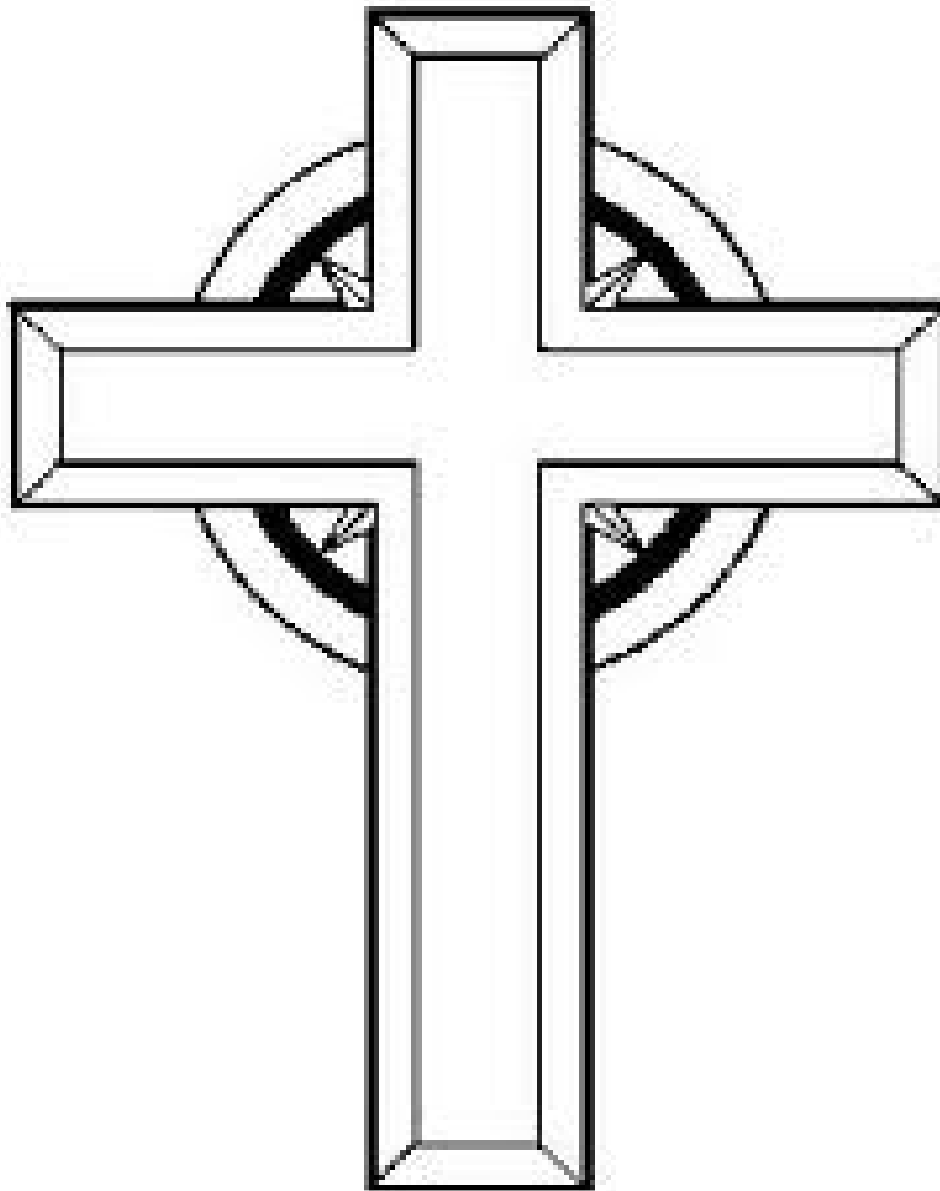


# The First Word



## April Lectionary

**April 7**  
**2nd Sunday of Easter**  
Acts 4:32-35 and  
Ps. 133 or  
Isa. 65:17-25 and  
Ps. 3;  
1 John 1:1-2:2;  
John 20:19-31

**April 14**  
**3rd Sunday of Easter**  
Acts 3:12-19 and  
Ps. 4 or  
Isa. 6:1-9a and  
Ps. 40:1-5;  
1 John 3:1-7;  
Luke 24:36b-48

**April 21**  
**4th Sunday of Easter**  
Acts 4:5-12 and  
Ps. 23 or  
Zech. 10:1-12 and  
Ps. 80:1-7;  
1 John 3:16-24;  
John 10:11-18

**April 28**  
**5th Sunday of Easter**  
Acts 8:26-40 and  
Ps. 22:25-31 and  
Ex. 19:1-6 and  
Ps. 118:19-25;  
1 John 4:7-21;  
John 15:1-8

## Re: Torn Veils and Empty Tombs

“When is the ending not the end? When a dead man rises from the tomb – and when a Gospel ends in the middle of a sentence.” – Dr. Lamar Williamson, Jr., on Mark 16:8

Humans, as a species, are uncertain about uncertainty. The amended endings to Mark’s Gospel are proof of that. The “empty tomb” of Easter morning was not enough for first-century believers, nor is it hardly enough for us now. Despite all they had seen, and the empty tomb, believers then and now needed to *see* Jesus for themselves.

The original ending of Mark’s gospel is v. 8, “So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had sieved them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.”

Consider, for a moment, if we never hear of Christ’s post-resurrection encounters with his disciples. Does it make a difference in our faith and action?

My favorite one-line interpretation of this passage is Dr. Williamson’s, quoted above. The ending of our Gospel, no matter how brief, is no ending at all. It is an invitation to finish the story ourselves.

We will always prefer that Jesus be the sole author of the Gospel, as proof of the many edits and endings Mark’s Gospel accrued over the years. The weight of the burden of being entrusted with the ending, or at least a small part, of the Gospel story *feels heavy*; perhaps it should.

The call of the faithful Christian, on Easter Sunday and year-round, is to continue writing the ending of this story. What part, big or small, will we play as we live into this call?

Despite its weight, the good news is we are not called to do it alone. We are called to create community and operate within community. Consider this Easter season, who is entombed and in need of someone to roll back the stone? Who is crucified, and needs someone from the crowd to speak on their behalf?

Happy Easter, and Happy Writing,

BJ

## Notes from the Worship and Music Committee

Worship and Music welcomes you to April and the Easter season. Thank you for your continued support of our Guest Musicians! We look forward to the special time of Easter leading us into Pentecost.




We have had the presence of our student guest musicians, and we will continue to see these faces throughout the Easter season. To continue being able to enjoy these guest musicians, ***please consider donating to our guest musician fund.*** These honorariums enable them to come to Columbus and for all of us to enjoy their gifts of worship and praise.



## April Birthdays

Scott Jones	April 9
Steve Wilkes	April 15
Robert Conway	April 18
Shannon Bowen	April 25
Desiree Krieger	April 26



*prayer*  
**Requests**



**Diane Keen**  
(Carol Jones Sister)  
Health Concerns

**Brennen Bowen**  
Health Concerns

**Jon Fortman**  
Health Concerns

**Toni Oakes**  
(Ed Oakes Sister)  
Health Concerns

**Bonnie Boyd**  
Health Concerns

**Allison L. Jones**  
(Scott Jones Mother)  
Health Concerns

**Sherri Musgrove**  
(Friend of Anna Jones)  
Breast Cancer

**Kandi Aultman**  
Recovery from procedure

**Natural Disasters**  
Wildfires in Texas

**Jared Oakes**  
Health Concerns

**Sandra Mims**  
Health Concerns

**Roger Burlingame**  
Health Concerns

**Ginny Oakes**  
(Ed Oakes Mother)  
Prayer Request

**Genie Hutchison**  
Continued Prayers

**Phil Adcock**  
(Hope Oakes Uncle)  
Suffered a stroke

**The Lindley Family**  
(Jennifer Mearkle's Family)  
Prayer Request

**Amy Sullivan**  
(Pam Sullivan's Daughter-In-Law)  
Health Concerns

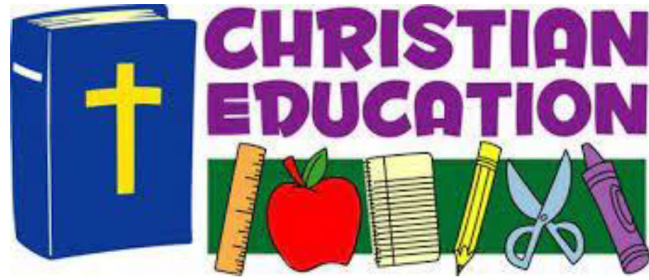
## Memorial

A donation to the Loaves and Fishes Book Fund has been given by Bert and Joy Cushman, Tom and Emma Richardson, and Ben and Barbara Brown in joyful memory of Martha Ella Perkins Brown (April 9, 1924 – May 23, 2020), in celebration of the one hundredth year of her birth. She was “*Teacher, Helpmeet, Mother, Friend.*”

Financial Information:

The information presented below reflects First Presbyterian Church finances as of March 2024.

YTD Income:	\$48,519.00
YTD Expenses:	\$48,975.69
YTD Balance:	-\$456.69
2024 Pledge Total	\$155,224.00
March Total Pledged:	\$39,000.00
March Total Received:	\$42,695.00



## JOIN A CHRISTIAN EDUCATION PROGRAM TODAY

### **Nursery Care**

Nursery Care is available in the Education Building from 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. from ages birth to 5 years old.

### **Children's Sunday School** 10:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Sunday School for children includes Bible study about growing in God's love and includes crafts and play.

### **Adult Sunday School – Tom Richardson** 9:45 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

In the Agape Sunday School class, we usually do a close study of a biblical text. We are just finishing a study of Mark's gospel, and in early September we will begin a study of the gospel of John. From time to time we also read other literary works with important theological themes or books by biblical scholars and theologians that help us understand biblical texts or challenge us to think in fresh ways about our roles as Christians in the modern world.

### **Adult Sunday School – Dennis Harmon**

They are studying a book "Every Prophecy of the Bible" by John F. Walvoord. Hoping to understand, not just see the signs of the times.

### **Bible Study & Prayer Group– Reverend B.J. Chain** Wednesdays 12:30 p.m.

Following the lectionary, we explore our thoughts on the scripture that is likely to be the basis of next Sunday's sermon.





Every Wednesday at 12:30 p.m.  
First Presbyterian Church



You're invited to join one of our Sunday School Classes, where we dig deeper into Biblical scriptures and theological concepts.

Classes are every Sunday 9:45 – 10:30 a.m.

The Agape Sunday School Class is currently studying the Gospel of John, led by Dr. Tom Richardson.







**JOIN US FOR  
Faith, Food, and Fellowship**

**Saturday, April 13th 8:00 a.m.**

**First Presbyterian Church  
3200 Bluecutt Road  
Columbus, MS 39705**



Join us for fellowship and fun!

Come enjoy some girl time  
with your “Hilltop Sisters”

## Presbyterian Women You’re Invited

Sunday, April 14th  
3:00 p.m.

First Presbyterian Church  
3200 Bluecutt Road  
Columbus, MS 39701

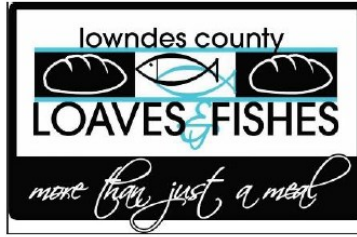
The background of the page is a soft-focus photograph of white flowers, likely cherry blossoms, with green leaves. The flowers are scattered across the top and right sides, with a light green bokeh effect in the background.

## **April Fellowship Lunch**

**Join us Sun., April 28th  
following worship.**

**Shepherding Group 2  
will provide fried chicken.**

**Please bring your  
favorite side dish  
or dessert to share.**



First Presbyterian Church

*"Come up The Hill to worship; go down The Hill to serve."  
Fri., March 15th, approximately 320 meals were served.*



*"A book is a gift you can open again and again."  
41 children's books were distributed.*



*Thank you to our faithful volunteers!*

# PCDP NEWS

Can you believe it is April? We have had a few busy weeks here at PCDP!

In April we will continue to learn about the Spring season, the farm, bugs, Earth Day, and transportation.

## FARM WEEK

Farm week is April 8-12. Volunteers are needed to work on the farm. Let Lezli know if you can help. Don't have time to volunteer? We would love monetary donations to help pay for the petting zoo.



## TRANSPORTATION FAIR

Our Transportation Fair is Friday, May 3rd at 9 a.m. in the church parking lot. We are looking for fun vehicles to attend. If you know of anyone, please let us know.





# PCDP



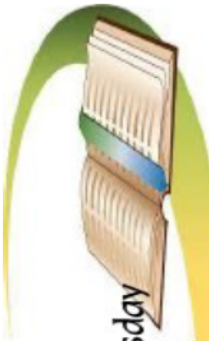
# Dr. Seuss Week!



Come Worship With Us Every Sunday  
 Choir Practice  
 9:00 a.m. Every Sunday  
 Sunday School: 9:45 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.  
 Social Gathering: 10:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.  
 Worship: 11:00 a.m.



Join us for  
 Bible Study  
 every Wednesday  
 @ 12:30 pm



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> 12:30 p.m. Bible Study	<b>4</b> 5:30 p.m. Al-Anon	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> 11:00 a.m. Worship	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> 6:00 p.m. Deacons' Meeting FPC	<b>10</b> 12:30 p.m. Bible Study  6:00 p.m. Worship & Music Meeting	<b>11</b> 5:30 p.m. Al-Anon	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> 8:00 a.m. Men's Prayer Breakfast
<b>14</b> 11:00 a.m. Communion Worship Congregational Meeting following worship 3:00 p.m. PW Fellowship Gathering	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 12:30 p.m. Bible Study	<b>18</b> 5:30 p.m. Al-Anon	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> 8:30 a.m. Session Meeting	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 12:30 p.m. Bible Study	<b>25</b> 5:30 p.m. Al-Anon	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
11:00 a.m. Worship						
<b>28</b> 11:00 a.m. Worship Fellowship Lunch (Shepherding Group 2) Care-o-ling	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>				