

Second Life

The Newsletter of Second Presbyterian Church

November 2024



How Will You Give Back to God?

Pledges and potluck are highlights of Stewardship Sunday

Here at Second, we are a “small but mighty” church family.

We’re mighty in part because of the joy, faith, kindness, caring, talents, time, and financial resources that we share to support our ministry. On Sunday, November 17, at the start of giving season, we’ll join together for worship and dedication of our stewardship pledges for 2025.

Be in prayer before that day about your commitment for this coming year. Soon you’ll receive in the mail a letter and pledge card. Please consider the ways in which you have been blessed and in which you

are thankful. Your contributions of money, time, and participation are important to Second Presbyterian Church and to the message we share.

Immediately after worship, we’ll gather for a potluck lunch, a time to enjoy fellowship, to remind ourselves of how we’ve been blessed, and to try the interesting, unusual, and tasty dishes our members are known for.

When we gather together in any church family, we bring an interesting amalgam of gifts. Our potlucks are equally so! The main dishes of fried chicken and barbecue will be provided; please bring a side dish, salad, or dessert.

Sometimes it takes us years to get perspective on life, on God’s call to us, and on our purpose. Hopefully, we grow to increasingly see how our blessings make sense in terms of our service to others and to the church, so that the gospel will touch more and more lives, all to the glory of God.

Please join us Sunday, November 17, for a time of stewardship and giving thanks.



Daylight Saving Time Ends Sunday, November 3, at 2 a.m.

Set your clock back, sleep in an hour extra, and join us for worship . . . still at 11 a.m.! Then stay for our Time Travel Potluck (see page 5).

From the Senior Pastor

A New Electronic Entrance to SPC

It takes great courage as a newcomer to walk into a church.

You don't know if you'll recognize anyone. You don't know what the music is like. If you're an introvert, you may dread greeting people or being asked to stand up and identify yourself. You don't want to be ignored, but you also don't want people to smother you with caring, particularly if you don't know if you can trust them. You may wonder if you're wearing the right type of clothes or if you're allowed to take communion. Or if you're not used to religious life, everything might feel deeply unusual. Maybe the last time you were asked to sing was in a fifth-grade music class.

When people visit, they come for a reason, a deliberate choice. Sometimes they can't articulate the reasons, because they don't know them themselves. But sometimes they're looking for meaning beyond this world. Or for community. Or for a sense that we really should be different than the world around us. Maybe they need to see decency, kindness, or joy, and to feel that that is not abnormal.



But it still is hard to make that first step into a new church or building. "Christians" haven't universally made themselves out to be attractive. So even though SPC has a very good location, people may be reluctant to just drop in.

What many are not reluctant to do, however, is visit our website. An electronic entrance to the church.

For several years, we've had challenges with our website. The material on it was dated. The organization of it was confusing. At times, it felt like it had been created via committee, or like a house that had numerous additions and all sorts of rewiring that was pulled together with duct tape. The greatest challenge was that the way it was set up made it very difficult for us to post new material. We knew that had to change.

As we thought about creating a new website, the session saw it as a time to also think about communication in general and, to go even further, to think about why we even have a website and what we want to communicate about our vision and our church family.

A group of us, including Philip Byrd, Mark Erickson, Peggy Troyer, and me met with Christen Kinard of Digital Congregations over many months. As an outsider who has studied us, Christen helped us think about how to express ourselves more clearly and meaningfully. Then during the last five months or so, much of the structure, implementation, and writing of the website continued to be thought through by Christen, Jo Kolb, and me.

We launched the new site Monday, October 28. Just go to spcnorfolk.org to check it out. All churches are not the same, they aren't supposed to be the same, and we are unique. Visitors to "our new electronic front door" can more clearly see who we are and be able to imagine their life at SPC. At the same time, the website will serve "insiders" well. Often I have thoughts, readings, or resources I would like to share, and now we have a clear mechanism to do through our blog, called "Life & Faith at SPC." In the months ahead, there will be emails from us that help you navigate the site.

This all has to do with our stewardship as a congregation. How do we communicate who we are and share possibilities for others to grow in their faith?

This month we hope you'll share your time (in our LAUNCH ministry, in decorating the church, or in deepening your faith through various Bible studies), your finances (through our stewardship campaign, reminding us that ministry needs to be supported by funds, electricity, and heating), and even your blood (if you can at our November 10 blood drive).

We also encourage you to share your faith, to point people to our website, or to spend time there yourself. We ask you to welcome and greet those who have the courage—and who have taken that hard first step—to come to church. And, particularly during a time when there is tension in so many people's lives, let them see how SPC could be a safe, joy-filled, and meaningful second home for them.

With deep gratitude,
Pastor Craig

Faith Matters

Sermon Series

Treasure What Matters Most: How Jesus' Parables Order Our Lives

How do we know what we should value most in life? Jesus could have given us a list. Instead, he shares stories that get us involved, wondering, and questioning. Sometimes the most important values in life need to be shown, not told, and that is what Jesus does in these four parables, each from the Gospel of Luke.



- Nov. 3 **Treasuring the Right Things, Despite the Cost** (Luke 10:25-37, The Good Samaritan)
- Nov. 10 **Treasuring What God Has Gifted You** (Luke 12:13-21, The Rich Fool)
- Nov. 17 **Treasuring What God Treasures** (Luke 14:15-24, The Great Banquet)
- Nov. 24 **Treasuring Relationships** (Luke 15:11-32, The Prodigal Son)

Adult Sunday School The Old Testament World

Sundays, 10-10:40 a.m.
SPC fellowship hall

Why does the Old Testament matter to us today? Join Pastor Craig for a study of key passages in the Old Testament and an introduction to the literature that the Israelites used to communicate their faith.

- Nov. 3 *Joseph's Unusual Coat and a Prostitute by the Side of the Road* (Genesis 37-50)
- Nov. 10 *Moses: Drawn Out of Egypt* (Exodus 1-18)
- Nov. 17 *After the Exodus: Sinai and the Ten Commandments* (Exodus 20-24 and Deut. 5)
- Nov. 24 *Leviticus and the Law* (Leviticus 1-2, 10-11, 18-19)

Lunch and Learn A is for Alabaster: 52 Reflections on the Stories of Scripture

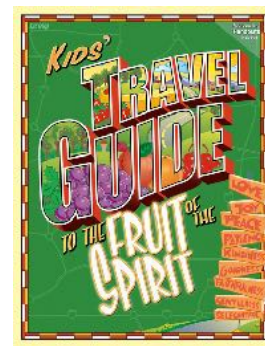
Wednesdays, noon to 12:55 p.m.
SPC fellowship hall
(please bring a sack lunch)

Take an hour out of your week, bring a bag lunch, and join us at noon Wednesdays in the fellowship hall for a meal, conversation, and Bible study, as we focus on the New Testament through the lens of Anna Carter Florence's book, "A is for Alabaster: 52 Reflections on the Stories of Scripture." No required reading ahead of time; just meaningful and fun conversation!

Children's Sunday School SPY KIDS: Second Presbyterian Youth and Kids Investigating Divine Stories

For 5-14 year olds,
10-10:40 a.m., upstairs in
youth room

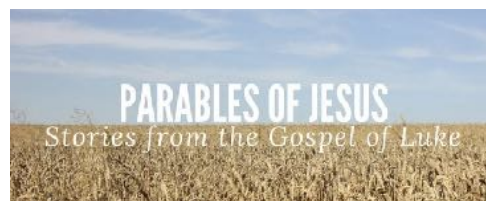
SPY KIDS stands for "Second Presbyterian Youth and Kids Investigating Divine Stories." Just as spies and detectives look carefully to find clues that lead to a deeper understanding, so we come together each week to find hints, clues, even God's fingerprints in this world. Join Ms. Jo and friends for interactive stories and activities, snacks, and games, as we see how the fruit of the spirit can surprise us and shape us in new ways. For more information, contact Ms. Jo at the church office.



Adult Bible Study Four Thursdays on the Parables of Luke: A Home Study at the Ericksons'

Thursdays, Nov. 7, 14, 21, and Dec. 5; 7 p.m.

Gather with us for an informal discussion—on couches and comfortable chairs—of four parables found only in Luke. We will study these four unusual parables from the sermon series in more depth, seeing their continued relevance to us.



From the Director of Music

The Stewardship of Choir

There are so many beautiful ways that our congregation members act as stewards of the church, sacrificing time, effort, and finances so that important work can continue and grow. Some of that important work can be easily seen: support of our missionaries and mission partners, care for the physical church and its grounds, support of programs whose physical requirements are readily understandable.

While it may not spring to mind in quite these ways, the act of singing in choir is without question an act of stewardship.

People often think of those who sing in choir simply as people who love music or those who have particular talents. While those things might be true, taken alone they fail to recognize the more significant reality of the way singers act as stewards in the life of the church.



Being “talented” is not the central value in play when it comes to singing in choir. “Talent,” however it might be defined, comes in varying forms and levels, and should be considered alongside the capacity people have to *learn* singing. There is a profound sense of **humility and servanthood** that is present when a person is willing to open their mouths to sing and actively *submit themselves to the pursuit of becoming better*. I am always moved from rehearsal to rehearsal and from year to year as I witness singers modeling this beautiful human and spiritual quality: to submit to the challenge of *becoming better*. I feel I am watching in real time the living out of the parable of the talents as gifts blossom and grow.

This is related to the element of **sacrifice** that is part of being good stewards. If one only thinks of choir singing as “enjoying music,” one really misses important realities: hours given up for intense, focused practice, willingness to alter one’s own musical ideas to create unified beauty with the community, and a servant spirit that turns a director’s instruction (or criticism!) into something more perfect and meaningful.

Stewardship implies the presence of something that is being **preserved, protected, and nurtured**. What does the choir work to nurture and protect? In the joining together in breath and melody and harmony, it nurtures and demonstrates our sense of *fellowship* and the beauty of the whole *community*. In its exploration of meaningful texts and their musical expressions, it nurtures and demonstrates the beauty of *discipleship*. In its weekly focus on the leadership of worship, it nurtures and protects the importance of reflecting God’s vast and varied beauty and *our roles as those who come before God in adoration, confession, and prayer*.

Though I don’t have sufficient words to fully express this aspect of choral singing, I am deeply grateful for the ways I have witnessed and continue to witness the stewardship of singers here at SPC.

If you are reading this and have not previously participated in our choir, I hope you will consider adding singing to your acts of stewardship here at Second.

Peace,
Bob



Choir Seeks Additional Singers

Our Choir is awesome! And while we’ve enjoyed some growth in the past couple of years, we are also facing the impacts of changing work schedules and life circumstances of our members.

The bigger-picture vision of the Choir includes ongoing musical growth to enable increasingly rich and meaningful worship experiences. With that in mind, **we hope to add singers in all sections, with immediate needs in our bass and tenor sections.**

If you or someone you know would like to consider joining this vibrant ministry, contact Music Director Robert Shoup.

Ways to Serve



Time Travel Tastebuds: A Retro Potluck

Sunday, November 3, after worship

Join us as we set the clocks back and take our taste buds on a delicious journey through the decades. Bring a dish inspired by your favorite era—from 1950s Jell-O molds and deviled eggs to 1970s fondue, 1980s casseroles, or 1990s snack foods. Let's celebrate the flavors of the past while enjoying great food and company!

Election Day Hospitality: Welcome Our Neighbors

Tuesday, November 5, all day

Haven't yet signed up for a time slot Tuesday, November 5, to staff the SPC hospitality table? You could still drop by the playground entrance of our building to help greet our neighbors who are coming to vote. We'll offer them a snack and an information card on our Advent and Christmas activities, as well as a reassuring, friendly face in these stressful times. The polls are open until 7 p.m.; evening is usually the busiest time. Hope to see you there.



St. Columba Needs Thanksgiving Food Items by Nov. 10

Please consider donating the following items for St. Columba's Thanksgiving food baskets: stuffing, canned corn, green beans, sweet potatoes, other vegetables mashed potato mix, Jiffy corn muffin mix, cranberry sauce, canned fruit, applesauce, dessert mixes. Place items in the orange bin in the hall by November 10. This year instead of turkeys, \$25 gift cards to Walmart and Food Lion are requested so families can purchase a turkey. Cards may be left with Jo Kolb in the church office.

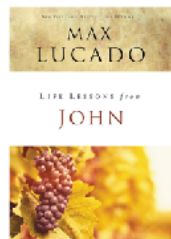
For Christmas, St. Columba is asking for \$25 gift cards to Target or Walmart so that families can choose the gifts and other items they need for celebrating Christmas. Cards can be left in the office or given to Alice Allen-Grimes. The last day to bring in gift cards for Christmas is Monday, December 9.

Giving Thanks: Faithful Neighbors Blood Drive

Sunday, November 10, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

After worship—or before Sunday School—Sunday, November 10, please take part with fellow congregants in the Red Cross blood drive in the fellowship hall. This is a joint blood drive with our neighboring churches, and your participation is important for many reasons.

It is coincidental that this drive is during the month of Thanksgiving and during a month when we focus on stewardship of our lives. But it's a good reminder that as Jesus gave his life for others, we can offer a gift that really is life-giving.



Triple S Circle Studies "Life Lessons from John"

Tuesday November 12, 10:30 a.m., SPC fellowship hall

This month Marie Finch will lead the discussion of Chapter 3 of Max Lucado's "Life Lessons from John: the Woman at the Well." Our outreach is ForKids, and we're collecting paper products, such as paper towels, tissues, napkins, and note pads, for their use. Come for fellowship and Bible study, and learn more about our mission partner, ForKids. Please contact Peggy Troyer or Nell Armstrong with questions.

Fellowship Opportunities



The American Canvas: Art, Texts, and Our Civic Soul

Saturday, November 23, 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.;

REPEATED Sunday, November 24, 2 to 3 p.m.

Chrysler Museum of Art (Meet in Chrysler lobby), Norfolk

Advance registration required. Register with kjackson@vwu.edu (757.455.3129)

What does it mean to be a citizen? What does it mean to be an American? Is there a distinct American identity or a civic soul? Following the election, this unique tour examines how the art of the Chrysler Museum gives us a lens to see our national diversity and values.

We focus on distinctive works of art, including “The Apotheosis of Washington,” “The Declaration of Independence,” “Angel on the Battlefield,” “Palimpsest: Hampton Roads,” and “Motives.” These works are coupled with brief classic American texts, including Emma Lazarus’ “The New Colossus,” and selections from works that include Elizabeth Cady

Stanton’s “The Slave’s Appeal” and Abraham Lincoln’s second inaugural address. Join us for a time that looks beyond politics and into our civic soul.

Advent Craft Workshop

Saturday, November 23, 2 to 4 p.m.

SPC fellowship hall

Join the festive fun as we paint and etch glass ornaments, fill a snack jar with treats, work on a simple manger scene to take home, color Christmas postcards, make origami stars, and much more!



Savor a Night Out with Your Second Family

Monday November 25, 6 p.m.

Men at District Taco; Women at Chicken Salad Chick

Gather with your Second family for dinner and lively conversation. Men will meet at District Taco, 2700 Hampton Blvd.; women will meet at Chicken Salad Chick, 1200 W 26th Street. These Norfolk restaurants are across from each other on Hampton Boulevard, so couples can carpool if desired. Men can RSVP to Jonathan Doyle, women to Lynn Ruehlmann. Come for a fun evening.

In December, there will be no men’s or women’s fellowship dinners. Instead, mark your calendars for two SPC holiday activities: Garden of Lights walk-through at 7 p.m. Wednesday, December 11, at Norfolk Botanical Garden; and dinner at the church, followed by caroling Wednesday, December 18.

We Need Your Help: The Greening of the Church

Saturday, November 30, 9 a.m.

Decorating the church before the first Sunday of Advent has become a Second tradition. We need your help in transforming not only the sanctuary but the whole building.

This year we’ll gather Saturday, Nov. 30, at 9 a.m. to dig into boxes of decorations. This is a great time for kids, seniors, and everyone in between.

Please put this on your calendar and join us for an opportunity to let loose your creative energies.



Committee Updates

Missions and Outreach Update

What Is the Kingdom of Heaven Like?

The Kingdom of Heaven is like . . . like what? How do we explain what Heaven is like to those who ask us? Maybe you've been asked that question before by friends, classmates, coworkers, children, or family members as you talk with them about the wonderful news that through Jesus our sins have been forgiven.

Throughout his teaching, as recorded in the Gospels, Jesus would often say, "The Kingdom of Heaven is like. . ." and then use story based on a common or familiar experience to explain a deep spiritual truth, giving us a glimpse into God's character or love for us. We call these stories "parables." During November, Pastor Craig will lead us through four parables from the Gospel of Luke to help us be better prepared to answer that question, "What is heaven like?"

One parable in Luke is the Parable of the Lost Sheep. Jesus uses it to reveal the heart of our God as a shepherd who seeks out the one lost sheep, leaving the 99 behind (Luke 15:1-7). In the Kingdom of Heaven, we are called by Jesus to seek out the lost, those who are spiritually wandering, those who need rescuing. This is the heart of missions. Each individual matters deeply to God, and our mission is to demonstrate that same love and care to those around us.

Our mission field is not just distant lands; it begins in our neighborhoods, workplaces, and communities. We are surrounded by people who feel lost, isolated, or disconnected. In sharing our faith, we embody the grace and compassion that Christ exemplified. Let us be intentional in our relationships, looking for opportunities to connect with others and share the transformative message of hope and redemption. Remember, each conversation, each act of kindness can be a step toward leading someone back to the fold.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like hospitality, love, and shelter amid a storm so God's work can continue.

What is the Kingdom of Heaven like? I was reminded by news from our missionaries this month that we, too, have "modern day parables" to help us understand:

Jake and Anna, who work in the Middle East, used funds we sent specifically to support a teaching and learning center they've set up. When fellow workers in Lebanon needed to leave as the conflict erupted in October, Jake and Anna were able to offer up this center for use and then worked to find homes in their city for workers and their families to shelter in. The Kingdom of Heaven is like hospitality, love, and shelter amid a storm so God's work can continue.

We also sent funds this summer to support Jarred Jung's participation in the Fourth Lausanne Congress, where 10,000 Christian leaders from across the world met as brothers and sisters in Christ to seek God's wisdom on meeting the needs of the global church and reaching those who haven't heard the gospel. The Kingdom of Heaven is like 10,000 people from different continents and languages lifting their voices in prayer and praise.

Through the generous giving of church members, Jasmin Seidl will be able to attend a special training event in January for Christian leaders of leaders. This Soul Care Retreat will help her learn techniques to better support missionaries who are experiencing emotional pressures due to their work in difficult places. The Kingdom of Heaven is like a warm and healing embrace to someone who is deeply hurting.

—Mark Erickson, Coordinator, Missions and Outreach Committee

Administration Update

Generous Gift Funds New Irrigation System

Thanks to a generous donation by Nell Armstrong and Mary Buckelew in memory of their beloved mother, Tommie Buckelew, Second now has an irrigation system to assist in watering our beautiful plantings. There are three drip-line zones and a smart controller with a rain sensor to provide water as needed. Hand-held hoses and watering cans supplement the system. Many thanks to Nell and Mary for their generosity, and to the rest of our volunteer watering team: Pam Reed, Arlene Baragona, and Sam Stearns.



SPC November Calendar

Friday, November 1

Men's Breakfast: 7AM [FH]

Saturday, November 2

Alex Erickson's & Joyce Wooldridge's Birthdays

Sunday, November 3

The office is open 9:30AM to 12:30PM

Daylight Saving Time ends

Adult Sunday School: 10AM [FH]

Children's Sunday School: 10AM [Upstairs]

Worship: 11AM [Sanctuary/webcast]

Time Travel Potluck: Noon [FH]

Monday, November 4

No activities

Tuesday, November 5

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM

Election Day Hospitality: Various times

[See Peggy Troyer]

Essentrics Exercise: 1PM [Zoom & FH]

Wednesday, November 6

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM

Men's Bible Study: 6:30AM [FH]

Lunch & Learn Bible Study: Noon [FH]

Choir Rehearsal: 7:30PM [SPC]

Thursday, November 7

Chuck Monroe's Birthday

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM

Essentrics Exercise: 1PM [Zoom & FH]

Parables of Luke Study: 7PM [the Ericksons']

Friday, November 8

Men's Breakfast: 7AM [FH]

Saturday, November 9

Jeff Stark's & BettyAnn Lingafelter's Birthdays

Sunday, November 10

Jenn West's Birthday

The office is open 9:30AM to 12:30PM

Deadline for St. Columba's Thanksgiving food drive

Red Cross Blood Drive: 9AM-1PM [FH]

Choir Rehearsal: 9AM [Sanctuary]

Adult Sunday School: 10AM [FH]

Children's Sunday School: 10AM [Upstairs]

Worship: 11AM [Sanctuary/webcast]

Fellowship Time: Noon [SPC]

Monday, November 11

No activities

Tuesday, November 12

Julia Libbey's, Kent Porter's, & Katrina Wansink's Birthdays

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM

Triple S Circle Meeting: 10:30AM [FH]

Essentrics Exercise: 1PM [Zoom & FH]

Wednesday, November 13

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM

Men's Bible Study: 6:30AM [FH]

Lunch & Learn Bible Study: Noon [FH]

Thursday, November 14

Betty Cheek's Birthday

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM

Essentrics Exercise: 1PM [Zoom & FH]

Parables of Luke Study: 7PM [the Ericksons']

Friday, November 15

Men's Breakfast: 7AM [FH]

Saturday, November 16

No activities

Sunday, November 17

The office is open 9:30AM to 12:30PM

Worship Band Rehearsal: 9:30AM

[Sanctuary]

Adult Sunday School: 10AM [FH]

Children's Sunday School: 10AM [Upstairs]

Stewardship Sunday Worship: 11AM

[Sanctuary/webcast]

Stewardship Sunday Potluck: Noon [FH]

Monday, November 18

No activities

Tuesday, November 19

Hannah Jung's Birthday

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM

Essentrics Exercise: 1PM [Zoom & FH]

Session Meeting: 6PM [SPC]

Wednesday, November 20

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM

Men's Bible Study: 6:30AM [FH]

Lunch & Learn Bible Study: Noon [FH]

Choir Rehearsal: 7:30PM [SPC]

Thursday, November 21

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM

LAUNCH Activities: Various times [See Joe Morgan]

Essentrics Exercise: 1PM [Zoom & FH]

Parables of Luke Study: 7PM [the Ericksons']

Friday, November 22

Men's Breakfast: 7AM [FH]

Saturday, November 23

The American Canvas: Art, Texts, & Our Civic Soul: 12:30PM [Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk]

Advent Craft Workshop: 2PM [FH]

Sunday, November 24

The office is open 9:30AM to 12:30PM

Choir Rehearsal: 9AM [Sanctuary]

Adult Sunday School: 10AM [FH]

Children's Sunday School: 10AM [Upstairs]

Worship: 11AM [Sanctuary/webcast]

Fellowship Time: Noon [FH]

The American Canvas: Art, Texts, & Our Civic Soul (repeat of Saturday program): 2PM [Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk]

Monday, November 25

Jack Vellines' Birthday

Men's Fellowship Dinner: 6PM [District Taco]

Women's Fellowship Dinner: 6PM

[Chicken Salad Chick]

Tuesday, November 26

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM

Essentrics Exercise: 1PM [Zoom & FH]

Wednesday, November 27

Perry Clark's Birthday

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM

Men's Bible Study: 6:30AM [FH]

Lunch & Learn Bible Study: Noon [FH]

Thursday, November 28

Thanksgiving Day: The office is closed

Essentrics Exercise: 1PM [Zoom & FH]

Friday, November 29

Men's Breakfast: 7AM [FH]

Saturday, November 30

Greening of the Church: 9AM [SPC]

Save the Date

Wednesday, December 11, 7 p.m.
SPC at the Garden of Lights
Norfolk Botanical Garden

FH = SPC Fellowship Hall

About Second Presbyterian Church

7305 Hampton Blvd., Norfolk, VA 23505 | 757.423.2822 | spcnorfolk.org | facebook.com/secondpresbyteriannorfolk
Office hours: Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.; Sundays 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

- Dr. Craig Wansink, Senior Pastor: 757.412.7467, cwansink@vwu.edu
- Rev. Catherine Hart Monroe, Covenant Associate Pastor: 757.287.9897, revcat@spcnorfolk.org
- Rev. Nancy Rowland, Parish Associate: 302.354.5880, rowlandnancy73@gmail.com
- Robert Shoup, Director of Music: 757.739.9444, shoup.robert@spcnorfolk.org
- Jo Ridout Kolb, Director of Administration & Family Ministry: 757.406.0879, jokolb@spcnorfolk.org
- Tom Libbey, Facilities Manager; Joe Morgan, Maintenance Specialist; Barbara Watson, Housekeeper & Host