



Rev. Ronald L. Bowens
Pastor

FRIENDSHIP'S VOICE

NOVEMBER 2025

VOL. 12, ISSUE 9

“Exhalt the Savior, Equip the Saint, Evangelize the Sinner.”

Thanksgiving

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Theme of the Month.....	2
Scripture of the Month.....	3
Hymn of the Month.....	4
Prayer List.....	5
Recent events	
41st Pastoral Anniversary.....	6
Men’s Ministry Fellowship.....	8
Education Ministry Field Trip.....	10
Highlighting Black History.....	14
Signs of the Season.....	16
Remember Our Veterans.....	18
Upcoming Events.....	19

CALENDAR

Nov

- 4 - Election Day
- 6 - Thanksgiving Food Giveaway
- 8 - Christmas Program rehearsals begin
- 11 - Veteran’s Day
- 16 - Kindred Connections Event
- 26 - Thanksgiving Luncheon
- 27 - Thanksgiving Day

THEME OF THE MONTH

Thanksgiving



WRITTEN BY SIS. HYACINTH CHUNG



Thanksgiving is a secular holiday, observed in many countries, as a day of giving thanks for the blessing of the previous year's harvest. This celebration is set aside as a once-per-year event.

Thanksgiving, for God's people, should be a lifestyle - an everyday continuous act. It should be embedded in our hearts and be the heart of our daily worship to God. We were created for worship, and worship without thanksgiving is like having the spread without the turkey. Thanksgiving should be the protein in our diets whet with praise, just like turkey or ham without the dressing would not appeal to our palettes. It is a way of life, the relationship between God and man.

The Pilgrims who came many years ago were dying of diseases and the Natives helped them back on their feet with food and medicine. Unfortunately, the Pilgrims later turned on the Natives and looked down on them as savages. However, when we were wallowing in sin, God looked down upon us with pity and sent His only Son to die on the cross so we could have eternal life. He saved us from the wretched path we were going down, so each day we open our eyes, we should be giving him thanks instead of looking back from whence we came.

Nehemiah 12:27 reads, "And at the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem they sought the Levites in all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem to celebrate the dedication with gladness, with thanksgivings and with singing, with cymbals, harps, and lyres". In the same manner, we should dedicate ourselves to God and His work with thanksgiving and praise.

Some of the many scriptures that support God's requirement for Thanksgiving are:

Psalm 116:17 "To you I shall offer a sacrifice of Thanksgiving and call upon the name of the Lord."

Psalm 50:14 "Offer to God a sacrifice of Thanksgiving and pay your vows to the most High."

Psalm 95:2 "Let us come before His presence with Thanksgiving. Let us shout joyfully to Him with Psalms."

Psalm 100:4 "Enter His gates with Thanksgiving and His courts with Praise. Give thanks to Him and bless His name."

Let us continue to praise God with gratitude, joy, and thanksgiving because if we are not grateful, we cannot be thankful. Keep praying for each other, my church family, and always give thanks for the gift of life.

Scripture of the Month

¹⁶ Rejoice always; ¹⁷ pray without ceasing; ¹⁸ in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:16-18 (NASB)

HYMN OF THE MONTH

Oh Give Thanks Unto the Lord

WRITTEN BY JUDITH CHRISTIE MCALLISTER

Oh give thanks unto the Lord
For He is good, yes He is good

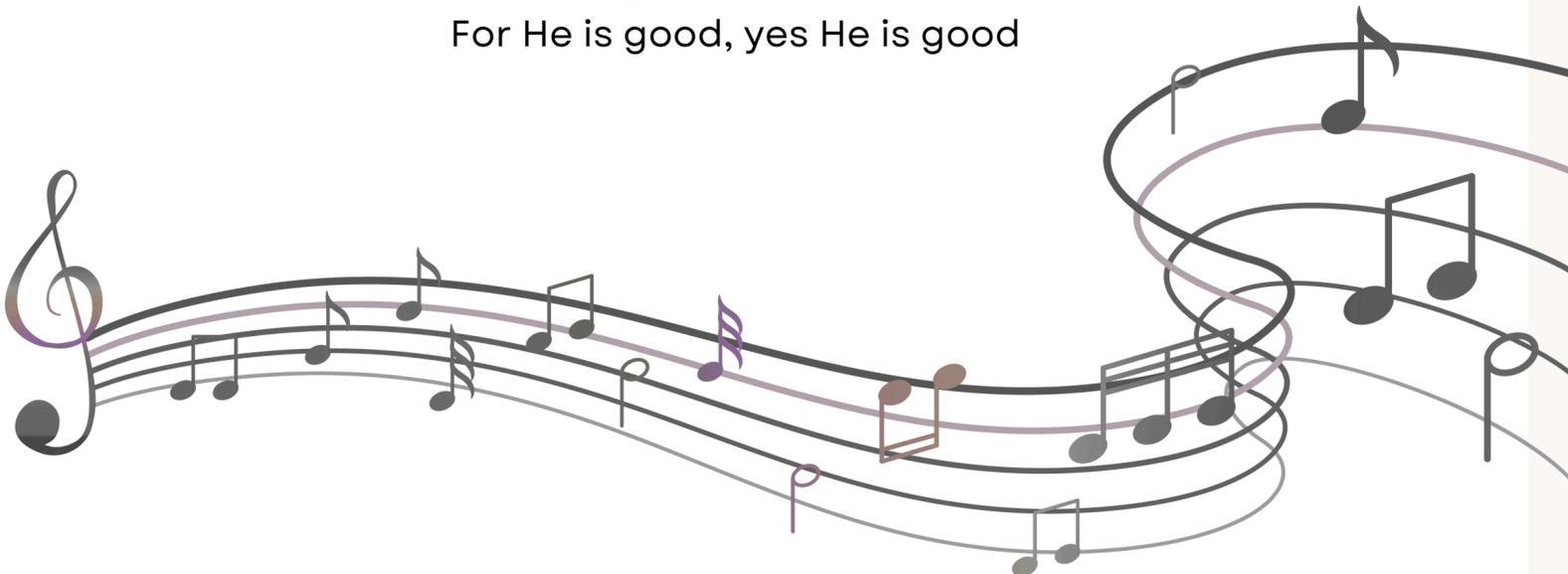
Oh give thanks unto the Lord
For He is good, yes He is good

For He is worthy, worthy
For He is good, yes He is good

For He is worthy, worthy
For He is good, yes He is good

(Repeat 2x)

For He is worthy, worthy
For He is good, yes He is good
For He is good, yes He is good



Pray for those on our "Sick and Shut-in" List

AS WELL AS THOSE GRIEVING THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE



Send them a card, give them a call, visit them. You never know how much it could mean to them.

Mr. William Annan

Sis. Charre Armstrong

Bro. Robert Beal

Bro. Willie Benton

Min. Karen Blacknell

Sis. Sheila Blackwell

Dea. Willie Blake

Bro. Don Bowens

Sis. Liz Bowens

Barbara Williams Brown

Sis. Denise Brown

Sis. Alice Burnes

Bro. Dwayne Bynum

Sis. Theresa Byrd

Sherita Caldwell

Breann Caldwell

Dominique Caldwell

Nick Caldwell

The Carmack Family

Sis. Chastity Collier

Sis. Sarah Collins

Sis. Carolyn Dukes

Bro. Joe Dukes

Sis. Andrea Green

Sis. Ruth Griggs

Sis. Barbara Hall

Sis. Dorothy Hines

Bro. Willie Irvin

Sis. Jennifer Jones

Bro. Patrick Jones

Sis. Quincie Joyner

Sis. Josephine Lipscomb

Ms. Jessie McCall

Sis. Valerie McClendon

Sis. Josephine May

Bro. Will May

Sis. Diane Meeks

Miss. Kaitlyn Miles

Sis. Alice Murphy

Tressa Norwood

Ms. Patricia Ochogu

Bro. Rickie Perry

Bro. Charles Phinizy

The Poe Family

Sis. Carrie Rawls

Sis. Linda Rogers

Sis. Cindy Rollins

Sis. Carrie Royals

Sis. Nilda C Sankitts

Sis. Jacqueline Scott

Sis. Tonya Sellers

Mr. Claudius Stafford

Bro. Xavier Stephens

Sis. Mabel Thomas

The Wells Family

Bro. Clarence Wilkerson

Rev. Dwight Wilkerson

Sis. Shelby Wilkerson

Sis. Valerie Williams

Sis. Joan Wilson

Sis. Sadie Wilson

Bro. Victor Winston Jr.

Sis. Priscilla Wise

Sis. Dorothy Woods

Sis. Lola Wright

Prayer changes things.

41st Pastoral Anniversary: Honoring Pastor & Sister Debbie Bowens

“Fully committed to preaching the Word” 2 Timothy 4:3-5



Musical Celebration – October 4th 2025

We joyfully kicked off this year’s celebration with a soul stirring musical. Deacon Anthony and Sister Tuwanda Williams brought energy and grace to the evening. Songs of Zion filled the sanctuary as we were uplifted by the Friendship Baptist church Praise Team and the Combine Choir. Special guest Saxophonist Tadric Jermaine moved hearts with two powerful selections, and the Mt. Zion Baptist Church Choir added their voices in praise.

Sunday Worship and Celebration

The spirit of gratitude continued on Sunday as we honored our beloved Pastor and his beautiful wife Sister Debbie. The atmosphere

was set with warm words of welcome from Sister Dranita Morrow, followed by a stirring message of inspiration from Sister Annie Johnson.

Fellowship Dinner

The day concluded with a celebratory dinner at Aqua Terra in Buford, Ga., with laughter, love & reflection.

A Message of Thanks

On behalf of the Shepherd’s Care Ministry, I, Vickie Chambers, extend heartfelt thanks to the Friendship Baptist church family, our cherished friends, live stream viewers and all of you who joined us in this unforgettable milestone.

41ST PASTORAL ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



Men's Ministry Fellowship

Main Event - October 11, 2025

The Men's Ministry enjoyed a fantastic day of fellowship at Main Event in Suwanee, GA, on October 11, 2025. The day was filled with laughter, friendly competition in bowling and billiards, and meaningful conversations. It was a great opportunity to relax, connect, and strengthen the bonds between brothers in Christ.

Events like this are more than just fun—they're essential for building lasting relationships and deepening our sense of community. Men of all ages came together, allowing us to engage with one another in a unique and refreshing setting beyond the church walls.

Before the activities began, Rev. Stanley Jackson led us in prayer, reminding us of the purpose behind our gathering. His words set the tone for the day, centering us on fellowship, faith, and mutual encouragement.

Whether through worship, service, or simply spending time together, moments like these foster genuine camaraderie among the men of Friendship Baptist Church. While each of us are at a different point in our walk with God, gatherings like this help us uplift and positively influence one another.

Our guiding scripture, Proverbs 27:17 - "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend" - remains at the heart of all we do. As the Men's Ministry, we are committed to creating more opportunities that encourage spiritual growth, unity, and brotherhood.

Ryan Dendy
Men's Ministry President



MEN'S MINISTRY FELLOWSHIP



Education Ministry Visits Historic Hooper-Renwick Themed Library

WRITTEN BY SIS. LATRELL CARR



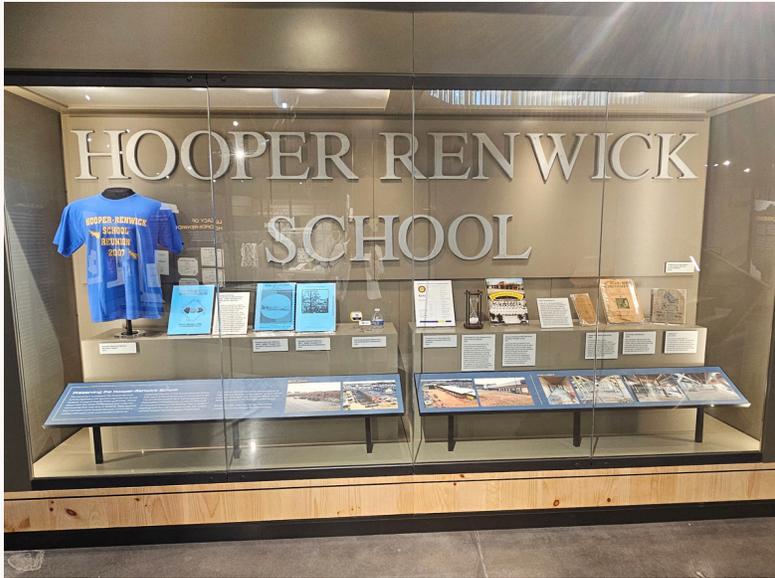
Education Ministry leaders Charlene Benn and Sharon Norman recently organized a field trip to the Hooper-Renwick Themed Library in Lawrenceville, Georgia, with the goal of helping attendees connect with the community's educational and cultural roots. The tour was led by Constance Brown, who attended Hooper-Renwick until grade six and now serves as an Ambassador Volunteer for the themed library. Her firsthand experiences and personal reflections brought the history to life, making the visit particularly meaningful for all attendees.

During the era of segregation, Hooper-Renwick was the sole high school in Gwinnett County where African American students could earn a diploma. Families from across the county sent their children to the modern, 12-classroom school constructed in Lawrenceville in 1951. The school was named for Principal Marshall M. Hooper, who dedicated many years to leading the school and shaping its students, and Mr. Mack Renwick, a community leader who generously donated three acres of land for the campus. Together, their contributions provided a foundation for educational opportunity and strengthened the Black community in Gwinnett County.

In 1949, there were 13 school centers serving Black students in Gwinnett County. Most had a single teacher and operated in inadequate buildings. By 1951, those schools were consolidated into five, including the newly constructed Hooper-Renwick School, which served grades 1 through 12. The other schools—Hull, New Bethel, Norcross, and



EDUCATION MINISTRY FIELD TRIP



Shiloh—served only grades 1 through 7, and after completing seventh grade, their students attended Hooper-Renwick to continue their education. A later consolidation in 1957 closed the Shiloh and New Bethel schools, with students from Norcross transferred to Hull.

Black churches were closely connected to the 13 school centers. They often provided the physical space, leadership, and networks that sustained the centers, while both institutions shared the goal of racial uplift through education, self-help, and moral development. Churches played a vital role in supporting Hooper-Renwick School, providing resources, guidance, and a nurturing environment for students during a time when educational opportunities were limited. This legacy of faith and community support became even more tangible during the tour, as the group discovered that several current and former FBC members—including Hezekiah Bowens, Sharon Norman, Vanessa White, and Kimberly Rogers, just to name a few—had once attended Hooper-Renwick. Learning about these personal connections added an extra layer of meaning to the experience for everyone present.



The Hooper-Renwick School closed in 1968 as part of Gwinnett County's desegregation efforts. Although it had operated for only 18 years, its closure was deeply felt, leaving many Black residents of the county grieving the loss of a cherished institution and community cornerstone. Former students, including Constance Brown, recall the transition with mixed emotions, describing the experience of integration as a moment when “all the love left”.



During the tour, one of the youth asked, “What is integration?” This question sparked a thoughtful discussion about the meaning and impact of

EDUCATION MINISTRY FIELD TRIP

desegregation in schools. This “teachable moment” was used to explain how integration aimed to provide equal educational opportunities, while also acknowledging the complex emotions it brought for students and communities who had strong attachments to their historically Black schools.

The Hooper-Renwick story is one of resilience and restoration. When Ruby Neal, a 1956 graduate of Hooper-Renwick School, learned that the historic building was scheduled for demolition, she formed a committee to fight for its preservation. Among those who joined her efforts was Constance Brown. Thanks to their efforts, the original Hooper-Renwick building was saved and incorporated into the Hooper-Renwick Themed Library, preserving its legacy for future generations.

The Hooper-Renwick Themed Library now stands as both a learning center and a historical landmark. The original Hooper-Renwick School building, constructed in 1951 with 12 classrooms, remains a part of the Hooper-Renwick Themed Library today. It was important to preserve a part of the original structure, as it serves as a tangible reminder of the memories, challenges, and triumphs that shaped generations of students. As Constance Brown explained, the original building “served as the cornerstone or nucleus of the Black community. It helped hold the community together.” The library has been thoughtfully designed to tell the story of the community before, during, and after Hooper-Renwick.

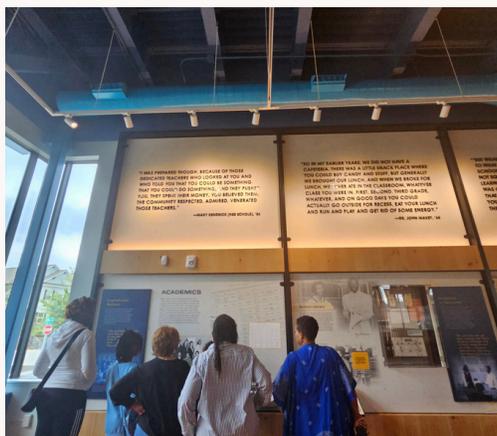
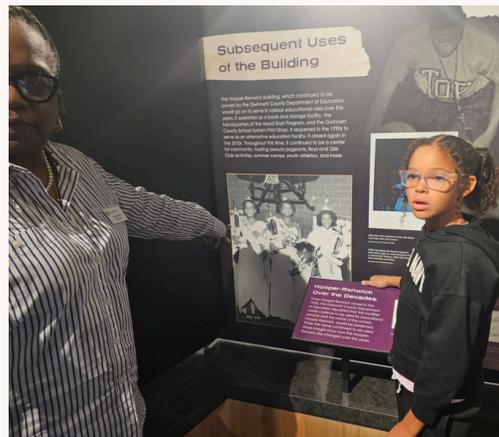
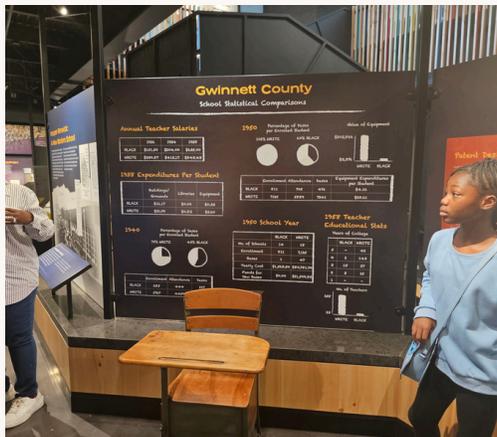
Much of what is known about Gwinnett County’s Black schools comes from Dr. Miley Mae Hemphill’s thesis titled, “A Study of the Negro Public Schools in Gwinnett County, GA 1937-1956.” Her research provided essential historical documentation and serves as the foundation for much of the

information and many of the exhibits featured in the Hooper-Renwick Themed Library today. During the visit, FBC member Marrika Wilburn-Howell was deeply moved upon discovering that several of her family members had attended Hooper-Renwick, including the esteemed Dr. Hemphill. Learning about her family’s connection to the school brought a personal and emotional dimension to the tour, highlighting how the legacy of Hooper-Renwick continues to touch generations within the community.

The group left the tour inspired, reflective, and proud of the legacy that shaped their own community. The visit to the Hooper-Renwick Themed Library was more than a field trip—it was a living lesson in history, identity, and faith.



EDUCATION MINISTRY FIELD TRIP



HIGHLIGHTING BLACK HISTORY

Lt. Col. George Hardy

WRITTEN BY SIS. DIANE RUSSELL



As we celebrate the veterans who served to protect our country and our rights, we mourn the loss of one of the last surviving Tuskegee Airmen, Lt. Col. George Hardy.

George Edward Hardy was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on June 8, 1925. His parents were Edward Hardy, a podiatrist, and Alma Vargas, a homemaker. He graduated high school, South Philadelphia High School in 1942 and wanted to join the military because his older brother had joined the U.S. Navy in 1941.

When he joined the Army Air Corps in 1943, the U.S. military was segregated, so George's

opportunities were limited until the military until Secretary of War, Henry L. Stimson authorized the formation of the African American pursuit squadron, 99th Pursuit Squadron. The training for this squadron was done at Tuskegee University, which is why we have the name the Tuskegee Airmen. This not only included the training of the pilots but also air and ground support.

George Hardy was a member of the first 940 men that graduated from the Tuskegee Airmen training. Of the 940, there were 335 that went to fight in WWII overseas, he was the youngest. He flew 21 combat missions over Germany in 1945. Most of his missions flying the P-51D Mustang were as bomber escort of B-17 and B-24 heavy bombers to their targets. Not only did George fly during WWII but also in the Korean and Vietnam wars.

Hardy was recalled to military service in 1948 and sent to Keesler Air Force Base in Mississippi. He was sent to Guam with the 19th Bomb Group. He then was sent to Kadena Air Base, Okinawa: he flew a B-29 and piloted 45 combat missions over Korea.[8] One senior officer, then-Lt Col Fred W. Miller, disliked Hardy because of his race and he removed him from a B-29 mission. That B-29 was shot down in North Korean airspace.

HIGHLIGHTING BLACK HISTORY

Hardy flew 70 missions piloting an AC-119 gunship in the Vietnam War. He flew missions at night using infrared to destroy North Vietnamese supply routes and convoys in Laos and Cambodia.

After retiring from the military at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, he worked in project management for 18 years for GTE Corporation.[16] Hardy spent much of his retirement traveling throughout the country telling the story of the Tuskegee Airmen and their fight against racial prejudice. He also volunteered at his local church and food pantry.

By early 2025, Hardy, 1949 Top Gun winner James H. Harvey, and Eugene J. Richardson were the last three surviving single-engine fighter pilots who graduated from Tuskegee AAF. A P-51D serial number 44-72035 was restored in England to the markings of "Tall in the Saddle", the aircraft that Hardy flew in combat. It still flies at airshows there.

With the death of Harry T. Stewart Jr. on February 2, 2025, at the age of 100, Hardy became the last surviving member of the original Tuskegee Airmen who flew combat missions overseas as a single engine fighter pilot during World War II. He flew with the 99th Fighter Squadron of the "Red Tails" of the 332nd Fighter Group based at Ramitelli AB, Italy; James H. Harvey, age 102, and Eugene J. Richardson, age 100, are also alive as of October 2025, but they did not serve in combat during World War II.

Hardy turned 100 on June 8, 2025. He later lived in Sarasota, Florida, and died there on September 24, 2025, at the age of 100.





A Thanksgiving Prayer: Giving God Thanks

Heavenly Father,

We come before You today with hearts full of gratitude.

You are the giver of every good and perfect gift,

we pause to remember that everything we have comes from You.

Thank You for Your unconditional, agape love that never fails,

for the breath in our lungs, the food before us,

and the people who fill our lives.

In times of trial, You alone have been our refuge, our rock, and our strength.

Lord, teach us to see Your blessings in every season—

to be thankful not only for what we receive, but to be thankful for who You are.

As we gather this Thanksgiving, may our hearts overflow with praise.

Let gratitude rise above worry, and let our lives reflect Your goodness every day.

*In Jesus' name we pray,
Amen.*

NOVEMBER 2025

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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

SIGNS OF THE SEASON

Every day is a Day of Thanksgiving

WRITTEN BY SIS. CHRISTINE SMITH



Although Thanksgiving is the seasonal gathering of family and friends to fellowship and feast, as Christians, let us remember that every day is a day of thanksgiving!

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 *“¹⁶Rejoice always, ¹⁷pray without ceasing, ¹⁸in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.”* (NASB)

Thanksgiving is an expression of gratitude to God for all He has done. It is a time to pause and remember that every good and perfect gift comes from God.

Psalms 107:1 *“Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, For His mercy is everlasting.”* (NASB)

When we give God thanks, we shift our focus from what we don't have to who He is – faithful, merciful, and generous. Gratitude reminds us that God's hand is at work in every season, even the difficult ones.



This Thanksgiving, let us thank God for these gifts:

- **His Son** – **John 3:16** *“¹⁶For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life.”* (NASB)
- **His Grace** – **2 Corinthians 12:9** *“⁹And He has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.” Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.”* (NASB)
- **Hope** – **Jeremiah 29:11** *“¹¹For I know the plans that I have for you,” declares the Lord, ‘plans for prosperity and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.’”* (NASB)

Remember Our Veterans

November 11, 2025 | Veteran's Day

Veterans Day is a time for us to pay our respects to those who have served. For one day, we stand united in respect for you, our veterans. This holiday started as a day to reflect upon the heroism of those who died in our country's service and was originally called Armistice Day. It fell on November 11 because that is the anniversary of the signing of the Armistice that ended World War I. However, in 1954, the holiday was changed to "Veterans Day" to account for all veterans in all wars.

When first celebrated as Armistice Day, the day marked the end of World War I, formally recognized on the "11th hour, of the 11th day, of the 11th month" in 1918. Today we continue to celebrate the day as Veterans Day, still recognizing the original tie with November 11. That means Veterans Day is on the same day every year -- November 11 -- regardless of on which day of the week it falls. When the date falls on a Saturday or Sunday, government officials or businesses may recognize it on both the official day and the following Monday.

Veterans, we thank God for both the lives He claimed, and the lives spared during the wars fought for the honor of this country. The church thanks you for your courageous service. Your bravery and your legacy will not be forgotten.

Happy Veteran's Day



NOVEMBER IS

Diabetes Awareness Month

Here are a few tips to remember when managing prediabetes and diabetes:

- Get active!
- Eat a balanced diet with foods from all the food groups.
- Seek support from a healthcare professional and loved ones.
- Take small steps. You don't have to change everything at once!

UPCOMING EVENTS

VOTE! VOTE! VOTE!

**EARLY VOTING IS OCT 14TH - OCT 31ST
ELECTION DAY IS NOV 4TH**

**MAKE A PLAN TO VOTE! IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START,
CHECK OUT THE VOTING RESOURCE GUIDE ON THE WEBSITE!**

UPCOMING EVENTS

The Mothers Ministry

Every Sunday Morning at 8:30

Prayer, Devotion
& Biblical
Inspiration



Join via Zoom - Visit:
fbcduluth.org & select
“Worship - Word, Prayer
and Devotion” - Join Live

Everyone is welcome and invited to join!
Servant Leaders Mtr. Gerald Baker & Mtr. Dorothy Blagmon

★ THE DRAMA MINISTRY IS STILL
LOOKING FOR PARTICIPANTS OF
ALL AGES TO JOIN US FOR THE
CHRISTMAS PROGRAM!

REHEARSAL WILL START ON SATURDAY
NOVEMBER 8 AT 2:30
IN THE FLC

WE CAN'T WAIT TO SEE YOU THERE!

CONTACT: SIS. VICTORIA JONES 662.315.1107



UPCOMING EVENTS



KEYBO BUILDING BRIDGES

THANKSGIVING

Food Giveaway

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 11AM - 4PM

GWINNETT COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS
2405 SUGARLOAF PARKWAY LAWRENCEVILLE, GA 30045



UPCOMING EVENTS

KINDRED CONNECTIONS

Event



Join the 1912 Forsyth County Descendants Foundation for our first official gathering, "Giving Thanks As We Gather," on November 16th at the historic Hooper Renwick Library in Lawrenceville. Come connect, celebrate community, and learn how we're preserving heritage and building a stronger future—together.



Sunday, 16 Nov.
1.30-3.00 Pm



Hooper Renwick
Historical Library

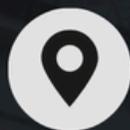


Save the
Date

LIGHT REFRESHMENTS

FAMILY

CONNECTION



56 Neal Blvd.
Lawrenceville, GA
30046

Visit Us on Facebook
1912 Forsyth County Descendants
Foundation



*"Let us continue to praise God with gratitude, joy,
and thanksgiving..."*

Thanks for reading

Friendship's Voice

Stay tuned for next month's Newsletter!

The deadline for December Newsletter articles is Friday, November 21st



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Vice President

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Hyacinth Chung

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Improvements to FBC's website are ongoing. Feedback can be provided to the

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A Purpose-Driven Church

Friendly through Fellowship
 Developed through Discipleship
 Enlarged through Evangelism
 Sharing and Caring through Servanthood
 Stronger through God's Word and True Worship

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Rev. Eugene Graves

Min. Shurron Green

Rev. Stanley Jackson

Rev. Artis Johnson

Min. Larry Jones

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Min. Monique Stroman

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