



EPWORTH CHURCH NEWSLETTER

May 2024

(334) 298-3186

WWW.EPWORTH-PC.ORG

“Mom’s List” or “You Had Better Be Finished When I Get Home!”

When my mother went to town, she never left my siblings and me to our “own devices,” with idle time on our hands. Momma firmly believed in the adage: “Idle hands are the devil’s workshop!” She would leave each of us with a checklist of chores to finish before her unspecified but certain return. Although our respective lists seemed to be --at least in our child mind-- the approximate length of Webster’s Dictionary or a good set of encyclopedias, none of us were willing to take the risk of facing her sure and certain wrath should she return to find our chores undone. Frankly, I never ventured to put her to the test, fearing that she might require me to eat boiled okra, liver, or oysters.... as a due penalty for my transgression, a consequence I considered worse than anything else I could imagine.

Ironically, in due time I learned much about the grace of God, because His grace was so often manifested through the lovingkindness extended

towards me by my mother and because of her unconditional and unmerited love for me. Even to this day, I strive to do things that would please my mother—Edna Earle Grant (Parker) Bush—who outran us to the Father’s House in 2019, not because I *feared* her, but because I *loved* her and because she first loved me.

In the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 25, verses 14-30, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ tells a quite similar story in the Parable of the Talents. Each of three servants were given talents by their lord and master—to the first servant five talents, to the second servant two talents, and to the third servant one talent. When their lord and master returned from his journey, he held his servants accountable for the use of their talents during his absence. The first two servants heard these wonderfully rewarding words from their master: “Well done, good and



by Rev. Grant Parker

faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things.”

Our Lord and God has given *all* of us “talents” of time and abilities and resources. How we invest our “talents” matters much to Him. How we use our “talents” should matter to *us*, as well. Let’s use them for God’s good and His glory, and to make a difference in the lives of others! Then perhaps one day we too will hear our Lord and Master say to us at the end of our life’s journey, “well done, good and faithful servant!” Keep the faith, but share the gospel!

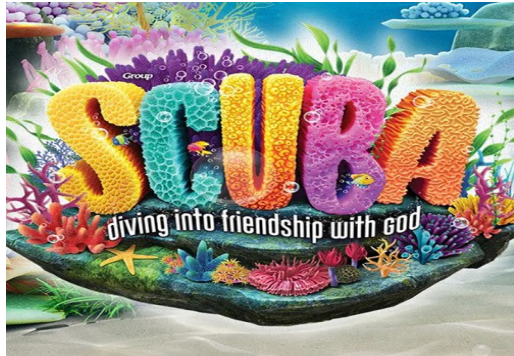
Your servant, because of Him!

Brother Grant

EPWORTH KIDZ CREW

Looking for Kindergarten Graduates!

We will recognize K-5 Graduates at the 11:00 service on Sunday, May 5^h. Please contact the church office: 334-298-3186, or Letha at 205-799-8547 to register your child's name, parent's name, and school name prior to this event.



SCUBA

"Take kids deep into an amazing undersea adventure where they'll experience the ever-flowing, never-ending love of God. At Scuba VBS, kids will be immersed in the Word and discover what living water is really all about!"

VBS

Your help is always needed and appreciated! Please sign up to help with DECORATIONS, TEACHING, CLEAN UP, KITCHEN, REGISTRATION, MUSIC, SOUND & VIDEO, NURSERY, PRESCHOOL. Check the website for online registration of Volunteers and Students.

*Background checks submitted by the church are required for all volunteers.

VBS VOLUNTEER WORKSHOP Will be held Sunday, June 4th at 4:00 pm.

All volunteers are encouraged to attend!

Dates for Vacation Bible School

Sunday, June 9th through Thursday, June 13th
6:00—8:30 pm

CHERUB CHOIR AND KIDZ CRUISE

Our last practice/meeting until next September will be May 5th.

Cherubs will sing on Mother's Day, May 12th.

Epworth Kidz Preschool & Epworth Mom's Day Out Registration

Please contact Letha at letha.parker@epworth-pc.org or 334-298-3186 to register your child for the **Summer MDO or Preschool, ages 3 and 4, beginning in August.**

LAST DAY FOR EPWORTH KIDZ PRESCHOOL - Thursday, May 16th

PRESCHOOL GRADUATION—Tuesday, May 21st at 6:00 pm in the Sanctuary.

MOM'S DAY OUT - Will be closed the week of May 28th and reopen for the Summer on Tuesday, June 18th.

MDO Summer Program will close the week of July 29th and the Fall program will open Tuesday, August 8th..



MERGE SUMMER KIDS CAMP / SCHOLARSHIPS

AGES: Completed 3rd – 6th grades

DATES: Monday-Thursday, July 9-12

We have 15 kids and 5 volunteers that will be attending camp this year. Epworth offers scholarships to each student to provide half the cost of the camp. This year's total cost for each attendee is \$220, so our scholarship for each student is \$110. If you would like to help with the cost of Summer Camp, please make donations through the Epworth Office to the FLETCHER FINDLATER CAMP SCHOLARSHIP FUND or give online to "Kids Summer Camp".

Thank you for your faithful support of this important ministry to kids each year. You are a blessing!



National Day of Prayer 2024
"Lift Up the Word - Light Up the World"

National Day of Prayer will be held at Epworth on **Thursday, May 2, 2024.**

Please save that day to join us in celebrating this special service. It will begin at 12:00 noon with special music, speakers, and many prayers for our country. The National Day of Prayer in 2024 will have the theme **"Lift Up the Word - Light Up the World."** "For you are my lamp, O Lord, and my God lightens my darkness. For by You I can run against a troop, and by my God I can leap over a wall. This God—His way is perfect; the word of the Lord proves true; He is a shield for all those who take refuge in Him." 2 Samuel 22:29-31

Please plan to join us and bring your friends. The contact person is Pam Shores, tel. (706) 464-0148.

Birthdays

May 1	Lindsay Petsch Claudia Hall
May 2	Sandra Rowan Paul Byrd Connor Sheppard
May 3	Mark Ensley
May 4	Gene Grantham
May 5	Kaila Lynn Nishimura Donnie Norton Caylin Tate Wanda Griffin
May 6	Jacob Head Raylan Woodham
May 7	Billy Belk
May 11	Joseph Wade Tristan Walrod
May 12	Mike Hamilton Sarah Garney
May 13	Tyler Green Amanda Head
May 14	Vickie Taylor Shepherd Clark
May 15	Dison Martin Miles Hamilton
May 16	Neil Reddish Cathy Head
May 17	Jennifer Head
May 18	Jared Martin Carrie Jones
May 20	Sandy Clay Jared Brewer James Hall Tucker Stone Ellis Yohn
May 21	Michele Lake
May 22	Beth Robinson Bailey O'Neill Jaxon Prins
May 23	Gail Hogge
May 24	Judy Grimes Brent Dillard
May 25	Monica Lawhon
May 26	Kirkland Ranew
May 29	Meg Clark

Anniversaries

May 1	Rich & Becky Coreno
May 5	Paul & Tina Byrd
May 10	Chris & Cindy Lamb
May 14	Roger & Teresa Cassman Bob & Jodi Wisor
May 17	Shaun & Karen Cameron
May 18	Brandon & Emily Sanford
May 19	Brian & Wendy Sieck Dalton & Caroline Pippins
May 20	Rejean & Shelley Lee
May 22	Rick & Patti Denzik Ralph & Vicky Moss
May 26	Josh & Amber McCart
May 30	Ross & Shirley Goode

Visitation Volunteers

The following people will accompany Brother Grant when he goes visiting on Monday nights. Please meet Brother Grant at 6:30 pm at the church.

May 6—Annual Conference

May 13—Mary Frances Head

May 20—Becky Coreno

May 27—Memorial Day

FUNFEST Saturday, June 1st
11:00 am—2:00 pm

Donations Needed: Bottled Water, Soft Drinks, Capri Suns and Snack Size Bags of Chips. Donations can be dropped off at the church and placed in the gathering room.



Volunteers Needed: call or text Jill Glass at 816-520-6697 or call the church office at 334-298-3186.

A message from our Youth Minister Daniel Cook

Summer is almost here! As the school year is coming to an end with it comes a bag of mixed emotions. Students are excited to have two months away from school and parents are diligently making plans to keep their children busy for two months. This also marks the end of another school year. To students this is an exciting time as it brings them one year closer to graduation. For parents it is another year closer to becoming an empty nester.

The completion of another academic calendar year and graduation is a time where life takes a turn for many students and parents. As one stage of life comes to an end another one begins. This is true for any student ending one grade level of school and beginning the next as the month of August approaches. It is also a time where many students will end their journey from high school and begin their journey toward college or their career. These times of transition should be used as a time to reflect on the joys of the past but also look forward to the adventures that lie ahead.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 (NIV)

“There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to refrain from embracing, a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace.”

In the midst of life, God has appointed seasons for every aspect of our existence. Just as the changing of the seasons marks the passage of time, so too do our lives fluctuate through seasons of endings and beginnings. As we meditate on Ecclesiastes 3, we are reminded of the importance of transitions and the significance of embracing them with faith and trust in God's plan.

Endings are not merely conclusions but vital parts of our journey. They signify the completion of one chapter, making way for the unfolding of the next. Just as autumn leaves fall to nourish the earth, our experiences, relationships, and seasons of life prepare us for what lies ahead. As we bid farewell to what was, let us do so with gratitude for the lessons learned and the memories cherished.

In the middle of endings, God offers us the gift of new beginnings. Like seeds planted in fertile soil, new opportunities emerge from the grounds of what once was. As we step into uncharted territory, let us do so with courage and trust in God's provision. For He who orchestrates the changing of the seasons also guides us through the thresholds of new beginnings, equipping us with the strength and wisdom we need for the journey ahead.

As we reflect on Ecclesiastes 3, let us remember that God's timing is perfect. In every ending and new beginning, He is at work, weaving together the threads of our lives into a beautiful tapestry of His grace. As the season of summer approaches let us celebrate the accomplishments of our students as they prepare to face their next chapter in life.



Epworth Students Upcoming Events:

Merge Youth Summer Camp

This June 12 - 15, Epworth Students will be sending 25 students and leaders to Merge Youth Camp for an exciting week worshipping with 175 other students and leaders from across Alabama. We are looking forward to what God has planned for our group during this week of camp. If you would like to help send students to camp any donation would be greatly appreciated. The cost for the trip is \$250 per student. You can give to the Youth Scholarship Fund today to help offset the cost of this trip. Thank you in advance for your generous giving to our students.

April Wednesday Night Series - Midnights

Midnights is 4-weeks of stories from the Bible highlighting how God shows up in our darkest moments. Midnights will challenge students to see that it's often in hard times that God is at work in our lives building our faith, lighting our path, and showing how worship strengthens us, even in the toughest times.

Join us on Wednesday night from 6:00 - 6:30 as we hang out in the gym, game room, and snack bar. From 6:30 - 7:30 we have our service that includes a time of games, teaching, and worship. Once a month we split off into small groups to discuss the topic of the night and talk about how we can apply it to our lives.

Sunday Mornings Worship

We invite all families and teenagers to attend a Sunday morning worship service. As you know there are three to choose from, with most teenagers attending the 9:45 service. We would love to see your family worship with us!

Small Group - Sunday Mornings at 11:00

Following the 9:45 service there is a class offered for all teenagers. Some may call it Sunday School and others call it a Small Group, no matter what you call it, it is important. This is a place for teenagers to talk through the Bible and life with other teenagers to grow together as they navigate what it means to follow Christ.

Summer Schedule

This summer there will be many opportunities for students to connect through different outings, events, and services. Along with the schedule below there will be certain Wednesday nights we have Wednesday night services at someone's house enjoying a cookout and swimming, along with other intown events happening on Thursdays. It will be an exciting summer that you do not want to miss!

- Fun Fest - June 1st
- Six Flags - June 3rd
- Sunday Funday - June 9th (after the 11:00 service - we will be back to help with VBS)
- VBS - June 9th - 13th
- Merge Youth Camp - June 12th - 15th
- Braves Game - June 17th
- White Water - July 22nd

Things to come in 2024:

- Dnow (Youth weekend) - August 16-18 - A DNOW (Disciple Now) weekend is a youth retreat that is designed to be "at home" for 6th -12th graders. There are several elements to a DNOW weekend: worship services, small groups, and events around town.
- Fall Trip - October (Date TBD)
- Ski Trip - December 27th - 30th





Memorial Day, our national holiday to honor our fallen Veterans, who are those service men and women who gave their lives in defense of our country, will be on 27 May this year. Epworth plans to honor our fallen Veterans in all three services on Sunday, 26 May 2024.

We try to honor our fallen Veterans in a different way each year. Last year, we honored fallen Veterans country-wide and we honored our deceased Veterans, who are those who served our country honorably and passed away later.

Since last year, we have discovered that we have a true fallen Veteran who is connected to Epworth. That fallen Veteran is Army Sergeant Rufus E. Davis, an uncle of Epworth member Bo Davis. SGT Davis died in Europe during World War II from wounds received shortly after D-Day. Epworth plans to honor all fallen Veterans, specifically SGT Davis, during our Memorial Day observances this year.

Unfortunately, the Memorial Day announcement in last month's newsletter was inaccurate, and we apologize for that.

Please keep sending information and photographs of any fallen or deceased Veterans in your family; we will always use it to honor them and alert Epworth worshippers to pray for their families.

Please join us in any service on Sunday, 26 May 2024, and help Epworth honor our fallen Veterans.

If you have new or updated information concerning fallen Veterans, deceased Veterans, Veterans or those still serving in our military forces, or if you have questions or need information, please contact Pastor Grant (334-298-3186 or grant.parker@epworth-pc.org) or Ross Goode (706-464-5089 or rcgoode525@gmail.com).

Tuesday Morning Bible Study on James

Starting on Tuesday, May 14th at 9:30 am, we will study the book of James for 12 weeks. The sessions will be led by Sandra Rowan, and we will use the Lifechange Bible Study guide for James published by the Navigators. Each week we come together to discuss and help each other to answer questions and seek applications for our lives.

True faith produces fruit. A faith without action and without life change is ultimately a dead faith. The book of James speaks to the realities of a living faith in Jesus—the kind of roll-up-your-sleeves and get-your-hands-dirty discipleship that is borne out of an authentic relationship with the risen Lord. James writes to believers who know suffering, who've faced trials, and who ultimately desire a deep relationship with God.

To enroll, please text or email Keith Badowski at badowski.poet@gmail.com or (334) 614-0577. Keith will be ordering the study guides for those who enroll by the deadline of Wednesday May 1st. Study guides are \$10.

Epworth-Mother Daughter Banquet

Please join us for another great annual Epworth Mother-Daughter Banquet on Friday, May 12th, 6:30 P.M. EDT, in the Church Fellowship Hall. Tickets are Adults - \$15.00 and Children (under 12) - \$10.00. A tremendous bargain for good food, great fellowship, great entertainment, door prizes and lots of love and laughter! This is a very special annual event in our church with daughters and mothers ranging in age from 2 years to 90+ years attending!

If you plan to attend, please sign up as soon as possible. You will find the sign-up sheets on the Gathering Room bulletin board or you can register by calling the church office at 334-298-3186. Also, we need the wonderful men in our church to sign up to be waiters for the Mother-Daughter Banquet. What a nice way to honor the most important women in your lives. Door Prize donations are also welcomed! Hanging baskets, flowering plants, and gift cards are just a few suggestions for great door prizes.

Don't miss out on the fun of this great annual tradition at Epworth. It's a wonderful way to begin your Mother's Day celebration with your personal family and your church family. Invite your Mother, Sisters, Daughters, Granddaughters and Friends for an entertaining evening of Christian sisterhood and fellowship! It's A Time for Love & Laughter!

May 2024

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
			1 9:00 am Preschool 6:00 pm Youth 6:30 pm Classes, Pastor's Bible Study & Kidz Konnections	2 9:00 am Mom's Day Out & Preschool Noon National Day of Prayer 6:30 pm Methodist Women	3	4
5 9:45 Service HS Senior Recognition Sunday (9:15 HS Senior breakfast) 11:00 Service Kindergarten Recognition 3:00 pm—COM meeting 5:00 pm Kidz Cruise & Cherub Choir—last practice/meeting	6 12:00 pm— Happy Days Covered Dish Luncheon	7 9:00 am Mom's Day Out & Preschool 9:30 am Bible Study	8 9:00 am Preschool 6:00 pm Youth 6:00 pm—FunFest Committee meeting 6:30 pm Classes, Pastor's Bible Study & Kidz Konnections	9 9:00 am Mom's Day Out & Preschool 6:00 pm Men's Ministry meeting	10 6:30 pm Mother- Daughter Banquet	11
12 Mother's Day 11:00 Service— Kindergarten Recognition and Cherubs sing No Evening Activities	13 Newsletter Deadline	14 9:00 am Mom's Day Out & Preschool 9:30 am Bible Study	15 9:00 am Preschool 6:00 pm Youth 6:30 pm Classes, Pastor's Bible Study & Kidz Konnections	16 9:00 am Mom's Day Out & Preschool—Last Day	17	18
19	20	21 9:00 am Mom's Day Out 6:30 pm— Preschool Graduation	22 6:00 pm Youth 6:30 pm Classes, Pastor's Bible Study & Kidz Konnections	23 9:00 am Mom's Day Out	24	25
26 Memorial Day Recognition during all 3 Services	27 Memorial Day Office closed	28	29	30	31	Remember FunFest on Saturday June 1st 11:00 am - 2:00 pm



Sound Choices Baby Bottle Boomerang

Every week Sound Choices ministers to women & girls that are facing an unplanned pregnancy. They do this by providing free pregnancy testing, a trusted advocate to talk with, an ultrasound, and referrals for community resources. These women are given the opportunity to hear the gospel, see the value of their life and the life of their unborn baby, and understand how much God loves them.

Starting **Mother's Day**, May 12th, we will distribute baby bottles from Sound Choices Pregnancy Clinic. Please take **one** per family. We are asking that you take the bottles home, fill them with a check, cash or coins, and return them to the church on Father's Day, June 16th.

This year's goal is \$3,500! We can do this! By filling your Baby Bottle, you are introducing expectant moms to their baby via ultrasound, and also introducing them to Jesus Christ & the hope He provides. Women who visit Sound Choices are invited to attend **FREE**:

- Weekly Parenting Classes
- Bible Studies
- Confidential Abortion Recovery Counseling to women who are hurting from a past abortion experience. If you need to talk to someone about a past abortion, please email info@SoundChoicesPC.org or call 706.322.5024.

Keep filling those Baby Bottles throughout this week with your spare change, as we celebrate changed hearts! Whether your bottle is full or empty, Sound Choices asks you to return each bottle, because they re-use these bottles. **By returning each one, we help them to be good and faithful stewards of the funds you donate, and the income which God provides for the crucial ministry they offer.**