

CHURCH CURRENTS

SEPTEMBER 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. 338 September 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

This is graffiti that was scratched into a plaster wall during the Roman Empire, around 200 AD. The Greek inscription approximately translates to "Alexamenos worships his god." Showing a man worshipping a crucified, donkey-headed figure, it is considered by many to be the earliest artistic depiction of Jesus, and it is literally a mockery of Jesus and his followers.

Even in the earliest days, Christianity was the scandal, not the scandalized. The Bible itself says that Christianity looks like foolishness to the world; that we are called to be humble.

Fast-forward a couple of millennia, and Christians act like outrage is our bread and butter. In the last few decades, Christians have been OUTRAGED by

- ~The Olympics opening ceremony
- ~People saying "Happy Holidays"
- ~Tampons in bathrooms
- ~A woman who is a boxer
- ~Taylor Swift "demonic" costumes
- ~Gendered M&M characters
- ~Heavy metal and Rap music
- ~Dungeons and Dragons, Tattoos
- ~The Oreos logo (explain)
- ~The Monster Energy Drink logo (explain)

All of those things are now mainstream, and harmless. Well, not Monster energy drink, that stuff is poison. But the point is, we should not waste our outrage on silly superficial shallow Shibboleths. If we're going to get outraged, let it be by things that matter. As Bob Price, the founder of World Vision said, "let my heart be broken by the things that break the heart of God."

And what breaks the heart of God? Scripture tells us over and over again: Inhospitality, turning away the stranger, and lack of care for the poor top the list. So, we should be outraged about things today that are like those things.

For example, in the US today: There are 13 million children living in food-insecure homes, 26 million people without health care, 42 million people living in poverty in this country oozing with wealth.

A religion that whispers about human suffering but shouts about a female boxer's physical appearance betrays itself as weak and meaningless; as more interested in making others conform to our cultural markers and influence than about actually bringing about God's kingdom of love and justice here on earth.

We define the church by our actions. Will we sing harmonious hymns of compassion, or will we shout cheap outrage?

Written by Reverend Matthew Schultz and reproduced with permission, First Presbyterian Church of Anchorage, Alaska





A Season of Peace: Seeking Reconciliation on the Road

While traveling across the American Southwest last spring, Kathy Mitchell was caught by surprise by the stories of her fellow travelers. “Everybody has a story,” said Kathy, a Native American ruling elder at

Trinity Presbyterian Church in Chinle, Arizona, in the heart of the Navajo Nation. “Everybody deserves to be heard.”

Kathy’s desire to share peace and seek reconciliation — both “with those parts of yourself and who you are called to be” as well as through others along life’s journey — unfolded on the road from Albuquerque, New Mexico, to Phoenix during a travel study seminar hosted in 2023 by the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program.

The “Native Lands of the Southwest: The Doctrine of Discovery and its Legacy Today” Travel Study Seminar was a collaborative effort with the Presbytery of Santa Fe and the Synod of the Southwest.

The seminar included opportunities for participants to visit historic sites, hear about Native American experiences and interact with PC(USA) Native American churches to understand the implications of the Doctrine of Discovery, which gave Christian European governments the religious and legal justification to claim lands occupied by Indigenous peoples.

The seminar is made possible, in part, by gifts to the Peace & Global Witness Offering. Traditionally received on World Communion Sunday, which this year falls on Oct. 6, the Offering is unique in that half of it is directed to peacemaking and global witness efforts at the national church level to address critical issues around the world. Twenty-five percent is retained by our congregation for our own peace and reconciliation work, and twenty-five percent goes to mid councils for similar ministries on the regional level. One congregation deeply committed to the healing and repair of Indigenous nations and communities — thanks to two of its members who participated in the seminar — is Second Presbyterian Church of Richmond, Virginia.

“Living in Virginia and having never visited the Northern Plains states, we learned a great deal about the Indigenous nations in that area,” said Lucretia McCulley and her husband, Dan Ream. “The opportunity that the seminar offered for us to have conversations about history with Native Americans made this trip ideal for us.”

Not long after they returned to Richmond, Lucretia and Dan gave a presentation to their congregation about their life-changing experiences with the travel study seminar. As a result, Second Presbyterian approved a large gift to help with necessary repairs and improvements at Native American churches and chapels.

“We are committed to sharing our gifts that will help address systems of conflict and injustice in the world,” they said. “We also need to live out the denomination’s commitment to peace and justice in our communities and across the world. Small and large contributions to the Offering work together to make significant changes for peace.”

Please give what you can to the Peace & Global Witness Offering — for when we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.





CONGREGATIONAL FELLOWSHIP



It's A Family Sweet Meet!

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, AT 10:00 AM
DUNKIN' DONUTS

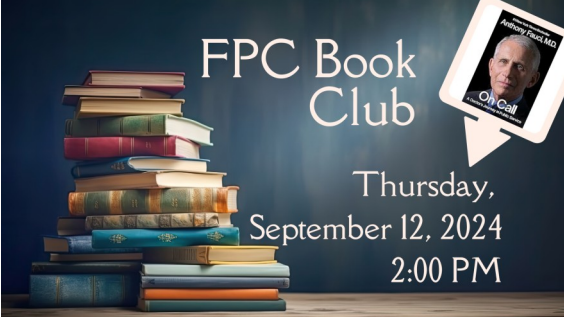


THE FIRST DOZEN DONUTS ARE ON US!

Church friends, I hope you have been enjoying the beautiful flower arrangements that have been on the communion table lately. Becky Humphrey has been doing some of the arranging in support of those done by Reverend Susan.

FPC Book Club

Thursday, September 12, 2024
2:00 PM



The First Presbyterian Church book club will meet on Thursday, September 12 at 2:00 PM in the church parlor. The book that we will be discussing is *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 during 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.

The book selection for October is *Uneven Ground: Appalachia Since 1945* by Ronald D. Eller. Eller examines the politics of development in Appalachia since World War II. Appalachia's struggle to overcome poverty, to live in harmony with the land, and to respect the diversity of cultures and the value of community is also an American story. In the end, Eller concludes Appalachia was not different from the rest of America; it was in fact a mirror of what the nation was becoming.

We look forward to your joining us for our book discussion on the 12th.

~ Millie Murphy

If you would like to help Becky by donating flowers directly to the church it would be most appreciated. You may also coordinate with a local florist as most will deliver to the church. These flowers can be to the Glory of God, in memory of someone or to celebrate an anniversary or birthday of a loved one. Let Lois know in the office and she will alert Becky so that she won't need to make an arrangement.

As always, your love and support of our church is always appreciated.

~Nancy Miller



Altar Flowers



MISSION AND MINISTRY



Milly Free Fridge is in need of regular volunteers to clean the fridge and the area around it. **Make plans to join us Sunday, September 29th 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.



Food Pantry staples list:

Canned soups, canned pasta, 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



Samaritan Ministry

The Samaritan Ministry continues to help those in our community by providing utility assistance. Each month, we see a larger and larger group asking for help. This month, we were lucky to help seven families keep their electricity or water on. It's too hot not to at least have a fan on in your home. Your consistent and generous giving to this special outreach is appreciated and very needed. Please consider helping Bill out on the third Tuesday of the month as he works with those who come to the church looking for assistance.

The next disbursement of funds will be on Tuesday, September 17 at 9:30 AM.



Food Pantry has been busy as ever in August, with 41 households (7 new!) served though our resources were reduced. Helpers have been reliable and welcome as my own availability has been less. Thank you to Margaret Ivester and GCSU students Liam and Hunter who handled the last Tuesday of the month while I was in a hospital waiting room as my son had open heart surgery. He is on the mend and we expect will be at home by the time you read this. Thank you for all your thoughts and prayers.

We had a windfall in-kind donation of canned goods late in the month and have been informed that will continue for the foreseeable future. Hence, we can increase our distribution to a few more bags each week and your donations need not include the following: corn, green beans, mixed vegetables, spaghetti sauce, and dry pasta. We will continue to need all the other items on the supply list above. Of course, funds designated "Food Pantry" always go toward these purchases.

Thank you for your continuing support of this ministry. These folks count on us!

~Donna Gautier



September

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

2 **Office Closed**



3 **9:30-10:30**

Food Pantry
12:00
 Kiwanis



8 **9:30** Sunday School
10:15 Children's Sunday School
11:00 Worship
1:00 UMC Bridge
5:00 PW Bible Study



9 **6:30** PFLAG
7:00 MSG



10 **9:30-10:30** Food Pantry
11:00 PW Bible Study
12:00 Kiwanis
5:30 Session Meeting



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



16 **7:00** MSG



17 **9:30-10:30** Food Pantry and Samaritan Ministry
12:00 Kiwanis



22 **9:30** Sunday School
10:15 Children's Sunday School
11:00 Worship
1:00 UMC Bridge

23 **7:00** MSG



24 **9:30-10:30** Food Pantry
12:00 Kiwanis



29 **9:30** Sunday School
10:15 Children's Sunday School
11:00 Worship Service
12:00 Milly Free Fridge Service Opportunity
1:00 UMC Bridge

30 **7:00** MSG



A Season of Peace 

2024



<p>4 6:30 Wednesday Potluck and Study</p> 	5	6	7
<p>11 6:30 Wednesday Potluck and Study</p> 	<p>12 2:00 FPC Book Club</p>  <p>6:00 IOBI</p>	13	14
<p>18 6:30 Wednesday Potluck and Study</p> 	19	20	<p>21 10:00 Family Sweet Meet</p> 
<p>25 6:30 Wednesday Potluck and Study</p> 	<p>26 9:30 Fall Fest Planning Meeting</p> <p>6:00 IOBI</p> 	27	28



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



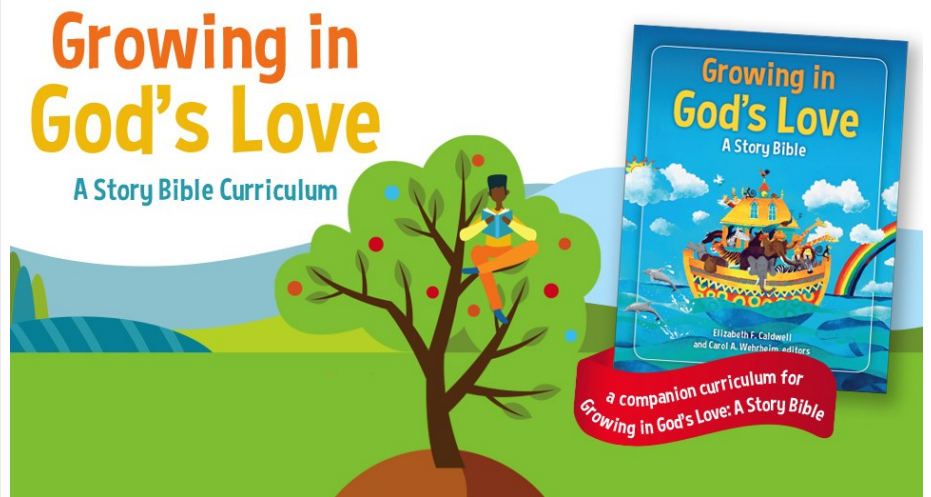
YOUTH MINISTRY



CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

10:15am, Craft
Room Upstairs

The children continue to meet every Sunday morning at 10:15 AM for Sunday School. We are currently using *Growing in God's Love*, a resource from the PC(USA).



Restarting
Youth Group

October 2024

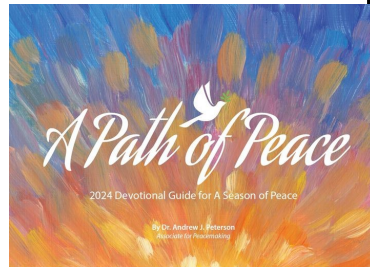


CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

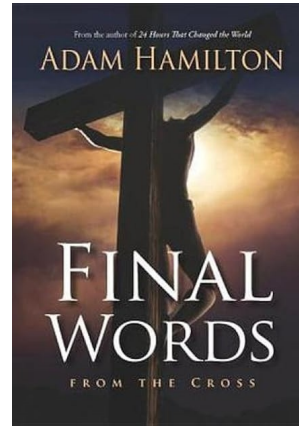


FREE DEVOTIONAL

Just in time for the *2024 Season of Peace*, the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program has released a devotional guide featuring individuals whose lives can serve as a source of inspiration and encouragement in the four weeks leading up to World Communion Sunday (Oct. 6). There are copies in the Narthex, but the office can also email you the PDF. Take advantage of this memorable devotional.



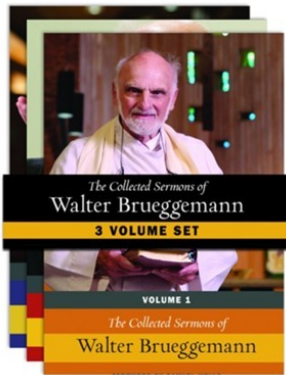
FELLOWSHIP SUNDAY SCHOOL



We are studying *Final Words From the Cross* by Adam Hamilton. This group meets in person in the parlor room **every Sunday morning at 9:45**

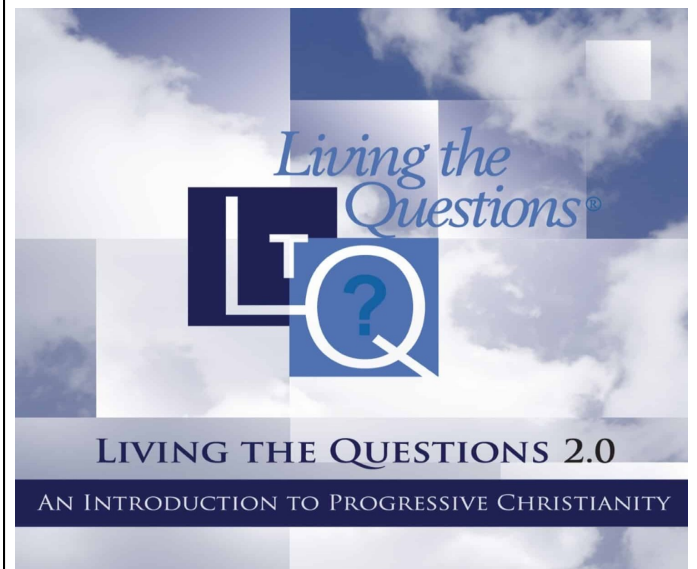
AM. We would love to have you join us. ~Bill Werts

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



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



There are ten changes that the General Assembly 226 adopted that are listed on the handouts available in the Narthex. We continue to highlight a few each month.

Sexual orientation, gender identity protections

Commissioners approved a two-part inclusivity change to the *Book of Order*, adding gender identity and sexual orientation to the list of the "rich diversity" reflected in the church's membership (recommendation 1, section F-1.0403) and then recommending an examination of these principles for ordination and installation (recommendation 2, section G-2.0104b) that could determine a "candidate's ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation ..."

If POL-01 is approved by more than 50% of presbyteries, these changes will be added to the *Book of Order*.

Fossil fuels and climate justice

After a protracted debate on alternative recommendations for aligning the values of the PC(USA) with its investments in fossil fuels, the GA initially approved overture ENV-02 encouraging categorical divestment in fossil fuels and other efforts to respond to climate change. However, in a historic turnabout, the assembly reversed its decision, disapproving ENV-02 and approving ENV-06, which directs **further engagement with greenhouse gas emitters and the fossil fuel industry.**

If you have any questions about these changes, please feel free to contact the office, or visit the *Presbyterian Outlook* website: pres-outlook.org. There are also booklets available in the church office that expand on each topic covered.

TREASURER'S CORNER

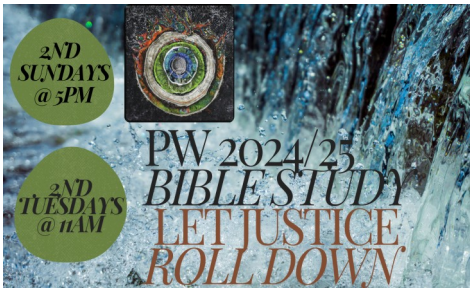
Our regular offerings for July and August were weak. Recently we had a special donation from some of our friends from out of town which has helped us greatly. Our regular giving needs to increase. We need to bring our giving into balance with our spending.



Please help us balance our giving with the necessary expenses of our missions. Remember to contribute to the general fund, Samaritan's Fund and Food Pantry. May God Bless everyone.

~Joel D. Burns

	June	July	2024 YTD
Contributions	\$13,669	\$12,816	\$98,657
Other Income	\$948	\$1,743	\$7,197
Designated Funds Received	\$2,258	\$4,311	\$20,054
Total Income	\$15,412	\$18,870	\$125,908
Budgeted Expenses	\$22,684	\$18,366	\$152,047
Designated Funds Spent	\$1,951	\$1,635	\$37,503
Total spent	\$24,635	\$20,001	\$189,550
Net (Loss)	(\$7,760)	(\$1,131)	(\$63,642)



Our Presbyterian Women's Bible Study will resume this month. Two groups meet each

month: one meets on the second Sunday at 5:00 and the other meets at 11:00 on the second Tuesday.

The study for the year is entitled *Let Justice Roll*. The author is Reverend Doctor Patricia K. Tull, Professor Emerita at Louisville Seminary and the author of *Inhabiting Eden: Christians, the Bible, and the Ecological Crisis*.

The study examines various aspects of the Environmental Crisis in light of the Scriptural admonitions telling us of our responsibility to protect and care for God's creation. Also included are some discussions of the Biblical warnings of what can happen to us and to the rest of creation when we disregard those responsibilities. The study includes chapters on environmental justice, land justice, water justice, air quality, climate change, economic justice, climate justice, intergenerational justice and, finally, a chapter discussing possible actions that can sustain "Creations Health for All". The study is an important and timely discussion of a crucial issue and should give us a deeper understanding of serious issues while reminding us that it is closely tied to the Biblical admonitions contained in the passages we will be studying.

~Rosemary Begemann

Presbyterian Women, this is a much delayed thank you note to let you know your contributions that I collected in late Spring this year amounted to \$490. I was able to present them to the coordinator of the In Our Best Interest group, Linnesia



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Harris. She was so happy to receive this money to help offset the cost of the babysitting when the group meets at our church. This program relies on donations to keep it going. No county tax dollars are ever used.

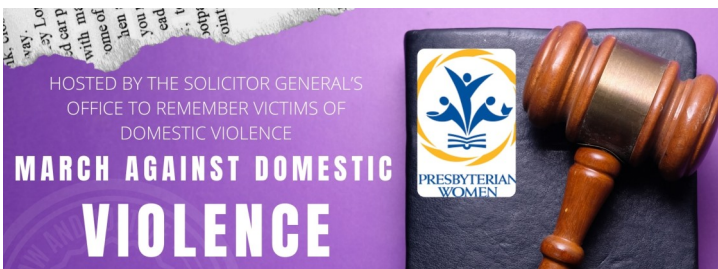
The program was started in the 1980s by the Solicitor General's office of Baldwin County. Its focus is to help women who are in a domestic violence situation. They learn that there are alternatives for them so that they can get out of the violence and keep themselves and their children safe. It has been ongoing all of this time, except of course during COVID.

Again, a deep heartfelt thank you for your generous donations to this project and outreach of our church.



show the hands and feet of Christ in our community. May the Peace of Christ be with you.

~Nancy Miller



FPC Presbyterian Women have supported the Baldwin County Solicitor General's Office with money to provide babysitting for the In Our Best Interest group and also by creating snack bags for the March Against Domestic Violence in October that recognizes those who died due to domestic violence in Baldwin County. Please

bring small bottled water, granola bars or small prepackaged snacks to the first PW Meetings (September 8 & 10) so we can make bags for the march in October.



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**

Jack Bivens, recovering from surgery in the Milledgeville hospital

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

Marshall Hodgman, Donna Gautier's son, recovering from heart 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

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

Paul Schrage, Carrie Cook's father, ongoing health concerns

Bob Smart, Anne Smart's husband, ankylosing spondylitis

Windy Spaide, Craig Callender's sister, ongoing health concerns

Randy Stewart, Haywood Edwards's son-in-law, ongoing health concerns

Ike Thomas, ongoing cancer treatments

Jeanene Vinson, former secretary at FPC, ongoing health concerns

Dudley Weathers, Anne Weathers's husband, at home in hospice care

Wayne Woodard, Ruby Werts' brother, diagnosed with Parkinson's

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

**Limited
Mobility**
Helen Danuser

Military Service
Will Deason
Rebecca Elangwe
(Both are
Reservists)



Anniversaries

September 1~ Kate & Roy Phillips

September 21~ George & Nan
Carpenter



Birthdays

September 1~ Jan Thompson

September 2~ Sheree Applebury

September 4~ Joseph Dean

September 9~ Frankie Holder

September 11~ Mollie Ritchie

September 14~ John Bradley

September 14~ Ellen Thompson

September 19~ Stephanie Azahar

September 19~ Iain Flory

September 19~ Erin Smith

