



## Race and the PCA

*By Alexander S. Brown, Minister*

**T**HIS PAST summer in my report from the General Assembly, I mentioned to you the momentous events of Thursday evening of that week, which centered on corporate repentance for our involvement in the sin of racial segregation. The debate that surrounded the personal resolution submitted by Dr. Sean Lucas (Senior Pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Hattiesburg, MS), and Dr. Ligon Duncan (Chancellor, Reformed Theological Seminary, and former Senior Pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Jackson, MS), was incredibly moving as the General Assembly tried to find the best way forward in an issue that is profoundly emotive.

For three hours the General Assembly debated whether or not to adopt the Resolution with the main point of contention being a desire that some action flow from the Resolution and this not simply be a few lines lost in the minutes.

For an hour the whole General Assembly stopped in a season of corporate prayer to simply ask for the Lord's leading on this issue. It was unprecedented, with our Stated Clerk writing that in his opinion "the periods of prayer and expressions of repentance and brotherly love on the Thursday evening session of the 2015 General Assembly were the most evident and powerful work of the Holy Spirit at any PCA Assembly heretofore."

In the end, the decision was made for the Resolution to spend this year being refined in order to be resubmitted next year, in the hopes producing a fruitful and effective way forward.

**T**HIS ISSUE is one that generates deep feelings with most who face it, on all sides. Some feel a deep anger that it has taken this long for our denomination to own the sins of the fathers during the period of racial segregation in which the white church across the South (although not just the South) turned a blind eye to the injustices being faced by our black neighbors, and even going so far, at times, to publically endorse the segregation of the races.

Others feel passionately that this is a politicized issue that the Church should stay away from and not add fuel to an already volatile fire, and that we should be trying to get past this issue rather than bringing it up again. There can be no doubt that this issue is seized on by people from a spectrum of backgrounds and with a variety of agendas to promote their own cause.

*Continued on page 2*

*We are committed to a social justice that seeks to render to every human being the dignity that comes from bearing the image of God.*

## November Calendar

### Sunday

9:30 a.m. Sunday School  
 "A History of the Reformation"

10:30 a.m. Morning Worship  
 "Gospel of Matthew"

6:00 p.m. Evening Worship  
 New series: "Ruth"

Children's Church, Nursery available

Sun 11/1 Lord's Supper (10:30 a.m.)

Mon 11/2, 16 Women's Study  
 (6:00 p.m., Chilton home)

Tue 11/3 Women's Monthly Study  
 (6:30 p.m., Parrish home)

Wed 11/4 "Beyond the Pages"  
 Book Group  
 (9:30 a.m., Magnolia Manor)

Fri-Sun 11/6-8 World Missions  
 Conference (see pg. 2)

Wed 11/11, 18 Ladies Bible Study  
 (9:30 a.m., Brown home)

Wed 11/11, 18 Prayer Meeting  
 (7:00 p.m., Brown home)

Sat 11/14 "2nd Saturday" Men's Study  
 (8:30 a.m., Brown home)

Tue 11/17 Stated Session Meeting  
 (6:00 p.m., GIPC)

Sun 11/22 Community Thanksgiving  
 Service (4:00 p.m., GIPC)

Sun 11/22 Bring your filled Christmas  
 Shoeboxes for Sacred Road to GIPC

Thu 11/26 Happy Thanksgiving!

## In this issue

Committee Updates  
 & Special Events..... 2,3,4  
 Psalm of the Month..... 4  
 Bible Reading Plan..... 5  
 November 'Fighter' Verses 5



## ***Race and the PCA***

*Continued from page 1*

However, regardless of how this issue has been mishandled, the fact of the matter is that we cannot just ignore it. The PCA has some significant baggage in this realm and some pretty scary skeletons in our closet and we cannot just pretend that they are not there. What lies at the root of this desire to bring this issue to the table and to deal with it in an honest and public way is simply a desire to obey the two great commandments.

**W**HEN JESUS was asked by the Pharisical Lawyer what was the great commandment in all the Law, He responded

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”  
(Matthew 22:37-39)

Those two commands go hand-in-hand and cannot be separated. The error of the liberal church is that they try to emphasize the second command while downplaying the first. The opposite error (and the error that the PCA has tended to fall into) is to emphasize the first commandment while downplaying the second.

But both commands are intimately tied to each other – you cannot love your neighbor as yourself unless you understand that the dignity of your neighbor is rooted in his bearing the image of God, and you cannot love the Lord your God without honoring His image bearers on earth.

And so, what that means is that Christians are to be a people who are committed to social justice – to *real* social justice. Not social justice as defined by the media, or by secular humanism, but a desire for justice that flows from our understanding of the unique dignity of humanity. We are committed to a social justice that seeks to render to every human being the dignity that comes from bearing that image of God.

Another way of putting this is that we are committed to the sanctity of human life – it is an unjust act to kill an unborn child because that fetus is not just a bag of tissue but is a human being who is to be afforded all the rights of an image bearer; it is an unjust act to abandon the elderly because they bear the image of God, regardless of what physical or mental deterioration they be undergoing; it is an unjust act to determine how a man will be treated simply because of the color of his skin because, as a human being, regardless of his color, he bears the image and likeness of God.

**T**HIS LATEST resolution follows the resolution on racial reconciliation that was adopted by the 30<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in 2002, which confessed the covenantal and generational sins connected with the institution of slavery in America; and on the heels of the pastoral letter on racism that was adopted in 2004. This current resolution, which deals with our sins during the Civil Rights Era, is part of an on-going realization and confession that we, both individually and corporately, have been guilty of de-humanizing our African-American brothers and sisters and in so doing we have broken both the first and second great commandments.

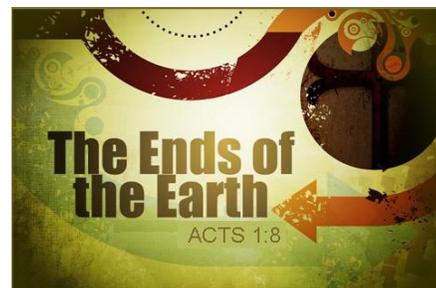
*Continued on page 3*

## **“First Wednesday” Dinner Schedule**

On the first Wednesday of each month, in lieu of the Midweek Prayer Meeting, the church family gathers in a home for a potluck dinner.

There will be no dinner in November in lieu of the Missions Conference weekend, November 6, 7 and 8.

The December dinner will be held on the 2nd at the Ledbetter home. *Details to follow!*



Join us for our  
**20th Annual  
World Missions Conference!**

Friday-Sunday • November 6-8  
Golden Isles Presbyterian Church

Rev. Jason Davis, Vidalia, GA  
Keynote Speaker

Go [here](#) for a calendar of events.  
(Click on each event for more details.)

Sign up sheets are located  
in the church foyer.

## **GOLDEN ISLES PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

48 Hampton Point Drive  
Saint Simons Island, GA 31522

Phone: 912.638.2563

E-Mail: [office@gipc-pca.org](mailto:office@gipc-pca.org)

*Sermons are available online:*  
[gipc-pca.org](http://gipc-pca.org)

## Race and the PCA

Continued from page 2

So, what does this mean practically? Well, to be honest, we are still trying to figure that out. Across the denomination, groups have been meeting to try and puts legs on this. A group of men in our presbytery have started meeting to ask the question, “How can we work to try to make the churches of our presbytery more reflective of the every-nation, every-tribe, every-people, every-tongue Church of Revelation 7?”

Right now it is just a conversation, and we are asking a lot of questions, but the direction that we are moving in is an exciting one. It is a conversation that is being replicated throughout the Presbyteries of the PCA, as we try to move forward in a constructive, helpful, and lasting way.

**I**F YOU have not yet read the Drs. Lucas and Duncan’s resolution, you can find it on our church’s blog, [gipc-pca.org/blog/race-and-the-pca](http://gipc-pca.org/blog/race-and-the-pca). I would also like to encourage you to pick up a copy of the latest *byFaith* magazine, which has a couple of articles directly related to this issue – one by Dr. Lucas, entitled *Grace, Race, and the PCA*, and another by the Stated Clerk of our denomination, Dr. L. Roy Taylor, entitled, *Moving Toward Racial Diversity* – both of which I highly recommend to you. (Copies of *byFaith* can be picked up in the church foyer. Alternatively, you can access the articles at [byfaithonline.com](http://byfaithonline.com)) ▪



Give Thanks  
to the  
Lord  
for he is good.

GIPC will be the host church this year for the “Community Thanksgiving Service” on Sunday, November 22, 4:00 p.m. in the afternoon.

All St. Simons Island churches are invited and the service is led by area pastors. Rev. Whit Chapman of Frederica Baptist Church is scheduled to preach; a reception will follow.

Those who are interested are invited to arrive at the church by 3:00 p.m. to rehearse with a “Community Choir” directed by Kathleen Turner, Organist and Choirmaster, Christ Church Frederica.

An offering will be collected for Manna House, Sparrow’s Nest, and other similar organizations.

## Women in the Church

A *Women’s Study Group* is offered on the first and third Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m., meeting at the home of Diane Chilton. *Topic*: The nature of love, using C.S. Lewis’ *The Four Loves*, as a guide. **November dates: 11/2, 11/16**

A *Women’s Monthly Study* meets on the first Tuesday of each month, 6:30 p.m. at the home of Cindy Parrish. *Topic*: “Women of the Word,” by Jen Wilkin.

The *Wednesday Morning Ladies Bible Study* continues their in-depth look at the book of *Acts*. This group meets each Wednesday except the first, 9:30 a.m. at the home of Sara Brown.

*Ladies, if you are able to help with food for the reception on 11/22 (see left column), please sign up in the Church Office or contact Sara Brown.*

## Buildings and Grounds

A tree was removed from the parking lot area after a portion of it fell. It was replaced by a new light pole with energy-efficient fixtures that will enhance safety in the parking lot. Additional (exterior) lighting improvements are being considered.

Plans are in place to have the carpets cleaned in November. If you are able to help move furniture please let Bill Wood or John Garvin know by Nov. 11th.

Suggestions regarding B&G repairs or improvements are always welcome!

## Finance

Loan Balance 9/25/15 \$712,811

October Payment:

Interest	\$ 3,008
Principal	\$ 2,940
Total Payment	\$ 5,948

Please pray for wisdom for the various committees of the church as they prepare their budget proposals for 2016.

## Significant Sessional Actions

- Approved a revised schedule for the Missions Conference weekend: there will be no Evening Service on Sunday, November 8th;
- Approved Vacation Leave for the Pastor in November and December;
- Approved Rev. Brown to preach at the “Kirkin’ O’ the Tartans” services to be held at St. Simons Presbyterian on Sunday, January 31, 2016, 8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

# psalm

OF THE MONTH

## Psalm 117

From all that dwell below the skies  
let the Creator's praise arise;  
let the Redeemer's name be sung  
through every land, by every tongue.

In every land begin the song;  
to every land the strains belong.  
In cheerful sound all voices raise  
and fill the world with joyful praise.

Eternal are Your mercies, Lord;  
eternal truth attends Your Word.  
Your praise shall sound from shore to shore  
till suns shall rise and set no more.

**O**UR PSALM OF THE MONTH for November is Psalm 117, which, although a short psalm, is packed with truth about the hope of the Gospel.

In that Psalm the Psalmist calls on all the nations of the earth to give praise to God because of His steadfast love and faithfulness that endures forever.

The word that is translated "steadfast love" is the Hebrew *hesed*, which is often given in Scripture as a reason for the worship of God – it is the understanding that God's love toward us is rooted in His covenantal promises and, because God cannot go

back on His word (Hebrews 6:18), that means that they cannot fail.

Despite the unfaithfulness of His people, God will do what He has said. It is the good news that we are saved in spite of ourselves, rather than because of ourselves. But what is particularly noteworthy about this Psalm is that the call goes out, not just to Israel but to "all nations."

What the Psalmist realizes is that God's covenant promises are not restricted to the ethnic descendants of Israel, but are for the whole world. The covenant promises are open to all, if they put their faith and trust in Israel's God.

That, of course, is the basis for the work of Missions that we will be celebrating at our Missions Conference, and so this psalm is very fitting for our Missions Month!

**T**HIS PSALM leads us to pray in **ADORATION** of God for His incredible love for a distinctly unlovely humanity. It leads us to adore God for His grace and mercy that is to be proclaimed as far as the curse is found.

It leads us to **CONFESS** our parochialism and how we are often consumed with our own little lives and give little thought to those who have not heard of this Gospel, or to those who are dedicating their lives to taking this Gospel to those who have never heard.

The psalm leads us to **THANKSGIVING** for our missionaries, and for how God has protected and provided for them in their work.

It also leads us to give thanks that the nations have, and are, responding to the Gospel-call and that people from every nation, tribe, people and tongue are coming into the Kingdom of God.

Finally, this psalm leads us to **SUPPLICATION**, praying that in response to Romans 10:14 God would raise up many more to preach this good news, and that through that proclamation many would be given new hearts that would respond in faith. ☞

## "Beyond the Pages" Book Group

Wednesday, November 4th, 9:30 a.m.

The Book Group meets on the first Wednesday of each month and is open to anyone who enjoys reading and discussing books. The November selection is "The No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency," by Alexander McCall Smith. *Meet at Magnolia Manor, 100 Heritage Dr., in the second floor library of the large building beside the water fountain.* **Looking Ahead:** The December book choice is "The Lost Art of Mixing," by Erica Bauermeister.

## Men's Monthly Study

Saturday, November 14th, 8:30 a.m.

The men of the church meet on the "2nd Saturday" of each month at Rev. Brown's home.

Their current study is based on the book, "The Life of God in the Soul of the Church," by Thabiti Anyabwile.

**NOVEMBER**

*"As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby."  
(I Peter 2:2)*

**Family Worship**

**Old Testament Reading**

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	<i>II Kings</i>	14	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		15	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		16	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		17	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		18	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		19	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		20	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		21	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		22	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		23	<input type="checkbox"/>
11		24	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		25	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	<i>I Chronicles</i>	1,2	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		3,4	<input type="checkbox"/>
15		5,6	<input type="checkbox"/>
16		7,8	<input type="checkbox"/>
17		9,10	<input type="checkbox"/>
18		11,12	<input type="checkbox"/>
19		13,14	<input type="checkbox"/>
20		15	<input type="checkbox"/>
21		16	<input type="checkbox"/>
22		17	<input type="checkbox"/>
23		18	<input type="checkbox"/>
24		19,20	<input type="checkbox"/>
25		21	<input type="checkbox"/>
26		22	<input type="checkbox"/>
27		23	<input type="checkbox"/>
28		24,25	<input type="checkbox"/>
29		26,27	<input type="checkbox"/>
30		28	<input type="checkbox"/>

**NOVEMBER**

*"As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby."  
(I Peter 2:2)*

**Family Worship**

**New Testament Reading**

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	<i>II Timothy</i>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	<i>Titus</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	<i>Philemon</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	<i>Hebrews</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
11		6	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		7	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		8	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
15		10	<input type="checkbox"/>
16		11	<input type="checkbox"/>
17		12	<input type="checkbox"/>
18		13	<input type="checkbox"/>
19	<i>James</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
20		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
21		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
22		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
23		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
24	<i>I Peter</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
25		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
26		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
27		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
28		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
29	<i>II Peter</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
30		2	<input type="checkbox"/>

**NOVEMBER**

*"As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby."  
(I Peter 2:2)*

**Private**

**Old Testament Reading**

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	<i>Hosea</i>	7	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		8	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		10	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		11	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		12	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		13	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		14	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	<i>Joel</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
11		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	<i>Amos</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
15		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
16		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
17		6	<input type="checkbox"/>
18		7	<input type="checkbox"/>
19		8	<input type="checkbox"/>
20		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
21	<i>Obadiah</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
22	<i>Jonah</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
23		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
24		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
25		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
26	<i>Micah</i>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
27		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
28		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
29		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
30		5	<input type="checkbox"/>

**NOVEMBER**

*"As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby."  
(I Peter 2:2)*

**Private**

**Psalms & New Testament**

Date	Book	Chapter	✓
1	<i>Psalms</i>	120-122	<input type="checkbox"/>
2		123-125	<input type="checkbox"/>
3		126-128	<input type="checkbox"/>
4		129-131	<input type="checkbox"/>
5		132-134	<input type="checkbox"/>
6		135,136	<input type="checkbox"/>
7		137,138	<input type="checkbox"/>
8		139	<input type="checkbox"/>
9		140,141	<input type="checkbox"/>
10		142	<input type="checkbox"/>
11		143	<input type="checkbox"/>
12		144	<input type="checkbox"/>
13		145	<input type="checkbox"/>
14		146,147	<input type="checkbox"/>
15		148-150	<input type="checkbox"/>
16	<i>Luke</i>	1:1-38	<input type="checkbox"/>
17		1:39-80	<input type="checkbox"/>
18		2	<input type="checkbox"/>
19		3	<input type="checkbox"/>
20		4	<input type="checkbox"/>
21		5	<input type="checkbox"/>
22		6	<input type="checkbox"/>
23		7	<input type="checkbox"/>
24		8	<input type="checkbox"/>
25		9	<input type="checkbox"/>
26		10	<input type="checkbox"/>
27		11	<input type="checkbox"/>
28		12	<input type="checkbox"/>
29		13	<input type="checkbox"/>
30		14	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Week beginning NOVEMBER 1**

**Matthew 7:13-14**

Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

**Week beginning NOVEMBER 8**

**Matthew 7:15-16**

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles?

**Week beginning NOVEMBER 15**

**Matthew 7:17-20**

So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

**Week beginning NOVEMBER 22**

**Matthew 7:21**

Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

**Week beginning NOVEMBER 29**

**Matthew 7:22-23**

On that day many will say to Me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and cast out demons in Your name, and do many mighty works in Your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you workers of lawlessness.'