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## *From Pastor Mike*

I went with Susan to her parent's house in Maryland on Sunday, January 24 to help get the house ready to sell. My job was to help get her mom's Ford Taurus running so it could be sold. So, I spent Monday morning installing a new battery; by 1:00pm I was finished and proud of my little accomplishment.

Just before 2:00pm I received a voicemail from my oldest brother, Mitchell. The message was: "Hey Mike, give me a call when you get this message." Given the time of day, I knew it was probably not good news. I called my brother back and he said two words, "Dad died."

I heard my brother's words clearly, but they were hard to process. I knew dad would not live forever but sometimes it seemed like he would.

You see, my dad survived 2 open heart surgeries, 2 gall bladder operations, and a double knee replacement since the summer of 2012. Each time he recovered and was able to resume the tasks that meant so much to him: caring for his yard, planting a garden, and doing other home maintenance tasks. I often joked that he was like a cat with nine lives but at 1:25pm on Monday, January 25, 2021, my father, Harry Reaves, took his last breath on this earth.

I am thankful for the 88 years God gave my father in this world. We had a nice visit with him and his wife, Helen, a few days before Christmas. He was in a great mood and he told lots of stories about growing up on his parent's tobacco and dairy farm in Halifax County, VA.

I am grateful that I have had both of my parents with me for more than 59 years. I will miss visiting with Dad and talking about his garden, the Boston Red Sox, and UVA football and basketball. I will miss that big grin he always had on his face when we walked in the door of his house for a visit. That only touches the surface of what his death means to me.

Losing a parent is never easy but I take comfort in God's loving embrace. I know we will be reunited one day in the eternal kingdom. Until then, my father will remain with me in the memories I carry and the lessons I learned from him.

Thank you for all your kind cards, texts, and emails since his passing. Susan and I also appreciate the beautiful potted plant that was brought to the parsonage and all other expressions of sympathy.

Yours in Christ.

*Pastor Mike*

# Pick-Up Spaghetti Dinner



You are invited to join us for our  
Pick-Up Spaghetti Dinner on  
Saturday, February 13th from 4pm-6pm  
at New Hope UMC

You will receive a spaghetti dinner,  
salad, bread and a dessert to-go.

Free-will donations will be accepted benefiting  
*'Emma's Ride'*

# **OUR NEW CHURCH SIGN**

Our new church sign was installed last week.

Our thanks to the Trustees for setting this in motion.



We also must thank Kim Maugans and Bruce Rogers for their work outdoors in the cold.





The following are the minutes from the **JANUARY** meeting of the Church Council. The minutes are available for you to help the entire church family Stay In The Know about how this group is caring for New Hope UMC!

## **Church Council Meeting Minutes - January 28 2021**

Present: Dallas VanLear, Cindy Sheets, Kevin Armstrong, Karen Whitmer, Wanda Harding, Cindy Deavers, Robin Craun, Mitch & Samantha Brensinger, Bruce Rogers and Nathan Kutz..

The meeting was called to order by chairman Dallas VanLear, with devotions and prayer.

The minutes from the December meeting were accepted as distributed.

### **Finance Report:** *(Kevin Armstrong)*

~ Thanked Wanda and Karen for their continuing efforts to count the tithes and offerings each week.

~ There is sometimes a problem with Wanda getting a bank receipt from Dupont CCU when she goes to deposit the money because her name is not on the account. Therefore, Bruce will draw up a letter that she can give to Dupont, so that she will have written permission to receive information for the church's bank account.

~ In 2020, we spent 83.5% of the budget. And we took in 82% of what we had projected. Which means that we spent \$6,000 more last year than we took in.

~ Currently payroll is \$8,100 per month, plus \$2,639 for apportionments per month. So, we need \$10,753 each month; not counting what we need to pay utilities and some other bills. Therefore, if we are not taking in at least \$2,688 per week; then there starts to become some concern.

~ We will need to conduct our annual audit, the problem is: Kevin A, Cindy D., Robin, Karen W., and Wanda can't do the internal audit because they handle the money/finances on a regular basis; and Becky Tate can't do it because of coronavirus concerns. So, we need to brainstorm who we can ask to do this for us internally this year - who is able, willing and qualified? We need the audit done by April 1st.

### **Treasurer's Report:** *(Cindy Deavers)*

~ As of today, we have 2 weeks of giving that is counted and deposited, but not in the books yet. So, we will have an additional \$7,398 that is not showing in the books yet.

~ The church has received our restitution check of \$250 from the young man who wrecked and destroyed our church sign.

~ New apportionments statements came in for 2021.

- In 2020, we paid 51.25% in apportionments to the District and the Conference. In 2020, we paid \$15,457 in total to the Conference for Priority 1 apportionments and we paid \$4,044 in total apportionments to the District.
- For 2021, we are scheduled to pay \$2,639 each month in total apportionments to the district and the conference: \$1,918 to the Conference Priority 1; \$305 to the District, and \$416 to the Conference Priority 2 apportionments per month.
  - Kevin suggested we paid the whole \$2,639 for January 2021 and then we re-evaluate each month to see how much we will pay each month. It was agreed by all to proceed in this way.

### **United Methodist Men Report:** *(Bruce Rogers)*

~ At their last meeting the UMM had 8 members present, the most since February 2020.

~ In their last meeting the UMM discussed what they can do in 2021, even with limited funding.

~ They have between \$6,000-\$7,000 to work with towards local missions. They are considering maybe partnering with the UMW or others to achieve the most impact.

~ They will work try to develop some additional funding options if possible

~ On February 13th, the UMM will help with the Spaghetti Fundraiser, they will donate \$200 towards the efforts and supply volunteers to help that day.

## **United Methodist Women Report:** *(Wanda Harding)*

~ Thanked Dallas and the UMM for their help last year in partnering with local missions and fundraisers.

~ The church was very generous last year in missions.

- 900 million Christmas Boxes were sent out in December 2020.
- People have been very generous to the Emma's Ride Project, and all of those involved would like to thank everyone for their generosity.

~ On February 13th from 4-6pm there will be a Pick-up Spaghetti Dinner at the church. All donations will go towards Emma's Ride.

~ Valentine's cards will be collected at the church to go to local nursing home residents.

## **Spiritual Nurture:** *(Samantha Brensinger)*

~ Martha has emailed activities to the kids for Valentine's Day fun at home. And Jennifer is knitting hearts for them.

~ There is discussion to send out Easter Egg Bags to the kids again this year.

~ Vacation Bible School 2021 options will be discussed further.

## **New Business:**

~ Robin has mailed out all of the giving statements. If you don't receive yours soon, please contact her.

~ Cindy D. made a motion to send \$100 from the church to St. Jude's in memory of Pastor Mike's dad. Flowers will also be sent to the family.

~ Dallas thanked everyone for coming to the meeting in the cold and for all of their hard work.

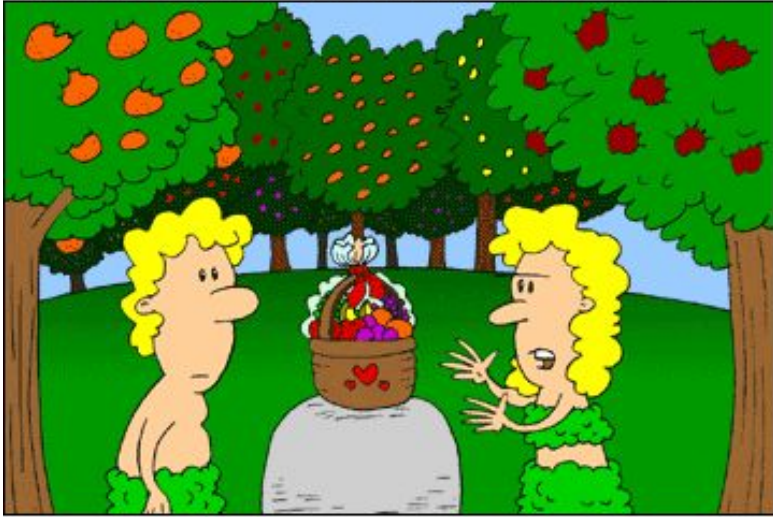
Dallas closed us with prayer and the meeting ended at: 7:21pm.

Respectfully submitted by:  
Cynthia Sheets  
Recording Secretary

**The next Church Council Meeting will be on Thursday, February 25, 2021 at 6:30pm.**

# Happy Valentine's Day!

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Thanks to Benoit Paquette

02-14-2002

REALLY ADAM ... A VALENTINE'S DAY  
FRUIT BASKET ... IN THE GARDEN OF  
EDEN?!?

**What did the flame say to  
his buddies after he fell in love?**

*I found the perfect match!*

**Did you hear about the bed bugs  
who fell in love?**

*They're getting married in the spring!*

**What Valentine's Day candy  
is best to give a girl?**

*Her-She Kisses.*

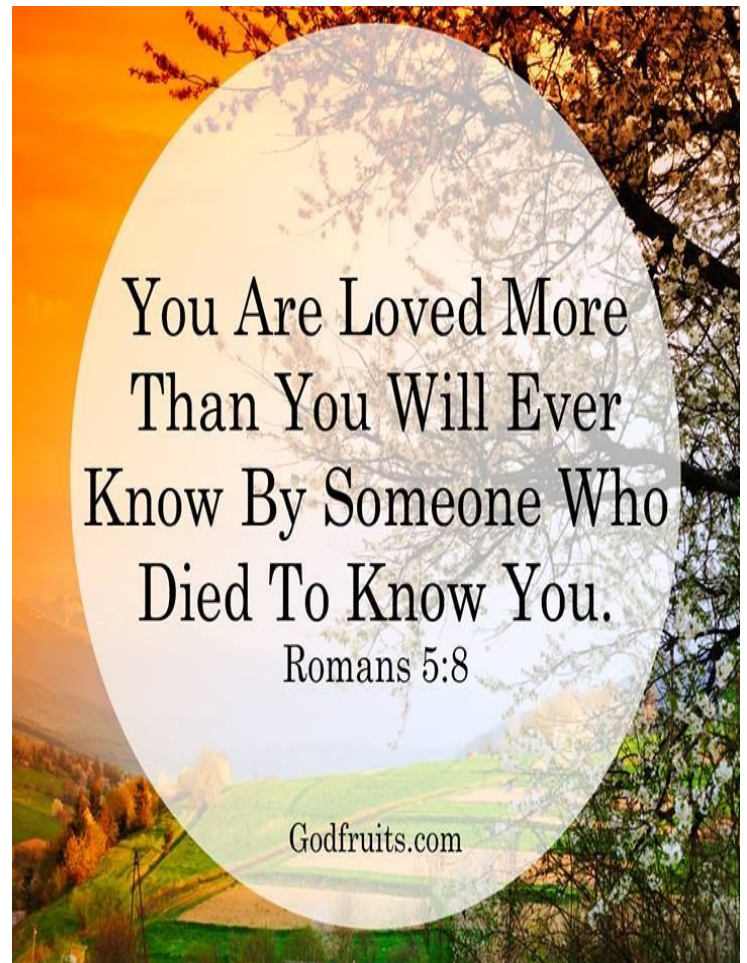
## Lots of Letters

Mike walked into a post office just before Valentine's day, he couldn't help noticing a middle-aged, balding man standing in a corner sticking "Love" stamps on bright pink envelopes with hearts all over them. Then the man got out a bottle of Channel perfume from his pocket and started spraying scent over the envelopes.

By now Mike's curiosity had got the better of him, and so I asked the man why he was sending all those cards. The man replied, "I'm sending out 500 Valentine cards signed, 'Guess who?'"

"But why?" asked Mike.

"I'm a divorce lawyer," the man replied.





# **Christian, Be Quiet!** - By: Joe Chase

I don't know that I have ever heard a sermon on the need for quiet. Yet, the Bible teaches that God will "quiet you by his love" (Zeph. 3:17). Peter lauds the need for a quiet spirit, which is very precious in God's sight" (1 Peter 3:4). Habakkuk instructs all people "...the Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him." (Hab. 2:20)

We need to stop talking so we can listen. We need to turn off the screens so we can meditate on God. We need to shut off the radio, CD player, iPod and turn down the noise of life so we can truly hear God's word.

Being quiet helps us to concentrate on what needs to change in our hearts, minds and lives. So often the voices of worldly passion, selfishness, lust, fear, hatred are present within us. We have skillfully ignored them so long that they blend in with noise of life. As Christians, we can silence those worldly callings as we put off the old man and put on the new.

T.O. Chisholm penned these beautiful words that teach just what I'm trying to say:

*Buried with Christ, my blessed Redeemer,  
Dead to the old life of folly and sin;  
Satan may call, the world may entreat me,  
There is no voice that answers within.  
Dead to the world, to voices that call me,  
Living anew, obedient but free;  
Dead to the joys that once did enthrall me—  
Yet 'tis not I, Christ liveth in me.*



Quiet forces us to listen to our inner man as he calls us to reform our character. Many of us don't hear our own soul's cry to seek God's saving grace. We've turned up the distraction volume knob squelch the pains of guilt and remorse and the cry for repentance.

Why are we so afraid to hear the call of our own broken lives? Some try to drown out the quiet with booze or drugs. Some try to hush the Word of God from working on their conscience by filling every moment with some noisy distraction, foolishly thinking; "if I don't hear it I won't have to deal with it."

Habakkuk knew that focusing on the Holiness of the Lord takes a halting of everything else. That is why he calls for silence in God's temple. I wonder if we remember that we are God's temple. God should occupy the throne room of our hearts. This calls for our lives to be sober and reverent reflections of the Heavenly Host reigning in our hearts.

Another need for being quiet is that we should be more careful what we say. We really don't have to insert our opinion into every conversation. We don't need to try to say everything we think. In fact, we would be much better off if we were "quick to hear, slow to speak" (James 1:19).

Being quiet includes refraining from gossiping, slandering, bragging, boasting, vainly flattering, lying, swearing, cursing, talebearing, criticizing, speaking words of contention, coarse jesting, idle words, and euphemisms etc..

Imagine how much quieter we would be if all this speech was removed from our conversations.



# Thank you!

A huge **THANK YOU** to all who have given generously to 'Emma's Ride'. The response to this project has been overwhelming and heart-warming. Many folks from near and far have given to one of our own.

*May God bless each one of you!*

A lift van is very costly, so we are continuing to accept donations through February 28<sup>th</sup>.

Checks can be made out to:

New Hope UM Women  
(‘Emma's Ride’ in the memo)

Mail To:


New Hope UMW  
PO Box 86  
New Hope, VA 24469





# Birthdays & Anniversaries

**1** - Loretta Dameron  
- Martha English  
- Jamie Stout

**2** - Kylie Armstrong  
 Al & Lynn Tuten

**4** - Robert Shiflett

**5** - JoEtta Walker

**7** - Alicia Copeland

**8** - Colin Hester


**9** - Nancy Pyle

**10** - Ian Gruber

**13** - Owen Pence

**14** - Ernest Shaver  
- Becky Tate

**15** - Cooper Coffey  
- Rebecca McCaskey  
- Tonya Meier  
- Holly Morris  
- Joan Simmons


**17** - Pastor Shin  
- Seth Joyner  
- Zach Rickman  
 Lewis & Karen Whitmer

**18** - Susie Shreckhise

**19** - Jo Layman  
- Robert Riner

**20** - Helen Shiflett

**21** - Al Tuten


**22** - Corey Johnson  
 Colin & Teresa Hester

**23** - Mike Shreckhise

**24** - Jennifer Bottenmiller  
- Tabatha Herring

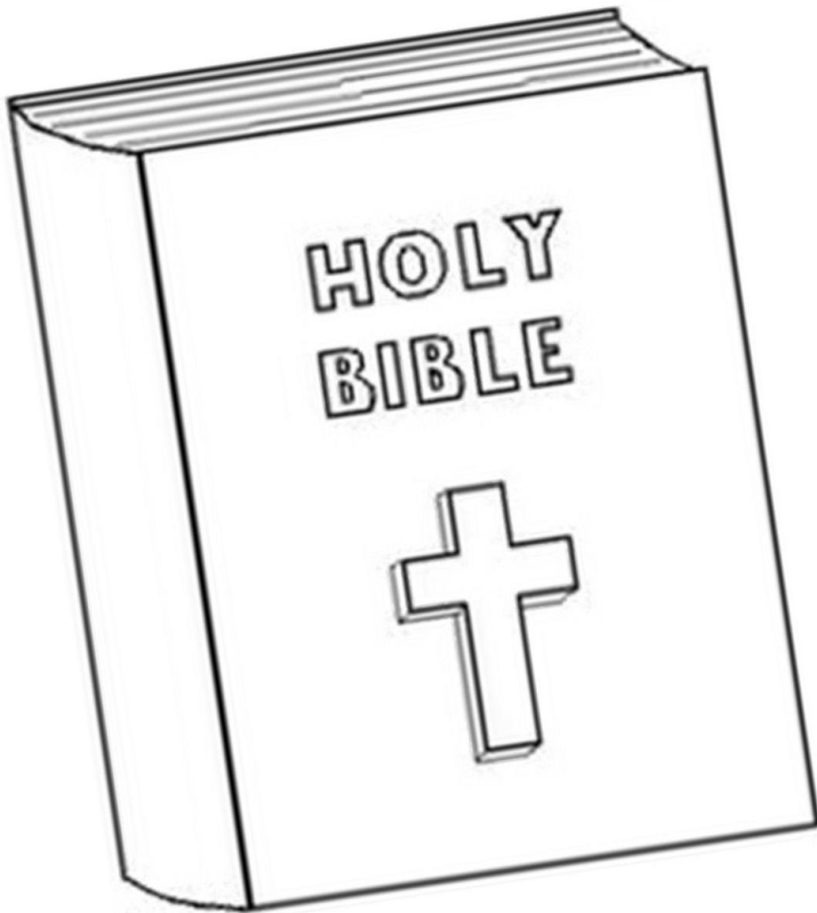
**25** - Marc Mehler

**26** - Dave Dively

**27** - Stephen Sundeen  
 Richard & Natosha Ritchie

# Kids' Corner - What Is The Bible?

By: LeAnne Guenther



## I Love God's Word

The Bible is that big, old looking book that sits on mommy and daddy's shelf. But it's more than just a big old book! The Bible is full of adventure, mystery, and rules that we should all follow. But most importantly, everywhere you look in the Bible, you will find a promise from God.

The Old Testament Promise: The Saviour is coming

The New Testament Promise: The Saviour has come

The Bible was not written by just one person, but was written by many different authors -- each one of them guided by God.

The Bible is made up of 2 different, but connected books - The Old Testament and The New Testament. The Old Testament is made up of 39 smaller books. The New Testament is made up of 27. All of these books are also divided into chapters and each chapter contains many different verses.

We've already learned some of the stories from the Bible. It's a very exciting book! In the Old Testament, we read about the creation of the whole universe, huge floods, burning bushes and major showdowns where God helps the little guys win. In the New Testament, we will read even more exciting stories about an evil king and a tiny baby who turns out to

be the most important person that ever lived!

In the Old Testament books, the story of the beginning of the Universe and the creation of man are found. We learn about brave men like Noah, David, Daniel and Moses and we learn about brave women like Ruth, Esther and Sarah. Throughout the Old Testament, God asks His people to obey His laws, but over and over again His people disobey him. Despite this disobedience, God promised to make a way for all things to be right again.

The New Testament tells us how God's promise that he made in The Old Testament came true. The New Testament is all about the birth, life, teachings, death and resurrection of a very special person named Jesus Christ.

Jesus is the saviour promised to us in the Old Testament. In the New Testament we learn what Jesus taught and what happened in His life. We also learn how Jesus made the Old Testament promises of salvation come true when He died on the cross for us. The very best part of the story is that Jesus came back to life.

The Bible is like a long letter written to us from God. He made sure there were stories that we can learn from, and if we're ever having a bad day the Bible can help with that too. He made sure there were plenty of verses to make us feel better, and tons more where He tells us that He loves us.





## **Sermons By Phone**

**Hear Pastor Mike's  
Weekly Sermon**

**1-877-369-1437**



**If you would like to add an article or announcement  
to the Hilltopper, please contact us!**

**Call/Text: (540) 280-1860 or [NewHopeUMC.Virginia@gmail.com](mailto:NewHopeUMC.Virginia@gmail.com)**

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