

# **SPC ANNUAL MEETING of the CONGREGATION**

Sunday, November 16, 2025, 9:45 a.m.

## **Report of the Session**

### **AGENDA**

Opening Prayer

Report of the Clerk

Report of the Pastor

Report of the  
Budget and Finance  
Committee

Celebration of Ministry  
(see back page)

Report of the  
Nominating Committee  
(see supplemental materials)

Report of the  
Personnel Committee:  
2026 Pastor Terms of Call

Closing Prayer

### **CLERK OF SESSION**

Suellen Myers

Our membership has remained stable, with a total of 296. Sadly, since the last report four of our members have died: Bill Ashforth, Cari Simon, Mark Pullen, and John Lacey.

We have also welcomed eighteen new members: Carol Arnold, Jessica Brunt, Ryan McKinley, Jennifer Merritt, Sarah Wagner, Jolene Jarrell, Connie Ross, Keith Laudermill, Tim Schaumberg, Erin Snook, Juan Rebollo, Lynn Wagner, Evelyn Bailey, Mileur Bailey, Joel Dillow, Hazel Hitt, Tori Jones, and Richard Kendall.

We have also celebrated the marriage of Keith Laudermill and Tim Schaumberg.

It is encouraging to know that we continue to reach and touch the lives of our congregation and the larger community.

### **PASTOR**

Rev. Gusti Linnea Newquist

When I think back on our ministry together in 2025, I will think of this as the year when “everything fell into place.”

A large influx of new members with fresh enthusiasm and energy for engagement with the SPC ministry filled in some gaps and forged ahead with new ideas to lead us into the future.

A strong Deacon Shepherds program committed to its first full year of a “Share the Care” model with great success and additional ideas for expanding their ministry.

Our staff team stabilized with the expansion of Christa Mastrangelo Joyce’s ministry as Director of Children and Youth Formation.

Several key leadership transitions took place far more smoothly than I feared they might in the areas of Personnel, Finance, and Property.

Our Sabbatical Planning Team secured funding, contracted with a guest pastor, and developed a congregation-wide plan for my four month sabbatical in February - June, 2026.

Our entire congregation rallied in support of federal workers, immigrants, and the LGBTQIA+ community in steadfast witness to the justice/love of Jesus.

Through it all, I have marveled at the deep faith and abiding commitment of this congregation. You are a delight to serve as Pastor.

For my part, the areas where I have focused most intentionally this year have been:

The All Hands on Deck SPC Leader Retreat in February. This gathering brought together Ruling Elders, Deacons, Trustees, Nominating Committee, and Committee Chairs to conduct a thorough overview of denominational expectations for our various roles. We then focused on key areas of importance for the SPC foundation: financial fitness; property management; collaboration among Social Justice, Mission, and Matthew 25 Initiative; stewardship of time and talent; and hybrid ministry. A second All Hands retreat will take place in January 2026 to solidify that work for the sabbatical period and beyond.

Supporting Rev. Dwight McCormick and The Community Cup and More New Worshiping Community. I completed my term as Treasurer for the presbytery Committee on New Congregational Development and supported Dwight as he transitioned to his new ministry as Pastor of First Presbyterian, Barre, VT.

Forging the staff into a team that functions together even more incredibly than the sum of its parts.

Composing a worship series on “The Great Sabbath” to lay the theological and biblical foundation for the sacredness of our seventh year in ministry together.

And, of course, all of the ways, large and small, of sharing moments of spiritual intimacy with one another in the promise that one day — and perhaps even today — *all shall be well, and all shall be well, and every manner of thing shall be well.*

## ADULT EDUCATION/FORMATION

Anne Teresa, Chair

The purpose of SPC's Adult Education and Formation Program is transformation through the renewal of hearts and minds.

The program supports these goals by seeking to cover a balance of subjects, including theology, spirituality, history, Bible and the arts. Formats include discussion groups, book studies, classes, retreats, and other small group experiences, with leadership that is shared as broadly as possible.

During this period Adult Education and Formation sponsored the following 2025 Sunday Seminar group discussions:

Spring 2025: On May 4 we completed a 13 week session using Brian McLaren's *Life After Doom: Wisdom and Courage for a World Falling Apart*. Despite its somewhat bleak title, this book squarely faces climate change and offers up hope through discussions of resilience and engagement. We had 3 presentations from SPC members Kay Schultz, Bill Howard and Than Hitt, describing our water environment and the risks to rivers, the Town Run, and other environmental concerns.

Fall 2025: This fall we focus less on book sharing and more on personal and community sharing. Our series *Topics and Conversation for Our Times: Gaining Perspective and Hope* features discussions

on issues impacting our community, relevant and courageous responses, and the need for conversation among us. Presenters from both inside and outside SPC will lead discussions about the work they are doing and why it is important.

Committee: Larry Neumark, Joyce Neumark, Missy Wheeler

## BUDGET AND FINANCE

Dave Smith, Chair

John Gonano, Stewardship

Pete Spreen, Administrator

### Financial Overview: Stability Through Generosity

As of October 31, 2025, SPC remains financially stable thanks to your continued generosity and commitment. We are 83% through the year, and giving is slightly ahead of expectations—an encouraging sign that reflects the strength and faithfulness of our community.

### Budget at a Glance (Through October 31, 2025)

| Category              | 2025<br>Budget<br>(12<br>Months) | Actuals*<br>Through<br>Oct 31 | % of<br>Budget |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Operating<br>Income   | \$395,104                        | \$375,449                     | 95%            |
| Operating<br>Expenses | \$392,873                        | \$329,856                     | 84%            |

\* Actuals include \$90,000 in major gifts.

With expenses on track and income slightly ahead of projections, we anticipate finishing the year strong. This financial health allows us to continue our mission and ministries with confidence.

## **Budget Justification:**

### **Where Do the Dollars Go?**

Your contributions support a wide range of ministries and operational needs. Here's how our budget is allocated:

#### **2025 Budget Breakdown**

- **Work in the World – \$30,250 (8%)**  
Enables SPC's outreach to Jefferson County Community Ministries, Eastern Panhandle Empowerment Center, LGBTQIA+ support, and other vital causes.
- **Property – \$55,250 (14%)**  
Covers general maintenance, landscaping, heating/cooling, custodial services, and insurance.  
*Note: A separate Building Fund supports major expenses like roof repairs.*
- **Ministry Programs – \$61,250 (16%)**  
Funds children and youth programming, worship and music, adult education, hospitality, and essential office supplies.
- **Pastor and Staff – \$243,250 (62%)**  
Supports salaries and benefits for our Pastor, Administrative Assistant, Director of Children and Youth Formation, Choir Director, Accompanist, Tech Support, and Nursery Attendants. Includes commitments to equity in

compensation, staff development, and benefits for those working more than 20 hours per week.

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### **Sustaining Our Mission:**

#### **The Importance of Your Pledge**

Your pledges are the foundation upon which we build our annual budget. They allow us to:

- Plan with confidence
- Sustain our ministries
- Support our dedicated staff
- Care for our sacred space
- Extend SPC's impact far beyond our walls

Every pledge is a promise—a promise that SPC will continue to be a place of worship, service, and community. Whether it's your first time pledging or you've been a faithful supporter for years, your gift matters deeply.

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### **Looking Ahead: Staying the Course**

With your continued support through pledges, plate giving, and major gifts, we are confident in our ability to sustain and grow SPC's ministries. Together, we are building a vibrant, inclusive, and faithful community.

Thank you for being part of this journey

## **CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

Mary Anne Hitt, Chair

The programs for children and youth had another successful year under the leadership of Christa Joyce,

our director of children and youth formation. Our Sunday Studio program, which serves children in grades K - 5, welcomed 18 children this year. Christa provided a curriculum that guided her lessons and those of our many volunteer teachers, focused on justice in the world. We are so grateful to all the adults in the church who share their wisdom with these wonderful kids as Sunday Studio volunteers.

Our youth group had a busy and exciting year. When the new school year started in the fall, several new middle schoolers joined the youth group, which now includes 15 members. Christa partnered with youth pastor Catherine Campbell to create a curriculum based on the parables of Jesus that will guide them through their 2025 - 2026 youth group experience.

In the spring, four youth group members completed a semester-long series of confirmation classes, including a weekend retreat at Rolling Ridge. Confirmands Evelyn Bailey, Mileur Bailey, Joe Dillow, and Hazel Hitt were confirmed and welcomed as church members on June 1. Special thanks to the church members who served as mentors for these youth: Natasha Baihly, Mary Ellen Lloyd, Dave Smith, and Sherry Sykes.

The nursery served between one and three children on most Sundays. Our long-time nursery director Olivia Gill moved on this

year, and the nursery is now led by Camryn Monroe. Adequately staffing the nursery continues to be a challenge, and suggestions for additional staff who can serve as paid nursery attendants are welcome.

Finally, we also provided fellowship opportunities for families of children and youth, including a back-to-school get together, pool parties, and drive-in movie outings. We're grateful to everyone who makes SPC a fun, welcoming, and affirming place for our children and youth and their parents. Mary Anne Hitt, who is the session liaison for children in youth, is in the process of forming a Children and Youth Committee that will launch in 2026.

## COMMUNICATIONS

Pat Hamilton and Carolee Youngblood,  
Co-Chairs

Mission: Improve communications and messaging among SPC members, friends and the community to assure the mission and goals of SPC are met.

*The Messenger* Newsletter: Published 10 issues of the monthly newsletter, *The Messenger*, which covers the events and highlights of SPC life, as well as regular financial insights, articles about SPC's outreach in the community, monthly calendar, a letter from the pastor and more.

Welcome Bags: Over 140 decorative gift bags with SPC bling have been distributed to new members and visitors. The bags contain: the latest issue of *The Messenger*, a Welcome Brochure, the Deacon Brochure, the Welcome letter from Gusti, an SPC Bookmark, 4 x 6 notepad, ballpoint pen, pencil and a mini-globe/pencil sharpener. We're hoping each

visitor remembers their visit to SPC.

**New SPC Website:** On October 8, the new SPC website was launched that includes new sections such as Community of Care which highlights all of the myriad ways to access any support you might need, Our Work in the World which is a different vision for Mission, Social Justice and Matthew 25 engagement and giving, and the History of SPC. Never miss a meeting or an event in the new What's Happening calendar on the homepage and in the Events section. You can even pledge and request a prayer online!

**Online Streaming Test:** In July, the CommTeam worked with the camera technical team to test an alternate streaming platform to FaceBook. Eight people volunteered to watch a test portion of the service and report on their experience.

Responses were positive; we will be retesting before making a shift.

**Stewardship:** CommTeam participated in the planning and execution of the Pledge forms and accompanying materials. The ability to pledge was also added to the website.

**Directory:** Research is underway about the opportunity to create a secure directory. We have started the process of adding pictures to the directory so that there will be a complete snapshot for 2026.

**Promotions:** The CommTeam assists with promotions and announcements where possible. Some of the SPC events the team helped promote in 2025:

- World Food Day – October 17
- Earthcare October Work days
- Food Security – food pantries, drives, Community Markets Inc.
- Annual Gift Giving for new families to the United States
- Online Streaming Test
- Stewardship
- Luncheon to support mental health care providers in Gaza
- More Light Monday presentations
- Eastern Panhandle Youth Alliance activities
- Pride March

## **DEACONS**

Donna Dettling, Moderator

Deacon Shepherds for 2025: Donna Dettling, Jen Jones, Yvonne Fisher, Patti McCarthy, Derek Smith, Chris Morehouse, Mica Martin, Susan Lovell, Sherry Sykes, Eva Moore, Lynne Wiseman, Diane Kradel, Diana Eldridge, Siri McDonald, Jeananne Stine, Elaine Hurd, and Carol Wood, Deacon Shepherd for Animals.

In 2025, with a new moderator and a new group of deacons, the SPC Deacon Team continued the spiritual development, formative planning, and collaborative work that begun last year under Jen Jones. We met monthly throughout the year to deepen our understanding and experience with the deacon role, and live into our goal of ensuring that everyone

at SPC feels cared for and connected, and that the deacons are supported in a reciprocal way by each other and the congregation.

Each monthly meeting included spiritual development led by Pastor Gusti, which was scripturally rooted to support topics including: spiritual and communal formation, utilizing a 2x2 ministry to provide support, seeing people separately from the demons within them, supporting inclusion in our church family, living out the SPC core commitments through our deacon work, levels of confidentiality, and prayer.

We continued to promote and demonstrate our Share the Care philosophy, by supporting one another and our flock members, and developing new ministries to add to those ongoing, that provide an additional layer of care and connection for everyone. We began a Support Group for those impacted by actions of the current administration, a Young Adult Ministry for those who have moved from high school into college or work, and a Sustained Care Ministry to help those with longer-term needs. We produced a revised Deacon Brochure to introduce us to the congregation, and had name badges made to identify ourselves during worship and at other SPC events.

## **HOSPITALITY**

Mary Ellen Lloyd, Chair

The SPC hospitality team had a busy year! We started with the Joy Gift dinner in January, held in our own fellowship hall for the first time in many years. A grand time was had by all. Throughout the year, we hosted four memorial receptions and six special event receptions after Sunday services, in addition to the regular coffee time. We also provided support for a new members lunch. We ended summer with our traditional picnic at Morgans Grove Park, complete with an ice cream sundae bar, congregational talent sharing, and a rousing water balloon toss. This autumn, the SPC coffee teams have come back to life, providing consistent hospitality after Sunday services.

In extending hospitality through opportunities to gather together and share conversation and food, we are mindful of SPC's Earth Care status, and strive to use recyclable and compostable items. Our coffee, tea, and sugar are certified fair trade, emphasizing our commitment to justice and support for the growers of those commodities. Mindful of dietary needs and preferences, we try to offer non-dairy, gluten-free, and no sugar options at our events.

Currently, 21 members of SPC serve on the hospitality committee in one way or another, it is a dedicated, caring, and fun group.

## **MATTHEW 25 INITIATIVE**

Anne Teresa, Chair

The PCUSA Matthew 25 Initiative invites Presbyterian congregations and other organizations to

actively engage in the world around them – to tackle systemic racism and systemic poverty, climate change, and build relationships between congregations. SPC became a Matthew 25 congregation in the fall of 2023. Our focus is on **Support for the Community Cup** in Martinsburg; **Food Insecurity** and **Clean Water**.

**Community Cup** Members of SPC are invited to visit and support this coffee shop in Martinsburg that reaches out to local residents, providing friendship, worship services, and good coffee. The SPC Presbyterian Women are now providing one meal every 2 months for the Community Cup. There are many upcoming events planned at the Community Cup – information is on their Facebook page.

**Food Insecurity** SPC hosted a workshop on February 20, 2025 presented by the WV Mountaineer Food Bank. The Food Bank provided advocacy training for 19 people in our area working in food insecurity. It focused on how policy decisions are made at the state level, and how to better engage with our state representatives. The Food Bank is the largest emergency food provider in the state of West Virginia serving families, children, seniors, veterans, and individuals at risk of hunger.

On March 23 SPC hosted an Oxfam Banquet at the Shepherdstown Community Club. 37 participants learned how hunger impacts each of us. As a result of the

Banquet, SPC donated \$300 to Oxfam to fight world hunger.

**Clean Water** In partnership with the Earth Care team, 3 Adult Education Sunday Seminar presentations were made focusing on water issues in our area, specifically the Town Run and threats to our rivers. Kay Schulz has prepared a document “Becoming Water Stewards” with practical advice and information.

### **Collaboration Team (Our Work in the World)**

Members of the Matthew 25 team have been active in the ongoing work to align and make more transparent SPC’s mission, Social Justice and Matthew 25 efforts.

**Matthew 25 Team:** Pat Hamilton, Barbara Hartman, Dave Smith, and Anne Teresa

## **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

Keri Mahoney, Chair

The Personnel Committee is responsible for attending to SPC staff and staffing needs.

This year's activities included facilitating year-in-review meetings for staff, developing ministerial and staff compensation recommendations, putting together job descriptions, organizing candidate interviews, negotiating offer terms, presenting proposals to Session regarding hiring, salaries, and staff actions, and providing advice and counsel to the Pastor and staff as needed. The Personnel Committee also has responsibility for setting up benefits each year, processing the bi-weekly payroll, and ensuring the year-end W-2 and 1099 statements are correct.

## **PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN**

Donna Dettling & Diana Eldridge,  
Co-Moderators

The Presbyterian Women of SPC meet at 10 am on the first Thursday of each month from September through June, for book or Bible study discussion, prayer, and fellowship.

This year the group is reading the book, *See No Stranger: A Memoir and Manifesto of Revolutionary Love*, by Valarie Kaur, to help us feel grounded during a time of much transition and fear.

The group also participates in missions with the international fellowship of Presbyterian Women, by giving to the national Thank Offering and Birthday Offering. These gifts help fund grants awarded to projects nationally and globally in areas of health, education, economic development, and the needs of women, children and families.

In addition, for local mission work we provide financial and material support to Bethany House, a shelter for women and children in Martinsburg, sponsor ongoing collections for two local food pantries, and provide food and volunteers for a bi-monthly dinner for those with food insecurity.

We participate with The Community Cup Coffee and More, a local business that supports those in recovery and living in

poverty, and have an active prayer shawl ministry to give handmade shawls and baby blankets to SPC members and friends.

In 2025, PW also participated in SPC's Oxfam Hunger Banquet, to bring an experiential awareness of hunger issues around the world. All women of the church and community are welcome to join the meetings for lively discussion and caring fellowship.

## **PROPERTY**

Adam Ware, Chair

### **Leadership Transition**

This year marked a significant change in the leadership of the Property Committee. After many faithful years of service, Daryl Kuster stepped down as Chair. We are deeply grateful for her dedication and guidance over the years. Stepping into the role is Adam Ware, who brings fresh energy and a commitment to continuing the committee's important work. The Property Committee plays a vital role in maintaining and improving our church, and we welcome anyone interested in contributing their time and talents as we are actively seeking additional members to join our efforts!

### **2025 Maintenance Highlights**

- **Elevator/Lift Repairs:** Based on recommendations from the inspector, we've worked to improve the reliability of the elevator/lift system. Repairs will soon be finalized, and we're committed to ensuring safe and consistent operation.
- **Basement Ceiling Leak:** We addressed an AC

condensation issue that was causing a leak in the basement ceiling. The source of the problem was resolved, and the ceiling has been professionally repaired.

- **Window Assessment:** All windows were assessed for condition and potential leaks. This preventive measure helps protect the building from water damage and energy loss.
- **Successful grounds cleanup:** This successful project was organized by Jolene Jarrell, bringing together volunteers to refresh and beautify the outdoor spaces. We're grateful for her leadership and everyone who participated.

#### Upcoming Projects

Looking ahead, our next major project will be the repair of the front brick porch. We are currently researching vendors and welcome any recommendations from the community. This repair is essential for both safety and curb appeal.

### **SOCIAL JUSTICE (WORK in the WORLD)**

Lynn Coddington, Chair

#### **JUSTICE AND PEACE**

##### Immigrant And Refugee Support

Legal support and basic needs continue for immigrants in our community and while our aim has been to help stem our immigration crisis at the root our efforts are primarily

local this year. Our volunteers have participated in immigration law and Know Your Rights trainings offered by the ACLU of West Virginia and Mountain State Justice in an effort to stay on top the ever-changing immigration landscape. We had printed and distributed Know Your Rights cards to individuals and community groups in response to numerous requests and at the urging of national immigration rights groups. We also responded to a request that we provide guidance to Session about how to safely and legally respond to possible immigration enforcement actions.

Local needs pop up unexpectedly. For example, we were able to provide rental support for an immigrant family facing eviction because of delayed work permits and other documentation. And once again this year gifts collected during the committee's 4th annual Holiday Angels gift drive will be directed to a small number of immigrant families.

### **INCLUSION AND EQUITY**

#### LGBTQIA Support

The Eastern Panhandle Youth Alliance (EPYA) supports gay and trans youth and friends with gatherings held twice a month at two locations in Shepherdstown and Martinsburg. In addition to these gatherings, in May, EPYA hosted WVFree, a Planned Parenthood subsidiary, which offered a sexual health presentation geared especially for the 14 to 24-year-old EPYA youths as well as SPC youths. EPYA has also launched another support group for 18-24-year olds. EPYA youth are newly engaged in helping serve meals provided by the SPC Presbyterian Women at the Midweek Manna at Community Cup in Martinsburg.

This June EPYA along with SPC members and friends participated in the first-ever Shepherdstown Pride Parade. EPYA handed out Skittles and shared EPYA informational flyers -- Progress flags passed out along the parade route were also a big hit. As rhetoric against queer and trans folks has increased exponentially this year, EPYA will continue providing a welcoming space for those under attack. Volunteers at the twice-a-month gatherings support the youth by their presence and are not expected to lead the group in activities. Contact [panhandleyouth@gmail.com](mailto:panhandleyouth@gmail.com) to get involved

Our connection with national LGBTQIA church networks like More Light Presbyterians and the Covenant Network of Presbyterians continues and in 2026 will be strengthened.

## **JUSTICE AND PEACE**

### **Guns To Gardens**

Guns to Gardens is a national initiative that provides a means for individuals to safely turn in unwanted firearms that are dismantled onsite with the parts turned into gardening tools. This year SPC's Guns to Gardens team was unable to hold a community G2G event, due to limited Shepherdstown Fire Department availability – the local site for the event -- but hope to confirm a Spring 2026 date. We had a productive year nonetheless: we provided a private G2G ceremony for a

local mother whose son died by gun suicide, a deeply moving experience that revealed an opportunity to serve more families affected by such loss; we supported Dave Smith's certification as a Firearm Safety Officer through RAWTools, enhancing the safety and skill of our firearm practices; and we welcomed two new Steering Team members, Rie Wilson and Julie Bakner.

## **INCLUSION AND EQUITY**

### **Racial Justice**

Looking ahead to 2026, we'll continue to explore how to tell the stories of those mostly erased from history, and whether and how to create internal and external exhibits arising from the examination of SPC and local history.

## **WORSHIP**

Mica Martin, Chair

## **2025 SESSION MEMBERS**

*Class of 2026:* \*Emily Gross,  
Keri Mahoney,\*Dave Smith, (vacant)

*Class of 2027:* John Gonano, \*Mary Anne Hitt,  
Stephanie Jamieson, Wanda Stewart

*Class of 2028:* Suellen Myers, Anne Teresa,  
\*Adam Ware, \*Carolee Youngblood

(\* indicates second term;

*Classes end in January of the given year)*

Today we honor the ministries of Daryl Kuster, Pete Spreen, and Lois Spreen as they transition from their roles as Property Committee Chair, Personnel Chair and Treasurer. We thank you, Daryl, Pete and Lois, for your faithful service to this congregation, for your endurance in times of transition and trial, for your caring and love of the community, and for your commitment to The Way of Jesus.

Let us pray for the saving presence of our living God:

**Be present, God.**

In this congregation,

**Be present, God.**

In this community,

**Be present, God.**

In the homes and hearts of all your people,

**Be present, God.**

Let us pray for the mercy of our God:

**Lord, have mercy.**

For work begun that still needs to be completed,

**Lord, have mercy.**

For expectations not met,

**Lord, have mercy.**

For wounds that need to be healed,  
**Lord, have mercy.**

For gifts that need to be shared,  
**Lord, have mercy.**

For promises that need to be kept,  
**Lord, have mercy.**

Let us give thanks for the journey,  
**Thanks be to God!**

For friendships made, joys celebrated, for nurture and growth,

**Thanks be to God!**

For wounds healed, expectations exceeded, gifts given, promises kept.

**Thanks be to God!**

For our communion in Christ, and for the love of God which has sustained us,

**Thanks be to God!**

Sharing Thanksgiving

Let us pray:

Loving God, Alpha and Omega, you are both beginning and end. Our endings and our beginnings are rooted in your love.

Help us to live with courage and gladness in the future you present us. In every time and place, may we offer you our highest and our best, through Christ, we pray.

Amen.