

# MOuNTaiN ECHoeS

FEBRUARY 2025

170<sup>th</sup> Edition



*"The Creek", with the snow melting on Feb 13<sup>th</sup>—photo by Virginia Mitchell*

## KEEZLETOWN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Rev. T. Joel Robinette, Pastor

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Pastor's office hours: Monday & Wednesday 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

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Are there mornings when you just wish Jesus would walk thru your back door with a cup of hot coffee and a glazed donut for you, sit down at your breakfast table, take your hand, and say "OK, here's how WE are going to handle today."? Yes, Dear Sweet Jesus, Yes.

**View Worship Online:** view the livestream of the 11:00 AM worship on facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/keezletownumc/live>. After the service is completed, it will be uploaded to YouTube and Facebook

**ONLINE GIVING AVAILABLE:** To give through the church website, click on <https://tithe.ly/give?c=6261418> and use the **Tithely Giving App**, Download the Tithely App from the [App Store](#) (iPhone) or [Google Play Store](#) (Android), select your church, create an account, and add your credit/debit card or ACH/banking info. Once your account has been created, you won't need to enter your personal or payment information. Just enter your PIN and give! A reminder, you can set your gift up as recurring. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to email us back and we'd be happy to assist you further! Thank you for your generosity and partnering with us to build the kingdom. **If you wish to continue giving by check, the address is: KUMC, 1456 Indian Trail Rd, Keezletown VA 22832**

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## **OUR PASTOR CHATS**

Our Shenandoah River District United Methodist Churches will be getting a new district superintendent in July 2025. Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson has appointed Rev. Kyungsuk Cho as our new district superintendent. Rev. Cho is currently serving as the pastor at Old Bridge UMC in Woodbridge, Virginia. Chris Cole's daughter Lori Zylich attends there and that is her pastor. Lori told me we are getting a great minister to serve as our district superintendent. This means that our current district superintendent Rev. Victor Gómez will be stepping down as our DS at the end of June 2025. Rev. Gómez has been our DS for seven years through which he provided great leadership during seasons of great shifts of the merging of the previous Harrisonburg and Winchester Districts into the Shenandoah River District, the COVID pandemic, and season of disaffiliation. Rev. Gómez preached at KUMC last October for United Methodist Men Sunday and encouraged us, "Keep your fork!" since God still has good things in store. Let us be in prayer for Rev. Gómez and Rev. Cho in this time of transition for them and their families. May the Holy Spirit fill them with grace and leadership for such a time as this for our district and the mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ. Here is a prayer we can pray for our district superintendents from *The United Methodist Book of Worship*: "Eternal God, by your grace you set us together in your Church, whose foundation is your Son Jesus Christ. Grant your continuing grace, we pray, to all who exercise leadership in your Church, that they may with diligence and faithfulness fulfill their various ministries; and grant that we your people may follow them where you lead and minister faithfully in the world; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

*Pastor Joel*

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## **KUMC's 2024 Accomplishments, Challenges, and Activities**

**Church family:** KUMC Facebook page shares weekly worship services and other events, and dates of upcoming events; decorated the Church for Christmas on Nov 25<sup>th</sup>; celebrated "Happy Birthday Jesus" party during Sunday school on Dec 22<sup>nd</sup>; presented "Come, Lord Jesus", a Christmas Program on Dec 22<sup>nd</sup>

**Website:** allows visitors to hear up to four sermons, and read up to twelve newsletters

**Special Messages:** by Ken Thomas; Leonard Williams; Cathy Sites Chouiniere; Wendall Cochran; Rev Victor Gomez

**Special Sundays:** had "Donuts for Dudes" reception on Father's Day June 16<sup>th</sup>; Outdoor Worship Service to celebrate Vacation Bible school on July 14<sup>th</sup>; InMotion Summer Praise Dance Team performed on July 28<sup>th</sup> during worship; Blessing of the Backpacks and those returning to school on Aug 19<sup>th</sup>; had Sunday School kickoff reception

on Sept 8<sup>th</sup>; UWIF Sunday on Sept 15<sup>th</sup>; UMM Sunday on Oct 13<sup>th</sup>; Veterans honored on Nov 10<sup>th</sup>; Hanging of the Greens on Dec 1<sup>st</sup>

**\*Community Thanksgiving Service:** on Nov 24<sup>th</sup>, with four different church families in attendance

**Prayer:** Forty-one Prayer Warriors receive e-mails about prayer requests

**Bible Study:** "Gospel of Mark"; "Third Day" study; "Wrestling with Doubt Finding Faith"; "The Lord's Prayer"; "Mere Christianity"

**\*Chill-N-Chat:** a new group met every Monday morning during the summer when there was no Bible Study for fellowship, refreshments, and good conversation.

**\*Lunch Bunch:** Starting in Sept, folks met twice a month on Wednesdays at a local restaurant for good food, fellowship, and conversation

**United Methodist Men:** started Asher Deets Memorial Camp Scholarship at Camp Overlook; completed the lighting project at Camp Overlook; annual St Patrick's day pancake meal on Mar 16<sup>th</sup>; presented a Mother's Day Tea on May 12<sup>th</sup> during Sunday School; prepared hot dogs and hamburgers for the Outdoor Worship service on July 14<sup>th</sup>; made repairs to shed at MCCC; Pizza night meeting on Aug 29<sup>th</sup>; Potato Bar luncheon on Oct 13<sup>th</sup>; cleaning out the garage day on Sept 3<sup>rd</sup>; UMM Sunday Oct 13<sup>th</sup>; participated in the UMM/UWIF/Community Christmas Dinner on Dec 8<sup>th</sup>; along with UWIF, helped purchase new Christmas trees for Church

**United Women in Faith:** served meal to Keezletown Ruritans Jan 2<sup>nd</sup>; continuing to make hats and having learning sessions; made Veggie soup on Feb 10<sup>th</sup>; served Keezletown Ruritans Mar 4<sup>th</sup>; served potato bar for Feb 21<sup>st</sup> Lent service; served Keezletown Ruritans on Apr 1<sup>st</sup>; held Call to Prayer and Self Denial meal and meeting on Apr 4<sup>th</sup>; led getting geraniums for Pentecost Sunday; served the Mt Crawford Ruritan meal on Mar 1<sup>st</sup>; hosted District Evening Together on May 23<sup>rd</sup>; held their annual "Evening Out" at Romano's on Jun 6<sup>th</sup>; held an ice cream social for the residents of Journeys Crossing on Jun 10<sup>th</sup> and recognized CNA week; school supply collection for District UWF Mission Encounter Hands-On mission project delivered in July; sponsored Church picnic on Aug 6<sup>th</sup> at Judy Coffman's home; served Mt Crawford Ruritans Aug 7<sup>th</sup>; served Keezletown Ruritans Sept 9<sup>th</sup>; served Blue Ridge Free Clinic on Sept 10<sup>th</sup>; attended Prayer breakfast in Dayton on Sept 14<sup>th</sup>; served a salad lunch on Sept 15<sup>th</sup> after UWIF Sunday during worship; served WOW dinner Oct 23<sup>rd</sup>; made new Chrismons for the Chrismon tree on Oct 26<sup>th</sup>; served Mt Crawford Ruritans Nov 6<sup>th</sup>; participated in the UMM/UWIF/Community Christmas Dinner on Dec 8<sup>th</sup>; "We Remember" Love gift bags were distributed to shut-ins and community members several times during the year; along with UMM, helped purchase new Christmas trees for Church

**Relay Team:** provided breakfast after the Sunrise Service on Mar 31<sup>st</sup>; celebrated remembering cancer survivors and fighters on May 19<sup>th</sup>; Team participated in Relay for Life on June 1<sup>st</sup> and donated auction items

**Community/Mission:** vowed covenant with missionary John Nday; collecting food items for a Massanutten Food Pantry each month; dedicated 79 health kits, 30 feminine hygiene kits, and 19 cleaning buckets for Annual Conference in May; Serve Kingsway Ministry a meal once a month; collected hygiene items for Equipment for Caring in May; held Big K Diner Event to raise scholarship money for Camp Overlook campers; a collection of 548 diapers and 112 baby wipes were dedicated on July 17<sup>th</sup> for People Places; Community Ice Cream Social on Aug 24<sup>th</sup>; collected school supplies for MCCC during Aug; had "KUMC Vineyard" booth at Trunk or Treat at Rockingham Park on Oct 26<sup>th</sup>; held Harvest Party and Hayride on Oct 27<sup>th</sup>; assisted with the Christmas Tree Lighting at the Ruritan Park on Dec 6<sup>th</sup>; presented a Christmas program on Dec 22<sup>nd</sup>; presented a Christmas Eve Service on Dec 24<sup>th</sup>; collected for MCCC by the "Baby Shower for Jesus" on Dec 24<sup>th</sup>, and the Hat/Mitten/Sock tree during Dec

**"Warm Heads" project:** hat making session Feb 24<sup>th</sup>; 19 hats were given to the Open Door Project; hat making session of Apr 27<sup>th</sup>; session on June 22<sup>nd</sup>

**Spotswood High School Care Closet:** 322 items Collected during Sept

**Flood Buckets:** 37 kits were collected on Oct 13<sup>th</sup>; a total of 75 buckets from the WOW service offerings

**"Souper Bowl Sunday":** collected 92 items for Kansas City Chiefs and 88 items for San Francisco 49ers for MPC

**"Rise Against Hunger Packaging":** Mar 17<sup>th</sup>, 60 volunteers packaged 11,016 food packages

**"World Cereals Sunday":** Nov 3<sup>rd</sup>, Collections were 86 items for Yankees and 72 items for the winning Los Angeles Dodgers for MPC

**Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes:** 78 shoeboxes were collected and blessed on Nov 24<sup>th</sup>

**\*Apple Project for Kingsway:** collected gifts for 62 apple requests, 18 tubes of toothpaste, and a numerous amount of wrapping paper and tape, and monetary donations

**Special Services:** attended Interfaith Assn Panel Discussion and Lunch on Mar 7<sup>th</sup>; Maundy Thursday was held at St Jacobs Lutheran Church on Mar 28<sup>th</sup> with Pastor Joel speaking; Good Friday services were held on Mar 29<sup>th</sup> at

Trinity Lutheran Church with Pastor Joel speaking; Easter Sunrise Service was held at the Keezletown Cemetery on Mar 31<sup>st</sup> with Cathy Chouiniere speaking; Denise Sites led remembering soldiers who gave their lives as she told the children about Memorial Day on May 26<sup>th</sup>

**Lent Services:** Ash Wednesday service with a potluck meal held Feb 14<sup>th</sup> with Pastor Joel leading; KUMC UWF provided a potato bar for the Feb 21<sup>st</sup> service with speaker Rev Brett Isernhagen ; KUMC UMM provided a spaghetti meal for the Feb 28<sup>th</sup> service with speaker Rev Amy Pannell; the Dillard family provided a chicken tetrazzini for the Mar 6<sup>th</sup> service with Rev Debbie Powell speaking; St Jacobs and Trinity Lutheran churches provided a soup and sandwich meal for the Mar 13<sup>th</sup> service with Rev Kathleen Overby Webster speaking; Mar 20<sup>th</sup> we had fried chicken from Karen Mooney and sides from Trinity ECLA with Terrie Childress was the speaker

**WOW (Witness on Wednesday) Services:** Becky Ryman, Wendell Cochran, Cheryl Carr, and Ginny Joseph all spoke on Oct 2<sup>nd</sup>; Scott Fury spoke on Oct 9<sup>th</sup>; Susie Hill spoke on Oct 16<sup>th</sup>; Diana Davis spoke on Oct 23<sup>rd</sup>; and Sharon Martin spoke on Oct 30<sup>th</sup>

**Lay Servant Training:** Sept 21<sup>st</sup> at Strasburg UMC

**Charge Conference:** held Nov 3<sup>rd</sup> at Bridgewater UMC with six KUMC folks attending

**Camp Overlook:** “Big K Diner” held on May 18<sup>th</sup> to support Camp Scholarships; five children from KUMC attended Summer camp

**Vacation Bible School:** “Gone Fishing With Jesus” was held July 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> with 12 children participating

**Feeding the Children Backpack Ministry:** Completed the 2023/2024 session packing 31 bags each week; started packing for 2024/2025 session in Sept

**Conference kits:** 79 health kits, 30 feminine hygiene kits, and 19 cleaning buckets dedicated on May 26<sup>th</sup>

**Other Events Attended:** Nine KUMC folks attended the musical “The Witness” on Apr 5<sup>th</sup> at Harrisonburg Baptist Church; six folks attended the St Paul Revival on Apr 17<sup>th</sup>; eight folks attended the St Paul Revival on Apr 18<sup>th</sup>, with the choir performing and Pastor Joel speaking

**Church/Parsonage repairs & maintenance:** New furnace installed Feb 15<sup>th</sup>; new church roof installed the week of May 6<sup>th</sup>; replaced commode in Ladies Bathroom

**Special Recognition:** to Jenn Robinette for coordinating the slides and videos of the services; Barrett Bowman received her Master of Arts in Secondary Education; Kathryn Pusey received her Masters in Business Administration; March was Pastor’s Wife Appreciation Month—Jenn was recognized; Noah Robinette for cleaning the garden area; Becky Ryman for the hat making project and backpacking; Leigha Dillard received the Garland L Reed Chemistry award; Alex Underwood was inducted into the International Thespian Society; Nicholas Mitchell received an Outstanding Achievement award in Agriculture; Winston Mitchell received a Certificate of Achievement award in Math; Parker Young won the State AgriScience Fair; Parker Young interned at the National Resources Conservation Services with the USDA; Carson Guilliams was a member of the 11U Baseball team that went undefeated to become the Summer States Shenandoah Valley Athletics 11U Champions; Carson Guilliams did well with his two goats and Leah Siler did well with her pigs and sheep at the Rockingham County Fair in Aug; Destin Shortell received her PhD in Neuropsychology on Aug 9<sup>th</sup>; Parker Young was appointed to Strengthening Ag Coach for the TA FAA Chapter; Allyse Dillard ran a half marathon on Oct 5<sup>th</sup>; Alex Underwood was part of the Spotswood Theatre District One Act Champions; Kendra Dodrill won a scholarship from NATFCS

**Deaths (includes Church, related Church family, and community friends):** Rosalie Virginia Harman; Marjorie (Margie) Jean Howard Vlasits; Betty Morris Aylor; Charles Franklin Baker; Virginia Yancey Harrison Phalen; Patsy Ann Smith; Ralph L (Sam) Eppard; Marlys Rebecca “Becky” Armentrout; Raymond Edward Michael; Barbara Ann Smith; William Elmer Michael Sr

**Engagements, Weddings and Babies:** Presley Kendall Ford born Feb 1<sup>st</sup> to Adam & Kelly Ford; Creed Combs and Autumn Flesher were wed on June 22<sup>nd</sup>; Joshua Wilt and Emily Carr announced their engagement on May 25<sup>th</sup>; Wyatt Martin and Heather Turner were wed on Sept 28<sup>th</sup>; Michael Shroyer and Hayley Johnson were wed on Oct 19<sup>th</sup>; Jared Kyger and Allyse Dillard were engaged on Nov 28<sup>th</sup>

**Graduates:** J Morgan Bishop; Battett Bowman; Brandon Bowman; Eli Bowman; Luke Dillard; Cady Martin; Kathryn Pusey; Brianna Roach; Sarah-Grace Singleton; Kahlyn Smith; Jamie Wener; Shaun Zylich

**New Members:** Faydene Ruth Cochran; Florence Begley Cochran; Wendell Ray Cochran

**Over 50 years of marriage in 2024:** Kennis & Carolyn Armentrout; Mac & Nancy Coffman; Bruce & Barbara Hoover; Dale & Lula Belle Dodrill; Wendell and Faye Cochran; Jim & Carol Dillard; Gary & Barbara Heatwole

**God has again blessed us in 2024; let us continue to be His hands and feet in 2025. (\*) New for 2024**



### **\*\*\*JANUARY EVENTS THAT HAPPENED\*\*\***

**GOD “GIVES A JESUS” AND GOD BRINGS SNOW!** In person worship was cancelled for Jan 19<sup>th</sup> due to falling snow. But that didn't stop Pastor Joel and Jenn from bringing the Good News to those of us watching on this, Human Relations Day. He began with us singing “In Christ Alone”, then read the Old Testament Scripture from Exodus 2:11-25, the story of Moses growing up and seeing the plight of the Hebrews. “The God Who Hears, Remembers, Looks, and Notices” was the title of today's message. God notices the suffering of His people. There were 2000 Egyptian gods and Egypt was number one in the world. Egyptians believed you could take everything with you and live life in splendor in the afterworld. The Pharaohs brought gifts to the Egyptian gods. Exodus showed a different God, who lives in the heavens, who can hear, see, feel, speak, defend, and bless. The Israelites are crying out in Exodus about the oppression and begging for help. Are we like the Egyptians when we hear the enslaved cry out? Slavery, poverty, oppression, persecution, all exist in America. God heard the groaning, the lamenting, the crying out, and responded. Jesus knew, came, heard, and touched us, and came to take us to eternal life. We can pray, asking for God's help, who “gives a Jesus” about us, and in His time, He will bring us peace. Pastor Joel gave the morning prayer, then led the singing of “Do Lord, Remember Me”, and gave the benediction. Bless you both, Pastor Joel and Jenn, for sharing God, even on a snowy day.

**Jan 20<sup>th</sup> Martin Luther King, Jr Day:** “Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”

**United Methodist Men** met on Jan 26<sup>th</sup>, with nine men present, with breakfast by Jim and Scott Dillard. Ken Thomas used “Daily Wisdom for Men” and the Psalms as devotion and Scott led a prayer time. We will help with the UWIF Donna Whetzel birthday dinner on Feb 1st with serving and cleanup. Feb 16<sup>th</sup>, we will provide a loaded potato bar Valentine's Lunch. Mar 5<sup>th</sup>, we will provide a spaghetti supper for Ash Wednesday Lent Supper and Service. Mar 22nd will be the annual pancake supper. We will do a 2024 – 2025 Backpack Project sponsorship. We would like to raise/give this year toward a Camp Overlook scholarship in memorial of Asher Deets and Noland Suter. Sept 28<sup>th</sup> will be UMM Picnic and Outdoor Sunday. Wendell Cochran lifted up the group Beloved Asheville which is a good organization providing disaster relief in their area, to which the group gave a donation. Oct 12th will be UMM Sunday. Next meeting is Feb16th.

**WHO IS YOUR PARTNER?** In the Worship service for Jan 26<sup>th</sup>, Pastor Joel led us in thinking about the “Partnering God”. Scripture today was from Exodus 3:1-4:17, where God tells Moses what He wants him to do. All of the earth is the Lord's; He has no restrictions. God came to Moses in a burning bush, called him by name. God told him to take off his sandals because he was on Holy Ground. Moses had to avert his eyes when he looked at God. God told Moses that he would take the Israelites to the land of milk and honey. I have heard their cry and I will deliver



them from Egypt. God, in saving, says come with me, and partner with me to bring the Good News to all. **God does not call the equipped, He equips the called.** Moses needed Aaron to partner with him in God's vision before Pharoah. God gives us partners to do what He needs us to do. Assisting in the service today were Wendell leading, John reading the Scripture, and Diana on the organ and giving the Children's Story, a story about a soldier saved by a spider.

**"The Message of Jesus" Bible Study** began Jan 27<sup>th</sup> and Jan 28<sup>th</sup>. This was the introduction to the session and talked about learning what Jesus meant as He taught with parables and stories.

**THE BEST LUNCH BUNCH YET!** Ten Church family members and friends met at Appleby's on Jan 29<sup>th</sup> for a wonderful lunch, great conversation, and lots of laughter, especially when Jenn told us why she didn't like to travel. Thank you to everyone who made it a great lunch.

**NEW DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT:** Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson is pleased to announce the appointment of Rev Kyungsuk Cho as the new Shenandoah River District Superintendent effective July 1, 2025.



**JANUARY was a tough year—but we made it!**

### **HAPPY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARY**



*Jade is 3*



*Kelli's B-day*



*Faye is 88*



*Rylynn is 2*



*Happy 32nd*

### **WAYS TO GIVE AND HELP OTHERS**

**Gathering Non-Perishable Food items:** Drop off items at KUMC for our local food pantry. Non-perishable foods and hygiene items are welcome. Items are distributed through Massanutten Presbyterian Church for residents of Keezletown, Penn Laird, and McGaheysville. The pantry is open 2<sup>nd</sup> Mondays from 10 – 11 AM and 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursdays from 7 – 8 PM.

**Serving Meals to Kingsway Prison Ministry:** Karen Mooney is leading preparing a meal each month for this ministry. Please contact her if you can help or donate.

**US Disaster Response:** For United States disaster relief designate your gift to "UMCOR US Disaster Response: Advance #901670." For international disasters please designate your gift to "UMCOR International Disaster Response: Advance #982450."

**Mission Central Equipment for Caring:** The medical equipment loaner closet loans out and receive donations of (1) durable medical equipment like hospital beds, wheelchairs, walkers, canes, bedside commodes, etc. and (2) disposable supplies like adult diapers, briefs, and wound care items. It is open Mondays 5 – 7 PM and Thursdays 9 - 11 AM. The location is Mt. Tabor UMC in Lacey Spring.

**Mission Central Children's Clothes Closet:** gives and receives donations of children's clothes including winter coats and shoes from sizes infant to 18 years old. New underwear, socks, and undergarments are also received. It is open 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each month from 10 AM – 1 PM; 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays of each month from 4 – 7 PM; and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays of each month from 4 – 7 PM.

## **BIBLE STUDY:**

**Sunday School Classes** includes Grades 1 – 5 Elementary School Class; Middle and High School Class; An adult class taught by Cathy Sites; An adult class taught by Chris Cole using *Adult Bible Studies* materials.

**The Bible in a Year:** Keezletown UMC has a Bible reading plan for reading the entire Bible in a year. This plan has four chapters of Bible reading each day: two chapters reading through the Bible; one chapter from Psalms, wisdom, poetry, or instructional materials; and one chapter from the Gospels or Acts. If you do this reading plan you will actually read through the Gospels and Acts three times during the 365 days. Printouts available at KUMC or online at [www.keezletownumc.com](http://www.keezletownumc.com).

**The Message of Jesus Study:** this six week Bible study from author Adam Hamilton talks about what Jesus taught about the Kingdom of God, the Sermon on the Mount, parables, the “I am” sayings in John, and more. The study is on Monday mornings at 10:00 a.m. and Tuesday evenings at 7:00 p.m.

**A Disciple's Path Class:** This seven week class is especially for new comers and new members to KUMC. Learn what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ as a member of Keezletown United Methodist Church. This class began during Sunday School Feb 2nd, at 9:45 AM. See Pastor Joel if you are interested.

Thought about anyone with chickens: With eggs at \$8.00 a dozen, they will have to set up a guard around their chickens. Right now, they are more valuable than catalytic convertors for cars.

## **\*\*\*FEBRUARY EVENTS THAT HAPPENED\*\*\***

**VALENTINE:** “For God so loVed the world that He gAve His onLy BegottEn SoN That whosoever believeth I In Him should N ot perish, but have E verlasting Life.” John 3:16

**FEB 1ST REMEMBERING THE SACRIFICE:** Today we remember the dynamic duo, Officer John Painter and Security Officer Vashon “J.J.” Jefferson of the Bridgewater College Police Department who sacrificed their lives to protect countless others on February 1, 2022.

**CHURCH SERVES MEAL:** The UWif and UMM served a private meal on Feb 1<sup>st</sup> at 4:30 p.m. to celebrate Donna Whetzel's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. Dinner included Pork Tenderloin, meatloaf, mashed potatoes, gravy, stuffing, green beans, macaroni and cheese, baked apples, cranberry salad, rolls, tea, and coffee, and appetizers of a cheeseball, crackers, veggies/dip, nuts, and punch, for the seventy-nine in attendance. The meatloaf, stuffing, and mac/cheese was prepared on Friday, the 28<sup>th</sup>. Prepping and setting up began around 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, the 1<sup>st</sup>. There was lots of good help in the kitchen, with nineteen UWif, UMM, and church family, helping to serve or cleaning up afterwards. There was lots of hard work, but lots of good fellowship and laughter, making it a great success.

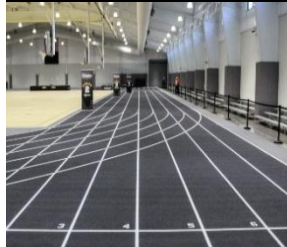
**WILL YOU AFFIRM OR REJECT?** In the worship service message for Sunday, Feb 2<sup>nd</sup>, Pastor Joel spoke on “Affirmation and Rejection of God’s Mission”, from Exodus 4:18-5:23, God talking with Moses. In our reading today is affirmation and acceptance, and rejection and frustration in God’s mission. Moses said yes after many excuses. Jesus lifts us up to be Children of God, serving as His ambassadors to the world with His Spirit. Moses returned to Egypt, met with Aaron, was told what to tell Pharaoh, and was rejected by Pharaoh. They talked to the people who were excited. They talked to Pharaoh who did not know God, and increased the oppression. When it seems like God is not there, He is waiting for us to partner with Him to carry out the mission. Assisting in the service today were Ken leading, Chris on the piano, Ken telling the children about David and Goliath, Josh reading the Scripture, and Sherry, Mike, Scott, Haiden, and Ken assisting with Communion.

**DEER AND CAR—WHO WINS?** Jenny Dillard and a deer met on Feb 3<sup>rd</sup> and it was not a good meeting for “Edna”, her car. As you can see, Edna now has a major “boo boo”. We are just so glad that Jenny’s angels were with her.



**CONGRATULATIONS** on Feb 3<sup>rd</sup> to the Keezletown Ruritan Club as they celebrated their 85th anniversary from 1940 to 2025. Thank you for the outstanding community organization you have become and for all the community outreach that you do.

**ROCKINGHAM RECREATION CENTER** had it’s official opening on Feb 6<sup>th</sup>. The week before, they celebrated the soft opening when Board members, contractors, county staff, and community members came together for the ribbon cutting of the 80,000 sq. ft. facility. The new indoor track is named for Edward S. Long Jr., a Rockingham County resident who has had a major impact on the area’s track and field scene. The first indoor track meet was held Saturday, Feb 8th. Starting Monday, Feb 10th, it will be open to the public for walking on the indoor track! Walking is FREE, and the hours for Feb will be Monday-Thursday 8am-2pm. Hours will change as we get adjusted to the new facility and we will be sure to post updates on our Facebook page. We can’t wait to see you all there—come out as we kick off this incredible new space at Rockingham Park.





### BACON JOKES:

Bacon is so versatile--like food duct tape—you can wrap it around anything.

Your child says, "But the dentist said bacon and soda work good as toothpaste" and you have to tell him it was baking soda.

There's a joke on the back of the Bacon packages. It says: Single serving: two slices. (hahaha)

Somebody asked me what to do with leftover bacon. What? Have you EVER heard of "leftover Bacon"?

**UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH:** The UWIF met on Thursday, Feb 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in the church social hall, with thirteen ladies present. Judy opened with prayer and we recited our purpose. Karen gave a St Valentine devotion with a history of Valentine's Day, a prayer and four short Valentine's funnies. Judy read the Jan minutes, and Cheryl gave the treasurer's report. Judy complimented and thanked everyone for all the great help with the Whetzel dinner, and also stated how great it was to have the help of the UMM. Many thanks were given to Sherry for her planning, preparation and leadership; and to Mike for his 3+ hours of washing the dishes. Three additional meals are being served from the leftovers, to Blue Ridge Free Clinic, the Keezletown Ruritans meeting, and Kingsway. The Soup and bake sale will be Feb 15<sup>th</sup>; we will prepare desserts for the UMM potato bar on Feb 16<sup>th</sup>; serve the Keezletown Ruritans on Mar 3<sup>rd</sup>; serve Mt Crawford Ruritans on May 7<sup>th</sup>, serve a meal after Sherry's mother's service on Mar 16<sup>th</sup>; and serve the Lenten meal on Apr 9<sup>th</sup>. Mission of the Month was to SW Virginia Hurricane Helene Relief. Kathy read a thank you note from MCCC expressing their gratitude for all the items given from Jesus Birthday party. Kathy presented an old United Methodist Church plate that was found at Barbara Smith's, that she and Carla are donating it to the church. Nine cards were signed. Judy closed with prayer. Twenty-eight love bags were completed. Next meeting will be Mar 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Virginia Frances Whitmore Plecker**, 96, passed away on Friday, Feb th. In 1949, she married Robert Plecker, who, with Frances, founded several businesses in the area and supported many organizations, like James Madison University, Blue Ridge Community College, and the JMU Arboretum. She is survived by three daughters: Mary Sease (Dr. Robert, J.), Peg Twitty (Maj Rob), and Patti Plecker. She has five grandchildren: Angela Watson (Curtis), Sara Corder (Micah), Justin Sease (Anna), William Sease (Emily), and Andrew Sease (Luisa), and 13 great-grandchildren. She will be deeply missed by family, friends, and all who were blessed to meet her, and will be remembered for her warmth, her love of life, and her wit.



**WHAT'S THE LORD'S NAME?** In studying Exodus 6:1-30, God promising freedom, Pastor Joel spoke on "Who Is the Great I AM?" for worship on Sunday, Feb 9<sup>th</sup>. Who is the Lord? Pharaoh said he didn't know this God of the Israelites, this God who just talks. Work had to become even more oppressive for the people—they were closing their ears—their spirit was crushed. No one was listening to Moses and Aaron and the future God was promising. The Lord is near to the broken hearted and those crushed in spirit.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus first addressed the crushed and the deflated. Is your spirit poor today? Our God will not be shut up—He says watch and see what I AM will do. I will not leave you, I will guide you, and you will be with Me. Assisting in the service today were Diana on the organ, Leonard leading, Karen reading “The Lion’s Whisker” to the children, and Cheryl reading a very long difficult scripture (for which she received a round of applause).

**SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY:** For the two Sundays of February (2<sup>nd</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>), we have been



collecting food items for the Massanutten Food Pantry for “Souper Bowl Sunday”. Along with lots of cereal, ramen, and peanut butter, the two bins were overflowing, one for the Kansas City Chiefs and one for the Philadelphia Eagles. Though both

teams were represented in the Church family, the count of the items was made during the taking of the offering, with the final count: Eagles 107, Chiefs 66. Thank you for your generosity in helping to feed folks in our community.



**“The Message of Jesus” Bible Study:** After missing last week, on Monday, the 10<sup>th</sup>, we began by talking about the Kingdom of God, where it is, what it is, and how we are a part of it.

**SURPRISE LUNCH BUNCH:** During the Bible study on Monday, the 10<sup>th</sup>, we discussed the upcoming weather and knew that Wednesday’s scheduled Lunch Bunch would not happen, so two of us decided to go after Backpacking. Then it became three. And by the time we got to Vitos, it was six. What a wonderful time we had, talking about school days (three of us went to MHS), and remembering old downtown Harrisonburg. Thank you to all who made a great lunch get together.

## **AND THE SNOW COMETH FEB 11TH**



*The Snow cometh*



*& the Snowman*



*Winston, shorts?*



*Even at Church*

## **VALENTINE'S DAY—FEB 14<sup>TH</sup>—A STORY ABOUT LOVE**

He always pushes the grocery cart. (and when we get back to the truck, he always unlocks the doors immediately so that I can get in, and then proceeds to unload the groceries, while I'm sat in the truck with the seat warmers on. rain or shine - every time - this is our

grocery game plan). Can I let you all in on a little secret? It's taken me many years to appreciate being loved like this. You see, I spent (ie. wasted) a lot of time looking for all how love is shown in the movies, in the magazines, and on the commercials. Flowers. Chocolates. Romantic meals. Surprise getaways. And guess what? I was disappointed time and time and time again. All because I was looking for the ways that I was being told he should show his love - Instead of paying attention to how he actually does show his love. And when I eventually came to that realization, Friends? That was the relationship game changer. For he rarely buys flowers, But he calls me every day when he gets off of work, to see if I need anything picked up. He never thinks of buying chocolate, But whenever he sees anything that resembles a slice of plant-based, organic goodness, he always buys it for me - And is always so proud to surprise me with his latest grocery store find. He can only boil eggs and butter bread, So while I have never walked into a dining room with candles flickering and plates of gourmet goodness laid out - He wakes up every Sunday morning, puts on coffee, pours up my favorite mug, and passes it to me while I'm cozied up on the living room couch (and if my mug is in yesterday's dirty dishes, he'll always wash it out. bless him). And while he cannot put together a travel itinerary to save his soul, He has sat in a theatre on Broadway with me to watch a musical. He has walked through Ernest Hemingway's home with me. He has been through more museums and libraries in a lifetime than he cares to admit. And he has never complained about any of it. Not even once. And it's more than that. So much more than that. He's gotten up in the middle of the night with a crying baby. If his restaurant order is better than mine, he'll always switch plates. He watches Sleepless in Seattle when he would rather be watching Jason Bourne (at least I think that's his name). He knows my most favourite 'lady products', and will run to the pharmacy to grab me them whenever needed (if that isn't love, I don't know what is)....And, he will always, always push the grocery cart. You know, the more I think of it, The flowers, the chocolates, the romantic meals, and the surprise getaways? That's all just momentary anyway. The flowers die. The chocolate and meals get devoured. And the surprise getaways happen, and then they're over. But it's in the moments that you can depend on (over and over and over again), well, that's where the love is found. The good love. The always love. Like your 'most coziest blanket on a fall day' love....And it's THAT kinda' love that I want to walk through this life feeling. Don't search for the flowers, Ladies. Nor waste your time in want of the chocolates. Search for the one who will push your grocery cart. For that's where the always kinda' love is ♡ (Taken from Facebook, Author Anon)

**(Editorial Note:** I included the above story because I was one of the blessed ones who had a “push the grocery cart husband”, who is missed very much. I hope you do too.)

**WARMTH FOR THE BELLY IS GOOD FOR THE SOUL!** Homemade beef vegetable soup, prepared by the UWIF, was ready for pickup on Saturday, Feb 15th at 11:00 a.m. Many folks came by to take the 115 quarts that was made, along with yummy bake goods of cake, cookies, candy, and bread, all for a freewill offering to support UWIF missions. Thank you for your support—hope you had a warm and happy tummy!

**PHAROAH VS GOD:** The Worship message on Valentine Sunday Feb 16<sup>th</sup> from Pastor Joel was “Let My People Go”. God filled the mouths of Aaron and Moses with His request—let my people go. They were hard to hear by Pharoah and by the Israelite slaves. This was a showdown between Pharoah and God. Pharoah had empire power



and could manipulate facing the one God, slaves in Egypt, and Moses and Aaron, who were 80 and 83, old men. Pharoah owned everything, yet he was so blind—the land and the people were God’s. Aaron’s staff became a snake; then the Nile turned to blood; frogs covered everything; gnats came from the dust; and flies came. Pharoah’s heart continued to harden with each one, but he also noticed that none of the plagues happened in Goshen where the Israelites lived. Jesus has defeated anything that might come against you. God is still speaking and saving today. Assisting in today’s service were Wendell leading, the Worship Team leading music, which included the uplifting songs “All God’s Creatures Got a Place in the Choir”, “Farther Along”, “Wayfaring

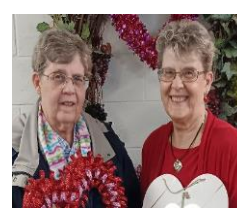


Stranger”, “Why Me, Lord”, and “Bullfrogs and Butterflies”. Jenny spoke to a large group of young people joining us today from Camp Overlook during the Children’s Time. She spoke on how to pray by just talking to God like a friend. Chad Hrbek from Camp Overlook briefly spoke on the Winter Camp, the Summer Camp upcoming, and how much they

appreciate what KUMC does for the Camp.

**VALENTINE POTATO BAR:** The UMM prepared an after Church Valentine lunch of potato bar and desserts for a group of approximately 80+ that stayed after worship on Feb 16<sup>th</sup>. Along with a delicious lunch, we were musically entertained by John and Parker Young, the Camp Overlook Campers, and Karen Mooney and Sharon Martin. Love pictures were taken by Sherry. Thank you, UMM, for good food, fellowship, laughter, and love.





### \*\*\*FEBRUARY EVENTS IN NEXT ISSUE\*\*\*

- 17 "The Message of Jesus" Bible Study at 10:00 a.m.  
Backpacking at 11:00 p.m.
- 18 "The Message of Jesus" Bible Study at 7:00 p.m.
- 20 **Serve Kingsway Meal**
- 23 **Sunday School 9:45 a.m.**  
**Worship at 11:00 a.m.; Message: "Changing Hearts" from Exodus 9:1-10:29**
- 24 "The Message of Jesus" Bible Study at 10:00 a.m.  
Backpacking at 11:00 p.m.
- 25 "The Message of Jesus" Bible Study at 7:00 p.m.
- 26 **Lunch Bunch carpool at 11:15 a.m.**  
Choir practice at 6:30 p.m.

**Join the Challenge: No Coffee or Soda on February 29<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>, or 31<sup>st</sup>.**

### \*\*\* MARCH EVENTS HAPPENING\*\*\*

#### MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Mar 1	Andrea Crisman	Mar 9	Wyatt Martin
Mar 1	Austyn Crisman	Mar 11	Jennifer Young
Mar 1	Jackie Werner	Mar 13	Wesley Crisman
Mar 2	Cathy Sites Chouniere	Mar 13	Melissa Kelley
Mar 2	Donnie Underwood	Mar 15	Nicholas Mitchell
Mar 4	Eli Bowman	Mar 18	Ann Ford
Mar 6	Barbara Heatwole	Mar 20	Dave Werner
Mar 7	Whitney Krauss	Mar 22	Becky Ryman
Mar 7	Brian Shafer	Mar 28	Kate Ramsey
Mar 8	Leslie Pellegrin		
Mar 9	Macie Heishman		

#### MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

Mar 1, 2008	Chad & Michelle Higgs	17 years
Mar 10, 2011	BJ & Kelly Smith	14 years
Mar 28, 2009	Cory & Lynette Guilliams	16 years

#### MARCH CALENDAR

- 2 **Small Group Leaders Gathering at 8:45 a.m.**  
**Sunday School 9:45 a.m.**



- Worship at 11:00 a.m. with Communion; Message: "The First Passover" from Exodus 11:1-12:42
- 3 "The Message of Jesus" Bible Study at 10:00 a.m.  
Backpacking at 11:00 p.m.  
UWiF serve Keezletown Ruritans
- 4 Worship Music Practice at 6:00 p.m.  
"The Message of Jesus" Bible Study at 7:00 p.m.
- 5 Ash Wednesday Lenten Service and meal at 6:30 p.m.; UMM serving spaghetti
- 6 UWiF meet at 7:00 p.m.
- 8 DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS—SPRING FORWARD
- 9 Sunday School 9:45 a.m.  
Worship at 11:00 a.m.; Message: "Celebrating God's Salvation" from Exodus 12:43-13:16  
Keezletown Light Commission meets at 7:00 p.m. in Social Hall
- 10 Worship Planning meeting at 9:00 a.m.  
"The Message of Jesus" Bible Study at 10:00 a.m.  
Backpacking at 11:00 p.m.
- 11 No Bible Study
- 12 Lunch Bunch carpool at 11:15 a.m.  
Lenten Service and Meal at 6:30 p.m.  
Church council Mar 12th at 7:30 p.m. (after Lenten service)
- 14 Newsletter items due
- 15 McGaheysville UMC District Lay Servant Training  
4:00 p.m. "Light of the Lord" WRE 2025 Choral presentation of SHS gym
- 16 United Methodist Men's breakfast meeting at 8:00 a.m.  
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.  
Worship at 11:00 a.m.; Message: "The Lord's Deliverance" from Exodus 13:17-14:31  
Lillie Moses Memorial Service at 3:00 p.m. with meal after service
- 17 St Patrick's Day  
"The Message of Jesus" Bible Study at 10:00 a.m. with lunch at Ciro's in Elkton to follow  
Backpacking at 11:00 p.m.
- 18 "The Message of Jesus" Bible Study at 7:00 p.m., with dinner at TBD location at 5:30 p.m.
- 19 Lenten Service and meal at 6:30 p.m.
- 20 FIRST DAY OF SPRING  
Serve Kingsway Meal
- 22 UMM Annual Pancake Supper 4:30 p.m.
- 23 Sunday School 9:45 a.m.  
Worship at 11:00 a.m.; Message: "Daily Bread and Water" from Exodus 15:22-17:7
- 24 3/24-28 Spring break  
TBD Bible Study at 10:00 a.m.
- 25 Monday morning Bible study class volunteering at MCCC at 10:00 a.m.  
TBD Bible Study at 7:00 p.m.

- 26     Lunch Bunch carpool at 11:15 a.m.  
         Lenten Service and meal at 6:30 p.m.
  - 30     Sunday School 9:45 a.m.  
         Worship at 11:00 a.m.; Message: "Moses Partnering with People" from Exodus  
         17:8-18:27
  - 31     TBD Bible Study at 10:00 a.m.  
         Backpacking at 11:00 p.m.
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## **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**Sally Ann Green Cooley**, 76, Keezletown community member, passed away on Nov 20, 2024, in Stanardsville, VA. She spent her career working at Kawnear Company. Sally is survived by her husband Jim Cooley, and son, Chris (Jonni) and grandchildren, Madison and Cameron, who attended KUMC for a while. Sally was a member of Trinity Lutheran Church, and enjoyed spending time in Florida in the winters.



**Congratulations to Kendra Dodrill**, Bridgewater College student Senior, who was named to the 2024 fall semester Dean's List.

**CAMP OVERLOOK**: is planning a **Confirmation Camp** on April 11-12. Rev. Gary Heaton will share about our relationship with God; Rev. Bertina Westley will talk about the Social Principles; and Dwayne Stinson, the Director of Discipleship and Congregational Vitality for the VA Conference, will speak to us about the Connectional Nature of the Church. More information about the weekend can be found on our website. We are also working on **Summer Camp**, which will be 5 weeks of Overnight Camp and 3 weeks of Day Camp, all beginning the week of June 22. All returning Campers should have received a postcard about the different sessions. We have full brochures that we are in the process of distributing. Our theme this year is "The Work of the Holy Spirit."

**A Simple Way to Pray for Lent**: Peter Beskendorf, a barber, asked Martin Luther how to pray. Martin wrote him a letter with "A Simple Way to Pray" which included ways to pray The Lord's Prayer, The Ten Commandments, and The Apostles' Creed. This letter and those resources are available to help give you a simple way to pray for Lent or anytime. This will be available beginning Mar 2nd.

**Ash Wednesday and Lent Supper and Services**: Come out for a meal, music, prayer, and service on Wednesdays in Lent from Mar 5th – Apr 9th at 6:30 p.m. If you would like to help provide a meal or music for a service please talk to Pastor Joel. We will begin with an Ash Wednesday Service on the first day in Lent.

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### MY PERSONAL NOTE

Just thinking on one of those days when I'm feeling isolated and alone, wondering if today is when I hit rock bottom and why I have to feel this way. But then I remember that I've had these days before, and that I've gotten through 100% of them—by the pure grace of God. During these days, He was working out His plan for me, to use the abilities, physical and emotional, that He has given me. Waiting is hard; I am not a patient person; I want to feel better; I don't want to cry; I want to be able to do. Some days, I just can't, and He's OK with that. He quietly sits with me, or makes sure my covers stay up as I nap, or holds me up as He walks with me, or lets me get a Frozen Dr Pepper, or puts someone in my path to make me smile or hug me. Even though there are days that I cannot feel Him, He is ALWAYS with me—I just have to drop the "pity party wall" and feel His presence. If you are feeling down, please know that He is right there beside you, surrounding you, within you, ready to give you the comfort you need. I pray you feel His presence today and are blessed. *Diana*

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### Editor's Note

**The March deadline for submissions is March 14th.** My home number is 540-269-8511 or e-mail me at [AntDyna@comcast.net](mailto:AntDyna@comcast.net). I hope that you enjoy reading it as much as I enjoy preparing it for you. God bless you all.

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Love is when a man wipes your tears, even after you left Him hanging on the cross for your sins.

