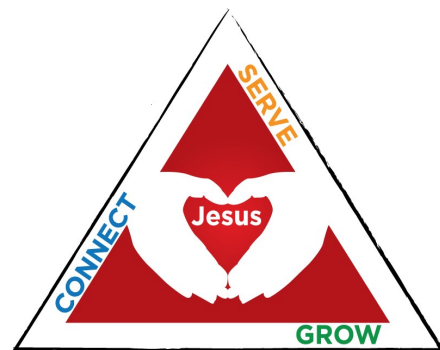




From the Hill

Fort Hill United Methodist Church
106 Oakridge Blvd.
Lynchburg, VA 24502
Phone (434) 847-1251
Corner of Memorial and Oakridge Blvd.
Website: www.forthillumc.com



Volume 58, No.12

December, 2023

We're Having A Christmas Joy Event!

Save the date for. . . .

The JOY team is throwing a Christmas Joy Event again this year, and they want YOU to come and share in the Christmas Spirit with the church! Mark Sunday, December 17, on your calendar.

We will join together for this event, right after the worship service that morning, in the Fellowship Hall. We will feast on crockpots of soup, salad and dessert. Our Director of Music, Jacob Dishman, will lead us in a Christmas "sing-a-long."

This is a JOYFUL giving event, and we want to share the Christmas joy to all in our community. To do this, we are asking that **each person bring at least two** non-perishable items for our Blessing Box. Foods that are needed are canned meats, vegetables, fruits, cereals of all kinds, boxed milk, instant coffee and creamers, juices, snack foods, sauces and noodles, complete boxed meals, etc. (Please no glass containers). With colder weather now here, hats, gloves, and scarves are also needed. The little red wagon will be in the Fellowship Hall that morning to receive your donation.



Watch for more details in upcoming Sunday bulletins.

A Service of Lessons & Carols

On December 10, we will be worshipping God through song, with a Lessons and Carols service entitled, "Laudamus Te" which translated means "We Praise You." As we sing and listen to the scriptures, we will remember the story of the promised coming of the Messiah, from the despair of Israel in exile, to the joy of the nativity and the birth of Christ. All of the music has been composed and arranged by Jacob for the Fort Hill Sanctuary Choir, and we will have several guest musicians joining us for this special day of worship. We hope you will join us on this special Sunday.



Christmas Eve Service Planned

A Christmas Eve Service of Holy Communion will be held in the church sanctuary beginning at 5:00 p.m. on December 24. This service will include a service of lights as we remember the coming light of Christ into the world on the first Christmas and the coming light of Christ into the world this Christmas.



Fort Hill Hosting Guest Musicians During Advent

This Advent season, we will be hosting several guest musicians, with a different featured instrument, or voice, for each of the four Sundays in Advent. On December 3, we will host Molly Grace Gerk, a local harpist and student at Liberty University. On December 10, Christy Lynn and her daughter, Amanda, will join us for our Lessons and Carols service, on the violin and cello. On December 17, our Celebration Ringers will play, and Josie Wright, a young local vocalist, will provide us with special music. Finally, on the morning of December 24, guitarist Michael Brennan, the professor of guitar at Liberty University, will be joining us in worship. We are looking forward to hearing these great local musicians in worship, and we hope you will plan to join us as we wait for the birth of Jesus Christ.



The Fort Hill UMC Staff wishes you
and your family a joyful and blessed
holiday season!



The Christian season of Advent begins on the 4th Sunday preceding Christmas Day. This year, the season of Advent begins on December 3. The Advent season is a journey that is made holy through the promise of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem and the promise of Jesus' birth in our lives. This holy journey begins with the message of the prophets who spoke about the Messiah of Israel, and concludes with the song of the angels about the Messiah of the world.

While the journey of Advent leads us to the manger, the message of Advent does not conclude there. While we may wish to stay at the manger and hold the infant Jesus safely in our hands, Advent points to the reality of a Messiah who holds us with hands that were nailed to a cross at Jerusalem.

As we travel the journey of Advent at Fort Hill, I want to encourage our members and friends to join in worship, as we proclaim the message of the prophets and sing the song of the angels. May God bless you with Advent joy.
-Marc

Ongoing Prayer Concerns

We are now listing our ongoing prayer concerns for those who are in nursing or rehab facilities or recovering at home. Only immediate prayer concerns will be listed in the weekly bulletin. Our current prayer concerns are as follows:

Runk & Pratt (Leesville Road)

Dodie Fauber

Bentley Commons

Frances White

Heritage Green

Doris Conner

Jean Poindexter

Others who need our prayers:

Abby Englund

Bryan & Lisa Garra

Judy Hall

Andrew Jenks

Mary Murphy

Becky Spangler

Kendra Toney

Phyllis Williams

Frances Wilkinson

Greg Vincent

NOTICE: If you know of a member, or a friend of the church, who is hospitalized, please let the church office know. The hospitals DO NOT call the church. Thank you!

December Communion Offering to Benefit ICM

Each month, half of our communion offering helps us reach out to the needy in our community. This month, our offering will be given to Industrial & Commercial Ministries, a program that provides, upon request, trained volunteer chaplains for the workplace, to help employees, who are dealing with the tough issues that all employees have to face in today's world. Chaplains visit the facility, one day a week, and are on call, for emergency situations.

The other half of the communion offering will go into our Local Relief Fund, to help those who come to our doors looking for some type of assistance. Thank you for your generous gifts on Communion Sunday.



Advent Devotional Book Available

The Society of St. Andrew has published a devotional book for Advent, and copies are available in the Narthex if you would like one. Any donation to help offset the cost of printing the book, will be appreciated by the Society.

Note: Beginning September 1, Fort Hill UMC began accepting online contributions through our website. You can also make contributions by going to <https://abundant.com/forthillunitedmethod>

2024 Giving Envelopes Available Starting December 17

Your box of offering envelopes for 2024 will be available in the Welcome Center, beginning Sunday, December 17. Please be sure to pick up your box, saving the church the cost of mailing them to you (appx. \$6.00 per box).

If you have not been receiving envelopes and would like to be included in 2024, please notify the church office no later than December 8.

Note: Please do not use your 2024 envelopes until January 1 as you most likely will have a new envelope number.

Bits and Pieces

United Methodist Women Supporting Miriam's House

For many years, the Fort Hill United Methodist Women have supported the Salvation Army at Christmas with filled stockings for children. This year they are supporting Miriam's House, which is a home for women and children who come from various situations and are in need of a new start with a new home. Miriam's House has provided a "wish list" of things that are needed when a family moves into a new home. The UMW is making this a church-wide project for Christmas. Listed below are items that are needed. If you would like to participate by providing any of these items, please leave your "gift" in the welcome Center. Thank you!

Ways we can help Miriam's House:

Wish List: (They also have a wish list on Amazon)

Toilet Paper
Paper towels
Cleaning supplies such as: all purpose cleaner, dish soap, dishwasher detergent, laundry detergent, bathroom cleaner, etc.
Towels
Linens, full and twin sheets are especially needed
Trash bags, heavy duty and 13 gallon
New pillows
Diapers and wipes, size 3-4 are especially needed
Pots and pans
Trash cans, kitchen and bathroom
Shower curtain liners and rings
Light bulbs

Other items: Contact Danna Whorton

Dannawhorton@gmail.com or 281-728-1702

Microwaves, new or gently used

Air mattresses, all sizes

Sleeping bags

Laundromat gift cards

GLTC bus passes

It's Going to Be A Fun Day!

Ladies! You are invited to the Annual Christmas Lunch at 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, December 16, at Charley's Restaurant. You may order whatever you like (Dutch treat), and there will be an inspirational program highlighting the meaning of Christmas. All ladies of the church are welcome! Please make your reservation by texting or calling Ramona Davis at 434-944-5175

PLEASE NOTE: Due to security and safety concerns on Sunday mornings, the office door for the Oakridge Boulevard entrance will be unlocked from 8:30 – 9:15 a.m., the door for the Wilson Street entrance will be unlocked from 9:00 – 9:15 a.m., and the Sanctuary doors will be unlocked at 8:00 a.m.

Poinsettia Orders Now Being Accepted

Once again, we are accepting orders for poinsettias for the Advent/Christmas season. **If you give a plant, please plan for it to remain in place through Christmas Eve. We will not be delivering leftover plants to shut-ins, as we do not have the personnel to do this,** so please make arrangements to have your poinsettia(s) picked up after the Christmas Eve Service. Deadline for ordering is December 8th! The cost is \$18 each and payable at the time of your order.



You may also choose to make a donation to our Capital Improvement Fund.

Poinsettia Order

\$18 each - Make check payable to Fort Hill UMC and enclose with order

Order deadline is December 8, 2023

In memory of: _____

In honor of _____

☐ I would rather give a gift for the Capital Improvement Fund in the amount of \$ _____

☐ I will pick up after services

Name _____ Phone _____

More Bits and Pieces

Fort Hill Continues It's Support of Perrymont Elementary School

As we continue our partnership with Perrymont, here is what your support has provided:

♦**American Education Week** - we honored the Staff on November 15th, with an assortment of cookies.

♦**Partnership Breakfast** – Rev Brown, Bonnie Kiger-Doney, and myself represented the Church at the annual LCS Partnership Breakfast that was held on November 20th.

♦**For December** – Individual tea towels and cookie mix will be given to the Staff before they leave for winter break.

♦**Thank you** to members of the Congregation that contribute financially or through donations of supplies/clothing or time to Perrymont.

♦**Perrymont's Fruit and Vegetable program** - If you have an hour on Wednesday and/or Friday to sort fruit or vegetables into teacher baskets, please let me know.

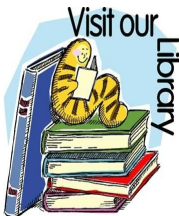
♦ **Please continue to pray** for the Staff and Students.
-Kim Beuerle, Perrymont/Church
Contact Person, 434-237-4598

From Our Librarian

Christmas Cheer: Stories about the Love, Inspiration and Joy of Christmas.

Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen
Chicken Soup for the Soul Publishing - 2008

"Everyone loves Christmas and the holiday season." For some of us, though, Christmas may be a time of remembrance of what could have been. There are memories of Christmas that do not fit with a joyful holiday season. Too often we miss the look of wonder in a child's eyes and feeling the joy of giving – and receiving – gifts. This book may be an answer for you. This book is filled with tales of kindness, gratitude and giving, in the spirit of the season. These personal stories are filled with the joy and cheer of the season. You may find yourself remembering, smiling and eager to share the holidays. Enjoy this wonderful gift - enjoy Christmas!



2023-2024 UWF Reading Program Is Underway

For December, we will be reading *World of Wonders* by Aimee Nezhukumatathil.

About the Book from Goodreads:

From beloved, award-winning poet Aimee Nezhukumatathil comes a debut work of nonfiction--a collection of essays about the natural world, and the way its inhabitants can teach, support, and inspire us.

As a child, Nezhukumatathil called many places home: the grounds of a Kansas mental institution, where her Filipino mother was a doctor; the open skies and tall mountains of Arizona, where she hiked with her Indian father; and the chillier climes of western New York and Ohio. But no matter where she was transplanted--no matter how awkward the fit or forbidding the landscape--she was able to turn to our world's fierce and funny creatures for guidance.

"What the peacock can do," she tells us, "is remind you of a home you will run away from and run back to all your life." The axolotl teaches us to smile, even in the face of unkindness; the touch-me-not plant shows us how to shake off unwanted advances; the narwhal demonstrates how to survive in hostile environments. Even in the strange and the unlovely, Nezhukumatathil finds beauty and kinship. For it is this way with wonder: it requires that we are curious enough to look past the distractions in order to fully appreciate the world's gifts.

Warm, lyrical, and gorgeously illustrated by Fumi Nakamura, *World of Wonders* is a book of sustenance and joy.

The following is a list of books for the rest of this reading program year:

January	<i>On the Come Up</i> Movie	by Angie Thomas
February	<i>The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek</i> by Kim Michele Richardson	
March	<i>The New American</i>	by Micheline Marcom
April	<i>A Knock at Midnight</i>	by Brittany Barnett
May	<i>Stamped</i>	by Jason Reynolds
June	<i>I'm Still Here</i>	by Austin Brown



And More Bits and Pieces

New Beginnings Event Is Planned

As we begin the Advent season and prepare for Christ's birth, it is exciting that we can celebrate a birth in our church family!

Jaslyn Sue Hamilton was born on August 1, 2023, and she is the daughter of Jessie Hamilton and Jaumal Wilkerson and the granddaughter of John & Macy Hamilton.



We will gather in Oxford Hall at 11:45 a.m. on Sunday, December 3, to welcome Jaslyn with hugs, cards and small gifts. Come and join in the festivities!

Church & Community Caroling Planned



Let's go caroling! Come join your church friends as we go caroling throughout the Fort Hill neighborhood on Sunday, December 10, at 4:00 p.m. Carolers will meet at the front of the church at that time and then disperse throughout the neighborhood to spread some Christmas cheer to our neighbors. In the event of rain or snow at that time, the event will be canceled. This should be fun, and it is hoped that you will want to join us. Questions? Please call Patty Marsh at 434-841-0189.

?? ? ? ?

Bible Quiz

Elizabeth, an older relative of Mary the mother of Jesus, was miraculously pregnant at the same time as Mary. What was the name of Elizabeth's husband?

- A. Aaron
- B. Zechariah
- C. Joseph
- D. Simeon

Answer: B (See Luke 1:5, 39-41.)

What Is the Meaning of the Advent Wreath?

During Advent, which begins this year on December 3, many churches and families use wreaths to symbolize watchfulness and increasing joy as Christmas approaches. Colors for the candles vary, with some traditions using blue (for hope or creation) and others preferring purple (for royalty, humility or penitence).

The four candles that each represent a week in Advent also signify hope, peace, joy and love. (The third candle is often pink.) In the center is the white Christ candle, representing Jesus as the light of the world. That candle is lit on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

The round Advent wreath has special meaning of its own. It symbolizes eternal life and the unending love of God, who sent his only Son to earth to die in our place.



We extend our sympathy to the family of Harry H. "Mike" Hill, Jr. upon his death on November 17.





Recipes

Cream Cheese Bars

1 Box Duncan Hines yellow Cake Mix
1 Stick butter melted
Add to Cake Mix 1 Egg
Mix until stiff

Place in glass 9x1 baking dish (greased)

Topping
1 oz cream cheese
1 Box 10X sugar
1 tsp vanilla
2 eggs

Mix with mixer pour over unbaked crust.

Bake on middle rack 350° for 45 minutes.

-Tillie Hunter

Cocoa Mix (for Sipp'ing or Gift'ing)

1- 8 quart size pkg. Dry Nonfat Milk
1- 5oz jar Coffee Creamer (1 1/2 cup)
1- 1 lb. size of Quik Chocolate Mix
1 cup powdered sugar

Mix together. 1/3 cup mix per 1 cup of hot water.

-Becky Spangler

Cranberry Cream Cheese Spread

8 oz. cream cheese
1/2 cup dried cranberries, chopped
1/2 cup dried apricots, chopped
2 tablespoons orange juice
1 teaspoon orange zest, grated
1/4 teaspoon ground ginger, optional

In a large bowl, whisk together the cream cheese, chopped cranberries, chopped apricots, orange juice, orange zest and ground ginger until well combined.

Refrigerate before serving.

Serve with crackers, fruit, slice baguettes or ginger-snaps.

-Anonymous

Caramel Cashew Haystacks

1 can chow mein noodles
1 lb. white chocolate coating
Salted cashews
Sprinkles (red, green, or mix)
Caramel bites

Melt chocolate in microwave. Add noodles, cashews, caramel bites and drop by spoonfuls on wax paper. Top with sprinkles.

-Anonymous

Christmas Ribbon Salad

2 packages (3 oz. each) sugar-free lime gelatin
5 cups boiling water, divided
4 cups cold water, divided
2 packages (3 oz. each) sugar-free lemon gelatin
1 package (8 oz.) reduced-fat cream cheese, cubed
1 can (8 oz.) crushed pineapple, undrained
1/4 cup chopped pecans
2 cups reduced-fat whipped topping
2 packages (3 oz. each) sugar-free cherry gelatin

1. In a bowl, dissolve lime gelatin in 2 cups boiling water. Add 2 cups cold water; stir. Pour into a 13x9 inch dish coated with cooking spray. Refrigerate until almost set, about 2 hours.

2. In a bowl, dissolve lemon gelatin in 1 cup boiling water; whisk in cream cheese until smooth. Stir in pineapple and pecans. Fold in whipped topping. Spoon over first layer. Refrigerate until firm, about 1 hour.

3. In a bowl, dissolve cherry gelatin in remaining boiling water. Add remaining cold water stir. Chill until syrupy and slightly thickened. Carefully spoon over second layer. Refrigerate until set, about 4 hours.
Yield 15 servings.

-Jeanette Seale

Easy Potato Rolls

2 packages (1/4 ounce each) active dry yeast
1-1/3 cups warm water (110° to 115°), divided
1 cup warm mashed potatoes (do not add milk & butter)
2/3 cup sugar
2/3 cup shortening
2 large eggs, room temperature
2-1/2 teaspoons salt
6 to 6-1/2 cups all-purpose flour

In a small bowl, dissolve yeast in 2/3 cup warm water. In a large bowl, combine mashed potatoes, sugar, shortening, eggs, salt, remaining 2/3 cup water, yeast mixture and 2 cups flour; beat until smooth. Stir in enough remaining flour to form a soft dough

Do not knead. Shape into a ball; place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease the top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour.

Punch down dough; divide into thirds. Divide and shape 1 portion into 15 balls; place in a greased 9-in. round baking pan. Cover with a kitchen towel. Repeat with remaining dough. Let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 30 minutes. Preheat oven to 375°.

Bake rolls until golden brown, 20-25 minutes. Remove from pans to wire racks. Serve warm.

-Anonymous



12/1 Easton Beuerle	12/9 Richard Kiger	12/22 Greg Vincent	12/28 Hannah Coleman
12/4 Tommy Green	12/11 Clay Bourguignon	12/22 Leigh Wrabley	12/28 Brantley Seale
12/4 Matt Connelly	12/11 Carly Bosiger	12/22 Charlie Toddammon	12/29 Jack Robertson
12/5 Nancy VanZant	12/13 Lynn Cash	12/23 Wiley Green	12/30 Betty Martin
12/5 Jean Fielding	12/16 Barbara Mayne	12/23 Wesley Duncan	12/30 Delores Layne
12/5 Dwayne Grant	12/18 Jimmy Thompson	12/25 Cody Elliott	12/30 Sonny Minnick
12/6 Paul Cox	12/19 Dave Thomas	12/26 Cheryl Napier	12/30 David Denny
12/7 Earl Wootton	12/20 Peggy Vannaman	12/27 Earl Mottley	12/30 Macy Hamilton
12/8 Paul Rogers	12/20 Robin Wrabley	12/27 Melissa Sutor	12/30 Kathryn Alvis
12/8 Kathy Crone	12/21 Cheryl Manning	12/28 Barbara Creasy	12/31 Liz Coleman
12/9 Conner Kendrick	12/21 Rhett Kiger	12/28 Jackie Marks	

If your birthday or anniversary is not listed, it may be because we do not have the date in our data base. Please call the church office at 847-1251 with your information.

December Wedding Anniversaries

12/1 Rico & Mindy Zelaya	13 years	12/21 Greg & Octavia Starbuck	27 years
12/7 Bubba & Carol Humphries	27 years	12/28 Earl & Mary Wootton	21 years



Outreach News

As we reach the end of the year 2023, we give thanks for your support of the Outreach team. The contributions of food and money have allowed us to provide the community with good nutrition and sustenance. We fill the Blessing Box almost daily. As winter approaches, we would like to put gloves, hats and socks in the Blessing Box. As always, any food or winter accessories will be greatly appreciated and used.

Perrymont Elementary staff has been supported with lunch on the first day of school, gifts each month, and a team member filling the baskets with fruits and vegetables for the teachers to give to the children every Wednesday and Friday. The teachers would appreciate someone to come once a week to read a story to the children. A new smiling face is always a treat.

The medical supply closet has been utilized a great deal. Ronnie Seale has received many contributions and has been able to provide for those in need of medical equipment.

We continue to support Meals on Wheels by driving two to three days a month. Jim and Sandi Kiger drive on the first Friday of every month and Bonnie Kiger-Doney drives on the 4th Tuesday and the 5th Friday of the month. MOW is always in need of drivers and substitute drivers.

The Little Library continues to provide books to children. Jeannette Twery maintains the library and can always use good children's books.

We have provided 100 meals for Parkview 4 times, the last being November 29th. Ronnie Seale has been the chief cook with his sidekick Wiley Green. Many hands have helped package and deliver the meals, which are greatly anticipated and appreciated.

Our team continues to work to be the hands and feet of Jesus in our community and world. We welcome anyone who would like to join us.


-Bonnie Kiger-Doney, Chairperson

Want to Make a Final 2023 Contribution to the Church?

All final contributions to the church for 2023, should be brought to the church office no later than 12:00 Noon on Friday, December 29, OR placed in the offering plate on Sunday, December 31, in order for your gift to be reflected on your 2023 giving record. Gifts received in the mail after those dates and time, will not be deposited until Tuesday, January 2, 2024 and therefore will not be reflected on your 2023 giving record.

December 2023

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

In-Person Worship Each Sunday @ 10:30 a.m. Java Stop 8:30 a.m. - 10:15 a.m. Sunday School 9:15 a.m. - 10:15 a.m. Staffed Nursery Available 9:15 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.					1	2
3 1st Sun of Advent 9:15 SPRC meets 11:45 New Beginnings Event Holy Communion	4	5 6:45 Sanctuary Choir rehearsal	6 7:00 Celebration Ringers	7 5:45 Brass Ensemble 6:45 Sanctuary Choir rehearsal	8	9
10 Service of Lessons & Carols 4:00 Caroling Event	11	12	13 7:00 Celebration Ringers	14 5:45 Brass Ensemble 6:45 Sanctuary Choir rehearsal	15	16 12:00 Ladies Christmas Lunch @ Charley's
17 11:45 JOYful Christmas Lunch	18	19	20	21 Blue Christmas Service online 5:45 Brass Ensemble 6:45 Sanctuary Choir rehearsal	22	23
24 5:00 Christmas Eve Service	25  Church Office Closed	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Miscellaneous

THE BOX SCORE

"I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord!'" Psalm 122:1

Average worship attendance in 2022 - 114
Average worship attendance as of November 19, 2023 - 121
NOTE: This attendance is for in-person & online worship beginning January 1, 2023

"Bring the full tithe into the storehouse . . . And put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts; see if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing." Malachi 3:10

BRIEF OPERATING FUND REPORT

Your first line of giving — mission and ministry!

Budget for 2023 as approved by the Church
Council is: \$401,311

We need an average of \$7,717.52 per week to meet this budget.

As of 47 weeks, our weekly receipts
have averaged \$5,913.06

**Thank you for your support of the mission
and ministry of your church!**

A Word From Amos . . .

Hi, my Fort Hill family! This is Amos, your little church mouse, reporting in again!

I've been hanging around Fort Hill UMC for quite some time now - about 6 years, in fact, and I've seen a lot of people come and go. Plus, I've seen a lot of "behind the scenes" things take place. I am saddened that the church doors now have to be locked, or monitored, due to the violence against churches or religious groups throughout our country. If you haven't noticed, Fort Hill is fortunate to have one man in particular who is always "on guard" at our Sanctuary doors and during the worship services. I'm talking about Bob Doney! Bob is always "watching" and is there to make sure our buildings are secure. If you get a chance, please thank Bob for his dedication to Fort Hill and it's members.



On a brighter note, I want to wish each of you a very Merry Christmas. I hope you will get to spend time with your families - just like I plan to do. I have learned in my years hanging around Fort Hill, that families play a very important part in our lives. And Fort Hill families seem to know that, because they care for, and show love for, each other. But the best part of all is that we are all part of God's family. Enjoy your holidays, and I will report in again in January!

-Amos

From the Hill

is a publication of Fort Hill United Methodist Church,
106 Oakridge Boulevard, Lynchburg, VA 24502-1308
Phone: 434-847-1251 Fax: 434-847-2536

Times of Worship

9:15 a.m. Sunday School

10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary

Staffed nursery provided from 9:15 a.m.- 12:00 Noon

Rev. Marc D. Brown, Pastor
marcbrown@forthillumc.com
Brown5129@verizon.net

Rev. Janet D. Hawkins, Minister of Visitation
tuned2joy02@gmail.com

Jacob Dishman, Director of Music & Communications
jacob.dishman@gmail.com

Jeanette Seale, Administrative Assistant
secretary@forthillumc.com

Rev. Denise Bates, District Superintendent
Phone: 434-832-0401

The Rev. Sue Hauptert-Johnson, Bishop, Richmond, VA
Phone: 1-800-768-6040

"Fort Hill United Methodist Church seeks to nurture
God's people so they can
CONNECT, GROW and SERVE."

-Fort Hill UMC Vision Statement

A Little Christmas Humor

Much planning and preparation goes into worship during December. But that doesn't mean Christmas services and pageants are always picture-perfect. For anyone who's experienced holiday chaos (who hasn't?!), take comfort in knowing you're not alone.

Church leaders who shared stories with Outreach magazine describe an alarming number of Christmas candle vs. hair incidents. Here's what else has transpired:

- One pastor was sharing the Nativity story when he bumped the button on his singing Christmas tie, which didn't have a mute button. So congregants had to listen to the entire verse and chorus of "Jingle Bells."
- A child discovered a live mouse in his chocolate-filled gift bag on Christmas Eve. Although the creature jumped out and scurried out the door, worshipers saw it return for the next service.
- After flames were distributed for the candlelight service, a pastor said, "Now that we're all good and lit . . .," causing laughter throughout the pews.
- Children tend to go off-script during Christmas plays, as evidenced by all the bloopers available online. (Check out the YouTube clip titled "Sheep, Mary tussle over baby Jesus in children's pageant gone hilariously awry.")



Fort Hill United Methodist Church
106 Oakridge Blvd.
Lynchburg, VA 24502

Address Service Requested

Phone: 434-847-1251
Fax: 434-847-2536

www.forthillumc.com



Rev. Marc D. Brown
Pastor

Rev. Janet D. Hawkins
Minister of Visitation

Jacob Dishman
Director of Music & Communications

Rev. Jonathan Park
Missionary in Southeast Asia

Worship Time:
9:00 a.m. Online Worship
9:15 a.m. Sunday School
10:30 a.m. Service in the Sanctuary

**Next newsletter deadline
is DECEMBER 15. Please
submit SHORT articles by
this date.
Thank you!**

Special Christmas Offering to be Received

Each year, the church receives a special Thanksgiving and Christmas offering, which, in years past, has been used to help in any area where there is a shortfall of cash flow.

This year, the Finance Committee has decided that this special offering should be divided between Meals on Wheels and Salvation Army, to help those who need a nourishing meal each day and to help those who need a helping hand in every-



day life. The Committee feels that meals and financial assistance during the holidays are crucial to our community.

The Finance Committee hopes you will want to participate in helping our community in this way. As always, your gifts are very much appreciated!



Online Blue Christmas Service to be Offered

A December 21 online Blue Christmas Worship Service will be offered for persons who feel at odds with, or estranged from, the general feeling of joy and happiness typically associated with Christmas. These may be people who have suffered a personal loss: death of a loved one, divorce, illness, or job loss. The service seeks to offer comfort for them by reminding them they are not alone, and that their feelings are honored.



A Blue Christmas Worship Service is a contemplative opportunity for the acknowledgement of human loss, while remembering that God's love can find us as we search for comfort and hope. The service will include an opportunity to remember that Jesus, the Light of the World, shines even in the darkness. The service will include music and a message. You can access the service on the church's Facebook page or YouTube page.