

Edgewood Presbyterian Church

Newsletter - July 2026



Core Convictions VII

In January, I started a series on my core convictions, those thoughts and beliefs that underlie what I think, say, and do, and I invited you into respectful conversation of these ideas as we grow in our lives of faith together. (The previous convictions are listed on the next page.) You probably haven't and won't hear me talk much about heaven or about getting into heaven, and this conviction helps explain why.

The focus of Christian life is not getting into heaven, but following Jesus Christ, being faithful disciples, and living and loving as Jesus did, here and now.

This conviction is about our purpose for living, our purpose for being. Is our purpose just about how we will live eternally, in the golden streets of heaven or the fiery abyss of hell? Is it to prove our worthiness for admittance to the world beyond the pearly gates? No! As the first foundational statement in the Book of Order states, our purpose is "to glorify and enjoy God now and forever, living in covenant fellowship with God and participating in God's mission," a mission to transform "creation and humanity by proclaiming to all people the good news of God's love, offering to all people the grace of God at font and table, and calling all people to discipleship in Christ" (F-1.01). We are called to be Jesus' disciples, living and loving the people around us, even the "sinners and tax collectors" we otherwise would find abhorrent, helping to create a world here on earth that mirrors God's heavenly realm.

Why is this conviction important? If our focus is on getting into heaven, we can easily only look

toward the future and ignore the world around us, a world that desperately needs justice, healing, and peace. God has called us to live in this hurting and beautiful world, to be peacemakers, justice seekers, and healers, working to make whole that which was broken. We need to open our eyes and our ears to the needs of the world, to be present in this time and place to what the Spirit is calling us next. God wants us to be faithful disciples, God's people, doing what we can, in whatever ways that we can, to transform the world to be God's kingdom, God's beloved community here on earth as it is in heaven.



Focusing on getting into heaven also implies that God's grace isn't sufficient, that there are things we need to do or not do in order to go to heaven after we die. Nothing we do or do not do can change the gift of God – grace, freely given to us in Christ Jesus. As I wrote in my first article on Core Convictions, nothing, not even our hateful thoughts or deeds, nor our self-centeredness, nor our faithlessness, nor our choices, nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. As Paul wrote to the Romans, "I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (8:38-39). Though, this doesn't mean that we don't break God's heart

(Continued from page 1)

when we turn away, when we do not love our neighbors.... We do, but God loves us anyway and calls us home, again and again.

Why do we do – act, think, speak, behave – the way that we do? Are we kind to others because it makes us a good person worthy of heaven when we die? Or are we kind to others in response to God's love and grace that Jesus taught about and lived during his ministry? Are we kind and loving toward others because that is what they need, and in meeting the needs of another, we mend tears in the fabric of society and help build the beloved community?

This isn't to say that the afterlife, eternal life is unimportant. But heaven is God's domain; earth, this world is where we live, where we can make a difference.

In faith, hope, & love,

Sara

Rev. Sara Martin

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O God,

As summer's sun blazes, provide shade and respite for us, especially those without adequate shelter. Release life-giving rain from the clouds to water the fields and bring relief from intense heat.

Send your Spirit to cool the humid air with a refreshing breeze and to lift our weary spirits.

Amen

Previous core convictions:

1. We are loved, just as we are, by God.
2. Conviction #1 applies to each human being as we are all created in God's image.
3. Just as we are loved, so too are we called to love one another, to love each human being.
4. There is a place for everyone in God's beloved community.
5. Diversity is, not only important, but essential for society, creation, and, thus, also God's beloved community.
6. Grace abounds, and we should approach life, our relationships, interactions, and activities with grace in mind.

Bless This Mess

a Summer Sermon Series
on the families of Genesis



7/5 At the Watering Hole

Genesis 24, *selected*

7/12 Playing Favorites

Genesis 25:19-34

7/19 Works in Progress

Genesis 28:10-19

7/26 Beneath the Veil

Genesis 29:15-28

8/2 Face Forward *Communion Sunday*

Genesis 32:22-31

TREASURER'S REPORT

MAY:

Receipts:	\$ 9,021.56
Expenses:	\$ 8,564.19
Receipts - Expenses:	\$ 457.37

JANUARY - MAY:

Receipts:	\$ 39,665.41
Expenses:	\$ 56,588.40
Receipts - Expenses:	- \$ 13,568.55

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Backpack Pals - 5/3	\$ 40.00
PW Birthday Offering	\$ 289.00

Scheduled Special Offerings

7/5/26	Backpack Pals
8/2/26	2 ¢ a Meal

Head Elder for July

Patsy McBryde

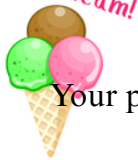
I scream!



Annual Ice Cream Social
July 25 from 2-4

We all scream for ice cream!
and BINGO!

You scream!



Your paragraph text



July

Prayer Family of the Week

- 5 Michael Edwards & family
- 12 Catherine, Ben, & Alec Erickson
- 19 Tommy & Joy Holder
- 26 Ronnie & Christie Kelly



Happy Birthday
to everyone
celebrating
birthdays this
month!



Ha

Acts of the Apostles Bible Study @ 7 PM

July 7	The Women	Acts 16 & 18
July 14	Riot in Ephesus	Acts 19:1-41
July 21	The Trial	Acts 25-26

Lights! Camera! ACTION!

Congregational Meeting - Highlights

At our Annual Meeting of the Congregation and Corporation on June 28, the congregation approved an amendment to our Administrative Manual of Operations to change the composition of the Congregational Nominating Committee from 5 members to 3 members. After making this amendment, the congregation elected Kim Dakdouk and Steve Womack to serve on the Congregational Nominating Committee for this year alongside Patsy McBryde, who was appointed to the committee by the Session. During the portion of the meeting focused on the corporation, the congregation approved the Session to serve as Trustees of the Church for 2026 and named Johnny Sellars as President, Patsy McBryde as Secretary, and Jon Wester as Treasurer.



12 MONTHS OF
Blessings
2026 - A YEAR OF GIVING

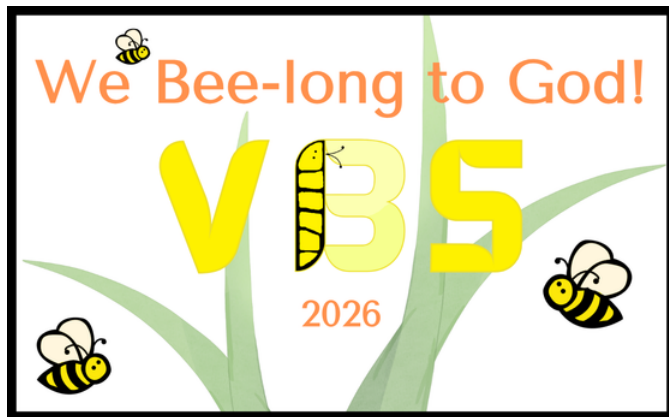


July - Toothbrush &
Toothpaste

any size, any brand

Edgewood Supporting the CUOC





Christian Education Committee

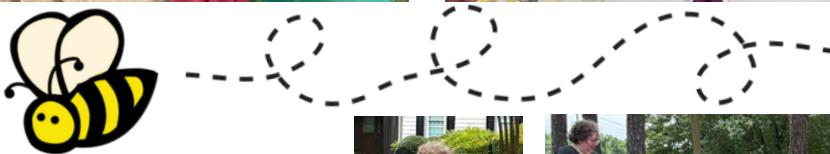
Our “We Bee-long to God” VBS was held on Saturday, June 6. Lessons and games, led by Pastor Sara, were held outside, and crafts and a hot dog lunch were held in the Fellowship Hall. The kids heard the stories of the Prodigal Son and the Good Samaritan. They learned:

- ✿ that we belong to God;
- ✿ that we belong to each other;
- ✿ that God loves us;
- ✿ and that we are part of God's big family.

Our numbers were low, but everyone enjoyed the day. “It was a fun day,” said one of the children.

The CE Committee wants to thank everyone who contributed to the success of VBS 2026, and especially our committee members - Debra Wall, Kim Dakdouk, Stephanie Sellars, Jean McSwain, Teresa Mangum, and Joyce McGehee.

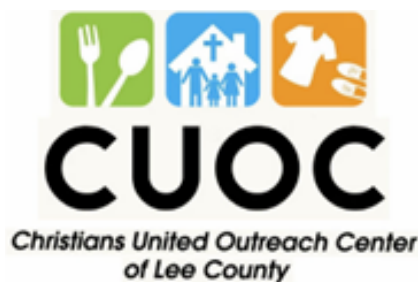
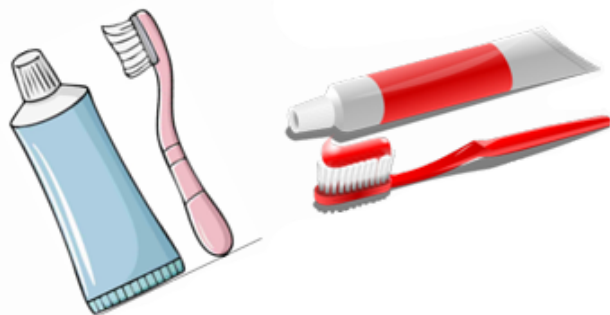
Nancy Mead: Chair



Mission Committee

CUOC Donations for July

We will collect toothbrushes and toothpaste, any size, any brand, this month.



We delivered **55 pounds** of canned fruit, fruit cups, jelly, and dried fruit that we collected in **June** to CUOC.

Thanks again for your generosity!

Steve Womack: Chair

The Sarah Wilson School Supply Drive

July 5 - July 26, 2026

In memory of former member and dedicated educator, Sarah Wilson, we are collecting school supplies to be donated to the CUOC for the children of Lee County. You may support this project by donating supplies from the list or making a monetary offering, just note "School" on your check/envelope.

Supply List

3-ring binders

2 pocket plastic folders

composition books

wide-rule loose leaf paper

pink bar erasers

colored pencils

Crayola crayons

#2 pencils

pens

pencil box/pouch



Jennifer Nicholson

April 7, 1971 - June 24, 2026

We offer our deepest sympathy to Jennifer's family, especially her husband, John, and daughter, Carlie Anne. Jennifer and Carlie Anne joined our church on September 15, 2019.

I am the Resurrection and the Life says the Lord.

John 11:25



Ice Cream & BINGO Social



Saturday, July 25, 2026
2:00-4:00 p.m.

**Please come out for great
fellowship and good ice cream and
BINGO!**



From last year

Fellowship Committee

Mark your calendar for July 25, 2026, for the Ice Cream and BINGO Social. It will be held in the Fellowship Hall from 2 - 4 p.m.

If you are donating prizes, please have them at the church by July 19, 2026, so we can set up the prize table. We will have to put donated gift cards in envelopes so they can be attached to the prize board. We will set up the hall on Friday, June 24, at 11:00 a.m. It should only take one hour.

Our professional caller, Dave Mead, will be our BINGO caller again.

Come out and help us setup and mark your calendar to be here on Saturday to eat some good ice cream. You will have fun!

A sign up sheet will be in the hallway on July 5.

Debra Wall: Chair

Communications Committee

We created and printed a Father's Day card for distribution at the worship service. We also developed a Father's Day card to distribute to local long-term care facilities and printed 200 for Presbyterian Women.

We added 12 sheets of pictures to the bulletin boards. Most of the pictures from VBS are posted in the Fellowship Hall. We updated the website, produced the newsletter, and posted worship videos.

Connie Wynn: Chair

Property & Grounds Committee

The session has approved funds for fixing the sanctuary flooring problem, but the work has not yet been scheduled.

Johnny Sellars: Chair

Presbyterian Women

The Presbyterian Women's Council will have a Planning Retreat in July. If you have any ideas or suggestions, please let Joyce McGehee, Debra Wall, Connie Wynn, or Teresa Mangum know. We would love input from everyone to make next year's Circle meetings great.

Teresa Mangum: Moderator

Edgewood Presbyterian Women

June 8, 2026

*We will not meet
in July. Our next
meeting will be in
August, 2026.*



Teresa Mangum presented the program:

Lesson Nine: When You are Walking with Jesus: The Road to Emmaus



PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN



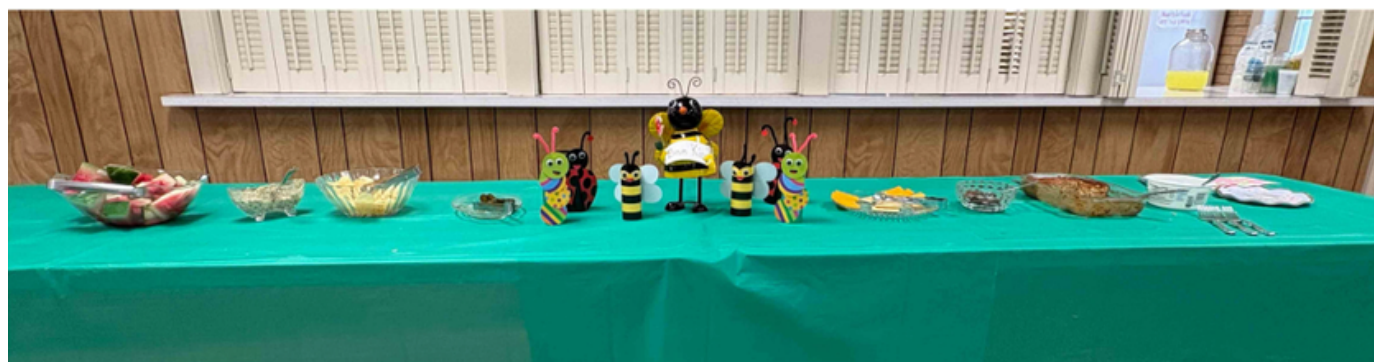
Teresa Mangum:
Moderator



Debra Wall:
Treasurer



Trish Sellars:
Devotion



Hostesses: Teresa Mangum & Jean McSwain

Welcome, Catherine!



We welcomed Catherine Erickson as a new member at Edgewood, via reaffirmation of faith, on June 21, 2026. She's pictured here with her son, Alec.

Congratulations!

Jeannie and Jimmy Williams welcomed a new grandson, George William Stricklin, born June 27, weighing 5 lbs., 7 oz., to Will and Rachel Williams Stricklin.



June 28, 1964, this young couple promised "Till death do us part."

Congratulations, Connie and Jerry on 62 years of marriage!

Dr. David Watson - Author



Dr. David Watson, **Erin's husband**, has recently released a new book, *Surveillance Noir: Being Watched in the 21st Century Film and Literature*.

David is an instructor at CCCC. He spent two years researching film and crime fiction to present many ways in which we're being watched - and ways that collected data is being used to change our world.

The book can be purchased from Cambridge University Press or on Amazon where you can also find his first book, *Truth to Post-Truth in American Detective Fiction*.

Erin offered to have any purchased copy autographed. 😊



Sara's House

Great progress is being made on Sara's new house. She has a driveway, grass, and a tree. They plan to move in by the end of July.