



January 13—Sheryl Malone
 January 14—Oaklynn Johnson
 January 15— Roger Elliott
 January 17—Matthew Marsh
 January 19—Margie Pendry
 January 19—Janice Hamby
 January 23—Burl Hamby
 January 25—Dylan Griffith
 January 28—Fred Miller
 January 29—Jenny Sons
 January 29—Samantha Miller



January 3—Randy & Sheryl Malone



The Union Messenger

Union United Methodist Church

Pastor: Rev. Randy Lankford

708 Curtis Bridge Rd
 North Wilkesboro, NC 28659
 Church Phone: (336) 838-8674 | Pastor Randy's Cell: (336) 452-4957
 E-Mail: rlanford@wnccumc.net Follow us on: Facebook & union-umc.com

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Pastor Share

Did you know that March used to be the first month of the year? It's true. Around 700 B.C. the Romans changed the calendar to reflect this new beginning. January was named after Janus, the Roman god of all beginnings; March celebrated Mars, the god of war. But as far back as 2000 B.C., the Babylonians celebrated New Years. Going right along with celebrations are New Years superstitions. We all know about blackeyed peas and cabbage and eating greens, but there are some lesser known beliefs as well. It's said that if you carry around an empty suitcase on New Year's Eve, you'll welcome new experiences and travel in the new year. For many, clapping, cheering, and blowing horns are a way to celebrate the start of a new year, but this noisy applause has roots in superstition. Chinese and Celtic folklore claim that loud sounds help scare away evil spirits and bad luck from the past year. The traditional version of this raucous involves banging pots and pans, but hoots and hollers should also suffice. In some European cultures, such as Italy, you may find people throwing couches, fridges, and more from their windows at midnight on New Year's Eve. While this may appear to onlookers as some sort of chaotic dispute, the practice is actually thought to help do away with the old and welcome in the new. Since Anna and I are usually, well always, in bed asleep at midnight on New Years, can you imagine the 9-1-1 call she would make if I suddenly banged on a pot while throwing our refrigerator out the window, all while pulling an empty suitcase? "Please come get my husband, or he's going to be as dead as Julius Caesar!"

As we begin another year in the life of our church family, luck will have nothing to do with the quality of that life. I'm sure we can find much better ways to celebrate our blessings, our joys, and even our struggles. We'll laugh a lot and probably cry some too. We'll work very hard and hopefully pray even harder. No, luck will not enter into the equation, but faith will determine our path. Happy New Years to you and your family and may God bless you and keep you safe. -

Pastor Randy

As we enter a new year, begin by renewing your covenant with God with this prayer:

I am no longer my own, but yours.

Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will.

Put me to doing, put me to suffering.

Let me be employed by you or laid aside for you,

Exalted for you or brought low for you.

Let me be full, let me be empty.

Let me have all things, let me have nothing.

I freely and heartily yield all things to your pleasure and disposal. And now, O Glorious and blessed God,

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,

You are mine, and I am yours. So be it. And the covenant which

I have made on earth, Let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.

John Wesley (attr.), "A Covenant Prayer in the Wesleyan Tradition," The United Methodist Hymnal (Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 1989), 607. Adapted.



If you are not already, we would like to invite you to become a member of Union United Methodist Church. Our vision is to connect to faith and each other through worship, fellowship, community and God's love. Our church mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

As a part of the worldwide United Methodist Church family, we follow a set of Bible-based, God inspired beliefs set forth by our denomination. To learn more about our beliefs, go to [What We Believe \(umc.org\)](http://What We Believe (umc.org))

If you are interested in joining our church, please reach out to Pastor Randy to schedule a time to discuss becoming a member! We look forward to having you join our membership!

