

SERVICES FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

SUNDAY, MAY 7 at 11:00 A.M.

SERMON: "The Voice of the Shepherd" TEXTS: John 10:1-10
Sacrament of Holy Communion

SUNDAY, MAY 14 at 11:00 A.M.

SERMON: "Many Dwelling Places" TEXTS: John 14:1-7
Blessing of the Cradle Roll

THANKING GOD FOR THE CHURCH

The Reformer John Calvin regarded every service for the Lord's Day as a celebration of Christ's resurrection and certainly last Sunday's worship had all the joy of Easter morning. A church member reported the sign in front of the Salvation Army: "The Tomb is Empty, the Sanctuary Should Be Full." The hymns lifted our hearts in praise, the Chancel choir's anthem set our own prayers to music, youth playing hand bells delighted us, and even the excitement when a church member collapsed in the choir loft and EMS was summoned had a happy ending. By mid-afternoon, the member was discharged from the emergency room and has been doing fine ever since.

The mountain top experience of Holy Week and Easter have near overwhelmed me by what a lively and loving place this is—how this congregation tries to reflect the very grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. It has been said before on this page, but it cannot be said enough: do you realize, do you ever really realize the gift of this congregation to each of us? Attend a Wednesday dinner and talk with your tablemates or glance around on Sunday morning at those who sit near you and appreciate how these people add much to First. So many people give so much of themselves to the work of the church.

Consider all the committees that quietly work to lead us in mission, to educate us about the substance of the Christian faith, to reach out to newcomers, to visit the sick and aged, to maintain our building and grounds. Consider the elders listed each week on the bulletin whose labors have strengthened the ties that bind. Hold in your hearts and prayers all the children that fill classrooms and join us in worship and the eight confirmands who have been meeting each week to explore their faith and learn the history and doctrine of the church.

As the days grow warmer and also longer, the church will be shifting gears. It is a wonderful time to rededicate ourselves to the service of God through this community of faith. In June, we will be joining with Butler Memorial Presbyterian Church for a four-session study on "The Protestant Reformations." Also, the first week in June, Vacation Bible School will offer a lively experience of learning for children—and plenty of opportunities for youth and volunteers to help! The summer choir begins on May 21, which means rehearsals are held on Sunday mornings at 10:15 a.m. and newcomers are always welcome to join the choir for as many Sundays as your schedule permits. In the next weeks, say "yes!" when someone calls asking you to teach or drive the shuttle bus or prepare a meal for our homeless ministry. When you match your interests with some opportunity at First, you'll end up making new friends and discovering new meaning. What an incredible, lively, remarkable gift this church is to all of us! I urge you to rejoice at what we do and are for each other. In gratitude to God for making all of it possible we can say:

*I love thy church, O God; her walls before thee stand,
Dear as the apple of thine eye, and graven on thy hand.*

NEW MEMBER CLASS TO BEGIN ON JUNE 11

Who comes to this three-week class? Typically, the class will include folks from a broad spectrum of religious experiences. Often one or two in the class have not yet been baptized. Others, though baptized as infants, have never made a public profession of faith. Still others grew up in a variety of Christian churches, have drifted away from church, and now seeking to renew their Christian commitment. And we have people who are longtime Presbyterians who are wanting to transfer their membership from another congregation. What happens in the class? Participants learn about the history of the church and the many activities of our congregation. Above all they explore the basic theological affirmation that all Christians hold in common: "Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior." This is the only theological statement required for membership in the Presbyterian church. Membership, however, is not an expectation for those who attend the class. Some people will come to the class and participate in discussion and yet are still exploring various dimensions of the faith! The class will be held Sundays, June 11, 18 and 28, 9:30 a.m. in Room 207. Those joining the church will be welcomed during worship on Sunday, June 28 at 11:00 a.m.

JOIN US FOR VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Children ages 3 years-5th grade are invited to Vacation Bible School, June 5-9, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. The children will learn about heroes of the Bible and discover the qualities that make them and us truly heroic in God. Daily themes which discuss the qualities that God's heroes have are: *Heart, Courage, Wisdom, Hope, Power*. Vacation Bible School requires lots of volunteers, so please contact Will Shelburne if you would like to help.

ENROLL YOUR CHILD IN PRESBYTERY'S SUMMER CAMP!

The camp is held at the New Ebenezer Conference Center in Rincon. Registration forms are available on Savannah Presbytery's website, www.savannahpresbytery.org. The early-bird deadline is May 12, all registrations postmarked after May 12 must include a \$35 late fee. T-shirts may not be available for late registrants. The costs listed reflect the amount that First members and their children will pay for the camps. Please turn in your checks, made payable to First Presbyterian Church, and completed registration forms to the church office, **not to the Presbytery office**, by May 11. If you have questions email Will Shelburne, will@savannahfpc.org. This year's camps include: Junior Leader Development Camp (rising 11th—graduated seniors) June 18-24; cost: \$160. **Space is limited. Family Camp (Rising 1st and 2nd Graders) June 23-24 (1 night/2 days) Cost: for child and parent \$95; for each additional child or parent \$50. Primary Camp (Rising 3rd and 4th Graders) June 22-24 (2 nights/3 days) Cost: \$95/after May 13 \$130. Elementary Camp (rising 5th and 6th graders) June 19-22 (3 nights/4 days) Cost: \$145/after May 13 \$180. Youth Camp (rising 7th graders—graduated seniors) June 19-23 (4 nights/5 days) Cost: \$195/after May 11 \$230.

LEARNING CENTER TO HOLD ALL-DAY CONFERENCE AT FIRST

The Learning Center will host a conference, "One Nation: An Examination of Issues that Divide the United States," on Friday, May 12 at First. This is an annual event that looks in-depth at "One Big Question." Topics include civil rights, the future of journalism, faith, globalism and the working class. Visit seniorcitizensinc.org for more information and registration or call 236-0363.

SUMMER CHOIR BEGINS MAY 21!

Are you interested in singing, but don't have time for Wednesday evening choir rehearsals? No worries – from May 21 through August 27 we will rehearse the Sunday morning anthem at 10:15 in the choir room prior to the service. Even better, we will be in casual summer attire rather than in choir robes and will take you any Sunday that you feel the urge to sing with us! Contact Anne McNair for more information.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday, May 7	9:30 a.m. Sunday School, Confirmation Class
	10:30 a.m. Coffee Fellowship, Chancel Choir
	11:00 a.m. Worship Service
	5:30 p.m. Youth Supper
	6:00 p.m. Youth Choir
	6:30 p.m. Junior Choir
Monday, May 8	9:00 a.m. Knitting Prayer Shawls
Tuesday, May 9	7:30 a.m. Morning Missions at Emmaus House
Wednesday, May 10	1:30 p.m. Jail Ministry
	5:30 p.m. Kinder Choir
	6:00 p.m. Wonderful Wednesday Dinner and Program
	6:30 p.m. Children's Choir
	6:30 p.m. First Ringers
	7:30 p.m. Chancel choir

Sunday, May 14	9:30 a.m. Sunday School, Confirmation Class
	10:30 a.m. Coffee Fellowship, Chancel Choir
	11:00 a.m. Worship Service
No Youth Activities
Monday, May 15	7:30 a.m. Men's Prayer Breakfast
	9:00 a.m. Knitting Prayer Shawls
	6:30 p.m. Session Meeting
Tuesday, May 16	7:30 a.m. Morning Missions at Emmaus House
Wednesday, May 17	1:30 p.m. Jail Ministry
	6:00 p.m. Wonderful Wednesday Dinner and Program
	7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir

PRAYER CONCERNS, RECORD OF OUR FAITHFULNESS, ETC.

April 23: attendance at worship: 160; Sunday School attendance: 65; visitors: 7. April 30 offering: attendance at worship: 133; Sunday School attendance: 42; visitors: 9.....Check out the freshly painted steps and handrails on the south stairwell going to the second floor of the education building....Did you know that a local business, Savannah Cleaners on Waters Avenue, has a prayer box on its counter? Customers may complete a prayer request card and members of First will pray for them.

MEN GATHER FOR FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST

Annual Men's Breakfast with Butler Memorial Presbyterian Church will be held on Saturday, May 6, 8:00-9:00 a.m. at Butler Presbyterian Church, 603 W. Victory Dr., \$4/person. All are invited.

CRADLE ROLL DEDICATION PLANNED FOR SUNDAY, MAY 14

Cradle Roll Sunday is a wonderful tradition at First. Families with children two years old and younger (children who have not yet celebrated their third birthday) are invited to the front of the sanctuary where prayers are offered and a blessing is given to each child. The Cradle Roll blessing is early in the service, and Extended Session care for small children is available for the rest of the hour. The Cradle Roll blessing is a vivid reminder of how children are a gift from God and the important role the church takes in caring for children and families. Older siblings and other family members are invited to the chancel for the blessing. Please call the church, 354.7615, or email judith@savannahfpc.org to let us know you will participate.