



The Opequon Spirit

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

January 2023

WORSHIP IN JANUARY
8:30 am In-Person
& Livestreamed Worship
11:00 am In-Person

Sunday, January 1st –
New Year's Day/Epiphany Sunday
Isaiah 60:1-6, Matthew 2:1-12
Sermon: "We Keep Seeking"
CCAP, Communion, "Star Words"

Sunday, January 8th –
Baptism of the Lord Sunday
Isaiah 42:1-9, Matthew 3:13-17
Sermon: "Remember Your Baptism"
Renewal of Baptism Service

Sunday, January 15th
Isaiah 49:1-7, 1 Corinthians 1:1-9
Sermon: "Called by God"

Sunday, January 22nd
Isaiah 9:1-4, Matthew 4:12-23
Sermon: "Moving Immediately"
Four Cents a Meal Offering

Wednesday, January 25th –
WOW Service, 6:30 pm
Join us for this casual time of special worship
with our LOGOS ministry!
Galatians 5:1, 13-26

Sunday, January 29th
Micah 6:1-8, Matthew 5:1-12
Sermon: "Blessed Are"
Habitat for Humanity Paint Can Offering

STAFF VACATION SCHEDULE
Julia Burkley, January 2-7

REMINDER: PLEASE NOTE STAFF DAYS OFF

Since several of our full-time church staff work all day Sunday, they each have a day off during the week. Please respect this day and remember that they are "technology free" (i.e., do not expect responses to texts and emails).

Pastor Julia – off on Mondays
Pastor David – off on Fridays
DCE Carole – off on Fridays

If a pastoral concern arises during these times, please note who is away and call Pastors David, Julia, or Tracie as needed.

A PRAYER FOR THE NEW YEAR OF 2023

Abiding God of love and peace, we thank You for a New Year. We ask You, Lord, to bless us and our families, as we begin this new year with renewed hope in You. Lord, we thank You so much for all that You have done for us and our families. Your hand on our lives is so much more than we could ask. Your blessings are so greatly appreciated. Over the past year, You have seen our challenges, been saddened by our weaknesses, and rejoiced in our successes. As this New Year commences, let us remember the past year. In so doing, we truly repent of all that has hindered us from abiding in You. Forgive us, for the promises and resolutions we made and never fulfilled. Forgive us, for the times we neglected prayer and Your word as our focus. Let us recall the things that hindered us from getting closer to You and keeping Your word. May we come to realize our mistakes and shortcomings and make amends. Help us Lord, to be willing to forgive ourselves and to

forgive one another. Lord, remind us of our truest values and our deepest desires. Help us to live in the goodness that comes from doing what You want us to do. Help us to put aside anxiety about the future and regret of the past, so that we might live in peace with You now, one day at a time. In the powerful name of Jesus, the Christ, we pray. Amen.

NOTES FROM THE PASTOR:

“Light Brings Renewal”

“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.” John 1:5

Dear Friends in Christ,

It seems that Christmas lights began appearing in neighborhoods earlier this year, even before Halloween. I have seen some beautiful, even music synchronized, displays around our community, some rivaling what you might see on TV’s “The Great Light Fight.” Christmas is indeed a time of light, and as people of faith, we celebrate the light of Christ that has come into the world, that shines in the darkness, and that cannot be overtaken. Although the twelve days of Christmas are winding down, meaning that many of those lights will also be coming down, Epiphany, symbolized by visiting wise men, precious gifts, a brightly shining star, and good news going out to all the world, is even more so a season of light.

Early in December, Barbara Rupert shared Christmas greetings with me and passed on the following poem written by Howard Thurman, a poem that Carole and I then included in the Christmas letter we sent to out-of-town friends and family...

“I will light candles this Christmas
Candles of joy despite all sadness,
Candles of hope where despair keeps watch,
Candles of courage for fears ever present,
Candles of peace for tempest-tossed days,
Candles of grace to ease heavy burdens,
Candles of love to inspire all my living,
Candles that will burn all year long.”

On Christmas Eve each year, as we hold candles, pass on the light, and sing Silent

Night, we experience magical moments. And when I stand before a crowded sanctuary and people lift up their lighted candles, I remind us that while the light of the candles may be extinguished, the light of Christ shining through us must never be diminished. We must keep the love-light burning all year long. Beyond quickly made and often quickly forgotten resolutions, the start of this new year of 2023 offers each of us the opportunity to renew our faith and our commitment as we respond to God’s call to bear the light of Christ into the world. How will you do that this year? How will your faith shape you so that the candle of your life – a candle of joy, hope, courage, peace, grace, and love – will burn all year long? I invite you to join us on that journey as we move forward, knowing that we are stronger as individuals and as a community because of one another. I recall the words of The Servant Song, “I will hold the Christ-light for you, in the nighttime of your fear. I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear.” May you, may we, be blessed in 2023 as the light of Jesus brings renewal to us all! Together in Christ’s Service.



PASTOR JULIA'S MUSINGS:

This time of year, I think a lot about Mary.

I think about her as a teenager, in a world that looks so different to ours. I think about her realizing she's pregnant, though she's not married, and hasn't engaged in marital relations with anyone. She must have been so fearful, knowing that she would bear the brunt of the implications and not her male counterpart.

I think about an angel coming to her, and the utter fear that must've wrecked her. Bearing the son of God puts a lot of pressure on someone who didn't sign up for it. I think about her resounding yes, a yes of power and conviction and choice.

I think about her walking to Bethlehem heavily pregnant, going through contractions. I think about her only relief being riding on a bumpy donkey. What a hard way to welcome a baby into the world.

I think about Mary not knowing where the baby will be born. I think about Mary not knowing any of the women who may be around to help her deliver her child. Can you imagine how scary that would be? To go into birth not knowing who would be there to help you, or if you even have a bed to lay on?

I think about her getting to Bethlehem and having to find the only place left, the leftovers, to deliver her little child. I imagine the women around her, helping her bring the son of God into the world. It was women's hands that welcomed him, that dried him off, that cut his umbilical cord, that delivered the afterbirth. The son of God came in messy and humble and by women.

I think about her raising a child she knew would be different, who would change the world, but who was still a child. I think about her waiting with anticipation through the challenges of soiled diapers, sore breasts, through keeping up with a toddler. I think about her teaching him, playing with him, rocking him to sleep through nightmares.

I think about the moment when he was twelve in the temple when Mary had to choose to let go, to let him do God's calling. I think about Mary worrying when she didn't know where her teenager was. I think about her having to witness the horror of her son's death.

There is something so incredibly powerful and so incredibly challenging to think about what Mary had to sacrifice to allow God to enter the world as a human.

Mary was the one who said yes, who allowed God incarnate to come and walk among us as humans. Thanks be to God for that yes.

Blessings,
Pastor Julia



JUST THINKIN'

As I write this article, it is Tuesday before Christmas. Our son and daughter-in-law are supposed to be here Friday to celebrate with us. There is an ice storm scheduled for Thursday and a blizzard for Friday. Things do not look good.

In years past I would be depressed and sad. I would be crying. Today, however, I am just waiting to see what will happen. Is it age, maturity, faith? I am not sure, but there is something that says, "be not afraid."

Wait! That is the Christmas angel quote! Pretty churchy for someone like me.

While I have had no vision of angels...no sudden insight...no great epiphany, I do see this new year somewhat differently from most others. There is so much that can go wrong. Politics are wonky to the max, the economy is in flux, all our traditional "isms" seem to be raising their foul heads. As Bill's mother used to say, "We're going the way of the Romans." Remember that song by the Kingston Trio, Merry Minuet?

*"They're rioting in Africa; they're starving in Spain
There's hurricanes in Florida, and Texas needs rain
The whole world is festering with unhappy souls
The French hate the Germans; the Germans hate
the Poles Italians hate Yugoslavs; South Africans
hate the Dutch,
and I don't like anybody very much"*

The song goes on to reference the BOMB and the end of the world. It finishes, "They're rioting in Africa; there's strife in Iran
What nature doesn't do to us will be done by our fellow man."

Here's the thing. So far, the human survival percentage with all those threats is 100%! While this world has plenty of stress and sadness, evil and strife, the people of God keep on moving forward, helping, supporting each other, doing what we do. The people of God are occupied with making the changes we can make. We seem to have chosen to live another, vastly different song.

*Do not wait until some deed of greatness you may do, do not wait to shed your light afar;
To the many duties ever near you now be true,
Brighten the corner where you are.
Refrain:
Brighten the corner where you are!
Brighten the corner where you are!
Someone far from harbor you may guide across the bar;
Brighten the corner where you are!
Just above are clouded skies that you may help to clear,
let not narrow self your way debar;
Though into one heart alone may fall your song of cheer,
Brighten the corner where you are. Here for all your talent,
you may surely find a need,
Here reflect the bright and Morning Star;
Even from your humble hand the Bread of Life may feed,
Brighten the corner where you are*

I remember hearing Tennessee Ernie Ford sing that on the Ed Sullivan show. Does that make me old enough to be an aging Pollyanna? Maybe...maybe not. Maybe I have just lived enough experiences to know that "there's got to be a morning after." Maybe those of us who remember Tennessee Ernie Ford, The Kingston Trio, Ed Sullivan, Maureen McGovern, and The Poseidon Adventure still have something to say to those of you who don't. If you cannot identify the things in the last sentence, ask us.

Maybe I am finally finding the faith that lets me do what I can and trust that the rest will come in one way or another. I know the world is tough. I know there will be sadness, fear, and bad stuff in 2023. I also know that there will be joy, friendship, and good surprises. There will be tears as well as smiles. We will have many questions; not all answers will be welcome. Still, I choose to believe that God wins in the end. I am curious to discover just how all that will come about. Maybe the best song for all generations right now is, "Jesus Loves Me."

Grace



RENEWAL OF BAPTISM

JANUARY 8th Each January, on the second Sunday of the year, Baptism of the Lord Sunday, we participate as a congregation in a Renewal of Baptism

service. The service culminates in the congregation coming forward and touching the waters within the baptismal bowl. On January 8, those worshipping in person will have their own opportunity that morning to consider the gift of water, the gift of baptism. For those who are livestreaming worship, we invite you to have water available to you at home as you participate in worship. A clear glass of water before you would be helpful.

USHER TRAINING UPCOMING ON JANUARY 8TH

There will be a training session on **Sunday, January 8 at 9:45** in the sanctuary for all ushers and for anyone who would be willing to serve as an usher at our 8:30 or 11:00 o'clock services. There have been several updates to usher protocols since our last training in June. Anyone currently serving as an usher or anyone who is interested in serving as an usher should plan to attend.

STEWARDSHIP 2023 – A NEW YEAR! WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

The active, thriving mission and ministry of Opequon Presbyterian Church has deepened and expanded over the past year, especially in calling Pastor Julia to serve as our associate pastor. We sincerely thank you for all you have done to encourage and empower the church to keep moving forward despite the challenges of the pandemic. Now, we need your promise of support through the dedication of your time, talents, and tithes. What treasure has God entrusted to you that you will dedicate to God and Christ's Church? As we envision a promising new year of 2023, your financial support is essential to what we hope to

accomplish. We are so grateful to all who have submitted a pledge card for this new year, which helps the session plan accordingly. If you have not yet had this opportunity, please consider making your pledge today. IT IS NOT TOO LATE! Simply drop your pledge card in the Sunday offering, in the mail, or stop by the church this week, using the mail slot in the office door. And now, you can also pledge online! We appreciate you participating as we leave God's fingerprints on the world.

STEWARDSHIP AT OPEQUON

One of the most fascinating tasks of my position as Parish Associate at the Opequon Church is interpreting stewardship. We seldom say that "S" word out loud today. Over the years stewardship has been called "giving," "support," "tithing," and most recently we are calling it "generosity." Whatever name we tag onto this method of supporting a local church and the connected denomination, the process is generally the same. Learn about the local congregation, help folks understand the importance of their personal involvement to God and to the congregation, and define personal involvement using the same language as the congregation. Having done this, asking for pledges of time and talent becomes a matter of reminding the congregation what they already understand...that each one of us matters...a lot! Good interpretation takes away the seeming burden of stewardship and creates relationships with people, the church, and especially our God.

I have worked with many different congregations over my years as a pastor. It would be a mistake to assume that their outlooks on personal stewardship were the same. In many cases they were not even similar. Some adhered to the "pay up" mindset. Several refused to ask for pledges and assumed the money needed would come from somewhere. Most put out a good line and tried with differing success to follow it.

The good news is that the Opequon Presbyterian Church is not a place where you

are required to purchase a ticket or pay dues to participate. This congregation is a gathering of people who choose to live and explore our lives of faith together prayerfully. While pledging to the OPC budget makes certain processes at the church easier for those who do financial planning, we recognize that support for the church comes in many ways.

As an exceptionally active congregation, we always have room for another set of ideas, hands, and feet. Whether you have been worshipping with us for a long time or have recently decided to explore OPC as a place where you might want to set down spiritual roots, we are glad you are here. We have room; you can join in as you choose. We believe that the Holy Spirit brought you here and that's enough for us. While this approach is unusual, it represents the true outlook of OPC. Frankly, I am excited to be able to tell you this. Knowing it as true makes our church experience together even more reliable.

If you want to explore more about the financial workings of Opequon, we will be glad to help you do that. If you want to investigate what we believe about stewardship, we can help you do that, too. Just contact the church office (office@opequonchurch.org, 540-662-1843) or any of our three pastors and we will set you up with the persons who can best respond to your questions. Essentially, we know that working within the structure of an active congregation offers believers the chance to grow in their walk with the God who provides for us.

Created in the image of our generous God, we are made to reflect God's generosity, and God calls us to become partners in God's work in the world through our gifts. Chief among those gifts are your presence within our congregation and your prayers.

The staff and volunteers of OPC want to help you feel comfortable here. You are certainly well-come. Here's to a new year of prayer, learning, and faithful life together. It's going to be fun.

Pastor Tracie Martin



“STAR WORDS!” What Are Star Words?

The use of star words, also called “star gifts,” is a prayer practice connected to Epiphany and the new year.

At Opequon Church, this will be the fifth year we have distributed “star words,” prayerfully handed out as “God’s word to you and for you.” These intentional words, we pray, will guide you throughout the upcoming year. Typically, participants are encouraged to trust the word they have drawn, and not to replace the word. However, there is not a strong need to be the “star police” if an individual wants to trade. We encourage you to place your star word somewhere you will see it regularly throughout the year to allow consistent reflection on how God has moved through, around, or in connection to that word. Star words will be handed out on Sunday, January 1 at our Sunday morning Epiphany service. For those who can’t be present, we are seizing any opportunity to bring God’s word to you. We can mail you one upon request or you can pick up a “star word” in the coming weeks.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE FLU, COVID-19, AND RSV?

According to LabCorp, A respiratory tract infection is an infection of the lungs, airways, sinuses, or throat. While respiratory infections occur year-round, there is a significant increase in these infections during the fall and winter months (cold and flu season) when people tend to spend more time inside.



The flu, COVID-19, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) are all highly contagious respiratory infections caused by viruses: the flu by influenza virus, COVID-19 by SARS-CoV-2 virus, and RSV by respiratory syncytial virus. It is possible for a person to be infected with multiple viruses at the same time.

What causes the flu?

The flu is caused by the influenza virus and spreads easily during the winter months when people spend time together indoors. There are many strains of influenza virus, and the virus can change from year to year, which is why you should get a flu vaccine each year.

What causes COVID-19?

COVID-19 is caused by SARS-CoV-2, a new coronavirus. Coronaviruses are a family of viruses named for their corona-like shape. Sometimes, the general term “coronavirus” is used with COVID-19, but this is technically incorrect because there are many types of coronaviruses in this family, including SARS-CoV-1 which emerged in 2002 and other coronaviruses that commonly infect humans. While a vaccine against SARS-CoV-2 is not yet available, several candidate vaccines are in development.

What causes RSV?

RSV is caused by the respiratory syncytial virus, a highly contagious virus that can infect children and adults. In adults and older children, RSV is typically a mild illness very similar to the common cold. In infants and the elderly, the symptoms can be more severe.

What are the symptoms of the flu, COVID-19, and RSV?

According to the CDC, the flu and COVID-19 share very similar symptoms, and it might be hard to tell which of the two you have. It can take longer for people infected with SARS-CoV-2 to show symptoms and people stay infectious longer than with the flu. A symptom that seems to be unique to COVID-19 is loss of taste or smell. Both viruses can cause:

- Fevers
- Chills
- Headaches
- Cough
- Muscle soreness
- Fatigue
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Shortness of breath
- Runny nose
- Sore throat

RSV can infect anyone but is most dangerous in infants and the elderly. Its symptoms are similar to those of the common cold. They tend to run their course with only mild intensity in adults and older children. In infants and elderly, symptoms tend to be more severe, and can include fevers and wheezing. Some cases may require hospitalization, but most infections run their course within 1 to 2 weeks. A baby contracting RSV may require a lot of attention until recovery. However, be on the lookout for serious symptoms that can indicate a need for emergency treatment. If your baby is unusually tired, breathing rapidly or has bluish fingernails, call 911 or go to the ER immediately.

How do I determine if I have COVID-19 or the flu?

Since the symptoms are so similar, the best way to accurately determine whether you have COVID-19 or the flu is to get tested.

COVID-19, Flu, RSV Combined Test

The COVID-19, Flu, RSV combined test is an option if you would like to determine what type of infection you have. The test determines if you are currently infected with SARS-CoV-2, influenza A/B, and/or respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and is available through doctors, hospitals, and other authorized healthcare providers nationwide.

At-home collection kit

If you are experiencing symptoms and would like an easy way to determine if you are infected with SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19), an at-home kit may be an option for you.

Kits are available to insured customers for \$0 upfront cost when experiencing symptoms. Also, every household is eligible to order 4 free at-home COVID-19 tests (<https://special.usps.com/testkits>).

How do I treat the flu, COVID-19, and RSV?

Viruses are significantly different from bacteria, and treatments such as antibiotics won't work on viral infections. Your body responds to infections, including infection with SARS-CoV-2,

by producing antibodies, either on its own or with the help of a vaccine. Antibodies are proteins that your immune system designs to target specific infections. Antibodies are very specialized and are tailor-made for a particular strain or type of a virus or bacteria. For this reason, vaccines against influenza and other viruses won't protect you against SARS-CoV-2 and vice versa.

There are currently multiple FDA-authorized vaccines for SARS-CoV-2, but some drugs and treatments can help combat disease once they occur. If you think you might be infected, ask your provider about treatment options. Additionally, a **COVID-19 test** can help determine if your symptoms are caused by SARS-CoV-2.

How do I prevent the flu, COVID-19, and RSV?

You can drastically decrease your odds of contracting the flu by getting a flu shot. There are many locations to get the vaccine including from your local provider, pharmacies, and grocery stores. The flu shot you get each year is designed to protect against that year's anticipated most common strains of flu.

Engaging in proper hygiene practices with your baby can reduce the risk of infections including RSV. Avoid placing your baby in contact with anyone who exhibits symptoms of the common cold, wash your hands regularly, and don't let anyone smoke around your baby.

You can reduce the risk of contracting COVID-19 by getting vaccinated and following CDC guidelines. It's always important to wash or sanitize your hands regularly.





JAVA WITH JULIA

Jan 27: Debbie and Bill Bender's House ([512 Jefferson St, Winchester, VA 22601-3209](#))

Feb 24: Hopscotch Cafe: 250 Millwood Ave, Winchester, VA 22601

March 24: Espresso Bar and Cafe 165 N Loudoun St, Winchester, VA 22601

April 28: Hideaway Cafe: 141 S Loudoun St, Winchester, VA 22601
pastorjulia@opequonchurch.org by the Sunday before.

MEN OF OPEQUON (MOO) WILL MEET ON JANUARY 9th

After a festive and Spirit-filled Christmas party in December, the Men of Opequon (MOO) will re-gather on **Monday, January 9 at 6:00 pm** at the Pleasant Valley Chick-fil-A. For this month, we'll simply remain at Chick-fil-A for our devotions and discussion. We'll enjoy being together and look at the rest of 2023! Happy New Year!



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. Many thanks to all the ladies who made our December Christmas Dinner such a success and a delicious time and all the fun we had with our Thieves Game! GLOW is on break during January and February- we will not meet during these two months. Watch and look for information about what March 2023 will hold for GLOW. We will be back together on March 14, 2023. During these two winter months, stay warm and safe at home. Be good to yourselves.

OLDER ADULT HAPPENINGS

Happy New Year! Look for NEW possibilities God brings your way in this new year. Try something new or do something new for yourself. There are NEW things happening at Opequon, especially for you. The Older Adult Team meets to discuss plans for Happy Days gatherings and other events. New faces are always welcome to the meetings. This team will meet on **Monday, January 9 at 9:30am** in the Bageant Room. A tasty morning treat will be provided. This month's Happy Days gathering takes place on Wednesday, January 11 in the Fellowship Hall, beginning at Noon. We will welcome guest speaker Michael Callahan from the Department of Transportation Emergency Response. He will have great things to share with us. We will begin with a potluck luncheon (Rotisserie Chicken provided) and then enjoy our speaker. All older adults are welcome!



THE LATEST IN LOGOS

The first half of our LOGOS year has been full of great excitement, new young people participating and some special nights. We had a STUFF the STOCKING night when LOGOS young people filled 14 stockings with valuable everyday items. These stockings are being placed in our church's Blessing box for anyone in the community. As we begin this month, we have 44 young people coming to experience all the fun at LOGOS. An exciting new aspect of LOGOS is that we are welcoming Pre-Kindergarten children to participate in LOGOS for the second half of this LOGOS year, January through March. We are so excited to welcome these youngsters to this valuable ministry. If you have any questions about PK children attending LOGOS, please contact Carole Witt (dce@opequonchurch.org). This month we will enjoy the themes "FROZEN Night", "Funny Hat Night", and "Family Feud Night". LOGOS is held on Wednesdays, 4:30-7:15pm. It is open to all K-12 young people. Come see that "LOGOS is one of the best things happening at Opequon!" Let us share

these special Wednesday evenings with your child or youth!

On **January 25**, LOGOS time will also include **'Worship on Wednesday'** (WOW) in the sanctuary **at 6:30pm**. LOGOS young people will be sharing in worship that evening. Everyone is invited to worship with us that evening. For more information about LOGOS, contact Carole Witt at 540-662-1843 or dce@opequonchurch.org.

OBJECT LESSON FOR KIDS THIS MONTH

This month's children's lesson is titled "What I Want To Be". It is a new year, so it is a good time to ponder what kind of people we want to be. This lesson encourages children to think about how they can be a person that helps make life better for someone else. There are so many small ways that children can put others first in simple ways that make a big difference. Older preschool and elementary-age children will receive this lesson in the mail. Look for it to arrive in your mailbox very soon. Enjoy!

SUNDAY MORNING STUDY RESUMES

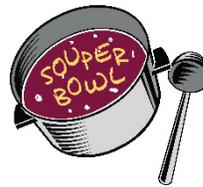
The "Spiritual Growth/Living Our Faith" Faith Formation Class returns to the Christmas/Epiphany study, both in person and via ZOOM that began in December. The class will meet **at 9:45 am on January 8, January 15, and January 29**. Our theme is "Go Tell." Over these three weeks, we'll consider "Break the Good News," "Join the Chorus," and "Tell of the Hope Within You." Join us for a special time.

GIFT EVENT: JANUARY 22, 9:45AM -- FOR EVERYONE

Are you confused about what "GIFT EVENTS" really are? Have you had the enjoyable experience of being at GIFT? Let's try to erase any confusion! Here is the simplest and most important information about GIFT:

1. GIFT stands for 'Generations in Faith Together' so **EVERYONE IS INVITED!**

2. GIFT is held on one Sunday morning a month at 9:45am usually in the Fellowship Hall.
3. GIFT is a time of learning, playing, laughing, talking, sharing- many good things happening!
4. GIFT is typically centered on a creative THEM;, each month there is something different!
5. There is ALWAYS something yummy to eat at GIFT!
6. GIFT IS SO MUCH FUN! FUN that we want to share with YOU TOO. Actually, YOU are the most important part of GIFT. The gift of your presence makes it all even better! **YOU ARE INVITED to GIFT on January 22. The theme is "Finding Warmth in Winter"**. We will be focusing on things that warm our hearts and can warm the hearts of others! Warm bread and oatmeal will be served to warm your stomach! Give yourself the GIFT of being part of this most enjoyable time.



SOUP TO-GO FEBRUARY 12

In addition to collecting soup cans on Souper Bowl Sunday, Opequon Youth are organizing

a Soup To-Go Pickup on February 12, 11:30am-1:00pm. Order homemade soup to support our local Sherando & Highland Food Pantries. Cups: \$2, Quarts: \$8. Checks should be made out to Opequon with Souper Bowl in the memo line. Cash should be placed in an envelope and labeled Souper Bowl. You may order chicken noodle, potato, vegetarian bean, traditional chili, or white chicken chili. All orders are due by February 5 at Noon. Soup will not be served hot. Questions or want to order? Contact Rebekah Witt at wittrebekah2@gmail.com or call her at Church.

SENIOR OUTREACH MINISTRY

Donate Hygiene Items



Join us in spreading kindness to our neighbors who live in low-income housing on **January 8 at 12:15pm**. Let Rebekah Witt know if you'd like to participate. Donations welcome: Canned soup, paper towels, toilet paper, dish soap & sponges, canned vegetables, pudding cups, fruit cups, and 2-in-1 shampoo & conditioner.

YOUTH GROUP GRADES 6-12

January 8-Senior Outreach Ministry, 12:15pm

January 8-College-Age Panel for High School Only, 12:15pm

January 22-Youth Families' Game Show Night, 5:00pm-7:00pm

YOUNG ADULTS AGES 18-35

January 22-FEAST Group at 12:30pm

COFFEE HOUSE-OPEN MIC

Our monthly "Coffee House-Open Mic" nights are returning in 2023! Join us this month in the Memorial Sanctuary as we restart on **Sunday, January 29th from 7:00 to 8:30 pm**.

OPC members or friends that are singers, musicians, comedians, story tellers, etc., are welcome to sign up for one or two songs or routines for the monthly event. A sound system with a soundman and a piano will be available. A karaoke laptop will also be available for use by singers. Contact Phil Hunter at his email address:

phunter@su.edu if you would like to participate. Coffee and tea will be provided. It is requested that everyone bring a snack or a dessert item to share.



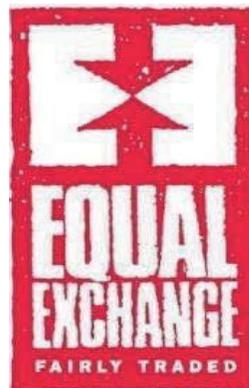
LIFE GOES ON

Our next meeting will be **January 20 at Noon**. We will enjoy a potluck type lunch and fellowship. Then we will watch the next episode of *The Chosen*. Please bring something to share or a dollar or two to throw into the pot. Contact Tracie (315-247-5969, or 304-856-2080) or call the office if you need a ride.



EMAIL LIST? Do you want to be in the know regarding upcoming Fellowship Ministry Team events. You can be put on an email list and choose what event that you want to be part of. Just send an email to Marj at teachandwritemp@gmail.com or call or text her at 540-327-2667.

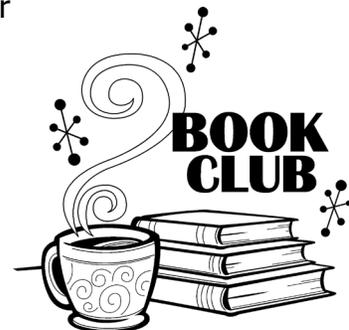
FAIR TRADE EQUAL EXCHANGE



Remember to stop in and pick up some great tasting coffee and a chocolate bar to enjoy! You will find these items in the kiosk located in the Gathering Area.

TIME TO READ

Fellowship Book Club will meet again **January 26, 2023 @ 6:30 pm**. We have chosen two book club selections: *The Memory of an Elephant*- by Alex Lasker and & *Verity*- by Colleen Hoover



COLLECTING FOR CCAP



OATMEAL

CRAFTING WITH BECKY

We're making a mason jar lighted snowman on Saturday, January 21, at 11:00 am in Fellowship Hall. You will need one strand of battery operated lights, either white or multi-colored. The wire should be clear, silver, or white. A nominal fee to cover supplies will be collected. Please sign up by January 14 by contacting Becky Proctor, 540-868-8149 or beckyproc@comcast.net, with questions or sign up.

BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS

We will be taking blood pressures on Sunday, January 15, 2022.



OUR EMPATHY EXTENDED

We extend our Christian love and empathy to . . .

Jeannie Wright upon the death of her brother, Kenneth Shook. Cards may be sent to Jeannie at 2075 Cidermill Lane, Winchester, VA 22601.

Andy and Kyle Homan, upon the death of their mother, Mary Lou Thomas.

Cards may be sent to...

Andy & Gretchen Homan
125 Kinross Dr.
Winchester, VA 22602

Kyle & Susan Homan
1305 Vanceright Circle
Winchester, VA 22601

Bill Bender upon the death of his mother, Betty Bender. Cards may be sent to

Bill & Debbie Bender
512 Jefferson Street
Winchester, VA 22601

Our Associate Pastor, Julia Burkley, on the death of her grandfather, Walter Raymond Burkley, age 97. Cards may be sent to the church office.

"I am the resurrection and the life", says the Lord. "Those who believe in me shall live, even though they die; and those who live and believe in me shall never die." John 11:24-25

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!

We are so grateful for everyone who made the Advent/Christmas season special in its own way. The decorations were sooo beautiful, from Advent wreath to Christmas trees to window trimmings. Our seasonal devotional, "Advent Adverbs," was outstanding. The music, the small gatherings, the outreach, and the contributions of time and talent were exceptional. The variety of worship services, from Blue Christmas to WOW, from choir cantata Sunday to in-person and livestreamed Christmas Eve candlelight, were all unique experiences for preparing for the coming of Christ. We enjoyed the Christmas cookie exchange and the return of the Christmas breakfast. We gathered for MOO, GLOW, Happy Days, and LOGOS all in the same week. Caroling even happened in our adjacent neighborhoods and over the phone! So, to one and all who led and shared and gave in countless ways, we say **thank you!**



Dan & Ellie Cammer
780 Broken Ridge Trail
West End, NC 27376

THE FLOWER CALENDAR

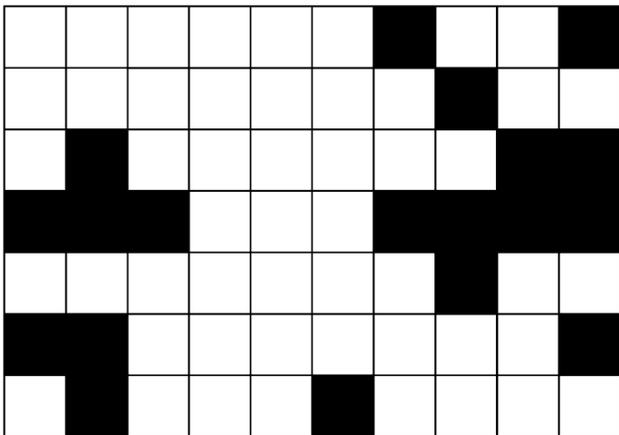


The **2023** Flower Calendar is available. You can link from the OpequonChurch.org website (flowers) or call the office @ 540-662-1843.

Puzzle!

Match the blocks of spaces and letters to complete an NIV Bible verse about an important commitment.

Y	AS	M	LL	OW	FO
A	S	E	AM	PL	EX
		OW	FO	LL	I
OF	E	T	HE		
.	ST	AM	PL	EX	
1	1 1	CH	R		
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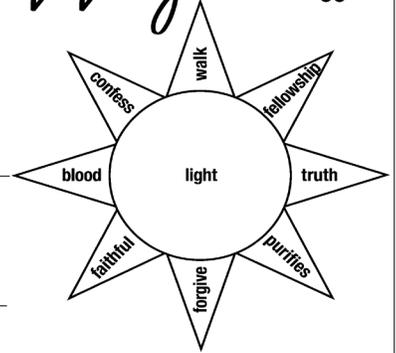


Answer: Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ. 1 Cor. 11:1

PUZZLE

The light of forgiveness

The Lord is full of mercy and light. What happens when we confess our sins to God?



Directions:
Use the coded shapes to fill in the blanks and complete 1 John 1:7-9, NIV.

But if we _____ in the _____, as he is in the _____, we have _____ with one another, and the _____ of Jesus, his Son, _____ us from all sin. If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the _____ is not in us. If we _____ our sins, he is _____ and just and will _____ us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

1 JOHN 1:7-9, NIV

Answer: walk, light, light, fellowship, blood, purifies, truth, confess, confess, faithful, forgive



Opequon Presbyterian Church
Financial Summary for the period ended
November 30, 2022

	Annual Budget (2022)	Current Month Actual	Year to Date Actual	Annual Budget Remaining	% of Annual Budget Used
Income					
410000 Offering Income	763,270	41,541	642,295	120,975	84.2%
420000 Other Income	700	96	1,616	(916)	230.9%
Total 400000 Income	763,970	41,636	643,911	120,059	84.3%
Expenses					
500000 Personnel Costs					
510000 Installed Pastors	189,664	17,863	160,799	28,865	84.8%
520000 Other Ministerial Staff	125,975	10,790	118,336	7,639	93.9%
530000 Administrative Staff	129,220	8,144	111,564	17,656	86.3%
Total 500000 Personnel Costs	444,859	36,797	390,699	54,160	87.8%
600000 Other Ministries					
610000 Christian Education	13,500	982	9,463	4,037	70.1%
620000 Congregational Care	2,000	0	440	1,560	22.0%
630000 Evangelism	2,900	45	1,275	1,625	44.0%
640000 Fellowship	3,580	613	1,994	1,586	55.7%
650000 Mission	65,750	6,117	61,833	3,917	94.0%
660000 Worship	7,000	160	3,770	3,230	53.9%
Total 600000 Other Ministries	94,730	7,916	78,775	15,955	83.2%
Total 700000 Church Administration	119,144	58,578	131,387	(12,243)	110.3%
Total Expenses	658,733	103,290	600,861	57,872	91.2%
Net Operating Income (Expense)	105,237	(61,654)	43,050	62,187	40.9%
920000 Other Income	15,540	1,409	15,965	(425)	102.7%
930000 Other Expenses	117,717	9,732	128,442	(10,725)	109.1%
Net Other Income (Expense)	(102,177)	(8,322)	(112,476)	10,299	110.1%
Income Greater Than (Less Than) Expenses	3,060	(69,976)	(69,427)	72,486	
Adjustment for Mortgage Prepay from 2021 Cash Surplus			20,000	(20,000)	
Income Greater Than (Less Than) Expenses After Adjustments	\$ 3,060	\$ (69,976)	\$ (49,427)	\$ 52,486	-1615.4%

	<u>11/30/22</u>
Cash	<u>\$ 93,384</u>
Sanctuary Mortgage Principal Balance	<u>\$ 582,342</u>

Note: November results are impacted by a receipt of \$30k from the Reserve Fund and the roofing invoice payment of (\$82k) for a net expense of (\$52k). If the roofing invoice activity is backed out of the numbers, our net loss for the month is (\$18k).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Epiphany & Communion 10:00 A In Person Worship WATTS	Church Office Closed 6:00 P Windsong WATTS	10:00 A Staff Meeting 1:00 P Circle of Conversation 1:00 P WATTS Cleanup 4:30 P Tech Meeting 6:00 P Ministry Team Night	4:30 P LOGOS 7:15 P Choir Practice	10:30 A Tai Chi 6:30 P Sherando Food Pantry 7:00 P Vision Team		
8:30 A In Person Worship 9:45 A Faith Formation 11:00 A In Person Worship 12:15 P Senior Outreach 12:30 P Youth College-Age Panel 1:30 P Spring Arbor Worship 3:00 P Choir Party	9:30 A Older Adult Ministry Meeting 6:00 P MOO 6:00 P Windsong	9:30 A Tuesday Morning Mission 5:00 P LOGOS Leadership Team 6:30 P Discipleship	12 Noon Happy Days 4:30 P LOGOS 6:15 P Our Daily Bread Faith Formation Class 7:15 P Choir Practice			14
Blood Pressure Checks 8:30 A In Person Worship 9:45 A Faith Formation 11:00 A In Person Worship	12:00P Life Goes On 6:00 P Safety Team Meeting 6:00 P Windsong	10:00A Staff Meeting 7:00 P Session	Newsletter Deadline 4:30 P LOGOS 6:15 P Our Daily Bread Faith Formation Class 7:00 P Choir Practice			21 11:00 A Crafting with Becky
4 Cents A Meal Offering 8:30 A In Person Worship 9:45 A GIFT Event 11:00 A In Person Worship	6:00 P Windsong	2:30 P TVOR Gathering 7:00 P Highland Food Pantry	4:30 P LOGOS 6:30 P WOW Worship On Wednesday 7:15 P Choir Practice	10:30 A Tai Chi	11:00 A Java with Julia	28
8:30 A In Person Worship & Livestream 9:30 A Faith Formation 11:00 A In Person Worship 7:00 P Coffee House @ Memorial Sanctuary	6:00 P Windsong	31	 <h1 style="font-family: cursive;">January</h1>			

Opequon Presbyterian Church
 217 Opequon Church Lane
 Winchester, VA 22602-2421

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

"The Opequon Spirit" is the monthly newsletter of:
 Opequon Presbyterian Church
 217 Opequon Church Lane Winchester, VA
 22602-2421 Phone: 540-662-1843
www.opequonchurch.org

Newsletter deadline is the Wednesday after
 the Stated Session Meeting.

Sunday Worship at 8:30 am and 11:00 am

Office Hours are 9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Monday thru Thursday & 9:00 am to 12:30

pm Friday



David R. WittPastor
 Julia H. BurkleyAssociate Pastor
 Tracie Martin..... Parish Associate
 Carole WittDirector of Christian Education
 Rebekah WittDirector of Youth & Young Adults
 William Heavner Organist
 Susan HomanDirector of Music
 Ken Smiy Financial Administrator
 Sherry Bean Office Administrator
 Robert Sydnor Sexton
 Laurie CarverNursery Supervisor
 Patty Klinefelter, Bill Martin,
 Mike Nutry, Pat WilliamsFaith Community Nurses

Artwork courtesy of ChurchArt! subscription

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LOOKING AHEAD: FEBRUARY DATES TO NOTE . . .

- February Communion Sunday – February 5
- Ministry Team Night – Tuesday, February 7
- "Souper Bowl Sunday" – February 12
- Transfiguration of the Lord Sunday – February 19
- Shrove Tuesday – Tuesday, February 21
- Ash Wednesday – Wednesday, February 22
- Annual Meeting of the Congregation – February 26 (Tentative)

