

---

SPRING 2024



# COMMUNITY OF FAITH AND LOVE

The newsletter of St. John's United Methodist Church

---

## 2024 with Joy & Hope!

We have begun 2024 with a sense of hope and joy! Though we experienced a chilly winter, our hearts were warmed in fellowship with Christ and friends. Every morning is a new gift of life, and we are grateful for the many blessings God has bestowed upon us.

We are happy to share that we finally have heat in the sanctuary! The work crews worked hard and finished their work last Friday.



We want to thank God and those who helped us through this challenge, especially Frankie Austin, Jim Hudson, Mike Irvine, and many others who accommodated our weekly space needs and followed up with the insurance and boiler companies. We appreciate your help and hard work.

As we enter the Lenten season, we recognize it as an important time to examine ourselves and repent ("turn around"). We will begin the Lenten season on Ash Wednesday, February 14. This year, we will impose ashes at the public square in front of the library, and you can receive ashes as you go. St. John's will participate in the Buena Vista Ministerial Alliance Lenten Worship and Luncheon Series. We will host the Lenten worship and luncheon on February 14, and I'll preach on February 28 at Buena Vista Presbyterian Church.

In March, we will invite a Korean drama group to come and perform their play about Jesus. This will be an excellent opportunity to reach out to our extended community and fellowship with new friends. We are also excited to launch the "Get to Know" gatherings. There will be two gatherings, and you are invited to join in February. Additionally, a "New Membership Class" will be offered in February. Many exciting things are happening in our church, and we encourage you to mark your calendars and participate in these events and ministries because we are in this together. We strive to be a community and an example of love that is welcoming, caring, connecting, and loving. Let's give thanks to God for the amazing, abundant grace that allows us to be a community of faith and love in Buena Vista.

Thanks be to God! Pastor, Hungsu

# Lenten Journey

“

*Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction;  
persevere in prayer.”*

*Romans 12:12*



Lent is a season of 40 days (not counting Sundays) leading up to Easter. It's a time when Christians take time to grow in faith, pay more attention to God, and get ourselves ready to tell the sacred story of the death and resurrection of Jesus.



## Ash Wednesday

**Ash Wednesday is February 22, 2024.** It is the first day of the season of Lent and a day to confess our sins and remember how much we depend upon God for everything, even our very lives. The ashes remind us of our mortality and the promise that God is stronger than even death. **There will be drive-through imposition of ashes at the public square in Buena Vista on Feb. 14, 7 a.m. - 9 a.m.** Ash Wednesday service will be held on Feb. 14, 12 p.m. as the first service of the Lenten service.

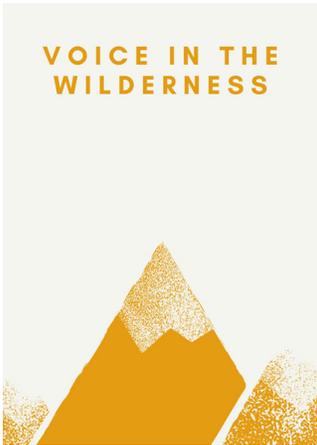
## Lenten Luncheon

As we continue to wrap up in our heavy winter coats and cautiously watch the weather forecast for the impending winter storm, it is hard to believe the Lenten season is rapidly approaching. The first day of Lent for 2024 is Wednesday, February 14th. Yes, this is also Valentine's Day.

St. John's United Methodist Church will be host to the first Lenten service and the Lenten luncheon to follow immediately after the service. The menu for the luncheon will be vegetable beef soup and potato soup, crackers and bread, salad and a dessert. Last year we served over 55 guests. This year we are planning for 75 guests. Donations of soup, salad or desserts are needed and a sign-up sheet is available in the back of the sanctuary and in Sandy's office. If you don't cook, we will also accept monetary donations to purchase food items.

It is a great time of fellowship and sharing of a meal and we look forward to sharing this special time with everyone. If you are able to help in the kitchen, please let me know. Thank you!

Kathy Hall, Organizer for Lenten Luncheon



## Lenten Devotional

Regular devotion time is one of the spiritual practices we highly recommend. Whether you use our recommended devotion or one you find on your own, we encourage you to take the intentional time to focus, especially during this holy season of Lent. We recommend one option for your Lenten Devotional this season. It is a weekly devotion produced by clergy in the Virginia Conference, including our own Hungsu Lim. The weekly devotion will be sent by email. You can request a hard copy if you need one. Please let the office know.

## Holy Week

**Thursday, March 28, 7:30 PM**

Maundy Thursday Service

**Friday, March 29, 7:30 PM**

Good Friday Tenebrae Service.

This is simple but profound service of remembrance uses music, readings, and increasing darkness to strip away all pretense and to encounter the Passion of Christ.



**Easter Sunday, March 31**

**10:00 AM: Easter Celebration**

## One Day Family Camp

St. John's is hosting a "One Day Family Camp" during the week of **March 18th**. This event is open to everyone! We'll be focusing on stories, songs, and crafts related to Lent and Easter. If you're interested in volunteering, please let Pastor Hungsu know.

## Spring Fest!

St. John's is excited to announce that we will host our first "Spring Fest" event on **April 27** this year! This event is open to the community, and we are in need of a lot of volunteers. Please mark your calendar and consider helping out. More information regarding the event will be available soon.

## Blanket Drive

It was a cold, cold day as we opened St. John's doors to give blankets and pillows to anyone in need. A few brave people came out to choose blankets. A dozen blankets and pillows have been given away to date. All who came were very grateful. We will continue to give blankets and pillows to anyone who we hear is in need. During the month of February, we will evaluate what remains of our supply and decide if another give away this winter is feasible.

A special thanks to Pam Ragland and Linda Blake for their help.

Mary Jo Brinkley



## United Women of Faith – 2023 Recap

The United Women in Faith, work to help women, children and youth in Buena Vista. In 2023, we...



United  
Women  
in Faith

- Helped a woman who needed to move from an unhealthy situation to alternative housing

- Partnered with Project Horizon to help women in need.
- Assisted a young man with his college tuition
- Provided 100 hygiene kits to the middle and high schools
- Donated towards the purchase of hats and gloves for Kling Elementary and PMMS students
- Acknowledged BVCPS teachers for all they do.
- Helped a grandmother with Christmas expenses as she unexpectedly gained custody of her grandchildren in December.

How you can help:

- **Join us.** Spiritual women of all faiths and ages are invited to join us as we discern where help is needed in our community and how, working together, we can make a difference.
- **Donate.** In 2023, we took in \$8,167 through donations and fundraising. We spent \$4,230 leaving a balance of \$3,937. One substantial \$3,000 donation in the spring of 2023 was a tremendous help to us and members of our community. Thank you for everyone who donated in 2023!
- **Pray for us.** Pray for our fundraising efforts and for discernment and wisdom in how we can best serve women and children in our area.

Please consider joining us and making a donation so we can make a positive impact in our community for women, children and youth.



## 2023 Church Financial Review

2023 brought financial challenges to St. John's as we transitioned from a part time to full time minister and refurbished our parsonage.

The good news is that we were able to meet our obligations in full. Good investments by our treasurer provided the funds to supplement what was received towards the budget. We received 126,377.67 in support of our budget. Apportionments were fully paid in the amount of 18,408.00. Our operational expenses and apportionments totaled 144,046.37 resulting in a deficit of 17,668.70. We received 29,097.58 in special gifts (designated for specific purposes) and spent 38,597.46. Special gift monies carry over from year to year so gifts received one year may be held indefinitely. Some of the 2023 spending in this category was money received prior to 2023.

The parsonage improvements costs were in excess of 15,000.00. Most of this was paid by special gifts with a small portion coming from the parsonage maintenance budget funds.

Our 2024 budget is set at 181,031 which is a significant increase. New items of outreach, communication and audio visual have been added to continue our mission both inside and outside of our church building.

Please help support St. John's financially as we impact our community and share the love of Christ. There is a lot of energy and momentum for exciting things this year! Everyone's financial support is needed to make them happen!

Kitty Irvine, Finance Committee Chairperson

## Small Group Opportunities

### **Morning Prayer Meeting, Mon. through Fri., 6:30 AM**

"I woke up this morning with my mind stayed on Jesus." This African American spiritual states an ideal that became a reality for me when Pastor Hungsu started the Morning Prayer weekday Zoom meetings. However, I am not truthfully ready to quote Martin Luther who said, "I have so much to do that I shall spend the first three hours in prayer." Besides inching closer to our Daddy in heaven, it is good to fellowship with members of the church. Please join us whenever you can." Paul Janiczek



## Small Group Opportunities

### “Get To Know Gathering”

We are thrilled to announce the launch of "Get To Know Gathering." There will be two meetings on Feb. 20 at 10:30 a.m. at Kathy Hall's home and on Feb. 27 at 6:30 p.m. at Mary Jo Brinkley's home. We invite you to attend one of these meetings and get to know us better. Please RSVP to Kathy Hall at krayhall2012@gmail.com or Mary Jo Brinkley at nnk6751@gmail.com.

### Sunday School Classes

We offer two Sunday classes, Crawford Durham and Page, at 9:00 a.m. Contact Jane Bayne or Mary Jo Brinkley for more information.

### Jane Bayne's Bible class

Jane Bayne leads a class on Thursdays at 6:00 p.m. Contact Jane Bayne for more info.



On All Saints Day Sunday, Nov. 5, 2023, we had a visit from 2 saints, St. Patrick, and St. Joan of Arc. St. Patrick was played in great form by Jonse Welch dressed in a black priest's regalia with a pastoral collar, and Silver Welch was dressed as a beautiful red haired St. Joan of Arc, holding a replica of a French knight's helmet. As I prepared the play, I researched the lives of these two saints, and found that both were called by God during their teen years. How appropriate for them to play!

St. Patrick was just 16 years old when he was captured by Irish rogues from his home in either Scotland or Northern England. He was taken into captivity in Ireland and became a slave of his captors. During these 6 years he missed his family and friends, but used the time to grow closer to the Lord. He spent time in prayer and learned to depend on Christ to guide his life. God gave Patrick a vision to how to escape from his captors and return to his family. "Where he could have easily lived out his days as a bitter, resentful man who hated the Irish for the things they'd done to him. He could've managed to forgive his oppressors, possibly even pray for them, and move on. But Patrick took it a step further. He didn't just forgive them or pray for them, he chose to love them. He loved them so much that, after he returned home to England, he became a priest and returned to Ireland to share the Gospel with the very people that hurt him, that kidnapped him, that caused the very darkest time in his life, as the very people God was calling him to tell the story of Jesus. He returned to Ireland and was very used by God. 100,000 people were converted to Christianity, through his witness. Learn more about this on the web at [teamexpansion.org/5-lessons-we-can-learn-from-st-patrick/](https://teamexpansion.org/5-lessons-we-can-learn-from-st-patrick/)

## Musical Gospel

You are invited to a fantastic performance called "Musical Gospel". Branches Ministry will be visiting us and performing at St. John's on March 2 at 6 p.m.

They are coming from Toronto, and will be traveling that weekend. Their aim is to offer comfort, healing, and convey God's love to the community through their performing arts. If you can help host the performers and support them financially, please let Pastor Hungsu know.

This is an excellent opportunity to invite our larger community, so be sure to invite your family, friends, and neighbors to this wonderful event!

ST. JOHN'S  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Experience the gospel  
in a whole new way

# MUSICAL GOSPEL

**MAR 2, 2024**  
Saturday 6pm

351 E 21st St Buena Vista VA, 24416  
Contact: 540-261-3304    [www.stjohnsbv.org](http://www.stjohnsbv.org)

## Information Update

Please help us with our mission to have complete and accurate information/records for all of our members and their families as well as non-members. Please fill out the inserted card as accurately as possible and return to church via email, text or regular mail. You may also leave them in the church office. If you need help filling it out, please call Sandy at the church office 540.261.3304.

# St. John's United Methodist Church

351 E 21st St

Buena Vista VA 24416

## Upcoming Events

February 11 – Souper Bowl Sunday

February 14 – Ashes to Go at the public square

February 14 – Lenten Service & Luncheon at St. John's

February 24 – Game Night

March 2, 6 pm – “Musical Gospel” presented by Branches Ministry

March 18 – “One Day Family Camp” for community

March 28 – Maundy Thursday Service

March 29 – Good Friday Service

March 31 – Easter Sunday

April 27 – “Spring Fest”

Follow us



<https://www.facebook.com/stjohnsbv>

<https://www.instagram.com/stjohnsbv>

<https://www.youtube.com/@stjohnsbv>



Scan QR code to follow



Contact us

Phone: 540-261-3304

Email: [office@stjohnsbv.org](mailto:office@stjohnsbv.org)