

Sunday Worship Times

8:30 a.m. In-Person & 10:45 a.m. In-Person & Online



February 2026 Newsletter



Lent Ramblings

The Lenten discipline of Almsgiving: This is not our weekly gifts to the church our tithes and offerings, but giving above and beyond to the poor, hungry, alone, wounded, and hurting. If you want to take part in alms giving this Lent, please use your Alms bags found at the church to give a little extra to help Spruce Street UMC give beyond its walls to serve the community and world.

We are reminded by Jesus' teaching in Matthew 25 for the spiritual need to give alms.

Matthew 25:31-46 “The Judgement of the Nations”

This is our cosmic final exam. This is about our belief. Belief is not about how much you memorize or doctrine you know, its about did you show love, service, compassion to those made in the image of God. So, righteousness and salvation is easy it's about following Jesus in action so did you visit, feed, clothe, give aid, invite, show love and hope to others.

25 ³¹“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. ³²All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, ³³and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. ³⁴Then the king will say to those at his right hand, “Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; ³⁵**for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.**” ³⁷Then the righteous will answer him, “Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? ³⁸And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? ³⁹And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?” ⁴⁰**And the king will answer them, “Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.”** ⁴¹Then he will say to those at his left hand, “You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; ⁴²for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was



Upcoming Birthdays

2/3	Biddie Phillips
2/8	Penny Turley
2/11	Jimmy Bost Jr.
2/13	Rick Kennell
2/13	Amelia Osbourne
2/14	Mike Wolfarth
2/15	Brian Johns
2/16	Paige Hetrick
2/17	Amberly Osborne
2/19	Mary Jo Powell
2/25	Saundra Britton
2/27	Rubyann Downes
2/27	Connie Erenrich
2/28	Allen Johnson

Happy
BIRTHDAY

thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me." ⁴⁴Then they also will answer, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?" ⁴⁵Then he will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me." ⁴⁶And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.'

Please be generous in your giving. Remember, you can get a bag at church by picking one up or having one mailed to you.

Every Blessing,

Pastor Bart

Love intentionally, extravagantly, unconditionally. The broken world waits in darkness for the light that is you. – L.R. Knost

Lent Study

Our church's Lenten study will be on Tuesdays at noon. Our focus will be on the creation story and the meaning of our place in the created order. We have a special guest teacher for all six lessons: Rev. William Linhart (Bill). He is a graduate of Drew Divinity School, a skilled preacher, a wonderful teacher, and a retired Elder of the WV Annual conference. Lunch is provided. We will also, Zoom the lessons, using our Bible Study link available on the website. Please come and join us. I pray that we all have a holy Lent. If you plan to attend, please bring your own Bible. We will be using NRSV for this study, but you can use any version you would like!



Lent Study Outline

Theology, simply stated, is talking about God. As Christians we center this talking in Holy Scripture. While we can speculate and theorize all day long, it is Scripture that grounds us in the nature of God and God's relationship to all of creation. We are created to be in that relationship and in relationship with each other. Studying Scripture together not only increases us in individual faith but allows us to share in the very mind of God.

The first eleven chapters of the book of Genesis (often called the "Primordial History") contain powerful and often perplexing imagery that is intimately embedded in the rest of Scripture. Without some understanding of this imagery, it is difficult to fully appreciate who Christ is and why it was necessary for him to the cross.

Part One	February 24, 2026	Genesis 1:1 - 2:3	"In the Beginning..."
Part Two	March 3, 2026	Genesis 2:5 - 3:19	"Then the eyes of both of them were opened..."
Part Three	March 10, 2026	Genesis 3:21 - 4:24	"I have killed a man for wounding me..."
Part Four	March 17, 2026	Genesis 6:1 - 7:24	"Every living that moved on the earth perished..."
Part Five	March 24, 2026	Genesis 8:1 - 9:27	"I now establish my covenant with you..."
Part Six	March 31, 2026	Genesis 11:1-9	"Come, let us build ourselves a city..."

How to Have a Holy Lent

What is Lent?

A 40-day period of repentance and renewal before Easter and it is how we prepare for the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

An overview of the season:

"Lent is a season of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. Lent comes from the Anglo-Saxon word *lenten*, which means "spring." The season is a preparation for celebrating Easter. Historically, Lent began as a period of fasting and preparation for baptism by converts and then became a time for penance by all Christians. The First Sunday describes Jesus' temptation by Satan; and the Sixth Sunday (Passion/Palm Sunday), Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem and his subsequent passion and death. Because Sundays are always little Easters, the penitential spirit of Lent should be tempered with joyful expectation of the Resurrection. The Great Three Days—sometimes called the Triduum or Pasch—from sunset Holy Thursday through sunset Easter Day are the climax of Lent (and of the whole Christian year) and a bridge into the Easter Season. These days proclaim the paschal mystery of Jesus Christ's passion, death, and resurrection. During these days, the community journeys with Jesus from the upper room, to the cross, to the tomb, and to the garden. They should be seen as a great unified service beginning with a service of Holy Communion on Holy Thursday and concluding with the services of Easter Day. These services may be connected with a prayer vigil lasting from Holy Thursday evening (or Good Friday) until the first service of Easter and may be accompanied by fasting." **Source- The UM Book of Worship**

Observing the Lenten season:

The desire to repent of your sins and to change your mind, heart, and path is a way of renewal. Lent offers a way for us to start over with God through the act of being penitent. Penitence is being sorry for our sins and how we reconcile with God. Living and observing the penitential season of Lent helps us to make an inner spiritual change more enduring. There are many ways that we can seek to grow closer to God; the following six are traditional Lenten ways for the penitent heart to make life changing transformation:

1. Prayer
2. Reading scripture
3. Worship
4. Almsgiving
5. Intercessory prayer
6. Fasting



Prayer:

Say what is on your heart to God. There is not a wrong or right way to pray; just be with the Lord. Be who you are and make a commitment to pray more than once a day during Lent. You may find it is habit-forming and will pray more often even after Easter.

Reading Scripture:

Start by reading the weekly lessons done in worship or choose one of the Gospels. Better yet, join a Bible study class or Sunday school class; just begin.

Worship:

Make a commitment to come to all the Sunday services in Lent. Observe Holy Week, too.

Almsgiving:

This is not our weekly gifts to the church, our tithes and offerings, but is giving above and beyond to the poor, hungry, alone, wounded, and hurting.

Intercessory Prayer:

This is prayer for others. Commit to pray once a day for a group of people during Lent. Examples are to pray for your family, friends, enemies, pastor, leaders, sick, grieving, and whomever you feel led to pray for during this holy time.



Fasting or Self Denial:

Self-denial/fasting should be a growth experience. It should be a positive act, not a time for remorse. Why fast? Because it recalls the time Christ suffered for all of humanity. It allows us to have empathy with the less fortunate and it is a time to strengthen self-control and find direction, and it should focus on God and God's grace. Fasting from food should only be done if your health allows. But the observance can include: eliminate wasteful spending, do without snacks, skip a meal out and give the money to charity, turn off the TV for some time period, stay off the internet, give up mobile devices, don't drive one day a week, etc.... Whatever you are called to give up; choose something that interferes with your relationship to God, family, friends, and/or church; thus by the end of Lent you will have grown closer to God.



Coins for Lent 2026

BY KEVIN JOHNSON DISCIPLESHIP RESOURCES

During Lent, we are reminded to examine our lifestyles and ask, **"What can we do for others?"**

Part of faith formation at any age is compassion and offering a serving heart to our neighbors. We need to demonstrate compassion to others now more than ever. Lent is a good time to commit to giving money to a project that helps those in need.

One way to involve the family is to **collect coins during Lent** and donate the money after Easter. Follow our [Coins for Lent Giving Calendar](#) as a guide.

Choose a Project

If you decide to do this as a family, first determine where you would like your money to go. Regardless of their age, everyone should have a voice in the decision. Maybe a community food bank could use funds to purchase food for the hungry. Perhaps you could contribute to a project beyond your local community.

Spruce Street UMC has the following ministries in the church that need your support; Messy Church, Gifts of Love, Circle of Friends, Advent and Lent Studies, confirmation, Scotts Run, Apportionments, and the building (Trustees). If you would like to use your Lent Bag for any or all, of these projects please write it on a note and put it in the bag.

How to Collect the Coins

Once you have selected a project, decide what coins you want to collect. You may want to contribute a quarter for every item on the giving calendar. You may want to simply collect loose change and give whatever coins you have for each item. [Interesting conversations can be had here regarding the elimination of the penny from our money system; our counters would love for you to save your pennies as collector items.]

Now make a container to collect the money. Use the Lent Bag provided or a plastic tub, jar, or a coin bank that you aren't currently using in your home.

You can decorate the non-Lent bag item and place it where the entire family can see it (and contribute to it).

Items on the daily guide will remind us of all we have and how little others may have.

Each Sunday, pray as a family for the project and the people who will benefit from your gifts.

Our giving begins on Ash Wednesday and concludes with Holy Saturday.

During Lent, Sundays are for worship and praise to God and are reflected with a weekly day of prayer.



Coins for Lent Giving Calendar

February 18, 2026 - Ash Wednesday Prayer Prompt:

“God, thank you for walking with us on this journey. Help us notice your love every day.”

Pray today, thanking God for those who will journey with you during this Lenten season.

February 19 - A coin for every backpack in your house.

February 20 - A coin for every pair of shoes in your house.

February 21 - A coin for every pair of socks in your dresser drawer. [This number may be different for each member of the family]

February 22, 2026 - Sunday Prayer Prompt:

“God, thank you for being with us even when the road is hard. Help us notice your mercy.”

Pray today, thanking God for the people in your life that are with you when things become difficult. Pray for those who are having a difficult time and need to feel the presence of God in their lives.

February 23 - A coin for every room in your home.

February 24 - A coin for every pillow in your home.

February 25 - A coin for every chair in your home.

February 26 - A coin for every blanket in your home.

February 27 - A coin for every bathroom in your home.

February 28 - A coin for every bed in your house.

March 1, 2026 - Sunday Prayer Prompt:

“God, thank you for the life and love you give us. Help us grow closer to you every day.”

Pray today, thanking God for shelter. Pray for those who have no place to sleep at night.



March 2 - A coin for every box of cereal.

March 3 - A coin for every can of soup.

March 4 - A coin for every type of bread in your home.

March 5 - A coin for every jar of jelly.

March 6 - A coin for every bottle of salad dressing/condiment.

March 7 - A coin for every jar of peanut butter.

March 8, 2026 - Sunday Prayer Prompt:

“God, thank you for walking with us and putting people in our lives to love and help us.”

Pray today, thanking God for the food you enjoy. Pray for those who have no food on this day.



March 9 - A coin for every light switch in your home.

March 10 - A coin for every candle in your home.

March 11 - A coin for every flashlight (including the one on your smartphone) in your home

March 12 - A coin for every electrical outlet in your home.

March 13 - A coin for every window in your home.

March 14 - A coin for every pair of sunglasses in your home/car.

March 15, 2026 - Sunday Prayer Prompt:

“God, help us shine your love and kindness wherever we go.”

Pray today, thanking God for love in your life that shines as bright as the brightest light. Pray for those who are in darkness and need to feel God's love and grace in their lives.



March 16 - A coin for every box of Band-Aids® in your house.

March 17 - A coin for every bottle of vitamins in your house.

March 18 - A coin for every bottle of Tylenol® in your house.

March 19 - A coin for every tube of Chapstick® in your house.

March 20 - A coin for every toothbrush and tube of toothpaste in your house.

March 21 - A coin for every cough drop/throat lozenge in your house.

March 22, 2026 - Sunday Prayer Prompt:

“God, thank you for bringing life and hope even in hard times. Help us trust your love and see your new life everywhere.”

Pray today, thanking God for your health. Pray for those who are sick.



March 23 - A coin for every ball cap or hat in your house.

March 24 - A coin for every sweatshirt in your house.

March 25 - A coin for every pair of jeans or pants in your house.

March 26 - A coin for every pair of gloves in your house.

March 27 - A coin for every T-shirt in your house.

March 28 - A coin for every coat or jacket in your closet

March 29, 2026 - Palm/Passion Sunday Prayer Prompt:

“Hosanna, King Jesus, We praise God in all things. We bow our knees in awe of God's grace that surrounds us. Help us honor and welcome you every day. Show us ways to be a blessing to others.

Hosanna in the highest, Amen.”

Pray today, thanking God for clothing that protects you from the elements. Pray for those who lack clothing to keep them warm and dry.



March 30 - A coin for every Bible in your house.

March 31 - A coin for every book of hymns or sacred songs in your home.

April 1 - A coin for every cross in your home.

April 2 - A coin for every prayer you say today.

April 3 - A coin for every story of Jesus you can tell.

April 4 - A coin for every person in your family.

April 5, 2026 - Easter Sunday Prayer Prompt:

“God of Easter, thank you for the gift of new life and the wonderful, good news that Jesus is alive.

Help us to feel the joy of the Resurrection every day and to share that joy with others.”

Pray, thanking God for Jesus and for the many ways we can gather and worship God. Pray for those who will receive the coins collected that they would see God's presence through them. Amen.



February Music Musings

My work as your choir director often breaks down into two major tasks. The first and most obvious is, of course, leading and conducting the choir through both practice and performance. The other, often more challenging, task is to select the anthems and cantatas you hear each week. I take a lot of care in which anthems I choose. I want to make sure we aren't repeating anthems too often while still returning to beloved favorites. I read each week's scriptures and make sure to select anthems that support the overall message and theme. And, above all, I try to present a true diversity of works.

Diversity in choral music takes many forms, of course. Any choral director worth their salt will make sure there aren't too many slow, subdued anthems in a row or too many weeks of peppy gospel selections. You want a balance of longer, more complicated works and shorter, simpler options. Some anthems are more "classical" sounding while others hint at the sounds of modern praise and worship bands. I also want to make sure that a variety of composers and arrangers are represented.

This focus on variety may seem frivolous on some level, and, to be clear, having a variety of options does make rehearsals and performances more interesting for both choir and congregation. But, my focus on diverse music is more deeply motivated. If there is one thing I know about music, it is that everyone experiences it differently. My favorite pieces may seem flat and boring to the person sitting next to me. A piece that makes one person want to dance and sing may leave a different listener annoyed. In the same vein, I believe that the Spirit can speak to us through music; however, it does not speak to all of us through the same music in the same way at the same time. Providing a variety of music for the church I serve also provides a variety of opportunities for the congregation to experience divinity in new and different ways.

In honor of Black History Month, all of this month's anthems are by African American composers. My goal with this month's selections was to highlight the diverse voices of Black composers. All of this month's anthems sound extremely distinct. What is more, several composers will be featured for the first time at Spruce Street. A short blurb will be shared about each composer in the bulletin each week, if you would like to learn more about these talented artists. Above all, I hope that the diverse and different works you hear this month will touch your heart in new and different ways!

*"Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet,
praise him with the harp and lyre,
praise him with timbrel and dancing,
praise him with the strings and pipe,
praise him with the clash of cymbals,
praise him with resounding cymbals.
Let everything that has breath praise the Lord."*

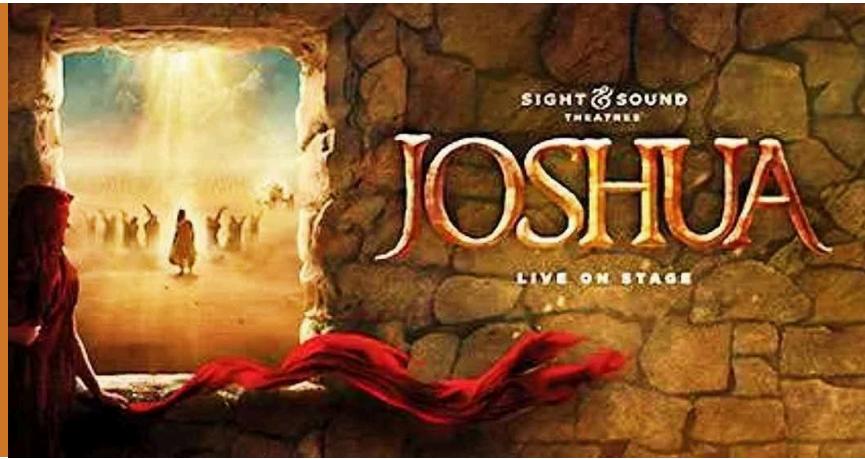
- Psalm 150: 3-6

-Ashley

A Note from Marguerite

Thanks to all who ordered from RADA CUTLERY! The choir internship program has made about \$200 in recent weeks. This fundraiser goes on ALL YEAR. Think about gadgets you need, or gifts for others.





Spruce St UWIF is offering a trip to Sight & Sound to see the fabulous production of Joshua!

Experience with us one of the most redemptive stories of the Bible as it comes to life in this brand-new original stage production from Sight & Sound Theaters. Be STRONG AND COURAGEOUS. From the banks of the Jordan River to the towering walls of Jericho, JOSHUA is a miraculous adventure for the whole family. Journey alongside the people of Israel as they navigate their new-found freedom in an unforgiving wilderness.

Includes the following:

- Lodging
- Hot Buffet Breakfast at Family Restaurant
- Shopping at Kitchen Kettle Village
- Dinner hosted by the Amish in their home
- Also includes an admission ticket to the Gettysburg Cyclorama & Museum and guided tour of the Battlefield.
- Ticket for Joshua at Sight & Sound

Date: April 10 – 11, 2026

Bus Pick-up: Morgantown, WV (Wal-Mart parking lot 75 Retail Circle Morgantown, WV)

Cost: \$435 single

\$385 double

\$355 triple

\$335 quad

For more information, please contact Teresa Johnson at 681-209-3961 or by email at teresa81265@hotmail.com

Finance Notes

Giving thru first three weeks of January amounted to \$16,562. Thank you for your generous support of our church!

Judy

MonValley District
BOOK CLUB



United
Women
in Faith

February 3, 2026

6 p.m.

Book: ***The Girl with the Louding Voice*** by Abi Daré

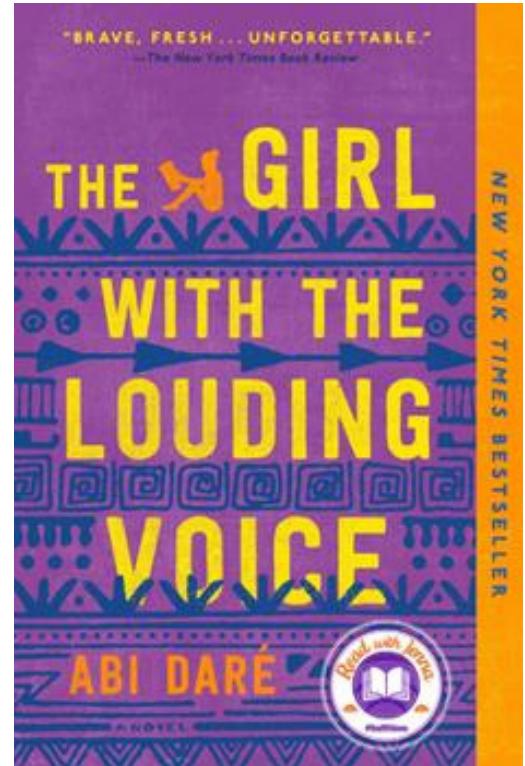
Reading Category: Education for Mission In the reading program, this title is a bonus book (counts as two books). Open to anyone!

Zoom Link To Be Announced

Next meeting: April 14, 2026, 6 p.m. Book: ***We Are Not***

Here to Be Strangers by Linda Sarsour

Place: To Be Announced



A Prayer for Peace



In a world filled with violence,
Let's be peacemakers.
In a world filled with hate,
Let's be healers.
In a world filled with divisions,
Let's be unifiers.
In a world filled with exclusion,
Let's be includers.
In a world filled with selfishness,
Let's be community builders.
In a world filled with hopelessness,
Let's be and proclaim Christ's hope.



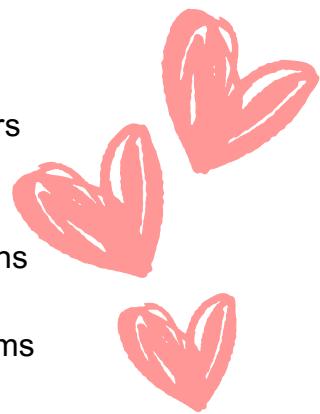
United Methodist Bishop of Upper NY and Susquehanna Annual
Conferences
Bishop Hector A Burgos Nunez

Gifts of Love

Thank you for supporting this ministry and donating your gently used household items. Please ensure items are clean and usable before donating. Suggested items include but are not limited to:

- Dishes
- Pots & pans
- Silverware
- Glasses/mugs
- Cooking utensils
- Can openers
- Mixing bowls
- Serving dishes/spoons
- Tupperware
- Coffeemakers
- Toasters
- Blenders
- Microwaves
- Dishcloths
- Towels
- Baking sheets
- Bakeware
- Measuring cups/spoons

- Potholders/mitts
- Cutting boards
- Storage organizers
- Blankets/quilts
- Backpacks
- Flashlights/lanterns
- Batteries
- Basic hygiene items



February Lectionary Scriptures

February 1 - 4th Sunday After the Epiphany

Micah 6:1-8; Psalm 15

1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Matthew 5:1-12

February 8 - 5th Sunday After the Epiphany

Isaiah 58:1-12; Psalm 112:1-10

1 Corinthians 2:1-16; Matthew 5:13-20

February 15 - Transfiguration Sunday

Exodus 24:12-18; Psalm 2

2 Peter 1:16-21; Matthew 17:1-9

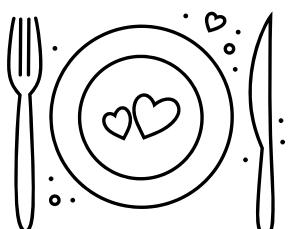
February 22 - 1st Sunday in Lent

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7; Psalm 32

Romans 5:12-19; Matthew 4:1-11

CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

Thank you for your help and support in this ministry. Our February dates are February 21 & 22. If you're interested in helping, please contact Carolyn Carr at coccarr@yahoo.com.



Prayer Chain

Our prayer ministry is very active. If you are part of the prayer chain and have not been receiving the emails or if you'd like to join the prayer chain, please send your email address to Carolyn at coccarr@yahoo.com. Short term prayer list can be found in the bulletin each week. Names are moved to the long-term list in the Newsletter after a month in the bulletin.



Prayers For

Laurie Audria

Lacey Lewis

David Bartl

Glenn McCracken

Lori Britton

Sharon Richman

Saundra Britton

Mary Belle Rowe

Cindy Cramer

Pat Ryan

Dianne DeAngelis

Janet Schlobohm

Rubyann Downes

Dr. Wilber Sine

Barbara Fox

Ken Shanes

Sara Fuqua

Syndy Slaughter

Mike Grant

Linda Sweetman

Jerry Holt

Penny Turley

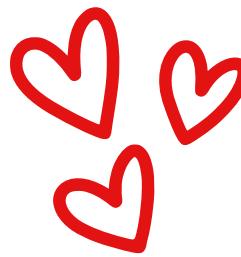
Aly Hutzel

Mary Lynn Withrow

Ben Lee

SCOTTS RUN DONATIONS

We collect nonperishable food and other items for Scotts Run Settlement House in our Overflow Area. **Food is a priority need for many right now. Please keep our low-income neighbors in mind as you are doing your grocery shopping. Additional helpful things to donate include non-perishable, high-protein items such as canned tuna or beans and whole grains such as rice or pasta. These items help keep bellies full!**

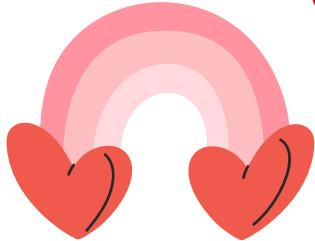


Spruce St UMC Office Hours & Contact Info

9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. (Monday - Thursday)

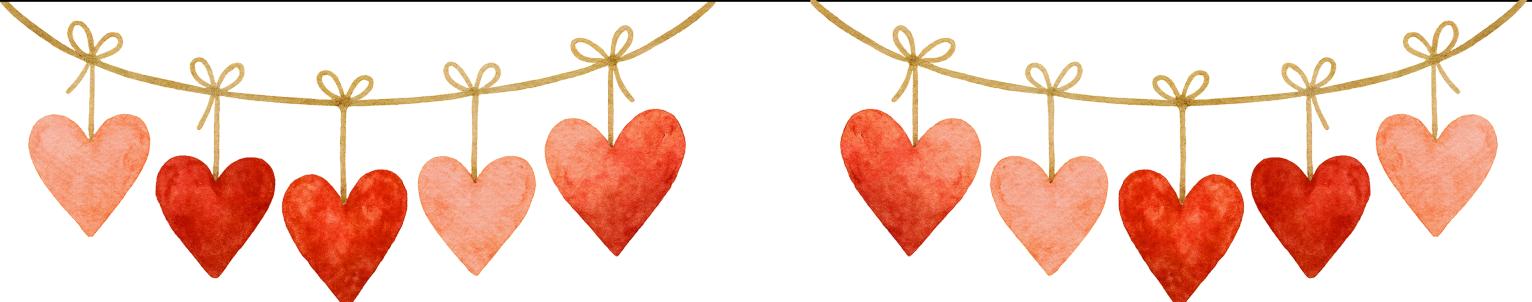
304-292-3359

sprucestumc.org



SPRUCE STREET STAFF DIRECTORY

Pastor	Rev. Bart Thompson	304-813-7213 pastor@sprucestreetumc.org
Lay Minister	Eldon Callen	304-290-7142 eldonc45@gmail.com
Administrative Assistant	Em Pechon	304-292-3359 secretary@sprucestreetumc.org
Financial Secretary	Judy Kennell	finance@sprucestreetumc.org
Music Director	Marguerite Bostonia	margbos6@gmail.com
Choir Director	Ashley Lewis	jashleylewis@gmail.com
Children's Ministry	Lena Glowacky	childrensministry@sprucestreetumc.org
Building Supervisor	Bonnie Johnson	johnson26541@yahoo.com
Prayer Focus	Carolyn Carr	cdccarr@yahoo.com



Sunday		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 <i>4th Sunday after the Epiphany</i>	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8:30 & 10:45AM Worship 10AM Sunday School		1:30PM Heritage Bible Study 6PM Mon Valley UWIF Book Club	11AM Bible Study 6:30PM Barnabas Group	10AM Chair Yoga 6PM January UWIF			
		6PM SPPRC 7PM January Ad. Council		6:15PM Handbell Choir 7PM Chancel Choir			
8 <i>5th Sunday after the Epiphany</i>	9	10	11	12	13	14	
8:30 & 10:45AM Worship 10AM Sunday School			11AM Bible Study 6PM UMM @ Eat N Park	10AM Chair Yoga 6:15PM Handbell Choir			
15 <i>Transfiguration Sunday</i>	16	17	18	19	20	21	
8:30 & 10:45AM Worship 10AM Sunday School			11AM Bible Study 6:30PM Ash Wednesday	10AM Chair Yoga 6:15PM Handbell Choir			
22 <i>1st Sunday in Lent</i>	23	24	25	26	27	28	
8:30 & 10:45AM Worship 10AM Sunday School 4PM Circle of Friends 5:30PM Messy Church		6PM Ad. Council 12PM Lent Study Session 1 6PM UWIF	11AM Bible Study 6PM Prayer Meeting (Zoom)	10AM Chair Yoga 6:15PM Handbell Choir 7PM Chancel Choir			