

CHURCH CURRENTS

FEBRUARY 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. 331 February 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,

Greetings in Christ! I give thanks to God for you always, and I marvel at the work God is doing among us, through your hands. Day to day, you answer Christ's call to be light, and a beautiful light, it is.

I have a well-worn book of poetry on my shelf: it's called *A Cry Like a Bell*, by Madeleine L'Engle. As we prepare for the season of Lent, I would like to share one of her poems.

“Andrew”

Jesus, too, needed friends; close friends
and solitude. The companionable meal,
laughter and talk—then he, the one who spends
himself must turn himself, turn, and conceal
himself in the desert emptiness to be
by Father filled. And then poured strength upon
all the empties, the most in need. And he,
being human for us, needed me, Peter and John.
So he taught us. So did we learn
this lovely rhythm—needing, needed—then
the deepest of all needs, the heartward turn
to Love's own source, the spring which fills all men,
Son-lit, Father-filled, Spirit-blown.
By yourself, Lord, to us our self is shown.

We often approach Lent with a reverence that puts distance between ourselves and the Holy. But Jesus needed friends. Jesus was a person, a thing we often forget when contemplating Christ. As we observe the Lenten season, let us seek to stand in awe beside—not below—Jesus.

May Jesus' peace be with you.

Rev. Susan



pancake brunch youth fundraiser

February 11, 2024

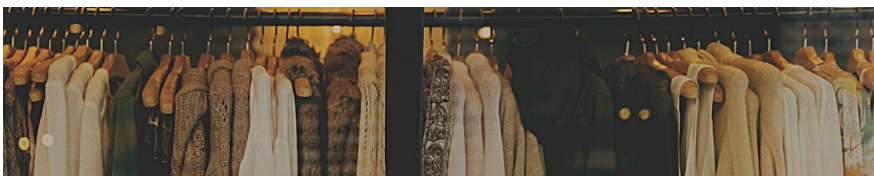
Sunday, directly after worship
service

\$10 per person, \$20 per
family

"If you don't need it, donate it!"

How often do we listeners of public radio hear that phrase in a week? It's good advice, even when there is no "old car" involved. Food Pantry has recently been gifted with clothing items we might have distributed if time and energy had not been focused on food.

Clothing can pile up, so I found a good place, especially for quality women's items: **Hope's Closet at First Baptist Church**. They collect items which will benefit women who are coming out of addiction and domestic violence situations, seeking to move on. Their wardrobes are often not appropriate for job interviews and workplace appearance once hired. Hope's Closet works with Hope House in Macon to help their "graduates" choose and use the kinds of clothing and accessories they now need, but cannot afford. Please consider this option when swapping out seasonal clothes or just downsizing your wardrobe. ~Donna



Hope Closet

IN NEED OF CLOTHING, JEWELRY, AND SHOES?



Join us for a Pancake Brunch directly after the service next Sunday. This brunch is being held by the Youth Group as a fundraiser for their trip to the Montreat Youth Conference this summer.

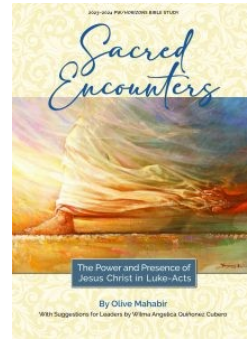
The Montreat Youth Conference affirms youth in their calling to be, and to shape, the church of Jesus Christ. The desire is to help youth come to know and believe that they are the beloved of God and to be a place where authenticity, community, connection, and God's truth thrive. Montreat seeks to be an inclusive space where each voice can be heard and where each heart can be molded; where change is invited, challenge is expected, and where all are embraced. This summer's conference theme is Planting Peace.



CONGREGATIONAL FELLOWSHIP

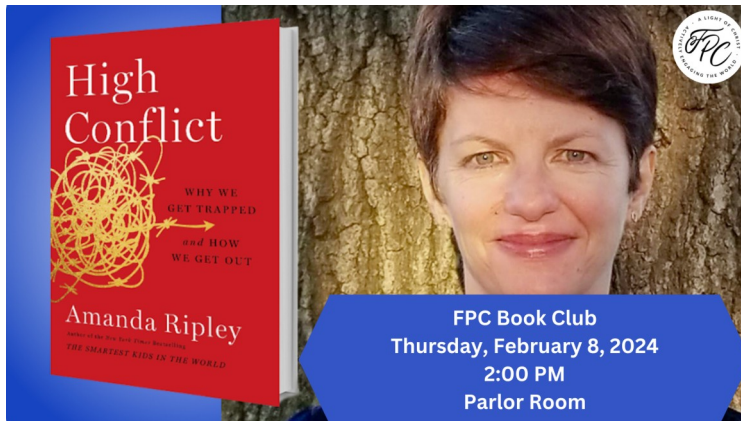


Join us in wearing blue on the first Sunday of Lent, February 18, to remind us of that our offerings to One Great Hour of Sharing help people in disaster areas around the world. This offering will be collected through Lent.



The PW groups meet at 5:00 PM on February 11 and again at 11:00 AM

on February 13 in the Parlor Room. We hope you will join us.



The First Presbyterian Church book club will hold its February meeting **February 8th at 2 PM** in the church parlor. The book we will be discussing is *High Conflict: Why We Get Trapped and How We Get Out* by Amanda Ripley. The New York Times best selling author investigates how good people get captured by high conflict and how they

can break free. People can escape conflict and short circuit the feedback loops of outrage and blame, thus making conflict useful rather than toxic. In her book the author presents a mind opening new way to think about conflict that will transform how we move through the world.

The book selection for **March** is written by a local person many of us have had the pleasure of knowing, and in fact, she has attended our book club meetings in the past. Marsha Fort Herren has written and published an autobiographical account of her life growing up and then as a parent, a pastor's wife, an educator and a small business owner. She and her husband, Darryl Herren, owned Olive Forge Herb Farm for many years. In her book *From my Perspective...It Was all Golden* she relates that for her, life has been golden; not easy, not without pain and scorn from others, but golden. **The group is in for a treat, as Marsha has agreed to come to our book club meeting in March to talk about her book.** The book is available on Amazon.

~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, February 25th 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



Utility Assistance

Samaritan Ministry

This past month, we helped three people either keep their utilities from being turned off or turned them back on. We unfortunately had to turn a few people away. The need for assistance is always great in the winter with the cold weather.

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, February 20 at 9:30 AM.**



Food Pantry has had windfall donations of food and funds recently, so we are able to prepare more bags than had been possible. We now try to have 20 bags available and most are needed each week. During January, we ran out one day when only 15 had been packed and we needed 19. Our total distribution for the month was 69, with the doors open all 5 Tuesdays.

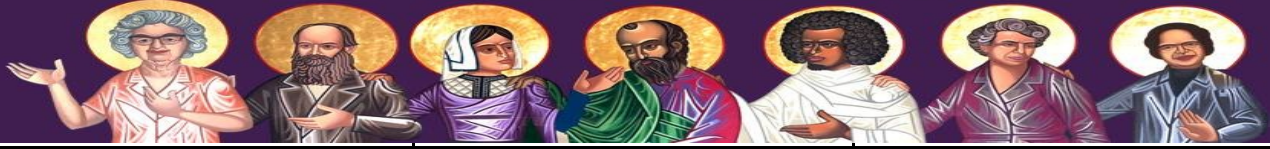
Thank you for continuing to bring in food items, anytime the church is open, and making designated funds donations as well. The "main dish" items which are most costly (and always included) are meats/ chicken and canned pasta items (ravioli, etc), and good cereals like raisin bran. Right now the less expensive canned vegetables are in good shape, while canned greens and succotash-type mixes are regularly on the shopping list.

My helpers (GC students) are a blessing and a joy to work with, and they do work. They get credit for volunteer hours, but they save me a lot of time and effort. Please include them in your prayers of thanksgiving. ~ Donna

February

LENT MADNESS

WHO WILL WIN THE GOLDEN HALO?



4 **9:30** Sunday School
10:15 Children's School
11:00 Worship Service
 FBLive & WKZR102.3FM
12:00 Youth Group

5 **7:00** MSG



6 **9:30-10:30** Food Pantry
12:00 Kiwanis Luncheon



11 **9:30** Sunday School
10:15 Children's School
11:00 Worship Service
 FBLive & WKZR102.3FM
12:00 Pancake Brunch by
 Youth Group
5:00 PW Bible Study

12 **6:30** PFLAG
7:00 MSG



13 **9:30-10:30** Food Pantry
11:00 PW Bible Study
12:00 Kiwanis Luncheon



18 **9:30** Sunday School
10:15 Children's School
11:00 Worship Service
 FBLive & WKZR102.3FM
12:00 Youth Group
**BLUE OUT! Wear blue for
 OGHS.**

19 **7:00** MSG



20 **9:30-10:30** Food Pantry
 and Samaritan Ministry
12:00 Kiwanis Luncheon
5:30 Session Meeting



25 **9:30** Sunday School
10:15 Children's School
11:00 Worship Service
 FBLive & WKZR102.3FM
12:00 Milly Free Fridge

26 **6:30** PFLAG Member
 Meeting
7:00 MSG



27 **9:30-10:30** Food Pantry
12:00 Kiwanis Luncheon



75
YEARS





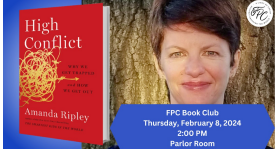
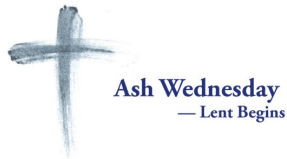




ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING
SPECIAL OFFERINGS

HUNGER • DISASTER • DEVELOPMENT

FEBRUARY 14 - MARCH 31, 2024

PLEASE GIVE GENEROUSLY —
 FOR WHEN WE ALL DO A LITTLE,
 IT ADDS UP TO A LOT.

2023

	1	2	3 10:00 Spiritual Discipline Workshop 
7 6:30 Wednesday Potluck and Study 	8 2:00 FPC Book Club 6:00 IOBI 	9	10
14 5:30 Joint Ash Wednesday Service and Dinner 	15	16	17 1:30 Family Fun Hike @ Selma Erwin 
21 11:00 Midweek Prayer Service 6:30 Wednesday Potluck and Study 	22 6:00 IOBI	23	24
28 11:00 Midweek Prayer Service 6:30 Wednesday Potluck and Study 	29 Leap Day! 		

Elders on Session

Class of 2024 ~ Wesley Applebury (At Large) Jennifer Flory (Worship)
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



YOUTH GROUP

Sundays, 12:00pm



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 is being updated thanks to a generous monetary contribution and in the next few weeks, their room will be transformed into a comfortable place for the youth to fellowship.



Feasting on the Word

In the fall, we used the curriculum from Growing in Grace and Gratitude. For the winter, we are using Feasting on the Word, another curriculum provided by the PC(USA). The Feasting on the Word Curriculum follows the Revised Common Lectionary and allows everyone to explore the same Bible passage each week. This makes it easy for families to live out their faith together. Explore the what, where, so what, and now what of each biblical passage from the lectionary through a variety of learning and teaching styles.

**CHILDREN'S
SUNDAY
SCHOOL**

**Sundays,
10:15am, in the
Fellowship Hall**

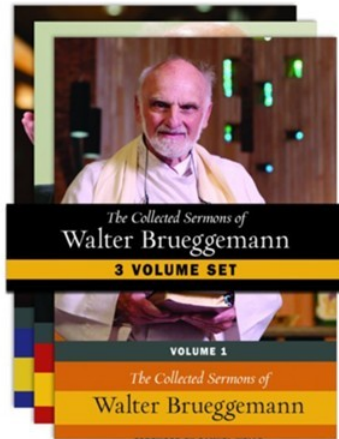


CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



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



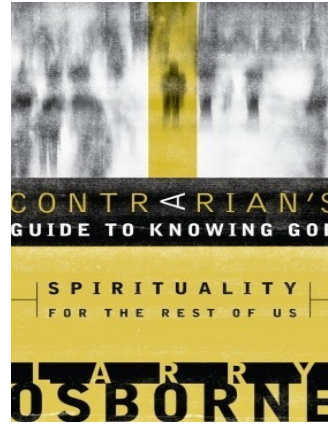
every Sunday at 9:30 AM. We are beginning the second volume of *The Collected Sermons of Walter Brueggemann*. This collection is organized to match the seasons of the church calendar. Each of the sermons are thought provoking and fresh. If you have never encountered Dr. Brueggemann's work you are in 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

Crochet Sunday School Class

We're trying something new! A Crochet Sunday School Class started the last week in October. The class has been focused on learning to crochet but we are now delving into meditation and explorations of faith. Join us in this new adventure on **Sunday mornings at 10:15 AM** in the library.



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*. John Lamsma has led the study and is doing a great job. 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.**

Please join us whether you have the book or not! The book is available on Amazon. ~Joel Burns





Join us in another Family Fun Hike at Selma Erwin Trails. This hike is being sponsored by Fringed Campion Chapter of the Georgia Native Plant Society and Georgia Native Plant Society. Walk with your native plant friends through the beautiful woods of this preserve to see the trout lilies blooming! Dress appropriately for the weather, wear hiking shoes, and bring your camera!



TREASURER'S CORNER

A month into 2024 we are excited about our mission. Many people in our area depend on the consistent love shown in what First Presbyterian Church is doing. We can only continue this service by having the material support you give. Please make support for this mission a priority.

God bless everyone ~Joel D. Burns

	November	December	2023 YTD
Contributions	\$26,317	\$128,565	\$333,665
Other Income	\$715	\$1,756	\$12,687
Total Income	\$27,032	\$130,321	\$346,352
Budgeted Expenses	\$20,190	\$22,183	\$232,904
Net (Loss)	\$6,842	\$108,138	\$113,448

Repairing the Breach, Fixing What's Broken

In Isaiah 58, God, through the voice of the prophet, calls us to be repairers of the breach — and by repairing the breach, we will, by God's grace, be led into a new season of justice, freedom and peace.

“Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin? You shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.” —Isaiah 58

WE ARE THE CHURCH, TOGETHER; and we are there with those who need us. Each gift to **One Great Hour of Sharing** helps improve the lives of the suffering and the vulnerable through three life-saving programs ~ PRESBYTERIAN DISASTER ASSISTANCE, PRESBYTERIAN HUNGER PROGRAM, SELF DEVELOPMENT OF PEOPLE

February 14-March 31, 2024 Join with Presbyterians worldwide in sharing God's love with our neighbors-in-need around the world by providing relief from natural disasters, food for the hungry, and support for the poor and oppressed.

This Lenten season, please give generously to One Great Hour of Sharing.

WAYS TO GIVE —

: Through your congregation

: Online at pcusa.org/give-oghs

: Text OGHS to 91999 to give -or- You can help sustain the important ministries and programs that are supported by One Great Hour of Sharing Offering by making an online gift at any time throughout the year.

Checks may be sent Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); P.O. Box 643700; Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700.





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, in home hospice in La Grange, GA
Nan Carpenter, ongoing health concerns
John Sallstrom, recovering from heart valve surgery
Gini Wilkerson, recovering at home from brain surgery

Extended Family:

Nannette Green Allen, Dear childhood friend of Margaret Ivester with serious health issues
Etta Bentley, Jennifer Flory's father's wife, ongoing health concerns
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, chemo treatment
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
Dee Hartmann, Susan Balfour's aunt, health issues
Karen Hartmann, Susan Balfour's cousin, stage 4 cancer
Alonzo Kelly, Craig Callender's father, Stage 4 Melenoma
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
Mildred Moore, Sundae Coleman's aunt, in hospice care
Ben Morgan, Jenifer Flory's brother, ongoing health concerns
Janie Mullis, Bill Wert's 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, undergoing prostrate cancer treatment
Chris Pearson, Sunda Coleman's son, recovering at home; dialysis
Runette Pounds, Sunda Coleman's mother, ongoing health concerns, recovering from a fall
Willy Sanders, Sunda Coleman's cousin, ongoing health concerns
Bob Smart, Anne Smart's husband, ankylosing spondylitis
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 Wynne, friend of Sue Bennett's, bone marrow transplant

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

February 8~ Deanna & Jack Bivins
February 17~ Julie & Robby Deason



Birthdays

February 1~ John Lane
February 2~ John Lamsma
February 12~ Louise Sallstrom
February 19~ Sunda Coleman
February 21~ Olympia Applebury
February 22~ Nan Carpenter
February 27~ Isabel Garcia
February 27~ Lee Gillis

