



The Beacon

JANUARY 2025

The Newsletter of Duncan Memorial United Methodist Church

Our Mission: "To Make Disciples of Jesus Christ and Share His Love"

Happy New Year 🎉 Happy New Year 🎉 Happy New Year 🎉

It's a new year, and with it comes the expectation and challenges of New Year's Resolution. The hope of a New Year Resolution is to do something or give up something that helps us to become a better person in some way. For some it is goal of losing weight, for others it may be quitting smoking, and still others hope to travel or volunteer more. By the middle of February however, we often find that our motivation for these resolutions quickly fades. It is hard to change ourselves by our own willpower.

That is why many Methodists since the time of John Wesley have entered into their own sort of new year's resolution called the Wesleyan Covenant. Unlike traditional resolutions, this covenant is not about doing things through our own willpower, but through the grace of God. This of course can be tricky, as sometimes God's will are not our desires. For this reason the covenant is more about putting our trust in God and reaffirming our willingness to follow wherever God calls us to go. This covenant is best summed up through a prayer John Wesley developed, and one that I will invite us to pray each day as we begin the new year.

"I am no longer my own, but yours. Put me to what you will, place me with whom you will. Put me to doing, put me to suffering. Let me be put to work for you or set aside for you, Praised for you or criticized for you. Let me be full, let me be empty. Let me have all things, let me have nothing. I freely and fully surrender all things to your glory and service. And now, O wonderful and holy God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, you are mine, and I am yours. So be it. And the covenant which I have made on earth, Let it also be made in heaven. Amen."

Pastor Daniel



Scripture Lessons and Sermon Titles for January

January 5-Epiphany Sunday

Matthew 2: 1-12

The Wise Men

January 12-Baptism of the Lord

Luke 3: 15-17, 21-22

I Was There

January 19-Second Sunday after Epiphany

John 2: 1-11

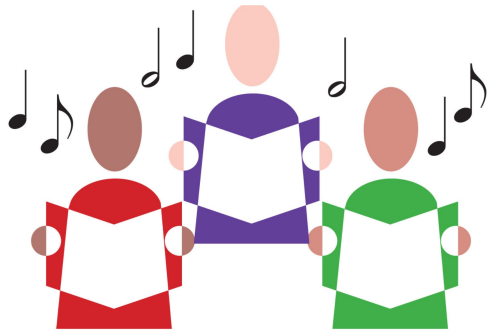
Do Whatever He Tells You

January 26-Third Sunday after Epiphany

Pulpit Swap

NOAH'S ARK — The image of an ark, or boat — often shown with pairs of animals — recalls the story of Noah and the “Great Flood” in Genesis. The floodwaters represent God’s judgment on sin, while the ark reminds us of his gracious power to save and redeem. In this account, Christians see a foreshadowing of our baptism into Christ: “And baptism, which [God’s rescue of Noah and his family] prefigured, now saves you ...” (1 Peter 3:21, NRSV).





Music Moment

By John Hudson

Epiphany is upon us and I wanted to share the story of the carol **WE THREE KINGS** since Epiphany is literally the last of the twelve days of Christmas, the day the wise men finally found the baby Jesus.

In the book of Matthew, there is a passage that reads "there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem". Most, including King Herod, thought they were astrologers. When they told Herod they were looking for the King of the Jews, it caused panic in the royal court, leading to the murder of countless baby boys in an

attempt to eliminate a future threat.

Most people believe that these astrologers came from Persia. Astrologers at that time were often priests, which explains why they were called Magi. The Magi were widely known dream interpreters for the Persian royal family.

The number of Magi that found the baby Jesus is uncorroborated. The bible indicates that there were at least two since Matthew states there were wise MEN. The number three evolved from the gifts given that represented Christ's life:

Gold - Kingly reign where Jesus would wear the crown forever

Frankincense - Ministry and worshipping the Son of God

Myrrh - Death and resurrection where the bitter perfume would mask death and blossom forth in life unending

John Henry Hopkins Jr. enjoyed the childlike spirit of the Christmas season even though he had no children of his own. A brilliant scholar earning degrees from the University of Vermont and a law school in New York City, Hopkins was ordained an Episcopal priest and became a writer for the New York-based *Church Journal*. As Epiphany neared, he wondered what to give his nieces and nephews for a gift. He decided to put into words and music what it might have been like to be one of wise men. The resulting carol had a Middle Eastern feel to it, its rhythms reflecting the sway of a camel's gait.

WE THREE KINGS was published in 1857. At the turn of the 20th century, many churches decided to start including carols in hymnals. This work, which defined the reason for the celebration of Epiphany, became one of America's most popular Christmas songs. It was also the first carol originating from the United States to achieve worldwide popularity.



In the classic film "The Robe" the Roman tribune, Marcellus, and his fiancée, Diana, are about to become martyrs. They have confessed Christ to the Roman Senate and the emperor Caligula (who was quite the whack job). Now they will be led out into an open field, where they will be tied to stakes and shot full of arrows.

Those people knew they were going to die that day. Most of us don't have any idea of our length of life, except for a generic estimate by our doctors if we have a serious disease. But in this new year we should, if we haven't done so, make a plan for the loved ones we leave behind after we exit this world. It's both very hard and very easy. Few people want to think about their impending death, but there are so many more resources available to us now to make decisions.

This is important, so pay attention. I interviewed a staff member at Seniors First and he immediately said that yes, you have the "Five Wishes" document, but it isn't necessarily lawsuit-proof. He recommended that you start with your personal physician, then contact a lawyer. I said, but I'm poor, or I'm on a fixed income. He mentioned Blue Ridge Legal, which has an office in Winchester. I can't give any details because I haven't used them, but it's an option.

An advance directive gives someone else (friend, family member, someone you trust implicitly) the authority to make decisions on your behalf in the event that you can't do so. Under this heading is your living will, organ donation, DNR, etc. This document must be signed by you AND notarized for it to be legal. It may take some really hard thinking on your part to decide what is best for you and your family.

I ask you to please not put this off. You don't want your family members (who may not get along with each other) to be screaming at each other in the ICU waiting room, arguing over your course of treatment, while you are on a ventilator (Lord, the things I have seen). Do you want a feeding tube, dialysis, chemotherapy, radiation, assisted ventilation? Do you have people in your family that you trust to talk to about your wishes? Where do you want your estate to go? Your pets, possessions, personal property? Yes, this will matter. We don't have the next hour of life promised to us, let alone tomorrow. And nobody is taking their money with them to Heaven. Up there they use gold for asphalt.

Pray earnestly about this, if you haven't already done the paperwork. Remember that God alone knows when He will call us, so we all need to be ready. This includes the stuff we leave behind. Will it go to advance the kingdom of Christ? Happy New Year.

Judy Melton



The Church Staff would like to thank the congregation for their Christmas gift. It was very much appreciated.

Pastor Daniel, Janet, John, Fiona, Frank, Stephanie & Lee.



Christmas Eve 2024
Photos by John Mallery





Jan 2	Viviane Meder
Jan 3	Joyce Vorisek
Jan 6	Thomas Vorisek
Jan 7	Teresa Baker
Jan 11	Katherine Reid
Jan 12	George Dellinger
Jan 14	Dayna Lawson
	Lee Sheaffer
Jan 19	Colby Bogert
Jan 21	Dorothy Meyers
	Randy Orndorff
Jan 22	Zachary Hudson
Jan 23	Randall Vinson
Jan 24	Brandon Christian
	Janet McDonald
Jan 25	Cynthia Morin
Jan 26	Audrey Hudson
Jan 27	Sheila Stephens

Snow/Ice Policy

In case of snow and/or ice when an event is scheduled at DMUMC, delays or closings will



be reported with a Robo Call. If there is light snow and activities remain on schedule, but you don't feel comfortable driving in the snow, then please stay home. Your safety is our greatest concern!

A Daily Prayer

Since God will be my end
Let him be my beginning,
So that I may now fully live
Instead of falling, straying, sinning.



Bible Quiz



When 12-year-old Jesus stayed at the Jerusalem temple as Joseph and Mary started traveling home, after how many days did his parents find him?

- A. 1 day
- B. 2 days
- C. 3 days
- D. 7 days





In the Military	Our Members	Family & Friends
Richard Harris	Doris Braithwaite	John Allen
John Pepper	Linda Burcham	John Wesley Allen
Jared Tinsman	Leona Cain	Katie Barsi
Triston Timbrook	Cheyenne Fowler	Art Beamer
Jessica Young	Jean Hinson	Charles "Larrie" Dillow
	Jeanne Hudson	Wanda Dunn
	Len Lawson	Ava Kilmer
	Debra Neises	Faith Kinney
Shut-ins	Tim Wilcox	Tim Mansfield
George Dellinger		Toni O'Connor
*Audrey Hudson		Donna Patterson
*Sam Legard		Lisa Perkins
*Alice Mansfield		Drew Pinilla
*Cindy Morin		Larry Rosenberry
*Marilyn Olsen		Gina Sutherlin
	Families Grieving	Easton Tavenner
*Nursing home or Assisted-living home		Jim Wiedemer
		Pat Wince

Leadership & Staff
Pastor-Rev. Daniel Wray
Administrative Assistant
Janet Moore

Directors of Programs for
Children/Youth
Frank & Stephanie Moore

Director of Music
John Hudson

Audio Visual
Claire Luzzi

Sexton-Fiona Glynn

Nursery Attendant
Lee Campbell

Administrative Council
Chairperson-Glen Hetzel
Lay Leader-Chris Shipe

Nurture
Sheryl Reid, Cindy Morin

Outreach & Mission
Sheila Stephens

Worship
Mildred Keating
John Hudson

Congregational Care Team
Cheyenne Fowler-Leader

Sheryl Reid-Leader
Jerry Beydler
Trudy Gheen
Beverly Goode
Barbara Lawson
Ellen Wilcox

Wee Angels Daycare
Administrator

Lauren Hawkins Bucher



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January 2025

Duncan Memorial United Methodist Church
210 E. Main Street, Berryville, VA 22611

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A Prayer for Spiritual Growth

When my spiritual vision is foggy, help me to find my way.

When my understanding is incomplete, open my mind and increase my patience.

When my indifference blocks my senses, touch my heart.

When worry or fear raise their voices, speak to my faith.

Let your Spirit permeate my longings as well as my living.
and my loving. Amen.

—Peggy Ferrell, Prayers and Poems