



THE COLUMNS

February 2020, Volume 58, Issue 2



First Presbyterian Church, Waynesboro, VA

First Presbyterian Church of Waynesboro is a community-minded congregation living out the love of Christ as we serve one another with humility, gentleness, and patience through God's grace.

Sunday Morning Worship Schedule

11:00 AM-Worship Service; Sanctuary

Church Office Hours

Monday - Wednesday - 8:00 - 2:30

Thursday - 8:00 - 4:30

Friday - Closed

In the immortal words of the bard, "*Adieu, adieu, parting is such sweet sorrow.*" Leaving this place is a truly bittersweet moment. After all, the Shenandoah Valley has been our home for eleven years. That may not seem like much to some, but in many ways, it's the only home we've known! Obviously, while Myra and I will miss the valued relationships we have formed over these last five years at First Presbyterian, at the same time, we are very much looking forward to our new adventure in France. It's strange how feelings of sadness and anticipation are not mutually exclusive, but one can feel both simultaneously. As sad and as anxious as the prospect of leaving is, the opportunity to experience how the Christian faith is expressed within a different language and culture is too important to pass up. And ever since I announced last December that I would be departing, folks have had many questions about my upcoming call. So, I will endeavor to answer in greater detail a few of the common questions I have received over the past several weeks:

Where are you going? Myra and I will be living and serving in the city of Saint-Étienne in the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region in southeast France—a Richmond-sized community (171,000 population) in the foothills of the French Alps, roughly 60km (37 miles) southwest of Lyon, or about 480km (300 miles) south of Paris. The city is named for Saint Stephen, the early apostle and martyr whose story is recounted in Acts 6:8-7:60. Although the earliest record of the city dates from the Middle Ages, by French standards Saint-Étienne is a relatively modern city, arising to prominence in the 19th century as a manufacturing center for munitions and coal mining. However, more recently the city has established itself as a center for design, opening the prestigious *Musée d'Art Moderne* (Museum of Modern Art) in 1987 and hosting a major design festival (or "biennale") every two years. The city is home to a professional soccer team, AS Saint-Étienne, commonly known as "Les Verts" (The Greens) which, at least for now, is the most successful franchise in "Ligue 1" history, having won the league championship ten times over their 101-year history.

Surprisingly enough, the climate in Saint-Étienne is comparable to the Shenandoah Valley, resting at an approximate elevation (1,300-1,400 feet—although some parts of the city are located over 3,500 feet). The city's geography and climate lend themselves to frequent snowfalls, being one the snowiest places in France. The city borders the *Parc Naturel Régional du Pilat* (Pilat National Regional Park), a popular hiking, biking and wine-growing destination.

Who will you be working for? With the blessing of the Presbyterian Church (USA), I have accepted a call with L'Eglise Protestante Unie de France (The United Protestant Church of France, or EPUF), which at 270,000 members, is the largest Protestant denomination in France. Although Protestants in France have been present since

the time of the Reformation, the present denomination was founded in 2013 by the merger of the EPUF with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of France. Even so, Protestants represent only about 2% of the population of France. The EPUF consists of 1,000 congregations with 450 ministers in its employ. While Catholicism has been the dominant religion for much of France's history, the culture has remained highly secularized since the era of the French Revolution (1789-1799). Recent trends show significant increases among non-believers—those who identify as having no religious affiliation—having grown from 15.5% of the population in 1986, to almost 40% by 2016.

What will you be doing there? In the United States, a typical church has at least one pastor working full-time. With less than one minister for every two congregations, the role of the pastor has evolved somewhat for French Protestants in the EPUF. When I arrive in Saint-Étienne, I will be partnered with another area pastor to oversee church operation within a particular region, while the day-to-day governance of individual congregations is accomplished by local lay leaders. While under ideal circumstances there would be four or five pastors working in the Saint-Étienne area, there will only be two of us for the foreseeable future. Pastors in the EPUF assume more of an administrative role, serving as a theological and ecclesiastical resource upon which individual congregations can draw, with the purpose of equipping lay leaders to perform sacraments, conduct funerals and the like. My understanding is that I, along with the other pastor, will be responsible for conducting Sunday services in the city center of Saint-Étienne, after which we will spend a considerable portion of our week visiting other congregations in the surrounding region.

Are the beliefs of French Protestants and Presbyterians the same? They are very similar, since both stem from a common religious tradition. While Presbyterians trace our ancestry through Scotland and John Knox and the settling of the American colonies, French Protestants assume a more direct route to our Reformation origins. Many of the major figures during the Reformation of the 16th century, like John Calvin, Martin Bucer and William Farel, were French. Like French Protestants, Presbyterians also consider ourselves to be “Reformed”, that is to say, we elect representatives from among the community of believers who are charged with the governance and maintenance of the church. And while the principles are the same, the implementation has varied according to the needs of the church. Even so, the organization of the EPUF and the PC(USA) share much in common, each consisting of local and regional governing bodies operating under the auspices of a national church. In other words, they love their committees, too!

Like the Presbyterian Church (USA), the EPUF is considered theologically liberal within the broad spectrum of Christian belief, recently allowing for the ordination of women as well as the blessing of same-gender unions (marriage being the jurisdiction of the state, not the church). The EPUF is also a “confessional” church, that is to say, that the beliefs of the denomination are expressed through a series of theological statements designed to articulate Christian understanding of scripture within certain historical and cultural circumstances. The most recent of these confessions for the EPUF was adopted in 2017. The statement echoes many foundational Presbyterian beliefs, including faith in Jesus Christ, trust in the three persons of the Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit), the universal nature of sin, justification by faith and the authority of the scriptures.

Are you fluent in French? I would say that I have a functional knowledge of the French language—I would not claim fluency by any stretch of the imagination. I managed to survive all of my interviews in French, and the *Commission des Ministeres* (“Council of Ministers”) has recommended that I take some remedial classes once I arrive on site. But make no mistake, after hours of conversation online and in person, they know what they're getting! (As it turns out, Myra's French is better than mine, mais ne lui direz pas ça!)

What will you do with your free time? Travel and explore! Aside from getting to know Saint-Étienne, it's a big continent. First opportunity we get, Myra and I will head to Geneva, Switzerland—home of the Protestant Reformation and only about a three-hour drive from Saint-Étienne. Other locations on the short-list are Florence, Edinburgh, Vienna, Barcelona and Normandy!

Well, I suppose that's about that. ("C'est fini", as it were.) As I reflect upon the last several years, the list of people to thank for their support and counsel is far too great for the purposes of a simple newsletter, but if you would indulge me, I would like to single out just a few: Colleen Cash (who has been with me on this journey the longest), Clerk of Session Betsy Ruehl (a true Presbyterian if there ever was one), Roger and Kimberlea Daggy (everyone needs a Roger and Kimberlea in their life), Joyce Tipton (arguably, my number one fan), Joan Berry (who has generously provided me with a steady supply of shortbread over the years), along with the "Three Wise Men": Mark Henderson, Cary Bennett and Steve Doherty, as well as all leaders past and present who have helped make this church into a truly welcoming and caring place, not least of which are the saints, Sandy Sandquist and Jayne Powell, whose voices are deeply missed. I know I'm omitting many others, but you know who you are! Much love to you all!

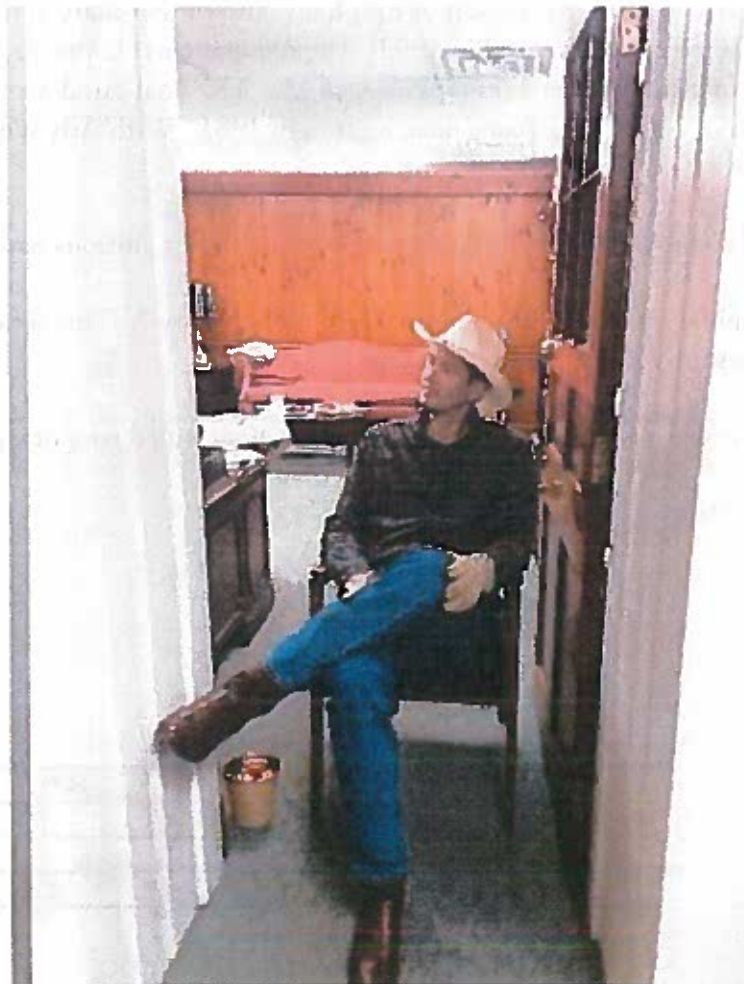
As we will have a new address and phone numbers, we'll let you know how to get in touch with us once we get settled. In the meantime:

« Que le Dieu de la persévérance et du réconfort vous donne de vivre en plein accord les uns avec les autres comme le veut Jésus Christ, afin que tous ensemble, d'une seule voix, vous rendiez gloire au Dieu et Père de notre Seigneur Jésus Christ. »

— Romains 15:5-6

Grace & Peace (*Allez les Verts!*),

George





**PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN**

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

2019-2020 PW Horizons Bible Study

Love Carved in Stone

Lesson Five: Words of Love: Hold Your Marriages Sacred
The Seventh Word

Scripture: Exodus 20:14, Genesis 2:18-25, and John 8:1-11

Purpose: To understand God's desire for deep and faithful relationships in the human family and how behavior that has no boundaries can devastate people and communities.

Wednesday, February 12, 2020

Meeting Location: Brunswick Dining Room at Summit Square

Lesson: 10:30 a.m. with Joyce Tipton - DVD followed by discussion

Volunteer leadership during pastoral transition

Lunch (optional): 11:30 a.m. - Choose from Tavern Menu

Welcome members of First Presbyterian Church and friends!

FAITH & FICTION BOOK CLUB

The Faith & Fiction Book Club will meet in the Parlor on February 20 at 10:00 to discuss its future. One of the options under consideration is using prepared Book Club selections available at the public library. Contact Anne Johnson (942-3222) with any queries or suggestions.

PRAYER AT A NEW BEGINNING

Thank you, Lord, for the beginning of a new year as we step out into the unknown future. Lord, we pray that You would be with us, leading and guiding us, teaching and drawing us ever closer to each other and to You. Thank You that your steadfast love never ceases and that Your mercies are new every morning - great is Your faithfulness, O Lord.

Father, we know that these times in which we live are becoming fraught with difficulties and increasingly stressful, and yet, Father, our hope is in You. For You are our faithful God who has promised to never leave us nor forsake us. Father, as we step into a new threshold with its inevitable problems and pain, we place our hands into Yours, for we know, Father, that there is no safer place to be than walking in fellowship with You.

Lord, may we be used for Your praise and glory, in Jesus' name. Amen

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Christian Ed is going thru some changes.

Presbyterian Women is taking on the task of teaching thru the use of a DVD to prepare lessons led by various volunteers. The ladies will surely miss their lessons and time with Rev. Chapman.

Adult Sunday School is in the midst of re-organization. It is my hope to have this up and running by March. A heartfelt thank-you to Myra Chapman for her dedication and support for this class and the church.

With the help of our wonderful volunteers, Children's Sunday School is going strong.

Colleen Cash

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Session held a Stated Session Meeting on January 14, 2020.

- Mike Cunningham was elected Commissioner to the Presbytery Meeting on February 22 at FPC.
- Warner Sandquist was elected Church Treasurer for a one-year term.
- Steve Doherty was elected Session representative on the Church Nominating Committee.

A member to this Committee, Class of 2023, will be elected at the Annual Meeting.

- PW will continue its study of Horizon Bible Study Love Carved in Stone using a DVD and volunteer leadership.
- Plans for the February Shenandoah Presbytery Meeting at FPC are being coordinated by a team from Presbytery and Colleen Cash.
- Session approved the 2020 Budget Proposal.
- Session approved hiring of the FPC Preschool Director, pending successful completion of background check.

Following discussion of Leadership Restructuring which originated at the Joint Session-Diaconate meeting in December, Session approved curtailing the number of deacons to one per class (3 total) to coordinate pastoral care responsibilities among congregation members on a volunteer basis.

This change in FPC bylaws will be voted up at the Annual Meeting.

- Session approved a Love Offering for Rev. Chapman.
- Session approved the extension of Rev. Chapman's Board of Pensions packet for the period February-April 2020.

General Presbyter Bronwyn Boswell answered questions regarding procedure for proceeding after Rev. Chapman's departure.

The Annual Congregational Meeting was held on January 26, 2020.

- The minutes of three Congregational Meetings in 2019 were approved.
- The Annual Report to the Congregation for the Year 2019 was distributed.
- Connie Sachlis was elected to the Church Nominating Committee, Class of 2023.
- A change in the Church Bylaws was approved: "The Diaconate shall consist of three (3) Deacons, who shall be elected by the congregation to serve a term of three (3) years." This change is also reflected in the section on Nominations & Elections.
- Session approved the dissolution of the pastoral relationship between First Presbyterian Church and Rev. George Chapman, III, effective February 3, 2020.

All Session and Congregational Meetings are opened and closed with prayer.

PRESBYTERY MEETING TO BE HELD AT FPC

Saturday, February 22, 2020

Shenandoah Presbytery, composed of churches from Winchester to Lexington, holds four meetings a year. Presbytery accepted our invitation to hold the February meeting on our premises.

Registration starts at 8:30 with lite refreshments. The meeting begins at 9:30 with a worship service in the sanctuary. Lunch will be upstairs in the Fellowship Hall about noon.

149 ministers, voting elders and guests attended the November meeting held near Winchester. Many folks have volunteered to help with parking, greeting, selling lunch tickets and the like. If you would like to help with this major event, please contact Colleen (949-8366) in the church office, who will be coordinating the meeting. We can always use a food server, floaters, and/or a smiling face or two!

Since our church will be hosting the February Presbytery meeting, the February Newsletter of the Shenandoah Presbytery chose to highlight us as "Church of the Month".

See next page for George's article

February

After Church Refreshments

Feb 2 Jeannie Curry & Sandi Henderson
Feb 9 Terry Crickenberger & Joe Earhart
Feb 16 Jen Jones
Feb 23 Ruth Kelley & Ann Nelson

Greeters

Danny & Pam Leech
Mark & Sandi Henderson
Susan Johnson
Ruth Kelley

Liturgists

Feb 2 Bill Pannill
Feb 9 Jen Jones
Feb 16 Steve Doherty
Feb 23 Terry Crickenberger

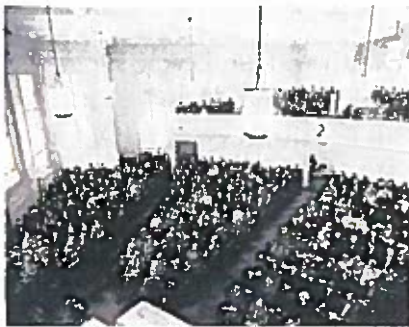
Mark 12:30
And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.



Artist's reconstruction of the original cabin chapel for First Presbyterian Church around the turn of the 18th century.



Rev. William H. Sheppard
(1865-1926)



Worshippers gather in the former sanctuary for communion, 1959

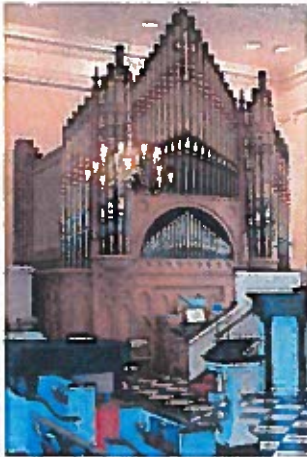


A devastating fire in 1983 destroyed FPC's sanctuary wing.

Following the Scotch-Irish migration through the Shenandoah Valley, the city of Waynesboro was founded in 1798 at western foot of the Blue Ridge near Afton Pass. City founders dedicated a parcel of land with the purpose of forming a Presbyterian chapel of nearby Tinkling Spring Presbyterian Church. In 1824, the original log cabin structure was replaced by a brick building which served the congregation for 54 years. First Presbyterian Church was incorporated in 1846, and by 1878 the congregation had grown strong enough to build a permanent structure along Main Street. In 1911, the congregation moved to a Greek Revival building on its present site. A fire in 1983 destroyed the sanctuary wing of the church. The six Corinthian columns which decorate the front entrance were the only structures left standing.

A new sanctuary would reopen in 1986, featuring an 1893 Woodbury & Harris tracker pipe organ, purchased from a shuttered church in Providence, Rhode Island. A strong music ministry remains highly important to the worship and outreach of our congregation. The present sanctuary was originally conceived as a multipurpose community space. FPC plays host to many local organizations and features regular concerts by the Waynesboro Symphony Orchestra, which offers free concerts throughout the year. Starting in 2020, FPC will enter into a more formal arrangement, whereby the Waynesboro Symphony will assume a permanent residence in our building.

Throughout First Presbyterian's long history, mission has remained at the heart of our congregational identity. Members were instrumental in the founding of Waynesboro public schools and developing the town into a thriving independent city. FPC is the home congregation of the first African-American Presbyterian missionary, Rev. William H. Sheppard, whose mission activity in the Congo was instrumental to exposing human rights abuses and atrocities perpetrated by the Belgian occupation in the 19th century. Over time, FPC has organized six chapels, four of which produced independent Presbyterian congregations in our area (Second, Glen Kirk, Westminster, Smyrna).



The 1893 Woodbury & Harris tracker organ following the reconstruction of the sanctuary.



*Rev. George W. Chapman III:
Defender of the Faith*



As we discern God's call for the 21st century, FPC has placed a renewed emphasis on mission and outreach to our local community. In the last five years, we have dramatically increased our mission budget and our outreach to food insecure households in our area through an expanded Food Bank, and regular participation in Meals on Wheels and Disciples' Kitchen. Our preschool also offers scholarship support for low-income working families. Through our gifts, we support a PC(USA) mission team in the Middle East, two orphans through our presbytery's partnership with Illubabor Children's Agape Response (iCARE) network, disaster relief through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and other projects too numerous to mention.

In 2013, during the wider conversation regarding the ordination of LGBTQ persons, many in the church leadership who disagreed with our denomination's evolving views attempted to lead First Presbyterian out of the PC(USA). After a straw poll revealed that they lacked the necessary support for such an undertaking, the minister and most members of session resigned to form their own congregation. As a consequence, FPC entered into a rebuilding phase, calling a new pastor and reaffirming our commitment to being a truly welcoming and inclusive Christian body for ALL people in our community—and for this commitment, we have been greatly blessed.

The current pastor of First Presbyterian is the Rev. George W. Chapman III. He earned his divinity degree at Union Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond, VA (formerly Union-PSCE), where he met his very lovely and very patient wife, Myra. George served the Buena Vista Presbyterian Church for six years before being installed as pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Waynesboro in June of 2015. Recently, George accepted a call to serve in the United Protestant Church of France (L'Église Protestante Unie de France, or EPUF) in the city of Saint-Étienne starting in March 2020.

PRESCHOOL



Children and teachers alike were excited to come back after Christmas break, ready to learn about Winter and Snow.

Several bikes were purchased with the profits from the corn hole board sale.

Looking forward into February: It's a time to make Valentines and take our trip to the Post Office. Students will also be having their midterm assessments.





February

2 - Terry Crickenberger

5 - Anne Johnson

7 - Cathy Cunningham and Nancy Snyder

9 - Leon Harouff

11 - Ray Quillen

15 - Glennis Bear

16 - Amber Brown and Sandi Henderson

18 - Phyllis Poluito and Valerie Purcell

27 - Arnett Tomey



To my kind and thoughtful Church family:

Thank you one and all for the love you expressed to me during my recovery from surgery.

I am so thankful to each of you for giving my heart such a lift. You are the BEST!!!!

Sincerely, Nancy Snyder

I want to thank everyone for my lovely cards, notes and meals provided to me while I have been confined at home with my broken foot and sprained ankle. This has really been something. It has now been four weeks and only four more to go with the boot and crutches. I am still supposed to stay completely off of it for four more weeks. In addition, I have a remodeling project going on in my family room with new hardwood floors being laid, so I am confined to my bedroom :(Anyway, this too shall pass but I want to thank everyone for their kindness!

Love, Sandy (Curry)

Editor—Betsy Ruehl (etruehl@ntelos.net) **Layout**—Colleen Cash

Reporters—Members of the Congregation & Staff

COLUMNS Mailing List

Anyone unable to pick up the monthly COLUMNS at the Church the beginning of each month may request that the newsletter be mailed to them. Please remember to give your new address to the Church Office when you move. We do not want you to miss any of the Church news. Just contact the Church Office (949-8366 or

church@firstpresway.com

Sermons, bulletins and many Columns articles can be found on the church website: firstpresway.org

Deadlines: COLUMNS: 20th of the month Bulletin: Wednesday

Prayers for Health and Other Concerns:

Kings Daughters Nursing & Rehab: Mary Frost

The Legacy: Eloise Morris

Shenandoah Nursing Home: Rubye Schwab

Baldwin Park: Lily Tichenor

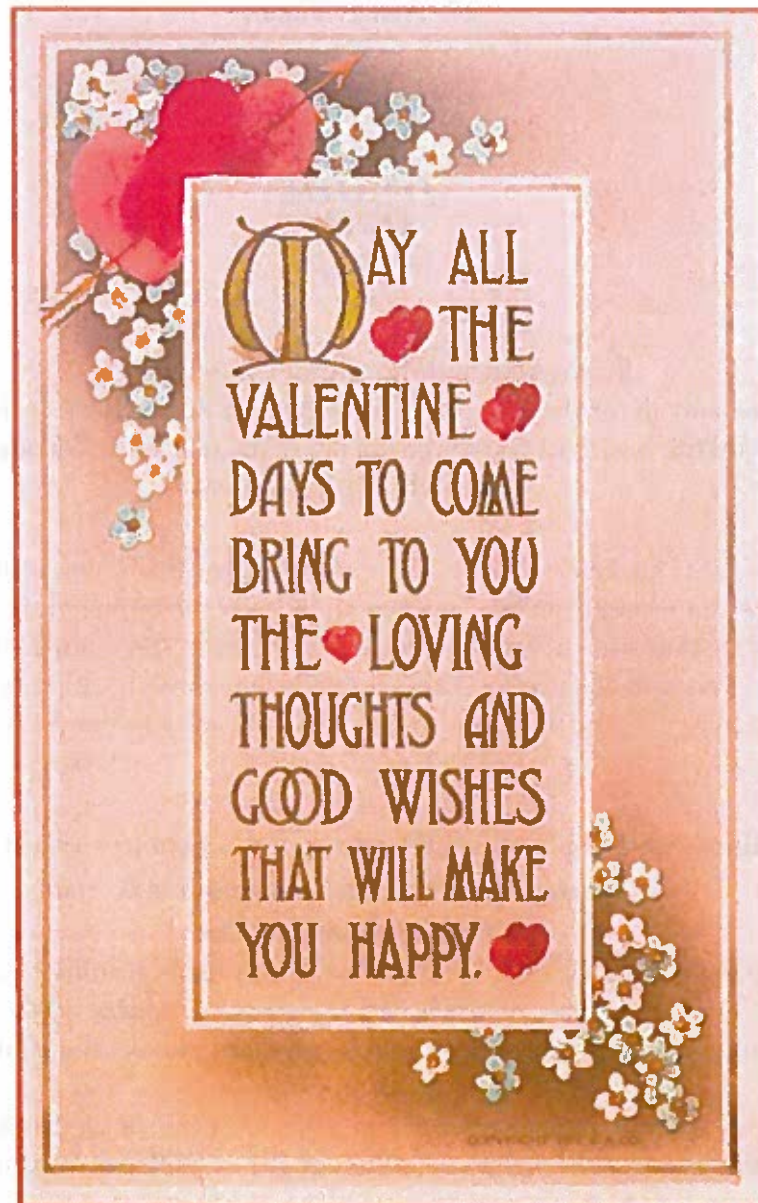
Summit Square: Aileen Kennedy, Ray & Ruth Quillen, Lillian Hryshkanych

Home: Dick Huff, Nancy Garber, Mary Ultee, Edie Lawrence, Mike Cunningham

Friends and Family: Kaiser family (Anne Harris), Andy & Jean Robeson, Wanda Braden, Lucy Colbert, Charlie Fairchilds, Steve Dowdy (Cunninghams), Nancy Vilain, Chris Davenport (Jen Jones), Danny Smith (Nancy Hypes), Jennifer & Charlotte Sergeant (Kathy Brown), Emily Bardeen (Sandi Henderson), Sara Verwymeren (Hashagens), Kathy Doyle (Cindy & Rodger Doyle), Peter Johnson, Lawrence Maddox, Joan Blazek, Glenn Fields, Sr. (Jen Jones), Jim & Pat Lewis (Sandy Bellamy), Bill & Ruth Metzel (Joyce Tipton), Grayson Coleman (Colleen Cash), Carl & Marianna Callaway (Ruth Kelley)

Military: Jeremiah Henderson, Carson Craig

Missionaries: Elmarie & Scott Parker, PC(USA) Regional Liaisons to Iraq, Syria & Lebanon



February Calendar

Sunday, February 2

9:45 AM Children's Bible School Room 204
10:00 AM Choir Rehearsal Sanctuary
11:00 AM Worship Service Sanctuary

Wednesday, February 5

7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal Choir Room

Friday, February 7

12:15 PM First Friday Concert with Light Lunch

Sunday, February 9

9:45 AM Children's Bible School Room 204
10:00 AM Choir Rehearsal Sanctuary
11:00 AM Worship Service Sanctuary - Bronwen Boswell

Tuesday, February 11

2:30 PM Session Meeting Room 212

Wednesday, February 12

7:00 PM Choir Rehearsal Choir Room

Thursday, February 13

2-4 PM Food Bank

Sunday, February 16

9:45 AM Children's Bible School Room 204
10:00 AM Choir Rehearsal Sanctuary
11:00 AM Worship Service Sanctuary

Thursday, February 20

10:00 AM Faith & Fiction Book Club Parlor

Saturday, February 22

Presbytery Meeting

Sunday, February 23

9:45 AM Children's Bible School Room 204
10:00 AM Choir Rehearsal Sanctuary
11:00 AM Worship Service Sanctuary - Nancy Meehan Yao

Wednesday, February 26 Ash Wednesday

Thursday, February 27

2-4 PM Food Bank

Mailing Address

P. O. Box 877
Waynesboro, VA 22980

Phone

540.949.8366

Fax

540.949.5750

E-mail

church@firstpresway.com

Website

www.firstpresway.org

Church Office Hours

Monday-Wednesday

8 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Thursday

8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Pastor

Rev. George W. Chapman, III
gchapman@firstpresway.com

Administrative Assistant

Mrs. Colleen Cash
ccash@firstpresway.com

Preschool Director

Director of Music

Mr. Roger Daggy
firstpreswaymusic@gmail.com

Music Associate

Mrs. Kimberlea Daggy
firstpreswaymusic@gmail.com

Audio/Visual Technician

Mr. Craig Cavanaugh

Maintenance Technician

Mr. Michael Griffith

Custodian

Mrs. Caroleia Strandberg

Child Care Attendants

Nate & Karalyn Rudin

