NACOOCHEE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

May 2026 Newsletter

Grateful for the music that lifted our hearts this Easter season.

From the Pastor

When I was 13, my godmother gave me a bookmark for my Bible with the poem “Footprints in the Sand” by Mary Stevenson. It felt too cheesy for my teenage mind, and I regret that I did not keep it, but that poem has stuck with me and has meant more and more to me over time.

It paints a picture of our walk with God as a walk along a beach from which we look back to see two sets of footprints in the sand. There are times in that walk when there is only one set of footprints, and those are the times on which we might look back and say “Where were you, God? That shouldn’t have happened to me. Why did I have to face those things alone?” God’s answer in the poem is to point out to us that when there’s only one set of footprints, they come from God’s feet, not ours. We weren’t alone when we felt alone. In the times when our own strength failed, God was there to carry us through.

The poem makes an important point that when we are in the future looking back, things will look different from how they look right now. I have found that to be true in climbing mountains, whether it's Yonah or a fourteener in Colorado or Kilimanjaro. The trail looks a lot different from thousands of feet above than it does looking up with sweat stinging your eyes. It's true as a parent, and it's so annoying to hear myself say "you'll thank me when you're older." It's true as a leader applying Stephen Covey's principle of "beginning with the end in mind." It's also true in our faith. Things look different when we see them from the future.

That is how Easter teaches us to see. It is a lonely feeling to lose the person you can't live without. We leave some heavy footprints when we carry their body to the grave. Easter gives us a different perspective on those footprints of pain and loss. Jesus rises to walk again with the disciples after they spent three days believing they were alone. He shines a new light by which to see the life we share knowing God can give back what this world takes away.

This is an exciting season in which the church is busy with many wonderful things. I pray each one of these many activities will give more energy to participants than they take, but I also pray we can give ourselves generously to the ministries of the church knowing how they will feel in the winter as we look back on another wonderful year together as a church.

God is spreading seeds of the future into our present life so that we will have hope to carry us through the seasons of despair, so that faith will guide us when we cannot see the way, so that we can hold onto trust that God will have the last word, and so that the last word on our lips will be "thank you."

Prim Family Musical Farewell

Saturday, May 16, 4pm, at the SNC gym

May 16 ----Save the date! The Radio Utility Players (RUPS), veterans from years of hanging out with Bob Prim on the Sautee Community Center (SNC) stage, are coming together one more time to say farewell to Bob, Anne Forrest, Will, and Bess. Yes, it is true, the family is leaving behind the beautiful Sautee Valley for the ice and snow of Minnesota. Learn more on that subject when you come to the show!

The gathering is FREE and being held at SNC through its generosity. Join us as we celebrate the love, friendship, and selfless service of the Prim family over the almost 30 years they have graced us with their presence.

Bob, of course, served as our pastor at Nacoochee Presbyterian for 24 years before retiring. Anne Forrest served the community as an esteemed teacher and academic officer at secondary and college institutions and as a volunteer at our church. Their children Bess and Will, both born and raised in these hills, generously contributed their academic, sports, and artistic talents to our church and community. Both are now college graduates (Bess just completed her master's degree) and are headed out in the wider world to pursue their chosen vocations.

The May 16 event will include musical performances and skits by various RUPs and others. We promise a fun, spontaneous, and poignant sendoff for the Prims.

Fellowship Committee Update

As we continue to gather for fellowship and shared meals, we want to let you know that we are using compostable utensils, plates, napkins, and cups for both hot and cold beverages at our receptions and Fifth Sunday potlucks. This not only supports environmentally friendly practices, but also makes cleanup much easier for our volunteers—something we greatly appreciate!

Mark your calendars for our upcoming **Fifth Sunday Potluck on May 31**. Our theme is **"Sunday Picnic"**—a relaxed, joyful time of food and fellowship. The Fellowship Committee will provide fried chicken, and we invite the congregation to bring sides and desserts to share.

We look forward to seeing everyone there for a wonderful time of community and connection!

Communion and the Easter Journey

Some of you may wonder why we celebrate Holy Communion every Sunday during the Easter Season. Among Protestant congregations, the practice of observing communion can vary greatly from church to church. Some churches do it quarterly, some monthly, and some have weekly communion on a regular basis.

At NPC, we choose to have weekly communion during the Easter Season because the invitation to taste and see is particularly relevant during that time. Just as the risen Christ revealed himself to the disciples, Mary Magdalene and other followers, he is revealed to us in the weekly breaking of bread together. Easter offers us the opportunity for spiritual nourishment through this revelation. By being intentional in this way, we are able to draw closer to God and receive the grace that is freely given to all those who seek. Come as you are!

Fellowship Opportunities

Women's Dinner will meet on **Thursday, May 7th at 6pm** at Bangkok Bistro in Demorest. Please email Vicki if you plan to be there or have any questions. vmcmorrough@gmail.com

Men's Breakfast will meet on **Wednesday, May 6th at 8:30am** at Crossroads Café - 3933 GA-17, Clarkesville.

Ladies' Lunch Bunch will meet on **Thursday, May 14th, 11:30am** at Bangkok Bistro in Demorest. The address is 579 Georgia Street. Let Willene Keel know if you can attend. wwkeel@gmail.com

Outreach News: Ministries Making a Difference

Our congregation, through its Outreach Committee, continues to address a variety of needs in the surrounding community and beyond. As we have for many years, we are supporting the monthly Convivio fellowship meeting attended by our Hispanic neighbors with volunteer service by our members and financial support. This ministry, led for over 25 years by Dottie Foster, is in a period of transition to a new location and new leadership from within the Hispanic community itself. Each month we provide food assistance to Convivio families through our Loaves and Fishes ministry led by Sherry and Jim Perkins with support from Joanne and James Sweeney, Susan McSwiney and others. You will find more details about Convivio elsewhere in this newsletter.

In March, NPC sponsored the monthly White County Family Connection food distribution, which served over 100 families. We also recently provided two weeks of meals to families housed in the Family Promise shelter. NPC's involvement with Family Promise is coordinated by Willene Keel.

Our neighbors at Bean Creek Missionary Baptist Church recently experienced the loss of their First Lady, Elaine Sweet Pea Harbin, the wife of their pastor, the Reverend Dr. Eugene Harbin. NPC through the Outreach Committee offered support to the Bean Creek congregation by making a contribution in memory of Ms. Harbin and in honor of Rev. Harbin.

The Warming Center provided by the Matthew 25 Alliance opened for its final winter session on March 17th. Multiple NPC members served the guests of the center on each of the five nights that it was open in this first season. Recognizing that the needs of our unhoused neighbors don't end with the last day of winter, the Alliance is developing plans to provide accommodations should severe weather strike in the summer, meals and fellowship opportunities, and the services of a Resource Center operating in both White and Habersham Counties. The Resource Centers will assist unhoused individuals to obtain identification and other documentation and access benefits that will help them achieve stability and move toward finding their way off the streets. One recent benefit of being in alliance with our sister churches in Matthew 25 occurred when NPC, First Presbyterian of Clarkesville and Grace-Calvary Episcopal churches joined together to prevent a mother and her fifteen year old daughter from being evicted and becoming homeless.

As always, NPC is seeking and responding to opportunities to be the church beyond our beautiful location here in Sautee Valley.

Supporting Our Neighbors: Convivio and Scholarship Updates

Good news! Convivio Latinoamericano—our Hispanic Fellowship—has found a new home. Beginning this summer and continuing beyond, gatherings will take place on the first Sunday of each month.

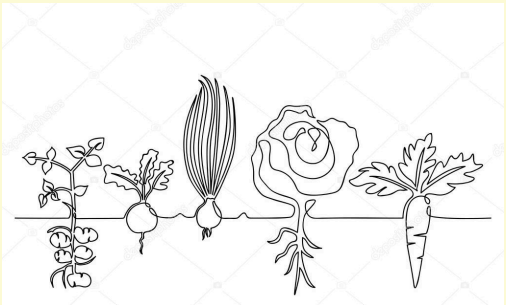
Our next **Convivio** will be held on **May 3 from 3-5pm at the United Methodist Church, 275 Wyly Street in Cornelia**, as we come together to celebrate Mother's Day. Everyone is welcome—bring a dish to share and enjoy an afternoon of fellowship and community. If you're interested in volunteering, please contact Mr. Jacobo at 706-892-4019.

Our church remains committed to supporting and walking alongside our new neighbors in meaningful ways. One important effort is the Stan and Dottie Foster Scholarship Fund for Hispanic Students. Established to encourage and support young people connected to Convivio over the past 25 years, the fund helps make education beyond high school more accessible.

This impact is already being seen. April Figueroa graduated from Kennesaw State University last fall and is now working as an accountant. Adrian Herrera is thriving at the University of North Georgia and is on track to graduate in the next two years.

The Outreach Committee offers applications for any Hispanic family in need of assistance. Contributions to this designated fund are always welcome. If you have questions or would like to recommend a student, please contact Dottie Foster.

A View from the Garden



In case you noticed, something is going on beyond the Memorial Garden. The Property Committee is working to make gardening activities more accessible and easier to manage by setting up three raised beds.

The lumber for the beds was donated by Larry King, and they are being built by John Lumsden, Rad Pate and Ron Skvarka.

What will we do with the area cleared last year? First, we will harvest the garlic that we planted. The hope is to till the area again and plant a wildflower meadow for birds, bees and butterflies. We are also hopeful to

create paths along the meadow as well as the beautiful areas along the creek.

If you have a desire to help make our garden grow, please contact Vicki or Rad. Bring your ideas! Help us plan for future growth..pun intended.

May 2026 - At a Glance

April 30 - *Sounds of Tohi* Round 2 Book Study begins, 6 - 7:30pm (5 weeks)
May 3 - Convivio, 3-5pm, First Methodist Church, Cornelia
May 6 - Men's Breakfast, 8:30am, Crossroads Café, Clarkesville
May 7 - Women's Dinner, 6pm, Bangkok Bistro, Demorest
May 14 - Ladies' Lunch Bunch, 11:30am, Bangkok Bistro, Demorest
May 16 - Prim Family Musical Farewell, 4pm, SNC
May 31 - 5th Sunday Potluck

Click here to view the NPC Calendar

Sounds of Tohi Book Study
Round 2

Back by popular demand, Anna Robertson will be leading a book study on *Sounds of Tohi: Cherokee Health and Wellbeing in Southern Appalachia* by Lisa J. Lefler and Thomas N. Belt. The group will **meet in the choir room** of Nacoochee Presbyterian Church **from 6-7:30pm each Thursday and will last for five weeks**. The **first session** will begin on **Thursday, April 30th**.

Please come to the first group having read the Forwards, Preface, Introduction and Chapter 1 (20 pages). The book can be purchased locally from Mt. Yonah Book Exchange or can be purchased online directly from the publisher at University of Alabama Press. Please feel free to contact Anna directly with questions at 404-641-0717.

Update on Giving

The General Fund covers our regular operating and maintenance expenses.

As of April 27th 2026 - General Contributions

Budget Projection: $97,100

Actual Received: $105,089

Click here to donate online

If you have an idea for an article for next month's newsletter or would like to provide feedback to the NPC Communication Committee, email Communications@NacoocheePresbyterian.org

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