

MARCH 2023

HBC ALIVE!

Harrisonburg Baptist Church's Newsletter

Finding Space to Heal

REV. MATT WINTERS

We don't have to search far to find life-bending struggles around us. Daily we're peppered with the reminders that this world isn't the way God intended creation to be. Over the past month, we've seen our neighbors from the fraternity next door cope with the tragic accident that killed three of their members. We're walking beside them as they pick up some pieces of their lives and slowly find new footing. Your cards show a great deal of compassion and I'm grateful for your willingness to write words from the heart. On March 8, we're hosting them for a meal in the fellowship hall as another way to bind wounds with the love of God. Pray for each young man and the impact of the Holy Spirit on their lives.

A bit further from home, victims of the last year's floods continue to eke out a living in rough conditions. In late summer 2022, a torrential rain flooded homes and communities like Myra, KY. Churches, houses, businesses, not to mention lives and dreams were devastated. Crops, coops and canned goods were lost. This winter has been tough on them, but their resiliency is proving strong. We have been a minor part of the Farm Ministry's presence in their lives. The Farm Ministry of Rockingham Cooperative has sent food, chicken coops, and farming equipment to get them back on their feet. Our church has sent our old fellowship hall tables, which were

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given to three different churches so that they can now have meals together once again. A pulpit Randy Shank built and dedicated to the kingdom of God stands ready to proclaim the power of God's redemptive work once again. Each of these efforts are the rainbows that promise God's provision after the devastation of floods. Each subtle gift proclaims God is the foundation of life and the fortress of refuge. I'm grateful for this church body's willingness to share what we have so that God's presence may be understood and grasped.

I hope you'll too find ways to help others heal and know the power of God's love.

~ Pastor Matt

Community Conversation regarding Leadership Team Structure

SUNDAY, MARCH 5

After our worship service on March 5, the Policy Review Committee will host a community conversation with regard to the Leadership Team Structure. In reviewing the operation manual of the church and by listening to the feedback from the deacons, Leadership Team and others, the review committee would like to engage a conversation around the current

structure's deficits and identify ways to improve the church's operation. We invite everyone to be a part of the conversation.

First Friday at HBC!

5:00-7:00PM 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 five artists from our church: Nick Barnes (inlaid woodturnings), Betty Ecklund (painting), Larry Ecklund (furniture), Mike Mandigo (furniture and decorative boxes) and Gabrielle Schofield (painting). There will be refreshments and even an activity for the children. Plan to 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.

Communion Update

In March, we're planning to return to receiving communion via deacons passing the trays down the rows. We will have juice and bread served out of the communion trays. We will also have pre-packaged cups available for those who would like them.



Looking Ahead to Holy Week

PALM SUNDAY, APRIL 2

The Children's Committee will host our annual Easter Egg Hunt on Palm Sunday, April 2 following our worship service. We will gather for a picnic lunch outside (weather permitting) immediately following the hunt.

If you would be willing to provide some plastic Easter Eggs with treats inside, please contact Pastor Eli. We want to have plenty for all of the kids and families that will join us that day! If your family would like to join us and if you have grandkids or other little friends you'd like to bring, they are more than welcome! A sign-up sheet will be available soon. Spring is on the way!

MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE 6:30PM, APRIL 6

Join us as we commemorate the Last Supper.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS 12-6PM, GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 7

The sanctuary will be open for Stations of the Cross on Good Friday, April 7 from noon until 6 pm.

EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE 7AM, SUNDAY, APRIL 9

On Easter Sunday, April 9, we will host a sunrise service in the lawn beside the gazebo, weather permitting (we'll move into the sanctuary if the weather dictates).

Summer VBS

Believe it or not, we have already started working on plans for Vacation Bible School for the summer! We are planning to do it in two different ways this year:

- 1) On Sundays throughout the month of June, we will be visiting with our Gratton Street neighbors, and hosting a back yard Bible club like the youth did last year. We would love your help with that!
- 2) On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday of the last week of June (the 26th, 28th, and 30th) we will invite our Compass friends (and former neighbors) with special needs to join our younger kids for a sensory-friendly VBS! This is a new endeavor for HBC! We plan to provide some training and guidance for those interested in helping. Please contact Pastor Eli if you'd be willing to help.

More information on both of these VBS programs will be coming in the weeks and months ahead!



March Youth Events

MARCH 5

9:15am Sunday School

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

MARCH 8

5:45-8:15pm Clothes Closet

MARCH 12

9:15am Sunday School

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

MARCH 19

9:15am Sunday School

4:00pm Youth Committee Mtg

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

MARCH 24-26

Mission Madness Retreat

MARCH 26

9:15am Sunday School

Youth Super Bowl Party

REV. KATELYN BELCHER

The youth group had their annual Super Bowl Party on February 12. The Belcher's hosted 24 kids and adults and it was a blast! We enjoyed a delicious meal together and several different kinds of dessert. We had a good time watching the game, laughing at the commercials, and critiquing the half-time show. A couple of die-hard Eagles fans left the party unhappy, but other than that, it was an excellent time of fellowship and fun for everyone!





Psalm 107

JEANNIE PETIT, DEACON

Psalm 107 is a Psalm of thanksgiving. Verses 1-3 say, "Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. His love endures forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord tell their story - those he redeemed from the hand of the foe, those he gathered from the lands, from east and west, from north and south."

As the Israelites wandered, they needed saving. This chapter details their struggles, which are also our struggles. Being lost, hungry, thirsty, in the darkness, rebels, prisoners, and fools are all things with which we can associate. Nonetheless, God provided. He was there. God provides. He is here. And He gave us Jesus.

Historically, we know that the Israelites often didn't get it right. But "they cried to the Lord in their trouble and He saved them from their distress" anyway. David, the Psalmist, instructs them in each circumstance to "give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for mankind." In spite of their iniquities, God showed up. In spite of our iniquities, God shows up. God gathered them. God gathers us. We are never too lost to be found. He calls us to Himself and gives us daily opportunities to engage Him - at home, at work, at church, at social gatherings, in public forums, in private conversations. Some are big, some are small; some are

obvious, some obscure; some grand, some mundane. Nevertheless, when we least expect it, God is there, working. Our job is to say yes to those opportunities, but often we don't recognize them.

We have a framework to follow: help a friend in need, listen to those who are hurting, provide for the widows and orphans, visit those who are imprisoned, feed the hungry, clothe the poor, care for the sick. These acts are concrete "thank you's" for being saved from our distress and are also ways in which we give God an opportunity to act, again. He doesn't quit. He will show up. He will enter if we ask him in. Every time.

Prayer & Story Circles

Our Prayer & Story Circles are getting underway! Our prayer focus for the month of March is focused on each of the prayer circle- that they will have a strong start and have some beautiful, intentional prayer time together. Everyone is encouraged to lift up one another in prayer! You don't have to be in one of the circles. You can also do this as a Sunday School class or any other small group within the church. When you are able to meet in person, we ask that you share stories with one another of someone who has been significant in your understanding what prayer really is; someone who has taught you more about prayer than anyone else you know.

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Cont'd from page 5

Share what you admired about this person's prayer life. Share how you were (and continue to be) influenced by this person and share this with your group. You may even want to jot down some notes as you reminisce about the important place this person has had in your life. Things will begin blossoming in a big way in March - let's hope our prayer life does too!

Save the Date!

SATURDAY, APRIL 15

Blacks Run Clean Up Day starts 9:00am!

More information can be found at <https://www.harrisonburgva.gov/clean-stream-clean-up-day>

Join the HBC Team... because *the earth is the Lord's!*

Skyline Literacy Classes

In case you weren't aware, HBC hosts four classes per week with Skyline Literacy. Two classes per week are for English as a Second Language and two classes for Citizenship. This is an excellent way that we share our space to serve our community. Thanks to everyone who is a part of this amazing gift to our neighbors.

Missions Committee Updates

MARY SMITH

Mercy House - Two to three times a year, HBC provides a basket of household items for new families who move into our apartment at Mercy House. This basket includes various cleaning supplies, paper products, mops, a broom, a trash can with plastic bags, a bucket, a laundry basket, laundry detergent and softener. We also provide a new Bible and a note inviting the family to attend church at HBC. This is just one of the ways we provide support to Mercy House. Each month, we restock the perishable items in the food pantry. We deliver the cheese and beef from the Farm Ministry, and we give a monetary gift from the missions' yearly budget. The Mercy House staff has expressed their sincere appreciation for our continued support and partnership over the years.

New Ways to Serve - Please continue your prayers for the missions committee as we discover new ministries in our community. During our March meeting, we will be learning more about Rebuilding Hope at Cloverhill United Methodist Church.



January Ladies' Night!

On January 27th, the ladies were invited to gather in the Fellowship Hall to learn the technique of paint pouring. Here are a few photos from that evening!





Associate Pastor Sabbatical

PASTOR ELI

According to its website, the Lilly Endowment Clergy Renewal Programs are administered by the Center for Pastoral Excellence at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis, Indiana. It does this largely through initiatives to enhance and sustain the quality of ministry in American congregations and parishes. To this end, programs provide an opportunity for pastors to step away briefly from the persistent obligations of daily parish life and engage in a period of renewal and reflection. Renewal periods are not vacations but times for intentional exploration and reflection, for drinking again from God's life-giving waters, for regaining enthusiasm and creativity for ministry. Gratefully, the Personnel Committee and the Leadership Team have approved me applying for this grant with the hope that I might have a fully funded three-month sabbatical in 2024.

At the end of March, I will have completed seven years of ministry with you here at HBC. My, how time flies. Many churches agree to provide pastoral staff with some sort of sabbatical time after a specified number of years in ministry together—seven years is a common choice. The Lilly Program encourages me to ask “What makes my heart sing?” “What encourages me in my role as minister?” and the church is called to

consider “What are the things that energize the congregation?” Part of the money allotted with the grant can be given to the church for specific consideration while the minister is away so that the congregation, too, can reevaluate the ministry of the church.

This is a fairly competitive grant program and there is no guarantee of receiving it. But, I'm gonna give it my best shot. I appreciate your prayers very much in this area. As I continue to work on my application for the grant, it has become significant to me to ask myself what really does make my heart sing? Where are the places in the world that God is calling me to live and learn at this specific point in my life?

I began my journey as a part time Director of Youth in my home church in 1995. As much as it astounds me, that is nearly 30 years of ministry—which really means 30 years of screw ups and falling short, 30 years of making mistakes and learning the ropes, but also 30 years of walking the journey of faith with so many beautiful people. It means 30 years of wanting to do better and 30 years of seeking God's will in my life and the churches to whom I've been called to minister. A period of renewal and restoration is like fresh air to the lungs for me right now. And I am hopeful. I want to be the person/minister God has called me to be in this place and alongside you. And if I'm



being honest, I believe I need this time to remember the exhilaration of the first time my friend called me a minister in front of a complete stranger; time to renew the energy that made such a difference early on in my ministry; and the time to sit and be with my creator and allow myself to be replenished.

I am grateful to the Personnel Team and to the Leadership Team for their blessing of this opportunity. There will be a time in the very near future for me to share more of this process with the entire congregation.

Thank you so very much,
Pastor Eli

Thank You!

Dear friends of Harrisonburg Baptist Church,

The family of Barbara Pond would like to thank the many friends who supported us during this difficult time. We appreciate the many expressions of kindness, the words of comfort, and the stories and memories shared. They truly helped our family and highlighted what a special person Barbara was.

With sincere gratitude,
The Barbara Pond Family

Another Thank You!

Thank you to all who came to my fundraiser luncheon. It really meant a lot and thankfully, I met my fundraising goal.

- JJ Obenschain

In Recognition

ROSEMARY LONBERGER

Rosemary began her service as HBC organist 16 years ago! Rosemary, thank you for blessing us with your musical talents.

ELI WITHERS

Eli has served as HBC's Associate Pastor for 7 years as of March 27. Eli, thank you for the many ways in which you bless HBC with your generous spirit and creative talents.

MATT WINTERS

Matt became HBC's Senior Pastor three years ago on March 15. Thank you, Matt, for your faithful leadership.



PRAYER CONCERNS

MEMBERS

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

EXTENDED FAMILY

Susan Hilldrup
(Sara Kate Moore's aunt)
Lucy Versen
(Greg & Susie Versen's granddaughter)
Kelly McCluskey (Pat Byrd's friend)
Becky Morris (Ellen Shomo's friend)

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

Mike & Sarah Kopcinski welcomed a baby boy, Isaac Colton Beery Kopcinski, on February 21, 2023.

January Stewardship Snapshot

Budget needs as of 1/31/23	\$ 57,265.00
Budget receipts as of 1/31/23	\$ 62,154.60

Non-Budget/Designated Funds

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------|
| • Barbara Pond Memorial | \$50.00 |
| • Saturday Bag Lunch | \$245.00 |
| • Love Fund | \$5.00 |

2022 Missions Giving Recap

HBC Cooperative Missions Giving through Baptist General Association of VA (includes SBC) and Cooperative Baptist Fellowship totaled **\$35,369**.

Local Augusta Baptist Association giving totaled **\$3,994**.

HBC Missions Ministry budget projects totaled **\$27,559** (includes Aid to Ukraine & Nasaruni Academy).

End of Year Surplus Distribution

The Finance Committee has voted to distribute the surplus funds at the end of 2022 in the following manner:

Additional 1% retirement match	\$2,700
Music Department	\$2,000
Major Maintenance Fund	\$5,500
South Asia Missions	\$2,000
Kentucky Disaster Relief	<u>\$6,000</u>
TOTAL	\$18,200

MARCH 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	Staff Out of Office Matt: Mar 13-14 Katelyn: Mar 24-26 Eli: Mar 30-Apr 1		1	2	3 5-7pm First Friday Art Exhibit	4
5 Annie Armstrong Offering 11:30am Community Conversation 5:30pm Youth Dinner & Bible Study	6	7 3pm Missions Committee Mtg (Parlor)	8 5:45-8 pm Youth - Clothes Closet 6pm Meal for Pi Beta Chi fraternity	9	10	11
12 Daylight Saving Time Begins 5:30pm Youth Dinner & Bible Study	13 6:30pm Leadership Team Mtg (B4)	14	15	16	17	18
19 2pm Kachin Church 4pm Youth Committee Mtg 5:30pm Youth Dinner & Bible Study	20 April Newsletter Articles Due	21	22	23 11am Brookdale	24	25
26	27	28				

WEEKLY REOCCURRING 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 Financial Peace (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

Mar 5 — Cathy Lawrence
Mar 12 — Don Aittama
Mar 19 — Karen Burke
Mar 26 — Jeannie Petit

COMMUNITY LUNCH

Mar 4 — Miller
Mar 11 — Ritcher
Mar 18 — Skelley
Mar 25 — Ruiz

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

2 Louise Johnson
5 Jake Petit
6 Elise Ritchie
8 Pattie Alvis
8 Janet Smith
10 Dennis Simmons
11 Susan Yazdani
14 Cathy Baugh
14 Katie Mazingo
16 Gary Lohr
17 Austin Harper
18 Will Simmons
19 David Hayes
20 Betsy Fly
23 Betty Ecklund
27 Cindy Skelley
28 Chris Belcher
28 Leah Tripp
29 Kevin Petit
31 Angela Hayes

HARRISONBURG BAPTIST CHURCH

501 South Main Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

HBC ALIVE!

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HARRISONBURG BAPTIST CHURCH

501 South Main Street

Harrisonburg, VA 22801

(540) 433-2456 www.hbcalive.org

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

APRIL NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

MARCH 20, 2023

Please submit articles to

Kim Brubaker at kim@hbcalive.org

