



SOUTHMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, USA



1124 Montgomery Highway, Vestavia, AL 35216

A Message from Tom

We have just entered into a new season for the church. The season of Lent began with the services of Ash Wednesday and stretches seven long weeks as we make our way to the empty grave of Easter morning. Lent is meant to be a journey and an exercise of the spirit. I would like to share with you a portion from a paper published on Lent by Rev. Meda Stamper entitled "Return to me."

Lent always begins in the wilderness. For some of us, this may sound harsh and unsettling. For others, it may sound exciting and freeing.

The wilderness time of Lent is surely a time of disorientation - repentance, a true turning of mind and heart, must be disorienting at first - but its disorientation for the sake of reorientation towards what really matters. And even as we pass through the wilderness, we are being fed and healed and loved into wholeness, even in the most hidden, hurting parts of ourselves, so that we may be a part of God's feeding, healing, loving work in the world. Being led by the Spirit on the Lenten way leads us deeper into our vocation, closer to our promised land.

If you ask people what they associate with Lent, many of them might think of giving things up. But the Lenten texts suggest that this is perhaps not the best way of understanding it. Perhaps it is more about making space for God to work. The Lenten texts are about finding something like the enduring treasures we read about in Matthew 6:19-21. The Lenten texts suggest that what we are called to give up are distractions that may make it harder for us to set out properly on the journey with Jesus, harder to see the treasures on the way and to feel the wind of the Spirit blowing over us and driving us toward the One who loves us and wants us to come home.

In the end, the great treasure is in the answer we find to the question of who Jesus is. The treasure is in the relationship that we build with the one who is the beloved Son, God's love enfleshed, the giver of living water and the saving Messiah of the world, light and sight in our blindness, and finally life itself in the valley of the shadow of death and at the door to our tombs.

If we give something up this year for Lent, let it be the distractions and hurdles that keep us from the journey. I am looking forward to our journey ahead as we walk with our Christ through the perils and rewards of Lent.

God Bless,

Tom



Meet Our Newest Staff Member Robert Newman!!!



If you weren't here this past Sunday, then you missed a wonderful service and reception for our newest staff member. Robert was the Leader of Youth and Media Ministries at First Presbyterian Church in Columbia, MO since August 2017. Prior to his time in Columbia, Robert spent several years in Tuscaloosa, AL. While in Tuscaloosa, Robert served on the Planning Team for UKIRK, and as a youth adviser and intern with the youth group at First Presbyterian Church. Robert is passionate about youth ministry and enjoys helping youth realize that they are not only the church of tomorrow, but also the church of today!

Robert grew up in Birmingham, where he played baseball, golf and tennis. Robert is an avid sports fan, especially anything involving the University of Alabama. (Roll Tide!!) He is also a long-suffering Atlanta Braves fan, and, due to his time in Missouri, has jumped on the Kansas City Chiefs' bandwagon. In addition to sports, Robert loves to travel and see new things. His favorite places he has been are Yosemite, Iceland, and Zermatt Switzerland. He loves to snow ski, loves all things Montreat and considers the mountains his happy place.

Robert is off and running and doing wonderful things here at Southminster. If you haven't met him yet, make plans to stop by and say Hi! Robert is in the office Tuesday through Friday and you can catch him in worship on Sundays.

Once again, welcome to the Southminster family, Robert! We are thrilled you are here!

B	I	N	G	O
4	26	43	59	70
9	30	41	55	68
7	23	FREE 32 SPACE	50	63
8	20	31	60	75
13	18	34	52	69

Encore Bingo Potluck Party

Hopefully by now you've heard about our new Encore Group. The word encore means "called out by an audience at the end of a concert to request an additional performance." Christ is the audience calling us out for additional performance, using our God-given talents as God's hands and feet in the Church and the community. Regardless of age, we are called to grow spiritually and to serve Christ in any way that we are able. The Encore Ministry has been formed to find ways to reach people for Christ, to call them into service in and outside the Church, for spiritual growth and to offer opportunities to connect socially to enter into deeper friendships. If you are in this age group, we hope that you will be eagerly supportive and willing to participate in intergenerational activities socially and in serving together. Together we are the Body of Christ at Southminster, regardless of age!

We are hosting a Bingo Potluck Party for everyone who is 50 or older on **Friday, March 8th, at 6:00 PM in Grace Hall.**

Please bring a covered dish and your lucky charm and maybe you will be the big Bingo winner!

Friends are welcome! Sign up is not required, but would help with set up, etc. Please call the Church Office, 822-1124, to add your name.

If you need a ride, please call Janet Nebrig (223-1045) because we want you to join the fun and we can find someone to pick you up.

Thank You Note Received

Dear Friends of Southminster,

My heart is overflowing with love and gratitude for all of your support. Your loving thoughts and prayers, the cards, the food, visits to the hospital, and your calls have all held me up and kept me going. The Celebration of Life service for John, with the choir and the wonderful reception that followed, was beautiful and so meaningful to myself and our family. Thank you for all you have done for us.

Many blessings to each of you,

Ann Gasque and family



Outreach Ministry Unit News

"You pray for the hungry. Then you feed them. This is how prayer works."

- Pope Francis

Southminster and First Presbyterian Churches are teaming up once again to assist in the fight against hunger worldwide. This year - as we did last year - Southminster has pledged to raise enough money to pack 10,000 meals. To pack those 10,000 meals we need to raise \$2,900! We have currently raised \$1,466.96! Each Sunday during the month of March you will find buckets located at every exit of the sanctuary labeled "RAH Bucket" with an adorable being or two holding it to collect donations. On the Outreach Bulletin Board you will find the Rise Against Hunger Meter tracking our progress, as well as an updated blurb in the bulletin each week. I truly believe with the help from people like you and me, we can help end hunger worldwide by the year 2030. IT IS POSSIBLE!

Raising money for Rise Against Hunger is only half of the fun! On April 6th at 2 p.m. Outreach Ministry Unit would like for you to join us at First Presbyterian Church to pack not only our 10,000 meals, but their 10,000 meals as well. We will have a blast packing the 20,000 meals together with our brothers and sisters in Christ. We hope to see you there!

Southminster is on the books to serve meals at First Light on the following days:

Sunday, May 12th- Dinner
Saturday, June 1st- Breakfast
Sunday, June 30th- Breakfast

If you are interested in attending the First Light Gala on May 4th, please visit their website at www.firstlightshelter.org. Click Menu and you will find more information under Events.

Peace,

Sara Brown, Outreach Ministry Unit

Wednesday Night Supper and Programs

March 13th:

Menu: Chicken Tetrazzini, Salad, Garlic Bread, Dessert

Program: Lenten Study led by Dr. Tom and Robert, followed by Holy Communion.

March 20th:

Menu: Meatloaf, Roasted Veggies, Bread, Dessert

Program: Lenten Study led by Dr. Tom and Robert, followed by Holy Communion.



****Make Reservations by signing the Attendance Form on Sunday or calling the Church Office, 822-1124, by Noon on Mondays****

Presbyterian Women Mission Monthly



Many thanks to all of you who contributed your time and talents to our annual Women's Luncheon. We had 40 attendees and a delicious meal, followed by our informative program of the excellent work accomplished by the Better Basics children's reading program throughout the Birmingham schools.

ANNUAL SPRING GATHERING is coming up. This is our annual spiritual and organizational meeting of Presbyterian Women of central Alabama. The date is March 23, a Saturday. at Living River. Carpooling is available. Reminder: The retreat is open to all women of the Church. Our theme is "Creation and Re-Creation." Our morning session will center upon our stewardship of creation and ways that congregations can support and practice initiatives that nurture our environment. The afternoon session will center upon our mission to the communities of our congregations and ways to strengthen our membership and work cooperatively to serve those in need, both in our cities and through the state of Alabama.

MARCH MISSION: Our chosen mission for the month of March is the Ronald McDonald House Charities of Alabama. The charity is Birmingham's only affordable temporary housing for sick children and their families, keeping families together while their children are receiving care at Children's of Alabama, UAB and other area hospitals. Over 40,000 families have been served since opening in 1979, helping families who cannot afford an extended stay in hotels.

In January 2018, the charity opened family rooms at UAB Women and Infant Center. Parents can share a meal in the room, which is also equipped with three private sleeping and shower areas.

The charity also provides family rooms at DCH Regional Medical Center in Tuscaloosa. Another service is the Happy Meals Cart, which provided toiletries, beverages, snacks and age appropriate books and toys to the Children's Hospital of Alabama.

We will be collecting paper products such as paper towels, toilet tissue, napkins, etc. and we would like to invite and encourage the congregation to participate. Look for our collection bin outside Grace Hall. Please pick up these items during your weekly shopping trip and donate. Thank you for your support of our mission projects.

Within our many ministry units and circles, PW contributes to the church as well as the community. Join us!

Charlotte Worsham, Secretary-Historian



Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the April *Sounds of Southminster* and calendar will be **Monday, March 25th**. This is the week of Spring Break ... so please get any articles or information you would like published in this edition to me as soon as possible. There is lots of exciting news to share ... so don't miss out!!!!

Bunch for Lunch

Join us on **Tuesday, March 26th at 10:30 am in Grace Hall** for another day of fun and fellowship. Bring your lunch ... drinks will be provided ... and let's play some SkipBo. This is a game that is enjoyed by all and a time to share much laughter and love. For more information, contact Evelyn Ellison!

Day School News

We are fast approaching the last nine weeks of school at Southminster Day School! Wow, this school year is flying by and our students are working harder than ever. We know they will enjoy our upcoming Spring Break as they gear up for upcoming SAT Testing, the 4th Grade Sea Lab trip, and the flurry of activities for our graduating 5th graders! Somewhere in there is the SDS Field Day, too. We have lots to look forward to in these final months of the 2018-2019 school year!

We are currently holding registration for the fall and always enjoy seeing new faces visit us during the Spring.

Recently, we were notified that our current 5th grader, Hudson Reed, made the list of finalists in the State of Alabama to compete in the Geography Bee at Samford University at the end of the month! We are so proud of him and all of our hard-working students. Hudson will compete with many 7th and 8th grade students from various schools around the state!

We had great school wide participation in the recent Mercedes Marathon in Birmingham. Current 4th grader, Camryn Brown, placed first in the overall kids run which was comprised of 4,840 area runners! Emory Bear, a current 5th grader, placed second! We are so proud of them and are always thankful when SDS students participate in our community activities.

We are thankful for those in the school and the church who donated items for the 2nd Annual Super Bowl Party for the homeless in Birmingham. This year we served over 120 people and they were so appreciative of the items we gave them.

Finally, our staff enjoyed a wonderful lunch that was provided by the church on Valentines Day! It was nice to have such a treat and we really appreciate that sweet gesture!

Jeanie Couin, Day School Director

Daylight Saving Time



A reminder that Daylight Saving Time begins **this Sunday, March 10th**. That means before you go to bed Saturday night, don't forget to "spring forward" and set your clocks ahead one hour.

Clerk of Session Report

A summary of the actions taken at the February Stated Session meeting since the last newsletter is as follows:

1. The Service of Holy Communion was observed on Sunday, February 2nd.
2. Elder of the Month for March is Charles Goodman.
3. The Session approved the nomination and election of Mike Horton as Trustee for the Session Class of 2019.
4. The Session approved the transfer of church membership for Rod and Judy Boyes to Faith Presbyterian Church (USA), Indian Island, South Carolina.
5. Communication received from Presbyterian Home for Children expressing thanks for the gift of \$302 received in December.
6. The Session approved the 2018 Church Statistical Report.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Ezekiel

A Big Thank You from our Youth

The Montreat Mardi Gras fundraiser was a HUGE success. Thank you to so many who brought delicious food. There was an abundance of Cajun food, mac and cheese, chicken fingers, muffulettas, bread pudding ... you name it!! The winners for the best dish went to - in a tie for 3rd place to Heather Benoit for her wonderful pasta dish and Ashley Bryson for her homemade Pralines, 2nd place to Marilyn Seier for her Aunt Lila's Mac and Cheese and ... drumroll please ... grand prize to Laura Bannon for her bread pudding.

There were beads and candy and moon pies galore for the kids to throw from their "floats." A grand time was had by all!!! The youth want to thank you from the bottom of their hearts for your generous donations! \$900 was raised!!! This will go towards sending our youth to Montreat this summer ... so THANK YOU!!!!



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Staff Members

The Rev. Dr. Tom Bryson, Pastor
Robert Newman, Program Director
Larry Hardin, Director of Music Ministries
David Renaker, Organist
Jeanie Covin, Director of Day School
Betsy Murphy, Church Administrator
Dereck Stewart, Sexton



SOUNDS OF SOUTHMINSTER

One Great Hour of Sharing



One Great Hour of Sharing Special Offering

Around the world, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education and opportunity. The three programs supported by One Great Hour of Sharing - Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People - all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance and hope.

Southminster will receive this offering on March 31st. Offering envelopes will be placed in the pews prior to the offering. Each gift to this offering helps to improve the lives of people in many challenging situations. In fact, the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance program has worked alongside many communities in our area as they recovered and found hope after the devastation of natural or human-caused disasters. Please consider this gift during this upcoming season of Lent.

Stewardship Ministry Unit

New Member Info

Over the last few months we have been blessed to welcome **Garrett Chow, B Jay and Elizabeth Nelson** and **Jonathan and Leah Wright** to the active membership of Southminster and we will be adding a few more in the next month. Stay tuned to your April newsletter for pictures and bios of our newest members!

Welcome to Southminster! We are glad you're here!