

*The*  
**FIRST**  
**PRESBYTERIAN**  
**CHURCH**

*Grace Transforms*



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## **FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

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## MISSION STATEMENT

*First Presbyterian Church proclaims and practices  
the Gospel of God's transforming grace for God's glory alone.*

### *Grace transforms our characters*

We believe God's grace unites us to Jesus by faith with the result that we become more like him. This character transformation develops through use of the means of grace and is displayed through lives of virtuous service.

### *Grace transforms our communities*

We believe that God's grace enables us to extend the same patient, sacrificial pursuit of relationship which God demonstrates toward us to our various spheres of community—our families, small groups, neighborhoods, work place, volunteer associations, and civic organizations.

### *Grace transforms our callings*

We believe that God's grace not only calls us to be saved, but calls us into a variety of vocations. We are workers with God in our homes, careers, church, and city to seek the flourishing of God's world and the extension of Christ's Lordship through work done well.

### *Grace transforms our city*

We believe that God's grace moves us toward our city, both Hattiesburg and the larger polities to which we belong, to seek its peace, welfare, and flourishing. We long for our city to know the reconciliation with God and others that the Gospel alone accomplishes.

## HISTORY

First Presbyterian Church's presence/ministry in Hattiesburg spans 135 years, having been organized just a few months before the city of Hattiesburg was chartered. The church was housed in several facilities in the early years but built a facility and remained at 840 Main Street until 1990, when due to increased membership as well as recognition that Hattiesburg was growing westward, the church moved to its present location.

The campus is strategically situated in the heart of Hattiesburg near Interstate 59, making it accessible to congregants and visitors from all parts of the city as well as surrounding small towns.



*Connie Allegretti & Lyn French  
2017 FPC Annual Chili Cook Off held in Mac Hall*

The initial improvements consisted of the sanctuary with an administrative building adjoined on the west and a Christian Education wing adjoined on the east. During 2010-11, the church's facilities underwent a significant expansion, nearly doubling the amount of square footage under roof. In May 2010, Currie Hall was dedicated, which provided educational space for the church's Sunday school program as well as a range of other studies, meetings, and programs. The following May, McIntosh Hall was also dedicated. A multi-purpose

space, "Mac Hall" provides space to feed over 500 at a single sitting; offers an alternative meeting or worship space; has use as a gymnasium; and provides three meeting rooms for youth ministry, plus an additional kitchen. A process that began in 2004 came to fulfillment seven years later.

Only nine pastors have served First Presbyterian. They include: Hector Campbell Smith; James Matheson Smith; E.J. Currie; W.H. McIntosh; William J. Stanway; Edward Johnson; Roy Taylor; Andrew Silman; and Sean Michael Lucas.



## WORSHIP—OUR VALUES AND VISION

We believe that worship is, broadly speaking, the Christian's joyful response in all of life to what God has done for us in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We believe that the corporate expression of this lifestyle of worship is the regular gathering of God's people in a service of worship on the Lord's Day, and we are committed to offering our God worship that reflects and pursues these values and characteristics:

### GOSPEL-CENTERED

- The Gospel is the good news of God's favor poured out on sinners through his Son. Worship is a response to this free grace given to us in Christ, not a way of acquiring or earning God's grace.
- We believe that the Gospel is what every worshipper needs, whether they be a visiting skeptic, a new believer, or a long-time church member, because the Gospel is how God both converts unbelievers and nurtures believers. Gospel-centered worship is naturally evangelistic, and so we aim to offer worship that is accessible and inviting to the unbelievers among us.
- We strive to make the Gospel clear not only in the individual elements of our worship service (the sermon, prayers, songs, etc.), but also in the overall flow and structure of the service itself.



*2016 FPC White Gift Candlelight Service*

### BIBLICAL

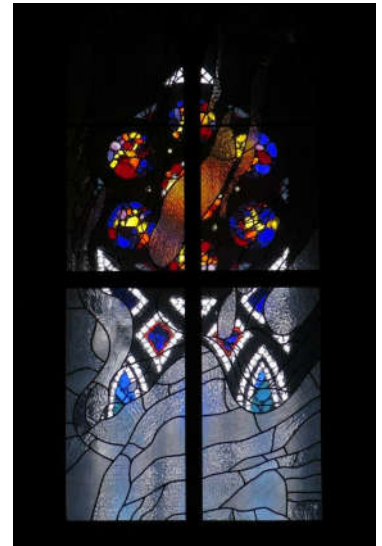
- We believe that our worship should be guided and regulated by how the Triune God directs us to worship in his Word.
- Covenant theology shapes our worship principles and practices. We view corporate worship as divinely initiated, redemptive dialogue between God and his covenant people.
- Every aspect of our worship service demonstrates a deep engagement with Scripture, because we believe that the Holy Spirit uses God's Word to instruct, correct, and train in righteousness.

## CORPORATE

- God's people are called to worship together as a body of believers who express their common union with Christ and communion with each other through corporate worship. We strive to offer our worship in a way that glorifies God alone while engaging, edifying, and ministering to the broad range of people that God has called together in this body.
- Worship is a corporate activity of the people, not just the ministers and musicians. We strive to offer worship that encourages the full and active participation of the people throughout the service.
- We prioritize the congregation's voice as the primary musical instrument in the worship service. We embrace a deep love for the hymns and songs from our Reformed and Presbyterian tradition, as well as current hymns and songs that reflect our theological commitments.

## REVERENT AND WELCOMING

- Our passion is to offer glorifying worship that reflects God's majesty, transcendence, and holiness, in a manner that is warm, welcoming, and approachable. Our aim is reverent worship that is presented with excellence, structured with thoughtfulness, and led with joy.



*Stained Glass Window in FPC Narthex*



*Dr. David Hatten Jussely and Louis Kosko*

## MEMBERSHIP

First Presbyterian includes members whose families have been members for generations as well as newer members of all ages. Total membership is 852 (385 families) with an average attendance at Sunday morning worship of 428. Approximately 196 attend Sunday school.

Community life is rich at FPC. Members have many opportunities to hear God's Word, worship, fellowship, and share one another's joys and sorrows. Its reputation for caring for its people is known in the community.

## LEADERSHIP

We currently have 15 active elders and nine emeritus. The Session is united in purpose and vision and is excited and optimistic about the future of FPC.

We have 22 deacons who serve in many ways—from clean-up/set-up crew to acts of mercy both within and without the church.

## PASTORAL STAFF

### **DR. DAVID JUSSELY**

*Minister of Senior Adults and Visitation*

David has over 40 years of pastoral experience in Mississippi. After graduating from the University of Southern Mississippi, he attended Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson. He has filled pulpits in Centreville, Yazoo City, and Hattiesburg. In December 1997, he received his Ph.D from USM; he joined the faculty at RTS as professor of homiletics and pastoral theology in June, 1999. In 2010, he returned to Hattiesburg to serve as associate minister at FPC and currently serves as minister of senior adults and visitation. He still serves as adjunct professor of practical theology at RTS. David enjoys a regular preaching and teaching ministry at our church and among churches in our presbytery. He is married to Andrea Herring Jussely and they have four children, Josh, Daniel, Jonathan and Carrie, and seven grandchildren.



### **REV. KNOX BAIRD**

*Minister of Missions and Outreach*

Knox is a graduate of Belhaven College and Reformed Theological Seminary. He spent two years in Africa with African Bible Colleges. He served at FPC from 1987-1991 and joined the staff again in 2003 as assistant pastor working with youth and families. Passionate about engaging the church in missions across the street and around the world, he leads a variety of mission teams and is heavily involved in Hope for Hattiesburg, an auxiliary ministry of FPC. He is married to Debra and has two children, Alexandria and James Knox.

### **REV. BEN GRIFFITH**

*Associate Pastor*

Ben is a native of Hattiesburg and has been on staff at FPC for 11 years. For 10 of those years, he served as the youth pastor, and was called in 2017 to be an associate pastor. Ben graduated from the University of Southern Mississippi in 2008 and from Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson in 2014. He and his wife have three children, Margaret (9), Owen (7), and Libby (4).



## ABOUT HATTIESBURG



*Longleaf Trace*

The population of Hattiesburg is approximately 50,000 but 150,000 including surrounding towns and approximately 16,000 at the University of Southern Mississippi and 4,400 at William Carey University. It is called the “Hub City” due to its proximity to Jackson, New Orleans, the Gulf Coast and even Florida.

Hattiesburg also is home to Camp Shelby (major military base), and two sprawling medical facilities, Forrest General Hospital, and Merit Health Wesley. Residents enjoy rich arts and cultural events as well as sporting events. The Longleaf Trace is a 41-mile stretch that runs from downtown Hattiesburg westward to Prentiss. It is perfect for walking, running, or biking.

Hattiesburg boasts great shopping, dining (both casual and upscale), and most amenities of big cities—just without the hassle!

We have among us families who send their children to Forrest County or Lamar County public schools, homeschool, or private school. Many choose to send them to **Presbyterian Christian School**, where Brian Smith, one of our deacons, is secondary principal. The school is kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade and is on a lovely campus approximately 15 minutes from the church.

FPC houses the preschool for PCS. Space is designated for the school, avoiding the conflict that can sometimes arise when a church and school share space.

## MINISTRIES

### CHILDREN

FPC’s children’s ministry is one of the biggest attractions to young families. Our outstanding nursery program is staffed with paid workers but also with church members who love to love on our covenant children! Always seeking to find creative ways to engage our children with the Gospel, the children’s ministry is showing the love of Christ to and making a difference in the lives of our children.

Sunday school is each Sunday morning at 9:45 and uses curricula from *The Great Commission*.

Children ages two to sixth grade have the opportunity to participate in the children’s choir and catechism classes on Wednesday evenings after church-wide supper.



*FPC children handing out bulletins before the worship service*



On Sunday evenings, children ages four to sixth grade are dismissed from the worship service prior to the sermon and go to the “Four Corners Café,” (aka the fellowship hall!). Here, they learn about various missionaries we support as well as different cultures. A highlight is tasting a specially prepared dish from the area about which they are learning.

The focus is on expanding the children’s vision for the lost and helping them, even at a young age, to have a heart for missions and the advancement of God’s Kingdom.



*Molly Blass with FPC 4th Graders*



*Kathy Young*

Kathy Young is our director of children’s ministry and has spent her career in the field of early childhood education, teaching children and training those who do. She holds a bachelor’s degree in psychology and a master’s in child development from the University of Southern Mississippi as well as an Ed.S. in instructional leadership from William Carey University. Kathy loves our children and delights to show them the God who is both Creator and Redeemer. She and her husband Louis have two children, Chase and Janie.

## YOUTH

Approximately 70 students currently make up the youth ministry. Emphasis is on learning and applying God’s Word as well as serving others via mission’s trips and local service opportunities.

Ben Griffith has led the youth ministry at FPC with excellence for 10 years. When Ben was called as associate pastor last year, the search for a new director of student ministries began. We are delighted that the Lord has led us to Todd Robinson, who has accepted the position with the intention of beginning in May after completing spring exams at Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson. He plans to continue pursuing his masters of divinity degree from RTS by commuting and taking online classes. Todd has served as youth director at Pearl Presbyterian Church (PCA) for the last 18 months.

Todd met his wife Carla in Atlanta while they were serving as RUF interns at Georgia Southern University and Texas Tech University, respectively. They were married in 2015 and have an infant son, Lucas. We look forward to the Robinsons joining our church family and continuing a vibrant ministry to our youth!



*Todd & Carla Robinson*

## WOMEN

From the time the original Ladies' Aid Society was formed in 1886 until today, the women of FPC have served the church in many important ways and are encouraged to use their gifts in the church.

The Women's Ministry Council, which leads the Women's Ministry, meets monthly to plan, organize and implement the many ways the women support the life of the church. From planning funeral meals and receptions to supporting local missions (Palmer Home for Children and Reformed University Fellowship at USM, for example), the Women's Ministry is a vibrant part of FPC.



2016 FPC Women's Ministry Scripture Dinner



Marcia Gatewood & Janet White

Women have several opportunities to gather for Bible study:

- Each Thursday morning from September through March, Bible study is offered at 9:30 a.m.
- The Tuesday night "circle" meets once a month for Bible study and prayer.
- The once-a-month Women's Ministry business meeting and Bible study meets on the second Tuesday of each month from September until May.

In addition, FPC is often the host church for Presbytery events such as women's conferences. Women are encouraged to participate in presbytery, state, and nation-wide PCA women's events.

## ADULT EDUCATION

FPC has a number of excellent and gifted teachers. We currently have nine Sunday school classes, both mixed gender and gender specific. This includes a class for college students and young adults. Adults also have the opportunity to be a part of Bible study on Wednesday evenings.

## SMALL GROUPS

The membership of FPC is divided into parishes, with an elder charged with shepherding each parish. We currently have seven parishes and 17 K (Koinonia)-groups. Meeting times vary, but each K-group is encouraged to meet at least once a month for Bible study, fellowship, and often a meal.

## THE ARTS

Believing that all of life is under the lordship of Christ, the Arts Ministry, under the direction of Loleeta Rhett, seeks to provide opportunities for members to engage with and enjoy the arts through a bi-monthly book club, as well as movie nights. In addition, the Arts Ministry coordinates/hosts musical opportunities which vary from concert organists to Hattiesburg's summer music festival, FestivalSouth, to Matthew Smith/Indelible Grace. A recent collaboration between Presbyterian Christian School and the FPC Arts Ministry provided an evening of choral music, creative writing, and an art exhibit, hopefully the first of many such future events.

## MUSIC

First Presbyterian has a vibrant music ministry. Our adult choir enhances our worship on Sunday mornings, whereas on Sunday evenings, "The Spear," our acoustic group, often leads us in familiar hymns as well as hymn texts set to tunes developed by Reformed University Ministries.

Both groups are led by Jesse Noote, who recently joined the staff at First Presbyterian after most recently serving as music director at First Presbyterian, Meridian, Mississippi. A very accomplished musician and vocalist, Jesse trained in piano and French horn at Loyola University Preparatory Program and the Greater New Orleans Youth Orchestra. He earned his B.A. in music from Belhaven University and his master's in choral conducting from the University of Southern Mississippi.



*Jesse Noote, Director of Music Ministries*

Jesse also currently serves as choral director at Presbyterian Christian School. He and his wife Leah have two young children, Carter and Kason.

Two other valued members of our music ministry are Loleeta Rhett, a very gifted organist/pianist, and Kerrin Hightower, who leads an excellent graded children's choir program. The goal of the children's music program is to prepare our children to be worshippers of God and enjoyers of his praise.



*FPC Children's Choir*

## MISSIONS

From its beginning, FPC has been a missions-minded church. We currently support nearly 60 missionaries and organizations as a way of extending the Gospel into our world. We also believe that our response to the Gospel involves praying and going as well as giving; therefore, we annually sponsor local and international mission trips, develop connections with our missionaries through regular reports, and host an annual missions conference.



## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

A key part of our outreach to the community is via **United Christian Ministries**, a ministry to under-resourced young people headed by Jack Kennedy. “Jack’s Kids” have been participating with us and being disciplined by members on Wednesday evenings for eight years. Our daughter church, Woodland PCA, recently became home to United Christian Academy, a new school for some of these students. It is our delight to come alongside Callison Richardson, a FPC member, in her role as principal, and to incorporate these children into the life of FPC.



*Callison Richardson with students from United Christian Academy*



*Painting a house  
in east Hattiesburg*

**Hope for Hattiesburg** began in 2006 as a partnership with Ebenezer Missionary Baptist to help restore homes after Hurricane Katrina. Since that time, approximately 45 homes have been repaired. Our mission is twofold. First, we purpose to assist needy families by doing deeds of justice and mercy. Second, we want to show forth the power of the gospel to transform historically challenging racial relationships.

To that end, we periodically have joint evening worship services with our friends from Ebenezer and seek to work on projects together. We are also developing a relationship with brothers and sisters from Mt. Olive Baptist Church, a body in southeast Hattiesburg.

More recently, Hope for Hattiesburg (H4H) began a partnership with a local public elementary school, specifically to enhance the school’s literacy program. In October, 2016, we held our first 5K Run to raise funds for the school. It was a great beginning to building a relationship that has grown as members of FPC volunteer and serve this school. The school was named for Grace Christian, one of our members who was a strong public school advocate and joined FPC in 1903!

More information about this ministry can be found at [HopeforHattiesburg.org](http://HopeforHattiesburg.org).



*FPC members judging Science Fair at Grace Christian*



## FPC 2017 Budget

<b>Ministry</b>	<b>2017 Budget</b>
Property	\$574,849
Christian Education Ministry	\$122,900
Music Ministry	\$20,550
Outreach Ministry	\$6,000
Supporting Ministries	\$50,600
Staff Ministry	\$789,171
General Assembly Admin.	\$8,000
Deacons Ministry	\$12,500
Mission to the World Exp.	\$114,680
Mission to North America Exp.	\$170,560
<b><i>TOTAL</i></b>	<b><i>\$1,869,810</i></b>

