

Latest Events @ Forest Grove UMC

Forest Grove United Methodist Church will be a loving Christian community using our spiritual gifts to welcome all God's people as we worship and serve God in the world.

Forest Grove United Methodist Church
13384 Ashland Road, Ashland, VA 23005
Website: www.forestgrovera.org



January 4, 2026

WELCOME!

It is a joy to have you with us for this time of worship. We pray that this time will be inspirational for all and hope you will come and worship with us as often as possible.

New Mailing Address!

The church has a Post Office box! Please direct any tithes and mail to this address:

Forest Grove UMC
Post Office Box 157
Ashland, VA 23005

Welcome Pastor Florence!

Forest Grove welcomes the Rev. Florence Brooks, an ordained elder in the Virginia Conference. Florence and her husband, Burt, also an ordained elder, have 5 children, ages 15 to 27. Florence is a native of Mississippi and came to Virginia to attend the former Randolph-Macon Woman's College, now Randolph College. She will be Forest Grove's interim pastor through the end of June 2026. One of her favorite verses is, "The joy of the Lord is my strength" (Nehemiah 8:10).

Nurture Committee

The Nurture Committee will meet this Wednesday at 10:30am. If you are interested in joining, let Pastor Florence know.

Volunteers Needed!

Please prayerfully consider helping with the following: Preparing and helping serve Communion, Scripture reading, and Front desk Greeters. Let Pat Weinstein or Florence know if you have any questions and would like to help with any of these and you will be added to the list. Thank you.

Stewardship Message

We give not out of obligation, but out of gratitude. Tithing is a spiritual discipline that helps us align our hearts with God's generosity. Whether you give 10%, 2%, or simply what you can — let it be a prayerful act of worship. Ways to give:

- Drop an offering in the offering plate at the back of the Sanctuary.
- Mail an offering to the **New** Post Office Box: Forest Grove UMC, PO Box 157, Ashland, VA 23005
- Online to "Forest Grove Ashland" at Tithe.ly:
https://tithe.ly/give_new/www/#/tithely/give

Your tithes at work: Through your faithful giving, our church supports not only our local church but a portion also goes to the Virginia Conference to fund clergy education, disaster relief, new church development, and global missions. Together, we're part of something bigger — sharing Christ's love across our community and the world. Thank you for giving generously and prayerfully.

Hanover Cluster Partnering

Forest Grove is looking at creative ways to partner with fellow UMC churches in our Hanover Cluster in worship, education, and service. For service and outreach, Forest Grove will focus our collections.

Roland Mills will lead the ministry to ensure deliveries are made to support Kenwood UMC's **Elmont Community Food Pantry**, in partnership with First Baptist Church of Elmont. Please consider donations as you are able. A basket is set in the Narthex.

Immediate Needs:

Jelly, Instant potatoes, Bagged rice

Upcoming event focuses on racial injustice

On Saturday, February 28, 2026, the Racial Justice Network (RJN) is hosting the Resisting Racial Injustice in the Way of Jesus Conference at Belmont UMC in Richmond. The RJN is an informal group of persons from different churches and backgrounds building strong cross-racial relationships and working together to learn about and address racial justice issues. The keynote speaker for the conference is Rev. Ben Campbell, Episcopal priest, civil rights activist, founder of Richmond Hill, and author of "Richmond's Unhealed History". In addition, three workshops will be offered: Conversations as Resistance with Rev. Lan Wilson, VAUMC Director of Belonging and Advocacy; Non-violent Direct Action as Resistance with Rev. Dr. Jim Melson, Executive Director of Cornelius Corps; and Spiritual Formation as Resistance with Rev. Tom Baynham, Richmond Hill Director of Outreach and Spiritual Formation. Make plans today to join us on February 28. Registration will be available soon. For questions, email racialjnetwork@gmail.com.

Advocate – December 16, 2025

Registration open for Lay Servant Academy courses

Join in February for Training Weekend featuring the Basic Course, Class Leaders, Leading Worship, and more. PLUS! Lent offers a deeper journey through Soul Reset, Daily Disciplines, and the Talking Bible. Laity and clergy are invited to sign up for courses. [Click here to see all the courses and to register...](#) Please direct questions to [Tianna Durbin](#) and [Richard Speirs](#).

Advocate – December 9, 2025

Forest Grove Memorial Garden

We now have cremation plots available in Forest Grove's cemetery. These are specially designed spaces in our cemetery where you can place the ashes of your loved ones. They offer a permanent and dignified memorial. If you have any questions or would like more information, please see Richard Mills or Carl Stanley.

Weekly Devotional

Scripture Focus: Matthew 2: 1-12

This Sunday we'll look at the wise men who followed a star to find Jesus. It's a story we know well, but there's one detail that changes everything.

After they worshiped him, Matthew tells us, "they went home by another way." They didn't take the road back through Jerusalem like King Herod expected. They listened to a dream, took a risk, and went home by another way.

I think Matthew means more than just a different road.

The wise men didn't stay with Jesus. They didn't become disciples. They went back to their regular lives — their work, their families, their routines. But something had changed. The encounter changed them, and they carried that change home.

That's how it works for most of us. God doesn't call us to abandon everything and start over.

God calls us to go home — but to go home by another way. Different priorities. Different choices. Different eyes to see with.

For reflection this week: Where is God showing you another way home? Maybe it's a relationship that needs repair. A habit that needs changing. A way of living that isn't working anymore. The old way is familiar, even when it's not good for us. But God insists there's another way.

JOYS & CONCERNS

January Celebrations: Many blessings to these beloved members of our church family

Birthdays:

Joanne Patterson, Jeremy Woodson, Russell Williams, Matthew Thomas, Christian Bott, Joyce Swann, Andrew Bott, Mary Cannada, Wayne Hall, Paul Fleshood, Megan Thomas, Erin Morrison

Anniversaries:

Ken and Linda Crabbs

Special prayers:

1/4/25

Russell Mills – hospital - home now
Andrew Stanley – health issues over Christmas
Beverly Batchellor – recovery from a stroke on 12/19
Spencer – stroke recovery
Baby Graham – respiratory concerns
Gayle Parker – hospital – home now
Vanessa and Dustin – prayers for healing
Joseph – prayers for healing
Gail Lane – continued prayers for healing for broken wrist
Sage – feeling better
Norman – prayers for healing

12/28/25

Joy: Dee Utrich thoroughly enjoyed her visit from the Christmas carolers!

Family and Friends of Pattie Crane Betz (Pixie Fleshood's aunt), who passed away on December 17.

David Fleshood's (Paul Fleshood's brother) continuing health struggles.

Gail Lane successful wrist surgery, prayers for continued healing.

Gayle Parker prayers for health and well-being.

Gratitude for Diane Ware for providing Sunday music for Forest Grove.

12/21/25

Gail Lane had surgery on her right wrist Wednesday and is home recuperating.

Gayle Parker is recovering at home after a short hospital stay for a COPD episode.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sundays	11:00am	Worship
Sun Jan 4	11:00am	Worship
Sun Jan 11	11:00am	Worship
Wed Jan 14	10:30am	Nurture Committee meeting
Sun Jan 18	11:00am	Worship
Sun Jan 25	11:00am	Worship
Sun Feb 1	11:00am	Worship
Sun Feb 8	11:00am	Worship