

## 2014 Leadership

### Administrative Council

**Chairperson** – Gary Ladd

### Administrative Council

**Vice-Chairperson** – Rodney Meeks

**Treasurer** – Lee Anne Robinson

### Finance Committee

**Chairperson** – Dana Stringer

**Trustees Chairperson** – Jan Smith

### Staff-Parish Relations

**Chairperson** – Bobby Blake

**Lay Leaders** – Hewitt Pittman,

Ron Tisdale, Leslie McGinnis

**Capital Stewardship** – Dick Weatherholt

**Financial Secretary** – Martha Toombs

**Membership Secretary** – Becky Hall

**Lay Members/Annual Conference** –

Larry Swales, Dana Grant, Christy Jones,  
Trey Curry

### Administrative Council at-large

**members** – Shane Case, Jan Martz,  
Lois Minchew, Jerry Oakes, Judy Tisdale,  
Suzan Watson, Jeremy Campbell,  
Sandy Cazier, David Hinton, Mike  
Kennedy, Linda Swales, LaNelle Weems,  
Jeremy Hackler, Heather Ward,  
Chuck McNeil, Kevin Champney,  
Ellen Sullivan



Jo Hebert

## An Encouraging Word From Jo Hebert

Are you like me, and you can't believe it's already February? When I try, I can still remember the stillness of Christmas and the warm celebration... a purposed focus on Christ and His birth, and the much-needed renewal. Then January came quickly. The Christmas lights came down, the kids said goodbye to sleeping until 11, and the poinsettia, once brilliant, started to decline.

Many of us began the New Year with a fresh determination and hopefulness that is now beginning to wane like my poinsettia. If that is you, I have a little story for you about a mountain and flies.

My kids are absolutely wonderful, and I don't want you thinking anything different, but *sometimes*, we have to pretty much **make** them do things we think are best, especially when there is fear involved...we don't want them to be held back by it. So, even though we were on a peaceful, fantastic vacation in Yellowstone last year when this story took place, my husband and I naturally took on the unified role of bad cop-bad cop as we forced our children to climb a mountain.

Mount Washburn, elevation 10,243 feet, provides a truly spectacular view. After already enjoying some big hikes, we drove most of the way up and prepared to walk the trail to the top on a beautiful, glorious day. It didn't start out bad. But, a mile into it, we realized 3 things: it was a much longer hike than we expected (6 mi), we should have brought water, and THE HORSEFLIES WERE ENORMOUS. (It must have been the elevation...but, no other hike had horseflies like these.) The kids wanted to turn back. Michael and I knew the view would be incredible, and we saw the opportunity for the kids to push through something; so, without words, he and I committed. We were not turning back.

There is no doubt my wonderful kids hated us that day. Though I tried fervently to teach a life lesson (albeit not always kindly and calmly) about pushing through obstacles...press on toward the prize...never give up...it was lost on them that day. They hated us. At one point we turned a corner and saw these gorgeous pronghorn antelope playing in the snow not far from us. It was so incredible that my oldest stopped complaining long enough to take pictures. But, once at the top, they didn't even pause to appreciate the view. They were unified too...in getting back down as fast as possible.

I hope that experience will produce fruit one day. We've had numerous opportunities since to remind them about "shooing the flies away," but it's still too soon. It just rekindles the loathing of it.

But, how about you? What's your *view*? Are you growing weary in the pursuit of it? Has your focus shifted to the flies in the way, and the pain of their bites? Are you thirsty with not enough water? It may be that, on the way to the top, times of refreshing are coming—an unexpected glimpse of something that will inspire you to the next step—if you do not turn back. But, if you turn back, you will never know.

In 2 Samuel, it says "I have pursued my enemies and destroyed them; and I have destroyed them and wounded them, so that they could not rise; they have fallen under my feet, for You have armed me with strength for the battle."

Keep swatting those flies while you take in the beauty of the Lord. He is with you.

*My office is just off the robe room in the main church building. I am available Mon., Wed., and Fri. mornings and some evening hours. You can reach me by phone (601-259-1749) or email (jhebertlpc@comcast.net).*



Saint Mark's United Methodist Church  
 400 Grant's Ferry Road  
 Brandon, MS 39047

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 ORGANIZATION  
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DATED MATERIAL FEBRUARY 6, 2013

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**Saint Mark's United Methodist Church**

Phone: 601-992-2131

**Church Staff:**

- Rob Gill, Senior Pastor.....x103
- Jeff Nesbit, Teaching Pastor.....x105
- Sandra Thomas, Minister of Worship & Music.....x104
- Martha Hand, Director of Nurture/Outreach.....x102
- Karie Sue McCaleb, Pastor to Children & Families.....x109
- Jeanne Chapman, Youth Director.....601-992-9554
- Jim Readell, Church Facilities Manager.....601-506-4714
- Delores Seward, Administrative Assistant.....x101
- Martha Toombs, Business Office.....x106
- Corrine Carpenter, Preschool Office.....x110
- Darlene Baker.....Pianist
- Jason Boyd.....Organist
- Robert Ghoston.....Custodian

Check the church website or Sunday bulletin for times of events and further information. See the bulletin for all on the caring list.

Worship is each Sunday at 8:20, 10:45 and 11:00 a.m.; Sunday School is at 9:30 a.m.

[www.saintmarksum.org](http://www.saintmarksum.org)

**YOUTH FUNDRAISER!**



**RED & RICE  
 BEANS & RICE  
 DINNER**

**Sunday, Feb. 23**

**10:30 am - 12:30 pm**

**\$7.00**

**Take Out Only**

\* Thank you for supporting our youth! \*



# the BEACON

*Shining Christ's light into the community*



January 2014 • Number 89

*"Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking Him by prayer..." - Daniel 9:3*

God. The Lord God.

Saint Mark's, there is absolutely nothing greater we can do for humanity in 2014 than to seek the Lord God by prayer.

Prayer is the single greatest thing we can do this year because prayer presses us into deep reliance on the God of the Bible.

I believe the God of Jesus Christ is having us lean into Him like never before in 2014.

Personally, you will face things this year and the difference of you making it through will be your testimony of two words, *"I prayed"*. (Daniel 9:4)

I believe the difference between a *"good" year* and a *"GOD" year* for Saint Mark's will be this testimony at the end of the year: *"WE PRAYED."*

Daniel said in 9:4, *"I prayed"*. But he did not just pray to any God. The verse says, *"I prayed to the Lord my God."* When Daniel prayed to the Lord his God, *the greatest prophecy* in the entire bible concerning Jesus Christ was revealed to him (Daniel 9:24-27)!

*What great thing might God reveal to you and me through prayer this year?* Could it be the greatest year in Saint Mark's history because we seek the Lord's face more seriously than we have in our previous 40 years? Could this be the greatest year that Saint Mark's finds herself most Christ-like in the way she worships, prays, loves, gives, serves, evangelizes, and makes disciples?

We will be tempted to depend on everything besides Jesus Christ this year when the tough gets going. We will be tempted to seek the power of money, the power of materials, the power of influence, and even the power of people more than the power of the Holy Spirit. In short, we will be tempted to explain God away.

I'm not going there. I personally invite you to not explain God away this year. Let's live a year that can only be explained by Jesus. Let's live a year of such believing prayer that when 2014 comes to a close, the only way to explain what happened in the ministries we have been given to steward will be Jesus. Who is Jesus? He is the God revealed in Daniel 9 when seen fully on the Cross: great and awesome, the One who keeps covenant; the One who is loyal and steadfast in love. He is the God in whom righteousness belongs. He is just in His wrath; forgiving in His mercy. He is the God of truth and the God who listens.

*"O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive. O Lord, pay attention and act. Delay not, for your own sake, O my God, because your city and your people are called by Your name."* (Daniel 9:19)



Jeff Nesbit

## Rob's Remarks



Over the past few weeks, many of you have been studying and hearing from the pulpit where I preach about "The Power of We". Many of us have listened to Bishop Swanson's teaching through the medium of DVD. I applaud his desire to bring us to a deeper understanding of how the Holy Spirit's power is our truest and deepest source for the transformation of the world, one person at a time.

I have become so inspired by the compassion and concern this congregation has exhibited this past year. So many lives have been encouraged and helped because individuals have been moved to give of their time and talent to make a difference in a family or an individual who needed help and someone from Saint Marks was there.

As you and I embark into a new calendar year, there are some great opportunities to grow our church deeper in faith and wider in mission. I pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to stir a desire to know in your hearts how much you are loved by God and how blessed you are to live in this time in history. If we continue to tune our hearts and minds to the ways in which God is at work and seek to join Him, blessings will flow.

It is amazing to watch God at work in the lives of folk, who, when they yield to His leading, are capable of wondrous gifts of service and generosity. I am thinking of a fellow who is teaching children in Sunday school. I bet you if you had told him five years ago he would walk into an elementary Sunday school class to teach, he would have laughed in your face, but God called and he answered. He is a grandpa who is still learning and still growing in grace.

We will face some challenges but through the "Power of We", God working in us, WE will meet these challenges. With prayer guiding us and worship and study inspiring us, 2014 holds some wonderful blessings.

I leave you with this challenge. Make worship a priority. Come every Sunday that you are able. Don't let indifference or attitude about something you may or may not agree with keep you from being in the community of the baptized every Sunday of this year. St.Marks is a real witness in this community and I am honored and humbled to have the chance to serve along side you in these days.

Gratefully,  
ROB

# Children's Corner



## New Year: New Programs!

There are many wonderful things coming soon to our Children's and Family ministries! This month kicks off to a **fresh start** for our Wednesday night programming for our children. In order to provide a more hospitable environment for our families' busy schedules and support volunteers, our Wednesday night programs for kids Kindergarten through 5th grade are making an exciting shift. Instead of bus pick up from aftercare facilities or schools, families are invited to join us from 5:00pm to 6:00pm for dinner and fellowship in the CLC. At 6:00, we ask that you bring your child(ren) to the Asbury building and sign them in at the front desk and they will enjoy programming from 6:00 to 7:00 in the Asbury building with children's choir, Bible lessons, and fun activities. Since we are moving toward a cohesive schedule, this will give you opportunity to join an adult study as well! **We will still need parent support!** If you are not currently on our parent rotation, we would love to have you join our team of wonderful leaders. 2014 is sure to be the best year yet for our mid-week faith program!

Also this month, we want to highlight "Created by God", a faith-based curriculum for families of 5th and 6th graders. This curriculum takes an in-depth look at how our bodies change over time, addresses important questions that students have about relationships and intimacy, and how God created it all for us. We will welcome Dr. D'Ann Somerall from Birmingham, Alabama to lead us in our sessions together. Dr. Somerall has expertise in this subject as she serves her community in the medical field teaching nursing students at UAB, and has faithfully taught this curriculum for over a decade at her home church. *Other volunteers are needed* who will lead small groups with students in break-out sessions. **Registration is \$25** per family and includes workbooks, supplies, and food. Parent preview session will be Sunday, February 23 at 5pm in Wesley Hall. This will be the final night for registrations. Please share the news to the community if you know families who have 5th and 6th graders who would benefit from this meaningful weekend: Friday, Feb. 28th from 6-9pm and

Saturday, March 1st 9am-4pm in Asbury Hall.

And we know that it is still cold outside, but we've got Summer Fever! Summer Camp registration is open for **Camp Wesley Pines** in Gallman, MS for elementary children and older. There is also a Family Camp for all ages! Check our website [saintmarksum.org](http://saintmarksum.org) for more info and registration forms. Mark your calendars now for these fun things coming in 2014:




**Join St. Mark's Kids & Families for an exciting Holy Land Adventure with Moses!**

**Go to** [www.groupvbspro.com/vbs/hl/stmarks](http://www.groupvbspro.com/vbs/hl/stmarks)  
**To Register K - 5th grade, Volunteer, AND watch a video tour of VBS 2014!**  
**The escape begins June 15th-19th**  
**6:00-8:30pm**



# YOUTH NEWS



**merge**  
bringing students and god together

Dinner ~ Worship ~ Life Groups ~ Hang Time  
SUNDAYS ~ 5:00 - 7:30 pm (programming ends @ 7)  
For students in grades 6 - 12

**FEBRUARY SCHEDULE:**

- 2 - Super Bowl Party!
- 9 - Game Night: Operation
- 16 - Life Group Dinner Out!
- 23 - Game Night: Perfection



**Super Bowl Party!**  
Feb. 2  
5 pm

Last names A-L bring salty  
Last names M-Z bring sweet  
Wings & Drinks provided

Free ~ Sign up is required!




Mississippi UM Student Conference  
**The Gathering**  
MIND GAMES  
2.28.14 to 3.2.14  
mississippi conference of the united methodist church

Worship ~ Small Groups ~ Friends ~ Teaching ~  
Laughter ~ Food ~ Host Homes ~ Life Change!


Cost: \$50 (scholarships are available)  
Deadline to register is Sun., Feb. 16th!



**5th Block**  
Wednesday's 3:30-5:00 @ the Hub

**FUEL**

High octane for your soul midweek!  
Wednesdays ~ 5:30 - 7:00 pm



Dive into God's Word in separate Bible studies for  
middle school and high school students!

## Mission Fest - June 1- 5 ~ Jackson, MS

For all students 6 - 12th grades  
Millsaps College ~ Cost: \$200 (before 4/1)  
\$85 deposit is due March 31 to guarantee spot and early bird price.

## HS Beach Camp ~ Orange Beach, AL

For all students 9 - 12th grades  
~ Cost: \$385 (before 4/1)  
\$85 deposit is past due! See Jeanne to register!

## MS Student Life Camp ~ Birmingham, AL

For all students 6 - 8th grades  
Samford University ~ Cost: \$300 (before 4/1)  
\$85 deposit is past due! See Jeanne to register!

## Trendsetters Adults Over 50

Williamsburg at Christmas may have been cold and a little rainy, but it certainly didn't damper the spirits of our group. The lights, the music, the history, the food, the fellowship was all outstanding. Talk to anyone who went and you will certainly hear interesting and fun stories about it.



Sandra Thomas

Coming Up.....

**FEBRUARY 19 NOON** - Brown Bag Fellowship Luncheon

Come and sit a spell and enjoy some fellowship. As we talk, we can share ideas for programs, trips, fellowship events, and more.

We will also draw names for secret prayer pals, so bring your completed form. If you have not filled out a secret prayer pal form, come by the office and pick one up. It's always nice to know that someone is praying for you through the year. Here is a bit about how to be a secret prayer pal.

Being a secret prayer pal is simple. Here are a few guidelines to get started.

Be willing to pray for another person.

Take the time to send a card or note to your prayer pal at least once a month. You may mail to your prayer pal (don't put your return address on it) or leave in the box in Sandra's office.

You may leave a small happy or gift for your secret prayer pal if you would like. Simply leave the gift in Sandra's office with the name of your secret pal on it.

Example: To: Jane Doe From: Your Secret Prayer Pal

Fill out the questionnaire about yourself to help your secret prayer pal know more about you; like birthday, hobbies, etc. Give to Sandra.

(Forms are available in the church office)

We will draw names for your 2014 Secret Prayer Pal at the February 19 Trendsetter Brown Bag Luncheon.

At the December Trendsetters' luncheon, we will reveal the names of the prayer pals, and draw names for 2015 Prayer Pals.

**REMEMBER - LUNCHEON on WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 19, at noon.** We will provide tea and water.

## Preschool News - Bring a Little Joy to Your Day

Every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, I am blessed with the opportunity to share in a sweet child's pure joy and excitement. St. Mark's Preschool has children ranging from ages 15 months to 4 years old. On any given day you will see them painting, singing, playing on the playground, walking in a line to the bathroom, listening to a Bible story, or enjoying a yummy snack!

St. Mark's Preschool is extremely blessed to have such a talented group of teachers who display their love for Christ to our children. Their role is to build a strong, well rounded, Christian foundation for these children and to prepare them for Kindergarten in a fun and loving manner. Their love and compassion for the children, combined with their skills and knowledge as educators provides our children with a fantastic preschool experience. We use the A Beka curriculum in each of our classes.

The children attend Music class each week led by Sandra Thomas. Sandra also leads a Christmas Program and an End of the Year program. She is amazing with the children! There is no sweeter sound than children singing praises to the Lord!

We have visitors come during different times of the year. These include Fire Fighters, paramedics, Dentists, Ophthalmologists & Meteorologists. We have Waffle House come and treat us with freshly made waffles! The children enjoy participating in a Patriotic Parade. There are so many exciting activities during the school year!

Our K4 children have gone on several field trips, including Mazzio's where they were able to make their own pizzas! There are several more coming up in the spring. They will go to the Museum of Natural Science, the nature trail at Winner's Circle Park, Community Bank in Flowood and a fun day at the park for the end of the year celebration!

We have several fundraisers throughout the school year. We will be holding a Spring Bazaar March 22, 2014. Anyone interested in participating as a vendor can contact the preschool office at 601-992-2244. You can also contact us through our email; [preschool@saintmarksum.org](mailto:preschool@saintmarksum.org). We will be having a Chicken Dinner Fundraiser February 20, 2014 in the CLC from 5:30-6:30 pm. You will be able to dine in or carryout. Tickets can be obtained through the Preschool Office or the Church Office. **Please come and support St. Mark's Preschool!**



Passion Conference - 2014 ~ Atlanta, GA

Passion was everything we hoped for and so much more! God's Spirit was raining on us as we worshiped with 20,000+ students and leaders under the leadership of Chris Tomlin, Kristian Stanfill, Hillsong United, David Crowder, Matt Redman and others. Fantastic messages brought by Louie Giglio, Francis Chan, Christine Caine and John Piper, that challenged this generation to receive the grace of God and go in the mercy of God to the ends of the earth for His renown!

**THANK YOU to everyone who partnered with us to make this trip possible! We are forever grateful!**