

First Family News

FEBRUARY 2026

1001 Juliana Street, Parkersburg, WV 26101

email: fumcjuliana@wvdsi.net

Phone: 304-428-0111

Dear Beloved Congregation and Friends,

Ordinarily, I see winter as a quiet time, a time to pause, a time for introspection, a time to gather strength and prepare for growth. I suppose that I noticed my grandfather's winter seasons spent in those activities. Activity on the farm slowed way down. In the early days of my childhood, my grandfather began those cold winter mornings, stoking the fires in the wood stoves—one for heating, one for scalding the morning milk. He would go out to the barn, milk and feed the cows and make sure all was well and then return to the house for hot coffee and warmth. In the days of my young adult years, when my parents had retired to the farm to take care of my grandfather, he would start his days with a mug of “Oliphant” hot coffee, a warm, satisfying breakfast, and then he would walk the farm to see what was what.

By late morning he was bringing in wood for the fire in the den and then he would spend the rest of the afternoon dozing in front of that fire or remembering. In the late afternoon he would be outside again and end his day by bringing in more wood and sharing a warm, satisfying supper with my parents. These were days of pausing for him, for resting, for planning ahead for the season of new growth. These were precious days, especially as my grandfather grew older and when I was there, I loved just sitting with him in the quiet, occasionally asking him a question or asking him to tell me what he remembered from his very long life. I would read. He would gaze out the window. It was cozy.

All over social media there are suggestions for being cozy during the winter. There are suggestions for what kind of tea to drink, what kinds of soups to make, what kinds of breads to bake, what kinds of books to read by the fire. There are suggestions for taking long walks, which sounds great until there are weeks of unmelting ice. There are suggestions for starting journals, for knitting. And you know what? Ideally, this all sounds good. It does sound cozy.

But this year, I am struggling with winter, with the cold, with the ice. I find snow beautiful—a little bit at a time—but not with layers of ice that cause me to worry for people walking or driving out in it. The cold this year invades my bones and body, and I think about those who do not have a safe place to be or warmth or food. I even find concentrating difficult. I feel lethargic and dull. My sleep is disrupted as well. Sigh. This year I find myself agreeing with the opening line of Shakespeare's play *Richard III*: *Now is the winter of our discontent.*

And yet, there is a part of me that wants to spend the winter in deep gratitude and reflection. I want to find beauty in winter. I want to remember that winter is a time that God has provided for the earth to sleep. Is that something you want too? What do we do about it? How do we turn our hearts and minds to the presence of God this winter?

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

The Hebrew Bible can help us. Here are 10 verses the Hebrew Bible offers us for moving closer to God and for reflections on the beauty and gifts of winter, in spite of harsh cold and wind and snow and ice:

Psalms 74:17

You set the boundaries of the earth, and you made both summer and winter.

Job 37:9,10

The stormy wind comes from its chamber, and the driving winds bring the cold. God's breath sends the ice, freezing wide expanses of water.

Genesis 8:22

As long as the earth remains, there will be planting and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night.

Zechariah 14:7,8

What a Day that will be! No more cold nights—in fact, no more nights! The Day is coming—the timing is God's—when it will be continuous day. Every evening will be a fresh morning. What a Day that will be! Fresh flowing rivers out of Jerusalem, half to the eastern sea, half to the western sea, flowing year-round, summer and winter!

Song of Solomon 2:11

Look, the winter is past, and the rains are over and gone.

Job 37:6,7

He directs the snow to fall on the earth and tells the rain to pour down. Then everyone stops working so they can watch his power.

Psalms 148:7,8

Praise the Lord from the earth, you great sea creatures and all deeps, fire and hail, snow and mist, stormy wind fulfilling his word!

Psalms 147:16-18

He sends the snow like white wool; he scatters frost upon the ground like ashes. He hurls the hail like stones. Who can stand against his freezing cold? Then, at his command, it all melts. He sends his winds, and the ice thaws.

Isaiah 1:18

Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool.

Isaiah 55:10,11

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the Sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

I hope that you find these scriptures helpful, as I do. The enduring promise that these scriptures offer us is that no matter what, winter gives way to summer. The darkness gives way to light. The cold gives way to warmth. And through it all God is with us. Perhaps by slowing down this winter we will not miss what God wants us to see—the beauty of the earth, the pain and anguish of many of God's human family. Perhaps by slowing down this winter, even if we

are dreaming of warmer days, we can feel the deep and abiding presence, love, and mercy of Emmanuel and the Holy Spirit and when winter is over, we might say that it has been a blessing.

Take care of each other and others that God puts into your lives.

Peace,
Pastor Alicia

“Vintage Valentines: Combating Loneliness”

(A *Young at Heart* program for Mid-Ohio Valley Senior Citizens)

Thursday, February 12th 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM

Doors open at 10:45 AM

Sponsored by
Methodist Church
at 1001
WV

Join us in
free lunch-
of St. Paul's
Learn about

CANCELLED

First United Meth-
Juliana St. Parkersburg,

the church's Fellowship Hall for a
noon. Guest Presenter: Pastor Shauna Hyde
UMC
ways to deal with loneliness!

Reservation deadline is Noon, Thurs., Feb. 5th.
Call 304-428-0111 or email fumcjuliana@wvdsi.net
Include your name and contact info.

SPECIAL LENTEN SERVICES

A summary of our Special
Lenten services will be in our
March newsletter. The services
will include:

3 Parish-wide Lenten Lunches

Maundy Thursday Service

Good Friday Service

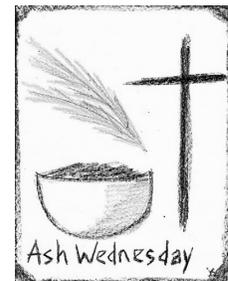
Easter services on
Easter Sunday



Anne Case passed away
December 5, 2025. She was
born November 11, 1930. She
attended church here some
years ago. She was 95
years old.

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

Ash Wednesday is on February 18th.
We will have a joint service of ashes
and communion with our sister church,
Logan Memorial, at First UMC
beginning at 6:00 pm.



The Kroger Community Rewards Staff has informed
us that during the period of August to
November 2025 we received \$42.41 in
Rewards with 15 households
participating.



FEBRUARY Birthdays

4-Pastor Alicia
11-Dick Phillips
11-Rita Hennen
20-Meredith Poole
28-Alease Goe
28-Judy Rhodes



WEEKLY OPPORTUNITIES

Sunday: *Sunday School, 9:15 am
Worship, 10:45 a.m.*

Wednesday: *Zoom Disciple Study, 7 p.m.*

Thursday: *Handbell Choir Practice, 6 p.m.
Sanctuary Choir Practice, 7 p.m.*

Saturday: *Women's Zoom Meeting, 8 am*

TELL SOMEBODY
YOU LOVE THEM
ON FEBRUARY 14.



FEBRUARY LECTIONARY READINGS

February 1

Micah 6:1-8
Psalm 15 (UMH 747)
1 Corinthians 1:18-31
Matthew 5:1-12

February 8

Isaiah 58: 1-9a (9b-12)
Psalm 112:1-9 (10) (UMH 833)
1 Cor. 2:1-12 (13-16)
Matthew 5:13-20

February 15

Exodus 24:12-18
Psalm 2 (UMH 739) or
Psalm 99 (UMH 819)
2 Peter 1:16-21
Matthew 17:1-9

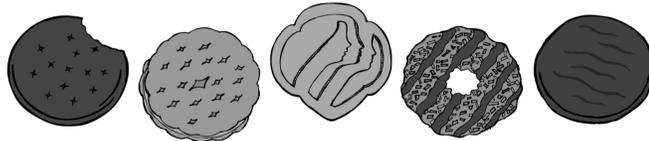
February 22

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7
Psalm 32 (UMH 766)
Romans 5:12-19
Matthew 4:1-11

IT'S GIRL SCOUT COOKIE TIME!

Need a cookie fix and also help a group of young ladies at the same time? Contact the Girl Scout troop that meets weekly at our church. The girls and leaders meet in the far back room behind the Fellowship Hall every Wednesday between 5-7 pm.

OR text your order to 304-615-6088.



Annual Pastor's Brunswick Stew Luncheon

It is that time of year again! It is time for Pastor Alicia to make Brunswick Stew for First UMC and Logan Memorial UMC congregations. So plan to stay after Worship on February 8 for stew. This Sunday would be a great Sunday to invite someone to church and to stay for lunch afterwards!



JOIN US!

CHECK OUT OUR FUMC WEBSITE

Want to know more about our church? Check out our current website for info about the past, present, and future for our congregation. There are links to many of the local missions we are involved with as well as information about our denomination. Forgot the time for one of our events? Check it out. It easy to find. Just Google First United Methodist Church, Parkersburg, WV. How did this happen? We have had John Gainer diligently working behind the computer screens to provide our congregation and the worldwide web about us. We cannot provide enough thank yous (but we can try!) to John for all of the work he has done on this project as well as continues to do so to keep the site current. **Thank you John!**
Deborah Shaffer

PARKERSBURG URBAN MINISTRIES needs for this month: boxed macaroni and cheese, egg noodles (large and small)



GUSTKE CENTER NEEDS FOR FEBRUARY: Shampoo



SOUPER BOWL



Are you a Seahawks fan or a Patriots fan? Choose a team to support, even if in name only. Decide on how many points they will score during the Super Bowl and bring that many cans of soup to church on Sunday, February 8th. No matter who the winner is, the real winner will be Parkersburg Urban Ministries, as they will receive the soup for their food pantry.

LENTEN STUDY

Our Lenten Study will be on Wednesday afternoons during Lent beginning on February 25 at 3:00 pm at First UMC. The study will be *Finding Jesus in the Psalms* by Barb Roose. The author indicates that...

“The Psalms provide a perfect framework for experiencing Lent through the verses that were Jesus’s own scriptures, offering both him and us strength and wisdom in a painful and redemptive season. The Book of Psalms hums with the heartbeat of our humanity with divinely inspired words that find purchase in the tenderest places in our hearts when our human words or wisdom fails us.”

Barb Roose

Please plan to take part in this 6 week study for Lent. Books will be available soon and will be \$15.

PRAYER LIST

If you put someone on the prayer list, PLEASE let Cindy know their status to keep the list current. **THANK YOU.**

AMERICA

Ada Franklin
Barrie Daniels
Carol Power
Cecil (Dina’s brother)
Charlie & Marilyn Casto
David Hennen
David Taliaferro
Doug McDonald
Douglas Mitchell

ISRAEL

First UMC
Gary Parsons
James Chaney
Jan Davis
Jaxson Harvey
Jim Rice
Lee Carrico
Logan Mem. UMC

UKRAINE

Margaret Stemple
Marie Butler
Martha B. Williams
Mike Brannock
Nathan Corathers/family
Scot Harper
Sharon Hennen
Tish Oney

PLEASE PRAY FOR PEACE!

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A LIGHTHOUSE CONGREGATION?

Does this mean we will change the name of our church?

No, our church will retain the name First United Methodist Church, Parkersburg.

What is the purpose of Lighthouse Congregations?

Lighthouse Congregations are local churches in the WV Annual Conference that are particularly equipped to welcome anyone whose church has closed or separated from the United Methodist Church, and those who are not currently connected to a local faith community. These congregations will act as a resting place for those seeking a United Methodist faith community, with people who will care for and provide a safe haven of peace and grace.

What is our congregation doing to be a more welcoming congregation?

New interior/exterior signage is planned for the near future.

Additional changes to meet ADA requirements. Additional mirrors have been added to restrooms at a lower level. A ramp is planned for access for all to the chancel area.

“How to Welcome the Visitor” training for congregation. TBA

How are going to pay for these additions?

We were given a \$5,000 grant from the Annual Conference Congregational Vitality Team to make changes and improvements that will allow visitors feel welcome.

Deborah Shaffer



THANK YOU CARDS

A NOTE OF



THANK YOU so much for the prayer blanket that was made and given to Selah. We were deeply touched by the gift. Just knowing all the prayers and time that went into it is heart-warming.

Appreciative and grateful,
Christina, Selah
and Rebecca

Prayer blanket warriors, I am so thankful for the blanket and the prayers. I'm alive due to the many prayers I received. Your concern and care mean the world to me. Tom, the lap cat, loves the blanket, too. He lands wherever the blanket rests. Thankful!

Love, Brenda Brum

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- 1—Communion Sunday
- 8—Souper Bowl Sunday (BRING CANS OF SOUP)
Pastor Alicia's Brunswick Stew Luncheon after Worship
- 11—United Women in Faith, Parlor, 2 pm
- 15—Transfiguration Sunday
- 18—ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE, 6 pm
- 22—First Sunday in LENT
- 23—Latrobe St. Mission dinner, 6 p.m.
- 24—CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING, 4 pm
- 25—Lenten Study begins, 3 pm





The following list is of our homebound members and friends for you to send a Valentine's greeting to.

Thelma Badger
1225 Juliana Street
Parkersburg WV 26101

Lee Carrico
The Willows
723 Summers Street
Parkersburg WV 26101

Charlie & Marilyn Casto
One Wyngate Drive
Parkersburg WV 26105

Sharon Hennen
1808 Foley Avenue
Parkersburg WV 26104

David Taliaferro
Room 501
514 High Street
Waynesville OH 45068

Virginia Edwards
Love & Care Assisted Living
5368 Dupont Road
Parkersburg WV 26101

Gary & Arlene Parsons
3 Cofer Street
Washington WV 26181

Mike & Bev Brannock
1901 Niagara Street
Parkersburg WV 26101

Gary & Jan Davis
2118 Florida Street
Parkersburg WV 26101

Margaret Stemple
810 38th Street
Vienna WV 26105

Suzie King
3305 Parrish Court
Parkersburg WV 26104

Carol Power
27897 Cincinnati Ridge
Coolville OH 45723

Betsy Albright & Gary Dunn
7 Crestview Drive
Vienna WV 26105



Please sign up for furnishing **flowers** for Sunday mornings for **2026**. The calendar is on the wall outside the office door, near the doors going into the sanctuary. If you want to bring them yourself you can, or you can order from and have them delivered by a florist on Friday morning. Also, please send Cindy the information you want in the bulletin regarding the flowers.

We have received word that Constance (Connie) Hosemann passed away in California on November 28, 2025. She and her sister, Carole McEwen and their parents, Harry and Mary McEwen, attended here many years ago. She and her husband, Robert, were active in one of the United Methodist churches in Oakland, CA.

WITH DEEPEST
Sympathy

SUMMARY OF CHURCH COUNCIL PLANNING MEETING

On Saturday, January 24, before the ice and snow kept us all at home, nine members of the FUMC Church Council met at the home of Rocky and Sheila Wiseman, for our January planning meeting. We covered events and successes of last year, and gathered ideas for improvements and/or additions for 2026.

We spent time reviewing the greatly improved church website, thanks to John Gainer's hard work. We collated a list of possible additions. We also reviewed our progress as to our designation as a Lighthouse Church. The need for improved signage and ramp access to the chancel area are in the planning stage. We recognized the success of the Young at Heart Ministry, and reinforced that it is an important new ministry of our church, and thanked Julia Lee and her committee for their hard work.

We spent time, also, brainstorming new possibilities for 2026. Included in these ideas were recognizing scholarship recipients in a Sunday service, continue connecting with Julia-Ann Square residents in various outdoor events, additional Choir Side Chats by Jimmy, and clean out/clear out closets and Sunday School rooms upstairs. Plans for these will be published as dates are confirmed.

Finally, we spent time talking about things we need to be aware of as we prepare for a new pastor. As the time approaches, congregational assistance will be sought for areas where and when help might be needed.

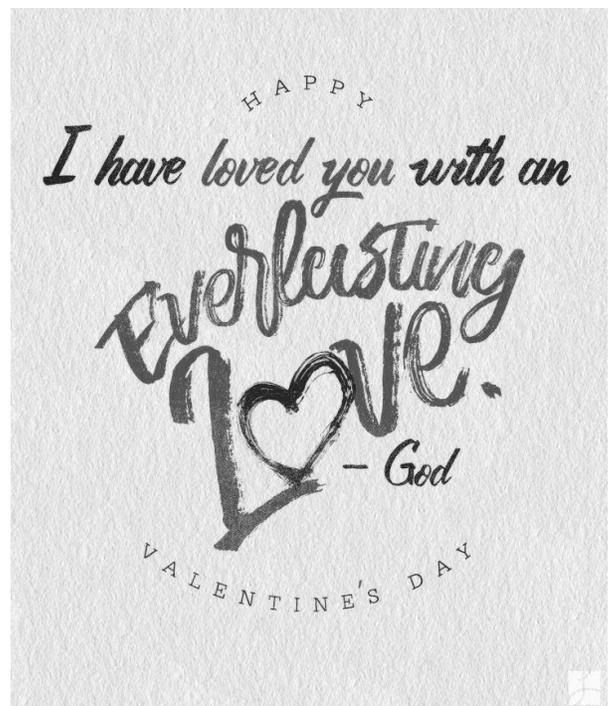
Sheila Wiseman, Church Council Chair

God's Love Is the Reason

Valentine's Day is more than hearts,
It's where true love got its start.
God gave us Jesus, His only Son,
A gift of love for everyone.

He showed us how to truly give,
Through sacrifice, so we could live.
Because of Him, love flows today,
In all we do, in all we say.

So as you celebrate and share,
Remember God's love is always there
His gift of Jesus, pure and true,
Is the greatest love for me and you.



Valentine word search

N S U V B F F S S Z T D W F V Z V P E M
W T P R I H L N R Q Y R Y R A U R B E F
N R N Y W G O U U A K V U H G K N T H Z
F A R G D M W G S U S Z J E W Q A D M O
X E A R V J E P W D D Q K W L I C L E U
P H E I K V R U E A R V R J C O O P C L
S Y B N D H S G E F Y W O P H A V B N O
C D Y G I H J P T F Z P A J O Z O E A V
M N D C P E Y I Z E C M J S C S W S M E
C A D O U A L N L C A I H M O F R Z O X
E C E U C R W K F T R D Y R L T Z I R K
O W T P E T N J P I D I M B A O X C S I
Y W M L P V R Y E O W E P W T G F H Y S
H R H E R A D U K N W N M X E A O U M S
K W P I H S D N E I R F Q U R U D O V C
D S E S O R X C G T R A E H T E E W S K
A A K U O K K E F V A L E N T I N E C Z
M K D Z M M G H S T M C G F A M I L Y J
L E S L K R C S D N O M A I D O K C U V
X Z G E F H E Z X F Z Z Y L H U G P D J

HEART	COUPLE	VALENTINE	DIAMOND
CUPID	CHOCOLATE	CARD	RING
FRIENDSHIP	CANDY HEARTS	ROSES	TEDDY BEAR
KISS	FEBRUARY	FAMILY	ROMANCE
SWEETHEART	PINK	LOVE	SWEET
TRUE LOVE	HUG	FLOWERS	AFFECTION



Church Staff

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Alicia Randolph Rapping

Financial Secretary: Rebecca Crooks

Director of Music: Jimmy Sundquist

Administrative Assistant: Cindy Lucas

Handbell & Choir Director/Organist/Pianist: Jimmy Sundquist

Volunteer Staff: Deborah Shaffer, Certified Lay Minister

Office Hours

Tuesday-Thursday—9 am to 4 pm Friday—9 am to noon

Phone: 304-428-0111

Contact Information

Administrative Asst.:

fumcjuliana@wvdsl.net

Financial Secretary:

finsecretary@wvdsl.net

Pastor Alicia:

aliciarapping@gmail.com

facebook.com/fumcparkersburg



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