

**www.richmondfpc.com**

Curtis Christian  
curtischristian@richmondfpc.com

Joel Stanley  
Joel.christopher.stanley@gmail.com

Dana Miller  
danamiller@richmondfpc.com

Joyce Wolf  
jhwolfsong@gmail.com

Mark Johnson  
markjohnson@richmondfpc.com

<b>ELDERS</b>	<b>CLASS OF</b>
Philip Gump	2026
Paul Hager	2026
Bill Mitchell	2026
Caroline Crump	2027
Jim Exline	2027
LeAnn Jones	2027
Arleita Dirne	2028
Eric Everett	2028
Mark Pitts	2028

<b>DEACONS</b>	<b>CLASS OF</b>
Jennifer Brubaker	2026
Kathy Shew	2026
Rhonda Orttenburger	2026
Wayne Bowlin	2027
Donna Cox	2027
Denise Crump	2027
Marti Exline	2028
Sarah Gump	2028
Amanda Tipton	2028

**ONLINE GIVING      3 easy ways!**

\*Click the **GIVING** button on our church website  
OR

\*Text **fpcgift** to **73256**    OR  
Download the **Abundant Giving** app on your  
phone. Locate our church name and select.

**Follow all prompts to give online. Of course  
you can always sign up to give through your  
bank site or by mailing a check to:**

**First Presbyterian Church  
P O BOX 165  
Richmond, KY 40476-0165**



**THE PULPIT: A SACRED TRUST**

Because I am a Minister of Word and Sacraments, a number of persons have asked me about my thoughts pertaining to a recent court ruling which now allows religious organizations to retain their tax-exempt status while endorsing political candidates from the pulpit. While I believe that the issue of taxing churches may contribute to the undue political influence (if not outright control) over our Christian mission, I don't believe that the question of taxation should ever interfere with our calling to be the church of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The pulpit is a sacred trust, given to the church by the Holy Spirit. As such, it must be approached reverently. Its pulpiteers must remain vigilantly mindful of the awesome power and authority that proceeds from the pulpit, and the proclamations that issue forth. The pulpit is for the proclamation of the Gospel; it is the font of Good News in Jesus Christ. It is the solemn witness to God's love for the world, and it is the beatific call to God's people to go into the world with love, peace, justice, compassion, mercy, service, and sacrifice. The pulpit is the voice of hope and promise to the world that the kingdom of God is at hand. It is not a convenient tool whose sacred authority should be usurped to advance the political partisanship of worldly kingdoms.

The power of the pulpit is not derived from coercion or force; neither political, financial, or military force. Rather, the power of the pulpit is derived from the cross. When he was tried by Pilate and questioned about his political status as King of the Jews, Jesus answered, "My kingdom does not belong to this world. If my kingdom belonged to this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over . . . But as it is, my kingdom is not from here" (John 18:36).

No, my Christian friends; unlike the kingdoms of this world that compel their followers with taxation, arms, and political power, the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ impels its followers with love, compassion, and sacrifice. Indeed, there is no love without compassion, and there is no compassion without sacrifice. This is what I mean when I say that the power of the pulpit is derived from the cross of Jesus Christ.

Of course, the pulpit remains the platform for proclaiming the Good News of God's kingdom, but sometimes that Good News takes the form of calling out those policies of worldly kingdoms that run counter to the kingdom of God. Jesus said, "I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me. Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me" (Matthew 25:35-36, 40).

Part of the Good News that we proclaim, part of the sacred trust of the pulpit is calling out those policies and practices that explicitly deprive the hungry of food, the sick of medical care, the stranger of basic human dignity, and the like. While such proclamations from the pulpit have obvious political consequences, they are only incidentally political (at least, by the world's measure). By the values of God's kingdom, they are Gospel, they are Good News, they are Christ-like.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

The pulpit is the proper platform for calling out those policies that fail to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ. But the pulpit is too sacred a platform to promote or demean particular politicians. Christians may choose which politicians to campaign and vote for; they may debate, deliberate, and reason together which politicians might serve the people in the most Christ-like manner. But when we Christians face the pulpit in worship, the only person we should be called to follow is Jesus Christ. To use the pulpit to endorse a politician only conflates the kingdom of God with the kingdoms of this world, as though they were on the same level. When the church uses the pulpit to endorse a politician, the church has become a political organization or a lobbying group and has abandoned its calling as the Body of Christ. To endorse a politician from the pulpit is to elevate that politician to messianic status, and it effectively renders Christ's sacrifice empty and his kingdom meaningless.

Christ's crucifixion was a sacrifice in love: a love for men, women, and non-binary alike; for Jews, Gentiles, and Samaritans alike; for disciples as well as pharisees; for fishermen as well as tax collectors; for followers as well as non-followers; for Mary Magdalene as well as Judas Iscariot; and for politicians of all parties. So, in that sacrificial, Christ-like love, we pulpiteers are called by the Holy Spirit to show no partiality or partisanship to anyone, and we belong, body and soul, to no one, save Jesus Christ our King.

Maybe the kingdoms of this world will tax the church, maybe they will not. But just because the government might grant us permission to endorse political candidates from the pulpit does not mean that we Christians should acquiesce. Remember, the pulpit is not ours by the mercy of the government. The pulpit is our sacred trust from the Holy Spirit.



Thank you to the following officers for your service. They are rotating off at this time.

*Jennifer Wilke-Deaton and Lucie Nelson as Elders  
Sue Reeves, Julie Stanley, and Gene Wolf as Deacons*

Welcome to the following officers who are beginning their service.

*Arleita Dirne, Eric Everett, and Mark Pitts are our new Elders.  
Marti Exline, Sarah Gump, and Amanda Tipton are our new Deacons*

FPC Youth  
**Prayer Breakfast**

**Thursdays at 6:45am on school days**  
**At Purdy's Coffee on Big Hill**  
**call 412-926-2581**  
**to arrange rides, if needed**





### Evening Women's Circle

Our book for Women's Evening Circle on Tuesday, September 9th is *My Friends* by Fredrik Backman. We meet in the church parlor at 6:30. Refreshments will be served.

### Rebecca Esther Circle

**Tuesday, Sept. 16  
10:30 a.m.  
in the parlor**

Curtis will teach the first lesson from the Horizons Bible Study: *Finding Resilience, Joy, and Our Identity in Jesus Christ*. Books are available in the parlor. We will have a light lunch of finger foods after the lesson. Please bring your Thank You offerings and sandwiches or cookies.



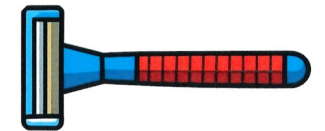
2 Sue Fain  
4 George Ferrell  
Randall Gray  
6 Tracy Lamb  
Joel Stanley  
7 Amelia Shew Trinh  
8 Bruce Bonar  
14 Pierce Johnson, Jr.  
16 Karen Losson  
22 Carter Lamb  
27 Gene Wolf  
28 Phyllis Gump  
Jeanie Smith  
30 Bill Carrico  
Jim Ney  
Mandy Owens



1 Betty Park Adams  
Rhonda Ortenburger  
11 Julie Stanley  
Eden Stanley  
15 Paul Hager  
17 Beth Underwood  
18 Curtis Christian  
20 Sonny Trinh  
23 Nancy Crider  
25 Abigail Adkins  
26 Phillip Seyfrit  
29 Shelby Dale Lamb  
30 Arleita Dirne

*Dear First Pres,  
Please forgive the delay and express  
to your elders, members, musician, and all  
those involved in hosting the May meeting  
of the Presbytery deep appreciation for the  
hospitality. God's continued blessing on  
your ministries.*

**Jurry Utt  
Stated Clerk of  
Transylvania Presbytery**



**Close Shave**

**September**

Drop off new men's and women's disposable razors to help  
those re-entering society after addiction treatment.

Drop off your contribution at the

**Battle of Richmond**

**Visitors Center**

101 Battlefield Mem. Hwy.

Richmond, KY

Call 859-624-0013 during normal business hours for details



**Triennium 2025**

**Joel, Olivia, Sheena,  
Ava, and Amara!**





**Buckhorn Children’s Home Offering**  
**Sunday, September 14**

August 2025 Love Fund Summary

<u>Category</u>	<u># of families served</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Utilities	20	\$2,029.15
Rent	19	\$2,235
Hotel	0	0
Save A Lot bill (food vouchers)		\$517.97
Gulf Bill (Gas Vouchers)		\$125
Gas vouchers distributed	3	
Food Vouchers Distributed	10	
Love Fund Pantry Assistance	5	
Total		\$4,907.12

**39 Unique Families served (includes 33 children)**

This month I was privileged to take a delegation of 3 youth and 2 adults to attend our denomination’s youth Triennium. It was a grand and impactful experience to be sure and this church, through some funds from Telford and the use of the church bus, was an instrumental part in making the trip a reality. As part of the trip we had the delegates write up a little bit about their experiences at Triennium to share when they got back home. I thought I might use this space to share them with you now.

*I’d like to thank you on behalf of our delegation for getting us safely to Triennium and back and for all that you did to enable us to be part of this cool event. I got to trade pins and got to know lots of other people from all over the country and other places. I also got to meet four people from other states who are now close friends and who I hang out with often. Triennium was a really fun place to hang out with people and explore new activities such as the recreation at Dreamscapes and interest groups. Some of my favorite activities were Singo (like Bingo but completed by identifying songs from short excerpts) and the silent disco where I met my new friends. Worship was really fun; I loved the energizers. I also liked that they had calmer places for kids who can get overwhelmed when there are so many people and so much loud noise. Thanks again - I am so glad that I got to go to Triennium. I hope to return in three years when I’m a senior in high school. - Olivia*

*Events like Triennium are so encouraging because they assure me that the church is in such capable and creative hands with our young people. As an adult advisor, it was wonderful to be able to witness the care and insight and energy the youth from all over our country and from around the world shared with each other. I loved learning, reflecting, creating, serving, and playing alongside my brothers and sisters in Christ regardless of their age, ethnicity, or denomination. There were moments to be still and know that God is God experienced at the prayer center or during the music in worship and there were moments to “make some noise” as CeCe Armstrong, PCUSA co-moderator reminded us - and how could you not in a space with over 2000 youth, young adults, and adults! I first attended Triennium in 1992 as a high school freshman and so what a joy to be able to share this experience with my own teenage daughter and with others from the Transylvania Presbytery! - Sheena*

*2025 Triennium was so much fun! It was my first time ever going and it was so cool to see so many different people from different backgrounds come together and connect through our faith. The daily worship was always so uplifting and I left motivated and inspired every time. The interest groups were so fun and I got to learn new things everyday. Seeing the way the people join together in just a few days and are so passionate about their love for the Lord was truly amazing and I can’t wait to go back! - Amara*

*This year I had the opportunity to go to triennium 2025. And I can safely say it was one of the highlights of my summer. I had so much fun getting to grow closer with my presbyterian community while trading buttons, attending rec events and meeting with my community group. It was truly meaningful to get to engage with so many of my peers within the denomination. I also enjoyed getting to explore my faith listening to so many amazing pastors and Interest group speakers. I left triennium feeling closer to my faith and closer to God. Thank you so much for enabling me to participate in this conference! - Ava*

# SEPTEMBER

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

P O BOX 165    Richmond, KY 40476-0165    859/623-5323  
 (fax) 859/623-5329  
[www.richmondfpc.com](http://www.richmondfpc.com)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 	2 <b>Tuesday Crew 9-11</b> <i>Mission mtg. 7:00 pm</i>	3 <i>Bible Study 6:30</i>	4	5	6
7	8 <i>Bible Study 10:30</i>	9 <b>Tuesday Crew 9-11</b> <i>Evening Circle Book Club 6:30 pm</i>	10 <i>Bible Study 6:30</i>	11 <i>Needle Arts Fellowship 11:30</i>	12	13
14 <i>Deacon mtg. noon</i>  <i>Buckhorn Children's Home Offering</i>	15 <i>Bible Study 10:30</i>	16 <b>Tuesday Crew 9-11</b> <i>Rebecca-Esther Circle 10:30 am</i> CE mtg. 4:30	17 <i>Bible Study 6:30</i>	18	19	20
21	22 <i>Bible Study 10:30</i>  	23 <b>Tuesday Crew 9-11</b> <i>Session mtg. 6:00</i>	24 <i>Bible Study 6:30</i>	25	26	27
28 <b>SUNDAY SUPPER</b> <b>POTLUCK 6:00</b>	29 <i>Bible Study 10:30</i>	30 <b>Tuesday Crew 9-11</b>				