

# Dranesville UMC Newsletter

February 2025

## *The Spiritual Significance of Tu BiShvat*

Last month I mentioned all the different annual cycles embedded in the year. This month contains the Jewish holiday of Tu BiShvat, also called the "New Year for Trees." Tu BiShvat happens on the 15th day of the Hebrew month of Shevat. This year, it occurs on Feb 12th. In Jewish tradition, it marks a new year for trees, which was important in biblical times for tithing and offering the first fruits to God. Today, people celebrate by eating fruits, especially those mentioned in the Bible, and by planting trees as a way of showing gratitude and hope.

Psalm 1 says that a person who trusts in the Lord is like a tree planted by streams of water, always bearing fruit in the right season. This reminds us that when we stay close to God, we will grow strong in faith and produce good things in our lives.

Proverbs also talks about wisdom as a tree of life, showing that true wisdom comes from God and brings joy to those who follow Him. And in Revelation, the Tree of Life appears again, bearing fruits to bring healing to the world. These images remind us that God wants us to grow spiritually just as trees grow in nature.

Another powerful lesson from Tu BiShvat is about



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Pastor's Message	1
Sunday School & Study	3
Worship & Fellowship	4
Mobile Food Pantry	6
Missions	7
Calendar	8



**Come worship with us  
on Sundays at 10:30 a.m.  
In the Sanctuary  
or virtually via Zoom**

**Coffee hour following  
worship via Zoom or live**

**Adult Sunday School  
at 9:00 a.m.**

*If you would like to join,  
please contact us at  
[office@dranesvilleumc.org](mailto:office@dranesvilleumc.org).*

## *The Spiritual Significance of Tu BiShvat (continued)*

hope and new beginnings. It takes place in winter, when trees look bare and lifeless. But deep inside, they are preparing for the new season of growth. In the same way, we all go through times when we feel dry or distant from God. But God is always at work, renewing and preparing us for what's next. Just as trees will bloom again in spring, God brings new life into our hearts. Easter is coming!

Some Jewish traditions observe Tu BiShvat seder meal modeled after Passover. During the meal, different types of fruit in Seder symbolize different spiritual stages. When they eat fruits with a hard shell like nuts, it reminds them external barriers like pride, apathy and busyness must be broken. Those fruits with a pit (olives & dates) symbolize hidden inner potential. These seemingly inedible rock-like seeds tell us with God, we can grow and be fruitful. Moreover, fully edible fruits like grapes and figs represent spiritual wholeness. They bring juicy sweet nutrients to a hungry world.



As we reflect on Tu BiShvat, let's take this opportunity to think about our own faith. Are we growing and bearing good fruit? Are we taking time to appreciate and care for God's creation? Are we staying connected to Jesus, the true source of life? Let's use this season to renew our commitment to Him, to trust in His provision, and to look forward to the new growth He is bringing into our lives. God is always at work, and just like the trees, we are called to grow, flourish, and bear fruit in His name.

With much hope,

Pastor Keith

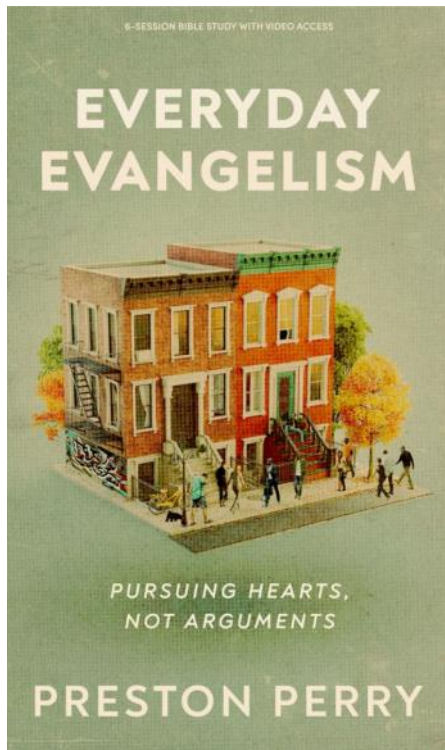
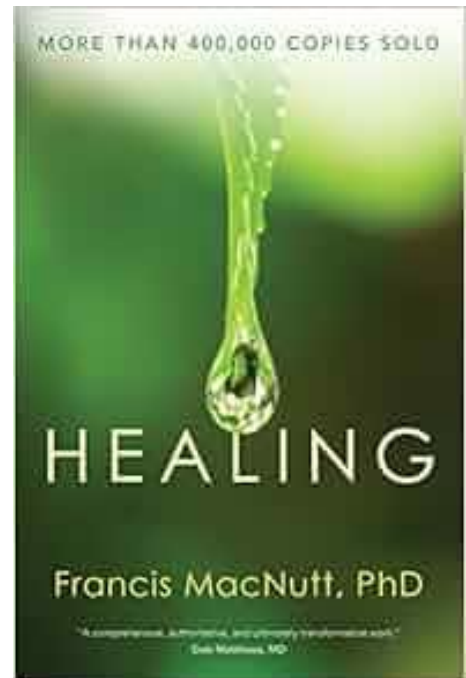
## Tuesday and Thursday Bible Study

### *Healing by Francis MacNutt*

Tuesday & Thursday Bible Study will begin a new study series based on Francis MacNutt's *Healing*. It will begin the week of Jan 20th.

MacNutt's best selling book provides a context within which to understand healing. The book covers topics including the basis of the healing ministry, kinds of healing, and the connections between sacraments and healing. MacNutt discusses new discoveries of connections between the spiritual and the physical, including scientific inquiries into the healing power of prayer.

Please join us for the new series.



### Adult Sunday School

#### *Everyday Evangelism* by Preston Perry

Most Christians find it difficult to share their faith. It can make us nervous, and we clam up. We worry we'll freeze in the moment. We're afraid we won't have the right words—especially if someone starts arguing with us. If we aren't careful, we'll let these hesitations keep us from the important work God's given us to do.

We have to think about evangelism differently. And that starts with remembering God has called us to be evangelists. If we are willing to engage with this calling, He is more than willing to empower us through the Holy Spirit to give the gospel to anyone we encounter. If you're willing to be used by God, He will use you. This Bible study was designed to help you embrace that truth and equip you with practical tools to be the everyday evangelist God has called you to be.

Every Week Join Us In Study and Prayer: [Dranesvilleumc.org/connect](https://dranesvilleumc.org/connect)

Prayer group is meeting virtually via Zoom, Tuesdays at 8:00 am [Zoom link here.](#)

Bible Study: Join anytime.

Tuesday Evening Bible Study: 7 pm Zoom info: [Zoom link for Tues Evening Bible Study](#)

Thursday Morning Bible Study: 10 am Zoom Info: [Zoom link for Thurs Morning Bible Study](#)

# Worship & Fellowship

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EVERGREEN  
*Lunch Group*

## Lunch with the Evergreen Group:

**February 9th at 12:00 pm in Sterling**

at The Bungalow Lakehouse Restaurant.  
Please see Pete Hause for details  
and to RSVP or call 703-430-7166.

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## DUMC Listening Sessions: Optimizing our Church Grounds

As a follow-up to October's Town Hall meeting on DUMC property use, Beth Hitchings, DUMC's lay leader, will be conducting "Listening Sessions" with the congregation, kicking off in January 2025. The intent of these sessions is to gather more feedback on the ideas/issues related to property use ideas and the Evaluation Rubric. In addition, she welcomes any interest in helping with this initiative.

A sign-up sheet is posted in the Fellowship Hall. These sessions can be one-on-one or small groups and can be scheduled at your convenience! Beth's email is [layleader@dranesvilleumc.org](mailto:layleader@dranesvilleumc.org).



### IN THE EVENT OF INCLEMENT WEATHER

We hope to share in-person and zoom worship each Sunday. In the event of inclement weather, we may move to a virtual-only zoom service. We will publish any notification of cancellations of our in-person worship by email on Saturday. We encourage all church members, and guests to observe all safety precautions by staying off the roads during extremely dangerous weather conditions. The church building will be closed if Fairfax County Public Schools are closed.

# Young Adult & Youth Bowling



SUNDAY  
BRUNCH



NEXT:  
FEBRUARY 26TH  
6PM

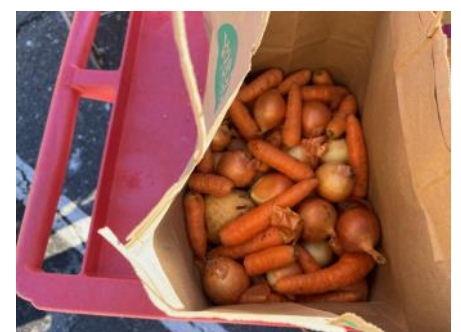
 **WEDNESDAY  
NIGHT Dinner**

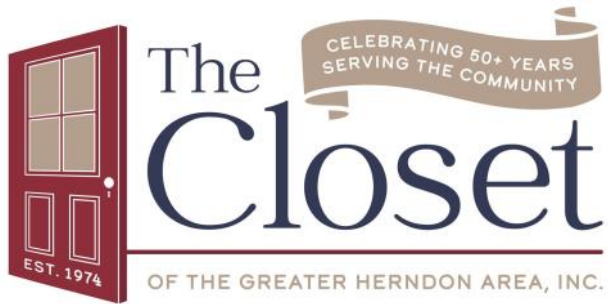
# January Mobile Food Pantry

Register online for the latest updates. Join us on the 2nd Tuesday of each month (light rain or shine) from 9:30 am – 12 pm (or until the food runs out) in the rear parking lot at Christ the Redeemer Catholic Church. Join Team Dranesville and wear your Dranesville UMC T-shirts while packing food for those in need.



**Next chance  
for us to help:  
February 11th!**





## February: A Creative Initiative

**Dear Community,**

Thank you once again for an incredible January and for setting the tone for a year of generosity, creativity, and community. As we wrap up January's giving initiative, we're shifting gears to focus on creativity for February. You may have noticed that our large store windows sometimes sit empty. This month, we're inviting all creatives—whether you're a regular customer for fabric or crafts—to showcase your artwork in our windows. We're kicking off this promotion starting today. Please consider if you'd like to participate. If so, email us pictures of your artwork, crafts, or masterpieces, and we'll do our best to feature as many as possible.

Please take a look at their website to volunteer. <http://theclosetofgreaterherndon.org/volunteer/>

### *June Mission Trip*

Are you are interested in participating in a Mission Trip to help with the Hurricane Helene recovery effort? We are looking for potential interest, at this point, and availability dates. A UMC church in Boone, NC has been organizing such efforts and we have contacted them to see what might be needed. Questions? Please reach out to Beth Hitchings at [layleader@dranesvilleumc.org](mailto:layleader@dranesvilleumc.org).



Grocery card total in January- \$765!!!

### **EVEN 4 OTHERS collection February 23rd**



Some of the top needs are Jelly, Dried beans, Canned fruit, Canned corn, peas, carrots, potatoes, Boxed potatoes, Toilet paper, Paper towels, Cleaning products, Toiletry items, etc.



# Dranesville

## United Methodist Church

*“Making disciples of Jesus Christ by feeding body, mind and soul.”*

### February

- 2 Holy Communion  
College Connection  
Community Potluck Brunch  
Mission Trip Interest Meeting
- 9 Scout Sunday  
Evergreen Lunch at 12:00 pm
- 11 Mobile Food Pantry
- 16 Church Council Meeting after worship
- 23 Even 4 Others Collection
- 26 Wednesday Night Community Dinner:  
theme: Winter Warm Up

GIVE Online!

### March

- 2 Holy Communion
- 9 Evergreen Lunch at 12:00 pm
- 11 Mobile Food Pantry
- 19 Wednesday Night Community Dinner  
theme: St. Patrick’s Day
- 23 Grocery Card Collection



### Every Week Join Us In Study and Prayer:

[Dranesvilleumc.org/connect](http://Dranesvilleumc.org/connect)

- ◆ Sundays at 9:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School in person and via Zoom
- ◆ Tuesdays at 8:00 a.m. Prayer group is meeting virtually via Zoom
- ◆ Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m. and Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. Bible Study is held via Zoom

To get connected to any of the virtual meetings, please contact the church office by e-mailing [office@dranesvilleumc.org](mailto:office@dranesvilleumc.org) or leave a message at 703-430-3137 anytime.

**Office hours: Tuesday—Friday 8:30 am—12:30 pm**  
**Closed February 5th & 6th: Wed & Thurs**