

THE CALL

First Presbyterian Church | Gainesville, Georgia | November 21, 2021

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

NOVEMBER 21

Christ the King

Rev. Lee Koontz

8:45 Morning Light

Swetenburg Hall

Morning Light Worship Team

11:00 Traditional Worship

Sanctuary

Chancel Choir

NOVEMBER 28

1st Sunday of Advent

Rev. Dr. Margaret Turney-Ayer

8:45 Morning Light

Swetenburg Hall

Morning Light Worship Team

11:00 Traditional Worship

Sanctuary

Chancel Choir

LECTIONARY

November 21

2 Samuel 23:1-7

Psalms 132:1-12 (13-18)

Revelation 1:4b-8; John 18:33-37

November 28

Jeremiah 33:14-16; Psalm 25:1-10

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

Luke 21:25-36

With Thanksgiving right around the corner, our thoughts are drawn to the many blessings that we enjoy as a church family. That can be a challenge as we are still dealing with the effects of a global pandemic, but the fact remains that we are able to enjoy and participate in so much more than we were just one year ago. Through it all, FPC leaders have tried to plot a course through the past several months prayerfully, thoughtfully, and faithfully. It's also been a course that has allowed us to join together in a church life that feels much more "normal". While there are still some things that we are doing differently as a result of the pandemic, I'm thankful for all of the meaningful things that we are able to share together right here, and right now.

Thank you for your encouragement and understanding as we have navigated our way through these challenges. Thank you for your prayers and your presence – both virtually and in person. Thank you for your commitment and your investment in the life of this church family even as our life together has been altered in significant ways. Years from now, articles will be written, sermons will be preached, and speeches will be given about how we have handled ourselves during the Covid-19 pandemic. I pray (and indeed, I am convinced) that they will be messages of hope and faithful perseverance.

As we approach the Thanksgiving holiday, and as I consider all that we have endured over the past year, and all that we will overcome still, I'm reminded of the words of Abraham Lincoln's very first Thanksgiving address to the nation. In it, he wrote:

It has seemed to me fit and proper that [our blessings] should be solemnly, reverently, and gratefully acknowledged as with one heart and one voice by the whole American people. I do, therefore, invite my fellow-citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next as a Day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the heavens. And I recommend to them that, while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners, or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty hand to heal the wounds of the nation, and to restore it, as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes, to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility, and union.

I don't think I could say it any better than that.

May God bless, guide, and keep you and your loved ones today and in the days to come. May you also find quite moments in which to give thanks to God for all of God's gracious gifts, even during times of challenge!

Grace and Peace,
Lee

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN



Thursday, December 2, 1 pm—PW Coordinating Team zoom meeting

Monday, December 6—9:45-10:15am Social Time;
10:15-11:15am Morning Bible Study. We meet in Swetenburg Hall. Our Horizon Bible Study Lesson 4 will be led by Linda Snowden.

Tuesday, December 7, 7 pm—Evening Bible Study's location to be announced at a later date.

December PW Mission Project—Santa Clause Express—
Each year in December PW women from all over Georgia help make Christmas a bit brighter for the residents of Presbyterian Health Service Centers in Austell, Swainsboro, and Quitman. Our financial donations to this cause enable Santa's elves to purchase and wrap gifts for Santa to deliver to these residents. Also throughout the year, gifts are given to residents to honor birthdays, to welcome new residents and other special occasions. As the Christmas Spirit fills you this season, share your joy by making a generous donation to this worthy cause. Make your check out to: Presbyterian Women, and in the memo section write "Santa Clause Express." Bring your donation to our December Bible study meetings, or drop it off at the church office.

WHISPERING ANGELS YOUTH RANCH

presented a plaque to First Presbyterian Church for the support that the church provided through the mission/work project that several of the members participated in in August of this year. The plaque is now hanging on the Community Outreach bulletin board. Come check out the plaque as well as the other agencies that are represented on the bulletin board.



Thank you so much for the sweet cards of encouragement many of you have sent to my mom, Sharon Martin. I cannot tell you how much they have meant to her. She has a long road of recovery ahead and your cards have and will continue to help her through.

*Blessings,
Dawn Fulenwider*

SYMPATHY ON THE PASSING OF...

- ... Brother-in-law of Frances Fite, October 31
- ... **Dr. John Ballard Humma** of Statesboro, GA (brother-in-law of Anne Begnaud), November 2
- ... **Pam Ashburn** (Shelley Collin's sister in Nebraska), November 3.

WOW | WEEKLY ON WEDNESDAY

5:45 PM SUPPER (\$8 Adult • \$5 Kid • \$20 Family)
Sign up deadline for supper and pick up is noon on Monday.

6:20 PM CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES & WOW! MUSIC

6:30 PM ADULT PROGRAM

NOVEMBER 24

No WOW the week of Thanksgiving



DECEMBER 1: PROGRAM—TBD

Wreath Making with Biscuits, Coffee & Hot Chocolate



For children, youth and their families

Sunday, November 28
10am | Youth Room

Support our "Homegrown" Missionaries

In preparation for the World Mission Conference coming up January 28-30, 2022, the WMC Committee is offering a limited supply of notecards, mousepads, and Christmas ornaments (they also make nice window decorations) to raise supplemental funds for those in



the mission field who grew up in our church family. All three items

feature the stained-glass windows in our sanctuary. The package of notecards features ten different windows, with a description of each. The ornament is packaged in a giftbox.

Suggested Donation:

Notecards \$10 • Mousepad \$5 • Ornament \$20

These will be on display at the Information Desk outside the sanctuary. To order contact Lori McBride at lolamcb@gmail.com. You will be notified when your items are placed in the church office, and you may leave your donation in a marked envelope in the office when you pick them up. Church office hours are Monday–Friday, 8:30–4:30.



ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES CELEBRATE ADVENT!

November 28 through Christmas – 10:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. on Sundays

Sunday, November 28 is the beginning of the Church New Year! We look back at what happened in the birth of Jesus, the Christ, and we also look forward in anticipation to the future coming of Christ again. It is a season of preparation, of prayer, of thoughtful examination of where we have been, and where we are going. We hope you may celebrate this season by renewing your commitment to study and learning as you seek to grow in your faith.

Our Adult Sunday School Classes are a great way to connect with a group of adults who share your interest in learning. Sunday School is a place of hearing, asking questions, expressing your thoughts and ideas, and growing in your knowledge of the Bible and Christian principles and values that are shaped by the lives of people in relationship with God, through Jesus the Christ. It is also a place of developing relationships with adults of various ages who are, like all of us, trying daily to put faith and life together in ways that are consistent with one another. We invite you to sit in on the various classes and discover where you fit at this time in your life. There is a place for you!

The following classes at First Presbyterian welcome newcomers and long time members, too. Check us out!

B.A.S.I.C. (Brothers And Sisters In Christ) – led by Jack Spencer, located off Swetenburg Hall. Cynthia Campbell explores how a house might look for Christmas based on what each Gospel says about it. In *Christmas in the Four Gospel Homes*, beautiful illustrations from architect Kevin Burns reimagine each of the four Gospels as a “house,” which the church visits at Christmas. In each section, Ms. Campbell reflects on the distinctive perspective of the birth of Jesus or the incarnation offered by each Gospel. She creatively reimagines the season and inspires new and exciting reflection for Advent.

The G.I.F.T. Class – located off Swetenburg Hall, led by various Class members: Barbara Case, Susan Nish, Susan Daniel, Jack Griffith, Barbara Griffith, Anne Hallum, Chris Cousens, and Steve Bunn.

The Wonder of Christmas, by Ed Robb and Rob Renfroe, is an exciting Advent Experience that explores the true wonder of Christmas through the lens of four elements of the Christmas story: a star, a name, a manger, and a promise. Come and rediscover that the true wonder of Christmas is found in the love of Christ and made real in our hearts when we share that love with others. Because of God’s great love and light in Christ, we can believe with confidence that anything is possible.

Rocks of Ages – led by Jim Robison and JoAlice Halsell. This class meets in the Church Parlor off the narthex/ lobby or in the Conference Room by the church office. This class will continue to look diligently at the Lectionary Scripture readings each Sunday, talking about the context for the readings, the meanings found in the texts, and how that relates to our lives today.

Mere Christianity, led by Marshall Pennington and Mary Carden. The class is located next to the Library and near the Children’s Wing and the Church Office.

For Advent, this class will explore *The Supporting Actors in the Nativity Story*. They will look at the pre- birth and birth stories as they are presented in the Gospels of Matthew 1 and 2 and Luke 1 and 2. What is there that you may have missed before or forgotten? Who is present? And, what happens to them as the story unfolds?

The Young and the Restless – led by Rev. Shon Peppers, meets in the Children’s Wing across from the Welcome Desk. This class reviews the Lectionary Texts for the current Sunday, and talks about the context of the scriptures for the day, what it meant when it was written, and what it means to us today. Their primary resource, other than the Bible, is *Feasting on the Word*, a curriculum put out by The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

We look forward to seeing you!

Grace and peace,

Margaret

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

www.fpcga.org

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—CHURCH CALENDAR—

—Week 1—

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 21

OCC Shoebox Dedication (Both Services)

8:45am Morning Light Worship, SH

9:15am Chancel Ringers

10:00am Sunday School

11:00am Traditional Worship

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 22

10:00am Prayer Group, Prayer Room

12:00pm Gentle Yoga, Gym

6:30pm Lakeshore Square Dance Class

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23

5:30pm Ladies AA, Lakehouse

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 24

12:00pm Church Office Closes for

Thanksgiving Holidays

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 25

Thanksgiving, Church Office Closed

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 26

Thanksgiving, Church Office Closed

—Week 2—

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 28

8:45am Morning Light Worship, SH

9:15am Chancel Ringers

10:00am Family Advent Festival, Youth Room

10:00am Sunday School

11:00am Traditional Worship

6:00pm Youth Group

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 29

10:00am Prayer Group, Prayer Room

12:00pm Gentle Yoga, Gym

6:30pm Lakeshore Square Dance Class

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30

5:30pm Ladies AA, Lakehouse

6:30pm The Session, M303*

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1

5:45pm WOW Supper

7:00pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2

9:30am Yoga, Gym

10:00am Wonderful Works decorating

Chrismon Trees

10:00am Local Mission Emphasis Cmte

via Zoom

1:00pm PW Coordinating Team

via Zoom

5:30pm *Be the Bridge* Study, TBD

6:00pm Mission Cmte, M303*

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4

9:00am Lunch With Santa, SH

6:30pm Lakeshore Squares, Gym

*Committee Meeting; CR-Conference Room; SH-Swetenburg Hall

IN-PERSON plus ONLINE

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

November 7— 8:45am 73 + 37 = 110

11am 104 + 77 = 181

November 14— 8:45am 35 + 40 = 75

11am 108 + 75 = 183

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 Pastor12

Margaret Turney-Ayer13

Interim Director of Faith Development

Benji Stegner, Music Director/Organist ...36

Debbie Holcombe, Administrator11

Libby Christiansen, Admin. Asst.23

JoAnn Watson, Accountant14

Brooke Lowe, CDC Director.....40

Ronny Childs.....35

Audio/Visual Coordinator

Ali Thompson.....29

Director of Children's Ministry

Dallas Thompson (dthompson@fpcga.org)

Young Adults Ministry Coordinator

Sue Ann Rogers, Publisher20

Hope Testament, Director of Bells

Sunday 8:45am worship and 11am worship streamed live.

Web address: fpcga.churchonline.org

View recent past services at fpcga.org/welcome/sermons.

MESSAGE from THE INTERIM DIRECTOR of FAITH DEVELOPMENT

Dear Kindred in Christ,

It is with sadness and yet deep appreciation that I have written my letter of resignation effective December 31, 2021: Sadness because this time of ministry with you since August 2015, has been personally a most inspiring time of service; and appreciation because through this unexpected opportunity in retirement, the grace, hospitality, and welcome this congregation offers in the name of God in Christ has become a heartfelt reality for me, as it has for so many before me. Here I have found a spiritual home where, while I will no longer be on staff, I hope to continue to worship and participate and serve with you for years to come.

Thank you for receiving me with love, grace, thoughtfulness, and kindness. I have truly been blessed by serving with you, the outstanding staff, under the Pastoral leadership of Lee Koontz, and the many volunteers who serve here with energy, intelligence, imagination and love.

I look forward to continued service with you in this next season of life as a volunteer partner in ministry.

In Christ's love,
Margaret T. Turney-Ayer
Interim Director of Faith Development



GLADIATORS HOCKEY *Fellowship Outing*

Saturday, December 11 | Match time is 7pm | Cost is \$15 per ticket

Those interested in carpooling will depart the church at 6pm and others can meet us there. Please contact the church office at 770-532-0136 or Shon Peppers 678-936-5357 / speppers@fpcga.org to reserve your seat.

This is always an exciting event along with some wonderful fellowship whether you know the game of hockey or not!

*Place in "Poinsettia" box as you leave Sunday worship, or mail or bring to the church office.
Please make check payable to FPC, designated "Poinsettias". Deadline to place an order is Sunday, **December 8.***

Christmas Poinsettias \$13

Circle One

HONOR OR MEMORIAL _____

Given by: _____

Created in Christ to do *good works*

Ephesians 2:10



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

November 21 is Shoebox Dedication Sunday. Let's help Samaritan's Purse bring the joy and Good News that accompany these shoebox gifts to less fortunate children and their

families worldwide. Your financial support for this project will also be greatly appreciated—please make your check out to FPC with Shoeboxes in the memo line.

FAMILY PROMISE CHRISTMAS STORE

It's that time of year again. Family Promise will have their annual Christmas store on **December 7-8**. This store will allow struggling children and families to purchase gifts at reduced prices for their loved ones for the Christmas season. There will be a box by the church office to collect new toys. The toys need to be delivered to the church before Thanksgiving. An easier way to give is through familypromisehall.org/christmas-donate to select toys from Amazon or Target and have them shipped directly to Family Promise located at 3606 McEver Road, Oakwood, GA 30566. You can also make a monetary donation in support of the Christmas Store. Thank you in advance for your support for this worthwhile project and vital ministry for Gainesville/Hall County.

Local Mission Emphasis (LME) Committee

We are looking for new members. The LME Committee was created in 2020 when we realized that the annual Expo, which local agencies attended at our church to explain their mission and seek volunteers, could not be held during the pandemic. To keep the mission of these local agencies in the heart of our congregation, the committee started advertising the needs of these agencies in FPC's The Call and its weekly emails. The needs of these agencies have only increased because of the pandemic and they are still in great need of donations, whether through volunteer hours or supplies or moneys.

The Committee also started organizing a quarterly work project at a local mission agency where members of our church can learn about the organization's mission, as well as apply their talents through the work project.

Do you have a heart for local missions? Would you like to help us spotlight these local agencies to our congregation and organize work projects? We would love for you to join us the first Thursday of each month at 10:00 am when we meet through Zoom. Please contact any of the Committee members if you are interested in joining us: Genie Comley, Patti Mouvery, Jack Spencer, and Tina de Waart.

DONATIONS RECEIVED

In Memory of...

Sandee McGlaun

by Martha and John Nesbitt
by Anonymous

Bill Ware

by Anonymous

Ruth Staley

by Jackie Sosby
by Jane Crawford
by Mike and Lynn Hulsey
by John and Frances Fite
by Janis Miller
by Barbara Hermann
by Mary Katherine Ennis
by Jan and Jerry Reeves

Carolyn Harvill

by Barbara Hermann

CHILDREN'S
CHRISTMAS CAMP

SAT. DEC. 18 • 10AM-4PM • \$10 PER CHILD

Meet in the Lodge
Lunch 11:30
Bus departs for Rockin' Jump at 12:00
RSVP by Fri. Dec. 11.