



The Presby Record

A community beacon of faith, love and hope.

Volume LX Issue 4

April 2026

Walking in the Light of the Risen Christ

In the Presbyterian tradition, Easter is not simply a moment to commemorate but a reality that continues to shape who we are and how we live. We proclaim the resurrection as God's decisive act of new creation—an event that broke open the world's assumptions about power, suffering, and death, and continues to break open our own. Rooted in Reformed theology, we understand the resurrection as the work of a sovereign God who brings life where none was expected, hope where despair had settled in, and renewal where the world saw only endings. Easter is God's great "Yes" to life, a declaration that the forces of death—literal and symbolic—do not have the final word.

This hope is not abstract or sentimental. Presbyterian reflections often emphasize that resurrection is the antidote to fear, especially in seasons when the world feels fragile. The empty tomb is not a fairy tale meant to comfort us from afar; it is the assurance that God's love has already triumphed and continues to triumph in the midst of our "sin-broken" realities. Because Christ lives, we dare to believe that God can bring new life out of situations that seem beyond repair—relationships strained, communities wounded, systems bent by injustice, hearts weighed down by grief. Easter gives us courage to face the world honestly, without being paralyzed by its pain.

Through the risen Christ, Scripture tells us, a "new humanity" has begun. Jesus is the firstborn of God's renewed creation, the beginning of a world where sin and death no longer hold ultimate power. This means the resurrection is not only spiritual but profoundly physical. It affirms that matter matters—our bodies, our work, our justice-seeking, our care for creation. God's redemptive plan embraces the whole world, and the resurrection invites us to participate in that renewal with our hands, our voices, and our lives.

Because of this, Presbyterians often speak of the church as "resurrection people." We are those who have encountered the grace of the risen Christ and are sent out to embody that grace in daily life. To be resurrection people is to live with a hope that does not deny suffering but refuses to be defined by it. It is to challenge injustice because we believe violence and oppression are not the world's destiny. It is to build communities where the weary find rest, the broken find support, and joy is shared freely.

Resurrection people are not spectators of Easter; we are participants in its ongoing story.

While every Sunday is a celebration of the resurrection, the season of Eastertide—the fifty days from Easter to Pentecost—gives us space to let these truths sink deeply into our hearts. It is a time to dwell in the "afterglow" of the empty tomb, to reflect on what it means that Christ is alive, and to open ourselves to the Spirit who empowers us for ministry. Eastertide invites us to move from the astonishment of the first disciples to the steady, Spirit-filled courage of the early church. It is a season of learning to live resurrection not just as a proclamation but as a way of being.

As we enter this holy season, may we be renewed in hope, strengthened in faith, and emboldened to live as people shaped by the risen Christ. The tomb is empty. Love has prevailed. And the world is being made new.

Christ is risen! Christ is risen indeed!

Easter Tulip Tributes

Each tulip given this Easter is a gift of love, remembrance, and gratitude. We honor those who have shaped our lives and celebrate those who continue to bless us with their presence. May these flowers stand as signs of resurrection hope and the enduring light of Christ.

In Memory Of

Kathryn Calkins Lichtenfels
Given by Kathryn & Jeff Maddy

Cel Jones
Given by Jennifer Burgess & Sara Kell

Jane Wade and Margaret Remmers
Given by Brenda Hughes

Bob & Louise Dillon and Denny Dillon
Given by Regina Dayfield

Brucie Harshbarger Kessler
Given by Regina Dayfield

Mart Denison
Given by Kristi Sutphin & Brian Denison

Mary, Harry and Debi Speidel
Given by Buck & Connie Ivey

Dorothy & Albert Harvey
Given by David & Wendy Harvey

Don Dolin, Paul Kell, Helene Kell, Mary Kell,
and Clare Kell
Given by Sara Kell

Ashley Rayburn
Given by Andrew & Katie Reyes

Dennis Pease
Given by Andrea Pease

In Honor Of

Keith & Patsy Denison
Given by Kristi Sutphin & Brian Denison

Joey & Sam Sutphin and Bob & Becky Sutphin
Given by Kristi & Bob Sutphin

Tanya & Jeff
Given by Vickie Godbey

Gracy Ivey and Bud Ivey
Given by Buck & Connie Ivey

Lee & Nancy Strain
Given by David & Wendy Harvey

Pamela Bossie and Letty Reyes
Given by Andrew & Katie Reyes



May these gifts remind us of the great cloud of witnesses who surround us and the loved ones who continue to walk beside us. Christ is risen—Christ is risen indeed!

Communion Servers

April 2nd (Maundy)

Buck Ivey- Set Up
Kathy Harrah - Server
Jack Rogers - Server

April 5th (Easter)

Jennifer Burgess - Set Up
Kristi Sutphin - Server
Valerie Wade - Server

May 3rd

Kristi Sutphin - Set Up
Kathleen Jordan - Server
Jennifer Burgess - Server

Liturgists

April

Apr 2 - Kristi Sutphin
Apr 5 - Kathleen Jordan
Apr 12 - Raven Lanham
Apr 19 - Dave Harvey
Apr 26 - Holly Greathouse

In Care Facilities:

Ann McCormick, Apt.106, English Meadows, 5 Bexley Dr, Scott Depot, WV 25560
Sadie Ashworth, 5 Rolling Meadows Dr., Room 118, Scott Depot, WV 25560

Prayer Concerns Congregation Members:

Kensie McComas	Mike Harshbarger
Ellie Malcomb	Alex Dayfield
Carolyn Reed	Mike Merguc
Theresa Evans	Regina Dayfield & Mike Dillon

Anniversaries

Jon and Melinda Cox	April 7, 1990
Jack and Flo Rogers	April, 29th, 1994

Memorials

Given in memory of Margaret and J. D. Treanor by: Mary Margaret and John Sampson

Given in memory of Muriel and Bob Frincke by: Wini Collis

Given in memory of Pat White, Millie White and Cel Jones by: Mary Marchun

Military

Captain Allie Curtis, US. Army (United States)
Hunter Parsons, U.S. Navy (Virginia)
Mickey Swartz, Aircrew Flight Equipment Technician, U.S. Air Force (Eugene, Oregon)
Lieutenant Jack Wiles, U.S. Air Force
PFC Joseph Sutphin, US Army
Master Sergeant Robert Maddy (Deployed)

Prayer Concerns - Family and Friends

Ashley Nestman, Lymphoma (Connie Ivey)
Victoria Reynolds (Wanda Bowman)
Flo Rogers (Jack's wife & Raven's mom) health complications
Jason Haught, complications from spinal surgery (Vickie Haught's son, Jack Rogers' nephew)
Brett and Linda Foster, glioblastoma (Laurie's nephew and his wife)
Kate Litchtenfels' family
Jason Turley, major health concerns including leukemia (Laurie's son and Holly's brother)
Matt Waldie, lung cancer (Kathleen Jordan's friend)
Mary Jo Swartz, health problems (Kathi Curtis)
Annette Burns, liver issues (Ann McCormick)
Sharon Peterson's parents, Decision-making for long term care
Angie Saunders, pancreatic cancer (Raven's Cousin)
Willie Williams & Millie Astin, ICU in Atlanta (Kathryn Weed)
Cindy Lucas, ovarian cancer (Tony & Alex Dayfield)
Charlotte Cloud, broken hip, (Jack Rogers Aunt)
Family of David Leftwich, passed away (Kathy Leftwich brother-in-law)
Mark, brain cancer in hospice (Abbie Burch's younger brother)

Birthdays

4 – Matthew Duvall
6 – Elly Denzie
7 – Paige Ennis
11 – Jon Dunlap
14 – Patricia Mullins
17 – Tori Capehart, Lew Baxter
18 – Jarrell Mullins, Abby Cox
19 – Bob Sutphin
20 – Tony Allevato
23 - Michael Merguc (young Michael)
28 – Carolyn Reed
30 – Gabe Mullins, Wendy Harvey

Highlights of February Stated Session Minutes

March 17, Stated Session Meeting Opened with Prayer

- Approved February 17 Session Minutes
- Income and Expense Statement accepted
- Agreed it is time for an audit
- Approved use of the sanctuary to Altared Hearts to make a video
- Approved use of the building for the May 12, 2026 election
- Approved purchase of an AED for church use
- Approved date of VBS June 8-12, Rainforest Falls
- Approved several names to be moved to the inactive roll
- Approved a work party for Saturday, April 25
- Approved use of the church parking lot for City-wide yard sale May 2
- Holy Week Schedule reviewed
- Received a report from the Pastoral
- Transition Committee

Little's Story Time Team



by Donna Merguc, Coordinator

The Littles' Easter Party will be Friday, April 3rd at 10:30 am. There will be an Easter Egg Hunt on the playground right after Littles. Come and watch if you can. Let's hope for a nice, sunny day!

We've invited the Littles and their families to First Presby's Easter Sunday service and the Ice Cream Social/Easter Egg Hunt. Let's keep them in our prayers.

On March 27th, we read the book, Humphrey's First Palm Sunday. Unhappy to be at the back of the pack, Humphrey makes a plan to become lead camel in his caravan. Despite his disruptive antics, the caravan makes its way into Jerusalem just in time to witness Jesus entering the city. Though more than three decades have passed, Humphrey recognizes the man on the colt as the child to whom he gave his covered blanket on that special night in Bethlehem. This beautiful and entertaining book is a wonderful way to introduce the events of Palm Sunday. Children will identify with the lovable camel and see, through Humphrey's example, that there is great joy in following Jesus. Then, we paraded around our room with palms to the song "Hosanna". The children and families really enjoyed. Then, the children made camels as their craft. It was a blessed day.

Volunteers, when filling out a green sheet you may use the account number 5502 under CONG. CARE & EVANGELISM for reimbursement. If someone wishes to make a donation to Little's Story Time, please use the number 1110-082 under DESIGNATED. Thank you.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Liam Lester April 17

Liam Miller April 26

Facilities & Worship Committee

- Mike Merguc reviews increase in this month's electric bill (\$2,400); seems high. Mike regulating room heating as necessary.
- Mat outside Fellowship Hall door was stolen, we moved the mat from 3rd Ave. to replace it.
- We set a church work day for April 25th at 10:00AM
 - Fill cracks in parking lot & re-strip
 - Clean men's room walls, floor & stalls
 - Clean basement dorms and bath
 - Tuck point 3rd St. steps
 - Paint handrails
 - Fix all wood tables under stage
 - Fix marquee door
- Update on defibrillator unit for church; Donna will keep us informed.
- Possible new urinals for men's room.



A note of thanks to the congregation:

Thank you for your prayers support during my niece Kate's illness, and the sympathy extended to our family since she passed away last month. Your prayers, cards, and kind words are a comfort.

Forgiven and freed by God in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to: nurture our faith through prayer and Bible study, support the mission of the church worldwide, work for justice and peace, and build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and witnesses to the promise of God's kingdom.

Women's Lunch Gathering

Women of the church are invited to gather at 11:45am for lunch and fellowship Friday, April 17 at Shuckers on Olde Main. Please RSVP if you can join us by calling Kathryn at (304)539-2573. Everyone is welcome!

Circle Bible Study

Our circle Bible studies are scheduled for Tuesday, April 14 at 7:00 pm on Zoom, and in person on Wednesday, April 8 at noon in the church fellowship hall.

We are on lesson eight of our Horizons Bible study for 2025-2026, *Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity in Christ*, by the Rev. Dr. Rhashelle D. Hunter. You do not need a book, or to read the lesson to join the Bible study discussion. All are welcome!

During this month's gatherings we embrace to joys of our baptism. In our baptism we are claimed by God as children of God. We are not alone. God is always with us. Through the Holy Spirit we are empowered to join Jesus Christ's ministry of love, peace, and justice. Come share your questions and thoughts.

Daytime Bible study meets Wednesday, April 8 at 12:00 noon in person for table fellowship. Bring your own brown bag lunch. At 12:35 pm we begin the Bible study and conclude promptly at 1:30 pm.

Evening Zoom Bible study meets on Tuesday, April 14 at 7:00 pm. The zoom will open at 6:45 for early birds to fellowship.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85861031680?pwd=Nw4SR3C1r969qxLdwY9avWaru3wiai.1>

Meeting ID: 858 6103 1680

Passcode: 406332

EASTER ICE CREAM SOCIAL & EGG HUNT

APRIL 5TH 2026

11:15



Church News & Pastor Update

No, we're not there yet, but there is progress. We are probably about halfway to a new pastor. Presbytery has approved us for a joint Pastor Nominating Committee with Teays Valley. Your nominating committee is hard at work picking 3 people to represent the congregation. We will have a congregational meeting on April 19th to elect a PNC followed by a lunch to discuss the process and give some more updates. We need your help - you will find poster boards in the fellowship hall asking for your feedback on this process. Please add your thoughts so we can do better at updating you now and in the future. If you can't make it on the 19th, we will also be doing a longer update in the May Presby Record and probably scheduling more updates and listening sessions, so stay tuned. You are also welcome to come to Session meetings to get a better feel for what we're up to.

Rev. Julie Hitsman

The Guys' Weekend

April 24 - 26, 2026

Bluestone Camp & Retreat



Email mark@bluestonecamp.org
for details or call (304) 397-5050
and leave a message!

The Registration Fee is \$100 per person for 2 nights and 4 meals.
Dinner for early arrivals on Friday is \$13.

Meet our Weekend Chaplain/Keynote: [Craig Schaub >> Scan Here >>](#)



This 17th Annual Men's Retreat is a weekend of reflection, service, and worship. Come ready to work, connect, and share in meaningful fellowship and camaraderie, experiencing God's goodness and wonder in a way that is uniquely Bluestone!

Things to Note:

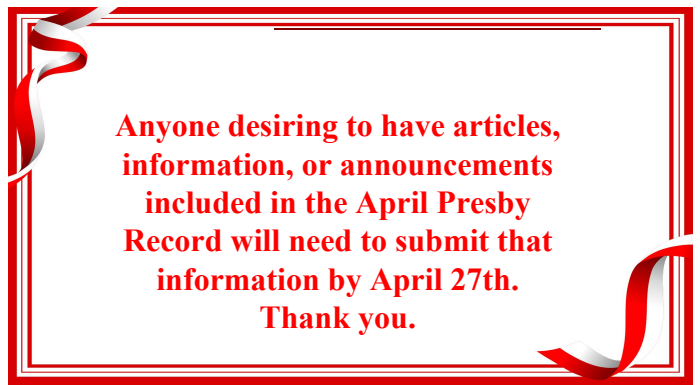
- We welcome the help of anyone who can come a day early to get started on work projects.
- Youth are encouraged to attend as long as they are accompanied by an adult.



bluestonecamp.org/guys-weekend

Friends of Bluestone

First Presbyterian Church
201 Kanawha Terrace
St. Albans, WV 25177



Trustees

Class of 2026: Holly Greathouse
Class of 2027: Dewitt Bowman
Class of 2028: Buck Ivey

Officers

Class of 2028	Class of 2026	Class of 2027
Dave Harvey (1)	Kathleen Jordan (2)	Jennifer Burgess (1)
Adam Greathouse (1)	Valerie Wade (2)	Kathy Harrah (1)
Buck Ivey (1)	Kristi Sutphin (1)	Jack Rogers (2)

Church Staff

Ministers..... Every Member of the Congregation
 Pastor
 Administrative Assistant.....Raven Lanham
 Custodian Jennifer Gil & Mike Merguc
 Musician..... N. David Stern
 TreasurerBuck Ivey
 Tech Team Dave&Wendy Harvey, Betty King, Logan Roberts

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Note: The number in parentheses refers to first or second consecutive three-year terms in office.