



Presbytery of West Virginia Awards Covenant Grant to First Presbyterian Church, Parkersburg

April 30, 2026

CHARLESTON, W.Va. – The Presbytery of West Virginia’s Outreach Committee met on April 28 and approved First Presbyterian Church, Parkersburg’s Covenant Grant application for a Liturgical Library. The Covenant Grant is part of the Presbytery’s New Life Congregational Grant program offering grants that provide money to encourage creativity and increase vitality in congregations.

With an award of \$2,000, the congregation will use this money to open worship to congregants who are neurodivergent, and or have developmental and cognitive issues by providing activities and objects that will allow the ability of congregants to participate fully and remain focused during the Worship Service.

Beginning this summer, First Parkersburg will provide a variety of creative tools for all ages to engage in during worship. With activities such as ribbon wands, sensory balls and stones, finger labyrinths, the Liturgical Library will also provide noise cancelling headphones, weighted lap blankets for both adults and children, weighted shoulder wraps and mind body stress balls for adults. Additionally, support specifically for those with dementia will be included.

According to Kelly Becket, Worship and Discipleship Chair, the Liturgical Library provides an opportunity to include those who are neurodivergent or with cognitive challenges to participate in worship with the Body of Christ, allowing the church to continue to spread the love of God through Jesus Christ. It allows for building loving and covenant relationships between those who live with disabilities or cognitive challenges and those who do not.

“We’ve started using the invitation, ‘Come as you are. We aren’t the same without you.’ With the liturgical library, we can more fully live into that invitation by welcoming everyone to meaningfully engage in worship,” said The Rev. Annie McMillion, pastor at First Parkersburg.

The Presbytery of West Virginia’s Lead Presbyter and Stated Clerk, Maureen Wright, said she is excited to partner with First Parkersburg’s new ministry.

“The Worship and Discipleship Committee and session of the church are modeling creativity and innovation to build up the Body of Christ in their community,” Wright said.

Since 2020, the Presbytery of West Virginia has awarded 15 Covenant Grants for more than \$26,040.

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