

THE FIRST EPISTLE

VOLUME 42, NUMBER 11

MARCH 20, 2009



Dr. J. Ligon Duncan III PREACHING SCHEDULE

Sunday, March 22
8:30 & 11:00 a.m.

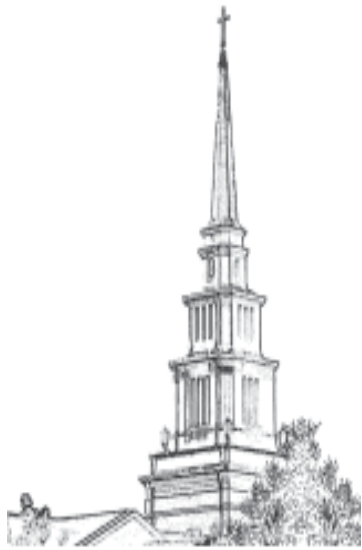
Dr. Ligon Duncan
"Jesus's Baptism"
Luke 3:20-21

6:00 p.m.

Dr. Derek Thomas
"When Children Let You
Down"
1 Samuel 2:12-36

Wednesday, March 25
6:30 p.m.

Dr. Ligon Duncan
**What Is A Healthy Church
Member?** (1)
"A Healthy Church Member
Loves and Grows by the
Preaching of the Word"



PROS, March 26

March PROS will meet Thursday, March 26, at 11:00 a.m. in Miller Hall. We will have the pleasure of hearing our own Day School's 5th and 6th grades Honors Choir led by Marsha Glover who has promised a program of sacred, folk, spiritual, and patriotic music. We encourage and welcome parents, grandparents, and friends to join us for the program and lunch. Our lunch menu is chicken tetrazzini, green salad, homemade french bread and fresh strawberry pie. If you plan to stay for lunch, please make reservations through the church office (601-353-8316) by Wednesday, March 25. Lunch is \$3 and, of course, there is no charge for the program.

Interested in Joining FPC?

If you are interested in joining First Presbyterian Church, please note that our next joining date is Sunday, April 5. Each person joining FPC is asked to fill out a new member form and return it two weeks before the joining date (March 23). The new member forms can be obtained from Shannon Craft in Pastoral Care or in the Session Room after the morning worship services. Applications for membership received after March 23 will be held until the next joining date of June 7. Interviews will take place March 24 - April 3. If you have any questions, please contact Shannon at 601-326-9243 or shannonc@fpcjackson.org.

Attention, Parents

Since we now have the benefit of Daylight Saving Time, the children will go to the playground from 5:30-6:30 p.m. on Wednesday nights. The gym will only be used in case of inclement weather.

Vacation Bible School 2009

"The Living Water" is on the way!! June 1-5 is VBS. Mark your calendars, and call to volunteer! If you would like to be a table teacher or help in any way, please call the Christian Education office (601-973-9115) at the church. We are always in need of helping hands. Please remember to be praying for a week of good weather and receptive ears and hearts for our children.

Men of the Covenant

April 2 - Judge Kenneth Fairly
"A Man's Public Witness for Christ"

Men, mark your April calendar and plan to come for lunch on Thursday, April 2, at 11:45 a.m. in Miller Hall. Invite a friend to come with you. Ken Fairly, a life-long member of First Presbyterian Church, will be our speaker. Ken was baptized by Dr. John R. Miller and married by Dr. Don Patterson. He was converted under the preaching of Dr. Jim Baird. Ken is a former Deacon and newly-elected Elder. He graduated from Ole Miss in 1980 and the MC School of Law in 1985. He is a former Jackson Police Officer. Currently Ken is a Municipal Court Judge for Flowood, Florence, and Puckett, and Justice Court Judge for Rankin County. He is a Gideon with the Brandon camp. He and his wife, Becky, have three children, Graham, Rebecca, and Anna.

Reservations are not required, and the cost of lunch is \$5.00. If you have any questions, please contact Shannon Craft in Discipleship Ministry at 601-326-9243 or shannonc@fpcjackson.org.

All Ladies Are Invited to Attend...

Mississippi Valley PresWIC

■ Saturday, April 25, 2009

First Presbyterian Church, Belzoni
Speaker: Sherry Lanier

Registration will begin at 10:00 a.m. and the program will start at 10:30 a.m. Reservations by Saturday, April 18, to Kristie Williams at 662-247-3326 or fpc@belzonicable.com

Pastor's Perspective

The Bible repeatedly emphasizes the importance of truth for the Christian life. This is especially significant for those of us who live in a day and age in which truth is at a discount. People claim to not believe in truth anymore. And even in the church, people (even ministers) discount doctrine. "Christianity is a life, not a doctrine," they say. "Deeds not creeds," is a trendy motto (though invented by Unitarian Universalists, you can find it on the lips of those who think of themselves as evangelical today). "Do your faith, don't debate your faith." Now all of these slogans, however "with it" they may seem, are in fact just good old fashioned moralism. There's not a drop of Gospel in them. They reduce Christianity to "stuff we're supposed to do" as opposed to the good news of what God, in Christ, has done for us.

Theology, doctrine, Gospel truth, saves us from this. In contrast to these slogans, the Bible urges the necessity of doctrine for our walking with God. Doctrine is for life. Creeds lead to deeds. The good news leads to good works. Think of how often the Bible stresses the importance of theology and doctrine for the Christian life. Take, for instance, the following six passages in the Gospels and in Paul's Pastoral Letters.

John 17:13-17 ¹³ But now I am coming to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves. ¹⁴ I have given them Your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁵ I do not ask that You take them out of the world, but that You keep them from the evil one. ¹⁶ They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁷ Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth. Right in the middle of the high priestly prayer, Jesus makes it clear that God's truth is for our joy and growth in holiness.

Matthew 28:18-20 ¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples

of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." **In the Great Commission itself, Jesus tells His disciples to teach the church not simply to believe His instruction, and to teach all of it, but to teach it with a view to his people living out the truth. Teach them to live My truth, in other words.**


1 Timothy 1:3-5 ³ As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine, ⁴ nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies, which promote speculations rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith. ⁵ The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. **In this key passage, Paul tells Timothy, negatively, not to allow people to teach or listen to bad theology (why? Because false teaching messes people up!), and positively, that good theology aims for true, heart-rooted, lived out, Gospel love in believers.**

1 Timothy 1:8-11 ⁸ Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully, ⁹ understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, ¹⁰ the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine, ¹¹ in accordance with the glorious gospel of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted. **In this important passage on the law in the Christian life, Paul makes it clear that doctrine and ethics are inseparably connected. Indeed he says that the Gospel itself, and doctrine, are inextricably tied to a certain kind of life.**

1 Timothy 6:2-4 Teach and urge these things. ³ If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree

with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, ⁴ he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. **Paul, here, says that the sound words of Jesus' teaching, and good doctrine lead to godliness.**

Your friend,


Ligon Duncan

Faith Promise for Missions 2009-2010



As of Sunday, March 15, 277 cards were received for a total of \$753,994.40 If you have not turned in your Faith Promise card, we encourage you to bring it this Sunday and place it in the regular offering plate as an act of worship.

Short Term Mission Trip 2009 Liberia

The short-term mission trip team to Liberia is in need of some furniture and appliance items. If anyone has any of these items that they would like to sell or donate please contact David Day at 601-720-0866 or davidd@fpcjackson.org

- 3 Dressers
- 2 Sofas
- 2 Living Room Chairs
- King Size bed with mattress
- 4 Single Beds with mattresses
- Dining room table with chairs
- Coffee Table
- Refrigerator
- Gas Range (for propane)
- Water Heater

The following is an article from Dr. Albert Mohler's blog which was posted on Friday, February 6, 2009, at www.AlbertMohler.com. Dr. Mohler is president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, KY.

Facebook Turns Five: Thoughts on Social Networking



Facebook marked its fifth anniversary on February 5, setting a milestone for social networking as a cultural phenomenon. Just five years ago Harvard undergraduate Mark Zuckerberg launched the site and service. Just as Facebook celebrated its fifth anniversary, it passed rival MySpace in registrations.

Together, MySpace and Facebook report over 280,000,000 registered users. Those services, first popular among high school and college students, are now joined by Twitter, a micro-blogging service. Together, these represent nothing less than a major social movement.

Social networking differs from other Internet services by creating a virtual community of linked users, whose updates, photographs, and postings allow for communication anytime and anywhere.

Today's student generation, the "Digital Natives," know of no existence before cell phones, the Internet, e-mail, and text messaging. Social networking perfectly fits their lifestyle and worldview. They assume 24/7 social contact — or at least access to this contact just a few clicks away.

Social networking is like any new technology. It must be evaluated on the basis of its moral impact as well as its technological utility. Social networking sites offer unprecedented opportunities for communication and contact — and that is both the promise and the peril of the technology.

Here are a few suggestions for safeguarding the social networking experience:

1. Never allow social networking to replace or rival personal contact and communication. God made us to be social creatures that crave community. We cannot permit ourselves to substitute social networking for the harder work of building and maintaining personal relationships that are face to face.
2. Set clear parameters for the time devoted to social networking. These services can be seductive and time consuming. Social networking (and the Internet in general) can become obsessive and destructive of other relationships and higher priorities for the Christian.
3. Never write or post anything on a social networking site that you would not want the world to see, or anything that would compromise your Christian witness. There are plenty of young people (perhaps older persons now, too) who are ruining future job prospects and opportunities by social networking misbehavior. The cost to Christian witness is often far greater.
4. Never allow children and teenagers to have independent social networking access (or Internet access, for that matter). Parents should monitor, manage, supervise, and control the Internet access of their children and teens. Watch what your child posts and what their friends post.
5. Do not allow children and teens to accept any "friend" unknown to you. The social networking world can be a dangerous place, and parental protection here is vital.
6. Encourage older friends and relatives to sign up and use the technology. Grandparents can enjoy keeping up with grandchildren and with friends and loved ones separated by distance or mobility.
7. Use the social networking technology to bear witness to the Gospel, but never think that this can replace the centrality of face-to-face evangelism, witness, and discipleship.
8. Do all things to the glory of God, and do not allow social networking to become an idol or a display of narcissism.

The fifth anniversary of Facebook is a milestone in American culture — and a good time for a reality check. We were made by our Creator to be social creatures, but made for far more than mere social media.



Camp and Conference Center

A ministry of First Presbyterian Church, Jackson, MS

The ideal summer setting... **Groups & Families**

When planning your summer 2009—think Twin Lakes! Located seven miles south of Florence, Twin Lakes Conference Center is the ideal place for a family getaway or a mini-retreat for your church or business group. Our wooded and lakeside settings provide a beautiful, calm environment where you can meet, rest, play, and dine.

Twin Lakes' modern accommodations provide the perfect place for relaxation with various facility types: hotel, group cabins and rustic camping—whatever you choose. Families and adult groups may stay in our beautiful lodges each featuring a fireplace, kitchen, living area, and porch. Like a hotel, everything is provided in our lodges. Or, if you prefer, sleep in one of our heated and air-conditioned cabins with full baths, closet, and bunk beds. In addition, our rustic bunkhouses and tent camping provide an experience uniquely their own.

Our recreational areas such as the pool, game field, pavilion, lookout tower, lakes, multi-level tree house, giant swings, etc., give you plenty of room for swimming, canoeing, fishing, hiking, sports activities and much more.

Come and take a tour of Twin Lakes with one of our staff members. Phone 601-845-6858. Toll free 1-866-237-4657. Web: www.twin-lakes.org

