



FPC Chronicle

First Presbyterian Church
Crystal Springs, MS



June 2018

WIC NEWS

“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me.” John 14:1

This month will be full of celebrations of God's goodness and gifts. On June 2, at 1:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall, we will have a baby shower for Amanda and Cole Neely. Another baby shower is planned for Susan and Chris Lee in July. A child is truly a gift from God - come celebrate with us. Invitations will be in your church bulletins, and posted on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall. Ladies, recipes are still needed for the cookbook. Please get them to the box as soon as possible.

A presentation will be made to the congregation on a Wednesday night very soon about the WIC love gift which will go to support those in the ministry who need financial assistance. Be listening for details as they are still in the planning stages.

Our next WIC meeting will be June 24 at 5:00 P.M.

Covered Dish Supper: June 6, Beth Shull/Mary Posey

Sanctuary Flowers: 3 JoAnne Davis, 10 Jo Reed, 17 Libby Matthews, 24 Beth Shull

Nursery Schedule: 3 Nancy Belknap/Stacey Lee, 10 Tim & Amy Blair, 17 Stephanie Newsome/Sharon Lee, 24 Beth Dickson/Sue Lee

Happy Birthday to Beth Shull, Ashley Chisholm, Susan Lee, Sharon Lee, and Amy Blair.

Happy Anniversary to Jim and Beth Shull

“May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble!...

May He grant you your hearts desire and fulfill all your plans!” Psalm 20:1,4

Youth News

June brings a month filled with exciting activities and ministries going on in our church life! We have Ridge Haven summer camp in North Carolina June 4th - 9th and VBS is the last week of June, 25th - 29th. Would you please commit these weeks to prayer? Please pray for 1) protection and ease as we travel to camp, and 2) that the Holy Spirit would work in our hearts to trust our Lord Jesus in faith all the more.

In Christ, Grant Gilliam

Missions Minute

In May, our regular \$1250 giving went to the RTS Scholarship Fund and \$200 to Anthony Gorsuch. We also gave \$300 to Dr. Bob Warren for his upcoming mission trip to Nicaragua. Please pray for his team's safety and success in spreading God's Word.

Church Improvements

We are preparing to put in a new sound system in the sanctuary. We have also made some repairs to the front steps. The security system covering the church, manse, and little manse is almost complete.

Upcoming Summer Activities

- Youth trip to Ridge Haven Camp, North Carolina June 4-9
- General Assembly in Atlanta, GA June 12-15
- Vacation Bible School June 25-29

Jim's Gems

Our congregation, First Presbyterian Church of Crystal Springs, Mississippi, does not exist independently. We are a part of the Presbyterian Church in America, and with this relationship we are interconnected with our sister congregations that make up the PCA. In other words, FPC Crystal Springs does not stand alone. We share mutual beliefs, commitments, and responsibilities. We serve the cause of Christ on three levels: the local church, the Presbytery (regional), and the General Assembly (national). Which brings me to the subject of this month's comments: the 2018 General Assembly of the PCA, which will take place June 13-15 in downtown Atlanta.

I attended my first General Assembly in 1976 at First Presbyterian Church in Jackson, and to the best of my knowledge I have never missed an Assembly in all the ensuing years. I have never made a speech in any of those assemblies, but I have been involved as a voting commissioner, and, at times, have served on various Assembly committees. All this is background to say something quite simple: I love the PCA, however, I am very concerned about the direction the PCA has been moving in for a number of years. No, we haven't changed our stance on the authority and truthfulness of the Bible, we still are committed to the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms as containing an accurate explanation of the major teachings of the Bible, and we are serious about the Great Commission—making disciples of all nations. The worship times and the fellowship of like-minded brothers and sisters in Christ are truly sweet and powerful. Those are a few of the reasons I love the PCA. But...

Currently, there are several issues commanding the PCA's attention that trouble me because they deal with matters that have not been issues before in the PCA, at least not to the degree they are now. Recently, a PCA church in Tennessee withdrew from us and united with another conservative Presbyterian denomination. Those things are going to happen occasionally, just as some churches will leave other denominations to join ours. But this church published a statement from their Session explaining why they left. Our elders have read their statement, and we all share their concerns. I'll just mention three of them to you so you can be praying about them as we meet in Atlanta:

1. An increasing emphasis on "social justice" regarding race relations that seems to virtually replace the main task of the church, which is to preach the Word of God and make disciples. No Christian should be against seeking justice and fairness for all people, but the Church has a specific mission, and it begins with the primary tasks of worship, discipleship, and outreach. My concern, and it is shared by many others, is that we become so focused on one major issue in our society (important as it may be) that we lose our distinctive voice in serving as agents of gospel truth and grace first and foremost.

2. Changing practices of the role of women in the PCA. Did you know that some of our churches already have women who serve as "commissioned church workers," Deacon assistants, and non-ordained Deaconesses? If the Bible limits ordained leadership to only men who meet certain qualifications (see I Timothy 3 and Titus 1), then these new positions for women seem to be eventually headed towards having ordained women. That's exactly what happened in the previous denomination that many PCA churches (including ours) left. We obviously should utilize the gifts and services women can provide the church, just as we should with men, but only within the confines of what the Bible teaches.

3. The influence of an unauthorized organization within the PCA called "The National Partnership." This appears to be a group of like-minded brethren who work to promote an agenda through General Assemblies that could turn the PCA into a completely different denomination than what it was formed to be. I confess, I don't know much about them because they operate virtually as their own unelected committee, and then exercise tremendous influence when the Assembly makes decisions.

All of these matters are concerns of ours, and we may learn that at least some of their concerns and agendas are worthy of consideration. But we are troubled by what we are seeing, and we certainly hope the Lord will guide us all into the way of faithfulness to His Word. So please pray for the Spirit of Truth to guide us as we meet June 13-15. May the Lord continue to be gracious to us in the PCA.