June-July 2026

Spreading the Word

Welcome as you are, where you are.

Volume 27, Issue 6/7



At our end of year Children's Choir party at Buddy Martin's house, the children got to visit with this sweet horse!

INSIDE, WE ALSO TALK ABOUT:

Education
VBS
Congregational Life
Missions
Blue Ridge Respite
Session
Alter Blooms

Rockfish Presbyterian Church

Seeking Certainty in a Complicated World

by Pastor Inger

Do you ever wonder what you would like for a personal super power? Not a "save the world" kind of thing, but something you just wish you had the ability to do.

Mine is to read and take in lots of books at one time. And remember them. I get so many recommendations and the books are just piling up!

One recommendation was *Letters to a Young Muslim* by Omar Saif Ghobash. Here is part of the Amazon write up: "From the Ambassador of the UAE to Russia comes *Letters to a Young Muslim*, a bold and intimate exploration of what it means to be a Muslim in the twenty-first century. In a series of personal and insightful letters to his sons, Omar Saif Ghobash offers a vital manifesto that tackles the dilemmas facing not only young Muslims but everyone navigating the complexities of today's world. Full of wisdom and thoughtful reflections on faith, culture and society. This is a courageous and essential book that celebrates individuality whilst recognizing it is our shared humanity that brings us together."

Continued...

Certainty, continued...

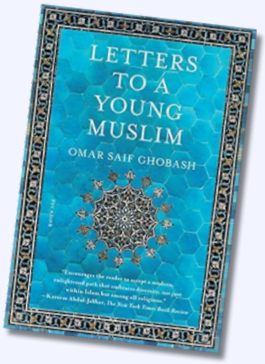
I am learning so much about Islam and the many iterations there are. Much like Christianity. But an overall lesson is that the complexity of the world is not new, and even in 2016 this author was sounding the alarms about the dangers of certainty as opposed to trying to understand other points of view.

The author provides some thoughts on our increasing polarization and also radicalization. He writes to the youth, "Your world is more complicated, more volatile, more unpredictable. Why is this the case? The simplest explanation is that the world is open to you through technology. There are no walls, no vast open spaces where nothing happens—as there were only a few decades ago, That is why many of you and your friends will lock into any certainty you find." (p 20).

Do you agree that we are all looking for something to lock into? A certainty in a world that seems erratic? Certainty is a very dangerous place to be because it shuts out all other voices. And in 2016 technology was not as developed as it is now. We are now targeted. We become too exhausted to hear all the viewpoints that are thrown at us through technology so we pick a few and dig in. And technology pays attention and furthers the division with focused news stories and rhetoric.

This reality is not going well and it is not Kingdom building. Is this division God's call on our lives? Scripture would remind us to stay soft and flexible. "To answer before listening—that is folly and shame." Proverbs 18:13 "My dear

Your world is more complicated, more volatile, more unpredictable.



brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry." James 1:19 "Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone." Colossians 4:6

I wish I had more answers of how to solve this huge problem, but I do believe that what is happening—our increasing polarization amongst ourselves—is not God's will.

Perhaps it is time for more dinner parties, more church events, more working together for common purposes, and more patience with one another.

Less online/television/phone time and more time spent in person, developing real relationships. More time outside in nature. More time cooking together. Golfing together, playing pickleball together. More time... together.

And then we will remember what life really is about. What really gives us joy. Sharing ourselves. That has not changed and never will.

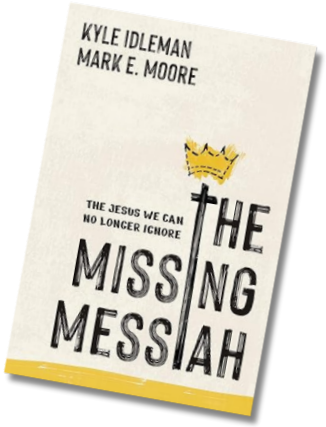
People are people, and God is good all the time!
Just some thoughts... Pastor Inger

Education News

There will be no “official” **Children’s Sunday School** for the middle schoolers and elementary children during the summer. There will be childcare during the 10:30 service throughout the summer.

The new Sunday School year will begin Sunday, August 16. The middle school class will begin meeting at 10:30 and the younger children will meet at 10:30 after the children’s time.

Plans are underway for **Vacation Bible School** beginning Monday, June 29 - Thursday, July 2 from 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM. All teaching slots have been filled. Now we need children from the community to register!



The “Food For Thought” Adult Sunday School Class is studying *Love Wins* by Rob Bell through June 7. We will continue throughout the summer with the study of *The Missing Messiah* by Idleman and Moore.

Jeri Engebretson
Christian Education



Volunteers

We need volunteers for the middle school and elementary school **Children’s Sunday School program**. If you are interested, please take a Protection Policy packet and form in the folder on the narthex table. Follow the directions on the form and submit the form to the church office (Trae’s mailbox, or under the door, or by email). Trae will send in your information for a security check. This process does not take long. Thanks for your interest in this very important opportunity.

VBS 2026!
Rockfish Presbyterian Church



Art & the Bible CAMP

Images of God in Scripture and the Arts

Monday, June 29 – Thursday, July 2

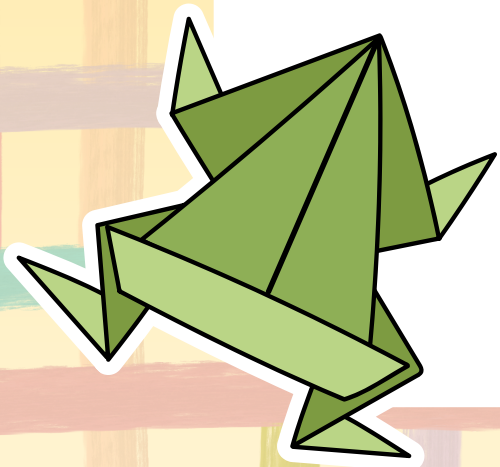
9AM – 12PM

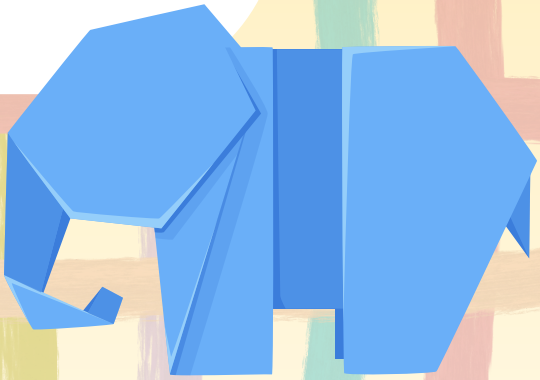
K-6th grade

Explore the Bible creatively through art such as origami, felting, weaving and creating mobiles

Games! Snacks!
Invite your friends!

Register today





For more details, contact
Rockfishpcus@gmail.com

Congregational Life

It has been my privilege to chair the VERY BEST Ministry Team at RPC for some 4 years. I have found each and every one of you kind, caring, helpful, and supportive! May God Bless each and every one of you cute people!! I love you all. I'm not leaving the Ministry Team and will continue to chair the Memorial Reception Committee, but we have a new “go-to” person. I know you will all welcome her to her new position. She's already been blown away at the responsiveness and willingness of the members of Congregational Life to help. As Inger would say... SO GOOD!!

Beginning June 1, we have a new Congregational Life Chair. Here is a note of introduction from Jen Kratz, your new CL Chair. I will be introducing her to the congregation in the next weeks. THANK YOU, JEN!!

Sue Fulton, Outgoing Chair
Congregational LIfe

Hello all! I am so grateful to be able to serve with this group and look forward to getting to know each of you more in coming months as I get familiar with all the duties and responsibilities.

I have been attending Rockfish Presbyterian with my wife Trae for the past year, some of you may know who she is :) and we have truly been blessed to be a part of a congregation that has been so warm and welcoming. It is that warmth and welcoming that I am excited to be able to contribute to in this capacity of church life.

It has been challenging to find a role within the church that fits my busy work schedule as I continue to work full-time in Harrisonburg each week, and this opportunity feels like a good fit. I am excited to see where it goes. I look forward to getting to know each of you on a more personal level in the coming weeks/months/years. Please feel free to reach out to me through text and email whenever or phone calls in the evenings and weekends.



Sincerely, Jen, Incoming Chair
jakratz79@yahoo.com, 540-810-7026



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

This month, we'd like to take the opportunity to highlight one of our mission partners, **Building Goodness Foundation**. In much the same way as RPC, Building Goodness is focused on making a difference in both the local and global community.

The organization is headquartered in Charlottesville and operates with the mission of "Creating spaces where communities thrive." They work with volunteers who provide skilled and unskilled labor to complete building and renovation projects for individuals, small businesses, and community groups. From building schools in Guatemala to performing bathroom remodels for a local Nelson county family, the organization taps its volunteer staff to scope out work, recruit team members, and deliver on its promise to improve the lives of the community.

As a volunteer of the organization, both Gordon Davis and I have done several home repair jobs for our county neighbors. Building Goodness is well organized and I've enjoyed getting involved with them. They are always looking for new volunteers as well as donations.

RPC provides financial support to this organizaiton, and we are considering opportunities to join them on a short-term mission trip to Guatemala, where we would provide skills and labor on one of their current projects.

You may learn more about the organization by visiting their website at buildinggoodness.org. If you're interested in helping out on a local project, feel free to reach out to me.

Tim Quick
Mission Member

Summertime Respite



As things wind down a bit for the summer, Blue Ridge Respite will be as busy and fun as ever. We welcome any of you to come visit us to see what we're all about. We're welcoming new members and volunteers. It's a great place for socialization, to make friends, to do movement, music and creativity.



This summer we will be going up to the Wintergreen music festival, and a group of their students will be coming to the church to play for us. **You are welcome to drop in and participate** whenever you would like. Please keep us in mind for people you know who are dealing with memory issues and or movement related disorders like Parkinson's.







We're also collecting coins for the next month. So, find that dusty bank in the corner and donate to us. Will sort and prepare the coins and use the funds towards a service project.

Finally, but most importantly, **Blue Ridge Respite is overwhelmingly grateful** to this church for the use of the space, and everything that goes with it. And of course, some of my best volunteers are members of this church.



Thank you for partnering with us to make this a place of welcome support, love and laughter for some really wonderful people.

Barb Shefelton
Blue Ridge Respite Director



RPC Cemetery Ministry Team Report

1. Our 44 veterans in the RPC Cemetery were honored on May 24 for Memorial Day. Carol Kingsley and Mike Chambers placed American flags at each grave marker, the names were read, TAPS was played by Lee Goodrich and Oeida Hatcher, and Reverend Inger said a prayer.
2. Updated paper maps were provided to Hilary Day of Stoney Creek to produce updated digital map files using AutoCAD software. New maps will be printed once the memory stick is returned with the map files.
3. Vonda Quick was interred in the Quick family plot in the Lower Cemetery.
4. Karen James has purchased a headstone for her parents' plot (Simroth) in the Upper Cemetery and is awaiting installation by the memorial company.
5. Karen James purchased two more plots in the Upper Cemetery for her family next to her parents' plots.
6. Lee Goodrich 'swapped out' a cremains plot in the Columbarium Garden around the Celtic Cross for a cremains plot in the Upper Cemetery lawn.
7. Families are expressing sensitivity to any removal of dilapidated or exotic adornments despite this being within the RPC Cemetery rules. So far, we have accommodated their wishes.
8. Creation Appreciation replaced several winter-damaged arbor vitae along the CVEC corridor next to the Upper Cemetery.

Mike Chambers contracted with Creation Appreciation to maintain the Upper Cemetery. Kate Humphrey and I are covering the costs as part of our 2026 RPC Donation Pledges. Including:

- Professional lawn care to increase the beauty. This area is where 'future sales' will be.
- Weed control, trimming, mulching.
- Watering of the arbor vitae barrier during drought-like weather.
- Except for mowing, the Upper Cemetery will not require Grounds Ministry funds.
- The Grounds Ministry Team maintains the Lower Cemetery.

Mike Chambers, Cemetery Chair
434-241-6456, chambersmj53@gmail.com





What we're reading in the RPC Book Club

***Culpability* by local author Bruce Holsinger (June)**
Culpability explores a world newly shaped by chatbots, autonomous cars, drones, and other nonhuman forces in ways that are thrilling, challenging, and unimaginably provocative.

***The Wondrous Life and Loves of Nella Carter* by Brionni Nwosu (July)**
This novel centers around a protagonist, Nella Carter, who seeks only the good and beauty in a world seemingly set to convince her otherwise.

Session Highlights

ROCKFISH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SESSION HIGHLIGHTS 5.19.26

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, Dave Lawson, Kathy Kristiansen, Phil DeFusco and Rita Scott, Clerk. Phone attendee: Elder Kevin Tucker. Excused: Elder Nancy Johnson. Elder Jeri Engebretson provided devotion and prayer.

New Business:

- 5.12.26 Presbytery of the James (POJ) Called Meeting Report from Elder Phil DeFusco who attended virtually:
  - The POJ approved sale of Chamberlayne Avenue office building for $800,000 with proceeds directed to operational reserves/investments. Financial stewardship from sale proceeds affirmed: $80,000 set aside for transition/tech costs, remainder invested (up to 5% annual draw for operations). Next steps: Trustees authorized to lease new space, likely remaining in Richmond area. New leadership appointed to Committee on Nominations and the Administrative Commission for Ebenezer Church.

Pastor's Report:

- APPROVED The Audio System Replacement was originally approved for an amount not-to-exceed $27,000. When the crawl space plan for wiring needed to be modified during the wiring phase, the additional work cost $1,012.28, which brought the completed project total to $27,057.28. Move that Session approve this increase as appropriate and necessary.
- APPROVED scheduling a Called Session Meeting for potential New Members, 6/28/26 immediately after 10:30 Church service.

Clerk's Report:

- APPROVED minutes of Stated Session Meeting 4.21.26.
- RATIFIED email vote 5.7.26 to approve Class of 2029, Elder-Elect Bronwyn White's written bio/faith journey.
- RATIFIED minutes of Called Session Meeting 5.11.26 ("Session Hereby authorizes Roger Fulton and Vicki Davis to open a Church Checking Account at Truist Bank, aka Truist Financial Corporation, and be signatories on the account ").
- APPROVED minutes of Called Congregational Meeting (Vote for New Elders) 5.17.26.
- APPROVED elect 2 Commissioners (Bill Muse and Bronwyn White) for June 17 POJ Stated Meeting.

Continued...

Session Highlights continued...

Ministry Team Reports:

- Elder Jeri Engebretson [Christian Education and Outreach]
  - Education:
    - No Youth Sunday School during the summer, childcare will continue during 10:30 service. Youth Sunday School will resume August 16.
    - Vacation Bible School scheduled June 29 - Jul 2, 9 AM-12 PM. All teacher slots filled - need children from congregation and community to register!
  - Outreach - no items to report.
- Elder Nancy Johnson [Facilities] Spring Refresh: painting of wrought Iron railings at rear entrance to narthex and painting of pavilion shed and end caps to be completed end of May.
- Elder Harris Luscomb [Stewardship] presented April 2026 Operating Fund Income and Expense Statement and Balance Sheet. He also provided an update on the Wells Fargo account.
- APPROVED increase appropriation of Helping Hands discretionary funds from $350 to $500.

Rev Manchester closed the meeting in prayer at 5:00 PM
Next Stated Session Meeting: 6.16.26, 4 PM in the library. Elder Amelia McCulley will have Devotions and Opening Prayer.
Active Members – 194 Affiliate Members - 14



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

Newsletter Articles Due
for the August issue:
July 22
Max word count for submissions is
400 words.

Birthdays

JUNE
SUE SCHIVLEY 05
GINNY SIMPSON 08
NANCY JOHNSON 11
ALLISON BELL 12
JIM CLARK 12
GREG FRAHM 12
PATTI HEGGIE 17
LINDA HEUER 18
ERIC DEANE 19
ELLA MANTHEY 19
KRISTEN NICKS 21
DENISE MEYER 22
VIRGINIA SCHWENINGER 22
LINDA WILK 24
RAEGAN JACKSON 25
KARISSA TORCOM 28
JULIE RUFFING 30

JULY
CAROL LEMONS 05
JANE SHAFFERMAN 07
JOE STEELE 10
STEVE WINSTON 10
WENDY CULBERSON 12
LEE CORDER 13
JULIA GRAMMER 14
JEN KRATZ 14
TOM LESLIE 15
KELLEY ALEXANDER 16
BOB MEYER 19
DORDY FOUST 20
DIANA GARLAND 20
WILEY MARTIN 20
ADA TULLY 25
SANDI WINSTON 26
KAREN JAMES 27
GENE VARNADOE 27
LUKE TOOMBS 28
ELEANORA HELLER 29
VICKI DAVIS 31



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www.rockfishpresbyterian.org

Office Hours
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 9:30 AM

Middle School and Childcare during 10:30 Service

Worship services are recorded and available via YouTube.

Follow us on Facebook

Keeping things Blooming on the Communion Table

Thanks to Sharon Gress, who has been providing the flowers each week at Rockfish Presbyterian Church for more than 10 years!

The flowers come from various places, including Bev Lacey's Blue Heron Farm in Nellysford, from Sharon's garden, or gardens of friends, supplemented from the Wegman's flower shop on occasion.



Sharon Gress constructing the Mother's Day flower arrangement.



A pro at flower arranging, Sharon recently shared her knowledge and expertise in small flower arranging workshops composed of Rockfish members. The most recent was a peony workshop at the fantastic garden property of Flo and Tim Quick. On a recent Sunday in May the Communion Table featured a beautiful Peony arrangement, and for Mother's Day Sharon put together a beautiful asymmetrical arrangement in tones of light pink and yellow that all the mothers in our church could enjoy!



Peony workshop participants (left to right) unidentified, Mary Gurr, Sharon Gress, Flo Quick, Vicki Davis, Bronwyn White, Sandy Gallagher and Lisa Shannon.

