



Beyond the Columns

First Presbyterian Church

AUGUST 2026

Wrestling with the Word

As August arrives, we find ourselves standing at a quiet threshold. The long days of summer begin to soften, routines slowly return, and there is a subtle shift in the rhythm of life. It is a season that invites reflection—not only on where we have been, but on where the Lord is leading us.

Scripture often reminds us that God does much of His deepest work not in moments of dramatic change, but in steady, faithful continuation. The Apostle Paul writes in Galatians 6:9, “Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.” August feels like a fitting time to hear those words again. The Christian life is not sustained by bursts of spiritual enthusiasm alone, but by a quiet perseverance rooted in the grace of God.

Over the past months, the Lord has been at work among us in worship, in fellowship, in the ordinary conversations that knit together the life of our church. Yet His work is often less visible than we expect. Like a seed growing beneath the soil, His purposes unfold patiently, steadily, and according to His perfect wisdom.

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We may not always see immediate results, but we can be certain that He is faithful.

This truth both comforts and challenges us. It comforts us because the weight of God's kingdom does not rest on our strength. It is His work, accomplished by His power. At the same time, it challenges us to remain faithful in the places He has called us; to worship wholeheartedly, to love one another sincerely, and to serve with humility, even when the fruit is not immediately apparent.

As we move into the fall season, I encourage you to consider where the Lord is calling you to renewed faithfulness. Perhaps it is a deeper commitment to prayer. Perhaps it is re-engaging in the life of the church after a busy summer. Perhaps it is reaching out to someone in need or stepping into a new area of service. Whatever it may be, remember that God does not call us to visible success, but to faithful obedience.

In all of this, our hope remains anchored in Christ. He is the One who sustains His church, who intercedes for His people, and who will bring His work to completion. We are not left to carry on in our own strength. We are held fast by grace.

May this month be one marked not by hurried activity, but by steady trust in the Lord who is always at work, often quietly, always faithfully.

Grace and peace,

Jackson

Music Department

August – Back to School, College, and Choir

Each August, the Presbyterian Church celebrates and prays for children, youth, students, and educators. Sunday, August 2nd, we will celebrate College and Young Adult Sunday as well as observing the sacrament of Communion. Please join us as we celebrate our recent high school graduate and pray together for our youth and student members. August 19th will be Public Education Day, when all Presbyterians commit to praying for students, teachers, and employees of our local public schools. We don't need to wait for August 19th to begin praying, as Danville Public Schools will start back on August 5th and Pittsylvania County Schools on August 10th. Kayla Stork, our former intern and current choir member, is beginning her first year as a full-time public-school teacher. She will teach elementary music, pre-K through fifth grade. Please join me in praying for Kayla, and all teachers in Danville, Pittsylvania County, and area schools.

August 30th will be Presbyterian Higher Education Day. Let's pause to pray for college students, faculty, and staff, who begin a new academic year this month. My husband, Greg Robey, is an adjunct professor for Germanna Community College teaching several online music courses each term. I pray he and his classes will have academic success and learn beyond the requirements of each class. Please join me also in praying for the students, faculty, staff, and community of Averett University and Danville Community College, as well as all college students who will leave our community and travel to other campuses this fall.

Choir Rehearsals Resume Soon!

During August and September, our choirs will resume their weekly practice schedules. All are welcome to join us – no audition or experience is required. Chancel Choir will rehearse on Thursdays from 4:30-5:30pm, beginning August 6th. Handbell Choir will rehearse on Tuesdays from 5:00-6:00pm, beginning September 8th.

If you are interested in singing *The Many Moods of Christmas* with the Danville Symphony Orchestra for the December 5th and 6th concerts, please join us for chorus rehearsals right here at First Presbyterian! This group will meet on Thursdays from 5:30-6:15, running from September 10th through November 19th. The final rehearsals are expected to take place with the orchestra on two Tuesdays, November 24th and December 1st at 7:00pm.

If you would like to sing or play handbells in DACAS (our community choir), please send me a message and I will add you to their contact lists. DACAS will begin fall rehearsals on August 31st (Mondays, 7:00-8:30pm) here at First Presbyterian in the choir room. DACAS Ringers are expected to begin September 1st (Tuesdays, 6:00-7:00pm), also meeting here at FPC.

Music Department Updates

Thanks to the generous assistance of our pastor, Jackson Weller, and the DACAS handbell director, Mark Gourley, the furniture and equipment in our music department has been moved to allow the above groups to share our rehearsal spaces. We have a few items left to move, but we are very close to being ready for the "first day of choir." I am so excited to welcome everyone back to choir, and to welcome DACAS into our church for their rehearsals and performances. May this be a wonderful season of singing, ringing, learning, and growing together!

Day of Service & Learning-- Our Priorities in Action

Who is it for? The Presbytery of the Peaks. All of Us. All ages. All congregations. All neighborhoods.

What is it? A day of hands-on service, practical learning, and connection — seed packing for food ministries, workshops on Ruling Elder leadership, grants, and shared space, plus the Neighborhood Challenge canned-goods competition. Free to attend, lunch provided, love offering for Two Cents a Meal.

Why are we doing this?

Day of Service and Learning grew out of work we have done together as a presbytery to determine our priorities and how we might live into them.

It brings those priorities to life. We build **Beloved Community** across our 100+ congregations with an opportunity to gather for fellowship in person. We **Equip the Saints** through workshops on leadership, grants, and shared space.

And we **Expand the Kingdom** through hands-on service — seed packing for community gardens in the presbytery and beyond, and the Neighborhood Challenge canned-goods competition. Together, they turn our time into support for our neighbors facing food insecurity.

It's also our first gathering with Leigh Anne Ring as our new Transitional General Presbyter — reason enough to BEE there.



Day of Service & Learning

Saturday, August 22, 2026

9am-3pm

Forest Presbyterian Church

Forest, Virginia

[Register now](#)

Day School Round Up

Sweet, sweet summertime!

How can it be that our summer camp at First Pres has come to an end! We really packed a lot into these last 6 weeks. We visited six different countries and learned so much about their culture, food, and countryside. Italy, England, Brazil, Japan, Mexico and the USA - you were a blast!

From tacos, to scones, empanadas to hotdogs, sushi to pizza, we were here for it! We made flags and sombreros, colored famous landmarks, and daydreamed of lands far away. But the very best was celebrating our country on its 250th birthday! We made T- shirts and waved our flags on Main Street to show our love and pride for our very own USA!!

Well, it's time for us to shop for school supplies and our teachers to get our rooms ready. Thanks for another great summer. See you soon!





2 Alice Bradshaw

7 Alexander Miller

13 Jay Hayes

Roy Pinckney

15 Chris Moore

17 Tom Saunders

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!

Announcements

Dear members and friends, as many of you know, it is our tradition at First Presbyterian Church to enjoy fresh flowers in our beautiful sanctuary, during worship. These flowers are usually placed in “honor of” or “in memory of” friends or love ones, and in celebration of a special birthday, anniversary, etc. For many years, there have been two arrangements displayed in the rear of the sanctuary on the reredos. We now have another option, and that is to display only one fresh arrangement in front of the chancel area. If you would like to place flowers in the sanctuary during worship, please contact me at 434- 203-1666 or email me at rebeccaatkinson@comcast.net. *In Christ, Rebecca Moore*

Sunday August 23rd Jackson Weller and Ashley Stanley-Robey will lead worship at Stratford House. The service is in the Evergreen Room at 2:00pm. All are invited.

Thursday Morning Bible Study

Due to scheduling conflicts, the Thursday morning Bible Study will need a new meeting time. We are looking at Thursday at 1:30pm or Tuesday 10:30am for the Bible Study. Please email admin@fpcdanville.com and let us know which date and time works best for you. Looking forward to hearing from you and will resume soon.

Men's Bible Study

We are looking at a new format for our Men's Bible Study. Would meeting during the week at lunch work better than a Saturday at breakfast? Email admin@fpcdanville.com and let us know what day of the week works best for a lunchtime Bible Study. Looking forward to hearing from you and will resume our Bible study in September.



HIGHLIGHTS FOR MISSIONS

One of FPC's missions is Abukloi Secondary School in South Sudan. In a poor country marked by ongoing warfare, floods, and famine, the school stands as a stronghold of hope for young men and women, helping them pursue their dreams for the future. On July 4, parents, family members, teachers, friends, local leaders, and government officials honored thirty-three graduating 'senior four' students. Every graduate sat for and passed the national examination for the South Sudan Certificate of Education, earning top grades.

Like all graduates, these students aspire not only to careers that will transform their own lives, but also to work that will strengthen their communities. One graduate, supported by FPC donations, is among the school's top students and plans to become a doctor. The Missions Committee congratulates all the graduates and offers prayers for *their* future success.

Abukloi School supplements its core academic program with a wide range of activities, including guidance, ongoing assessment, sports, spiritual growth, life skills, and student clubs such as debate, poetry, drama, and music. The school is not resting on its laurels. In the coming year, it aims to improve learning through Internet-in-a-Box, increase the number of Senior Four candidates to 85, and help more female students complete school without interruption from forced marriages.

In addition, the Abukloi Foundation is partnering with UNIPOD, the University of Juba's Innovation POD, in a three-year effort focused on socio-economic growth, digital transformation, and youth empowerment. The partnership will launch four joint programs:

- Creative English Programs – intensive, high-level English courses designed to strengthen professional writing and communication skills.
- Digital Innovation – a digital solutions initiative to help accelerate digitization across South Sudan.
- Resource and Equipment Sharing – UNIPOD will make its state-of-the-art space and equipment available to innovators from the Abukloi Foundation.
- Joint Program Creation – development of new solution proposals and local and international partnerships to support youth, women, and the broader business community.

Through its work, the Abukloi Foundation is helping strengthen communities across South Sudan. Students gain hope, academic knowledge, spiritual formation, and practical skills at Abukloi School—and they are also learning how to use those gifts to serve and improve their communities and country.

~submitted by Jackie Rochford

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

Youth

Youth will meet August 5, 12, and 19th.

Saturday Lunch Ministry will be August 26th.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

937 Main Street

Danville VA 24541-1809

Website: www.fpcdanville.com

Phone: 434.792.7822

Email: admin@fpcdanville.com