

The Hilltopper



November 2021

From Pastor Mike

There was a pastor who had a stray kitten climb up a tree in his backyard and then was afraid to come down. The pastor tried to coax the kitty down by offering food and water. The kitty would not come down.

The tree was not sturdy enough to climb. The pastor decided that if he tied a rope to his car and the tree, he could bend the tree enough that he could then reach up and get the kitten.

That is what the pastor did, all the while checking his progress in the car. He then figured if he went just a little bit farther, the tree would bend sufficiently for the pastor to reach the kitten. But as he moved the car a little forward, the rope broke.

The tree went "boing!" and the kitten instantly sailed through the air – out of sight.

The pastor felt terrible. He walked all over the neighborhood asking people if they had seen a little kitten. No, nobody had seen a stray kitten. So, he prayed, "Lord, I just commit this kitten to Your keeping," and went on about his business.

The next day he was at the grocery store and met one of his church members. He happened to investigate her shopping cart and was amazed to see cat food. This woman was a cat hater, and everyone knew it, so he asked her, "Why are you buying cat food when you hate cats so much?"

She replied, "You won't believe this," and then told him how her little girl had been begging her for a cat, but she kept refusing.

Then the day before, the child had begged again, so the mom finally told her little girl, "Well, if God gives you a cat, I'll let you keep it." She told the pastor, "I watched my child go out in the yard, get on her knees, and ask God for a cat. And really, Pastor, you will not believe this, but I saw it with my own eyes. A kitten unexpectedly fell to the ground suddenly from out of nowhere, with its paws outspread, and landed right in front of her."

This story just made me laugh. Hope the story leaves a bright spot in your day. Never underestimate the Power of God and His unique sense of humor.

Prayer: Give me a sense of humor, Lord! Give me the grace to hear a joke and pass it on to others. AMEN!

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Mike

55 Round Hill School Road Fort Defiance, VA
New Hope United Methodist



The DUNNS



10:30am

NOVEMBER 14TH

Remembering The Saints

On Sunday, October 31st, we celebrated All Saints Sunday during worship at New Hope UMC. The observance of All Saints Day comes from a conviction that there is a spiritual connection between those in Heaven and on Earth. In United Methodist tradition, All Saints Day relates to giving God earnest gratitude for the lives and deaths of his saints.

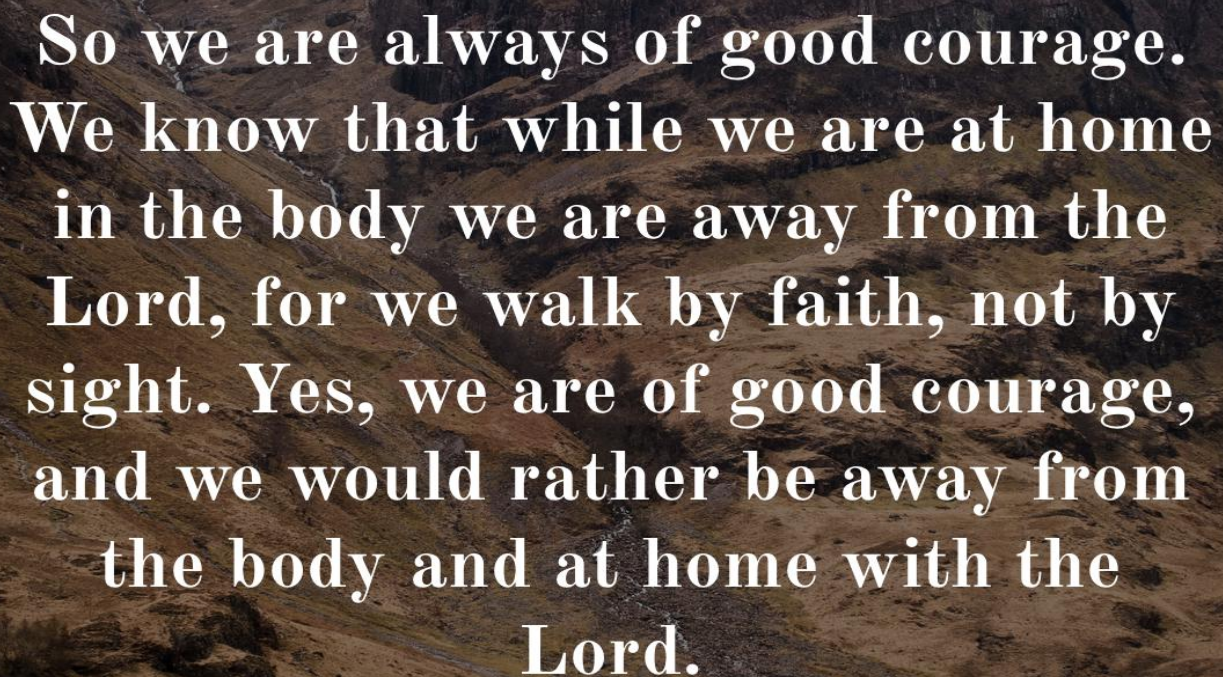
"All Saints Day" annually reminds us of our connectedness as Christians. If you believe saints are statues in a church building, the Bible teaches something completely different.

Who is a saint? You are. That is if you are a follower of Jesus. God calls a "saint" anyone who trusts in Christ alone for salvation.

God grants sainthood, not religious leaders. Any common, salt-of-the-earth person who simply trusts Christ (*1 Corinthians 1:2*) is a saint. The gospel message is that God the Son came to earth, lived a perfectly obedient life, died on the cross to pay for our sins (*Romans 5:1*), and rose again proving His atoning work was complete (*Romans 4:22-25*). Scripture says that the person of faith becomes the very righteousness of God (*2 Cor. 5:21*)! Anyone who trusts in Christ alone for salvation is a saint in God's sight.

Here are the Saints we remembered who have gone on to glory in the past year: Mary Sheets, Irene Morrison, Mary Booth, Morene "Butch" Morris, David Riner, Larry Hinebaugh, Charles Fretwell, Jr., Emma Jean Shiflett, Henry Breeding, Alice Ward, and Gladys Riddle.

Praise God and give thanks for all the saints of New Hope and the Church Universal!



**So we are always of good courage.
We know that while we are at home
in the body we are away from the
Lord, for we walk by faith, not by
sight. Yes, we are of good courage,
and we would rather be away from
the body and at home with the
Lord.**

~ 2 Corinthians 5:6-8 ESV



The following are the minutes from the **OCTOBER** 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 - October 28, 2021

Present: Kevin Armstrong, Alicia Copeland, Robin Craun, Cindy Deavers, Wanda Harding, Pastor Mike, Bruce Rogers, Cindy Sheets, Dallas VanLear and Karen Whitmer

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

The minutes from the September meeting were accepted as distributed.

Finance Report: *(Kevin Armstrong reported)*

~ We are 78% through the year, and we have received 62% to meet our budget.

~ We are not spending like we used to, but we are trailing behind what we took in in donations during the 2020 year. Part of the reason for this is the fact that we are losing members. For this and other reasons, we are in a downward trend in donations.

~ We are still meeting the budget and Kevin recommended that we pay the apportionments for this month. Apportionments went up for next year, so we will continue to have to analyze our financial status, and we might have to make some changes in the future. Pastor Mike mentioned that the conference tried to keep the apportionment budget as tight as possible, but the Clergy Health Insurance went up and that was a big part of it.

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

- ~ All the giving has been reported through this Sunday.
- ~ All bills, payroll and apportionments have been paid.

~ On the Treasurer's Report, the Minister's Church Contribution - which is the Pastor's Health Insurance - is listed as: \$9,144. This amount was actually from the year 2020. The correct amount that should have been listed for this year (2021) was: \$10,644. And for next year (2022), it will increase to: \$10,927. - Pastor Mike noted that this amount is based on the Pastor's salary.

- Kevin made a motion to revise the budget to reflect what it should have been in 2021, and to also show the increase for 2022. Karen seconded the motion. After some slight discussion and clarification, it was passed by all persons present.

~ We have received \$1,655 in memorial donations in memory of Alice Ward and Henry Breeding. \$25 of that has been designated for music, but the rest is non-designated.

~ Cindy Deavers asked if it was okay to send the allotted end-of-the-year donations to our usual recipients: including: the District Mission Center, the Verona Food Pantry and 2 others - which would total \$1,546. Approval was given for her to send the end-of-the-year donations.

Financial Secretary: *(Robin Craun reported)*

~ Robin expressed a need for a few more counters after worship on 1-2 Sundays each month. Wanda and Karen W. count the offerings 2-3 times a month and Kim and Karen Maugans count the tithes and offerings two times a month. It only takes about 15-20 minutes to perform this ministry and Robin is asking for a few more volunteers, so that those who are doing it now, won't have to do it as often.

Trustees: *(Pastor Mike reported)*

~ Corey Johnson and Sandy Wyrick have completed painting the church hallway leading into the kitchen.

~ Currently, we have had only one company come and submit a bid for the mowing of the church lawn next year.

Pastor's Report: *(Pastor Mike reported)*

~ Kids' Rock has been restarted. Thanks to Sam Brensinger and all the others who have helped her in this ministry. They will have Kids' Rock available every Sunday during worship, except when we have Holy Communion.

~ A new Bible Study started three weeks ago and 14 people are regularly participating, between both the afternoon and evening classes.

Worship: *(Pastor Mike reported)*

~ The Dunns will be performing at New Hope UMC on Sunday, November 14th during Sunday Morning Worship.

~ Advent starts the first Sunday after Thanksgiving, so we will need to work on getting a group of people who will be willing to put the Christmas tree up in the Sanctuary and the other Christmas decorations up in the Narthex.

United Methodist Men: *(Bruce Rogers reported)*

~ The UMM had their monthly meeting and the Circle of Hope provided their dinner. Fourteen men were in attendance, the most since we were shut down in 2020. Bruce thanked Wanda and the ladies for the food.

~ The UMM are in their third month of manning the New Hope Community Dump. They have received two checks of \$342 each for their efforts that will go towards their mission projects.

~ They are in talks to hold a Ladies Night again next year, and possibly a Christmas Dinner this year.

United Methodist Women: *(Wanda Harding reported)*

~ The UMW met on October 18th with guest speaker, Kelly Truxell, from the Creative Works Farm, Camp Light. They had 12 people attending for the program.

~ The Circle of Hope served a meal to the UMMen on October 21st, where 14 men were in attendance.

~ The UMMen had a workday in which seven men came to help out with flowers and other outside chores around the church. The UM Women had blueberry muffins and peanut butter cookies for them to snack on.

~ The UM Women and the UM Men are planning on sponsoring a church-wide Christmas Breakfast at 9:00am one Sunday Morning in December, date TBD.

Membership: *(Karen Whitmer reported)*

~ On Sunday, October 31st, we will be honoring the following 11 people who have already passed on to be with the Glory of God. Mary Lee Carter Sheets, Irene Huffer Morrison, Mary Moats Booth, Morene 'Butch' Morris, David William Riner, Larry Nelson Hinebaugh, Charles William Fretwell Jr., Emma Jean Shiflett, Henry Preston Breeding, Alice Aldhizer Ward and Gladys Beaver Riddle.

Youth: *(Pastor Mike reported)*

~ The Youth plan to have a Bowling Day on Saturday, November 13th, at Staunton Lanes in Staunton, starting at 3:00pm.

New Business:

~ The light in the library needs to be fixed.

~ It was decided that the next and last church council meeting for the year will be on Thursday, December 2nd at 6:30pm.

~ Dallas thanked everyone for coming and for keeping the church running behind the scenes. He wanted everyone to know that their efforts are appreciated.

Dallas closed the meeting, and Pastor Mike sent us off with prayer. The meeting ended at 7:13pm.

Respectfully submitted by:
Cynthia Sheets
Recording Secretary

The next Church Council Meeting will be on Thursday, December 2nd, 2021 at 6:30pm.



Upcoming Events and Meetings:

Monday, November 1st @ 1:30pm

The Sisters of Faith will meet in the Sunday School Class

Monday, November 1st @ 7:00pm

The Circle of Hope will meet in the Sunday School Class

Sunday, November 7th

Veterans cards are due for the Veterans in Assisted Living Homes

Daylight Savings Time Ends --->> *Fall Back!*

Tuesday, November 9th @ 7:00pm

The Circle of Love will meet in the Social Hall

Saturday, November 13th @ 9:00am

District UMW meeting at Mountain Valley UMC

Saturday, November 13th @ 3:00pm

Youth Bowling Event at Staunton Lanes

Sunday, November 14th @ 10:30am

The Dunns perform at Sunday Morning Worship

Sunday, November 14th

Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes are due at the church

Thursday, November 18, 6:30PM

United Methodist Men Meeting - Circle of Love serving meal

Thursday, November 25th

Thanksgiving Day

Sunday, November 28th

The First Sunday of Advent



Thanks to Richard Germain (See Genesis 19:23-26) 11-21-2006

IT'S TOO LATE NOW, LOT ... APPARENTLY WE SHOULD HAVE STARTED MONITORING HER SODIUM LEVELS A LONG, LONG TIME AGO

The Scrawny Turkey

It's the day before Thanksgiving, and the butcher is just locking up when a man begins pounding on the front door. "Please let me in," says the man desperately. "I forgot to buy a turkey, and my wife will kill me if I don't come home with one."

"Okay," says the butcher. "Let me see what I have left." He goes into the freezer and discovers that there's only one scrawny turkey left. He brings it out to show the man.

"That's one is too skinny. What else you got?" says the man. The butcher takes the bird back into the freezer and waits a few minutes and brings the same turkey back out to the man. "Oh, no," says the man, "That one doesn't look any better. You better give me both of them!"

A man in Chicago calls his son in New York the day before Thanksgiving and says, "I hate to ruin your day, but I have to tell you that your mother and I are divorcing; forty-five years of misery is enough.

"Pop, what are you talking about?" the son screams. "We can't stand the sight of each other any longer," the father says. "We're sick of each other, and I'm sick of talking about this, so you call your sister in Dallas and tell her."

Frantic, the son calls his sister, who explodes on the phone. "Like heck they're getting divorced," she shouts, "I'll take care of this,"

She calls Chicago immediately, and screams at her father, "You are NOT getting divorced. Don't do a single thing until I get there. I'm calling my brother back, and we'll both be there tomorrow. Until then, don't do a thing, DO YOU HEAR ME?" and hangs up.

The old man hangs up his phone and turns to his wife. "Okay," he says, "they're coming for Thanksgiving and paying their own way."





Birthdays & Anniversaries

1 - Larry Shiflett


2 - Susan Coffman

3 - W. B. Harner, Jr
- Cathy Killough
- Kerry Fretwell

5 - Linda Gail Johnson

6 - Joseph Bragg
- Steven Price

7 - Kevin Bell

8 - George Taylor
-  Earl & Jackie Wilberger


10 - Donald Michael
- Roy Randolph
- Jim Gruber

13 - Chuck Wagner
- Cindy Sanger
- Cheyenne Canipe

14 - Katherine Garber
- Beth Rogers

17 - Lynn Tuten

18 - Lydia Hough

19 - Aggie Selmon
-  Lloyd & Kay Moore



20 - Christopher McCray
- Curt Rosen

22 - Nancy Evers
- Jeff Kraisser

23 - Cindy Deavers

25 - David Critzer

26 - Maureen Morris

27 - Steven Broyles
- Wendy McLaren
-  James & Linda Howdysell
-  Aggie & Betty Selmon

28 - Corey Stogdale

29 - April Selmon

30 - Jennifer Broyles
- Kimberly Hinkle

How Much Do You Suffer For His Name?

“But the Lord said to Ananias, “Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel. I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.” *Acts 9:15-16 NIV*

“Are they servants of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk like this.) I am more. I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was pelted with stones, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my fellow Jews, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false believers. I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. Besides everything else, I



face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches. Who is weak, and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn?” *2 Corinthians 11:23-29 NIV*

I want to say right off that this month's writing is going to be more pointed than the ones we have written in the past. We all have ups and downs in life. Whether I'm dealing with my own trouble, helping my wife with hers, or helping a friend and encouraging a fellow Christian, most of the time I turn to scripture in order to draw strength because I know I can count on it. A week or two ago I wanted to read about the suffering of the early church disciples and apostles. I can guarantee you nearly all of them could have had their names inserted somewhere in the above passage. As you read, Paul who wrote the second one and is who Jesus is referring to in the first endured more than most, if not all of us in our modern world ever will. All of the apostles and disciples (except for Judas) endured terrible things in order to spread the gospel. To tell the pagan world of 2000 years ago of the good news of Jesus Christ. Without that most likely we would not have Bibles today, or churches, crosses, we would all still be pagan sinners. If you are not a real Christian today, you would not be living in a culture that has been so incredibly molded by biblical teaching and philosophy. I really hope this month's article will challenge everybody who reads it. Because honestly if it doesn't then these writings are doing no good, and it is actually a disservice to Jesus Christ and all who have suffered for the Faith we claim to live.

I want to ask you a few questions, how sharp is your sword? Is your armor shiny or barely used and dusty? Or is it actually dented, dirty and bloody? Where has the bottom of your cross been drug through? Or is it actually stored away somewhere all nice and pretty? How tired are you from your burdens or helping your brother and sisters in Christ carry their burdens? Or are you a "well rested Christian", possibly so incredibly comfortable in your spiritual life that all of your spiritual armor looks brand new? Do you have scars from spiritual battles and war that Paul writes about in Ephesians 6? Or has our modern American life made you so delicate that you no longer share in the suffering for the name of Christ? Do you wish to carry no burdens or have it easy? Jesus promises his yoke is easy and his burden is light, but he still commands us to take up our cross daily, and after all it is still a burden though with him it is lighter than the burdens of sin and this world. The apostles rejoiced from being worthy to suffer for the name of Jesus Christ. I could be wrong but maybe that's why Christianity is no longer respected today. Maybe people who need the real message of Christ don't see it in us who are supposed to live it and glorify God in our suffering. If we don't, why should they?

Don't misunderstand me please, for I am an American as well. I am proud of my country and everything our national heritage entails. Our nation helped save the world twice, we have lots to be proud of. But at the same time I feel like our American culture and all of our conveniences have really hurt our spiritual lives. If you are a real Christian it's not hard to see how far our country has drifted from our moral anchor. If you get too wrapped up in our American habits, trust me you will see that you are drifting from your spiritual and moral anchor.

I heard a story from a missionary in a sermon on YouTube recently. He was telling a story about a young man named Andrew in Africa in a church their ministry had helped start. The church was in a Muslim culture, and one day Muslims who were persecuting them literally took Andrew outside of the church and demanded he deny Jesus Christ. Although he was petrified, he told them he couldn't and would not deny Jesus. They shot him and left him with a mortal wound to die. That story has pierced my conscience ever since I heard it.

How much have we knowingly or unknowingly denied Christ in our everyday lives? Not even looking at the compromises we make with modern culture today, how many times have we been suffering and going through hard things and we are so quick to question why God is letting us go through something so bad? I can tell you I am embarrassed by how much I've denied Christ in my life. But I made a choice that even though I know I will still stumble and fall, I'm going to stand on the Rock of Christ. And to borrow this statement he is so big and strong that when you fall you don't completely fall down into the dirt, you fall into him if he is where you are. Please join me in repentance and let's be real soldiers in the army of the Lord. No matter what they say this world still needs a hero. Let's show them that Jesus Christ is who they need. And if you have never repented, please do and your sufferings will take a whole new meaning.

Nathan & Cheryl Kutz ~ *Real Life Heavenly Hands*



Sermons By Phone

Hear Pastor Mike's Weekly Sermon

1-877-369-1437

Kids' Corner - The Lord's Prayer

By: Sharla Guenther



Today we're learning about how God would like us to pray. Even Jesus' closest friends, the disciples wanted to know how to pray. The disciples were with Jesus all the time and were with him when he went to pray and heard his prayers to God as well, yet they still weren't sure how they were supposed to do it.

Before Jesus teaches the prayer he has a few things to say first. He says that we should keep our prayers simple. God listens to us no matter if our prayers are long or short and if you just don't have the right words God knows what we mean (and we don't need to use fancy words either)!

Jesus also mentions that we shouldn't 'show off' when we pray. He said this to the people that used to stand on the street corners praying so that everyone would see how 'great' they were. God doesn't want us to pray so people can see us or to hear how great we can pray. He wants us to pray in a quiet

place with our own words, our needs, thanks, praise, and what we're sorry for.

This is how Jesus told us we should pray:

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

This prayer might be a little tough to understand when you first hear it, but we're going to go through it and try to explain what it means.

Our Father which art in heaven means we're praying to our father who is in heaven. We start the prayer out this way so we know that we're praying to God our father and we're not alone. God likes it when we call him father and he wants us to talk to him like we talk to our own father. God is our loving father and we are his special children.

Hallowed be thy name is next and it means holy is your name. Even though God wants us to call him our father, he is still God. It's sometimes really hard to understand who God is and what he's like. How did he make us? How is he perfect and never makes mistakes? God just wants us to remember that we need to treat him super special because he is God and when we pray to him we need to be respectful.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. If we think about where God lives, we know it's pretty great. The Bible says that in heaven there will be no more crying, God will live with us, and there will be no hunger or hurt there.

This part of the prayer says let your kingdom come. Let your will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. This means we are praying that people would live in peace and love with one another the way it is in heaven. It reminds us that we should be living the way God wants us to everyday.

Give us this day our daily bread means give us today all that we need. Keep in mind that these are things that we can't live without. We don't *need* video games and princess dolls those are the things that we want, we need food, water and shelter.

Even though we pray for things we need, that doesn't mean we'll get them. There are still people with no food in many parts of the world but that doesn't mean we stop praying for these things. When we ask God for things that means we trust Him and we'll leave the decision to God.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. This next part of the prayer is asking for forgiveness for our mistakes. Forgiveness means that we are sorry for something we've done and we don't want to do it anymore. But we also need to forgive people who have done wrong to us. Sometimes others hurt us very badly, so we need to ask God to help us forgive them because it's really hard or we don't want to. If we forgive others, God will forgive us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Is it sometimes tempting to do something you're not supposed to? This part of the prayer is really neat because it asks God to help us to know the right thing to do. To protect us against the evil that is in the world and keep us away from it.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. The last part of the prayer is the best part! For yours is the kingdom means that Heaven will last forever and will always be God's. God also has all the power and all the glory FOREVER! It makes me happy knowing that God will never die and he's the strongest and greatest. With God we will always win!

Anyone can read the Lord's prayer, so it's important to think about what you're saying. When you pray "give us this day your daily bread" think about all the things you have to be thankful for and how God has given you everything you need, or things you need to ask for or pray for others. When you pray "forgive us our debts" ask forgiveness for those things you did wrong.

Prayer is our special way of talking to God so remember to pray as many times as you can. God loves you and wants to know everything about you and how you're doing.



For the second year, our local VFW will be collecting cards for our Veterans who are currently living in assisted living homes. They need our help by providing cards for the Veterans that are residents of these homes. There will be a box in the Narthex through Sunday, November 7th, for anyone who would like to leave cards that will be given to the directors of the nursing homes to give to the Veterans. Veteran's Day Cards and regular greetings cards are needed, signed by folks that are willing to provide the cards. *Thanks for your help!*



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

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