

Spring Hill Messenger

Spring Hill Presbyterian Church

Vol. 64 No. 3
March 2008

While It Was Yet Dark

All around the world, people will gather on March 23 for Easter sunrise services. Some will gather in snow with the prospect of spring flowers still a long way off. On the other hand, those in the southern hemisphere will be clinging to the last hints of summer. Whatever the weather, we gather at dawn.

Why? Because, almost 2000 years ago, some women went to the tomb of Jesus “while it was still dark,” as John 20:1 puts it, or “as the first day of the week was dawning” according to Matthew 28:1. Exactly which women went to the tomb depends on the Gospel account and, in the final analysis, is far less important than the rest of the story.

They went, not quite sure what to expect, and they found something beyond their wildest imagining. In one way or another, they encountered the risen Christ.

Perhaps that’s why we still gather on hillsides, on beaches, in churches, in the rain, in myriad places at break of day on Easter morning. Somehow, in the music, in the sunrise, in the grandeur of the setting, in the presence of a gathered few or a crowd, we also encounter the risen Christ yet again.

Hallelujah! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed.

Hallelujah!

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From the Pastor...

In his book, *The Ragamuffin Gospel*, Brennan Manning tells of an encounter he had with Christ. Manning was praying in a chapel in the Saragosa Desert in Spain when he heard the Voice say, "For love of you, I left My Father's side. For love of you I was spat upon, punched, beaten, and fixed to the wood of a cross." Brennan Manning walked out of the chapel and looked into the night sky and shouted, "Are You out of Your mind to have loved me so much?"

From the sacredness of that evening, Manning wrote Nineteen Mercies (quickly admitting that the Lord's mercies are innumerable). Here they are:

- (1) **Be here, now.** Discipline your time, your thoughts, your emotions. Be present to the Spirit of God. Read Psalm 139.
- (2) **Don't wait.** Don't wait until your act is cleaned up. Follow Jesus in your brokenness.
- (3) **Jesus wants your friendship.** The Gospel is for sinners. The love of Jesus is for people who have messed up, who don't feel worthy. With such people Jesus wants the deepest friendship.
- (4) **Cry out for the Spirit.** Pray continually for the Spirit of Jesus to give you a reckless trust, a real conversion, a radical break with sin, a forgiving and loving heart.
- (5) **The Person of Jesus.** Meditate on your relationship with the Savior. Read Mark 8:27-30; Romans 10:8-13.
- (6) **The call from the Cross.** Remember Paul's words: "I want to know Christ and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death." (Phil. 3:10)
- (7) **Through Jesus we know Abba.** "Anyone who has seen Me has seen the Father." (John 14:9) And what did Jesus do at the request of His Father? He paid the penalty for our sins.
- (8) **The God Who is love.** God's love for us never changes. Read John 4:7-16.
- (9) **God loves unconditionally.** God understands us. He is our Abba. Nothing can remove His love for us. Read Isaiah 49:15-16; Luke 15:11-33.
- (10) **We cry, "Abba!"** Jesus tells us that His daddy is our daddy. Read Galatians 3:26-4:7.
- (11) **The prayer of simple regard.** Pray (inhaling) "Abba" then (exhaling) "I belong to You."
- (12) **The freedom of serving.** Don't split theological hairs and get caught up in minutiae. Do what Jesus did. *Serve*. In *that* you will find joy.
- (13) **Healing through meal sharing.** Christian servanthood is not a matter of what we feel; it has everything to do with following Jesus' example. Invite to dinner someone with whom you have been estranged.

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Continued from page 2

- (14) **Washing feet**. Meditate on the humility of Jesus as He knelt to wash His disciples' feet.
- (15) **Freedom from your own contempt**. "Faith is the courage to accept that God loves me as I am and not as I should be, because I'm never going to be as I should be." Paul Tillich.
- (16) **Christ in the person next to you**. Remember what Jesus said about serving the neediest and lowliest and that in doing so "You have done it unto Me."
- (17) **Trust in the Father's delight**. Remember we are His children, loved unconditionally.
- (18) **Worry is an insult to the Father**. Jesus said, "There is no need to be afraid, little flock, for it has pleased your Father to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12:32)
- (19) **The grace of reckless love**. Authentic Christianity is abandoning our pride and fear to the immeasurable love of our God and Savior.

In preparation for Easter, I invite you to think on these mercies and find in them peace beyond understanding.

In His love,
Norman

Molly's Musings

"Hot, Cold or Lukewarm?"

To the angel of the church in Laodicea write:

These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation. I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth. You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see. Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent. Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me. To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

Last Sunday night, after Norman's sermon, "The Revelation to the Church in Philadelphia: *Sixth in a Series on the Revelation to the Seven Churches*," I had a dream that I was witnessing the revelation to the Church at Laodicea. When I woke, I had the compelling urge to turn to the Scriptures and read this revelation I had just dreamt.

Before I proceed, I must first note that I have never studied the book of Revelation at any length or depth. If I was playing Trivial Pursuit and had to name the 7 churches that received the revelations, I could probably only name 3 or 4 – and that's only because I've heard Dr. McCrummen preach on them most recently. The more I reflect on the dream, the more amazed I am. I dreamt about a church that I probably could not have previously named.

Continued on page 4

Do I think God speaks to people in dreams? Absolutely. He did in the Scriptures, and I believe He can speak to His children in any way He chooses. Do I think God was speaking to me through this dream? Without a doubt, I feel He was and is pointing to a truth I should take to heart personally and share with those in my body of Christ.

In many ways our church and community are not unlike the church in Laodicea. We live in a culture of unprecedented wealth and many can easily say, "I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing." Jesus has a warning, however, for people and churches that find themselves in such a comfortable spot. In the ease of luxury, it is all too easy to be lulled into one of Satan's greatest traps: self reliance. Spiritually speaking, when we have more than we need, we are easily deceived into thinking we're not hungry or thirsty so coming to the banquet table (also known as worship, Bible Study, Sunday School, opportunities for Christian fellowship etc.) for spiritual nurture becomes a second or even third priority. When Jesus is anything but our first priority, we are lukewarm about our faith.

The question I think we have to answer is: are we, as a church and individuals, lukewarm? Do we first recognize our wretchedness and rely on the grace of Jesus Christ to save us from our sins? As a result, do we above all desire to be His body, do His work, grow in His grace, and serve Him with all we are? Ultimately, He must be the driving force in our lives which guides everything else.

As a church, we have to answer these questions: do we merely reflect the culture or do we stand for Jesus Christ as an agent of change in our culture? Do we value His word and His work above all else or do we just give lip service to the importance of the Bible and the ministries it directs? Are we fostering the transformation of lives and equipping people to be disciples for Jesus Christ or do people leave our campus relatively unaffected? Do we have a heart for the lost and the unchurched or do we prefer to sit contentedly in our pews inside the walls of our church? Are we willing to get out of our comfort zones and sacrifice in order to serve His purposes or are we satisfied with where we are? Are we willing to trust Him completely to provide for our needs and lead us in the direction we need to go or do we get nervous and question His guidance when He leads us down a path that we might deem thorny?

Jesus warns us because He loves us. My friends, it is time to stop playing church and get on with the real business of Jesus Christ. It is time to put aside the masks we wear and to authentically embrace who we are (sinners) and what we really need (grace, Christ, forgiveness, salvation). How can we be the church if we are lukewarm? How can we be the church if we don't have a heart for the things Jesus loved? There is possibly no greater damage we can do to the name of Jesus Christ than to convey indifference. Please, please hear His words. Impress them on your hearts. He demands more than half hearted devotion. Do not be deceived into thinking that He is willing to be third or fourth on your priority list.

I hope, in light of the truth that God has revealed through these Scriptures, we will all take this warning to heart and repent if He reveals our faith is lukewarm. He stands at the door and knocks. To the men and women that overcome, a throne awaits. Thanks be to God!

In Christ,
Molly

Easter is not a time for groping through dusty, musty tomes or tombs to disprove spontaneous generation or even to prove life eternal. It is a day to fan the ashes of dead hope, a day to banish doubts and seek the slopes where the sun is rising, to revel in the faith which transports us out of ourselves and the dead past into the vast and inviting unknown.

- Author unknown

One Great Hour of Sharing

One Great Hour of Sharing gives us the opportunity to share God's gift with people in need. We ask your prayers for this annual offering which will take place on Palm Sunday and Easter. These gifts will support Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, self-development, and the Presbyterian Hunger Program. Special envelopes will be in the pews.

Stewardship

We finished the 2007 financial year with remarkable success, coming out in the black. Our church has again responded to our financial goals in outstanding fashion. We not only finished 2007 in the black, but met our 2008 budget year goal with your pledges.

The Session has carefully considered the recommendations of the Budget Committee and passed an insightful and prudent budget. We are not without ongoing challenges. Our need to expand our programs and supplement our staff continues. We will face challenges in maintaining and improving our aging facility.

What is heartening is the strong commitment of our church family to strengthen our church at this time of growth. We all should take satisfaction in and be grateful for our efforts.

You'll want to know:

2008 pledges	\$1,175,982
Receipts as of January 30, 2008	79,712

Respectfully,
R. Gordon Mowry

Join the Sound Team

Persons are needed to share responsibilities for recording our 11:00 worship and special services. Training will be provided. For more information, contact Randy Sheets at the church.


Get to know your Church Website

www.shpc.us

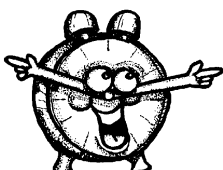
Did you know that you can access copies of the sermons, bulletin announcements, lists of elder/deacon greeters, newsletters and more on our website? For fun, look at the photo gallery, to see familiar faces in a variety of church activities and programs.

Pianos Available

To assist the SHPC piano maintenance and replacement plan, the Session approved the liquidation of several of our pianos that need refurbishment. Persons interested in acquiring 1-2 upright pianos (free or by donation) or a small grand piano (\$400; the Fellowship Hall Brambach piano on the west wall) should contact director of music Randy Sheets at the church.

BLOOD DRIVE  Our Blood Drive will be Sunday, March 2 in the Bullard Building from 8:30 am. to 1:00 p.m.

Your help is needed. Please sign up to donate. It only takes a few minutes of your time. The Red Cross now requires a valid driver's license, donor card, or two (2) alternative forms of ID to be shown before you can give blood. Please call the church office (342-1550) or use the tear-off in the bulletins.



Time Change!

Daylight Savings Time begins on Sunday, March 9. Remember to turn your clocks **forward** one hour before going to bed on Saturday.

The first duty of love is to listen.

- Paul Tillich

Presbyterian Women



PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN

Presbyterian Women's Coordinating Team will meet on Wednesday, March 5 at 9:30 a.m. in the Conference Room.

Circles will meet on Wednesday, March 12 as follows:

#1 at 10:00 a.m. at the home of Janie Sims (7051 Stonebridge Ct.)

#2 at 9:15 a.m. At 9:30 a.m. at Atlantic Bread; 10:00 a.m. we will go to Mulherin Home for Easter Egg Hunt. (bring 2 dozen stuffed Easter eggs). Childcare provided at the church at 9:15 a.m.

#3 at 9:30 a.m. in the Parlor

#4 at 7:15 p.m. in the Parlor

The 20th annual Spring Gathering will be Thursday, March 27 at Evergreen Presbyterian in Dothan. March 20th. Registration begins at 9:00 a.m. Cost is \$10.00 which includes lunch. More information is posted on a flyer on the bulletin board outside Fellowship Hall. Also watch the bulletin for further details.

The Member Involvement Opportunities

The Member Involvement Committee is replacing Care Groups with Care Ministry. Care Ministry offers opportunities for members of the congregation to express a loving concern for other members of the church family.

These opportunities are:

Bereavement Ministry Team: Provides a meal for the family before or after a memorial service. The family may also request coffee and punch during visitation.

Care Meal Team: Provides a meal when church members have an illness or a new baby.

New Member Reception Team: Provides a reception once a year for new members and their sponsors.

Call Marcia Autterson 660-1727 or Nancy Adams 342-6130 or email Marcia Autterson at tmautterson@bellsouth.net if you would like to be a member of one of the caring teams.

Thank you.
Member Involvement

Library News



With the motto, "The Church Reformed and Always Being Reformed", and renewed interest in Campus Ministry; can a congregation prepare for a new generation of seekers and the post modern church which will meet their needs, searching for answers in their lives today?

Perhaps the following books will help to accomplish this:

Thom S. Rainer: *Simple Church – returning to God's process for making disciples*; Alan Hirsch: *The Forgotten Ways – restructuring the missional church*; D. A. Carson: *Becoming Conversant with the Emerging Church – understanding a movement and its implications*; H. Stanley Wood, Ed.: *Extraordinary Leaders in Extraordinary Times – unadorned clay pot messengers*; Robert H. Bullock, Jr., ed - *Presbyterians Being Reformed – reflections on what the church needs today*.

VBS registration form

This form is on page 11. If you need more forms, go to the SHPC website, click on newsletters, March 2008 and print the PDF (page 11)

Service Committee

The Service Committee currently assists over 20 agencies in our community. Beginning this month we will highlight an agency each month to enlighten the congregation of our mission. This month we will highlight the Service Center. Marcy Harris is the liaison between the committee and this agency.

The Service Center is a social service agency that provides emergency assistance to individuals and families in Mobile County during times of crisis. Assistance is available to all persons regardless of race, creed, gender or age at no charge. The Center also offers a representative payee service to a limited number of individuals who, due to mental illness or retardation, chemical addiction, illiteracy, age or physical disability, are unable to manage their own finances. In these cases, the clients' monthly checks are directly deposited into individual bank accounts from which clients' bills are paid. A weekly stipend is provided for food and personal needs. Depending on each client's circumstances, a small fee is charged for this service. This service supports individuals and families in maintaining independent living and minimizes financial exploitation by others.

The annual programs, Tools for Schools, Angel Tree, and Santa's Workshop help meet the children's needs for basic school supplies and gifts at Christmas. Through collaborative efforts with others these material goods are provided to families most in need.

Trained caseworkers interview clients at the Center or in their homes and verify their needs to determine the assistance that is needed. Responding to immediate needs, as well as challenging clients to address his/her issues that have contributed to his/her present emergency, are keys to creating a plan of action for each client. Through providing information and referrals to other programs, support is given to clients seeking long-term solutions to underlying problems. Each person is encouraged to become self-sufficient through job training, obtaining employment and participating in available programs.

Collaboration with other agencies and faith-based and community groups creates a necessary network in responding to needs that the Service Center cannot address alone. The underlying efforts to decrease the effects of poverty in Mobile must be a joint effort.

On the web: <http://mobilecss.org/>

Camp Pinetreat Summer 2008

- June 22-27: Night Owls 1 (rising 7th - 9th graders)
- July 6-11: Teen Leadership Camp (rising 10th -11th graders)
- July 9-11: Footsteps (rising 1st-3rd graders)
- July 13-18: Journey 1 (rising 3rd – 6th graders)
- July 20-25: Journey 2 (rising 3rd – 6th graders)
- July 27-Aug. 1: Night Owls 2 (rising 7th – 9th graders)



Pinetreat

Easter Lilies

Lilies will be part of the sanctuary decorations for worship on Easter Sunday, March 23. The plants will be taken to shut-ins by the Service Committee in the name of the church following the 11:00 a.m. worship service on the 23rd. Cost will be \$12.00. Please call the church office if you wish to place a memorial for a loved one by helping to decorate the sanctuary. Deadline is March 14.



Editors: Dan and Laura Sellers and marshmallow cats from Ti Amo and Al E. Cat.

Email: Dan: desellers@earthlink.net

Laura: handbell@earthlink.net



Easter Egg Hunt

Join us for the Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday, March 16 immediately following the 11:00 a.m. service. There will be a family lunch and Easter Egg Hunt in the Bullard Building for families with children 5th grade and below. Please call the church office or use the tear-off in the bulletin for reservations. If anyone is interested in helping with the Easter Egg Hunt and lunch/or sharing an Easter story with our children during this time, please call Kelley Lamberth (343-5733).

Lenten Reflections

"Lenten Reflections with Henri Nouwen as our Guide" is the title of a seminar being presented at St. Paul's Episcopal Church on March 12 at 7:00 p.m. The presentation will be given by Sue Motteller, a Sister of St. Joseph, a teacher and long-time member of L'Arche Daybreak where she lives. She has worked with people with disabilities there and served as Community Leader for a number of years. More details can be found on the bulletin board outside Fellowship Hall.

You may lose your way, or you may not.
But you can always walk with God.
You may suffer, or you may not.
But you can always find deep happiness in Christ.
You may know fear, or you may not. But you can always find encouragement in the Holy Spirit."

- Kent Keith, Jesus Did It Anyway:
The Paradoxical Commandments for Christians

Jesus uttered a triumphant cry: "It is accomplished!" and it was as though he had said: "Everything has begun!"

- Nikos Kazantzakis,
The Last Temptation of Christ

Educational Outreach

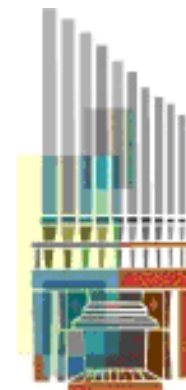
Educational Outreach wants to remind the congregation of the need for box tops, Bruno's green cash register receipts and Campbell soup labels. For more information, refer to the bulletin board near the choir hall.

Village of Springhill news

The Village of Springhill will have our 3rd Annual Clean-Up Day on Saturday, April 5th from 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Our community has made great strides over the past three years. We would like to have involvement from the churches in our area and would greatly appreciate any participation. Our volunteers will distribute flyers in the neighborhoods to encourage people to join together for hotdogs and music on Saturday, April 5th.

Please contact Brennan Myers at 344-9922 or bmyers@asfinc.us with any suggestions. In addition we would like to know if you have a specific problem area(s) around your church so that we may encourage our volunteers to assist as well.

**Recital by
The Organist of Coventry Cathedral, England
Alistair Reid**



Thursday, April 24, 7:00 p.m.



death shall
no longer
have
dominion

The prayers and sympathy of the congregation are with the family of Marie McCollum in her death on February 1.

Memorials

Memorials have been received for the following:

Marie McCollum
Mary Crenshaw
Hewitt Smith

From the following:

Ruth Fitzgerald
Jimmy and Jane Bledsoe
Billy and Sue McLean
Hilary Cabaniss
Ferd and Sue Zundel
Barnett Mill Works
US Machine Shop
Gulf Lumber
Whistler Machine Works
Technical Welding Service

I send low prayers along the ground.
These are for Jesus Christ;
asking him to heal all people.

I send high prayers into the sky.
These are for our God in heaven,
asking God to bring peace to the world.

I send deep prayers into my heart.
These are for the Holy Spirit
asking the Spirit to heal and pacify my
heart.

- traditional Celtic prayer

So I am here -
I have not gone away,
I will not go away.
As long as anyone, anywhere, is
rejected
cast aside
spat upon
by the world - or,
worse still,
by the church -

I am here
to proclaim the same truth
once told to me:
Christ Jesus is risen for you,
and calls you by name.

- Donald Schmidt,
Bible Wonderings: Familiar Tales Retold

The opposite of love is not hate, it's indiffer-
ence. The opposite of art is not ugliness, it's in-
difference. The opposite of faith is not heresy,
it's indifference. And the opposite of life is not
death, it's indifference.

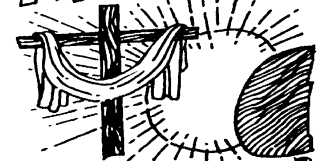
- Elie Wiesel



ALLELUIA



Good Friday



Lectionary for the Lord's Day

March 2008

- 2 *4th Sunday in Lent*
1 Sam. 16:1-13; Ps. 23; Eph. 5:8-14
John 9:1-41
- 9 *5th Sunday in Lent*
Ezek. 37:1-14; Ps. 130; Rom. 8:6-11
John 11:1-45
- 16 *Passion/Palm Sunday (Holy Week begins)*
Matt. 21:1-11; Os, 118:1-2, 19-29;
Isa. 50:4-9a; Ps. 31:9-16; Phil. 2:5-11;
Matt. 26:14-27:66 or Matt. 27:11-54
- 23 *Easter/Resurrection of the Lord*
Acts 10:34-43 or Jer. 31:1-6;
Ps. 118:1-2, 14-24; Col. 2:1-4 or
Acts 10:34-43 John 20:18 or
Matt. 28:1-10; Isa. 25:6-9; Ps 114
1 Cor. 5:6b-8; Luke 24:13-49
- 30 *2nd Sunday of Easter*
Acts 2:14a, 22-32; Ps. 1 Peter 1:3-9
John 20:19-31



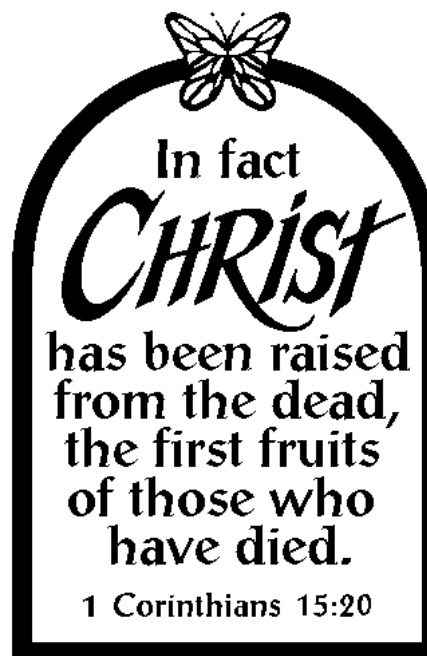
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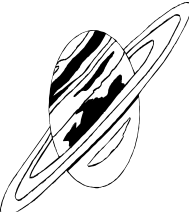
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30	31					

Church Calendar

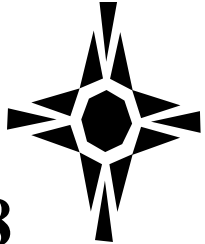
March 2008

- 2 Blood Drive – 8:30 – 1:00 p.m.
Men's Bible Study/Women's Bible Study – 5:00 p.m.
- 4 Committees
- 5 Presbyterian Women Coordinating Team – 9:30 a.m.
Lenten Noon Service – Mrs. Monnie Anderson
Bible Study and Supper – 5:45 p.m.
- 6 Women's Bible Study – 9:15 a.m.
First Thursday Lunch
- 9 Children's Musical – 8:30 and 11:00 a.m.
Men's Bible Study/Women's Bible Study – 5:00 p.m.
- 11 Men's Breakfast – 7:00 a.m.
Diaconate – 7:00 p.m.
- 12 Circles
Lenten Noon Service – Rev. David Mauldin
Bible Study and supper – 5:45 p.m.
- 13 Women's Bible Study – 9:15 a.m.
- 16 Easter Egg Hunt – Noon
Men's Bible Study/Women's Bible Study – 5:00 p.m.
- 17 Newsletter Deadline – 9:00 a.m.
- 18 Session – 7:00 p.m.
- 20 Maundy Thursday Communion Service – 7:00 p.m.
- 21 Good Friday Service – noon
- 23 Easter Sunday
- 24 Church office closed
- 27 Presbyterian Women's Spring Gathering – Evergreen Presbyterian in Dothan





Astronomical Grace



VBS REGISTRATION FORM 2008

VBS 2008 is being held Monday, August 4 – Friday, August 8th. Registration is limited to the first 150 children. Spring Hill Presbyterian Church members have priority until April 13th. VBS is open to children 3 years old – rising 5th graders. All children must be potty trained. VBS is free of charge. Please call or email Mendy Turnipseed (380-0618, robbieturnipseed@bellsouth.net) with any questions.

Are you a member of Spring Hill Presbyterian church? (circle one) Yes No

If no, what church do you attend? _____

Name of Child: _____ Age: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone (Home): _____ (Cell): _____

Email Address: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Grade entering: _____

Emergency Contact and relation: _____

Mother's Name: _____

Father's Name: _____

Allergies and other medical conditions: _____

Name of a special friend your child might like to be with: _____

T-shirt size (circle one): Youth: S M L Adult: S M L

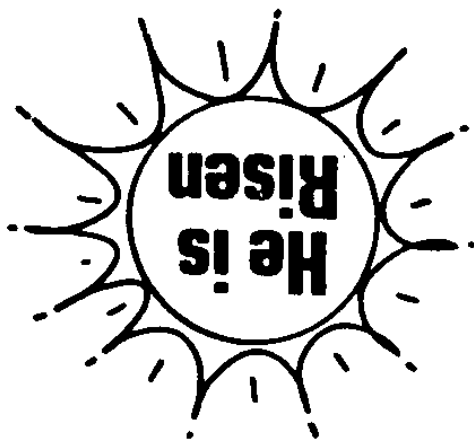
Would you be willing to donate food items for snack or volunteer to help during the week of VBS? If yes, circle which one. Donate food Volunteer to help

Additional comments/requests: _____

Office use only: Date registration received: _____

Spring Hill Presbyterian Church
10 Westminster Way
Mobile, 36688
Phone: 251-342-1550
Web site: www.shpc.us

Non-Profit
Organization
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Mobile, AL



*March
Newsletter*