



Members of Bott Memorial Church enjoy their new playground.

## Let the Children Come to Me

Playgrounds provide a place for children and families to come together. While kids build their physical and social skills, their adults forge relationships. With funding help from the Small Church Ministry, two congregations revitalized their church playgrounds, creating welcome spaces for the community to reconnect after the distance caused by COVID-19.

In late 2018, the session of Bott Memorial Church in Dinwiddie County began looking critically at their 15-year-old playground. Congregation members and neighbors value the space at the church since the next closest playground is five miles away at the elementary school.

At the same time, C.J. Gomez, a youth elder at Bott Memorial and a Boy Scout, approached Pastor Katherine Jackson about completing a service project at the church. An overhaul of the play area was a perfect fit, with Gomez leading the planning and fundraising for the initiative.

Forty miles north in Chesterfield County, Ampthill Church is tucked in a residential area. The backyard of the church property has for many years been dedicated to a neighborhood playground, beloved by members and non-members.

In early 2021, the Ampthill Presbyterian Women decided the aging play structure needed an update for safety. They solicited contributions from family and friends and a grant from Costco, raising \$9,000.

As both churches have small congregations—Ampthill has about 75 members and Bott, 58—they were eligible to apply for grants from

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## Worshiping Community Becomes a Church

Trinity Ghanaian Presbyterian Fellowship has organized as Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church, after 12 years as a worshiping community. The process was approved October 16 at the 109th presbytery meeting, with some of the church's 40 members participating.

“We thank the leadership of the presbytery for their guidance, mentorship, and support in getting us this far,” shared congregation member Kwame Appiah-Yeboah, who presented the petition for organization to the presbytery. “We are ready and willing to partner to further the Lord's work in Richmond.”

Holy Trinity Church began in October 2009, serving African families who emigrated to Richmond. It became part of the PC(USA)'s 1001 New Worshiping Communities initiative, which raises up leaders in churches and presbyteries inspired by God to create new congregations, particularly those reflecting new and varied forms of church for our changing culture. Participation includes financial support and coaching to help the new groups succeed and grow.

For building space, the fellowship partners with other congregations in the presbytery, currently Tuckahoe Church and previously Three Chopt Church. Rev. Dr. Willie Woodson, who had retired from First United Church after 26 years, became the fellowship's pastor. It was a dream of Woodson and the Trinity Ghanaian Fellowship family to eventually organize as a church.

In 2019, the Presbyterian Mission Agency awarded Trinity Ghanaian Fellowship a \$25,000 grant to promote its growth and development.

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Holy Trinity Church members gathered at Camp Hanover in 2017 for an outdoor worship.

**STATED MEETING: October 16, 2021****Jordanger Installed as Moderator, Three Candidates Approved for Ordination at 109th Meeting**

The 109th stated meeting of the Presbytery of the James was held virtually on October 16, 2021. Westminster Church, Richmond, and Ginter Park Church served as host sites for presbytery leaders.

John Garrett, a ruling elder at St. James Church and a former presbytery moderator, led a service of installation for Dan Jordanger (Providence Church, Gum



Dan Jordanger

Spring) as moderator through February 2023. The installation of Jordanger, previously vice-moderator, came early due to the relocation of Rev. Patrick Dennis and family to Texas. We are grateful for the service of Patrick and Sarah Dennis during their time here.

Rev. Shannon Waite Hendricks, covenant pastor at Fairfield Church, and Rev. Hyung "Howard" Kim, pastor of Lord Jesus Korean Church, led the presbytery in worship. Rev. Kim preached a message entitled "Are You Good Soil?" based on Matthew 13:1-9.



Rev. Hyung Kim

During worship, we celebrated the sacrament of the Lord's Supper and recognized ministers and ruling elders who had entered the Church Triumphant in the prior year.

Rev. Karen Witt, pastor of Providence Church, Gum Spring, and moderator of the Examinations Committee, welcomed five new ministers to the presbytery:

- Rev. Keith Curran (Presbytery of Eastern Virginia), honorably retired
- Rev. Kerry Foster (Shenandoah Presbytery), interim pastor at Amelia Church
- Rev. Chas Jones (Presbytery of Mississippi), honorably retired



Rev. Kerry Foster

- Rev. Mary Newbern-Williams (Presbytery of Eastern Virginia), covenant pastor at First United Church
- Rev. Laura Sugg (Denver Presbytery), pastor at South Plains Church



Rev. Mary Newbern-Williams



Rev. Laura Sugg

Three candidates for ministry of the Word and Sacrament participated in the final step of the examination process:

- Colleen Earp (Ginter Park Church) to serve as director of Programs at Massanetta Springs Camp and Conference Center
- Patrick Lane (Presbytery of St. Andrew) to be pastor of Mitchells Church
- Crystal Varner Parker (Three Chopt Church) to be associate pastor of Salisbury Church



Rev. Colleen Earp



Patrick Lane

Each was approved for ordination. In addition, Ruling Elder Marvin Daniel (Second Church, Richmond) was commissioned as a commissioned pastor for mission and advocacy at Second Richmond. May God's love and blessing be upon them as they enter the ministry.

The business of the day was comprised of the following:

- Declared the constitution and organization of the Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church (formerly Trinity

Ghanaian Fellowship) as a congregation of the presbytery.

- Received the 2022 proposed budget as a first reading.
- Elected Rev. Fred Holbrook as stated clerk effective December 1 for a period of one year or until the election of a successor stated clerk.
- Approved an updated Manual of Administrative Operations.
- Elected a number of people to serve on presbytery constitutional committees, commissions, committees, and teams, including commissioners for the 225th General Assembly (2022) of the PC(USA).
- Heard a progress report from Ruling Elder Barbara Flynt (Brandermill Church), co-moderator of the Presbyters Search Committee.
- Granted honorable retirement to Rev. Victoria Murdock effective May 31, 2021; Rev. Beverly Sherrill Bullock effective December 31, 2021; and Rev. Sylvester Bullock effective December 31, 2021.
- Disapproved a continuing education policy proposed by the Commission on Ministry.

Moderator Jordanger declared the meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m. and led the presbytery in prayer.

In Christ's Service,

Fred A. Holbrook  
Interim General Presbyter  
and Stated Clerk

## 2022 Presbytery Meetings

February 19, 2022

June 21, 2022

October 15, 2022

## Playgrounds Continued from page 1

the presbytery’s Small Church Ministry to help with their projects’ costs. These grants are for \$5,000 or less for projects addressing either building/equipment needs or outreach.

Over the past 18 months, both congregations worked to implement their projects.

At Bott Memorial, Gomez coordinated congregation members and Scouts in dismantling the old structure and building a new one, complete with landscaping. On August 8 in a ceremony held at the church, he was awarded Eagle rank, the highest a Scouts BSA member can achieve, for his leadership of the project.



C.J. Gomez

Volunteers at Amphill Church leveled the ground, installed borders, spread mulch, and built a new playset and geodome. Supporters, including Pleasant’s Hardware, donated a sign and benches to complete the space. On November 6, the congregation celebrated the opening and dedication of its renovated Let It Shine playground.

Sometimes ministry takes place when children in the neighborhood gather at the playground of the church and parents connect to share this time with each other and their children.

Jesus said, “Let the children come to me.” The congregations of Amphill and Bott Memorial have shared that invitation in a very tangible way.

Learn about the Small Church Ministry at [presbyteryofthejames.com/small-churches](http://presbyteryofthejames.com/small-churches). Visit Bott Memorial Church online at [bottmemorial.com](http://bottmemorial.com). Find Amphill Church on Facebook at [facebook.com/amphillpres](https://facebook.com/amphillpres).



Members of Amphill Church gather at a new sign identifying their recently rebuilt playground.

### Be Part of Small Church Ministry Across the Presbytery

The Small Church Ministry is looking for pastors and congregational leaders who are interested in helping the presbytery care for our smaller congregations. The group meets approximately every other month. In the coming year, this ministry will work with the to-be-hired presbyter for congregational life to identify and address needs of small membership congregations in our presbytery. In addition, this team reviews applications for small church grants and helps to oversee the small church intern program. To get involved, contact Kerra English at [kerra.english@gmail.com](mailto:kerra.english@gmail.com).

## Forest Hill Church Has Playground for Pooches

Forest Hill Church in south Richmond offers several community spaces on its property. In addition to a playground and meditation labyrinth for its human guests, the church has a fenced play space for dogs. Since 2004, Phideaux Field dog park has provided off-leash fun for canine pets.

On October 2, Forest Hill held a Blessing of the Animals, led by Rev. Mary Jane Winter. Worshipers sang “All Creatures of Our God and King” and remembered Frances of Assisi who praised creatures as siblings under God. After the outdoor blessing service, dogs and their humans enjoyed refreshments. The church also was open for tours.

Nearly 300 people are members of the Friends of Phideaux Field Facebook group, which is used to coordinate playdates and care for the property with the church.



Learn more about Forest Hill Church at [fhprichmond.org](http://fhprichmond.org).

## Camp Hanover Welcomes Outdoor Ministry Director

Laura Haney has joined the staff of Camp Hanover as associate director of outdoor ministry.

A graduate of Randolph-Macon College with dual degrees in environmental studies and biology, Haney is responsible for Camp Hanover's environmental stewardship and education program and will inspire creation care among staff, campers, and guests. She also will lead the development and implementation of a year-round, nature-based after-school program, in addition to caring for the camp's ducks, chickens, goats, and honeybees.

Haney is a lifelong lover of nature and summer camps and may be familiar to some Camp Hanover visitors. In 2017, 2018, and 2019, she worked at Camp Hanover first as an intern and later as a unit director for summer camp.



A true servant leader, Haney spent a year in Arizona, rebuilding houses as a participant in the PC(USA) Young Adult Volunteer program. Most recently, Laura was the assistant day camp director at Massanetta Springs Camp and Conference Center in Harrisonburg.

Haney is "looking forward to creating ways for people to connect with and explore the wonders of creation in Camp Hanover's 600 acres. It's my dream outdoor classroom!"

**Hanover Christmas**

**Friday, December 10**  
**Saturday, December 11**

A magical night of music and drama celebrating the birth of Jesus

Find details at [camphanover.org/hanover-christmas-home](https://camphanover.org/hanover-christmas-home).



## Prepare Now for Earth Care Certification

Is your church active in earth care or interested in growing your stewardship of God's earth? Become certified as an Earth Care Congregation by taking the Presbyterian Mission Agency's Earth Care pledge. Check off activities and projects in the fields of worship, education, facilities, and outreach that you're already doing. Submit your application for certification January 1 to February 15. Find details at [presbyterianmission.org/earth-care-congregations](https://presbyterianmission.org/earth-care-congregations).

## New Youth Ministry Associate Seeks Applicants for Youth Council

Rev. Jess Cook has begun serving as the presbytery's interim associate for youth ministry. Cook, who has more than a decade of experience working with youth in a variety of contexts, loves people, liturgy that means something, and spaces that invite us to bring our whole selves, whoever we are and wherever we come from. They live in Richmond with their partner and child.



Cook's primary responsibility is coordinating the presbytery's Youth Council, which develops youth leadership through learning, volunteer service, and fellowship.

Cook is seeking youth interested in serving on Youth Council for 2021-2022. Participation is open to high school students who are members of a Presbytery

of the James congregation or have a connection to Camp Hanover, such as involvement in the Pathfinders program or attendance at a youth retreat. Youth Council meets monthly through June, planning and hosting events for youth across the presbytery.

One of Youth Council's emphases this year is preparing for the 2022 Presbyterian Youth Triennium, July 24-27 in Indianapolis.

The theme for Triennium is "When Did We See You?" Taken from Jesus's Judgment of the Nations as depicted in Matthew 25:31-46, the theme is designed to engage young people with the mission priorities at the heart of PC(USA)'s Matthew 25 initiative: dismantling structural racism, eradicating systemic poverty, and building congregational vitality.

To become involved with Youth Council, as a youth participant or an adult mentor, contact Jess Cook at [jess@presbyteryofthejames.org](mailto:jess@presbyteryofthejames.org). Learn about Youth Triennium at [presbyterianyouthtriennium.org](https://presbyterianyouthtriennium.org).

## Campbell Presbyterian and Living Water Lutheran Share Faith and Space

Two congregations from different denominations now have one address in the Northern Neck of Virginia. Campbell Memorial Presbyterian Church and Living Water Lutheran Church have begun a partnership that allows the Lutheran congregation to use space in and operate from the Presbyterian facility.

The Lutheran congregation is part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Because of the two denominations' similar theology and practices, since 1997 ELCA and PC(USA) have been in "full communion." This allows them to worship together and exchange clergy.

About two years ago, the cost of maintaining their large building prompted

the Lutherans to begin exploring other options. About that time, the Rev. Jim Moseley, then the new pastor at Campbell, recognized that there was considerable unused space at his church.

"Ecumenical interactions can be richly rewarding," Moseley says. "And this could be a 'win-win' situation for these two churches."

After consultation with congregational leaders at Campbell, who agreed with the idea, he invited Living Water to consider renting space in Weems.

Living Water's leaders found that Campbell "checked nearly all the boxes" for their needs.

"From the beginning, in so many ways, I have felt that the Holy Spirit is at work in this partnering," states the Rev. Bruce Burslie, lead pastor at Living Water.

"The agreement allows Living Water and Campbell to continue being unique, independent congregations, while at the same time sharing activities in Christian education, mission, and service," comments the Rev. Judy Thomson, a PC(USA)-ordained minister serving as co-pastor at Living Water.

Visit Campbell Memorial Church online at [campbellchurch.net](http://campbellchurch.net). Find Living Water Lutheran Church at [livingwaterchapel.org](http://livingwaterchapel.org).



The combined congregations of Campbell Memorial Church and Living Water Lutheran Church gather on the steps of their shared building.

## Kirk O'Cliff Church Celebrates 145 Years of Ministry



On October 17, current and former congregants gathered to celebrate Kirk O'Cliff Church's 145th anniversary. Bobby Goodwin, who has worshiped at the Kirk for 70 years, recalled the church's history and his childhood memories. Other members led the congregation in the Lord's Prayer using American Sign Language.

The church building was constructed in 1876 of hand-made bricks because there was no suitable lumber nearby. Between 1910 and 1911, the sanctuary was dismantled and rebuilt using the original materials in a new location.

See more photos from Kirk O'Cliff's anniversary worship at [facebook.com/kirkoclippres](https://www.facebook.com/kirkoclippres).

## Presbytery Sponsors Young Adult Volunteer Serving in Scotland

Each year, the presbytery's World Mission Ministry contributes financially to support young people in the presbytery who join the Presbyterian Mission Agency's Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) program.

In this ecumenical, faith-based year of service, individuals ages 19 to 30 help agencies around the world address root causes of poverty and reconciliation. Alongside this work, volunteers explore the meaning of their Christian faith and accountability to their neighbors in community with peers and mentors.

Helen Salita is the newest presbytery YAV and is serving in Scotland along with three other volunteers.

The daughter of Rev. Lisa Salita, who served churches in Presbytery of the James before taking a call to Delaware this fall, Helen graduated from the University of Mary



Find information about the YAV program at [presbyterianmission.org/ministries/yav](https://presbyterianmission.org/ministries/yav).

Washington after studying history and political science. She most recently worked at Sojourners, a print and online magazine of faith, culture, and politics.

Salita is most looking forward to connecting with people during her year as a YAV. "Given this past year and a half where people have had to keep apart [due to COVID-19]," she said, "I'm looking forward to being with people and having the chance to form strong relationships."

The program is accepting applications now for positions starting in Fall 2022. International assignments include Colombia, Peru, Philippines, Scotland, South Korea, and Zambia. U.S. assignments are available in Arizona, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Montana, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Texas, and Washington, D.C.

## Collegiate Ministries Welcome Back Students to Campus

### UKirk at University of Virginia

UKirk at University of Virginia seeks to support students in their journeys of faith through an inclusive campus ministry and as a welcoming church community away from home. Sponsored by Westminster Church in Charlottesville, UKirk at UVA encourages students to join for worship Sundays at 11 a.m., followed by a brunch for young adults. The ministry also offers gatherings for graduate and professional students and monthly service opportunities. Westminster Church and UKirk at UVA welcome partnering with you in bridging the college gap in baptismal vows for the students your church has helped to grow in faith, hope, and love.



Contact Associate Pastor Dorothy Piatt-Esguerra at [ukirkuva@westminsterva.org](mailto:ukirkuva@westminsterva.org) or visit [ukirkuva.org](https://ukirkuva.org).

### UKirk RVA at Virginia Commonwealth University

At the start of the 2021-2022 school year, UKirk RVA at Virginia Commonwealth University began collaborating with the Episcopal and Methodist campus ministries in a joint initiative called ToGather. This multicultural, multi-faith group of students connects with and learns about others in an intentional community that includes fellowship, storytelling, Bible study, and student worship. Encourage your student at VCU to get involved. You can support this ministry by praying for it and providing lunch for one of their Wednesday meetings.



Contact Campus Minister Kelley Connelly at [ukirk.rva@gmail.com](mailto:ukirk.rva@gmail.com) for more info or visit [ukirkuva.org](https://ukirkuva.org). To learn more about the Spiritual Life offerings at VCU, visit [thepacecenter.com/togather](https://thepacecenter.com/togather).

## Presbyterians Help Afghan Refugees in Virginia

In July and August, following the takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban, more than 124,000 Afghan refugees were evacuated to the United States. Through Operation Allies Refuge, the U.S. military is coordinating care until the refugees can be resettled into more permanent accommodations.

Government agencies, non-profit organizations, and faith communities also are coming to the aid of these displaced people. Your church may be one of those helping “the least of these”.

New Hanover Church coordinated a drive for blankets. On September 22, they delivered nearly 700 twin, full, and baby-sized blankets to Marine Corps Base Quantico in Prince William County. Quantico is housing up to 5,000 Afghans.

Genito Church in Powhatan County focused on the needs of refugee children, collecting clothes, diapers, and wipes. The items were provided to Fort Pickett in Nottoway County, which has more than 7,000 evacuees. Fort Lee in Prince George County also is housing Afghans.

Once they leave military bases, some Afghans will go to Massanetta Springs Camp and Conference Center in Harrisonburg which, through a partnership



(LEFT) New Hanover Church member Marianne Vermeer headed up a blanket drive to benefit Afghan refugees at Quantico. (RIGHT) Genito Church set up a display encouraging congregation members to donate items for babies and young children at Fort Pickett.



with Church World Service, has provided short-term housing for refugees in the past. Your congregation can support Massanetta through donations to fund meals and housing space. Other ways to assist include serving meals and donating hygiene, cleaning, kitchen, and clothing items.

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) offers additional ways to help Afghans in Virginia. These include donating funds and in-kind items to the Charlottesville or Richmond IRC offices, sponsoring a family, and volunteering.

Find information about helping Afghan refugees in Virginia at [rescue.org/announcement/how-help-afghan-evacuees-virginia](https://rescue.org/announcement/how-help-afghan-evacuees-virginia) and [massanettasprings.org/blogarchive/refugeewelcome](https://massanettasprings.org/blogarchive/refugeewelcome).

## Monthly Saturday Program Fills VBS Void at Culpeper Church

After several years without vacation Bible school, the Christian education committee at Culpeper Church decided to re-evaluate the traditional weeklong event and launched something new for 2021. Once a month, the church holds Sunrise Saturdays, a morning program with music, Bible stories, activities, and games.

Each month has a different theme. In June, two puzzle rooms explored the stories of Joseph and Paul and Silas. For July’s “Build It” theme, children learned about Solomon’s temple and constructed birdhouses. In August, they painted rocks and distributed them downtown. September featured a scavenger hunt, with 12 actors portraying disciples for participants to discover.

Between 10 and 20 volunteers are involved each month, including members of the youth group who illustrate Bible stories through skits.

“The monthly format has been easy to staff with volunteers,” said Katherine Ayers, a member of the Christian education committee.

It also has been popular with parents, as the Saturday morning time frame allows parents to take care of errands while their children participate.



Children watch members of the youth group perform a skit during Sunrise Saturday.

Learn about Culpeper Church at [culpeperpresbyterian.org](https://culpeperpresbyterian.org). See more pictures of Sunrise Saturdays at [facebook.com/culpeperpresbyterian](https://facebook.com/culpeperpresbyterian).



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Come, you that are *blessed by my Father*,  
inherit the kingdom prepared for you  
from the foundation of the world;  
for I was *hungry* and you gave me food,  
I was *thirsty* and you gave me something to drink,  
I was *a stranger* and you welcomed me...

**Matthew 25:34-35**

Send submissions, corrections, or requests for additional  
copies to [office@presbyteryofthejames.org](mailto:office@presbyteryofthejames.org).



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**Holy Trinity** Continued from page 1

In December 2020, Woodson passed away suddenly. To commemorate and honor Woodson's leadership, members of the church began the process of organizing.

"We rejoice in their calling," shared Rev. Fred Holbrook, interim general presbyter. "They love Jesus Christ and want to share that love with others, not only those who trace their roots to Ghana, but to anyone whom they meet."

"We pray that God will help us all as we work together to serve Jesus Christ through the love and power of the Holy Spirit."



Rev. Willie Woodson

Visit Holy Trinity Church online at [trinityghanaianpresbyterian.org](http://trinityghanaianpresbyterian.org).

