



WASHINGTON COOPERATIVE PARISH

March/April 2026 Bi-Monthly Newsletter



Epworth United Methodist Church

60 Merriman Way Road
Moneta, VA 24121
540-721-4926

<https://epworthumcmoneta.org>

Sunday Worship—9:30 a.m.
Livestream also on Facebook:

click link:



Halesford United Methodist Church

1601 Lakewood Forest Road
Moneta, VA 24121
540-520-7875

<https://www.halesfordumc.com>

Sunday Worship—11 a.m.
Livestream also on Facebook:

click link:



Go green! If you would like to subscribe to a full color electronic copy of your monthly newsletter (instead of paper) please email Cindy Lollar - clollar65@gmail.com

Design Team: Teresa Edwards, Kaye Hancock, Betty Johnson, Cindy Lollar

*From the
Pastor's
Desk*



“Trust in the Lord”

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.” - Proverbs 3:5–6 (NRSV)

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,

These words from the Book of Proverbs are simple, but they carry deep truth. “Trust in the Lord with all your heart.” That’s something many of you have been doing for quite some time.

In a small rural community like ours, we have learned to work hard, solve problems, and take care of ourselves. That’s a good thing. But this Scripture reminds us that we don’t have to carry everything by ourselves. We don’t have to figure it all out on our own. The Lord invites us to lean on Him.

As we grow older, life can bring new challenges, health concerns, changes in our families, worries about the future of our farms, our community, and even our church. It’s easy to lie awake at night thinking about what might happen next. But God’s Word tells us to trust in the Lord with *all* our heart, not just part of it.

When the verse says, “In all your ways acknowledge him,” it means we talk to God about everything. The small things and the big things. The doctor’s appointment. The bills. The grandchildren. The decisions our church must make. Nothing is too small for God’s care.

And here is the promise: “He will make straight your paths.” That doesn’t mean life will be easy. We know better than that. But it does mean that God will guide us. God will not leave us wandering. God will walk with us, step by step.

Many of you can look back over the years and see how the Lord has already led you through hard seasons, droughts, losses, lean times, and personal trials. God was faithful then. God is faithful now.

Let us keep trusting in the Lord together. Let us pray together. And let us remember that the same God who has carried us this far will carry us home.

Grace and Peace,

Your servant in Christ,

Pastor Jeff

GIVE FREELY

“You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don’t give reluctantly or in response to pressure. ‘For God loves a person who gives cheerfully.’ 2 Corinthians 9:7 (NLT) “I have found that among its other benefits, giving liberates the soul of the giver.” Maya Angelou

Vivid scenes of famine and poverty in distant areas can move us to tears and compel us to send money to a place we’ve never visited and pray for people we’ve never met. These are good impulses. But many of us struggle with compassion in our own circles, our own towns, and our community centers. The close proximity of poverty and pain can make us uncomfortable, even as our hearts ache for the need we see in our immediate vicinities. Spreading love and our resources to the ends of the earth is good use of our time and priorities, but we cannot do that and still neglect sharing God’s love with those closer to us.

Being a physical representative of Christ’s love for another is a powerful act. When we first reach out to others and touch their shoulders and look them in the eyes and express compassion, we will understand the importance of this personal, intimate connection with God’s children. What does it look like to be Christ’s hands? We are his hands and his heart when serving a meal at a homeless shelter, reading mail to an elderly neighbor, giving someone money without conditions, cooking for a friend who’s ill, holding hands with a person in the hospital or listening to the needs and life story of a stranger.

This isn’t an easy or comfortable step for a lot of us. It requires a vulnerability that can feel awkward and even painful. Reaching out to another requires us to reach beyond our norm. So we can *pray* and we can start by first noticing the hearts and aches of the people in our own homes. Then those of our neighbors. Then we can expand our awareness to the people we cross paths with on our way to work or as we run errands. Giving and loving freely actually frees us and others to change the world with the unconditional love of Christ. We have recently seen this modeled in Minneapolis as “Minnesota Nice” where neighbors help out those trapped in their homes due to fear. Food deliveries, car pools for school children, and fundraisers are truly showing what “love your neighbor” really means.

When you ask to see the needs and hurts of others, you will. Prepare to be prayerful and to draw from God’s compassion. Have you wept for the heartache of another? Don’t hold back from empathy. It connects you to the brokenness of others and then right back to your own brokenness. Ultimately it leads you right back to God’s heart. Consider ways to be the hands of Christ. Preaching the gospel is for some; living the gospel is for all of us.

God, where are those needs? We’re ready to see them and respond to them. Even people closest to us are good at hiding their pain and ignoring their needs. Show us how to be vulnerable so they are invited to do the same in our presence and yours. In your holy name we pray, Amen.

(adapted from *LIFE AS A PRAYER-- Devotions to Inspire, Invitations to Be Still* by Hope Lyda)

~Submitted by Chris Mosig, Lay Leader
Epworth United Methodist Church

Spring: A Time to Grow in Faith

As the chill of winter fades and the warmth of spring awakens,
We are reminded of God's promises of renewal, growth, and transformation.
Spring is not just a season of blooming flowers and longer days;
It's also a time to reflect on our faith in fresh and meaningful ways.

Spring is an extraordinary testament to God's creativity and faithfulness.
He breathes life into the world and our spirits, in ways we can't express.
The earth bursts forth with vibrant colors and life, as our faith expands and grows.
We open our hearts, breathe in the fresh air, and marvel at all that he knows.

Just as we prune away dead branches, to make way for our plants to grow,
Spring is a perfect time to assess our spiritual lives; there are so many things we don't know.
Are there habits, distractions, or attitudes that need to be trimmed away?
Allow God to prune your heart this season so you can grow closer to Him every day.

Spring is also a season of planting. Farmers and gardeners sow seeds, trusting they will thrive.
We are called to plant seeds of hope and love; looking to change people's lives.
Whether through kindness, prayer, or sharing the Word, may these seeds grow tall and climb.
Trust that God will nurture those seeds as they grow toward heaven, in His always perfect time.

At the heart of spring is Easter, when we rejoice in the resurrection of our Lord.
This incredible event is the ultimate symbol of renewal and hope through His Word.
It reminds us that through Christ, we are given new life. We are chosen to be heaven bound.
Let this season of faith, hope and love inspire you; may your joy and your praise resound.

A Prayer for Spring

Heavenly Father, thank You for the gift of spring and the reminder of Your power to renew and restore.
Help us to embrace this season as an opportunity to grow closer to You. Prune away what holds us back,
plant seeds of faith in our hearts, and guide us as we seek to live out Your purpose for our lives. May we be
refreshed by Your Spirit and filled with the hope of Christ. Amen.

Christine Mosig

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper



Pancake Day, or Shrove Tuesday, is the traditional feast day before the start of Lent on Ash Wednesday. Lent – the 40 days leading up to Easter – was traditionally a time of fasting and on Shrove Tuesday, Anglo-Saxon Christians went to confession and were “shriven” (absolved from their sins). A bell would be rung to call people to confession. This came to be called the “Pancake Bell” and is still rung today. Shrove Tuesday always falls 47 days before Easter Sunday, so the date varies from year to year and falls between February 3 and March 9. Shrove Tuesday was the last opportunity to use up eggs and fats before embarking on the Lenten fast and pancakes are the perfect way of using up these ingredients. [The History of Pancake Day](#)



Washington Parish celebrated Shrove Tuesday on February 17, at Epworth. The food was delicious, the presentation looked wonderful, and of course, Brother Jimmie was cooking up pancakes! An enjoyable time of food and fellowship!

~Betty Johnson



Ash Wednesday Service

Washington Cooperative Parish – Epworth UMC



The Parish Ash Wednesday service was held on February 18, 2026, at Epworth UMC. Rev. White brought the message, preaching from Matthew 6:19-21, with the title, "Treasures that do not turn to dust". Rev. White said in part that we should remember that our citizenship is in Heaven, which is truly our home. Scripture says, "Do not store up treasures on Earth," the comma means to pause, to reflect on these words. Jesus is not condemning possessions. What are we holding precious? Jesus examines our heart-where our true heart lies, that's your treasure. Jesus sacrificed all things. Lent invites us to ask, "What are we storing up?" We tend to keep what fades, teach us to treasure what endures.

The service then moved into the imposition of ashes, as Rev. White reminded us that ashes symbolize that we are dust, from dust we came and to dust we will return. Ashes are temporal and fragile.

~Betty Johnson





United Women in Faith

Halesworth UWF met on February 23, 2026 at Epworth UMC. We welcomed several visitors to our meeting, including future members (I hope) Deanna Pelozza and Marie Flippen. Our other visitors included Tammy Burdick, District Lay Leader, and Sarah Bowles and Carol Ellis, on the District UWF Board.



The program came from the book, *Come Sit with Me: How to Delight in Differences, Love through Disagreements, and Live with Discomfort*. The essay shared was by Patricia Raybon, entitled "From Heartbreak to Grace". The writer shared her story of understanding God's grace in her life. She wrote, "But God" sharing Scripture (Genesis 8:1, Genesis 31:42, Genesis 50:20, Romans 5:8) and pointed that "But God" shared grace undeserved, in all our lives, and His followers should share the same grace as well.



A quote from the essay "Staying Friends When You Share more Differences than Similarities", finished the program. The quote reads, "We must love people where they are, not where we wish they were. Part of having a hospitable spirit is accepting this through and through". Discussion followed, and continued as we began to plann, with our visitors learning the techniques, helping out, and all of us enjoying Cindy's cookies! **The next meeting is March 23, 4pm at Epworth.** Ya'll come! ~Betty Johnson



District UWF Event-Soup's On!

On February 21, there was a special gathering at Kaleidoscope in Hardy! Hosted by our own Renee Naden, this year's Soup's On Event had a session for children as well as adults, and of course, Renee's delicious soups! Board members supported by helping Renee finish setting up and bringing other dishes to add to the lunch offerings. Renee read *We Are Still Here! Native American Truths Everyone Should Know* and *When the Schools Shut Down: A Young Girl's Story of Virginia's "Lost Generation" and the Brown V. Board of Education of Topeka Decision*, chronicling events in Farmville, VA. There were displays of Native American items, and participants created a writing, using Native American symbols and crinkling the paper to look old. A good time of fellowship, learning, and food! Hope you can join us next year!



~Betty Johnson



PLEASE SUPPORT
\$1 FOR \$1 MATCH
UP TO \$30,000



**Save the Date - SML Gives Day – March 18
Double Your Donation with a Challenge Match!**

Help us make the most of a generous challenge match that will double donations to Lake Christian Ministries on March 18. Two LCM supporters are offering a generous **\$1 for \$1 match for donations up to \$30,000**. Low-income families have been hit hard by prolonged high costs for food, utilities, and rent. Our client numbers have grown by 25% over the past two years.

TO DONATE: On March 18, simply go to www.smlgives.org, select Lake Christian

Ministries as the charity and follow the easy instructions to donate using your credit card. Your donation is complete in just 2-3 minutes!

If you would prefer to donate by check or cash, you can drop off donations at one of two events. To kick things off, Lake Christian Ministries will host a donor hospitality event on Wednesday, March 18, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the SML Coffee House at Bridgewater Plaza. Stop by, enjoy a coffee or tea, donate, and pick up a complimentary boxed lunch. Later that afternoon, the SML Gives Nonprofit Fair will be held from 2 to 5 p.m. at Resurrection Catholic Church. Participating SML Gives charities will be on hand to process online gifts, collect donations, and share information.

Help us make the most of our generous SML Gives Day Challenge Match. Together we can assist the growing number of families who need food, crisis financial aid, and New Tomorrows program services. Thank you for your support!

In appreciation,

Jane

Jane Winters
Executive Director

BIBLE BRAIN TEASER

Contributed by John Kezer

I once made a remark about the hidden books of the Bible. It was a lulu, kept people looking so hard for facts and for others it was a revelation. Some were in a jam, especially since the names of the books are not capitalized, but the truth finally struck home to numbers of readers. To others, it was a real job. We want it to be a most fascinating few moments for you.

Yes, there will be some really easy ones to spot. Others may require judges to help them. I will quickly admit it usually takes a minister to find one of the 17, and there will be loud lamentations when it is found. A little lady says she brews a cup of tea so she can concentrate better. See how well you can compete. Relax now, for there really are the names of 17 books of the Bible in these sentences. (One preacher found 16 books in 20 minutes. It took him three weeks to find the seventeenth one.)

~submitted by Betty Johnson



March Birthdays

2	Devon Allen	(Halesford)
4	Alice Prather	(Halesford)
8	Roy Ferguson, Jr	(Halesford)
15	Valerie Jordan	(Halesford)
17	Cecelia Henderson	(Halesford)
12	Brian Devlin	(Epworth)
24	Becky Purpera	(Epworth)

April Birthdays

8	Cindy Lollar	(Epworth)
14	Melvin Wuergler	(Epworth)

March Anniversaries

9	George & Sue Ruple	(Epworth)
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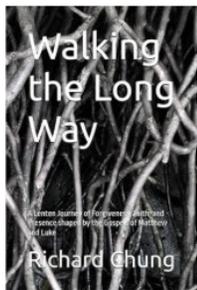
April Anniversaries

2	Rick & Melissa Toney	(Epworth)
3	Wayne & Dee Loomis	(Epworth)
10	Faye & Barry Martin	(Epworth)
26	Frank & Becky Purpera	(Epworth)
26	Mike & Amy Wells	(Epworth)

~ submitted by Kaye Hancock

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **March 23** —UWF Meet 4 pm @ Epworth
- **March 27**—SAS meeting (Epworth) 12 noon, Fellowship Hall
- **April 5— EASTER SUNDAY:**
Sunrise Service—Halesford UMC 7:15 am followed by breakfast
Easter morning service—Epworth UMC 9:30 am
- **Save the Date: April 17-18** —State Spiritual Growth Retreat
- **April 27** —UWF Meet 4 pm @ Epworth
- **Save the Date(s):** —District Spiritual Growth Retreat, **May 2** in Danville—**May 3** in Lynchburg



Sunday School

Thursdays @ 7:30 p.m.

via Zoom

contact Cindy Lollar for link:
 clollar65@gmail.com

Prayer Meeting —Every Other Thursday @ 7:00 p.m.

(see calendar for schedule)



via Zoom—contact Cindy Lollar for link: clollar65@gmail.com



**Sundays @
 Epworth UMC
 9:30 a.m.**

Please let Cindy (Epworth) or Betty (Halesford) know if you have a prayer request you would like added and also updates on those currently listed.

Prayer Meeting held every other Thursday @ 7:00 p.m. on Zoom

Collecting: plastic bags from your grocery or department store for plan (plastic yarn) to make into homeless mats. Help the Halesworth UWF keep these bags out of the landfills. Please place in the recycle bin located in the Narthex. Thank you!!

Collecting New Socks for the Homeless ~ Drop Box is in the Narthex at Epworth UMC



“Socks for Lost Souls”

Socks are currently being donation to Rescue Mission in Roanoke:
<https://rescuemission.net/>



Thank you to all who are signed up with the Kroger Community Rewards program for Halesford (QD391) or Epworth (EP178). Without realizing that when you shop, a percentage of your total order is shared with our churches through the Community Rewards Program.

Here is the link to get started:
<https://www.kroger.com/i/>

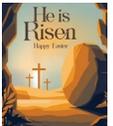
March 2026

AA meets every Monday, Wednesday, & Friday @ 9:00 a.m. @ Epworth UMC
 Tuesdays @ 7:00 p.m. @ Epworth, and
 Wednesdays @ 7:00 p.m. @ Halesford UMC

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5 Prayer 7:00 PM Sunday School 7:30 pm on Zoom	6	7
8 	9	10	11	12 Sunday School 7:30 pm on Zoom	13	14
15	16	17	18	19 Prayer 7:00 PM Sunday School 7:30 pm on Zoom	20 	21
22	23 UWF Meeting 4 PM @ Epworth	24	25	26 Sunday School 7:30 pm on Zoom	27 SAS meeting 12 Noon (Epworth)	28
29 	30	31				

April 2026

AA meets every Monday, Wednesday, & Friday @ 9:00 a.m. @ Epworth UMC
 Tuesdays @ 7:00 p.m. @ Epworth, and
 Wednesdays @ 7:00 p.m. @ Halesford UMC

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
*See "Upcoming Events" for Easter			1	2 Prayer 7:00 PM Sunday School 7:30 pm on Zoom	3 Good Friday 	4
5 	6	7	8	9 Sunday School 7:30 pm on Zoom	10	11
12	13	14	15	16 Prayer 7:00 PM Sunday School 7:30 pm on Zoom	17	18
19	20	21	22	23 Sunday School 7:30 pm on Zoom	24	25
26	27 UWF Meeting 4 PM @ Epworth	28	29	30 Prayer 7:00 PM Sunday School 7:30 pm on Zoom		