



ELK CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

Serving the Community Since 1813

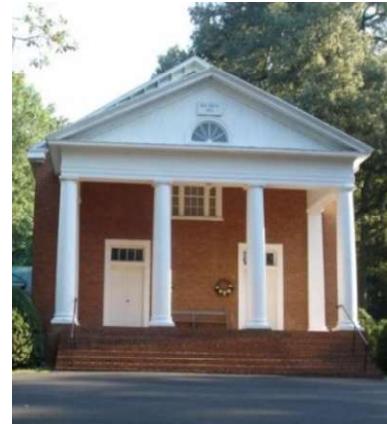
5916 Kentucky Springs Road

Mineral, VA 23117

540-967-8004

elkcreekbaptistchurchva.org

December 2023



!!Potluck Breakfast this Sunday, December 3rd!!

Please join us for breakfast this Sunday following the 8:30 service as we celebrate our first Sunday with Pastor Mike Gray and his wife, Cathy. There will be no Sunday School this Sunday. The 8:30 and 11:00 services will be held as usual. Please bring your favorite breakfast dish to share. Coffee and juice will be provided.



From the Desk of the Pastor...

Grace to you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ!

It is awesome that we get to begin our journey together on the first Sunday of Advent 2023. Advent means waiting, as in waiting for the Lord. The Advent season is a time for reflection and anticipation—reflection on our spiritual lives, and anticipation for the arrival of Christmas.



Together we wait to celebrate again His first coming in the season we call Christmas. Whatever our age, there is still an excitement in hearing the words of Luke 2:10-11, "But the angel said to them, 'Don't be afraid, for look, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.' Today in the city of David a Savior was born for you, who is the Messiah, the Lord. (CSB)

It is with joy that I anticipate sharing the great themes of Advent – Hope, Peace, Joy, Love and Salvation. They are always worth hearing, either for the first time or in reinforcement for the moments we are living now. As we experience life and gain new knowledge daily, we hear the unchanging truth of God's Word with a different ear each year. May you be open to the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

My sermons for December will be under the simple theme: "**Waiting on Jesus.. for Hope.. for Peace.. for Joy.. for Love.. for Salvation.**" Through faith in Jesus we can experience these great desires as reality. It is not through things or events, but through faith in Jesus, that these great longings are fulfilled.

I am doubly excited for beginning a new journey together and for the Advent season. I hope that you are too!

Thank you for the way that you have received us into the Elk Creek Baptist Church family. It is with appreciation and gratitude that we say thank you to those who have provided a place to stay, wiped out shelves, unloaded vehicles, provided meals (you are famous for that), helped with hanging a tv on the wall, and even hauled away lots of boxes and packing materials. We are still unpacking, organizing, decorating for Christmas, and getting to the hanging of pictures on the wall. **THANK YOU!**

As Cathy and I have had the opportunity to have conversations with some members there is a common theme that keeps being mentioned. It is: "God is at work at Elk Creek and we can't wait to see what He is going to do next!" There we are, back to waiting. We wait and celebrate at the same time. Isn't that what Advent is about?

Let the journey begin under the Lordship of Christ Jesus, our Savior!

In gratitude and celebration,

Pastor Mike Gray



Have you heard of a "glimmer"? It's the opposite of a "trigger". (In psychology, a "trigger" is a stimulus that causes a painful memory to resurface.) Glimmers are those micro-moments in your day that make you feel joy, happiness, peace, or gratitude. Once you train your brain to be on the lookout for glimmers, the more these tiny moments will appear.



From the Treasurer:

As the holidays approach, we are often mindful of the love and appreciation we have for our pastors. This is especially true in a year when we have been blessed with so many truly wonderful sermons from all of their many backgrounds and experiences. As a reminder, should you wish to make any gifts to any of them, please do so directly to them and not via the church. In other words, make the check or cash payment to the pastor, not to Elk Creek Baptist Church. Each pastor has to determine and account for gifts according to IRS tax code section 102(c) and therefore is outside the purview of the church.

Thank you and Happy Holidays and Merry Christmas!

Mike Bridges



Comings and Goings –

Thursday, Nov 30th the church was decorated for Advent. We decorated, we ate sweet treats, we talked and laughed and talked and talked.... Sadly, we did not have time to sing carols; but there are more opportunities coming up.



Introducing our **Family Tree**. Please bring an ornament from your family and place it on the Family Tree at church.







Calling all Carolers. Join us for **Tree Decorating and Caroling**, 9:30 am, at the Louisa Health Care Center, 210 Elm Avenue, Louisa. There is limited parking, so plan to meet at the church between 8:30 and 9:00 and carpool, if possible.



Christmas Joy Outreach will be meeting at the church, 9:00 am, Dec 12th to put together and deliver baskets and boxes of goodies on to friends of the church who cannot always be with us. All are invited. Contact Bunnie Wyckoff, 202-286-8954, for more information.



Christmas Families Gifts and Food. We have adopted four families this year. Please remember to only return one present (package) per tag taken. Donations of non-perishable food, tissues, toilette paper, and cleaning products are requested to be in multiples of four, one for each family. The deadline is December 17th, so deliveries can be made the week of December 18th. Drivers are needed make the deliveries. Contact Coral Losinski with questions, 571-366-9500.



The monthly **Women's GRACE Fellowship** met on November 9th at Alana Frazier's house. It was a small group, but lots of chatter. Discussion included the number of COVID cases lately, and there were several new additions to the prayer list. Alana shared a short devotional.

The next gathering will be lunch December 7th at noon Anna Jones' house, Old House Road, Bumpass. Please RSVP if you plan to attend.



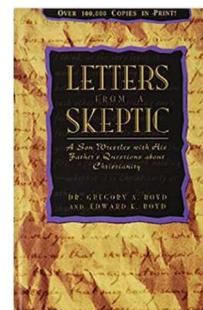
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The **Quarterly Men's Breakfast** had a good turnout on November 14th where the menu included venison burgers. Beginning in January, this will become a bimonthly event; men, mark your calendars now for breakfast on Tuesday, January 16th at 8:00 am. For more information, call Jay Canova, 703-624-9802, or Wayne Frazier 703.217.3564.



Book Study continues the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 6:45 pm, at the church. The current book is ***Letters from a Skeptic: A Son Wrestles with his Father's Questions about Christianity***, by Dr. Gregory and Edward Boyd. Everyone is welcome to attend at any time. Each person is responsible for buying their own book. (It will not meet on Dec 27th.)



Moviegoers – If you haven't seen *Journey to Bethlehem*, we recommend it. A bunch of us went on November 16th, and enjoyed it. If you like going to the movies, contact Mindy Ward, 301-335-8315, to find out what's scheduled next.



The **Bunco group** enjoyed good fellowship on November 15th, and had a roaring good time. This group meets the third Wednesday of the month, 6:45 pm, at the church. Boys and girls of all ages are welcome.



LouisaClean Wrap Up - Year to date we are now at a WHOPPING 582 bags utilizing a total of 176 volunteers and approximately 423 hours of volunteer service.



Jody Korman, Carol DeZorzi, and Beth Ann Boone met with VDOT to discuss the program further and see how we can better work together to come up with solutions to help solve the litter problem, or at least to curb it.

The Woodchuckers have made more deliveries of wood this month. Contact Rick Perks, 301-704-2743, for more information or to be notified when a need arises, or if you just feel like splitting some wood.



The Caring Community Team gathers monthly on the first Tuesday, 6:45 pm at the church, to coordinate the needs of our church family and pray over those on our prayer list. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, Dec 5th. The meeting and vigil is open to anyone who would like to come. Questions? Call Alan Frazier, 703-282-2393.

From the Buildings and Grounds Team

The team has been busy creating this month; stay tuned for a new addition to the lawn for Advent

Should you see something that needs to be repaired, or would like to lend a hand, please contact Jay Canova, 703-624-9802.



Volunteer Opportunities

- **Food providers for Sunday morning fellowship** after the 8:30 service. Sign up in the Fellowship Hall, or call Coral Losinski, 571-366-9500, or Bunnie Wyckoff, 202-286-8954, for more information.
- **Wednesday Book Study Snack and Study Leader(s)** to facilitate discussion of the current book on specific Wednesdays. Contact Tony Wilson, 540-748-1159, wilsontony540@gmail.com, for more details.
- **The ECBC Woodchuckers** who provide firewood to families in need can always use an extra pair of hands. If you have any questions about this ministry or would like to get involved, contact Rick Perks, 301-704-2743.
- **RuraLove Ministry**, an outreach of Goshen Association, welcomes volunteers. Contact the Ministry Center for more information, 540-894-8440. (Or Coral Losinski, 571-366-9500)
- **Young Life of Louisa can always use your help.** Contact Susan and Dane Swenson, 703-863-9972, susanswenson466@gmail.com.
- **LouisaClean** – Contact Jody Korman, 804-502-1128, Jody@Jodyshomes.com, to be notified when a road cleanup is scheduled. Remember to bring gloves, wear long pants, and boots, if available. Grabbers, security vests, and hats will be given out while supply lasts. Group photos are requested to share with Keep Virginia Green.

DATES TO REMEMBER

December

Mission Project: Christmas Families Gifts and Food Due by Dec 17th

Fri & Sat thru Dec One Bright Light at Louisa Baptist Church, 305 E. Main St, Louisa,
Reservations required; see notice under "Looking Ahead"

Sun 3rd Advent Begins/Communion Sunday

Tue 5th Louisa Health Care Center Caroling and Tree Decorating, 9:30 am,
210 Elm Avenue, Louisa (Meet at church, 8:30 to carpool.)

Tue 5th Caring Community Coordination & Prayer Vigil, 6:45 pm at the church

Thu 7th Women's GRACE Fellowship Luncheon, noon, at Anna Jones' home,
39 Deep Creek Circle, Bumpass

Tue 12th Christmas Joy Outreach

Wed 13th Book Study, 6:45 pm at the church

Wed 20th Bunco, 6:45 pm at the church

Sun 24th Christmas Eve Service 5:00 pm

Mon 25th Merry Christmas!!

Wed 27th Book Study cancelled

January

Mission Project: None

TBD Women's GRACE Fellowship

Mon 1st New Year's Day

Tue 2nd Caring Community Team 1st Tue each month

Fri 5th Pack up Christmas decorations 9:00 am

Sun 7th Epiphany Sunday/Communion

Sun 7th Deacon's Meeting

Wed 10th Book Study, 6:45 pm at the church

Sun 14th Quarterly Business Meeting 1st Quarter

Wed 17th Bunco, 6:45 pm at the church

Mon 15th Martin Luther King Day

Tue 16th Men's Bi-monthly Breakfast 8:00 am at the church

Sat 20th Deadline for newsletter articles and photos

Wed 24th Book Study, 6:45 pm at the church

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

December

Mary Faccone	4
Sandra & Tony Wilson	4
Elizabeth Estep	7
Michael DiFranco	10
Katie Dick	10
Butch Weaver	11
Daniel Kimball	12
Bernie & Jeffrey Marsh	15
Jean Brannon	18
Jean & Dan Brannon	18
Phillip Mason	18
Catherine Brown	19
Phillip Brown	19
Cathy & Mike Gray	20
Kim Brown	21
Grace Grecco	22
Cecilia Hoffman	23
Grayson Hoffman	23
Cecilia & Peter Hoffman	28

January

Linda Wilson	5
Kristin Barmoy	6
Wayne Webb	7
Veronica Schnippel	7
Lee Morrell	7
Sarah Tyler	11
Christina Vaughan	13
James Duerson	14
Mike Gray	15
Tessie Fugett	18
Karen Wood	19
Andrew Lunsford	21
Tony Wilson	24
Matt & Kristen Hoffman	27
Cindy Bock	29



Families in crisis, Those affected by the war in Israel and Ukraine, recent earthquakes, hurricanes, fires, and shootings, Janice Horton, Linda & Phil Mason, Dallas Dorsey, Karen Andrews, Maureen Bouger, Maureen O'Hara, Nadia Ruffner, Rick Perks, Terry Vickery,

Gerald Paine, Cindy Sullivan, Gary Harkins, Andy Seelinger, John Fugett, Alvin Wood, Mary Hess, Barry Glenn, Janelle and Stephen Beckwith, Bishop Aubrey Bouger, Ben Settle, Erin Boxley, Frida Kim, Kylie Parker, Julie Parker, Cole Morriss, Kathy Thompson, Tony Style, Debbie Haggard, Lisa Danik, Lauren Cole, Dora McRae, Sandy Moore, Allen Lewis, June & Bob Seelinger, Don Gartrell, Dee Bailey, Michael Wright, B.M. Seal, Grace Grecco, Teri Kulakowski, Shirley Griffith, Lori Gunter, Doug & Ellen Hewitt, Jerry & Emma Kay Talley, Dennis McFarlane, Doug McFarlane, Alfred Sletton, Catherine Proffitt.

POTLUCK! Here is a throw back to days of Christmas past when a celebration was not complete without a Jello mold salad. I still count dinner a success when the mold comes out in one piece.

Ingredients

1 large (8.5 serving) box of Raspberry gelatin (or 2 3 oz boxes)
2 cups boiling water
½ cup pecans, chopped into small chunks
(use more if you especially like nuts – I usually do)
½ cup celery, chopped into small chunks
1 12 oz package of fresh cranberries
1 navel orange
1 cup granulated sugar

Directions

1. Grind together the cranberries and orange.
2. Add the sugar and mix together until sugar is dissolved.
3. Add the nuts and celery, mix well and set aside
4. In a large bowl, dissolve the jello in 2 cups of boiling water.
5. Add 1 ½ cups of cold water to jello, mixing well
6. Pour jello into cranberry mixture, mix well and set in refrigerator to chill.
7. When ready to serve, with a fork, stir cranberry jello salad around with a fork, breaking up the jello.
8. Or, if using a mold, lightly spray mold, pour mixture into mold and set in refrigerator to chill.



LOOKING AHEAD –



November 22nd – December 31st



With two shows per evening—5:30 & 7:00 p.m.

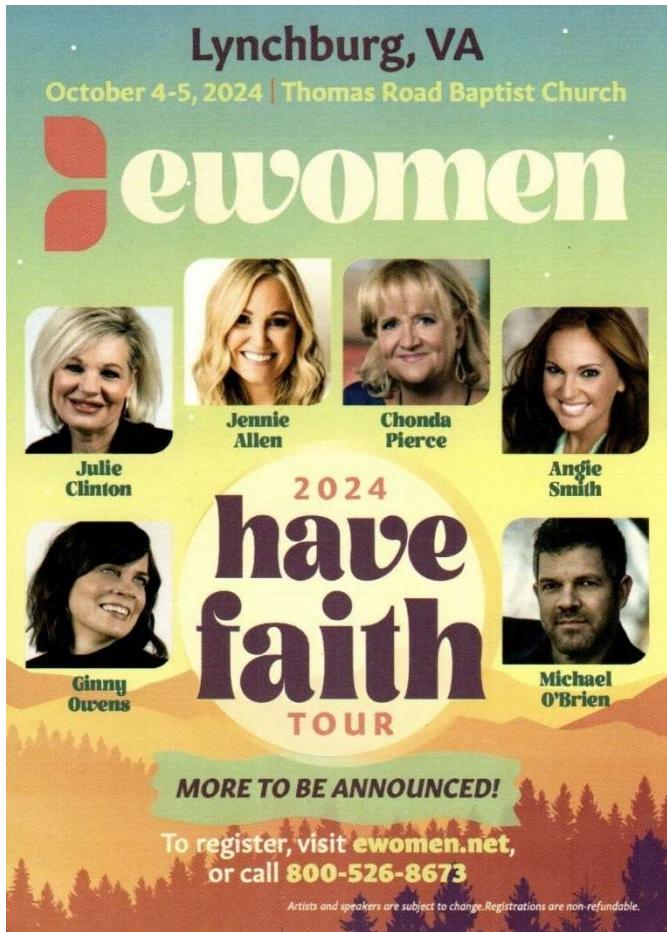
Friday, Dec. 1 and Saturday, Dec. 2

Friday, Dec. 8 and Saturday, Dec. 9

Friday, Dec. 15 and Saturday, Dec. 16

Friday, Dec. 22 and Saturday, 23

Reservations at www.onebrightnight.com





Do you know someone who needs counseling?

BGAV offers Christian Counseling Daystar Pastoral Counseling, Samantha J. Reynolds, BS, MSW, PAC, LCSW. Reasonable fees. For appointment availability call 540.308.7500 or Email: DaystarPastoralCounseling@gmail.com



STAY TUNED (IN)....

- **If your contact information changes**, please remember to notify the church. Send changes to your address, phone number and/or email address to Mindy Ward, dm3ward@gmail.com, 301-335-8315, so we can update our directory.
- **If you cannot come in person**, tune into the 11:00 am service (and 8:30 am when indoors) on Mixlr app. Download the app on your mobile phone or computer, select "Listen" and search for ECBC-5916.
- **Visit our website** – elkcreekbaptistchurchva.org – and like us on Facebook.
- **Need access to our secure online directory?** Email the webmaster, web@elkcreekbaptistchurchva.org, for access to the secure directory.
- **Are you getting the GBA newsletter each month?** If not, email Larry Edmonds, lyninandlarrye@aol.com. There's lots of information and opportunities to put your talents to work locally, around the country and the world.



Together in Christ.

Mindy and Doug Ward, Beth Larson, Alana and Wayne Frazier

elkcreeknewsletter@gmail.com