



FEBRUARY 2023

# HBC ALIVE!

Harrisonburg Baptist Church's Newsletter

## Let's Get Acquainted!

REV. MATT WINTERS

If you remember, "Covid-19 shutting down the community" and I showed up about the same time. About fourteen hours before my first sermon as the pastor of HBC, we cancelled the worship service out of concerns for safety and not knowing what to expect. Since then, we've strengthened our bonds and been able to get to know one another well. It takes time to form relationships and cultivate trust. We utilized several meet-ups and "get to know us" sessions in the gazebo and yard to help facilitate relationships.

In the past several years, we've shared pews with lots of new faces. The staff and I began a conversation about trying to be more acquainted with one another and help those who are new to the church get to know us and vice versa. As a result, we're planning a Get Acquainted Luncheon for those who want to learn a bit more about who we are, what our story is and what we are doing.

Of course, this is also a time for us to get to know you better as well. May we never stop being interested in the lives of our neighbors. We're planning our Get Acquainted Luncheon for Sunday, February 19 at 11:30 am. Please RSVP to Kim at [kim@hbcalive.org](mailto:kim@hbcalive.org) by February 13.

Be curious about the life stories around you!

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## God's Plans

KAREN BURKE

Sometimes, we may be clear about what God wants us to do. At other times, God's plans may seem fuzzy and we're unsure where he's leading us. Even if we are sure of what God wants, we may still have doubts and concerns.

The prophet Jeremiah had a confrontation with another prophet named Hananiah in Jeremiah Chapter 28. The two are standing in the Jerusalem temple which is empty because the Babylonians had ransacked the city and carried the Israelites into exile to Babylon. Hananiah said that God was going to restore Israel in two years. This included returning all the stolen possessions and the thousands of Israelites back to Jerusalem in two years.

Jeremiah's disagreement led him to write a letter to the Israelites, who were still exiled in Babylon. Jeremiah told them that the other prophets were lying to them and were not sent by the one true God. He also told them they should settle down, build permanent homes, and plant gardens because they would be there for a long time. In fact, he told them that God said he would leave them in exile for seventy years, not two years. After the seventy years, God would end their exile and bring them out of Babylon and back to Jerusalem.

God had plans for his people then, and he has plans for each one of us. Jeremiah told

them that they were not separated from God even though they were in exile. They could be close to him and come to him in prayer just as if they were still in Jerusalem. They didn't need the land, the temple, or anything else they had in Jerusalem. God was still with them.

Jeremiah 29: 11-13 "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."

The following is a good illustration of God's plans.

### *God's Embroidery* unknown author

When I was a little boy, my mother used to embroider a great deal. I would sit at her knee and look up from the floor and ask what she was doing. She informed me that she was embroidering. I told her that it looked like a mess from where I was. As from the underside, I watched her work within the boundaries of the little round hoop that she held in her hand, I complained to her that it sure looked messy from where I sat. She would smile at me, look down and gently say, "My son, you go about your playing for a while, and when I am finished with my embroidering, I will put you on my knee and let you see it from my side." I would wonder why she was using some



dark threads along with the bright ones and why they seemed so jumbled from my view. A few minutes would pass and then I would hear Mother's voice say, "Son, come and sit on my knee."

This I did only to be surprised and thrilled to see a beautiful flower or a sunset. I couldn't believe it, because from underneath it looked so messy.

Then mother would say to me, "My son, from underneath it did look messy and jumbled, but you did not realize that there was a pre-drawn plan on the top. It was a design. I was only following it. Now look at it from my side and you will see what I was doing."

Many times, through the years I have looked up to my heavenly Father and said, "Father, what are you doing?" He has answered, "I am embroidering your life." I say, "But it looks like a mess to me. It seems so jumbled. The threads seem so dark. Why can't they all be bright?" The Father seems to tell me, "My child, you go about your business of doing My business, and one day I will bring you to Heaven and put you on my knee and you will see the plan from my side."

[\(https://oneclimbs.com/2013/05/16/gods-plan-is-only-messy-from-our-perspective/\)](https://oneclimbs.com/2013/05/16/gods-plan-is-only-messy-from-our-perspective/)

## Scout Sunday

FEBRUARY 5

We look forward to having the Scouts Troops participate in the Worship service on Sunday, February 5!

## Financial Peace Series

6:00-7:45PM TUESDAYS, BEGINNING 2/7

David Hayes will be facilitating a Dave Ramsey Financial Peace University Class on Tuesdays from 6:00-7:45pm beginning February 7. This class is a perfect fit for those trying to improve their financial capacity as well as managing their budgets. Cost is \$69 per family unit. If you're interested in attending, please contact the church office.

## First Friday Returns to HBC!

5:00-8:00PM FRIDAY, MARCH 3

On Friday, March 3, HBC will be taking part in First Fridays of the Valley. Visual and other arts will be on display in galleries, stores and other venues from downtown Harrisonburg to HBC and Hotel Madison. HBC will be featuring six artists from our church: Nick Barnes (inlaid woodturnings), Betty Ecklund (painting), Larry Ecklund (furniture), Mike Kopcinski (wrought iron), Mike Mandigo (furniture and decorative boxes) and Gabrielle Schofield (painting). There will be refreshments and possibly crafts for children in the gazebo. Plan now to come and enjoy the wonderful variety of art created by members of our HBC family, and spread the word to your friends! It is going to be a beautiful display of the way God has gifted these individuals.

## February Youth Events

FEB 5

9:15am Sunday School

5:30-7:30pm Dinner & Bible Study

FEB 8

5:45-8pm Clothes Closet

FEB 12

9:15am Sunday School

5:00pm Youth Super Bowl Party  
@ the Belchers

FEB 19

9:15am Sunday School

5:30-7:30pm Dinner & Bible Study

FEB 26

9:15am Sunday School

5:30-7:30pm Dinner & Bible Study

## Youth Scholarships Needed

REV. KATELYN BELCHER

The youth group is headed toward their ninth summer of Passport Camp and we need your help! We need eight scholarships (\$200/each) to help send our students to camp. Please contact Rev. Katelyn Belcher at [katelyn@hbcalive.org](mailto:katelyn@hbcalive.org) if you are interested in providing a life-changing experience to a student this summer!

We plan to attend Passport Youth Camp at Converse University in Spartanburg, SC on July 9 through July 14, 2023. This year we are taking a group of 18 students and chaperones. For nine years now, Passport Camp has been the highlight of the year for our students. They love to get away, stay on a college campus, serve

others, and grow in their faith in Jesus while enjoying many fun activities. The gift of a scholarship to camp truly allows our students an opportunity they otherwise would not be able to experience.





## Youth Meals Needed

The youth group meets most Sunday evenings, and our meal schedule has many open dates through May 21. If you are interested in providing a meal for the youth on a Sunday night, please sign up at <https://takethemameal.com/GQAI3407> or by contacting Katelyn Belcher at [katelyn@hbcalive.org](mailto:katelyn@hbcalive.org).

## Thank You!

The youth group would like to thank everyone who has donated clothes for Clothes Closet. It has really been an answered prayer for our community in need! Over the summer and fall of 2022, Clothes Closet's supply was greatly reduced and their racks of clothes were sparse. Thanks to YOU, the clothes racks are full now and there have been plenty of clothes for our clients to choose from. We will continue collecting clothes over the winter and bringing them to the closet when we serve each second Wednesday of the month. Feel free to keep bringing donations to the youth room. Thank you!



## Kids Alive

During the past year in Kids Alive, HBC members shared their gifts with us and ways they use these gifts to help others. Mary Laughland, a co-chair of the Visitation Team, helped us make cards that we included in our "Goodie Bags" for the college students. Don Aittama, chair of the Finance Committee, shared with the children how our tithes help support our church and allows us to help others. Kathy Ritcher and Cindy Skelley, members of the Creation Care Team, taught us about taking care of God's earth by planting flowers and recycling. The Youth Group with Rev. Katelyn and Chris Belcher shared lessons about Easter including a real Seder Meal.

*"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others."*  
1 Peter 4:10a

This year in Kids Alive, the children will be sharing their own talents and gifts. They already started by using their dramatic and singing talents in the Christmas Pageant. Trace Belcher and Leigha Winters read scripture during the Christmas Day service. We look forward to discovering the talents God has blessed us with and sharing them with others.



## Passport Kids!

Parents of third through sixth graders: **Deposits of \$55 are due by Sunday, February 5** if your child is planning to go to Passport at Eagle Eyrie Wednesday, June 14 through Saturday, June 17th. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Eli asap!



## Missions Committee Updates

MARY SMITH

**Spotswood Elementary:** At the end of December, HBC received a request to help two of the Spotswood Elementary families in need of furniture, household items and beds. The Spotswood staff helped to provide furniture, and HBC provided each family with a \$100 gift certificate to Gift & Thrift. Thanks to Jeff Obenschain and Sleep On It for helping the Missions Committee provide several mattresses and bed frames.

Pat Dickens has agreed to help the Mission Committee provide snacks for the Spotswood staff the last Friday of each month. Thank you, Pat. She will be calling on several people to help her with this ministry this year.

**When Helping Hurts** In the final chapter, Steve Corbett encouraged churches to observe what other churches near them were providing that are unique and working for the materially poor in our area. Emmanuel Episcopal has a food pantry every Tuesday. Cindy and Doug Skelley boxed up and carried the canned goods we had in our pop-up pantry to Emmanuel Episcopal. They came at just the right time, when their own supplies had been depleted. We have helped provide food for many people over the past two years from our little pop-up pantry. We continue to receive donations from our congregation and others who leave staples in the Blessing Box. We thank God for these blessings that we continue to share with others.

**Missions' Goals for the New Year:** During our January meeting, the Missions Committee spent time in prayer with each member asking for God's guidance and direction during the coming year. We agreed on the importance of continuing our support for the four main local mission ministries: Bridge of Hope, Mercy House, Spotswood Elementary, and Salvation Army. We also felt the importance of continuing our \$2,400 yearly donation to People Helping People. Our team members are looking at other new opportunities where HBC can serve such as Church World Service. Each of us realizes that the gift of relationships, one-on-one interactions, is equally vital to carrying out Christ's mission in our local community and world. We ask you to join us in praying for God's guidance as our committee is constantly making decisions in how best to use our financial and material resources.

## Blessing Box Monitors

Monitors for the blessing box are always needed and appreciated. Monitors' responsibilities are typically to buy food and toiletries and fill the box daily on a weekly rotation. The missions committee stocks some items in a cabinet in the parlor so those items are also available to use. We also appreciate food or money donations to support the blessing box. People in our community benefit from the generous bounty they find in the blessing box. If you think this would interest you, please contact Cindy Skelley at (540)421-3273 or [scvaconn@aol.com](mailto:scvaconn@aol.com).



## College Lunches

Who likes to cook?  
Who loves it when people eat  
what they cook?  
If that is you, then we know a  
great place for you to serve.  
College students LOVE to eat and  
are always excited at the food offered  
at the Sunday lunches.

Please consider forming a team or partnering with others to provide lunch in the fellowship hall for 15-30 on Sunday after the church service. If this sounds like something you would like to do, please check your calendar and add your name to the lunch list at the college table in the foyer.

More details: We have anywhere from 15 – 30 people every week. Yes, they are not all college students - we open this to our young adults too, who were previously in the program as college students. We invite several staff and college committee members to participate in building relationships and to carry on meaningful conversations. Lunches are scheduled just about every Sunday when JMU is in session (typically we follow JMU 's academic calendar). We need food to continue what has been developing over the past several years. The approach prior to 2018 was to offer lunch at a church member's home, but we have found that weekly lunches provide increased opportunities to get to know more students and to encourage their participation in the church activities. We have a core group of regular attenders, but we also have several who attend more infrequently.

We have had several graduate who have been with us for several years. This has been very meaningful to both students and HBC. We need your help to continue this joyful effort. To make providing lunches more affordable and less difficult, we are asking people to team up or partner with others. Please prayerfully consider a team approach. and sign up for lunch on the sheet located at the info desk. Contact Cindy Skelley with questions at (540)421-3273 or [scvaconn@aol.com](mailto:scvaconn@aol.com). The college ministry committee THANKS you SO MUCH!

## TOGETHER with Our City

**CREATION CARE PRESENTATION  
FEBRUARY 15 @ 1PM, FELLOWSHIP HALL**

You're invited to attend a presentation by Harrisonburg City staff members to share updates from our city's Sustainability and Environmental department. Topics will include local efforts in regard to Urban Heat Islands and Tree Planting, as well as the city's Environmental Action Plan. We look forward to welcoming Keith Thomas, Sustainability and Environmental Manager, and Jeremy Harold, Greenspace Manager, as well as other city staff members. This will be a great opportunity to become better informed about what our city is doing in the area of earth care and consider how we might actively come together to support their efforts.

Sponsored by HBC Creation Care Team...  
because the earth is the Lord's!



## New Members

### RANDY & DEBBIE DAIL



Randy and Debbie currently live in Mt. Jackson, and are building a home in Basye. They hope to move into their new home sometime this winter or spring.

They have one adult

daughter, Sarah, who lives in Northern Virginia. They enjoy hiking and camping.

Randy was born and raised in Newport News, Virginia, and Debbie was raised in the Richmond area. They both graduated from Mary Washington College - Randy with a degree in Business Administration and Debbie with a degree in Sociology and American Studies.

Debbie has worked 10 years for Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) in Virginia Beach. Randy works for Holtzman Corporation.

### LEAH TRIPP

Leah is no stranger to HBC - she has led our Praise Team since 2021! Leah graduated from JMU's Communication & Advocacy program and received her



bachelor's degree in English and Communications Journalism from Campbell University in 2016. She currently works for Church World Service. Leah's hobbies and interests include music, writing and church involvement.

## In Recognition

### SUSAN KISER



In February we celebrate Susan Kiser's five year anniversary with HBC. As our Financial Ministry Assistant, she helps to ensure the church runs smoothly from a financial perspective.

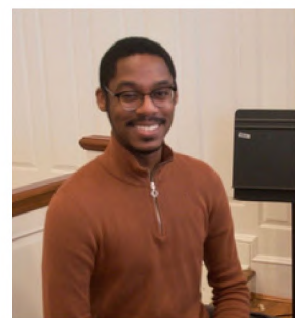
Her knowledge of the

people of this church and her caring personality have allowed the staff to blossom. Her quiet presence is invaluable to the church, and she is beloved by everyone.

Congratulations on a beautiful five years in the HBC Office!

## Congratulations!

Congratulations to **Harold Bailey** who has been named Adjunct Professor of Piano at Eastern Mennonite University. (But he is still continuing at HBC!)





# PRAYER CONCERNS

## MEMBERS

Becky Armentrout  
Dennis Greene  
Wayne Hannah  
Sue Jones  
Lola McBride  
Bill Pond  
Karen & Kerry Potter  
Jimmy & Nancy Russell  
Merrick Stewart  
Constance Via

## EXTENDED FAMILY

Barbara Williams  
(Katelyn Belcher's godmother)  
Aaron Downey  
(David & Donna Downey's son)  
Mary Morgan (Jane Branch's sister)  
Sheila Dart  
Becky Morris (Ellen Shomo's friend)

## SYMPATHY

We grieve with Bill Pond the loss of his wife of many years, Barbara.

# December Stewardship Snapshot

Budget needs as of 12/31/22      \$ 573,382.00  
Budget receipts as of 12/31/22      \$ 551,177.48

## Non-Budget/Designated Funds

- Love Fund      \$2,000.00
- Staff Christmas Fund      \$2,825.00
- Lottie Moon Missions      \$975.00
- Saturday Bag Lunch      \$197.00
- Passport (Christmas Post Office)      \$475.25
- Trustees Fund      \$6,000.00

# Thank You!

Mama, Jeff, Claudia, JJ, and I would like to thank everyone for their support, prayers, cards, and well wishes during the sudden losses in our family recently. It has been very reassuring.

Thank you,  
Faye Bland Obenschain

A giant THANK YOU to our Impressions Team for all of the beautiful decorations in our church throughout the Advent and Christmas season! We know it takes a lot of work and a tremendous amount of effort to make the sanctuary Christmas ready and we are so grateful to you for the time and energy you put into everything!

Also, many thanks Sandy and Don Cude, who once again placed beautiful nativities from around the world in our sanctuary windows! We enjoy being able to admire them ourselves and especially to share them with visitors we have throughout the season. God bless you all!

# FEBRUARY 2023

| Sun                                                                                                   | Mon                                          | Tue                                                                                                     | Wed                                          | Thu                      | Fri | Sat                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----|---------------------------|
|                                                                                                       |                                              |                                                                                                         | 1                                            | 2                        | 3   | 4<br>6:30pm S'more Games! |
| 5 Scout Sunday<br><br>5:30pm Youth<br>Dinner & Bible Study                                            | 6                                            | 7<br>3pm Missions<br>Committee Mtg (Parlor)<br>6pm Finance<br>Committee Mtg (B4)<br>6pm Financial Peace | 8<br><br>5:45-8 pm Youth -<br>Clothes Closet | 9                        | 10  | 11                        |
| 12<br><br>5:00pm Youth<br>Super Bowl Party                                                            | 13<br><br>6:30pm Leadership<br>Team Mtg (B4) | 14<br><br>6pm Financial Peace                                                                           | 15<br><br>1pm Creation Care<br>Presentation  | 16                       | 17  | 18                        |
| 19<br>11:30am Get<br>Acquainted Luncheon<br>2pm Kachin Church<br>5:30pm Youth<br>Dinner & Bible Study | 20<br><br>March Newsletter<br>Articles Due   | 21<br><br>6pm Financial Peace                                                                           | 22<br><br>6:30pm Ash<br>Wednesday Service    | 23<br><br>11am Brookdale | 24  | 25                        |
| 26<br><br>1-5pm Sanctuary<br>Reserved (Lions Club)<br><br>5:30pm Youth<br>Dinner & Bible Study        | 27                                           | 28<br><br>6pm Financial Peace                                                                           |                                              |                          |     |                           |

## WEEKLY REOCCURING EVENTS

### SUNDAY

9:15am Sunday School  
10:30am Community Worship

### MONDAY

6:30am Men's Prayer Breakfast  
10:00am Skyline Literacy (Rm 201 & 203)  
1:00pm Staff Meeting (Parlor)  
6:30pm Scouts

### TUESDAY

10:00am Skyline Literacy (Rm 201 & 203)  
11:00am Tuesdays Together (B4)  
6:00pm Jubellation Practice

### WEDNESDAY

10:00am Ladies Prayer Group (B4)  
10:00am Skyline Literacy (Rm 201 & 203)  
6:00pm Choir Practice

### THURSDAY

10:00am Skyline Literacy (Rm 201 & 203)

### SATURDAY

10:30am Community Lunch

## DEACON OF THE WEEK

Feb 5 — Phil Douglas  
Feb 12 — Lyn Weaver  
Feb 19 — Dustyn Miller  
Feb 26 — Jeff Obenschain

## COMMUNITY LUNCH

Feb 4 — Miller  
Feb 11 — Obenschain  
Feb 18 — Ritchie  
Feb 25 — St. Stephen's

## FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

3 Susan Mason  
7 Patti Good  
7 Sherrill Schafer  
8 Judy Simmons  
8 Jim Wampler  
12 Dawn Krall  
15 Ellen Shomo  
16 Jonathan Phaga  
17 Laura Fly  
17 Jimmy Russell  
18 Victoria Moutinho  
21 Trace Belcher  
21 J J Obenschain  
21 Missy Simmons  
22 Susan Creasy  
22 Nomene Paul  
24 Caroline Lohr  
25 Terry Hughey  
26 Tom Ward  
26 Jay Webb  
27 Laura Logan  
28 Joshua Fly

## HARRISONBURG BAPTIST CHURCH

501 South Main Street  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

### HBC ALIVE!

*A publication of*

HARRISONBURG BAPTIST CHURCH

501 South Main Street  
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

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#### STAFF

Rev. Dr. Matthew Winters, Senior Pastor

Rev. Eli Withers, Associate Pastor

Rev. Katelyn Belcher, Minister of Youth

Dr. Gary Ritcher, Director of Music & Worship

Leah Tripp, Praise Team Leader

Rosemary Lonberger, Organist

Harold Bailey, Pianist

Susan Kiser, Financial Ministry Assistant

Kim Brubaker, Administrative Ministry Assistant

MARCH NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

FEBRUARY 20, 2023

Please submit articles to

Kim Brubaker at [kim@hbcalive.org](mailto:kim@hbcalive.org)

Love  
Never  
Fails

1 CORINTHIANS 13:7

you  
VIBRANT  
FAMILY