



# The Bridge

September 2024



## From the Pastor

*Rev. Julie Sterling*

### A New View from Our Window

Moving day is coming soon. It's hard to believe how fast the summer has gone by. Boxes are starting to stack up in the Bette Hahn room and several cherished items have found new homes. As we have gone through closets, cabinets, and drawers, one common question keeps popping up: Will we use this in future and is it worth moving?

So far things are going well. The truth is that this congregation has always been good about not holding on to too much. Of course any move can be emotional at times. 410 North Broad has been our home for generations. I've enjoyed hearing stories about the history of the church as we have planned for our future move.

This is a big change for our congregation. We are a church on the move! It's hard to envision what life will be like at our new home on the corner of St. James Ave. and Washington St.

Will being part of a shared space change the way we do ministry?

What will Sunday mornings feel like?

How will people connect with us in our new home?

According to American author Rachel Hollis, "Moving doesn't change who you are. It only changes the view outside your window." Still, as we transition to a new residence, there have been a few things we have had to consider. Not everything can stay the same.

One thing that is evolving in our move is the church logo. Our church is currently using a sketch of our church building and cross to reflect our ministry. It is used on letterhead, stationary, and our weekly church bulletin. As part of the transition, a team of church members are working with a website developer to help rebrand and market our church. One thing we have been tasked to do is design a new logo that reflects us at SPC. Easier said than done.

After weeks of hard work and prayer, we agreed on a design which incorporated both the traditions of our past and the excitement and hope of our ministry moving forward. Our new logo includes the cross from the church yard with waves representing 'living water'. The celtic cross symbolizes faith, hope,

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Our Mission — To be a bridge to Christ through faith and service • Our Vision — When SPC is faithful in accomplishing its mission, people will know that Christ is at work in their lives and follow Him. • We Value — Being accepting, caring, outreaching, Spirit-led, and willing to serve

## Prayer Requests

- † The family of Katherine JoAnne Branham
- † Eric Sterling
- † Jeffery Birkey
- † Alan Goforth, Sr.
- † Pat Jones
- † Tommy Morrison
- † Shelby Owen
- † Charlie Powell
- † Cindy Robinson
- † Nikki Scott
- † Ron Sterling
- † Caroline

## Happy Birthday

- 9/2 Miki Hayley
- 9/3 Ron Sobel
- 9/13 Tosh Copeland
- 9/27 Zach Super

## Pray for our Military

- † Ashlyn Dawson
- † Laura Dawson
- † Sidney Dawson
- † Nick Meadors
- † Glenn Smith
- † Hayden Spalding
- † Greg Vernon

The *Suffolk Presbyterian Bridge* is a publication of Suffolk Presbyterian Church in Suffolk, VA. The *Bridge* is published 12 times a year under the direction of the Administration/Communication Ministry Team of the SPC Session.

News items should be submitted to the newsletter editor by the 20th of the month in one of the following ways:

- email at [office@suffolkpresbyterian.org](mailto:office@suffolkpresbyterian.org)
- mail to the church address
- Laura Farmer's office mailbox

Editor: *Laura Farmer*, Administrative Assistant

## News Briefs

**Food Pantry Donations:** The greatest needs are canned veggies/fruits/tuna/chicken, cold cereal, peanut butter, and jelly. Financial donations accepted via church website. Donations delivered to Suffolk Christian Fellowship Center.

**Gift Card Ministry:** The deacons are collecting \$25 restaurant gift cards during the offering to help congregation members in times of need. These will be used to assist with meals.

**Suffolk Little Pantry:** The youth are collecting items for their project. Granola bars, individual cracker packets, fruit cups, rice crispy treats, and other non-perishable snack items can be placed in the Narthex collection box.

### Relocation Dates

9/8 at 3 pm Decommissioning SPC

9/15 FIRST Worship service at new location 9:30AM

9/16 Moving week for office



### Administrative Office Hours



Starting on September 16, Laura Farmer's regular office hours are Tuesdays from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm, Wednesdays from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm, and Thursdays from 9:30 am to 1:30 pm, If you would like to contact her directly, please email [office@suffolkpresbyterian.org](mailto:office@suffolkpresbyterian.org) or call 757-539-3213.

### Directory Updates

If you have a new address, phone number, or email, please contact **Laura Farmer**, Administrative Assistant, at [office@suffolkpresbyterian.org](mailto:office@suffolkpresbyterian.org) or 757-539-3213. If you are not in the directory, and would like to be added, please email your information. Thank you!

## Living Waters 2024 Fall Plant Sale

*By Jack Stoughton*

First, a huge thank you for all the years you have brightened your fall gardens with 'mum and pansies in support of SPC's Living Waters for the World mission. Now get ready to fill your gardens again as we launch our fall plant sale! Orders will be taken Sunday, Sept. 8 through Sunday Sept. 29. Plants will be delivered locally or picked up on Friday, October 4 from 9-11am from the parking lot of **our new location at West Washington St. and St. James Ave.**

Since Covid, our goal has been to sustain our operating partners as they improve their water purification standards as mandated by government health regulations. We fund this mission through donations and semiannual plant sales. Over the past 12 months, we have provided more than \$7,600 to support projects like restoring a system that had fallen into disrepair at an elementary school, site of our second installation. The new principal desperately wants to provide clean water for the children once more.

You can help by purchasing lovely pansies and 'mums grown locally for our plant sale. Beautify your gardens while helping achieve the principal's dream of clean water for her students.

Keep the clean water flowing!

Please note the following:

- ✦ Orders forms and information will be available in the SPC (N. Broad St.) narthex beginning Sunday, Sept. 8.
- ✦ Return your order and payments to Jack Stoughton in person or by mail, at 125 Longwood Ave, Suffolk, VA 23434, (please allow some extra time for the mail to be delivered); or
- ✦ Make your payment and/or donation through the church website at <http://Suffolkpresbyterian.org/support-us/>. AND email your order to Jack at [jstoughton92@gmail.com](mailto:jstoughton92@gmail.com) or text him at (757) 651-0284.
- ✦ Make your check payable to Suffolk Presbyterian Church, memo: LWW plant sale.
- ✦ **Turn in all orders and payments by 5 pm, Sunday Sept 29.**

Thank you in advance for your continued and generous support of this ministry.

Your Living Waters for the World team: **Nancy Cisco, Chris & Skip Irby, Curtis Mackenzie, Mary Ann & Rob Saunders, and Jack & Susie Stoughton.**

## Composer / Arranger Spotlight

A church musician is similar to an avid reader. People who love to read have their favorite authors and genres. Those authors are often in high demand at the library, and the same books fly on the shelves at your local bookstore. Composers and arrangers of music are no different.

One of my favorite composers is Gordon Young. His name is synonymous with Gresham, Patterson, and Steele. Gordon Young has long been a staple of organ repertoire due to his accessible service music. The term “accessible” is debatable but with some practice, the organist can master the tune, dynamics, and overall musicology of his works. Young passed several decades ago, but there is not a Sunday that goes by that his unmistakable style is not heard in churches large and small around the world.

Young is best known for his organ work "[Prelude in Classic Style](#)" (from [Nine Pieces for Organ](#), Sacred Music Press, 1966), which has entered the worldwide standard organ repertoire.

### Music Notes...

Special Choir Rehearsal will be held on Monday, August 26th at 6:30 pm. This is preparation for the decommissioning service.

Regular Choir Rehearsal will resume on Thursday, September 5th from 7:00 pm until 8:15 pm. This will be the final rehearsal held at our current location. Choir Rehearsal will begin at Suffolk Presbyterian at West End Church on the following Thursday.

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## Special reception to be held after decommissioning service on Sept. 8

On Sunday, Sept. 8, we will host a special reception, one where we will bid a fond farewell to a building that no longer suits our needs and look forward to a new chapter in SPC's long history of faith and service.

After the Presbytery of Eastern Virginia concludes the 3 p.m. decommissioning service, we will gather one more time in the narthex at 410 N. Broad Street. The light reception will honor SPC members and guests, including the presbytery officials.

Since the reception will be held in the late afternoon, we are serving punch and cookies ONLY! Please bring a ready-to-serve plate of finger foods (home baked or bakery cookies, brownies or other “bars,” or other delicious treats that can be picked up without a fork).

Please remember to take your dish home afterward since we will begin worshiping at West Washington St. and St. James Ave. the following week.

## “Lunch and Learn” to highlight Guatemala in our new home



On Oct. 6, we will have an opportunity to enjoy a familiar activity - the popular “Lunch and Learn” - in a new venue and a new format.

That day, on World Communion Sunday, we will celebrate our common bonds with believers around the world as we worship with the West End faith community. This combined service will be held at 11 a.m. in the sanctuary where our two churches will be worshipping at different hours on a normal Sunday. Afterward, we will host a “Lunch and Learn,” as we have done before, with a program on SPC’s Living Waters for the World mission.

The pot-luck luncheon also will be shared with our West End friends. Please bring a covered dish to share as we gather in the spacious fellowship hall in the basement of our new church home. Many will remember attending dinners and dessert auctions there during combined Vacation Bible School with West End Baptist and Oxford Methodist churches.

For those newer Suffolk Presbyterians who may not be familiar with the building, the fellowship hall can be accessed by stairs behind the sanctuary or the elevator located at the rear of the choir room.

After eating, **Rob Saunders** will lead an update on SPC’s 18-year mission to help provide “clean water for all God’s children.” This will give the West End family an overview of our mission that has produced four water purification systems, providing clean drinking water to families in eastern Guatemala.

Since Covid, our Living Waters for the World team has been in a sustaining mode instead of developing additional systems. We have been focused on providing financial assistance and online support through Zoom conferences with the LWW staff and our operating partners.

However, earlier this year, Rob traveled to Guatemala to help rebuild one of those systems at an elementary school. The system had fallen into disrepair when the principal, who had been the operator, left for a new position. The new principal is grateful now that the students have clean water to drink once more.

We are excited to share this time with West End. Leaders of both congregations felt this was an especially appropriate way to celebrate World Communion Sunday and to kick off our time together as we share space and similar purposes.

What better way to celebrate our communion with friends in Suffolk and around the world?

*By Susie Stoughton, LWW team member*

Dear Church family and friends,

We live in an era of uncertainty. The uncertainty of floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, climate change, political polarization and more. The uncertainty of aggression through war, gun violence, human trafficking and international conflict. The uncertainty of employment, inflation, illness – the list goes on.



However, when I think about it, I guess humanity always has in one form or another. Long ago, the Psalmist wrote: “Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me” (Psalm 23:4, NRSV). Today, as a community of faith, we claim God’s promise – you are with me.

As your pastor, I’m grateful for our participation in A Season of Peace culminating with our receiving the Peace & Global Witness Offering on World Communion Sunday. This offering draws Presbyterians together and provides education and exposure to siblings in Christ who work for peace every day. Your support of this offering helps encourage our church partners in Ukraine as they struggle against the trauma of war. It helps congregations begin to address the growing mental health crisis and the increase in the number of suicides in their communities. It provides resources for congregations seeking to address issues of gun violence in their communities.

This is why we give generously to the **Peace & Global Witness Offering**. We give because we know that every level of society needs Christ’s peace. From our congregation, where we retain 25% of this Offering to support local missions and their important roles in our community; to the region, where 25% is retained by mid councils to support peacemaking efforts with our neighboring congregations; and to the ends of the Earth, where the remaining 50% is used by the Presbyterian Mission Agency to join the peacemaking efforts of church partners all over the globe. We join these monetary gifts with our prayers for peace and our work for justice.

You are invited to visit the Peace & Global Witness website ([pcusa.org/peace-global](http://pcusa.org/peace-global)) to learn how your support of this offering helps peacemaking efforts both in the U.S. and around the world. As a community of faith, we want to deepen our commitment to peacemaking so that it becomes a visible and profound witness to our community. I challenge each of us to consider how we might increase our witness and our giving to the Peace & Global Witness Offering. I pray that the God of Peace might open the generosity in our hearts to join with Christians all over the country on World Communion Sunday, Oct. 6, in response to the Peace & Global Witness Offering.

As Presbyterians, we claim Jesus Christ as the Prince of Peace and pattern our lives in the compassion, kindness and grace that he shows us. God is with us. May we joyfully bring that peace to all those we care for, love and serve.

Yours in the Peace of Christ,  
*Rev. Julie Sterling*

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balance, connection, wisdom, and life; all things reflected in our congregation. The circle within the cross represents eternity and the endlessness of God's love. We also wanted to acknowledge our passion for mission as a Spirit-Driven church through the image of a wave. John 7:38 states "Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them."

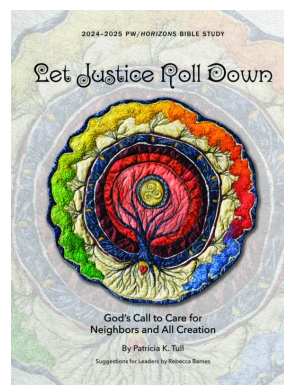
I look forward to our new adventure together. I know that there may be some challenges around the bend. Thomas Fuller said it best, "All things are difficult before they are easy." It will take time to get used to this change. Remember, this isn't the first time our congregation has been a church on the move. SPC is more than a building, it is us and I am so thankful for your faith and hope through all of this. To quote Henry Ford, "If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself." And when things get overwhelming, which they probably will, I invite you to meditate on a line of scripture from Jeremiah 29:11:

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Amen!

## **Let Justice Roll Down: God's Call to Care for Neighbors and All Creation**

### **The 2024–2025 PW/Horizons Bible study**

Patricia Tull, author of the 2024–2025 PW/Horizons Bible study *Let Justice Roll Down: God's Call to Care for Neighbors and All Creation*, describes her call for creation justice in this way: "When I first learned of the climate crisis, I wondered how a biblical scholar with few practical skills could help and found my purpose in learning about ecology and teaching people of faith what I could. Such is not everyone's skillset or desire, but each of us has something to do with all our hearts."



We are called to care for neighbors and God's creation with all our hearts, with particular care for society's least powerful members who are disproportionately impacted by unjust systems. In God's first instructions to the nation of Israel we hear "you shall not pervert the justice due to the poor" (Exodus 23:6); in Moses' final speech at the promised land's border, he reiterated, "Justice, and only justice, you shall pursue" (Deuteronomy 16:20); and from Amos, the earliest recorded prophet, "Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everflowing stream" (Amos 5:24). Scripture reminds us that we are called to speak out to urge our society to act for just transitions in this fast-changing world.

**Join us on October 14 at 7 pm for our first Presbyterian Women meeting of the year.**

<https://www.presbyterianwomen.org/bible-study/justice/>





# September 2024

Suffolk Presbyterian Church

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>1</p> <p>Communion 9 AM Choir 9:30 AM Worship</p>	2	3	4	<p>5</p> <p>6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir Rehearsal (current location)</p>	6	7
<p>8</p> <p>9 AM Choir 9:30 AM Worship 3 PM Decommissioning Service &amp; Reception</p>	9	10	<p>11</p> <p>7 PM Diac-nate Meeting</p>	<p>12</p> <p>6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir Rehearsal (new location begins)</p>	13	14
<p>15</p> <p>Worship begins at our new home 9 AM Choir 9:30 AM Worship</p>	16	17	<p>18</p> <p>7 PM Session Meeting</p>	<p>19</p> <p>6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>20</p> <p>NewsLetter <b>DEADLINE</b></p>	21
<p>22</p> <p>9 AM Choir 9:30 AM Worship</p>	23	24	25	<p>26</p> <p>6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	27	28
<p>29</p> <p>5th Sunday 9 AM Choir 9:30 AM Worship</p>	30			<p>Ecumenical Youth Group will meet on Sunday, September 8 at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 5:30 pm.</p>		



Suffolk Presbyterian Church  
410 North Broad Street  
Suffolk, Virginia 23434



**Visit our website!**  
[suffolkpresbyterian.org](http://suffolkpresbyterian.org)

Suffolk  
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**CHOIR PRACTICE**

9:00 AM

**WORSHIP**

9:30 AM

Sunday School resumes on  
October 13 at 11 AM.

## Upcoming Events:

September 8—Decommissioning Service &  
Reception

September 8—Ecumenical Youth Group

September 11—Diaconate Meeting

September 15—Worship begins at new location

September 18—Session Meeting

Thursdays—Spiritual Fellowship & Choir Rehearsal



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