



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

September 2025

www.opequonchurch.org

540-662-1843

office@opequonchurch.org

WORSHIP AT-A-GLANCE

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

Sunday, September 7
"Grandparent's Day"

† Psalm 105:1-6;
Hebrews 11:1-3
Sermon: "Prepared by the Word"
Rev. Bronwen Boswell,
Shenandoah Presbytery General
Presbyter / Stated Clerk
Communion; CCAP

9:45 AM Staff Transitions Q & A
(Fellowship Hall)

2:00 PM "Blessing of the Pets"
(Picnic Shelter)

Sunday, September 14

† Exodus 32:7-14;
Luke 15:1-10
Sermon: "God's Heart Revealed"

1:30 PM Spring Arbor Worship

Sunday, September 21

"Back to Church" Sunday:
† Psalm 133;
Hebrews 10:19-25
Sermon: "Life Is Better... Together!"
Blood Pressure Checks

Sunday, September 28

† Jeremiah 32:1-3, 6-15;
Luke 16:19-31
Sermon: "Investments"
Baptism (8:30 AM)
4 Cents A Meal; GIFT Event

MINISTRY TEAM NIGHT

Tuesday, September 2

6:00 PM Meal: Costco Pizza, Salad, Pudding

6:30 PM Youth Mission Trip Presentation

7:00 PM Devotions & Team Meetings



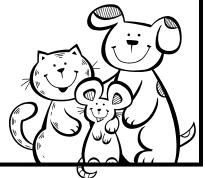
BLESSING OF THE PETS

Sunday, September 7
2:00 PM—4:00 PM

You and your critters are invited to join Pastor Tracie Martin
for a special Blessing of the Pets in the Picnic Shelter
on Sunday, September 7, at 2:00 PM.

Please bring cats in their carriers
and dogs on their leashes.

Goody bags await your blessed pets!



NEWCOMERS' CLASS

Are you new to Opequon Church or our
community? Would you like to know more about
the heritage, mission, and vision of Opequon
Church? Do you have some questions about
what, where, when, why, and how we do things
within this faith community? Would you like to
become a member of Opequon?

If you said "yes!" to any of these questions, you are cordially
invited and encouraged to attend our next Newcomers' Class
on Sunday, September 14, at 4:00 PM in the Bageant Room.

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





NOTES FROM THE PASTOR:

"Platooning"

Dear Friends in Christ,

When Carole and I began our vacation in July, our first evening stop was Cooperstown, New York. I don't know if you have been to Cooperstown, but it is a picturesque village at the foot of pristine Otsego Lake, 60 miles west of Albany, 67 miles southeast of Syracuse, and 145 miles northwest of New York City. Of course, Cooperstown is most known as the home of the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum; hence, the reason for our visit. I highly recommend the Hall of Fame, a treasure trove for all baseball fans, an incredible collection of all things, baseball. But all things baseball does not end at the museum: it extends to the entire town, because everything throughout the town is about baseball, so much so that Carole, who was so gracious about this first excursion, had enough of baseball by evening. When we went to the Fly Creek Cider Mill & Orchard the following morning (we both highly recommend this stop!), we laughed at the sign at our parking space. (seen here →)



While moving in and out of the stores with all the baseball paraphernalia, I picked up a new book: *After the Miracle: The Lasting Brotherhood of the '69 Mets*, written by Art Shamsky, a '69 Met himself. I've been a Mets fan as long as I can remember, since we were both born in the same year, 1962—the Mets in April, me in September. Of course, I knew about the "1969 Miracle Mets," the first expansion team to win the World Series, beating the mighty, heavily-favored Baltimore Orioles 4 games to 1. Since I was only 7 then, I remember the older kids listening on a transistor radio (I'm really dating myself!) to some of the games on the bus ride home from school. Exciting doesn't come close to describing how the Mets whipped up a frenzy across the country that year, overcoming their loveable loser image and providing more than just a miracle in baseball, but symbolizing hope for the underdog and for a war-torn, conflicted, beat-up nation, following up on the lunar landing back in July. What I discovered in the book about that team was that the key to their success was the absolute reliance of their manager, Gil Hodges, on teamwork, on platooning players in positions. In baseball, a platoon is a method of sharing playing time, where two players are selected to play a single defensive position. Usually, one platoon player is right-handed, and the other is left-handed, batting on days against

their opposite handed pitching counterparts. The Mets had star pitchers, but no incredibly stellar hitters, so platooning, teamwork, building and working off their strengths was the key to their success.

At Opequon Church, teamwork is not only preferred; it is necessary, essential, and required. We need each person's gifts, each person's time and talents, each person's commitment to share and offer for the common good. We are not a church of lone rangers, "baseball stars." We are a church, a team, of can-do, work together, love and serve Jesus disciples, who can make a difference together. We often platoon to get the job done, to help one another, to encourage and challenge each other as we walk together and with Jesus. This month, we'll think about that more deeply in worship, education, fellowship, and service. We'll celebrate "Back to Church Sunday" on September 21 with the theme, "Life Is Better... Together." And this fall, I hope you will consider how you will build and work off your strengths, joining the team, for a great season ahead.

Together in Christ's Service,

David

PASTOR TRACIE'S JUST THINKIN'...

About Stewardship!

Every year I look forward to September. It has become my favorite month. Why? Because I can enjoy our porch every day. The high heat is over, the grackles have moved on so I can watch the birds at the feeder, days are still not too short, and things have not completely ramped up at the church. It's a sweet break before Stewardship and the holidays become all too real.

I do most of my Christmas shopping in September. I also make sure to finish our annual Generosity Campaign.

By now, most of you know that writing and promoting our annual stewardship outreach is a true passion for me. I know most pastors find this odd, but for me, this important outreach is a strong center of faith.

For me, stewardship is a way of life that includes, but is not at all limited to, writing a check. It is a means of working toward a just world by using the things of life responsibly and mindfully. It is a way to show God that we appreciate the many gifts of life; a way to help and consider people we care about in our own way. Our generosity is self-expression that is not self-centered.

My hobby of gluten-free cooking is part of my stewardship at OPC. The idea that a person could feel left out or could self-exclude from fellowship activities because of dietary limitations feels wrong to me. Being dairy-free falls into the same place. Several churches where I raised this concern decided not to bother modifying their menus. OPC welcomed gluten-free cooking. This is only one reason I decided to spend my time here.

Laughing is another aspect of generosity or stewardship for many of us. After years and years of formal, stilted letters asking for money, I find that cheerful giving is much better. Who ever said, "I give to the church because it's boring." When we can smile and laugh as we support our congregation, fun and generosity become essential. I think Jesus knew this and it made him more accessible to everyday people. I know most of us actively look forward to Sunday worship as well as events in between. We never know just what will happen, but we know we will be having a good time with old and new friends. Why do you think we all watch the "Time for All Ages" so closely. We can never be sure just what will come up. Pastor David isn't always sure either, which is even greater fun.

Singing in the Choir, offering special music, serving on Session, the Deacons, or a team are all aspects of stewardship. "Redding up the pews," volunteering for Logos, teaching or attending Faith Formation, participating in Senior Outreach, stopping to salt an icy walk, picking up a stray bottle or paper, planting, watering... it all counts. It all demonstrates generosity of spirit. How often do you give yourself credit for generosity of spirit? You should, because everything we do for the good of the church and God's people demonstrates **who** and **whose** we are.

Last, but hardly least, prayer is an especially essential aspect of generous stewardship as well as effective evangelism. Years ago, I served a congregation that was not invested in personal prayer. They prayed, of course, but active prayer seemed less important to them than to me. Then I met a woman of the church who made a list of everyone she believed needed her prayer and prayed over it several times a day. I mentioned her practice in a sermon without giving her name. People remarked that I did not need to give a name, because everyone knew how she prayed. I asked them if that was important. "Of course," they said. Then I asked them what it could mean to a community if there were to be a church that would pray for anyone who needed or asked for it. I told them that we could be known as the church that would pray for anyone. Before long, that congregation began talking more openly about prayer. They asked friends and neighbors about

their prayer needs. The phone at the church office started ringing with prayer requests. I was excited when I made a hospital visit and a nurse asked me if I belonged to "that church that would pray for anybody." Years later, that church is still known for its praying. It makes a difference.

How is this stewardship? The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines stewardship as "the conducting, supervising, or managing of something **especially** the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care." Prayer fits that definition well. It recognizes needs, addresses them, entrusts them to a higher power for additional care, and demonstrates the importance of the subject and/or person prayed about.

Our church needs our treasures to continue to do God's business—obviously! No one wants to broil in summer worship or freeze in the winter. Our time and talents are equally needed. We need to define "time and talent" carefully. There are fewer limits than one might imagine. Our lives of faith must be lives of generous stewardship in many, many ways. Here at Opequon Pres, as far as I can see, they truly are.

—Tracie

EXTENDING OUR EMPATHY & CHRISTIAN LOVE TO...



- ✧ Chris and Therese Collins upon the death of Chris' father, Verne Collins, on August 4.
- ✧ Dan Cammer upon the death of his wife and OPC member, Ellie Cammer, on August 18.
- ✧ Mitch and Pam Orndorff, upon the death of Mitch's brother, Jeff Orndorff, on August 23.

"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

CELEBRATION OF LIFE: BILL HEAVNER

A Celebration of Life Memorial Service for OPC Staff Member Bill Heavner will be on Saturday, September 13, at 11:00 AM in the Sanctuary; preceded by a family and friends visitation in the Gathering Area at 10:00 AM. A luncheon will be held in the Fellowship Hall following the service. As designated by the Heavner family, all memorial contributions given in Bill's name will go towards the Opequon Church Building Fund.

MOVED & WANT TO KEEP IN TOUCH...

Tom & Rhoda Tandy
112 S. Ridge Road, Littleton, NC 27850

NEWS ABOUT OUR MUSIC MINISTRY:

Laura Swartz, *Interim Organist/Pianist*

The Session is very pleased to announce that, on Sunday, August 31, Laura Swartz joined us as our Interim Organist/Pianist. She will be playing for Sunday morning worship services and practicing with and accompanying the Choir. Laura will be serving in this role until the end of the year. Laura began worshipping with us in August and some of you may have already met her. We hope everyone will join us in extending a warm Opequon welcome to Laura!



Here are some things Laura wanted to share with all of us:

Music has always been an important part of my life. I learned to love symphonies and piano concertos in my home before I even went to first grade. My life as a church musician started a wee bit later. I had my first organ playing job when in the eighth grade. Since graduating with a Bachelor Degree in Music Education and a Master of Fine Arts in Music, I have served in 10 different denominations as full-time Organist and Choir Director or Supply Organist. I have even played and sung for High Holy Days at the Synagogue in Scranton, PA. I have also sung in church and community choirs and have composed music for choir, flute and piano, and Children's Choir.

Larry and I have been married for 54 years, have 2 sons, and 7 grandchildren in Arlington, VA and York, ME. Born in Pittsburgh, PA, I am still trying to figure out how I have lived for the past 27 years south of the Mason-Dixon Line.

Other activities I enjoy are: sewing, knitting, swimming laps, playing cards, and sharing a glass of wine with friends on our porch in Lake Frederick. "Skol!"

Garrett Jones, *OPC Organist/Pianist*

The Session and Personnel Team would also like to joyously announce that Garrett Jones has been called to join our church staff as OPC's Organist/Pianist beginning January 1, 2026. Garrett is currently serving as organist at Strasburg United Methodist Church for two services each Sunday and will fulfill his contract with them through the end of December.

Garrett grew up at Opequon Church—coming here with his family when he was beginning high school. He is a graduate of John Handley High School and the Shenandoah University Music Conservatory. Garrett has extensive experience in accompanying and conducting. He has served as Music Director at Riverside Theatre in Fredericksburg and here at the Shenandoah Summer Music Theatre.



Garrett has played at Opequon Church many times, as he did back in July, providing music for WOW for several summers and accompanying (and even directing from the piano!) our annual Christmas Cantata since 2017. Garrett is a theatre and music educator, currently serving as a staff accompanist with Frederick County Public Schools at Millbrook High School and the Theatre music director at John Handley High School. He has also been the Music Supervisor for Shenandoah Summer Music Theatre since 2022, wrapping up this season of *Singin' in the Rain* (as conductor and music director), *Little Women*, and *Million Dollar Quartet*. A DMV-area music director, conductor, and pianist, Garrett has over 100 production credits featuring over 80 different musicals since 2010. Garrett also plays keyboard with Robbie Limon and Tracey Wygal's Hank Williams & Patsy Cline Tribute Show, and Robbie's Buddy Holly Tribute Show! We look forward to welcoming him aboard as he joins our music staff in January.

WELCOME THROUGH THE WATERS OF BAPTISM



Through the waters of baptism, we welcomed Conner Harman Link and Henry Clayton Link into the baptized membership of Opequon Church on Sunday, August 10. Conner and Henry are the sons of Layne and Justin Link. May they be blessed by the grace and steadfast love of God and may we, as their church family, remember and uphold the promises of nurture and care we have made to them and their families.

CAR VACUUMING FUNDRAISER TO BENEFIT YOUTH MISSION TRIPS & CONFERENCES

Sand, mud, and other debris quickly make their way into cars over the summer, but fall is approaching, and we all want our vehicles to be clean once again! Pull up to the church parking lot curb on Sunday, September 14, 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 received will support our Youth Mission Trips, Camps, and Conferences. Thank you!



SUNDAY MORNING ADULT FAITH FORMATION RESUMES...

on Sunday, September 14, with a study called, "Live in Community," from our popular *Follow Me: Biblical Practices for Faithful Living* curriculum. This Faith Formation Class, facilitated by Ann Denison and David Witt, will meet in the Bageant Room at 9:45 AM each week.

When God looked at the first human in Genesis 2:18, God proclaimed that it was not good for the human to be alone and created a partner to provide companionship and company. Since the beginning, humans have lived in some type of community. At their best, these communities work together to share abundant life. The church is a living community committed to gathering together across differences, feasting and listening together, uplifting those in need, and supporting those who depart. This vision of believers worshiping God together as they learn to live a life worthy of the gospel is strong evidence that life in community is intrinsic to being a Christian. Explore what living in community truly means—think about joining us—and plan on being present on September 14.

"GIFT" EVENT— Sunday, September 28 at 9:45 AM (Fellowship Hall)

"GIFT" means "Generations in Faith Together" as all ages come together one Sunday a month for a themed inter-generational experience. The theme for this month is "Let's Wonder—Be Curious." We all have questions to ask. We all have questions to answer. Being CURIOUS and WONDERING can be fascinating. Did you know that the Bible records over 300 questions of Jesus! No worries, we can't answer all those at one time, but we can wonder and be curious ourselves. Come enjoy some refreshments and thought-provoking conversation along with lots of laughter woven throughout. Your day is bound to be enriched by your time at GIFT. Everyone is invited.



THE LATEST IN LOGOS: REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

The 28th year of Logos at Opequon begins this month on September 17. Our opening theme will be "WE BEGIN AGAIN!" Logos is open to all 4-year-olds through 12th grade. It is a midweek miracle that happens each Wednesday, September through March. The overall theme for our 28th year is "CHOOSE JOY," based on John 15:11. We are so excited to get started with this new year. We celebrate having new and returning staff along with new young people and returning young people.

A registration/information display is in the Gathering Area and registration is also available online: <https://forms.gle/16Gmzs7NmGhoyAKE8>

Payment of fees is requested upon registering. Upon registering, a Logos Handbook will be sent to you with tons of great Logos information.

Do you have any specific questions we could answer to help you know more about Logos now? PLEASE ASK! Feel free to contact Carole Witt (dce@opequonchurch.org). We hope you will come onboard with us! We look forward to spending Wednesday evenings together.

LOGOS STAFF ORIENTATION

A Logos Staff Orientation will be held on Wednesday, September 3, at 5:30 PM in the Fellowship Hall. A full dinner will be provided, along with a full orientation of our upcoming Logos year. It's an evening of Food, Fun, and lots of important Facts about Logos. All Logos Staff are asked to attend. Childcare will be provided in our church nursery.

MICAH 6:8 "DO JUSTICE" CLASS

Beginning on September 11, this 8-week class will meet on Thursdays, 6:45 PM—7:45 PM, in the Bageant Room. Participants will find that Scripture is filled with the themes of liberating justice in ways that are bold and ways that are subtle, always returning to the need to bridge the gap between the world as it is and the world toward which God calls us. Contact Rebekah Witt (rwitt@opequonchurch.org) to let us know you plan to attend or if you have any questions.

OPIE'S PLAYHOUSE

Summer church hours may be coming to an end, but Opie's Playhouse will still be heading out to the playground! We also return to our normal time of 9:45 AM—10:45 AM, between the worship services.

Just for this month, we will meet on the second Sunday—September 14. (Please note this is a change from our normal first Sunday of the month playdate.)

We have had such great attendance over the summer months, and the kids absolutely love being outside! If you haven't tried us yet, please join us. Opie's Playhouse is a playgroup for young families and offers toys, snacks, drinks, a space to run and play, and a chance to chat and get to know one another. Being out on the playground in the morning sun is a great way to start the day. In the event of rain, we will meet in the Memorial Sanctuary. Hope to see you all there!

YOUTH GROUP (Grades 6-12)

September 14 (8:00 AM—1:00 PM):
Car Vacuuming Fundraiser

September 21 (12:30 PM—2:30 PM):
Youth Families' Kick-Off

YOUNG ADULTS

September 26: Game Night

ADULT CHOIR REHEARSALS

Are you interested in singing during Sunday worship services? Come and join the Adult Choir as we lift our voices together in musical praise! Choir rehearsals are Wednesdays at 7:15 PM in the Sanctuary. If you have any questions, contact Susan Homan (srh1305@verizon.net).

ADULT TRIP TO:

SHEPHERDSTOWN & BAVARIAN INN

An adult trip to Shepherdstown for some touring around and lunch at the Bavarian Inn is scheduled for Monday, October 27. We will meet at the church at 9:30 AM to gather before we get ready to leave. The cost of the trip is \$10, plus lunch at the Bavarian Inn. If you would like to be part of this outing, please let Carole Witt know. (540-662-1843 or dce@opequonchurch.org).

MEN OF OPEQUON (MOO): GATHERING AT THE WITTS' THIS MONTH

The Men of Opequon (MOO) will meet on Monday, September 8, at 6:00 PM in the backyard at the home of David and Carole Witt. The Witt's live at 203 Halifax Court, Stephens City. We'll enjoy pork BBQ, macaroni & cheese, green beans, coleslaw, fruit, and brownies. Let's enjoy this gathering and share conversation while meeting outdoors. So that we will have a general number of who to expect so we can prepare, please RSVP to Pastor David Witt by talking with him, calling him, or emailing him (pastor@opequonchurch.org). All men are invited! If it rains, we'll meet in the sunroom at the Witts'.

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. We enjoyed a Backyard Picnic and Poolside Chats last month at Carole Witt's home.

GLOW will meet this month on Tuesday, September 9, at 6:00 PM in the Dell and Bageant Rooms for BUNCO NIGHT. Your 'ticket to play' will be one of the following: Dish Sponges, Dish Scrubbers (with a handle) or Clorox Wipes. All these items are things greatly used and needed at OPC, so they will be very beneficial. BUNCO is so easy to play and requires no difficult skills. This rolling dice game is learned in a matter of minutes! Drinks and Goodies will be provided. Give yourself a break and enjoy an evening with the ladies. There is a place for YOU.

FELLOWSHIP BOOK CLUB

Book Club will meet on Thursday, September 21, at 6:00 PM. The book selection and meeting location will be announced in the September bulletins as the details become available.

OLDER ADULT HAPPENINGS

We say farewell to another Summer and can look forward to beginning the Fall. September will be a great month at Opequon as many things kick back into gear. On Monday, September 8, the Older Adult Planning Team will meet at 9:30 AM in the Bageant Room. This meeting is for discussing and planning programs for Happy Days and other special events. The meeting is open to any older adult who would like to attend. Some morning goodies and coffee will be provided.

The monthly older adult fellowship time known as 'Happy Days' will be held on Wednesday, September 10 at NOON in the Fellowship Hall. Rotisserie chicken and drinks are provided. Bring a covered dish to share as part of the pot-luck lunch. Following lunch, we will be reminiscing about our HIGH SCHOOL DAYS. Bring an old high school yearbook! It will be such fun to think back to those school days and share good stories. All older adults are welcome. Come enjoy the friendships, a good lunch and all that is shared.

LIFE GOES ON

Life Goes On will meet at noon in Fellowship Hall on September 15. The main dish will be corn chowder, unless it is too hot for soup. Please plan to bring a side to pass or chip in a couple of bucks toward expenses. If you need a ride or have questions, contact the church office or Pastor Tracie Martin(assocopc@gmail.com).

CCAP COLLECTION

Throughout the month of September, Mission Ministry will be collecting peanut butter and jelly for CCAP. The box for CCAP donations is located in the Dell Room.

SENIOR OUTREACH MINISTRY

The Senior Outreach Ministry will meet Sunday, September 14, at 12:15 PM, by the church office door to load up the totes which will be brought to the Shenandoah Senior Apartments on Wilson Blvd, in Winchester. Donations of paper towels or bath tissue would be helpful.

ORCHARD VIEW BACKPACK PROGRAM

Our Mission Ministry's Orchard View Backpack Program ensures that children in need at Orchard View Elementary School have access to meals over the weekend. Once a month, volunteers gather in the Bageant Room at 8:30 AM to pack bags with two breakfasts, two lunches, milk, juice, peanut butter crackers, vegetables, and snacks—providing essential nourishment for the children. These bags are then delivered to the school by a church volunteer. Many hands make light work and we invite you to get involved! Here are our packing dates for the 2025-26 school year:

October 1	January 7, 2026	April 1
November 5	February 4	May 6
December 3	March 4	

If you are interested in helping pack the bags or want to learn more about this important initiative, contact our OPC Backpack Program Coordinator, Janet Murphy (murphy.janet@comcast.net). You can also support this program through making donations to OPC and indicating "Mission Backpack Program."

ROOTS & SHOOTS GARDEN NEWS

Community in Action—Day of Caring

We are excited to announce that we will be participating in United Way's "2025 Day of Caring" on Friday, September 19! Come on by the garden anytime between 8:00 AM—noon! We look forward to welcoming our community into the garden to work alongside us on various projects that help keep our space thriving.

Monthly Garden Projects

We would love to invite our Youth, Young Adults, Older Adults, MOO, GLOW, and any other Opequon team or group to consider setting a monthly garden project day. This could be something simple but meaningful, such as picking beans, weeding, or watering. We can help coordinate the details so it works for your group. This is a great way to get involved and make a difference!

Got Extra Veggies? Share the Harvest!

Do you have a personal garden at home and find yourself with extra produce? You are welcome to bring produce donations to the garden each Monday, 8:00 AM – 11:00 AM. Every contribution helps feed our community!



"TALK SAVES LIVES" PRESENTATION

Sunday, September 28

3:00 PM (Fellowship Hall)

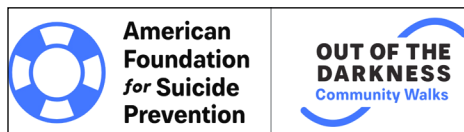
AFSP's signature education program, *Talk Saves Lives: An Introduction to Suicide Prevention*, provides participants with life-saving knowledge and confidence critical to preventing suicide.

This presentation will cover what we know about this leading cause of death, the most up-to-date research on prevention, and what we can all do to help save lives.

Participants will learn the common risk factors for suicide, how to spot the warning signs in others, and practical examples for how to engage in critical conversations and connect to resources.

Join us to learn how to keep ourselves, our loved ones, and those in our community safe. When it comes to suicide prevention—talk truly can help save lives.

RSVP to Winter Brooks (winterbrooks.afsp@gmail.com).



"OUT OF THE DARKNESS"

Stephens City Community Walk for Suicide Prevention

Saturday, October 11

The annual "Out of the Darkness" Community Walk for Suicide Prevention in Stephen's City will be held on Saturday, October 11. OPC is once again sponsoring a team to walk and help raise money for suicide awareness and prevention.

Suicide takes many lives each year and was the 11th leading cause of death in the US in 2021, with an average of 132 per day, as well as 1.7 million reported suicide attempts. It is the second leading cause of deaths in Virginia for both the 10-24 and the 25-35 age groups.

The route is a pleasant, 1.2 mile walk through Sherando Park. It will begin and end at the Sherando High School Stadium, with a handicap accessible option. The Mission Team has committed \$500 toward the event, and we hope to match that with donations for our team. (see flyers in Gathering Area for more info)

⇒ Register to walk or donate online at: <https://afsp.org/stephenscity>

⇒ Or contact OPC's Team Captain, Mike Nutry (gernurse@aol.com).

CHURCH OFFICE STAFF EMAIL ADDRESSES

To reach a staff member or if a pastoral concern arises, contact the church office (540-662-1843 or office@opequonchurch.org) or note who is out of the office and email one of the pastors directly and we will get back to you in a timely manner. If you email a staff member and do not hear back within a couple business days, please call us to verify the message was received.



Pastor, David Witt	pastor@opequonchurch.org
Parish Associate, Tracie Martin	assocopc@gmail.com
Church Office / Office Administrator, Rachel Lesink	office@opequonchurch.org
Finance Administrator, Ken Smiy	ksmiy@opequonchurch.org
Director of Christian Education, Carole Witt	dce@opequonchurch.org
Director for Youth & Young Adult Ministries, Rebekah Witt	rwitt@opequonchurch.org
Director of Music, Susan Homan	srh1305@verizon.net
Facilities Coordinator, Robert Sydnor	sexton@opequonchurch.org

IMPORTANT: Messages sent via our church database (ex/ OPC's Tuesday/Friday Messages) use an outgoing-only "notifications@onrealmmail.org" address. **Please do NOT send any messages to notifications@onrealmmail.org — we cannot receive them!** Also, please note that the sender's name appearing next to that notifications address does change based on who is sending the message.

≧ GRAHAM TAYLOR OPC-WATTS ≦ CONCERT & MEAL FUNDRAISER EVENT

Location

- ▶ OPC Picnic Shelter
- ▶ Some seating available
- ▶ Bring your own lawn chairs or blankets
- ▶ In the event of rain, dinner will be relocated indoors to the Fellowship Hall and concert to the Sanctuary.

Parking

- ▶ Please park in the church parking lots first.
- ▶ Overflow parking will be in the lot by the Picnic Shelter.

About the Band

- ▶ Murphy's Bluegrass Bandits from Winchester is led by Murphy Hicks Henry, a long-time performer and developer of The Murphy Method. The band has been together since early 2022 and has performed at a variety of venues in Winchester/ Northern Shenandoah Valley and in Fairfax County.
 - ♪ Murphy Hicks Henry: guitar, fiddle, lead & harmony vocals
 - ♪ Matt Occhuzzo: guitar, lead & harmony vocals
 - ♪ Doug Sherburne: banjo, bass vocals
 - ♪ Kathy Holliday: bass, lead & harmony vocals
- ▶ Murphy's Bluegrass Bandits are graciously donating their time and music to support this fundraising event. As a thank you, a "tip jar" will be available for those who wish to show their appreciation to the band.

Proceeds

- ▶ Benefiting OPC's WATTS Hosting Fund & WATTS
- ▶ For more info about OPC's partnership with WATTS, please reach out to Heather Burton (mcpitch5@hotmail.com) or any of our Mission Ministry Team Members.

Saturday, September 20

5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

(OPC Picnic Shelter)

CONCERT FEATURING: Murphy's Bluegrass Bandits

Performing: 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm

CONCERT TICKETS: \$20 each

~ Kids 18 and under are FREE ~

Purchase Concert Tickets:

- ✓ *Online*—scan the QR code below or click "giving" on OPC's website, fill out payment info and select "GT-WATTS Concert" Fund
- ✓ *Cash/check in the worship offering*—label as "GT-WATTS Concert"
- ✓ *Church Office*—during normal office hours
- ✓ *At the door*—cash or check only

OPTIONAL:

Fried Chicken Dinner

Menu Includes: Fried Chicken, Cole Slaw, Red-Skinned Potato Salad, Soda, & Cookies

DINNER TICKETS: \$10 each

~ **AVAILABLE FOR PRE-PURCHASE ONLY** ~

Purchase Dinner Tickets by September 14:

- ✓ *Online*—scan the QR code or click "giving" on OPC's website, fill out the payment info and select "GT-WATTS Dinner" Fund
- ✓ *Cash/check in the worship offering*—label as "GT-WATTS Dinner"
- ✓ *Church Office*—during normal office hours

Purchase Tickets:

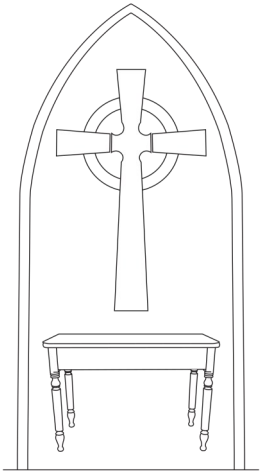


opequonchurch.org



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

"Grace"



A Place at the Table

It is with God's **grace** that we as God's people have discovered OPC, and OPC called to us. It is with God's **grace** that we, as a community of believers, continue to honor the act of giving as a principle of our faith.

It is with God's **grace** that we recognize the challenges of our humanity and continue to fervently pray that faith will intercede. It is with God's **grace** that we acknowledge that growth within our community allows us to facilitate physical expansion of our walls. It is with God's **grace** that our congregation, each of you, have graciously accepted the call to share funds that will allow us to move forward in this expansion.

It is with God's **grace** that we willingly and freely tithe our pledges to allow our faith to most assuredly go beyond our walls, directly into our community and around the world in this great time of need.

It is with God's **grace** that "A Place at the Table" has drawn us closer as a community of believers.

With prayers for continued **grace**,
Mitch Orndorff, *OPC Capital Campaign Chair*



Dear OPiE,

Are three new sets of interior stairs part of our new building? I saw a design schematic and it seemed to indicate three sets of steps from downstairs to up.

— Curious

Dear Curious,

I just looked at the schematics and I was not sure about the stairs, so I asked Pastor David.

He told me that two currently existing staircases will be changed. The staircases are now outside, leading into the building. They are hard to keep up. They collect water when it rains and ice in the winter. We cannot eliminate these exits because of county law, but we can move them inside and eliminate the mess. The third staircase you saw was probably the one for the playground when we earlier expected to build it outside the nursery. Now the playground will be moved to a better and less expensive location.

It makes sense to keep as many staircases inside as possible to me because of snakes. Inside stairs are less available to black snakes and I am quite afraid of blacksnakes. When I was out in the field, before returning to OPC, those black snakes tried to eat me. I survived by hiding and making false mice out of mud and leaves. I know they are still unhappy with me, so I do not want them anywhere near the new Fellowship Hall. I don't want to be afraid when I clean up the crumbs left from events.

— OPiE

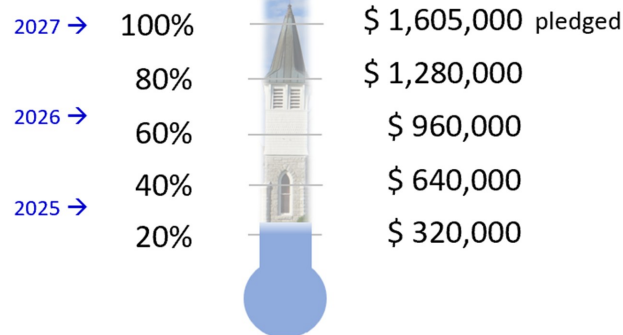
Dear OPiE,

You are very observant to notice the new stairwells. As part of the addition project, we intend to replace two outside sets of steps with two enclosed, interior stairwells. Both of these emergency exit stairs are required by the Virginia Building Code. They are a crucial part of a building's safety system, providing an unobstructed path for everyone to exit during emergencies like fires. We will not be building three sets of interior stairwells. Since our property is not nice and flat, we will have a few locations where outside steps are needed to help you get to the ground, as from the new kitchen to the dumpsters. This was a great question, and thanks for asking.

—Greg Eisenhauer

BUILDING CAMPAIGN NOTES

Building Campaign receipts now total \$383k, which is 23.9% of the total amount pledged. On the thermometer, the years are listed as guides, dividing the pledge total evenly by 3. Many pledges, however, are not set on a regular giving schedule and will not be received evenly over the 3-year period.



Opequon Presbyterian Church Financial Summary for the period ended July 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	54,943	529,914	352,504	60.1%
420000 Other Income	1,800	134	983	817	54.6%
Total 400000 Income	884,218	55,077	530,897	353,321	60.0%
Expenses					
500000 Personnel Costs					
510000 Installed Pastors	228,422	15,326	128,369	100,053	56.2%
520000 Other Ministerial Staff	143,633	15,116	88,046	55,587	61.3%
530000 Administrative Staff	155,104	12,342	88,302	66,802	56.9%
Total 500000 Personnel Costs	527,159	42,785	304,717	222,442	57.8%
600000 Other Ministries					
610000 Christian Education	15,050	378	7,601	7,449	50.5%
620000 Congregational Care	2,800	(94)	626	2,174	22.4%
630000 Evangelism	2,250	(80)	699	1,551	31.1%
640000 Fellowship	3,800	40	2,048	1,752	53.9%
650000 Mission	77,000	4,157	37,657	39,343	48.9%
660000 Worship	8,000	638	2,304	5,696	28.8%
Total 600000 Other Ministries	108,900	5,040	50,935	57,965	46.8%
Total 700000 Church Administration	148,385	11,479	94,473	53,912	63.7%
Total Expenses	784,444	59,304	450,125	334,319	57.4%
Net Operating Income (Expense)	99,774	(4,226)	80,772	19,002	81.0%
920000 Other Income	18,675	1,646	12,577	6,098	67.3%
930000 Other Expenses	118,449	9,706	68,729	49,720	58.0%
Net Other Income (Expense)	(99,774)	(8,060)	(56,152)	(43,622)	56.3%
Income Greater Than (Less Than) Expenses	0	(12,286)	24,621		

	7/31/25
Cash	\$ 178,972
Sanctuary Mortgage Principal Balance	\$ 324,060

Preparing For Winter: A Fall Checklist for Your Lawn and Garden



Lawn

- ☐ Cut Grass Short
- ☐ Fertilize
- ☐ Eliminate Weeds
- ☐ Seed Bare Spots
- ☐ Aerate
- ☐ Remove Leaves



Garden

- ☐ Divide and Plant
- ☐ Keep Watering
- ☐ Dig Up
- ☐ Cut Back
- ☐ Pull Weeds
- ☐ Till the Soil
- ☐ Feed and Cover

****This calendar is subject to change. The most current schedule is on the OPC website here: www.opeonchurch.org/get-involved SEPTEMBER 2025**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31 9:30am - Hymn Sing @ Sanctuary 10am - Worship & Live Stream @	1 Church Office Closed Labor Day	2 5pm - Tech Team Meeting @ 6pm - Ministry Team Night @ 6:30pm - Mission Trip Presentation	3 9:30am - Staff Meeting @Bageant 5:30pm - Logos Staff Orientation @ 7:15pm - Choir @ Sanctuary	4 10:30am - Tai Chi @ Memorial 6:30pm - Sherando Food Pantry @ 7pm - ART Team Meeting @ 7pm - Vision Team @ Bageant	5	6
7 Communion 8:30am - Worship & Live Stream @ 9:45am - Staff Transition Q&A @ 11am - Worship @ Sanctuary 2pm - Blessing of the Pets @	8 9:30am - Older Adult Ministry 6pm - MOO @ Witt's Home 6pm - Windsong @ Sanctuary	9 9:30am - Tuesday Morning Mission 11am - Retired Teachers @Picnic 6pm - GLOW @Bageant Room/De	10 12pm - Happy Days @ Fellowship 7:15pm - Choir @ Sanctuary	11 10:30am - Tai Chi @ Memorial 6:45pm - Micah 6:8 Faith	12	13 10am - Heavner Visitation @ 11am - Heavner Memorial Service 12pm - Heavner Lunch @
14 8am - Car Vacuuming Fundraiser 8:30am - Worship & Live Stream @ 9:45am - Faith Formation @ 9:45am - Opie's Playhouse @ 11am - Worship @ Sanctuary 12:15pm - Senior Outreach 1:30pm - Spring Arbor Worship @ 4pm - Newcomers Class @	15 Rebekah Away-Vacation NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 12pm - Life Goes On @ Fellowship 4pm - Discipleship Team @ 6pm - Safety Team @Bageant 6pm - Windsong @ Sanctuary	16 7pm - Session Mtg @Bageant	17 9:30am - Staff Meeting 4:30pm - Logos 7:15pm - Choir @ Sanctuary	18 9am - WANC Tea @ Youth Spot 10:30am - Tai Chi @ Memorial 10:30am - WANC Meeting @ 6:30pm - Sherando Food Pantry 6:45pm - Micah 6:8 Faith	19 Day of Caring @ Roots & Shoots	20 2pm - Mohimann Wedding @ 5pm - Graham Taylor Fundraiser @
21 Back to Church Sunday Blood Pressure Checks 8:30am - Worship & Live Stream @ 9:45am - Faith Formation @ 11am - Worship @ Sanctuary 12:15pm - Youth Families' Kickoff	22 6pm - Windsong @ Sanctuary	23 3pm - TVOR Gathering 5:30pm - Highland Food Pantry @	24 4:30pm - Logos 7:15pm - Choir @ Sanctuary	25 10:30am - Tai Chi @ Memorial 10:30am - WANC Lunch @ 6pm - Fellowship Book Club 6:45pm - Micah 6:8 Faith	26	27
28 4 Cents a Meal Offering Baptism Stewardship Begins 8:30am - Worship & Live Stream @ 9:45am - GIFT Event @ Fellowship 11am - Worship @ Sanctuary 3pm - "Talk Saves Lives"	29 6pm - Windsong @ Sanctuary	30 8:30am - Backpack Program @ 9:30am - Staff Meeting @Bageant 4:30pm - Logos 6:30pm - Worship on Wednesday 7:15pm - Choir @ Sanctuary	1 8:30am - Backpack Program @ 9:30am - Staff Meeting @Bageant 4:30pm - Logos 6:30pm - Worship on Wednesday 7:15pm - Choir @ Sanctuary	2 10:30am - Tai Chi @ Memorial 6:30pm - Sherando Food Pantry @ 6:45pm - Micah 6:8 Faith 7pm - ART Team Meeting @ 7pm - Vision Team @ Bageant	3	4

NEW CONTACT INFO?

Have you moved recently?
Do you have a new email address?
Do you have a new home and/or cell phone number?
Have you cancelled a landline or old cell phone number?

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



STAFF SCHEDULE NOTES

September 1: **CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED** (Labor Day)
September 15-19: Rebekah Witt - Vacation

If a pastoral concern arises, please note who is available and call or email the church office, Pastor David Witt (pastor@opequonchurch.org), or Parish Associate Tracie Martin (assocpc@gmail.com).



COMING IN OCTOBER...

WORLD COMMUNION CELEBRATION

Sunday, October 5
8:30 AM & 11:00 AM

"Bread-Basket Buffet"

Watch the bulletins for details!



OUTSTANDING OCTOBER DATES TO NOTE:

- October 5: World Communion Sunday
Bread Basket Buffet
Peace & Global Witness Offering
Opie's Playhouse
- October 7: Ministry Team Night
- October 11: "Out of the Darkness" AFSP
Stephens City Community Walk
- October 12: Pastor Appreciation Day
- October 17-19: Youth Retreat
(Massanetta Springs)
- October 19: Chili Cook-Off
- October 26: Reformation Sunday
October GIFT Event
- October 29: Trunk & Treat



SAVE THE DATE:

**CHILI
COOK-OFF
OCTOBER 19
12:15 PM**



Are you ready for OPC's
Fellowship Chili Cook-Off?

Bring your favorite chili recipe to be judged or just come and enjoy a meal and fellowship on October 19 (after the 11:00 AM worship service)!

If you are interested in making some chili or being a judge, please contact Marj Praml (pramlmarjory550@gmail.com).

More details will be shared in the bulletins when the date gets closer.

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

OPEQUON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

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CHURCH STAFF

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

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

Website:

www.opequonchurch.org

Phone:

540-662-1843

Email:

office@opequonchurch.org

Church Office Hours:

Monday—Thursday
9:00 AM—2:00 PM

Friday
9:00 AM—12:00 PM

Sunday Worship Services:

8:30 AM & 11:00 AM