

August 2025



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri 1	Sat 2 7:30pm Heifetz Concert (S) Rehearsal am
3 11am Worship Sanctuary FB Live	4 10:30am Cong. Life Comm. Meeting (L) Heifetz- moving out	5 10am Bible Study (L) 2pm Mission & Outreach Committee Mtg. (P)	6 5:15pm Worship Committee Meeting (L)	7	8	9
10 11am Worship Sanctuary FB Live 12:15pm Admin. Committee Meeting (L)	11 5:15pm Session Meeting (L) SMF- moving in	12 10am Bible Study (L) 12:30 PW Meeting (L) SMF-moving in	13 SMF rehearsals (S)	14 11:30am Trinity Lunch SMF rehearsals (S)	15 SMF rehearsals 12pm SMF-kids only program	16 SMF rehearsals (S)
17 11am Worship Sanctuary FB Live Ice cream social after worship SMF in worship	18 SMF rehearsals 12pm SMF Free Concert (S)	19 10am Bible Study (L) SMF rehearsals (S) 12pm SMF Free Concert (S)	20 10am Home Goods Pantry SMF rehearsals 12pm SMF Free Concert (S)	21 SMF rehearsals 12pm SMF Free Concert (S) Newsletter Deadline— September	22 SMF rehearsals 12pm SMF Free Concert (S)	23 SMF rehearsals 12pm SMF Free Concert (S) Picnic at 3rd Pres
24 11am Worship Sanctuary FB Live	25	26 10am Bible Study (L)	27	28	29	30
31 11am Worship Sanctuary FB Live						

S=sanctuary; L= library; P=parlor; FH=Fellowship Hall; Ch=chapel

First Impressions

Newsletter of First Presbyterian
Church

Staunton, Virginia

August 2025



Letter from the Pastor

A New Chapter

Well, it's official. I've officially been approved by the presbytery to serve as your Covenant Pastor for three more years.

So, what does this mean for First Presbyterian? Well, it means that we can begin a new chapter here, as we now have a longer timeline in place with the understanding of who will be your pastor for the foreseeable future. I bought a house! I'm staying for a while.

With new chapters in ministry, in many ways we will continue with the positive moment that has already been developed over the previous two years I have served alongside you all.

To name a few:

- ◆ We will continue to offer top-quality worship each and every Sunday.
- ◆ We will continue to build upon healing relationships between church members and staff.
- ◆ We will continue to organize administratively within the Book of Order and Manual of Operations.
- ◆ We will continue to discern how God is calling First Presbyterian forward in the days ahead.

(cont. on p. 2)



FIRST IMPRESSIONS is a publication of First Presbyterian Church
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Rev. Dr. Jeff Binder, Pastor

Letter from the Pastor

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A New Chapter

And in some ways we are invited to try out new ideas, that perhaps we couldn't have tried within the traditional interim chapter. Some of those might include:

- ♦ Implementing longer-term programs and strategies based upon Session and congregational decisions such as the *Building for Hope* program.
- ♦ Intentionally partnering with neighboring churches such as Second and Third Presbyterian Churches to share in programming and resources when possible.
- ♦ Developing new community partnerships with other organizations such as *WARM* and *Oratory*.
- ♦ Offering new classes and programs that help promote a new vision for First Presbyterian moving forward.

Interested in learning more? I invite you to join us for our Ice Cream Social which will take place following worship on Sunday, August 17th, where we will have a conversation on celebrating this new chapter together!

In Christ,



Pastor Jeff

In Memoriam

(cont. fr. p. 10)

Edith (Marion) Shoffner Vernon

August 9, 1936 — July 17, 2025

Edith was preceded in death by her beloved husband, John. She is survived by three children: son James J. "Jim" Vernon (Martha) of Forest, VA, daughter Sue V. White (Rich) of Greenwood, IN, and daughter Mary Ellen Vernon of Raleigh, NC. Additionally, she is survived by 13 grandchildren, their spouses, and 9 great grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that memorials be made to the Saint Andrew Presbyterian Church Memorial Fund. Cards to be shared with the family can be sent to Mary Ellen Vernon at 1402 Governors Court, Raleigh, NC, 27604.

First Presbyterian Church, Staunton, VA

Mission & Vision Statement

Adopted on September 10, 2024

We open our hearts and our doors to worshipping Christ in downtown Staunton as a visible witness to the Gospel.

We are called to be a congregation that...

1. Invites all people to faith in Christ.
2. Worships God in a vibrant community through discipleship, music, and fellowship.
3. Uses our resources, time, and talents in the service of the least of these.
4. Nurtures and strengthens those within and outside of our community.
5. Makes the best use of our historic downtown property to benefit others.

In Memoriam



Edith (Marion) Shoffner Vernon
August 9, 1936 — July 17, 2025

Edith (Marion) Shoffner Vernon, 88, of Lynchburg, VA, died on July 17, 2025. She was born in Norristown, PA, on August 9, 1936, to Francis Lewis and Marion Boyd Shoffner. "Edie" grew up in Buena Vista, VA, graduating from Parry McClure High School in 1953. That year

she caught the eye of Joseph Henry Johnson "John" Vernon of Lexington, VA, while at McCrumbs Drugstore. Edie and John were married on March 17, 1957. Later that same year, she graduated as a Registered Nurse from the former Lewis-Gale Hospital School of Nursing in Roanoke, VA.

Her 62 years of marriage to John brought her many happy years of church and community involvement in Bullock Creek, SC, Winston-Salem, Charlotte and Belmont, NC, and Staunton, VA. Fond memories and friendships from each congregation remained important to Edith throughout her life. In 2003, John and Edith moved to the Summit Retirement Community in Lynchburg, VA, where family and both old and new friends enriched their final years. Edith was a member of Saint Andrew Presbyterian Church.

Edith enjoyed reading, quilting, drives in her beloved mountains, crossword puzzles and sudokus, ACC basketball and British TV. She loved planning trips and traveling. Adventures later in life included a hot air balloon ride and multiple cruises. She will be remembered for birthday cards and handwritten notes, fondness for mouse figurines and pear art, and participation in many PW Circles, card groups, and book clubs over the years. Above all, Edith delighted in her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

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Church News

Session Meeting Monday, August 11

There will be a Session meeting on Monday, August 11, at 5:15pm in the library.

Highlights of July 14 Session Meeting

- ◆ Session approved Waynesboro Symphony dates and times for their fall concerts and rehearsals.
- ◆ Session reallocated the memorial funds given specifically in memory of Ginny Reid to the Home Goods pantry, at the request of her family.
- ◆ Session approved the purchase of a new "gently used" Canon copier for the office.
- ◆ The Congregational Life Committee will host an ice cream social following worship on August 17. Jeff, Scott and Dick will give some updates on our *Building for Hope* projects.
- ◆ Connie Caywood has been added to our prayer list.
- ◆ Session approved collection of a special offering from July 27-August 31 that will go toward the Trinity Lunch program. Scott Wilson will give a "minute for mission" concerning this on July 27th.

Church Attendance for June-July 2025

(in person and online)

June 29	In person: 44	Online: 8
July 6	In person: 26	Online: 10
July 13	In person: 29	Online: 13
July 20	In person: 34	Online: 15

Average Worship Attendance for Past Month: 45

Church News

Congregational Life Committee Meeting

There will be a Congregational Life Committee meeting on Monday, August 4, at 10:30am in the library.

Mission & Outreach Committee Meeting

There will be a Mission & Outreach Committee meeting on Tuesday, August 5, at 2:00pm in the parlor.

Worship Committee Meeting

There will be a Worship Committee meeting on Wednesday, August 6, at 5:15pm in the library.

Administration Committee Meeting

There will be an Administration Committee meeting on Sunday, August 10, immediately following worship at 12:15pm in the library.

Bible Study Every Tuesday at 10:00am!

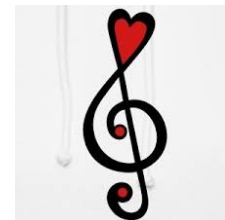
Please join us for Bible Study every Tuesday at 10:00am in the library. Discussions are lively and refreshments are provided. All are welcome. Please join us!

Around Our Community

(cont. fr. p. 8)

Tenielle Neda - "The Way of Love" tour with Paul Zach

Tenielle Neda - "The Way of Love" tour with Paul Zach will take place Sunday, August 24 at Weavers Mennonite Church in Harrisonburg, VA.



Weavers Mennonite Church is very excited that singer-songwriter Tenielle Neda from Australia will be here this summer! They will be hosting her in Harrisonburg on her *The Way of Love* tour with Paul Zach on Sunday, August 24. Tickets are available now at:

https://www.itickets.com/events/483611?utm_source=Songs+for+the+Valley+Subscriber&utm_campaign=5a6e61d223-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2021_09_11_12_15_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_92acd8947a-5a6e61d223-341660117

She recently released her debut album "The Way of Love": produced by Jon Guerra, on July 4, 2025.

Originally, they planned to have the concert outdoors. They now expect to move the concert indoors, although they are going to be meeting with the church to see if they could have the concert outdoors, weather permitting.

Church News

“Feed my sheep”
–John 21:15–17

This is exactly the mission of the Noon Lunch program at Trinity Episcopal Church!

Many area churches and organizations support this compassionate mission, and First Presbyterian is one of them. We have 2 teams of 6 that rotate throughout the year preparing and serving meals free of charge to our guests in McCracken Hall at Trinity Episcopal Church.

A special offering supporting this outreach mission will be collected the entire month of August . Please prayerfully consider a donation to support this important mission in our community.

Thank you—Mission and Outreach Committee

Ice Cream Social Sunday, August 17

There will be an ice cream social on the lawn after the worship service on Sunday, August 17, weather permitting. In case of rain, it will be in the fellowship hall. During the social, there will be a brief conversation about Building for Hope. We hope to see you there!



Covered Dish Picnic at Third Presbyterian Church
Saturday, August 23

Third Presbyterian Church has invited us to a covered dish picnic at their church on Saturday, August 23. Details will be provided soon!



Church News

Heifetz Concert Saturday, August 2

Heifetz will perform their 2025 Grand Finale concert in our sanctuary on Saturday, August 2 at 7:30pm. We hope to see you there!



Staunton Music Festival at First Pres in August!

The Staunton Music Festival will perform concerts in our sanctuary Monday, August 18–Saturday, August 23 from 12:00–1:00pm. They will also play during our worship service on Sunday, August 17. All concerts are free and open to the public. All are welcome! We hope you can join us.

Newsletter Deadline for September 2025

The deadline for submissions for the September 2025 issue of First Impressions is Thursday, August 21. Please submit any info you would like to include by then. Thank you!

August Birthdays

- 3 Alice Herbst
- 9 Ron Lowman
Lissa Dod
- 14 Robin Knott
- 19 Kathleen Garrison
- 21 Raymond Hoaster
- 26 Lisa Caywood
Mona Tate
- 28 Robert Richardson



Church News

Presbyterian Women Tuesday, August 12

PW Circle will meet Tuesday, August 12 at 12:30pm in the library. We would appreciate a head count, so please respond to Alice Herbst if you can make it. And feel free to bring guests—all are welcome!



Home Goods Community Pantry Wednesday, August 20

Our Home Goods Community Pantry will be open on Wednesday, August 20. We served 114 households in July, and we continue to grow. Due to dramatic growth in popularity, financial and product donations are always welcomed and needed.



If you wish to donate items, there is a donation basket outside of the sanctuary for your convenience. Items needed include: Paper towels (2-pack), toilet paper (4-pack), tissues (small pack), trash bags (10 count), dish soap (one bottle), laundry detergent, and disinfectant wipes.

Church News

Appeal from the Treasurers

For a Treasurer, July is not only a time of green grass, picnics and family time, but as our church operates on a calendar budget, it marks the time when we are halfway (50%) through our giving year.

Session recently reviewed our halfway point and noticed that while our pledged giving is coming in as expected (47%), our unpledged giving has been lagging. In fact, "Other Income" (unpledged, loose plate and rent) is only 31% of our budget through June. As our rental income is contractually fixed and loose plate is very small, we need to look more closely at unpledged income.

With summer in full swing, there is also a seasonal lull in giving that can sometimes occur that puts more pressure on our finances. Our church expenses, however, don't take a summer vacation.

Please take this halfway point to reexamine your giving and consider an increase in your support and continue that support through the summer months...and beyond.

Our church has an enormous impact on our community, and our Building for Hope initiative plans to increase that collaboration with community programs and leaders. First Presbyterian has a long history of compassion and leadership. Let's show our support for these efforts. You can make a difference.

Thank you,

Amanda Avery and Scott Wilson