

THE CALL

First Presbyterian Church | Gainesville, Georgia | July 18, 2021

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Dear Kindred in Christ,

What is “normal” anyway? I think one of the bigger mistakes we’ve run the risk of making as a society has been to see the coronavirus pandemic as a ‘blip’, a momentary disruption that changes our routines for a while but eventually subsides and lets us get back to life as we knew it. I think that’s the assumption behind the desire to get back to “normal”. Don’t get me wrong, over the past year, I have longed and hoped and prayed for a return to normal just as hard as anyone. But as we’ve come closer and closer to actually arriving on the other side of the pandemic, there’s a stubborn question: *What if there’s no going back?*

There’s ample evidence that *life as we knew it* is gone. The pandemic has shaped us and changed us, and at least some of those changes are not ‘blips’; they are here to stay. This isn’t to say that a lot of what we considered “normal” has returned, or will return: full stadiums at sporting events, unmasked trips to the grocery store, singing in worship, and festive family gatherings. What a joy it has been for so much of what we love to come back! At the same time, some things around us have shifted, and our routines now include hybrid work schedules, standby facemasks in the glove box, contact tracing protocols, and virtual gatherings (just to name a few). Maybe what’s “normal” now doesn’t look like “normal” from two years ago.

But you know... I think that’s okay. Rather than see some of the changes around us as unwelcome, we might see them as the results of learning. Hopefully, we’ve learned things as a result of living through a pandemic together, things like how to better prevent illness, and how to be happier in our productivity, and how to better connect with people when we can’t meet face-to-face. I think it’s the last one of these that’s the hardest to see as a positive change. Especially at church, making room for *virtual* participation, and worship, and fellowship just doesn’t feel right because we want to love people like Jesus did – up close and personal. Plus, we just want things to feel *normal* again.

If anything, though, the pandemic has taught us that people experience God in many, many different ways. That’s what we’re talking about when we talk about church – *how people experience God*. So much of experiencing God really *does* happen face-to-face, up close and personal. It happens in the smiles, the handshakes, the hugs, the encouragement, the *love* resident within the in-person family of faith. And trust me, that’s still here! It’s still happening! At the same time, however, it’s more than possible to experience God from a distance, or in a quiet, contemplative space, or through a computer screen. I dare say that this is something we’ve learned together during this season of pandemic.

With this in mind, I’d like to offer an invitation. If you’ve not yet returned to in-person church gatherings, I hope that you’ll consider doing so very soon. There’s a lot of love that happens in face-to-face worship, fellowship, and service. It’s one of the primary ways that we experience God! But if you’re not yet ready to return or *can’t* participate in in-person gatherings, we understand. We’ve all learned together that there are many ways to experience God, and some of these might not look like the “normal” to which we’ve longed to return. Virtual gathering is not “less than” in-person gathering.

Finally, I want to recall an Old Testament reading that we heard just a few weeks ago in worship. It comes from Psalm 46, and it reads: *God is our refuge and strength, a very*

JULY 18

8th Sunday after Pentecost

Rev. Lee Koontz

Jeremiah 23:1-6

Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

“On the Fringes”

8:45 Morning Light

Swetenburg Hall

Morning Light Worship Team

11:00 Traditional Worship

Sanctuary

Chancel Choir

JULY 25

9th Sunday after Pentecost

Rev. Lee Koontz

8:45 Morning Light

Swetenburg Hall

Morning Light Worship Team

11:00 Traditional Worship

Sanctuary

Chancel Choir

LECTIONARY

July 18

2 Samuel 7:1-14a; Psalm 89:20-37

Ephesians 2:11-22;

Mark 6:30-34, 53-56

July 25

2 Samuel 11:1-15; Psalm 14

Ephesians 3:14-21; John 6:1-21

Pastor’s Desk continued on page 2...

Are you looking for a way to serve?

We are in need of a Head Usher! If you would like to learn more, please contact Alene Arenas, Worship Committee Chairperson, alenearenas@gmail.com or 678-478-5984.

New Sunday Bus Schedule

9:15 Lanier Village Estates East
9:20 Lanier Village Estates West
9:25 The Phoenix at Lake Lanier
9:45 Smoky Springs

DONATIONS RECEIVED

In Memory of...

Mildred Simons

by Sylvia Arant

Polly Hartford

by Gina Miller

Sister Wright

by Fletcher and Gina Miller

Annette Marsh

by Wiley and Judy Black

Dave Markey

by Anonymous

by Barbara Hermann

Sympathy on the passing of...

... **Lucille Diener** (Matt McGowan's sister), June 27

... **Dave Markey** (Faye Markey's husband), July 2

... **Peggie Coleman**, July 5

... **Gennie Cook** (Darlene Parrish's mother), July 5

... Anne Carraway's first cousin, July 7

... **John Plant** (Donnice McAlister's brother-in-law), July 10

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

I am the light of the world, whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life. Oh great and mighty God, may we share our faith in love. You sent your Son to be the light of the world, to redeem us and give us grace. We pray that you will refresh us with new thoughts and new understanding. Help us to have the courage to meet these challenges and to grow in the faith. We know the best way to live closer to you is daily reading of scripture, prayer, and worship with a community of faith. May we always be ready to answer your call. Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord. In Christ's name. Amen. Ruth Staley

...Pastor's Desk continued

present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea; though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

What is "normal"? I'm not really sure. But in the midst of changes from *life as we knew it to life as we know it*, I do know that some things remain constant: God is always with us. God is our ever-present help. And ultimately, there is nothing of which to be afraid.

Grace and Peace,
Lee

Have you seen the local missions page of the church's website: <http://fpcga.org/welcome/serve-local?>

The Community Outreach and Local Missions Emphasis Committees have provided current information for all the agencies that FPC supports, whether via members' volunteer contributions or FPC's financial contributions. Susan Daniel and Susan Nish have added this updated information to FPC's website.

If you want to find a way to use the gifts that God has given you, check out the website.



To be distributed in July thru
Casa and Park Hill Apartments

Bookbags & School Supplies

Donate to help us purchase
100 bookbags at a discount

Make check payable to FPC
designated "school supplies"



YOUNG ADULTS

Saturday, July 24 Gathering at the Peppers'
Please join us at the Peppers home (North Hall area) on July 24th at 5pm for a time of good food, great fellowship, and even more fun. All you might need to bring is a chair. Please let Shon know if you can make it so that we can plan accordingly. speppers@fpcga.org.

Sunday School for College Students and Young Adults is meeting each week 10 am, led by Dallas Thompson.

YOUTH END OF SUMMER
POOL PARTY
5-7pm, Sunday, July 25
Jason and Robyn Shoaf's Home

• • •

FOOD AND DRINKS WILL BE PROVIDED.

Bring towel and bathing suit.

OUR YOUTH WILL KICK OFF
Sunday Night Fellowship

August 8, 5-7pm.
Food and color wars and games!

YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL continues each Sunday in Youth Room at 10. Volunteers are needed to be present. Email Maggie if you can volunteer, mparker@fpcga.org.

COMMUNITY SERVICE FAMILY PROMISE

With the delay of the new Family Promise facility being opened, we have been asked to host the families the weeks of September 1, October 10, and December 26. That will include overnight hosting and meals being provided. We need to ensure that we are able to meet the need before agreeing to host so if those are things you could assist with, please contact Pastor Peppers at speppers@fpcga.org or 678-936-5357 to sign up or with questions. The overnight hosts generally serve from 7 pm to 7:30 am, and meals are provided each evening at 6 pm. If this is something you are able to do, please let us know.

FIRST AND THIRD MONDAYS EACH MONTH

Ladies Bible Study

BEGINNING MONDAY, AUGUST 23 AT NOON IN THE PARLOR



If you have questions, text or call Susan Nish, 770-538-5995.

Studying Galatians
"Living in Freedom and Love"
by Scott McKnight, Karen Lee-Thorpe

First Friday each month
(beginning August 6)
7 pm in Swetenburg Hall

ADULT GAME NIGHT

Bring a snack to share.

INVITE A FRIEND!



Monday, August 23 thru Thursday, August 26
Cost \$440

3 nights lodging, 4 days of golf
Sign up at church office or email strother1126@gmail.com.

ALL AGES AND GOLF ABILITIES

ANNUAL GOLF TRIP TO TENNESSEE



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
800 SOUTH ENOTA DRIVE, NE
GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA 30501

www.fpcga.org

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

PERIODICAL POSTAGE PAID AT
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—CHURCH CALENDAR—

—Week 1—

SUNDAY, JULY 18

8:45am Morning Light Worship, SH

10:00am Sunday School

11:00am Traditional Worship

MONDAY, JULY 19

10:00am Prayer Group, Prayer Room

10:30am VBS, Roper Park

12:00pm Gentle Yoga, Gym

TUESDAY, JULY 20

10:30am VBS, Roper Park

1:30pm Endow Grants Cmte, CR*

4:30pm Finance Cmte, CR*

5:30pm Ladies AA, Lakehouse

5:30pm Matthew 25, CR*

WEDNESDAY, JULY 21

10:30am VBS, Roper Park

7:00pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal

THURSDAY, JULY 22

10:30am VBS, Roper Park

7:00am *Be the Bridge* Study, Lakehouse

9:30am Yoga, Gym

FRIDAY, JULY 23

10:30am VBS, Roper Park

—Week 2—

SUNDAY, JULY 25

8:45am Morning Light Worship, SH

10:00am Sunday School

11:00am Traditional Worship

MONDAY, JULY 26

10:00am Prayer Group, Prayer Room

12:00pm Gentle Yoga, Gym

TUESDAY, JULY 27

10:00am Terrific Tuesday

5:30pm Ladies AA, Lakehouse

6:30pm The Session, M303*

WEDNESDAY, JULY 28

5:15pm Andrew Ministry, Cabin 1

7:00pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal

THURSDAY, JULY 29

9:30am Yoga, Gym

***Committee Meeting**

CR-Conference Room

SH-Swetenburg Hall

IN-PERSON plus ONLINE
WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

July 4— 8:45/ 49 + 28 = 77

11:00/ 125 + 54 = 179

July 11— 8:45/ 50 + 24 = 74

11:00/ 121 + 75 = 196

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday 8:30-4:30

CONTACT US

Church Office..... 770-532-0136

Child Development Center 770-532-8188

FAX.....770-287-1397

Holiday, Weekend Emergency 770-718-8584

CHURCH STAFF

Extension

Lee Koontz, Senior Pastor.....23

Shon Peppers, Associate Pastor 12

Margaret Turney-Ayer 13

Interim Director of Faith Development

Benji Stegner, Music Director/Organist ...36

Debbie Holcombe, Administrator 11

Libby Christiansen, Admin. Asst.23

Brooke Lowe, CDC Director.....40

Ronny Childs.....35

Audio/Visual Coordinator

Maggie Parker 15

Director of Youth Ministry

Ali Thompson.....29

Director of Children's Ministry

Donnice McAlister, Accountant 14

Sue Ann Rogers, Publisher.....20

Hope Testament, Director of Bells

Please join us Sunday for our in-person or online worship
at 8:45 am Morning Light service and 11 am Traditional service.

The link is available beginning 30 minutes before the services.

[Click here](#)

Sunday worship web address: fpcga.churchoonline.org
View recent past services at fpcga.org/welcome/sermons.

THE NOMINATION OF MEMBERS OF THE SESSION AND THE BOARD OF DEACONS FOR THE CLASS OF 2023

Your Congregational Nominating Committee depends upon your suggestions and needs your list **on or before August 8**. In accordance with the Book of Order, the names to be placed in nomination must fairly represent the composition of the congregation as to age, gender, etc. There are six vacancies on the Session and nine on the Board of Deacons to be filled by election to three-year terms. Biographical information on the nominees will be provided prior to the election scheduled tentatively for the end of October.

Some of the qualifications for those who may be elected to the Session or Board of Deacons:

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP: Regular attendance at worship services; participation in church programs and activities (Sunday school, committees, children's and youth activities, choir, teaching, etc); leadership positions and offices held; volunteer roles and services rendered.

CHRISTIAN WITNESS IN DAILY LIVING: Within the family; at work, in the community; in social activities; in the church.

INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS: Cooperativeness; openness to others; positive outlook; willingness to learn; ability to follow through on responsibilities; maturity of judgment.

PERSONAL FAITH: Devotion to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior; love of God and neighbor; stewardship of time, talents and treasures.

Please consider the qualities in bold print above. List your suggestions for officers (with each nominee's permission) by emailing, mailing or calling Libby Christiansen at the church office:

Libby Christiansen, Administrative Assistant
 First Presbyterian Church
 800 S Enota Dr NE, Gainesville, GA 30501
 770-532-0136 ext. 23, lchristiansen@fpcga.org

2021 Congregational Nominating Committee—Susan Wiley, Susan Biddy, Wiley Black, Rusty Burns, Alene Arenas, Barry Sanders, Alex Wisnoski

Qualifications for Office of Elder (from the Book of Order)—As there were in Old Testament times elders for the government of the people, so the New Testament Church provided persons with particular gifts to share in discernment of God's Spirit and governance of God's people. Accordingly, congregations should elect persons of wisdom and maturity of faith, having demonstrated skills in leadership and being compassionate in spirit. Ruling elders are so named not because they "lord it over" the congregation (Matthews 20:25), but because they are chosen by the congregation to discern and measure its fidelity to the Word of God, and to strengthen and nurture its faith and life. Ruling elders, together with teaching elders, exercise leadership, government, spiritual discernment, and discipline and have responsibilities for the life of a congregation as well as the whole church, including ecumenical relationships. When elected by the congregation, they shall serve faithfully as members of the session. When elected as commissioners to higher councils, ruling elders participate and vote with the same authority as teaching elders, and they are eligible for any office. (G-2.03)

Elders are expected to be the spiritual leaders of the congregation, and as such will participate in the life of the church as fully as they are able.

The Session meets once monthly and at other times as necessary. It is expected that all elders will attend the meetings unless granted an excused absence. Individual elders will be asked to serve on one of the Ministry Teams during their tenure on the Session.

Persons now serving on the Session:
Class of 2021—Alene Arenas, Harry Case, Susan Daniel, Julie Ferguson, Carroll Todd, Don Willers
Class of 2022—Chris Cousens, Stacy Morley, Lynne Plummer, Kevin Price, Cathy Vining
Class of 2023—Dawn Fulenwider, Andrea Jones, Jim Robison, Karen Shaap, Jack Spencer, Joe Thompson

Qualifications for Office of Deacon (from the Book of Order)—The office of deacon as set forth in New Testament Scripture is one of compassion, witness, and service, sharing in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ for the poor, the hungry, the sick, the lost, the friendless, the oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies or structures, or anyone in distress. Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, sincere compassion, and sound judgment should be chosen for this ministry. (G-2.02)

Anyone who has a gift for caring and ministry to others can be a deacon.

Deacons meet monthly and at other times as necessary. It is expected that all deacons attend the meetings unless granted an excused absence. Deacons will be asked to serve on one or more of the Deacon sub-committees, which include Fellowship, Outreach, and Congregational Care.

Persons now serving on the Board of Deacons:
Class of 2021—Enow Agborsangaya, Sue Bradley, Mary Katherine Ennis, Susan Hosford, Marlyn Mortland, Rebecca Pate, Erin Taylor, Joan Van Ryssselberge, Alex Wisnoski
Class of 2022—Steve Bunn, Barbara Case, Jane Davenport, Cathy Finch, Susannah McBride, Barry Sanders, Jason Shoaf, Scott Stowers, Chris Wheeler
Class of 2023—Haydee Anderson, Wilson Golden, Rachel, Greenwalt, Kimberly Hulsey, Bonnie Ray, Justin Reynolds, Dan Schaap, Ches Tredway

NOMINATIONS FOR THE OFFICE OF ELDER OR DEACON

SUBMITTED BY: _____

(Please check one or both)

ELDER	DEACON	NAME	COMMENTS
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1. _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2. _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3. _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4. _____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5. _____	_____



TERRIFIC TUESDAY

3 years old thru
5th graders

July 27

\$10, lunch included

10:00 meet at Lodge

2:00 pick up

RSVP athompson@fpcga.org

GWINNETT STRIPERS

Fellowship and baseball

Saturday, August 14

The church bus will depart at 5 pm.

Game time is 6:05.

\$10 per ticket - great seats!

Contact the church office to
sign up, 770-532-0136.



KICK-OFF SUNDAY/RALLY DAY

*Join us in greeting one another, enjoying fellowship, and
celebrating the start of the new Program Year.*

AUGUST 8

Swetenburg Hall • 10:00 -10:40 am

**Blessing of the Back Packs
for all children and youth**

Nursery will be available
There will be no Sunday classes.

Donuts and other Goodies
Coffee, Tea, and Cool Lemonade

Music with Mike Henry

NOTE FROM MICHAEL HENRY

Our former Director of Music

What better way to celebrate a new year of Church programs and Christian Education than to join our voices, children, youth, and adults, in making music together with fun, joyful song! I am happy to have been invited back to lead our singing for a few minutes in Swetenburg Hall on the morning of August 8 in between the worship services. You won't want to be late and miss the fun as we climb Jacob's Ladder, March in the Light of God, and remember the Green Alligator, the Long-neck Geese, the Humpty-backed Camels, the Chimpanzees, and the Unicorn! I hope to see and hear you all that morning!

SEPTEMBER 3-6

Some arriving on 2nd

VOGEL CAMPING

Biking, hiking, fishing, relaxing, fellowship

**Claim your spot now, speppers@fpcga.org.
14 sites reserved, \$102-\$136**





VBS REGISTRATION SUMMER 2021

JULY 19-23 | 10:30 am - 12 noon | Roper Park

3 YEARS-5TH GRADERS WELCOME

In-Person VBS

Student's Name _____ Grade Completed/Age _____

Street Address _____

Cell Phone _____ Alternate Phone _____ Email _____

Parent/Guardian's Name _____

Allergies or Special Needs _____

Emergency Contact—Name, phone number & relationship to child _____

I hereby release FPC Gainesville and its staff from responsibility and liability for any injury or illness that my child may sustain during this activity. In event of emergency, I hereby authorize an adult leader of this activity, as agent for me, to consent to any x-ray examination; medical, dental, or surgical diagnosis, treatment, and hospital care advised and supervised by a physician, surgeon, or dentist (as appropriate) licensed to practice under the laws of the State of Georgia where the services are rendered, either at a doctor's office or in any hospital.

My child's photo may be used to promote this event.

My child may be released to (Name, relationship, phone) _____

Online VBS Name and Age of Participants

Parent/Guardian Contact Information

Phone _____ Email _____

Materials will be available at the church for pickup 10am to 3pm, July 12-16.

Hybrid VBS Can't make it to Roper Park each day—come visit when you can and enjoy the online activities.

Please turn in or email completed VBS registration forms to the church office.

To register online the link may be found on www.fpcga.org > Ministries > Children's Ministry.
Questions? Contact Ali (678-936-1053).