



Special
Edition SPARKS
2 weekends of
SHARED
mission & ministry!
(Feb 11th & 18th)

It takes a Tornado.....

A Brief Update by our Executive Presbyter, Deb Bibler

During our **Columbus Reformation Project** gathering this past week, **Jones Doughton**, associate pastor at First (Columbus), spontaneously declared, "**It takes a tornado to raise a village!**" He's right.

Grief and gratitude have mingled together in extraordinary and equal measure. The outpouring of generosity has been humbling. **Presbyterian Disaster Assistance has given our presbytery office a \$9,600 grant to assist in operational expenses so we may continue in our rigorous support of congregations and campus ministries in their vital Christian witness.** In addition, nearly \$20,000 has been given from individuals and congregations in our presbytery, the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta presbytery, *and beyond.* **Again, thank you!**

[Post Tornado pdf](#)

And keep reading -- and watching!

Notice the Family Day pictures revealing the tremendous improvement of the grounds thanks to the tremendous commitment of so many spontaneous volunteers!

In This Issue

- It takes a Tornado....
- Family Day Celebration
- Presbytery Overview
- New Summer Camp!
- Mission & Evangelism
- Scotland Trip Deadline
- Proposed Amendments Results
- Pathfinders Resource
- Presbytery Schedule/Calendar
- Monthly/Annual Calendar

**Remembering
that we are
graced with
Resilience!!**

And there's more!

See what you missed at our recent presbytery meeting,
learn about a spontaneously formed group
called **the Pathfinders**,
and note that our March calendar and annual calendar are
listed once again for easy access.



Because We are All God's Family...

[Family Day pdf](#)

Family Day on Saturday, February 18th
*revealed Flint River Presbyterians at our very best
as we fed the hungry, clothed the struggling,
and welcomed the stranger.*



Children played.



Adults too.



Students served.

Everyone listened well.

And learned much.

Relationships were forged.

Trust was built.

Love revealed.

We remembered that God's family is always bigger than what we imagined, and we created physical space -- *and heart space* -- for everyone who walked through our doors.

Somewhere between 250-300 folks participated in this event,
with an even divide coming from the community and the presbytery.

*Thank you Flint River Saints for revealing that Christ-focused ministry
is about "people not projects!"*

***Be sure to use these slideshows during fellowship events and worship announcements
so we may remain connected in Jesus Christ.***

**Flint River Presbytery
119th Stated Meeting
Second (Thomasville)
February 11th**



Small *and* mighty!

Young David overcame Goliath.

And Second (Thomasville) with 43 members
learned that they could host a presbytery meeting --
and do it wonderfully well!

Heartfelt thanks to **CRE Henry Walden** and
the **Second Thomasville saints** who cooked and
cleaned, carted and carried, and most of all
WELCOMED their sisters and brothers from
throughout the presbytery.

Well done good and faithful servants!

During this meeting, we accomplished the following.....

- **Remembered our baptisms through powerful liturgy:**

In the waters of baptism, we received God's promise of salvation, of belonging, and of hope.

Flow sweet waters, through our spirits and revive us in the hope of God's coming Kingdom.

In the waters of baptism, we received God's Spirit of energy and transformation.

Flow sweet waters, through our bodies, that we might be effective agents of God's profound love.

In the waters of baptism, we received resurrection to a new life characterized by a new way of thinking.

Flow sweet waters, through our minds that we might partake of the mind of Christ.

- **Installed our new presbytery moderator, Dick Shelton of (First) Valdosta**
(at right), and thanked Don West of Boston for his year of faithful service.
- **Received encouragement to "Travel Wet" by Deb Bibler as she reminded us that we are a people bathed in baptismal promises and sent out by Jesus Christ to serve!**



Click here to see what good words our Executive Presbyter had to say about our NE Cluster churches and campus ministry in October. **What we do Best! - October** because sometimes we simply need to be reminded!

Prayer for the Day

Patient and Persistent God---

You have gifted us with possibilities beyond measure: bodies and minds, souls and wills, all of which are knit together that we might be Light and Salt to Your world.

Show us again and again how to demonstrate Christian unity - not as a mere bending to the lowest common denominator, but rather as an active rising to a place of passionate focus as we seek to serve the world in Jesus' name. Leave us not in places of desperation nor despair, but reveal to us the fruits of such focus, and grant us courage.

Show us, too, how to live faithfully with our obvious - and subtle - differences. Teach us how to walk kindly in one another's shoes, so our brothers' blisters and our sisters' struggles might become our own. Remind us, Holy One, to point less and to listen

more. *Convict us that we might be persistent in repentance and hopeful in stance, shedding Light and shimmering with gratitude, generosity, ingenuity and joy. We ask this in Your Son Jesus' name, Who both saves us and sends us to serve. AMEN!*

...**and then** click here to see what she had to say about our Southern Cluster churches and campus ministry at our February meeting. [What we do BEST! - February, 2017](#)

Prayer for the Day

Let us pray.

Every day, Almighty and Everlasting God, You gift us with fresh opportunities to grow, to learn, and to serve. Whatever our circumstances or challenges, we proclaim afresh our lasting trust in You. Thank You for holding our lives in Your hands. By the power of Your Holy Spirit, breathe into our hearts once again that whatever is hardened by fear, blinded by worry, or overwhelmed by demands may be utterly transformed and wholly united. Enliven us, empower us, and equip us that we may revel in every possibility which You place before us, regardless the discomfort of disaster or uncertainty of the unknown.

Grant to us the gift of fresh joy that we may serve our communities, experiment with outreach, and create havens of hospitality and hope for the sake of God's kingdom. And in the weeks and years to come may we, as Flint River Presbyterians - as Christians -- be known not by words which diminish, actions which exclude, or thoughts which divide. Rather, by Your grace, may we be known by our foolish and extravagant love, which mirrors in every way Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN

NEW Summer Camp!
Dogwood Acres, an outdoor ministry of Florida Presbytery,
located in Chipley, Florida

Dogwood Acres PowerPoint

Here's a marvelous resource prepared by
Anghaarad Teague-Dees, co-pastor of Trinity (Valdosta)

Share this resource with your congregation and spread the word!

Dates? June 25-30 for children and youth
who have completed 3rd grade through 12th grade

Register online at

www.DogwoodAcres.org

Registration Deadline with a \$50 deposit is due on April 15th

Committee on Mission and Evangelism (CME) Overview

Dot Nickoley, CME moderator and member of First (Donalsonville) provided us with ample opportunity to learn about our shared practices and programs for the good of our congregations' health and the growth of our campus ministries.



Below you'll find a link to what CME is all about!
Don't miss out on learning more.

[CME Overview](#)



Leanne Simmons, pastor of All Saints, presented an informative and inspirational PowerPoint about our presbytery's recent trip to our Guatemalan mission partners, *Unión Sinódica Femenil*. Check out this presentation, share it, and be sure to complete the attached interest form after these images have piqued your interest.

[2017 Mission Trip to Guatemala pdf](#)

[Guatemala Interest Form](#)

Scotland Trip Deposit Due on March 15th!

****ONLY 5 ROOMS LEFT!****

The 2017 Scotland and Presbyterian Heritage Customized Tour will depart from the US on September 4, 2017, arriving Glasgow September 5th. The return from Edinburgh will be on September 13, 2017.

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 since it is a customized tour for Flint River Presbytery. If we reach 20 or more passengers, Globus will reward us with a \$1,000 charitable donation to Flint River Presbytery to go toward Tornado Relief!

Itinerary for Customized Guided Tour September 4

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

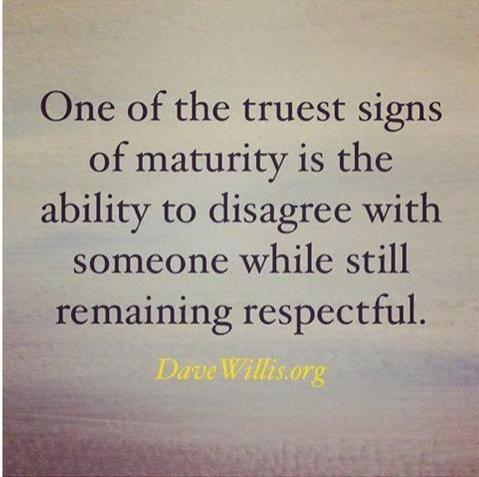
www.sgatravel.com

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSITUTION
Summary of Content and Presbytery Action

Proposed Constitutional amendments from the 222nd General Assembly (2016) which are now being voted upon by our 171 presbyteries.

A majority of all presbyteries must pass a particular amendment in order for it to be included in the Book of Order

Summaries, with actions noted in **RED**



One of the truest signs of maturity is the ability to disagree with someone while still remaining respectful.

Dave Willis.org

16-A Child and Youth Protection Policy - This would amend G-3.0106 to add the words "and youth" to the required policy statement, so that the sentence reads, "All councils shall adopt and implement a sexual misconduct policy and a child and youth protection policy." **passed**

16-B Parity in Committees - This proposed amendment to G-3.0109 specifies that

the parity of members of committees of councils "higher than the session" will be made up of "teaching elders and members of congregations in numbers as nearly equal as possible." This seeks to allow the membership make-up of committees to maintain parity but not be as restrictive as currently is worded. **passed**

16-C Ordered Ministry Titles - There are eight different proposed amendments that all deal in different ways with restoring the title, "minister of Word and Sacrament," to generally replace the title, "teaching elder." 16-C.1. Amending F-3.0202 16-C.2. Amending G-2.0102 16-C.3. Amending G-2.0301 16-C.4. Amending G-2.05 and G-2.0501 16-C.5. Amending G-2.0701 16-C.6. Amending G-3.0307 16-C.7. Amending both the Directory for Worship and the Rules of Discipline to replace "ruling elder commissioned to particular pastoral service" or "ruling elder commissioned to pastoral service" (commonly referred to as CRE or Commissioned Ruling Elder) with "commissioned pastor (also known as commissioned ruling elder), and to replace "teaching elder" with "minister" or "minister of Word and Sacrament." 16-C.8. Amending W-4.4001a. **passed**

16-D Relationship to the PC(USA) of a Person Who Has Renounced Jurisdiction of the Church - This proposed amendment seeks to address what was seen as a permanent ban on teaching elders who renounced jurisdiction in the middle of a disciplinary process from either being paid or volunteering to work again in the church, and would allow a former teaching elder to publicly face accusations which s/he had halted before as a step to possible reinstatement. 16-D.1. To amend G-2.0509 16-D.2. To amend D-10.0401. **failed**

16-E Certified Service Requirements - This proposed amendment to G-2.1101, referring to people who seek a call to a certified position in the Church, deletes reference to a "handbook" of a national certifying body, relying instead on such body's certification requirements. **passed**

16-F The Ministry of Members - This proposed amendment to G-1.0304 adds the phrase "caring for God's creation" to the present list of ways in which a faithful member of a congregation seeks to be involved responsibly in the ministry of Christ's Church. **passed**

16-G Access to the Lord's Table - This proposed amendment to W-2.4011a and W-2.4011b urges sessions to encourage people who come to the Table for Communion to learn about the grace of God evidenced in Baptism, but would not require admission to the Table to be only for those who are baptized. (Note: If proposed amendment 16-H, which is the revised Directory for Worship, is approved, the wording in 16-G already would be included in the revised Directory.). **passed**

16-H Directory for Worship - This proposed amendment would replace the current Directory for Worship with a new Directory. Much like what happened a few years ago with the then-new Form of Government, this new version of the Directory for Worship has been condensed (from 7 chapters to 5 chapters), has been reorganized in ways that group common subjects together and reflects the

flexibility that the revised Form of Government provided to councils of the Church.
passed

Pathfinders -- a group to help your congregation find its Way

What happens when 3 retired disciples with hearts for mission gather together?

Possibilities bubble up and resources are made available!



Presbytery Pathfinders invite your questions and concerns about effective ministry in the 21st century. We are members of FRP who are willing to meet and discuss the possible needs of your congregation as you seek to be fruitful witnesses to Jesus Christ. We explore demographics, generational issues, congregational strategies and leadership adjustments. If you wish to meet and have a meal and chat about any of this, do contact us. We look forward to a discussion.

(Pictured from left to right) Fred Richmond (ruling elder in Americus), Jerry Little, honorably retired minister from Bainbridge, and Jim Rodgers (commissioned ruling elder in Camilla).

Contact information is as follows:

fredr4@gmail.com or 229.942.2726 (cell)

littlegerald@msn.com or 229.726.8283 (cell)

rodgers72oki@gmail.com or 229.296.5620 (cell)

PRESBYTERY MEETINGS for 2017

Our next meeting will be held on **Saturday, June 10th**
at First (**Albany**), beginning at 10 am.

Our October meeting will be held on **Saturday, October 21st**
at First (**Columbus**), at 10 am.

We will be celebrating 30 years of being Flint River!



What happens when you come the night before a presbytery meeting?

At least 4 generations of joyful leaders gather together

to laugh, build relationships and grow together.

Come early. Join the party. Spread joy.

Want to spread a little more joy? Then consider this!

Our former Executive Presbyter Paul Luthman underwent very serious back surgery on Thursday, March 2nd, and will be recovering at home during the next two weeks. You can send Paul and Karen an encouraging card at 3206 Wexford Drive, Albany GA 31721

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*.***

As of Thursday March 16th, June will be working from 8 am to 3 pm

(with an hour lunch from 12 noon)

from Monday through Thursday,

so that she may recover well from a difficult year.

Please note these changed hours and be mindful of them.

MARCH

9	10:30 am	COM
16	11:00 am	Church Relations and Admin. Teams
16	1:00 pm	Advisory Board
23	12:00 noon	Columbus Cluster lunch @ Mandarin Cafe

*****2017 March - December Annual Calendar*****

available here with all known meetings for the year