



# Newsletter

August 2025



## Important Dates

### August

- 3** Communion/Youth Sunday
- 4** Super Tuesday Kids Club '25 Registration Opens
- 16** Meals on Wheels 8:30am
- 17** Blessing of the Backpacks
- 18** Session Meeting 6:00pm
- 24** Homecoming
- 31** Sunday School Move Up & Kick-off

## THE PASTOR'S MESSAGE

**Dear Church Family,**

August is upon us, and with it comes the familiar rhythm of preparation and transition. As summer winds down, many of our families are already looking ahead to a new school year. Several kids at VBS shared with me that they were excited and ready to go back while others were not so enthusiastic. Whether your children are entering kindergarten or college, this season brings fresh beginnings and plenty of backpacks!

On Sunday, August 17, we'll hold our annual "Blessing of the Backpacks" during worship. All students, teachers, and school staff are encouraged to bring their backpacks or work bags to be blessed as a symbol of God's presence with them in the new school year. It's a beautiful tradition that reminds us that faith goes with us into every classroom, hallway, and office.

Although "Kids Club" doesn't begin until September, registration opens this month! We're excited for another season of growing in faith and friendship. Be sure to sign your children up early so we can plan well and welcome everyone with open arms.

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## THE PASTOR'S MESSAGE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

I will be attending an Interim Pastors' Conference in Montreat beginning the evening of August 10. It will be a meaningful time of learning, sharing, and renewal with fellow Interim Pastors and a dynamic leadership team. Because of this trip, I will be out of the pulpit on August 17. We are grateful for Rev. Dr. Bob Thompson, the guest preacher who will fill the pulpit that Sunday—and I encourage you to come, especially for the Blessing of the Backpacks!

As we turn toward fall, may we carry the spirit of summer's warmth into everything we do. Whether you are preparing school supplies, registering for Kids Club, or simply trying to hold on to the last days of summer, know that God walks with you in every season.

Blessings,  
Steuart

## DIGITAL MINISTRY NEWS BY TOM SIDBURY

[Welcome](#)[Worship](#)[Preschool](#)[Contribute](#)[We're Hiring](#)[Ministries](#)[Prayer Wall](#)[Sermons](#)[More ▾](#)

### Have You Visited Our Church Website Lately?

Our church website is a vital resource for connection and communication at Topsail Presbyterian Church. For those seeking a church home, it serves as a welcoming introduction—offering a glimpse into who we are, what we believe, and how we live out our faith together. It reflects our commitment to being an active, Christ-centered community, both within our church and in the world around us. In today's digital age, a church website often serves as the first impression for visitors—just as important as a handshake or a friendly greeting.

For our members, the website is a central hub for information. You'll find details about upcoming events, ministry activities, forms for communication, and access to our member directory—all in one convenient place. You can also use the site to sign up for volunteer opportunities, contribute flowers for worship, and participate in other church activities throughout the year. It allows us to stay organized, informed, and engaged—no matter our schedules or locations.

It's also a meaningful resource for friends and members who may be traveling or living elsewhere. Sunday worship services, along with special services, are streamed live and archived for viewing anytime, anywhere. This helps us extend our reach beyond the church walls and stay spiritually connected even when we're apart.

Recently, we've made a number of updates to the site to keep it fresh, relevant, and easy to navigate. Along with streamlined content, you'll notice a refreshed color palette and an updated layout designed to enhance your experience.

Whether you're a frequent visitor, an occasional browser, or someone who hasn't yet explored the site, we invite you to take a look at the new format at [www.topsailpresbyterian.org](http://www.topsailpresbyterian.org). We'd also love to hear your thoughts! An up-to-date website reflects a living, active congregation—and shows that we care about clear communication and accessibility. If you have suggestions, ideas for new content, or general feedback, please reach out to us at [admin@topsailpres.org](mailto:admin@topsailpres.org). Your input is always welcome.

# PASTOR SEARCH UPDATE: HELP SHAPE OUR MISSION AND MINISTRY

BY LAURIE RUCKS & TOM SIDBURY

The Session wanted to update the congregation on where we are in the process and the Next Steps to be taken. Right now we are getting ready to complete #1.

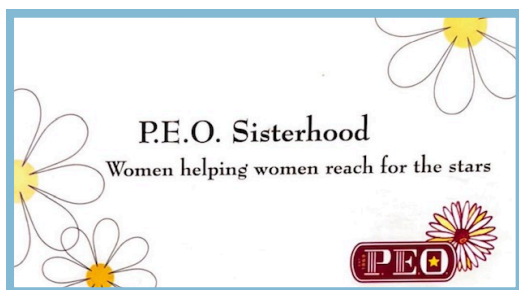
1. TPC's Session has reviewed the 2022 Topsail Presbyterian Survey to verify that the results are still current and submitted their responses including their futuristic goals.
2. TPC's Session has authorized a Transitional Ministry Team (TMT) to conduct a final survey to the congregation on items not included in the 2022 survey (what characteristics in a pastor do you want, etc.). This will be chaired by Elder Tom Sidbury.
3. The Session and TMT will take the results from the Session responses, and the results from the congregation survey and create a new Mission Statement or affirm our current Statement. This will then be used on the Mission Discernment Profile (MDP) (This will be used later in the PCUSA's Church Leadership Connection (CLC) software system.)
4. At the completion of the Mission Study, the Session will request permission from ECOM to form a Pastor Nominating Committee.(PNC)

We are aiming to distribute the follow-up survey in August, both electronically and in paper form, to ensure broad participation and accessibility. Everyone's voice matters—whether you've been a member for decades or have only recently joined the congregation. The survey is your opportunity to help guide the future direction of our ministries and shape the pastoral leadership we seek. More details will be shared as the survey launch date approaches. Please watch for announcements in worship, email, and on social media—and make sure your voice is heard.



Meals on Wheels is an outreach ministry of Topsail Presbyterian Church. On the third Saturday of every month we prepare, pack, and deliver approximately 35 meals to area residents who are elderly or disabled. We have two teams: Cooks and Drivers. **We are in need of another Driver.** If you have a couple of hours once a month to cook or drive please contact Marcia Kissire. Email: [mjbowlin@gmail.com](mailto:mjbowlin@gmail.com). Mobile: 512-994-7464.

Your support in this ministry not only helps provide nourishing meals but also fosters a sense of community and care among our neighbors. Volunteering as a driver or cook offers a wonderful opportunity to connect with others and make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve. We invite you to be part of this compassionate outreach, as we strive to bring comfort and kindness to those who need it most. Thank you for considering being a vital part of our Meals on Wheels team. Together, we can continue to spread joy and support throughout our community.



P.E.O Chapter CX meets in our Youth Building once a month. P.E.O. is a philanthropic educational organization that offers scholarship opportunities to women furthering their undergraduate, masters, and doctorate degrees. P.E.O. has five scholarship funds and owns a women's college in Missouri. If you know of a woman who would like to apply for a scholarship please contact Marcia Kissire. Email: [mjbowlin@gmail.com](mailto:mjbowlin@gmail.com). Mobile: 512-994-7464

By providing these opportunities, P.E.O. not only helps individuals achieve their academic goals but also fosters a sense of empowerment and leadership in communities. We encourage you to spread the word about these scholarships and invite eligible candidates to apply. Together, we can help build a brighter future for women, enhancing their potential and opening doors to new possibilities. Thank you for your continued support and involvement in making education accessible and impactful.

## Grateful Hearts & Exciting Days Ahead!

Dear TPC Families and Friends,

What a joyful and faith-filled week we had during True North VBS! Our hallways and grounds were filled with the sounds of joyful laughter, song, learning and worship. While on their Alaskan adventure, our VBS kids explored what it means to trust Jesus in every part of life. Our week together was a beautiful reminder that Jesus is a friend who is always there, and he is always guiding us—our one True North!

To all the amazing VBS volunteers, creative hands behind the scenes, generous donors, and supportive families...Thank you from the bottom of our hearts! We could not have done this without you! Your love, time, and dedication helped plant seeds of faith that will continue to grow in the hearts of our TPC children.

As we turn the page from summer into a new season, we're hopeful and filled with excitement for what's to come. We can't wait to welcome children and families back into our regular rhythms of the school year growing, learning, and serving together in Christ.

## Mark Your Calendars!

**August 4 – Super Tuesday Kids Club Registration** opens for TPC families. STKC is our fun, Bible-based weekly program that includes participation in our Joyful Noise Children's Choir, weekly Bible lessons, crafts, games, and a yummy kid friendly dinner each week. Super Tuesday Kids Club will start **September 16**. Stay tuned in the weeks ahead for more information.

## August 17 – Blessing of the Backpacks

Children will bring their backpacks for a special blessing during worship as we head into a new school year.

## August 31 – Sunday School Move-Up & Kickoff

A new year of Sunday School begins! We'll celebrate with fun and welcome children into their new classrooms.

## Come Serve With Us!

We are always prayerfully building our Children's Ministry Team and would love to have you join us! We're growing in the following areas:

- Sunday School teachers and assistants
- Super Tuesday Kids Club volunteer staff and kitchen team

Whether you can serve weekly or occasionally, your time and talents are a blessing. For more information on serving or about upcoming events and programs, please reach out to Dawn Frazier, Children's Ministry Director at [christianed@topsailpres.org](mailto:christianed@topsailpres.org) or 910-270-2312.



# VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2025

Here are just a few of the wonderful moments we captured during our adventures with our True North Vacation Bible School. With 59 explorers registered and 15 youth volunteers, the halls of TPC were filled with laughter and excitement. Our adult volunteers and staff participated with joy and led the children through what turned out to be an amazing week of fellowship and faith!



## OUR TIME AT MONTREAT BY SHELLY AEBI

Thanks to the generosity of the Session and congregation of Topsail Presbyterian Church, our music staff spent an enriching week at the Montreat conference center for the annual Presbyterian Association of Musicians' Music and Worship Conference. The week was filled with both educational and musical events and opportunities. Highlights included beautiful worship services, diverse classes such as conducting and organ improvisation, and performance opportunities.

The conference is led by highly skilled clinicians and musicians. Musical groups included a children's choir, middle school choir, two high school choirs, and two adult choirs. These groups rehearse each day of the clinic, learning choral anthems that can be used in their church communities. Handbell choirs abound at Montreat and are easily one of the most popular groups in which to participate! This year, there were five choirs of different levels meeting each day. It's not just about performing, but learning both new music and new ways to present and instruct.

Organ classes were presented both in literature – what's new, what's available, etc. – and in improvisation – techniques to heighten hymn playing and versatility. The organists who played for services and instructed were a true inspiration. Organists of every level were present, and everyone could benefit from the well-structured offerings.

The final evening of concerts is always a special event, where the hard work of all is highlighted and shared. Rebecka played the oboe with different ensembles, performed with a handbell ensemble, and sang in the choir. Shelly added her harp to the wind ensemble offering. It was an uplifting concert. The beauty of Montreat remains inspiring, despite the damage caused by Hurricane Helene last fall. A special museum exhibit was opened concerning the devastating floods, complete with actual videos of the storm, stories of survivors and renovation efforts. Restoration of the conference center on Montreat College is just about complete and Lake Susan looks beautiful! The bigger picture of devastation remains, with roads still closed and much rebuilding to be done throughout the area, including Swannanoa. One highlight this year was the bears! While we kept our distance, watching the mama and her three cubs was very entertaining!

We are deeply grateful to the congregation and Session for allowing us to be nourished both musically and spiritually at Montreat.

With our sincere thanks,

Rebecka & Shelly



# SANCTUARY REJUVINATION PROJECT 2025

During July, our Buildings and Grounds Committee worked hard overseeing a beautiful transformation of our sanctuary. Thanks to their dedication—and the efforts of many others—we now have a refreshed space featuring a new ceiling, updated lighting, fresh paint, and brand-new carpet. We're grateful to everyone who helped bring this renovation to life.





## Prayer Requests

**Prayer List:** Bobbie Ruegner, Bruce Filer, Bonnie Miller, Nancy Lockamy, Janice Thomas, Donna Kraynick, Ann Henry, Charlotte Kelly, Mary Anne Matherly, Sally Ferrante, Ken Rice, John Stillgebauer, Brian Jones, Mary Rogers-Ellsworth, Carolyn Rice, Sharon Egan, Theresa Allen, Deliah Sitorus, Marcia Caison, Tom & Sue Feller, Linda Blount, Marjorie Gulliksen, the family of Charlie & Ginger Hardee, Jacqueline Kirksey, the family of Luke Hanson, the family of Marie Hufham, Wiley Lewis, Carol Campbell, Lee Porrazzo, Jerrod Lowry, Murdis Woodcock.

Deployed: Mark Rohlfing

## Cookies & Lemonade



Cookies and Lemonade is in full swing and Fellowship hopes you are enjoying our social hour after church services. We can't do this without you!! Please sign up in the Narthex or by using the website Ministries, Fellowship/Community to sign up to volunteer for this special event. Grab a friend or new member to help provide for our Cookies and Lemonade social event. **THANK YOU.**  
*Fellowship*

### AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

Carla Strickland	August 4
Trent Talbert	August 4
Sally Kennedy	August 5
Jay Kalfin	August 7
Michael Migliara	August 7
Maddie Sutton	August 7
Andee Woodcock	August 7
Donna Kraynick	August 8
Isabella Migliara	August 8
Matthew Polk	August 8
Maggie Sayre	August 9
Martin Padgett	August 11
Maddyn Watson	August 11
Cheri Haight	August 12
Emily Rand	August 13
Greg Mosher	August 16
Adam Van Cleave	August 17
Mary Waddell	August 17
Jon Carroll	August 18
Denise Heinemann	August 18
Jonathan Heyler	August 18
Anne Musser	August 18
Jerry McCaskill	August 19
Griffin Sutton	August 19
Emma Garland	August 22
Ginger Hardee	August 22
William Kirksey	August 23
Gail Lanier	August 23
Gwen Gulliksen	August 25
David Hughes	August 25
Kaleb Kirksey	August 25
Jennifer Schwarz	August 25
Jace Grogan	August 26
Corbin Blair	August 29

### SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Bryan Kalfin	September 2
Barbara Ruegner	September 2
Margie Alber	September 4
Nancy Simon	September 4
David Askins	September 6
Skip Boe	September 6
Paige Brown	September 7
John Foster	September 8
Judith Scott	September 8
Jack Talbert	September 9
Diane Thomas	September 11
Jack Griffith	September 12
Emery Kennedy	September 12
Landon Consey	September 15
Giuliana Migliara	September 16
Leah Hemphill	September 17
Nicki Moss	September 18
Neil Thomas	September 18
Patrick Carroll	September 20
Elzaan Serfontein	September 25
Hannah Kirksey	September 26
Will Rand	September 26
Connor Bryant	September 27
Bryna Fair	September 28
Jacqui Kirksey	September 28
Howard Parkes	September 29
Esther Stillgebauer	September 29
Evelyn Carpenter	September 30



Pastor Steuart led the congregation in a wonderful sanctuary rededication on Sunday, July 27th.

## HOMECOMING SUNDAY

**SUNDAY AUGUST 24, 2025**

One Service at 10:30 with our guest speaker Jay Bender. Pot Luck Side Dish, Salad and/or Dessert. FRIED CHICKEN is our main entree compliments of the Fellowship Committee and Lowes Foods. **PLAN TO ATTEND!!**