

CHURCH CURRENTS

APRIL 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. 333 April 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,

Grace and peace to you! I am grateful for this beautiful church family. There are so few congregations like us, and I am so fortunate to be your pastor.

Most of you know that the Triduum and Easter is a difficult time for me. Two years ago, my mom closed her eyes for the last time on Maundy Thursday, and she died on Easter Sunday. The confluence of grief and the celebration of the Resurrection makes the holiest days difficult to navigate.

I share this because I know how hard it is to live into the resurrection life while grieving. We all carry some grief, whatever loss we've experienced. "Trusting in the hope of the resurrection" can sound trite. And yet Easter Sunday—the day of Resurrection—is still our holiest day. Each year, we still pull out all the stops (literally—all the organ stops are pulled!), sound the horns, bedeck ourselves and the cross in flowers and finery, and turn to family as we begin a new season. This new season coincides with lengthening days, the pale green of new leaves, and the riot of blossoms and birdsong. In other words, Easter signifies new life, reflected in the new life proclaimed by nature living into warmer, sunnier days after the relative dark and cold of winter.

Just as we trust in Spring each year, we are called also to trust in the Resurrection. In Christ's resurrection, we are invited into new life. This is no substitutionary atonement—it is participation in Christ's life. Christ died before us, and prepares new life before us. Death is still a reality, as is grief, but it is not the final word. Love is. Love is the reason we grieve, and love is the reason we live.

I bid you a most blessed Easter season, with and in spite of whatever grief you carry. Trust in the hope of the resurrection.

In Christ, Rev. Susan



**Make plans to join us this summer,
June 17-21, 9:00 AM- 12:00 PM daily,
for Vacation Bible School.**



At Camp Firelight VBS, students will enjoy an interactive, energizing, Bible-based good time on their summer camp adventure with God. They will become Campers and discover how to put their trust in God in every situation.

After a high-energy Opening Assembly time, the Campers make their way to the Bible Story Station. Interactive Bible lessons reveal each Firelight Focus to equip Campers for an active life with God. Campers will also discover our Firelight Focus (Bible memory verse), which will remain with them in their faith long after VBS.

The students will expand on what they've discovered by making their own art projects at the Craft Station, singing new songs at the Music Station, exploring the wonders of God's creation at the Science Station, playing games at the Recreation Station, and enjoying tasty treats at the Snack Station. Along the way, the Campers will hear about our mission project and as their respond to a call for action!

Join us as we discover how to put our trust in God in every situation!

**Sign up sheets can be found in the Narthex and on our website:
www.fpcmilledgeville.org**

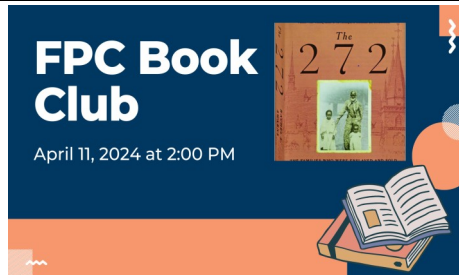


CONGREGATIONAL FELLOWSHIP



Join the youth as they both lead worship and then serve the congregation on Youth Sunday. The Soup & Sandwich Fundraiser will help the youth to attend the Montreat Youth Conference in June 2024.

Make plans to join us for an outing on Saturday, April 20 at 10:00 AM at the local Dunkin' Donuts. The first dozen donuts is on us!



The First Presbyterian Church Book Club will hold its April meeting on Thursday, **April 11th at 2 PM in the church parlor**. We will be discussing *The 272: The Families Who Were Enslaved and Sold to Build the American Catholic Church* by Rachel Swarns. This book has been selected as the best book of the year by several major publications. The author tells the story of a group of America's most

prominent Catholic priests who in 1838 sold 272 enslaved people to finance their largest mission project, which is now Georgetown University. The author follows one family through nearly two centuries of indentured servitude and enslavement. The author's reporting on this one family's story has started a national conversation about reparation and reconciliation in America.

The book selection for the month of May is *Undaunted Courage: Meriwether Lewis, Thomas Jefferson, and the Opening of the American West* from the *New York Times* best selling author Stephen Ambrose. This book about the Lewis and Clark exploration of the Louisiana Territory tells the story of the most momentous expedition in American history and one of the greatest adventure stories of all times. In 1803 Thomas Jefferson selected Captain Meriwether Lewis and his partner Captain William Clark to lead a voyage up the Missouri River to the Rocky Mountains, down the Columbia River to the Pacific Ocean and back.

The book club members would like to express their appreciation to all of the church members that came to our February meeting to hear the local author Marsha Fort Herren talk about her book. It was an amazing, enjoyable event. I am not sure who enjoyed it more, the audience or the author. It was just plain fun. She talked about her book, shared some of her recipes, and displayed some of her current paintings.

Please join us for more discussions of thought provoking books. ~Millie Murphy



MISSION AND MINISTRY



Milly Free Fridge is in need of regular volunteers to clean the fridge and the area around it. So please join us Sunday, April 28th 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.

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

In March, we once again had a long line out the door. We helped seven families either keep their utilities from being turned off or turned them back on. Despite this, we still had to turn people away.

The Samaritan Ministry is meant to assist those in need of utility assistance once a month. We thank you so much for your consistent and generous giving to this special outreach. 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, April 16 at 9:30 AM.**



Thank you for the support you are providing our neighbors through the Food Pantry! During March we served 20 households each week and could usually have helped more. This is the first time we have run out of food every week of the month since I have been involved with it.

Our college student helpers continue to be a Godsend and will largely be carrying the responsibility for this ministry in latter April, possibly into May, as I recuperate from knee replacement. Thanks to those of




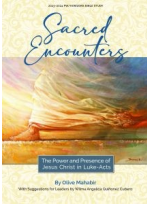



you who have offered to back us up in this and especially those who have agreed to assist in particular efforts.

We are experimenting with making bulk purchases from one source during the month of April and will continue beyond that if it seems most reasonable. We can still use your donations, especially designated funds, but also the standard items we always place in bags, and, always, your prayers for the folks who have such need that we can help fill.

~ Donna



April

	<p>1 7:00 MSG</p> 	<p>2 9:30-10:30 Food Pantry 12:00 Kiwanis Luncheon</p> 
<p>7 9:30 Sunday School 9:45 Adult & Intergenerational Classes 10:15 Children's School 11:00 Worship Service 12:00 Youth Group</p>	<p>8 6:30 PFLAG 7:00 MSG</p> 	<p>9 9:30-10:30 Food Pantry 11:00 PW Bible Study 12:00 Kiwanis Luncheon</p> 
<p>14 9:30 Sunday School 9:45 Adult & Intergenerational Classes 10:15 Children's School 11:00 Youth Sunday 12:00 Soup & Sandwich Fundraiser 5:00 PW Bible Study</p>	<p>15 7:00 MSG</p> 	<p>16 9:30-10:30 Food Pantry and Samaritan Ministry 12:00 Kiwanis Luncheon 5:30 Session Meeting</p> 
<p>21 9:30 Sunday School 9:45 Adult & Intergenerational Classes 10:15 Children's School 11:00 Worship Service 12:00 Youth Group 1:30 Homeless Awareness Club</p>	<p>22 7:00 MSG</p> 	<p>23 9:30-10:30 Food Pantry 12:00 Kiwanis Luncheon</p> 
<p>28 9:30 Sunday School 9:45 Adult & Intergenerational Classes 10:15 Children's School 11:00 Worship Service 12:00 Youth Group</p>	<p>29 7:00 MSG</p> 	<p>30 9:30-10:30 Food Pantry 12:00 Kiwanis Luncheon</p> 

Caring for God's Creation



2024



<p>3 6:30 Wednesday Potluck and Study</p> 	4	5	6
<p>10 6:30 Wednesday Potluck and Study</p> 	<p>11 2:00 FPC Book Club</p>  <p>6:00 IOBI</p>	12	13
<p>17 6:30 Wednesday Potluck and Study</p> 	18	19	<p>20 10:00 AM Sweet Meet</p> 
<p>24 6:30 Wednesday Potluck and Study</p> 	25 6:00 IOBI	26	27



WE ARE A **MATTHEW 25 Church**

Actively Engaged in the World

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



YOUTH GROUP Sundays, 12:00pm

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sundays,
10:15am, in the
Fellowship Hall

Playing games is just one facet of the youth group. They also chat about the world, their faith, and how the two mix. The Youth room has been updated thanks to a generous monetary contribution; their room has been transformed into a comfortable place for the youth to fellowship. Check our website for the Youth Newsletter.



The Youth have once more been doing a large amount of fundraising and you may be wondering what that's for. Each year, the youth attend the Montreat Youth Conference in June. Montreat Youth Conference affirms youth in their calling to be and to shape the church of Jesus Christ. Through engaging worship, lively music, and practices of gratitude and fun, they offer youth different opportunities to cultivate their spiritual faith journeys and practice sabbath. They provide a secure space that is loving, holy, and authentic so that they may glorify God in all that they do, inspiring and equipping a lifetime of faith.

Youth leave Montreat knowing that:

Their faith matters.

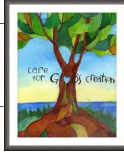
They are loved as they are.

They are part of a community of faith.



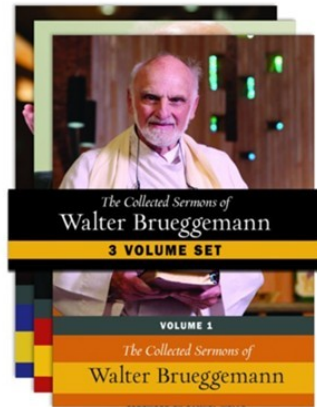


CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



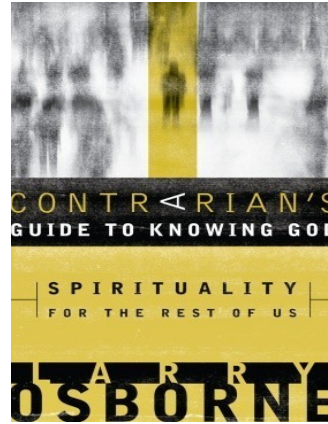
ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

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 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

FELLOWSHIP SUNDAY SCHOOL



We are studying *Contrarian's Guide to Knowing God: Spirituality for the Rest of Us* 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 reading and discussing, *The Other Evangelicals, A Story of Liberal, Black, Progressive, Feminist and Gay Christians and the Movement that Pushed Them Out*. This is an interesting history of the gradual effort by the conservative evangelicals to usurp the term "evangelical". John Lamsma has led the study and everyone has been participating in the discussion. **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 whether you have the book or not! The book is available on Amazon. ~Joel Burns

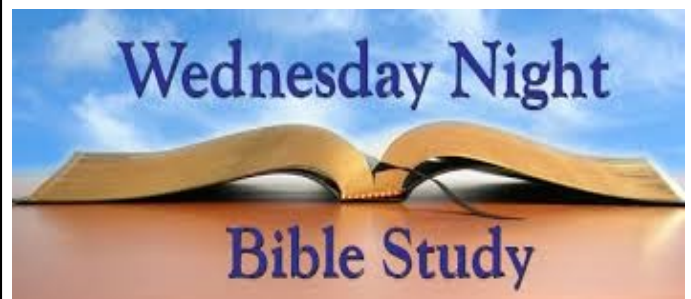
Intergenerational New members and Confirmation Sunday School

STARTING

SUNDAY 17 MARCH
2024

AT 9:45 AM

Join us in learning about our faith- this class is for confirmands and new members and anyone else who wishes to participate



HONORING OUR GRADUATES

Graduation time is upon us and many of our youth are graduating both college and high school.

Please send the information on your student(s) that are graduating this year to the office (fpchurch@windstream.net) so the church can be sure to recognize them.

And make plans to celebrate ChiChi on May 3!



TREASURER'S CORNER

Since my last article the finance committee has been active. We are moving to make sure that our assets earn a higher return and we are doing what is necessary to modernize procedures. We are also blessed to have good leadership.

Meanwhile, as a church we need to support our mission more vigorously. During the first three months we have had to rely on the surplus from last year to cover deficits. Please consider your contributions of money and try to maximize your support.

God is working here. Listen for the call. ~Joel D. Burns

	January	February	2024 YTD
Contributions	\$13,396	\$12,630	\$26,026
Other Income	\$691	\$690	\$1,381
Total Income	\$14,087	\$13,320	\$27,407
Budgeted Expenses	\$19,373	\$25,043	\$44,416
Net (Loss)	(\$4,183)	(\$11,723)	(\$17,009)

Reverend Susan is offering to have canvas prints of her portraits made, sized up to 16x20. Canvas prints are also available for portraits posted on Facebook. Each canvas is \$75; sizes larger than 16x20 are priced differently. Please text her at 478-233-4907 if you would like to have your (or your family member's) portrait.



PROPERTY UPDATE

From the Head of Property:

For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Matthew 18:20

Recently, two, or three, and more, have gathered here to share their love of Christ and love for our church family. As I've mentioned in my children's time's stories, some of the most meaningful connections to the Lord and our faith I've experienced have come outdoors. But the opportunity to celebrate and deepen our love for the Lord, in an aesthetically pleasing meeting place that is safe and comforting, is immeasurable - in rewards and meaning. And as Margaret reminded us a couple years ago, our building, in its age, beauty, and stories to be told and unearthed, is like

a beloved grandparent. Over years and years, many - more than two or three, have gathered in the Lord's name to give life to our building.

Bill Werts has gathered. Bob Carroll has gathered. Donna has gathered. Charles and Melba have gathered. Sue and Joe have gathered.

With administrative support from Rev. Susan and Lois, these church family members and others recently have either personally repaired or steered outside contractors from our community to:

Repair and make safe our kitchen floor. Repair leaks in a downstairs AC unit. Replace an upstairs AC unit. Repair restroom plumbing. Remove a very large tree too close to our building. Install an enclosed shed for maintenance equipment. Inspect our buildings for termite activity and install termite traps. Repair and seal our attic space from small nesting wildlife. Cut oak tree limbs that were over our fellowship hall roof. Have our narthex inspected for floor and wall structural damage. Continued and in some cases begun repairs on the exterior wood trim around our stained glass windows. Cleaned every single gutter and downspouts. Improved and restored our landscaping on all sides.

On March 16th, Sherry, Pat, Will, Andrew Lindsay, Susan, Bob, Cathy, Joe, Sue, and Charles all gathered. It was comforting to work side by side with another crew, Gloria, Anne, Margaret, Rev. Susan and Lois.

The outdoor workday crew moved along our playground makeover a week ago. Old play sets were removed, beautiful new plants are in the ground, and new play sets are on the way. Sidewalks and patios are cleaned and fence improvements are evident. So many have gathered. **Thank you to these people, thank you to this church family.** ~ Joel Respass



PRAYER *Requests*

Church Family:

Wesley Applebury, attending seminary in Atlanta, **Columbia Theological Seminary, D.**

Wesley Applebury, Box 289, 701 S. Columbia Dr., Decatur, GA 30030

Beth Baarda, at home in hospice care in La Grange, GA

Nan Carpenter, ongoing health concerns

Greg Jones, congestive heart failure

Extended Family:

Nannette Green Allen, childhood friend of Margaret Ivester with serious health issues

Joseph Bennett, Joe Bennett's father, in hospital

Judy Bledsoe, Mary Lucik's daughter, recovering from car accident

Michael Bledsoe, Mary Lucik's grandson, multiple health concerns

Heather Brooks, Susan Balfour's cousin, lung and brain cancer

Peggy Deschermeier, Jennifer Flory's aunt, stage 1 pancreatic cancer, recovering at home from Whipple procedure

Margret Ellen (Meg) Clark, Margaret Ivester's daughter, ongoing health concerns

Susan Eilers, Mary Lucik's friend, cancer surgery

Don Goggans, Elaine Goggans' son, stage four cancer

Karen Hartmann, Susan Balfour's cousin, stage 4 cancer

Alonzo Kelly, Craig Callender's father, Stage 4 Melenoma

Velma Kelly, Craig Callender's grandmother, ongoing health concerns

Elizabeth Knobel, Carolyn Morgan's daughter, ongoing health concerns

Mildred Moore, Sundae Coleman's aunt, in hospice care

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

Willy Sanders, Sunda Coleman's cousin, ongoing health concerns

Bob Smart, Anne Smart's husband, ankylosing spondylitis

Windy Spaide, Craig Callender's sister, in rehab

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

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

Limited Mobility

Helen Danuser

Military Service

Will Deason

Rebecca Elangwe

(Both are

Reservists)

Weeping may last
through the night,
but **joy** comes
with the morning.

-Psalm 30:5



BibleVerseImages.com

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

April 5~ Andrew & Min Lindsay



Birthdays

April 3~ Gabriel Respass

April 4~ Donna Gautier

April 9~ Jennifer Carroll Morris

April 9~ Anne Smart

April 10~ Jose Garcia

April 16~ Anna Respass

April 17~ Jackie Northington

April 18~ Roy Phillips

April 21~ Marianne Edwards

April 22~ Mary Lucik

April 23~ David Baarda

April 25~ Vera Bales

April 28~ John
Sallstrom

April 29~ Bob Carroll

April 30~ Wesley
Applebury

