

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

March 2024

www.opequonchurch.org

540-662-1843

office@opequonchurch.org

SUNDAY WORSHIP AT-A-GLANCE

Sunday, March 3

The Third Sunday in Lent

† Psalm 19; Matthew 16:13-20

Sermon: "Praise the Mount"

Lenten Communion; CCAP

Sunday, March 10

The Fourth Sunday in Lent

† Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22; Matthew 16:21-23

Sermon: "I'm Fixed Upon It"

Daylight Savings Time Begins (Spring Forward!)

1:30 PM - Spring Arbor Worship

Sunday, March 17

The Fifth Sunday in Lent

† Psalm 145:1-9, 21; Mark 4:35-41

Sermon: "How Great Is Our God!"

LOGOS Sunday (11:00 AM);

Blood Pressure Checks;

Annual Potato Bake Luncheon (12:15 PM)

Sunday, March 24

Palm/Passion Sunday

† Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29; John 12:12-16

Sermon: "Songs of Loudest Praise"

Parade of Palms; Four Cents A Meal

Sunday, March 31

The Day of Resurrection, Easter Sunday

† Acts 10:34-43; Luke 24:1-12

Sermon: "And I Hope"

Communion; Special Music;

One Great Hour of Sharing;

Family Easter Event (9:45 AM)

SPRING FORWARD



**Daylight Saving Time Begins
Sunday, March 10!**

**Set your clocks ~~AHEAD~~
one hour at bedtime on ~~Saturday!~~**

SPECIAL HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Maundy Thursday Communion Service

Thursday, March 28 - 7:00 PM (Memorial Sanctuary)

† Exodus 12:1-14; John 13:1-17, 31b-35

Meditation: "Streams of Mercy"

Communion in the Round

Good Friday Reflections

Friday, March 29 - 12:00 PM—1:00 PM

† "Good Friday Meditations" in the Sanctuary
Reflection & Meditation with Music & Readings

Good Friday Tenebrae Service

Friday, March 29 - 7:00 PM (Sanctuary)

† Isaiah 52:13-53:12; John 18:1-19:42

Meditation: "Prone to Leave the God I Love"

Recessional with the Cross

Easter Sunrise Service

Sunday, March 31 - 6:30 AM (Pitcock Memorial Picnic Shelter)

Disciples at the Tomb; Sharing Worship with Our Neighbors from Kernstown UMC

† Mark 16:1-8

Meditation: "Easter's Morning Light"

Special Music; Flowering Cross;

Easter Breakfast (7:15 AM)



NOTES FROM PASTOR DAVID

“The Eyes of Lent”

*“Open the eyes of my heart, Lord;
open the eyes of my heart;
I want to see you;
I want to see you...
holy, holy, holy;
holy, holy, holy;
holy, holy, holy,
I want to see you.”*

Dear Friends,

While Lent just began, by the end of this month, we will journey through Holy Week, from Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday, with Maundy Thursday and Good Friday in-between. We recently moved from the fun and fellowship of a Pancake Party on Shrove Tuesday to the reflections of Ash Wednesday with ashes on the forehead giving perspective on life and death, mortality, and humility. We will experience similar highs, lows, and in-betweens during Lent and Holy Week upcoming (March 24-31).

As you know, our Lenten theme this year is “Wandering Heart,” focusing on the disciple Peter through his encounters with Jesus. As the authors of our Sanctified Art worship series observe, “Like many of us, Peter has a wandering heart. His journey is not polished, or linear, or perfect, but he is always tethered to the love of God. When you look closely at Peter’s story, you find Jesus at each step along the way—offering him abundance, catching him when he begins to sink, challenging him when he stands in the way, washing his feet, predicting his betrayal, and offering him agape love. This Lent, we’re joining Peter in figuring out faith. We’re not idolizing or vilifying him; instead, we’re hoping to wander alongside him, open to what we might learn about Jesus (and ourselves) by stepping in his shoes.”

I pray that Lent and Holy Week will open the eyes of our hearts, will renew, reshape, and revive us as followers of Christ, especially as we close out the month of March on Easter Sunday, proclaiming, “He is alive. He is alive. He IS alive!”

My colleague, Pastor Michael Lindvall, once emphasized in a sermon I heard, “I preached defiance, for Easter is just that... resurrection, I preached, is the forever mocking of the last enemy... I can’t prove a thing, of course. I can only trust God to be God. And if God be God, this One who pulled five billion galaxies out of compacted matter, hurled planets into their places, and then imagined the lady slipper, can certainly

defy death in the twinkling of an eye. That is where you see such death-defying defiance – in the eyes.”

Lord, open the eyes of our hearts in this season of reflection and remembrance, as well as new life.

Together in Christ’s Service,

David

PASTOR JULIA’S MUSINGS

Friends in Christ,

At our Leadership Retreat this past month, the Elders, Deacons, and Staff of Opequon joined with Nancy Meehan-Yao, Shenandoah Presbytery’s Associate General Presbyter. We had great conversations filled with thoughtfulness, laughter, and fellowship.

Nancy brought in a subject called “liminal space.” Liminal space is the in-between time. It’s like standing on your covered porch; you’re not fully inside nor fully out. We were talking about how OPC is in the in-between, as are many of us. We are planning forward, looking forward to continued growth, and what’s coming next but we aren’t quite there yet. It’s also like this time of year; we are in this weird middle ground between winter and spring, when tulips are starting to come out of the ground, but there are still some snowy days.

WOW—what an amazing topic as we come towards Lent. Lent is also liminal, it’s the season that we walk with Jesus to the cross, but we aren’t quite there yet. We aren’t yet in Jerusalem. We aren’t yet at the cross. We aren’t yet at the resurrection. It’s a bit unnerving, a bit uncomfortable, just like any in-between really is. We are filled with anticipation, but we have to be patient. We have to sit in the liminal, the journey because that’s what this sacred time is for. This time of the Christian year is ALL about the journey. So what is your Lenten journey going to look like this year? Where do you want to sit with God in this journeying time?

I know for me, that I am determined to actually keep up a devotional. I’m the kind of person who has great hopes to read a devotional every day, but get distracted and then drop off, before furiously picking it back up and catching up (most of the time) right before the season ends. I’m hopeful, because I just bought a beautiful new devotional by one of my favorite authors, Kate Bowler, that I can keep that up as well as the OPC devotional that Carole put together!

The other practice I want to deepen this Lent is truly about journeying. I want to increase quiet walking time. I walk the dog all the time, but am often times distracted by my phone. This season, I want to leave the phone off and use walks as a time of reflection and prayer.

What do you want to add or let go of during your journey with Jesus this Lent? Let us be in this journey together, walking with each other as we go to the cross as a congregation and Church, knowing there will be 'alleluias' on the other side.

Blessings, Pastor Julia

Julia

PASTOR TRACIE'S JUST THINKIN'

*Advent tells us Christ is near;
 Christmas tells us Christ is here!
 In Epiphany, we trace
 all the glory of God's grace.
 Then three Sundays to prepare
 for a time of fast and prayer,
 That in Lent, we may begin
 earnestly to mourn our sin.
 Holy week and Easter then,
 tell who died and rose again.
 O that happy Easter day!
 "Christ is risen indeed," we say!*

I learned that song as a child. In the Episcopal church I attended, the seasons of the church year were very, VERY important. We celebrated most of the saint's days. Were you aware that there are several Saint Julias and Saint Davids, but no Saint Tracie? Whoda thunk! Saint David is the patron



saint of Wales. Saint Julia is the patron saint of Corsica. The closest thing to sainthood under the name of Tracie is a footnote saying that most "Tracies" are Christian.

As a child I loved Lent... at the beginning. Everyone in the family gave up something, generally a favorite food. Keeping that fast guaranteed our holiness and repentance. Of course, Sundays do not belong to Lent so we had a reprieve once a week, which helped.

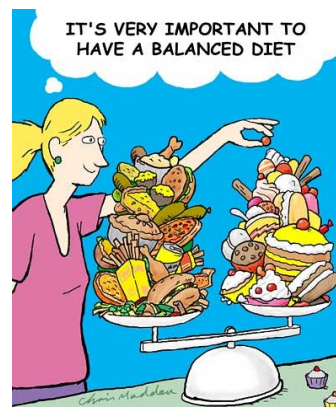


Lent has become a bit more complex over the years, but it has also become more essential to my soul. The easy tradition of avoiding chocolate during the week has been replaced with a resolve to learn or do something that will make a

difference in my or someone else's life. Sundays are no longer a day off from the fast-of-the-year.

AARRGGHH! One year, I decided to change my language. Remember, I was a florist. Florists I knew had rather a coarse use of English. It was necessary to use the required adjectives if one was to be taken seriously at the wholesale house I used. Language has always been my strength. I needed to make a serious change if I was to be accepted at seminary. That was a tough 40 days... let me tell you. I still have stress dreams where I slip.

Not all fasts work. The intention to walk for at least an hour a day wound up leaving me three days in which to catch up for many, many days without exercise. The decision not to lose my temper with a particularly difficult person in my life finished with me firing her days before Easter. We won't even consider talking about the many Lenten diets I tried. Disaster and remorse!



When you think about it, it's a good thing God is God. Who else could put up with the annual slips and misinterpretations? I understand Lent to be a time of preparation. Easter is a big deal! Jesus did not hover in front of the cross as is depicted in many period paintings. Those nails went through his wrists. The pain he suffered was real... humanly real. If we are to take Good Friday and Easter seriously, we need to get real about what happened... and we need to be prepared! Jesus did not give up chocolate... he gave up his life in a horrid way. He did not relax on Sunday and take a break from the situation... he rose from the dead! The concept is overwhelming! We should be overwhelmed.

Religion has a lot of details, practices, and rules. Many of our details, practices, and rules differ from denomination to denomination, but one thing is universal for Christians. That one thing is Easter. We can argue about how it happened, where it happened, and who experienced what, but there is no denying that the Easter event is still affecting humanity 2,000 years later. As my good friend Dora used to say, "All the rest is window dressing."

-Tracie

SESSION MEETING HIGHLIGHTS FROM FEBRUARY 20, 2023

- ✦ Session welcomed new Ruling Elders Rebecca Agbayani, Ben Brooks, and Jack Marquis to their first official Session meeting, joining re-elected Elder Marj Praml who begins her second term.
 - ✦ Stewardship and Finance reported that giving in January 2024 was strong. Session approved the January Financial report and recommended transfer of \$60k of excess cash from operating checking account to the Reserve Fund. The internal Annual Financial Review was completed in January.
 - ✦ Leaders from the Stewardship and Finance, Buildings and Grounds and Vision Teams, developed a 3-year budgetary tool to help prospectively track priorities, costs and timelines to assist Session with funding decisions for larger projects outside the annual budget.
 - ✦ Technology and Communications—Rebekah Witt is facilitating the team. Plans for the 2024 phone/WIFI system upgrade are in progress. Reconfiguration of the Live-Stream Desk Area in accordance with accessibility and emergency exit regulations is under discussion.
 - ✦ Personnel and Administration welcomed Brenda Steffens to the team. Look for future newsletter articles highlighting our wonderful staff (Staff of the Month).
 - ✦ Christian Education Ministry Team is busy planning VBS set for June 9-12, 2024. Session approved the 2024 VBS Leadership Team (Carole Witt, Rebekah Witt, Carrie Rockwell, Winter Brooks, Linda Shimer, and Layne Link) and VBS theme, “Something Old, Something New, Something Changed” that focuses on the story of Abraham and Sarah using a curriculum planned/written by the Christian Education Team.
 - ✦ Deacons/Congregational Care Ministry—The 2024 Deacon Retreat will be held at Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Delaplane on March 2 (9:15 AM—2:00 PM).
 - ✦ Visioning Ministry—The Pedestrian Path project proposal application (written by Alan McKay) was submitted to the Rappahannock Electric Coop’s Power of Change Program to secure a grant to fund this project.
 - ✦ Mission Ministry—Opequon’s Medical Missionary Team, led by Max and Rebecca Agbayani, is busy packing donated medical supplies and non-medical donations for their Dominican Republic Medical Missionary Trip ,
- March 2-16, 2024, following the team’s commissioning on Sunday February 25, 2024.
 - ✦ Are you looking for a way to get involved at OPC? Evangelism Ministry Team continues to seek volunteers to serve as Hospitality Greeters. Fellowship Ministry Team welcomes new volunteers to assist with many exciting fellowship events planned in 2024.
 - ✦ Session approved a contract with Shallow Creek Electrical Services for \$3,800 to complete an electrical inspection and safety assessment of all wiring/panels as recommended by Buildings and Grounds.
 - ✦ Session approved 2024 vacation days for Pastor David (September 14-17) and Pastor Julia (May 3-5; June 14-20, and July 22-24) as requested.
 - ✦ The Annual 2023 Statistical Report approved by Session was filed with the PCUSA by Clerk of Session Ann Smith; a copy is included in Opequon’s Annual Report.
 - ✦ Pastor Tracie expressed her sincere appreciation to Session for the kind letter of thanks received from Clerk Ann Smith on behalf of Session in recognition of her creativity and passionate leadership that resulted in the highly successful 2023/2024 Stewardship Generosity Campaign.
 - ✦ Opequon’s first 2024 New Member Class is scheduled for February 25 and March 3.
 - ✦ Session endorsed Rich Schempp’s Hiett Global Misson Fund Grant Application to be submitted to Presbytery in support of the adult mission service trip to Tulcea, Romania June 21-July 2, 2024, to work with NOROC.
 - ✦ Elder Jack Marquis was elected by Session to serve as Commissioner to attend the Presbytery meeting held virtually on February 27 (9:30 AM—12:30 PM).
 - ✦ Session approved a request from member Amy Tubbs to hold the Camp Paddy Run banquet at Opequon in August (date to be determined).
 - ✦ Session voted to endorse the application process for the Roots and Shoots Rainwater Harvesting Proposal prepared by Alan McKay with anticipated Virginia state funding support.

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

MARCH MINISTRY TEAM NIGHT

Tuesday, March 5

- 6:00 PM Meal: parmesan-crust chicken, mashed potatoes, rolls, green beans, fruit, assorted cakes, & drinks
- 6:45 PM Devotions & Team Meetings



MUSIC AT NOON

On March 20, 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!

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 SUNDAY, APRIL 30.

PARENTS Night Out

Would you like a night off from taking care of your kids? Opequon Youth and Leaders will host Parents' Night Out at the church on Friday, March 22, 6:00 PM—9:00 PM. Kids will enjoy a provided dinner and games in the Fellowship Hall. Parents should register their children by March 18. Contact Rebekah Witt (wittrebekah2@gmail.com) to register or if you have any questions.

MARCH STAFF NOTES

- March 1:** Tracie Martin - away
March 16: David, Carole, & Rebekah Witt - away

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

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL JUNE 2024



It may still be a bit chilly outside right now, but we are planning for those warm evenings as summer begins and we hold VBS here at Opequon. Our fun-filled week of VBS is scheduled to happen June 9—12, 5:00 PM—7:30 PM. The theme this year is: “SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW, SOMETHING CHANGED, A FAMILY GREW!” We will be focusing on the story of Abraham and Sarah with very exciting activities happening each night! Vacation Bible School will be available for 4 year olds through 8th grade, with an adult class as well. Registration will begin on April 21. Stay tuned for more information.

LENTEN STUDY CONTINUING THIS MONTH (IN-PERSON & ZOOM)



Our Lenten study, "Make Disciples," continues Sunday mornings at 9:45 AM as a part of the Faith Formation Hour. Each class is 55 minutes in length, both in-person and via Zoom, and will be facilitated by Pastor David and Ann Denison. Making disciples is not inviting others to have an identical faith to one's own; it is an invitation to live into a faith that meets a person's spiritual needs and contributes to the goodness of the community. The six dimensions of this practice that we are discussing include: live like a disciple, go, be a witness, baptize, teach and learn about Jesus, and trust in Jesus' presence always. Join us!

LENT JIGSAW PUZZLE PROJECT

During Advent our challenge was to walk to Bethlehem by Christmas. This Lent, our challenge is to complete the Lent Jigsaw Puzzle by Easter! The puzzle table is set up in the Gathering Area. Anyone is invited to work on it and fit some pieces together. We will watch the picture come alive through the weeks of Lent. Surely, we can complete it by Easter Sunday. Please take care to keep all puzzle pieces on the table. Thank you.

LENT DEVOTIONAL BOOKLETS

A Lent Devotional, titled "Wandering Hearts and Beyond," is available for you to use during this new season of Lent. Daily readings focus on keeping our hearts connected to God and one another. 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 "Put Your Heart Into It," is available for young ones. This will help children focus on putting their heart into loving family, friends, home, God, and more. These were distributed at LOGOS to all young people and copies are available in the Gathering Area and Dell Room. Help yourself.

BRING FLOWERS FOR EASTER CROSSES

We will have two "flowering crosses" outside for Easter: the traditional one at the Pitcock Picnic Shelter for the sunrise service and the newer one, in the island outside the porch entrance to the Gathering Area. We added this newer one during the pandemic as a welcoming sign of new life. So, we invite you to bring fresh flowers to decorate one or both of the crosses, bringing flowers to the 6:30 AM Sunrise Service or bringing flowers to the 8:30 AM and 11:00 AM services.



MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE!

All are welcome to join with the Choir to sing on Easter Sunday at the 8:30 AM and/or 11:00 AM worship. Rehearsals are Wednesdays at 7:15 PM. Contact Susan Homan (srh1305@verizon.net or 540-664-8781) with any questions.

FAMILY EASTER EVENT

March 31 at 9:45 AM

Easter Sunday brings our annual Family Easter Event; March 31 at 9:45 AM in the Fellowship Hall.

Children and families are invited to come enjoy breakfast followed by the wonderful story titled "The Easter Fix," a short video, and more. And, of course, there is the **COLORFUL EGG HUNT** for children of all ages to collect eggs. Children are asked to bring a basket or bag to collect their eggs in. A goodie bag will be given to each child at the end of this fun event.





OPC STAFF SPOTLIGHT: Robert Sydnor

Have you met our Facilities Coordinator? (formerly known as our Sexton)

Robert Sydnor has been with OPC for 19 years. His title previously had been our Church Sexton. Recently, the Personnel Team decided it was time to provide him with a new more current job title and Session approved the change to “Facilities Coordinator.”

Robert’s service and commitment to OPC does not go unnoticed. He works faithfully every day of the week to keep our church beautiful and stocked with all the supplies we need. He helps set up for special events. He works closely with the Buildings and Grounds Ministry Team on ongoing projects to improve our facility. He is always so thoughtful and considerate and willing to help you in any way. We are grateful for his gifts, talents, and skills.

Here are some fun things you might not know about Robert:

- ❖ Robert’s favorite movie is “The Ghost and Mister Chicken.”
- ❖ His favorite food is his homemade hot wings.
- ❖ He enjoys collecting 1:24 diecast cars and trucks.
- ❖ A fun fact about Robert is that he has his own Santa suit.



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
Associate Pastor, Julia Burkley -----	pastorjulia@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-----	wittrebekah2@gmail.com
Director of Music, Susan Homan -----	srh1305@verizon.net
Organist, Bill Heavner-----	heavner@comcast.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.



THE LATEST IN LOGOS

We will wind down our 26th LOGOS year this month. We can't believe the time has gone so fast since we began last September. This month offers another helping of some great themes such as "March Madness Night," "Touch of Class 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 17. Worship that morning will focus on our theme for the LOGOS year, which has been "Our God is So Big." We are ever so thankful for the LOGOS staff and LOGOS families. Wednesdays won't feel as 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 info about LOGOS, contact Joanne Berson (opequonlogos@gmail.com) or Carole Witt (540-662-1843 or dce@opequonchurch.org).

OUR DAILY BREAD

Our Daily Bread Faith Formation with Pastor Julia currently meets on Wednesdays at 6:15 PM in Classroom 2 and via Zoom.

Upcoming Discussion Topics:

- > March 6 - Matthew 16:21-28
- > March 13 - Matthew 18:15-22
- > March 20 - *No Class* (last night of LOGOS)
- > March 27 - *No Class* (Holy Week)

TIME CHANGE NOTICE: Starting in April, Our Daily Bread will meet on Wednesdays at 4:30 PM.



FEBRUARY CHILDREN'S LESSON

Children will receive a lesson called, "Easter Resurrection," which was adapted from Creative Youth Ideas.

A glove by itself is useless. But when it is filled with a hand, the glove can do all kinds of things! The glove is like our body and the hand is our spirit. God put Jesus' body and spirit back together on Easter, which created the resurrection!

SPECIAL EVENT DURING OPIE'S PLAYHOUSE ON MARCH 3



Opie's Playhouse on March 3 will feature all the fun toys for young children, as well as some intentional conversation with parents about "Celebrating Milestones" in your family. You will discover that milestones can be whatever your family chooses them to be, and you can have such fun, memorable times celebrating them! Breakfast will be available for all participants along with coffee and juice. All parents of young children are invited to come join us on March 3 at 9:45 AM in the Fellowship Hall. We will all share breakfast together, play a family game, and then the children can play while the adults meet off to the side just a little way. Each family will receive a special gift at the end.

YOUTH: GRADES 6-12

March 22 (6:00 PM) - Parents' Night Out

YOUNG ADULTS: AGES 18-35

March 15 (7:00 PM) - Game Night



KEEPING IN STEP WITH OUR OPC CHILD SAFETY POLICY

Everyone's safety is of utmost importance at Opequon Church. Over the years we have worked to develop a strong Child Safety Policy. An important component of that policy is that background checks are conducted on anyone that works with children and youth through the ministry of OPC. The Opequon Safety Team feels it is crucial to do official background checks every five years. This year (2024) will be a time when we need to be contacting many of you for the five-year refresher of background checks. Please be patient and understand that this is for everyone's safety. We will be doing the background checks gradually as we move through the early part of this year. You may be contacted and asked to complete a form which begins this renewal process. Thank you.

MEN OF OPEQUON— VISIT SPECIAL PLACES

The Men of Opequon (MOO) will gather for dinner on Monday, March 11, at 6:00 PM at Italian Delight (640 Warrior Drive, Stephens City, VA 22655 / phone: 540-868-1600). When entering the restaurant, turn left and go past the restrooms to the room at the rear. After dinner, we'll go to SpecialMade for a tour led by Mitch Orndorff, who with his wife Pam, started this company more than twenty-five years ago. For those who may choose to join us at SpecialMade only, the address is 141 Marcel Drive, Winchester, VA 22602. Join us for a fun and informative evening. Questions? Please reach out to Pastor Witt.

GOD-LOVING OPEQUON WOMEN

GLOW is Opequon's multi-aged women's group that meets monthly to build friendships and enjoy heart-warming activities together. GLOW RESUMES this month after being on break for the past two months. GLOW will meet on Tuesday, March 12, at 6:00 PM in the Bageant Room and Dell Room areas. It will be a wonderful GAME NIGHT with Guesstures being the main game. All women are invited to come be part of one of the teams. Guesstures is a game of split-second charades providing a ton of holy hilarity. We will begin with a 'Walking Taco Bar.' Desserts and drinks will be provided by the GLOW Planning Team. We look forward to being back together!



OLDER ADULT HAPPENINGS

We are 'MARCHING' forward with life that God has blessed us with! There is much to praise God for every day. The Older Adult Team will meet on Monday, March 4, 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, March 13, at noon in the Fellowship Hall. Our guest speaker will be Jason Gottschalk from Godfrey Miller Center. We will begin with our covered dish lunch. Rotisserie Chicken will be provided along with beverages. All older adults are welcome. Come enjoy the warmth of one another and the delicious food.

LIFE GOES ON

Life Goes On, a gathering of people who have lost their significant other, will meet on March 18 at noon in Fellowship Hall. If you need a ride, please let us know by calling the church office. The main dish this month will be American Goulash. Please bring a side to pass or plan to chip in a couple of bucks toward expenses.

FELLOWSHIP BOOK CLUB

The Fellowship Book Club will meet on Thursday, March 28 at 6:00 PM in the Bageant Room to discuss the book *The Vanishing Half* by Brit Bennett.



Looking ahead, the book for April is *The Five Wishes of Mr. Murray McBride* by Joe Siple.



JAVA WITH JULIA

Swing by Hopscotch Café (250 Millwood Ave in Winchester) for Java with Julia!

➤ Friday, March 22: 11:00 AM—1:00 PM

CCAP

During the month of March, the Mission Ministry Team will be collecting Tuna Fish for CCAP.

SENIOR OUTREACH MINISTRY

The Senior Outreach Ministry will meet Sunday, March 10, at 12:15 PM by the church office doors to load up the totes and distribute to the Shenandoah Senior Apartments

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Highland Food Pantry is seeking volunteers to help as they distribute food to families on Tuesdays 8:30 AM—11:30 AM and 5:30 PM—7:30 PM. They are in particular need of:

- * Fluent Spanish speakers (adults only)
- * Child care/play center supervisors (high school youth & adults)
- * Car loaders to carry heavy food boxes from the pantry to cars (high school youth & adults)

If you are interested and available to help, please contact Barbara Rupert (540-247-5951) or Jenny Callis (540-327-6427).





ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

The One Great Hour of Sharing offering is one of the four church-wide special offerings sponsored by the Presbyterian Church (USA). It is highlighted during Lent, received and dedicated on Easter Sunday, March 31. This year marks the 75th Anniversary of the first OGHS, begun as American Christians recognized the need to respond to the worldwide devastation caused by World War II. In March 1949, a national broadcast on a Saturday evening asked Americans to give generously the next morning in their churches; a remarkable assembly of national leaders and celebrities gave their efforts to the broadcast, and more than 75,000 churches responded the next day. Today, our contributions to One Great Hour of Sharing are divided equally among the Presbyterian Hunger Program, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, and Self-Development of People. When it comes to Easter Sunday, let there be no mistake about our commitment to feed the poor and help the afflicted as we respond to the new life received in and through Christ. We encourage everyone to give to OGHS. Special envelopes will be available beginning March 24.

SOUPER BOWL OF CARING UPDATE

Thanks to your generous support for the Sherando and Highland Food Pantries through the Souper Bowl of Caring! The window side collected 232 cans of tomato soup, the center section collected 239 cans of chicken noodle soup, and the choir side collected 232 cans of vegetable/beef soup. Congratulations to the center section for bringing in the most cans! Onelife Fitness Gym also added 70 soup cans to our collection. The grand total was 773 soup cans, which was a lot more soup than we collected last year!

SOME NOTES OF THANKS...

From Julia Burkley:

Friends, thank you to all those who came to my open houses this past month! I had so much fun welcoming you and I appreciate all the time and fellowship. I so appreciate all of your prayers and well-wishes as I settle into my new home and am so glad to feel so at home in Winchester!

With Hope from Winter Brooks:

Thank you so much for the hospitality of Opequon Church for hosting our ASIST Training as well as Survivor Day. It gives me comfort to know that Opequon is proactive about mental health and suicide prevention. The Virginia Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention appreciates the support given to our community and our church family. Suicide prevention is for all people and I am grateful to you for your continued support.

GENEROSITY MOMENT

(From Pastor Tracie Martin)

What do the Witt's stomach bug, a leak in the Assembly Room pipes, and LOGOS on Ash Wednesday all have in common? I've got ya thinkin', right? Well, hear me out...

All three of these events could have caused the Opequon Church to cancel or postpone something important. Instead, our church had the resiliency and ability to make and implement a plan B.

In the case of the stomach bug, there were people in place who could handle things as needed. The leaky pipes required a plumber, but Mike Wygant was able to call one and get things fixed before we had a huge mess. LOGOS WOW and Ash Wednesday just gave us an opportunity to ramp up the LOGOS meal and add children and black light to worship.

Not all congregations could be so flexible.

OPC has this strength because of the many people who give their time, treasure, and talents to God through our church. It is easy to take such situations for granted. We don't.



Opequon Presbyterian Church
Financial Summary for the period ended
January 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	91,833	91,833	751,170	10.9%
420000 Other Income	1,600	78	78	1,522	4.9%
Total 400000 Income	<u>844,603</u>	<u>91,911</u>	<u>91,911</u>	<u>752,692</u>	<u>10.9%</u>
Expenses					
500000 Personnel Costs					
510000 Installed Pastors	219,432	18,036	18,036	201,396	8.2%
520000 Other Ministerial Staff	144,436	11,154	11,154	133,282	7.7%
530000 Administrative Staff	146,818	11,582	11,582	135,236	7.9%
Total 500000 Personnel Costs	<u>510,686</u>	<u>40,773</u>	<u>40,773</u>	<u>469,913</u>	<u>8.0%</u>
600000 Other Ministries					
610000 Christian Education	14,100	346	346	13,754	2.5%
620000 Congregational Care	2,800	(60)	(60)	2,860	-2.1%
630000 Evangelism	1,900	25	25	1,875	1.3%
640000 Fellowship	3,800	359	359	3,441	9.4%
650000 Mission	73,575	2,708	2,708	70,867	3.7%
660000 Worship	7,000	233	233	6,767	3.3%
Total 600000 Other Ministries	<u>103,175</u>	<u>3,611</u>	<u>3,611</u>	<u>99,564</u>	<u>3.5%</u>
Total 700000 Church Administration	<u>129,632</u>	<u>10,867</u>	<u>10,867</u>	<u>118,765</u>	<u>8.4%</u>
Total Expenses	<u>743,493</u>	<u>55,250</u>	<u>55,250</u>	<u>688,243</u>	<u>7.4%</u>
Net Operating Income (Expense)	<u>101,110</u>	<u>36,660</u>	<u>36,660</u>	<u>64,450</u>	<u>36.3%</u>
920000 Other Income	17,625	1,923	1,923	15,702	10.9%
930000 Other Expenses	118,735	10,050	10,050	108,685	8.5%
Net Other Income (Expense)	<u>(101,110)</u>	<u>(8,127)</u>	<u>(8,127)</u>	<u>(92,983)</u>	<u>8.0%</u>
Income Greater Than (Less Than) Expenses	<u>0</u>	<u>28,533</u>	<u>28,533</u>		

1/31/24

Cash	<u>\$ 212,081</u>
Sanctuary Mortgage Principal Balance	<u>\$ 472,685</u>

Here are some tips for helping your medication work more effectively...

1. **Take your medication as directed.** Be sure to follow all the instructions for taking your medicines. Don't skip or take more of the medicine as this may cause harmful effects. Tracking your medication in an online tool can help you keep track and set reminders to take your medication(s).
2. **Keep your medication organized.** It isn't unusual for heart patients to have several different medications, making keeping track difficult. Learn ways to manage your medication and keep track using easy tools or our. You also can use a pill dispenser that helps sort your medication or a weekly pill organizer.
3. **Take your medicine even if you don't have noticeable symptoms.** When you have the sniffles or a fever, you know you're probably sick. But many cardiovascular conditions don't have symptoms that you can identify without a medical test or blood pressure reading.
4. **Continue taking medicine even if symptoms seem to have "gotten better."** People may discontinue their medication once they have improved their cholesterol or blood pressure numbers. However, the medication may be what is making the cholesterol or blood pressure levels go down, and if they stop taking it, their numbers go back up.
5. **Tell your health care professionals and pharmacists about all the medications you are taking.** Drug interactions can change the way a medication works, making it more effective, less effective or worse, combine to create a dangerous mix. Maintain a list of all the medications you're taking, including drug names and dose. Many people won't mention a drug they take because it's not a heart medicine. The prescriber needs to know about all the other drugs you're taking.
6. **Make sure your health care professionals and pharmacists know about other supplements or over-the-counter drugs you may be taking.** Your health care professionals need to have the whole picture of what you're taking so they can create a plan for the most effective treatment and identify possible interactions. Inform your health care team of all the over-the-counter drugs and herbal and/or nutritional supplements you are taking, including the names and dose. If you have high blood pressure and are on prescription medication, consult your health care professional before taking any over-the-counter medications or supplements.
7. **Be aware of any food interactions.** Check whether your medication should be taken on a full stomach or an empty one. That could affect how well your body absorbs it. What you eat and drink may also make a big difference. Drinking alcohol, for example, could change how well your liver processes medications. Even eating healthy can sometimes create a dangerous interaction between your medication(s) and the food and/or beverages you consume. Learn more about food and medication interactions.
8. **Be aware of potential side effects.** Medication routinely comes with detailed information about possible side effects. Familiarize yourself with the major ones and stay vigilant when starting a new medication so you can quickly identify bad reactions. An upset stomach, dry mouth and drowsiness are common medication side effects, but many people don't realize they may be coming from a medication. Be sure your health care professional knows if you've had any bad reactions or allergies to medication.

Taking medication as directed is important, but it's not the only action needed. Lifestyle changes, such as following a heart-healthy diet, not smoking and getting physical activity, play a key role in getting your health back on track.

Written by American Heart Association editorial staff and reviewed by science and medicine advisors.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
25	26	27	28	29	1	2
<p>Tracie Away</p>						10am - Deacon Retreat @
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<p>Communion</p> <p>8:30am - Worship & Live Stream</p> <p>9:45am - Celebrating Milestones</p> <p>9:45am - Faith Formation @</p> <p>11am - Worship @ Sanctuary</p> <p>4pm - Newcomers' Class @</p>	<p>9:30am - Older Adult Ministry</p> <p>1pm - Disciple Bible Study @</p> <p>6pm - Windsong @ Sanctuary</p>	<p>10am - Staff Meeting @ Bageant</p> <p>4:30pm - Tech Team Meeting @</p> <p>6pm - Ministry Team Night @</p>	<p>4:30pm - LOGOS</p> <p>6:15pm - Our Daily Bread Faith</p> <p>7:15pm - Choir @ Sanctuary</p>	<p>10:30am - Tai Chi @ Shelter/Mem</p> <p>3pm - Bland Contest/Lion's Club @</p> <p>6:30pm - Sherando Food Pantry @</p>		<p>11am - Crafting with Becky @</p>
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
<p>8:30am - Worship & Live Stream</p> <p>9:45am - Faith Formation @</p> <p>11am - Worship @ Sanctuary</p> <p>12:15pm - Senior Outreach</p> <p>1:30pm - Spring Arbor Worship @</p>	<p>1pm - Disciple Bible Study @</p> <p>6pm - MOO @ Italian Delight, 640</p> <p>6pm - Windsong @ Sanctuary</p> <p>7pm - MOO @ Special Made</p>	<p>9:30am - Tuesday Morning</p> <p>6pm - GLOW Fellowship Hall @</p>	<p>12pm - Happy Days @ Fellowship</p> <p>4:30pm - LOGOS</p> <p>6:15pm - Our Daily Bread Faith</p> <p>7:15pm - Choir @ Sanctuary</p>	<p>10:30am - Tai Chi @ Shelter/Mem</p> <p>7pm - Vision Team</p>	<p>NEWSLETTER DEADLINE</p> <p>7pm - YA FEAST Group @</p>	<p>Wife Family Away</p>
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
<p>Blood Pressure Checks</p> <p>LOGOS Sunday</p> <p>8:30am - Worship @ Sanctuary</p> <p>9:45am - Faith Formation @</p> <p>11am - Worship & Live Stream @</p> <p>12:15pm - Potato Bake @</p>	<p>12pm - Life Goes On @ Fellowship</p> <p>1pm - Disciple Bible Study @</p> <p>6pm - Safety Team Meeting @</p> <p>6pm - Windsong @ Sanctuary</p>	<p>10am - Staff Meeting</p> <p>4:30pm - VBS Team Meeting @</p> <p>7pm - Session Mtg @ Bageant</p>	<p>12pm - Music at Noon @</p> <p>4:30pm - LOGOS</p> <p>6:15pm - Our Daily Bread Faith</p> <p>7:15pm - Choir @ Sanctuary</p>	<p>10:30am - Tai Chi @ Shelter/Mem</p> <p>10:30am - WANC Meeting @</p> <p>11am - Piano Tuner - Eric Olson @</p> <p>5:30pm - Discipleship @ Gathering</p> <p>6:30pm - Sherando Food Pantry</p>	<p>11am - Java With Julia @</p> <p>6pm - Youth-Parents' Night Out @</p>	<p>10am - Presbytery Minutes</p>
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
<p>4 Cents a Meal Offering</p> <p>Palm Sunday</p> <p>8:30am - Worship & Live Stream</p> <p>9:45am - Faith Formation @</p> <p>11am - Worship @ Sanctuary</p>	<p>1pm - Disciple Bible Study @</p> <p>6pm - Windsong @ Sanctuary</p>	<p>3pm - TVOR Gathering</p> <p>6:30pm - Highland Food Pantry @</p>	<p>5:30pm - LOGOS Youth Extension</p> <p>6:30pm - Choir @ Sanctuary</p>	<p>Maundy Thursday</p> <p>10:30am - Tai Chi @ Shelter/Mem</p> <p>10:30am - WANC Lunch @</p> <p>6pm - Fellowship Book Club @</p> <p>7pm - Maundy Thursday Worship</p>	<p>Good Friday</p> <p>12pm - Good Friday Reflections @</p> <p>7pm - Good Friday Worship</p>	<p>10am - Jubilee Kitchen - Opequon</p>
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
<p>Easter Sunday</p> <p>6:30am - Easter Sunrise Service</p> <p>7:15am - Easter Breakfast @</p> <p>8:30am - Worship & Live Stream</p> <p>9:45am - Family Easter Event @</p> <p>11am - Worship @ Sanctuary</p>	<p>OFFICE CLOSED</p> <p>6pm - Windsong @ Sanctuary</p>	<p>Youth Bowling</p> <p>10am - Staff Meeting @ Bageant</p> <p>4:30pm - Tech Team Meeting @</p> <p>6pm - Ministry Team Night @</p>	<p>Rebekah Away</p> <p>7:15pm - Choir @ Sanctuary</p>	<p>10:30am - Tai Chi @ Shelter/Mem</p> <p>6:30pm - Sherando Food Pantry @</p> <p>7pm - Vision Team</p>		



In Loving Memory of:

Given by:

Tulips for Easter

*Let's decorate the Sanctuary
with tulips this Easter!*

Cost = \$10 each

Please clearly print your dedication(s) and ordering info on this form and place it with your payment in the worship offering or give it to the church office by **Monday, March 11.**

Order forms are also available in the bulletins and Gathering Area.

In Honor of:

Given by:

To the Glory of God by: _____

Checks should be made payable to Opequon Presbyterian Church with "tulips" on the memo. Contact Robin Eddy (540-664-2535 or robineddy1@gmail.com) with any questions.

DEADLINE = MONDAY, MARCH 11

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVANTS NEEDED

Would you like to be a Door Greeter or Beadle? Door Greeters smile, have a welcoming attitude and open doors as people arrive for worship and Beadles carry forward the pulpit Bible. Sign-up for an upcoming Sunday by contacting the church office or click on the "Beadle & Greeter" [link](#) at the bottom of our OPC website.

2024 FLOWER CHART

To provide the flowers for an upcoming worship service in 2024, please sign-up on the Flower Chart posted in the church office or you can click on the "Flower Chart" [link](#) at the bottom of our OPC website.



LOOKING AHEAD TO AN AMAZING APRIL

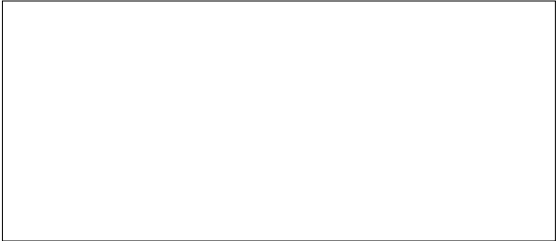
- › **Monday, April 1:** CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED (Easter Monday)
- › **Tuesday, April 2:** Ministry Team Night
- › **Sunday, April 7:** Communion; Opie's Playhouse
- › **Sunday, April 14:** Spring Forward Celebration Event
- › **Sunday, April 21:** Mission Forum with Rev. Kristen Harris
- › **Sunday, April 28:** April GIFT Event

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:

**OPEQUON
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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

Worship Services:

Sunday, 8:30 AM & 11:00 AM

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



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