November 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 11am Worship Sanctuary FB Live	2 10:30am Cong. Life Comm. Mtg. (L)	3 10am Bible Study (L) 2pm M&O Committee Meeting (P)	4 5:15pm Worship Committee Meeting (L) 6:00pm Handbells 7:00pm Choir	5	6	7
8 11am Worship Sanctuary FB Live 12:15pm Admin. Comm. Mtg. (L)	9	10 10am Bible Study (L) 12:30 PW Circle (L)	11 6:00pm Handbells 7:00pm Choir	12 11:30am Trinity Lunch 7pm WSO Dress Rehearsal (S) Newsletter Deadline-December	13	14 7:00pm WSO Chamber Groups Fall Concert (S)
15 11am Worship Sanctuary FB Live 2-5pm Session Retreat-Wilson's	16 5:15pm Session Meeting (L)	17 10am Bible Study (L)	18 10am Home Goods Pantry 6:00pm Handbells 7:00pm Choir	19	20	21
22 11am Worship Sanctuary FB Live	23 Christmas Flowers Deadline	24 10am Bible Study (L) 5:30pm Sanctuary Christmas decorating	25 6:00pm Handbells 7:00pm Choir Heidi-out	26 Thanksgiving Day-Church Offices Closed	27 Church Offices Closed	28
29 11am Worship Sanctuary FB Live	30					

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

First Impressions



Newsletter of
First Presbyterian Church
Staunton, Virginia

November 2026

Letter from the Pastor

Thanks-Giving



What are you thankful for?
This is often the question that is asked around the dinner table before enjoying a Thanksgiving feast.

Our typical thoughts go to the more immediate parts of our lives: we are thankful for our family and friends, our health, our home, etc.

Eventually, we'll get to being thankful for our church and our church family…maybe after our football team. :)

The larger question for us: *How do we express our thankfulness for others in our lives, for the organizations and communities that shape us into who we are today?*

The traditional "church answer" has always been to give financially; whether you call it your tithe, your pledge, or your offering. Many of us additionally dedicate quite a bit of our "time and talents" through our volunteering to be on committees and with various service projects.

(cont. on. p. 2)

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100 East Frederick St., Staunton, VA 24401 (540) 886-0704
stauntonfirst@gmail.com and www.1stpres-staunton.org
Rev. Dr. Jeff Binder, Pastor

Letter from the Pastor

(cont. fr. p. 1)

Thanks-Giving

But I'd like to challenge you this month to go a bit deeper than just money or volunteering. Beyond "time, talents, and treasure," how are you giving thanks for First Presbyterian Church this year?

I think our response invites us to think beyond the immediate church community, to how we live our lives as Christians today. How might our spiritual lives reflect our thanksgiving?

If we are thankful for our church community, then how do we share it with our friends and family that we are also so thankful for? How do we share First Presbyterian with the world around us, so that this church may be glorifying God to its fullest extent?

Just something to think about…

In Christ,

Jeff

Pastor Jeff

Church Attendance for September-October 2026
(in person and online)

September 27	**In person:** 22	**Online:** 11
October 4	**In person**: 29	**Online:** 11
October 11	**In person**: 23	**Online:** 10
October 18	**In person:** 36	**Online:** 9
October 25	**In person:** 24	**Online:** 8

Average Worship Attendance for Past Month: 37

Church News

First Presbyterian Church at the Staunton Pride Festival







Church News

Presbyterian Women Tuesday, November 10

PW Circle will meet Tuesday, November 10 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, November 18

Our Home Goods Community Pantry will be open on Wednesday, November 18. 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 lotion, baby wipes, and baby shampoo. Please bring any donated items to the church office or place in the donations basket outside of the sanctuary.

On Wednesday, October 21, the pantry handed out 161 full bags and 6 partial bags, which assisted 395 individuals. Thank you to everyone who made this possible.

Many thanks for your continued support!

Staunton Police Dept. Volunteers at the Home Goods Pantry!



Thank you Staunton Police Department officers for packing the October bags for the Home Goods Community Pantry. Your support to the community is greatly appreciated!

Church News

Fall Back!

Daylight savings time ends Sunday, November 1. Don't forget to set your clocks back one hour!





Flowers

The flowers in the sanctuary Sunday, November 8, are given in loving memory of Fulton B. Kegley (1931-1981) by his family Betty, Mary Huffard, Sarah, and Fulton B. Kegley II.

Christmas Flowers



It's that time of year again! If you would like to remember or honor a loved one at Christmas, we will have the poinsettias again during the Advent season. An insert will be in the bulletin by which you can give the name or names of the person(s) you wish to remember. Then put your check (made out to First Presbyterian Church) in the collection plate and mark it "Christmas flowers." The deadline for donating, and to be published in our bulletin insert, is **Monday, November 23**. Thank you for helping our sanctuary look beautiful during this special season!

Christmas Decorating in Sanctuary Tuesday, November 24!

We will be decorating the sanctuary for Advent & Christmas Tuesday, November 24, at 6:00pm. Pizza and dessert will be served at 5:30pm. . Everyone is encouraged to attend! Many hands make light work. Please join us!



November Birthday List

10	Joseph Clem
16	Bob Driscoll

Congregational Life Committee Meeting

There will be a Congregational Life Committee meeting on Monday, November 2, at 10:30am in the library.

Mission & Outreach Committee Meeting

There will be a Mission & Outreach Committee meeting on Tuesday, November 3, at 2:00pm in the parlor.

Worship Committee Meeting

There will be a Worship Committee meeting on Wednesday, November 4, at 5:15pm in the library.

Administration Committee Meeting

There will be an Administration Committee meeting on Sunday, November 8, immediately following worship at 12:15pm in the library.

Waynesboro Symphony Orchestra Chamber Music Fall Concert

Please join us for a chamber music concert presented by the Waynesboro Symphony Orchestra on Saturday, November 14, at 7:00pm in our sanctuary. All are welcome!

Thanksgiving Holiday



The church offices will be closed Thursday, November 26 and Friday, November 27 for Thanksgiving. Heidi will be off Wednesday, November 25. We hope everyone has a wonderful and safe holiday!

(cont. fr. p. 12)

Stewardship Message: Commitment to Our Future

We have an energetic Bible Study group that includes members of other churches, and a Home Goods Pantry that in three years has grown so much that we now serve hundreds of people each month. First Pres has received grants to support the Pantry's efforts to grow and serve those in need. Also, the opportunities for fellowship have grown to include members of our neighboring churches, 2nd and 3rd Presbyterian. And what can I say about the music we enjoy, both in-house on Sundays and through the organizations that fill our church throughout the year? Capital improvements have enabled us to make better use of rooms that can now serve a purpose for our future community endeavors.

This year we will not hold a formal Stewardship Campaign, but your support is still critical. Later this month, the Session will present a summary of committee accomplishments, goals, and plans for 2027. A bulletin insert will include that summary, and a presentation will be made to the congregation with a budget narrative for the year thus far. This is not in place of an Annual Report, but is intended to let you know how much we appreciate the ongoing support you give us and what that has allowed us to do. The church needs your support. We need financial support and the time and talent you can give on committees, worship, music, fellowship gatherings, and more. We urge you to re-evaluate your current financial giving. As we re-evaluate our church assets, I ask you to re-think your own giving as a measure of commitment to the future. I said last year, and I will say again: "Re-imagine First Pres as a beacon of hope, a place rich in creativity and spirit, and a refuge where inclusiveness and love for one another is a testament to the Holy Spirit. Please commit to this future."

By the way, pledge cards, along with a short letter, will be mailed out to the congregation. If you don't receive one in the mail, you can ask for one from the church office, or the narthex.

- Lucinda Cooke, Stewardship Coordinator

Church News

Stewardship Message: Commitment to Our Future

As we move forward into fall, it seems to be the season when we think most about the Stewardship Campaign. Stewardship really goes on throughout the year, but as Session plans for the next year's budget, we usually strategize a campaign with multiple messages to the congregation to give of their time, talent, and treasure. Last year the Stewardship theme was *Building for Our Future*. This centered on our church's participation in the *Building for Hope* program, envisioning how the underutilized spaces in our buildings could better serve the Staunton community, embracing both what we are doing well already with thoughtful, creative new ways to open our doors to our neighbors throughout the city—including perhaps those of other backgrounds and persuasions, including the unhoused.

In 2026, we had successes and a couple of disappointments, but, overall, we moved forward with the challenge to embrace what First Pres could be if empty spaces could be filled with community groups that reflected the diversity of Staunton, bringing new life and energy to the church. The Session asked for your support in 2025, and we ask for it now, in 2026. We know many of you have concerns which have not lessened over the past year. To repeat what I said in 2025, "there may be some of you who remain on the fence, hesitant about giving in a time of uncertainty—uncertainty about a big sanctuary with empty pews; uncertainty because, for some of you, this isn't the way things used to be; uncertainty because the faces around us don't include the faces of children; and uncertainty because we live in a time where division and anger is tearing this country apart, along with many friendships and families."

Yet what better time to commit to the future of First Presbyterian Church? We may be small in numbers, but look at what we are doing to be that downtown historic church that is truly living into our Staunton community. Think about the many ways we are fulfilling our mission to be an open and welcoming place through music, outreach, discipleship, and fellowship.

(cont. on p. 13)

Church News

Session Fall Retreat

There will be a Session fall retreat on Sunday, November 15, from 2:00-5:00pm at Scott & Sharon Wilson's home.

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!

Newsletter Deadline for December 2026

The deadline for submissions for the December 2026 issue of First Impressions is Thursday, November 12. The early deadline is due to the fact that Heidi will be off starting Wednesday, November 25 for Thanksgiving week. Please submit any info you would like to include by then. Thank you!

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.

Message from the Nominating Committee

This year, the Nominating Committee consisted of the following: Lucinda Cooke, Chair; Sam Clem, Donna Goble, Martha Tillen, Sharon Wilson, and Pastor Jeff Binder, ex officio. All worked hard and, I might add, successfully put together a terrific slate of officers for 2027. Sam Clem, Barbara Richardson, and Martha Tillen were elected as officers for the Class of 2029, and Lucinda Cooke for the Class of 2027 at a Congregational Meeting, which took place following the service on Sunday, October 18.

The Nominating Committee is deeply appreciative of all those who agreed to serve. I wish to personally thank the committee members for their diligence in filling this slate.

Worldwide Communion Sunday





Waynesboro Symphony Orchestra Concerts:
"The Wondrous World of Wizards" Saturday, September 26







Conductor Peter Wilson

(cont. fr. p. 9)

Outdoor Worship, Blessing of the Animals, & Picnic on the Lawn
Sunday, September 20







Sanctuary Doors Are Coming Along!





Outdoor Worship, Blessing of the Animals, & Picnic on the Lawn
Sunday, September 20

First Presbyterian held outdoor worship & a Blessing of the Animals on Sunday, September 20, followed by a picnic on the lawn.. It was a beautiful day with lots of fun, furry friends, fellowship, and great food!









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(cont. fr. p. 8)

Outdoor Worship, Blessing of the Animals, & Picnic on the Lawn
Sunday, September 20







(cont. on p. 10)