

We VIEW Life through the Cross

First Presbyterian Church

Rev. Burnetta Armour Pastor

CONTENTS JANUARY 2024

Birthdays10
Blessings13
C & C11
Calendar15
Cantata7
Chili Charcuterie3
Education8
Epiphany2
God's Garden14
Liturgists11/ Ushers11
Looking back at 20234-6
Missions 10
Musical December14
ONEsies8
PM/PW Christmas Party 13
PW9
PW Officers Installed9
Scriptures & Sermons2
Session Scripts11
The Growing Place12
Welcome to FPC8



Rev. Burnetta Armour **Pastor's Ponderings**

Setting Sail—Part 1: Putting Up Our Sails

In her book, *The Sailboat Church: Helping Your Church Rethink Its Mission and Practice,* Minister of Word and Sacrament and moderator of the 217th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA), Joan S. Gray compares the church to a boat. The image of the church as a boat is almost as old as the church itself, but Gray puts a new spin on this age-old symbol when she asks the question: What kind of boat is your church: a rowboat or a sailboat?

Gray defines a rowboat church as the following:
The bedrock reality of life in the rowboat church is that
"God has given us a basic agenda...and then left it up
to us to get on with it." ... The church focuses on circumstances, such as the money it has or can raise, the
available volunteers, the charisma and skill of the leaders, and the demographics of the community. The
rowboat congregation believes and acts as if its progress depends on its own strength, wisdom,
and resources. It's all about how hard, long, and well

Sailboat churches have a different idea of how the church should work.

people are willing to row (emphasis added).

... the bedrock reality of life in the Sailboat church is that God "through the power at work in us can do abundantly far more than we could ever ask or imagine" (Eph. 3:21). Sailboat churches tend to focus not on their situations, resources, or limitations, but rather on discerning God's unfolding will. They engage in intimate partnership with God, trusting God to provide, and do what only God can do. ²

I don't know about you, but rowing gets tiring after a while. Believing that the life and progress of the church depend on our strength, resources, and wisdom wears down, not only the congregation's leadership but also its members. We spend time in worship and Bible Study talking about how we should let God be in control

(continued on page 2

Pastor's Ponderings

(continued from page 1)

of our lives—how we should put God first in our lives and turn to him for our strength and wisdom. Yet, when it comes to the life of the church, it seems that God will have to pry those rowing oars out of dead cold hands because we have a hard time letting them go, putting up sails, and moving with his Spirit. We have a hard time letting him be first in the life of the church—HIS church, by the way.

Our Session read *The Sailboat Church* together and discussed it at our Session retreat this past Fall. One thing that kept coming up again and again in our discussions was the power of prayer, and the need for intentional discernment of God's will for us as a congregation. I believe that First Presbyterian Church of Cleveland is a sailboat church; we've put out the sails already, but we still have a few oars in

Sermon & Scriptures for January

Year of Discernment

JANUARY

1/7/2024-Epiphany and "Year of Discernment" Kick Off

Scripture: Matthew 2:1-12

Follow the Star

1/14/2024-Second Sunday after Epiphany

Scripture: 1 Samuel 3:1-10 (11-20)

Are You Listening?

1/21/2024-Third Sunday after Ephiphany

Scripture: Jonah 3:1-5, 10; 4:1-10

Of Worms and Men

1/28/2024-Fourth Sunday after Ephiphany

Scripture: 1 Cor. 8:1-13
A Building Up Kind of Love

the water. Therefore, the Session has dedicated this year, 2024, to be a "Year of Discernment." What does this mean?

Well, it means that we are putting up all our sails and allowing the Holy Spirit to move us, direct us, and guide us into God's will for our congregation, in this time of our life as a congregation. We are going to be intentional about practicing the Spiritual art of discernment, and we are going to ask you to do the same. We are going to ask you to listen for the voice of the Spirit, and to share where you feel the Spirit moving in our community, and in our church. We are going to ask you to share your ideas for ministries in the church, no matter how crazy they may seem. We are going to ask you to put up your sails and catch the Spirit. It may seem a little scary, but I believe, and the Session believes, that "with God all things are possible."

In next month's article, I will be sharing with you a little more about what discernment looks like and how it can be practiced, but until then, get ready to throw away your oars, raise your sails, and go with the Spirit wherever she (or he) may lead us.

Peace and Love in Christ Pastor Bunetta

¹ Joan S. Gray. *The Sailboat Church: Helping Your Church Rethink Its Mission and Practice*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2014.
² Ibid, 5.

For many Christians this is when people celebrate how a star led the Magi to visit the baby Jesus after he had been born. 'Epiphany' comes from the Greek word meaning 'to reveal', as it is when the baby Jesus was 'revealed' to the world.

When the (live) stream doesn't flow

Nancy Webber

There have been several Sundays recently when those watching the service online have reported problems such as "freezing" of the audio or video, interruptions of service, and the audio and video being out of synch.

Some problems can't be predicted or corrected by the church. During one recent service, for example, streaming was interrupted by a brief power outage in the church neighborhood. On another occasion, Facebook itself shut down several times during the service.



Typically, the live worship service is transmitted as a digital signal that combines information from the video

cameras and microphones in the sanctuary.
The signal is transmitted through a dedicated laptop computer to the church's internet service provider and on to the Facebook streaming service.

Facebook sends the signal through a network of data centers to computers or phones that are connected to the live stream. There can be a problem at any point of this process, both upstream (between the church and Facebook) and downstream (between Facebook and your computer or phone).

On the downstream side, the quality of the signal coming into your home computer can be affected by the bandwidth you have available. Bandwidth is a measurement of how much data can be sent over an internet connection in a certain amount of time. A live-stream requires a lot of data, so it may freeze or appear jerky if your connection doesn't have enough bandwidth to handle it. It's like traffic in Atlanta: sometimes eight lanes are more than enough to handle the number of cars on the road. At other times, such as rush hour, not so much.

If you are having problems with the livestream, here are a few things you can try to increase the bandwidth of your computer connection:

- Unplug your wireless router or modem, wait about 30 seconds, and plug it back in. This will reboot and update the equipment, which might take several minutes.
- Make sure that no one else in your family is using the internet connection while you're viewing the live-stream.
- Don't use the internet for other activities (games, downloading, checking out other websites) while you're viewing the livestream.
- If you watch the service on your phone, the quality will probably be better if you are connected to a wireless router rather than the mobile cell tower signal. And, in general, older phones or computers may not be able to process a live-stream smoothly.

Online worshipers are an important part of our church family. Please let us know about your experiences with the streaming of the worship service as we continue to explore ways to improve.

You are invited to a... Chili Charcuterie

PW invites everyone to a Chili Charcuterie lunch, following worship service on Sunday, January 21. You will have



the opportunity to enjoy various types of chili (chicken, beef, vegetarian), with a myriad of toppings. And the desserts!

The lunch is when we request donations to our annual Thank Offering for Presbyterian Women. This Offering benefits national and global missions, and traditionally we use half the funds for help in our local area.

We look forward to serving you on the 21st.

Looking Back at 2023



New Members of our FPC family ... Rachel & Roy Ficklin, Dave & Cheryl Cook, Becky Wiegert & Emily & Trey Hassel.











Christmas Cantata









Rachel Ficklin gives an wonderful organ concert in Clarkesville during Lent.

Emily Hassel received a graduation cord in the EPIC (STEM) program.

Lily Geiger is accepted to Davidson College and received generous grants & financial aid.

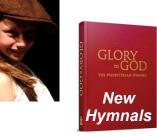


Sebastian Wiley stars in the lead role of Singin' in the Rain at White County High School. And his sister, Josalynne Wiley was also in the show.





Josalynne Wiley and Charley Geiger as acolytes.









Looking Back at 2023 continued from page 4







Charley and Collin make Easter cards for the Nursing Home.



Dana Abu Ghazaleh was our guest preacher for the Celebration of the Gifts of Women.



Britt Jacobs becomes the new Administrative Assistant.



Cara Jackson becomes the new leader of

PM go to the Gwinnet Stripers game.



Naivar turn 90.

armer's Ma

Beth Everling and Joyce

Back to School Bash.



Hannah (Wall) Satterfield and her daughter, Reese. Hannah was the first baby born into our church.



The ONEsies group had a farewell

luncheon for Amanda Rice (who moved to Florida) and a month later, Jean Kelly moved to Arkansas. At Jean's farewell luncheon, we gave a send off to Lily Geiger for a successful year at Davidson College.





Looking Back at 2023 continued from page 5











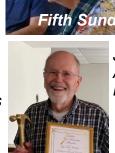




PW had a luncheon for volunteers at the Community Helping Hands Clinic.



Over 50 Shoeboxes were blessed before being sent to children.



Andy Negra, 99, one of the **ONEsies** received the Salute



to Service Patriot Award.







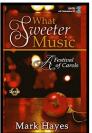
Cantata joyously welcomes the Christmas season

Nancy Webber



What sweeter music can we bring Than a carol, for to sing The birth of this our heavenly King? Awake the voice! Awake the string!

The words of this poem written by Robert Herrick in 1647 were the centerpiece of the joyful Christmas cantata presented by the FPC Chancel Choir during the worship service on Sunday, December 17. As usual, the choir was expertly prepared and directed by our musical director David Arvold.



The cantata, What Sweeter
Music: A Festival of Carols by Mark
Hayes, included 15 traditional carols and hymns interwoven with
new melodies by the composer.
The choir was accompanied by an
instrumental ensemble and, at

several points, by the congregation. It was thrilling to hear all of our voices joining in *Silent*

Night, The First Noel, Joy to the World, and O Come, All Ye Faithful.

Kristen Sparrow, a former member of the choir, and daughter of David and Clair Arvold,



returned to the chancel to sing Mary's Song, a beautiful setting of the Magnificat.

A narrative of the Christmas story was read by Rev. Burnetta Armour and Phil Baughman.

Thank you to the Choir, David, James, and the musicians for a wonderful service.



Solosits Dick Frost and Nancy Webber.

Participatants in the Cantata

Sopranos Nanette Baughman Barbara Chambers Rachel Ficklin Lily Geiger Joyce Naivar Adele Page Kristen Sparrow Nancy Webber

Altos Susie Allen Gail Rollin Cheryl Cook Angela Lathrop Rita Morgan Melody Thomason Debbie Wessely

Ross DeMeritt Basses James Armour Bruce Morgan

Tenors

Dick Frost

Musicians Kathy Wallace - Violin 1 Adam Jobson - Violin 2 Emese Vas - Viola Esther Morgan-Ellis Cello Whitley Grindle Clarinet

A New Face at FPC

We have a special new addition to our FPC family, our new Administrative Assistant, Britt Jacobs.



Britt, and her husband,
Michael (an Electrical
Engineer at Caterpillar),
are parents to three
children, Devin, age 21,
Kyrie, 20, and Lathan, 16.
After traveling the
country as a family for
three years in an RV, they
decided to make Cleveland

their forever home in 2019.

This is a job that I believe was meant for me to have. I enjoy office work and accounting, and love being able to be home for dinner with my family, says Britt. She looks forward to meeting everyone, but please be patient as she tries to put names and faces together.



Welcome to FPC

On Sunday, November 26, we welcomed

Rev. Greg Loskoski and his wife, Ellen, to our church.

Rev. Loskoski was our guest preacher that day, as Pastor Burnetta had the week off. However, she did show up for church and enjoyed sitting in the congregation while someone else preached.

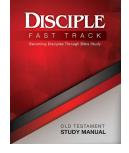


Elaine Wiegert

Wednesday Bible Study

Disciple Fast Track. Becoming Disciples Through Bible Study Old Testament, is a12week study of the Old Testament, starting on

Wednesday, January 10, at 12:30 p.m. Participants will read 3-5 chapters a day in preparation for the weekly meetings. Sessions will last approximately 75 minutes. The weekly video will help participants recall important



facts and ideas. Bring your lunch.

The cost of the study manual is approximately \$19.00. If you would like to participate in the study and would like for us to order a Study Manual for you, please add your name to the list in the Upper Narthex.



The December get-together was attending the PM/PW Christmas Party at Chicago's Pizza in Demorest. It was a delightful time with good food, wonderful fellowship, and a lot of laughter as we participated in the Naughty Santa game.

We certainly missed two of the founding members of the ONEsies, Mary Smith, and Jean Kelly, and one of our regular members, Amanda Rice. They all moved to different states.

We decided to join forces with the PW and PM and reactivate the Lunch Bunch. The ONEsies will no longer be a separate group but we hope everyone interested will join us for the monthly lunches at local restaurants. Keep watching for further information.

Until then, enjoy the holidays and, may the New Year bring you good health and much happiness.



Judy Winski

CT COMMITTEE MEETING

The CT Committee meeting has been rescheduled and will meet Thursday, January 4, at 10:30 a.m.

PW BIBLE STUDY

Beginning on January 9 and the second Tuesday of each month, PW will meet for Bible study and lunch at noon in the Fellowship hall.

THIS IS A NEW DAY AND TIME.

Bring your own lunch, and our hostess will provide drinks and dessert..

The Bible study leader on January 9 is Judy Winski. Linda Leslie will be our hostess.

All women are invited to join us for this study of Luke and Acts.

KNIT'n'STITCH

Knit and Stitch meets **every Wednesday at 2 p.m.** You are invited to participate even if you do not knit. Contact Linda Leslie for info.

ZOOM PRAYER MEETINGS

Zoom Prayer Meetings In January, the Zoom prayer meeting will be at 10:00 a.m. on January 11, 18, and 25. Everyone is welcome to join us. If you want to receive the link each week, contact Lindalee Walters.

EVERYONE IS INVITED

PW invites everyone to a Chili Charcuterie lunch following worship service on Sunday, January 21. See related article on page 3.

PW CHURCHWIDE GATHERING

Do Everything in Love

The next Presbyterian Women's Church-wide Gathering (CWG) will be held in St. Louis, Missouri, August 8-11, 2024. Plenary and large group sessions will be held at the America's Center Convention Complex. Attendees will receive a special conference rate for hotel rooms at the Marriott St. Louis Grand.

The theme *Do Everything in Love* based on 1 Cor. 16:13-14 (NIV). If you attended the last gathering on St. Simon's, you know what a fulfilling experience these meetings are.

Save the Dates. More details to follow from your PW!



Lindalee Walters

The new Officers of the Presbyterian Women were installed during the Worship Service, December 10, as follows:

Immediate

Past Moderator	Lindalee Walters
Moderator	Judy Winski
Vice Moderator	Elaine Wiegert
Secretary	
Treasurer	Betty Royds
Historian	Penny Murdoch

After the installation, Judy Winski, on behalf of the PW, presented Lindalee Walters with a gift of wind chimes with butterflies. The butterfly holds great significance to PW and their lifetime member pin is in the shape of a butterfly.







Melody Thomason

WHITE CHRISTMAS

This year our church participated in White Christmas, which helps families in our community with Christmas gifts. 207 families, 487 children in White County were served through this Family Connections Organization which works through our local schools. Families apply for help and give ideas of what their child would like. Individuals and organizations from the community choose families to help. We chose 3 families with 2 kids each. These families were showered by our FPC people with clothing, books, toys; things requested by the family. Our gifts joined others at The Bridge Church staging area to be picked up by the families requesting help. Thank you to all who partici-pated in this fun time of helping local children have a better Christmas.

FRIENDSHIP NURSING HOME

FPC sponsored 4 individuals at the Nursing Home who were in need of some Christmas gifts. Two women and two men received gifts from FPC of clothing, blanket throws, and special items appropriate for each person.

Retha Purvogel, a our long-time seasonal church visitors led a group of friends in helping with decorations and food for the yearly resident Christmas Party. They also made up goody bags for 50 residents and some special treats for the staff.

Boxes of Coffee pods (k cups) were delivered to the Nursing home to be enjoyed by residents and staff from our generous FPC folk. We hope we made this Christmas Season a little easier, brighter and happier for the residents and staff of Friendship Nursing Home.

FIRST LUNCH RETIRES

We have decided to reevaluate our First lunch program and put it on hold for now. We will be praying and seeking discernment on how to better serve our hungry, needy community in the future. We didn't feel as though we were having enough people coming for lunch to justify the time and money we were spending. We can however feel proud that First Lunch took place for almost 2 years. We tried something new. We served many meals, met some new friends and had fun doing it. A special thanks to Jim Crawford who had the idea to start this ministry and to all those MANY church folk who helped along the way.

Fellowship Hour

Fellowship Hour after Worship is scheduled for the first Sunday of each month.



We don't have much time before Worship to visit with each other, and after church is a perfect time. And, this also gives us an opportunity to get to know our visitors.

Volunteers are need to host the reception. We want to keep it simple with just cookies and drinks (water, sweet and unsweet tea, coffee if you want), napkins (no plates), unless you are celebrating a special occasion.

Please sign up in the Upper Narthex with your availability to host one Sunday.

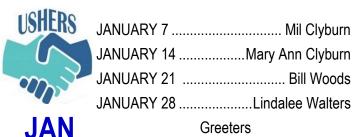
Remember to keep it simple. Thank you in advance.

JANUARY Birthdays

ZACHARY CIRIELLO
DAVID COOK
SHERRY DICKSON
LINDA HOPPOCK
SANDY NELLIS
DEWAYNE NIX
HUGH WALTERS



If we missed your birthday, please let us know.



Charles Massingale & Hugh Walters

Thank you for your willingness to serve.



Liturgists for the Month January

JANUARY 7	Debbie Wessely
JANUARY 14	Nancy Webber
JANUARY 21	Susie Allen
JANUARY 28	Bruce Morgan
Thank you all for your willingness to serve.	



Elaine Wiegert

Please join us at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings for Coffee and Conversation. During January we will be discussing texts from Genesis, Mark, Psalms, and Mark. Join us! The topics for discussion in January will be: JANUARY 7 Genesis 1:1-5 Order Out of Chaos JANUARY 14 I Samuel 3:1-10 (11-20); 1-8 Discerning God's Call JANUARY 21 Mark 1:14-20 The Gift and Call of Discipleship JANUARY 28 Psalm 111 Praise the Lord!

Session Scripts

Bruce Morgan

At our December 17 meeting we:

- Volunteered to serve as a focus group for Pastor Burnetta's presentation for her Level II Older Adult Ministry certification,
- Thanked Elders "retiring" for their faithful service. Thanks to Melody, Becky, and
- Reviewed and approved the 2024 Budget,
- Approved moving of funds from a couple of unused encumbered fund accounts to more active ones.
- Approved changes to the Pastor;s Call,
- Called a Congregational Meeting for January 28 to elect a congregational nominating committee, review the budget and consider changes to the Pastor's Call,
- Approved the November financial report,
- Approved participation in denominationwide special offerings in 2024,
- Set the celebration of The Lord's Supper on a monthly basis in 2024,

- Removed six members from the membership rolls due to relocations,
- Heard concerns about the maintenance needs of "This Old House".
- Declined to approve a use request for a concert on Easter Sunday,
- Prayed for many needs in our church family, and set the next meeting for January 14.

Christmas at Mt. Airy

Many from our Cleveland FPC attended an Advent Service at the Mt. Airy Chapel on Sunday afternoon,

December 3. We were welcomed by Rev. Andy Chambers, a former pastor in our church, now of the Cornelia church.

Several youth from the Cornelia church read scripture, or sang solos, and Burnetta read a scripture. Our Choir sang an anthem, Bob and Melody shared their musical talents by singing several songs, and Nancy Webber sang a solo.

It was a delightful service!











Cara Jackson

and Christmas

















Naughty Santa Reappeared

Lindalee Walters

PW and PM combined for a Christmas lunch at Chicago's Pizza on December 12. The group enjoyed a private room for fellowship and gift exchange. The gifts were all so good that there was very little "stealing". Two popular gifts that were stolen several times were a snowman and a Sloth neck massager.

It was suggested that in the new year we revert back to having Lunch Bunch each month where everyone is invited to participate. Each month we will visit a different restaurant, and hope you will give suggestions as to where you will like to eat.



Carpooling is always available for those who desire to ride with someone.

We look forward to more news about this activity in the coming weeks.















Blessings and Prayers are with you, Zack!

On December 17, there was a special blessing given to Zack Ciriello, son of Kim and Dave Ciriello, and grandson of Penny Murdoch. Zack is in the Georgia Army National Guard, and

sometime in the next year, he will be going on deployment. PW presented him with a check for expenses the military won't pay for (extra uniforms, etc.).

Our prayers are with you, Zack! Thank you for serving our country.







From God's Garden

A very special "Thank You" to those who have contributed the beautiful flowers and displayed them to brighten the sanctuary for our Sunday Worship Services. These flowers add a bright spot and

make our Worship Service feel so very special.



This floral arrangement on December 3, was donated by Polly and Bill Woods in celebration of their December birthdays (83 and 86).

This beautiful Christmas Cactus, on December 10. was donated by Bernice and John Rogers in memory of John's parents, Sarah McGee and C. Ortense Rogers.



The flowers on December 17. were donated by the choir in honor of David Arvold's vears of service to our church.



If you'd like to provide flowers for Sunday service, please sign up in the upper Narthex or contact the church office with the preferred date and the occasion you're commemorating.

If you are willing to be a Flower Coordinator please contact the Church Office.



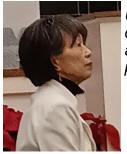
December was filled with Music

Nancy Webber

Friday evening, December 1, the Georgia Musicale Group presented a wonderful concert featuring piano and vocal

pieces by some extremely talented individuals. The weather that evening was not conducive to drawing a big crowd but those who attended were treated to a delightful evening.

The performers were so appreciative to have our church host their concert and hope to be able to have another concert at our church some time in the Spring. When the date is set, mark your calendar for a magnificent concert.



Utako Tanigawa is one of the founders of GMG and an accomplished pianist.



Annette Russo was one of the soloists.



Tom Slavicek was the Master of Ceremonies.



Julie Woodall was one of the performers as well as the accompanist.

Happy New Year!

Hospitality Hour after Worship the first Sunday of the month PW CT Meeting, PW Bible Study, & Zoom Prayer Meeting Wednesday Bible Study at 12:30 pm In-Person ONLY Coffee & Conversation 10 am
Church Services 11:00 am In-Person and Online In-Person/Zoom

			VALET	VALET PARKING available Sunday mornings starting at 10:45 am	unday mornings st	arting at 10:45 am
	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6 Eninhaun
			Knit'n'Stitch 2 pm	PW CT Meeting 10:30 am In-Person & Zoom		* 4
			Choir Rehearsal 6:30 pm	Mah Jongg 1 pm		
Worship Service	&	PW Bible Study Noon Bring a Lunch	10 BIBLE STUDY 12:30 pm In-Person Knit'n'Stitch 2 pm	Zoom Prayer Mtg. 10 am	12	13
Hospitality Hour after			Choir Rehearsal 6:30 pm	Mah Jongg 1 pm		
Worship Service & Installation of Elders & Deacons	15	16	BIBLE STUDY 12:30 pm In-Person Knit'n'Stitch 2 pm	18 Zoom Prayer Mtg. 10 am	19	20
11 am and Online			Choir Rehearsal 6:30 pm	Mah Jongg 1 pm		
ward	22	PM Luncheon	24 BIBLE STUDY 12:30 pm In-Person Knit'n'Stitch	Z5 Zoom Prayer Mtg. 10 am	26	27
11 am and Online Session Meeting 12:15 pm			∠ pm Choir Rehearsal 6:30 pm	Mah Jongg 1 pm		
	29	30	31 BIBLE STUDY 12:30 pm In-Person			MASKS
Worship Service 11 am and Online Congregational Meeting			Knit'n'Stitch 2 pm			are welcome!
after Worship			Choir Rehearsal 6:30 pm			



Editor & Chair......Jean Kelly Publisher.....Penny Murdoch

COMMITTEE

Kim Ciriello Penny Murdoch
Dick Frost Adele Page
Jean Kelly Lindalee Walters
Bruce Morgan Nancy Webber
Elaine Wiegert



THE SESSION

Clerk	Bruce Morgan
Moderator Rev	_
Clerk Emeritus	Jim Hiers
Youth Elder	Lily Geiger

CLASS OF 2023

Communications.	Jean Kelly
Missions	Melody Thomason
Worship	Becky Clark
Youth	Lily Geiger

CLASS OF 2024

Membership..... Phil Baughman

CLASS OF 2025

Admin. & FinanceBruce Morgan Building & GroundsHugh Walters Education....... Elaine Wiegert

THE DIACONATE

ModeratorRita Morgan Session LiaisonPhil Baughman

CLASS OF 2023

Kim Ciriello Bob Thomason

CLASS OF 2024

Tyler Ledford Debbie Wessely

CLASS OF 2025

Rita Morgan Adele Page







FREE VALET PARKING

Every Sunday starting at 10:45 a.m.



SAVE THE DATE!





Saturday, October 12, 2024 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church / Cleveland, GA 30528



First Presbyterian Church 147 N. Main Street Cleveland, GA 30528