

SEPTEMBER 2026

Beyond the Columns

First Presbyterian Church-Danville, VA

What's INSIDE

- 3 Music Department
- 5 Missions
- 7 Announcements
- 10 Session Highlights



Wrestling with the Word

September has always felt like a month of new beginnings. Summer begins to give way to autumn, school is in full swing, routines are reestablished, and calendars once again begin to fill. There is something about this time of year that reminds us that life is not meant to remain stagnant. We are made to grow.

That is true physically, intellectually, relationally, and, perhaps most importantly, spiritually.

The Apostle Paul writes in Colossians 2:6–7, *“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith.”* There is a wonderful picture in those words: **rooted, built up, established.** The Christian life is not simply about making a profession of faith and then remaining where we are. By God's grace, we are called to grow deeper roots, stronger faith, greater maturity, and a more faithful obedience to Christ.

That is an important word for us as a church.

First Presbyterian has a long history in Danville, dating back to 1826. We are part of something much larger than ourselves. Generations of Christians have worshiped in this congregation, taught children, cared for neighbors, served the community, proclaimed the gospel, and sought to be faithful to Jesus Christ. We have received a tremendous spiritual inheritance.

But an inheritance is not something we simply preserve behind glass. We are called to faithfully carry it forward.

Our calling is not merely to maintain the church as it has always been. Our calling is to remain faithful to the unchanging gospel while continually asking how God wants us to live that gospel in the world around us.

That requires growth.

Growth means becoming people who know God's Word more deeply, pray more faithfully, love our neighbors more genuinely, serve more willingly, forgive more readily, and trust God's providence more completely. It means moving beyond simply asking, *“What does the church offer me?”* and beginning to ask, *“How is Christ calling me to serve?”*

Continued on page 2

And perhaps that is one of the great challenges of the Christian life: **we can be busy without actually growing.**

We can attend worship without worshiping. We can hear sermons without listening. We can participate in church activities without becoming more like Christ. We can know a great deal about Christianity while still resisting the transforming work of the Holy Spirit in our own hearts.

The good news is that our growth does not ultimately depend upon our own strength.

The God who calls us is the God who sustains us.

The God who began a good work in us will carry it on to completion (Philippians 1:6). Our confidence is not that we are remarkably faithful Christians, but that we belong to a remarkably faithful Savior. Christ does not abandon His people halfway through the journey. He patiently sanctifies us, corrects us, strengthens us, and draws us closer to Himself.

So as we enter this new season together, I encourage each of us to consider one simple question:

Where is Christ calling me to grow?

Perhaps you need to grow in prayer. Perhaps you need to spend more time in Scripture. Perhaps there is a relationship in which you need to practice forgiveness. Perhaps God is calling you to serve in a new way. Perhaps you have become comfortable in your faith and need to recover a sense of spiritual hunger. Perhaps you simply need to slow down long enough to hear God's voice.

Whatever it may be, do not be afraid of growth.

God is not finished with us.

And He is not finished with First Presbyterian Church.

Let us enter September with renewed confidence—not confidence in ourselves, our programs, our plans, or our abilities, but confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us seek to be rooted more deeply in Him, built up together as His people, and established in the faith.

May God make us a congregation that is faithful to the gospel, generous in love, steadfast in hope, and always willing to follow wherever Christ leads.

I am grateful to serve alongside you, and I look forward to all that God will do among us in the months ahead.

Grace and peace,

Jackson

Music Department

September – Autumn Prayer, Devotion, and Individual Worship Practices

September 1st is the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation – Pause to pray with Christians around the world, giving thanks for God’s gift of Creation. What is something you can observe in the natural world that inspires gratitude to God for Creation? I am very fond of birds and the river, and soon we will see colorful autumn leaves again. Whisper a prayer of thanksgiving for the experience of seeing, hearing, or feeling the beauty of creation.

September 6th begins the Season of Preparation which lasts through World Communion Sunday on October 4th. During this season, we are called to pray daily for peace.

September 13th is Christian Formation Celebration Sunday. Let’s lean into lifelong discipleship in our church, families, and community. Go the extra mile to answer someone’s question after church; say a prayer for the youth group; or share something new you learned at church with a friend after Bible study, worship, or a meeting.

September 13th is Disability Inclusion Sunday. Presbyterians for Disability Concerns invites the church to affirm that every person is created in God’s image and has gifts to bring to the church. Though we have many gifts, we are united in the Holy Spirit and through *Imago Dei* as we all bear the image of God our Creator.

September 20th is Theological Education Sunday. Pray for our pastor and church leaders as they continue their lifelong theological education. Consider how you learned the tenets of our faith and revisit those lessons. I learned so much theology singing hymns beside my granny at church and reading them as I played the piano. Many of us learn theology through catechisms, Sunday school lessons, and some are blessed to attend seminary.

September 27th is Evangelism Sunday. I think often of the evangelism of my Christian mentors. For many Presbyterians, evangelism takes place through invitations and leading by example. Who do you know that could thrive and grow through Christian fellowship, discipleship, and love? We have all of that here together at First Presbyterian, and I do my best not to take it for granted. I try to remember to invite others to worship with us, share meals, and have conversations. Our church family is a priceless blessing – let’s share it with others.

*Special Prayer Request – Please pray for Mt. Vernon United Methodist and their new organist, Samuel Freedman. Sam is a sophomore aviation major at Averett University; he has played organ for many years (growing up in the Durham area). Sam practiced on our Schlicker organ last year while he was a freshman. Let’s celebrate with our neighbors at Mt. Vernon UMC as Sam begins his ministry there!

Back to Handbells and Community Choir!

If they haven’t already begun, all our community music groups will start rehearsals in early September. I am so excited to welcome DACAS and Dan River Ringers into our music department. If you or anyone you know is interested in singing or playing handbells, please let me know. We would be happy to have you join us! In case you missed them last month, below are the start dates and rehearsal times for all our “in house” community music groups.

- Danville Area Choral Arts Society (DACAS) – Your community choir
 - Meets 7:00-8:30pm on Monday nights from August 31st through November 16th, here in the choir room at FPC
 - Performances will be on Sunday, November 15th at 3:00pm, Mozart’s *Requiem*, and Monday, November 23rd at 7:00pm (Community Thanksgiving Service)
- Dan River Ringers – Community handbell choir, directed by Mark Gourley
 - Meets 6:00-7:00pm on Tuesday nights from September 1st through at least November 17th in the handbell room
 - Performances will be held jointly with DACAS on Sunday, Nov. 15th and Monday, Nov. 23rd. The group will also attend the Capital Area Handbell Festival in Raleigh on Saturday, November 7th.

- Danville Symphony Chorus – A chorus to accompany the Danville Symphony Orchestra’s December performances in Danville and South Boston
 - Meets 5:30-6:15pm on Thursday evenings in the sanctuary or choir room
 - Two final rehearsals will take place with the symphony on Tuesdays, November 24th and December 1st at 7:00pm
 - Performances will be on Saturday, December 5th at 7:30pm at George Washington High School and Sunday, December 6th at 5:00pm at The Prizery in South Boston.

You’re always welcome to join the choir! If you’d like to join for certain times of the year, or forever, please let me know. I will have music ready and waiting for you!

- First Presbyterian Church Handbell Choir – Leading in worship monthly
 - Meets 5:00-6:00pm on Tuesday evenings in the handbell room
- First Presbyterian Chancel Choir – Singing weekly and leading the congregation in song
 - Meets 4:30-5:30pm on Thursday afternoons, usually in the sanctuary

Remember, also, the whole congregation worships together in song, word, and deed. It is a blessing to worship with each of you, to hear your voice in the sanctuary, and to serve God together. Thank you for the opportunity to practice the musical vocation, and to reach our community in the beauty of this sacred space. I am so looking forward to all the celebrations this fall and winter – especially celebrating two centuries of glorifying God and making Christ known!

Peace and love of Christ,

Ashley

OUR PARTNERS IN MISSION

ABUKLOI SECONDARY SCHOOL

(Abukloi Foundation)Rembek, South Sudan

CHRIST FOR THE ISLAND WORLD Greensboro, NC, Indonesia

FRAISER, IAN & STEPAHNIE (VIA) Springdale, AR

PARTNER IN MISSION (FRONTIER FELLOWSHIP)

Indonesia & Central Asia

LEE, MATTHEW & TERESA ((Wycliffe Bible Translators) Dallas, TX

PERROW, WILLIAM & WANDA (Open Arms Foundation)

Medellin, Colombia

PARTNER IN MISSION (Paraclete Mission Group)US West Coast

SYDNOR, PAUL & REINHILD (TeachBeyond) Paris, France

WEYMEYER, DONALD & MARTHA (The Antioch Partners)

Merida, Yucatan, Mexico

Missions

CROP HUNGER WALK 2026

OCTOBER 4 – 3:00 P.M.

The CROP Hunger Walk is an annual event sponsored by Church World Service that supports people around the world and in our community who do not have enough food. Church World Service brings hope to 80 countries by providing immediate food assistance and helping people meet their own needs through gardens, water systems, wells, and livestock for milk. The Danville Area Walk sends about 70% of funds raised to Church World Service, while 30% stays in Danville to help God's Storehouse.

Since the walk began in Danville in 2008, the local CROP Hunger Walk team has raised \$331,657.88, including \$94,630.69 for God's Storehouse. First Presbyterian Church participated from the beginning through the efforts of our own Marie Louise Crane.

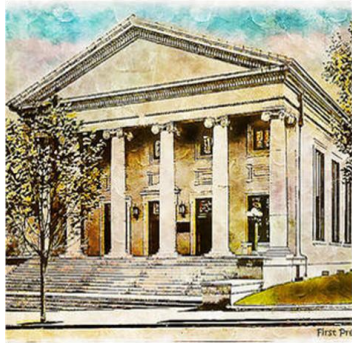
The walk is scheduled Sunday, October 4, at 3:00 p.m. in Ballou Park. You can help in one or both of the following ways:

- **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. ***Please include your T-shirt size on the sign-up sheet. The deadline for T-shirt orders is Sunday, September 13.***
- **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

A Call to Serve

This walk is an opportunity to put our faith and love for God into action by helping more people facing hunger. Please join our FPC family in this effort as an expression of gratitude and service.



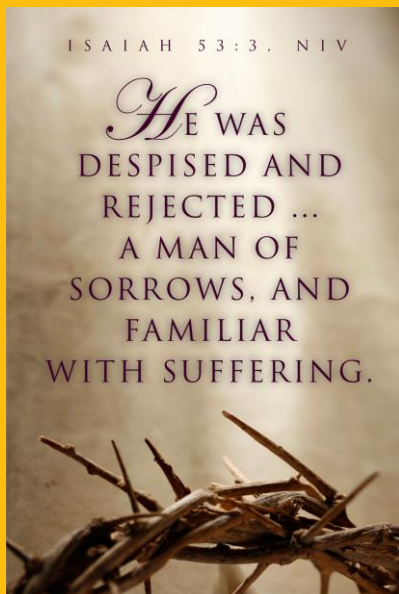
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, DANVILLE

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



3 Paige Wiseman
4 Sally Clark
7 Caitlyn Crews
Susie Crews
8 Millie Hatcher
Parker Davis
9 Val Ochoa
10 Jeff Davis
14 Anderson Miller
Sue Leggett Miller
16 Gail Jones
Sam Meadema
22 Ava Barrett
23 Rebecca Moore
24 Linda Dodson
26 Carol Strange
28 Lauren Mathena
Ashley Davis

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



The office will be closed
September 7th for Labor day.

Announcements

The Presbyterian Women's Day Circle will begin the new circle year on Monday, September 14th 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 will meet September 14th at 7pm at the home of Harriett Beale. All are welcome to join. If you have questions please call Ava Barrett 434-799-9022.

Sunday September 27th 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.

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



Youth will meet September 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30.
Saturday Lunch Ministry is September 26th.

FPC Beautification Committee

Report – 8-24-2026

The committee (Rebecca Moore, Charlotte Garrett and Harriet Beale) met with Eddie Blount to discuss how the committee should move forward and keep the Session informed of the projects chosen to work on around the church. This list will give you an idea what has happened and what is planned to happen soon. If you have any questions, please talk to Eddie or any of the committee members.

The following projects have been completed in the Dayschool/Dayschool Hall area in preparation for the start of school:

- Replaced ceiling tiles in the 4 year old classroom, painted ceiling, repaired window gap space by adding a gasket
- Dayschool hallway and classrooms -Painted Cabinets, painted cubbies, painted baseboards throughout, painted multiple corners where paint was damaged in hallway and classrooms, repaired ceiling and painted ceiling in storage area, repaired child safety locks on the cabinets in the nursery
- Additional Projects: Painted and Scraped all black hand railings entering the church, painted black lamp post on the cement landing beside the front steps, cleaned globes, replaced missing bulbs..... Missing and broken globes will be replaced
 - **\$1,500.00 (Supplies, Paint and Labor)**
- Electrical Repairs in Dayschool Classrooms (Approximate cost 350.00) Final cost to be billed by electrician – Replaced 4 – AC 220 outlets and converted them to 110 GSCI outlets
- Purchase 5 Blinds in the 4 Year old Classroom. 250.00 X 5 Windows = 1,250.00

Administrative Building – Quotes and Projects for near future

- The following are quotes for stripping and waxing Overby floors:
 - 2,700.00- Quote (+500.00 to move furniture) We will move forward with this quote.
 - 5,000.00 - Quote
 - 4,900.00 – Quote
 - Lowes – Blinds for 18 Windows in Overby Hall - 3,804.12
 - Blinds for Windows in Elevator/Storage Area behind Stage – 703.48
 - Blind for Window at landing on the 2nd floor above the elevator door 250.00
 - Blind for Window in Room 112 – 234.48
 - Blind for Window at Sutherlin Ave. Entrance Door Area – 250.00
 - *Additional blind quotes will be submitted
- Repair Ceiling Tiles in the Elevator/Storage Area behind the stage in Overby

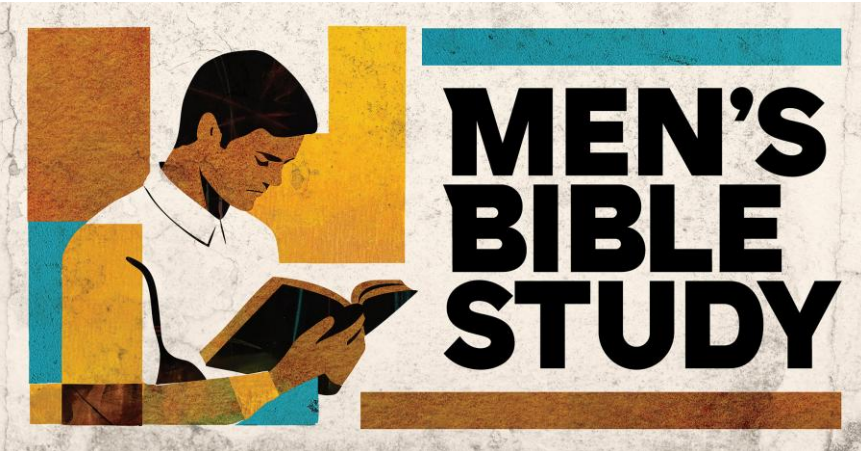
Purchased – Mini Split AC/Heat Unit for the Kitchen \$2,700.00+ Labor (1,500.00) +Electrician to install 208-230V
There is NO heat in the kitchen – Share cost of lift for the installation of the split unit with Bob Newman as his men repair & paint the outside trim on the Administrative Building and Across the back of the church
-Remove old AC units from the Kitchen, Repair & Paint Windows,

Continued on next page...

-Purchase 5 Blinds for the Kitchen 250.00/each

Additional Information:

1. Stanley Steamer will give an estimate on cleaning the following Areas:
 - Carpet at the Sutherlin Ave sanctuary entrance
 - Carpet in the Parlor,
 - Carpet in the Library
 - Carpet in the area near the Elevator on the Lower Level
 - Tile floor in the men's and ladies Bathrooms on the lower office area and the men's bathroom near the chapel
 - Some of the chairs in the Coffee Room
 2. Milton Hudson is going to confirm that he fabricated the first outside Office Sign and we will duplicate it for the Sutherlin Avenue entrance sign.
 3. Dee Ware from Diamond Paper Co. will contact Rebecca concerning questions about paper towel dispensers, soap dispensers and toilet paper dispensers.
 4. Update old brown signage around the church
 5. Get estimate on painting the trim in the area near the offices (Paint door casings, baseboards, shoe molding, the inside of the front and back doors and the door surround
 6. Paint or remove the vent in the library on the wall
-



Men's Lunch and Bible Study start Monday September 21 at noon. Please bring your own lunch we will meet in the Westminster room.

Session Highlights

FINANCE COMMITTEE

- Jackie informed session not to be alarmed by the overage for July, as that will balance itself out when money is moved from Endowments that were allocated.
- **STEWARDSHIP**
 - Kickoff Oct. 4 - Theme: We are a Reviving Church
 - Commitment Sunday: Nov. 8.
 - Information will be in the bulletin and newsletter

MEMBERSHIP

- Church picnic-Oct. 11 @ 5PM - catered BBQ and chicken tenders and those attending are asked to bring a dessert.
- T-shirts have been given out and there are 2 XL extra ones.

MISSIONS - Report from July 26, 2026

- Session approved that the following be granted funds from Freddie Lamb Fund.
 - Christ for the Island World
 - God's Pit Crew
 - House of Hope
 - God's Storehouse

PROPERTY

- House committee: Rebecca, Harriet and Charlotte did a walk through of the church and found things that need to be repaired, cleaned, removed, serviced, etc.. Money to fund the House committee is allocated in the property budget. Harriet had a list of things that needed to be done and prioritized the list. #1-Overbey Hall-waxing the floors and replacing the blinds.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

- Praise to the music we have been having each Sunday.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Offering: passing the plate should be continued
- Thank you note was read from scholarship recipient for receipt of their scholarship money.



Sunnyside Communities Update

Good morning Friends at Danville First Presbyterian Church,
I hope this email finds you well and enjoying these steamy summer days!
I'm reaching out to let you know that we have had Danville First Presbyterian Church's Evergreen Fellowship tile engraved and placed on the Evergreen Fellowship donor recognition wall, which on display at each community. Should you ever have the opportunity to visit King's Grant campus, you'll find the donor recognition wall in the main lobby right beside the elevator. Danville's tile was placed in the Mark 10:21 Circle, representing donors who have made cumulative lifetime gifts totaling between \$10,000-\$24,000. Tiles are listed in alphabetical order by last name.

We are so grateful for your congregation's generous support of Sunnyside Communities. Your compassion and kindness truly makes an impact on residents who find themselves in need of a helping hand. Thank you for bringing hope, dignity, and comfort to older adults in our community at a time when they need it most. On behalf of Sunnyside Communities staff and residents, please accept our deepest appreciation.
Warmest Regards,
Jen DuVon



Women's Ministry Leaders Luncheon

Saturday September 19th at 12 noon at North Main Baptist Church. RSVP by Sat. Sept. 12th to 434.250.5605.

Let's Talk About Life! Luncheon with speakers from Blue Ridge Pregnancy Clinic, Sidewalk Advocates for Life, Abortion Amendment and Surrendering the Secret Post Abortion Healing Ministry.

This Luncheon is being sponsored by Carolyn Winstead Bagley and Jane Kendrick. A flyer with more info is on the bulletin board behind the sanctuary.



New member class/Presbyterian 101

We will meet in the Westminster Room Thursday September 24th at 6:30pm for a “What does it mean to be Presbyterian class?” All are welcome.

Beyond the Columns

September 2026

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

937 Main Street

Danville VA 24541-1809

Website: www.fpcdanville.com

Phone: 434.792.7822

