

THE GOOD NEWS



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St. Marys UMC

Northern District

West Virginia Conference

Northeastern Jurisdiction

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

How's your New Year's resolutions going? Since this is the first newsletter since we moved into a new calendar year, I'm wondering how those commitments you made to change your life in 2023 are going. Luckily, I didn't really make any significant resolutions, but historically, it doesn't take long for them to be forgotten or set aside as impossible.

However, I invite you to pause for a moment and look back at the year that has recently concluded. I don't know about you, but I have mixed feelings. My blessings have been abundant; my sense of God's grace has been constant, but I have also experienced things that I would not have chosen. There have been losses in my circle of friends as well as my church family; there have been sicknesses and challenges in my life and the lives of those I love; tensions have run high at some points; and uneasiness at our national and global situations has occasionally threatened to put my sense of hope and trust in the One to whom we belong in doubt.

In the midst of all that, I work to remember that while I am called to serve and be fully involved in this world—indeed to love it as Christ loves it—my ultimate citizenship is in the Kingdom of God. This world is not my final destination! I know there is a destiny for us all beyond this life.

While the Bible gives us tantalizing clues as to what that will be like, it can't really paint a complete picture, because there is no human vocabulary for that which

(Continued on the next page —>)

exceeds our human ability to understand. Someone once said that for the Christian, death does not extinguish the light. It puts out the lamp because dawn has come.

The Scriptures give us glimpses of what the next life will be like. Want to know more? Look up and consider these references to at least seven heavenly activities that will keep us busy forever:

1. We will worship God (Revelation 19:1-8; 22:8-9)
2. We will serve God (Revelation 22:3)
3. We will know God perfectly (Revelation 21:3; 22:4)
4. We will fellowship with others (Hebrews 12:23; Revelation 19:7-9; 22:14)
5. We will enjoy God and our heavenly home (Revelation 19:7; 22:14)
6. We will reign with God (Matthew 25:21, 23; Revelation 22:5)
7. We will rest (Revelation 14:13)

Perhaps you will want to join me in considering these seven activities, and in asking God how we can begin doing some of them now — certainly fellowship, service, and worship are possible every Sunday. We can enjoy a foretaste of heaven right now!

Blessings & Love,
Clare

October 10, 2022

Dear Clare,

My mother Elsie Maxwell Siers, was a member of the SMUMC. So many members of the church were “over the top” thoughtful to my mother during her aging years. For one, Jim McKnight and the men’s club built a ramp so Mother could exit her house safely. Secondly, Randy Nutter arranged for a church youth to visit her on Sundays. Her circle (I think it was Faith) called often to chat. Since I live out of town, all these gestures were comforting to my family. The church was a VERY important part of her life. I mention these “good deeds” to say SMUMC is not forgotten even though those “good deeds” took place years ago. I see in the “Good News” that the church continues to do “good works” within the church and the community.

Keep up the good work in the church.

God Bless You, Becky Brennan

CELEBRATION OF MISSION EVENT REPORT THROUGH 11/30/22

WV Annual Conference Churches:

By your dedicated support of the WV Conference Mission Ministries, cash gifts sent to the Conference Treasure for the Celebration of Mission Event through November 22, 2022 total **\$101,567.97**. Thank you sincerely for your continued support of COME, even though we have not been able to have actual "EVENTS" for the past three years. Your gifts show your faith in God's provision for missions, and your confidence in the work being performed by our ten mission ministries supported by COME.

On behalf of our WV Conference Mission Ministries, thank you for your generosity.

Rev. Clifford Schell, West Virginia Conference COME Coordinator

December 14, 2022

Dear Friends,

During this holiday season, The House of the Carpenter is engaged in serving nearly 350 children/youth from 140 different families as part of our Christmas Kids program this year. Our food pantry and thrift store are serving more people than ever. The education programs are having a positive impact on our students as they seek to recover from their pandemic experience. The arts programs see children and youth dancing, playing guitar, and painting. Health and well ness programs through our parish nurse and yoga programs continue to serve or community.

Your gift is helping the House of the Carpenter provide services for the holiday but also keeps our ongoing efforts to serve our community active throughout the year. All of us, the staff, volunteers, and most of all our neighbors say thank you for helping us bring hope this holiday season.

Blessings and peace to you this Christmas,
Dr. Michael Linger, Executive Director

Dear Friends at St. Mary's UMC,

THANK YOU for your contribution to the future of Crossroads Camp!

Being a camp alumni and board member, I am very passionate about camp and its future. I enclose a "State of the Greater Things Campaign" that I use as a script for what we have in mind for the camp's vision and future endeavors. I hope this can bring a smile to your face and excitement for the future.

Looking forward to what God has planned for camp and thanking God for you and what your church does every day to help those in your community.

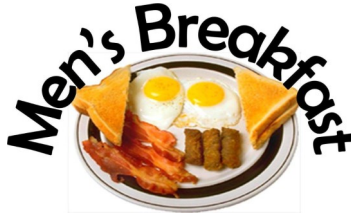
Blessings, Davina Bell, Crossroads Camp Treasurer

The "State of the Greater Things" can be found outside Deb's office.

United Methodist Men

Meet on the 3rd Sunday morning for breakfast
at 8 AM in the Fellowship Hall.

All men are welcome



Next Breakfast meeting - February 19th at 8 AM

*The UMM still has lots of apple butter for sale
The price is \$6 per pint. Thank you!*



2023 DATES TO REMEMBER

CHURCH COUNCIL - 6 PM

March 14 - May 9 - July 11 - September 12 - November 14

TRUSTEES - 5 PM

March 12 - May 14 - July 9 - September 10 - November 12

FINANCE COMMITTEE - 6 PM

April 11 - July 12 - October 10

LAY LEADERSHIP & NOMINATIONS - 6 PM

June 14 - July 12 (7 PM) - August 16

SPRC - 6 PM

February 7 - April 18 - July 11 - November 14



United Women In Faith News

FEBRUARY

Executive Committee - Monday February 6th at 5 PM

Circles - Monday February 6th at 6 PM

Program: ***Call to Prayer & Self-Denial***

Program: Grace

Flowers & Greeters: Peace

Donation

Ebenezer Community Outreach Center

Huntington, WV Celes Sheffield, Director

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| • February 6 | Call to Prayer and Self Denial Offering |
| • February 16 | New Vision Depot Work Day |
| • February 22 | ASH Wednesday |
| • March 23 | UWF Birthday - Day of Giving |
| | Celebrate with Great Joy |

Collect items for Sojourner House by March 6th

United Women in Faith – Circles 2023

Grace Circle

Baily, Wilma
 Boley, Donna
 Braun, Diane
Campbell, Liz-Spiritual Life
Carder, Carol-Co-Leader
 Collins, Janet
 Conaway, Carla
 Eddy, Liz
 Hamilton, Pam
Himmeger, Gretchen-Cards
 Ingram, Becky
 Little, Eleanor
Mayfield, Dodie-Treasurer
McGee, Sharon-Cards/Treas.
 Morgan, Sue
 Nichols, Sandra
 Nichols, Tammi
 Park, Mary Frances
 Simonton, Sue
 Smith, Sheila
Thomas, Debbie -Leader

Peace Circle

Baughman, Janet
Blauser, Ruth-Spiritual Life
 Carl, Barbara
 Conaway, Karen
 Conaway, Linda
 Davis, Donna
Ennis, Melissa-Cards
 Hupp, Sharon
Lewis, Mae-Treasurer
 Mankins, Beth
 Mays, Pat
 McLaughlin, Louise
 Nutter, Judy
 Powell, JoAnn
 Rouse, Suzanne
 Scadden, Angie
Stutzman, Beverly-Leader
 Troisi, Thomasina
 White, Margaret
Wilson, Karen -Co-Leader

Kindness Circle

Barnhart, Lori
 Bennett, Whitney
Carder, Melissa -Leader
 Carpenter, Kristi
 Cronin, Addie
 Evans, Suzanne
 Fetty, Joette
 Hadley, Mindy
 Hooper, Mary
 Hupp, Jennifer
 Jones, Kristi
 Lewis, Dianna
 Wells, Helen
 Westfall, Leslie

Honored

Leggett, Anerl
 Poling, Ginger
 Roden, Judy

Honored

Dennis, Audra “Babe”
 Ingram, Margo
 Neely, Evelyn



We would like to thank the church congregation and community for all the sympathy cards thoughts and prayers extended to us upon the death of my sister, Sara McKnight. They were all very much appreciated.

Love, George & Eleanor Little

Thank you for your generous gift to my family and myself. We appreciate your support of us and give thanks we are called to serve here at St. Marys UMC. A blessed New Year to all all!

Blessings & Love, Clare & David

Thank you for your generous gift. I appreciate it more than you will ever know! I consider it an honor to work for such a wonderful and loving group of people. And I'm happy to call you my family in Christ.

Love and prayers, Deb

Thank you for your generous Christmas gift. I am blessed to be a part of the choir and this wonderful church.

God Bless, Mark

Thank you for your generous Christmas gift. I greatly appreciate your thoughtfulness and all of the support you have given me I pray that each of you will receive many blessings in 2023.

Love, Barb

St. Marys United Methodist Church

Leaders – 2023

Members of the Church Council

Pastor	Rev. Clare J. Sulgit
Church Council Chairperson	Diane Braun
Lay Leader	Keith White
Treasurer	Randy Nutter
Financial Secretary	Gary Loughner
Lay Member to A. Conf.	Beverly Stutzman
Alt Lay member to AC	Pat Mays
Sec. to Charge Conference	Karen Conaway
SS Superintendent	Andy Hickman
Church Council Secretary	Carla Conaway
Membership Secretary	Louise McLaughlin
Chairperson – SPRC	Melissa Carder
Finance Chairperson	Gary Loughner
Trustees Chairperson	Al Thacker
UWF President	Liz Loughner
UMM President	Bill Carder
Youth Leaders	Randy & Judy Nutter
District Conf. Delegates	Beverly Stutzman & Pat Mays
Church Business Admin.	Debbie Thomas

Church Council Members at Large

2023	2024	2025
Rick McCullough	Pam Hamilton	Linda Birkhimer
Max Powell	Mike McGee	David Conaway
Jim McKnight	Sheila Hickman	Diane Braun

Committee on Staff-Parish Relations

2023	2024	2025
Brian Westfall	Frank Ennis, Vice-Chair	Lori Barnhart
Richard Conaway	Beverly Stutzman	Libby Watson
Melissa Carder, Chair	Bryan Poling	Mindy Hadley

Keith White, Lay Leader

Finance Committee

2023	2024	2025
Robbie Evans	Al Thacker	Melissa Ennis
Gary Loughner, Chair	Sherie Poling	Carol McFadden

Keith White, Lay Leader

Diane Braun, Church Council Chair

Randy Nutter, Treasurer

Debbie Thomas, Church Business Adm.

Beverly Stutzman, Annual Conf. Delegate

Rev. Clare J. Sulgit

Melissa Carder, SPRC Chair

Gary Loughner, Financial Secretary

Al Thacker, Trustee President

Committee on Nominations and Leadership Development

2023	2024	2025
Karen Conaway	Gretchen Himmeger	Mark Barnhart
Sharon McGee		

Rev. Clare J. Sulgit, Chairperson

Trustees Committee

2023	2024	2025
Sue Morgan	Mae Lewis	Al Thacker
Andy Hickman	Tim Ambrose	Doug Poling
John Davies	Liz Campbell	Wayne Birkhimer

Rev. Clare J. Sulgit

GIVING

TOTAL GIFTS RECEIVED

December 4	\$7,769.00
December 11	\$5,160.00
December 18	\$2,983.00
December 25	\$25,076.70

ATTENDANCE

IN PERSON

ONLINE

December 4	49	126
December 11	63	95
December 18	58	114
December 25	42	124

YTD Gifts received for our Budget - \$191,682.65

YTD needed for our Budget - \$179,080.00

Custodial Account Balance - \$1,115.00

Year-End Financial Report

Thank you to everyone who made sure we finished strong financially in 2022. We ended the year considerably ahead of our budget needs. Your faithful support of the church's ministries is appreciated and makes a difference in our community and beyond. Please keep it up!

Through our Christmas Eve offering, you also gave \$1,283.00 to the WVU Children's Hospital in Morgantown, WV. Lives will be touched because of your generosity.

Neighbor Network Highlights for the Month of November

Total Donations: 186

Total Customers: 888

Total Families receiving services: 110

(Gabriel Project - 16, total of 19 children)

(food - 208 individuals)

(utility assistance - 4)

Total Thrift Store Transactions: \$10,950.83

Total Donations to NN: \$14,050.83

Total Expenses: \$11,312.89

Number of Volunteers this month: 21

**Volunteers are
always needed,
please call the store
at 304-684-3990 if
you can help.**

NEIGHBOR NETWORK FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Our Neighbor Network partners with Mountaineer Food Bank for a monthly food giveaway. It is held at the Marina beginning at noon. Volunteers are always need and ask to be at the Marina by 9:45 AM. You may also know someone who would benefit from the distribution. Pleasants County residents only please.

Our next giveaways are February 10th, March 10th, April 21st, May 12th, June 9th, July 14th, August 11th, September 8th, October 13th, November 9th, December 8th

Did you know that our weekly radio broadcast airs on Sunday mornings at 9 AM on 93.9 FM. Our weekly worship video posts at 10:30 AM on our 2 Facebook pages and on YouTube. These are outreach ministries the church supports through its budget. Please share this information!

Birthdays

JANUARY

Eleanor Little	1/8
Anerl Leggett	1/12
Marshall Norman	1/12
Joe Fleege	1/13
Morgan Poling	1/13
David Fetty	1/15
Natalie Ferrell	1/16
Liz Carpenter-Eddy	1/16
Reece Westfall	1/16
John Lanham	1/22
Patricia Moore	1/23
Thomas Thacker	1/23
Judy Nutter	1/25
Angela Scadden	1/26
Ty Flower	1.27
Chris Lewis	1/29
Darla Carpenter	1/29
Treasa Davies	1/29

FEBRUARY

Debbie Thomas	2/1
Donna Barksdale	2/2
Bev Fitzpatrick	2/2
Sharon McGee	2/4
Andrew Simonton	2/5
Steve Pickens	2/7
Maya Morrison	2/9
Frank Ennis	2/9
Andrea Watson	2/10
Charmel Radcliff	2/11
Drew Wells	2/12
Asa Nichols	2/12
Mildred Harden	2/13
Katee McVey	2/14
Samantha Eisenman	2/14
Nancy Main	2/15
Kacie Estep	2/16
Tim Ambrose	2/18
Tammy Poling	2/19
John Davies	2/20
Maureen Maiden	2/20
Betsy Metz	2/20
James Poling	2/20
Angie Dalrymple	2/21
Karen Carpenter	2/21
Brian Westfall	2/21
Joe Conaway	2/22
Melissa Carder	2/22
Martha Sams	2/25
Kathy Elder	2/26

MEETINGS

FEBRUARY

6 UWF Exec. Comm. - 5 PM

6 UWF Circles - 6 PM

MARCH

10 Church Council - 6 PM

15 Trustees - 5 PM

EVERY MONTH

First Mon. - UWF - 6 PM

Third Sun. - UMM - 8 AM

OTHER GROUPS MEETING AT OUR CHURCH

2nd Mon. Habitat for Humanity 6 PM

& Middle Island Ramblers 4-H 7 PM

Every Tuesday Boy Scouts 7 PM

Every Thursday AA / Al-Anon 8 PM



Do we have your birthday listed?
Please call Debbie at 304-684-3018
if we do not have it!

PRAYERS FOR:

Paul Tallman
Betty Moorhead
Ginger Poling
Suellen Simonton
Caroline Hill
Margo Ingram
Shirley Seaboy
Carolyn Ashkar
Avery Clickenger
Debbie Bailey
Matthew Beard

Benny & Ruth Wagner
Emma Jean Dobbins
Philip Starks
Dwight Davis
Maddie Collins
Dave Taylor
Art Smith
Terri Gellner-Hulls
Mike Davis
Johnna Cochran
JD Williamson

Evelyn Neely
Duane Larsen
Dwayne Barnes
John Hess
Smitty Smith
Sheila Scadden
Jennifer Furr
Webb Carpenter
Greg Hill
Mary Brewer
Rob Wilson

Denise Vandenberg
Nancy Forrester
Eleanor Pierce
Kenneth Carder
Merle Rouse
Bev Fitzpatrick
Kohner Loughner
Betty Wilson
Martha Hoyt
Janet Nutter Matheny



*Christian Sympathy
is extended to the
friends & family of
Margaret Bills Elder*



*Christian Sympathy
is extended to the
friends & family of
Charlie McKnight
(Brother of Jim McKnight)*



*Christian Sympathy
is extended to the
friends & family of
Larry Nutter
(brother of Randy Nutter)*



*Christian Sympathy
is extended to the
friends & family of
Joan Robey*

The January/February 2023 Upper Room is available at the church.
Want one mailed to you? Just let us know.

THE HISTORY OF LENT

The word Lent comes from the Anglo-Saxon word that means “spring” or “springtime.” Taken literally, the word means that this is the time of the year when the days lengthen. This season of the church year is a time of preparation, reflection, growth, and change.

As God’s people take the time to learn more about God and their relationship to God and to others, the season before Easter can be seen as the springtime of the soul - a time of growth in faith and a time of nurture in the faith that is already theirs.

The Christian faith centers around the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We need to see this event from both sides - before and after - because each side of the story is incomplete without the other.

The season of Lent began in the early church as a time for preparing new converts for Baptism on Easter. By the middle of the fourth century, a 40-day preparation period, not counting Sundays. Historically the Lenten fasts were lessened on Sundays, thus not included in the days of Lent. All Sundays are considered “little Easters,” Celebrating the resurrection.

The season of Lent begins for many people on Shrove Tuesday, but it officially begins on Ash Wednesday and continues until Easter morning.

By the year A.D. 400 the early Christian Church had established this period of 40 days. It became a time of self-discipline and harsh self-examination, and during the Middle Ages, the season of Lent was so strict that people dreaded its coming.

Through time, the harsh demands and expectations have been softened and relaxed. People today look to Lent as a time of growth and change. They often include fasting or restriction of some of their favorite foods or drinks during the 40 days of Lent. Some people spend more time in prayer and meditation while others give up habits they think are unnecessary. Still others search to discover how they can share God’s love with others in the world in meaningful ways.

Purple is the color associated with the season of Lent. Purple is a solemn color, reminiscent of royalty and repentance. It reflects the serious and somber nature of this time in the life of the church.

Taken from Before and After Easter: Activities and Ideas for Lent to Pentecost.

Ash Wednesday Service

**Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on February 22nd.
Our Ash Wednesday service will be at 7:00 pm.**

A decorative border of snowflakes surrounds the central text. The border consists of a top row of 16 snowflakes, a bottom row of 16 snowflakes, and two vertical columns of 8 snowflakes each on the left and right sides.

When Snow Falls

Just a reminder about our

Church Inclement weather policy:

When the weather is bad on Sundays in St. Marys, Clare will be at church if at all possible. However, please only travel to church if you can **SAFELY!** The Trustees will make sure the parking lot and sidewalks are passable. A message will be sent by the One-Call Now system if we need to announce cancellations during the week such as United Women in Faith, Choir practice, etc...

Outreach Ministry Opportunities

- Neighbor Network food pantry needs:
Boxed Mac. & Cheese, small pkgs. of Hamburger & Hot Dogs, Soup Beans, Peanut Butter, Jelly, Syrup, Soup, Instant Potatoes, Crackers, Pork & Beans, Canned Milk, Complete Pancake Mix, Jiffy Cornbread Mix, oil for cooking
- Size 5 diapers for Neighbor Network

Upcoming Dates

- January 25* **Choir at 7 PM**
- January 26* **NN Board Meeting at 3:30 PM**
- February 1* **Choir at 7 PM**
- February 6* **UWF Exec. Committee at 5 PM**
UWF at 6 PM
- February 7* **SPRC at 6 PM**
- February 8* **Choir at 7 PM**
- February 10* **NN Food Distribution (Marina) at 9:45 AM**
- February 15* **Choir at 7 PM**
- February 19* **UMM Breakfast Meeting at 8 AM**

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