

The Messenger

P.O. Box 1088 / 6930 Cold Harbor Road Mechanicsville, VA 23111

The Rev. Dr. Stephen W. Starzer, Pastor The Rev. Mike Watson, Associate Pastor

Web Site: www.fairfieldpcusa.org
E-Mail: office@fairfieldpcusa.org
Office Phone: (804) 730-7164

January 2024



A Grateful Year

Grace and gratitude belong together like heaven and earth. Grace evokes gratitude like the voice of an echo. Gratitude follows grace like thunder lightening. - Karl Barth

I have a lot to be grateful for this month, as I celebrate one year serving as your Associate Pastor. You have welcomed me, and my family, with wide open arms. You have showered us with gifts and kindness, you have expressed patience with me as you've helped me learn the traditions and practices around here. You have been brave enough to try new things alongside me, as we seek the way the Spirit may be calling us to new ministry opportunities. We have shared a wonderful first year, and I'm excited to see what God has in store for us next.

As I enter this new year, feeling particularly grateful. I'm reminded how difficult practicing gratitude actually is. To some, writing thank you notes, or going out of their way to thank a particular person, or group of people, comes naturally. To others, it takes time and effort to put gratitude into practice, expressing it to the people or groups who need to hear it.

However easy or difficult gratitude may be, I'm sure we all agree how important it is. Expressing or receiving gratitude is a powerful action that has certainly lifted us up over time, giving us life or energy to carry on with whatever we are doing.

In her book "Grateful", Diana Butler Bass expresses her challenges with expressing gratitude, and her commitment to take on 100 days of committing to practice gratitude more deeply. Near the end of her book, she expresses her deepened understanding of the importance of gratitude:

"Gratitude empowers us. It makes joy and love possible. It rearranges the way we see and experience what is around us. Gratitude makes all things new. It transforms how we understand what is broken and gives us the ability to act more joyfully with hope...Gratitude takes us from abstract belief to living compassion in the world."

The gratitude I've felt and shared with you all has been a gift, and I'm encouraged to continue to share it and let it impact the way I serve alongside you. I'm hopeful to commit more deeply to how I love into my gratitude this new year. Perhaps you can join me? Sending more thank-you cards, calling or texting people just to say "thank you," praying gratitude prayers for what God has done and how others have lifted us up.

May we enter this year with grateful hearts, that lead us to grateful actions.

Grace and Peace, Mike



Member News

Our sympathy goes out to Nancy Walls and her family on the death of Billy Walls who passed away on December 8. Billy had been a member of Fairfield for 79 years and served the church in every way possible. We will definitely miss him! Please keep Nancy and her family in your prayers.

Pastor Mike Watson's grandmother, Janell Watson passed away on December 24. Please keep Mike and his family in your prayers.

Ashley & Jake Foster have moved. Their new address is 67 Chelsea Circle, Aylett, VA 23009.

Sarah Dobson & Rick Heterick have also moved. Their new address is 8230 Boones Trail Road, Chesterfield, VA 23832.

Carneal's Caroline son, Bremner, Becky Clark and her mother Nancy Sinicki, Gulliver's sister Pam, Gerry Miller's great niece, Charles Moore, Elizabeth Moorhouse,



Barbara vanSteenburgh's sister Linda, cousin Cee Cee, niece Kim, Tony Underdown, Ed Wolfgang's brother, Gary, Dale Woodfin's friend. Dee and all those who serve as missionaries abroad and those who serve our nation.



Please remember our homebound members who are unable to get to church: Ann Barlow, John Crowe, Reggie Crump, Nita Dunkum, Dot Gammon, Ruth Homebound Harpster, Eva Ladd, Laverne Longest, Carolyn Moore, Nancy Norment, Joyce Nuckols, Virginia

Phipps, Charles & Betty Ransone, Helen Rigsby, Larry Rigsby, Faye Sandridge, Louise Setchel, Barry Snedker, Tony Underdown, and Jack Ward.

(Please update Pastor Steve or Pastor Mike in the church office as often as possible if you wish to keep your name or your loved one's name on this list.)

I'd like to thank all who sent cards, calls, and prayers during Dad's illness and death. I'm truly blessed to have such an awesome church family! Thank you again.



Myra Moore

We would like to extend our deepest gratitude for the wonderful gifts shared with us, your pastors, for Christmas. We are blessed to serve a church so full of love!

> Grateful. Steve & Mike

To my Church Family.

Thank you for the cards and especially the prayers during my recent recovery. This Lord is still keeping me on the earth for His purposes. I am thankful for the support of my church family through this time.

Chuck Chelette

Angels live at Fairfield!

The Mission Committee would like to thank all of the Fairfield angels for making dreams come true for four children who attend Cold Harbor Elementary School. The school counselor interviewed the parents and found out what the children needed - coats, shoes, sweaters, shirts, pants, socks and underwear, and a few wishes specific toys, fluffy blankets, books and games.

In addition, all 19 families that the school is helping received gift cards to Walmart to buy other items that they need for their families. The Men of the Church made a sizable contribution to the gift card purchases, allowing us to help all of the families on the counselor's list. Thank you!

When Christmas morning comes, know that your generosity will brighten the lives of these children and their families who have faced difficult times in the past, but with the help of our Fairfield Angels, will experience great joy this Christmas morning!

Anne Young A Grateful Fairfield Member Dear Rev. Starzer,

On behalf of our staff, board and the Veterans we serve, we express our sincere appreciation to you and your congregation for your kind and generous contribution of \$200 which provides support to our residents in our supportive housing program for homeless Veterans. We truly thank you for your generosity and compassion. With the help of your gift, we are able to offer shelter, meals, case management, clothing, recovery services and many other forms of support. Because of you, we continue to see great success and as we continue working together, we will help our local veterans who are experiencing hunger and homelessness to have a brighter future.

Lynne Berkness Chief Advancement Officer Liberation Veteran Services



the elders and deacons who have rotated off in 2023 They are:

Vicky Beamer (elder)
Jim France (elder)
Allison Letourneau (elder)
Dwight Clark (deacon)
Elizabeth Moorhouse (deacon)
Pam Roberts (deacon)
Melanie Rubeck (deacon)
Debby Starzer (deacon)

These members served our congregation well and did a fantastic job! Please be sure to thank these individuals when you see them.

We now welcome our new Classes of 2026. The following individuals will be installed and/or ordained as **deacons** on January 28th:

Anna Barrowclough
Cindy Cattoi
Janet Chelette
Ginny Patterson
Judie Thompson

The following individuals will be installed and/or ordained as **elders** on January 21st:

David Cunningham
Donna Hohman
J. R. Marker
Gene Rosen
Beth Young

Please pray for these individuals as they serve our church and the members herein. Give them your support when asked to help in some small way. Volunteer to help them out when the need arises. Our leadership is only as strong as our members!

Special Dates

- New Year's Day, January 1
- Epiphany, January 6
- Baptism of the Lord, January 7
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, January 15
- Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, January 18-25



Zachary Letourneau	January 3
Collin Humphrey	January 4
Tess Wenninger	January 4
Kelly Wolfgang	January 5
Kathryn Zweckbronner	January 6
Ashley Clark	January 9
Dale Woodfin	January 10
Eva Ladd	January 11
Richie Tanner	January 11
Ryan Westphal	January 12
Richard Wood	January 12
Cooper Irwin	January 13
Debby Starzer	January 13
Sydney Westphal	January 14

Jo Mitchell Jack Briel	January 14 January 15
Jeff Harding	January 18
Morgan Wills	January 18
Nancy Hart	January 19
Diane Brown	January 20
Anna Barrowclough	January 21
Louise Setchel	January 23
Elizabeth Davis	January 24
Troy Horn	January 24
Will Dunn	January 25
Mike Hohman	January 26
Virginia Phipps	January 26
Hailey Weis	January 26
Rick Richardson	January 27
Caleb Boyd	January 28



Jeff & Becky Cumins Scott & Megan Stevens Tracy & Beth Young

January 4 January 30 January 31

All Church Night

January 7th

The date of All-Church Night for the month of January is January 7th beginning at 4:30pm. The schedule will be:

Starting at 4:30pm:

- Children's JOY Choir (Parents whose children participate in this group encouraged to attend Adult Bible Study!)
- Adult Epiphany Bible Study Adults will gather in the Open Door classroom for a fun exploration what "star" we are seeking in 2024, what we may be called into this new year of promise and opportunity. It will be led by pastor Mike. Stick around afterwards for our All Church Night Dinner at 5:30pm!
- All Church Dinner, 5:30pm

A nursery will be provided.



Prayer Shawl Ministry: In 2023, the Prayer Shawl Ministry delivered four prayer shawls, 18 lap robes and joyfully two baby blankets.

Even with all of this, the closet is still overflowing. As the new year is with us, we continue to prayerfully knit and crochet. If you would like to join in the fellowship, we meet on the first Wednesday of each month. If you don't know how to knit or crochet, we would be happy to help you learn.

The next meeting of the Prayer Shawl Ministry is Wednesday, January 3 at 10:00am in the Barlow Parlor.

Anna Barrowclough



Men of the Church - join us on Tuesday, January 9th starting at 7:00am at Cracker Barrel Restaurant on Bell Creek Road for our monthly Men of the Church Breakfast! It is a great time of fellowship

and a good way to fulfill the mission statement of the church: As a Christian community, together we BELONG to God, GROW in Christ and SERVE led by the Spirit. We encourage any and all men of the church to join us. Bring a friend!

Call or email Billy Putze (804-510-8719) or billyputze@comcast.net with any questions about the men of the church activities. You never have to reserve a seat, we will always have one open for you.

Service in Christ, Billy Putze

ellowship The Fellowship Circle will Circle start back on Tuesday, January 9, 10:00am in the Open Door classroom. All women are invited to join us for this daytime

Bible study. We will be studying the Book of Ephesians.



The Joyful Readers will meet again on Tuesday, January 9th, 7:00pm in the Heritage Hall for their monthly meeting. They will be discussing the book "Black Cake" by Charmaine Wilkerson. Barbara Wash will be the discussion leader and will lead the devotions. We hope all the ladies can join us.



Deacons Update:

in December, we gave thanks for our wonderful deacons and all the heart, soul, love, and time they put into their calling in 2023. In particular, we celebrated those rotating off the diaconate: Dwight Clark, Elizabeth Moorhouse, Pam Roberts, Debby Starzer and Melanie Rubeck. These wonderful deacons truly represented Christ in the ways they have cared and served our congregation.

On January 2nd the deacons will meet for some time of discernment, exploring who we are called to be and how we can shift to better serve the congregation, and the community beyond our walls. We'll be welcoming in our new deacons: Judie Thompson, Anna Barrowclough, Janet Chelette, Ginny Patterson, and Cindy Cattoi who is returning for another term. Pray for us, as we pray for you!



As fall turns to winter, our homeless population often suffers due to the cold. Please prayerfully consider Giving the Gift of Warmth to those less fortunate by providing your gently used blankets and gloves. Please place your contribution in the box located in the narthex through the month of January.



Youth Confirmation 2024

Starting this month, we will offer a confirmation class for our youth in grades 9th - 12th grade beginning on January

21st in the church library. Confirmation is a wonderful opportunity for youth to learn more about themselves, their faith, and the church. In late-Spring, they will also have a chance to create their own statement of faith and deepen their promises to this faith community. The class will take place on Sunday mornings, during the 10am Sunday School hour, along with other days/activities that may arise. Please prayerfully consider encouraging your high school student to join us for this class and contact Pastor Mike with your intention to join.

The Fairfield Youth Group had a wonderful closeout to 2023 at a youth group holiday party, what a wonderful group of youth and advisors we have! Our youth group will be taking a break in early January as families enjoy time off from school. We'll be back in action January 20 for a service activity with MCEF! More details to come in January. We'll meet for two hours on January 28th for movie night! Happy New Year everyone!



Youth Helping with Toy Drive

Keith Curran, with the help of Mitzi. Zoe, and McKenzie Marker, purchased and delivered a trunk

full of toys to All Nations Church for their toy drive. What a wonderful way to spread the

Christmas Spirit!





9:00am Nursery

Jan. 7	Angela Blue & Nikki Glass
Jan. 14	Marge Wantz & McKenna Blue
Jan. 21	Angela Schwartz & Allison
	Letourneau

Jan. 28 Anne Young & Abbey Glass



Pickleball continues here at Fairfield! Everyone is invited to join us - young and old! Here is the schedule for games. All games are played

in the Family Center.

Monday 5:30-7:30pm - Fairfield members only

Tuesday 12:00-2:00pm - Open to everyone Wednesday 5:30-7:30pm - Open to everyone Thursday 12:00-2:00pm - Open to everyone

Come join us! If you don't have your own equipment - no worries. We have paddles available for you to use.



The Worship Committee is looking for members willing to usher at the 9:00am and 11:00am services. If you are interested, please call the church office and leave your name, phone number

and whichever service you prefer. A training will be offered on January 14 at 8:30am for 9:00am service and 10:30am for 11:00am service.

News from Mechanicsville Churches Emergency Functions (MCEF) and the One Stop Shop (OSS)

www.4mcef.com

THANK YOU to Fairfield members and friends who have contributed to MCEF during 2023. There will be some statistics next month on what was done during that year. MCEF is grateful to all the Mechanicsville churches for their support and interest as we all try to meet the needs of those in our community who need a helping hand.

Minutes of the monthly meetings of MCEF are now listed on the first page of the website at the very bottom under **More Information**. Hope you will check them out for current needs.

For your consideration as you think about Fairfield's first Sunday donations to MCEF are: bar soap, condiments (mayo, mustard, ketchup, syrup), canned meat products.

Looking for other items to donate? Consider the following:

- Women's XL and larger tops for fall and winter
- Men's sweatshirts (no advertisement logos please)
- New socks and underwear for adults, boys, girls and toddlers
- · Linens: bed linens and towels

In November the OSS served 192 families (620 persons in the household), welcomed 16 new clients, gave out 105 bags of clothing, and 10 bags of linens.

Thank you for your support and Happy New Year



Notes from your Session

Your elders met in Session on December 12th during which time they:

- Convened with a Bible study and prayer
- Commended our Clerk of Session for her work and the Presbytery's review of her minutes and their approval without exception
- · Reviewed and approved the minutes of the most recent meetings
- · Heard the Associate Pastor express gratitude for and a brief explanation of his recent study leave
- · Learned that Mike will be serving on a Presbytery Task Force reviewing the strategic plan
- Expressed their deep appreciation and gratitude for the service of Allison Letourneau, Jim France and Vicky Beamer as they complete their years of Session responsibilities
- Enthusiastically welcomed Gene Rosen, J. R. Marker, and Beth Young as they begin their new season of service
- Elected Fran Hansbrough to serve as the Clerk of Session for 2024 and Bruce Arnette as Assistant Clerk of Session for 2024
- Joyfully renewed our two Parish Associates as Ministers in Residence for 2024
- · Heard that a new AED for the Family Center wing has been ordered
- Were surprised to learn that squirrels have done damage and taken up residence in our attic but a firm has been hired to eliminate the problem and repair the damage
- · Approved the budget for 2024 with no changes
- Thanked the Children's Nurture Team for their work in increasing activities and involvement for our children, especially for their work on reviving the early Christmas Eve Worship service for families with young children
- · Were delighted to learn that Team Youth is starting our next Confirmation Class for early in 2024
- Celebrated the news that our second annual Beat the Winter Blues Dinner is scheduled for February
 3, 2024
- Expressed their gratitude for Terri Joyce and all of the wonderful members of the decorating team for their hard work in providing beauty for numerous events and worship experiences at the Church
- Adjourned with prayer to meet again in the new year!



Under-aged Thinking



Geodes look plain on the outside but contain beautiful crystals. Create these "rocks" to show how God makes us new on the inside.

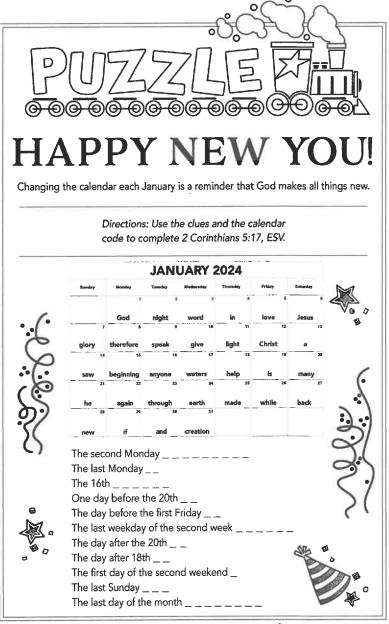
What you need:

- Clean cardboard egg carton
- Scissors (and adult help)
- Epsom salt
- Plastic zippered bags (one per color of dye)
- Food coloring
- Glue
- Paintbrush



What you do:

- 1. Cut out the tops and bottoms of all the egg compartments so you can make 6 ball shapes.
- 2. In each bag, put 3 tablespoons of Epsom salt and a drop or two of food coloring. Seal and shake to mix.
- 3. With the paintbrush, spread glue inside two egg-carton halves. Sprinkle a spoonful of Epsom salt into those halves. Then close and shake.
- 4. Open your homemade geode and shake out excess salt.
- 5. Optional: Preserve the crystals with a coat of clear-drying glue.



Answers: Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.

Get our new Fairfield Church Directory App

Our new directory app is here and ready to be used! If you wish to install and use it on your device, email office@fairfieldpcusa.org requesting your unique identifier code (see below) and follow these instructions:

STEP 1: DOWNLOAD

If you have an iOS device, click on the following link: http://tinyurl.com/zdm6h4cd.image.png

- OR go to the App Store and search for 'universal church directory'
- Select the "GET" button, then select "INSTALL" when prompted. When the App has finished installing, select "OPEN"

If you have an Android device, click on the following link: http://tinyurl.com/smambm53.image.png

- OR go to the Google Play store and search for 'universal church directory'
- Select "INSTALL" to download and install the App. This will display a popup window, in which you should select the "ACCEPT" button

STEP 2: ACTIVATE

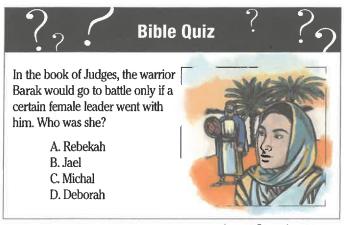
When the App is finished downloading/installing, click the "OPEN" button. You will be prompted to enter a unique identifier code. Contact the church office to receive yours. Each family has their own unique code, which can be provided to you so you can gain access to the app. Once entered, you're good to go!

If you have issues activating the app, or have any questions, feel free to contact the church office.



January 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
9:00am –9:45am Contemporary Worship Service (Family Center) 9:45am –10:45am Sunday School 11:00am New Beginnings Church Worship (Family Center) 11:00am –12:00pm Traditional Worship (sanctuary) 6:30pm –7:30pm New Beginnings New Year's Eve Service (FC)	New Year's Day New Year's Day - Church Office Closed 5:30pm -7:30pm Pickleball (FC) 6:00pm -8:00pm AA Group (#29)	2 12:00pm –2:00pm Pickleball (FC) 7:00pm Deacon's Meeting (Heritage Hall)	3 10:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry (Barlow Parlor) 5:30pm –7:30pm Pickleball (FC) 7:00pm –8:00pm Fairfield Ringers (sanctuary) 8:00pm Praise Band Practice (FC)	4 12:00pm –2:00pm Pickleball (FC) 6:30pm –9:30pm C.A.P. (Family Center) 7:00pm –8:00pm Adult Choir Practice (sanctuary)	5 2:00pm –3:00pm Wedding Set-up	Communion Set- Up (Small Kitchen) Epiphany 12:30pm –1:30pm NBC Choir Practice (#14) 2:00pm –3:00pm Wedding (sanctuary)
7 Baptism of our Lord 9:00am –9:45am Contemporary Worship Service (Family Center) 9:45am –10:45am Sunday School 11:00am New Beginnings Church Worship (Family Center) 11:00am –12:00pm Traditional Worship (sanctuary) 12:00pm –1:30pm New Beginnings Church Anniversary Luncheon (FC) 4:30pm All Church Night!	8 8:00am -4:00pm Classical Conversations 5:30pm -7:30pm Pickleball (FC) 6:00pm -8:00pm AA Group (#29)	9 7:00am -8:00am Men's Breakfast (Cracker Barrel) 10:00am -11:00am Fellowship Circle (#20) 12:00pm -2:00pm Pickleball (FC) 7:00pm Joyful Readers Circle (Heritage Hall)	10 5:30pm –7:00pm Girl Scout Troop 557 (#20) 5:30pm –7:30pm Pickleball (FC) 7:00pm –8:00pm Fairfield Ringers (sanctuary) 8:00pm Praise Band Practice (FC)	11 12:00pm -2:00pm Pickleball (FC) 6:30pm -9:30pm C.A.P. (Family Center) 7:00pm -8:00pm Adult Choir Practice (sanctuary)	12	13 12:30pm –1:30pm NBC Choir Practice (#14)
14 8:30am –9:30am Usher Training 9:00am –9:45am Contemporary Worship Service (Family Center) 9:45am –10:45am Sunday School 10:30am –11:30am Usher Training 11:00am New Beginnings Church Worship (Family Center) 11:00am –12:00pm Traditional Worship (sanctuary)	Martin L. King, Jr. Day 8:00am -4:00pm Classical Conversations 5:30pm -7:30pm Pickleball (FC) 6:00pm -8:00pm AA Group (#29)	16 12:00pm –2:00pm Pickleball (FC) 7:00pm Session Meeting (#20)	17 5:30pm –7:30pm Pickleball (FC) 7:00pm –8:00pm Fairfield Ringers (sanctuary) 8:00pm Praise Band Practice (FC)	18 12:00pm -2:00pm Pickleball (FC) 6:30pm -9:30pm C.A.P. (Family Center) 7:00pm -8:00pm Adult Choir Practice (sanctuary)	19	20 Newsletter Deadline 12:30pm –1:30pm NBC Choir Practice (#14)
21 Installation of new Elders 9:00am –9:45am Contemporary Worship Service (Family Center) 9:45am –10:45am Sunday School 10:00am Confirmation Class (#26) 11:00am New Beginnings Church Worship (Family Center) 11:00am –12:00pm Traditional Worship (sanctuary)	8:00am -4:00pm Classical Conversations 5:30pm -7:30pm Pickleball (FC) 6:00pm -8:00pm AA Group (#29)	23 12:00pm –2:00pm Pickleball (FC)	24 5:30pm -7:00pm Girl Scout Troop 557 (#20) 5:30pm -7:30pm Pickleball (FC) 7:00pm -8:00pm Fairfield Ringers (sanctuary) 8:00pm Praise Band Practice (FC)	25 12:00pm –2:00pm Pickleball (FC) 6:30pm –9:30pm C.A.P. (Family Center) 7:00pm –8:00pm Adult Choir Practice (sanctuary)	26	27 12:30pm -1:30pm NBC Choir Practice (#14)
28 Installation of new Deacons 9:00am –9:45am Contemporary Worship Service (Family Center) 9:45am –10:45am Sunday School 10:00am Confirmation Class (#26) 11:00am New Beginnings Church Worship (Family Center) 11:00am –12:00pm Traditional Worship (sanctuary)	8:00am -4:00pm Classical Conversations 5:30pm -7:30pm Pickleball (FC) 6:00pm -8:00pm AA Group (#29)	30 12:00pm –2:00pm Pickleball (FC)	31 5:30pm –7:30pm Pickleball (FC) 7:00pm –8:00pm Fairfield Ringers (sanctuary) 8:00pm Praise Band Practice (FC)	1 12:00pm -2:00pm Pickleball (FC) 6:30pm -9:30pm C.A.P. (Family Center) 7:00pm -8:00pm Adult Choir Practice (sanctuary)	Beat the Winter Blues setup (FC) Groundhog Day	Beat the Winter Blues Dinner & Fellowship (FC & HH) Communion Set- Up (Small Kitchen) 12:30pm –1:30pm NBC Choir Practice (#14)



Answer: D (See Judges 4:1-10.)



Return Service Requested



Church Staff

Pastor	Rev. Dr. Stephen Starze
Associate F	Pastor Rev. Mike Watsor
Minister In	Residence Rev. Dr. Keith Currar
Minister in	Residence Rev. Fred McCal
Kaylyn McC	Shee Seminary Interr
Administrat	ive Assistant Donna Carsor
Children's I	Ministry Assistant 👵 Angela Blue
Music Direc	ctor Amy Wenninge
Choir Direc	tor Celeste Underdowr
Organist	Dave Starze
Praise Ban	d Leader Matt Wenninger
Custodian	John Longes