



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Shelbyville, TN.



Sunday, February 28, 2021
Second Sunday in Lent

Dear Friends,

May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all!

I trust this email letter finds you all well.

Wasn't last week's ice/snowstorm something? I haven't experienced something like that since the "Snowpocalypse" that shut Birmingham, AL. down back in 2014 for several days and caused many folks all manner of grief.

As I have been commuting back and forth from my rental to the church this week, I have been amazed by how many branches and trees were either damaged or destroyed by the snow and ice.

It got me to thinking about how the weight of the burden on the some of the trees simply exposed a weakness that was already there but not visibly apparent or how in some cases a healthy tree just couldn't bear the burden placed upon it.

It was a short leap to think how the same often happens to human beings when life's heavy load weighs down on us. Like the trees I see all along the road, we humans often break under the stresses and strains these extra burdens life often place on us. We have sure had our share of those over the past year-plus.

I hear story after story how the stresses and strains on our fellow citizens have pushed them to the breaking point. Some have broken under the strain and taken their own lives. It is so sad, and it didn't have to be this way.

Some of us may have lost branches from our family trees in recent months as loved ones succumbed to this relentless and deadly virus. But the tree still stands as does evidence of our loved ones who were once a visibly part of our family trees.

They live on in us and the generations they have helped spawn and the lives they touched along the way. We keep their memories live in the stories we share about them and the times we spent with them. They will continue to live on in our memories and in our very DNA.

But there is one significant difference between the brokenness of the tress around us and our own brokenness. Our brokenness can be healed. And, that my friends, is the promise of the Gospel and stands at the heart of the Easter message.

In time we do heal, and life moves on. Our loved ones would want us to move on. They would want us to continue to grow into the kind of person God intended us to be when He first spoke our names and not be weighted down by the past but be informed by it now and in the future.

Continued on Page 2

The same can also be said of our nation. We are a broken nation. But brokenness is not the last word. God promises that healing, restoration, and reconciliation will have the say word, my friends. That is the promise of God so lovingly revealed by Christ's empty tomb on Easter morning.

The storms of life will continue to batter, bruise, and at times break us. But they will never defeat us whether it is in this life or in death because nothing, absolutely nothing can separate us from the healing, restoring power of God's great love. I find great comfort in knowing this, even as I feel weighted down by the burdens life often rains down upon us.

Know that you are loved by God with a love that knows no bounds and binds up all wounds, great and small. I think that's pretty cool and I do find comfort in this promise even in the midst of life's pressures and burdens.

Grace and Peace,
Taylor

LOOKING AHEAD

Good things come to those who wait! You have waited long enough. Beginning Monday, March 1st FPC church activities will return to in-person meetings and worship. This is welcomed news indeed.

The protocols we had in place before we suspend in-person gatherings will still be in effect. We will require folks to wear masks, observe social distancing, you are encouraged to use the hand sanitizer we have made available for your use, and we will still not have a choir nor will we be singing hymns.

Children's Church will also resume on the March 7th.

I look forward to the day when we can once again "make a joyful noise unto the Lord and "come into His presence with singing." But this is not the time. I know we all look forward to the day when we can fully worship as we once worshiped.

We will continue to livestream the worship service on Sundays even when we are back to "normal." Whatever that looks like, and whenever that might be. So, keep ahold of your patience. As for fellowship dinners and other activities that bring us all together, we will have to wait a little longer on those as well.

Committees and other small group activities will be able to meet in person if they choose to do so. I know some committees like meeting by Zoom and they are welcome to continue to do so.

Speaking of committee meetings:

Faith and Development Committee will meet via Zoom this Tuesday, March 2nd at 5:30PM

Worship and Music Committee will meet Wednesday, March 3rd at 5:30PM.

Committee members will be getting an email notice as to whether we plan to meet in person or continue meeting via Zoom, so watch your email accounts for our notification.

Finally, our monthly newsletter Anchor Links will be coming out next week. If you have something you want Shirley to include in this month's edition you better get it in quick. Time is drawing neigh. Consider this your "two-minute" warning.

I hope you have all had a good week and have enjoyed this beautiful weather. It's God's way of telling us better days are ahead. I firmly believe that. Take care. Stay safe. Be smart. And show God's love to others.

Grace and Peace,
Taylor

SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY~SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2021

Second Sunday in Lent

Welcome and Announcements

Faith and Development Committee Zoom meeting – Tuesday 5:30PM

Worship and Music Committee meeting – Wednesday 5:30PM

In-person worship resumes Sunday, March 7th, 10:00AM (Previous protocols in effect: masks, social distancing, no singing, use hand sanitizer.)

March Anchor Links monthly newsletter coming out this week.

Prelude

Billie Crowell

Responsive Call to Worship

Psalm 100

Leader: Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth.

People: Worship the Lord with gladness; come into God's presence with singing.

Leader: Know that the Lord is God. God has made us, and we are His; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture.

People: Go through the gates with thanksgiving, and into the courts with praise. Give thanks and bless God's holy name.

Leader: God is good; His steadfast love endures forever, and His faithfulness to all generations.

People: Come, let us worship God.

Prayer of Preparation

O God, light of the minds that know You, life of the souls that love You, strength of the thoughts that seek You: Help us so to know You that we may truly love You, so to love You that we may fully serve You, whose service is perfect freedom; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Call to Confession

O Lord, You have searched me. You know when I sit and when I rise; You perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; You are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue You know it completely, O Lord.

In the light of God's complete knowledge of our thoughts and actions, let us confess our sins before God and one another.

Unison Prayer of Confession

Merciful God, we confess that we have not been sincere Christians. We claim to follow Jesus, but we have not taken his path of sacrificial love. We profess to be disciples, but we are not willing to bear the cost of discipleship. We affirm the virtue of self-denial, but we indulge our selfish desires and seek earthly gain. Forgive us, we pray. Free us for sincere repentance through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Hear the good news: God deems as righteous all who trust that Jesus has been raised from the dead for our salvation. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven. Amen.

Gloria Patri

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be world without end. Amen. Amen.

Passing of the Peace

Minister: May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

Minister: Please share the peace of Christ with those around you.

Time for Children

Kate Canady

Prayer for Illumination

Gracious God, Your Word surprises, challenges, upsets, and overturns our way of seeing and thinking. Come and find us today wherever we are, however, we are. By the power of Your Holy Spirit cause that which is withering in us to blossom and that which is exacting in us to broaden until we see as You see, and thereby glimpse the kingdom You are bringing. In Christ's name we pray and hope. Amen.

Scripture

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16 and Mark 8:31-38

Sermon

"Chronicles of the Covenant"

Rev. Dr. Taylor Todd

Music

Billie Crowell

Profession of Faith

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father almighty. From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed, be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil: For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Doxology

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him all creatures here below; Praise Him above, ye heavenly host; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication

Almighty God, we thank You for the covenant You established with Abraham and Sarah, which You have opened to us through Jesus the Christ our Lord. Accept these offerings with the dedication of our lives, that we may be for the world a sign of Your abiding love and a testament to Your enduring promise. In Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory are Yours, Almighty God, now and forever. Amen.

Charge and Blessing

Disciples of Jesus do not shun the way of the cross but follow wherever our Lord may lead. And may the blessings of God, our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, uphold you on the way.

Amen.

Postlude

Billie Crowell



- **Sunday, February 28th** ~ 9:30am ~ Children's Church via Zoom
- **Sunday, February 28th** ~ 10:00am ~ Worship livestream on FaceBook
- **Sunday, February 28th** ~ 6:00pm ~ Youth via Zoom
- **Tuesday, March 2** ~ 5:30pm ~ Faith & Development via Zoom
- **Wednesday, March 3** ~ 5:30pm ~ Worship & Music
- **Friday, March 5th** ~ 11am ~ Never Rest Park dependent on the weather or at First Presbyterian Church in the Fellowship Hall, discussing **"The Perfect Horse"**.
- **Word Day of Prayer** ~ Pray for our Nation and all of God's creation.
- **Sunday, March 7th** ~ In-person Worship at 10:00am. In-person worship resumes Sunday, March 7th, 10:00AM (Previous protocols in effect: masks, social distancing, no singing, use hand sanitizer.)
- **March Anchor Links monthly newsletter coming out this week**
- **Tuesday, March 9th** ~ Night Circle at 6:00pm in the Russell Classroom. **Lesson 4-I am the Good Shepherd** in our book **I Am-Discovering Who Jesus Is**.
- **Sunday, March 14th** ~ Blessing of your food donations for Good Samaritan.
- **Monday, March 15th** ~ Session Meeting at 5:30pm.
- **Backpacks** ~ Information forthcoming.

PRAYERS FOR CONCERN

Doris Cochrane (Friend of Rev. Dr. Taylor Todd)

Matthew Croson (Nephew of Charlotte Williams)

Evelyn Davidson (Member)

Bob & Alice Durio (Members)

Pat Edmiston (Friend of Christy Jensen)

Ed & Elaine Holcombe (Members)

Carolyn Matussek (Member)

Gail Parsons (Member)

Those in Military Service:

LT Andy Canady (Member)

Airman Chase Blanton (Member)

Those who are suffering physical, mentally, and spiritually.

In Loving Memory Of

Sarah Milholen Mason passed away peacefully in her sleep on Thursday, February 11, 2021. A private interment will be in Willow Mount Cemetery, Shelbyville, Tennessee.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made in Sarah's memory to your favorite charity. On November 12, 2016 she married Kenneth R. Mason. Ken's mailing address: 9707 Georgetown Road #1523, Bethesda, MD 20814

Feldhaus Memorial Chapel is assisting the family with the arrangements.

SARAH MILHOLEN MASON
for Memorial Fund



Romans 5:28

God shows His great love for us in this way: Christ died for us while we were still sinners.

The Strength of God's Love

"That's your sin I'm feeling. That's your death I'm dying. That's your resurrection I'm living. That's how much I love you."

Grace for the Moment by Max Lucado