



The Bridge

September 2025



From the Pastor

Rev. Julie Sterling

What a Difference a Year Can Make

They say that time flies when you are having fun. It's shocking to realize that this month marks the one year anniversary of our big move to the corner of Washington and St. James. It has been a very busy year. Renovations were made to the administrative wing and multi-purpose area, joint ministries were developed between our congregation and West End Baptist, and cherished traditions were continued. Looking at all that we have accomplished, it is clear that God has been with us on this journey.

This past week church Elders and Deacons gathered together for our annual leadership retreat. They discussed the many successes of the past year and how our congregation and ministry have become stronger in the midst of transition and change. Much of their discussion connected with the theme of our opening call to worship, inspired by Hebrews 13: 1-8:

God calls us to service, rather than honor.

God calls us to love the unknown,

rather than the familiar.

We come to this time of worship, trusting in the grace of Jesus Christ, who is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Throughout our retreat, members compared this transition to the struggles of journeying through the wilderness. It was quite a leap of faith! Yet they discussed how Jesus was tested in the wilderness at the beginning of his ministry and how Jesus often went to the wilderness to be close to God. They also talked about how God calls us to go out of our comfort zone and try new things.

We are who we are today because of having courage to listen to God and being led by his Spirit. In honor of this special occasion we are planning an anniversary celebration and reception on September 21st following worship.

September is also a time for fresh starts. As the seasons change, so does the life of the church. This month's worship will center on the theme of renewal and will include a sermon on new beginnings. Each week we will consider ways to recharge as we transition from summer to fall:

How do we re: concile relationships to make them healthy again?

How can we re: imagine regret, let go and look forward?

(Continued on page 5)

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

- ✝ Jean Butcher
- ✝ Faye Sobel
- ✝ Eric Sterling
- ✝ Joan Anderson
- ✝ Jeffery Birkey
- ✝ Sidney Brown
- ✝ Jerry Chambers
- ✝ Charlotte Davidson
- ✝ Kurt Donaldson
- ✝ Richard Alan Goforth, Sr.
- ✝ Dan Gullion
- ✝ Tommy Morrison
- ✝ Calvin Piland
- ✝ Ben Potter
- ✝ Charlie Powell
- ✝ Cathy Stoughton
- ✝ Ron Ventura
- ✝ Caroline
- ✝ Leslie

Happy Birthday

- 9/2 Miki Hayley
- 9/3 Ron Sobel
- 9/13 Tosh Copeland
- 9/27 Zach Super

Pray for our Military

- ✝ Ashlyn Dawson
- ✝ Laura Dawson
- ✝ Sidney Dawson
- ✝ Nick Meadors
- ✝ 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. 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.

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.

Glory to God Hymnbooks: If you would like to donate to help offset the cost, each book is \$25.

On Sept. 7, A Season of Peace begins! It is the preparation season for the Peace & Global Witness Offering. You could receive a daily reflection during A Season of Peace focused on Presbyterians who have contributed to civic well-being and embody the spirit to pursue what makes for peace. The reflections begin on Sept. 7 and culminate on World Communion Sunday, Oct. 5, when the Peace & Global Witness Offering is traditionally received.

Daily Devotionals Delivered to Your Inbox

<https://pcusa.us14.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=a3617d8799f77a05442289ad4&id=a54b3a778f>

Pursue What Makes for Peace Video

<https://vimeo.com/1097925528>



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 the church office. If you are not in the directory, and would like to be added, please email your information.

Celebration planned for anniversary of our relocated ministry

Join us after worship on September 21 for a celebration of our first year in our new home!

We'll enjoy light refreshments upstairs in our new space – our gathering room/administrative suite and the newly remodeled all-purpose room – as we consider how God has led us through the transition.

A year ago, we worried about the sanctuary roof leaking, how to get the grass cut and repairs that were needed throughout the building. Today, we have freshly painted walls, a sacred worship space and building partners who share our desire to be mission-driven followers of Christ.

As we celebrate the first anniversary of our moving date, we will commemorate the massive relocation effort, consider all that we have accomplished in our first year at 105 St. James Ave., and look forward to continuing our life together as a Matthew 25 congregation.

More information will be available in the coming weeks.

Leadership Retreat

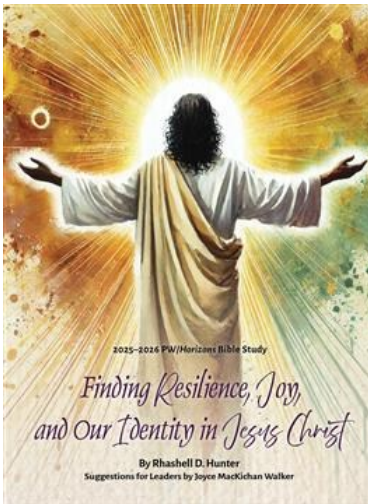
The church leadership team gathered on Tuesday, August 26.



Participants made sculptures that represented something they love about the church.



The leadership team hard at work!



The 2025–2026 PW/Horizons Bible study

Looking for something new to do this fall? Join us on Sundays for a PW sponsored study/series. These activities are open to men, women, and children. Meetings will occur once a month following worship in the upstairs multipurpose room. The event will include a DVD overview by the author and a designated mission activity. Refreshments will be provided. Please see the study description below taken from the Introduction to Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity in Jesus Christ

Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity in Jesus Christ by Rhashell D. Hunter

In this Bible study, we will explore resilience. This is modeled for us by several biblical characters, gospel and epistle writers, as well as Jesus. So, what exactly is resilience? Resilience is the ability to spring back into shape and to adapt well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or stress—such as from family, relationships, health, workplace, and financial stressors. People who survive and thrive well in change are resilient.

The Bible study is also about joy. How do we find joy in a chaotic world? Christian joy may be different from how a lot of people define joy.

Joy is sometimes confused with happiness. For Christians, joy can occur while we are in the midst of difficult circumstances. Joy is the second fruit of the spirit, preceded by love and followed by peace (Gal 5:22-23). Trusting in God when we are in trying times can fill us with glorious joy and peace. We have joy in our suffering, because ultimately our joy is found in Jesus Christ.

We will also seek to rediscover our identity. Identity is more than who we are or who we show ourselves to be. At its core, it points to our humanity. Our core identity is not found in our titles, our positions, our spouses, our partners, or our possessions. For Christians, our identity is found in Jesus Christ.

(Continued from page 1)

What does it mean to re: frame prayer?

Finally, what does it take to re: think happiness?

The same Spirit that guided us in our new beginning will continue to lead us in the coming year. It is amazing to see all the wonderful things that have happened over the last twelve months and I look forward to experiencing what God has in store for us next.

Living Waters 2025 Fall Plant Sale

By Jack Stoughton

First, a huge thank you for all the years you have brightened your fall gardens with 'mums and pansies in support of SPC's Living Waters for the World mission. Get ready to fill your gardens with beautiful plants from our fall plant sale! Orders will be taken Sunday, Sept. 7 through Sunday Sept. 28. Plants will be delivered locally or picked up on Friday, October 3 from 9-11am from the parking lot of **at 501 West Washinton St. and St. James Ave.**

Since Covid, our goal has been to sustain our operating partners as they improve their water purification standards as mandated by government health regulations. We fund this mission through donations and semiannual plant sales. Over the past 12 months, we have provided more than \$2,800 to support projects such as restoring our first system in Estancia de la Virgen that is wasn't being maintained properly. Now, with some equipment improvements and training, the new operators are again producing clean water for their community.

You can help by purchasing lovely pansies and 'mums grown locally for our plant sale. Beautify your gardens while helping achieve the principal's dream of clean water for her students.

Keep the clean water flowing!

Please note the following:

- Orders forms and information will be available in the SPC sanctuary entrances beginning Sunday, Sept. 7.
- Return your order and payments to Jack Stoughton in person or by mail, at 125 Longwood Ave, Suffolk, VA 23434, (please allow some extra time for the mail to be delivered); or
- Make your payment and/or donation through the church website at <http://Suffolkpresbyterian.org/give>. Use the memo feature to indicate "Plant Sale", AND email your order to Jack at jstoughton92@gmail.com or text him at (757) 651-0284.
- Make your check payable to Suffolk Presbyterian Church, memo: LWW plant sale.
Turn in all orders and payments by 5 pm, Sunday Sept 28.

Thank you in advance for your continued and generous support of this ministry.

Your Living Waters for the World team: Nancy Cisco, Chris & Skip Irby, Curtis Mackenzie, Mary Ann & Rob Saunders, and Jack & Susie Stoughton.



September 2025

Suffolk Presbyterian Church

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Reminder: Plant sale orders are due on Sunday, September 28!	1	2	3	4 6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir Rehearsal	5	6
7 9 AM Choir 9:30 AM Worship 10:45 AM Sunday School	8	9	10	11 6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir Rehearsal	12	13
14 9 AM Choir 9:30 AM Worship 10:45 AM Sunday School	15	16	17	18 6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir Rehearsal	19	20  Newsletter Deadline
21 One-Year Celebration 9 AM Choir 9:30 AM Worship 10:45 AM Sunday School	22	23 7 PM Session Meeting	24	25 6 PM Spiritual Fellowship 7 PM Choir Rehearsal	26	27
28 Instillation of Officers 9 AM Choir 9:30 AM Worship 10:45 AM Sunday School	29	30				



Suffolk Presbyterian Church
105 Saint James Avenue
Suffolk, Virginia 23434



Visit our website!
suffolkpresbyterian.org

Suffolk
Presbyterian Church

Reverend Julie Sterling,
Pastor

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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:

September 17—Session Meeting
September 21—One-Year Celebration
September 28—Installation of Officers
September 28—Plant Sale Orders Due

October 5—World Communion Sunday Joint Worship

Thursdays—Spiritual Fellowship & Choir Practice

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