

***A Message from Pastor Alan***

In the Gospel of Luke, when Jesus approaches the fisherman who will become one of his many disciples, they have been out fishing all night, they have caught nothing, so they have returned to the shore. Jesus hops into the boat, and after teaching the crowds, he encourages Simon to “Row out farther, into the deep water, and drop your nets for a catch” (Luke 5.4). Simon and the other fisherman protest, naming the ways in which they have worked so hard, and yet have nothing to show for it. However, Peter senses that there is something powerful about the words that Jesus speaks. Because it is Jesus asking, Peter agrees. The result is overwhelming. When they move out into the deep waters, under the direction of Jesus, the fishermen haul in so many fish that their nets begin to split and their boats begin to sink. Peter’s response to this event is to fall to his knees in confession of his sinfulness. Luke tells us that everyone, including James and John were “amazed.” Finally Jesus describes to them that from now on, as they follow Jesus as his disciples, that they will be fishing for people.

As we seek to follow Jesus Christ as his disciples in the congregation of First United Methodist Church, we are so thankful to the many wonderful mission and ministries that happen in and through our church. And yet, in this current context, when more and more people have given up on the Church at large, entering the category of “none” when asked about their religious affiliation, Jesus continues to call us into those deep waters, to fish for people.

With this in mind, our Church Council has undertaken an exciting opportunity. In the fall, after recognizing a need to look at our ministry and mission, so that we can grow more deeply as disciples, as well as make new disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, our Church Council approved what we are calling a **Deep Water** opportunity. We are inviting a special team to help us do the important work of reflection on who we are, and where God is calling us to go. The team will be made up of my clergy coach, the Rev. Dr. Margaret Kutz, who is a retired elder in the Virginia Conference; the Rev. Peter Moon, the District Superintendent of the Richmond District; and the Rev. Kathleen Overby-Webster, the District Superintendent of our own Roanoke District. The process that our conversation is based on has been very well received with churches in other districts in the Virginia Conference, but First UMC Salem is the first church to enter into a process like this in the Roanoke District!

The team will have a variety of conversations at First UMC over the weekend of **April 20-22**. These conversations will include reviewing demographic data about our church and community, data about our church itself, interviews with members of a variety of ages, and a **large conversation on April 21 to which the entire congregation is invited**. As we get closer to the weekend, you will hear more about the process, and you will be invited to participate in a variety of ways. We will complete the weekend with a special worship opportunity on **Sunday, April 22, when we will have a combined worship service**. At that service, Rev. Kutz will preach, and we will hear from the team what they have learned in their conversations, and prescriptions that they will offer to us as we move forward together serving Jesus Christ through First United Methodist Church.

I am proud of the proactive work of our Church Council to lead our congregation to follow Jesus Christ out in to deep waters, to continue the wonderful mission and ministry of church in these times of great challenge, as well as great opportunity for new people to know the love of God revealed in Jesus Christ!

Peace,

Pastor Alan



## **CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES**

*Tricia Givens, Director*

### **God's Handiwork**

As March blows in and spring begins to show signs all around us, take time during the Lenten season to help your child to see God's Handiwork. I was talking about miracles to the preschoolers the other day and that sometimes is a concept hard for them to understand. Children in school may hear teachers explain all the science background to all the amazing things around us; such as rainbows, flowers, trees budding, grass growing, or the process of evaporation and condensation. Science explains much, but do help your child to see that in the midst of all these things that can be scientifically explained there is a trace of God's handiwork. God is the beginning of all that is around us. HE is the beginning of all new life. God's handiwork is all around us. He is in the world beneath us, above us, beside us, within us and within others. Help them to see this during Lent and as we prepare for Easter.

Activity: Place a jar or it can be a large drinking glass on your kitchen cupboard or a dining table. Place a card in front that says God's Handiwork. Now make it intentional to spend some time with your child through a weekly or daily walk, an intentional conversation in the car, or some intentional family time. During this time, point out God's handiwork around them. Help your child or even teenager see the handiwork of God in all that is around them and in happenings and people in their life. During Lent, we try to become even closer to Christ. We try to invite Christ to be a more integral part of our life. Help your child to see Christ. As you name moments or things you see that are a part of God's handiwork, write it on a tiny piece of paper and put it in your jar or glass. As you get to Easter, share what is in the jar. Maybe read them at an Easter dinner or sometime over Easter week. Help them realize that God reminds us of the Miracle of Christ's resurrection and gift of New Life often in the miracles of life around us. Explain God is the beginning and ending of all life and the resurrection of Christ was God's handiwork. God's miracles are still happening all around. Christ's miracle of new life has been given to us through him. Look at the flowering trees bloom, change, wither, become barren and then begin to slowly bloom again with new buds. Miracles of life are here. People often are a part of God's handiwork when they come to our aid and share their kindness and love. Help them see Christ around them and in God's Handiwork. God is in all that is GOOD!

### **Vacation Bible School**

Rolling River Rampage

July 16<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 – 12:30

Ages Pre K 4 through 5<sup>th</sup> grade

Kids: Register Early!

Third graders through fifth graders travel and do service in the community all week. Registration forms are at the Church Welcome Center and at the Church Office.

VBS Teachers: We will have a very brief meeting on Sunday March 18<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 Pm in Key 73 room. I will give out books and some VBS information so you can have the theme in mind. This should be an easy theme to decorate for. It is a good curriculum and easy for children to relate to.

### **Sunday, March 4<sup>th</sup>**

#### **WESLEY KIDS - 5:00pm**

You did such a nice job when we visited Snyder Nursing Home. They loved your stuffed animals. You are good singers and you truly shared God's love with people who are sometimes lonely. Thank you for participating. March 4<sup>th</sup> we will meet in the chapel and we will watch a film on John Wesley and then we will serve by cleaning the church. We will clean behind the pews and we will wipe handprints from the doors. I will have the materials we need. There will be a surprise snack for all who come to serve!!

#### **Lenten play "LENTEN ENCOUNTERS"**

Meet biblical characters who met or knew Jesus in the play, "Lenten Encounters". Come on out March 4<sup>th</sup> and join us for supper and a play (in our fellowship hall); 6:00 supper (lasagna, salad, and dessert) and 6:30 pm the play "Lenten Encounters".

**PALM SUNDAY Family Processional – March 25<sup>th</sup>**

All families with children up to seventh grade will meet in the fellowship hall. We will process through the fellowship hall for the 8:45am Genesis service and the sanctuary at the 11:00am service. This is a special time and tradition, when we celebrate when Christ processed into Jerusalem. We will wave palms and leave the palms on the stage or communion rail as we process out. This is a really special procession, as we get to see all the young children and their families and celebrate together the beginning of HOLY WEEK.

**NEEDING EGGS- EGGS- EGGS**

Please help us out by donating eggs that are filled with candy or little prizes. Place them in the containers at the welcome center and at the office. Make sure the candy does not have peanuts or any peanut product in them.

**MARCH 25<sup>th</sup> SPRING FESTIVAL, 5:30-6:30pm**

Come on out and bring your child and an Easter basket. There will be a short program in the fellowship hall at 5:30 and then we will have our annual Easter Egg Hunt. Enjoy Prizes, Crafts, outside inflatable fun and activities.

**Kids' in the Spotlight**

This month we recognize Mary Alex and Laurel Combs. Mary Alex and Laurel attend Sunday school regularly. They are members of the children's choirs. They attend Wesley Kids and attended VBS, Story time and are at many of our church functions. They share their joy for life wherever they go. They have made so many friends here at First Church and are sweet sisters to their little brother Walker. Mary Alex and Laurel are the daughters of Pastor Alan and Morgan Combs. Thank you girls, for making a difference at First Church.



**Children's Ministry Volunteer of the Month**

This month we recognize Meghan O'Brian and Alex Linter for all their help in our nursery. They have helped in the evenings, as well as on Sunday mornings. Their help in the nursery truly enhances our church programs. Thank you so very much for making a difference in children's ministry. The books, " My Friend Jesus" and" Getting To Know Jesus For Little Ones," have been added to our children's ministry library in their honor.



**WESLEYAN PRESCHOOL**

*Jane Butto, Director*

We are looking forward to Spring! This month our children will be celebrating Dr. Seuss' birthday. This is always a fun day learning about this children's author and reading some of his hilarious books.

In March the children will participate in our March Fitness Challenge. All the classes will be walking, skipping and hopping laps around the church building. We are encouraging gross motor activity and fun! Every lap that a class completes will be documented with a paper sneaker to find out how many laps they can do in a month!

Registration for next year was held on Feb.19. We registered many returning children and lots of new participants, too. We still have a few openings in some of our classes so please spread the word about our amazing outreach ministry to the preschoolers of our church and community.

Our Preschool will be closed for Easter Break beginning on March 30 through April 6.

**YOUTH MINISTRIES**

*Jessica Kauffman, Director*

**Youth Mission Trip Potato Fundraiser Success!**

Thank you to all who came and supported the Youth Mission Trip Fundraiser! It was a huge success - we made over \$850 towards our mission trip. This will help tremendously to offset costs. Thank you to all parent volunteers who came and helped in the kitchen, and thank you to the youth who came in the early hours to start baking potatoes! Our next fundraiser will be a Car Wash on March 17<sup>th</sup> from 10:00am-1:00pm!

### Coffee Shop Small Group!

During the season of Lent the Youth will be doing a Lent Study called "What Makes a Hero". This study looks at pop culture heroes and others through the lens of faith and shows how Jesus turned the concept of hero on its head.

Group	Day	Time	Location
7-8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Mondays	7:30-8:30pm	Mill Mountain Back Room <u>March 19<sup>th</sup> - Frank's Pizza</u>
9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Wednesday	6:30-7:30pm	Starbucks Main Street
10-12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Wednesday	7:30-8:30pm	Starbucks Main Street



### Youth Mission Team Car Wash Fundraiser March 17<sup>th</sup> 10:00am-1:00pm

As long as the weather is nice the youth will be out in the parking lot washing cars! Come by and get a nice clean shine for your car, and help the youth raise funds for their mission trip!

### Confirmation Day Retreat March 24<sup>th</sup>

All Confirmands and Mentors will be attending a Confirmation Day Retreat at Camp Alta Mons. The retreat will encourage us to step away from our day to day activities and really grow in our faith with God, grow in our relationship with our mentors, and peers.

### Movies on the Lawn in April Mission Trip Fundraiser

Be on the lookout for details for *Movies on the Lawn* happening during April! We will be watching the family friendly movie "Wonder" with our church family and raising funds for our Youth Mission Trip! Bring your chairs, family, and friends!

### SKY (SENIORS KEEPING YOUNG)

*Rev. Bobby J. Pickle, Director*

### SKY Luncheon - March 15<sup>th</sup>

Come and join us @ 11:30am in the Fellowship Hall for some good food followed by our program: Mr. Trey Gregory, the founder of: **Domestic Abuse Disruption (D.A.D.)**, Inc. was instituted in 2012 and now primarily serve the Greater Roanoke Valley, including Salem, Roanoke County, Roanoke City, Botetourt County and surrounding areas. Trey will demonstrate positive and easy methods to keep our Seniors safe! This will be a fun and helpful program so you will not want to miss this and do bring a friend!

### SMALL GROUPS

*Hilda Paxton, Coordinator*



### Green Church

Christians hear about global warming and damage to God's creation. They want to help, but how? Join us in a 6-week study after Easter using scripture and scientific findings to help us look at God's Word, God's world, and our response. The journey begins where we are and helps us think through what we know, what we can learn, and what we can do to make a difference. Through the study we will learn that we can do many things small and large that will help to heal God's world. The study will be led by Margaret Riggs and Judy Burton - more information to follow in April newsletter.

### Love Does - New Worship Series

During the Easter Season, the first scripture reading changes from an Old Testament Lesson to a reading from the Book of Acts. The Book of Acts describes the emergence of the church as the disciples being to process, with the help of the Holy Spirit, what happened in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The result of how they understand their work as his disciples is to *act*, hence the name of the book. They increasingly recognize that to follow Jesus is to bear the love of Jesus in the world as an action, that love is not only something that we rest in, but it is something that we do. Therefore, as we look at the Book of Acts, we will consider the ways in which *Love Does*, also using the book of the same name by Bob Goff as a more contemporary reference.

## **CAMP ALTA MONS**

Ronda Wimmer, Executive Director



## Make **Alta Mons** part of your summer plans!

**WHO?...** **Alta Mons** is our Methodist outdoor ministry on 850 acres in beautiful Shawsville, VA—featuring summer camps of a week, half-week, or day-long. Alta Mons features camping experiences for K-12.

**WHAT?...** A Christian camp supervised by hand-picked and highly qualified camp counselors and focused on small group activities and basics of the Christian faith.

**WHY?...** Camping experiences interwoven with worship and small group activities appropriate to age for spiritual growth and as an aid for emphasizing and proclaiming the Gospel as an integral developmental event in the lives of youth.

**WHEN?...** Week long camps: **JUNE 24-29, JULY 1-6, JULY 8-13, AND JULY 15-20**

**Registration required:** Fees are structured to the age and length of camp (camperships available). For more information, contact the church office at (540) 389-5459 or visit [www.altamons.org](http://www.altamons.org).

### **Paul Bunyan Day - March 17<sup>th</sup>**

Paul Bunyan Day at Camp Alta Mons is Saturday, March 17<sup>th</sup>! Bring your whole family for a day full of fun, volunteer work, fellowship, and free food! Meet at the Alta Mons Dining Hall (rain or shine) at 9AM! Bring work gloves, chain saws, rakes, log splitters, etc. Visit <http://www.altamons.org/events-at-alta-mons.html> for more information.



**UNITED METHODIST WOMEN**

**THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF  
METHODIST WOMEN IN MISSION!**

Illustrated by Chawah (HA-WA) Bellin



**THE FOUNDING OF  
UNITED METHODIST WOMEN**

IN THE 1800s, INDIAN WOMEN WERE BEING DENIED CARE BECAUSE MALE DOCTORS WERE NOT ALLOWED TO TREAT THEM.



ON A DARK & STORMY NIGHT IN 1869, CLEMENTINA BUTLER AND LOIS PARKER SHARED THIS WITH SIX FRIENDS AFTER RETURNING HOME FROM INDIA WITH THEIR MISSIONARY HUSBANDS.



WOMEN BEGAN TALKING TO OTHER WOMEN...

THEY WROTE A CONSTITUTION.

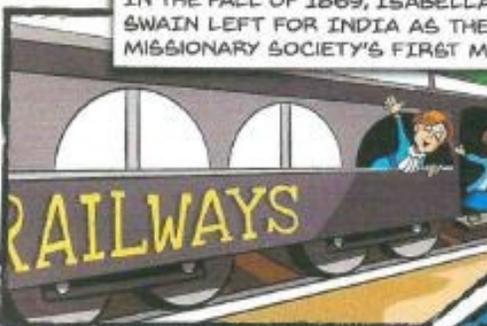
Constitution of the  
Woman's Foreign  
Missionary Society



AND DONATIONS BEGAN TO POUR IN.



IN THE FALL OF 1869, ISABELLA THOBURN & CLARA SWAIN LEFT FOR INDIA AS THE WOMAN'S FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY'S FIRST MISSIONARIES.



TODAY, UNITED METHODIST WOMEN REGIONAL MISSIONARIES CARRY ON THE TRADITION BY WORKING AROUND THE GLOBE TO ASSIST WOMEN, CHILDREN AND YOUTH.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN CONTINUE THE LEGACY OF OUR FOREMOTHERS BY PUTTING FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE INTO ACTION FOR WOMEN, CHILDREN AND YOUTH AROUND THE WORLD. CELEBRATE OUR 150TH ANNIVERSARY AT ASSEMBLY 2018. [UMWASSEMBLY.ORG](http://UMWASSEMBLY.ORG), AND SUPPORT MISSION FOR ANOTHER 150 YEARS AND BEYOND WITH THE LEGACY FUND: [WWW.UNITEDMETHODISTWOMEN.ORG/LEGACY](http://WWW.UNITEDMETHODISTWOMEN.ORG/LEGACY).

# MARCH 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 10:00am - Bible Babes 6:30pm - Girl Scouts	2 8:00pm - AA 8:00pm - AI-Anon	3
4 <b>Fellowship Sunday</b> 4:30pm - God & Church 5:00pm - Wesley Kids 6:00pm - Fellowship Dinner	5 7:00pm - Church Council 7:00pm - Boy Scouts 7:30pm - Youth (7th-8th) 8:00pm - AA	6 10:00am - SKY Board 6:30pm - Financial Peace 6:30pm - Cub Scouts	7 6:30am - Men's Bible Study 11:00am - Lent Study 6:00pm - Lent Study 6:30pm - God & Me 6:30pm - Youth (9th) 7:30pm - Youth (10th-12th)	8 10:00am - Bible Babes 6:30pm - Girl Scouts	9 10:00am - Parliamentarians 8:00pm - AA 8:00pm - AI-Anon	10
11 4:30pm - God & Church 6:00pm - Youth Reality Check	12 7:00pm - Boy Scouts 7:30pm - Youth (7th-8th) 8:00pm - AA	13 9:00am - UMW Meeting 6:30pm - Financial Peace 6:30pm - Cub Scouts 6:30pm - Venturing Crew 7:00pm - Cracked Pots 7:00pm - SPRC	14 6:30am - Men's Bible Study 11:00am - Lent Study 6:00pm - Lent Study 6:00pm - Girl Scouts 6:30pm - Youth (9th) 7:30pm - Youth (10th-12th)	15 10:00am - Bible Babes 11:30am - SKY Club 6:30pm - Girl Scouts	16 8:00pm - AA 8:00pm - AI-Anon	17 Youth Car Wash Fundraiser
18 4:30pm - God & Church 5:30pm - VBS Teachers 6:00pm - Youth Reality Check	19 7:00pm - Boy Scouts 7:30pm - Youth (7th-8th) 8:00pm - AA	20 6:30pm - Cub Scouts 7:00pm - Finance Meeting	21 6:30am - Men's Bible Study 11:00am - Lent Study 12:15pm - Staff Meeting 6:00pm - Lent Study 6:30pm - Youth (9th) 7:30pm - Youth (10th-12th)	22 10:00am - Bible Babes 6:30pm - Girl Scouts	23 8:00pm - AA 8:00pm - AI-Anon	24 Confirmation Day Retreat
25 <b>Palm Sunday</b> 4:30pm - God & Me 5:00pm - Spring Festival	26 7:00pm - Boy Scouts 7:30pm - Youth (7th-8th) 8:00pm - AA	27 9:00am - District Meeting 6:30pm - Cub Scouts 7:00pm - Cracked Pots	28 6:30am - Men's Bible Study 11:00am - Lent Study 6:00pm - Lent Study 6:00pm - Girl Scouts 6:30pm - Youth (9th) 7:30pm - Youth (10th-12th)	29 <b>Holy Thursday</b> 10:00am - Bible Babes 7pm - Holy Thursday Service	30 <b>Good Friday</b> <b>Church Office Closed</b> 7pm - Good Friday Service 8:00pm - AA 8:00pm - AI-Anon	31

**First United Methodist Church**

**125 West Main Street**

**Salem, VA 24153-0887**

**First United Methodist Church Staff**

- ◆ Lead Pastor, **Alan Combs** ([alancombs@fumcsalemva.org](mailto:alancombs@fumcsalemva.org))
- ◆ Associate Minister, **Jeffrey Dorsey** ([jeff@dorseylawfirm.com](mailto:jeff@dorseylawfirm.com))
- ◆ Assistant Minister of Congregational Care & Senior Adults, **Bobby Pickle** ([bpickle@fumcsalemva.org](mailto:bpickle@fumcsalemva.org))
- ◆ Director of Children's Ministries & Children's Choirs, **Tricia Givens** ([triciag@fumcsalemva.org](mailto:triciag@fumcsalemva.org))
- ◆ Youth Ministries Director, **Jessica Kauffman** ([jessicak@fumcsalemva.org](mailto:jessicak@fumcsalemva.org))
- ◆ Director of Wesleyan Preschool, **Jane Butto** ([jbutto@fumcsalemva.org](mailto:jbutto@fumcsalemva.org))
- ◆ Director of Sanctuary Choir, **William Snyder**
- ◆ Director of Youth & Handbell Choirs, **Heather Mitchell** ([hnmitchell@comcast.net](mailto:hnmitchell@comcast.net))
- ◆ Organist, **Judith Snyder**
- ◆ Piano Accompanist for Children & Youth, **London Reinhard**
- ◆ Contemporary Worship Music Co-Director, **Allan Davidson** ([davidsonallan4@gmail.com](mailto:davidsonallan4@gmail.com))
- ◆ Contemporary Worship Music Co-Director, **Joey Poarch** ([joseph.poarch@gmail.com](mailto:joseph.poarch@gmail.com))
- ◆ Office & Communications Manager, **Margaret Woolwine** ([margaretw@fumcsalemva.org](mailto:margaretw@fumcsalemva.org))
- ◆ Sextons, **Butch & Genia Johnson** ([winhoos1@hotmail.com](mailto:winhoos1@hotmail.com))

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125 W. Main Street, Salem VA 24153-3615 | Phone (540) 389-5459 | Fax (540) 389-6046

Website: [www.fumcsalemva.org](http://www.fumcsalemva.org) Email: [church@fumcsalemva.org](mailto:church@fumcsalemva.org)

Wesleyan Preschool: (540) 389-5144