

ST. JOHN'S UMC EPISTLE

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2025

Pastor: Rev. Chuck Cole



1716 N. Augusta St.

Staunton, VA 24401

(540) 886-1500; stjohnsumc@verizon.net

www.stjohnsstaunton.com; facebook.com/stjohnsstaunton

Table of Contents~

Page 2....From the Pastor

Page 3....Preschool News

Page 4....Church News

Page 5....Church News

Page 6....Getting to Know Us

Page 7....History

Page 8....Birthdays

Insert....Calendars



Long Term Planning,

On January 19th we will begin a long-term planning process under the well qualified leadership of our very own Hannah Gazmen. Hannah is a Marine Corp Officer working in logistics and planning and in the civilian world she works for Target Corporate in planning and goal setting. She is very excited to use her skills to aid the church in an ongoing process of long-term planning with the setting of 1, 3 and 5 Year goals.

After the formation of a vision and mission statement. Pastor Chuck will present the overall goals for the church and then each committee will seek to set 1,3 and 5 year goals. The goal setting part will be repeated annually. This is an exciting opportunity for us to be more effective as a body at making disciples of Jesus Christ here in Staunton and throughout the world.

Please be in prayer for this on-going process. Also please if possible plan to attend the first two hour meeting immediately following worship on January 19th. Lunch will be provided.

Dear Brothers and Sisters of St. Johns,

As we begin a New Year some of us may have made New Year's resolutions. It is my prayer that we are able to follow through with those that will bring us greater physical, emotional and spiritual so that we can be more faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

In connection to our physical and emotional health perhaps this is to exercise more regularly or eat differently, perhaps a decrease in time spent in front of screens or to make a weekly call to a relative or friend with whom we need deeper connection or to maybe make an appointment with a counselor to work on an issue that we need help with. These are of course just some resolutions that would help our physical and emotional health.

In terms of spiritual health maybe a resolution to more consistent time with the scripture and prayer, or to prioritize worship attendance, or maybe to increase your giving to the church by 1% of your annual income. Another possibility I would encourage is a resolution to pray and participate in the Long-term planning process being led by Hannah Gazmen starting January 19th.

I am confident that if we approach this process prayerfully God will shape us and help us fulfill his mission in this community. The more of us that are actively praying and participating in setting and living out the goals the more vital we will be for Christ.

Most importantly of all though let us resolve to rejoice in the Lord this coming year whatever the news; the Good News of Jesus Christ is true always and everywhere.

Blessing in Christ,

Rev. Chuck Cole

St. John's Preschool Epistle Article:
December 2024

We have been so busy this holiday season learning about the true meaning of Christmas, the birth of Jesus Christ. The children have been working so hard practicing for their Christmas Program. They have created Christmas crafts each day to put together a gift bag for their parents to receive. It was so wonderful to watch them perform; Mrs. Laney and I are so proud of each of them. After the program everyone joined for cookies and milk in the Social Hall, and it was a beautiful end of the 2024 school year.



Mrs. Laney and I look forward to the children's return after Christmas break! It is going to be a fun filled New Year, with new crafts, and new lessons.

Wishing you all peace,

Alissa Jones and Laney Greer



Church News



Trustees

We recently had to replace the hot water heater at the Parsonage at a cost of \$1,431.00. We are also busy working on selling the property at Jollivue UMC. We have several churches interested in the property and hope to start showing it after Christmas. In the meantime, we are meeting to decide what contents will stay to help sell it, what we will sell (will be listed on FB Marketplace) and what we will bring to St. John's. If you have any input or questions about this, please

contact Kim Harris.

We are also welcoming new Trustees, Lori Lewis, Tony Redifer and Mike Hammer. Our returning Trustees are Kim Harris, Eric Fitzgerald, Linda Pancake, Bruce Frank, Keeler Chapman and Maurice Smith.

Kim Harris, Trustees Chair



Finance Committee

We are very thankful for the generous offering we receive on Sundays and in the other ways our congregation gives to our Church. However, our expenses still continue to exceed our offering. We hope you will consider this as you determine your giving in the future.

As we have merged with Jollivue, we not only have received assets but also have to be responsible for their liabilities & expenses until the property is sold, In addition, starting in Jan., as mandated by the conference, 75% of the rental income from the Parsonage will go to Pastor Cole for a living allowance and 25% will be set aside for Parsonage maintenance /repairs.

Thank you for your consideration,

Kim Harris & Donna Elkins, Finance Comm. co-chairs

In 2024, we donated almost **600 pounds** of food and other health items to the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank. The BRAFB, working alongside their regional network of pantry and program partners, serves over 100,000 individuals each month. This could be accomplished without the generous support of the community.



Thank you for your continued support of this mission! Now let's fill those barrels up.



The good news is the Christmas Bazaar this year raised to date #3,660.00!! This is an increase from last year's bazaar which raised \$2,070.85.

Here is the breakdown:

Vendor fees- \$530.00

Bake Sale/ Breakfast/Lunch- \$853.00

Quilting table- \$277.00

Silent auction- \$627.00

Yard Sale- \$623.00

FB Marketplace- \$750.00 (these are the better items donated for the yard sale that Kim sold on FB)

We still have items listed on FB marketplace, so this number could continue to increase!

Thank You so much to all who planned, organized, promoted and worked the event. And, of course, to all of the great donations for the yard sale, bake sale and silent auction from all of our awesome members of the congregation as well as all who attended!

Hannah, Sarah, Kim, Cindy, Gwen, Linda
Bazaar Committee



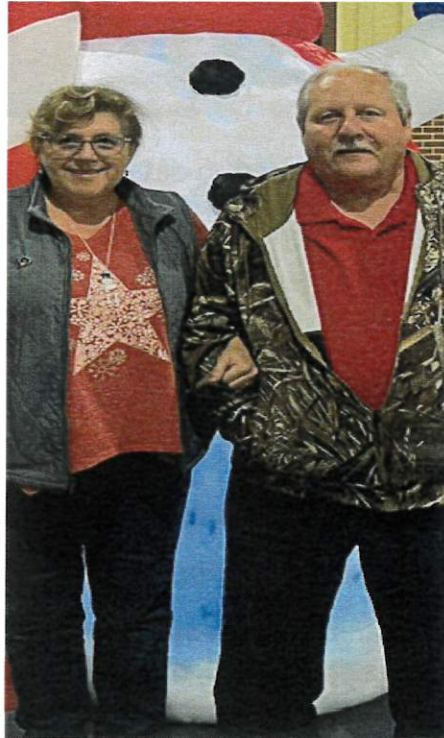
Hello family! Our youth ended the year with smiles as we participated in the Christmas Bazaar. Our talented kids made baked goods (for humans and pups!), blankets (also for humans and pups!), yarn dolls and nativities, and beautifully crafted gift bows. We will take a break throughout the holidays and the month of January and come back fresh and ready with catering a meal for the WARM shelter in February. We have an action packed spring as we're hosting the first ever YCM Youth Business Fair in June. This is open to rising high school seniors and below. It gives our young entrepreneurs in the community a venue to network, showcase their business product or service, and to make some money. More to come in the following weeks!! We hope everyone has a wonderful holiday season and we can't wait to update you soon!

Want to join YCM or know someone who might? Do you have a charity or organization that could benefit from our talents? Please let us know! Contact us at stjohnycm@gmail.com

• • •

Getting to Know Us

• • •



We are from Jollivue but have participated in some bible studies with St. John's prior to the merger and have enjoyed getting to know several of the folks from St. John's.

As you all know we very recently merged St. John's and Jollivue. However, prior to this I have enjoyed fellowship quilting and learning from the lovely ladies in the Quilting for a Cause group for the past few years.

Tony was born in Staunton and spent his later childhood in Norristown, PA but moved back to Staunton in his early 20's. I was born in Staunton and grew up in Spottswood living in the same home my entire childhood and attended Old Providence in which we could walk to. We have 2 sons Jonathan and Jamie. Jonathan remains at home and Jamie is married and lives in Waynesboro. We have a dog named Annie and an aquarium. We have several other relatives in the areas of Staunton, Middlebrook, and Vesuvius area.

Tony was previously a certified welder but then worked for Dupont and retired with 38 years of service about 7 years ago. I took a early retirement in 2009 from Dupont. I now work for the Commonwealth of Virginia doing Child Support Enforcement.

We enjoy spending time with family and friends. We like to go camping with family. Tony enjoys fishing, cooking, gardening, crossword puzzles, and movies. I enjoy gardening, crafts, sewing, reading, and home improvement projects.

Friends may say we are nice people and value friends and family.

BITS AND PIECES – January/February 2025

Did you ever wonder how the early Methodists celebrated New Year's or even if they did? Well, they did. There was a special service called a "Watch Night" which involved extended prayer, preaching and a covenant renewal ceremony. This was a time to recommit their faith to God as they entered the new year. These services often lasted late into the night, hence the name "Watch Night".

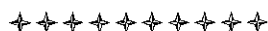
Actually, John Wesley is credited to first celebrating a 'covenant renewal as the "Watch Night" service on 11 August 1755. After the service, he wrote in his journal "After I had recited the tenor of the covenant proposal...all the people stood up, in testimony of assent. Such a night I scarce ever saw before. Surely the fruit of it shall remain forever."

For a number of years, the Methodists would hold these Watch Night services for covenant renewal several times each year. Towards the end of John Wesley's life, the services were usually celebrated on New Year's Day or a Sunday near the beginning of the New Year.

Watch Night services on New Year's Eve have also become an important part of the African-American worship, Methodist and otherwise, because the Emancipation Proclamation would go into effect at midnight on 1 January 1863.

Now during this time, the early colonists didn't celebrate like we do today. It was believed that the ending of the previous year was to be celebrated with drinking and socializing with loved ones and friends (ok, maybe not so different) but then the start of the new year should be celebrated with the giving and receiving of small gifts. This was also when the tradition of 'wassailing' would be celebrated. Young women would carry bowls of spiced ale from house to house, sharing it with neighbors and

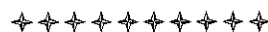
receiving small gifts in return. Some areas saw the practice of firing their guns as a noisy celebration.



Now I tried to find things that happened in February in the Methodist church and was only able to find one. And that was that John Wesley charted the first Methodist church in the US on 28 February 1784.

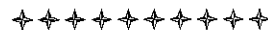
So, I found a few fun facts of February you may not know.

Originally the calendar was only 10 months because the winter was considered a dormant, month-less period. January and February were added by the Roman King Numa Pompilius to better align the calendar with the lunar year. This happened somewhere between 715-672 BC. He had originally made all the months with 29 days as the Romans believed even numbers were unlucky. However, since there was even number of months, February was chosen as the unlucky month to consist of 28 days.



WHAT WAS HAPPENING 25 YEARS AGO?

- Souper Bowl Sunday was held on 28 January
- Rev. Richard Eckland was minister.



WHAT WAS HAPPENING 50 YEARS AGO?

- Carol Ann Mizer, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Darryl Mizer was born 26 Dec., 1974.
- Rev. J.G. Long was minister.

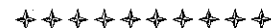
- On 15 Jan., a special program about "The Community Child Care Center" was held for the men of the church. Reservations were required at the cost of \$2.00 per person and dinner was provided by "some of the best cooks in Staunton who really know how to put it together".

- An arrangement was given for the church lounge by Mrs. James E. Harper and Mrs. Douglas A. Palmer.

I plan to include Jollivue's history as well as St. John's. Please be patient til we get it all together.



As chair of the Family Committee, I want to extend Kudos to those you helped with the bake sale at the Bazaar. Not only with those of you who came by and brought goodies but for those of you who helped. We couldn't have done it without you.



- Cheers to a new year and another chance for us to get it right.

- What the new year brings to you will depend a great deal on what you bring to the new year!

- Like a snowflake, no two days in February are alike. Embrace the uniqueness of each moment.

I hope each and every one of you had a very, very happy and prosperous New Year!

Cindy Phillips



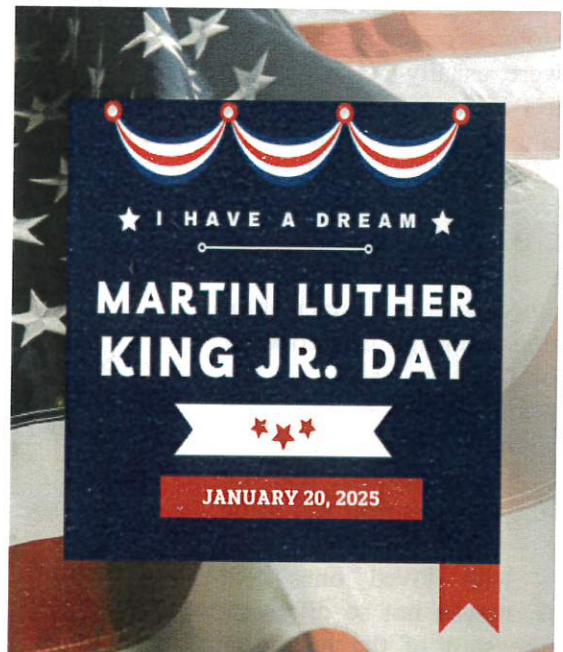
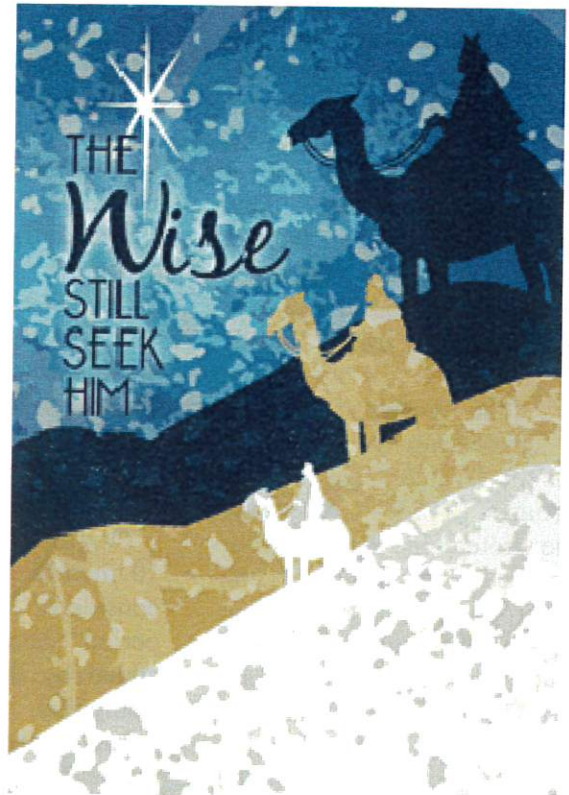
- 1st- Denny Hughes, Keeler Chapman
- 11th- Kristen Daughtrey,
- 16th- Tony Redifer
- 18th- Robert Reid
- 21st- Luken Mason, Dede Redifer
- 22nd- Kenneth Kirby
- 29th- Maurice Smith, Jr



- 1st- Joanne Campbell
- 6th- David Coleman, Jimie Taylor
- 7th- Karen Hamrick
- 10th- Linda Pancake, Jim Hodge
- 18th- Courtney Markham
- 19th- Vicky Mausen
- 20th- Evalee Cole
- 23rd- Elizabeth Coleman
- 24th- Yvonne Hanrick
- 26th- Holt Markham, Albert Deaver, Jr,
Cathy Ralston Fretwell



Epiphany Sunday- January 5th



"Approach the New Year with resolve to find the opportunities hidden in each new day."

~ Michael Josephson