

**Susanna Wesley UMC**  
3900 George Washington Memorial Hwy.  
Ordinary, VA 23131

**Mailing Address:**

P.O. Box 39  
Hayes, VA 23072

**Sunday Services**

Traditional at 8:15 a.m.

Contemporary at 10:30 a.m.

**In-Service, Facebook Live  
Drive-In Worship 101.7 FM**

**December 15<sup>th</sup>,  
2022**



## A Mid-Month Update on the Activities of SWUMC



# December

*Mid-Month*



A note from Pastor Tom

As we approach the birthday of our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ, Kim and I want to wish you a joyous and happy Christmas. This is truly one of the most wonderful times of the year.

As we approach Christmas, my challenge for everyone is to cut through all the glitziness and marketing hype of the season that has grown increasingly secular and commercial, and be reminded of the beauty of the One who is Christmas. *"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given..."* Isaiah 9:6-7

Pastor Tom & Kim



### Christmas Eve Service

6:30 p.m.

**Family Service**  
Special Guest for  
Children

### Christmas Day Service

9:30 a.m.

**Family Service**  
Bring the children with  
their favorite toy

### New Year Day Service

9:30 a.m.

St. Nichols shares  
his story

"And she will bring forth a  
Son, and you shall call His  
name Jesus, for He will  
save His people from their  
sins." – Matthew 1:21





Many of us say ‘Merry Christmas!’, in this season of hope, peace, joy and love to all we meet. But for many this season may be hard when they are grieving. It would be safe to say we all have experienced the grief. It is at Christmas we remember the times of great joy we experienced with the ones who have passed from our earthly bonds to be with Christ.

While the rest of the world seems excitedly engaged in decking their homes, planning parties, and keeping fun family traditions, it’s hard to fathom a Christmas without our loved one(s). What used to bring joy — things like making cookies or decorating the tree — now seem hollow. The days are laced with dull pain and constant triggers of the huge loss we may be navigating.

It is in our deep grief we come to understand God is our comfort. Psalm 34:11 *“declares that The LORD is close to the brokenhearted; he rescues those whose spirits are crushed”*.

**God’s presence doesn’t take the pain away; God’s presence sustains us in the pain.**

The Bible tells us that God is the Father of Compassion and God of all Comfort who comforts us in our troubles.

**Praise to the God of All Comfort**

*“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.”*

2 Corinthians 1:3-4

If we cry out to God for comfort, it’s a prayer He will always answer. So, as we face the holidays without the one we love, let’s lift up the Christmas prayer below for grieving hearts. It may be a prayer for your own grieving heart or a prayer you lift for someone else walking through grief and loss.

My prayer for all that are experiencing renewed or continuing pangs of grief as we approach Christ’ birthday is for you to find comfort in remembrance, joy as you share their story and strength in this prayer. -- Pastor Tom

# A Christmas Prayer for Grieving Hearts

Dear Lord, we cry out to you. Where else would we go with our deep loss? Our heart is split open, our pain feels like it's pulling us under and our spirit is crushed.

You have promised to be close to the brokenhearted and to draw near to us if we will draw near to You. So, we come with open hands and wounded hearts, asking You to carry us now when we are too weak to see our way through this grief. We come to You, the only One who can heal us, lift our head and walk us through this dark season into your light and life.

Comfort us as only You can. You know the depth of our sorrow and how many tears we've cried. You have counted every one and collected them in a bottle. Wrap us with Your presence and fill the empty spaces of our heart with the length and width and height and depth of Your love for us.

Let us see Your good even on days which feel so far from it. Surprise us with your goodness and open our eyes so that we don't miss a thing You are doing. We declare this: You are good and You do good. Lord, even though we don't understand the circumstances, even though we have questions and even fear for the future, we trust You. Help us to trust You with every fiber of our being and anchor our faith in You alone. Give us Your peace that passes all understanding so that we can rest in Your ways and Your paths.

Thank You for living hope. Thank You that our hope is alive and well in Jesus. Thank You for heaven, for our true home. Thank You that this suffering is not all there is and that we will have eternity with You. Thank You for taking on flesh and dwelling among us, for taking our pain and bearing our sorrows, so that you might not just know our suffering but so that You could deliver us from it. We praise You and thank You for the gift of eternal life.

O, Lord, only You know that while the world celebrates with merrymaking and song, we are weighed down with pain. We need to know that it won't always feel like this and that You have a hope and a future for us. Restore joy to us. Put a new song in our mouth that we might praise You and live out the abundance of life that You've promised and secured for us.

God, we have such deep need and we can't fix it. Sustain us. Carry us. Bring us through. Heal our hearts.

We love You with all of our heart, all of our soul, all of our mind and all of our strength. You are THE gift. Forgive us for putting anything else in that place.

*Prayer shared by Lisa Appello*

# Team Training Coming in 2023

As we move towards normalcy we are establishing Teams. Teams are made up individuals who have volunteered to help for a specific ministry activity like Vacation Bible School (VBS Team) or for an ongoing church related ministry or need. For example, the Worship Team (formerly called the Worship Committee) or the Maintenance Team (formerly called the Trustees who were the ones who maintained the church). As we plan for the new year we are scheduling training in two specific areas with two Teams.

## Counter Team

“Everyone involved in church is 100% honest, right?” That is usually the thinking when it comes to counting offering. Unfortunately, it isn’t always the case. So, the church needs to have Counters along with guidelines for handling the church offering to protect itself AND to protect the counters.

Prior to the pandemic we had Counter Teams. They were made up of two unrelated individuals who would take up the offering from the services, count it, prepare the deposit slip and drop it off at the Chesapeake Bank on Sunday using the night deposit box. Vicki Barnes a member of the Leadership Board and Financial Secretary for our church has been working to bring back the Counter Teams. She has spoken with many of the former counters and several new members creating the Teams. If you are interested please talk to Vicki or email her at [vickibrns@aol.com](mailto:vickibrns@aol.com).

**Counter Training will be held  
Sunday, January 8, 2023 after 2<sup>nd</sup> Service  
11:45 a.m.**

## Greeter Team

One of the most important jobs in our community is being a Greeter. They are the first person we meet when coming through the door and the ones who welcome not only long-term members but also those who are visiting for the first time. The Greeter Team is part of our Worship Team which works with the Pastor in planning our services and our efforts to welcome and engage all who attend our services.

*A greeter’s role is to make the guest feel welcome and at ease. They remove the anxiety of a new location. That’s when greeters hit their sweet spot. But, to be helpful and successful they require training. In our ever-changing world we they need to have the training and skills needed to not become an obstacle for those who are visiting but to make it easy for our first-time guests.*

We will be working with those who are serving as our greeters and asking others to consider joining team. Our greeters rotate throughout the month.

**Greeter Training Coming in January 2023**



## Wanted Worn, Tired and Discarded T-Shirts



In seven weeks, we will begin collecting worn, tired and discarded t-shirts (adult sizes). This gives us time to go through our t-shirt collections and pull out the ones we haven't worn for a long time or they have tears or holes.

**Why** - will be collected for the making of jump ropes to put in the 2023 shoeboxes. The shirts are cut into strips and then braided—they make a very sturdy jump rope.

**When:** A box for the shirts will be in the atrium beginning January the 8th.

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## Our HVAC Systems Replacement Fund Status

The final bill has been received and forward for payment. It was for \$58,208.00 a little less than anticipated. We have been blessed. So far, we have raised \$40,415.74 through December 11th. We have \$17,792.26 to go and its dropping fast through the generosity of our community. As we close the year and begin a new one' pray about giving a 2<sup>nd</sup> mile gift or committing to a monthly payment spread over several months. The church budget for 2023 includes a monthly payment of \$650.00.

**\$17,792.26 to go**



# November Giving Report

Budget for November \$19,264.00 (monthly number)

Received - \$15,210.91

Below Budget this month: \$4,053.09

NOTE: We tithe 10% of our giving which goes to our Mission Outreach Team for distribution to ministries and missions in our community

## Leaving a Legacy – Dave Ramsey Financial Advisor

December sees the most charitable giving, and January, the most financial planning. If you are like thousands of others, you might find this article from Dave Ramsey, author and financial guru, helpful.

### TITHING AND GIVING: YOUR 5 QUESTIONS ANSWERED

As the old saying goes: We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.

Three big principles of any solid financial plan are to save, spend and give. Most people forget about the giving part, though, because they think mostly about saving and spending.

But giving—specifically tithing—is just as important. It softens the heart of the giver and frees their soul from dependence on money. You'll never walk away from giving feeling bad! Giving comes in many forms, with your tithe being the most important, because it's a biblical mandate.

### WHAT IS A TITHE?

Let's start with the basics. Simply put, the tithe is the first 10% of your income that should be given to your local church. It's strictly measured in money, so you can't replace it with giving your time or your talents.

### WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT TITHING?

According to Leviticus 27:30 (TLB), "A tenth of the produce of the land, whether grain or fruit, is the Lord's, and is holy." And 2 Corinthians 9:7 (NIV) says, "Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

What's the difference between tithing and offerings? A tithe is an amount (a percentage of your income) and an offering is anything given beyond that, but not in place of the tithe.

After you've tithed, you can give in other ways: Giving a cash offering to your church above and beyond the tithe, giving money to a charity you support, giving to a friend or neighbor in need, or giving of your time or talents. Not only does giving of your money or other resources generate good in the lives of others, it also generates contentment in your heart.

### WHY SHOULD I TITHE?

The tithe was not put into place for God's benefit—He already has everything He needs. He doesn't need our money! (And "our" money is already His anyway.) Tithing is an act of obedience and should be given freely with pure motives.

In other words, we give without expecting anything back in return. And it teaches us to be good stewards of what God has given us.

Tithing was created for our benefit. It teaches us how to keep God first in our lives and how to live unselfishly. Unselfish people make better spouses, friends, relatives, employees and employers. And they usually have better finances.

God is trying to teach us how to prosper over time. Remember, no one has ever become poor by giving. But what about those times when you're wondering if your situation is the exception?

### 1. Is it okay to pause my tithing during tough financial times?

The Bible doesn't mention anything about "pausing" tithing. And it doesn't say we'll go to hell if we don't tithe. But get this: Many people have observed that after they stopped tithing, their finances seemed to get worse. In Malachi 3:8–11, God says that if you tithe instead of keeping it for yourself, He will pour out blessing and rebuke your devourers. In other words, He'll keep you safe from those who might harm you. So keep tithing.

If you can't live off 90% of your income, then you're probably struggling to live off 100% anyway, and that means you have bigger financial problems you need to address. It shouldn't require a miracle for you to get through the month with 10% less in your wallet.

If you sit down and look at your budget, you'll see you can make it while giving away at least 10%. That might mean cutting some fun money or increasing your income, but it can be done. Read the Bible and take from it what you will, but remember this: If you tithe, do it out of love for God, not out of guilt.

### 2. Is it right to count my church tithe on my tax returns?

You were biblically obedient by giving your tithe to your church. The Bible tells us to be good managers of our money, but it doesn't shrink the value of your gift if you take the tax deduction. It is a way to manage the other 90% of your money. Take the deduction.

Later, when you get your income tax refund, remember it's money you've already tithed—although you're certainly welcome to devote some or all of it back to the Lord as additional thanks for His blessings.

**3. If I'm not affiliated with a church, should I still donate 10% of my income?**

If you don't belong to a church, you can still give a percentage of your income to charities and philanthropies that are important to you. Think of what causes matter most to you, and align your support there. There are plenty of ministries and organizations that are doing great work and could benefit from a percentage of your income.

**4. Do I donate 10% of my income before or after taxes? And do I factor in income from side hustles?**

Honestly, whether you tithe from your gross pay or your take-home pay is entirely up to you. The point here is you're giving that 10% of your income. Dave gives off the top of his taxable income, but he'll be the first to tell you, "Just give and be a giver. It's about changing your spirit anyway."

As for your side hustle—the 10% should be a percentage of your entire amount of income. So if you take a part-time job on the weekends that brings in \$300 extra each month, add that amount to your total monthly income.

**5. I'm making more money now. I want to know how to increase giving above the tithe.**

When things are going well and you find yourself with lots more income than you need, it can be easy to accidentally spend all that extra cash on yourself.

But it should be a great opportunity to begin thinking about other ways to give above and beyond your tithe. That's why it's a good idea to budget what you'll do with the extra so you can make sure you're giving some of it too.

Once you've calculated your tithe, plus any saving and spending you're doing, see what your surplus is. Divide that surplus among extra offerings, extra investing, and some fun money.

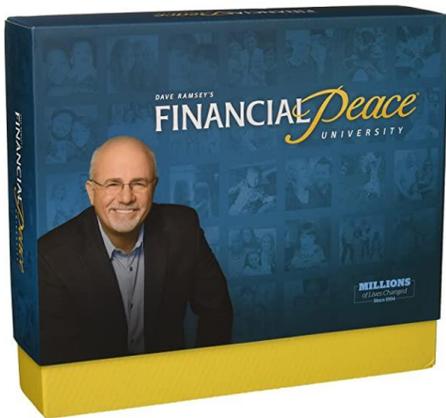
It might help to specifically budget a certain amount each month for special giving opportunities above the tithe. Then look around you—ask friends if they know of anyone in need and watch for opportunities to give that money away. If you're intentional about seeking out those circumstances, you're going to find them!

And remember, whether you're giving a tithe, offering, or some other special contribution, it should come from your heart. It's an important part of any financial plan, and it's really the most fun you can have with your money!

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## Would you like to experience freedom in your finances?

Financial Peace University is a 10-week class that helps you take control of your financial future and find real freedom.



### LESSONS INCLUDE:

Lesson 1: Build a Starter Emergency Fund and Learn How to Budget

Lesson 2: Pay Off All Debt

Lesson 3: Save a Fully Funded Emergency Fund

Lesson 4: Invest for the Future and Build Wealth

Lesson 5: Buyer Beware

Lesson 6: The Role of Insurance

Lesson 7: Retirement Planning

Lesson 8: Real Estate and Mortgages

Lesson 9: Outrageous Generosity

This virtual experience will involve weekly videos, a workbook, and coming together as an online community to learn.

Pastor Tom and several members of our community had taken and led Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University. It can and is a life changing course that can transform your finances, your life, your relationships and free you from the pressures of debt and financial struggles.

Tell Pastor Tom – I'm interested in taking this course or email him at [pastor@susannawesleyumc.org](mailto:pastor@susannawesleyumc.org)

# To Activate the Prayer Chain:

*Step 1: Call any of the individuals listed during the time indicated.*

*Step 2: Please leave a message if your call is not answered before calling another member of the prayer chain.*

*Step 3: Pray as the prayer chain prays for your need*

*You may also place your written requests in the drop box at the front door or email you prayer request to:*

[Prayers@susannawesleyumc.org](mailto:Prayers@susannawesleyumc.org)

*How can I join the prayer chain?*

*Call the office: 804-642-7551*

## DAYTIME: 7AM – 5PM

- Phyllis Russell (540) 903-2817
- Joyce Neville (804) 815-2089
- Louise Quinn (804) 693-2192
- Julia Scarborough (804) 642-4525
- Deborah Wilson (757) 784-2451

## EVENINGS: 5PM – 11PM

- Vicki Barnes (757) 592-4489
- Barbara McGlohn (804) 384-1693
- Goldie Rowe (804) 824-7377

## NIGHTTIME: 11PM – 7AM

- Phyllis Russell (540) 903-2817
- Sonnie Leonard (804) 815-2864
- Marsha Germek (804) 815-3639

**Church Office: (804) 642-7551**  
**Pastor Tom Tipton: (703) 307-6892**

**Please keep the following parishioners in your prayers:**

**Contact Pastor Tom or the church office - 804-642-7551 to add people to or remove people from the prayer list.**

- For our brothers and sisters in Christ with unspoken prayers.
- For all to joy and thankfulness in the blessings of the Lord
- For the families of the Univ. of VA and Univ. of Idaho students
- For those who have COVID, Flu, RSV, or other health crisis's or are caring for loved ones. Prayers for healing and no long-lasting effects.
- Praises for the good test results for Harry
- Clifford Beach for healing
- For the people in Ukraine
- Traci Noah's nephew J.P. for healing, peace and strength
- Lisa Scarborough Kim for strength and peace
- G.U.E.S.T. program as they plan for winter
- ECHO Ministry as they help families with no other hope
- Lorrie Wolostoncraft
- Jimmy Huff for continued healing
- Raymond Church for healing and strength along with Judy for pain relief in her shoulder and strength.
- Don Wilson & Deborah Wilson.
- Jim & Ann Hansen (Mike Hansen's mother) for peace, healing and strength
- Praises for Karen Peabody (Mike Hansen's sister) for continued healing and strength.
- Jeff & Scott Leiffer who both have multiple myeloma.
- Carrie, a friend of Deborah Wilson, who broke her neck in an auto accident.
- Linda Triolet and her family as they care for her mom.
- Michael, Ralph, C.K., Kimber Lee & Katherine Williams
- Lois Hensley and David Tipton as the rehab from knee replacement
- Charles Rowe, continued prayers for healing and strength.
- Rev. Gary Livermon for continued healing and strength
- Sondra Colbert's mother.
- Phil Lyliston (Pastor Tom watches over him) a place in Newport News to become available for him.
- Vicki Barnes, prayers for healing as she continues treatment.
- Marvin Fanton
- Mark & Curtis Rice
- Angela Jenkins
- Most of all for people dealing with loneliness at this time of year

**“Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.” Matthew 5:4**

- Danny Carey's family in the passing of his brother
- For Jim Germek's family in the passing of his mother.
- For all who have lost loved ones, we miss them this time of year.





**CHARLOTTE'S ANNUAL TOY  
DRIVE**

*Christmas*  
**TOY**

*Please Give a Little Joy to Our Local Children*

Accepting Donations Through  
**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21**

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**Drop-off  
Location:**

3900 George Washington  
Memorial Hwy, Ordinary, VA  
23131, Susanna Wesley United  
Methodist Church

We are looking for donations of new (unwrapped/not gift wrapped) toys for ages 0-19

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For more information text 757-376-7767 or message Charlotte's Annual Toy Drive on Facebook.



GOD  
ROCK  
SAVIOR  
MESSIAH  
IMMANUEL  
HOLY • CHILD  
MIGHTY • GOD  
LORD • OF • ALL  
LAMB • OF • GOD  
CHRIST • OF • GOD  
KING • OF • KINGS  
THE • WORD • OF • GOD  
ALPHA • AND • OMEGA  
PRINCE • OF • PEACE  
LIGHT • OF • THE • WORLD  
HEAD • OF • THE • CHURCH  
SON • OF • THE • HIGHEST  
EVERLASTING • FATHER  
RESURRECTION • AND • LIFE  
JESUS



*Articles and Ministry updates for submission in the Monthly newsletter are due by the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month. Mid-Month submissions are by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the current month.*