

Faith Speaks

I couldn't escape. I ran around the ring, out of breath; my legs were tired, and I couldn't hold my guard up. My instructor yelled from the sidelines, "Don't run, John. Learn!" I was a brown belt in Tae Kwon Do, and my instructor had been putting me up in sparring matches against black belts much better than me. He told me at the start, "You're not going to win, but that's the point. I want them to expose your weaknesses. That's the only way you'll learn."

There are a lot of things in life you simply cannot outrun; you must face them and let them reveal the chinks in your armor. And none of those predators is more deadly or more necessary than the word of God. Consider these words from Hebrews 4:12-13 – "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account."

This passage presents to us scripture as a scalpel in the hands of God, our master surgeon. No-

tice the first two descriptions of God's word: living and active. I've read many novels that made me think, made me cry, or made me angry, but every book I've ever read shares this same quality: If I put it down, I don't have to deal with it. Not so with the living and active word of God.

You can refuse to read the Bible, but you'll still hear it. You'll hear it referenced in movies, books, magazines, you name it. You'll hear God's word preached and taught. You'll hear it discussed and debated. God's word also has the ability to stick with you years later in your mind and heart. Multiple New Testament authors refer to the word as a seed that is planted in us. James calls it the "implanted word, which is able to save your souls" (James 1:21). Peter calls it the "living and abiding word of God" (1 Peter 1:23). The point is – you can't outrun God's word. You can't just put it down. There is no other scripture of any religion that you are forced to think about or reckon with. But the truths of

God's word are always there.

I realize that this all sounds scary. Surgery is scary, but what is the point of surgery? It's not to kill but to heal. As God's word pierces down to the marrow, to our souls and spirit, it's getting down to the truth of who we are, what we think, what we feel, what we believe. And that's a good thing! You want that, Christian! You want God to see the real you now so he can transform you into what you're really supposed to be.

Hebrews 4:13 concludes by saying that our God, holding this piercing scalpel, sees all. We are all naked and exposed before him, and it is to him we must give an account. Dear reader, this year, you cannot escape God's Word because you cannot escape your God. He is calling you to repentance, calling you to service, calling you to understand his will, calling you to have (continued on page 2)



Church Staff

Pastor

Rev. John Cleveland

Church Administrator

Melinda Hawkins

Music Director

Nancy Lowry

Financial Secretary

Brooke Echols

Treasurer

Ronnie Burch

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2024

Session Members

John Cleveland

Gregg Coniglio

Keith Lovern

Dan Patterson

Mark Watts

Deacons

Jimmy Brock

Alan Dennis

Cameron Dennis

Zohrab Najarian

Pray that the Lord will bless the preaching and teaching ministry of the church to gather and build up the saints, that God's word will grow and multiply, and that our witness, love, and holiness will increase by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Ask the Lord to strengthen us with the Holy Spirit for counsel, wisdom, understanding, and the fear of the Lord, that we may share in our Savior's life and grace.

For the following, pray for health, comfort and fellowship with God during a period of sickness, that the Lord will give them faith, patience, joy and submission to his will.

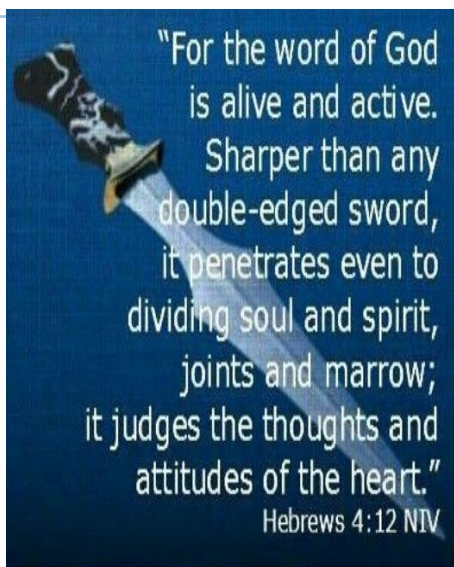
- ◆ **Bob Brown:** chronic pain
- ◆ **Jimmy Brock:** cancer treatment
- ◆ **Jimmy Cook:** cancer treatment
- ◆ **Jay Hilgefjord:** health issues
- ◆ **Myra Echols:** cancer
- ◆ **Miles Pass:** 5y/o with leukemia
- ◆ **Jordan Israel:** recovery from surgery
- ◆ **Kay Horvath:** In Memory Care Center
- ◆ **Chris Ober:** continued chemo treatments
- ◆ **Peggy Savory:** (Sara Cleveland's mom) liver cancer and chemotherapy
- ◆ **Donna Criger:** Corticobasal Degeneration
- ◆ **Rhonda Murray:** Continued good health
- ◆ **Wilson Station EPC in Tennessee**
- ◆ **Children in Foster Care**
- ◆ **Our Shut-Ins**
- ◆ **The Lost**
- ◆ **Our Elders and Deacons**
- ◆ **President Biden and Congress**
- ◆ **Supreme Court**
- ◆ **Persons serving in our Military**
- ◆ **Law Enforcement Officers**
- ◆ **Emergency Responders**
- ◆ **Our Nation**

Praise:

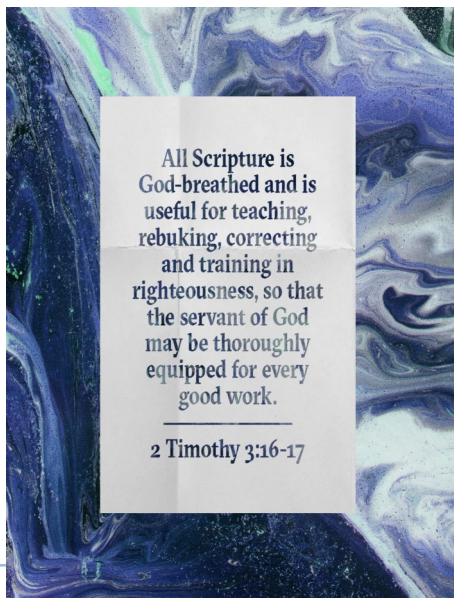
- ◆ **Rhonda Murray:** no treatment, no radiation or chemotherapy and she's back at work

Please pray for our missionaries:

- ◆ **Phil and Diane Thrash**
- ◆ **Gary and Jackie Burnett**
- ◆ **Santosh John**
- ◆ **Keith and Rachel Keller**



If you have a prayer request or a praise report that you would like to have included in the next newsletter, please email them to: faithepcrus@gmail.com by Wednesday, January 31st. This would include any NEW or OLD requests that you would like to have included. This section is renewed monthly.



(Continued from page 1)
 faith for every circumstance. We've all heard the excuses: "I'm not a good reader." "I can't memorize scripture." "I don't have the time to study." "I don't understand what I'm reading." "I can't make it to Bible study on time." "I'm just not feeling it."

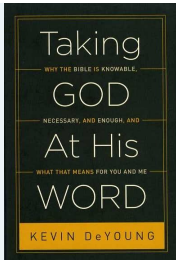
Take some comfort in Hebrews 4:12-13. The word of God is not a tool in YOUR hand to do surgery on yourself. It's a tool in GOD'S hand to work on you. Our call is to have faith and submit to his word – stop running, listen, and learn. Will you do that this year? In April, I'm going to host a Wednesday night Bible Study focused on getting more out of reading God's Word. I hope you'll join us. But, more than anything, I hope you'll make it a habit to sit and read the words of your Creator this year – they are words of life that you desperately need.

Pastor John

The Scripture is both the breeder and feeder of grace. How is the convert born, but by "the word of truth"? (James 1:18). How doth he grow, but by "the sincere milk of the Word."? (1 Peter 2:2).

Thomas Watson
 Ref: A Puritan Golden Treasury

From the Pastor's Shelf...



"Taking God at His Word"
– Kevin DeYoung

Most Christians can tell you that the Bible is important, and if you were to ask them why, they would probably say something like, "because it's helpful" or "because it helped me." But, the Bible should have our trust for more than just its ability to speak wisdom into our difficult circumstances. The Bible is authoritative, it's sufficient, it's clear, it's true and it's even necessary.

In this succinct and witty little book, Kevin DeYoung gives the reader a foundational understanding of the theology of scripture. Presently, our world is very confused as to how to think about scripture – what it is and what it means. DeYoung does an excellent job of clearing the air and showing us how we can trust the Bible.

This is a great book to read, but also a great book to hand out to those friends and family who are confused as to why we say the Bible is "God's inspired Word." We have some copies in our church bookstore. I highly recommend you pick one up!

Surely we only have to be realistic and honest with ourselves to know how regularly we need to turn to the Bible. How often do we face problems, temptation, and pressure? Every day! Then how often do we need instruction, guidance and greater encouragement? Every day! To catch all these felt needs up into an even greater issue, how often do we need to see God's face, hear his voice, feel his touch, know his power? The answer to all these questions is the same: every day!

John Blanchard

Ref: How to Enjoy Your Bible, Evangelical Press, 1984, p. 104.

Fellowship News

Girlfriends in Faith

Our next meeting will be on Saturday, December 16th at 10:00 am. We will share brunch foods, a devotion, and make plans for the new year. We hope all ladies will join us! Contact Laurie Brannan or Marcia Daniel for more information.

Men's Book Study

Our Men's Bible Study meets on Thursday's at 7:00 pm. We are studying 2 Corinthians. This is a wonderful opportunity to gather with other men around God's Word, fellowship, and prayer. Contact Gregg Coniglio for more information.

Ladies Bible Study

We have a new study on Tuesdays at 10:00 am beginning January 16th. Our AM study will be a study of Genesis 1-11. Our Tuesday at 6:30 pm. Group is studying, True Woman 201, the 10 "design elements" of Biblical Womanhood. We would love to have you join us. Contact Sara Cleveland for more information.

BOOK NOOK

Check out the bookshelf in the Narthex. We have excellent books available for your Christian growth.

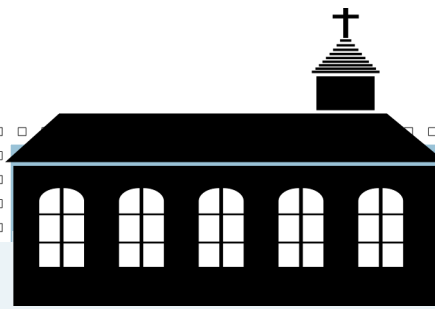
The Session held its December meeting at the church on Thursday, December 7th.

The Session used their time together to pray for the church and its members.

We scheduled a tentative date for our January budget planning meeting for Thursday, January 4th.

Please pray for your Elders and Deacons as we seek to guide the Church.

- John Cleveland, Moderator
- Dan Patterson, Clerk
- Gregg Coniglio
- Keith Lovern
- Mark Watts



Calendar

- ◆ January 6 Youth Hangout
- ◆ January 7 The Lord's Day
- ◆ January 7 Communion
- ◆ January 9 Ladies Study PM
- ◆ January 11 Men's Study
- ◆ January 14 The Lord's Day
- ◆ January 14 Billings Baby Shower
- ◆ January 16 Ladies Study AM/PM
- ◆ January 18 Men's Study
- ◆ January 20 Ladies Meeting
- ◆ January 20 Youth Hangout
- ◆ January 21 The Lord's Day
- ◆ January 21 Congregational Meeting
- ◆ January 23 Ladies Study AM/PM
- ◆ January 25 Men's Study
- ◆ January 28 The Lord's Day
- ◆ January 30 Ladies Study AM/PM



The Ladies of Faith

*Invite you to a
Baby Shower
For
Kayla Billings
and baby Oliver
On Sunday,
January 14th
During our
Fellowship time*

*Gift Cards
and/or
Gifts
are appreciated.*

First of all, the evangelical is one who is entirely subservient to the Bible...

This is true of every evangelical. He is a man of one book; he starts with it; he submits himself to it; this is his authority.

Martin Lloyd-Jones

Ref: What is an Evangelical? The Banner of Truth Trust, 1992, p. 42.



December 2023

Financial News

Donations:

\$41,488.73

Expenses:

\$32,658.34

P.O.P. Fund:

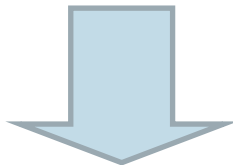
\$8,371.00

Mortgage Principal:

\$773,958.21

It's a
BOY

Outreach News



Mission of the Month

The Bridge Wellness South

www.thebridgewellness.org

Needs

Baby care products
Diapers

Please place your items in the mission box in the back of the sanctuary.

Thank you for always giving so generously to those in need!

2 PETER 1:16

FOR WE DID NOT FOLLOW CLEVERLY DEvised MYTHS WHEN WE MADE KNOWN TO YOU THE POWER AND COMING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, BUT WE WERE EYEWITNESSES OF HIS MAJESTY.



If you have a need that arises, or know of anyone that is in need, please reach out to our Deacons for assistance. They have the ability to reach out to the congregation on your behalf as well as physically meet your needs, or they can point you in the right direction for help.

Deacons of Faith

Jimmy Brock
Alan Dennis
Cameron Dennis
Zohrab Najarian



Volunteers Needed For Fellowship Time!

If you would like to provide refreshments, there is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board by the kitchen. Speak to a Deacon if you have any questions!



Children's Sunday School

We have Sunday School classes for all ages!
We are in need of teachers!
Contact Susan Jones if you are interested in serving the children of Faith!

Are you a 4th to 12th grader?

You don't want to miss out on the fun and excitement of our hangouts! Our next hangouts are January 6th & 20th at 6:00 pm At the Church Bring a friend!

UPDATE FROM GEORGIA RIGHT TO LIFE

NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS!

"Out with the OLD and in with the NEW." We hear that phrase quite often. In terms of what Georgia Right to Life is doing we continue moving forward into 2024 with the same goal - to protect and preserve the sanctity of innocent human life, from earliest beginning until natural death!

We look forward with anticipation to see how God will use the challenges and experiences ahead in 2024 to expand our organization and increase our faith in Him.

Georgia Right to Life 2023 Accomplishments

Your support and prayers have enabled us to accomplish a lot during calendar year 2023:

*College campus visits to speak directly with students and educate them on the nature of pre-born human life. We also staffed booths and tables, and held speaking engagements at conferences, fairs, schools, and churches.

*Running billboards that get millions of views in a month's time. We have messages running now in Atlanta and Augusta. The billboards offer help for those in an unplanned pregnancy and encouragement to save their babies.

*Digital ads that target the smartphones of young teens and

women in Georgia. These ads are getting three to four times the industry average in clicks to the Teenbreaks.com website – a site loaded with true facts. Over 250,000 people per month receive the ads! Overall, thousands have responded.

*Pro-Life Bridges Across Georgia: We've taken our message to Georgia highways and reached hundreds of thousands as we've held large signs on bridge overpasses over I-285, I-85, I-75, I-985, GA 400 and other highways across Georgia.

*Chapter activities around the state engage the public and uphold the sanctity of life. An example: Hall County Right to Life teaches about the origin of life and the birth process to multiple grades in Hall County public-schools every year. GRTL produced monthly e-newsletters on current developments, events and aspects of the life-related battles.

*Radio spots Monday – Friday on 31 radio stations in portions of five states. GNNradio.org. Tune in at 3:15pm on your smartphone or laptop. At 3:17pm our spot is played with fifteen different topics related to life issues.

*Annual Memorial Service commemorating the loss of more than 64 million children who have been denied the God-given right to life.

*Annual Oratory and Video Contests are conducted initially at the local county chapter level which culminates in a statewide competition.

*With Georgians Ending Abortion, promoted HR 413 - The

Georgia Personhood Amendment, and HB 496 - the Georgia Prenatal Equal Protection Act (GA-PEPA) now in committee in the Georgia Legislature. And much more!

2024 GEORGIA RIGHT TO LIFE EVENTS

Georgia Right to Life will be holding its annual GEORGIA STAND FOR LIFE (previously known as the Georgia March For Life) on Friday, January 26, 2024 at 11:30 AM at Liberty Plaza.

The 2024 Georgia Stand For Life
Program & Events

Praise & Worship Music – Kurt
Scobie (11:15 AM)

The Memorial Service (11:30 AM)
Testimony

Keynote – Pastor Josh Buice
Special Music – Shonneeka Wright
Silent March

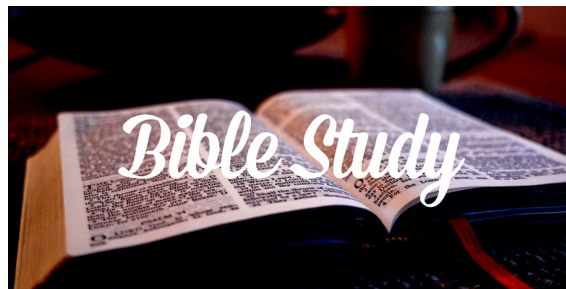
PILLARS OF PERSONHOOD PRO-LIFE TRAINING

JOIN US for a Pillars of Personhood pro-life training seminar on Sat, February 10, 2024 at Providence Church, 2146 Buford Hwy, Duluth, GA 30097.

This seminar equips pro-life citizens to persuasively articulate their pro-life convictions and to advocate for the right to life of every person.

A complimentary lunch will be provided for all registrants. Please advance register for this event via stateoffice@grtl.org / (770) 339-6880.





To the glory of God, Faith Presbyterian Church has been called together to faithfully proclaim the Gospel, to make and equip disciples for Christ, and to advance God's Kingdom in our families, community, and world.



Faith Presbyterian Church is a congregation of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church (www.epc.org) and the Presbytery of the Southeast (www.epcsoutheast.org).

Our Church Website:
www.FaithMcDonough.com

Church Email:
faithepcrus@gmail.com

Church Phone Number:
770-648-5288

Mailing Address:
Faith Presbyterian Church EPC
1185 East Lake Road
McDonough, GA 30252

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work,

2 Timothy 3:14-17

CHOIR NEWS

If you would like to join our choir, contact Nancy Lowry! We would love for you to join us!

HAPPY JANUARY BIRTHDAYS!



Heidi Glinski	1/04
Susan Jones	1/07
Zohrab Najarian	1/07
Wylene Eason	1/08
Albert Campbell	1/11
Charles Crumbley	1/11
Ethan Echols	1/11
Cameron Dennis	1/13
Billie Miller	1/14
Carolyn Wolowicz	1/17
Tuffy Murray	1/20
Nancy Burch	1/22
Haley Dennis	1/23
Landon Evans	1/24
Gregg Coniglio	1/26
Kathy Hunt	1/28



CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

If you are interested in joining Faith Presbyterian Church (EPC), you may do so by a profession of your faith in Jesus Christ, by a re-affirmation of your faith, or by a transfer of your membership from another church. Please speak with the an Elder if you have any questions about joining.

January 2024

Sun

Mon


Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

	1 	2	3	4	5	6 <i>Youth Hangout 6:00 pm</i>
7 Communion 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Fellowship 10:30 Worship	8	9 6:30 Ladies Bible Study	10	11 7:00 Men's Bible Study	12	13
14 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Fellowship & Billings Baby Shower 10:30 Worship	15	16 10:00 Ladies Bible Study 6:30 Ladies Bible Study	17	18 7:00 Men's Bible Study	19	20 <i>10:00 am Ladies Meeting</i> <i>Youth Hangout 6:00 pm</i>
21 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Fellowship 10:30 Worship 12:00 Congregational Meeting	22	23 10:00 Ladies Bible Study 6:30 Ladies Bible Study	24	25 7:00 Men's Bible Study	26	27
28 9:00 Sunday School 10:00 Fellowship 10:30 Worship	29	30 10:00 Ladies Bible Study 6:30 Ladies Bible Study	31			