

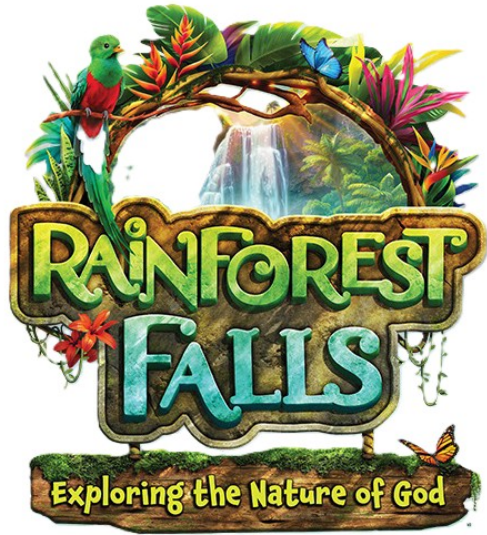
# The Presby Record

A community beacon of faith, love and hope.

Volume LX Issue 7

July 2026

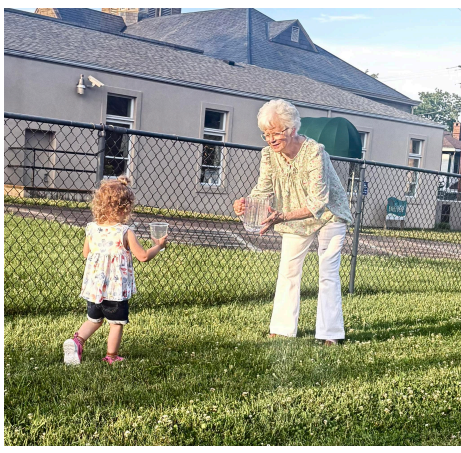
## VBS 2026: A Week of Faith, Fun, and Friendship



(cont.)







**This year's Vacation Bible School, Rainforest Falls, was an overwhelming success and we are beyond grateful for the nearly 30 volunteers who made it possible. We were also able to strengthen and grow in our partnership with Teays Valley Presbyterian as they participated in our annual ministry. The energy, creativity, and care helped welcome more than 50 children into a week filled with learning, laughter, and faith. Thanks to everyone's generosity, we also raised over \$100 for the Jubilee Fund, supporting local families in need. To every volunteer who taught, led games, prepared food, decorated, cleaned, prayed, or simply showed up with a smile — thank you. Your service truly reflects Christ's love in action!**

## Communion Servers

### July 5th

Kathleen Jordan - Set Up

Buck Ivey - Server

Jennifer Burgess - Server

### August 2nd

Raven Lanham - Set Up

Dave Harvey - Server

Kathleen Jordan - Server

## Liturgists

July 5th - Buck Ivey

July 12th - Kathryn Maddy

July 19th - Raven Lanham

July 26th - Kristi Sutphin

## 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

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## Prayer Concerns Members:

Ellie Malcomb      Alex Dayfield

Carolyn Reed      Mike Merguc

Mike Clark

Dolly Locke

## Anniversaries

Betty and Kirk King	July 6, 1985
Bill and Felicia Hoyle	July 6, 1985
Lorn and Dreama Walker Tom	July 21, 1972
and Marianne Peyton Beth and	July 25, 1998
Gary Hager	July 24, 2010
Ina and Wayne Armstrong John	July 29, 2000
and Julie Wiles	July 24, 1994
Kim and Dave Gaines	July 27, 1985
Trinity and Dustin Resler	July 19, 2008
Valerie and Jeff Wade	July 18, 2015
Dewitt and Wanda Bowman	July 31, 1965

## 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

## Prayer Concerns - Family and Friends

**Family of Ashley Nestman**, passed away from 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 Lichtenfels' 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 and lupus (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 **Abbie Burch's  
family** for the loss of her brother, Mark.

**Clay**, respiratory distress, (Abbie Burch's niece's baby)

**Eva**, MS, (Katie Reyes friend)

## Birthdays

5 - Gary Hartman, Jack Rogers

7 - Debra Parsons, Chris Manley, Adam  
Greathouse, Alex Dayfield

8 - Matthew Lanham

9 - Keira Cook

10 - Olivia Greathouse

11 - Tim Malcomb

22 - Logan Adkins (Merguc)

23 - Jamie Boyd (1977)

24 - Mike Merguc

26 - Florence Schumacher

27 - Debi Speidel

# Little's Story Time Team



Little's Story-time by Donna Merguc

We are taking a little break...Our last day with Little's was Friday, June 26th. We will be back on board August 21, 2026.

We had six Little's attend the VBS Pre-K class. They were familiar with the room and the teachers, Raven, Kathryn and Donna. We had the best time celebrating the Love of God.

We enjoyed reading these books during the month of June: Summer is Here, When Dads Don't Grow Up, Dini Dinosaur, and Time to Fly. I do believe the children really enjoyed them too.

I continue to thank God for our 18 helpers who read, prepare a craft and snack for them: John and Jackie Jones, Andi Pease, Connie Ivey, Debbie Duvall, Jennifer Burgess, Raven Lanham, Abbie Burch, Kirk King, Sara Kell, Linda Slappe, Regina Dayfield, Teresa Evans, Julie Hartman, Kathleen Jordan, Kathryn Maddy, Kathy Leftwich, and me! We could not do this program if it wasn't for you sharing your time.

A BIG "thank you" to Kathy Leftwich for donating the books, *The Other Side of Christmas* (An Upside Down) book written by Beth Gully, Kathy's Sister and *The Other Side of Easter* (An Upside Down) book written by Beth Gully also.

A BIG "thank you" to Tara Adkins, Donna's daughter-in-law for donating these books in honor of Michael and Logan: *I Am a Masterpiece*, a story about a little girl with Down syndrome and *Ember, the Brave Bear*, a story of healing and courage.

Donna prepared a writeup or story about "How Little's Got Started" and "Why First Presby started a Story-time" for Julie Hitsman, Session.

## JULY and AUGUST Birthdays

David VanScoy – July 26

Mao Shimizu – August 14

Aiden Lane – August 30

We sing "Happy Birthday" to them on the first Friday of each month. Birthdays are extra special just like our Little's!

On our last day with Little's, we gave them a bottle of bubbles as a gift with this poem by Ruth Reardon:

SOMETIMES...

let's just blow bubbles,

For no good reason,

let's just blow bubbles.

Laugh a little, watch them disappear,

not even wonder where.

Smile and touch the rainbow colors

watch them float in air.

No reason why--

no goals—no structure.

Sometimes...

let's just blow bubbles...

We can't begin to thank all of you enough for the wonderful things that you do for the "Littles" of St. Albans. Your mission is such an example of what Jesus said we should do... Love God and each other.

You certainly put your faith in an action of love, ♡

Your thoughtfulness means  
so much more  
than words can say.

The McCormick Family

Zoe





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**

The women of the church will meet on Friday, July 17 at Cozumel in the St. Albans loop at noon.  
 Everyone is welcome. Please RSVP to Kathryn if you plan to join us. (304)539-2573

**NEXT FALL'S BIBLE STUDY:**

United Through Christ, Bound to Each Other: Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians  
 by Rhonda Mawhood Lee  
 Suggestions for Leaders by Sarah Leer  
 (the 2026–2027 PW/Horizons Bible study)

Readers will be fascinated by this journey to Corinth and will explore how Paul's timeless message of  
 loving unity calls Christ's followers today. We will come to understand early church conflicts and how  
 some of the same problems persist today.



## **Facilities & Worship Committee**

6-2-26

Attending: Mike Merguc, Mike Clark, and Jack Rogers

- Mike Merguc Updates
  - Will keep up on odor control in the old basement after flood.
  - Need a new AC/heat unit in the Nursery.
  - Mr. Roofer made repairs at 3rd St. entrance.
- Getting estimates for the flat roof at the 3rd St. entrance.
- Getting estimates on a 1st floor mens room reno.
- Discussed upcoming mission team visits from June-Dec.
- Mel Burch making repairs to 3rd St. steps.
- Nest Work day August 8th. No meeting in July.
- Michale Clark gettin estimates for audio equipment in Sanctuary.

## **Bell Ringing on Independence Day**

Perk up your ears at noon on July 4, the 250th celebration of our great nation's birth. Somewhere in the midst of the ringing you may hear the bell of First Presby.

We are participating in the combined bell ringing all over our almost heaven state of West Virginia to give thanks and celebrate.

Regardless of where you are, tune in to the sounds of bells ringing and know that God and your Church are with you!

## Pastor Search Update #2

from Rev. Julie Hitsman, moderator of First Presbyterian Church of St. Albans

If you like this and it's helping, I need more of your questions for future updates. Email me or the church office. Or write them down and hand them to Raven (during her work hours or leave it on her desk).

### **What is a PNC and what do they do?**

The PNC is the Pastor Nominating Committee. This group is representative of your church, and they will be interviewing pastors. Your PNC is composed of 6 people: 3 from your church and 3 from Teays Valley. Of those, one person from each church is on their session and two are members who are not on session. The goal is to get a representative group who can speak for each of the churches. They have been meeting and writing up more stuff - yes, we're Presbyterian and there is always another layer of reflection and writing it up. They have submitted it to the Presbytery, who will authorize it being put into the Presbyterian employment system soon. Once it is there, its alot like online dating. Your PNC will recieve a pile of matches that the system thinks might be a good fit. Your PNC will sort through them, and start to talk to some that seem to have potential. This can be a slow process, even if your PNC is working hard. The goal is to find the right person, even if that takes a little time. In some ways it will look to the rest of us like nothing is happening. But your PNC is already hard at work and will continue to work away until they have a potential pastor to bring before us.

### **Are we getting a real Presbyterian pastor?**

Let's start by better defining what people probably mean by that question. Traditionally a Presbyterian pastor has gone to seminary, has a Masters of Divinity, and has passed their ordination exams. They either have already been ordained, or are ordained at their first pastor job. This is different than a commissioned pastor, which is what its called if an ALP like Adam or Kathy continue their training through the Presbytery and become the pastor of a church.

Now as to the question of are we getting a seminary trained Presbyterian Pastor. Maybe. The PNC will be looking at seminary trained pastors. It is currently the hope to hire one. One of the wonderful things about partnering with Teays Valley is that we have enough money to come up with an appropriate compensation package for a seminary trained pastor. However, there is openness and flexibility in this process. If the PNC doesn't find any good candidates from the Presbyterian pastor pile, or if a really good option for a pastor comes up that isn't a traditionally educated pastor, then all options will be considered.

### **Where will the pastor live?**

A pastor is an employee of the church. As such, the church has no say in where they live. However, the church does have a say in how many hours the pastor will be in the building and what those hours will be. We have heard how much people want to be able to drop by and see the pastor. The top request in what we want for a pastor was one who will be in the building and have regular office hours. As an extension to this, the church has no control over how much time a pastor's spouse and children spend at the church or if they even attend. I understand this is a painful concept and that it is hard to hear. But the church as an employer does not get a say in how the family of one of their employees spends their time and does not get to dictate their religious identities, beliefs, or practices. It is ok to hope the pastor's family will be present and its ok to be welcoming and inviting to them. It is not ok to punish the pastor if his or her family doesn't come to church. So, the pastor will live wherever makes sense for them, but he or she will be in the building at predictable times to be available and present with the congregation. Everything else we don't know and can't control.

## Can we just hire you? Are you applying?

I was surprised and flattered as this question kept coming up, but I am not applying. I spent a long time picking a church that I love to be a part of and that really appreciates the gifts and talents I bring to ministry. I've been the pastor at Spencer Presbyterian for almost 7 years, longer if you count my time as a regular pulpit supply. Its a great fit for me, for my family, and for my church. It is my sincere hope that we can find you a pastor that feels the same about your church. So I will be part of the team support you all during this transition period, and then I will joyfully hand you off to your next pastor.

## How can I help?

"There is one body, but it has many parts. But all its many parts make up one body. It is the same with Christ...You are the body of Christ. Each one of you is a part of it." 1 Corinthians 12:12, 27

This transition to a part time pastor is going to be different. This church is used to being able to rely on a full time pastor plus extra staff to do alot of the work. This is going to be a shift away from that. We are going to need everyone's gifts and talents to not only survive, but to thrive. Things that were traditionally the pastor's job, like leading Wednesday night Bible study, may no longer be the pastor's job. The exact details won't be known until the new pastor is in place, but in general, some of the things the pastor used to do will need to be done by other people.

Additionally, this church does not have any paid staff on Sunday mornings, other than the visiting pulpit supply. Raven and Mike might be in the building on Sunday, but they are not on the clock. This means that if the trash is overflowing or the phone is ringing, it is up to whoever is nearby to handle it.

Churches are run by human energy. Strong, thriving churches have many people willing to step up and share the work of being a church together. Find what you're good at and can help the church out with.



# Blessing Bag Needs

Socks – for men and women



Toilet Paper



Every donation helps bring comfort and care to someone in our community.



Thank you!

Please leave all donations on the stage



## Parade

**Alban Arts Center- July 10 @ 8:00 pm - 10:00 pm**

Parade follows Leo Frank, a Jewish man falsely accused in 1913 Georgia, revealing how prejudice warps justice and how love endures in the darkest moments.

# Benelovent Ministries & Community Events

**Free Movie Night – Superman 2025**  
**July 10 @ 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm**

Join St. Albans Parks & Recreation for a free family movie night showing Superman (2025) on Friday, July 10 at 7 PM at McKinley Rec Center.

## Saint Albans Farmer's Market

201 Kanawha Terrace

Bringing fresh harvests, local creativity, and hometown spirit together in one welcoming market.

**Saturday Market Dates:** **Night Market Dates:**

10-3

5:30-8:30

June

June 30

6 & 20

July 31

July

August 31

11 & 25

August

8 & 22



## Dragonpalooza 2026

**Saturday, July 18, 2026 5:00 PM – 10:00 PM**  
**Roadside Park**

Free Admission

Dragonpalooza returns to Roadside Park on Saturday, July 18, for an unforgettable evening of live music, local vendors, food, and family-friendly fun along the Coal River.

## Hygiene Drive for Children in Foster Care

Donate full-size products to your local CASA office!

- Shampoo
- Body Wash
- Deodorant
- Feminine Hygiene

westernregionalcasa@teamwv.org

## SAPD Blood Drive with the Red Cross July 21, 2026

St. Albans Police Department  
Donate blood with SAPD and the American Red Cross 9:30 a.m.–2:30 p.m. at 613 MacCorkle Ave.  
Appointments preferred.

## Christ's Kitchen & St. Albans Food Pantry

Christ's Kitchen and the St. Albans Food Pantry continue serving our neighbors.

Donations can be placed in the Fellowship Hall cart.

Volunteers are always appreciated.

Kitchen: Mon–Thurs & Sat, 10–1  
Pantry: Tues & Thurs, 8:30–10:30

405 B Street

Top 5 pantry needs: hamburger helper, pasta sides, cake mix, pudding, and tuna.



**Historical Society Museum Open**  
**10am-2pm**  
**July 4, July 18**

Stop in and see us! Our museum is open to the public the first and third Saturday of each month.

## JAWS

**July 24 @ 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm**

**Alban Arts Center**

A great white terrorizes a beach town, forcing the police chief, a biologist, and a shark hunter into a deadly hunt to stop it.

# CAN COLLECTION ST. ALBANS



**HIGH SCHOOL**

Procedes go to the Garden Club



## CHRISTMAS IN JULY

As reported in the last Presby Record, Session has approved an opportunity to get started on collecting canned food items for the 2026 Christmas Food Basket program.

The pilot for accepting shelf stable food items last year was hugely successful resulting in over \$500 worth of food helping us to balance our budget for the program. The Christmas in July collection will occur July 1-31. We hope you can take advantage of sales and specials.

Beginning July 1, you can contribute CANNED food only toward the program. These can be name brand or store brand. Because the food will not be distributed until mid-December, we request canned only – no bagged or boxed items. Even though those items may still be within a “use by” date, they could get “buggy” while in storage awaiting distribution.

PLEASE ENSURE THAT THE ITEMS WILL STILL BE WITHIN THE “USE BY” DATE AT LEAST THROUGH JANUARY 31, 2027.

You can leave the items on the front of the left side of the stage close to the piano.

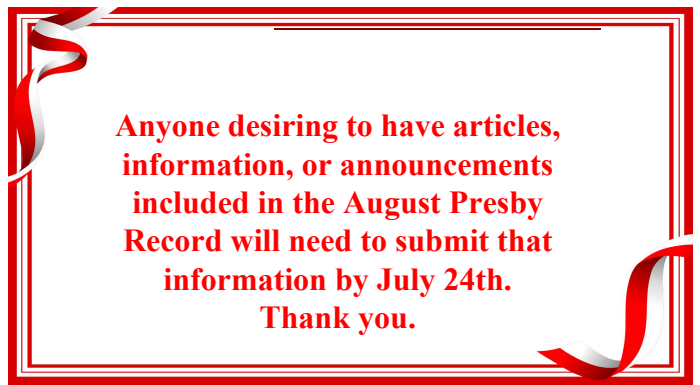
Following is a suggested list of items we will need.

- Soup, tomato
- Soup, chicken noodle
- Peach, pear, pineapple in juice
- Chicken broth, canned (not boxed)
- Corn, 15 oz can
- Green beans, 15 can
- Apple juice, canned
- Tuna, 5 oz can
- Tomatoes, diced, 15 oz can

First Presby has always taken pride in this project, and that support is greatly appreciated. Thank you in advance for supporting this important community project.

If you have questions, please contact Jennifer Burgess at 304-421-3780 or [jenniferburgess54@gmail.com](mailto:jenniferburgess54@gmail.com).

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**

<b>Class of 2028</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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 Email: [fpcs@firstpresbychurch.com](mailto:fpcs@firstpresbychurch.com)  
 Web site: [www.firstpresbychurch.com](http://www.firstpresbychurch.com)  
 Facebook: First Presbyterian Church of St. Albans

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