



Sandston Presbyterian Church Newsletter July 2023

Worship Service is at 10:00am every Sunday in person for the summer.

Sunday School Classes are on break for the summer.



CONTACT US...

Email us:

sandspres@verizon.net

Call us: **804-737-1527**

Office hours: **Monday -
Thursday (8:30am -
1:30pm)**

Follow us on Facebook
@sandstonpc

Check out our website:
www.sandstonpc.org

A Note from Pastor Todd...

Sometimes it's human nature to focus on what we don't have or what we're not and miss the gifts that are right in front of us. At the June meeting, I shared the following with the Session. It was requested that I put it in the newsletter, which was a great idea! It is written by Lewis A. Parks, author of *Small on Purpose*. I continue to be grateful for Sandston Presbyterian Church and all the ways it has impacted my faith!

*Peace be with you,
Pastor Todd*

Outside my front door is the campus of a megachurch that averages 3,000 persons in worship weekly. Some parents with children have left my church for this church. They wanted a more complete Christian environment for their family — for their children to be around other children as they learned, played, came to confession of faith, and grew into adulthood. It is a compelling logic, and I never tried to argue against it.

What I have tried to do is figure out what the alternative logic might be for a small church. And I think it may be this: the small church offers a surrogate family for those whose basic family unit is dispersed or in need of wider circles of reinforcement. There are widows and widowers that fear being swallowed by their memories, regrets, and health issues. They know they need regular face-to-face and name recognition contact. They know they need their faith to be tangible and incarnate.

There are empty nesters whose grown children and fast-growing grandchildren live at a distance. These empty nesters have surplus space to care for persons to whom they are not related, except by the waters of baptism and a shared Christian worldview. She has time to be aunt to the young single mother who struggles with addiction. He has time to be uncle to the young man trying to start a new business. Together they visit those of the church family who can no longer leave their residences. There are the young single adults who obviously are just passing through on their way to life after college, military service, or the entry-level job. For a few months they lend their enthusiasm, their gifts, their surprising preference for small church and traditional liturgy. They sit alone in the pews comfortable and confident in their youth but give themselves freely in the social exchanges through which their elders soak up their energy.

Grandparents bring their grandchildren. They are not giving up on the missing generation with its casual secularity, but they would see their children's children exposed to religious faith. It is a gentle act of subversion. Those who thrive in large families where celebrations are frequent plan surprise birthday and anniversary celebrations for those who have no one else to remember. The well-dressed, bookish homeless man settles into the pew next to the family of five sporting the casual Hawaiian look.

Sometimes it occurs to me that I am witnessing the last stages of decay of a once vibrant organism, the leftovers of the heyday of nuclear families of the 1950s, '60s, and '70s, the church on its way down. I counter those gloomy thoughts by remembering some other churches on their way up, the house churches of the New Testament and first two centuries. The persons in those small churches, so to speak, come from broken homes. They answer the call to exclusive, ultimate loyalty to Jesus as Lord.

In the new surrogate family of Jesus, some of the established family patterns and practices of the ancient Mediterranean are left behind such as exclusion by bloodline, firm hierarchical relations, and the limited roll assigned to women. Other patterns and practices, such as sibling solidarity, fellowship around the table, and worship, are kept but reminted to fit the members of the new surrogate family. In the Gospels Jesus builds that first surrogate community precursor to the church.

The drama of the loss of biological ties and traditional family ties and the gain of new faith-based and future-oriented family ties saturates the pages of the New Testament. It is a narrative of collapse and restoration ignited by the example and lordship of Jesus Christ. It is a staple of the soul care that can be replicated in the small-church setting.

The decline of mainline churches has brought the nature and mission of the church front and center. Some see small churches as part of the problem. They judge their size as a business enterprise that never quite took off; small churches have not carried their weight. I prefer to see the small church as part of the solution. These "failed enterprises" have been around a long time. They have replenished themselves with new players and new services for decades, and in some cases centuries. That's a durability worth pondering.

Small churches have a quiet but diffuse witness to share with congregations of all sizes. It is a witness to the value of maintaining focus over the long run, of being thrown again and again on the Spirit for buoyancy and gifts, of being shrewd in dire circumstances. It is a witness to the worth of being a place where everyone knows your name and all together we can call upon the name of the Lord and thereby experience more abundant life.



Flower Calendar Requests 2023...

We are continuing to take requests for the flower calendar for 2023! You can find the request forms outside of the office as well as the narthex of the church. The cost of the flowers has changed to \$35.00. You will find the available dates to the left.



Newsletter Photos...

For the August Newsletter we would like to get some pictures together again from the congregation of what everyone has been up to this spring/summer. So please send a photo or two to the church email at sandspres@verizon.net. **All pictures are due into the church office by July 20th for the August newsletter.** If you have any questions call the church office or Stacie O'Berry at (804)937-2916.

July – 2, 9, 23, & 30
August – 6, 13, & 20
September – 3 & 24
October – 1, 8, & 22
December – 3

Our Prayer List...

Please keep the following individuals below in your thoughts and prayers.

- Alice Baldwin
- Joe Woodham
- Judi Saunders
- Jan & Wayne Richter
- Leon App
- Richard Young

Keep in your prayers the Breckinridge family on the passing of John Breckinridge on June 8th.

July Birthdays

8	Penny Dolan
10	Fisher Oldham
12	Judy Whitesides
14	Thomas Nolan
19	Sandy Young
21	Richard Young
29	Jeneane Lucas

MLP Supply Collection...

The Christian Life Committee will be collecting much needed school supplies for our preschool, Meredith Loughran Preschool for the month of July. You will find the list of items that are needed just below. All donations can be left in the box outside of the church office.

This will take the place of our monthly item collection for FISH. For the month of June we were able to collect a total of 27+ boxes of cereal for Eastern Henrico FISH. Thank you to everyone who donated this past month.



Just a reminder... MLP is now enrolling for the Fall 2023 school year. Please help spread the word to anyone you may know that has children 3 to 5 years old that are ready for preschool!



Highlights About Us

- We are an affordable, small, high quality preschool program in a nurturing christian environment.
- We only have 19 openings, so you can be assured your child will get one-on-one attention and the help they need.
- Children learn best by doing and experiencing so there is tons of hands-on learning.
- Our teachers are passionate about teaching!
- Our classrooms are fun, inviting, and a safe environment.

Programs

Now Offering Full Time Hours
Offered from 8am to 5pm
3 Day (Monday, Wednesday, Friday)
5 Day (Monday-Friday)

Contact Us

804-737-1527
www.sandstonpc.org/our-preschool
Follow us on Facebook
@MeredithLoughranPreschool

If you know of any young families that have children ready for preschool please pass on this information.

Help Our Garden Grow...

The Christian Life Committee is holding another Rock Painting Event on **Saturday, July 15th from 1:00 to 3:00pm**. Come join us paint some rocks to go in our Kindness Rock Garden out front. You can stop by for a little bit or stay the whole time. Rock painting is such an enjoyable activity that requires no skill just a little imagination. Hope to see you there!

Help Our Garden Grow



**Come join us paint rocks for
our Kindness Rock Garden!**



**Saturday, July 15th, 2023
1:00pm to 3:00pm**

Let's catch up...

For the months of July & August we are asking the congregation to send in photos of what they have been up to this spring/summer. We would like to thank everyone who participated this month. If you have some photos you would like to send in for the month of August please email or bring them up to the church no later than July 20th.



Meeting Skye & Marshall from Paw Patrol at Bass Pro.



Time to go fishing! Got new fishing poles at Bass Pro.



Retirement ceremony and last flight in the Army as a Blackhawk Helicopter Instructor.





Visiting Richlands Farm & having a picnic!



Mississippi River

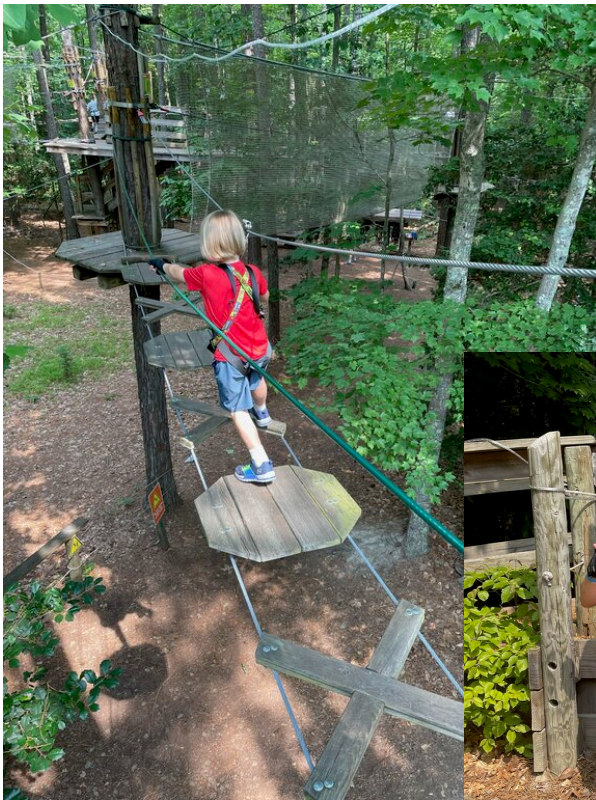




Pretending to whitewash the Tom Sawyer Fence in Hannibal, Missouri.



Cedar Rapids, Iowa



Go Ape in Williamsburg, Virginia





Animal Kingdom, The Tree of Life

Epcot Flower & Garden Festival



Hollywood Studios: Star Wars Galaxy's Edge



July Activity Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 10:00am Worship Service & Communion	3	4 Fourth of July (Office Closed)	5	6	7	8
9 10:00am Worship Service	10 Todd out of Office	11 7-9pm Richmond Beekeepers Meeting Todd out of Office	12 Todd out of Office	13 Todd out of Office	14 Todd out of Office	15 1-3pm Rock Painting Event Todd out of Office
16 10:00am Worship Service Todd out of Office	17 Todd out of Office	18 Todd out of Office	19 Todd out of Office	20 Todd out of Office	21 Todd out of Office	22
23 10:00am Worship Service	24	25	26	27	28	29
30 10:00am Worship Service	31					