



SURROUNDED BY GOD’S FAITHFULNESS

Dr. Kathy Young, Director of Children’s Ministry

Recently, I conducted the first training for this year’s Vacation Bible School youth volunteers. One thing I shared with them, which I hope was just a reminder, was the purpose statement for our children’s ministry. Thirteen years ago, a committee met many times to ascertain the focus of our children’s ministry, and how to reflect and communicate that focus within our various ministry efforts. **“In total reliance upon God’s transforming grace, our purpose is to effectively prepare children for a life of adoration and devotion to the one Triune God.”**

As I reminded our dedicated and faithful teenaged volunteers, everything that we do in children’s ministry is with this statement in mind. When we plan events, we know that it is not from ourselves. *“Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain.”* Psalm 127:1.



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SUNDAY SCHEDULE AT FPC

Sunday School, 9:30 a.m.
Morning Worship, 10:45 a.m.
Evening Worship, 6:00 p.m.

All worship services are available online!
livestream.com/fpc-tv
facebook.com/fpchattiesburg

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This ministry is not by one person, a small group of people, or even a large group of volunteers. We, as members of First Presbyterian Church, all share in the preparation of our children. This may be done through teaching in a classroom, rocking babies in the nursery, bringing food for Vacation Bible School, or through supporting in various ways, especially in prayer for our little ones. *For what are we all preparing them?* We want our children from their earliest days to adore and become steadily and further devoted to our God. Our amazing one Triune God formed each of our children and knows them by name. May they each respond to his loving kindness with awe, wonder, and lifetime devotion!

Soon this school year will end. We also reflect on a children's ministry year not ending but rather starting all over again. June—Vacation Bible School. July—Waterslide night. August—*Creation*

Exploration and the beginning of *Wonder Nights*. September—the *4 Corners Café* resumes. October—*Reformation Celebration*. November—*Operation Christmas Child Packing Party*. December—Christmas parties. January—*On the Rock Retreat* for 5th and 6th graders. February—Children's Missions Conference. March brings spring break. April—Easter celebrations. May—*Rally Night*. All year long—Sunday School. Children's Church. Education, fellowship, joyful activity. **Everything (good or hard) intended for our reliance on grace for preparation of children to adore and be devoted to God!**

On the evening of May 7, we have the opportunity to gather and celebrate the Lord's faithfulness to us through growing his kingdom right here in the hearts of our children. **Please join us to praise God for this graciousness!** Our children will sing. We will sing with them. Our children will recite God's truths. We will rejoice in that truth. We will hear highlights of ways their hearts are being drawn closer to Him. Our hearts will also be drawn closer as we consider their growth. This service is for our whole congregation, because together we are part of this church family. As Josh Adair said recently, "From womb to tomb." I think that covers us all.

And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the LORD, "For he is good, his steadfast love endures forever toward Israel." And all the people shouted with a great shout when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. Ezra 3:11 ESV



WOMEN'S MINISTRY NEWS

Sara Robertson, Women's Ministry President

If you are 21 years old or older, female, and a member of this church, then congratulations! **You're in the Women's Ministry!** What are we, and what do we do? We are female members of this church who want to minister to each other, the larger congregation, and God's church in all the ways and gifts He gave us to serve. We are multi-generational. We have young women, and...."wiser" women. We have new members to First Presbyterian and third generation members who went to Sunday School in our church. Our theme verse for the last three years has been our prayer, as a Women's Council, for what we do in this ministry...

"And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers...and all who believed were together and had all things in common."

Acts 2:42, 44

We have many smaller committees and representatives in each who give a report once a month on how things are going. We have ministry committees called Baby Blanket, Sanctuary Care, Kitchen, Food/Meals, Flower Arrangements, Visitations, Missions, Christian Higher Education, and Social Activities, to name a few. We have a Council, consisting of our officers who meet once a month to review our budget, discuss new and old business, and report on the latest happenings in our ministry.



One of our biggest activities is Bible Study. We have multiple studies at varying times... Thursday morning weekly, a quarterly study, and Wednesday evening times to get together and study God's Word together. We have a Christian Education Coordinator who plans these studies with the help of the larger Christian Ed committee and Session approval.



Our biggest fellowship of the year is quickly approaching, May 3rd, where we welcome the new members from the year. Traditionally called the Scripture Dinner, the past few years we've taken a spin on the fellowship to include a vintage fashion show with our church youth, and this year, a vintage wedding reception, where our youth girls will model the wedding dresses worn from our own church women pre-1980! It is a lovely time of fellowship, with a devotion time, and praising the Lord.

If you are interested in using your gifts in this important ministry, we'd love to have you and the specific gifts God gave you! Contact Sara Robertson for more information at 601-201-6315...and be sure to grab one of the yellow yearbooks that include contact information for our members, important days, and all the ways you can be involved.



UPCOMING EVENTS

- Wednesday, May 3 **Women's Ministry Fellowship: A Vintage Wedding Reception**, 5 p.m., Taylor Hall
- Sunday, May 7 **Baccalaureate Service** honoring graduating high school seniors during morning worship, 10:45 a.m., Sanctuary
- Children's Ministry Rally Night**, 6 p.m., Sanctuary
- Monday, May 8 **PCS Choral Concert and Art Show**, 6:30 p.m., Sanctuary/Taylor Hall
- Tuesday, May 16 **Joyful Senior Adults Lunch and Program**, 12 p.m., Taylor Hall
- Monday, May 29 Church office closed for **Memorial Day** holiday



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Copies of this month's **Tabletalk** magazine from Ligonier Ministries are available at the Book Nook in Stanway Hall!

"Tabletalk magazine exists to help establish us in the Word to deepen our understanding of God and apply this knowledge to our daily living."
 — R. C. Sproul

STEWARDSHIP UPDATE	
Year-to-date through March 31, 2023	
General Fund Income	\$357,253
Expenses	<u>577,237</u>
	(219,984)
Mortgage line of credit balance at 3/31/23	\$478,962