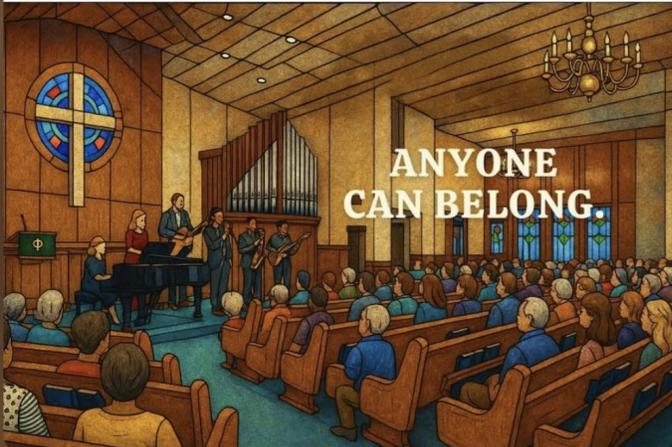




Westminster Presbyterian Church



SEPTEMBER 2025

"Though they stumble, they will never fall, for the LORD holds them by the hand." Psalm 37:24

A few weeks ago in a sermon, I mentioned that my favorite movie of all time is Tim Burton's *Big Fish*. It's a fantastic film in every sense of the word. The story follows Edward Bloom, a father who fills his son's childhood with unbelievable tales—stories allegedly drawn from his own life. At one point Bloom reflects, "There are some fish that cannot be caught. It's not that they are faster or stronger than other fish, they're just touched by something extra." His life is marked by a kind of curious confidence in the midst of uncertainty—leaning *into* adventures, events, and strange characters with open hands and an expectant heart.

Many of us love the *idea* of living that way—free of care, willing to take risks, and letting life unfold like a great novel. This, in fact, is the kind of life Jesus calls us into. Too often, though, we get in our own way. From childhood we are taught that maturity means making the "respectable" choice, which is often just another way of describing the safe and predictable path. But Jesus invites us into a freedom that ignores the limiting opinions of others—even our own. Instead of living according to our fears, we are invited to step onto the road with Jesus, full of expectation for what he might get us into.

When we let him, Jesus writes us into a story far more compelling than any we could author on our own. He is the hero, sweeping us up into his saving plot. Psalm 37:24 reminds us that we don't have to live shackled by fear—fear of rejection, fear of failing too badly to recover, fear of what others may think—because the Lord is always holding

our hand. The setbacks and slipups become part of the meaningful story God is weaving when we lean on him through it all.

As we lean into this new adventure God has set before us together at Westminster this September, may we know the freedom of walking hand in hand with him—trusting that he will steady us, guide us, and lead us into a story worth telling. The steadying hand of God is the "something extra" Edward Bloom was getting at all along.

With warm affection, Pastor Trey





CHURCH WELCOME

To all who are weary and need rest,

To all who mourn and long for comfort,

To all who feel worthless and wonder if God cares,

To all who fail and desire strength,

To all who sin and need a Savior,

This church opens wide her doors with a welcome from Jesus,

the Ally of His enemies,

the Defender of the guilty,

the Justifier of the inexcusable,

the Friend of sinners.

Welcome.



September Birthdays

Brenda Gray	3
Sue Winn	3
Helen Linzey	9
Larry Ramsey	11
Marlee Suey	11
Ira Suey	12
Janice McKell	23
Lud Seme	23
Susan Parker	30



WELCOME TO OUR *new* HOME

Wow, what a busy August the Suey's have had! They sold their home in Mt. Juliet, moved to Florence to pastor WPC, lived in temporary housing for 3 weeks until finally they got to move into their beautiful home just down the street from the church on Hermitage. Thank you Babs Moody for making this happen!



Selling Agent

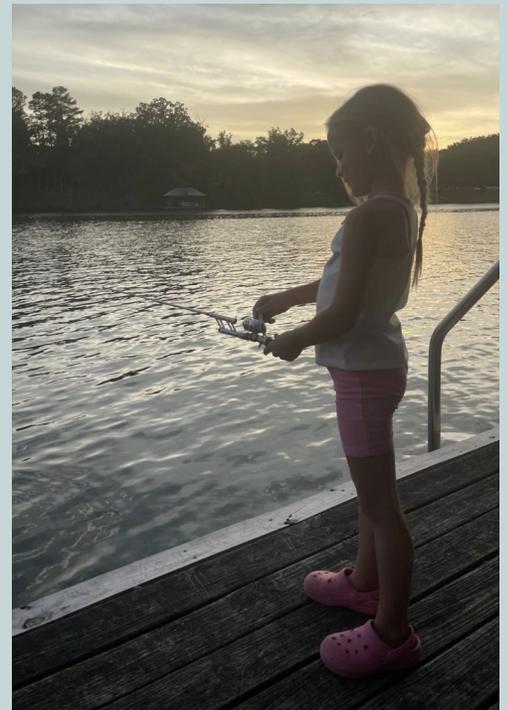


Babs Moody

+1 256-366-3090
Renaissance Realty
+1 256-740-0706



WPC Family & the Suey Family would like to extend a sincere thank you to John Offutt for arranging temporary housing at his friend's lake house. Eden loved getting to fish & be on the water before school got started back!





**WELCOME
BACK TO
SCHOOL**



**Eden –Kindergarten,
Riverhill**

**Ira-
Pre-K 2
Edgemont & Riverhill**





The last few weeks at WPC have been filled with a fresh spirit of grace, and we are so thankful for the way that God has been meeting us in this season of new beginnings.

LET'S KEEP LEARNING TOGETHER:

10:00 –New Beginnings Seminar.

- * **God's New Thing**
- Without a vision the people perish.
- How we can get in our own way of success.



Breakfast snacks served in the Narthex. All our welcome!

Worship comes in all forms. The WPC Music ministry glorifies God with beautiful songs Hymn Sing takes place during the first 15 min of worship during the last Sunday of the month.



Bob Moody & Avery Guinn



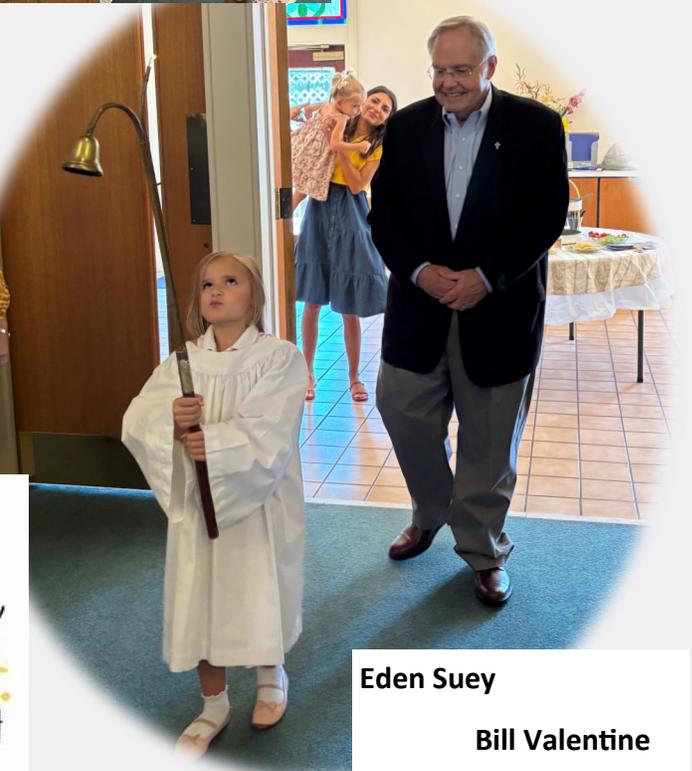
Bailey White

CHILDREN'S CORNER



Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these

Bible craft



Eden Suey
Bill Valentine

SOUP KITCHEN



Paula Offutt, Elaine Brooks, Marsha Bullock, Brad Moody & Stan Bullock serving from the heart!

The Bullocks' friends and family came to serve as well: Brookelyn, Sophia, Lila, Ember, Lydia, Amanda Oakley & Marsha Bullock. These precious children brought their crafts & other items to give out to the soup kitchen attendees.



If you'd like to collect items for next month's project, see the list later in this newsletter



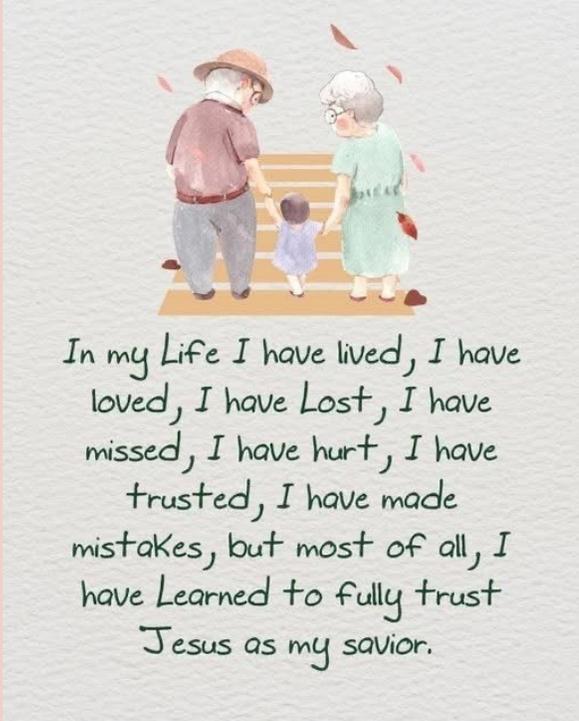
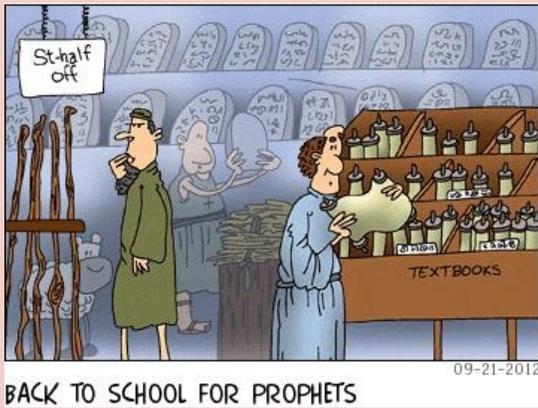
Ember Oakley, Sophia and Brookelyn Bullock painting toilet paper tubes fish for the Soup Kitchen craft! We are talking about how Jesus called us to be 'fishmen of men.' We had a fun day!





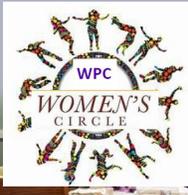
Lydia, Sophia & Brookelyn
Bullock

We pray protection on the Bullocks' grandchildren during the new school year at Central Elementary.



Melissa Winn has a love for flowers like her mom. She has started a flower business if anyone needs an arrangement. Call her at 470-261-7494





This group meets the 3rd Tues of the month at 1:00 to work on items to give to UNA students, Soup Kitchen, Montreat Sr. Living, as well as other needs. All are welcome to join in "Being the Hands and Feet of Jesus"!



- List of items needed for the upcoming Soup Kitchen ministry:
- TRAVEL SIZE**
- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 3 in one (shampoo, conditioner, body wash) | Chap Stick |
| wash cloths | Hand lotion |
| Soap | Small zip lock bags |
| brushes/combs | Band-aids |
| nail files, emory boards | Kleenex (small purse size) |
| Deodorant | |
| hand wipes/ hand sanitizer | |
| toothbrush/toothpaste/ mouthwash | |
| Q tips | |
| small sewing kits | |



Swimming through the years: Dan Hendricks finds strength in competing, By Chelsea Retherford Staff writer

At 77, Dan Hendricks continues refining his strokes — both in the pool and in life. The retired university administrator represented Florence at the 2025 Alabama Senior Olympic Games, held in the spring in Opelika, where he brought home one gold and two silver medals in breaststroke and free-style swimming. He's hitting the pool again this August as he competes in the National Senior Olympics in Des Moines, Iowa. For Hendricks, the event is less about winning and more about prioritizing his physical well-being. He knows practicing for those competitive events helps him grow stronger in body, mind and spirit. "I enjoy being a spectator of football, basketball, baseball or soccer. It's one thing to be a spectator in the stadium, but to be down in the arena, competing. You know, the apostle Paul talks about physical fitness, and he likened it to godliness," Hendricks said.



"When you're preparing, you try to discipline yourself, and then you compete against yourself. In sports, there's a thrill, I think, in the preparation for the event. You can become better, and you tend to feel better when you're training for something. You get stronger."

Hendricks is no stranger to preparing for the national senior games. Having earned seven gold medals at the state level from past events, he's also participated in three previous games held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Hendricks first medaled at the national level in the Pittsburgh games, earning a bronze in breaststroke. Though it wasn't gold, it's one of the awards he's especially proud of. "That was a thrill," he beamed. "I was in the eighth lane, which means I was the slowest qualifier in the fastest heat before that race. I was eighth out of eight, and then in the competition, I went from eighth to third. That was two years ago, and it was definitely one of those thrills. In athletics, you only have moments like those very seldomly."

Hendricks was just eight years old when he first fell in love with the water. He recalled his introduction to swimming after city officials in his hometown of Evansville, Indiana, had built a public pool in his neighborhood that year. "We were there every summer, every day," he said. "It was so crowded because that was the era of Baby Boomers. There were so many kids, we had to line up down the street just to get in."

By the time he entered ninth grade, Hendricks joined a local swim team and competed in weekly meets. He'd found a love for competitive swimming early on but would leave the sport behind temporarily in pursuit of his college degree. At DePauw University in Greencastle, Indiana, where Hendricks studied English, political science and theology, swimming took a backseat. As a graduate student at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, however, he found his way back to the pool — this time as an assistant coach of the swim team — as he worked towards his master's and doctorate degrees. "In college, I had to work in the summers," he recalled. "I did host a team. There were one or two summers where I would work the third shift and then come home, and I had a little time before we held swim practice. I really enjoyed that. Then at Duke, when I was working on my PhD, I assisted Coach (Walter "Jack") Persons. That was good for me to see the talent at that level. They were good." Focusing on his career and his family, Hendricks gave it up again after his graduation from Duke University. Then he picked it up again at 41 when his three daughters, Jenny, Whitney and Reilly, found a shared love for competitive swimming. Living again in Evansville, Indiana, the year was 1989, Hendricks decided to join the local team for swimmers aged 40 and up. That first year back, he won the Overall Point Trophy in his division. "In any case, that was a thrill to swim with my daughters and to be a part of all that with them," he said with a smile. Before moving to the Shoals, where Hendricks continued a

decades-long career in administration that ended with his retirement in 2018 from his role as vice president of Advancement at the University of North Alabama, he had taken another hiatus from swimming. This break probably becoming the longest pause of them all.

With more time and fewer obligations, he rediscovered the sport and decided to begin training for the senior circuit. However, his successes in those competitions didn't come without setbacks. "At my first practice I developed hyperventilation, so they had to put a bag over my mouth," he said with a laugh. "I didn't really have a chance to practice that much before I picked it back up, but I still had some muscle memory. I think it was really helpful that I had started swimming early and I had that muscle memory." Preparing for his first state games about six years ago, Hendricks began to focus his training efforts in breaststroke, freestyle and backstroke. "I tried butterfly, but I just don't have the endurance to do that," he admits. "It's too many yards or too many meters. Anyway, I only swim the three strokes. Just being there gives me a lot of satisfaction. At my age, ultimately, if I get first or last, at least I was competing."

Now competing with alumni swimmers who had years of experience at the collegiate level, Hendricks holds his own in the pool. Sporting his previous gold medals from several Alabama championships, Hendricks also brought home a silver in the breaststroke sprint and two gold in 50-meter freestyle and backstroke sprints from the Tennessee Senior Olympics. In preparing for each of these competitions, Hendricks spends at least three to five days swimming laps in the aquatic center at YMCA of the Shoals. When he's not in the pool, he's working on muscle toning and maintaining his cardiac health by walking and gardening at home with his wife, Barbara. "We don't watch a lot of TV," he added. "There's a lot of physical work that I have to do every season in the garden. That kind of helps me with weight training and things like that. Really, the key is to keep moving." Hendricks applies that same dedication when it comes to his mental acuity.

The author of three novels and one non-fiction work that focuses on theories of Protestant reformist John Calvin, Hendricks also published a collection of poetry in the last year. He said writing is one of several ways he stretches his mind. Quoting lines from the poem "Fern Hill" by Dylan Thomas, Hendricks said he takes inspiration from many great poets who came before him. "'Oh, as I was young and easy in the mercy of his means, Time held me green and dying, though I sang in my chains like the sea!' Isn't it beautiful?" Hendricks said. "The thing is, even at my age, you don't stop learning how to sing in your chains. It's a little bit more difficult when you're older, because it's easy to be cynical and think life has passed you by, but as you get older, you also begin to recognize that you're here by the grace of God. You start thinking to yourself, every day is precious, and the most important thing is to give what you have to give. You take everything to the limit. You appreciate it, celebrate it, and you find ways to contribute." It's a philosophy he imparts to his children and grandchildren as well. "I tell my grandchildren that I want them to develop healthy habits in all areas," he said. "It's important for you to do well by your body and your mind, but you have to also consider your spirit. Leave time for prayer, and the consideration of Christ to lead your life comes more with age and time as well, I think."

In asking his grandchildren to continue to challenge themselves physically, mentally and spiritually, Hendricks said he tries to lead by example. Whether it's swimming in a competitive event, writing or pondering poetry, or finding himself in meditation and prayer. "More comes of it than just fun," he said. "Swimming is learning and growing for a lifetime. As we used to say in the old days, 'It's a trip,' and I love it."