

# The Messenger

MOUNTAIN BROOK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## LANT'S LINES

A Message from our Pastor



*Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence.*

*1 Peter 3:15-16 (NRSV)*

This text from First Peter is often mentioned in connection with doing what sometimes is called “giving your testimony.” While our Reformed/Presbyterian tradition—at least in contemporary times—has not provided many formal opportunities for members to give their testimonies, it can be a very powerful practice. When Christians speak publicly about why they feel blessed to be followers of, and believers in, Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, it has a power to persuade those who have not yet come to a saving faith in Jesus. Such testimonies also greatly encourage other Christians in their lives of faith. No one escapes ups and downs in our faith. Hearing another Christian describe their challenges and their victories is a great inspiration, for we say, “If God has helped them in that powerful way, then God can help me, too.”

Since we recommenced our Wednesday night programs, we have had two members of this congregation bring us talks that, essentially, have been their testimonies. Both of them were about addictions and the power that they can wield over our lives. Both, with God’s help, have had significant victories over these addictions. Through these talks we have learned that addiction—no matter what the substance or behavior one is addicted to—have certain things in common. Similarly, the spiritual and practical tools we have against the addictions in some sense are also the same. So, since we all probably experience some kind of addictive behavior, or are affected by a loved one who does, these talks have helped us to be on guard and to know more about the dynamics of addiction.

*(continued p.2)*

Tonight's program will be presented by Jonathan Edwards, who is the executive director of Serving You Ministries, an organization that is performing important ministry in the Woodlawn area of Birmingham and beyond. I think you'll appreciate his energy and vision.

We have your great suggestions for other speakers in the future and are in the process of trying to arrange those. SO . . . . please consider, if you are not already, coming to the dinners on Wednesday and staying for the programs. (By the way, the kids are really enjoying their own programs, which are being led by our Christian Education director, Spencer Bissell. So far Spencer has been using science "experiments" to illustrate theological ideas to the kids.)

I'll look forward to seeing you there!

Mountain Brook Presbyterian Church  
3405 Brookwood Road  
Birmingham, AL 35223  
(205) 967-5037      mhall@mbpcusa.org

## CONTENTS

---

COVER/LANT'S LINES

CONTENTS/STAFF

OCTOBER CALENDAR

MBPC HAPPENINGS

ACOLYTE RECOGNITION/COMMISSIONING

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

MISSIONS & OUTREACH

PRESBYTERY REFLECTION

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

PRESCHOOL UPDATE

TROOP/PACK #320 UPDATE



## STAFF

---

PASTOR

REV. LANT B. DAVIS

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

DEWIN TIBBS

ORGANIST

GARY SMOKE

DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

SPENCER BISSELL

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

MELISSA HALL

FINANCIAL ASSISTANT

BERNIE GREGSON

DIRECTOR OF PRESCHOOL

MARY LIZ INGRAM

BOY SCOUT TROOP 320

SCOUTMASTER: FRANK TYNES

CUB SCOUT PACK 320

CUBMASTER: JUSTIN KELLY



# MBPC Calendar, Holidays in United States

Oct 2019 (Central Time - Chicago)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29	30	1	2	3	4	5
		8am - Body Works 1pm - Worship Staff 6:30pm - Christian	5pm - Hand Bells 5pm - Personnel 6pm - Dinner & 6:45pm - Adults' 6:45pm - Children's 7:30pm - Chancel	8am - Body Works 10am - Bible Study 11:15am - Welcome	8am - Body Works	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
9:30am - Sunday 10:15am - Chancel 11am - Worship 11:15am - Sunday	8am - Body Works	8am - Body Works 1pm - Worship Staff	5pm - Finance 5pm - Hand Bells 6pm - Dinner & 6:45pm - Adults' 6:45pm - Children's 7:30pm - Chancel	8am - Body Works 10am - Bible Study	Van Reservation - 8am - Body Works	Van Reservation -
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Van Reservation - 9:30am - Sunday 10:15am - Chancel 11am - Worship 11:15am - Sunday 12pm - Finance 5pm - Session	Columbus Day 8am - Body Works 6pm - Troop #320	8am - Body Works 9:30am - Prayer 11am - Worship 1pm - Worship Staff	9am - PEO Meeting 5pm - Hand Bells 6pm - Dinner & 6:45pm - Adults' 6:45pm - Children's 7:30pm - Chancel	8am - Body Works 10am - Bible Study--	8am - Body Works	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
9:30am - Sunday 10:15am - Chancel 11am - Worship-- 11:15am - Sunday	8am - Body Works 6:30pm - Pack 320	8am - Body Works 1pm - Worship Staff	5pm - Hand Bells 6pm - Dinner & 6:45pm - Adults' 6:45pm - Children's 7:30pm - Chancel	8am - Body Works 10am - Bible Study--	8am - Body Works	
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
9:30am - Sunday 10:15am - Chancel 11am - Worship-- 11:15am - Sunday 1pm - Nancy Harper	8am - Body Works	8am - Body Works 1pm - Worship Staff	5pm - Hand Bells 6pm - Dinner & 6:45pm - Adults' 6:45pm - Children's 7:30pm - Chancel	Halloween 8am - Body Works 10am - Bible Study		



Dinner reservations are needed by Monday at noon each week. Please email Melissa Hall at [mhall@mbpcusa.org](mailto:mhall@mbpcusa.org) or contact the church office at 967-5037.

---

November 3, 2019



The "First Sunday" Food Drive is still going strong.

The items to donate November 1 is a box of corn bread or biscuit mix.

Thank you for your continued support!



*Pledge Sunday*  
*October 13*



# Alycolyte Recognition and Commissioning

## Sunday, September 29, 2019

*Ben Brown*  
*Addison Duncan*  
*Avery Faircloth*  
*Ava Garrison*  
*William Kaiser*  
*Savannah Moran*

*Arden Plugge*  
*Miles Plugge*  
*Rushton Robinson*  
*Tripp Robinson*  
*Silas Segars*  
*Neal Wellman*







**Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley**

[www.pslpcusa.org](http://www.pslpcusa.org)

# 2019 Habitat House

**MBPC Volunteer Date is November 2, 2019!**



## Sponsored by

**Mountain Brook Presbyterian Church's  
Benevolence and Mission Endowment Fund  
and other Birmingham Area Churches in the  
Presbytery**

**We need volunteers!** No construction experience is necessary, but you do have to be at least 14 years of age.

If you have not registered as a volunteer at Habitat for Humanity, then:

Go to: [habitatbirmingham.org](http://habitatbirmingham.org). Go to Volunteer, then scroll down to (1) Individual Volunteer Registration, click on Schedule Volunteer Duty. This will send you to a calendar. Then go to Sign Up or Login at the right top of the page. Then you register or login. If you have not registered as a volunteer before, click on Sign up and register as a volunteer. Habitat will want your name and contact information. You will need to agree to Habitat's waiver of liability.

Once you are registered as a volunteer, then go to Login. Login sends you to your My Participation page, then click on the 2019 Presbytery & Parham Family site. This will send you to the calendar for the Presbytery & Parham Family build site. Pick the date you want to volunteer, which is November 2.

Once you are registered as a volunteer, you can go directly to the 2019 Presbytery & Parham Family page by going to: [give.habitatbirmingham.org/ge/Presby](http://give.habitatbirmingham.org/ge/Presby). This will take you straight to the Presbytery & Parham Family page.



**Jasmine and Darius  
Parham**

Jasmine Parham was born in Birmingham. She has 5 siblings- 3 older brothers, 1 older sister and 1 younger sister. She graduated from Huffman High School and earned an associate's degree in Business Management, plus a certificate in Accounting, from Lawson State Community College. She is a Retail Banker at Woodforest Bank.

Jasmine attends Southside CME Church and enjoys drawing, sewing, playing football with her son (Darius), spending time with family, and assisting people.

Darius is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and loves school. His favorite subjects are Math and Social Studies. In 2017 he received a 4<sup>th</sup> Place Award in Math Derby and is studying to be part of Math Derby in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. He is active in Martial Arts and has earned his brown belt. He sings in the choir at church and loves to play football (his favorite sport) and basketball, and video games, and read books.

"Owning my home will change my life," said Jasmine. "It will be one of the biggest tasks and greatest accomplishments. My son and I have prayed for a house; this shows my son that faith and prayers are real, and that working and striving for things come in due time."

"I would like to tell my sponsor that thanking them could never be enough for what they've placed in me and my son's life," said Jasmine. "I am forever sincerely grateful and may God always continue to be a blessing in their life like they have been in mine."

**Build Location:**  
3504 3<sup>rd</sup> Street N.E., Center Point

# Missions and Outreach Committee Update



**Mountain Brook Presbyterian Church** | *Living a Friendly Faith.*



church of the reconciler

a United Methodist congregation with and for the homeless

During the month of October, the Mission and Outreach Committee is sponsoring a clothing drive to support the mission of Church of the Reconciler. This drive is specific to **new men's underwear and socks**. Donated items will be collected in the narthex and then transported to Church of the Reconciler at the end of the drive.

Church of the Reconciler is a multicultural, multiracial United Methodist congregation, which maintains a unique ministry in downtown Birmingham.

[www.churchofthereconciler.com](http://www.churchofthereconciler.com)

FAITH IN GOD \* LOVE FOR THE CITY \* HOPE FOR ALL  
THE PEOPLE

Christ's message is one of love for all people. There's no mention of an entrance exam, income requirements, or dress code in the New Testament. You are loved and accepted by God because you are. And you are accepted at Church of the Reconciler because you are loved by God. Ours is a vision of a congregation that worships together on Sunday and works together during the week to live out God's call for reconciliation.

At Church of the Reconciler, we have a special ministry with the homeless. When Church of the Reconciler opened in 1993, the homeless were enthusiastically welcomed to come in and teach us about their spiritual journey. We continue to learn so much about the Christian faith with the homeless of Birmingham. They are our members and supporters, our brothers and sisters in Christ. Just as Jesus and his first disciples were homeless, many, many faithful Christian believers are homeless. Come to Church of the Reconciler and find out why people are homeless in Birmingham, and how we can change Birmingham so that no one will be homeless in our city.



# PRESBYTERY REFLECTION

By Sheppards and Lapsley Moderator, Susan Clayton

AUGUST 2019

HOST: GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## Highlights of the August Presbytery meeting



The Lord's Supper  
Rev. Cathy Hoop and  
CRE Olympia McCrackin



Anti-racism Team



PSL Musicians Revs  
Yarboro and McLeod



Rev. Patrick Harley  
UKirk Birmingham  
Campus Minister

## God Calls Us Together



The Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley held its regular stated meeting on Thursday, August 15, 2019 at Grace Presbyterian Church in Tuscaloosa, AL. We enjoyed wonderful hospitality all day from the staff and members of Grace and we are deeply grateful!

Moderator Susan Clayton opened the meeting with prayer. Stated Clerk Tom Winter declared that a quorum was present and presbytery adopted the docket for the day. The presbytery welcomed visitors, corresponding members and first time commissioners to the meeting.

The gathered community then joined together in worship which included wonderful musical offerings by the Choir of Grace Presbyterian Church, as well as a sermon by Grace Pastor, Rev. Cathy Hoop. Her sermon was entitled "When the South Wind Blows" and was based on the Scripture passage Luke 12:49-56. The Offering was taken and the proceeds were given 50% to the Commission on Preparation for Ministry for candidates, and the other 50% to the Presbytery's discretionary fund for pastoral care. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was celebrated by Olympia McCrackin and Cathy Hoop, and the congregation received the elements by intinction.



## UA Crossroads Workshop

After worship, the presbytery broke up into two groups to participate in a workshop led by UA Crossroads and hosted by the presbytery's Anti-Racism Team. This workshop of an hour-and-a-half helped us examine our stereotypes and biases around many issues that divide us as human beings: race, ethnicity, religious affiliation, political affiliation, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, language, ability/disability, immigration status and other areas of human difference. Both groups found this workshop illuminating and challenging as we continue the work of facing racism in our presbytery this year.

A delicious lunch prepared by members of Grace Presbyterian Church followed the workshop and nourished us for the remainder of our afternoon's business. The business meeting of presbytery reconvened at 1:30PM with Good News shared by the Presbyterian Home for Children and several of our member churches. There is much wonderful ministry happening in our presbytery!

---

## Presbytery Business



The Executive Council report by Jane Clayton contained only one item of action. Council recommended that Dr. Jay Wilkins, General Presbyter, be honorably retired as of December 31, 2019. Jay made some comments about this next phase in his life and expressed his deep love for the presbytery, his gratitude for the years of service together, and his hope for the faithful future of our presbytery. Jay will remain in the area and have more time to enjoy his family, particularly his grandchildren—there is a new

grandchild on the way! **Reluctantly**, presbytery approved Jay's retirement and thanked him with a standing ovation.

## Ministry Within our Presbytery

### Some highlights of the presbytery meeting include:

Jonathan Yarbboro and Jenny Thagard gave a report for Living River. The summer camping season was a great success at Living River with leaders and participants in all camping experiences reporting a wonderful experience of faith-building on the banks of the Cahaba. The Board of Directors of Living River continues to work on paying off the debt, but has also taken action to meet the reduced income of the camp by laying off all Cahaba Education Center staff, the Food Service Manager, and Jenny Thagard, the Director, has moved to part-time. Much work lies ahead for the presbytery and the Living River Board in trying to get the camp on solid financial footing in 2020. We ask for prayers for the staff, board members and our presbytery as we seek to discern God's will for the future of Living River.





Mark McCormick gave a good report from Stillman College, which greeted its highest number of incoming first year students in many years. Many good things are happening at Stillman. The school continues to need the presbytery's prayers and support.



The Commission on Ministry four ministers for examination to be received into the presbytery. It was a very international group of clergy as we welcomed Rev. Jungkyun Son as Associate Pastor at Korean, Auburn-Opelika; Rev. Daekeun Park as Associate at Korean, Auburn-Opelika; Rev. Young Kim to Anniston-Korean and Rev. Sunelle Stander from the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa to serve as a Chaplain at UAB Hospital. All four examinations were sustained and all four candidates were warmly welcomed into membership in the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley. We pray their ministries will be fruitful and joyful and look forward to their gifts adding to our life together as a presbytery.

Ralls Coston made a report as our Mission Coordinator about the good mission work happening around our presbytery. Of particular interest at the moment is the Habitat for Humanity House that the Birmingham churches will join together to build beginning on September 19.

Patti Winter made the report from the Nominating Committee. Presbytery voted to approve Emily Burt, Young Adult from First Presbyterian Church, Birmingham to the Youth Council, Class of 2020; and George Fritsma to serve an unexpired term on the Presbyterian Home for Children Board of Directors.



Keenan Rogers from the Presbyterian Board of Pensions made a report about some changes and invited us to download an app that would help track our health as part of the BOP.

Belinda Dickinson reported for the Congo Team that there would be a Congo Network meeting in Knoxville in October. She also reported on funds donated so far in memory of Jerry Vandegrift.



Rush Watson reported on behalf of the Presbytery Trustees. Presbytery approved a motion recommending the sale of the former Trinity Presbyterian Church property to The Vine Church of Birmingham. Sale price is \$630,000 with a cash down payment at closing of \$126,000. Closing to be no later than August 26, 2019.

Neil McCarter reported for Equip, Nurture, Connect about upcoming events: the Youth Council retreat on October 12-13 at Living River, the Children's Retreat on January 3-4 at Living River, and the Main Event in February 2020.



The meeting adjourned with prayer.

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Susan Clayton, Moderator*

Yvonne Wells, a member of Brown Memorial, is known as the "quilt lady of Alabama," but her works are known around the world. A self-taught quilter, her works frequently depict Biblical texts or scenes from the civil rights era, particularly highlighting events in Alabama.

The quilt displayed for our Presbytery meeting featured Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and included Rosa Parks' bus ride, the Edmund Pettis bridge crossing in Selma, the stand in the schoolhouse door at UA, the bombing deaths of the four young girls at 16th St. Baptist Church in Birmingham, and many other critical moments. The quilt is a powerful snapshot of the struggle for racial equality in Alabama.



# *Wednesday Night Supper*

*Come pull up a chair and grab a plate!*

Join your friends and neighbors as we begin our  
Wednesday night activities for 2019-20.

Activities start at 5:30 with childcare providers  
monitoring your children as adults get some time  
to socialize before dinner at 6:00.

The dinner will be followed up by a time for  
Biblical thought and reflection with Lant and  
games and indoor activities for children.



# Christian Education



**Our Wednesday night activities this season have been stellar! We have enjoyed seeing so many faces at dinner for good times and comradery. After dinner, we have been splitting the adults and children. The adults go with Pastor Lant and the children learn hands-on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics lessons with Spencer Bissell. We have had two amazing speakers for the adult activity that covered very real world and modern topics. The children have been learning about ideas such as cleansing our hearts with the Holy Spirit through observable chemistry and how the simplest building blocks in our lives can build cool and amazing structures. We hope to see even more of you coming out to join us in the weeks to come!**





# MBPC Preschool Fundraiser 2019

We had a blast at our Wishing Tree fundraiser! Thanks to all who came out and supported MBPC Preschool and made our classroom wishes come true!







On September 14, Pack 320 had a back yard camp out. This was held at the Scout Hut at MBPC.



## Septemeber Session Summary

The regular meeting of the session of Mountain Brook Presbyterian Church was called to order by the moderator, Rev. Lant Davis, on Sunday, September 8, 2019, at 5:00 in the church library with all members in attendance. The opening devotional and prayer were given by Norton Montague.

The agenda was accepted with the addition to the clerk's report of discussion of procedures for the selection of the Pastor Nominating Committee.

Elder responsibilities for devotional and prayer, home communion, and presbytery meeting were reviewed. For the October meeting, Karen Ogle will have the devotional.

Erschine Carmichael reported briefly on the presbytery meeting at Grace Church in Tuscaloosa on August 15, 2019.

On motion duly made and passed, the session voted to have the congregational Nominating Committee solicit nominations for the Pastor Nominating Committee from the congregation and to form a slate from the nominations. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor in a congregational meeting.

After receiving approval from the executive presbyter and the chairman of the committee on ministry of the presbytery, the session agreed by electronic vote that a meeting of the congregation would be called and publicized by Rev. Lant Davis for September, 29, 2019, immediately after worship. The purpose of the meeting will be to elect the Pastor Nominating Committee.

### **Ministry Team Reports** **Stewardship Committee**

Rev. Davis reported that the stewardship campaign will begin on September 22, 2019, and will end on October 13, 2019, pledge Sunday. The theme will be "Devoted to Generosity" and materials from the Ecumenical Stewardship Center, resource for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), will be used.

### **Personnel Committee**

Rev. Davis has subscribed to an online data base maintained by "Church Law and Tax" which will provide helpful information in reviewing our current compensation levels in preparation of the budget for calendar year 2020.



## **Education Committee**

The schedule and plans for Wednesday night activities were presented.

## **Property Committee**

On the recommendation of the Property Committee and on motion duly passed, the session voted to change our HVAC maintenance contract from Robert Puckett Central Heating and Air to Hardy Services, Inc., the base price of which is \$4614.00 annually.

Before the session meeting, the Property Committee recommended that the session authorize Servpro of Birmingham to remediate the mold in the St. Stephen Building for the proposed price of \$2916.00. By subsequent electronic vote, the session accepted this recommendation and authorized payment from the Major Capital Repairs Fund. Work will begin on September 10, 2019.

Carpenter Matt Smith, with help from Dave Kaiser, Spencer Bissell, and Alex Wellman, repaired the front doors of the church on September 7, 2019.

Alan Speaker will research details concerning a possible grant from FEMA that would cover new protection for the stained glass windows as well as upgrades in security within the church buildings after an initial payment of \$6000.00 by Mountain Brook Presbyterian Church for a comprehensive review of both projects.

## **Worship Committee**

The Lord's Supper was served in Sunday worship on September 1, 2019.

Extended communion was served on September 4.

Helen Faught and Sue Wellman have agreed to co-chair the Worship Committee.

## **Mission and Outreach**

The MBPC date for working on the Habitat for Humanity house in Center Point has been set for November 1, 2019. The committee recommended that MBPC participate in a clothing drive specific to men's underwear and socks to benefit the Church of the Reconciler in downtown Birmingham. The motion passed.

## **Preschool Committee**

The amount over the preschool's reserve fund of \$10,000.00 for the academic year 2018-2019 that will be transferred to the church (Outside Budget, account #1-4219) is \$4861.82.

## **Moderator's Report**

Rev. Davis will be out of town from October 14, 2019-October 27, 2019.