

Spruce Street UMC Newsletter

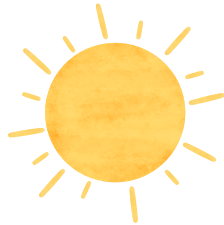
386 Spruce Street Morgantown, WV 26505 304.292.3359

Sunday Worship Times

8:30 a.m. In-Person & 10:45 a.m. In-Person & Online



Bart Thompson
Pastor



August Ramblings 2025

Matthew 22:20-22

New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition

²⁰ Then he said to them, “Whose head is this and whose title?” ²¹ They answered, “Caesar’s.” Then he said to them, “Give therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and to God the things that are God’s.” ²² When they heard this, they were amazed, and they left him and went away.

My sisters and brothers, you have read, maybe heard, probably seen that there has been a recent change in the Johnson rule at the IRS.

Here is some background on the Johnson rule, it is named for former Senate Majority Leader and former President Lyndon B. Johnson. When he was the majority leader, he introduced a rule that applied to all charitable nonprofits (religious or secular) that stated that they could not participate in the political endorsement or opposition of candidates for political office.

The recent rule change may be seen not as a first amendment argument of free speech or religious expression but as an altering of campaign finance laws that could funnel money into religious organizations in exchange for political endorsements.

Therefore, *what does our church believe? What guidance do we have on this controversial topic? The United Methodist Church has a position, and it is the following.*

“While we do not believe churches should affiliate with particular political parties, we do encourage churches to speak out boldly on social issues from a gospel perspective. We further believe churches have a right and responsibility to educate and equip their members to be effective advocates for justice in the wider world.” (United Methodist 2025 -2028 Social Principles, The Political Community, Government Responsibilities, A., Church and Governments)

August Anniversaries

8/4 John & Lee Beaumont
8/6 Charlie and Bobbie Leach
8/9 Hank & Jennifer Burton
8/13 Jack & Sharon Richman
8/14 David & Brandi Helms
8/16 John & Dianne DeAngelis
8/18 Pat & Sandy Ryan
8/28 Don & Becky Davis
8/30 Josh & Amberly Osborn





Our position at Spruce Street will be simply, we will not endorse candidates for office, nor will we oppose candidates for office. I am the pastor of all people. I am the pastor of those who are registered as Democrats, Republicans, Independents, Mountain Party, Green Party, Unaffiliated, none, and other. Therefore, we will endorse for the Gospel.

In doing that act, we will be able to do the following:

1. Preserving Church Unity and Inclusivity: The United Methodist Church is a diverse body, encompassing members with a wide spectrum of political views. When a pastor endorses a specific candidate from the pulpit, it risks alienating and dividing the congregation. The church is called to be a place of worship, spiritual growth, and community for all, regardless of political affiliation. Introducing partisan politics into the sacred space of worship can create an environment where some members feel unwelcome, judged, or compelled to align their political beliefs with the pastor's. This undermines the unity of the body of Christ and can drive people away from the church.

2. Focusing on the Gospel, Not Partisan Agendas: The primary mission of the church is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to make disciples, and to transform the world through love and justice. This mission transcends any particular political party or candidate. When the pulpit becomes a platform for political endorsements, there is a risk of conflating the divine message with human political agendas. It can dilute the spiritual authority of the sermon and distract from the timeless truths of Scripture, shifting the focus from God's kingdom to earthly politics.

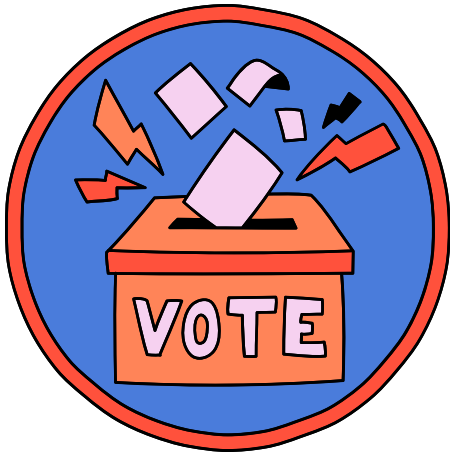
3. Upholding Pastoral Authority and Trust: A pastor's authority is rooted in their calling to preach the Word of God and provide spiritual guidance. When a pastor endorses a political candidate, it can be perceived by some as elevating personal political opinions to the level of biblical principle. This can erode trust within the congregation, as members may question whether the pastor's message is truly God-centered or influenced by partisan leanings. Instead, pastors are called to equip congregants to think Christianly about societal issues, allowing them to form their own consciences and make informed decisions, rather than dictating a particular vote.

4. Maintaining the Church's Prophetic Voice: The United Methodist Church has a strong tradition of speaking out on social issues and advocating for justice, guided by our Social Principles. This prophetic voice is most effective when it is perceived as independent and principled, rather than tied to any specific political party. By avoiding partisan endorsements, the church maintains its credibility and moral authority to critique policies and advocate for the vulnerable from a non-biased stance. If the church is seen as merely an extension of a political party, its ability to speak truth to power on a broader range of issues may be compromised.

August Birthdays

8/2 Sam Spears
8/4 Roger Britton
8/6 Mark Clingan
8/6 Lauren Kennell
8/6 Pat Pierce
8/10 Josh Osborn
8/12 Teresa Johnson
8/13 Greg McCracken
8/13 Orson Redden
8/14 Will Burton IV
8/14 Carolyn Carr
8/14 Shirley Hill
8/15 Cindy Cramer
8/15 Sam Lee
8/17 Piper Hetrick
8/19 Mary Belle Rowe
8/21 Brandi Helms
8/23 Bill Kennell
8/24 Barbara Johns
8/26 Em Pechon
8/28 Lori Britton
8/28 Kayla Lindsey
8/28 Bob Losh
8/29 Sara Fuqua
8/29 Gary Schlobohm
8/29 Joe Schlobohm
8/31 Tim Koon





I want and expect individual United Methodists to be engaged citizens and to vote according to their faith-informed consciences (I do), the institutional church and its pulpits serve a higher purpose. By choosing to remain non-partisan in candidate endorsements, United Methodist Churches can better fulfill their mission, foster genuine community, and ensure that the focus remains on making disciples for the transformation of the world. **We can be agents of hope in the community and world. We can also be seen as people and places of grace where we teach and live out the commandments of our Lord to love God and our neighbor by loving and welcoming all.**

Every Blessing,
Pastor Bart

A MESSAGE FROM BISHOP DEBRA WALLACE-PADGETT



Vision and mission are important. Indeed, much has been written across the years about both.

Vision: The Book of Proverbs says, “Where there is no vision, the people perish . . .” (Proverbs 29:18 KJV). Similarly, agricultural scientist and inventor George Washington Carver is quoted as saying, “Where there is no vision, there is no hope.” Author and political activist Helen Keller made a statement about vision that was especially impactful because of her physical deafness and blindness. “The only thing worse than being blind is having sight but no vision.”

Mission: American Psychologist Arnold H. Glasgow stated, “Make your life a mission - not an intermission.” German author Johann Wolfgang von Goethe said, “Every person above the ordinary has a certain mission that they are called to fulfill.” Rick Warren wrote, “God has given you a mission in life, and only you can fulfill it.”

I am thankful for The United Methodist Church’s vision statement which was released in mid- May, 2025 to complement our oft-quoted mission statement. **UMC Vision:** The United Methodist Church forms disciples of Jesus Christ who, empowered by the Holy Spirit, love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously in local communities and worldwide connections. **UMC Mission:** To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Our West Virginia Conference’s focus is in alignment with the General Church’s vision and mission. **West Virginia Conference Vision:** In the West Virginia Conference, we live into the worldwide United Methodist vision by transforming Appalachia through God’s love—growing disciples, healing communities, and casting a future of hope rooted in Christ. **West Virginia Conference Mission:** To Discover, Develop, and Deploy passionate spiritual leaders of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Central to both West Virginia and the worldwide United Methodist Church **is the formation of disciples of Jesus Christ.** West Virginia adds an emphasis on developing leaders. Below are West Virginia's definitions of a passionate spiritual disciple and a passionate spiritual leader.

Spiritual Disciples: A Passionate Spiritual Disciple (PSD) is a Christ-follower committed to imitating Jesus' example. Filled with and guided by the Holy Spirit, PSDs demonstrate the fruit described in Galatians 5:22-23 as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. A PSD is in covenant with other Christ-followers to grow spiritually, missionally, and relationally.

I will add that Passionate Spiritual Disciples and Leaders embody the characteristics of our new United Methodist Church vision of loving boldly, serving joyfully and leading courageously, both locally and around the world.

Spiritual Leaders: A Passionate Spiritual Leader (PSL) is a Passionate Spiritual Disciple leading other Passionate Spiritual Disciples. Though not all Christians are Passionate Spiritual Leaders, hopefully we are all Passionate Spiritual Disciples.

Yes, vision and mission are important. Without vision, we struggle to thrive, find hope and see clearly. Without a mission we do not have purpose.

How grateful I am that our United Methodist Church and the West Virginia Conference have clarity around vision and mission. My prayer for us is that we will become increasingly successful in moving toward them both as a denomination and conference.

As always, it is a joy to serve as your bishop.

Blessings,
Debbie

Debra Wallace-Padgett
Resident Bishop
Holston and West Virginia Conferences

July Contributions

Thanks to our generous and loving donors, contributions for the month of July 2025 amounted to:

Undesignated - \$21,598.23

Local Church Nurture - \$435.00

Flowers and Radio - \$320.00

Conference Mission (WV Flooding) - \$540.00

UMCOR (Texas Flooding) - \$250.00

Community Assistance - \$195.00

We also received a Campus Ministry Grant of \$4,000 and interest from our Foundation Music Endowment of \$730.55.

Bless you for not only keeping our doors open, but also allowing our church to support those in need!

Judy Kennell
Finance Secretary

MUSIC MUSINGS

Christian families help each other. We respond to trials, needs, hunger, and misfortune. We support the work and efforts of those in ministry. We are called to unity as we pray for unity with God's will. Jesus reinforces family unity in the Lord's Prayer, by calling us God's children, and heirs to the Kingdom. If only God's perfect unity prevailed constantly in this imperfect world.

In looking ahead in the lectionary, there is a hard Gospel to read on August 17. Jesus speaks of division: father against son, mother against daughter. The words are full of admonition. Division is not a comforting word at all, the opposite of unity.

Our current lives are full of division as well. Some believe the division is enough to damage the fabric of our country. Families are divided and not speaking due to divided political loyalties, which hurts deeply. People publicly protest, march, sing, and argue about their cause. There are some who believe it is wrong to publicly show any side of division even though this is our right.

There is a hymn – a very joyful hymn – that could comfort those who are coping with severe division. It references marching, chanting, and pilgrimage – all going on today on all sides. **“Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart”** is a rallying cry for Christians marching for Christ (#161). We will be singing it on August 17, and it is also a great meditation during your devotions. How are we expected to stay pure in heart through worldly divisions? It is far more than rejoicing – it is also being thankful during the long march of life with its woes and its divisions. It is waving our banners, singing Hosanna which means “Please Save Us!” We know He will, and for that we can thank and praise God openly and publicly!

Marguerite



Barnabas Group Card Drive

Barnabas Group is doing a Card Drive. We are currently taking donations of:

- birthday cards
- thinking of you cards
- get well cards
- encouragement cards

We are also always taking donations of stamps! We love writing and sending cards, but the price of stamps is costly. Thank you for your help in continuing this ministry!!






Greetings from the United Women in Faith!

We invite all the women of the church to join us for our meetings/activities. Meetings are every 4th Tuesday of the Month at 6 pm.

On going activities –


 We are again selling **Boscov's Friends Helping Friends Shopping Passes**- \$5.00 per Shopping Pass – Valid ONLY on Wednesday, October 22, 2025 8am-11pm 25% of lowest sale price. Pass can be used in-store or on-line. See any of us to purchase.


 The United Women in Faith focus on community and global missions supported by a variety of fundraising efforts. **In order to assist with those fundraising efforts, we have established a Facebook Group page titled “Spruce Street Women in Faith Fundraising”**. This is a private group which means that you must be a member of the group to see the posts or to comment in the group. Anyone can find and join the group and we welcome you to join and to invite your friends who would support our fundraising efforts.

Part of the Facebook group will be an **ongoing fundraiser through Park Lane Jewelry** with the commission earned by sales through the Facebook group being donated in whole to Spruce Street Women in Faith to use at their discretion to support missions. Additional fundraising activities supported by the group will also be promoted on the Facebook page. Link to the Facebook group page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1372896213732346>

Or go to Facebook and search Groups for Spruce Street Women in Faith Fundraising Park Lane Jewelry Link: <https://parklanejewelry.com/a/681306-9>

Or go to parklanejewelry.com - Find stylist Mary Wilson - Shop with a Party “Faithful Women”

 The UWIF Mon Valley District has started a Book club. The purpose of this book club is to encourage fellowship and encourage people to participate in the UWIF Reading program. **The next book club meeting will be August 12 @ 6 pm at Suncrest UMC and via ZOOM**. The Book will be The House that Love Built.

 **The UWIF Challenges the other groups in the church to MEET US OR BEAT US** - we have pledged to give a \$100 donation toward flood relief efforts- the challenge is for the other groups in the church to match our donation or give a bigger donation



United Women in Faith Annual Meeting

October 17-18

Long-time Spruce Streeters may remember a young girl named Heather Bailes whose spiritual formation began in our church in the 1980s, and who received influence from Reverend William Turley as she was growing up. Fast forward to 2025: Heather has developed into Reverend Heather Bailes Baker who serves Arnold Mills United Methodist Church in Cumberland, Rhode Island.

We are excited to announce that Reverend Bailes Baker will be the key-note speaker at the West Virginia Conference United Women in Faith Annual Meeting, where our theme will be “Lift up our World.” The Potomac Highlands District will host the meeting at Keyser First United Church, October 17-18, 2025. We encourage everyone to register as soon as possible. The registration forms, which include lodging, directions, and other pertinent information are on the Spruce Street UMC website: <https://sprucestreetumc.org/programs/united-women-in-faith>.

While the first meeting session begins at 6:30 on Friday evening, October 17, workshops listed in the registration are available for anyone who arrives early on Friday afternoon for any reason. Counting workshop attendees will help instructors make agreements. In addition, sending our forms early will help Potomac Highlands District UWF, who will provide supper for all attendees. Please be aware that the Conference will not accept a partial registration fee (for example, just for Friday evening).

Consider coming to Keyser for this worthwhile gathering of women! You will make new friends, and if you travel to the Spiritual Growth Retreat in April, you will enjoy a cheerful reunion.

Judi McCracken

WV Conference United Women in Faith

Social Action Coordinator

MonCounty District ex-officio

SCOTTS RUN DONATIONS NEEDED!

We collect nonperishable food and other items for Scotts Run Settlement House in our Overflow Area.

The meal we are collecting ingredients for this month is spaghetti dinners. Please consider donating boxes of pasta and jars or cans of spaghetti sauce. You might also consider shaker parmesan cheese or other things to complete the meal! If you have even more room in your shopping cart, here are some additional ideas:

PRIORITY NEED - CAN OPENERS

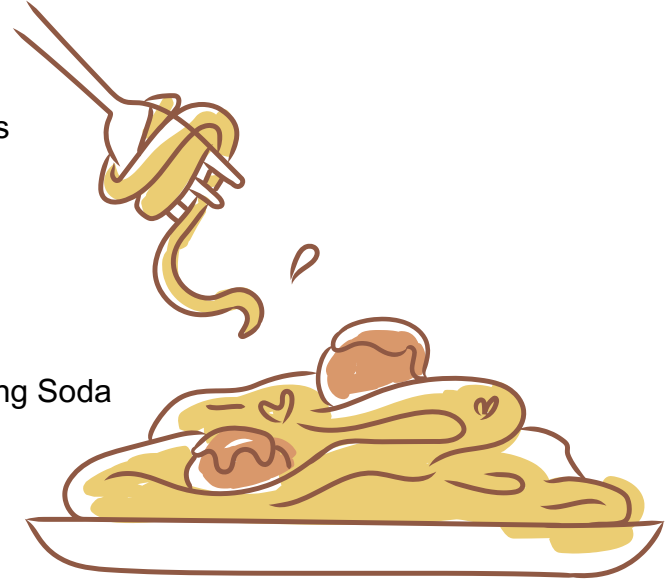
- Simple manual non battery/not electric can openers
- A few electric can openers
- Any color

CONDIMENTS

- Heinz Ketchup
- Mustard
- Mayonnaise
- Salt
- Pepper

STAPLES

- Flour
- Baking Powder & Baking Soda
- Yeast
- Sugar
- Spices



SCOTTS RUN - LOOKING FORWARD

We will be focusing on a different meal pairing each month through the end of the year! Upcoming donation drives are as follows:

MONTH	MEAL PAIRING ITEMS
September	Cake mixes and canned frosting <i>*Also consider - sprinkles, birthday candles</i>
October	Pancake mix and syrup <i>*Also consider - canned fruit, peanut butter</i>
November	Taco shells and canned refried beans <i>*Also consider - jar of salsa, taco seasoning</i>
December	Oatmeal, boxes of cereal and/or cereal bars, and a can of fruit <i>*Also consider - peanut butter, honey</i>
January	Cans of tomato sauce, diced tomatoes, and chili beans <i>*Also consider - cornbread mix, chili seasonings</i>

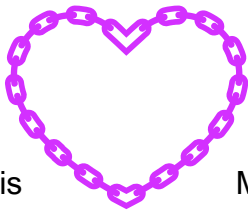
Prayer Chain

Our prayer ministry is very active. If you are part of the prayer chain and have not been receiving the emails or if you'd like to join the prayer chain, please send your email address to Carolyn at coccarr@yahoo.com. Short term prayer list can be found in the bulletin each week. Names are moved to the long-term list in the Newsletter after a month in the bulletin.

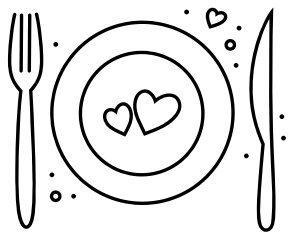


Prayers For

Laurie Audria	Aly Hutzal
Lori Britton	Teresa Johnson
Roger Britton	Ben Lee
Sandra Britton	Lacey Lewis
Cindy Cramer	Sharon Richman
Dianne DeAngelis	Mary Belle Rowe
Rubyann Downes	Pat Ryan
Barbara Fox	Janet Schlobohm
Sara Fuqua	Ken Shanes
Judy Harman	Linda Sweetman
Jerry Holt	Penny Turley
Brian Hoskinson	Mary Lynn Withrow



CIRCLE OF FRIENDS



Our weekend meals will be August 16 & 17. If you would like to help serve, please contact Carolyn Carr at coccarr@yahoo.com.

COMMUNITY MEALS

Our next Community Holiday Meal will be on Labor Day. Signup sheets will be available soon. Thank you for all of your donations and support for this meal.

Gifts of Love

Thank you for supporting this ministry and donating your gently used kitchen and bathroom items. Please no knives. The basic list is in the May newsletter if you need more ideas. Thanks to everyone.



August Lectionary Scriptures



August 3 - 8th Sunday After Pentecost

Hosea 11:1-11
Psalm 107:1-9, 43
Colossians 3:1-11
Luke 12:13-21

August 10 - 9th Sunday After Pentecost

Isaiah 1:1, 10-20
Psalm 50:1-8, 22-23
Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16
Luke 12:32-40

August 17 - 10th Sunday After Pentecost

Isaiah 5:1-7
Psalm 80:1-2, 8-19
Hebrews 11:29-12:2
Luke 12:49-56

August 24 - 11th Sunday After Pentecost

Jeremiah 1:4-10
Psalm 71:6
Hebrews 12:18-29
Luke 13:10-17

August 31 - 12th Sunday After Pentecost

Jeremiah 2:4-13
Psalm 81:1, 10-16
Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16
Luke 14:1, 7-14

August 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
3 <i>8th Sunday after Pentecost</i> 8:30AM Worship 9:45AM Sunday School 10:45AM Worship	4 1:30PM Heritage	5 6PM Welcoming Committee	6 11AM Bible Study	7 10AM Chair Yoga	1 8	2 9
10 <i>9th Sunday after Pentecost</i> 8:30AM Worship 9:45AM Sunday School 10:45AM Worship	11 3PM Harmony	12 3PM Harmony	13 11AM Bible Study 6PM UMM @Eat N Park	14 10AM Chair Yoga	15	16 4PM Circle of Friends
17 <i>10th Sunday after Pentecost</i> 8:30AM Worship 9:45AM Sunday School 10:45AM Worship	18 7PM Trustees	19 6PM UWIF Book Club @Suncrest UMC	20 11AM Bible Study	21 10AM Chair Yoga	22	23
4PM Circle of Friends						
24 <i>11th Sunday after Pentecost</i> - Adult Confirmation 8:30AM Worship 9:45AM Sunday School 10:45AM Worship	25 6PM Administrative Council	26 6PM UWIF	27 11AM Bible Study	28 10AM Chair Yoga	29	30
31 <i>12th Sunday after Pentecost</i> 8:30AM Worship 9:45AM Sunday School 10:45AM Worship	1	2	3 11AM Bible Study	4 10AM Chair Yoga	5	6

Spruce St UMC Office Hours & Contact Info

9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (Monday - Thursday)

304-292-3359

sprucestumc.org

SPRUCE STREET STAFF DIRECTORY

Pastor	Rev. Bart Thompson	304-813-7213 pastor@sprucestreetumc.org
Lay Minister	Eldon Callen	304-290-7142 eldonc45@gmail.com
Administrative Assistant	Em Pechon	304-292-3359 secretary@sprucestreetumc.org
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Choir Director	Ashley Lewis	jashleylewis@gmail.com
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