

CHURCH CURRENTS

OCTOBER 2025

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MORE LIGHT
PRESBYTERIANS

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
210 SOUTH WAYNE STREET
MILLEDGEVILLE, GA 31061



First Presbyterian Church

Issue No. 350 October 2025

Pastor:
Rev. Mari Turner

Coord. of Children &
Youth Ministries:
Vacant

Admin. Asst.:
Amy VanderGroef
(Temp)

Director of Music:
Dr. Jennifer Flory

Organist:
Kate Phillips

Child Care Providers:
Volunteers

It is with a heart full of joy and gratitude that I write this first column as your new pastor. The welcome my family and I have received has been incredibly warm and generous. I am excited not only to serve as your pastor, but to start working alongside you as partners in ministry. I look forward to spending these first months getting to know you all and building relationships as we discern the wonderful things God has planned for us.

I consider it a privilege to be your pastor, and I'm ready to start our ministry together. There is important work ahead, and the newly installed Session and I are excited to hit the ground running. As we organize our efforts, we will identify and begin to undertake ministry priorities. Our activities and actions will be shared with the congregation with clarity and transparency. We encourage each of you to prayerfully consider how you can best participate in the work and worship of the church as we move forward.

In these first few months, one of my primary goals is to listen and learn. I want to hear your stories, understand what makes this congregation unique, and learn about the dreams and hopes you hold for our future. Please know that my door is always open—whether it's for a quick chat after worship, a scheduled time in the office, a phone call, or even a cup of coffee somewhere nearby. Don't hesitate to introduce yourself; I want to meet every one of you!

Regarding my schedule, I will be at the church every Wednesday from 9am through the Potluck and Bible Study and either Tuesday or Thursday (depending on the week), and of course Sunday. I will work from home the Thursday or Tuesday I am not in Milledgeville. You can reach me by phone or text at 706-424-6354 any of those times, and do not hesitate to call at any time in case of an emergency. My email address is revmariturner@gmail.com, and I check that regularly throughout the day.

I am truly excited about the ministry we will share in the months and years ahead. I look forward to exploring how we can continue to be a place of grace and meaningful service in the world around us. I pray for all of you as we embark on this new chapter together.

Grace and peace,

Mari





Reverend Mari Turner joins us today as our new Covenant Pastor, bringing 28 years of experience as an ordained minister serving congregations in Alabama, South Carolina, Virginia, and Georgia. She is an active leader in the Northeast Georgia Presbytery, where she has held several key roles, including Moderator, Coordinating Team Chair, and serving on the Committee on Ministry. Pastor Mari lives outside of Athens, GA, with her husband, Brett, their daughter Robin, and their German Shepherd, Savannah. Their son, Jon, lives in Syracuse, NY, with his wife, Courtney, who is also a pastor. She enjoys singing and will join the alto section of the MFPC choir, and in her spare time she might be found reading, knitting, or walking. We are blessed to welcome her into ministry with us!



The new Session has been Ordained and Installed:

Elders ~ Andrew Allen, John Bradley, and Becky Humphrey (3 year term)

Elders ~ Frida Ituka, Susan McGill, and Bill Werts (2 year term)

Youth Elder ~ Josefa Tchamna-Kouna (1 year term)



CONGREGATIONAL FELLOWSHIP

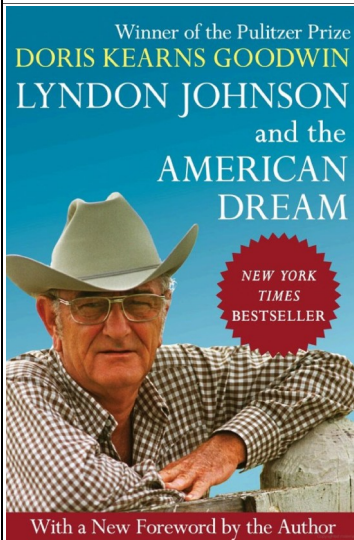
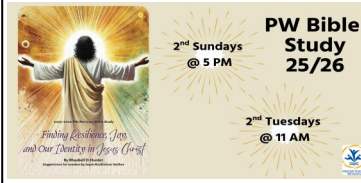


SANCTUARY FLOWERS

A signup sheet is available in the kitchen if you would like to put flowers in the sanctuary to honor a special occasion or to remember someone. Please contact Becky Humphrey (478) 457-5349 if you have any questions or need any assistance.

The Presbyterian Women are starting their yearly bible study again this fall. The group meets each month on the **second Sunday at 5:00 PM (October 12th) and the second Tuesday at 11:00 AM (October 14th)** so that people who are unable to meet during work hours have the opportunity to join at a different time.

This year's Bible Study is about finding resilience and joy in Christ. Make plans to join them!



The First Presbyterian Book Club will hold the October meeting on **Thursday, October 9th at 2:00 pm** in the church parlor. The book selection for October is *Lyndon Johnson and the American Dream* by Doris Kearns Goodwin. Goodwin was a twenty-four year old graduate student at Harvard when she was selected to join the White House Fellows where she worked directly with President Johnson. She later joined the White House staff, building a relationship with Johnson that allowed him to share candid insights about his presidency. After his presidency ended, she assisted him in writing his memoirs and to organize his papers for the presidential library. From this position of friendship, trust, and respect, she presents an intimate, compelling portrait of Lyndon Johnson, revealing the thirty-six president in all his vibrant, conflicted humanity. She probably knew him more intimately than anyone outside of his family, and that fact is evident in this insightful biography that she has written about his life and accomplishments as president.

The book that was selected for November is *Nine Parts of Desire: The Hidden World of Islamic Women* by Pulitzer Prize winning correspondent for the *The Wall Street Journal* Geraldine Brooks. In this book she presents stories of a wide range of Muslim women in the Middle East and their reaction to the tightening of women's freedoms by the men in the resurgent of fundamentalism in the Muslim world. The author's analysis of the world's fastest growing religion illustrates how Islam's holiest texts have been misused to justify repression of women and how male pride and power have warped the original message of a once liberating faith.

Please join us in October as we learn more about our thirty-sixth president Lyndon Johnson. It promises to be an interesting discussion. ~ Millie Murphy

The church
has left
the building.

The church
has left
the building.



MISSION AND MINISTRY



The Milly Free Fridge continues to help those families and individuals who experience food insecurity in our community. With such hot weather, consider filling the fridge with bottled water.

Make plans to join us Sunday, October 26th to help feed our neighbors 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.

Samaritan Ministry

We helped three families this month through Samaritan Ministry. We hear so many stories of lost jobs, lowered wages and illness that have negatively impacted these families searching for help. Please contact Pat Henry or Bill Werts if you are interested in supporting this ministry. Thank you for your continued help.



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



During September the Food Pantry assisted 49 households, a quarter of them new. We benefitted from some generous in-kind donations, a major one from a community member who "just wanted to find a place to help". Thank you in advance to those attending and donating through the Forget-Me-Nots concert on first Friday in October. We need this to be

successful; find details elsewhere in the newsletter. Please continue to keep the hungry in our community in your prayers and your budget. Thank you! ~ Donna Gautier

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



All are welcome!

Homelessness Awareness Club of Milledgeville is a multi-generational organization here in Milledgeville dedicated to educating ourselves and our community about homelessness. We will meet in the fellowship hall on October 19th from 1:30-3:00. Please join us and help make a difference! Thank you!

Co-founder, Teri Anne Bradley










October

		
<p>5 9:30 Sunday School 10:15 Children's School 11:00 Worship 12:00 Congregational Lunch 2:30 SESSION meeting</p>	<p>6 7:00 Oconee Recovery Commission</p>  <p>All Recovery Meeting</p>	<p>7 9:30-10:30 Food Pantry 12:00 Kiwanis 7:30 NA</p> 
<p>12 9:30 Sunday School 10:15 Children's School 11:00 Worship Service 5:00 Presbyterian Women Study</p>	<p>13 7:00 Oconee Recovery Commission</p> <p>6:30 PLAG (Parlor) 7:00 Milledgeville Singers Guild</p>	<p>14 9:30-10:30 Food Pantry 11:00 Presbyterian Women Bible Study 12:00 Kiwanis 7:30 NA</p> 
<p>19 9:30 Sunday School 10:15 Children's School 11:00 Worship Service 1:30-3:00 Homeless Awareness Club 4:00-5:00 Women's NA Group 6:15-8:00 PLAG</p>	<p>20 7:00 Oconee Recovery Commission</p>  <p>All Recovery Meeting</p> <p>7:00 Milledgeville Singers Guild</p>	<p>21 9:30-10:30 Food Pantry and Samaritan Ministry 12:00 Kiwanis 7:30 NA</p> 
<p>26 9:30 Sunday School 10:15 Children's School 11:00 Worship Service 12:00 Milly Sandwich Squad</p> 	<p>27 7:00 Oconee Recovery Commission</p>  <p>All Recovery Meeting</p> <p>7:00 Milledgeville Singers Guild</p>	<p>28 9:30-10:30 Food Pantry 12:00 Kiwanis</p> 
<p>2 9:30 Sunday School 10:15 Children's School 11:00 Worship Service</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>



2025



	2	3	4
8 6:30 Wednesday Potluck and Study 	9 2:00 FPC Book Club 6:00 IOBI 7:30 NA 	10	11 7:30 NA 
15 6:30 Wednesday Potluck and Study 	16 2:00 FPC Book Club 7:30 NA	17	18 7:30 NA 
22 6:30 Wednesday Potluck and Study 	23 4:30 BICENTENNIAL Planning Meeting 7:30 NA	24	25 7:30 NA 
29 6:30 Wednesday Potluck and Study 	30 7:30 NA	31	1 

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

Please call the office for an appointment

Liturgists for October:

October 5 & 12 Laurie Peebles

October 19 & 26 Bill Werts





YOUTH MINISTRY



CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:15am, Craft Room Upstairs



If you are interested in doing Children's Time, please let Gloria Burns or Anne Smart know. We want to continue this ministry to our young people.

Nine members have volunteered to help on a rotating basis to staff the nursery. Two adults must be present per our church policy.

Nursery Schedule for October:

- Oct. 5—No Nursery
- Oct. 12 Charles Burrell/Susan McGill
- Oct. 19 Anne Smart/Laurie Peebles
- Oct. 26 Joel Burns/Nancy Miller



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

BICENTENNIAL PLANNING COMMITTEE UPDATE

Great news! In its first meeting, the newly elected Session has approved (in concept) the tentative schedule of activities and budget for the Bicentennial Celebration next year. We will provide more details as plans are finalized but some special worship services and events we are planning include: a Kirkin' of the Tartans service in April, several special music services in May including one featuring the sacred music of former choir director Clyde Tipton, an open house to coincide with First Friday events downtown in June, and culminating with a big celebration on June 14, 2026. We hope to involve many individuals and families who formerly participated in and contributed to the life of this church as part of the celebration and incorporate some unique features of previous celebrations as well.

Next month, look for more information on fundraisers to support the Bicentennial celebration as well as ways you can participate in the planning process.



Susan McGill, Chair



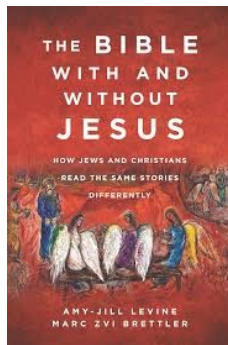
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

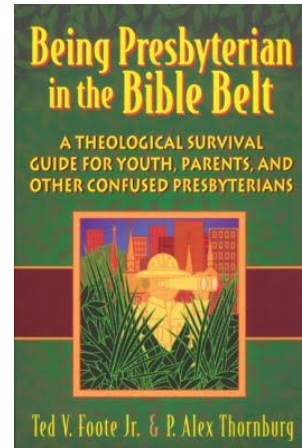
The Bible Sunday School class is studying *The Bible With and Without Jesus* by Amy Jill Levine and Marc Zvi Brettler. This book helps us start to see the Jewish perspective on the holy scriptures we call the Old Testament. Our class began meeting back in person on October 5 and will remain so. We join in lively conversations **every Sunday at 9:30 AM**. 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 *Being a Presbyterian in the Bible Belt* by Ted V. Foote Jr. & P. Alex Thornburg. This group meets in person **every Sunday morning at 9:45**. We would love to have you join us. ~Bill Werts



d365

d365 is a daily devotion written for youth and adults. The devotion follows a five-step format – **Pause, Listen, Think, Pray, Go**.

The **Pause** step remains the same all week and is designed as a centering tool as you begin the devotion.

The **Listen** step is the scripture passage for the day, using the

Common English Bible translation.

The **Think** step is the devotional thought by the week's writer.

The **Pray** step is the start of a prayer that you can expand into your own conversation with God.

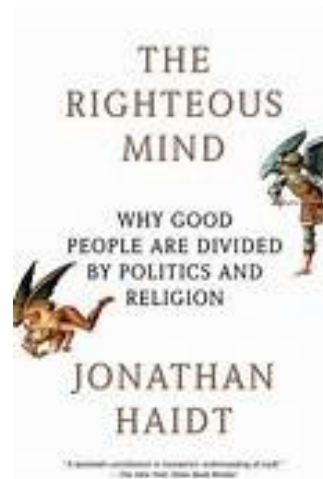
The **Go** step is a call to action – launching you from this moment toward acting on what you have heard.

As you read the thoughts of the writers, think about your own response to the scripture for the day. Let the writer's words serve as background for your own conversation with God.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT STUDY

The Wednesday night study group meets in person for a great pot luck supper and lively discussion every week.

We continue our inquiry into *The Righteous Mind, Why Good People are Divided by Politics and Religion* by Jonathan Haidt. This thought provoking book investigates the hidden reasons people make decisions.



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.

The pot luck begins at 6:30

Our church building and grounds are looking so much better thanks to many of you. Thanks to the vision and leadership of the Presbyterian Women, over 25 of our folks came to the church and joined in working together to improve our place of worship as a welcome to our new pastor, Mair Turner.



Upon driving to our lovely building you now see newly trimmed shrubbery all around the grounds, newly planted beds that are mulched, a bright and welcoming sign that is cleaner and clearer, welcoming our new minister to our church and all to our services.

The inside of the building was touched by many hands in all of the current unstable space. Offices were straightened and organized, the library was arranged to be more usable, the nursery was inventoried, cleaned, and made a more welcoming space, the parlor was tidied and all of the chairs are now repaired and back around the table, the kitchen was deep cleaned, decluttered and reorganized, bathrooms were cleaned and mopped thoroughly, choir loft and sanctuary were wiped down, dusted and vacuumed in all the hard to reach places, pew backs were arranged properly, the narthex was tidied and cleaned and some baseboard repaired, many windows were washed, music room was straightened and music was filed, and many closets were cleaned out and organized for better use.

We are thankful to all who came and worked and to those who supported with funds to help pay for the costs of the repairs and the extensive landscape work that we were able to get done. All the work and resources were given for the glory of God!! A very special thanks to all!! ~ The Presbyterian Women



TREASURER'S CORNER



FINANCIAL UPDATE: Many new projects are on tap as we transition to a new minister and session. We will begin to spend on our building repairs and the new minister's salary and benefits. We need to step up our giving to make sure we can fund everything. Remember to 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

OPERATING BUDGET	July	August	2025 YTD
Contributions	\$12,007	\$19,029	\$144,483
Other Income	\$688	\$689	\$5,508
Total Operating Income	\$12,695	\$19,718	\$149,992
Total Operating Expenses	\$13,423	\$16,775	\$165,675
Net Operating	-\$728	\$2,942	-\$18,637
<u>DESIGNATED FUNDS</u>			
Contributions	\$4,712	\$2,318	\$29,183
Expenses	\$3,650	\$1,674	\$19,871
Net Designated	\$998	\$644	\$9,312



Our recent congregational lunch was a wonderful success, filled with fellowship, joy, and a shared sense of community. Members from all ages came together after the service to enjoy a delicious meal, and the atmosphere was one of warmth, laughter, and unity.

The highlight of the afternoon was the opportunity to officially welcome our new pastor. Heartfelt words of encouragement were shared, and many took the time to personally greet and connect with Rev. Mari Turner. Several members expressed their excitement and support, making the pastor feel truly embraced by the congregation.

Thanks to the efforts of volunteers who organized, cooked, served, and cleaned, everything ran smoothly. The food was plentiful and enjoyed by all, and the event provided a meaningful chance for everyone to come together outside the regular worship setting.

This lunch not only marked the beginning of a new chapter in our church's journey but also reinforced the strong spirit of community that defines our congregation.





PRAYER REQUESTS



CHURCH FAMILY:

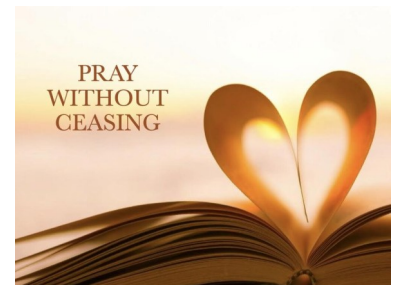
Harry Beck, ongoing health concerns
 Nan Carpenter, ongoing health concerns
 Sunda Coleman, recovering from surgery after a fall
 Frida Ituka, recovering from knee replacement surgery
 Ellen Thompson, recovering from a broken hip at home

EXTENDED FAMILY:

Darryl Allen, Andrew Allen's father, ongoing health concerns
 Nannette Green Allen, childhood friend of Margaret Ivester with serious health issues
 Wesley Applebury, hospitalized after reconstructive neurosurgery on Sept. 10.
 Mark Archer, Sunda Coleman's brother-in-law, hip replacement, recovering at home
 Michael Bledsoe, Mary Lucik's grandson, multiple health concerns
 Taylor Croghan, Craig Callender's niece, EDS diagnosis
 Don Goggans, Elaine Goggans' son, stage four cancer
 Kathy Hall, Gini Wilkerson's mother, stroke
 Peter Hall, Gini Wilkerson's brother, ongoing health concerns
 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
 Charles Morgan, Jennifer Flory's father, ongoing health concerns
 Joanne Murphy, Kathy Carroll's mother, ongoing health issues- at Carlyle House in Macon
 John J. Murphy, Kathy Carroll's father, recovering from kidney operation
 Paul Orman, Barbara Orman's husband, ongoing health concerns
 Chris Pearson, Sunda Coleman's son, recovering at home; dialysis
 Renee Pearson, Sunda Coleman's daughter-in-law, diagnosed with congestive heart failure, at home
 Runette Pounds, Sunda Coleman's mother, ongoing health concerns
 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' 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

Military Service

Will Deason
 Rebecca Elangwe
 (Both are Reservists)



PRAY
 WITHOUT
 CEASING

IN ASSISTED LIVING

Nan Carpenter, PO Box 527, Jefferson, GA 30549
 Jude Hirsch, Fellowship Home at Meriwether, 10 Meriwether Place
 Maryanne Morris, Fellowship Home at Meriwether, 10 Meriwether Place
 Runette Pounds, The Cottages, 1010 Fernwood Dr, Rm 206, Milledgeville, GA 31061
 Suzy Smith, The Oaks Peake, 400 Foster Rd., A2, Macon, GA 31210

*When you can't put
 your prayer into
 words, God hears
 your heart.*

Birthdays

October 1 ~ Bob Smart
October 4 ~ Linda Bradley
October 8 ~ Astrid Callender
October 8 ~ Holley Cowan
October 9 ~ Millie Murphy
October 10 ~ Laura Baarda
October 12 ~ Bill Flory
October 24 ~ Mary Baker; Becky Henderson
October 30 ~ Doris Moody

