

THE FIRST POST

Lent Begins | February 2023



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DOXOLOGY AS A DAILY PRACTICE

BY STEPHEN WILLIAMS

A few years ago, I attended a continuing education class where Fred Craddock of Emory's Candler School of Theology was the keynote speaker. Craddock made the point that praise and gratitude are the very bedrock of the Christian life. He prodded us to think how we incorporate doxology, a Greek word that literally means "to glorify," into our daily living. There are times when our doxology seems to rise out of the heart and overflow in words or acts of praise.

After a few days of overcast weather, the first hint of sunshine does that for me. "When morning guilds the sky," I want to sing. There are other times when I leave doxology behind and end up the lesser for it. Where can the praise be when I visit someone who is seriously ill? I better leave doxology back in the office or wait for Sunday worship. But then, not always but sometimes, even there in the sick room, there can be such family love present and such quiet acceptance of a difficult situation, that praise and thanksgiving do not seem out of place. God seems very much there, and doxology is not only an appropriate response, it enriches the experience.

Continued on pg. 2

DOXOLOGY AS A DAILY PRACTICE

Continued

At Christmas, Claire was skilled at getting me involved in a hundred small tasks. She claimed this was to make me feel a part of our festivities. I was entrusted with mailing packages, returning library books, buying some essential but forgotten ingredient for a pie or cake. Almost all these activities involved searching for scarce parking places and standing in long lines! Add in all the necessary details of ministry like planning worship services and writing sermons. When I was about to be overwhelmed by the activities, suddenly doxology would sneak around the corner and meet me where I least expected. Yes, I am a child of God. Yes, this world is the realm of God's rule. Yes, even now God is active and present.

Doxology is the way we relate to God. Recall how the Shorter Catechism declares that our chief end is to glorify and enjoy God for ever. We can study the Bible, worship every Sunday, attend all manner of church committee meetings, but if we don't have doxology on our lips, then our Christianity is flat and without sparkle. The Apostle Paul had every reason to be serious and stern, but if you read his letter to the Romans, he often interrupts the theological argument with bursts of doxology to God. "For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever. Amen."(Romans 11:36)

--SCW

WAYS TO MAKE THE MOST OF THE SEASON OF LENT

- Begin the season with the Ash Wednesday Service on February 22 at 6:30 p.m. with imposition of ashes. Co-sponsored by First and Butler, this year it is hosted by Butler Memorial Presbyterian Church, 603 West Victory Drive.
- Attend the Lenten Service with Holy Communion on Sundays at 9:00 a.m. in the sanctuary. Led by the minister and an elder, this 20-minute service provides time to meditate on Scripture, sing a hymn and offer prayers.
- Make time in your schedule for the mid-week dinners and Lenten services held Wednesdays, March 1 – 29, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. The theme will be, "A People at Prayer During Lent: The Lord's Prayer."
- Join us for the Maundy Thursday dinner and worship on April 6, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. which will include the Sacrament of Holy Communion.
- The Chancel Choir along with members of the confirmation class as readers will present "The Seven Last Words," on Good Friday, April 7 at 7:00 p.m.
- Use the These Days devotional as a Lenten discipline. Pick up a copy in the receptionist's office.

SOUPER BOWL LUNCHEON

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12



Come ready to cheer on your team in Stewart Hall following worship on Sunday. Proceeds will help defray the expenses related to the youth mission trip. The menu features soups, garden salad, hearty bread, and brownies. \$10 adult, \$2 child under 12



YOUTH WINTER RETREAT TO WINTERPLACE, WV

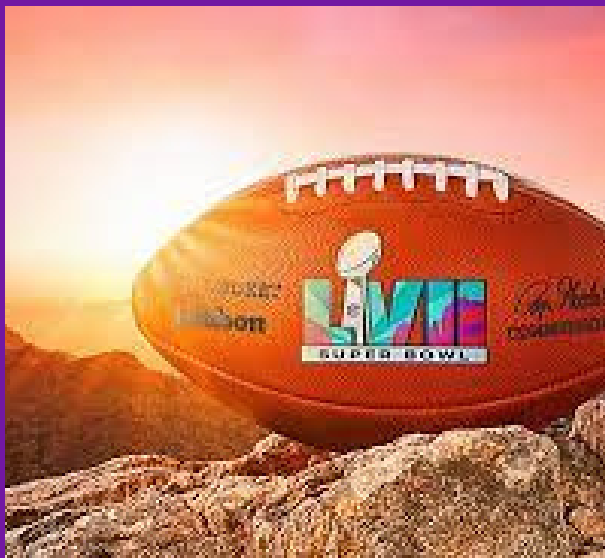
FRIDAY - SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 24-26

This trip is for 6th through 12th-grade youth. This includes lodging, travel, meals, lift tickets, ski rental, and snow tubing. A deposit of \$100 is due to reserve your spot. Scholarships are available. Contact Allison Shearouse allison@savannahfpc.org to sign up for the trip.

The cost of the trip is \$275

6TH-12TH GRADE SUPER BOWL PARTY

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12



Watch the Philadelphia Eagles face off against the Kansas City Chiefs with some festive snacks and cheers!

The party will be held at the McManus' Home from 6pm until halftime



FACES
OF OUR
FAITH
Youth Sunday 2023

YOUTH SUNDAY WORSHIP

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12

We will explore Faces of our Faith: Overcoming Fear with Faith in the Lord."

MUSIC - ART - FAITH

TUESDAYS | 4:30-6:00PM IN STEWART HALL



3-year-olds through 5th grade

Each week stands on its own, so come as often as you can for making music, creating art and exploring our faith together.

Winter/Spring dates would include: Session 1: January 10 - February 14 and Session 2: February 28 - March 28 Sign up here: <https://forms.gle/VGAk54WQsymnqcPJ6>



PANCAKES & JAZZ

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21 6:00 P.M

Feast on buttermilk pancakes, sausage, grits, and scrambled eggs as the church stands poised for the season of Lent. The Skyelite Jazz Band of the Savannah Arts Academy will fill Stewart Hall with the exuberant tempo of Mardi Gras, which literally means "Fat Tuesday." Mask-making and dancing for all! \$6/adult; \$3/child under 12; \$25 family maximum. Here is a link to this premiere musical group directed by Michael Nestor:

<http://savannahjazzfest.com/savannah-arts-academy-skyelite-jazz-band/>

WOMEN'S CIRCLES

TUESDAY, FEB. 2 & 14, THURSDAY, FEB 16



Jubilee- February 14 @ 10:30 am in John Knox
Grace & Joy- February 2 at 6:30 pm
Agape- February 16 at 7:00 pm at Imlay House
Questions? Contact Allison Johnson



YOUTH GROUP

SUNDAYS, FEBRUARY 5 & 19

4:45 pm Youth Music

5:30-7:30 pm Dinner, Activities, and Games

February 26

No Youth Group- returning from Winter
Retreat

SHARING THE GOSPEL BEGINS WITH LISTENING



In sharing faith, listening opens the door to speaking. Listening to God is an essential in prayer, and listening to others is a requirement for witnessing. Talking about faith begins not in our speaking but in our hearing. Genuinely loving and caring for others and hearing their story precedes our telling our faith story. Our prayer needs to be, “O Lord, make me a good listener.” This is excerpted from *The Faith-Sharing New Testament with the Psalms*. Consider joining First’s efforts to equip all of our members to share the Good News. Email the Evangelism Committee’s chair, Will Schriefer at willschriefer.nc@gmail.com to indicate your willingness to help.



INVITATION TO JUSTICE ADVOCACY MEETING

SUNDAY, FEB. 26 @ 12:15PM

JUST, an interfaith justice advocacy coalition that includes about 20 houses of worship in Savannah, will hold a meeting on Sunday, February 26 at 12:15 p.m. in Stewart Hall for team members of the church. A light lunch will be served. Email belindapwalters@gmail.com for more information.

Piano Four-Hands Favorites!

Dr. E-Na Song and Dr. Cameron Fuhrman, pianists



Friday, February 10, 2023
7:00pm

First Presbyterian Church
520 Washington Avenue, Savannah, GA 31405

Free admission

Featuring Brahms' Hungarian Dances and favorites by Copland, Gershwin, Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninov, and Saint-Saëns

ASH WEDNESDAY

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22 @ 6:30PM | BUTLER
MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Ash Wednesday Service on February 22 at 6:30 p.m. at Butler Memorial Presbyterian Church, 603 West Victory Drive. Service includes imposition of ashes with Rev. Stephen Roberson, preaching. This is an annual service jointing sponsored by Butler and First.





SESSION COMMITTEES FOR 2023

If you are not already serving on one or more committees, consider contacting the committee chair and express your interest. A lot of important work of the church is accomplished by church committees under the direction of the Session.

Worship and Music
Christian Education
Social Concerns
Property
Mission
Evangelism
Finance
Congregational Care
Preschool Advisory Board
Hospitality
Endowment
Communications

Myra Hill, Chair
Ellen Tate, Chair; Natalie Chase, Co-Chair
Linda Wittish, Chair
Michael Brooks, Chair
Eric McManus, Chair
Will Schriefer, Chair
Colin McRae, Chair
Allison Johnson, Chair
Ellen Tate, Chair
Beth Longley, Chair
Myra Hill, Chair
Robert Bennett, Chair

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE STATED SESSION MEETING

When the Session met Monday, January 23 at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary, Eric McManus opened the meeting with prayer and led a study using “The Ethos of the Reformed Tradition” by John Leith. The topic was, “The Majesty and Praise of God.” This will begin a year-long study by the Session of hallmarks of the Reformed faith. Later, after moving to the John Knox Room, brief committee updates were made. The Finance Committee reported that overall income in 2022 was \$894,927 against expenses of \$796,878. Many thanks to the congregation whose generosity made a surplus possible. An operating budget for 2023 was adopted that will use \$43,593 of this surplus as carryover to fund have a balanced budget. The annual statistical report for 2022 was received indicating 31 new members were received and 4 members were dismissed by transfer or died. At the end of 2022, membership stood at 431. Committee chairs and members were approved, Presbytery commissioners and alternates for the year elected, the calendar for Holy Communion, stated Session meetings and the annual congregational meeting was scheduled. Zelda McRae was invited to preach at the annual women’s service on Sunday, March 12. The various steps in organizing an ambitious Facilities Task Force along with its duties were discussed and an overall plan approved. This very exciting undertaking will seek to evaluate the many systems and meeting spaces of the church and develop a plan for maintaining, up-dating and improving them. Pick up a copy of the plan in the receptionist’s office. The meeting closed with prayer at 8:50 p.m.

SHARING GRATITUDE



Dear Friends,

Thank you for loving my sweet mother so well, for your kindness, for your generosity, and for your countless prayers. Mother loved you back, appreciated you, and was blessed by you. For that, I am forever grateful for her church family. Mother is with Jesus now among the angels, reunited with Daddy and Gary. She is happy, she is whole, and she is rejoicing! Oh, how I miss her, but I count my endless blessings that she was my Mother.

Joy to the World!

Ronda Parker Johnson and Family

FPC, I thank my God every time I remember you. Philippians 1:3

Ana G. McKee
Dear First Presbyterian Church Family:
Thank you all so much for taking the time to bake and cook for us! We appreciate that you've been thinking of us during this exciting (and chaotic!) time in our lives, but it means so much that you're willing to make and deliver us food. It's been delicious too! We've enjoyed some delicious soup, quiche, chicken, spaghetti, and lasagne, as well as all the side dishes, salads and desserts!
We'd like to especially thank Eliza Brooks, Jordan Chase, Kate Toftness, Janelle Griffith, Sally Blaine, Linda Barnes and Emily Salzer. And a special thanks to Reverend Stephen Williams, without whom none of this would have been possible. If any of you have not yet seen baby Sarah Dahlia Ellen McKee yet, we hope to be able to bring her by the church in the next few months. She's just as cute as a button, as our mom/mother in law Gwen would say! Thanks again, and hoping you all have a blessed day! Sincerely *Ana G. McKee* + *Billy McKee*

Summer with First

MONTREAT | June 4-10

Youth Conference for rising 9th-completed - 12th grade. They would stay with high school youth from around our presbytery in William Black Lodge.

Cost: \$500 (all inclusive) Register with our presbytery group here by March 1:

<https://www.savannahpresbytery.org/events/children-youth-events/montreat-youth-conference/>



MIDDLE SCHOOL EXPERIENCE FOR 6TH-8TH GRADE.

Stay in the home in Montreat with a middle school small group. The week would include Montreat Keynote & Worship as well as Clubs adventure programs. Our group will do a mid-week service project together as well.

Cost: \$425 (all-inclusive with registration fee/food/housing/church transportation) To register, let Allison know by February 15. allison@savannahfpc.org



MONTREAT FAMILY WEEK



Families with children 5th grade and under would stay in the home in Montreat. We would offer group meals in the home, devotions, hikes, with art classes available. Montreat Worship services would be available to join in. Children can be enrolled in the Montreat clubs program. To register, let Allison know by February 15 at allison@savannahfpc.org

Cost: \$200 per person (food/housing/church transportation)

Clubs Registration Fee: \$190

Register children for Clubs program here on March 1. <https://montreat.org/events/clubs-23#:~:text=The%20Clubs%20program%20is%20a,age%20counselors%20supervise%20each%20group>

Summer with First

YOUTH MISSION TRIP JULY 15-22 | 6TH-12 GRADE

We will work with Frontera de Cristo at the Arizona/Mexico border. After 5 days of mission work, we will have an opportunity for a pilgrimage to the Grand Canyon.

Housing: The group will stay in a dormitory at Frontera de Cristo and then at a nearby home to the Grand Canyon.

Cost: \$440 per youth

(Fundraising, scholarships and mission budget will cover the other 2/3 of trip cost.)

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Save the Date (July 10-13)



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

CHANCEMAKERS LAB

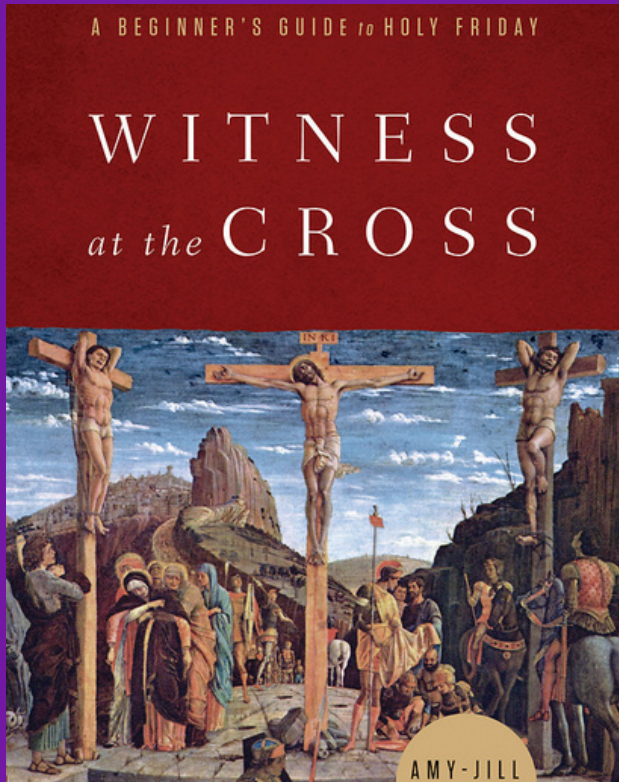
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, SAVANNAH
MONDAY, JULY 10-THURSDAY, JULY 13, 2023
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
AGES 3-RISING 5TH GRADE

CONTACT ALLISON SHEAROUSE FOR
MORE INFORMATION

The poster features a white background with colorful, abstract brushstrokes and streamers in shades of blue, pink, yellow, and green. The text is centered and uses a mix of bold, sans-serif fonts.

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

SUNDY MORNINGS AT FIRST



After the hugely successful The January Term with combined classes, what's in store for February? The Covenant/Fidelis Class will continue their study of Charles Wiley's study, "Grace and Gratitude," which meet in Room 115 led by Bob Morgan. The Sojourners class is led by Howard Crawford and Peter Foley and they will be using the Faith Lens lectionary based study until they begin Amy Levine's book, "Witness at the Cross" during Lent. Levine is on the faculty of Vanderbilt Divinity School. The class meets in Room 209. The Timothy Class, led by Eric McManus, meets in Imlay House and will also be using the Faith Lens study that will amplify the Scripture readings during Sunday worship. If you are not already attending a class, spend the next three weeks sampling each class!

Pray

CHILDREN & YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL

SUNDAYS AT FIRST

Follow Me "Pray" curriculum
Babies to Age 3- Nursery
3's-Kindergarten- Room 8
1st & 2nd Grades- Room 202
3rd-5th Grades- Room 221
6th-12th Grades- Room 212



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



seeking:
honest questions
for deeper faith

WOMEN'S LENT STUDY
THURSDAYS AT 9:00 AM
MARCH 2, 9, 16, 23, AND 30
COFFEE DELI (4517 HABERSHAM STREET)

Join us to share coffee, fellowship and discussion using the
Seeking Lent Devotional

WOMEN'S LENT STUDY

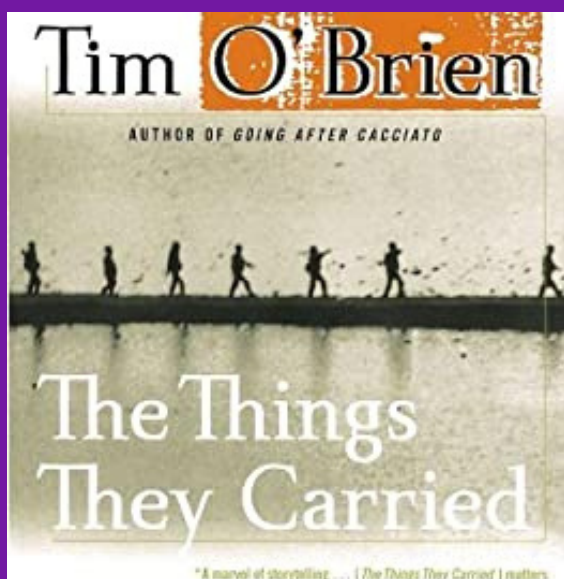
Coming in March!

Women's Lent Study

Thursdays at 9:00 am at Coffee Deli

March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

This group will use the Seeking: Honest Questions for Deeper Faith devotional.



Tim O'Brien
AUTHOR OF GOING AFTER CACCIATO

The Things They Carried

*A marvel of storytelling... (The Things They Carried) letters

MEN'S BOOK STUDY

The Men's Book Group will gather on Tuesday, February 21 at 5:30 p.m. in Room 115. Peter Foley will lead a discussion about the book, *The Things They Carried*, by Tim O'Brien.



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Menu items, including items of participating restaurants in the U.S. Not valid with other discounts or promotions. Tax and gratuity excluded. Price may vary, including in Alaska and Hawaii. © 2023 IHOP Franchisor, LLC.

MEN'S BREAKFAST AND STUDY

The Men's Breakfast and Study will meet on Monday, February 20 at 7:30 a.m. The new location is the International House of Pancakes, 1800 East Victory Drive. All are welcome.

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

2nd Taylor McMasters, Lynn N. Odom, Paul Pressly, Carol Ann Stovall

3rd Colby Longley

4th Maebel Schott, Alex Wasily

5th Janet Yon

7th Cynthia Cupp

8th Randy Bolinger

9th Robinson Norman

10th Jocelyn Johnson

15th Valor Peteranetz

16th Jacque Jouffrault, Amelia Taylor Team

22nd Mary Eckwall, Anne McNair, MaeRose Ryan

24th Larry Koch

26th Judith Buckeridge

27th Grey Salzer, Griffin Salzer

28th Ann Glendenning

