Second Life
November 2026

SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

November at Second: Giving Thanks, Giving Back



Here's How to Help Us Stay "Small but Mighty"

Sunday, November 22, SPC sanctuary and fellowship hall

As we often say, we are a "small but mighty" church family at Second.

We are mighty in part because of the joy, faith, kindness, caring, talents, time, and—yes—the financial resources that we share to support our ministry. On November 22, we'll come together for worship and dedication of our stewardship pledges for 2027.

Right after worship, we'll gather for our traditional potluck meal, a time to enjoy fellowship, to remind ourselves of how we've been blessed, and to try the interesting, unusual, and tasty dishes that our members are known for. Fried chicken and barbecue will be provided; please bring a side dish, salad, or dessert.

Be in prayer before that day. Soon you'll receive a letter and a pledge card in the mail. Consider the ways in which you have been blessed and in which you are thankful, and please reflect on your commitment to our mission for this coming year.

Your contributions are deeply important to the message we share.

Then join us on Stewardship Sunday for a time of giving thanks and giving back.

What We Carry Home: Veterans, Memory, and the Hope for Peace

Wednesday, November 11
6 p.m. dinner, 6:30 p.m. program
SPC fellowship hall

Veterans Day offers an opportunity to honor those who have served in our nation's armed forces—and to listen to stories we don't often get to hear.

This evening, several veterans in our congregation—including Jonathan Doyle, Andrea & Roger Phelps, and Mark & Sam Stearns—will reflect on what military service taught them, what experiences have stayed with them, and what they wish others understood.



We'll also explore how their service shaped their relationships, values, and understanding of themselves and the world. What was difficult? What surprised them? And how did those experiences influence their lives after their service ended?

Come out for an evening of honest conversation and thoughtful questions.



Daylight Saving Time Ends Sunday, November 1

Set your clock back, sleep in an extra hour and join us for worship . . . still at 11 a.m.!

From the Senior Pastor

What Might We Make Possible Together?

A friend of mine used to say, “I have so much on my plate that it's hard to give grace.” I’m guessing that many of us know that feeling. And perhaps it's a pretty good indication that something in our lives is out of whack.

After Easter, Thanksgiving may be my favorite holiday. Not simply because of the food or the company, although I appreciate both. I love Thanksgiving because it asks us to do something at the heart of our faith: recognize how much we've been given, how much we depend on others, and how much we depend on God.

We talk frequently about faith, hope, and love. But gratitude? We sometimes reduce that to good manners. My children may not want to admit that they once loved Barney, the six-and-a-half-foot, singing, dancing, purple dinosaur. But they did. And I was grateful when they sang along with his reminder that “please” and “thank you” are the magic words.

That said, gratitude is much more than good manners. Paul’s letters begin with thanksgiving, the Psalms overflow with gratitude, and Jesus repeatedly challenges people to recognize that life itself is a gift.

In 2005 Norfolk State University hired a football coach, Pete Adrian, who impressed me. I don't particularly care for football—George Will once observed that football combines two of America's favorite activities: violence and committee meetings—but this coach caught my attention.

A reporter asked how he expected to build a winning program with the players Norfolk State could recruit. His response was wonderful: “We will recruit the players we can,” he said, “and develop them so well that, three years later, people will wonder how we ever managed to recruit such talented athletes.”



Later, someone involved in hiring him told me what had impressed the search committee. Other candidates had explained everything Norfolk State lacked. “We already knew what we didn't have,” he said. “But this coach looked around and saw potential and opportunity everywhere.”

That is an attitude that reflects the Gospels well. The Gospels are filled with stories about small beginnings and remarkable possibilities: Mustard seeds growing, talents multiplying, a few loaves and fish feeding thousands. Again and again, Jesus asks us to look beyond what we lack and imagine what God might do with what we have.

That is one of the things I appreciate most about Second Presbyterian. We aren't a huge congregation. We don't have unlimited resources. But we have remarkable people, generous hearts, creative energy, and a willingness to do something meaningful with the gifts we've been given.

Our November sermon series is called “How Not to Waste Your Life.” It's an intentionally provocative title, but the question behind it is hopeful: What might our lives become when we give our attention, compassion, time, and resources to the things that truly matter?

As you consider your pledge for the coming year, I hope you'll think not simply about what Second needs but about what Second makes possible. Think about the lives touched, the relationships nurtured, the faith deepened, and the people we have yet to welcome. We can accomplish things together that none of us could accomplish alone.

Second is a remarkable community, filled with wonderful people and a sweet, sweet Spirit. In a world that often seems short on grace, we have good news to share.

And that is something worth investing in.

Blessings,

Pastor Craig



Stewardship Sermon Series

How Not to Waste Your Life

Most people are terrified of failure. Jesus seems more concerned about something else entirely: wasted lives. Wasted attention. Wasted compassion. Wasted gifts. Wasted years chasing things that don't matter while ignoring the people and purposes that do. Through some of Jesus' most unsettling stories and encounters, we ask what it means to become people whose lives bear fruit.

Nov. 1 **Death by Distraction** (Luke 10:38–42)
Nov. 8 **Busy but Unfruitful** (Luke 13:6–9)
Nov. 15 **Your Wounds as Wisdom** (John 21:15–19)
Nov. 22 **A Life That Multiplies** (Matthew 25:14–30)



Advent Sermon Series

"Are We There Yet?" Being Rerouted and Delayed, Missing Connections, and Traveling at Christmastime

Holiday travel rarely goes exactly the way we planned: flights are delayed, gates change without warning, connections are missed, and sometimes what mattered most never arrives at all. In this Advent series, we'll explore how the Christmas story itself is filled with rerouted journeys, long waits, uncertainty, and weary travelers trying to trust God one step at a time.

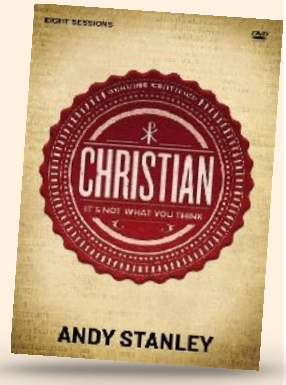
Nov. 29 **Gate Change: When the Plan You Had Isn't the One You Get** (Luke 2:1–5)
Dec. 6 **Flight Delayed: Waiting Without a Timeline** (Psalm 13; Habakkuk 2:1–3)
Dec. 13 **Lost Luggage: When What You Carried Doesn't Arrive** (Heb. 11:13–16; Matt. 6:19–21)
Dec. 20 **Are We There Yet?: The Weariness of Not Knowing** (Isaiah 40:28–31;Rom. 8:22–25)
Dec. 24 **Christmas Eve—Arrivals: God Shows Up Where You Are, Not Where You Planned** (John 1:14; Luke 2:6–7)
Dec. 27 **Christmas Leftovers & The Trip Home** (Luke 2:15-20)

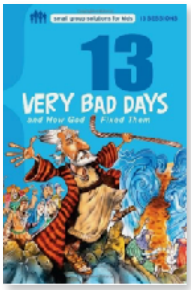
Adult Education

Christian: It's Not What You Think

Sundays, 10 a.m., SPC fellowship hall

Why is there so little agreement about what it means to be a Christian? In this eight-session discussion led by Pastor Craig and Nancy Rowland, we'll start with video clips from pastor and bestselling author Andy Stanley, who explores what Jesus actually said about being his follower and why that sometimes looks so different from what people associate with Christianity today. Join us for some thoughtful conversation about "Brand Recognition," "Quitters," "Loopholes," faith, discipleship, and the challenge of following Jesus in today's world.



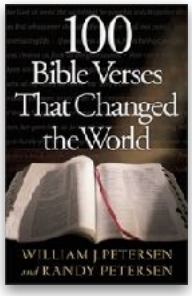


Children's Sunday School

13 Very Bad Days (and How God Fixed Them)

Ages 5-14; Sundays, 10 a.m.
Upstairs youth room

Join Ms. Jo and friends for fun interactive stories and activities, snacks, and games, as we learn to look for God's presence in the midst of life's challenges Contact Ms. Jo at *jokolb@spcnorfolk.org.*

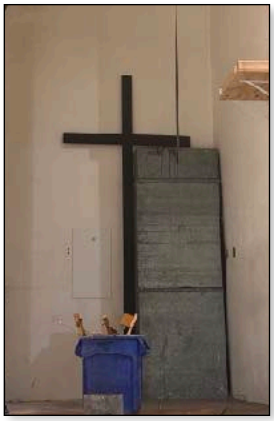


Wednesday Lunch and Learn

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 for a meal, conversation, and Bible study, as we focus on '100 Bible Verses That Changed the World" by William J. Petersen and Randy Petersen.



Organ Project Reveals a Surprise

Work on the church's organ project brought an unexpected discovery: a large wooden cross hidden behind the organ's largest wooden pipes.

The cross was likely placed there when the pipe organ was installed and came into view as the last of those pipes were removed. Stay tuned as we decide what to do with it.

The organ pipes and wood components are gone, making room for new equipment to support the digital organ. Sanctuary renovations are next, including installing new choir risers, renovating the stairs around the chancel floor and refinishing the wood floor. The work is expected to be complete by Thanksgiving.

Holiday Food Items, Gift Cards Requested by St. Columba

St. Columba Ecumenical Ministries, an SPC mission partner, is fully renovated following the building's water damage and is now back in full swing. At this time of year, the organization is in need of clean, gently used warm clothing for adults.

The following food items are requested by November 9 for Thanksgiving and by December 7 for Christmas:

Canned green beans, corn, sweet potatoes, and other veggies | Cranberry sauce | Dried mashed potatoes | Boxed stuffing | Jiffy cornbread mix | Boxed or pouched dessert mixes | Packets, cans or jars of gravy

Donations of $25 gift cards from Food Lion or Walmart are also requested, so families can buy a turkey or cover other holiday needs.

Food items can be placed in the orange bin in the hallway. Gift cards can be taken to the church office or given to Alice Allen-Grimes.

Volunteers Needed for LAUNCH's Holiday Activities

As the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays approach, SPC's mission partner LAUNCH hopes to help families stretch their budgets to accommodate the stress of additional expenses. Thanks to help from the Sentara Cares Foundation, LAUNCH is able to serve an additional 50 families monthly with bags of groceries.

Now we need help sharing the bags with friends and neighbors in need. We plan to help two churches in the Huntersville and Church Street neighborhoods with gift certificates for turkeys (or something similar) for 100 families. These churches prepare bountiful Thanksgiving baskets with all the fixings for a family holiday meal, which the gift certificates complement by offering the flexibility to choose their protein.

For the Peace on Earth event in Huntersville on Saturday, December 19, Second will again seek to donate six dozen youth sports balls for the toy drive. Balls bought in bulk average $10 each if you'd like to donate cash. Individual donations of sports balls are also welcome.

The Peace on Earth event will distribute 200 family holiday meal baskets and will feature lunch served on site, a program inside the Mason Memorial sanctuary to share the Gospel, enough toys available for 300 children, and more.

No Essentrics Classes for Two Weeks

Essentrics classes will not be held for two weeks in November. Classes are cancelled on these Tuesdays and Thursdays: 3rd, 5th, 10th and 12th. Also, there's no class Thanksgiving Day.



When classes resume Tuesday, November 17, everyone will be out of shape—a great time to start because you'll be on equal footing. Led by SPC member Peggy Troyer, Essentrics is a gentle stretch, rebalancing, and restorative class that takes place from 1 to 2 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays in the SPC fellowship hall and on Google Meet.

There's always a place for you at Second Presbyterian.

Help Spread SPC Hospitality to Voters

Tuesday, November 3, 6 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Next to the SPC playground



Our sweet little hospitality tent, with bottled water, coffee, leftover Halloween candy, and other treats, has become a hit. This election is predicted to have a big turnout, so consider signing up or just showing up. It's a wonderful way to spread the love of Second over our neighbors who come to vote. Contact Emily Byrd with questions: *ebyrd1223@gmail.com*.

Calling All Hands: Fall Clean-Up

Saturday, November 7, 9 a.m., SPC

Come out to help with our annual fall clean-up—we'll have coffee and donuts to get you going. There's mulch to spread and general clean-up around the church grounds, as well as some cleaning inside the church. Many hands make light work. Please contact Sam Stearns with any questions: *stearns5@cox.net*.

SPC Hosts Blood Drive

Sunday, November 15
9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
SPC fellowship hall



Before Sunday school or after worship, please take part with fellow congregants in our blood drive. It's a happy coincidence that this drive is during the month of Thanksgiving, as well as during a month when we focus on stewardship of our lives. Just as Jesus gave his life for others, so we can offer a gift that really is life-giving. You can sign up at redcrossblood.org by searching "Faithful Neighbors."

Date Change: Triple S Circle

Tuesday, November 17, 10:30 a.m.
SPC fellowship hall

This month, Triple S Women's Circle meets the third Tuesday, so mark your calendar. Wonderful things are happening in our Circle, and you'll even get a great Max Lucado book about the book of Esther. Come join us for fellowship, learning, and fun.

Dine with Your Second Family

Monday, November 23, 6 p.m.
Women: No Frill Grill; Men: Tacos Y Tequila

We'll gather before Thanksgiving, so you won't have started dieting yet. Women will meet at No Frill Grill, 808 Spotswood Avenue in Ghent; men at Tacos Y Tequila, 1421 Colley Avenue. They're are walking distance from one another, so if you and your sweetie are both going, you can carpool.



O Come, All Ye Faithful, to Decorate

Saturday, November 28, 9 a.m., SPC

Decorating the church before the first Sunday of Advent has become a Second tradition. We need your help transforming not just the sanctuary but the whole building. This is a great time for kids, seniors, and everyone in between. Please put this on your calendar and let loose your creative energies.



SPC November Calendar

Sunday, November 1 (DST Ends)
The office is open 9:30AM to 12:30PM
Adult Sunday School: 10AM [FH]
Children's Sunday School: 10AM [Upstairs youth room]
Worship Band/Singers Rehearsal: 9:30AM [Sanctuary]
Worship Service: 11AM [Sanctuary/ webcast]
Fellowship Time: Noon [FH]

Monday, November 2
No activities

Tuesday, November 3
The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Midterm Voter Hospitality Tent: 6AM-7PM [SPC playground; see Emily Byrd]
No Essentrics Exercise

Wednesday, November 4
The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Men's Bible Study: 6:30AM [FH]
Lunch & Learn: Noon [FH]
Choir Rehearsal: 7:30PM [Sanctuary]

Thursday, November 5
The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
No Essentrics Exercise

Friday, November 6
Men's Breakfast: 7AM [FH]

Saturday, November 7
Fall Church Cleanup: 9AM [SPC]

Sunday, November 8
The office is open 9:30AM to 12:30PM
Choir Rehearsal: 9AM [Sanctuary]
Adult Sunday School: 10AM [FH]
Children's Sunday School: 10AM [Upstairs youth room]
Worship Service featuring mission partner Ben Seidl: 11AM [Sanctuary/webcast]
Fellowship Time: Noon [FH]

Monday, November 9
Thanksgiving food items due for St. Columba

Tuesday, November 10
The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Second Singers @ Villages of Rosemont: 8:30AM [FH]
No Essentrics Exercise

Wednesday, November 11
The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Men's Bible Study: 6:30AM [FH]
Lunch & Learn: Noon [FH]
Dinner & What We Carry Home: Veterans, Memory, & the Hope for Peace: 6PM [FH]
Choir Rehearsal: 7:30PM [Sanctuary]

Thursday, November 12
The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
No Essentrics Exercise

Friday, November 13
Men's Breakfast: 7AM [FH]

Saturday, November 14
Norfolk Street Choir's Slover Sing: 3PM [The Slover, 235 E. Plume St., Norfolk]

Sunday, November 15
The office is open 9:30AM to 12:30PM
Faithful Neighbors Blood Drive: 9AM [FH]
Choir Rehearsal: 9AM [Sanctuary]
Adult Sunday School: 10AM [FH]
Children's Sunday School: 10AM [Upstairs youth room]
Worship Service:11AM [Sanctuary/ webcast]
Fellowship Time: Noon [FH]

Monday, November 16
No activities

Tuesday, November 17
The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Triple S Circle: 10:30AM [FH]
Essentrics Exercise: 1PM [FH & Online]
Session Meeting: 6PM [FH]

Wednesday, November 18
The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Men's Bible Study: 6:30AM [FH]
Lunch & Learn: Noon [FH]
Choir Rehearsal: 7:30PM [Sanctuary]

Thursday, November 19
The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
LAUNCH Distribution: Various times and activities [See Joe Morgan]
Essentrics Exercise: 1PM [FH & Online]

Friday, November 20
Men's Breakfast: 7AM [FH]

Saturday, November 21
No activities

Stewardship Sunday, November 22
The office is open 9:30AM to 12:30PM
Choir Rehearsal: 9AM [Sanctuary]
Adult Sunday School: 10AM [FH]
Children's Sunday School: 10AM [Upstairs youth room]
Stewardship Worship Service: 11AM [Sanctuary/ webcast]
Stewardship Sunday Potluck: Noon [FH]

Monday, November 23
Fellowship Dinners: 6PM [Women: No Frill Grill; Men: Tacos Y Tequila]

Tuesday, November 24
The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Essentrics Exercise: 1PM [FH & Online]

Wednesday, November 25
The office is open 10:30AM to 1:30PM
Men's Bible Study: 6:30AM [FH]
Lunch & Learn: Noon [FH]
Choir Rehearsal: 7:30PM [Sanctuary]

Thanksgiving, November 26
The office is closed for the holiday
No Essentrics Exercise

Friday, November 27
Men's Breakfast: 7AM [FH]

Saturday, November 28
Greening of the Church: 9AM [SPC]

Sunday, November 29
The office is open 9:30AM to 12:30PM
Adult Sunday School: 10AM [FH]
Children's Sunday School: 10AM [Upstairs youth room]
Worship Band Rehearsal: 9:30AM [Sanctuary]
Worship Service: 11AM [Sanctuary/ webcast]
Fellowship Time: Noon [FH]

Monday, November 30
No activities

**FH = SPC fellowship hall*

About Second Presbyterian Church

7305 Hampton Blvd., Norfolk, VA 23505 | 757.423.2822 | spcnorfolk.org | facebook.com/secondpresbyteriannorfolk
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

- Dr. Craig Wansink, Senior Pastor: 757.412.7467, cwansink@vwu.edu
- Rev. Catherine Hart Monroe, Covenant Associate Pastor: 757.287.9897, revcat@spcnorfolk.org
- Rev. Nancy Rowland, Parish Associate: 302.354.5880, rowlandnancy73@gmail.com
- 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