

The Gazette
May 2026



Laurel Presbyterian Church
Enter to Worship, Depart to Serve



Easter Mylar Balloons: Grounded yet Rising

Since my boys were born, I started a tradition of placing mylar balloons in their bedrooms on the eve of their birthdays equal to the number they were turning. I would tie them around their room while they slept so when they awakened, they would be delighted that it was a different day. Their birthday! They are “precious, and honored and oh so loved” after all. It got tricky securing the balloons and getting them home as they grew. Especially for the twins—because it was double the balloons in one car. But I learned a neat trick. Balloons weighted down allowed a clear view out the back of the car and a safe passage home. That, and parking so it was not necessary to back up.

Why am I telling this story? Easter is all about the joy that we begin again “with brand new lives” as Eugene Peterson translates 1 Peter 1:3-5 in *The Message*. And even as Easter people with brand new lives we can doubt we can change, or doubt that we can be loved or be love, or doubt that Jesus can do anything other than register us as doubters. And, as Frederick Buechner has told us, doubt is a good thing, it keeps our faith alive and moving. We need doubt to keep our minds open, nimble, curious, and exploring. It balances out the swallowing of the whole doctrine without digesting it with both our hearts and our minds. Like a mylar balloon, it allows us to rise but not float to the ceiling, where we will float away. Doubt grounds us so we can be real with God about all of our lives. It also allows us to speak love to people just as we find them—just like Jesus spoke love to Thomas by allowing him to inspect his wounds for evidence of the nails of the cross. Some of us need to do that. At the same time, we need our belief to rise and not be held down or grounded in our take off. We need both—our doubts and our faith to speak love and to authentically wrestle with the questions that our faith arises in us. By being faithful to the questions, we rise. One grounds the other, while freeing us to be real and to stay in communion with God. Jesus said at the end of that passage about Doubting Thomas in John 20— “Blessed are those who have not seen, but yet believe.” Let us speak love to ourselves and each other by meeting each other where we are—a mixture of doubt and faith. Or as the father declared in Mark 9, “I believe, help my unbelief!”

Reverend Dr Ann D. Cherry

MAY CALENDAR

Sunday May 3

9:00am Adult Sunday School meets.
10:00am Worship/Communion/Good Samaritan Offering
11:00am Team Meetings.

Wednesday May 6

1:00pm Beloved A meets.
3:00pm Beloved B meets.
5:30pm Choir meets.

Sunday May 10- Happy Mother's Day!

9:00am Adult Sunday School meets.
10:00am Worship
11:15am Lingering-S&P

Tuesday May 12

10:00am Women's Circle meets.

Wednesday May 13

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

Sunday May 17

9:00am Adult Sunday School meets.
10:00am Worship

Wednesday May 20

1:00pm Beloved A meets.
3:00pm Beloved B meets.
5:30pm Choir meets.

Sunday May 24

9:00am Adult Sunday School class
10:00am Worship
11:15am Session Meeting
11:15am Vision Task Force meets.

Monday May 25-Memorial Day Holiday



Thursday May 28

3:30pm Supper Club meets to cook.
5:00pm Supper Club dinner time.

Sunday May 31

9:00am Adult Sunday School meets.
10:00am Worship/Five Cents a Meal Offering

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



Shepherd on Call: The Shepherd on Call for the month of May is Julie Messick. You may reach her at 804-339-3602. Please contact her if you know of someone who could use a visit or some extra Laurel love this month.



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

Nancy Cross (3)
Annie Roeder (6)
Megan Day (7)
John Horigan (9)
Gladys Chamberlayne (9)
Tod Balsbaugh (10)
Emily Anderson (15)
Glenda Miller (18)
Jim Smith (19)
Shelby McBane (20)
Bernie Cheatham (24)
Thomas Miller (25)
Eileen Anderson (27)
Teddy MacRae (27)
Barbara Rose (28)



MAY SANCTUARY FLOWERS

May 3-Open

May 10-Glenda Miller-To the Glory of God and in honor of Mary Lawrence on Mother's Day.

May 17 Open

May 24-Lawrence/Miller/Roeder Families-To the Glory of God and in memory of Clint Miller.

May 31-Eddie Ann Mathewson-To the Glory of God and in memory of her son Jon Paul Mathewson.



LAMB'S BASKET

Please bring in boxed or canned items, and snacks to refill our Lambs basket. There is a donation box in the narthex. Thank you.

CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES!

Michael Whitby is graduating on May 15th from Virginia Tech with a major in Biology and with top honors of Summa Cum Laude from the University. He will continue working as a paramedic. And he will be doing innovative medical research with a professor. All of this while applying to medical school in the next year. You can send him cards of congratulations to his home address.



Reverend Ann is graduating from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary on May 17th with a Doctor of Ministry. Her work on "Love" will be published. The title of her dissertation was: *A Sampling of How Incarnational Love Can Be Lived in the Local Church*. Her new title is now The Reverend Dr. Ann D. Cherry. Please congratulate her when you see her or send a card to her home address.



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.

The Laurel Choir will be practicing every other Wednesday starting in May. They will meet on Wednesday May 6th and Wednesday May 20th at 5:30pm.



Please consider joining us! Your gift of singing is needed, and you will be welcomed into our little family. We are glad that James Sudbury will continue to lead us as he has for the past three years! Give it some thought and prayer and if you have any questions, please speak with James or any choir member. Lift up your voice and sing!

Janice Berger



Marcia Deisher
12113 Club Commons Dr
Glen Allen, VA 23059

SUPPER CLUB...The May Supper Club will be meeting on Thursday May 28, 2026. We will gather at 3:30pm and prepare Loaded baked potatoes, salad, and dessert. We hope to eat by 5:00pm. After we eat, we are playing Bingo. Please join us.

Susan Dameron

JAMES IS BACK! We are extremely excited to announce that James has returned to his role as our Director of Music. We celebrate the goodness of God!

LINDA AND WOODY PATTERSON LAMB'S BASKET FOOD DRIVE THROUGH JUNE 1: Please join us in bringing in extra love for the Lamb's Basket in memory of Linda and in honor of Woody—both who have given so much love to this organization. We will collect food items through Sunday, June 1st.



Would you like to meet up with Dr. Ann?

As we know it is the joy of Dr. Ann to connect with you. If you would like to grab a cup of coffee with her, you may reach out to her by email, text or phone to make an appointment. You can also grab her attention after church to set up a date and time.

JUNE LUNCH BUNCH...Our next Lunch Bunch will be held at Roma Ristorante 8330 Staples Mill Rd on Thursday June 25th at 11:30am. Please join us!

Mary Searce

MEMBER CARE AND MISSION April 12, 2026

Member concerns discussed.

Rebecca will check with Coal Pit for a good date to have a dinner for their families.

Continue to bring food items for Lamb's Basket. Bring books for Coal Pit children.

It was brought to our attention about taking clothes to nursing homes and residents choose what they want. I thought this was a better idea than having a clothing drive.

Beverly, Rebecca, and Carol will manage the kitchen supplies. Thank you so much.

A food drive for Lamb's Basket will be held in the next several weeks in memory of Linda Patterson. She worked there for many years. Rebecca will make an announcement to the congregation.

Gladys Chamberlayne

STEWARDSHIP AND PROPERTY

April 10, 2026

Our fire extinguishers were inspected and serviced by Fire Protection Equipment Company.

The Henrico County Fire Marshall will be conducting its bi-annual inspection on April 24th.

The session has recommended that we increase the wages for our custodian, Donna, by \$50 per cleaning session from \$200 to \$250.

Bonnie Poff and Glenda Miller will conduct our annual finance review in the near future.

We will be scheduling an inspection of our chimney within the next month.

Old Business

The 2027 Gingerbread Cottage lease was given to Stephanie Jarvis, and we are awaiting their response.

The vendor list was updated.

Conducted 2026 annual insurance review on March 6th.

Tod Balsbaugh

WORSHIP AND EDUCATION MEETING

April 12, 2026

The Worship and Education committee met on April 12, 2026, to debrief on Holy Week and begin planning for future services. The team reflected on the success of the unique elements, including the nailing of sins into the cross with spy paper and the reflective nature of our Tenebrae service. We also discussed potential improvements for future years, such as buttoning down some planning and potentially having a meal together on Maundy Thursday. Looking ahead, the committee is hoping to recruit help with flowers, communion, and greeting ministries, and is currently drafting a "Communion Playbook" to standardize service procedures and make it simpler for others to jump in. Discussion also began about equipment upgrades, specifically the purchase of new communion serving trays and repairing the projector, for which we may partner with the Vision Task Force. If you have interest in plugging in to support worship, please reach out to me at (757)771-5569.

Thomas Miller



SUMMER NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Please send your newsletter articles to Brenda MacRae by Saturday May 23rd for the summer edition (June, July and August) of the newsletter. Thank you!

Dear Members of Laurel Presbyterian Church,

I am writing on behalf of Family G to express their sincere gratitude for your generosity. The gift cards you provided have been truly life-changing for them.



With your support, the husband was able to purchase new, much needed work boots, the children received new shoes, and the wife was able to buy essential household items and toiletries, in addition to food for the family.

These cards have alleviated a significant financial burden. Previously, the family had to limit attendance at church and other activities to save gas for essential trips like work and dialysis appointments. Thank you once again for your impactful kindness and generosity.

*With so much gratitude,
L & K*

Carrie and the family of Claude Dickerson thank you for everything you did and for always showing your Laurel love for Claude and me. Thank you for your prayers, the beautiful peace lily plant, food, and cards. We are so blessed.

Carrie Dickerson and Family



**In Honor of Memorial Day
May 25, 2026**

CAMP HANOVER: The Session has allocated funds to Camp Hanover in light of their major budget reduction and is inviting the congregation to make donations too. Write your check to Laurel and earmark it for Camp Hanover.

REST IN PEACE LAUREL FRIENDS...

Linda Roadcap Patterson

May 1, 1941-March 25, 2026

Linda graduated from Woodrow Wilson High School in 1959 and was a very active member of Laurel Presbyterian Church. She retired as a food service manager for Henrico County Schools after 25 years and loved volunteering, especially at the LAMB's Basket Food Pantry, playing games with family and friends, bowling, and spending time with her family. She was a beloved daughter, sister, wife, mother, aunt, grandmother, great-grandmother, and friend, and will be dearly missed by all those whose lives she touched. She was preceded in death by her parents, Malcolm T., and Madaline R. Roadcap; her brothers, Bobby G., and Donny T. Roadcap; and her sisters, Polly R. Hanger and Sandra K. Roadcap. She is survived by her husband of 66 years, Elwood S. Patterson; her children, Douglas K. Patterson (Robyn), Gregory S. Patterson, and Christopher D. Patterson (Lorin); her brother, Jerry E. Roadcap (Laura); her grandchildren, Courtney Lucille Patterson, Megan Ditchman (Cole), and Reed Patterson (Ryan); and her great-grandchildren, Wes and Miller Ditchman. A memorial service was held on Saturday, April 11, 2026, at Laurel Presbyterian Church. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made in her memory to Laurel Presbyterian Church.



Claude Dickerson 1935-2026

Claude went to his eternal rest on March 28, 2026. He is survived by his loving wife, Carrie Hale Dickerson, to whom he was married for over 68 years. He worked for over three decades as a Train Dispatcher for C&O and CSX Railroad. He is survived by his sister Lucille D. Blankenship, sons Claude, John, and Richard, as well as nine grandchildren, three step grandchildren, and one great grandson. A Celebration of Life was held on Monday April 13, 2026, at Laurel Presbyterian Church.



Thanks to all who contributed to the annual One Great Hour of Sharing Offering on Easter Sunday and after. \$190.00 was raised to end hunger and poverty, provide assistance after disaster strikes, work with sustainable community development, and help vulnerable communities around the world.



**ONE GREAT
HOUR OF SHARING**



CHEWY BROWNIES

4 eggs beaten.
1 c. butter
4 squares cooking chocolate.
1 tsp. baking powder
2 c. granulated sugar
2 tsp. vanilla extract
Dash of salt
1 c. flour
2 c. pecans or walnuts

Melt chocolate and butter in saucepan. Remove from stove, add flour, eggs, baking powder, sugar, vanilla, salt and nuts. Stir until well blended. Pour into 9x13 inch baking pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 35-40 minutes. Cool. Cut into squares.

This recipe was donated and featured in the Laurel Gazette in January 1974 by Mary Lawrence. It was later posted in the *Laurel Angel Food Cookbook 2000*.

Laurel Presbyterian Church
9675 Staples Mill Road
Glen Allen, VA 23060

