

# FLINT RIVER PRESBYTERY

Responding to God's Call.

*LeaderPak*

**November, 2011**

## Ripples in the Pond

*Guest Editorial by Tom Goodwin*

When you were a little kid, did you ever throw a rock into a pond and watch the circle of ripples grow? Did you wonder how one little rock could make so much water move so far? I did, and I always tried to make a big splash with a big rock. It always amazed me, however, that the size of the rock did not make much difference except for the size of the initial splash. The small stones moved almost as much water.

Think of the pond as Flint River Presbytery. Think of the rocks as the pledges of our churches to Flint River Presbytery. Think of what throwing 50 rocks simultaneously into the pond would do to the surface of the water. Wouldn't it seem like wind blowing over the water? Could the work of our pledges be a reflection of the work of the Holy Spirit in our midst?

Whether we realize it or not, our pledges enable Flint River to maintain effective witness for Christ and His church in a variety of ways, both here and throughout the world. Your pledges provide for three campus ministries within the bounds of Flint River Presbytery, and the foundation for the establishment of a fourth for the three institutions in Macon. A portion of your pledges which go to Synod and General Assembly is returned to us in part to support campus ministry and other ministries like the Bare Bulb Coffee House in Houston County. The presbytery portion supports ministries like the church renewal project, and the mentoring program for pastors, support for struggling congregations, and for the maintenance of a skilled and dedicated staff in Albany.

Through General Assembly, you provide support for missionaries throughout the world, disaster relief through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance teams, and a multitude of other ministries that affect the lives of millions of people. Through the Synod, you support institutions like Thronwell Home and School, Presbyterian College, Georgia Presbyterian Homes, and others.

It has been my privilege to serve as Moderator of your Finance Committee for the last two years. I have seen and can testify to the effectiveness of your stewardship. Keep up the good work. We can make a splash for God's Church if we follow Christ, and listen to the calling of the Holy Spirit.

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## A Definitive Splash for the Kingdom!

by Rev. Deb Bibler

I hope you will share Tom Goodwin's article (and perhaps even this one!) with your Session as you listen for the ways in which God is calling you to give both personally and communally to the broader church!

About a month ago, First (Thomaston), in a smooth, negotiations move, persuaded me to serve as the Guest Leader for their Stewardship Season. I thought this meant preaching for 1 Sunday. The good folks in Thomaston had a little more in mind. I was overwhelmed by the thought of "one more thing". They were wholly unperturbed and unerringly patient. And then they sent me a book to read. "Just look at it!" was the simple admonishment. And so I did. *Thank God!* The book is a little treasure by Herb Miller called Consecration Sunday and there's a line in there that will stay embedded in my memory for the rest of my days: "We don't drift into good giving habits, we decide into them!"

I love this metaphor!

As we think about Tom Goodwin's "Ripples in the Pond...."

As we think about our lives which are grounded and girded in Jesus....

As we think about the splashes of grace in our lives....

As we think about the Biblical story of "Swimming Lessons" at our recent presbytery worship service....

As we think about the ways in which our days are saturated in blessings....

Think about these words some more. "We don't drift into good giving habits..."

We drift off to sleep, drift out to sea, or drift into another lane of traffic when we're juggling the steering wheel, cell phone, and note pad. When we drift, there's a sense that we're not paying close attention, that we're moving aimlessly, content with a leisurely ride.

### **We don't drift off into discipleship.**

Drifting will not get us anywhere. And, we have places to go.

Places to which we have been called to go.

Ripples to rejoice over. Splashes to celebrate.

So, as your congregation decides how to share the gifts which it has been given, remember the mission and ministry of Flint River Presbytery!

Not because you must.

Not because of a budget line or a particular need.

- Decide clearly as disciples of Jesus.
- Decide because there are ministries and missions which are building beautiful bridges of every sort between us and others in every kind of need.
- Decide because you know that you are called to be a part of these ministries.
- Decide to be a part of the ripples of renewal and reformation!

**And know that by the Spirit's power we will make quite a splash indeed!**

**Monastery Visit  
Sherwood**

**Judy Hay,**

I went to the Monastery on the weekend of Oct. 7 - 9. There was a program that weekend on Anger, Resentment, and Forgiveness. I had just finished a 6 part Sermon series on Barriers to Faith which included the issues addressed in the Monastery program as well as others. But I really went to find direction for myself and Sherwood through distance and quiet contemplation.

The program was full, people came from Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Tennessee, and South Carolina to attend. Once again, it was brought home to me that everyone has a story, and that we must listen with our hearts and not just with our ears, and reach out to people where they are in their lives not

just where we want them to be.

By listening, worshiping, and being quiet, the Holy Spirit gave me insight and I left the Monastery with a renewed sense of peace and direction.

### **Pray for Flint River's Mission Trip to Guatemala!**

*15 Flint River Presbyterians will be in Guatemala November 7-14 to develop our mission partnership with the Sinódica Women's Union (USF) of the Guatemalan Presbyterian Church. We will attend a USF national convention, host a vacation Bible school for participants' children, share faith stories, visit NGO projects and a Maya village, worship in a local church, and explore the country's history and culture. For details, see the announcement on the Flint River Presbytery website or contact Bain Cowell, All Saints, at tel. 706-565-9878 or [baincowell@hotmail.com](mailto:baincowell@hotmail.com); or Pam Moye, FPC Columbus, at [pambmoye@charter.net](mailto:pambmoye@charter.net).*

***....And after they get home and have a chance to catch up on their sleep, invite one of the team members to speak at your church!!***

### **Personals**

**Mindy Katz** (1st Thomasville) has been elected president of the Villa International Board of Directors  
**Bill Christman**, former pastor at 1st Tifton, is critically ill after a fall, and is in an acute care hospital in Denver. Send him a card c/o Laura Picher 2490 South Birch St, Denver, CO 80222.

**Pam Moye's** mother is now having so much trouble swallowing that they have had to insert a feeding tube.

**Richard Hart's** father died on Monday evening, November 7

**Tom Goodwin** is having surgery on neck on November 8.

**Riedy Simmons** is having yet another surgery on her palate on November 9.

### **November, 2011 Calendar**

1	3:00 pm	Resource Center/Library
1	6:00 pm	CEN, meal at 5:30 pm
3	10:00 am	COM
3	10:00 am	CME conference call
5	10:00 am	Presbyterian Women, Annual Gathering, Cairo Presbyterian Church
8	6:00 pm	COF, meal at 5:30 pm
10	Noon	NW Clergy Grp at Edgewood
13		Boston Presbyterian Church celebrates 175 years
14	1:00 pm	Reformation Project, Valdosta
14	3:00 pm	Misconduct Prevention Seminar at Trinity Valdosta
15	10:00 am	<b>Presbytery Meeting at Trinity Valdosta</b>
24-25		OFFICE CLOSED FOR THANKSGIVING HOLIDAYS

***All meetings are held at the Presbytery Office unless otherwise noted.***

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Tuesday, November 1 = Final deadline for "Faith in 3D" payment (group and/or individual)

**AND** Montreat Youth week (June 10-16) registration deadline! NON-

REFUNDABLE deposit of \$100 due to FRP office November 1!

Check out [www.flintriverpresbytery.org](http://www.flintriverpresbytery.org). Click on the "Youth" tab and scroll down to the "Montreat Youth Week" to find both a flyer and registration form. Cost is \$550/student.

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Looking Ahead

December 6 (4:30-6:30 PM) = Southern Clergy Cluster Christmas Gathering. Location TBA

January 17 = Southern Cluster Clergy Lunch @ noon @ 1st Thomasville

January 29 = Danny Loffredo Installation

January 22 = Leadership/Pulpit Swap

January 28 = Spiritual Practices Class from 10 -2 @ FRP office; register by January 24. Cost \$20. Lunch included. Childcare provided if registered by January 20.

February 18 = Youth Council will meet at FRP office for COF Planning

## ***Parish Paper***

### November, 2011 Parish Paper

Our Presbytery's purchase of a subscription to the Parish Paper includes:

1. Permission to provide copies to our staff and to the congregations within our Presbytery in any of the following ways: E-mail, Postal, newspaper, newsletter, meetings, training events, and our Web site.
2. Permission is granted for each congregation within our Presbytery to (a) photocopy or electronically distribute for local use as many copies as it needs, (b) post them on its Web site, and (c) quote sentences and paragraphs.

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