



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

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March 2025

Early Signs of Spring

I've been hearing a lot more birds out and about this week: taking up residence on tree limbs that are showing their early signs of budding again. Of course, my first thought is 'what are they thinking?' feeling the likelihood of at least one more snowstorm in the mix before the end of winter. Virginia weather seems extra determined to keep Spring at bay this year.

After three separate weeks featuring heavy snow, ice, and cancelled school...I know I join the chorus of many of you praying for a warm and uneventful month of March. Everything was fun and games with snow days until having school-aged children came into the mix. The first day playing in the snow was magical...beyond that it's a constant game of keeping them entertained! I'm just grateful our community was safe in the midst of the weather events.

While it was highly unlikely there was snow in Biblical times, I've at least felt a bit like the early disciples in the gospel of John, locked in an upper room following the death of Jesus Christ, fearful for what was just outside. I can only imagine how stir crazy they must have been! And yet, they did not remain there. Following an appearance by the risen Christ, they left the room, they left their town, they flew out to spread word of the risen Christ, like birds on the branches of budding trees, singing their songs of a new kingdom, a new reign, new life for all people.

One of my favorite singer/songwriters, Josh

Ritter, grew up in Idaho, which certainly knows something about the emergence of Spring following snowy winters. In his song "Snow is Gone," he sings a song of greeting the singing of birds as the welcome of a new season, almost as if they are heralds of good things to come.

*Hello blackbird, hello starling,
winter's over, be my darling...*

A long time coming but now, the snow is gone.

Maybe the birds have the right idea after all. Perhaps there will be another snowstorm, locking us in our homes again. And yet, springtime remains on the horizon. Perhaps we find ourselves hiding behind locked doors, fearful of what's happening in the world, in our lives, tentative to take courageous but necessary steps in our lives. And yet, the birds are at our window, upon trees just waiting to bloom.

What a vision of hope. As people of faith, we are called to preach the good news, even when the flowers of proof have not yet bloomed. We share the love of God even when there's no love to be seen. We do so because we believe that God is actively involved in our lives, in a world full of fear and despair. So may we always be those who sing a song of spring, of hope on the horizon.



Member News



Our sympathies go out to Jennifer McDuffee on the death of her mother, **Jeri McDuffee** on February 2nd. Jeri was a member of Fairfield for 17 years. She will be remembered fondly.

Our sympathies go out as well to **Rae Hayden** and her family on the death of her husband, **Ken** who passed away on February 19 after a brief battle with cancer. You can see all of Ken's talents in our church wherever you see something painted. He did so many different paintings, especially in the Children's Sunday School wing. Our secretary also has a special window in her office that he painted for her. Ken was a beloved member for 30 here at Fairfield. He will be sorely missed.

Directory Updates:

Walt Fadeley now resides at Covenant Woods Healthcare, Apt. C212, 7090 Covenant Woods Drive, Mechanicsville, VA 23111.

Helen & Larry Rigsby have moved to Elizabeth Adam Crump Manor - Health & Rehab. Their new address is 3600 Mountain Road, B-26, Glen Allen, VA 23060. Their phone number remains the same.

Ed & Judy Baggett, Norm Ballmer, Linda Canyock, Becky Clark, Tim Gulliver's sister Pam and friend Neil Mallam, **Fran Hansbrough, Sally Kovacs' husband, David, Susan Patterson's** friend, Susan and friend Abbey Ford, **Barbara Wash, Herta Wenninger** and all those who serve as missionaries abroad and those who serve our nation.



Sandridge, Tony Underdown, Jack Ward, Herta Wenninger and **Sheri Woodburn**.

(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.)

Special Dates

- Transfiguration Sunday, March 2
- Ash Wednesday, March 5
- World Day of Prayer, March 7
- Daylight Savings Time begins, March 9
- First day of Spring, March 20



Marsha Young, Bryant Lowery, and their families would like to thank their church family for all the beautiful sympathy cards, messages, phone calls, prayer shawls and other kind expressions of sympathy shown after the passing of their mom, Frances Lowery.

In this season of Epiphany as we celebrate the gift of incarnation and Christ's light being shared with the world, we are grateful and mindful of the ways in which you have been "God with us" in the greatest sense of the word. In the wake of Hurricane Helene, we have witnessed neighbors helping neighbors, countless acts of kindness, and an unwavering sense of faith. Your financial support has been a beacon of hope during this extremely challenging time. We are thankful for the compassion of our community, the tireless efforts of our staff and volunteers, and your partnership in this important work.

Rev. Mary Katherine Robinson
Black Mountain Pres. Church



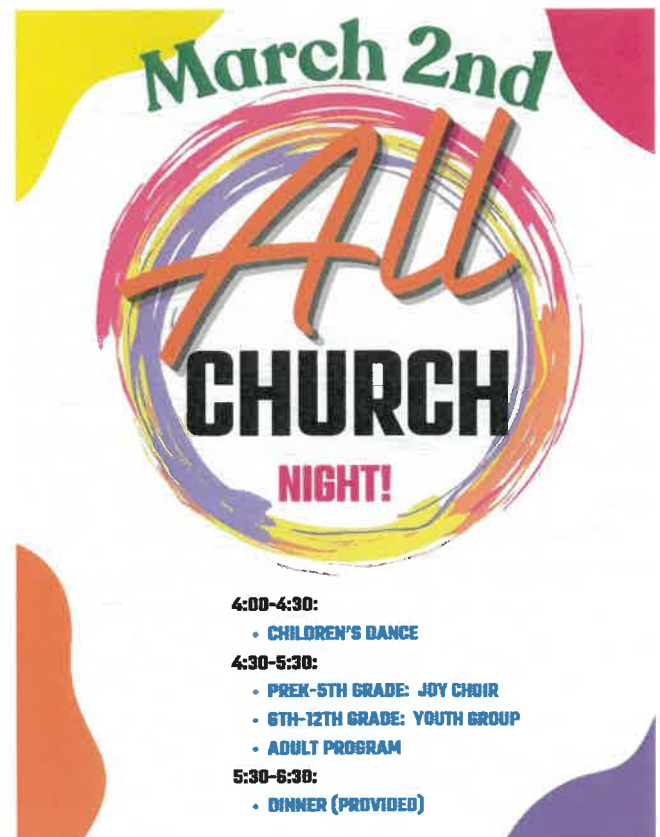
Please remember our homebound members who are unable to get to church: **Ann Barlow, John Crowe, Reggie Crump, Dot Gammon, Ruth Harpster, Eva Ladd, Laverne Longest, Nancy Norment, Virginia Phipps, Helen Rigsby, Larry Rigsby, Faye**



Jake Foster	March 1
Sam Patterson	March 1
Courtney Street	March 2
Becky Cumins	March 3
Paige Lake	March 4
Charlotte Pritchett	March 4
Dennis Sulser	March 4
Cindy Carey	March 5
Becky Settle	March 7
Amy Wenninger	March 7
Jane Welborn	March 8
James Trexler	March 9
Dwight Clark	March 11
Jennifer France	March 12
Bill Thompson	March 12
Steve Trexler	March 12
Brian Wash	March 12
Jan Fadeley	March 13
Grayson Palmore	March 14
Katy Underdown	March 14
Micah Clark	March 15
Amy Atkinson	March 16
Buck Smith	March 16
Audrey Westphal	March 19
Mandy Harding	March 20
Mike Watson	March 24
Vicky Beamer	March 25
Everleigh Mueller	March 25
Celeste Underdown	March 26
Erica Hutchinson	March 27
Victoria Tanner	March 28
Alison Dunn	March 29
Keith Franklin	March 29
Pam Roberts	March 29
Jean Kirwin	March 30
Doug Beamer	March 31
Brooke Bessette	March 31



Mike & Melody Watson	March 5
Bill & Phyllis Kerns	March 21
Parker & Gabrielle Hohman	March 25
Wayne & Cindy Carey	March 29

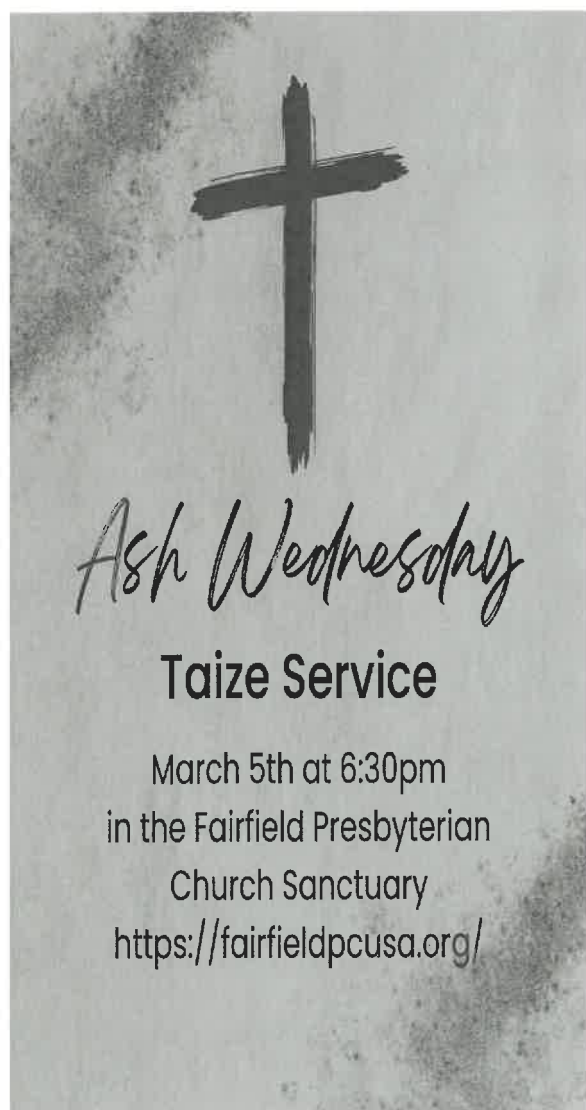


March 2

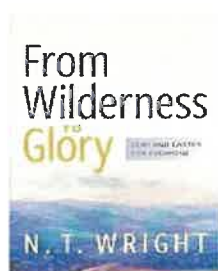
Adult All Church Night Lecture

Celebrating our Common Testament

As we draw our sermon series "Celebrating our Common Roots" to a close, we have a wonderful opportunity for one final conversation regarding our common Scriptural roots - the Old Testament. We are blessed to have a guest speaker: Rev. Crystal Varner Parker, Hebrew scholar and pastor of Providence Forge Presbyterian Church. She will help us explore how to appreciate the Old Testament in its own light and not just as a tool for interpreting the New Testament. Lecture and conversation starts at 4:30pm, all church dinner to follow by 5:30pm.



Lenten Study Opportunity



As you know in the Church calendar, Lent is a period of preparation for the coming glory of Easter morning. This year's Lenten Sermon Series will be based on the book From Wilderness to Glory: Lent and Easter for Everyone by N. T.

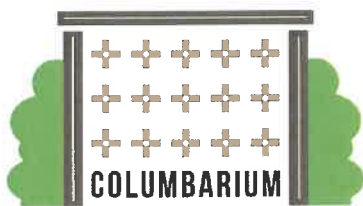
Wright. Each Sunday in Lent, March 9 through April 13 from 4:30-5:30 in the Open Door classroom, there will be a discussion of that Sunday's sermon topic. These discussions will give you the opportunity to delve deeper into that morning's sermon and scripture. Please consider joining us and adding your name to the sign-up sheet available at both services or via the link below. You can also pick up a copy of the book at that time. We are asking for a \$12 donation to cover most of the cost of the book. Hope to see many of you joining this Lenten preparation. Sign up here:

<https://forms.gle/jtDjUg34mmmgRHG39>

Lenten Sermon Series

Based on N. T. Wright's devotional,
"From Wilderness to Glory"

3/9 1 st Sunday of Lent	Luke 4:1-13
"Jesus in the Wilderness"	
3/16 2 nd Sunday of Lent	TBD
Youth Sunday	
3/23 3 rd Sunday of Lent	John 17: 20-26
"Jesus in Prayer"	
3/30 4 th Sunday of Lent	John 11: 28-37
"Jesus Among Friends"	
4/6 5 th Sunday of Lent	Mark 12: 13-17
"Jesus Among Enemies"	
4/13 Psalm Sunday	Luke 10: 28-40
"Jesus in the City"	
4/20 Easter	Matthew 28: 1-10
"Jesus in Glory"	



Soon the congregation will be receiving a letter about the Memorial Garden and Columbarium. In addition to the niches in the Columbarium and the Memorial name plates, we are accepting donations, either one time or monthly, to build this special place to remember, reflect and enjoy our beautiful church grounds. This would be for everyone since it is handicap accessible with paved paths and benches.

A donation can be noted on your offering envelope in the "other" space or on a check in the memo space with Memorial Garden.

Our goal is \$300,000 and we plan to have a poster in both the Heritage Hall and the Family Center that will track our progress. For those who have indicated they plan to purchase a niche or name plate, we are working on the legal

agreement and policies.

Please consider being a part of this wonderful addition to our church campus.

If you have any questions, please contact a member of the committee: Larry Hansbrough, Donna Hohman, Billy Putze, Marge Wantz or Beth Young.



Do you want to boost your knowledge, empower yourself to act and create a safe space for someone to open up about their mental health challenges? Fairfield is assisting Hanover's Behavioral Health and Wellness team by providing space for several upcoming classes. **Registration is required** and is done by Eventbrite. **Majken Whitaker** is the facilitator for at least two of the three offerings and can answer any questions you may have. These classes are **FREE** and will help you feel prepared for discussions about these topics.

March 11th safeTalk training 4:30-5:00pm. Dinner provided. Training will begin promptly at 5:00pm and conclude at 8:30pm.

You will learn how to reach out to someone thinking about suicide and help them keep safe by promptly connecting them to further support. Your role as a connector is the focus of this training. <https://bit.ly/safe31125>

April 8th Kintsugi ACE training 9-10:45am

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) training seeks to shed light and understanding on the potential traumatic events and environments occurring in childhood (0-17). We learn how the presence of ACEs may contribute to increased risk for mental and physical health concerns in adulthood. You will discover how protective factors reduce risk for children in their lives and community. After the training, you will be empowered to take the knowledge and implement change in your community. This interactive training will utilize the Japanese art form of Kintsugi to illustrate the impact of ACE

and potential for resilience and hope.

<https://bit.ly/aces4825>

May 13th Adult Mental Health First Aid 9:00am - 4:00pm In person session

Adult Mental Health First Aid teaches people how to recognize signs of mental health or substance use challenges in adults ages 18 and older, how to offer and provide initial help, and how to guide a person toward appropriate care if necessary. Topics covered include anxiety, depression, psychosis, and addictions.

<https://bit.ly/amhfa51225>

**** There is NO CHARGE** for this course, but participants must complete a 2 hour, self-paced online class prior to attending the Instructor-led in-person training. Your instructor will reach out to you prior to the class starting to provide you with information to complete the 2-hour, self-paced portion.**



Prayer Shawl Ministry

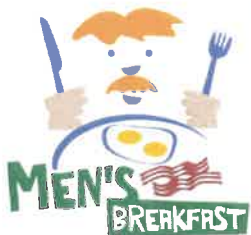
Prayer Shawl Ministry

Do you know how to knit or crochet? Would you like to learn? The Prayer Shawl Ministry is a group that meets the first Wednesday of each month to share fellowship as we work on projects that provide comfort to the distraught and bereaved. We would welcome anyone wishing

to be a part of our group.

The next meeting of the Prayer Shawl Ministry is **Wednesday, March 5 at 10:00am** in the Barlow Parlor. See you there!

Anna Barrowclough



Men of the Church - join us on **Tuesday, March 11th** 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. See you on the 14th!



The Fellowship Circle will meet again on Tuesday, **March 11th**, 10:00am in the Open Door classroom. All women are invited to join us for this daytime Bible study.



The Joyful Readers will meet again on Tuesday, **March 11th**, 7:00pm in the Heritage Hall for their monthly meeting. They will be discussing the book "People of the Book" by Geraldine Brooks.

Donna Hohman will be the discussion leader and will lead the devotions. We hope all the ladies can join us.



Mike opened the meeting in prayer. We welcomed our new deacons Martha Houchins, Donna Richbourg, Darlene Shegogue and Deborah Newcomb. Introductions were made around the table. Mike led us in Deacon's training using the definitions from the Book of Order, Directory for Worship, and scripture. **As a group we are to think about what needs (within and beyond) are we serving well? What needs (within and beyond) can we serve to a greater capacity? We are to contemplate those two questions and bring back to the March Deacon meeting.**

The deacons are currently working on our area of assignments for the year. The next meeting is March 4, 7:00pm in the Open Door Class (#20).



The deacons have a number of items of medical equipment that may be borrowed by our church members and their family and friends. We currently have 4 wheelchairs and 2 of them have elevation leg rests. There are rolling walkers and a knee scooter. We also have an electric scooter. There is an unopened bath bench. In addition, we have a several portable ramps. Hopefully, these items can be used by someone in need of equipment. Currently, we are not accepting anymore equipment donations as our storage area is limited for large items. If you have any questions or would like to borrow any item, please contact Donna Carson in the church office or Angela Schwartz (804) 337-4475. There is a sign out sheet in the equipment room. The entrance door is along the hallway behind the sanctuary.



NURSERY SCHEDULE

3/2	Abbey Glass & Majken Whitaker
3/9	Angela Blue & Marge Wantz
3/16	Barbara VanSteenburgh & McKenna Blue
3/23	McKenna Blue & Nikki Glass
3/30	Anne Young & Angela Blue

Try this:

When a doctor doctors a doctor, does the doctor doing the doctoring doctor as the doctor being doctored wants to be doctored or does the doctor doing the doctoring doctor as he wants to doctor?

The Lenten Desert

During the Lenten season, which begins on Ash Wednesday (March 5 this year), Christians figuratively follow Jesus into the desert. Just as our Savior spent 40 days fasting and facing temptation, we focus on self-reflection and contrition.

In an 1873 hymn, Claudia Hernaman wrote, "O Lord, throughout these forty days, you prayed and kept the fast. Inspire repentance for our sin, and free us from our past."

The desert experience of Lent serves a clear purpose, filling us up rather than depleting us. "This is what Lent is meant to be," write theologian Ron Rohjeiser. "Time in the desert to courageously face the chaos and the demons within us and to let God do battle with them through us. The result is that we are purified, made ready, so the intoxicating joy of Easter might then bind us more closely to God and each other."

Fasting and Feasting

During Lent, consider this practical - and biblical advice from Arthur Lichtenberger, a former presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church.

- Fast from criticism, and feast on praise.
- Fast from self-pity, and feast on joy.
- Fast from ill-temper, and feast on peace.
- Fast from resentment, and feast on contentment.
- Fast from jealousy, and feast on love.
- Fast from pride, and feast on humility.
- Fast from selfishness, and feast on service.
- Fast from fear, and feast on faith.

Under-aged Thinking

sweet soil



This snack's layers mimic properties of our planet's crust.

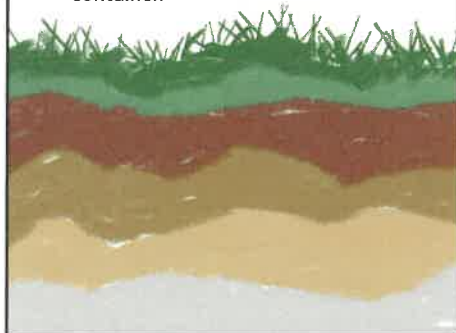


What you need:

- 1 cup rolled oats
- ½ cup nut butter (divided)
- ½ cup chocolate chips
- Microwave-safe bowl
- Silicone mini baking cups

What you do:

1. Combine the oats and ½ cup of the nut butter. Mix until oats stick together.
2. Place 2 teaspoons of oat mixture in each baking cup. Press with a spoon. Freeze for 10 minutes.
3. Spread remaining nut butter atop the cups. Freeze for 10 more minutes.
4. Microwave the chocolate chips 30 seconds. Stir and keep heating for 30-second intervals until melted.
5. Spread melted chocolate atop the cups. Freeze until chocolate is firm.
6. Remove from the molds and enjoy! Refrigerate leftovers in an airtight container.



FROM WORD TO WORLD

Words are important! God spoke and created all things.
What does the psalmist declare about creation?

Directions: Using the word clues, unscramble the letters to complete Psalm 102:25, NIV.

A preposition	NI	--
An article	HTE	---
Genesis means this	NINBGEIGN	-----
A second-person pronoun	OUY	---
Past tense of <i>to lay</i>	IDAL	----
An article	HET	---
A plural noun meaning <i>base</i>	SODTAINFONU	-----
A preposition showing possession	FO	--
An article	TEH	---
A concrete noun meaning <i>world</i>	HRTEA	-----



Psalm 102:25, NIV

Answer: In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth. (Psalm 102:25, NIV)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
23 9:00am –9:45am Contemporary Worship Service (Family Center) 9:45am –10:45am Sunday School 11:00am –1:00pm New Beginnings Church Worship (Family Center) 11:00am –12:00pm Traditional Worship (sanctuary)	24 9:00am –3:00pm Classical Conversations Tutor Meeting 5:30pm –7:30pm Pickleball (FC) 6:00pm –8:00pm AA Group (#29)	25 11:00am –1:00pm Pickleball (FC) 1:00pm –6:00pm Blood Drive (HH) 4:30pm –5:30pm NBC Dance Rehearsal (FC) 5:30pm NBC Choir Practice (#14)	26 5:30pm –7:30pm Girl Scout Troop 557 (#20) 5:30pm –7:30pm Pickleball (FC) 7:00pm –8:00pm Fairfield Ringers (sanctuary) 8:00pm Praise Band Practice (FC)	27 11:00am –1:00pm Pickleball (FC) 6:30pm –9:30pm C.A.P. (Family Center) 7:00pm –8:00pm Adult Choir Practice (sanctuary)	28	1 Communion Set-Up (Small Kitchen)
2 9:00am –9:45am Contemporary Worship Service (Family Center) 10:30am Combined Worship Service (Sanctuary) 11:00am –1:00pm New Beginnings Church Worship (Family Center) 4:30pm All Church Night!	3 8:00am –4:00pm Classical Conversations 5:30pm –7:30pm Pickleball (FC) 6:00pm –8:00pm AA Group (#29)	4 11:00am –1:00pm Pickleball (FC) 5:30pm NBC Choir Practice (#14) 6:30pm Facilities Management Committee (#26) 7:00pm Deacon's Meeting (#20) 7:00pm Personnel Nominating Committee (#19)	5 10:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry (Barlow Parlor) 5:30pm –7:30pm Pickleball (FC) 6:30pm ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE 7:30pm Choir Practice (sanctuary) 8:00pm Praise Band Practice (FC)	6 11:00am –1:00pm Pickleball (FC) 6:30pm –9:30pm C.A.P. (Family Center) 7:00pm –8:00pm Fairfield Ringers Practice (sanctuary)	7	8
9 9:00am –9:45am Contemporary Worship Service (Family Center) 9:45am –10:45am Sunday School 11:00am –1:00pm New Beginnings Church Worship (Family Center) 11:00am –12:00pm Traditional Worship (sanctuary)	10 8:00am –4:00pm Classical Conversations 5:30pm –7:30pm Pickleball (FC) 6:00pm –8:00pm AA Group (#29)	11 7:00am –8:00am Men's Breakfast (Cracker Barrel) 10:00am –11:00am Fellowship Circle (#20) 11:00am –1:00pm Pickleball (FC) 3:45pm –9:00pm safeTALK (#29 & kit) 5:30pm NBC Choir Practice (#14) 7:00pm Joyful Readers Circle (Heritage Hall)	12 5:30pm –7:30pm Girl Scout Troop 557 (#20) 5:30pm –7:30pm Pickleball (FC) 7:00pm –8:00pm Fairfield Ringers (sanctuary) 8:00pm Praise Band Practice (FC)	13 11:00am –1:00pm Pickleball (FC) 6:30pm –9:30pm C.A.P. (Family Center) 7:00pm –8:00pm Adult Choir Practice (sanctuary)	14	15
16 9:00am –9:45am Contemporary Worship Service (Family Center) 9:45am –10:45am Sunday School 11:00am –1:00pm New Beginnings Church Worship (Family Center) 11:00am –12:00pm Traditional Worship (sanctuary)	17 8:00am –4:00pm Classical Conversations 5:30pm –7:30pm Pickleball (FC) 6:00pm –8:00pm AA Group (#29)	18 11:00am –1:00pm Pickleball (FC) 5:30pm NBC Choir Practice (#14) 7:00pm Session Meeting (#20)	19 5:30pm –7:30pm Pickleball (FC) 7:00pm –8:00pm Fairfield Ringers (sanctuary) 8:00pm Praise Band Practice (FC)	20 <i>Newsletter Deadline</i> 11:00am –1:00pm Pickleball (FC) 6:30pm –9:30pm C.A.P. (Family Center) 7:00pm –8:00pm Adult Choir Practice (sanctuary)	21	22
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Bible Quiz

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?

Complete this sentence which introduces a well-known Bible story:
 “The hand of the Lord was on me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the Lord and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of ____.”

A. flowers

B. sheep

C. rocks

D. bones

Answer: D (See Ezekiel 37:1, NIV.)

Church Staff

Pastor Rev. Dr. Stephen Starzer
 Associate Pastor Rev. Mike Watson
 Minister In Residence Rev. Dr. Keith Curran
 Minister in Residence. Rev. Fred McCall
 Pastor Emeritus Rev. Bob Temple
 Administrative Assistant. . . . Donna Carson
 Children’s Ministry Assistant Angela Blue
 Music Director Amy Wenninger
 Choir Director Celeste Underdown
 Organist Dave Starzer
 Praise Band Leader Matt Wenninger
 Custodian John Longest



Fairfield Church
 P.O. Box 1088
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Return Service Requested

