

Faith Speaks

A long time ago, I was invited to sit on a pastors' panel at a college function. Myself and five other pastors of different denominations were tasked with taking turns answering biblical questions and theology questions from the students present. If memory serves, most of the questions were ones you could expect, including the obligatory, "are there animals in heaven?" My answer: "I sure hope so!"

The student who put this panel together began the whole proceeding by saying, "All of the pastors present here believe everything in the Bible 100%." Now, I don't know if that was true. I hope it was. But I do know that statement was a little bit misleading. Even if we assume that all of us pastors on that panel did believe everything written in the Bible, the fact is we all had different interpretations of what the Bible says and teaches.

This is likely to be true of any other Christian you come into contact with. Will you both love Jesus? Sure. Will you both love the Bible? Yes. Will you both line up on everything you believe about everything the Bible says? ...No, probably not. There used to be an evangelical statement that well-meaning Christians, like the one that put together that panel, would say. It

went like this: "No creed but Christ, no book but the Bible." Such statements have their place. The fact is Scripture is the only book that is inerrant, infallible and all that we need. Scripture is the only God-breathed book.

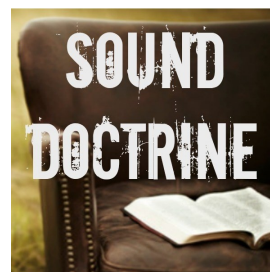
However, even a cursory glance at Church history will reveal that Christians found much value in creeds and confessions from the very beginning of the Church. Why? There has always been a need for doctrinal clarity to distinguish between what teachings are true and plumb to the Bible and what teachings are askew and false.

At Faith Presbyterian, we have chosen to identify ourselves as a confessional church, meaning we have chosen to take our theological positions from what is called the Westminster Confession of Faith. Now, if the concept of being "confessional" is foreign to you, you might have alarm bells going off. Don't worry. We do not place The Westminster Confession over Scripture or even beside Scripture. It is very squarely far below Scripture in terms of moral and spiritual au-

thority. In other words, we don't believe that the Westminster Confession is Scripture. We simply believe it is an accurate man-made statement of what Scripture teaches on specific points.

See, if you ask me or any elder at Faith Presbyterian, "Do you believe everything written in the Bible?" We would all say yes, but so would a Jehovah's Witness; so would a Mormon; so would a Roman Catholic priest? So, how do we differentiate one minister's "I believe the Bible 100%" from another minister's "I believe the Bible 100%"? We do that through the Confession.

A while back, a beloved sister in our congregation sent me an email saying, "I hear you mention the Westminster once in a while. Sometimes we even recite it in Church. What is that? I've never read it. Should I read it?" That email is really why I'm writing this article. The answer to that question is ...
(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

Andy Martin

Dan Patterson

Deacons

Jimmy Brock

Randy Cononge

Alan Dennis

Cameron Dennis

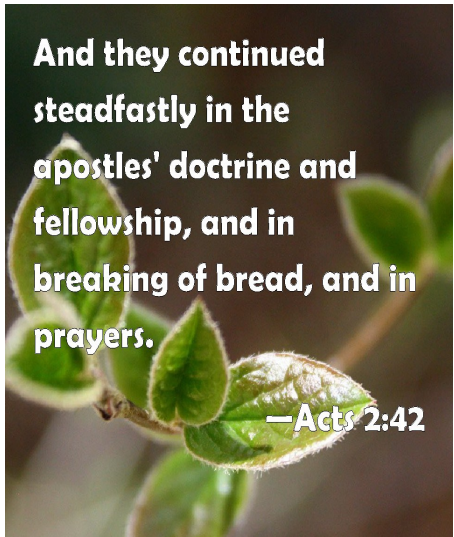
Pray that the Lord will bless the preaching and teaching ministry of the church to gather and build up the saints, that God's word will grow and multiply, and that our witness, love, and holiness will increase by the power of the Holy Spirit.

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.

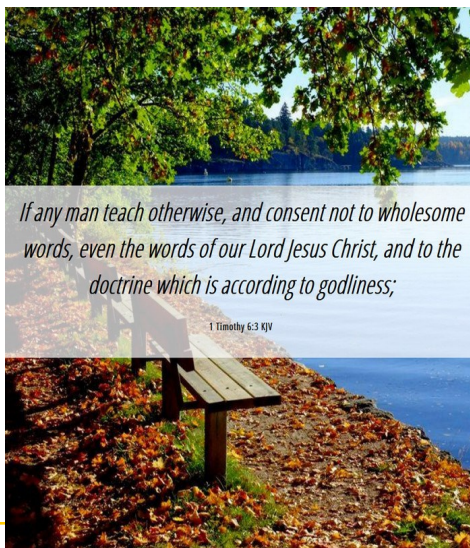
- ◆ **Bonnie Turner:** gallbladder cancer
- ◆ **Billie Miller:** fighting cancer
- ◆ **Jay Hilgeford:** answers and healing
- ◆ **Jimmy Brock:** cancer treatment
- ◆ **Chris Ober:** continued cancer treatment
- ◆ **Faith Strickland:** emphysema
- ◆ **Richard Ingram:** esophageal/liver cancer
- ◆ **Myra Echols:** cancer
- ◆ **Miles Pass:** 5y/o with leukemia
- ◆ **Jordan Israel**
- ◆ **Bonnie McEachern:** recovery from heart surgery
- ◆ **Linda Thomas:** lung and liver cancer
- ◆ **Kay Horvath:** In Memory Care Center
- ◆ **Peggy Savory:** liver cancer
- ◆ **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**

Please pray for our missionaries:

- ◆ **Phil and Diane Thrash**
- ◆ **Gary and Jackie Burnett**
- ◆ **Santosh John**
- ◆ **Keith and Rachel Keller**
- ◆ **Jeff & Veronique Kim**
- ◆ **Jenny Coon**
- ◆ **Mike Rasmussen**
- ◆ **Grady Davidson**



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 Monday, September 30th. This would include any NEW or OLD requests that you would like to have included. This section is renewed monthly.



(Continued from page 1)

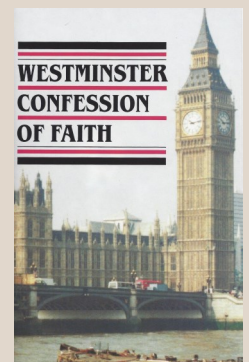
Yes! You should definitely read the Westminster Confession. We all should. Not because it is like the Bible or even comparable to the Bible. It is not! It is, however, an extremely careful and precise summary of the Reformed understanding of the scriptures.

Historically, the Confession was written by 131 Protestant ministers and professors from England and Scotland over six years (1643-1649). During that time, the assembly met a total of 1,163 times. Their goal was to write a concise summary of the Protestant faith. So, this was a cooperative document with a very noble goal - the goal of summarizing Scripture, not reinventing it, not spinning it, not adding to it. And so today, what we have in the Confession is an extremely valuable tool for study, for clarification, and for doctrinal integrity.

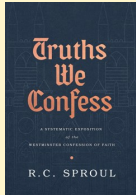
If you've never read The Confession, I highly recommend it to you. You can find some copies in our Church Bookstore. You'll learn a lot, and I promise you'll love Scripture all the more because of it.

Blessings to you.

Pastor John



From the Pastor's Shelf...



“Truths We Confess: A systematic Exposition of the Westminster Confession of Faith”
- R.C. Sproul

So, if you read the article in this newsletter, then you’ve already received one book recommendation - The Westminster Confession of Faith. But let’s fast forward. You’ve picked up your Confession, you crack it open and start reading ... Whoa! This is a lot of fancy language right here. The Confession is deep and careful in its wording, and let’s be honest, it was written hundreds of years ago, so to our modern ears, it sounds a little stilted.

If you want to study the Confession in more depth, I have just the thing - R.C. Sproul’s “Truths We Confess.” This is basically a commentary on a commentary. It is Sproul teaching The Confession chapter by chapter. This book is a great reference tool to have, like any commentary, but it would also be a great book to use for a small group study of the Confession.

Whisper: “Don’t tell them, but I’m actually using this book right now as I study the Confession with the Church Elders. Shhh!”



It is necessary in every generation for the church to clarify its beliefs against constant attacks and distortions of her body of truth. Christianity is sometimes called a faith, the “Christian faith.” In using the term faith, what is in view is the body of truths that the church affirms and puts her trust in and by which the content of Christianity is defined.

RC Sproul

Reference : Preface: Truths we Confess

Fellowship News



Girlfriends of Faith

The Girlfriends of Faith are excited to announce a **BABY SHOWER** for Samuel Cleveland and his parents, John and Sara. As members, and /or regular attendees, you are invited to join this happy event.

WHEN:
Sunday, September 8, 2024

TIME:
9:00-10:30 am.
(during Sunday School and Fellowship time)

GIFT REGISTRY:
(click the link)
Amazon: Baby Registry
*Gift cards or other “non-Amazon” gifts are also welcome as well as cash

“Rejoice with those who rejoice...”
Romans 12:15



BOOK NOOK

Girlfriends of Faith

Mark your calendar for our next meeting on Saturday, September 21 at 10:00 am.

We will share brunch and will be discussing our annual Operation Christmas Child project, as well as, other possible ministry project opportunities.

Women’s Bible Study

Our Women's Evening Bible Study meets on Tuesday's at 6:30 pm.

We are studying an overview of the book of Isaiah using "Isaiah: The Holy one of Israel" by Sarah Ivill.

Contact Becky Fowler or Pam Fraticelli if you have any questions.

Men’s Bible Study

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

Check out the bookshelf in the Narthex.

We have excellent books available for your Christian growth.

The August regular Session meeting was held on Thursday, August 15th, at the church at 5:30 PM. For the devotion, the Session read the Westminster Confession of Faith. The Session reviewed a bid to repair the parking lot and will ask for three more competitive bids. Other topics discussed were the future budget for Vacation Bible School in 2025, the new member classes scheduled for September 1st and 8th, the need for volunteers to assist with future Youth Hangouts, and the "Sparks Conference" to be held at Glen Haven Church on August 25th.

The Session also discussed the future sermon series, which will include three more in Ephesians and then a series on the Sacraments. Prayer needs were discussed and lifted to God.

The next Session meeting is scheduled for September 12th, 2024

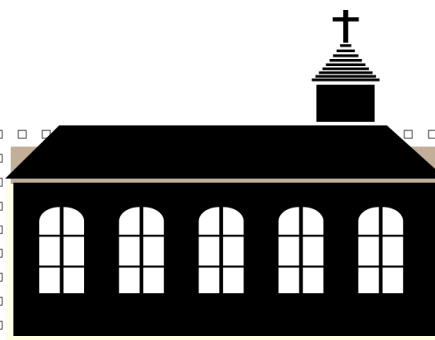
Faith Presbyterian EPC Session

- John Cleveland, Moderator
- Dan Patterson, Clerk
- Gregg Coniglio
- Keith Lovern
- Andy Martin



Are you a 4th to 12th grader?

- You don't want to miss out on the fun and excitement!
- Our next Hangouts are Saturday, September 14th and 28th at 6:00 pm



Calendar

- September 1 The Lord's Day
- September 1 New Member Class
- September 3 Ladies pm Study
- September 5 Men's Bible Study
- September 8 The Lord's Day
- September 8 Baby Shower
- September 8 New Member Class
- September 10 Ladies pm Study
- September 12 Men's Bible Study
- September 14 Youth Hangout
- September 15 The Lord's Day
- September 17 Ladies pm Study
- September 19 Men's Bible Study
- September 21 Ladies Meeting
- September 22 The Lord's Day
- September 24 Ladies pm Study
- September 26 Men's Bible Study
- September 28 Youth Hangout
- September 29 The Lord's Day



August 2024
Financial News

Donations
\$38,096.23

Expenses
\$29,814.00

P.O.P. Fund
\$600.00

Mortgage Principal
\$742,531.39

Now, in order that true religion may shine upon us, we ought to hold that it must take its beginning from heavenly doctrine and that no one can get even the slightest taste of right and sound doctrine unless he be a pupil of Scripture.

John Calvin

Reference: Institutes, Scripture.

Outreach News

**NEED
HELP?**

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
Randy Cononge
Alan Dennis
Cameron Dennis



**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!



Mission of the Month

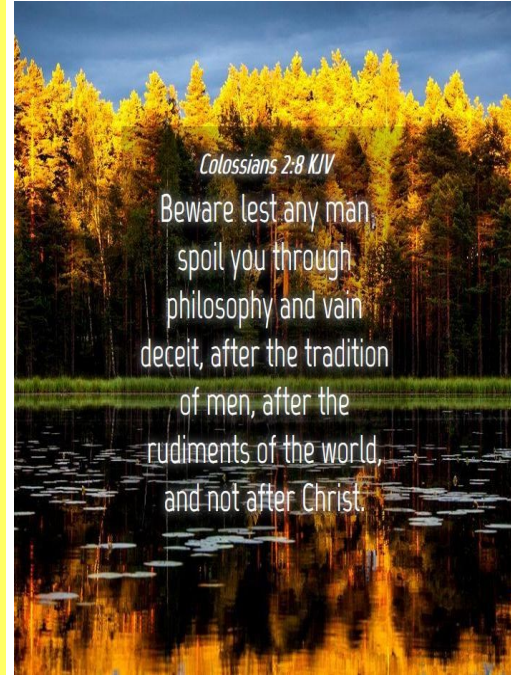
Georgia Right to Life

www.grtl.org

Needs

8" paper plates,
toilet paper,
paper towels,
tall kitchen garbage bags, thermal coffee cups, plastic water cups, napkins

*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!*



Colossians 2:8 KJV

Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

Doctrine is the framework of life – the skeleton of truth, to be clothed and rounded out by the living grace of a holy life.

Adoniram Gordon

UPDATE FROM JENNY COON

Marhaba!

It may be a little early for an August update, but things change quickly these days, and I know this country has been in the news more as of late so I thought I would send a little earlier update this month.

The threat of war, or a widening regional conflict has ebbed and flowed since October 7th of last year. I have hesitated to write much as the situation is complicated and honestly requires a larger dialogue than I can write in these updates, so I have chosen to share bits and pieces through the lens of how it affects my patients and secondarily how it affects me as I enter into their lives through their stories and often through their pain which brings them to me. However, last week a series of deafening explosions shook Beirut on multiple days as warplanes flew overhead breaking the sound barrier. This is not the first time this has happened as they have violated Lebanese air space hundreds of times before. But this time was much more aggressive and seemed to contribute to the signal that the conflict had entered into a new stage.

The first time, I was with a patient who lives in the south suburbs of Beirut which is a stronghold and potential target. Fear and panic immediately crossed her face. I offered that she could stay as long as she wanted at the clinic until she felt safe to leave but she preferred to go check on her family. We prayed protection for her and she left. The second day it happened, I was visiting a Syrian family. The explosion of sound this time was much louder and immediately sent this family back to the days of the war in Syria. The children began crying hysterically and we all tried to comfort them as we ascertained what was happening. The third day it happened, I was in the middle of treating my patient and even though I almost felt accustomed at this point to the sound, it was all I could do to keep my hand from shaking subconsciously.

Embassies have raised alert levels. Flights have been cancelled. Anxiety and

uncertainty are constant companions. But you can read all of this in your news feed. What is my response personally and what is my response as co-director of a medical clinic and counseling center that exists precisely for times like this? Of course I have contingency plans and protocols for sheltering in place or safe places to seek shelter if needed, but what about staying physically, emotionally, and spiritually healthy to be strong for my patients and my clinic team and care for them well through this prolonged crisis? They (and sometimes me!) are understandably tired, stressed, and not always reacting in the healthiest of ways. We pray, read a lot of Psalms, spontaneously order ice cream, watch the Olympics, and encourage each one another with the reason why we are here - stories like the following:

"F" is from the south and her village has been repeatedly bombed. She worries constantly about her mother and brother. As I was treating her, she shared that someone had told her she should take some anxiety pills (unprescribed). She said she would rather speak to a psychologist but could never afford the sessions. She was so grateful to find out that we offer counseling sessions at affordable prices and immediately took an appointment. We prayed together with her as a team before she left.

"Aya" is from a very strict Islamic background and has recently started coming to see me for chronic pain. Spontaneously, a Korean gave her a Bible last week. She and her husband started reading it and she told me she was amazed by the stories and hasn't stopped reading it all week. We may start reading together soon.

"Leah" is another Syrian who told me she thought she had forgot everything from the war until the first "sonic boom" happened last week when all of the memories just came flooding back. I offered to pray for her and she looked shocked. "You mean you can do that here and now?", she asked me. After our prayer, the countenance on her face changed completely.

Every day I am asked why I choose to remain in Lebanon. I am not a saint. Sometimes I am scared or feel alone or am simply tired of constantly

thinking through different scenarios. Sometimes I am too angry to even be scared because of the injustice that I see happening around me. Sometimes, life just feels strangely normal in spite of everything. Most of the time, I feel inadequate to know how to meet the constant demand and need around me. But at the same time, I am so thankful to constantly feel the presence of God, the prayers of those around the world, and to tangibly see the fruit of our ministry on a daily basis. Please continue to pray for the people like "F", "Leah", and "Aya" that God would open their hearts to receive Him during this time.

Thank you to each and every one of you and how you pray, support, and encourage the ministry here in Lebanon as well as me personally. I could not do it without you!

With gratitude,
Jenny



My co-director and I had the opportunity to attend a Global Forum on Refugee Health with representatives from the World Health Organization and other influential organizations both regionally and locally. It was helpful to see a higher level picture of global health concerning refugees, the research that is being done, and the work being done to cross the bridge from research to practice.



The social media post one of my patients shared with me during his appointment of his village in the south being targeted earlier in the day. His mom remains and he constantly worries for her safety.



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).

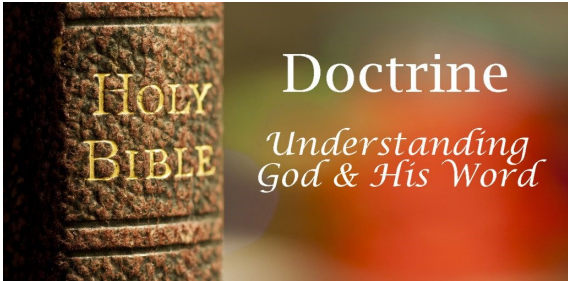


Our Church Website:
www.FaithMcDonough.com

Church Email:
faithepcrus@gmail.com

Church Phone Number:
770-648-5288

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



Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away.

Psalm 1:1-4



CHOIR NEWS

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

HAPPY SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS!



Leah Harper	9/02
Aiden Echols	9/04
Eva Anderson	9/05
Suzy Skelton	9/05
Alan Dennis	9/06
Teresa Harvey	9/06
Terry Clotfelter	9/07
Keith Billings	9/09
Elliott Glinksi	9/09
Dorothy Toal	9/11
Ann Herndon	9/12
Ken Foshee	9/14
Jake Skelton	9/14
Paula Anderson	9/15
Kayla Billing	9/16
Alaina Harper	9/18
Beth Burer	9/18
Joy Brock	9/24
Gerald Gilbert	9/26

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.



September 2024

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

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