

JANUARY 2016 NEWSLETTER

SWIFT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A Church That Practices Fruitful Living

PASSIONATE WORSHIP

Worship in the New Year

- January 3 Epiphany Sunday, Matthew 2:1-12
Communion, Pastor Jody Beth preaches
Pastor Jody Beth and Jane Capsis at Live Oak Assisted Living at 1:00pm
- January 10 Isaiah 43:1-7
Baptism of the Lord Sunday
Ordination and Installation of church officers (both services)
- January 17 Isaiah 62:1-5
- January 24 Nehemiah 8:1-10
- January 31 Jeremiah 1:4-10
- February 7 Transfiguration Sunday
Communion
Pastor Keith and Lisa at Live Oak Assisted Living 1pm

February 10 Ash Wednesday Worship 6:00pm

- February 14 Gwenda and John Fletcher speak at both services
First Sunday of Lent

RADICAL HOSPITALITY

**The Monthly “Two or More” Lunch Group
will begin meeting at the Cracker Barrel in January**

“Where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.” Matthew 18:20

“Two or More” is a monthly ecumenical fellowship luncheon, open to all. For 1½ years the group met at Captain’s Choice Restaurant in the Gulf Bowl. Many thanks to our special waitress, Janice!

On January 7th, the group will meet at the Cracker Barrel in Foley. They will continue to meet once a month, on the first Thursday of each month at 11:30am at a local restaurant. People who are able to attend are encouraged to invite and bring along someone who may not be able to get out as easily – someone who doesn’t drive for example – so that “two or more” will gather! Men, women, family, friends, co-workers, neighbors are all welcome.

At the January gathering, those present will decide where they would like to meet the following month. Please RSVP to Lee Mansell of Swift Presbyterian Church to make a reservation, 251-232-4775 or 251-943-8367.



Butterfly Girls and Guys Night Out

Thursday, January 21st, 6:30pm

Butterfly Girls and Guys Night Out are opportunities for us to gather for a meal and fellowship, with *no* agenda and *no* commitments.

ALL ladies are invited to Butterfly Girls, and ALL men are invited to Guys Night Out.

We have met the 3rd Thursday of each month for over 5 years! We have gone to restaurants mostly in Foley and Gulf Shores, but also in Orange Beach, Robertsedale, Malbis and even Pensacola once.

Our next gathering is Thursday, January 21st at 6:30pm

Butterfly Girls will meet at Longhorn Steakhouse

Guys Night Out will meet at Cactus Cantina...

Pelican Shopping Center, Gulf Shores

Call or Text Susan or Daryl Pichoff at 251-233-9486

INTENTIONAL FAITH DEVELOPMENT

Christian Education

Adult Sunday School Classes will resume January 10, 2016

Our Adult Sunday School classes meet on Sunday mornings 9:00-9:45 in the Annex.

“**Coffee with Keith**” meets in the Library and will resume on January 10th. We will discuss the value of many people praying vs the value of just one prayer.

“**Live with Anthony and Norman**” meets in the Andy Lay room and will also resume on January 10th. They are studying the book of Daniel.

You're Invited to the Thursday Morning Bible Study for Men and Ladies

“**Ecclesiastes: Looking for the Answer to the Meaning of Life**” Bible Study meets on Thursdays from 9:30-11:00am in the Swift Church Library using the Bible, study books by Dr. Warren Wiersbe, and lots of discussion. There are 8-10 people each week.

Prayerfully consider if God is leading you to join us.

We have been on break, and weekly study will begin again Jan. 7th, 2016.

Contact Pastor Jody Beth for more information, 213-6625.

Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God

A Small Group Study

“**Experiencing God**” is a 13-week course in which participants will learn how to have a meaningful and personal relationship with God and to know His will in their lives.

The essence of this study is for you to know God and to know Jesus Christ, whom He has sent. Through examination of biblical and contemporary illustrations, participants will understand and apply seven realities of experiencing God. Churches will be helped to better function as the body of Christ as members understand how to experience God. God is at work around you. Will you join Him?

Kathy Menk will facilitate this course at Swift Church beginning Tuesday, February 23rd from 2:45-4:30. The class will continue to meet on Tuesdays, 2:45-4:30, through May 17th. Cost is \$20 for the workbook. Scholarships are available. This course requires a significant time commitment on the part of the class members, but the rewards are potentially eternal. For more information or to register, please contact Kathy Menk at 971-6509.

College and Adult Education Students

Several adult members of our congregation are furthering their education through college and other adult education studies. We can support them with our prayers, and perhaps you feel called to do something special for one or more of them. Maybe sending an encouraging card? Or a care package? Making a meal for a family whose mom or dad is studying? Providing restaurant gift cards for students living away from home? Or gas cards for a student traveling back and forth to classes frequently? How about offering child care during exam time?

Here is a list of those who we know are students. If you know of someone else, or if you are one of the ones taking classes, please let us know so we can include all students in our prayers.

Pate Cardwell, Columbia Southern University, On Line Bachelor of Applied Science in Fire Administration program

Rene Guidroz, University of South Alabama

Tessie Helton-Carrel, Faulkner State Community College, Culinary Arts Program

Tracy King, Bossier City Community College

Karely Kleinschmidt, Faulkner State Community College

Tara Morrow, Pensacola State College, Physical Therapist Assistant program to earn Associates Degree in Applied Science.

Philip Melton, University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, On Line Christian Leadership Program.

Zach Melton, Central Alabama Community College

Karleigh Neese, University of South Alabama

Tanya Vetrano, Faulkner State Community College, Criminal Justice

MISSION AND SERVICE

Note from our missionaries:

Dear Friends at Swift Presbyterian Church,

Larry and I wish you a Merry Christmas! Thank you for the financial support you have given us this year and your prayers for us personally, those we work with, and the country of Congo. Through your support, millions of people in Congo, particularly women and children, are receiving better health care, and the medical work of the Presbyterian Church in Congo is being strengthened. Wishing you God's many blessings in 2016!

Larry and Inge Sthresley

Church Officer Training

On January 9th, sixteen Swift Church elders and deacons will attend the **Church Officer Leadership Training (COLT)** at Springhill Presbyterian Church. There they will attend workshops, share ideas with other elders and deacons and feel the value of a connectional church. **If you wish to carpool, please be at the church before 7:30am.**

Missionaries At Swift on February 14, 2016

Gwenda and John Fletcher, Presbyterian missionaries to the Congo, will be at Swift Church on February 14th. They will speak briefly at both worship services, talk in detail about their work during the Sunday School hour, and will be our guests at a lunch following worship. Come hear them talk about their role in proclaiming and living Christ.

About John and Gwenda Fletcher's ministry

In January 2009 John and Gwenda Fletcher were appointed to serve with the Presbyterian Community of Congo (CPC) in the Kasai region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

John works with the Christian Medical Institute of the Kasai (IMCK), helping the staff build and maintain a unified network of all the CPC's mission hospitals. Although John's primary surgical responsibilities are at the Good Shepherd Hospital, his broader charge is to work with the CPC medical director in support of the CPC medical program. He teaches medical residents, medical students and nursing students at the IMCK and other mission hospitals.

The CPC came out of the efforts of the "American Presbyterian Congo Mission," which existed from 1891 to 1970 and has been a fully autonomous church since 1961. The CPC serves a large part of the population in West and East Kasai through its ministries of evangelism, health, education and development.

Gwenda fills a position that World Mission has long been recruiting for: education consultant. She works with the CPC, helping the church with teacher training, administration and community involvement.

IN THE COMMUNITY

ULTREYA

What is Ultreya?

It is a gathering of Cursillistas (and those who might want to see what Cursillo is all about, so bring a friend!) Lunch, fellowship, singing, a council report, and a devotional are part of the program. Optional: lots of hugs! This is a time to gather with your Cursillo brothers and sisters. It's like a Cursillo reunion and no reunion is complete without the whole family, so we hope to see you there.

Ultreya is January 16 at First Pres. in Pensacola:

33 E Gregory St, Pensacola, FL 32502

It starts at noon with a potluck lunch.

Join us for fellowship, food, singing, news, and a devotional.

What to Bring: a friend, a hug (or two or three!!), a dish to share, a voice for singing and a heart for loving

Ecumenical Community Lenten Lunches Begin February 11, 2016

The lunches are light, but the music and worship are full and rich! The lunches begin at 11:30 and end at 12:30pm. Save these dates:

February 11, 2016

Speaker: Rev. June Jernigan
U M District Superintendent

February 18, 2016

Speaker: Rev. Jonathan Wallace
First Presbyterian Church

February 25, 2016

Speaker: Pastor Linda McGowin
New Fellowship Church

March 3, 2016

Speaker: Msgr. Stephen Martin
St. Bartholomew Catholic Church

March 10, 2016

Speaker: Pastor J. P. Wilson
Liberty Church

March 17, 2016

Speaker: Pastor Bennie Richardson
Morningstar Missionary Baptist
(Swift Church is providing lunch this week)

Contact Philip Melton to help out. 213-6505)



Swift Church Preschool

January Newsletter

December flew by and I hope your Christmas was magical. Even though there isn't a chill in the air yet, we are starting our month talking about Winter and Arctic animals. What better way to get into the winter spirit than to have our second annual snowball fight! That is correct, I said snowball fight. We don't get the white stuff down here so we are going to use marshmallows again.

Now, marshmallows aren't snow, we all know that. We are using our IMAGINATIONS. We will be pretending that the marshmallows are cold and made of snow. Sounds silly to some people but critical thinking skills, and creative problem solving skills are important to a child's development. In short, letting a child use his or her imagination is not a waste of time, in fact it is as important as learning to read.

As a child, eons ago, I remember running through our neighborhood creek, exploring the rocks and looking for frogs. We would make forts out of blankets and ride our bikes until the sun went down. Today our children are surrounded by electronics, which are full of apps and games and ways to keep them busy. We give our children tablets, laptops and hand held electronic games. While these items are fun and do provide chances to learn and play, using our imagination seems to be falling by the wayside. The phrase "I'm bored" is heard more often and they need to know how to entertain themselves. What would happen if a child, reliant on electronics to be happy, was given a box of blocks? A box that came with no instructions just a simple box full of blocks. Sure, at first there may be some resistance, but eventually that child will play. They will create something wonderful and a spark will ignite the sleeping imagination. They might even start to tell you a wonderful story about their creation that is full of creativity. All from blocks. The following article has wonderful ways to help your child's imagination grow! <http://www.brighthorizons.com/family-resources/e-family-news/2014-nurturing-creativity-and-imagination-for-child-development/>

Important dates:

- ♥ 1/1 NO SCHOOL
- ♥ 1/13 SPIRIT DAY
- ♥ 1/15 SNOWBALL FIGHT!!!
- ♥ 1/18 NO SCHOOL MLK DAY

Please send in 1 bag of
super large
marshmallows for our
snowball fight.

*Creative play is like a spring that
bubbles up from deep within a
child.*

-Joan Almon

Reminders:

- ✓ Tennis Shoes and socks every day
- ✓ LABEL EVERYTHING THAT COMES TO SCHOOL
- ✓ Drop off your child no later than 9am please
- ✓ SIGN IN AND OUT YOUR CHILD IN THE KITCHEN