

Stained Glass Gazette

First Presbyterian Church, Moultrie, GA

January 15, 2026

Learning to Walk in the Dark

This past Sunday we began our contemporary service, *Resonance*, here at First Presbyterian. One of the things that makes this worship service unique is that there is no traditional preaching. Instead, it centers around podcast-style conversations on various faith topics. Unfortunately, due to the flu, our original guest speaker was unable to join us, so Pastor Rick and I improvised a discussion. We chose to talk about darkness, and what it means to walk with God during seasons of wilderness and uncertainty, whether those seasons come in the form of doubt, depression, or hardship. In many ways, the conversation served as a preview of our upcoming adult WATCH program, which will be centered on Barbara Brown Taylor's book *Learning to Walk in the Dark*. I highly encourage you to join us for that study.

Darkness can be frightening. It limits our ability to see clearly and often provides cover for dangers we would rather avoid. That is why so many of our parents warned us not to stay out after dark. But it isn't only physical darkness that unsettles us. Spiritual and emotional darkness can be just as disorienting. Sometimes it shows up as doubts or fears about God and faith when life disrupts our tidy theology. Other times, something unexpected and painful turns our world upside down, leaving us to wonder where God is when all the pieces are scattered on the floor. That place of darkness can feel overwhelming, especially when we have never had to walk through it before.

The church, often unintentionally, can be unhelpful when people find themselves in seasons of darkness. This is largely because many Christians operate out of what Barbara Brown Taylor calls "solar spirituality," a way of faith that does everything it can to avoid darkness rather than seeing it as an opportunity for faith to deepen and mature. Solar spirituality often offers well-intentioned platitudes like, "You just need to have more faith," or, "Don't worry about this; it's all part of God's plan." While meant to be comforting, these responses often leave little room for wrestling with God or for the holy and necessary practice of lament.

For this reason, we must learn what Taylor calls "lunar spirituality." Lunar spirituality is a way of faith that learns to walk in the dark, especially during seasons when God's presence feels faint or barely visible. It means giving ourselves permission to doubt when faith no longer makes sense—to allow tension where there was once certainty, and to lament brokenness rather than wearing a painted smile and pretending everything is okay. It means experiencing the dark not as a place of fear, but as an invitation to encounter God and to wrestle with faith in new and deeper ways.

Often, it is because of the darkness that light shines the brightest. The stars decorate the night sky only because they shine against the backdrop of a dark curtain. Darkness can become a gift because it often refines our trust in the one who has walked our darkness and is ever present with us in it. In Psalm 139, the psalmist says that our darkness is like light to God. God already knows our fears, our wounds, our doubts. Lunar spirituality allows us to be honest with scars God already knows about. To heal instead of hide. So, I hope you will consider walking with God in the dark and join us in our study as we learn to walk with God and each other.



Austin Pounds

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

501 First Street, S.E., Moultrie, Georgia 31768

Email us at firstpresmoultrie@gmail.com

Sunday Worship at 11 a.m. Office Hours: Mon-Thurs 9-5 and Friday 9-4

To all who are weary and need rest, to all who mourn and need comfort, to all who are lonely and need friendship, to all who are glad and would serve others, to all who are complacent and need disturbing, to all who sin and need a Savior, this Church opens wide its door in the name of Christ, and bids you welcome.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thursday, January 15 at 12:30 Cornerstones Lunch on the Road

Sunday, January 18 – *Rock the Universe* deposit deadline

Monday, January 19 at 12:30 p.m. Cornerstones Meeting

Monday, January 19—*church office will close at 2 p.m.*

Tuesday, January 20 at 8 a.m. Preschool Open Enrollment

Tuesday, January 20 at 5:15 p.m. SESSION

Wednesday, January 21 at 5:30 p.m. WATCH Supper

Jan 23-25 YOUTH on ROCK THE UNIVERSE ORLANDO TRIP

Tuesday, January 27 at 4 p.m. Missions Committee

Wednesday, January 28 at 5:30 p.m. WATCH Supper

Sunday, February 1 at 11 a.m. worship & baptism, followed by baptism celebration (see below)



Baptism

✝

MICHAEL ALEXZANDER

&

ADDILYN SPENCER

Please join Talmadge and Michelle Williams
for the Baptism of their grandchildren
Sunday, February 1, 2026 at 11 o'clock in the morning
First Presbyterian Church
501 1st Street SE - Moultrie, Georgia
Reception to follow at the Fellowship Hall
RSVP to Michelle Williams
by January 25th

HELPING HANDS BOX: HOPE HOUSE MOMMY MALL

This quarter, we are collecting baby goods for the Hope House Mommy Mall. Not only does Hope House do pregnancy testing/limited ultrasounds (read by a local **obstetrician**) and counselling, but they offer online parenting classes from prenatal through the child's first birthday where parents can earn points to re-



deem for new baby items at the Mommy Mall by attending classes, prenatal visits, and attending church. Parents can continue online lessons without earning points from ages 1-3. Some in-person classes are starting back. **Items most needed:** Newborn up to 2T boys clothes, breastfeeding supplies (breast pumps both manual & electric, bags for breast milk, nursing pads); Dr. Brown or Philips Avent bottles and bottle brushes, play mats, mesh or plastic baby tubs, tummy time pillows, thermometers/healthcare kits, diaper bags, bouncers, baby carriers for carrying baby close to mom, baby shampoo, diaper bags and size 5-7 diapers. See the board above the Helping Hands box for other needs. Hope House also needs volunteers to work with women in online parenting classes.

MFPC TREASURER'S REPORT

FOR THE MONTH: DEC 2025

YTD: JAN-DEC 2025

	ACTUAL \$	BUDGET \$	VARIANCE \$	ACTUAL \$	BUDGET \$	VARIANCE \$
Income	60,676	39,938	20,738	539,894	479,262	60,632
Expenses	45,376	44,206	1,170	570,779	572,035	-1,256
Net	15,300	-4,268	19,568	-30,885	-92,773	61,888



PREFERENCE REGISTRATION PERIOD:

Tuesday, January 13 – Friday, January 16

Families already enrolled in the preschool program will receive registration packets from teachers starting **Thursday, January 8**.

First Presbyterian Church members can pick up registration packets in the front office as a part of early registration. Preference applications will be accepted **January 13–16**.

OPEN ENROLLMENT:

Begins Tuesday, January 20 at 8:00 AM

Packets can be picked up in the church office!

Preschool director Anna Davis will be in the fellowship hall at 8:00 AM on **Tuesday, January 20** to accept applications from the general public.



*Child must be the class age by October 1, 2026



BISCUITS & BLESSINGS Youth gathering at Chick-fil-A 7 a.m. Monday, January 12th.

FPC

Pub Theology

Last Monday of the Month

Food  Drinks

Faith Discussions

Starting Jan 26th at 6 P.M.
at The Speakeasy on Main

14 S Main St, Moultrie, GA 31768

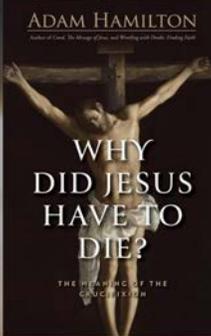
COME JOIN US

LENT AND EASTER STUDY: WHY DID JESUS DIE?

In this study we will be reflecting on Jesus's atoning death

February 24th, 2026 at Shalom Cafe! Starts at 9 A.M.

\$20 for the book or you can purchase an ebook on Kindle



First Presbyterian Church

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Moultrie, Georgia 31768

229-985-3158

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www.moultriefirstpres.com

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W.A.T.C.H. SUPPER

Wednesday Nights at the Church

5:30 P.M.

Menu: Wednesday, January 21

Everyone: Fish Fry, Baked Fish, Cheese Grits, Cole Slaw, French Fries, Salad Bar

Dessert: Apple Dumplings, Cookies, Ice Cream

Menu: Wednesday, January 28

Everyone: Buffalo Wings, BBQ Wings, Lemon Pepper Wings, Steamed Veggies, Baked Beans, Fries, Salad Bar

Dessert: Ricotta Chocolate Chip Cake, Cookies, Ice Cream

Make your reservation: Email firstpresmoultrie@gmail.com Call 229-985-3158