

Stained Glass Gazette

First Presbyterian Church, Moultrie, GA

October 2, 2025

Honest Grace

The late Rachel Held Evans once wrote,

“Convinced the gospel is a product we’ve got to sell to an increasingly shrinking market, we like our people to function as walking advertisements: happy, put-together, finished—proof that this Jesus stuff WORKS! ... But if the world is watching, we might as well tell the truth. And the truth is, the church doesn’t offer a cure. It doesn’t offer a quick fix. The church offers death and resurrection. The church offers the messy, inconvenient, gut-wrenching, never-ending work of healing and reconciliation. The church offers grace. Anything else we try to peddle is snake oil. It’s not the real thing.”

She’s right. Too often, we come to church dressed in our Sunday best, plaster on our biggest smiles, and shove down whatever mess we’re carrying inside. When someone asks how we’re doing, the script is already written: *“Oh, I’m doing good.”*

This way of thinking doesn’t form a community shaped by the suffering, joy, and transformation of the gospel. Instead, it creates people who go through the motions—wearing masks, repeating lines, and hiding what’s really going on. At its worst, it even breeds an environment where corruption and abuse are covered up in order to safeguard appearances.

But the gospel doesn’t require us to be “fine.” The good news is not about polishing our image or holding it all together. It is about grace in the middle of our mess. It is about a God who meets us in our brokenness, not after we’ve hidden it away. At its best, the church has always been a place where burdens are shared, wounds are named, and grace is encountered.

The greatest challenge facing the church today is not whether we can keep up with modern trends or win the latest culture war. The real challenge is that we too often cling to an image of perfection instead of becoming a thin place where the divine meets our scars and embraces our humanity.

The number one reason people are leaving the church is not disbelief but disillusionment. They are weary of hypocrisy. What they long for is authenticity, hope, and a community where they are both accepted as they are and transformed by grace. Yet too many churches have become more concerned with appearing holy than with being honest.

But there is another way. We can be a community that doesn’t fear weakness but welcomes it—a church where people don’t have to hide their doubts, struggles, or scars. We can choose honesty over image, grace over appearances, and love over pretense. When we do, we become the kind of place where resurrection is not just a story we tell but a reality we live—where God’s presence is felt in the midst of our honesty, and where people discover that the gospel truly is good news for real life.

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

Saturday, October 4 at 10 a.m. Jack Chastain Memorial
Sunday, October 5 at 8:30 a.m. MEN'S BREAKFAST at FMC
Sunday, October 5 *after church* RISE AGAINST HUNGER in Valdosta
Monday, October 6 at 10 a.m. PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, October 8 at 1 p.m. FINANCE COMMITTEE
Wednesday, October 8 at 5:30 p.m. WATCH SUPPER
Thursday, October 9 at 1 p.m. CARD PLAYING
Sunday, October 12 from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. OUR TIME (kids and youth)
Monday, October 13 at 10 a.m. CHRISTIAN SERVICE
Monday, October 13 at 12:30 p.m. CORNERSTONES MEETING
Monday, October 13 at 7 p.m. PW EVENING CIRCLE
Tuesday, October 14 at 10 a.m. PW MORNING CIRCLE
Wednesday, October 15 NO WATCH SUPPER (Sunbelt AgEXPO week)
Thursday & Friday, October 16 & 17 FALL BREAK – OFFICE CLOSED
Thursday, October 16—deadline to sign up for THRIVE spring retreat at Epworth

SIGN UP FOR A MEETING TO DISCUSS THE CHURCH

We have scheduled eight (8) congregational meetings during the month of October to discuss current issues at our church.

The schedule is as follows:

1.	Thursday	October 2	1:00 – 2:30 PM
2.	Sunday	October 5	2:00 – 4:30 PM
3.	Tuesday	October 7	12:00 – 1:30 PM
4.	Tuesday	October 7	6:00 – 7:30 PM
5.	Tuesday	October 21	3:00 – 4:30 PM
6.	Wednesday	October 22	2:00 – 3:30 PM
7.	Thursday	October 23	9:30 – 11:00 AM
8.	Saturday	October 25	9:00 – 10:30 AM
Alt 1	Wednesday	October 22	10:00 – 11:30 AM
Alt 2	Thursday	October 23	1:00 – 2:30 PM

There will be a maximum of 20 slots for each meeting and the sign-up sheets will be in a notebook in the Fellowship Hall or you can call or email the church office to ask them to sign you up at your preferred time. Each meeting will last a maximum of 1 ½ hours.

Following these meetings, the information gathered will be summarized and circulated back out to the congregation. At that point, we will call a congregational meeting to have a formal vote from the membership on whether or not to enter into discernment.

HELPING HANDS COLLECTION BOX

This quarter, First Presbyterian will be collecting for the Colquitt County **FOOD BANK**. Bring in items like canned food and peanut butter to help local hungry people.

CCHS FALL CONCERT

THIS SATURDAY

October 4, 2025

7 p.m.



SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5TH, 2 PM
AT TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN IN VALDOSTA



NOURISHING LIVES

IT STARTS WITH A *meal*

SIGN UP NOW for the Spring Retreat
Email: dcefirstpresmoultrie@gmail.com

THRIVE RETREAT

Theme:
Sacred Ordinary: Finding
Rhythms of Grace, Rest, and
Joy in Every Day Life

MARCH 13-15, 2026

EPWORTH BY THE SEA

For Details and Pricing see Austin
Pounds

\$20 off Registration if signed up

By OCTOBER 16th!

MEN'S BREAKFAST

When: Sunday, October 5 at 8:30 a.m.

Where: First Methodist Church

Speaker: Travis Kern, choir director

Come join us for Food & Fellowship.
All men, all ages welcome!

Call Jim Soos 229-891-0612 to RSVP



Family Heritage Sunday

Sunday, October 26

An old-fashioned Homecoming with dinner on the grounds (more precisely, in the Fellowship Hall) to celebrate your family's heritage, Scottish and otherwise, as well as the heritage of being Presbyterian.

Bring a treasured family heirloom – quilt, family Bible, photograph – to remember those who have laid your faith foundation.

Invite your grown children, siblings who may have grown up in the church, and others who need a blessing as we observe Kirkin' of the Tartans, also known as blessing of the families.

Congratulations to the first winners of Spot the Scot, **Suzanne Christensen** and **Beckett Thompson**. Be on the lookout every Sunday for Ian and Bonnie who will be somewhere on the church campus.



Catching up on the Flowers to the Glory of God...



July 20, 2025

The flowers were given in honor of Elizabeth Samford's 102nd birthday (Carrie's grandmother) and in celebration of Carrie and Judd Lasseter's 22nd anniversary.



July 27, 2025

The flowers were given in loving memory of Bobby L. Harnage, from his family.



August 3, 2025

May the flowers remind us of the preciousness of life, to be kind to those less fortunate, be generous to so many in need of a small handout, be vigilant to the troubles of others, and to be grateful for the blessings we receive through worship.



August 10, 2025

The flowers in sanctuary were placed in honor of Marjorie Vickery, from her children.

First Presbyterian Church

501 First Street SE

Moultrie, Georgia 31768

229-985-3158

Email: firstpresmoultrie@gmail.com

www.moultriefirstpres.com

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W.A.T.C.H. SUPPER

Wednesday Nights at the Church

JOIN US WEDNESDAY AT 5:30 P.M.

MENU: Wednesday, October 8

Everyone: Taco Bar

Dessert: Fruit Tray, Strawberry Cake,
Cookies, Ice Cream

NO WATCH SUPPER
OCT. 15 & OCT. 29

RESERVATIONS

*Remember to let Penny know if you need to
change or cancel your reservation.*

229-985-3158 or firstpresmoultrie@gmail.com

