

August 2026



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat 1
2 11am Worship Sanctuary FB Live Melissa Harmon preaching Heifetz- moving out	3 10:30am Cong. Life Comm. Meeting (L) Heifetz- moving out Pastor Jeff- out	4 10am Bible Study (L) 2pm Mission & Outreach Committee Mtg. (P) Pastor Jeff-out	5 5:15pm Worship Committee Meeting (L) Pastor Jeff- out	6 Pastor Jeff-out	7	8
9 11am Worship Sanctuary FB Live 12:15pm Admin. Committee Meeting (L)	10 SMF- stage building (S)	11 10am Bible Study (L) 12:30 PW Meeting (L) SMF-stage building (S)	12 SMF rehearsals (S)	13 11:30am Trinity Lunch SMF rehearsals (S)	14 SMF rehearsals (S)	15 12pm SMF Free concert (S)
16 11am Worship Sanctuary FB Live	17 5:15pm Session Mtg. (L) Newsletter Deadline- Sept.	18 10am Bible Study (L) 12pm SMF Free Concert (S)	19 10am Home Goods Pantry 12pm SMF Free Concert (S)	20 12pm SMF Free Concert (S)	21 12pm SMF Free Concert (S)	22 12pm SMF Free Concert (S)
23 11am Worship Sanctuary FB Live	24	25 10am Bible Study (L)	26	27	28	29
30 11am Worship Sanctuary FB Live	31					

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

First Impressions

Newsletter of First Presbyterian Church
Staunton, Virginia

August 2026



Letter from the Pastor

What is the Connectional Church?

Trivia questions: How many PCUSA churches are in the Staunton community? How many in Augusta county?

Answer: There are currently 7 churches in Staunton, and 26 churches in the county! That's a lot of Presbyterian churches!



You may ask yourself, "Why all the Presbyterian churches?"

(I know I ask myself that question from time to time).

Well, the short answer is that church life was organized differently back then than it is these days. There were no cars to drive us from one end of the county to the other in a matter of a few minutes, and so, many churches were organized in towns that were on the scale of horse-power transportation. Another reason is still a reality we deal with today: human relationships. Some churches were formed with particular types of people in mind, whether it be racial, cultural, or professional. A third reason may be because of missional needs. Churches were organized in towns (or parts of town) that were growing, and would benefit from having a more local expression of Presbyterianism within their immediate community. *(cont. on p. 2)*

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Rev. Dr. Jeff Binder, Pastor

Letter from the Pastor

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What is the Connectional Church?

So how might we think of our relationships with so many other local churches? Some of us may think that each church should operate as a separate faith community, similar to the other churches and denominations in the community.

However, the Presbyterian Church (USA) celebrates what we call the *Connectional Church*. In short, this means that even though there are numerous congregations throughout the region (and the country for that matter), we each are called into a relationship of trust and cooperation that is part of our shared identity as Presbyterians.

This is the reason behind our recent efforts with other PCUSA churches in Staunton to share in Bible Study, mission projects, Presbyterian Women, special worship services, and certainly in our fellowship meals together.

Our understanding of the connectional church means that when one church is struggling, we should be there to support them.

And that means that when one church is thriving, we are celebrating as well.

I wonder how we can continue to evolve in our identity as the connectional Presbyterian Church today? How might we continue to build upon the relationships we already have? How might we support other congregations within the Presbytery? And how might we celebrate with our brothers and sisters in faith when God is doing amazing things?

In Christ,



Pastor Jeff

Church News

First Presbyterian Bicentennial— Saturday, June 26, 2004 at the Frontier Culture Museum



Church News

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First Presbyterian Bicentennial— Saturday, June 26, 2004
at the Frontier Culture Museum



Church News



Staunton Music Festival at First Pres in August
The Staunton Music Festival will perform concerts in our sanctuary Saturday, August 15, and Tuesday, August 18–Saturday, August 22, from noon–1:00pm. All concerts are free and open to the public. All are welcome!

Newsletter Deadline for September 2026

The deadline for submissions for the September 2026 issue of First Impressions is Monday, August 17. 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 Attendance for June–July 2026
(in person and online)

June 28	In person: 37	Online: 12
July 5	In person: 23	Online: 9
July 12	In person: 38	Online: 10
July 19	In person: 27	Online: 9

Average Worship Attendance for Past Month: 41

Church News

Session Meeting Monday, August 17

There will be a Session meeting on Monday, August 17, at 5:15pm in the library.

Congregational Life Committee Meeting

There will be a Congregational Life Committee meeting on Monday, August 3, at 10:30am in the library.

Mission & Outreach Committee Meeting

There will be a Mission & Outreach Committee meeting on Tuesday, August 4, at 2:00pm in the parlor.

Worship Committee Meeting

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

Administration Committee Meeting

There will be an Administration Committee meeting on Sunday, August 9, immediately following worship at 12:15pm in the library.

Pastor Jeff's Upcoming Schedule

Pastor Jeff will be out Sunday, August 2–Thursday, August 6.

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

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First Presbyterian Bicentennial—June 27, 2004: A Look Back



Church News

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First Presbyterian Bicentennial—June 27, 2004: A Look Back



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Church News

Presbyterian Women Tuesday, August 11

PW Circle will meet Tuesday, August 11, 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 19

Our Home Goods Community Pantry will be open on Wednesday, August 19. Financial and product donations are always welcomed. We are in need of the following items:



Baby diapers (any size), toddler pull-ups (any size), baby wipes, baby lotion, and baby shampoo. Please bring any donated items to the church office or place in the donations basket outside of the sanctuary.

On July 15, we handed out 147 full bags and 15 partial bags, totaling 162 bags handed out. 383 individuals were assisted.

Many thanks for your continued support!

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.

Church News

Sanctuary Doors Receive a Facelift

On Tuesday, July 14, work began to revitalize the Sanctuary doors. The process of stripping three sets of doors is laborious and time-consuming, but progress is being made. If you look closely at one of the photos, you can see where stripping has removed the old finish, revealing the original appearance with its rich tones of deep browns and reds. Scaffolding will go up, one set of doors at a time, to strip and finish the upper parts of the doors and trim work. The doors should be finished by early August.



The Session approved a capital campaign of \$20,000 to give our Sanctuary doors a facelift worthy of the entrance to our historic and beloved First Pres. The campaign will run through Labor Day weekend. If you would like to contribute, you can make a gift to the church, indicating "Sanctuary Doors" on your check, or other ways that you choose to give. With the many concerts and other

community events that take place in our church, this facelift will be a beautiful first impression, and one we can be proud of as a congregation.

Lucinda Cooke, Administration



Church News

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First Presbyterian Bicentennial—June 27, 2004: A Look Back



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Church News

First Presbyterian Bicentennial—June 27, 2004: A Look Back



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Church News

Power Up Our Community: Join the August Food Protein Drive

This month, our church has the opportunity to make a direct impact on local hunger. We are launching a protein food drive to support local families, children, and seniors who lack reliable access to nutritious meals.

Protein remains one of the most requested and least donated at local food banks/pantries. Protein is an essential nutrient. It strengthens muscles, supports immunity, and provides the sustained energy children need to grow and adults need to work. Unfortunately, high protein foods are often the most expensive grocery items for families living on a tight budget.



We need your help to bridge this nutritional gap. From August 1 to 31, we are collecting non-perishable, high-protein food items. We are looking specifically for the following shelf-stable items:

- ◆ Canned tuna, salmon, and chicken
- ◆ Peanut butter and other nut butters
- ◆ Canned beans (chickpeas, black beans, kidney beans, baked beans)
- ◆ Dried beans and lentils
- ◆ Canned stews, chili, and hearty soups
- ◆ Protein bars and nuts

Drop-off bins are located in the Sanctuary narthex and in the lobby area of the Fraser Building. Thank you for your generosity and for helping ensure that no one in our community has to worry about where their next healthy meal will come from. NO GLASS CONTAINERS, PLEASE.

-Missions and Outreach Committee

Church News

Church Picnic with 2nd & 3rd Presbyterian Churches
Thursday, July 9, at Gypsy Hill Park Pavilion



Church News

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Church Picnic with 2nd & 3rd Presbyterian Churches
Thursday, July 9, at Gypsy Hill Park Pavilion



Great food & fellowship were enjoyed by all