

CHURCH CURRENTS

JULY 2022

210 S. Wayne Street, Milledgeville, Georgia 31061

478-452-9394; fpchurch@windstream.net; www.fpcmilledgeville.org



MORE LIGHT
PRESBYTERIANS

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. 312 July 2022



Pastor:
Rev. Susan Balfour

Coord. of Children &
Youth Ministries:
Gloria Burns

Admin. Asst.:
Lois Callender

Director of Music:
Dr. Jennifer Flory

Organists:
Kate Phillips

Child Care Providers:
Childcare is
temporarily
unavailable

Beloved,

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ! I am grateful for you all, and for the Image of God that you each bear. Your love is a testament to God's goodness.

During Pride Month (June), I make a point to read books by LGBTQ authors. This year, I read *This Body I Wore: A Memoir*, by Diana Goetsch. Diana is a trans woman, who transitioned at the age of 50. A poet by profession, she writes eloquently and candidly about her identity, relationships, and the struggles she had with understanding herself.

Last Sunday, I preached about generational trauma, and Goetsch's life is a prime example of the causes and effects of generational trauma. She explores the ways in which her awareness of that trauma unfolded and the unrealized consequences of the things that happened to her, but also the silence around her parents' respective families.

And of course, her memoir is a privilege to read, as it invites the reader into a very intimate portrait of her life. It is short on lurid details, while also sharing her inner life in ways that help to understand the turmoil, struggles, and dysphoria that trans persons must navigate. This memoir is a gift that I highly recommend. Whatever your opinion about trans people is, I encourage you to read this memoir. It may not change your mind, but I hope it will at least provide a little insight.

*Trigger warning: this book does contain the occasional coarse word, and references to sexual abuse.

May the light of Christ bring you peace and joy in all things.

Rev. Susan

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Make Waves

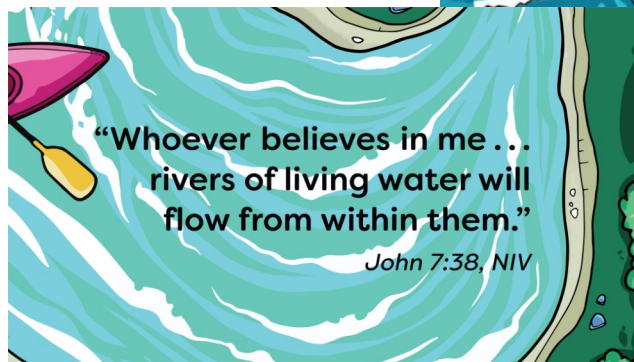
WHAT YOU DO TODAY CAN
CHANGE THE WORLD AROUND YOU

Makes waves and don't miss Vacation Bible School this year!

Everyday **July 18-22, from 9am to 12pm.**

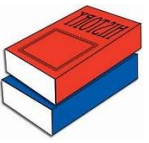
Bring all your friends! We'll be having lots of fun with water, so wear a swim suit and be sure to bring a change of clothes each day.

Please call (478-452-9394) or email (fpchurch@windstream.net) the church office and let us know if you can come. We would love to have all ages from 3 to 18!





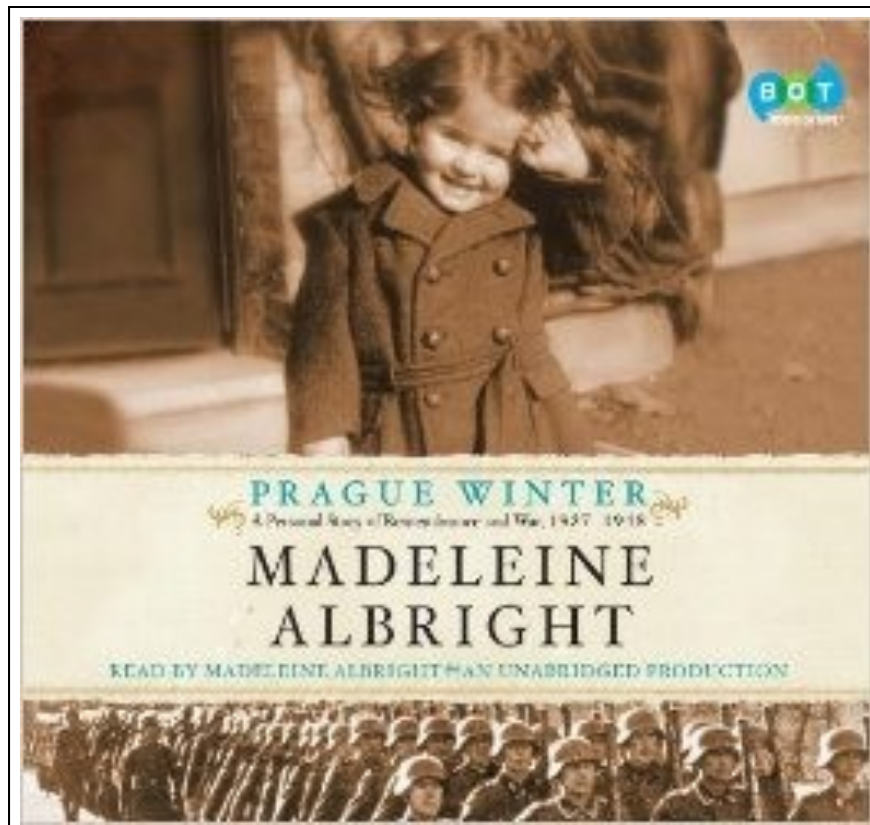
FPC BOOKCLUB



The First Presbyterian Book Club will hold the July meeting on the 14th at 2:00 pm. We will be discussing *Prague Winter: A Personal Story of Remembrance and War, 1937-1948* by Madeleine Albright. Under the Clinton Administration, Albright was selected to be the United States Ambassador to the United Nations. During the vetting process for this position, it was brought to her attention that her family was Jewish. Her family had immigrated to England from Czechoslovakia to escape the Nazi invasion. Her parents hid their Jewish heritage, and Madeleine was unaware of her family history. In the book *Prague Winter* she reflects on her discovery of her family's Jewish roots many decades after the war and on her Czech homeland's tangled history.

The book selection for August is *Hearts Touched by Fire* by David Gergen. *Fascism*, another book by Madeleine Albright, is our book of choice for September. We would love to have you join us for a stimulating discussion and just good fellowship.

Millie Murphy





SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES



Looking for a devotion that puts word into action? Join us the last Sunday of the month to help feed our neighbors and ourselves.

Don't forget- the last Sunday of the month, after worship, we will meet in the Fellowship Hall to make sandwiches for the Milly Free Fridge. We will join in community to prepare the food, break bread together, then take the food to the Milly Free Fridge.

Milly Free Fridge is a local organization that provides prepared food for those in need. People are encouraged to leave what they can and take what they need. It helps feed the homeless community that cannot use the local food pantries, while also helping food-insecure families to supplement their food supply.

Let's work together to sustain those who need what we already have in abundance: love, food, fellowship.

Bring any of the following:

Sliced bread, lunch meat, peanut butter, jelly, fresh fruit,
prepackaged snacks, bottled drinks










We will provide condiments and
labeling materials.

Check out Milly Free Fridge online on

Facebook and Instagram



July

		
<p>3 9:30 Sunday School 11:00 Worship Service on FBLive & WKZR102.3FM</p> <p>Immigration Sunday</p>  <p>PRESBYTERIANS FOR JUST IMMIGRATION</p>	<p>4</p> <p>Office Closed</p> 	<p>5</p> <p>9:30-10:30 Food Pantry 12:00 Kiwanis Luncheon</p> 
<p>10 9:30 Sunday School 11:00 Worship Service on FBLive & WKZR102.3FM</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p> <p>9:30-10:30 Food Pantry 12:00 Kiwanis Luncheon</p> 
<p>17 9:30 Sunday School 11:00 Worship Service on FBLive & WKZR102.3FM</p>	<p>18 VBS 9:00-12:00</p> 	<p>19 VBS 9:00-12:00</p> <p>9:30-10:30 Food Pantry and Samaritan Ministry 12:00 Kiwanis Luncheon</p> 
<p>24 9:30 Sunday School 11:00 Worship Service on FBLive & WKZR102.3FM</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26</p> <p>9:30-10:30 Food Pantry 12:00 Kiwanis Luncheon</p> 
<p>31 9:30 Sunday School 11:00 Worship Service on FBLive & WKZR102.3FM</p> <p>12:00 Milly Free Fridge Service Opportunity</p> 		

2022

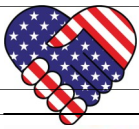


		1	2
6 Wednesday Bible Study 6:30PM 	7	8	9
13 Wednesday Bible Study 6:30PM 	14 FPC Book Club 2:00PM 	15	16
20 VBS 9:00-12:00 Wednesday Bible Study 6:30PM 	21 VBS 9:00-12:00 	22 VBS 9:00-12:00 	23
27 Wednesday Bible Study 6:30PM 	28	29	30

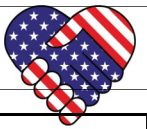
Elders on Session

Class of 2024 ~ Catherine Dean (Congregational Life) Jennifer Flory (Worship) Nancy Miller (Clerk of Session) Laurie Peebles (Personnel) 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.



MISSION AND MINISTRY



Food Pantry

We have served 12 families in the three weeks since I last reported. As usual, there were new names and faces. Thank you to the several generous shoppers

who have reduced the need for purchasing, and to so many others who make the buying possible. You are making a difference in our community! Keep up the good work and the prayer support I know you are providing.

- Donna Gautier

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

We could not help anyone this month. Our application for more funding has now moved on to the national stage, which puts us one step closer to being approved. Please consider giving to the Samaritan Ministry to help us aid those in need in our community. There remains a need for another person to help Bill as he aids those who come to us for assistance. Please consider giving of your time once a month for this ministry.



TREASURER'S CORNER

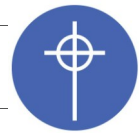
In the midst of this long hot summer we still need your faithful support to continue the mission of First Presbyterian Church. Our finances have suffered greatly this year and we must not have the usual summer meltdown if we hope to pursue all of our programs. Please consider an extra donation to keep the church financially solid.

I hope that everyone continues to show the financial faithfulness that you have so far. We need to help bring God's love to our community now as we have in the past. -Joel Burns

	April	May	2022 YTD
Contributions	\$15,890	\$10,755	\$64,488
Other Income	\$780	\$683	\$4,928
Total Income	\$16,670	\$11,438	\$69,416
Budgeted Expenses	\$252,554	\$17,592	\$95,606
Net (Loss)	(\$4,884)	(\$6,154)	(\$26,190)



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

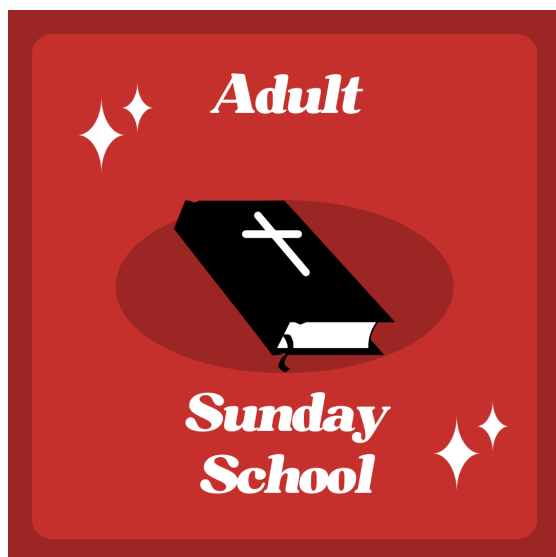


ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Bible Sunday School class continues to meet via ZOOM. You can come to the class from the comfort of your home or if you are already at church, via your smart phone. Every Sunday at 9:30 AM we have a wonderful God filled experience in our conversations and study. We have just begun a study of the Walter Brueggemann book, *Virus as a Summons to Faith: Biblical Reflections in a Time of Loss, Grief, and Uncertainty*. This very thoughtful analysis of the scriptures as they relate to the pandemic is incredibly timely and necessary.

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 *The Martyr Song* by Ted Dekker. 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



The Wednesday night study group meets for a pot luck suppers and the continued discussion of the N. T. Wright book *Broken Signposts*. This book has been

fascinating and we are taking our time to savor it. We hope a number of folks will join us in this study. 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.

Drawing on the wisdom of the Gospel of John, Wright explains why these signposts are fractured and damaged and how Christianity provides the vision, guidance, and hope for making them whole once again, ultimately healing ourselves and our world.

-Joel Burns

Matthew 25 and Systemic Poverty

Throughout the last few weeks, we have been looking at the call, as a Matthew 25 church, to help eradicate systemic poverty. In case you missed the bulletin inserts, here are the discussions about what systemic poverty is and how it affects those in the US . Poverty is a complex issue with many variables on every side. This is by no means a comprehensive look at the problem, but an overview drawn from materials supplied by the PC(USA).

What is “systemic” poverty?

Systemic poverty refers to the economic exploitation of people who are poor through laws, policies, practices and systems that perpetuate their impoverished status. We live in a world where not all have equal access to education, transportation, fresh food, financial resources, clean air, water or healthy environments, employment with a living wage, healthcare, benefits, citizenship, and affordable housing. This lack of access creates generational cycles of poverty and a racial wealth gap that are systemic in nature. An individual cannot change their economic and social location easily by just “working harder.” Meanwhile the many, interlocking disadvantages often are compounded by choices to stay near family or a particular location or employment opportunity, or by gender and racial injustice, trauma, violence, immigration status, impacts from climate change and environmental degradation, and other complicating issues.

Why are people poor?

Individuals are economically poor for diverse, complicated, and unique reasons that stem from living in a world in which economic policies and practices trap some people in persistent poverty while enabling others to accumulate wealth. Wealth or profit often accrues on one side of the equation, often precisely because on the other side of the equation laborers are not paid fair wages, given health or safety protections, employed full-time or long-term, offered benefits, or given voice, power or influence.

Why can’t people work themselves out of poverty?

In the United States, social safety nets and government programs to provide food, housing assistance, healthcare, and employment often fail to meet basic needs and do not provide adequate or equitable access to these resources. Poverty is also often compounded by where a person is born and lives– certain geographic regions, communities and neighborhoods cannot easily access resources that could improve their situations. Around the world, international trade deals, government corruption, armed conflict, and climate change exacerbate conditions of poverty. While there is no simple or easy solution, we do know that communities can become safer, happier, and have an increased sense of well-being when they have vision, leadership, and find allies in their quest self-empowered sustainable development.

(From: presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/poverty/)

What does our faith demand?

We believe God calls us to work to end poverty and to create communities of well-being. We believe that God created the world and called it good; that the earth belongs to God; that God tasked the first humans with serving and preserving God's creation; and that the prophets called again and again for God's people to seek well-being and justice for all people.

We believe Jesus Christ models how we are to live in community and to confront systems of injustice, including poverty. Jesus Christ taught us to care for the vulnerable, to be a good neighbor, and to provide food to the hungry. Christ came to proclaim good news to the poor. Jesus Christ came not to condemn the world, but to save it.

We believe the Holy Spirit inspires, motivates and guides all faithful work to eradicate poverty and build communities of well-being. The early Christians supported sharing things in common for the good of all. Throughout the centuries, Christian hospitality has included providing food and shelter. In the Lord's Prayer, we pray for God's kingdom to come "on earth" as it is in heaven, and we believe the Spirit works in the world to make this so.

We declare that poverty is not a personal problem but a corporate sin and that "a church that is indifferent to poverty, or evades responsibility in economic affairs, or is open to one social class only.... offers no acceptable worship to God ... Enslaving poverty in a world of abundance is an intolerable violation of God's good creation." (PC(USA) Confessions of 1967)

We declare that "We Presbyterians evaluate any economic system not simply on the basis of the material goods and services it provides, but especially on the basis of its human consequences: what it is doing to, with and for people, particularly the most vulnerable among us. In our tradition, economic behavior, like all behavior, must be subject to moral scrutiny. For this reason, the church must speak to the present economic crisis, to the devastation it has brought, and to the hope to which we bear witness: that, in Christ, a more just order is arising." ("Living Through Economic Crisis," 219th General Assembly (2010))

We repent that Christians have misunderstood or been misled by biblical passages taken out of context or by theological interpretations that distort the gospel's original intention. We repent that the church has used scripture to uphold systems that perpetuate oppression and poverty. We do not believe that "the poor will always be with us" indicates poverty is inevitable or God's will. We do not believe that "blessed are the poor in spirit" indicates it is a blessing to lack economic sufficiency or basic human rights. We do not believe in a prosperity gospel in which God blesses faithful people with economic riches and condemns unfaithful people to poverty.

We advocate for global economic justice through a range of strategies and approaches including racial, gender and environmental justice, care for refugees and immigrants, guaranteed minimum wages and full employment, support for programs that meet the needs of women and children, and welfare reform that neither requires "workfare" nor punishes the poor. In our advocacy, we ensure that the voices of impoverished people enable us to discern and address the root causes of poverty. (From: presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/poverty/)



PRAYER REQUESTS

Church Family:

Beth Baarda, rehabilitating at a family home
Nan Carpenter, recovering from fall at home
Jenny Moore, recovering at home

Limited Mobility

Martha Chappell
Helen Danuser

Extended Family:

Richard Applebury, Wesley Applebury's father, stage 4 cancer, in hospice
Michael Bledsoe, Mary Lucik's grandson, multiple health concerns
Brittany Caruthers, Sunda Coleman's niece, chemo treatment
Susan Eilers, Mary Lucik's friend, cancer surgery
Dee Hartmann, Sandra Balfour's sister-in-law, health issues
Alonzo Kelley, Craig Callender's father, Stage 4 Melanoma
Elizabeth Knobel, Carolyn Morgan's daughter, cancer stable
Julie MonteJulyor, Becky Henderson's mother, ongoing health concerns
Chris Pearson, Sunda Coleman's son, recovering at home; dialysis
Runette Pounds, Sunda Coleman's mother, ongoing health concerns
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



In Assisted Living:

Bryan Dempster, Green Acres, 313 Allen Memorial Drive, Milledgeville 31061
Nancy Holbrook, The Dublin Place, 504 Fire Tower Rd, Dublin GA 31021
Eloise Lamb, Fellowship Home at Meriwether, 10 Meriwether Place Milledgeville 31061
Gloria Smith, Fellowship Home at Meriwether, 10 Meriwether Place, Ste 1110
Suzy Smith, Savannah Court, 1061 Willow Run Rd, Unit 4, Greensboro GA 30642

Anniversaries

July 2~ Reverend Susan Balfour & Greg Thigpen
July 2~ David & Elizabeth Wells
July 22~ John & Cissy Lane



Birthdays

July 10~ Jack Bivins
July 15~ Teri Anne Bradley
July 15~ Jude Hirsch
July 23~ Susan Balfour
July 24~ Bill Werts
July 25~ Joel Burns
July 28~ Romanus Elangwe

