

OCTOBER 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4 10:00 am Adult SS, via Zoom Recorded Worship Philippians 3 "A stronger word than Rubbish"	5	6	7 7:00 pm Kid's Fellowship 7:30 pm Churchwide Fellowship via Zoom	8 7:00pm "Let's Talk" via Zoom	9	10
11 10:00 am Adult SS, via Zoom Recorded Worship Philippians 4 "Sincerely"	12 Columbus Day Office Closed	13	14 7:00 pm Kid's Fellowship 7:30 pm Churchwide Fellowship via Zoom	15	16	17
18 10:00 am Adult SS, via Zoom Recorded worship Matthew 22:15-22 "God and the Emperor"	19	20	21 7:00 pm Kid's Fellowship 7:30 pm Churchwide Fellowship via Zoom	22 7:00pm "Let's Talk" via Zoom	23	24
25 10:00 am Adult SS, via Zoom 11:00 am Live worship with communion, via Zoom Deuteronomy 34:1-12 "Promised"	26	27	28 7:00 pm Kid's Fellowship 7:30 pm Churchwide Fellowship via Zoom	29	30	31



Oct 1 Cheri Bailey
Oct 4 Monica Andrea Coutin-Baxter
Oct 5 John Dunn
Oct 11 Judy Simmons
Oct 15 Sandra Martin
Oct 16 Edward Maccombie
Oct 17 Carlton Smith
Oct 22 Jeffrey Cochran
Oct 27 William Turner
Oct 28 Cydnee Keller

THE SPC SESSION
Jim Beisner, Clerk of Session

Discipleship
Aaron Roberts (20)
Paul Szeto (21)
Terry Holmes (21)

Witness
Stephanie Phillips Ayoola (20)
Arlene Lathrop (22)
Lee Hart (22)

Resources
Gene Ingram (21)
Kim Seal (20)

SPC SPOTLIGHT

The Church At The Bridge

Friends,
I am so thankful for the ways we are connecting while apart. The highlight of September was sharing communion meal via Zoom on September 20. What a gift it was to have 25 squares on the Zoom screen, and nearly 40 people (plus a few 4-legged friends!) join us for that holy meal. Because it was so well-received, we will be offering this opportunity monthly. Our next time will be Sunday, October 25 at 11:00am, and we will use the same connection information as before: Check email or contact Betsy for the Zoom information for this meeting.

Some of you remain reluctant to try Zoom. For that group, I first want to say we miss you! And second, I want to respond to some comments I've heard:

"I'm not tech savvy." – First of all, if you can read and respond to email or go on Facebook, you have the technology and enough savvy for Zoom, I promise. And we will help you. But this is legitimate concern for about 10-15% of our people who really do not have an internet device. For those folks, we have other options – you're getting this newsletter by mail, you can call in to listen to weekly worship (857-385-7514), and Women's Bible Study meets by phone. Every Zoom meeting has an option to call in by phone – you won't be able to see, but you'll be able to converse. We are doing our best to keep everyone connected.

"I don't know how to Zoom" – That may be true, but none of us did prior to Covid. We have learned because it was necessary, just like you probably didn't learn to roast a turkey until you hosted your first Thanksgiving. With new challenges come new opportunities to learn.

"I'm too old for this." – If Abraham and Sarah weren't too old to expect a child, you're not too old to try this! We have small children all the way up to 80-90 year olds on Zoom.

"But it's not the same!" – You're right! It's not the same, and it's not perfect. But it's the best we've got right now. It has been surprisingly meaningful to connect in these new ways. The resounding opinion is that it's worth it to try.

"I'd rather just gather in the building, face to face." – Sure, we all would! But that is still too risky right now. We are tentatively hopeful that the numbers are starting to move in the right direction, but we are still far being able to mitigate the risk sufficiently to gather. If you're just waiting for when we are able to gather in person, please know that the timeline remains unknown and even when we are able to gather in person, it won't feel "normal" either – we'll be keeping distance, wearing masks, not embracing or touching, and modifying our worship in profound ways. We might as well connect now!

"We should just get back to normal." – Yes, we'd like to flip a switch and have this all sorted out magically, but that's just not the reality. Covid has changed our world, changed our lives, and changed both the church and our understanding of church. And we can't go back, only forward through it. We aren't going to "get back to normal" (whatever that means) – instead, we are creating a new normal.

These are not easy days, my friends. None of us predicted living through a pandemic, and I certainly never planned on pastoring through one. On top of that, our nation is in crisis and turmoil on every level – a public health disaster layered with economic downturn, political upheaval, racial tension and unrest... and that's along with whatever is going on personally in terms of physical and mental health, family, work, and so on.

The only thing I know to do with all of that is to keep the faith, to keep being the church, to keep praying, and keep reaching out to one another. I think often of the scripture that says, "we grieve, but not as those without hope" – that's as true for this tough, complicated season as it is at a time of death. We cling to our steadfast God, to our hope, and to one another, thanks be to God!

Peace,

Betsy Turner

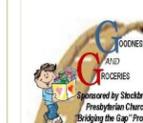


October 4
Recorded worship
Philippians 3
Sermon: "A stronger word than Rubbish"

October 11
Recorded worship
Philippians 4
Sermon: "Sincerely"

October 18
Recorded worship
Matthew 22:15-22
Sermon: "God and the Emperor"

October 25
Live worship with communion, via Zoom
(Recording will be available afterward)
Deuteronomy 34:1-12
Sermon: "Promised"



As of September 28, Henry County is phasing back in with some in-person learning. We are in touch with our contacts in our partner schools. At this time, we are not able to gather for the usual Goodness and Groceries ministry, but we are looking for other ways to help. So, stay tuned for more updates in the weeks ahead. And in the meantime, be praying for the students, teachers, families, and school leaders as they navigate this unusual school year.



We are continuing our conversation about race and racism every other Thursday (October 8 & 22) at 7:30 pm. Please email Stockbridgeinterim@gmail.com or call the church office if you would like to join this group.



We would love to have you join us! Our Adult Sunday school is meeting via Zoom every Sunday morning at 10:00 am.

Zoom information:

Check email or contact Betsy for the Zoom information for this meeting.



JOIN US for fellowship and fun each Wednesday night - 7:00 pm for kids, and 7:30 pm for church-wide fellowship!

Zoom information:

Check email or contact Betsy for the Zoom information for this meeting.

Coat Closet



We are collecting winter coats, small blankets, socks, scarves, gloves for the Coat Closet. Items can be dropped by the church office Monday-Thursday, 9 - 1 pm.



On November 1, All Saints' Day, our worship service will include remembering those who have died in this last year. We will include any church members who have died in the last year, but we also invite you to submit the names of those saints you would like to have remembered by name in worship that day - whether they died in the last year or previously. You can send those names to Betsy Turner at StockbridgeInterim@gmail.com, or to Linda in the church office (spcusa7777@gmail.com, 770-474-7777). Please get them in by October 25, so we can be sure to include them all on November 1.



SPC Family,

Searching for a pastor is hard and complicated work, especially daunting in this Covid time, but we are trying to be faithful to the task. We continue to meet regularly by Zoom, to consider and even interview candidates. This month, we are working on a video tour of SPC, so that we can show candidates the building where (in non-Covid times) we worship, fellowship, and serve. We will keep you posted on our search progress and are always willing to answer questions about the process.

Thank you for your continued prayers.

Faithfully,

Your Pastor Nominating Committee: Annetta Harper, Terry Holmes, Aaron Roberts, Kim Seal, and Paul Szeto



Set your clocks back!
Daylight saving time ends Sunday, November 1.

Ways to give during Covid. Give on-line, below is a link to donate to SPC. You can also mail your checks to the church or drop it by the office Monday-Thursday 9 - 1 pm. Thank you!

GIVE NOW

Ward

Dear Friends,

We are proving daily that there are new paradigms and procedures to learn and adapt in ministry during the pandemic. Zoom has proven to be a very useful program as evidenced in our online Sunday School, worship, "Let's Talk" conversation about race and racism, Wednesday night children's time, and Wednesday night fellowship. Unfortunately, Zoom won't work for singing together due to the varying delays of transmission. This is where virtual technology comes in, for which I've been training. Thanks to all for being so patient with us as we learn new things!

So, what are we doing in music? I have asked volunteers, from choir and beyond, to listen to Betsy's Lord's Prayer and record themselves speaking the prayer. I am compiling the recorded contributions to create a unison prayer, and it will be published soon to be heard on a Sunday morning worship. Also, we have asked singers and instrumentalists if they want to record a song that they'd like to share. Remember, we cannot do live singing or horn playing when we do amass at church yet, due to viral concerns. (The exception is for string players whose playing does not emit dangerous particulates.) I may be able to visit our musicians, fully masked, at their homes, equipped with a portable electronic piano, to record them. Please contact me if you want to participate or comment.

Joseph's Pantry needs:



Canned Soup
Canned Meat

Thank you for all the donations to Joseph's Pantry. We continue to make appointment and serve Henry County residents.

You can drop these items by the church Monday - Thursday, between 9 - 1 pm. Or, if you need contactless pickup, let Linda or Betsy know, and we will work with the Witness Committee to arrange to get your items. Thank you for your generosity!



Sunday, November 1st
Drive By Giving

(more details to follow)

Now is the moment for which a lifetime of faith has prepared you. All of those years of prayer and study, all of the worship services, all of the time devoted to a community of faith: it all comes down to this, this sorrowful moment when life seems chaotic and the anarchy of fear haunts the thin borders of reason. Your faith has prepared you for this. It has given you the tools you need to respond: to proclaim justice while standing for peace. Long ago the Spirit called you to commit your life to faith. Now you know why. You are a source of strength for those who have lost hope. You are a voice of calm in the midst of chaos. You are a steady light in days of darkness. The time has come to be what you believe.

-Bishop Steven Charleston

Session Report

Special Meeting - August 9, 2020

Rev. Turner stated the reason for the meeting was to address issues that affect Stockbridge Presbyterian Church caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

Committee Reports

Resources: Kim discussed the financial condition of the church through the month of July 2020. Kim updated the Session on July revenue of \$14,771 through 7/31/2020. Income through 8/4/2020 exceeds \$7,000.

Discipleship: The committee met and discussed ways to connect with the congregation using Zoom technology. Adult Sunday School will tentatively start on Sunday 8/16/2020. Betsy is planning a Kid's Bible Study time to be held immediately preceding the weekly church Zoom meeting. She is looking at the first session to be on Wednesday 8/12/2020

Witness: The committee met and discussed ways to do mission with the Henry County schools we support through Goodness and Groceries. Linda Roberts has contacted one of our sponsor schools and found out school supply requirements. She placed an order to meet this need.

Jim provided an update on the loan forgiveness application for the Paycheck Protection Program. Ameris Bank on-line application for loan forgiveness will go live on 8/10/2020. Linda has been researching what will be needed to the application.

Betsy talked with Stephanie concerning proposed nominating committee members. She has recruited 2 females and still is looking for a male.

Gathering for worship - The task force recommends no in person meetings at the church until Phase 2 of the church reopening plan. The Session approved to cancel all activities in the church facilities from 9/1/2020 to 10/1/2020. Gene attended a virtual meeting conducted by the Presbytery on church reopening issues. Several examples of churches method of serving communion were discussed. There are funds available from the Presbytery to support church efforts to transmit church worship services and Sunday school. A Georgia law concerning liability of institutions concerning death or illness of people coming into their facilities. Kim will check with our insurance company to see if there is any impact on SPC. Gene will prepare the required signage for the church.

PNC - Aaron and Kim provided an update on the PNC's progress in finding our next full-time pastor. The PNC is meeting every other week. They are still reviewing candidate PIF's. Aaron mentioned they have reviewed 140 PIF's so far.

Betsy continued a discussion on serving communion. She wants the Session to continue to think about ways communion can be served during the time we cannot gather as a congregation. A possibility is to conduct communion virtually in conjunction with the congregation meeting in September.

Betsy reminded the Session of the conversation on race discussions she is planning. There is one person interested as of today. The first session will be Thursday 8/13/2020.

The Session received a proposal from the PNC to develop a virtual tour of the church facilities to be used in their search for a new pastor. They will use PNC budget funds.

The Session approved moving the congregation meeting scheduled for 8/9/2020 to 9/20/2020 at 11:00 am. There will be a vote on changing the church by-laws to included conducting electronic congregation meetings.

Session Business

The Session decided to have a called meeting via video conference on Sunday 8/30/2020 at 3:00 pm to discuss additional actions as dictated by the situation concerning coronavirus.

The reason for the meeting having been accomplished, Jim Beisner closed the meeting with prayer.

Special Meeting—August 30, 2020

Rev. Turner stated the reason for the meeting was to address issues that affect Stockbridge Presbyterian Church caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

The Session approved the following minutes of previous called meetings on the dated listed below:

3/13/2020, 3/29/2020, 4/12/2020, 4/26/2020, 5/17/2020, 6/7/2020, 6/28/2020, 7/19/2020, 8/9/2020

Committee Reports:

Resources: Kim discussed the financial condition of the church through the month of July 2020. Kim updated the Session on August revenue of \$10,681 through 8/26/2020. Performance evaluations have been completed on Betsy, Linda, and Ward. Aaron to check with Ward on Gina's evaluation. Resources is stopping the subscription of "These Days" until the church starts in person meeting.

Discipleship: Adult Sunday School started on Sunday 8/16/2020. Betsy is conducting Kid's Bible Study time immediately preceding the weekly church Zoom meeting. Discipleship will apply for funds from Presbytery through their pandemic grant program for virtual and vital technology grants.

Witness: Committee met and discussed needs of current missions. Another discussion was held concerning drive through events where congregation members can drop off items for Joseph's Pantry, the yard sale and school supplies. Linda Roberts is in contact with our sponsor schools to find out their school supply requirements. Another discussion dealt with outdoor library and food pantry boxes and lockbox to be placed outside of backdoor for pantry items to be donated. The committee will do more research on these topics.

Jim provided an update on the loan forgiveness application for the Paycheck Protection Program. Ameris Bank on-line application for loan forgiveness still has not gone live. Linda has been researching what will be needed to the application and is ready to process when the on-line portal is open.

Stephanie announced the members of the Elder Nominating Committee, Jeffrey Cochran, Linda Roberts, Laura Richardson and herself. They will be presented to the congregation for approval at the 9/20/2020 congregation meeting.

Gathering for worship - The task force confirmed no in person meetings at the church until Phase 2 of the church reopening plan. The task force reviewed the Shallowford Presbyterian Church's Faithful Use of Space Covenant and will use as a protocol to base our guidelines on when we enter Phase 2. The task force will start to meet every 2 weeks as the pandemic indicators are beginning to trend down in Georgia.

PNC Kim provided an update on the PNC's progress in finding our next full-time pastor. The PNC is meeting every other week. There have been no new candidate PIF's. Paul is meeting with a videographer at the church this upcoming week to let him get a feel for our facilities. The Session approved an exception to Phase 2 of the Re-opening Plan for this visit.

Betsy continued a discussion on serving communion. Communion will be conducted virtually in conjunction with the congregation meeting on September 20, 2020. The Session approved.

Betsy updated the Session on the conversation on race discussions, adult Sunday School and Kid's Bible Study.

The Session approved a change to the by-laws which will permit electronic congregation, Session and committee meetings. This change will be brought before the congregation for vote on 9/20/2020.

The Session approved applying for pandemic grant funds from Presbytery. The request is for \$300 to purchase thermometers.

The Session approved giving Linda Hodges and Rev. Betsy Turner a net \$1,000 bonus for their exceptional work during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Session Business - The Session decided to have a called meeting via video conference on Sunday 9/20/2020 at 3:00 pm in conjunction with the annual budget meeting to discuss additional actions as dictated by the situation concerning coronavirus.

The reason for the meeting having been accomplished, Rev. Turner closed the meeting with prayer.