

Oglethorpe Presbyterian

Crossings

September, 2017

Questions, Questions, Questions

Why do we ask questions?

Most of the time, we ask questions to get answers. "Where are my keys?" "Where in the Bible is the story about the donkey that speaks to the prophet Balaam?" "Why do we change the color of church vestments throughout the year?" "Who decides the hymns and scripture reading for each Sunday?" Maybe we know the answers already, but can't remember. Maybe we've always been curious and inquiring minds want to know.

Sometimes, we ask questions knowing that there are no answers, at least not clear and conclusive ones. "How could a good God allow such bad things happen to good people?" "Why did this happen to me/us?" As meaning-making beings, we ask these questions, because something that has happened has jolted how we understand the world and ourselves and God.

Sometimes, we ask questions so that we can ask better questions. This is something that a seminary professor once said, and this is the reason that has always resonated with me.

In our new fall series, we will be doing all of the above. From September 3, 2017 through October 8, 2017, we will be engaged in a 6-week series simply called "Questions." During this series, we will spend time considering the questions that many of you wrote in during a recent Sunday worship service. The questions range from informational items to issues that the church has been wrestling with for centuries. We will get answers, we will wonder, and we will learn to ask better questions together.

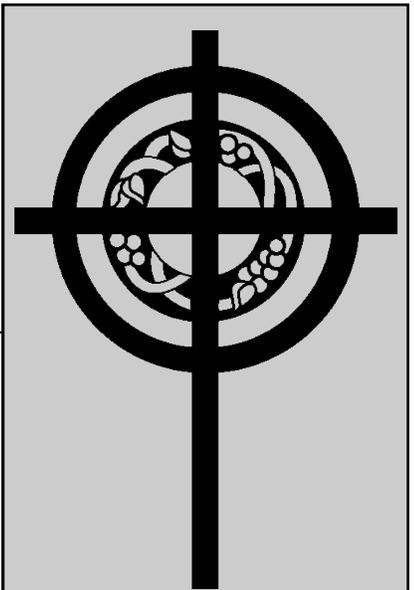
I think we'll do more than that, though. As I've studied the questions and worked with the staff to plan the worship series, what I see in the questions is a desire to connect, and grow, and serve, and belong.

Yes, I realize that this is the new OPC tagline. Yes, I realize that I probably have a very one-track mind when it comes to a church's mission and ministry. And through that lens, I see these questions as a way of connecting with our faith tradition, including our denomination, a way of growing in our knowledge and love of God, a way of growing in service to the community and world around us, and a way of belonging to God and one another.

Questions matter. How we engage questions matters. How we make space for questions matters.

CONT'D ON BACK COVER

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What's Inside:

Prayer List, p. 2

Session Minutes, p. 2

September Calendar, p. 3

Financials, p. 3

Missions, p. 4

*Book Fair and Book Club
p. 5*

PNC News, p. 6

It's here!

The new tagline that goes with OPC's newest mission statement is:

**Connect. Grow.
Serve. Belong.**

Look for it in the coming weeks and months as we continue to roll out the tagline in all of OPC's communication vehicles.

CLERK'S CORNER

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The Rev. Dr. Fitzhugh Legerton

Ministers

All Members of OPC



**Next Deadline for
Crossings
September 20, 2017**

At its August 27 meeting, the Session made the following decisions:

- Approved minutes from July 23 stated meeting and August 20 called meeting
 - Approved agenda for August 27 stated meeting as amended
 - Received Clerk's report
 - Examined and approved Brock Timmons as ruling elder and Eydie DaVia as care deacon
 - Authorized CE to hold book fair(s) featuring books from Spark House Publishing throughout the preschool year
 - Approved CPACS (Pan Asian Community Services) using a parking spot in our lot for their HIV testing/education van
 - Authorized Cheryl with consultation with Beverly Moon to negotiate use of parking spaces for overflow parking for OLA on select dates
- Oglethorpe Presbyterian maintains an open book policy. All financial reports and session minutes are available at request.*

People in Our Prayers

Rivers Varn (Timmon's friend); Gwen Brouse (Christina Cross's Aunt); Jerry Gillespie (Ethan's Granny); Cuyler Barr and parents (Elizabeth Parks' friends); Lee Marley; Karen Zacek (Amy Chance's mother); St. Martins School; Mary Lee Williams; Barbara Kiefer-Konow (Georgia Gunter's Mother); Virginia Quillian; Diane Powell; The Rev. Denise Anderson and The Rev. Dr. Jan Edmiston (Co-Moderators, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)); Oglethorpe Presbyterian Church during our transition.

MEMBER UPDATES & THANKS

Dear OPC Friends,

We want to thank you for the beautiful reception on our final day of worship with you. It was a special but emotional time for us to leave OPC after worshipping with you for over 20 years. Your blessings as we departed and your gift of the lovely cross will remain with us in heart and mind of the wonderful church and friends we leave as we move to Arkansas.

We are so pleased to be near our children again, and we love the sleepovers and adventures we have with our granddaughter. The church we visited during our extended stays in Springdale warmly welcomed us back, and we are enjoying the relationships we are developing here. We certainly feel blessed that God led us to OPC and our Springdale church that are such loving and scripture-based congregations. Our thought and prayers remain with you as you continue your search for a new pastor. May God bless each of you with His grace and everlasting peace!

Love in Christ,
Ken and Jane Young

From Pat Morrison:

Thank you to whoever saved and brought a bag and a large container of pop-tops for the Ronald McDonald House.

The amount filled a gallon jug and the ones left have started another jug.

Five gallon jugs will be delivered to the Ronald McDonald House close by on Peachtree Dunwoody Road

In Memoriam

Murial MacConnell

Stewart Cobb
(Diane Powell's friend)

*Nothing in all creation
will be able to separate us
from the love of God
in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

-Romans 8

Monthly Calendar



Stewards Serving Sunday September 3:

liturgist: Reyn Langwell; **usher/greeters:** Linda Morris, Jeff Morris; **usher/counters:** Bill Cox, Georgia Gunter; **sound/open:** _____; **refreshments:** Mary Ann Hawthorne; **powerpoint:** Mike Poley; **nursery:** Jennifer Sterner Allison

Stewards Serving Sunday September 10:

liturgist: Margy Jones; **usher/greeters:** _____, Donna Poseidon; **usher/counters:** Ethan Gilesple, Chris Soltis; **sound/open:** Mike Lopata; **refreshments:** Margy Jones; **powerpoint:** Tamara Lopata; **nursery:** Rachel Paterson

Stewards Serving Sunday September 17:

liturgist: John Gunter; **usher/greeters:** Ric & William Paterson, Lisa Kelly; **usher/counters:** Mark Kelly, _____; **sound/open:** Cortlandt Minnich; **refreshments:** Amy Chance; **powerpoint:** Kim Crocker; **nursery:** Jean Cox

Stewards Serving Sunday September 24:

liturgist: Elizabeth Parks; **usher/greeters:** Jeff Chance, Mike Poley; **usher/counters:** Brock Timmons, Amy Chance; **sound/open:** Jeff Morris; **refreshments:** _____; **powerpoint:** Ric Paterson; **nursery:** Jennifer Sterner Allison

Oglethorpe Presbyterian Church Financial Summary

	<u>Jul-17</u>	<u>YTD 2017</u>	<u>YTD 2016</u>	<u>change</u>
Receipts	\$ 23,217	155,006	181,435	(26,429)
Expenditures	25,191	183,720	186,110	(2,390)
Surplus/(deficit)	<u>(1,974)</u>	<u>(28,714)</u>	<u>(4,675)</u>	<u>(24,040)</u>
Beginning bank balance	\$ 87,225	127,584	141,716	(14,132)
Cash increase/ (decrease)	<u>(2,768)</u>	<u>(43,128)</u>	<u>(19,302)</u>	<u>(23,825)</u>
Ending bank balance	<u>84,457</u>	<u>84,457</u>	<u>122,414</u>	<u>(37,957)</u>
Loan balance	\$ 96,440	96,440	0	96,440
Reserve funds	\$ 34,250	34,250	72,042	(37,792)
Reserves - months of budget expense	1.2	1.2	2.5	(1.4)

• Receipts are down from 2016 primarily due to a decrease in giving of \$31,783, but we received \$6,250 for movie parking.

• YTD Expenditures are down \$2,390 as the Session is closely watching expenses in this transition.

• Reserve fund is total of designated reserve fund plus retained earnings

OPC has an open book financial policy: for more information, contact the Treasurer, Jardon Bouska via email: jtbouska@comcast.net

Regular Meetings

(except when noted elsewhere)

Weekly

Sundays:

11am Worship

Tuesdays:

10am Food Pantry at Suthers Center
8pm Alcoholics Anonymous (FH)

Wednesdays:

5:45pm Centering Prayer (Parlor)
6:45pm Handbell Choir (Sanctuary)

Fridays:

10 am Food Pantry at Suthers Center
8pm Alcoholics Anonymous (FH)

Monthly

Fourth Sundays after Worship
Session Meeting

Calendar Events & Notes

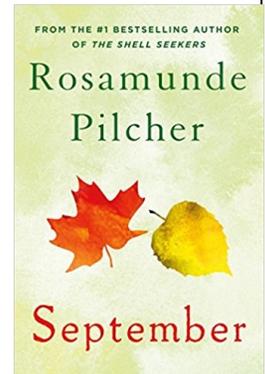
Our next **church workday** is Saturday, **September 9**, from **9am to 1pm**. Please join in and help keep your church in good shape.

OPC book club

will meet Monday September 11 at Margy Jones' home where we will discuss *September* by

Rosamunde Pilcher. See page 5 for our book club selections through

August 2018. For more information about the book club, contact Margy Jones at mjibailey@aol.com.



Atlanta Ministry with International Students

AMIS is a French word that means "friends" and is an organization with a mission of friendship and hospitality. They connect international college students with local families and individuals in a number of different ways, providing opportunities for meaningful and personal relationships. OPC has been involved with AMIS for 40 years.

AMIS is excited to announce a new Executive Director, Irene Wong, who started in August. Irene brings a unique combination of experience, education and interests in non-profit leadership, student ministry, volunteering, and international programming. Irene also has years of ministry experience, including international and student ministry. Come meet Irene and the international college students at the 40th Annual International Student and Scholar Welcome Reception on Saturday, Sept 16 from 2-4 at Georgia Tech Student Center Ballroom located at 350 Ferst Dr. NW, Atlanta, GA 30332. This event is free and open to the public. The reception will feature the Kennesaw State University Jazz Trio and will be catered by Carabba's of Kennesaw. Join us in welcoming Irene Wong and the international students and extending the hand of friendship.

International college students will be arriving in the Atlanta area in August for the new school year. Many of these international students have never been to the US before and would like to learn more about our community and culture. If you would like to be a friend to an international student, read more about the Amigo program at <https://amis-inc.org/volunteers/amigo/>

The Food Pantry Report

The Food Pantry at the Suthers Center in Chamblee is open on Tuesday and Friday mornings, and we would love to have you join the team. Extra hands are always needed.

Mercy Congregation

OPC donated coffee this month to Mercy Congregation to help serve the homeless. See <https://mercyatl.org/> for more information.

New American Pathways

Sue Westfall, Linda Morris, and Emily Texter are helping the Syrian refugee family with English as a Second Language. More volunteers are needed. The 2 older children are enrolled in kindergarten and 3rd grade and the youngest is busy walking and talking. The husband is employed but is looking for additional work using his extensive graphic design experience. If you know of any work or have contacts in this industry, please let us know.

Missions Committee at OPC

Mission and outreach are central to our identity at Oglethorpe Presbyterian Church. Our mission programs are a way to serve those in need and also provide opportunities for us to share our time, talents, and resources. To find out more about how you can get involved in these missions, contact Emily Texter at emilytexter@bellsouth.net

Presbytery Volunteer Day at the Atlanta Community Food Bank

September is National Hunger Action Month, and the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta is organizing a volunteer afternoon at the ACFB on Saturday, September 30th, from 1-4 p.m. Jeff Morris invites you to join in this service opportunity in honor of Linda's birthday! Children 8 years and older may take part. Volunteers must wear closed-toed shoes. There is plenty of parking at ACFB, and we can carpool.

To participate, you must register by at <http://vhub.at/path>, or ask Jeff to register you.

Please bring a food donation (see below) or a \$1 donation (for every dollar donated, ACFB is able to distribute \$9 worth of groceries, enough for 4 meals!). Some of the most-needed food items are: canned tuna or chicken in water, dried beans, low sodium canned vegetables, and canned fruit in light syrup or juice.

Maybe we can all gather for an informal dinner afterward at a yet-to-be-determined restaurant? If you're interested in joining us at ACFB, please contact Jeff Morris at morrii2658@gmail.com or (770) 452-1799. Thanks!

FINANCE

Mike Lopata

Last week you received a letter from Pastor Jihyun asking your support for two very important and needed endeavors. The first is to support the Pastor Nominating Committee in our efforts to call a new pastor. Funds are needed in order to bring the two final candidates from out of state to Atlanta so that the committee may have a chance to meet with them and to hear them preach. After a candidate is chosen, there will be an additional need for funds to help our new pastor move and relocate in Atlanta. The second need is to address a drainage problem in the Memorial Garden and around the newly-built OPP kindergarten classroom in the chapel basement. The drainage problem is putting this beautiful new space at risk for water damage and also creating very soggy conditions in our beloved Memorial Garden. We are very fortunate to have already received a generous commitment of \$2500 from someone who believes strongly in the ministry of OPC! The church needs your help in raising \$4000 to meet these two important, immediate needs. Please designate your contributions as being for the Special Ask and either send them to the church office or put them in the Sunday offering. If you have any questions, please contact me or our treasurer, Jardon Bouska.
Charles Hawthorne, member of Finance Committee

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Steve Allison



The church is sponsoring a Book Fair in the month of September with SparkHouse. SparkHouse is a subsidy of the Lutheran Church (ELCA) and offers good theological books for children. If you are looking for a good book to help introduce a child to the Bible we would particularly suggest The Spark Story Bible. There are plenty of other good books to consider also. You can find more out about the books at <https://sparkhouse.org/shop/allproducts>

Any orders should be turned into the church office by October 1.

FELLOWSHIP

Book club books for this coming year
September 11 *September*, Rosamunde Pilcher
October 9 *Hillbilly Elegy*, J.D. Vance
November 13 *A Piece of the World*, Christina Baker Kline
December 11 *Bettyville*, George Hodgman
January 8 *Learning to Walk in the Dark*, Barbara Brown Taylor
February 12 *The Book Thief*, Markus Zusak
March 12 *Founding Brothers*, Joseph J. Ellis
April 9 *Looking for Alaska*, John Green
May 14 *Where Peachtree meets Sweet Auburn*, Gary Pomerantz
June 11 *The King Who Made Paper Flowers*, Terry Kay
July 9 *Killers of the Flower Moon*, David Grann
August 13 *The Rent Collector*, Cameron Wright

When we ask questions without preconceived answers, when we welcome together questions to which we have no answers, when we wrestle with questions that are difficult and messy, we open ourselves up to the movement of God. We listen together for God's voice and leading. We hope and look for God's presence. We pray for God's Spirit to re-create within us and in the world.

So, you are invited. You are invited to connect, grow, serve, and belong at OPC. You are invited to question and to wonder. You are invited to show up with your whole selves, including the question-asking parts of yourselves.

Grace & peace,

Jihyun

The PNC has narrowed the field of over 40 applicants for OPC's pastorate to just two finalists. Next steps for the PNC include in-person interviews with the finalists and hearing them preach "live." Following necessary approvals by the Presbytery, we hope to present a recommended candidate for the congregation's vote by late September or early October. The PNC is grateful for the congregation's continuing prayers and patience!

Oglethorpe Presbyterian Church
Worship: 11am • Christian Education: 9:45am
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DATED MATERIAL

If you don't want to receive this by mail,
please contact the church office:
404.233.5469, cheryl@opcbrookhaven.org