



Orchard Park United Methodist Church

WEEKLY NEWSFLASH

Psalm 51:16-17

For you have no delight in sacrifice;
if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased.

The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

Several years ago during the season of Lent, I was observing a time of contrition with a morning devotion about sacrifice. I do not remember the scripture, but the prayer that I offered to God was “all that I have, I offer to God to do with as God pleases”. I remember praying that prayer with sincerity, thinking about material things that can always be replaced. I could offer all to God trusting that God would take care of me.

However, as I drove to work that morning I was still thinking about that prayer, and I realized that my family could be a part of that prayer. What had I done by offering everything I had to God? God tested Abraham by asking him to sacrifice Isaac. Would God test me in this way? My family was more important to me than any of my possessions.

As I continued to think about that prayer, I remembered the sacrifice God wants is a broken and contrite heart—and that I am willing to give. Jesus made the ultimate sacrifice for all of humanity. Self-examination taught me to pay attention to what I said in my prayers and to remember to trust our merciful God.

God of mercy, I offer you my heart. Guide me with your Holy Spirit as I examine my thoughts and prayers this Lent and always. Amen.

by Doris Hedrick - Natural Bridge, VA

**OPUMC will be open for
in-person worship and
activities beginning**

February 21.

COVID-19 precautions must be followed to ensure that we are gathering as safely as possible.

Worship Opportunities

beginning February 21

Adult Sunday School

9:30 AM

Worship Service

10:30 AM



Discipleship Ministries of UMC has created daily prayers for anti-racism. Enclosed is a list of last week's prayers.

Upcoming Events

February 16: **Red Letter Challenge begins**

February 17: **Ash Wednesday**

February 21 @ 9:30 AM: **Adult Sunday School**

February 21 @ 10:30 AM:

in-person **Sunday worship**

February 22, 9:30 AM-1 PM:

Sewing Circle

February Birthdays

Mary Jane Russell (2/7)

Charlene Marcus (2/14)

Beth Kaforey (2/23)

Debbie Schwabel (2/24)

Thank you to this month's St. Pauly's Clothing Shed volunteers!

Art Cooper (2/7)

Ed Nuse (2/14)

Dan Liggett (2/21)

Linda Carroll (2/28)



RECONCILING MINISTRIES NETWORK



Ash Wednesday is February 17. Enclosed is a self-directed prayer walk to help you observe this day.

Prayer Requests

- Pray for Pastor Jen, who has tested positive for COVID-19 and is not feeling well.
- Pray for Ed Nuse's 9-year old great-nephew, Vignesh. He will be undergoing extensive hip and leg surgery on February 23. He will be in a full leg cast for 12 weeks and will have a long recovery.
- Please pray for Candy and Joe's neighbor, Scott, who will be receiving a stem cell transplant this week.
- Please pray Roger and Debi, friends of Candy and Joe. Roger has been fighting prostate cancer for 13 years. Meds don't seem to be helping anymore.
- Pray for the health of Maria Galley's uncle, Scott Jedrysik. He plans to return to work next week.
- Pray for Lurly Hunsberger.
- Pray for continued healing for Beth Stuart's friend Tony.
- Pray for people in our community, as the COVID-19 pandemic affects all of us in different ways.

Have a prayer request you'd like to share? Has God answered your prayer? Email opumc@verizon.net or call Pastor Jen at 603-4470. We will include your prayer request or praise report in next week's NewsFlash.

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

James 5:16

Orchard Park United Methodist Church is a Reconciling Congregation.

We celebrate God's gift of diversity and value the wholeness made possible in community equally shared and shepherded by all. We welcome and affirm people of every gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation, who are also of every age, race, ethnicity, physical and mental ability, level of education, and family structure, and of every economic, immigration, marital, and social status, and so much more. We acknowledge that we live in a world of profound social, economic, and political inequities. As followers of Jesus, we commit ourselves to the pursuit of justice and pledge to stand in solidarity with all who are marginalized and oppressed.

FEBRUARY 1, 2021

Oh Lord, let me love my brother,
let me love my sister
always and everywhere
as your mirrored Self
here among us, beside us,
and where I need to lift up,
let me bend my knees,
put my hands to the plough,
and do just that.
And where I need lifted up,
let pride never refuse
the rainbow touch of another.
Bless him, bless her, bless us
and weave us together within that covenant comfort
that stretches from here to there
till it reaches everywhere,
warm and strong
within the shelter of your loving arms.

Amen.

Marc Harshman, from Race and Prayer: Collected Voices Many Dreams edited by Malcolm Boyd and Chester L. Talton (Morehouse Publishing, 2003), 136.

FEBRUARY 2, 2021

Creator God,

Give us eyes to see all people as you see them - not a mirror to see only ourselves but a loving vision that truly sees others and knows their worth - that all your people may see themselves represented in the work, play, mission and ministry of your Church; we pray this in the name of Christ Jesus, who lived and died for all. Amen.

Rev. Linda Cheek, participant in the Mountain Sky Conference (UMC) virtual journey of daily prayer, organized by Rev. Bich Thy (Betty) Nguyen, Multicultural and Advocacy Ministries Developer, Mountain Sky Conference.

FEBRUARY 3, 2021

Over the Shoulder

Forgive us, Lord of all time, for spending so much time looking over our shoulders.

Forgive us for looking back to a “better time” when there weren’t so many questions and we could think about us and about them and do our best to keep apart, even when it wounded all of us.

Forgive us for looking over our shoulders as our hearts began to pound when we found ourselves in a “bad” part of town, living in fear of the very neighbors you sent us to love as we love ourselves.

Forgive us for the mess we made of the world you built for us and the family you enfolded us into; forgive us for the divisions and hatred and the oppression and growing gap in the ability to live and to thrive. Forgive us. Forgive us. Forgive us. Christ, have mercy.

And yet,

Even in the mess, there are signs of hope. Signs that you haven’t given up on us. Signs that the kin-dom might be within our reach, despite us. Suggestions of joy and unity and peace lurk in the edges of our vision.

As we embrace the possibilities of a new start, may we resist looking over our shoulder, looking to what was and what never was, and embrace the new thing you are doing in our midst. May it spring forth in the wilderness of our world and bring water to the desert of division. May the people that you have formed and are forming come together to give praise. May we continue to hold on to hope and move forward into your new kin-dom. In Christ’s name.

Amen.

Derek C. Weber, January 2021

FEBRUARY 4, 2021

For Building Bridges

Almighty God, through your Holy Spirit you created unity in the midst of diversity; we acknowledge that human diversity is an expression of your manifold love for your creation; we confess that in our brokenness as human beings we turn diversity into a source of alienation, injustice, oppression and wounding; empower us to build bridges between races, ethnic groups and religious communities; enable us to be the architects of peace, friendship and understanding between people; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the basis of all unity, now and forever. Amen.

Brian Cox, from Race and Prayer: Collected Voices Many Dreams edited by Malcolm Boyd and Chester L. Talton (Morehouse Publishing, 2003), 138

FEBRUARY 5, 2021

God, you demand such hard things. How can you expect me to love those who abuse me? I'm not your Son. I've got a little of his grace, but what you're talking about is too much for an ordinary person like me. What are you going to do about me? What are you going to do with me? Lord, have mercy on old hardened me.

It's only been through your grace and mercy that I have found you. It was only when I put down my "dukes" and let you in that you showed me the power of what love could do. You sent Jesus into my life; Oh what a Wonderful Savior!

Must Jesus bear the cross alone and all the world go free? No, there's a cross for everyone, and there's a cross for me. Help me to pick up my cross and walk on by grace. Amen.

Sherrie Boyens-Dobbs, The Africana Worship Book, Year A, Valerie Bridgeman Davis, PhD and Safiyah Fosua, eds., Discipleship Resources, 2006, p.143.