

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
and grace my fears relieved;
how precious did that grace appear
the hour I first believed!

John Newton, 1779

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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

WONDER

Darwin Jordan, Interim Senior Minister

The Psalmist writes, *There is forgiveness with you that you may be feared* (Ps. 130:4). Wait, fear *because* of being forgiven? But John writes the opposite, *There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love* (1 Jn 4:18). John says if we fear final punishment, we don't grasp God's forgiveness and love. Psalmist: forgiveness creates fear. John: forgiveness drives away fear. What?

The hymn, "Amazing Grace," helps us: *'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved.* Grace relieves my fears of punishment as grace teaches me the wonder of a God so kind and gracious. When I experience the relief and hope of his grace, I begin my new career of awe and wonder. Grace teaches my heart to fear.

Then grace is the doorway into wonder over all that God is as glorious Creator, Ruler, Provider and Rescuer. And in the New Testament our wonder bursts forth from what God has done for us in Christ. Paul says, *The love of Christ controls us* (2 Cor 5:14). Other translations: "compels us," "moves us," "has hold of us."

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I think Psalm 130:4 and 2 Corinthians 5:14 are saying the same thing. His forgiveness and love create a wonder that gets hold of us and moves us. In all my preaching, I am seeking to bring about wonder and awe in God, wonder over his momentous and far-reaching salvation, wonder over his humility and sacrifice, wonder over his creativity and power in creation, wonder over his generosity, his faithfulness, his coming judgment.

We were made to be in awe of God; otherwise we are like fish flopping on the bank. We must live in the water of wonder. *The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life* (Prov. 14.27). Dear believer, cultivate wonder in God. Capture more time to admire and enjoy him, to treasure and adore him. Enrich your days with wonder and awe over all that God is and all that God does. *Continue in the fear of the Lord all the day* (Prov. 23.17).



IN THE BOOK NOOK

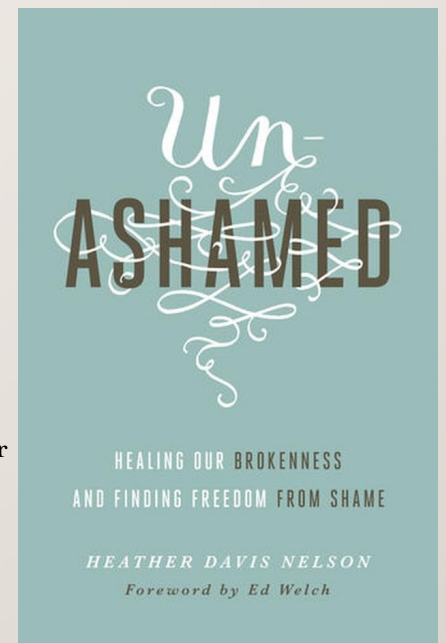
Josh Adair, Minister of Discipleship

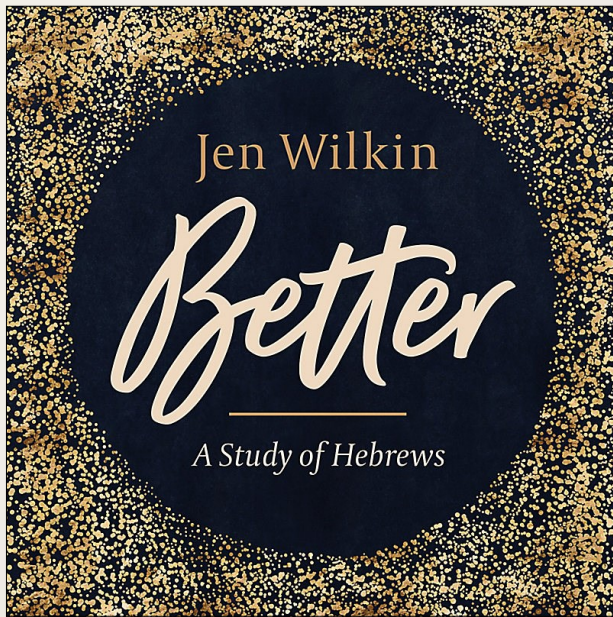
Have you ever felt a nagging sense that, no matter how hard you try, your best efforts at life just aren't good enough? Or have you ever struggled with feeling easily embarrassed among friends though you know they love you for who you are? Have you ever felt dread over being perceived as weak, a failure, or unworthy in the eyes of people you love? I would like to suggest this all too common experience is a phenomenon more familiarly called 'shame'. But if it really is this common of an experience, why is 'shame' so hard of a topic to discuss? **Who would want to go first at taking a stab at an answer?**

Part of the problem of talking about shame can be alleviated by finding a helpful interpreter. Scripture clearly and often speaks to shame. Before the fall, Adam and Eve were 'naked and unashamed'. After it they had to live life covered up and cast out of God's presence in the Garden. Think about how many Psalms beg God not to let his people be 'ashamed'. It's one thing to see how Scripture addresses shame, but another thing entirely to grasp the heart of God who has acted to clothe us with his love by *covering* our shame. One helpful conversation partner I would like to share with you (found in the Book Nook this month) is Heather Davis Nelson's book *Unashamed*.

Unashamed is a resource that places a gentle finger on how the gospel helps us personally and corporately deal with shame. In her book, Nelson first identifies how the Bible's vision for a community meets us in the struggle with shame we all experience. Second, Nelson outlines the varieties of shame occurring in our relationships. Third, she outlines the places shame is commonly experienced in our lives (Marriage, Parenting, and Church). Throughout its pages *Unashamed* blends a pathway to spiritual healing over shame informed by modern shame research and sensitive to the Gospel's solution for it: a Savior who delights in his people by "enduring the cross, despising the shame" (Heb. 12:1-2).

Each chapter offers helpful questions for reflection to help connect how shame is in your own life. The book also casts a vision for how church communities can serve the role of being the safest places to discuss this difficult topic because of our Beautiful Savior. So wherever you find yourself on the 'shame' struggle bus, I Invite you to consider how the Gospel can help deliver us and our community from its awful effects by picking up a copy to read today.





WOMEN'S MINISTRY BIBLE STUDY

Bridgett Aehnlich, Christian Growth Chair

The Women's Ministry Fall Bible Study beginning in September will be "Better—A Study of Hebrews" by Jen Wilkin. The study will begin on Wednesday night, September 13, at 6:30 p.m. in the Parlor and Thursday morning, September 14, at 9:00 a.m. in Taylor Hall. Please note new start time for the Thursday morning study.

"Better" explores the book of Hebrews verse-by-verse, where you will discover through Paul's letters that scripture points to Christ as the new and better covenant for us to have access to God. This 10-session study offers a way for you to grow in your understanding of who Christ is and the hope of the new covenant.

Books are available for purchase outside Taylor Hall before Sunday school and between Sunday school and worship service. Books are \$17 each and are also available on Wednesday nights in the gym during supper.

Registration can be completed online using the QR code or when purchasing your book at the table during the times listed above.



If you have any questions please contact Bridgett Aehnlich at 228-297-8683.

FPC'S JOY (JESUS, OTHERS, YOURSELF) MISSION: OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Lacretta Shurden and Debera Shaw, OCC Co-Chairs

Three Phases of Operation:

- Pray—for all children & families
- Prepare—purchase shoebox items
- Pack—mid-November (details later)

Suggested items to fill shoeboxes:

Bar soaps
Toothbrushes (soft)
Wash cloths
Socks—boys/girls (ages 2-14)
Crayons, markers, pencils (sharpeners and bags), colored pencils, pens
Coloring books, journals, flexible composition books
Deflated soccer balls with pumps and small balls
Small toys—cars, yo-yo's, harmonicas, jump ropes, dolls, stuffed animals
Shoes—tennis shoes, sandals, flip flops
Clothes—T shirts, shorts, shirts, pants [boys/girls (ages 2-14)]
Flashlights with batteries, solar calculators, small radios with batteries
Hairbrushes and combs, hair accessories, small purses

Please remember that no food products, toothpaste, or any type of liquids can be included in a shoebox. Two displays are currently set up in the hallways on each side of the sanctuary. Containers are available to receive your items for the shoeboxes. Periodically, we will be supplying a few more details about specific dates and times and shipping costs.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact one of us; leave a voicemail if we are unavailable at the time. Lacretta Shurden. (601-577-0901) or Debera Shaw. (662-871-6020)

Our faith has grown because of OCC. God is clear in so many Scriptures that when we provide for others (like these little ones), we do it as unto Him. He loves children so.

With joy, we thank you for all your support!!





FALL INQUIRERS CLASS
FRIDAY-SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22-23

If you are interested in becoming a member of First Presbyterian Church, register now for the Inquirers Class! The fall class will be a weekend format (Friday evening and Saturday morning), with childcare available upon request.

Contact Pastor Darwin or Pastor Knox
(601-606-4053 or knoxbaired@fpchattiesburg.org)
for more information.



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4 CORNERS CAFÉ RETURNS SEPTEMBER 10

Kathy Young, Director of Children's Ministry

Soon, we will begin our 13th season of the 4 Corners Café! This year we will once again “travel” around the world, learning about people, traditions, food and art.

Most importantly, we will learn about the work of God's people as they share the Gospel in word and deed, and we will praise God for bringing people from every tribe and nation into His family!

If your child has never been to the 4 Corners Café, we meet on Sunday nights after the first part of the

evening worship service. This is for children in 4K through 4th grade classes. We need our 5th and 6th graders for helpers, and we welcome adult volunteers as available.

If you have any questions, please contact Kathy.

