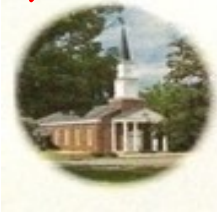


November 2020

editor Daisy Wilson

Spreading the Good News



First Presbyterian Church
Douglas, GA.



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Climbing a Mountain



Many people have a "bucket list" of significant things they want to do before they die, but I've never made one or even given it much thought.

At the same time, I'm intrigued by others' bucket-list adventures. A few years ago one man mentioned he was planning to climb Mount Kilimanjaro, which sounded so magnificently exotic. I searched online and was quickly hooked by the imposing mountain in northeast Africa. Kilimanjaro looks softer somehow and more inviting than the others that make up the Seven Summits, which are the seven highest mountains in each of the seven continents.

"Kili" as it's often called, doesn't require advanced mountaineering skills or special climbing equipment. Some websites term it a "very long and often challenging upward hike," but that description doesn't do justice to the rigors required to reach the summit. The 19,341-foot altitude, considered extreme in mountaineering, stymies many before they get to the top, and sheer exhaustion from the 12-14-hour summit attempt keeps others from making the last push to reach Uhuru Peak.

My online search led me to videos that showed breathtaking scenery, especially of the sunrise on the summit. They also spoke frankly about the difficulties of the climb and what is required to reach the top successfully.

The more I heard, read and watched, the more I realized that the lessons of Kilimanjaro applied to my own life. I've never climbed a high physical mountain like Kilimanjaro, and at this stage in life, I doubt I ever will. But I've climbed my share of emotional, relational, and spiritual ones, and I expect many of the same strategies apply.

Kili climbers are told they must be prepared to hike long hours with a backpack over demanding terrain for multiple days in a row. That level of fitness takes intentional cultivation to increase cardiovascular capacity and physical stamina. Strength training, especially for the legs and core, is also important. If you have the luxury of knowing a mountain is in your future, train in advance.

Here's a big hint for life: Trust me, a mountain always rises in your future; you just may not know it's ahead. Prepare in times of strength for times of weakness. Consistently practice rigorous self-care. Cultivate physical and emotional grit to get you through the exhausting times when it feels like you can't go on.

Even for the physically fit, high altitude climbing is tricky. No matter how well you've trained or how prepared you are, anyone can still succumb to altitude sickness. Sometimes the "tough" ones are more susceptible, because they push too fast and don't allow enough time to acclimatize to the altitude. If you get sick from lack of oxygen, the only cure is to go back down to where the air is...better.

No one is immune from tough life challenges, and many of those involve variables no one can control. There is no shame in taking backward steps until you can breathe again. If the mountain's airless height is too much for now,

it's wise to find a lower spot where you can regroup. Be gentle with yourself. You'll start back upward when you're ready.

Climbing Kilimanjaro, as well as most kinds of extreme adventures, depends on adjunct supporters. A guide and a porter accompany Kili trekkers. Meals are prepared and camp is ready at the end of each long day. It takes help to succeed at hard things. No one successfully navigates life alone. You need your community.

The material about Kilimanjaro consistently emphasizes that a slow pace is key to reaching the summit. Guides regularly urge, "Polé, polé!" which means "Slowly!" in Swahili. Conserving energy and oxygen is crucial. At higher altitudes, trekkers take one or two steps and stop for air. The trick for the steep ascents is to keep your momentum moving forward, even if it's at a snail's pace. The advice is to lean into the mountain, not fight it, and to stay upright.

Some prefer to rush over the mountains of life. They push to conquer the challenges quickly and are impatient with slow progress. A slow, steady "Polé, polé!" isn't their typical mindset. They are a fighter at heart, which makes it harder to surrender to life's process. And finally after reaching the mountain's summit, many trekkers discover that coming down is just as hard as going up, maybe harder. It's easy to get over-confident and not pay enough attention to the potential pitfalls on the way down.

I don't know what our friend learned on Mount Kilimanjaro, but the mountains I climb are always faithful to teach me something if I'm willing to learn. God is with me on the mountain in a way I don't experience in other places of life. And God invites me to "Polé, polé!" and enjoy the view along the way.

"Alone we can do
so little; together
we can do so
much."

Helen Keller

**Lots of help is needed to close out 2020
and begin anew for 2021!!!**

Please check to see what you can do to help out!. And
notify the contact person listed below by November 15th.

- ♦ If you would be willing to serve on the session, please contact Kim Clayton
- ♦ If you would like to serve as a trustee, please contact Kim Clayton
- ♦ If you will be available to help with the hanging of the greens, please contact Lisa Tierney
- ♦ If you will be available to stand in the live nativity on Christmas Eve, please contact JoAnn
- ♦ If you will be available to help with the assembling of the Nativity stall,
please contact JoAnn



Thornwell

The pandemic is forcing all of us into a life of solitude. As adults, we can learn to cope, but for children, it is much more difficult. For the past several years, we have all worked together to try and bring the spirit of **Christmas** to the children at Thornwell. We have bought items, food, and games for the children. This year, we do not want to forget them. With that in mind, we will be taking up a special collection for the children of Thornwell on **Sunday, December 6**. We really want to see these children have a Merry **Christmas** and your donation can assure that to happen. Please consider giving as much as you can. If you can't be at church, please mail your donation to us at FPC, PO Box 1210, Douglas, GA 31534, and make sure that you note this a donation for Thornwell on your check.

Thank you in advance for thinking of them.

Lisa



Your generosity makes it possible for kids from hard places to find joy—in the big and the small things.



Friends



Brother & Sister back together

HeHo November.

Happy
Birthday

Vicki Lewis... Nov 02

Curt Scarce... Nov 02

Clay Clark...Nov 05

Tom Dunlap.. Nov 05

Jim Dedmond...Nov 07

Izzie Bella Reed...Nov 08

Keegan Dedmond... Nov 09

Virginia Carson...Nov 10

Walter Jardine...Nov 16

Jackson Martin... Nov 16

Will McLean...Nov 28

Matt Hennesy...Nov 30

Jennifer Reed...Nov 30



A new Fall arrangement has been donated by JoAnn for the sanctuary. She had it designed by a local florist in an urn that has an engraving on the side that reads

*" In loving memory of King Stephenson by the
Green Thumb Garden Club 1984"*

(Mary Charles's Mother)

Thanks JoAnn

Thanks from ERIC

In October of 2018, Rev Tom Dunlap challenged the members of the church to join with him in reading assigned bible scripture each day for 2 years. I am happy to announce that 5 of our members have completed the challenge.

Nedra Mathis: Grace & Buddy James &

Ben & Daisy Wilson

I am truly blessed to be part of this family. I wanted to thank each of you for their prayers and all the support my family and I have been receiving. It is such a blessings!!! Please thank each of you on my behalf. I love y'all.

Eric

Stewardship

Dear Family and Friends of First Presbyterian Church,

The 2021 Stewardship season is upon us. This means as stewards we can gratefully and gladly return to God a portion of what has been given to us with abundance. The Theme for the 2021 Stewardship Campaign is:

"God has given us two hands, one to receive with and the other to give with."

The message of stewardship is not always an easy one to follow in our culture. Our society celebrates individual possessions. However, to accept the invitation of Jesus

"COME FOLLOW ME" means to accept the invitation that we make God a priority.

Stewardship is our response to God's Grace and Goodness.

"God is able to do more than we can ask or imagine." Ephesians 3:20

As you review the upcoming year of stewardship to your Lord and church please prayerfully consider how you might increase your support. The church budget is based upon pledges. Your pledge means support to the church's activities, missions and community outreach as well as covering our church expenses and staff.

The amount of your planned, thoughtful gift of 2021 is needed to complete our budget.

Please complete the enclosed pledge card for dedication **Sunday on November 15th** or mail to the church. If you have not pledged before, now would be the time to begin.

EACH ONE'S PLEDGE IS IMPORTANT!

Thank you for being a part of the family we love at First Presbyterian Church and for your faith as we move forward.

Thanks for being a part of our church family,

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Ben

Ben Wilson, Chairman

Stewardship and Finance Committee



**Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his love endures forever." 1 Chronicles 16:34**