

OTTERBEIN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
176 West Market Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

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Tidings



October 2026

The Tidings
Otterbein United Methodist
Church

176 West Market Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Office - (540) 434-7747
oumcharrisonburg.org

Tidings articles are generally due
by the 15th of each month.
You may either bring articles to
the church office or email them
to oumcdadm@hotmail.com

Sunday Schedule

9:30 am Sunday School
10:30 am Worship Service

Please check the calendar for
times of regular and special
events.

Weekday Office Hours

Monday - Thursday: 8:00 am - 3:00 pm



Have you checked out our Facebook Page? You
can find us at facebook.com/OUmCHarrisonburg or
through the link on our website. Please check out
our page and share with your friends!

Our Staff

Rev. Laura Stratton
Senior Pastor
laurastratton@vaumc.org

Melissa Miller
Office Manager
oumcdadm@hotmail.com

Gary Edlind
Director of Visitation

Colin Cossi
Director of Music Ministries
colincossimusic@gmail.com

Dan Curtis
Organist

Drew Dodson
Bell Choir Director

Melvin Falls
Custodian

Bonnie Andrade
Treasurer
oumctreasurer@hotmail.com

Office: 540-434-7747
x200 for Melissa
x201 for Laura

Otterbein in Prayer

David Angier
Rosalie Bailey
Gary Billingsley
Whitney Bradley
Rev. Louis Carson
Loretta Crider
Nissa D'Andrea
Cliff Davis
Jo Ellen Dickenson
Mike Earman

Rev. Samuel & Judith
Espinoza
Zach Fickes
Mary Ann Glendye
Ray Griffith
Fred Hopkins
Joel Jordan
Steve Lilly
Patty Liskey
Chuck Macklin
Art Mitchell

Eric Mitchell
Maxine Perry
Judy Pruett
Ann Sebrell
Dot Swartz
Carolyn Stroop
Michelle VanPelt
Hazel Willi
Jay Williams
Keith Wright

Mystery Friends 2026-27

College students: Do you want to receive a reminder each month of how
special you are to the Otterbein church family?

Congregation: Do you or your group want to make a college student's day?
Mystery friends is the perfect match, and it's SO EASY!

Students: Simply fill out an information form (found at the church entrances
and in the choir room) and **return it by Sunday, September 27.**

Congregation: If you would like to participate, you can sign up to cover one
month, birthdays, special occasions, however works best for you. Volunteers
are needed beginning in October, so don't delay. **If you would like to sign up
to make a college student feel special please contact either Kim
Zigler (kzigler@comcast.net or 540-246-7781) or Beverley Nelson**
(beverleyznelson@comcast.net or 540-908-8793).

Let's continue to show how important our college students are to our
congregation.

For Your Information

***Tidings* deadline** for the **November** issue is **Thursday, October 15** by **9 am.**
All groups, classes, and individuals are welcome to submit articles for the
Tidings. Plan your activities and bring the written details to the church
office or email to the office at oumcdadm@hotmail.com by the 15th.

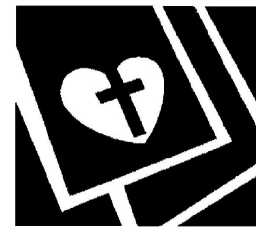
Guy's Grief Group

Instead of my usual OOTSP column this month, I want to report on the new Guy's Grief Group (GGG) that has been meeting for several weeks, and will meet each **Thursday, 9:30 am** at **Mr. J's Bagels** (1635 East Market Street). Many churches have seen that off-campus groups like this one form helpful relationships and strengthen the church.

The group now has five members from Asbury and Otterbein United Methodist Churches and we hope to be joined by others in the future. Men are being targeted with the hope that each will be more willing to share and therefore bond with the group. Also the group can be an outing to look forward to. Perhaps a similar woman's group could also be helpful.

So far we have learned that a person may react to grief as "no big deal" or they might be paralyzed by it and that grief can surprise a person! One big tip is that it can help to keep busy with work, volunteering, church, or other activities. We also pray for each other. Several men have chosen not to join and that's fine too. Our resource book is *Reflections of a Grieving Spouse* by H. Norman Wright.

Please pray for us,
Gary Edlind, Visitation Director



FROM THE PASTOR

In a sermon at the end of August, I talked about how having deep roots in God allows us to weather the storms and difficulties of life, while keeping us grounded in God and God's love for us. Ephesians 3:17-19 echoes this idea - *"...that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God."*

So, I am curious - what do you do to keep you rooted and grounded in God's love? I would love to hear about your practices, because listening to others helps me to grow in my practices. I'll offer three resources that I use to keep me rooted and grounded.

For years, part of my daily devotion includes reading a daily email from the Henri Nouwen Society, which curates his writings into short pieces for our contemplation and consideration. I find Nouwen's wisdom to be illuminating, and I have been formed by his constant reminders that we are all beloved children of God.

A few years ago, I learned from a friend about an app called Lectio365. This app has morning, afternoon, and evening prayer times, though I normally only do the morning devotion. The morning devotion is around a 10-minute guided time of prayer and meditation on a Scripture passage. I like how this devotion focuses me on a short Scripture passage and asks thought-provoking questions. I also appreciate

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WRE Benefit Auction

Saturday, October 17
10:00 am

Shady Oak at Weaver's Mennonite Church
(2501 Rawley Pike; Route 33 West of Harrisonburg)

Breakfast Biscuits & Lunch Available!

Friday Night Bake Sale & Silent Auction
Friday, October 16
5:00—7:00 pm

how this devotion will observe days for different saints and teach me something about their lives and faithfulness.

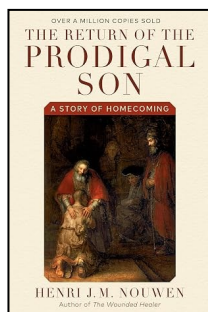
I also like to use a resource called The Bible Project. They have wonderful videos giving overviews of books of the Bible and biblical themes, and they produce a weekly podcast that goes in depth into Scriptural interpretation. Because the podcasts run around an hour, I don't get to listen to them as regularly as I do other parts of my devotion routine, but I love learning from them and having my understanding of Scripture broadened.

Let me know what resources you use for your devotions!

In Christ,
Pastor Laura

Book Club

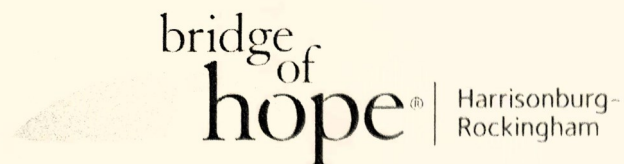
Another way to root and ground ourselves in God's love is by reading! Our faith has produced many excellent authors, and I invite you to join me in reading some of their works. To start, we will meet once every other month to have a discussion on the books. We will meet on the second Tuesday at 7:00 pm after Bible study. Our first meeting will be **Tuesday, November 10 at 7 pm**. Our first book is ***The Return of the Prodigal Son: A Story of Homecoming* by Henri Nouwen**. Hope you can join me! And if this time doesn't work for you, know that the United Women in Faith also do book studies every three months at 10:30 am before their meetings. These book studies are open to everyone.



Fresh Start

The biggest **Thank You** to **Otterbein's Hospitality Committee** and to the **very generous Otterbein Community** for the most successful **Autumn Tea** to date. Over \$2,000 was donated to the work of **Fresh Start**. **Fresh Start** is solely supported by donations, so this year's Autumn Tea will enable us to continue to support those who are starting fresh!

Fresh Start had two distributions last month. See Bridge of Hopes acknowledgement below.



CHURCHES RESPOND. HOMELESSNESS ENDS. HOPE BEGINS.

August 12th, 2026

Otterbein United Methodist Church
176 W. Market Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Dear Otterbein United Methodist Church,

Thank you for extending your Fresh Start program to a family in Bridge of Hope's program. The household items are a wonderful resource for families as they get settled into their new homes. Your generosity and awareness of needs within our local community are appreciated. If interested in receiving an in-kind tax donation form, you are welcome to call 540-478-2356 to request this document.

This family had significant barriers to housing and had nothing to furnish the home with. This is such a gift to them, not only their own home but items to help them make that space a real welcoming warm home.

Thank you, once again, for your support of families in Bridge of Hope's program.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Nutter, Program Director
Bridge of Hope Harrisonburg-Rockingham
Office: (540) 478-2356 Cell: (540) 252 5353
Email: carolyn@hr.bridgeofhopeinc.org



Otterbein United Methodist Men's News

Many thanks to all who participated in United Methodist Men's Sunday! On August 23

Shenandoah River District Superintendent

Rev. Kyungsuk Cho brought an inspiring message. The Men's Choir sang the anthem, *How Can I Keep from Singing?* You can see and hear the Men's anthem and other information concerning our fellowship on the OUMC website under the *Ministries/United Methodist Men* pull-down menu.



The next two Otterbein Men's Fellowship Prayer Breakfast meetings will be **Saturday, September 26** and **Saturday, October 24** beginning at **7:30 am** in **Memorial Hall** at **Otterbein UMC**. Please plan to join us for food, fellowship, and a time to share prayer requests and join in group prayer. There will be no meeting in November.

The Otterbein Men will gather in Memorial Hall on **Saturday, December 5** at **7:30 am** for breakfast, a short business meeting, and prayer time. We will also be setting up the dining area and preparing for the **Annual Christmas Pancake Brunch**. The brunch will be held following the 10:30 am Worship Service on Sunday, December 6. Look for more information in the November *Tidings* and future Worship Bulletin announcements.

Want to know more?

Contact any member of our planning team: Mike Earman, Bill Pollard, Carter Ritchie, or check our website: <https://www.oumcharrisonburg.org/united-methodist-men>



United
Women
in Faith

United Women in Faith seeks to connect and nurture women through Christian spiritual formation, leadership development, creative fellowship, and education so that they can inspire, influence, and impact local and global communities.

We are collecting **toothpaste** for **Kingsway Prison Ministries**. Their goal is over 8,300 tubes of toothpaste for their Christmas outreach program. Tubes must be 3-6 oz., individually boxed, and alcohol-free. A basket is available for your donations. **Collection will continue through October.**

Tuesday, October 13, Otterbein UWF will meet at **11 am** in **Memorial Hall**. The program is titled "Grace, Not Punishment," giving us the opportunity to connect with UWF's work to end mass incarceration and interrupting the school-to-prison pipeline. Following the program, we will share soup and sandwiches. **ALL ARE WELCOME!**

****Our next book study from the UWF Reading Program is centered on ***They Called Me Lioness: A Palestinian Girl's Fight For Freedom*** by Ahed Tamimi and Dena Takruri. Raised in a West Bank village, at 16 years of age, Tamimi was jailed after a non-violent confrontation with Israeli soldiers. She shares the human-scale story of an occupation that has shaped global politics. Check the Massanutten Library for availability, your favorite bookstore, etc. We will have 1 copy to share. Our next "Book Talk" will be **Nov. 10 at 10:30 am.**

Questions? Please contact me.

"...for I knew that you are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from punishment." Jonah 4:2

Grace & Peace,
Pat Wingert

Mark your calendars for United Women in Faith Sunday November 8. Planning is underway.



Energy Vampires

CREATION CARE TASK FORCE

Halloween is right around the corner, and there may be vampires hiding in your kitchen, your bathroom, and throughout your entire home.

An energy vampire is any appliance that continues to use power from electrical outlets, even when turned off or idle. Where there's a plug, there's sure to be a vampire appliance on the other end.

Every home has some vampire power that is necessary for the home to function efficiently.

Vampire power monitors refrigerator temperatures. It enables the use of remote controls and keeps digital clocks and thermostats running. However, unplugging many other electronic devices, when not in use, can save energy and lower your electric bill. There is nothing scarier than a high electric bill.

This month take the Halloween Challenge and walk through your home on a vampire hunt. Start early in the morning after breakfast. Is your coffee maker or electric teapot still plugged in even after the second cup? Maybe the blender whipped up a delicious and healthy breakfast smoothie. Is the blender done for the day? If so, unplug it. How about the toaster?

Now head to the bathroom. If still plugged in, even when turned off or set on standby power, electric toothbrush chargers, curling irons, and electric shavers are all siphoning energy. If these tools are left plugged in to recharge a battery, be sure to unplug them after a full charge is reached.

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Return to the bedroom to get ready for the day, and make a quick check. Are your phone and tablet chargers unplugged? If left plugged into the wall, these devices draw power continuously. Do you have a sound machine, fan, or humidifier that can be unplugged until the evening?

Finally venture into your primary living space.

Power strips with a master switch can be used to plug in TVs, soundbars, streaming boxes, and game consoles. Turning off the power strip at night is an easy way to stop all these energy vampires until morning. Power strips can also be used in home offices to consolidate plugs for computers, monitors, printers, and speakers. However, do not use power strips for high-power heating, cooling, or motor-driven appliances due to a risk of overheating and electrical fire.

Hope your Halloween vampire hunt was successful, and that you located and tamed the energy vampires in your home. Now venture outdoors into the crisp cool air, observe the trees as they change into their colorful autumn attire, and marvel at God's creation.

Happy Fall Y'all!

The Creation Care Taskforce

Finding Otterbein by GPS

The church website "Visit Us" page has been updated to add **151 West Elizabeth Street** as the **address for the parking lot**. If visitors use that address for GPS/online directions, they will see the center parking lot entrance with the little white OUMC sign. ***Our mailing address remains the same (176 West Market).***