



# Second Press

Volume 41 Issue 1 January 2024

Friends in Christ,

*Awed to Heaven, Rooted to Earth* is a collection of prayers by Walter Brueggemann, professor emeritus of Old Testament, Columbia Theological Seminary. This is one of the prayers each of us should pray as a new year begins.

## Occupy our Calendars

Our times are in your hands:  
But we count our times for us;  
we count our days and fill them with us;  
we count our weeks and fill them with our busyness;  
we count our years and we fill them with our fears.  
And then caught up short with your claim,  
Our times are in your hands!  
Take our times, times of love and times of weariness,  
Take them all, bless them, break them,  
give them to us again,  
slow paced and eager,  
fixed in our readiness for neighbor.  
Occupy our calendars,  
Flood us with itsy-bitsy, daily *kairoi*,  
In the name of your fleshed *kairos*. Amen.



Fred Holbrook  
Interim Pastor

*Kairos* is a Greek word meaning “fitting time or opportunity.” Brueggemann names Christ Jesus the “fleshed *kairos*” and prays that each day be flooded with daily opportunities. This year is a fitting, opportune time in the life of Second Pres. Your Pastor Nominating Committee will be seeking a pastor to join your wonderful staff in serving Christ and others together with you. Your mission study includes some abilities you desire in those pastors who will be under prayerful consideration. Among these are:

- An ability and interest in creating a family life ministry that is effective in attracting parents, children, and youth
- An ability and interest in excellent preaching
- An ability and interest in reshaping the ministries of the church to reach others and incorporate them into the life of the church
- An ability and interest in developing pastoral ministries that serve those in times of need
- An ability and interest in developing opportunities for members to form relationships that fit their particular lifestyle and needs
- An ability and interest in creating a governance process that appropriately involves the members of the church in decisions
- An ability and interest in developing a Christian education and formation ministry that reaches people at every age and stage of life
- An ability and interest in creating ministries in the church that work to heal those broken by life circumstances
- An ability and interest in creating a welcoming and caring community that helps give meaning to life
- An ability and interest in working as advocate for important social change

May the Spirit guide the discernment of our PNC as we ask God to flood us with “itsy-bitsy, daily *kairoi*.”

In Christ’s Service,

*Fred*

## Adult Education in January | 9:30-10:30am

**Dining Room Class** ~ with Roger Gench

### *Trouble the Water: Conversations to Disrupt Racism and Dominance*

Description: A documentary series resource produced by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for communities and congregations to facilitate conversation and engagement around the issues of race and racism. As we struggle as a nation with these deep systemic and structural issues on a daily basis, we hope this series can be a resource to listen to one another, have difficult but honest conversations, and collectively work together to disrupt systemic racism.

- January 7** *Whiteness* What is whiteness? What is white supremacy? How are we complicit in supporting and perpetuating systems of oppression and privilege? How can we begin to disrupt these systems?
- January 14** *Racial Identity* What is the social construct of “race” and where did these categories come from? Why is exploring one’s own racial identity important? Why is it important for white people to do the hard work of understanding their own racial identity? How do systems impact and form our identity?
- January 21** *Intersectionality and Disruption* What is Intersectionality and whom does it impact? How does it impact people differently? What does intersectionality have to do with justice? What is dominance and white supremacy? How do we recognize it and how can we respond? How can we disrupt these systems of dominance in our everyday life?
- January 28** A Study of New Scholarship on *The Psychology of White Christian Nationalism* by Pamela Cooper-White

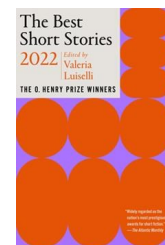
## Faith and Literature Class

Second’s Faith & Literature adult Sunday school class will continue reading and discussing *Best Short Stories of 2022: The O. Henry Prize Winners* through the end of March.

As always, our class will be looking for themes of faith and spirituality in these stories.

Our discussions happen simultaneously in person and via Zoom each Sunday morning.

Newcomers are always welcome at any time! For more information, please contact Dan Ream at [danream@gmail.com](mailto:danream@gmail.com).



## Deacons' News

At the beginning of December, the deacons created and delivered advent bags to share with members who cannot attend worship or come downtown. The recipients were delighted to enjoy homemade baked goods, Christmas candy, updated church directories, and the Advent devotional from *A Sanctified Art*. The one-on-one visits were the most important parts of the deliveries.



On December 10<sup>th</sup>, the deacons hosted the annual Holiday Trivia & Tacky Sweater competition after church. With fierce competition, the Reindeer Team reigned supreme in the Trivia Contest, and the “Bobbsey Twins” Mary Jane Winter and Peggy Singlemann took home first prize in the sweater competition. This event has really caught fire, and this year included Christmas llamas and reindeer, glittering flamingos, light-up sweaters (and bow ties!), and even a biker Santa shirt.



At our monthly meeting, we were pleased to learn the congregation had a 96% participation rate in the Holy Cow survey. The feedback was very positive, with energy and satisfaction scoring very high.



“We have a lot to give thanks for at Second,” said Kate Fiedler.

During budget discussions, we learned that everything is in really good shape financially when it comes to the 2023 budget. Two areas that Budget and Finance Committee are watching are the Monday Walk-In lunch and Tuesday shower ministries, due to increasing costs and demand. Recently, 173 people attended the Walk-In lunch, and 30 people came for showers. When guests stop by to take a shower, they also receive toiletries, undergarments, clothing, coffee, and a snack.

All this is possible due to the “the extravagant generosity of Second” as Dixon Kerr pointed out.

While there has been much joy this season, Kate concluded our meeting with an important message for deacons. “This can be a really difficult season for some people, especially those who are anxious about a diagnosis, estranged from family members, or grieving,” she said. “Think about the ways you may reach out.”



## Children's Church School | 9:30 am

### Children's Church School | For children, ages 4 years to 5th Grade | 9:30am-10:45am

Our creative and interactive Family Worship Service has been warm and inviting!

We are grateful to all who have attended, filling the Chapel with energy, imagination, and love. We are also grateful for our new children's minister, Rev. Paul, and for our children's ministry team—Ms. Maggie, Ms. Hadian, and Ms. Arzo.

They bring love and consistency to our children's wing!

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**

*"Thank you for providing a space where we feel included."* —a visiting family

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

Waffles, conversation, and Bible study in the youth suite at 9:30am on Sundays.

#### Youth Sunday preparations!



In the new year, the youth will start preparing for Youth Sunday (February 25).

This year, the service will be during the season of Lent, so the hymns and liturgy will reflect the season. Please pray for our middle and high school students as they plan and prepare for this worship service.

## Winter Warmth Ministry

*Dear Friends:* As winter approaches it is time for our annual warmth ministry for our Walk-In neighbors. We are collecting new warm gloves, hats, socks, and hand warmers for our neighbors. Please bring contributions to the church and put them in the collection boxes outside the sanctuary. We will distribute them during the winter months.

If you have any questions, please contact Elva Mapp ([eamapp@icloud.com](mailto:eamapp@icloud.com)). *Thank you!*



## Nominations for Officers ~ Class of 2027

Please prayerfully consider whom you would like to nominate for Elder, Deacon, or Trustee.

Please send your names to either Vernon Mays ([vernonlmays@gmail.com](mailto:vernonlmays@gmail.com)) or David Wilson ([ddwilson804@gmail.com](mailto:ddwilson804@gmail.com)).

## Transition Progress Update

On December 17, the Pastor Nominating Committee was elected by the congregation during a congregational meeting.

We give thanks for the work of the Nominating Committee and the yes to serve from: Sharon Blount, Bryan Carr, Terry Crickenberger, Judy Cutting, Mary Sue Donahue, Jed Dutton, Tom Jefferson, Elva Mapp, and Lucretia McCulley.

In early January, the PNC and staff will be trained by the Rev. Leigh Anne Ring, the Presbytery of the James Presbyter for Relational Care. After being trained, the PNC will work together to create the Ministry Discernment Profile (job description).

Once the MDP is approved by the session and the POJ's Commission on Ministry, it will be posted to the Church Leadership Connection system, and the PNC will begin the work of reviewing and interviewing candidates.

We pray for the work of the Spirit in this process.

## Register for the “Day for All People” ~ Wednesday, January 17 at the General Assembly

Join Kate Fiedler and others from Second Pres for the annual Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy's Advocacy Day at the General Assembly on Wednesday, January 17.

People of faith from across Virginia will meet with state senators and delegates to advocate for living minimum wages, expanding access to paid sick days, increasing funding for affordable housing, and requiring unconscious bias training for medical professionals.

With our close proximity to the Capitol, this is an easy day for us. You can park at Second, and walk a couple of blocks to St. Paul's Episcopal Church for orientation and workshops.

We will also walk over to the Capitol to meet with our state delegates and state senators—a great day for learning and participating in our democracy. It would be wonderful to have **10 people** from Second Pres.

Register at [www.virginiainterfaithcenter.org](http://www.virginiainterfaithcenter.org) or contact Kate Fiedler with questions at ([katef@2presrichmond.org](mailto:katef@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](mailto:katef@2presrichmond.org).

## Campus Ministry Connections

We welcomed the Rev. Russ Kerr during worship on Sunday, December 10, to share a Moment for Mission about the ongoing partnership between Second Pres and the campus ministry at the Pace Center.

Here are the highlights of his Moment for Mission:

*I am the PC(USA) Campus Minister at VCU - on staff at the Pace Center for Campus Ministry located in Monroe Park. A lot of you are probably wondering how PC(USA) campus ministry at VCU has continued? Like many things in this season of expectant waiting, God is doing lots of new and exciting things!*

*It is because of the partnership with Second Presbyterian, formed by Kelley Connelly, and sustained through financial and volunteer support, that Pace has seen exponential growth this semester.*

*In our growth, Pace is really excited to share that **over 1,200 VCU students** have come through our doors this semester! Yes, that is 1,200.*

*The Pace Center hosts many programs. Here are a couple of highlights I'd like to share:*

- *The first, a Church Crawl. A group of students attend Open & Affirming churches within walking distance of VCU. The group of college students have twice attended Second because of this program. One student mentioned it was the first time they had ever heard a woman preach. How powerful to have that experience here in the Sanctuary of Second!*
- *A second highlight is a small group that is attending the Montreat Conference Center Collegiate Conference in early January. A group of three students will make the trek from Richmond to Montreat for three days of worship, fellowship, and renewal. Two students will be attending Montreat for the first time.*

*Additionally, here are some ways you can get involved and stay connected with our ministry:*

- *The first is to **refer a VCU student**. Do you know a college or high school aged student attending VCU? Reach out to me and we'll all go to coffee or lunch!*
- ***Sign up for our newsletter or email list** - the Pace Center dot com (that's the [www.thepacecenter.com](http://www.thepacecenter.com))*
- *For the tech savvy - follow us on Instagram - VCU Pace.*
- *Another way to get involved is to **prepare a meal for our Stories & Lunch program** in which we host over sixty students for a weekly meal on Wednesdays.*
- ***Donating funds**. Your financial support ensures that students are cared for, loved, and supported. Your financial support shows that Presbyterians are excited to be a part of this vital mission and ministry!*

We give thanks for our ongoing partnership with the Pace Center to provide campus ministry opportunities at VCU.



Russ Kerr



**Literary Circle****Tuesday, January 9 at 7:00pm**

Literary Circle will meet Tuesday, January 9, 2024 at 7:00pm.

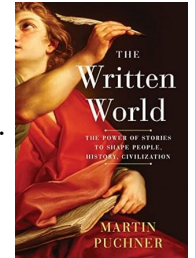
Donna Carey will be our host (2823 East Weyburn Road, 23235). Each of the members will be sharing a recent book we have read and enjoyed.

Please contact Carolyn Brandt ([crbrandt1412@gmail.com](mailto:crbrandt1412@gmail.com) or 804-288-2511) for more information.

**Day Book Group****Wednesday, January 17 at 10:00am**

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

The book for discussion is *The Written World* by Martin Puchner.

**Disaster Relief Team Needed ~ Trip to Southern Florida February 3-11**

Once again, a team will be assembled to help with the recovery from Hurricane Ian in Southern Florida. Previous teams are still seeing homes that are in dire need of repair. Hurricane Ian wreaked havoc on Florida both on the coast and inland. This trip is February 3-11, 2024, near the coast of Fort Myers.

*A note from Brown Pearson  
Moderator, Disaster Relief Team*

Needed are able bodied people who can get in there and get to work. Any skill level is helpful. It has been over a year since the hurricane and their homes are still a mess. We will be rebuilding. I am hopeful to have a team of 20.

Three things are promised: 1. You will do manual labor (at your own pace) and you just might develop a skill you never thought you would have; 2. You will have one of the most positive experiences of your lifetime and you will have fun; and 3. You will be making a huge difference in the lives of some very grateful people.

If you have an interest in being a part of this mission team, please contact Brown Pearson, at [cbpearson3@erg-homes.com](mailto:cbpearson3@erg-homes.com). Please give prayerful thought to being a team member.

For those who are new to missions with the Relief Team, there is a mandatory training session from 6:00-9:00pm on January 17<sup>th</sup>, at the home of Brown Pearson in North Chesterfield. It is a “working” meeting so please wear work clothes. It will familiarize you with how things will go on the trip, what you need to bring, and safety.

**Brunch Bunch ~ Friday, January 19**

Meet at 11:30am at McLean’s Restaurant

**Coffee and Tea Sales****January 7 & 21**

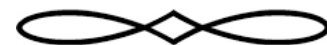
Coffee: \$9/bag

Tea: \$5/box

**February Newsletter Deadline**

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

[wjacob@2presrichmond.org](mailto:wjacob@2presrichmond.org)





*Second Presbyterian Church*  
OF RICHMOND VIRGINIA

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**Preaching Schedule for January**

January 7    Kate Fiedler  
January 14    Fred Holbrook  
January 21    Fred Holbrook  
January 28    Fred Holbrook

HAPPY NEW YEAR  
**2024**