

**The First Presbyterian Church  
of Washingtonville  
The *Good News*-Letter**

October 2024



## From The Pastor

Dear friends,

At this time of year, I always find myself thinking about how to use the things that are entrusted to my care. It's probably hard wired into my DNA by my farming ancestors, who were concerning themselves with the state of the root cellar and how much hay and firewood they would need to get through the winter. I have a few tomatoes and peppers left in the garden, and I admit to a few hours devoted to canning and freezing food for winter, but no worries about the hay and firewood. My mind, influenced today by severe storms due to climate change and a very divisive political race, turns more to other kinds of resources.

For example, what am I doing with my gratitude? Am I grateful for things my family and friends enjoy, like good jobs, warm living quarters, a neighborhood more tolerant than many parts of the country, and loved ones? We live in the fallacy of thinking that when bad things happen, they cancel out good gifts from God and make them less good. We might even feel guilty thinking about our blessings while others are mourning hate crimes and random violence in their neighborhoods. But the truth is, the more people who notice the warmth, light and love around them, the harder it is for someone to think that hate is the way to make their mark. The more people notice the help they receive during a storm, the more they want to help.

What am I doing with the resource of my desire to help? Working with the congregation, I have several upcoming opportunities. The Peacemaking Offering, taken on World Communion Sunday, helps the denomination to fund peacemaking efforts around the world. We're donating 25% locally to try to address the unequal experience of kids, since some families can and some can't afford food for weekend meals. In November, we begin packing for Food for Kids.

What are we as a church doing with the resource of our building? We worship God in an open and welcoming way, study the Bible, and share our space with a Haitian congregation. We let in groups that meet regularly, who teach their members to rely on a higher power or do their duty to God. We directly influence the children of Washingtonville by sharing our faith with them at Vacation Bible Camp. We have been seeing that talking with one another is a good step to community peace, so we're exploring how our hall can be used for community gatherings that need a place to happen.

Have you noticed how when you are doing something you love, time flies by and even the most strenuous activity seems like no trouble at all? Let's love God in that way, and work for His purposes with gratitude and joy.

In Christ's love,  
Martha

### Prayer for October

God of all creation, thank You for the harvest. Help us to remember that the apostle James said that a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who work for peace. In the name of Your Son, the Prince of Peace, we pray. Amen.

## Worship Ministry

October is here already, and fall is upon us. Where does the time go?

We begin with October 6 ó World Communion Sunday. At this service we will be taking the Special Peace & Global Witness Offering, along with celebrating the Lord's Supper. We have been observing September as the month of Peace, culminating with this Special Offering.

From the PCUSA Website: "The Peace & Global Witness Offering supports the peacemaking and reconciliation efforts of the church at every governing body level and provides an opportunity to witness to God's gift of peace in the world. 25% of this offering is retained by congregations for support of their own peace and reconciliation efforts." We will be giving our 25% gift to Food For Kids.

October 27 is Reformation Sunday. Presbyterians celebrate the tradition that grounds their faith on Reformation Sunday. It is always the last Sunday in October, marking the occasion in 1517 when Martin Luther posted his 95 theses on the church door in Wittenberg, Germany.

Looking a bit to November, on November 3, we will be observing the Lord's Supper. It is also the end of Daylight Saving Time, so don't forget to "fall back."

Blessings,

The Worship Committee

# October 2024

## First Presbyterian Church

		1  7:00 Troop 416	2  8:00 PM A.A	3  9:30 AM Bible Study  11:00 AM Choir 7:00 N.A.	4	5 11:00 AM Book Club meets  Josef's Cleaning Service  7:00 PM Dr. Bob's Group
6  9:30 Worship, Lord's Supper  11:30 LCWM  8:00 PM A.A.	7  7:30 PM Dr. Bob's Group	8  7:00 Troop 416	9  8:00 PM A.A.	10  9:30 AM Bible Study  11:00 AM Choir 7:00 N.A.	11	12  Josef's Cleaning Service  7:00 PM Dr. Bob's Group
13  9:30 Worship  11:30 LCWM  8:00 PM A.A.	14  7:30 PM Dr. Bob's Group	15  7:00 Troop 416	16  8:00 PM A.A.	17  9:30 AM Bible Study  11:00 AM Choir 7:00 N.A.	18	19  Josef's Cleaning Service  7:00 PM Dr. Bob's Group
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First Presbyterian Church  
of Washingtonville

Session Moderator  
Rev. Martha Carlson

Clerk of Session  
Deborah Chedister

The Session  
Nancy Bruscano 2024  
Lois Dunikowski 2024\*  
Mark Chedister 2025  
Debra Van Regenmortel 2026  
Bobbie Trager 2026\*

Board of Deacons  
Peggy Wright 2024\*  
Jorus Beasley 2025  
Hanora Sullivan 2026

\*indicates second term

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Presbytery of Hudson River  
[www.hudrivpres.org](http://www.hudrivpres.org)

## October Birthdays

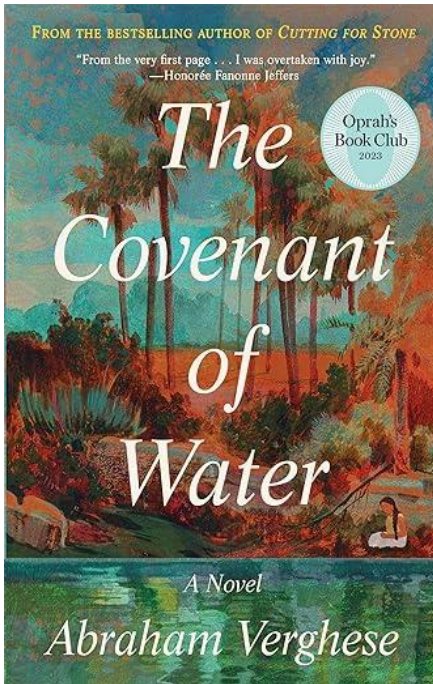


18 Mark Chedister



## THE SAVVY SOULS SISTERS OF SYNTAX

### “The Covenant of Water” by Abraham Verghese



Spanning the years 1900 to 1977, *The Covenant of Water* is set in Kerala, on South India's Malabar Coast, and follows three generations of a family that suffers a peculiar affliction: in every generation, at least one person dies by drowning—and in Kerala, water is everywhere. At the turn of the century, a twelve-year-old girl from Kerala's long-existing Christian community, grieving the death of her father, is sent by boat to her wedding, where she will meet her forty-year-old husband for the first time. From this unforgettable new beginning, the young girl—and future matriarch, known as Big Ammachi—will witness unthinkable changes over the span of her extraordinary life, full of joy and triumph as well as hardship and loss, her faith and love the only constants.

A shimmering evocation of a bygone India and of the passage of time itself, *The Covenant of Water* is a hymn to progress in medicine and to human understanding, and a humbling testament to the difficulties undergone by past generations for the sake of those alive today. It is one of the most masterful literary novels published in recent years.

The Savvy Soul Sisters of Syntax will be reading this book in October. Our meeting to discuss the book will be in November.

## Remaining in Jesus

Read: Matthew 16:13-19

“I will build my church”

Matthew 16:18

A fire burned Balsora Baptist Church to the ground. As emergency workers and community members gathered after the blaze subsided, they were surprised to see a charred cross standing upright amidst the smoke and ashes in the air. A firefighter commented that the fire “took the structure, but not the cross. [This is a reminder] that the building was just that, a building. The church is the congregation.”

The church is not a building, but a community united by the cross of Christ—the One who died, was buried, and rose again. When Jesus lived on earth, He told Peter He “would build His worldwide church, and nothing would destroy it (Matthew 16:18). Jesus would gather believers from all over the globe into a group that would continue throughout time. This community would face intense difficulty, but they “ultimately endure. God would dwell within them and sustain them (Ephesians 2:22).

When we struggle to establish local churches only to have them stagnate and sputter, when buildings are destroyed, or when we’re concerned about believers struggling in other parts of the world, we can remember that Jesus is alive, actively enabling God’s people to persevere. We’re part of the church He’s building today. He’s with us and for us. His cross remains.

### Reflect & Pray

In what ways might you support fellow believers? How does sharing the good news relate to God’s plan for the church?

Dear God, please strengthen Your people everywhere. Fill them with wisdom, protect them, and help them stay faithful to You.

Our Daily Bread

With blessings of love from the Nurture Ministry

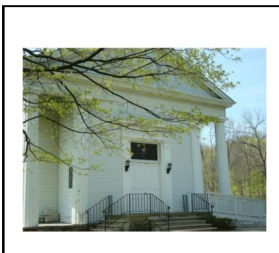
## Calendar of Prayer for our Congregations and Leadership

The endorsed calendar of prayer is a way for us to be united. It's an awesome responsibility and gift to pray for one another. To make our offering on behalf of one another. Each member congregation, staff member, elected servant leader, ministry team, and mission commitment of our Presbytery is represented:

Central PC Haverstraw, World Communion Sunday, First Church Goshen, Indigenous Peoples Day (10/14)  
World Food Day (10/16), First Church Florida, Validated Ministries, Educate a Child, Transform the World, Eastchester PC, Reformation Sunday, PC(USA) Young Adult Volunteers



Call Cynthia at 845-496-3814 or send an email to [firstpres@frontiernet.net](mailto:firstpres@frontiernet.net)  
to share your news with our church family.



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