



The Messenger

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

The Rev. Dr. Richard Haney, Pastor
The Rev. Nancy Clark, Pastor
The Rev. Mike Watson, Associate Pastor

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December 2025



Greetings:

December has arrived so quickly. These are the days when we are watching and waiting, remembering back and looking ahead to the birth of Jesus. Joy fills the earth as we celebrate God's wonderful gift of love to the world. I am very happy to be a part of this community as we celebrate and share this Christmas love with each other and the world.

For some, memories and life's circumstance make this season difficult. As we reach out and share love, we help them see a glimmer of hope. Who do we know that would be blessed by an invitation to dinner, to the Longest Night service, or to worship with us? Let's make it happen.

Three different services on Christmas Eve, 5:30pm, 7:30pm and 11:00pm will address different needs of members and friends from the very young to all ages beyond. I hope that you will be able to be present at one of these services to worship and celebrate Christ's birth. Beginning our Christmas celebrations with this time of worship puts everything else in perspective.

If you are unable to attend Christmas worship take a few minutes alone or with those around you and read the Christmas story together. Give thanks for Immanuel, God with us.

Advent will bring a series of sermons based on the prologue of John 1: 1-16. The theme of this series is "The Word Became Flesh and Dwelt Among us". The season of Advent and these scriptures bring us to ponder anew the Light coming into the darkness; Christ coming into the world; the glory of the One and Only, full of grace and truth.

Richard, Mike, and I are spending time seeking to discern priorities and address needs. We appreciate your prayers and grace as we sort out details and find our rhythm for schedules and tasks. Know that we are committed to this congregation and want to be present and serve well.

Currently, as part-time pastors, Richard will be primarily in the office on Mondays and Tuesdays and other times will vary; Nancy will focus on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and other times will vary. As a full-time pastor, Mike will continue to work Tuesday - Friday. Sunday will be a priority for each of us.

Advent is here! As we journey through this special season of remembering and celebrating, may the love of God fill your hearts with joy and the peace of Christ be with you.

In Christ's Love,

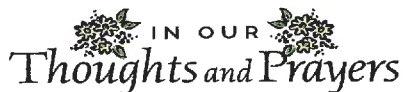
Member News



Our sympathy goes out to the family of **Martha Houchins** and **Katie Underdown** on the death of their son/brother, Andy Houchins, who passed

away on November 9th. We also express our sympathies to the family of **Ann Barlow** who passed away on November 15 and the family of **Libby Taylor** who passed away on November 15.

The Hastings' family has moved. Their new address is 472 Lyceum Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19128.



Jack & Lori Briel's friend, Brenda, Kathy Boyle's father, Bill, Linda Canyock, Becky Clark, Danny Couch, Debbie Curran's friend, Kim, Ashley Foster, Terri Joyce's family member Jude, Kaylyn McGhee, Elizabeth Moorhouse, Barbara Wash, Don Wells, Herta Wenninger, K. C. Whitaker's uncle, Bruce, Ed Wolfgang 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: **Janice Baily, Linda Canyock, John Crowe, Reggie Crump, Dot Gammon, Ruth Harpster, Eva Ladd, Laverne Longest, Nancy Norment, Virginia**

Phipps, Helen Rigsby, Larry Rigsby, Jack Ward, Betty Wade, Herta Wenninger and Sherri Woodburn.

(Please update Dr. Richard, Rev. Nancy or Rev. 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.)

thank you

Dear Fairfield Family,

I give thanks for all the many loving gestures of care and compassion you have extended to me and my family over these days since Andy's diagnosis and death. While our grief is profound, every prayer, hug, tear, call, card, and the many ways you have expressed your love for us is deeply appreciated. You have uplifted and strengthened us as we grieve our loss.

With gratitude,
Martha Houchins

Thank you so much for hosting our Blood Drive in November. Our goal was to collect 20 units and we collected 22! These units can save up to 66 lives in our community.

We are so grateful for the time and energy you put into make this event successful.

Special Dates in December

- Second Sunday of Advent, December 7
- Third Sunday of Advent, December 14
- First Day of Winter, December 21
- Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 21
- Christmas Eve, December 24
- Christmas Day, December 25
- New Year's Eve, December 31

Christmas is not as much about opening our presents as opening our hearts."

Janice Maeditere



In a season of Thanksgiving, we are so grateful for our youth group, their families, and all the church who continue to support and cheer on our amazing middle and high school students, who continue to be involved in many aspects of our church.

This November, we enjoyed fellowship and bonding with two different game nights, then spent an afternoon volunteering at Boaz and Ruth!

In December, we'll join with the rest of the church for caroling and early Christmas festivities on Sunday, December 14.

Pastor Mike

DECEMBER Birthdays

Terri Helfrich	December 5
Chris Selph	December 5
Noah Clark	December 7
Dana Franklin	December 7
Terri-Joyce	December 7
Bruce Watson	December 7
Sheri Wodwaski	December 8
Matthew Leigh	December 9
Jim France	December 11
Madeleine Letourneau	December 11
Heather Brady	December 12
Sam Endicott	December 12
Allen Boyle	December 16
Donna Hohman	December 16
Larry Rigsby	December 17
Ayron Young	December 17
Darlene Shegogue	December 18
Matthew Trexler	December 18
Carson Street	December 19
Herb Coulter	December 20
Charles Fishburne	December 20
Sara Gaston	December 20
Jaymes Pielmeier	December 20
Eric Spott	December 21
Reggie Crump	December 22

Lucas Settle	December 22
Patricia Leedy	December 24
Angela Schwartz	December 24
Su Ling Trexler	December 24
Laverne Longest	December 26
Lisa Denton	December 28
Norm Ballmer	December 29
Karen Couch	December 29
Phyllis Kerns	December 29
Rusty Hale	December 30
Pam Wells	December 31

DECEMBER Anniversaries

Ryan & Emily Westphal	December 10
Courtney & Randy Street	December 15
Jerry & Sheree Duggan	December 24
Chad & Lindley Starzer	December 31



We have ordered 40 red poinsettias for Christmas. The cost of each is \$15. If you would like to purchase one in celebration/memory/honor of someone special, please fill out the order form found in the Sunday bulletins for the next three weeks. All orders are **due by December 15**. Please get your orders in soon!

"Because of his boundless love, Jesus became what we are that he might make us to be what he is."

Irenaeus, third-century apologist

FAIRFIELD'S LONGEST NIGHT TAIZE SERVICE

December 18th, 7:00pm
in the sanctuary



A service of hope and healing, of prayer and song. For all feeling grief or loss this holiday season.

We will gather in the Sanctuary at 7:00pm on Thursday, December 18th, for our service of hope and healing. Come if you're feeling grief or loss this holiday season, come if you wish to accompany others, come and enjoy being in God's presence together. All are welcome to attend. This service will be one of contemplation and meditation, in the style of Taize. You will have an opportunity to light a candle in honor or memory of someone.

JOIN FAIRFIELD PRESBYTERIAN FOR

CHRISTMAS CAROLING

WITH CAMPFIRE, TREATS, AND FUN TO FOLLOW

🎵 **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14TH**

4:30pm - Meet at the church to go out caroling

5:30pm return to the church pavilion for a campfire, food, treats, and fun!

BEST The Worst Christmas Pageant Ever!



CHRISTMAS EVE FAMILY SERVICE

5:30 PM

PRESENTED BY: FAIRFIELD'S PUPPET MINISTRY

Based off of the book, "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever" by Barbara Robinson

Join us this Christmas Eve for a hilarious and heartwarming puppet show inspired by Barbara Robinson's beloved classic *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*!

Watch the Herdmans turn the church pageant upside down with their wild antics - only to discover the true meaning of Christmas. This interactive performance will bring the Nativity story to life with laughter, surprises, and your favorite carols.

Don't miss the chaos, the joy, and the BEST Christmas pageant ever at 5:30pm on Christmas Eve in the Family Center.

Bring the whole family for an unforgettable celebration of the greatest story ever told!

Dec.24 The Word Became Flesh

7:30pm & 11pm



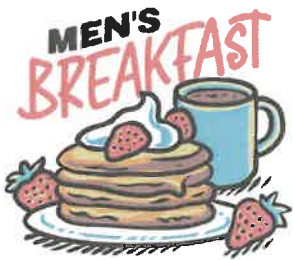
Prayer Shawl Ministry

Browns, reds, oranges and yellows mark the colors of fall but soon we will see the grays, whites and crystals of winter. Still, the Prayer Shawl Ministry continues to knit and crochet all colors and designs of Prayer Shawls and Lap Robes to provide warmth, comfort and love in times of need.

If you would like to be part of this effort, join us on the first Wednesday of the month. If you don't know how to knit or crochet, we will be happy to help you learn.

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

Anna Barrowclough



MEN'S BREAKFAST

The **Men of the Church** will meet on Tuesday, **December 9**, 7:00am at Cracker Barrel Restaurant on Bell Creek Road. We'll start off with a good breakfast and a lively discussion. All men are invited to join us. We

welcome new blood to the group.



Fellowship Circle

The **Fellowship Circle** meets on the second Tuesday of each month beginning at 10:00am in the Open Door Classroom (#20). This year we will be studying James, John,

Peter and Jude. **Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, December 9 at 10:00am.**

Beverly Burts



Christmas Dinner

The **Joyful Readers Circle's** next meeting is Tuesday, **December 9**, 7:00pm in the Heritage Hall. They will be discussing the book "Christmas in Bethel by Richard Paul Evans. Sue Putze will be the discussion

leader. We will also have our Christmas dinner. Come join us!



CHURCH LIBRARY

News

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have eternal life." John 3:16

As we enter into this Christmas season of giving, let us never forget that God gave us the gift of salvation and eternal life.

In the midst of our busy holiday activities, take time to relax and enjoy some inspirational Christmas reading. New to our library this year you will find The Noel Diary, A Redbird Christmas and A Merry Little Christmas. New to our children's library you will find The Newborn King, The Christmas Pageant and The Animals of Christmas Eve.

In this Christmas season, as we begin to exchange gifts with our friends and family, remember that God gave us each and everyone the greatest gift ever given. Christmas peace and joy to you and to those you love.

Merry Christmas,
Elizabeth Covington



It's Time for the Angels to return to Fairfield!

Our Angels have made their gift selections and now it's time to ship and bring your gifts back to Fairfield on or before **December 7**. These

treasures can be dropped

off during the week and left in the Narthex or brought to church on Sunday and left at the Family Center or Narthex before or after the service. The gifts will be taken to Millie's Home on December 8, and to Hanover Safe Place on December 9, so it's **very important** that they are returned to church by **December 7**.

Advent Worship Schedule

11/30	Advent 1	"The Word"	John 1:1-5
		Rev. Richard Haney	
12/7	Advent II	"The Witness"	John 1:6-8
		Rev. Mike Watson	
12/14	Advent III	"The Light"	John 1:9-11
		Rev. Nancy Clark	
12/21	Advent IV	"Children of God"	John 1:12-13
		Rev. Richard Haney	
12/18	Longest Night		Rev. Mike Watson
12/24	Christmas Eve	"Word Became Flesh"	John 1:14

On December 28th we will combine both worship services in the Sanctuary at 10:30am. We'll enjoy a nice post-Christmas Sunday morning of worship with Christmas carols and lots of festive joy.



Dec. 7	McKenna Blue & Anne Young
Dec. 14	Nikki Glass & Barbara vanSteenburgh
Dec. 21	McKenna Blue & Marge Wantz
Dec. 28	Abbey Glass & Angela Schwartz

"Christmas, my child, is love in action. Every time we love, every time we give, it's Christmas."
Dale Evans



The Stewardship and Finance Committee would like to thank everyone for making their pledges during the Stewardship Campaign. Your financial commitment for 2026 allows us to effectively plan for the coming year. If you have not turned in your pledge card yet, feel free to drop it in the offering plate next Sunday or mail it to the church.

As the year draws to a close, we want to express our appreciation to the many members who "catch up" their pledges during the month of December. If you are unsure if you have fallen behind or by how much, give the church office a call to find out where your pledge for 2025 stands.

J. R. Marker
Stewardship & Finance



Liturgist for December

Dec. 7	Stuart Settle (9am) Nancy Gallihugh (11am)
Dec. 14	Allison Letourneau (9am) Topher Carson (11am)
Dec. 21	Pastors



MCEF One Stop Shop
4mcef.com

MCEF is so grateful that the Mechanicsville churches have its back. Going into the Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday and

amid a government shutdown, MCEF came up with a plan to make sure our clients and any others had food. The Hanover Food Network came together to brainstorm what all of us (county and faith communities) could do to assure food. For MCEF, our shelves stayed full thanks to our community churches, partners, individuals and businesses. THANK YOU.

October saw the first month we have served over 200 families in a month. MCEF offered additional Thanksgiving bags of food and personal care items in addition to what clients get depending on the size of their family. So much is normally donated that a holiday bag can be offered again before the end of the year. THANK YOU.

A couple of requests for the food pantry: canned meat, jelly, mayo, broth. For the clothing closets, men's S, M, L boxer briefs.

If you would like to take a tour of the pantry, please let us know.

Nancy Gallihugh



"Jesus did not come to make God's love possible, but to make God's love visible."

Author unknown



Candles That Tell a Story

Lighting its candles each Sunday, is a treasured tradition during the four weeks of Advent. Depending on denomination, churches use different color

combinations for the candles. Some place four blue candles around the wreath with a white one in the center, while others use all white. Many light purple candles on the first two Sundays, pink of the third, purple again on the fourth, then a large white candle on Christmas Eve or Day.

Each part of the wreath carries symbolic meaning:

- **The wreath:** Its circular shape represents the everlasting love of God, having no beginning or end. The green symbolizes eternal life.
- **The four candles:** Mark the four weeks of Advent. One tradition says that each candle also represents 1,000 years, totaling 4,000 years from Adam and Eve to Christ's birth.
- **Purple candles:** In ancient times, was expensive and was considered the color of royalty and kings. On Christmas, Christ is proclaimed King of King. Purple also symbolizes humility and penitence. The first purple candle represents Hope; the second Peace; and the final purple candle, Love.
- **Blue candles:** Blue is another color often used as a symbol of royalty. Some churches use blue candles to symbolize the night sky and the anticipation of the announcement of Christ's birth. Blue also symbolizes the beginning of a new creation as in the waters of Genesis 1.
- **The pink candle:** Lit on the third Sunday, it represents Joy and marks the halfway point of Advent.
- **The white candle:** The large white candle in the center is the Christ candle. Its light symbolizes Christ the Savior - "the light of the world."

The beauty and brightness from the glow of all five candles is a reminder that Christ's life was the light for all earth's people - "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." (John 1:5:, NRSV)

The Advent wreath is more than just greenery and candles - it's a symbol of watchfulness and growing joy as Christmas draws near.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 ADVENT 1 9:00am –9:45am Contemporary Worship Service (Family Center) 9:45am –10:45am Sunday School 11:00am –1:30pm New Beginnings Church Worship & Workshop (Family Center) 11:00am –12:00pm Traditional Worship (sanctuary) 12:00pm –1:30pm NBC Workshop (FC)	1 8:00am –4:00pm Classical Conversations 5:30pm –7:30pm Pickleball (FC) 6:00pm –8:00pm AA Group (#29) 6:30pm Amy W. Dance Rehearsal (HH)	2 8:00am –1:00pm Hanover safeTalk Training (#29) 11:00am –1:00pm Pickleball (FC) 4:00pm –8:00pm Classical Conversations Christmas Dinner (FC) 5:30pm NBC Choir Practice (#14) 7:00pm Deacon's Meeting (#20) 7:00pm Personnel Nominating Committee (#19)	3 10:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry (Barlow Parlor) 12:00pm –1:00pm Adult Learning Center (HH) 5:30pm –7:30pm Pickleball (FC) 7:00pm –8:00pm Fairfield Ringers (sanctuary) 8:00pm Praise Band Practice (FC)	4 11:00am –1:00pm Pickleball (FC) 1:00pm –3:00pm Mahjong Get-Together (FC) 6:30pm –9:30pm C.A.P. (Family Center, 29, 31) 7:00pm –8:00pm Adult Choir Practice (sanctuary)	5	6 Classical Conversations Makers Market, Talent Show & Spaghetti Dinner Communion Set-Up (Small Kitchen)
7 ADVENT 2 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) 2:00pm –3:00pm Hanover Towne Garden Club (Heritage Hall)	8 5:30pm –7:30pm Pickleball (FC) 6:00pm –8:00pm AA Group (#29) 6:30pm Amy W. Dance Rehearsal (HH)	9 7:00am –8:00am Men's Breakfast (Cracker Barrel) 10:00am –11:00am Fellowship Circle (#20) 11:00am –1:00pm Pickleball (FC) 5:30pm NBC Choir Practice (#14) 7:00pm Joyful Readers Circle (HH)	10 12:00pm –1:00pm Adult Learning Center (HH) 5:30pm –7:30pm Pickleball (FC) 7:00pm –8:00pm Fairfield Ringers (sanctuary) 8:00pm Praise Band Practice (FC)	11 11:00am –1:00pm Pickleball (FC) 1:00pm –3:00pm Mahjong Get-Together (FC) 6:30pm –9:30pm C.A.P. (Family Center, 29, 31) 7:00pm –8:00pm Adult Choir Practice (sanctuary)	12	13 5:00pm –8:30pm AA Christmas Gathering (Heritage Hall)
14 ADVENT 3 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)	15 5:30pm –7:30pm Pickleball (FC) 6:00pm –8:00pm AA Group (#29)	16 11:00am –1:00pm Pickleball (FC) 5:30pm NBC Choir Practice (#14) 7:00pm Session Meeting (#20)	17 12:00pm –1:00pm Adult Learning Center (HH) 5:30pm –7:30pm Pickleball (FC) 7:00pm –8:00pm Fairfield Ringers (sanctuary) 8:00pm Praise Band Practice (FC)	18 11:00am –1:00pm Pickleball (FC) 1:00pm –3:00pm Mahjong Get-Together (FC) 6:30pm –9:30pm C.A.P. (Family Center, 29, 31) 7:00pm –8:00pm Adult Choir Practice (sanctuary)	19	20 <i>Newsletter Deadline</i> 1:00pm Memorial Service for Melanie Rubeck (Sanctuary & HH)
21 ADVENT 4 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)	22 5:30pm –7:30pm Pickleball (FC) 6:00pm –8:00pm AA Group (#29)	23 11:00am –1:00pm Pickleball (FC) 5:30pm NBC Choir Practice (#14)	24 CHRISTMAS EVE 12:00pm –1:00pm Adult Learning Center (HH) 5:30pm Family Christmas Eve Service (Family Center) 7:30pm Christmas Eve Service (sanctuary) 11:00pm Christmas Eve Service (sanctuary)	25 CHRISTMAS DAY Church Office Closed	26 Church Office Closed	27
28 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)	29 5:30pm –7:30pm Pickleball (FC) 6:00pm –8:00pm AA Group (#29)	30 11:00am –1:00pm Pickleball (FC) 5:30pm NBC Choir Practice (#14)	31 12:00pm –1:00pm Adult Learning Center (HH) 5:30pm –7:30pm Pickleball (FC) 7:00pm –8:00pm Fairfield Ringers (sanctuary) 8:00pm Praise Band Practice (FC)	1 11:00am –1:00pm Pickleball (FC) 1:00pm –3:00pm Mahjong Get-Together (FC) 6:30pm –9:30pm C.A.P. (Family Center, 29, 31) 7:00pm –8:00pm Adult Choir Practice (sanctuary)	2	3 Communion Set-Up (Small Kitchen)

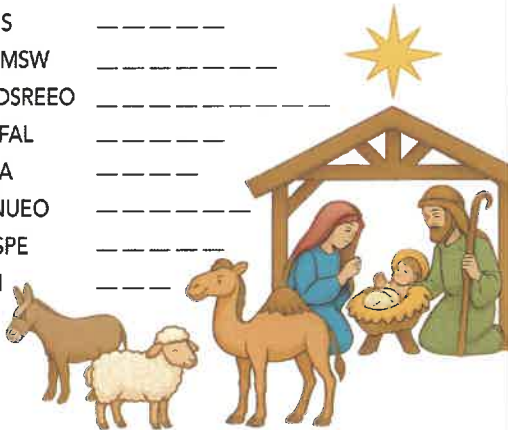
Under-aged Thinking

Puzzle!

The Christmas Story

Unscramble each set of letters to form a word from the Christmas story. One letter in each set doesn't belong. Write each extra letter below, on the line above the correct number. Then answer the question: What did we all receive at Christmas?

- (1) TGLBEHHEME _____
- (2) NEAGLO _____
- (3) NRMEDAG _____
- (4) ODEKSNY _____
- (5) AMGYR _____
- (6) OHESJIP _____
- (7) EFJSUS _____
- (8) ITEENMSW _____
- (9) SPHDSREEO _____
- (10) EMCFAL _____
- (11) TLSRA _____
- (12) CSSNUEO _____
- (13) HEVSPE _____
- (14) ENIN _____



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
9 10 11 12 13 14

Answers: Bethlehem (G), Angel (O), Manger (D), Donkey (S), Mary (G), Joseph (I), Jesus (F), Wise men (T), Shepherds (C), Camel (F), Star (L), Census (O), Sheep (V), Inn (E), God's gift of love (N)

Christmas Card treasures



Turn old Christmas cards into beautiful keepsake ornaments! It's a fun, simple way to give new life to cards you've received and add a handmade touch to your tree.

What you need:

- Christmas cards
- Scissors
- Glue
- Circle pattern (cut from cardboard or trace around object)
- Hole punch
- Yarn or ribbon
- Glitter (optional)



What you do:

1. Trace a circle onto two Christmas cards.
2. Cut out the circles and glue the backs together.
3. Decorate the edges with glitter or ribbon for extra sparkle.
4. Punch a hole at the top and thread yarn or ribbon through to hang.




Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights.
— James 1:17 (NIV)

"Christmas is not a time nor a season, but a state of mind. To cherish peace and goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy, is to have the real spirit of Christmas." - Calvin Coolidge

???

Bible Quiz

???



Who told Mary that her child would be called “the Son of the Most High”?

- A. Zechariah
- B. Gabriel
- C. Simeon
- D. Joseph

Answer: B (See Luke 1:26-32.)

Church Staff

Interim Pastor Rev. Dr. Richard Haney
 Interim Pastor Rev. Nancy Clark
 Associate Pastor Rev. Mike Watson
 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
Mechanicsville, VA 23111

Return Service Requested

