

2026

MUSINGS...

by Pastor John Bethard



CHARLES TOWN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

CT Press

We are closer to advent than we are to Easter!

2026 has gone by at breakneck speed. At church, the staff has begun discussing advent and Christmas. We are shifting from summer to school year, which really means we are just more focused on what's ahead in the next couple of months. The summer has a relaxed feel, apart from Vacation Bible School.

There are a couple of things about which I am excited. First, this month I am starting a short series on outreach. I plan to cover how to share our faith with family, friends, coworkers, people on the margins, etc. We are an older congregation, and many among us remember the days when outreach simply meant planning a program or service and opening the doors. People would come. That is no longer the case. Outreach is a problem for most Christians in the Western world for a variety of reasons, which I plan to address from the pulpit.

I am getting into outreach for a couple of reasons. First, we have done a tremendous amount of work on our building. Over the last three years, conversations have centered on the building improvements and their cost. Maintenance and upkeep are critical, and they are spiritual endeavors because we are stewards of this great physical plant that most of us had little to do with when it was built. But maintenance is different from ministry. Maintenance is necessary for ministry to happen when a congregation has a building like ours, and when we are busy with the building that can often feel like ministry because we are doing the work at church. My concern is this: I don't want to have a great physical plant with no one in it. That is not the case now, but I can imagine a scenario in the not-too-distant future where that could be the reality. None of us wants that. We are a vibrant congregation full of talented people with enormous potential. I believe we can have a much different future.

Disciple-making is the work of the Church. It is our mission as followers of Jesus. And so much has changed in the last couple of decades that the way we share the message needs some attention. My hope with this series is simply this: We come away better equipped to talk about what we believe, and we start looking for some unique and creative ways to engage in outreach. Please keep this series in prayer and come with an open heart and mind.

I am also excited about the new members' class I am leading later this month. I've had several people ask about that over the summer, and that means the time is right for the class. I encourage you to pray for this as well.

We are off and running, as the saying goes. Let us pray that God continues to lead and bless us in the year ahead!

Blessings,

Pastor John

🎵 MUSIC NOTES 🎵 from Miss Penny

Attitude of Gratitude

*Charles Town Presbyterian Church
Sunday September 20
At 2pm*

Thomas Keesecker retired in 2019 after more than 40 years as a church musician, having served Lutheran and Roman Catholic parishes in Virginia, Montana, and Maryland.

His award-winning sacred choral music is published by MorningStar, Augsburg Fortress, Choristers Guild, Concordia, and GIA. Since 2017, MorningStar has published thirteen of his piano collections, several of which have become bestsellers.

Keesecker studied at Berklee College of Music in Boston and the Catholic University School of Music in Washington, D.C. His music reflects a distinctive blend of classical training, jazz improvisation, and Celtic and folk influences.



Since retiring, Tom has traveled throughout the country sharing his piano music with churches and audiences across the United States. His expressive hymn arrangements and thoughtful theological reflections have made him a welcome guest in congregations nationwide. His concerts often include the poetry of Mary Olive and Wendell Berry. Tom and his wife, Tricia, have three adult sons and a cherished granddaughter.

His music is available on Amazon, Spotify, YouTube, and other streaming platforms.

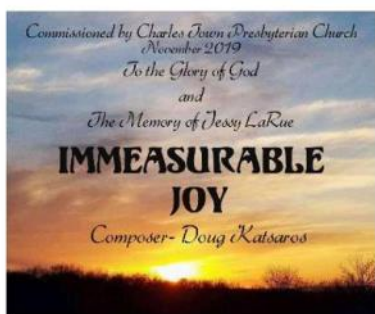
*Reception to follow
In Fellowship Hall*

I am so excited to have Tom Keesecker join us September 20th! I love his piano arrangements and I hope you will, too. He will provide us with 75 minutes of piano, poetry, and audience participation. This concert is free to the public, so bring a friend! A love offering will be collected to benefit Jefferson County Community Ministries. A meet and greet reception following the concert will be in the fellowship hall. A sign-up sheet for food is on the piano in the sanctuary!

This concert brought to you by CTPC Music Ministry and Sponsored by the Yokefellows Sunday School class.

Hope to see you there!

Blessings, Penny



***Practice officially begins
Sunday September 13th
Following worship
Ringers needed !
For a full 5 octaves
For December 13th Joy Service***

Let's Try this Again!

Right before Covid hit the bells had been hard at practice on our commissioned piece, Immeasurable Joy. The plan was to debut it Easter Sunday 2020. Covid put an abrupt end to it. It is our plan to make Immeasurable Joy part of our December 13th Joy Service!

If you would like to join in the ringing, please contact Penny!



Know. Grow. Serve.

Announcement

— SILVERBELLS —
PRACTICE
 — WILL NOT RESUME UNTIL —
SEPTEMBER 22ND
 AT
1PM
See you then!



Charles Town Presbyterian Church
Glory Singers



Join the Choir...
You'll Be Glad You Did!

Rehearsal
Sunday September 13th
At 9:30am
In the choir room
All Are Welcome!

Charles Town Presbyterian Church
Hospitality
MINISTRY

Current Hospitality Center Needs
 Breakfast Bars
ASSORTED CHIPS
 Lollipops
POPARTS
 Werthers candy
SMALL BOTTLES WATER
 Assorted hard candy
CHEEZ-ITS
 Gluten free treats
PACKS OF SUGAR



The Hospitality Center has created this wish list to assist in maintenance and growth. All donations greatly appreciated!

AppleFest



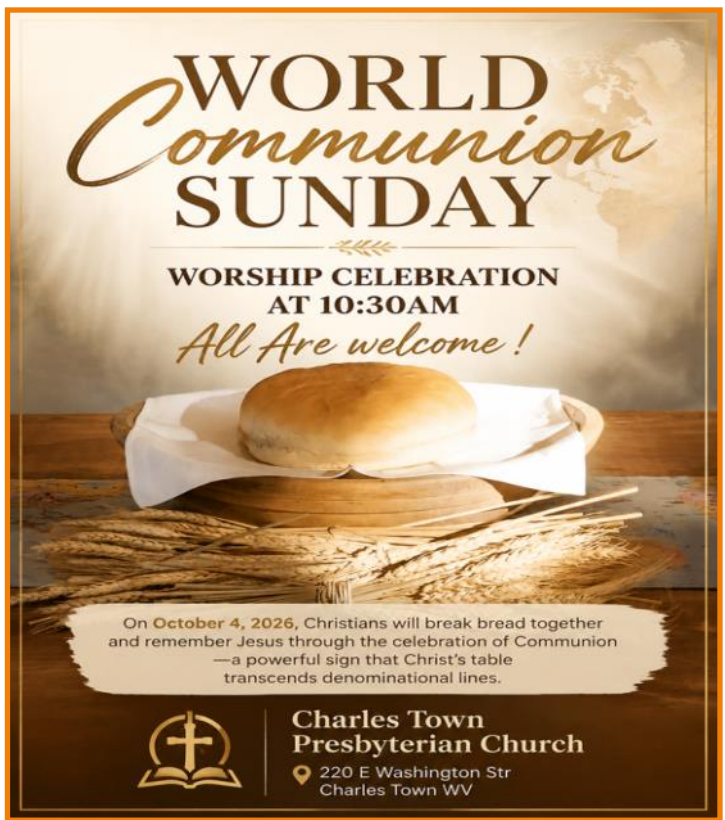
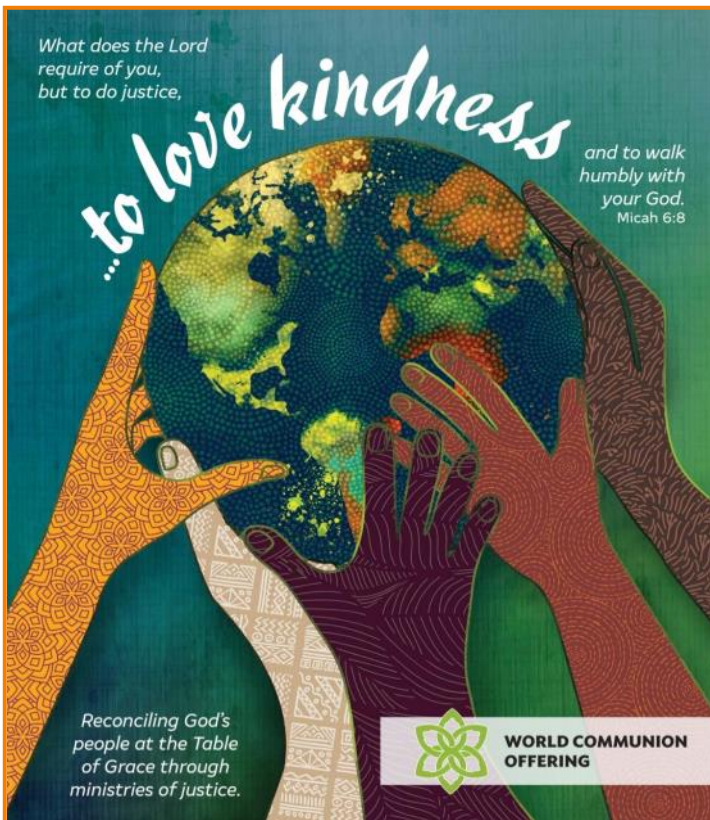
*Sunday
 October 18th
 11:30am*

ALL ARE WELCOME!

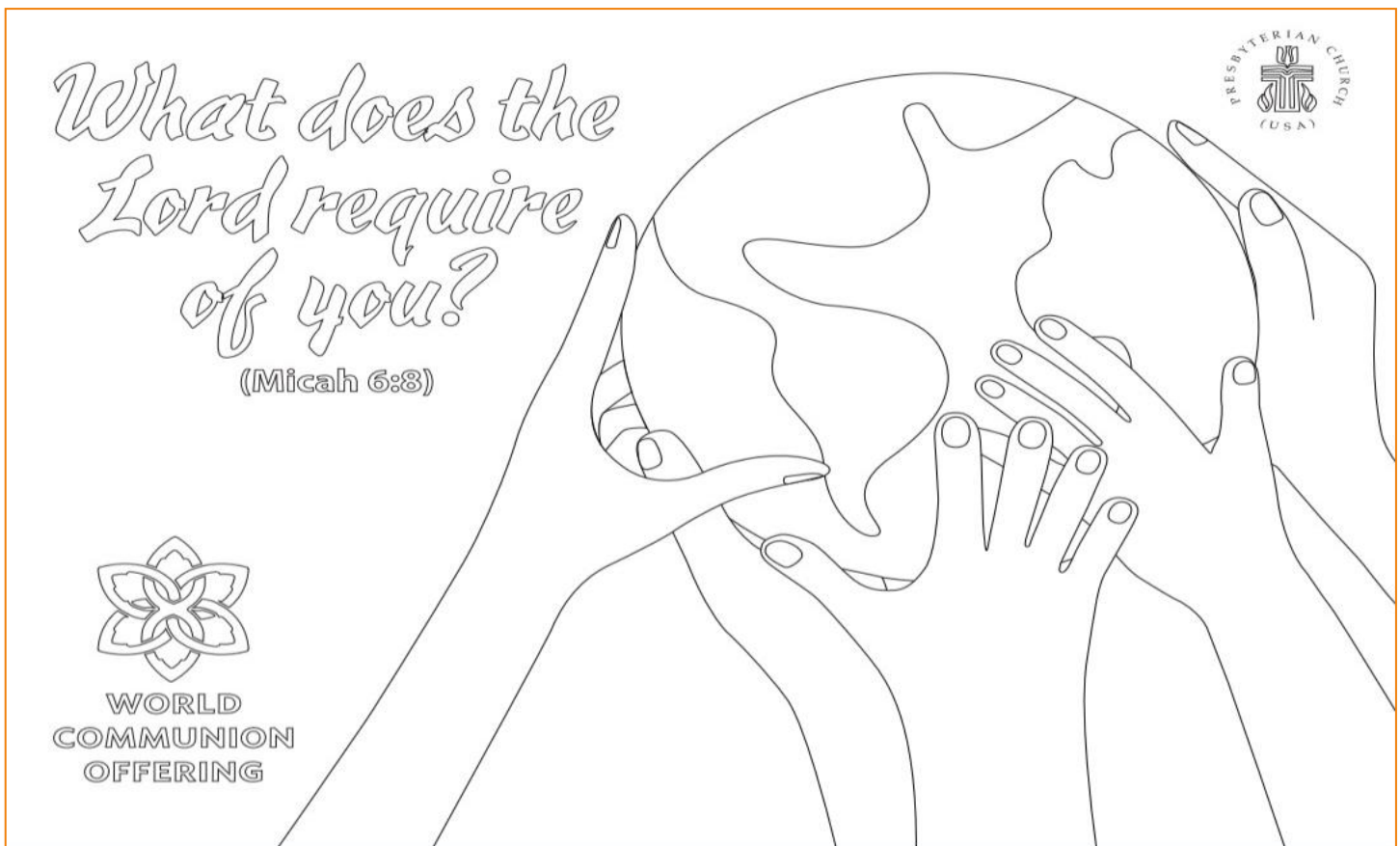
CHARLES TOWN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Hospitality Center

Do you love apples? We apple-solutely have the event for you! Apple Fest 2026! Join us Sunday, October 18, 2026 at 11:30 am (after Worship) in the Hospitality Center. Apple everything! Apple cider, apple pie, apple bread, caramel and dips for apples and other apple goodies! Now is the time to start thinking of your favorite apple treat to make and share. Please watch for more information and a sign up soon.



To help us focus on our role in answering the question in Micah 6:8, we are asking everyone in the congregation to participate in an Art Contest, using the drawing below (full sized copies will be available) with whatever medium you choose. Be creative! Prizes will be awarded for adults and youth. Submit your creation by September 27th. Please sign your name on the back of your artwork! Copies available for the Contest throughout the church!



Session News

The session of Charles Town Presbyterian Church met for their August, 2026 stated meeting. Here are the highlights:

- Received the minutes of the June meeting as presented
- Transferred the membership of Geraldine and Hartley Tetro to Bolivar United Methodist Church
- Transferred the membership of David Weil to First Presbyterian Church of Watertown, NY.
- Received with regret, the resignation of Brooks Kursey from the session. Brooks has taken a new position in Morgan County, where he and his wife are building a home.
- After hearing a report from the congregational nominating committee, scheduled a congregational meeting after worship on Sunday, August 30 to act on the CNC's recommendations.
- Approved the request of the Mission and Outreach committee to hold a special offering for flood victims in WV. That offering will be collected in a few weeks.
- Approved a bid presented by the property committee for major landscaping clean up along Mildred Street and the front of the manse and sanctuary. Bid was for \$3500.
- Approved the purchase of flooring for the Day Care Center project for up to \$13,000. The money for that purchase has already been collected.
- After a discussion on stewardship, the session agreed to collect commitment cards on Sunday, November 7.
- Reviewed serving communion by intinction.
- Approved the Thomas Keesecker concert for September 20.
- Approved the revised Meals on Wheels lease agreement as amended.
- Approved the wedding of James Adams and Jamie Jackson for 8/26.
- Approved the recommendations from the Financial Review Team, who do a basic review of the church finances every year.

It was a very busy and productive meeting.

NEW MEMBERS CLASS Sunday, September 20th, 2026 9:00am

Are you new to Charles Town Presbyterian Church?

Do you want to learn more about your faith?

Would you like to consider uniting with CTPC in membership?

If you answered "yes" to any of the above questions, then please consider attending the New Members Class on Sunday, September 20th, in Room 114 (parlor). During the class we will cover what it means to be a Christian, who we are as a church at CTPC, and why it's important to unite with a congregation. To sign up, please fill out the information below, and we'll plan on seeing you on the 20th of September.

Those wishing to unite in membership will be able to meet with church elders immediately following the class and will be introduced to the congregation during the worship service on Sunday, 27th, at 10:30am.

You may sign up by filling out below and placing in the offering plate, dropping off at church office, calling or emailing church office (304-725-5316 or ctpres@ctpres.org).

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

W E L C O M E



## Team Members Wanted

*Join our Sunday morning worship rotation  
of powerpoint and streaming team members!*

*"We should approach technology with gratitude  
and a desire to use it wisely for His glory. "*

*Contact Pastor John for more info!*

## VBS 2026 Mission Project Update

**Thank you!** With the generous donations from the VBS children, our congregation and the Yokefellows, the Pathfinders youth group assembled 34 meal bags to donate to area families. Each bag contains the shelf stable ingredients needed to prepare a one-dish meal. The Martinsburg Initiative will distribute the meals to area families. The extra ingredients were donated to JCCM. The VBS children would say, "Wow, God!"



## Celebrations this month

### Birthdays

Allen Rogers  
Connor Howard  
Kenneth Hetzinger  
Ben Puster  
Louise Spitzer  
Tiffany Burns  
Jim Warbel  
David Weil  
Lucas Kropf  
Wesley Clark  
Susan Wall  
Thane Van Zomeren  
Violet Eilers

### Anniversaries

Bryan & Angie LaVallee  
Mike & Jane Ishman  
George & Jeannette Tabb  
Gary & Ruth Scott



## Sunday @ CTPC

10:30am-Worship Celebration FaceBook

For a complete listing of all of the church activities, please click [here](#).



**Donate**



**Yokefellows Sunday School** class is in need to two Sunday school teachers. Teachers are furnished with teaching materials from the Adult Bible Studies series. Teachers will only be asked to teach one Sunday per month. Please contact the church office if you are interested (304-725-5316 or [ctpres@ctpres.org](mailto:ctpres@ctpres.org)).



**Yokefellows BBQ Pork dinner.** Get your tickets now from any Yokefellow and plan to join us on Saturday, September 12, 2026, 4:30-6:30pm, for fresh pork BBQ, slaw, mac & cheese, baked bean, desserts, and drink provided. Tickets: \$15.00 adults; \$7.00 children under 12 years; Free children under 3 years. Proceeds from the dinner go to church ministries.

The Yokefellows Sunday School Class is requesting contributions of baked goods such as cakes, pies, cookies and, pastries for the September 12, 2026 Yokefellows BBQ Dinner Fundraiser. Members wishing to contribute baked goods should contact Jeanette Tabb.



from Vicki Burns: Thank you to all who are praying for, visiting, and sending cards to Jonathan as he is in care facility. It brings comfort as we take things a day at a time. God bless you!



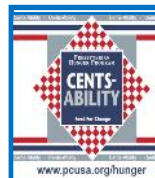
**Online giving** helps you to bring your offering before God in a simple, and secure way. You can choose from The Presbyterian Foundation, Facebook, or PayPal, each of which have a nominal fee that you can include as part of your gift. The Presbyterian Foundation fee does help the organization's mission, and you can easily use a mobile app (Vanco Mobile Faith Engagement on Google Play/AppStore) to set up for repeating or one time giving. If you have any questions, please contact the church office. Donation options and tax information at [www.ctpres.org](http://www.ctpres.org) (<http://www.ctpres.org>).



**URGENT NEED- Meals-on-Wheels** needs drivers. Please call (304-725-1601) or stop by the kitchen of the Charles Town Presbyterian Church. We are open 8am-1pm.



**JCCM Food Pantry** needs. Any assistance would be Greatly appreciated: spaghetti sauce, canned fruit, canned meat (vienna sausage, spam, chicken, tuna), canned beans, canned vegetables (not green beans or corn), soups (heartly & condensed), canned chili, rice (small bags), instant mashed potatoes, jelly and peanut butter, syrup, instant oatmeal, crackers, boxed pancake mix, cooking oil, deodorant, shampoo & conditioner, paper towels, toilet paper, dish soap, laundry detergent. Thank you, Kari Dean, Food Pantry Coordinator, JCCM



**The Six-cents-a-meal offering**, is collected on the 4th Sunday each month, and goes to the Presbyterian Hunger Program. To contribute to this offering please note on memo