



Do All to the Glory of God

Whether therefore you eat, or drink, or whatever you do, do all things to the glory of God.”
1 Corinthians 10:31

“What does it mean—to do all things to the glory of God? In fact, what is the glory of God? What does the word “glory” mean? To humans on the earth, looking for the ultimate meaning of life, any clues we can pick up are of great importance.

Why are we on the earth? What is life all about? What does God want from us? What can we expect from God? These are the questions for which we are always seeking answers—answers that will help us survive in this world . . . and the next.

Of course, at the heart of all things and underlying all things is God—Author of the universe and its essential meaning. But how do we relate to God? What does He want? And what is our expectation? Our ultimate destiny?

A pivotal word in the answer to these questions is “Glory”—The glory of God; the glory of Christ; the glory of God’s people. Sometimes the word is used synonymously with

God—“Unto Him that is able to present us faultless before the presence of His glory.”

Whatever is of God is a reflection of His glory. Whatever glorifies Him is essential to the meaning of life. As electric current produces an arc, and an arc reflects electric current, So, whatever is of God, reflects His glory.

But what do we mean by the word, “glory?” Like so many abstractions, it can mean so much, and so little. It can describe trivia—“Having a glorious time!” Or meaningful human concepts—“Old Glory,” the United States flag.

Whatever it may mean in the common vernacular, We need to know what God means by it in His Word. The Hebrew word is *kabod*—“weight”; that which has substance. Gold, for instance, has substance; its weight shows its worth.

The Greek word is *doxa*—“That which is apparent.” The glory of the temple was manifested in the splendor of its gold. The glory of God’s substance is

manifested to the world, in the radiant splendor of His creation.

The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth His handiwork.” (Psalm 19:1)

In kabod God has the substance to be the reality of the universe; In *doxa* His substance is manifested in radiant splendor.

The central purpose of every element of God’s creation is to glorify God—to reflect His glory.



“Whatsoever you do . . . do all things to the glory of God.” But what does that mean? How do humans do that?

Humans do it the same way nature does it—by simply being humans; living according to God’s purpose. Plants provide food or color or fragrance according to their purpose,

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Special points of interest:

- Join the Pastor in his study for a time of Prayer on Thursdays, May 7 and 21, 11:00 AM.

From the Pastor

Dear friends,

Last year we planned a joint Vacation Bible School with Trinity Lutheran Church. The VBS was held at their location, they took much of the lead, and the VBS was very successful. This year we will host. Together we once again hope to provide a meaningful experience for the community. This joint effort is one of the few events locally where there is cooperation between churches, for that I am thankful.

Margit Adams has been at work for several months setting plans in place. Soon you will be contacted to help. VBS will be held at FPC Toccoa, Monday through Friday, July 20-24, 8:30AM – 12:00 PM.

On Friday there will be a closing program with lunch for the children and volunteers. It is a big commitment, yet it is only for five mornings in addition to preparation time, depending on the responsibilities you agree to take on. I am hopeful that it will be a fun week, but more importantly, a week of sowing seeds of Christ into the next generation. Please plan to help!

On another note, during my years at FPC Toccoa I have often heard of previous joint services held during the summer months with other churches. I have spoken with Mary Demmler, Rector of St. Mathias and John Brown, Pastor of First Methodist, about the possibility of having three combined services this summer, one

at each church. Soon a letter will go out including ideas expressed to me and a suggestion that we plan the services for the last Sunday of each month during June, July and August. If personal schedules allow, I think this is a wonderful opportunity for the Body of Christ to gather to worship and get to know a little more about our neighbors as we celebrate our common faith in Jesus Christ. In a community that has such need, the churches beginning to work together could be a positive witness.

I look forward to these and other opportunities that may reflect our faith and trust in the living Christ. Blessings to you all!

Pastor David

In The News...



Recently project coordinators from the First Presbyterian Church of Toccoa and Coats & Clark presented approximately 100 hand-knitted and crocheted newborn hats to the New Impressions Maternal Unit at Stephens County Hospital. Approximately ten women from both groups contributed their handiwork for this ongoing project. The yarn for this project is being provided by Coats & Clark. Pictured from left to right are: Betty Sosebee, project coordinator for Coats & Clark; Tonya Chitwood, Nurse Manager of the Maternity Unit; Vickie Reid, Maternity Unit nurse; Angela Wellborn, Maternity Unit nurse; and Ann Morris, project coordinator for the First Presbyterian Church.

A group of women from the First Presbyterian Church and Coats & Clark in Toccoa and



have been busy knitting and crocheting hats for the newborns at Stephens County Hospital. Sporting one of the hats is Caralena Elizabeth Natale, daughter of Micah and Kristen Natale. Pictured from left to right are Betty Sosebee, project coordinator for Coats & Clark, Micah and Caralena Natale, and Ann Morris, project coordinator for The First Presbyterian Church. Other women from both groups who are contributing to this project and are not pictured are Cindy Smith, Rosale Bolstad, and Lynn Newsom from the First Presbyterian Church and Jackie Holland, Jerrie Collier, Marie Hardin, Wanda Shirley, and Tressa Westmoreland from Coats & Clark. Coats & Clark is providing the yarn for this project.

From the Church Secretary

Bulletin/Newsletter Information

Thank you for providing information for the weekly bulletins by 8:00 AM on Wednesday. Please submit information for the May 24 & 31 bulletins by Monday, May 18.

Please plan to submit information for the **Combined Summer Newsletter** (June, July and August) by **Monday, May 18**.

Remember to include the five W's: who, what, when, where, and why.

Please note

The church secretary will be out of the office the week of May 25.

Financial Update March 2015

Operating receipts and expenses:

	March	YTD
Receipts:	\$12,469.07	\$36,736.07
Expense:	\$12,459.81	\$39,455.15

Souper Bowl of Caring \$145.66
The Gideons International \$243.00
One Great Hour of Sharing \$200.00

Do All to the Glory of God Continued

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and manifest the glory of God, in simply being what they are.

Humans are “*partakers of the divine nature*” (II Peter 1:4)—imbued with the attributes of God in limited measure. Our purpose is to interact with God, forever—commune with Him; worship Him; serve Him.

Whatever we do for Him; however we relate to Him, becomes a part of His glory—the radiant stream of His splendor.

This purpose was obscured in the tragedy of Eden. It is restored in redemption to all who receive His Spirit.

Possessed by His Spirit, we are able to manifest His glory. We are able to commune with Him; to understand His purpose; to sense His presence—His love and grace and joy; to live by faith and express His Word to the world.

We are, in another figure, “God-trees,” producing the fruit of “godness.” David says we are the godly, who love His law. We are like trees planted by the watercourse bringing forth fruit in season—the fruit of “godness.”

Our fruit is not pious “religiosity,” but the expression of the heart of God. Later, David says that we are inferior only to God, and have dominion over all His works (Psalm 8). And Peter says that we are “*partakers of His divine nature.*”

The main purpose of a fruit tree is to bear fruit. The purpose of the peach tree, is peaches (not other peach trees). The peaches may be less than excellent, but they are still peaches. Our natures are far less than God, but like God, nevertheless.

Nature produces what it is designed to produce. The elements of creation glorify God in a great many ways. Some simply exist in beauty and wonder, producing after their kind. Other elements produce for human benefit with obvious purpose. The sheep, for instance, grows wool and provides food.

It does nothing but express these capaci-

ties. It neither pulls wagons, nor plows, nor carries riders. It stays in the pasture and eats, and gets fat, and grows wool.

We are likened to sheep; not cattle. Cattle are often in a frenzy of activity. Pastors are sometimes more like cowboys than shepherds, driving the sheep to ever more frenetic effort.

Christ said, “*Come unto me . . . my yoke is easy, my burden is light.*” In God’s economy, each element of nature does what it is designed to do. And each glorifies God—by splashes of beauty; or by provision, but each according to its design and capacity.

However, much of what is produced is known by God alone. Great herds of wild beasts provide neither food nor

clothing. Great fields of flowers and flocks of fowl are known only to God, but

“It is not a matter of being great for the glory of God; but letting God glorify Himself through us, however He sees best.”

known to Him they are, “*For not a sparrow falls to the ground without Him.*”

The snowflake, so exquisite; each unique in design, glows for a moment in the air, and vanishes in the frozen wasteland.

Just so human beings. Many do exploits in obvious ways, but many abide for a moment and are gone—glorious to God alone.

And the less comely—the offensive—they too are His creation. In the overall pattern of God, they are beautiful to Him. Like the musical device of *scordatura* (instruments tuned off key), they too serve the Great Composer; they too, glorify Him.

It is not a matter of being great for the glory of God; but letting God glorify Himself through us, however He sees best. Sometimes what we are and do seems lowly in the eyes of others. John the Baptist said, “I must decrease.” Paul said, “I have become refuse.”

The flesh must often be shattered that the glory of God may be revealed. Death is often referred to as glorifying God. “*This He said, signifying by what death He*

should glorify God.” (John 21:19) We are but vessels of clay housing the glory of God.

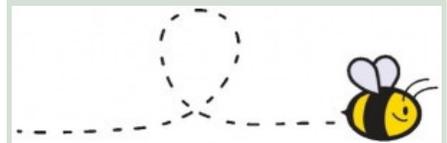
The desert is full of wildflowers, minute and microscopic. Each one, exquisite in design, is usually seen by God alone. This is what it means to live for the glory of God. Giant Bird of Paradise, or tiny Verbena, everything is for His glory.

As members of His body and the radiant effluence of His Spirit, whatever God wants us to do, He will give us the capacity to do, and the desire. And whatever we do, however trivial it may seem, Will become part of His glory, manifested in the world.”

David Morsey
Harvestermission.org

J.O.Y. Group Just Older Youth

What’s all the buzz about?



Honey, we’ve got a program planned that’s sure to delight! Bee sure to join us on Tuesday, May 12, at 10:30 AM as Sally Hodges presents a program on bees and beekeeping!

Now, don’t get a bee in your bonnet — we’re planning to provide a light lunch too—cause we think you’re the bee’s knees.

Mother's Day Offering, May 10, 2015

Caring Hands Fund

The famous British statesman of another era, David Lloyd-George, once said, "The true test of a civilization is the way it treats its old people."

Followers of Christ have always recognized the truthfulness of that statement and, as a result, have been willing to put feet to their faith when it comes to sharing Hope with folks who are along in their years.

Since January 2011, 10,000 of us are turning 65 years old every day. And half of all those who are 65 or older in United States are widows; two-thirds of all those over 75 are widows. In fact, there are four times as many widow who are alive as widowers in this country.

The Scriptures remind us that God has special concern for these women, along

with those vulnerable people who live in difficult circumstances. The Psalmist describes God as their protector and judge: "a father of the fatherless and a judge for widows in distress." (Psalm 68:5)

This Mother's Day, you have the opportunity to bring Hope to more than 400 of the 1,000 elderly residents of the Presbyterian Homes of Georgia. As many of you know, the *Caring Hands Fund* of Presbyterian Homes provides critical care for these 400 residents who, through no fault of their own, have simply outlived their financial resources. Their average age is 86 years old and most of them are women. Last year, the *Caring Hands Fund* provided more than \$3.1 million in services to these residents, keeping a promise made 66 years ago to *never ask a*

nursing care resident to leave because that person had outlived his or her financial resources.

To make your giving even more rewarding this year, your gift will, once again, be matched in part by a group of donors, who care deeply for this ministry to older folks. I hope you will join me as you share Hope with some wonderful older folks who need our support.

And don't forget, you can now make a gift to the *Caring Hands Fund* with your smartphone! Just scan the QR code printed on the back of the Mother's Day brochure and use your credit card to make your donation.

Thank you for choosing to share your Hope with these wonderful saints!

Pentecost Offering, May 24, 2015

The Pentecost Offering supports a broad range of programs that work to nurture young people. It supports youth programs in your own community, creates opportunities for young adults to learn to serve others around the world, and helps build a foundation of faith. Research suggests that lifelong choices are formed based upon the belief systems and role

models we experience early in life. This offering provides opportunities for our young people to forge deep-rooted connections to God and to the church."

40% of the offering will be used locally.

60% of the offering will be remitted to the Presbyterian Mission Agency to support the Young Adult Volunteers and

Ministries with Youth Programs. These funds are also used for education and advocacy for children and youth at risk.

Your dollars really do make a difference! Thank you for your generous giving!

Salad Supper and Hymn Sing

The Salad Supper and Hymn Sing will be held on Sunday, May 3 at 6:00 PM! Bring a salad or dessert to share and join us for supper! You will enjoy a light meal, good fellowship and a time of singing hymns with your church family.

Psalm 92:1 A Psalm or Song for the sabbath day. It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High.

Memorial Day, May 25, 2015



Congregational Meeting

There will be a Congregational Meeting on Sunday, May 24 to elect a member-at-large to the Elder Nominating Committee.

May Fellowship Dinner

Dear Friends,

The Keister family is responsible for the May 20 Fellowship Dinner, and we thought we might try something a little different. We are planning an old-fashioned cookout with hamburgers, hot dogs, potato salad, chips and drinks. The meal will be provided; we ask that you bring desserts. If the weather is nice enough we will eat outside, if not, we will eat in the fellowship hall.

Following supper, our program will be provided by one or more members of the Embry family; Beth and Trace are the founders and directors of the Shepherd's Hill Academy and Alli is their daughter.

We know a little about the school since Jon and Nancy Boyd and Kenny Keister work there; but there is much more to know. We should be proud that such an institution is located in our general community.

SHA was designed for kids who are on a downward spiral. It offers a high quality, well structured training ground for kids who are very bright but in need of a new purpose and path in life. SHA is a "back to basics" environment that is conducive for healing, learning and growing; built on change that can only come from the heart. It is the firm commitment to God and His Word that sets SHA apart from those who rely entirely on clinical ap-

proaches to healing. The school has hard data to affirm that these beliefs work with most students doing so well that they are eventually weaned off of medications prescribed to deal with their behavioral issues.

Come and enjoy the cookout and learn about a Christian based ministry that is having a powerful effect upon the lives of talented but misdirected teens.

Pastor David

Music Notes

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. ([Colossians 3:16](#))

Singing hymns—why do we do it? Is it to express our praise to God? To reiterate what we believe? To give us a theological focus? To identify with the songwriter's personal experiences or proclaim our commitment to God? Yes. I believe the answer to each of these should be "yes."

I have read that if congregations are left on their own, they will sing the same fifty hymns over and over. We do much better than that with probably 125 hymns in our repertoire, but I still struggle with how to introduce a new song which could become very meaningful to us. I completely understand that no one wants to have a new song thrust upon them on a Sunday morning, but unlike past generations, we do not have a Sunday evening or Wednesday service in which hymns can be introduced. We do try new songs at our monthly hymn sings, but of course, not everyone is there to participate.

Because of this difficulty, I frequently face a dilemma when I am choosing hymns to go along with Pastor David's sermons. Do I choose a hymn that really fits the topic but isn't familiar, or do I choose a hymn that's familiar but doesn't have anything to do with the topic? When faced with this situation, I opt for the familiar a huge majority of the time. It's not meaningful to try to sing a song one doesn't know. I know this from personal experience. At the same time, I know that some of my favorite hymns are ones I learned as an adult, not as a child. My Christian experience would be impoverished if I had never learned these once unfamiliar songs. At times, I try to introduce a new hymn by using a verse of it as our benediction response—though, of course, that doesn't often work because of the topic of the hymn. I have, at times, made up new words for the tune to be able to do this, but that is often not convenient and is certainly time-consuming. Infrequently, I've had the choir sing a new song as an anthem before asking the congregation to sing it or have asked Frank to play the melody as an introduction and as an accompaniment for the first verse. Sometimes, I can find a familiar hymn tune and put the new words

to it, which can work quite well. None of these options are ideal, but they do offer some help. If you have any suggestions to aid in this process, I would be happy to hear them.

In the meantime, when you are faced with a less than familiar hymn, I hope you will remember several things.

1. The hymn was chosen for the appropriateness of its text and you might wish to focus on the words rather than try to sing along, if you can't do both.
2. I try to keep unfamiliar hymns to a minimum—for every time I use one, there have been at least two or three times that I have chosen a familiar hymn when an unfamiliar one would have been a better fit textually.
3. The Bible does call on us to "sing a new song" to the Lord so maybe you could just think of the experience as a "sacrifice of praise" in obedience to God! ☺

Blessings, Sharon

Worship Committee

Thank You!

We thank all who contributed their time, talent and funds to make all of the Easter Services successful and beautiful, glorifying our Lord and Savior.

The Sanctuary was beautiful with the Easter flowers. The floral cross was exceptional with all the donated flowers.



Upcoming...

- Communion will be celebrated on May 3.
- Mother's Day will be celebrated on May 10.
- Clary and Wilkinson Centers Services, May 24, 3:00 PM at Clary and 3:30 PM at Wilkinson. Plan to come and join us. You will receive a blessing.

Sanctuary Flowers

Located near the Pond Street entrance is a flower calendar where you may sign up to donate flowers. You may choose to order flowers from your favorite florist or provide a fresh arrangement from your garden. If you would like an announcement included in the weekly bulletin please contact the church secretary. The Worship Committee has the responsibility of setting up the sanctuary weekly for worship; we ask that those providing flowers arrange for placement by 10:30 AM, prior to worshippers entering the sanctuary. Don't forget to remove the arrangement following worship. Many dates remain open on the calendar; thank you for providing flowers!

Presbyterian Women

Our May meeting will be held at 10:00 a.m., May 7, in the Gathering Place. Please read chapters 12-14 in *Autopsy of a Deceased Church* and be prepared to discuss these. We will conclude our final meeting of the year with a luncheon provided by Barbara Matheson. You won't want to miss it!

Don't forget our ministries! Remember to bring those courtesy toiletries you've

collected from hotels to give to Barbara Matheson for the women at Circle of Hope. The Redeeming Love Women's Center donation box will be left out through our May meeting for any donations of chocolates, coffee, or bottled water. Many thanks to those of you who have already made donations! Also, thanks to those who have knitted or crocheted baby hats and afghans. It was

great to see pictures regarding this ministry in the paper recently. We are continuing to interact with the Clemmens family. They are in the process of getting a car so now can move forward with their efforts to get a job. Brittany also wants to get her GED.

Prayer Time

You are invited to join the prayer time held on Wednesdays from 6:30 to 7:00 p.m. (except for Fellowship dinner nights). There are many problems in the world, in our community, and in our church. Jesus said, "...I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them." (Matt. 18:19) While we real-

ize from Scripture that there are other factors involved in how God answers our prayers, it's rather exciting to think that each of us, joining together, can be instrumental in bringing about the answer! We hope to see you soon!



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Pastor: fpctoccoa@windstream.net

Preaching the hope of Christ.

The Ministry of this church is to support God's family through mission, evangelism, worship, care, education, fellowship, and stewardship. You are invited to join the members and friends who serve and support the church in these areas. All persons are invited and encouraged to become active participants in God's Family.

We're on the Web!!

www.toccoapresbyterian.org

Christian Education

Committee Meeting

The Christian Education Committee will NOT meet on Sunday, May 10 but will instead meet on Wednesday, May 13, 6:00 PM.

Sunday, May 17 is Youth Sunday!

Nursery Volunteers Needed

We are in need of members who would be willing to volunteer in the nursery on Sunday mornings. Presently, we have a volunteer for the first part of the service and then another for the second part of the service allowing all volunteers to participate in some of the Sunday morning service. If you would like to volunteer please contact Debbie Allen or Lane Tucker.

Book Swap

Do you have any good books, hard cover or paperback, that you have enjoyed reading and would like to share with others? The Christian Education Committee is in the process of developing a Book Swap area in the fellowship hall near the Pond Street entrance. Place your good used books on the book shelf and take one or two to read. Books are meant to be shared and enjoyed. Stop by the bookshelf next time you are in the fellowship hall and see if anything interests you.

Church Library

Our church library is the site of many committee meetings every month. Next time you are on the second floor, stop in and look at the wide variety of books that are available to read. A notebook and pen has been provided to sign your name and date if you wish to check out a book. Mark the books place on the bookshelf with a paint stick (provided by the check-out notebook). When you return your

book, mark your name off the notebook and place your book where you had a paint stick holding its place.

Save the Date!

VBS, July 20-24, 2015, 9 AM—12 PM!

Planning for Bible School is underway. We are in need of volunteers to serve in any capacity. If you can help one or all five days, please contact Margit Adams, Debbie Allen, Lane Tucker, or Mona Keister. If you aren't available the week of VBS, please plan to help with preparations. We need everyone's help! There will be several meetings to prepare for VBS; already scheduled is a May 30 meeting at 10 AM in the church fellowship hall. Watch for announcements of additional meetings. Please help us make this a memorable learning and worship experience for the children, youth, and adults involved.