



The Bridge

January 2025



From the Pastor

Rev. Julie Sterling

Living the New Year Well

A few years ago I introduced our congregation to the tradition of picking a 'star word' to start the new year as part of our celebration of Epiphany. This practice helps guide participants spiritually throughout the year through meditation and prayer, reflection, and further exploration of how this word is present in your life. It also allows us to focus on how God is guiding us in the new year and change our perspective on new ways God is speaking to us.

The word epiphany comes from the Greek word 'epiphaneia', which means appearance or manifestation and relates to a moment of sudden understanding or consciousness to something very important. In the Bible, Epiphany refers to the manifestation of Christ to the world. It follows the journey of the Three Wise Men, Melchior, Gaspar, and Balthasar as they follow the star in search of Jesus. When they find Jesus they honor him as a king. Through the Wise Men, the world is given a glimpse of the glory of God and the

world was changed forever. This glimpse is a gift for us as well; a calling to actively open ourselves to God. According to Pope Francis, "Like the Magi, may we also journey and be attentive, and untiring and courageous on the path to find the invisible God who was born among us."

As a pastor, one major challenge is finding a way to bring the magic, wonder, and excitement of the season with us after Christmas day. Our congregation celebrates Christmas well. We give abundantly to those in need, we celebrate with music and fellowship, and we worship with joyful hearts...but when the long, cold nights of January sets in, the excitement dims a bit. Thankfully, we have Epiphany to remind us that the celebration of the Christ child doesn't end on December 25th. Billy Graham proclaims this by stating "Don't leave Jesus in the manger; don't remember Him only at Christmas. Instead, learn to walk with Him every day, as you pray and read His Word and ask Him to help you".

The true purpose of Epiphany is not only to experience the presence of God in our lives but also to reflect it so others can understand the hope, peace, joy, and love of God through you. For in Isaiah 60 verses 1 and 2, the prophet proclaims:

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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

- ✝ Eric Sterling
- ✝ Jeffery Birkey
- ✝ Richard Alan Goforth, Sr.
- ✝ The family of Kathy Jones
- ✝ Pat Jones
- ✝ Tommy Morrison
- ✝ Tina Motley
- ✝ The family of Shelby Owen
- ✝ Charlie Powell
- ✝ Dennis Richardson
- ✝ The family of Cindy Robinson
- ✝ Cheryl Scott
- ✝ Mary Ann Sterling
- ✝ Ron Ventura
- ✝ Caroline

Happy Birthday

- 1/3 Lennon Super
- 1/4 Doc Crusenberry
- 1/5 Jane Sommers
- 1/7 Gary Williams
- 1/11 Eric Sterling
- 1/24 Lisa Morrison
- 1/29 Nancy White

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
- 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.

Thank
you 

Thank you to everyone that support our Edmarc holiday mission! Your gifts of Thanksgiving and Christmas meals and support of the Angel Tree were much appreciated.

Administrative Office Hours



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 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 757-539-3213. If you are not in the directory, and would like to be added, please email your information. Thank you!

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**Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.**

**2 For darkness shall cover the earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;
but the LORD will arise upon you,
and his glory will appear over you.**

How will you start the new year? What words will guide you on your journey with God? And more importantly, what can we do together to reflect the light of God so all may know his love.

Happy New Year and God bless!

Rev. Julie Sterling

Presbyterian Women

Have you ever considered what it means to live in abundance? How does it affect our life with God? How can the church help those who have little food to eat? Join us on Monday, January 13 at 7pm for our PW Horizon's discussion on chapter 3, "Food Justice". This lesson will discuss the scriptures from Genesis 1:22, 3:19; Exodus 16:13-18, 19-21; Joshua 5:12; Psalms 65:11-14, 78:23-29; 105:40-41; Hosea 4:1b-3; Micah 6:12-15; Matthew 13-8; Mark 4:8; and Luke 8:8. During our lesson we will focus on the following main idea:



The Bible portrays the earth as yielding food in abundance, and today's agriculture scientists say it could provide food for all. We can learn to produce food with justice and peace and feed a starving world.

The evening will include a DVD led description of the chapter by author Patricia K Tull followed by group discussion. All are welcome to join. Extra studies are available but not needed to take part in the discussion.

December Session Notes - from the Clerk

At the December 2024 Session meeting, the Session heard reports from the pastor on her activities and a financial report from Jack Stoughton. It approved the minutes for a called meeting on October 30, 2024 and the November stated meeting held on November 20, 2024.

The Session approved the recommendations from the Personnel Ministry Team regarding the 2025 budgeting for the compensation for the minister, the music director, the administrative assistant, and the nursery workers. The Session recognized that our staff is outstanding and expressed gratitude for the work of these dedicated individuals.

The Session voted to approve a proposal for Phase II renovations to the large room and hallway space upstairs at a proposed cost of \$28,650. This work involves updated lighting, electrical switches and outlets, painting and new flooring.

The Session authorized the Clerk to sign the agreements with the New Covenant Trust Company for the financial management of church assets and the Volper and Willis scholarship trust funds.

The Session elected Bruce Sharp as the Elder Commissioner to the January Presbytery meeting and scheduled the Annual Meeting of the Congregation for January 26, 2025. The Session also scheduled a leadership retreat for 12:30 p.m. on January 14 to consider revisions to the church government and any required revisions to the Manual of Administrative Operations necessary to implement proposed changes.

Bruce Sharp



Chrismon Tree Decorating

The poinsettias in the sanctuary on Christmas Eve were given by:

Nancy Bird, in memory of George Morrison and Howard & Miriam Bird.

Molly Crow, in memory of Mom & Daddy.

Dana & Beryl Hale, in memory of Fan Panton and Martha Britt.

Don & Caroline Luzzatto, in memory of David & Carlene Nylen and Rudy Luzzatto.

Curtis MacKenzie, in honor and memory of parents Nancy & Malcolm Mackenzie, and in memory of in-laws Goldie & Cliff Stewart and wife Diane Stewart-Mackenzie.

Jeff & Maryanne Persons, in memory of Bob & Mary Dawson, Bob & Blanche Persons, and William R. Dawson.

Caroline Pond, in honor of Charles, her brother, and in memory of Sarah Parker Pond & C. B. Pond, Jr., her parents.

Kathryn Pond, in memory of Wayland Pond.

Cheryl Sawyer, in memory of Ed Sawyer and Barbara Jenkins.

Judy and Phil Saunders, in memory of Mack Saunders and in honor of Ruth Saunders.

Sam & Mary Sherard, in memory of Rozanne Brown and in memory of our parents.

Jack and Susie Stoughton, in honor of SPC's new home & our WEBC partners.

Cheryl Super, in memory of Charles & June Ramsey.

Jeff & Alison Super, in memory of our parents, Charles & Ina Buffkin and Mike & Gladys Super.



*Advent Wreath
and Nativity
Candles*



Centerpiece and Wreath Decorating





January 2025

Suffolk Presbyterian Church

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<p><i>1</i></p> <p>New Year's Day <i>Office Closed</i></p>	<p><i>2</i></p> <p>6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p><i>3</i></p>	<p><i>4</i></p>
<p><i>5</i></p> <p>9 AM Choir 9:30 AM Worship 10:45 PM Sunday School *5 PM Youth Group</p>	<p><i>6</i></p>	<p><i>7</i></p>	<p><i>8</i></p> <p>7 PM Diaconate Meeting</p>	<p><i>9</i></p> <p>6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p><i>10</i></p>	<p><i>11</i></p>
<p><i>12</i></p> <p>9 AM Choir 9:30 AM Worship 10:45 PM Sunday School</p>	<p><i>13</i></p>	<p><i>14</i></p>	<p><i>15</i></p> <p>3 PM Session Meeting</p>	<p><i>16</i></p> <p>6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p><i>17</i></p>	<p><i>18</i></p>
<p><i>19</i></p> <p>9 AM Choir 9:30 AM Worship 10:45 PM Sunday School</p>	<p><i>20</i></p> <p>Martin Luther King Jr. Day <i>Newsletter DEADLINE</i></p>	<p><i>21</i></p>	<p><i>22</i></p>	<p><i>23</i></p> <p>6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p><i>24</i></p>	<p><i>25</i></p>
<p><i>26</i></p> <p>9 AM Choir 9:30 AM Worship 10:45 PM Sunday School</p>	<p><i>27</i></p>	<p><i>28</i></p>	<p><i>29</i></p>	<p><i>30</i></p> <p>6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p><i>31</i></p>	<p><i>*Ecumenical Youth Group will meet on at St. Paul's Episcopal Church.</i></p>



Suffolk Presbyterian Church
105 Saint James Avenue
Suffolk, Virginia 23434



Visit our website!
suffolkpresbyterian.org

Suffolk
Presbyterian Church

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CHOIR PRACTICE

9:00 AM

WORSHIP

9:30 AM

SUNDAY SCHOOL

10:45 AM

Upcoming Events:

January 5—Ecumenical Youth Group

January 8—Diaconate Meeting

January 13—Presbyterian Women

January 15—Session Meeting

Thursdays—Spiritual Fellowship & Choir Rehearsal



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Church