

**First
Presbyterian
Church**
of Waynesboro, Virginia

The Columns -Online.

November 3, 2021 | Waynesboro, Virginia | *a newsletter supplement.*

A Pastoral Letter

Maybe you remember the Bible story of David and Goliath. The one about a shepherd boy's victorious encounter with an 8-foot foe. It's a story that holds lessons of faith, trust, bravery, and resilience. It tells of a 40-day standoff between David's Israelites and Goliath's Philistines. It was a battle of two enemy armies frozen in place and at volatile levels of hostility.

For more than a year and a half, we've been facing down an invisible giant in COVID-19. The virus has broken down the bodies, lungs, and lives of over 860,000 people in our Commonwealth. A recent letter from Augusta Health shared that COVID cases in our area are as high as they've been since January of this year. Nurses, doctors, and other hospital workers—our neighbors—are exhausted from this constant struggle. The virus itself does its work to break down our bodies, lungs, and lives. Our response to the virus has led to broken relationships, irreconcilable differences of opinion, unprincipled fear, and a crippling, toxic spirit within and between us.

Some of the unvaccinated and unmasked among us have asserted that their faith in God protects them from this virus. Some claim religious exemptions



continued below

COVID average Incidence Rate per 100,000
from the Virginia Dept of Health.

Augusta County:	14.2
Harrisonburg	14.0
Rockingham	20.6
Staunton	20.1
Waynesboro	20.8
Average/100K	17.85

Level of Community Transmission

High

Substantial

Moderate

Low

2 Sundays for the Future

November 14 and 21, we will again celebrate our common life and talk about the future of FPC.

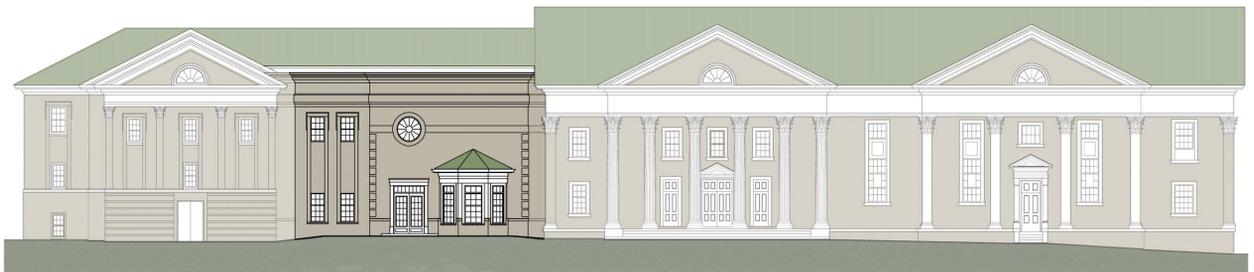
Following worship we'll adjourn to the Fellowship Hall, where lunch will be provided.



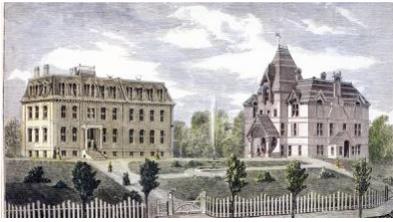
The first Sunday will focus on **Finances** - one of the most important, yet misunderstood facets of the church's ministry. We will examine the challenges and opportunities of the current situation.

The second Sunday we will discuss the direction of our mission and ministry for the future.

If you care about FPC, then plan to attend both Sundays.



This Week in History.



Boston Female Medical College established, November 1, 1848
-the first medical school for women



Daniel Boone born November 2, 1734



First and only flight of the Hughes H-4 Hercules, AKA the 'Spruce Goose' November 2, 1947



'Gunpowder Plot' to blow up English Parliament fails November 5, 1605



Laika orbits earth aboard Sputnik II November 3, 1957



The Tomb of King Tutankhamen rediscovered by archaeologist Howard Carter November 4, 1922

Letter, *cont.*

to the vaccine and mask wearing, asserting that their faith in God protects them from COVID-19, making God into some sort of divine force field, some shield of defense, some seal against germs.

David was a faithful Israelite. He knew his God would be with him as he stepped into the giant's shadow, but David never imagined his faith in God meant being able to face Goliath without his sling and river stones. Doing such a thing isn't faith, it's unpreparedness. Never is faith a blind and unequipped trust. Trusting in God, David equipped himself for this fight, yet David engaged the enemy not for himself but for the sake of his fellow Israelites and the God in whom he placed his trust.

Getting a vaccine is not a lack of trust in God, it's like David looking at the exhausted soldiers on the front lines and recognizing that "scooping up the stones" gives them hope, too. In our case, these exhausted soldiers are on the front lines at Augusta Health.

So, get a vaccine. Wear a mask in public places. And trust that God will see us through to face down this invisible giant.

- Rev. April H. Cranford*
Pastor, Westminster Presbyterian Church, Waynesboro, VA
- Rev. Barrett Owen*
Senior Pastor, First Baptist Church, Waynesboro, VA
- Rev. Benjamin R. Badgett*
St. John's Episcopal Church, Waynesboro, VA
- Rev. Bill Jones*
Pastor, Basic United Methodist Church, Waynesboro, VA
- Deacon Brian Hutcherson*
St. John's Episcopal Church, Waynesboro, VA
- Rev. Dr. José F. Colón*
Latino Pastor, Basic United Methodist Church, Waynesboro, VA
- Elder Les T. Howard*
Pastor Elect, St. James Baptist Church, Waynesboro, VA
- Rev. Patrick Ryan*
Pastor, Tinkling Spring Presbyterian Church, Fishersville, VA
- Rev. Paul H. Pingel*
Pastor, Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Waynesboro, VA
- Rev. Rolo B. Castillo*
Pastor, St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church, Waynesboro, VA



"Summer is behind us; winter is ahead. I guess we're on course."

Music Notes for this week.



This week, we welcome Dr. David Berry to First Presbyterian Church. He is Associate Professor of Piano and chair of the Department of Music at Eastern Mennonite University, where he has taught since 2017. Dr. Berry was also recently named the new Artistic Director of the Shenandoah Valley Bach Festival. He holds a Bachelor of Music from the Eastman School of Music, and Master and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees from the Juilliard School. Dr. Berry will play two of his own hymn arrangements on Sunday morning: *O For A Thousand Tongues To Sing* for the Introit and *Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho* for the Special Music. We are blessed to worship with Dr. Berry this week!

Our Worship Channels

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