classes 6:00 pm Chancel Choir	25 6:45 am Men's Bible Study/Breakfast	26	27
28 10:00 am Sunday School 10:30 am Fellowship Time 11:00 am Worship	29 ECO Meeting	30 8:30 am Women's Bible Study ECO Meeting	31 2:30 pm Liturgy ECO Meeting 5:30 pm S.A.L.T. Dinner 6:00 pm S.A.L.T. Classes 6:00 pm Chancel Choir			



Junior High Christmas Party



Senior High Christmas Party



Youth Ice Skating Trip



Youth Decorating Cookies



Youth Decorating the Shed



Animals



Mary and Joseph



Angels

**NATIVITY
PAGEANT
December 17,
2023**



Kings and Shepherds