

P

rovidence Press



Providence Presbyterian Church

"You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood."

Pastor's message

We can't just pray and walk away

As she was stepping off the bus, I saw her feet and legs . . . they were covered in large sores. Her shoes were too large for her feet and were held together by string. I knew this was a woman who would need special attention today.

"Today" was Saturday, September 27, and we were hosting the ladies of McKemie Place, giving them a Safe Haven in our church.

McKemie Place serves the homeless, unaccompanied women in Washington, Baldwin, and Mobile Counties. They sleep seven nights a week at the shelter and spend their weekdays at 15 Place.

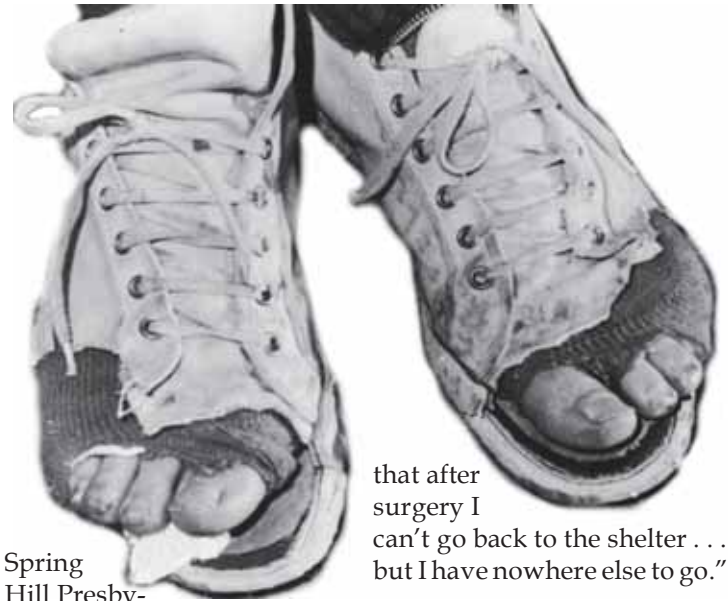
But on weekends, 15 Place, the library, and other locations where the ladies can find shelter from the weather and safety from those who want to take advantage of them, are closed. Therefore, a number of congregations in the Mobile area offer Safe

Haven for Saturdays and Sundays.

Providence and The Grove team up to provide a place of safety and care for 30-40 ladies four times a year. In our heads, we think we are doing the women a service in the name of our Lord, but in our hearts, we know we are receiving much, much more . . . we are receiving from them a deeper understanding of what it means to serve Christ.

It's difficult to imagine what life without the security of home might look like. I've always had a roof over my head and food in the refrigerator. But as I met the women and learned their stories, it was impossible not to realize that we all walk very close to experiencing their dilemma. Throughout the day their stories bubbled up . . . and we were all stunned by some of what we learned.

It started just after breakfast on Saturday. The people of



Spring Hill Presbyterian were helping us and providing the meals for the day. I had introduced Rev. Buz Wilcoxon and Rev. Billy McLean to the women, and that prompted one lady to ask for prayers.

"Of course we'll pray for you. What are we praying about?"

Her answer caught me by surprise: "I've been diagnosed with stage three breast cancer. They tell me

that after surgery I can't go back to the shelter . . . but I have nowhere else to go."

Can you imagine going through chemo while living on the streets of Downtown Mobile and sleeping in a homeless shelter? I can't. All I see in my head is a nightmare. How can we help her? We can't just pray and walk away.

And then there's the lovely young woman who is a full-time student with a 3.95 grade point average who studied the entire weekend in the back

(See "Can't just pray" on page 2)

Providence Presbyterian Church
(251) 633-9701

www.providence-pc.org
office@providence-pc.org

Mary Montei Clark, Pastor
Debra Ehman, Nursery Staff
Bob Ellis, Treasurer
Laura Fletcher, Accompanist
Justin Gipson, Director of Music Ministries
Pam Fredelake, Bookkeeper
Amy Messer, Administrative Assistant
Wendy Mouner, Nursery Staff
Jimmie Roebuck, Percussionist

Boy Scout Troop 292 Liaison	
Curtis Andrews	342-1375
Newsletter Editor	
Ken Gadomski	660-8565
Prayer & Care Coordinator	
Sharon Smith	776-6958
Session	
Don Bloom	661-9669
Worship	
Ken Gadomski	660-8565
Clerk of Session & Communication	
Emmett Proudfoot	633-8899
Building & Grounds	
Aggie Roebuck	665-4900
Fellowship	
Joan Rommes	653-4308
Evangelical Missions	
Barry South	660-8670
Discipleship	
Christine South	660-8670
Stewardship	
Sharon Smith	776-6958
Nurture	

Providence Press is published monthly by Providence Presbyterian Church. Email articles to kengadomski@comcast.net.

This month's contributors:

- Mary Montei Clark
- Ken Gadomski
- Mary Mastrangelo
- Amy Fletcher Messer
- Joan Rommes
- Manny Russo

("Can't just pray," from page 1)

classroom. As I asked her about her studies, she told me she has a full scholarship for tuition and a 20-hour per week work-study program, goes to school full time, and since she has no family to rely on, lives at McKemie Place. With a year and three months to go before graduation, she's worried about how long she can stay in the shelter and how she will finish her studies. She's intelligent and determined . . . but I wonder if that's enough.

Another woman who had interviewed for a job in a restaurant and had been told she would need a food handler's permit before she could be hired. No problem . . . well, maybe a problem. The permit costs \$20 . . . but she didn't have \$20. . . but Catholic Social Services will help with that . . . but only if she had already been hired. It all sounded like Catch-22 to me. She could . . . but she couldn't . . . and so she continues without employment and stays homeless.

So many stories . . . so many needs. How do we make a difference? How do I make a difference? After all, I pay taxes and give to charity . . . isn't

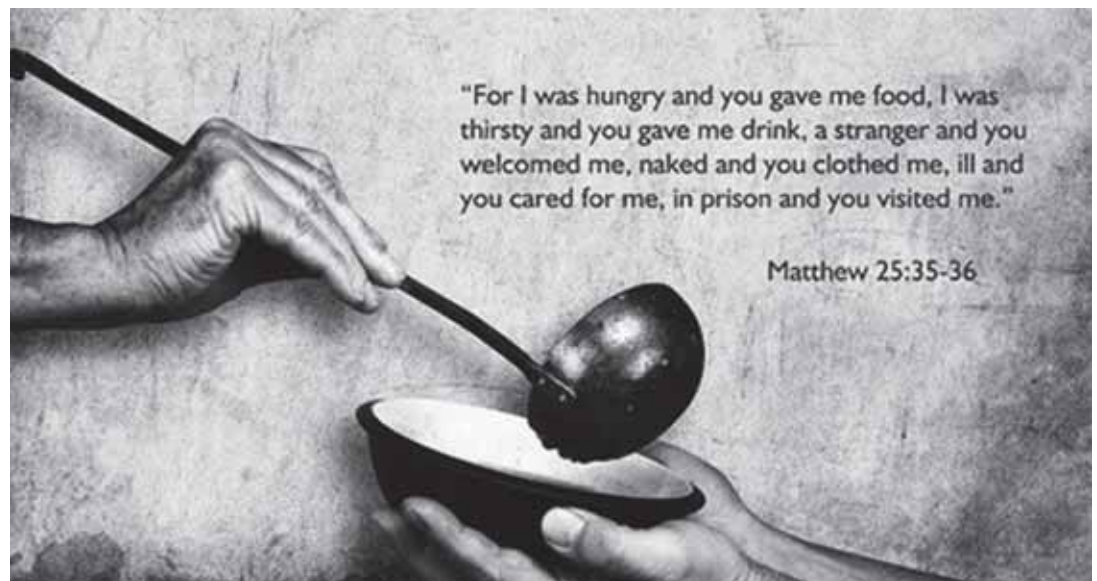
Here's what I learned, again, over the weekend. It's not the "system" that's broken . . . it's me. When I step away from the needs of others and assume the "system" will take care of the lost and broken, I am missing what God has given me to do.

that enough? Why doesn't the "system" work better? Who's at fault, and how can it be fixed?

Here's what I learned, again, over the weekend. It's not the "system" that's broken . . . it's me. When I step away from the needs of others and assume the "system" will take care of the lost and broken, I am missing what God has given me to do. In the twenty-fifth chapter of the Gospel of Matthew, we read "for I was hungry and you gave me

food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me." (35-36 NRSV)

On Wednesday, October 1, the *Press-Register* ran a front-page article about a homeless man and his four-year-old son. As they bounced from one "system" to another, looking for a safe (See "Can't just pray" on page 3)



("Can't just pray," from page 2)

place to sleep and food to eat, it was impossible not to be frustrated for him and wonder how this story would unfold.

The article went on the say, "A report calculated by homeless coalition Housing First shows that in 2013 there were 493 people who were homeless on any given night in Mobile and Baldwin counties." Let's round that number up to 500 . . . and then ask ourselves how many Christians live in Mobile and Baldwin counties. I don't know that number . . . but I bet it's enough people that if we took the needs of homeless people seriously, there wouldn't be a homeless "problem."

And last weekend, that is exactly what happened here at Providence Presbyterian Church!

We listened to one woman's story and gave her the \$20 needed for a food handler's permit. God is good, and the \$20 had already been given and was sitting on the counter in the kitchen, waiting to be used.

Another group of people is working to secure housing and care for the lady with breast cancer. It's amazing how God works when we get involved. What seemed hopeless when she asked for prayer now is filled with possibilities as we continue to search for answers for her.

The beautiful woman who stepped off the bus on Saturday morning, her feet and legs in terrible shape, told a story that angered many of us. She's diabetic and had been taken to a local hospital after passing out in a parking lot. They

It's amazing how God works when we get involved.

admitted her and put her on IV antibiotics.

But at 3:00 pm on Friday afternoon, she was packed up, taken to the curb, placed in a taxi, and driven downtown. She had no idea where she was going until the driver pulled up to 15 Place and put her suitcase on the sidewalk.

No wonder she looked like a deer in the headlights when she arrived here the next morning. No prescriptions, no doctor's appointment, no follow-up — just a night in a women's shelter and a bus ride out to our church.

The people asked Jesus: "When did we see you?" His answer is simple, and I want you to read it slowly and thoughtfully . . . "For I was hungry . . . I was thirsty . . . [from breakfast and hot coffee to lunch and then afternoon popcorn, we offered food and something to drink] . . . I was a stranger and you welcomed me . . . [can you see her stepping off the bus?] . . . I was naked and you gave me clothing . . . [The clothing box we keep at the church is now empty] . . . I was sick and you took care of me . . . [our resident nurse has made certain our lady from the hospital has seen a

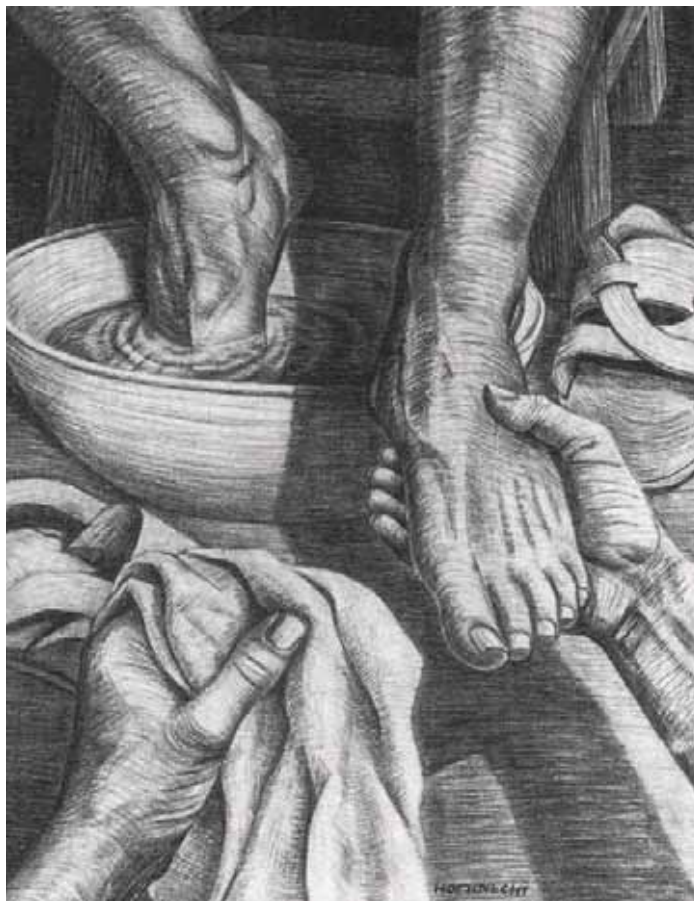
doctor and has gotten the prescriptions she needs] . . . I was in prison and you visited me [being homeless is a prison that is difficult to escape; the days spent at our church offer respite from the streets]."

Yes, we need the "systems" that provide for emergency housing and care, but that is only part of the answer. The rest of the answer is you . . . and me. It's one person saying he or she will help with one small part of the problem, and suddenly the greater need is filled.

Last weekend with the ladies from McKemie Place it wasn't enough to simply provide food and shelter — we were compelled to listen to their stories and then do something about those stories. Do something about it . . . that's our calling. Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me" (Matthew 25:40).

I watched as a woman from Spring Hill Presbyterian Church filled a pan with warm water, picked up a towel, and walked to the table out under the trees. There, she carefully washed the feet of a homeless woman and gave her a pedicure . . . something she had never "given" before. I have a pretty good idea that was a God sighting, and He was part of that pedicure. What is God compelling you to do? Think about it . . . and let me know.

It was an amazing weekend of ministry, and I can't wait to see what God is doing next!





1ST ANNUAL WEMO



Saturday, November 1

11:00 am-1:30 pm

**Providence Presbyterian Church
2320 Schillinger Rd. S.**

We're looking for churches and businesses to compete for bragging rights and awards in a variety of categories!

If you just want to eat and not compete, \$5 will get you a taste of every chili in the competition. 8 years old and under are FREE!

Drinks and desserts will also be sold.

Good food, great fellowship, music by Providence's Praise Band, and more!

For more information, contact Providence Presbyterian Church at 251-633-9701 or office@providence-pc.org.

It's going to be a great day in WeMo (West Mobile)! See you there!

ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT

MCKEMIE PLACE HOMELESS SHELTER



Did you know?

There are three ways you can keep up with what's happening at McKemie Place and how you can support them through fundraisers and other donations:

- **Website:**
mckemieplace.org

- **Email:**
Go to the website and, in the bottom-right corner of the page, enter your email address

- **Facebook:**
www.facebook.com/pages/McKemie-Place/145823362123604



Ruby Tuesday GiveBack Program

The Ruby Tuesday GiveBack fundraiser for McKemie Place continues this month at two locations: 5205 Service Road in Tillman's Corner and at the corner of Airport Boulevard and McGregor Avenue. A flyer like the one shown below *has to* be presented when you pay your bill in order for McKemie Place to receive 20% of the total ticket!

Volunteers will be handing these out at the door. If you would like to help, email McKemie Place Community Liaison Shelli Bell at shellibell@robertsbrothers.com.

GiveBack Program dates:

- October 4, 5, 11, and 12



Boy Scout Popcorn Sunday—October 12

By Manny Russo, Scoutmaster, Boy Scout Troop 292

Each year at this time, the Boy Scouts of America sell popcorn. The sales provide money not only for the scout but also for the troop, the Mobile Area Council, and the National Boy Scouts of America. Selling popcorn is the main fundraiser for the scouts.

On October 12, a scout will attend your worship service, and maybe you will have a "hankering" for some of the most delicious, mouth-watering, over-priced popcorn in the world!

You will have a choice of microwave popcorn, caramel popcorn, cheese popcorn, and a variety tin of popcorn.

The prices will vary from \$15 to \$30,

depending on what you want.

Thanks for all you do to support



the troop, and we look forward to Popcorn Sunday on October 12.





EVANGELICAL MISSIONS

Joan Rommes, Elder

Hope changes everything: News from Family Promise

Excerpted from the Family Promise Fall 2014 newsletter

We are on the threshold of implementing a new rehousing program, which will allow us to provide housing for six families at a time.

Our agency began as a grassroots effort in our community to help alleviate the suffering of children and their families who had no other place to turn.

We continue to rewrite a brighter future for over 100 children a year, children



who have no idea where they will sleep each night or when they will get their next meal, take their clothes so they can wear clean clothes to school. For these children, Family Promise has been a God-send, helping their family move from

homelessness to housing.

Join us in ending homelessness in Mobile by being involved with the annual Cardboard City benefit on Saturday, October 25.

Each year hundreds of participants spend the night on

the grounds of the Alabama School of Math and Science on the corner of Dauphin Street and Ann Street to experience homelessness for one night.

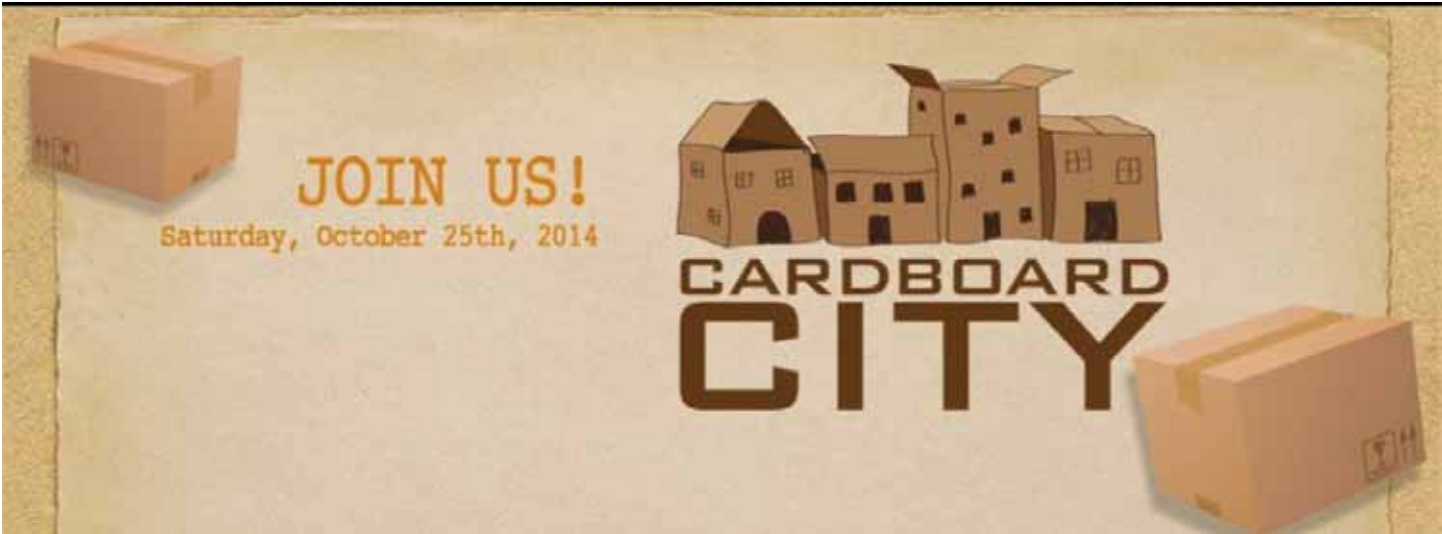
We serve dinner (soup kitchen), hold a contest, enjoy a DJ, organize a memorial/devotional service, and raise awareness of homelessness in our community.

For more information call (251) 441-1991 or visit us at www.familypromisemobile.org or www.cardboardcitymobile.com.

Did you know?

The Mobile County school system has eight social workers in its Homeless Education Program, which is part of the Student Support Services division. The social workers, along with the counselors in the system's 89 schools, provide financial help for homeless students and their families, including transportation and gas vouchers; Wave bus passes; and money, or waivers, for school fees, such as field trips or graduation caps and gowns.

Reprinted from www.al.com/news/mobile/index.ssf/2014/09/life_for_a_homeless_student_tr.html#incart_related_stories





*By Manny Russo,
Scoutmaster*

Troop 292 had an awesome September! It started with Troop Elections. Seventeen scouts were elected to serve in a variety of leadership positions. Twenty-two more scouts were appointed in various positions, such as Chaplain, Color Guard, Instructors, and Bugler. Scouts learn to be leaders by serving in various positions.

They usually learn more from their mistakes than in any other way. These scouts learn to work with their fellow scouts and the adults in the troop. They are guided by the older scouts and the adults.

The September campout involved canoeing the Coosa River in Wetumpka. Forty-five scouts and adults canoed. Everyone had at least one "flip over" due to the fast running water and the vicious rapids on the river. Most of the scouts and adults had bloody knees, hands, feet/toes, and many sore joints. Especially this old Scoutmaster! It was a memorable activity, and the boys loved it!

It was great getting back to camp, doctoring our wounds, telling stories about our crashes (with a lot of untruths and exaggerating), and having a hot dinner with homemade cobbler pie.

The month ended with our Troop Court of Honor. The COH is a ceremony that recognizes each scout who has advanced in rank, earned a merit badge, or held a position of leadership. We had 199 in attendance to enjoy the ceremony and fine dinner catered by Gambino's Italian Restaurant.

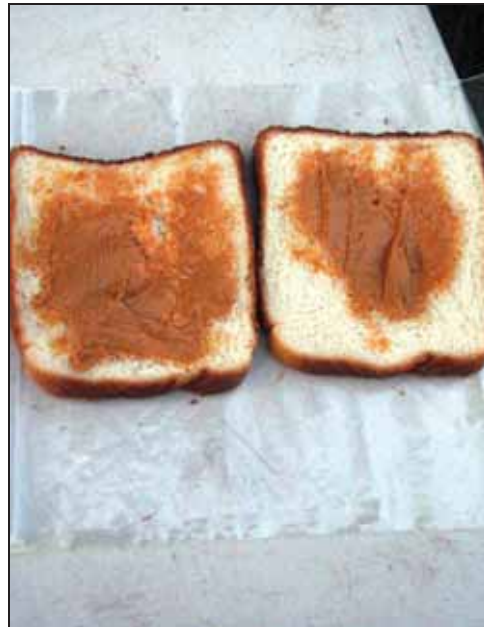
During the last month, two scouts have earned their Eagle Rank. We are very proud of the guys and what they have accomplished.

In October the troop will travel to Maubila Scout Reservation for a "shooting Sports" campout. The boys will learn the safe handling and use of firearms for recreational purposes.

They will fire 22-caliber rifles, use shotguns to shoot skeet, fire black-powder rifles, use bows and arrows, practice with slingshots, and throw tomahawks. Boys enjoy this type of activity and learn a lot about the safe use of firearms and the laws governing the ownership and use of firearms.

Thanks again to Providence Presbyterian Church for supporting your troop and providing a place to meet---a place in God's House.





Session Activities

Ken Gadomski, Clerk of Session



July 13 Congregational Meeting

- Approved a motion to allow Clerk of Session Ken Gadomski to moderate the meeting rather than Pastor Mary Montei Clark since the meeting was about the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC).
- Were reminded that the purpose of the meeting was to determine the next steps to be taken by the PNC.
- Approved a motion to place the PNC on hiatus until April 1, 2015, at which time the congregation will again meet to determine how the PNC should proceed.

August 17 Stated Session Meeting

- Approved a motion to approve the minutes of the July 10, 2014, Session eMeeting and the July 13, 2014, Stated Session.
- Received a letter of thanks from Family Promise.
- Were informed that Nurture Elder Sharon Smith planned to have the shepherds call all of their sheep about Tom Fletcher's Visitation on August 18 and Celebration of Life on August 19.

- Were informed that Comcast planned to install and set up the Internet during the coming week.
- Were informed that Pastor Mary Montei Clark will be scheduling a New Member Class.
- Received and discussed the July Treasurer's Report.
- Received Building and Grounds Elder Emmett Proudfoot's report.
- Were informed by Building and Grounds Elder Emmett Proudfoot that a broken light out by the sign has been fixed.
- Agreed to have Stewardship Elder Christine South check into the church's insurance policy and deductible.
- Approved a motion to allow the Mobile chapter of PEO International (Philanthropic Educational Organization) to hold its Christmas party at Providence on December 11.
- Received Communication Elder Ken Gadomski's written report.
- Were reminded by Communication Elder Ken Gadomski about the deadline for the September newsletter.
- Received Discipleship Elder Barry South's written report.
- Were informed by Discipleship Elder Barry South that the new Wednesday night discipleship program FIRED UP begins September 3 and that it focuses on the book *Detective Stories from the Bible*. Dinner begins at 5:15 pm, and class, taught by Elder Barry, runs 6:00-7:00 pm.
- Were informed by Discipleship Elder Barry South that a new adult Sunday School class begins on September 7. It will focus on Pastor Mary's sermon with Pastor Mary leading the discussion.
- Were informed by Discipleship Elder Barry South that a new Sunday School class for 3-5-year-olds begins September 7. Linda Payne will be teaching the class.
- Received Evangelical Missions Elder Joan Rommes' written report.
- Discussed instituting a school uniform closet and using vouchers for uniforms at Good Will Easter Seals.
- Were reminded by Evangelical Missions Elder Joan Rommes that volunteers are needed for the August 25 Ronald McDonald House dinner.
- Were informed by Evangelical Missions Elder Joan Rommes that we more than met our beginning-of-the-school-year goal of two back-to-school backpacks per grade at O'Rourke Elementary School.
- Received Fellowship Elder Aggie Roebuck's written report.
- Were informed by Fellowship Elder Aggie Roebuck that Providence Night at the BayBears was "a big hit."
- Agreed to postpone a planned dinner with the millennials for now.
- Were informed that Nurture Elder is working on the Shepherding Program and is planning a breakfast meeting.
- Were informed that Nurture Elder is currently looking for a couple of shepherd replacements.
- Thanked Nurture Elder Sharon Smith for continuing to serve so faithfully after her car accident in June.
- Discussed using the PCUSA "Consecrating Stewards" curriculum for this year's stewardship season.
- Were informed that Pastor Mary Montei Clark had discussed and planned worship (See "Session" on page 11)



("Session," from page 10)

activities for the next six weeks with Worship Elder Don Bloom before he left for Phoenix.

- Approved the wording of Providence's proposed overture to the Presbytery.
- Approved a motion to send the overture to the Presbytery for inclusion on the docket of the August 22-23 Presbytery meeting.
- Agreed to plant a tree in memory of long-time member Tom Fletcher, who died on August 15, 2014.

INSIDE  **OUTSIDE**

CHURCHWORKDAY

SATURDAY ★ OCTOBER 11 ★ 7:00-11:00 AM



WORSHIP

DON BLOOM, ELDER

Condolences

To Barbara and Stephen Fitzpatrick

- On the death of their father and grandfather, Stephen Laning, on September 15.






October worship volunteers

Contributed by Mary Mastrangelo

Date	Liturgist	Communion	Ushers	Nursery
7	Graham Hayes	Intinction	Bill Berry	Myrna Andrews
		Laura Anderson	Buck Bolton	
		Steve Crenshaw	Joan Rommes	
			Amy Westerberg	
14	Graham Hayes		Ann Bosarge	Amy Westerberg
			Aggie Roebuck	
			Buddy Low	
			Mary Mastrangelo	
21	Ken Gadomski	Al Drinovsky	Marlene Taylor	Sue Drinovsky
		Jerry Esneul	Les Taylor	
		Pam Fredelake	Bob Ellis	
		Debbie McLendon	TBA	
28	Ken Gadomski		Al Drinovsky	Kathy Taylor
			Debbie McLendon	
			Myrna Andrews	
			TBA	

October 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 5:15-7:00 pm FIRED UP 7:00 pm Choir	2 6:00 pm Closely Crafted 7:00-8:30 pm AA meeting	3 9:00 am Worship Team meeting	4 10:00 am Shepherds' breakfast October 4-5 Ruby Tuesday GiveBack for McKemie Place
5 8:20 am Morning Prayer 9:15 am Worship 10:15-11:00 am Boy Scout popcorn sales 10:45 am Sunday School 11:00 am The Grove 12:30 pm Building Usage Team meeting 5:15-7:00 pm Financial Peace (Grove) October 5-11 Family Promise at Redeemer	6 5:30 pm Girl Scouts	7 6:30 pm Boy Scouts	8 5:15-7:00 pm FIRED UP 5:30 pm McKemie Place (The Grove) 7:00 pm Choir	9 6:00 pm Closely Crafted 7:00 pm 25th Anniversary Committee meeting 7:00-8:30 pm AA meeting	10 10:00-11:00 am Food Pantry 11:00 am Evangelical Missions Team meeting	11 7:00 am- 11:00 am All-Church, Inside-Outside Work Day October 11-12, All Day Ruby Tuesday GiveBack for McKemie Place
12 8:20 am Morning Prayer 9:15 am Worship 10:45 am Sunday School 11:00 am The Grove 5:15-7:00 pm Financial Peace (Grove)	13	14 6:30 pm Boy Scouts	15 5:15-7:00 pm FIRED UP 7:00 pm Choir	16 6:00 pm Closely Crafted 7:00-8:30 pm AA meeting	17  Betty Blakeman Michelle Nall	18
19 8:20 am Morning Prayer 9:15 am Worship 10:45 am Sunday School 10:45 am Session Meeting 11:00 am The Grove 5:15-7:00 pm Financial Peace (Grove)	20 5:30 pm Girl Scouts	21 6:30 pm Boy Scouts	22  5:15-7:00 pm FIRED UP 7:00 pm Choir John Massey	23 6:00 pm Closely Crafted 7:00-8:30 pm AA meeting	24 10:00-11:00 am Food Pantry	25
26 8:20 am Morning Prayer 9:15 am Worship 10:45 am Sunday School 11:00 am The Grove 5:15-7:00 pm Financial Peace (Grove)	27	28 6:30 pm Boy Scouts	29 5:15-7:00 pm FIRED UP 7:00 pm Choir	30 6:00 pm Closely Crafted 7:00-8:30 pm AA meeting	31	I 11:00 am- 1:30 pm 1st Annual WeMo Chili Cookoff

Providence Presbyterian Church
2320 Schillinger Road South
Mobile, AL 36695

www.providence-pc.org

REMEMBER WHEN?

Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN; now Family Promise) team members (L-R) Joan Rommes, Sierra Edwards, Mary Mastrangelo, and Benny Harden pose on August 12, 2007, with the IHN participation and Inspire by Example Heart of Gold plaques awarded to Providence. Photo by Ken Gadomski

