

Riverlawn Presbyterian Church
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2025

Dear Redeemed of Christ, greetings in the grace of our Savior who has come! May this find you resting and relishing in the everlasting Joy that has come to all because He came! Hopefully, when you read this, we will still be in the midst of the twelve days of Christmas (they begin on Christmas day rather than precede it, despite popular practice), followed by Epiphany (Sunday, Jan. 5), when we remember the Magi taking a journey of faith and of sacrifice, all because of a great longing to find and worship the one revealed to them from the heavens – this small child – the King of kings!

And while the new Church year actually began last month, in the far majority of minds, the New Year is ushered in the midst of this most sacred of seasons – between Christmas and Epiphany. At the very least, it is helpful to be mindful that our celebration of the Savior is not ending – far from it! And such Good News of Great Joy is not confined to the end of each calendar year, where we must yet again wait for another whole year. Not at all, beloved of God!

No matter how you come to this New Year, no matter what regrets are in the past, no matter what “resolutions” you feel you ought to make and not break (again?), we must always keep at the forefront, right there at the center, informing our understanding and empowering our lives, the greatest and most wonderful of realities – WE ARE HIS!

When we rest in this truth – when we surrender to it – hope and joy are more than concepts, more than feelings. In a New Year, the most precious and most poignant of our longings are not out of reach! They have already been given to us! But have we, like little children, expressed fascination over the discovery of dearly longed-for gifts ... only to put them down, move them aside, forgetting about them ...

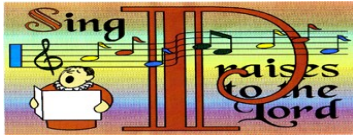
But unlike children’s toys, the greatest gifts are from above and we can’t outgrow them! And they never wear out! Never break! Never disappoint! The world will disappoint us, and so we may get discouraged and take our eyes off of the glorious and full provision of God through His Son Jesus Christ ... But we are always invited back ... to the place that is always available to us, the place where we rest in wondrous grace – the presence of the Lord.

So, in the midst of a New Year, and as a people redeemed and rejoicing over the Light who has shattered the darkness of this world to bring us salvation (which is a present reality as well), how then shall you live? Who will be your strength? What will be your story? May the Lord use each of us, and all of us, mightily in the coming year to change the world with His Good News of Great Joy!

May the Lord enrich, send, and use you every day of the year,

Pastor Chris





MUSIC DEPARTMENT NEWS January 2025

Hard to believe 2025 is here, but before we put December 2024 to rest, I want to take a minute and look back on the music during the month. I appreciated Anita Stonestreet subbing for me on December 1, and Brenda Petry offering a solo that morning while we still enjoyed time in Canaan Valley. The special music on December 15th was beautiful; always nice to have Betty King and Aaron Sowards join us. I think everyone loved the arrangement of *O Holy Night* that they played. The instrumental and choral pieces were outstanding. It was good to have Bill Bryan sharing pieces with us on the 2nd and Christmas Eve. I appreciated all those who were able to attend my program "Hush From the Rush" and hope it was a time of reflection and meditation for you. I want to thank Greg Sayre for being at the computer during the choir's special music on the 15th; Randy Dodrill for his willingness to create the slides used during our presentations; Pat Croghan who makes sure the 'sound' is just right and Paul and Pam Mullins who faithfully work each week by streaming our services and then posting recordings. All of them are dedicated and willing to go the extra step to help with my requests.

Choir will have a two week break from rehearsals (Dec. 26th and Jan. 2nd). We will resume practice on Thursday evening, January 9th.

Have a blessed New Year!

Pam



Join in us on Wednesday nights for Family Night, a time to enjoy friendships and our church family, with dinner at 5:30. Activities for the children and youth begin at 6:15. *Family Night will resume on January 8.*

WEDNESDAY KITCHEN CREW

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|---------|----|---------------------------------|
| January | 1 | No Family Night |
| | 8 | Mimi Albert & Sherry Claar |
| | 15 | Pam Johnson |
| | 22 | Judy Clingenpeel & Sherry Claar |
| | 29 | Pam Johnson |

Available to substitute – Susan Bryan (304) 389-6063



BITTY BASKETBALL

Bitty Basketball season will begin on Saturday, January 18 and run thru March 1. Games are on the hour from 9:00 a.m. until 3 or 4 pm. Come and join the fun to cheer on the little ones and connect with their families and our community.



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|----|----------------|----|--------------------|
| 7 | Terri Adkins | 21 | Brenda Petry |
| 8 | Ron Claar | 22 | Betty McAdam |
| 8 | Layna Kilbert | 23 | Donald Marcum, Jr. |
| 13 | Laura Cottrill | 28 | Donald Marcum, Sr. |
| 15 | Joanna Keller | 29 | Lucy Suchy |
| 19 | Jake Shears | 30 | Ryan Campbell |
| 20 | Gayle Michael | 31 | Charlie Smith |

We thought you might be interested in this news release. Our congregation contributed generously. We were part of a much bigger effort, and we did our part to help.

News from Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

By Forrest Palmer, PDA National Response Team

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, along with many other disaster response organizations, have been quite active and challenged with the destruction brought on by Hurricanes Helene and Milton. Helene brought winds, rains, and flooding to many states, including two counties in southern West Virginia. Currently, the damage estimate is in the billions and the death toll stands at more than 230 people. Milton caused damage across Florida estimated to be about \$50 million, with 17 fatalities caused by winds and tornadoes. PDA has sent out multiple response teams, as well as recovery grants to the presbyteries and communities impacted, thanks to the giving of people to the ministry of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. PDA's ministry extends in many directions – national and international, as well as storytelling – and you can [subscribe](#) for free to the PDA newsletters to keep up. You can also stay updated on current responses at the [PDA website](#). Thank you for your prayers and giving to those impacted by disasters.



Saturday, January 11 at 8:30 at Cracker Barrel in Cross Lanes. A time for fellowship, devotion and prayer.



Junior Church is offered for 1st through 5th grade on Sunday mornings after the Children's Message, until 11:30 or when the church service ends.



Bible study of Romans, Volume 2 with J.D. Greear, lead by Pastor Chris will be meeting at 6:15 p.m. on the 8th of January in the Cottage



Thanks to everyone who contributed in any way to the Christmas Food Baskets this year, from sponsoring a family, donation of food, etc., financial donations, help with assembling the baskets and with the distribution. We had 36 baskets with 130 people served. Thank you Joe Lothes for your dedication and service to this project.



Visitation Teams/Schedule

- Week of:
- 01/05 Pastor Chris (304) 539-1514
 - 01/12 Mary Reppert (304) 419-2755
Sharon Herndon (304) 444-2032
 - 01/19 Mimi Albert (304) 546-6547
Jamie Albert (304) 681) 340-1128
 - 01/26 _____
Steve Wilson (304) 741-7890



BUILDING SECURITY

After church lock-up for January is Mary Reppert.

After hours security check for January:

- 01/05 Denis Emmett
- 01/12 Larry Hyatt
- 01/19 Randy Dodrill
- 01/26 Brenda Petry/Rosie Rhodes

If you are unable to cover the security check on your scheduled week, please let Pat Croghan know (304) 989-1894. Thank you.



Current St. Albans Food Pantry needs:

- Venna Sausage
- Peanut Butter
- Spaghetti
- Pasta sauce
- canned Pineapple



Joe Lothes; David Poe (Wanda Smith); Robin Burnam; Eddie Mcfall (Linda Ross' son); Courtney Golden/Mike VonDuben (Gayle Michael); Greg Cook (Dawnetta Cook); Collin Recknagel (Adam & Sandra Recknagel); Lois Jackson (Todd Barrie); Emma Rose Cavender; Frances Miller; Kathy Barnes; Elbert Taylor; Caroline Dodrill; Jane Lothes; Arlis Miller (Joe Lothes); Sarah Wandling; Gretna Michels (Susan Bryan); Angel Grover (Brenda Petry); Rick Wolford; Linda Monday; Ernie Powell; Travis Keller (Ray Keller); Pam Mullins; Lori Goodwin (Brenda Petry); Betty McAdam; Sherry Ellis; Elizabeth Thompson (Bill Bryan); Missy Sneed; Abby Goff/Anthony Smith/Renee Bird (Wanda Smith); Dave Ryan; JB Recknagel; Janet Young; Mick Hughes (Caroline Dodrill); and for the Global Church that we may embody the gospel to all.

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**2024 Riverlawn Elders and Board of Deacons**

**Elders:**

***Pam Mullins, Acting Clerk of Session/ Stewardship***

304-932-8463; pwmandpsm@yahoolcom

***Parry Johnson, Building/Grounds/Security/ Finance***

304-926-4745; Parryjohnson1@gmail.com

***Steve Wilson, Missions***

304-741-7890; stevewillie@suddenlink.net

***Paul Mullins, Worship/Fellowship***

304-741-5914; nascarmemberswva@yahoo.com

***Sharon Herndon, Christian Nurture***

304-444-2071; Polecat818@hotmail.com

***Jamie Albert, Evangelism/Family & Community***

681-340-1128; James.macd.albert@gmail.com

**Deacons:**

*Jason Barnes*

304-205-3315; jasonbarnes@yahoo.com

*Mary Reppert*

304-419-2755; Reppert.mary@gmail.com

*Mimi Albert*

304-546-6547; Mimialbert72@yahoo.com

*Linda Monday*

304-541-4927; lindamondays@gmail.com

**Deacons' Meeting— January 19 after worship service.**

*An updated list of elders and deacons for 2025 will be available in the next Newsletter.*

**Nurturing Faith Ideas**

**January 5:** Second Sunday after Christmas/Epiphany Sunday Read Matthew 2:9-12 Following a star, Magi, or Wise Men, journey to Bethlehem bearing gifts fit for royalty. Finding the child, they knelt and worshipped him. What gifts would you give to Jesus to celebrate his birth?

**January 12:** Baptism of the Lord Sunday Read Luke 3:21-22 As we celebrate Jesus' baptism, many congregations celebrate a reaffirmation of baptism, a time to remember our own baptism when we were proclaimed children of God. What do you remember about your baptism? How might you celebrate being part of the body of Christ, the church, through baptism?

**January 19:** Second Sunday after Epiphany Read Psalm 36:5-10 In God's light and love, we see light. In these dark cold days of winter, light brings hope as it makes the dark places seem less scary. How can you share your light and love with those you encounter this week?

**January 26:** Third Sunday after Epiphany Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 Paul described the church as the body of Christ, each one of us an important part of Christ's body. What is your role in the body of Christ? How do you live out your role

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Dates to Remember

- 4th Taking Down the Greens - 9:00 a.m.
- 8th Family Night Resumes—5:30 p.m.
- 8th Romans Bible Study—6:15 p.m.
- 9th Choir rehearsal resumes—7:00 p.m.
- 11th Men's Prayer Breakfast 8:30 a.m. Cracker Barrel in Cross Lanes
- 12th Ordination and Installation of Officers
- 18th Bitty Basketball begins at 9:00 a.m.
- 19th Deacons' Meeting—After worship service



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**Monday, January 27**

*Riverlawn Strives To*

*Purge ourselves of pride by focusing on glorifying God*

*Teach the truth through fellowship & discipleship*

*Demonstrate a life of love through service to others*

*Share the gospel of Jesus Christ with those in need*

***Purge Pride, Teach Truth, Live Love***