



2025 SMOKE SIGNAL

Our Mission Statement
Sharing the love of Christ with ALL
people.

*"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your
good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven."*
Matthew 5:16

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Some thoughts on Christian Nationalism

The Methodist churches I grew up in and have always been a member of, always celebrated patriotism. Every Fourth of July, we would recite the Pledge of Allegiance and celebrate the birth of our nation. We would remember the sacrifice of our founding fathers, the heroics of those who fought to build a country where freedom for all people was the law of the land. Freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of religion just to name a few.

Every Memorial Day, we would honor those who have given the ultimate sacrifice so that we could continue to live with liberty and freedom and to worship how we choose, which includes the choice to not worship. Every Veterans Day, we would celebrate and honor those men and women who have served our country in the past and who are actively serving in the military now.

We would always sing the great patriotic hymns that are found in any Methodist Hymnal. The American flag along with the Christian flag were always a part of every Methodist sanctuary I had ever been in. This is what Christian Nationalism means to me. It is all that I have ever known. At Burnt Factory Church, we have always, with pride, gratitude and humility, continued those traditions, and we have done so in what I believe are reverent, respectable and appropriate ways.

And like the churches I grew up in and have been a member of my entire life, none of them (BFC included) have ever tried to place patriotism above or equal to Christ or try to make our government equal to Christ's church! To do so, quite frankly, would be the definition of Idolatry. God is supreme and his sovereignty is without comparison! *"Thine, O LORD is the greatness & the power & the glory & the victory & the majesty: for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all."* 1 Chronicles 29:11 KJV

We can be patriotic in the church and still understand that it is the Triune God who we worship and no one else. We can be patriotic Christians and still believe that the church takes care of religion while the government takes care of the state. Freedom of religion and freedom from religion is foundational to the success of democracy.

Do we believe the founding fathers of our beloved country knew what they were doing or not? I believe they did! They were brilliant, visionary, Christian, and were wise enough to withstand the great temptation to create a national religion.

This does not mean by any stretch of the imagination that they did not consider the Judeo-Christian ethic to have a role to play, a big role! Christianity is foundational in our laws, it is foundational in our ethics, and it has proven to be instrumental in the success of democracy, but religion and especially morality cannot be forced.

The law must be written on our hearts, not on stone tablets. Religious freedom must be for everyone, every religion, or it is not for anyone.

Gordon Robertson of the Christian Broadcasting Network said, *"Religion that is forced is no religion at all. The best religion is freedom of conscience. Where you can have the religion of your choice."*

Robertson goes on to say, that some of the more zealous, so-called, Christian Nationalist organizations of today, those that claim God has made covenant with America and no others, is simply not true. For them to believe this entitles them the right to make and justify any decision regarding their version of religion in government, once again, is simply not true, and I agree with him.

The term and definition of Christian Nationalism has been hijacked by both the far left and the far right and both use the term to try and re-write history to fit their definitions, agendas, and in my estimation, erroneous interpretations. The proof is in the division they cause as opposed to the healing they should seek.

I guess I'm just getting old and missing the good old days when everyone knew that we *"Render unto Caesar what is Caesars and unto God what is God's."*

I am so thankful that I belong to a church that understands the importance of keeping our focus on Jesus and not the world!

Pastor Steve

September Birthdays

- 4th Angela Wiseman
 Bob Hunt
 Carol Delauter
 Zayne Bryant
 Cecilyn Bayliss
 Catherine Rhodes
 Linda Harrison
 Scoth Melvin
- 5th Randy Willis
 Denise Willis
 Alice Reaves
- 8th David Werdebaugh
 Linda Bodkin
- 9th Glen Boudier
 Sadie Blanchfield
- 16th Jennifer Stinnette
- 18th Brendan Luttrell
 Colton Luttrell
- 19th Sylvia Woods
- 20th Sequoia Britton
- 22nd Liz Duvall
 Brandy Woods
 Mallory Henschen
- 23rd Zoey Corron
 Ruth Riemenschneider
- 26th Grant Henschen
- 30th Debbie Burke
 Carter Lynn Kerr



Happy Anniversary

- 2nd Adam & Brandy Woods
- 9th Steve & Melanie Melester
- 21st Jim & Amy Shepley
 Eric and Robin Russell
- 25th Mark and Cheryl Jones
- 29th Sam and Catherine Rhodes
- 30th Gary and Kathy Dixon

Joys



Ezra Lauren and Elliot Stephan Carter were born to Laura Nelson's daughter Abby and husband Jaison.

Important



Aug 30 - Sept 10
 Pastor on Vacation.
 Call Carrie Fair
 if help is needed.

CONDOLENCES

As many have experienced the loss of a loved one, please remember them in prayer:



- Sandy Burkhart's mother Helen, claimed the promise of the resurrection.
- Please pray Pastor Steve's cousin Mary and her husband Derek. Derek's mother, Carol, claimed the promise of the resurrection.



“For no one is cast off
by the Lord forever.
Though he brings grief, he will
show compassion,
so great is his unfailing love.
- *Lamentations 3:31-32*

Children's Ministries Corner!

August was a great month! In Children's Church we started studying the Twelve Disciples. The children have been very interested in getting to know these 12 men who followed and learned from Jesus, and what we can learn from them. In Sunday school we started to "get to know our Bibles". We have looked through varying Bibles, and other resources to learn how to look something up and how to find a passage. We will continue to learn and grow from the disciples and learn about other followers of Jesus and how they all help us in our discipleship.

Blessings,
Miss Carrie

Have you given your email address to Keith Roberts, yet?

Pastor Steve has special notices he needs to send to those who attend Burnt Factory. The notices will include not only prayer concerns but also schedule changes during bad weather.

Keith keeps an email list in his computer for just such purposes. Your email address is protected, and emails are sent, recipients not disclosed, to protect your privacy.

Kindly send your email address to Keith Roberts at john.k.roberts@comcast.net with the message:

"ADD ME TO THE CHURCH EMAIL LIST"

Would you like to receive the Smoke Signal Newsletter by email?

Kindly send an email to Becca Ratliff at beccalea.ratliff@gmail.com with a subject:

"Add me to the Smoke Signal Newsletter email distribution"





All youth grades 6-12 are invited to participate in the following events:

September 7th: 4:30-6:30 pm Regular Youth meeting in the cottage. We'll have pizza, devotion, games, and fun! Friends welcome!

September 20th: 7:30-5:30 pm Museum of the Bible Trip! We will be traveling in style on the Varsity travel busses. Cost: \$20 + box lunch (additional \$15-\$18). Sign ups are in the Fellowship Hall.

September 21st: 4:30-6:30 pm Regular Youth meeting in the cottage. We'll have pizza, devotion, games, and fun! Friends welcome!

**Please RSVP to Miss Erin for any of the above events
youth@burntfactory.org, or text 540-535-5283**

Greetings from Outreach

The Outreach Mission Statement

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 4:10-11 (NIV)

This past Sunday, our Sunday School lesson talked about faith and works. We discussed how some Christians confuse doing good works with having a strong faith. Some even believe that doing good works will earn their way to heaven. The class understood that only faith leads to redemption and salvation, not works. It is not earned by deeds. However, a solid faith fed by the Holy Spirit does prompt a desire to do good and share Christ’s love with others.

I think sharing that love is what Burnt Factory does best. Burnt Factory Church is a family. I have seen it displayed often in the years that I have been a church member. I see it every Sunday in the service during the Passing of the Peace when everyone greets each other with smiles, hugs, and handshakes. I see it when the praises and prayers are announced. I see it when Miss Carrie gives the children’s sermon and the warm laughter of the congregation when one of the kids says something funny. I catch hints of it here and there when I overhear conversations giving comfort and see little acts of love with a card or gift or chore that gets completed.

I am blessed that I get to see it when this church does outreach. Our Handyman Team performs critically needed repairs and improvements to the homes of members as well as non-members. The Youth travel to hotels to hand out hygiene items. Volunteers devote hours to working at CCAP, in the food pantry, clothing house, driving the truck and working in the office. WATTS week is coming up and BFC devotes money, time, skills and camaraderie to the guests every night for a week. This Fall we are sending a mission team to Asheville, North Carolina to help rebuild after the terrible floods. Additionally, we have blood drives, support for cancer patients and their families, collections of food, school supplies, household items in support of our community locally and internationally.

All these works are an outward display of the faith we share in the Holy Father and his son, Christ Jesus. If you feel led to join us in outreach, please come to our meeting on September 4th at 7:00pm in the lower cottage, or you may contact me, or anyone on the Outreach Team. ALL ARE WELCOME!

Sharon Woodard
Outreach Committee Chair
sfwoodard111@gmail.com

CCAP Corner

CCAP Mission: Guided by our faith in God and love of neighbor, CCAP is committed to helping our neighbors meet basic needs with food, clothing and financial resources.

THANK YOU for continuing to support CCAP with our T-Shirt, underwear and socks donation during our July Quarterly CCAP Collection. These items are essential and greatly appreciated by our clients.

Pickleball Tournament – tentatively scheduled for Oct 11th. More details to come in the near future.

3rd Annual Golf Fore CCAP – Friday, Oct 24th **at Sly Fox Golf Club**. To register, go to www.ccapwinchester.org. All proceeds go to CCAP and Literacy Volunteers of Winchester.

CCAP of Winchester is a great place to give your clothing a second life. Because of limited storage, **we can only accept fall/winter clothing beginning Sept 1st**. We need the following gently used items:

- Fall/Winter clothes for **infant** thru **Adult** sizes; **Tennis shoes – All SIZES; Men's Jeans and T-Shirts**; Women's Jeans - sizes 2 thru 8; Sweatpants and Sweatshirts for all, Fall Jackets and Hooded Sweatshirts for all. **New socks and underwear for toddler through adult 5XL**, Men's belts and women's purses.
- **Adult** Backpacks & gently used/clean linens (sheets, pillowcases, blankets, & towels)
- **DIAPERS sizes 2 thru 6**; Hygiene Products for babies and adults; and Individual baby wipe packs.
- Tampax tampons, **Adult** disposable underwear in all sizes and incontinence pads.

We appreciate all of our donors!! Donations may be dropped off Monday-Friday between 9am and 2pm at 112 S. Kent St. Winchester. Call CCAP at 540-662-4318 for a scheduled donation drop off if these hours don't work with your schedule.

Our Friendly Neighborhood Freedges are community refrigerators that are open 24 hours a day for all to enjoy. The Freedges are stocked by your neighbors and community members with fresh produce, items they don't want to go to waste, pre-cooked meals, etc! Find them at these 3 convenient drop-off locations:

- **329 N Cameron St (location of this Freeedge was recently moved to 329N Cameron)** on the Our Health Campus – you can park on Cameron St and walk across to the Our Health Campus to drop off donations
- **102 Montague Avenue** at the Methodist Church
- **700 Aylor Road, Stephens City** at Abundant Life Church

Thanks so much for your continued support of this important, Community Lifeline.

Patty Leonard – Outreach CCAP Rep

Faith and Health Corner



World Alzheimer's Month is observed globally every September to raise awareness and educate people about Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. It culminates with World Alzheimer's Day on September 21st.

The goal is to spread awareness about dementia, challenge the associated stigma, and encourage people to learn more about the disease.

Dementia is a leading cause of death and disability worldwide, affecting millions of families.

This month provides an opportunity to educate the public about the importance of early diagnosis and the support available for those living with dementia and their caregivers.

As part of the importance of education, I would love to schedule a training date for Dementia Friendly Blue Ridge (DFBR), a collaborative initiative to enhance awareness of what it means to live with dementia by educating the community. This will help people with dementia so they can live, engage, participate, and thrive within our community.

Please let me know if you would be interested in receiving this training. You can text me at (540) 247-5612 (please include your name within your response) or email me at theresahgilbert@gmail.com

"You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make."
Jane Goodall

As always, I pray that you will both be a blessing and be blessed.

Theresa

You can reach me at any time by e-mail at tgilbert@afpdocs.com or theresahgilbert@gmail.com or by phone at (540) 247-5612



As your faith community nurse, I am here to serve as a bridge to better health, meeting the wholistic healing mission of the church by partnering with the pastor as a healer of the spirit, mind and body.

Burnt Factory Sisters in Faith

Purpose: “Burnt Factory Sisters in Faith is a community of women whose purpose is to connect and nurture women so that they can inspire, influence and impact local and global ministries”.



Burnt Factory Sisters in Faith met Saturday, August 16 for a wonderful program of learning and fellowship. The featured speaker was Kathy McHale from Project Esperanza. Kathy is the mother of Caitlin McHale, Project Esperanza’s founder and director.

Founded by Caitlin in 2005, Project Esperanza reaches out to homeless Haitian children in Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic who often are exploited and mistreated.

Project Esperanza has established schools and other programs to give these children a chance for a better life. Currently Project Esperanza is educating over 230 students.

Kathy informed us that Project Esperanza’s greatest need is for sponsors who will commit to supplying tuition for an entire school year. Burnt Factory has supported several students over the last ten years as well as helping to purchase a van and other crucial needs.

At Saturday’s meeting, Sisters in Faith decided to contribute funds to Project Esperanza as well as to several other Winchester area ministries. We also considered scheduling a Women’s Retreat sometime next Spring. Our next meeting will be October 11. All women of the church are encouraged to join us.

Apple Butter 2025



When: October 23rd to 25th

This will be a church wide event where everyone can join in including family and friends who are invited to help. Some preparations are already in progress. This year we will process 50 to 60 Bushels of apples from "Timber Ridge Fruit Farm". A "Sign up Genius" will be available the first week of September for volunteers to sign up for various activities that are spread out over several days. Such as:

- Apple Peeler operation and transport of apples
- Snitting Apples
- Set up shelter and overhead tarps
- Staging of materials
- Washing apples/cleaning kettles
- Fire starters and maintainers
- Stirring Kettle folks
- Pouring apple butter and processing jars
- Breakfast Preps
- Clean up

As you can see this is a major effort and is something that Burnt Factory Church has been successful at in years past. Please come and join in on this wonderful opportunity to fellowship and make new friends!

Dennis

WATTS 2025



WATTS stands for Winchester Area Temporary Transitional Shelter. The mission of WATTS is to break the cycle of homelessness one life at a time.

We want to empower individuals to re-enter the workforce and connect individuals to the resources needed to be as self-sufficient as possible while providing a safe, temporary shelter during extreme weather.

We are set to host the WATTS shelter for the week of November 29, - December 6, 2025.

Our WATTS shelter is located at the Stonewall District Ruritan Building in Clear Brook.

There will be a Signup Genius available for volunteers to sign up for various activities and times during our week of hosting WATTS.

We need a lot of help during our week to make sure that we provide our guests with a week of comfort and peace as well as some nourishing meals and plenty of coffee.

If you have any questions, please contact our WATTS Leader this season, Jim Grayson (540) 664-1735.

Opportunity to Serve



Please join us for a blood drive at Burnt Factory Church on Thursday, September 11th from 12:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

There are several of us routine blood donors that are unable to donate this time around due to medical procedures and under a doctor's care. So we are hoping for some "Fresh" blood donors to help us meet our donation goal of 25 units. Folks can see me (Dennis Loeffler) after services to schedule an appointment or Schedule an appointment today on line at <https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/drive-results?order=DATE&range=10&zipSponsor=burntfactory>



In the Garden

C. Austin Miles
(1912)



Chorus Spotlight

I come to the garden alone,
While the dew is still on the roses;
And the voice I hear, falling on my ear,
The Son of God discloses.

Refrain:
And He walks with me, and He talks
with me,
And He tells me I am His own,
And the joy we share as we tarry there,
None other has ever known.

September 2025 Calendar

Date/Time		Event
Tues 2 nd	5:30 PM	Praise Team Practice
	6:30 PM	Choir Practice
Thurs 4 th	Homeschool Group	
	6:30 PM	Boy Scouts Troop 63
	7:00 PM	Outreach
Sat 6 th	10:00 AM	Intentional Prayer Group
Sun 7 th	Shelter booked	
	8:30 AM	In-Person Worship
	9:45 AM	Sunday School
	11:00 AM	In-Person Worship
	4:30 PM	Youth Meeting
Tues 9 th	12:00 PM	2/4 BLT
	5:30 PM	Praise Team Practice
	6:30 PM	Choir Practice
Wed 10 th	Homeschool Group	
Thurs 11 th	Blood Drive	
	6:30 PM	Boy Scouts Troop 63
Sat 13 th	10:00 AM	Sisters in Faith
Sun 14 th	8:30 AM	In-Person Worship
	9:30 AM	Blood Pressure Checks
	9:45 AM	Sunday School
	11:00 AM	In-Person Worship
Mon 15 th	7:00 PM	Mission Team Meeting

Date/Time		Event
Tues 16 th	5:30 PM	Praise Team Practice
	6:30 PM	Choir Practice
Wed 17 th	9:30 AM	Pastor's Office Hours
	12:00 PM	Pathfinders
Thurs 18 th	Homeschool Group	
	6:30 PM	Boy Scouts Troop 63
Sat 20 th	Museum of the Bible Trip	
Sun 21 st	8:30 AM	In-Person Worship
	9:45 AM	Sunday School
	11:00 AM	In-Person Worship
	4:30 PM	Youth Meeting
Tues 23 rd	12:00 PM	2/4 BLT
	5:30 PM	Praise Team Practice
	6:30 PM	Choir Practice
Wed 24 th	9:30 AM	Pastor's Office Hours
Thurs 25 th	Homeschool Group	
	6:00 PM	Board Meeting
	6:30 PM	Boy Scouts Troop 63
Sun 28 th	8:30 AM	In-Person Worship
	9:45 AM	Sunday School
	11:00 AM	In-Person Worship
Mon 29 th	7:00 PM	Mission Team Meeting
Tues 30 th	5:00 PM	Praise Team Practice
	6:30 PM	Choir Practice



For more info, view the calendar on our website:

[CalenderNew](#) | [Burnt Factory Church](#)