

## Writing Your Very Own Devotional



by  
Pastor Paul A. Coats

**W**riting is easy. All you do is stare at a blank sheet of paper until drops of blood form on your forehead.

Gene Fowler

Have you ever thought of writing your own devotional? Of course, you say. Right after I finishing singing *America the Beautiful* on national TV, stark naked. Writing for an audience is something most people avoid like soured milk. But occasionally we are called upon to do it; and it need not be as painful or distasteful as one might imagine.

Cooks have known for years that what is repulsive at first whiff—like soured milk—is a key ingredient to some very delicious recipes. In the same way, sharing your thoughts in writing can be a delightful treat for others. What follows are some thoughts on how to turn your ideas and experiences into words that touch the hearts of others through writing a devotional.

**1. SELECT YOUR FAVORITE RECIPE**—Recipes begin with a list of ingredients. Devotions begin with a Bible passage. For those contributing to the Edgewood Presbyterian Advent devotional booklet, the list of possible ingredients is provided. Simply select one of the available Bible passages listed in this Newsletter or that are posted in the Narthex or the hall of the Education Center. Think of your passage as your personal kitchen cabinet. You don't need to use everything you find there. If only one or two verses interest you, pull them out and use them for your recipe.

**2. MIX UP THE INGREDIENTS**—The most overlooked ingredient of every recipe is *the Cook's Personal Touch*, but it is the most important. Give the same set of ingredients and the same directions for cooking them and no two cooks will produce the same results. And that is the beauty of it. My wife and mother-in-law make many of the same cookies using the same recipes, but their cookies—while similar—are quite distinct. Yet, I love them both. Different eyes with different life experiences bring new and delicious insight into God's Word.

You may have a special memory from your life experience that is sparked by one of the Advent passages. Remember, it is the things unique to you that give a special memorable flavor to the dish you cook up. It might be a time when you felt especially close to God, a time when your faith helped you through a difficult time, someone who touched your heart at a critical moment, or simply an insight from your personal reflection. It doesn't matter what connection you make. Just don't forget the personal touch.

**3. STICK IT IN THE OVEN**—Sometimes we cook for the fun of it, but cooking (and writing) have little purpose without an audience. And nothing brings greater joy than knowing someone enjoyed what you made. So, write with this simple thought in mind: *Share what you care about*. I find it helpful to have particular people and situations in mind when I write. Ask yourself, what would these words sound like to someone in a nursing home, someone who is lonely, someone who is sick or having a hard time at work, or someone who has become less active in their faith. Filet mignon may be wonderful, but it might be lost on guests who are vegetarians. And it is usually inadvisable to experiment on guests. So, stick with what you know.

Isaiah 3:8 contains the phrase: *"Judah is falling."* So write about a time when you fell and someone helped you up. Isaiah 7:13 reads: *"Is it not enough to try the patience of men? Will you try the patience of my God also?"* That might be enough for you to write about a time you felt God was slow in answering your prayers and about how things eventually turned out. And Luke 1:79 contains the words: *"to shine on those living in darkness."* I bet you already have an idea of what your personal touch could do with that. Don't sweat blood over this little project. Have fun writing. And don't forget to finish up with a prayer.

Making Disciples  
Every Person Counts where

**OCTOBER VOLUNTEERS FOR:**

Kitchen	Fred Holt
Sanctuary	Claudia Wells
Ushers	Bob Wells & Walter Nesbitt (CC); Karen Wetherell; Theresa Kelly; Shirley Williams; Sheryl Wright
Visitor Greeter	Noelia Knapp

**SERVING EPC WEEK OF OCTOBER 30**

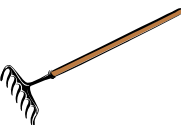
Children's Church	Cheryl Betts; F. & K. Reynolds
Counters	Susan Gilbert; Pete Sanders-Nesbitt
Elder Prayer Partner	Liz Allison
Greeters	Walter Nesbitt; Ruthel VanAmburg
Greeting Cards	Martha Jane Roark
Lay Reader	Mac Johnson
Nursery	Serena Mills
Security	Barry Cosby
Sound	Nick McNair

**EVANGELISM****Last Sunday's Attendance at EPC**

Worship: 94    Sunday School: 34  
 Visitors at EPC: In town: 12    Out of town: 3

**EPC's Building and Grounds Team needs YOU!**

We need your assistance here on Saturday, November 5, from 8:00 am until noon, for some repairs and upkeep. Please see Larry Mills or Chris Posey if you can help.

**UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES****Sunday, October 30**

9:30 am	Sunday School
10:30 am	Fellowship Time
11:00 am	Worship
	Prayer in Parlor with elders
	Lunch after Church—Mongo's, Veterans Parkway

**Monday, October 31**

No Life Group Mtg. at Coats' home

**Tuesday, November 1**

10:00 am	Psalms Bible Study
7:00 pm	Bridge Club
7:00 pm	Boy Scouts

**Wednesday, November 2**

10:00 am	Crafty Crew in Education Center, Room 4
5:15 pm	Joyful Ringers
6:00 pm	Adult Bell Choir
6:00 pm	Tai Chi Class in Fellowship Hall, stage area
7:00 pm	Chancel Choir Rehearsal

**Thursday, November 3**

10:30 am	Lively Ones Meeting—lunch at Caffe Amici
6:00 pm	Sundowners Toastmasters Meeting

**Friday, November 4**

6:00 pm	Kids Night In/Parents Night Out
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**Saturday, November 5**

8:00 am	Grounds-Upkeep-Repairs at EPC until noon
5:00 pm	Worship on the River—Gilberts' home

*Please note that the Church Office is closed each Friday.*

**STEWARDSHIP SEASON**

Our Stewardship Season series in the Minute for Mission part of Sunday worship continued this week with a presentation by our Building and Grounds Team which is led by elders Larry Mills and Chris Posey. They shared the many facets of their mission to keep our church facility running smoothly. This team handles our utilities—including heating and air conditioning. They manage the unlocking and locking of the facility for worship and other activities as well as managing the janitorial upkeep. Throughout the year there are periodic workdays—the next one is November 5 at 8 a.m. Please contact Larry if you can help. Installing storm windows and playground repairs are among the projects planned.

A large part of our budget goes to maintaining our facility. Periodic repairs and replacement of faulty equipment are essential. We also have the usual ongoing expenses of electricity, gas, garbage pickup, phone service, custodial care of the buildings, and the maintenance of our grounds.

Part of the Opportunity List that you were mailed this past Monday is devoted to this Team and its mission. Please carefully consider how you can help in these endeavors—both financially and with your time.

**FINANCIAL REPORT FOR EDGEWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

	September, 2011	Year to Date	Budget to Date
Receipts	\$24,891.67	\$218,320.65	\$230,778.00
Disbursements	(23,915.48)	(248,560.39)	(231,984.00)
Differences	(976.19)	(30,239.74)	(1,206.00)

We had a slight improvement over last month but it looks like we still have a big deficit at the end of the year. Consequently, we are going to have to make some big cuts somewhere. Walker K. Williams, Treasurer

## FELLOWSHIP

**LUNCH AFTER CHURCH** on Sunday, October 30, is at Mongo's, Veterans Parkway, and you are invited to join us (Dutch treat). Please sign the notebook on the credenza in the narthex before worship for a seating count.

**LIVELY ONES PREPARING FOR SANTA!** The Lively Ones meet November 3rd, 10:30 am. Each year the Lively Ones support the Santa Express, which collects gifts for the Presbyterian Home in Quitman and Presbyterian Village in Austell. The list of needed items will be in Sunday's bulletin. (Or, call the office and request a list). Miranda Jones will give the devotional in November, and lunch will follow at Caffe' Amici. Join us; we would love to see you in our "lively" group.

## WORSHIP

### 11 WEEK SERMON SERIES

- Oct. 30 *A Praying Church*  
Psalm 5:1-3; Acts 12:1-17
- Nov. 6 *We're Not Gods*  
Exodus 20:1-3; Acts 15:1-21

### SANCTUARY FLOWERS

The flowers this Sunday are given by Joe Rhodes in celebration of Liz Allison's birthday.

### Advent Devotional Scriptures and Dates Available Still to Choose from.....

- Monday, Nov. 28 – Luke 20:1-8  
Wednesday, Nov. 30 – Luke 20: 9-18  
Friday, Dec. 2 – Luke 20:19-26  
Saturday, Dec. 3 – Isaiah 2:12-22  
Monday, Dec. 5 – Isaiah 3:8-15  
Tuesday, Dec. 6 – Luke 20:41-21:4  
Thursday, Dec. 8 – Isaiah 4:2-6  
Friday, Dec. 9 – Isaiah 5:8-12  
Sunday, Dec. 11 – Isaiah 7:1-9  
Monday, Dec. 12 – Isaiah 7:13-17  
Wednesday, Dec. 14 – Isaiah 10:20-27  
Friday, Dec. 23 – Luke 1:57-66  
Saturday, Dec. 24 – Luke 1:67-80  
Sunday, Dec. 25 – Luke 2:1-20

Are you working on your devotional? Remember 300 words or less with a short prayer due to Cheryl Betts by Sunday, **November 13th**.

Call if you want a particular date or have questions—706-575-1964.



## YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### Saturday, October 29

Trunk or Treat, 4-6 pm

#### Friday, November 4

Kids Night In/Parents Night Out, 6-8 pm

#### Sunday, November 6

MH/HS Youth go to Edgewood UMC for volleyball, 4-5:30 pm

#### Sunday, November 13

Deadline for Devotionals to Cheryl

### TRUNK OR TREAT—October 29, 4–6pm

Have you decided what you are going to dress up as for Trunk or Treat?

Have you decided how you will decorate your trunk or what candy you will buy?

It's finally here—Saturday evening. Come one, come all. Calling everyone to come have some fun!



*Letter received recently.....*

*Dear Members of the Edgewood Presbyterian Church, Inc.,  
Thank you so much for your generous donation of \$399.48 to the Tuscaloosa City Schools Disaster Relief Fund. It is with sincere gratitude that I say "Thank You" to all those who donated to our schools. The act of kindness and support that you have shown is heart warming. Many lives will be touched by your donation. Keep us in your prayers as we, and our city, make it through the recovery process.*

*Sincerely,  
Ed LaVigne, CSFO, Tuscaloosa City Schools*



Making Disciples  
where Every Person Counts

3617 Macon Road  
Columbus, GA 31907

Return Service Requested

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
PERMIT #124  
COLUMBUS, GA 31908

Trunk or Treat  
Saturday,  
October 29,  
4-6:00 pm



**HAPPY NOVEMBER**

**BIRTHDAY TO:**

Courtlyn Jowers 5



**PRAYER REQUESTS FOR CHURCH FAMILY**

Mark Blackwell	Susan Knight	Lillie Register
Rachel Flournoy	Bob & Julie Ligon	Pete Sanders-Nesbitt
Sue Hearn	Janie McClerkin	Rae Taylor
	Ann Pratcher	

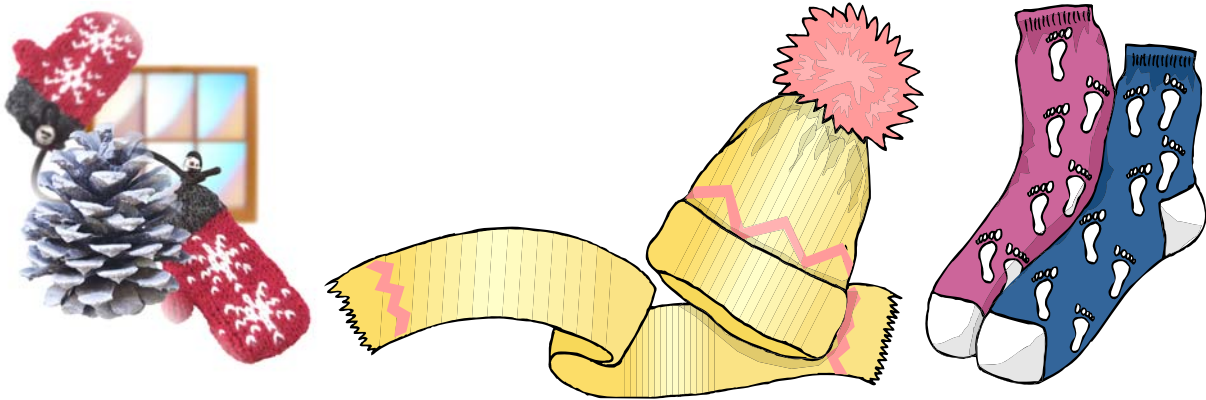
<b>Covenant Woods:</b>	Eva Lucille Roberts, PC 227
<b>Gardens at Calvary:</b>	Lee Cook, Apt. 321
<b>Magnolia Manor:</b>	Lillian McLeod, 24
<b>Morningside Asst'd Living:</b>	Bob Gedroic, Room 142;
	David Anastasia, Room 108
<b>Muscogee Manor:</b>	Lillie Register, East Wing 25B
<b>The Veranda:</b>	Bette Schroeter, Room 205

**PRAYER REQUESTS FOR FRIENDS AND RELATIVES**

Preston Wetherell (Wetherell's grandson) in pneumonia recovery	Cathy Cushman (Jed Robbins' Mom) cancer & Lyme disease
Charles Smith (Roark/Grainger relative) deployed to Afghanistan	Kay Fouts (former member)
Nita Butler (Pat Kinar's sister) surgery	Tracy Connor (friend of Joneses & Marge Welker) cancer
Don Morrow (Ligons' friend) difficult recovery after surgery	Miranda Erwin (daughter of Walter & Shirley Williams)
Tina Singleton (Ligons' friend) unknown cause of illness	Al McCullough (Pete Sanders-Nesbitt's Dad) cancer
Lacy Dixon (Mary Adams' granddaug.) pregnancy complications	Bradley Brooks (Gigi Lennon's friend's toddler) seizures
Reese Stansfield (6 mos. old baby girl with brain cancer)	Joe Jones (Marge Welker's friend)
Dorothy Cupples (Bob Ligon's sister) heart condition	Robert McCart (Frances Long's brother) throat cancer
Ron Weller (Ligons' friend) stroke rehabilitation	Bill Blakely, recovering from stroke
Jackie Jernigan (Tammy Mills' friend) widespread cancer	Bobbie Marbut (former member)
Kathy Windham (EPC Financial Secretary) seizures	Sue Poore (Janie McClerkin's sister)

## **PARENTS—GRANDPARENTS— AUNTS & UNCLES**

Would you be interested in hearing someone from Crime Prevention speak on how parents can assure safety for their children and youth on the Internet? This is something to think about as you may be considering purchasing a computer or cell phone for your child/youth for Christmas. We want to keep our young people safe and secure. If you are interested please email or call Cheryl and a program will be scheduled



### **CHILDREN & YOUTH CHRISTMAS COLLECTION**

Help us clothe children and youth in need by bringing NEW socks, gloves/mittens, hats and scarves that we can decorate Christmas Trees in Fellowship Hall. Let's see if we can fill the trees and provide warm socks, glove/mittens or hats and scarves for those less fortunate. Collections can be brought to church starting now through December 11th.

# Christmas SOC

## Serving Our Community

Whatever your family status, imagine that you have no family; no parents, no children, no siblings.

Whatever your financial status, imagine you have no savings, no income, no money.

Whatever type of home you live in, imagine you live in a nursing home or a personal care home.

Muscogee County has 14 people who are in this situation. These six men and eight women are under the guardianship of Mr. Grooms of the Division of Aging Services. We would like to make this Christmas special for these people by decorating shoe boxes and filling them with small items that would be useful and special. Mr. Grooms has also made a list of specific items each person could use. He visits each client monthly, and will be happy to deliver our gifts for us.

How can you help?

- Gather shoe boxes to fill (we need 14) (You may wrap your box if you wish)
- Bring items to place in shoe boxes to church and place in the **Christmas SOC** box in the entrance to the life center. Items needed include: socks, toiletries, snacks and other treats an elderly person could use.
- Shop for special items requested by Mr. Grooms. We have a list of each person's name and items that he/she has requested or that Mr. Grooms felt they would like. We will keep track of what is purchased to make sure we have at least one special gift for each person. (blankets, men's shirts, pajamas are the types of requested items)
- Give money to help purchase gifts for these people, and we will purchase items on the list.

We would like to have all boxes wrapped and filled by Sunday, December 4. Let's work together to make Christmas special for these Wards of the State in our area.

If you have other questions, please call Susan Gilbert of Tiffany Ingram.

Thank you.