

Beyond the Columns

First Presbyterian Church~ Danville, VA

Wrestling with the Word

October is going to be a very special month in the life of First Presbyterian Church of Danville. As we continue celebrating our **200th anniversary**, we will also celebrate **Reformation Sunday**, giving us two wonderful opportunities to reflect on who we are, where we have come from, and where God is leading us.

Two hundred years is a remarkable milestone. Generations of people have gathered in this congregation to worship God, hear His Word, receive His grace, care for one another, and serve the community around them. Pastors have come and gone. Buildings and ministries have changed. Danville itself has changed in ways those first members could never have imagined.

And yet, through it all, **God has remained faithful.**

That is what makes an anniversary like this so meaningful. We are not simply celebrating that First Presbyterian Church has existed for 200 years. We are giving thanks for the God who has sustained His church through two centuries.

Reformation Sunday gives us another opportunity to remember what is at the heart of our identity as Presbyterians. The Reformation continually calls the church back to the authority of Scripture and to the central truth of the gospel: that we are saved by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ.

The Reformation also reminds us that the church is always in need of being reformed and renewed according to God's Word. That is an important message for a congregation celebrating 200 years.

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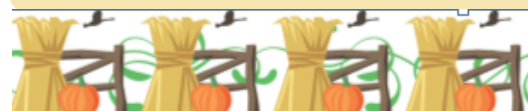
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We should remember our past. We should tell the stories of those who came before us. We should be grateful for their faithfulness, sacrifice, and perseverance.

But we are not called simply to preserve the past.

We are called to be faithful in our own generation.

The people who worshiped at First Presbyterian generations ago could not have imagined the world in which we live today. Yet they trusted the same God, worshiped the same Lord Jesus Christ, and proclaimed the same gospel that we proclaim today.

And now it is our turn.

There are people in our community who need to hear the good news of Jesus Christ. There are families who need a church home, children who need to know the love of God, and neighbors who need compassion, friendship, and hope.

God has placed us here for such a time as this.

So this October, let us celebrate with grateful hearts. Let us honor those who came before us without becoming trapped in the past. Let us give thanks for what God has done while remaining open to what God is still doing.

Our confidence is not ultimately in our history, our traditions, our buildings, or our accomplishments. **Our confidence is in Christ.** Two hundred years is certainly worth celebrating. But the next chapter is worth living.

My prayer is that future generations will look back on First Presbyterian Church and say not simply that we had a remarkable history, but that **we were faithful**—faithful to Christ, faithful to Scripture, faithful to the gospel, and faithful to the calling God has given us.

May this anniversary year be a time of celebration, gratitude, remembrance, and renewal.

And may the God who has been faithful to First Presbyterian Church for 200 years continue to lead us into the future, for His glory and the sake of His kingdom.

To God alone be the glory.

Grace and peace,

Jackson



OCTOBER 2026 SPECIAL DAYS

Some of the special days celebrated in October are:

World Communion Sunday —
October 4, 2026

Pastor/Clergy Appreciation
Sunday — October 11, 2026

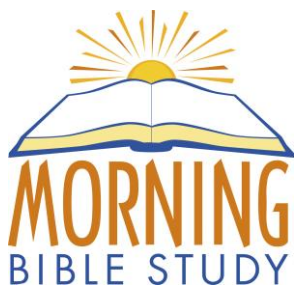
Columbus Day observed —
October 12, 2026

Indigenous Peoples Day —
October 12, 2026

Reformation Sunday — October
25, 2026

Reformation Day — October 31,
2026

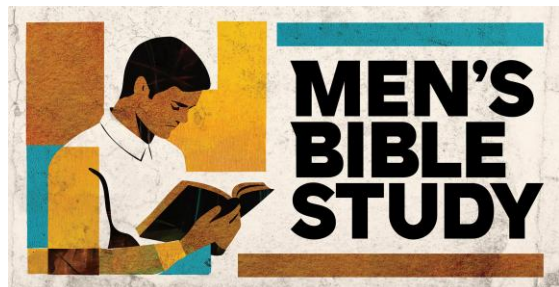
Announcements



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



Youth will meet on Wednesday October 7th, 14th, 21st & 28th and help with SLM on October 24th.



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



5 Wilson Walden

7 Bob Newnam

9 Angie Alexander

David Clark

Michael Jones

10 Chris Belk

11 Brenna Takata

15 Nicholas Argyrakis

Rafeal Garcia

23 Iya Kassa

26 Carolyn Baker

Nick Argyrakis

28 Fred Baker

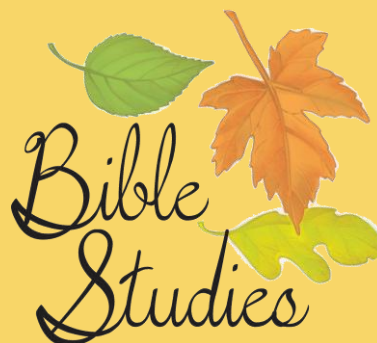
Anniversary:

Rebecca & Chris Moore: 10/10

Please let the office know if we have missed your special day!

The Presbyterian Women's Day Circle will meet on Monday, October 5th 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 starting a new study on October 5, 2026. We will meet that evening at the home of Ava Barrett. 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 October 5th.



Music Department

October – Let's Celebrate Together!

This October will begin with World Communion Day on Sunday, October 4th. Join us as we observe the sacrament of the Lord's Supper and celebrate with Christians around the world. Our church will also participate in the CROP Walk on October 4th, to raise money to feed hungry people around the world and here in Danville. I have been asked by Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church to assist with a pick-up children's choir and poster design workshop for the CROP Walk. The children will sing at the opening ceremony, around 2:50pm right before the walk begins at 3:00. If you are walking this year, I hope you will see some of our posters as you begin and end your walk!

The last Sunday of October will be a day of festivities this year as we celebrate Reformation Sunday and the 200th anniversary of our congregation here at First Presbyterian Church of Danville. Back by popular demand, piper Tim Carpenter will play the bagpipes for our Reformation Sunday service. The Virginia Carolina Scottish Society will join us for the annual Kirkin' of the Tartans! Our Handbell Choir is preparing a piece of music, "Glorious Celebration" by Cynthia Dobrinski, which was commissioned especially for a 200th church anniversary service at another First Presbyterian Church (in Washington Court House, Ohio in 2014). We also hope to collaborate with the Chancel Choir on an arrangement of the benediction, "God Be with You till We Meet Again." After church, there will be a catered lunch in Overby Fellowship Hall. Please invite your family, friends, and neighbors to join us as we celebrate two centuries of knowing Christ and making Him known in Danville and around the world!

Upcoming Fall Concerts – Mark Your Calendars!

Friday, October 23rd, 7:00pm, Pritchett Auditorium – Averett University Symphonic Band's Fall Pops Concert. This is a FREE concert, open to the public! No reservations required.

Sunday, November 15th, 3:00pm, First Presbyterian Church Sanctuary – Danville Area Choral Arts Society's fall concert, featuring Mozart's *Requiem* with reduced orchestra and organ. Dan River Ringers will open the concert with selections from their participation in the Capital Area Handbell Festival. This is a FREE concert, open to the public. No reservations are required. Please carpool and arrive early to find parking. Thank you, again, for sharing our beautiful church and instruments with DACAS and Dan River Ringers!

Saturday, November 21st, 7:00pm, George Washington High School Auditorium – Danville Symphony Orchestra will present *The Nutcracker and More*, with dancers from Danville's middle and high schools. In addition to most of Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker*, the symphony will perform Girolamo Frescobaldi's "Toccata" and "Capriccio Espanol" by Rimsky-Korsakov. This is a FREE concert, but tickets WILL BE ISSUED due to the high attendance expected. Check dsova.org for a link to Eventbrite coming soon to reserve free tickets.

I hope to see you at one of these special services and programs, and I am grateful for our church's support of music and the arts in worship and in our community.

Peace be with you always,

Ashley

Session Highlights

September 2026 Session Highlights

A complete copy of the session minutes are available in the church office.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION/Dayschool

- Change in WNS on Nov. 18 we will have missionary Paul Sydnor come to give a message.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

- Session approved the 2027 budget by consensus. A presentation will be made at the October 21 Wednesday Night Supper.
- The finance committee with session approval authorized Jackson to use the Pastor Discretionary Fund to respond to requests for assistance from people in need. A committee will work with Jackson to establish guidelines, including eligibility, amount, and verification requirements. NOTE: Joe Alexander agreed to serve on the committee. Kim Wimer, Kathy Dolianitis, and Alex Walthall volunteered to serve on this committee. This committee was approved by consensus
- Kim Wimer moved that we set up a committee to examine fund sources and how to inform the congregation on the trusts. Jackie Rochford, Kent Shelton, Harriet Beale and maybe John Parris will serve on this committee. This committee was approved by consensus.

STEWARDSHIP-Commitment Sunday will be on Nov. 8-We are a Reviving Church powerpoint will start in October and run through commitment Sunday.

MEMBERSHIP - Kent Shelton

- Church Picnic - Oct. 11
- SLM Linens Giveaway set for Nov. 7
- New member class luncheon-after new members join - maybe a welcome reception with volunteers from Session to help set up, serve, program, food, clean up, when a date is set. Motion from committee for a date to be announced. Motion was approved by consensus

MISSIONS - Report from August , 2026

- A request of \$1,000 through Freddie Lamb funds to support the work of Paul Sydnor was approved. This will be distributed by Trustees.
- On August 19, FPC received a request from Danville Social Services for assistance funding Christmas gifts for foster care children. Annually, FPC has donated \$500 to this cause. The committee is requested \$500 for Social Services from Freddie Lamb funds. This request was approved by consensus and sent to the Trustees.

PROPERTY - Report from September 1, 2026 - Eddie Blount

- It was a recommendation from a congregation member that handrails be put up on both sides of the chancel area. The House committee will take care of this.

NEW BUSINESS

- Son servants will be at our church from July 5-10, 2027
- Temple Beth Shalom has moved all their things out of the chapel. They are very appreciative of the church allowing them to use our facility during their construction phase.

Mission Committee

FRONTIER FELLOWSHIP

“For every people, an indigenous church. For every church, a mission vision.”

In January of this year Ethan Collins, Executive Director of FF, wrote this letter, excerpts of which follow.

In recent years FF has used the phrase “Going Beyond” to capture our movement toward God’s calling in our ministry. Our calling is to meet new international leaders and partner with them so that together we can reach farther into unreached areas with the Good News of Jesus. ... Relation Ships that were catalyzed in 2025 are starting to blossom in the Persian World, the Middle East, the Sahel region of Africa and South Asia. ... Partnerships ... have moved toward strategizing, innovating and resourcing frontier projects. Together with you, our international partners and all the churches we serve, we are crossing barriers to share the Good News of Jesus with those who have never heard it before.

In June of this year I joined a FF Zoom meeting. We heard from an Iranian pastor in Europe who reported that the church in Iran is the fastest growing in the world. There are no Bibles. New believers are being served and trained through social media. This pastor stated, “The Western Church needs the Iranian Church which prays for it.” We also heard from Susan who left Iran 42 years ago. She established and teaches at the Iranian Bible College. She reported on the disillusionment with Islam after the massacres, destruction and crackdown on protests. Mothers of the teenagers who died are coming to Christ. There is a fast growing Christian movement and a growing unity among Iranian ministers. Ninety percent of Iranian Christians live in Iran. Most that are equipping the church live outside the country. Preparation is being made for a free Iran.

We were encouraged to pray for Iran to be free, for regime change, protection of the church and for refugees in Turkey.

Submitted by Linda Copeland





CROP Walk
CROP HUNGER WALK 2026
OCTOBER 4 – 3:00 P.M.

The 2026 CROP Hunger Walk is almost here. From the very first Danville walk (which Marie Louise Crane helped organize) First Presbyterian Church has shown its love for those in need through its support of this important event. Once again, we can put our faith and love for God into action by helping people who are experiencing hunger.

The walk is scheduled Sunday, October 4, at 3:00 p.m. in Ballou Park. You can help in one or both of the following ways:

- ***Walk the Walk!*** Join the First Presbyterian Team and walk with us. Sign up at the table in front of the bulletin board in the hall behind the sanctuary.
- ***Donate to help the hungry.*** Place donations in the offering plate or give them to the church office. Please write “CROP Walk” on the memo line of checks. If donating cash, place it in an envelope marked with your name and “CROP Walk.”

‘If you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry, and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday.’ Isaiah 58:11





fall events



Save the Date for our annual Fall Church Picnic. It will be held at Angler's Park Picnic Shelter, 350 Northside Drive. The fall decorated tables will hold the barbecue and chicken tenders with side dishes that is being catered by Walkers Restaurant. The food will be served at 5pm. Several of the ladies of the church will bake desserts, so all the congregation needs to bring is a joyful spirit and an appetite on Sunday October 11th from 4 – 8 pm.

Fall is Here!



Clean out your Linen Closet

Church Members are asked to bring gently used clean blankets, sheets and towels to give away to our Saturday Lunch guests on November 7th. You can bring them to the parlor where they will be sorted. Thanks for your help!

Day School Round Up

School days are here again! These past few weeks have flown by! Between meeting new friends and reuniting with old ones, the days at First Pres are ticking by!

We were so surprised to see how hard our teachers had worked to get our classrooms ready. There was fresh paint, new toys, and new spaces to explore. Now add in new faces and you've got a great start to a new school year!!

We welcomed back our Pre- K4 year program, and Ms Brandi! It's so nice to see that room filled again and Ms Brandi's smiling face. It's like she never left, and we are glad she's here!

We will round out our September with a visit from our local fire department. We will be sure to let you know how that goes. Until then, Happy October!



Ends November 1st

Kirkin' of the Tartans! Reformation Sunday October 25th we will have special music during worship and lunch after our worship service! This will be a catered lunch in Overbey hall. Mark your calendar today for our 200th church anniversary & Reformation Service.



SALVATION

*is nearer to
us now than
when we*

**FIRST
BELIEVED.**

ROMANS 13:11, ESV

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

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