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THE VISITOR

JANUARY 2024

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Oak Grove Church of the Brethren
2138 McVitty Road, SW
Roanoke, VA 24018



Join us on Sundays
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Worship 11:00 a.m.

**DEADLINE FOR
FEBRUARY
JANUARY 15**

January Sermon and Scripture

January 7 *Baptism* Mark 1:4-11

January 14 *Called* John 1:43-51

January 21 *Kingdom* Mark 1:14-20

January 28 *Healed* Mark 1:21-28

**NEWSLETTER
COMMITTEE:**

Rena' Brown

Carolyn Broyles

Nancy Hylton

Josephine Keller

Bryana Lackey


Emily Nelson

**CHURCH OFFICE
SECRETARY HOURS:**
Monday-Friday
9:00-2:00 p.m.

January 14-15, 2024

We have a Youth Retreat scheduled on January 14-15, 2024 (Sunday-Monday.) We will meet at church at 6:00 p.m. for fun including games, tour of the Sports Car Clinic, snacks, movie and discussion, sleep, breakfast at church, volunteer with an MLK Day clean up (community beautification with a group at the Envision Center).

We've invited other youth groups to join us! Let [Carol](#) know you can come. Friends are always welcome!



Church News

Prayer concerns since the last Visitor:

- ...**Hollie Johnson**, recovering from surgery
- ...**Dennis Shearer**, prayers for treatment
- ...**Becky Fowler**, recovering from surgery

Sympathy and prayers to the family of Jack Thomas. Jack passed away on December 10, 2023. Jack was the father of Sara Thomas King and the grandfather to Matt, Philip and Andrew.

Sympathy and prayers to the family of Randy Cook. Randy passed away on December 12, 2023.

December Outreach

- Two families assisted through our Good Samaritan Fund.
- Food for two families through our Food Pantry.
- Split and delivered wood with Project WARM on Saturday, December 23, 2023.
- Backpack Ministry is now distributing 23 backpacks weekly!
- Prison Postage collection for the Roanoke City Jail.
- Tree of Love collected mittens, scarves, hats and socks for the Rescue Mission.
- Built 20 beds with Sleep in Heavenly Peace.



Children and Youth Families are invited!

Let's go watch the Roanoke Rail Yard Dawgs ice hockey team at the Berglund Center on Saturday, January 27, 2024, with a 7:05 p.m. start time! Carol Elmore has sent out a link for you to purchase group tickets in our section. Please join us!

Oak Grove's Andrew King is our church contact. Friends are always welcome!



Happy Birthday

- 1– Emily Nelson
- 3– Peter Lubbs
- 10– Wanda Lynch
- 11– Tyler Broyles
- 19– Jonna Detweiler
- 22– Coulton Janney
- 26– Dennis Ferguson
- 27– Shelly Haas
- 27– Bill Cianelli
- 28– Maggie Pizzullo
- 30– Andrew King

Happy Anniversary

- 1– Nelson & Nancy Hylton
- 1– Dan & Kris Lubbs
- 23– Jim & Margie Shaver

Oak Grove members:

Thank you so much for the generous pastor's appreciation gift this Christmas! Between needing some new running shoes and clothes and the ever-present opportunities to expand my woodworking hobby, your gift will be a great blessing for hobbies that bring much contentment and joy.

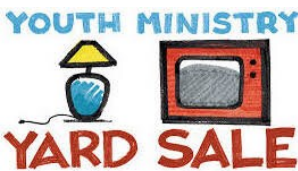
Your kindness and faithfulness are a continual blessing to me.

Pastor Tim

Looking Ahead...

March 15-16, 2024

Bring your items starting March 3!

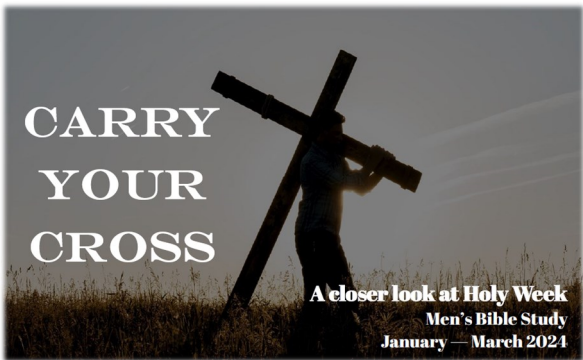
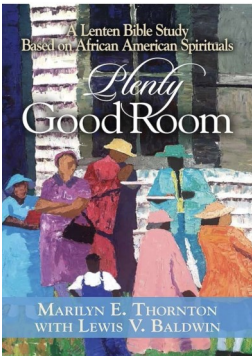
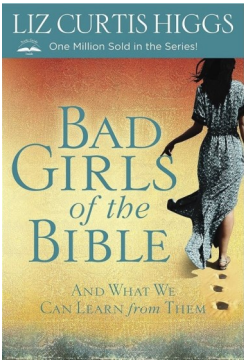


Women’s Bible Study

We will begin a new book study on Thursday, January 4, 2024, at 9:30 a.m. (gather at 9:15 to catch up)! We meet weekly. We will begin with Bad Girls in the Bible, by Liz Curtis Higgs. Then we will take a six-week break from that book and begin Plenty Good Room, on February 15, 2024 through Lent. We will pick Bad Girls back up after Easter.

It’s a great time for new folks to start. This is a good group of supportive, curious women. Come join the fun!

Ask Carol to order your books (both for \$24.00) OR you can order them yourselves.



Men’s Bible Study

Carry Your Cross — A closer look at Holy Week
Winter 2024 Men’s Bible Study — Wednesdays @ 6:00 p.m.

When the Apostle Paul proclaimed the Gospel to the church in Corinth approximately 25 years after Jesus’ resurrection, his message focused on the cross: “we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles” (1 Corinthians 1:23). Beginning the sermon by essentially saying, “I know none of you are going to believe this, but...” doesn’t seem like an effective strategy!

With a message like this, how could first century Christians—or 21st century Christians—expect to attract converts? And yet they did. Within 300 years of Jesus’ resurrection, the followers of this so-called foolish Gospel of a crucified Savior had gone from being a largely ignored religious sect within Judaism to being outlawed and occasionally persecuted to overtaking the Roman Empire.

How might a fresh look at Jesus’ actions, encounters, teachings, and sufferings on Holy Week help us follow him in our lives? Lets open our Bibles and learn together!

- Jan. 3 [Palm Sunday—Entry](#). Matthew 21:1-11
- Jan. 10 [Monday—Confront](#). Luke 21:1-4
- Jan. 17 [Wednesday—Faithful?](#) Mark 14:3-9
- Jan. 24 [Maundy Thursday—Serve](#). Luke 22:14-23
- Jan. 31 [Good Friday—Crucify](#). John 18:28-38
- Feb. 7 [Holy Saturday—Silence](#). Isaiah 52:13-53:12

- Feb.14 Ash Wednesday
- Feb. 21 [The Gravity of Sin](#). Psalm 51:1-17
- Feb. 28 [A Passover Festival](#). Exodus 12:29-32
- Mar. 6 [The Difficulty of Crucifixion](#). 1 Cor. 15:1-11
- Mar. 13 [Carry your Cross](#). Luke 14:25-33

Camp Bethel News



Winter Camp is a fun and spiritual program for kids in 1st-5th grades, youth in 6th-8th grades & teens in 9th-12th grades led by our reunited Summer Staff and Youth Leaders from our District Churches.

Click [here](#) for more information or to register.



Pastor’s Column

The new year brings the predictable small talk about resolutions, self-improvement, gym memberships, diets, and other goals which we’ve all, at various times, planned for, joked about, and experienced mixed success in fulfilling. But the fact is that we do mark time by the passage of days, months, and years, and flipping the calendar from December 31 to January 1 does invite a certain amount of self-reflection.

We’ll begin the new year with four sermons taken from the Gospel texts in the Revised Common Lectionary. In my own preparation, I see two themes merging in these four texts: an invitation into the desert for self-reflection to refocus on what I’m calling *First Things*: experiences with Jesus that are foundational to our faith.



The picture that accompanies the worship theme is a panoramic photo that I took when we visited Rose in Portland during her BVS year. We hiked one morning on the “Lyle Cherry Orchard Trail” about an hour east of the city and were treated to this magnificent view of the Columbia River and the beautiful terrain of the countryside—once we’d made our way to the top of the ridge. It was a warm respite from the pressures of life, and invited reflection on the beauty of creation and the God who created it all.

You might have noticed a new piece of furniture in the vestibule. Noel Naff commissioned this table for our recent Virlina District Conference. Brother Noel is deeply concerned about the great amount of division in our world and especially in our beloved Church of the Brethren. He approached me about this design as a symbol for how our faith in Jesus is strong enough to bring us together across our divisions. The table was used in worship on Friday evening of District Conference, and as part of the worship center on Saturday.



Most of the walnut came from lumber Dennis Shearer gave to me when they moved into their current home. The live edge on this board adds a unique beauty to this design. I believe we will enjoy using this table for years to come.

Pastor Tim

Old Testament Survey course for Christian Growth Institute, taught by Pastors Tim Harvey and Bruce Huffman will be held here at Oak Grove on January 13 and 27 and February 10 and 24, 2024 from 10:00 a.m.- 3:30 p.m.

<div><div></div><div>January 2024</div><div></div></div>						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 <div>Church Office Closed</div> <div>Camp Bethel Summer Registration Opens!</div>	2 <div>5:30 p.m.– Handbells</div> <div>6 p.m.– Peace & Justice</div>	3 <div>9 a.m.– ESL</div> <div>6 p.m.– Men’s Bible Study</div> <div>7 p.m.– Choir</div>	4 <div>9:30 a.m. Women’s Bible Study</div> <div>2 p.m.–Games</div> <div>5:30 p.m.– Evangelism & Membership</div> <div>5:30 p.m.–Mission & Service</div> <div>6:30 p.m.– Christian Education</div>	5	6 <div>Winter Camp at Camp Bethel January 6-7.</div>
7 <div>9:45 a.m.-SS</div> <div>11:00 a.m.- Worship</div>	8 <div>9 a.m.– ESL</div> <div>9 a.m.- Crafts</div> <div>12:30 p.m.– Backpack</div>	9 <div>5:30 p.m.– Handbells</div>	10 <div>9 a.m.– ESL</div> <div>6 p.m.– Men’s Bible Study</div> <div>7 p.m.– Choir</div>	11 <div>9:30 a.m.– Women’s Bible Study</div> <div>11 a.m.– Good Samaritan</div> <div>2 p.m.–Games</div>	12	13 <div>10 a.m.-Old Testament Survey course</div>
14 <div>9:45 a.m.-SS</div> <div>11:00 a.m.- Worship</div> <div>12:30 p.m.– Executive Committee</div> <div>Youth Retreat</div>	15 <div>9 a.m.– ESL</div> <div>9 a.m.– Crafts</div>	16 <div>5:30 p.m.– Handbells</div>	17 <div>9 a.m.– ESL</div> <div>6 p.m.– Men’s Bible Study</div> <div>7 p.m.– Choir</div>	18 <div>9:30 a.m.– Women’s Bible Study</div> <div>2 p.m.-Games</div>	19	20 <div>8 a.m.-Project WARM</div>
21 <div>9:45 a.m.-SS</div> <div>11:00 a.m.- Worship</div> <div>12:30 p.m.– Deacons Meeting</div>	22 <div>9 a.m.– ESL</div> <div>9 a.m.– Crafts</div> <div>12:30 p.m.– Backpack</div> <div>6:30 p.m.– Roanoke Reparations Meeting</div>	23 <div>5:30 p.m.– Handbells</div>	24 <div>9 a.m.– ESL</div> <div>6 p.m.– Men’s Bible Study</div> <div>7 p.m.– Choir</div>	25 <div>9:30 a.m.– Women’s Bible Study</div> <div>2 p.m.-Games</div>	26	27 <div>10 a.m.-Old Testament Survey course</div> <div>7:05 p.m.– Roanoke Rail Yard Dawgs Hockey game</div>
28 <div>9:45 a.m.-SS</div> <div>11:00 a.m.- Worship</div>	29 <div>9 a.m.– ESL</div> <div>9 a.m.– Crafts</div>	30 <div>5:30 p.m.– Handbells</div>	31 <div>9 a.m.– ESL</div> <div>6 p.m.– Men’s Bible Study</div> <div>7 p.m.– Choir</div>	<div>HAPPY NEW YEAR</div> <div>2024!</div>		