

# The Opequon Spirit

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



## December 2018

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#### *Advent-Christmas-Epiphany Insert*

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### MINISTRY TEAM NIGHT

Tuesday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, in the Fellowship Hall

Dinner 6:00 pm

Prepared by The Congregational Care Ministry

We will be blessed by the musical offerings of Sing! Shenandoah during our dessert.

Ministry Team Meetings 7:00 pm

### CHRISTMAS CONCERT ON MINISTRY TEAM NIGHT!

Sing! Shenandoah, the Sweet Adeline's chapter that practices at Opequon each Monday night, will present a half-hour of wonderful Christmas music on Tuesday, December 4 at 6:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall. It is Ministry Team Night, so our teams will gather for dinner at 6:00 pm. The ladies will share holiday songs from 6:30-7:00 pm. So, even if you are not a part of a team, come on out and enjoy the music.

### COLLECTING FOR CCAP



### CANNED FOODS

### HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS

The church office will close at noon on December 24<sup>th</sup> and will remain closed until Thursday, December 27<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 am. It will also be closed on January 1<sup>st</sup>, in observance of New Years. It will reopen on Wednesday, January 2, 2019 at 8:30 am.

### CHRISTIAN COFFEE HOUSE

A Christian Coffee House will be held on Sunday, December 9 beginning at 6:00 pm in the Memorial Sanctuary. We are inviting anyone who would like to share a talent that evening. We are looking for people who do music, tell jokes, give a testimony, or really any sort of talent that is Christian in its nature. There are five slots open to do one song or act. Folks can be inside or outside the church so it's okay to invite a friend. Interested parties should contact Vicki Schmidt Crites, vschmidt1998@gmail.com, 540/247-5735 or Sarah Shade, skshade87@gmail.com 540/550-7143 (text is best).

**NOTES FROM THE PASTOR**

“Light Shining in the Darkness”

*“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.”* John 1:5

Dear Friends in Christ,

On the first day of summer (June 21) in Fairbanks, Alaska, the sun officially sets at 12:37 am and rises less than three hours later, the time in between known as twilight, not darkness. The Benders and Witt’s experienced the midnight sun this past summer when we began our Alaskan journey in Fairbanks. The four of us were out playing cornhole at 10:30 pm on a Saturday night when the sky was blue, and the sun was shining brightly! It was an incredible experience. Now, what that means in reverse, of course, is that on the first day of winter (December 21), the sun will rise at 9:44 am and set at 3:28 pm, less than six hours of daylight! This is NOT something I would want to experience. I heard a few weeks ago that our official sunset here would soon begin before 5:00 pm each day, which will continue on for two months. So, while we don’t live and experience the extremes of Alaska, we do understand the contrast between light and darkness, knowing that we have just entered into a season of shorter days.

Interestingly, for those who live in the Northern Hemisphere, these shorter days with longer darkness coincide with Advent. This season of watching and waiting that focuses on getting ready for the coming of Jesus Christ is one that is also underscored by the contrast between darkness and light. As we listen again to the message of Old Testament prophets, who were speaking to a people in exile, a people who knew spiritual darkness, and as we attend to the words of John the Baptist who candidly told people to get ready for the coming of the Lord by repenting, by turning away from the darkness of their sin, we are called to prepare. And as we hear gospel texts that proclaim a light that is coming, a light that the darkness will not be able to overcome, we

are called to that Light. For even in the midst of darkness, that Light will shine, and will bring the kind of hope, peace, joy, and love that cannot come from this world, but only through Jesus Christ. As you and I center ourselves in this Light, I pray that we will be encouraged and strengthened. As you and I receive the gifts of the Gift, I pray that we will be so overwhelmed that we will go forth like those shepherds from the manger, “glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen.” In this season, while the days may be shorter, as you and I prepare our hearts for the coming Light, we will gather, we will share, we will worship, we will ponder, we will serve, we will witness; and then, I believe, we will understand in a new and fresh way “the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it” and rejoice in the Gift and gifts of God.

The thoughts and prayers of the whole Witt Family are extended to you and yours for a most holy, blessed, and light-filled season of Advent as we prepare for the coming of Jesus the Christ. We look forward to celebrating and sharing the Light of Christ with you this Christmas!

Together in Christ’s Service,

*David*

Remember  
OPC  
in  
Your Will

**STAFF VACATION SCHEDULE  
THIS MONTH**

David Witt-----December 26-29

## JUST THINKIN'

I guess this congregation likes fudge. I have had so many requests for the fudge recipe I used for Generosity Sunday that I will print it here for easy distribution and access. This is the best tasting fudge (other than Carol Treece's) I have ever made – and it's easy. You can also find it on the Allrecipes website listed as German Chocolate Fudge. You should have no illusions about this fudge being a health food.



For about five pounds of fudge you will need:

- 12 oz (4 bars) Baker's German Chocolate
- 2 Cups (1 bag) semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1 can evaporated (not sweetened condensed) milk (12 oz)
- 7 oz marshmallow fluff
- 4 ½ cups of white sugar
- 2 tbs butter
- 1/8 tsp salt

How to make the fudge:

- Combine chocolate chips, German sweet chocolate and marshmallow creme in large bowl.
- Combine sugar, butter, evaporated milk and salt in heavy skillet. Bring to a boil over medium heat.
- Cook for 6 minutes, stirring constantly. *(This step is the most important, keep stirring)*
- Pour hot syrup over chocolate mixture. Stir with wooden spoon until smooth. *I pour the chocolate and marshmallow fluff into the heavy-duty pot I use to cook the milk/sugar mixture. This gives me more time to incorporate the two mixtures before the fudge sets.*

- Spread into buttered 10x15 inch pan. Let stand until firm; cut into squares.

Now here's the fun part.

- You can substitute Baker's white chocolate and white chocolate chips for a white chocolate flavor. For some reason this will take more stirring to melt all the white chocolate.
- You can make white chocolate fudge and add finely crushed candy canes at the last minute for a great peppermint fudge.
- You can add dried cranberries and pecans for a beautiful result.
- Oreo cookie pieces make another great addition.

This fudge freezes well and can be kept in the refrigerator for about two weeks.

I realize that this newsletter article is not especially theological, but have you ever wondered how much God loves us? Enough to give us Christmas and fudge in the same season!

'Nuff said!



## SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

### November 20, 2018 Stated Meeting

- Session welcomed newly elected officers as observers at this meeting.
- Elder Bill Burslem, newly returned from his tenth mission trip to Ethiopia, reported on the construction of a dormitory there using Lupton bequest funds. The hope is to open the dorm in September 2019.
- At the recommendation of the Personnel Team, Session approved the creation of a part-time bookkeeping position.
- Building & Grounds reported that the repair of the garage roof next to the manse is in progress.

- Session approved the replacement of the heating unit in the sanctuary that has failed.
- Stewardship and Finance said that income and expenses are tracking well with the budget although additional monies (\$40,000+) have been expended for emergency building needs. The 2019 budget will be presented for approval in December. It will reflect income and expenses of over \$600,000.
- Session discussed the fact that every year we have extraordinary maintenance expenses, outside of budget. Ways of addressing this need are being discussed.
- On the recommendation of Christian Education, Session approved placing children's Bibles in the Sanctuary.
- Congregational Care has been reviewing our rolls and presented a list of individuals who have not been at church in over a year. Session directed the Clerk to attempt to contact them to find out if they wish to continue on the active roll of the church.
- The Visioning Team has added new members and continues to concentrate on membership engagement as its number one goal.
- The Team to evaluate options for the future of the Manse reported on a meeting with the county Zoning Administrator.
- At the request of the Director of Youth and Young Adults, and in accordance with the Book of Order, Session approved allowing communion at both services on December 2 to be served by young people.

### **DID YOU TURN YOUR PLEDGE CARD IN?**

"Making a Difference" was the theme for this year's stewardship emphasis." Generosity Sunday was a few weeks ago; however, you can still submit your pledge card by dropping it

in the offering plate or Joash box, stopping by the church office, or even mailing it in. Time/Talent surveys may be placed in the cat hat Thank you.

### **TAX BENEFIT TRANSFER FROM IRA TO OPC**

Congress passed the Tax Increase Prevention Act which makes permanent the IRA Charitable Rollover. The provision allows individuals age 70½ or older to make tax-free gifts totaling up to \$100,000 from a traditional IRA account directly to qualified charities (such as Opequon Presbyterian Church). You can do this provided the transfer is completed by December 31, 2018. If your spouse has an IRA account, you may each make gifts of up to \$100,000 from these accounts. While you cannot claim a charitable deduction for IRA gifts, this distribution from your IRA counts towards your minimum required distribution for the account and does NOT trigger income tax for you. Yes, you can make a tax-free transfer to OPC and not have to pay any tax on it. Contact your IRA administrator to have a distribution sent directly to Opequon Presbyterian Church, but insist it be done by December 31, 2018.

### **END OF YEAR TAX SAVINGS FOR GENEROUS PEOPLE WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

Generous people can make a difference in the world and Opequon supports an active outreach program that makes a difference in people's lives. "Giving people" with grateful hearts help to reach people who need God's help. Are you a "giving person?" There is not much time left to make charitable donations qualifying for an end of year tax deduction. Is your pledge up to date? Did you get a Christmas bonus from your employer and wish to make a special donation to Opequon? Did you have a wonderful year, and now realize that when we give, others are blessed, and

God is glorified? God blesses us financially when we give generously (2 Corinthians 9:6). The white envelopes in the pew racks are for donations to the General Fund. Simply write General Fund on the envelope and insert your check. Checks can always be left during the week in the church office, and all donations received by the end of 2018 will be credited to your account, thus qualifying for the charitable deduction on your income taxes. All extra donations will be credited to your envelope number and shown in your end of year statement.



### **A CHRISTMAS BREAKFAST**

Sunday, December 23,  
9:45 am

You are invited to a delicious holiday morning breakfast on

Sunday, December 23 at 9:45 am in the Fellowship Hall. It is our annual CHRISTMAS BREAKFAST with a menu of scrambled eggs, sausage, biscuits, fruit, juice and coffee, all fixed fresh for you that morning. Rather than separating into smaller classes, our Christmas Breakfast Event will bring all of us together as we enjoy a great meal, friendship at the tables, and some carol singing. Share your joy in this season with others and dig into a warm breakfast. It is a church family affair. Your presence will be the best GIFT.

### **ADVENT ITEMS FOR YOU**

Advent is the first season of the CHURCH year; it begins four weeks prior to Christmas, on Sunday, December 2 this year. A treasured item for us during Advent is our annual ADVENT DEVOTIONAL. The title of this year's devotional is "**Let Every Heart Prepare Him Room**" with pages full of writings by our own Opequon people that you can ponder, cherish, and immerse yourself into! In all the flurry of activity and seasonal cheer, we want to be

sure to take some quiet moments each day to sit, pause, read, reflect, and remember. We are tremendously grateful for all those who have contributed to the devotional by writing, designing, proofing and printing. It is full of a daily dose of words worth reading. Advent Devotionals are in the Gathering Area and Dell Room for you to pick up. Please help yourself and enjoy special moments each day.

**Children** are invited to pick up the devotional prepared just for their use during Advent titled "**Let Every Child Prepare Each Room**". A supply packet comes with each booklet. As children work their way through the pages of the booklet and get more and more excited through the days of Advent, there are many activities for them to do at home to help prepare for Christmas. All instructions are in the booklet. Let's get ready for the birth of our Savior! HAPPY ADVENT! Booklets with supply packets attached are in the Gathering Area and Dell Room. Make sure your child gets one to experience all the activities inside.

### **THE LATEST IN LOGOS**

Wednesday at LOGOS is like a mid-week reunion! Forty-three children and youth along with 62 LOGOS staff fill Opequon Church with a lot of energy and excitement. There are faith lessons being taught, songs of faith being sung, games of cooperation being played, and wholesome meals being served. It is tremendous to be in the midst of this! We had our annual Teacher Night with fourteen special guests joining us for dinner, games and music. New friends have come on board after coming on Bring-a-Friend Night. LOGOS youth experienced making s'mores over a fire and a yoga session with a certified Yoga Instructor. Halloween night at LOGOS was unique! Parachute games filled the Fellowship Hall, followed by many activity stations lead by the LOGOS youth. Everyone received a full bag dinner as they left to enjoy trick or treating

with their families. This month we are looking forward to "An Advent Night", "O Christmas Tree" and our annual caroling outing. All LOGOS staff and children are invited to bring work gloves, hats, or mittens on December 12 to hang on the Christmas tree. These items will be donated to our Motel Ministry and distributed to people in the community.



**COMMUNITY CAROLING AT KERNSTOWN COMMONS DECEMBER 22<sup>ND</sup>**

This new caroling event has been a unique treat the past two Christmas seasons, as many of us have joined together to carol in the community. We will first gather and carol in the Alamo Drafthouse lobby (the acoustics are wonderful; we sound great!) and then go over to serenade people at lunch at the Greene Turtle. We'll meet at 11:00 am. We would love to have you join us for a fun and festive occasion. Santa hats and bells are welcome!



**HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW YOUR FLU FACTS?**

from Patty Klinefelter, Our Faith Community Nurse

True or False

1. The flu virus can "live" on some surfaces for up to 48 hours. True or False
2. Even healthy people get the flu. True or False
3. Everyone 6 months or older should get the flu vaccine. True or False
4. Getting an annual flu vaccine is the first and best available way to protect yourself and your family from the flu and its potentially serious complications. True or False

5. It takes two weeks after being vaccinated for antibodies that protect against the flu build up in the body. True or False
6. The flu can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. True or False
7. The following are signs and symptoms of the flu – fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, fatigue, sometimes diarrhea and vomiting. True or False
8. The flu viruses spread mainly by tiny droplets made when people with flu cough, sneeze or talk. True or False
9. Prescription medications called "antiviral drugs" that can be used to treat flu illness. True or False
10. A high-dose flu vaccine also will be available for adults age 65 and older. True or false

Reference: CDC

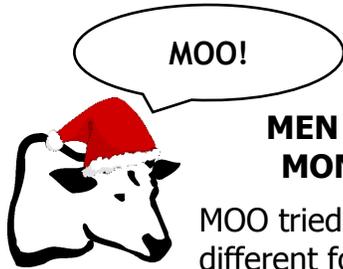
**OLDER ADULT HAPPENINGS**

Is it beginning to look a lot like Christmas in your home, your neighborhood, and the many places you go? It looks A LOT like ADVENT and Christmas at YOUR church! That's right- Opequon is decorated for Advent and Christmas. Hope you can be here for worship and other special seasonal activities! December kicks off with the Older Adult Ministry Team meeting on Monday, December 3, 9:30 am in the Bageant Room. The team enjoys friendships, morning goodies, and time for planning as they look ahead to Happy Days programs and future trips. The meeting is open to any older adults who would like to attend. A special Christmas treat will nourish us during the meeting.

Happy Days this month occurs on Wednesday, December 13 at noon. This is our older adult fellowship group that is full of spirit as they have great times together. The gathering begins with a covered dish lunch and will be followed by our annual **Christmas**

**Celebration.** As part of our celebration we will watch the 30-minute movie "Mr. Krueger's Christmas" starring Jimmy Stewart and then enjoy a few simple holiday games. Good times await you! Bring a few rolls of toilet paper that supports our Motel Ministry.

Those who have a reservation for the Christmas trip on **Friday, December 7** to see "**Rockabilly Christmas**" at the Riverside Center in Fredericksburg, **please be at church by 9:15 am** that morning. Our return time is approximately 6:00 pm.



### **MEN OF OPEQUON MONTHLY NEWS**

MOO tried something new and different for Christmas last year, and we liked it! The Men of Opequon's (MOO) December gathering will be at the Greene Turtle in Kernstown Commons (beside the Alamo) on Monday, December 10 at 6:00 pm. A room for our party has been reserved just for us (we can be a bit noisy, you know!) We will enjoy seasonal devotions and the always popular "Thieves' Christmas Gift Exchange" (a \$10 or less gift). All men are invited. You won't want to miss this holiday tradition and all the fun it holds! We will need a headcount to let them know. Please RSVP to Pastor Witt at [pastor@opequonchurch.org](mailto:pastor@opequonchurch.org) or let him know in person by Sunday, December 9. Let's fill up the room!



### **READ 'EM & REAP**

Read 'em & Reap, a small group, meets on the second Thursday of each month. This month's meeting on December 13<sup>th</sup> starts at 7:00 pm, at the home of Tom and Rhoda Tandy (128 Cahille DR, 22602). December's discussion will be on the book, *One Light Still Shines*. You are welcome to join us.



### **LIFE GOES ON**

*"The Lord is close to the brokenhearted: He rescues those who are crushed in spirit."*

Psalms 34:18

This small group ministry at OPC evolved because many in our congregation had lost their spouses through death. Others recently have lost family members and close friends. The Christmas Holiday Season is often a difficult time as we experience the loss of a loved one. Searching the internet, I found an article "64 Tips for Coping with Grief at the Holidays." You can choose something that would be right for you. I like the idea of beginning a GRATITUDE JOURNAL. Write down three things you are thankful for each day of December—morning, noon and night. Repeats are fine. Perhaps we can share some of these ideas when we meet next month, which will be Friday, January 25<sup>th</sup> 1:00 pm at The Firefly Café. Contact Martha Fulton, with questions at 540-542-6161 or [fultonmartha@gmail.com](mailto:fultonmartha@gmail.com).



### **God-Loving Opequon Women**

The Opequon's women's group, known as GLOW, meets monthly for great gatherings of friendship, support, enjoyment and spiritual nourishment. Women are invited to come on Tuesday, **December 11** at **7:00 pm**. We will be meeting in the Bageant Room for a **SOCK SWAP Game**, Devotion, and A Holiday Surprise for each woman! Bring a pair of NEW women's socks (whatever style and color you choose) that are gift wrapped or bagged to play the game. There will be much to enjoy in the Christmas spirit among us that evening. Come join the girls for this great time.

## **PRESBYTERIAN YOUTH CONNECTION GRADES 6-12**

December 1-Youth/Young Adult Sunday  
Practice  
December 2-Youth/Young Adult Sunday!  
December 7-Midnight Gladness  
December 16-Minute to Win It Games  
December 23-Motel Ministry  
December 30-No Meeting, Happy New Year!



### **CHRISTMAS CAROLING IS FOR EVERYONE!**

The Christmas season is upon us and with all the hustle and bustle it brings, wouldn't it be nice to take an evening off and share the joy of Christmas with others?

Our LOGOS and Congregational Care ministries are teaming up again to lead the way, and they invite you to join them on Wednesday, December 19 when we will be caroling to shut-ins from our church family. After caroling, EVERYONE will reunite and gather in the Fellowship Hall for a Soup and Sandwich dinner prepared by our LOGOS kitchen crew. Everyone is invited to come along as we share the familiar sounds of the Christmas season and give the gift of joy and fellowship. Please gather with us at 4:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall. If you have questions about caroling, please contact David Witt at 662-1843 or [pastor@opequonchurch.org](mailto:pastor@opequonchurch.org).

### **"TY HEADLEY TREE OF WARMTH"**

Blankets for Church World  
Service

The church will soon be trimmed for Advent and Christmas, which means that the chrismon tree will soon rise within the Sanctuary. Of course, initially the tree will only be decorated with lights. It is up to us to make it glisten with sparkling white bows,



creating a symbolic "tree of warmth," donating \$5 per blanket for our annual blanket drive for Church World Service, marking our 12th year. Someone, somewhere, needs shelter and warmth. Yes, shelter. Sometimes, your CWS blanket is all they have to shield them from the elements. You can help! When tragedy strikes – war, flood, and fire – as has happened so often this fall, your blanket will be there. You can help! Our Opequon congregation has generously supported this Christmas mission project each year, reaching the \$5,000 mark nine of the past eleven years. Let's meet that challenge again! We continue to remember and honor Ty Headley, who before his death, facilitated this drive with an inspiring personal message and a persistent challenge.

December 19<sup>th</sup> is the deadline to purchase blankets for recognition in the Blanket Booklet that will be available on Christmas Eve; however, donations will be gladly received through the end of the year. Fill out the special envelope located in the pew racks, include a check made out to "Opequon Presbyterian Church" and drop it in the offering plate. You can buy multiple blankets in the name of your loved ones and to the glory of God, who shares the greatest gift of all with us – Jesus Christ. You can give blankets as alternative Christmas gifts for those who already have so much. Please give generously, giving the warmth of your heart through a warm blanket to those in need.

### **MOTEL MINISTRY**

**Fourth Sunday Each Month at 12:30 pm**

If you're unable to visit the local motels, then think about preparing a hot food item as a donation. We often take foods such as spaghetti, soup, sloppy joe, or pork BBQ. Please email Rebekah Witt at [wittrc@dukes.jmu.edu](mailto:wittrc@dukes.jmu.edu) if you are willing to prepare one of these items or something similar.

## CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING RECEIVED DECEMBER 16<sup>TH</sup>

Advent asks us to open our hearts to God's love and grace, and by responding to that call through the Christmas Joy Offering, PCUSA church workers and racial ethnic students in need receive support. You may have heard the stories – of the retired minister who, after years of living independently, had a critical need for care he could not afford. Or the elderly missionary who, after years of earning modest wages, has outlived her savings. Or the church administrator who, flooded out of his home, watched the bills mount along with his worries. There are hundreds of such church workers in need each year – a key reason the PCUSA established the Christmas Joy Offering many years ago and why Opequon participates. This year's offering centers on "The Perfect Gift". For those of us gathered together in Advent expectation, we know that the only perfect gift ever given was the one we received in Jesus Christ—a perfect gift from a gracious God. Although we cannot give the perfect gift, we can give generously, knowing, as the New Testament letter of James says, "Every generous act of giving...is from above." Thank you for your compassion and commitment to our connectional church.

### OPEQUON'S THANKSGIVING MISSION MINISTRY PROJECT

**114** banana boxes filled with Thanksgiving meal items were collected during November for Orchard View Elementary School and CCAP. The delivery crew, Mike Birchenough, Mo Mohler, Lance Pearce, Bill Robinson, Nick Sardelis, Dave Schwantes, Phil Sommer, Robert Sydnor, and Carroll Youngblood delivered boxes to CCAP on November 16<sup>th</sup>. Bill Deck, Lance Pearce and Bill Robinson delivered boxes to OVES on November 19<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to Happy Days and Mission Ministry for donating the funds for turkeys. Thank you, everyone, for your generosity!



### WATTS WEEK AT OPC

Opequon will host WATTS guests **Saturday, December 29-January 5**. If you would like to support our WATTS week financially, please make your check out to OPC and put OPC WATTS in the memo line. These donations will be used to purchase food and supplies as well as socks and underwear for our guests. Volunteer sign-up sheets can be found in the Gathering Area and Dell Room. **We need people willing to prepare and serve breakfast and the nightly meal. Also folks willing to stay overnight (you may sleep!) are needed.** Contact Volunteer Coordinators with questions:

Graham Taylor, 540-247-4663 or  
gtaylorgofishing@gmail.com

Heather Burton, 540-771-0121 or  
mcpitch5@hotmail.com

### OPC FUNDED MISSIONARIES AT WORK IN OUR WORLD

OPC's mission outreach this past year and into 2019 includes work in Israel & Palestine, Ethiopia and Northern Africa. The hands, heart and feet of our congregation touch many faithful followers of Christ through four missionaries we support financially and through prayer. What follows is a brief overview of the mission work of two of them—the Rev. Michael Weller and Rachel Weller.

Michael and Rachel have served since 1994 as mission co-workers in Ethiopia, the second most populous country in Africa. They became part of OPC's Mission outreach in 2016 and have continued to receive financial support since then.

Their responsibilities have grown and changed over the years, with Michael currently teaching and training future church leaders, while Rachel facilitates the Community Health Evangelism (CHE) program. They live in

Gambella where there has been recent ethnic violence between the Anywaa and Nuer people who are historic enemies. Rachel and Michael have joined an inter-ethnic prayer group to facilitate peace, unity and reconciliation among the several people groups who live in the Gambella region. In early November, again, there were demonstrations and some violence between the tribes, but the region now is calm again. They ask us to join them in prayers for peace and unity in Gambella, as well as asking God to help them bring people together who seek unity.

During Thanksgiving week, Rachel and two colleagues went to Juba, South Sudan at the request of the South Sudan Presbyterian Evangelical Church. The goal is to help them start their own Community Health Evangelism (CHE) program modeled after the one Rachel facilitates among the Anywaa and Nuer communities in Gambella. CHE is a program that gathers people together to identify and use available resources to improve their health situation and to learn truths from the Bible. When Bill Burslem recently traveled with Presbytery representatives to Ethiopia, he had the opportunity to converse and dine with the Wellers several times. He learned first-hand about their mission work and the turmoil in the region.



Rachel and Michael ask for our prayers in their ongoing work. The photo of them is from the PC(USA) outreach postcards which are available in our Gathering Area. If you feel called to personally support them in any way, we encourage your outreach.

[www.pcusa.org/Michael-and-rachel-weller](http://www.pcusa.org/Michael-and-rachel-weller)

For questions contact Karen Winters, 315-440-6508  
[Kwwinters@gmail.com](mailto:Kwwinters@gmail.com)

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

On November 18<sup>th</sup> we welcomed into the membership of Opequon Church:

**Curt & Budny** by transfer Idylwood Presbyterian Church, Falls Church VA

**Kevin & Lisa Callanan** by transfer First Presbyterian Church, Winchester VA



To acknowledge your recent loss...

To remember a loved one...

To offer support in this holiday season...

You are invited to Our Annual

## "Blue Christmas—Longest Night Service"

A Service of Healing and Wholeness

Sunday, December 16, 2018

2:30 pm Memorial Sanctuary

Please join us for this time of prayer, scripture reading, reflective music, and remembrance.



## ALL SAINTS' SUNDAY

On All Saints' Sunday, we celebrated our great communion with the saints and honored the memory and lives of those who have died in the past year and joined the Church Triumphant...

**Mary Katherine "Katie" Baker**

**Betty Jewell Bly**

**John Richard Boyd, Sr.**

**Margaret B. Guthrie Dearth**

**Dottie Baker Edwards**

**James J. "Jay" Journell**

**Charles Garland "Gary" Strickler**

**Tim Thompson**



**Madison Elizabeth Michels**

was born to Jaclyn & Nate Michels on November 1<sup>st</sup>. She is the granddaughter of Tracy & Jack Drumheller.

**Avonlea Noelle Thompson**

was born on November 2<sup>nd</sup> to Lindsay & Casey Thompson. She is the granddaughter of JoEllen Delamatta.

**HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW YOUR FLU FACTS?**

Note all answers are **true**



**Melody Ann Daggett**

(daughter of Annette & Dave) and Trevor Joseph Loudin were united in marriage on November 10 by Pastor David Witt. The happy couple resides in North Carolina. Congratulations and best wishes on your new life together.



We express our Christian love and sympathy to...the Family of **Judy Payne** who died on November 24<sup>th</sup>

*"I am the resurrection and the life," says the Lord. "Those who believe in me shall live, even though they die; and those who live and believe in me shall never die."*  
John 11:24-25

**NOTES OF GRATITUDE**

Please accept this donation as a thank you for allowing us to use the Pitcock Memorial Shelter for our end of the school year gathering.

The Faculty & Staff of  
John Kerr Elementary School

Dear David & Opequon Church,  
Thank you for your gracious hospitality in hosting Shenandoah Presbytery's Boundary Training in November.

Blessings!  
Nancy Meehan Yao

The Fellowship Ministry would like to thank the congregation for providing items for our Thanksgiving Eve Reception. It was greatly appreciated. Thank you!

**THANK YOU!!!**

A huge thanks to those of you who contributed to The Wall of Envelopes. This money was well spent on the Playground/Recreation Area near the back parking lot. We hope you can enjoy the playground and basketball court.



**Nate, Jaclyn & Madison Michels**

12701 Millstep Ter  
Midlothian VA 23112-7013

**SERVANTS IN MINISTRY**

**Acolytes**

- 8:30
- 2 Youth/Young Adult Sunday
- 9 Carson Ritter
- 16 Tim Gaul
- 23 Reagan Tibbs
- 30 Volunteer Needed
- 11:00
- 2 Youth/Young Adult Sunday
- 9 Lauren Moses
- 16 Paige Hughes
- 23 Ethan Schwantes
- 30 Volunteer Needed

**Beadles**

- 8:30
- 2 Heide Mohler
- 9 TBD
- 16 Graham Taylor
- 23 Bud Proctor
- 30 Leslie Tucker
- 11:00
- 2 Bill Robinson
- 9 Leslie Tucker
- 16 Leslie Tucker
- 23 Bill Hopeck
- 30 TBD

**Bell Ringer**

- 8:30 Mo Mohler

## Hospitality

8:30  
2 Debbie & Bill Bender  
9 Lisa & Bill Frye  
16 Ina & Robert Walker  
23 Betty Chicklo, June Malone  
30 TBD

11:00  
2 Martha Fulton, Kirsta Weber  
9 Betty Ganoë, Debi Hodgson  
16 Vicky Astorino, Annemarie Matthews  
23 Jack Drumheller, Marj Praml  
30 Carole Fox, Martha Fulton

## Liturgists

8:30 Mike Butler                      11:00 Kevin Reed

## Livestream

2 Lance Astorino  
9 Susan Witt  
16 Rebekah Witt  
23 Bud Proctor  
24 Rebekah Witt-5:00 pm  
    Susan Ritter-7:30 pm  
30 Susan Ritter

## Nametags

Week 1 Pat deButts  
Week 2 Dulcie Reed  
Week 3 Martha Fulton  
Week 4 Kail Barbe  
Week 5 Dulcie Reed

## Ushers (Head Usher in **Bold**)

8:30  
2 Youth/Young Adults  
9 MacKenna Bell, Alyce Callahan, Cameron  
    & Carson Ritter, **Jim Youngblood**  
16 Tim Gaul, Terry Hartman, **Heide Mohler**,  
    Allison & Melanie Morgan, Lance Pearce  
23 Mike Butler, Reagan Tibbs, John Winn,  
    Natalie Youngblood  
30 Bob Gaines, Jordan Hartman, Lance Pearce,  
    Child/Youth Volunteers Needed,

11:00  
2 Youth/Young Adults  
9 Elise Buonocore, Jason Hathaway,  
    Kyle Homan, Jonathan Lightcap,  
    Lauren Moses, **Bill Robinson**  
16 **Andy Homan**, Jordan & Paige Hughes,  
    Sydney Sardelis, Joel Witt  
23 Curt Budny, **Bill Hopeck**, Griffin Hott,  
    Ethan Schwantes, Joe Seaton,  
    1 Child/Youth needed  
30 **Travis Morgan**, Nick Sardelis,  
    Chris Seaton, Child/Youth Volunteers  
    Needed

## LOOKING INTO THE NEW YEAR:

- ❖ Hosting WATTS at Opequon through Saturday, January 5<sup>th</sup>
- ❖ Elder/Deacon Orientation – Saturday, January 12<sup>th</sup>
- ❖ Ordination/Installation/Commissioning of Ruling Elders, Deacons, and Trustee - Sunday, January 13<sup>th</sup>

## A NOTE OF GRATITUDE

We would like to think we as a congregation are thankful for so much that we have, and that we express this gratitude in many ways, including kind words of thanks. It's not a difficult thing to do. We say thanks when someone holds the door or hands us our purchase or lets us go first in the line. Lots of people say thanks, ta or thank you, in many languages.

We express gratitude daily for little (but important) things. Right now; however, we want to thank you for your generous response to our request that you support the Opequon Presbyterian Church for the coming year. As this article is written, we do not have figures yet, but watching the congregation come forward to place their pledge cards in our new Joash Box was both exciting and humbling. We were humbled to see how seriously you all take this commitment. We were also excited to see how willingly you gave. Thank you for this experience. Thank you for your commitments of money, time, and talents.

We are the disciples of Jesus Christ and we are to model kindness, love, peace, justice and gratitude. This Generosity Sunday you did just that, and we are grateful.

The Generosity Team

SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENT  
October 2018

EXPENSES	2018 Budget	Net Expenses	Net Expenses	Budget
		Current Month	Expenses Year to Date	Balance Remaining
Administrative Ministry	405,427	36,673	339,490	65,937
Christian Education Ministry	13,550	1,153	7,412	6,138
Congregational Care Ministry	1,400	140	1,121	279
Evangelism Ministry	2,250	50	688	1,562
Fellowship Ministry	3,500	160	1,615	1,885
Mission Ministry	50,200	3,401	40,088	10,112
Worship Ministry	7,700	132	5,346	2,354
Capital Expenses	115,000	9,584	95,838	19,162
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>599,027</b>	<b>51,291</b>	<b>491,597</b>	<b>107,430</b>

INCOME	Current	Year to Date
	Month	
Envelope Offerings	37,233	475,622
Loose	491	4,521
<b>Total Operating Income from Offerings</b>	<b>37,724</b>	<b>480,143</b>
<b>Adjustments to Income</b>		
Checking Account Interest	4	59
Room/Facility Usage	0	650
Wedding Fees	0	0
Manse Rental Income (Net)	990	9,050
Unplanned Facilities Maintenance (EXP)	0	-28,316
<b>Operating Income After Adjustments</b>	<b>38,718</b>	<b>461,586</b>
<b>Operating Expenses</b>	<b>51,291</b>	<b>491,597</b>
<b>2018 Operating Balance as of October 31</b>	<b>-12,573</b>	<b>-30,011</b>

**MOVIE NIGHT**  
**“Same Kind of Different as Me”**  
 A Story of Faith, Fortitude, and Friendship  
 Monday, December 17<sup>th</sup>  
 6:00 pm—Fellowship Hall  
 Pizza, Popcorn & Drinks Provided  
 Watch, Talk, and Be Changed!



DECEMBER 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 10am Youth/Young Adult Sunday Practice
<b>2 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent</b> CWS Blanket Kick-Off 8:30 & 11am Worship, Youth/Young Adult Sunday, Communion, CCAP 9:45am Faith Formation 1:30pm Elder Training	<b>3</b> 9:30am Older Adult Ministry Team	<b>4</b> 11am Lions Club 6:00pm Ministry Team Night 6:30pm Sing! Shenandoah Concert	<b>5</b> 9:30am Staff Meeting 4:30pm LOGOS 7pm Choir Practice	<b>6</b> 9:30am Administrative Commission 7pm Scouting Ministry	<b>7</b> 6pm-1am Midnight Gladness	<b>8</b>
<b>9 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent</b> 8:30 & 11am Worship, 9:45am Faith Formation 6pm Christian Coffee House	<b>10</b> 6pm MOO Christmas Gathering @ Greene Turtle 6pm Sing! Shenandoah	<b>11</b> 9:30am Tuesday Morning Mission 7pm GLOW	<b>12</b> 12 Noon Happy Days 4:30pm LOGOS 6:10pm YA Bible Study 7pm Choir Practice	<b>13</b> 1:45pm Pianos Tuned 7pm Read 'em & Reap 7pm Scouting Ministry 7pm WATTS Orientation	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>16 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent</b> <i>January Newsletter</i> <i>Deadline</i> 8:30 & 11am Worship 9:45am Faith Formation 2:30pm Blue Christmas 5pm PYC	<b>17</b> 6pm Sing! Shenandoah 6pm Movie Night	<b>18</b> 7pm Session	<b>19</b> 9am Staff Christmas Breakfast 10am Winchester Newcomers 4:30pm LOGOS 4:30 pm Caroling 7pm Choir Practice	<b>20</b> 7pm Scouting Ministry	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> 11am Community Caroling @ Alamo & Greene Turtle
<b>23 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent</b> 8:30 & 11am Worship, Cantata, 4 Cents a Meal Offering, Fair Trade Coffee 9:45am Christmas Breakfast 12:30am Motel Ministry	<b>24</b> <i>Church Office Closes @ Noon</i> 5pm Family Worship 7:30pm Traditional Worship 11pm Late Night Worship	<b>25</b> <i>Christmas Day!</i>	<b>26</b> <i>Church Office Closed</i>	<b>27</b> 9am WATTS Moving Day	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> WATTS Week Begins
<b>30</b> WATTS Week 8:30 & 11am Worship Habitat for Humanity Paint Can Offering 9:45am Mission Morning	<b>31</b> ⇒⇒⇒⇒⇒	<b>1/1</b> ⇒⇒⇒⇒⇒	<b>1/2</b> ⇒⇒⇒⇒⇒	<b>1/3</b> ⇒⇒⇒⇒⇒	<b>1/4</b> ⇒⇒⇒⇒⇒	<b>1/5</b> ⇒⇒⇒⇒⇒

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

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**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

"The Opequon Spirit" is the monthly newsletter of:  
Opequon Presbyterian Church  
217 Opequon Church Lane  
Winchester, VA 22602-2421  
Phone: 540-662-1843  
[www.opequonchurch.org](http://www.opequonchurch.org)

Newsletter deadline is the Wednesday after the Stated Session Meeting.  
Sunday Worship at 8:30 and 11:00 am  
Faith Formation Educational Hour at 9:45 am

David Witt----- Pastor  
Tracie Martin ----- Parish Associate  
Laurie Carver ----- Nursery Supervisor  
William Heavner----- Organist  
Susan Homan----- Director of Music  
Patty Klinefelter ----- Faith Community Nurse  
Catherine Richard----- Office Administrator  
Robert Sydnor ----- Sexton  
Carole Witt----- Director of Christian Education  
Rebekah Witt----- Director of Youth & Young Adults



*"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"*

May you experience Jesus' birth in a new way this Christmas. God bless!

The Church Staff

*David  
Cathy  
Susan  
Alicia*

*Tracie  
Rebekah  
Robert  
Karen*

*Carole  
Bill  
Laurie  
Nancy*