

# McAllister Messenger

OCTOBER 2025

## A Word From Your Pastor “Burden or Blessing?”

*Fall is here! It is my second favorite season of the year, behind spring. It would be my favorite, except for one thing: leaves. Our house is surrounded by a number of large oak trees, and each fall, they produce an abundant amount of leaves. These leaves cover our yard, and it’s a lot of work to rake them into piles, and then carry them to them to the giant leaf pile on the hillside in our backyard. Each fall, I dread having to do all this leaf work.*

*I should, however, be grateful for the leaves. I should be thankful that I am able to have a house in such a beautiful neighborhood, with so many beautiful oak trees. In other words, I should feel blessed by all the leaves that fall into my yard.*

*In the same way, we can find blessing in all sorts of things that tend to bother us. For example, we might feel annoyed that we have a sink full of dishes that need to be washed. But instead of feeling annoyed, we could feel grateful that we have food to eat and dishes on which to eat that food. Or, we might feel bothered by a stack of dirty laundry that needs to get done. But instead of feeling burdened by the dirty clothes, we can feel blessed that we have clothes to wear.*

*We can even feel this way about our faith. On the one hand, we can see our Christian belief as a bunch of rules to follow, as a burdensome list of duties. But on the other hand, we can see faith as a blessing – as something that enriches our lives and brings us joy and contentment. This time of fall, as I struggle to be grateful for all those leaves, is also a time I can seek to be grateful for all the blessings that God brings into my life – especially the blessings of faith.*

*So let us not dread the leaf piles, the sinks full of dishes, and the stacks of dirty laundry. And let us not see faith in God as a burden. Let us see them all as blessings, and let us thank God for bringing them into our lives.*



McAllister Memorial Presbyterian Church  
900 North Alleghany Avenue  
Covington, VA 24426



NOV. 2025  
NEWSLETTER  
DEADLINE:  
Friday,  
October 17th

BULK RATE  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Covington, VA  
Permit No. 67  
Non-Profit Organization

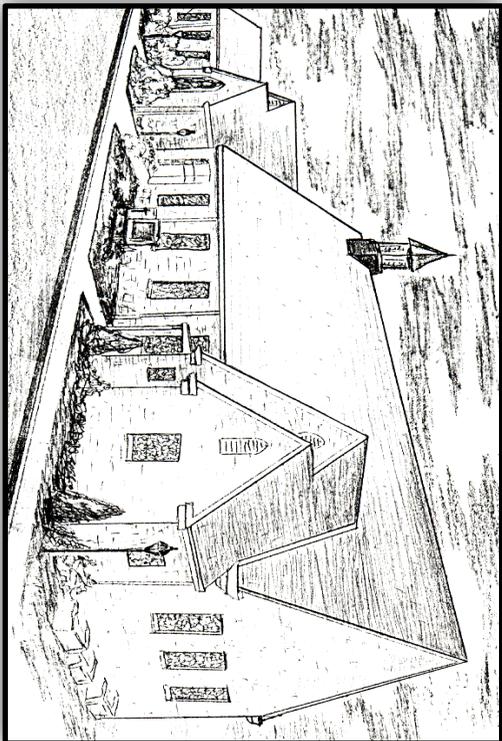


**McAllister Memorial  
Presbyterian Church**  
(540) 962-2675

admin@mcallistermempcusa.org  
www.mcallistermempcusa.org

**Rev. James Edward Moss**  
Cell phone: 434-738-8841  
revjimmos95@gmail.com

online giving link:





- 1—Harry Tingler, Gail Wood
- 4—Gary Rice
- 5—Ronnie Kinsey
- 9—Jeremiah Young & Sutton Young
- 10—Danielle Conner
- 11—Patty Anderson, Heather Johnson
- 12—Olivia Sponaugle
- 13—Erin M. Nicely, Tracy Miller,  
Danny Rodgers
- 14—Tracey Walker
- 15—Makenzie Shifflett
- 17—James Bush, Jr., Chris Rice, Sabrina Yox
- 20—Rhoda Hill
- 21—Samuel Poague
- 22—Mason Kinsey
- 23—Lisa Dickson
- 25—Lizzie Gibson, Lora Thompson
- 28—Diane Barksdale, John Bush,  
Clyde Landis, Jr., Lisa Sponaugle
- 29—Dolly Whitehead
- 30—Laura Young
- 31—Charles "Woody" Whitmer



- 1—Van & Brenda Walker
- 3—George & Cindee Stinnett
- 6—Shane & Missy Reid
- 8—Danny & Debbie Rodgers
- 11—Gene & Gail Wood
- 12—Stacey & Amy Bishop
- 16—Stacy & Kelly Patterson
- 17—Howard & Pam Poague
- 20—Greg & Lisa Dickson  
Kevin & Laura Young
- 24—Daniel & Adrienne Reynolds
- 25—Howard & Lora Thompson

(The following letter was received from Granbery Methodist Church in Covington):

Dear Friends in Christ,

8/18/25

**It has come to our attention that there is a great need in our community for children and teen clothing. In response to this need we are working on a way to love our neighbors by establishing a clothes closet for those that need this resource.**

**The clothes will be free and we are asking for your help in donating new or gently used clothing, shoes and coats for children and teens. Sizes will include newborn through high school age.**

**The clothes closet will be housed at Granbery Memorial United Methodist Church on the corner of Main and Maple Streets in the City of Covington. There is easy first floor access. This is a united community project, by the community and for the community, not a project of Granbery Church alone.**

**The closet, at the start, will be open one weekday and one Saturday a month from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**

**Donations may be dropped off at Granbery Church. For your convenience, a drop box has been placed near the front door on Maple Avenue. We hope to open this closet in the near future, if donations make it possible.**

**Thank you for all you can do to help make this need become a reality. God has blessed us to live in such a caring and sharing community, which will make this all possible with your help and His!**

**In Christ's Love,  
Clothes Closet Committee**

**Contacts: Greg Kropff (540-471-3747) Becky Perkins (540-960-1479)**

## McAllister Church 2025 Relay For Life Update:



Thanks to the collective effort of Team McAllister Church and it's massive list of supporters, our team alone raised OVER \$5000, making it the SECOND PLACE fundraising team overall. That is quite an accomplishment. Way to go, Team McAllister and it's strong support system... ALL OF YOU!

### TOP TEAMS:

Friends & Family Fighting Back Against Cancer—	\$7656
McAllister Memorial Presbyterian Church—	\$5053
Warriors of Hope	\$4044
LewisGale Hospital—Alleghany (LGHA)	\$2392
Cupcakes, Cars, & Bicycles	\$750
Connie's Angels	\$628
Dancers for a Cure—A1 Studios	\$522
Cancelling Cancer—	\$137
Team White Oak Dairy—	\$50

Thanks to the caring, determination and commitment by all of these teams and their supporters, the event in it's entirety raised over \$21,000 towards the battle against cancer!!!!

***"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you." Luke 6:38***

### NEXT SESSION MEETING

**October 19, 2025  
immediately after worship**

### PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN (PW):

**Circle 3: 2nd Tuesday of month, 5:30  
Circle 4: 2nd Wednesday of month, noon**

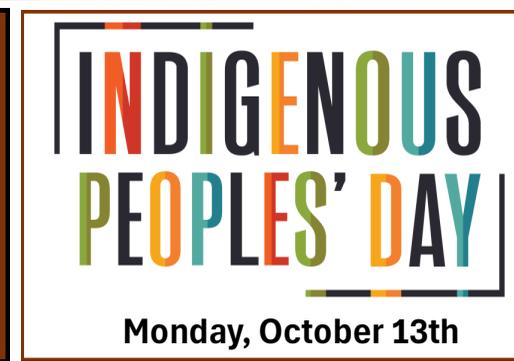
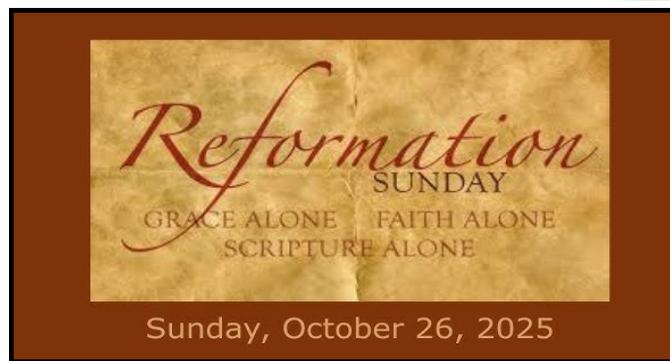
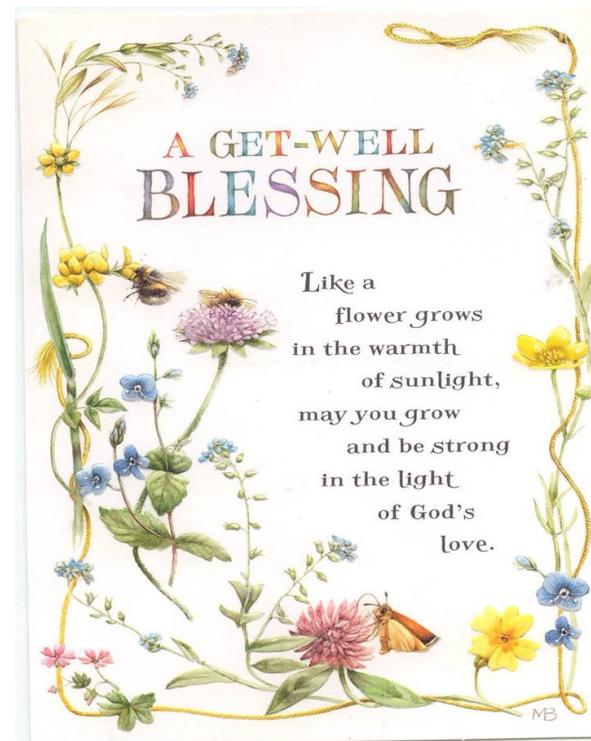


Temporary residency at the  
Brian Center in Low Moor:

**Ricky Cooke – room 509  
Betty Gibson – room 404**

To send mail:

NAME – room #  
c/o Kissito: Brian Center  
100 ARH Lane  
Low Moor, VA 24457



\*\*\*The McAllister Messenger is a monthly publication. Deadline for submissions is the second Friday of each month. You can also view this newsletter online at [www.mcallistermempcusa.org](http://www.mcallistermempcusa.org). To request a full color copy of this publication BY EMAIL, inform us of a change in contact information, OR object to the use of your photo/your children's photo being used, please call the church office or email us (see back cover). We sincerely regret and apologize for any error, misprint, or omission that may occur in this publication. Contact our office at 540-962-2675 with any revisions. Leave a message if necessary as voicemail is checked regularly.

## Prayer Concerns

Juanita Helton	Mickey Craghead	Rutledge Ives	Geraldine Allen
Sally Hudnall	Greg Dickson	Diane Lambert	Allan Broughman
Kelly Kern	Abraham Gherman	Luke Linkswiler	Robin P. Duncan
Myrtle Kimberlin	Jim Irvine	Pearl Miller	Ricky George
Toni Persinger	Dawn King Lewis	Frenchy Parris	Belinda Kerns
Hudson Rice	Milton, Tina McGrady	Sandy Price	Ron Leichter
Buddy Sizemore	Natalie Sponaugle	Brielle Smith	Barbara Leitch
Dennis Staton	Susan Terrell	Margie Young	Cadiz Marshall
Emily Vest	Mike Wade	Ricky Cooke	Priscilla Moncus
Donna Waddell	Maddie Wimer	Carolyn Waugh	Steve McCormack
Myrtle Ryder Family	Moss Family	Minnesota Family	Bobby McCormack
Aaron Camp	Rebecca Barber	Presley Adams	Callie Uzzell
Gladys Laws	Jerry Belcher	Tammy Barker	Haymaker Family
Gladys Lipscomb	Dwayne Broughman	Bob Bartley	Bill Bennett
Jenny Oeltjen	Pat & Linda Caldwell	Joyce Clark	Dave Haggerty
B.R. Rupert	Bert & Nancy Seay	Leslie Vaughters	Our Country
	Sponaugle Family	Charlie Kirk Family	Our World

## Shut-In; Military & Missionaries

BRIAN CENTER: David Lynn, Bonnie Patterson, Rosa Lee Bartley (#500)  
SCOTT HILL: Sarah Mays  
CARRINGTON PLACE: B.R. Rupert  
TOCKWOTTEN (Rhode Island): Shelby Rock  
SHUT-IN: Bob & Leta Bartley, Ricky Cooke, Betty Gibson, Dolly Whitehead  
MILITARY: Olivia Bryant, Aiden Downer, Chris Whitehead  
MISSIONARIES: Tom & Judy Harvey, Kurt Esslinger & Hyeyoung Lee

THE SPRINGS: Andy Howell  
BRIDGEWATER HOME: Jean Broughman



## Constant Need

Midge Akers, Jerry Ballengee, Dennis Brinkley, Edgar Brinkley, Linda Caldwell, Sandra Capps, Harry & Jean Casey, Joyce Clark, Leslie Downer, Barbara Flint, Renee Gann, Don Hampton, Cory Harrison, Emma Hartless, Danny & Rhoda Hill, Rob Honts, Janet Hubble, Lori Isaacs, Robert A. Jackson, Wendell & Judy Jones, Bebe Marshall, Pearl Miller, Bucky & Doris Mottern, Mary Jane Mutispaugh, Denise Pillow, Theresa Purdue, Linda Ratliff, Anita Rice, Mary Rice, James Rice, Angie Sponaugle, Ethan Thompson, Buddy Vass, Greg Vess, Gwen Wolfe, Jerry Wolfe, Linda P. Wolfe, Rider Yeagley, President Joe Biden. Non-believers. Our Church, Unspoken Prayers, Local First Responders, Our Nation, Our Troops & Government, Ukraine & Russia, Middle East.

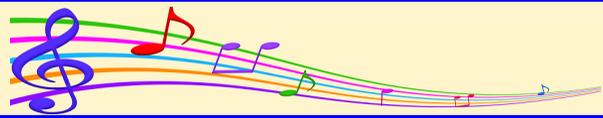


Pekin ducks who lived somewhere up the road. Our Black Russian Terrier, Mila, was always delighted in the spring when the cows returned to the pasture that abutted our backyard. For Mila, having the cows back was better than live TV and smelled more interesting, too. Whether full-fledged farmers, or home or apartment dwellers, most Austrians seem to have an affinity for gardening. All summer long we enjoyed the sight of bountiful flower and vegetable plots and abundant flower boxes hanging from windows. In the fall, there were fields of corn (most destined for animal fodder), sunflowers, rapeseed, and pumpkins, and there were signs at the crossroads of the many country lanes that intersected the “main” unlined road announcing the sale of honey, eggs from free-roam chickens, pumpkin seed oil, farm bread, butter, and other homemade and homegrown products. It was a charming and picturesque place, not a village actually as there were no shops or services, just a magical spot inhabited by hardworking farmers and a few of us who made our livelihood in the city (about thirty minutes away) who were lucky enough to be their neighbors.

In all of our years in Edelsgrub, our idyllic, bucolic settlement, I had only one dangerous encounter with a local pumpkin—a sneak attack that occurred under cover of darkness. It took a bit of sleuthing to solve. Andy was traveling and we didn’t yet have our Mila-girl, so I was home alone when I opened the back door to the terrace one late summer morning to discover one of my prized terra cotta flower pots—a gorgeous, shapely urn from Greece that I’d purchased from a garden shop in Graz—upturned and smashed, the flowers and trailing vines mangled and broken. Nothing else seemed to have been touched. My first thought was, “Who would do such a thing?” Then I thought of our neighbors. We’d been treated with nothing but kindness (or shyness, at the very worst) since our arrival in Edelsgrub. No one who lived near would have done this. Then I thought of the local wildlife—also improbable. It was a large, heavy pot. This damage certainly wasn’t caused by a rabbit or a fox (unless they had all ganged up to do it). The deer in our fields were pretty scarce and also quite petite compared to Virginia’s White tailed deer. Unless a whole herd had run through, it was unlikely. Still in my bathrobe, I patrolled the perimeter of our terrace. Everything was in its place. Then I saw it . . . Something orange and gooky stuck on the terrace curb about twenty feet from the smashed pot. The color was unmistakable. It had to be pumpkin goo. Exploring further, I looked down the hill from the terrace edge and aha! There it lay—smashed and looking slightly embarrassed, if one can say that about a pumpkin. Busted—and in more ways than one, actually—truly busted and also nabbed! My best guess is that the pumpkin in question came from our neighbor’s pumpkin patch, located on a steep hill (kind of like from McAllister’s choir room door on the back of the church to the road below) above our back door. While unintended, the havoc it wrought was real. But I’ve never been able to hold a grudge against a pumpkin. So I cleaned up the pot shards, replanted the broken plant bits, said a quick blessing over the guilty pumpkin and threw the remains to the cows in the field below.

There used to be a specialty oil shop, Oliveto, in Roanoke where I could get my pumpkin seed oil fix, but since it closed a year or so ago, the internet is now my best source. Still, I have a wonderful souvenir of Graz and its pumpkin culture in the form of a beautiful ceramic candle-holder made by a young Austrian friend. In the shape of a Styrian pumpkin, stripes and all, it sits on our dining room table each fall, its smiling, cheerful face and glowing light reminding us of friends and pumpkins past. Wishing you all a wonderful fall season!

~Beth



## Musical Minute

Great gourds! Here we stand on the threshold of October 2025. Where has the year gone? In only ten brief weeks we will welcome Advent, one of my favorite seasons in the church calendar. The music and hymns of anticipation are lyrical and magical. But let's not rush things. The Christ Child will be on his way soon enough . . . Let's get back to those pumpkins, winter squash, and their knobby kin, the gourd family. Since our years in Austria, fall for me is inevitably associated with pumpkin seed oil. Living in the region of Styria, or Steiermark, as it was called in Austria, Andy and I watched each autumn as the distinctive pumpkins grown in the area—deep green when young, and gradually green and orange striped from stem to bottom, and about basketball-sized when mature—ripened in the fields. As the vines eventually dried out signaling the end of the growing season, the pumpkins appeared from underneath their leafy privacy sporting their dazzling fall finery. Once ripened, they lay in the fields only a few days before they were gathered together in an orderly pile and the field was cleared. It was a glorious sight to behold, all of those pumpkin brethren soaking up the sun on a clear blue-sky, late fall kind of day and I always felt lucky when my timing was just right and I got to see them before they met their violent demise, usually right there in the very field where they had grown. One day after seeing them cheerfully laid out in the field on my way into town, I returned home to see only their carcasses strewn in a heap, a couple of ladies with kerchiefs covering their gray hair and tied under their chins, sitting in straight-backed wooden chairs and bearing long knives, clearly the culprits of the massacre. The pumpkins had all been halved and their innards scraped out and their seeds harvested for oil, Styrian gold as it was sometimes called by the locals.

When the seeds are pressed, the resulting oil is a rich, mossy green, almost like melted dark chocolate if chocolate were green instead of brown. The scent is earthy and deeply nutty. Pumpkin seed oil's presence on the table in the region where we lived was as ubiquitous to the area as the scent and presence of lavender in Provence. It has a very low smoke point and so is used only as a finishing oil for soups and such, or as an ingredient in salad dressings. A traditional salad in Steiermark is made of Käferbohnen (beetle beans in translation), a type of scarlet runner bean. A deep purple to brown bean with black spots, two to three times the size of a lima bean, they're meaty and delicious and hold their shape and color beautifully when cooked. They grew in many of our neighbors' gardens, their striking flowers climbing up the tripods supporting them. Cooked and mixed with thinly sliced onion, apple cider vinegar (Apples are another agricultural specialty of the region.), and pumpkin seed oil, the bean salad is a delectable taste of the terrain where we lived and my luggage destined for the U.S. always held bottles of pumpkin seed oil and dried Käferbohnen to bring to family and friends as gifts. With its unique flavor and nutty aroma, the only downside to pumpkin seed oil is the stain it leaves when dripped onto a silk tie or a fancy blouse or slacks! That flavorful, chocolatey green oil has made its mark, literally, on centuries of lunch and dinner attire. Our Austrian friends swore to us that the only way to remove the stain was to lay the item in bright sunlight until the spot(s) gradually faded and eventually disappeared. There was certainly some truth to the home remedy, but I discovered that it was helped along by a couple of squirts of laundry stain remover, when the fabric allowed.

We were blessed to be surrounded by small family farms in the settlement where we lived north of Graz, Austria's second largest city. We heard the rumble of and were treated to the sight of tractors, vintage and modern, from early spring to late fall. Our closest "neighbors" were free-roam chickens (including a rather nasty-tempered rooster), and a beautiful breed of long-horned cattle owned by our nearest human neighbors, with an occasional visit from some sweet-faced

## Deaths

*Peggy G. Casey  
Glenn L. Higgins, Sr.  
Cristin "Nicky" Lewis  
D. "Don" Mitchell, Jr.  
Mickey McMillion, Jr.  
Will Nichols  
Pauline Nickell  
Jennifer Ada Olewine  
Paula Ann Pickwick*

*Betty "Maxine" Smith  
Angela S. Anderson  
J. "JR" Bowling, Jr.  
David F. Golden  
Joyce M.F. Helton  
Fred C. Johnson  
Gary A. Jones  
Myrtle R. Ryder*

*Freda V. Edwards  
Marvin C. Fridley  
F. "Tate" Plecker  
Bobby Fry &  
Elenor "Cookie" Fry  
Warren D. Kegley  
Selma S. Lee  
Midred M. McCabe*

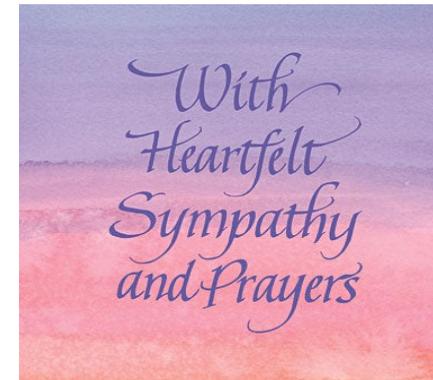
*Stephen Cale  
Helen Vass Carter  
Bing DeGuzman, Jr.  
Sawyer Haymaker  
Jean Marie M. King  
Ric King  
Dorothy Quелlette  
Clayton Plecker*

## Gifts in Memoriam

In Loving Memory of Charles "Butch" Curtin by:

- † Chuck & Jean Bartley
- † Bobby Joe & Anita Rice
- † Joe & Pat Martin
- † Mike & Debbie Henderson
- † Larry Wade

## With Deepest Sympathy & Comfort



The McAllister Church Family extends prayer and sincerest condolences to:

- † Anyone having recently experienced a loss.



### Notes from Pastor Jim

◆ Wednesday night Bible study resumed on September 10 at 6:00. We are studying the book "Questions Jesus Asks." It explores six questions Jesus asked in the Gospels, and how they challenge us to grow in our faith. Please call me (434-738-8841) if you would like to order a book and join our study.

◆ Sunday, October 5 is World Communion Sunday. We will be celebrating the sacrament with Christians from all over the globe. Let us take this opportunity as an occasion to pray for all the places in the world that are facing the horrors of war or the scourge of poverty, and let us see it as an opportunity to recommit ourselves to working for peace and unity in our own nation.

◆ McAllister will be hosting the next potluck meal for area Presbyterian churches. The meal will be a lunch on Sunday, October 12 at 12:30. The church will provide soup. Please bring a salad or dessert to share. This is an excellent chance to get to know our fellow Presbyterians in the Highlands area.

◆ The Halloween Party will be on Sunday, October 26 at 5:00 pm. We will have supper, Halloween-themed games and activities, a costume contest and much more. Please join us and bring your friends and family members.

◆ Sunday, October 26 is Reformation Sunday. We will be gathering with the other area Presbyterian churches for a special service. The service will be at Low Moor Presbyterian Church at 11:00 am. There will not be a service at McAllister that Sunday. We will have Sunday school at McAllister and then drive over to Low Moor. Please carpool, as parking is limited.

◆ Sunday, September 21st COPE special offering collected \$462. God Bless you!

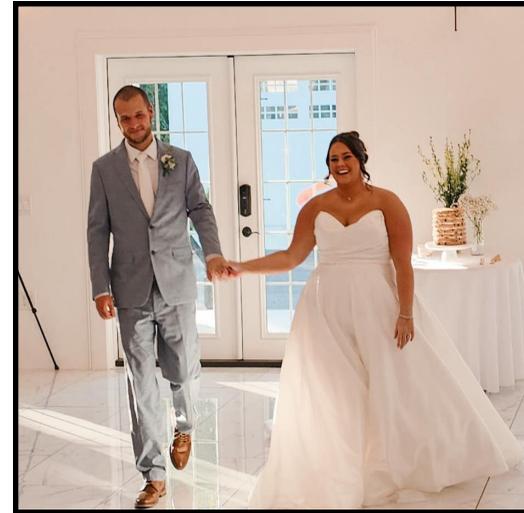
### **AVERAGE SEPTEMBER 2025 SUNDAY WORSHIP ATTENDANCE:**

**63**

## CONGRATULATIONS

*McAllister Church wishes to congratulate member, Mikayla Webb & Aaron Ratliffe on their marriage on Saturday, August 20, 2025 at Menefer in Low Moor.*

*Mikayla's parents are fellow members Amanda & Eric Webb. Her grandparents are Jean & Chuck Bartley. Aaron's parents are Greg & Teresa Ratliff.*



## APPRECIATION

*A heartfelt thank you from PCHH to the Session and congregation of McAllister Memorial for hosting the Presbyterian Children's Foster Closet in August.*

*It was a wonderful day. We had 68 visitors and lots of clothes were given out. Each child at the home has a part in the closet. After school, they wash, dry, fold and sort all the donated clothing. If you visit the home you can see how they enjoy giving back to those who have given to them.*

*Our Presbyterian home is special because we can take both boys and girls. PCHH is one of a very few designated by the state of Virginia and capable of receiving both boys and girls. Because of this designation brothers and sisters who are entering the Foster care system do not have to be separated.*

*Please remember the children and the very special caregivers in your prayers. Thank you.*

*\*submitted by Brenda Linkenhoker, PCHH board member*