

First Presbyterian Church

Americus, Georgia

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

First Sunday in Lent



What Do I Believe?

I believe in a God of abundance-
a God who sees possibilities where I cannot,
and who holds onto hope when I am at the end of my rope.

I believe in a God who comforts-
a God who says, "Do not be afraid;"
a God who joins me in life's deep waters.

I believe in a God who invites-
a God who says, "Follow me,"
and, "You will be fishers of people."

I believe in a God who seeks after me relentlessly and persistently-
a God of second chances and boundless mercy; a God who calls us by name.

We believe.

Help our unbelief.

In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

Wandering Heart: "Jesus sought me"

*All This Time
I put my headphones in.
I walk quickly.
I look toward the ground.
I create one million barriers of independence,
but still God seeks after me.
God leans a rainbow over the sky.
God sends sun after the rain.
God blankets the earth with wildflowers.
God allows music to carry
and laughter to rise,
all so that I might notice.
And when I do notice,
the unfurling that begins in my soul
is slow and holy and burning.
I am not alone.
God has been chasing after me
all this time.*

First Presbyterian Church of Americus, GA

Sunday, February 18, 2024 ~ 11:00 a.m.

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT



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



PRELUDE.....Pianist Candice Godby

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS.....Pastor Sommer Bower

***HYMN (#2)**.....Pianist Candice Godby

“Come, Thou Almighty King”

CALL TO WORSHIP

Come in.

Feel your feet on the floor.

Settle your worries.

Take a deep breath.

Dust the cobwebs from your ears. Relax the tension in your jaw,

for Christ is here.

God never stops seeking us.

We have been found.

Let us find God in return.

Let us worship the God of deep waters. Amen.

CHURCH EVENT CALENDAR

COMMUNION ~ Celebrated on the first Sunday of every month during 11:00am worship.

FPC OFFICE HOURS ~ The Church Office is open Monday-Thursday; 9:00am-3:00pm.

COMMUNITY SERVICE MINISTRY ~ Every Thursday 9:00am– 11:30am. Volunteers from member churches of the Sumter Area Ministerial Association help their neighbors in need of assistance with utility expenses. Hosted in FPC Mission House at 127 S. Jackson St.

LENT BIBLE STUDY ~ You are invited to a 12:00pm Noon Lenten Bible Study, with Lunch, in the parlor on the following **TUESDAY**'s; February 20 & 27, March 5 & 12.

Let us study God's word together!

NEXT STATED SESSION MEETING ~ Tuesday, February 27, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

PALM SUNDAY ~ March 24, 2024 ~ Sunday, 11:00 am worship.

MAUNDY THURSDAY ~ Worship, Communion and an evening meal in the Fellowship Hall.

~ Thursday, March 28, 2024 at 6:00 pm ~

CAMPUS MINISTRY ~ Thursday, March 14 ~ St Patrick's Day celebration ~ Stay tuned for details and volunteer sign up.

TRE (Trained Ruling Elder) ~ Flint River Presbytery Pastoral Leadership Classes begin Saturday, April 13th. Elder David Minich will be joining this class!



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 February, we will be collecting 30 oz - Mayonnaise.***

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.*

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

Nancy Herron
Nate Herron
Mitch and Riley Herron

*You are invited to sign the Prayergrams on the narthex table in fellowship.

MISSIONARIES REMEMBERED IN PRAYER

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

PRAYER REQUESTS

~ BJ Bryan ~ We lift up BJ Bryan, and pray for comfort and peace from the Holy Spirit with the recent passing of her brother, James Carpenter. A prayergram is on the narthex table; condolences can also be mailed to: ~ BJ and Bob Bryan; 543 Lakewood Avenue, Americus, GA 31709 ~
~Cathy Clark Reynolds ~ Let us hold Cathy in prayer as she continues her Parkinson's treatment in Gainesville Florida. ~ Cathy Clark Reynolds; 113 Hurt Drive, Cordele, GA 31015 ~
~ Cairo Presbyterian Church ~ This week, from the Flint River Presbytery perpetual prayer calendar; we celebrate the Pastor, Session and Congregation of Cairo Presbyterian.

***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.

Elder of the Month: February 2024 ~ Richard Pollette

March 2024 ~ Terry McDonald & Richard Pollette

SESSION (Ruling Elders):

<u>Class of 2024</u>	<u>Class of 2025</u>	<u>Class of 2026</u>
Carrie Hawkins	Ronnie Greer	Mary Catron
Sharon McFarland (clerk)	Terry McDonald	Jim Griffith
	Richard Pollette	David Minich

2024 Corporation Officers elected on Feb. 4, 2024

President: Ronnie Greer - VP: Terry McDonald
Secretary: Sharon McFarland - Chief Financial Officer: Bill Krenson

CALL TO CONFESSION

In our scripture passage for today, we will read about Jesus calling Peter to be a disciple. In the story, Peter is in the presence of the Divine for quite some time before he realizes it. Jesus crawls into Peter's boat. He tells him to head toward deep water. Together, they let the nets down. And it is only when the boat threatens to sink, due to the extreme abundance of fish, that Peter turns to Jesus and truly sees who's in his boat. Sometimes we miss what's right in front of us. Fortunately, Christ keeps crawling into our boats anyhow. So join me in the prayer of confession, not out of fear, but out of a desire to finally see who's right in front of us. Let us pray:

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Loving God,

You call us by name.

You join us in the deep waters of life.

**You invite us to drop our nets and follow you,
and yet, more often than we'd like to admit, we are like Peter.**

**Over and over again, we stand slack jawed
and surprised to find you in our midst.**

Forgive us for drowning out your voice with our own.

Forgive us for assuming that we can tackle deep waters by ourselves.

Forgive us for forgetting that you will never stop climbing into our boat.

Turn our hearts, our minds, and our spirits toward you,

for you are the Lord our God, and it is in your name that we pray. Amen.

WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

Friends, Peter didn't exactly make a good first impression when Jesus got into his boat. He questioned dropping his nets, as they hadn't caught any fish all night. He was oblivious to who Christ was for quite some time, and once he realized the Divinity standing in his boat, he quickly deemed himself unworthy. And even still, Jesus called Peter a disciple and a friend. Church family, hear and believe this good news: (CONGRESSIONAL RESPONSE NEXT PAGE)

**You can make a thousand bad impressions.
You can make every mistake in the book, roll your eyes,
and assume you know better.
And even still, Christ will forgive you, claim you,
and continue to seek your heart.
That is the good news of the gospel.
Rest, celebrate, and trust in that. Amen.**

GLORIA PATRI (#581).....Pianist Candice Godby

***Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen, amen.***

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Creator God, You hear everything. You hear the rush of the wind through the trees. You hear a baby’s first cry. You hear the crickets chirping, our silent prayers, and laughter around tables. You hear it all! We don’t need that same capacity, but we do need to hear your Word, O God, for we cannot live on bread alone. So today we pray: give us the ability to truly listen. Give us the ability to listen with our hearts, and may the truths revealed in your scripture today change us. With hearts full of gratitude we pray, amen.

SCRIPTURE Luke 5: 1-11 NRSV updated edition

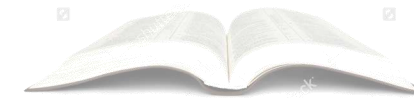
Jesus Calls the First Disciples

5:1 Once while Jesus was standing beside the Lake of Gennesaret and the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, **2** he saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gotten out of them and were washing their nets. **3** He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. **4** When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch.” **5** Simon answered, “Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets.”

6 When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to burst. **7** So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both boats, so that they began to sink. **8** But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’s knees, saying, “Go away from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!” **9** For he and all who were with him were astounded at the catch of fish that they had taken, **10** and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. Then Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching people.” **11** When they had brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

This is the Word of God, for the People of God,

Thanks be to God.



***HYMN (#824)**Pianist Candice Godby

“There Is a Place of Quiet Rest”

SERMON.....Pastor Sommer Bower

“Jesus sought me amidst tides and taxes.”

OFFERTORY.....Pianist Candice Godby

***DOXOLOGY (#606)**Pianist Candice Godby

***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.***

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

***HYMN (#475)**.....Pianist Candice Godby

“Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE.....Pianist Candice Godby

