

# The Springs

Where The Thirsty Find Life

July 12, 2023

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*"If possible, as far as it depends upon you, be at peace with all men."*

*Romans 12:18*

From June 27<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup>, clergy & laity from across Mississippi gathered for the Mississippi Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. It is a time I usually look forward to, but not so much this year; I was nervous heading into it. The shadow of disaffiliation & separation hung over the conference, and I was expecting some unwelcome drama. On Tuesday, in our clergy session, we approved a report that listed some 100 pastors who had chosen to leave the denomination. On Wednesday, we approved the disaffiliation process for 189 churches. That's around 20% of our churches and 15% of our clergy. It is sobering to think about.

When I sat in the clergy session, I was dreading the vote of the report about pastors who were leaving-the part of getting to voting on clergy that had turned in their credentials or were leaving as local pastors. I had heard anecdotally from other annual conferences in which the dialogue & language had become heated & rancorous. But none of that materialized, and for that I give thanks to God for the leadership of our bishop Sharma Lewis. After the vote, she invited us into a time of prayer. She asked that all the clergy who were departing to stand; I believe several dozen stood up. She then asked the rest of us to walk over to the nearest person standing and lay our hands upon their shoulders; she encouraged us to pray for them, their churches, and their ministry as they followed their discernment of God's call. As I was standing there with my hand on the shoulder of another shepherd of God's flock & silently praying for him, tears began to form in my eyes. It was all I could do to keep from crying. I have no idea where this emotion came from (and even right now as I type this, my eyes are filling up with tears). It was a moment filled with the love, grace, and peace of Jesus Christ. It melted away all the fears that had been welling up in me prior to conference.

As we navigate this difficult time, I implore you to remember the words of Paul from Romans chapter 12 above: "If possible, as far as it depends upon you, leave at peace with one another." During this difficult time, it is essential that we live out the peace that Christ gives us and calls us into so that the world may see. The first church I served, St. Matthew's in Madison, is currently going through the discernment process. On Sunday, their pastor (who is a friend of mine), addressed some heated arguments that had spilled out into public view in Facebook. I watched part of his sermon, and there was a singular moment that struck me. He said "The devil doesn't win when we have disagreements. The devil only wins when we hate each other. And Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil." This is a hard time in the life of our church and the United Methodist Church. My pray for all of us is this: in the midst of disagreement, disappointment, anger, hurt, or whatever emotion may be welling up inside of us, may we seek to live at peace with each other and lift up the name of Jesus together.

In Christ, Matthew Hall

### New Prayer Requests

**Ricky Brant** - Cancer (Ken LaBruyere's cousin)

**Jason & Taneka Hopkins** - loss of infant

#### Please continue to pray for:

Shirley Dooley, Francois du Plessis, James & Glenda Smith,  
Ken LaBruyere, Otha Barham, Brenda Huffman, Sharon Stephens,  
Delaney Heckert, Charlotte Chaney, Shane Helton, Kati Stenbridge,  
Adrian Hill, Robert Sanford, Brenda Ferry, Cheri Barry, Neal Martin,  
Nora Goodsell, Justin Dean, Jimmy Downs, Hayes Clayton,  
Kevin Stiefel, Lorraine Vaccarella, Ceil Coleman, Ben Hucherson

If you have a prayer request please let the office know.

#### Sunday, July 16

9:30 A.M. Worship

10:45 A.M. LifeGroups

#### Tuesday, July 18

NO Basketball

#### Wednesday, July 19

5:00 P.M. Choir Rehearsal

#### Sunday, July 23

9:30 A.M. Worship

10:45 A.M. LifeGroups

#### Wednesday, July 26

5:00 P.M. Choir Rehearsal

**6:00 P.M. Family Game Night**

**Finger foods and Watermelon**

#### Thursday, July 27

**5:00 P.M. Missions Team Meeting/Conf. Rm**

#### Sunday, July 30

9:30 A.M. Worship

10:45 A.M. LifeGroups

**4:00 P.M. Children's Pool Party**

(See Ashley for details)

### July Birthdays

5th Cathy Ellis

6th Wanda McBrayer

10th Melissa Brown

11th Ashley Hill Powell

21st Dixie LaBruyere  
Jimmie Wells

28th James E. Smith

### August Birthdays

4th Peggy Baldwin

Beth Hall

5th Jake Joyner

Mindy Mendiola

13th Gertrude Hodges

15th Whitney Rhett

24th Butch Shannon

25th Semmes Martin

28th Suzanne Grafton

29th Leigh Ann Smith

30th Barbara Miller

31st Jim Autry

## CHURCHWIDE FAMILY GAME NIGHT



Wednesday, July 26th, 6 PM

Please bring finger foods, snacks.

*We will also be having Watermelon !*

## MEMORIALS

**In Memory of: Barbara Walker**

Sandy Thomas

Grady & Vicki Coleman

Ron & Jennifer St. John

Ken & Dixie LaBruyere

## Fall Kickoff - Worship & Potluck Picnic

**Bring a dish to share, and your lawn chair!**

**Sunday, August 6th**

**10 AM - Pine Lake Fellowship Camp**

Enjoy our morning worship, potluck lunch,  
and all the camp amenities while we spend  
the day having fun and fellowship!



## Volunteer Opportunities

### July 16

Acolytes: Jeffrey Rhett, Sandy Thomas  
Greeters: Angie Sherrill, Cathy Ellis  
Scripture Reader: Kristi Brown  
Sunday Snacks: Cindy Lang, Dianne Shannon

### July 17 - Monday

Meals on Wheels Delivery: Nancy Crews, Grady Coleman

### July 23 - Sunday

Acolytes: Bekah & Hannah Hall  
Greeters: Margaret Yates, Regina Ford  
Scripture Reader: Leigh Ann Smith  
Sunday Snacks: Katie Autry, Erin Richardson

### July 24 - Monday

Meals on Wheels Delivery: Marjorie Walker

### July 30 - Sunday

Acolytes: Ashley Powell, Sadie & Owen  
Greeters: Malaea Mendiola, Dixie LaBruyere  
Scripture Reader: Linda Long  
Sunday Snacks: Jessica Hall, Robin Thompson



Dates are still available on the "Sunday Morning Snack List". Please sign up in the Gathering Area.

## Wesley House

**We will not be collecting donations  
for July and August**

## RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

PLEASE  
PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

### STAFF

**Rev. Matthew Hall**

*Pastor*

*matthewhall1980@gmail.com*

**Debbie Young**

*Worship Coordinator*

*debbiyoung1961@comcast.net*

**Amy Floyd**

*Youth Coordinator*

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**Ashley Rue**

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**Mark Adkins**

*Maintenance*

*601-917-9415 text or call*

**July 12, 2023**

**Mailing Address:**

**PO Box 3333**

**Meridian, MS 39303**

**To:**

### The 2023 Bible Challenge

July 12	Psalm 146-150
July 13	Proverbs 1 - 3
July 14	Proverbs 4 - 6
July 15	Proverbs 7 - 9
July 16	Proverbs 10 - 12
July 17	Proverbs 13 - 15
July 18	Proverbs 16 - 18
July 19	Proverbs 19 - 21
July 20	Proverbs 22 - 23

Commit spending time every day in God's word. For those who meditate and journal, here are some reflection questions:

1. What does this passage teach us about God?
2. What does this passage teach us about ourselves?
3. What does this passage teach us about our world?
4. Are there any thoughts, words or phrases that caught your attention ? Why ?

**Poplar Springs Drive United Methodist Church**

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