

# The Gazette

## May 2025



To the Congregation of Laurel Presbyterian Church,

I write this epistle to y'all with a heavy, but joyful heart, as my time in Richmond ends. Looking back, I am surprised to realize that half of my time at Union Presbyterian Seminary has been spent worshipping with you, serving with you, and loving with you. I have gained so much insight and wisdom from our conversations, your words of encouragement, and the Spirit's call to teach and preach to such a special congregation. I hope you have heard me say it often that Laurel is special. There is a reason that small churches are often saddled with stereotypes. Small churches can be boring. Small churches can simply be tending to their

cemeteries. Sure, small churches can feel like a family, but in plenty of congregations, newcomers can feel like uninvited strangers at the dinner table. None of this can be said for Laurel.

I recently learned that as we age, humans lose their sense of "thirst." Of course, we obviously need to drink water – as much as possible! – but for some reason or another, the further we stretch in our adulthood, doctors encourage us to be more conscientious about our water consumption, lest we face the consequences of dehydration. And the consequences of dehydration are serious. Symptoms can simply be uncomfortable experiences, like dry mouth or struggling to find the right words, or worse: kidney failure and death. In its own way, this is what can happen to people entrenched in a house of worship that does not fill their cup, and it's more common of an experience than you might imagine. People stop finding reason to participate; they see no value in facilitating a newsletter, mowing the lawn, adorning the sanctuary, flipping pancakes, or visiting students and homebound members. This happens because they forget to drink it all in. They do not receive the reminders of the juicy fruits which spill forth from Laurel's love (Matt 7:16).

They do not recognize the power of the Spirit which should arrive daily from a church's commitment to the gospel. They do not recognize the power of the Spirit breathing life into the proclamation of God's word: through the sermon and the choir and the liturgists. They do not feel the incredible expression of communion, taken together, as a body of believers. They do not understand why weekly gatherings like Sunday School and Beloved fundamentally change the ways Christians choose joy and humility and justice for the world-at-large. They do not understand the mystery that can be found by intentional love (1 Peter 5) and collective siblinghood. But I understand. I get it. I get it because Laurel gives it. When you live it out, people feel it in their bones; like God's love, it feels inescapable. And you never ever want to forget about it.

So, as I discern my first call to be an installed Minister of the Word and Sacrament, Laurel is my constant reminder to drink up the water of life and to ensure that it flows freely in whatever congregation comes calling. And because of my experience here, I know that I will not be the fount of Spirit, but instead a man honored enough to share God's love with all who choose.

Each one of you touched Sarah's and my hearts in your own way. Thanks to the leadership of the Vision Task Force and Reverend Cherry, the Spirit has developed my confidence. I hope you understand how rare of a feat this is, in a truly Secular Age. Listen to the Spirit about the ways you have changed lives. By continuing to tend to your church, you will not be thirsty. You will always find your way back to the Source.

Laurel's Seminary Resident, David McDowell

## UPCOMING Events



The **Shepherd on Call** for the month of **May** is **Julie Messick**. Julie may be reached at 804-339-3602. Please contact her if you know of anyone that needs a visit or call, or just some extra Laurel love.

### Sunday May 4

9:00am Adult Sunday School  
10:00am Worship/Communion/Good Samaritan Offering  
11:15am First Sundays Committee meetings

### Wednesday May 7

1:00pm Beloved A meets.  
3:00pm Beloved B meets.

### Sunday May 11-Happy Mother's Day

9:00am Adult Sunday School  
10:00am Worship  
11:00am Lingering



### Tuesday May 13

10:00am Women's Circle meets.

### Wednesday May 14

1:00pm Beloved A meets.  
3:00pm Beloved B meets.

### Sunday May 18

9:00am Adult Sunday School  
10:00am Worship  
11:30am Session Meets.

### Wednesday May 21

1:00pm Beloved A meets.  
3:00pm Beloved B meets.

### Thursday May 22

3:00pm Supper Club meets.

### Sunday May 25

9:00am Adult Sunday School  
10:00am Worship/Five Cents a Meal Offering  
11:15 am Vision Task Force Meets.

### Monday May 26-Happy Memorial Day!



\*West End Toastmasters meets every 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> Mondays at 6:30pm in the Fellowship Hall



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS  
AND FRIENDS OF LAUREL. MAY YOU BE  
ABUNDANTLY BLESSED THIS YEAR!**

Linda Patterson (1)  
Nancy Cross (3)  
Annie Roeder (6)  
Megan Day (7)  
John Horrigan (9)  
Gladys Chamberlayne (9)  
Tod Balsbaugh (10)  
Emily Anderson (15)  
Glenda Miller (18)  
Jim Smith (19)  
Shelby McBane (20)  
Thomas Miller (25)  
Eileen Anderson (27)  
Teddy MacRae (27)  
Barbara Rose (28)



**May 4** – Sarah & David McDowell – To the Glory of God and in honor of Covenantal and Laurel Love.

**May 11** – Glenda Miller - To the Glory of God and in honor of Mary Lawrence on Mother's Day.

**May 18** – Fran Tredway – To the Glory of God and in honor of Glenda, Adam & Jonah on the occasion of their birthdays.

**May 25** – The Lawrence/Miller/Roeder families – To the Glory of God and in memory of Clint Miller.



**Let us keep the following people in our prayers sharing in both their joys and needs:**

**\*New additions will be in bold.**

Our First Responders – Police, Fire, Rescue

Our Military Personnel, Healthcare Workers

Mary Jane Bowlin

Kathy Boyce

Reverend Ann Cherry and family

Jean Cole

Marcia Deisher

Carrie and Claude Dickerson

Donna Edwards

Diane and Eugene Jackson

Sherrie Kolb

Mary Lawrence

Laura Jo Pike and family

Eddie Ann Mathewson

Glenda Miller

LaVerne Miller

Trudy Moolenaar

Muriel-neighbor of Michael Henderson

Eugene Peterson

**Kathryn Rhoden and Family**

Nana Sarfo-Kantanka

Dot and Page Shepherd

Judy and Jim Smith

Autumn Waddell

Prayers for the World

Prayers for Ruling Elders

Prayers for friends and families

Prayers for the hungry and homeless

Prayers for the incarcerated

**If you know of someone in need of prayer, please call Gladys Chamberlayne at 755-6172**



#### **LAMB'S BASKET**

Thank you for your generosity. Our donations are delivered weekly due to high demand for items. Currently there is a need for spaghetti sauce and pasta, large

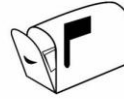
family sized cereals, canned fruit, juice boxes, Pop Tarts, macaroni and cheese and SpaghettiOs.



#### **DO YOU ENJOY READING TO PRESCHOOLERS...**

We have received a request from Gingerbread Cottage for readers at 9:30am every day of the week. Please look for a signup sheet on the bulletin board in the coat rack area. Preschoolers

love our time with them.



**NOTE!  
ADDRESS CHANGE**

Claude and Carrie Dickerson have a new address:  
Apt. 116, Hermitage Green  
1080 Brooks Farm Rd,  
Mechanicsville, VA 23111.

**LENDING A HAND AT LAMB'S BASKET...** On April 28, several church members volunteered at Lamb's Basket, our local food bank. Carol Cummins, Rebecca Owen, Woody and Linda Patterson, and Carolyn Stinger helped with preparing the food for distribution and helped clients do their "shopping". It was a busy but rewarding experience.

Carolyn Stinger

**SUPPER CLUB...** We are planning to have Supper Club Thursday May 22nd. We will gather to prepare the meal at 3:00pm and eat when it is ready. Anyone is welcome to come. This is not an exclusive "club." I will post a signup sheet soon.

Susan Dameron

#### **SUMMER NEWSLETTER DEADLINE- JUNE, JULY, AND AUGUST**



Please send your newsletter articles to Brenda MacRae by May 23rd for the summer edition of the newsletter. Thank you!



#### **EASTER BAGS MADE FOR COAL PIT CHILDREN BY MCM TEAM...**

On April 16, Rebecca Owen, Beverley Shepherd, and Carolyn Stinger delivered Easter tote bags filled with treats to Coal Pit Learning Center. Maria, the Director, really appreciated the gifts and planned to give them out later. The children greeted us and were so happy to have visitors. Carolyn Stinger

#### **MEMORIAL DAY MONDAY MAY 26, 2025**





### THE MOWING HAS BEGUN!

Spring is here and that means it's mowing time again! We will see our efficient mowers out there weekly taking care of our lawn and property. Stop and say Hi or lend a hand

if you're able.

### MEMBER CARE AND MISSION TEAM MEETING April 6, 2025

We are still collecting items for Lambs Basket.

There are sign-up sheets on the bulletin board that can be filled out and put in the GBC Mailbox outside the church office for those wishing to read to the GBC children.

We plan to send Easter cards to those who can't come to church.

We are going to fill 19 Easter tote bags for the children of Coal Pit Learning Center.

We are planning a 'Farewell Reception' for David and Sarah McDowell on Sunday, May 25 after church.

Carolyn Stinger



### STEWARDSHIP AND PROPERTY TEAM MEETING April 6, 2025

We are awaiting results from the state on the status of Gingerbread Cottage water testing.

The Gingerbread Contract for 2025-26 is still in process.

Gingerbread has submitted a lengthy list of requested repairs and improvements. The next meeting of this team will focus on this list.

The Henrico County Fire Marshall did a reinspection, and all violations have been corrected.

Fire Equipment Company inspected our fire extinguishers and serviced one which needed recharging.

Several routine maintenance items have been repaired by Wayne Alvis and Marshall Chamberlayne. We had water that had collected from a downpour by the door by the choir loft. The water seeped in around the air conditioner. Marshall replaced wood to prevent future water intrusion. We will purchase plastic piping to divert water away from this entrance.

It has been recommended that Laurel consider leasing cell tower space. More research is needed before an informed decision can be made.

Tod Balsbaugh

### CENTRAL VIRGINIA IRIS SOCIETY SHOW AND SALE AT LEWIS GINTER BOTANICAL GARDEN-FREE EVENT

#### Event Details:

Come and celebrate these beautiful spring blooms with us and the Central Virginia Iris Society! The sale will take place on Sunday May 4, 2025, 10am-4pm (or until sold out) in the Robins Visitors Center Atrium, and the show will be from 12noon-4pm in the Robins Room.

*Free admission to show and sale. If you wish to visit inside the Garden, you must pay admission.*

### EASY SUMMER CORN SALAD



#### Ingredients

4 cups of sweet corn off the cob or frozen (defrosted)  
1 cup sliced cherry tomatoes  
1 green pepper diced  
1/2 cup red onions sliced  
3 Tbs olive oil  
Juice of 1 lime  
Zest of 1 lime  
Salt & pepper  
1/3 cup chopped cilantro

#### Instructions

In a medium bowl add all your ingredients and give a good stir. Cover with Saran Wrap and refrigerate for at least an hour before serving. Makes 8 servings.

(From Tornadough Alli website)



DEADLINE FOR GAZETTE – 19th OF EACH MONTH

Consider going paperless and receiving the Gazette via email. Just send me a message at the address below and I will take care of the rest.

Gazette email: [pamacrae@comcast.net](mailto:pamacrae@comcast.net)

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Glen Allen, VA 23060

**MAY 2025**