

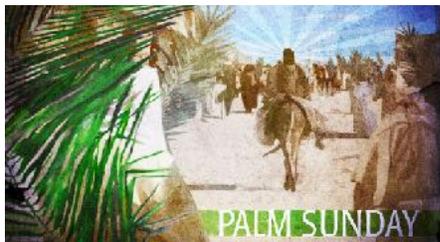
Second Life⁺

A Monthly Newsletter

April 2023

The Challenge of Holy Week

The resurrection was so central to Christians that the day of the resurrection—Sunday—soon became the day on which they came to worship each week. Easter is a time of great celebration, but without our recognizing Palm Sunday and Good Friday, the meaning of Easter is dramatically diluted.



Palm Sunday, April 2, 11 a.m.

It is an unusual story, one that involves Jesus clumsily riding on a donkey and crowds cheering. This was only five days before those crowds called for his death. Join us as we reflect on an odd journey and on *Giving Up Popularity* (Matthew 21:1-11).



Good Friday, April 7, 7 p.m.

The Lord Is Christ's Shepherd: A Good Friday Service with Psalm 23

Psalm 23 takes on an entirely different tone in light of the suffering and death of Jesus. Join us on this dark night as we read scripture, sing, and pray together, fully immersed in Psalm 23.



Easter Sunday, April 9

Early worship, breakfast, Easter egg hunt, and Celebration of the Resurrection

Early in the Morning: A Quiet Outdoor Service from 9 to 9:25 a.m.

That first Easter morning, those who went to Jesus' tomb took embalming fluids. Their response to the empty tomb wasn't joy—it was perplexity and shock. We

don't always cheer at the most wonderful news in life. Sometimes we pause and reflect. Sometimes we're simply grateful to be with others. At 9:00 Easter morning, wear a warm coat, bring your lawn chair, and join us outside by the Robertson Family Deck for a reflective, peace-filled Easter service. No brass or strings. No triumphant organ music. This quiet time consists of readings, prayers, scripture, messages, and reflective music. And then, come back for our celebration of the resurrection at 11.

continued

Holy Week events, continued

Easter Breakfast from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m.

For many years on Easter morning, the men of the church have prepared breakfast for our congregation. This year, the delicious tradition continues. There will be no Sunday School on Easter morning. Instead, all are invited to join us for breakfast of quiche, pancakes, sausage, and more.



Celebration of the Resurrection Easter Worship from 11 a.m. to Noon

How do we leave behind, or give up, what holds us back, so we can embrace new life? That's been our focus for the last six weeks. This morning we gather together, focusing on John 20:1-18 to celebrate new life, transformation, and hope!



Easter Egg Hunt: After Worship

After worship, all children through 5th grade are invited to be part of an Easter egg hunt celebration, as they both hunt eggs and learn about the spirit in their own lives. Call Katrina Wansink, Director of Children's Ministries, at 757.802.1536 with any questions.



It's Time to Order Your Easter Quiches

This wonderful 25-plus year tradition from the men of the church continues. Proceeds will support our feeding programs, so please consider buying a few quiches.

Orders are strongly encouraged by Friday, March 31, to allow time for cooking, but orders may be placed later as well.

Kinds of Quiches: Mexican (cheese, ham, mushrooms, peppers, onion, sun dried tomatoes); Veggie (same but without ham); Meat (cheese, ham and bacon shreds); Ham & Cheese; Bacon & Cheese; and Cheese only. All quiches can be made with a gluten-free crust.



Cost: \$10 each. You can pay when you pick up your order.

Pick-up Day: We encourage you to drop by the church **Saturday, April 8, between noon and 2 p.m.** to pick up your quiches. You can also pick them up Easter morning, April 9, before the worship service.

Orders: Email orders to **Larry Hull** (lhull49@cox.net). **Suggested order deadline is Friday, March 31.**

Mark Your Calendar
Spring Clean-up Day: Saturday, April 22

See page 7 for details.

From the Pastor

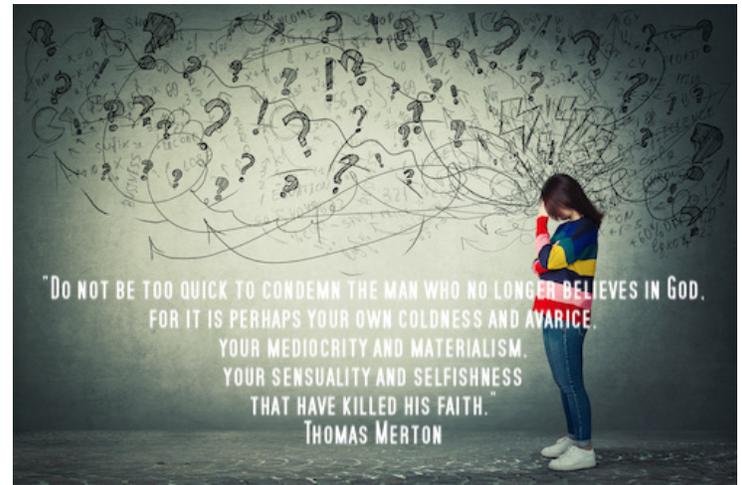
In What Do You Place Your Faith?

Recently I was driving on I-64 en route to the church. In the adjacent lane, a truck was carrying a large load of huge pipes. While in my little Kia Soul, I realized that if one of those pipes were not adequately secured and slid off the truck, that would be horrific. Did I have faith that those pipes were adequately secured? I asked myself that question, but I didn't answer it because I was too busy accelerating so as to pass the truck.

In what do we place our faith?

Plenty of my students at the university consider themselves agnostics or atheists. Although I don't discount their perspectives or feelings, I think many of them really are seekers. They recognize that their understanding of faith from their childhood doesn't square up with what they believe now, and so they are seeking. Like me, when I was 19 years old, some of them say, "Reason matters. I'm not going to make a leap of faith. That's illogical."

It is great for those students—it is great for all of us—to reflect on faith in general and to ask the question—again—"In what do we place our faith?"



We may have faith that the water that comes out of our tap is drinkable (even if we lack that same faith when in a foreign country). We may have faith that our dog will love us, even on our very worst days. We may have faith that the voting processes in our country are fair. When we're young, we may have faith that our parents will watch over us, making sure that we're fed and that we have a roof over us. We may find faith in relationships. As J. Ellsworth Kalas says, "We bet our happiness, our emotional security, and sometimes our very lives on the faith we have in people."

As humans, we're characterized by rationality and by emotions, but we also are characterized by faith. The decisions we make every day are grounded in acts of faith.

In his book "Who Needs God?" Harold Kushner writes, "I can't prove to you that a human life is special and of unique value, any more than someone else can prove to you that it isn't. I can only suggest to you that some wonderful and liberating things happen to you when you come to see life through the eyes of religious faith (and some difficult and demanding things happen). . . . When we have learned to see life religiously, we will understand why we have certain commitments that have no basis in logic or science: that the birth of a child is something wondrous, worthy of celebration, and that the death of a child is a searing tragedy; that it makes sense to spend thousands of dollars and hundreds of man-hours to rescue one person from a collapsed building."

In worship during the weeks between Easter and Pentecost, we'll focus on how we can find, nurture, develop, and live out our faith. How can we become increasingly faithful in ways that make a difference in our lives?

Isaiah 40:31 reminds us that "those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint." John Claypool says that the order of that description may seem like it is written in reverse: Isaiah begins with soaring and ends with walking. All of us pass through different stages in our lives. Sometimes we soar, sometimes we run, and sometimes we're grateful simply to walk forward in faith. In April and May we acknowledge—as the Bible highlights—that doubt is a normal part of life. In light of that, the question we ask is, how can we grow in our faith?

With deep appreciation for all of the ways in which you nurture others' faith, including my own,

Pastor Craig



New Sermon Series

When Doubt Encounters Faith

How do you live out your faith? How do you find faith when your world is turned upside down? In reflecting on the Psalms, Harold Kushner writes, "There are days when I have trouble (with faith), days when I wonder about the efficacy of prayer and whether good will indeed triumph in the end. On days like that, I need to turn to the Psalms, not to find answers, . . . not to be told what to believe, but to be reminded of what the world looks like when seen through the eyes of a believer."

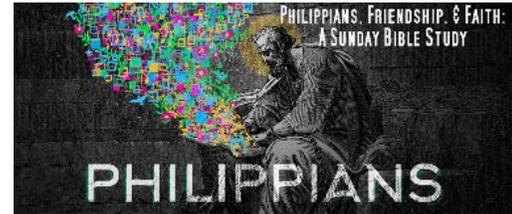
During the weeks between Easter and Pentecost, we look at what happens when faith is shaken. Join us as we look at faith and doubt through the eyes of Thomas, Abraham, Sarah, Job, Solomon, Paul, and Ezekiel.

- April 16 **Thomas and Faith: Longing for God, Yet Refusing to Believe** (John 20:19-31)
- April 23 **Abraham: Finding God in the Darkness** (Genesis 22:1-19)
- April 30 **Sarah: Laughing at the Apparently Impossible** (Genesis 18:1-15)
- May 7 **Job: When God Seems Indifferent** (Job 23:1-17)
- May 14 **Solomon: When We No Longer Care** (Ecclesiastes 1:2-14)
- May 21 **Paul: How We Grow in Faith** (Philippians 3:4b-14)
- May 28 PENTECOST: **Ezekiel and Faith: Breathing Life into Dry Bones** (Ezekiel 37:1-14)

Philippians, Friendship, and Faith: A Sunday Morning Adult Bible Study

9:45 to 10:30 a.m. Sundays in the fellowship hall, starting April 16

The apostle Paul's letter to the Philippians is one of the most beautiful writings in the New Testament. From his imprisonment, Paul writes to a church community for whom he is sincerely appreciative. He is grateful for their friendship and—in this letter—we read the sort of advice that one friend offers another in the faith. It is advice that should strengthen each of us as well. Please bring your Bible and join us.



Lunch and Learn: A Wednesday Time for Fellowship, Discussion, and Study

Noon to 12:55 p.m., Wednesdays in the fellowship hall (please bring a sack lunch)

Take an hour out of your week, bring a bag lunch, and join us at noon every Wednesday in the fellowship hall for a meal, conversation, and Bible study, as we focus on "Living the Questions in Luke." No required reading ahead of time, just meaningful and fun conversation! Please join a variety of SPC friends for a great time together.

New-Member Inquiry Class: Sunday, April 16

Second Presbyterian Church constantly seeks to grow in new ways. If you're interested in being a part of the life of this community, we would love to have you join us. A new-member inquiry class will take place in Pastor Craig's office before worship Sunday, April 16, from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. If you'd like to be part of the church or just learn more, please contact Pastor Craig at 757.412.7467.



The Spirituality of Decluttering

At our house we are slowly beginning the process of preparing for an impending move across town. As I'm sure many of us have experienced, the accumulation of years in a home is accompanied by an accumulation of items tied to our memories. A child's book is connected to bedtime stories... a cat's collar is a reminder of playful delights with a now departed pet... a sun hat reminds us of a family visit at the beach. It can be difficult to part with some items because they feel so profoundly attached to the histories and experiences that formed us.

But in some cases, part we must.

It's been an illuminating family experience, discussing this process of discernment: what to keep, what to discard, what to give away. While there is a measure of melancholy as pieces of the past are released, there is also a sense of possibility, of making room for a new life ahead.

Marie Kondo, author of "The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up," recognizes a painful truth: Our possessions have more control over us than we would like. Her solution is to thank unnecessary items for their service and then give them away. In a way, Jesus speaks of this kind of freedom—when the rich young ruler asks what he must do to inherit eternal life, Jesus tells him to release all his possessions (Mark 10:17-23).

—Charlotte Hand Greeson, Virginia Theological Seminary

During these weeks of Lent, as we have considered what we should permanently "give up," I am struck by the parallel to our house-moving preparations. Control, expectations, superiority, enemies—so many aspects of our spiritual and emotional lives have become like dusty possessions taking up space on the shelves of our spiritual houses, occupying space in our lives but in no way moving us forward. These are possessions that are tied in harmful ways to who we have been. But they need not influence who we can become.

In a recent episode of "Ted Lasso," the surly character Roy Kent mournfully regrets a decision to leave a previous job, wondering if he should have stayed "and just been happy. But I guess that's just not who I am." Ted smiles and responds, "Not yet."

It's the letting go of damage and damaging parts of our lives that allows for "not yet" possibilities for change. It's what makes room for the joy that can accompany such hope. As our family occupies a new home, I know we will lean into its new opportunities for comfort and safety and memory making. As our faith family seeks to live in richer, fuller ways by "giving up," may we embrace the forgiveness, safety, and joy of the resurrected Christ.

Worship during Eastertide

I find the seasons of Advent and Lent to be uniquely meaningful as we intentionally anticipate the hope of Christmas and the joy of Easter. These celebrations are made more so from our having prepared. During worship, we have experienced this in part through specific musical practices, including a gentle sung "prelude," emailed daily prayers, and Lent-appropriate worship music around the Confession and Grace.

As we lean into Eastertide and the overflowing joy of the resurrection, you'll notice some new practices related to music, including the singing of the Doxology with Alleluias each week, as well as other elements that will help us shift the seasonal tone. The Choir, the Worship Band, and I look forward to worshipping with you each week as we celebrate Christ's Rising!



Peace,
Bob

Broken Worlds: Music to Heal or to Divide

Presented by Robert Shoup, Monday, April 3, 7 to 8 p.m.; Reception, 6:15 p.m., Brock Commons

In a world that seems defined by conflict and seemingly endless divisions, music continues to function as a steady thread through our individual and shared experiences. While music's capacity to heal is well-known, is it possible we unwittingly contribute to the climate of divisiveness by the ways we listen, sing, or play? From political and religious animosities to racial and cultural contentions, music has long had a role in both binding and opening of wounds. In environments as varied and perhaps surprising as the Virginia Symphony Orchestra, The Norfolk Street Choir Project, and Second Presbyterian Church, Shoup has long sought to deploy music as a vehicle for meaningful human connection.



Over My Dead Body: Unearthing the Hidden History of America's Cemeteries

Presented by Greg Melville, Thursday, April 20, 7 to 8 p.m., Blocker Hall Auditorium

What American cemeteries say about race, politics, sustainability, hero worship, and unspoken values is stunning at times. With a nod to three Virginia cemeteries (Jamestown, Monticello, and Arlington), Melville explores with us how, where, and why we bury our dead, and the ways in which cemeteries reflect so many conflicting values.

Greasy Rider: Two Dudes, One Fry-Oil-Powered Car, and a Cross-Country Search for a Greener Future

Presented by Greg Melville, Friday, April 21, 11 to 11:50 a.m., Brock Commons

Is it possible to drive coast to coast without stopping at a single gas pump? Journalist Greg Melville, who's in love with the idea of free fuel, sets out on an enlightening road trip with his friend, seeking to be the first people to drive cross-country in a car powered on vegetable oil collected from restaurant grease Dumpsters along the way. Join us for an upbeat, funny story about sustainability in the United States, about what we can do and where we're going, through the lens of a very unusual journey.

Noisy Religion as a Public Nuisance:

Church Bells, the Muslim Call to Prayer, and the Challenges of Negotiating Sound

Presented by Isaac Weiner, Thursday, April 27, 7 to 8 p.m., Blocker Hall Auditorium

Walking down the street, you might hear church bells ringing, ISKCON followers chanting, the Muslim call to prayer, or hymns played over digital synthesizers. In American society, religious individuals rarely keep quiet; they practice their religion out loud. This lecture focuses on how religious pluralism isn't just about different beliefs but about how those beliefs are expressed in public in ways that impact others. Together we'll focus on how conflicts about religious sound can be negotiated, and how those conflicts and resolutions affect us. Isaac Weiner, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor and Director of the Center for the Study of Religion at The Ohio State University.

Our Story, God's Story, with Emily and Philip Byrd

Wednesday, April 26, 6-7:15 p.m. SPC fellowship hall (pizza, salad, and time together)

In "Our Story, God's Story," members of the Second family offer personal stories on their faith and life. These talks create meaningful opportunities for greater understanding and connection, encouraging each of us to think about what has shaped us and given our own

life meaning. Please join us for pizza and salad, and then for stories, reflections on faith, and more about the lives of Philip and Emily.



Church Clean-up Day: Help Spruce Up SPC for Spring



Please join us for spring clean-up day Saturday, April 22, from 9 a.m. to noon. Projects include cleaning windows, trenching out downspout run-offs, and spreading mulch. For the mulch, if you happen to have a pitchfork and wheelbarrow, we invite you to bring them, along with your work gloves. This is a wonderful opportunity for folks of all ages and skill sets to get to know our church family in a meaningful way and to make the church look great. We'll have the coffee and donuts ready. Thank you for helping!

The Administration Committee has been busy addressing repairs to the building's masonry and lintels. In the coming weeks, work will be done to improve water drainage on the flat roof. As it warms up, the holes in the back parking area will be filled in. If you see something else that needs to be repaired or corrected, please contact a member of the Administration Committee: Pam Reed, Mark Stearns, Philip Byrd, or Wendy Horner.

Tickets Available for St. Columba's April 29 Fundraiser

A fundraiser for St. Columba Ecumenical Ministries is set for Saturday, April 29, at Bayside Presbyterian Church in Virginia Beach. Tickets can be purchased from Alice Allen-Grimes. The doors open at 5 p.m. for a silent basket auction. A barbecue dinner will be served at 5:30, and the event will conclude around 6:30. Please consider attending this fun event, the only annual fundraiser held by the organization.

Your donations of items to St. Columba help greatly with the organization's ability to offer services to homeless people in our community and need families. In February alone, St. Columba provided 59 showers at its day center and handed out 766 sandwich bag lunches, 139 hygiene kits, 28 bags of clothing, and 22 sets of hats/gloves/scarfs to men and women. The following items are most needed by St. Columba at this time:

Nonperishable pantry items | Individually wrapped beef jerky sticks | Brown grocery bags
Men's spray deodorant | Travel-size hygiene products, especially soap and lotion

April Offers Fun and Meaningful Volunteer Opportunities

SPC's Feed My Sheep ministry needs volunteers to help with these activities in April. Look for the sign-up email soon.

- Wednesday, April 5: Sandwich making after the noon Bible study
- Saturday, April 8: St. Mary's distribution
- Thursday, April 20: LAUNCH food pick-up, prep and distribution
- Sunday, April 23: Preparing/serving food during after-worship fellowship



Second Singers will visit the Villages of Rosemont in Virginia Beach Tuesday, April 4. See Joe Morgan for details.

YOURS (Youth Outreach Urban Resources and Services) will hold its 14th Annual Youth of Excellence Awards Banquet Friday, April 21. YOURS, an SPC mission partner, works to give every teen an opportunity to experience positive life outcomes through Christian-based values and to nurture their faith within a multicultural peer group around their school and in their community. For more information, see Larry Hull or Joe Morgan.

Prayers Needed for SPC's East Asia Missionaries

Jarred and Shelley Jung, SPC's East Asia missionaries, have requested prayers for Jarred as he finishes his dissertation, mentors a new student from East Asia named "E," and mentors Japheth during his last semester; and for Shelley as she assists with a Bible study methods class and leads an English class. Thank you.

There is definitely a place for you at Second Presbyterian!

SPC April Calendar

Saturday, April 1

Micah Erickson's and David Ferraro's Birthdays
No activities

Palm Sunday, April 2

The office is open 9:30AM to 12:30PM
Adult Sunday School: 9:45AM [FH]
Children's Sunday School: 9:45AM [SPC]
Worship: 11AM [Sanctuary/webcast]
Fellowship Hour: Noon [FH]

Monday, April 3

Roger Phelps' Birthday
Broken Worlds: Music to Heal or to Divide by Robert Shoup: 7PM [VWU Brock Commons]

Tuesday, April 4

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Second Singers at Villages of Rosemont: See Joe Morgan
Essentrics Exercise: 1PM [Zoom & FH]

Wednesday, April 5

Mark Stearns' Birthday
The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Men's Bible Study: 6:30AM [FH]
Brown Bag Bible Study: Noon [FH]
Sandwich making: 1PM [FH]
Choir Rehearsal: 7:30PM [Sanctuary]

Thursday, April 6

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Essentrics Exercise: 1PM [Zoom & FH]
BEMA Bible Study: 7:30PM [Zoom]

Good Friday, April 7

Men's Breakfast: 7AM [FH]
Good Friday Service with Psalm 23: 7PM [Sanctuary/webcast]

Saturday, April 8

St. Mary's Distribution: See Joe Morgan
Easter Quiche Pick-up: Noon to 2PM [SPC]

Easter Sunday, April 9

The office is open 9:30AM to 12:30PM
Early in the Morning: A Quiet Outdoor Service: 9AM [Robertson Family Deck]
Choir Rehearsal: 9:30AM [Sanctuary]
Easter Breakfast: 9:30AM [FH]
Worship: 11AM [Sanctuary/webcast]
Easter Egg Hunt: Noon [SPC]

Monday, April 10

No activities

Tuesday, April 11

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Triple S Circle Meeting: 10:30AM [FH]
Essentrics Exercise: 1PM [Zoom & FH]

Wednesday, April 12

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Men's Bible Study: 6:30AM [FH]
Brown Bag Bible Study: Noon [FH]

Thursday, April 13

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Essentrics Exercise: 1PM [Zoom & FH]
BEMA Bible Study: 7:30PM [Zoom]

Friday, April 14

Sheila Eley's Birthday
Men's Breakfast: 7AM [FH]

Saturday, April 15

No activities

Sunday, April 16

The office is open 9:30AM to 12:30PM
Faithful Neighbors Blood Drive: 8AM to 1PM [Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd Memorial Hall, Norfolk]
New-Member Inquiry Class: 9:30AM [Church Office]
Adult Sunday School: 9:45AM [FH]
Children's Sunday School: 9:45AM [SPC]
Worship: 11AM [Sanctuary/webcast]
Fellowship Hour: Noon [FH]

Monday, April 17

No activities

Tuesday, April 18

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Session Meeting: 6PM [SPC]

Wednesday, April 19

Suellen White's Birthday
The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Men's Bible Study: 6:30AM [FH]

Thursday, April 20

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
LAUNCH Activities: See Joe Morgan [Various hours and locations]
Unearthing the Hidden History of America's Cemeteries: 7PM [VWU Blocker Hall Auditorium]
BEMA Bible Study: 7:30PM [Zoom]

Friday, April 21

Men's Breakfast: 7AM [FH]
YOURS Awards Banquet: 6:30PM [First Presbyterian Church, Norfolk]

Saturday, April 22

Spring Clean-up Day: 9AM [SPC]

Sunday, April 23

The office is open 9:30AM to 12:30PM
Choir Rehearsal: 9AM [Sanctuary]
Adult Sunday School: 9:45AM [FH]
Children's Sunday School: 9:45AM [SPC]
Worship: 11AM [Sanctuary/webcast]
Fellowship Hour: Noon [FH]

Monday, April 24

No activities

Tuesday, April 25

Arlene Baragona's Birthday
The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM

Wednesday, April 26

Lori Crouch and Helen Pribesh's Birthdays
Men's Bible Study: 6:30AM [FH]
Brown Bag Bible Study: Noon [FH]
Our Story, God's Story, with Emily and Philip Byrd: 6PM [FH]

Thursday, April 27

Bill Ruehlmann's Birthday
BEMA Bible Study: 7:30PM [Zoom]

Friday, April 28

Men's Breakfast: 7AM [FH]

Saturday, April 29

St. Columba's Fundraiser: 5PM [Bayside Presbyterian Church]

Sunday, April 30

John Sawyer's Birthday
The office is open 9:30AM to 12:30PM
Adult Sunday School: 9:45AM [FH]
Children's Sunday School: 9:45AM [SPC]
Worship: 11AM [Sanctuary/webcast]
Fellowship Hour: Noon [FH]

FH = SPC Fellowship Hall

Trouble hearing the worship service in the sanctuary? Hearing-assist devices are in the audio-video room adjacent to the lobby.

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
- Robert Shoup, Director of Music: 757.739.9444, shoup.robert@spcnorfolk.org
- Jo Ridout Kolb, Director of Communications & Administration: 757.406.0879, jokolb@spcnorfolk.org
- Katrina Wansink, Director of Children's Ministry & Nursery: 757.802.1536, katwansink@gmail.com
- Tom Libbey, Facilities Manager; Joe Morgan, Maintenance Specialist; Barbara Watson, Housekeeper