



NAP News

February 2024



Do you have news you'd like to have included? Send submissions to adminoffice@napcusa.org by the 25th of each month.

What's Inside this Month

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Lent is the time between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday. Ash Wednesday is often marked with a worship service to prepare us for the hard season of Lent when we are reminded of our humanity and our total reliance on God. There are 40 days in Lent not including Sundays, because Sundays remain celebrations of the resurrection throughout the season.

The church encourages spiritual practices or disciplines during Lent such as prayer, Bible studies or devotions, fasting, and worship. Adding spiritual practices during Lent can instill habits of faith that provide an experiential understanding of spiritual truth and nurture the inclination to sustain a Lenten practice throughout the year or for a lifetime. Considering the traditional spiritual practices of Lent, here are some ideas :

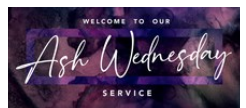
PRAY—Set up a prayer station in your home. Include a purple cloth or napkin, a Bible, and a candle. Use this prayer station as a daily reminder to spend time with God's Story (reading the Gospel of Mark or your own devotional) and prayer.



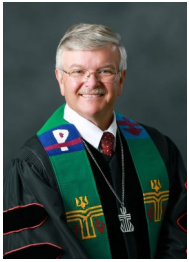
FAST—It's not about giving up chocolate! Fasting is about giving up something in your life that isn't bringing value to your relationship with God. Fast an activity (like giving up a TV show to spend time reading the Bible.) Fast material wealth (like purging your closet and donating clothes to those who have little or none.) Fast food (like giving up eating out in order to add money to your One Great Hour of Sharing Offering fish bank.)



LOVE—Spend time with others in worship, spiritual discussions, Bible study, fellowship, and service. Let your season of Lent be a time of sharing God's love.



How will YOU observe Lent?



**From our Executive Minister,
Dr. Tom Lovell...**

Dear Partners in Ministry,

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ as we prepare to begin our journey through the season of Lent. I must admit, I have mixed feelings about our annual observance of Lent. Those mixed feelings originate from a research paper I authored during my seminary years. The paper was entitled, *“Celebrating Lent in the Reformed Tradition.”* I thought this would be a great subject to research and would help me to develop a Lenten study for the congregation in which I was serving as a student intern. However, I was quite shocked when my research revealed that observing Lent with all of its fasts and prohibitions, was something that Reformers, especially John Calvin objected to vigorously. In his writings, Calvin used words such as superstitious, vulgar, and delusional as he warned against the observance of Lent. In the *Institutes* 4.12.19-21, Calvin advises his readers to take ***“precaution lest any superstition creep in, as has previously happened to the great harm of the church.”*** He quotes Joel 2:13 in opposition to religious hypocrisy, and cites St. Augustine, cautioning readers to avoid Lenten fasts as a work of merit. After completing my research, I wondered if I should distance myself and the church I was serving as far away from Lent as possible. Yet, over the course of my tenure as a Pastor, I have experienced the value of observing the disciplines of Lent for myself and have witnessed the many ways embracing intentional times of prayer, service, sacrifice, study, and other spiritual disciplines of Lent have nurtured and nourished those in the church and deepened their experience of God’s grace and presence. Thus, my mixed feelings.

Should we be cautious about observing Lent, or should we embrace it with everything we’ve got? Might I suggest that we do both? In concert with Calvin and his colleagues, I agree that some measure of caution is required if we choose to engage in the spiritual disciplines of Lent. However, I also believe that a humble observance of the season of Lent provides us with the opportunity to deepen our relationship with God in ways that we cannot even imagine. There is absolutely nothing wrong with engaging in the spiritual disciplines of Lent. Which of us would not benefit by increasing our time in prayer, or giving of ourselves or our resources to minister to others? But as we embrace these disciplines, we must take care to remember Jesus’ words of caution that our acts of piety not become an occasion for a public display or for pride to well up inside of us. As we engage in these spiritual disciplines, we must always remember the reason for embracing them is to deepen our relationship with God that we may more fully understand and recognize who and what we are that we may experience the incredible love that God has for us. As season of Lent draws near, let us embrace those spiritual disciplines which speak to us, but let us do so in a spirit of deep humility, keeping all that we do between us and God that we may fully experience the transformation he longs to bring to our lives.

Dr. Lovell’s Schedule

February 11—First, Ft. Payne

February 18—First, Guntersville

Feb 28 – Mar 2 Synod of Living Waters
Executive Forum

***Grace & Peace,
Tom***



***The Commission on Ministry
of
North Alabama Presbytery***

***cordially invites you to attend
the
Installation Service
for
The Rev. Dr. Michael Bowe
on
Sunday, February 25, 2024
at
5:00 pm
at
Faith Presbyterian Church
5003 Whitesburg Drive
Huntsville, AL 35802***

Attention: Clerks

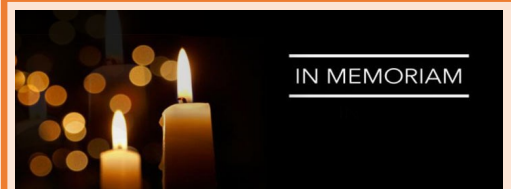
The 2024 Terms of Call Forms for Pastors are available on the NAP website.

Send to: adminoffice@napcusa.org

Attention: Treasurers

Please return your Per Capita Apportionment and your 2024 NAP Pledge Form ASAP so our Business Affairs and Personnel Team can meet NAP’s financial obligations for 2024.

Send to: adminoffice@napcusa.org



We will honor and remember all our Teaching and Ruling Elders who entered the Triumphal Kingdom at our February 24th Stated Meeting. **Clerks are asked to email names to be included to our Stated Clerk, Therese Howell at thehowell@outlook.com**

75
YEARS



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT



REPAIRING THE BREACH

— ISAIAH 58

Repairing the Breach, Fixing What's Broken

In Isaiah 58, God, through the voice of the prophet, calls us to be repairers of the breach — and by repairing the breach, we will, by God's grace, be led into a new season of justice, freedom and peace.

"Is not this the fast that I choose:

to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?

Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house;
when you see the naked, to cover them,
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

You shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
the restorer of streets to live in."

—Isaiah 58



One Great Hour
of Sharing
supports
programs in
over 100
countries.

FLETCHER

75
YEARS



ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT

IN THIS SEASON OF LENT,
we follow Jesus' example;
walking alongside the most vulnerable
to partner in repairing the harm inflicted upon them.
WE ARE THE CHURCH, TOGETHER;
and we are there with those who need us.

Each gift to One Great Hour of Sharing helps improve the
lives of the suffering and the vulnerable through three
life-saving programs ~



HOUSE RESTORATION - VILLAT

PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE

Restore Streets
to Live In



KASUPE MINISTRIES

PRESBYTERIAN HUNGER PROGRAM

Share your Bread
with the Hungry



CARDAD GARDENS

SELF- DEVELOPMENT OF PEOPLE

Loose the Bonds
of Injustice

Please give generously.

IF WE ALL DO A LITTLE, IT ADDS UP TO A LOT!



Fish Banks, children's curriculum, a leaders guide, bulletin inserts, minute for mission scripts, hymns, and worship aids are available to help you promote and encourage your congregation to respond to the One Great Hour of Sharing offering in 2024. This offering is the biggest collective offering in our denomination.

Download your resources at pcusa.org/specialofferings.





Ministry Grants



In November, the Business Affairs and Personnel Team awarded TWO Ministry Grants to Hope Presbyterian Church for building improvements, repairs, and ministry enhancements. Since then, BAPT has received and approved TWO additional ministry grants (described below.) North Alabama Presbytery has been blessed to be a blessing and will continue to receive grant applications on a rolling basis. Details are on the NAP website: www.napcusa.org.

Congratulations to Grace Presbyterian Church on being awarded a NAP Ministry Grant for roof and building repairs to stabilize their building and enhance their ministry as they look to the future of welcoming people to “Experience Grace” and “Expect to be Accepted.”



Congratulations to Big Cove Presbyterian Church on being awarded a NAP Ministry Grant for thinking “outside the box” for their “**Front Porch Project**”, an online and digital way to connect to people where they are and intentionally have conversations and serve “virtual lemonade.” We look forward to hearing more about this journey utilizing technology as a new way of evangelism and “doing church!”



I wish we had money to make a difference in the lives of college students nearby....

We've got a grant for that!

I wish we had money to help our ministry with at-risk children and youth...

I wish we had money to hire a technology person to create and enhance our social media presence...

We've got a grant for that!

I wish the Presbytery had more resources for helping small churches with pulpit supply.....

I wish.....

We've got a grant for that!

I wish I had money to send more youth to a Montreat conference....

Grant information and applications are available at www.napcusa.org

February/March NAP Events

Business Affairs/Personnel Team

Tripp Brogdon/Bob Phelps

Friday, February 16, 2024

via zoom

NAP Winter Stated Meeting

Saturday, February 24, 2024

St. Andrew Presbyterian Church

Decatur, AL

Commission on Ministry

Carol Copeland, Moderator

Thursday, March 7 @ 6:00 pm

via zoom

Executive Commission

Robin Palmer, Moderator

Tuesday, March 19

NAP Winter Stated Meeting

Saturday, February 24, 2024

8:30 am—3:00 pm

St. Andrew Presbyterian Church

Decatur, AL

Lunch provided by Apple Lane Farms

\$13 (your choice of Ham, Turkey, Cheese)

**Please RSVP for meeting and lunch
to Krista at adminoffice@napcusa.org**



Alabama Pilgrimage Jubilee Weekend

April 19-21, 2024

Maranatha Camp & Conference Center

www.alabamapilgrimage.com



Important Dates

Presbyterian Women Spring Gathering

Saturday, April, 20, 2024

Location: TBD

NAP Summer Stated Meeting

Tuesday, June 11, 2024

Location: TBD

NAP Fall Stated Meeting

Tuesday, October 22, 2024

Maranatha Camp & Conference Center
Scottsboro, AL

Seasons of the Church Year



**Celebrating the dance of the Holy Spirit
and telling the story of God's love.**

February 14—Ash Wednesday

February 18—March 24—Lent

Matthew 25 Focus #3: ERADICATING SYSTEMIC POVERTY

What is Systemic Poverty?

Systemic poverty refers to the economic exploitation of people who are poor through laws, policies, practices and systems that perpetuate their impoverished status. We live in a world where not all have equal access to education, transportation, fresh food, financial resources, clean air, water or healthy environments, employment with a living wage, healthcare, benefits, citizenship, and affordable housing. This lack of access creates generational cycles of poverty and a racial wealth gap that are systemic in nature. An individual cannot change their economic and social location easily by just “working harder.” Meanwhile the many, interlocking disadvantages often are compounded by choices to stay near family or a particular location or employment opportunity, or by gender and racial injustice, trauma, violence, immigration status, impacts from climate change and environmental degradation, and other complicating issues.

How Do We Eradicate Systemic Poverty?

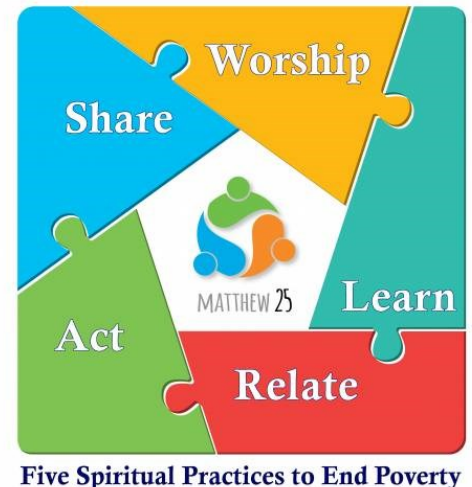
WORSHIP: In our worship, prayers and faith life, we incorporate confessional, biblical, theological and ecclesial understandings of poverty

LEARN: In our Christian education and personal learning, we seek to understand the intersectional, systemic and root causes of poverty.

RELATE: We engage in genuine, humble, mutual and equitable relationships across divisions, social status and groups as Jesus modeled.

ACT: We prioritize listening to, and responding alongside, communities as they identify needs, organize for solutions and engage in advocacy for change.

SHARE: Recognizing that all gifts come from God and are to be shared, we share financial, building, time and other resources to create fair access and to right historical harms.



Download the full Poverty Resource Kit and other resources at
<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/poverty>

**PRESBYTERIAN ONLINE
BOOK STUDY**

Featuring
Matthew
Desmond's
**POVERTY,
BY AMERICA**

7:30-8:45 p.m. (ET)
Mondays in February

Register at
pcusa.info/povertybookstudy

“Why does this land of plenty allow one in every eight of its children to go without basic necessities, permit scores of its citizens to live and die on the streets, and authorize its corporations to pay poverty wages?”

Join with other PC(USA) members across the country to discuss Matthew Desmond’s book “Poverty, by America” over 4 sessions (2-3 chapters will be discussed each session).

7:30-8:45 p.m. Eastern

Mondays in February, 2024

Feb. 5, 12, 19, 26

Register at pcusa.info/povertybookstudy

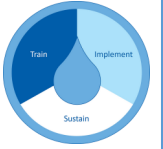
Living Waters for the World



A MINISTRY OF THE SYNOD OF LIVING WATERS,
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)

Living Waters for the World (LWW) **trains volunteers** to establish and lead water mission teams that partner with communities to **implement and operate** sustainable water purification systems and health education programs.

LWW Networks come alongside water teams and partners throughout every phase of a water project. They provide essential support



for **sustainable** water systems that produce **clean water for a generation**.

Steve Young, Executive Director of LWW, will be present at our **February 24th Stated Meeting** to share exciting news about the work of LWW and new opportunities to GO, GIVE, and PRAY for this important ministry of our Synod!

Living Waters for the World: Success in Huimanguillo! by Christi Robinson, Faith Presbyterian Church, Huntsville



From November 5-9, 2023, three members of Faith Presbyterian Church served as part of a Living Waters for the World drinking water system construction and education mission trip in Huimanguillo, Tabasco, Mexico. The Faith members traveling for this trip included Lorraine Lyter-Reed, Bridgett Martin, and Christi Robinson, who joined with Faith's partner church of St. Phillip Presbyterian of Houston, TX, to complete this project that began over two years ago in planning with an initial assessment trip made in October 2021 (Christi Robinson attended as part of that initial group). Between 2021 and 2023, two more trips were made by Faith members, including Anna Norton, Bridgett Martin, Bob Captain, and LoDean Scoble, for coordination and preparation for this November 2023 installation trip.

After meeting up with our Houston partners on Saturday, November 4, for some final planning and logistics, including balancing the weight of our luggage to carry needed supplies, the team arrived in Villahermosa on Sunday evening, November 5. At that point, the US team members were joined by the in-country LWW personnel including Pastors Pablo, Isa and Freddy, two education specialists Fany and Teresa, and translator Eigner, for the duration of the trip. Due to some safety concerns regarding cartel activity in the closer town of Cardenas, the group spent each night in a hotel in Villahermosa and traveled about 1.5 hours each way by church van and a rental car each day to the project location in Huimanguillo. The group maintained a small footprint by staying within either the hotel or project site locations throughout the trip and did not encounter any problems.

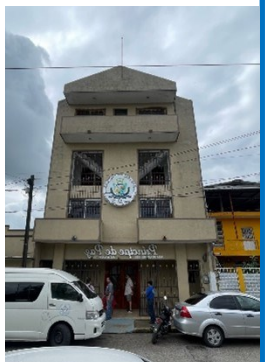


The education team, including Bridgett and Lorraine, met each morning at the Principe de Paz (Prince of Peace) Presbyterian Church in Huimanguillo with local women who volunteered to learn about the water system. These volunteers worked together each morning to teach and learn about when to use the purified bottled drinking water versus regular tap water available in the area along with fun lessons, Bible story skits, and songs that reinforce the overall message of God's love and the need for clean, healthy water. In the afternoons, students from the local area met at the church after school where the local volunteers taught them the same lessons that they themselves learned and practiced throughout the morning.



The installation team, including Christi (who also happens to be a water engineer in her regular day job back home), worked at the water plant building each day located on the church's rural camp type property named Rancheria Villa Flores (south of Huimanguillo). These volunteers cut PVC pipe to fit and ran all the lines from the newly drilled well into storage tanks located both on the roof and inside the water plant building for this "agua cruda" (raw, untreated water). From those tanks, the water lines and equipment were installed for the raw water pump, carbon filter, water softening resin with

brine tank, reverse osmosis membrane filters, and into the "agua purificada" (purified water) tanks. When the operators are ready for bottling, the bottling pump is then turned on to draw water out of the agua purificada tanks and send it through the final ultraviolet (UV) disinfection vessel just prior to the bottling stations. As you will notice with the building photo, there are three elevated large door openings that can serve as truck loading bays for the church members to begin delivery operations to the local community.




On the last day of work, all team members met for their jobs at the water plant site. The education group prepared for that evening's water plant system dedication and celebration ceremony. The installation group continued finalizing the plant's installation with attaching pipe supports, completing drain lines, labeling every component for operator reference, and flow testing all the lines under pressure, stopping to make repairs as needed when a glued joint wasn't quite glued!

It was a great evening when nearly 200 people gathered to celebrate the new water plant and share in the first taste of this clean, pure, safe and healthy drinking water!


Faith Presbyterian's Water Team will continue to build on this partnership over the next two years through prayer, communication, and follow-up visits with their new friends!






2024 Book Discussion Group


JUSTICE and PEACE

 DISCUSS THE BOOKS WITH OTHERS VIA ZOOM


- The J&P Book Discussion Group is open to all!

 DISCUSSION GROUP MEETS EVERY OTHER MONTH

- Read and discuss any or all books that appeal to you. Registration will be needed to join the discussion on Zoom.

 RECEIVE STUDY GUIDES TO INFORM YOUR READING

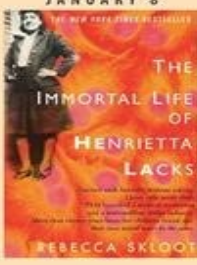
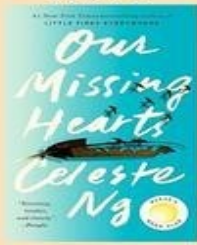
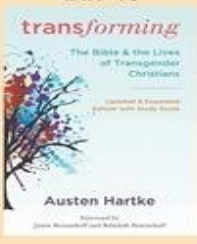
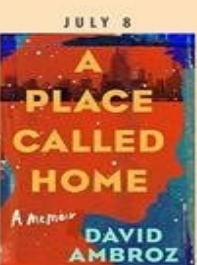
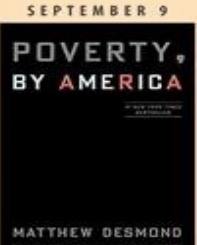
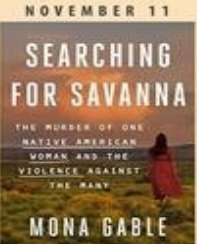
- Questions for discussion or reflection will be sent with your registration confirmation.



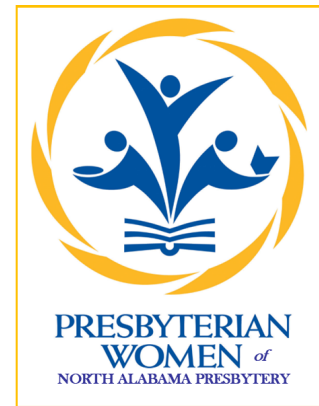
To register, scan the QR code with your smart phone or go to presbyterianwomen.org/justice.

Reading Selections

(6:30 PM – 8:30 PM Eastern Time)

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>JANUARY 8</p>  <p>MARCH 11</p>  <p>MAY 13</p>  | <p>JULY 8</p>  <p>SEPTEMBER 9</p>  <p>NOVEMBER 11</p>  |
|--|---|

Selections are recommended by the Justice & Peace Committee of PW's Board of Directors.



Dates to Remember

March 10, 2024
Celebrate the Gifts of Women Sunday

April 17, 2024
Come See Columbia Day
Decatur, GA

April 20, 2024
PW-NAP Spring Gathering
First Presbyterian, Athens

August 8-11, 2024
PW National Gathering
St. Louis, MO

Presbyterian Women of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), featured a generous gift they made to the Presbyterian Home for Children in a national publication they produced about their Annual Mission Fund. Presbyterian church members throughout the nation give to the Thank Offering and Birthday Offering, and Presbyterian Women distributes gifts from those funds to deserving organizations, including the Presbyterian Home for Children.

In 2022, the national organization awarded the Home a \$50,000 Thank Offering grant toward funding one of six tiny cottages at Union Village. The Home has partnered with its neighbor Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind to offer Union Village, a permanent supportive housing community for individuals who are deaf, blind, deafblind or multi-disabled.



PHFC has operated Union Village on a separate and secluded part of its campus for AIDB consumers since 2017. Six additional cottages opened in September 2023, thanks in part to the gift that The Creative Ministries Offering Committee of Presbyterian Women decided to fund after prayerful and careful consideration.

"In 2022, (Presbyterian Women) from all across the nation came together, pooled resources and provided a \$50,000 Thank Offering grant to PHFC," the article states. "The monies received and bestowed are making real accessible and affordable homes for adults with multiple disabilities through Union Village, partnership program between PHFC and the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind."

PHFC President and CEO Doug Marshall thanked the Presbyterian Women for their gift and for shining a light on Union Village. "It's fitting that in this, our 156th year, Presbyterian Women once again show their love and dedication to Presbyterian Home for Children," Marshall said. "It was the faith and hard work of Presbyterian Women that raised funds to build the Home 156 years ago, and their support continues to this day."

Marshall said, "We also thank God for the help of the North Alabama Presbytery and PHFC Board Members and Presbyterian Women Carol Copeland, Joyce Pettis Temple, and Janis Williams for writing a recommendation letter and assisting in the grant application process to make sure the Home and the Union Village are here to serve some of our most vulnerable citizens."

For Youth who will complete 5th-8th grade by summer 2024!



MONTREAT MIDDLE
SCHOOL CONFERENCE
July 17-21, 2024
montreat.org/msc-24

The Middle School Conference is a great introduction to Montreat Conferences for younger youth and their adult leaders!

Adults must be fully registered and housed with their youth in campus housing. **The daily schedule includes keynote, worship, recreation, singing, small groups, and many other activities.**

The conference will be held at Maryville College, located in Maryville, TN.

Registration fees for youth and adults include conference, housing, and food.

Work Camp opportunities are also available for Senior High Students!

Fee before April 1—\$435 with a deposit of \$100 due at registration. For more information, visit www.montreat.org.

NAP would love to send a group to this conference! If you are interested in organizing a Presbytery group, please contact Jaina Glaze!

For Youth entering 9th grade through graduating seniors!

PLANTING PEACE

Montreat Youth
Conference 2024

**NAP YOUTH WILL BE ATTENDING WEEK 3:
JULY 7-13, 2024**

HOUSING: Reynolds Lodge

COST: \$650.00

DEPOSIT OF \$350 IS DUE ASAP!

**MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO NORTH ALABAMA PRESBYTERY
AND MAIL TO PO BOX 4031, HUNTSVILLE, AL 35815**

ATTENTION: KRISTA LOVELL

*Please include full name of youth/adult and their church
on the check.*

Churches are asked to pay \$150 per adult
to offset their room/board

**QUESTIONS? Contact Rev. Jaina Glaze at
rev.jainaanderson@gmail.com**

Montreat Youth Conference affirms youth in their calling to be and to shape the church of Jesus Christ. Our desire is to help youth come to know and believe that they are the beloved of God and to be a place where authenticity, community, connection, and God's truth thrive. We seek to be an inclusive space where each voice can be heard and where each heart can be molded; where change is invited, challenge is expected, and where all are embraced.

This summer, we will build an accepting community of unconditional love where every story matters. Through engaging worship, lively music, practices of gratitude and fun, we will offer youth different opportunities to cultivate their spiritual faith journeys and practice sabbath. We will provide a secure space that is loving, holy, and authentic so that we may glorify God in all that we do, inspiring and equipping a lifetime of faith.

Youth leave Montreat knowing that:

- Their faith matters.
- They are loved as they are.

They are part of a community of faith.

Montreat Youth Conference is open to rising 9th graders through graduating 12 graders.



MONTREAT
CONFERENCE CENTER