

Christmas Mission Challenge

This year for Christmas, First Presbyterian Church of Americus raised money to help alleviate hunger through the PC(USA) Presbyterian Hunger Program.

Gift Given by Ronnie Greer,
in memory of Tom Collins.

Gift Given by Nancy Herron,
in memory of her beloved husband, Dr. James Herron.

Gift Given by Sharon Parks,
in honor of Pastor Sommer, Jaimie and Kerstin.

Gift Given by Jaimie Minich,
in honor of her parents; David and Donna Minich

Gift Given by Ray and Donja Tripp,
in honor of; Sommer Bower, Kerstin Cherrbboneau, Candice Godby,
Percy Kelley and Jaimie Minich.

Gift Given by Sommer Bower,
in honor of the session of First Presbyterian Church,
with gratitude for their service to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.



First Presbyterian Church

Americus, Georgia

A community of faith responding to God's call.
Loving, learning and leading people to Jesus Christ.

First Sunday of Christmas



Photo by Mindy Olson P on Unsplash

Two people give witness to Jesus' greatness, and to the significance of what he will accomplish: Simeon and Anna. Characteristically, the Gospel of Luke balances a prophetic utterance from a man with another from a woman. Both are profoundly religious. Both are elderly... Both are prophets. Upon seeing the child, both praise God and make declarations about him. Both of these people did not see the present state, but were able to see in the coming of what seemed like an ordinary child, the coming of God.

How do we develop the eyes of Simeon and Anna?

First Presbyterian Church of Americus, GA

Sunday, December 31, 2023 ~ 11:00 a.m.

First Sunday of Christmas



*All Are Invited to Stand in Body or in Spirit.
The congregation is invited to respond at the **bold** print.

PRELUDE.....Pianist Elder Joy Thompson

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS.....Pastor Sommer Bower

***HYMN (#88 verse 1 and 7)**.....Pianist Elder Joy Thompson
"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

CALL TO WORSHIP

*In the newness of this day, this week, this coming year:
may we know God's abundant love for us.*

**May we turn back to God's ways, forgiving one another
and loving one another,
and may we know that God is making all things new again.**

*Go with joy into this new year,
knowing that in Christ there is always new life. Amen.*



CHURCH EVENT CALENDAR

DECEMBER ELDER ~ Terry McDonald

JANUARY ELDER ~ Ronnie Greer

FPC OFFICE HOURS ~ The church office will be closed December 25 & 26, and January 1.

VACATION ~ Jaimie Minich will be out of the office Dec 27 - Jan 3.

TAKING DOWN THE ADVENT DECORATIONS ~ Thursday, January 4th at 1:00 p.m. What goes up, must come down! Please come to help if you can.

NEXT STATED SESSION MEETING ~ Tuesday, January 30, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

PRESBYTERY FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING ~ Tuesday, January 30, 2024.

Flint River Presbytery Stated Meeting ~ Saturday, February 3 ~ In person meeting at New Hope Presbyterian in Columbus, GA. ~4142 Weems Road, Columbus, GA 31909~



We are absolutely delighted that you've chosen to worship with us today!

May Christ's peace be with you until we meet again.

You can always join us on our

website: americuspresbyterian.org and on

facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/fpcamericus/>.



*First Presbyterian supports the Harvest of Hope Food Pantry each month financially and with food donations. **The month of December, we will be collecting 20 oz - Jelly (any flavor).***

Donations can be brought to Sunday 11am Worship or to the office Mon - Thurs 9am—3pm.

As we are fed each month by our Lord Jesus through Holy Communion, we do our best to help feed others in need.

December Birthdays:

- December 9 ~ Carrie Hawkins
- December 12 ~ Jim Buffaloe
- December 13 ~ Cara Hawkins
- December 14 ~ Ronnie Greer
- December 14 ~ Katie Minich
- December 23 ~ Russ Childers
- December 23 ~ Pat Hill
- December 23 ~ Sharon Parks

December Anniversaries:

- December 20 ~ Earl and Beth Williams
- December 28 ~ Ray and Donja Tripp



If we have missed a birthday or anniversary, please let us know. A sign up sheet is on the narthax table.

SESSION (Ruling Elders):

Class of 2024

- Tom Collins
- Carrie Hawkins
- Sharon McFarland (clerk)

Class of 2025

- Ronnie Greer
- Terry McDonald
- Richard Pollette

Class of 2026

- Mary Catron
- Jim Griffith
- David Minich

2023 Corporation Officers elected on Feb.12, 2023

President: Tom Collins - VP: Carrie Hawkins
 Secretary: Sharon McFarland - Chief Financial Officer: Bill Krenson



GOSPEL READING

LUKE 2:22-40

22 When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord 23 (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), 24 and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons."

25 Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. 26 It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. 27 Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, 28 Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying,

29 "Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
 according to your word;
 30 for my eyes have seen your salvation,
 31 which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
 32 a light for revelation to the Gentiles
 and for glory to your people Israel."

33 And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. 34 Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed 35 so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

36 There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, 37 then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. 38 At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

39 When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. 40 The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

This is the Word of God, for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

***HYMN (#340)**.....Pianist Elder Joy Thompson
“This Is My Song”

SERMON.....Pastor Sommer Bower
“More to the Story”

OFFERTORY.....Pianist Elder Joy Thompson

***DOXOLOGY (#606)**Pianist Elder Joy Thompson

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host.
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.***

***HYMN (#623)**.....Pianist Elder Joy Thompson
“I’ve Got Peace like a River”

BENEDICTION

*God of All Seasons, we give You thanks for the memories of this past year. We cannot go back and relive the good or the bad, but we can live in the now. Help us to know that You are present with us, right now. Your love is with us, right now. No matter what suffering we have endured, no matter what pain we are going through, no matter what worries we have for the road ahead, You are present with us, right now. May we live with the wonder and awe of this gift in this moment. May we look forward with hope, peace, joy, and love, into this New Year, knowing that in You, this moment is eternal.
Amen.*

POSTLUDE.....Pianist Elder Joy Thompson

Works Cited

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PRAYER LIST

We lift up prayers for those listening Sunday mornings on WISK 98.7, Radio.
May they be spiritually fed. Please Pray For - Our Nation, Our Church; Our
Presbytery, Our Pastor, Our Staff, Our Officers, Campus Ministry,
Our Community and especially:

MEMBERS AND CHURCH FRIENDS AT HOME &/OR IN RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES

Bob & B.J. Bryan Nancy Miller Gloria Johnson Pat Hill
Blanche Palmer Kathy Newkirk Anne & Malcolm Perry

MEMBERS REMEMBERED

Ray and Donja Tripp
Judy and Jody Wade

PRAYER REQUESTS

~Becky Willis ~ Flint River Presbytery has requested intentional and perpetual prayer for all the churches, affiliates, staff and volunteers in our Presbytery. This week we are lifting up FRP Stated Clerk, Becky Willis. Prayers of gratitude for her leadership.

~ Tom Collins ~ We extend our condolences to the family of beloved Tom Collins. Funeral Services were on Thursday, December 14 at 4pm at First Presbyterian of Americus. The committal will be on Wednesday, December 27 at First Presbyterian Church in Pickens, South Carolina. Robinson Funeral Home in Easley, SC is handling the committal arrangements.

~ Emily Collins ~

171 Westshore Drive, Americus, GA 31719

MISSIONARIES REMEMBERED IN PRAYER

- Ben & Esther Campbell, Push the Rock Intl.
- Tim & Lois Hunter, Spoken Worldwide
- Rev. George Haugen (PC USA Minister), Antioch Partners

*****Please notify the church office at 924-2162 or
office@americuspresbyterian.org
if you would like to add someone to our prayer list and/or
request a PrayerGram.**