

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
Winchester, VA 22602-2421

May 2024

www.opequonchurch.org

540-662-1843

office@opequonchurch.org

MAY WORSHIP AT-A-GLANCE

Sunday, May 5

Older Adult Sunday; Apple Blossom Sunday

† 1 John 5:1-6; Psalm 98;
John 15:9-17

Sermon: "Bearing Fruit"
Communion; Honoring &
Celebrating Our Older
Adults!

Sunday, May 12

Mother's Day; Christian Family Sunday

† Luke 24:44-53; Acts 1:1-11

Sermon: "Get to Work!"
Honoring those who are
moms to us! Celebrating
families!

**1:30 PM - Spring Arbor
Worship**

Sunday, May 19

Pentecost Sunday

† Ezekiel 37:1-14; Psalm
104:24-34; Acts 2:1-21

Sermon: "We've Got the
Spirit... or Do We?"
Communion

6:00 PM - Taizé Worship
(Memorial Sanctuary)

Sunday, May 26

Memorial Sunday

† Psalm 29; John 3:1-17

Sermon: "See God's Spirit"
Remembering Those Who
Served & Died

**8:15 AM & 10:45 AM Special
Pre-Service Music**



OLDER ADULT SUNDAY

Sunday, May 5

Celebrate the gift of generations
at Opequon! Give thanks for our
multi-generational congregation!

Older adults share, serve, and
sing! We are so blessed!

**Remember to wear PINK and
GREEN for Apple Blossom!**

PENTECOST SUNDAY

Sunday, May 19

Celebrate the gift of
the Holy Spirit!

*Communion; Special Music;
Pentecost Offering*

REMEMBER TO WEAR RED!

MOTHER'S DAY & CHRISTIAN FAMILY SUNDAY

Sunday, May 12

As families, come together for
worship. Honor the women of
Opequon. Give thanks for our
faith community. Renew your
commitment as families.
Glorify God!

MEMORIAL SUNDAY

Sunday, May 26

8:15 AM & 10:45 AM

Remember and honor
those who have served
and gone before us!

*Special Patriotic
Pre-Service Music*



WELCOMING VISITORS FROM ETHIOPIA

Kes Tariku, the Vice President of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus and Director of Mission and Theology, and Kes Amena, the President of our partner Synod, Illubabor Bethel Synod (IBS) will visit Winchester and OPC. On Sunday, May 19, Kes Tariku will worship with us at OPC while Kes Amena visits Winchester First. After the second service, we will take Kes Tariku to lunch and anyone is invited to join the group.

On Monday, May 20, at 7:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall, there will be an open presentation by both guests to explain the present statuses of EECMY nationally, IBS and our partnerships, and the Gore Home for Children. Since it is the season of Pentecost, they will also share about the twentieth century Pentecost-like parallel which occurred in IBS. An open question and answer period will follow. Anyone interested in the Gore Home, Ethiopia, and our relationships is welcome and those outside of OPC are also invited. Please join us for a delightful and enlightening time for fellowship and education.

If you are interested in possibly having the guests visit in your home for lunch, coffee, or dinner the following Monday or Tuesday, please contact Bill Burslem (wburslem331@comcast.net).



NOTES FROM PASTOR DAVID

"Discovery"

Dear Friends in Christ,

Two weeks ago, on a very windy Friday, Carole and I decided to go to the mall to walk with our grandson, Knox. After our walk, we stopped at the little play area, which Knox had all to himself at the time. It was so much fun to watch him go from one place to another, discovering objects to climb on and crawl through. At this point, Knox is all about discovery. And as grandparents, we are all about watching all three of our grandchildren make discoveries as we spend time with them. It's amazing how in this later stage of life, we have been gifted with this precious and powerful time to engage and interact, observe and reflect, which we certainly did as parents, but at a more measured pace as we were hyper-focused on raising our kids and all the realities that entails.

At Opequon Church, after 292 years, we are also about discovery. We are continually discovering new adventures, engaged by and interacting with our living God, who obviously is not finished with us yet! Through worship, education, fellowship, stewardship, mission, and service, we are reaching in and reaching out, discovering how the Lord is leading us onward and forward. The vision that God planted within our pioneer ancestors of the 1730's has been renewed time and time again, helping Opequon as a community of faith to continually make new discoveries.

As you learned last week from a letter sent to you by our Vision Team, our church is once again entering a period of discernment regarding our building. Through a series of events and instruments, the Vision Team gathered a lot of information as to "what's important" to our congregation. You told us that there were four main areas of focus that you thought we should be looking at: a larger Fellowship Hall; a larger kitchen; more storage; and a choir room. The Vision Team aspires to preserve OPC's rich history, while we continue forward-looking planning, to discern the needs to support where God is leading our growing mission next. An Architectural Review Team (ART) has now been established to lead this time of discernment, to dream and plan about specific next steps. This will indeed be a time of discovery for them and for all of us. Enclosed with the letter was a "feedback card" that seeks both your input and your questions, along with your prayers that will guide us to move forward as a congregation in serving our Lord and Savior. I hope you will seize this

opportunity to share and pray with us as we embark on this new stage in our journey as a people. It's a time of discovery, a precious and powerful gift.

Together in Christ's Service,

David

PASTOR JULIA'S MUSINGS

Friends in Christ,

The last couple of weeks I have been absolutely struck by how people show up and care for one another. In a world that often times feels so hard, I've been amazed how people show up and care for those around them.

I want to share a little story that I am going to be talking about in a sermon at the very end of April. This is a story about a little kitten named Motka, a kitten that captured the hearts of hundreds of clergy members in a group called "Clergy with Cats" on Facebook.



Motka is a 7-week-old little fluffy kitten who was found abandoned and in distress in Oklahoma. A clergy member heard about her locally and posted her in the Facebook group.

An older nun in Ohio had just lost her beloved friend and fell in love with the grey little fluff ball. It seemed like the perfect fit. But they had to figure out how to get this kitty over hundreds of miles from Oklahoma to Ohio.

A GoFundMe was organized and over seven clergy members along the route figured out a 'kitten train' to transport little Motka there safely. Over five days, hundreds and hundreds of miles, clergy of different denominations and faiths came together to get little Motka safely home to her new convent and mom.

I feel God's kingdom in this story: people from so many different places, walks of life, beliefs, all gathered together to make a difference in one little furry life. God must be smiling.

I wonder: Where do you see unexpected people coming together in your own world and community? Where have you seen God's kingdom in-breaking this month?

God is present. God is loud. God calls us to work together and make a change for the smallest and least of these. And what a gift it is to be able to respond to that call.

Blessings,

Julia

PASTOR TRACIE'S JUST THINKIN'

I am late doing spring cleaning this year. Spring hit suddenly with weather change. I was not ready. Family needs, Holy Week, and Easter hit. I am now playing catch-up.



Spring cleaning is not my favorite part of housekeeping. I tend to be cluttery... clean but cluttery. Everything I attempt must start with picking up. Since downsizing our home, picking up has become more and more difficult. I like to keep things. They might be needed later. It's just plain hard to find a place to put them. Bill, however, has no problem deciding where to put the things I gather. He has plenty of garbage bags. He's such a help... sigh.

In retirement, I find that I am more willing to discriminate as I choose what to keep and what to discard... which brings me back to spring cleaning. As I force myself to go through every room and shelf, I discover occasional forgotten treasures, but still find far more trash that just needs to go away. I fill bag after bag as I work my way to the lower level. Once I have done my craft room, however, the real work begins.

Spring cleaning for me, you see, means digging down spiritually as well as washing out drawers. I tend to hold on to papers. I also can sometimes hold on to feelings and emotions that are less than helpful. I am not alone. I see many people who are holding onto things better let go. Racism (and all the other "isms," gaslighting, frustration, burnout, that fatigue that hits when there is just not anything left to give, the aches and pains of trying to act younger, pretending to be "fine" no matter what. You get the idea.

Please understand, these are thoughts and emotions that come and go. They are normal whenever people's lives interact. Still, I find that failure to stop, think, and deal with them **NOW** can endow them with importance they do not deserve. I'll bet you do, too.

Sometimes, however, help drops by.



I heard a story recently from a fellow clergyperson... a friend... that describes this sort of situation very well. This pastor was needed to work on a day that had been planned for R&R... all day... and he was tired. It happens... quite often, to be honest. Taking a deep breath, the pastor did the work as needed, but found that resentment was boiling and near to overflow. Then, while waiting to be freed from duty, the

hymn, "Amazing Grace," could be heard being sung by a group that included those who had needed his help. The sound of that hymn changed the pastor's attitude and served as a reminder of who and whose that pastor truly was. It changed everything. Spiritual Spring Cleaning! Attitude restored!

I more often tend to use a trick I learned, rather by accident, in seminary. It consists of one word,



"**REBUKE**." I had a classmate who would suddenly get going, running on and on with complaints and criticisms, doom and gloom, and then just stop. She would make the oddest face I have ever seen and just yell out "**REBUKE!**" Then she would become calm and become a different person entirely. The "**REBUKE**" sometimes took me by surprise because when she got rattling on, I (and others) would just tune her out. However, it was not possible to tune out the "**REBUKE!**" It never failed to gain attention.

She was just one of the many fascinating people I met in seminary, but she, like many others, left her mark. Today, when life goes awry, all I need to do is picture her look and think "**REBUKE**." It still works. I feel any sullenness disappear. I use her method more quietly, but if you see me walking away with an odd look, you can be sure that I am adjusting my attitude. Should I file this under "Fingerprints" or "Faceprint?"

Back to the kitchen drawers...

—Tracie

SESSION MEETING HIGHLIGHTS FROM APRIL 2024

New Deacons

☒ Session welcomed the following new Deacons to complete the increase of the number of Deacons as part of the formalization of Board of Deacons (Diaconate):

Betty Chicklo	Class of 2024
June Malone	Class of 2024
Trish Crawford	Class of 2025
Debbie Bender	Class of 2026
Judy Moody	Class of 2026
Mary Ann Johnson	Class of 2026

☒ Deacon nominee Brian Steffens has decided to not move forward with the call to be a Deacon. It was decided by the Board of Deacons that for the remainder of 2024, the Board would consist of eleven Deacons, moving to a total of twelve in 2025. The Deacons' regular meeting will coincide with Ministry Team Night.

The Ordination and Installation of Deacons will be Sunday, April 28, 2024, at 8:30 AM (livestreaming) with a reception following.

- ✕ The Officers of the Board of Deacons are: Robin Cooke, Moderator; Winter Brooks, Vice Moderator; and Heather Burton, Secretary.

Christian Education Ministry

- ✕ LOGOS concluded its 26th year on March 27, 2024. In honor of Mother's Day and Father's Day, the CE Team purchased a podium that can be used in Fellowship Hall for leaders/speakers.
- ✕ Graduating High Schoolers will be honored on Sunday, June 2, 2024, during worship. (7 graduates)

Buildings and Grounds Ministry

- ✕ New sidewalk and main entrance concrete work is coming this summer with improved handicap access.
- ✕ The recent Mulch Madness Day was a great success with many strong bag toting volunteers—doesn't that mulch look great? Thank you to all who participated and organized this event.
- ✕ Efforts are underway to determine next steps on improvements to the church building telephone system, internet access points, and the associated cabling efforts.

Stewardship and Finance Ministry

- ✕ The March 2024 financial reports were approved and show a healthy financial position at the end of the first quarter.

Discipleship Team

- ✕ The "Spring Forward" event was well attended and a success. Thank you to all who attended and put this event together.

Church Nominating Committee

- ✕ Ben Brooks was elected to be one of two Session Members to serve on the 2024 Church Nominating Committee.

Ron Smith as Acting Clerk of Session

TAIZÉ ON PENTECOST



We invite you to come as friends on the evening of Pentecost Sunday, May 19, at 6:00 PM for a worship service in the style of Taizé. Weather permitting, we will be in the Picnic Shelter. This will be a time of singing, of quiet, and of being together as we celebrate the Holy Spirit and the many ways that the Spirit works in our lives. We hope that you come for this special time of worship.

MAY MINISTRY TEAM NIGHT

Tuesday, May 7

- 6:00 PM Meal: cold-cut sandwiches, potato salad, pasta salad, fruit, & chips (provided by the Young Adults)
- 6:45 PM Devotions & Team Meetings

NEW OPEQUON MEMBERS WELCOMED IN APRIL



- ❖ Judie Birchfield, Transfer of Membership from United Church of Christ (Chapel Hill, NC)
- ❖ Cheryl Mortland, Transfer of Membership from Trinity Lutheran Church (Stephens City, VA)
- ❖ Dan Mortland, Transfer of Membership from Trinity Lutheran Church (Stephens City, VA)
- ❖ Robert Edwin "Ed" Painter, Re-Affirmation of Faith
- ❖ Lois Roy, Transfer of Membership from Manassas Presbyterian Church (Manassas, VA)
- ❖ Marsha Bennett, Transfer of Membership from Market Street United Methodist Church (Winchester, VA)
- ❖ John White, Re-Affirmation of Faith

CELEBRATING A NEW ARRIVAL



Congratulations to Brett and Ashleigh Hodgson Barber upon the arrival of their daughter, Wrenleigh Elaine Barber, who was born on April 19! We rejoice in celebration of this precious gift of new life and pray God's blessing upon Wrenleigh Elaine, her parents Brett and Ashleigh, and her grandmother, Debi Hodgson.

EXTENDING OUR EMPATHY AND CHRISTIAN LOVE TO...



- ☞ Alice Foley and her family upon the death of her sister, Ruby Hoover, on March 3.
- ☞ Jennie Wright and her family upon the death of her mother, Lillian Hanks, on March 28.
- ☞ Wayne Godlove and his family upon the death of his mother, Alice Godlove, on April 7.

*"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

GRADUATE CARD SHOWER

Congratulations to our high school graduates! We invite you to shower Jack Hathaway, Payton Hughes, Thomas Littman, Grace Morgan, Abbie Rogers, Sydney Sardelis, and Audrey Saunders with cards! Please bring cards to the church by Sunday, May 26. Their first and last name should be written on the front of each card and you may put them in Rebekah Witt's mailbox near the Church Office. Thank you!



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES!

Opequon's 2024 High School Seniors will be honored during morning worship services on Sunday, June 2, right after the Graduation ceremonies which will occur at the end of this month. The Christian Education Team is privileged to highlight this special milestone in their life. We wish them happiness and fulfillment in the next chapter of life. Congratulations to:



Jack Hathaway----- Sherando High School
Payton Hughes----- James Wood High School
Grace Morgan----- Handley High School
Abbie Rogers----- Handley High School
Sydney Sardelis ----- Handley High School
Audrey Saunders ----- James Wood High School
Thomas Littman----- James Wood High School

SUNDAE SUNDAY FOR KIDS!

Sundaes are delicious! Sundays are special! Why not have a 'deliciously special' day called **Sundae Sunday**! Sundae Sunday will be on May 19, right after each worship service. Kids and families are invited to stop by the SUNDAE STATION and add your own toppings to a freshly dipped cup of ice cream. Taste and see that the Lord is good! Sundays are special because it is the day we gather together as God's people and WORSHIP. We learn from God's word all the sweetness He has given us in our life. God wants us to savor Sundays, just as we savor the flavor of our Sundaes. Your Sundae can be a delightful mix of ice cream and toppings just as your SUNDAY can be a delightful experience of being a community of God's people. Both are quite SWEET!



OLDER ADULT CHOIR

The Older Adult Choir will rehearse on Wednesday, May 1, at 4:00 PM for the worship services on Older Adult Sunday. All older adults interested in singing are welcome to join us in the Sanctuary! For more info or if you have any questions, contact Susan Homan (srh1305@verizon.net).



NOMINATE AN OLDER ADULT FOR OPEQUON'S "2024 OLDER ADULT OF THE YEAR"

So many of our older adults have been recognized as our "Older Adults of the Year." We celebrate those crowned in the past: Roy Bayliss, John Boyd, Frances Smith, Louise Duncan, Bill Robinson, Shirley and Dave Brumble, Rob MacGregor, Ty Headley, Edgar Tufts, Howard Kent, Donna Coffman, Betty Ganoe, Carol Tubbs, Graham Taylor, Carol and Jack Treece, Dick and Gail Crane, Martha Fulton, Becky Proctor, Steve Brown, Edwina Johansen, Betty Chicklo, June Malone, Alan McKay, and Jean Smith.



It is time to share your nominations for this year's Older Adult of the Year. Who would you like to nominate? There are forms available on the Gathering Area table. Share who you nominate and **WHY**. Nominations are **due by May 8** and they may come from anyone in the congregation. Forms may be returned to Carole Witt or dropped in the box provided in the Gathering Area.

The Session will review the nominations and make the selection. The 2024 Older Adult of the Year will be announced at the Older Adult Luncheon on Wednesday, May 29.

MUSIC AT NOON



On May 15, the noon hour will be filled with the music of our sanctuary organ and piano. The music is eclectic and the atmosphere informal, as our organist shares new pieces and old favorites from his repertoire. Church members, neighbors, and guests are invited to come and go as their schedules allow. This time of "just music" repeats each month on the third Wednesday from noon to 1:00 PM. Feel free to pass along this invitation to those outside our church family. All are welcome to come!

IN HONOR OF MOTHERS DAY & FATHERS DAY

The Christian Education Team has excitedly purchased some gifts for Opequon in honor of all women and mothers and all men and fathers. A new podium for the Fellowship Hall is one of these gifts. This attractive podium will be very valuable and user friendly for speakers, events, and programs held in our Fellowship Hall. It is on wheels, has a cherry wood finish on top and a front magnetic panel. We have also purchased a set of 8 aprons, all different solid colors, for our kitchen. Many of our old aprons are showing great wear and age so these fresh aprons will be well-used during many events. Both of these items are pictured here. Happy Mother's Day and Happy Father's Day (a month early)!



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2024

This summer's VBS experience will be all about Abraham and Sarah through our theme "Something Old, Something New, Something Changed, A Family GREW!" We are planning so much fun for those warm evenings of VBS at Opequon. Our fun-filled week of Vacation Bible School is scheduled to happen June 9-12, 5:00-7:30 PM, with classes for children ages 4 through 8th grade and also an adult class. Registration is open through June 2. Registration forms and volunteer forms are available at the VBS display in the Gathering Area. Invite your friends now to come along with you to VBS. We want you to be part of it all!



For Online VBS Children & Youth Registration:

Go to www.opequonchurch.org and click the "All Generations" tab at the top. Scroll down to the section about Children and click where it says, "Click here to register by June 2!" You may also access the registration form by using this direct link:

<https://forms.gle/Z5nHurEs3r8XTKtH6>

For Online VBS Adult Class Registration:

Go to www.opequonchurch.org and click the "All Generations" tab at the top. Scroll down to the section about Adult Small Groups and click where it says, "Register by June 2 by clicking this link." You may also access the registration form by using this direct link:

<https://forms.gle/eS8BNxqmHXfnkpzD7>



THE LATEST IN LOGOS

The church building is much quieter now on Wednesday evenings as we have ended another LOGOS year, but the work has already begun to prepare for the new year to start in September! The Leadership Team has been reviewing evaluation comments from our LOGOS young people, parents, and LOGOS Staff to help us discern where improvements or modifications are needed. We appreciate all that feedback. The enthusiasm and vision of a strong LOGOS Ministry stays with us as we meet each month. Signs hang in the downstairs hallway saying, "Thank you for LOGOS," which serve as a testimony to the value of this ministry. We aim to keep that going year after year. We miss one another right now each Wednesday, but LOGOS Year #27 is on the horizon and we have our eyes on it. We look forward to growing stronger each year in our love for God and one another. For more info about LOGOS, contact Joanne Berson (opequonlogos@gmail.com) or Carole Witt (540-662-1843 or dce@opequonchurch.org).

A "GIFT" EVENT—Sunday, May 28 9:45 AM in the Fellowship Hall

"GIFT" stands for **"Generations in Faith Together"** and it truly is a gift to have all ages and stages together during the Sunday morning educational hour (known as FAITH FORMATION) at 9:45 AM. The theme for this special day is "Slipping into Summer" with wonderful surprises of the season! Come enjoy some good food, good company, and a good morning experience. Everyone is invited.

OPIE'S PLAYHOUSE

Are you looking for a way to connect with other Opequon families with young children?

Well, we have the perfect group for you! Christian Education is excited to host Opie's Playhouse, a monthly playgroup for children ages 7 and under and their families. We meet in the Memorial Sanctuary from 9:45-10:45 AM on the first Sunday of each month and we will meet again on May 5. We provide lots of fun toys as well as coffee, juice and snacks. The children have a blast playing together and the adults enjoy chatting with friends, both old and new. This is a wonderful opportunity for fellowship. Please drop in any time!



MAY CHILDREN'S LESSON



Children will receive an adapted lesson called, "Rushing Winds & Tongues of Fire," written by Kristin Highly. This lesson focuses on Pentecost and the Holy Spirit. Enjoy cupcakes for the birth of the Church, create painted art by blowing air through a straw, and learn a few phrases from another language. Let's celebrate this amazing church holiday with hands-on activities that relate to Acts 2:1-21!

YOUTH: GRADES 6-12

May 19 (12:30 PM) - Graduates' & Youth Families' Lunch

YOUNG ADULTS: AGES 18-35

May 7 (6:15 PM) - Cook/Serve Ministry Team Night Meal

OUR DAILY BREAD

Our Daily Bread Faith Formation with Pastor Julia meets on Wednesdays at 4:30 PM in the Bageant Room and on Zoom. Drop-by or attend online however it works best for you! If you have any questions, please reach out to Pastor Julia (pastorjulia@opequonchurch.org).

Upcoming Discussion Topics:

- > May 1 - 1 John 5:1-6
- > May 8 - Luke 24:44-53
- > May 15 - Acts 2:1-21
- > May 22 - John 3:1-17
(led by Ann Denison via Zoom only)
- > May 29 - "Celebration"

Join us virtually by using the following Zoom info:
[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84996337422?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84996337422?pwd=aG13U3I1QUFSZjBTK1U3b2FxEtEXDUT09)
[pwd=aG13U3I1QUFSZjBTK1U3b2FxEtEXDUT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84996337422?pwd=aG13U3I1QUFSZjBTK1U3b2FxEtEXDUT09)

Meeting ID: 849 9633 7422

Passcode: 309811

FELLOWSHIP BOOK CLUB

The Fellowship Book Club will meet on Thursday, May 23 at 6:00 PM in the Bageant Room to discuss the book *Remarkably Bright Creatures* by Shelby Van Pelt.



JAVA WITH JULIA

Swing by Hopscotch Café in Winchester for Java with Julia on Friday, May 17, anytime between 11:00 AM—1:00 PM!

MEN OF OPEQUON (MOO):

ON THE ROAD AGAIN THIS MONTH

The monthly MOO gathering will be held on Monday, May 13, but once again, we're going on the road! We'll return to Italian Delight (640 Warrior Drive, Stephens City, VA 22655 / Phone: 540-868-1600) for dinner at 5:30 PM. Please note the earlier time. When entering the restaurant, turn left and go past the restrooms to the room at the rear. After dinner, we'll go to the WWII Heritage Museum on Fairfax Pike in Stephens City, guided by Kyle Homan's good friend, Marty Fravel. So we can have a sense of numbers, please RSVP to David Witt at pastor@opequonchurch.org.

GOD-LOVING OPEQUON WOMEN

GLOW is our multi-aged women's group that meets monthly to build friendships and enjoy heart-warming activities together. Last month, we had a wonderful CARD MAKING Night, an inspirational devotional and a full table of refreshment goodies .



GLOW meets this month on Tuesday, May 14, at 6:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall. We are having a "BIRTHDAY BASH" Night. Cake, ice cream, candles, birthday singing, and birthday party games will all be happening. All women are invited to come celebrate that we were each born. We will have devotions and tons of great fun. Give yourself a little time with the girls.

LIFE GOES ON

Life Goes On will gather on May 20 at noon in Fellowship Hall. Life Goes On is a monthly lunch meeting of people who have lost their spouses. We will enjoy passing a meal, chatting and just sharing whatever is going on. The main dish this month will be spaghetti and meatballs. Please plan to bring a side to pass or to chip in a couple of bucks toward expenses. Gluten-free food is always provided. If you need a ride, contact Pastor Tracie (540-662-1843 or assocopc@gmail.com).

SENIOR OUTREACH MINISTRY

The Senior Outreach Ministry will be held on Sunday, May 12. Meet at the church office door at 12:15 PM to load up the totes for the trip to the Shenandoah Senior Apartments on Wilson Blvd., in Winchester. Donations of paper towels and snack packs of apple sauce, mixed fruit, and pudding would be appreciated.

OLDER ADULT HAPPENINGS

Let's hope we can begin many mornings this month saying, "Good Day, Sunshine!" May brings warm sunshine on our backs! There is much to praise God for every day. We praise God for our older adults of Opequon, and this month is known as OLDER ADULT MONTH. Older Adult Sunday is May 5 with many of our older adults sharing in worship leadership and the Older Adult Choir that morning. The Older Adult Team will meet on Monday, May 6, at 9:30 AM in the Bageant Room to discuss plans for Happy Days gatherings and other events. New faces are always welcome at the meetings. (Happy Days is the monthly older adult fellowship gathering.)

This month's Happy Days gathering takes place on Wednesday, May 8, at noon in the Fellowship Hall. The program features an "Honor Your Mother" theme. We will share memories and photos of moms as well as hear some 'Wit and Wisdom' of mothers and of course some good MOM JOKES! BRING A PHOTO OF YOUR MOM to share during this time. We will begin with our covered-dish lunch. Rotisserie Chicken and beverages will be provided. All older adults are welcome. Come enjoy the friendship of one another and the delicious food.

The Annual OLDER ADULT LUNCHEON will be held on Wednesday, May 29. This festive event is in honor of Opequon's Older Adults! Entertainment begins at 11:30 AM in the Sanctuary, with the luncheon to follow in the Fellowship Hall at 12:15 PM. Menu for the luncheon includes: Chicken Strata, Rolls, Vegetable Medley, Cranberry Jello Salad, and Brownie Sundaes or Strawberry Shortcake. The 2024 Opequon Older Adult of the Year will be announced and crowned at the luncheon. **Please RSVP by May 8** to dce@opequonchurch.org or to the church office at 540-662-1843.

MAY 2024 CCAP DIAPER DRIVE

Once again, the Mission Team is sponsoring a Diaper Drive for CCAP in May. Last year we collected over 2,000 diapers, so this year we want to top that score. Each year, CCAP distributes hundreds of thousands of diapers to needy families in the Winchester area. Diapers in sizes 5-6 are the most requested, but any size is appreciated. Diapers should be left in the Gathering Area of the church any time during the month. Thank you for your contribution.



ROOTS & SHOOTS GARDEN

With great joy, the garden received a special blessing from Pastor Julia on April 27 to welcome the new growing season. God is so good! The seedlings carefully tended in our greenhouse over the past two months were planted in the freshly prepared beds by volunteers who came to help and celebrate with us. We are grateful to students from Sherando NHS who have spent many hard-working hours planting seeds and preparing all those beds. Whew, they saved our backs! Having already donated a few early crops, our team looks forward for more to come. Thanks to OPC for their prayers and support! Stay tuned for more events to come!

***Would you like to deliver an abundance of goodness and joy this summer?
Ho, Ho, Ho! Do we have a job for you!***

What: Fresh garden produce from our garden

Where: Sherando Food Pantry in Stephens City

When: 1st & 3rd Thursdays at 6:00 PM throughout the growing season

Look for our SignUpGenius coming soon, or contact Beth Eisenhauer (bethann89@msn.com). Thank you!

GENEROSITY MOMENT

(From Pastor Tracie Martin)

I heard an interesting comment in the church office recently. Rachel found a bulletin cover that showed a drop of water with the resultant circles spreading out. "Interesting," she said, "It looks like a fingerprint." I, of course, jumped on this concept. We often speak of fingerprints making a difference at OPC. Maybe we should also talk about how this happens and how far-reaching our fingerprints might be.



When a faith community does something thoughtful, helpful, or supportive, the result passes from person to person gently... much like a single drop of water falling into a pond. Picture it. The drop falls, the water's surface is set into motion, circles of energy ripple out from the center. As these circles encounter a breeze, something floating on the surface, or pretty much anything, the general shape of the waves will change. The surface incorporates these changes and continues its energy. It takes something quite strong to stop the motion. Most obstacles are simply surrounded, and the energy moves on.



When a person of faith leaves a fingerprint, the result is quite similar. There is the immediate effect, then the energy moves outward. Let's say that someone notices a person is unusually quiet and disengaged. A question is asked and they chat. True listening happens. It makes a difference, but that difference is not limited to the two who start the interaction. Humans are innately intertwined. What affects one generally affects many. What does all of this have to do with a congregation's generosity? A lot! The Opequon Presbyterian Church's Generosity Outreach is about time, talent, AND treasure... not just about treasure. I have helped close more than one church that had a huge endowment. In one notable case, the church had well over a million dollars in the bank when things began to become difficult. Over a remarkably short period of time, that church lost energy and purpose. It closed within three years. It still had some money, but the will to serve had gone out of many of its members.

Yes, it takes an amount of money to fund a church, but unless there is also an active congregation of faith-filled supporters working, worshipping, and acting as Christ's hands, heart, and feet, no congregation can last. Cash is certainly needed, but that by itself is not enough. The energy created by the people of God serving, listening, and working for Christ's sake is essential.

Not everything we are called to do as Christians is exciting. Not everything we are called to be as Christ's disciples is easy. Not everything we are called to try works. Still, it is the spread of our rippling efforts and fingerprints that creates a God-blessed world.



MISSION CONNECTIONS:

José LaMont Jones

José LaMont Jones is our Mission Co-Worker in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo. He assists the Presbyterian Community of Kinshasa (CPK) Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo education department in the development, support and implementation of strategic plans to expand and strengthen the churches' primary and secondary education programs. This work involves walking with our partners and learning from their experiences and context in order to engage them purposefully in locally sustainable initiatives that will move their educational ministries towards excellence. These initiatives include building their capacities in infrastructure, teacher skills and training, administration and community involvement.

José works closely with PC(USA) mission initiators engaged in this work, seek to facilitate their active involvement with the CPK in achieving the CPK goals for education excellence, help make connections with NGOs working in related fields and seek to assist the CPK in its education work through collaboration with the RL for Central Africa.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is a country roughly one-quarter the size of the United States. It is a land that has been ravaged by conflict. The havoc wrought by 40 years of dictatorship under Mobutu followed by multiple wars and continued fighting by pockets of militia have kept this resource-rich country from developing its potential. The majority of DR Congo's people struggle daily for survival. Despite these circumstances, the church in the DRC continues to witness to the good news of God's word through their multifold ministries.

José writes, "I am from a family of preachers, ministers, and people active in churches of various denominations. From a very young age, I have sensed a call to go out and share Christ's love in the world, not as a minister, but in a support role, to end human suffering and build up the body of Christ. The invitation to serve as an educator and an educational program specialist in the Democratic Republic of Congo is an answer to all my prayers. While in Kinshasa, I will support our

partners of the church schools of the Presbyterian Church of Kinshasa with teacher training, program evaluation, and implementation. The goal is for me to serve as a bridge for mutual learning and connection. I believe that all people have the same needs to love, be loved, and occupy themselves with something significant to themselves or society. My love of people and sharing Christ's love has been very helpful to me in engaging families and communities in the educational process and for advocating for their children and their communities."

José heard the call to be a bridge-builder while he served in a multi-racial, multi-ethnic context. He has lived out his professional life in underserved communities as a teacher and as someone who has supported broad educational endeavors. Most recently, he has served as the Coordinator of the Hispanic Ministry of the College Hill Community Church in Dayton, Ohio.

The call to serve in the Congo has a vital connection for José, who reflects, "Many of the enslaved Africans of the United States came from the Congo. As an African American, the opportunity to engage with the culture and peoples of the "motherland" is exciting. It is an opportunity to learn about a part of my heritage that has not been fully captured in the narrative presented here in the United States."

José continues, "I pray that my service will help develop, empower, and liberate all Congolese generations as they fulfill God's purpose for their lives. I pray that God will give me eyes to see opportunities and ways to overcome barriers, hands that are strong enough to break down walls to build sustainable and equitable structures, feet to walk paths that take our cooperation far and wide, a mouth from which wisdom and truth flow and, most importantly, ears to listen and understand. I pray that my service will help develop, empower, and liberate all Congolese generations as they fulfill God's purpose for their lives. I go as a living testimony riding on the shoulders of the witness of the saints who came before me, with the Lord and Holy Spirit as my guide."

Jose's family is extremely important to him and he is grateful that his wife Evelin will be accompanying and supporting him in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

(www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/jose-lamont-jones/)

"Literacy is the Key"

Jose Jones' focus is education and this letter provides some insights into his work in the Democratic Republic of Congo in the middle of Africa. To view his letter and photos, visit:

https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/missionconnections/letter/literacy-is-the-key/?utm_medium=email&_hsmi=297061198&utm_content=297061198&utm_source=hs_email

"OPC PRAYS"

If you would like to participate in our emailed prayer chain, "OPC Prays", as prayer concerns of our congregation are mentioned during the week, please email Winter Brooks (winterbrooks@comcast.net) to be added to the group.



SOME NOTES OF THANKS...

"MULCH" THANKS!

"Mulch Madness" was a great success! Many helpful hands made short work on a BIG job! In about two hours time, the OPC gardens, playground, and Memorial Garden were covered with fresh mulch and it looks great. Special thanks for all the dedication and hard work goes out to: Dave Rusch, Carrol and Jim Youngblood, Max and Rebecca Agbayani, Bud Proctor, Kieran Orndorff, Julia Burkley, Dave Schwantes, Brent Miller, Dennis Boyd, Greg Eisenhauer, Jack Marquis, and Mike and Wendy Wygant. Thank you, thank you and thank you to all!

Thanks to the men who sponsored the Easter Sunrise Breakfast under the direction of Kyle and Andy Homan. We are grateful!

The Men of Opequon also cooked up "some grub" in the church kitchen for our April Ministry Team Night! A standing ovation!



*During a time like this,
we realize how much
our friends and relatives
really mean to us...
Your expression of sympathy
will always be remembered.*

To My Church Family,

Thank you so much for your love and support during Fred's illness and passing. Our family's grief has been lessened by your prayers.

Love,
The Johnston Family

Dear Pastor David & Opequon Presbyterian Church Family,

I wanted to say thank you all for the prayers for me before and after my surgery. I definitely felt them all and the love and support I received was amazing!



The Opequon congregation is certainly filled with God's love and grace.

Peace of our Lord Jesus be with you all.
Maureen Dick

Thank you so much for all the prayers, cards, and food from my OPC family! I truly appreciate the thoughtfulness of each one of you!

— Bill Robinson



PENTECOST OFFERING: Sunday, May 19

"I am coming to you" – John 14:18b

Christ shared these simple but powerful words to assure us that He will always be at our side. This is the hope and inspiration that carries us forward, and is fundamental to our faith. Instilling this understanding is a gift we pass to our children. The Pentecost Offering helps our youth begin life with a strong start in the years from childhood through young adulthood that will last a lifetime. Each year, we mark Pentecost by receiving the Pentecost Offering which nurtures the faith of those who join us in being the church together now—children, youth, and young adults. When we give generously to the Pentecost Offering, it proves that our church and its members really want to empower young people and bring them into the church. While 25% of this offering goes to support our denominations Young Adult Volunteer program, 25% supports PCUSA youth ministries, and 10% supports children at-risk, Opequon retains 40% for our own youth and young adult ministry and outreach right here.

Remember: If we all do a little, it adds up to a lot! Thank you for your energy and support in giving to the Pentecost Offering. Let us celebrate the fulfillment of God's promise to us through the coming of the Holy Spirit by guiding our young people toward a brighter, faith-filled future.

**Opequon Presbyterian Church
Financial Summary for the period ended
March 31, 2024**

	Annual Budget 2024	Current Month Actual	Year to Date Actual	Annual Budget Remaining	% of Annual Budget Used
Income					
410000 Offering Income	843,003	97,345	231,254	611,749	27.4%
420000 Other Income	1,600	356	590	1,010	36.9%
Total 400000 Income	844,603	97,701	231,844	612,759	27.5%
Expenses					
500000 Personnel Costs					
510000 Installed Pastors	219,432	19,213	54,984	164,448	25.1%
520000 Other Ministerial Staff	144,436	12,150	34,770	109,666	24.1%
530000 Administrative Staff	146,818	11,541	35,510	111,308	24.2%
Total 500000 Personnel Costs	510,686	42,904	125,264	385,422	24.5%
600000 Other Ministries					
610000 Christian Education	14,100	(88)	1,882	12,218	13.3%
620000 Congregational Care	2,800	(113)	241	2,559	8.6%
630000 Evangelism	1,900	0	25	1,875	1.3%
640000 Fellowship	3,800	294	827	2,973	21.8%
650000 Mission	73,575	2,708	19,850	53,725	27.0%
660000 Worship	7,000	574	932	6,068	13.3%
Total 600000 Other Ministries	103,175	3,375	23,757	79,418	23.0%
Total 700000 Church Administration	129,632	8,576	29,195	100,437	22.5%
Total Expenses	743,493	54,855	178,216	565,277	24.0%
Net Operating Income (Expense)	101,110	42,846	53,628	47,482	53.0%
920000 Other Income	17,625	1,632	6,481	11,144	36.8%
930000 Other Expenses	118,735	9,698	30,650	88,085	25.8%
Net Other Income (Expense)	(101,110)	(8,066)	(24,169)	(76,941)	23.9%
Income Greater Than (Less Than) Expenses	0	34,780	29,459		

3/31/24

Cash	\$ 164,746
Sanctuary Mortgage Principal Balance	\$ 456,662

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28	29	30	1	2	3	4
<p>Julia Away</p> <p>Comunion</p> <p>Older Adult Sunday</p> <p>8:30am - Worship & Live Stream</p> <p>9:45am - Faith Formation</p> <p>9:45am - Opie's Playhouse</p> <p>11am - Worship</p>	<p>9:30am - Older Adult Ministry</p> <p>6pm - Windsong</p> <p>6:30pm - Safety Team</p> <p>7pm - Hospitality Greeter Training</p>	<p>10am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>5pm - Tech Team Meeting</p> <p>6pm - Ministry Team Night</p>	<p>4pm - Older Adult Choir</p> <p>4:30pm - Our Daily Bread Faith</p> <p>5:30pm - LOGOS Youth Extension</p>	<p>10:30am - Tai Chi</p> <p>6:30pm - Sherando Food Pantry</p>	<p>Julia Away</p> <p>OFFICE CLOSED</p>	<p>8am - Breakfast Feast Group</p>
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
<p>Julia Away</p> <p>Comunion</p> <p>Older Adult Sunday</p> <p>8:30am - Worship & Live Stream</p> <p>9:45am - Faith Formation</p> <p>9:45am - Opie's Playhouse</p> <p>11am - Worship</p>	<p>9:30am - Older Adult Ministry</p> <p>6pm - Windsong</p> <p>6:30pm - Safety Team</p> <p>7pm - Hospitality Greeter Training</p>	<p>10am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>5pm - Tech Team Meeting</p> <p>6pm - Ministry Team Night</p>	<p>12pm - Happy Days</p> <p>4:30pm - Our Daily Bread Faith</p> <p>5:15pm - Discipleship Team</p> <p>5:30pm - LOGOS Youth Extension</p> <p>6:30pm - Choir</p>	<p>10:30am - Tai Chi</p> <p>5pm - Vision Team & ART</p>	<p>David & Carolee Away</p> <p>8am - Breakfast Feast Group</p> <p>11:30am - Windsong Picnic</p>	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
<p>David & Carolee Away</p> <p>Mother's Day</p> <p>8:30am - Worship & Live Stream</p> <p>9:45am - Faith Formation</p> <p>11am - Worship</p> <p>12:15pm - Senior Outreach</p> <p>1:30pm - Spring Arbor Worship</p>	<p>5:30pm - MOC @ Italian Delight</p> <p>6pm - Windsong</p> <p>7pm - MOC @ World War II</p>	<p>9:30am - Shenandoah Presbytery</p> <p>9:30am - Tuesday Morning</p> <p>6pm - GLOW Fellowship Hall</p>	<p>Rebekah Away</p> <p>NEWSLETTER DEADLINE</p> <p>12pm - Music at Noon</p> <p>4:30pm - Our Daily Bread Faith</p> <p>6:30pm - Choir</p>	<p>10:30am - Tai Chi</p> <p>10:30am - WANC Meeting</p> <p>6:30pm - Sherando Food Pantry</p>	<p>11am - Java With Julia</p> <p>8am - Breakfast Feast Group</p>	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
<p>Blood Pressure Checks</p> <p>Pentecost & Communion</p> <p>Sundays on Sunday</p> <p>8:30am - Worship & Live Stream</p> <p>9:45am - Faith Formation</p> <p>11am - Worship</p> <p>12:30pm - Graduates & Youth</p> <p>3:30pm - Private Event</p> <p>6pm - Taize Worship</p>	<p>12pm - Life Goes On</p> <p>5pm - LOGOS Leadership Team</p> <p>6pm - Windsong</p> <p>7pm - Ethiopia Forum</p>	<p>Julia Away</p> <p>10am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>7pm - Session Mtg</p>	<p>David & Carolee Away</p> <p>4:30pm - Our Daily Bread Faith</p> <p>4:30pm - VBS Team</p> <p>6:30pm - Choir</p>	<p>10:30am - Tai Chi</p> <p>10:30am - WANC Lunch</p> <p>6pm - Fellowship Book Club</p>	<p>Tracie Away</p> <p>8am - Breakfast Feast Group</p>	
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
<p>Tracie Away</p> <p>4 Cents a Meal Offering</p> <p>8:30am - Worship & Live Stream</p> <p>9:45am - GIFT Event</p> <p>11am - Worship</p>	<p>OFFICE CLOSED</p>	<p>3pm - TVOR Gathering</p> <p>5:30pm - Highland Food Pantry</p>	<p>11:30am - Older Adult Luncheon</p> <p>4:30pm - Our Daily Bread Faith</p> <p>6:30pm - Choir</p>	<p>10:30am - Tai Chi</p>	<p>8am - Breakfast Feast Group</p> <p>11am - Crafting with Becky (TBA)</p>	

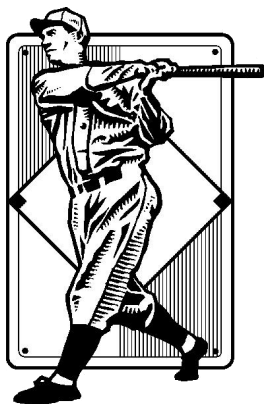
MAY OFFICE & STAFF SCHEDULE NOTES

- May 3:** CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED
May 3-5: Julia - vacation
May 11-18: David & Carole Witt - vacation
May 15-18: Rebekah Witt - GenOn Training
May 21-24: Julia Burkley - YWCI Conference
May 22: David & Carole Witt - away
May 24-26: Tracie Martin - vacation

If a pastoral concern arises during these times, please contact the church office (540-662-1843 or office@opequonchurch.org) or please note who is away and email one of the pastors directly.

MOO SPONSORS ROYALS BASEBALL OUTING FOR THE WHOLE CHURCH

The Men of Opequon are inviting all women and men, girls and boys to join them for the church's annual outing to watch the Winchester Royals, who are our local team in the Summer Wooden Bat League, play at Jim Barnett Park. Circle your calendar for Thursday, June 20. More details will follow.



Take me out to the ballgame!!!

Summer WORSHIP

COMING IN JUNE: "Faith Practices" Summer Worship Series

Beginning on Sunday, June 2, summer worship at 10:00 AM will focus on the theme "Faith Practices." We invite you to be present as much as you can with all you can to serve God and to share with one another.

THE GREAT OPEQUON CAMPOUT: Coming July 20-21 (July 27-28 rain date):

Bring your camper or your tent for church family camping experience on the church grounds. Come enjoy meals, vespers, campfire and sing along. Watch for details!



JUNE WILL BE JUMPING AT THESE OPEQUON HIGHLIGHTS

- › Sunday, June 2: Summer Worship at 10:00 AM only begins! Communion; Honoring Graduates; Choir Recognition Windsong Concert (4:00 PM)
- › Tuesday, June 4: Ministry Team Night
- › June 9-12: Vacation Bible School
- › Sunday, June 16: Father's Day
- › Thursday, June 20: Opequon at Winchester Royals Game
- › June 21-July 2: Mission Trip to Romania
- › Sunday, June 23: "Picnic in the Garden" (4:00 PM) WOW Service (6:00 PM)
- › Thursday, June 27: Hymn Festival (7:00 PM)

SAVE THE DATE:

**Homecoming
Sunday
August 18
10:00 AM**

Make plans now to
come celebrate
with everyone!



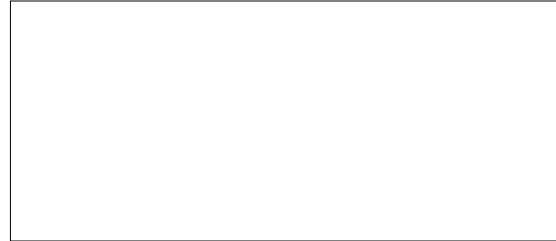
****The deadline to send newsletter submissions to the church office the 15th of each month. Thank you!**

OPEQUON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

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"The Opequon Spirit" is the monthly newsletter of:

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Winchester, VA 22602-2421

Website: www.opequonchurch.org
Phone: 540-662-1843
Office: office@opequonchurch.org

Church Office Hours:
Monday—Thursday, 9:00 AM—2:00 PM
Friday, 9:00 AM—12:00 PM

Worship Services:
Sunday, 8:30 AM & 11:00 AM



***** REMEMBER *****
Summer Worship at 10:00 AM
begins Sunday, June 2 and
continues through August 25!



CHURCH STAFF

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