

THE MESSENGER

November 2026
Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church
Shepherdstownpresbyterian.org



LOVE THY NEIGHBOR

Our immigrant neighbors need your compassion!

AN ECUMENICAL COLLABORATION FOR A VERY, VERY IMPORTANT CAUSE

Since the Syrian refugee crisis in 2015, SPC has been engaged through its Immigrant and Refugee Support team in assisting our immigrant community. Working with local and national groups to maximize our success, we're now joining with St. Agnes Catholic Church to raise money for Mountain State Justice, which provides free legal aid for our immigrant neighbors, but is stretched thin. With your help in raising $55,000 for a bilingual paralegal, MSJ will be better able to provide this desperately needed assistance. Join us at this fundraiser, or please donate to this important cause. MSJ lead immigration attorney Katy Lewis will explain why a paralegal is so critical to the work. Father Andy and Pastor Gusti will make opening comments and lead us in prayer.

Ecumenical Community Fundraiser
for Mountain State Justice

Mountain State Justice provides legal services for immigrants in West Virginia. Due to an overwhelming caseload, they have had to turn away far too many people. The solution is to hire a bilingual paralegal at a cost of $55,000 per year.

Shepherdstown Community Club Ballroom
Thursday, November 12th, 6pm

Reserve a seat and/or make a donation. This event is years of quiet work for those who have been made invisible in our society—this November we're doing something about it. Register/donate at: http://tinyurl.com/45mpzpca

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
Eva Moore, Nursery Manager

100 W. Washington Street
P.O. Box 268
Shepherdstown, WV 25443
Shepherdstownpresbyterian.org

Church Office Hours: 8 a.m. – 2 p.m., Monday through Friday; 304-876-6466
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

Then and Now

November Worship with SPC

Revisiting portions of the SPC Timeline,
our Worship in November invites the congregation to
Carry the Tradition Into the Future

Sunday, November 1 **For the Facing of this Hour** Hebrews 11-12:1
All Saints
Communion

… we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses …
Focus on the communion of saints surrounding us, taking notes from the Timeline Project

Tuesday, November 3 **Prayer Vigil for the Nation: Anxiety, Peace, Justice, Perseverance**
7:00 p.m. Co-sponsored with the Shepherdstown Friends (Quakers)

Gathered in nonpartisan spiritual community,
we pray through our collective anxiety in this election season,
seek comfort and reassurance through the peace that passes all understanding,
re-commit to justice and wholeness in ourselves and in the world,
and cultivate perseverance no matter the outcome.

Sunday, November 8 **Where We Go From Here** Philippians 3:12-16
Thirty-second Sunday of Ordinary Time
1:00 p.m. New Member Class

Forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on …
Focus on how we Carry the Tradition Into the Future

Sunday, November 15 **Youth Led Service** TBD
Thirty-third Sunday of Ordinary Time

Sunday, November 22 **Building a Church That Reflects God's Heart** 1 Corinthians 13
Realm of Love Sunday
Reception of New Members
9:45 a.m. Annual Meeting

The greatest of these is love …



CHILDREN AND YOUTH UPDATE

Christa Mastrangelo Joyce
Director of Children and Youth Formation

Perhaps the most important news from my Christian Education desk was the adult retreat I led this past month on October 3, at Priest Field Retreat Center. What a gift to offer the educational design I've spent months preparing, entitled, *Discovering the Sacred Rhythm of the Church: Making Room for Advent.* The course was offered in completion of my Christian Educator certification; however, what it's formed in me has gone much deeper than one day-long retreat.

The six-hour retreat was designed to help participants slow down and enter more deeply into the sacred seasons of the Church, to recognize our place in these seasons, and to experience how they can form our identity and inform our living. The season we focused on most specifically was that of Advent.

So often in the lead-up to Christmas, we experience the tension of longing to slow down, while the world and culture around us suggests that we should take on more, consume and spend more as we rush toward Christmas Day. The educational event invited participants to intentionally embody a slower pace and prepare to experience the deeper gifts of the Advent season.

Through Scripture, poetry, conversation, and contemplative prompts, we considered the four Advent themes of hope, peace, joy, and love. Advent is the beginning of a new year in the life of the Church, the season during which we prepare for the birth of Christ among us. It is a time in which we can consider the birth of hope, peace, joy, and love into our own season of life.

The preparation for this event has led me to experience sacred time as part of God's story that we can live into. This has informed the youth curriculum for the coming year. The youth and I are considering the wisdom of Ecclesiastes 3:1-15 as we discern the "time" in which we're living, recognize God's work in time, and discern our own participation in each of these "times" and "seasons."

The youth will gain an understanding of a yearly liturgical cycle, a Sunday liturgical rhythm, and the ways that living into "time" in this way can inform our daily rhythms. In this, the intention is for them to be formed as people who can read the world through Scripture, notice God's life-giving work, recognize their own place in it, and participate. And so, adults and youth will discover the sacred seasons of the church as a way we can live in God's time, rather than the push of consumer culture time, might inform our church identity.

RETREAT REFLECTIONS

by Missy Wheeler

For this semester's Sunday Seminars series, we have been truly blessed to have Christa Mastrangelo Joyce not only provide the inspiration for our theme of "Living Into the Seasons: A Time for Hope, Peace, and Joy," but also join us as we continue to find and discuss connections to her retreat on October 3, entitled "Discovering the Sacred Rhythm of the Church: A Time for Advent."

During the Saturday afternoon gathering of 25 from the SPC community, Christa reminded some of us (and educated others of us!) that the four weeks leading up to Christmas Day do indeed have their individual focus on Hope (beginning November 29), Peace (beginning December 6), Joy (beginning December 13), and Love (beginning December 20), and that one idea respectively unfolds into the other. Everything begins with Hope, she said, as she also shared journaling prompts with which we could contemplate each idea. As for Hope, one question offered was "What will I watch for?" For Peace, "What will I make room for?" For Joy, "What will I notice?" And for Love, "What will I practice?"

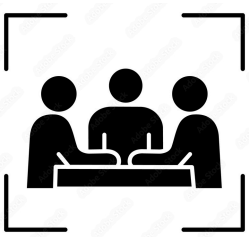
Sunday Seminars continue to unpack these ideas as weekly facilitators take on one word at a time and invite participants to contribute with spontaneous reflections or responses to relevant prompts. It is important to note that having attended the retreat has NOT been a requirement for attending our Sunday morning seminar time together, and so if you haven't joined us yet, you can find us in the Fellowship Hall or via Zoom on Sundays at 9:30 a.m. Everyone is welcome! For more information, please contact Anne Teresa at ateresa@comcast.net. The zoom link for Sundays is https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3048766466?pwd=cnhPY3kyeG9pbUdGSmZQVVlEM2Jodz09







(Photos by Leslie Williams)



OCTOBER SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

Suellen Myers, Clerk of Session

The Stated Meeting of Session was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on October 8 and opened with prayer and a short meditation led by Pastor Gusti. A quorum was declared.

Dave Smith, Chair of the Finance Committee, gave an in-depth report on the state of SPC's finances: **A Financial Crossroads.** Following his report, the meeting was recessed to allow for an Executive Session meeting. The stated meeting resumed at 8:30 p.m.

A letter from Joyce and Larry Neumark concerning online viewing of services was referred to the Worship Team for review and comment.

Pastor Gusti requested that the November date of Session be changed from the 12th to the 19th. The original date conflicts with the fundraiser for Mountain State Justice. **Approved.**

Deacons provided at home communion for Sidney Lewis**.** The Deacons are also planning and organizing **A Gathering of Remembrance** for John Mason. It will be held at 2:00 p.m. on November 14.

Pastor Gusti reported that the next session of The Bible for Progressives will be held Tuesday, October 20, at 7:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall and on Zoom.

Session agreed for a bulletin insert giving information about the March to the Polls on October 24.

Work in the World emphasized the Oxfam Banquet to be held on October 25 at the Community Club.

Both Adult Education and Worship provided written reports.

Clerk – Communion was served October 4 and will be served November 8 as previously approved. The old set of handbells have been sold and a lovely used 3-octave set purchased. Lynn Dampman is checking with the Presbytery office to find a date for us to host their mobile staff meeting. The minutes of the September stated meeting were approved as amended. By email vote Session **approved** the request form Personnel to hire Danielle (Elley) Brooks as Nursery Assistant. The next stated Session meeting will be November 19, 2026.

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

CARRYING SPC's TRADITION INTO THE FUTURE

As SPC enters the stewardship campaign for 2027 pledges, we are grateful for the congregation's continued support of our shared ministries. Over the past year, that support has enabled a restorative sabbatical, growth in youth education, vibrant worship, Work in the World outreach, community care initiatives, Guns to Gardens peace work, and the ongoing maintenance of our buildings and grounds.

Based on September's financial reports, general giving continues to lag behind budgeted levels, leaving revenues below projections as SPC prepares for the upcoming stewardship campaign. At this point in the year, approximately 75% of the annual revenue and expense budgets provide a simple pacing benchmark. Expenses remain below that benchmark, but lower spending does not eliminate the gap between operating income and operating expenses.

SPC's unrestricted funds are now approaching the six-month operating reserve level established by Session. These funds are not restricted to a designated purpose; the reserve level represents six months of operating expenses. In recent years, SPC has supported rising operating costs through pledged and general giving, major gifts, and withdrawals from unrestricted funds. The declining cushion underscores the importance of a strong stewardship response this year.

As you consider your 2027 pledge, remember that annual pledges provide the foundation for faithful budgeting and help Session plan SPC's ministries and operations for the year ahead. Pledge materials have been mailed to households and will also be available online and at the church.

The next Finance Committee meeting will be November 10, 2026.

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 age or use the QR code. You may donate through PayPal, debit or credit card or Venmo.

Thank you for supporting SPC's ministry through your regular giving, pledges, and major gifts. Every gift helps sustain worship, care, outreach, and the shared life of our congregation. Together we carry SPC's tradition into the future.

The figures below show operating expenses exceeding operating income by $24,212 for the reporting period. The annual operating budget also lists expenses $31,759 above income. Both income and expenses round to 71% of their respective annual budgets, but those matching percentages do not mean that income covers expenses.

BUDGET AT A GLANCE THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2026

Income and Expenses	2026 Budget (12 Months)	Actuals* through September 30	Actuals as % of the 12-Month Budget
Operating Income	$366,082	$259.419	71%
Operating Expenses	$397,841	$283,631	71%

** Actuals include major gifts received during the reporting period. The operating income total therefore reflects both regular giving and major gifts; it is not a measure of regular giving alone.*

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STEWARDSHIP AT SPC
WHY YOUR GIFTS ARE SO IMPORTANT
What Would Our Church Be Without Them?

By Keri Mahoney, Chair, Personnel Committee

I'd like you to imagine something with me for just a moment. Imagine coming to church on Sunday morning, and there is no one to lead the singing. No one has chosen the music, rehearsed with our choir and combined their voices to make a beautiful sound on a Sunday morning. Imagine that no one sits down to play the music. The notes that have accompanied our celebrations, our prayers, our Christmases and Easters, our weddings and funerals are suddenly silent.

Imagine arriving and there is no bulletin. No one tending to the countless details that keep us connected or making sure the needs of this church do not get lost in the busyness of everyday life.

Imagine our children and young people without that special person who knows their names, welcomes them, encourages them, and helps them discover that this is their church. The person who plans the activities and experiences that bring our young people together, or nurture their faith or reminding them that they are loved and valued is not there for them.

Imagine needing a pastor and finding no one. No one to prepare a sermon and stand before us on Sunday morning with words of faith, challenge, wisdom, and hope or even more importantly, no one to stand beside us in those moments when Sunday morning feels very far away. No one to pray with us when we are frightened, celebratory, grieving, or to help us say goodbye or remind us, in the most difficult moments of our lives, that we are not alone.

And imagine all the wonderful things that happen inside these walls we want to share. No one to broadcast our worship and message to the homebound, our neighbors, and people who may be searching for a church community of their own.

It is easy to see the finished product: the voices, the hymns, First Pew, the sermon and sharing all of that with others. What we don't always see are the hours of preparation, the phone calls, the practices, the planning, the creativity, the compassion, and the commitment behind them.

Ministry does not simply happen. People make ministry happen. When we support the personnel of our church, we are not simply funding positions. We are investing in ministry.

We are investing in beautiful music that helps us worship. We are investing in pastoral care that will be there when one of us faces hardship, in worship that strengthens our faith and in communication that keeps us connected.

We are investing in reaching beyond our doors so that the message we treasure here does not remain here. We are investing in our children. *And, ultimately, we are investing in one another.*

So today, I ask you not merely to think about salaries or budgets or numbers on a page. Instead, think about people. Think about gifts. Think about ministry. Think about what this church would sound like without them. Think about what it would feel like without them.

And then think about who we can be because they are here.

Let us show, through our generosity and our commitment, that we value the people who give so much of themselves to the life and ministry of our church. Because a church is more than a building. It is more than a Sunday service. It is a community of people using the gifts God has given them in service to one another.

May we never take those gifts, or the people who share them with us, for granted.

And may our support say clearly and gratefully: We see you. We value you. And your ministry matters.

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SAVE THE DATES!

On November 1, Community Meal. Please sign up today.

November 3, Prayer Vigil for the Nation: Anxiety, Peace, Justice and Perseverance. 7:00 p.m. at SPC.

On November 12, Ecumenical Fundraiser for Mountain State Justice, at 6 p.m., Community Club



DEACON TEAM UPDATE

Donna Dettling, Deacon Moderator

Your deacon team has been busy supporting the congregation in a variety of ways!

Meals and Rides Ministry Changes – We celebrate the years of assistance that Jeananne Stine has provided to the congregation as coordinator of this vital ministry that provides meals and rides to those in the midst of a difficult situation. When there was a need, we knew to contact Jeananne and she did the work of finding volunteers to jump in with food or rides. As of October 1, she stepped down from that role and two new coordinators stepped up!

Connie Ross is now the person to contact if meals are needed. She can be reached at rossjc316@gmail.com or (304) 860-5456 and will set up a meals request using our Perfect Potluck platform for signups. **Carol Arnold is now the person to contact if rides are needed.** She can be reached at mnsach56@yahoo.com or (404) 433-4179. Please join the deacons in thanking Jeananne for her years of tireless support, and welcome Connie and Carol into their new roles. And, if making a meal or providing a ride is something you could do for your church community, please reach out to Connie or Carol and let them know to add you as a volunteer. We would welcome your assistance!

With the help of your contributions, **the Young Adult Ministry sent care packages in October** to thirty young adults connected to our congregation. Imagine how pleased they must have been to receive this box of treats and know they are remembered by their church, even when they are not worshiping with us regularly as they attend college or work in their chosen field.

Pastor Gusti's **Funeral Planning Workshop is on Sunday, November 1 from 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.** in the Fellowship Hall and on Zoom. We hope you will join us to explore how your life might be celebrated through scripture, song, poetry and personal reflections. We will be invited into the spiritual practice at the heart of the funeral/memorial service, and have time for personal sharing, group reflection, and developing a draft of our service. Please bring a bag lunch and meet in the Fellowship Hall at 12:30 p.m. if you'd like to eat together before the workshop.

Please be with us for a **Prayer Vigil for the Nation on Election Day, Tuesday, November 3, at 7:00 p.m.** in the sanctuary. Gathered in a nonpartisan spiritual community, we will pray through our collective anxiety in this election season as we seek comfort and reassurance through the peace that passes all understanding, and we will re-commit to justice and wholeness in ourselves and in the world and cultivate perseverance no matter the outcome. Co-sponsored by The Shepherdstown Friends (Quaker Community) and Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church.

The deacons are pleased to be part of these events and activities, and grateful to support SPC with direct contact with our flock members and help with our Share the Care ministries.

PrayerNet - Please send your prayer requests to **prayernet@shepherdstownpresbyterian.org**. You may also call the church office during office hours (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-2 p.m.) at (**304) 876-6466**. 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, Mica Martin, Jolene Jarrell, and Sarah Wagner.), rather than sending it to the whole PrayerNet group of over 90 people.

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

Julie Slonaker, Co-Moderator

We hope you have marked Thursday, November 5, 10 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall and on Zoom for our next Presbyterian Women meeting. We will discuss ***The Second Power: "Craving"*** from the book *Mary Magdalene Revealed* written by Meggan Watterson. We welcome you to join us for an interesting conversation on the topic of historical views and spiritual leadership of Mary Magdalene, whether you have read the chapter or not. We will also seek your input on plans for upcoming meetings. The zoom link is: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3048766466?pwd=cnhPY3kyeG9pbUdGSmZQVVlEM2Jodz09



WORK IN THE WORLD CLOSING OUT 2026

What We've Given in 2026 and Where We're Headed

The Work in the World Team directs funding to organizations and programs 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. Specific programs identified in each organization 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. We've also built flexibility into our funding model so that, where needed, we may shift funds to meet emergency needs.

Recipients:

$1,000 to **ANAR** for Palestinian children's programs **(Healing to Hope)**
$500 to **Annunciation House** in El Paso, TX for migrant care
$3,500 to the **Bluefields Nicaragua Partnership** for agricultural development & **VERBO Scholarships** for college student support

$1,500 for **Coalfield Development**, Huntington, WV for various program support
$1,500 for **Community Markets, Inc**. to address systemic poverty
$500 for **Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)** for volunteer recruitment

$1,500 for **Durable Solutions Congo** to support a solar power project
$1,000 to **EPEC** (Eastern Panhandle Empowerment Center)
$2,000 for **Guns to Gardens,** a national gun voluntary surrender program

$1,600 for **Immigrant Family Support** locally in the Eastern Panhandle
$3,000 for **Jefferson County Community Ministries** to support the unhoused
$1,000 to **Jefferson County Foundation to** educate about the impact of local development on groundwater and land use

$1,036 for **LGBTQIA** advocacy and support including **EPYA; Covenant Network**, a national LGBTQIA support group of churches; **More Light Presbyterians,** supporting LGBTQIA people in the PCUSA

$1,000 for **Martinsburg Rescue Mission** for program support
$3,000 to the **Presbyterian Home of the Highlands**, Wytheville, VA, a foster home for
$1,000 to **West Virginia Rivers** for watershed education and advocacy in WV

Total Support (to date): $24,636 of $30,000 budgeted

Create! Grow! Buy Local! Forage! Cook!

Please Contribute--Our Neighbors Need Your Help Every Month

- ★ **Food collection for JCCM** - Presbyterian Women spearhead this ongoing collection basket activity for non-perishables, tied in to our communion days, although food can be dropped off any time (in the sanctuary or outside the office).
- ★ **Food collection for Shepherdstown Shares/Ecumenical Food Pantry** - Presbyterian Women also spearhead this ongoing collection basket activity for non-perishables, tied in to our communion days, although 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 from 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: www.perfectpotluck.com/meals.php?t=WTED3207&v=cbd4748866
- ★ **Community Cup meals** - Presbyterian Women provide and serve a meal approximately every two months on a Wednesday evening for 25 - 50 people; anyone can help serve or provide food for the meal.
- ★ **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
- ★ **Become a food driver** for those who fear leaving home for myriad reasons. This population is growing.

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Also, visit SPC's website to get involved

https://shepherdstownpresbyterian.org/volunteer/



PURCHASE OF HANDBELLS

Since the inception of the handbell choir in 2022, the group had been playing with handbells made in the 1950s and donated to SPC by Rev. Jim MacDonell. With the hope of someday replacing them for newer bells, we began researching the possibility of selling the older bells. After posting online this summer, we received several bids and were able to finalize the sale of the bells to a ringer in Rockville, MD. In addition, with the money received from the sale, we were able to purchase a newer set of handbells at no cost to SPC. Our debut of the new bells will be Sunday, November 1, at the 11 a.m. worship service. We will be playing "Deep River." Come and hear them and perhaps you will want to be a part of the group. No experience is necessary; we can teach you how to ring!



SPC CHOIR

by Rie Wilson



Some people have been asking, “Who is directing the choir these days?” Fortunately, we have two people: Sheila Melendez and Sam Jannotta, our church accompanist. While Sheila is still the *official* choir director, she and Sam are now sharing the responsibility. Sheila is very professional and creative, and a lot of fun! And, as everyone will attest, Sam is a terrific accompanist. Do *you* enjoy singing? I have been singing in our choir for 37 joyful years! We rehearse on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. in the choir room on the second floor and we sing at the 11 a.m. Sunday worship service. We would love to have you join us.

REFLECTIONS ON MIDWEEK MANNA

By Season Jones

What is a meal? It is defined simply as “an act or the time of eating a portion of food to satisfy appetite.” On Wednesday, October 21, the meal happened at The Community Cup with the magic of SPC/EPYA. This meal is called Midweek Manna and occurs every Wednesday, with the food and servers provided by different groups. When SPC’s Presbyterian Women and the Eastern Panhandle Youth Alliance (EPYA) serve, it is organized by Susan Lovell.

Last night, after serving the first round, I sat across from a woman I will call Barb. We made small talk and realized we have a connection regarding our avoidance of certain textures of food. She then turned to another attendee and said, “The vibe is way better this week.” The woman agreed, as did the elderly gentleman sitting next to me. I asked what she meant. Barb told me that she could tell we cared. She then told me she almost didn’t come because someone serving a prior week had made them feel like they were less than the servers. She said, “I mean, you guys have name tags, like you want to know our names and get to know us. And you are sitting here talking to me. Some of us are just going through a hard time.” I replied, “You never know what someone else is going through.” The man next to me agreed and added, “Your life can change in an instant with a heart attack or stroke.”

The conversation then turned to the amazing cornbread salad that Susan had made. I believe the best definition of a meal is sharing food while really seeing the people with you. We all want to be seen, and sometimes the easiest way is with the food we serve and share. Help the SPC “love” vibe continue to be spread in our community. Watch the E-news for sign-ups for both events and bring your kids/youth. My 18-year-old looks forward to serving and even brought her boyfriend with her!



(Photo by Susan Lovell)



CALLING ALL SPC CHRISTMAS ANGELS

By Lynn Coddington
SPC Immigrant and Refugee Support

Watch for your invitation from Immigrant and Refugee Support to join in this year's 5th annual Holiday gift-giving event.

Children attending Jefferson County Schools from families who may be facing significant immigration-related financial hurdles will be the happiest youngsters again this year if we're successful! The families are identified through the schools and then make their wishes known to us –then we do our best with your help to fulfill their dreams!

More information will follow soon in SPC's E-news and bulletin inserts – we make gift giving easy. Don't miss out on this chance to make a youngster smile! If you would like to volunteer to wrap gifts, contact Siri McDonald at sirimcdonaldwv@outlook.com or text her at 703-554-3914.

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THE ADMIN'S CORNER



Jolene Jarrell
Christopher Meadows
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