



A Congregation of ECO  
A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians

# Toccoa Presbyterian Church

## A Church With a Great Commission

Our church exists to make disciples of Jesus Christ through a winsome display of gospel grace in both word and deed. This is the Great Commission Jesus Christ has given us. It is not an option. As is often observed, “It isn’t the Great Suggestion but the Great Commission!” It is the missionary mandate of our Lord! The more we fulfill it, the more we will flourish as a church, and the more glory God will receive as the gospel of the riches of his glorious grace transforms lives.

A church cannot be involved in Great Commission work without being concerned about the healing of broken lives. Did not our Savior make this evident though his compassionate works of healing while he was here? We have seen his heart displayed throughout our study of Mark. The gospel not only redeems us from sin, but it reconciles and restores our relationships with God, with one another, with the creation around us, and even with ourselves. It is a healing gospel – the only source for the total

healing for this world. There are broken people all around us - their lives ravaged by their own poor choices and also because of the injuries done to them by others. But the ultimate cause, we know, is that they are caught in the web of darkness and ignorance in separation from God; cut off from the grace and truth that he alone brings. How are we going to come to know these people? How are they going to come to trust us? How will they become desirous to hear what we  
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## From the Stewardship Ministry

It is the season that preparations are made for the upcoming year. Unlike previous years, we will not have a Stewardship Campaign for 2020 and you will *not* receive pledge

cards to record your plans for giving for the coming year. Instead, we ask that you take time to thank God for his provisions in the past and prayer-

fully seek His direction on how to be a faithful steward in the coming year.

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### Special points of interest:

- *Daylight Savings time ends Sunday, November 3, 2019.*
- *Thanksgiving Day is Thursday, November 28th.*
- *Information for the combined December 2019 and January 2020 is due by Monday, November 18.*
- *We're collecting toys for Toys for Tots & Shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child.*



## News from the Worship Ministry

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The Mercy Ministry, along with Larry Murley of the Toccoa-Stephens County Airport will host a Men's Breakfast at the new administration building of the airport on Saturday, November 2nd from 8:00 a.m. until 9:30 a.m. This special appreciation event will serve as a thank you to all the men of our church who help make Toccoa Presbyterian Church the special place it is. Please RSVP to the church office, 706-886-3680 or [tpcsecretary@windstream.net](mailto:tpcsecretary@windstream.net), by 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, October 30th.

The Worship Ministry is super excited about this coming Christmas season. Plans are unfolding for services beginning with our Upon A Midnight Clear service on December 4 at 7 pm. For most people, Christmas is a time of great joy! For many others, it's a time of deep loneliness due to sickness, death of a spouse or a loved one or some other deep loss or grief.

We will be giving you small postcards for you to hand out to friends, neighbors, and loved ones to invite them to join us for a night of worship.

After the service, we'll have a desert fellowship instead of a dinner before

the service. So, please be aware of this change, and mark your calendars for our Upon a Midnight Clear service on December 4, at 7 pm. (The Presbyterian Women will be in charge of the desert fellowship.)

Then on December 24, we have our Christmas Eve service—more to come on this as we get closer to the date. And of course, we'll celebrate the birth of our Savior during our traditional Christmas service. We hope you will make plans to attend and also to bring your family, friends, neighbors, and loved ones to Toccoa Presbyterian Church during this amazing season of faith and eternal love.

## Decorating the Church for Advent

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In preparation for the upcoming Advent Season, the Property Ministry will set up the Chrismon Tree and assist the Presbyterian Women in decorating the church immediately following the service on November 24<sup>th</sup>. We invite the congregation to help us as we prepare our church for the advent season.

There will be a light lunch served during fellowship time to all those assisting with the decorating. Lunch will be available so that you can choose a time to eat, whether it be before you help decorate, when you take a break from decorating or after you've finish decorating.

## Prayer Night

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There will be no Prayer Night for November and December since it falls on a holiday or just after a holiday. We are looking forward to you joining us when Prayer Night resumes on January 23<sup>rd</sup> at 6:00 p.m..

## Property Ministry

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### Thank You

The Property Ministry would like to thank the men and women that helped make our Church Workday a success!

### November Fellowship Dinner

The Property Ministry will host a church-wide Thanksgiving Dinner on November 13th at 6:00 p.m. The ministry will provide turkey, dressing, gravy and beverages; please compliment this meal with your special casseroles and deserts.

Our own Joel Harlow will tell us about his amazing experiences working with the Seed Company, a subsidiary of Wycliffe Bible Translators, translating Bibles into over 1500 languages.

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have to share? Works of mercy and charity prepare the heart for the gospel. They are the living proof that Jesus is in this world and that he is in our church. They are the context in which a person gradually grows to trust us, to see Jesus in us, eventually becoming eager to know the message that has transformed our lives. Works of mercy are not the gospel; they cannot replace the message of God's gracious forgiveness and renewal in Jesus. But they are the preparatory and necessary accompaniment to it. They are like a welcoming doorway into a crowded house that is filled with love.

I'd like to share a few avenues of healing mercy that we are just beginning to develop as a church; pathways that you can walk in joyful obedience to our Lord.

## PATHWAY 1: WORKS OF MERCY

Over the past 18 months, our Mercy Ministry has been quietly studying the principles and practice of Christian mercy under the leadership of first, Gary Lance, and now, Barry Hodges. They have been working out systems for ministering to needy persons in our region and been very active in caring for dozens of people outside of our church. Your financial gifts to the church have been of great assistance to many lives.

Recently, the Mercy Ministry brought together area churches to form a collaborative network of churches to care for our needy friends with the goal of seeing such individuals and families brought to a place of wholeness and flourishing in Christ. This initiative is only

in its first stages, but the potential of uniting resources with other churches of similar vision is tremendous. There is presently no mechanism in Stephens County for churches to work together in a manner that will fundamentally change the culture of our region. Please be praying for this new project, that all who gather might wisely discern and faithfully follow our Lord's leading. If you sense the Holy Spirit's calling to commit more of your time and talent to this work, please contact Barry Hodges or a member of the Mercy Ministry.

## PATHWAY 2: MISSIONAL COMMUNITIES

If works of mercy are the welcoming doorway that begin to establish trusting relationships, it is vital that the next step provide a context where the needy person can become immersed in the love of Spirit-filled community in Christ; where they can experience the tangible, incarnated realities of God's love and grace. Our culture has drifted so far from the institutional church. Many are skeptical and distrusting. Most would be unable to relate to what we are about on Sunday morning. If we are going to be true to Christ's call, we need to provide contexts where people can experience the new people of God outside of our usual church gatherings. Jesus is merely glimpsed through individual acts of Christian charity. But he comes into full view in the midst of a charitable community, where people are living out Christ's truth and love with open and sincere hearts.

We need to move people from the doorway into such a living room filled with joy. We need fellowships that are gathering outside of the present church structures and

facility. We need to bring our community to the people, not require them to come to us. We need what have been called Missional Communities, full of courageous people who are willing to step out of traditional comfort zones for the sake of Christ and the gospel. These gatherings will be in homes or other non-church settings. They will invite "outsiders" into authentic, welcoming, non-judgmental, healing relationships, where the gospel can be presented, discussed, and celebrated.

Over the next four to six months, we will be piloting our church's first Missional Community group. This originating community will be comprised of about a dozen newer people in our church. The hope is to see several Missional Community groups established in 2020. The groups will last for a set period, regularly rotating membership so as to prevent them becoming stale, ingrown, or unintentionally exclusive. But they will need to last long enough for community dynamics to develop and outsiders to be welcomed in.

Another idea we are developing is an outreach to men that will also meet outside of the church with the hopes of encouraging not only our own men, but also welcoming men from our area who might not be interested in coming to a worship service. More about that soon

If you are interested in being a part of this sort of outreach, please speak with me.

## PATHWAY 3: BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

On December 4 our church will

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present to our community its second Blue Christmas Service which we call, "Upon a Midnight Clear." It is an alternative service to the artificial and often forced jollity of the season. It says that it is alright to mourn at Christmastide.

The service will be at 7 PM and will be followed by a desert fellowship in which we will play host and welcome those who have come. This is a major outreach for our church – a way to directly minister into the pain and heartache of our region. It isn't only for consciously hurting people. We all bear wounds. We all need healing. In our struggle with darkness and grief, Christ comes to give us light and hope. We want to cast a big net and invite everyone and anyone who will come.

It will be presented with the non-Christian especially in mind. It is an expression of our "Yes!" to Christ's Great Commission. It will only be well attended if each of us commits to inviting others. Here is a very simple and practical thing you can do. Please begin to pray and ask the Holy Spirit to bring to your awareness individuals you might invite. You too, brothers! Let's not leave it just to the women! Our healing Savior will go before us and do wonderful things, if we will only believe in his desire to use his powerful Word and Spirit, and our own struggling, yet loving hearts, to bring his healing grace and comfort.

We want to ask each person in the congregation to invite two or three people to attend this service. A few weeks prior to the service, we will

be providing you several cards with details about the service that you can easily use to invite a person.

We also will need people to assist in distributing advertising, designing and setting up the sanctuary, reading scripture during the service,

and helping with the desert fellowship following the service. If you would like to participate in some way, please speak with Angie Ramage or Jenny Bell, our co-directors.

## Poinsettias



### 2019 POINSETTIA ORDER FORM

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

- Yes, I wish to have a Poinsettia to take home.
- No, I will not take a Poinsettia.

**Please observe November 10, 2019 as the deadline for placing orders.**

In Honor of	In Memory of	Please Print FLOWERS ARE IN HONOR/MEMORY OF:
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**Please pay as your place your order.**

\_\_\_\_ Quantity at \$10 each = \_\_\_\_ Total Due

*All proceeds will benefit the Presbyterian Women.*