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THE COLUMNS

First Presbyterian Church, Waynesboro, VA

**May 2025, Volume 63, Issue 5**

*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.*

*15  Toward evening the disciples approached him. “We’re out in the country and it’s getting*

*late. Dismiss the people so they can go to the villages and get some supper.”*

*16  But Jesus said, “There is no need to dismiss them. You give them supper.”*

*17  “All we have are five loaves of bread and two fish,” they said.*

*18-21  Jesus said, “Bring them here.” Then he had the people sit on the grass. He took the*

*five loaves and two fish, lifted his face to heaven in prayer, blessed, broke, and gave the*

*bread to the disciples. The disciples then gave the food to the congregation. They all ate*

*their fill. They gathered twelve baskets of leftovers. About five thousand were fed.*

*Matthew 14:15-21*

*When in doubt, always quote scripture. This is not one of the rules I have painstakingly collected over the years,*

*but perhaps it should be. Last month, we began with insights into basketball; for May, we are diving back into*

*the New Testament for illumination.*

*We are conditioned, I think, to look at the miraculous as magical, the theological equivalent of alchemy. Just as*

*the medieval alchemist sought to turn lead into gold, and thus enrich themselves without labor, we look at*

*miracles at least in part, as labor-saving plot devices: healing without the effort of treatment; gifts that eliminate*

*the need for impossible choices; rescue that makes of us passive recipients of grace. But, in the words of yet*

*another of my rules, God is not a magician; what we call miracles are signs of God at work in our midst - and*

*God hates to work alone.*

*In the feeding of the multitude, the disciples recognize a need - the crowd is getting hungry and the day is*

*mostly gone. This is a real problem, they know, but the best they can come up with is to send the crowds*

*back to town, where they might find some supper. But Jesus has something else in mind; not just pushing*

*the problem down the road, but actually doing something about the hunger of the people. He asks what*

*food is available, and is told, 5 rolls and 2 cooked fish - the lunch of a well-prepared young man. Jesus*

*then does the miraculous, but the miracle isn&#39;t magic- Jesus does not make everyone feel full, or have*

*manna fall from the heavens. The miracle happens through the work of the disciples. It is the disciples*

*who organize the people, getting them to sit down in an orderly fashion; they who oversee the distribution*

*of the loaves and fishes, making sure everyone is fed; even making sure the leftovers are collected. And*

*that, friends, leads us to Rule #10:*

Dear members and friends of First Presbyterian Church,

Lately I have become an adherent of thrift shopping, and of thrift-gifting. I f ind that claiming someone else’s disposed-of item, either as a sought-after treat for myself or as a sought-after gift for a family member or friend, is meaningful for my spirits and sustainable for my purse.

When I shop secondhand, the objects I find are often not just things or stuff – they are one-of-a-kind gems that I wouldn’t be able to find elsewhere. Sometimes I even find brand-new items, which is one of my favorite thrills of the process (...with no offense to those among us who love antiquing!). And even if the items are actually old, they always feel new-to-me. I explained this to my daughter the other day about a pair of shoes: they were in ‘play condition’ – i.e. they’d been worn before, but they still had lots of life left in them – and so although they were not new, they were still *new-to-us*.

As spring blooms in the Shenandoah Valley, this sort of renewal is resonating in my heart. Especially at Eastertide, as we exchange the traditional greeting “Christ is risen! / He is risen indeed!” Liturgically, in the month of May, we have Jesus’s *new-to-us* body. It is a body that’s familiar to Jesus, but it is also different. It bears scars of his violent and painful crucifixion, and at the same time, it is a living, moving body – a body that Jesus uses to *breathe* the gift of the Holy Spirit onto his disciples, like a mini-Pentecost.

Even Jesus’s closest friends experience Jesus’s embodied self differently. As we heard in John’s gospel on the Sunday after Easter, Thomas questions Jesus about the marks on his hands and his side. Thomas yearns to reach out and experience Jesus’s body.

How does *our* body of Christ – our congregation – look and feel different, from past iterations and forms of our church? As I shared with you from the pulpit after Easter, to quote Dr. Ryan Bonfiglio, Old Testament professor at Emory University’s Candler School of Theology in Atlanta: *Christ’s resurrected body is going to look different from his former body which died.*

At FPC, how can we continue to preserve and hone our past traditions of service and hospitality, while embracing the vitality of our preschool, our food bank, and our transition to space-sharing with Fishburne?

I am so excited to faithfully discern these questions alongside you, as the summer approaches.

May the grace & peace of our risen God be with you, today and in the days to come. And may we rejoice that our body of Christ, our congregation, is being made *new-to-us*, even now.



-Samantha

MAY MUSIC NOTES



What a glorious spring we’ve experienced in the Valley! The cool temperatures have allowed spring to take its time in revealing the beauty of the season, with dogwoods and tulips still holding their blooms. We continue to celebrate Easter this month with music rejoicing in the Risen Lord.

On 4 May, the choir will sing *Spirit of the Living God* by Daniel Iverson (1890-1977). He was ordained in the Presbyterian Church in 1914 and served congregations in Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina. Iverson also founded the Shenandoah Presbyterian Church in Miami, Florida, where he served until his retirement in 1951. Iverson said he wrote the hymn in 1926 after hearing a sermon on the Holy Spirit. *Spirit of the Living God* was sung at the crusade and then printed in leaflets to sing at other services.

As Rev. Coggins will be away on the first Sunday of May, we will celebrate communion on the 11th – Mother’s Day. The choir will sing Jay Althouse’s *At the Table of the Lord.* It is one of more than 800 choral works by the composer who has also served on numerous boards of musical publishing houses in America.

The third Sunday of May brings a pre-Pentecost Scripture reading, reminding the apostles of Jesus’ words: “John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” The opening hymn for 18 May will be *Come Down, O Love Divine,* one of many original hymns composed by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958). The English composer edited *The English Hymnal*, which was published in 1908. Vaughan Williams included scores of English folk songs he'd collected over the years, which he then turned into hymns.

The last Sunday of May falls before Memorial Day, when we honor those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our country. We remember those who gave their all so that we may enjoy the blessings of a peaceful life.

Finally, the First Friday concerts are on hiatus until the fall.

May you and yours continue to experience the joy of Easter!

Roger and Kimberlea Daggy



**SESSION HIGHLIGHTS**

Session held a Stated Meeting on April 8, 2025.

* Doug Smith, member of the Board of Trustees of the Massanetta Springs Camp & Conference Center, reported on its capital campaign.
* Motion: Session accepted, with regret, the resignation of Elder Mike Cunningham due to health issues, effective immediately.
* Rev. Coggins will be attending the Easter Respite at Massanetta Springs April 21-24 with her family. She will participate in a Continuing Education opportunity at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary on “Preaching in a Post-Christian Age” May 1-3 and be out of the pulpit on May 4.
* Preschool: Two new employees have been hired. Graduation will be May 22.
* The Budget Letter with financial expenditures has been sent to the congregation.
* Mission/Outreach Report provided (published elsewhere).
* P&M: P & S Electric will investigate the ceiling lights in the Barksdale Room. Zeh has been contacted to fix the hot water in the boiler.
* Rev. Coggins was ill and unable to participate in the worship service March 30. FPC will participate in 6:00 p.m. “Better Together” church services Maundy Thursday at Hermitage PC and Good Friday at Smyrna PC (April 17 & 18).
* *Presbyterians Better Together* will meet May 18.
* Motion: Session approve calling a Congregational Meeting for May 18 to elect members to Session.
* Motion: Session approved the installation of elders and welcoming new members on June 1 followed by Lunch in the Barksdale Room.
* Session briefly discussed the Massanetta Springs Capital Campaign and decided to do nothing immediately.
* Session discussed the four requests submitted by the Waynesboro Symphony. No solutions were found possible for two of the requests. Brighter lights in the Fellowship Hall and window covering to combat sun blindness in the Sanctuary will be addressed.
* All Session meetings are opened and closed with prayer. The next Stated Session Meeting will be May 13.

--Betsy Ruehl, Clerk of Session

**MEMORIAL DAY**

Created to honor the many American men and women who have died in military service, Memorial Day is a day of remembrance and celebration. The focus is on those who made the ultimate sacrifice, which sets it apart from Veteran’s Day which honors all miliary veterans, living or dead.

Observed every year on the last Monday in May, this is one of the eleven permanent federal holidays and ensures a 3-day weekend for such employees.

Many consider Memorial Day the official start of summer. As you enjoy a parade, a picnic, or a day to do as you choose, please take a moment to remember those who have given their lives for our country.





**MISSION/OUTREACH MARCH 2025**

* Ordered and received food from Blue Ridge Area Food Bank March 11 and 25. Volunteers assembled 20 pantry boxes for each order.
* Maintained temperature logs for refrigerators and freezers. Defrosted and cleaned refrigerators.
* Food Bank held March 6, 13, 20 and 27.
* Purchased bread and margarine for Food Bank weekly.
* Updated weekly shopping list for extra options.
* Completed pantry inventory and report: Served 101 individuals and 37 households.
* Some Food Bank staples were served at Mr. Roger’s Day celebration.
* Served 73 meals at Disciples’ Kitchen March 31. Next Disciples’ Kitchen June 2.
* Collected cereal for Food Bank. Requesting Personal Care items in April.
* Attended meeting with BRAFB officials at Waynesboro High School regarding their setting up their own Food Pantry. WHS established an ongoing Care Closet for foodstuffs, loan of equipment, prom gowns, etc. FPC will continue to ask for Snack type items for the high school. --Cynthia Hoover, Mission Chair

**COLLECTING *PERSONAL CARE ITEMS* FOR FPC FOOD BANK**

**COLLECTING NON-PERISHABLE ITEMS for**

**WAYNESBORO HIGH SCHOOL FOOD BANK**

**Healthy snacks like granola bars and grab-and-go items**





**FIRST FRIDAY ORGAN CONCERT**

**MAY 2, 2025 – 12:15 p.m.**

**CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

Immediately after worship on Sunday, May 18, 2025

for the purpose of electing members to Session

**INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS**

**WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS**

during Worship on June 1, 2025,

Followed by Lunch in the Barksdale Room

***PRESBYTERIANS BETTER TOGETHER* BIBLE STUDY**

The weekly Bible Study, ably led by Westminster’s John Tindall, comes to a close this month. Remaining sessions meet at 1:00 p.m. at First Pres May 5, Second Pres May 12, and Hermitage May 19. The Study resumes after Labor Day. Think about joining your fellow Presbyterians for an interesting and informative time in the fall.



Total collected $655.00

**REMEMBERING POPE FRANCIS**

“Rivers do not drink their own water; trees do not eat their own fruit.

the sun does not shine on itself, and flowers do not spread their fragrance for themselves.

Living for others is a rule of nature. We are all born to help each other.

No matter how difficult it is….Life is good when you are happy.

but much better when others are happy because of you.”

--Pope Francis (December 17, 1936 – April 21, 2025)

**Preschool News**

Where has the time gone??? We can’t believe it is May already!! Our preschool has enjoyed watching the flowers bloom, listening to the birds’ chirping and watching the squirrels roam around; we even caught our little squirrel snacking in the tree!

We were able to celebrate Ms. Jamie for National Librarian Day when she came to read to us for story time. The children colored pictures and made her some little surprises for her special day.

Our children are currently working hard with Mrs. Lynda for our Spring concert. Ms. Lorene’s 4-year-olds are anxiously awaiting graduation day, as they have already begun to practice their song and their entrance for their big day.

We have exciting news in the preschool - baby chicks are going to be hatching soon! The children have been anxiously awaiting their arrival and cannot wait to see them hatch from the little eggs.

A squirrel on a tree branch

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

A machine with eggs in it

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

A group of children sitting on steps

AI-generated content may be incorrect.A child playing with toys

AI-generated content may be incorrect.

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE FOR MOTHER’S DAY**

Nurturing God,

On this Mother’s Day we pause to remember the gifts of mothering

and as we remember we pause to give thanks for the ways you are a mother to us:

for nurturing us, giving us the guidance and the freedom we need to grow in experience and wisdom

(even if we are sometimes headstrong and make unwise choices); for comforting us when we are wounded in body or spirit, helping us to heal and being stronger for it, for believing in and challenging us, calling us to be more than we are, encouraging us to live out our potential, for not letting us be content to simply coast, reminding us to keep trying and growing, we offer words of thanks.

Gracious God,

on this day we also give thanks for those who have been like mothers to us.

Some of them are related to us through blood, some of them have come into our lives through happenstance,

some of them have been part of our lives for decades, some of them are new to us; but many people have nurtured, taught, comforted, challenged, encouraged us. Without them we would not be who we are, and so we give thanks for them and all that we have learned from through our interactions with them.

And yet, in the midst of our thankfulness, we remember….

We remember that there are those for whom Mother’s Day is difficult; those for whom the relationship between mother and child is strained, or difficult, or non-existent; those who are distanced from their mothers

by geography, or illness, or unhealed hurts, or communication failures and those who have said farewell to mothers or children, not to meet again until we join in the life which lies beyond this life.

For all these mothers and children who meet pain or struggle on this day, we pray for comfort, that they would know they are not alone.

We also remember those who want to be mothers those who have given up a child for adoption; those who wish to know the woman who carried them but never will. May they, too, know Your peace.

God of life, today and every day we give thanks for the gifts of life, today and every day we also remember the people in the world who know more about curses than blessings. We pray for peace and justice throughout the world.

This we pray in the name of the one who taught about your love, your justice, your hope for the world, Jesus Christ. Amen.

[Written by Rev. Gord Waldie (revised slightly) and posted on *Worship Offerings]*



**LITURGISTS**

A drawing of a book with a cross and a sun

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4 – Betsy Ruehl

11 – Jo Pannill

18 – Bill Pannill

25 - Cynthia Hoover





**BIRTHDAYS**

**ANNIVERSARIES**

12- Roger Bryant 24 – Cary & Holly Bennett

14 - Don Hashagen 25 – John & Cynthia Hoover

15 - Betty Dixon 31 - Danny & Pam Leech

16 – Carrol Smith

26 – Ron Smith



**CHURCH OFFICERS:**

Treasurer – Colleen Cash

Members of Session - Jean Hashagen, Betsy Ruehl

Cynthia Hoover and Bob Miller





Shenandoah Nursing Home: Nancy Garber

Summitt Square: Ruth Quillen

Home: Mary Ultee, Mary Ann Maupin, Warner Sandquist, Mike & Cathy Cunningham

Friends and Family: Bill Bromley, Jean Custen, Sally McNeel, Col. Stuart Roberts (Mark Henderson), Carolyn Hedrick-Williams, Mac Watts (Colleen Cash), Betsy Boswell (Curry), Shane Bennett (Bennett).

Military: Carson Craig, Michael Little



**MAY CALENDAR**

Thursday, May 1

6-7:30 pm Food Bank

Friday, May 2

12:15 pm First Friday Organ Concert

Sunday, May 4

11 am Worship

Monday, May 5

1 pm Better Together Bible Study First Presbyterian

Thursday, May 8

2-4 pm Food Bank

Saturday, May 10

1-6 pm Sarah Braverman Practice

Sunday, May 11 Mother’s Day

11 am Worship

Monday, May 12

1 pm Better Together Bible Study Second Presbyterian

Tuesday, May 13

2:30 pm Session Room 212

Thursday, May 15

10 am Fishburne Graduation Practice

6-7:30 pm Food Bank

Saturday, May 17

10 am Fishburne Graduation

3-6 pm Sarah Braverman Spring Concert

Sunday, May 18

11 am Worship

Monday, May 19

1 pm Better Together Bible Study Hermitage

Thursday, May 22

2-4 pm Food Bank

Preschool Graduation

Sunday, May 25

11 pm Worship

Monday May 26 Memorial Day Office Closed