

# The Presby Record

A community beacon of faith, love and hope.

Volume LX Issue 3

March 2026

## Gracie and the Power of Friendship

It was a hot day in the Red Sea reef that Gracie and her friends called home. They were having a debate about what to do next. Some just wanted to take a nap, while others were hungry. Benji Butterflyfish was anxious to do something more active. He suggested a relay race from the branch coral to the sunken ship and back. The others agreed that this sounded like a good idea, and they divided up into teams.

Benji chose Gracie and Gus Grouper for his team. His twin sister Belinda chose Angie Angelfish and Ephraim Eel for her team. Old Codfish, their teacher, agreed to start the race. He cautioned both teams to be alert, as there were reports of lionfish in the area, which could be dangerous to the smaller fish like Gracie, Benji and Belinda.

Old Codfish began the race by saying, “On your mark. Get set. Go!” and Benji and Belinda began swimming as fast as they could. When they returned, they tagged Gus and Ephraim. Ephraim was an especially good swimmer as an eel and took off with an early lead. Gus, who was much bigger, was also a slower swimmer. Benji started shouting at him to go faster, but Gus was swimming as fast as he could. When the second swimmers returned, they tagged the third team members. It was now time for Gracie and her best friend Angie to race against each other. Angie was a strong swimmer and larger than Gracie. Gracie tried to swim as fast as her little fins would take her, but she was no match for Angie. Benji was yelling from the sidelines, but Gracie was going as fast as she could. Belinda’s team won the race!

Benji was very angry and became a poor sport. He blamed losing the race on his teammates. “I knew I should have chosen better swimmers than you two,” he shouted at Gus and Gracie. “In fact, I think all of you are too slow for racing. You’re not even trying. I’m going to go find faster friends or just race by myself.”

He swam off so quickly that none of his friends had time to say anything in reply.

Old Codfish said, “Benji is very angry, but I’m sure he still wants to be your friend. When our waters get warmer, sometimes it makes our fish friends do strange things, like swim faster or leave their group. This puts our separated fish friends at risk for harm if they get injured or if a predator finds them.”

“Oh, no!” cried Gracie. “The lionfish is a predator. We need to find Benji before anything happens to him.”

“Yes!” replied Old Codfish. “But remember to stay together while you search for him, or more of you could be at risk.”

The friends began their search. First they explored the coral reef near their school and then headed toward the sunken ship, which was the direction that Benji had gone. They swam to the surface and down to the bottom of the sea, always staying together and making sure that those who swam more slowly were with the group.

Finally, they came to a cave where they could see two eyes looking out at them. Could this be a lionfish, or was this their friend Benji? Ephraim volunteered to explore the cave, since he was larger and knew caves well. He went carefully inside, calling Benji’s name.

A voice said, "Go away! I'm safe here, and I don't need your help." This was Benji, and everyone gave a sigh of relief.

"Benji, come on out!" said his sister Belinda. "We are all here, and we want you to come back with us."

"You are just saying that because Old Codfish sent you to find me," replied Benji.

"You won't want to be my friend anymore because of the mean things I said. Besides, I saw a lionfish when I was by myself, and I don't want him to get any of you."

Gracie was the next one to try to get Benji out of the cave. "Benji, we are stronger together than we are by ourselves. Gus is bigger than any lionfish and can protect us. Remember how we all worked together to free him when he got caught in the coral and how that made him part of our group?"

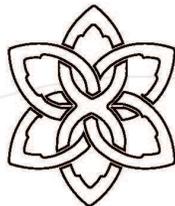
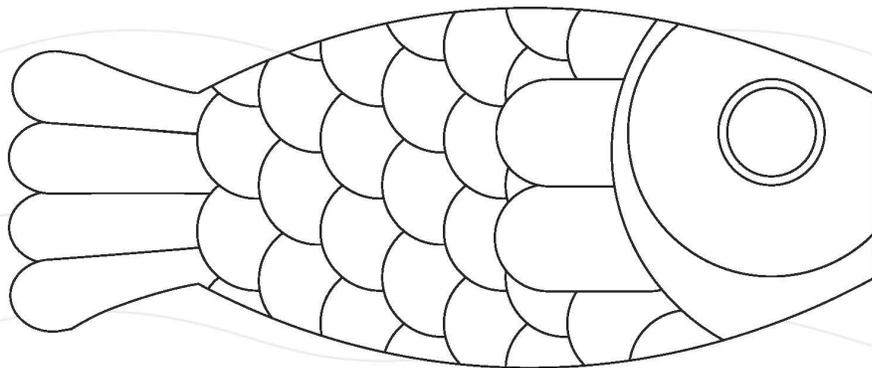
Angie reminded Benji of the time when all of them worked together to plant algae plants so that all of the reef fish would have something to eat. Ephraim reminded Benji of how everyone helped rebuild his home after it was damaged in a storm. Belinda reminded Benji of how they all listened to and aided the immigrant fish who had joined them from the Mediterranean Sea.

"See?" Gracie asked. "We are more powerful when we work together than we are when we try to do things by ourselves."

"OK," Benji said reluctantly. "You convinced me. I'm sorry I was so mean about the race. You will always be my friends no matter what."

"Let's go back to our reef and have a Friendship Party," said Gracie. And that is exactly what they did. As the day turned into night and the waters cooled somewhat, the fish friends bubbled a prayer to the God of the Seas, thanking God for the power that comes from working together for the good of all. As each fish began to swim back to their home, Benji looked at each of them and said, "Thank you for being my friend."

What does the Lord require of you?  
...to do justice



ONE GREAT  
HOUR OF SHARING

# A Sharing Calendar for Lent 2026

Each day at or after a meal time, gather around this map activity. Consider the reflection and questions, place a coin or a bill (a "gift") in your fish coin bank or a jar.

Feb. 22-28

**Sunday:** After a natural disaster, it may be hard to find places to cook or buy meals. Say a prayer of thanksgiving and give a gift for each meal you ate today.

**Monday:** Over 18 million Americans live in a food desert, far from a store where they can buy groceries. Give a gift for each grocery store nearby.

**Tuesday:** Electricity is usually the first utility that is lost in a storm. Give a gift for each electrical outlet in the room you are currently in.

**Wednesday:** Is water necessary for good health? Using the map, find Zambia and read what the PC(USA) is doing there. After learning more, give a gift for each drink you had today.

**Thursday:** On the online OGHS map, look at the U.S. states where the PC(USA) is working. Pray for each by name and give a gift for each state you've visited.

**Friday:** If you can read, you are more likely to be healthier. Learn a new word today and give a gift for every letter in your name.

**Ash Wednesday:** Read Micah 6-8. What does God require of us? How can we "do justice" in our day today?

**Thursday:** Our fish coin boxes will hold many gifts of money this season, but what other kinds of gifts can we give? What gifts can you give or share?

**Friday:** Sunday is Blue T-Shirt Sunday. What does the PC(USA) do to show God's love during a disaster? Choose something blue to wear or bring to church to celebrate.

March 1-7

**Sunday:** Most people around the world don't have access to the many varieties of fruit and vegetables we have. Give one gift for each type of fruit in your house.

**Monday:** Climate change is forcing farmers worldwide to either adjust their farming methods or move away. Give a gift for each type of animal you saw today.

**Tuesday:** When families move, building a new community of friends and neighbors can be hard! Make a card or gift for someone new in your church or neighborhood.

**Wednesday:** Without the right nutrition in the first two years of life, a child's physical and mental development is compromised. Give a gift for each toddler you know.

**Thursday:** When roads are closed and electricity is off, going to see a doctor can be hard. Give a gift if you've been able to see a doctor in the past year.

**Friday:** It is estimated that 1 in 5 kids in the U.S. will experience hunger this year. Give at least one gift if you have not experienced hunger this year.

March 8-14

**Sunday:** Where does your water come from? Many people carry buckets of water long distances to their homes every day. Give a gift for every faucet in your home.

**Monday:** In Panama, the PC(USA) partnered in the construction of a 25,000-liter tank, helping families with clean water for drinking and cooking. Give a gift for each drink of water you had today.

**Tuesday:** Social barriers are like locked doors that hold people back and keep them from thriving. Give a gift for every door that can lock in your home.

**Wednesday:** If you could start a business of your own, what would it be? Give a gift for every good business idea you hear from those you are with.

**Thursday:** Rainwater is rare in some places, so special collection systems are built to catch the water. Give one gift for every day it rained (or snowed) in the past week.

**Friday:** Changing weather patterns mean old ways of farming don't work in some areas anymore, so farmers need to be taught new techniques. Give a gift for every farm you've visited.

March 15-21

**Sunday:** In some places, people walk for hours to go to church, where they find support and encouragement from friends and family. Give a gift for every time you went to church this month.

**Monday:** Hunger-related causes kill thousands of people every day around the world. Give a gift for meals you've had today.

**Tuesday:** Some people can't find jobs and care for themselves because they don't have access to a car or the right bus route. Give one gift for every wheel in your garage that helps you get places.

**Wednesday:** Poverty can make people feel like they are always falling two steps back with surprise expenses or problems. Give a gift for every set of steps in your home.

**Thursday:** The most vulnerable are often the most impacted in emergency situations. Say a prayer for children impacted by disasters, and give a gift for every flashlight in your home.

**Friday:** Sometimes people need help advocating for their rights — like lawyers fighting for those impacted by unfair employment practices. Say a prayer for those who advocate for the poor.

March 22-28

**Sunday:** In South Sudan, women have found hope as they learn to farm so they can grow food for their families. Give a gift per plant in your house.

**Monday:** In Ohio, refugee women are able to market their sweet and savory treats at the farmers market, helping to take care of their families. Give one gift for every sweet treat you had today.

**Tuesday:** Immunizations give us hope for when certain diseases will no longer cause sickness and pain. Give a gift for each immunization you have received.

**Wednesday:** In Haiti, hope is seen in the leaves of the moringa tree, a superfood that can help many hungry people! Give one gift for every tree at home.

**Thursday:** Give a gift for every year you have been in school and find three books you can donate so another person can read and learn.

**Friday:** Learning new languages can be hard! Give five gifts for every language your family members speak.

March 29-April 4

**Passion/Palm Sunday:** Blankets are used internationally to comfort those impacted by disasters. Give a gift for each blanket in your home, or find some blankets you can donate.

**Monday:** Teaching healthy food choices and food safety can change the health of an entire community! Find some healthier foods you can donate to a food pantry or soup kitchen.

**Tuesday:** Find a location on the OGHS map you have not learned about yet. Spend some extended time learning about and praying for the ministry and people there.

**Wednesday:** Communication can be incredibly difficult after a disaster. Give a gift for every computer in your home, and call, email or text a loved one.

**Thursday:** God's love is shown in so many ways. Find three things you can do today or tomorrow to share God's love.

**Friday:** Clean water is a precious resource all over the world. Find some ways you can conserve or use less water every day and commit to doing at least 1 for a month or more.

April 5

**Sunday - Resurrection/Easter/One Great Hour of Sharing:** Present the gifts in your coin box to your congregation. Say a prayer for all those who will receive help from your generosity.

For more locations and ministries, go to [pcusa.org/oghsmap](http://pcusa.org/oghsmap) or scan this code.



**ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING**

## Communion Servers

### Hgdt wct { '3uv

Mcvj { "J "/"Ugv'Wr "F cxg"

J ctxg{ "/"Ugtxgt"

Mcvj rggp"lqtf cp"/"Ugtxgr

### March 1st

Wanda Bowman - Set Up

Jennifer Burgess - Server

Buck Ivey - Server

### 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

## Liturgists

February 1st Kathleen Jordan

February 8th Buck Ivey

February 15th Kathryn Maddy

February 22nd Dave Harvey

March 1st Kristi Sutphin

March 8th Valerie Wade

March 15th Buck Ivey

March 22nd Kathryn Maddy

March 29th Adam 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

Ellie Malcomb

Carolyn Reed

Theresa Evans

Mike Harshbarger

Alex Dayfield

Mike Merguc

Regina Dayfield & Mike

Dillon

## Anniversaries

Debbie and Mike Duvall

March 29, 1980

## 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

**Kate Lichtenfels & Family**, passed away from cancer (Kathryn

Maddy's niece)

**Jason Turley**, major health concerns (Laurie's son and Holly's

brother)

**Matt Waldie**, lung cancer (Kathleen Jordan's friend)

**Mark Cunningham**, brain cancer (Abbie Burch's brother)

**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)

**The Family of Cel Jones**, loss of Cel

**Willie Williams & Millie Astin**, ICU in Atlanta (Kathryn Weed)

**Cindy Lucas**, ovarian cancer (Tony & Alex Dayfield)

**Brenda Hughes**, heart cath (Valerie's sister-in-law)

**Charlotte Cloud**, broken hip, (Jack Rogers Aunt)

**Linda Mitchell**, blood pressure

## Birthdays

7 – Pat Dillon

9 – Sarah Hoyle, Evan Hartman, Mark Swartz, Mila Boyd (2009)

10 – LaVada Jones

11 – Moria Boyd (2007)

12 – Kathy Leftwich

13 – Micah Dettweiler

14 – Kathy Weed

17 – Cel Jones

23 – Mona McMillion, Miller Boyd (2001)

24 – Evelyn Otto

28 – Jillian Smith

29 – Linda McCallister, Philip Morrison, Ava Truly

31 – Joshua Merguc

## Highlights of February Stated Session Minutes

- Approved January Session Minutes
- Approved Annual Congregational Meeting minutes
- Approved Feb. 17th Session Agenda.
- Approved service date for Denny Dillon.
- Reviewed list of current membership
- Approved 2025 Church Stat. Report

## Facilities & Worship Committee

February

- Approved applying for grant from the Presbytery of WV for Hezekiah House parking lot.
- 
- Approved a collection for Owen Watson for Jamaican Hurricane Relief.
- 
- Approved WVMAW mission groups to stay at First Presbyterian this summer.
- 
- SAMA meeting held on 2/24/26

## Little's Story Time Team

by Donna Merguc, Coordinator

Storytelling can help children use their imaginations and think creatively, as they engage with the characters and plot of a story. The Little's readers continue to share a book each week with our little ones. Our volunteers continue to be blessed and the children continue to look forward to Fridays!

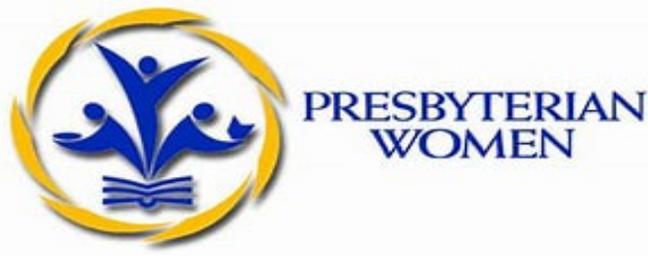
We welcomed Miller Reich-Trail, age 1, and his momma Carly this week. They live in St. Albans.

A BIG Thank You to Susan and Richard Allowatt for all the toy donations and stuff animals.

The Valentine Party was a big success! We had 27 Little's and 3 babies. The children really enjoyed exchanging valentines with each other and sharing a lot of love with each other too.

As a reminder, Spring Break is March 9-13 in Kanawha County; therefore, Little's will not meet on Friday, March 13. We will invite all the Little's and their families to Easter Sunday service and our Easter Egg Hunt at First Presbyterian Church of St. Albans.





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, March 20 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, March 10 at 7:00 pm on Zoom, and in person on Wednesday, March 11 at noon in the church fellowship hall.

We are on lesson seven of our Horizons Bible study for 2025-2026, Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity in Christ, by the Rev. Dr. Rhashelle D. Hunter. This month we find our identity in Christ through the story of the bent over woman Jesus healed on the Sabbath day. We are to be servant leaders, like Christ, healing and freeing others. All are welcome!

Daytime Bible study meets Wednesday, March 11 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, March 10 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=Nw4SR3Clr969qxLdwY9avWaru3wiai.1>

Meeting ID: 858 6103 1680

Passcode: 406332

#### FESTIVAL OF FAITH

"Tell Me A Story"

Keynote: The Widow's Mite and the Widower's Might: Seeing Scripture in Ordinary Actions

Keynote Presenter: Bil Lepp, storyteller, author, and recording artist

Saturday, March 21 9:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.

First Presbyterian Church, Charleston

Registration is \$30 and walk-ins are welcome. Links to registration forms, lunch orders, and workshops are on the presbytery's website.



# EASTER BRUNCH & EGG HUNT

APRIL 5<sup>TH</sup> 2026

11:15

Join us here at First Presby March 11th as we host a Lenten Lunch. If you would like to help please contact Raven Lanham at 304-437-8220 or in the Church Office.

## 2026 St. Albans Lenten Series

"Keeping the Unity of the Spirit"

Wednesdays at 12pm  
Worship service at 12pm, with  
a luncheon following service.

Sponsored by the  
St. Albans Ministry Alliance



2/25  
St. Francis  
Catholic  
Church

3/4  
St. Andrew  
United  
Methodist



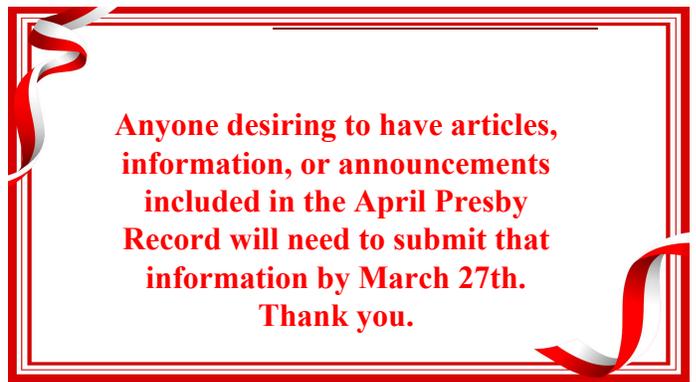
3/11  
First  
Presbyterian  
Church

3/18  
Gateway  
Church



3/25 St.  
Peter United  
Methodist

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



**\*Directory Update:**

Mila and Moria Boyd are members of this church who reside at 457 Mahood Drive, Huntington, WV 25705

David Kessler  
840 Mt. Movo Rd., Villanova, PA 19085

**Trustees**

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

**Officers**

<b>Class of 2025</b>	<b>Class of 2026</b>	<b>Class of 2027</b>
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
Treasurer .....	Buck Ivey
Tech Team .....	Dave&Wendy Harvey, Betty King, Logan Roberts

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Facebook: First Presbyterian Church of St. Albans

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