



SPARKS from the FLINT February/March 2017 Tornado Edition

A Variety of Gifts! (a new rendering of I Corinthians 12) by Rev. Debra T. Bibler, Executive Presbyter

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To one is given the use of a chainsaw and to another the repair of a computer server.



To one is given the strength of a back and to another the power of words. To another the Spirit grants knowledge of how to update a website and another knowledge of how to repair a window and tarp a roof. To another the Spirit gives organization and another compassion.

And while the Spirit gives one a rake and a pair of gloves, the Spirit gives another a working oven and a pair of mitts. And as the Spirit gives one with the ability to write a generous check, so too does the Spirit give another with the ability to offer a generous ear. And finally,



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while one is gifted with the capacity to move through piles of details with relentless persistence, another is gifted with the spirit of deep listening and contagious calm. **All of these gifts are activated by the same Lord, who allots to each one individually, just as the Spirit chooses.**



Never has it been more evident that our presbytery is full to overflowing with capabilities beyond our imaginings. **You have been generous with your chain saws and your checkbooks. Thank you! Never have I been prouder to be a part of this presbytery.**

Your Advisory Board and a newly-formed Tornado Team are working carefully and creatively to balance immediate needs with long-term strategy.



Please continue to check our website weekly for updates at www.flintriverpresbytery.org and click on "Tornado Relief" at the top of the page. If you or someone you know want to help in specific ways through volunteering, please e-mail us at tornadorelief@flinriverpresbytery.org, and one of our marvelous volunteers will be in touch!



*And never have I been more thankful for the PC(USA) and its wide-spread resources. **Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) landed in Albany 48 hours after my call to Louisville.** Three highly-trained pastors from various corners of the country came to offer support and people-power in the first days after the tornado. More teams will return as we discern how*

*best to be vibrant witnesses to the love of Jesus Christ in the months and years to come in these affected areas. **When we give to One Great Hour of Sharing during Lent/Easter each year, these funds go directly to support crucial mission outreach such as Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.***

Finally, don't forget about our marvelous Family Day scheduled for this Saturday, Feb 18th at the presbytery office. Drop in anytime between 11 am - 2 pm. Free lunch, bouncy-house fun, face painting and crafts for kids of all ages as well as a full overview of our presbytery camp offering for Summer 2017 will be available for all to enjoy.

It is an honor to serve with all of you!

In Christ's tremendous hope,
Deb

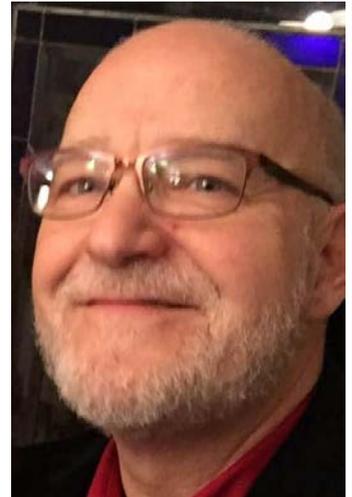
"I Saw Angels with Chainsaws"

a poem by Rev. Joel Alvis, PhD, after experiencing a tornado in Atlanta in 1998.

The insurance company called it an "act of God."
The weather report said it was even the "finger of God."
Oh Lord, I know that it was not your hand that brushed this place.
It was not your foot that stomped on homes like a merciless giant.

Two days later I saw your desire for human life.
Cresting a hill where before 50,000 trees had stood,
there was a vista of destruction.
Amidst the destruction were hundreds, even thousands of angels.
Working, sweating, pulling debris from on top of houses,
salvaging what could be saved.

How did I know they were angels?
I heard the flutter of their wings in the whine of the chainsaws.



WE are CONNECTED ONE to ANOTHER:
CONCERNS and CELEBRATIONS around our PRESBYTERY

In our NE Cluster

Remember the family and friends of **Rev. Dr. Al Simmons**, who died peacefully at home on Sunday, January 29th. A beautiful, memorial service was held on February 1st at First (Thomaston) with our presbytery well-represented by his colleagues and former members.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance will be working with several congregations in this area to discern how we can help regarding tornado damage in poor neighborhoods.

In our NW Cluster

Welcome to **Connie Happell**, a child of this presbytery, who grew up at First (Columbus). After many decades away from home, she has returned to be near her aging mother. We are delighted to welcome Connie as a member-at-large of our presbytery and the new interim campus minister at the Abbey at CSU! (**Connie is pictured here, to the right, so you can recognize her and welcome her at future gatherings!**)



In our Central Cluster

Remember the family of **Pat Gohman**. Pat died due to injuries sustained in the January 22nd tornado. Cards can be sent to her husband Lee at 105 Coosaw Court, Leesburg, GA 31763.

Our 3 Albany churches (**CK Smith, Covenant, and First**) have each done a remarkable job in reaching out to the community during this chaotic time. Please hold their pastors, elders, and members in prayer as they discern "next steps" for faithful and effective relief work.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance will be landing in this area again to discern ways to help with neighborhood recovery in the near future.

Remember **Chet Dreschel**, the Music Director at Covenant (Albany), who suffered a severe stroke on February 9th.

And continue to remember the **Dawson congregation** as well. Extend to them your love and grace, and remind them about the gift of our presbytery, as they begin the discernment process around a potential dismissal.

In our Southern Cluster

Remember our **Adel** congregation, its pastor and elders, as it continues to serve as a beacon of hope in the midst of much natural destruction.

Remember **Richard Hart** as he embarks on a two-month Sabbatical, and **Anghaarad Teague-Dees** as she flies "solo" for this time.

February/March 2017 Calendar

plus a link to our year-long calendar including committee dates and presbytery meeting dates!

**All events are held at the presbytery office unless otherwise noted*.*

FEBRUARY

18	11:00 am - 2:00 pm	Family Day
23	10:00 am - 12 noon	Tornado Team (Recovery Efforts)
25	10:00 am	COF, The Abbey in Columbus
27		Columbus Reformation Project

MARCH

9	10:30 am	COM
18	11:00 am	Church Relations and Admin. Teams
18	1:00 pm	Advisory Board
23	12:00 noon	Columbus Cluster lunch @ Mandarin Cafe

**** [2017 Annual Calendar](#) ****

available here with all known meetings for the year

AmazonSmile -- an easy way to give back to FRP

**Remember, always start at <http://smile.amazon.com>
and Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible
AmazonSmile purchased to Flint River Presbytery.**

<http://smile.amazon.com>

Scotland Trip Deposit due **March 15** to confirm participation!

The 2017 Scotland and Presbyterian Heritage Customized Tour for 2017 is being re-introduced with new travel dates!

Departure from the US on Sept 4, 2017, arriving Glasgow September 5th. The return from Edinburgh will be on September 13, 2017.

Great news! We can offer this date at a lower rate, with the 8 day land-only at \$2,425 per person and includes gratuities to the tour director and motor coach driver!

Air-inclusive rate with land is \$3,870 per person, which estimates the air at \$1,445. Air will be round-trip Atlanta to Glasgow and returning Edinburgh to Atlanta.

Please note that if a lower airfare rate is available or if someone plans to travel using mileage, air can be booked outside the group reservation. Keep in mind, however, that airport transfers are currently provided based on people arriving at or about the same time.

Single Supplement is \$526 for anyone who will not be sharing a room with another person.

Optional Travel Protection is highly recommended and available upon request.

Deposit is \$250 per person due March 15, 2017, and should be sent "ATTN: Jane Shelton" at the address listed below

Final payment is June 1, 2017.

We need 20 passengers to have this group happen, since it is a customized tour for Flint River Presbytery; and based on comments, I believe we can reach that number fairly quickly! If we go over 24 passengers, the rate will drop by \$150 per person!!

If we reach 20 or more passengers, Globus will reward us with a \$1,000 charitable donation to Flint River Presbytery!!!

[Itinerary for Customized Guided Tour](#)

Flint River Presbytery Scotland Trip Volunteer Liaison

Jane Shelton, President
SOUTH GEORGIA TRAVEL
1300 Baytree Rd - Valdosta, GA 31602
(229) 244-2324 or 800-248-2324
www.sgatravel.com

Presbyterians
Today

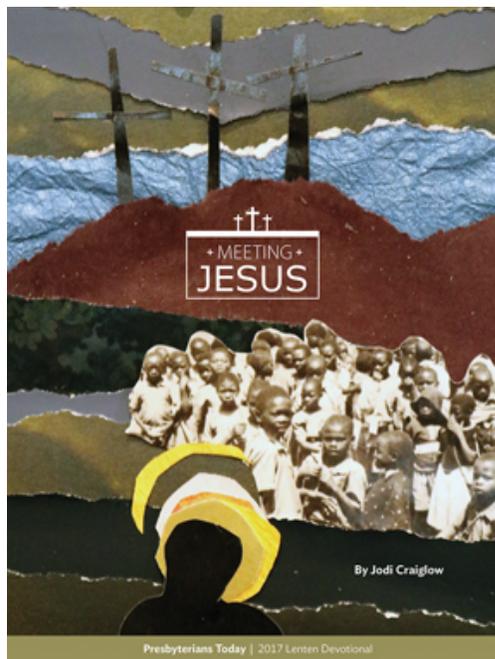
2017 Lenten Devotional Available

Meeting Jesus

This year's Lenten devotional by Jodi Craiglow invites us to join 47 biblical figures who encounter Jesus during his earthly life and ministry. Speaking in first-person conversational form, these characters tell us "in their own words" what they've seen and learned. They draw us in to share their joys and struggles and help us understand Jesus in a richer way. The narratives are rounded out with a daily Scripture reading and short prayer.

Along with the text, *Meeting Jesus* includes a collection of multimedia artwork from Creation Lab in Chicago featuring ancient Lenten symbols expressed in a contemporary style.

Meeting Jesus is perfect for congregations, families, and individuals.



2017 Lenten Discount Pricing: 1 copy, \$4.50 * 2-9 copies, \$3.50 each * 10-99 copies, \$2.50 each * 100+ copies, \$1.95 each. Shipping: 10% of order, \$5.25 minimum.

Order by phone at 800-524-2612 and ask for PDS 17116-16-008.

****Upcoming PC(USA) Webinar****

*Here's an easy way to further your professional development
from the comfort of your home or office!*

Confirmation: Equipping children, parents and congregations for the journey of faith

Tuesday, Mar. 28 at 2 p.m. ET (11 a.m. PT)

Should confirmation be an introduction to the Christian faith and life for young people, or a moment when their faith is transformed into something new? This webinar will examine our expectations for confirmation classes and why it feels like more and more students are coming to this pivotal year unprepared to have the experience we want them to have. Together we will look at specific examples of how core Biblical stories, liturgies or congregational traditions can be expanded into confirmation conversations.



Presented by Rebecca Kirkpatrick

[Learn More and Register](#)

Each webinar is \$29.95 (for up to six participants from a church or ministry setting) and comes with access to the web replay.

Scholarships are available, thanks to The Omaha Presbyterian Seminary Foundation. Visit the website for details and eligibility.

A "SPARK-LING" EXCHANGE

Have stuff at your church you don't need?

Need stuff for your church that you don't have?

There are all kinds of gently used items that might be of interest to sister congregations. If you would like to submit an offer or make a request, please submit the information by using the form below. You can fill it out online and it will go directly to June.

For Sale (below): Peavey Amplifier. \$100. Call Melissa Coleman,
the campus ministry director at The Center @ VSU for more info.

(229) 548-1707



For Sale: 4 OSP microphone stands. \$25 each.
Call Melissa Coleman for more info. (229) 548-1707





For Sale (see above and below): Pioneer Amplifier VSX-D510 surround sound system with Pioneer S-FCR W210-K subwoofer & 5 small speakers. \$250.

Call Melissa Coleman for more info. (229) 548-1707



NEW ITEMS for sale!!

***A newly-refurbished espresso machine is available
due to the ongoing liquidation of Bare Bulb.***

A multitude of musical equipment and technical sound equipment is available as well.

Call Jerry Watts for cost and details at (478) 747-3631 ... and please spread the word.

[Exchange Form](#)

6 Mission Agencies of PC(USA)

Did you know that the 6 mission agencies of the PCUSA are as follows?

These organizations support our presbytery and its mission to strengthen congregational witness every year! Be sure to save this newsletter so you have immediate access to all of the websites to our mission agencies.

- [BOP](#) (the Board of Pensions)
- [OGA](#) (the Office of the General Assembly)
- [PF](#) (Presbyterian Foundation)
- [PILP](#) (Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program)
- [PMA](#) (Presbyterian Mission Agency)
- [PPC](#) (Presbyterian Publishing Corporation)