

September 2026

Spreading the Word

Welcome as you are, where you are.

Volume 27, Issue 9



INSIDE, WE ALSO TALK ABOUT:

RPC is Hiring

Nelson Kid Care

Respite Celebrates 2 Years

Revolutionary Vets
Honored in Cemetery



Rockfish Presbyterian Church

May Their Memory Be a Blessing

by Pastor Inger

As many of you know Lee's father, John, passed away on August 11. He was a fabulous man who I was very lucky to call my father-in-law. Because of his age (almost 91) he decided that he did not want a funeral or memorial service.

He felt that most of his friends had already passed away. Instead, he wanted the family to gather at the St. Lawrence River in Alexandria Bay in Northern New York, and have a celebration in our own time. An absolutely lovely thought, and a common one I hear

Continued...

Blessing, continued...

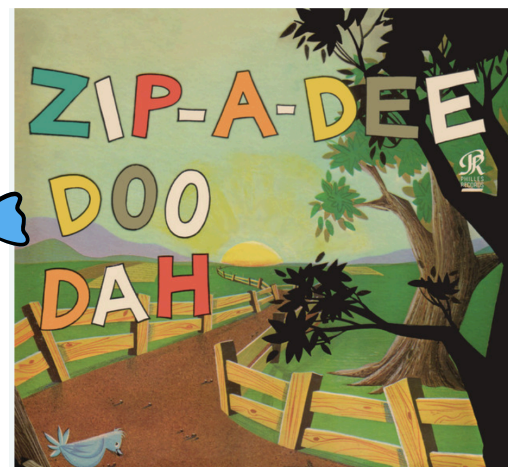
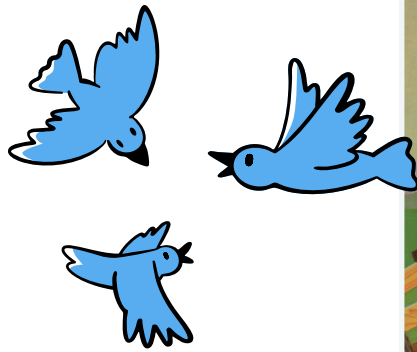
when I visit folks. No funeral, no memorial. Just have a drink in my honor. And to be truthful, the St. Lawrence River is incredible and has many, many family memories.

But here is the thing. I fully understand how a dying person might feel this way, but they are with our Lord. All is well with them. The people left here to grieve NEED a time to thank God and to celebrate a person's life.

What seems simple enough—travel to a place—becomes very, very complicated as extended families work to juggle vacation time, dates and their grief to figure out how everyone will meet in a specific place. Everyone wants to be there but a week off is not always easy, especially some place so remote, as it is almost in Canada.

This situation reminded me of the book *Annie Freeman's Fabulous Traveling Funeral* by Kris Radish, which we read in our book club. Here is an overview.

For Katherine Givens and the four women about to become her best friends, the adventure begins with a UPS package. Inside is a pair of red sneakers filled with ashes and a note that will forever change their lives. Katherine's oldest and dearest friend, Annie Freeman, left one final request—a traveling funeral—and she wants the most important women in her life as "pallbearers."



Of course, it's a book and of course folks' lives are changed. But the reality of doing something like that is A LOT for a family. Do not do it! You know who you are. :)

So I return to my strong recommendation of a memorial service or funeral or burial service. Let your family do it. A specific time and place to hear God's Word spoken, to sing the hymns that carry such meaning for hundreds of years, to thank God for the gift of life and to move forward knowing that the beloved person was remembered and celebrated.

It is not for the dead, it is for the living. A huge gift one can give is to let your family know in writing what you want at the funeral, so that your family has a guideline. So many people said they felt Sandy Gallagher at her service. That is because she told us what she wanted. Sing "Zip-a-Dee-Doo-Dah"? Of course!

As our Jewish brothers and sisters say, "May their memory be a blessing." All thanks be to God for John Manchester, and for all of our beloved family members and friends who are now with the Lord.

God is good! Amen

Rockfish Presbyterian Church

YOUTH LEADER POSITIONS

Rockfish Presbyterian Church is seeking dynamic and creative college students or adults who are interested in Youth Director and Youth Assistant positions

We plan to meet two Sundays a month.
The program starts October 11, 2026, from 5–7 PM.

We are an inclusive and affirming church. We expect theology discussed and taught will be respectful of those boundaries.

**Accepting applications until September 11
interviews begin September 13**

For more information and a full job description,
contact the church office at
434-361-1221
rockfishpcus@gmail.com



ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL will resume our regular discussions on Sept. 13, as we start a new book, *The Fruits of the Spirit*.

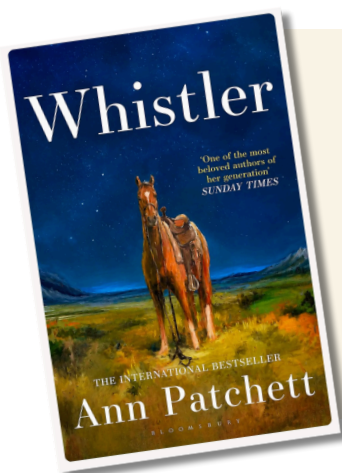
ADULT WEDNESDAY CLASS resumes on Wednesday, Sept. 16, 11:30, in the Adult Sunday School Room downstairs in classroom #5. We'll enjoy Ray Vander Laan's *In the Dust of the Rabbi*, filmed on location!

ROCKFISH IS ON THE MOVE FOR OUR YOUTH! PLANS, PLANS, PLANS...

- 6TH GRADE AND UP
 - Starting Sept. 6 at 10:30 - Confirmation will be the 1st and 3rd Sundays at 10:30 in the youth room, led by Sandi Winston and Rev. Carl Rush.
 - Starting Sept. 13 at 10:30 - Sunday School will be the 2nd, 4th, and 5th Sundays led by Stan Scott and volunteers.
 - Starting Oct. 11 from 5-7 - Youth Group will be the 2nd and 4th Sundays. Invite your friends! Open to all 6th grade and up (5-5:30 dinner, 5:30- 6 "campfire discussions," 6-7 games and activities).
- CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL begins Sept. 13 at 10:30.
- CHILDREN'S CHOIR begins Thursday, Sept. 17 at 4:30.

WE DESPERATELY NEED VOLUNTEERS to assist in the Nursery and Elementary Children's Sunday School classes. Also, a volunteer(s) to assist in the middle school class on the 2nd, 4th, and 5th Sundays of the month. (There are only two 5th Sundays during this Sunday School year.) As a reminder, the volunteers do not have to prepare the lesson, only support the teacher in the class. Also, if you want to have your name on the substitute list, that is also an option. Under Presbytery of the James guidelines, we MUST have two adults in each room. If we want to continue children's Sunday School, we need volunteers! Thanks so much for your prayerful consideration! Please contact Jeri Engebretson, jeri.engebretson@verizon.net, if you can help.

RPC Book Club



What We're Reading

Whistler by Ann Patchett

Whistler is a story of two adults united after 40 years of separation. It explores loss and blame and how the feeling of being deeply known by another person can transcend decades of separation.



Spotlight on organizations that the RPC Mission Committee supports globally, regionally and locally:

Nelson Kid Care is a local organization that has been making a difference for years in Nelson County. Nelson Kid Care has been providing kid-friendly, weekend food for children in the Nelson County Public Schools for 15 years. Last year, Rockfish Presbyterian Church took over this program because the original sponsoring non-profit organization, Amherst-Nelson Cares, Inc., was being dissolved.

During the first year of operation under the RPC umbrella, Nelson Kid Care provided weekend food for over 160 students weekly during the school year. The program costs about \$26,000 to run each year with over 99% of the costs going toward food. We are very grateful for the donations from individuals, businesses and churches in the area that have allowed us to continue the program.

Nelson Kid Care also relies on many volunteers to buy food, pack food bags and deliver food bags to the schools. We pack food bags at Tye River Elementary for children from Tye River Elementary, the Middle School and the High School on Friday mornings and for Rockfish River Elementary children at our church on Thursday afternoons.

We are currently in need of additional volunteers to help with packing and delivering bags for Rockfish River Elementary. Packing is done from 2:15 PM until about 3:15 PM on Thursday afternoons and volunteers just sign up for specific dates they are able to help.

If you are interested in helping out or have any questions about Nelson Kid Care, please contact Wendy Culberson, wendy@ronculberson.com.

The next **Mission Committee meeting** is scheduled for Sept. 14 at 4 PM in the church library. Everyone is welcome to attend! We will be focusing on the Nov. 8 Mission Fair and the Thanksgiving food bag distribution.

Celebrating 2 Years of Respite Program



More than two years ago RPC chose to step out in faith to open their doors to a respite program that was all ideas, hope and great need.

We didn't know how it would work and there have been many bumps on the way, but as we approach our 2nd anniversary we are proud of where we are. And we are grateful, so grateful, to the church for the space, the time and some of my best volunteers. RPC has stepped up in so many ways.

We invite everyone to come to the anniversary party in September (date TBD) or stop by another day and visit us. You will see laughter, friendship, dancing, music, movement, art, cooking, quiet moments, gardening, brain games, and so much more.

Barbara Shefelton
Director - Blue Ridge Respite
(757) 897-2830
brrespite.dir@gmail.com
www.blueridgerespite.org



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

**Newsletter
Articles Due**
for the October issue:
Sept. 23
**Max word count for
submissions is
400 words.**



Revolutionary Veterans to be Honored at RPC

There will be a Grave Marking Ceremony to Honor Revolutionary War Veterans, Saturday, Oct. 10, at 11 AM.

The Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) received permission from the RPC Session on July 21, 2026, to perform a Grave Marking Ceremony in the RPC Lower Cemetery honoring four Veterans of the American Revolutionary War on October 10 at 11 AM. These are:

- Captain Samuel Woods (1727-1781), who was Commissary Officer for the Quartermaster's Division of Virginia Troops, Buckingham District, Nov. 1775
- James McAlexander Sr. (1717-1798), for patriotic service (beef and provisions)
- Captain James McAlexander Jr. (1741-1783), Albemarle County Militia
- Alexander McAlexander (1756-1840), who served as Orderly Sergeant of the Albemarle County Militia and was at the Battle of Yorktown, Virginia in 1781

The McAlexander's remains are not present, but are believed to be buried in Nelson County, so the family erected a cenotaph May 13, 2001, honoring these patriots in the RPC Cemetery. The remains of Samuel Woods and his wife Mary Woods (1728-1779) are presumed to be in the RPC Cemetery. No living descendants have been located.

SAR will provide all necessary items to perform the ceremony with no cost to RPC and SAR will provide insurance coverage.

The ceremony will include presentation of the national colors by the SAR Color Guard, a recitation of their war service and the unveiling of two SAR grave markers placed in honor of the four patriots. The use of the RPC restrooms, parking lots, and the outdoor pavilion is permitted.

Volunteers from the RPC Choir will sing "God Bless America", Lee Goodrich has agreed to perform "Taps" on the trumpet, and Dave Lawson will provide the Prayer of Invocation.

The RPC congregation is invited to attend, as well as local dignitaries, law enforcement, emergency services, news organizations, and representatives from Virginia historical societies.

RSVP to Tom Quigley at tjquigley6@gmail.com so that expected numbers of visitors will be counted. A detailed Program Schedule of the ceremony will be provided.

Michael Chambers
Cemetery Ministry Team Chair
chambersmj53@gmail.com
(434) 241-6456





**GENERAL
DANIEL MORGAN
CHAPTER**

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GRAVE MARKING CEREMONY

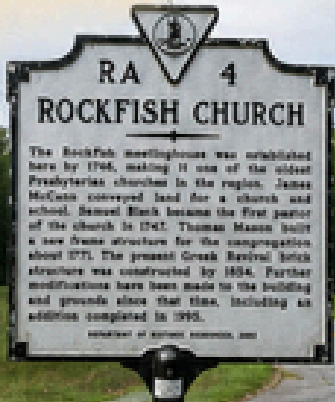
★ HONORING FOUR PATRIOTS ★

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2026

★ **11:00 AM** ★

ROCKFISH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CEMETERY

5016 Rockfish Valley Highway (Hwy 151)
Nellysford, VA 22958



RA 4
ROCKFISH CHURCH

The Rockfish meetinghouse was established here by 1768, making it one of the oldest Presbyterian churches in the region. James McCune conveyed land for a church and school. Samuel Black became the first pastor of the church in 1767. Thomas Mason built a new frame structure for the congregation about 1770. The present Greek Revival style structure was constructed by 1854. Further modifications have been made to the building and grounds since that time, including an addition completed in 1990.

MEMBER OF HISTORIC HERITAGE, INC.



SAMUEL WOODS
1727 — 1794
HIS WIFE
MARY WOODS
1728 — 1779



IN MEMORY OF
JAMES
MC ALEXANDER
Christened
Feb. 17, 1717
Agricultur, Scotland
Died
Jan. 1798
Davis Creek, Virginia
Dedicated by the Grateful Descendants
May 15, 2006

*Preserving
Our Heritage
Honoring
Our Patriots*

★ ★ ★



**CONTACT TOM QUIGLEY TO PARTICIPATE
IN THE WREATH LAYING CEREMONY.**

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 tjquigley6@gmail.com



Session Highlights



ROCKFISH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (RPC) SESSION HIGHLIGHTS 8.18.26

Pastor's Report:

- MOTION: Additional Called Session Meeting for Membership requested for 9.20.26, following 10:30 service, in the Library. APPROVED
- MOTION: Any dates that Pastor Manchester is on vacation, etc., there will only be one service (the second one) APPROVED
- MOTION: To approve request for Wintergreen Wonderland w/Virginia Consort, Sunday 12.13.26 at 4 PM. Tabled at the July Stated Session Meeting, to obtain more information. Procedure already in place to request use of facility. No further action required by Session.

Ministry Team Reports:

- Elder Nancy Johnson [Administration]:
 - Solicited recommendations from Session members to be sent to her, on categories of information to be included on the new RPC website being developed.
 - She also recommended current photos be solicited from congregation for use on the website. Trae will be asked to make a request in the Tuesday email for a few weeks.
- Elder Jeri Engebretson [Christian Education]:
 - Next study for Adult Sunday School Class will be about the Fruits of the Spirit.
 - Wednesday 11:30 Study will begin 9.16.26, with Ray VanderLaan movies telling Bible stories in the Holy Land.
 - Tuesday Potluck dinners will resume when Season 6 of *The Chosen* comes out.
 - Twelve children attended Vacation Bible School (VBS) this year. Christian Education requesting \$1500 in their 2027 VBS budget.
 - Elementary and Nursery Classes will begin 9.13.26 after the Children's Time at the 10:30 service.
 - Confirmation Class will start 9.6.26 in the Youth Room, conducted by Sandi Winston and Rev Carl Rush on 1st and 3rd Sundays at 10:30.
 - Youth Sunday School will start on 9.13.26, led by Stan Scott and a volunteer on the 2nd, 4th and sometimes 5th Sundays at 10:30.
 - Youth Group will start 10.11.26, led by Youth Director (to be determined) on the 2nd and 4th Sundays from 5-7 (5-5:30 dinner, 5:30-6 "campfire discussions", 6-7 games/activities)
 - MOTION: Salary approval requested for Youth Director and an Assistant, not to exceed \$10,000/year. APPROVED

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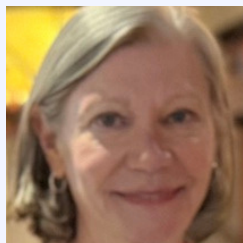
Session continued...

- Elder Bronwyn White [Outreach]:
 - Hope's Legacy Auction, 9.26.26, 1-4 PM.
 - Yard and Bake Sale previously scheduled for 10.31.26 cancelled for 2026.
 - Blue Ridge Respite is going well and has added an Activities Director.
 - Pub Theology, Where We Are, We Care Bags, and Circle of Friends groups are all doing well.
 - Committee is looking into sponsoring a Red Cross Blood Drive in the future.
- Elder Amelia McCulley
 - [Personnel]: Continued discussion on staff compensation, Pastor evaluation inputs continue.
 - [Health & Safety]: Inoperable fire alarm pulls have been covered, first aid kits being updated, fire extinguisher hung, fire blanket hanging in kitchen, discussion on emergency preparedness for children and staff on 1st floor,
 - CPR and AED training in the fall, Greeter Pilot Program ongoing.
- Elder Phil DeFusco [Missions]:
 - Successful Mission trip to Guatemala by three church members,
 - 45 Pre-K backpacks distributed to Tye River and Rockfish River Elementary schools,
 - Committee donated \$250 to National Child Safety Program,
 - Mission Fair 11.8.26, and
 - Thanksgiving Food Bags distribution 11.21.26.
- Elder Bill Muse [Grounds]: volunteers still needed to maintain church areas (weeding, pruning, removal, planting). Notebook in Narthex for sign-up and pictures/directions on upkeep.

Active Members – 198 Affiliate Members – 14

New Members added: Jackie Mason, Dave and Sharon Meadows (8.9.26)

Meet new members



Jackie Mason



Rose Csorba

If you are interested in becoming a member of our church
we would love to speak with you! Below is the next date 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.

Sept. 20 and Nov. 8, 2026



September Birthdays

JANE ANDREWS 1
LINDA WILLIAMS 1
CHRIS TOOMBS 8
KEITH SMITH 10
SALLY BRYANT 12
SUE FULTON 13
PAT HUMPHREY 14
MILES DEANE 15
TONI ROBY 16
JIM WRIGHT 18
GRACE BUNI 20
CONNIE UNDERWOOD 20
BARB FENTON 22
LILLY RUFFING 24
PRISCILLA STONE 24
GEORGE BONHEYO 25
STAN SCOTT 25
LOUIE ANDREWS 26
EMILY RUFFING 28
LEE GOODRICH 30

Rockfish Presbyterian Church
Mail: P.O. Box 278
Visit: 5016 Rockfish Valley Hwy
Nellysford, VA 22958

434-361-1221
rockfishpcus@gmail.com
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

Childcare during 10:30 Service
(Children's Sunday School resumes
Sep. 13. See p. 4)

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

Follow us on [Facebook](#)



SINGING FOR THE HORSES

~ IN BENEFIT OF ~
HOPE'S LEGACY EQUINE RESCUE

September 26
1-4pm

*INSIDE IF RAIN

~Live Music~

~BBQ for Sale~

~Accessible Bathrooms~

~Art & Fabulous Finds Auction~

~Petting Zoo with Hope's Mini Horses~



Rockfish Presbyterian Church
5016 Rockfish Valley Highway, Nellysford

