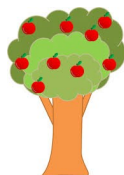


September 2025



First Impressions

Newsletter of First Presbyterian
Church

Staunton, Virginia

September 2025



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Labor Day- Church Offices Closed	2 10am Bible Study (L) 2pm Mission & Outreach Committee Mtg. (P) Heidi-off	3 5:15pm Worship Committee Meeting (L) Heidi-off	4 Heidi-off	5 Heidi-off	6
7 11am Worship Sanctuary FB Live 12:15pm Admin. Comm. Mtg (L)	8 5:15pm Session Meeting (L)	9 10am Bible Study (L) 12:30 PW Meeting (L)	10	11 11:30am Trinity Lunch	12	13
14 11am Worship Sanctuary FB Live Colleen Earp preaching	15	16 10am Bible Study (L) Heidi-off	17 10am Home Goods Pantry	18 Newsletter Deadline—October	19	20
21 11am Worship on the Lawn followed by BBQ Picnic FB Live	22	23 10am Bible Study (L)	24	25 5pm WSO Dress Rehearsal (S)	26	27 10am WSO Rehearsal 3pm Concert #1 5pm Concert #2 QCMM Fest.
28 11am Worship Sanctuary FB Live QCMM Festival	29	30 10am Bible Study (L)				

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

Letter from the Pastor

Re-Interpreting "Mission Work" Today

A lot of us who have been raised in the church remember meeting missionaries on some special Sundays. Even though they were born and raised in the US, they typically spent most of their time overseas in some far-off country, far from Staunton, Virginia. From time to time, they might return to the US, where they might be invited by a congregation to teach a Sunday School lesson, preach, or simply worship during their stay, as we would be the beneficiaries of wonderfully shared stories of faith.



These missionaries were sent out into the world to share the good news of Jesus Christ with those they encountered; oftentimes people who might have never heard of Jesus before.

And in turn, our understanding of mission work as American Christians was influenced in the same way. We understood mission to be programs, experiences, or events where we, as church members, were sent out into communities to share God's love through manual labor (service trips), educational programming (Vacation Bible School), or evangelism (outreach).

(cont. on p. 2)

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Rev. Dr. Jeff Binder, Pastor

Letter from the Pastor

(cont. fr. p. 1)

Re-Interpreting “Mission Work” Today

But is this a working model for us as the members and friends of First Presbyterian Church in 2025?

What happens when our relationships with traditional international missionaries fade or end?

What happens when those same programs feel outdated and not as effective as years past?

What happens when we no longer have the same personal energy that many of us had 30 years ago when some of these programs were first organized?

I believe this congregation is being called to a new understanding of mission work today.

Instead of understanding our role as being sent out to far off places, I wonder what it looks like for us to participate in mission right here at church, and right here in Staunton.

Mission will always be about reaching out to share the love of Christ with the world. But it can also look different from time to time.

Perhaps it looks like us opening our church doors to groups and organizations that may not otherwise identify as “church folk.”

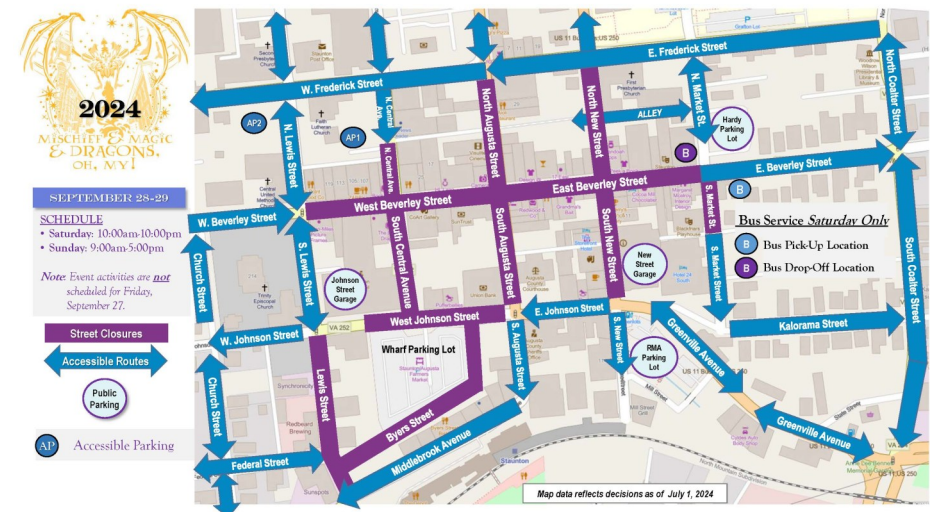
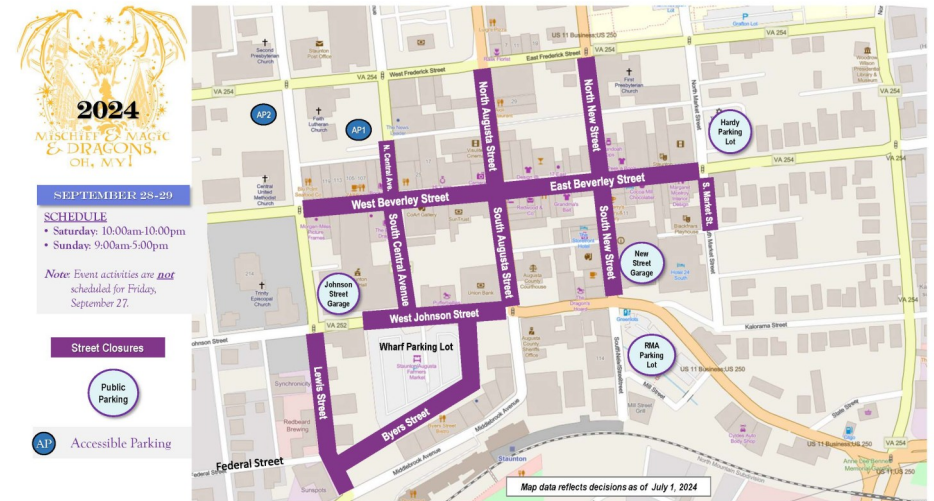
Perhaps it looks like us supporting local organizations that are doing the work of Christ right here in Staunton, although they may just not identify it as such.

Perhaps it looks like this church discovering that there are additional needs amongst our community members, and so we organize ways for the entire community to support such work.

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Around Our Community

(cont. fr. p. 10)



Around Our Community

Queen City Mischief & Magic Festival

The Queen City Mischief & Magic Festival will take place in downtown Staunton **Saturday, September 27, 10:00am-10:00pm and Sunday, September 28, 9:00am-5:00pm.**

We will have worship on Sunday, September 28, during the festival. If you choose to come in person, please note that parking will be limited. There will be parking on the left side of the street, and there will be signs stating "Reserved for First Presbyterian." You can also park on the grass, if needed. Of course, there is also the option to attend online. A map showing street closures is shown on the next page. These are 2024 maps (just for reference), and were obtained from the Queen City Mischief & Magic website. We assume the info applies to 2025 as well. For further info, please visit <https://queencitymagic.com/>

(cont. on. p. 11)

Letter from the Pastor

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Re-Interpreting "Mission Work" Today

One way that we continue to participate in mission work today is found in our *Building for Hope* plan to partner with community organizations. For many of these groups, they are already doing great work reaching out to others in the community; they just need some space to operate.

That's where we come in. We have space. We have lots of space.

Perhaps one way our mission work exists these days is to intentionally provide space for these organizations, like our musical programs, our theater organizations, and our new partners like WARM and Sacred Heart.

Perhaps one expression of our re-imagined mission is to share our church facility with others who share in our larger mission of sharing God's love with the world.

How might you understand our call to serve in mission today?

In Christ,



Pastor Jeff

Church News

Congregational Life Committee Meeting

There will be a Congregational Life Committee meeting on Monday, September 1, at 10:30am in the library.

Mission & Outreach Committee Meeting

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

Worship Committee Meeting

There will be a Worship Committee meeting on Wednesday, September 3, at 5:15pm in the library.

Administration Committee Meeting

There will be an Administration Committee meeting on Sunday, September 7, immediately following worship at 12:15pm in the library.

Session Meeting Monday, September 8

There will be a Session meeting on Monday, September 8, at 5:15pm 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!

Church News



The church offices will be closed on Monday, September 1 for Labor Day. We hope everyone has a wonderful holiday!

Upcoming Office Schedule

Heidi will be off Tuesday, September 2–Friday, September 5, returning Monday, September 8. She will also be off Tuesday, September 16. Fay Knicley will kindly be filling in during this time.

Pastor Jeff will be out Sunday, September 14. Rev. Colleen Earp will be preaching on that day.

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.

Worship & BBQ Potluck Picnic on the Lawn

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21
11:00 AM

We will have worship on the lawn Sunday, September 21, followed by a BBQ covered dish picnic! BBQ & drinks will be provided. Folks are asked to bring side dishes, salads, and/or desserts. All are welcome, including pets! **Don't forget to bring your lawn chair.** Please RSVP to stauntonfirst@gmail.com or 540-886-0704. We hope you can join us!



Waynesboro Symphony Orchestra Annual QCMM Concerts

Saturday, Sept. 27

WSO will perform two concerts in our sanctuary on Saturday, September 27:

3pm: Concert #1

5pm: Concert #2



All are welcome. We hope to see you there!

Newsletter Deadline for October 2025

The deadline for submissions for the October 2025 issue of First Impressions is Thursday, September 18. Please submit any info you would like to include by then. Thank you!

September Birthday List



6	Wyatt Hollar Sarah Kullman
11	Kitty Tillen
13	Carolyn Hoaster
14	Cynthia Hughes
16	Patt Hollar
20	Andra Borrell Sharon Wilson
22	Mary Huffard Kegley
29	Roger Knott
30	Collin Lendermon

Church News

Presbyterian Women Tuesday, September 9

PW Circle will meet Tuesday, September 9 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, September 17

Our Home Goods Community Pantry will be open on Wednesday, September 17. We served 129 households in August, 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.



Highlights of August 11 Session Meeting

- ◆ The Administration Committee is calling for a Congregational meeting on August 17 for the purpose of electing a slate for the Nominating Committee.
- ◆ The Congregational Care Committee is planning for an Ice Cream social after church on August 17.
- ◆ The Mission & Outreach Committee will probably be pursuing some grant money to help with the Home Goods Pantry based on leads from the *Community Foundation*. Megan McAllister may help with grant writing.
- ◆ The Worship and Music Committee is looking at possible new collaborations for next year and will be meeting in September to start plans for Advent and Christmas.
- ◆ The Building for Hope members (Jeff, Dick & Scott) will be meeting soon with representatives from W.A.R.M. and Staunton City concerning plans for our new day center. They will also be meeting with representatives from the *Scared Heart of Jesus Classical Academy* as they make preparations to open on the top floor of the Fraser building. The BFH committee will be leading an information session about these two projects after church on August 17.

Church News

I Go To The Beach, But I Don't Go in the Water

Growing up near the beach was a magical time. On a summer day, my parents, two sisters and I would pack the car with chairs, blankets, picnic supplies and an umbrella and drive the 30 minutes or so to Jones Beach on the south shore of Long Island. My sisters and I could hardly wait to arrive at the wide beach to jump out of the car, run to the water and jump in. We would stay in the water, enjoying the surf until we were finally called to come out, dry off and eat lunch. Then we anxiously had to wait one hour after eating, as was the custom, before racing down to the waves once more. **The whole point of going to the beach was to jump in.** I've noticed, as I have gotten older, that when I go to the beach now, it's not so much jumping in the water but relaxing on the beach and watching other people get wet. The purpose of the beach is more observational than jumping in.

As Christians, we are called to serve. Attending worship is essential to our faith, but it's not what we are being called to do. Serving can take many forms, from ushering, signing up for coffee time, serving as Lector, volunteering on church committees, performing "hands-on" mission (Home Goods Pantry, Trinity Lunch, etc.), and...providing leadership by serving on the Session. Maybe it's time to jump back into the water?

Church Attendance for July–August 2025

(in person and online)

July 27	In person: 23	Online: 6
August 3	In person: 28	Online: 8
August 10	In person: 28	Online: 9
August 17	In person: 29	Online: 9
August 24	In person: 24	Online: 7

Average Worship Attendance for Past Month: 34