May 2026

Spreading the Word

Welcome as you are, where you are.

Volume 27, Issue 5



INSIDE, WE ALSO TALK ABOUT:

Circle of Friends
Health & Safety
Nelson Co. Community Development Foundation
Tuesdays Together
VBS
Goodness Grows Garden
Woodchucks

Rockfish Presbyterian Church

The Grace of Accepting Help from Others

by Pastor Inger

Rockfish is such a healthy church family. It is such a gift to be a part of. We show up for one another.

Acts 2:42-47 says,
42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Hebrews 10:24-25 reminds us how important it is to meet together regularly.
24 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, 25 not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Romans 12:10 tells us,
10 Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.

As the two funeral services this past month attested, we are good at this. We show up. We celebrate and mourn

Continued...

Accepting Help, continued...

together. People here understand that being a family means more than just showing up on Sunday for service, but means so much more!

It means socials and wood ministry and knitting and volunteering. It means making deviled eggs for fellowship and cookies for prisoner families. What a gift to be part of a congregation that understands this important aspect to our life together!

And here is the harder part. I think we will all agree that it is easier to be the helper than the one helped.

Very few people like to be the center of attention, but I want to point out that accepting the attention is also a gift for others.

When something happens like the loss of a beloved one or a sickness, people around you NEED to show up and help. They NEED to make the casserole or coffee cake, send the card, show up and clean your bathroom or walk your dog.

It is their way of saying I am sad, too, I miss that person, too, I am worried about you, too. I love you. I care.

And it is so HARD to accept it because YOU want to be that helper. YOU really don't "need" it, whatever "it" is. But then it's time to remember that THEY do.

So, when someone asks, "What can I do?" and you know they are sincere—give them something to do. Sit with you, make your lunch, take you out for a wine or coffee, clean your kitchen, make the bed for incoming guests.

Say yes. Say yes. Say yes. Even when it's uncomfortable. One day it will be your turn to help again.

And by accepting that love offering you are the one offering grace. Isn't it amazing how love works? It just keeps pouring and pouring...

We are a family. Amen.
All thanks be to God!
Pastor Inger



Celebration for Sue Nichols

Saturday, May 23, 4 PM

Sue Nichols is retiring from her volunteer job as Disbursing Treasurer. She has done this work for the church for more than 20 years! WOW! We are going to celebrate this dedication to RPC with a potluck picnic at Inger and Lee's home on May 23 at 4 PM.

Circle of Friends

The Circle of Friends is a newly formed group that has been meeting once a month with around 15 men and women who are un-partnered and would like to meet people in a similar situation.

Not designed as a "dating" group, but as people interested in having interactions with other singles. This group is not limited to RPC members but to anyone in the county/community who might like to join.

The members have outlined many ideas for events to attend such as theatre performances, vineyard tours, restaurants for lunch or dinner, hiking, dancing, singing events, and many more ideas yet to come.

So far, several people have carpooled and attended a performance at The Paramount Theatre in Charlottesville and also a Waynesboro Symphony event.

The monthly get-togethers, held at a member's home, are interesting, lively, and a great way for all to get to know each other better.

Under the leadership of Lisa Shannon, please feel comfortable in coming to a meeting, usually held on the **third Wednesday of the month at 4:00 PM**. Please look for an update in the monthly RPC newsletter, or ask Lisa, Mike Fisher, or Sandy Gallagher for more information. We would love to have you join us!

Sincerely,
The Outreach Ministry
Sandy Gallagher

Health & Safety Team

The Health and Safety Team's mission is to help keep our church secure, safe, welcoming and prepared, by leading awareness, prevention, and response to safety needs and concerns.

At their meeting on February 17, Session approved the creation of a Safety & Security Team (now called Health & Safety Team). The team is led by Amelia McCulley and Gordon Davis. Members include: Harris Luscomb, Ken Engebretson, Jim Wright, Ben Holmes, Kevin Tucker, Lee Manchester, and Ginny Simpson.

This Team will help our church be prepared for everyday situations and unexpected emergencies. Many houses of worship are doing this as a simple way to care for their congregations and property.

Our goal is to gather helpful resources and develop practical plans. We will start by focusing on common emergencies such as fire and medical needs. In the future, we will also look at ways to support overall church safety. **We are working with local Nelson County partners, including the Sheriff's Department and Wintergreen Fire & Rescue**. We will review equipment, training, and procedures so we can respond effectively if needed.

This is about being prepared—not alarmed. We want to support a safe, friendly and open environment for everyone.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, we encourage you to reach out to a member of the team.

Amelia McCulley,
Health & Safety Co-Chair









Nelson County Community Development Foundation

Spotlight on a local organization that RPC's Missions Committee supports.

The Nelson County Community Development Foundation was founded in 1985 to foster and promote community development that primarily benefits low and moderate income citizens of Nelson County.

The organization's primary focus is housing, but they can assist with health, water, recreation and education development. The organization is governed by a board of directors and has a small staff that works out of the Nelson Center in Lovingston. NCCDF works closely with licensed and insured contractors in our area to help with housing issues.

One of NCCDF's latest projects is St. James Place in Piney River. The apartment building offers 2-bedroom layouts with a fully equipped kitchen, stove, microwave, dishwasher and refrigerator. Tenants are responsible for electricity, and rent is capped at $900 and adjusted based on each tenant's income.

NCCDF currently has a matching grant from the Perry Foundation to help finish the apartments. The grant is for $65,000 but NCCDF needs to raise matching funds to access the Perry Foundation funds. So far they have raised $28,500 with the support of 72 individuals and $10,000 from a grant. They are almost 60% of the way to access the Perry Foundation Grant match!

Learn more about this important local organization at their website https://nccdf.org/

Dana Ogilvie, Mission Co-Chair

Education News

Jeri Engebretson
Christian Education

Tuesdays Together this Spring are in celebration of the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence and the 200th anniversary of Thomas Jefferson's death. Everyone is invited to join for potluck dinners and presentations by Louie Andrews, docent at Monticello and former pastor at RPC.

We will meet Tuesdays in May from 5–6:30 in the Fellowship Hall.

May 5 - The Declaration of Independence
May 12 - Jefferson's religious views
May 19 - Jefferson and slavery
May 26 - Jefferson's relationship with John and Abigail Adams.

Bring a dish to share and enjoy this educational presentation as we celebrate our country's 250th birthday!



Adult Sunday School Class
Sunday mornings at 9:30 AM



Vacation Bible School

Monday, June 29 – Thursday, July 2
9 AM – 12 PM

We are excited to offer a Vacation Bible School this year!

I AM WHO I AM:
Images of God in Scripture and the Arts

Calling all volunteers and campers!

From the opening verse of Genesis, we know God as one who creates. God speaks, "Light!" and creation has begun. By the time the writer of Genesis concludes the sixth day, we know ourselves to be made in God's image. That means that we, too, are creators.

Art & the Bible Camp is a space where students explore creativity, both as a process and a product, through the visual arts in conversation with scripture. This four-day long arts experience introduces various media and techniques as ways to amplify and interpret scripture.

Art & the Bible Camp is intended for children who have completed K—6 grades. Older kids would be great helpers!

Bronwyn White
VBS Director

Goodness Grows at RPC

Deb Andrews, Goodness Grows

"Inch by inch, row by row, gonna make my garden grow" was the theme song for the church garden as we began almost 10 years ago.

In that time we have added people and changed our mission several times as we grew inch by inch and year by year.

In 2016, Nancy Johnson and Leslie Buchanan had the idea of using the unused expanse of property up the hill from the church. "What about putting a community garden there?"

That was the beginning of a new church mission joined by Debbie Andrews, Mike Fisher, Wendy Culberson, Jeri Engebretson and Peggy Toms. We were given seed money by the Hunger Mission of the Presbytery of the James with our plan of giving food to people in need in Nelson County. The church put us in the budget and we were ready to go.

In the spring of 2017, generous folks like Gene Varnadoe and Dave Lawson helped to till up the red clay ground, build compost bins, put up fencing and build a gate to keep out deer and other critters.

Over the years, we have composted and hauled mulch to improve the soil, installed pathways between rows, improved the fencing, added an irrigation system and added two rows of raised bed containers.

One Saturday we had the building trades class from Nelson High School come and build our garden shed. Jim Wright built us a second gate in the last few years. We are grateful for all the extra hands that helped to make Goodness Grows the special place that it is.

To fulfill our mission, we tried to interact with Head Start families at Rockfish Elementary School to reap the benefits of our garden. We found most families could not get to our church so we looked for other ideas.

For a while, we took vegetables to the Afton Fire Station during Senior lunches once a week. We would set up a farm market table for people to take home bags of vegetables. That worked really well until Covid hit in 2020 and the lunches were stopped.

Continued...





Goodness Grows, continued...



During Covid, our mission became focused on homebound church members and wood ministry clients as we would drop off vegetables to front doors.

The garden was a haven for us gardeners during those two years as we were able to join in fellowship and still be safe as we worked outdoors. We formed our own "bubble" and our friendships grew as much as the plants.

Following Covid, we began a new mission where we provided the church family with vegetables and you in turn donated money that we contributed to Heifer International.

Over the last three years we have contributed over $2,300. That's a lot of chickens, goats and cows! Many thanks to you who supported that ministry.

This year our new theme song is "All My Life's a Circle" as **we return to our original mission** of providing fresh vegetables to those in need.

We will become part of the Nelson County project, "Plant an Extra Row" that will provide fresh vegetables to families in need in Nelson county. Several organizations will receive and distribute weekly to county residents, and we are thrilled to become part of this cooperative effort.

We have had gardeners come and go through the years. Jennifer Tucker and Lisa Shannon are more recent additions and we are always happy to have new faces. Work is always lighter with many hands and it's not work when you are with friends.

Spring has sprung with the planting of many root vegetables; garlic, onions, radishes, beets and carrots. Asparagus is just finishing and much more will be planted in the weeks ahead.

Thank you for your continued support of the garden. Walk up the hill, pull a few weeds, take home a few delicious veggies or just sit and enjoy the beauty of God's creation that we call Goodness Grows.





Woodchuck 2025-26 Wrap-Up

Our 25ish-member woodchuck coterie (look it up) began our 2025-26 season last August when we bucked logs at the Averitt's and started delivering split hardwoods to 18 clients in early November.

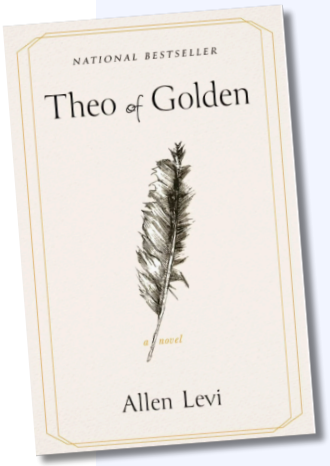
We usually met weekly on Wednesdays at 9 AM and operated our two hydraulic splitters for an hour or two, and loaded a couple pickup truck beds with our "product" for deliveries... sometimes at the south end of the county, 23 miles away. A few very cold days and delivery paths in snow and icy conditions...challenges met with smiles and sweat...but deliveries were made!

We ended the season with over 44 delivered loads, exceeding our totals for each of the past two years. Many warm homes resulted from those dedicated efforts and hours of transporting our "product" throughout the Rockfish Valley — efforts that were greatly appreciated by our clients!

We officially closed out this season with our annual picnic gathering at Rick & Dottie Winter's home in April. It was a fun time for all with great fellowship while we did not have to wear safety glasses, ear protection, gloves and steel-toed boots!



Going forward, we will be doing some further cleanup of the work area and possibly a little splitting just to keep the machinery in working order. If you have questions or an interest in joining our efforts for next season, please contact Ken Engebretson at ken.engebretson@verizon.net.



What we're reading in the RPC Book Club

A story of giving and receiving, of seeing and being seen, *Theo of Golden* by Allen Levi is an unforgettable novel about the power of generosity, the importance of connection, and the quiet miracles that happen when we choose kindness and wonder.

Session Highlights

ROCKFISH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (RPC) SESSION HIGHLIGHTS 4.21.26

Moderator, Rev Inger Manchester called the Session Meeting to order with prayer at 4 PM in the Library. Present and constituting a quorum were Ruling Elders: Jeri Engebretson, Mary Hopkins, Harris Luscomb, Amelia McCulley, and Rita Scott, Clerk. Phone attendees: Elders Kevin Tucker and Nancy Johnson. Excused: Elders Dave Lawson, Kathy Kristiansen, and Phil DeFusco. Elder Mary Hopkins provided devotion and prayer. Prayers were asked for: Harris Luscomb's continued healing and travel mercies for those away from home.

New Business:

- Elder-Elect (Class of 2029) Bill Muse gave his faith journey.

Pastor's Report:

- Inger has had complaints about a garden flag outside the front door of the Church that states "Hate Has No Home Here." Session decided to remove it and put a banner on the Church website that welcomes all to the church.
- Discussed how to address three items Church Administrator Trae Turner brought to Session last month:
- 1. Church website (update to new platform),
- 2. PowerChurch Plus (update to online version),
- 3. Online Directory (get in budget/plan).
- A committee will be formed to find a company that can assist with these items. Website design and/or business experience is requested. Contact the office if interested.

Clerk's Report:

- [MOTION] approve minutes of Stated Session Meeting 3.17.26. APPROVED
- [MOTION] approve minutes of Called Session Meeting (New Member: Rose Csorba) 4.12.26. APPROVED
- [MOTION] approve date in May for Called Congregational Meeting for Congregation to vote on Elders-elect nominated for Class of 2029. APPROVED *Sunday* 5.17.26
- [MOTION] approve date in June for installation of new Elders. APPROVED *Sunday* 6.14.26

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.

Aug. 9, 2026 • Nov. 8, 2026

Session Highlights continued...

Ministry Team Reports:

- Elder Mary Hopkins [Worship Ministry]
  - Reported Deb Andrews will be taking over as Communion Coordinator and Dave Lawson will be become Chairperson for the Worship Ministry Team as Mary rotates off Session in June.
  - Results of a poll taken about the 8:30 service received a wide range of opinions (somewhat equally divided) giving the Team good data with comments to continue discussions of what best meets needs of the congregation as we move indoors in the Fall.
- Elder Amelia McCulley [Personnel]
  - A newly formed group, the Health & Safety Team, has met once. Its mission is: "to help keep our church secure, safe, welcoming and prepared by leading awareness, prevention and response to safety needs and concerns." Current focus will be on awareness and preparation related to medical emergencies.
- Elder Harris Luscomb [Stewardship]
  - Reports and Motions:
  - [MOTION] That the 2025 Annual Financial Review be approved by Session and that the required information from that review be sent to the Presbytery of the James. APPROVED
  - [MOTION] That $5000 of the unrestricted funds for the church be allocated to the restricted Helping Hands fund. APPROVED
  - [MOTION] That Session authorize Roger Fulton and Vicki Davis to be the signatories on the Vanguard investment account for the church. (A document indicating this authorization will be prepared for the signature of the Clerk of Session and the Pastor) APPROVED

Session requested the Stewardship Committee review Helping Hands oversight and disbursement policies and report at the May Stated Session Meeting, 5.19.26.

Rev Manchester closed the meeting in prayer at 5:10.

Next Stated Session Meeting: 5.19.26, 4 PM in the Library. Elder Jeri Engebretson will have Devotions and Opening Prayer.

Active Members – 196 Affiliate Members - 14



Click here to view a live version of the current RPC Calendar.

Newsletter Articles Due
for the June issue:
May 27
Max word count for submissions is 400 words.

May Birthdays

ROSS RUFFING 02

MARY JO RUSSELL 02

KEVIN TUCKER 03

WALT NICHOLS 04

BILL HYSELL 07

TUCKER KIRK 07

MICHELLE RICHARDSON 07

PEGGY TOMS 09

MICHAEL MANTHEY 11

KAREN ASHER 12

KEN ENGEBRETSON 12

BILL HAMRE 13

CARL RUSH 13

JOHN MORGAN 15

WILLIAM NEWSOME 17

BILL SCHIVLEY 17

JERRY WRENN 19



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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.

Follow us on Facebook

Inger's Inklings





Security Tips for Church Members

Ugh! I hate that there are people in this world who are actively using the church to scam people out of money. It feels like the lowest of the low. But they are out there.

A few reminders to help us avoid those scams:

1. I will NEVER ask for gift cards or money in an email. You will hear from me in person, by phone call, from the pulpit, or in an official church communication
2. Check the "from" box on the email. Is it from rpcimanchester@gmail.com? That is my real email.
3. If in ANY doubt, text me or call me. I will let you know immediately if I was trying to get hold of you. I would rather hear from you!
4. Peggy Watts Gup also reminded us that an Evite or such will never come from a person but from the company. Rockfish Church does not use Evite so don't open it if it says it is from us.
5. If you do feel you have fallen for a scam, change your password immediately, and use two-factor verification when it is offered.
6. Don't feel dumb. These scammers are good at what they do!

I hate that I had to write this and I am sorry my name was associated with a scam. It is a common occurrence for pastors and churches because people trust us. I imagine that God is paying attention to scammers using God's name in vain this way, and I have to remember that justice will be God's in the end. See—I do listen to what I preach. But boy do scammers make me mad!

Much love,
Pastor Inger