

Beyond the Columns

Random thoughts from Jackson

First Presbyterian Church
August 2025

As we move into August, life around the church building begins to pick back up, we step into a new beginning from the break of the summer. Bible Study groups will resume, Youth Group will begin again, Sunday School for our young people will start back; vacations have ended, and folks are getting back into the normal rhythms of life. As we step into the warmth of August, the summer sun reminds us of the vibrant life all around us. This month, I invite you to reflect on the theme of new beginnings and the transformative power of Jesus Christ, who brings us new life.

The Scriptures tell us in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" This promise is a cornerstone of our faith. No matter where we've been or what we've faced, Jesus offers us a fresh start—a chance to shed the burdens of the past and embrace a life filled with hope, purpose, and grace.

August often feels like a season of transition. For some, it's the excitement of a new school year or the anticipation of cooler days ahead. For others, it may be a time to reset personal goals or mend relationships. Whatever your journey, know that Christ walks with you, offering renewal at every step. His love is the foundation for every new beginning, guiding us to live with courage and compassion.

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This August let's commit to embracing the new life Jesus offers. As we move forward, may we hold fast to the truth that in Jesus, every day is an opportunity for a fresh start. Let's encourage one another to live boldly in His love, trusting that He is making all things new. With blessings for a hope-filled August,

Jackson

Thursday Bible Study will resume on August 14th at 10:30am in the Westminster Room. We will begin with a study in the Book of Hebrews. Hope to see you there.



For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.



August – Month of Prayer & Support for Children, Youth, & Young Adults

During the month of August, the Presbyterian Church celebrates, prays for, and supports children, youth, young adults, and students. Each Sunday during the month of August has a focus on supporting young people in the church and our community. On Sunday, August 3rd, we will celebrate College and Young Adult Sunday as well as Youth in the Church and World (August 10th). Please join us as we celebrate our recent high school and college graduates and pray together for all our youth and student members.

The third Sunday of August is designated as Young Adult Volunteers' (YAV) Commissioning. YAVs work as volunteer missionaries across the United States and throughout the world. Some of their site locations include Colombia; Scotland; Peru; the Philippines; Sonora, Mexico; South Korea; Chinook, Montana; New Orleans; New York City; and Tucson, Arizona. When I visited New York in March, Presbyterian Women were supported by a YAV named Bella who was assigned to the Presbytery of New York City.

On August 20th, Presbyterians are called to pray for students, teachers, and employees of our local public schools. Below is a prayer from the study *Loving Our Neighbors* (2010):

A Prayer for Loving Our Neighbors Who Are Children

Creator God, you have entrusted to us the earth and all that is in it and have called us to a wise stewardship of Your good creation. Remind us of our calling to be good stewards of children—all children. Clear our minds of the pervasive rhetoric that would have us view our children as cogs in the wheel of commerce or as products to be turned out, rather than as Your precious and good gifts. Stir us from the apathy that keeps us from reframing the conversation about education to one that names our young people as Your children, created in Your image to serve You in joy. Amen.

The last Sunday of August is Presbyterian Higher Education Day. Let's pause to pray for all students who have just arrived on campus at a Presbyterian college or university, all faculty and staff, and all their families. Let's pray for a successful academic year, for spiritual renewal, and for the discipleship of each person on every Presbyterian campus.

Chancel Choir and Handbell Choir

During August and September, our choirs will resume their weekly practice schedules. All are welcome to join us – no audition or experience is required. We learn and prepare together each week. These are the expected start dates for rehearsal.

Chancel Choir – Thursdays from 4:30-5:30pm, beginning August 7th

Handbell Choir – Tuesdays from 5:00-6:00pm, beginning September 2nd

If you are interested in singing or playing handbells in the community choir, please send me a message and I can add you to the contact lists. DACAS will begin fall rehearsals on August 18th (Mondays, 7-8:30pm), and DACAS Ringers are expected to begin August 19th (Tuesdays, 6-7pm).

Peace of Christ,

Ashley



Missions Update

“Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint. Isaiah 40:31

First Presbyterian Church partners with a variety of local and global missions each year. Our church provides them with monetary support through budgeted and endowment funds as well as individual donations. Of equal importance is the regular prayer we give to our mission partners and those they serve. We remind the FPC congregation that our missionaries are not just partnering with the Mission Committee and Session, but with the total church. Each month we will share information on one or two partners.

Please add these people to your prayers – God will give them strength and perseverance.

CROP HUNGER WALK – OCTOBER 5

Over the past 17 years, the Danville Area CROP Walk has raised nearly \$300,000. Approximately one quarter of the funds stay in Danville and are donated to God’s Storehouse. The rest goes to Church World Service, a respected international humanitarian organization transforming communities through just and sustainable responses to hunger, poverty, and disaster. First Presbyterian’s Marie Louise Crane was an early organizer of this walk – so it is near and dear to the hearts of many of us.

You can be involved by walking with the First Presbyterian Church team, donating to the CROP Walk, and praying for the growing number of hungry and starving people throughout the world.

You will find out more in the next month – but put the date on your calendar and plan to join us.

Missions

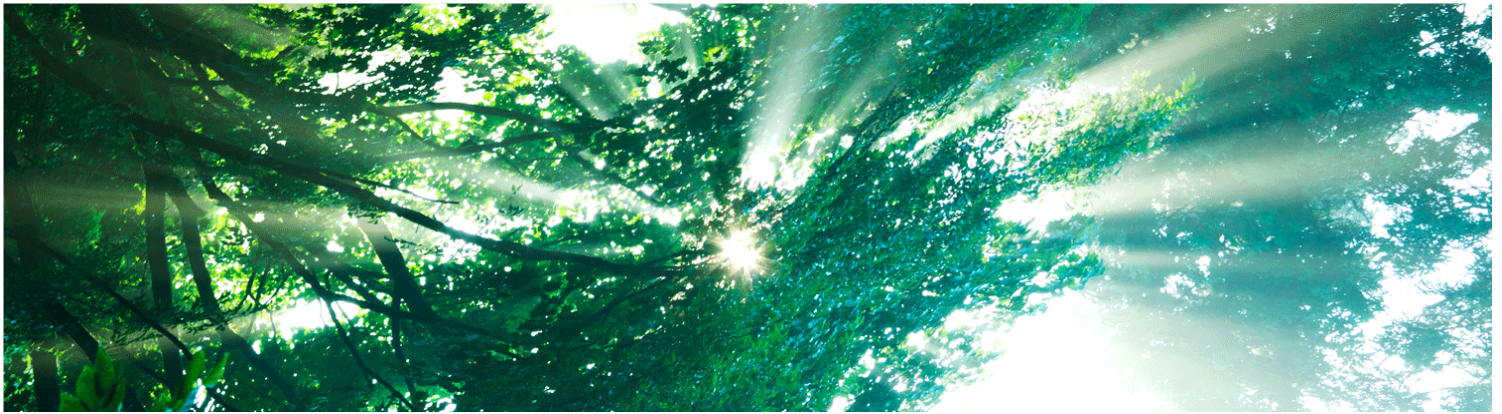
PARACLETE MISSION GROUP

(To come alongside Christian leaders around the world)

Paraclete Mission Group comes alongside mission agencies, churches and church planting movements serving around the world. Paraclete associates are experienced missionaries and professionals who use their histories, skills and gifts to partner with individuals and organizations to help them to be effective in life and ministry.

Our mission contact has spent a significant amount of time in partnership with Latin American and Central Asia churches and networks. She has recently supported Latina female workers who were beginning missionary service in Central Asia. These ladies have moved in faith to show and share God's love with Muslim women and children. They are now working with families to teach them to read, discuss health issues and healthy choices for women and children, and help them learn about our Lord. In this country, our Paraclete missionary worked with another woman to offer business training and counseling to Central Asian refugees in an effort to prepare them for making a living and transitioning into their new communities. While helping these women learn new skills needed in life, the new missionaries also had the opportunity to participate in bi-lingual bible study sessions and counsel women and children in crises. In this way, they are spreading the message of our Lord. These missionaries are demonstrating the Word of Jesus in their actions, their conversations, and the love they show these women during a time of great needed.

Please keep our partners in your prayers. Prayer ideas from the Paraclete Mission Group are posted on the bulletin board in the Sutherlin entrance hall. Please review and encourage intercession for the people in these stories.



LOCAL MISSIONS

Share your food with the hungry and give shelter to the homeless. Give clothes to those who need them and do not hide from relatives who need your help.

Isaiah 58:7

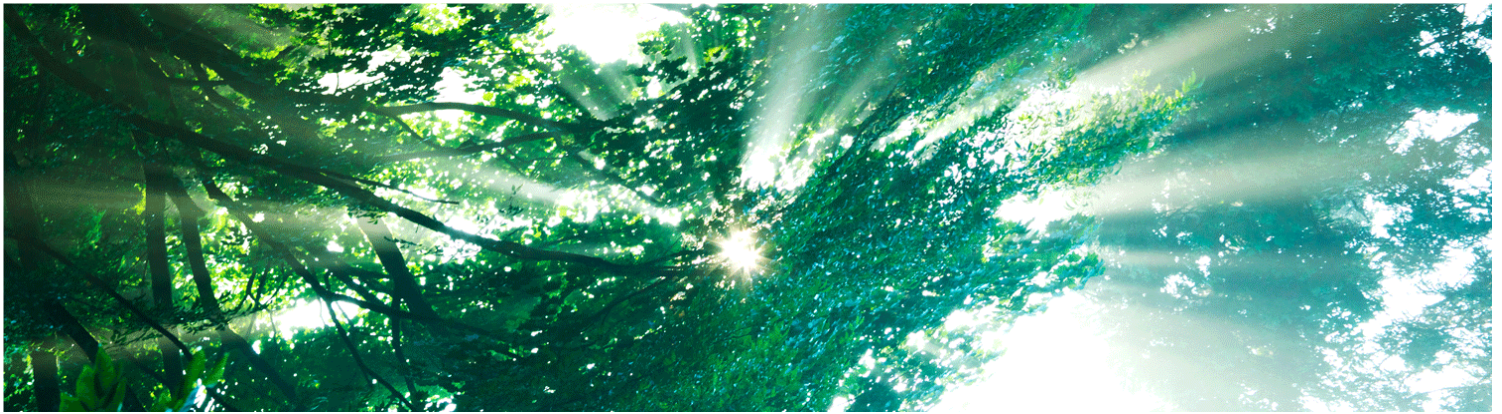
HOUSE OF HOPE

Danville Area Emergency Homeless Shelter

The House of Hope is the only emergency shelter for homeless adults and children in the Danville Area. It has two sections: Norma's Place for women and their children and Phil and Fran's Place housing men and their families. Phil and Fran's Place also offers two rooms for husbands and wives with their children, single parents with more than 3 children, or adults with special needs. The shelter is open seven days per week, 365 days per year. It provides guests with a hot dinner, breakfast, hygiene projects, laundry facilities, access to computers, and a lounge for playing games, reading, and/or watching television. Staff help guests set up appointments for needed services and secure transportation; arrangements are made with local schools to make sure children get to school. While church affiliation is not a requirement for entry to the shelter, the House of Hope operates with Christian values and treats guests with respect and dignity during a low time in their lives.

The shelter opens at 5:00 p.m. each day; guests must leave at 9:00 a.m. However, in the past two years, hours at Norma's Place have been expanded to allow women or men with small children or adults with mobility problems to remain at the shelter during daytime hours. In addition, when the weather is very hot or cold or stormy, the shelter is open for all guests. Unlike many shelters, guests are assured of their same bed for consecutive days as long as they notify staff that they plan to return. The House of Hope collaborates with other service providers to not only ensure that guests have access to needed services, but to plan for a more seamless system for helping guests transition from the shelter back into the community. However, guests at the shelter have a myriad of problems leading to their homelessness. Some have experienced some obstacles (losing a job, being evicted, divorce) that can be overcome with a little help. Others have chronic mental health conditions, physical disabilities, substance abuse histories, criminal records, etc. that require a great deal of support before they can be self-sufficient in the community. Thus, the House of Hope is working with community partners to establish a wrap-around service center next year where guests and other adults at risk of homelessness can meet with community representatives who can help them identify and access the services they need to move toward long-term housing.

The House of Hope is one of the First Presbyterian Church's important local mission partners. Your help – your prayers – are needed. Please ask God to help the homeless citizens of Danville -- and the House of Hope better meet their needs for emergency shelter and transition back into the community.



2 Alice Bradshaw

7 Alexander Miller

12 Will Wiseman

13 Jay Hayes

Roy Pinckney

15 Chris Moore

18 Donna Parris

24 Jackson Weller

25 Pat Pinckney

27 Barbara Wilkins

28 Walker Davis

29 Ina Dodson

If we've missed your special day,
please let us know!

If you are interested in placing
flowers in the sanctuary, please
contact Brannon Blount at
434-334-9935 or
brannon_blount@yahoo.com
for the dates available.

Youth

Youth Group resumes August 13th and will
meet August 13, 20, and 27

6:00-7:30pm in the Church Fellowship Hall.

Youth Saturday Lunch Ministry August 23rd



PARTNERING, EMPOWERING, SERVING
TOGETHER

June 26, 2025 Presbytery Meeting

The meeting was hosted by the churches of Martinsville and Henry County at First Presbyterian Church, Martinsville. There were 97 voting members present and a total of 140 people in attendance. Thirty-nine churches were represented by ruling elder commissioners. The offering for Two-Cents a Meal was \$665.

Worship began with violin solos by Taylor Moore, age 7 and DeShawn Moore, age 8, from Grace Presbyterian. Rev. Jimmie Hawkins, Director, Office of Public Witness, Presbyterian Church (USA) brought the message, "Justice is God's Priority" and participated in a facilitated discussion.

In addition to the business conducted at the meeting, the presbytery recognized retiring pastors Keith Leach, Susi Ennis and Kim Steinhorst and designated them as "Happily Retired". And Peaks' General Presbyter, Carl Utley, was thanked for his service to the presbytery and his retirement was celebrated at a luncheon after the meeting.

Presbytery Actions Taken at the Meeting

- Approved the recommendation from Cabinet for grant funds leftover from Commission on Ministry and Church Partnership Commission at the end of the calendar year be rolled over into Justice and Mercy Commission to be additional grant money for the coming year to be spent on mission within the bounds of Peaks Presbytery.
- Heard presented from Cabinet Purpose and Priorities for a first reading.
- Approved the request of First Presbyterian Church, Martinsville to call Rev. Dr. Bea Miller as their installed pastor.
- Approved waiving the second language requirement, and the use of accommodations for his 3 remaining Ordination Exams for Rev. Jeffrey Schroeder.
- Appointed an Administrative Commission to dissolve the congregation of Jamestown Presbyterian Church, Rice. The congregation no longer has property because they created a legal non-profit cemetery association that has received the cemetery, sanctuary, and a third building suitable for receptions. The sanctuary will serve as a cemetery chapel. Financial assets will be assigned to the cemetery association to provide money to maintain the cemetery.
- Approved the recommendation from the Justice and Mercy Commission regarding a \$100,000 request from the Presbyterian Community Center to be funded from the Williamson Bequest and an additional \$10,000.00 as recommended by the Commission on Administration in honor and memory of Helen Dean, for her many endeavors with the Presbytery and PCC, bringing the total to \$110,000 approved for the PCC.

Actions Taken on Behalf of the Presbytery Between Meetings

Coordinating Cabinet

- Approved to carry over the church redevelopment grants fund for Church Partnership Commission use in 2025.

Commission on Ministry

- Authorized the Ruling Elders who completed training for serving Communion to serve Communion in their respective churches.
- The COM was active in the period between the between the presbytery meetings. You can find that information in full on pages 8-10 of the meeting minutes.

(continued on next page)

Commission on Administration

- Approved to sell Glasgow Presbyterian Church to the Town of Glasgow for \$100,000.
- You can read their full report on page 14 of the meeting minutes.

Justice and Mercy Commission

- All the subcommittees continue to be active. You can read the full report in the meeting minutes on pages 10-14 and watch for information about their upcoming activities in Peaks Postings.

Church Partnership Commission

- CPC has only given out 2 Church Partnership Grants this year so we encourage churches to buddy up on a project. CPC has members willing to talk with churches on how to craft a project that meets our grant criteria to be able to assist you in your ministries.

Full minutes for this Presbytery meeting, including details on personnel actions can be found under “Resources” on the website, www.peakspresbytery.org.

Stay informed about the work of the presbytery between meetings by subscribing to our newsletter, Peaks’ Postings at <https://www.peakspresbytery.org/subscribe-to-peaks-postings/> or use the link at the bottom of our website homepage.

Purpose & Priorities of the Presbytery of the Peaks 2025, FIRST Reading

Presbytery is the tie that binds our diverse contexts to share God’s love by:

Supporting, connecting, guiding, equipping, and resourcing congregations

Guided by prayer and the Holy Spirit, shaped by the teachings of Jesus & united in the Reformed tradition the Presbytery seeks to carry out our purpose through the following priorities:

Beloved Community:

fosters relationships, facilitates partnerships, enhances communication,
builds trust, prays, and gathers regularly

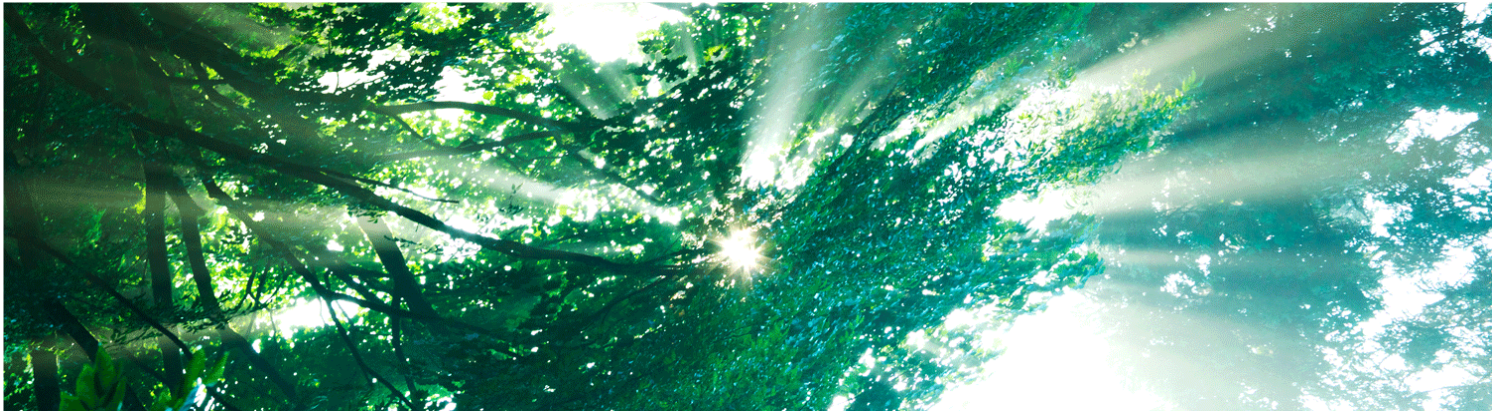
Equipping the Saints

through education, leadership training, guidance, conflict resolution, the
administration of grants, the sharing of ideas and technology, and
communal worship

Expanding the Kingdom

through missional opportunities (near & far), sharing revitalizing resources,
strengthening connections within the larger church, prayer, and facilitating
faithful, generous stewardship





Day School Round Up

Wow! What a summer we had at Day School! Six weeks of fun with our friends and teachers, learning about different places, jobs, and animals. Throw in a July 4th celebration, and a really cool water day, and you've got some very happy campers!

- There are a lot of really cool jobs out there. We learned about pilots, cowboys, astronauts, zoo keepers, farmers/beekeepers- and even pirates!

- It's hard to pick favorites, but we'll give it a try... astronauts! For the 4th, we ate bomb pops and pretended we were blasting off into outer space. Also, we had a real beekeeper come to school!! She brought a queen bee in a box, and real honeycomb! We learned so much that day, like, bees are not that bad after all and honey is good! Water Day was the BEST! Sprinklers, a slip and slide, water tables, pools, and ice cream!! The best way to end our summer.

We are sad to see our summer come to an end at FPDS. It's always hard to say goodbye. We will be counting down the days until September 2nd! Until then, friends!

(see pictures on next page)

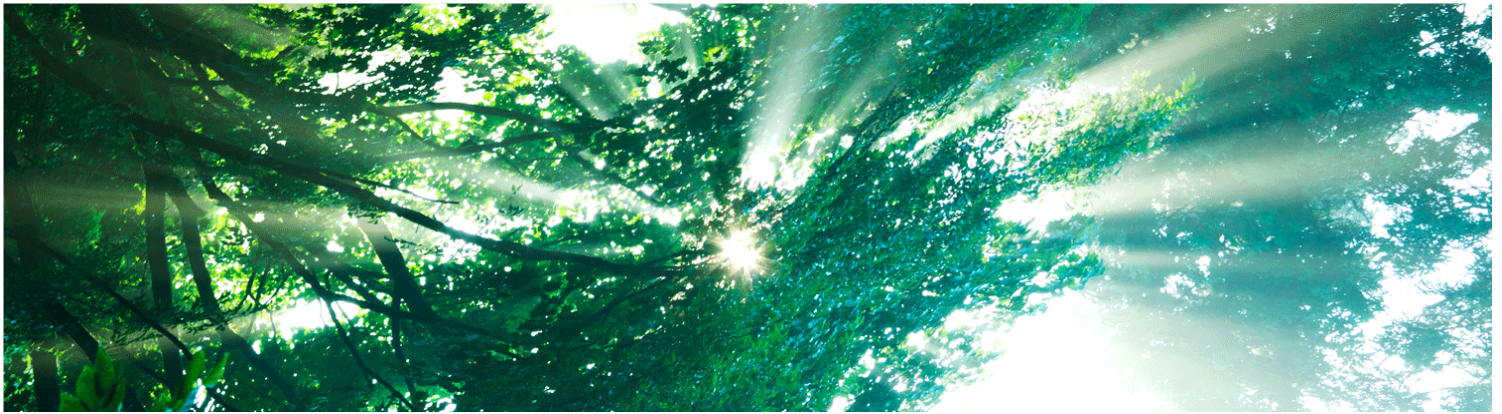
Session Highlights....

Kent and Jackie are submitting a grant that is due by August 1. It is with JT Minnie Maude for the Saturday Lunch Ministry. Please be in prayer that we will be awarded this grant for at least for 2026 to supplement and improve our lunch ministry program. If you have any questions about this grant, please reach out to Jackie or Kent.



Day School Pictures





FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, DANVILLE

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
Office hours are Monday– Thursday 9 am—1 pm

John 6:33-35

“And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.”

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