



First United Methodist Church
PO Box 130
Cleveland, MS 38732
(Return Service Requested)

Our Mission: Win people to Christ, involve people in ministry, and nurture all people



The Bellringer
First United Methodist Church
318 South Court Street
Cleveland, MS 38732
(662) 843-3414

Dear Church Family,

When Jesus began his ministry with a simple statement: **“Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven has come near.”** But what does it mean to be part of the Kingdom of God? Since we live in America where we do not have a monarchy, it can be difficult to think about kings and submission to ultimate authority. We have a individualistic mentality that wants to put ultimate trust in ourselves, our own efforts, and/or our own goodness.

The truth of the matter, though, is that we pledge our allegiance to one kingdom or another whether we realize it or not. Each one of us has a worldview that shapes who we become and what we do daily, and that worldview is either shaped by God or by the surrounding society in which we live.

One kingdom places a premium on wealth, power, position, and beauty. This kingdom encourages us to put our own self-interests above the interests of others, but the truth of the matter is that in supposedly putting our self-interests above others we are actually serving the interests of this worldly kingdom and its values. The problem is that this kingdom, at its heart, is corrupt and temporary. All of these things will pass away because they have no lasting and ultimate meaning. The temptation, if we are not careful, is to get caught up in the pursuit of these things. Whether or not we actually achieve any of these things turns out to be secondary because we have already centered our lives on the pursuit of them by doing, saying, and thinking about what the world tells us is valuable and important. Think for a moment of the people we honor and lift up in this society. They are almost the exact opposite of the people and the attitudes Jesus describes as important.

The Kingdom of God, in contrast to the kingdom of the world, places a premium on love, servanthood, and the highest good of all people. The Kingdom of God looks not at just what is best for each one of us, but what is also best for those around us. The Kingdom of God is exemplified in the Beatitudes where Jesus pronounces a blessing upon those who are humble, who care about the state of the world, who fervently seek God’s righteousness, who are caring and gentle, who are merciful, who seek to live in peace with one another, and who are willing to remain faithful even when it may cost them something.

One kingdom works to benefits the individual only while the other Kingdom benefits both the individual and those around us. One kingdom presumably lifts up the freedom of the self, but in actuality enslaves the soul, while the other Kingdom lifts up God and results in true freedom of the soul. One kingdom places a premium upon what is temporary while pretending it is eternal while the other puts a premium on what truly lasts forever, which is the Kingdom of God.

As we being a season of Lent on February 14, and as we journey to the Cross and the Resurrection, ask yourself the following question: “What do MY words, actions, thoughts, and attitudes of the heart say about which kingdom has MY allegiance?”

Peace in Christ,

Chris



**First United
Methodist Church Staff**

Rev. Chris Young
Pastor

Angela Jefcoat
Director of Christian
Education
and
Children's Ministries

Collis Thorn
Director of Music

Joyce Sledge
Organist

Anne Henry
Pianist

Julie Jackson
Handbell Director

Don Conger
Church Secretary/
Financial Secretary

Pam Butler
Nursery Supervisor

Isaiah Davis
Custodian

Administration

Nott Wheeler, Jr.
Lay Leader

Alan Morgan
Chair, Administrative Board

Gary Crews
Chair, Trustees

Marcia Houser
Chair, Finance Committee

Becky Nowell
Chair, Staff/Parish Relations

Joseph Crews
Church Treasurer

Sunday School and Bible Study Information

Children's Sunday School - 9:45 a.m.
In the Education Building
5K - and under will meet downstairs.
Upstairs Sunday School teacher is Sarah
Makamson.

DIG IN and Confirmation Class

DIG IN SCHEDULE:
Sunday nights 5:00-6:30
February 25
March 3 and March 7
April, 7, 14, 21, and 28
May 5 Last DIG IN

CONFIRMATION CLASS SCHEDULE:
Wednesday afternoons at 3:15 in the Parlor
January 31
February 7, 14, and 21
March 6 and 20
April 3, 10, 17, 24
May 19

Youth

- **Youth Sunday School meets at 9:45 a.m.**
- **Youth meet on Sundays at 5:00 p.m.**
- **On Sunday, February 4 the Youth will help with Rise Against Hunger.**

Adult Sunday School Classes

- **9:45 a.m. - Upper Room/Cornerstone Class led by Joyce Kennedy**
- **10:00 a.m. - Women's Sunday School Class meets in the Parlor.**
- **Men's Sunday School Class meets in the Fellowship Hall.**

Abide Bible Study Group

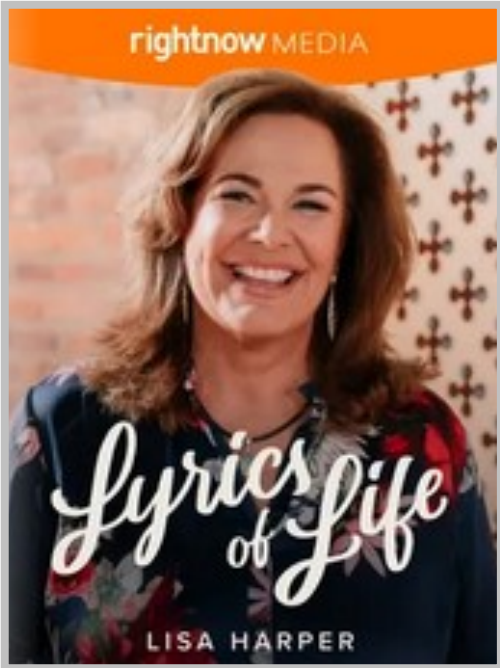
Abide Bible Study Group meets on Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. in the Parlor. They studying the life of Paul, and then will meet for the Lenten lunches starting on February 21.

Wednesday Evening Bible Study

meets at 5:30 p.m. in the Parlor. We are looking at the Parables of Jesus for the first several weeks, and then we will do a special Lenten study titled "24 Hours That Changed the World" that looks at the last day of the life of Jesus from the Last Supper through the crucifixion. That study will conclude around Easter as we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

CHURCH MEETINGS AND EVENTS

- **Women's Bible study meets on Mondays at 9:00 a.m. in the Parlor.**
- **Prayer Chain meets on the second Sunday of each month at 4:00 p.m. in the Parlor.**
- **Methodist Men meet on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.**
- **Chancel Choir practices on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. in the Choir Room.**
- **Ash Wednesday Service is February 14 at 6:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary.**
- **Lenten Lunches begin on Wednesday, February 21 at noon in the Fellowship Hall.**



Ladies Sunday School Class

In this eight-session series, learn how to find comfort in any situation based on this songbook of the people of God.
Sundays at 10:00 in the Parlor.



We are excited about our Rise Against Hunger Meal Packing Event on **February 4**, starting at **3:00pm in the Fellowship Hall**. We will partner again with St. Luke UMC and package 25,000 meals in two hours! There is something to do for **EVERY AGE**, and we need **100-120 people** to make sure we get it all done in time.
If you would like to donate, you can donate online or write a check to the church and put Rise Against Hunger in the memo section. Registration can be done by calling the church office or using the QR code below. Go ahead and put it on your calendar and on your prayer list.



CHURCH IN PRAYER

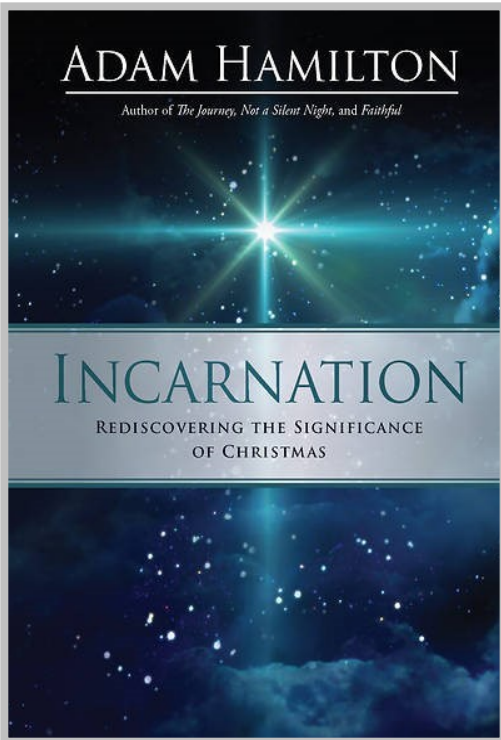
Charlene Wolfe
Paul Rainey
Dr. Jon Meyer
Jack Nowell
Pittman Edwards
Peggy Miller
Porter Antici
Joyce Kennedy
Rose Bizzell
Nicky Griffith
Bobby McArthur
Robert Martin
Cynthia Weeks
Lila Tatum
Lee Speakes
Richard Graham
JoAnn Box
Clint Horne
Flip Godfey

Larry McCalop
Chris Mitchell
Nolan Williams
Nancy Gerrard
Fred Johnson
Cack Meyer
Clay Matthews
Joanne Crews
Dawn Raybon
Tim Sewell
Hazel Cox
Cookie Newman Jones
Jimmy Bobo
Jimmie Best
Kevin Creasy
Leslie Griffin
Susie White
John Henry
Mary Lou Dilworth

Roberta Wiggins Edwards
Jimmie Best on the loss of her sister,
Shirley Wilkerson
The family of Johnny Thornell

Prayer request cards are available in the office and in the church bulletin on Sundays.

Members of our prayer chain who pray for you daily: Joyce Kennedy, Margaret Tullos, Joyce Sledge, Ramona Rizzo, Susan Sledge, Joanne Crews, Jill Mahaffey, Phyllis McCalop, Cristyn Holder, and Betty Sullivan Johnson.



Monday Women's Bible Study

Best-selling author Adam Hamilton examines the names of Christ used by the gospel writers, exploring the historical and personal significance of his birth.

THE CHURCH IN SERVICE

February Volunteers:

Ushers: Ed Pentecost, chairman; Jason Cotton; John Capocaccia; Rob Shipp; Chris Ouzts
Coffee Detail: Clint Allen and Robert Maxwell

Acolytes:

February 4: Candles: Knox Thompson; Cross & Offering: Levi Thompson
February 11: Candles: Keegan Farris; Cross & Offering: Sarah Hardin Makamson
February 18: Candles: Grey Gainspoletti; Cross & Offering: Lily McPherson
February 25: Candles: Ann Spencer Griffin; Cross & Offering: Maddie Murphy

Flowers: Altar and Foyer:

February 4: Church: both
February 11:
February 18: Kay & Buddy Long - altar; Maribeth Crews - foyer
February 25: Angela & Judd Jefcoat - both

Liturgist:

February 4: Kay Long
February 11: Don Conger
February 18: Rachel Tate
February 25: Russell Gainspoletti

Stewardship Quote:

Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure—pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return. Luke 6:38

Memorials:

**Price Whitley
Fred Spain**

by
Beverly & Julian Hardy

Ann Barnes

by
Leslie & Keith Griffin
Don Conger
Nancy & Eckward McKnight
Anne & John Henry

India Nowell Hawkins

by
Joyce Kennedy

**Shirley Wilkerson
Alberta Tucker**

by
Don Conger

John Thornell

by
Don Conger
Joyce Sledge & Family

Memorials:

Jack Fletcher

by
Judy & H.L. Dilworth
Leslie & Keith Griffin
Bill, Susan, Trevor,
& Trent Swartz
Marcia & Mark Hargett
Nancy & Eckward McKnight
Anne & John Henry
Vicki & Ben Pentecost
Mary Ann & Wally Ashley
Carol Tatum
Shirley & Wylie Hilburn
Peggy & Pemble Davis
Nancy Gerrard
Joyce Sledge & Family

Pat McCaleb

by
Beverly & Julian Hardy
Paula Lindsey & Kenny Lishman
Judy & H.L. Dilworth
Joyce Kennedy
Michelle & Bubba Bailey
Nancy & Eckward McKnight
Vicki & Ben Pentecost
Joyce Sledge & Family

Jane Hart Hargett

by
Joyce Kennedy
Vicki & Ben Pentecost

Tim Saxton

by
Vicki & Ben Pentecost



Freedom Trail Revival Worship Service
On Saturday, February 3, at 2:00, at Greenwood First United Methodist Church, there will be a Freedom Trail Revival Worship Service sponsored by the End Racism for Good initiative in the Mississippi Conference. The worship will be led by different pastors and will consist of corporate worship- singing, praying, preaching, confessing, committing, and discerning our work together in Mississippi. This service is the first of five worship services that will be held throughout the state of Mississippi in the coming months. Everyone is invited to come as we worship together!