



Second Press

Volume 41 Issue 4 April 2024

Second Presbyterian friends,

I have discerned that after almost five years as your Theologian in Residence, it is time for me to step down from this wonderful role. Thus, at the end of July, I will conclude my service.

There are several reasons for doing so—first and foremost among them: I look forward to being fully retired! Second, I have a book I want to write (one that I've partially shared in the Fall Sunday School class on the Sacraments) and look forward to devoting time to that project. And third, you will be installing a new pastor on the near horizon, and Presbyterian protocol suggests that folk with roles such as mine step aside when new leadership comes on board.

I am deeply grateful for the many opportunities for meaningful interaction with you that serving as your Theologian in Residence has provided! Book groups over the last five years have been among the highlights and especially engaging for me. From books on racism (especially ones we tackled during the days when RVA's Confederate monuments were coming down) to books on contemporary theology and issues like climate crisis, political polarization, and alternative economics, we have grappled with critical issues and questions that are facing our church, our nation and the world. In these book discussion groups, I have treasured deep reflection together on new ideas and visions for our present and future with members of Second Presbyterian Church.

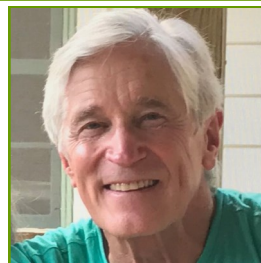
I have also thoroughly enjoyed teaching Sunday School on a range of topics from Advent and Lenten reflections, racism and White Christian Nationalism to theological topics that are critically important for our faith, such as atonement theologies, the theology of the cross and resurrection, the sacraments, and Christianity's engagement with the world. You have been energetic discussion partners in these forums, and for that I am deeply grateful.

Finally, I have enjoyed participating in worship leadership—whether offering the pastoral prayer, officiating at the Eucharist, or preaching. Preaching at Second has been quite meaningful for me, for as the apostle Paul observed, “faith comes from what is *heard*” (Romans 10:17), and I have consistently found you to be unusually attentive and responsive hearers, as well as generous and supportive ones, even when I found myself stepping into the pulpit with a short covid emergency notice. I am thankful for your hospitality to occasional interlopers in the pulpit!

Know especially that the last several years of service have been meaningful and inspiring for me. And I am not going anywhere—you will still find me in the pews!

Gratefully,

Roger



Roger Gench
Theologian
In Residence

The Forum Class ~ April through May | 9:30-10:30am

Fracture: Mental and Behavioral Health in the Wake of the Pandemic

A 7-Week Series of Resurrection Stories for Eastertide

- April 7** **Isolation: Sharing Definitions, Realities & Research**
- April 14** **Resurrection: Rocking it out in Recovery!**
- April 21** **Pathways: Voicing Hope & Respect for those in Crisis**
- April 28** **Awareness: Removing Stigma through Education and Conversation**
- May 5** **Grace: Freewriting for Health & Collegiate Recovery**
- May 12** **Community: A New Mission in Community Support**
- May 19** **Prevention: Leadership Metro Richmond**

Faith and Literature Class

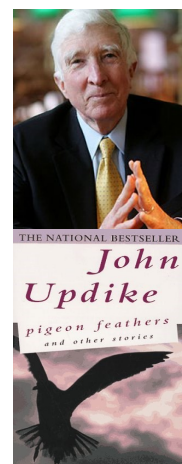
Pigeon Feathers Coming to Faith & Literature!

Starting on Sunday, April 14th, Second's Faith and Literature Adult Sunday morning class will begin discussing a new book: John Updike's *Pigeon Feathers and Other Stories*.

It's a collection of 19 short stories published in the 1960s in *The New Yorker* and elsewhere.

Newcomers are always welcome to join us in person in Room 308 or via simultaneous Zoom.

Contact Dan Ream at danream@gmail.com with any questions or for the Zoom link.



Children's Church School | 9:30 am | For children, ages 4 years to 5th Grade

Join Ms. Laura, Ms. Maggie, and Rev. Paul for Children's Choir and Sunday School.
All are welcome!

1st Sunday of the Month — Music Time and Family **Worship** Service with Communion

2nd Sunday of the Month — Music Time and Church School | **Art**

3rd Sunday of the Month — Music Time and Church School | **Mission**

4th Sunday of the Month — Music Time and Church School | **Drama**

[5th Sunday of the Month] — Music Time and Church School | **STEM**

Youth

Youth Group | 6th grade through 12th grade | 9:30am-10:45am

Join Annabelle and Andrew for Youth Group every Sunday in the youth suite!
Waffles, conversation, and Bible study at 9:30am.



New!

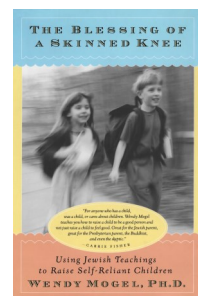
Parenting Discussion Group | Sundays at 9:30am | April 7—May 12

The Blessing of a Skinned Knee: Using Jewish Teachings to Raise Self-Reliant Children
by Wendy Mogel, Ph.D.

Parents, come together for 6 weeks of discussion around this highly recommended book based on the teachings of the Jewish Talmud.

We will meet in the Atrium Conference Room.

Please contact Hannah at hgarrity@2presrichmond.org for more information.



Gratitude for Roger Gench

We give thanks for the gifts, mind, and talents that Roger Gench has shared with us over four years as our Theologian in Residence! He plans on writing a book and enjoying the full fruits of retirement. His last Sunday serving as part of our Interim Team will be July 28th.

If you would like to share your gratitude for Roger's preaching, teaching, and presence with our congregation, please send a card or email to Kate Fiedler (katef@2presrichmond.org) or leave it in her box by the church offices.

Kate and Hannah will arrange the cards and notes into a book of thanks to present to Roger in July.



Urban Engagement

Adjacent Services at Walk-In Ministry

The incredible Walk-In ministry at Second Presbyterian has offered a hot meal every Monday for decades. Yet, people continue to experience homelessness. In the last few weeks we have had 170 to 180 guests join us for lunch on Mondays.

We have offered space and time for adjacent services to join our Walk-In ministry. There are fully fledged non-profits such as CARITAS and AFOI that grew out of our ministry. This year is no exception.

Our Walk-In ministry is a place where our guests feel cared for and honored. The hard work of building that sense of support and positive energy creates a comfortable space where organizations can meet with their clientele.

1. The Department of Social Services is present at Second Pres on the second and fourth Mondays of the month. DSS' Olivia Neefe's regular presence provides a reliable way for guests to reorder lost IDs or birth certificates, without which employment and services are unavailable. She also has access to sign people up for the HMIS (Homeless Management Information System) which is necessary for people to attain a bed in a shelter.
2. On the second Monday of each month, the Legal Aid Justice Center is also present at Walk-In. Maisie Osteen and her team of lawyers offer legal aid to our guests, and collaborate with Olivia Neefe in obtaining birth certificates from other states. Class action lawsuits to challenge injustice are part of the LAJC's work, and listening to the lived experience of community members is one way to find gaps in our systems that may be rectified in court.
3. Our adjacent services round out with the continued presence of the Daily Planet offering health care on the third Monday of the month.

Each of these offerings is made possible by the incredible warmth, love, and service that our volunteer-operated ministry has created over the past 45 years. Thank you for your continued support.

April Mission Drive

Shower Ministry Donations

The Shower Ministry at Second serves approximately 25 people every Tuesday. In order for us to open each week, we must have new undergarments for our guests. A week without shelter is a long time and new undergarments are one of the consistent offerings across Shower Ministries.

Our most needed items weekly are size L and XL men's T-shirts and boxer briefs.

Donations may be placed in the shower ministry/monthly donation drive bins located in the sanctuary hallway.



PNC Corner

The Pastor Nominating Committee is now hard at work. We welcome nominations from staff and church members for the Pastor/Head of Staff position. Please convey to potential candidates that our preference is to receive a Personal Discernment Profile (the PDP is an enhanced resume on a specific form) through the Church Leadership Connection at: <https://clc.pcusa.org/>.

However, we are also open to receiving PDPs via email at: pnc2presrva@gmail.com.

We appreciate your assistance with identifying possible candidates and your continued prayers.

Women's Bible Study | April 4—May 16 | Thursday at Noon | Room 308 & Zoom*Blessed Are You: The Beatitudes of Jesus in Scripture and in Life*

Meets at noon on Thursday in Room 308 and by hybrid Zoom.

Contact Hannah for more information at hgarrity@2presrichmond.org.**Lectio Divina**

Are you looking for a way to engage with scripture at the new year?
Would you like to get to know a new small group at Second?

If so, you are invited to join our small, devoted group of disciples for the practice of *Lectio Divina*. Join us weekly on Mondays from 1:00-2:00pm on Zoom. We read a passage from scripture three times, with periods of silence and reflection following each reading. We close our time together with conversation and prayer. **All ages and stages of faith are welcome!**

Join us for this time to focus our attention on the living Word and to tune our hearts with God's love. Join Lectio Divina on Mondays at 1:00pm by clicking [this link](#) (Meeting ID: 951 6829 7558 // Passcode: 067514)

Questions? Curious? Email Kate at katef@2presrichmond.org.

**Earth Day Service Project at Yaupon Place ~ Saturday, April 20**

Yaupon Place (1313 Westwood Avenue) is a park at Union Presbyterian Seminary adjacent to Shalom Farms that provides open green space and enhanced tree canopy for the community.

From 10am-12pm on Saturday, April 20, come enjoy the park and join in a family-friendly service project to waterproof new picnic tables and benches.

Bring your old paint brushes and pack a lunch, if you wish. Please let Sally Johnston sallynaylorjohnston@gmail.com know if you can help with this fun Earth Day project!

Earth Care at Second Pres

As a Certified PC(USA) Earth Care Congregation, Second Presbyterian pledges to integrate environmental practices and thinking into our worship, education, facilities, and missional outreach. In keeping with our pledge and the motto of the Earth Day Organization, let us *Make Every Day Earth Day*.

Second became certified before Covid and is seeking new ways to move our congregation forward in education and action.

If you would be interested in working with like-minded members to further the mission of Earth Care at Second, you may contact Lollie George at Lfgeorge56@gmail.com.

**Church Retreat ~ Saturday, May 18 ~ 9:00 am to 4:00 pm**

Plan to connect at the Second Presbyterian Church Spring 2024 Retreat at Richmond Hill!

The mission study we recently completed as a church reminded us that we seek to know one another in this vibrant Christian community. Over the last year, many have asked about mental and behavioral health in our post-pandemic life. There has also been interest among the congregation to spend some time on the topic of grief.

At our church retreat in May, there will be offerings along these lines in art, garden, and lecture formats.



Save
the
Date!

Deacons' Corner

At our March meeting, we talked about all the exciting news coming up in the life of Second Pres, from the work of the pastor nominating committee to the Maundy Thursday, Palm Sunday, and Easter services.

Deacons are involved in the Second Course gatherings at members' houses, which have drawn about 90 members. "Second Course has really gotten people excited to meet other people," said the Rev. Kate Fiedler. "It's generated some good energy and wonderful connections."

On April 14, we look forward to the ordination and installation of officers, including our new and returning deacons for the Class of 2027: Lauriston Davis, Joe Earhart, Carly Groover, Collyn Hawn, Stuart Martin, Susan Nochta, Bill Richter, and Jack Warren. We are grateful for the service of the deacons who are rotating off their term of service: Nancy Foltz, Amy Goobic, and Kathy Morgan. Thank you for sharing your talents!

We discussed upcoming plans including the return of the deacons' dinner. This will be one night in April or May 2024, where members from various parts of town get together for a meal around a table—either at a home or restaurant of their choice. Stay tuned for more details.

We will also be working on updating the directory this summer.

Summer Sartorial Shindigs!

This summer we are going to enjoy some stylish FUN and pizazz!

On the third Sundays of May through August, we'll have a fun theme and time after worship for a photo of those who participate.

This is not intended as an exercise in consumerism. Borrow from friends and neighbors, or get crafty to participate and play along!

May 19: Pentecost (wear a pop of red!)



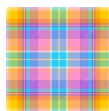
June 16: Rainbow (or any color of the rainbow!)



July 21: Sparkle (bring out all things that light up, or have sequins, or bedazzled, or have gemstones!)



August 18: Plaid



Art in Eastertide

The banners for Eastertide that hang overhead in the sanctuary were created over a decade ago by the Second Presbyterian Arts Committee. We are grateful for the incredible leadership of Janice McMurray and Harlan McMurray, along with many others over many years.

These beautiful banners are made in a style called paper lace with photo backdrop paper, box cutters, and Exacto knives. Spend time with these this season, exploring the patterning and meaning behind each creation.

Kroger Community Rewards

Statistics: December (2023) — February 2024

54 households participated (52 last quarter)

\$248.69 donated (\$279.34 last quarter)

These reward earnings benefit our Walk-In Ministry. If you shop at Kroger, please consider linking your rewards card to Second Presbyterian Church. The Kroger Company Family of Stores is committed to helping the local neighborhoods and helping create stronger communities.

Keep shopping. It truly can't be any easier than this!



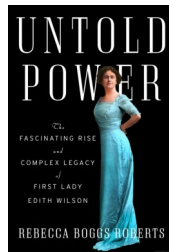
Literary Circle

Tuesday, April 9 at 7:00pm

Literary Circle will meet Tuesday, April 9 at 7:00pm.

Collyn Hawn will host (250 Finial Avenue, Unit 2C) and lead the discussion of *Untold Power* by Rebecca Boggs Roberts.

Please contact Carolyn Brandt (288-2511, crbrandt1412@gmail.com) for more information.

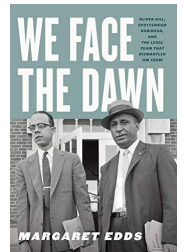


Day Book Group

Wednesday, April 17 at 10:00am

The Day Book Group will meet at 10:00am, Wednesday, April 17 in Room 308 Virginia Building and by Zoom.

The book for discussion is *We Face the Dawn* by Margaret Edds.



The Pace Center at VCU

Thank you!

Each Wednesday, the Pace Center buzzes with energy as over 50 students and members of the vibrant VCU community come together for its weekly Stories & Lunch ministry. It's a heartwarming ritual where souls are nourished not just with delicious homemade meals prepared by local churches but also with the sharing of personal stories, woven around a chosen theme for the week.

In a recent gathering in March, the warmth and generosity of Second Presbyterian shone brightly. Over a dozen individuals collaborated to provide homemade lasagnas, decadent desserts, and an assortment of fruits. The students loved how each casserole was different and a taste of someone else's home.

Thank you, Second Presbyterian! Your unwavering support empowers Pace to extend a taste of the Kingdom of God to over 1,000 students every semester, enriching their lives in countless ways.

If you are interested in becoming more involved at Pace, please reach out to Pace Director, Rev. Katie B. Gooch: director@thepacecenter.com.



Fair Trade Coffee and Tea Sales



April 7 & 21

May Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the next newsletter is **Monday, April 15**. Please send submissions to:

wjacob@2presrichmond.org

Brunch Bunch

Friday, April 19 ~ 11:30am

at

McLean's Restaurant

Session News

April 2024

The session met for its monthly stated meeting on March 19. The following items were on the agenda and received their action:

1. Approved the February 20 stated meeting minutes and the minutes of the February 25 annual congregational meeting.
2. Gave thanks for the life and ministry of the Rev. James Alvin Payne, Jr. who died March 8, 2024. A service celebrating his life and witnessing to the resurrection will be held on Sunday, April 28, at 1:00pm at the church.
3. Received as information the treasurer's report.
 - *For the month of January 2024, expenses exceeded income. The principal reason for the lower income figure was pledges of \$54,000 rather than the budgeted \$74,000. Expenses of \$72,325 were actually \$40,000 below the budgeted amount, resulting in an income deficit for the month of \$15,773.*
 - *It is important to remember that while expected monthly pledge income is determined by dividing the annual total by 12 months, pledge income does not actually come in evenly every month. Also we have \$180,000 in prepaid pledges to allocate as needed through the year, over \$65,000 in the surplus from the previous two years, and the quarterly draws on the endowment and the quarterly Virginia Building Net Income Transfers to help meet the annual budget.*
4. Approved a request from Deepthi Valbhapuram Nalla to enter the process of becoming an inquirer for the ordained office of minister of the Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
5. Approved changing the distribution from the UKirk Fund to the Pace Center at VCU. This campus ministry representing several denominations replaced the UKirk program. Pace will receive \$10,000 per year until that fund is exhausted (\$47,936 balance on 2/29/2024). Rev. Russ Kerr, a PC(USA) minister of the Word and Sacrament and member of the POJ, works with students at the Pace Center.
6. Approved establishing a Line of Credit from the General Endowment Fund #16 for the urgent capital expenses identified for the session from Gene Roland (building administrator) and the Property Council. The approximate \$1.4m projects include a new roof on the connector between the Virginia and Hawes buildings, new HVAC units for the VA Building, repairing stained glass in the Sanctuary and Chapel, and replacing the cornice and soffit on the VA Building. The trustees are proposing terms for the LOC that will enable the General Endowment Fund to remain strong. The plan is to use some of the net proceeds from the monthly parking deck income to repay the LOC.
7. Approved a concert in the fall of 2024 (date to be determined) sponsored by Moms Demand Action to serve as a fundraiser to address the issue of gun violence. It is to be understood that Second Pres is the venue for the concert and it not a sponsor of the event.
8. Approved a request from Cherry Peters, 2024 moderator of the POJ, that Second Pres invite the POJ to have their Saturday, October 19, 2024 stated meeting at the church. Due to technological and visual support, the meeting itself will be held in the chapel. Lunch and refreshments will need to be provided by Second Pres.
9. Received a letter of thanks from the Pace Center for the financial support from Second Pres.
10. It was suggested by a member of the session that, since Second Pres is in such a strong financial position, upon completion of the urgent capital expense projects in 2024-2025, we might "share the wealth" with less fortunate churches in the POJ by awarding grants for their property needs.

Meet Our New Members

We kicked off Holy Week by welcoming new members to our church family during worship on March 24. We welcome them into the life of our ministry together!



Holly Coryell and Charlie Trochlil Holly works as a Physician Assistant at a hospital in Richmond, staffing the ICUs. She enjoys biking around Richmond with Charlie and swims laps at the YMCA. Charlie moved to Richmond in 2021 after graduating from UVa. He works at Capital One as an analyst. You can find him most days riding his bike in the Fan with Holly.

Katherine Goldberg After many moves, Katherine is happy to have found a permanent home in Richmond with her husband Mike and Irish doodle Aldus. She is happy to walk each week to work from their apartment in Shockoe Bottom and on Sundays to Second Pres.



Donna Gordon Donna has lived all over the U.S.—from Palo Alto, California, to Northampton, Massachusetts. She is retired and is transferring her membership from Rio Rancho, New Mexico.

Hannah and Aaron Haynes Hannah is from Mishawaka, Indiana, and she graduated from Purdue University in 2021. She works at WestRock in research and development, focusing on recycling and sustainability. Hannah and Aaron were married in October of 2023. Aaron is from Fredericksburg, Virginia, and he graduated from the University of Mary Washington in 2018. He is currently the marketing specialist at Richmond International Airport. Hannah enjoys reading, visiting historic sites, trying new recipes, and basking in Virginia's lovely weather. Aaron loves roller coasters, biking, hiking, and supporting Ravens and Hokies football.



Jacq Lapsley Jacq and her husband Greg Bezilla, an Episcopal priest, are happy to be in Richmond after many years in Princeton, New Jersey. Jacq serves as the President of Union Presbyterian Seminary. She and Greg enjoy biking and hiking—both in extreme moderation, and have two grown children, an adolescent rescue dog, and a curmudgeonly, elderly cat who takes a dim view on all his housemates.

Peggy and Doug Singlemann Peggy and Doug moved to Richmond in 1983 from Cold Springs on the Hudson, New York. They have two wonderful daughters and two terrific sons-in-law. Peggy is a Mémère (grandmother) and Doug is Pépère (grandfather) to three fun grandchildren. Doug is a retired IT professional who now enjoys being able to spend time outdoors canoeing and kayaking. Peggy was Maymont's Director of Horticulture for 38 years. She retired from Maymont in 2022 to focus on being the host and co-producer of "Virginia Home Grown" on VPM/PBS. Doug enjoys fishing, woodworking, and cooking. Peggy loves to garden, hike, travel, bird watch, and kayak.





Second Presbyterian Church
OF RICHMOND VIRGINIA

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Preaching in April



April 7	Roger Gench
April 14	Fred Holbrook
April 21	Cindy Corell, Mission Co-Worker
April 28	Kate Fiedler