

# CHURCH CURRENTS

## AUGUST 2024

210 S. Wayne Street, Milledgeville, Georgia 31061

478-452-9394; fpchurch@windstream.net; www.fpcmilledgeville.org



Join us on Sunday mornings on WKZR  
102.3 FM or via Facebook Live


**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
**210 SOUTH WAYNE STREET**  
**MILLEDGEVILLE, GA 31061**





# First Presbyterian Church

Issue No. 337 August 2024



Pastor:  
Rev. Susan Balfour

Coord. of Children &  
Youth Ministries:  
Vacant

Admin. Asst.:  
Lois Callender

Director of Music:  
Dr. Jennifer Flory

Organist:  
Kate Phillips

Child Care Providers:  
Childcare is  
temporarily  
unavailable

Beloved,

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ! I reflect daily on the marvel of our church family, and the ways in which we work together to show God's love among ourselves and to our community. I give thanks to God for your faithfulness and our work together.

Our Session consists of dedicated elders, and I am grateful for their leadership. Strong personalities and differing visions have caused some discord, making it difficult for us to move forward. Last month, the Session voted unanimously to appeal to the presbytery's Committee on Ministry for mediation to help us work through the contention so that we may better serve this church family each of us holds so dearly. The Committee assembled a panel who came and spoke to each elder and have agreed to work with us. Two weeks ago, a called presbytery meeting formally established an Administrative Commission for this purpose. The AC will begin work with us at our August Session Meeting. If you have questions, you may consult the PC(USA) Book of Order, section G-3.0101b, or feel free to speak to me.

I am confident that these matters will be resolved and that we will resume the kind of collegial atmosphere of cooperation and fellowship that I, as Moderator, have always strived to maintain, and which has habitually come naturally to our leadership. On behalf of our Session, I humbly request that you keep us, the Administrative Commission, our church family, and our mission and identity as the Body of Christ in your prayers.

Again, I see God working among us and through us each day. Though we face challenges, we are strong, and our faithful work to show God's grace and love has sustained us. As I mentioned in my July 28<sup>th</sup> sermon, God's foolishness has surpassed worldly wisdom in preserving our fellowship and service. Thanks be to God!

In Christ,

Rev. Susan

*we're all in this together*

# Light By Which We See

(Meditation from Center for Action and Contemplation from July 18, 2024)

Make a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

—Step 4 of the Twelve Steps

*Father Richard helps us understand that a moral inventory or “shadow work” is a necessary part of the spiritual life:*

I am convinced that some people are driven to addictions to quiet their constant inner critic, but it only gives them another thing to hate about themselves. What a vicious cycle! Moral scrutiny is not to discover how good or bad we are and regain some moral high ground, but to begin some honest “shadowboxing” which is at the heart of all spiritual awakening. Yes, “the truth will set you free” as Jesus says (John 8:32), but first it tends to make us miserable.

People only come to deeper consciousness by intentional struggles with contradictions, conflicts, inconsistencies, inner confusions, and what the biblical tradition calls “sin” or moral failure. The goal is actually not the perfect avoidance of all sin, which isn’t possible anyway (see 1 John 1:8-9; Romans 5:12), but the struggle itself, and the encounter and wisdom that come from it. Law and failure create the foil, which creates the conflict, which leads to a very different kind of victory than any of us expected. Not perfect moral victory, not moral superiority, but *luminosity of awareness and compassion for the world*. After thirty years in “perfect” recovery, alcoholics are still imperfect and still alcoholic, and they know it, which makes all the difference.

So shadowboxing, a “searching and fearless moral inventory,” is for the sake of truth, humility, and generosity of spirit, not vengeance on the self or some kind of complete victory. And while seeing and naming our actual faults allows us to grow and change, it may be experienced as an even greater gift by those around us.

Our shadow self is not our evil self. It is just that part of us that we do not want to see, our unacceptable self by reason of nature, nurture, and choice. That bit of denial is what allows us to do evil and cruel things—without recognizing them as evil or cruel. Ongoing shadowboxing is absolutely necessary because we all have a well-denied shadow self. We all have that which we cannot see, will not see, dare not see. It would destroy our public and personal self-image.

Jesus says, “Take the log out of your own eye first, and then you will see clearly enough to take the splinter out of your brother’s or sister’s eye” (Matthew 7:5). Step 4 is about dealing with our own log first, so we can stop blaming, accusing, and denying, and thus displacing the problem. It’s about seeing truthfully and fully. Note that Jesus does not just praise good moral behavior or criticize immoral behavior, as we might expect. Instead, he talks about something caught in the eye. He knows that if we see rightly, the actions and behavior will eventually take care of themselves.

## Reference:

Selected from Richard Rohr, [\*Breathing under Water: Spirituality and the Twelve Steps\*](#), 10th anniv.

ed. (Cincinnati, OH: Franciscan Media, 2011, 2021), 29, 30-31, 31-32.



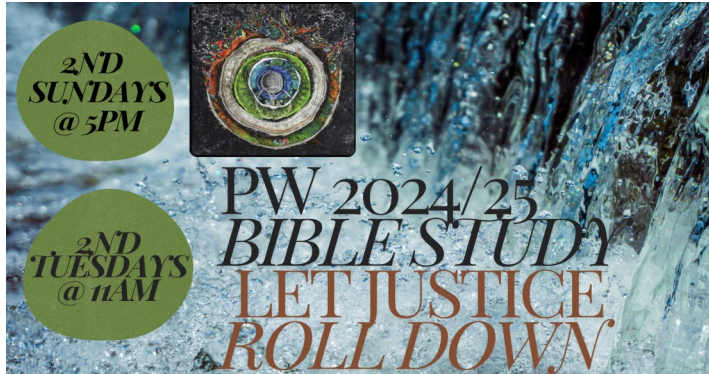
Center for Action  
and  
Contemplation



# CONGREGATIONAL FELLOWSHIP



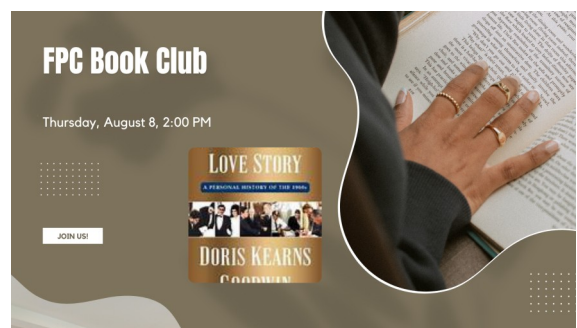
Next month marks the restart of the Presbyterian Women's Bible Study. The study this year is Let Justice Roll Down and covers creation care. There will be two different groups meeting on the second Sunday at 5:00 PM and the second Tuesday at 11:00 AM. We hope you can join us.



The First Presbyterian Book Club will meet on August the 8th at 2:00 pm in the church parlor. We will be discussing *An Unfinished Love Story: A Personal History of the 1960s* by Doris Kearns Goodwin, a Pulitzer Prize winning author and one of America's most beloved historians. In this book the author takes the reader along on the emotional journey she and her husband, Richard (Dick) Goodwin embarked upon in the last years of his life, as they relived the events of the 60s for this book. Dick was one of the brilliant young men of the John F. Kennedy's New Frontier, and then he helped design Lyndon Johnson's Great Society. Doris worked directly with Lyndon Johnson and later assisted on his memoir. The Goodwins' last endeavor has produced this must-read history of the 1960s. This voyage of remembrance brought unexpected discoveries, forgiveness, the renewal of dreams, and the reviving of hope that the youth of today will carry forward the unfinished love story with America.

The book selection for September is a memoir, *On Call: A Doctor's Journey in Public Service* by Anthony Fauci, M.D. Dr. Fauci was the doctor who became a beacon of hope for millions of people through the misinformation and the mismanagement of the COVID pandemic. He tells his story of a six-decade career in the highest-levels of public service; one that had him working with seven presidents. His role in the COVID pandemic was only the most recent epidemic in which he played a major role. Dr. Fauci also had a crucial role in researching HIV and bringing AIDS into a sympathetic public view. On a global level, he played a significant role in helping the world navigate through the Ebola, SARS, West Nile virus and the anthrax crises. Please join us on the 8th as we take a stroll down memory lane with Doris and Dick as Doris recounts their personal involvement with the historical events from the 60s and 70s that we were only able to observe from afar.

~ Millie Murphy







Milly Free Fridge is in need of regular volunteers to clean the fridge and the area around it. So please join us Sunday, August 25th to help feed our neighbors and ourselves by making sandwiches for the Milly Free Fridge and cleaning out the fridge when we deliver our donations.

Please bring any of the following:

Sliced bread, lunch meat, jelly, fresh fruit, prepackaged snacks, bottled drinks. We will provide condiments and labeling materials. *With the hot weather, frozen bottles of water for the Free Fridge are always welcome. Thank you!*

## Samaritan Ministry

The Samaritan Ministry is meant to help those in need of utility assistance and those who receive help are only allowed to come once every six months. Your consistent and generous giving to this special outreach is

appreciated; it is very needed. Please consider helping Bill out on the third Tuesday of the month as he helps all those who come to the church looking for assistance.

**The next disbursement of funds will be on Tuesday, August 20 at 9:30 AM.**

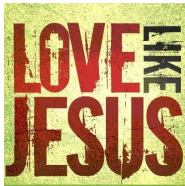
**GOD'S WORK.  
OUR HANDS.**



Our Food Pantry has been busy during the month of July, distributing all we had in about 10 minutes each week. As noted before, we have had to cut back our standard from 20 to 10 bags, but gave out 57 over the 5 Tuesdays. As Pastor Susan pointed out in her sermon on the 28th, this is a vital ministry and needs to be kept in mind as we shop and as we make our offerings as well as in our prayers as we give thanks for our own abundance. Please use the list of items included in the newsletter to govern your purchasing. ~Donna

### Food Pantry staples list:

Canned soups, canned ravioli, canned ham, tuna, salmon, and chicken; boxed mac & cheese, pasta noodles, grits, oatmeal, and/or cereal; peanut butter & jelly; canned spaghetti sauce, fruit, and vegetables



# August



## Stewardship

sharing the gifts we have been given

4 9:30 Sunday School  
10:15 Children's School  
11:00 Worship Service  
1:00 UMC Bridge

5 6:00 MSG Board Meeting



6 9:30-10:30 Food Pantry  
12:00 Kiwanis Luncheon



11 9:30 Sunday School  
10:15 Children's School  
11:00 Worship Service  
1:00 UMC Bridge

12 6:30 PFLAG  
7:00 MSG



13 9:30-10:30 Food Pantry  
12:00 Kiwanis Luncheon  
5:30 Session Meeting



18 9:30 Sunday School  
10:15 Children's School  
11:00 Worship  
1:00 UMC Bridge  
1:30 Homeless Awareness Club

19 7:00 MSG



20 9:30-10:30 Food Pantry and Samaritan Ministry  
12:00 Kiwanis Luncheon

**GOD'S WORK.  
OUR HANDS.**

25 9:30 Sunday School  
10:15 Children's School  
11:00 Worship Service  
12:00 Milly Free Fridge Service Opportunity  
1:00 UMC Bridge

26 7:00 MSG



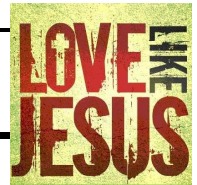
27 9:30-10:30 Food Pantry  
12:00 Kiwanis Luncheon



WE ARE A **MATTHEW 25 Church**

*Actively Engaged in the World*

# 2024



	1	2	3
<b>7 6:30 Wednesday</b> Potluck and Study 	<b>8 2:00 FPC Book Club</b> <b>6:00 IOBI</b> 	9	10
<b>14 6:30 Wednesday</b> Potluck and Study 	15	16	<b>17 6:00 Family Game Night</b> 
<b>21 6:30 Wednesday</b> Potluck and Study 	<b>22 6:00 IOBI</b>	23	24
<b>28 6:30 Wednesday</b> Potluck and Study 	29	30	31

## Elders on Session

**Class of 2026** ~ Wesley Applebury (At Large) Charles Burrell (Congregational Care) Jennifer Flory (Worship) Pat Henry (Finance) Nancy Miller (Clerk of Session) Laurie Peebles (Personnel) Joel Respass (Property) Anne Smart (Christian Education)

**Operations:** The church office is open Monday - Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

**Pastor Office Hours:** Tuesday - Friday 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Please call the office for an appointment



**CHILDREN'S  
SUNDAY  
SCHOOL**  
Sundays,  
10:15am, in the  
Craft Room  
Upstairs

Youth Group will restart at the end of September or the beginning of October. Enjoy the start of the new school year!



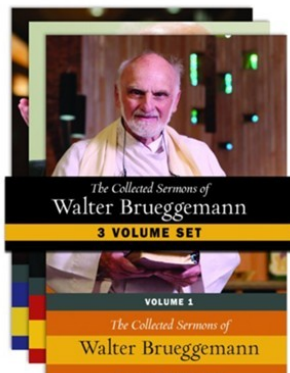


# CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

## ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Bible Sunday School class continues to meet via ZOOM. This conveniently allows us to study and learn in an informal manner from the comfort of our home computer, on a tablet or on our smartphones. We meet for thoughtful

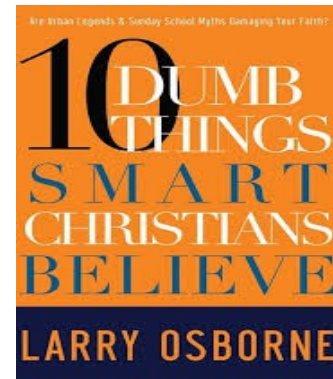
conversations **every Sunday at 9:30 AM**. We are discussing the sermons in the second volume of *The Collected Sermons of Walter Brueggemann*. This collection is organized to match the seasons of the church calendar. The material is thought provoking and fresh. If you have never encountered Professor Brueggemann's work you are in for a treat. Not only is he incredibly knowledgeable, he also has a great sense of humor. I hope a number of you will join us. If you wish to join by ZOOM, call me at (478) 414-6516 and I will forward the link. ~Joel D. Burns



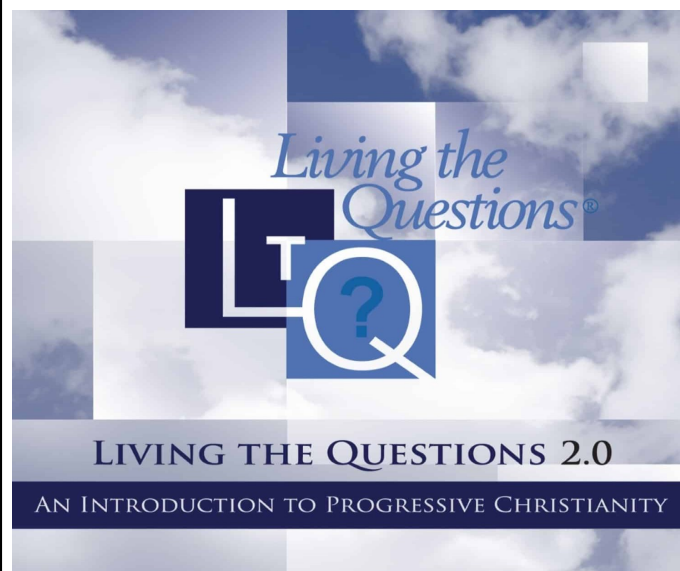
The **DAILY RIPPLE** is a new app developed as part of the PC(USA)'s 1001 New Worshiping Communities initiative. Every weekday, the app and website publish a "100-150-word droplet" reflecting on Scripture. Each droplet creates a "ripple" through a question that prompts a positive action. Engage with the app a few minutes (1% of your day) each day to find ways to strengthen and grow your faith and discipleship.



## FELLOWSHIP SUNDAY SCHOOL



We are studying *10 Dumb Things Smart Christians Believe* by Larry Osborne. This group meets in person in the parlor room **every Sunday morning at 9:45 AM**. We would love to have you join us. ~Bill Werts



## WEDNESDAY NIGHT STUDY

The Wednesday night study group meets in person for a pot luck supper and lively discussion every week. We are engaging in a video series, **Living the Questions 2.0**. This series features progressive Christians who help us think deeply about our faith. Each session is somewhat independent from the others so if you can't get there a particular week, you can still enjoy the ones you can attend. *The pot luck begins at 6:30 P.M. If you do not wish to participate in the pot luck, the discussions begin about 7:00 P.M.* Please join us . ~Joel Burns



At times lively, with bursts of dancing and joy, and - at times - pindrop quiet as commissioners and observers listened to the voices at the mics, General Assembly 226 - themed **Live into Hope** - was an ever-faithful time for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to ask profound questions about the shape and future of Christ's church.

There are ten changes listed on the handouts available in the Narthex. We will highlight a few each month.

**Changes to special offerings:**

The four special offerings currently received by the PC (USA) will be reduced to three, and proceeds will be distributed to causes instead of programs. The changes in

FIN- 12, which take effect for the 2026 offerings, include eliminating the Pentecost Offering and moving the ministries it has supported to a restructured Christmas Joy Offering.

**The rejection of Christian Zionism:**

The GA passed on consensus the update and expansion of the resolution confronting Christian Zionism approved in 2004. Through the Office of Theology, Formation and Evangelism, GA calls on the denomination to reject Christian Zionism in all its forms, acknowledge the expansion of Christian Zionism in all its forms, and issue a study document that addresses the expansion of Christian Zionism since the 2004 policy.

If you have any questions about these changes, please feel free to contact the office, or visit the Presbyterian *Outlook* website: [pres-outlook.org](http://pres-outlook.org)



*Stewardship*  
a way of life

**TREASURER'S CORNER**

The contributions to our general fund have been very low this summer. This time of year is always difficult for the church but this year it has been even tougher.

God needs this church. Please support its missions. ~Joel D. Burns

	May	June	2024 YTD
Contributions	\$14,724	\$13,669	\$85,841
Other Income	\$688	\$948	\$5,454
Designated Funds Received	\$3,177	\$2,258	\$15,743
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$18,589</b>	<b>\$15,412</b>	<b>\$107,038</b>
Budgeted Expenses	\$17,811	\$22,684	\$133,681
Designated Funds Spent	\$10,123	\$1,951	\$35,868
<b>Total spent</b>	<b>\$27,934</b>	<b>\$24,635</b>	<b>\$169,549</b>
<b>Net (Loss)</b>	<b>(\$9,345)</b>	<b>(\$7,760)</b>	<b>(\$62,511)</b>

# 25 DAYS OF RANDOM ACTS OF Kindness



1. Smile at someone just because.
2. Buy the person behind you coffee.
3. Donate toys to charity.
4. Make homemade dog treats and deliver them to a shelter.
5. Bake cookies for your neighbor.
- 6.. Donate to a food bank.
7. Send a card in the mail just because.
8. Volunteer
9. Donate old blankets and towels to an animal shelter.
10. Paint rocks and hide them for others to find!
11. Send a care package to deployed soldiers.
12. Pay for someone's meal at a restaurant.
13. Let someone go in front of you in line.
14. Mow the lawn, rake the leaves, or shovel snow for your neighbor.
15. Leave a generous tip at a restaurant.
16. Send someone flowers.
17. Help someone before they ask.
18. Carry a stranger's grocery bags.
19. Leave a treat in the mailbox for your mail carrier.
20. Donate to your favorite charity.
21. Compliment a stranger.
22. Bake treats and deliver them to your local police station.
23. Pick up litter at the park.
24. Place a jar of pennies by a wishing fountain!
25. Call a relative just to say hello!





# Prayer Requests

### Church Family:

Wesley Applebury, attending seminary in Atlanta  
 Jack Bivens, recovering at home  
 Nan Carpenter, ongoing health concerns  
 Ellen Thompson, in need of two hip replacements

### Extended Family:

Nannette Green Allen, childhood friend of Margaret Ivester with serious health issues  
 Judy Bledsoe, Mary Lucik's daughter, recovering from car accident  
 Michael Bledsoe, Mary Lucik's grandson, multiple health concerns  
 Brittany Caruthers, Sunda Coleman's niece, ongoing health concerns  
 Bella Covone, Susan Balfour's niece, idiopathic hypertension  
 Susan Eilers, Mary Lucik's friend, cancer surgery  
 Don Goggans, Elaine Goggans' son, stage four cancer  
 Alonzo Kelly, Craig Callender's father, Stage 4 Melanoma  
 Velma Kelly, Craig Callender's grandmother, ongoing health concerns  
 Elizabeth Knobel, Carolyn Morgan's daughter, ongoing health concerns  
 Janie Mullis, Bill Werts' son-in-law's mother, ongoing health concerns  
 Joanne Murphy, Kathy Carroll's mother, ongoing health issues- at Carlyle House in Macon  
 Paul Orman, Barbra Orman's husband, ongoing health concerns  
 Chris Pearson, Sunda Coleman's son, recovering at home; dialysis  
 Runette Pounds, Sunda Coleman's mother, ongoing health concerns  
 Gloria Roberts, Bill Werts' cousin, recovering from a traumatic fall  
 Bob Smart, Anne Smart's husband, ankylosing spondylitis  
 Windy Spaide, Craig Callender's sister, ongoing health concerns  
 Randy Stewart, Haywood Edwards son-in-law, ongoing health concerns  
 Ike Thomas, ongoing cancer treatments  
 Jeanene Vinson, former secretary at FPC, ongoing health concerns  
 Dudley Weathers, Anne Weathers' husband, at home in hospice care  
 Wayne Woodard, Ruby Werts' brother, diagnosed with Parkinson's

**Limited  
Mobility**  
 Helen Danuser

**Military Service**  
 Will Deason  
 Rebecca Elangwe  
 (Both are Reservists)



### In Assisted Living:

George and Nan Carpenter, PO Box 527, Jefferson, GA 30549  
 Jude Hirsch, Fellowship Home at Meriwether, 10 Meriwether Place  
 Nancy Holbrook, The Dublin Place, 504 Fire Tower Rd, Dublin, GA 31021  
 Maryann Morris, Fellowship Home at Meriwether, 10 Meriwether Place  
 Jackie Northington, Fellowship Home at Meriwether, 10 Meriwether Place, Ste 3303  
 Suzy Smith, Savannah Court, 1061 Willow Run Rd, Unit 4, Greensboro GA 30642

## Anniversaries

August 2~ John & Louise Sallstrom  
August 30~ Gloria & Joel Burns



## Birthdays

August 7~ Jane Tipton  
August 16~ David Ritchie  
August 16~ Suzy Smith  
August 18~ Rebecca Elangwe

