



Potomac Highlands District Highlighter 2021

Welcome to the Potomac Highlands District Second Edition of The Highlighter.

There are myriads of ministries undertaken by the churches in the Potomac Highland District, so many it is not possible to enumerate them all. In this year of pandemic, we are again using “The Highlighter” as a way to glorify the Lord while showcasing the ministries we are called to. Each parish has been asked to highlight 3-5 ministries they believe are unique or outstanding. We understand that this is not an exhaustive list of ministries taking place, however, each parish may choose to feature an entirely new set of ministries next year. This exciting information is now assembled to be passed on to you!

Please take time to peruse the exciting work highlighted on these pages. Who knows, you or your church may decide to participate in some of these ministries or you may decide to initiate similar ones. If you would like more information on a specific ministry listed, there is contact information below each section.

May we celebrate God’s work in the Potomac Highlands District!

Brought to you by:

The Potomac Highlands District Lead Team.

Mountain Parish

Allegheny, Mountaintop Ministries, Riverton, South Fork

Technology, Old and New

Churches in the parish have explored unique ways of reaching their congregations during the COVID crisis. The South Fork Parish procured a FM Transmitter, which required approval from the Greenbank Observatory and the Sugar Grove NSA Installation because they are in a US National Radio Free Zone. The transmitter, which will reach about 1 mile, allows people to “attend” a parking lot church and listen to the service through their radios. The transmitter, which fits in the palm of a hand, can be moved from church to church; it is not necessary to always broadcast from the same location. It is not without issues; at least one parishioner ran down their car battery while listening!

A number of the churches are taping their services and posting them on Facebook early on Sunday afternoons. This has encouraged people, even outside the area, to tune in and listen at their leisure. One church uses conference calls for services, since many of their members do not have internet service or are not internet savvy. Another church tapes a service on CDs and delivers them to both temporary and permanent shut-ins.

For additional information, contact:

- *Rev Judy Vetter (South Fork) at 304-703-0591 or at pjrvetter@gmail.com*
- *Rev Mike Loudermilk (Mountaintop Ministries) at 304-802-3121 or at pastormikeloudermilk@gmail.com*
- *Rev Cindy Skinner (Riverton) at 304-567-2155 or at cindylskinner@yahoo.com*
- *Rev Mike Lambert (Allegheny) at 304-668-2665 or at pastormikelambert@gmail.com*
- *Rev. Earl Bible (Allegheny)*

South Fork Charge Drive by Events

“Drive-by” events used to have a negative connotation. Not anymore! South Fork hosted a drive-by All Hollow’s Eve Trunk or Treat with twelve different Bible scenes and characters represented. The event attracted over 100 people. How did they know? They registered all the attendees by name and contact information so they would be prepared for contact tracing, in the event a Covid case was traced to the activity.

At Christmas a “Drive By” Live Nativity Scene, starring the Holy Family, angels, shepherds, and Wise Men attracted many onlookers. St. Nick even made an appearance to celebrate Jesus’ birth. As people drove by, they could listen to Christmas Carols on the FM station, thanks to the FM transmitter!

For additional information, contact Rev Judy Vetter at 304-703-0591 or at pjrvetter@mail.com

Masking the High Rock Community and Beyond

When COVID began, the High Rock UM church started making masks for the 1st responders and their church members. No good deed goes without notice. Soon, they were taking requests and made over 400 masks for nursing homes, fire departments and eventually, all the local school children!

For additional information, contact Mrs. Ann Bennett at 304-567-2398 or at nfd@spruceknob.net or contact Mrs. Vickie Skavenski at 304-567-2213 or at wvelac_2000@hotmail.com

Riverton Card Ministry

The Riverton Card Ministry has been active for years, but this year, the needs increased. They send over 100 cards per month to people who are shut-ins, people in their community they know may be experiencing grief or facing distress in their lives, or people celebrating anniversaries or birthdays. They’ve been known to receive THANK YOU cards in return: recipients expressing their gratitude for knowing they are remembered and loved.

For additional information, contact Rev. Cindy Skinner at 304-567-2155 or at cindylskinner@yahoo.com

Smoke Hole Parish

Bayard-Mt. Storm; Grove Street (Petersburg); Main Street (Petersburg); North Branch; Pendleton-Grant; South Branch; St. Paul's (Williamsport)

Daisy Drive

The North Branch church plants a small live flower in a cup and delivers about 100 to the people in the community each year, typically before Mother's and Father's Day or earlier, as simply a "Happy Spring". It is accompanied by a flyer inviting the ***unchurched*** to Worship, along with the starting times for Church and Sunday School. Some of the children in the church are enthusiastic helpers delivering the flowers. The church is literally sowing the seeds. Just as plants take time to grow the church, it has taken and will continue to take time for these seeds to take root. New faces are now attending church!

For additional information contact Mrs. Mary "Cookie" Gerstell at 304-257-5681 or at joseph3@frontiernet.net or contact Mrs. Cheryl Keplinger at 304-749-7824 or at rhkeplin@frontier.com

A Covid Limited VBS

St Paul held a "mini" Vacation Bible School (VBS) solely for the 3 children in the St. Paul's congregation. The VBS was held outdoors at a member's home, with the materials developed by the church members. They had 5 adult teachers and 3 children helping and enjoying.

For additional information contact Mrs. Joyce Stewart at 304-289-3269 or at jestewart@citlink.net

Grove Street Meal Program

Although Covid reeked its havoc for about a year, the Grove Street UM Church has just this March restarted their meal program. With safety precautions in place, they deliver full meals to people who are shut-ins or have a temporary need due to illness, surgeries, etc. Many recipients have responded with their appreciation and they note the amount of food delivered stretches for much more than a single meal. Deliveries, typically for about 25 people, are made every Monday.

For additional information, contact Lee or Rhonda Thompson at 304-257-4514 or lemionethompson@yahoo.com

Pendleton Grant Charge Gutter Sunday

In 2019, St. Johns, with the help of other churches in the charge, sponsored a Vacation Bible School. One of the highlights of the activities was the "Gutter Sundae". Taking a (clean) length of gutter (yes, like the ones you have lining the roof of your home), one end was filled with different ice creams (un-cartoned and dumped directly into the gutter) and other end was stocked with toppings (in cups). Like a buffet, each camper could fill their individual cups with the ice cream and toppings to their hearts, and stomach's, content. It was WELL received!

For additional information, contact Mr. Daniel Meadows at 304-358-3114 or bigdmeadows97@gmail.com

Prison Backpack Ministry

The Youth at the Lahmansville Church helped pack backpacks with hygiene items for people being released from prison throughout the state. This activity was coordinated through the Church Women United in Petersburg.

For additional information, contact Rev Luke McKenzie at 304-813-5721 or at pastorlukemckenzie@gmail.com or Mrs. Ellen Kirby 304-703-4582

Hampshire Parish

Augusta; Bethel-Hill; Cacapon; Capon Bridge; Ebenezer-Springfield; First (Romney);
Hampshire, Mill Creek Valley

Devotion Line

Capon Chapel has a phone line people can call in and leave prayer requests. They can also hear a devotion each day. In the past year many of us have decided to remain home and this ministry has truly allowed so many to still feel connected to God and their church and it shows us that God can use any resource that we have to share his word. To leave a prayer request and/or hear a devotion simply call 304-856-1040.

For additional information, please contact Mrs. Karen Trueblood 304-856-1040 or caponchapel@gmail.com

United Methodist Women

Capon Bridge UMW supplies food to about 70 children within Capon Bridge Elementary and Middle Schools. This ministry has truly been a blessing while children were out of school during the quarantine; it gave children meals when they were not able to receive their full meals at home due to the economic impact of covid-19.

For additional information, please contact Mrs. Judy Bowyer 304-856-3320 or rjbowyer@frontier.com

Backpack Program

Hampshire Charge works monthly to collect funds to send to the Backpack program at Community Fellowship Church. The charge sends approximately \$300-\$400 per month helping to feed 78 or more children within John J Cornwall & Slanesville Elementary School. This ministry is such a blessing to the children and their families.

For additional information, please contact Rev. Steve Davis 304-492-4198 or revsteved@hotmail.com

Right from the Start

Children are one of our greatest blessings and Springfield UMC has collected baby items for the "right from the start" through Burlington UM Family Services. This program is for new moms and church members set out a bassinet within the church for the congregation to fill it with diapers, wipes, onesies, sleepers, and other items needed for the new bundle of Joy.

For additional information, please contact Rev. Lucinda Davis 304-596-3333 or lucindaion@hotmail.com

Esther's House

During December volunteers of Romney First UMC provide a toy/book distribution program to help families in need at Christmas. Throughout the year, volunteers collect, clean and repair gently-used toys and games. Parents are able to shop (for free) for toys to fit the ages and interests of their children at the house next to Romney First. In December of 2020, 645 children received gifts from this program. Esther's House is always in need of gently used toys and the toys and books may be dropped off at the church office.

For additional information, please contact Mrs. Rebecca Arnold 301-338-4696 or 304-822-3023 or not_mother@hotmail.com

Hardy Parish

Baker; Duffey Memorial – Bass; Mathias; Open Door Ministries, Wardensville

Big Blue

Wardensville UMC greatly supports the Big Blue, which is a program supported by local churches to care for youth and teach them about Christ. This program is located in the “Big Blue” house in Wardensville WV. The mission of Big Blue is to reach teens for Christ. It is a great program and continues to grow through support from local churches and the community.

For additional information, please contact Rev. Robert Oakley 304-841-4475 or pastorrobertoakley@gmail.com

Feed My Sheep

Oak Grove UMC works to provide meals for 30-40 most in-need families. Church members will bag groceries to supply them with a week’s worth of meals. The meals are delivered each Saturday. Before the Covid-19 quarantine this program made 472 lunches...praise be to God that this program is still going strong to help families in need during this time.

For additional information, please contact Rev. Harold George 304-851-6727 or pastorbloop@gmail.com

Radio Program

The Duffey-Bass Charge has a Sunday morning radio program on WELD-FM that allows them to reach members, constituents and others who do not have the means to watch the live-streamed Sunday services. The Radio Program allows the community to hear the Gospel of Christ in new ways. This program is paid for through the generous hearts of church members.

For additional information, please contact Rev. Mark Flynn 304-538-2024 or revmwflynn@gmail.com

Daily Devotion

Pastor Heather, of the Mathias Charge, gives a 5 minute or less devotion that can be found on Facebook. The devotion begins with a story and offers Scripture, words of encouragement and assurance for each new day. This ministry is a great way for those who are choosing to remain at home or those who are homebound to continue to hear the word of God every morning.

For additional information, please contact Rev. Heather Rogers 304-897-5182

Baker Charge Food Pantry

Congregations within the Baker Charge collect food and deliver food to homes within the community. Members are able to send money and the churches purchase a gift card to be delivered to community members along with the food. The vacant parsonage has become the Food Bank and is served by Mountaineer Food Bank. This ministry is new but growing fast to meet the needs for the community.

For additional information, please contact Ms. Anna Smith annadare@gmail.com

Mineral Parish

Antioch; Burlington; Emoryville; Forest Glen – St. Paul's; Fort Ashby; Grace (Keyser); Keyser Faith; Laurel Dale; Rees Chapel; Trinity (Keyser); Trinity-Waldon (Piedmont); Wesley Chapel (Short Gap)

Sunday School-in-a-Bag

First UM Church includes the After-School children in the "Sunday School-in-a-Bag" delivery schedule. They continued reaching out to the children and families of our 2019-2020 After-School Program since the children enrolled last year never received the opportunity to complete the program due the Covid-related school shut-downs. First UM Church applied for, and received, the same annual grant funding for the After-School Program (21st year). They were able to bless these children and families during difficult economic times, providing gift cards to a local supermarket and Christmas gifts for each of the After-School children. We believe we will see good fruit come from the seeds we planted in the lives of these children and families.

For additional information, please contact Rev. Shirley Reed pastorshirleyreed@gmail.com

Prayer & Vision

The Prayer and Vision Team began livestreaming Sunday services on Facebook in 2019 and was able to make a smooth transition when Covid-19 began. Facebook views between Trinity UMC and Centenary UMC are 370-400 per week. Through this new way of worship connections within the community are being made and more people are receiving the Word of God and accepting Jesus as their Savior.

For additional information, please contact Rev. Scott Ingleton 304-520-7774 or wscottingleton@gmail.com

Card and Phone Ministry

Forest Glen-St. Paul's UMC participate in a card and phone ministry by sending get well cards, sympathy cards, birthday cards, anniversary cards and more to church members and community members. The phone ministry allows for everyone to continue to feel connected to God and their church.

For additional information, please contact Rev. Ann Merkel 301-876-3566 or tarheelfan85@yahoo.com

Prayer Shawl Team

In partnership with Western Maryland Hospital, the Prayer Shawl Team is designed to help children who have struggled with addiction, which is an ever-growing epidemic in our area. In addition, the team delivers to nursing homes and hospice facilities. The shawls are prayed over before distributing for God to work in the life of the recipient and grant healing and strength to those who are in need of it.

For additional information, please contact Rev. Lauren Godwin 304-788-2561 or revlaurengodwin@gmail.com

Northern Garrett

Friendsville; Grantsville; Hoyes-McHenry; Northeast Garrett

Hoyes-McHenry Charge Backpack Ministry

This backpack ministry is coordinated through the charge's Christian Women's Fellowship, with parishioners from both churches donating needed school supplies and participating in the delivery. In the past, the backpacks had been donated to the children at Burlington. In 2020, the ministry was shifted toward serving and sharing the gospel with the local community. The supply list recommended by the Garrett County Board of Education identified what students of each grade would need for the upcoming school year. Families at Mountain Village West School (located between the Hoyes and McHenry churches) were provided the opportunity to sign-up to receive supplies. Approximately 30 backpacks, packed for Pre-K to college, were distributed.

Not to miss an opportunity, parishioners from 7 to 70 years young served as the evangelism team and used an "Evangecube" (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zETUh50u8Vs>) to share the gospel with each family upon the delivery of the backpacks.

The children at Burlington were not overlooked; the Christian Women's Fellowship also made a donation to Burlington in the amount of \$250.

For additional information, contact Mrs. Mary Kahl at 301- 746-6107 or contact Mrs. Kim Becker at 301-616-4546 or at 4kimbecker@comcast.net

Birthday Party at Goodwill Mennonite Nursing Home in Grantsville

Once a year, the Friendsville Charge Women sponsor a "birthday party for the month" at the nursing home. In the past, these parties have typically been held in September or October with a fall theme of apples or pumpkins. A 30 minute program is presented and may include a menagerie of activities: seasonal poems, short stories, scripture readings, prayers, and a group sing-a-long of familiar hymns. The activity is topped off with a birthday treat (generally cupcakes) for all the residents and festive gift bags are presented to the residents with birthdays in that month.

In 2020, the nursing homes were closed, but the church was still able to provide gift bags and cupcakes for the residents. Once the nursing homes open again, this activity will continue.

For additional information, contact Mrs. Carol Squires at 301- 501-602 or at carol@stpaulmercantile.com or contact Mrs. Wilma Friend at 301-501-1733 or at gramfriend@gmail.com

Friendsville Church Thanksgiving Fundraiser

The Friendsville UM Church partners with the Fire Department, which has a commercial kitchen, for a Thanksgiving Dinner fundraiser. Last year, Covid altered the sit-down dinner to a drive through dinner, where people could stay in their vehicles to receive their food. They sold-out their 225 Thanksgiving dinners in 40 minutes and raised over \$1,200 for the Church's Mission Projects.

For additional information, contact Mr. Terry Spear at 301-616-1375 or at tspear@comcast.net

Grantsville's Phone Ministry

The phone ministry at Grantsville puts smiles on people's faces. The church makes a point to call its member and some in their general community to either check-in or wish a person a happy birthday or anniversary. During Covid, this activity allowed the members a reason to reach out to the children and youth who previously attended when church was face-to-face. They let them know that their church loves them and has not forgotten them!

The phone ministry also includes a prayer chain for people needing prayer.

For additional information, contact Rev. Russell Zang at 240-522-2683 or at russellram67@gmail.com

Mountain Top Parish

Bloomington; Elk Garden; Garrett Highlands; Mt. Lake Park – Bethel; St. Paul's (Oakland); Swanton-Kitzmilller

Easter Egg Tree Project

During the season of Lent, St. Paul's UMC collects needed items in their congregation as well as working with community groups such as: Foster Appalachia, Light House and Nursing Homes. The needed items collected include backpacks and school supplies like pens, pencils, notebooks, etc... Items are then delivered to those who are homeless and foster children, which is an amazing way of showing love to their neighbor.

For additional information, contact Mrs. Sue Damon 301-334-4242 charlesdamon67@msn.com

Weekly Facebook Hymn Sing

On Tuesday or Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. each week a group does a hymn sing on Facebook for all to hear. Requests for hymns are taken as listeners post them in the comment section. Musicians then play the hymns requested. Not only are hymns played but personal stories and historical facts are shared about the hymns they are singing. Simply go to St. Paul's UMC Facebook page each week for a night of hymn singing and learning about the hymns being played.

For additional information, contact Rev. Matthew & Melissa Paugh 301-501-0572 mpaugh@usa.net

Pennies for Missions Ministry

Each week change is collected within Bethel UM church and is used for community and church ministries. Some of the funds collected have been given to BUMFS, local animal shelters, and Cindy's Fund which is a local cancer center. Since the start of covid-19, electronic donations have allowed for an increase in the giving by community members and people from all over.

For additional information, contact Mrs. Connie Trickett 301-616-4678 druzhiba@hotmail.com

St. Paul's UMC also participates in the "Pennies for Mission" ministry. On the 2nd Sunday of every month the mission team chooses ministries and a few of the past ministries include: LHHS, Meals on Wheels, House of Carpenter and UMCOR. Similar to Bethel, St. Paul's has also been using electronic ways of donating money which has given an increase in funds coming in for this ministry allowing them to serve more community ministries.

For additional information, contact Mr. Terry Riler 301-334-5684 dtriley@hughes.net

Tucker Parish

Blackwater; First (Parsons); Hamrick; St. George; St. John's (Parsons); St. Paul's (Parsons)

Hinkle House Food Pantry

During the difficult times of Covid-19, praise be to God that Hinkle House has been able to remain open. Individuals stay outside and their food is delivered to them by volunteers who wear the proper protective gear to keep themselves and those receiving food items safe. Local community and churches help support this ministry financially and through a partnership with Shop-n-Save. We give thanks to God for this ministry serving others.

For additional information, please contact Rev. Bill Brown 304-478-1114 or kiltwrb@gmail.com

Prayer Squares

3"x3" pocket sized squares are placed in people's hands as a reminder that those who receive them are being prayed for during those difficult times. "Made with Love" is crocheted into the prayer squares for those who receive them to remember that they themselves are created in love by God.

For additional information, please contact Rev. Bill Brown 304-703-2930 or kiltwrb@gmail.com

Website Prayer Chain

People call the pastor and the pastor delivers the message to those who have committed to praying for others for the needs no matter what the need is. The website is "call-em-all" and the messages can be delivered via text or phone call. As of now there are 38 God led people who have committed to answering the call to praying for others.

For additional information, please contact Rev. Bill Brown 304-703-2930 or kiltwrb@gmail.com

Christmas Toy Drive

In 2020, over 200 children were served with the Christmas Toy Drive. This was by appointment only and age-appropriate toys were selected by volunteers in a drive-through pick up. Thousands of toys were donated and then cleaned and sanitized before giving to the children.

For additional information, please contact Mrs. Marie Barr 304-621-5133

Preston

Trinity (Terra Alta); Wesley (Kingwood); Albright: Aurora; Faith (Cranesville); First-Otterbein (Preston); Rowlesburg; South Preston

First-Otterbein's "Love Project"

Each Sunday parishioners are asked to bring a specific non-perishable food item. The food is accumulated to provide food boxes for distribution to needy families. At Easter, the church provided a complete Easter Meal to the food box recipients.

For additional information, contact Stevie or Larry Bayles at 304-789-2867 or at haybales@frontier.net

Rowlesburg Free Community Dinner

The brainchild and labor of love of a couple and their good friend who desire to "give back", for the last 3 years a Christmas meal is prepared at the Christ UM Church in Rowlesburg. Church members deliver the meals to those who live in the Rowlesburg community. This activity was recently expanded to include some community members from the UM churches. The meal is free, but donations have been substantial. This past year alone, \$200 was given to The Shriner's Children Hospital, \$200 to the Church, \$100 to the Local 4-H, and \$100 to the needy in the community. In 2021, this was expanded for the first time to a second dinner event with 140 meals being delivered. Not being sure of where these donations will be directed yet is just one more pleasure of providing the meals.

For additional information, contact Mrs. Sharon Sunderland at 304-698-8918 or at sunderlandstorm@gmail.com

Give Jesus a "Pizza" Your Heart

The Corinth UM church provided pizza to 38 families at their first "Give Jesus a Pizza (piece of) Your Heart event"; 48 families were served at the second event. Pizzas are ordered from a local pizza partnership. The Church connects with families ahead of time so they have an idea of how many pizzas to order. While distributing the pizza, church members are able to talk and pray with community members and help address concerns they may have.

For additional information, contact Rev Eric Beeman at 304- 698-8098 or at pastorbeeman@yahoo.com.

Faith (Cranesville) Youth Ministries

Once a month, the youth prepare meals to take to shut-ins. The activity provides meals and teaches the youth how to cook, as well as offering the gift of "giving" skills. Through Covid, the activity has continued, albeit, with masked participants physically distanced either in an outside makeshift kitchen or more recently, back in the regular kitchen.

Throughout the holidays, the youth connected with shut-ins by becoming their pen-pals. Youth were encouraged to reach out with a note or card to bring a smile to that person who cannot leave their homes. The youth also sponsor a student at the Living Hope High School, in Bungoma, Africa, reaching out to them with cards and letters.

For additional information, contact Mrs. Maria Yoder at 304-789-5613 or at bcreeree77@yahoo.com.

Food for Preston County

One way the Wesley church helps meet the material and spiritual needs of Preston County is by providing rent free facilities for the Preston County Family Resource Center and Food for Preston County. Food for Preston County addresses local hunger by holding fundraisers, working with local food pantries, and supplying weekend food packs for county schools to distribute to approximately 320 food insecure students.

On the 4th Friday of each month, the Wesley UM church has a local benevolence program that delivers a free meal to about 400-450 residents with another 100 people picking up their meals from the church. It takes a village of volunteers to run the program; some kitchen staff are required to be certified by the local health department. Food left-over is donated to Food for Preston County.

For more information, contact Mr. Bob Meissner at 304-282-4286 or at rbmeissner613@gmail.com or visit <https://www.foodforpreston.org>.