



# The Bridge

DECEMBER 2022



## *From the Pastor*

*Rev. Julie Sterling*



### CHRISTMAS JOY SPECIAL OFFERINGS

CHURCH LEADERS—PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

In the story of God, as we tell it, there is a barrier that exists between the Created world and its Creator. A wall. Sin, we believe, separates us from God, and separation from God is unbearable.

Our story goes on to tell us that God, seeing that we had no hope in ourselves of getting over, or through or around what separates us, offered us a gift in Jesus Christ, who opens a door — a door we could not open ourselves.

What a gift!

But the story goes on to say that Jesus is the perfect gift; not only opening a door but coming through it. Our story says God is with us. In Jesus, God joined with humanity, pointing the way to the end of our separation. And in his life, death and resurrection, so our story of God goes, Jesus is the door, now standing open. The giving continues because God is with us, still — and always.

Because being with us is part of God's story, being with others is part of our call. During this Advent Season, we are called to support the Christmas Joy Offering, to celebrate God's perfect gift and open doors for those we might

not be able to meet face to face, but who need the support that our gifts provide.

We support the potential of students of color who are becoming leaders in our churches and communities as we seek to come alongside them, to encourage and to open doors. And we support church workers and their families who encounter critical financial needs as we come alongside them, to assist them — we open doors for them. We thank God for being “with us” through the gift of Jesus and for joining us together as the Church and, through our gifts, with those who have need.

The story of God, as we tell it, is not about a barrier, but about a gift. It's not about the separation, but about the gift of “being with.” Please give generously to the Christmas Joy Offering, in celebration of God's perfect gift to us. Give because it brings us together, to open doors of relief and opportunity and to relationships that are part of God's story, a part of God's perfect gift to us.

Our gifts reflect our generous God. Our gifts support leaders in our Church and world — past, present and future.

<https://specialofferings.pcusa.org>

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





12/7 Courtney Super  
12/30 Adelaide Wandell

- † Calvin Piland
- † Sandy Acton
- † Nancy Forrester
- † Richard Alan Goforth, Sr.
- † Linwood U. Holland
- † Jimmy Hope
- † Jon King
- † Bud Little
- † Diane Stewart MacKenzie
- † Roy Malonson
- † Joyce Milteer
- † Shirley Ries
- † Jeff Snow
- † Doug Stoughton
- † SPC's Living Waters for the World  
and World Vision partners in  
Guatemala dealing with COVID-  
19

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](mailto: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!*

- † Laura Dawson (relative of Maryanne Persons)
- † Jarrett Hagwood
- † Derek Kershner
- † Nick Meadors (US Navy deployment)
- † JB Persons (Reserves)
- † Glenn Smith (Betty Chapman's grandson)
- † Hayden Spalding
- † Greg Vernon (Joyce Jordan's grandson)





## News Briefs



SPC is collecting food pantry donations for the **Suffolk Christian Fellowship Center**. The greatest needs are canned veggies/fruits/tuna/chicken, cold cereal, peanut butter, and jelly. Donations accepted via church website.

The Deacons started a **Gift Card Ministry**. \$25 restaurant gift cards will be collected during the offering to help congregation members in times of need. These will be used to assist with meals.

Because of the uncertain climate, activities may be adjusted as we go. Be sure to read the weekly church announcements for any changes. If you attend an in-person event and later develop COVID-19 symptoms or test positive, please contact **Nancy Cisco** so that she can notify attendees in a confidential manner. **In response to the new CDC guidelines, mask use at SPC is optional for all activities.**

PDA'S SUSAN KREHBIEL DISCUSSES PARTNERSHIPS THE PC(USA) IS EMPLOYING DURING THE EARLY DAYS OF THE UKRAINE CRISIS

[HTTPS://WWW.PRESBYTERIANMISSION.ORG/STORY/REFUGEES-JUST-WANT-TO-GO-HOME/](https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/refugees-just-want-to-go-home/)

DISASTER RELIEF-INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE PROGRAMS (DR000156)

[HTTPS://PMA.PCUSA.ORG/DONATE/MAKE-A-GIFT/GIFT-INFO/DR000156/?APPEAL=PDA&PACKAGE=UK22-ABB](https://pma.pcusa.org/donate/make-a-gift/gift-info/DR000156/?APPEAL=PDA&PACKAGE=UK22-ABB)



### 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](mailto:office@suffolkpresbyterian.org).

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





## Choir to Present Christmas Concert Dec. 11

Under the direction of **Chris Johnson**, the SPC Choir will present a program of Christmas music during worship at 11 a.m. on Sunday, Dec. 11. Seven anthems that unfold the Christmas story will be interspersed with scripture readings by liturgist **Nancy Bird**.

After worship, the congregation is invited to a reception for Johnson, SPC's music director, and all the volunteer musicians who contribute to the church's music ministry throughout the year.

Chris' sister, Charlene Herrala, pianist and organist at Bethany Presbyterian Church, will accompany the musicians on piano, allowing Chris to direct. Guest singers will include Virginia "Ginger" Beatty-Riffle and Steve Drake.

Selections will include "Arise and Shine! Your Light Has Come!" by Joseph M. Martin, based on the tune of the familiar English carol "Sussex Carol," and arrangements of traditional carols, "The First Noel" by Dan Forrest and "O Come, All Ye Faithful" by Lloyd Larson. Though some of the anthems may be familiar to the congregation, others are more contemporary and have not been sung by the choir previously.

## Church family to carol to shut-ins on Dec. 18

Don your Santa hat or reindeer antlers and join us on Sunday, Dec. 18 for an evening of caroling and pizza - often considered a favorite event of the year. We'll gather at the church at 5:30 to carpool to various homes and Lake Prince Woods to sing carols to our shut-ins and friends who are unable to be with us in person. Battery powered candles and blinking Christmas light necklaces will be distributed at the church. All ages and singing abilities are welcome. Last year, the popular tradition was revived after COVID-19 prevented us from caroling in 2020.

After caroling, we will return to the church for a pizza party, hosted by the Deacons.

## Supporting Past, Present, and Future Leaders

The Christmas Joy Offering has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s. The Offering distributes gifts equally to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions and to Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. The Assistance Program provides critical financial support to church workers and their families. Presbyterian-related schools and colleges provide education and leadership development while nurturing racial and ethnic heritage. This has been a Presbyterian commitment for nearly 140 years.

### \$1.1 MILLION IN GIFTS FROM 2021

are being used to provide critical financial support and grants for current and retired Presbyterian church workers in their times of need

### 26 COUNTRIES

represented in the last 25 years at Presbyterian Pan American School

### 98% OF GRADUATES

from Menaul School go on to college

### 84% OF FACULTY

at Stillman College hold terminal degrees



## Presbyterian Women

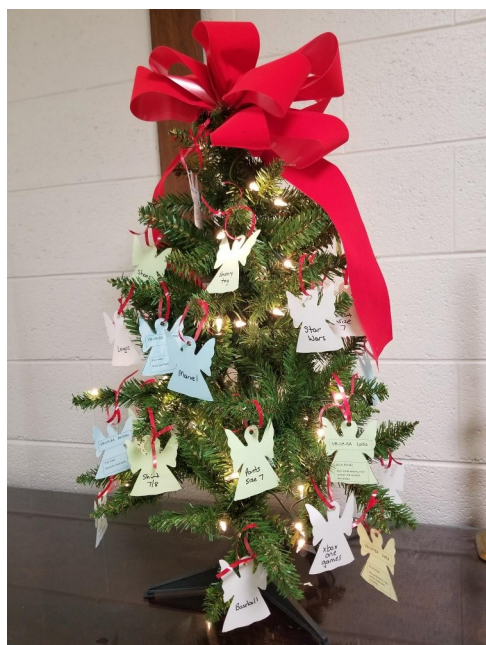
The season of Advent is upon us. What a better way to prepare for Christmas than by learning about the importance of Sabbath in our lives? Join us on Monday, December 12th at 7pm for our PW study on lesson Four “Sabbath and Surrender” from our study Celebrating Sabbath: Accepting God’s Gifts of Rest and Delight. Our discussion will focus on Exodus 16 and will consider the following key ideas:

*The “manna” story, with its emphasis on only gathering as much as we need and not gathering on the Sabbath, is a call to trust God to provide for our needs. It is a call to surrender our unhealthy striving for more wealth, more stuff, and more success. It is a call to recognize when it is time to say, “Enough”.*

Our monthly meetings include a DVD led discussion by author Carol M. Cechtel followed by our regular business meeting. Everyone is welcome to attend. Extra studies are available. Please contact **Rev. Julie** or **Lisa Morrison** with any questions.

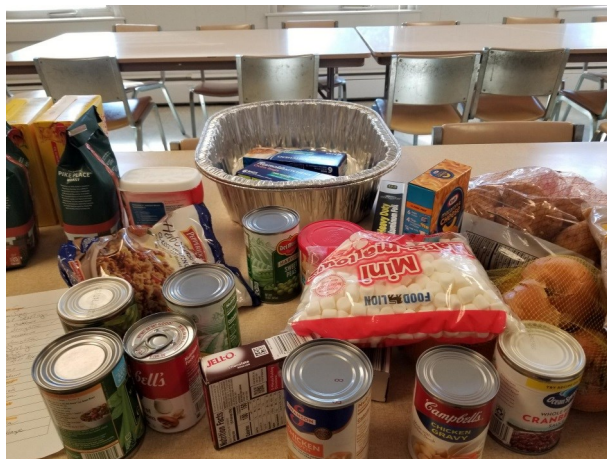


Let Go April Harrison



Angel Tree

*Thank you for the continued support of Edmarc families during the holiday season!*



Thanksgiving and Christmas Food Baskets



## The Heart That Grew Three Sizes

*Rediscover the gift of Advent that comes without packages, ribbons, and bows. We don't know why the Grinch hated Christmas. We just know he did. If we're being honest, there's probably something within the Christmas season celebration that awakens a Grinch within all of us. Maybe the gift we unwrap was all wrong, or memories that were supposed to be joyful never were. When everything seems wrong in the world, even joyful celebrations are much too loud.*

*In his new Advent study, Matt Rawle explores the faith themes in the Christmas classic, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* including how did the Grinch's heart grow three sizes come Christmas morning? How did Christmas save the Grinch? Could it be that the very thing we think we hate, is the one thing that changes our life?*

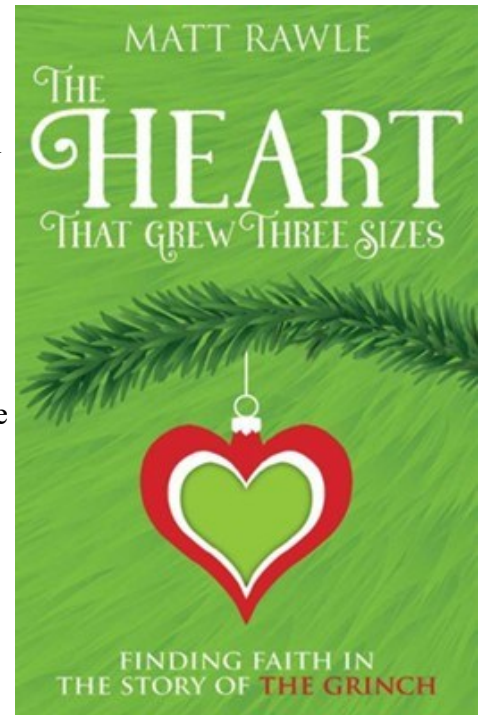
*Rediscover and reinvigorate your Christian faith this Advent and Christmas season and look at this familiar classic through the lens of faith. (Publisher's Description)*

Our four week Advent will start November 27th and will focus on the following themes:

1. When Everything is Wrong
2. When Christmas Isn't Christmas
3. When light Shines
4. When Joy is Our Song

Recorded studies will be available online for congregation members to access on their own timeline. The studies will include a DVD led presentation by author Matt Rawle followed by study questions and activities led by **Rev. Julie Sterling**.

Study books are available in the Narthex but are not needed to enjoy the study.





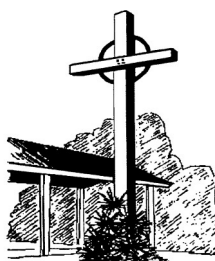


# December 2022

## Suffolk Presbyterian Church

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir Practice	2	3
4 <i>Communion Sunday</i> 9:45 AM Adult Sunday School 10:30 AM Choir 11 AM Worship 3 PM Wreath & Centerpiece Decorating	5	6	7	8 6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir Practice	9	10
11 9:45 AM Adult Sunday School 10:30 AM Choir Practice 11 AM Worship/ Music Program 12 PM Reception	12 7 PM Presbyterian Women	13	14 3 pm Session Meeting (Zoom) 7 pm Diaconate Meeting (Zoom)	15 6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir Practice	16	17
18 <i>Christmas Joy Offering</i> 9:45 AM Adult Sunday School 10:30 AM Choir Practice 11 AM Worship 5:30 PM Caroling & Pizza	19	20 	21	22 6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir Practice	23	24 7 pm Christmas Eve Worship
25 <i>Christmas Day</i> 9:45 AM Adult Sunday School 10:30 AM Choir Practice 11 AM Worship	26	27	28	29 7 PM Choir Practice	30	31





Suffolk Presbyterian Church  
410 North Broad Street  
Suffolk, Virginia 23434



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

## **Suffolk Presbyterian Church**

**Reverend Julie Sterling  
Pastor**

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[office@suffolkpresbyterian.org](mailto:office@suffolkpresbyterian.org)  
Pastor E-Mail:  
[pastor@suffolkpresbyterian.org](mailto:pastor@suffolkpresbyterian.org)**

### **ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL**

9:45 AM

### **CHOIR PRACTICE**

10:30 AM

### **WORSHIP**

11 AM

## **Upcoming Events:**

December 4—Christmas Wreath and Centerpiece  
Decorating

December 11—Music Program and Reception

December 12—Presbyterian Women

December 14—Session & Diaconate Meetings

December 18—Caroling and Pizza

December 24—Christmas Eve Worship

Thursdays—Spiritual Fellowship & Choir Practice



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Church*