

# Beyond the Columns

First Presbyterian Church of Danville  
197 Years of "Knowing Christ and Making Him Known"

November 2024



We have reached a time of the year where there is much debate in my home, Thanksgiving. The debate circles around where the first Thanksgiving took place. While traditionally, we have been taught that the first Thanksgiving was in the Autumn of 1621 at Plymouth, MA. There is much debate over if the Plymouth Thanksgiving was actually the first or if it was actually in Virginia. The Berkeley Hundred Plantation makes no hesitation in letting you know the first Thanksgiving took place on the plantation grounds December 4, 1619. So why is there debate in my house? Sara's ancestors arrived on the Mayflower at Plymouth (Cooke and Howland families), and my ancestors arrived to Jamestown (Argall, Bennett, Delke, Filmer, and Pace families, among others). If Plymouth was the first location, then my wife's ancestors were there. If Jamestown was the first location, then it occurred just down the James River from my ancestor's land grant (and potentially my relatives being there). Now granted, the debate is irrelevant because for our children, regardless of the location, they had ancestors attending (or living near) the first Thanksgiving. It doesn't matter who was the first to "officially" celebrate Thanksgiving (even if we all know it was the Jamestown colonists), what matters is that they gave thanks to God for carrying them through a difficult time. Scripture tells us (or reminds us) to give thanks. David writes in Psalm 107:1 "Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever." Paul writes in 1Thessalonians 5:18 "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." Over and over again we are reminded of God's goodness and to give thanks. God cares for us and meets our needs, and for that we should be thankful. Not just thankful at a certain time of the year; we should be thankful all the time. It's easy in the busyness and chaos of everyday life to forget to give thanks, to forget to be appreciative of our lives and to remember how God holds us in His hands. We need to stop and take inventory of all that we have to be thankful for. I have healthy children, a loving wife, food on the table, clothes on my back, and most important a God who cares for me. I have nothing to complain or be upset about; I should be thankful every day, not just during this season. Enjoy your Thanksgiving and look for things for which we can give thanks every day, and give thanks that God meets our needs and cares for us.

With thanksgiving to God,

*Jackson*



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## **Session Highlights**

### **October 8, 2024**

The Session at First Presbyterian Church, Danville, met for the October session meeting at 6:30 pm in the Westminster classroom on Tuesday October 8, 2024. General Presbyter and moderator of our session meeting, Rev. Carl Utley and Committee on Ministry representative, Rev. Annette Goard was present at this meeting.

#### **CLERK'S REPORT - October**

- Ashley Stanley-Robey was approved for a Church Redevelopment Grant from Presbytery for three music interns for weekly participation in ensemble rehearsals and worship services.
  
- Peaks Presbytery is having its quarterly Presbytery meeting at Raleigh Court Presbyterian Church, Roanoke on Oct. 24 from 9-3
  
- A motion was made and seconded to call a congregational meeting for November 3, 2024 immediately following worship to hear the nominating report and to elect officers for 2025.
  
- Change in Communion for December. We are doing a switch with Mercy Seat for communion Sundays. Joyce Perez will be coming from Mercy Seat to do our communion services and Jackson will be preaching at Mercy Seat on those Sundays. A motion was made to change our communion date from Dec. 1st to Dec. 8th.

#### **ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE**

- An administrative assistant was hired. This position would be in the office Monday-Thursday from 9AM-1PM. Vickie Holman will fill this position.

#### **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION/DAY SCHOOL REPORT**

- Erin and Laine, co-directors, have started a Parent Focus Group to grow the Day School.
  
- Oct. 27 is our Fall Festival with the Dayschool. Congregation is invited to attend and join in the hot dog lunch immediately following worship.

#### **STEWARDSHIP**

- Commitment Sunday will be Nov. 10, 2024.

#### **MISSIONS**

- Support the Joy Offering.
  
- Allocate money from Freddie Lamb from Missions for the 6 missionaries that we support, and also for PCUSA Disaster Relief fund for Hurricane Helene aid.

#### **NOMINATING**

- A report from the nomination committee was submitted to be approved by the congregation at the November 3rd congregational meeting.

(Continued on next page)

## Session Highlights continued

### PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Completed Property Projects

- Concrete trip hazards at Sutherlin completed
- Pilot light in oven in Overby Hall
- Elevator Contract signed for the door replacement

Carl spoke to Session about transitioning and healing that we will be experiencing in the future.

A full copy of the minutes is available to the congregation for review at any time. Contact the church office if you wish to see a copy of the session minutes for this month. Session meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 PM in the Westminster Classroom.

Next meeting: Tuesday, November 12, 2024 at 6:30 PM.

## Youth Info:



Youth Group will meet November 6, 13, and 20th

No Youth Group November 27th.

Youth Lunch Ministry is November 23rd, it is also the Thanksgiving Lunch.

Contact Jackson for details:

Jackson@fpcdanville.com or 434-792-7822 ext 3

The office will be closed Thursday November 28th in observance of Thanksgiving.



Our AED is located in the Dayschool Office. Several of our congregation members have had training recently, we are ready to use if needed!





**PASTORAL CONCERNS—**

Gail Jones, Carol Strange, Sandra Strange

**OUR VIPs**—Chuck Bolt, Alice Bradshaw, Carol Cooper, Millie Hatcher, Grace Litzenberg, Sue Miller, James Turner, Reggie Walton, Jackie Wilson, Nancy Jones, Elizabeth Walden

**CAREGIVERS**

**THOSE SERVING IN THE MILITARY**

The Concerns of those who wish to remain unnamed. Prayers for our lunch ministry guests. Our Service Personnel and First Responders. The victims of hurricane Helene and Milton. The people of Israel

Men's Bible Study and Breakfast is Saturday November 23rd at 8:00am in Westminster Room.



There will be a community Thanksgiving Service Monday November 25th, at St. Luke's United Methodist Church at 7:00 pm.





**House of Hope**, Danville’s emergency homeless shelter, is one of the local missions First Presbyterian Church supports annually. In the past two years, the House of Hope has expanded, doubling its capacity. Since 2009 – 2022, the shelter had one section and served primarily homeless men. Starting in 2023, two other sections were added. One, Norma’s Place, provides 24/7 shelter for women and women with children. The other offers larger rooms designed to handle couples and their children or single parents with larger number of children. The result: in 2023, the shelter housed 387 different individuals – 232 males, 123 females, and 32 children. The shelter serves people who are most in need – who have lost housing and need a safe place to lay their head. The House of Hope operates from a holistic Christian perspective, fulfilling its mission through a lens of love, dignity, and respect. Many of those entering the shelter feel like they have failed in life, are worried about their children, and have been treated like second-class citizens by people in the community. The shelter seeks to provide a warm, caring environment that helps alleviate the guests’ feelings as they enter the facility. Perhaps, the experience is best explained by those who live through it: “Coming to the shelter has given me hope and self-confidence when I was low in my spirit. Through the times staying there, the staff had helped me greatly by giving me direction and stability, but being a single parent in that situation made me realize where I don’t want to be again and know within myself the steps I had to take. Being at the shelter, there was rules that need to be followed and I didn’t want to but I had to sacrifice because there was a goal at the end of the road to help me and my children. Hard work, dedication to my children, and being persistent are key goals and we all have them within us. I haven’t reached all my goals, but, I’m moving towards them thanks to Norma’s Place at House of Hope. Hopefully my journey will be a testimony to other women out there on the same journey so they can make it too.”

*Submitted by Jackie R.*

*Missions Committee*



## DAY SCHOOL NEWS

We were honored to host our Day School families and teachers to our service on October 27th! We had such a great turnout and above all, the children sang two of the songs they're learning in chapel! Afterwards we all gathered together for a hotdog lunch and then the kiddos went wild in the bounce house in the courtyard! We continue to be grateful for your many years of love and support to the Day School and like I mentioned in the minute for Stewardship; please remember our Pat Bolt Scholarship fund which helps underprivileged children in our community to attend the school free of charge. Donations may be given directly to myself, Brenna or paid online. Thank you all and Happy Thanksgiving!



## A note from Music Department

### Giving Thanks for Renewed Music Internship Grant Funding

Last year I applied for and received a Church Redevelopment Grant from Presbytery of the Peaks in the amount of \$5,000 to begin a music ministry internship program for college students. We were able to hire two music ministry interns in late fall of 2023, and the program has been very successful. Our interns Kayla Stork and Tyrel Smith have worked here at First Presbyterian preparing music for rehearsals, setting up rehearsal spaces, moving and maintaining equipment, and most importantly playing and singing during worship for nearly a year. Our interns have also attended a North Carolina Chamber Orchestra concert, observed Day School music classes, performed at DACAS concerts, substituted at Danville Symphony rehearsals, and performed at a Martinsville Handbell Ensemble concert. Both Tyrel and Kayla also attended the community handbell workshop held at West Main Baptist Church on August 25th. My husband Greg and I have volunteered in the Averett University Concert Band for three years. We have had the joy of performing alongside our interns and playing under their direction for several pieces. Because of the success of this program and the dedicated work of our interns, I reapplied for the Church Redevelopment Grant last month. I am so grateful that we were approved to receive the grant again, in the amount of \$5,000, to continue funding this program through October 2025. During the upcoming year, Kayla Stork is planning to graduate from Averett in the spring of 2025 and apply to graduate programs in education. Tyrel Smith plans to remain at Averett to complete his teacher preparation and student teaching requirements next year. When our current interns complete their undergraduate studies, I plan to hire new interns and continue this program to prepare student musicians to serve in local churches and schools. We are so proud of Kayla and Tyrel for their diligent practice and hard work. They have grown immensely as musicians, conductors, and as people. We cannot wait to attend their senior recitals and graduations next year! Please join us in prayers of gratitude for the support of our Presbytery, for the success of our interns in college and in their careers, and that we will be able to continue this internship program in the future.

Happy Thanksgiving to all in our extended church family!

Christ's peace and blessings,

Ashley



2 Hampton Wilkins

8 Alex Walthall

11 Elliot Stowe

12 Jim Pritchett

Kent Shelton

13 Becky Meadema

Joyce Perez

14 Joan Reynolds

17 Julia Gregson

20 Ruth Meadors

25 Lisa Argyrakis

26 Wayne Womble

27 Beth Brown

### **ANNIVERSARIES**

28 Carolyn & Fred Baker

Let us know if we've missed  
your special day!

## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Founded in 1826, we were the first organized congregation in Danville. Our sanctuary and offices are located at 937 Main St, next door to the Sutherlin Mansion and Museum and a few blocks of west downtown. You can reach us at (434) 792-7822 or [admin@fpcdanville.com](mailto:admin@fpcdanville.com) Office hours are Monday–Thursday 9 am—1 pm

Greetings First Presbyterian Church,

Last year Mercy Seat participated in the Samaritan's Purse shoebox ministry. We packed 42 boxes and our youth had a blast providing for those less fortunate. We will participate one again this year and wanted to invite First to join us!! You can either shop and bring items to First or make a monetary donation and we will do the shopping. The list of suggested items is at the office.

Mercy Seat will pick up any donated items on Monday November 11th.

Mercy Seat will have a shoebox packing party after church on November 17 and you are invited to join us. We will enjoy drinks and snacks while the kids pack the boxes.

Thanks

Richard Bagby



## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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