
NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 2023

COMMUNITY OF FAITH AND LOVE

The newsletter of St. John's United Methodist Church



A Bundle of Blessings

It's been a bundle of blessings for me to be part of St. John's. Everyone has welcomed my family and me with joyful hearts. Trustees and SPRC have worked hard to prepare the parsonage to welcome us. I've been learning about St. John's and the congregation and have visited all of the listed members since July and learned about St. John's and heard their stories. Hearing them has

been wonderful because we always learn something new when we share stories. Stories are not only people's but also God's because church is God's showcase to share God's love in the community. Fall has been busy with a lot of exciting opportunities. In October, we offered Fall Fest for children, the youth, families, and the community. We had inflatables, games, face painting, a photo booth, music, a drama group, and food. It turned out to be a fantastic event. We served approximately 230 people, including a lot of children. All who joined us enjoyed a beautiful fall day and fellowship. It was a success because I saw the smiles on people's faces and felt their excitement and joy. It was a success that church members all wore the same t-shirts and felt connected. It was a success because they were willing to try something new that they never had before. It was God's grace that we were able to do such an event. In November and December, as we celebrate holidays, we give thanks to God and dedicate ourselves to loving our Lord and our neighbors. We will celebrate our ministries and mission on Promise Sunday when we will have an opportunity to provide an estimate of giving for 2024 and indicate how we offer our time and talents. We invite you to prayerfully consider how God is calling on your time, talents, and treasure. It will be our joy to be on this spiritual path together. Also, as we celebrate Jesus' birth, we want to have a service of Lessons and Carols and Christmas Caroling on December 17. There will also be a Christmas Eve service with candlelight. We will dedicate our Christmas offer to UMF, which provides comprehensive programs to support children, teens, and parents as they work to overcome challenges. Many exciting things are happening at St. John's. Let's continue to find ways to show our love for God, welcome our community, and offer our hospitality to them. We're called to be together and build relationships in the community! Blessings,



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*Give thanks to the Lord because he is good,
because his faithful love lasts forever!”
Psalm 107:1*

Stewardship Letter

Written by Kitty Irvine, Finance Committee Chair

2023 has been a busy year for St. John's. We said goodby to Rev. Caddell and welcomed Rev. Lim and his family. The parsonage required a great deal of work and TLC to ready it for a new family. In addition to providing necessary funds, our church furnished a great deal of labor for this project. The work provided an opportunity of fellowship and common purpose.

This unity carried over as we welcomed the community to St. John's during the Fall Fest. As we look forward to 2024 we hope to build on these activities and make our church a friendly, active and wholesome part of our community. Please join me in making a promise to support St. John's with your time, talents, gifts and service in 2024.

Stewardship Campaign

We want to thank you for all you have done for St. John's, for each other, and our community. Your acts of Stewardship; (time, skills, donations, funds) make such a difference in what we can accomplish as a church. It is time to build upon that commitment through our stewardship campaign. Using the enclosed card, we ask that you provide an **Estimate of Giving** on Nov. 19th. You can mail the card, or bring it to church.

On one side of the card, you provide an estimate of your tithes and offerings for the year which will be an essential part of St. John's budget process establishing our general funds for the coming year. Flip the card over and you will see the heading **Additional Ways I Will Give**. God does not ask that we offer Him only our treasure. He asks for our time and talents too. So we are inviting you to estimate your attendance in worship, whether in person or virtually, and your volunteer hours. This will be a goal for you and our church. The Talents & Interests section is for you to list ways in which you might like to serve St. John's. A few examples include cooking, A/V, gardening, photography, woodworking, singing, letter writing, visitation and building repair. All talents are welcome! All ages are welcome. We all have something to contribute. The Groups & Ministries section is for you to name the areas of St. John's where you might like to serve. Examples include: Mission trips (Local or International), Kids, Students, Ushers, Care Team, Committees and so many others. Please prayerfully consider how God is calling on your time, talents, and treasure. It is a joy to be on this spiritual path together!

New Green Paraments

In the fall of 2020, it was determined that the green paraments needed to be replaced. Those paraments were given in memory of Mr. L. T. Page by Mrs. L. T. Page and children in 1967. Upon hearing that new green paraments would be purchased, the grandchildren of Mr. and Mrs. L. T. Page decided they would provide the necessary funds. They requested that the new paraments be dedicated in memory of their grandparents and parents.



A dedication of the paraments was part of the worship service on November 12, 2023. Several members of the Page family were in attendance. The members of St. John's UMC are appreciative of the thoughtfulness of the Page family.



Fourth Tuesday Luncheon

Noon - Nov. 28, 2023

Please join us for fellowship and food on Tuesday, November 28 in the church social hall. Bring a pot of your favorite soup to be shared with others as we fortify ourselves to hang the greens. Following the luncheon, the sanctuary and the exterior front doors will be decorated in preparation for **the first Sunday of Advent, December 3, 2023.**

The young children will have an opportunity to complete the Chrismon tree by adding Chrismons during Kids Moment on December 3. Mark your calendar and plan to join us at noon on November 28.

Advent at St. John's

A Service of Lessons & Carols, Christmas Eve Services Dec. 17 @ 10:00 AM

The traditional "Lessons & Carols" service traces its roots to Victorian England, where it was inaugurated at King's College Chapel, Cambridge. The service includes select scripture readings and carols that tell the Christmas story with grace and power. We hope that you and your loved ones will join us for this most meaningful service.

Caroling - Spreading Holiday Cheer, Dec. 17 @ 5:00 PM

Whether you sing beautifully or can't carry a tune ... we invite you to "make a joyful noise" on December 17th as we travel about singing Christmas carols to our shut-ins and others. We'll meet in the lobby of The Mayflower in Lexington at 5 PM to visit with Mary Lou Crist and Barbara Catlett and then travel to Buena Vista for additional caroling. If you know of someone we should visit, please let CP, Mary Jo or Kim know and we'll map out our course! We'll return to the church for hot chocolate and Christmas cookies. Please mark your calendar to join in the fun!

Celebrate Christ's birth at St. John's. We will have two worship services on Sunday, December 24, for you and your family.

10 AM Worship Service (also online) 7 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight service (also online)

A traditional Christmas Eve worship service. This late evening service will be an intimate format, featuring Christmas music, a special Christmas Communion, and a candlelight vigil. Come, and celebrate, as we bring in Christmas Day together.





News from the Buena Vista Children's Library

We continue to be blessed to have the Rockbridge Regional Library Buena Vista Children's Library housed in our education building. The library continues to offer exciting events for children.

Story time every Tuesday at 10:30 a.m.

Homeschool gathering 1st and 3rd Thursday

**Chose Your Own Adventure Book Club -
last Monday of each month**

There will be special programs during the month of December.

Meet Santa on December 12th at 6:00 p.m.

Family Gingerbread House Build, time and date TBA

A special thanks to the Rockbridge Regional Library and Julie Goyette for donating the upholstered chairs for our social hall. They are beautiful and comfortable.

Creation Care Ministry

At our Bible study, we had a very productive discussion on how we can take better care of God's creation. As believers, we understand that **everything in the world and all who live in it belong to the Lord, as stated in Psalm 21:1**. Therefore, it is God's call to be good stewards and take care of the earth and everything in it. We are excited to begin a Creation Care ministry in the church. Our initial focus will be to recycle various items such as bulletins, office papers, and plastic bottles.

We welcome any suggestions or ideas, and we are seeking new ways to fulfill our calling to take care of God's creation centered around worship, discipleship, stewardship, evangelism, and mission. We hope to inspire others to join us in our efforts to care for the earth and everything in it.





United
Women
in Faith

The UWF made \$550 from their paint night fundraiser in October. We spent \$250 to help a women with her utilities. Our next fundraiser/service project, in February, will be a “Soups & Sweets” fundraiser. We will offer soups, salads and sweets for an amount to be determined. We’ll discuss details at our next meeting.

As for service projects Ellen Wheeler with Project Horizon has invited us to adopt a family for the holidays (like an Angel Tree); and at our next meeting we’ll be preparing holiday greeting cards for all BVCPS teachers to thank them for all they do (and spend!) on the kids.

Each teacher will receive \$20 to have lunch on us! We’ll include an explanation of and invitation to join the UWF. We’ll deliver the cards in early December.

If you haven’t yet joined our small and merry group, we’d love to have you. Regular attendees are Linda Blake, Rita Blackwell, Kathy Janiczek and Betty O’Connell. Representing other churches in Buena Vista are Karen Fitzgerald Clark, Betty Jo Garrett, Hollie Martin and Pudden Stinnett.

Please join us for these meetings:

November 16th at 5:30 at St. John’s.

December 14th at 5:30 at Todd’s for dinner.

Christmas Poinsettia

We will decorate our sanctuary with poinsettias at Christmas. If you wish to honor or remember a loved one during the Christmas season, please use the enclosed form to fill in the information and attach \$5.00 as a special offering.

The received money will be designated to appropriate projects and missions. All special gifts will be acknowledged in a bulletin insert listing the dedication and the donor.



Fall Fest



St. John's United Methodist Church
351 E 21st St
Buena Vista VA 24416

Upcoming Events

November 19 – Promise Sunday

November 23 – Happy Thanksgiving Day!!

November 24 – Poinsettia sign-up sheets are due

November 28 – Tuesday Luncheon and afterward “Hanging of the Greens” at Noon
(All are invited to help!)

Dec. 3 – Dedication of Poinsettias

Dec. 14 – United Women in Faith meeting at Todd's at 5:30 PM

Dec. 17 – A service of Lessons and Carols at 10:00 AM

Dec. 17 – Christmas Caroling at 5:00 PM

Dec. 24 – Sunday Worship Service at 10:00 AM, Christmas Eve Candlelight service at 7 PM

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