



GSPC NEWS



ISSUE # 32

AUGUST 12, 2009

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Home Again

Dr. George Sinclair
Pastor

I never guessed that twelve weeks would go by so fast. But what a great twelve weeks. Having to shave this morning and put on a necktie and long pants reminded me just how great those weeks were! I felt like a kid on summer vacation.

The first thing I did was get rid of my watch. I stopped the daily paper and except for mapping our next adventure, I seldom looked at a calendar. It was nice not living by the clock. It was nice not having to work. (It was also nice not having to shave which I didn't do for six weeks, maybe seven. My neighbor said I looked like Hemingway. One friend said I looked younger. Another told me I could play Santa Claus. Paula said I looked "old." That was the final straw. But I really liked my beard and one day I'll grow it back.)

Sabbath is rightly associated with rest, but I think "play" is the better word. Play is not affected by necessity. It is unconcerned with achievement or competition (though I must confess the utter joy I experienced when I beat Paula at *Scrabble*—only the second time in 35 years.) Play knows about "law," but rules are subsidiary. I truly enjoyed my twelve weeks of grace.

I will not soon forget catching an 18-inch flounder in the surf at Perdido; hiking the Chattooga River in the mountains of South Carolina; watching the sun set on Fort Morgan; uninterrupted hours of reading; riding a tandem bicycle with Paula on the Aran Islands; getting lost in Dublin on our way home from the U2 concert at midnight or drinking in the musical magic of *Wicked* at the Apollo in London.

Thank you for providing this Sabbath. Your generosity is inspiring. I want to say a special word of thanks to Al and Ryan for their able leadership, especially during so many occasions of pastoral care and to the GSPC staff and lay leaders who kept things going day by day. Your tremendous efforts are in evidence everywhere.

While I return with trepidation, it is good to be home. I hope I haven't forgotten anyone's name. I discovered this morning that I haven't forgotten how to

type but I still cannot spell. Mostly, I just want again to say thanks for providing this time apart. Quite simply, it was wonderful. And now to work . . .

Briefly . . .

A word of welcome to Kathryn Threadgill, our new Associate Pastor of Youth and Christian Education. Many of you met Kathryn on Sunday. It is great to have her aboard. She has hit the ground running, preparing for her first CE meeting, Rally Sunday, and the Youth Retreat. Kathryn brings wonderful gifts to her call. Her installation is set for Sunday, September 20 at 11am. Our guest preacher will be Dr. Roger Nishioka of Columbia Seminary.

This Sunday we will say farewell to Andy King, our Seminary Intern, who has been responsible for our Urban Ministries. Andy, a 2008 Columbia graduate, will return to Atlanta and seek employment there prior to his marriage in January. His bride to be, Melissa McNair, will be a 2010 Columbia graduate. We sincerely appreciate all of Andy's good work and wish him God's blessing.

With Andy's departure, we welcome Scott Spence, a 2002 Centre College graduate and an Austin Seminary student. Scott is a member of the University Presbyterian Church in Chapel Hill, NC and is a candidate under care of New Hope Presbytery. He and his wife, Tara, are expecting their first child this fall. In view of a full household, which also includes two cats, Scott and Tara have leased an apartment in West Mobile.

This Sunday I will lead a class on the foundations of Presbyterian worship. This is the second in an occasional series. Please feel free to drop in. My regular Sunday morning class resumes September 20th. The book title and reading schedule will be published in advance. Please watch for it in these pages.

Again, it's good to be back. I look forward to seeing you all Sunday.

God's Peace,
George

Dr. Al Reese's Latest Retirement

This past Sunday, August 9, was Dr. Al Reese's last day as GSPC's interim minister during Dr. George Sinclair's three-month sabbatical. His wonderful wife Helen and many friends were in attendance. Al's sermon "*On Moving Decisively Toward A Metaphor*" was a thoughtful exposition on the consequences of biblical illiteracy as context for our church's commitment to strong Bible study:

"... metaphors like living bread and living water, eating Christ's flesh, reigning from a tree, serpents lifted up in the wilderness, coming down from heaven, and eternal life are all clues to a reality known only to those who are intimately familiar with the stories and events which they interpret, and those stories and events are contained in only one place...the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments which our hymn today called the bread of life. And that is why those who are planning and have planned for the future viability and the future growth of this church have made serious Bible Study the centerpiece of that plan."

"GSPC still nurtures those who seek to know the God of suffering love, the Jesus who had the courage to speak truth to power and simultaneously give his life for all of Adam and Eve's children who missed the meaning of God's image in which they were created. We seek here, by the serious study of scripture, to become the new humanity where faith, hope, and love abide and reach out to a city hungry for living bread."

Dr. Reese closed with strong encouragement for this mission and affirmation of his faith in GSPC to accomplish it: "You have everything you need to move decisively toward a life nurtured by the living bread which alone has the power to satisfy every hunger... a legacy which is the envy of every Presbyterian Church in Alabama, and a people who in joining GSPC have already made a promise to live toward the true bread of life. There is nothing which can separate you from the love of Christ who is the head of this church and whose word will write your agenda for the next 200 years."

After the service, a reception was held in the Fellowship Hall for Al and his wife Helen. Samford Turner, Executive Director of the Presbytery of South Alabama, was in attendance with his wife Carol. Samford thanked Al on our behalf for this most recent of his "10 unretirements" and presented him with a gift of appreciation from GSPC.



Worship

Lectionary Readings for August 12: 1 Kings 2:10-12, 3:3-14; Ps. 111; Eph. 5:15-20; John 6:51-58

Volunteers this Sunday, August 16

Sunday Assistants: Don Carlisle and Michon Trent
Greeters: Casi and Jarrett Callaway,
Judy Wells
Sanctuary Preparers: Bligh Jones and Trisha Hawkins
Nursery Volunteers: Lisa and Travis Goodloe
Children's Church Leaders: Dusty and Teresa Neff
Office Volunteer: Dot White

Music & Fine Arts

New Season for Choirs begins August 19

Sacred Tones Potluck: Wednesday, August 19, 6 p.m., Fellowship Hall

Mobile Community Chorus Potluck: Tuesday, August 25, 6 p.m., Fellowship Hall

GSPC Choir Potluck: Wednesday, August 26, 6 p.m., at the home of M.R. Andrews: 6013 Cumberland Rd. S, Mobile.

Note: Sacred Tones will not have practice this evening.

World Mission

Aug. 22-23 Frank Dimmock Visit Confirmed

Dr. Frank Dimmock, our missionary in Lesotho, Africa, has confirmed his August visit to GSPC. Frank will be arriving on Saturday, August 22nd. A party in his honor will be held that evening from 7 to 9 p.m. at the home of Sally and David Pearsall, 6 Spring Bank Road S., Mobile. All GSPC members are invited. Please contact Sally at 344-3903 if you would like to bring a dish or dessert for this gathering.

On Sunday, August 23, Frank will speak in Fellowship Hall during the Sunday School Hour. He also will briefly address the congregation during the Worship Service. A special offering will be taken during the service towards the \$3000 remainder balance on our 2009 commitment to the Dimmocks and the Turks, our wonderful missionary families.

Arts and Sabbath Workshop at Montreat

Montreat Conference Center will be offering a Fall Arts and Sabbath Week October 4-8. Workshops *Watercolor Painting from Life* and *Pottery: In the Potter's Hands* will be led by noted regional artists. Contact Holly Carrigan at 767-1035 if you are interested in going and traveling with other GSPC members. Registration is discounted through August 24. Details on the retreat and lodging options are available at:

<http://www.montreat.org/current/2009-arts-and-sabbath>

Congregational Life

Fellowship Events and Staff Updates

This Sunday marks our 2008-09 Seminary Intern **Andy King's** last day with us. Please take a moment after the Worship Service to thank Andy for his many contributions to GSPC in his year of service and wish him and his fiancée Melissa well.

Christian sympathy is extended to the family and friends of **Eleanor Rogers**, who died on Tuesday, August 4. She was the wife of Harry Rogers who died last year. Eleanor was living at Westminster Village and had been sick for a long while. A memorial service was held at 3 p.m. on Thursday, August 13, at Spanish Fort Presbyterian Church.

Christian sympathy is extended to the family and friends of **Frankie Jernigan**, sister-in-law of Mickie Jernigan and a Westminster Village resident. Frankie died on Tuesday, August 4 after a brief illness. Frankie's memorial service will be held at Spring Hill Presbyterian Church at 10 a.m. on Saturday, August 15.

Volunteers Needed at Westminster

Westminster Village retirement community is seeking volunteers with the time, energy and desire to help enhance residents' quality of life through visits on a regular basis. This wonderful non-profit retirement community is committed to having daily activities in all care levels for its approximately 390 residents. Outside help is sought to assist the staff with that mission and help make it fresh and meaningful.

The need is greatest for Sunday afternoon visitations in all care levels of the community – independent living, assisted living and nursing care. Visitation activities often include storytelling, reading, playing music, walks, engaging conversation and/or volunteer-suggested activities of all kinds, so if you have a wonderful hobby to share or love to debate specific topics, this would be a great place to serve. Pairings are carefully made based on the cognitive and/or physical condition of the resident and the interests of both the resident and the volunteer. An orientation is provided. According to Melisa Manjone, ACC, Activity Coordinator for the overall community, the experience is a "setup for success" for all involved.

If you have questions or wish to learn more about volunteering for this vital ministry, please contact Melisa Manjone, at 626-4104. You may also contact the activity coordinators in specific care areas: Kathy Stowers, ADC, Activity Coordinator in Assisted Living, 626-4188; or Maxine Knight, Activity Coordinator in the Health Care Center, 626-8670.

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GSPC NEWS (USPC 736150) is published weekly except Thanksgiving and Christmas by GSPC, 300 Government Street, Mobile, AL 36602. Periodical: postage paid at Mobile, AL. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to GSPC NEWS, 300 Government St., Mobile, AL 36602

Children's Ministry Update

by Amanda Murray, Director of Children's Ministries

Welcome Back! I have missed everyone so much this summer and look forward to seeing you all again this Sunday! Please read below for all of our upcoming events. Also, look for a package with more details to arrive at your home soon.

- **Rally Day: *Pieces of the Puzzle***, August 30. Please join us for brunch at 9:30 a.m. The children will need to report to Sunday School rooms by 10:40 a.m. They will sit together for worship and have a special part in the morning service. After the children's sermon, all of the children and youth are invited to join me for a Rally Day Celebration during worship.
- **Sunday School:** You are invited to a **Welcome Back to Sunday School Party** on September 6th at 9:30 a.m. Sunday School will begin as normal on September 13th. Look for your child's name on the classroom doors to find their new room. Sunday School is available for Toddlers in the nursery and children ages 3 through 5th grade. **Sunday School now begins at 10:00 a.m. and will end at 10:45 a.m.**
- **CLUB 345** (a fellowship group for 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders): Our **Kick-Off Party** is September 20th after worship. We will meet for a provided lunch and games in the park. We will end at 2:30 p.m.
- **Children and Cherub's Choirs:** Practice will begin on September 13th at 9:30 a.m. It is imperative that you be there on time every Sunday to practice. Mr. Terry and Mrs. Wanda are getting everyone ready for the Christmas Program. All children ages 3 years through 5th grade are invited to participate in the choirs.
- **Children at the Lord's Table:** I invite all of those children in second grade to the Children at the Lord's Table Class. It begins on September 13th during the worship hour. Please look for more information in the mail soon!

Friday Men's Bible Study resumes this Friday, August 14!