2026
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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Well. Another year is in the books. When I was younger, many people who were older than me said, just wait till you get to be my age, time will go by faster and faster. They were right. It seems to be flying by faster and faster.

Having said that, Melanie and I are so blessed to be in ministry with all of you at Burnt Factory Church! It is hard to believe that we will be completing our 20th year in service to this wonderful faith community. In that time, we have experienced the providence, promise and blessings of God, as our Lord continues to be faithful. We have seen the Holy Spirit move in glorious, exciting, and vibrant ways! Melanie and I still remember the first time we came to the church for our official introduction in 2006, and the warmth and genuine affection you showered upon us then, is still being showered upon us now!

We are so very grateful and so honored to be a part of Burnt Factory Church and we are constantly amazed and perpetually humbled at your obedience to the Holy Spirit and your willingness to be the people that God wants you to be!

Melanie and I cannot adequately express to you how very grateful we are to each and every one of you for your grace, compassion, forgiveness, generosity, encouragement and love! As we continue to journey and ministry together; it is our prayer that each of you have a very happy and prosperous New Year! It is our hope that you will experience Christ anew and that all of you will know the peace that surpasses all understanding; the peace that came to us from heaven in a little baby born in a stable. It is our hope that all of you would continue to grow and foster abundant and overflowing fruit for the Kingdom of God, knowing that God sent his son to save us.

I cannot wait to see what our good and faithful Lord has instore for Burnt Factory Church this coming year. Let's all KEEP THE MAIN THING THE MAIN THING! "Jesus is the way, the truth and the life." And that is the main thing. If we stay unified in the MAIN THING, there is no telling what God will do! We are to live in this broken world, we are to live in a challenging culture, but we are not of this world. Our citizenship, our residency, our address, our P.O. Box is addressed, HEAVEN! We have a new home reserved for us already! Until we go to be with the Lord, we are to make a difference in this broken world for the glory of God. The church is the hope for the world and we are the church therefore we are the hope of the world too. Let's embrace that hope and maybe, we can instill in our little part of the world, a more positive, joyous, loving witness of Amazing Grace! We love you and want to wish each and every one of you a very Happy New Year!!

In Christ's Love

Pastor Steve, Melanie, Abby

(And Barney!)

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

Spiritual Connection-Associate Pastor Thoughts

I am so very blessed to be the new Associate Pastor for Burnt Factory. This calling into pastoral ministry has been one on my heart for a very long time. I have pursued pastoral ministry through several channels throughout my adult life. As a teen, I sang in the choir at my church, Nineveh Presbyterian, read scriptures, and learned from so many wise adults. The calling was there. In 1997 I went to church with a dear friend that changed my life forever. I was born again, joined Crums Church, and began a journey there starting Children's Church, was co-Youth Group Leader, reading scripture and preaching, co-founded a Christian preschool with a dear friend, and served on the board as the Christian Education chair. With the love of some wonderful folks, I attended the Walk to Emmaus and returned to serve on the Chrysalis Board for two years, which is the teen version of Emmaus. Rev. Kathleen Ross and Pastor Harvey Warnick were fundamental to encouraging my calling. I began the educational process by enrolling in (LFCC) now Laurel Ridge and received my Associates of Philosophy and Religion. I had so many wonderful professors encourage me, like my Public Speaking teacher, that I had a calling to be in front of people and my Philosophy Professor that said I had a gift. High praise that kept me moving forward. I entered the Candidacy Process shortly after taking several Lay Servant/Lay Speaker classes through the United Methodist Church Programs. I sat in front of the Candidacy Board and told my story. How my past would shape my future in helping people. I entered into the process and was assigned a mentor. I loved her deeply but at the same time as this process, I was told some deeply personal news and left the process to deal with that. A few years later, I applied to Liberty University for their Bachelor of Religion Degree and Completed that in 2011. That was a wild ride.

Spiritual Connection-Associate Pastor Thoughts Cont'd

While I was in school, working diligently on writing papers, studying, raising a family, and being a church leader. Around that time I had the worst church hurt come down on me. I was told that women should not be Pastors and I should just stay in Children's ministries and let that go. I left that church with so much hurt, found Burnt Factory, was counseled by Pastor Steve and embraced by this family. Healing came slowly but so much love and encouragement here kept me going forward. I left a job at Clarke County as a special needs assistant, to become the Children's Pastor here at Burnt Factory. I attended many conferences and continuing education classes to keep up my Lay Speaking and continue to improve my leadership skills. I attended so many Lay Servant Classes to the point I almost completed the Course of Study to become a Local Pastor. I inquired about this process through the UMC and was told that I would have to leave Burnt Factory and be placed in another church to go forward. After our disaffiliation, I approached the Global Methodist Church and was told the same thing. So, in order to stay here at Burnt Factory, I gave up that route. I love this church and all it stands for. I love the people here, and will serve this church for as long as I can.

Carrie Fair
Associate Pastor
Burnt Factory Church

January Birthdays

1st Keith Roberts
2nd Iris Sibert
3rd Noah Swimley
5th Karen Lynch
David Wales
8th Renee Stump
Derek Bursey
Jacob Taylor
10th Linda Snapp
13th Bill Shope
Kenny Rohrbaugh
15th Harrison Fair
Jimmy Grayson
Kelly Hays
Junior Blanchfield
18th Yvonne Katz
19th Terry Bouck
21st Stephanie Britton
22nd Jay Powell
24th Lilly Reed
25th Hayden Earhart
26th Scott Snyder
27th Ron Baker
Anne Bromley
28th Sharon Pitzvada
29th Gary Jenkins
30th Debbie Rhodes
Gail Winter
Audrey Sutphin
31st Mary Ruff
Jackie Livengood
Jason Wiseman

20th Jim and Yvonne Borror
24th Joy and Scott Melvin

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”

CONDOLENCES

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

- Rev Andy Brock claimed the promise of the resurrection.
- Darren Bursey's mother, Linda, claimed the promise of the resurrection.
- Pastor Ken Wale's sister-in-law claimed the promise of the resurrection.

"So do not fear, for I am with you;
do not be dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you and help you;
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."
- Isaiah 41:10

Dear Burnt Factory Church Family,

I hope you have all had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! I couldn't think of a better way to start off this year than to be stepping into my new role as director of Children's Ministries at Burnt Factory Church! I've spent the past few months shadowing Miss Carrie to make this transition as easy as possible for the little ones. She has been an amazing mentor to me and has helped me feel right at home in the children's area. I've had the best time spending time with, getting to know, and making connections with these kids!

As children's minister my first and top priority is to show our children the love of Jesus. Any child that comes through our doors will be welcomed with open arms, have a safe place to learn about the Bible, and be supported in wherever life may take them. I look forward to partnering with parents/guardians to help each of these children grow in their faith.

Year 2026 is going to be beautiful, and I conclude with the following Bible verse so that these words may guide us and help us to provide support for each and every one of our precious children at Burnt Factory:

"Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it." (Proverbs 22:6)

With gratitude and joy,
Erin Hartman
Children's Minister
Burnt Factory Church
540-535-5283

Greetings from Outreach

The Outreach Mission Statement

1 Peter 4:10-11 "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."

Happy New Year! This holiday is filled with hope and excitement for the year ahead as well as nostalgia and a little sadness for the year just passed.

Reflecting on the recent past, December was packed with activity at Outreach. We rang the bells for Salvation Army for the first three Saturdays of the month. Thanks to Cathy Barley for being the point of contact and organizing the first two Saturdays! Watts week was a success with hundreds of hours donated by our congregation as well as material and financial support. Great thanks to Jimmy Grayson for leading the effort and everyone who volunteered. Thanks to Kathy Dixon for organizing and managing the Christmas meal basket give away for Social Services. A total of 28 baskets and $2,800 was collected.

Patty Leonard is our CCAP representative. She provides wonderful leadership and donates countless hours in service at CCAP. Please read her "CCAP Corner" contribution to the newsletter for more information on what CCAP does and all that our BFC members do in support of this very worthy organization. We served our final Family Promise Meal of 2025 on the 21st and fed 68 family members staying in motels throughout Winchester. Thanks to all who donated, cooked, assembled, and especially Marcia Etu, Dave Darsie and Jimmy and Jo Grayson who delivered the meals last Sunday!

Greetings from Outreach Cont'd

2026 will surely provide lots of opportunities to serve in Outreach. If you are considering joining us but don't know where to start, come to the Ministry Fair held in February in the Fellowship Hall. Information on all Burnt Factory's ministries will be available and you can learn about them. It is always a fun and informative time. If you would like to hear what the Outreach Team is doing before then, please join us at our next meeting on **Thursday, January 8** at 7p.m. in the lower cottage. We will be meeting one week later than normal as the first Thursday of January falls on New Years day.

Grace and Peace to you all,
Sharon Woodard
Outreach Committee Chair
sfwoodard111@gmail.com

Bagged Lunch Tuesdays

Some people might wonder what people at Burnt Factory are talking about when they refer to a BLT group. It is not a gathering dedicated to the consumption of bacon, lettuce and tomato sandwiches. Instead, BLT or Bagged Lunch Tuesday, is an opportunity for Burnt Factory people to get together for an informal bring-your-own lunch and experience conversation and fellowship. It is a relaxed gathering for both men and women where you can meet new friends while sharing a meal together.

Starting in January, BLT will meet once a month instead of twice. The meeting will always be held on the second Tuesday of the month. The next meeting will be January 13 at noon. Please think about joining us.

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.

CCAP is grateful for the many ways our church facilitates the mission of CCAP. As we begin 2026, the needs are greater than ever. We have several volunteers that go in weekly, and have done so for a long time. Our weekly volunteers are: Donna Bonjo, Dave Darsie, Marcia Etu, Kathy Dixon, Cheryl Jones, Kathy Dick, Laine Everhart, and me. We volunteer in several different areas. Thanks so much to all of you who give of your time, your compassion, and your talents to help others. Bonnie Henry and Linda Harrison volunteered at the Christmas Food Giveaway and both really enjoyed the experience. There is always a need for more volunteers and we would love to have you join us.

<u>Current Donation Needs:</u>

Items most requested:

- **Men's Jeans, men's and women's sweatpants, hooded sweatshirts, T-Shirts, tennis shoes, new boxer brief underwear and new socks.**
- All sizes of baby/child winter clothing; infant sizes thru teen;
- Adult Backpacks and gently used/clean linens (sheets, pillowcases, blankets & towels);
- New underwear – all ages and sizes

CCAP Corner

Food Pantry Items needed:

- Spaghetti Sauce/Diced Tomatoes (Cans only)
- Spaghetti and other pastas and Rice
- Canned meats (tuna, chicken, beef, ham)
- Shelf stable Juice and Milk
- Cereals, crackers, cookies Peanut butter, jelly and jam
- Ramen cup-a-soup, Mac and Cheese cups
- Canned Fruit
- Infant and baby foods (must have current dates)
- Toiletries/Paper Products
- Laundry detergent

We now have 4 Neighborhood FREEDGES. With so many more people in need, these Freedges are more important than ever. These 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!

- **329 N Cameron St** 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
- **Wayside Inn in Middletown**

Donations may be dropped off Monday-Friday between 9am and 2pm at 112 S. Kent St. Call CCAP at 540-662-4318 from 9 to 4 daily for a scheduled donation drop off if these hours don't work with your schedule.

On behalf of Outreach, thank you for your extraordinary commitment to this cause, we are making a difference.

Patty Leonard, Outreach CCAP Rep

Faith and Health Corner

Welcoming a New Year of Wellness, Faith and Purpose

January arrives like a clean page – quiet, calm, and full of possibility. After the fullness of Advent and Christmas, the New Year offers us a time to slow down, reflect, and gently realign our lives with the rhythms God intends for us. As your parish nurse, I invite you to enter this season with intention: caring for your body, nurturing your spirit, strengthening your mind, and embracing the gift of community.

The start of a new year naturally prompts us to look back and look forward. We pause to remember where God has carried us, to acknowledge blessings and challenges, and to consider what we hope to cultivate in the months ahead.

Reflection doesn't need to be elaborate. You could try any of the following:

- **A weekly check-in the God**: thanking Him for the week behind you and inviting His guidance for the week ahead.
- **Choosing a Scripture "focus word"** for the year such as *peace, hope, courage or gratitude*.
- **Journaling or quiet prayer**, allowing space for God's voice to rise above the noise.

Winter can bring emotional challenges – shorter days, quieter schedules, and sometimes loneliness. You are not alone. God offers comfort, and the church community can be a source of warmth and connection.

Faith and Health Corner Cont'd

Consider:

- **Calling or visiting someone**
- **Participating in Bible study, choir or fellowship events**
- **Practicing gratitude** by naming three blessings each day
- **Reaching out for support** if you struggle with low mood, anxiety or grief.

January reminds us that God is continually doing new work in use, even when our days feel ordinary. As Isaiah 43:19 proclaims, *"See, I am doing a new thing!"*

Gracious God,
As we step into a new year, fill our hearts with hope and our minds with clarity. Guide our steps toward health, peace and purpose. Strengthen our bodies, renew our spirits, and draw us closer to You and to one another. May this year be filled with your grace and gentle leading. Amen

As your parish nurse, I am here to support you in this season. Whether you have health questions, need help navigating a diagnosis, or simply want someone to pray with you, please feel free to reach out.

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

January is First Responders Cancer Month

First responders, especially firefighters, face higher cancer risks due to exposure to carcinogens (like smoke and asbestos) and chronic stress.

Why First Responders are at a Higher Risk

- **Toxic Exposures**: Firefighters encounter a cocktail of harmful chemicals from burning materials, including polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and PFAs (in firefighter foams).
- **Stress & Sleep Disruption**: The high-stress environment and shift work negatively impact immune function and detoxification.
- **Contamination**: Carcinogens from fires settle on gear (PPE) and vehicles, leading to secondary exposures even after the fire is out.

Common Cancers Linked to First Responders

- **Prostate Cancer:** Significant elevated risk.
- **Testicular Cancer:** Linked to firefighting foam
- **Kidney, Esophageal, Oral, Lung Cancers:** Increased incidence noted in studies.
- **Mesothelioma & Melanoma:** Also higher risk.
- **Leukemia & Thyroid Cancer:** Elevated in 9/11 responders, showing broad risks.

Key Prevention & Screening

- **Proper PPE Care:** Cleaning gear after every fire (NFPA 1851 standards).
- **SCBA Use:** Staying on air until overhaul is complete.
- **Regular Screenings:** Annual skin checks, PSA tests (prostate), mammograms (breast), and lung cancer screenings for high-risk individuals.

The Bottom Line

Cancer is the leading cause of death in the fire service, making awareness, decontamination, and early detection essential for protecting these critical workers.

100% of all donations to The Believers go directly to help cancer patients in Winchester, Frederick County, Clarke County, Warren County, Fauquier County and Page County through the Helping Hands Cancer Outreach organization.

"Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass…It's about learning to dance in the rain."

Vivian Greene

Theresa Gilbert
(540) 247-5612
theresahgilbert@gmail.com

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".

It was a joy to wrap up this year with "A Christmas Tea". The decorations were beautiful with each person receiving a cup, saucer and spoon. Martha Inglis asked some questions to test our knowledge about tea and she also told us some very interesting facts. The refreshments were delicious.

We enjoy celebrating the missions we feel called to do. We adopted a mother and her 17- and 19-year-old daughters at Laurel Center. Many of us purchased an abundance of gifts. You could feel the love for this family.

We gave a donation of $250.00 each to Laurel Center, ABBA, Evan's Home and Special Love.

It's been a pleasure being in ministry with these ladies. We are making a difference!

The next meeting is February 21 at 10:00 in Fellowship Hall. Come join us.

Chorus Spotlight

It is Well with My Soul

Horatio Spafford and Philip Paul Bliss
(1876)

When peace like a river, attendeth my way
When sorrows like sea billows roll
Whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say
It is well, it is well, with my soul

It is well
With my soul
It is well, it is well with my soul

January 2026 Calendar

Date/Time		Event
Thurs 1st	6:30 PM	Boy Scouts Troop 63
Sun 4th	8:30 AM	Worship
	11:00 AM	Worship
Wed 7th	9:30 AM	Pastor's Office Hours
Thurs 8th	6:30 PM	Boy Scouts Troop 63
Sun 11th	8:30 AM	Worship
	11:00 AM	Worship
Tues 13th	12:00 PM	2/4 BLT
	5:00 PM	Praise Team
	6:30 PM	Choir Practice
Wed 14th	9:30 AM	Pastor's Office Hours
Thurs 15th	6:30 PM	Boy Scouts Troop 63

Date/Time		Event
Sun 18th	8:30 AM	Worship
	11:00 AM	Worship
Tues 20th	5:00 PM	Praise Team
	6:30 PM	Choir Practice
Wed 21st	9:30 AM	Pastor's Office Hours
	12:00 PM	Pathfinders
Thurs 22nd	6:30 PM	Boy Scouts Troop 63
Sun 25th	8:30 AM	Worship
	11:00 AM	Worship
Tues 27th	5:00 PM	Praise Team Practice
	6:30 PM	Choir Practice
Wed 28th	9:30 AM	Pastor's Office Hours
Thurs 29th	6:30 PM	Boy Scouts Troop 63

For more info, view the calendar on our website:
[CalenderNew | Burnt Factory Church]