

CHURCH CURRENTS

SEPTEMBER 2023

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. 326 September 2023



Pastor:
Rev. Susan Balfour

Coord. of Children &
Youth Ministries:

Admin. Asst.:
Lois Callender

Director of Music:
Dr. Jennifer Flory

Organist:
Kate Phillips

Child Care Providers:
Childcare is
temporarily
unavailable

Beloved,

Greetings in Christ! I hold you in my prayers daily, giving thanks for each of you. You are dear to me.

I wrote this a while ago, and thought I'd share it with you:

I love photography. For me, it's a spiritual practice. When I put the camera to my eye and start scanning the world around me, I see things I would have otherwise missed. I see details hidden in plain sight. It's in the details that I see glimpses of God.

When I was in seminary, I went on a travel seminar with my classmates. I fell in love with Egypt as a child, and had spent hours looking at pictures and reading up. I loaded far more camera equipment than I really needed when we set out for the Middle East—I was eager to photograph some of these magnificent locations for myself, to find the little details most photographers simply don't highlight. One of the locations I was particularly jazzed about was the temple at Luxor.

We arrived in the late afternoon, and our tour guide ushered us directly into the visitor's center, where he proceeded to drone on for a couple of hours. I was frustrated to be stuck inside this building while a far more impressive edifice awaited our presence just outside. My shutter-finger itched.

When *finally* the guide walked us to the door, I was crestfallen to discover that night had fallen. All of those wonderful photos I had dreamed of snapping would not happen. As we walked into the temple, I complained. Why couldn't we have come straight out here when we got here?! I can't photograph this in these conditions! Grumble, grumble, grumble.

Then Berry looked at me and said, just be here for a minute.

I had focused so much of my attention on details that I had missed the wonder of the moment. Would I ever again be in this place? Would I ever again have the chance to marvel at the ancient sanctuary, lit from below by dramatically-placed floodlights, and from above by the light of a waxing moon?

This was my forest-for-the-trees moment. And I almost missed it. I almost missed the *gestalt* for the sake of the *leitmotif*.

Thanks to Berry, I have altered this spiritual practice. Now, I spend a few moments just taking it in, then use the camera's viewfinder to spot the details, and then—then I put the camera down and take it all in again.

Thanks be to God (and Berry).

Rev. Susan Balfour

There will be a Memorial Service for Clyde Tipton on **September 30, 2023 at 2:00 PM**. Members of our church and community are invited to sing in the choir with us. If you'd like to participate, please email Jennifer Flory at jennifer.flory@gcsu.edu for information on materials and rehearsals.



The Seven Marks of Congregational Vitality are:

- **Lifelong Discipleship Formation:** how others know we are disciples of Jesus Christ beyond just our words
- **Intentional Authentic Evangelism:** going beyond personal piety and ritual to locate ourselves and others in God's story
- **Outward Incarnational Focus:** broadly sharing God's good news and practicing nuanced and genuine hospitality
- **Empower Servant Leadership:** broad participation in leadership, beyond the pastoral staff and usual lay leaders
- **Spirit-Inspired Worship:** challenge, teach, transform, convict, and call us into deeper relationship with God and greater service in mission
- **Caring Relationships:** genuine and sincere vulnerability with and trust in one another
- **Ecclesial Health:** the why and how of our community, based on factors of prayerful discernment, decision-making, pastoral health, stewardship of resources, and clarity in mission and ministry



It's coming! **September 10th** Reverend Susan will cover the last mark of Congregational Vitality.

Directly after the service, we will meet and break bread together in the Fellowship Hall. The church is providing fried chicken, but we need your help to feed everyone.

Please bring the following based on the first letter of your last name:

A-J Salad

K-S Veggie

T-Z Dessert

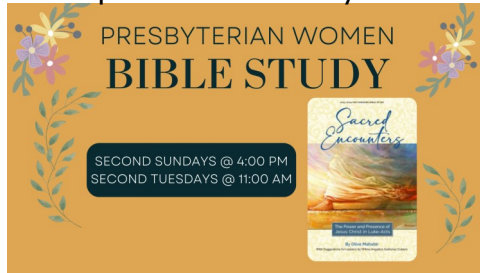


We look forward to fellowshiping and eating together once more. We will consider the different marks of Congregational Vitality and what we as a church can do to strengthen those marks.



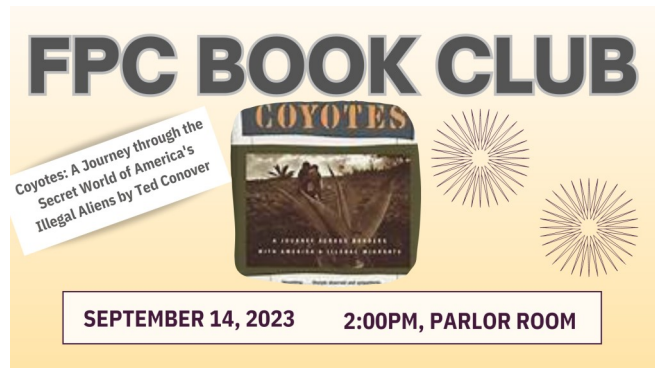
CONGREGATIONAL FELLOWSHIP

The Presbyterian Women Horizon Bible study for the coming year is entitled Sacred Encounters. Written by Olive Mahabir, a Presbyterian minister, the book describes nine encounters between God, Jesus or his disciples and people who are profoundly affected by their experiences. The events are described in the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts. Many, but not all of them, are about women. The lessons are interesting and well-written and should lead to some lively discussions. Please join us in the parlor on the second Sunday at 4:00 or the second Tuesday at 11:00 from September until May.



Join us in cleaning the church on Saturday, September 23 at 10:00 AM. We'll have coffee and donuts. Many hands make light work.

The First Presbyterian Church book club will hold the monthly meeting on September the 14th at 2:00 pm. The book selection for September is *Coyotes: A Journey through the Secret World of America's Illegal Aliens* by Ted Conover. To find out what happens to aliens that slip into the United States illegally, the author disguised himself as an illegal alien, walked across deserts, hid in orange groves, and waded across the Rio Grande to give an account of a way of life that no outsider has seen before.



The book selection for October is *Inheritance: A Memoir of Genealogy, Paternity, and Love* by Dani Shapiro. Have you ever thought about having a DNA test to find out more about your background? The author decided to do just that and through that DNA test, she received the astonishing news that her beloved deceased father was not her biological father! This secret had been kept from her for more than fifty years by the author's family out of shame and self-protectiveness. This book tells the story of Shapiro's urgent quest to unlock the truth of her own identity and to find her biological father. This is an amazing detective story with surprising twists and turns along the way.

Please join us. We would love to have you. We have some very interesting and stimulating discussions. You don't have to talk if you prefer not to do so. You don't even have to read the book. Just come and listen.

~Mille Murphy



MISSION AND MINISTRY



Join us Sunday, September 24th to help feed our neighbors and ourselves by making sandwiches for the Milly Free Fridge.

Please bring any of the following:

Sliced bread, lunch meat, jelly, fresh fruit, prepackaged snacks, bottled drinks. We will provide condiments and labeling materials.



As the weather this summer has been brutally hot, please consider donating water for the Milly Free Fridge to help those who are un-housed and those whose water has been turned off. The need is great in our community. **Thank you!**

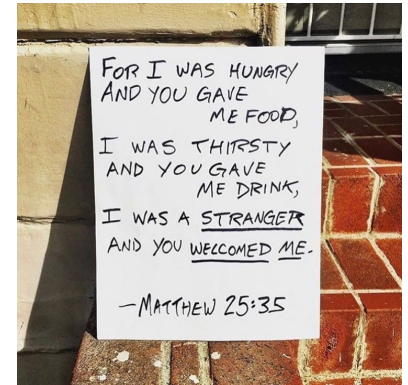
Food Pantry staples list:

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

Samaritan Ministry

This month, thanks to your support, we were able to help six people with their utilities for a total of \$947.45. Please consider giving regularly to this mission as we often have to turn people away. There are so many in need.

The Samaritan Ministry help for this month is scheduled for September 19 at 9:30 am. Also please consider giving of your time once a month. Bill could really use the company.



Thanks to a couple of very generous in-kind donations during August, we were able to serve 49 households without going too deeply into "debt". As the summer's feeding program ended and school had not yet started, the first two Tuesdays were filling the gap for families with children. Now that they are back into breakfast and lunch programs, we may settle back to previous levels - but may not. We continue to have new folks and some returning after long absence. As mentioned, our funds have dropped to a historic low and all designated contributions are welcomed. Please consider adding to this or bringing in items

for the pantry, even if you never have before. This is a vital ministry in our community. Several of you have remembered to drop off calendars to share with our folks and I know they will enjoy selecting one or two beginning in December. Thank you! Most of these are not just functional but decorative, and the ladies love to find the most beautiful one. Because I do not regularly use Kroger's online order/pickup service, we do not always have their generously sized and strong bags for our canned goods. If you have some, or any kind of reusable bag that will carry about 15 pounds, please donate your spares. (Wine bottle bags hold 12 veggie cans very well!) Thanks for recycling this way! As always, your support of the Food Pantry and the neighbors it assists is a blessing. May you realize how God is blessing us all in this. ~ Donna and Margaret



September

A Season of Peace

3 9:30 Sunday School
 11:00 Worship Service
 FBLive & WKZR102.3FM
Sermon Series: 7 Marks of a Vital Congregation



4 Office Closed



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



10 9:30 Sunday School
 11:00 Worship Service
 FBLive & WKZR102.3FM
Sermon Series: 7 Marks of a Vital Congregation
 12:00 Luncheon



11 6:30 PFLAG
 7:00 MSG



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



17 9:30 Sunday School
 11:00 Worship Service
 FBLive & WKZR102.3FM
 1:30 Homelessness Awareness Club

18 7:00 MSG



19 9:30-10:30 Food Pantry and Samaritan Ministry
 12:00 Kiwanis Luncheon



24 9:30 Sunday School
 11:00 Worship Service
 FBLive & WKZR102.3FM
 12:00 Milly Free Fridge
 12:00 Youth Group

25 7:00 MSG



26 9:30-10:30 Food Pantry
 12:00 Kiwanis Luncheon



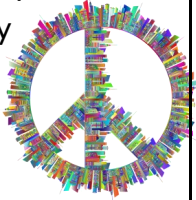

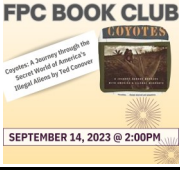





God's presence empowers us to bring peace to all people.



PEACE & GLOBAL WITNESS
 SPECIAL OFFERINGS
 PEACEMAKING AND RECONCILIATION
 SEPTEMBER 3 - OCTOBER 1, 2023

2023



		1	2
6 6:30 Wednesday Potluck and Study 	7	8	9
13 6:30 Wednesday Potluck and Study 	14 2:00 FPC Book Club 6:00 IOBI 	15	16
20 6:30 Wednesday Potluck and Study 	21 	22	23 10:00 Church Work Day 
27 6:30 Wednesday Potluck and Study 	28 6:00 IOBI	29	30 2:00PM Memorial Service for Clyde Tipton 

Elders on Session

Class of 2024 ~ Wesley Applebury (At Large) Jennifer Flory (Worship) Margaret Ivester (Congregational Care) Nancy Miller (Clerk of Session) Laurie Peebles (Personnel) Joel Respass (Property) Anne Smart (Christian Education) Bill Werts (Missions and Outreach)

Operations: The church office is now 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



BEGINNING THIS MONTH!

WHAT IS YOUTH GROUP?

*Games, Food,
Friends
and God*

Starting on:
September 24, 2023

Join us right after church service for
pizza and games



What do we do at Youth Group?



Board Games



Prayer



Service Projects



Fun Outings

Join us on Sundays
after worship service!





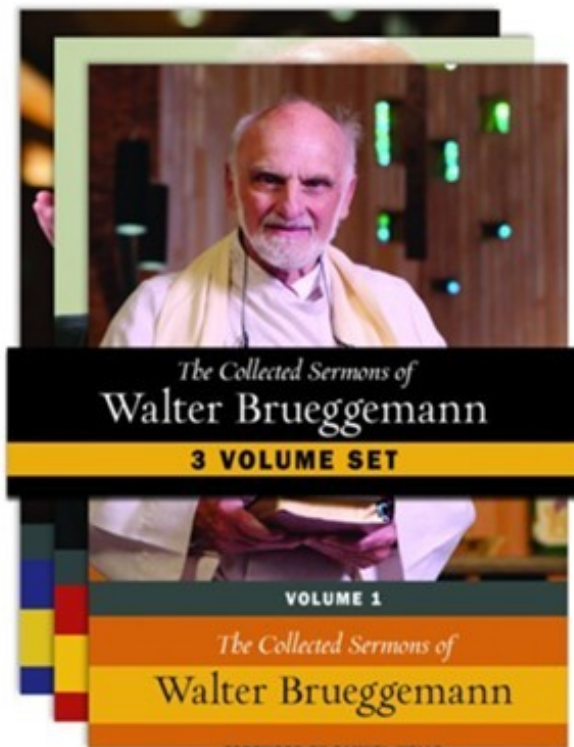
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



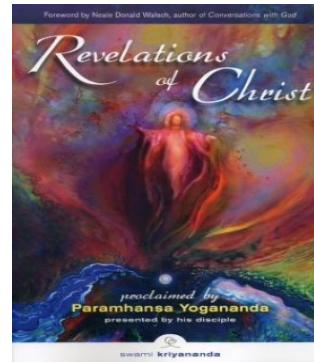
ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

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 homes or on our smartphones. We meet for thoughtful conversations every Sunday at 9:30 AM. We are studying the first volume of *The Collected Sermons of Walter Brueggemann* and each of the sermons has been thought provoking. The sermons were written in the 1980s through the early part of this century but they are as fresh today as when originally delivered. If you have never encountered Dr. Brueggemann's work you are in for a treat. 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 *Revelations of Christ* by Yogananda. 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. Please join us. We are reading and discussing *The Other Evangelicals, A Story of Liberal, Black Progressive, Feminist and Gay Christians and the Movement That Pushed Them Out*. The book is available on Amazon. This is an interesting history of the gradual effort by the conservative evangelicals to usurp the term "evangelical." 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. and finish by 8:00 P.M. Please join us whether you have the book or not!
~Joel Burns



Mission Opportunity: Homeless Awareness

Homelessness is a very complex problem with many different causes. It is often easy to blame a homeless person for being homeless. This is why we formed a Homelessness Awareness Club for youth from our community. The mission of this club is to educate ourselves and the community about homelessness. We are having discussion about the causes and symptoms of homelessness. We are also talking about solutions

Our next meeting is **1:30PM on September 17th** at the First Presbyterian Church. We will discuss homelessness and make boxed lunches. Several people will then go downtown to distribute these boxes. Any leftovers will be given to the Milly Free Fridge. We are excited about continuing to learn and to take action in service to the homeless within our community.

~Teri Anne Bradley



Stewardship

sharing the gifts we have been given

TREASURER'S CORNER

Now that the summer travel season has ended, we need to recommit ourselves to our church. Summer took a toll on our resources. Please sustain our income to keep our services strong. and remember to contribute to the general fund, Samaritan's Fund and Food Pantry. God Bless everyone. ~ Joel Burns

	<u>June</u>	<u>July</u>	<u>2023 YTD</u>
Contributions	\$13,422	\$13,147	\$137,968
Other Income	\$1,824	\$688	\$7,808
Total Income	\$15,246	\$13,835	\$145,776
Budgeted Expenses	\$19,499	\$16,442	\$134,035
Net (Loss)	(\$4,253)	(\$2,607)	\$11,741

On World Communion Sunday, we celebrate that Christ's peace extends throughout all creation. Whenever the church gathers for worship, we are assured of Christ's peace. We celebrate that we are connected, we are loved we are not alone. We worship together and are fed Scripture and at Christ's table of peace. Extending peace of Christ is part of an active, engaged faith- a witness to what it means for us to be the church, together.

Through participation in the Peace & Global Witness Offering, our church is extending Christ's peace throughout our community and our world. We begin at the communion table, with our siblings in every time and place, and we celebrate the peace we find there and commit to building a more just and peaceful world. God is with us...and God in Christ is with us through the Sacrament of Communion, celebrated on World Communion Sunday. We are not alone. Peace begins with each of us.

As we work to share Christ's peace with one another, let's share that peace with those beyond our doors, beyond our communities and beyond our borders. The Peace & Global Witness Offering provides the tools and resources for us as we join together, connected as active peacemakers.

The Peace & Global Witness Offering draws us together by providing education and exposure to those who show us how to do peacemaking well. It allows us to create resources for dealing with conflict and provide nurturing reconciliation, and stand in support of our global siblings, because the peace of Christ belongs to people everywhere.



Blessed are the
peacemakers,
for they will be called
the children of God.

MATTHEW 5:9



SEPTEMBER 3-OCTOBER 1, 2023





Prayer



Church Family:

Wesley Applebury, attending seminary in Atlanta
Beth Baarda, in hospice, hospitalized in La Grange, GA
 Nan Carpenter, recovering from a fall
 Will Humphrey, hip replacement surgery
 Debbie Lamsma, recovering from a fall

Extended Family:

Michael Bledsoe, Mary Lucik's grandson, multiple health concerns
 Susan Eilers, Mary Lucik's friend, cancer surgery
 Don Goggans, Elaine Goggans' son, stage four cancer
 Joellen Gunsaulley, Nancy Miller's sister, internal bleeding
 Dee Hartmann, Susan Balfour's aunt, health issues
 Karen Hartmann, Susan Balfour's cousin, double amputation
 Alonzo Kelly, Craig Callender's father, Stage 4 Melanoma
 Elizabeth Knobel, Carolyn Morgan's daughter, cancer stable
 PJ Malagisi, former elementary student of Jennifer Flory, traumatic brain injury
 Julie Montemayor, Becky Henderson's mother, ongoing health concerns
 Janie Mullis, Bill Wert's son's mother-in-law, ongoing health concerns
 Joanne Murphy, Kathy Carroll's mother, mass on her colon- at Carlyle House: Macon
 Chris Pearson, Sunda Coleman's son, recovering at home; dialysis
 Runette Pounds, Sunda Coleman's mother, ongoing health concerns and recovering from a fall
 Susan Patrick Renfroe, dear friend of Margaret Ivester, caretaker of husband after hip replacement surgery
 Timbo Renfroe, dear friend of Margaret Ivester, recovering from hip replacement surgery
 Willy Sanders, Sunda Coleman's cousin, ongoing health concerns
 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
 Addie VanOrsdale, family friend of Cissy Lane, kidney failure
 Dudley Weathers, Anne Weathers' husband, ongoing health concerns
 Johnny Wynn, son of friend of Sue Bennett's, Lukemia

Limited Mobility

Martha Chappell
 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
 Eloise Lamb, Fellowship Home at Meriwether, 10 Meriwether Place
 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

September 1~ Kate & Roy Phillips
September 21~ George & Nan
 Carpenter



Birthdays

September 1~ Jan Thompson
September 2~ Sheree Applebury
September 4~ Joseph Dean
September 8~ Eloise Lamb
September 9~ Frankie Holder
September 11~ Mollie Ritchie
September 14~ John Bradley
September 14~ Ellen Thompson
September 19~ Stephanie
 Azahar

September 19~ Iain Flory

