Edgewood Presbyterian Church

Newsletter - November 2026

Core Convictions XI

We are nearing the end of this series of articles on my core convictions that I began in January. The previous convictions – those thoughts and beliefs that underlie what I think, say, and do – are listed on the last page.

You are not alone. We are not alone. God is with us, always, in sunshine and in raging storms.

In Matthew's telling of the nativity story, an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream and told him that Mary would bear a son, a son who had been spoken of by the prophets and who would be named "Emmanuel," God with us (1:20-23). Matthew ends his gospel with this message as well. Jesus' last words to the disciples were, "And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (28:20).

The promise of God's presence with us did not begin with Jesus or the prophets' proclamations. God declared, "I will be with you" way back in Genesis, when speaking with Isaac during a time of famine: "Do not go down to Egypt; settle in the land that I shall show you. Reside in this land as an alien, and I will be with you, and with bless you" (26:2-3). God spoke those words again to Isaac's son, Jacob, in a dream, telling him, "Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land" (28:15). And again, when Jacob fled from his uncle Laban with his wives and many children: "Return to the land of your ancestors and to your kindred, and I will be with you" (31:3). Yet again, when God called Moses to rescue the Israelites from Pharoah and Moses protested the assignment, God told him, "I will be with you" (Ex. 3:12).

This promise is not just given to individuals, but to the whole people of God. In the story of the Exodus, beginning before they crossed the Red Sea and throughout the wilderness journey, "the Lord went in front of them in a pillar of cloud by day, to lead them along the way, and in a pillar of fire by night, to give them light…. Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people" (Ex. 13:21-22). The presence of God in their midst made the Israelites unique in the lands through which they traveled (Ex. 33:16). God was present in the pillars of cloud and fire and in the tabernacle – the tent of meeting that housed the ark of the covenant (Ex. 40:34-38). God was in the midst of God's people as they traveled in the wilderness and settled in the land God had promised for Abraham's descendants.



In the writings of the prophets, "I am/will be with you" was recorded 11 times as messages from God to the people. God's promise to be with us is a refrain throughout the scriptures, clearly stated and as revealed through stories of God's providential care. Jesus' words to the disciples sing out this promise yet again, reminding us that, though we may feel lost, abandoned, weary, and at our wits end, God is, indeed, with us. And Jesus gives us the added promise of "always." God has been faithful, God is faithful, and God will be faithful for that is who God is.

In faith, hope, & love,

Sara

Rev. Sara Martin
919-770-5791 • sara.martin@edgewoodpres.org

Congregational Meeting

Sunday, November 15, 2026

The session has called a congregational meeting for November 15 after worship and before the Thanksgiving Luncheon. The purpose of the meeting is to update the pastor's terms of call for next year and to elect 2 elders for the class of '29. The nominees are Kim Dakdouk and Nancy Mead, who is completing a one-year term and is willing to continue.

Upcoming Services & Sermons

11/1/26	"Refuge and Rest"	Psalm 34; Revelation 7:9-17	*All Saints' Sunday*
11/8/26	"Ready or Not?!"	Matthew 25:1-13; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11	
11/15/26	"Simon Says"	Matthew 23:1-12; 1 Thessalonians 2:9-13	
11/22/26	"Bearing the Image"	Matthew 22:15-22; Ephesians 1:15-23	*Reign of Christ Sunday*





Angel Tree

Again this year, we will be supporting the Angel Tree project of The Salvation Army. Angels should be available in the Narthex on November 8. Donations should be dropped off in the Fellowship Hall by Sunday, December 6.



TREASURER'S REPORT

SEPTEMBER:	
Receipts:	$ 8,850.95
Expenses:	$ 11,605.47
Receipts - Expenses:	**- $ 2,754.52**
JANUARY- SEPTEMBER:	
Receipts:	$ 80,387.35
Expenses:	$101,759.31
Receipts - Expenses:	**- $ 21,371.96**
SPECIAL COLLECTIONS	
2 ¢ a Meal - 10/4	$ 61.16

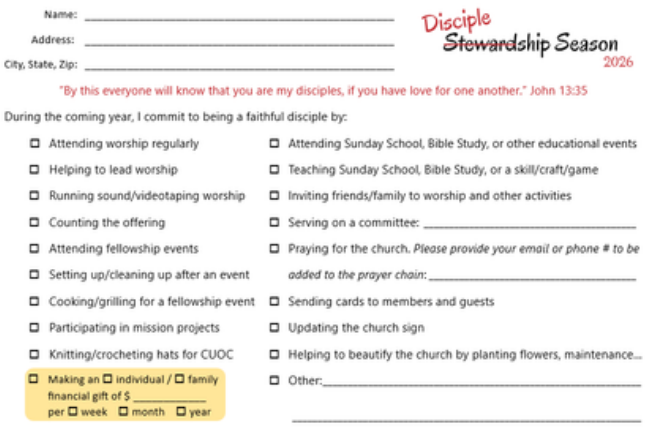
Scheduled Special Offerings

11/1	2 ¢ a Meal
11/15	PW Thank Offering
12/6	2 ¢ a Meal

Stewardship & Finance Committee

If you have not turned in your 2027 Discipleship Commitment Card, please turn it in to the church office as soon as possible so we can better plan for next year.

Jonathan Wester: Chair



Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Disciple Stewardship Season 2026

"By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." John 13:35

During the coming year, I commit to being a faithful disciple by:

- ☐ Attending worship regularly
- ☐ Helping to lead worship
- ☐ Running sound/videotaping worship
- ☐ Counting the offering
- ☐ Attending fellowship events
- ☐ Setting up/cleaning up after an event
- ☐ Cooking/grilling for a fellowship event
- ☐ Participating in mission projects
- ☐ Knitting/crocheting hats for CUOC
- ☐ Making an ☐ individual / ☐ family financial gift of $ _____ per ☐ week ☐ month ☐ year
- ☐ Attending Sunday School, Bible Study, or other educational events
- ☐ Teaching Sunday School, Bible Study, or a skill/craft/game
- ☐ Inviting friends/family to worship and other activities
- ☐ Serving on a committee: _____
- ☐ Praying for the church. *Please provide your email or phone # to be added to the prayer chain:* _____
- ☐ Sending cards to members and guests
- ☐ Updating the church sign
- ☐ Helping to beautify the church by planting flowers, maintenance...
- ☐ Other: _____

O God,

Amid our many blessings, help us to not lose sight of the heartbreak and devastation present in the world. Help us to show our gratitude by offering grace, peace, justice, and kindness to those who are hurting and struggling. Show us ways to fill empty bellies and shelter those without roofs so that all of your children may be full, warm, and safe.

Amen

November

Prayer Family of the Week

1	Carlie Anne Nicholson
8	Jim & Rose Owle
15	Liesl Owle
22	Barbara Rosser
29	Johnny & Tricia Sellars

November Birthdays



Head Elder for November

Connie Wynn

Joyous News!

On October 19, Anna Johns (one of our members) and her husband, Stewart Elmore, welcomed Vivian Faye into the world! She weighed 8 lbs., 4 oz. She and mom are doing very well. Vivian is Cathy Wicker's granddaughter, Catherine Coley's great-granddaughter, and Ron Coley's great-niece.

Congratulations!





On Sunday, November 1, we lit candles to remember our beloved members who passed away during the past year and all of the others we hold dear in our hearts and memories.



Harold Weathers
April 29, 1935 - December 8, 2025



Jennifer Nicholson
April 7, 1971 - June 24, 2026



Helen Weathers
September 10, 1934 - January 31, 2026



Rafael Morales
December 31, 1934 - August 19, 2026

Christian Education Committee

Sunday School 2026-2027

Adult

Monroe-Smith Class — Teresa Mangum, Jean McSwain, Steve Womack, Connie Wynn

"The Present Word: Adult Bible Lessons"

Youth +

The Gospel According to... — Adrian Martin, Rev. Sara Martin

ex. Harry Potter
The Simpsons
Star Wars...

Children

Follow Me — Biblical Practices for Faithful Living

Nancy Mead
TBD

Youth + is for anyone who is interested!

INVESTIGATING THE MYSTERY

The Gospel of Mark

Tuesdays at 7 p.m.



11/3	The Mystery Foresaken *Chapter 14*
11/10	The Mystery Solved *Chapter 15*
11/17	The Mystery Precedes *Chapter 16*

Just bring your Bible and yourself!

TRUNK OR TREAT

Saturday, October 31

The Christian Education committee hosted a community Trunk or Treat event on Saturday, October 31. Watch the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall for pictures, coming soon! Thank you to everyone who participated and/or donated to this event!

EXPLORING FAITH

Confirmation Retreat

On Saturday, October 17, Adrian Martin, a former director of youth ministries, led a one-day Confirmation Retreat for youth in the Presbytery of Coastal Carolina. The retreat was organized by the West Community Steering Team (that I chair) and was held at Highland Presbyterian Church in Fayetteville. Youth from all three missional communities of the presbytery attended, including one of our own! They learned about the Bible, prayer, faith, worship, and what it means to be a Presbyterian. To close the retreat, the youth helped plan and lead a worship service for family and church members who supported them. It was a wonderful day of learning and laughter!

~ Pastor Sara



Fellowship Committee

We would love for you to join us for our annual Thanksgiving Lunch on November 15 immediately after the worship service and congregational meeting. We will have plenty of turkey, ham, and all the fixings, plus delicious desserts. We have great cooks in our church, so come out and join us for good food and great fellowship. Hope to see everyone there!

Debra Wall: Chair

Sunday, November 15, at Noon, in the Fellowship Hall

Thanksgiving Lunch

Turkey and ham will be provided.

(Your help with other items would be appreciated. See sign-up sheet)





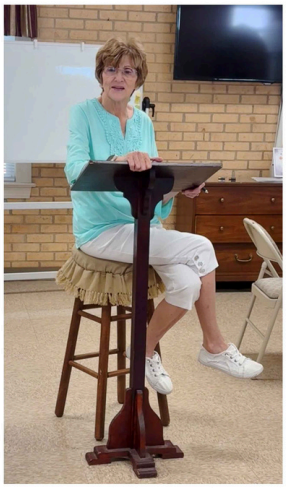
Church Christmas Party

Saturday, December 5

3-5 p.m.

Joy to the world!





Joyce McGehee moderated the meeting





Rev. Sara Martin presented the program: Lesson Two from the PW Horizions Bible Study "Connected in Christ"

Edgewood Presbyterian Women

October 12, 2026

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Next Meeting: 2:00pm, Monday, November 9, 2026
Connie Wynn will present
Lesson Three: "Freedom in Christ"



Hostesses for October were Joyce McGehee and Mary Holder

Presbyterian Women

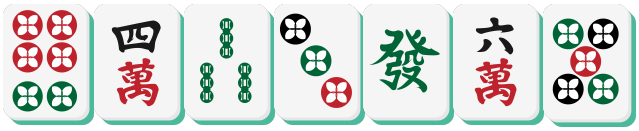
The Edgewood Presbyterian Women will meet November 9 at 2:00 p.m. We hope to see everyone. Lesson Three from the PW/Horizons Bible Study, "Freedom in Christ," will be presented by Connie Wynn as Bible Moderator.



Join us for great fellowship time and wonderful Bible Study.

Teresa Mangum: Moderator

Presbyterian Women
Living for Jesus



MAHJONG

Open Play

Every 2nd and 4th Thursday
(except Thanksgiving & Christmas)

6-8:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall

Donations will support the Presbyterian Women's misson projects.

Missions Committee

We delivered 100 pounds of pasta sauce to the CUOC as our October offering. Again, I want to thank everyone for your generosity.

Steve Womack: Chair



Photo by Steve

12 MONTHS OF Blessings
2026 – A YEAR OF GIVING

November - Bar Soap & Deodorant

any size, any brand - for men & women

Edgewood Supporting the CUOC

Communications Committee

We printed 360 Thanksgiving cards for distribution at the local long-term care facilities, printed a sign-up sheet and signs for the upcoming November 15 Thanksgiving Lunch. We also updated the church website and posted worship service videos on Facebook.

Connie Wynn: Chair

Property & Grounds Committee

We have commitments from contractors to install an awning over the entrance to the downstairs Sunday School room and a shelter along the walk leading to the Fellowship Hall. We expect the installation to take place soon.

Johnny Sellars: Chair

Shared by Jean McSwain:

This past week, I received a note from Mary Olive Smith Jr. Weiss. Her father, Jeff, was our minister for nine years from 1979.

I'm finally writing back to thank you for inviting me to the 75th Anniversary of Edgewood Presbyterian! I hope it was a wonderful event. I regret that I couldn't make it.

I hope you are doing well. I just started a new job this year as a Family Advocate for Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities! I Love It! and I am still making short documentaries and singing with Danny in our Roots Music Band when I get a chance. Danny has happily retired, and our son, Grant, is 17 and a senior in High School. He's going to do a year or two of Community College and then get a BA. He's a challenge and a joy.



Mom is still well and moving around, although she's had several strokes. Fortunately, they were minor, so she's still on 1st Street in Winston Salem with Bubba and his caregivers. Sandra and Davilla's kids are all in college or graduates and working. We miss Dad every day! Please give my love to the folks who remember me at Edgewood.

Love, Mary Olive (Jr.)

Pastor & Music Director Appreciation



On October 18, we recognized Rev. Sara Martin for her dedication to the ministry of our church, her spiritual guidance, and her leadership as our pastor. Rev. Sara serves the community as a member of the board of directors at CUOC. She also serves in a leadership role with the Coastal Carolina Presbytery.

Rev. Sara works so hard behind the scenes that most people don't see. Her meticulous preparation for Session meetings, Bible Study, and all meetings she attends is always extremely thorough. Her organization skill is incredible. She has become a major contributor to the newsletter, not only with her articles, but also with her skill with graphics. She often works late into the night in her effort to fulfill our church's needs. We are very blessed to have her leading our congregation.



We also recognized Dr. Erin Cooper Watson, our music director, for sharing her immense talent by filling our sanctuary with beautiful music each Sunday. We appreciate the time she spends selecting the music and practicing in preparation for our services. We are very grateful for her service to Edgewood.

Thank You, Rev. Sara and Erin!

Debra Wall's Granny Maddox Banana Pudding Recipe

Many people asked how to make the banana pudding we served at the September picnic.



Ingredients

4 bananas
1 box of vanilla wafers
3/4 cup sugar + 1/4 cup sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 cup all purpose flour
1 cup whole milk
1 1/2 cups evaporated milk (12 ounce can)
4 eggs, separated
2 teaspoons vanilla + 1 teaspoon vanilla

Baking Instructions

Pudding: Put sugar, salt, flour, milk, egg yolks, and evaporated milk in a heavy pan and cook over medium heat (4 or 5 minutes). Stir all the time; it burns quickly. It gets thicker as it cools. Add 2 teaspoons vanilla at the end.

Layer Pyrex dish with a layer of vanilla wafers then a layer of banana slices, alternating layers and finishing with a top layer of vanilla wafers. Pour the pudding mixture over the bananas and wafers.

Meringue: Beat the 4 egg whites 1/2 way, add 1/4 cup sugar and 1 teaspoon vanilla. Finish beating until stiff.

Cover pudding with meringue. Bake at 350 degrees until light tan.

Note from Jean: I usually pour part of the pudding mixture after a few layers and the rest when the layers are finished.

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.
7. 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.
8. Faithfulness includes having doubts and questions as they help us grow and deepen our life of faith.
9. Yet, faithful discipleship does not necessarily mean participating in everything, but in those activities, events, and ministries that are meaningful to us, that bring us joy, or even that challenge us in faith.
10. God is big enough and loving enough for the full range of human emotion that we can throw at God.



Session Meeting Highlights - 10/11/26

During the stated meeting on Sunday, October 11, the session amended the "Child, Youth, and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy" to remove the fingerprint requirement and to accept, in place of a new background check, a letter from an employer that confirms a background check was completed in the last 36 months and that the results met their standards to allow the individual to work with children. The session also set a timeline for full compliance with this policy to be December 31, 2026.

In August, the Presbyterian Women suggested building a covered walkway from the Fellowship Hall to the parking lot, and the session directed the Property and Grounds Committee to get quotes for the project. The Presbyterian Women and anonymous donors have covered $9,050 of the $12,050 cost. The session agreed to cover the remaining $3,000. In addition, the session approved a quote to install an awning over the exterior door to the Monroe-Smith Sunday School classroom, which was paid for by anonymous donors. Many thanks to those who have contributed to these projects!

Johnny Sellars reported on the October 3 Presbytery Meeting, where the presbytery approved a 3.5% increase to the minimum terms of call for full-time installed pastors. The presbytery also dissolved the Primaea Iglesia Presbiteriana de Fayetteville (First Hispanic Presbyterian Church of Fayetteville) and dismissed Raven Rock and Priest Hill Presbyterian Churches from the PC(USA) to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, as requested by those congregations. Jerrod Lowry, General Presbyter and Stated Clerk, provided training on the Trust Clause, the Chapter VIII exemption, church property, and what that means for us. If you have questions, please contact Pastor Sara for an appointment to discuss it.

The session scheduled a Congregational Meeting for Sunday, Nov. 15, after worship and before the Thanksgiving Lunch, to elect elders for the class of 2029 and to approve the Pastor's Terms of Call for next year.