

The Opequon Spirit

*"Prayerfully Equipping Disciples of All Generations
To be Christ's Hands, Heart, and Feet in the World!"*



Opequon Presbyterian Church
217 Opequon Church Lane
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March 2026

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WORSHIP AT-A-GLANCE

Sunday, March 1—

2nd Sunday in Lent

+ Psalm 121; John 3:1-17

Sermon: "Help!?!"

* Communion; CCAP; Church
Coffee Reception (9:30 AM);
Annual Meeting & Celebration
of Ministry (10:00 AM)

Sunday, March 8—

3rd Sunday in Lent

+ Exodus 17:1-7; John 4:5-42

Sermon: "At The Well"

* Daylight Saving Time starts

1:30 PM Spring Arbor Worship

Sunday, March 15—

4th Sunday in Lent

+ 1 Samuel 16:1-13;

John 9:1-41

Sermon: "Open My Eyes"

* Baptism (11:00 AM); Blood
Pressure Checks; Potato
Bake Luncheon (12:15 PM)

Sunday, March 22—

5th Sunday in Lent; Logos Sunday

+ John 15:1-11;

Philippians 4:4-9

Theme: "Choose Joy!"

* All Logos Young People
Participating; 4 Cents A Meal

Sunday, March 29—

Palm / Passion Sunday

+ Isaiah 50:4-9;

Matthew 21:1-11, 27:11-54

Sermon: "The Risk of
Obedience"

* Parade of the Palms; Habitat
for Humanity Paint Can
Offering

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION CELEBRATING OUR MINISTRY

The Session of Opequon Presbyterian Church calls for the Annual Meeting of the Congregation and Celebration of Ministry for Sunday, March 1, at 10:00 AM in the Sanctuary. The meeting will also be available via Zoom. See the "OPC March Newsletter & Annual Meeting" email, sent on February 26, for the Zoom link and please be mindful that technology is not perfect.

The purpose of the meeting is to review the written report to the congregation (became available on Sunday, February 22), which includes statistical and financial reports, ministry team reports, staff reports, and the 2026 church calendar. We will also hear reports from the church's Architectural Review and Capital Campaign Teams. The congregation will be asked to elect four representatives to the church's Nominating Committee. In addition, the annual meeting of the corporation—Opequon Presbyterian Church, Inc.—will occur, with a report by the trustees on investments in 2025 and the corporation's and trustees' organization in the current year.

The meeting will be called to order promptly at 10:00 AM and will be preceded by a church coffee in the Gathering Area, 9:30 to 9:55 AM. Based on the positive feedback on the format from last year, we look forward to worship, fellowship and meeting or fellowship, meeting, and worship, depending on whether you attend the 8:30 or 11:00 AM service that day.

All active members of Opequon are encouraged to participate in this meeting, exercising both the privilege and responsibility of church membership, as we give thanks for our ministry and mission as the called people of God.



SPRING FORWARD...

Daylight Saving Time Begins Sunday, March 8!

Set your clocks **AHEAD** one hour
at bedtime on Saturday Night...
you wouldn't want to be late
for church on Sunday morning!



NOTES FROM PASTOR DAVID

"Practicing Discipleship"

Dear Friends in Christ,

While Lent just began, by the end of this month, we will begin our journey through Holy Week, from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday, with Maundy Thursday and Good Friday in-between. We recently moved from the fun and fellowship of a Pancake Party on Shrove Tuesday to the reflections of Ash Wednesday with ashes on the forehead giving perspective on life and death, mortality, and humility. We will experience similar highs, lows, and in-betweens during Lent and the upcoming Holy Week (March 29—April 5). As we meet Jesus on the road this Lent, we will explore encounters with him through the stories of those who are named disciples and with those who become disciples.

In our just-completed Faith Formation Class, we discussed the basis and intent of discipleship: "Since Jesus walked this earth, disciples have practiced following his model of loving others at all costs. Today, the word *disciple* might evoke a variety of responses. Some will think of the twelve disciples who followed Jesus. Others may associate it with some religion or cult, not necessarily Christian; but in the first-century Middle East, where there were many teachers—rabbis—who attracted followers, the term was quite common. A disciple actively sought to imitate both the life and the lessons of the teacher. It was a deliberate, lifelong apprenticeship in which the goal was to become a living copy of the rabbi. Discipleship was not just a process of accumulating information or changing moral behavior to align more fully with the teacher's teachings. It was a fundamental shift toward the ethics and lifestyle of the teacher in every way. When Jesus says, 'Follow me,' and we choose to follow, we are committing to a lifelong apprenticeship journey – one in which we will be continually formed, reformed, and transformed. Jesus shows us what we are choosing: restored relationship with God and one another. Discipleship implies practice. We need to practice because following Jesus takes shape in an infinite assortment of circumstances and contexts. Sometimes this new way of living may seem as natural as breathing. But many times, following Jesus can be hard work. Like the arduous breathing we experience in training for a race, practicing discipleship exercises our spiritual muscles and builds our capacity to become stronger disciples. What we are practicing now has been practiced by Christians for centuries. Discipleship is not a skill; it's a way of life. In the

Gospels, Jesus shows us why God so loves the world, how God loves, and what it looks like to live a life rooted in the two greatest commandments to love God and others."

So, this Lent, let's practice discipleship as apprentices of Jesus as we meet him on the road.

Together in Christ,

PASTOR TRACIE'S JUST THINKIN'...

Lent... forty weekdays (we get Sundays off because they always belong to Easter) at the very end of winter mud, and just as spring begins to think about blooming. For a time of supposed meditation, contemplation and prayer, it surely is busy around here.

We begin on March 1 with communion and the Annual Meeting. At Robinson Memorial, the church I retired from, we held the Annual Meeting as part of worship. It was an interesting experiment, but I do not recommend it. It took too long and somehow the business always ran over into the following weeks.

We end the month with a car vacuuming event, one of my favorites, and Holy Week. In between, we have the Potato Bake, Mulch Madness, Logos Sunday, St. Patrick's Day (which also traditionally belongs to Easter), a leadership retreat, and the Sunday we "Spring Forward." Of course, the Roots & Shoots Garden also gets prepped, as do our income tax returns. There are numerous school spring concerts, competitions and games. Spring cleaning must be done, and the church walkways are rinsed of salt. This year, the sidewalks were well-cleared and salted... for good reason, but they must be rinsed so they do not break down. Of course, it may rain, which would take care of that, but "if it rains in March, so it rains in June." Be careful what you wish for.

With all of this and more, what's a girl to do? It's all important. It all matters, but Lenten devotions matter, too. The easiest way for me to honor Lent is to give up something that I like. Chocolate is a good choice; ice cream might be another. I remember my father giving up brussels sprouts and encouraging me to give up liver. That was painless, but it hardly matched the intent. My grandmother always suggested I give up whining. (Me???? Whine????) She also wanted my Lenten devotion to be spending more time with my sister or helping Mom with the cooking or dishes. Again, I get it, but how can we make these 40 days more personally meaningful?

When I had the flower shop, one of my clerks had been a missionary to Zimbabwe. Sally was a practicing Christian who had interesting ways to practice. She was always busy flitting from one thing to another, but she unfailingly found time for prayer. Even more unusual, she never seemed to rush; she had a quietness about her. When we talked about Lent, she explained that each day she took several short times for prayer or listening for God. What was her short time? Often only seconds. She prayed as she went from one room to another. She listened as she straightened merchandise. She said she often took a little bit more time than necessary in the cooler because the change in atmosphere reminded her to calm herself and find a few moments of peace. To me, that sounded silly. I believed in multi-tasking, but this level seemed ridiculous... until I tried it. It works!

The thing is, as I age and certain aspects of life slow down a bit, I find that this integrated prayer comes easier. I am not in anywhere near as much of a hurry to get from one place to another, so I can stop at a door and listen just a bit longer, walk more carefully and pray a bit more precisely. It's a new time of prayer for me and, frankly, I rather like it. IN fact, I have not stopped this practice from Lent a few years ago. Whoda thunk?

—Tracie

**SESSION MEETING HIGHLIGHTS
 FROM JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2026**

- ✦ Session received a very informative report by Rev. Nancy Meehan Yao on results of the Congregational Assessment Tool (CAT) at the January meeting. The CAT and Vision Teams are working on a summary for the congregation addressing what we learned from the CAT that tells us about God, about ourselves, and about our members.
- ✦ Personnel & Administration Ministry: Session approved the part-time (20hr/wk) Parish Associate position description. Session approved an anti-racism policy, in alignment with the church's commitment to inclusion and Christian witness, to be added to the Personal Policies/Practices Handbook.
- ✦ Session enthusiastically approved the February recommendation of the Personnel Team to renew the contract with Parish Associate Tracie Martin for another year (April 1, 2026 to March 31, 2027).
- ✦ In February, the Worship Ministry expressed sincere gratitude to Mac McNichols for his gift of

Paula McNichol's Steinway Baby Grand Piano for use in Opequon's future expansion. Paula's well-loved piano will be moved and stored for two years under the care of Mitch Orndorff, until it can be moved into the new space at Opequon.

- ✦ Session approved the Worship Team's recommended choice of the official Benjamin Moore paint colors for the Memorial Sanctuary in February.
- ✦ Christian Education Ministry: In January, Session approved the 2026 Vacation Bible School dates (June 14-17), Planning Team (Winter Brooks, Layne Link, Carrie Rockwell, Rebekah Witt, and Carole Witt) and curriculum (Every Living Thing). Monthly minutes now reflect the CE 2026 Planning Calendar.
- ✦ Congregational Care Ministry/Deacons: All future prayer requests should be directed to the single email address: opcprays@gmail.com. A new grief devotional series, developed by Stephen Ministries, is included in the grief bag provided to families during their time of loss. Debbie Bender agreed to serve as the Deacon member of the 2026 Nominating Committee.
- ✦ Vision Ministry welcomed four new members: Ann Denison, Mike Birchenough, and Bill and Maureen Wellman. Team meetings in 2026 shifted to the second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 PM.
- ✦ Mission Ministry Team enjoyed an energetic and productive discussion with invited guest Sam Rogers (Winchester Rescue Mission) at the February Ministry meeting.
- ✦ Evangelism Ministry is purchasing a new outdoor church wrap-around sign for Holy Week. Pastor David is beginning a New Member Class, scheduled for February 22 and March 1, 2026 (4:00—6:00 PM).
- ✦ Fellowship Ministry: See you at Opequon's Annual Potato Bake and St. Patrick's festivities on Sunday, March 15, following the 11:00 AM service.
- ✦ Buildings & Grounds Team has had a busy two months:
 - In January, exterior improvements around the Manse and garage area were completed, including the regrading and removal of poles from old volleyball area, filled old septic pit (2.5 tons of topsoil purchased), and removal of the large dirt dump pile. The large safe in garage storage for over 30 years was also removed. The Dell Room exit double door is under repair. Due to the cold weather resulting in several false alarms (failing

batteries), the wireless warning system for the sewage pumps was disarmed until the frigid weather subsides.

- In February, Session approved the replacement plan and expense (\$6,000) to purchase/install new Pella windows in the Fellowship Hall.
- Look forward to welcoming Spring 2026 by joining in OPC's March Mulch Madness on March 21.

☒ Stewardship and Finance Ministry:

- In accordance with 10% Mission Component of the Building Campaign, funds were distributed to OPC's 4 mission partners (\$20,000/group; \$80,000 total) in January.
- Session approved the proposed 2026 balanced budget (projected income/pledges and expenses) of \$963,141 in January; the 2026 budget includes a 5% COLA for all staff.
- The January 2026 Financial Report was approved by Session in February.

☒ Other Session Actions/Approvals in January/February:

- The Annual 2025 Statistical Report approved by Session in January was filed with the PC (USA) by Clerk of Session Ann Smith; a copy is included in Opequon's 2025 Annual Report.
- Session called the Annual Congregational Meeting to be held Sunday, March 1, 2026, at 10:00 AM.
- Session approved a baptism request in January for Brooks Robert Witt, child of Joel and Susan Witt, for Sunday, March 15, 2026, at 11:00 AM worship.
- Session ratified the January 31, 2026, email vote to approve submission of the Rainwater Harvesting Proposal by Alan McKay.
- Session approved two Sanctuary use requests: Susan Tickner's Piano Recital request for Sunday, May 17, 2026; and Windsong's Concert Request for Saturday, June 20 at 4:00 PM.
- The 2026 Leadership Retreat for Elders, Deacons, Church Ministry Staff, Vision and Personnel Teams, is scheduled for Saturday, March 28, 2026 (9:00 AM—3:00 PM).
- The Discipleship Team is exploring potential sites for an all-church weekend off-site retreat in February 2027.

Ann C.M. Smith, Clerk of Session, Opequon Presbyterian Church

EXTENDING OUR EMPATHY & CHRISTIAN LOVE TO...



- ☞ Susan Homan and family upon the death of her father and OPC member, Bill Robinson, on February 11.
- ☞ Holly Lightcap and family upon the death of her mother, Colleen Zbur, on February 15.
- ☞ Rob and Donna Smith, Waverly and Garry Lee, and family upon the death of their mother and OPC member Jean Smith, who was the oldest member of Opequon, on February 20.

"I am the resurrection and the life," says the Lord. "Those who believe in me shall live, even though they die, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die."
—John 11:25-26

MINISTRY TEAM NIGHT Tuesday, March 3

6:00 PM Meal: Homemade Soup, Chicken Salad Sandwiches, Egg Salad Sandwiches, & Dessert
(provided by OPC Staff)

6:45 PM Devotions & Team Meetings

EASTER TULIP ORDERS

Tulip order/dedication forms are available in the bulletins and Gathering Area and are due to the church office by Sunday, March 15. The cost this year is \$10 each. Please indicate "tulips" with your payment.

RACHEL BAYLISS SCHOLARSHIP



TAKING APPLICATIONS

The Claytor and Bayliss families established the Rachel Bayliss Scholarship Fund more than twenty-five years ago to support Opequon youth in their college or vocational endeavors. This fund has been supplemented by additional contributions and through regular donations by Happy Days in memory of older adults after their death. Thousands of dollars have been awarded through the years to well-deserving young people.

Scholarship applications ARE NOW AVAILABLE to graduating high school seniors; please contact the church office by calling 540-662-1843 or emailing office@opequonchurch.org to request an application.

All applications must be returned to the church office by THURSDAY, APRIL 30.

ANNUAL POTATO BAKE

SUNDAY, MARCH 15

12:15 PM
(Fellowship Hall)

FUN, FOOD, FELLOWSHIP—
Done "The Opequon Way!"

Baked Potatoes, fixin's, desserts,
and drinks will all be provided.

Please consider bringing a
salad or cold side dish to share.



COOKBOOK UPDATE

The display for "A Place at the Table Commemorative Cookbook" will take a breather in March and April, BUT recipes will continue to be accepted through August. Should you have a recipe that you want included in the cookbook, handwritten or typed recipes may be put in Marj Praml's mailbox (near church offices) or you may email your recipe to Cindy Sousa (casousa260@gmail.com).

CAR VACUUMING FUNDRAISER

Back by popular demand!

Gravel, dirt, and other debris quickly make their way into cars over the winter, and we all want our vehicles to be clean once again! Pull up to the church parking lot curb on Sunday, March 29, from 8:00 AM—1:00 PM. The Youth will have shop vacs, and you'll see the satisfaction that comes from a freshly vacuumed carpet. Please remove small objects from the floor of your vehicle. Donations will support Youth Mission Trips and Camps/Conferences. Thank you!



LENT DEVOTIONAL ITEMS

Lent began with Ash Wednesday on February 18. There are Devotional items provided to help us all reflect on Jesus and on our faith during this time. If you haven't gotten a devotional booklet, help yourself to one from the Gathering Area.

The Road to the Cross adults is a booklet of 'a word a day for Lent' written by Rev. Jill Paulson of Wildwood Presbyterian Church. We are grateful for permission to share this booklet with Opequon during this Lent season. May you find the focus of a word a day a great way to deepen and challenge your faith.

Beatitudes at Home Family Devotional, developed by the PCUSA, is great for families. This is a pack of cards that focuses on blessings from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. The artwork is capturing, the conversation questions are interesting, and there are ideas of things to do!

Surprising Lent Objects are being given out for four weeks of Lent. (this began February 25) These items are given out to ALL Logos young people at dismissal time each week and they are available to other young people in the Gathering Area. Watch for the surprising items that will be useful at home and help young people think about important aspects of loving Jesus through this season.



Dear OPiE,

When will we break ground for our addition?

— Restless

Dear Restless,

It can feel like nothing is happening right now, can't it? Actually, a lot is going on behind the scenes. What is really hard for me to understand is that people are holding meeting after meeting and talking a lot about all sorts of things, but they do not have cookies or anything yummy to nosh on as they work. I wouldn't even care if their snacks were healthy, but these people are completely ignoring the Presbyterian tradition of making progress on its stomach. What a bunch of nuts! But I digress... sigh...

So, here is the current situation—

The Architectural Review Team, the architects, and Kee Construction are talking at length about what we can afford and how to get the most out of our budget. This is not an easy discussion, as you might expect. We want everything to be top notch, but compromise is always necessary when it comes to the bottom line. We are not an impoverished church, but we are not unlimitedly wealthy either. We have always expected to need to compromise.

The goal seems to be getting the most building we can get for what we can spend, even if some of the furnishings must come later. This makes sense. It would be foolish to compromise the size of the kitchen or Music Center or for the Fellowship Hall to have fancy-schmancy tables, but a Fellowship Hall without safe places to sit makes no sense either. There is a lot of talking and researching going on.

Once we have a reasonable price set, the finance people will put our project out for bids. Last time, from what I hear, we had nine different banks and lenders bidding for our Sanctuary project. Who knows how many we will have this time! It's sort of exciting!!! We will need to award a financial contract as well as a building contract. You see, Kee is working with us to develop costs, but we have not decided on our builders yet.

It seems to me that a lot of good work is going on, and good work takes time... and cookies... hint, hint! I did hear that Vision has started talking about a groundbreaking celebration, but they have not set a date. I gather we could put shovels in the dirt as soon as this fall... or maybe not.

In my opinion, the main thing that is holding up our progress is hunger. How can these people expect to make good decisions without lots and lots of carbs? Maybe someone could make them some chocolate chip cookies? Even better, why not try peanut butter cookies with chocolate frosting? Chips might help. Cupcakes? Sheesh!

— Your friend, OPiE

NEWCOMERS CLASS

Are you new to Opequon Church or our community? Would you like to know more about the heritage, mission, and vision of Opequon Church? Do you have some questions about what, where, when, why, and how we do things within this faith community? Would you like to become a member of Opequon? If you said "yes!" to any of these questions, you are cordially invited and encouraged to attend our upcoming Newcomers' Class. We will gather in the Bageant Room on Sunday, March 1, at 4:00 PM.

If you have questions, contact Pastor David Witt (540-662-1843 or pastor@opequonchurch.org), who will be facilitating this time of sharing; to help prepare the appropriate resources, please also let him know you would like to attend.

LENTEN STUDY BEGINS THIS MONTH

Our Lenten study, "Meeting Jesus on the Road" will begin on March 8 and meet on Sunday mornings at 9:45 AM as a part of the Faith Formation Hour. Each class will be 55 minutes in length, held both in-person and via Zoom, and will be facilitated by Pastor David Witt and Ann Denison. Designed as a spiritual journey through Easter, this Lenten study offers a meaningful way to engage the season through scripture, reflection, and walking. Throughout, we will learn that faith is not sedentary but a relationship with God that grows and changes over a lifetime. We will be guided "on the road with Jesus." Join us!

TUESDAY FAITH FORMATION: ANGELS

The Tuesday Bible Study will continue meeting at 1:30 PM in the Bageant Room through March 24.

Some of the upcoming topics include:

- ☞ The Angel of the Lord
- ☞ Angels in the Life of Christ
- ☞ Special Questions about Angels
- ☞ And whatever else we decide to consider...

YOUTH: GRADES 6-12

March 6: Movie Night (6:30 PM—9:00 PM)

March 29: Car Vacuuming Fundraiser & Breakfast (8:00 AM—1:00 PM)

YOUNG ADULTS: AGES 18-35

March 13: Fondue Party (6:30 PM)

OPIE'S PLAYHOUSE

Opie's Playhouse is a Sunday morning playgroup for young families offering toys, snacks and drinks, space to play, and a chance to chat and get to know one another. Families with infants, toddlers and elementary aged children are all welcome! We were so happy to be able to meet the Sunday after the big snow and ice storm. The Memorial Sanctuary is such a sunny, cozy place to play on a cold winter's morning, and both children and adults had fun spending time together.



We hope you will join us on March 15, 9:45 AM—10:45 AM, for our next playgroup! **Please note this change from our normal first Sunday of the month schedule.** Because of other events in the life of OPC, we are modifying our March and April schedules. Please note these changes:

- ◆ We will meet on March 15, instead of March 1.
- ◆ We will not meet in April, as Easter Sunday falls on April 5, but hope to see everyone at the Family Easter Event between services that morning!



THE LATEST IN LOGOS

We will wind down our 28th LOGOS year this month. We can't believe the time has gone so fast since we began last September. Did you hear anything about the great BAKE-OFF Challenge our youth competed in last month during Logos? It was a fantastic event, and each baking team did a super job. It was all judged by our 4-5th grade Logos class.

This month offers another helping of some great themes such as our annual Spoon Hanging Competition Night, Spring Forward Night, Luck of the Irish Night and our special closing night with families on March 25.

We are preparing for Logos Sunday, when all our young people will lead worship. Logos Sunday is on March 22, with the young people leading BOTH 8:30 and 11:00 AM worship services! The theme for worship will be CHOOSE JOY!

We are ever so thankful for the Logos staff and Logos families. Wednesdays won't feel complete without you all. We are so privileged for the time we have with one another. The Leadership Team will continue working as Logos ends and we begin to look ahead to a new Logos year.

For more information about Logos, contact Carole Witt (540-662-1843 or dce@opequonchurch.org).

MEN OF OPEQUON

The Men of Opequon (MOO) will gather for dinner on Monday, March 9 at 6:00 PM at the Chick-fil-A on Pleasant Valley Road. We'll then return to the church for our monthly program at 7:00 PM, which this month, will be provided by Ken Shank from the Winchester Astronomy Club. Join us to hear stories about the stars. Dessert will be provided.

GLOW: God-Loving Opequon Women

GLOW is Opequon's multi-aged women's group that meets monthly to build friendships and enjoy heart-warming activities together.

GLOW resumes this month after being on break during February. GLOW will meet on Tuesday, March 10, at 6:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall. We will be doing 'ESCAPE BOX CHALLENGES'. Sounds very intriguing. Come be part of a team working to get into their box in the time allotted. The GLOW Planning Team will be providing Soup, Sandwiches, Dessert and Drinks before we begin our challenge and a special devotional time. We look forward to welcoming Opequon women for a delightful evening together. All Opequon women are invited.

OLDER ADULT HAPPENINGS

We may be treated to some spring-like days this month! Won't that feel good! We shall see as the month unfolds.

The month begins with the Older Adult Planning Team meeting on Monday, March 2, at 9:30 AM in the Bageant Room. This meeting is for discussing and planning programs for Happy Days and other special events. The meeting is open to any older adult who would like to attend. Some morning goodies and coffee are provided.

The monthly older adult fellowship time known as 'Happy Days' will be held on Wednesday, March 11, at NOON in the Fellowship Hall, beginning with a covered dish lunch. Rotisserie Chicken will be provided, as well as drinks. AND this month with the theme "A Birthday Party for Everyone," homemade cake will be provided for dessert. You are invited to bring something other than dessert to contribute to the lunch. After lunch, we will enjoy some birthday party games suitable for everyone. All older adults are welcome. Come enjoy the friendships, warmth around the tables and this fun event in celebration of each of you.

OPC MULCH MADNESS

Roll up your sleeves for our annual "Mulch Madness" Work Day! Bring your gloves and rake (if you have one) to the church on Saturday, March 21. We plan to get started at 10:00 AM. Many hands make light work! Enjoy some fresh air while helping beautify the grounds and having fun together. For details, reach out to Jack Marquis (lorsoe53@gmail.com).

LIFE GOES ON

Life Goes On will gather in the Fellowship Hall on Monday, March 16, at noon. The main dish will be hearty soup. Life Goes On is a monthly lunch for folks who have lost their significant other. We chat, have lunch, and encourage each other. Please plan to bring a dish to pass or chip in a couple of bucks toward expenses.

FELLOWSHIP BOOK CLUB SELECTIONS

Fellowship Book Club typically meets at 6:00 PM on the fourth Thursday of each month. Upcoming gathering dates and selections are as follows:

- March 26 (Bageant Room)—
Managed Care by Joe Barrett
- April 23 (Bageant Room)—
The Gales of November: The Untold Story of the Edmund Fitzgerald by John U. Bacon

MARCH COLLECTION FOR CCAP

Mission is collecting tuna fish for CCAP this month. Donations may be placed in the collection bin in the Dell Room at any time. Thank you for your contributions and supporting our community!

SENIOR OUTREACH

Senior Outreach Ministry will gather on Sunday, March 8, at 12:15 PM, by the church office door to load up the totes for the Shenandoah Senior Apartments in Winchester. Donations of paper towels or bath tissue are always welcome.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

The One Great Hour of Sharing offering is one of the three church-wide special offerings sponsored by the Presbyterian Church (USA). It is highlighted during Lent, received and dedicated on Easter Sunday, April 5.

This year marks the 77th Anniversary of the first OGHS, begun as American Christians recognized the need to respond to the worldwide devastation caused by World War II. In March 1949, a national broadcast on a Saturday evening asked Americans to give generously the next morning in their churches; a remarkable assembly of national leaders and celebrities gave their efforts to the broadcast, and more than 75,000 churches responded the next day. Today, our contributions to One Great Hour of Sharing are divided equally among the Presbyterian Hunger Program, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, and Self-Development of People. When it comes to Easter Sunday, let there be no mistake about our commitment to feed the poor and help the afflicted as we respond to the new life received in and through Christ. We encourage everyone to give to OGHS. Special envelopes will be available beginning March 29.



GENEROSITY / STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

(From Pastor Tracie Martin & the Generosity Team)

A friend sent me an article which said that, in February, the local ER was busy with older adults who had fallen on their way to church. Given the weather during most of the month of February I can well imagine that this is true. I know the snowpack in Yellow Spring was deeply frozen enough that I could walk on the crust without breaking through. Toward the end of the month, the sun seemed to be stronger and things melted, but cold nights and re-freezing are real concerns where sidewalks are concerned.

Walking out of the church following a night meeting recently, I paid almost no attention to the curb. Why? Because the curb had been cut to allow me and others to walk safely to the car. I did not slide on an icy patch—Why? Because the driveway and the walks were all well cleared and salted. I could see where I was going because there are good lights around our parking areas. I did not trip on broken pavement or catch my coat on straggly branches either.

The proactive care our Building and Grounds Team gives the OPC campus in difficult weather is important, but I admit that I seldom spend much time thinking about it. We all would miss it if it were to stop, however. How many other aspects of our church life together fall into this category? Our Sunday-clean Sanctuary, sanitary bathrooms, hallways that lack clutter, safe paths from one area to another, carts to help carry things downstairs, good lighting, all these expected safety measures help to make our church friendly and easy for all to access. They all take thought, work, and a budget that considers them important. They are all quite easy to take for granted.

Your pledges to the general budget pay for safety measures. Volunteers and staff plan to keep things accessible. Soon, spring will blossom and most of us will forget about icy walkways, but some will continue to plan and prepare to keep our church family safe. It feels important that we not take them and their hard work for granted. So, thank you to all of "the helpers"—our planners, workers, and all those who make sure we can afford to keep things up without worry.

ROOTS & SHOOTS: Preparing for a Season of Growth

As the days begin to lengthen and we look toward spring, the Roots & Shoots Garden is already preparing for a new season of growth!

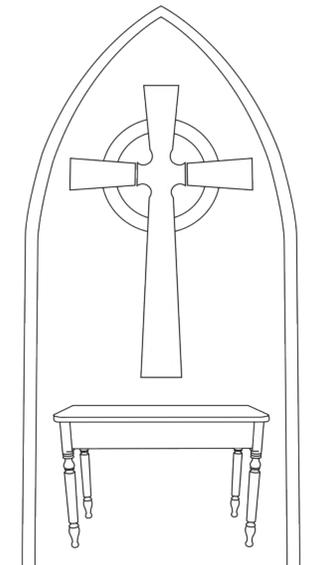
We'll be starting seeds in the greenhouse beginning in March, nurturing tiny beginnings that, with care and patience, will grow into plants to share and enjoy. There's something holy about this work. By placing small seeds in the soil and trusting in God for the growth, it reminds us of the quiet ways He works in our lives.



This spring, Roots & Shoots will once again have seeds available for the congregation. Whether you're an experienced gardener or trying something new, we hope you'll take some seeds home as a reminder that God brings new life in every season.

Recently, members of our team attended the seed exchange at the Clarke County Fairgrounds, where we were encouraged by the abundance and generosity of fellow growers. There were so many varieties of seeds shared.

As we move toward spring, we invite you to join us in praying over this Garden. Specifically, pray for the seeds being planted, for the hands that will tend them, and for the ways God will use even the smallest beginnings to bless others.



A Place at the Table

MAKING A PLACE AT THE TABLE: Prayers for Our Capital Campaign

Written by: Becky Proctor

Dear Lord:

As we look back, we see how far our faith and church have come over the years. As we look forward, we see how much further we wish to go. We ask for your guidance, strength, and answered prayers for these steps forward as we plan to expand our church building. Please be with the OPC leadership and all those who are serving on committees to oversee this project. Amen.

BUILDING CAMPAIGN RECEIPTS

Building campaign receipts now total \$967k through January 2026, which is 60% of the total amount pledged. Note that some pledged gifts have been received in full and will not be evenly spread over the 3-year giving period. The total also includes gifts that were not pledged.



CAMPAIGN NOTES OF THANKS

The Capital Campaign Team sincerely thanks all of you who have prayed for the work of the Team and prayed for the generous response of the congregation. We especially thank those who have shared their prayers for publication. Stepping out in faith in this way demonstrates another way to be generous. You've contributed to the financial foundation of our building project. Now we look forward to the physical foundation being constructed!

FRIENDS OF THE GORE HOME SPONSORSHIPS

We are seeking scholarship donors for the students at The Gore Home. The Home is an outreach of our partner synod in Ethiopia. It supplies dormitory style housing, complete with house mothers, three meals a day, supervised study hall time, medical care, and tutors. The Home serves primarily orphans, whose remaining family cannot support them. The students attend public school in the town of Gore.



A full scholarship is \$1,550 for the coming school year. Partial scholarships will be combined as appropriate. We want to collect the funds by early summer so that the Home may plan for the coming school year. The Home can easily house 60 students and there is currently only about 40. OPC is the largest source of funds for the Home in Shenandoah Presbytery, providing for over 40% of the students.

Please thoughtfully and prayerfully consider helping to fund the Home. Scholarship funds should be sent to OPC clearly labeled for "Friends of the Gore Home." Please direct any questions to Bill Burslem at (wburslem331@gmail.com).

FELLOWSHIP SHOUT-OUT

We'd like to give a shout out to Fellowship's newest Team Members: Barb Agreggaard and Jane Willard and to the people who agreed to be on our email list. We appreciate your time and attention to activities and events that Fellowship presents, all in bringing the Community of Opequon Presbyterian Church together.

Thanks!

SOUPER BOWL OF CARING UPDATE

Thanks to your generous support for Sherando and Highland Food Pantries through the Souper Bowl of Caring, the window side collected 122 vegetable beef, the center section with 215 tomato, and the choir side with 245 chicken noodle. Congratulations to the choir side for bringing in the most cans! We also thank OneLife Fitness Gym for adding soup cans to our collection.

Our grand total came to 582 soup cans!

A NOTE OF THANKS

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the congregation for the many meals, visits, prayers, cards, and get well wishes that I have received over the past several weeks, as I recover from my shoulder replacement.

I am truly overwhelmed at the outpouring of love and generosity from the congregation. I have never experienced anything like this in my past, and am beyond grateful that our life's journey led us to Opequon.

Again, I, as well as Mike and Brendan, are blessed to be a part of this amazing community.

— Carol Nutry

CWS BLANKET THANK YOU

Thank you all so much for your extraordinary generosity and for the incredible gift you shared with the CWS Blankets Program. Opequon Presbyterian's compassion will bring comfort, warmth, and hope to families facing some of their hardest moments. This support strengthens our mission and reminds us of the power of a community that chooses to care. We are deeply grateful for your partnership and the love you extend through this ministry! !

— Belinda, Church World Service

Opequon Presbyterian Church
Financial Summary for the period ended
January 31, 2026

	Annual Budget 2026	Current Month Actual	Year to Date Actual	Annual Budget Remaining	% of Annual Budget Used
Income					
410000 Offering Income	961,041	94,605	94,605	866,436	9.8%
420000 Other Income	2,100	161	161	1,939	7.7%
Total 400000 Income	963,141	94,766	94,766	868,375	9.8%
Expenses					
500000 Personnel Costs					
510000 Installed Pastors	160,114	12,708	12,708	147,406	7.9%
520000 Other Ministerial Staff	259,866	16,885	16,885	242,981	6.5%
530000 Administrative Staff	167,195	13,792	13,792	153,403	8.2%
Total 500000 Personnel Costs	587,175	43,386	43,386	543,789	7.4%
600000 Other Ministries					
610000 Christian Education	15,650	1,183	1,183	14,467	7.6%
620000 Congregational Care	2,800	59	59	2,741	2.1%
630000 Evangelism	6,050	0	0	6,050	0.0%
640000 Fellowship	4,250	582	582	3,668	13.7%
650000 Mission	79,219	3,162	3,162	76,057	4.0%
660000 Worship	8,000	873	873	7,127	10.9%
Total 600000 Other Ministries	115,969	5,858	5,858	110,111	5.1%
Total 700000 Church Administration	160,200	13,598	13,598	146,602	8.5%
Total Expenses	863,344	62,842	62,842	800,502	7.3%
Net Operating Income (Expense)	99,797	31,924	31,924	67,873	32.0%
920000 Other Income	18,650	1,700	1,700	16,950	9.1%
930000 Other Expenses	118,447	10,078	10,078	108,369	8.5%
Net Other Income (Expense)	(99,797)	(8,377)	(8,377)	(91,420)	8.4%
Income Greater Than (Less Than) Expenses	0	23,547	23,547		

	<u>1/31/26</u>
Cash	<u>\$ 184,945</u>
Sanctuary Mortgage Principal Balance	<u>\$ 272,589</u>

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Communion 8:30am - Worship @ Sanctuary 9:30am - Coffee Fellowship @ 10am - Annual Meeting @ 11am - Worship & Live Stream @ 12:15pm - Trustees Meeting @ 4pm - Newcomers' Class @	2 9:30am - Older Adult Planning 6pm - Windsong @ Sanctuary	3 1:30pm - Angel Bible Study @ 5pm - Tech Team Meeting @ 6pm - Ministry Team Night @	4 8:30am - Backpack Program @ 9:30am - Staff Meeting @ Bageant 4:30pm - Logos 7:15pm - Choir @ Sanctuary	5 10:30am - Tai Chi @ Memorial 6:30pm - Sherando Food Pantry @ 6:45pm - Micah 6.8 Faith 7pm - ART Team Meeting @	6 6:30pm - Youth Movie Night @	7
8 Daylight Saving Time starts 8:30am - Worship @ Sanctuary 9:40am - VBS Team Meeting @ 9:45am - Faith Formation @ 11am - Worship & Live Stream @ 12:15pm - Senior Outreach 1:30pm - Spring Arbor Worship @ 3pm - Windsong @ Sanctuary	9 Rebekah Away (Continuing Ed) 6pm - MOO Meal @ Chick-fil-A 6pm - Windsong @ Sanctuary 7pm - MOO in FH @ Fellowship	10 9:30am - Tuesday Morning Mission 1:30pm - Angel Bible Study @ 5:30pm - CAT Team @ Bageant 6pm - GLOW Fellowship Hall @ 7pm - Vision Team @ Bageant	11 12pm - Happy Days @ Fellowship 4:30pm - Logos 7:15pm - Choir @ Sanctuary	12 10:30am - Tai Chi @ Memorial	13 David & Carolee Away 6:30pm - YA Fondue Party @	14
15 Blood Pressure Checks NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 8:30am - Worship @ Sanctuary 9:45am - Faith Formation @ 9:45am - Opie's Playhouse @ 11am - Worship & Live Stream @ 12:15pm - Potato Bake @	16 12pm - Life Goes On @ Fellowship 5pm - Logos Leadership Team @ 6pm - Safety Team @ Bageant 6pm - Windsong @ Sanctuary	17 St. Patrick's Day 1:30pm - Angel Bible Study @ 6:30pm - Session Meeting @	18 10:30am - Staff Meeting @ 11:30am - Staff Lunch 4:30pm - Logos 7:15pm - Choir @ Sanctuary	19 9am - WANC Tea @ Youth Spot 10:30am - Tai Chi @ Memorial 10:30am - WANC Meeting @ 6:30pm - Sherando Food Pantry	20 10am - Mulch Madness @ Church	21
22 4 Cents a Meal Offering Logos Sunday 8:30am - Worship @ Sanctuary 9:45am - Faith Formation @ 11am - Worship & Live Stream @	23 5pm - Discipleship Team @ 6pm - Windsong @ Sanctuary	24 1:30pm - Angel Bible Study @ 3pm - TVOR Gathering 5:30pm - Highland Food Pantry @	25 4:30pm - Logos 7:15pm - Choir @ Sanctuary	26 10:30am - Tai Chi @ Memorial 10:30am - WANC Lunch @ 11:30am - Piano Tuner - Eric Olson 6pm - Fellowship Book Club @	27 8:30am - Leadership Retreat @ 10am - Presbytery Clerks Meeting	28
29 Palm Sunday 8am - Car Vacuuming Fundraiser 8:30am - Worship @ Sanctuary 9:45am - Faith Formation @ 11am - Worship & Live Stream @	30 WCPFS Spring Break CPFS Spring Break 6pm - Windsong @ Sanctuary	31 8:30am - Backpack Program @ 9:30am - Staff Meeting @ Bageant 6:30pm - Choir @ Sanctuary	1 Maundy Thursday 10:30am - Tai Chi @ Memorial 6:30pm - Sherando Food Pantry @ 7pm - Maundy Thursday Worship	2 3pm - Good Friday Worship @	3 7pm - Maundy Thursday Worship	4

Holy Week & Easter Schedule

Sunday, March 29

Palm/Passion Sunday & Parade of Palms

- * 8:30 AM **Worship Service** (Sanctuary)
- * 11:00 AM **Worship Service** (Sanctuary & Livestream)

Thursday, April 2—Maundy Thursday

- * 7:00 PM **Maundy Thursday Communion Service** (Memorial Sanctuary)
☞ *Communion in the Round*

Friday, April 3—Good Friday

- * 7:00 PM **Good Friday Tenebrae Service** (Sanctuary & Livestream)
☞ *Recessional with the Cross*

Sunday, April 5

The Day of Resurrection, Easter Sunday

- * 6:00 AM **Easter Sunrise Service** (Pitcock Memorial Picnic Shelter)
☞ *Outdoor Worship with Kernstown UMC*
☞ *Special Music*
☞ *Flowering Cross*
☞ *Sunrise Breakfast (7:00 AM)*
- * 8:30 AM **Easter Sunday Worship Service** (Sanctuary)
- * 11:00 AM **Easter Sunday Worship Service** (Sanctuary & Livestream)
☞ *Communion*
☞ *Special Music*
☞ *One Great Hour of Sharing*
- * 9:45 AM **Family Easter Event & Breakfast** (starts in the Fellowship Hall)

STAFF SCHEDULE NOTES

March 9-12: Rebekah Witt - continuing education
March 13-14: David & Carole Witt - out of town

Note: If a pastoral concern arises, please note who is away and contact Pastor David Witt or Pastor Tracie Martin directly as needed.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2026

It may still be a bit chilly outside right now, but we are planning for those warm evenings as summer begins and we hold VBS here at Opequon.



Our fun-filled week of Vacation Bible School is scheduled to happen June 14—17 (Sunday—Wednesday), 5:00 PM—7:30 PM. The theme is: "EVERY LIVING THING!" We will be focusing on how every living thing needs Food, Water, Shelter, Air, and Community, based on Psalm 104. Vacation Bible School will be available for 4-year-olds through 8th grade, with an adult class as well. Registration will be available next month. Stay tuned for more information.

NEW CONTACT INFO?

Have you moved recently?

Do you have a new email address?

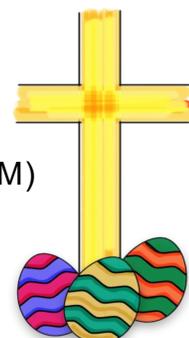
Do you have a new home or cell phone number?
Or cancelled a landline or old cell phone number?

Please contact the church office (540-662-1843 or office@opequonchurch.org) to ensure we have your accurate contact info. Thank you!



APRIL DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

- Maundy Thursday Communion Service—Thursday, April 2 (7:00 PM)
- Good Friday Tenebrae Service—Friday, April 3 (7:00 PM)
- Easter Sunrise Service & Breakfast—Sunday, April 5 (6:00 AM)
- Family Easter Event & Breakfast—Sunday, April 5 (9:45 AM)
- Resurrection Day Worship & Communion—Sunday, April 5 (8:30 AM & 11:00 AM)
- Church Office Closed—Easter Monday, April 6
- April Ministry Team Night—Tuesday, April 7 (6:00 PM)
- April GIFT Event—Sunday, April 26 (9:45 AM)



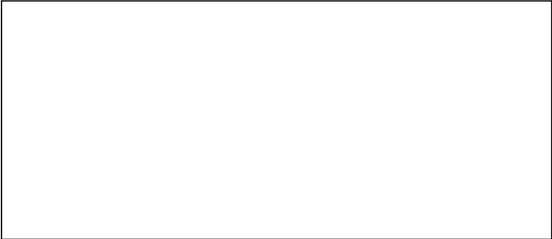
**** The deadline to send newsletter submissions to the church office the 15th of each month. ****

OPEQUON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

217 Opequon Church Lane
Winchester, VA 22602-2421
www.opequonchurch.org

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**March
2026**

**OPEQUON
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**
217 Opequon Church Lane
Winchester, VA 22602-2421

Website:
www.opequonchurch.org

Phone:
540-662-1843

Email:
office@opequonchurch.org

Church Office Hours:
**Monday—Thursday
9:00 AM—2:00 PM**

**Friday
9:00 AM—12:00 PM**

Sunday Worship Services:
**8:30 AM (in-person)
11:00 AM (in-person & livestream)**

CHURCH STAFF

Pastor	David R. Witt
Parish Associate	Tracie Martin
Church Office Administrator	Rachel Lesink
Church Finance Administrator	Ken Smiy
Director of Christian Education	Carole Witt
Director of Youth & Young Adults	Rebekah Witt
Director of Music	Susan Homan
Organist/Pianist	Garrett Jones
Facilities Coordinator	Robert Sydnor
Nursery Supervisor	Laurie Carver
Faith Community Nurses	Bill Martin, Mike Nutry, Pat Williams