

*“Yesterday and Today
and Forever”*

The 225th Anniversary Year
Keezletown United Methodist
Church Devotional

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today
and forever.” Hebrews 13:8, NRSV

Yesterday and Today and Forever
The 225th Anniversary Year Keezletown UMC Devotional

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A WORD OF INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Keezletown UMC 225th Year Anniversary Devotional. I'm so glad you are reading these pages. The main hope of this work is for you to enter a period of daily time with God on your own or with others. There are opportunities to do so with reading a scripture from the Bible, reading a testimony or piece of history from Keezletown UMC friends, and engaging in prayer. You will encounter stories of God and faith in these pages and I pray it will be a blessing to you.

"Jesus is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8, NRSV). This is the theme verse for KUMC this year. These pages contain stories of what Jesus has done. I hope Christ so blesses you to see that Jesus still comes, saves, and brings peace in your own today and forever.

This devotional includes at the beginning a list of abbreviations and contributors. The middle is the longest section with daily devotions. The end has a historical list of pastors and acknowledgements. That historical list of pastors can be helpful as there are some stories about them within.

What I have found in working on this devotional is that there are so many more stories about what Jesus has done and is doing through the ministries and people of KUMC. Maybe you will share yours in one of our future devotionals or in a testimony with someone you know. That would be a blessing.

Items marked with an asterisk (*) were contributed by the editor.

Special thanks to everyone who has contributed with writing, prayer, and suggestions for this devotional. Special thanks to our 225 anniversary committee that has been working many months on having meaning ways for us to encounter Christ this year. Thanks also to Lynn Siler who does such a wonderful job with the printing of this resource.

Pastor Joel Robinette

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>BOH</i>	<i>The Book of Hymns</i>
CEB	Common English Bible
<i>FWS</i>	<i>The Faith We Sing</i>
KMC	Keezletown Methodist Church
KUMC	Keezletown United Methodist Church
LB	The Living Bible
MECS	Methodist Episcopal Church, South
NIV	New International Version of the Holy Bible
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version of the Holy Bible
<i>TSH</i>	<i>The Service Hymnal</i>
<i>UMH</i>	<i>The United Methodist Hymnal</i>
v.	verse
vv.	verses

CONTRIBUTORS

This list of contributors includes friends, members, pastors, and bishops of KUMC. It also includes authors of historical resources such as pastor memoirs from conference publications and our own KUMC histories by Revs. Michael and Hawks.

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Rev. Hugh Harris	Rev. S. K. Wine
Mary Harris	Virginia Workman
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Sam Hasler	

DAY 1

"Cover"

Read a Scripture: 1 Corinthians 1

In Rev. Olin B. Michael's *The History of Keezletown Methodist Church and The Rockingham Circuit*, one of the first things you see is, what was probably, a bulletin cover. It has the name KEEZLETOWN METHODIST CHURCH in capital letters. Below it is written *Where you meet God and friends* in italics.

I like that. Some may hope for a welcoming God but the Church through history has not always been known for friendliness or hospitality. There is great relief in meeting friends when facing God.

The location and old phone number are listed.

Then there are some words of instruction:

Whosoever thou art that entereth this church, remember it is the House of God; be reverent and prayerful; and leave it not without a prayer to God for thyself, for those who minister, and for those who worship here, and for all men everywhere.

The language is dated but that King James Version style brings a gravity to the words, especially to pray.

The words in the bottom are in a small font but are bold and in all caps and somewhat separated from one another like so:

ENTER TO WORSHIP

DEPART TO SERVE

Those bold words suggest to me the expectation that transformation occurs when we enter to worship God with friends, that we are empowered, changed, or encouraged to serve.

As you read this devotional I would encourage you come each day to worship God. Come in a prayerful manner and be ready to meet God. Also be ready to meet friends in these pages who share their testimonies, stories, and faith in hopes that Jesus may work the love of God in your life and living.

Don't skip over the prayers. Don't do the written prayers or hymns alone. Let them help you begin to pray. Take time to pray for yourself, ministers of Jesus Christ, people who make up the Church, and people everywhere.

Be ready to leave your time of devotions ready to serve and share the grace God has showered on you. May God cover us with the grace of Christ and the peace of the present Holy Spirit each day that we may be a blessing to all we meet.

Pray

Pray to God for yourself. Tell God where you are at, what is going on, and where you need God's strength, grace, mercy, and peace.

Pray to God for ministers and people in the Church. There are some who have gone through, are going through, or will go through the trials, temptations, or trouble that you have faced. They need God's help as much as you.

Pray to God for people everywhere. If you're not sure who to pray for, just turn on the news and pray for the emerging needs in the world.

Rev. Joel Robinette

Day 2

"Learning to Pray"

Read a Scripture: Luke 11:1-13

Lord, how my Daddy could pray! As Sunday school superintendent, he always prayed before we went to class, and we stood the whole time he prayed—phew! Some of them were pretty long, but they were beautiful.

Pray

"Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen" (UMH #896).

Diana Davis

Day 3

"Gaining Wisdom"

Read a Scripture: Proverbs 3

Lute and Nancy Armentrout: for as long as I can remember, I have witnessed their love for Christ and the love of Christ through them. Their faith is so evident in the way they live and in the ways they relate to others. I so respect Lute's wealth of knowledge and his desire to grow in godly wisdom. I love to hear his thoughts on Biblical topics and life ones as well and have always enjoyed his teaching. Nancy is one of the friendliest and most sincere people I've ever met. She is always welcoming and expresses interest in my life. I so appreciate her listening and encouragement. She has godly wisdom, too.

Pray

Lord, grant us to walk in the ways of wisdom, know your grace, work for justice, and live in peace.*

Jan Shafer

Day 4

Read a Scripture: John 1:1-18

"What Is a Valentine?"

What is a Valentine? A Valentine
is a lovely thought on
a card...if you love someone
dearly, then why don't
you put it on the card, then maybe
someone will be happy to
receive it. Sometimes it means you
love somebody like me...
I wonder if anybody will send me
a Valentine tomorrow?
I am going to send a Valentine to
Somebody I know, because
I
like them!

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Pray

Pray about who to send words of encouragement, love, and grace today. Maybe a Valentine, maybe a thank you, maybe a card with words of life. Send one today and make your actions a living prayer.*

Paul Robert Harris from *One Day at a Time*

Day 5

"Growing Closer to God"

Read a Scripture: Psalm 119:57-64, 105-112

After attending a revival at our church in November 1999, a time in which I felt excitement and closeness to God, a Monday Night Bible Study group was formed in January 2000, and I began attending. I have been involved with several Monday night studies and have even completed 4 books in the Disciple series. I

have grown close to the members of the Disciple studies, and I have found myself able to share with them and to receive the encouragement that I needed.

Through my studies, I am reminded that God is in control of all situations – that He has a plan and I need to trust Him. Answers to questions come in His time, and not my time, and that’s not easy when you want an answer now. Even though I know He is in control, it still doesn’t take away the worry.

Worry is a part of my life, and it shouldn’t be, especially if I remember my favorite scriptures. Matthew 6:25-34 tells us not to worry about tomorrow; that tomorrow will bring enough worry and troubles of its own. Philippians 4:6 states that we are not to worry about anything but instead pray about everything.

Pray

Father God, thank you for times to grow and study. Thank you for friendships and for groups to help one another to grow in their faith. Amen.

Michele Dodrill

Day 6

Read a Scripture: Matthew 6:25-34

“One Day at a Time”

Sometimes we hurry
And run from day to day.
But I don’t.
I do everything
– one day at a time

I wonder,
Why do we hurry?
Why?
It hurts me to see people running
Right here at Cohope!
And in town.

I didn’t know I’d meet the Lord
Right here!
And I didn’t know that He’d be
My Lord.
But all my heart
Is burning to serve Him
– one day at a time.

I've stopped my running
As I've given my life to the Lord.
But now that I'm on
This side,
He gives me my life
— one day at a time.

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Pray or Sing the Hymn
"His Eye Is on the Sparrow"

Why should I feel discouraged? Why should the shadows come?
Why should my heart be lonely and long for heaven and home,
When Jesus is my portion? My constant friend is he:
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know he watches me;
his eye is on the sparrow, and I know he watches me.

Refrain

I sing because I'm happy, I sing because I'm free,
for his eye is on the sparrow, and I know he watches me.

"Let not your heart be troubled," his tender word I hear,
and resting on his goodness, I lose my doubts and fears;
though by the path he leadeth but one step I may see:
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know he watches me;
his eye is on the sparrow, and I know he watches me.

Whenever I am tempted, whenever clouds arise,
when song gives place to sighing, when hope within me dies,
I draw the closer to him, from care he sets me free:
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know he watches me;
his eye is on the sparrow, and I know he watches me.

(Civilla Martin)

Paul Robert Harris from *One Day at a Time*

Day 7

"Amen"

Read a Scripture: Romans 8:18-39

Don Clatterbuck – what an amazing man! What a faithful follower! He has never let his disabilities keep him from coming to Sunday school, worship services, Bible studies nor all the mission and fellowship activities of our church. His desire to honor, worship, and praise God is so evident in his life. The way Don lives his faith is a tremendous witness and a blessing! I love to hear him proclaim, "Amen!"

Pray

Let your amazing grace be shown in us Jesus. Let nothing keep us from you.*

Jan Shafer

Day 8

"I Saw God"

Read a Scripture: Luke 18:31-43

When we first came to Keezletown UMC in 1983, I was in awe of the way the church family embraced its handicapped members. I'm sure it was no coincidence that our church building is all on one floor. It was not unusual to see Myron Good and Paul Harris in their wheel chairs, and Don Clatterbuck in his chair on wheels making up the back row in the sanctuary on Sunday mornings. Don still sits back there on most Sunday mornings, and blesses us with an occasional "Amen."

Pastor Joel asked us to write about where we have seen God at KUMC. The simple answer is everywhere. I would like to share a poem that expresses this. It was composed by Paul Robert Harris, dictated to his mother, Mary Harris, and included in his booklet *One Day at a Time*. The poem is aptly named "I Saw God!"

I
Saw God!

I saw God today when I woke up.
I saw the day until it was over.
I saw God in the trees –
I saw Him in the people that walked along.
I saw the day beginning.
I talked to a lady who was with me.
I saw God in everything.

I saw Him in the water.

I

saw

God!

He walked with me, and

He told me everything that I needed to know.

I saw God in the mountains and in the hills.

I saw God in everything there was.

I saw God in the pretty oak tree.

I saw God in the flowers.

I saw Him in everybody.

What is love?

God

Is

Love!

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Pray or Sing the Hymn

“Open My Eyes, That I May See”

Open my eyes, that I may see glimpses of truth thou hast for me;
place in my hands the wonderful key that shall unclasp and set me free.

Silently now I wait for thee, ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my eyes, illumine me, Spirit divine!

Open my ears, that I may hear voices of truth thou sendest clear;
and while the wave-notes fall on ear, everything false shall disappear.

Silently now I wait for thee, ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my ears, illumine me, Spirit divine!

Open my mouth, and let me bear gladly the warm truth everywhere;
open my heart and let me prepare love with thy children thus to share.

Silently now I wait for thee, ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my heart, illumine me, Spirit divine!

(Clara H. Scott)

Chris Cole

Day 9

"Kindred Spirits"

Read a Scripture: Matthew 12:46-49

I remember our young adult group (the YAKS) planning a surprise birthday party for Rev. Dennis Perry. The surprise included a "foam rubber cake" covered in chocolate frosting. He tried his best to slice that cake.

I especially enjoyed the time spent with Dennis & Sharon Perry. They were much closer to my age than previous pastors, and I could talk about real life issues and experiences with them. They even arranged a date for me with a friend of theirs who was a pastor.

I also remember going with Mom to visit Dennis and Sharon a few times after they moved to Gordonsville, VA.

Pray

Thank you Lord for the people you bring into our lives and we share in brother- and sisterhood with you. Thank you for those we can share in joy, faith, and foam rubber cakes in Jesus Christ.*

Jan Shafer

Day 10

"Oh Yes, You Did Laugh"

Read a Scripture: Genesis 18:1-15; 21:1-7

My relationship with KUMC began at birth. Marhl and Alleen Clatterbuck, Sr., my parents, followed in the footsteps of T. R. Clatterbuck my paternal grandfather who attended the Keezletown Methodist Church his entire adult life. He sat in the back pew on the right hand side; however, my family soon filled in the pew beside him.

As the oldest of four children, I felt responsible for my siblings' behavior and church was no exception. Because there wasn't a nursery, parents disciplined their children and for the most part we were well behaved. One exception would be when Penny, my sister, and Lesta Mae, a friend, talked and laughed enough to disrupt the sermon and Pastor Bangle stopped and reprimanded them. I am not sure Penny ever forgave him. Another time Patsy, sister, and best friend, Claudette, created a scene laughing during the singing of a hymn. Immediately, mother tried to get control, but surprisingly she began to laugh uncontrollably and shook the entire pew drawing even more attention from those around us.

Pray

Thank you God for the gift of laughter and that we can laugh at the

ridiculously wonderful and surprising things you do. Thank you for the laughter of children and parents who get caught up in moments of uncontrollable-uncontainable-unbelievable joy. May we share in the laughter at the experience of your joyful salvation and grace.*

Don Clatterbuck

Day 11

"Hugs"

Scripture Reading: Luke 18:15-17

Hugs bring people back; knowing that someone cares enough to come up and say "Hi" and give you a hug, says a lot about who we are and who we are living for. I pray, I sing, I play the piano, I tell stories to the children, but mostly, I hug. It's the one gift God has given me, that I can give away, unconditionally, that will come back to me with a warmth in my heart that can only be His love. My Sunday children, my beautiful, wonderful, Sunday children throughout the years, have been my pride and joy, especially those who have promised that no matter how big they get (yes, even the boys), they will never stop hugging me. They have shown me that I should never let the child in me die, that to believe without questioning the love of our Father, and to know, without a doubt, that you are His child, to look for the beauty that He has created, and to love with all your heart, everyone, is all He asks. We are a church, but even more, we are family.

Pray

As you welcomed the little ones and blessed them, let us welcome little ones with joy.*

Diana Davis

Day 12

"I Have Heard of Your Faith"

Read a Scripture: Ephesians 1:15-23

I was born while my father, Warren Reeves was serving at Keezletown Methodist Church so I have no direct memories, but will do my best to share his. While he had fond memories from all his appointments, Keezletown held a special place in his heart. His face lit up when he spoke of the "wonderful" people there and the manner in which his family was embraced by the members. My babysitter's name was Tootsie and a delightful person. Unfortunately, I do not know her given name. I do know that she was close with my family and she treated me as her own child.

**Do you know the name of Cheryl's babysitter? Answer on page 139.*

Pray

Bless all the children who pass through our congregation. May they all be touched by the love of Jesus Christ through KUMC family and community. Form in them a love for Christ, neighbor, and themselves.*

Cheryl Reeves Workman

Day 13

"Tulip Caper"

Read a Scripture: Exodus 20:1-17

Sunday school was a great time to socialize with friends and hear the stories of the Bible. I remember sitting in class with a hand full of tulips that I picked at Mrs. Crider's house on the way home from Betsy Dean's, which I had every intention of giving to my Sunday school teacher. Did I mention I thought they were pretty and stopped and helped myself without asking? Well, guess what the lesson was about that day. Thou shall not steal! Those tulips seemed to wilt in my hand. Lesson learned. Don't be hasty in your actions, stop and think, "What would Jesus do?"

Pray

Help me to slow down and discern "what would Jesus do." Help me to do "what Jesus would do."*

Carol Coffman Dillard

Day 14

"Grace"

Read a Scripture: Colossians 4:5-6

It was moving day for our pastor! There were lots of folks preparing for Pastor Joel Robinette to arrive in a couple of hours. Folks were cleaning the house inside and out. Some were working in the basement and some in the yard. We were also expecting someone to be stopping by to check the roof.

I had been helping several other ladies clean the parsonage but went to clean the church office. On my way back to the parsonage, I noticed a woman sitting by the fence. She had on a burgundy t-shirt that had the word "Rooftop" printed on it. As I walked by I said, "Hi, how are you?"

She replied, "Hi, I'm okay."

I walked past her a few more times as I continued my work. A short time later, as I was walking back to the church, I noticed she was standing by the fence and I asked if I could help her. She told me her name and that she was the pastor's wife. They had arrived early! I was so embarrassed and had to apologize for not stopping to welcome her earlier. Because of the logo on her shirt, I had mistakenly thought she was with the roofing person who was to come by for the inspection. Jenn graciously accepted my apology and with a slight smile told me "Rooftop" was the name of a band. I later found out it was Pastor Joel's band!

Pray

"Let the words of my mouth and the mediation of my heart be acceptable to you, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer" (Psalm 19:14, NRSV).

Jan Shafer

Day 15

"Rainbows"

Read a Scripture: Genesis 8:20 – 9:17

Joel,

I met a woman today at Dukes Car Wash who attends your church. I did not get her name but perhaps you can identify her and show/print and give her these attached pictures. She was irritated and I could tell down in spirits. They were taking entirely too long at the car wash and we had a brief conversation. I told her that maybe the Lord had other plans for you today!

We got to talking about her church and I remembered a rainbow picture I took one day in April of 2013, the day we had to put our dear dog Stella down. "Rainbows are a sign of Gods promise" according to scripture and I just wanted her to see and have these pictures and know that God's promises are so very real and true. He has a purpose just for her and maybe it took a random stranger at a car wash to get her attention this Friday morning. I remember thinking when I took the picture that I wanted to share them with your church. I can't remember if I did, but maybe they were taken just for this lady. Maybe she needs a sign of Gods promise in her own life. I just felt compelled to share this with her.

I don't have her name, but she is 71, worked at JMU for decades and is now retired. She cared after her mother and father for many years. Her mom has been gone for over 25 now. I think she misses her. She never had children but cared for orphans for a period and watches a few little ones from time to time. She has very short curly hair (gray). Do you know who this is? If so, will you share these pictures with her Sunday?

Thank you and be blessed!

*Can you guess who the mystery KUMC member was that Jessica reached out to?
Answer on page 139.*

Pray

Promise Keeping God, help us share your rainbows every day and fill each other's lives with the promises of your grace. Amen.*

Jessica Peachey

Day 16

Read a Scripture: John 5:1-29

"Jesus Died for You and Me"

Why did He die? Jesus died for our sins. He loved us so much that He walked on this earth. On that day there was a man who couldn't walk but one day Jesus touched his head. He said, "Now you can walk." He man got up and started to walk.

Why do we hurt other people? I'll tell you why. It is because we don't love one another with Jesus' kind of love. Jesus is the Way and the Light and He wants to help. Jesus died on a cross and He did it for me and you.

This is the day for you and me and the whole world to sing a new song of joy, for the Lord not only died, but He arose, too! We who know the Lord shall live forever in Paradise!

The Beginning!

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Pray

Heal our lameness that we may walk with you Jesus, starting now!*

Paul Robert Harris from *One Day at a Time*

Day 17

"Bring Them to Jesus"

Read a Scripture: Luke 5:17-26

Granny Clatterbuck always brought Don to church, and Paul came with Mary Harris. Those two women gave us all a great gift. They showed us that God can love thru anyone – handicapped, unable to speak – because they gave those two young men God's love and they showed them how to love us. No one can ever take Paul's place, or Don's, in our hearts.

Pray

Praise God Three in One. Thanks for love that carries, forgives, and spreads.*

Diana Davis

Day 18

"Sunday Taxi"

Read a Scripture: John 1:35-42

Daddy was known as the "Sunday Taxi." He picked up and delivered an elderly man, a neighbor lady and her children, and always Daddy's sister, Aunt Sade Wright .

Pray

Thank you for John, Andrew, and Marhl who brought people to Jesus so they could see for themselves. Help me to be a Sunday taxi.*

Don Clatterbuck

Day 19

"Corky"

Read a Scripture: Matthew 2:1-12

I think about Corky Coffman coming to the house not long after I moved in. He came early in the morning and I wasn't even dressed yet. My mom was visiting so she answered the door. There was Corky in jeans and suspenders and that's all—no shirt on. And she said, "We aren't dressed yet!"

His reply was, "That's okay, I don't mind!" He came in to chat bearing homemade apple butter and good tidings to welcome me to Keezletown.

Pray

Like wise ones searching for Jesus or Corky Coffman seeking to welcome the new pastor, let us seek others with good gifts and accepting them right where they are.*

Rev. Dawn-Marie Singleton

Day 20

"Helped Them In"

Read a Scripture: Jeremiah 31:1-34

Mary Harris shared with me about her and husband Hugh's first visit to Keezletown Methodist Church. They moved to Keezletown and heard rumors that they would not want to attend Keezletown Methodist Church. That made Hugh more determined to go, especially after meeting Marhl and Alleen Clatterbuck and knowing they had gone to there for many years.

Their son, Paul, had cerebral palsy and a special chair that his father Hugh made for him. The people of Keezletown Methodist were waiting when they came to help Paul inside the building. That hospitality and willingness to help made Keezletown Methodist their home church for many years.

Pray

As Keezletown folks did years ago, let us extend radical hospitality and welcome to everyone who comes to draw near to God.

Mary Harris and Rev. Joel Robinette

Day 21

"Ring the Bell"

Read a Scripture: 1 Corinthians 10:31-33

As a boy of eight or so, I asked my mother what the bell was used for in the churches. She answered that at one time there were no phones so the bell was rang to get everyone rounded up for announcements. Also when someone died in the community, they would ring the bell. And the third use was for church each Sunday morning. I said they ought to ring the bell Sunday morning at Keezletown.

She said that was an excellent idea and to mention it to Marhl Clatterbuck, the Sunday school superintendent. So, at the beginning of church I asked Uncle Marhl (as a lot of people affectionately called him) if he thought the bell could be rang before church services. He said, "Sure, great idea."

I went and sat down and Uncle Marhl said, "Mackie Coffman has volunteered to ring the bell an hour before services every Sunday morning."

Wait a minute, I thought. I said it was a good idea. I don't want to ring it! How am I going to get out of this? I went home and told Mom that I was not sure what just happened. It was my idea, let someone else do the work. As always she encouraged me to try it.

Every Sunday morning she would wake me to ring the bell at precisely 9:00. Church started at 10:00. I would hop on my bike and pedal down to the church to ring the bell for a quiet village. I can still feel the rough pedals on my feet because

most of the time I didn't stop long enough to put shoes on. No need to take a key, the church door was always unlocked. There were a few people that would tease me about being five minutes late ringing the bell. One sweet lady came up to me and told me she wasn't coming to church until she heard the bell ring that morning. Somehow that warmed my heart. I learned, no matter how small the task, whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

Pray or Sing the Hymn
"There's Within My Heart a Melody"

There's within my heart a melody Jesus whispers sweet and low:
Fear not, I am with thee, peace, be still, in all of life's ebb and flow.

Refrain

Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, sweetest name I know,
fills my every longing, keeps me singing as I go.

All my life was wrecked by sin and strife, discord filled my heart with pain;
Jesus swept across the broken strings, stirred the slumbering chords again.

Though sometimes he leads through waters deep, trials fall across the way,
though sometimes the path seems rough and steep, see his footprints all the way.

Feasting on the riches of his grace, resting neath his sheltering wing,
always looking on his smiling face, that is why I shout and sing.

Soon he's coming back to welcome me far beyond the starry sky;
I shall wing my flight to worlds unknown; I shall reign with him on high.
(Luther B. Bridgers)

Mac Coffman

Day 22
"Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors"
Read a Scripture: Nehemiah 8:1-12

Open hearts, open minds, open doors: Keezletown United Methodist Church embodies this in every way to me. Jim and I first visited KUMC after our daughter and her family moved to this area a few years ago. The very first Sunday we found examples of each of those concepts. The doors were certainly open and the schedule was posted on the sign out front so we knew when to come. We were warmly welcomed into the Sunday school class that felt so much like ours in Jacksonville,

Florida. I think we even entered into the discussion that very first time (open minds). But without a doubt the love of Christ has been evident each and every time we returned as warm smiles and great hugs greeted us.

I will never be able to express fully how powerful your love has and continues to be manifest in your prayers, cards, and smiles. I love to be able to participate in the worship services, Bible studies, and UMW whenever I am in Keezletown. Getting the newsletter and prayer requests as well as having a copy of the picture directory keeps me "in the know" and allows me to pray with you.

This church has been an inspiration to me every day. "The joy of the LORD is your strength" (v. 10, NRSV) and joy has certainly been my watchword, especially these last two years. I have found great amounts of joy in being with you. Happy 225 and many more to come.

Pray

May God continue to bless your ministry in this community and around the world.

Evalyn Campbell

Day 23

Read a Scripture: Luke 2:39-52

"I Love You, Mother and Dad"

What does a little boy mean to you?

It means Mother and son
and Father and son.

It means love
patience
and kindness.

It means always being happy
and loving.

Let me tell you more...

One night a little boy was born
and this little boy was named
Wonderful.

And I saw Him leading the way.
We are being gently led
by His wonderful Light.

Without Him, there would be no love –
There would be no reason
for being.

That little boy loved His parents,
Just like I love my parents.
I hope they know it,
But if they don't, I'll say it:

I

Love

You, Mother & Dad!

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Pray

Thank you God for loving mothers and fathers. Bless our mothers and fathers with the wonderful light of Jesus. Help parents who struggle with being parents. May they see your way of being parent, savior, and redeemer in their lives and share such grace with their children and children everywhere.*

Paul Robert Harris from *One Day at a Time*

Day 24

"Destiny"

Read a Scripture: Ephesians 2:1-10

I started playing the piano in church at sixteen; me and Connie Deeds and Faye Hoover (-Thomas). Noland Suter would tell us in class how the Presbyterians and the EUB's were theologically different, especially on "predestination." He had his hands full with a class full of teenagers.

Pray

Sovereign God, as you have prepared good works for us to do, give us discernment to recognize the work you have for us to do, strength to serve with the grace of Christ, so that we may bear fruits of the Spirit.*

Diana Davis

Day 25

"Light Bulb!"

Read a Scripture: Nehemiah 1:1 – 2:18

While at my first United Methodist Virginia Annual Conference, I

participated in a Stop Hunger Now packaging event. The packaged meals would be sent to a school in a third world country where the only time children were sent to school was if there was a meal. Not only did the meals prevent starvation but the children were receiving an education. This benefitted the country as a whole.

The Holy Spirit had the cartoon “light bulb” go off in my brain that morning! I needed to take this back to OUR church! Our Sunday attendance was around 90 each week. My concern was the \$2,500/10,000 meal minimum.

Well, I prayed about it for a few months and at the prompting of, then pastor, Dawn-Marie Singleton, I presented my proposal to the church council. That night we probably had 20 people attending the meeting. This mission was new to EVERYONE, except Chris Cole, my conference roommate. I shared about this mission; that it was for ages 5-95, that there were sitting or standing jobs, that it was fast paced and FUN! I proposed we host a packaging event during Lent as a Sunday afternoon of self-denial. We would take up three collections, January, February and March. It passed unanimously.

I was amazed! God opened ALL the doors for this mission. Not only did we reach our \$2,500 goal but we doubled it and packaged 20,000 meals.

Pray

God of inspiration, inspire us to make a difference where there is suffering in our world. God who parted the sea and Jordan, make the ways for us to bring those in need to your blessings.*

Tanya Dawn Eppard

Day 26

“Can’t Out Give God”

Read a Scripture: Luke 18:18-30

I began my ministry at Keezletown in June of 1995. A difficult beginning turned into ten wonderful years of ministry with the folks in and around Keezletown.

One of the amazing highlights for me was the beginning of our organized support for the Relay for Life and cancer research. Jenny Dillard and Scott Dodrill came to church one Sunday morning and challenged the church to join and support the Relay for Life. They presented an astronomical financial goal. Our church responded in spectacular fashion and we smashed that goal.

The faith and vision of two people energized our church’s outreach ministry. Keezletown UMC became a force in the quest to find a cure for cancer.

The lesson: you can’t out give God. We gained much more than we gave: fellowship, inspiration, purpose, commitment, etc.

Whatever the future holds, faith in God will not disappoint you. The promise is eternal life with Christ.

Pray

All we have is from you God of Providence. As we give and share out of what you have generously bestowed on us, may we find your grace shared with others and our hearts at home with yours.*

Rev. David Breeden

Day 27

“Cheerful Giving”

Read a Scripture: 2 Corinthians 9:6-8

When I was a child my pastors would preach about giving until it hurts. They were sincere and I tried to believe and practice what they told me. Later in life I came to a different understanding. On one stewardship Sunday morning, Mrs. Black, an uneducated farmer's wife, told our congregation of thirty people that we should give until it feels good. I heard her say this because I was serving as a student pastor for her congregation.

Giving until it feels good is the way that God gives but it is not the way our culture views giving. God is a giving God. God gives and gives to us. God is like a Grandmother who prepares Thanksgiving lunch for the family. She prepares more than enough for every member of the family and then some. There are enough leftovers to feed two or three more families of the same size. Every moment of every day God gives us more than enough.

The more that I am present to the “now” of life the more I am in touch with the giving nature of God. We cannot rewind life nor do we know what the next hour will bring. So, we need to experience the holy in what we can see and feel in the passing moments of life. It is possible to have the experience of life and to miss its beauty and meaning. The more we are present to the now of life the more we know that life is a gift.

When Paul wrote to the Corinthians he reminded them that “God loves a cheerful giver” (v. 7, NRSV). Cheerful givers are those who give until it feels good. Mrs. Black was a good theologian. She taught me more than some of my well educated pastors and professors.

Pray

Help me give until it feels good.*

Bishop Joe E. Pennel, Jr.

Day 28

"Movie"

Read a Scripture: Acts 10

Don't underestimate the power of a movie! We all experience coming to the Lord in different ways. When I was in the 7th grade I made my commitment to the Lord after watching the movie *Two a Penny*. The London, England based movie integrates a clip of the Rev. Billy Graham preaching at a crusade and the response of two young people attending the crusade. I had gone with some friends and their youth group. After the movie, the group went back to the church for discussion and soul searching and some of us went forward to dedicate our hearts to God that very night.

Pray

Lord Jesus, come in a vision, movie, devotional, or some other way and reveal your love, grace, and truth to me that I may know you and dedicate my heart to you.*

Tanya Dawn Eppard

Day 29

"Call"

Read a Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

In my present "growing older years," I do not remember the details of many significant spiritual experiences, even those we had while serving as bishop in Virginia 1988 - 1996. I do remember many God directed times in some churches as we visited two or three each Sunday throughout the conference.

However, one of my most influential spiritual times came when I was a 20 year old college student working as a life guard at Lake Junaluska. I attended a youth conference at Shackford Hall where the service concluded with communion. There was a young student who had polio and was carried to the communion rail, kneeling as an act of commitment to serve Christ in the ministry of the church as the Holy Spirit would lead him.

At that time I felt a pull in my life that if that young man would give himself – as handicapped as he was – to serve the church of Christ, then I should give myself – with good physical health – to serve as God might call me.

I realize that community ourselves, with the abilities God has given us, is the greatest source of joy available to us from our Heavenly Father.

Since that day – in the years that have come – some of our most significant experiences have come with the clergy and laity of the Virginia Conference. Those were good times with good people and a good Lord.

"Live it up" with celebration of the 225th!

God bless!

Pray

Let me serve Christ in the ministry of the church as the Holy Spirit would lead me.*

Bishop Thomas B. Stockton

Day 30

"Rev. Daniel A. Frazier"

Read a Scripture: John 20:15-23

IN OUR CHURCH CONFERENCE WORK, he was a good member of Va. Conf. He was Conference Statistician for a number of years. He was so accurate in this. He was patient, having to deal with the indifference of many ministers in getting in their reports. By the reports straggling in, it made for him so much extra work. He was Treasurer many years for the Board of Christian Education, likewise for our Youth Camps. He was an *Itinerant* Minister. This term means, a minister is willing to go to a pastorate where the Stationing Committee feels directed to send him. The Stationing Committee in our Conference never had any problem with Brother Frazier. When he felt he had been at a Church or Charge long enough, he would tell the Committee that he felt he ought to move. His instructions were: "Send me where the Lord leads." He did not ask for a certain church or charge. He never asked what was the salary, the benefits, the condition of the parsonage. As he was given an assignment, he went joyfully, trusting for Heavenly Guidance, to be used of the Lord to minister to the people as best he could. I can imagine how our Stationing Committees today would love to have more ministers like this!

Pray or Sing the Hymn

"Where He Leads Me"

I can hear my Savior calling, I can hear my Savior calling,
I can hear my Savior calling, "Take thy cross and follow, follow me."

Refrain

Where he leads me I will follow, where he leads me I will follow,
where he leads me I will follow; I'll go with him, with him all the way.

I'll go with him through the garden, I'll go with him through the garden,
I'll go with him through the garden, I'll go with him, with him all the way.

I'll go with him through the judgment, I'll go with him through the judgment,
I'll go with him through the judgment, I'll go with him, with him all the way.

He will give me grace and glory, he will give me grace and glory,

he will give me grace and glory, and go with me, with me all the way.
(E. W. Blandy)

Rev. Howard L. Fulk (from Phillips)

Day 31

"Y.A.K.s"

Read a Scripture: Acts 2:43-47

Darryl and I started attending KUMC in 1982 when, after my grandfather's death, we moved in with my grandmother. We were made to feel right at home and soon joined the Y.A.K.s (Young Adults of Keezletown). It was a fun time of fellowship. Most of us were in our 20's or around 30 and did a number of things together as a group, such as meetings in each other's homes, painting Al and Jackie Liskey's picket fence, and compiling a cookbook in the summer of 1982 to name just a few.

Pray

Thank you Lord for the gift of small groups where we may love one another and grow in faith together. Grow faith and love in my own heart and those with whom I gather.*

Tanya Dawn Eppard

Day 32

"This Church Is Not Yours, but Mine"

Read a Scripture: Exodus 33:12 – 34:9

It was about 15 years ago when I served Korean UMC of Greater Washington in Northern Virginia. To follow up the 3rd phase of Five-Year Long Range Plan, the church started a process of renewing the small group ministries. This plan was adopted by the Church Conference, and we have prepared for the renewal plan for more than a year.

First, we trained the small group leaders and tried 5 small groups for a year with a new format as a pilot project. After a year we got positive responses from all pilot groups and decided to expand the new format to the entire congregation. This renewal plan was aimed at the transformation of small groups from fellowship groups to disciple making groups. New small groups would meet at least twice a month, and the congregation could choose their small groups. In the past all members were assigned to small groups according to their residing areas.

Though we prepared this process thoughtfully and cautiously, much criticism and opposition began to spread among church members. Why is Pastor Cho asking to meet twice a month in today's busy world? Isn't it enough to meet once a month?

Pastor Cho was influenced by a small group seminar and tried to implement it without considering our situation. One of the long time members came to me and said, "Rev. Cho, this plan is splitting the congregation. I decided not to join a new small group. Please honor my choice." I was deeply disappointed and full of frustrations.

On Sunday when the congregation was scheduled to choose their small groups and commit to this renewal process, I went to church early in the morning, and knelt down before the Lord. My heart was full of worries, anxiety, and frustrations. There was no peace in my mind. I prayed to God: "Lord, have mercy on me and this church. As you know and see, we have been struggling with the renewal of small group ministries. There are a lot of oppositions. Lord, what shall I do? Help this church and me. We need to move on." I knelt before the altar area and prayed and waited in silence.

After a while I heard soft and comforting words in my heart. "This church is not yours, but mine." At the moment I heard this voice, I was relieved from all anxiety and worries. "Yes, Lord. This church is yours. Not mine. I will leave the future of this church into your hands. If you allow us to move on, we will proceed. But if you have a different plan, we will gladly obey your guidance." On that Sunday I shared this experience in my sermon and asked the congregation to forgive me if I had pushed too much.

More than 60% of the congregation committed themselves to the new format of small groups. The renewal plan was successfully launched that year.

Pray

Yes, Lord. This church is yours. Not mine. I will leave the future of this church into your hands. If you allow us to move on, we will proceed. But if you have a different plan, we will gladly obey your guidance.

Bishop Young Jin Cho

Day 33

"Lay Witness Mission and Mini-Mission"

Read a Scripture: Acts 2:1-21

The Lay Witness Mission was a "full weekend" experience during which a group of ordinary men, women, and youth came from other churches and communities to share how God was working in their lives. The lay witnesses stayed in the homes of church members. The entire weekend was a time of fellowship, food, great music, worship led by visitors, and small group meetings.

The Thursday Nights "Mini-Mission" began following the first Lay Witness Mission. During these weekly Thursday Night meetings we had music and someone's testimony followed by small groups. We always had several people from other denominations attending and participating.

Pray

Raise us ordinary folks up in the Holy Spirit to be God-bearers for Church and world.*

Dale Dodrill

Day 34

"Sunday School Class of Preachers Including Rev. John Thomas Brown"

Read a Scripture: Proverbs 27:17-19

To look back in memory some fifty years and see a teenage class of boys in a small church in Southwest Baltimore from which went several outstanding ministers of the Methodist Church stirs one's heart. From this Class and Sunday School eight young men received and answered the "Call to Preach." Among the first to respond was Jim Brown and the writer of this Memoir. We entered Randolph-Macon Academy in the fall of 1918 and a year later John joined us at R-M Academy. This formed a close friendship which reached down through the years. We studied together, we worked together (serving in the Dining Room) and played together at R-M Academy, and at Randolph-Macon College. We joined the old Baltimore Conference about the same time but it was not our lot to serve close to each other in appointments. It was a real joy to greet Jim and John at Conference and inquire the welfare of each other and our families and friends.

Pray

Bless Lord the faith friends who walk with you and me. Use me sharpen their faith as they have sharpened mine. Bless us to walk together in hope and reflect the love, commitment, and compassion of Christ to each other.*

Rev. Harry W. Craver (from Davis, 1969)

Day 35

"Lay Speaker"

Read a Scripture: Acts 16:1-10

The Lay Speaking Program (now called Lay Servants) was where Wade Huffman took me under his wing and encouraged me. Nancy Armentrout and Barbara Smith traveled with me to provide special music. At one church, a member said, "He brought the girls with him again." After that comment, they were hooked.

Pray

Thank you God for Paul who took Timothy under his wing and Wade who took Dale under his. Bless Dale as he takes lay servants under his wing for our

Harrisonburg District churches. Give me grace to bring someone under my wing and help them grow in their service and faith as a disciple of Jesus.*

Dale Dodrill

Day 36

“A God Thing”

Read a Scripture: Psalm 145

I'll share “a God thing.” In September 2015, the church was just starting on some parsonage renovations to two bedrooms. Church members were removing the one-hundred-year-plus plaster on Wednesday and Thursday night. We had to be finished with our part because the insulation people were coming Friday.

On Thursday afternoon the insulation man phoned to say one of their trucks had broken down and asked if it would be all right to do the installation on Saturday. That night not as many folks showed up to help and we did NOT get finished...but it was okay because the insulation crew had rescheduled! So we had the time to get finished on Friday night. Wow!

Pray

Take some time in prayer and quiet to remember or consider “a God thing” in your experience. Then take some time for thanksgiving and praise for what God has done. If you have never had “a God thing” happen to you, pray to God that you would recognize “a God thing” should God do one.*

Tanya Dawn Eppard

Day 37

“Writing on the Wall”

Read a Scripture: Daniel 5

May 13, 1969—not long after the joining of Keezletown Evangelical United Brethren and Keezletown Methodist Churches into Keezletown United Methodist Church—some folks came together to do refinishing work in the parsonage which they now shared. These folks, united in Christ, congregation, and community, recorded their names on a piece of wall that was covered over: Mensel Dean, Conrad Deeds, Owen Derrer, Jim Marston, Noland Suter, Elmer Michael, and Al Liskey.

September 9, 2015 that record was uncovered while doing some demolition in two bedrooms at the parsonage so new insulation and dry wall could be installed. It was a great revelation. Those folks had been doing 46 years ago what our congregation is doing today. Caring for the parsonage to bless the church's pastoral ministry, bless the parsonage family, and the future parsonage families and pastoral ministry of KUMC. Those have been my son's and daughter's rooms for more than 3 years now and they love their rooms. It was a blessing

to reflect upon the people who helped make those great rooms in 1969 and the people making them great rooms for 2015 and beyond.

That 5-13-1969 record was a reminder for me; our lives are held together and blessed by the grace of God and other people. Is there a reminder for you? Do you have a home, family, job, school, church, or memento that reminds you how you are lifted up in the grace of Jesus Christ through people who share God's love? I am in awe and appreciation for God's provision. Thank you God and thank you people who share the love of Christ!

Pray

Thank you God for the signs of your grace, provision, and salvation that surround us.

Rev. Joel Robinette

Day 38

"Kneeling at the Altar"

Read a Scripture: Acts 20:17 – 21:5

The Superintendent of the Winchester District called me on a Saturday to ask if I would preach the Sunday morning service at a church near Harrisonburg. I thought I was hearing things but said, "Yes" anyway.

What happened amazed me!

This 22 year old high school dropout, auto mechanic, and dance band drummer found himself behind the pulpit of a church I knew nothing about; but, *I knew enough to trust the leading of the Holy Spirit*. At the end of the service I extended my first altar call to any who wanted to kneel and pray. The altar filled quickly. It was my first altar call but not my last.

I was so totally impressed and humbled by what happened at Keezletown United Methodist Church on Sunday morning, February 9, 1969, that it became a weekly Sunday practice throughout my 40 years of parish ministry.

I've never gotten over it.

I never will.

Pray

I put my trust in your leading Holy Spirit. I kneel to pray and open my life to the grace of Jesus. I praise God for all the wonderful mercies I have seen that guide my course.*

Rev. Bill Fisher

Day 39

"Methodist Holy Water"

Read a Scripture: Matthew 10:40-42

Rev. Bill Fisher's definition of coffee: Methodist holy water.

Thanks “Billy” for all the memories. Al’s coffee pot still sits on the stove and used every day. Remember there is always a cup waiting for you whenever you come down this way.

Pray

We welcome you Jesus as we welcome others. Through acts of hospitality may we welcome and enter your presence. Bless our times of coffee, meals, and breaking bread with others so much that we discover you in our midst.*

Jackie Liskey

Day 40

“Not Taking No for an Answer”

Read a Scripture: Exodus 3:1 – 4:17

The invitation to share from the pulpit came as a big surprise to me. One Saturday, Pastor Bill Fisher called and asked if I believed in prayer. I said yes to which he replied, “God told me to tell you that you are going to speak from the pulpit in three weeks.” He would not accept my answer of “No.”

Pray

When there are people who need your grace and you come calling Lord, help us like Moses to go when we hide our face, question our identity, hardly know you, fear rejection, and have fumbling words. Come with your Presence, Purpose, and Power so that we go in the grace of God.*

Dale Dodrill

Day 41

“O Lord, Let This Math Class, Er, Thorn Be Taken from Me”

Read a Scripture: 2 Corinthians 12:1-10

Bill Fisher led the largest Bible Study I ever attended at the Keezletown Church. He was our pastor while he attended Eastern Mennonite Seminary. We met each Wednesday evening and at one time had seven different denominations attending. We met in the basement of the “old” Methodist church. Pastor Fisher was a people person, and his sermons seemed to speak to each in attendance. Bill stopped at my home frequently. He often had breakfast and he and my Daddy gave each other advice. Once Bill stopped by after taking his math exam. He asked Daddy for his gun and he shot his math textbook into confetti.

Pray

Thank you Lord for finally delivering Bill Fisher from math class. May our weaknesses, frustrations, and thorns make us lean even more on the strength of your grace.*

Don Clatterbuck

Day 42

Read a Scripture: Proverbs 29

"Easter Story"

This story is about a man I saw on a snowy day. I thought about him because he looked so mad, and because of what he did. He put something down on the car and looked mad! He looked right at me – he didn't say anything to me, but I said to myself, "Mister, whoever you are, you are giving me a story." Then I said to myself, "Why are some people so mad at the world?"

The man put something down, so hard it might break – he did that because he doesn't know about Easter. Sometimes people are mad but they don't know it and also some people yell and argue all the time. Why do they argue? Because they are sick in their minds and also because they don't know the Lord Jesus.

What is Easter all about? Easter is a time to be born again and a time to be happy because Jesus said, "I am the Way, whosoever believes in me, shall not perish, but have everlasting life."

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Pray

Deliver me from anger that escalates or takes over everything else. Renew my mind in the peace and confidence of you Lord Jesus. Grow and bear in me the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Paul Robert Harris from *One Day at a Time*

Day 43

Read a Scripture: Psalm 123

"I Wonder"

Why do people look so sad
when I am happy?
Why do we all look down
at ourselves?

Because we do not know
to look up at the heavens.

I look up in the heavens
and I see the Lord
in the blue sky,
And all the people are looking
down at themselves,
When I am looking
up in heaven.

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Pray

I look to heaven to see your face. I look to Jesus to find my way. I look to the cross to find my place. To the empty tomb and heaven's play. I look up and find your grace.*

Paul Robert Harris from *One Day at a Time*

Day 44

"Harold Martin Fuss"

Read a Scripture: Jeremiah 1:4-9

A faithful, committed servant of Christ who as a child of the living God was brave in his service to God's kingdom and a true ambassador of Christ to all people. Harold Martin Fuss, marched into the glory of God's kingdom on September 17, 2014. He was brave in his ministry of "the Word" and loving in his service.

From a very early age, 3 or 4 years old, he felt called to be a preacher. At 18 he was appointed to three small churches as a student preacher while attending college and seminary. In the fall of 1946 Harold moved from the Baltimore Conference to the Virginia Conference and was appointed to 8 small churches in the north end of "the valley" with a parsonage that had no indoor plumbing.

Harold and Jackie were united in marriage February 8, 1947 in Washington, D.C. That union brought a gift of love and joy in their three children Gerald, Christopher (member of the Virginia Conference) and Deborah Ann.

He was attending seminary in Richmond and serving the churches on weekends. Harold was a stalwart minister of the gospel for 44 years. He was active in all parts of church ministry and helped with church mergers, relocations, and building projects. In Eagle Rock, VA both the church, parsonage, and 3 other homes burned and the family faced some hard time before another parsonage was obtained. At that time he was completing his seminary requirements and all of his academic work was burned in that fire.

Harold was always greatly involved with youth both in the church and the community. He served for many years as a volunteer chaplain with the training and then guidance of The Institute of Industrial and Commercial Ministries, Inc. He was proud to be a United Methodist minister.

He retired after 44 years of active ministry and moved on a small farm where he continued his intensive work as a gardener, woodworker, and growing Christmas trees. He self-published a book about his life and Christian ministry.

Harold was born into a very poor home in Gerrardstown, West Virginia but he was rich in his Christian faith and blest thousands with the fire of his convictions.

Pray

God with me, you knew me before I was formed in the womb. Put your words in my mouth, send me where you will, and let me not fear since you go with me and are my Deliverer.*

Rev. James "Jerry" John (from Pillow, 2015)

Day 45

"Lord's Acre"

Read a Scripture: Matthew 13:1-23

Harold and I, with our 3 month old son, moved to Keezletown (our third appointment in the Virginia Conference) September, 1949. The preceding minister left to go to school. We had 5 churches on the charge.

Our second son was the first child to be born to a Keezletown parsonage family.

One of the highlights of Keezletown Church was the year we observed the "Lord's Acre" program of the Conference, raising potatoes. From the position of a picture of the present church, it is built on that land.

Harold was given a "higher appointment" September 17, 2014.

Pray

Sower of life, forgiveness, and grace, we thank you for: potatoes that grow to satisfy the hungry; parsonage babies that grow into pastors; and your word sown in our hearts that we may be true disciples of Jesus Christ. Help our pastors to be faithful and the people of Keezletown UMC to bear fruits of the Spirit.*

Jacqueline Fuss

Day 46

"Nelson"

Read a Scripture: 2 Timothy 1:3-10

When I was pastor of Keezletown United Methodist Church in the mid-80's for a relatively short time, the one person who made a particularly lasting impression on my life was Nelson Miller. Nelson had lost her husband in a tragic death some 30 years before I knew her. She and her husband had run a farm on Indian Trail Road. Rather than withdrawing from the community and her church, Nelson continued her lifelong commitment to Keezletown Church and to the larger community.

In the life of the church Nelson was the church organist and had taught an adult Sunday school class. She gave major leadership for many years for the annual fall Election Day oyster/turkey event at the church.

Equally significant was Nelson giving piano lessons to some 300 students over the course of her professional life including teaching our daughter Anne. Nelson always had a warm caring smile and greeting for her students and encouraged them to enjoy playing the piano.

Most fascinating for me was the way Nelson and her loyal friend, Dorothy Sites, worked together on Nelson's farm giving hay to the cattle. For a number of years Nelson drove her pickup with Dorothy throwing hay out of the back of the pickup to the cattle in the winter, and doing other chores around the farm. This friendship helped Nelson do what she enjoyed most of all – being a piano teacher with children and young people, and then teaching Sunday school and playing organ at church.

Nelson gave a profound witness of God's love and grace to those around her at church and in the larger community.

Pray

Dear God, let us live into your gifts of friendship, discipline, service, joy, and grace through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Rev. Bill Finley

Day 47

"Special Music"

Read a Scripture: Psalm 100

Many individuals and occasions helped to develop and define my life. One is Nelson Miller. She was pianist/organist for more than 50 years. She gave music lessons to Patsy and Penny. Each of them provided special music for worship making me very proud. Mrs. Miller also directed the senior and junior choirs and

was instrumental in Irene Dean making choir robes. Also she aptly taught the adult Sunday school class for years.

Pray

“Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth.

Worship the LORD with gladness;
come into his presence with singing.

Know that the LORD is God.

It is he that made us, and we are his;

we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture” (vv. 1-2, NRSV).

Don Clatterbuck

Day 48

“Sam Stories”

Read a Scripture: Psalm 150

Sam Hasler shared with me some Keezletown stories.

Sam told me, “When I joined it was called Keezletown Methodist Episcopal.”

I asked, “Was it Keezletown Methodist Episcopal, South?”

Sam said, “It was, but we called it Methodist Episcopal.”

Sam’s mom died when he was six weeks old and he was raised by his grandparents. His grandfather was a part of the Keezletown congregation but his grandmother was a Lutheran and went to Spaders. It was Sam’s Aunt Verdie White who took him to church and Sunday school.

Sam relayed how Keezletown MECS was part of a charge then and had Sunday school every Sunday. The congregation had worship twice a month on first Sundays at 11:00 AM and on third Sundays at 7:30 PM. For Sunday school there would be a devotion upstairs and then people would go downstairs to classes before classrooms had been added. Sam said, “I’d been going to Sunday school and thought I should join the church.”

Sam remembers when the old Methodist church had paper on the windows to make them look stained. When that got old they scraped them and put in stained glass.

Sam was the substitute organ player in the old church. In the new church Sam would rotate Sundays playing organ with Nelson Miller with each playing two. Sam played piano for the choir and also played piano when Nelson played the organ. Sam also got to play the pump organ in the EUB church. Sam played organ at other congregations who did not have an organ player like John Wesley UMC in Harrisonburg.

Pray

Spend time praising the Lord this week. You might praise like Aunt Verdie White and take someone with you to praise God at a time of worship. You may play an instrument in praise and thanksgiving to God like the piano, organ, or some other. You may go to a time of worship and when organ, piano, and choir praise you can join in the celebration of what the Lord has done.

Sam Hasler and Rev. Joel Robinette

Day 49

“Encourager”

Read a Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 5:8-18

I grew up and went to church in McGaheysville, VA but often spent weekends and part of summer vacations at my grandparents’ home in Keezletown. My love of music may have started when, one summer, as a very young child, I attended Vacation Bible School. Mrs. Nelson Miller was leading the music. There was one particular song that I REALLY liked. (I have no idea the name of it)! Mrs. Miller asked me to do a solo and to “sing out.” I must have belted it out at the closing program because I remember watching my parents’ faces and my Mama’s looked a little “pained.” Ha! Mrs. Miller was an encourager to me!

Pray

Thank you Lord, for those who have been an encourager to me. Help me to be an encourager to others and build them up in the grace of Christ.*

Tanya Dawn Eppard

Day 50

“Send”

Read a Scripture: Luke 10:1-24

Keezletown United Methodist Church has been a vital part of service and ministry to the community. In addition, the church has added to the ministry of the Virginia Conference as well by approval of two candidates for ministry and sending one missionary in service. In 1959, Hugh T. Harris was licensed to preach as a member of the former Methodist church. He served as pastor of the church for one year in 1963....His brother, James Harris, began preaching in 1976....Both men are artists and their work is often seen in the Virginia Advocate.

In 1927, Kathryn Eye entered service as a Methodist missionary. She was commissioned to the Belgian Congo in Africa. From 1939 to 1960 she served as

medical, educational, and evangelistic missionary in Central Africa. After returning to the United States she served several churches in the area as an educational director. From 1970 to 1976 she served as a local preacher in Winchester. She died in November, 1979.

Pray

Sending Savior, thank you for all from our congregation you have sent into pastoral ministry, missions, and ministry here in our community, our conference, and world. Continue to call, save, and send. Help us to cultivate a culture of call and response. Send me. Use me in sharing the love of Jesus Christ.*

Rev. Don Hawks (Hawks)

Day 51

"Resistance"

Read a Scripture: Genesis 32:3-32

1951 was a year of huge cultural change for me. That's when my family moved from Cincinnati to Keezletown. I felt totally disconnected, uprooted from everything that held familiarity and comfort.

The people at Keezletown Methodist Church became a key resource for making that change. I especially remember Nelson Miller, who tried to teach me to play the piano (alas, a lost cause), and who did teach me to sing. A large part of that lesson was learning self-esteem and self-confidence.

While in the Army overseas, I accepted God's call into the ministry, and entered from Keezletown Church when I returned. Dr. O. B. Michael was the pastor during those years. I answered the call in France in 1957, but it had begun two or three years earlier when Dr. Michael would tell me he believed God had a call on my life.

I resisted.

God persevered.

After basic training I attended the Army Information School in Fort Slocum, New York. Our post was on an island in Long Island Sound. We shared that post with the Army's school for chaplains.

The call continued.

I still resisted, yet always in the background was Keezletown Church and Dr. Michael. He never gave up.

After I accepted the call, Dr. Michael led me to take a correspondence course for a license to preach, which I completed while in France. I was able to organize a Sunday school program at Bussac, and help with preaching when we were without a chaplain. Later I attended Bridgewater College, and served as student pastor at the

Blue Ridge Charge. During my last year of college, Keezletown Church became attached to the Blue Ridge Charge. That year, I lived in the Keezletown parsonage, and pastored the church from which my call had emanated.

I have always been grateful to the people of Keezletown Church for their role in my call to ministry, and most of all for their support for my family, and their mission to meet the educational/relational needs of developmentally disabled people through Community of Hope (COHOPE).

Thanks be to God for all of you!

Pray

Thank you God for never giving up on us. Thank you for people in our lives who have never given up on us. Help us to give in to God's blessing and trust in Jesus' path. Wrestle with us a little longer, Jesus, until we recognize your goodness in the light of a new day.*

Rev. Hugh Harris

Day 52

"Cross in the Night Sky"

Read a Scripture: Luke 9:18-27

When I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of Glory died,
my richest gain I count but loss, and pour contempt on all my pride.

Were the whole realm of nature mine, that were an offering far too small;
love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.

These words from the pen of Isaac Watts reflect the life and ministry of GEORGE SYLVESTER WIDMYER. His papers speak of his vision of the cross which God used to call him to ordained ministry. He wrote of one night, in his early teen years, when his mother pointed his attention to the twinkling stars in God's mammoth sky. While gazing at the mystery of God's heavenly beauty, he beheld a cluster of stars in the form of a cross. From that moment he believed that God had fingered him to proclaim the love of Jesus expressed most fully in that cross.

Pray

What would you finger me for Jesus? Which cross is mine to bear with you?
How may I serve you and save life?*

Rev. Paul C. Bailey (from Phillips)

Day 53

"Thankful Prayers"

Read a Scripture: Philippians 1:3-6

As I have reflected upon my years as the Pastor at Keezletown these verses come to mind. Keezletown was my first full time appointment upon completion of my theological training at Union Seminary in Richmond. I could not have been appointed to a better place. Your love, patience, and graciousness toward me is something I will always cherish. When I received the request to share some of my memories about my time at Keezletown, I found it to be a difficult task to make a succinct summary. There is not an individual of whom I do not hold fond memories. As I have attempted to narrow down the possibilities, please do not assume that any person is not important to me at Keezletown. What I have chosen to do is highlight some more of the lighthearted stories that come to mind.

Of course, no story would be complete without talking about the Election Day meals. We did two meals: lunch and dinner. And one of my favorite dishes was the mashed potatoes done under the supervision of Wally Simmers. Since then her mashed potatoes have been my standard for the best mashed potatoes. Every time we have mashed potatoes at home, my wife unfortunately has to hear the words come out of my mouth: "Honey, these potatoes are good. But they're not Wally's."

Speaking of food – how I still miss that German chocolate cake Miriam Simmers made for me every Christmas. And not to forget that Japanese fruit pie Norma Smith baked for me every Christmas. Then there were those cakes that Ruby Layman baked for me as she surely knew that it was difficult for me to yield not to temptation: her infamous "Better than Sex" cake and rum cake. Polly Frye was the lay member to Annual Conference each year I was at Keezletown and it was always our custom to go to a restaurant and have a nice feast while at Annual Conference. In fact, we continued that tradition for many years after I departed Keezletown until she was unable to attend. Did I mention that I gained more than a few pounds while at Keezletown?

One of the summers at Keezletown started out rather dry. One Sunday during that dry spell, as Maynard Michael was departing after the service he mentioned to me his concern that the drought was having on his fields. I jokingly replied, "You're not paying the preacher enough." Beginning the next Sunday and every Sunday thereafter, Maynard placed a quarter in my hand after the worship service. And lo and behold it started raining after that very first Sunday he paid me with a quarter!

I could go on with these stories, but I'll close with this one. I went to Keezletown with fear and trepidation because someone told me that I'd better watch out for that Ralph Crowe. He was really hard on preachers, so I was told. I don't know what it was, but I actually had a rather enjoyable relationship with Ralph and

his family. Maybe it was because I never took his gruffness seriously (I think I perceived that he was a real softy on the inside). It was my privilege and honor to have officiated at his funeral service before leaving Keezletown and I think I was just as heartbroken as his family at losing him.

I could go on with so many stories. I think of the many opportunities I had to minister to you in the midst of life's challenges and the loss of loved ones. This process of reflecting upon Keezletown memories has made me so thankful that you have been a part of my life and ministry.

Pray

Again my prayer for you is this, in the words of Paul: "I'm thankful for all of you every time I pray, and it's always a prayer full of joy" (vv. 3-4, CEB).

Rev. Don Hawks

Day 54

"Train"

Read a Scripture: Proverbs 22:6

My roots at KUMC go back to my great-grandparents, who were members here in the early 1800s. I thank God every day for Christian parents who made church a priority. My earliest memory is being in the Nursery class with Grace Coffman as my teacher.

I always loved Christmas programs and practices to prepare for them. Mrs. Miller worked hard to put on a wonderful program every year.

Preparing and serving the Election Dinner every year was always fun, though we all complained about how much we dis-liked it. The church smelled like oysters for weeks after!

We had an active MYF group and meetings were always fun.

This is where I joined the church at age 12. Rev. Warren Reeves was our pastor then. I was so proud, years later, when my daughter Jennifer joined the church while Doug Akers was our pastor. Later, Rev. Akers conducted my Dad's funeral here, and several years after that, Rev. Jim Harris led the service as my grandmother was laid to rest.

This church, its pastors, and congregation, have been a major influence in my life – all of my life. Last April, Len and I rejoined our church family here and this coming April, our daughter Jennifer, will be married here! It has always been "home" to me and it is so good to be home again!

Pray

Thank you Father, for blessing us with Christian parents who make learning

about You a priority in their children's lives. And thank you for our church family who loves us and supports us through good times and bad. We pray in Your name, Amen.

Diane Williams

Day 55

"Her Share"

Read a Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12-31

Mother always did her share. Her big project was the two week Vacation Bible School Program. I remember one year we coordinated our VBS with Crossroads Presbyterian Church. Not only was daily attendance huge, the church could not provide seating for the crowd at the closing program. Mother, Pasty, and Penny always helped Daddy pack treats of candy and an orange for Santa to give to each child after the Christmas Program. Another event Mother viewed as special as Christmas was Easter. She helped to plan the Easter Program, the Sunrise Service and the breakfast which followed the Sunrise Service. We had our Sunrise Service in the lot behind our old church; a perfect place to witness a sunrise. Mother enjoyed her membership in the Methodist Women and their outreach program as well as the fellowship.

Pray

Jesus our Savior and Head, Alleen took a pretty big share and part in the body of Christ. Help me to receive the share you give to me. Help me be a willing, healthy, and vital part of Christ's body ministering to the world.*

Don Clatterbuck

Day 56

"Servant Heart"

Read a Scripture: John 13:1-20, 31-35

Mary Harris told me how one day she telephoned her friend Alleen Clatterbuck, mother of Don Clatterbuck, and asked her, "What are you going to do today?"

Alleen said, "I don't know. No one has told me what they need, yet."

I'm sure Alleen had plenty on her plate. Maybe more than you or I. Her day was open to the emerging need of someone else. The servant heart.

Pray

Lord Jesus, give me that servant heart. Share with me your heart of compassion and a love for kindness.

Mary Harris and Rev. Joel Robinette

Day 57

"Positive Influence"

Read a Scripture: 2 Timothy 2

I have grown up in the church and now find myself doing the things that all the "older" women were doing, which included the Election Day Meal. I think of how all those people in the church played such an important part of my life without knowing it at the time. I hope we can be a positive influence for the youth today. Funny how life goes in a full circle.

Pray

Thank you for faith passed on to me. As others have been a positive influence in my life, help me to be a positive influence on others. Lord help me to appreciate the heritage you have passed on to me through the gracious example of saints around me. Give me grace, strength, and resilience for Christ-like positivity.*

Carol Coffman Dillard

Day 58

"Everyone Has a Job"

Read a Scripture: Ephesians 4:1-16

Keezletown UMC is famous for the Election Day turkey and oyster dinner. Almost everyone is involved in some way. In my first year I was eager to help any way I could. I jumped in and started mashing potatoes. I quickly learned that this was not my job and that everyone had a job. Mine was to take money and I did it every year. That was one reason the meal went so smoothly each year because everyone knew what to do to make it successful.

When God's church works together, God blesses in so many ways. Think about it! Two or three people can do great things to honor God. An event like the Election Day Meal is an excellent example of what the church can do when everyone works together.

Keep the faith! Continue to serve Christ in your words and actions.

Pray

Help me Head-of-the-Church Jesus to build up the body of Christ in unity and love with the gifts and tasks you have provided me.*

Rev. David Breeden

Day 59

"Don't Get Tired of Doing Good"

Read a Scripture: Galatians 6:7-10

Brother Donovan had many excellent qualities as a minister. He was an interesting preacher and an untiring pastor. He was preeminently successful in winning souls, especially in his earlier ministry. Few led as many souls to Christ, in the last quarter of a century, as he. Among the railroad men, along the line of the B.&O., he was a great favorite, and led not a few of them to Christ. His manner of life was such as to win multitudes of friends. Once having met a man he remembered him.

During the last months of his life, true to his life-principle to help others, he cared for an aged blind man in whose home he lived on South Queen Street, Martinsburg, W.Va.

Pray

Everlasting God who does not grow weary, renew our strength and mount us up on your wings that we never tire of doing good to others, making disciples for Jesus, and sharing the grace of Jesus with them that need it most and are near to us.*

Rev. George P. Hott, 1906 (from Phillips)

Day 60

"Rough Start, 10 Wonderful Years"

Read a Scripture: Psalm 40

One of my first memories of KUMC was not the most pleasant one. That memory started the day before moving day when they came after our belongings. The truck was too small but they loaded as much as possible. They went back and brought a truck that was not so suitable but they took the rest of our belongings. On moving day our water beds were an issue but that got settled. I wrote this to let you know that not so nice starts can turn out to be wonderful during the years, like let us say ten wonderful years.

In our ten years there we made many friends and had many wonderful experiences. One of our great experiences was to be with Jenny Dillard and Scott

Dodrill to start the church's first Relay for Life. He team went beyond their pledge for Relay that year and every year after. What a wonderful mission for the great team and KUMC.

Dave suffered a major illness which while we were there. The church members were so caring and helpful to the point that Al Liskey offered to pay to have Dave taken to the Mayo Clinic to find the problem of his illness. Thank God UVA Hospital found the problem, a medication he was taking. We will always be grateful for the church through this time.

We enjoyed the annual oyster meals served by the church twice a year. Some of the best oysters ever. I remember all the help from adults and children to make these meals a success.

Mrs. Alleen Clatterbuck had wanted a Lay Witness Mission at Keezletown for a long time. We had one while we were there and it was a well-attended, very enjoyable, and a success. I remember a lot of weddings and then a lot of babies that happened during our ten years there.

Do you still do the fall hay ride? We enjoyed them very much, but know that Don Clatterbuck enjoyed it more than anyone.

I enjoyed serving with Dave at this wonderful church and meeting and making friends with so many people. It is so good to be remembered by old friends like Ramona Crowe who still sends us cards all the time. Thanks Ramona.

Thanks for including us in your 225th year celebration. What a great accomplishment this is for KUMC. Keep up the faith!

Pray

"Be thou my vision" (Byrne) and grant me to see beyond first impressions to Christ impressions.*

Phyllis Breeden

Day 61

"Keezletown"

Read a Scripture: Psalm 121

My memories of serving Keezletown United Methodist Church are all so special. They were formative to my faith journey and have made me who I am today.

I loved sitting on the front porch of the parsonage. Day or evening. It was my favorite place to be. I loved to watch as the cars, trucks, milk trucks and all kinds of tractors drove by. It was fascinating to see what went down the road. Everyone waved—it was just that way in Keezletown.

My memories of visiting in the homes of so many of the Keezletown folk are numerous and I will cherish them. I loved living in a place where I had to walk to the post office. It was a true experience for a city girl! I also enjoyed hearing the train whoosh through the back of the house – even when it happened during worship.

I loved teaching Confirmation class and watching the youth begin to understand the meaning of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. I was able to confirm 15 youth while I was there. Altogether, including those 15 youth, 27 people came in by profession of faith. I had the honor of baptizing 21 people, including my own daughter. THAT was a day to remember.

I remember how honored I was the day I baptized Phillip and Cheryl Carr and their daughter Emily – all on the same day, and then the next year I had the privilege again to baptize Gena Dove and her girls Miranda and Destin on the same day. Those are the ministry moments that are extra special.

I remember teaching a Revelation Bible study at Joe and Linda Liskey's home. I remember making chocolate Easter eggs for the Relay for Life fundraiser. I have great memories of the Relay for Life Event, especially the year after my dad passed away from cancer himself. Birthday parties for Jesus, new banners for the sanctuary, UMW Christmas programs, the Turkey and Oyster meal, the Pork tenderloin Spring meal, Vacation Bible school, Harvest Party Hayride, the Lawn Party, Christmas Caroling through the neighborhood, serving communion with my five year old daughter on our last Sunday there and the list goes on and on. Faces come across my mind, events, homes in which I visited, and the good times are relived time and time again. Keezletown was and is a special place for me, my ministry and my family. Thank you for all you are, for being willing to be a vessel of God's love and for being the church right there in Keezletown, Virginia.

Pray

Give us a willingness and joy to look to you Jesus, to be vessels of God's love, and to be the church right where we are.*

Rev. Dawn-Marie Singleton

Day 62

Read a Scripture: Luke 8:22-25

"The Approaching Storm"

I see the dark clouds coming over the mountain tops in the far distance;
Soon my world will be changed by its coming,
I will have my plans changed, my goals frustrated by its presence.
Why should that over which I have no control change my life?

The storm has arrived as expected. The rain falls,
I cannot go about my appointed tasks. The lightning flashes!

The thunder sounds and I am gripped with fear,
Why me? Why can't every day be a time of sunshine?

The storm has passed. The world has received renewal.
A new lease on life. The trees lift their leafy arms in a prayer of thanksgiving,
The world is now a more beautiful world.
God has taken another step in creation.

Troubles are in my life, I see problems as I look at the future,
Why should my life have storms? Why should I get old?
How will the world get along without me?
How will I get along without the world?

God of the storm, of the sunshine,
Help me to see the renewal of life that comes through the storms,
The abundance of life beyond death, give me a clear vision of a new dawn,
A calm assurance of the renewal.

Pray

Jesus who rests in the boat during the storm, may we find our rest and peace in you. Still the storms of our fear and doubt and let your peace and faith guide our course.*

Rev. Harold Fuss (1986)

Day 63

"Roller Coaster Emotions"

Read a Scripture: John 10:1-6, 17-37

Have you ever felt that your emotions were on a roller coaster ride? Well that has been my experience on an Emmaus weekend. There are times of laughter, times of tears, and times of silence and just listening for God's voice. I have been going through a time in my life over the past few months where I have been feeling guilty because I have stepped back from some of my roles of serving God, but when I am feeling burnt out because I am being pulled in so many different directions, I need to take a step back so I can listen for a clearer voice of where God may be calling me. In a book that I am currently reading by Lysa Terkeurst called *Unglued*, it says that emotions are not bad. It says that God created emotions for us to experience life, not for us to destroy it. I'm so glad I read that for reassurance after the roller coaster ride of emotions I have recently experienced. De Colores to all of my Emmaus friends!

Pray

Father God, thank you for giving us emotions that we can share with others.

Thank you for tears that we can share as well as smiles and laughter. Amen.

Michele Dodrill

Day 64

"Servant's Heart"

Read a Scripture: Mark 9:33-37

I got to talk to Lou Reeves in August 2015. Lou is the widow of Rev. Warren Reeves who served Keezletown Methodist Church from 1960 - 1963. Lou shared some great memories of Warren.

Warren was there when they split the charge. Keezletown Methodist had been with Fellowship, Linville, and Edom. The District Superintendent said he and the churches had three months to get it done. And they did it.

Warren was a true pastor. When Warren went on vacation he gave his phone number for where they were. That was back before cell phones. We never had a full vacation and that was all right with me. He would regularly come back early for a need that had arisen while we were away.

I would drag him to Bible studies after he retired and he knew more than the teachers. But he never let it show. They would have to dig it out of him. He was humble and gracious.

Pray

Suffering Servant Jesus, give me your love to serve others and welcome little ones.

Lou Reeves and Rev. Joel Robinette

Day 65

"Reluctant Acceptance"

Read a Scripture: Luke 16:1-13

In 1963, under the pastorate of Rev. W. L. Reeves, the Keezletown Church offered the figure of \$2,666.66 as set for the parsonage, garage, and half acre lot and agreed to pay for the three-fourth interest owned by Edom, Linville, and Fellowship Churches the sum of \$2,000.00 in order to purchase full ownership, noted in a court record, which was reluctantly accepted in view that an adjoining houseless, smaller lot to the Church within the same period had been sold for \$3,500.00; but to encourage the Keezletown congregation to perpetuate the parsonage seat and, if possible, to subsequently establish a station or to connect with a nearby charge, the above three Churches permitted a deed to be written by an attorney with the

approval of a court action, signed by the necessary trustees and put on record in the Office of the Clerk of Court of Rockingham County.

Pray

Thank you Lord for other congregations that have been joined to us in the work of the Jesus Christ like Edom, Linville, and Fellowship UMCs. Thank you for their wisdom in the earthly value of things like property and house and also their generosity and encouragement in blessing our congregation with below market value – but higher Jesus values – dealing. Help us to be generous and encourage others in light of the generosity showered on us.*

Rev. Olin B. Michael (Michael)

Day 66

“Confidences”

Read a Scripture: Proverbs 11:12-14

Daddy kept confidences throughout his ministry. You know the truth always comes out eventually, but daddy never shared it. When things would come out and we asked him about it he always said the same thing.

“Is that what you heard?”

And it was never discussed again.

Pray

God who spoke through the burning bush and heard the cries of the Hebrews, watch over our lips and the stewardship of what we have heard. Empower us to keep confidences, seek wise counsel, and refuse gossip.*

Cheryl Reeves Workman

Day 67

“Shirt”

Read a Scripture: Luke 10:25-37

I will never forget the one when the police showed up because someone was in the emergency room due to a domestic dispute and they needed his assistance, they didn't want to arrest the man, but they couldn't come up with any other options. Without hesitation he grabbed his jacket and was out the door, telling us to go on with our plans and he would be back as soon as he was able. When he returned several hours later we were concerned because his shirt was gone, he had

his undershirt and there was blood on it. All he would say is that the gentleman he was asked to see needed his shirt more than he did that night. When we questioned him further he said the doctors patched the man up, but his own shirt was destroyed so daddy gave him his, took him to dinner and booked a hotel room for him. We pressed him for more details and he smiled at us and said he was glad that his shirt fit the man so nicely.

Pray

Jesus, give us Samaritan faith that we may go and do likewise – giving mercy.*

Cheryl Reeves Workman

Day 68

“The Good Snowmaritans”

Read a Scripture: Luke 10:25-37

During the 2016 blizzard my neighbors Mike and Jenny Farrell were digging out their car from the church parking lot as Mike was attempting to go to work. I went over to lend a hand with my snow shovel. They had gotten the car uncovered and snow moved from around it but it was a long way and deep snow from the front of their car to the still covered road. It would have taken a lot of shoveling!

While we were talking a tractor came down the road. Mike said, “This might be my savior.” It was Joe Coffman and his son-in-law Brandon. They pushed out a lane of snow and then pulled Mike’s car out so he could attempt the drive to work.

Later that day, Bob Threewitts was plowing the parking lot with his tractor when Mike was returning. Bob cleared him out a space to make room for him.

It was a blessing to see people in our community and church being good snowmaritans and sharing grace.

Pray

Lord Jesus, let love for God and neighbor reign in my heart. Give me a way to show love to my neighbor today. Allow myself to be diverted and take time for loving my neighbor.

Rev. Joel Robinette

Day 69
"Church Home"
Read a Scripture: Psalm 89

KUMC became our church home in December 2012 and we both felt part of this family from our first visit. We started attending Sunday school, Greeting, Reading Scripture, Bible Study, Men's Group and being faithful in our attendance on Sunday mornings because we knew this is where God wanted us to worship at this time in our lives. During the summer of 2014 when we experienced a major health issue Pastor Joel and this church family reached out to us in a way that we shall always be ever so grateful. God is GREAT and our walk with him has been awesome and we love and appreciate each family member here at KUMC!

Pray

"Forever and ever I will sing about the tender kindness of the Lord! Young and old shall hear about your blessings. Your love and kindness are forever; your truth is as enduring as the heavens" (vv. 1-2, LB).

In His Love, Jim and Grace Brown

Day 70
"Support"
Read a Scripture: Romans 12:9-15

One of the things that keeps us at KUMC is the support, love, and caring that members show one another. Darryl's brother, Neil, died on December 29, 2006 at the age of 48 from injuries sustained in a car wreck. A HUGE number of folks from KUMC showed up at the funeral which had standing room only at the entrance. We were so very touched! Some of those people had taken off work to be there with us. We were still sad but felt so loved and supported.

Pray

Emmanuel, God with us, give me grace to be with others. Let me rejoice with those who rejoice and mourn with those who mourn. Your presence, Emmanuel, is a blessing. Let my presence be a blessing to others as your presence is a blessing to me.*

Tanya Dawn Eppard

Day 71

"The God of Jacob Is Our Refuge"

Read a Scripture: Psalm 46

This memory is a very vivid one of Rev. Cameron Miller. I can picture him and hear his very distinct voice, as I recall that day. I don't know exactly how old I was, but I must have been in my early childhood years.

During worship service one Sunday morning, I sat with Donna Armentrout who had cared for me at some point during the previous week. I really don't remember if she had been my sitter at home or had helped in my Sunday school class or VBS, but she had intrigued me in some way. I don't remember ever sitting with anyone other than my parents before that day. My family was sitting on the left side of the sanctuary, close to the front. Donna and I were sitting on the right side, close to the front. I wanted to show her my Sunday school papers, but I had left them with Mom. Being oblivious to the fact that Rev. Miller was standing in front of the altar rail (as I remember him doing often) and in the middle of his sermon, I crossed in front of him to get my papers.

He paused briefly.

I crossed again to take them to Donna.

Again, he paused.

Then as I went back the second time to get something else from Mom.

Rev. Miller paused for an even longer time and then said, "Oh, my!"

When I crossed in front of him for the fourth time to get back to my seat beside Donna, he stopped preaching and said something like "My...are we finished yet?"

That got my attention!

I realized at that moment I had been very rude, my pastor was rather annoyed and I was supposed to stay in my seat during worship. I'm sure Mom and Dad were very embarrassed (I'm sorry about that!). I don't recall any punishment but I know I didn't sit with anyone except them for a long time.

Pray

Be still, and know that I am God!

Be still, and know that I am.

Be still, and know.

Be still.

Be.

Jan Shafer

Day 72

“Perseverance in Prayer”

Read a Scripture: Luke 18:1-8

Church meals were held in the Methodist basement, ‘cause it was bigger; and I remember, one time Granny Clatterbuck brought a rhubarb pie for us to try. She kept telling us how good it was and how we would just love it. Tasted it. No thank you. No more—ever. Only thing Granny ever told me that wasn’t the truth! That lady had the biggest heart; she taught me about perseverance in prayer.

When we moved in to the new building, it was hard on both groups, ‘cause even though we worshipped together in the “M” building, after they tore down the “E” building, we were still two groups. It took a lot of compromising and a lot of praying, but Granny stood fast that we could make it work.

Sure, we’ve had our ups and downs as a congregation: we’ve fought over things; we’ve had people leave because of things said or done; we’ve gotten rid of preachers that just didn’t work out in our situation, but God, throughout all of it, has brought us closer together. I’ve been a part of this church for over fifty years, and I can tell you, we are closer now than we have ever been. We care about others more, and we care not only about our own, but about new folks walking in the door.

Pray

I pray that God will continue to bless this family with growth, and abundant unconditional love to give to each other and to all who walk thru the doors.

Diana Davis

Day 73

“Praying for Others”

Read a Scripture: James 5:13-20

Alleen Clatterbuck—I remember her genuine concern for others and her desire to help however she could. I can remember her asking me on several different occasions, “Please tell me, how is _____ getting along?” or “How is this project moving along?”

If the answer was, “Good,” she would state her plans to continue to pray.

If the answer was, “Not so good,” she would ask, “Now, what do we need to do to help?” She always sought an answer to help, to make life better or to improve a situation and she always let me know she would keep praying.

I’ll always remember how strongly she believed in the power of prayer.

Pray

Take time today to pray for others. If you don’t know who or what to pray

for, take some time first to see how someone is getting along or how a project is moving along, so you will know what to pray for and how to pray. There may be a way to help with prayer and there may be a way to help so you are part of the answer to their prayer.*

Jan Shafer

Day 74

"A Husband for Dawn-Marie"

Read a Scripture: 1 Corinthians 7

I remember going to a Women of Faith Conference with Rev. Dawn-Marie Singleton and several other ladies from KUMC. I shared a room with Dawn-Marie and we stayed up late sharing about ourselves, our families, our roles in life. I came to realize during that time some of the difficulties and challenges pastors face with close relationships and friendships within their congregations – the fine line they must often walk. It gave me a new perspective and a greater appreciation for pastors. I'm so glad we had that time together.

We also shared some hopes for the future. Some of her hopes were to one day be a wife and mother.

A funny memory is from the next day as we were on the transit to the conference center. Dawn-Marie suddenly realized she'd lost her watch. All of us began looking for it, but I happened to spot it rather quickly. Dawn-Marie said, "Now Jan, if you could just find me a husband that quick, I'd be set!" For weeks after that, she would ask if I'd found "him" yet.

I'm still praying for a godly husband for Dawn-Marie!

Pray

We thank you God for blessing Dawn-Marie with her daughter Sarah-Grace. You fulfill our hopes in wonderful ways. Continue to bless your servant Dawn-Marie and this servant who prays, too.*

Jan Shafer

Day 75

"Minister Married by a Justice"

Read a Scripture: Genesis 2:15-25

Springfield Ill., Sept 13 – Sweethearts in childhood, later engaged to be married, but separating after a lovers quarrel, Rev. Samuel L. Rice of Harrisburg, Pa., and Mrs. Antoinette G. Howells of Chicago, were married here last week. "After their separation [of] 35 years, Rev. Rice found another girl and married. He has been a widower for a year. Mrs. Howes also married, but her husband died 2 years after the union. Recently Rev. Rice learned the address of his first sweetheart and wrote her. She replied and after an exchange of letters,

he proposed marriage and they met here. A clergyman friend who was to have performed the ceremony was out of the city and to save time they were married by a justice of the peace. It is believed to be the first local instance of a minister being married by a justice. Rice is 64 years old and his wife 7 years his junior. They will reside in Harrisburg, Pa."

Pray

Thank you God for the gift of marriage. Thank you for being there to bless Adam and Eve when no human pastor was around, and for providing a justice of the peace when our pastor Samuel Rice wed Antoinette Howells and their pastor friend was out of town. Bless us with your presence at the wedding and stay and bless the marriage again and again with your grace and example of how Christ loved the Church.*

Article from *The Intelligencer*, September 13, 1920 (from Phillips)

Day 76

"No drinking. No Spam."

Read a Scripture: Ephesians 4:17 – 5:2

Conrad and Dorothy Deeds once shared with me a secret to their long and happy marriage. Dorothy said she had seen the harm alcohol abuse could do on families. So before agreeing to marriage, Dorothy pointed her finger and told Conrad, "No drinking."

Conrad served our country in World War II and ate plenty of potted meats. He'd had quite enough of that. So he pointed his finger back at Dorothy and said, "No Spam."

They tell me there has been no drinking and no spam and they have lived most happily.

Pray

Jesus our Savior, free us from harmful practices like alcoholism and others that damage our health and relationships. Jesus who comes to give us life to the full, help us to give abundant life to others considering even small things like Spam preferences.

Rev. Joel Robinette

Day 77

"Changing Ways"

Read a Scripture: Luke 16:19-31

When you are a young teenager, and Rev. E. Cameron Miller would come

down out of that pulpit, oh my, and look you square in the eye, and tell you that if you didn't change your ways and start following Jesus, you were going to end up in the lake of hell fire and brimstone. Scared the bejeebers outta' me, and I got myself baptized and in the church.

Pray

Merciful Jesus, save me from the wrath to come. Thank you that our ways can change – with your help – to your ways. Help me to have the faith of Abraham, depend on you like Moses, cherish your Word like the prophets, and love like Jesus that I may know your good things.*

Diana Davis

Day 78

"Frequently Neglected"

Read a Scripture: Matthew 16:1-4, 16-18

Frequently Neglected Co-Founder of Shenandoah. The oral traditions of the history of Shenandoah College and Conservatory are quick to invoke the name of A. P. Funkhouser as "founder" of the institution; but often only as afterthought is J. Newton Fries given credit as a co-founder. Although a scarcity of primary sources makes it virtually impossible to isolate accurately the individual contributions of these men to the founding, their cooperation in the enterprise is never questioned.

In "A Study of the Functions of Shenandoah College and Shenandoah Conservatory of Music" (a University of Virginia doctoral dissertation, June 1955), Clarence H. Connor quotes from a letter written in 1954 by Winona Fries Hunter to Mrs. Ernest Ralston. In it, she says, "...in the summer of 1875, they – Papa [J. N. Fries] and A. P. [Funkhouser] – got together and planned and started Shenandoah Seminary in September." Also, the history of Shenandoah which Funkhouser incorporated into his *History of Va. Conf. of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ* speaks quite generously of the work of J. N. Fries, even though some readers of that work have been critical of what they feel is a self-aggrandizing tone on the part of Funkhouser. Still another letter, this one from Annie Baer Funk during her 87th year (March 12, 1936), acknowledges the relationship between Fries and Funkhouser at the time of Shenandoah's founding: *At the time of the opening of the school the faculty consisted of two teachers, Professor Paul Funkhouser and Professor Frieze [sic], who were in charge of the academic work, and of myself, who was in charge of the Music Department. My work in the school consisted of the teaching of Piano. As we had no piano, I gave lessons on the organ....*

On the campus, Fries did not restrict himself to classroom activities and administrative responsibilities. He took an active part in the activities of the Platonian Literary Society and encouraged all of the Societies to establish libraries to support the academic programs. Fries was also a regular contributor to *The People's*

Educational Monthly, writing on a variety of topics from practical instruction on selecting and educational institution to defending institutions like Shenandoah from what he felt were attempts by the U.B. Church to close them...

Similarly, he did not restrict his activities to affairs of Shenandoah Institute and the U.B. Church. When, after the Virginia General Assembly passed an Act incorporating the town of Dayton, Va., Jay Newton Fries became its first mayor.

Pray

Help me to seek and find your face Lord and rejoice in my reward in knowing you.*

Rev. Bruce Souders (from Phillips)

Day 79

"Teaching"

Read a Scripture: Psalm 78

One of the most dynamic and colorful personalities in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was A. P. Funkhouser of Rockingham County, Virginia: "Boy Preacher," founder of Shenandoah College and Conservatory of Music, short-term president of two other U.B. colleges, and spokesman for both secular and religious education, promoter of Chautauqua programs and camp meetings, writer, orator, editor, and church historian; articulate advocate of union with the Methodist Protestant Church; six times a delegate to General Conference; Superintendent of Schools in Rockingham County for a few years; Postmaster of Harrisonburg; and at the age of 63, the time of his death, a candidate for the Ph.D. degree at Columbia University. In accomplishing all of this, he earned a reputation for independence, boundless energy and drive, flawless public speaking without notes, efficiency, impatience, and sometimes, arrogance (particularly among youth). "He considered no discouragement, paused at no obstacle, waited for no council, and listened to no applause," eulogized his friend and peer, the Rev. C. P. Dyche, at the meeting of Va. Conf. in September, 1917. A. P. Funkhouser maintained his active pace up to a few days before his death on July 6, 1917, in Assembly Park, Harrisonburg....Carmean reports in the Lebanon Valley College Alumni Review: "...Three days before [his death] he had preached a funeral sermon, addressed the quadricentennial of Luther, arranged for an outing for fifty children on July 4 in his park, and spoke on behalf of a civic project in which he was interested."

A. P. Funkhouser's interest in education began when, at the age of 18, he accepted a teaching position at one of Virginia's first free schools in Rockingham County. It did not flag even when his pastor and presiding elder tried to dissuade him from entering college for a period of study before becoming a minister. While there is some doubt of the accuracy of their words, the sentiment they expressed was

typical of a large segment of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ at that time: "It is a pity to see a man spending the best years of his life in school while the world is being lost." By the same token, his interest was not limited to his connection with Shenandoah College and Conservatory of Music which he served as a trustee for many years after leaving its presidency in 1881. From 1883 to 1885, he served as Superintendent of Schools in Rockingham County. From 1893 to 1894, he served as President of Western College, a United Brethren institution near Cedar Rapids, Iowa, that was a precursor to Leander Clark College, which was to be merged with Coe College in 1917. From 1906 to 1907, he was President of Lebanon Valley College which he also served as Trustee from Va. Conf. on a number of occasions (1878-80; 1889-92; 1894-96; 1899-1909; and 1914-1917). At both Western College and Lebanon Valley College, A. P. Funkhouser served brief but important presidential terms, helping to save both institutions from fiscal bankruptcy after they had suffered disastrous fires prior to Funkhouser's arrival on the scene. In the process, he appears to have provided a "shot in the arm" to waning faculty and student morale at both institutions despite his reputation for directness and a lack of humor.

His interest in education also found outlet in two personal endeavors in which he was involved: newspaper publishing and the operation of Assembly Park west of Harrisonburg. His newspaper publishing began in 1883, when together with C. I. B. Brane, another United Brethren minister, he founded *The People*, which was dedicated to temperance and education. After the first year, A. P. Funkhouser served alone as publisher. In 1886, publication of *The People* was halted and a new publication took its place, *The State Republican*. The concerns of this publication were expanded to include (1) statements on the rights of labor, (2) political news, (3) an observation that "Baseball is superseding bull-fighting in Cuba," (4) an expose of "iniquitous road laws of Virginia," and (5) articles like "Little Practical Use for Flying Machines" (January 15, 1891), which asserted that "... the world has as little practical use for flying machines as it has for the North Pole." Both *The People* and *The State Republican* carried Harrisonburg area school news, a farmer's corner, and train schedules.

Though the latter publication continued into 1900 before it was disbanded, Funkhouser's connections with it were sporadic during the 1890s. For example, beginning in 1897 he served a year as Associate Editor of *The Religious Telescope*, a publication of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. He might have continued in the position a few more years had he not been forced to undergo surgery for an undisclosed eye problem.

Pray or Sing the Hymn
"Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies"

Christ, whose glory fills the skies, Christ, the true, the only light,
Sun of Righteousness, arise, triumph o'er the shades of night;
Dayspring from on high, be near; Daystar, in my heart appear.

Dark and cheerless is the morn unaccompanied by thee;
joyless is the day's return, till thy mercy's beams I see;
till they inward light impart, cheer my eyes and warm my heart.

Visit then this soul of mine; pierce the gloom of sin and grief;
fill me, Radiancy divine, scatter all my unbelief;
more and more thyself display, shining to the perfect day. (Charles Wesley)

Author unknown (from Phillips)

Day 80

"The Postmaster and the President"

Read a Scripture: Romans 13

Furthermore, after February 18, 1898, he [A. P. Funkhouser] was busy at his post as Postmaster at the United States Post Office in Harrisonburg. It is said that this position was given to him because of his support of William McKinley when he ran for the Presidency in 1896. Among Funkhouser's accomplishments was the organization of a three-train "Confederate excursion" to Canton, Ohio, the Republican candidate's hometown, for about 2,000 veterans and their sons. The Rockingham Register (Friday, May 26, 1899) reports that when President McKinley passed through Harrisonburg on his way back to Washington from a vacation in Hot Springs on May 20, Funkhouser was a passenger on the Presidential Train, having gotten on board at Staunton.

Pray or Sing the Hymn

(If in a country outside the United States, you may wish to pray for your country and leaders)

"America the Beautiful"

O beautiful for spacious skies, for amber waves of grain;
for purple mountain majesties above the fruited plain!
America! America! God shed his grace on thee,
and crown thy good with brotherhood from sea to shining sea.

O beautiful for heroes proved in liberating strife,
who more than self their country loved, and mercy more than life!
America! America! May God thy gold refine,
till all success be nobleness, and every gain divine.

O beautiful for patriot dream that sees beyond the years
thine alabaster cities gleam, undimmed by human tears!

America! America! God mend thine every flaw,
confirm thy soul in self-control, thy liberty in law. (Katharine Lee Bates)

Author unknown (from Phillips)

Day 81

"Wake Up"

Read a Scripture: Isaiah 52

Already, for a considerable time, I had become acquainted with William Otterbein and George Adam Geeting, two preachers of the German Reformed Church, and had frequently heard them preach in the neighborhood of my place of residence. These individuals endowed by God, preached powerfully, and not like the Scribes: their discourses made uncommon impressions on the hearts of the hearers: they insisted on the necessity of genuine repentance and conversion, on the knowledge of a pardon of sin, and in consequence thereof, a change of heart and renovation of spirit. Many secure and unconcerned sinners were, by their instrumentality, awakened from their sleep of sin and death – many converted from darkness to light – from the power of Sin and Satan unto God. They soon collected many adherents to, and followers of the doctrines they preached, from the multitude that congregated to hear them. Those persons who held to, and embraced these doctrines, were by them, formed into societies, and were called Otterbein's people, and the worldly-minded, gave them the nick-name *Dutch Methodists*, which in those days, is rather considered slanderous.

Pray

Praise you Lord for those early United Brethren who faced ridicule and scorn from some people but received grace and life from you through faith in Jesus Christ. Let us wake from sin and death and live in your mercy and life of the Church.*

Bishop Christian Newcomer (from Newcomer)

Day 82

"I Must Stay at Your House"

Read a Scripture: Luke 19:1-10

The first meeting of the United Brethren in Keezletown occurred in Keezletown on Monday, September 2, 1800 at Zimmerman's "The Stone House." The meeting was conducted by Christian Newcomer and Henry Boehm. Newcomer was 51 years old at the time and was in the valley on a preaching mission with

Boehm. Services continued in this home as preachers with the United Brethren passed through the area.

Pray

Jesus who passed through Jericho and stayed at the house of Zacchaeus to bring salvation there, thank you for sending Newcomer and Boehm here to Zimmerman and letting faith root, sprout, and bear fruit in our community. May we always welcome you that our hearts may be your home. Come to us and stay with us.*

Rev. Don Hawks (from Hawks)

*Hawks' source had Newcomer as 81 years old on this visit, however Newcomer was born 1749.

Day 83

"Preached in Keiseltown"

Read a Scripture: Matthew 5:3-6

...15th – This day we returned to Staunton, dined at brother King's, and rode about 17 miles to Widore's, where a great many people had assembled; father Boehm spoke with wonderful power; we staid here for the night. 16th – This forenoon I preached in Keiseltown, at one Zimmerman's, from Matthew 5; v. 3 to 6. Henry Boehm spoke also. The people cried aloud: may the Lord grant them saving grace. We rode in the afternoon about 16 miles, to John Peters'; father Boehm preached here to a numerous congregation.

Pray

We give you praise Lord for an early meeting place, sermon, prayer, and response of the Keezletown United Brethren in Christ. As we cry aloud, Lord grant us saving grace.*

Bishop Christian Newcomer, September 1800 (from Newcomer)

Day 84

"Desire for a Deeper Work"

Read a Scripture: Matthew 3:1-12

Sunday 27th – This forenoon Otterbein preached again from Matth. 3; v. 12, to a great congregation, I followed him; Br. Strickler spoke in the afternoon. I rode yet to Woodstock and lodged with Br. Zehring. 28th – I rode in company with Br. Neuswander, and Huber, to Mr. Rhinehart's. When we had taken some

refreshments, we parted; I rode through New Market, and came to a Mr. Huff's; he would not suffer me to go further, and insisted on my tarrying for the night. This man and his companion are truly a pious pair: may the Lord bless them. 29th—I travelled again alone, felt a desire in my heart for a deeper work of grace in my soul; came through Keiseltown and lodged with Mr. Kreiner. 30th—I came to Staunton, where I had to transact some business for one of my neighbors; rode in the afternoon about 20 miles to Br. Strickler's. 31st—I came to Harrisonburg, overtook two Methodist preachers on the road, with whom I travelled to town. We stopped with Mr. Sala, a book binder, and took some refreshments. I then pursued my journey, came to J. Peter's, three miles from New Market.

Pray or Sing the Hymn
"Give Me the Faith Which Can Remove"

Give me the faith which can remove and sink the mountain to a plain;
give me the childlike praying love, which longs to build thy house again;
thy love, let it my heart o'erpower, and all my simple soul devour.

I would the precious time redeem, and longer live for this alone,
to spend and to be spent for them who have not yet my Savior known;
fully on these my mission prove, and only breathe, to breathe thy love.

My talents, gifts, and graces, Lord, into thy blessed hands receive;
and let me live to preach thy word, and let me to thy glory live;
my every sacred moment spend in publishing the sinner's Friend.

Enlarge, inflame, and fill my heart with boundless charity divine,
so shall I all my strength exert, and love them with a zeal like thine,
and lead them to thy open side, the sheep for whom the Shepherd died.

(Charles Wesley)

Bishop Christian Newcomer, May 1804 (from Newcomer)

Day 85
"Revive Us Again"
Read a Scripture: Psalm 85

In 1850, the first church building of the United Brethren was built in Keezletown on land given by Amos Keezle. The building was located on the corner

of the present school grounds. The second church building was constructed under the leadership of Rev. S. L. Baugher at a cost of \$1,100.

Very little is known about the activity and events of the early church in Keezletown, as extensive written records were not kept. Membership and participation apparently declined through the years. In 1946, the Evangelical Church merged with the United Brethren in Christ to form the Evangelical United Brethren Church. By this time the church in Keezletown was at a low ebb. Preaching services only were held on Sunday afternoon with an attendance of six or seven people. A decision was made to close the church in 1949, at which time the church was part of the Pleasant Valley Charge.

The church was thus closed for three years and re-opened as a station appointment. The church was re-opened as a result of a large number of people developing interest in meeting in the church building once again. The church was placed on a two-point charge with Cedar Grove from 1957-60. During the 1950's the church was served by student pastors from Shenandoah College which was located at that time in Dayton, Virginia.

Pray or Sing the Hymn
"Revive Us Again"

We praise Thee, O God, for the Son of Thy love,
For Jesus who died and is now gone above.

Refrain

Hallelujah! Thine the glory, Hallelujah! Amen;
Hallelujah! Thine the glory; Revive us again.

We praise Thee, O God, for Thy Spirit of light,
Who has shown us our Saviour, and scattered our night.

All glory and praise to the Lamb that was slain,
Who has borne all our sins, and has cleansed every stain.

Revive us again, fill each heart with Thy love;
May each soul be rekindled with fire from above. (Mackay & Husband)

Rev. Don Hawks (from Hawks)

Day 86

Read a Scripture: Acts 1:1-14

"My Testimony"

The Lord touched me. He filled me with the Holy Spirit. He told me, "You are ready to do my work everyday. I will tell you what to do. You tell others that I have filled you." And He told me to tell others about Him. One specific thing He said to do: to love others and to work with others.

I didn't tell anybody what happened that night.

At the Full Gospel Meeting I looked at Linda, and she looked at me, but I didn't look at the lady sitting next to me. People were all around me, and then the Lord was with me right in that room. He held out His hand and talked to me. Then He touched me, filling me with His love and the Holy Spirit. And I thought I was drinking water. After that, I felt like the Lord lifted me all the way out of my chair! After He did that, He took away all my fear. Then He took away His hand.

Love the Lord with all your heart, and with all your soul, and all your might. Listen to me, and I will tell you more.

Jesus is my best friend. And I love Him. The Lord will help you to learn to trust Him. And I want you to know I am happy in the Lord Jesus.

September 1976

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Pray

Fill me Jesus with the Holy Spirit. Give me the gift of love for you and others. Take all my fear away. I place my trust in you and am happy in Jesus my Lord.*

Paul Robert Harris from *One Day at a Time*

Day 87

Read a Scripture: John 14

"A Poem by Rev. James W. Brill"

Oh! for a heart to praise the Lord,
A heart from sin set free,
For then we have a great reward,
His beauty we do see.
For blessed are the pure in heart,

For they shall see their God,
For this is what the Saviour said
To those who with Him trod.
Oh! may we feel the holy fire
Inspiring us to go,
In faithful service to the end,
To know as we are known.

Pray or Sing the Hymn
"Blessed Assurance"

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! O what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God, born of his Spirit, washed in his blood.

Refrain

This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long;
this is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long.

Perfect submission, perfect delight, visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
angels descending bring from above echoes of mercy, whispers of love.

Perfect submission, all is at rest; I in my Savior am happy and blest,
watching and waiting, looking above, filled with his goodness, lost in his love.
(Fanny J. Crosby)

Rev. James W. Brill (from Phillips)

Day 88

"Byrd on Horseback: Rev. Rudolph Byrd"
Read a Scripture: Numbers 22; Acts 8:26-40

He was a good sermonizer, a faithful pastor, and lived the gospel he preached. In his earlier ministry he rode his circuits on horse-back in typical pioneer fashion. His saddle-bags, and other valuable historical materials and data he had collated, are being cared for by the Pa. Conf. Historical Committee. Mr. Byrd took a keen interest in U.B. Church history and from 1912 to 1925 was secretary of the Pa. Conference Historical Society.

Pray

Lord, wherever we ride, give us your words of grace, truth, hope,
encouragement, and blessing to share with everyone we meet.*

Author unknown (from Phillips)

Day 89

"Rev. Clyde W. Tinsman's Good Advice"

Read a Scripture: The Song of Solomon 8:5-14

I have many memories of my uncle, but I want to share these two as parting messages to Va. Conf. First, I pass on to you the good advice he gave me when I was a new pastor: "Above all, a pastor must love the people and receive their love." Second, here is the biblical reference with which he closed every letter he wrote to me, "Cant. 8:6-7":

Set me as a seal upon your heart,
as a seal upon your arm;
for love is strong as death,
passion fierce as the grave.
Its flashes are flashes of fire,
a raging flame.
Many waters cannot quench love,
neither can floods drown it.
If one offered for love
all the wealth of his house,
it would be utterly scorned. (NRSV)

Pray

Jesus who before dying on the cross spent time being blessed by friends Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, give us grace to love the people you place in our lives and to receive their love.*

Rev. Lucy Hook Porter, OSL, a clergy member of the New York Annual Conference and niece of Rev. Tinsman (from Phillips)

Day 90

"Sign"

Read a Scripture: Luke 24:13-35

I cherish the memories of watching people grow in their faith and become more involved in the church. I think specifically about Jim Dillard. He was already a devoted Christian, but after he attended the Emmaus walk; man, he was on fire.

He began the "Sign ministry" and we started having people call the church asking if I was preaching on the topic that was out on the sign. It was an attention getter and people were noticing. Jim and so many other men in Keezletown were foundation builders. Nowhere else in my ministry have I seen so many faithful men proclaiming God's word and doing his will.

Pray or Sing the Hymn
"Rise Up, O Men of God"

Rise up, O men of God! Have done with lesser things.
Give heart and mind and soul and strength to serve the King of kings.

Rise up, O men of God! The kingdom tarries long.
Bring in the day of brotherhood and end the night of wrong.

Rise up, O men of God! The church for you doth wait,
her strength unequal to her task; rise up, and make her great!

Lift high the cross of Christ! Tread where his feet have trod.

As brothers of the Son of Man, rise up, O men of God! (William P. Merrill)

Rev. Dawn-Marie Singeton

Day 91

"The Grace of God"

Read a Scripture: Matthew 18:21-35

It was the summer of 1962. A time of playing ball in the lot behind the old Methodist church. The ball field was not in the shape of a diamond but rather the shape of a rectangle. Any ball hit across Miss Elton's fence was an automatic out and you had to climb the fence and get the ball. To this day every ball I hit goes to left field. The girls would play ball, too. They couldn't hit the ball as far, but they always got on base (usually a piece of board). They could run like deer. At the end of the lot was Rev. Reeves' watermelon patch. Rev. Reeves was a quiet and gentle man.

One hot summer as we were sitting on the bank across from the church, someone said he wished he had one of those watermelons in Rev. Reeves' patch. Trying to impress my friends I said, "I will get you one."

"I dare you," was their response.

I made my approach from the south and like the Indians I had watched on TV, from fence post to fence post. While wearing a white tee shirt crossing a green field, I thought that I was invisible. I grabbed the biggest watermelon and the only way I could carry it was the bear hug method. It was more of a waddle than a run and I realized my exit was going to be more conspicuous than my stealth approach.

I delivered the watermelon to my friends. After opening it with a pocket knife, not giving much thought of the places that pocket knife had been, we ate until we could hold no more. I was the man of the hour until everyone was full. I kept bringing the act up but the praises stopped abruptly.

After supper that day, we all gathered for our ball game. Rev. Reeves was working in his watermelon patch. "Uh oh," I thought. We finished our game at the same time every evening...when you couldn't see the ball any longer. Rev. Reeves called my name and said, "Mackie, come over here, I have something for you." I was aware teachers could spank you but not sure if preachers could spank. I thought, "This is going to hurt and hurt a lot more when I get home." Frankly, I could have handled a spanking easier than what Rev. Reeves did that evening.

He picked up a watermelon and handed it to me. He said, "I want you have this. Take it home to your family." I took it home and told my mother that Rev. Reeves wanted us to have it. She said, "What a nice man." At the time I seen no reason to tell her the whole story.

This is not a story to my credit, because I did wrong. But Rev. Reeves returned good for evil. I often wonder if he was watching from the parsonage's window. I wonder if he was thinking about the passage from Matthew 18:21-35, the parable of the unforgiving servant.

In the twilight of that evening in 1962, I didn't get what I deserved, I experienced the grace of God.

Pray or Sing the Hymn
"Grace Greater than Our Sin"

Sin and despair, like the sea waves cold, threaten the soul with infinite loss;
grace that is greater, yes, grace untold, points to the refuge, the mighty cross.

Grace, grace, God's grace, grace that will pardon and cleanse within;
grace, grace, God's grace, grace that is greater than all our sin!

(Julia H. Johnston)

Mac Coffman

Day 92

"Watching Daddy"

Read a Scripture: Deuteronomy 6:1-13

I loved the watermelon story you shared with me, but I was a bit surprised to learn people still remembered. I spoke with momma about it and she said he knew the kids took them and was happy they enjoyed them. I did not know the rest of the story. He was an avid gardener and produced massive amounts of food. They gave most of it away and always the best of his crops. I remember many nights that he and momma were up till the wee hours canning and freezing what was left. Not only did we enjoy the fruits of his labors once winter came, but so did anyone else in need.

While I have no green thumb and am totally incapable of growing anything, I can cook. My cousin says that I try to feed the world – while that is a major exaggeration I do enjoy cooking for others. When I hear of someone down with their health or in a bad place I will cook for them. I don't tell you this in a boastful way, only to share one of the many things that I learned from watching daddy. He always said that providing food was a way of helping to lessen someone's burdens, at least to lighten them for awhile.

Pray

The little ones are watching me Lord. Help me to be a good spiritual mother or father to the little ones watching me. Let me pass on the way, truth, and life of Jesus. Let those little Macs grow up into big Macs who pass on the grace of Jesus.*

Cheryl Reeves Workman

Day 93

"Princess Status"

Read a Scripture: Genesis 37:1-11; 44:18 – 45:15

The only other thing I know about that time at Keezletown is my sister was known as "Princess" by members of the church. One of the boys in her class called her that in school and the teacher didn't like it. She reprimanded both of them saying that she was quite sure my sister had no royal blood and would never be addressed as Princess again in her presence. Apparently they were both scared and no one ever called her Princess after that scolding. Unfortunately, this occurred around my birth and she equated the loss of her princess status with my arrival, thus beginning our contentious relationship throughout my childhood.

We did not have a close relationship until my teens. If anyone messed with the other we banded together momentarily. Otherwise, we were pretty much at each other's throats most of the time. Momma and daddy were always a great team and they did their best in dealing with us, but I have no idea how they maintained their sanity. We never made it easy for them, yet they never gave up on us. Years later he told me they did a lot of praying on our behalf. What got them through was they could see the love we had for each other we just usually refused to show it. He thought our biggest obstacle was our completely opposite personalities. While we were delightful with those we encountered we chose to give each other a hard time as often as possible. But we were his children and he loved us equally and he believed that somehow we would outgrow the hostility and figure it out.

Eventually we did, although momma wasn't happy with our solution, which became known throughout the family as our annual fight. As adults we saw each

other as much as possible and spent countless hours on the phone, but every May her visits here began with a disagreement. She always got to their house before me and was kind of like a cat waiting to pounce. Before I was out of my car, she was on her way down the driveway picking on me with whatever popped into her head. She always had this big ole grin on her face waiting for my reaction. I never failed to disappoint her and it was on, never physical, just words. It was always over in a matter of minutes with us laughing and making plans for our visit. But momma never got used to it and would tell daddy to do something. He would put his arm around her and lead her to the front porch to stay out of our way. He then reassured her they had raised us properly and everything would be fine. He was correct. We always had a blast once we got it out of our systems and everything was peaceful.

Pray

God of Joseph who is able to bring good out of evil, bring harmony in our family relationships where there has been discord and help us to grow in knowing our piece in your song.*

Cheryl Reeves Workman

Day 94

"Upset 2"

Read a Scripture: Proverbs 30:18-20; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

The second time I saw my father upset was his one attempt at teaching me to drive. Half way around the block he told me to go home and I heard him utter a quick prayer. When we went in the house his face was an ashen color and he was shaking from head to toe. He apologized to momma and said he just couldn't do it. She would have to teach me. That was the only time that I ever saw him give up on anything. When this story was shared at his funeral I had the realization that I had probably given him the heart attack doctors said he had, but were never able to pin point when or where it had occurred.

Pray

In your wisdom God you saw it was not good for a person to be alone and created partners, helpmates, and friends for us. When we fail, discover the things we cannot do, or reach the limit of our understanding, give us wisdom to realize the gift of good friends, family, and community that you have graced us with so we may find strength beyond our own in you and these providential relationships.*

Cheryl Reeves Workman

Day 95

"Surviving Suicide"

Read a Scripture: Philippians 4:2-9

Daddy was extremely honest with a deep unyielding faith. He never shied away from the hard truths of life. I had always known this but I never saw it more than when my sister committed suicide.

Aside from dealing with his own pain he was the rock for the rest of us. While I was a blubbering idiot, struggling just to get through each passing day without her, he was providing comfort to me. He never questioned God, or displayed any anger. While I had never been angrier at any point in my life, although not at God, my anger was directed at the people I held responsible and had never even met.

When I asked him how he was able to be so strong, his reply was simple. God knew her pain and suffering better than the rest of us and he was certain that even in her final moments she was wrapped in God's loving arms. His strength came from God and if I could open up, even just a little, then God would do the same for me and provide me with the strength and peace that I needed.

Pray

God of new life and resurrection, for those who wrestle with suicide and for those who have survived suicide, wrap us in your loving arms, give your strength, provide peace as we open up in faith to you.*

Cheryl Reeves Workman

Day 96

Read a Scripture: Psalm 27

"My Poem on Waiting"

Wait

and talk to the Lord.

Jesus said to wait on the Lord.

Wait

on the Lord.

The Lord wants us to wait and

Listen to Him.

Wait
and do work for the Lord,
and He will help you.

Wait
and I will tell you how to wait.
Seek after his ways
And love Him.
Don't listen to anybody but the Lord.

Wait
and I'll tell you more.
With your whole heart tell everybody
What I have said.
The Lord loves all of us and loves us telling about Jesus.

Wait
and call upon Him.

Wait
and I'll tell you where He is.
He is right in this room!
Right over there, because I saw Him!
How do you get to know the Lord?
By calling His name and waiting on Him.

Wait
upon the Lord.

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Pray

Take time today for silence. It could be just 5 minutes of your prayer time. Not silent prayer with words running through your mind. Just silence. Waiting on the Lord. You may need to find a quiet place first. Wait with God awhile.*

Paul Robert Harris from *One Day at a Time*

Day 97

"Rev. George B. Fadeley and Estimating Worth"

Read a Scripture: Luke 5:1-11

During his active ministry, the records show that he received 1,300 members into church fellowship. With one exception, his services were confined to Rockingham and Augusta Counties, having served several charges the second time. He was a timid man and always underestimated his value. In his pastoral visitation he was lovable and sympathetic, and in his preaching his appeals prompted by his inner life, touched the hearts of his audiences. He lived a good life and died a triumphant death. He was married to Charlotte (Lottie) Shipp (born Mar. 12, 1860; daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Godfrey Shipp) in 1878 and had seven children: Claudia (Mrs. S. J. Sutton), Alice (Mrs. John S. Funk), Arresta, Ethel (Mrs. David F. Glover), Horace M Fadeley, Joseph Fadeley, and Garfield Fadeley. Mr. Fadeley made a record as a good preacher, an industrious worker, a man loyal to his friends, who hold him in high esteem."

Pray

When we underestimate, or truly estimate our worth, Jesus, you pour out your Spirit of grace and display your valuation of us as your draw us near, give us peace, and empower us to work worth doing.*

Author unknown (from Phillips)

Day 98

"The Church"

Read a Scripture: 1 Kings 8

The church holds a lot of memories for me. There have been births celebrated, weddings, and deaths. A lot of joy and sadness have filled both the old and the new buildings.

I remember riding my bike as a young girl on the road and stopping in front of the old Methodist church and feeling the need to go inside. Then the doors were left unlocked. Pushing open those big old doors and the soft creaking noise they made and the smell that greeted me as I stepped in was such a welcome feeling. The smell of seasoned wood benches and old books. I can shut my eyes and the old sights and smells are clear in my mind today. As I sat there, the total silence and peace that I felt remains a vivid memory.

I loved my old church with all its smells and memories, but now I have new smells and memories of this church that I love as well.

I like the song that says, "I am the church! You are the church! We are the church together!" (Avery & Marsh). That is what this church is all about. It is not the building. It is the presence of the Lord and the people in it that make it a church.

Pray

Jesus, give me grace to be blessed and a blessing in your Church.*

Carol Coffman Dillard

Day 99

"Flicked a Fly"

Read a Scripture: Acts 20:7-12

I remember in the summer time how the windows were pushed open and the breeze and small of summer drifted in making it hard to listen to the preacher's message. Plus there was always a fly or bee that managed to find its way in. Speaking of flies, there was the one that flew in and landed on Mutt Harrison's ear, who happened to be sitting in front of me and daddy. I sat there and looked at that fly on Mutt's ear and could not resist the urge to flick it off. Needless to say, that caused quite a ruckus in the back of the church and also drew the wrath of daddy, not to mention giving poor Mutt a come to Jesus moment, who I think had dosed off not knowing the fly was on his ear to begin with. Lesson learned. Pay attention to the preacher and make sure you are out of reach of your daddy.

Pray

Lord, Mutt had a "come to Jesus moment." Eutychus had a come alive and awake moment. Carol had a wrath of daddy Sunday. Help us to wake in faith from sleeping, rise from death in new life, and while ignoring flies reach for you.*

Carol Coffman Dillard

Day 100

"Remember and Don't Forget"

Read a Scripture: Deuteronomy 8

Keezletown memories:

Angel drills at Christmas time! Nelson Miller and Dorothy Sites would choreograph the movements/dance to "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing" during the annual Christmas program. This involved the older youth girls. They would dress as angels (white gauze robes, tinsel halos, and white socks) and holding tinsel attached to a flag pole would do the drill.

My grandmother, Edna Crowe, would stop on her way to Irene's to pick me up and take me to Church every Sunday morning.

The children and youth would hold their Sunday school opening in the basement of the church. Barbara Smith and Nancy Armentrout would lead the group in singing and then have a little opening. Everyone would then go to their various classes.

Wedding! October 15, 1977, Bob and I were married in the former Methodist Church. Rev. Riley Smith performed the candlelight ceremony. There were several concerns during the evening. Would someone's heel go through the air intake grate in the center of the aisle (didn't happen)? Would the flower girl knock over the candelabra or hurt herself tumbling over the altar rail (no, again didn't happen)? It was an evening enjoyed by all attending.

Those that paved a way for us: Alleen and Marhl Clatterbuck; Edna Crowe; Louise Wilfong; Snookie and Mutt Harrison; Elizabeth VanPelt; Mariam Simmers; Charlotte Coffman; Alice Taylor; and Nelson Miller to name just a few individuals and their families.

UMW. This very active group of church women has always been a strong point in our church. This group has held many fundraisers over the years (serving meals, auction sales, reunions, cookbooks, ornaments, plates to name just a few). In leaner years, this group has helped the church actually meet budget. However now most of our money is given to various missions ranging from local to global.

Election Day Meals. This tradition began many years ago in the Methodist Church. Folks going to the meal would wait upstairs in the Sanctuary until seating was available in the basement. At that time you were taken down the winding steps to the social hall. Some of the helpers would take your order (oysters or turkey) and then place the plate in front of you. No buffet or all you can eat, just a serving of the meat and the rest was served family style. The UMW hosted their bazaar table at the top of the stairs in the Sunday school room. The folks attending had to pass by the delicious baked goods and gorgeous handcrafted items before they ate and also afterwards.

Pray

Use some prayer time to remember and recall what God has done for you. When you have finished that pray:

I remember you Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Help me not to forget. Let me live in the confidence that your saving hand of yesterday is the saving hand of today and forever.*

Susan Threewitts

Day 101

Read a Scripture: Genesis 1 – 2:4

"Summer Thoughts"

The ancient sun appears over the mountains,
It marks the beginning of a new day.
Millions of times it has obeyed the command of God,
"Let there be light."
Yet today the sun is cooler than it was yesterday,
Long does it live, yet is ever changing.

The sun shines over the mountains,
Those symbols of eternity.
Yet even these were brought forth by command of the Creator.
These mountains which change with every gust of wind,
Every drop of rain,
Long do they live, yet ever changing.

Those mountains covered with trees,
Trees which are the oldest living of all creation,
Oldest, yet changing with every season, every leaf that falls.
Long do they live, yet ever changing.

The brook flows from the mountain and from under the trees,
Ever changing itself, and the world around it.
Changing even the mountains, carrying the fallen leaf,
As I allow the stream to wash my feet,
I am reminded that my body is more changing than the flowing stream,
It will not live as long as the trees of the mountains.
"The days of my life are three score and ten"
"From dust it cometh, to dust it will return"

I am soul, my soul has a body.
The voice which proclaimed, "Let there be light," made me in His image.
The hand that formed the mountains, formed my soul.
The power that gave life to the trees,
Proclaimed, "Because I live, ye shall live also"
I am more eternal than the shining sun, the towering mountains, the stately trees,
the flowing brook.
I alone was made in the image of God, I alone am eternal.

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Pray

Turn in your Bible to Psalm 148 and pray that Psalm.

Rev. Harold M. Fuss

Day 102

"Shenandoah President Forrest Racey"

Read a scripture: Isaiah 53

Forrest cited an incident that demonstrates this self-effacement, in addition to his commitment to Shenandoah. "The reflecting ponds in front of the campus had always presented...some problems. We really did not have money to spend on reflecting ponds. So I was able to borrow (a backhoe) from Perry Engineering and was down in what was to be a pool on a very hot August day. I had come to work in socks, a pair of (work)shoes, and shorts. A car drove up and a man got out. "He said, 'Where is the president's office?' "I said, 'In that building.' "He went in. Shortly thereafter, he came out and said, 'The secretary said the president is out here. Where is he?' "I answered, I haven't seen anyone that looks like a college president. Have you?' "He said, 'No,' and got in his car and drove off."

Pray

Help us not to mistake your identity Suffering Servant Jesus. Help us not to mistake your presence in others but to recognize the humility, sacrifice, and servanthood of your disciples.*

Rev. Bruce C. Souders, *Shenandoah Today*, Summer 1988 (from Phillips)

Day 103

"Methodist Mother"

Read a Scripture: Acts 9:32-43

The mother of Methodist churches in the Harrisonburg area was the Asbury Memorial Church in Harrisonburg. All subsequent churches established between Woodstock and Staunton, between Waynesboro and Elkton, with Bridgewater and Mt. Solon and other points within the area were organized as the Rockingham Circuit of the Methodist Church by act of Bishop Asbury's visit to the area in 1790. This circuit arrangement was followed until after the Civil War in 1866. At that time, Asbury became a station and the Rockingham Circuit was made a separate charge with a list of appointed preachers to various churches. By 1791, a Methodist church was established in Keezletown under this circuit arrangement on the lot offered by Keezell in his original plat.

Pray

Thank you Jesus for the opening doors faith of Asbury Memorial in helping to establish new congregations in our region including our own community. Thank you for the leadership of Bishop Francis Asbury in establishing a circuit where early Keezletown Methodists could have the blessing of clergy leadership in preaching, baptism, and communion. Give us opening doors faith that we may support new places where disciples of Jesus Christ may be formed and multiply.*

Rev. Don Hawks (from Hawks)

Day 104

"First Meeting Places"

Read a Scripture: Mark 1:21-34

The congregation first met in Keezell's home and grove. Later a log church was constructed near the cemetery and in time a frame building was erected in which both the Methodist church and school met. The combination church-school building was a result of Bishop Asbury's founding of a Methodist School in the Stone House in Harrisonburg. Afterwards, schools were built in several other locations in the area, including Keezletown. In each school, Methodist services were conducted by appointed ministers and local preachers.

Pray

We thank you Lord for where people made room for you to arrive in the early days of the Keezletown Methodists. Thank you for the hospitality of a home and grove. Thank you for efforts of a log church. Thank you for a place where church and school could meet, where faith and frame were made a blessing to local children for their education. Give us the gift of hospitality to provide places for faith to grow and all things good to be nurtured.*

Rev. Don Hawks (from Hawks)

Day 105

"Rev. Commodore Ira Berton Brane: Writing the Story"

Read a Scripture: Luke 1:1-4

The name of Dr. Brane became favorably known throughout the denomination by his writings as Associate Editor of the Religious Telescope, a position he held from July 1909 until his death Apr. 7, 1920. His early life was saturated by the rich traditions which arose from the founding of the denomination about Frederick, Maryland. He was born in the neighborhood of the Peter Kemp home on Christmas Day in the year 1848, a son of Henry and Margaret Lauman

Brane. The famous Kemp house passed into the possession of a daughter of Peter Kemp, Esther by name, who married Valentine Doub. The United Brethren continued to use the house as a place of worship until services were transferred to the Rocky Springs Schoolhouse which was located about a mile west of the Kemp-Doub residence. Of this schoolhouse and his interest in it, Dr. Brane wrote: "Here the writer worshipped on Sunday and wrestled with the 'three R's' during the week. It is the embodiment of some of the sweetest memories of my life, secular, social, and religious. In that old school-house I was converted. Within those walls, one bright Sunday morning, I was formally received into the Church."

The Churches of Lebanon County, Pennsylvania, and of Frederick County, Md., are especially indebted to him for his work as co-author with Daniel Eberly and I. H. Albright of the *Landmark History of the United Brethren Church*.

**The "three R's" here refer to reading, writing, and arithmetic.*

Pray

Thank you Lord for the ministry of Luke, Commodore Brane, and others who after committing themselves to learning and study have then written stories of Jesus so that Theophilus and all God lovers may know the works of the Lord even more.*

Author unknown (from Phillips)

Day 106

"Assembly Park"

Read a Scripture: Proverbs 8 – 9

Assembly Park provided A. P. Funkhouser with an even greater opportunity to serve education. There, he permitted his Tabernacle to be used for Chautauqua Meetings as well as religious services. As an example, the program for August 1 to 21, 1895, reported lectures by United Brethren preachers, the Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage, D.D., a "noted Indian Scholar," a "native Japanese scholar," and others; schools of theology, music and voice culture, languages (English, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, German, and French), fine arts, oratory, and physical culture; and special programs for children. Also, Funkhouser, who operated a three-story hotel on the grounds, supervised an industrial school for boys near the hotel. Finally, through Assembly Park, he had an indirect hand in the founding of Eastern Mennonite College. Shortly before his death in 1917, he and Mrs. Funkhouser negotiated the sale of their Assembly Park property to the Mennonite brethren who had been renting it since the beginning of 1916 for special "Bible terms." Out of this grew the College.

Pray

Lord, those United Brethren and Methodist forebears believed in educating

people in gospel and practical matters so that people could grow in faith, wisdom, industriousness, responsibility, and justice. Help us to pass on the knowledge we have to build up those around us. Grant grace to our places of learning in churches and schools.*

Author unknown (from Phillips)

Day 107

"Steep Steps"

Read a Scripture: Luke 15:1-7

A new church building was erected in 1860 at the corner of Cemetery Street and Main St. (on the West side)...During these years the location of Keezletown church proved to be unsatisfactory because several steep steps were required to enter the church. As a result, a new location was selected in 1880 on the east side of Main Street. A half-acre lot was bought for \$100, conveyed to the Methodist trustees.

In 1882, new construction of a church commenced under the pastor, J.S. Hopkins, who drew the plans, broke the ground and performed much of the work himself. Free labor was also offered by residents of the area, since little money was available as a result of the effects of the civil war. Among those who helped with the building were Senator George Keezell, Kate Keezell, Belle Hannah, Mrs. Fred Simms, Joseph Huffman, and John Boyer. An indebtedness of \$1280 was paid off by selling the previous church building. The money had been borrowed from a Col. Peter Roller. In 1883, another half-acre lot was purchased with an old house on it to be used as a parsonage for the charge at that time. The parsonage was located adjacent to the church with an alley between the two lots.

Pray

Thank you Lord for people in our church who cared about reaching people for Jesus enough to remove obstacles to faith like steep steps. Thank you Jesus for tearing the barriers down and seeking us that we may know you. Help us to provide easy access to Christ.*

Rev. Don Hawks (from Hawks)

Day 108

"Alive '75"

Read a Scripture: Colossians 2:6-15; 3:1-17

I remember being involved in the "Alive '75 Crusade" with Evangelist George Brunk that was held in a tent on the grounds of Montevideo High School. The

crusade involved a large number of churches (different denominations) in Rockingham County and Harrisonburg. They had a community choir, special music, and great preaching each night for a week or more.

*Pray or Sing the Hymn
"And Are We Yet Alive"*

And are we yet alive, and see each other's face?
Glory and thanks to Jesus give for his almighty grace!

Preserved by power divine to full salvation here,
again in Jesus' praise we join, and in his sight appear.

What troubles have we seen, what mighty conflicts past,
fightings without, and fears within, since we assembled last!

Yet out of all the Lord hath brought us by his love;
and still he doth his help afford, and hides our life above.

Then let us make our boast of his redeeming power,
which saves us to the uttermost, till we can sin no more.

Let us take up the cross till we the crown obtain,
and gladly reckon all things loss so we may Jesus gain. (Charles Wesley)

Dale Dodrill

Day 109

"Rev. John William Maiden, Daddy Sold the Farm"

Read a Scripture: Luke 9:57-62

His early years were spent on the farm, in a typical mountain home on top of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

John William was an only son, and his mother was said to have gone to the Provost to ask that he be exempt from military service. He already was working at an iron furnace and, after considering his experience and the shortage of war material in the South, the request was granted.

He was converted in 1869 and began his ministry as a local preacher in Albemarle, Green, Madison, and Rockingham Counties.

John William married Mary Bethilda "Polly" Long after the war (1870). John and Polly Maiden bought a farm near Swift Run Gap and John served as an itinerant preacher. When he became licensed, they sold the farm, and he devoted the remainder of his life to the U.B. ministry.

For many years, Grandpa had been an itinerant preacher along with his farming. When his License was granted in 1875, he became a full-time preacher, and for the rest of his life he was a U.B. preacher, and two of his sons were preachers in the same Faith.

His long life of almost 93 years was marked by sacrifice and personal denial. He was a careful student of the Word. His preaching was scriptural, systematic and exegetical. His appeal was to the conscience rather than to the emotions. His delivery was quiet and deliberate. After retirement at an advanced age, he still preached as opportunity presented, and never lost the urge to preach.

Pray

Give me such faith to plow in God's garden and never look back.*

Compiled from obituaries and articles (from Phillips)

Day 110

"Civil War Leader"

Read a Scripture: 2 Kings 5:1-18

JOHN W. HOWE was born in Rappahannock County, Va., December 4, 1829, and died at Dayton, Va., June 17, 1903, aged 73 years, 6 months, and 15 days. At the age of 15 he was bound out to a farmer, the late Samuel Crabill, who then live at Strasburg, Shenandoah County, with whom he lived until he was 21, and who was always afterwards one of his warmest friends. As a farm hand, young Howe was one of the best: strong, willing, and industrious, but wild and reckless.

When the Civil War broke out, he was transferred to Shenandoah Valley, and spent the following 7 years as pastor in August and Rockingham counties. The war so decimated and disorganized his church that Bishop Markwood, himself a Virginian, declared at its close, "There is no United Brethren church in Virginia." But Mr. Howe remained with his church and preached to them and to the soldiers as opportunity offered, and when peace was restored, he entered zealously into the work of gathering and rallying those left; and in great revival meetings and camp meetings he soon saw his membership doubled, then trebled, and, at the time of his death, multiplied six times in Rockingham, his home County, as compared with 40 years ago.

He was a good singer, and used new and popular songs with great effect. After the war, he lived at Singer's Glen, and with kindred spirits got up a small songster to be used at camp meetings. It was printed by T. Funk & Sons, publishers of the *Harmonia Sacra* in character notes. The songster proved popular, and new publishers and a larger one was demanded. J. W. Howe, E. Ruebush, A. S. Keiffer, and C. B. Hammack undertook to publish the book, and borrowed \$300 with which to put the songster on the market. It sold at a profit, and they kept printing it. Thus

started Ruebush, Keiffer & Co., the prosperous and successful publishers, Mr. Howe being the unknown company. This fortunate undertaking grew largely, and has been the source of a comfortable income for many years.

Mr. Howe was a good business man and resourceful under trying circumstances. Twice his home and property were consumed by fire in his absence. Nothing daunted, he set about recouping his losses. To all church enterprises he was a liberal giver. There was scarcely a church-house or parsonage built in the conference in the last 20 years to which he did not contribute.

He was one of the earliest friends of Shenandoah Institute, a close counselor in its beginning, and one of the first to contribute [\$500] toward its purchase by the Church. Near the close of his life, it was through his counsels and contribution that the Howe Memorial Library was erected in front of his late residence. He looked upon the institute as the hope of the Church in this State.

Mr. Howe's position of leadership in the conference was not undisputed, but was unquestioned for many years, and during this time nearly every important selection of men was made with his approval or suggestion. He was a tireless worker, a fine organizer, and a leader of men. He was able in planning and in executing, and if his work had called him to it, he could have managed a State as well as a Conference. To him more than to any other man of his day is due the successful recovery of our Church from the dire disasters of the Civil War. He was loyal and true in every trial, and his people were saved by the same spirit.

Pray

"Make Me a Captive, Lord"

Make me a captive, Lord, and then I shall be free.
Force me to render up my sword, and I shall conqueror be.
I sink in life's alarms when by myself I stand;
imprison me within thine arms, and strong shall be my hand.

My heart is weak and poor until it master find;
it has no spring of action sure, it varies with the wind.
It cannot feely move till thou hast wrought its chain;
enslave it with thy matchless love, and deathless it shall reign.

My power is faint and low till I have learned to serve;
it lacks the needed fire to glow, it lacks the breeze to nerve.
It cannot drive the world until itself be driven;
its flag can only be unfurled when thou shalt breathe from heaven.

My will is not my own till thou hast made it thine;
if it would reach a monarch's throne, it must its crown resign.
It only stand unbent amid the clashing strife,

when on thy bosom it has leant, and found in thee its life. (George Matheson)

Rev. A . P. Funkhouser, 1904 (from Phillips)

Day 111

"Help My Unbelief"

Read a Scripture: Mark 9:14-29

To me, daddy was the bravest person I have ever known. He was patient, kind and faced every situation in a calm reassuring fashion. When he saw a need he found a solution. He lived his faith in a quiet humble way, never ashamed to share it with the people he encountered. He just had a special way of putting people at ease. I can only remember two instances where he showed visible signs of uneasiness. I'll tell you about those later. For now, I will share the one time he doubted his abilities and was not sure he was the right person to complete the assigned task.

He received notification from his district superintendent or bishop, I believe via a phone call which came out of the blue that he was to remove one of the churches from his four point charge and establish it as an independent church. He would keep the remaining churches as his three point charge. He was given only 90 days to complete the entire transition.

This meant he had to deal with all the congregations involved (as you know often times people don't like change, especially when they have no say in the matter), while finding and setting up a new parsonage and every other detail. He never went into specifics with me but did say it was the one time in his ministry that he wasn't quite sure he was up to it. His primary concern was for the people and to get this done in the least painful way possible. This newly independent church was Keezletown Methodist Church.

Pray

Help me believe when I have unbelief. Help me pray when somebody remains bound up in trouble. Help my deficiencies when I am not up to Christ's tasks.*

Cheryl Reeves Workman

Day 112

"Rev. Henry Jones, No Compromise with Evil"

Read a Scripture: Luke 4:1-15

He was a man of strong convictions, and would not make any compromise with what he looked upon as evil.

He was conscious to the last and had no fear of death, expressing entire resignation to the will of God. He bade his friends good-bye, and his spirit took its departure to dwell, as we trust, with Jesus in heaven.

Pray

Like you Jesus tempted in the desert and then back to the mission of the Spirit, let us not be distracted, sidetracked, or wrecked by any temptation to settle for less than your purpose for our lives. Let our prayer be that of many saints who pray, "Dear Lord, your will, nothing more, nothing less, nothing else."*

Author unknown (from Phillips)

Day 113

"Upset"

Read a Scripture: Galatians 3:23-29

I have mentioned that I had only seen daddy upset twice in my life. I was about 12 the first time and he didn't know I was home. He had just left a meeting and when he came in he said one sentence and then saw me. It was a racial issue with an organization that was prohibiting someone from membership. He firmly believed that we are all God's children and equal in his eyes. I never knew the whole story, but over time he persisted and the ban was lifted.

Pray

Give us your eyes and heart to see the image of God in every person and know that Christ breaks every barrier down.*

Cheryl Reeves Workman

Day 114

"Stood Firm"

Read a Scripture: Daniel 3

William Richard Berry was born October, 11, 1853, on what was then called the Gordon farm, one mile north of Mt. Clinton, Rockingham County, Va. He was the second son of Archibald and Elizabeth Berry, of sacred memory, who now are very feeble. Under the influence of these pious parents his heart was in early years turned to the claims of the Savior on his life.

In the year 1870, at a camp meeting conducted by Rev. J. W. Howe, near Singers Glen, he was converted. His opportunities to acquire an education were somewhat limited, except the two years from March 1876, to March 1878, he spent at school in Dayton, Va., while President A. P. Funkhouser and Professor J. N. Fries

had charge of that school. That he was an earnest student and diligent while there, the writer can testify, since we were class and roommates, as well as charter pupils of Shenandoah Collegiate Institute. He was ordained at Boonsboro, Md., March 7, 1881, with a class of seven by Bishop Glossbrenner.

Brother Berry was a man of deep convictions and when he once decided that a measure was right or wrong he stood firm in his opinion even if he had to suffer on account of it.

"Well done good and faithful 'servant.' This text was selected by Brother Berry a few days before his death, for the reason as he stated "he did not regard his life a success, but he had always endeavored to be faithful."

Pray

When everyone else is giving in, when the flames of the furnace can be felt, when there is an easy way out from doing the right thing, help us to stand with God and like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, may we find we don't stand alone.*

Rev. S. K. Wine (from Phillips)

Day 115

"Unauthorized Use"

Read a Scripture: Mark 11:1-11

Ozzie Armentrout was in the hospital for several days. When I visited him, I learned that he drove himself to the hospital and that he needed help getting home. I offered to help him. When the time came, I asked Lute Armentrout to drive me. He would drive me to the hospital and then follow me as I drove Ozzie's car to his home. When I got to the hospital, Ozzie was waiting.

He gave me his keys and told me he had a Ford and that it was green. I searched the lot and finally found a green Ford Explorer. The door was unlocked, so I climbed inside. The key fit, the engine started, so I knew it was his, but what a piece of junk. The door was unlocked because it would not lock, in fact it wouldn't even stay closed without help. I drove up to the door and proceeded to help Ozzie get in. As he climbed in he said, "David, this is not my car."

I thought he was still kind of not sure of his surroundings yet, so I said, "Ozzie, it has to be, the key started it."

"Well, it's not mine," he said.

It never entered my mind that I should just go back to the parking lot and find his car. I brushed off his comments and proceeded to drive him on home to the north side of town, all the time having to hold the door to keep it closed. He continued to tell me that it wasn't his car. By the time we got there he had me convinced.

I told Lute what I had done. I'm not sure if he laughed or not. I wanted to, but by this time I was very upset. I knew that I needed to go back to the hospital. First of all, would the car go another four miles without breaking down? Would the owner go out and find their car missing? Suppose a policeman pulled me over. How could I explain driving someone else's car? Would I find a parking place to put it back? These were all legitimate questions any "innocent" car thief would ask himself.

It seemed like it took an hour to drive the four miles, but I finally got back with no further incidents. I found a parking place close to where I found the car. Man, was I relieved. Ozzie's car didn't even look like an Explorer. To this day I can't figure out how that key started someone else's car.

Sometimes even good deeds lead to strange circumstances. Sometimes good deeds can even get you in trouble. Usually, though it's worth the risk to help someone in need. I've had some unique experiences in my ministry, but that was the closest I ever came to breaking the law, even if I was "innocent." Maybe I should have left a note in that strange car, but why complicate things even more? After it was all over, I and the Lord had a good laugh, and I asked for forgiveness.

Thank you Keezletown for the memories.

Pray

Blessed be the Lord who provides unriden colts and overridden Fords for God's service. Guide us as stewards of your gifts sent and lent. Amen.*

Rev. David Breeden

Day 116

"From School Choir to Church Choir"

Read a Scripture: Mark 1:16-20

When we moved to the Methodist building, the choir became the four Whitmore girls, the two Chapman girls, and the three Armentrout girls, and we sounded good. Most of us were in the choirs at school.

Pray

God of Redemption who took fishermen and called them to fish for people and school choir girls and called them to sing for Christ, redeem our gifts and work for the glory of God. Work through what you have already given us to display your presence, purpose, and power.*

Diana Davis

Day 117

"Rev. Lee Allen Racey"

Read a Scripture: Ephesians 6:1-4

The Raceys were elderly when they served Singers Glen. Mrs. Racey was not well, and Rev. Racey had a nervous temperament and was easily annoyed, though otherwise a nice man. Nearly every Sunday during church service, he would call down the children for misbehaving even if they were not deserving of the chastisement.

Pray

Have mercy on us Lord in our nervousness and when easily annoyed. Let us find our rest and peace in Jesus. Help us to rush to calm center of Christ. Let the peace that the Spirit brings may fill our hearts. Then use us as channels of your peace to others.*

Author Unknown (from Phillips)

Day 118

Read a Scripture: 1 John 4:7-21

"How Jesus Shows His Love"

Jesus shows His love in everything
that is around us.

Jesus shows His love
in the air we breathe.

Jesus shows His love in the trees
and in the grass.

Jesus shows His love in the roses,
daisies, tulips,
and all the other flowers.

Jesus shows His love in blessing
the world
with parents and little children.

Jesus shows His love in blessing
our community with Cohope

for the physically handicapped.

Jesus shows His love
by blessing me with friends
and the other residents at
Cohope!

I show my love to Jesus
for having Cohope!

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Pray or Sing the Hymn
"This Is My Father's World"

This is my Father's world, and to my listening ears
all nature sings, and round me rings the music of the spheres.
This is my Father's world: I rest me in the thought
of rocks and trees, of skies and seas; his hand the wonders wrought.

This is my Father's world, the birds their carols raise,
the morning light, the lily white, declare their maker's praise.
This is my Father's world: he shines in all that's fair;
in the rustling grass I hear him pass; he speaks to me everywhere.

This is my Father's world. O let me ne'er forget
that though the wrong seems oft so strong, God is the ruler yet.
This is my Father's world: why should my heart be sad?
The Lord is King; let the heavens ring! God reigns; let the earth be glad!
(Maltbie D. Babcock)

Paul Robert Harris from *One Day at a Time*

Day 119
"Feeding with God's Word and Rabbits"
Read a Scripture: Luke 9:10-17

I remember Rev. Bush and his wife. They were missionaries before becoming the pastor at Keezletown. Mrs. Bush hosted and taught a weekly Bible Study in the parsonage. Most memorable was their practice of raising and slaughtering rabbits to

give to feed the needy. My Aunt Sade and the Bushes developed a spiritual bond during the tragic death of Aunt Sade's son, J.F., at the age of five.

Pray

Thank you Jesus for your mercy on the crowd in teaching about the kingdom of God, healing those in need, and feeding the hungry. Pour out your mercy through us like Rev. and Mrs. Bush in teaching about God, sharing food with the hungry, and comforting those in need.*

Don Clatterbuck

Day 120

"UNITED"

Read a Scripture: John 17

As I traveled from New Hope UMC to summer camp at Overlook, one place I remember is Keezletown UMC. I knew I was getting close to camp as I passed the church. It was not 'til I was a lay speaker that I stopped to enter the building. Inside the building has become so much more to me than just a place along the road.

- Inside I found the warm spirit of Christ.
- Inside I found the quiet Holy Spirit.
- Inside I found the creativity of God.

I cherish the encounters I have had with many of you within the walls of Keezletown UMC and outside in Harrisonburg District events including the Walk to Emmaus and trips to Belize. You are a model of being UNITED Methodist. Thank you for have courage many years ago to bring two churches together and showing us how to live UNITED.

Pray

I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in Jesus Christ through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in Christ and Christ is in you, may they also be one in the life of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Modified from vv. 20-21, NRSV).*

Rev. Melissa Fretwell

Day 121

"A Laugh"

Read a Scripture: Romans 3:21-31

Two sisters were talking like co-conspirators about growing up in the Keezletown EUB church and one Sunday in summer with windows open when both churches, EUB and Methodist sat side by side. One congregation sang, "Will there be any stars in my crown?"

And the other sang, "No, not a one!"

Pray

Lord, have mercy! Christ, have mercy! Lord, have mercy! You know Lord of old rivalry, jealousy, and fear in our past. You also know where it exists in your Church today. Free us from division within our congregation, denomination, and the Church in our community. Bring us to a unity in the life and way of Jesus Christ. Help us to laugh at the silliness of posturing, boasting, and one-up-man-ship in the light of your liberating grace through faith in Christ.

Rev. Joel Robinette

Day 122

"Wasted Strength"

Read a Scripture: Mark 9:38-41

Next to A. P. Funkhouser's interest in education was his consuming passion for merger between the United Brethren and the Methodists. Nothing illustrates this passion better than his address before the General Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church, May 24, 1912. Rather than send one of their own members, the Board of Bishops of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ sent A. P. Funkhouser, whose interest in joining ranks with Methodism was superseded only by that of Christian Newcomer in the early Church. He had been a member of the Tri-Council (Congregational Churches, the United Brethren, and the Methodist Protestant Church) that met in Dayton, Ohio, February 7, 1906, and the Committee on Policy that met first in Pittsburgh and later in Chicago.

Speaking of the denominational separateness in American Protestantism, he proclaimed in his 1912 address: "What wasted strength, what weakening of our forces, what a dissipation of our vital resources!" He saw union as the will of Christ and opposition to it as the work of "Satan, the arch enemy." To the end of fulfilling God's will, he called for ... the marshaling of our columns under one banner and one leadership and as one host with a single purpose would be an object lesson in the recovery of Christianity towards the unity that alone is the Master's plea and a forerunner of similar movements that may characterize our age.

The author of these sentiments must have been greatly disappointed when the General Conference of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ voted two months before his death to halt merger negotiations since it appeared as though the denomination's membership at large would not deliver the three-fourths majority that was required for the plan of union.

On the other hand, A. P. Funkhouser appeared too busy to be bothered very long by setbacks in any single situation.

Pray or Sing the Hymn
"The Church's One Foundation"

The church's one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord;
she is his new creation by water and the Word.
From heaven he came and sought her to be his holy bride;
with his own blood he bought her, and for her life he died.

Elect from every nation, yet one o'er all the earth;
her charter of salvation, one Lord, one faith, one birth;
one holy name she blesses, partakes one holy food,
and to one hope she presses, with every grace endued.

Though with a scornful wonder we see her sore oppressed,
by schisms rent asunder, but heresies distressed,
yet saints their watch are keeping; their cry goes up, "How long?"
And soon the night of weeping shall be the morn of song.

Mid toil and tribulation, and tumult of her war,
she waits the consummation of peace forevermore;
till, with the vision glorious, her longing eyes are blessed,
and the great church victorious shall be the church at rest.

Yet she on earth hath union with God the Three in One,
and mystic sweet communion with those whose rest is won.
O happy ones and holy! Lord, give us grace that we
like them, the meek and lowly, on high may dwell with thee. (Samuel J. Stone)

Author unknown (from Phillips)

Day 123

"Friends Next Door"

Read a Scripture: Matthew 5:1-12

My earliest memories from the EUB church are of the friendships within our church family and of the help that was so often offered and given to each other. Our family developed close relationships with other families in our church, especially the Al Liskey family and the Maynard Michael family. The times of fellowship were always fun. I also loved Vacation Bible School and the Hymn Sings, especially with The Valley Four!

I remember the grassy lot (our parking lot and sometimes play area) that was between the two buildings and often seemed to "separate" our church from the

Methodist church. I would often wonder about the building and the people “next door.”

I remember during the years of the EUB Church and the Methodist Church merging hearing differing opinions and an occasional argument from some adults over the “whys, where’s, who’s, and how’s” of merging the two churches, but I also remember voices of the peacemakers and encouragers of unity and in moving forward as one congregation.

I was excited to get to know more kids and to develop new friendships. I was also excited about being in a nicer building. I don’t remember being in the Methodist church building before the merger but I do remember being excited that at least half the Sundays (for a time, we rotated location of our Sunday services between both buildings) we’d have indoor bathrooms and enclosed Sunday school classes with doors rather than partitions on wheels.

Even though the amenities were much better at the Methodist church, I remember the sadness at the complete closing and later destruction of my home church building. Through the welcome, love, and acceptance shown from folks in the Methodist church, I realized “my church” had nothing to do with the building but with the brotherly love, support, and fellowship of my church family.

I remember having a different order for worship services and learning new hymns. I remember new friendships that developed, and many caring adults who taught me more about God and His love not only through lessons and sermons but through example.

I really don’t remember who belonged to or attended which church. To me, it didn’t matter. We worshiped and prayed together, played and learned together, laughed and cried together. We loved and served together. We became one family and one that God has continued to grow.

I’m part of KUMC today because this family continues to grow in and through God’s love. God is at work in and through the folks here. I see it in His provisions, His blessings, and His miracles that happen every day here in this little church. I also see it in the responses of our family, to the many things He calls and leads us to do. We are so blessed and blessed to be a blessing! Praise the Lord!

Pray or Sing the Hymn
“Blest Be the Tie That Binds”

Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;
the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.

Before our Father’s throne we pour our ardent prayers;
our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our comforts and our cares.

We share each other’s woes, our mutual burdens bear;
and often for each other flows the sympathizing tear.

When we asunder part, it gives us inward pain;
but we shall still be joined in heart, and hope to meet again. (John Fawcett)

Jan Shafer

Day 124

"With Hope"

Read a Scripture: Jeremiah 29:10-14

Hugh and Mary Harris – I always admired their compassion for and deep desire to not only help meet the physical needs of disabled persons but to also help meet their intellectual, emotional, and spiritual needs as well. They gave me my first regular part time job, as an aide at Co-Hope. They also arranged their busy schedules to take me to The Library of Congress in Washington D.C. to help me find grant and scholarship information as I began preparing for college and the hope of nursing school.

I learned a great deal just by watching Mrs. Harris interact with folks who had so many different abilities and needs. Some of the residents had much difficulty in communicating clearly. I remember her unending patience in making sure she understood not only their needs but their thoughts as well. She made them feel special and valued by the way she lovingly and respectfully interacted and cared for them.

I remember Mr. Harris' firm stand for God, his faith and what he felt was right & wrong. I often think of him and his faith when I see the beautiful cross in our sanctuary.

Pray

Lord, help us to share in Hugh and Mary fashion, a future with hope, dignity, patience, and justice.*

Jan Shafer

Day 125

"I Will Not Forget You"

Read a Scripture: Isaiah 49:1-18

Mary Harris told me part of her story with her husband Hugh. They met when Hugh was a salesman and Mary working in an office. They spoke for some time that first meeting and as Hugh was leaving he asked Mary, "How old are you anyway?"

Mary told me, "I was 22 or 23."

Hugh mumbled as he headed out the door, "That is just a year older than me, that would be all right."

Mary said, "I was surprised, that was almost a proposal!"

Mary did marry Hugh and they were blessed with a good marriage, not perfect nor without disagreements, but a good marriage.

Hugh later developed Alzheimer's and they moved to Bridgewater Retirement Community to help with his care.

Hugh would often ask Mary, "Where is my wife? Have you seen Mary?"

Mary describes feeling, "My husband has gone. I am taking care of this person."

One day when Hugh asked, "Where is my wife? Have you seen Mary?"

Mary told him, "Look closely, I am Mary." He recognized me and was so happy. That lasted about five minutes. Then we were back to where we were.

Hugh asked, "Where is my wife? Have you seen Mary?"

Mary replied, "No, I haven't seen her." She told me, "I hadn't looked in a mirror lately, so there was some truth in it."

She told me, "God gives us the strength."

One day, Hugh said to Mary, "We get along so well, will you marry me?"

Mary told me, "I thought of telling him we are married, but instead said, 'Yes, I would.'"

Pray

"Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom" (Luke 23:42, NRSV).

Mary Harris and Rev. Joel Robinette

Day 126

"God Hears and Understands"

Read a Scripture: Psalm 116

Mr. Wade Huffman was another pillar of the community and an exemplary church member. He was a quiet man of few words but when he spoke, we all listened. He loved the Lord and was a strong witness. Although he had difficulty understanding me, he had long talks with me. His effort and compassion helped to give me a sense of self-worth despite my handicap. Mr. Huffman was our school bus driver and he handled each child as though he or she was his own child.

Pray

Inclining-Your-Ear-to-Me God, thank you for hearing and understanding the

deep cry of my heart and faltering words from my lips. You save, deliver, and deal bountifully with me. Let my ears be inclined toward others and give me understanding for where others need your grace.*

Don Clatterbuck

Day 127

"At the Feet"

Read a Scripture: Ruth 3

The first time I met Fay Higgs, she and Ellen Layman were cleaning windows in the parsonage while I was getting a tour. She was serving. The second time was the day my family moved into the parsonage and Fay and her UMW friends had prepared food for us. She was serving. Fay regularly sent cards, visited the sick, and was a great friend to a special group of ladies in the church.

Then she was in the hospital and things were not good. Fay was to be flown to UVA Medical Center and while she was being prepped for the flight, her husband Richard and I were at the foot of her gurney. We touched her feet. Her feet were as close as we could get.

I thought there of Jesus washing the feet of the disciples and how Fay had answered that call to serve others. Fay had not only been a blessing to others but has certainly been a blessing to me and I felt so blessed by the kindness she had given to me in my first years at KUMC. I also thought of Mary at the feet of Jesus remembering the most important things and Fay demonstrated that in her life, family, and faith. I was reminded of Ruth at the feet of Boaz seeking God's provision. Richard and I wept there and prayed there for God's healing.

God has shown awesome grace in Fay's life. As she has gone through recovery, rehab, setbacks, and new ways of doing things, the joy of the Lord and her love for others has continued to shine through like Ruth's love for Naomi and Christ's love for the world.

Pray

Draw near to the foot of the cross for mercy, forgiveness, and Savior. Draw near to the feet of others in service that encourages and surprises. Draw near to the feet of the sick and seek God's healing presence.

Rev. Joel Robinette

Day 128

Read a Scripture: Matthew 6:5-6

"From a Wheelchair"

A blank page stares from my tablet.
I wheel my chair down the corridor of a retirement home.
Blank faces occupy the wheelchairs and beds.
Are these living the golden years of their promised retirement?

Moving among these people are the attendants.
Each performing unpleasant tasks,
Working long hours,
Unappreciated by those who cannot appreciate.
Inadequately rewarded by a society that spends so much on unimportant things.
I pray, "God who controls true wealth, that which moths,
rust and thieves cannot take,
Grant a special blessing to these Thy servants."

Pray

God who controls true wealth, that which moths,
rust and thieves cannot take,
Grant a special blessing to these Thy servants.

Rev. Harold M. Fuss

Day 129

"Come Together"

Read a Scripture: Ezekiel 37:15-28

As the two denominations were discussing the possibility of merger, the two churches which stood in Keezletown began to ponder the effect of the merger upon their local congregations. The two churches had stood side by side since 1917. After much discussion and contact with the Conference office after the denominational merger of 1968, the two bodies officially merged in June, 1970 in Keezletown. Glen Baker was appointed pastor of the newly formed church. This was a difficult decision since much history and memories were associated with each respective church building. At first, services were alternated on a monthly basis between the Methodist and E.U.B. buildings. In the Fall of that same year an inspection of the E.U.B. building by the county determined that the E.U.B. building was unsafe to

meet in, being a fire hazard. Thus, that building was closed and services were held in the Methodist building.

Pray

God our Father, you bring us together and make us one in Jesus Christ. As you brought together The Evangelical United Brethren and The Methodist Churches into the United Methodist Church and as you brought together the congregations of Keezletown EUB and Methodist into one KUMC, make us one with all in Christ around us.*

Rev. Don Hawks (from Hawks)

Day 130

"Evaluation and Vision"

Read a Scripture: Acts 6:1-7

The Methodist building, however, seemed to be lacking in space, so talks began among people about a new building and discussions about location. In August, 1971, a building committee was established to study the possibility of a new structure. Members were Conrad Deeds, Wade Huffman, Hugh Harris, Noland Suter, Carol Michael, Calvin Armentrout, Carl "Lute" Armentrout, Dale Dodrill, Alleen Clatterbuck, Alan Liskey, Elmer Michael, and Mensel Dean. Correspondence from and to the pastor, William Fisher, in 1972 indicates that definite plans were being made for a new building at that point.

Pray

Lord, you raise up people for your work in sharing grace with people. Thank you for the seven deacons in Acts 6 and the 12 Keezletown members in 1971 seeking space for ministry. Be our vision Creator, Savior, and Advocate to see where you need our hands and work today that the salvation of our God may continue to spread.*

Rev. Don Hawks (from Hawks)

Day 131

"Phase I"

Read a Scripture: Psalm 127

By 1976, the District Board of location granted permission to build Phase I of the building, the educational unit. Cost of this Phase I construction was \$34,000,

with grants from the Harrisonburg District Board of Missions (\$2,000) and the Section of Church Extension (\$4,000). Groundbreaking for the new building was held on April 15, 1977.

Pray

O Lord, you have built a house for faith development, prayer, disciple making, and transforming service. Let us find our happiness, labor, and rest in you.*

Rev. Don Hawks (from Hawks)

Day 132

"Phases II and III"

Read a Scripture: Psalm 122

In August of 1977, Phase II of the construction of the sanctuary was approved by the church. The cost of this phase was \$22,887 of which \$8,000 was financed by the Church Extension Program of the Board of Global Ministries of the Virginia Conference. Phase III, construction of the Social Hall was completed in Spring, 1980. Much of the work on the three phases of construction was donated by people in the community and church. Within a few years the church had paid off any debt incurred from the building program.

In the meantime, the E.U.B. building was torn down while the congregation met in the Methodist building. The altar rail, communion table, pulpit, and stained glass windows from the E.U.B. building were saved and stored to be placed in the new sanctuary. On February 4, 1979, the new sanctuary was used for the first time. The congregation marched from the old Methodist sanctuary carrying items of worship to place in the new worship setting.

Pray

With joy I enter the house of the Lord to worship, praise, and fellowship with God above and church around. With wonder I enter the house of the Lord, with relics from houses of worship that have come before, to worship Christ whom we adore. With thanksgiving I enter the house of the Lord to celebrate all the Spirit has done. With hope I enter the house of the Lord to bring earth's pain and pray salvation comes.*

Rev. Don Hawks (from Hawks)

Day 133

"Consecration"

Read a Scripture: Psalm 133

On November 16, 1980, a service of consecration was held with the new building completely finished. Bishop Robert Blackburn officiated and Rev. Dennis Perry was pastor and Rev. Samuel NeSmith was District Superintendent. A news release concerning the consecration states: "Keezletown United Methodist Church grew out of a former EUB Church and a Methodist Church. The two buildings were located within 50 yards of each other. In 1968 the two congregations joined together and are now one strong church meeting in a new church facility." The Methodist building was torn down after the consecration of the new facility.

By 1983, the church had paid off the debt on the building. On Sunday, April 17 a Service of Dedication and Note Burning was held.

Pray

Lord, grant your blessing for kindred and congregation to live together in unity. Free and forgive us from all debts, trespasses, and sins to joyful obedience which is life in Jesus forevermore.*

Rev. Don Hawks (from Hawks)

Day 134

Read a Scripture: Psalm 96

"Autumn"

I always love the Autumn wind in October,
It reminds me of when I was little.
I used to look out my window and watch
the leaves
 come
 falling
 down

In the wind.
I didn't believe in God back then.

What is Autumn?
I think often about Autumn.
Autumn is the Beauty of the earth.
Let me tell you more.

I never met the Lord in Autumn,
And I didn't know Him there.
But then one day I met the Lord—
I didn't believe it could happen!
I loved Autumn after that.

Let me tell you more.
Autumn is here,
And I feel like singing a new song!
The wind is blowing the leaves
Off the trees.
And how lovely it is outside!

What is Autumn?
Autumn is many colors!
How does He do it?
By His love!
And the Lord turns the leaves gently
From glory
to glory,
like us!

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Pray or Sing the Hymn
"For the Beauty of the Earth"

For the beauty of the earth, for the glory of the skies,
for the love which from our birth over and around us lies;

Refrain

Lord of all, to thee we raise this our hymn of grateful praise.

For the beauty of each hour of the day and of the night,
hill and vale, and tree and flower, sun and moon, and stars of light;

For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and mind's delight,
for the mystic harmony linking sense to sound and sight;

For the joy of human love, brother, sister, parent, child,
friends on earth and friends above, for all gentle thoughts and mild;

For thy church, that evermore lifteth holy hands above,
offering upon every shore her pure sacrifice of love;

For thyself, best Gift Divine, to the world so freely given,
for that great, great love of thine, peace on earth, and joy in heaven:

(Folliot S. Pierpoint)

Paul Robert Harris from *One Day at a Time*

Day 135

"Trick-or-Treat"

Read a Scripture: Acts 4:32-37

The McGaheysville church I attended didn't have an organized trick-or-treat plan but Keezletown did! I recall going with the Keezletown children and adults. We carried small containers, which looked like milk cartons, and knocked on doors shouting "Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF!" Not only did we collect money for UNICEF but received LOTS of candy and other goodies as we trudged from door to door. When we finished, we would return to the church basement for hot chocolate. I always felt such a sense of community and camaraderie, even as a child, in Keezletown.

Pray

God our Provision, you provide every blessing in abundance so let us share abundantly in every good work you are doing (From 2 Corinthians 9:8).*

Tanya Dawn Eppard

Day 136

"Funerals"

Read a Scripture: Jeremiah 29:11-14

Among the hardest and most poignant memories were two funerals I officiated in. Both in 2007.

The first one was the Celebration of Life of Julie Anne Coffman. A vibrant young woman who loved life and who was more than just a parishioner. Julie was my friend. I remember her laughter, her beautiful smile and her love for life. Cancer stole her from us far too soon. I remember being right there with her as she lived her last days. As I lay in the bed with her praying and singing and talking to her about heaven, she was assured her faith was true. It was a moment that I wouldn't have traded for anything. Of course, I wish she had not had to die, but she is out of pain and cancer free and once again at peace.

The other funeral that was difficult for me was the funeral of Gabriel Kaden Morris, the son of Steve and Beth. He was only 15 days old. Gabriel didn't have the chance to live his life, but he sure made an impression on my ministry. My faith was rattled when he was born and was so sick, yet by spending time with Steve, Beth, Morgan, and Gabriel and watching their faith being lived out for all to see – made me realize how blessed we are to have a God that is with us in the difficult times. Praise Him in the storm!

Pray

Come again Comforter. Come alongside us in our grief. Be tender with our brokenness. Bind our wounds. Lift us up in the resurrection and new life of Christ.*

Rev. Dawn-Marie Singleton

Day 137

Read a Scripture: Ecclesiastes 9

"A Moment of Reflection"

There is a tear in my eye,
There is an ache in my heart,
There is a pain in my body,
When I remember what used to be.

Past are the years with their joys of being with my children, work and play.
Gone are the years with their joys of intellectual achievement,
They are gone like a pleasant dream when morning has come.

Today is free of the work schedules, which enslaved me,
Today I am free of many financial worries.
Today I am free of the concerns of training my children properly.
Today, I wish to have again those golden chains.

I am blessed with a wonderful wife,
I am at times a burden to her.
I cannot hear and often forget.
I am more frustrated than she by my limitations.
No one know how hard I try, how heavy my heart.

My banker tells me that I am not a rich man.
I have three adult children of whom I am very proud.
Each is living a honorable life.

Each is a credit to our family.
I am a rich man.

My calendar tells me that most of my life is past.
My Savior tells me that a more beautiful life will soon begin.
I have His blessed assurance, "I go to prepare a place for You,
and I will come again and receive you unto myself
that where I am there you will be also."
I am a rich man.

Pray

Jesus who promises your presence to be with us and that you prepare a place for us with you, may our lives and hope be found in you. You have poured out your bounty on us, so help us to recognize how rich we are in your provision.*

Rev. Harold M. Fuss

Day 138

"A Cloud of Witnesses"

Read a Scripture: Hebrews 12:1-12

Members fondly remembered include: Mrs. Keezle, Erma Cline, Lena Earman, Robinette Randolph, Mr. Wheeler, Mary Harris, Aunt Charlotte Coffman, Elton Armentrout, and Sam Hasler. Each contributed to the church using his or her talent.

Other memorable moments at KMC include: each of our baptisms, Penny's solo during the Christmas Program when she was only six years old. She wore her new white satin dress bought by Mrs. Miller. Patsy and Bill's wedding, Penny and Dorsey's wedding, Mother and Daddy's surprise 50th Anniversary, Aunt Sade's funeral, Marhl Jr.'s memorial service, and Mother and Daddy's memorial services.

My life has been enhanced and enriched by past and present members of the KUMC and I thank you for your kindness. To God be the glory!

Pray or Sing the Hymn
"To God Be the Glory"

To God be the glory, great things he hath done!
So loved he the world that he gave us his Son,
who yielded his life an atonement for sin,
and opened the life-gate that all may go in.

Refrain

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the earth hear his voice!
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the people rejoice!
O come to the Father thru Jesus the Son,
and give him the glory, great things he hath done.

O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood,
to every believer the promise of God;
the vilest offender who truly believes,
that moment from Jesus a pardon receives.

Great things he hath taught us, great things he hath done,
and great our rejoicing thru Jesus the Son;
but purer, and higher, and greater will be
our wonder, our transport, when Jesus we see.

(Fanny J. Crosby)

Don Clatterbuck

Day 139

"Good Grief"

Read a Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Yesterday the world lost the greatest man I have ever known. I know everyone says that about their family, but my grandfather was truly the most selfless, caring, giving, understanding, loving person I've ever met. I can't remember a time where I ever saw him angry or even raise his voice. I was really hoping for one more year of holidays with you, but I'm glad to know that you're no longer in pain and suffering. I'm so grateful that I got to see you Sunday. I love you and will never forget you Grampy.

Pray

Resurrecting God, we commit those we love and ourselves to you in gratitude for your grace to us in life and in the promise of your transformational eternal life in Christ Jesus.*

Virginia Workman
Granddaughter of Rev. Warren Reeves

Day 140

"To Live Is Christ, To Die Is Gain"

Read a Scripture: Philippians 1:19-30

On June the 15th, 1921, Rev. George A. McGuire, of Toms Brook, Va., was called to his reward. For several years his health had been failing, but with it all he was true to his nature, clung to his work, and refused to surrender. How he fought death! Not that he was afraid to die, but he wanted to live, to be of service to his Master.

Our dear beloved Lord has in His infinite wisdom and divine purpose, seen fit since the meeting of our last Annual Conference to call from our ranks a noble soldier of the Cross, GEORGE A. MCGUIRE, and promoted him to a place among the redeemed of heaven; it may here be said of him that the worth of his life upon the earth was not in the honors and glories obtained, but in the honors and glories he sacrificed for the sake of others.

The late D. L. Moody once said, "Light houses don't toot horns, or blow whistles and ring bells to call attention to their shine; they just shine." Brother McGuire never made a great noise or bluster in the Conference about the work he had done, or was doing, but his life just shone.

He was quiet, unassuming, brotherly, gentlemanly, and a conscientious Christian minister. He loved people, and especially the young folks, with whom he labored very earnestly. On several occasions, he was commended in the Young People's Convention for the many Young People's Organizations he had established, and rebuilt on the charges he served.

It was my pleasure and privilege to visit Bro. McGuire a few weeks before his death and even then, as the shadows of death's night were closing about him, he talked with me about our approaching Young People's Convention. How much he wished he could be there, to help and mingle with the young folks, and see the brethren. Bro. McGuire is gone, need I say where? He has gone – not like the evening stars lost in the darkness of the night, but like the morning star; only lost in the brightness of the day.

Pray or Sing the Hymn

"Brightly Beams Our Father's Mercy"

Brightly beams our Father's mercy From his lighthouse evermore;
But to us he gives the keeping Of the lights along the shore.

Refrain

Let the lower lights be burning! Send a gleam across the wave!
Some poor fainting, struggling seaman You may rescue, you may save.

Dark the night of sin has settled, Loud the angry billows roar;

Eager eyes are watching, longing, For the lights along the shore.

Trim your feeble lamp, my brother! Some poor seaman, tempest tossed,
Trying now to make the harbor, In the darkness may be lost. (Philip P. Bliss)

Rev. Robert Newton Young (from Phillips)

Day 141

“Rev. Thomas J. Feaster: Our Pastor Gave His All”

Read a Scripture: 1 John 3:11-24

Thomas J. Feaster (1874-1906) was born of religious parentage near Maysville, Grant Co., W.Va., Nov. 23, 1874. He was a model young man, being religiously inclined from early childhood. When a mere lad he would preach to his old brothers and sisters.

He died in the parsonage in Pleasant Valley, Va., August 20, 1906, aged 31 years, 8 months, and 28 days. The news of his death came as a flash of lightning out of a clear sky. He was sick of typhoid fever only two weeks.

He was a model young man, being religiously inclined from early childhood. He was converted at the age of sixteen, in a meeting held by Rev. A. S. Hammack, at Johnsonville, on South Branch circuit. He and the writer of this sketch were converted at the same time and place, having gone to the altar the same night. He united with the church at Mt. Hebron, South Branch circuit, where he held his membership until his death. At the age of nineteen he was granted quarterly conference license to preach. While he held this relation, whenever possible, he would assist the pastor on the charge in any way he could be helpful.

His call to the active ministry kept pressing itself upon his life, and in 1898, when twenty-three years of age, he was admitted into Va. Conf. at Winchester and granted a license by Bishop E. B. Kephart. He was ordained by Bishop Kephart in 1901, at Churchville, Va. He was 8 years and 5 months in the active work, having traveled Pendleton, West Frederick, Toms Brook, and Pleasant Valley circuits in the order named. He was one of our most promising young men; a plain, forcible Gospel preacher and an earnest Christian worker. Many souls were led to accept Christ as a personal Savior under his ministry. His work in church and parsonage building is a monument to his memory. He has gone from us, but his work remains and his influence will continue to live and grow and do good until time shall be no more.

Pray or Sing the Hymn

“O Thou Who Camest from Above”

O Thou who camest from above, the pure celestial fire to impart,
kindle a flames of sacred love upon the mean altar of my heart.

There let it for thy glory burn with inextinguishable blaze,
and trembling to its source return, in humble prayer and fervent praise.

Jesus, confirm my heart's desire to work and speak and think for thee;
still let me guard the holy fire, and still stir up thy gift in me.

Ready for all thy perfect will, my acts of faith and love repeat,
till death thy endless mercies seal, and make my sacrifice complete.

(Charles Wesley)

Rev. Arthur J. Secrist (from Phillips)

Day 142

"Into Your Hands I Commend My Spirit"

Read a Scripture: Luke 23:44-56

There is mourning in the Conference today. We have come from the field of the Lord's conquest, and there is sad news from the front. Our dear comrade JOHN WESLEY OTTERBEIN EWING fell in the height of battle at his post, a faithful soldier of the cross. Our hearts are sad. We miss him so, because his familiar presence is not with us in our homecoming, his seat at the King's table is vacant, he has answered his last roll call and bivouacked for the last time. He has received his last marching orders, and died executing the King's decree. His death is a great loss to the Conference and a personal bereavement to many of its members.

It seems strange his pen should be the first to drop and his tongue the first to become silent in death. Not a word of aspersion passed his lips, for he lived in the higher atmosphere of unselfishness, integrity, and uprightness. Born of pious parents, always a good boy, he grew up in favor with God and man. Advancing by hard and incessant study, and with great devotion to his books, step by step, until—as has been rightly said of him, though doubtless unconscious to himself—the "Model Preacher of Va. Conf." "He was large in body, mind, and soul; pure minded and lived above reproach." Some of us who have read page by page his life's history, find not a single blot; the leaves are all pure white. In manner he was kind, cautious, and dignified.

As a preacher he was not emotional or sentimental, but preached the principles of the gospel as a workman that needeth not to be ashamed. A deep current of spirituality swept through his whole being. He was a good thinker, an able writer, and his productions, like his good, pure life, will live after him.

He died in the parsonage at Churchville, Va., October 18, 1898, at the early age of 32 years, 3 months, and 5 days, after an illness of eight weeks. He suffered much, but without a murmur. When death came he was ready. Among the few requests was his desire to be buried at Friendship Church, near Stephens City, Va., the scenes of his childhood. Rev. G. P. Hott, his Presiding Elder, had charge of the

funeral service. With tender heart, his brethren in the ministry laid his body in the earth.

Pray

Help us to live as those who are prepared to die. And when our days here are accomplished, enable us to die as those who go forth to live, so that living or dying, our life may be in you, and that nothing in life or in death will be able to separate us from your great love in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

(Part of a prayer from "A Service of Death and Resurrection," UMH 871)

Rev. N. F. A. Cupp (from Phillips)

Day 143

"Well Done"

Read a Scripture: Matthew 25:14-30

Early in life Dr. Michael accepted the call to ministry of the Reformed Church. He was a firm believer in education and throughout his life never ceased to be interested in scholarly pursuits. On the day of his death he completed work on the history of the Keezletown Methodist Church and the Rockingham Circuit...

In 1960 Dr. Michael suffered a severe heart attack and was forced to retire from the active pastorate...

His life was characterized by a sincere desire to serve his Lord as a minister of the gospel, by an abiding interest in Christian higher education, and a deep appreciation of the influence of history upon the present generation...

Pray

Lord, your servant Rev. Olin Bain Michael suffered a heart attack and had to retire while our pastor and later died while working on a history of our congregation. May we spend our lives in the life of Jesus Christ and be a blessing to our community and family. Let us live in such faith that we may hear you say at our homecoming, "Well done, good and faithful servant."*

Rev. Robert Harris Kesler (excerpts from Davis, 1966)

Day 144

"Soldier Ministry: Rev. George Henry Ray"

Read a Scripture: Matthew 8:5-13

Being duly recommended, he was received on trial into the Virginia Annual Conference at its meeting in Lynchburg, Va., in October, 1853. His first appointment was as junior preacher on the Springfield and South Branch circuit. He was subsequently appointed to Fauquier circuit; to Clay street, Richmond; to

Fredericksburg; to Winchester; and to Harrisonburg – in all of which places his labors were greatly blessed.

In the fall of 1860 he was appointed Chaplain to Randolph-Macon College. At the ensuing Conference, November, 1861, he was appointed pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in Washington City, but, for political reasons, he declined to go, and became Chaplain in the Confederate Army for a while, and afterwards was sent to Louisa circuit, and from there to Union Station, Richmond.

During the latter part of the War he was engaged as agent for the Richmond Christian Advocate, then the property of the Conference, and raised a large amount of money to relieve the Advocate of its debts, and to send religious literature to the Confederate soldiers. When the War closed, having no pastoral charge, he settled upon a plantation owned by his wife in Nottoway county, where he supplied destitute portions of our work in that county and in Prince Edward and Lunenburg counties.

Pray

Jesus who ministered to the Roman Centurion and those under his authority, help us to minister to those beyond the limits of our political comfort zones and bring the grace of God to the open cracks and crevices of the human heart. Thank you Jesus for entering our own social, religious, and political time so that with the leading of your Spirit we may know life in God.*

Rev. W. E. Judkins (from Keene)

Day 145

“Rev. William Gabriel Starr and the Times”

Read a Scripture: Ecclesiastes 3

Six weeks later he was directed by his presiding elder to take charge of the church in Hampton, where his work was terminated by the War between the States. He then returned South and enlisted as chaplain in the 47th Alabama regiment. In 1863 he became the captain of a company in the same regiment. As a soldier he was noted for cool-headedness, courage and resourcefulness. On the retreat of the Army of Northern Virginia from Gettysburg a battery located on an eminence was annoying the Confederate forces, and the general in command of that part of the field ordered Captain Starr to capture it. He replied, “General, I cannot capture the battery by a frontal attack, but if you will let me flank it through that ravine (pointing to the ravine), I think I can capture it.” The general replied, “Take it any way you can.” Captain Starr had the command of about ninety men. He flanked the battery, charging it from the rear; and though he lost more than twenty-five per cent of his men, he captured the battery....It was just like him; whatever he attempted he did with his might.

He was one of the most systematic men in all his work we ever knew. On Monday he mapped out and scheduled his work for the week; and there was a time for every duty, so far as it was possible for him to forecast. He made his calls upon his parishioners with regularity and promptness, and if there was an partiality, it was because this one or that one most needed his attention and service. He had a time for visiting, a time for reading, a time for study and the preparation of his sermons, a time for private meditation and prayer and communion with God, a time for family devotion, a time for recreation...His work was so systematized, that he accomplished the greatest possible results in a given time, and yet he never seemed hurried or worried or flustered. He was a thoroughly drilled soldier of the Cross, and his duties were discharged day after day with almost military discipline. In short, Dr. Starr was the complete master of himself and all of his forces. His flesh was subject to his mind; his mind and flesh were subject to his spirit, and the whole man was under the domination of the Holy Ghost.

Religion to Dr. Starr was a reality, not merely a sentiment. The Bible was his code, his rule of conduct. His religion was the religion of happiness, the religion of joy, and his joy and happiness shone in his countenance and cropped out in his conversation.

Dr. Starr preached a living gospel, suited to every age, to every condition and phase of life, the answer to every question, the solution to every problem, temporal and spiritual. He preached a religion that was salvation now and hereafter; he pictured death of the body as the means of egress for the soul. He presented the life of the Christian as but the preparation for the greater and more abundant life beyond. He presented Heaven as the result; the logical and inevitable refuge and abiding-place of the soul redeemed.

Pray

Merciful Savior, you come in the midst of our brokenness, fallenness, and shame. We are mixed up in the times we live. Today there is war, injustice, and times our ways look nothing like your ways and our thoughts are far from yours. Do not leave us to be subjects only to the time we live. Let this be the time we are subject to Christ and the salvation, mercy, and justice of Jesus that are breaking into the world. Let our time be God's time for the reconciliation, forgiveness, and joy of Jesus Christ for everyone.*

Rev. J. C. Reed (from Keene)

Day 146

"Rev. William Sherman Tussey"

Read a Scripture: Psalm 33

For some years Brother Tussey worked on passenger trains and did milling and logging. He was talented in manual arts.

It is interesting to note that W.S. Tussey's brother, John David Tussey, served for fifty years as a fully ordained minister in the Missouri Conference.

The Rev. W.S. Tussey served in the Missouri and North Arkansas Conferences from 1914 to 1944 and then in the Virginia Conference from 1944 to 1955. From 1919 to 1923 he did printing work in addition to doing much evangelistic work. As an evangelist, Mr. Tussey believed that revival services should continue two or more weeks in length. He preached in many revivals for various fellow ministers, and he was instrumental in helping many persons to accept Jesus Christ as Savior. In addition to preaching with great fervor, Brother Tussey sang solos in a number of the revivals.

Some of the favorite hymns for Mr. Tussey were "Life's Railway to Heaven," "How Beautiful Heaven Must Be," "The King's Business" and "When They Ring Those Golden Bells."

Across the years Brother Tussey had a special love for children, young people, and aged people. Also, he was engaged in many church and parsonage building programs. He did much of the work himself.

Pray

Our Conductor Jesus Christ, see us safely through life's lightning rails, and through dark tunnels or high trestles of strife. Give us joy through all life's journey and bring us to life forevermore.* (Adapted from Snow and Abbey)

Rev. Herbert P. Hall (from Keene)

Day 147

"Rev. Charles Ray Curtis Blessed by Encouraging Wife"

Read a Scripture: Proverbs 31:10-31

...in young manhood, he entered the employ of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. In its general offices he soon became a marked man by reason of his loyalty and his splendid ability. There was another kind of business, however, which also engaged his attention – business for The King!

Feeling secure that God wanted him for special service, Brother Curtis early asked for a local preacher's license and soon was in wide demand not only in the city but far beyond its bounds. No doubt even then he was wrestling with a definite call to a full-time ministry. When thirty-six years of age, sleeping sickness fell upon him and God, who has His own way of approach to the spirits of men, drew near and talked with him as he lay unconscious upon his bed. Surviving that dread disease and informed by his physician that he must give up his work in the office or in the church, he did not hesitate. For him the die had been already been cast. Encouraged by his devoted wife, Brother Curtis turned his back upon a business career and sought admission into the Baltimore Conference of the Methodist Church, South, at its session in 1926...

On October 17, 1911, Brother Curtis was married to Miss Elizabeth Jones of Delta, Pennsylvania. She was his ministering angel, his constant inspiration. Surely God's hand fashioned had fashioned that home in which He was always the Honored Guest.

Pray or Sing the Hymn
"Happy the Home When God Is There"

Happy the home when God is there, and loves fills every breast;
when one their wish, and one their prayer, and one their heavenly rest.

Happy the home where Jesus' name is sweet to every ear;
where children early speak his fame, and parents hold him dear.

Happy the home where prayer is heard, and praise is wont to rise;
where parents love the sacred Word and all its wisdom prize.

Lord, let us in our homes agree this blessed peace to gain;
unite our hearts in love to thee, and love to all will reign. (Henry Ware, Jr.)

Rev. H. M. Canter (from Keene)

Day 148
"Christian Parents and Home"
Read a Scripture: Proverbs 4

William J. Whitesell was born September 5, 1867, near Mt. Crawford, Va., the son of James David Whitesell and Frances Huffman, his wife. Both parents were devoted Christians and their home resounded to the voice of prayer as morning and evening the family gathered together and were led by their father or mother to the throne of Grace. In such an atmosphere this son was nourished and unconsciously prepared for his life work as a minister of the gospel.

Pray

Make time today to pray with the people you live with. It could be people in your home or if you live alone you could call and pray with someone you share your life such as a neighbor or friend. Pray silently or pray The Lord's Prayer. Pray with thanksgiving or pray about the needs that are near. Make prayer a regular part of your home.*

Rev. H. M. Canter (from Keene)

Day 149

"Faithful Widow"

Read a Scripture: Luke 2:22-38

LILLIAN VIRGINIA CROFT DONOVAN, a daughter of Daniel Croft and Virginia Smith Croft, was born in Augusta County, Va., March 7, 1873. She was the last survivor in a family of eight children, sharing her childhood with three brothers and four sisters.

On March 17, 1896, she was united by the sacred bonds of matrimony to the Rev. John D. Donovan, a U.B. minister, who was admitted to Va. Conf. in 1877. At the time of this marriage, Rev. Donovan was serving the Staunton Station. The same year of their marriage, Rev. Donovan was elected Presiding Elder of the Winchester District, the position which he held until 1903.

Mrs. Donovan shared the responsibilities with Rev. Donovan in the pastorate at Martinsburg from 1903 to 1905, at which time ill health forced him to resign. She was preceded in death by her husband on April 22, 1905. One son, Gladstone Croft Donovan, was born of this union. He, too, preceded his mother in death, passing on October 26, 1961.

Following the death of her husband, Mrs. Donovan resided with her son in Lexington, North Carolina. She was a lady with a fine personality, a jolly spirit and a genuine Christian life. She worked with her son as a saleslady for the Dwinell-Wright Company and operated a rooming house in Lexington, as long as health permitted. Following several years of ill health, Mrs. Donovan passed to her eternal reward on February 28, 1962.

Final rites were conducted by Va. Conf. Superintendent, Dr. Floyd L. Fulk, on Saturday, March 3, 1962. The funeral was held at Singers Glen, Va., in the Donovan Memorial Church, named in memory of her husband, and the church at which she retained her membership until her death. Her body was laid to rest at the cemetery in Singers Glen.

Pray

Thank you Bridegroom of the Church for godly spouses, help us to encourage them and labor beside them in their call and service for Christ and others. Thank you Father for children to care for and depend upon in Christian family. Thank you Comforter for Lillian who made room for others and Anna who presented Jesus to people looking for redemption. Thank you Emmanuel for coming near to us so our eyes may see the wonderful ways God is with us.*

Rev. Paul C. Bailey, 1962 (from Phillips)

Day 150

“Serving with Love: Rev. Samuel Summerfield Lambeth”

Read a Scripture: 1 Corinthians 13

It will also be seen by the appointments he received, that he served the chief churches and those also of lesser note. When his strength did not enable him to serve the larger charges, he served the smaller with the same fidelity and cheerfulness he served the chief churches in the days of his strength. He was free from ecclesiastical ambition or self-seeking – a sweet, radiant spirit without guile.

Pray

O God, rescue us from being noisy gongs, clanging cymbals, being nothing, and gaining nothing. Free us from envy, boasting, arrogance, rudeness, irritability, resentment, and insisting in our own way. God who is Love, free us to love and love in all we do. Let our speaking, work, generosity, patience, kindness, rejoicing, bearing, believing, hope, and enduring be filled with the love of Jesus Christ through the will of the Father and abiding of the Spirit.*

Rev. J. C. Reed (from Keene)

Day 151

“Turn and Live: Rev. John Pitts”

Read a Scripture: Ezekiel 18

He was born in Anne Arundell county, in the state of Maryland, Feb. 23, 1772, of reputable parents. Being members of the Church of England, they educated their son according to its principles.

At the age of seventeen, under Methodist preaching, it pleased God to awaken young Pitts to a sense of his sinfulness, and to bring him to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. Soon after he became a member of the church, and he walked in all good conscience.

He was a man of a meek and quiet spirit. His patience also was such as gave him the possession of his soul, in all the trials and afflictions he had to pass through. He was a lover and cultivator of peace and union in the church of God; and when he was called upon to execute discipline, the minister’s painful and trying duty, he was generally enabled to perform the task so as to secure the confidence of all concerned. He was a good minister of Jesus Christ. Love to God, and to immortal souls, filled and governed his heart; and truth, divine truth, was the constant guide of his mind in his exhortations and sermons. As an ambassador of Jesus Christ, he kept in view his awful charge. He was plain in person, manner, and language; and generally in the pulpit he was so affected, that, like his Master, he wept over those who refused or neglected to know the things belonging to their peace. There was a peculiar tenderness and pathos in his spirit and word, which frequently penetrated the

whole congregation while he was holding forth the Lord Jesus Christ in all his offices as the only and all sufficient Saviour of lost men.

Pray or Sing the Hymn
"Sinners, Turn: Why Will You Die"

Sinners, turn: why will you die? God, your Maker, asks you why.
God, who did your being give, made you himself, that you might live;
he the fatal cause demands, asks the work of his own hands.
Why, you thankless creatures, why will you cross his love, and die?

Sinners, turn: why will you die? God, your Savior, asks you why.
God, who did your souls retrieve, died himself, that you might live.
Will you let him die in vain? Crucify your Lord again?
Why, you ransomed sinners, why will you slight the grace, and die?

Sinners, turn: why will you die? God, the Spirit, asks you why;
he, who all your lives hath strove, wooed you to embrace his love.
Will you not his grace receive? Will you still refuse to live?
Why, you long-sought sinners, why will you grieve your God, and die?

You, on whom he favors showers, you, possessed of nobler powers,
you, of reason's powers possessed, you, with will and memory blessed,
you, with finer sense endued, creatures capable of God;
noblest of his creatures, why, why will you forever die?

You whom he ordained to be transcripts of the Trinity,
you, whom he in life doth hold, you, for whom himself was sold,
you, on whom he still doth wait, whom he would again create;
made by him, and purchased, why, why will you forever die?

You, who own his record true, you, his chosen people, you,
you, who call the Savior Lord, you, who read his written Word,
you, who see the gospel light, claim a crown in Jesu's right;
why will you, ye Christians, why will the house of Israel die?

Turn, he cries, ye sinners, turn; by his life your God hath sworn;
he would have you turn and live, he would all the world receive;
he hath bought to all the race full salvation by his grace;
he hath no one soul passed by; why will you resolve to die?

Can ye doubt, if God is love, if to all his mercies move?
Will ye not his word receive? Will ye not his oath believe?

See, the suffering God appears! Jesus weeps! Believe his tears!
Mingled with his blood they cry, why will you resolve to die? (Charles Wesley)

Author unknown (from Keene)

Day 152

"Seeking the Lost: Rev. Philip Kennerly"

Read a Scripture: Luke 15:11-32

He was a good preacher, filled with faith and the spirit of Christ, so that while he exposed the errors of the heterodox, and the crimes of the wicked, with faithfulness and authority, he, for the most part, possessed himself of their confidence and good will. It was remarked by his friends and acquaintances, that the last year of his life he had an increasing concern for the salvation of men. Neither the business of life, the interesting ties of a beloved family, nor the numerous difficulties of a life devoted to itinerating operations, could make him contented at home, while souls were perishing for lack of knowledge; hence he applied to the Conference...for readmission, which being obtained and presented, he was, in September, again received cordially among the travelling brethren, and appointed to Christian circuit.

God has not forgotten his work and labour of love. Since his departure, the Lord has powerfully converted his oldest son, and his son's wife: and we humbly hope that more of his children are well nigh persuaded to follow him, as he followed Christ.

Pray

Jesus who came to seek and save the lost, give us your concern for the salvation of people. Let our concern grow into prayer and acts of seeking and grace for those in need of salvation. Lord, in your mercy, extend that salvation grace to the children in my family, too. Welcome us in the arms of the Prodigal's Father.*

Author unknown (from Keene)

Day 153

"I Die Poor: Rev. Adam Clarke Bledsoe"

Read a Scripture: John 10:7-16

During a notable revival at Emory and Henry College in 1859, he was with seventy-five other students, converted. He became the class leader of the young Christians during his entire college career.

He heeded the call of the Spirit in October, 1860, to the ministry by seeking and receiving permit to preach. After a year he resolved to make the pulpit his life work. He connected himself with our Conference and assisted Rev. J. L. Clarke, as Junior, on Albemarle Circuit two months, when he was transferred to Harrisonburg,

where he served two years. In November, 1863, he became a chaplain in the Confederate Army and assigned to the Fifteenth Virginia Calvary, which position he held till the Civil War closed.

The war ended in the spring. The Conference would sit in the autumn. In the meantime he established a classical school at Scottsville, Va., using the Sabbaths and vacations for preaching. He assisted in a wide work of grace during the two years he conducted this school and proclaimed the glad tidings at his own expense. As soon as the work needed more men than the Bishop could find waiting at his elbow, Bledsoe let go the profitable employment of a successful teacher and took a circuit.

He loved his Conference. He would not trade himself for dollars.

After all, this is the spear of Ithuriel, the touchstone of character. The minister who can command a larger income outside the pulpit, yet "swears to his own hurt and changes not," by wearing himself out preaching for the public good, makes lustrous his own life, rebukes the sneers of the infidel that shepherds serve God for the "fat and the wood" of the flock, and honors his God. Woe worth the day for Methodism when Zion outbids the world for men of genius. Bishop Marvin, at the Winchester Conference, sending married men out in the North Mountain and the Massanutta on the promise of three hundred dollars a year, blurred the MSS appointments with his tears of sympathy for the wives and little ones while rejoicing at such proof of loyalty to the Lord Jesus.

"I die poor," was the unperishing utterance and unfading glory of Holland Nimmons McTyeire. It set the old keynote of Asbury and McKendree for modern Methodism. Bledsoe could have coined his rare powers into a frescoed palace, into merchandise of fine gold, into superb equipages. He died poor, but making many rich unto eternal life.

Pray

Good Shepherd, allow me to labor as you do and give my life that others may have the fullness of eternal life.*

Rev. John J. Lafferty (from Keene)

Day 154

"Rev. William Goodwin Williams and Methodists Die Well"

Read a Scripture: Philippians 3 – 4:1

In 1848, after thorough previous training under private tutors, and in the neighborhood of schools, he entered Emory and Henry College, the better to prepare for the study of law, which he had decided to make the business of his life; but the Lord had need of him in another field, where great usefulness awaited him. We do not know anything of the struggle that took place before he concluded to give up the cherished plans of his life, but he was not disobedient to the Heavenly calling.

God makes no mistakes, and in calling Wm. G. Williams to the work of the ministry, he found a man to whom he committed a precious trust that was never betrayed.

While like Saul of Tarsus, he was being prepared for the law, God had a higher and better work for him in the gospel ministry, and like him he conferred not with flesh and blood, but entered at once upon the work of declaring the whole counsel of God, and went forward with such strong faith and abiding confidence that he never faltered, nor did he doubt the genuineness of his call.

On Saturday, through the rain, he insisted, against the wishes of his family, on going to the neighborhood of his Sunday morning appointment. Sunday afternoon he was taken sick and soon after being taken, remarked, "Do not let my family know of my illness until after I am dead, for my wife is not well enough to come to me. My work is done, but all is well." All that kind friends and two attending physicians could do was done to stay the hand of death, but in vain. He was perfectly conscious of his condition, and shouted aloud the praises of God, "Hallelujah, glory to God," and when urged not to shout, said, "I cannot help it, my soul is filled with heavenly joy and gladness. I will soon be with Jesus."

It has been said that "Methodists die well." All do who live well.

He was deeply spiritual, both in the pulpit and out of it....He was prayerful. A brother who roomed with him, while assisting at a meeting of his charge, says that three times during the night he arose and wrestled in prayer for God's blessing on the meeting, which was answered the day following by Pentecostal power.

Pray or Sing the Hymn
"Ask Ye What Great Thing I Know"

Ask ye what great thing I know, that delights and stirs me so?
What the high reward I win? Whose the name I glory in?
Jesus Christ, the crucified.

Who defeats my fiercest foes? Who consoles my saddest woes?
Who revives my fainting heart, healing all its hidden smart?
Jesus Christ, the crucified.

Who is life in life to me? Who the death of death will be?
Who will place me on the right, with the countless hosts of light?
Jesus Christ, the crucified.

This is that great thing I know; this delights and stirs me so:
faith in him who died to save, him who triumphed o'er the grave:
Jesus Christ, the crucified. (Johann C. Schwedler)

Rev. George C. Vanderslice (from Keene)

Day 155

"Missionary Kathryn Eye"

Read a Scripture: Hebrews 13:1-16

Kathryn Eye was a child of a Methodist Parsonage....Her parents were the late Rev. W. D. Eye and Lelia Lipton Eye. From early childhood, she had the desire to become a missionary and pursued this dream while she attended Blackstone College and then went to Emory and Henry College...At Johns Hopkins University Hospital, she received training in the field of nursing.

In May, 1938, she was commissioned a missionary to the Belgian Congo in Africa, where she worked with love and caring and healing until 1960. Many Methodist Churches have circles or units named for Kathryn Eye which supported her work financially and prayerfully during her years in Africa.

The great spirit with abounding energy and big heart with lots of love, of Kathryn Eye are with the Lord she loved and served, but she lives in her contributions to the lives of persons everywhere and is appreciated by a host of friends whose lives she touched.

A fitting tribute which was given in recognition of Jesus Christ may cover the life of Kathryn, too: "She went about doing good." Thanks be to God for Kathryn Eye!

Pray

Make Hebrews 13:20-21 your prayer today. Read it through first, consider what it says, then pray it as your prayer.*

Rev. Harvey W. Ashby (from Keene)

Day 156

"Rev. Robert Lee Fultz Planted Near a Good Friend"

Read a Scripture: Psalm 1

In the spring of 1895 he was married to Miss Bessie Watkins of Howard County, and took her as a bride to his new charge on the Staunton Circuit. The next spring he moved to Keezletown, where his son, Paul, was born and his wife died. During his three years there he built a new parsonage, largely by personal donations of materials in a time of depression.

The following statement is submitted as a tribute from Rev J. W. Leggett, who had been a close friend of Dr. Fultz's for thirty years.

"It is my privilege to bear testimony to the sterling character and fruitful life of a beloved comrade in the ministry. Lee Fultz was my friend. What a gift to a man! Our lives have been like two trees side by side; they were not quite the same species, their foliage differed, but somehow sprang immediately into rich, mutual understanding, and our roots became inseparably intertwined.

“In my friend’s rich personality there were many strands. The master passion was loyalty; it was the key note of his character – loyalty to family, friends, church, and country. He was always steadfast and fixed in the midst of the inconstant. His word was his bond. His life was marked with a contagious simplicity. He was always natural; we loved him for that. He loved the countryside – the trees, the rivers, the green fields, and the vegetable gardens. His strength of character was closely akin with a loving tenderness.

“...And he could pray! His prayers fairly opened the heavens, and men and women were brought face to face with their precious Savior.

“He was a level-headed business man and an executive of unusual ability. It was his real forte; he left behind him through the years churches repaired, new churches built, parsonages built, parsonages erected and remodeled. It was thrilling to be in his manual workshop in his home. He was a workman that need not be ashamed.

“...He used to tell me how short was life at longest to do the things needed to be done. With an enthusiasm, an abandon, a devotion he lived his life. He poured out his strength like a spendthrift. In his heart there was a vision of the Cross, and the living presence of his radiant Lord. He would have been ashamed to be too comfortable with such a Captain.”

Pray

Plant me Jesus near the waters of life in the company of saints who will help me grow. From roots in your grace, let the Holy Spirit bear good fruit in my life so that I may be part of building: the kingdom of God; the people of God; and the generosity of God.*

Rev. Herbert S. Southgate (from Keene)

Day 157

“Okey”

Read a Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 1

The first time I saw him, the subject of this memoir, the Rev. Okey D. Lambert, was in January 1906. Two days earlier I had left the old farm house in southern Maryland to begin my preparation for the ministry to which I was certain I had been divinely called. Brother Lambert was among the first to greet me on my arrival at the Randolph-Macon Academy, Front Royal, Va. I just stood and looked at him, for I thought that I had never seen such a physical giant. Broad-shouldered, full-chested and well over six feet in height. One did not have to know him long before realizing that his heart was bigger than the physical man by a long way. He seemed to find peculiar joy in helping other carry their burdens. He had a word of encouragement for everyone; never a note of discouragement escaped his lips. This due to the fact that he cherished a deep Christian experience, which he practiced in

all his dealings with people, both in the pulpit and out of the pulpit, regardless of their rank or station in life or the color of their skin.

His chief interests were his family to whom he was devoted and his Father's business. Deep reverence and earnestness marked his preaching, which was usually evangelistic in tone. Those who sat under his ministry were sure of one thing, namely, that he believed with all his heart what he preached of which his personal life was a living illustration – the redeeming, saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The writer will always be grateful for having known this humble, noble soul. He has known many others with a superior intellectual background and training, but he cannot recall having known one superior in spirit and who walked closer to God and whose fixed purpose was to serve his day and generation according to the will of God.

Pray

Thank you God for good examples of faith in Christ like the Thessalonian believers to those in Macedonia and Achaia or like Okey to his friends, congregation, and family. Bless those who have been Christian examples to us. Through your Spirit let us to be examples of Christ to others "regardless of their rank or station in life or the color of their skin."*

Rev. T.M. Swann (from Keene)

Day 158

"Rev. Alexander Gustavus Brown: Trusting the Saviour's Merits"
Read a Scripture: Matthew 7:21-29

As a Presiding Elder, he possessed the first order of ability. Whether in his regular rounds, or at a District Conference, in some special emergency, or at the Annual Conference advising the Bishop as to the appointments, he was alert, sagacious, far-seeing, broad-minded, fervent in spirit, at once progressive and conservative. He was full of resources, and often when he seemed to have failed to carry his point, came around to a successful issue by another route, to the surprise of those who supposed him to be foiled.

His religious character was natural without deformity of affection, austerity, narrowness or cant. He loved his Saviour and his Saviour's people with undisguised sincerity. He held fast to the fundamentals of doctrinal and experimental religion. Free of bigotry and intolerance, he easily consorted with believers of all denominations. He had decided, cheerful views of the fullness of salvation through our blessed Lord.

In June, 1899, he said to me, "I know that I am in a critical condition. I have tried to live before God in His fear and love; am not conscious of having done anything from an unworthy or unholy motive; but I put no trust in anything I have ever done or been; all my trust for salvation is in the merits of my Saviour, and I am

resting contented and without fear of Him, resigned to His will and expecting to be saved by His blood. He added with much feeling, "All other ground is shifting sand!"

Pray or Sing the Hymn
"My Hope Is Built"

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness.
I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name.

Refrain

On Christ the solid rock I stand,
all other ground is sinking sand; all other ground is sinking sand.

When darkness veils his lovely face, I rest on his unchanging grace.
In every high and stormy gale, my anchor holds within the veil.

His oath, his covenant, his blood support me in the whelming flood.
When all around my soul gives way, he then is all my hope and stay.

When he shall come with trumpet sound, O may I then in him be found!
Dressed in his righteousness alone, faultless to stand before the throne!

(Edward Mote)

Rev. Paul Whitehead (from Keene)

Day 159

"Teen Preacher"

Read a Scripture: 1 Timothy 4:6-16

In 2015 before one of my son's soccer games I went to the family time following the burial of the mother of Mike Summers. Rev. Wayne Wright served at the burial and took time to share words of grace, testimony, and the good news of Jesus Christ while family and friends were gathered together. He did excellently.

In Rev. Olin B. Michael's *The History of Keezletown Methodist Church and The Rockingham Circuit* there is mentioned a Wayne Wright who showed interest in ministry but nothing else is recorded there. I was curious if this pastor was the same mentioned in those pages but I thought it unlikely.

I got to speak with Rev. Wayne Wright that day and told him of what I had read and he began to share part of his testimony of how Rev. Olin B. Michael was not well and that as a teenager, still in high school, Wayne began pastoring and preaching at Keezletown Methodist Church. God did not only raise up that teenager

to pastor and preach for only a brief time. Wayne has now served for decades at Mt. Olivet Christian Church in Elkton, Virginia.

Pray

Thank you Lord for raising up a youth to lead us. Continue to raise up the youth for faith, life, and ministry with the encouragement of the Church and empowering of the Holy Spirit.

Rev. Joel Robinette

Day 160

Read a Scripture: Psalm 65

"Thanksgiving: The Message of Paul Harris"

Be thankful for:

...all that you have,
...His love,
...life and health,
...the work that you do,
...this time of year,
...the beauty of all the world,
...all of Life!

Be thankful for:

...living here,
...your Mother & Father
 who love you,
...the Light,
...the birds outside,
...the Son,
...the sea,
...and the earth.

Let us pray:

Dear heavenly Father,

You made the world all without help. Help me to love without difficulty. We need You. Everybody needs You. We know you are in the room right now! We love You, but not the way You love us. Without You,

we are nothing. Someday we will see the Lord in his true colors and will dwell with Him.

Amen.

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Paul Robert Harris from *One Day at a Time*

Day 161

"Thank God for You"

Read a Scripture: Colossians 1:3-14

In July 1967, Lula Belle and I purchased a house in Keezletown on property previously owned by Bill and Stella Earman. Little did we know then, how much they would become a part of our family.

One Sunday, we accepted Mrs. Earman's invitation to attend the Methodist Church with her. Brad was 14 months old. Before we left church, Lula Belle accepted to teach a class in Vacation Bible School. The same afternoon, Hugh and Mary Harris came for a visit.

As I try to reflect on the past 48 years, God has blessed us with many friendships, opportunities and experiences at Keezletown. For example:

- Co-teaching the Adult Sunday School Class with Mrs. Nelson Miller where we had fantastic members.
- The fellowship, fun, and tired muscles that were made as the result of serving a variety of meals.
- The love and support that our family has received from the church family, over the 48 years has truly been a great blessing.
- The manner in which the church nurtured Brad and Scott as they grew in their faith.
- The love and support given to Michele and her family following Ronnie's death.
- The encouragement that Scott and Michele have received following their marriage in this church.
- The acceptance and love shown to two granddaughters (Alissa and Kendra) as they began their spiritual journey. Watching them being baptized, becoming members, using their gifts and talents is awesome.
- Being in a congregation that is very involved in outreach and missions that brings glory to Our Heavenly Father. Together, we are making a difference as we share God's love.
- In 1994, we moved to West Virginia and transferred our membership (for a period of time) but we were still treated as part of the KUMC family. We are grateful for the outreach of love shown to us following the deaths of our mothers during this time.

It's hard to believe that we have been in this building since February 1978 (38 years).

Pray

Pray Colossians 1:9-14 for KUMC.*

Dale Dodrill

Day 162

"How Blessed I Am"

Read a Scripture: Psalm 34

How blessed I am to have been born into a loving, godly family with parents who made learning about God, worshiping Him and especially helping others part of everyday life.

How blessed I am that our Keezletown church family always welcomed us with loving hearts, supported, and reinforced my parents' efforts and gave me so many opportunities to grow in my knowledge of God and my faith.

How blessed I am to be part of a church family who continued to show their love and support through all our years of living out of the area.

How blessed I am to see that my family members continue to be loved and remembered even though they don't often attend or participate in church services or activities.

How blessed I am to have a church family who will pray for my family, my friends, and me!

How blessed I am!

Pray or Sing the Doxology

"Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow"

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

(Thomas Ken)

Jan Shafer

Day 163

"Hanging of the Greens and Setting the Scene"

Read a Scripture: Ezekiel 17:22-24

Special programs and occasions is when my Daddy stepped up to the plate.

Additionally, he was Sunday School Superintendent , Sunday School teacher, choir member, and served on boards and committees. But his greatest challenge and joy was decorating for the annual Christmas Program. He cut greens from the mountain, cedars from local farmers' fields and gathered bittersweet berries from the railroad track. After he positioned the large mural across the front of the sanctuary he used the greens to create hillsides and the town of Bethlehem. He insisted on draw curtains for the stage using wire, a pulley, and eight white sheets. His final touch was the light board mounted at the back of the church. I remember watching all this transformation and witnessing the excitement of Christmas within our congregation.

Pray

Emmanuel our God with us, transform our hearts with your presence. Give us the Spirit of Christmas. Decorate and fill our lives with signs of hope, peace, joy, love, and Christ in our midst.*

Don Clatterbuck

Day 164

"The Perfect Tree"

Read a Scripture: 1 Kings 3:1-15

Doug Akers was our pastor for three years (1983 - 1986). He wanted a real Christmas tree for his first Christmas in Keezletown. Scott and I asked Noland Suter if we could take Doug to his farm and let him get a cedar tree. He replied, "Help yourself."

On a Sunday afternoon, we got in my truck and drove up the hill above the pond and saw many trees. Suddenly, Doug saw his perfect tree and Scott cut it down. We threw it in the truck and began driving back down the hill and then Doug saw a more perfect tree. He said, "I wish I had seen that one first."

I stopped the truck – and immediately – they were out of the vehicle and cutting it down. Now, we have two trees (one for Doug and one for the ditch).

Can you believe, that before we exited the farm, Doug spotted a third tree? Now, we finally have the tree of his dreams and the first two were donated to the ditch. Once decorated, he was very pleased.

Pray

God the giver of all good things, let us seek your best gifts like wisdom to bless others which is the wisdom of Jesus Christ. Your gifts in Jesus are the best of all. Bless those who have given us grace to seek the greatest things you give. And even more than the good gifts you give, let us seek and know you in Christmas, in

generosity, in decorating, and all things in life and serving others.*

Dale Dodrill

Day 165

"I Made Room"

Read a Scripture: Luke 1:26-39

I was visiting with Irene Armentrout back around 2012 and she was telling me about Rev. Riley Smith. Irene shared how he knew the scriptures better than any pastor she had known. She expressed a deep respect and appreciation for his ministry. She shared how one day she was talking to Riley. Irene was pregnant. Irene already had a daughter who would be some years older than this new child. Irene told Riley she was not sure she could do it, have the child and be mother to another.

Riley told her, "God has made room for this baby in the world. You can make room for this baby in your heart."

And Irene told me, "I did."

Irene is blessed with two wonderful daughters, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren and a love for each in her heart.

Pray

Jesus the host who makes room for us at the communion table and in your kingdom, let us make room in our hearts and lives for the little ones you call us to bear, mother, nurture, guide, and disciple.

Irene Armentrout and Rev. Joel Robinette

Day 166

"Bud"

Read a Scripture: Isaiah 9:1-9; 11:1-13

I remember the day that Bud Armentrout came into church after years of visiting him and him telling me he wasn't a church goer. It was during Advent. I had visited with him across the parking lot many times and had even gone to "pick him up" a couple of Sundays.

"No," he wasn't coming to church.

I told him that was fine, but I was still going to pray for him.

He would always tell me, "Don't waste your breath."

Then one day, as I was practicing my sermon, I heard the sanctuary door open and the rap-rap of a cane and a man clearing his throat. I looked up and there was Bud. I ran to him and said, "I am so glad you came!"

He looked at me with the biggest smile you can imagine and chuckled and said, "Surprise!"

It was the best Christmas present that year.

Pray or Sing the Hymn
"Rescue the Perishing"

Rescue the perishing, care for the dying,
snatch them in pity from sin and the grave;
weep o'er the erring one, lift up the fallen,
tell them of Jesus, the mighty to save.

Refrain

Rescue the perishing, care for the dying;
Jesus is merciful, Jesus will save.

Though they are slighting him, still he is waiting,
waiting the penitent child to receive;
plead with them earnestly, plead with them gently;
he will forgive if they only believe.

Down in the human heart, crushed by the tempter,
feelings lie buried that grace can restore;
touched by a loving heart, wakened by kindness,
chords that were broken will vibrate once more.

Rescue the perishing, duty demands it;
strength for thy labor the Lord will provide;
back to the narrow way patiently win them;
tell the poor wanderer a Savior has died.

(Fanny J. Crosby)

Rev. Dawn-Marie Singleton

Day 167

Read a Scripture: Luke 2:1-20

"Welcome Grace"

One of my greatest joys was when I brought home Sarah-Grace from Russia and everyone welcomed her as family. Before she even became a reality to me, the church had a huge baby shower for me – which I will forever be grateful for. I loved that the church treated Sarah-Grace like a regular child – not a “preacher’s kid” – and that has made all the difference in the way she grew up in the church. I cherish her “birth certificate” that Scott Dillard made her when we left claiming her as “born in Keezletown.” That is something that is priceless.

Pray

Love for God is shown in new mother treasuring the gift from God. Love for God is shown in community welcoming the new children into God’s grace. Love for God is shown as we open our church to all the children God sends. Let love for God be shown.*

Rev. Dawn-Marie Singleton

Day 168

Read a Scripture: John 3:1-21

"What Is Christmas?"

To me, Christmas is the day,
many years ago...
God gave His only
begotten Son!
We don't all now what it means.
To me, it means love and hope
for eternity!

What does it mean to you?
Does it mean you hate the Lord?
Does it mean you love the Lord?

If Jesus said, "I will be with you
always"
What are we doing
with our lives?

Every day there is a baby born,

24 hours a day!

God gave His Son to die for us...
He did it to love us...
He died!
And He rose!

December 9, 1977

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Pray

Christ the begotten Son who came to live, die, and rise for us, through your mercy and grace, give us some understanding of God and ourselves that we may live in the blessings of faith and hope in you.*

Paul Robert Harris from *One Day at a Time*

Day 169

"Happy Birthday Jesus"

Read a Scripture: Matthew 1:18-25

Happy birthday to you!
Happy birthday to you!
Happy birthday dear Jesus!
Happy birthday to you!

A birthday song that we sing every year – not just to our own family members but that we have been singing at church as we celebrate the birth of Jesus. We have been making a special 4-layer cake and having a birthday party for Jesus since 1994. Happy birthday Jesus!

Pray or Sing the Hymn

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie;
above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars together, proclaim the holy birth,

and praises sing to God the King, and peace to all on earth!

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given;
so God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!

(Phillips Brooks)

Michele Dodrill

Pastors of Keezletown United Methodist Church

Keezletown Methodist Episcopal

- 1791 Rev. Samuel Breeze
Rev. Jephthah Moore
1792 Rev. Daniel Fidler
Rev. Elijah Sparks
1793 Rev. Stephen George Roszel
Rev. Randolph Smith
1794 Rev. Joshua Wells
Rev. Seely Bunn
1795 Rev. J. Jones
Rev. L. Moore
1796 Rev. Samuel Welsh
1797 Rev. Morris Howe
Rev. John Pitts
1798 Rev. John Pitts
1799 Rev. Curtis Williams
Rev. Benjamin Essex

*Keezletown United Brethren
Church (1800)*

Pastors unknown 1800-1873

- 1800 Rev. James Paynter
1801 Rev. James Ward
1802 Rev. James Ward
Rev. Leonard Cassell
1803 Rev. William Knox
Rev. Fred Stier
1804 Rev. Philip Kennerly
Rev. Samuel Phillips
1805 Rev. Thomas Curren
Rev. Nicholas Willis
1806 Rev. Jacob Gruber
Rev. William Neely
1807 Rev. Andrew Hemphill
Rev. S. Montgomery
1808 Rev. Christopher Fry
Rev. Joshua Monroe
1809 Rev. Christopher Fry
Rev. Benedict Reynolds
Rev. Robert Richford Roberts
1810 Rev. Gerard Morgan
Rev. John White

- 1811 Rev. Daniel Stansbury
Rev. Ashby Pool
- 1812 Rev. John Gill Watt
Rev. Ezra Grover
- 1813 Rev. James Paynter
Rev. Thomas Sewell
- 1814 Rev. William Houston
Rev. Zechariah Mitchell
- 1815 Rev. William Shanks
Rev. Henry Padgett
- 1816 Rev. James Paynter
Rev. William Houston
- 1817 Rev. William Monroe
Rev. Daniel Stansbury
- 1818 Rev. Tobias Reilly
Rev. William Barnes
- 1819 Rev. Thomas Kennerly
Rev. James Sansom
- 1820 Rev. Robert Boyd
Rev. John Miller
- 1821 Rev. Gerard Morgan
Rev. Charles B. Tippet
- 1822 Rev. Gerard Morgan
Rev. Samuel Clarke
- 1823 Rev. James Sewell
Rev. John Watson
- 1824 Rev. William Monroe
Rev. Phillip D. Lipscomb
- 1825 Rev. William Monroe
Rev. John Howell
- 1826 Rev. James Watts
Rev. Charles Kalbfus
- 1827 Rev. Gerard Morgan
Rev. Davis Kennison
- 1828 Rev. Gerard Morgan
Rev. Henry S. Keppler
- 1829 Rev. William Hank
Rev. Johnathan Clary
Rev. N. B. Mills
- 1830 Rev. William Hank
Rev. William H. Enos
- 1831 Rev. John Rhodes
Rev. William Edmonds

- 1832 Rev. John Poisal
Rev. William B. Edwards
- 1833 Rev. John C. Lyon
- 1834 Rev. Phillip Rescori
- 1835 Rev. William Wicks
Rev. William H. Coffin
- 1836 Rev. William H. Coffin
Rev. William Houston
- 1837 Rev. John C. Lyon
Rev. William M. Ward
- 1838 Rev. John C. Lyon
Rev. Jared H. Young
- 1839 Rev. Thomas Wheeler
Rev. Levi Monroe
- 1840 Rev. Alfred A. Eskridge
Rev. Charles Brown
- 1841 Rev. Alfred A. Eskridge
Rev. John Stine
- 1842 Rev. Benjamin N. Brown
Rev. William H. Lane
- 1843 Rev. Benjamin N. Brown
Rev. Layton Hansberger
- Keezletown M.E., North*
- 1844 Rev. Stephen Hildebrand
Rev. William Krebs
- 1845 Rev. Stephen Hildebrand
Rev. T. Fulton
- 1846 Rev. George W. Israel
Rev. William H. Wilson
- 1847 Rev. George W. Israel
Rev. Fielder Israel, Jr.
- 1848 Rev. Wilson Spottswood
Rev. O. P. Wirgman
- 1849 Rev. Wilson Spottswood
Rev. John W. Hedges
- 1850 Rev. Samuel Regester
Rev. Cornelius Cronin
- 1851 Rev. Samuel Regester
Rev. Elijah Merchant
- 1852 Rev. Mabury Goheen
Rev. Samuel R. Griffith
- Keezletown M.E., South*
- 1852 Rev. William G. Cross

1853	Rev. William G. Williams	
1854	Rev. John H. Doll	
1855	Rev. John L. Clarke	
1856	Rev. Alexander G. Brown	
1857	Rev. Thomas H. Haynes	
1858	Rev. Thomas H. Early	
1859	Rev. George H. Ray	
1860	Rev. Samuel S. Lambeth	
	Student Charles Frye	
1861	Rev. William G. Starr	
1862	Rev. Adam C. Bledsoe	
	Rev. L. F. Way	
1863	Rev. Charles V. Bingley	
1864	Rev. J. S. R. Clark	
1865	Rev. Peter F. August	
1865	Rev. Adam P. Boude	
1868	To be supplied	
1869	Rev. H. D. Bishop	
1870	Rev. W. O. Ross	
1871	Rev. S. S. Ryder	
1873	Rev. A. A. Eskridge	
		1874
		Rev. J. W. Nihiser
1875	Rev. J. T. Maxwell	
1876	Rev. J. T. Maxwell	
	Rev. William B. Dorsey	
1877	Rev. Francis H. Richey	1877
	Rev. George T. D. Collins	Rev. A. P. Funkhouser
1878	Rev. Francis H. Richey	
	Rev. David F. Eutzler	
1879	Rev. A. Rody	1879
	Rev. H. A. Brown	Rev. A. P. Funkhouser
1880	Rev. J. S. Hopkins	Rev. John D. Donavon
		1880
		Rev. John W. Howe
		1881
		Rev. Commodore Ira
		Berton Brane
		1882
		Rev. John Elkanah Hott
1884	Rev. R. M. Wheeler	1884
		Rev. George J.
		Roudabush
		1885
		Rev. Henry Jones
		1887
		Rev. Rudolph Byrd
1888	Rev. W. L. Dolly	
1889	Rev. J. M. Fallansbee	1889
1890	Rev. A. C. McNeer	Rev. Samuel L. Rice
1892	Rev. Thomas Briley	1892
		Rev. William R. Berry

1896 Rev. Robert Lee Fultz

1899 Rev. Thomas Cooper
1902 Rev. H. M. Roane

1906 Rev. Fraizer Furr

1910 Rev. George T. D. Collins
1911 Rev. G. W. Richardson

1914 Rev. William J. Whitesell

1918 Rev. C. J. Clark

1920 Rev. H. B. Alexander

1923 Rev. W. D. Eye

1927 Rev. L. H. Smallwood

1931 Rev. N. L. Fearnow
1934 Rev. L. C. Rudisill
1937 Rev. C. R. Curtis

Keezletown Methodist Church (1939)

1941 Rev. John Thomas Brown
1943 Rev. O. D. Lambert
1944 Rev. O. C. Bush

1946 Rev. W. C. Bangle
1949 Rev. Harold Fuss
1951 Rev. Wm. S. Tussey

1954 Rev. Olin Bain Michael

1894 Rev. John W. O. Ewing

1897 Rev. Jay Newton Fries
1898 Rev. Arthur J. Secrist
1899 Rev. John W. Maiden

1904 Rev. T. J. Feaster
1906 Rev. W. B. Bennett
1907 Rev. William Sampsell
1910 Rev. Lee Allen Racey

1912 Rev. Charles P. Dyche
1914 Rev. Joseph H. Schmitt
1915 Rev. Solomon Baugher

1919 Rev. George McGuire
1920 Rev. George B. Fadeley
1921 Rev. Clyde W. Tinsman
1923 Rev. Ernest Caplinger
1924 Rev. Daniel Frazier
1927 Rev. Luther P. Tederick
1928 Rev. James W. Brill
1931 Rev. Daniel A. Frazier
1934 Rev. Forrest S. Racey

1940 Rev. George Widmyer

1943 Rev. G. L. Pardo

*Keezletown Evangelical
United Brethren Church
(1946)*

1946 Rev. E. A. Kessler
1949 Rev. J. E. Sawin
1951 Rev. Wilton B. Thomas
1952 Rev. Andrew Agnew,
Sr.
1952 Rev. Norman Butler

1955 Rev. J. E. Sawin
1956 Rev. Harold E. Albert

1957	Rev. D. E. Payne
1959	Rev. B. D. Gearhart
1960	Rev. K. B. Frank
	Rev. E. Cameron Miller
1962	Rev. Lawrence R. Frye
	Rev. E. Cameron Miller
1963	Rev. E. Cameron Miller
1960	Rev. Warren Lee Reeves
1963	Rev. Hugh Townsend Harris
1964	Rev. John I. Collins
1966	Rev. E. C. Smith
1968	Rev. J. H. Legg

Keezletown United Methodist Church

1969	Rev. Glen Baker, Jr.
1970	Rev. Frank Baker
1971	Rev. Robert Nichols
1972	Rev. William R. Fisher
1976	Rev. Riley R. Smith
1978	Rev. Shannon Swortzel
1979	Rev. Dennis Perry
1983	Rev. C. Douglas Akers
1986	Rev. William Finley, III
1988	Rev. H. Donald Hawks
1995	Rev. David W. Breeden
2005	Rev. Dawn-Marie Singleton
2012	Rev. T. Joel Robinette

This list of pastors compiled from:

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ANSWER KEY

Day 12: Clarissa "Tootsie" Sellers, but she truly preferred Tootsie!

Day 15: Barbara Smith