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**January 2017**

Mission Statement

Love God . . . Love Others . . . Reach Out to the Community and the World

Well.....here we are again. Early in yet another year. A chance to look back upon the year past --- 2016 being most recent ---- and to reflect on what went well, what went not so well; what can one take from the old year and carry it forward to the new; what to leave behind.

Well, just what do you hope to see and do in the new year.....I will stop short of using the “R” word (resolutions) because that seems to me to paint one into a corner; to do, or attempt to do, something simply for the sake of checking off the “resolution” box.

Maybe one should begin by being grateful for all that we have; for how very fortunate we are. Then perhaps we can find time to reflect upon our spiritual lives and to ponder how we might “spruce it up” in the New Year. Suggestions, and they are only suggestions; and this is but a partial list to be sure:

Get a good devotional and read it each day (there are a great many to choose from)

How about accepting our Bishop’s challenge to read the entire Bible in 2017

How about accepting your pastor’s challenge to join our adult Sunday school class

How is your prayer life; start a prayer journal and watch/record to see how prayer is indeed answered----- often in ways that you did not expect

What has/is the Holy Spirit laying upon your heart; nudging you with persistent taps upon your shoulder or whispers in your ear.....should you really be getting involved with the homeless shelter or with our county Social Services...or what about Rising Hope or any number of mission or community outreach possibilities? What to do? How to respond? Who to talk to? And on and on the “to do” list goes.....sometimes we feel overwhelmed and just give up; but is that what we are called to do?

It is also true that in our lives, and certainly our spiritual lives, we need to know--- we need sometimes to be reminded --- that God is always there. In good times and in bad times, God is always there!

We need to believe in Jesus Christ and beckon the ever-present Holy Spirit every day....every single day.

And we need a place that we know will always be there --- a place that will always be warm and welcoming – a place that will be filled with whoever has answered God’s call for that day and who has chosen to venture forth to this place.

This place --- our place ---- and the place for millions around the world is the country or rural church. In this tiny crossroads called Orlean, Virginia, ours has been welcoming us here since 1883, and I am confident that it will continue to be that welcoming place in which to worship for a future that will surpass us all.

Hear these words about a Country Church (I do not know the author, but the message is very powerful):

**POEM ABOUT A COUNTRY CHURCH**

Today I sought the throne of God, but not in structure tall,  
With gilded altar frontispiece or icons on the wall,  
But in a simple country church which seats but very few,  
Surrounded by a grassy plot, still bright with morning dew.

Kind country folk came drifting in ....the backbone of our race,  
Their honesty and strength were plain in every single face.  
As gentle fingers plied the keys, the organ rose and fell  
In old and dear familiar strains of hymns we’ve loved so well.

Each person wore their very best in tribute to God’s day,  
And silence was profound and sweet when they had bowed to pray.  
The sermon told of all God’s grace, His love and tender care.  
Alike on mounts of happiness or valleys of despair.

Then smiles and hugs and handshakes, as each would go their way,  
With wishes for God’s blessings ‘til another Sabbath Day.  
I thought of gentle Jesus, dear and humble Son of God,  
Whose Father taught Him carpentry...whose Mother tilled the sod.

I feel He would have been at home among these country folk  
And nodded His approval to the truth the sermon spoke.  
Somehow the great cathedrals paled, for I can truly say  
I’ve never felt as close to God as I have felt today!

(Author unknown)

Now the truth is that one can find God anywhere....anyplace....any time. But I do feel that this poem has much to say to us, to comfort us and to give us pause.

Not a sermon.....just some thoughts.

Blessings to all

And Grace and Peace

Pastor Jim

### Food Pantry and PDF

The food pantry continues to provide assistance to one family and an individual on a monthly basis. While our shelves are fairly well stocked, the pantry fund is low and some of the staples we normally provide are gone. Please consider donating either money or staples to our pantry if you are able. Thank you!

During the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, the PDF provided assistance to 3 households.

### Tip of the Halo to:

~~**everyone** who contributed to the farewell luncheon for Norma and Wayne  
~~the **choir** for singing and **Jim J.** for playing the saxophone at the Community Thanksgiving service  
~~**everyone** who donated Campbell's Labels, Box Tops, and Tyson A+ labels  
~~**Lorraine** and **Jim J.** for their instrumental duets during worship  
~~**Joan, Kenny, Gus, Elma,** and **Sharon** for preparing the church and grounds for Advent  
~~**everyone** who donated items and money to the Fauquier Homeless Shelter  
~~**everyone** who participated in the annual Pizza Party and White Elephant gift exchange  
~~**Joan, Kenny, Scott,** and **Jason** for landscaping the area in front of the church  
~~**Mary** for getting names from DSS to sponsor for Christmas presents; **everyone** who sponsored a child; **Mary** for taking the gifts to be distributed

### Note

Please note that Box Tops have expiration dates and organizations will not accept expired Box Tops.

### OUMW

The Orlean United Methodist Women is collecting bleach, Pine Sol, and toilet paper for the Fauquier Family Homeless Shelter. Please place any items you wish to donate in the laundry basket in the rear of the church. Thank You for your support

### Birthdays and Special Occasions

|                            |         |                            |          |
|----------------------------|---------|----------------------------|----------|
| Gus C.                     | Jan. 13 | Peggy & Mack Baer (anniv.) | March 3  |
| Caye N.                    | Jan.17  | R.O. U.                    | March 12 |
| Heidi & Jim Jones (anniv.) | Jan. 19 | Bob T.                     | March 14 |
| Kathy & Al Carter (anniv.) | Jan. 21 | Peggy B.                   | March 15 |
| Tanya W.                   | Jan. 29 | Rose R.                    | March 16 |
| Joan B.                    | Jan. 31 | Alyssa G.                  | March 17 |
| Joan & Ken Poole (anniv.)  | Feb. 6  | Mary & Bobby Tarr (anniv.) | March 19 |
| Sharon H.                  | Feb. 10 | Sandra P.                  | March 26 |
| Gracie W.                  | Feb. 14 |                            |          |
| Erin M.                    | Feb. 15 |                            |          |
| Della S.                   | Feb. 16 |                            |          |
| Bill D.                    | Feb. 18 |                            |          |
| Shaw M.                    | Feb. 26 |                            |          |
| Julie T.                   | Feb. 28 |                            |          |

### Calendar of Events

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| January 15  | OUMW Lunch and Meeting at Orlean Market after worship           |
| January 29  | 5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday Potluck in Fellowship Hall after worship |
| February 12 | OUMW Lunch and Meeting at Orlean Market after worship           |
| February 19 | Administrative Council meeting after worship in Fellowship Hall |
| March 12    | OUMW Lunch and Meeting at Orlean Market after worship           |