



# The Beacon January 2026

*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 🎉

The New Year brings for many people new hopes and dreams. We put behind us everything that we wanted to do in the last year, but never did, and now our focus is renewed with hope for what the new year brings. This is why New Year's resolutions are so popular. We become determined to lose that weight, quit smoking, read more books, and hundreds of other goals that we set for ourselves.

How often do we think about our spiritual life as we begin a new year? For early Methodists, the new year offered an opportunity to renew our commitment to being followers of Christ. During a service, known as the Wesleyan Covenant Service, Methodists would acknowledge what they had done well and what they hadn't in the past year, and commit striving to become more like Christ in the ways they live in the new year. This service was marked with a special prayer that would be prayed each year. Many Methodists today still pray this prayer, sometimes even daily. And so as we begin a new year, I will leave you with this prayer from our founder John Wesley. May it bless you and guide you throughout the year.

*"I am no longer my own, but thine. Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt. Put me to doing, put me to suffering. Let me be employed by thee or laid aside for thee, exalted for thee or bought low for thee. Let me be full, let me be empty. Let me have all things, let me have nothing. I freely and heartily yield all things to thy pleasure and disposal. And now, O glorious and blessed God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it. And the covenant which I have made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven. Amen."*

*Pastor Daniel*



**Scripture Lessons and Sermon Titles for January**

**January 4 - Epiphany Sunday**

**Matthew 2:1-12**

*Epiphany*

**January 11 - Baptism of the Lord**

**Matthew 3:13-17**

*Well Pleased*

**January 18 - Second Sunday after Epiphany**

**John 1:29-42**

*Well Pleased*

**January 25 - Third Sunday after Epiphany**

*Pulpit Swap*

***Scripture Keys to a Joyful New Year***

**H**old fast to your faith (Hebrews 4:14)

**A**ssemble with the saints (Hebrews 10:25)

**P**ray earnestly every day (1 Thessalonians 5:17, 18)

**P**ray for great blessings (Malachi 3:10)

**Y**ield not to temptation (1 Thessalonians 5:22)

**N**eglect not your talents and opportunities (Galatians 6:10)

**E**xamine yourself daily (2 Corinthians 13:5)

**W**ork diligently for the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58)

**Y**ield your members to righteousness (Romans 6:11,16)

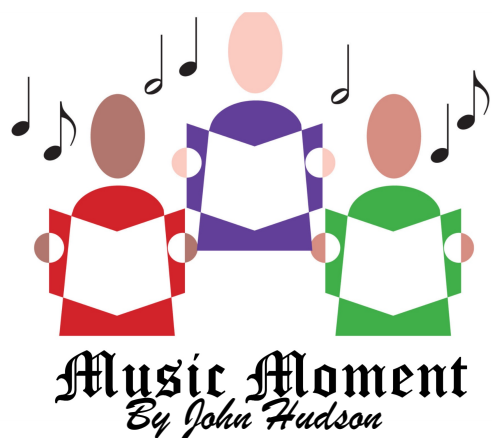
**E**xercise yourself in godliness (1 Timothy 4:7)

**A**im at sinless perfection (Hebrews 6:1)

**R**edeem the time (Ephesians 5:15, 16)

— Gus Nichols





## Part two of our story of O HOLY NIGHT —

Born in 1813, John Sullivan Dwight was a graduate of Harvard College and Divinity School. He became a unitarian minister in Massachusetts but panic attacks struck him each time he sermonized. As a result, he eventually understood that he would be unable to continue in his ministry position.

Gifted and bright, he channeled his energies into writing, founding Dwight's Journal of Music. This publication inspired some of the most gifted musicians and music lovers in the northeast. As he looked for new material,

he read CANTIQUE DE NOEL in French. He was particularly moved by the lines "truly he taught us to love one another; his law is love and his gospel is peace. Chains shall he break for the slave is our brother; and in his name all oppression shall cease." Dwight opposed slavery. Keeping the original meaning intact, he translated it into English. Published in his magazine and in several songbooks of the period, O HOLY NIGHT quickly found favor in America, especially in the north during the Civil War.

Adams had been dead for many years and Cappeau and Dwight were old men when, on Christmas Eve 1906, Reginald Fessenden, a university professor in Pittsburgh and former chief chemist for Thomas Edison, did something long thought impossible. Using a new type of generator, Fessenden spoke into a microphone and, for the first time in history, a man's voice was broadcast over the airwaves, coincidentally on Christmas Eve. The first words spoken? "And it came to pass in those days that here went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed..."

Shocked radio operators on ships and wireless owners at newspapers sat stunned as their coded messages suddenly were understandable in English as a man read from the Gospel. It must have seemed like a miracle. People rushed to their wireless units to catch this amazing event. Then, Fessenden picked up his violin and play O HOLY NIGHT, the first song ever sent through the air via radio waves.

After an unbelievably challenging journey. O HOLY NIGHT has been sung millions of times in churches in every corner of the world and has become one of the most beautiful, inspired pieces and music ever created.



Can we get a couple of things clear, right off the bat? The homeless are not necessarily stupid, and the homeless are not necessarily mentally ill.

I don't often get offended at the national news (okay, I do), but they did a story last month that pushed my buttons. Everyone knows about the Portuguese national who murdered two students at Brown University, and then went on to shoot a professor. A homeless man (they called him "John") provided the F.B.I. with crucial information about the killer, right down to his license plate. They were able to run the man down because of John's description. Some journalist on the broadcast mentioned, incredulously, "This homeless man lives in the basement of a building at the University??" I wanted to yell at the T.V. screen, "Yeah, so what? It was warm there. He possibly saved many lives, something you and I couldn't have done."

Some very brief medical definitions: A sociopath lacks empathy, can go into a rage, behaves impulsively, sees nothing wrong with their attitude. A psychopath has violent tendencies, manipulates others, can display a cold and uncaring attitude. A narcissist truly thinks the world revolves around them, needs consistent affirmation and admiration, doesn't give a hoot about you or your family. (Please don't diagnose your in-laws — that is so rude).

Do we ignore these people? Mercy, no. Jesus said to love your neighbor as yourself. He also said, "Be ye wise as serpents, and as harmless as doves." That means that IF the person is already diagnosed, you show them the love of Christ even as you educate yourself about the condition. I know some people who would drain me dry emotionally if I allowed them. I love them dearly, but I must hold them at arm's length. When I work the WATTS shelter every year, I can figure out quickly why some guests are there. My job is not to diagnose or judge, but to love them unconditionally. (This is also a big reason why the Laurel Center is so needed).

If you can't do anything else, smile whenever you see people that you think are "different". They are also God's children, and Jesus died on the Cross for them. God knows their mental status far better than we do. Always ask for wisdom from the Holy Spirit if you have an opportunity to reach out to the homeless.

Judy Melton

# Christmas Eve 2025



## JANUARY Birthdays

Jan 2	Viviane Meder
Jan 3	Joyce Vorisek
Jan 6	Thomas Vorisek
Jan 11	Katherine Reid
Jan 12	George Dellinger
Jan 14	Dayna Lawson
	Lee Sheaffer
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!



### WATTS Volunteers Needed

On January 20, DMUMC will be co-hosting WATTS. Volunteers are needed for this. Please see Cindy Willingham if you wish to volunteer.



# WEE ANGELS LEARNING CENTER

## January



As we step into a brand-new year, our hearts are full of gratitude and anticipation for all that God has in store for us. January is a beautiful reminder that God delights in giving us new beginnings—fresh pages to fill with growth, joy, and His abundant blessings. Here at WALC, we are excited to welcome our children back and begin another chapter together.

In the months ahead, we look forward to making memories—big and small. Whether it's exploring new lessons, creating art, playing with friends, or celebrating milestones, these moments become the building blocks of our community. We pray that every activity and every interaction reflects God's love and helps our children experience the joy of being known, supported, and cherished.

As we begin this new year, we ask for your continued prayers for our teachers, families, and students. May God guide us with wisdom, fill our classrooms with peace, and bless our children with hearts open to learning and discovering His goodness in every day.

Here's to a wonderful January and a joyful year ahead—filled with God's blessings, growth, and unforgettable memories!

-Lauren Hawkins, WALC Administrator





In the Military	Our Members	Family & Friends
Richard Harris	Patty Aycock	John Allen
John Pepper	Doris Braithwaite	John Wesley Allen
Triston Timbrook	Linda Burcham	Katie Barsi
Jared Tinsman	Mike Clotzman	Art Beamer
Tyler Tinsman	Joy Fiddler	Warren Broy
Jessica Young	Cheyenne Fowler	Jessica Clotzman
	Jean Hinson	Wanda Dunn
	Jeanne Hudson	Lisa Gheen
<b>Shut-ins</b>	Lew Lawson	Faith Kinney
George Dellinger	Erin McDonald	Janet Moore
*Audrey Hudson	Robyn McGrath	Stephanie Moore
*Alice Mansfield	Kaia Meyer	Toni O'Conner
*Cindy Morin	Debra Neises	Donna Patterson
	Adam Owens	Lisa Perkins
*Nursing home or Assisted-living home	James Preston (JP) Puryear	Drew Pinilla
	Ellen Wilcox	Gina Sutherlin
	Tim Wilcox	Easton Tavenner
	Debbie Zimmerman	Ann Varley
	<b>Families Grieving</b>	Pat Wince
	Family of James Blake, Sr	

Please be in prayer for our church, our employees, our community, our state, our nation, and one another. In times of peril, God's people have spent time in prayer and fasting to seek Devine favor for healing.



**Our Website:**  
[www.dmumc.org](http://www.dmumc.org)



# The Beacon

## January 2026

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US Postage Paid  
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Berryville, VA 22611

Address Service Requested

### Leadership & Staff

**Pastor**

**Rev. Daniel Wray**

**Administrative Assistant**  
**Brenda Elsea**

**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**

**Outreach & Mission**  
**Sheila Stephens**

**Worship**  
**Mildred Keating**  
**John Hudson**

**Congregational Care Team**  
**Cheyenne Fowler-Leader**  
**Sheryl Reid-Leader**  
**Trudy Gheen**  
**Beverly Goode**  
**Barbara Lawson**  
**Ellen Wilcox**

**Wee Angels Daycare**  
**Administrator**  
**Lauren Hawkins Bucher**

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



## When All Else Fails— God Reigns

When we deliberate, God reigns;  
When we decide wisely; God reigns;  
When we decide foolishly; God reigns;  
When we serve God in humble loyalty,  
God reigns;  
When we serve God self-assertively,  
God reigns;  
When we rebel and seek to withhold  
our service, God reigns—  
The Alpha and the Omega, which is,  
and which was and which is to come,  
the Almighty.

—William Temple  
At the Lamberth Conference, 1930