



The Bridge

APRIL 2024



From the Pastor

Rev. Julie Sterling

When “I Am” becomes “Us Too”

Jesus Christ is risen!

The stone has been rolled away and we rejoice in the empty tomb.

The long journey of Lent has been replaced by shouts of hallelujah.

Our Savior lives, he lives in us today.

Easter Sunday has come and passed, yet the Spirit of the season remains. As we count down the weeks until Pentecost, we rejoice with the good news that the gift of the Holy Spirit is with us; guiding us as we continue the story of God through us. How can we honor what Christ has accomplished for us on the cross? We are called to talk up the cross and follow in his way. 1 Peter 2:1 says “To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in his footsteps and Matthew 11:29 Jesus proclaims, “Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your soul.” One of the best ways to model our lives after Jesus is to ask ourselves the qualities of Jesus that are most important to us.

What do we see when we close our eyes and think of Jesus? During our Lenten season we focused on the “I Am” statements of Jesus. In the study Jesus Revealed: The I Am Statements in the Gospel of John, Matt Rawle shared 7 “I Am” statements” found in the Gospels: I am the light

of the world; I am the bread of life; I am the good shepherd; I am the gate; I am the true vine; I am the way, the truth, and the life; and I am the resurrection and the life. Each one of these “I Am” statements” may have their own special meanings to us. There may be one in particular that registers with us more than others. Rawle suggests to look at them like lenses stacked on each other, so that each statement is part of the whole artistic expression of “I Am”:

“Our role is to keep pointing to this work of art and welcoming others Into understanding that God’s story, through grace, is our story. We Are called to offer our own drama, our own art to the body of Christ, extending the frame of God’s grace to neighbor and enemy alike until The curtain falls on God’ drama with a new heaven and new earth.”

How can we be the same compassion, comfort, hope, and sustaining faith while providing for the needs of others? How can “I Am” be “Us Too”?

Over the next few months we will be using the “I Am” statements of Jesus to guide us as we discern our next steps as a church. What will our ministry look like? How do we hold on to what is important while changing location? How might it evolve and change? Maybe the best way to do so is by defining who we are in relation to our life with God; our “I Am” statement. We will have

(Continued on page 6)

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

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!



4/5 Curtis MacKenzie
 4/7 Susie Stoughton
 4/12 Erik Wood
 4/12 Lilith Wood
 4/15 Faye Sobel
 4/19 Chris Johnson
 4/25 Sherry Matthews

† Doc Crusenberry
 † Eric Sterling
 † Jeffery Birkey
 † Richard Alan Goforth, Sr.
 † Skip Irby
 † Anton Johnston
 † Jimmy Hope
 † Charlie Powell
 † Cindy Robinson
 † Jeff Snow
 † Randy Stoughton

Happy Anniversary

4/1 Calvin & Susie Piland
 4/5 Stewart & Ann Doughtie
 4/13 Danny & Cheryl Morrow

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 in one of the following ways:

- email at office@suffolkpresbyterian.org
- mail to the church address
- Laura Farmer's office mailbox

Editor: Laura Farmer,
 Administrative Assistant

PRAY FOR OUR

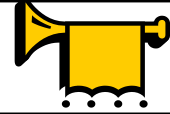
MILITARY

*Thank you for
 your service!*

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



News Briefs



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.

Information from Breena:

Below is a link to the list of needs for the ODU English students from Congo and Tanzania. The list should be updated occasionally as the needs are met. If you are trying to downsize and would like to donate items no longer on the list, the English Language Center will send them on to Catholic Charities to be given to other refugee individuals and/or families. Thank you so much for your love, compassion and generosity.

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1RZz9G6o9ungSfVmPb_Z4uTfQGcBRvlrjM6bHu71IeFE/htmlview

Support humanitarian assistance in Israel/Palestine: The needs for the response will be great. God's people are called on to stand in the "GAP" — Give. Act. Pray. Gifts can be made [online](#), by calling (800) 872-3283, by texting PDAIP to 41444, or by check made payable to Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with "DR000081-Israel/Palestine" on the memo line. Mail to: Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), P.O. Box 643700, Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700.

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.

Administrative Office Hours



Laura Farmer's regular office hours are Wednesdays from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm, Thursdays from 9:30 am to 1:30 pm, and Fridays from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm. If you would like to contact her directly, please email 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 or 539-3213. If you are not in the directory, and would like to be added, please email your information. Thank you!

Presbyterian Women

What does it mean to walk the path of Jesus? What can we do to live out our faith as Easter People? Join us on Monday, April 8th at 7pm for in our study “Sacred Encounters: The Power and Presence of Jesus Christ in Luke-Acts” by Olive Mahabir. During this month’s study we will introduce lesson 7, “An Ethiopian Eunuch Encounters the Good News of Jesus” and focus on Acts 8:26-40 and the following main idea and questions:

The Word of God is an essential tool for expanding the reign of God. Can a person read the Bible and understand what it means without help? What aids have helped you better understand the Bible? How does your church spread the good news or evangelize?

Our evening will include a DVD presentation by the author followed by group discussion. Everyone is welcome to attend. Studies are available by request but not necessary to participate. A brief monthly business meeting will be held following our discussion.



Pot-luck planned for April 21

Think of all the covered dish lunches and dinners our church family has enjoyed over the years in Suffolk Presbyterian’s fellowship room or spread out a bit more in the narthex. We’ have also had pancake breakfasts, outdoor picnics and ice cream socials.

As a tribute to all those delicious meals and times of fellowship, choose a favorite pot-luck dish that you have made or one that someone else brought that you enjoyed. Dig out the recipe and bring your dish to share with your church family as we gather for a pot-luck luncheon after worship on April 21.

Remember the dishes everyone exclaimed over and said, “Can I have that recipe?” Perhaps it was Janice Thomas’ “Fresh Apple Cake,” Helen Zekert’s “Out of This World Pie” or Nancy Sharp’s “Corn Pudding.” Who could forget Fran Alwood’s beautiful fruit platter on a fresh pineapple or Jackie Meadors’ “Cheesecake Tarts”?

If you need inspiration, check out some of the Suffolk Presbyterian cookbooks—loaded with culinary gems from members over the years. After Easter, some will be available on the narthex table in case you can’t locate yours.

Please bring the recipe with the name of the original cook so we can carry forward the tradition. As we honor the past, we will look forward to gathering in another space someday soon for food and fellowship—hallmarks of SPC’s heritage.

Return to Guatemala: LWW Team Member Helps Revive a Water Project

Rob Saunders, who has been involved with Living Waters for the World for 18 years, was not satisfied with sending money and “best wishes” to Suffolk Presbyterian Church’s clean water partners in Guatemala when he saw a problem he could help solve in person.

This spring, he volunteered to return to Estancia de la Virgen to help SPC’s partners and LWW staff resurrect a clean water system that had fallen into disrepair. For five years, our church has supported our water partners in Guatemala remotely. COVID and other concerns had curtailed our annual mission trips to help build and maintain four Living Waters for the World installations in three localities in the Central American country.

Earlier this year, we learned that SPC’s second LWW system, installed in 2010 in an elementary school in Estancia de la Virgen, was inoperable after a change in school administration. The former principal, who had been the operator, had left, and the system was idle for some time.

The new school principal, Lizbeth Ruiz, wanted to provide clean water for the students and staff, but new governmental regulations and revised LWW guidelines required a whole new system, not a patchwork of repairs.

Lizbeth, a former teacher at the school and a member of the church where SPC installed its first project, said the school personnel could provide tile work to mount the system, one of the new requirements. But they would not be able to do the “plumbing” - putting together the pipes, pumps, valves and filters that would make the water drinkable.

Rob, who had helped put together the original system as well as three others, decided his “plumbing skills” could help the LWW in-country staff get clean water running again. He flew to Guatemala for the week of March 17-24 to work with Pablo Perez, our LWW in-country coordinator, and the LWW technicians to make the repairs.

Being back in Estancia de la Virgen was like “old home week” as he greeted “amigos” such as the Ramirez Valdez family. Mildred de Ramirez, is now running the water system that her late husband, Sergio, operated for years. Her daughters Diana Ramirez Valdez and Mildred Alessa Ramirez provided lunch and dinner for Rob and the LWW staff all week.

“Gracias” to Rob for squeezing in this trip in between two other family travels this spring! Watch for an update on the efforts after Rob returns.

By Susie Stoughton, LWW team member



*The Ramirez Valdez family welcomes Rob back to Guatemala:
(L to R): Mildred Alessa, Santi, Mildred, Diana holding Alberto Nefali, Estela, and Rob.*

Flower chart has spots available

Please sign up for any special dates.

Flowers are \$50/Sunday and can be paid via check (memo: Sunday Flowers) or PayPal. <http://suffolkpresbyterian.org/support-us/>

To see the current sign ups, visit:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1ayk0Mi5uOMHriYqMZz2_MoES_P0BwvtXirBIIN7j4oU/edit?usp=sharing



Gracie Fish Mission Project

Thank you for supporting the collection during the month of March!

(Continued from page 1)

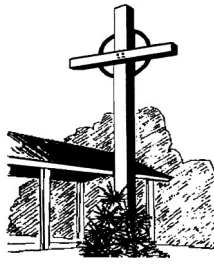
opportunities through “non traditional” services and fellowship activities to work as a congregation to hash some of these things out together. On April 7th we will focus on what it means to be connected to God and to one another as branches of “the true vine”. What can we do as a congregation to bear fruit and what might need pruning? In other words, what can we do to be at our best for Jesus?

Baptist Theologian Augustus Hopkins Strong stated that “Christianity is summed up in two facts: Christ for us and Christ in us”. We are Easter people. We believe that Jesus lives. Just imagine what all we can do with Jesus working through us? Let us embrace what we have learned and know about Jesus so we can better continue God’s story and make it our own, so that “I Am” includes “Us Too”.

April 2024

Suffolk Presbyterian Church

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i> 6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>7</i> <i>Communion Sunday/Non-Traditional Service</i> 9:45 AM Sunday School 10 AM Choir 11 AM Worship	<i>8</i> 7 pm Presbyterian Women	<i>9</i>	<i>10</i> 7 pm Diaconate Meeting	<i>11</i> 6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir	<i>12</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>14</i> 9:45 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Choir 11 AM Worship	<i>15</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>17</i> 3 pm Session Meeting	<i>18</i> 6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir	<i>19</i>	<i>20</i> 
<i>21</i> 9:45 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Choir 11 AM Worship 12 PM Pot-luck	<i>22</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>25</i> 6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir	<i>26</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>28</i> 9:45 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Choir 11 AM Worship	<i>29</i>	<i>30</i>				



Suffolk Presbyterian Church
410 North Broad Street
Suffolk, Virginia 23434



Visit our website!
suffolkpresbyterian.org

Suffolk Presbyterian Church

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Pastor**

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SUNDAY SCHOOL
9:45 AM
CHOIR PRACTICE
10:30 AM
WORSHIP
11 AM

Upcoming Events:

April 8—Presbyterian Women
April 10—Diaconate Meeting
April 17—Session Meeting
April 21—Pot-luck

Thursdays—Spiritual Fellowship & Choir



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Church*