

Faith Presbyterian Church Blue Ridge GA 30513

FAITH CONNECTION

Friday, March 20, 2020

To the Faith family,

I trust all of you are as well as you can be in the light of the situation all of us are facing and the circumstances in which we find ourselves, in company with all in our country and world. It is an amazing thing to recognize that the vast majority of people alive on our planet are all affected by the COVID19 virus.

This week has been a week of reaching out, making connections, supporting one another and looking for ways to assist others. This will be the same spirit and intention that we will all need over the coming days. Please let me or your Shepherd or someone else know if you have any pressing needs and we will stand together.

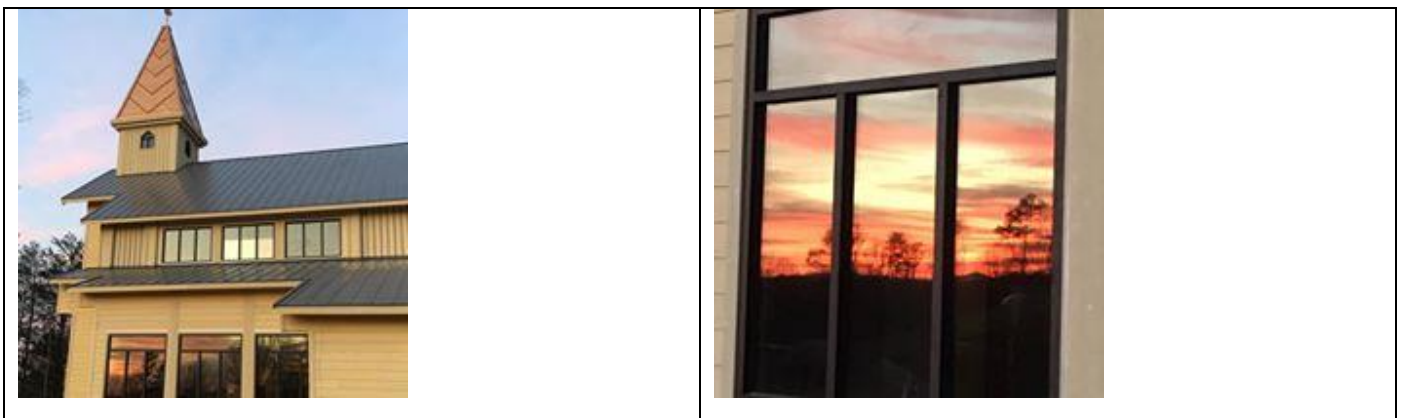
As of this afternoon Gerrie Jones remains in hospital in Jasper, clearly in a time of concern like this, she and Hervey being separated is an extra burden for both. Gerrie thanks us all for our prayers and told me to tell you that, “she is a tough old bird!”

On Wednesday the Session met via ZOOM, and agreed the following:

“The Session agrees to continue meeting weekly on Wednesdays at noon via ZOOM technology to continue to closely monitor the COVID-19 virus situation in our area. It was agreed that the church will remain closed through March 31, with no in-person meetings. As we approach the March 31 deadline, the Session will make a decision on how we will move forward, understanding that this suspension may have to go on longer. Great efforts are being made to make it possible for meetings, Lunch and Learns, and worship services to take place virtually via ZOOM and Facebook Live.”

The Session has agreed to meet weekly on Wednesdays to monitor the unfolding situation and is aware that even upcoming special Sundays, such as Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday may likely be much affected by the need for everyone’s sake to observe social distancing.

We shared some photographs today of continuing progress at the new church building, I am sure you enjoy seeing these and the beauty they represent.



Plans have been made to enable a limited number of people to attend to the business of the church in receiving contributions and paying bills. There is on the church website a document that describes how people can use their own bank's online billpay system to remit contributions – you can find it here: <https://faithpresbyterianusa.org/on-line-giving> All checks should continue to be mailed to the church's PO BOX address which is: **Faith Presbyterian Church P.O. Box 2668 Blue Ridge, GA 30513**

For Sunday, March 22, 2020 we will host our LIVE WORSHIP CONNECTION on ZOOM, please see the end of this communication for all the ways you can connect to this interactive medium. This feed will also appear on Facebook Live on the church Facebook page but on that platform there is little opportunity for interaction, whereas on ZOOM everyone's voice can be heard and shared. For this Sunday, the program will begin at 10:30 a.m., the zoom meeting will be open from 10 a.m. to allow everyone to get connected and settled in. We encourage everyone to connect as they can by using just their phone – landline, home phone or cell phone to call in; or your computer/laptop/tablet/I-Pad; or your smart phone – both I-Phones and Android phones will connect with ZOOM.

You are also being provided with some of the liturgy and prayers that will be used in the Worship Connection this Sunday, you may decide to print them out for your use and reflection.

This week's Service was designated as a Service of Wholeness and Healing and it is in that spirit of openness, love and faith that we will unite together on Sunday morning. Come to pray and to be prayed for.

Grace and peace in Jesus Christ our Lord to all!

Jim Simpson, Pastor

Important information follows:

1. Link to Worship Connection on ZOOM
2. Worship Information

1. Weekly Worship Connection Faith Presbyterian Church in Blue Ridge GA

Time: Sunday, March 22, 2020 10:00 AM (EDT)

To get started on your computer, tablet or smartphone....

Download and install Zoom on Windows

1. Go to <https://zoom.us/download>
2. Click Download below the headline “Zoom Client for Meetings”
3. Choose “Save file” to download the Zoom installation program to your computer.
4. Double click on the downloaded program (ZoomInstaller.exe) to start the installation.

Once the program is installed you can click on Login <https://zoom.us/j/499592777> or type in the following Meeting ID number: 499 592 777

You do NOT need to create an account and you do NOT need to subscribe for an account – no need to pay any money.

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/499592777> Meeting ID: 499 592 777

To dial in using your phone you can use any of these numbers and when asked enter the Meeting ID: 499 592 777

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

+1 253 215 8782 US

+1 301 715 8592 US

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

Meeting ID: 499 592 777

2. Worship Information for Sunday, March 22 – The Fourth Sunday in Lent

Poetry Poem: THE WILDERNESS IS A PLACE OF DISRUPTION

My grandfather was a good man, But he believed

That wilderness emotions Were not to be seen.

Cry with the door closed, Don't dwell on the negative. Chin up, kid,

We've been here before.

My grandfather was a good man, But I'd like to say—

The wilderness is here to interrupt your previously-scheduled programming.

Like water in the desert And setting the slaves free,

The wilderness might be The very thing we need,

The very thing we dream, The very thing we plead For.

I guess what I'm trying to say is—

It never seems appealing to let a bird in the house,

But if you do, Then you might as well Open every window and door.

And if you do, Then you just might find yourself Basking in the light,

Dancing in the breeze, Overwhelmed with the beauty That an open door brings.

So I'm opening my door And inviting in the wind, To rustle up my heart

And start over again.

For sweeping the truth under the rug Has never gotten us far.

So may the wilderness be like a Bird in your house.

Throw open your doors. The truth must come out.

CALL TO WORSHIP

God is in the water that restores our soul.

And God is in the night when we lose our way.

God is in today and tomorrow, raising up leaders, prophets and dreamers.

And God is in the wilderness with us—every step of the way.

So with confidence we declare—

If God is in those spaces, then God is surely here.

Let us worship the God of creation.

Let us worship the God of wilderness spaces

CALL TO CONFESSION and PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Jesus of Nazareth, there are stories of you healing the blind all over scripture.

You were constantly opening people's eyes. So today we confess that we often choose to keep our eyes closed.

We turn away from injustice in our world, worried you might ask us to work for change. We close our eyes to our privilege, because the truth is uncomfortable.

We avoid eye contact with those who are suffering to avoid identifying with their pain.

Forgive us for failing to be your Church in the world. Guide us from the depths of our wilderness into your light. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Friends, Christ calls us to be community together. Everyone has worth, and we are called to protect and uphold the dignity of all, to suspend judgement and to offer welcome, to suspend criticism and to offer hospitality, that with our open arms and open hearts, and expressions of generosity and hospitality, we may enable others to find the freedom to flourish, to live life in all its fulness, and to be all that we have been created to be.

Forgiven and freed by Christ's Spirit of compassion, love, hope and generosity let us journey on together, woven together as one. Amen.

Our Scripture Readings today are Psalm 23 and from the Gospels, John 9: 1-41