The Martinsburg Cooperative Parish of United Methodist Churches Otterbein St. Luke's Trinity December 2024 The Bridge

One parish, three church campuses working together to be a bridge to the fullness of life in Christ.

Come share, worship, connect, serve, and learn alongside us.

Greetings, Martinsburg Cooperative Parish!

Advent is here, and it's not just a time of anticipation for Christmas but a season filled with excitement and a sense of community. Churches are bustling with Advent meals, the hanging of the greens, and the joyous tradition of Christmas Caroling. It's a time to come together and praise the Lord!

Advent is also a four-week season that prepares us for deeper Christian discipleship. Our Savior wants us to seek to follow Christ with an active faith. Loving God and our neighbors (Mark 12:30-31) are referred to as the Great Commandments and are the foundation of Christian discipleship.

Here is the question that we should be asking ourselves. What are ways that we can commit ourselves to observing these Great Commandments?

In 2024, the MCP took a deliberate step to embody the Great Commandments and strengthen our community outreach. St. Luke's and Winchester Avenue Elementary School initiated a new partnership. When the principal reached out for clothing donations for their supply closet, the church responded with generosity. The resulting image captures the joy and honor of serving the local school, a testament to the Parish's commitment to community service. Additional opportunities for each church of the parish are on the horizon.



Are we ready to take the next step in our Christian discipleship? The next step may be to join the monthly prayer group, participate in Sunday school, and volunteer at the Martinsburg Rescue Mission. These ministries represent a love for God, neighbor, and self.

Please let your pastors know how we can walk beside you to deepen Christian discipleship.

In Christ,

Pastor John C. Mayden, Jr. Pastor Mary Jo Sims

For the pastor on call, day or night, dial 304-664-4141 On Saturday, November 2, Pastor John Mayden, Parish Administrator, Ashley Albright, and I journeyed to Conference Mission Center in Fulton, MD to attend the initial meeting of a cohort of lay and clergy within our geographic region who are interested in learning more about Fresh Expressions (FE). Fresh Expressions is a movement within the ecumenical church that strives to cultivate new faith communities with new people in new places and in new ways. At the heart of Fresh Expressions is Jesus' command to "go", what we call the



Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20). The four values of the movement are inclusiveness, accessibly, transformation and connectionalism. The United Methodist Church is developing a vision and strategic plan to further the Fresh Expressions movement within our denomination and throughout the world.

The Rev. Dr. Michael Beck facilitated our gathering. Dr. Beck is a pastor in the Florida Annual Conference and the director of Fresh Expressions, Florida: "Fresh Expressions [communities] are created when Christians seek out simple ways to love those around them, create space for community to grow, and expand the definition of what the church can be" (Fresh Expressions, Florida). We learned that new communities of faith have been formed in such locations as tattoo parlors, dog parks, and Mexican restaurants (where a community of faith was formed around a weekly gathering of sharing a taco meal together). People are studying the Bible, praying together, and sharing with one another what God is doing in their lives in contexts other than church buildings and at times other than Sunday mornings.

When I was a teenager, I believed that God was calling me to be a missionary. I was right. Only the mission field to which I'm called is not some foreign land; it's all around us. It's to the folks who live in the city of Martinsburg and Berkeley County. Turns out, according to Gallup, only three out of every ten adults in the USA attend church regularly (news.gallup.com). And we're not really surprised by this. All we need do is look around us on Sunday mornings.

But I'm not alone in that call to the mission field that surrounds us. By virtue of our baptismal covenant, we are all called to respond to Jesus' command to "go." Most of the examples of Fresh Expressions ministries that Dr. Beck shared with us were fruit from the initiatives of laity not the innovations of clergy.

I want to make something clear: Fresh Expressions is not meant to replace traditional expressions of church. (Thank God, because I love the worship traditions we have in our churches.) FE is, however, a way to emphasize our actively going out to share the gospel in new ways rather than simply wait for folks to come to church.

During the next year, I will be enrolled in the Fresh Expressions Academy that our annual conference is offering. I will meet with other pastors and laity who are committed to discovering through the work of the Holy Spirit new ways to reach out to others in the name of Jesus. At the end of February, I will attend the second annual gathering of FXUM (Fresh Expressions, United Methodists) in Atlanta from February 28 to March 1. The theme of the gathering is "Love Alike: We Can Do Hard Things! I am excited because I am certain of this—people need to experience the grace of Jesus working in their lives.

I ask this of you: (1) That you pray for me as I continue to learn how to reach out to others with the love of Jesus. (2) That you share with me your thoughts/ideas about how we as a parish can reach out beyond our church walls to address the needs (physical and spiritual) of those around us. How can we be a church beyond our church walls? I would love to hear your ideas. Please feel free to reach out to me via phone call or text (443-841-2219) or email (stupot@comcast.net).

If you want to learn more about Fresh Expressions, go to the UM Discipleship Ministries website (umcdiscipleship.org) and look for the Fresh Expressions link or Fresh Expressions Florida (freshexpressionsfl.org) or simply search for Fresh Expressions.

Advent Blessings,

M J Sims



<u>December Preaching Schedule</u> Subject to change.

12/1/2024

OUMC: Pastor Sims
TUMC:

Dr. Ray Moreland SLUMC: Pastor Sims

12/8/2024

OUMC: Pastor Mayden TUMC: Pastor Sims

SLUMC: Pastor Mayden

12/15/2024

OUMC: Pastor Sims TUMC: Pastor Mayden

SLUMC: Pastor Sims

12/22/2024

OUMC: Pastor Mayden TUMC: Pastor Sims

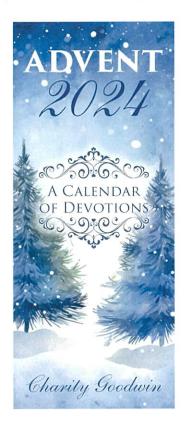
SLUMC: Pastor Mayden

12/29/2024 10 AM MCP

Combined Service:

Lessons & Carols
@ TUMC





The 2024 Advent
Devotional, "Advent 2024, A Calendar
of Devotions" by Charity Goodwin is
available at all MCP campuses.

Each day's reading includes the Scripture, a short devotion, and a brief prayer or practice. It is a great way to center your thoughts on the true meaning of Christmas each day of the Advent season.

You may also contact Ashley Albright to obtain a copy.



To contact Ashley Albright, MCP Administrator, simply email

umctrinity@comcast.net or trinityumchurch@gmail.com (Please use only these 2 emails to communicate with Ashley) or dial 304-263-9215, ext.4.

Please reach out to Ashley if you wish to be added to the MCP Email list.

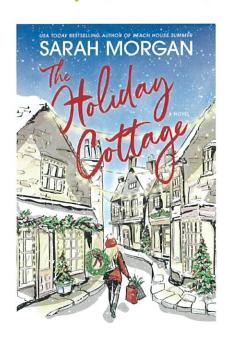
MCP Ministries

On Friday, November 8th, Mary Lee Vandevander and Pastor Mary Jo Sims delivered 99 hygiene kits to Calvary United Methodist Church in Mt. Airy, Md. Calvary UMC is a hub where all churches across the Western Region conference send or bring such kits. The kits are then taken to Mission Central, an UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) warehouse in Mechanicsburg, Pa. UMCOR has 8 such warehouses spread across the United States. The kits will be distributed where and when they are needed.



Kits are only one way to support UMCOR. Another way is to volunteer at a warehouse. The Missions Team at St. Luke's plans to do this in 2025 and hopes that folks across the MCP will participate. Another way to support UMCOR is through a monetary donation. Such donations allow UMCOR to purchase needed supplies. Donations may be one time only for a specific disaster relief fund or you may make monthly donations to be used as needed. UMCOR and its partners provide response every day to disasters across the globe. Currently UMCOR is delivering relief efforts in areas affected by Hurricane Helene. To donate to UMCOR, go to umcmission.org.





MCP Book Club

Our book for December is The Holiday Cottage by Sarah Morgan.

Save-The-Date

Our Christmas Luncheon at The Sycamore—December 9th 11:30 AM

Celebrating Our Members...

OTTERBE	IN BIRTHDAYS		
DEC 2	MEGAN HAMMERSLA		
DEC 13	CONNOR WATERS		
DEC 15	JENNIFER UNGER		
DEC 20	PAT WILSON		
	DANNY AHRENS		
DEC 22	ANITA COOPER		
	BETTY GUNNOE		
DEC 23	ART STAGGS		
DEC 24	RICK FRYE		
DEC 27	JOSHUA SPICKLER		
DEC 29	DAMIEN PIERCE UNGER		
ANNIVERSARIES			
DEC 17	GARY & REENIE RAINES		

		W.	
ST. LUKE	S BIRTHDAYS	TRINITY BIRTHDAYS	
DEC 1	ALEXANDRA SHULZ	DEC 1	JAY SMITH
DEC 7	COURTNEY DOYLE	DEC 4	LISA BETHEL
DEC 9	JEAN WATSON	DEC 5	DEBBIE GLOVER
DEC 12	BROOKE CANTLEY		KAYE PHALEN
DEC 16	BARBARA BROOKS	DEC 8	CASSIE EDWARDS
	LUCIE STARK	DEC 9	BECKY PYNE
DEC 23	JAMES WATTS	DEC 12	PEYTON & PATRICK EDWARDS
DEC 31	CATHERINE PARLETT		BROOKE CANTLEY
		DEC 14	DOLORES DETTER
ANNIVER	SARIES	DEC 15	SYRAH & URYAN GEORGE
DEC 12	JACK & MARY LENA LEFLER	DEC 23	ART STAGGS
DEC 18	STEVE & CAROL KENNEY	DEC 27	BETTY COX
DEC 22	BILL & BETTY MCDONALD		ANGELA TROTTER
	JACK & BOBBI ROGERS	ANNIVER	SARIES
DEC 30	WILLIAM & PATRICIA GRINNAN, III	DEC 14	STEVE & BETTY COX





Greetings MCP family! We are excited to announce a Bible Study (in addition to the current study at OUMC on Sundays morning after 9:00 worship) at the Otterbein UMC campus of the MCP!

The study, Luke: Jesus and the Outsiders, Outcasts, and Outlaws, is by Rev. Adam Hamilton and is based on the gospel of Luke. This is from the book cover of the study:

In Luke: Jesus and the Outsiders, Outcasts, and Outlaws, pastor and best-selling author Adam Hamilton explores the life of Jesus as told in the Gospel of Luke. Through's Luke's stories we find Jesus's care and compassion for all as he welcomes sinners and outcasts. As we study Luke and see Jesus's concern for those who were considered unimportant, we hear a hopeful and inspiring word for our lives today.

As we begin 2025, this study will be an opportunity to study Luke, the gospel reading for most Sundays in Year C of the Revised Common Lectionary, which is the liturgical year beginning with the first Sunday of Advent (Dec. 1, 2024) and lasting until Regin of Christ Sunday (Nov. 23, 2025).

The Bible Study will be on Wednesday mornings from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm in the Newcomer Classroom just off the Assembly Room of Otterbein UMC. The study will begin on Wednesday, January 8, 2025, and will last approximately 12 weeks. This will be a traditional in-person study. Darren Unger, a member at Otterbein and a certified lay speaker, will lead the study.

If you are interested in this Bible Study, please contact Ashley Albright at Trinity and she will order the study guide from Cokesbury, The cost is \$16.82.

We hope to see you January 8th!





SAVE THE DATE: Holiday Concert
Holiday Concert—Otterbein UMC
Saturday, December 7th, 2024
at 6 PM

Your donation will benefit CCAP Loaves & Fishes. Light refreshments will be served after the concert.

Those who would love to share their musical gifts with others, please contact Pastor Ed Hall (304-535-2765) or Pastor Mary Jo Sims (443-841-2219)

Things You Can't Eat Free Giveaway Wednesday, December 18th, 2024 9:30 AM at Otterbein UMC

1 bag per car. If more than 1 bag is requested, proof of address will be required to prove you are in different households.

We will be giving out items such as Laundry detergent, soap, toothpaste, and paper products.

Anyone who has a need for any of these items is welcome! Must be 18 years of age or older to participate.



St. Luke's UMC

December 2024



Welcome to St. Luke's UMC and Martinsburg Cooperative Parish. We hope that you find love and comfort in the house of God. He has blessed us with many loving hands and feet of Jesus. All welcome to join us each Sunday.

St. Luke's just completed their 54th Annual Arts & Crafts Bazaar. Pie making began early in July, next came candy making, and yummy soup making. That's not all! Delicious sandwiches and salads were prepared. And, that's not all either! Homemade crafts, jams, jellies, breads, and cookies were lovingly made to benefit this event. All in hopeful anticipation of the crowds coming and enjoying this special time in the life and ministry of St. Luke's UMC. All proceeds benefit the budget of St. Luke's UMC and missions both local and abroad. Come and see what you can be apart of with the Family of God. Many, many warm thanks to all the generous givers and hard-working people who work to make this happen every year.

In January 2025, you will see the stats resulting from this joyous day. So, stay tuned for the next edition of The Bridge Newsletter.

Mark your calendars for the following events in December:

Each Sunday in December each campus of MCP will host Advent Services.

Sunday, December 1, 2024, 5:00 PM, Advent Dinner at St. Luke's UMC

Saturday, December 7, 2024, 6:00 -8:00 PM, Holiday Concert at Otterbein UMC,

Benefits CCAP of Berkeley County, WV.

Tuesday, December 24th, all campuses of the Martinsburg Cooperative Parish will host Christmas Eve Services. See the times on the ad in this newsletter.

Find us on Facebook @ St. Luke's UMC Martinsburg WV or watch us live on YouTube @ SLUMC Worship





MCP Family,

The children and youth invite you to decorate our annual giving tree with hats, gloves, mittens, scarves, socks, and blankets. We need items for all ages. These items may be placed on the tree in Trinity's Fellowship Hall between Sunday, Dec. 1st, and Sunday, Dec. 29th. These items will be distributed through the TYCE program!

Thank you for decorating our tree to help this in need!



The MCP Children & Youth Christmas
Dinner & Program will be held
Friday, Dec. 13th, at 6 PM in the
Fellowship Hall at Trinity.

TUMC will provide the meat, rolls, drinks, and paper goods. This is a highly attended event. Please bring a covered dish to share.

All are welcome to attend!





Otterbein UMC

St. Luke's UMC

Marsha Spickler Gisler Girls
Marvin Ashby Janice Dodson
Bill Queen Catherine Neel

Lana Tonalli Candi Keiter-Johnson

Larry Clemons Pat Wilson

Randy Hess Barbara Lancaster

Nancy Kief Jim LeMaster
Jean Fulk Mike Wheeler
Arlene Mauck Jeremy Duke
Mike Emery Mike Shipe
Gary McDaniel Carol Wilson

Carol Shimel Brenda McDaniel

Lester Brining Kathryn Ford

Christie Heaton Carol & Bucky Hensler
Susan Cookus Betty Ann Keiter Tabler
John Kesecker Darlene Robertson

Trinity UMC

Those unable to attend worship:

Anne Keller (Celebration Villa), Mildred Wilson (Celebration Villa), Lana Tonalli (Hospice at Home).

Those in our congregation: Sandy Barron, Jean Eriksen, Geneva Hollida, Barbara Humes, Linda Humes, Sue Leatherman, Diana Ropelewski, & Mary Snyder, the Cooperative Parish.

Friends & Family of our congregation: Dr. Barry Dutton, Barbara Elliott, Chuck Fouke, Maggie Jackson, Ava Mae Lillard & family, Carole Newsome, Justin Price, David Tichnell, Pastor Angela Wells, Henry Wendt, Susan Wiltbank, Larry Winegarden.

Contact the Prayer Team

By phone, contact Bobbi Rogers (304-263-8746)
By phone, contact Pat Isner (304-754-9644)
By email, contact Nancy & Allen Barr
(nanal69@frontier.com)

Please remember to contact the Prayer Chain with updates on your prayer requests. They love to know how they can continue to pray or celebrate a praise with you!

Thank you.

You may also leave a message on the church phone (304-263-2788) or email (stlukesumc700@comcast.net)

Extended Prayer Concerns: Michelle McDonald, Isabella Munoz, Cooperative Parish Teamwork, Emily Nagley, Jay Parlett, Marvin Parlett, Eddie Roy, Josh Roy, Jeanne Tederick, Joyce Triggs, Roy Tucker, Mary Ann Wright.

Please update the church office with any changes to the extended prayer list.

Martinsburg Healthcare Center: Sue Sims Willow Tree Healthcare Center: Doris Dick Countryside Assisted Living: Emily Nagley, Jeanne Tederick

Celebration Villa: Joyce Triggs
Harmony at Martinsburg Assisted Living:

Anne Lea Rannells, Jean Watson
Williamsport Retirement: Sonny Boyd
Homewood: Margaret Bane

Healing Prayer Service

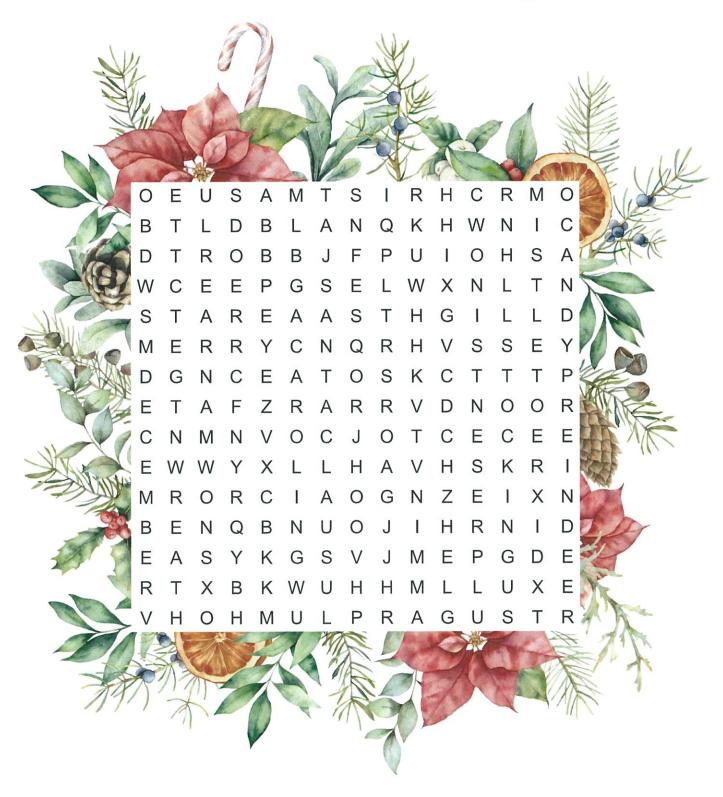
The MCP monthly prayer service for healing will be held at Otterbein UMC on Wednesday, December 18th, at Noon.



December 2024

Sunday 1 First Sunday in Advent 8:45am Sunday School @ TUMC	Monday 2 4:00pm MCP Serving our Mighbors @ Immanuel's	Tuesday 3 11:00am Homeschool Co-Op © TUMC's Orchard House	Wednesday 4 5:30pm STEM @ SLUMC 6:30pm MCP Coaching	Thursday 5 6:00pm TUMC Chancel Choir Rehearsal	Friday 6	Saturday 7 6:00pm Holiday Concert to benefit CCAP Leaves & Fishes @ OUMC
9:00am Early Morning Worship @ OUMC 9:45am Sunday School @ SLUMC 10:00am Mid-Morning Worship @ TUMC 11:00am Elim Church Service in Chapel @ OUMC 11:10am Late Morning Worship @ SLUMC 11:15am Youth Meeting @ TUMC 5:00pm MCP Advent Dinner @ SLUMC 6:00pm NarAnon Meeting @ TUMC	6:30pm District Boy Scouts @ TUMC 7:30pm Potomac Chapter Boy Scouts @ TUMC	5:30pm Girl Scouts @ SLUMC 5:30pm STEM @ SLUMC 6:30pm MCP Steering Committee @ SLUMC 7:00pm Boy Scouts @ TUMC's Orbard House 7:00pm Narcotics Anonymous @ OUMC	Participant Virtual Meeting with Coach Kay Kotan 7:30pm Elim Church Service in Chapel @ OUMC	Choir Rehearsal		
8 Second Sunday in Advent 8:45am Sunday School @ TUMC 9:00am Early Morning Worship @ OUMC 9:45am Sunday School @ SLUMC 10:00am Mid-Morning Worship @ TUMC 11:00am Elim Church Service in Chapel @ OUMC 11:00am Late Morning Worship @ SLUMC 11:15am Youth Meeting @ TUMC 6:00pm NarAnon Meeting @ TUMC	9 11:30am MCP Book Club Christmas Lunch @ The Sycamore 6:00pm Children & Youth Christmas Play Rehearsal @ TUMC 6:00pm Sleep in Heavenly Peace Team Meeting @ TUMC's Orchard House	10 11:00am Homeschool Co-Op © TUMC's Orchard House 9:30pm Girl Scouts @ SLUMC 5:30pm STEM @ SLUMC 6:30pm SLUMC One Board Meeting 7:00pm Boy Scouts @ TUMC's Orchard House 7:00pm BSA Order of the Arrow Meeting ® TUMC 7:00pm Narcotics Anonymous @ OUMC	5:30pm STEM @ SLUMC 7:30pm Elim Church Service in Chapel @ OUMC	4:30pm Christmas Dinner & 4:30pm Christmas Dinner & Play Set Up @ TUMC Good Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm TUMC Handbell Choir Rehearsal	13 6:00pm MCP Children & Youth Christmas Dinner and Program ® TUMC	14
Third Sunday in Advent 8:45am Sunday School @ TUMC 9:00am Early Morning Worship @ OUMC 9:45am Sunday School @ SLUMC 10:00am Mid-Morning Worship @ TUMC 11:00am Elim Church Service in Chapel @ OUMC 11:15am MCP Youth Christmas Shopping & Gift wrapping for Adopted Family @ TUMC 12:30pm Blood Pressure Checks @ SLUMC 6:00pm NarAnon Meeting @ TUMC	16 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	17 10:00am Pack for TYCE @ OUMC 11:00am Homeschool Co-Op @ TUMC's Orchard House 5:30pm Girl Scouts @ SLUMC 5:30pm Boy Scouts @ TUMC's Orchard House 7:00pm Narcotics Anonymous @ OUMC	9:30am MCP Things You Can't Eat Giveaway @ OUMC 12:00pm MCP Monthly Prayer Service @ OUMC 5:30pm STEM @ SLUMC 7:30pm Elim Church Service in Chapel @ OUMC	19 6:00pm TUMC Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm TUMC Handbell Choir Rehearsal	20	21 9:00am SLUMC Adopt-a- Street 10:00am Private Party @ SLUMC
Fourth Sunday in Advent 8:45am Sunday School @ TUMC 9:00am Early Morning Worship @ OUMC 9:45am Sunday School @ SLUMC 10:00am Mid-Morning Worship @ TUMC 11:00am Elim Church Service in Chapel @ OUMC 11:00am Late Morning Worship @ SLUMC 11:15am Youth Meeting @ TUMC 6:00pm NarAnon Meeting @ TUMC	23	Christmas Eve 5:00pm Family Christmas Eve Candlelight Service @ SLUMC 7:00pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service @ OUMC 7:00pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service @ Tunnc	25 Merry Christmas!	6:00pm TUMC Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm TUMC Handbell Choir Rehearsal	27	28
Pirst Sunday after Christmas Day 8:45am Sunday School @ TUMC 10:00am MCP Combined Worship: Lessons & Carols @ TUMC 11:00am Elim Church Service in Chapel @ OUMC 11:5am Youth Meeting @ TUMC 6:00pm NarAnon Meeting @ TUMC	30	31 New Year's Eve 11:00am Homeschool Co-Op © TUMC's Orchard House 5:30pm STEM @ SLUMC 7:00pm Boy Scouts TUMC's Orchard House 7:00pm Narcotics Anonymous @ OUMC	Happy New Year! 7:30pm Elim Church Service in Chapel @ OUMC	2 6:00pm TUMC Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm TUMC Handbell Choir Rehearsal	ယ	4

Christmas Day

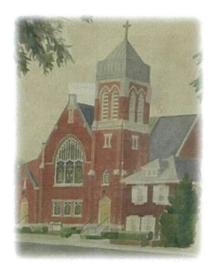


CANDY, CANE, CAROLING, CHRISTMAS, DECEMBER, HOLLY, LIGHTS, MERRY, MISTLETOE, NORTH, POLE, PEACE, PRESENTS, REINDEER, SANTA CLAUS, SLEIGH, SNOWMAN, STAR, STOCKING, SUGARPLUM, TREE, WREATH.



The Martinsburg Cooperative Parish Of United Methodist Churches
Pastor John C. Mayden, Jr.

Pastor Mary Jo Sims



Otterbein UMC
549. N. Queen Street
Martinsburg, WV 25401
304.263.0342
Sunday Worship –9 AM
secretary@otterbeinumc.net



St. Luke's UMC
700 New York Avenue
Martinsburg, WV 25401
304.263.2788
Sunday School 9:45 AM
Sunday Worship—11 AM
stlukesumc700@comcast.net



Trinity UMC
220 W. Martin Street
Martinsburg, WV 25401
304.263.9215
Sunday School 8:45 AM
Sunday Worship—10 AM
umctrinity@comcast.net