



The Bridge

OCTOBER 2023



From the Pastor

Rev. Julie Sterling

Brothers and sisters,

Please see the article below from Bruce Sharp, Session Clerk, on behalf of our session board. Please keep our leadership in your prayers.

Julie Sterling
Pastor

For the past two years, the members of the Session have been considering the future of our congregation using guidance from the Presbyterian Foundation under its Project Regeneration program. The members of the Session have considered a wide range of alternatives including, but not limited to, dissolution of the congregation, reinvention of the congregation's identity to attract new members, leasing space in the building to another organization, merging with another PCUSA congregation or selling the property and leasing or building new space for the congregation's continued life.

After this time of thoughtful discussion and prayerful consideration, the Session decided at its August 21, 2023 meeting that the alternative which will best meet the goal of maintaining a viable and mission-focused PCUSA congregation in central Suffolk is the sale of the existing church property and the relocation of the

congregation's life to leased space. There are a number of reasons for this decision.

The current church building is now over 56 years old and, despite some major repairs done over the years, it will need some major system replacements and building renovations in the relatively near future. Continued occupancy of this building by our congregation presents both financial and physical challenges.

Financially, despite generous giving by the congregation, annual withdrawals from the reserve fund created by significant gifts from several past church members have been necessary for a number of years. These withdrawals have allowed us to bridge the gap between annual income and expenses. Since the departure of Appletree Kids, the annual withdrawals from reserves have grown to approximately \$40,000 per year. This, combined with increasing routine maintenance expenses, increasing utility costs and declines in stock values means that the end of our reserves is getting closer. A failure of a major system in the building such as a roof or heating and air conditioning system could decimate our remaining reserves with little notice.

Physically, continued occupancy of any building of this age requires almost constant repairs, both

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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



10/7 Danny Morrow
 10/11 Breena Branham
 10/14 Rob Saunders
 10/18 Julie Sterling
 10/29 Jeff Super

† Susie Piland
 † Faye Sobel
 † Ron Sobel
 † Gary Williams
 † Jeffery Birkey
 † Randy Branham
 † Richard Alan Goforth, Sr.
 † Anton Johnston
 † Jimmy Hope
 † Joyce Milteer
 † Charlie Powell
 † Shirley Ries
 † Ron Rimasse
 † Sue Rimasse
 † Jeff Snow



10/3 Doc & Jerolene Crusenberry
 10/23 Rob & Mary Ann Saunders
 10/25 Zach & Courtney Super

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:

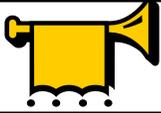
- email at office@suffolkpresbyterian.org
- mail to the church address
- Laura Farmer's office mailbox

Editor: Laura Farmer,
 Administrative Assistant

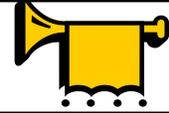


Thank you for your service!

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



News Briefs



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_Z4uTfQGcBRvIrljM6bHu71leFE/htmlview

PDA Responds to Hawaii Wildfires

Multiple fires burned in Hawai'i on the islands of Maui and (The Big Island). While there are no PC (USA) congregations on those islands, PDA has been in touch with a pastor on O'ahu and the Presbytery of the Pacific to discuss ways PDA can support those impacted by the devastating fires.

PDA Hawaii update <https://www.facebook.com/PDACARES/videos/196183046645178/>

To support PDA response, gifts can be designated to **Disaster Relief--U.S. Wildfires "Hawaii" (DR000165)** and sent to the PEVA office or you can give to PDA directly online at bit.ly/DR000165

Please continue to pray for the affected communities.

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 have 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.

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

Join us on Monday, October 9th at 7pm in the church library as we discuss chapter 2, “The Exorcism in Gerasa”, from the PW Horizons Study Sacred Encounters: The Power and Presence of Jesus Christ in Luke-Acts. This Month’s study will focus on the scripture passage from Luke 8:26-39 and will consider the following main idea:

Jesus’ presence and human vulnerability can result in a personal and communal transformation.



The lesson will include a DVD led discussion by the study’s author, Olive Mahabir. The evening will close with our monthly business meeting.

Everyone is welcome to attend. Study books are not required to take part in this study but can be purchased for \$10. Please contact **Rev. Julie Sterling** or **Lisa Morrison** with any questions.



Newborns in Need wants to Warm up those Toes!

The South Hampton Roads chapter of Newborns in Need is participating in the organizations’ annual sleeper drive during the months of September and October. The mission is to bring warmth and comfort to babies in our area who need help to stay warm and comfortable through the winter. We are seeking your help in collecting new, gently loved and handmade sleepers, gowns, and sleep sacks to help keep the local babies warm during the winter months.

Participating is easy! All you need to do is purchase new or gently used sleepers, gowns, or sleep sacks for babies in sizes NB – 24 months, or make a financial donation made payable to our chapter or on-line. Please make payable to Newborns in Need and your donations are tax deductible. If you donate on-line at newbornsinneed.org, please designate our chapter and add the word sleepers after it.

Example: “South Hampton Roads-Sleepers”

Newborns in Need is a nonprofit organization that distributes needed essentials such as diapers, clothing, blankets, bottles, toiletries, pacifiers, small toys and other needed items to babies of low income or babies in a challenging environment. We also provide bereavement items for the angels that leave this world too soon.

Newborns in Need
South Hampton Roads
 957 North Haven Circle Chesapeake, VA 23322
 757-287-5101

Oct. 15 Lunch and Learn will be full of mystery and intrigue

I would like to invite everyone to a “Lunch and Learn” to be held following the worship service on October 15th. The topic will be the Shroud of Turin. For those not familiar with it, the Shroud is a religious relic purported to be the cloth which wrapped the body of Jesus following his crucifixion and bearing evidence of his resurrection. In addition to being a religious object, it is the most scientifically analyzed object in human history. Despite a history reaching back to the Middle Ages and decades of scientific testing, it remains an enigma. Plan to come on October 15th and enjoy lunch, fellowship and to learn a little about this religious and scientific mystery.

Bruce Sharp

From the deacons: For lunch, the deacons will provide a variety of soups - keto friendly no-bean chili, a hearty beef and vegetable and a vegetarian option—as well as drinks and Nancy Sharp’s sourdough rolls. Come take your pick or sample them all.

You’re invited to bring a salad or dessert to share.

Come enjoy the food and fellowship and see if you can solve the mystery of the shroud.

Trunk or Treat set for Oct. 31

Though the weather hasn’t felt like fall, Trunk or Treat is just weeks away!

SPC will host the annual Halloween festivities on Tuesday, October 31. Make your plans now to decorate your car trunk, hatchback or pickup bed. Costumes are optional.

Bring donations of individually wrapped candy—peanut free—any Sunday during October and drop them in the narthex.

Spread the word! Invite your family, neighbors and friends to enjoy the fun. **Rob Saunders** will bring his tractor for the ever popular hay rides around the lawn, and **Don and Nancy White** will be passing out popcorn from the popcorn booth.

Sign up to reserve your spot for the candy distribution to provide a safe and fun Halloween treat for kids!



(Continued from page 1)

minor and major. Both categories of repairs require time and effort by someone in the congregation. The pool of congregation members willing and able to support the maintenance of this building is getting smaller and older. Hiring a caretaker or using contractors will only accelerate the depletion of our reserves and quickly bring us to the time when we can no longer support the continued life of the congregation.

Sale of the property will not only relieve us of the financial burden of maintaining the building, it will provide a large influx of funds to support the continued life and missions of the congregation. The Session has discussed the possibility of a sale with the Executive Presbyter and Trustees of the Presbytery of Eastern Virginia and they have indicated their willingness to allow Suffolk Presbyterian to retain the net proceeds from any property sale for support of our continued operation. Moving into leased space will relieve us of the burden of building maintenance and repair and allow the members of the congregation to focus more on missions and the life of the congregation.

Inevitably, the sales process will take some time. In the meantime, the Session will be researching possible leased locations for the congregation once the time comes to vacate the building. Promising possibilities have already been identified and you will be kept informed once a location is settled on.

Please contact Reverend Julie or members of the Session if you have questions or concerns about this at any time. Please continue to pray for wisdom for the Session and for the future of this congregation.

Bruce Sharp
Clerk of the Session



PEACE & GLOBAL WITNESS
SPECIAL OFFERINGS
PEACEMAKING AND RECONCILIATION

God's presence empowers us to bring peace to all people.

Through our gifts to the Peace & Global Witness Offering, we as a single congregation, participate in this larger work that we would not be able to do on our own. A gift to this Offering enables the church to promote the Peace of Christ by addressing systems of conflict and injustice across the world, as well as right here at home.

25% of this Offering stays with our congregation to support peacemaking and reconciliation in our own community.

25% of this Offering goes to our mid-council to join with other congregations to support peacemaking work in our region.

50% of this Offering supports the work being done by Presbyterians across the globe.

Peace begins with each of us.

WHEN WE ALL DO A LITTLE, IT ADDS UP TO A LOT!

Thank you for your participation in the Peace & Global Witness Offering

- Excerpt from the Special Offerings email: <https://mailchi.mp/pcusa.org/peace-global-witness-you-are-with-me?e=fbbb5e512b>. SPC will collect the offering on Sunday, October 1.



October 2023

Suffolk Presbyterian Church

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><i>1</i></p> <p><i>Communion Sunday</i> 10 AM Choir Practice 11 AM Worship</p>	<p><i>2</i></p>	<p><i>3</i></p>	<p><i>4</i></p>	<p><i>5</i></p> <p>6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir</p>	<p><i>6</i></p>	<p><i>7</i></p> <p>9 AM Plant Sale Pick Up and Delivery</p>
<p><i>8</i></p> <p>9:45 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Choir Practice 11 AM Worship 5 PM Youth Grp at St. Paul's</p>	<p><i>9</i></p> <p>7 pm Presbyterian Women</p>	<p><i>10</i></p>	<p><i>11</i></p> <p>7 pm Diaconate Meeting</p>	<p><i>12</i></p> <p>6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir</p>	<p><i>13</i></p>	<p><i>14</i></p>
<p><i>15</i></p> <p>9:45 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Choir Practice 11 AM Worship 12 PM Lunch and Learn</p>	<p><i>16</i></p>	<p><i>17</i></p>	<p><i>18</i></p> <p>3 pm Session Meeting</p>	<p><i>19</i></p> <p>6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir</p>	<p><i>20</i></p> <p style="text-align: center; color: red; font-weight: bold;">Newsletter DEADLINE</p>	<p><i>21</i></p>
<p><i>22</i></p> <p>9:45 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Choir Practice 11 AM Worship</p>	<p><i>23</i></p>	<p><i>24</i></p>	<p><i>25</i></p>	<p><i>26</i></p> <p>6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir</p>	<p><i>27</i></p>	<p><i>28</i></p>
<p><i>29</i></p> <p>9:45 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM Choir Practice 11 AM Non-Traditional Worship (Narthex)</p>	<p><i>30</i></p>	<p><i>31</i></p> <p>6 PM Trunk or Treat</p>				



Suffolk Presbyterian Church
410 North Broad Street
Suffolk, Virginia 23434



Visit our website!
suffolkpresbyterian.org

Suffolk Presbyterian Church

Reverend Julie Sterling
Pastor

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Pastor E-Mail:
pastor@suffolkpresbyterian.org

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

Upcoming Events:

October 7—Plant Sale Pickup & Delivery
October 8—Youth Group (St. Paul's)
October 9—Presbyterian Women
October 11—Diaconate Meeting
October 15—Lunch and Learn
October 18—Session Meeting
October 31—Trunk or Treat

Thursdays—Spiritual Fellowship & Choir



Find us on Facebook
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Church*