

Manassas Church of the Brethren

April 2023

Peacefully. Simply. Together.



April has arrived!

This month we have a ton of activities for fellowship, faith, and fun. We begin this month with our hiking group at Stone Bridge Loop Trail on Saturday April 1st. Please see page 12. We will celebrate Palm Sunday on April 2nd. We begin our Palm Sunday with Rev. Dr. Jeff Carter leading our Adult Sunday School class. Dr. Tamisha Tyler will be our preacher for worship. Following worship we will host our Annual Easter Egg Hunt with a light kid-friendly meal, see pages 3 & 9.

On Maundy Thursday, April 6th at 7:00pm we will celebrate our Love Feast with a simple meal, feet-washing and communion. See page 3. On Friday April 7th, the sanctuary will be open from 8:00am—8:00pm for all to come and pray using our prayer stations. To learn more see page 5.

Easter Sunday, April 9th, our Youth will host an Easter Breakfast at 9:00am. Worship will be at 11:00am, there is no Sunday School, Children's Church, or Nursery on Easter. Folks are welcome to use the baby room on the balcony.

Our service day at House of Mercy will be on Thursday April 13th and our spring/summer softball team is starting! If interested in either, please see page 3. We are collecting paperback books for the Living Library Initiative, see page 14.

Also, it's time to apply for a Education & Enrichment scholarship! See page 10. On Friday April 14th we will host a game night and sundae bar. All are welcome! See page 8.

On April 29th we have two events! We will host our annual spring clean-up to make our church beautiful inside and out. See page 13 for information. Also, we are having a women's benefit concert, see page 14. Also in this issue, is how to communicate with church staff on page 6.

We will end this month with our Spring Congregational Council meeting on Sunday, April 30 immediately following the worship service in the Fellowship Center. We will hear reports from each ministry team and get a final update of Pastor Mandy's upcoming Sabbatical. Mark your calendars and look for more information to come."

We wish you all a lovely April and Happy Easter.



March Stewardship by the Numbers

Average Weekly Giving: \$6570.00

Average Weekly Worship attendance: 89

Average Weekly Worship online views: 45

Pastor's Page

When Jesus was asked “What is the Greatest Commandment?” He answered by saying, “The greatest commandment is to love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” What did Jesus mean when he called us to love our neighbor as we love ourselves? Did he mean it literally, figuratively, or something else? No matter how we read it, it is pretty clear that we are to love our “neighbors”, however you define them. So what would happen if every follower of Jesus made an attempt to build relationships with the people in the 8 households closest to them? How would that change our community? Join us for a sermon series this month as we explore what it means to love our neighbors in the series “The Art of Neighboring.”

The Art of Neighboring

-Pastor Mandy

Worship Themes

April 2—Palm Sunday

Psalm 22

Preacher: Dr. Tamisha Tyler

Worship. Leader: Rev. Mandy North

April 9—Easter

John 20:11-18

Preacher: Rev. Mandy North

Worship Leader: Terrie Cox

April 16— The Art of Neighboring: Tak- ing the Great Commandment Seriously

Luke 10:25-37

Preacher: Rev. Mandy North

Worship Leader: TBD

April 23—The Art of Neighboring: The Time Barrier

Luke 10:38-42

Preacher: Rev. Mandy North

Worship Leader: TBD

April 30—The Art of Neighboring: The Fear Factor

Luke 5:27-32

Preacher: Rev. Mandy North

Worship Leader: TBD

Events



House of Mercy Workday!

April 13th from 1:00pm-
4:00pm.

Please arrive at the House of Mercy thrift Store
at 1:00pm
8170 Flannery Court Manassas, VA 20109



The Spring/
Summer church
softball season is
starting April
14th! If you are interested in joining
the softball team, please contact
Sean North at ssnorth@gmail.com,
so that he can add you to the roster.



HOLY WEEK & EASTER

Manassas Church of the Brethren

10047 Nokesville Road Manassas, VA 20110

Holy Week is a time to reflect on the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Remembering Jesus' actions, reflecting on his messages and recommitting to living as his disciples in the world today.

We hope this schedule helps you plan to observe these important days, both on your own and with others. May you have a blessed Holy Week and Easter.

Sunday April 2nd - Palm Sunday

9:45am Sunday School with Jeff Carter
11:00am Worship with Dr. Tamisha Tyler
12:00 Lunch and Easter Egg Hunt

Thursday April 6th - Maundy Thursday

7:00pm Love Feast with feet washing,
communion, and a simple meal.

Friday April 7th - Good Friday

8:00am - 8:00pm Prayer Stations open in
the Sanctuary

Sunday April 9th - Easter

9:00am - Easter Breakfast
11:00am - Worship



Child Abuse Prevention Month and Healthy Families Prince William

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. As a congregation that cares deeply about children, you will be glad to know about a program that is doing everything in its power to eradicate child abuse in our community. That program is [Healthy Families Greater Prince William Area](#) (HFPW). HFPW is located within the SERVE Campus and operates under the umbrella of [Northern Virginia Family Service](#) (NVFS). The four primary goals of the Healthy Families program are to:

- Promote positive parenting
- Improve child health and development
- Promote school readiness
- Prevent child abuse and neglect

Mandi Fisher, the Senior Program Manager for Healthy Families Greater Prince William Area, says, “Something I always like to highlight is that parents voluntarily sign-up for our program because they want what is best for their children. Often the families we work with don’t have the best relationships with their own parents. They want to do things differently, but don’t know how. Healthy Families helps parents reflect on their own childhood and shares strategies and information to help them be the best parent they can be! “

Mandi and her team stay very busy throughout the year receiving referrals, doing assessments, and providing home visits for their families, whether in-person or virtually. In 2022, they received 309 referrals from partner agencies for families in need of services and a total of 225 families were served with 1241 home visits. 100% of parents surveyed reported that the program helped them with their parenting skills.

Based on a recent family satisfaction survey, several parents provided testimonies about how they were positively impacted by the program. Here are a few comments from the survey:

- “I was raised with physical punishments and my Family Support Specialist (FSS) helped me learn other ways to discipline my children”
- “The program has helped me learn parenting skills such as safe sleep practices for babies, how to talk to my baby and how to react when facing a stressful situation.”
- “My FSS has been very supportive and empathetic. I was going through a difficult situation that made me feel depressed and talking to her helped me feel better.”

HOW YOU CAN HELP

There is an **annual picnic** for participant families in the late afternoon of Wednesday, June 7th (rain date June 8th) at **Signal Hill Park**. Volunteers and supplies are needed for the picnic. More info to come.

Ongoing needs for the program: **baby blankets, diapers, wipes, and board books**. **Financial support** is always welcome to help support the cost of operations. To donate to Healthy Families directly, please visit the website: [Healthy Families Direct Assistance - Northern Virginia Family Service \(nvfs.org\)](#)

If you would like to learn more about Child Abuse Prevention Month and be more informed about the ways you can identify and prevent child abuse, please visit:

[Child Abuse Prevention Resources \(familiesforwardva.org\)](#)



These prayer stations will be open in the Sanctuary

Good Friday, April 7th from 8:00am—8:00pm.

Stone Prayer

Sometimes the weight that we carry is too much – the weight of shame, regret, grief, worry. Pick up a stone and let it represent something that is weighing on your heart, a burden that you carry. Feel the weight, pray about it, and then turn it over to God by laying your stone at the foot of the cross. Repeat with as many stones as you need to.

Filling Prayer

Sometimes you may hear the phrase, “You can’t fill up from an empty cup”. Sometimes, we feel empty. We’re tired, we’re drained, we’re stressed. We feel defeated and deflated. Use this time of prayer to get filled back up again. As you fill up the empty pitcher, think about the things you need more of in your life to feel fulfilled More rest, more love, more grace, more hope, more comfort, more peace Reflect on these words and imagine God pouring new life and new energy into you as you fill the pitcher. Repeat as many times as needed.

Prayer Wall

You are not alone. You do not carry your concerns or your celebrations alone. Share your joys and concerns on a post-it note and stick it to our prayer wall. Take a moment and pray for all the joys and concerns shared on the wall as you add your own.

World Map Prayer

Take some intentional time looking over the World Map.... Think of all the countries and all the places of the world and all the people and all of creation. Center your thoughts and mind on one location. Where is your heart drawn? What place? How can you pray for the people there? For creation there? How might your actions here affect their Sabbath rest there? How can you honor your need for Sabbath Rest which may offer Sabbath Rest for this place in the world?

Coloring Mandalas

Used as a spiritual guidance tool, mandalas help establish a sacred space. They act as an aid to meditation. Because of its symmetrical shape, our attention is immediately directed to the center. The design of the mandala absorbs the mind in such a way that chattering thoughts may cease. So, clear your mind, center your thoughts, and color a mandala while you release your stress and anxiety and find some Sabbath rest.

Walking the Prayer Labyrinth

Using a labyrinth involves moving one's body and opening one's heart to Jesus. All you have to do is follow the path and you will find the center. Unlike a maze the labyrinth has no tricks. A "typical" labyrinth experience involves preparing oneself at the threshold, following the single path to the center, spending time in the center, following the same pathway out the threshold, and then responding to the experience.

If this is your first encounter with the labyrinth you may wonder, "What is the correct way for me to do this?" Relax! Pray on the labyrinth the way you like to pray in other places. Have a conversation with God about the things that matter most to you, offer words and gestures of praise, or present your prayer requests to Christ; there is no "right" way to pray the labyrinth. If you still aren't sure how to get started simply repeat, "Thy will be done" as you move on the labyrinth. Another simple way to pray the labyrinth is to pray for others on the way, enjoy God's presence in the center, and pray for yourself as you move back towards the threshold.

Lighting a Candle Prayer

Light a candle for focus.

A flickering candle can help you stay focused in prayer. Simply light it (perhaps with an invocation such as, “Come, Lord Jesus, Light of the World”) and gaze into the flame as you pray. You may find it easier to shut out distractions as you watch the candle burn.

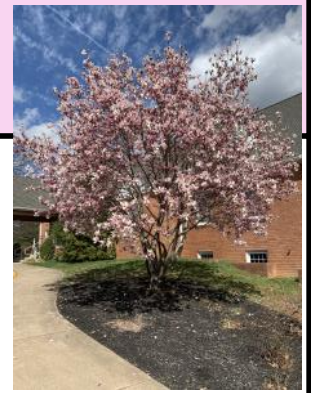
Light a candle in gratitude.

The warmth of light—whether a torch, lamp, candle or sunrise—brought blessings of safety, clarity and health to people in Jesus’ day. So, you may want to light a candle, accompanied by a prayer of gratitude for the blessings you enjoy.

Light a candle for someone.

There may be a friend or loved one for whom you feel a special concern right now. One way to remember and pray for that person is simply to light a candle and, as you do, ask God to meet that person’s needs.

Earth Month



Let's Celebrate April-It's Earth Month!

The Creation Care group has a new name. We are officially calling our ministry team Brethren Understanding of Green Stewardship (BUGS). BUGS is back! With Creation Care being one of the four pillars designated for action by our congregation in 2019, we believe it is time to bring the focus back to basics with these 4' principles:

- Celebrate, Respect & Revere the Earth's Blessings
- Demonstrate Good Stewardship in Managing Land & Facilities
- Engage Our Community in Environmental Work
- Work Together to Protect and Restore Our Watershed

These goals were laid out for us in the Partner Congregation Pledge with Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake (IPC) that we signed last year. One benefit of the partnership with IPC was the opportunity for our Creation Care Team to participate in the 3-part Faithful Green Leaders Training in March. The training helped us learn how to name and share our individual Creation care stories, build an effective team, and most importantly how to build a plan for action.

We Want (and Need) You!

Our next action focuses on removing non-native and invasive plant species from church property. You may have noticed vines around a lot of trees. These vines are not native and will end up killing an otherwise healthy tree. We have successfully coordinated with the Property Team on the upcoming Spring Cleanup and have created opportunities for you to help us remove these undesirable plants. Please consider joining our team on April 29 to start the process of removing unwanted invasive plants around the church property.

Another way we can all participate in the celebration of Earth month is to participate in the 2023 City Nature Challenge. [City Nature Challenge](#) The Washington DC area has been participating in the City Nature Challenge since 2017. It is held on the last weekend in April and relies on citizen participation for its success. Participants use the iNaturalist app (<https://inaturalist.org>) on a smart phone or a computer to document their findings, get crowd sourced confirmation, and to upload the data to a web site. While you are out and about or working on the church property on Saturday, April 29, take pictures and post them to the iNaturalist App to demonstrate your love of nature and God's creation. Please join us as we grow as BUGS – Brethren Understanding Green Stewardship!

Happy Earth Month!



How to Communicate with MCOB

Contact MCOB

Guidelines and best practices for communicating with the church office and staff:

1. For office related questions, including dates and times of events, serving on Sundays, financial questions, adding or removing a prayer request, or for bulletins and announcements, contact Kim Beaty via email office@manassasbrethren.org or call 703-368-4783. Kim is in the office Monday-Friday 8:00am - 12:00pm. **Please do not use social media or text for church business. Using either method of communication is not a guarantee that you will receive a response.**
2. For information on using or renting space in our building for church related events, family events and sports events; or for information on our community partners and working with other organizations, contact Tina Fisher at facilities@manassasbrethren.org. Tina is out of the office on Fridays.
3. If you have building maintenance or property questions, contact Gilmer Akers at maintenance@manassasbrethren.org or call 703-264-2166. Gilmer works 8:00am—12:00pm, Monday-Friday.
4. For Christian Education information, contact Deanna Gage at deanna.gage@manassasbrethren.org or call 703-864-6368.
5. For security, lock-up, or livestream questions, contact Ryan Dommer at ryan.dommer@manassasbrethren.org
6. For music program related questions, contact Susan Dommer at susanwdommer@gmail.com
7. For pastoral emergencies, pastoral visits, membership, or Baptism, contact Pastor Mandy North at mandy.north@manassasbrethren.org or call 703-395-5793. Mandy is out of the office on Tuesdays.

Deadlines

Weekly eNews—Tuesday evenings by close of business

Bulletin—Thursday evenings by close of business

Newsletter—Third Friday of each month by close of business.



Scrapbook Group

Sunday April 16th

12:00pm—2:00pm

Room 209

Let's
Laugh &
Play with
Friends

MANASSAS CHURCH OF
THE BRETHREN

GAME NIGHT

FRIDAY

APRIL

14

6:00PM - 8:00PM

SIGN-UP TO BRING THE
MAKINGS OF OUR SUNDAE
BAR!

Join us on Friday April 14th 6:00pm – 8:00pm for Game night and a Sundaes Bar! Click here to sign up for Sundaes Bar fixings: [Manassas Church of the Brethren: Game Night Sundaes Fixings! \(signupgenius.com\)](https://signupgenius.com)



Or Scan the QR
Code:





BRING YOUR
EASTER
BASKET!

PALM SUNDAY

EASTER EGG HUNT

AND EASTER BUNNY VISIT!

APRIL
2ND

12:00PM

ALL ARE WELCOME!

AFTER THE EGG HUNT, A FINGER-FOOD,
FAMILY LUNCHEON WILL BE PROVIDED
IN THE FELLOWSHIP CENTER - PLEASE
BRING A DESSERT TO SHARE.



Manassas
Church of the Brethren

Education & Enrichment Scholarships

Apply Now for our Fall 2023 Scholarships!
Applications are due May 1st!

Scan the QR Code to
apply!



MORE INFORMATION:

703-368-4783

APPLY TODAY!

office@manassasbrethren.org

It's Time for Scholarships! Apply by May 1st!

1. Click this link: [Education and Enrichment Scholarship Application \(manassasbrethren.org\)](https://manassasbrethren.org) or scan the QR code (see graphic) to open the application.
2. Fill out the application and save it to your computer or print the completed application.
3. Email the application to office@manassasbrethren.org or bring the completed application to the church office.

Living Library Initiative



Prince William Public
Defender's Office

LIVING LIBRARY INITIATIVE

PAPERBACK BOOK DRIVE

Our mission is to expand access to a diverse variety of books
for people incarcerated in Prince William County through
community collaboration

BOOKS NEEDED:

- Books in Spanish
- Vocational & trade books
- General fiction (all literacy levels)
- Non-fiction
- Biographies
- Motivational & personal growth
- Resume & job interviewing
- Financial literacy
- Addiction & recovery
- Science fiction

RESTRICTIONS:

- Extreme graphic violence
- Explicit sexual content
- Gang-related materials
- Bomb/explosive making
- Drug manufacturing
- Any how-to guides on tool making, escapes, martial arts & fighting



Accepting
paperback book
donations
through **May 15**

HOW TO DONATE:



DROP BOXES

We have drop boxes throughout Prince William County. Check out our social media to find a drop box near you!



LOCAL PICKUP

We may be able to accommodate local pickups. Contact us for details!



AMAZON WISHLIST

Check out our Wishlist for ideas and order books directly from there!



@pwdefenderslivinglibrary



Living Library Initiative



pwdefenderslivinglibrary@gmail.com

The Prince William County Public Defender's Office, which VOICE played a major role in creating in 2020, is committed to working with and for the community that brought them here. **The Living Library Initiative** is their fledgling project to benefit one of our county's most vulnerable populations. They are eager to bring new reading material to our local jail and are excited to strengthen their ties to the larger community they serve. Please bring your books to the church and place them in the book bin next to the Serve basket. Donations will be accepted through May 15.