



First Presbyterian News – August/Sept 2019

“Our vision is to live and share the ministry of reconciliation in Clarksdale, in Mississippi, and around the world.” (2 Corinthians 5:18-19)

A word from Pastor Ryan,

This school year marks a milestone for my family. All three of our kids will be in school for the full day, with Olivia beginning Kindergarten, Levi in 3rd grade, and Evan a big-time 5th grader. This means we don't have babies any longer, which triggers mixed feelings in Leslie and me. As I have visited the many new babies born into our church over the past few months, I've been reminded of the sweet joys of having "littles". But also, if I'm honest, I've been reminded of the chaos, the sleeplessness, and the hanging-on-for-dear-life typical of those early years. It makes me thankful for this stage, when our kids are relatively independent, even as I remember fondly (and selectively) earlier stages. As Paul teaches us, we can "give thanks in all circumstances"—for each stage brings with it unique reasons for thankfulness.

I am thankful to have served the Lord among you for (coming on) 3 years and look with great hope for the days ahead we have to share. I'll be finishing up my summer preaching series on the disciplines of the Christian life by Labor Day and beginning a new series through the Old Testament book of Daniel that I'm calling "Living Faithfully in Exile." I've preached through the book before and can say that no other series of sermons I've preached has made more of a lasting impact on my life than these.

Also, the Outreach Team has designated Aug. 25 as TFA Sunday, when we will extend special hospitality to TFAs, MTCs, and Reclaimed teachers. They will be honored in Worship and join us for a fellowship meal thereafter. As a part of this, these young adults will be offered the opportunity to be "adopted" by a family or individual in our church. Adoptive "parents" will take responsibility to reach out, show hospitality, and pray for a particular teacher. Please consider whether you might be put on the list to serve in this way.

continued

MORE OF PASTOR RYAN’S LETTER

If you aren’t involved in a bible study or Sunday School class, this new school year is a great time to jump in. Be looking out for an updated “Ways to Grow” card in the next month. In particular, I am praying that the Lord would be pleased this school year to bless us with growth in our children’s Sunday School ministry. Laying a biblical foundation for children, both our own and others, should be of vital to importance to all parents, grandparents, and to the church as a whole. I pray that you would catch a vision for this and do everything your can to make your children and grandchildren’s attendance at Sunday School (and Worship) a matter of first priority.

Please let me know how I can serve and pray for you.

Ryan

WORSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

AUGUST

- Sunday, Aug. 11 – Worship @ 11:00, Ryan Dean
Sermon Text: Matthew 9:14-17
Communion
Sunday, Aug. 18 – Worship @ 11:00, Ryan Dean
Sermon Text: Psalm 73:1-28
Sunday, Aug. 25 – Worship @ 11:00, Ryan Dean
Sermon Text: Ephesians 4:7-16

SEPTEMBER

- Sunday, Sept. 01 – Worship @ 11:00, Ryan Dean
Sermon Text: 2 Cor. 9:6-15
Communion
Sunday, Sept. 08 – Worship @ 11:00, Ryan Dean
Sermon Text: Daniel 1
Sunday, Sept. 15 – Worship @ 11:00, Ryan Dean
Sermon Text: Daniel 2
Sunday, Sept. 22 – Worship @ 11:00, Ryan Dean
Sermon Text: Daniel 3
Sunday, Sept. 29 – Worship @ 11:00, Ryan Dean
Sermon Text: Daniel 4

NEW SERMON SERIES BEGINNING SEPT. 8

DANIEL



LIVING FAITHFULLY IN EXILE

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

Van Williams	8/02
Bridgette Walton	8/03
Joey Young	8/03
Rich Weiss	8/04
Crawford Jackson	8/04
Terry Smith	8/07
Betty Porter	8/08
Dan Shannon	8/10
Wynne Spinks	8/10
Ricky Weiss	8/15
Beverly Grant	8/19
Jennifer Walton	8/20
Mary Beth Fyfe	8/21
Dudley Barnes	8/24
Aidan Byrd	8/25
Edna Gleason	8/25
Amanda Claire Campos	8/27
Gerry Grant	8/30

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Brook Hodges	9/03
Willis Frazer, Jr.	9/04
Marilyn Gibbs	9/04
Carolyn Davis	9/05
Olivia Smith	9/07
B Bass, V	9/08
Laura Murphy	9/12
Jackson Spinks	9/12
Ally Risner	9/12
Libby Peay	9/15
Daniel Myrick	9/17
Loflin Falls	9/23
Davis Carr, Jr.	9/23
Leah Draper	9/25
Mark Noland	9/25
Kacy Allen Risner	9/28
Linda Hood	9/28
Claire Drew	9/30
John Stoltman	9/30

WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS!



Daniel and Kendall Myrick live in Marks, where they serve with the Reclaimed Project. Daniel is originally from Brandon, MS, where he grew up at Pinelake Church. Kendall is from Hernando, where her dad was the planting pastor of Christ Covenant Church (PCA). They met as students at Ole Miss and were married in July of 2018.



Parker Abney is a native Clarksdalian, graduate of Griot and Clarksdale High (class of '19). He was nurtured in Christ and made a profession of faith at New Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church. He works at the Clarksdale Collegiate Charter School. His mother, Miss Phyllis Brown, and other members of his family are also regular attenders of worship at FPC.



Cody McLain grew up in Clarksdale and came to faith in Christ as a teenager through the ministry of Clarksdale Baptist Church. He works in the family business, helping run Hood's Pit Stop on Friars Point Road. He is married to Anna Catherine, who was a member of FPC before him.

AUGUST

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 Thursday Bible Study - 7:00am @ Rest Haven	2 Care Station – 8:45 Emily Cooper Lois McMurchy	3
4 Sunday School - 9:45 Worship – 11:00 Communion	5 PDS SCHOOL BOARD MEETING 5:30 pm	6	7 Young Women’s Study 10:30 am PDS FIRST ½ DAY OF SCHOOL	8 Thursday Bible Study - 7:00am @ Rest Haven PDS FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL	9 Care Station – 8:45 Need Volunteers!	10
11 Sunday School - 9:45 Worship - 11:00	12	13	14	15 Thursday Bible Study - 7:00am @ Rest Haven	16 Care Station - 8:45 Carolyn Davis	17
18 Sunday School - 9:45 Worship – 11:00 Worship Committee meeting after worship Children & Youth Committee Meeting - 4:00 pm	19 Deacons’ Meeting 6:00 pm.	20 Session Meeting 5:30 pm	21	22 Thursday Bible Study - 7:00am @ Rest Haven	23 Care Station – 8:45 Margaret Johnson	24
25 Sunday School-9:45 Worship – 11:00 TFA Luncheon after Worship	26 WIC COUNCIL MEETING FOR SEPT. – 9:30 am	27	28 Outreach Committee Meeting	29 Thursday Bible Study - 7:00am @ Rest Haven	30 Care Station – 8:45 Emily Cooper Lois McMurchy	31

SEPTEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Sunday School- 9:45 Worship – 11:00 Communion	2 LABOR DAY NO SCHOOL	3	4 Young Women's Study 10:30 am	5 Thursday Bible Study - 7:00am @ Rest Haven INDEPENDENCE DAY	6 Care Station – 8:45 Emily Cooper Lois McMurchy	7
8 FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST Sunday School-9:45 Worship – 11:00	9	10 Deacons' Meeting 6:00 pm. PARENTING SEMINAR 6:00 P.M.	11 Young Women's Study 10:30 am	12 Thursday Bible Study – 7:00am @ Rest Haven	13 Care Station – 8:45 Need Volunteers	14
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CHURCH ACTIVITIES



2019 PCA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Hilton Anatole in Dallas, June 25-28

Assemble | Pray | Worship | Volunteer
WWW.PCAAC.ORG/GENERAL-ASSEMBLY/



GENERAL ASSEMBLY REPORT

The General Assembly (GA) of our denomination, the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), gathered in Dallas, Texas on June 25-28. I, (Pastor Ryan) attended as a Teaching Elder commissioner; Willis Frazier attended as a Ruling Elder commissioner. In attendance were 1,614 of our closest friends, also serving as commissioners.

For those unfamiliar with our denomination's system of government, there are three "courts" in the PCA: the local church Session, the Presbytery (elder representatives from churches in a geographical area), and the General Assembly (representatives from Sessions and Presbyteries throughout the PCA). Our Session meets monthly; Covenant Presbytery (encompassing churches in N.M.S, W.TN, and E.AR) meets 3x annually; General Assembly, once a year. At GA, we have debates and render decisions that shape the direction and ministry of our little sub-group of Christ's church.

GA reminded me of why I love the PCA and am grateful to God to serve Him in it. Here's some things came to mind:

- **Diversity.** We come from all parts of America and the world: rural, urban, suburban, those serving on college campuses, missionaries from Europe, South America, Asia, the Middle East. Increasingly, ours is a denomination of racial and ethnic diversity. Although the vast majority are white, I have seen an increasing number black and brown commissioners in the nearly 10 years I've been attending.
- **Unity.** All leaders in the PCA take vows professing their embrace of the inerrancy and inspiration of Scripture and the Westminster Standards as a faithful summary of the Bible's teaching (ask me if you want to know more this). Unlike many other denominations, we need not wonder where our sister churches and their pastors and elders stand on the fundamentals of the faith.

- **Graciousness.** Of course, unity doesn't mean that we all hold exactly the same view on the minutia of our faith and doctrine. The PCA is by design that aims to be a "big tent" for those holding Presbyterian and Reformed convictions. This means we don't require exact conformity on secondary issues, but allow for differences of opinion on non-essential matters. This means that we will have honest disagreements, disagreements that lead us to debate fiercely certain issues. This summer's assembly was no exception to this. Yet I felt that even in the more contentious moments, we handled one another in an honorable way—contending for our sincerely-held positions while not making secondary things ultimate.

Here are some of the more consequential issues before GA:

- An "Overture" (a request from a Presbytery for the GA to take a particular action) was made to withdraw the PCA from membership in the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE). The Overture (#23) was motivated by a concern that membership in the NAE ties us with its advocacy of certain political causes. Ultimately, it was decided that we remain. Although we may not agree with everything the NAE does, our membership is an important way we magnify the voice of Bible-believing Christians in our country.
- Overture 7, *to form a committee to study and report on the problem of sexual abuse and domestic assault*, was approved. In light of ongoing revelations about the prevalence of such things, even in the Church, this committee will advise us on how to make our churches safe havens for the vulnerable and hostile places for predators.
- Overture 4 dealt with the commending to our churches the Nashville Statement on biblical sexuality as a biblically faithful statement. The Nashville Statement, produced in 2017 by the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, is a statement consisting of 14 affirmations and denials meant to lay out and defend the Bible's teaching on gender, marriage, and sexuality. I don't need to tell you the importance in our day for Christians to think clearly on these issues. We voted to approve the Overture to commend it, and I would commend it to you.
- We approved Overture 42 to establish a study committee on human sexuality, with particular attention to the issues of homosexuality, same-sex attraction, and transgenderism. Note that this committee is not in the least re-considering orthodox, historic Christian doctrine on these matters, but rather advising churches and individual believers on how to faithfully and compassionately bear witness to the the eternal truth of the Word in our culture of deep sexual confusion.

On a different note altogether, Leslie and the kids were able to join me in Dallas, so a trip that would have been all work had an element of fun! We visited "Mecca" aka Waco, home of the Gaines of "Fixer Upper" fame, and our hotel had a legitimate water park, which occupied the kids quite well during the days. I'm thankful for these times with my family and for being able to serve in a denomination like the PCA.



First Presbyterian Church
900 West Second Street
Clarksdale, MS 38614



Understanding your child's needs.

Parenting Seminar

featuring

Dr. John L. Cox

Tuesday, September 10, 2019 • 6:00PM
First Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall
944 Catalpa Street • Clarksdale, MS



Parents want to meet their children's needs. But what exactly is it they need? Depending on what book you read (or what internet blog) parents can be bombarded with theories about the basic needs of children. John Cox, a clinical psychologist from Jackson, brings us a simple straight forward model for understanding your child's needs. What do kids need in order to grow up happy and healthy? And what do we do when we drop the ball? Dr. Cox will provide us with practical, "hands on" advice for disciplining kids, effectively communicating with them and helping them when they struggle.

PDS
Presbyterian Day School



First Presbyterian Church
CLARKSDALE, MISSISSIPPI

