

# FLINT RIVER PRESBYTERY

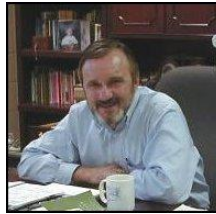
Responding to God's Call.

LeaderPak

February, 2012

## Remembering

January was not a particularly happy month for me. There's the on-going friction within our denomination....and uncertainty about our budget because so many churches still haven't worked through their own numbers...and the shoulder which doesn't seem to be responding to cortisone shots anymore....and the sinus infection that hit on the 6th day of the new year and which only just today is letting me feeling anything like normal. (Oh, and in the middle of it all I had to have Pawly, my 16 year old Dalmation, put to sleep.) No, January wasn't fun.



But I'm back up!

What pulled me back?

Several years ago I had a series of quotes mounted around our Presbytery Office. One of them caught my eye this morning.....and I walked slowly around reading each of them ....and by the time I was done I was pumped back up and ready to move on to whatever comes next.

I offer them now to those of you who may be having a hard time and need a little kickstart.

*The Spirit of God is among the people of God.*

*Dare we risk failure? Dare we NOT risk failure?*

*Rule #1: Don't fall back into the old way of doing things.*

*A Presbytery in which every action and activity is based upon the needs of our churches....and every church is focused on the mission of Christ on earth.*

*Angels can fly because they take themselves so lightly.*

## In This Issue

[Remembering](#)

[Church Spreads Cheer During Parade](#)

[Fighting Over Jesus](#)

[Be My Valentine](#)

[Bare Bulb in the Spotlight](#)

[Coaching for you and for your Church](#)

[Resource Center Review](#)

[Flint River Resource Center Renovation](#)

[Personals](#)

[February, 2012 Calendar](#)

[Parish Paper](#)

## Quick Links

[FRP Youth Network](#)

[January Parish Paper](#)

[February Parish Paper](#)

[2012 COF Event](#)

[Sabbath Retreats](#)

[Sabbath Retreat insert](#)

[Green Bough House of Prayer](#)

We are not alone. We have a great God. And He is never, ever, going to abandon us. And as long as there are so many strong and faithful souls in this Presbytery to rub up against, everything is going to be okay.

### ***Church Spreads Cheer During Parade*** by Alline Kent, Macon Telegraph, Reporter

Ever since I moved to Warner Robins, one of my favorite things about December has been the Christmas parade. I have gone with my friends. I have gone with my children. I have gone alone to watch my children. All those years I got there early and sat for an hour or more, in the same area, in the parking lot of a shopping center. But this is the first year I remember that I have ever been late.

We had gone to the Warner Robins High School football away game the night before and arrived home late. When the boys and I woke up all about the same time, it was with the realization that the parade was about to start and we weren't going to be able to get to our spot before it passed. So this year, we out ran the parade and went to the other end to find a spot. We found a place to park near Commercial Circle and then went walking up Watson Boulevard to find a place to sit in the sun while we waited for the parade to make it down that far.

What we found was a group of people ministering in the shade but in the name of the Son. One of my children needed to use the bathroom, which presented a problem as the parade has been traditionally short on bathrooms. It is understandable. Most businesses don't want to have a lot of people trooping through just to use the facilities.

So when we saw a sign that announced that restrooms were open, my son made a beeline. I waited on the sidewalk and then noticed that the same place allowing restroom breaks was also giving away hot chocolate and popcorn.

It was the First Presbyterian Church.

After my children and I drank hot chocolate, I decided it was prudent to stay near the only open restroom within sight, so we sat down on the curb.

Conversations went on with strangers like you have when a group of people are gathered and I soon learned from one of the members of the church that the hot chocolate/restroom initiative was started years ago as a simple way for their members to minister to the community.

One of the people I met that morning was Paula Hoffman, pastor of First Presbyterian. Bubbly and vivacious, her enthusiasm for the Christmas season was contagious to the parade onlookers seated nearby.

The parade was wonderful as always and our pleasure was added to by the wonderful hospitality of the members of First Presbyterian Church.

My family always plans to attend the Warner Robins Christmas Parade. Next year, we are planning

on waking up late as well. It'll be fine since we know the best spot in town to watch it from.

Contact writer Alline Kent at 396-2467 or [allinekent@cox.net](mailto:allinekent@cox.net).

Read more here: <http://www.macon.com/2011/12/14/1831125/church-spreads-cheer-during-parade.html#storylink=cpy>

## ***"Fighting Over Jesus"***

*by Rev. Deb Bibler*

Let me give you a quick, unfocused glimpse into my world.

Like yours, it's messy and marvelous,  
tearful and joyful,  
troubled and hopeful.

But here's another, more focused, glimpse -- and it's not particularly pretty.

But it is funny. And sad. And real.

It's Christmas Day and I am looking everywhere for the baby Jesus, whom I had tucked away a month earlier. (\*When the children were younger, we would play "Hide and Go Seek Jesus" on Christmas Day before placing him in the manger.) After a frantic opening of every drawer in the house and several household complaints about my organizational system, I find Jesus. I try not to dwell too closely on the internal and external parallels and bring the baby to our living room.

Amelia (11) and Thom (8) are waiting. Together they make a nose-dive for Jesus, grabbing him from my hands, ready to pull Jesus to bits. Both want to be "THE ONE" that places Jesus in the manger.

"GUYS! " I shout LOUDLY, while managing to extricate Jesus from locked fingers and fists.

"I DON'T think Jesus wants us to fight over him!!!"

Eventually, Jesus is tossed in the manger. And then he is pulled out and placed in a little more gently, even reverently, this time. And finally, finally, finally, tempers are soothed.

And we look in silence, for just a brief, fleeting moment, at Jesus.

My husband, who tends to be somewhat taciturn when it comes to matters involving Jesus, looked at me, nodded his head toward the manger, smiled and said, "Sounds like a message to me."

And he's right.

I DON'T think Jesus wants us to fight over him.

Jesus wants us to follow him.

But we get caught up in our own deeply personal needs, don't we?

Our need to be included. Or our need to be important. Or right. Or heard.

And when we get caught up in our own needs, fingers and fists locked up in anger and shame,  
we forget about the needs of the world.

We joust for position and power,  
and Jesus is left watching from the side-lines.

But again, I DON'T think Jesus wants us to fight over him.

Jesus wants us to follow him.

God knows, I don't do this very well.

But I'm in good company, apparently.

After all, Paul's letters to the varied churches, and John's three letters, and Jude are riddled with conflict, frustration, and occasional mud-slinging.

Yes, we're in good company. The company of the saints.

So....

when our tempers flare, our generosity fails, and our actions disappoint, we can still trust that the radical and renewing power of Jesus will work its way to our very core and cause death, denial and destruction to give way to radical renewal, resurrection and, ultimately, rejoicing.

Let's continue to keep company with each other - and with Jesus.

Peace.

Really.

Peace.

Deb

### ***"Be My Valentine" (God's Perspective)***

*by Laurel G. Smith*

*An original prayer by Laurel G. Smith, an insightful and energetic nonagenarian who is a member at the Dawson Presbyterian Church and a regular contributor to the "Religious Moments" section of the Dawson paper.*

Dear Earthly Children:

Over 2000 years ago, your Heavenly Father, I AM, joyfully sent you My Breath of Love, Jesus Christ, who is part human and part divine.

Learn to love from Him.

Love yourself, your family, your neighbors, near and far, and even your enemies.

"There are three things that will endure - faith, hope, love - and the greatest of these is love" (1 Corinthians 13:13)

Love's essence is stronger than all passions.

It overcomes all problems, soothes all wounds, and rectifies all transgressions.

It encompasses the universe.

I encircle your life with My Love.

Your ever-loving Father, God.

### ***Bare Bulb in the Spotlight***

*by Rev. Nikki MacMillan*



The General Assembly of the PC(USA) is looking to tell the story of Bare Bulb Coffee on film - in the form of short videos to be shown in the plenary sessions of the General Assembly meeting in Pittsburgh, PA this summer.

Recently, the General Assembly Mission Council unveiled the goal of establishing [1001 new worshiping communities](#) during the next ten years. To inspire Presbyterians to join this endeavor, the Mission Council wants to begin telling the stories of some of our church's newest communities of faith. Bare Bulb Coffee has earned a spot on that list!

A film crew will be present at the shop for the weekend of February 4-5 to capture the life of this vibrant ministry. They will witness Neon Light (Bare Bulb's mission-minded youth ministry), Open Mic Night, Table Talk (our version of Sunday School), [Souper Bowl](#), and Evening Prayer. The crew will interview members of the community and customers all in an effort to describe our mission in Middle Georgia.

If you're not interested in the big football game, make a trip to Warner Robins and be a part of the fun.

To learn more about Bare Bulb Coffee, visit our [website](#). There you can see the calendar of events, discover the good things we are doing, sign up for our newsletter, and make a donation to our mission.

As always, thank you for your prayerful support.

***Coaching for you and for your Church***



Take advantage of a new resource offered to you by your very own Flint River Presbytery!

Discover new insights!

Recover fresh energy!

Grow in Christ-like leadership!

### **Clergy Coaches**

Garrett Andrew [garrett@1stpresalbany.org](mailto:garrett@1stpresalbany.org) or 229.395.9985 (cell)

Deb Bibler [dbibler@flintriverpresbytery.org](mailto:dbibler@flintriverpresbytery.org) or 229.942.8304 (cell)

Paula Hoffman [firstprespastor@bellsouth.net](mailto:firstprespastor@bellsouth.net) or 478.747.3401 (cell)

Jerry Little [littlegerald@msn.com](mailto:littlegerald@msn.com) or 229.246.3960 (church)

John Sawyer [john\\_sawyer@northminstermacon.org](mailto:john_sawyer@northminstermacon.org) or 478.335.1628 (cell)

### **Resource Center Review**

Helping Children Grieve with Khris Ford and Paula D'Arcy

*"This profound new video resource offers helpful information to adults (parents, caregivers, professionals) on how to help children of all ages grieve with hope and heart. You will meet two experts: Khris Ford and Paula D'Arcy, whose personal experiences with death give them intimate knowledge and compassion. And you will meet others who are now in the process of helping their children through grief."*

*Melinda Andrew, Hospice Chaplain, had reviewed this resource and highly recommends it.*

### **Flint River Resource Center Renovation**

The Flint River Resource Center Ministry Committee is undertaking an internal renovation! Our goal is to move from a print- focused library to a 21st -century resource center with a variety of useful learning media platforms to bring the message of the gospel to Flint River Presbyterians, their neighbors and friends! We are looking to add at least three new members who desire a more contemporary approach to spreading the Good News to fellow Christians of any age.

Please consider your gifts to support this ministry. Pray for guidance on ways you can contribute to a more relevant Resource Center Ministry. Is God calling you to join the Resource Center Ministry Committee? The Resource Center Ministry Committee meets at the Flint River Presbytery office every other month (six times a year) usually at 3:30 PM on the first Tuesday of the month.

If you are interested in serving or learning more, please contact Ed Booth, moderator, at 706.322.2466.

### **Personals**

**Pam Moye's** mother, Virginia Bartow, died on January 31 at her home in Mississippi after a long illness.

**Joan Evans**, wife of retired pastor Paul Evans, died in Macon on January 30th shortly after suffering a

massive stroke.

**James B. Spencer, Jr**, son of retired pastor Jim Spencer, died in an automobile accident (likely caused by a heart condition) on December 4th.

**Danny Loffredo's** installation as pastor of First Americus was held on January 29th.

**February, 2012 Calendar**

|    |                    |  |
|----|--------------------|--|
| 1  | 12:00 noon         | Retirement Luncheon, Stonebridge Country Club        |
| 1  | 3:00 pm            | BOP overview with Clark Simmons                      |
| 2  | 10:30 am           | BOP overview with Clark Simmons                      |
| 2  | 10:00 am           | COM, 1st Albany                                      |
| 2  | 11:00 am           | AB's Administrative Work Group                       |
| 2  | 1.00 pm            | Advisory Board                                       |
| 7  | 6:00 pm            | CEN with a brief FRP Youth Network meeting to follow |
| 9  | 12:00 pm           | NW Clergy Cluster, 1st Korean, Columbus              |
| 11 | 10:00 am - 3:00 pm | Sexual Misconduct Training                           |
| 14 | 12:00 noon         | NE Cluster, Northminster                             |
| 15 | 11:00 am           | Finance  |
| 16 |                    | Reformation Project, class 1, Lakehouse              |
| 18 | 10:00 am           | Presbyterian Women Coordinating Team                 |
| 18 | 12:00 noon         | Youth Council Planning meeting                       |
| 24 | 3:00 pm - 7:00 pm  | Sexual Misconduct Training, Northminster, Macon      |
| 25 | 10:00 am           | Presbytery Meeting, Northminster, Macon              |
| 28 | 12:00 noon         | Southern Clergy Cluster, 1st Thomasville             |
| 29 | 12:00 noon         | Central Cluster                                      |

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

Looking Ahead

March 2-4 = [COF event](#), Norman Park

**Parish Paper**

[January Parish Paper](#)

[February 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.

Congregations within our Presbytery do NOT have permission (a) to delete the copyright notice, (b) to re-write, paraphrase, or change the wording of sentences and paragraphs, or (c) to give ANY THIRD PARTY-other than our staff and members-permission to photocopy or reprint (in any quantity, no matter how small, whether for free distribution or for sale).