The Opequon Spirit

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

March 2025

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

www.opequonchurch.org
540-662-1843
office@opequonchurch.org

WORSHIP AT-A-GLANCE

Sunday, March 2
Sunday of Christ's Transfiguration; Jazz Sunday
✝ Exodus 34:29-35; Luke 9:28-36
Sermon: "A Stirring in Our Souls"
Communion
Join Us for Stirring & Vibrant Music!

Wednesday, March 5
Ash Wednesday
6:30 PM Ash Wednesday Worship
✝ Psalm 51:1-17; Luke 9:51-62
Meditation: "Stepping Forward"
Ashes, LOGOS Worship Groups, Sanctuary Choir

Sunday, March 9
Daylight Savings Time Begins (Spring Forward!); First Sunday in Lent
✝ Luke 10:25-37
Sermon: "Who Is My Neighbor?"
1:30 PM Spring Arbor Worship

Sunday, March 16
Second Sunday in Lent
✝ Luke 10:38-42
Sermon: "Faith & Works: Both Needed"
Blood Pressure Checks
12:15 PM Potato Bake Luncheon

Sunday, March 23
Third Sunday in Lent; LOGOS Sunday (11:00 AM)
✝ Genesis 1:1-2:3; Luke 13:6-9
Sermon: "Rest & Growth"
4 Cents A Meal

Sunday, March 30
Fourth Sunday in Lent
✝ Genesis 21:14-21; Luke 15:1-7
Sermon: "Lost and Found"
Baptism (8:30 AM)

SPRING FORWARD...

Daylight Saving Time Begins Sunday, March 9! Remember to set your clocks AHEAD one hour at bedtime the night before! You wouldn't want to be late for church on Sunday morning!

FIRST EVER JAZZ SUNDAY ON MARCH 2!

Opequon will have its first ever Jazz Sunday at both 8:30 AM and 11:00 AM worship on Sunday, March 2. A four-person jazz ensemble from Shenandoah University, along with their director, Dr. Craig Fraedrich, will provide special music and accompany our hymns. On Transfiguration Sunday, just before we enter into the season of Lent, this is a wonderful way to celebrate the rhythm and light that stirs our souls. Don't miss out on this wonderful opportunity.

LENT PRAYER BREAKFAST EVENT

The Christian Education Team is hosting a Lent Prayer Breakfast Morning on Sunday, March 2, at 9:45 AM. Everyone is invited! The theme for this event is "Prayer Everywhere Anytime." The breakfast menu includes a variety of Breakfast Casseroles, Fruit, Cereals, and Danish. We will watch a story video of "I Can Pray Anywhere" and enjoy a reflective slide show offering inspiration about prayer. Come join us at this marvelous gathering as we prepare to begin the season of Lent. You'll find a token gift to take home with you! This just may be the perfect way to start your day.

NEW LENT WORSHIP OPPORTUNITY

During the season of Lent, Pastor Julia Burkley will be leading a mid-week time of prayer and reflection to help us draw closer to God during this season of contemplation and waiting. Starting on March 12, join her each week in the Memorial Sanctuary on Wednesdays, 8:30 AM—9:00 AM, for a short morning prayer service. Please contact Pastor Julia (pastorjulia@opequonchurch.org) if you have any questions.

LAST CHANCE FOR DIRECTORY PHOTOS!

Don't miss your chance to be included in the OPC Photo Directory! Photos will be taken in the Dell Room after both services on March 16. If you have any questions or want to schedule a time for us to come to your home and take your directory photo, contact Debbie Bender (540-336-7689) or Alyce Callahan (586- 801-0279).

NOTES FROM PASTOR DAVID

Dear Friends in Christ,

As you know, March is a month of transition, moving away (we hope!) from winter storms and the doldrums of still short days toward spring and the lengthening of days. We will set clocks ahead an hour, spring plants will begin to poke through the earth, and grass will green up. Along with changes in God's creation around us, you will also notice the change in church seasons as we begin the 40-day season of Lent with Ash Wednesday on March 5. Lent gives us the opportunity to think, reflect, and make changes to our lives, as we give up old routines and sacrifice those things that may hold sway over us while also taking up new rhythms and ways of serving others. Our theme for Lent this year is, "Everything in Between: Meeting God in the Midst of Extremes." Beginning with Jesus setting his face toward Jerusalem (Luke 9:51), the series flows through several familiar Biblical stories—The Good Samaritan, Mary and Martha, The Fruitless Fig Tree, The Lost Sheep, Zacchaeus, and more. These scriptures reflect how Jesus' ministry was rooted in relationships that disrupted the established and extreme social, political, and religious divides of his time. This series is an invitation to navigate the polarities in our lives with more faith, intention, and openness to be transformed. In a divided world, we might find that God is present in between. Life is complex, unsettled, and stressful. So, let this season and these stories speak to you through worship, devotionals, learning, fellowship, and service as God meets us. As we begin, consider this prayer found in our Sanctified Art series:

God meets us in the night—
before the sun rises,
before the wound heals,
before there are answers,
before there is closure.
God meets us in the light—
where joy is effervescent,
where laughter is contagious,
where flowers bloom from cracks in the sidewalk,
where people gather around tables.
God meets us in between—
at the edge of the water,
at the beginning of the wilderness,
at the start of something new,
on the edge of faith.
And if God meets us in all those places,
then surely God meets us everywhere—
at the water's edge, at the start of something new,
after the baptism, and before the call.
We are not alone. God is all around.
Let us worship the God of everything.

I invite you to join with me and our faith community at Opequon as we worship, study, pray, serve, reflect, and give this Lent.

Together in Christ's Service,

David

PASTOR JULIA'S MUSINGS

Friends in Christ,

I waited until the March newsletter to share this, because I wanted to make sure I was actually going to stick with it. One of my biggest goals for 2025 was to increase my spiritual practices. I'm at a church every day, but I know that it's easy for me to get pulled in a million directions and not actually take intentional time to be with God.

As I was praying about what I want to do for the year, I reflected on how much I love study, but also on how I often times focus on other people's words. I discerned: why don't I go to the source and actually read the Bible again? This year, I have committed to reading the whole Bible, front to back, following the guide from The Bible Project. Each night, I will read a couple of chapters chronologically and a paired Psalm. The Bible Project also has articles and videos that go along. Here's the thing—I have not been perfect. I have fallen asleep before reading a couple of times and once I totally forgot. But there's grace in the process and I just catch up the next day.

So I wonder: what are your spiritual practices? What brings you closer to God? Maybe you find peace in walking and praying once a day. Maybe there is a devotional that you really enjoy. Maybe, you want to read the Bible more and found a program that works well for you. God is there all the time, but there is something powerful in pausing each day, naming God, studying the Word, and praying. It's a discipline that takes us out of the day, gives us a moment to pause, and centers us in what matters.

I'd love to hear more about what you do to grow closer with God, and how we can support each other in our own journeys.

Blessings,

Julia

PASTOR TRACIE'S JUST THINKIN'

Spring is generally a time when we sweep clean. We clean out drawers, scrub things we might have ignored over the winter, clean out leftover chaff from flower beds and pots. We sort and box, dust and scrub, sneeze and spray most everything

within our homes, desks, and closets. We wash windows, launder curtains, and poke corners. Nothing is disregarded.

What about our thoughts, however? How often do we check out our assumptions, clean out our baggage, or challenge our memes?

It occurs to me that the divisions of our current culture can make it harder to check in with ourselves. Am I being fair? Do "they" truly deserve all of that (whatever "that" might be)? Do I truly believe "that" to be true or do I just want it to be true? Did I take enough time to get the whole picture? Am I being realistic... fair... or am I simply reinforcing old assumptions?

I remember reading about a woman who always cut the first three inches from the family's Easter ham before baking it. She had done this most of her life. When asked why, she replied that her mother had always done that, and she simply continued the practice. When her mother was asked why she had always shortened hams, she replied that the only heavy baking pan she had was too short to hold a whole ham, so she cut the meat down to size and tucked the extra piece in. A larger pan ended the family's practice.

Then there is the old trope about the police officer who was heading home after a long, hard day on patrol. He had dealt with a whole succession of difficult people, and a mountain of frustrating paperwork. All he wanted at this point was to kick back, unwind, enjoy some peace and quiet, and maybe watch a few innings of baseball on TV. But, as he neared home, he was startled by a vehicle that came careening around a sharp curve and narrowly missed his squad car. As the car passed within a few inches of him, the other driver shouted "Pig!" The police officer was suddenly energized. He slammed on brakes, all set to turn his squad car around and head-off in hot pursuit. But, as he rounded the curve, … he ran head-on into a large pig that was standing in the middle of the road!

Effective communication is far more complicated and difficult than we think. With barriers like cultural differences, personal "filters," different definitions, etc., it's amazing that any of us ever understand one another. Honest communication requires trust and taking risks. And we all have been burned, many times. So, obviously we settle for safety, make the natural assumption, and run head-on into our own version of that pig as we journey down life's highway!

There is a better way. A way that recognizes our similarities. A way that sees others as a source of community and healing. A way that looks past our own frustration and previous disappointments to explore the possibility that even a "stranger" may have something positive to say. The Apostle Paul described it in Corinthians, chapter 13. It's the "higher way" of love. I almost hesitate to use that term these days because of the way our culture misuses it. But when you read Paul's description, try substituting "maturity." It's a perfect fit. The risks are higher for this way of living, but so are the rewards.

Another (anonymous) writer cautions: "To laugh is to risk appearing the fool. To weep is to risk appearing sentimental. To reach out to another is to risk involvement. To expose feelings is to risk exposing your true self. To place your ideas, your dream before a crowd is to risk their loss. To love is to risk not being loved in return. To live is to risk dying. To hope is to risk despair. To try is to risk failure. But risks must be taken, because the greatest hazard in life is risking nothing. Only a person who risks is free."

This doesn't mean we should be naive. It does mean we should be careful what we assume. Check it out. Give others the benefit of the doubt. Who knows, that approach could change our life. (Largely taken from Making Assumptions by Capt J. David Atwater, CHC, USN in Motivational Stories, Aug 12, 2013. Why? Because he said it better than I ever could.)

—Tracie

SESSION MEETING HIGHLIGHTS FROM JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2025

- Session expressed thanks for the leadership and years of service given by 2024 outgoing Elders Steve Bock, Fran Jeffries, and Mike Wygant as they end their terms and to Ron Smith who begins his second term.
- Stewardship & Finance Ministry: Financial reports for December and January were approved by Session in January and February, respectively. In January, Session approved the updated 2025 Giving Events Calendar and 2025 Offering Counters (Bob & Judy Gaines, Nancy Picklap, Paula Marquis, Carole Fox, Ray Jones, Tim Hoffman, Chris Williams, Susan Witt & Laverne Cooper). The annual 2024 review was completed in January with no issues.
- Technology & Communications Team: Incoming Elder Michelle Hammer now chairs the team. Goals for 2025 include conducting an inventory and developing a replacement plan for OPC's tech equipment, such as laptops. In February, OPC's new telephone system was installed, and

a replacement livestream camera purchased (installation pending).

- Personnel & Administration Ministry: Session enthusiastically approved the recommendation to renew the contract with Parish Associate Tracie Martin for another year (April 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026). The need for a contracted cleaning/janitorial service to support Robert Sydnor after WATTS week is under discussion for 2025.
- Christian Education Ministry: Session approved the VBS Planning Team (Carole Witt, Rebekah Witt, Winter Brooks, Layne Link, Linda Shimer, and Melanie Palmer) and VBS curriculum (*Compassion Camp: Changing the World with Loving Kindness*); VBS is scheduled for June 16 -19, 2025.
- Deacons & Congregational Care Ministry: The Deacon Retreat on February 15, 2025, focused on setting goals for 2025. Additional volunteers to assist with transportation to/from medical appointments are needed.
- Vision Team: Regular meetings have been shifted to the 2nd Tuesday of the month. Video testimonials are being captured by Rick Ours for inclusion in the Capital Campaign Gala program on April 4.
- Capital Campaign: The Capital Campaign inaugural "A Place of the Table" leadership event was held in January. Future events include culmination of the Leadership Gifts phase with a Capital Campaign Gala/ Celebration Dinner on April 4, 2025, at West Oaks Market and Event Center (6:00—8:00 PM) launching the Congregational Gift phase; and Dedication/Celebration Service, Sunday May 18, 2025. Watch for announcements.
- Mission Ministry: Session decided that the 10% tithe of total Capital Campaign funds raised be divided equally between four recipients of the Capital Campaign Mission Component grants (equal shares)—two global (Ethiopia Partnership with the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) & Romanian/ NOROC) and two local Winchester mission projects (Family Promise of Winchester and Bright Futures of Winchester/Frederick County).
- Congratulations to Deacon Co-Chair, Winter Brooks, who also chairs the Virginia chapter of American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, and was awarded National AFSP Chapter of Year.
- Fellowship Ministry: Remember to get your photo taken by Debbie Bender or Alyce Callahan for the new Directory. Fellowship purchased five new titanium cutting boards. Efforts to expand the FEAST Groups program are underway—watch for future announcements.
- Buildings & Grounds Ministry: Thanks to Mike Crawford for his donation of a portable natural gas detector to the church. The livestream stage project began in late February with expected construction to be completed the end of March. The historical Memorial Sanctuary Lighting and Electrical project is expected to be completed by Spring 2025 before VBS begins.
- Get ready for SPRING at two upcoming March events: Opequon's Spring Cleaning Day, Saturday, March 22 (1st day of Spring), at 9:00 AM, and Mulch Madness, Saturday, April 5, at 9:00 AM.
- Discipleship: Session has appointed a 2025 REALM Subcommittee to focus on discerning members gifts and fostering engagement within the congregation. Vern Gamble brings IT expertise as chair, and Pastor Julia is the staff person assigned to work with the subcommittee.
- The annual Leadership Retreat is scheduled for Saturday, March 8, 2025. This year's theme is "Building a Bigger Table."
- Session approved the request for use of the sanctuary by the Lions Club to hold the annual Bland Music Contest on March 6 (4:00 PM). Session approved use of OPC's Picnic Shelter by Kernstown United Methodist to hold an outdoor Good Friday Service on April 18, 2025, at 7:00 PM.
- Session approved the Baptism of Camille Hartley Orndorff for Sunday March 30 at the 8:30 AM service.
- Session approved the wedding request from Jaclyn Mohlmann and Taylor Beaubien Jr. to use Memorial Sanctuary for their wedding, on September 20, 2025, at 2:00 PM.

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

EXTENDING OUR EMPATHY AND CHRISTIAN LOVE TO…

- Pat Young and family upon the death of Pat's husband, Richard Young, on January 31.
- Mabel Stevers and family upon the death of her cousin, Thomas "Jake" Fleming, on February 19.

"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

Dear OPiE,

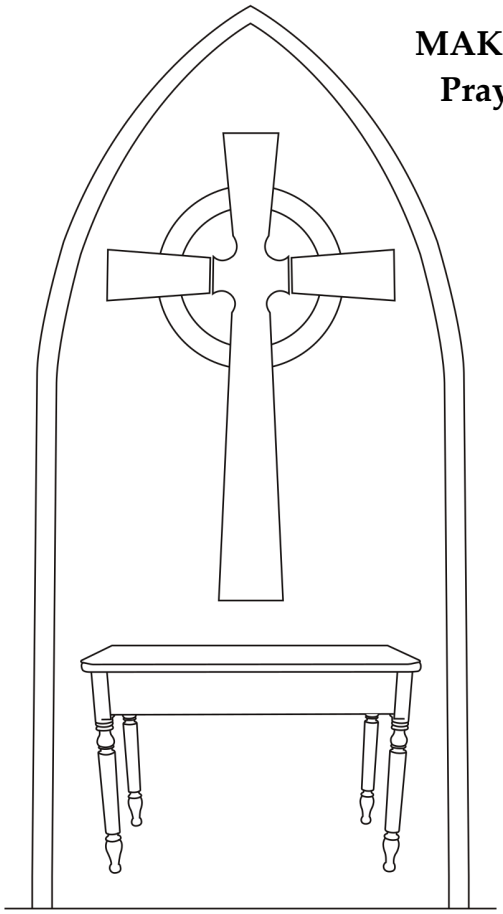
What's new with the building project and Capital Campaign? The weather has been lousy. Is that holding things up? —Wondering

Dear Wondering,

Planning is the longest part of any building project. Right now, the Architectural Review Team is working with both the Balzer Architecture Group and KEE Construction, our cost estimating group, to get the specifications and details in place. There has been talk about how high the cathedral ceiling will be, what kind of air locks and doors will keep the cold out of the back entrance (have you felt the freezing wind of the last two weeks?), and making sure there is good space for our playground and recreation area.

There is a lot more going on behind the scenes as well. Capital Campaign teams are planning and organizing for the larger outreach this spring. The Prayer Team, for example, is bringing together prayers from many places to encourage and support us. If you would like to write a prayer about what you experience at OPC or what you hope the new expansion will bring, please do so. Prayers can be sent to Maureen Wellman (mobill4july01@gmail.com) or Lois Roy (yankee4@verizon.net). Praying for our congregation and this project will be ongoing. You can expect to see these special prayers in the bulletin and other places soon.

Plans are going forward for our bodacious opening celebration at West Oaks Event Center on April 4. You won't want to miss that. I'll have lots more information for everyone before long!



A Place at the Table

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

(Written by: Winter Brooks)

Father God,

As we begin our Capital Campaign, we are asking for your guidance. Lord, you know our hopes as we begin this journey. We pray for expanded room and "a place at the table" for everyone who enters the doors at Opequon Presbyterian Church. Fellowship with our church family and opportunities to provide space for our community is the foundation we are building on.

A Bible verse that speaks to the success of church leaders and building upon their work is Ephesians 4:11-12, which says, "And Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ."

We are asking for prayers for our leaders, the shepherds and teachers, the Elders, Pastors, designers, Mitch and his team, to equip them with all the skills needed to continue building our strong church. Lord, please guide them as they engage our congregation to actively participate in the growth and development of OPC so we can continue with our mission, to be the "Hands, Heart, and Feet of Christ" in our community.

Amen.

ASH WEDNESDAY
MARCH 5

Ashes To Go
8:30 AM—10:00 AM
(Kernstown UMC Parking Lot)

Ashes to Go is a shared ministry "Outside the Buildings" sponsored by Opequon Presbyterian Church and Kernstown United Methodist Church. For more information, contact Pastor David Witt or Pastor Julia Burkley.

Supper & Worship

We will gather on March 5 in the Fellowship Hall for Supper, which will be served at 5:30 PM, and is open to the entire congregation, along with our LOGOS students and staff. Please come, have a warm meal, and share in the opportunity to fellowship together!

Ash Wednesday Worship will begin at 6:30 PM in the Sanctuary and will introduce "Everything in Between: Meeting God in the Midst of Extremes" as our theme for Lent. Please join us for this meaningful hour of praise, reflection, and prayer. Ashes will be offered on the forehead or the back of the hand.

LENT DEVOTIONAL BOOKLETS

A Lent Devotional titled, "Looking Around Through Lent… and Everywhere in Between" is available for you to use during this new season of Lent. Daily readings focus on helping us sense God's presence all around us, we may just need a nudge to realize it. Take a booklet home today and spend a few quiet moments each day as you read it. Copies are available in the Gathering Area and Dell Room. Help yourself.

A Children's Lent Booklet titled, "The A to Z Book of Lent" is available for young ones. This will help children focus on looking for signs of God in everyday life and offering their own selves to God. These will be distributed at LOGOS to all young people and copies are also available in the Gathering Area and Dell Room. Help yourself.

LENT COLORING POSTER PROJECT

During Lent last year, our congregational challenge was to complete the Lent Jigsaw Puzzle by Easter! This year, our challenge is to completely color the LENT POSTER that focuses on LISTENING. The poster table is set-up in the Gathering Area with markers available. Anyone is invited to work on it and add some color by filling in any un-colored spaces. Let's make this poster burst with color. We will watch the picture come alive through the weeks of Lent. Surely, we can complete it by Easter Sunday. Please be reminded to leave all the markers on the table for others to use as well.

OPC SPRING CLEANING

Our Building and Grounds Ministry is organizing an Interior Spring Cleaning Day for Saturday, March 22, and needs your help! Volunteers are needed to help with some seasonal interior cleaning from 9:00 AM until about noon—the more hands we have, the quicker it will go!

ANNUAL POTATO BAKE

SUNDAY, MARCH 16

12:15 PM
(Fellowship Hall)

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

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

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

CAR VACUUMING FUNDRAISER

Back by popular demand!

Gravel, dirt, and other debris quickly make their way into cars over the winter and we all want our vehicles to be clean once again! Pull up to the church parking lot curb on Sunday, March 30, from 8:00 AM—1:00 PM. The Youth will have shop vacs ready, and you'll see the satisfaction that comes from a freshly vacuumed carpet. Please remove small objects from the floor of your vehicle. Donations will support Youth Mission Trips & Camps/Conferences. Thank you!

LET'S SUPPORT OUR KIDS & YOUTH

Did you know that our young people are involved in all sorts of activities outside of the church building? We have amazing artists, athletes, writers, musicians, and more! Rebekah Witt is collecting activity schedules so that we can show up and support our families in all that they do. Let Rebekah know if you would like to nurture relationships with our families outside of the church walls by attending their events! If your child or youth has a schedule that you'd like to share, please reach out to Rebekah (540-686-0752 or rwitt@opequonchurch.org).

OPIE'S PLAYHOUSE

Opie's Playhouse is taking a break this month so that everyone can attend the Prayer Breakfast! Our next Opie's Playhouse gathering will be on April 6, 9:45 AM—10:45 AM, in the Memorial Sanctuary.

RACHEL BAYLISS SCHOLARSHIP TAKING APPLICATIONS

The Claytor and Bayliss families established the Rachel Bayliss Scholarship Fund more than twenty-five years ago to support Opequon youth in their college or vocational endeavors. This fund has been supplemented by additional contributions and through regular donations by Happy Days in memory of older adults after their death. Thousands of dollars have been awarded through the years to well-deserving young people. Scholarship applications ARE NOW AVAILABLE to graduating high school seniors; please contact the church office by calling 540-662-1843 or emailing office@opequonchurch.org to request an application.

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

THE LATEST IN LOGOS

We will wind down our 27th LOGOS year this month. We can't believe the time has gone so fast since we began in September. This month offers another helping of some great themes such as "Twenty-Seven Night," "Old West Night," "Pacific Ocean Night," and our exciting closing night with the theme "Dinner and Movie Night." LOGOS Sunday will be a highlight this month. All LOGOS young people are writing the parts of worship and will be leading worship at 11:00 AM on Sunday, March 23. Worship that morning will focus on our theme for the LOGOS year, which has been "He's Got the Whole World In His Hands". We are ever so thankful for the LOGOS Staff and LOGOS families. Wednesdays won't feel complete without you all. We are so privileged for the time we have with one another. The Leadership Team will continue working as LOGOS ends and we begin to look ahead to a new LOGOS year.

For more info about LOGOS, contact Joanne Berson (opequonlogos@gmail.com) or Carole Witt (dce@opequonchurch.org or 540-662-1843).

CONFIRMATION INFORMATION

Our Confirmation Class students recently enjoyed a day retreat here at Opequon. The day was full of games, faithful conversations, reflections, healthy competitions and good food! What an added benefit to have Covenant Partners with us for the retreat time. Students have been involved in conducting interviews with parents and Covenant Partners and they are working on final projects. They will be attending worship at another church together as well. Please continue to pray for our Confirmation students : Adelyn Astorino, Malayna Bates, Virginia Barr, Joshua Batcha, McKenna Bell, Caleb Garcia, Jaxson Hughes, Paige Littman, Jackson Russell, and Camden Saunders. Confirmation Day will be April 6.

YOUTH: GRADES 6-12

March 4 (4:00 PM—7:00 PM): Serve the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Party
March 30 (8:00 AM—1:00 PM): Car Vacuuming Fundraiser & Breakfast

YOUNG ADULTS

March 21 (6:30 PM): Fondue Party

OLDER ADULT HAPPENINGS

We are making our way through a snowier winter and we get to 'Spring' into a new season this month! There are exciting things going on at Opequon that are welcoming us to SPRING into as well. This month, the Older Adult Team will be meeting on Monday, March 3, at 9:30 AM in the Bageant Room. This team discusses plans for Happy Days programs, day outings and other special events. Morning refreshments and coffee are provided. The meeting is open to any older adult who would like to join us.

The monthly older adult fellowship time known as 'Happy Days' will be held on Wednesday, March 12, at NOON in the Fellowship Hall. We will have a covered dish lunch with Rotisserie Chicken and drinks provided. You are invited to bring a covered dish for the luncheon. Following lunch, the guest speaker will be our own Mike Nutry, who is OPC's BEE KEEPER! It is sure to be a fascinating presentation. All older adults are welcome. Come enjoy the friendships and the delicious food.

MEN OF OPEQUON—ON THE ROAD

The Men of Opequon (MOO) will gather for dinner on Monday, March 10, at 5:30 PM at Ledo Pizza, 419 Gateway Drive in Winchester (Rt. 7 east near Martins / phone: 540-662-9499). After dinner, we'll go to the Dowell J. Howard Center, 156 Dowell J. Circle in Winchester, for a talk and tour led by their staff. Dowell J., a Frederick County Public School, includes technical/vocational/trade preparation. Join us for a fun and informative evening. Got questions? Please reach out to Pastor David Witt.

GLOW: God-loving Opequon Women

GLOW is Opequon's multi-aged women's group that meets monthly to build friendships and enjoy heart-warming activities together. GLOW has been on break during the past two months and now we are ready to come back together! All OPC women are invited to the SPRING FLING on Tuesday, March 11, at 6:00 PM in the Fellowship Hall. Let's warm things up after a long winter and kick-off the season of Spring with a great time together. Food and drinks will be provided along with a host of great fun! Make plans to grace us with your presence.

MINISTRY TEAM NIGHT

Tuesday, March 4

6:00 PM Shrove Tuesday Pancake Party

6:45 PM Devotions & Team Meetings

MUSIC AT NOON

On March 19, we invite you to the Sanctuary during the noon hour to enjoy this eclectic, informal time of "just music" that repeats on the third Wednesday each month.

LIFE GOES ON

Life Goes On will gather in Fellowship Hall on March 17 at noon. The main dish provided this month will be a surprise. We ask that you bring a side to pass or chip in a couple of dollars toward the main dish. If you need a ride, contact the church office or Pastor Tracie Martin.

JAVA WITH JULIA

Swing by Hopscotch Café for Java with Julia on Friday, March 28, any time between 11:00 AM—1:00 PM!

FELLOWSHIP BOOK CLUB

Book Club will meet on Thursday, March 27, at 6:00 PM. Terry McKay will lead us through *Queens of Crime* by Marie Benedict. From the New York Times bestselling author of *The Mystery of Mrs. Christie*, this is a thrilling story of the five greatest women writers of the Golden Age of Mystery and their bid to solve a real-life murder.

The April Book Club selection is *Theo of Golden* by Allen Levi and Wendy Wygant will lead the discussion on Thursday, April 24, 6:00 PM.

SENIOR OUTREACH MINISTRY

The Senior Outreach Ministry will meet on Sunday, March 9. We will meet at 12:15 PM by the church office door to load up the totes for the trip to the Shenandoah Senior Apartments on Wilson Blvd, in Winchester. Donations of paper towels or bath tissue would be helpful.

FEBRUARY MISSION SCHEDULE

- March 6 (6:30 PM): Sherando Food Pantry
- March 9 (12:15 PM): Senior Outreach
- March 20 (6:30 PM): Sherando Food Pantry
- March 25 (5:30 PM): Highland Food Pantry
- March 29 (10:00 AM): Jubilee Kitchen

MISSION HIGHLIGHT

This month's Mission Highlight is from Rich Schempp and focuses on **CCAP**. Please join us in supporting this important mission:

CCAP was formed in October 1974. By 1975, it became the Congregational Community Action Project, considering itself a homeless prevention program, helping community people who are in crisis by providing support throughout the crises. CCAP has a food pantry, a clothing ministry, and offers financial aid in the form of small grants to pay utility bills, heating/fuel, rent, mortgage, and car repair. Its vision statement says: "Our neighbors can always count on the compassion and generosity of the community in times of need and will have meaningful opportunities to lift themselves out of difficult life situations."

OPC has been a part of CCAP since the beginning and currently provides support with a monthly collection of selected items and a gift of approximately 120 Thanksgiving Banana Boxes. In addition, there is a budgeted line item in the Mission budget for continued CCAP support. In 2024, CCAP served 6,402 households and 11,000 individuals. The clothing and baby/toddler room distributed 77,207 diapers and 165,000 items of clothing. It assisted 1,081 households and 3,229 individuals in need of water, electric, and rent assistance. 494 households and 1,651 individuals received holiday distributions and 50 households and 120 individuals were delivered firewood. Volunteers donated more than 16,657 hours of their time in 2024. CCAP meets a vital need in the Winchester area and OPC's excited to be a part of its mission.

For more information, contact Rich Schempp, who serves on the CCAP Board of Directors.

MONTHLY CCAP COLLECTION

Our Mission Ministry is collecting cans of tuna fish for CCAP throughout the month of March. Donations should be placed in the CCAP collection box in the Dell Room.

Opequon Presbyterian Church
Financial Summary for the period ended
January 31, 2025

	Annual Budget 2025	Current Month Actual	Year to Date Actual	Annual Budget Remaining	% of Annual Budget Used
Income					
410000 Offering Income	882,418	69,755	69,755	812,663	7.9%
420000 Other Income	1,800	62	62	1,738	3.4%
Total 400000 Income	884,218	69,817	69,817	814,401	7.9%
Expenses					
500000 Personnel Costs					
510000 Installed Pastors	228,422	17,821	17,821	210,601	7.8%
520000 Other Ministerial Staff	143,633	10,842	10,842	132,791	7.5%
530000 Administrative Staff	155,104	12,788	12,788	142,316	8.2%
Total 500000 Personnel Costs	527,159	41,452	41,452	485,707	7.9%
600000 Other Ministries					
610000 Christian Education	15,050	445	445	14,605	3.0%
620000 Congregational Care	2,800	34	34	2,766	1.2%
630000 Evangelism	2,250	86	86	2,164	3.8%
640000 Fellowship	3,800	156	156	3,644	4.1%
650000 Mission	77,000	2,817	2,817	74,183	3.7%
660000 Worship	8,000	377	377	7,623	4.7%
Total 600000 Other Ministries	108,900	3,914	3,914	104,986	3.6%
Total 700000 Church Administration	148,385	11,023	11,023	137,362	7.4%
Total Expenses	784,444	56,388	56,388	728,056	7.2%
Net Operating Income (Expense)	99,774	13,429	13,429	86,345	13.5%
920000 Other Income	18,675	2,754	2,754	15,921	14.7%
930000 Other Expenses	118,449	10,239	10,239	108,210	8.6%
Net Other Income (Expense)	(99,774)	(7,486)	(7,486)	(92,288)	7.5%
Income Greater Than (Less Than) Expenses	0	5,943	5,943		

	1/31/25
Cash	$ 180,763
Sanctuary Mortgage Principal Balance	$ 374,635

GENEROSITY MOMENT

(From Pastor Tracie Martin & the Generosity Team)

The end of February tells us that spring is imminent. It's been a wintery winter this year. We have had more snow than I remember seeing down here in 8 years—more ice, too. We have had to cancel, Zoom, and postpone events… even worship went to only streaming a few weeks ago! It's been brutal!

Thank God for a congregation that provides the church with what is needed to keep things going over a hard winter. Think about trying to get into the church building last month if we had run out of salt! Imagine the burst pipes and damage if we couldn't pay for heat. What if no one plowed or cleared the walkways or the front entrance?

I know it's hard to imagine a church without clear sidewalks, salted parking lots, or heat, but I am aware of congregations that had, and still have, exactly those concerns. For one, it was a matter of planning ahead. For another, it was discovered that the supply was out and no one replaced it. One larger congregation was caught short because only the pastor had ever thought to get to the church early enough to shovel. In each case, the panic was real and tempers were not always gentle before things were handled.

Absurdities happen everywhere… even churches. I remember one congregation I served early on, where no one would enter the church building until I arrived. Instead, they circled their cars in the parking lot, rolled down their windows and chatted. This was fun until I forgot my keys one Sunday. No one else had brought their keys, because I always had mine. There was momentary panic until Grandma Dykes revealed that she had hidden a key near the back door. Lesson learned!

We can laugh at all this nonsense because the OPC congregation has generously provided for emergencies—even absurd ones. We have contingency funds to cover broken HVAC units, a Building and Grounds Team and staff to fix things that go awry. Can you even imagine any situation when the key to the door would be missing as long as I (Tracie) am not the solo pastor at OPC? Water may spill; things may leak. Things may get stuck; switches may fail. A congregation as faith-filled and generous as ours, however, gets things done. Attitude… such a little thing that makes a big difference.

SOME NOTES OF THANKS

Souper Bowl of Caring Update:

Thanks to your generous support for Sherando and Highland Food Pantries through the Souper Bowl of Caring, the window side collected 249 chicken noodle soups, the center section 234 vegetable / beef soups, and the choir side 264 tomato soups. Congratulations to the choir side for bringing in the most cans! We also thank OneLife Fitness Gym for adding soup cans to our collection. Our grand total was 747 soup cans!

From F.R.O.G. (Families Reaching Out Group):

We can't thank you enough for your generous donation of the new clothing to Families Reaching Out Group. Thanks to your contribution, we'll be able to provide clothing and other essential items to foster children, children at risk, and children in need in our community. At Froggy's Closet, we're dedicated to ensuring that every child feels confident in what they wear. We provide new or like-new clothing, and always new shoes, coats, socks, and underwear—items that make them feel good and ready to take on the day. We truly appreciate your support and the positive impact you're making in our community.

From Helen Hatfield:

Just a note to say thanks for the beautiful Christmas music you gifted me with on December 18. I was fortunate enough to have two groups visit me. I loved the songs and the children were delightful with their ad-libs. It was very special. Please know how much fun it was to have you come by. The joy and friendliness of your group is a testimony to the real meaning of Christmas. Thanks so much to the children and youth. Happiest of new years!

NURSE NOTES

What's on the Nutrition Facts Label?

In 2016, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) updated requirements for the Nutrition Facts label on packaged foods and drinks. FDA required changes to the Nutrition Facts label based on updated scientific information, new nutrition research, and input from the public. This was the first major update to the label in over 20 years. The refreshed design and updated information make it easier for you to make informed food choices that contribute to lifelong healthy eating habits. So, what changed?

Original Label

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 2/3 cup (55g)
Servings Per Container 8

Amount Per Serving

Calories 230	Calories from Fat 72
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 8g	**12%**
Saturated Fat 1g	**5%**
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	**0%**
Sodium 160mg	**7%**
Total Carbohydrate 37g	**12%**
Dietary Fiber 4g	**16%**
Sugars 12g	
Protein 3g	
Vitamin A	10%
Vitamin C	8%
Calcium	20%
Iron	45%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily value may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Current Label

Nutrition Facts

8 servings per container
Serving size **2/3 cup (55g)**

Amount per serving
Calories **230**

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 8g	**10%**
Saturated Fat 1g	**5%**
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	**0%**
Sodium 160mg	**7%**
Total Carbohydrate 37g	**13%**
Dietary Fiber 4g	**14%**
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	**20%**
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 240mg	6%

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

1. The serving size appears in large, bold font and some serving sizes were updated.
2. Calories are displayed in large, bold font.
3. Daily Values were updated.
4. Added sugars, vitamin D, and potassium are required on the label. Manufacturers must declare the amount in addition to percent Daily Value for vitamins and minerals.

Nutrition Facts Label
What's in it for you?

August 2023 — 1

Learn more about Nutrition Facts Labels on the OPC Faith Community Nurses' Bulletin Board in the hallway or online at: www.FDA.gov/NutritionFactsLabel

**This calendar is subject to change. The most current schedule is on the OPC website here: www.opequonchurch.org/get-inolved

MARCH 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
23	24	25	26	27	28	1
2 Communion & Jazz Sunday 8:30am - Worship & Live Stream 9:45am - Prayer Breakfast @ 11am - Worship @ Sanctuary	3 9:30am - Older Adult Ministry 5pm - LOGOS Leadership Team @ 6pm - Windsong @ Sanctuary	4 1:30pm - Faith Formation @ 5pm - Shrove Tuesday (Youth 5pm - Tech Team Meeting @ 6:30pm - Ministry Team Night @	5 Ash Wednesday 8:30am - Ashes To Go @ 9am - Backpack Program 9:30am - Staff Meeting @ Bageant 4:30pm - LOGOS 5:30pm - Supper @ Fellowship 6:30pm - Ash Wednesday Worship 7:30pm - Choir @ Sanctuary	6 10:30am - Tai Chi @ Memorial 4pm - Bland Contest (Lions) @ 6:30pm - Sherando Food Pantry @	7	8 8:30am - Retreat Breakfast 9am - Leadership Retreat @
9 Daylight Saving Time starts 8:30am - Worship & Live Stream 9:45am - Faith Formation @ 11am - Worship @ Sanctuary 12:15pm - Senior Outreach 1:30pm - Spring Arbor Worship @ 4pm - Newcomers' Social @	10 6pm - MOO @ Ledo Pizza 6pm - Windsong @ Sanctuary 7pm - MOO @ Dowell J Howard	11 9:30am - Tuesday Morning 10am - CER Presbytery Committee 1:30pm - Faith Formation @ 4pm - Capital Campaign Team @ 6pm - GLOW Fellowship Hall @ 7pm - ART @ Assembly Room 7pm - Vision Team @ Bageant	12 8:30am - Mid-Week Lenten 12pm - Happy Days @ Fellowship 4:30pm - LOGOS 7:15pm - Choir @ Sanctuary	13 10:30am - Tai Chi @ Memorial	14	15 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 8:30am - Presbytery Minutes
16 Blood Pressure Checks 8:30am - Worship & Live Stream 9:45am - Faith Formation @ 11am - Worship @ Sanctuary 12:15pm - Potato Bake @ 4pm - Newcomers' Class @	17 St. Patrick's Day 12pm - Life Goes On @ Fellowship 6pm - Safety Team @ Bageant 6pm - Windsong @ Sanctuary	18 1:30pm - Faith Formation @ 4pm - VBS Team Meeting @ 6:30pm - Session Mtg @	19 8:30am - Mid-Week Lenten 9:30am - Staff Meeting 12pm - Music at Noon @ 4:30pm - LOGOS 7:15pm - Choir @ Sanctuary	20 9am - WANC Tea @ Youth Spot 10:30am - Tai Chi @ Memorial 10:30am - WANC Meeting @ 5pm - Discipleship Team @ 6:30pm - Sherando Food Pantry	21 6:30pm - Young Adult Fondue	22 9am - Spring Clean Up
23 4 Cents a Meal Offering LOGOS Sunday 8:30am - Worship @ Sanctuary 9:45am - Faith Formation @ 11am - Worship & Live Stream	24 6pm - Windsong @ Sanctuary	25 1:30pm - Faith Formation @ 3pm - TVOR Gathering 5:30pm - Highland Food Pantry @	26 8:30am - Mid-Week Lenten 11:30am - Staff Appreciation 4:30pm - LOGOS 7:15pm - Choir @ Sanctuary	27 10:30am - Tai Chi @ Memorial 10:30am - WANC Lunch @ 6pm - Fellowship Book Club @	28 11am - Java With Julia @	29 10am - Jubilee Kitchen - Opequon
30 8am - Car Vacuuming Fundraiser 8:30am - Worship & Live Stream 9:30am - Family Event (Orndorff) 9:45am - Faith Formation @ 11am - Worship @ Sanctuary	31 6pm - Windsong @ Sanctuary	1 5pm - Tech Team Meeting @ 6pm - Ministry Team Night @	2 8:30am - Mid-Week Lenten 9am - Backpack Program 9:30am - Staff Meeting @ Bageant 6:30pm - Choir @ Sanctuary	3 10:30am - Tai Chi @ Memorial 6:30pm - Sherando Food Pantry @	4 6pm - Celebration Dinner Capital	5 David & Carole Away 9am - Mulch Madness

HOSTED BY OPEQUON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Details

CELEBRATION DINNER

West Oaks Event Center
4305 Middle Road, Winchester

FRIDAY, APRIL 4, 2025
6:00 – 8:00 PM

No cost to attend
All ages welcome!

Join OPC for dinner, entertainment, and a program as we celebrate the kick-off of this opportunity to expand our church.

Please RSVP by Friday, March 21 to
opc.rsvp@gmail.com

NEW CONTACT INFO?

Have you moved within the last year or two? Have you gotten a new home and/or cell phone number? Have you cancelled a landline or old cell phone number? Do you have a new email address?

Please contact the church office (540-662-1843 or office@opequonchurch.org) to ensure we have your accurate contact info before we print the OPC Photo Directory!

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2025

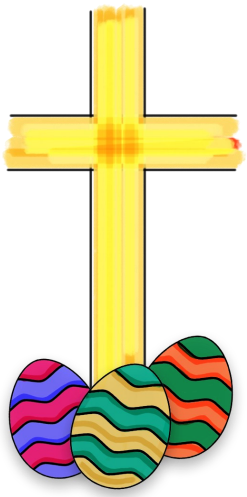
Spring is coming, which will lead into SUMMER and that means Vacation Bible School time! We are already planning for those warm evenings of summer and VBS fun.

Our fun-filled week of VBS is scheduled to happen June 16—19 (Monday—Thursday), 5:00 PM—7:30 PM. This year's exciting theme is "COMPASSION CAMP: CHANGING THE WORLD WITH LOVING KINDNESS!" Vacation Bible School will be available for 4-year-olds through 8th grade with an adult class as well.

Registration will begin next month.

APRIL DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

- April Ministry Team Night—Tuesday, April 1
- "A Place at the Table" Celebration Dinner—Friday, April 4 (West Oaks)
- Confirmation Sunday, Communion, & Opie's Playhouse—Sunday, April 6
- Palm/Passion Sunday—Sunday, April 13
- Maundy Thursday Communion Service—Thursday, April 17 (7:00 PM)
- Good Friday Reflections—Friday, April 18 (noon)
- Good Friday Tenebrae Service—Friday, April 18 (7:00 PM)
- Easter Sunrise Service & Breakfast—Sunday, April 20 (6:00 AM)
- Family Easter Event & Breakfast—Sunday, April 20 (9:45 AM)
- Resurrection Day Worship—Sunday, April 20 (8:30 AM & 11:00 AM)
- Church Office Closed—Easter Monday, April 21



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

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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March 2025

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
Director of Youth & Young Adults	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

OPEQUON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
217 Opequon Church Lane
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

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