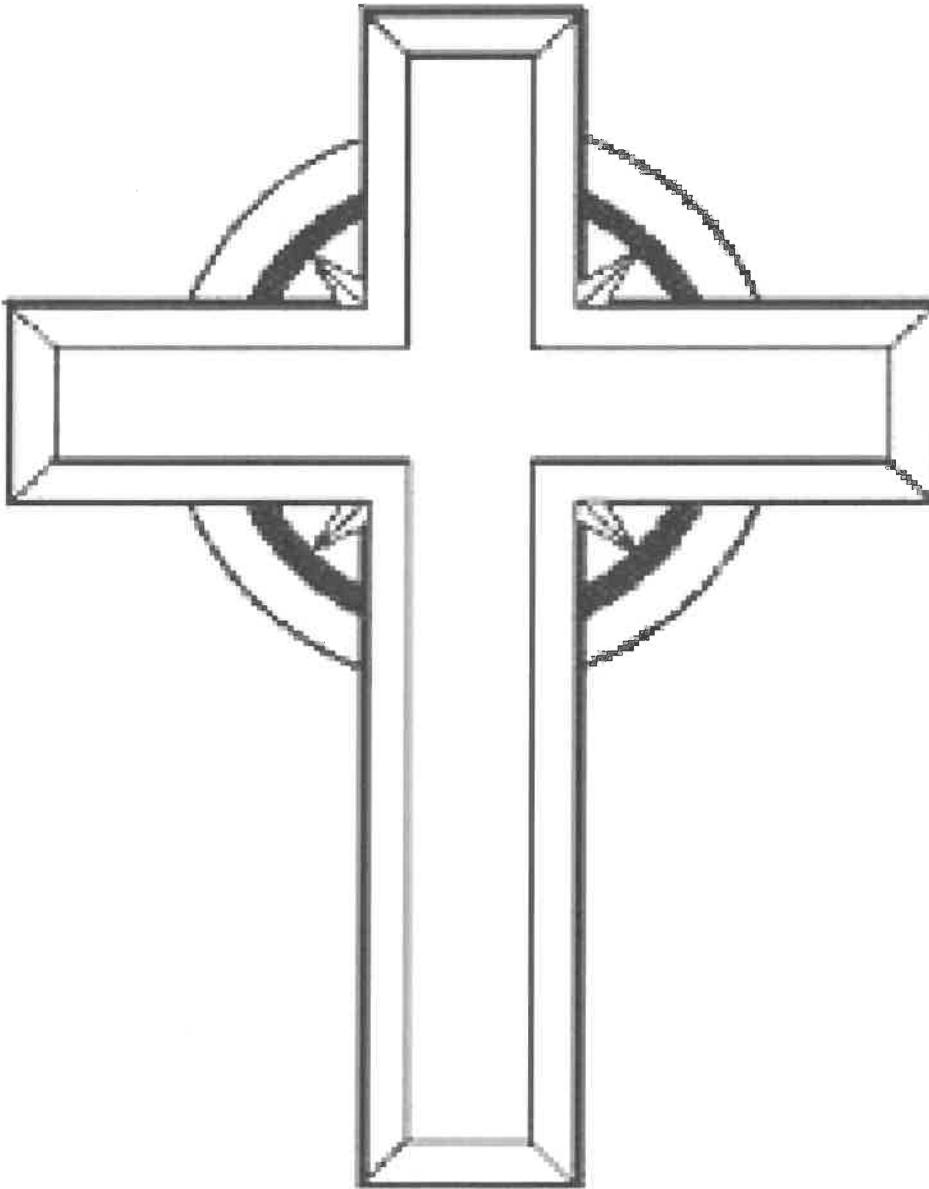


The First Word

**OCTOBER
2024**

October Lectionary



October 6

20th Sunday after Pentecost

Semicontinuous:

Job 1:1; 2:1-10 and Ps. 26;

Complementary:

Gen. 2:18-24 and Ps. 8;

Heb. 1:1-4; 2:5-12;

Mark 10:2-16

October 13

21st Sunday after Pentecost

Semicontinuous:

Job 23:1-9, 16-17 and

Ps. 22:1-15;

Complementary:

Amos 5:6-7, 10-15 and

Ps. 90:12-17; Heb. 4:12-16;

Mark 10:17-31

October 20

22nd Sunday after Pentecost

Semicontinuous:

Job 38:1-7 (34-41) and

Ps. 104:1-9, 24, 35c;

Complementary:

Isa. 53:4-12 and Ps. 91:9-16;

Heb. 5:1-10; Mark 10:35-45

October 27

23rd Sunday after Pentecost

Semicontinuous:

Job 42:1-6, 10-17 and

Ps. 34:1-8 (19-22);

Complementary:

Jer. 31:7-9 and Ps. 126;

Heb. 7:23-28; Mark 10:46-52

October Reflection

Re: Buechner, Sanford, Memories, and Closed Doors

In “The Remarkable Ordinary,” a posthumous collection of Frederick Buechner’s writings, he talks about finding God breaking into “normal”, “secular” life, suggesting that there is no moment, artwork, movie, book, or place that God cannot be found. One of the overarching themes of the collection is Buechner’s unaddressed experience of his father’s suicide during his childhood amid the Great Depression. He recalls not crying about it, being unable to even think about it, and not realizing until *much* later in his life just how much it was affecting him.

Buechner is vulnerable enough to share an encounter he had with a woman named Agnes Sanford, a fellow Christian writer and founder of a type of prayer aimed at the healing of memories and emotions. The way she prayed for Frederick Buechner and for others is unusual. It is also scary. It calls the hearer, the one being prayed for, to at least prepare to open the doors to memories long-since repressed. When I say doors, I mean literal doors, because that is what Agnes Sanford means. This is how Buechner describes it:

The image was of the person she was praying for, a house with rooms and corridors; some of the rooms hadn't been open for years and were full of dark places. She would invite Jesus into the house, saying, 'Now open the doors and let in the fresh air, blessing it, cleansing it, and making it livable again.'

It will be difficult to pray such prayers with an earnest desire that those closed doors of the past be opened, addressed, even confronted in some cases. As individuals, it is something we can do for ourselves and something we can help others do.

As Christians, we are called to be truth-tellers. This not only includes but emphasizes truth-telling around memories and experiences that may be harmful to ourselves or others. It might seem like self-preservation to keep the contents of these rooms packed-away and hidden. These closed, and locked doors of our psychological houses only allow the dust and cobwebs to accumulate; we resent unpacking such rooms for fear of the clutter and for fear of the effort it will surely take.

Still, we cannot open such doors before we are prepared, and we certainly cannot force others to do any such opening before they are prepared. What we can do is pray for ourselves and others that Jesus might enter our houses and prepare us, whether it be now or in the future, to open these shut-and-forgotten doors and allow fresh air in, making it livable again.

Blessings,

BJ

***“When
Did
We See
You?”***



A Year in Living Our Faith
October 1, 2023 - October 1, 2024

**FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH (USA)**

3200 Bluecutt Road
Columbus, Mississippi 39705





Loaves and Fishes

Meals Served: 2,131

Volunteers Involved: 85

Children's Books Distributed: 327

Faith, Creativity, Community

"Writing As an Act of Faith"

Poetry class taught by Thomas Richardson

Students: 16

\$2,500 raised for Loaves and Fishes

Mississippi Food Network

Backpack Meals to Stokes Beard

Elementary School: 1,376

Presbyterian Hunger Program

Two-Cents-a-Meal Offering: \$1,162.17

Helping Hands

Fans Donated: 50 +

Blankets Donated: 30 +

Canned Goods: Weekly Deliveries

Fresh Start Tiny Home Village

Project Completed: 10 Dishware and Flatware Starter Packs

Dream Center's Bedz4Kidz

Columbus Build, October 28, 2023

FPC Participants: 12

Beds Built: 41

Starkville Build, September 7, 2024

FPC Participants: 9

Beds Built: 45

Big House Books Project

Books donated: 850 + (with 330 from Friendly City Books)

Packing Party at Big House Books in Jackson—FPC Participants: 10

Pill Bottle Project

Bottles Collected: 668 (ongoing)

Bottles washed and mailed to *Matthew 25*:

Ministries: 318

Presbyterian Men

Monthly Prayer and Fellowship Breakfasts

Prayer Cards Mailed: 36

Deacons' Care Packages

Delivered to Homebound Members: 8

Non-Profit Benevolences

Boys & Girls Club of Columbus: \$1,000.00

Camp Hopewell: \$600.00

Dream Center Golden Triangle/Bedz4Kidz:
\$1,200.00

Helping Hands: \$2,000.00

Loaves and Fishes: \$1,000.00

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (Aid to
Ukraine): \$500.00

Safe Haven: \$1,100.00

The Salvation Army: \$1,000.00

Golden Triangle Homeless Coalition:
\$500.00

Presbytery of St. Andrew Disaster Relief
Fund: \$1,000.00

Presbyterian Child Development Program (FPC)

Students and Families Served: 54
25 (2023-24)
29 (2024-25)

Students, Families, and Teachers Supported
by FPC through PCDP Teacher Appreciation
Breakfast: 4 Teachers
Boo-Hoo, Woo-Hoo Breakfast: 19 Parents
FPC Information Packets Distributed to
Parents: 19

PCDP Community Service Projects: 2 yearly
For Helping Hands
Canned Goods: 110

For Columbus-Lowndes Humane Society
Bags of dog food: 6
Bags of cat food: 5
Flats of wet cat food: 4
Gallons of bleach: 4
Boxes of dog treats: 7
Bags of cat treats: 3
Dog toys: 10
Cases of paper towels: 1

Presbyterian Special Offerings

One Great Hour of Sharing: \$2,196.57

Pentecost: \$2,063.68

Peace and Global Witness: \$195.00

Christmas Joy: \$950.00

Presbyterian Women

Monthly Meetings with a visit to Trinity Place
Retirement Community, an ice-cream social,
devotionals, fellowship, and prayer

Thank Offering: \$319.94

Fellowship of the Least Coin Offering: \$128.65

Mailing Ministry

Birthday Cards to Worshippers: 143

Cards to Visitors: 29

Cards to Homebound Members: 84

"You-Were-Remembered-in-Sunday-Prayers"
Cards: 168

Weekly Bulletins to Adults: 572

Weekly Bulletins to Children: 728

Monthly Newsletters and Calendars to
Adults: 132

Total Mailings: 1,856

Loft Choir Ministry

"Caroling and Care-o-ling" to Homebound
Members: Quarterly Visits and with the
Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

"Columbus Sings Messiah": 10 FPC Voices

Montreat Worship and Music Conference,
"Lead Us Homeward": 11 FPC Participants



More Caring For Our Community

United Way Angel Tree Program,
Christmas 2023; \$2,150 contributed for
gifts for two grandparents and their three
grandchildren

Book Donations to Baptist Memorial
Hospital-Golden Triangle

Martin Luther King Day at Columbus
City Hall-Reading of MLK's "Letter from
Birmingham Jail": 4 FPC Readers

More Caring For Our Congregation

"Love Gifts" to Church Staff: 5

Gifts of Bibles to High School Seniors: 4

Starbucks Gift Cards to College
Students: 16

Blankets to Newborns and Homebound
People: 3

Casseroles to People in Sickness or Loss: 3
Visitor Gift Bags: 10

Blessing of the Backpacks Tags and
Cookies: 19

Caring For the Earth and Sustainable Living

GotSneakers-Zero-Waste Recycling Project
(ongoing)

Sneakers Collected: 28 pairs

Sneakers Mailed: 22 pairs

Ecumenical Fellowship

Lowndes Church Softball League
First Presbyterian All-Stars; aka *The
Hilltoppers/The Westminster Warriors/The
Hilltop Hotshots/The Justified Sinners/The
P'destimators/The Hilltop Hard Knox*

Players on Roster: 15

Games Scheduled: 16



Fellowship Lunches

Monthly; hosted by Shepherding Groups

Christian Education Opportunities

Nursery: Birth to 5 Years

Elementary I: Ages 5 - 7

Elementary II: Ages 8 - 10

Adults: Agape Class

Adults: Parlor of Prayer ("PoP") Class

Wednesday Bible Study with Pastor B.J. Chain

"What Presbyterians Believe" Classes on
Sunday afternoons with Pastor B.J. Chain

Special Services

Ash Wednesday

Maundy Thursday and Monk's Meal with the
Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

Easter Sunday

Hymn Singing Sunday

Blessing of the Backpacks Sunday

Kirkin' o' the Tartans Sunday

All Saints Sunday

Advent Lessons and Carols Sunday

Christmas Joy Sunday

Christmas Eve with the Sacrament of the
Lord's Supper

*"I was hungry and you gave me food, I was
thirsty and you gave me something to drink,
I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was
naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick
and you took care of me, I was in prison and
you visited me."*

Matthew 25: 35-36

Financial Information:

The information presented below reflects First Presbyterian Church finances as of September 30, 2024.

YTD Income:	\$129,537.90
YTD Expenses:	\$151,218.60
YTD Balance:	-\$21,680.70

2024 Pledge Total	\$155,224.00
September Total Pledged:	\$117,000.00
September Total Received:	\$114,035.00



Children's Message



Sunday morning talks with Pastor B.J.



A decorative border surrounds the central text. At the top, a blue ribbon with white stars and a yellow star arches across. On the left and right sides, clusters of balloons in red, blue, and yellow are tied with brown ribbons. The background is a light blue sky with white stars and a large white sun or moon in the center.

October Birthdays

Jack Jones	October 1
Boomer Stanley (14)	October 4
Emily Anne Oakes	October 6
John Owings III	October 15
Jessie Smith (7)	October 16
Darlene Walrod	October 16
Russell Hatcher	October 17
Julie Krieger (13)	October 17
Jared Oakes	October 18
Hillary Richardson	October 25
David Sullivan	October 25
Amelia Rose Richardson (6)	October 26

A decorative border at the bottom features a blue ribbon arching over several gift boxes. The gift boxes are in yellow, blue, and red, each with a matching ribbon. The background is a light blue sky with white stars.

prayer
Requests



Diane Keen
(Carol Jones Sister)
Health Concerns

Sandra Mims
Health Concerns

Brennen Bowen
Health Concerns

Bonnie Boyd
Health Concerns

Toni Oakes
(Ed Oakes Sister)
Health Concerns

Ginny Oakes
(Ed Oakes Mother)
Prayer Request

Allison L. Jones
(Scott Jones Mother)
Health Concerns

Patty Jones Family
Prayer Concerns

Amy Sullivan
(Pam Sullivan's Daughter-In-Law)
Health Concerns

Lyla Fulton (2 Years old)
(Holly Longton's Great Niece)
Cancer Diagnosis

Chris Geuder
(Son of Rod & Maridith Geuder)
Health Concerns

Dustin Bruce
(Friend of Joey & Tracie Hanson)
Prayers through cancer treatment

Ronnie Richardson
(Taylor Richardson's Father)
Health Concerns

Desiree Krieger
Recovery from back surgery

The Alexander Family
(Friend of Amanda Bowen)
In the loss of Jessica Alexander

The Crusoe Family
In the loss of Carlos Rayshaun Crusoe, Jr.
(Glenda Crusoe's Great Nephew)

The Harrington/Griffin Family
In the loss of Hope Oakes Aunt
Betty Harrington Griffin

The Family of James Pope
Family Friend
Prayer Request



JOIN A CHRISTIAN EDUCATION PROGRAM TODAY

Nursery Care

Nursery Care is available in the Education Building from 9:45 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. from ages birth to 5 years old.

Children's Sunday School

Grades 1 & 2 – 9:45 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Grades 3 & up – 9:45 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Children's Sermon – During Worship

Children's Church – Ages 3 – Kindergarten

After Children's Sermon until 12:00 p.m.

Adult Sunday School – Tom Richardson 9:45 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

In the Agape Sunday School Class, we usually do a close study of biblical text. The Agape Sunday School class has just begun a study of the biblical book of Genesis. In addition to addressing the foundational significance of Genesis for our Bible, we will discuss the book as literature, focusing on the elements of the art of storytelling, as well as the complexity of the authorship and sources of Genesis. Everyone is welcome!"

From time to time we also read other literary works with important theological themes or books by biblical scholars and theologians that help us understand biblical texts or challenge us to think in fresh ways about our roles as Christians in the modern world.


Adult Sunday School – Dennis Harmon 9:45 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

In this Sunday School Class, we are studying a series of books by Henri J.M. Nouwen. We are currently studying "The Return of the Prodigal Son-A Story of Homecoming". A look at the painting and parable in light of the three principle figures-the younger son, the elder son, and the Father.

Bible Study & Prayer Group – Reverend B. J. Chain

Wednesdays 12:30 p.m.

Following the lectionary, we explore our thoughts on the scripture that is likely to be the basis of next Sunday's sermon.

COME JOIN OUR
BIBLE

Study

Every Wednesday at 12:30 p.m.

First Presbyterian Church
3200 Bluzcutt Road
Columbus, MS 39705

Pill Bottle Donation Drive

The Deacons and the Congregational Care Committee will have a final pill bottle washing session on Thursday, October 10th from 12:00 p.m. until 2:00 p.m. Please join us for as much time as you have available.

The bottles will be washed and mailed to a ministry in Ohio for use in international medical missions.



Thank you for your support.

The background of the page is a light cream color with a repeating pattern of autumn-themed illustrations. These include various shapes of leaves in shades of yellow, orange, and red, as well as green and blue leaves. There are also several red mushrooms with white spots and clusters of red berries on thin black stems.

Join us for fellowship and fun!

Come enjoy some much
deserved girl time with your
“Hilltop Sisters”.

Presbyterian Women
You’re Invited

Sunday, October 13th
3:00 p.m.

First Presbyterian Church

JOIN US
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20TH AT 11:00 A.M.
FOR KIRKIN' O' THE TARTAN



KIRKIN' O' THE TARTAN

Highland Games

Following worship, join us outside for our version of traditional Scottish Highland games!



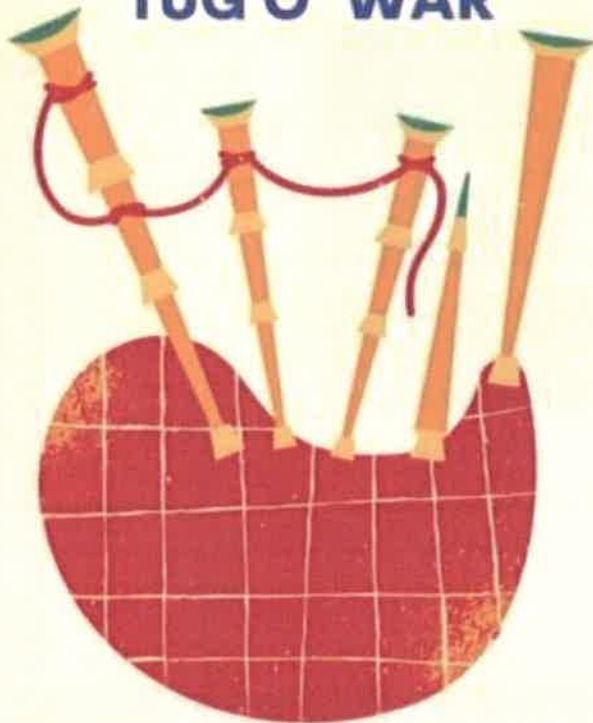
CABER TOSS

HAGGIS HURL

SHEAF TOSS

BROAD JUMP

TUG O' WAR



OCTOBER 20, 2024

First Presbyterian Church
3200 Bluecutt Rd.
Columbus, MS 39705



For more information:
firstprescolumbus@gmail.com

HIGHLAND GAMES MEMORIES

OCTOBER 2023





October Fellowship Lunch

**Join us Sun., October 20th
following worship.**

**Shepherding Group 4
will provide fried chicken.**

**Please bring your
favorite side dish
or dessert to share.**

PCDP

PCDP has lots of fun things planned for October. We will be learning about nursery rhymes, shapes, colors, pumpkins, leaves, and all things autumn.

Our fall break is 10/7-10/14.

The PCDP Fall Festival is 10/31 in the church parlor.

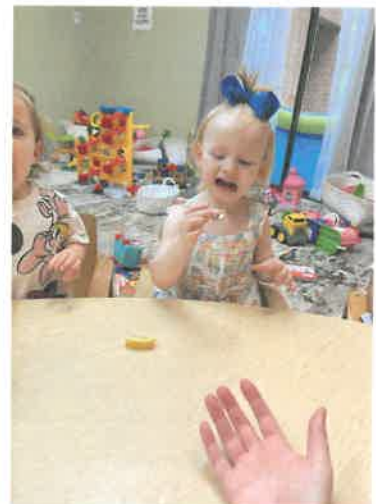
And just a little reminder from PCDP

Always BE-LEAF in yourself



PCDDP

TERRIFIC TWO'S



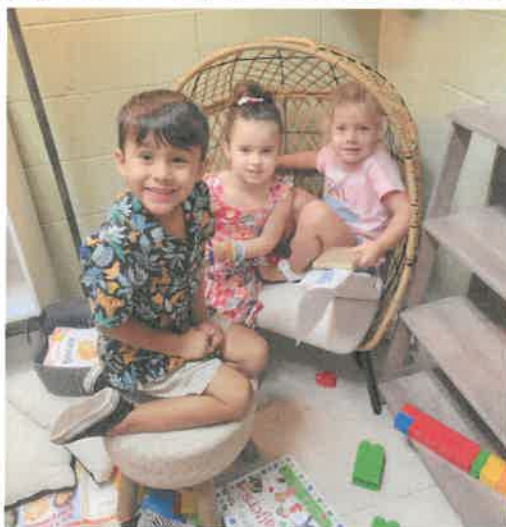
PCDDP

WILD & THREE'S



PCDDP

FANTASTIC FOUR'S



THANK YOU



for supporting our FPC Softball Team!

We had a great season.
Watch your email for upcoming play-off game information.





FPC volunteers helped build more than 45 beds Saturday, September 7th at The Dream Center Golden Triangle's Bedz for Kidz build at Starkville FUMC. Thank you to our awesome volunteers!





First Presbyterian Church

"Come up The Hill to worship; go down The Hill to serve."

*Fri., September 20th, approximately 390 meals were served, and 58 children's books were distributed.
Thank you to our faithful volunteers!*





THE BEST TIMES
ARE ALWAYS FOUND WHEN
friends & family
GATHER ROUND

Fellowship Lunch
September 29, 2024



Jo Shumake

Sunday School Perfect Attendance for **12 Consecutive Years** thanks to her parents. The one on the right was run over by the family car. :(



Come Worship With Us Every Sunday
 Choir Practice
 9:00 a.m. Every Sunday
 Sunday School: 9:45 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
 Social Gathering: 10:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
 Worship: 11:00 a.m.

October

Join us for
 Bible Study
 every Wednesday
 @ 12:30 pm

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
6 World Communion Sunday 11:00 a.m. Communion Worship 5:00 p.m. "What Presbyterians Believe" Class	7 PCDDP Fall Break	8 PCDDP Fall Break	9 PCDDP Fall Break 12:30 p.m. Bible Study 5:00 p.m. Worship & Music Meeting	10 PCDDP Fall Break 12—2:00 p.m. Congregational Care Pill Bottle Washing Session	11 PCDDP Fall Break	12 No Men's Prayer Breakfast for October
13 11:00 a.m. Worship 3:00 p.m. Presbyterian Women Gathering	14 Columbus Day Office & PCDDP Closed	15	16 12:30 p.m. Bible Study 6:00 p.m. Deacons' Meeting FPC	17 5:30 p.m. Al-Anon	18	19
20 11:00 a.m. Kirkin' o' the Tartan Fellowship Lunch following Worship (Shepherding Group 4) Highland Games	21	22	23 12:30 p.m. Bible Study	24 5:30 p.m. Al-Anon	25	26
27 8:30 a.m. Session Meeting 11:00 a.m. Worship 2 Cents A Meal Offering	28	29	30 12:30 p.m. Bible Study	31 PCDDP Fall Festival 5:30 p.m. Al-Anon		