FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH~DANVILLE, VA

Beyond the Columns

November 2026

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Wrestling with the Word

November has a way of turning our attention toward gratitude. As the leaves fall and the days grow shorter, we begin to think about the blessings that surround us, the people who enrich our lives, and the many ways God has been faithful to us. Here at First Presbyterian Church of Danville, we have so much for which to give thanks.

This year, our gratitude is especially meaningful as we celebrate 200 years of ministry. Two centuries of worship, service, fellowship, and witness represent generations of people who have sought to follow Christ and share His love with our community. We are grateful for those who came before us, whose faithfulness helped establish the church we know today. Their work reminds us that we are part of a story much larger than ourselves. We have inherited a legacy of faith, and we have the privilege and responsibility of carrying that ministry forward for the generations yet to come.

We also have much to celebrate in the life of our congregation today. Our church family continues to grow as we welcome new members into our fellowship. Each new member is a reminder that God is still at work among us, drawing people together in faith, deepening our relationships, and calling us into new opportunities for ministry. A growing church is not simply a matter of numbers; it is a sign of lives being connected through Christ and people discovering new ways to serve Him together. I am thankful for every person who calls First Presbyterian home and for the many ways you contribute to the life and witness of this congregation.

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As we look back on 200 years of ministry and look around at the life of our church today, we can be confident that God is not finished with us yet. The same God who sustained this congregation through two centuries continues to guide us today. There are still people to welcome, neighbors to serve, needs to meet, and opportunities to share the good news of Jesus Christ. We do not know everything the future holds, but we can move forward with gratitude for the past, faithfulness in the present, and trust in God's continuing work among us.

I also want to take a moment to offer a special word of personal thanks. Thank you for the generous gift you presented to me; I am deeply grateful. It is a wonderful expression of your kindness, encouragement, and care. My family and I are thankful not only for this thoughtful gift, but also for the love and support you have shown us as we serve alongside you. Ministry is a calling, but it is also a shared journey, and we are blessed to walk that journey with you.

Most of all, I thank God for placing us here at First Presbyterian Church of Danville. It is a privilege to serve this congregation, to worship with you, to learn from you, to laugh with you, and to see how God works through your faith and generosity. My family and I are grateful to be part of this church family, and we thank you for making us feel so loved. Please know that your kindness means more to us than words can fully express.

Of course, gratitude should not be reserved for anniversaries, special gifts, or a particular season of the year. As we approach Thanksgiving, we are reminded that thankfulness is meant to shape the way we live every day. It is easy to give thanks when life is going well, when our prayers seem to be answered just as we hoped, or when we can clearly see God's blessings. It can be more difficult to remain thankful when we face uncertainty, disappointment, grief, or challenges we would rather avoid.

Yet Scripture calls us to a deeper kind of gratitude. The apostle Paul writes in 1 Thessalonians 5:18, “Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.” This does not mean that we must pretend everything is good or that we should be thankful for every hardship we experience. Rather, it means that even in difficult circumstances, we can give thanks because God remains faithful. Our circumstances change, but God's love does not. Our understanding may be limited, but His grace is not.

There is much for which to be thankful in the ordinary moments of life: the gift of another morning, a meal shared with loved ones, a conversation that encourages us, the beauty of the world around us, the opportunity to help someone in need, and the assurance that we do not walk through life alone. Sometimes we become so focused on what we lack, what we wish were different, or what we hope will happen next that we overlook the blessings God has already placed before us.

Perhaps this November, we might each make a simple commitment: to begin each day by naming one thing for which we are thankful, to look for one opportunity to encourage someone else, and to end the day by remembering where we have seen God's goodness. These small practices can help us cultivate hearts that recognize God's grace not only in the extraordinary moments, but also in the quiet, everyday experiences of life.

As we celebrate 200 years of ministry, welcome new members, give thanks for one another, and look toward the future, may our gratitude become more than words. May it lead us to greater generosity, deeper faith, more compassionate service, and a renewed commitment to the work God has entrusted to us.

Thank you for being the church you are. Thank you for your faith, your generosity, your kindness, and your willingness to serve. Above all, let us give thanks to God, who has been faithful through every generation and who continues to lead us into the days ahead.

May we enter this season with grateful hearts, remembering that every good gift comes from God and that every new day is another opportunity to live in response to His grace.

With gratitude and blessings,
Jackson

Music Department

Thank You, Church Family

As we observe All Saints Day on November 1st I remember my granny, Mildred Matthews Stanley, who taught me to play the piano. I thank the leaders at my home church, Guinea Presbyterian in Cumberland County, for letting me sing and play the piano as a young child. I am grateful to Village Presbyterian Church in Charlotte Court House for trusting me to begin learning to play the organ. I am grateful to Broad Street United Methodist Church in Cleveland, Tennessee for the opportunity to work as an intern, direct choirs, and learn to play handbells. I am very grateful for our sisters and brothers at Holbrook Street Presbyterian Church trusting me to lead worship for three years and welcoming us to Danville as newcomers. And I am very glad Brenna asked me to come play for two Sundays at First Presbyterian in 2021.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to lead worship, direct music, and care for our beautiful instruments! I am so grateful for the celebration of my five years of service in music ministry here at First Presbyterian Church. It has been an enormous blessing and honor to worship with you all, your families, and our neighbors. Greg and I have grown musically and spiritually with God's help and our church's support.

At Thanksgiving (and always), we are grateful for each member of our Chancel Choir and Handbell Choir. Your dedication and talents add much joy and depth to the life of our church, and the community. We are grateful for our quality instruments. We thank God for the wonderful professionals who service them – Kelly and George, our organ tuners; Ember, our piano technician; and Shawn in South Carolina at Jeffers Handbells. We are grateful to our church for sharing space and instruments with community ensembles, students, and musicians from neighboring churches. We thank God for all the members of our congregation who lift their voices together in worship each week.

Concerts and Services for November and December *Free Admission!
Sunday, November 15th, 3:00p.m., First Presbyterian Church sanctuary – Danville Area Choral Arts Society (DACAS) will present Mozart's Requiem, with live orchestra after a prelude of handbell selections from Dan River Ringers.

Tuesday, November 17th, 6:15p.m., Stratford House – First Presbyterian's Handbell Choir and Dan River Ringers will perform a handbell concert for residents of Stratford. Relatives and friends are welcome to attend!

Saturday, November 21st, 7:00p.m., George Washington High School – Danville Symphony Orchestra presents "The Nutcracker and More," free tickets required SOLD OUT – Please arrive very early (around 6:00 or so) if you would like to wait until 6:45 for any available seats.

Monday, November 23rd, 7:00p.m., Epiphany Episcopal – Community Thanksgiving Service including music from DACAS and Dan River Ringers handbell ensemble. Non-perishable food and cash donations to God's Store House will be collected.

Wednesday, December 2nd, 6:00p.m., FPC Fellowship Hall – Wednesday Night Supper followed by our annual Advent Service
Thursday, December 3rd, 7:00p.m., Pritchett Auditorium – Averett Celebrates Christmas featuring the Averett Symphonic Band, selections from the Averett Show Choir, and instrumental duets. This will be livestreamed at averett.edu/live

Saturday, December 5th, 7:30p.m., George Washington High School – Danville Symphony Orchestra will present The Many Moods of Christmas by Robert Shaw, with the newly organized Danville Symphony Chorus. Other orchestral selections include "Festive Sounds of Hannukah" and "Sleigh Ride."

Friday, December 11th, 7:00p.m., First United Methodist Church of Martinsville – Martinsville Handbell Ensemble's annual Christmas concert. This is a FREE concert; voluntary donations will be collected to support the music library and handbell maintenance. This will also be live-streamed and re-playable on First UMC's YouTube channel!

Wednesday, December 16th, 6:00p.m., FPC Fellowship Hall – Wednesday night supper followed by our annual Christmas Carol Sing-Along!

Looking forward to celebrating Thanksgiving, Advent, and Christmas together,
Ashley



Day School Round Up

October, you've been a blast! We love this cooler time of year- leaves falling, crisp, cool morning air, and all of the fun that Fall brings. Orange Day, school pictures, the pumpkin patch, our holiday party, and trick or treating make this month extra "spooktacular"!

Our arts and crafts have been so fun!! Ms. Brandi took her four year old class over to the museum to collect leaves to make their very own leaf man. They were really cool. All of the classes jumped on board with their own version of leaf art, as well as lots of pumpkins, a few ghosts, even a friendly spider or two! The halls of First Pres are dressed in October fun!

Our picture day with Alan Dalton Photography was at times a little crazy, and our faces did get a little sore from all of that smiling, but our parents sure did love our pictures!

Harvest Ridge Pumpkin Patch really gave us a good time!! Hay rides, train rides, the corn dive, hay bale castles, and a giant slide! Well, that kept us really busy. The weather really cooperated and gave us the perfect Fall Day. We are already dreaming of next year…

It's hard to believe, but we still have our holiday party and trick or treating with the Day School Committee to go. We have really packed in the fun this month, and really look forward to finishing it strong! Happy Fall, and we will catch up soon!



October Session Highlights

The following was discussed at our last Session meeting in October. A complete document of the minutes is in the church office and can be reviewed at any time during office hours.

CLERK'S REPORT

- Letters of Transfer were sent for Jeremy Williams, Rose Williams, Debra Bolt Thompson, Teresa Beale, and Kim & Leonard Pryor will be joining in November. New members will join on Nov. 1, 2026
- Just a reminder that we will have a congregational meeting on December 13 for officer election.

200th Anniversary Committee

- Holbrook Presbyterian was invited to join us for Reformation Sunday and Ray Williams from Holbrook will give the message that day.
- Tim Carpenter will play bagpipes but will also have Kirkin' Of the Tartans.
- There will be a meal after the service. Donations for the meal will be collected. It will be optional.

MEMBERSHIP

- Linen giveaway to Saturday lunch visitors. There was a request for blankets. Giveaway will be on Nov. 8

PROPERTY

- House committee report:
  - Lots of cleaning and painting, also new lighting outside.
  - New blinds are being installed
  - A new sign for Sutherlin entrance will be posted soon.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

- Additions to the worship minutes: Ray Williams from Holbrook Presbyterian will be preaching on October 25th, and David Baker on November 8 & December 13, 2026.

November 22nd Jackson Weller will lead worship at Stratford House. The service will begin at 2pm in the Evergreen room.

SUPPORTING our SENIORS





Outlook Class Christmas breakfast will be Sunday December 6. We will welcome our new members received during the year at the breakfast. We will meet in Overbey Hall. Everyone is welcome! Plan to come with your family to celebrate the coming of Christ!

It is time to order poinsettias in honor of or in memory of a loved one this Christmas season. Prices are $14 for the wrapped plants 6.5 inch plants. All orders should be in the church office by Sunday, December 8th.
Please call Leigh Blount at 434.251.8591 for more information.
I desire to have _____ poinsettias dedicated as follows: (Check) _____In Honor of _____In Memory of

_____

_____

Given by:_____
(Name as you wish it to appear in the Bulletin)
Please send a check made payable to First Presbyterian Church
and return it to:
First Presbyterian Church
937 Main St., Danville, VA 24541







Missions

Our missionaries Ian and Stephanie Fraiser are working out of VIA headquarters (formerly Center for Mission Mobilization) in Arkansas to recruit, train, and equip indigenous missionaries in Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America.
Currently, 80% of the world's Christians live in Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America but they produce only 20% of the world's missionaries. VIA plants teams of mobilizers in countries like Peru, Kenya, and China to help start missions movements in the global church. Almost three billion people are unreached; they don't know anyone who knows anything about Jesus; and VIA is focused on mobilizing the unsent, those who know and love Jesus but aren't engaged in missions, to share the gospel with them. VIA engages with students, families, and leaders worldwide to point their hearts towards God's Great Commission: go into the world and raise up disciples. Pray for the Lord of the Harvest to raise up more laborers!

March 31, 2026
Dear First Presbyterian Church,
Via exists to mobilize local churches to discover their most strategic role in God's global mission. But what does that look like? One small church offers a compelling example of how mobilization grows through relationships and faith. Located near many least-reached peoples, this Indonesian church sensed its unique opportunity and set a bold goal: to send ten workers by 2040. Though unsure how to begin, they committed the vision to prayer. When a new pastor stepped in, uncertainty remained. However, God was already shaping his heart toward this mission.
Via's relationship with the church began years earlier through a worker they had sent to Central Asia. Over time, trust deepened as Via listened, encouraged, and walked alongside the church. Via led a Parenting with a Global Vision workshop, helping families see their role in God's mission. As the partnership grew, the church took a significant step by sending its pastor to visit its worker. Despite severe flooding in their region, they chose to move forward in faith.
The visit brought great encouragement to the worker and gave the pastor new insight into the challenges of cross- cultural ministry. "Seeing is so much better than reading reports," he said. When he returned, his vision had grown. "I want to come back again and bring our elders. And I want to expand our program for young people, so they're better equipped for cross-cultural work." This is what mobilization looks like: not a single event, but a process, a partnership, and a growing vision.

David Rofkahr,
Executive Director
Reaching the nations through the nations

~submitted by Gary Wimer

MORNING BIBLE STUDY

Tuesday Morning Bible Study is ongoing at 10:30am in the Westminster room. We continue our study of Mark. Everyone is invited.

Dinner Nights!

Our Wednesday Night Dinners will be November 4th and November 18th . On the 18th the Sydnors will be our guest speakers. Team 1 will be in charge.

The Presbyterian Women's Day Circle will meet on Monday, November 2nd at 12:30 p.m. in the Westminster Room. We will continue in our study of 1Peter with the series "Sojourners and Exiles" by Dr. Sinclair B. Ferguson. Everybody is welcome!

The Evening Circle is continuing a new study on November 2nd, 2026. We will meet that evening at the home of Karan Johnson. Joyce Perez will lead the study entitled "Jesus Calling - Putting Jesus First" There is a book to accompany the study, if you would like to purchase one, they are available on Amazon or call Ava 434-250-5599 to reserve a copy. All are welcome and we look forward to seeing you on November 2nd. If you have any questions, please call Ava.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Youth will meet on Wednesday November 4th, 11th, and 18th and help with SLM on November 28th.

YOUTH GROUP NEWS

Happy THANKSGIVING!

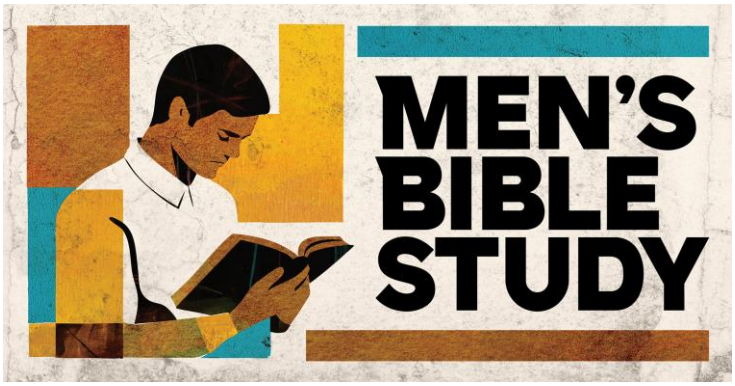
The church office will be closed ½ day Wednesday November 25th & Thursday November 26th in observance of Thanksgiving.

Birthdays & Anniversaries

2 Hampton Wilkins
8 Alex Walthall
Cameron Kassa
11 Elliot Stowe
12 Kent Shelton
13 Becky Meadema
Joyce Perez
14 Joan Reynolds
17 Julia Gregson
20 Ruth Meadors
25 Lisa Argyrakis
27 Beth Brown
ANNIVERSARIES
28 Carolyn & Fred Baker



Men's Luncheon & Bible Study continues Monday November 19th at noon. Please bring your own lunch we will meet in the Westminster room.





The Episcopal Church of the Epiphany will host the community Thanksgiving service this year. The service will be at 7pm. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

Special Dates for November 2026

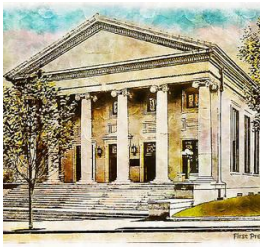
- All Saints' Day, *November 1, 2026*
- Daylight saving time ends, *November 1, 2026*
- Veterans Day, *November 11, 2026*
- Christ the King Sunday, *November 22, 2026*
- Thanksgiving Day, *November 26, 2026*
- First Sunday of Advent, *November 29, 2026*

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



First Presbyterian Church

937 Main Street – Danville, VA 24541-1809

www.fpcdanville.com

Phone: 434.792.7822

Email: admin@fpcdanville.com