



THE MESSENGER

July/August 2026
Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church
Shepherdstownpresbyterian.org

PASTOR'S NOTE: A Summer of Story-Telling

Beloveds,

It is good to be back!

What a gift to return to a congregation that has not merely “made it through” their pastor’s sabbatical but has actively thrived in her absence!

From the Timeline Project to the new tagline (“Building a Church That Reflects God’s Heart”) to the welcome of six new members (and three baptisms!) to just plain being YOU, I am beyond excited to re-enter active ministry with you.

The next several months of worship will include many opportunities for mutual reflection on what this time has meant for us. In July, our Parents and “parental figures” will share how the Scriptures intersect with their hopes and dreams for our children and youth. In August, I will share stories from my sabbatical and the wisdom of the Spirit that emerged along the way. In September, we will begin an intentional integration of mutual wisdom and forward-looking intention, based on our shared experiences.

For now, let me simply say what I said in worship when I returned. If the theme of the sabbatical was “Who Am I Now?” three immediate answers have emerged:

I am Wife to the best husband on the planet;

I am Pilgrim returning to the best home on the planet; and

I am Pastor serving the best congregation on the planet.

Thank you beyond words for the gift of this time and for the gift of this return.

With you as we reconnect,
Pastor Gusti

Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church: An Inclusive Spiritual Community. We welcome all who long for meaning, hope, and belonging. Our faith & practice are rooted in the way of Jesus and enriched by wisdom from all sources. We are committed to being and becoming people of radical compassion, working for justice and wholeness in ourselves and in the world.

The "core commitments" that guide us, and the underlying beliefs that support them are:

Radical Hospitality: We Choose Welcome

- Everyone and everything, and every part of ourselves, is included in the circle of God's love.
- Imperfections and suffering are integral to the spiritual path.

Holistic Spirituality: Everything Belongs

- The Way of Jesus is a path of transformation.
- Doubt and questions are essential to faith.
- We are connected in Love with all, including those who have gone before us, and all those yet to come.
- We value all sources of Wisdom.

Engaged Compassion: God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God

- The Way of Jesus is a way of being in this world, loving, serving and making things whole.
- Loving God means loving all of creation.

Church Staff

Rev. Gusti Linnea Newquist (she/her), Pastor

Christa Mastrangelo Joyce (she/her), Director of Children and Youth Formation

Lynn Dampman (she/her), Administrative Assistant

Sheila Melendez (she/her), Choir Director

Sam Jannotta (he/him), Accompanist

Mark Nutwell (he/him), Tech Support

Vacant, Nursery Manager

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lynn@shepherdstownpresbyterian.org

Contacting Pastor Gusti: Pastor Gusti makes every effort to respond to communications as soon as possible between the hours of 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. Saturday through Thursday. Fridays are her Sabbath. If you are having a pastoral emergency, please call any time, day or night, 681-283-5314;

gusti@shepherdstownpresbyterian.org

“Sabbatical Stories”
SPC Worship in August 2026

Pastor Gusti will share stories from her sabbatical journey
and the wisdom of the Spirit that emerged along her path.

Sunday, August 2

**On Brisket, Breakfast Tacos,
and The Table That Sustains**

Isaiah 25:6-9

Eighteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time

Communion

... the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast ...

Sunday, August 9

Best Laid Plans

Jeremiah 29:11-14

Nineteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time

For surely I know the plans I have for you ...

Sunday, August 16

His Eye is on the Gila Monster

Job 12:7-10

Twentieth Sunday of Ordinary Time

Back to School Sunday

... ask the animals, and they will teach you ...

Sunday, August 23

When Church Hurts

Psalm 55

Twenty-first Sunday of Ordinary Time

selected verses

I utter my complaint and moan ...

Sunday, August 30

Seventy Times Seven

Matthew 18:21-22

Twenty-second Sunday of Ordinary Time

... how often should I forgive? ...



CHILDREN AND YOUTH UPDATE

Christa Mastrangelo Joyce
Director of Children and Youth Formation

What are the youth and children up to this summer? While the school year is on break, we also take a break from the school year rhythm—but not a break from beloved community. Summer is a time to mix things up, get creative, and find ways to connect new people. Our children are hanging out with a beautiful variety of members through the summer as we “respond to God’s love” in our very own SPC neighborhood. The children will be hearing about chickens, dogs, water preservation, art, and so many other wonderful things that inspire love in many of you.

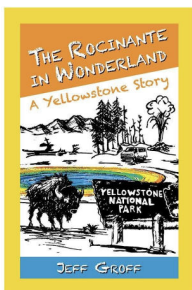
In the meantime, our youth are planning for a night on the river kayaking, a movie under the stars at the drive-in theater in Virginia, an evening of fun swimming and picnicking at the river, and our first mission trip to Massanetta Springs near Harrisonburg, Virginia. Best of all perhaps, our annual intergenerational baseball event has over 40 family members who’ve signed up for what will undoubtedly be another night of fun, hilarity, and connection to cheer on the Hagerstown Flying Boxcars at Meritus Park.

We couldn’t be more excited for these upcoming months! And there’s plenty of room for volunteers to join in these events and activities! Reach out to Christa at christa@shepherdstownpresbyterian.org if you want to be involved with any of the youth or children’s events this summer.

BELATED CONGRATULATIONS to **CALEB STAPLETON**, great nephew of Stephanie and Perry Jamieson. Caleb graduated from Liberty High School in Sykesville, MD. He will attend Carroll County Community College in the fall where he will study business and finance.



SUMMER CLEANING? Check your closets for full/king/ queen-size blankets, quilts or comforters, clean and in good condition, to make sleeping bags for unhoused people. Also, are you interested in working on this project? Sewing skills aren’t required. Contact Rie Wilson, 304-433-0224 or riewilson@me.com.



Celebrate the publication of *The Rocinante: A Yellowstone Story* by SPC’s Jeff Groff. The book is based on a trip to Yellowstone Park with college students. It is published by Starlight Studio; all proceeds from sales benefit their nonprofit programs. Those wishing to make a donation of \$13 or more will receive a print copy of the book as a gift. Reserve your gift by visiting the Starlight Studio store at <https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/starlight-studio-shop>



JUNE SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Suellen Myers, Clerk of Session

Session met on June 11 at 7:00 p.m. A quorum was declared, and the meeting was moderated by Pastor Mary Jane.

Prospective new members Meredith Houck and Matthew Brinkley (Alma and Alfred), Ursula Kimble and Matthew Eakle, Pat Hamilton, and Carol Richmond attended the meeting and were **Approved**. All except Carol Richmond, who will be away, will be received into membership on the 14th. Also **Approved** were the baptisms of Matthew Brinkley and Alma and Alfred.

Budget and Finance - Stewardship timeline and processes were presented.

Session Statement - There was a discussion about next steps. It was decided by general agreement to put it on the church website, in the Welcome bags, send it to Presbytery and perhaps make it available to the Ministerial Association.

Property – The little wooden chairs from the basement have been donated to a Montessori school in Charles Town. Several options for the renovations to the office area were presented. After discussion, the Committee will do all the renovations at the same time to avoid continued disruption to the area.

Timeline Team – Requested that the new banner on the front of the balcony be hung by hooks rather than the string that now holds it up. Property will see what works best.

Bells – Request from Patti McCarthy and the Handbell Choir that the current bells be sold so that a more appropriate set be purchased. It was decided to table the request pending further clarification.

Moderator – Pastor Mary Jane reported that she will be moving out of the office on the 15th. She will spend the next afternoon with Pastor Gusti. On the 21st she will officiate the service through First Pew and the transfer of the walking stick. The 28th will be her last Sunday. She and Bill will then be leaving for a week's vacation and will head home to Ohio on July 5.

On June 14 she will be officiating the reception of new members and the three baptisms.

This meeting is her last responsibility to moderate Session.

Work in the World – The immigrant/refugee support team is collaborating with St. Agnes Catholic Church to develop a program to provide food and supplies to a Special Needs population. The team is working with Shepherdstown Shares Food Pantry to provide for the families' needs. Drivers will be trained on best practices to maintain the safety and privacy of both the clients and the drivers.

Clerk – Communion was served on June 7 and will be served on July 5 as previously approved. The minutes of the May meeting were approved as corrected. The self-certification document has now been signed by all members of Session. The next stated meeting will be August 13. The meeting was closed with prayer and adjourned at 8:45.

The SPC Session meets the 2nd Thursday of the month from 7-9 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall and via Zoom. Meetings are open to any member of the congregation who wishes to attend. Contact Suellen Myers, Clerk of Session, to learn more.



SPC'S FINANCIAL HEALTH REPORT

Dave Smith, Budget and Finance

BUILDING THE FUTURE TOGETHER

The Finance Committee met to review May's financial reports, discuss stewardship and budget processes, and review upcoming projects.

The finance committee meeting focused on reviewing the church's budget and financial processes. They reviewed the current budget performance, noting that while pledge income was meeting targets, general giving has continued to be lower than in the most recent years. The committee discussed accounts supporting the sabbatical. The committee finalized the Stewardship and Budget process timelines and workflows. The next committee meeting will be on August 4.

Ways to give to SPC:

- In the offering plate during worship
- By mail - Make checks payable to Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church and mail to: PO Box 268, Shepherdstown, WV 25443
- Online - If you would like to make an online donation, please go to: www.shepherdstownpresbyterian.org and use the GIVE icon in the upper right on the home page or use the QR code. You may donate through PayPal, debit or credit card or Venmo.



BUDGET AT A GLANCE THROUGH MAY 31, 2026

Income and Expenses	2026 Budget (12 Months)	Actuals* through May 31	Actuals as % of the 12-Month Budget
Operating Income	\$358,589	\$157,379	44%
Operating Expenses	\$397,841	\$160,067	40%

* Actuals include major gifts

SPC TIMELINE PROJECT CELEBRATION

Thankfulness abounds for everyone who participated in the timeline project! The sanctuary has been transformed into a historical journey from past to present, that rekindles memories and moments, both sad and joyful, of world, national, local and SPC events. We added personal reflections to weave ourselves into the tapestry, and created a dreamland of hopes for the future of SPC on the tree.

Special thanks to those who created display boards for each time period: Pre-1700s – Lynn Coddington; 1700s – Keri Mahoney and Donna Dettling; 1800s – Diana Eldridge; 1900-1959 – Brian and Donna Dettling; 1960-1979 – Larry and Joyce Neumark; 1980-1999 – Jeananne Stine; 2000-2015 – Rob Mahaffey; and 2016-present – Keri Mahoney. And to others who brainstormed with us and found historical information, we couldn't have done it without you: Kristen Saacke Blunk, Elaine Hurd, Suellen Myers, and Mary Ellen Lloyd. Many thanks to the worker bees who helped with the installation, to those who submitted quote ideas and voted on their favorite, and all who celebrated with us on June 7. It took a village!

We plan for the timeline to stay in place throughout the summer, so tags and leaves will remain available at both entrances to the sanctuary. Please feel free to continue adding memories as they surface, and hopes as they emerge. Take some time to look at the displays and take a walk down memory lane. We are blessed with a rich history, and our sanctuary now bears witness to all the souls who have worshiped and been in fellowship here through the years.



Diana Eldridge, Colin Stine, Joyce Neumark, Larry Neumark, Donna Dettling,
Rob Mahaffey, Keri Mahoney, Lynn Coddington, Brian Dettling
(Jeananne Stine absent for picture)

(Editor's Note: If you weren't able to attend the celebration, check out the display boards in Fellowship Hall for pictures of the event.)

DEACON

DEACON TEAM UPDATE

Donna Dettling, Deacon Moderator

The deacons are available to do the service of **Extended Home Communion** within a couple days after our **July 5 communion Sunday (or any other communion Sunday)** for those who are **homebound or unable to attend services**. This is an extension of the communion that is served during worship, so it must be done as soon after a communion Sunday as possible. Two deacons would take the elements and perform the communion service with you. If home communion is requested at a different time, it would be done by the pastor and a deacon. Please contact your deacon or the church office if you would like to schedule this special visit.



As a next step from our Autism Acceptance Workshop, we introduced our Sensory Support Cart during worship on June 7. The cart will be at the entrance to the sanctuary on Sundays, and includes noise-cancelling headphones, sensory (fidget) items, and blue butterfly stickers. A sign on the cart instructs people to take what they need for use during the worship service, and lets them know there is a quiet corner in our Fellowship Hall in case they need to step out for a bit. We hope these simple but thoughtful steps will help provide a better worship experience for all. Items have already been used and appreciated, and the feedback has been very positive. If you could volunteer to wipe down the returned objects at the end of worship, we would welcome your help.

PrayerNet

Please send your prayer requests to prayernet@shepherdstownpresbyterian.org. You may also call the church office at 304-876-6466 during office hours (Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.) or request the prayer through the SPC website at [Community of Care | Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church](#). A couple of practical reminders as you make your requests:

1. Please make sure the person for whom you are requesting prayer has given their permission. Due to privacy considerations, we are unable to share requests without that permission.
2. Please indicate whether or not you would like this request to be shared in worship.
3. You may also indicate that you prefer to keep this request confidential among the PrayerNet Team (currently Lynn Dampman, Jen Jones, and Mica Martin.)

If you are having a pastoral emergency (death of a spouse or child, life-threatening medical emergency, etc.), please contact Pastor Gusti directly at (681) 283-5314. If you would like to participate in our larger PrayerNet community (as one of the 90+ who have agreed to pray), or volunteer as one of the PrayerNet administrators, contact Lynn at the church office: lynn@shepherdstownpresbyterian.org.

Deacon Shepherd for Animals

Carol Wood was commissioned to remind us of the holiness pets add to our lives. This includes care to those who have lost a dear companion, assistance during final days with a pet, and support when bringing a new pet into the home. Contact Carol at cwood453@aol.com.



PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Donna Dettling, Co-Moderator

Fourteen of our Presbyterian Women gathered for a year-end picnic on Thursday, June 4, in Chris Madeo's sanctuary barn in Boonsboro. We

feasted on a wonderful assortment of lunch dishes, desserts, and drinks while enjoying fellowship, thanks, and memories of the year. The weather cooperated and the space was relaxing and beautiful. Thank you, Chris, for sharing your amazing sanctuary with us!



Our **Mid-week Manna Meal at the Community Cup in Martinsburg was on Wednesday, June 10.** Many from our group provided food and shared the serving duties with EPYA volunteers. Susan Lovell shares this update:

We had a wonderfully varied meal to serve the guests at the Community Cup in Martinsburg. We served around 40 and got lots of compliments on individual dishes as well as the meal in general. One guest raved several times that this meal was perfect, just perfect! Thank you for your contributions of foods and for those helping to serve, thank you for your support and smiles for our guests. Thanks also to Season Jones for the devotion and prayer.



We are taking our summer break during July and August, but please consider joining the Presbyterian Women's group in the fall. We will return on Thursday, September 3, at 10:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall and on Zoom. There will be new leadership, a new book, but lots of the familiar as we share fun, food, fellowship and prayer with one another. Please watch the E-News for updates later in the summer. All are welcome!

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WHAT'S NEW AT WORK IN THE WORLD?

The Work in the World team is continuing to disburse funds to the organizations and programs we identified for support in this first year of our new collaborative model. The \$30,000 approved by Session is comparable to 2025 but some of the beneficiaries have changed.

We want to select specific programs in each organization that align more closely with our focus areas of Justice and Peace, Inclusion and Equity, Systemic Poverty and Earth Care where we believe we can have a more tangible impact.

Recipients in the Second Quarter:

- \$250 for **More Light Presbyterians**, committed to centering LGBTQIA people in the Presbyterian Church (USA) and beyond
- \$150 for immigrant family support
- \$525 for **LGBTQIA** support and Pride month supplies
- \$1,500 for **Coalfield Development**, Huntington, WV
- \$2,000 to complete funding of SPC **Guns to Gardens**
- \$1,500 for **Durable Solutions Congo** to support a solar power project
- \$1,000 to **EPEC** (Eastern Panhandle Empowerment Center)
- \$1,000 to **ANAR** for Palestinian children's programs
- \$3,000 to the **Presbyterian Home of the Highlands**, Wytheville, VA
- \$500 to **Annunciation House** in El Paso, TX for migrant care
- \$250 to support **Covenant Network of Presbyterians**, a national LGBTQIA support group of churches

Recipients in the First Quarter:

\$3,500 to the **Bluefields Nicaragua Partnership & VERBO Scholarships**

\$1,000 to **West Virginia Rivers and Jefferson County Foundation** for watershed support and advocacy in WV

\$500 to Jefferson County Foundation to educate about local impact of development on groundwater and land use

\$750 to **Community Markets Inc.** during the United Way campaign so that the CMI donation will be matched by the “Unity” campaign

West Virginia Rivers Coalition Thank You

“West Virginia Rivers Coalition is focused on the places where we can make the most difference. Right now, we're in court and we're working in solidarity with communities who are dealing with unsafe water, aging infrastructure, and underfunded systems. We're focused on changing the systems that prioritize private and corporate gain over our land and water. And we couldn't show up the way we need to without your support. *Thank you.*”

HAVE WE ALL BEEN FED?

It's no secret that hungry neighbors are likely to be a constant in our world for some time. If you are looking for a way to give back, we will republish all the ways you can help feed those in need. Read *The Messenger*, watch SPC's Facebook page, SPC's website, E-News and special announcements in church or online. One small sandwich can mean something big.

Create! Grow! Buy Local! Forage! Cook!

- ✓ **Food collection for JCCM** - Presbyterian Women spearhead this ongoing collection basket activity for non-perishables, tied in to our communion days. Food can be dropped off any time (in the sanctuary or outside the office).
- ✓ **Food collection for Shepherdstown Shares** - Presbyterian Women also spearhead this ongoing collection basket activity for non-perishables, tied in to our communion days, food can be dropped off any time (in the sanctuary or outside the office).
- ✓ **Food and supplies Collection for the Youth** away/at school - Part of the deacons' Young Adult Ministry to stay connected with those who have graduated high school and are in college or working; care packages that include snacks and candy are collected and sent periodically
- ✓ **Community Meal**—Held the first Sunday of each month at Zion Episcopal Church in Charles Town. Cook or buy food to share and/or be a part of the serving team! If you have more questions, email Connie Ross at rossjc316@gmail.com. If you are ready to jump in, go to:
<https://www.perfectpotluck.com/meals.php?t=WTED3207&v=cbd4748866>
- ✓ **Meals for congregants in need** – the Deacon's Meals and Rides Ministry provides meals as needed for people dealing with a loss, health issue, or other challenges
- ✓ **Community Markets, Inc.** – Is a WV non-profit purchasing food from local farmers and providing affordable, healthy food to the community. SPC supports CMI through donations, but they are always in need of drivers and helpers.

- ✓ Plant an extra row in your garden. JCCM and Shepherdstown Shares can always use food donations as well as neighbors in our congregation and beyond. Let someone on the Work in the World team know you have fresh food to share. workintheworldspc@gmail.com
- ✓ **Mid-week Manna Meal at the Community Cup in Martinsburg**— Presbyterian Women provide and serve a meal approximately every 2 months on a Wednesday evening for 25 - 50 people. Watch for announcements for the next group meal and read in this issue about our last meal served in June by Presbyterian Women and Eastern Panhandle Youth Alliance.

Highlighting the Presbyterian Children’s Home of the Highlands

In Wytheville, VA, a town of 8,000 lying 275 miles southwest of Shepherdstown, the Presbyterian Children’s Home of the Highlands (PCHH) has been a lifeline for children for over 100 years. What was founded by the Abingdon Presbytery in 1919 as an orphanage is now a residential facility for abused and neglected children ages 5 to 17. PCHH is the only Presbyterian children’s home in Virginia.

For more than 100 years PCHH has provided a home with love, sanctuary, guidance and support for thousands of children who have been removed from their homes and families. In the early days, many of the children were orphans, whose parents were victims of wars and disease. Moving into the 21st century, many of the children are victims of various forms of abuse and neglect. PCHH provides room & board, medical care, medication management, therapy, vocational training, recreational opportunities, spiritual & religious opportunities and a well-trained staff providing a caring & nurturing environment.

The primary service area for PCHH is the Commonwealth of Virginia, mostly the nineteen counties in the Appalachian Region of Virginia west of Roanoke. In this region, the combination of poverty and drug abuse wreaks havoc on families who already are living close to the margins. And the children are the most vulnerable. Through no fault of their own, children can and do fall through the foster care system - which is the first choice in Virginia for child placement – and is overburdened. Social service agencies refer children to PCHH, where they are provided something like a normal home environment, with house parents, counselors, nutritious and regular meals, education, recreational opportunities, and medical services. As the Director, Billy Rice, says, “Our core mission is to show our children that there is a different way to live their life than what they have experienced before they come to us. We do this through how our dedicated staff loves and cares for our children, which lets our children see that verbal and physical abuse does not have to be part of your life.”

Thank you to SPC for being one of 59 Covenant churches that supports PCHH in meeting its mission of “Giving Children Hope & Purpose for the Future.” To read more, go to <https://www.pchh.org/>

INCLUSION AND EQUITY

PRIDE MARCH ON JUNE 1, 2026



MEET OUR NEW MEMBERS



URSULA KIMBLE AND MATT EAKLE

Ursula was born and raised in Martinsburg. She frequently visited Shepherdstown and attended a concert at SPC and later attended a church service here. She and Matt both have gay children and love that SPC is so accepting of the gay community. Ursula has worked at Valley Health System for 20 years and is currently supervisor of the registration department at Spring Mills Urgent Care. She has three children and six grandchildren (three girls and three boys) ranging in age from 4-14. She loves books, movies, drawing, and music of all kinds. She has been a part of church choirs since she was a child! She and Matt have been engaged since September 2025.

Matt is originally from Clarksburg, WV, where he and his brothers grew up in a United Methodist church and his parents were very active in youth ministries. He had not actively attended church for quite a while when his family relocated to Martinsburg in 2020. While his son was attending Shepherd University, they began to take notice of “the church with the big Pride flag.” He decided if he ever returned to church, “it would be someplace like this.” Matt has worked in public health since 2008 in Maryland and West Virginia. He is currently a Disease Intervention Specialist with the WV Office of Epidemiology and Prevention Services serving the entire Eastern Panhandle where he provides counseling, testing and linkage to care services to folks newly diagnosed with or at risk for HIV. His son Liam (now 24) lives in Sparta, NC, with his mother and his daughter Maddie (20) attends WVU in Morgantown. He is the unofficial “Pappy Matt” to his fiancée Ursula’s six grandchildren and considers that one of the greatest joys of his life. He enjoys the outdoors and “flips over every rock and log in search of snakes, salamanders and other critters.” He also plays some guitar, binge-watches documentaries and dabbles in origami.



MEREDITH HOUCK AND MATT BRINKLEY

Meredith grew up mostly within the Blue Ridge Mountains and spent the longest period of time in Abingdon, VA; her entire family is from West Jefferson, NC. She and her husband, Matt Brinkley, have known each other since they were 15 and married in 2015. Since their marriage, they have lived in New Jersey, Brooklyn, Tanzania, and Washington, DC. They moved to Shepherdstown because they wanted a stronger sense of community, a slower pace of life, and easy access to the outdoors. And when they fell in love with a 227-year old house, they made the move here. They have two children, Alma (3) and Alfie (1). Meredith grew up in the United Methodist Church, but drifted away as a young adult. She wanted to reconnect with a community that embodied

inclusivity, peacemaking and care for others near and far. This search led her to SPC and they attended their first service here in April 2025. Meredith says, “I knew we’d found the right place.” Meredith worked at the U.S. Department of State from 2018 to 2025, most recently managing humanitarian assistance and policy in South Asia. She has been home with Alfie since then, but will start a new role in July as a Consultant at Rios Partners, a firm that helps nonprofits and government agencies solve complex organizational and operational challenges. Meredith loves to be outside—hiking, biking, tending her garden or sitting on the porch with a book and coffee, and since moving to Shepherdstown, has gotten into birding. She also bakes, does crossword puzzles and works her way through the NY Times Best Books of the 21st Century list.

Matt was born in Wichita Falls, Texas, but grew up mostly in Greensboro, NC. Moving to Shepherdstown, he and Meredith wanted their children to have a place where they could meet other kids and have childhoods where they felt integrated into their community. They were drawn to SPC because it was one of the earliest instances of experiencing that sense of community. From the moment they moved to Shepherdstown and started attending services at SPC, they knew they were in the right place. Matt has been working from home for about 10 years mostly in the Pharmaceutical Advertising field at Merck. He has recently started working with Veeva Systems, a technology company that provides software to Life Science and Pharma companies. His job is tangentially related to his background which is in Graphic Design, which he describes as still a bit of a hobby. He states, “Whether it’s drawing, playing music, or experimenting with sourdough bread, I simply love to make things.”



PAT HAMILTON

Pat Hamilton was born in Washington, D.C., and moved to the area in 1991 from Capitol Hill. She has attended SPC since 2012 with her partner, Lynn Coddington. Pat's career spanned 35+ years as president of The Hamilton Group, LLC, a marketing and information management company. She now heads the Communications team and is part of the Work in the World team that helps direct SPC's gift giving. Pat is also invested in and committed to protecting LGBTQ+ rights and our history, as well as the human rights of our immigrant neighbors.

DEALING WITH INJURED WILDLIFE ENCOUNTERS

by Carol Wood

Deacon Shepherd for Animals

Dr. Jennifer Riley, a veterinarian and hospital director with the Blue Ridge Wildlife Center in Boyce, VA, advises folks to call the center (540-837-9000) for advice about injured wild animals that one may encounter. Although the Blue Ridge Wildlife Center handles about 3,500 wildlife cases a year, Riley said the vast majority of questions or concerns involving wildlife encounters can be handled over the phone.

Calls for birds struck by cars along a roadway are common, but so are inquiries from property owners coming across animals on their land, Riley said. Her primary advice, however, is for people not to handle, move, or feed any wildlife whether dead or possibly injured. Many animals (particularly raptors, raccoons, skunks and foxes) can attack and seriously harm a person, even if the animal is injured. Many wild animals also carry diseases that can infect humans.

"If you find an injured animal, definitely don't touch it directly. We always recommend calling for advice first because every situation is different," she said. "Every animal is unique. There is no real blanket advice we can give for wildlife, aside from 'do not touch it.'" Riley recommends a cardboard box over a passive or stationary animal to protect it and keep it in place while a call is made to the wildlife center to get advice on what might be done in the situation.

Her advice for keeping a distance applies to all baby wildlife, including chicks that have fallen from a nest and may appear to be in danger. However, a mother bird will often be temporarily away and will return to rescue a healthy but wayward offspring.

For more information and resources, go to their website: blueridgewildlifectr.org.