

OTTERBEIN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
176 West Market Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

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Tidings

Ash 
Wednesday

february 2021

The Tidings
Otterbein United Methodist
Church

176 West Market Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Office - (540) 434-7747

Fax - (540) 433-4018

oumcharrisonburg.org

Prayer Ministry - (540) 434-7745

Tidings articles are due by the
15th of each month.

You may either bring articles to
the church office or email them
to oumcdadm@hotmail.com

Saturday Night Alive

5:30 pm

Informal Worship Service

Sunday Schedule

9:30 am Sunday School

for all ages

10:30 am Worship Service

Please check the calendar for
times of regular and special
events.

Weekday Office Hours

Monday - Thursday: 8:00 am - 3:00 pm



Have you checked out our Facebook Page? You can find us at [facebook.com/OUMCHarrisonburg](https://www.facebook.com/OUMCHarrisonburg) or through the link on our website. Please check out our page and share with your friends!

Our Staff

Rev. Adam Blagg

Senior Pastor

oumcpastor@hotmail.com

Rev. Faith Fowler

Associate Pastor of Health &
Wellness

faithfowler@vaumc.org

Sandy Schaefer

Music Director / Organist
oumcmusic@hotmail.com

Melissa Miller

Office Manager

oumcdadm@hotmail.com

Judy Falls

Custodian

Dawn Hunter

Treasurer

oumctreasurer@hotmail.com

Office: 540-434-7747

x200 for Melissa

x201 for Adam

x203 for Dawn

x204 for Sandy

x207 for Judy

x210 for Faith

Otterbein in Prayer

Dana Arthur

Gary Billingsley

Millie Bruce

Rev. Louis Carson

Jo Ellen Dickenson

Nancy East

Vicki & Ed Gaines

Judy Grandle

Florence Green

Betty Griffith

Ray & Audrey Griffith

Doris Hanger

Norma Heath

Laura Headlee

Silas Herndon

Bennie & Gloria

Hildebrand

John Hoffnagle

Dot Jones

Evelyn Keane

Glen Langston

Connie Liskey

Janet Liskey

Marion Malabad

Allene McCoy

Andrew Moyers

Judy Pruett

Don & Bonnie Rohr

Ron & Mary Ellen

Rohrbaugh

Linda Stephens

Martha Taylor

Keith & Sharon Waters

Mary Wenger

Anita Yount

*We would like to thank everyone
for your prayers, phone calls,
and cards with words of
condolence following the death
of our loving mother and
grandmother, Martha Hevener.*



~ Wilma & Eric Mitchell ~

For Your Information

- *Tidings* deadline for the March issue is **Monday, February 15** by **3 pm**. All groups, classes, and individuals are welcome to submit articles for the *Tidings*. Plan your activities and bring the written details to the church office or email to the office at oumcdadm@hotmail.com by the 15th.
- **Prayer Line Ministry:** Call 434-7745 anytime (day or night) to hear a prayer to encourage and give you support. To leave a prayer request: listen to the prayer, then follow the prompts to leave your request or words of praise.



CREATION CARE TASK FORCE

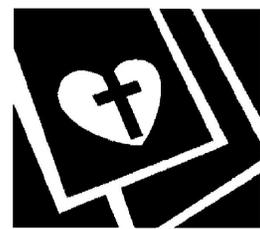
God is concerned with the spiritual world as well as the physical world. We are not to neglect the task of serving our fellow man, striving for justice,

and spreading the gospel, but neither are we to neglect the work of tending to God's creation. At the start of a new year what actions can you personally take to be a better steward of creation this year?

Saving energy reduces air and water pollution and conserves natural resources. Here are some simple suggestions for the winter months:

- Weatherproof doors and windows to prevent drafty leaks that allow cold air in and warm air out.
- Close the blinds/drapes to the colder night air and open to sunlight during the day.
- Set thermostat as low as comfortable – 68° is the ideal setting for winter (energy.gov).
- Layer clothing – putting on a sweater instead of turning up the thermostat.
- Change the rotation of ceiling fans to run clockwise.
- Maintain humidity level of 30%-40%.
- Adjust water heater to 120° (energy.gov).

Betty Redmond,
Creation Care Taskforce



FROM THE PASTOR

In 2021, shortly after Valentine's day, we come to Ash Wednesday. I'm going out on a limb and guess that in the 2021 February *Tidings* there will be something that references our affection for February 14th. Maybe the calendar insert will be pink or red, maybe the cover will have a heart or flowers, or maybe Melissa will read this and make my predictions turn out to be false. What I am almost sure of that most of us will make more note of February 14th than February 17th. Be honest, when was the last time you received an Ash Wednesday card? The two days are pretty far apart on their focus. One, at its purest, symbolizes the power of love and how it impacts our lives. The other, reminds us that we are going to die.

For some, Valentine's Day is a great time to treat a special someone to a nice meal, or some pretty flowers, or even an assortment of chocolates. For others, the day is avoided because of the challenges and hardships of romantic love. Ash Wednesday brings no feelings of excitement or gift giving, but it is probably more necessary than the 14th of February. Ash Wednesday asks us to acknowledge our own mortality and the theological implications our own sin. This is not a task we are often eager to embark upon and, when we do, it does not make us feel great. There might be some sense of peacefulness or satisfaction at

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having come to grips with our own mortality, but I find little joy in naming sin or anticipating death.

So why even bother with Ash Wednesday? I think it is vital for us to acknowledge and honor not only the wonderful things in life but also the total reality of our existence. Sin and death are a part of the Christian narrative; skipping over them leaves us with an incomplete picture of who we are. Only acknowledging them in passing during baptism or communion misses the point. I would not want every day to be Ash Wednesday, but when it comes around, I am okay with pausing and reflecting for a moment on the entirety of the human condition.

Adam

Trustees Update

In early January, Landes Heating and Air completed the installation of two new gas furnaces that will provide heating for the sanctuary. This new system utilized the present duct work and will provide a more reliable and efficient heat source for the sanctuary. The old boiler and radiators that heated most of the church have been disconnected and are no longer in use. The trustees are working on a solution to provide heat to other areas of the church that are in need of supplemental heat due to these changes.



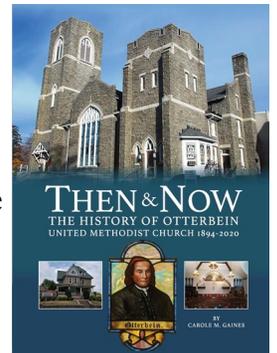
The richness of God's grace lies in the knowledge that there is nothing we own or can earn that will ever come close to what Christ has done on our behalf. If we had everything, even all the possessions the world has to offer, and gave it to God as a sign of our gratitude, it still would fall short. We owe not only everything *we have* to Jesus, but we owe everything *we are* to Jesus. Throughout Lent, I encourage you to reflect on and listen to this great hymn as you remember Christ's atoning sacrifice. May the words inspire you and help you to point your eyes to and on our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Sandy Schaefer



HERITAGE PROJECT BOOK

Reminisce and discover some little-known details about our church's history in the new published, 309-page book, ***Then & Now: The History of Otterbein United Methodist Church 1894-2020.***



The narrative is presented in an easy-to-follow timeline style. Additional features include: photos, 125th Anniversary video transcripts and anecdotes, fact-filled appendices, and pastor biographical sketches. There's also a sprinkling of humor—*because history can be fun!*

Contact the church office to obtain your copy. Price: \$25. Enjoy reading our story!

As we begin our journey through the Lenten season this month, we (I am first in line!) need to throw off anything and everything that hinders us. God doesn't want a temporary sacrifice *from* us, He wants a forever living sacrifice *of* us. One of the most treasured hymns about the cross was written by Congregationalist preacher Isaac Watts, who is known as the Father of English Hymnody. Watts wrote both original hymns and metric poems based on the psalms that could be sung to familiar tunes. His hymn *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross* is based on Galatians 6:14: "*May I never boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.*"

**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.**

**Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast,
save in the death of Christ my God;
All the vain things that charm me most,
I sacrifice them to His blood.**

**See from His head, His hands, His feet,
sorrow and love flow mingled down;
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
or thorns compose so rich a crown?**

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

This text provides a first-hand account of the cross and puts us at the foot of it, overwhelmed with emotion and awe. *continued next page...*



UMW News

No February Monthly Meeting.

The \$4 AMD dues and the first quarter Pledges to Mission are due to the UMW District Treasurer on March 15. Please bring your pledges up to date through March and send the \$4 AMD and pledge to Jo Ann Liskey (4856 Shen Lake Drive, Rockingham, VA 22801) by **Tuesday, March 9**. For concerns on this, call Jo Ann at 434-2997. More information will be in the March *Tidings* regarding the Call to Prayer and Self-Denial.

Saturday, March 13 is the District Spiritual Life Retreat on Zoom from 9-11 am with speaker Melissa White. If there is someone in the Unit that can take part in this retreat, let Wilma know as soon as possible (433-9545)

Until the churches open for meetings, the UMW District events are up in the air, so we cannot complete the Unit Handbook at this time. At present, everything is on Zoom. Be sure to read the *Tidings* for upcoming events.

The Social Action priorities for 2021-2024 are Climate Justice and School-to-Prison Pipeline.

No decision has been made on the Evening Together on April 22 that was scheduled for Otterbein to host.

The new reading books are in the church library. If you would like to read this winter, call the church office on Thursdays to get in.

If you have any concerns, call Wilma at 433-9545.

Why Engage in Men's Ministry?

Here are some answers to that question as taken from the General Commission of United Methodist Men:



- Men lead others best by modeling Jesus Christ in thoughts, words and deeds.
- Spiritual maturity is signified in spiritual reproduction, as the faith of mature disciples passes on in others.
- Men growing in Christ become effective spiritual leaders in their homes and congregations, working as partners with their spouses and congregational leaders—both lay and clergy.
- Spiritually growing men help congregations to become vital and alive.
- Everything desired from and through men comes as a result of men growing spiritually and maturing as disciples: family blessings, stewardship, service, outreach, prayer, spiritual leadership, lifestyle evangelism, and faithful obedience. Men are foundational to the life and health of the church.
- When a man lives daily in surrendered faith, God is honored, and many lives are blessed. Transformed hearts are forged only within Christ-centered lives—nothing less is our acceptable offering; nothing less truly reveals Christ.



As you consider these reasons for engaging in men's ministry, the Otterbein Men's Fellowship invite you to join us for our monthly meetings. Our regular breakfast/prayer meetings for the next several months will be **Saturday, February 27** and **Saturday, March 27** beginning at **7:30 am** at

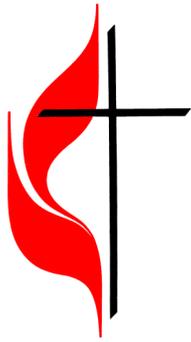
Thomas House Restaurant in Dayton. These are times of food, fellowship, and a time to share prayer requests and join in group prayer. Masks and physical distancing rules will be in effect.

Please see our entire planned meeting/event **2021 Calendar** at this website: <https://www.oumcharrisonburg.org/united-methodist-men>

- ♦ Bathroom usage is available on the main floor but limited to one person at a time and with the brevity of the service, our hope is that most will not need to avail themselves of the facilities.
- ♦ Our worship service will be shorter than normal with the following protocols in place:
 - ◇ No congregational singing
 - ◇ Seating will be limited and spaced
 - ◇ Only members of the same household may sit together
 - ◇ Offering will be collected at the entrance and exit
 - ◇ Communion elements will be available at the exit and partaken when you may safely remove your face covering
 - ◇ Ushers will assist with seating as needed and indicate when you may leave
- ♦ We anticipate that the content of our worship service will grow in scope and complexity over time.

For those viewing the live-stream on YouTube, during the communion portion of the service, you are invited to participate. Prior to the 10:30 time, please locate your communion elements (bread and grape juice) and have them ready. At the appropriate time during the service, you make partake of the elements. The current denominational guidelines allow for communion participation during the “live” portion of an event but not for a recorded viewing. It is our intention to offer communion weekly until we are once again worshipping without restrictions on building capacity.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Rev. Adam Blagg either via email or on his cell phone.



In-Person Worship

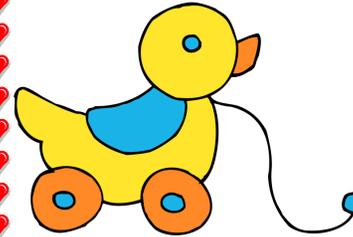
We began offering an in-person worship option on January 10. Below are some important things to keep in mind and guidelines that must be followed if you decide to join us in the building:

- ◆ There will continue to be a virtual worship service available each week until we are able to worship without restrictions. Our pre-recorded service routine will not change.
- ◆ Our in-person worship service is available as a live-streamed service on our YouTube channel, which allows you to take communion according to the UMC doctrine. While our first few services might have some technical hurdles to overcome, we are committed to making this a reality as quickly as we can.
- ◆ An appropriately fitted face covering will be necessary to attend worship and must be worn at all times while in the building. **No exceptions!**
- ◆ You will be required to affirm that you are free from COVID-19 symptoms and provide your name and contact information upon entering the church.
- ◆ Worship will occur at the normal 10:30 time, but the church will not be unlocked until 10:00 am. Entry will be via the breezeway doors and everyone will exit via the Market Street vestibule. All other entry points of the church will be locked and the breezeway doors will be locked at 10:35. We are taking precautions to avoid high touch surfaces so you will find most, if not all, doors open for you throughout the church.

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Congratulations to proud parents **Sean and Sarah Macomber** on the birth of their son:

Owen Alexander
January 18 at 5:47 am
8 lbs., 11 oz.



*Children are a gift from the Lord,
a reward from Him.*
Psalm 127:3

Faith in Action Update

On behalf of Faith in Action,
thank you for your support of the
Friends of Faith in Action

Campaign. We received donations from over 170 donors, surpassing the goal of raising \$75,000. These funds will enable the hiring of the first full-time organizer in 2021.

As we start the year, three new members are joining Faith in Action's 23 members: John Wesley United Methodist Church, COPSU (Coalicion Solidaria Pro Immigrantes Unidos), and Bridgewater Church of the Brethren.

Perhaps most importantly, at this moment, Faith in Action will continue to build relational power across the lines that divide us – religious, political, economic, racial, and city/county.

Learning to Dwell with the Lord

One of my favorite things to do is to sit with my daughter, Sarah Grace, and dwell. When she walks over and sits close, gazing up at me with those beautiful eyes, it is hard for me to desire anything other than remaining with her. As we dwell and abide with one another - giving our full attention to each other - nothing else matters. This experience with my daughter reminds me of the beauty of dwelling with the Lord.

In the Hebrew language, the word *dwell* can be translated: to sit, abide, to be set, to remain, stay, have one's abode, to be inhabited, to marry (give a dwelling to).

Merriam-Webster's dictionary identifies the word *dwell* as a verb and the definition is: 1) to remain for a time, to live as a resident, to exist, to keep attention directed.

I find these translations and definitions helpful as I consider the cry of David's heart in Psalm 27. In verse 4 he says, "*I have asked one thing from the Lord; it is what I desire: to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life.*"

David is saying that what he desires above all else is to remain where the Lord is. In David's time, this meant a specific location where people gathered to worship - like a sanctuary or a tent. Above all else, his one desire was to continuously remain in fellowship with the Lord.

I wonder when this became true for David. We know from the Scriptures that there were times in his life when he desired other things...times when his presenting desire led him to dwell in other places and with other people. As I ponder David's journey, I think of my own. I know that my deepest desire has always been to dwell with the Lord, but because of my pain and grief, fear and disappointment, there have been moments when the desire to escape these difficult emotions has driven me to dwell in other things.

Much of my journey with the Lord has been learning how to dwell with Him even in the midst of my difficult emotions. I have had to practice going "*through the valley of the shadow of death*" (Psalm 23:4). This has meant learning to dwell in my body in the midst of the overwhelming desire to escape the difficult emotions. "*Don't you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit?*" (1 Corinthians 6:19a). It has been a beautiful and messy journey. It has been a journey of success and failure, triumph and defeat, honor and humiliation. It has been a journey that had led me to desire ONE thing above ALL else - JESUS! In this posture, He has encountered me and healed the

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parts of me that use to run away from Him when it felt too hard. This has changed everything! I now live in victory and freedom as I have learned to dwell with Him in every moment of every day.

Psalm 27 helped me to get here. As I memorized this life-changing Psalm in March of 2020, my belief systems began to shift. I started to lay down old, ingrained mind-sets that proved to be false in the light of God's Word. As I renounced these destructive mind-sets, I created room in my soul for the truth to enter in about who God is and who I am in Him. This is the context for my breakthrough! God encountered me in His power and loving-kindness and the result was the gift of faith, the healing of my body, soul, and spirit, and the capacity to dwell with Him though ALL things. My life has not been the same since that day!

I want to take you on an adventure with me! I want to lead YOU through Psalm 27 this Lenten season. Come with me on a 40-Day journey that will create space for you to encounter the Lord as you ponder, reflect, and learn how to dwell with Him in your body.

Email me at faithfowler@vaumc.org to sign up to receive the daily email devotional called "*Dwell: A Journey through Psalm 27*". Upon signing up, this 40-Day daily devotional will be sent directly to you beginning the first week of Lent. Looking forward to the adventure with you!

Faith

Small Group Offering

"DWELL: A Journey Through Psalm 27"

A 7-week Lenten Small Group

Wednesdays, Noon—1 pm, via Zoom
February 17—March 31, 2021

Contact Faith at faithfowler@vaumc.org to sign up.

Race, Class, and the Kingdom of God
Course and Small Groups

Begin March 2021 via Zoom

More information and details to come.

Contact Faith at faithfowler@vaumc.org to learn more.