



# FIRST PRESBYTERIAN Church

Valdosta, GA



August 2020

## First Family News

### That's God



Some years ago, I attended a clergy retreat during which three pastors spoke about their experience of church growth in their congregations. The story one pastor told still resonates with me. When he arrived as the new pastor of his church, the circumstances were less than optimal. The previous pastor had been involved in serious misconduct—so much so the congregation was left with a deep distrust of the office of clergy. As a result, over the course of the first year, the new pastor made it his goal to do everything he could to repair the relationship between the pastor and the people. Mostly, he listened. He listened to people share the hurt they felt over what had transpired. Thanks be to God, healing began, little by little.

Then slowly the pastor realized his role as Minister of Word and Sacrament was transforming into something different. Instead of a change-agent he was becoming a point-person, pointing out to the people the presence of God in their lives. Repeatedly church folk came to him with stories of unexplainable things happening. Some called it “providence,” others called it “coincidence,” but the pastor had another name for it, and he spoke it loud and clear: “That’s God!”

Undoubtedly, we live in extraordinary times. Who could have imagined that our lives could change so drastically in only 5 months? Who could have imagined that a global pandemic would result in an inability to safely gather for worship? Who could have imagined that the best way to care for one’s neighbor would become social distancing, wearing a mask, and washing our hands? Yet here we are. But even in these unsettling times, we must not become distraught. We must not become overwhelmed because, still, God sightings abound—sightings of light shining into darkness—of joy and wonder overflowing. Every morning that we are gifted with a new day, it holds the potential for new possibilities of God sightings. Will we notice?

Recently I have been on the lookout for God sightings, and I am happy to report that I have not been disappointed. I have seen God in your commitment to participate in worship on a virtual platform because of your deep concern for the well-being of our faith community. I have seen God in your care for one another through cards and text messages and phone calls. I have seen God in the beauty of things coming together so that, via Facebook Live, Zoom, Instagram, Email, and snail mail, we continue to learn and grow and stay connected—even though we are apart.

Another God sighting has been blessing my heart these days. Instead of one that I have already witnessed though, it is one that I look forward to with great anticipation. It is a seed of hope that the Spirit has planted in my heart—hope for that day when we will meet to celebrate the wonder and mystery of God—together in one place. As I imagine that day, at the close of worship I offer the benediction and Jane Shelton and I walk to the rear of the sanctuary as we always do, and I glance back over the sanctuary while Donna Gosnell plays the piano and the choir sings. After the last note is played, I notice the expressions on your faces, expressions of pure joy. You are smiling and offering one another handshakes and hugs, and you are in no hurry to leave. Just thinking of it makes my heart skip a beat because I know the day will come soon, and I know that when it does, with tear-filled eyes, I will proclaim, “That’s God!”

Grace & Peace,

Dr. Glenda Hollingshead

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*The Mission of First Presbyterian Church is to celebrate God's grace and to share Christ's love through worship, study, and service.*

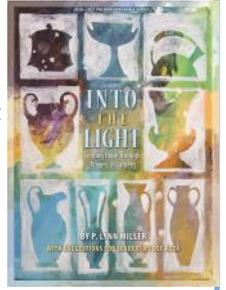
## JOURNEY WITH JANE



Beginning August 21st, join Jane Shelton, CRE, for a morning journey through the Bible via Facebook Livestream at 7:30 a.m. each Friday. Learn about destinations and places in the Bible and their significance. See if you can guess the answer to weekly trivia! Tune in each week to learn the previous week's trivia answer, and to discover a new location and a new adventure! Don't miss this exciting learning opportunity!

## ZOOM INTO THE LIGHT—COMING IN SEPTEMBER

Before Zoom meeting software became so popular, the word 'zoom' was more commonly thought of as a verb as in, to move quickly, or to change magnification—from a long shot to a close-up or vice versa. Now, Zoom is being used as a noun to name a relatively new platform that makes virtual meetings possible. It happens to be the platform we will use for a new Bible Study. With Zoom, participants will zoom (or move quickly) to complete the



Horizons Bible study, "Into the Light: Finding Hope through Prayers of Lament." The 10-week study will occur in 30 minute Sunday morning lessons, beginning at 11:45 a.m. on Sunday, September 20<sup>th</sup>. This is not a study on the book of Lamentations per se. Instead, this study takes a long shot and a close-up—a long shot (or broad view) is achieved by drawing on scriptures from both the New and Old Testaments—while a close-up is provided by the specific literary format of lament. Why zoom in on the poetry, songs, and prayers of Biblical lament? Because through the lens of scripture, it is evident that lament leads to hope. So, please join facilitator and teacher, Sherrida Crawford, for a journey "Into the Light." If you wish to participate, you may contact Katie Altman at [office@firstpresvaldosta.org](mailto:office@firstpresvaldosta.org) so she can add you to the Zoom invitation list. The lesson books, which are \$10, may be purchased directly through [www.presbyterianwomen.org/shop](http://www.presbyterianwomen.org/shop) or Katie Altman will order one for you, if you let her know by September 1<sup>st</sup>. (Please note that while this study material is offered through Presbyterian Women, EVERYONE is encouraged to participate!)



## memorials, honorariums & gifts to Break Bread Together or FPC

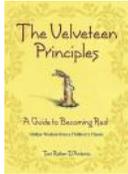
### Gifts to Break Bread Together and First Presbyterian Church

Tommy Thomas  
New Hope Missionary Baptist Church  
Mary K Corbitt  
Jerry & Norene Bennett  
IGS- First Christian Church  
Trinity Presbyterian Church  
United Way  
Barnes Foundation  
Richard Munroe Foundation  
Lilly Respress, Grey & Marshall Swails  
Judy B Tomberlin  
Park Avenue United Methodist Church  
Mattie Hodges  
Margaret Mittiga  
Nancy Hobby  
In Memory of Catharine Minor  
PW Circle #1  
In Memory of Harold George  
PW Circle #1  
In Memory of Verallynn Adams Edwards  
Tom & Sue Miller  
Lamar & Florence Cole

In Memory of June McGoogan Coleman  
Lamar & Florence Cole  
In Memory of Grady Folsom  
Ray & Peggy Chitty  
Mark & Sherrida Crawford  
Stacy Folsom Rogers, Lynn Folsom Courvelle  
& Karen Folsom Allen  
James & Loraine Folsom  
Tom & Sue Miller  
Lamar & Florence Cole  
Alice McDuffie  
Gerry Folsom  
Barry & Deidre Carter  
Libby Clanton  
Betty Ann George  
In Memory of Barbara Owens  
Alice McDuffie  
Nellie John  
Lamar & Florence Cole  
In Memory of Joe Wilsom  
Eve Renfroe

In Memory of Helen Halstead  
Walter & Terry Peacock  
In Memory of Larry Clanton  
Bryan & Sissy Almand  
In Memory of Carolyn Walker  
Nellie John  
Bion & Jenny Williams  
Dick & Jane Shelton  
Libby Clanton  
Mark & Sherrida Crawford  
PW Circle #2  
Tom & Sue Miller  
Lamar & Florence Cole  
Betty Ann George  
Alice McDuffie  
In Honor of Beth Mathis  
Tom & Sue Miller

# August 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 Worship 11:00 am  At Home Communion	3	4	5  5:30 pm	6	7	8  Zoom Pub Theology 2:00 pm
9 Worship 11:00 am  Virtual Friends out Front 11:45 am	10	11	12  5:30 pm	13	14	15
16 Worship 11:00 am	17	18	19  5:30 pm	20  10:00 am	21  7:30 am	22
23 Worship 11:00 am	24	25  Zoom Book Club 5:30 pm	26  5:30 pm	27  10:00 am	28  7:30 am	29  Virtual Retreat 9:30 am -12:30 pm
30 Worship 11:00 am	31	 <p>Every Sunday Facebook Live Special Music 10:45 am Worship 11:00 am</p>				

THURSDAYS AT  
10:00 AM

**VIRTUAL  
COFFEE HOUR**

JOIN DR. GLENDA VIA ZOOM FOR  
COFFEE & CONVERSATION

Have you missed Coffee House Office Hour? If you have, "Zoom" on by for Virtual Coffee Hour with DrG Thursdays at 10 am. beginning August 20th. Invitations will be emailed each Wednesday so be sure to get your name on the list!

## August birthdays

2 Neal O'Neal	14 Marsha Harris
4 Fred McIntyre	16 Royce Coleman
7 Emily Blalock	21 Tim Harris
10 Maria Vick	27 Jerry Powers
12 Patti Amos	31 Brady Jepson

## August anniversaries

2 Bion & Jenny Williams	17 Phil & Cathy Alday
14 Tom & Sue Miller	25 Ray & Peggy Chitty

**First Presbyterian Church  
Book Club**

**The Velveteen Principles**  
A Guide to Becoming Real  
Hidden Wisdom from a Children's Classic  
Toni Rafter-D'Antonio

**AUG 25 AT 5:30 PM  
ON ZOOM**

This summer several of us have enjoyed meeting via Zoom for a Virtual Book Club. We have discussed *The Parables of Peanuts* (which was quite a heavy read) followed by *A Walk in the Wood: Meditations on Mindfulness with a Bear Named Pooh* (which, thankfully, was the complete opposite). This month we will meet Tuesday, August 25 at 5:30 p.m. to explore *The Velveteen Principles: A Guide to Becoming Real*. Participating in a book club has been so much fun, we have decided to continue the practice beyond the summer and the September read has already been selected: *A Good Life: Benedict's Guide to Everyday Joy* by Robert Benson. So, if you love to read, and if you like talking about books with others, make plans to join us, and invite a friend or two! Everyone is welcome!

**First Presbyterian Church  
Book Club**

**A Good Life**  
Benedict's Guide to Everyday Joy  
Robert Benson

**SEPT 29 AT 5:30 PM  
ON ZOOM**

**SESSION**  
VIRTUAL RETREAT

Zoom Virtual Session Retreat  
August 29th  
9:30 am –12:30 pm

To access **Online Giving** or for more information about **First Presbyterian Church** you may visit our website at [www.firstpresvaldosta.org](http://www.firstpresvaldosta.org) or scan this QR code with your smart phone app.



## The Staff of First Presbyterian Church

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**Jane Shelton** Commissioned Ruling Elder  
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**Beth Mathis** Break Bread Together  
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**Julie Stout** Financial Administrator  
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**Sabina Bennett** Custodian

**Christal Dudley** Nursery Worker

**Benjamin Dudley** Technology Intern

