

The Main Thing

A Publication of
MAIN STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

February 2018

Missions Month

Missions Conference Keynote Speaker Richard L. Pratt, Jr.



As President of Third Millennium Ministries, Dr. Richard L. Pratt, Jr., is actively involved in all aspects of the ministry. He also travels extensively to evangelize and teach. Richard holds a Th.D. in Old

Testament Studies from Harvard University, a Master of Divinity from Union Theological Seminary, and a B.A. from Roanoke College. He is the general editor of the NIV *Spirit of the Reformation Study Bible*, a translator for the *New Living Translation*, and a Christian theology consultant for the *Islamic Encyclopedia*. Richard has authored numerous articles and books, including: *Pray with Your Eyes Open*, *Every Thought Captive*, *Designed for Dignity*, *He Gave Us Stories*, as well as commentaries on both Chronicles and Corinthians. Dr. Pratt taught at Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, MS, and Orlando, FL, for 21 years and chaired the Old Testament Department in Orlando.

Who is a Missionary?

The role of the
local church in the mission of God

Saturday, February 24

3:30-6:00pm Session I

**RUF Mississippi State and
MTW Church Plant
Ministry Presentations**

And

Keynote Message I:

**The Mission is Not
Added to Your Life**

Church-wide Supper

Sunday, February 25

9:30am-12:00pm Session II

**9:30am Third Millennium
Ministries Presentation**

10:40 am Morning Worship

Keynote Message 2:

Jesus' Mission for Our Lives

Church-wide Fellowship

Luncheon

Evening Worship

6:00 pm Session III

Keynote Message 3:

Keep It to Yourself

Guest Pastor Rev. Bill Bradford



Renewed Concern for Missions

Faith Promise Sunday, Feb. 4

Bill Bradford is from Jackson, MS and graduated from the University of Mississippi in 1990. He earned his M.Div. Missions from Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson in 1996 and his Th.M. in New Testament in 1998. The most important event that happened at RTS, however, was that he met and married his wonderful wife, Allen! In early 1999, shortly after being ordained a Teaching Elder in the Presbyterian Church in America, he and Allen moved to the north of Peru where they served for over ten years with Peru Mission in partnership with the national denomination called the Iglesia Evangélica Presbiteriana del Perú. Together with their team, they engaged in a community-based, holistic church planting ministry which includes seminary training, mentoring of church planters, university ministry, medical and dental care, Christian education and various economic development projects. In late 2009 Bill, sensing the need and desire to pastor a local church, accepted the call to become Senior Pastor of Lawndale

Presbyterian Church in Tupelo, MS. He and his family are enjoying growing in Christ together with a local body, applying their foreign mission experience to stateside needs and engaging in world mission through the local church. Bill continues to be involved with Peru Mission by serving as president of the Board, helping to fundraise and making yearly trips to Peru. Bill and Allen have four children: Mollie (21), William (18), Hannah (15), and Andrew (13).

Short-Term Missions Trip Presentation



Sunday Feb 4

Following an update about new Sunday School classes beginning in February, Bill Bradford will also be sharing a short-term missions trip presentation during the Sunday School class time on Feb. 4.

This summer, we are hoping to join with other churches to provide opportunities for missions trips to Celendin, Peru. Two separate trips have been planned. One is the week of May 26-June 2 and the other is June 22-30. There is a limit on participants for each one, but if any spaces are not filled, we will have the opportunity to use them. If you are interested in going, you will need a passport (apply NOW if you don't have one). If you desire to serve and money is the only hindrance, let Russ Russell, our Missions Committee Chairman, know because some funding resources are available.

FAITH PROMISE

Here at Main Street, the means used to fund numerous missionaries is called *Faith Promise* and consists of giving above the tithe. It should grow, not replace, our normal giving. Study booklets are available and pledge cards will be distributed beginning in February. We hope to receive the pledges by the end of April.

The amounts pledged will be used to set the Missions Budget for the coming year. While these pledges are non-binding and confidential (no one will come looking for you regarding your pledge and only the Missions Chairman sees them), they should be made prayerfully and seriously. The Missions Chairman, John (Russ) Russell, will total the pledged amounts and inform the Missions Committee what their total budget will be for the next year.

Missions needs grow each year. In addition to increasing needs for the living support of our missionaries, Main Street would like to offer more missions trip opportunities. Last year the total pledged was \$42,735.

2018 Operational Funding Goal: \$50,000

2018 Praise Funding Goal: \$55,000

2018 Halleluiah Funding Goal: \$65,000

Please prayerfully consider what the Lord would have you commit to give between this Missions Conference and the next.

Who is a Missionary?

When we think of missionaries, we imagine a radically devoted Christian packing his bags (along with his family's bags), getting on plane and flying to a distant land. This is a missionary.

When Jesus thinks of a missionary, he thinks of you. How can this be?

Mark Your Calendars for the 2018 Missions Conference

Please make plans to join us for the Missions Conference weekend. This very special occasion at Main Street is the time each year when we renew our personal and our congregational commitment to the Great Commission. On Saturday, during Session I, a special offering for the missions fund will be collected.

Join with us in faithful prayer as we approach the Missions Conference. A schedule has been posted outside the church office. There are time slots to sign up for on the schedule, the goal being to have someone praying for missions for as many hours as possible of every day of February leading into the conference.

Displays for each missions partner Main Street supports will be set up in the chapel. Copies of their recent prayer requests and newsletters will be available for you there. Information regarding the guest speakers is in the conference brochure.

Infant and toddler childcare will be available during all sessions in the nurseries. Children's programs are also planned.

Are We Disciples or Mere Christians, and What Does That Have to Do with Missions?

by
Frank Webb

With our missions conference coming soon, there is a question each of us might do well to ask. That is “Is there a difference between being a disciple of Christ and being a “mere Christian”? [The term “mere Christian” is one coined by this writer for the purpose of this article.] Some may take issue with what follows, but the writer can only posture as he understands this issue and offers the following for earnest reflection. To reiterate, each reader is surely at liberty to have a different take on what is stated below. First let me say that the term, “mere Christian”, in itself is not a derogatory term, in that any real Christian is a most blessed being by virtue of the Atonement provided by our Lord and his redemptive actions on the cross in our behalf. However, one can honestly venture to postulate that there is indeed a difference between what this writing will term as a “mere Christian” and a true disciple of Christ. Both are a result of the exercising of our wills. Being the former means, one is a child of God and a member of His Kingdom; the latter requires much more exercise of one's will and at much greater “cost”.

Being a Christian is amply defined by the Apostle John in the first chapter of his epistle. In that first chapter John very succinctly explains who the Word of God is and was. He states in verse 1 that the Word was in the beginning and that He “was with God, and the Word was God”. He then sets forth that “All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.” He next states, “In Him was life and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.” John next mentions John the Baptist, who bore witness to this Light that all through Him might believe. Then John states, “That was the true Light which gives light to every man who comes into the world.” He then states that “He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.” Then John states, “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become the children of God, even to those who believe in His name. Here we see the requirement of one who is to become a child God, i. e. a Christian. Yes, a decision of the will must be exercised to believe on and in the name of this Word of God.

The above sets forth the requirements of becoming a Christian. Another succinct description is found in the very familiar verse, John 3:16. Following these requirements will bring anyone who follows them into the family of God; it is the initial step to salvation. But does salvation make one a disciple of Christ in the Biblical sense? Opinions will differ on this question; this writer's opinion is that the two are not the same. So, **for the sake of this letter**, what is the difference between a “mere Christian” and a true disciple of Christ. One must look to the words of Jesus and other New Testament writers for further clues.

Let us start with some “red letter” verses from the gospel of Luke. In Luke 14:26 Jesus makes the daunting statement, “If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he **cannot be My disciple.**” (emphasis added) Now for sure Jesus is not saying we should hate our fathers, mothers, wives, children, etc. But He is saying in comparison without love for Him, our love for these dear humans in our lives must not even compare with our love and devotion for Him. Without this degree of love for our Lord, we will remain among the realm of “mere Christians”, but we will not be His disciples. I did not say this, Jesus set this definition of a disciple.

Next, we look but one verse further at Luke 14:27, where Jesus states the following: “And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me **cannot be My disciple.**” (emphasis added) This takes a bit more subjective turn, in that each man's “cross” will generally be different. Nevertheless, we all have things that are in our life which are painful, hard, and even gut-wrenching “fiery trials”, that we must learn to bear joyfully as unto the Lord. And all the time without grumbling, murmuring, or complaining, but rather counting it all joy that we can make up “what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ” as the Apostle Paul states in Colossians 1:24. Or as Peter states in 1 Peter 4:12&13, “Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; **but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings**, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.” (emphasis added).

The last quote from our Lord is from Luke 14:33, where He has another “cannot be my disciple” stating as follows: “So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has **cannot be my disciple.**” (emphasis added) Is our Lord stating that we must forsake everything we have? This writer does not believe this is an objective standard being imposed but a subjective one. Each one of you must ask yourself what our Lord is saying to you on this matter. At the very least we must give up the entrapping ties we have to this material world, and at most give all to the poor and follow Him, as He directed the rich young ruler to do. And by the way, many, if not most, believe that this rich young ruler was indeed saved, but he remained a “mere Christian”, and did not accept Christ's personal and glorious invitation to come be His disciple.

So, one might ask, “What does all this have to do with missions”. If we are Christ's disciples, then there will not be any hesitation to give to missions, because we have already given up our own possessions – at least in our heart. The only question is how much. There really is no decision for a disciple. If we are merely Christian converts, then there is the threshold question of “if” I will give. If that is answered affirmatively, then the second question is how much. Now this writer has no idea as to which readers of this missive may be a “mere Christian” (as defined herein) and which are disciples. In fact, only our Lord knows that answer for sure, and that applies to this writer as well.

In conclusion it should be a good exercise for each of us to ask ourselves at least two questions: 1) Do I want to be Christ's disciple? and 2) and if so, Will I “pay the price” to be such? This is a very serious question, which must not be taken lightly. And as with Jesus, no one will force you; it is a decision that each of us must make for himself. Also, remember making no decision is indeed a decision. However, to truly be missions minded, let us all consider the cost of discipleship, with a heart to move more and more in that direction. If we all at Main Street were true disciples of Christ, the Missions budget would be no issue, as it would be burgeoning; and we all would be cheerful givers, which is most pleasing and “a sweet aroma” to our God.



Preschool News

I hope everyone had a fabulous start to the New Year! It was so nice to welcome all of our precious friends back to school for another exciting semester of fun and learning together. I believe we have successfully transitioned back into the school routine. January has been full of opportunities for fun indoor activities. We've stayed pretty busy trying to avoid the frigid temperatures outside. Some of our fun-filled units have included Dinosaurs and the 5 Senses. We are conducting mid-year evaluations and amazed, yet again, how much the children have grown in all areas. We've witnessed physical, intellectual, social, and spiritual growth. We cannot take all the credit however, we have some pretty amazing Moms and Dads!!!!

Open enrollment will begin in February for the 2018-2019 school year. This seems early to be thinking about the next school year, but this semester will fly by and time will sneak up on us all. We have 2's, 3's, and 4-year-old classes at MSCS. Our program is designed around developmental and age appropriate skills and thematic units of study. Our teachers are highly qualified and committed to guiding children in developing Christian beliefs. Please feel free to call or stop by for a visit!!!

In His Service,

Cindy



CONGREGATIONAL

"MISSIONS" LUNCHEON

The monthly luncheons continue to give us so much pleasure. We should all rejoice and be proud to know that January's "Soup and Sides" had the largest in attendance. There were over 120 with 17 crock pots of *different* soups from which to choose. The "sides" were all varied and delicious with sweet desserts to finish up. With the onset of snow and ice on Monday and Tuesday I'm sure those who had a little left over managed to enjoy it. Once again, our January luncheon could not have been more fun!

Let's now turn our attention to **Sunday, February 25th**. This is the weekend of Missions Conference. Here is an opportunity to meet and share a wonderful meal with our missionaries. It's a time to get to know them and their work on a more personal note.

The Missions Committee will provide the meat again this year. It will be **pulled pork bar-b-que and rolls**. We have been asked to provide the sides. If your last name begins with:

- A-E Cold Vegetable or Salad
- F-L Dessert
- M-S Hot Vegetable
- T-Z Fruit or Fruit Salad

So, mark your calendars for **Sunday, February 25**, following the morning worship service when we can be with our missionaries and share our 4 F's...Fellowship, Family, Fun...without the Fuss!

Lynda



After a break in January, the Men's Prayer Breakfast will crank back up on Wednesday, February 7, at 6:30 AM in the Fellowship Hall. This is a wonderful ministry open to all men and boys. The meal is really something and the fellowship is special. Please plan to attend and share this great time.

Don't forget...Wednesday, February 7, at 6:30 AM in the Fellowship Hall. See you then.

Mike

RYM
Middle School Florida
June 25-29, 2018
Scripture is Relevant
Laguna Beach Christian Retreat Center
Panama City Beach



Women in the Church



Happy Hearts

WIC got off to a great start for 2018! Our Pottery Session with Shelia Clark was a great success! We had 45 people in attendance - many were guests. Everyone enjoyed making pinch pots, and can't wait to get them back from Shelia. They, of course, have to be fired and glazed which is very time consuming. We hope to have them in about 2 weeks.

WIC at Night will meet on February 6 and February 20 in the HeBrews Coffee Room on second floor at 7 o'clock. WIC Morning Group will meet on February 6 in the fellowship hall at 10:45. If you are not participating in one or the other group, may I encourage you to do so. Both are wonderful times of Bible study, fellowship, sharing prayer requests, and getting to know each other better.

Bess



A small sample of the items created - more to come in the next newsletter

Happy Hearts met on January 23, 2018 in the fellowship hall. We were pleased to have Henry Pilkinton speak to us concerning our church budget and security issues being addressed by our deacons. He also gave a complimentary report of our church staff and their accomplishments. Our group was very encouraged by Henry's remarks and appreciated his volunteering to come and present the facts.

January is National Soup Month so Happy Hearts, having enjoyed many months of soup, celebrated the occasion. We had a different soup, Chicken and Lime, along with assorted cheeses and chips. It was a fun time and a good crowd. We missed you if you weren't there. This was one of a very few times Pogie and Frances were unable to attend, and we certainly hope to see them back in the swing of things once flu season is over.

Our next meeting will be on February 13 at 11:30, in the fellowship hall. I am so pleased that our church violinist, Aidan Dunkelberg, will be presenting a program of music. This will be a great time for us to get to know Aidan, who contributes so much to our worship services. **Note the change of time: 11:30--instead of the usual 10:30!** Hope to see you there!

Bess





February 2018

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.
				1 Prayer Meeting	2	3
4 Rev. Bill Bradford Pulpit Guest Communion	5	6 WIC 10:45 AM WIC at Night 7 PM Morgan Shipp	7 Men's Prayer Breakfast	8 Prayer Meeting Jack Hairston	9 Caleb Drown	10
11 Hannah Arnold	12 Eleanor Hairston	13 Happy Hearts 10:30 AM Leslee White	14	15 Prayer Meeting	16 Warren & Jan Swoope	17 Frank Arnold
18 Colleen Meek Warren Swoope	19	20 WIC at Night 7 PM Melinda Howard	21 Martha Clegg	22 Prayer Meeting Henry Ensley	23 Jean Yelverton Richard & Karmel Crandall	24 Missions Conference
25 Missions Conference	26	27 Eddie Estalote Marcia Lovegren Frank Webb	28			

Notes

Rev. Bill Bradford will be our pulpit guest on Sunday, February 4, 2018.
 The Lord's Supper will be observed during the evening service on Sunday, February 4, 2018.
 Women in the Church will meet on Tuesday, February 6, at 10:45 in the Fellowship Hall.
 WIC at Night will meet on Tuesday, February 6, and February 20 at 7 p.m. in HeBrews.
 The Men's Prayer breakfast will be held on Wednesday, February 7, at 6:30 in the Fellowship Hall.
 Happy Hearts will meet on Tuesday, February 13, at 10:30 in the Fellowship Hall. Aidan Dunkelburg will be our guest.
 Missions Conference: Saturday, February 24 and Sunday, February 25

February Volunteers

Nursery

- Feb. 4 Gee & Becca Allgood
Justin & Ivy Harris
- Feb. 11 Jennifer White
Chris & Kristina Carden
- Feb. 18 Marianne Field
Janie Williams
- Feb. 25 Cathy Duncan
Karmel Crandall

Ushers

- Feb. 4 Allan Brewer, Phillip Goodwin,
Russ Russell
- Feb. 11 Gray Flora, Bill Laws,
Stephen Matocha,
Matt White, Ben Woodson
- Feb. 18 Grover Allgood, Ray Kilpatrick,
Mike Meharg, Jay Nail,
Patrick Shipp
- Feb. 25 Gee Allgood, Roger Day,
Brent Drown, Trip Hairston,
Henry Pilkinton

February
Money Counter
Bill Laws

January
Budget Report
Offerings this Month
\$ 27,371

Please be
Praying for...

NEW NEEDS:

Fran Perkins -- hospital
Poogie Laws

CONTINUING NEEDS:

Our Shut-Ins:

Louise Armstrong

Sadie Brewer

George & Martha Clegg

Verda Laws

Dot Pilcher

Emily Shull

Jennifer Garner

Phillip Goodwin

Barbara Harrell

Sue Lovegren

Dan Matocha

Edna Mae McCoy

Melanie McCoy

Colleen Meek's mother

John Mark Russell

Alice Talley's great-nephew – Braxton

Brad Talley

Faith Whitlock

Rick Wright

President Donald Trump

Officials in Washington

Governor Phil Bryant

Mayor Robert Smith

Police Chief Fred Shelton

Sheriff Mike Aldredge

State, City, and County Officials

Helping Hands

Life Choices Pregnancy Center

Palmer Home

All Churches and Pastors in Columbus

**MAIN STREET
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

701 Main Street
P. O. Box 26
Columbus, MS 39703-0026

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Organization

U. S. Postage Paid

Columbus, MS

Permit No. 10



2018

Main Street Presbyterian Church

(A Presbyterian Church in America Congregation)

Sunday Schedule

9:00 a.m. Church Officer Prayer Time

9:15 a.m. Sunday School Fellowship

9:30 a.m. Sunday School

10:40 a.m. Morning Worship

6:00 p.m. Evening Worship

Wednesday Schedule

5:30 p.m. Supper

6:00 p.m. Children and Youth Activities

6:00 p.m. Adult Bible Study and Prayer Time

Thursday Schedule

Weekly Prayer Meeting at Noon

