



Keyhole Press

Southminster Presbyterian

August 2022

From the Pastor

Southminster Presbyterian: A name I heard at Presbytery meetings. Another congregation amongst the many. That was Southminster to me.

Things changed quickly. Two in-person meetings, a number of other meetings, lots of paperwork, and now I am part of Southminster. Thankfully and proudly I can say: “We are Southminster.”

The reality is we don’t know each other. The majority of what I know about “us” I found on Southminster’s webpage and limited conversations I had with some of you. If I am a “betting man” I would bet you know less about me than I generally know about you. You got snippets of information here and there, but not much. Not enough to ease the curiosity-itch newcomers carry with them.

This won’t cure the itch! Maybe it will inflate it. Either way.

I am Johan O’Connell (nicknamed JOC stemming from my initials that turned into JOCK). Born on a farm in South Africa 67 years ago. Growing up and later ordained in the Dutch Reformed Church, at that time the major “whites only” Afrikaans denomination in the country. Afrikaans is my mother tongue, the language that lives in me, I dream in and our home language. English is our second language. I translate from Afrikaans into English as I speak. Not always easy as I am sure you will soon be aware of!

After high school (1973) two years of compulsory National Military Service followed, and on completion I joined the military permanently, enrolled at University studying part-time obtaining two degrees. Somewhere in this - too long a story to recount here - I was called to the ministry. In 1983 Diane, a university “love” and I married. She is a Special Education teacher. We have two children, Kelly, our daughter, and Rick, our son. Both were born in South Africa and graduated here from American universities. All are dual citizens.

I resigned from the military with the Rank of Major, pursued my studies full time at the Seminary where I obtained my Masters of Divinity and a Masters of Theology. Ordained on 9 March 1990, I served as solo pastor in three congregations in South Africa. 2001 brought a cancer diagnosis into our lives. I was diagnosed with Lymphoma and given six months to live depending on the outcome of the chemo treatments. They pumped the “bathtub, its dirty water and everything else” into me. Thankful to say it is in remission. In 2002 the congregation gave me a yearlong sabbatical and we came to America, Charlottesville, VA that summer where I completed a yearlong CPE internship at UVA Hospital.

An “out of the blue” call to be the minister at Byrd Church in Goochland came just before we returned to South Africa. We went back home in the summer of 2003. Accepted the call and moved to Goochland in March 2004 where I served the congregation till now.

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Rally Day: An Annual Tradition

Every year we begin the Fall season with Rally Day, where we introduce what will be happening in Sunday School classes in the coming year. Look for more information and details in the next issue of the *Keyhole Press*. Details about the Rally Day Picnic can be found on page 4.

Children's Sunday School News

We will be attempting to re-start the children's Sunday School program starting Fall 2022. It will be based on input from parents, and former and current Sunday school teachers. If you would be interested in teaching, serving as an assistant teacher, or otherwise helping out, please contact Rev. Mary Bielen, Covenant Pastor, at mary@southchurchpres.org.

Adult Classes

Two adult classes are offered throughout the year. The *Contemporary Issues* group discusses current events, books, and other topics of interest with a focus on how our faith informs our daily living. The group meets Sundays at 10 am via Zoom. Contact Joyce Lapsley at jhlwords@comcast.net for details. The *Spiritual Life* group focuses on reading and discussing various writings from contemporary Christian authors. This group also meets Sundays at 10:00 am, but in person at the church. Contact Jennifer Weddle at jweddle726@comcast.net for more details. Newcomers are always welcome.

Church In The World

Liberation Veteran Services Mission

“We believe two words that should never go together are ‘homeless’ and ‘veteran’.

First of all, a huge thank you to all the volunteers who have made this local community mission a success!

Additional thanks to those who have contributed paper supplies and other expendable items that are occasionally requested. A special thanks to Jennifer Weddle for the knitted scarves.

We can always use extra hands to lighten the load for this dedicated group. We prepare and deliver 5 meals each year. Anyone who can grocery shop, chop, slice, cook, and/or serve a plate of food is needed and welcome to help us – even if it’s just once a year. This does not have to be a huge commitment, but we almost guarantee that once you help, you will keep coming back.

Liberation Veteran Services (located on Hull Street) offers Richmond area veterans in crisis the care, resources and stability needed to rebuild their lives. See their success stories here: [Success Stories - Liberation Veteran Services \(lvsrva.org\)](http://SuccessStories-LiberationVeteranServices(lvsrva.org))

Please consider being a part of this humbling, yet very satisfying mission effort. Email Susan Pharr: shpharr@gmail.com.

Scholarship Committee Report

I am pleased to share the Scholarship Committee was able to provide generous scholarships to five of our college students. Merrill Dugger, Ryan Endries, Bella Paterson, Seth Willis and Jacob Wetzel received portions of \$26,918.49 made possible by the Zona Willis Estate and a special scholarship fund established by an anonymous donor. This is such a blessing for the students and their families.

To be eligible to receive a portion of this fund, you must be a confirmed member of the church. I encourage our youth members to speak with Rev. Bielen about joining the church if you are not already a member. If anyone would like to contribute to the Scholarship Fund you may make designated contributions to the fund.

Kitty Bice, Moderator.

Leadership & Planning**Welcome Rev. O'Connell**

On behalf of the Interim Pastor Nominating Committee, which includes myself, Rich Kowalski, Clay Spillman and Robin Lapsley, as well as the session, it is our pleasure to welcome Rev. Johan "Jock" O'Connell as our Interim Pastor. This will be his first position as an Interim Pastor as he has spent the last sixteen years at Byrd Presbyterian Church. Rev. O'Connell grew up in South Africa and is fluent in Afrikaans, his native language. Please join us in welcoming Rev. O'Connell as he leads us to the next step in our process of hiring a new pastor. I am sure that he will feel the friendliness of this congregation that we are known for.

Jennifer Weddle

Facilities**Thank You: HVAC Team**

Richmond summers are, by their nature, hot and humid and the Summer of 2022 has been one for the books. As one might imagine, keeping a building the size of Southminster cool is no easy feat.

With that in mind we would like to thank Chuck Greenberg and his colleagues at Kelliher for all the work they have done over the past few months to service our HVAC system to keep them clean and operating smoothly.

Rise Against Hunger

Save the date:

Sunday, October 16, 2022

Special Announcements

The Manchester Concert Series

It is with excitement that members of our choir have formed a committee sponsoring, what we have named The Manchester Concert Series. Our sanctuary will serve as a music venue for 3 Saturdays throughout the calendar year 2022-2023. Each concert will begin at 4:00 PM with doors opening at 3:30 pm. We will be asking attendees for a \$10 donation for the performers and a food item donation for our Southminster Food Closet. These concerts will be open to the community and will hopefully serve as an outreach opportunity for our members to extend the right hand of fellowship to visitors. Should these concerts be well received, more will follow in the next calendar year.

Our first concert will be Saturday, September 3rd at 4:00 PM. Please join us as we welcome a former member, Andrea Greenberg Connolly and her husband Pete, and guitarist Ben Nisbet. Their group, Birds and Arrows call Tucson, Arizona their home, but will be on an East coast tour through North Carolina, Virginia, and Maryland. Spread the news! Share the excitement.

School Supply Drive

Our School Supply Drive is well underway. We will be supplying almost 70 special needs children with a backpack full of the supplies needed to start back to school. Thanks to all who have already given items or shopping money. The needed items are listed below.

Please bring any donations you have to the church by Sunday, August 7th. We will be doing final shopping the week of August 8th with the Blessing of the Backpacks on Sunday August 14th. We would like to invite the congregation to stay after worship and assist in packing the backpacks for pick-up by the case workers on August 15th. We hope you can join us.

Gail DeCosta and Audrey Pearson

- Pencils
- Black Pens
- Red Pens
- Crayons (15 pack)
- Colored Pencils (12 pack)
- Erasers
- Ruled Paper (Wide)
- Single Subject Spiral Notebooks
- Composition Notebooks
- Colored Paper
- Elmers Glue
- Glue Sticks
- Scissors
- Backpacks for all ages

Rally Day Picnic

Rally Day Picnic is back for the first time in three years!

It is scheduled for Sunday, September 11th after worship services. Please bring a dish to share, a good appetite, and a helping hand to put this all together. Volunteers are needed on Sunday morning by 9:00 AM to arrange tables and chairs, “set” tables, take in food, and serve. Volunteers are also needed for clean up after a delicious meal. Contact Kathy Liesfeld 804-240-2529 for additional information.

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“This me,” which is only the tip of the iceberg, is now your interim minister! I won’t even be mildly upset if you, in between scratching your curiosity itches, would mumble: “God bless Southminster”. Most probably I would be upset if you don’t?

This I know. God took us on a fascinating journey. I never imagined that a barefooted little farm boy from South Africa would one day be a minister of God’s grace in Southminster! What I know is that when God calls I can follow because the One who calls is already waiting for you at the point where you are called to be. God is waiting there to lead and guide you to let His kingdom come.

Together we can do just that: let His Kingdom come. It begins in allowing each other to know each other and accepting each other in God. Let us start there. My heart and “office” are open to you.

Rev. Jock O’Connell

Welcome New Member!

Mary Ann (Ann) Wilkins
7323 Norwood Pond Place
Midlothian, VA 23112
804-743-7904

Southminster Notes

Big thank you to Bonnie and Rich Kowalski for organizing our annual ice cream social. It was delicious and a good time was had by all!

Barbara Reid

To the Southminster membership,

Our family continues to appreciate the care, concern, and prayer for our daughter, Elizabeth, as she recuperates from the fifth major surgery since her cancer diagnosis in July of 2019. We rejoice in God’s power and presence, providence, and care in our lives.

Sincerely,
Candace Young

This card is to thank all from this church how have helped by my sister, Ada Park, and her husband, James Park, in their time of need. It is comforting to my sister and me that they have such caring people in their lives.

Virginia Nivuan & Roberta Auchauhault

August Birthdays

- 1 Kathy Brammer, Morgan Krigelman
- 3 Courtney Price
- 5 Kimberly Ryan
- 6 Shelley Murray
- 7 Barbara Briggs, Gary Pond
- 8 Ken Brammer, Judy Updegrove
- 10 Lynn Sutton
- 12 Audrey Lopez
- 13 Aileen Davis, Logan Pond
- 15 Larry Chamberlain, David Flynt,
Lucie Pond, Bob Lee
- 16 Jeanne Coryell, Cooper Knight
- 17 Layla Pond, Libby Pond, Howard Vann
- 21 Benton Flynt, Nancy Peters, Mark
Pinchbeck
- 22 Brad Flynt, Melba Jolly, Jim Lewis, Jacob
Wetzel, Kyle Taggart, Tori Carter
- 26 Ivy Stennett, Peggy Morrow-Sanders
- 28 Becky Rowan, Dennis Stone
- 29 Kevin Pond, Cheriene McCall
- 30 Chuck Greenberg, Gary Miller, Clay
Spillman
- 31 Lindsay Conrad

August Anniversaries

- 4 Matt & Barbara Briggs (38)
- 6 Bob & Lisa Tully (39)
- 8 Gary & Amy Pond (30)
- 15 Bob & Bonnie Davis (54)
- 16 Curtis & Karen Radt (42)
- 17 Brown & Laura Pearson (48)
- 18 Al & Karen Stafford (49)
- 26 Brad & Barbara Flynt (33)
- 26 Bob & Danise Warren (61)

*Have we missed your birthday or anniversary?
Let the church office know: 804-276-1749.*

August Schedules

*If you cannot be present on your scheduled day,
please notify your schedule's organizer.*

Communion Team

August 7: Team 2 (Unit)

Elder Greeters

- 7 Jennifer Weddle
- 14 Mary Stahl
- 21 Robin Lapsley
- 28 Clay Spillman

Facility Stewards

- 7 Jennifer Weddle
- 14 Mary Stahl
- 21 Robin Lapsley
- 28 Clay Spillman

Ushers

- 7 Pat Thomas, Kathy Liesfeld,
Jerry & Cheriene McCall
- 14 Gail DeCosta, Tracey Williams, Pat & Rick Abbott
- 21 Gail DeCosta, Tracey Williams, Pat & Rick Abbott
- 28 Jan Belote, Moses Adiele, Margaret & Jim Hall

Visitation Team

- 14 Jerry & Aileen Davis
- 21 Jerry & Aileen Davis
- 28 Jerry & Aileen Davis

Food Closet

- 2 Mary Stahl, David Stahl
- 4 Jane Tarter, Margaret Hall
- 9 Ann Potts, Melba Jolly
- 11 Gail DeCosta, Bonnie Kowalski
- 16 Jane Williams, Shelley Murray
- 18 Cheriene McCall, Shelley Murray
- 23 Rose Spradin, Margaret Hall
- 25 Gail DeCosta, Bonnie Kowalski
- 30 Jane Williams, Mary Stahl

Southminster Presbyterian Church

August 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 12 PM: Chair Yoga 6 PM: BSA Scouts 7:30 PM: IPCN	2 Food Closet 7:30 PM: IPCN	3	4 Food Closet 10 AM: Balladeers	5 7:30 PM: IPCN	6 7:30 PM: IPCN
7 Communion 9 AM: Outdoor Worship 10 AM: Sunday School 11 AM: Worship 3 PM: IPCN	8 12 PM: Chair Yoga 6 PM: BSA Scouts 7:30 PM: IPCN	9 Food Closet 7:30 PM: IPCN	10	11 Food Closet 10 AM: Balladeers	12 7:30 PM: IPCN	13 7:30 PM: IPCN
14 9 AM: Outdoor Worship 10 AM: Sunday School 10:15 AM: Pastor's Aid 11 AM: Worship 12 PM: School Supply Packing 3 PM: IPCN	15 9 AM: School Supply Pick Up 12 PM: Chair Yoga 6 PM: BSA Scouts 7:30 PM: IPCN	16 Food Closet 7:30 PM: IPCN	17	18 Food Closet 10 AM: Balladeers	19 7:30 PM: IPCN	20 3 PM: LVS Cooking 7:30 PM: IPCN
21 9 AM: Outdoor Worship 10 AM: Sunday School 11 AM: Worship 1 PM: Session 3 PM: IPCN	22 12 PM: Chair Yoga 6 PM: BSA Scouts 7:30 PM: IPCN	23 Food Closet 7:30 PM: IPCN	24	25 Food Closet 10 AM: Balladeers	26 7:30 PM: IPCN	27 7 AM: IPCN Fasting 7:30 PM: IPCN
28 9 AM: Outdoor Worship 10 AM: Sunday School 11 AM: Worship 3 PM: IPCN	29 12 PM: Chair Yoga 6 PM: BSA Scouts 7:30 PM: IPCN	30 Food Closet 7:30 PM: IPCN	31			
		Notes				

SOUTHMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

7500 Hull Street Road

N. Chesterfield, VA 23235-5810

Phone: 804-276-1749

www.southpreschurch.org

office@southpreschurch.org

Return Service Requested

August 2022

**Blessing of the
Backpacks**

Sunday, August 14th
11:00 AM

Join us after worship
to help pack school supplies



Would you like to receive your newsletter electronically?

Send an email to office@southpreschurch.org with *Add Me To Newsletter List* in the subject line.