



Beyond the **Columns**

Monthly Newsletter of First Presbyterian Church, Danville | *May 2026*

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Wrestling with the word

“Be still, and know that I am God.” — Psalm 46:10
As the month of May unfolds, we find ourselves surrounded by the quiet yet profound testimony of God’s creation. The chill of winter has long passed, and the vibrant renewal of spring is now fully upon us. Trees stand clothed in fresh green leaves, flowers bloom with quiet confidence, and the rhythm of life seems to soften into something both steady and sacred. In this season of growth and renewal, the words of the Psalmist call to us with particular clarity: *“Be still, and know that I am God.”*

Stillness does not come easily in our time. The pace of life often presses upon us with urgency; responsibilities, commitments, and the constant movement of days that seem to pass more quickly than we would wish. Yet the invitation of Psalm 46 is not merely to pause, but to enter into a deeper awareness of God’s presence.

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Youth

Youth will meet May 6, 13, 20 and 27. We will help with Lunch Ministry on May 23rd.

To the Members of First Pres.,
Thank you all for the healing prayers
for me during my recovery. It is
slow. I hope to be back to church
very soon. God bless you all.

Fondly,
Kathleen Harris

It is a call to trust, to rest, and to remember that God is sovereign over all things, even when the world feels unsettled.

May, in its gentle beauty, offers us a natural opportunity to practice this holy stillness. As we witness gardens coming to life and daylight stretching longer into the evening, we are reminded that growth itself often happens quietly, unseen, and without haste. The work of God in our lives is much the same. Faith is nurtured not only in moments of activity, but in times of reflection, prayer, and attentive listening.

This month, I encourage you to seek intentional moments of stillness. Perhaps it is a few quiet minutes in the morning before the day begins, a walk beneath the shade of newly leafed trees, or a pause in prayer at day's end. In these moments, we are reminded that we are not sustained by our own striving, but by the grace and presence of God.

May also brings occasions of celebration and gratitude. We give thanks for the gift of mothers and those who have nurtured us in faith. We look toward the close of the school year, graduations, and milestones that mark both endings and new beginnings. In each of these moments, we are invited to recognize God's faithful hand guiding us forward.

As a congregation, may we embody this spirit of stillness, not as inactivity, but as rootedness in God. From that place of trust, we are then sent into the world to serve with compassion, to love generously, and to bear witness to the peace that comes from knowing the Lord.

May this season renew your spirit, deepen your faith, and draw you ever closer to the One who says, "Be still, and know that I am God."

In Christ's peace,
Jackson

Reminder:

The membership Committee is selling "Love Where You Serve" t-shirts to show our support for First Presbyterian ministries. The cost is \$20 each. A sample of the shirt and sign up sheet are located at the bulletin board in the hallway behind the sanctuary. Orders will be taken until May 31st.



200 Year Celebration

This month we continue our look at our carvings in the sanctuary. You see them every Sunday but do you know why they are in our church?

FERNS AND CROWN

"The fern conceals its grace, delicacy, and beauty in the shadowed glens of the forest. Because the charm of this plant is seen only by the honest searcher, the fern symbolizes solitary humility, frankness, and sincerity." The crown is a symbol of authority.

IVY WITH TRIANGLE WITH THREE INTERLOCKED CIRCLES

"Symbolically, the ivy has always been closely identified with death and immortality. Because it is forever green, it is a symbol of fidelity and eternal life. The ivy, which clings to its support, is also a symbol of attachment and undying affection." The equilateral triangle is the symbol of the Trinity, suggesting three equal parts joined into one. The three interlocking circles superimposed on the triangle is the monogram of the Trinity: the Three Persons in the One God: the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

OAK AND ANCHOR

"Because of its solidity and endurance, the oak is a symbol of the strength of faith and virtue, and of the endurance of the Christian against the adversity." The Anchor in form of a disguised Cross, represents hope.

This concludes the description of the carvings on the communion table, organ screen and pulpit. Copies of the symbolism can be found on the table at the Sutherlin entrance with the newsletters.

Day School Round Up



April has been a blast! Easter egg hunt and party, Spring Break, Art Show - and it's not over yet! We have our trikes and tykes fundraiser, and a visit to the Danville Science Center still to come!

We had a beautiful day for our egg hunt. It was tricky, but we found all the eggs! They had little goodies in them that we enjoyed. We all brought snacks for our party and traded Easter treats. We are so thankful that He is Risen!

We dove right in coming back from Spring Break... Our teachers had been saving at work from the whole year just to display in our show! Our parents met upstairs to fellowship and share donuts with us as we admired all of our hard work throughout the year! April has more in store! We will give you an update soon. Until then, Happy Spring!

Our mission project for May will be the Baby Bottle Boomerang. We are collecting donations to help the local Transition Pregnancy Solutions Center. They provide parenting classes, Bible studies, and sharing God's love to clients facing a pregnancy. With your help they can continue their mission of helping women considering their options in an unexpected pregnancy. Baby bottles are on the table behind the sanctuary. Make your check payable to FPC with Transitions in the memo line. This will run until Sunday May 17th.





Session Highlights

Session Highlights-April 14, 2026

Session met on April 14, 2026. Below are some highlights to keep the congregation informed of what we have met about. A complete set of the minutes for this minutes can be requested by contacting the church office.

Clerk's Report - Session approved the following motions:

- Hughes Foundation will use Overbey for their dinner meetings in May and November each year. Meetings will take place either the second or third Tuesdays during these months.
- The use of our building for Mahjongg lessons and Chrismon workshops for members.
- DACAS would meet and rehearse here and may also hold their two concerts here. They will rehearse on Mondays 6:30PM-8:45PM and will meet from August to May.

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES:

200th Anniversary Committee

- More exciting historical facts this month, and more portraits to go up.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

- Change in next meeting date from April 13 to April 20, 2026.
- Dayschool Sunday will be on April 26, 2026.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

- As of March 31st, our finances are on the upside. See the budget for March posted in the bulletin.

MEMBERSHIP

- **Survey** to be given to new and existing members to get others involved is in the process of being completed.
- **Meaningful membership**-participate in the life of the church like volunteering in the life of our church
- **Church T-shirts** - will be publicized and can be purchased for \$20. Need to sell 24 to get a discount rate.
- **Low Country Boil** is May 19, 2026 - Tuesday
- **Blanket ministry for SLM** would be a project in the fall. This will either be a joint effort with the CE committee or will turn over to CE.

PROPERTY

- House Committee needs volunteers
- Lawn - Miller Lawn care - Lawn looks wonderful

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

- Holy week activities were reviewed

Music Department

May – A Month of Special Celebrations

This year the calendar in May contains several special worship services in a row. On May 3rd we will share in the sacrament of Communion together. May 10th is Mother's Day, when we will give thanks for our mothers, maternal figures, and women leaders in the church. On May 17th we will observe Ascension (which falls on Thursday, the 14th) and the final Sunday of Eastertide. Our Handbell and Chancel Choirs are working to prepare a few special pieces of music to mark the end of the Easter season.

The special celebrations will continue with May 24th being the Day of Pentecost, when we celebrate the birthday of the church and the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit. We will return to Stratford for their 2:00p.m. service, also on May 24th. The fifth and final Sunday of the month, May 31st, is Trinity Sunday. This year Western churches and Eastern Orthodox churches will celebrate Trinity Sunday on the same day! Please invite your family, friends, and neighbors to join us on any Sunday in May – they will be sure to enjoy special music and a meaningful service each week.

Upcoming Concerts and Events for May

Saturday, May 2nd, 5pm – Danville Symphony Orchestra Concert, Bonner Middle School auditorium, "Up, Up, and Away" is a family friendly concert of superhero themed music from movies, cartoons, and television. Our very own Gregory Robey will take the podium to direct "Bat Man: The Dark Knight Rises." Anyone wearing a superhero costume will receive a free gift!

Sunday, May 3rd, 3pm – Danville Area Choral Arts Society (DACAS) will present a concert of patriotic music in celebration of the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. DACAS Ringers handbell ensemble will accompany the choir on "Let Freedom Ring," as well as presenting a handbell arrangement of the national anthem. Several members of our Chancel and Handbell Choirs will perform at this concert!

Sunday, May 17th, 3pm – Martinsville Handbell Ensemble Spring Concert, First United Methodist Church, 146 E. Main Street, Martinsville, VA 24112. This will be another patriotic concert celebrating the 250th anniversary of America. Greg and I will both direct pieces on this program, "Armed Forces Salute" and "Prayer for Peace" respectively. Members of the Still Waters choral ensemble will join us on part of this program.

Looking forward to celebrating together,
Ashley





PARACLETE MISSION GROUP

Paraclete, meaning "one who comes alongside" in Greek, is a mission group focused on supporting unreached people groups, mainly in Southeast Asia. They also assist refugees—including Afghan refugees who aided American soldiers—by helping them learn English, find housing, access job training, secure employment, enroll children in school, and obtain citizenship. Mission partners also facilitate bible study and church services to introduce Jesus and Christianity.

As the United States seeks to limit illegal immigration, the efforts of Paraclete to help refugees in this country have become difficult. Many are facing deportation either back to Afghanistan or to another country where they have no roots. Paraclete missionaries remind us, as Christians, "to be faithful witnesses locally and globally." Few Muslims have someone close to them who can help them learn about Jesus and the love he demonstrated to all people.

How can we prepare ourselves to share the love and hope we have through Jesus with Muslims and others who follow other religions? We can start by becoming more cognizant of the spiritual vocabulary of other religions and cultures so we can better talk with them about our stories of Jesus and our own testimonies. Paraclete is exploring how 'interfaith fluency' can be nurtured in people who follow Jesus preparing Christians to have impactful religious conversations with immigrants and refugees we encounter.

The Paraclete missionaries – in fact all our missionaries – seek to carry out the Great Commission, where Jesus instructed his disciples to "go and make disciples of all nations (Mathew 28.19-20). In Acts 13.47, the Lord tells his followers, 'I have placed you as a light for the gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the Earth.' What a gift the Lord gave us gentiles – including us among his Chosen? Is it not our role to carry out this command – to share the Good News - with other people who have not had the opportunity to learn about Jesus?

~Submitted by Jackie Rochford





Announcements

Men's breakfast & bible study will meet Saturday May 23rd at 8am in Westminster Room. Please bring your breakfast as we join together in study. This will be our last session until the fall.

Thursday Bible Study will meet Thursday mornings at 10:30am. We will continue our study of Daniel. We will NOT meet Thursday May 14th. Please mark your calendars.

Sunday May 24th Jackson Weller and Ashley Stanley-Robey will lead worship at Stratford House. The service is in the Evergreen Room at 2:00pm.

The Low country Boil will be Tuesday May 19th at 6 pm. More details to come. Mark your calendars.

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



The Presbyterian Women's Day Circle will meet on May 4th at 12:30 p.m. in the Westminster Room. We will continue our Series on First Peter "Sojourners and Exiles" by Sinclair B. Ferguson. All are welcome.

The Evening Circle will meet at the home of Karan Johnson., May 4th at 7pm. All women are invited to attend for the bible study with Joyce Perez and fellowship with other members. For more information you may call Ava Barrett 434-250-5599, while Bernadine is at Roman Eagle.

Women Of Church

Thank you so much for the recognition of my 90th birthday and the beautiful flowers in my honor. You all are a special group who do wonderful work for our church.

Pat Argyrakis

- 1 Pat Argyrakis
- Leigh Walden
- 5 Nancy S. Clayton
- 7 Gary Wimer
- 8 Jackie Rochford
- 9 Cabell Barrow
- 10 Kathy Dolianitis
- 11 Bridgett Belk
- Martha Cutright
- 12 Leigh Blount
- Kimberly Clifton
- 15 Kathryn Beale
- 18 Jim Turner
- 20 Brannon Blount
- Lyla Parris
- 31 Victoria Shelton

Anniversaries

- May 6 Hampton & Barbara Wilkins
- May 8 Roy & Pat Pinckney

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



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