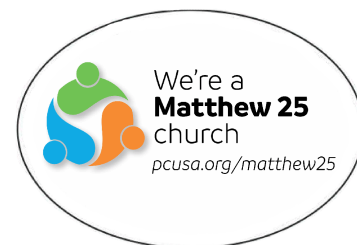


# CHURCH CURRENTS

## JANUARY 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. 342 January 2025



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,

Grace and peace in the name of our newborn Christ! As always, I pray for each of you and give thanks to God for the work and witness we do.

As I begin my tenth year with you, I have spent some time reflecting on the work God has given me to do with you. When I arrived, there was a great deal of pessimism about the future of this church, particularly as there had been a cycle of pastors who came and went a couple of years at a time. And honestly, my first couple of years, I was also discouraged and wondered if this was truly where God wanted me.

Reflecting on the discernment process involved in bringing me to this congregation, and spending much time in prayer, God affirmed that I did indeed have good work to do with you. So I spent the first several years working on building our spiritual health, striving to banish that pessimism, and find a new boldness in our ministry. We were just about getting there when Covid hit. My God-given work shifted to figuring out how we could still be church together despite being apart. Navigating technology, learning new skills, enlisting members to act as deacons to call you on a regular basis, brainstorming ways to remind folks that they were still a part of a loving church family.

In the years since then, God's work for me has been oriented to rebuilding our church structure and procedures. This has, admittedly, been slow work. And of course, the loss of my mother in 2022 was a heartache that has made my work more difficult. These last few years in particular have taken a heavy toll on my spirit. I look forward to my coming sabbatical and pilgrimage to renew my spirit so that I may come back to you a better pastor with fresh energy and imagination as we prepare to celebrate our 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary next year.

Thank you for your grace, compassion, and willingness to do God's work in this time and place. I beg that you hold me in your prayers as I hold you in mine.

May God bless you—and our church family—deeply in the New Year.

Rev. Susan

Thanks to your generosity, First Presbyterian Church donated \$346 for the **Presbyterian Women's Thank Offering**. The Thank Offering provides grants up to \$50,000 to worthwhile programs each year. The recipients are always a mix of domestic and international projects, but all meet crucial needs. At least 40 percent of this offering funds health ministries, often helping the most marginalized members of God's community. The remaining percentage supports new or expanded projects and small capital improvement projects.

Your generosity also means \$315 was donated for the **Christmas Joy Offering**. The Christmas Joy Offering provides assistance to current and retired church workers and their families in their time of need, and develops our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

THANKS  
FOR  
BEING  
AWESOME

connect.  
grow.  
serve.  
Stewardship-A Way of Life.

It's not too late to turn in your pledge sheet for 2025! Extra pledge sheets are available in the Narthex and the office.

stewardship  
sharing the gifts we have been given



Administrative  
Commission

### Administrative Commission Update

The Administrative Committee continues to meet and plan to help us move forward in the new year. We are forever grateful for their help and guidance at this time.

**Rev. John McCrosky, the AC Moderator, plans to be at the church every Thursday from 10:00 am until 2:00 pm.** Here are the names and contact information of the members of the **Administrative Commission First Presbyterian Church Milledgeville:** Kent Burel 678.525.9683 [mkentburel@gmail.com](mailto:mkentburel@gmail.com), Corey Ingold 770.490.6831 [coreyingold62@gmail.com](mailto:coreyingold62@gmail.com), Meg Jackson Clark 770.301.6165 [megjacksonclark@gmail.com](mailto:megjacksonclark@gmail.com), Lynne Jordan 706.476.2951 [lynneq.jordan@gmail.com](mailto:lynneq.jordan@gmail.com), John McCrosky 706.339.1559 [johnmac6@gmail.com](mailto:johnmac6@gmail.com)



**YOUTH  
Bake Sale**

A fundraiser for the youth trip to Montreat

**pies, cookies, brownies and more!**

Sunday  
January 26  
After worship service



**COFFEE FELLOWSHIP**

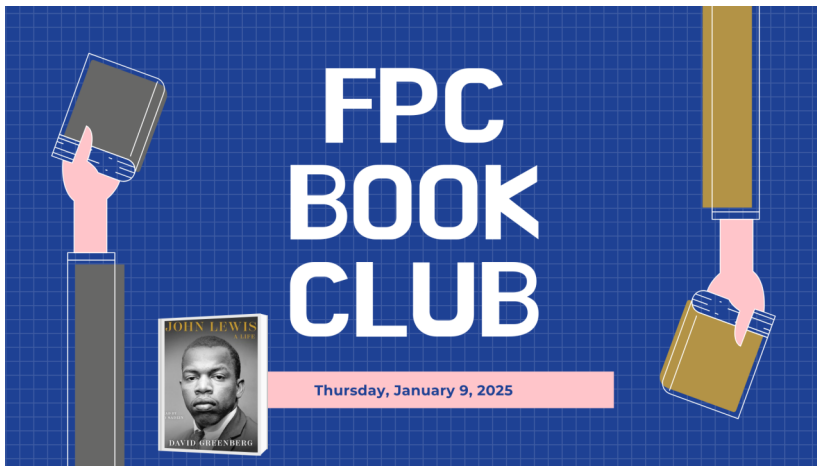
Join us!



**IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE WORSHIP SERVICE**  
Make yourself at home!

**After-Worship Receptions:**

**Sign up to contribute refreshments for the after service fellowship reception. We enjoy this time with each other after worship. The sign up sheet is on the refrigerator in the kitchen.**



**FPC BOOK CLUB**

Thursday, January 9, 2025

The First Presbyterian Book Club will meet **Thursday January 9th at 2:00 pm in the church parlor.** We will be discussing *John Lewis: A Life* by David Greenburg. Greenberg has written a comprehensive biography of the Civil Rights icon, John Lewis, drawing on interviews with Lewis and others who knew him at various stages of his life.

Born into poverty in rural Alabama, Lewis became second only to Martin Luther King, Jr. in his contributions to the Civil Rights movement. His heroism during this time helped to bring America a new birth of freedom.

The book selection for February is *Baron's: Money, Power, and the Corruption of America's Food Industry* by Austin Frerick. This book is the number one best seller on the topics of agriculture and food policy. Frerick reveals the ill-gained strangle hold that a hand full of companies have on America's food economy. These stories are examples of the monopolies and corruption that define today's American food industry. These companies have manipulated our tax laws for their own benefit to the detriment of our neighborhoods, livelihoods and our democracy itself. The author paints a stark portrait of the consequences of corporate consolidation and greed, but he also shows how we can take a different path in the future.

Join us in January as we discuss the life of John Lewis, whose heroism helped bring America a new birth of freedom. ~Millie Murphy



# MISSION AND MINISTRY



With the weather turning colder, it's harder for those on the streets to sustain themselves.

**Make plans to join us Sunday, January 26th 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.



**BE THE CHURCH**

THE CHURCH **SERVES**

## Samaritan Ministry

We had a group of 7 families come for assistance this month and we helped them all keep their utilities on through the generous gifts you have given to the Samaritan Ministry. Joel Burns graciously stepped up to help when Bill was unavailable this

month. But Bill works hard on this ministry each month and could use a partner to help. With the weather turning cold, we expect more people to need help with their utilities.

**The next disbursement of funds will be on Tuesday, January 21 at 9:30 AM.**

During the first 3 weeks of December, Food Pantry served 38 households, 18 on one day (4 of them new). We had prepared holiday dinner bags before Thanksgiving as an option that week and held the unclaimed ones for Christmas. They were taken by several folks after the "regular" ones were all distributed, hence the 18 on Dec. 17th. We still ran out in 15 minutes! We did distribute on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve, serving 11 more families (2 of them new), because the need does not take a holiday. Thank you for your generous support of this ministry; so very many families depend upon it, as shown by that total of 49 this month. Keep your contributions and your prayers coming! My thanks to Pat and Sherry Henry who helped on December 31 and will manage in my absence January 7. ~Donna



## Food Pantry staples list:

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





# January



5 **9:30** Sunday School  
**10:15** Children's School  
**11:00** Worship with communion  
**12:00** Youth Group  
**1:00** UMC Bridge



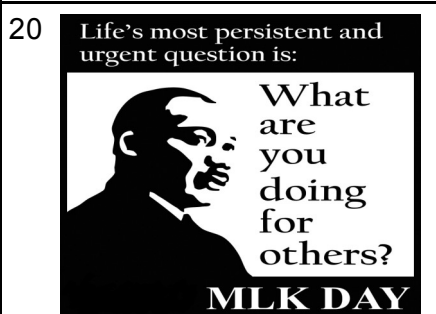
7 **9:30-10:30** Food Pantry  
**12:00** Kiwanis

12 **9:30** Sunday School  
**10:15** Children's School  
**11:00** Worship Service  
**12:00** Youth Group  
**1:00** UMC Bridge  
**5:00** PW Bible Study



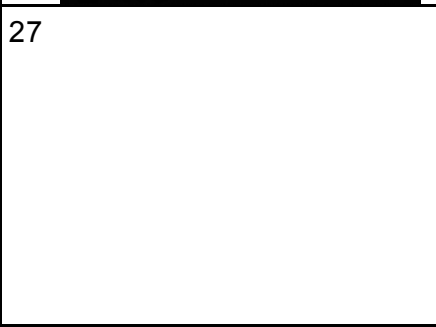
14 **9:30-10:30** Food Pantry and Samaritan Ministry  
**11:00** PW Bible Study  
**12:00** Kiwanis

19 **9:30** Sunday School  
**10:15** Children's School  
**11:00** Worship  
**12:00** Youth Group  
**1:00** UMC Bridge  
**1:30** Homeless Awareness Club



21 **9:30-10:30** Food Pantry  
**12:00** Kiwanis

26 **9:30** Sunday School  
**10:15** Children's School  
**11:00** Worship Service  
**12:00** Milly Free Fridge Service Opportunity  
**12:00** Youth Group Bake Sale  
**1:00** UMC Bridge



28 **9:30-10:30** Food Pantry  
**12:00** Kiwanis



WE ARE A **MATTHEW 25 Church**

*Actively Engaged in the World*

# 2025



<p>1</p> 	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>
<p>8 6:30 Wednesday Potluck and Study</p> 	<p>9 2:00 FPC Book Club</p>  <p>6:00 IOBI</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11 10:00 Removal of the Greens</p> 
<p>15 6:30 Wednesday Potluck and Study</p> 	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p>
<p>22 6:30 Wednesday Potluck and Study 6:30 UMC Women's</p> 	<p>23 6:00 IOBI</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25</p>
<p>29 6:30 Wednesday Potluck and Study 6:30 UMC Women's</p> 	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>	

***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.

***Pastor John McCrosky will be in the office Thursdays, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.***

*Please call the office for an appointment*

# CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

10:15am, Craft  
Room Upstairs

# YOUTH GROUP

12:00pm, Youth  
Room

With one ceiling tile left to complete nursery updates, we hope to have the nursery area ready for January. This is for children 5 and under during worship. Nine members volunteered to help on a rotating basis. Two adults must be present per our church policy.

Jan. 5- Gloria Burns/Susan McGill

Jan. 12- Anne Smart/Margaret Ivester

Jan. 19- Joel Burns/Melba Burrell

Jan. 26- Charles Burrell/Nancy Miller

If no young children are present, adults do not need to go to the nursery. If adult volunteer cannot attend said date, please contact another volunteer to switch.

Thank you to the volunteers for helping with this ministry.

~Anne Smart



The Youth Group performed *Away From a Manger* for the congregation on Sunday, December 8 during worship service. They had been rehearsing for more than two months, coming twice a week for the last few weeks before the performance. They really put in the work to create something special for the congregation to enjoy.





## Podcast

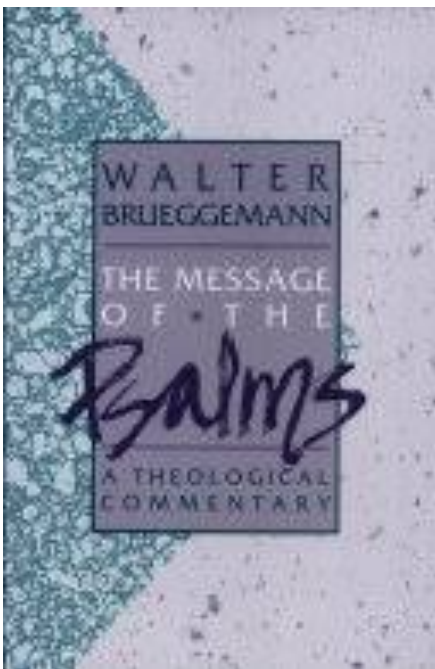
Did you know that you can listen to *JUST* the sermon if you missed it on Sunday morning or if you wanted to re-listen to the message because you were moved by the Spirit? Check out our website (fpcmilledgeville.org) under 'Podcast' where you will find a link to the podcast

**Take advantage of this opportunity to hear the message any day, any time!**



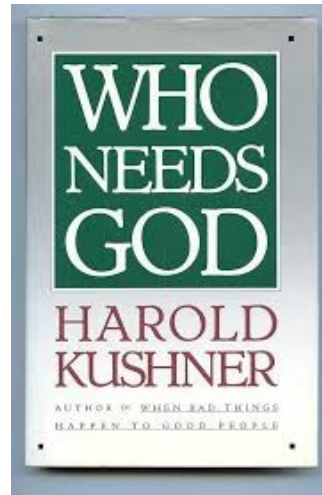
## ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

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 studying *The*



*Message of the Psalms* by Walter Brueggemann. Professor Brueggemann makes the Psalms come alive. 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

## FELLOWSHIP SUNDAY SCHOOL

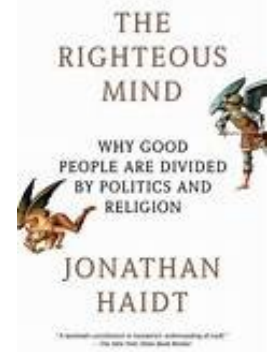


We are studying *Who Needs God* by Harold Kushner. This group meets in person in the parlor room **every Sunday morning at 9:45**

**AM**. We would love to have you join us. ~Bill Werts

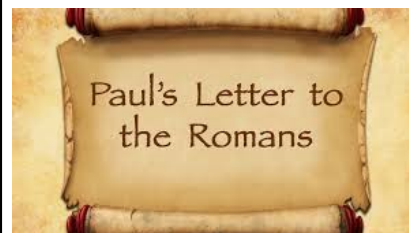
## WEDNESDAY NIGHT STUDY

**Beginning again on January 8**, the Wednesday night study group plans to meet in person for a pot luck supper and lively discussion every week.



We are currently studying Paul's letter to the Romans. John Lamsma has studied Romans for many years and is leading the study. After we complete Romans, we plan to discuss *The Righteous Mind, Why Good People are Divided by Politics and Religion* by Jonathan Haidt.

**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



**Montreat Sponsorship & Fundraisers**

Despite the wide-spread damage Hurricane Helene did to the Montreat Community and surrounding areas, the Montreat Conference Center has announced that plans for the annual Youth Conference are going ahead for 2025!

**We will hold monthly fundraisers:**

**January 26: Bake Sale**

**February 16: Pasta Bar**

**March 16: St. Paddy's Potato Bar**

**April 6: Soup and Sandwich Lunch**

**May 13: \*Trece\* de Mayo Taco Bar**



While the fundraisers are fun and a great source of funding, they don't cover the cost of lodging and meals. We are sending six youth and three chaperones this year. **To supplement our fundraisers, we invite you to sponsor a youth or chaperone. Half-sponsorships are \$350; Full sponsorships are \$700.**

This is a deeply edifying experience in the life of faith for our youth and adults alike. Vibrant worship, inspiring keynote speakers, stimulating small group discussions, and of course, the beauty of the North Carolina Mountains work together to provide young people with spiritual nourishment as they deepen their faith.



**TREASURER'S CORNER**

We finished the year in a much better fashion than earlier in 2024 .We need this level of financial support to keep our missions alive. Make sure you remember the needs of the church as we proceed into 2025.We recently sent our Stewardship letter with the Time and Talents form. If you have not returned this important information to the church, please do so as soon as possible. Please support the general fund, the Samaritan's Ministry and the Food Pantry. All of our work is an effort to follow the example of Jesus.

~Joel D. Burns, Acting Treasurer

	October	November	2024 YTD
Contributions	\$21,112	\$28,003	\$191,798
Other Income	\$687	\$688	\$11,314
Designated Funds Received	\$3671	\$2731	\$30,501
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$25,470</b>	<b>\$31,422</b>	<b>\$233,613</b>
Budgeted Expenses	\$18,100	\$18,668	\$231,370
Designated Funds Spent	\$2,102	\$2,750	\$47,669
<b>Total spent</b>	<b>\$20,202</b>	<b>\$21,418</b>	<b>\$279,039</b>
<b>Net (Loss)</b>	<b>\$5,268</b>	<b>\$10,004</b>	<b>(\$45,426)</b>

# IN THE SPOTLIGHT



Congratulations to our very own Teri Anne Bradley who was this year's Clara in the GCSU production of The Nutcracker. We are so proud of the young person she is growing into as a leader of the community through her work in the Homelessness Awareness Club (which she founded!) and the youth group. The youth group saw her final performance on Sunday, December 15 and were blown away.



Any reflection on the work of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. calls into view particular gifts of his ministry: the application of the gospel to political and social reform; the coupling of cries for justice with public action; and the merger of passion and intellect. Dr. King, like preachers before him, focused on agape. However, he was radical enough to merge the themes of grace and justice.

He brought to the pulpit a social gospel that defined racism as a theological issue and promoted active agape love as a power that could bring political transformation to a nation steeped in discriminatory practice and ideology. In the early 60's, many of us saw King as representing a new breed of preachers. My exposure to the church had provided a limited view of the black preacher as someone who only interpreted the gospel as a promise of salvation in the "bye and bye." Dr. King wasn't the first, but he was the most prominent symbol of a person who brought together themes of the black church tradition (emphasis on justice and hope) with the universalism of the gospel (God has created all people equal) in a style that affirmed both the passion of black preaching and the astuteness of theological training. Certainly people who preceded him and many of his contemporaries fit that mold, however they were not as visible to the masses. Dr. King launched, through the help of television, the times and his being deemed the leader of the civil rights movement, an appreciation in the (sic) populous for a different image of the "black preacher." His incorporation of a social gospel, a passionate call for political involvement, with a well-grounded theological perspective is still an influential model of ministry within the African American Christian community and beyond.

Written by the Rev. Dr. Gloria J. Tate is a pastor of The Presbyterian Church of Teaneck in Teaneck, New Jersey. She can be reached at [g.j.tate@worldnet.att.net](mailto:g.j.tate@worldnet.att.net).



# Prayer Requests



### Church Family:

Wesley Applebury, cancer recurrence and treatment, attending seminary in Atlanta,  
**Columbia Theological Seminary, D. Wesley Applebury, Box 289, 701 S. Columbia Dr.,  
Decatur, GA 30030**

Nan Carpenter, ongoing health concerns  
Ellen Thompson, recovering from hip replacement

### Extended Family:

Nannette Green Allen, childhood friend of Margaret Ivester with serious health issues  
Mark Archer, Sunda Coleman's brother-in-law, hip replacement, recovering at home  
Julie Balfour, Susan Balfour's sister, ongoing health issues  
Michael Bledsoe, Mary Lucik's grandson, multiple health concerns  
Nick Carruthers, Sunda Coleman's great nephew, recovering from car accident in hospital  
Blake Connolly, Mary Lucik's great grandson, ongoing health concerns  
Susan Eilers, Mary Lucik's friend, cancer  
Don Goggans, Elaine Goggans' son, stage four cancer  
Kathy Hall, Gini Wilkerson's mother, knee replacement surgery  
Alonzo Kelley, Craig Callender's father, Stage 4 Melanoma  
Velma Kelley, Craig Callender's grandmother, ongoing health concerns  
Elizabeth Knobel, Carolyn Morgan's daughter, ongoing health concerns  
Donald Lucik, Mary Lucik's son, recovering from back surgery  
Charles Morgan, Jennifer Flory's father, in hospital  
Joanne Murphy, Kathy Carroll's mother, ongoing health issues- at Carlyle House in  
Macon  
Paul Orman, Barbra Orman's husband, ongoing health concerns  
Ambriea Pearson, Sunda Coleman's granddaughter, ongoing health concerns  
Chris Pearson, Sunda Coleman's son, recovering at home; dialysis  
Shaylee Pearson, Sunda Coleman's great-granddaughter, ongoing health concerns  
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  
Randy Stewart, Haywood Edwards son-in-law, ongoing health concerns  
Ike Thomas, ongoing cancer treatments  
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  
Runette Pounds, Oaks at Lake Wildwood, Rm 109, 6191 Peake Rd, Macon, GA 31220  
Suzy Smith, The Haven, 1061 Willow Run Rd, Unit 4, Greensboro GA 30642

## Anniversaries

January 29~ Anne & Dudley  
Weathers

## Birthdays

January 2~ Haywood Edwards  
January 7~ Grace Anne Azahar  
January 9~ Nancy Holbrook  
January 11~ Harry Beck  
January 21~ Frida Ituka  
January 24~ Ruby Werts  
January 31~ Rosemary Begemann

