

THE SALTSHAKER

MARCH 2022 | VOLUME 258

Mercy Sunday MARCH 20

In Scripture, the Diaconate is tasked with the care of the marginalized, neglected, and impoverished. The “widows and orphans” of Scripture.

Acts 6:1-7 – The neglected widows led to the creation of the office of deacon.

James 1:27 – “Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.”

Because this ministry is so vast in nature, the Diaconate appoints godly men and women to assist them in this work. That’s the Mercy Team, and our task is to work in Poverty Alleviation and human flourishing.

WHAT IS POVERTY ALLEVIATION?

“A process in which people, both the materially poor and the materially non-poor, are empowered to move closer to living in right relationship with God, self, others, and the rest of creation” (from *Helping Without Hurting in Church Benevolence*).

HOW DO WE PRACTICALLY DO THIS?

INSIDE THE CHURCH:

- Our call is first to the household of the saints (our own church body)
- As we are made aware of needs within the church body, we develop care teams of 3-6 people to walk alongside them long-term

OUTSIDE THE CHURCH:

- “Cold Calls” – Ask people to fill out a “Mercy Ministry Questionnaire” and then meet face to face with 2 people from the diaconate and/or Mercy Team
- Partner with other ministries

MINISTRY PARTNERS

The ministry partners of the AVPC Mercy Team include: Urban Hope Community Church, Oak Mountain Ministries, Clerestory Jobs Ministry, Lifeline Foster Care training, Foundations Early Learning & Family Center, Sav-A-Life, Jump Start Prison Ministries, and Christian Service Mission

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

On Sunday, March 20, Mercy Team members will be sharing more in Sunday School classes about how you can support and get involved with your Mercy Team. Then, we will have lunch together after the late service with guest, Mitch Haubert, from *Jump Start Prison Ministries*. *Jump Start* aims to transform the lives of prisoners from the inside out. We look forward to this time together and we hope you can join us. All are welcome.

INSIDE

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Some of you have been following the voting in our denomination on the amendments addressing the PCA's requirements for its church officers (elders and deacons) regarding homosexuality. These were amendments to our Book of Church Order, and they just recently failed to get the required two-thirds affirmation from the 88 presbyteries. I want to make just two points about this.

Does the failure of these amendments mean that the PCA has become more tolerant of the sin of homosexuality? The answer to this question is a clear and unqualified "No." All in the PCA agree that homosexual behavior, homosexual lust, and homosexual desires are all sins. The report stating our understanding of the Bible's teaching on human sexuality has garnered near universal approval among us (you can see this report on the internet via a search for "PCA report on Human Sexuality"). This report is clear in stating that homosexuality is a sin against God. The disagreement among us concerns the best way to fight for the purity of the church in the face of our society's pressure to approve of and normalize all manner of sexuality that the Bible clearly forbids. Many feel that singling out one sin like these amendments do is not the best way to fight for biblical morality, and that is one of the chief reasons for its failure.

The second point I want to make is that this has become a divisive issue that has the potential to divide our denomination. It is time to be praying for the peace of the PCA as we head into our annual General Assembly that meets this summer here in Birmingham. There are PCA pastors who are mischaracterizing the failure of these amendments as caving in to cultural pressure, or as allowing self-identifying homosexuals to be officers in the church. The truth is that we do allow men to be pastors who admit that this is a temptation they continue to battle, as long as they continue the fight against it, remain faithful to biblical commands concerning sexual morality, and affirm that their chief identity is in Christ. As the report mentioned above clearly states, they are to name their sins, but they are not named by their sins. It is no different for any other sin. All our officers fight sin, whether it's the sin of laziness, self-righteousness, pornography, gluttony, homosexuality, the idolatry of pastoral success, or any number of a long list of sins. As long as a person keeps fighting, putting to death sin, he is welcome as a member in our church or an officer, no matter the specific sin.

minutes

SESSION MEETING • JANUARY 18, 2022

- The Session, by unanimous consent, agreed to allow the use of credit and debit cards for any giving to the church.
- Brad Allison presented and reviewed the 2022 assignments for ruling elders.
- Judicial Commission Minutes, in which a member was put under church discipline, were approved.

DIACONATE MEETING • FEBRUARY 8, 2022

- The Diaconate unanimously approved changes in Finance team leadership from Josh Putman to Steve Klose as Chair and Russell Lloyd as Diaconate representative.
- Russell Lloyd shared that the surplus from the 2021 budget was put into various funds to include Capital Reserve, Capital Reserve Equipment, Capital Reserve Roofing, and General Fund Cash Flow Reserve.
- Altadena Park Improvement Committee Report: a new park sign is planned.

MEET OUR NEW MEMBER



HELLO
my name is

Dennis Self

HOW DID YOU FIRST FIND OUT ABOUT OUR CHURCH?

I don't remember; I have known about Altadena Valley Presbyterian Church for many years.

WHAT HAVE YOU ENJOYED ABOUT AVPC THE MOST?

The worship service and sermons, Sunday School, and fellowship.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN A CHRISTIAN? Since I was a young boy.

WHERE WERE YOU BORN AND RAISED AND WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER MOST ABOUT YOUR CHILDHOOD?

I was born in Fairfield and raised in Pleasant Grove, Alabama. I remember growing up on a small farm and church experiences most of all.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO IN THE NEXT 10 YEARS? Living in fellowship with God. Learning more and more about God. Seeking God. Loving people. Sharing life with God and people.

I KNEW I WAS GROWN UP WHEN... my body began to show its age. But I'm not grown up yet. I won't be until I am in the presence of Jesus Christ.

I ALWAYS THOUGHT IT WOULD BE GREAT TO... Live in England for at least three years, travelling around the country, seeing and learning. One could learn so much!

PEOPLE WOULD BE SURPRISED IF THEY KNEW... I began working on a Master of Divinity when I was 70 and completed it in four years.

WHEN I HAVE FREE TIME I ENJOY... Reading, always reading, studying scripture and supporting literature. Watching football. Walking and enjoying nature. Being with family... I really love being with family.

MY ALL-TIME FAVORITE MOVIE IS... *Amazing Grace* and *Hunt for Red October* is a close second.

MY FAVORITE RESTAURANT IS... Uncle Sam's Barbecue (Hueytown) **BECAUSE...** their ribs and sides are great.

WHAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY READING? The Bible and *The Moody Bible Commentary* for study with the Bible, *The Fire That Consumes*, and *The Screwtape Letters*.

MY HOPE FOR AVPC IS THAT IT COULD... always be faithful to the Gospel and the Bible.

OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED

Tired of being at home? Looking for something worthwhile to do?
Think about joining us for one of these involvement opportunities!

MARCH 5

WORK DAY

ALTADENA PARK

MARCH 20

MERCY SUNDAY

JOIN US FOR LUNCH

APRIL 16

EASTER EGG HUNT

WE NEED WORKERS AND
CANDY

APRIL 24

WOMEN'S LUNCHEON

FREESTYLE LUNCH
IN HOMES

MAY 15

PRAYER IN THE PARK

GATHER IN THE PARK FOR PRAYER

AVPC PEOPLE NEWS

OUR CONDOLENCES

We extend our deepest sympathies to Hunter Boggs following the death of his cousin, Micah.

We extend our deepest sympathies to Shirley Wilson following the death of her brother, David Feusner.

We extend our deepest sympathies to Aretha Jackson following the death of her grandmother.



MOVING ON TO A NEW CAREER

After a decade (plus some) of faithful service as our Children's Director, Betty Carter officially retired from that position on Sunday, January 30, 2022. Betty was honored by her church family with a short ceremony after the early service that day. But don't worry! Betty and Jon will still be seen 'round these parts and no doubt will still be serving wherever needed.

We wish Betty our best as she has already started working as a counselor with Daymark Counseling.

Congrats!



Congrats to Christy Robeson and Connor Bingham, who were married on February 5! We are thrilled for you both! May God richly bless your marriage.

Their new address is:
3703 Inverness Cliffs Dr.
Birmingham, AL 35242

WOMEN'S MINISTRY



In January, we had a Winter Ladies' Luncheon where we met in small groups in homes, restaurants, and even the Fellowship Hall. Did you miss out? Great news! We will do this again so mark your calendars for April 24 and July 24. We are hoping and planning for a traditional Fall Luncheon in the Fellowship Hall with all the women together on September 18. I hope you can join in for at least one of these luncheons.



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

In *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'Engle, Meg Murry perceives the world and her circumstances one way, only to be jolted into the unseen where a seeming war is raging. This is a repetitive pattern throughout literature and entertainment: the seen is only a doorway to the unseen. This rhythm of entertainment echoes the anchored truth in Hebrews 11:1, "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for, and certain of what we do not see." There's hope in knowing this seen world's sufferings and challenges are threads of the unseen world around us. I keep returning to this truth as I embark on this new season as director of the children's ministry. In the seen, there is so much beauty, but it's also discouraging when I expected things to be one way and realize God's launching plan is very different than mine. There's been days where I have felt like I was playing tug-of-war with God.



Last week I received a call from Oak Mountain Elementary's principal. She told me that Bentley was the state winner for the State Superintendent Art Contest, and Carol Popwell would be honored as her teacher! (They are going to lunch with the Governor!) This one moment reminded me that I'm not in a tug-of-war; God may allow me to think I have strength for a moment, but it's like a Daddy holding up the weight while the toddler's hand is on it, thinking he's the strong one. I had been fighting God on some parenting struggles, and Bentley's celebration was a kiss from God, reminding me He holds and loves her more than me.

God loves this ministry, this church, these children and you more than I ever could. He's weaving the seen and unseen for our good and His glory, and He delights in me – and you - when He sees me pressing into His weight of glory with my feeble little hand.

Because of Jesus,
Catie Lumpkin, *Children's Ministry Director*

GOD'S HOUSE KINDERGARTEN



Mrs. Peggy's Kindergarten class having fun with Hat Day for the letter H



Miss Barbara's 3K pizza & pajama day



Mrs. Kayla's 3K class painting on Valentine's Day



Mrs. Rivers 2K having fun making "snow"

YOUTH HAPPENINGS

It seems like every day there is another example of the church and God's people under siege. We read daily about the increasing hostility our culture has for Christianity. We regularly read about brothers and sisters, both lay members of the Church and ecclesiastical leaders, turning away from Jesus, following false teachings. We see and read about new ways our young people are particularly targeted for indoctrination into the non-doctrine of this world. It can feel like we are surrounded and that the circle of enemies is growing closer and tighter. Our natural response to this is fear and anger. However, should this be where we camp out?

I have been pondering Gideon recently and I believe his (read: The Lord's) defeat of Israel's enemy Midian is instructive to us today. The Midianites were massing forces on the outskirts of Israel and had been harassing the people for quite some time, acting as the proverbial school bully stealing lunch money. How does God intend to rid Israel of this powerful enemy? By a young man with no confidence in himself. Through an army that is outnumbered already and then further whittled down to a laughable 300 soldiers. (Do we see parallels of this today?) On top of that, what super weapons do these 300 soldiers take into battle? Torches and trumpets. That's it. Look it up in Judges 7. Torches and trumpets. The light of Christ and the clarion call of the word of God. Through faith these are our weapons today, just as they were for Gideon and his army. Time and time again, the Lord has proven the words of Deuteronomy 31:8 to be true: "It is the Lord who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed." Friends, this is a truth that we can take to the bank, because it has already been taken there...and it's growing interest.

Peace,
Clint Cvacho, *Youth Director*

Have a safe
Spring Break!

LOOKING AHEAD...

MARCH 30: Deadline to sign up for mission trip and first team meeting

MAY 21: Mission Trip Fundraiser Event

JUNE 2-3: Senior High Rafting Trip

JUNE 20-24: The Edge (Junior High)

JULY 16-23: Yakama Mission Trip

SUMMER MISSION TRIP

The youth will be returning this summer to join Sacred Road Ministries for a week serving the Yakama people in Washington State. The entire team that went in 2019 was deeply impacted by this experience and I am excited to see what the Lord will do in us this year! The trip consists of construction/manual labor in the morning with kids' club activities in the afternoon at one of the housing projects on the reservation. This year we are opening the trip up to one parent from each household who wants to join their student. The deadline to register is March 30 and any remaining spots will be offered to a second parent or others who may want to join us who are not in the youth group. If you would like to support our team as we head July 16-23 there will be a couple of opportunities to do so. We will once again be running the 100 Envelopes fundraiser after Easter and, this year we will be sponsoring a church-wide talent show on Saturday, May 21! More information to come about both of these events!

MISSIONS NEWS



Dear AVPC Family,
On behalf of the AVPC Missions Committee, I want to express our strong thank you for making 2022 Missions Week very special. From the hardy band who came out in the cold on Saturday to participate in a work morning for Restoration



Academy, to the phone call that Dr. Kim received as he left town, you were so encouraging. Thank you for your attendance to hear great teaching and enjoy fellowship times offered with our missionaries. Thank you also, for bringing your "future missionaries" (our AVPC children) to several fun times.

Finally, a thank you from our missionaries - some of whom have been supported by AVPC for over 25 years said, "I so love coming to AVPC, because I feel so loved when here." Another newer missionary said, I felt loved by each person I engaged with. Then one missionary commented on how special their community group meeting was, to meet old friends and make new ones. Plans for next year have already started and if you would like to be involved, let me know! But again, our sincere thank you for your support this year.

Dan Dougherty,
for the AVPC Missions Committee



FAITH PROMISE UPDATE

20% FULLY FUNDED
Help us reach our goal to continue supporting our missionaries in 2022

28 PLEDGES
totaling

\$78,392
towards a

GOAL OF \$385,000

We are so thankful to the Lord for the Faith Promises made at this year's Missions Weekends.

If you've not yet made a faith promise, please pray about doing so by the deadline on Sunday, March 13.

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 3/1 David Allen
- 3/2 Larry Church
- 3/3 Brooklyn Collier
- 3/3 Clint Cvacho
- 3/4 Catie Lumpkin
- 3/4 Carol Popwell
- 3/5 Jim Davis
- 3/5 Mark McCallum
- 3/6 Tom Hinke
- 3/6 Tara McCallister
- 3/6 Daniel Sommer
- 3/9 Courtney McCrory
- 3/10 Tricia Foster
- 3/11 Bailey Collier
- 3/12 Nancy Chambers
- 3/12 Rob Richey
- 3/15 Brandon Ames
- 3/16 Clayton Rasmussen
- 3/17 Joel Bostrom
- 3/17 Jay Lloyd
- 3/17 Sue Ann Oaks
- 3/18 Rebecca Linder
- 3/20 Carol Apol
- 3/20 Michael Chick
- 3/20 Gaylon Rogers
- 3/20 Randy Tipton
- 3/20 Shari Wimberly
- 3/21 Jim Baird
- 3/21 Suzanne Brown
- 3/23 Reese Rasmussen
- 3/24 Matthew Stromberg
- 3/26 Jack Cwynar
- 3/27 Ava Labreche
- 3/27 Faye Walls
- 3/27 Gayle Young
- 3/28 Nancy Becker
- 3/28 Sherrill Coley
- 3/29 Kathy Light
- 3/30 Paden Franklin
- 3/30 Pete McAskile
- 3/31 Betty Jo Allison
- 3/31 Zoe Labreche
- 3/31 Allen Short

SAVE THE DATE...

APRIL 22
MEMBERSHIP WEEKEND

JUNE 6-10:
CAMP SOLID ROCK

JULY 5-8:
WACK WEEK

YOUNG ADULTS

PRESENTINES

Ever wanted to celebrate Presidents Day and Valentines on the same night? Now you can (a month late)! Join us on Friday, March 11 at 6:00 PM at the Youth House for dinner, the true story of Valentines, and presidential ceremony.

JOIN THE BOILER ROOM

Five young college students were spending a Sunday in London, so they went to hear the famed C.H. Spurgeon preach. While waiting for the doors to open, the students were greeted by a man who asked, "Gentlemen, let me show you around. Would you like to see the heating plant of this church?" They were not particularly interested, for it was a hot day in July. But they didn't want to offend the stranger, so they consented. The young men were taken down a stairway, a door was quietly opened, and their guide whispered, "This is our heating plant." Surprised, the students saw 700 people bowed in prayer, seeking a blessing on the service that was soon to begin in the auditorium above. Softly closing the door, the gentleman then introduced himself. It was none other than Charles Spurgeon. Would you join the Boiler Room Prayer Team as we harken back to the days of C. H. Spurgeon who would often declare that the power of his ministry came from the Lord answering the prayers of those praying for him in the boiler room of the church during worship services? See Danny Wachs or Michael MacCaughelty if interested.

JANUARY FINANCIAL REPORT

	BEGINNING BALANCE	INCOME	EXPENSES	TRANSFER	ENDING BALANCE
GENERAL FUND	\$0	\$142,423	\$104,369	\$-6,572	\$31,482
MISSIONS	\$0	\$17,864	\$30,000	\$6,572	\$-5,564
TOTAL	\$0	\$160,287	\$134,369	\$0	\$25,918