

March 2026

Spreading the Word

Welcome as you are, where you are.

Volume 27, Issue 3



Lent & Easter Services

Mar 11, 18, 5:30 PM
Wednesdays of Lent

Mar 25, 5:30 PM
Passover Seder
with Peggy Watts Gup

Mar 29, 8:30 and 10:30 AM
Palm Sunday

Apr 2, 5:30 PM
Maundy Thursday

Apr 3, 5:30 PM
Good Friday

Apr 5
6:30 AM sunrise outdoor
9:00 AM and 11:00 AM
Easter Sunday

NOTE time changes for Easter services from our regular Sunday Worship Service schedule.



Rockfish Presbyterian Church

Angels & Elves in God's Creative World

by Pastor Inger

Amid the chaos of this world the Holy Spirit has been driving me to explore God's presence in non-traditional places. I have been taking a course called Leading With Spirit and one of the purposes is for us to broaden our understanding of how this whole world, universe, nature, etc., is interconnected and has the ability to communicate.

As I always say, there is so much going on that we cannot understand or, more likely, have never considered. Some of it is challenging to me and I am quite skeptical.

For example, in Iceland and Ireland, roads and building projects are affected by the presence of elves. Elves!

Continued...

It was quite the musical Sunday as the children joined the adult choir to sing Here I am Lord!



Angels & Elves, continued...

I found this: “Just south of Iceland’s capital of Reykjavik, in the city of Kopavogur, a two-lane street in a quiet residential area abruptly loops and narrows to avoid a small hill dotted with lichen-speckled rocks. The diversion seems inexplicable, but anyone ‘round here will tell you the reason is simple: Elves live in those rocks.

“It’s been that way since the 1970s, when roadbuilders were stymied here by accidents and equipment breakdowns. Nearby residents explained that elves were responsible for the problems. The contractors persisted, but the breakdowns continued. It became a hot news story. Finally, the roadbuilders gave up and looped round the hill.”

“There are many such spots in Iceland—houses with distorted walls, narrowed driveways, roads suddenly split in two—all to accommodate the Icelandic elves and the huldurfolk (hidden people), two similar elves of Iceland.”
(<https://www.rd.com/article/dont-mess-with-elves/>)

What It’s Like in the Town Where They Re-Route Roads to Avoid Elves



“There are a lot of unemployed angels out there. Ask Jesus—who commands the angels—to reveal one.”

Ok, you are probably reacting the same way—or maybe not. I am not sure I will ever believe in elves although I can’t say I don’t believe...be open be open... Also, by the way, elves fall into a category called Elemental Beings—Fairies, Gnomes... Yep, people think they are real. God IS pretty creative, but I am not there.

But I do—as a Bible studying Christian—believe in angels. One of the statements made by Cameran Trimble is this, “There are a lot of unemployed angels out there. Ask Jesus—who commands the angels—to reveal one.”

So, here is the weird thing—I had no idea the course would talk about angels and just the night before I had pulled out a book I have on angels—literally went through my whole bookcase looking! —and started reading it. Why? I had no idea why I did that. Well, now I guess I do. I think our Lord wants us to know we are not alone and are very protected and loved. Angels ARE real.

There is so much to explore in this wonderful, very interconnected world that God has made.

Another testimony—since I told you all to do this—a friend told me about Teilhard De Chardin, a Jesuit priest who was also a scientist. He was much maligned for his viewpoint that science points to God and how science is not

Continued...

Angels & Elves, continued...

antithetical to the Christian belief system. Now I keep seeing him quoted everywhere. In particular the quote, "We are not human beings having a spiritual experience; we are spiritual beings having a human experience."

So, from not knowing about him at all to seeing his name in lots of places, I think that is a message to learn more, don't you? So much to learn and read! My brain hurts.

I leave you with lots to ponder. And don't get me started on UFOs. How can anyone ever be bored? So much to learn and to explore, and God the CREATOR is in the midst of ALL OF IT!

Finally, I leave you with this interesting link regarding plant life. [Learning to Listen to Plants – with Monica Gagliano](https://emergencemagazine.org/conversation/learning-to-listen-to-plants/) (<https://emergencemagazine.org/conversation/learning-to-listen-to-plants/>)

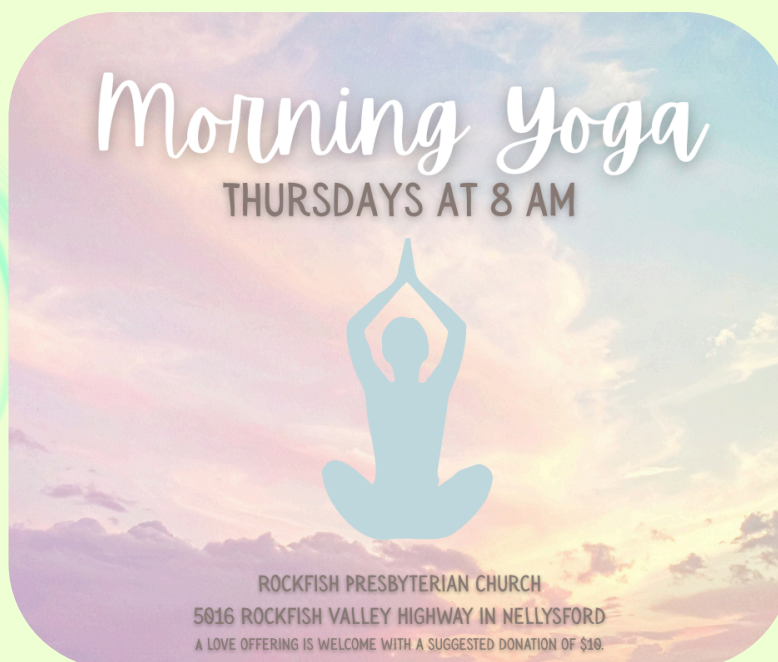
May our Lord Jesus Christ guide you in this Lenten Season of discovery, always grounded in Scripture, Prayer and Listening. Be open but always discerning. Are the fruits of the Spirit present?

Proverbs 3 (NIV) advises, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight."

1 John 4:1, "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world."

Ask God to open your eyes to the Lord's Presence and creation all around us and give thanks.

In Joyful Exploration,
Pastor Inger



Mission Notes

Dana Ogilvie, Missions co-chair

Sign-ups to shop for food for the Easter baskets will begin on March 8. **The Easter food bags for our community will be handed out on Saturday, March 28.** The Missions Committee has funds to reimburse shoppers. Contact Dana Ogilvie or Wendy Culbertson know if you have questions.



The **Wool & Grace knitting group** created cuddly bunnies to give when members make a visit during Easter season, like this visit with Nancy Small at Martha Jefferson House in Charlottesville

Local Spotlight: Gladstone Senior Center

RPC supports the Gladstone Senior Center, which serves about 50-55 active seniors ages 55+. They meet once a week to discuss local events and support each other. They enjoy a lunch together and deliver food to group members unable to attend in person.

The group supports Tye River and Rockfish River Elementary students with school supplies, helps the Blue Ridge Food Bank and donates to the Nelson County fire department. At Christmas, they adopt a nursing home to make sure the residents have gifts.

The Gladstone Senior and Citizen Center, located in Nelson County, VA, serves as a community hub for local seniors. It offers social, educational, and recreational activities to promote wellness and community connection.

Wood Ministry Warms Hearts and Homes

The **RPC Wood Ministry (a.k.a. the Woodchucks)**, serve many families in our community with wood to heat their homes. In cold, cold February this energetic crew battled snow and ice to continue making deliveries across the area to keep everyone warm. Thank you, Woodchucks!





Education News

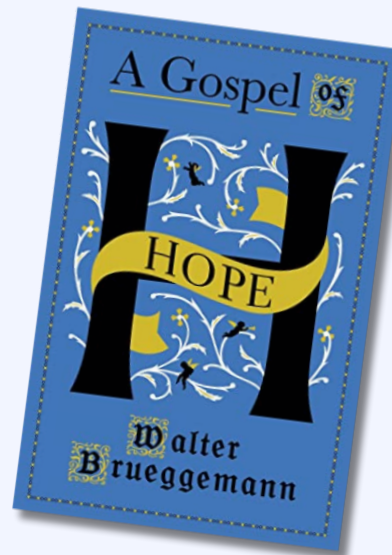
Jeri Engebretson
Christian Education

“Gospel of Hope” Study

On Wednesdays, **March 4–25, 11:30 AM to 12:30 PM**, Louie Andrews, former RPC pastor, will offer a four-week study based on Walter Brueggemann’s book, **A Gospel of Hope**. The study will be held in classroom #5, across from the church office.

Those of you familiar with Brueggemann might find the title curious. Walter Brueggemann is an Old Testament guy. For him, the term gospel is not limited to the first four books of the New Testament. Gospel is a “Holy utterance intended to awaken us from dogmatic slumbers and the temptation to have our faith reduced to a privatized narcotic.”

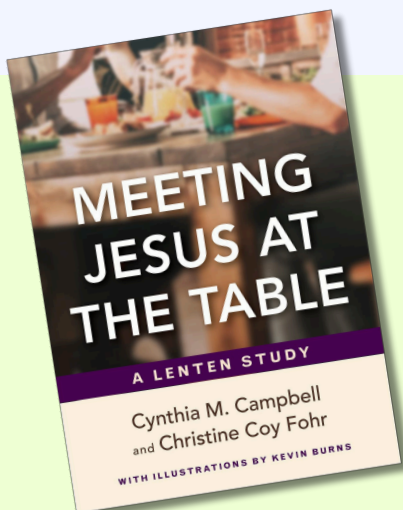
A Gospel of Hope is a wonderful collection of the wit and wisdom of over 60 years of scholarship which celebrates the “audaciousness



Wednesdays,
March 4–25,
11:30 AM to 12:30 PM

of the biblical witness.” My goal is to take a chapter a week from Walter Brueggemann’s book as a way of examining faith as more than a trusted mantra but rather a reliance on a future-hoping God who constantly makes a way out of no way.

Looking forward to spending some time together,
Louie Andrews



The Food for Thought adult Sunday School class will begin an **eight-week Lenten study** called “Meeting Jesus at the Table” **through March 29**.

All are welcome to attend 9:30 Sunday mornings in classroom #5 across from the office.

There will be **no Sunday School on Easter Sunday**.



Session Highlights



2-17-26: Moderator Rev. Inger Manchester called the RPC Session Meeting to order at 4:00 PM with prayer. Elder Dave Lawson opened with devotion and prayer. Prayers were asked for Tom Leslie and his partner Mike, on the recent unexpected death of Mike's father, healing for Greg Frahm after a skiing accident, healing for Dave Whistler with a broken hip, and peace for the Engebretsons' friend Rick who placed his wife Carol in hospice.

PASTOR'S REPORT: Discussion/Recommendation to create an RPC Safety & Security Team. Its goal would be to take a broad approach to what emergencies might happen at or around RPC and create plans to respond, e.g., medical, fire, active threat to congregation, etc. This team would fall under Facilities Management. Volunteers to be on this team will be solicited. **MOTION: to create a Safety and Security Team was made, seconded and APPROVED.**

CLERK'S REPORT:

- **APPROVED:** minutes of Stated Session Meeting on 1.20.26, minutes of Called Session Meeting on 2.1.26, minutes of Called Congregational Meeting on 2.8.26. **RATIFIED** email vote (dated 2.6.26) unanimously approving Facilities Use Agreement with Blue Ridge Respite (BRR) Program, signed and dated by both RPC and BRR on 2.11.26.

MINISTRY TEAM REPORTS:

- STEWARDSHIP/FINANCE: Elder Dave Lawson presented the Jan 2026 Balance Sheet and Income & Expense Report.
- WORSHIP MINISTRY: Elder Mary Hopkins reported team will conduct a survey on how to best meet the needs/interests of our congregation for early service. Additionally, three motions were proposed: **MOTION: for 2026 Easter Sunday Service times to be same as last 2025: Sunrise/6:30, 9:00 and 11 AM, with choir at both 9&11 Services. MOTION: for single 10:30 AM Service on 3/8, 5/3, 8/30 and 9/6 for Pastor's vacation dates. MOTION: for baptisms of Daniel Diaz and Arthur Manchester on 7/5. ALL APPROVED.**

Continued...

If you are interested in becoming a member of our church we would love to speak with you! Here are the dates when the Session will receive new members in 2026 following the 10:30 service. Please let Inger know if you are interested, rpcimanchester@gmail.com.

Apr. 12, 2026 • Aug. 9, 2026 • Nov. 8, 2026



[Click here](#) to view
a live version of
the current
RPC Calendar.

**Newsletter
Articles Due**
for the April issue:
Mar. 25
Max word count for
submissions is
400 words.

Session Highlights continued...

- **MISSIONS:** Elder Phil DeFusco reported the team is: 1) reviewing organizations being considered to receive RPC donations in 2026 and budget for those groups, and 2) working on the Easter food bag project: number of bags required, shoppers needed and schedule for completion/delivery of bags.
- **CHRISTIAN EDUCATION:** Elder Jeri Engebretson reported Louie Andrews will conduct a class on Wednesdays, March 4,11,18,25, 11:30 AM-12:30 PM in Room #5. Title: A Gospel of Hope, by Walter Brueggemann. He will also conduct a class in honor of the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence and 200th anniversary of Thomas Jefferson's death, titled "The Complexities of Thomas Jefferson" on Tuesdays, May 5,12,19,26, 5-6:30 PM in the Fellowship Hall. It will be a potluck—bring a dish to share!
- **OUTREACH:** Elder Jeri Engebretson reported the RPC Yard & Bake Sale will be Saturday, 4/18, 9-11 AM.

Rev. Inger Manchester closed the meeting in prayer at 4:45 PM.

Next Stated Session Meeting is Tuesday, March 17, 2026, at 4:00 PM in the Library. Elder Kathy Kristiansen will have Devotions and Opening Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Rita Scott, Clerk

Membership: 192 Active 14 Affiliate Members

March Birthdays

ROGER FULTON	01
FRAN DAVIS	02
SHARON GRESS	07
DWIGHT MCCALL	07
CHARLOTTE CHAPMAN	09
RITA SCOTT	09
PHYLLIS SAVIDES	12
BILL MUSE	13
MARY DUDLEY EGGLESTON	14
CHARLIE NEWSOME	14
PHIL DEFUSCO	15
TRAE TURNER	17
TRACY MCGATHA	23
KITTY DEANE	26
CYNTHIA RAMSEY	30
BRENT KITCHING	31
ZACHARY MANTHEY	31



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Tue., Wed., Thu. 9 AM — 1 PM

Pastor Inger O. Manchester
704-252-0924
rpcimanchester@gmail.com

Join us for worship

Sundays 8:30 and 10:30 AM

Adult Sunday School & Middle
School 9:30 AM

Children's Sunday School during
10:30 Service

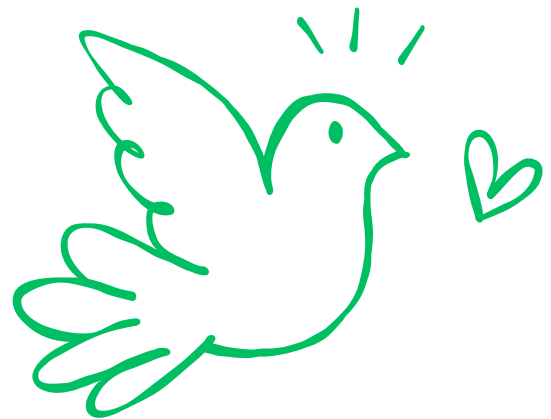
Worship services are recorded and
available via [YouTube](#).

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Inger's Inklings

by Pastor Inger



Gifts of the Spirit

In a sermon a couple of weeks ago, I asked everyone to begin noting when the Holy Spirit was showing up in your life.

So I decided to do the same because I am generally preaching to myself. I have been writing it in a journal.

From moments like feeling nudged to go and talk to John and Dorothy before our service, only to find out that John was having back surgery the next day.

To other moments like hearing stories from parents about children who have had BIG Holy Spirit moments leading them into ministry challenges that God is growing.

And, yes, I asked for the kids (who are adults) to come and tell their AMAZING stories when they're in town. I CANNOT WAIT to hear the two separate stories told in person. (Hint, hint, parents.)

For another example, I received two gifts from people in the congregation; one I received last year is a book that I thought was beautiful, but the moment wasn't right until now for it to "speak" to me.

Then God put it together with a second gift from a separate person (the surprise to be revealed on Easter) so that the connection will be a theme for our Easter Sunday sermon.

This is a big gift from the Spirit as Easter sermons are meant to be special. Sometimes Spirit moments are given through time in ways we can't see immediately... connections being made, quilts being woven, lives being led... The Holy Spirit is truly at work ALL THE TIME.

Another type of gift is confession.

I am the president of the board for my tiny homeowners association. As you know, things pop up that upset neighbors. In an attempt to quickly resolve a matter, I sent an email without asking the board for approval because I thought it was simple. The receiver of the email went ballistic.

I felt horrible that I had not run it through the board and sent an apology to the board. Their response was so generous. And my stress went right down. I made no excuses, just laid out what I had done. And was forgiven. Which made me think about how God asks us to come to Him and just lay it out. And be forgiven. What a gift for us. Let us use it!

So this Lenten Season pay attention. You may be surprised at how much the Lord reveals.

In Holy Love,
Pastor Inger