



NORTHMINSTER *Life*

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ROSA TAYLOR BACKPACK MINISTRY



Throughout the month of July, we will be gathering gifts for our backpack ministry supporting our neighbor, Rosa Taylor Elementary school. Each year, members of our neighborhood committee pack over 900 bags filled with ready-to-eat or easy-to-prepare foods and deliver them to Rosa Taylor where 26 students every week will be sure not to go hungry over the weekend. Funds collected this month will not only provide over 900 milks, juice boxes, oatmeal packets, granola bars, and more, but will also provide teachers with classroom supplies for the entirety of the 2023-2024 school year. Our goal for this school year is to raise \$7000.

SUMMER HYMN SING

*Hymn Sing
& ice cream*



Join us Sunday, July 9th at 6pm for worship through hymns and fellowship with ice cream! This is a free event and we'd love to see everyone there. Invite your friends, family, and neighbors.

5TH SUNDAY LUNCH AND PRAYER WALK

5th Sunday Lunch



July 30th

Bring a side dish or dessert (but most importantly, yourself!) and join us for a wonderful time of fellowship at 5th Sunday lunch, following the July 30th worship service. The neighborhood committee will be providing fried chicken. Afterward, all are welcome to join the neighborhood committee at 1:30 at Rosa Taylor Elementary school to pray for the students, teachers, and staff as they begin the 2023-24 school year.





Sunday, July 16th

We will hold a congregational meeting immediately following the worship service to elect our nominating committee for 2024 elder selection.

THANK YOU TO THE LATE LES PEEK

The session wants the congregation to know that recently we received a generous memorial donation from the estate of Les Peek, some \$75,000. The timing of the gift could not have been better, as we incur out-of-pocket costs related to the repair and upgrade of our building following last year's tornado damage. Although he never officially joined Northminster as an Active Member, Les was an important part of our spiritual fellowship for many years. He sang in the worship choir and always kept our preachers on their theological toes. The session gives thanks to God for this generous and meaningful gift to our congregation.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

July 2 - Molly Brown
July 11 - Frank Clark
July 25 - Jinny McDuffie

July 6 - Genny Whitaker
July 13 - Karen Jones
July 26 - Lala Scales

July 9 - Nita McCord
July 21 - Catherine Woody

FINANCIAL SUMMARY - MAY 2023

As of May 31, NPC has:

- Received \$156,888.91 in pledges
- Received \$12,755.00 from regular (no pledge) givers
- Received \$8,747.72 in loose offerings
- Received \$12,051.41 for outreach programs
- Spent \$193,858.67 on budgeted and outreach expenses

*Summary: NPC has received \$190,443.04 in total income and has spent a total of \$193,858.67 which leaves us with a deficit of \$3,415.63

FROM YOUR PASTOR



Perhaps you've heard the news? I'm getting married next month. [wink] Saturday, August 5 at noon, to be precise. And you are all invited to share in the celebration. I believe you are pretty familiar with the location.

And a celebration it is. Worship that day will be a honoring of God's generous goodness, of the gift of a good marriage, and of second chances. Indeed, that was the title of my sermon on June 25 — "In praise of second chances." I now have a much better heart-sense of why the faithful shepherd and the searching woman each throw a party when what they had lost is found. (Luke 15)

Debra Kay is an unalloyed gift in my life. Her love. Her wisdom. Her partnership. Her joy in Jesus. Her sense of ministry. I often refer to her as "My Medieval Mystic," as in a Teresa of Avila or a Hildegard of Bingen. Never have I come to know so well such a steward of the inner life of prayer and peace. What's more, I am so proud of the ministry she conducts all around southwest Georgia as our regional presbyter. After 20 years in the region, including seven as EP, she is wisely celebrated in our Flint River churches as a generous, wise, and kind leader in ministry. I'm one lucky preacher to have landed here, with her.

In truth, there was a time when I thought I would never marry again. Parallel to this, there was a season when divorce seemed to me a dark tumor on the X-ray of my life. I remember talking with Scott Emener and Amy Fletcher on the phone — your pastor search committee co-chairs — telling them I thought it was important that their committee understand that recently I had gone through a painful divorce. It is difficult to describe now just what a soul-healing grace it was then to hear them say, "We understand. It is okay. We want to keep talking with you."

What a difference six years have made, between that phone call then and this wedding now. Deb and I began as presbytery colleagues, me doing in Pennsylvania what she does here. Then we became fun friends, then through conversation and understanding, compatriots in parallel journeys through divorce. Then came affection, thanks to proximity. Then the joy of new love. Then companionship. And now, marriage.

So what gift can you give your pastor on the day of his wedding? Only one thing: your presence. It will mean the world to Deb and me for you to gather with us in the Northminster sanctuary to give thanks to God in song and ceremony, to witness our sharing of vows, and to encourage our shared ministry. No other gift is needed. Your presence is the only present these two middle-age souls need or desire.

You may have heard by now that we are to be married in a presbytery meeting. Sort of. It would be better to say that the wedding will be conducted during the worship time after the morning ministry meeting. Pastors and elders will come to Wimbish Road at 10am for our normal business. Worship and wedding will begin at noon, which is when you can join us.

Why a presbytery gathering? Because both Deb and I are members of Flint River presbytery. This regular gathering of pastors and elders from each of the churches is our ecclesiastical home. To be surrounded by our colleagues, in addition to friends and family: It just made too much sense to ignore as a holy option for a wedding. Stick around, too, for a reception — hosted by the happy couple, honoring their roots — featuring Louisiana red beans & rice (Ralph) and Pennsylvania pies (Deb). We'll pass a good time, no? It will all be a happy stew of pastors, church members, presbytery people, family, and friends.

In two words: thank you. Thank you for your love and support of us individually, and now as a couple. Many of you have known Deb longer than I have. As such, you know what a precious gift she is, to all of us Presbyterians. Thank you for supporting our coming together and for joining us August 5 to celebrate, Presbyterian style.

With much love, RWH

*You're invited!*