



The Enduring Relevance of Holy Week

Join us for a remarkable week of spiritual reflection and challenge.

Palm Sunday, March 29

When Kings Ride Donkeys (Luke 19:28–44)

11 a.m., SPC sanctuary

Photographs often reveal what we didn't see in the moment. Luke tells the Palm Sunday story that way—capturing five overlooked scenes that change how we understand the whole day. As we look more closely, we may discover not just what happened then but what we might be missing now.

Maundy Thursday, April 2

Prayers without Words: A Personal Maundy Thursday Immersion

5:45 p.m. dinner, SPC fellowship hall

6:30 p.m., SPC sanctuary

Just as Jesus went alone to pray in the garden of Gethsemane, we take time on to bring the personal prayers of our hearts before God and to listen for God's voice. Music and artistic images will provide the quiet, gently guided atmosphere.

Good Friday, April 3

After the Burial: A Good Friday Service

7 p.m., SPC sanctuary

We'll begin after the crucifixion—after the body has been taken down, the crowds have gone, and the day has ended. Through Scripture, brief reflections, prayer, and silence, we remain at Golgotha, looking at what has been left behind. In that space, we pause to recognize something of our own lives and the things we carry that do not quickly pass.

Easter Sunday, April 5

When the Tombs Opened: The Overlooked Verses of Matthew 27:52-53

Early in the Morning: A Quiet Outdoor Service | *8:30 to 9 a.m., Robertson Family Deck at SPC*

Join us outside for a reflective, and maybe perplexing, Easter service (if it's too cold, we'll be in the back of the sanctuary for a more intimate service). Before the familiar words of Easter morning are spoken, Matthew tells of a different moment when the earth shook, tombs opened, and "many bodies of the saints were raised." We'll look at that strange and often overlooked passage as we reflect on how resurrection begins before we fully recognize it. And we'll look at the first open tombs as we consider what it means to live in a world where what seems sealed may not be as closed as we thought.

Easter Breakfast | *9:30 to 10:30 a.m., SPC fellowship hall*

Quiche, pancakes, sausage, and more—gather with us for this delicious tradition. There will be no Sunday School; all are invited to breakfast.

The Day Death Lost (Luke 24:1–12)

Celebration of the Resurrection | *11 a.m., SPC sanctuary*

Easter doesn't begin with something appearing; it begins with something gone. The stone is gone. The body is gone. Death's threat is gone. What if resurrection is already happening in the quiet places where fear, shame, or isolation are starting to loosen, and what if loving your neighbor is how we help it happen?

Children's Easter Egg Hunt | *12:20 p.m., SPC playground*

After worship, all children through the 5th grade are welcome to bring their baskets and join us by the playground for a joy-filled Easter egg hunt.



From the Senior Pastor

Happy 50th Anniversary to Apple

“To me, the phone is just this seldom-used app on my phone.”

Comedian Gary Gulman’s line lands a little too close to home. For many—especially younger generations—the phone has become the least important thing a phone does.



50 Years of Thinking Different.

Times have changed. I grew up in a house with one phone. If you wanted privacy, you stretched the 30-foot cord as far as it would go, through the living room, across the dining room, and into a bedroom, hoping no one needed the line. At one point we even had a party line, which meant our phone was shared with another family we didn’t know. Sometimes you’d pick up the receiver and hear strangers mid-conversation. You’d have to hang up . . . wait . . . and check again, trying not to seem too eager.

Even making a simple call took preparation. In 8th grade, I wanted to call a girl from school. I hadn’t met her family, so I wrote out a script—complete with a decision tree—depending on whether her protective father, inquisitive mother, or intimidating older brother answered. It felt like preparing for a job interview.

That world feels distant now. There’s much I don’t miss now that I have a smartphone. I don’t miss unfolding massive maps or flipping through a AAA TripTik just to get across Hampton Roads. I don’t miss watching the clock during long-distance calls. And I’m grateful—truly—that Nancy and our kids can reach me instantly when they need to.

But every gain carries something with it. Students now write entire papers on their phones—interrupted every few minutes by notifications that fracture their attention. My son, Teddy, reminds me that videos increasingly are no longer made for the wide screen but for the vertical scroll. And all of us, in one way or another, live with the quiet expectation of being available . . . almost all the time.

April 1, 2026 marks the 50th anniversary of Apple. It seems like a good moment to pause, not just to marvel at the technology, but also to ask what it is doing to us. Tools don’t just serve us; over time, they shape us for both good and bad.

Perhaps it’s not accidental that scripture’s first story of temptation involves an apple. What looked beautiful, useful, and wise also brought unexpected consequences. It might be worth asking: How is this “Apple”—or smartphones at least—forming us?

Join us Wednesday, April 15 (*see below*) for a presentation and conversation about smartphones, attention, and faith, and how we might think more clearly about all three.

With blessings,
Pastor Craig

The Apple in Your Hand: Smartphones, Sanity, and the Soul

Wednesday, April 15, 6 p.m., dinner, presentation, conversation

“Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” In a world where our phones are rarely out of reach, what does that mean for our spiritual lives? We carry them everywhere. We check them constantly. But what are they doing to us? On the 50th anniversary of Apple, Pastor Craig will share insights from Tony Reinke’s “12 Ways Your Phone Is Changing You,” in addition to other recent books. This will be followed by a guided conversation about faith and focus in a distracted age. Join us for dinner, reflection, and meaningful conversation—and bring your phone with you.



Sermon Series: April 12 — May 17

Letters to a New World

The early church faced a world of empires, confusion, and change, just like us. These bold letters of the apostle Paul call on the first Christians not to escape the world but transform it. Two thousand years later that message hasn't changed.

- April 12 **Spiritual Life Hacks** (1 Thessalonians 5:12–22)
- April 19 **Cracked Vessels, Radiant Light** (2 Corinthians 4:7-12)
- April 26 **Jesus Is Your Pronoun** (Galatians 3:23-29)
- May 3 **God's Art, Not God's Project** (Ephesians 2:1-10)
- May 10 **The Anxiety Antidote** (Philippians 4:4-9)
- May 17 **Jesus Is Bigger Than You Think** (Colossians 1:15-20)



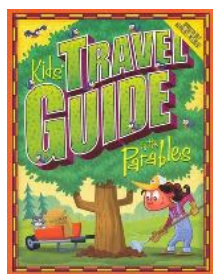
Adult Education

A Peculiar Faith: Why Christianity Refuses to Behave Like Other Religions

Sundays, 10 a.m., SPC fellowship hall

Join Pastor Craig for a deep dive into a faith that matters to your life. This 20-week study focuses on the uniqueness of Christianity. In April we focus on "Just the Trinity."

- April 5 *No Meeting. Happy Easter!*
- April 12 *The Creation of the Trinity*
- April 19 *The Spirit: God on the Loose*
- April 26 *"I Believe?" The Apostles' Creed and the Shape of Christian Faith*

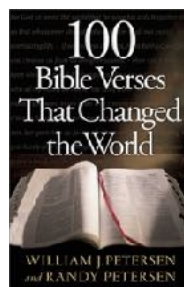


Children's Sunday School

Kids' Travel Guide to the Parables

*For ages 5 to 14; 10 a.m.
Upstairs youth room*

Join Ms. Jo and friends for fun interactive stories and activities, snacks, and games, as we see how the Parables of Jesus teach us in meaningful ways. For more details, contact Ms. Jo in the church office.



Lunch and Learn

100 Bible Verses That Changed the World

*Wednesdays, noon
SPC fellowship hall*

Take an hour out of your week, bring a bag lunch, and join Pastor Craig in the fellowship hall for a meal, conversation, and Bible study, as we focus on "100 Bible Verses That Changed the World."

Volunteers Needed to Help SPC Host Presbytery Meeting

SPC will host the quarterly meeting for the Presbytery of Eastern Virginia, which is set for 10 a.m. Tuesday, April 28.

We're expecting over 125 guests, so we need many volunteers to help with the following tasks: direct traffic in our parking lot, greet guests as they enter the building, point people to the restrooms and the sanctuary, staff the registration table, serve as ushers, and help prepare and serve lunch.

Look for a sign-up email, or contact the Rev. Catherine Hart Monroe at revcat@spcnorfolk.org or 757.287.9897 to volunteer.

From the Director of Music

Prayers without Words: A Personal Maundy Thursday Immersion

Thursday, April 2, 6:30 p.m., with a light meal at 5:45 p.m.

I am always grateful for the collaborative energy of our staff, and the commitment we make together to assemble worship services each Sunday that strive to unify each element of worship around a focused theme.

We all come to worship with a variety of concerns, questions, experiences and hopes—so we try earnestly to help everyone find their way to the focus of each worship service.



As much as I treasure worship in this way, I'm also aware that sometimes we might need the space—even amongst one another—to be able to give voice to prayer and worship with a more personal focus. That we're able to take time in God's sanctuary and in the safety of our community to allow our personal prayers space to be spoken and to listen for God's voice.

Maundy Thursday is a day in our liturgical calendar that traditionally might include elements like foot washing, Jesus' betrayal, the new commandment of Love from John 13:34, a transition to the darkness of Good Friday, and the institution of the last supper.

Aside from the familiarity of these themes in church life, they also represent human experiences and emotions that are familiar to us all: humility, servanthood, pain, abandonment, fear, love, sorrow, anger, sacrifice, community.

On April 2, we will share together a different kind of Maundy Thursday experience, when we will be guided not so much by spoken or printed words, but by images and music whose purpose is to create an atmosphere for prayer. Organized into various themes like those listed above, each section will provide "space" for you to silently bring the prayers of your heart before God, and to offer time for you to listen for God's presence and voice.

As Jesus went to Gethsemane to pray alone before God, so we will come to offer the private prayers that weigh on our hearts.

Peace,
Bob



First Outdoor Service of 2026

Sunday, April 19, 11 a.m.

Join the SPC worship band for the season's first outdoor worship service. Dress for the weather and bring your folding chair. See you at the Robinson Family Deck!

Supper & Sound: Exploring SPC's Organ Project

Wednesday, April 29, 6 p.m. SPC fellowship hall



Do you know how many individual mechanical parts there are in a pipe organ? Do you know where the saying "They really pulled out all the stops" comes from? Why is it possible for the organ to be a powerful tool for worship? What makes one organ different or "better" than another?

Join Director of Music Robert Shoup and members of our Organ Project Task Force for dinner and an informational discussion around our efforts to install a new organ in the SPC sanctuary. Bring your questions, and dive deeper into why the project has been undertaken, what's involved in the process, and what the new and exciting impacts can be for our congregation and community.

An Update on the Church Organ Project

Last year, Session asked our music director, Bob Shoup, to research the future of the organ at SPC. As an elder on Session, I supported that request and now have the privilege of serving as chair of the Organ Project Task Force that is helping guide this conversation.

Our task force held its first meeting March 11 to review Bob's research, assess the condition of our organ, and consider possible paths forward for SPC's music ministry. Then the task force recommended and Session approved continuing the process with Walker Technical Company to develop a proposal for a custom digital organ for our sanctuary.

It is important to acknowledge why we can explore this opportunity at all. Former SPC organist Joe Adkins left a generous endowment to support the church's music ministry. His gift allows us to consider this project without the need for a fundraising campaign. Joe believed deeply in the power of music to shape worship and strengthen the life of the church, and his gift specifically encouraged innovation and growth in the music program.

Our current Austin pipe organ has faithfully served the congregation for nearly 75 years. Like many instruments of its age, it now faces increasing maintenance and repair needs. Several stops are not functioning, major leather components require replacement, and ongoing repairs will continue to become more costly over time. Interestingly, the organ also includes 12 stops that were prepared but never completed, suggesting that earlier leaders, including Joe, once hoped the instrument might eventually be expanded. Completing those pipe additions today would require a very significant investment and additional space the church does not currently have.

These realities led Bob to spend several months researching modern organ builders and consulting with organists and colleagues about possible paths forward. In addition to examining repair options for our current instrument, he explored several leading builders of modern digital organs.

After visiting instruments, speaking with experts, and evaluating the quality and reputation of different companies, Walker Technical Company emerged as the top choice. Walker instruments are custom-built for each client and are used in many respected venues, including the National Cathedral, United States Naval Academy Chapel, and David Geffen Hall at Lincoln Center.

Modern digital organs represent a remarkable development in organ building. Rather than producing electronic tones, they use carefully recorded samples of real pipe organs that are reproduced through sophisticated audio systems designed specifically for each sanctuary. The result is an instrument capable of serving both traditional worship and a wide range of musical expressions. Walker will design a custom instrument specifically for SPC, offering expanded tonal flexibility and new opportunities for worship leadership, collaborative choral projects, and community music events.



In many ways, this conversation is similar to one Session had recently when we renovated the fellowship hall. That space had not been updated in more than 25 years, and we saw an opportunity not only to refresh the room but also to strengthen the church's ability to host gatherings and expand its mission. The discussion about the organ invites us to think in a similar way how we care for the tools and spaces that support worship and ministry for the next generation.

At this stage, Walker is working with us to develop a proposal for an instrument that would fit our sanctuary and musical needs. The task force will carefully review the proposal and share more information with the congregation. The entire process, from final design to construction and installation, could take more than a year to complete.

Updates will be shared during worship and in the newsletter. In addition, on April 29 Bob will host *Supper & Sound: Exploring SPC's Organ Project*. During this Wednesday evening meal and conversation, Bob will share more about the research process, the possibilities for the instrument, and the role music continues to play in the life of our church.

Throughout this process, our goal is to remain thoughtful, transparent and faithful stewards of both our musical tradition and Joe Adkins' generous gift. The organ has long been central to SPC's worship life, and we hope this project will strengthen that tradition while opening new possibilities for music and ministry in the years ahead.

—Lori Crouch, Elder and Chair of the Organ Project Task Force

Calling All Hands: SPC Spring Cleanup

Saturday, April 18, 9 a.m. to noon

Fear not—we'll have coffee and donuts. There's playground mulch to spread and general cleanup around the church grounds, as well as some cleaning inside the church. Many hands make light work. Contact Sam Stearns, chair of the Administration Committee, with questions.



ROBERT NUSBAUM CENTER
VIRGINIA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY
DIVERSITY | DIALOGUE | FAITH | FREEDOM

Events at Virginia Wesleyan University

Sponsored by the Robert Nusbaum Center; Dr. Craig Wansink, Director
All events are free and open to the public.



Glory, Glory, Ambiguity: The Strange Journey of “The Battle Hymn of the Republic”

Monday, April 13, 7 p.m., via Zoom, presented by Dr. Craig Wansink

Registration required.

Register by noon Monday, April 13, with kjackson@vwu.edu or 757.455.3129

Julia Ward Howe wrote “The Battle Hymn of the Republic” after hearing Union soldiers sing a crude song about John Brown’s hanging body. Her rewrite—packed with violent apocalyptic imagery from the book of Revelation—became the Union Army’s anthem, the rallying cry of

abolitionists, and the song that moved Lincoln to tears. Then the hymn took on a strange second life: a tool of militarism and expansion and eventually the soundtrack of the civil rights movement. See how one song became sacred scripture, political propaganda, and a prayer for justice.



Freedom from Fear: Jews and the Sounds of Liberation, 1944-1945

Thursday, April 16, noon, Blocker Auditorium, presented by Dr. Sara Ann Sewell

In 1944 and 1945, Allied forces liberated hundreds of thousands of Jews from Nazi tyranny. This lecture explores how Jews experienced liberation through sound and sensation—how freedom was heard, felt, and processed in its earliest moments. Using sensory analysis, Sewell reveals liberation as a complex emotional passage shaped by trauma and memory.

Home Is a Poem: Poetry, the American Dream, and Unhoused Voices

Thursday, April 23, noon, Brock Commons, in partnership with ForKids and Norfolk Street Choir Project

As the nation marks 250 years since the Declaration of Independence, we are reminded that freedom—like the American Dream—is both a promise and a pursuit. This program features poetry written and performed by individuals who have experienced housing insecurity. Their words offer insight into what freedom feels like when home, stability, and voice are uncertain.



The poetry is followed by a conversation with Thaler McCormick, CEO of ForKids, and Robert Shoup, Founding Artistic Director of the Norfolk Street Choir Project, as they explore how art and music, community, and advocacy can

help build a future where freedom includes dignity, belonging, and economic security. Both organizations are mission partners of SPC.





SPC April Calendar

Wednesday, April 1

Micah Erickson's & David Ferraro's Birthdays

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Men's Bible Study: 6:30AM [FH]
Lunch & Learn Bible Study: Noon [FH]
Choir Rehearsal: 7:30PM [Sanctuary]

Maundy Thursday, April 2

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Essentrics Exercise: 1PM
Prayers without Words: A Personal Maundy Thursday Immersion: 5:45PM supper [FH]; 6:30PM service [Sanctuary]

Good Friday, April 3

Roger Phelps' & Benjamin Rogge's Birthdays
Men's Breakfast: 7AM [FH]
After the Burial: A Good Friday Service: 7PM [Sanctuary]

Saturday, April 4

No activities

Easter Sunday, April 5

Mark Stearns' Birthday
The office is open 9:30AM to 12:30PM
Early in the Morning Outdoor Service: 8:30AM [Deck]
Choir Rehearsal: 9:15AM [Sanctuary]
Easter Breakfast: 9:30AM [FH]
Celebration of the Resurrection Worship: 11AM [Sanctuary/webcast]
Children's Easter Egg Hunt: 12:20PM [SPC playground]

Monday, April 6

No activities

Tuesday, April 7

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Essentrics Exercise: 1PM [Zoom & FH]

Wednesday, April 8

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Men's Bible Study: 6:30AM [FH]
Lunch & Learn Bible Study: Noon [FH]

Thursday, April 9

Linda Mathias' Birthday
The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Essentrics Exercise: 1PM [Zoom & FH]

Friday, April 10

Men's Breakfast: 7AM [FH]

Saturday, April 11

No activities

Sunday, April 12

Jo Kolb's Birthday
The office is open 9:30AM to 12:30PM
Adult Sunday School: 10AM [FH]
Children's Sunday School: 10AM [Upstairs]
Worship Service: 11AM [Sanctuary/webcast]
Fellowship Time: Noon [FH]

Monday, April 13

Glory, Glory, Ambiguity: Strange Journey of the "Battle Hymn of the Republic": 7PM [VWU Zoom]

Tuesday, April 14

Jonathan Doyle's & Sheila Eley's Birthdays
The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Triple S Circle Meeting: 10:30AM [FH]
Essentrics Exercise: 1PM [Zoom & FH]

Wednesday, April 15

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Men's Bible Study: 6:30AM [FH]
Lunch & Learn Bible Study: Noon [FH]
Dinner & The Apple in Your Hand: Smartphones, Sanity, & the Soul: 6PM [FH]

Thursday, April 16

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
LAUNCH Distribution: Various times and activities [See Joe Morgan]
Let's Talk About Music with Robert Shoup: 11AM [for SPC residents of Harbor's Edge]
Freedom from Fear: Jews & the Sound of Liberation: Noon [VWU Blocker Auditorium]
Essentrics Exercise: 1PM [Zoom & FH]

Friday, April 17

Men's Breakfast: 7AM [FH]

Saturday, April 18

All-Hands Spring Cleanup: 9AM [SPC]

Sunday, April 19

Suellen White's Birthday
The office is open 9:30AM to 12:30PM
Worship Band Rehearsal: 9:30AM [Deck]
Adult Sunday School: 10AM [FH]
Children's Sunday School: 10AM [Upstairs]
Outdoor Worship: 11AM [Deck/webcast]
Fellowship Time: Noon [FH]

Monday, April 20

No activities

Tuesday, April 21

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Essentrics Exercise: 1PM [Zoom & FH]
Session Meeting: 6PM [FH]

Wednesday, April 22

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Men's Bible Study: 6:30AM [FH]
Lunch & Learn Bible Study: Noon [FH]
Choir Rehearsal: 7:30PM [Sanctuary]

Thursday, April 23

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Home Is a Poem: Poetry, the American Dream, and Unhoused Voices: Noon [VWU Brock Commons]
Essentrics Exercise: 1PM [Zoom & FH]

Friday, April 24

Men's Breakfast: 7AM [FH]

Saturday, April 25

Arlene Baragona's & Jason Rogge's Birthdays
No activities

Sunday, April 26

Lori Crouch's & Helen Pribesh's Birthdays
The office is open 9:30AM to 12:30PM
Choir Rehearsal: 9AM
Adult Sunday School: 10AM [FH]
Children's Sunday School: 10AM [Upstairs]
Worship: 11AM [Sanctuary/webcast]
Yellow Foods Spring Potluck: Noon [FH]

Monday, April 27

Bill Ruehlmann's Birthday
Fellowship Dinners: 6PM [Men: Jessy's Taqueria; women: AJ Gator's Sports Bar]

Tuesday, April 28

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
SPC Hosts Presbytery of Eastern Virginia Meeting: 10AM [Sanctuary & FH]

Wednesday, April 29

The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Men's Bible Study: 6:30AM [FH]
Lunch & Learn Bible Study: Noon [FH]
Supper & Sound: Exploring SPC's Organ Project: 6PM [FH]

Thursday, April 30

John Sawyer's Birthday
The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Essentrics Exercise: 1PM [Zoom & FH]

FH = SPC fellowship hall



About Second Presbyterian Church

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Office hours: Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. | Sundays 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

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- Robert Shoup, Director of Music: 757.739.9444, robertshoup@mac.com
- Jo Ridout Kolb, Director of Administration & Family Ministry: 757.406.0879, jokolb@spcnorfolk.org
- Tom Libbey, Facility Manager
- Joe Morgan, Maintenance Specialist
- Heather Libbey, Hostess