

Church Currents



FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH
210 S. Wayne St
Milledgeville, GA 31061



A Note from the Pastor

Dear Church Family,

Over the past four weeks, I have been away in Houston walking through a season of grief, memory, and family connection following the death of my father. Stepping away from the regular rhythms of ministry to simply be a daughter and a sister has been a tender, exhausting, and deeply meaningful time.

Grief is rarely a single, clean emotion; it is an entire landscape. There is the ache of absence, of course, but there are also unexpected moments of joy and grace. Being together allowed me to reconnect with my brother and his daughters, sharing laughter and stories around the table. It gave me precious, gentle time with my mother in her memory care community, navigating the quiet complexities of Alzheimer's and holding onto love that transcends memory.

Gathering to remember Dad also offered a beautiful window into the sheer breadth of a life well-lived. Hearing reflections from colleagues, friends, and neighbors from different eras of his life reminded me how deeply our lives are woven into the lives of others—often in ways we never fully realize while living them.

(Cont. on next page)

Alongside the emotional journey of loss comes the unavoidable reality of "the stuff"—the paperwork, the phone calls, and the countless decisions that follow a death. Amidst all of that, what a profound gift of grace it was that we knew what Dad wanted. Having those plans in place did not erase the sadness, but it freed us from the burden of guessing during a time of shock. It allowed us to simply be present to our grief and to one another.

As your pastor, I often encourage people to have those difficult conversations before they are necessary, and living through it these past weeks only deepened that conviction. Talking about end-of-life wishes, advance directives, and funeral plans is not morbid; it is an act of deep pastoral care and love for the people we leave behind. If you have ever thought about writing down your wishes or want a space to talk through what a service of witness to the resurrection looks like, my door is always open.

Above all, I carry profound gratitude for this congregation. Thank you for the extraordinary grace you extended in giving me the time and space to step away and be with my family. I am deeply grateful to everyone who stepped up to care for the church and keep our ministries moving seamlessly in my absence—with special thanks to Laura Baarda for stepping into the pulpit to preach and lead worship.

Thank you for your prayers, cards, and steadfast support during this time. I am so looking forward to being back with you soon as we enter this new season together, grounded in the God whose love holds us in life, in death, and in life beyond death.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Mari



Congregational Meeting

Session has called a Congregational Meeting after worship in the Sanctuary for **Sunday, September 13** to approve changes to the By-Laws to reflect that the Treasurer for the Corporation and the Treasurer for the Church should be the same person; and to approve the following list of officer candidates for the Class of 2030: Carrie Cook, Holley Cowan, and Laurie Peebles, and Youth Elders (Class of 2028): Teri Anne Bradley and Nathan Tchamna.

Thank you to the candidates for their willingness to serve and to the Nominating Committee for their time and effort.

Committee members:

Susan McGill (Chair)

Pat Henry

Glory Nwankonta

Anne Smart

Bill Werts



Thank you to everyone who made our anniversary celebration for Dr. Jennifer Flory a success! We had a beautiful reception in her honor.



Missions & Ministry

FPC Food Pantry

Food Pantry was as busy as ever in August with all prepared bags collected within the first 15 minutes each Tuesday. As usual on the day Samaritan Ministry is held, we had several new people (12 this month) and ran out quickly. We served a total of 51 households. Thank you for providing for our neighbors so generously!

We continue to collect calendars and other "freebies" as you provide them. The calendars do not go out until November, but the notecards, greeting cards, etc. are out each week and are regularly picked up. Thanks for sharing.

Please keep your in-kind and financial contributions coming; they are so vital to so many, as is your prayer support.

-Donna Gautier



Food pantry items:

- Canned soups
- Canned pasta
- Canned ham, tuna, salmon, and chicken
- Boxed mac & cheese
- Grits, oatmeal, and/or cereal
- Peanut butter & jelly
- Canned fruits and vegetables



Did you know? Our food pantry also includes pet food! Thank you for keeping local pets fed.

Missions & Ministry



Samaritan Ministry

Designated funding was up this month, allowing us to help 18 families with utility bills. Power and water bill increases present a burden to many in our community.

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, September 15 at 9:00 AM.**

“Thank you for helping us with our bills. I hope your families stay safe!

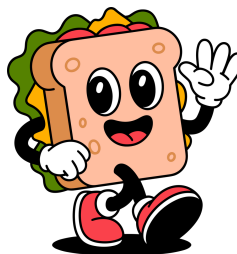
-Gloria Jones, August Samaritan Ministry recipient”

Snack & Hygiene Pack Ministry

Donations of the following are greatly appreciated:

- Disposable utensil sets
- Bottled or boxed water

Use the QR below to browse our Amazon wishlist. These donations come directly to the church and can be anonymous.



Sandwich Squad

Join this ministry by staying after service on the last Sunday of the month. All are welcome!



Sunday School Kick-Off!

All are invited to join us on Sunday, September 13th at 9:45 AM in Fellowship Hall as we launch a brand-new year of learning, fellowship, and discipleship!

As Presbyterians, we value lifelong learning. Engaging our minds and spirits deepens our faith, helps us discern God's call in our lives, and equips us to serve our community with compassion and wisdom. Whether you are continuing a long-standing routine or trying something entirely new, there is a place for you to grow.

Our Sunday Morning Rhythm

- **9:45 AM:** Brief gathering in Fellowship Hall for morning prayer, community announcements, and sending to classes.
- **9:55 – 10:40 AM:** Sunday School class time.
- **10:40 – 11:00 AM:** Light refreshments and fellowship time in Fellowship Hall.
- **11:00 AM:** Worship in the Sanctuary.

Class Offerings for Children & Youth

- Children's Sunday School

- **Location:** Upstairs Craft Room
- **Teachers:** Anne Smart & Gloria Burns
- A fun, creative space where our youngest disciples encounter scripture through engaging stories, crafts, and foundational faith lessons.



- Youth Sunday School

- **Location:** Youth Room
- **Leader:** Rev. Mari
- Using the PC(USA) *Faith Questions* curriculum, our youth dive into the real, pressing questions of faith, doubt, and identity, exploring honest answers together in a supportive community.



ADULT

Sunday School

Adult Class Offerings



- Bible Study Class
 - **Location:** Betty Newton Campbell Parlor
 - **Leader:** Joel Burns
 - For those seeking a deep, rich exploration of scripture. The class is currently walking through an in-depth study of the prophetic wisdom in the Book of Jeremiah.
- The Fellowship Class (*Note the new location!*)
 - **Location:** Church Library
 - **Leader:** Bill Werts
 - Focused on practical discipleship, this group reads and discusses contemporary Christian works that offer insight, encouragement, and challenge for daily faithful living.
- The Engage Class (*New Offering!*)
 - **Location:** Upstairs Classroom (to the right of the stairs near Fellowship Hall)
 - **Leaders:** John Bradley, Carrie Cook, & Melba Burrell
 - Using the PC(USA) Engage curriculum, this interactive group journeys through prayer, spiritual practices, and open faith-sharing—discovering practical ways to live out our faith boldly and connect the church with our wider community.



Christian Education



Bible Sunday School

The Bible Sunday School class is in the midst of an intensive study of the Book of Jeremiah.

One of the longest books in the Bible, Jeremiah is critical to understanding the Judaism of Jesus' era. Before the exile in 587 B.C.E., the time when the book of Jeremiah was set, one theology was predominant and after that date, a totally different theology prevailed.

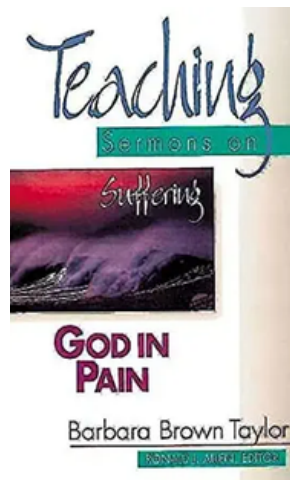
After a break in July we are resuming the first Sunday in August.

Our class meets in person (in the church parlor) every Sunday at 9:45 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 Class

We are studying *Teaching Sermons on Suffering: God in Pain* by Barbara Brown Taylor. This group meets in person every Sunday morning at 9:45. We would love to have you join us.

~Bill Werts

Wednesday Night Potluck & Study

The Wednesday night group meets in person for a great pot luck supper and lively discussion every week. We just finished a study of *Poverty in the Promised Land* by Walter Brueggemann and will soon begin a different challenging subject.

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.

Youth Group Happenings this September

Our youth group continues to meet on Sunday afternoons following worship! We begin with lunch together at noon, followed by an hour of games, meaningful conversation, and faith-building activities.

A huge and heartfelt thank you to Laurie Peebles and Jennifer Flory for their incredible leadership, dedication, and care in keeping our youth group going strong and thriving during Rev. Mari's absence!

Here is what our youth have coming up this month:

- **Sunday, September 6:** No Youth Group - (Labor Day Weekend – enjoy the holiday with family and friends!)
- **Sunday, September 13:** Finding Our Balance

We'll kick off our September gatherings with high-energy Minute-to-Win-It games, check in on how the school year is going, and practice practical ways to find true rest and balance when schedules get hectic.

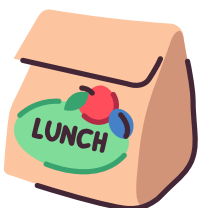
- **Sunday, September 20:** Faith & Real-World Decisions

Through interactive challenges and real-life scenarios, we'll explore how to navigate peer pressure, culture, and tough choices with everyday integrity and courage.

- **Sunday, September 27:** Kin-dom in Action

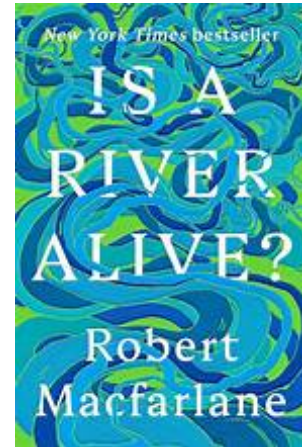
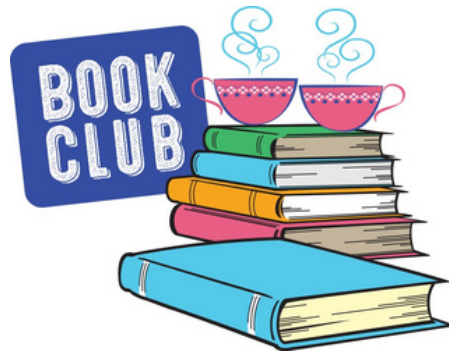
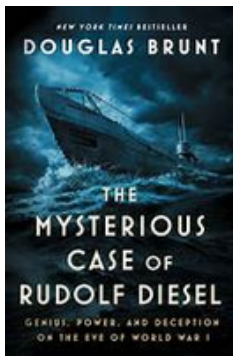
Putting our faith into practice! We will spend our time creating handmade no-sew fleece blankets and personalized encouragement cards for local homebound members.

Sharing a meal together is a central part of our youth fellowship each week. If you would like to support our youth ministry by providing lunch for an upcoming Sunday, please sign up using the link below:



Sign up to provide a meal:
<https://bit.ly/FeedYouth>

First Presbyterian Book Club



Thursday, September 10 @ 2:00 PM in the Parlor

The book we will be discussing for the month of September is *The Mysterious Case of Rudolf Diesel: Genius, Power, and Deception on the Eve of World War I* by Douglas Brunt. This *New York Times* best selling detective story reveals the hidden history of Rudolf Diesel, one of the world's greatest inventors, and his mysterious disappearance from a steamship halfway between Belgium and England on the eve of World War I. Diesel built the first internal combustion engine, which put him in the crosshairs of two of the most powerful men on earth, Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany who wanted complete control of the engine to power his submarines and John D. Rockefeller, owner of Standard Oil who felt wide use of the engine would threaten his monopoly on the petroleum industry. This conflict made foul play a serious consideration when Diesel disappeared. In this biography/true crime story, the author has attempted to prove another theory about Diesel's disappearance that is a shocking conclusion to this age old mystery.

The book selection for October is *Is a River Alive?* by Robert Macfarlane. This award winning, *New York Times* best seller is a joyful, mind-expanding exploration of three rivers in different parts of the globe. Macfarlane takes readers on an unforgettable journey to the miraculous cloud-forests and the mountain streams of Ecuador, to the wounded creeks and lagoons of India, and to the spectacular wild rivers of Canada, each one imperiled respectively by mining, pollution, and dams. Macfarlane explores the concept of rivers as living beings, examining their ecological significance and legal rights.

Please join us as we learn more about the mysterious disappearance of Rudolf Diesel and the possibility that he did not drown in the North Sea despite the overwhelming evidence to support the fact that he did.

-Millie Murphy

PW Fall Workshops

A roaring success!



I want to extend a sincere thank you to our PW for the help at our NE GA Presbyterian Women's fall workshop, which was a success with 37 PW members from across our Presbytery in attendance. I especially want to thank Susan McGill and Jessica McQuain for their technical assistance and help with room arrangements, as their support was essential in keeping everything running smoothly. I also want to express deep appreciation to Becky Humphrey, Melba Burrell, Margaret Foster, Ruby Werts, and Millie Murphy for the delicious food that was a big hit with all in attendance. In addition, I am grateful to Marion Robinson and Becky for the flower arrangements that added such a warm touch to the luncheon tables.

Our three presenters were well-informed and shared relevant information, and we were truly blessed to have them with us. Thanks to Elaine Wiegert for the Bible study overview, Kate Gallop from Tharros Place for the presentation on the work they do with young girls that have been trafficked, and Anne Hallum for the information about Air Guatemala. Anne founded Air Guatemala over 30 years ago and has made many trips into Guatemala and Nicaragua where they run a hunger and environmental ministry serving rural families.

Thank you again for helping make this gathering meaningful and well organized, with appreciation for your continued support of future PW events.

Nancy Miller
NEGA Presbyterian Women Moderator



Presbyterian Women @ FPC

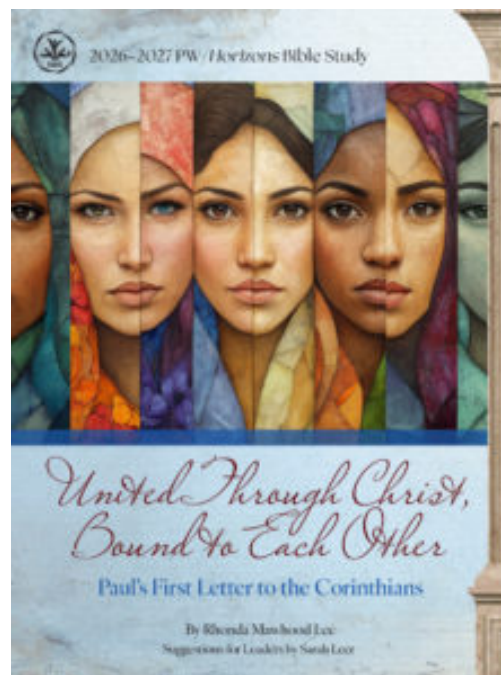
Hello, all ladies of our church! Presbyterian Women will kick off the fall meeting with a gathering. There is a group that meets on the second Sunday at 5:00 p.m. and our other group meets the second Tuesday at 11:00 a.m. **For September, there will only be one meeting on Tuesday, September 9 at 11:00 AM in the church parlor.** As we consider what schedule works best for us, we want to consider all who'd like to join. Please reach out ASAP.

Our study book is from the *Horizon* magazine and we will be working through 1st Corinthians. If you decide to check us out and would like a study guide, they come in regular print (\$14) and large print (\$20). Please either call the church office and tell Jessica that you want to be included or email me at [**nancymiller76@hotmail.com**](mailto:nancymiller76@hotmail.com). Books can be paid for using cash, check, or online via Vanco or Paypal. You can also download the e-book on your device if you'd rather.

We meet in the Parlor which is comfy and conducive to lively conversation. Please consider joining us!

Blessings,

Nancy Miller





Session Notes

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,
SUSAN MCGILL
CLERK OF SESSION

A motion was approved to purchase the Lexmark CT951TSE printer/copier for \$6,963.46, with monthly service payments of \$92.

A motion was approved to accept Apex Roofing's proposal to provide and install new roofs over the fellowship hall and the office/Christian education building at a cost of \$33,900.

A motion was approved to increase the number of signatories for the checking account, money market account, and certificates of deposit from four to six by adding Andrew Allen (CEO) and Holley Cowan (Finance Committee) to the current signatories: Susan McGill, Laurie Peebles, John Bradley, and Joel Burns.

A motion was approved to remove Dave Baarda as an authorized trader on the investment accounts—New Covenant Mutual Funds, including the Minter Fund, Drew Cotton Fund, Baum Trust Fund, and Manse Vanguard Fund—and to add John Bradley and Holley Cowan alongside Joel Burns.

A motion was approved to proceed with Apex Roofing's Phase 3 proposal to replace the roofs over the choir loft and the stairwell leading to the playground, and to install new downspouts to redirect roof runoff away from the Sanctuary window beside the piano, at a cost of \$25,800.

A motion was approved to allow the Milledgeville Singers Guild to use the Sanctuary for rehearsal on December 5, 2026, at a time to be determined, and for its Christmas Concert at 7 p.m. on December 7, 2026.

A motion was approved to retroactively accept Laura Baarda as pastor supply for August 9, 16, and 23, 2026, and Dale Chapin for August 30, 2026.

A motion was approved to call a Congregational Meeting immediately after worship on Sunday, September 13, 2026, to present the slate of candidates and the previously approved By-Laws changes concerning the corporation Treasurer.

Committee Highlights

Care and Fellowship Team



The Team has been busy!!

Refreshments were served during visitation before the funeral service for Hagen Thompson on August 8th.

In collaboration with the Worship Committee and the Choir, the Team celebrated Jennifer Flory's 20th anniversary as our Music Director with a surprise reception on August 9th. Dana Gorzelany-Mostak provided lovely table decorations plus balloons. Choir members brought food and the Team handled the set-up and clean-up plus supplied the cake and drinks. Several of Jennifer's family members, friends, and colleagues joined us for the celebration. Jennifer, thank you for sharing your gifts with First Presbyterian Milledgeville!!!

The Team hosted morning refreshments and lunch for the Presbytery-wide PW Fall Workshop on August 29th. Forty-five women were registered to attend. Nancy Miller is moderator of the group.

Members of the Team stayed in touch with Mari Turner, our pastor, as she traveled to Texas due to the illness and death of her father, Bob Bishop. Gift certificates were sent for the family to share a meal at a favorite restaurant after the funeral service. Mari and the family continue to be in our thoughts and prayers.

-Becky Humphrey



Committee Highlights



Worship Committee



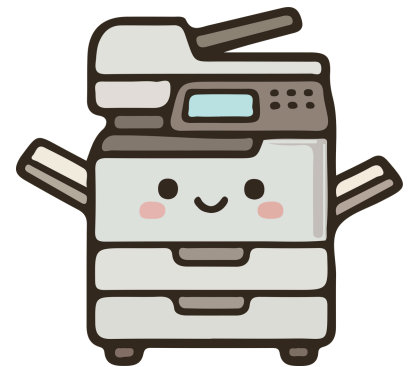
New worship service volunteer assignments are now available through the rest of 2026! Please check [here](#) or scan above for more information!

Property Committee

Phase 2 of the roof completed the install of the roof over the fellowship hall, office, and CE building. Phase 3 will replace the roof over the choir loft and create a new water diversion system. The office will advise any closures needed for this third phase.

Work on the boiler system continues.

The new copier/printer will be delivered and set up this month. Please bear with us as we figure out this new device!



Stewardship Committee



The Stewardship Committee will meet during the month of September to begin plans for the Stewardship season. The current members of the committee are Joel Burns, Holley Cowan and John Bradley.

Photo Gallery



**GC Gives Day
8/15/26**

Students helped weed the gardens, sanitize the nursery, organize the Sunday School classroom, and pack snack packs. Go Bobcats!

Church Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday

9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

By appointment-

Call (478) 452-9394

Call or Text (478) 443-5203

2026**Thursday****Friday****Saturday**

3 7:30 Never Alone	4	5 7:30 Never Alone
10 2:00 FPC Book Club 7:30 Never Alone	11	12 7:30 Never Alone
17 7:30 Never Alone	18	19 6:30 PFLAG Movie Night Fried Green Tomatoes 7:30 Never Alone
24 7:30 Never Alone	25	26 7:30 Never Alone



Jakob Freeman - 9/9
 John Bradley - 9/14
 Ellen Thompson - 9/14
 Iain Flory - 9/19
 Erin Smith - 9/19
 Glory Nwankwonta - 9/23
 Roy & Kate Phillips - 9/1

Prayer Requests

CHURCH FAMILY:

Harry Beck, at home recovering from surgery
Debbie Lamsma, dealing with Parkinson's
Bob Smart, Anne Smart's husband, ongoing health concerns
Louise Sallstrom, ongoing health concerns
Ellen Thompson, waiting on two hip replacements

EXTENDED FAMILY:

Jay Bastow, dealing with child cancer round 2, and parents Catherine & Jason
Bastow, family friends of Pat & Sherry Henry
Don Lucik, Mary Lucik's son, in the hospital
Oscar Jude Hall, Gini Wilkerson's nephew, born prematurely
Ron Bracewell, Joy Bracewell's father, dealing with a cancer diagnosis
Darryl Allen, Andrew Allen's father, ongoing health concerns
Nannette Green Allen, childhood friend of Margaret Foster with serious health issues
Kathie Bishop, Mari Turner's mother, in memory care
Elizabeth Knobel, Carolyn Morgan's daughter, ongoing health concerns
Charles Morgan, Jennifer Flory's father, ongoing health concerns
Joanne Murphy, Kathy Carroll's mother, health issues—at Carlyle House in Macon
John J. Murphy, Kathy Carroll's father, recovering from kidney operation
Renee Pearson, Sunda Coleman's daughter-in-law, at home with 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 Woodward, Ruby Werts' brother, diagnosed with Parkinson's

IN ASSISTED LIVING:

Jude Hirsch, Fellowship Home at Meriwether, 10 Meriwether Place
Laura King, The Cottages of Milledgeville, 1010 Fernwood Drive
Maryanne Morris, Fellowship Home at Meriwether, 10 Meriwether Place
Runette Pounds, Fellowship Home at Meriwether, 10 Meriwether Place
Louise Sallstrom, The Cottages of Milledgeville, 1010 Fernwood Drive
Suzy Smith, The Oaks Peake, 400 Foster Rd., A2, Macon, GA 31210



Treasurer's Corner

	<u>June</u>	<u>July</u>
<u>OPERATING BUDGET</u>		
Contributions	\$15,631	\$16,507
Other Income	\$225	\$1,356
Total Operating Income	\$15,856	\$17,863
Total Operating Expenses	<u>\$32,815</u>	<u>\$23,710</u>
Net Operating	\$(16,960)	\$(5,847)
<u>DESIGNATED FUNDS</u>		
Contributions	\$3,233	\$7,982
Expenses	<u>\$7,227</u>	<u>\$4,573</u>
Net Designated	\$(3,994)	\$3,409

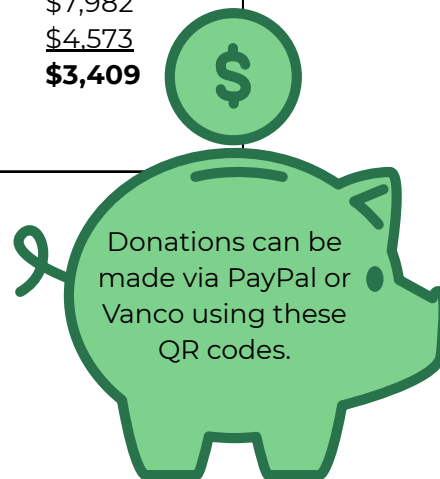
Summer has been a tough time for our church finances.

We are very fortunate this year to have a cushion from your monetary faithfulness, but we will need continued support to avoid depleting our reserves.

Please remember that your support of the general fund, the Samaritan's Ministry and the Food Pantry is the only way these ministries are possible. All of our work follows the example of Jesus.

Joel D. Burns
For the Finance Committee

Thank you for reading!



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH MILLEDGEVILLE	478-452-9394 478-443-5203 (CELL)
www.fpcmilledgeville.org milledgevillepcusa@gmail.com	210 S WAYNE ST MILLEDGEVILLE, GA 31061

Sunday School Kickoff

September 13, 9:45 AM



"No, the River Jordan was not named after Michael."



"We have child-size wooden chairs, child-size folding chairs and child-size stacking chairs, but not one child who will sit down."