



The Bridge

November 2024



From the Pastor

Rev. Julie Sterling

From Gratitude to Thanksgiving

The holiday season is quickly approaching. In just a few short weeks Americans will celebrate with annual Thanksgiving feasts of turkey and pumpkin pie, surrounded by those they love. Thanksgiving is a time to rejoice in all that God has done for us. The art of giving thanks is a key to building communities of faith and love. According to Marcus Tullius Cicero, "A thankful heart is not only the greatest virtue, but the parent of all the other virtues."

Giving thanks is good for the soul. It enriches our relationship with God. As children of God, we are blessed in so many ways. God provides for all that we have and only asks that we consider giving some back in support of others. Through the creation story in Genesis, the importance of stewardship is clear and we have an important part to play. In the words of John Jay Jackson, Jr. "There can be no stewardship without stewards" and we can practice stewardship in many ways.

The definition of Christian

stewardship follows the belief that human beings are created by the same God who created the entire universe and everything in it and we as believers are responsible for using and maintaining the gifts that God has given them wisely. The act of stewardship allows our relationship with God to grow. In hymn 822 "When We are Living", each verse paints a picture of what our relationship with God is like:

"In our living and our dying"

"When we are giving or receiving"

Whether we suffer or sing rejoicing"

"When we help them (those who are crying) or when we feed them"

In the final line of each verse we are reminded "who we are and whose we are"...

"we belong to God, we belong to God".

This year our church has been blessed with a new beginning. The sale of our church building and property has given us an opportunity to invest well in our community and our congregation, but God doesn't simply call us to maintain a large sum of money in the bank and nurture good investments. God calls us to respond to blessing with a heartfelt giving. Henry Van Dyke said "Gratitude is the inward feeling of kindness received. Thankfulness is the natural impulse to

(Continued on page 8)

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.
- ✝ Katie Humphries
- ✝ Pat Jones
- ✝ Bud Little
- ✝ Tommy Morrison
- ✝ Tina Motley
- ✝ Shelby Owen
- ✝ Charlie Powell
- ✝ Dennis Richardson
- ✝ Cindy Robinson
- ✝ Cheryl Scott
- ✝ Mary Ann Sterling
- ✝ Ron Ventura
- ✝ Caroline

Pray for our Military

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

Happy Birthday

- 11/1 Sarah Super
- 11/5 Jeff Persons
- 11/5 Jeffery Super
- 11/9 Abram Wandell
- 11/11 Maxann Morrison
- 11/13 Pat Lynn
- 11/14 Alison Super
- 11/17 Cheryl Morrow

Happy Anniversary

- 11/1 Nancy Bird & Randy Morrison
- 11/24 Randy & Breena Branham

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

Edmarc Families

It is fall once again! Fall brings thoughts of the joy of Thanksgiving and Christmas. However, many families are dealing with the personal care needs of their ill children. This year we will be sponsoring two EDMARC families for holiday dinners. Donation requests are listed on sign-up sheets just outside the sanctuary on the Baker Funeral Home side of the church. All donations are due by Sunday, November 17 to be delivered on Monday, November 18. Each year, SPC members have been extremely generous for this cause and I know the EDMARC families are thankful. I thank you in advance.

FYI – more information coming regarding Christmas Gift and meal donation.

Nancy Cisco

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.

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!

The Redemption of Scrooge Advent Study 2024

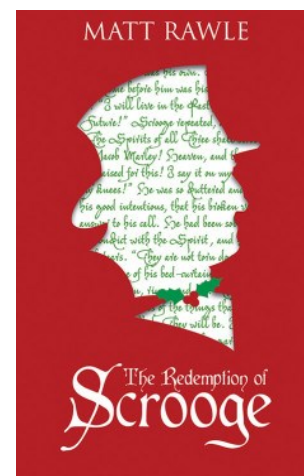
Are you looking for a way to prepare for the hope, peace, joy, and love of Christmas? Join us on Tuesday nights at 7pm starting November 26th this Advent for the Study The redemption of Scrooge by Matt Rawle.

Is redemption possible for Ebenezer Scrooge? Pastor and author Matt Rawle believes so as he discovers the teachings of Jesus in the words of the Charles Dickens classic A Christmas Carol. Rawle dives deep into the dark, sad, greedy world of Scrooge and discovers a man in dire need of a second chance. Along with Scrooge, we meet the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Future and in the process learn about living with and for others in a world blessed by Jesus. Rediscover and reinvigorate your Christian faith this Advent and Christmas season and look at this familiar classic through the lens of faith.
- Press Release

The study includes a book and DVD. During the four week sessions we will discuss the following themes:

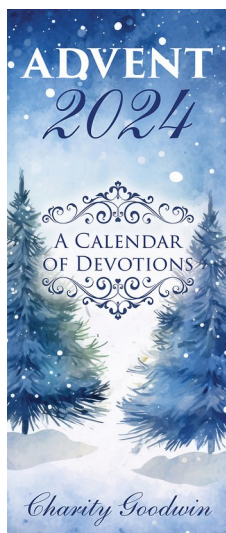
Bah! Humbug!
The Remembrance of Christmas Past
The Life of Christmas Present
The Hope of Christmas Future

Sessions will be hybrid and participants will be able to access the study via Zoom or at the church. Books are available at the church or can be ordered through Cokesbury for \$12.79 or Amazon for \$14.39.



Zoom Link

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86489235210?pwd=8TPaWWp7hznPyZGFVDC4uCYE92XOW7.1>



Advent Devotion For the Congregation

Copies of the Advent 2024 devotions are now available at the church. They are located in a basket near the Baker Funeral Home exit.

Advent

“Advent” means “coming” or “arrival.” During the season of Advent, we celebrate Christ’s coming into the world and watch with expectant hope for his coming again. In its historical origins, the season of Advent was patterned after the season of Lent, a six-week period of penitence and preparation for Easter. Similarly, the four weeks of Advent present an opportunity for communal discernment and personal examination, as the church prepares to celebrate the Nativity of the Lord and looks with hope for Christ’s return.

Between memory and hope

**An excerpt from the *Companion to the Book of Common Worship*
(Geneva Press, 2003, 96)**

In Advent we expectantly wait for the One who has already come. We anticipate the promised justice of God’s new world, yet we praise God who raised the “righteous branch” to rule with justice and righteousness. We hope for the restoration of the afflicted, the tormented, and the grieving, yet we delight that healing has come in Christ. We long for the beating of swords into plowshares, yet we rejoice that the Prince of Peace has appeared. We yearn for the barren deserts of our inner cities to flourish, yet we laud the desert Rose that has bloomed. We dream of the land where lions and lambs live in harmony, yet we acclaim the child born to lead us into the promised land.

Christ has come! Christ is risen! Christ will come again! In Advent, we are living between the first and the second coming of the Lord. The dialectical tension of *maranatha* [alternately translated “Come, our Lord!” or “Our Lord has come”] — placing us between memory and hope, past and future — may strengthen our Advent liturgies. Perhaps we need to cling to the ancient cry of *maranatha!* and its paradoxical meanings so we may freely embrace “the new thing” prophesied by Isaiah (Isaiah 43:19) that God is doing among us right now. The tension and paradox we find in Advent shapes our celebrations during the season.

Presbyterian Mission Agency

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/worship/christianyear/advent/>

From the Desk of Chris Johnson

As a child, I was enthralled by my sister's ability to play the piano. She would practice for hours and then I would sit down and bang! I asked my mom when I could learn to play the piano and her reply was always, "Soon!" That was her favorite answer to everything.

Eventually, third-grade year arrived, meaning I could start taking piano lessons. If the truth be known, I just wanted to collect all those brightly colored stars "sissy" had throughout her music books. I progressed with piano but soon my teacher realized I was playing by ear and not reading the music. If you have ever taken piano lessons, you know that is not well-received by those music teachers who strictly adhere to the "rules" of music.

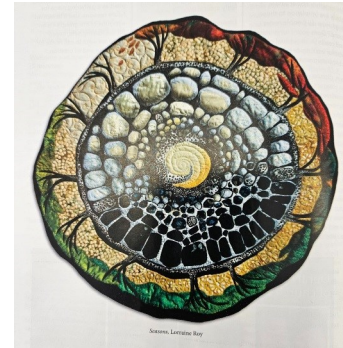
Once I got back on track and did pages and pages of theory, I quickly became focused on reading the notes and adding a few along the way. When I finally reached the orange book, I was playing real music; music that my father could tolerate as he attempted to watch television or read the paper. This is when I discovered classical music and my lessons evolved around the art and science of composers such as Bach, Handel, Mendelssohn, and Chopin.

As time went on, I went through a phase of playing the pop hits from the radio as well as learning beloved church hymns. Do you know the first hymn every piano student learns first? It is "What a Friend We Have in Jesus." It's easy to learn because the left hand has minimal movement. Most the the beloved hymns and anthems have origins of classical music in some shape or form. Classical music is the foundation of the majority of everything we listen to today. The timeless melodies found in pieces such as "Moonlight Sonata," "The Messiah," and "Fugue in B" are woven into the melody lines of songs we sing today. Classical music was originally written to be used in the church because the composers expressed a full gamut of emotions and experiences from the events that occurred in history. These emotions were also used as preachers prepared sermons for their congregations.

As Christians, we bring before God our own emotions and experiences when we worship Him. This process holds for selecting hymns and service music for us. Church staff strive to make meaningful selections to empower the congregation. The roots of classical music have ministered to so many Christ-followers throughout history.

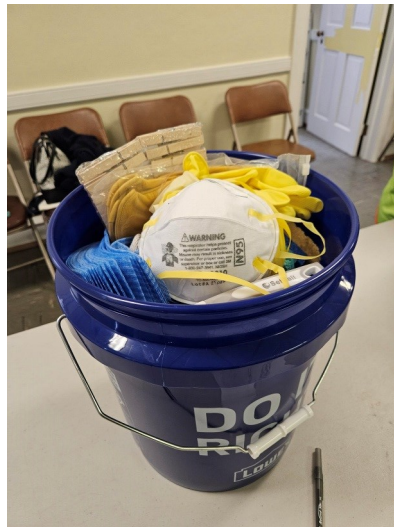
Presbyterian Women

Have you ever wondered what the Bible says about environmental justice? Join us on Monday, November 11 at 7pm for our Horizons PW Study “Let Justice Roll Down: God’s Call to Care for Neighbors and All Creation” by Patricia K. Tull. This month we will discuss Chapter 2, “Land Justice” and focus on the scriptures from Genesis, 2:7; Leviticus 25:23, 25, 26-28, Deuteronomy 20:16-18; Joshua 6:1; 1 Kings 21:1-16; Psalm 24:1-2; and Isaiah 5:8. We will also consider the following main idea:



Scriptural accounts of divinely ordered conquest and laws of Jubilee that support the rights of individual landowners stand in tension but are rooted in the perception that all the earth is God’s.

Each meeting includes a DVD led description of the chapter by the author followed by a group discussion, business meeting, and coffee time. All are welcome to attend. Extra study books are available at the church for \$10 but are not needed to participate. Contact **Rev. Julie Sterling** or **Lisa Morrison** with any questions.



Thank you to everyone who donated items and/or helped pack the Gifts of the Heart Cleanup Buckets!

World Communion Sunday



Bottom left: Abram, Lennon, Adelaide
Bottom right: Rev. Julie Sterling



(Continued from page 1)

express that feeling. Thanksgiving is the following of that impulse." Billy Graham's views of good stewardship are summed up in the following words. "We are not cistern made for hoarding, we are channels made for sharing. Billy Graham."

This month you will be given an opportunity to honor your life with God through your stewardship pledge. I encourage you to search your heart for what you can give to God and support the continued ministry of his church. We have been blessed with so much and there are many opportunities to say thank you. True giving is more than a donation, it is a tribute of faith and love to God who is good all the time.



November 2024
Suffolk Presbyterian Church

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
<p><i>*Ecumenical Youth Group will meet on Sunday, November 3 at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 5 pm.</i></p>						1	2
<p>3 9 AM Choir 9:30 AM Worship 10:45 PM Sunday School *5 PM Youth Group</p>	4	5	6	<p>7 6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	8	9	
<p>10 9 AM Choir 9:30 AM Worship 10:45 PM Sunday School</p>	<p>11 Veterans Day 7 PM Presbyterian Women</p>	12	<p>13 7 PM Diac-nate Meeting</p>	<p>14 6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	15	16	
<p>17 9 AM Choir 9:30 AM Worship 10:45 PM Sunday School 3 PM Wreath/Centerpiece Workshop</p>	18	19	<p>20 3 PM Session Meeting</p> <p>Newsletter DEADLINE</p>	<p>21 6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir Rehearsal</p>	22	23	
<p>24 9 AM Choir 9:30 AM Worship 10:45 PM Sunday School</p>	25	26	27	<p>28 Thanksgiving</p>	29	30	



Suffolk Presbyterian Church
105 Saint James Avenue
Suffolk, Virginia 23434



Visit our website!
suffolkpresbyterian.org

Suffolk
Presbyterian Church

Reverend Julie Sterling,
Pastor

Church Office:
757.539.3213

Office E-mail:
office@suffolkpresbyterian.org
Pastor E-Mail:
pastor@suffolkpresbyterian.org

CHOIR PRACTICE

9:00 AM

WORSHIP

9:30 AM

SUNDAY SCHOOL

10:45 AM

Upcoming Events:

November 3—Ecumenical Youth Group

November 11—Presbyterian Women

November 13—Diaconate Meeting

November 17—3 PM Wreath/Centerpiece
Workshop

November 20—Session Meeting

Thursdays—Spiritual Fellowship & Choir
Rehearsal



Find us on Facebook

Search for *Suffolk Presbyterian
Church*