



October 2021 Newsletter

Transitional General Presbyter's Corner

“Together Is Better”

I am presently reading a book that is hot off the press, **Together is Better: How Small Membership Churches Fulfill God's Missional Call Through Partnerships**. The author, the Rev. Dr. Lisa B. Culpepper, happens to be my little sister. Though younger than me, she knows whereof she speaks (writes). Reverend Culpepper has facilitated discussions at numerous PCUSA small church conferences, published articles in the “Journal for Preachers,” “The Presbyterian Outlook,” and “Presbyterians Today.” More importantly, she has walked the talk! She has devoted much of her ministry to serving small churches and partnering them together with other small churches for missions.

As you know, our denomination is primarily a denomination of small congregations. As Reverend Culpepper notes, many are no larger than those in the early life of the Christian church. For instance, during the Civil War the average congregational size was fewer than 100, and by the 1900's fewer than 150 members. If you are in a small church, you are in good company with Christians throughout the ages! So, why do we think bigger is better?

According to the author, a first step for those of us in small churches is that of not only facing our fears but also naming them. Dr. Craig Barnes, president of Princeton Theological Seminary, amplifies this for us in a *Christian Century* article entitled, “The Post Anxiety Church.” He remarks,

“The church has never looked less attractive than when it is dressed in anxiety, and little good comes from fixating on empty pews. The mainline protestant church must stop fretting about its future, because this anxiety takes up the air and leaves the church too lethargic to offer anything to the world. The alternative response is for the church to do what it has always done at its best, and what it did at its beginning: stop thinking about its future and sacrifice itself to mission.”

Reverend Culpepper names many of our fears: fear of change, fear of losing members, fear of not enough, fear of “aging out” or dying, and fear of loss of identity. The remedy to allowing fear to take the oxygen out of a church is found in the attitudes of partnership: respect, compassion, humility, trust, and love. Her book contains true stories of small churches thriving together through missional partnerships. **Together is Better** is biblically based, theologically sound, structured in such a way as to be a study guide with questions for discussion at the end of each chapter. It contains practical information on how a church might go about discerning its missional identity and partnering with other congregations to form a missional cluster.

Without hesitation I promote the Reverend Dr. Culpepper's book, not because she's my sister, but because her book effectively addresses concerns experienced by most of the churches in Savannah Presbytery. A vital congregation is a congregation in motion and mission. As we prayerfully and thoughtfully connect with sister churches in missional clusters, we indeed become better together and thus more effective as the Body of Christ in our part of God's Kingdom.

Peace, Gratitude & Blessings,

From the Desk of the Stated Clerk

Actually this is from the den in the Stated Clerk's home in Dublin GA! Exciting times in Savannah Presbytery as your leadership makes designs on the paradigm that will guide our ministry together in the future: new people, new places, new things!

- Clerks of Sessions and Pastors, remember we would like to hear from you about your minutes by October 1.
- Plans are in process for our next VIRTUAL presbytery meeting on Tuesday, October 26.
- Members of Presbytery Council are reminded to have your final committee reports ready for presbytery by the Council meeting on October 4.
- We do not have Commissioners for the General Assembly meeting this summer. Let me know if you are interested. There is an application on the Savannah Presbytery website.

Grace and Peace,
Proctor Chambless
Stated Clerk, Savannah Presbytery

Presbytery Meeting Information

**Registration is now open for the Fall Stated Presbytery Meeting
Tuesday, October 26th @10am**

Register in advance for this meeting:

Fall Stated Meeting Zoom Registration

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Help Us Remember the Saints

In our upcoming October Stated Presbytery Meeting, there will be a Service of Necrology. During this service Teaching and Ruling Elders from our Presbytery who have died in this past year will be remembered.

We want to make sure everyone is mentioned that should be. We need each church to please send in the names and date of death of each beloved elder from your church to Moderator-Elect Mark George.

Information can be sent to markgeorge1@bellsouth.net or you may reach him by phone at 478.697.2976.

Does Your Congregation Need Pulpit Supply?

A group of faithful ruling elders and ministers have made themselves available to be on the presbytery's Pulpit Supply list. The list (with emails and phone numbers) can be accessed through the presbytery's online directory on our website or by clicking [Savannah Presbytery Web Directory \(in-c.net\)](#). If you are willing to be on the list or need the password for the directory, please email Rev. Deanie Strength,

2021 Special Offering



2021 Special Offering

Online giving is simple and convenient.

You can even give from your phone.
Click the button below and give
securely through our website.

Feel more comfortable giving by check?

You can easily mail a check to:
Savannah Presbytery
3590 Darien Highway Suite 8
Brunswick, GA 31525

*Note: "2021 Special Offering"

Thank you for your generosity



Donate

Savannah Presbytery exists as a governing body of Presbyterian churches in southeast Georgia but its heart is found in the education and encouragement of church members, congregations and pastors.

This year the ministry of our presbytery has been funded through faithful giving from our churches as well as a PPP loan and a grant from the Synod of South Atlantic. For all of this we give glory to God.

Presbytery leaders have also agreed to offer church members and pastors an opportunity to give to our mission through a special offering. This 2021 special offering gives us an opportunity to express our individual gratitude for the programming and ministry that has been carried out in this challenging season:

- Summer Camp at New Ebenezer Retreat Center
- A virtual Faith Enrichment Conference
- Several sessions of a virtual/hybrid School of the Laity
- A trip to the Montreat Youth Conference
- Weekly clergy support calls via Zoom
- Four virtual presbytery meetings with special speakers
- Preachers to fill vacant pulpits
- Teaching Elders to serve as session moderators for churches in transition
- A new monthly E-newsletter to keep us informed and connected
- A new website with online event registration and online giving
- A new online directory of presbytery and church leadership
- Continued funding of presbytery staff, office property, and insurance

If the work of Savannah Presbytery has strengthened your life and ministry, we invite you to participate. You may contribute online by credit card or bank debit at www.savannahpresbytery.org Checks may also be sent to Savannah Presbytery, 3590 Darien Highway, Suite 8, Brunswick, Georgia, 31525. Note: "2021 Special Offering"

We thank you in advance for your support and for your prayers for the presbytery. We

continue to seek ways to reduce our expenditures so that we can continue to fulfill our mission while adjusting as needed to the changing demands and needs of ministry today. May our lives and our faith continue to inspire others to seek and follow Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

**Grace and Peace,
The Stewardship & Finance Committee**

Rev. Deanie Strength, *Chair*
Elder Candace Christian, *Henry Memorial*
Elder Allene Groote, *First St. Marys*
Elder Lewis Stubblefield, *First Douglas*
Elder Judy Walker, *Wilmington Island*
Rev. Dr. Stephen Williams, *First Savannah*

Ex Officio:

Rev. Dr. Alan Baroody, *Transitional General Presbyter*
Elder Ann Henderson, *Treasurer*

Education & Training Team

Save the Dates: Children & Youth

Summer Camp: June 20-24th, 2022

Join us for **Elementary, Youth, and Family Camps** hosted by the churches of Savannah Presbytery at New Ebenezer Retreat Center in Rincon, Georgia. Campers share meals, worship, swimming, and games guided by volunteers from our churches to enrich their faith journey and enjoy God's great creation. Family Camp allows young campers to enter into the camp experience with a parent or guardian for 24 hours. Elementary camp is a three day/night stay and Youth Camp is a four day/night stay.

Registration opens in late February of 2022.

View Our Summer Camp
Video

Montreat Youth Conference: June 5-11th, 2022

A Montreat Youth Conference affirms youth in their calling to be and shape the church of Jesus Christ. MYC's desire is to help youth come to know and believe that they are the beloved of God and to be a place where authenticity, community, connection, and God's truth thrive. We invite all high school-aged youth from our churches to be part of the Savannah Presbytery group. We gather our youth from across the presbytery and travel together to Montreat, NC each year. Whether your church has one or ten youth who are interested in experiencing this faith affirming week, share this opportunity with them and reach out to our Montreat Registrar, Susan Parrish of First Presbyterian Church Statesboro (susan@fpcestatesboro.org)

Registration will open in October/November.

For more information visit: [2022 Montreat Youth Conferences](#) | [Montreat Conference Center](#)

[For more information about signing your youth up for Montreat, click here!](#)

Presbyterian Youth Triennium:

July 24-27th, 2022 in Indianapolis, IN

This tremendous gathering of high school youth, youth leaders and young adults from the Presbyterian (USA) and Cumberland Presbyterian Churches ***only takes place ONCE EVERY THREE YEARS!*** Therefore, this could be your youth's *only opportunity* to gather with *thousands* of other faith-filled Presbyterian Youth-*all in the same place!*

The 2022 version of Presbyterian Youth Triennium promises activities that will extend a full year following Triennium. The event will be held at the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis. All attendees will enjoy their meals together in a large assembly hall at the convention center. Meals together will also include Bible study, games — and one of PYT's signature components, music.

As with Montreat, Savannah Presbytery invites all its churches to seek out high school youth to send as part of our delegation to Triennium! For more information visit: <https://presbyterianyouthtriennium.org/>

Registration will begin in October/November .

Our Triennium Registrar is Marty Susie (msusie1@savannahpresbytery.org)

School of the Laity Updates:

Capital Campaign

The Covid-19 pandemic took our keystone School of the Laity program online in 2020. Back in March of this year, The School of the Laity Committee reached out to SOL graduates first throughout our presbytery, seeking donations to fund equipment for three classroom set-ups allowing for a quality hybrid (*online & in-person*) experience for all that participate when it became safe to do so according to the CDC and presbytery guidelines.

The Capital Campaign raised \$6,747.00 to purchase laptops, cameras, microphones, screens and supporting accessories. It was our hope to hold our first hybrid session this October 2-3, however, due to rising Covid-19 cases filling local hospitals, the SOL Committee voted to go online again and pray it will be safe to provide a hybrid experience in March of 2022.

New Cohort: June 2022

Reminder that we will begin a new Cohort -*The Class of 2024*- in June of 2022. Consider becoming a participant yourself or referring someone to the full two-year program. If you want to “try out a course” know that all courses are open to everyone who is interested.

Attention Savannah Presbytery Clergy:

A brief survey was sent to you to share your gifts and the topics that you are passionate to teach at the School of the Laity. We encourage you to complete the survey so we can approach you about integrating those gifts into the ongoing programming or via Elective Courses.

2022 School of the Laity Brochures

[2022 Save the Date Brochure](#)

[SOL Cohort Enrollment Brochure](#)

Christian Education Round Table Gatherings

In June of 2020, Savannah Presbytery began hosting round table discussions about all things Christian Ed! At our first gathering, eleven of our churches participated and we continue to invite other churches to the table. These gatherings seek to grow relationships among the participants as we share experiences, resources, and ideas. Not only do we talk about regional and national Christian Education opportunities, but we have been able to provide specific workshops to address local needs such as our *Re-imagining Worship* workshop last October.

If you have not attended a CE Round Table, or do not have anyone in your congregation doing

so, we welcome you to join us via Zoom, on **Tuesday October 5th at 2 PM.**
Contact Marty Susie at msusie1@savannahpresbytery.org for the link.

Missions Team

*Anchored in our faith and
Using the winds of the
Holy Spirit to move us
forward...*



Savannah Presbytery Mission Team

Inspire Others!

Let us know what your church is doing in these trying times for the benefit of your community.

For questions on mission activities in our presbytery, please contact Barbara Conner at gatorgal7277@yahoo.com.

**The Savannah Presbytery
Missions Team is seeking new
ways to serve others in
answering God's Royal Call.**

REFUGEE PERSONAL CARE PACKETS

We are now adding a mission opportunity for those churches who wish to participate. Advice from several national and regional mission leaders has convinced the Mission Team of the advantage in collaborating between smaller area congregations as a way to pool resources. In response, we have designed such a mission

project for the second half of the year that addresses the needs of the evacuees fleeing danger in Afghanistan for assisting our American operations. Many families have already arrived on our shores in Savannah and Jacksonville. With the help of our national Presbyterian agencies (PDA and Office of Immigration and Refugees), we have put together a list of needed items to be put in Personal Care Packets, as well as other miscellaneous supplies and notes of welcome, and will deliver to both sites.

We are going to work in districts to fulfill this commitment. Individual packets or donated items from the list will be taken by churches:

- **District 1** to *First Presbyterian of Savannah* and *Allenhurst Presbyterian* - Place items in large dropbox in front of the fellowship hall or call Rev. Ben Beasley at (678)296-1233
- **District 3** to *1st Presbyterian of Brunswick* (M-Th 9am-12pm) and *First Presbyterian of St. Marys* (M-Th 8am-3pm)
- **District 2** will be asked to write personal notes of welcome to the newly arrived families, compile them and send them to Barbara Conner (unstamped) at First PC St. Marys to be placed in the packets and Welcome Baskets.

Some of the women of various churches are sending hand-made items.

The Deadline for Collecting these items is October 15!

Synod of South Atlantic News

The Necessities of Connection

John 15:5



You are invited to
the
**Synod of the South Atlantic
African American Clergy and Educators
Virtual Retreat**

October 22, 2021
12:30 PM

Register for the ZOOM event

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom-join?meetingId=785765147&meetingKey=1061653530>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email
containing information about joining the meeting.

If you are interested in presenting during this
time, please email Rev. CeCe Armstrong at
ccarmstrong619@msn.com for more
information.



News From Our Churches



White Bluff Presbyterian

*White Bluff Presbyterian kicks off the year
of Bible study with Grandma's Garden
Party!*

Grandma expected me to wear a hat and gloves to church and to social gatherings. At the time it seemed like cruel and unusual punishment, but now I find I look back on those times with fondness.

The Horizons Bible study for 2021-22, *What My Grandmothers Taught Me*, reminds us of the spiritual seeds planted by our earthly grandmothers and gives insights into what our spiritual grandmothers have to teach us through Scriptures.

With those memories and expectations in mind, the Presbyterian Women of White Bluff Presbyterian Church in Savannah held Grandma's Garden Party on Saturday, August 28, 2021 to kick off this year's study. Everyone dressed to suit Grandma with hats and gloves. Of course, the party was "covid style" so we also wore masks. Even though prepackaged drinks

and snacks were served instead of dainty canapes on fine china and punch from a silver punch bowl, it was a wonderful fellowship and fun-filled afternoon.

The ladies brought photographs of the grandmothers in their families and shared with the group important memories and teachings that have impacted their spiritual lives. Copies of the inspiring art work from each lesson was displayed for the ladies to explore and study in preparation for the upcoming lessons.

As Renee Berry gave an overview of the women to be studied throughout the year, all thought about the powerful women in the family tree of our Savior and left energized, giving thanks for their own grandmothers and the grandmothers of Jesus, and anticipating the upcoming year of learning more about these women.

We even wore our hats and gloves to church the next day.

Thanks, Grandma!

Please Be in Prayer for the Following Pastor Nominating Committees

- **Butler** (*Savannah*) - Pastor
- **Christ** (*Pooler*) - Pastor
- **Henry Memorial** (*Dublin*) - Pastor
- **Skidaway Community Church** – Pastor

[View this email in your browser](#)

Savannah Presbytery | [Website](#)



Savannah Presbytery | 3590 Darien Highway, Suite 8, Brunswick, GA 31525

[Unsubscribe mrichardson@savannahpresbytery.org](mailto:mrichardson@savannahpresbytery.org)

[Update Profile](#) | [About Constant Contact](#)

Sent by office@savannahpresbytery.org in collaboration
with



Try email marketing for free today!