

Faith Happenings *December 2024*



Faith Presbyterian Church of the North
Georgia Mountains
1349 Bluebird Road
Mineral Bluff, GA 30559

Advent

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS AT FAITH PRESBYTERIAN

WORSHIP SERVICES

Sunday, Dec. 1 – 10:30 a.m. – 1st Sunday of Advent – Hope

Celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper
Old Testament Reading: Jeremiah 33:14-16
Anthem: Duet—"Hope Is"
Gospel Reading: Matthew 24:36-44
Sermon: "What Can't Wait...Hope"

Sunday, December 8 – 10:30 a.m. – 2nd Sunday of Advent – Peace

Old Testament Reading: Malachi 3:1-4
Anthem: Guest Musicians, Bill and Cheryl Star
Gospel Reading: Luke 1:68-79
Sermon: "Re-assessing"

Sunday, December 15 – 10:30 a.m. – 3rd Sunday of Advent – Joy

The Faith Presbyterian Choir will present the cantata....
"A Story of Stars A Story of Love"
by Phillip E. Mitchell with Arden Mitchell

Sunday, December 22 – 10:30 a.m. – 4th Sunday of Advent – Love

First Scripture: Micah 5:2-5a
Anthem: "One Child, One Hope, One King"
Second Scripture: Luke 1:39-55
Sermon: "Burden or Blessing"

Tuesday, December 24 – 5:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Scripture: Luke 2:1-20
Sermon: "Compelling Witnesses"

*(Information on Advent Lunch
& Learns on Page 5)*



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DECEMBER 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10:30 Worship & Communion Sunday	2	3 1:00 Book Club Christmas Party 1:00 Outreach Planning Team Meeting	4 11:00 Year of the Bible 2.0 12:00 Advent Lunch & Learn	5 11:30 Ladies' Christmas Lunch & Raffle 5:00 Choir Practice	6 9:00 Merry Maids	7 9:00 Men's Breakfast
8 10:30 Worship & Second Sunday Lunch	9 1:00 Congregational Care Team Meeting	10 12:30 Spiritual Development Team Meeting	11 12:00 Advent Lunch & Learn	12 5:00 Choir Practice	13 9:00 Merry Maids 10:00 Crafty Friday	14 10:00 Cantata Rehearsal
15 10:30 Worship—Christmas Cantata	16 12:30 Mission Planning Team Meeting	17	18 11:00 Year of the Bible 2.0 12:00 Advent Lunch & Learn	19 5:00 Choir Practice	20 9:00 Merry Maids 9:30 Senior Center 6:00 Jewish Congregation of Blue Ridge	21
22 10:30 Worship & Joy Gift Offering	23	24 5:30 Christmas Eve Service & Joy Gift Offering	25 OFFICE CLOSED MERRY CHRISTMAS! 2:00 Triple L Homeless Project	26 OFFICE CLOSED	27 OFFICE CLOSED 9:00 Merry Maids	28
29 10:30 Worship	30	31 NEW YEAR'S EVE				

Each Sunday

9:45- 10:10 a.m. Coffee and Conversation

10:30 a.m. Worship

The worship service is live-streamed every Sunday to the FPC website – www.faithpresbyterianusa.org

The recording of the weekly Service of Worship is available on the church website following the service.



If you would like a copy of the sermon from any past Sundays' worship services, please call or email the church office.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

I should know by now there's no way of getting anything past this congregation! As some of you know, I was in Valdosta with my daughter, Christie, for my 70th birthday on November 24. In true Faith Presbyterian fashion, you were not to be deterred in helping me celebrate this "momentous" milestone. The amazing song written by Phillip and sung so beautifully by the choir touched me deeply. The bountiful birthday basket full of goodies was icing on the cake of what had been a wonderful week of celebration. Thank you, my Faith Presbyterian family, for your love and support, not just for my 70th, but continually throughout the year. I am blessed to be your pastor!

Grace and Peace,
Susan



Spiritual Development

Our women of Faith will not meet during the month of December. Instead, we encourage our ladies to join in all the Advent activities. Our next gathering will be on Monday, January 27, 2025. We hope you will join us then for fellowship, yummy food, and a Bible lesson on an Old Testament hero, Esther.



Spiritual Development

Elders:

Bob Elwell -
drbobelwell@gmail.com

Greg Duncan -
Gregwduncan58@gmail.com

Congregational Care

Elder:

Terri Charron -
sweetwatergsp@gmail.com

Mission

Elders:

Sally Crawford -
shcrawford52@gmail.com

Sylvia Goodyear -
smgoodyear01@gmail.com

Administration

Elders:

Bill Young -
captainclds@aol.com

Al Gnann -
algnann@gmail.com

Outreach

Elder:

Sandy Cuppia -
doggylady171@msn.com

The Year of the Bible 2.0—Digging Deeper

Our Year of the Bible 2.0 group continues to meet every other week at **11:00** for a discussion group. The group began at the beginning...with Genesis. A team of facilitators, led by Steve Baker, guide the discussion. After digging deeper into Genesis is complete, the discussion group will determine which book of the Bible will be studied next. We are excited to offer this opportunity to anyone in the congregation or community who wishes to participate.

Sanctuary Flowers

The presence of flowers in the sanctuary on Sunday morning add beauty and warmth to our weekly gatherings for worship as a congregation. If desired, flowers may be placed in honor or in memory of someone, or to celebrate a birthday, anniversary, graduation, or in recognition or honor of someone's achievement.

Dedication information to be published in the Sunday bulletin for the day an arrangement is placed should be submitted via email to the church office no later than 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday of the week before the Sunday the arrangement is to be displayed. Contributions (\$65.00) may be made to the church to purchase flowers by noting "Floral Fund" in the memo line of your check and made payable to Faith Presbyterian Church. You may also designate the specific Sunday on which your flowers will be displayed, and we will do our best to honor your requested date. Request forms are available in the narthex—a new list has been provided for 2025.

Please contact the church office (office@faithpresbyterianusa.org) for additional information.

Ushers for December

December 1

Anne Williamson

Nancy Goodson

Cynthia Salamone

Frances Young

December 8:

Phil & Lynda Ray

Bob & Susie Wasielewski

December 15

Ray & Betty Benedict

Bob & Vicki Elwell

December 22

Nancy Goodson

Mark & Dorothy McClain

Debbie Peterson

December 24

Bud & Treva Wheatley;

Candy Frank;

Vicki Elwell;

Greg & Debbie Duncan

December 29

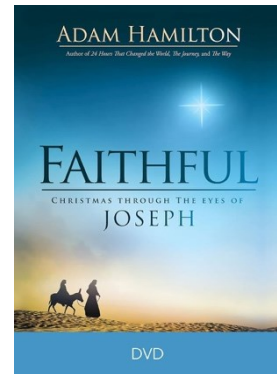
Anne Williamson

George & Susan Piros

Chris Martinez

Advent Lunch & Learn

From his beginnings as a humble carpenter to his all-important role as the earthly father of Jesus Christ, Joseph's place in the nativity story is sometimes overlooked but contains valuable lessons for all of us. Join us for this Lunch & Learn series as we examine Christmas through the eyes of Joseph. Absent from much of the biblical narrative, Joseph never spoke a word, but his courageous actions were crucial to the birth of Christ and God's salvation plan for humanity.



Due to the lateness of Thanksgiving (11/28) and Christmas Day being on Wednesday, there are only 3 Wednesdays available for Advent Lunch & Learns this year:

Weds, Dec. 4 beginning at noon - Advent Lunch & Learn 1

Weds, Dec. 11 beginning at noon - Advent Lunch & Learn 2

Weds, Dec. 18 beginning at noon - Advent Lunch & Learn 3

Susan Haynes will lead all 3 of the Advent Lunch & Learns.

Faith Groups Resuming in 2025

The **Thursday Faith Group** just finished our Fall study. We've not decided on new material yet. We are looking for a 6-week study to begin in late January or early February

The **Tuesday Faith Group** just finished Season 3 of The Chosen. We are strongly leaning toward a study of the Gospel of Luke .



*** Stay Tuned for more information!***

Newsletter Submissions

We respectfully request that all submissions for the January newsletter be submitted by email to newsletter@faithpresbyterianusa.org **NO LATER than Friday, December 27th.**

Congregational Care

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Happy Birthday!

Chris Martinez, Bruce Burn, Ray Benedict, Joe Mahovsky, Doris Riggs



Happy Anniversary!

Dick & Lori Nesz; Bill & Frances Young; Dwayne & Jane Gray Collier;
Tom & Kim King; Bill & Jamielee Green

Blue Bird Bookworms Book Club

Our next meeting will be **January 16 @ 4pm**. We will be reading and discussing The Brilliant Life of Eudora Honeysett. For more information, contact Chris Martinez at chris.martinez8258@gmail.com.



Second Sunday Lunch

The Session invites you to join us on Sunday, December 8th for our Second Sunday Lunch. Please bring a salad, side, or dessert to complement a traditional ham. Please plan to stay after the service and enjoy a great meal and meaningful fellowship.

Several people asked how to make the beautiful centerpieces that were on our November tables. Here is a YouTube link that shows you how....

<https://youtu.be/kobBS3yidUc>



Thank you, Sandy White, for sharing!

Meal & Transportation Volunteers Needed



Some of you signed up to help provide meals and transportation this year at the Time and Talent Fair. We are sure there are more people who are willing to provide meals or transportation for those in need for various reasons throughout the year. If you are interested in doing one or the other (or both), *please* contact Terri Charron. We're establishing a list so you can receive communications from our Meal Coordinators (Liz & Roger Charbonneau) or Transportation Coordinator (Craig Learn) when needs arise throughout the year. Thank you!

Ladies Holiday Luncheon and Raffle



Just a reminder that our annual Ladies Christmas Lunch and Raffle will be at the General Ledger in Blue Ridge Thursday, December 5th at 11:30 am. We aren't exchanging gifts this year but are planning a great raffle. There will be a lot of wonderful handmade items, and all the proceeds will go to the Presbyterian Disaster Relief Fund. FYI - everyone will be responsible for paying for their own lunch. If you haven't already signed up to come, there's a sign up sheet in the Narthex. This is a fun and festive event, so mark your calendars and plan to join us!

Faith's Coffee Corner!



We now have a designated space around the coffee pot where we can sit and visit. We have been used to using the office as a social place, and sometimes that hinders "office work." There is a small table with a few chairs just perfect for enjoying a cup of coffee & conversation when we stop by the church. You may even see the office angels and Susan having their lunch there.

Ducks In A Row Before I Go

Back by popular demand! If you didn't attend the last Ducks In A Row series back in 2018, or if you need a refresher or want to discover new information to help you navigate through your "Golden Years," we hope you will sign up to attend one, some, or all of our Wednesday sessions in 2025. Mark your calendars! The series will begin on Wednesday, February 5th and will continue each Wednesday on the 12th, 19th & 26th from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Be on the lookout for an agenda of topics along with a sign-up in the Narthex soon!

Faith Men's Breakfast

Join the Faith Men of the Church for breakfast and Christian fellowship on Saturday, December 7th. Coffee will be ready at 8:30, followed by breakfast at 9:00. This month's cook team is lead by the Reverend Ken McKenzie with John Thompson, Joe Ballay, and Jerry Jones on the griddles.



Gift of the Magi

Some ladies from Faith and Friends of Faith met for lunch and an enjoyable afternoon of fellowship at the Blue Ridge Community Theatre. The play "The Gift of the Magi" was excellent and gave the message that selflessness and love are the greatest gifts of all.

Veteran's Day Recognition

These wonderful gentlemen served in all the branches of the service (more Navy than anything else). We are blessed to have them as members of our congregation. We celebrate our freedom because of their bravery. Thank you all for your service!



Faith, Hope and Hammers

If you have a home project that you are unable to do, contact FHH Coordinator – John Thompson. He can reach out to the FHH volunteers to come out and assess the job and arrange to schedule the work. If it is beyond the FHH volunteers' ability, John can (hopefully) refer you to a local contractor who has been recommended by a Faith family member. John can be reached by email: jkentompson@yahoo.com. Contributions are welcome and can help defray some of the costs associated with projects undertaken.

Crafty Friday

Calling all Elves! There will be another Crafty Friday on **December 13th**. This is not a make and take. We will be putting together the final touches on the gift bags for the Senior Center as well as finishing up something new for the Outreach Team that will be added to our Visitor Welcome Bags. There is something for everyone to do: cutting, gluing, stuffing, or wrapping. Please come help and enjoy some fun and fellowship!!



Lost & Found

Please check the kitchen for items you may be missing. Unclaimed items will be donated at the end of December.



Mission

Habitat for Humanity

Help Us Double the Impact! ☀️

Habitat for Humanity of Fannin & Gilmer Counties has an incredible opportunity, and we need YOUR help! An anonymous donor has pledged to match every dollar we raise, up to \$100,000. This means your donation will go twice as far in helping us purchase land to build homes for hardworking, deserving families in our community.

🏠 Your Contribution = Double the Impact! 🏠

By donating today, you're not just supporting the construction of a house—you're building hope and stability for families striving for a better future. Plus, your contribution can be made tax-free from specific investment accounts, making it even more impactful.

Use the link below to donate and help us reach our goal!

Together, we can build a stronger community. <https://habitatfgc.charityproud.org/Donate/?cid=22723>

Triple L Homeless Project

The Triple L Homeless Project began on August 28th; touching the lives of the least, the last, and the lost in the Blue Ridge community. Our mission: to bring nourishing & nurturing meals to lay a foundation of trust, and to bridge the gap of hopelessness, lonesomeness, and brokenness by being the conduit to resources that can help assist where needed. To finish out the year, the Triple L Homeless Project still needs volunteers for the following event:

Wednesday, December 25th (Christmas Day)—Homeless dinner at Covet Hair Salon (4060 E. First Street, Blue Ridge). 1 or 2 people needed to shop, cook, and drop off food (enough to serve 12 people) at 1:30 p.m. Also needed: 1 person to meet at the church at 12:30 to work on site from 2-4 p.m. A sign-up sheet is available in the Narthex for anyone able to help.



*Have any unused Angel ornaments? Let's adorn the tree in the narthex with angels!
Ornaments can be retrieved the first Sunday in January.*

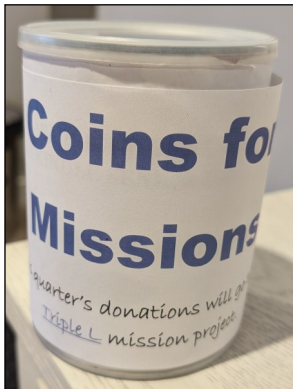
Family Connections Food Drive

The Faith Mission Team was recently informed about food shortages that have occurred in our community. Some of the shortages are due to changes in the regional food distribution centers, as well as supply chains disruptions. Family Connections is reaching out to the community to help fill the shelves as this is a high demand season for food assistance. They are asking for food items that require milk or water for preparation. Examples: Mac & cheese, instant potatoes, stuffing mix, brown gravy, hamburger helper, taco kits, rice, cereal, beans, and pasta. We are continuing to collect items in the mission basket located in the church office. Thank you to everyone who has



Thanksgiving Blessings

Each Thanksgiving, Faith takes a basket filled with all the traditional Thanksgiving meal items for two families of children at East Fannin Elementary School. School counselors select the families in need each year.



Coins for Missions

Got some coins sitting around your house? Car? Wallet?

Gather those coins and deposit them in the *Coins for Missions* canister located on the sign-up counter in the Narthex! Last quarter, we collected \$220.00 that went toward Rekindle Senior Food Program. All the coins and/or paper money collected this quarter will go to our new mission project, **The Triple L Homeless Project**. Once a month, Triple L is preparing and delivering meals to the homeless.

Presbyterian Disaster Relief

There is a thank you from Presbyterian missions on the bulletin board outside the Founders Room. This is for our contribution to Presbyterian Disaster Relief. Please take a moment to read all the thank yous we have received

Senior Center Outreach

Please join us on **Friday, December 20th @ 9:30 a.m.** for more fun with our Seniors!

News from the Church Gardens

Spicing up your Fall Recipes

Did you know we have started a church herb garden outside the kitchen door? It is in its infant stages but can offer you some fresh herbs for your fall recipes. We have fresh rosemary, sage, thyme, and oregano. We also have flat and curly parsley in one of our raised beds. So, if your special recipe calls for some fresh herbs, come and cut/snip some fresh herbs from the herb garden!

Vegetable Garden

Our summer vegetable garden is complete for the season. Youth volunteers from Pleasant Hill Presbyterian in Atlanta helped to weed and clean up the garden bed. *We are looking for an interested vegetable gardener to take on the leadership for next summer, 2025.* If this is something you would like to do, please contact Carl Riggs.

Fall Leaves

Bag up those wonderful leaves falling in your yard and bring them to the garden where we will add them to our winter cover to help amend our soil.



Prayer requests for immediate needs relating to persons directly connected to members and friends of Faith are circulated via e-mail and others are included and published in our weekly and monthly newsletters.

**For prayer requests, please email or call Rev. Susan Haynes
(678) 697-0822
susan.haynes@faithpresbyterianusa.org**

Nancy Goodson

Nancy experienced a sudden and debilitating vision issue Wednesday, 11/20. Thankfully, the issue is not retina related, but likely caused by scar tissue; however, it has greatly affected the vision in that eye. She will have a follow up in a week. Nancy is also having significant pain in her left hip. Nancy asks for God's healing mercies and a more definitive idea of what is going on with her vision.

Carl Riggs

Carl will have a second knee replacement surgery on Thursday, 12/5. Prayers for successful surgery and good healing are appreciated.

Joe Ballay

Joe will have heart bypass surgery Friday, 12/6 in Atlanta. He will not return to North Georgia for at least six weeks or so following the surgery. Please keep Joe in your prayers for a successful surgery and good healing.

Dan Charron

Dan will have knee replacement surgery on Monday, 12/9. Prayers for successful surgery and good healing are appreciated.

Family of Marty Elders

Marty, step-sister of Larry Giles, died unexpectedly on November 24th. Please keep all of Marty's family in your prayers.

Family of Joe Silva

In sure and certain hope of the resurrection, we give thanks to God for our friend Joe Silva, who entered into eternal rest early November 15th. There will be a memorial service after the first of the year to celebrate the lives of both Joe and his beloved Helga. Please keep John and Linda in your prayers in the days ahead.

Cynthia Chitwood

Update: Cynthia has almost completed her antibiotics and hopes to return to church on December 8th. She has a follow-up appointment with her pulmonologist on December 12th. Thank you for your prayers.

**Ana, granddaughter of
Cynthia and Clark
Chitwood**

Update: Ana still is not allowed to walk on her leg, but at 2 1/2 she is doing well on her quilt on the floor and in a wagon. She will have x-rays on 12/16 to determine if she can wear a walking boot. The Chitwoods are thankful for your prayers.

Cynthia Salamone

It was wonderful to see Cynthia at worship on December 1st . Cynthia is very thankful for the prayers and support of her Faith family. Please continue to pray for Cynthia's recovery.

**People and Communities
who are Victims of the
devastation from
Hurricanes Helene &
Milton**

We continue to pray for all those who are trying to recover from the devastation from Hurricane Helene and Milton. Homes, businesses, and infrastructure have been destroyed, many lives have been lost, and people are overwhelmed by the magnitude of the damage. Please pray for all who are suffering...physically, emotionally, and financially and for all those who are supporting the ongoing recovery efforts.

We lift in prayer those with ongoing health challenges and who appreciate our continuing prayers:

David Furtwengler; sister & mother of Susan Piros; Kristin Boynton; Nancy Williamson; Sandy, sister of Patty Morris; Swan McKnight; David Nasser; Gene Shillcutt; Larry Ransom and Judy Mascho; Lamar Singleton; Ryan Wheatley; Carol Smith; Diana Gnann; Patricia Shillcutt; Susan Learn; Fran Inghram; Virginia McPhee; Prue, great-granddaughter of Martha Heffner.

Faith Presbyterian Church

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Faith Website:

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