



SHARING CHRIST'S LOVE
WITH
OUR COMMUNITY

Church Staff:

Rev. Jake Steele, Senior Pastor
jacobsteele714@gmail.com
(304) 972-2258

Rev. Dr. Ellis Conley,
Pastor Emeritus

Luke Spurgeon, Minister of
Youth & Young Adults
youth@forrestburdette.com

Mike Barnhouse,
Director of Music
mike@marshallbarnhouse.com

David Shanklin,
Assistant Director of Music
dshanklin@gmail.com

Zach Edgell,
Media Tech Coordinator
media@forrestburdette.com

Karen White, Admin. Assistant
office@forrestburdette.com

Ellen Bowie,
Business Manager/ Treasurer
finances@forrestburdette.com

Katie Spencer, Custodian

Children's Outreach Ministries (COM) Child Care:

Cathy Daley, Director
cathy@forrestburdette.com

Jenni Reib, Business Manager
jenni@forrestburdette.com
(304) 562-9170—COM Office


2848 Putnam Avenue
Hurricane WV 25526
(304) 562-5903
(304) 562-6654—fax
office@forrestburdette.com
www.forrestburdette.com

Worship Sundays @ 10:30 a.m.

VISIONS

The newsletter of
Forrest Burdette Memorial United Methodist Church

January 2026



Rev. Jake Steele
Senior Pastor

Class is in Session



So here we are post-Christmas and from a scriptural standpoint, it's very easy to leave Jesus in the manger and make a mad dash to the miracles he performed as an adult. When we do, we miss a lot in the middle.

Numerous times after the birth of Jesus, the Gospels describe Mary and Joseph as "amazed and astonished." After a virgin birth, angelic encounters and prophetic fulfillments, one would think Mary and Joseph would be hard-pressed to be surprised about anything related to their baby boy. Call me crazy, but I'm *amazed and astonished* that they continued to be amazed and astonished. And yet, the early childhood accounts of Jesus are a kind of classroom from which we can glean some very valuable lessons about our life in the Lord and our growth as disciples.

In the coming three weeks, let the scriptures take you to school. Join Mary and Joseph as they journey with Jesus to greater heights and richer experiences. Pack your bags, buckle your seatbelts and get ready to move in. This month we'll set foot on the campus of new connections and deeper community. Here, there'll be new views to see, new cues to take, new spiritual moves to make and maybe as we step into a *New Year*, you'll follow the Lord to a *New U*.

Sermon Syllabus:

Week 1:	Matthew 2: 13-15 "Further than You Fathomed"	
Week 2:	Luke 2: 21-33	"More than You Thought"
Week 3:	Luke 2: 41-51 "Better than You Believed"	

Luke Spurgeon

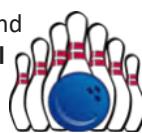
Minister of Youth & Young Adults

Happy New Year, Church! 2025 was a year full of surprises, both good and challenging, but we are excited and ready for all that 2026 has in store. Let's take a moment to look back at what happened in the life of our youth ministry during December.

Early in the month, we handed out hot chocolate at the Hurricane City Christmas Parade. It was cold, but it was a fun and joyful way to serve our community. We also had many church families participate in Advent readings and candle lighting throughout the season. We wrapped things up with an awesome Youth Christmas Party, featuring a progressive dinner that started at the Ramey's house and ended at the Steele's house. There were gifts, games, great food, and lots of laughter. This Christmas season was a different one for me personally, but my church family truly made it memorable.

January has started off strong and shows no signs of slowing down. On January 4th, we celebrated Confirmation Sunday, where we confirmed 10 youth and baptized 4 of them. This was an incredible moment and a true highlight of my time so far as your youth pastor.

There is still plenty happening this month. **Youth will resume on January 11th** with Bible study and fellowship (6-7:30 p.m.). **On January 25th, we will have a Youth Night Out** and go bowling together. Looking ahead to February, we are excited for our **Super Bowl Party** on February 8th. The night will include Madden on the projector, the Super Bowl game, the Puppy Bowl, food, and other fun activities for all youth.



Summer is already on the horizon, and plans are beginning to take shape. There will be many opportunities for both youth and parents to get involved, so please reach out to learn how you can serve and be part of what's coming next.

Youth in Action



SNOW FUN!
Youth enjoying a
Progressive Dinner
Christmas Party,
December 14, 2025

Children & Family Ministries

Spreading the Good News!

The Children & Family Ministries Team would like to thank everyone for their participation in Church Family Christmas Dinner and their support of or participation in "No Time for Christmas," the annual children's Christmas play.



12/7/25

The centerpieces for the dinner were handmade by the kids in Children's Church, and we had just over 100 tickets sold to the dinner. It was a great evening!

We also participated in the Hurricane Christmas parade for the first time by handing out hot chocolate, kids' goody bags, and cards about the Christmas Eve services. We made 65 cups of hot chocolate, which were well received on such a cold day!

Children's Church, held during a portion of our Sunday morning worship service, follows Pastor Jake's weekly sermons and the scriptures he has selected for each sermon. Join us!

Cathy Daley, Director

Children's Outreach Ministries (COM)

We are thankful to start a new year here at COM. We are not excited that funding may be withheld for some time. But we trust that God has a plan and that He will lead us to do his will, for the children and the center. Please keep our children, their families, and our staff in your prayers as we strive to provide the best care possible.

♥ Have fun, and make a difference. ♥

BLOOD DRIVE: January 16, 12-5:00PM

Please visit RedCrossBlood.org and enter HURRICANE COM to schedule an appointment. The drive will be held in the Forrest Burdette Fellowship Hall. *Donating blood only takes about an hour. Can you spare one?*



American
Red Cross



JOY Fellowship (60+)

JOY (Just Older Youth) Fellowship will hold our monthly covered dish luncheon on **Thursday, January 15, at 12 noon**, in Fellowship Hall. If you are 60 or older, we would love to have you! Our guest speaker will be a representative from the West Virginia United Methodist Foundation. Bring or buy your favorite dish to share, and bring a friend too.

From the Church Record

Christian sympathy is extended to Carrie Parsons and family upon the death of husband Robbie Parsons (12/24/25).



On January 4, 2026, the following 10 students were confirmed: Tyler Halstead, Rocco Hughes, Reese Ramey, Rylee Ramey, Ezra Scott, Brody Steele, Isaac Vance*, Makenzie Vance*, Aubree Welch*, and Makenzie Warner*. Those marked (*) also received the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. Additional new members received on January 4 were Warren & Julie Bryant, Judi Hall, and Paul & Sally Page. Welcome!

Notes of Thanks

Bruce & Nancy Colella would like to thank everyone who joined them for their 50th Wedding Anniversary reception on December 28, 2025. They appreciated all who came in to celebrate!

Thank you to the anonymous person who placed "Thanks for Making a Difference" pens in staff mailboxes in December.

Generosity for Ministry

Following is financial information for November 2025:

November 2025 Contributions Received.....	\$50,585
Monthly Receipts Needed	\$64,023

Mortgage Balance:

November 2025 Payments on Mortgage*	\$12,838
Funds Received, November 2025	\$15,187

*The mortgage payments are not part of the Operating Budget. Contributions to the Building Fund pay the mortgage each month.



GIFT OF THE MONTH

Preparing for shoeboxes throughout the year

In January, we are collecting **children's socks** for Operation Christmas Child. Please bring your donations to the Connection Center throughout the month.



Be a part of The Branch in a Wednesday adult class:

Starting on January 14, 2026

Evening Small Group Studies @ 6:30 p.m.

Debby Cunningham will offer:

Making Sense of the Bible by Adam Hamilton (\$12)

*"Denominations from evangelical to mainline continue to experience deep divisions over universal social issues. The underlying debate isn't about a particular social issue, but instead it is about how we understand the nature of scripture and how we should interpret it. In *Making Sense of the Bible*, Adam Hamilton addresses the hot-button issues that plague the church and cultural debate, and answers many of the questions asked by Christians and non-Christians alike."*

J.D. Philyaw will offer:

"J" Walking with Jesus (bring your Bible!)

Join us for "J" Walking with Jesus, where we will dive into the powerful messages of Jonah, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Jude, and James. Each week, we'll unpack the timeless truths from these books as they offer insight into how we can deepen our relationship with Christ. This is a great opportunity to strengthen your faith and knowledge in a structured, in-depth study of Scripture.

Pastor Jake Steele will offer:

God's Favorite Place on Earth by Frank Viola (\$18)

"God's Favorite Place on Earth is a retelling of Jesus' many visits to Bethany and a relaying of the message it holds for us today. Frank Viola presents a beautifully crafted narrative from the viewpoint of Lazarus, one of the people who lived in Bethany with his two sisters. This story not only brings the Gospel narratives to life, but it addresses the struggle against doubt, discouragement, fear, guilt, rejection, and spiritual apathy that challenges countless Christians today."

Registration: Register for classes at the Connection Center in the Narthex, through the church office, or just show up! Study books have been ordered and will be at the Connection Center when available. You may pay for your book in the church office or with your teacher. If payment for a class book is a problem, please speak with your teacher or the church office.

Wednesday Fellowship Dinners: 5:30 p.m., catered by Shonet's Country Café. *You do not need to be in a Wednesday evening class to join us for dinner.* Free will donations are accepted. Please sign up at the Connection Center, or call/email the church office by Tuesday morning so that we may prepare accordingly.

There is also a sign up sheet at the Connection Center for **weekly helpers** to prepare the dining space, cut pies, and clean up before class.

January Birthdays:

- 1 Natalie Neville
- 2 Kathryn Courtright, Michael Kinneer, Butch McCoy, Mark Stutler
- 3 Ashley McCann, Isaac Vance
- 4 Lydia Peterson
- 5 Jackie Alexander, Billie DeLung
- 6 Keith Midkiff
- 7 Seth Bowers, Brittany Bowie, Danielle Grant, Gene Lewis, Tom Plumley
- 8 Curtis Ferguson
- 9 Leigh Anna Bennett, Shannon Lawman, Hilda Mynes
- 10 Lois Brewer
- 11 Joshua Johnson, Jennifer York
- 12 Heather Cortellesi, Megan Fisher, Joshua Gooden, Cindy Hinshaw, Logan Jackson, Jennifer Romeo
- 13 Joshua Campbell, Julie Cremeans
- 14 Tiffany Bryan, Frances Meredith
- 15 Hannah Courtney, Jozee Johnson, Brad Sergent
- 16 Mikki Larch
- 17 Angie Hill, Katelyn Huggins, Stephanie Mellace, Jim Sovine
- 18 Adam Harshbarger, Chelsey Lilly
- 19 Madison Bucher, Georgia Conaway, Harris Coulter, Caleb Gooden, Coy Mullins



- 20 Madeline Brumfield, Idale Buskirk, Riley Coulter, Taylor Haney
- 21 Tammy Lawhon, Margaret Logan
- 22 Katy Limanen
- 23 Laura Harrison, Heather Holland, Joann Walker
- 24 Kevin Mullins
- 25 Lola Vance, Rick Wallace
- 26 John Bowie, Don Jacobs, Scott Riedel, Dan Russell, Andy Wendel
- 27 David McBrayer, John Neville, Laura Stewart, Hunter Vance
- 28 Casey Smith
- 29 Charlotte Barney, Jim Vealey
- 30 Lauren Cox
- 31 Maxine Birt



January Anniversaries:

- 27 Tim & Becky Landin
- 29 Bill & Kristina Painter

** Birthdays and anniversaries are generated from our church database. Please call the office if you are not listed (304-562-5903).



Sunday Morning
Worship: 10:30 a.m.
Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.

VISIONS
The Newsletter of
Forrest Burdette Memorial
United Methodist Church
2848 Putnam Avenue
Hurricane, WV 25526
304-562-5903
office@forrestburdette.com
www.forrestburdette.com

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