

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
Facebook: [Forest Grove United Methodist Church](#)
Website: www.forestgrovera.org



February 8, 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

Upcoming Events

Wednesday, February 18th – 5:00pm – Ash Wednesday Service, Forest Grove Sanctuary – followed by a pancake supper

Saturday, February 21st – 1:00pm - Memorial service for Marian Bomberger at Kenwood United Methodist Church, 11208 Elmont Road, Ashland

~NEW DATE~ **Sunday, February 22th – 9:30am** – Fellowship Hall – Valentine Event - Please join us for a special multigenerational Sunday School lesson and outreach activity on Sunday, February 8, 2026 at 9:30 AM. We will be led in a Valentine's related Bible study followed by making gift bags for a neighbor or shut in. There will also be some yummy treats to share with one another before joining together for worship at 11:00 in the sanctuary. All are welcome! If you have questions or need

more information, please reach out to Sheila Bailey.

Tuesday, February 24th – 10:30am – Lenten Bible Study begins – “Because of This, I Rejoice” – Forest Grove Fellowship Hall (Please let Florence know if you are attending.)

Facebook Update

We have a new Facebook page! Please join us there and follow the page for updates and event information.

[Forest Grove United Methodist Church](#)

Opportunities to Serve

Teams of two to prepare communion for First Sundays. Please reach out to Florence, if you are interested.

Elmont Community Food Pantry

Kenwood UMC, in partnership with First Baptist Church of Elmont, runs the Elmont Community Food Pantry. We would like to help support their effort and encourage everyone (as you are able) to try to bring a can or non-perishable item each week. There is a basket in the narthex to collect donations. Deliveries are made each week to Kenwood UMC. All items are welcome and we will update weekly with most needed items. Thank you for your support!

Immediate Needs:

Chunky soup, Instant mashed potatoes, Spaghetti sauce

Lenten Bible Study

It's not too early to make plans to join Forest Grove UMC for a Lenten Study. Read the details and save the dates and time on your calendar.

"Because of This I Rejoice"

What if Lent wasn't about giving things up, but about drawing closer to God?

Starting Tuesday, February 24, through Tuesday, March 31, we'll gather for a 6-week study of Paul's letter to the Philippians facilitated by Rev. Florence Brooks. Even while imprisoned, Paul discovered spiritual practices that kept him connected to God's power and presence - and filled him with joy. Practices that can still make a difference for us today in the midst of life's many challenges.

"Because of This I Rejoice" invites us to move beyond spiritual chores and New Year's resolution-style promises. In our time together each week, we'll explore practices that help us focus more on God, allowing joy to flow through our lives no matter what we're facing.

This isn't about achieving. It's about drawing near to the One who longs to draw near to us.

Study begins: Tuesday, February 24 at 10:30 a.m.

Location: Forest Grove UMC Fellowship Hall

Cost: Suggested contribution of \$9 per book

Books will be available for participants.

All are welcome from the Forest Grove community and beyond. This is a great opportunity to enjoy time with others in fellowship and study.

Questions? Reach out to Florence.

I hope you'll be able to make time to join us on Tuesdays.

With joy! Florence

Website Update

Out of a desire to encourage local churches to create an online presence, the Three Notch'd District received a grant to provide Forest Grove and other small churches with the resources for

a website. Visit Forest Grove's website at: ForestGroveRVA.org

A Few Things to Celebrate

*FGUMC submitted its annual report to the Conference, which summarizes membership, finances, and property. Many thanks to each of those who contributed data for the report.

*Sheila Bailey recently created a new Facebook page for FGUMC. Be sure to find us and follow us!

*Our electronic sign has been refreshed with new slides and current information. Thank you to Melinda Mills for her work on this.

*The church's phone is now working and the voicemail is back online.

*The Nurture Committee met recently to review and update our homebound list and is actively reaching out to homebound members.

*The Administrative Council also met recently to review the work of the church and discuss areas of need. The next meeting is set for a Sunday in April.

*Forest Grove was one of 534 churches in the Virginia Conference that paid 100% of their apportionments for 2025. Apportionments make possible the shared work of the Church — developing leaders, supporting congregational vitality, extending compassion and justice, and sustaining our connection. Every contribution, regardless of amount, plays a meaningful role in this mission.

Message from Drew

Aloha to all,
My mother finally has a date for her funeral. It is at Arlington National Cemetery, April 10, 2026 at 1PM. Any who wish to attend are asked to be at the cemetery at 12:15 for the procession. Thank you and Mahalo.
Aloha, Drew

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 UMC, 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.

US pastors stand against federal crackdown

UNITED METHODIST NEWS--United Methodist clergy from across the U.S. joined in a Minnesota interfaith protest Jan. 23 against federal violence. Now with federal agents responsible for another person's death, pressure for accountability and truth-telling is mounting. United Methodist clergy from outside the state say that what they learned in Minnesota they plan to apply in their own communities. [Learn more...](#)

Advocate – February 3, 2026

United Methodist Church Bishops condemn violence in Minnesota

January 26, 2026--The Council of Bishops of The United Methodist Church released a statement on the violence ongoing in Minnesota. The letter

said in part, "The United Methodist Church deplores the use of violence, fear, separation, and intimidation as a means of creating social order. Such means do not build beloved community. We reaffirm our longstanding commitment to the sacred worth of every person and to the way of peace taught and embodied by Jesus. We stand against the separation of children from their families. We detest the inhumane, evil actions that are perpetuated by governmental authorities." [Read more...](#)

Advocate – January 27, 2026

New District Superintendents announced

Bishop Sue Hauptert-Johnson is pleased to announce the appointment of two new District Superintendents to serve the Virginia Annual Conference beginning July 1, 2026: Rev. Grace Han will serve the Three Notch'd District and Rev. Alan Combs will serve the Valley Ridge District.

"I am delighted to welcome Rev. Han and Rev. Combs to my Cabinet," Bishop Sue said. "Both bring with them the immense trust of the clergy and laity of the Virginia Conference from their years of effective ministry in the local church. They are both well-versed in the connectional nature of United Methodism. I am so grateful for all they will bring to their respective districts as well as to the work of the Cabinet as a whole." [Read more...](#)

Advocate – January 20, 2026

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 – January 6, 2026

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:

You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden." (Matthew 5:13-14)

Dear Forest Grove community and friends,
I've often observed that after a snowfall, the snow surrenders first at the feet of trees, melting away in quiet circles while the wider world stays frozen. As frequently as I've seen this phenomenon and thought it curious, it was only recently that I learned there's a name for this occurrence in nature — thaw circles. These uneven dark rings where earth shows through appear because sap is already moving upward from the roots, warming the soil at their base.

Yesterday, when I managed to navigate safely out of our neighborhood to head to the gym, I found myself drawn to the plethora of thaw circles that peppered the landscape in the front yards of my neighborhood, around the Short Pump Mall, and even at a newly landscaped office park on Broad Street. As cold as it has been, it is a marvelous sight to be reminded that the earth, although frozen on the surface, is

pulsing with life down deep. No, spring is not here yet. But rest assured, it is on the way.

The French philosopher Albert Camus wrote: "In the depth of winter, I finally learned that within me there lay an invincible summer."

That's what thaw circles remind us — watch and wait in this in-between time, this threshold, assured that God is doing a new thing. It's much like the tapping of maple trees in March — the tree looks dormant, but the sap is rising, and the taps draw out the precious liquid that is pulsing within.

Scripture shows us that God does mighty work in the thresholds of life, reshaping one thing into another, when life is already moving, but not yet seen.

I found myself thinking about the truth of thresholds this week as I reflected on the portion of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount when Jesus looks at his disciples and says, "You ARE the salt of the earth. You ARE the light of the world." (Matthew 5: 13-14)

Not "you might become." You ARE.

This is threshold language. Life is already in you. The sap is already rising. Your invincible summer. Now it's about letting it break through the surface.

We live at a threshold — between who God has made us to be and how we show up in the world. Between receiving our identity as God's children and living that identity out in ordinary moments.

You ARE salt and light. Not because you earned it. Not because you followed all the rules. But because God has made you that way.

Now, it's worth pondering where you will let that life break through this week.

Take care,

Florence

JOYS & CONCERNS

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

Birthdays:

Shirley Callahan, Carl Stanley, Allen Saunders, Vanessa Parker, Trey Morrison, Christopher Harbin, David Gatton, Gabby Meyer-Gatton, Daryl Gatton, Marilyn Stanley, Laney Stanley

Special prayers:

2/8/26

Family & friends of Marian Bomberger

Family & friends of James Burchet Dye – by Danielle

1/25/26

Norman Bobbitt – heart surgery & complications – by Pat & Carlton Weinstein

Dona Glasco is out of the hospital and appreciative of everyone's prayers

Gayle Parker - continued prayers

Roland and Carol - continued prayers

Ava - prayers for her and her baby's well-being

Jackson- ongoing health concerns and surgery (Carolyn's nephew)

Tyreek's friend who has cancer (Danielle)

Continued gratitude for the legacy of Floyd Lane, Sr.

Drew as he makes preparations for his mother's burial at Arlington

1/18/26

Concerns:

Carol Mills is in the hospital. Prayers for her, Roland and her medical team.

Gayle Parker is in the hospital again. Prayers for her medical team and recovery.

1/11/26

Joys:

Dustin - birthday this month

Andrew - getting better - prayers for continued healing

Mitch and Richard - addressing property needs

Ava and Joseph - baby shower

Concerns:

Gayle Parker - prayers for healing and for family members with flu

Donna Glasco – hospitalized with double pneumonia – by Ivy Erlich

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sundays	11:00am	Worship
Sun Feb 8	11:00am	Worship
Sun Feb 15	11:00am	Worship
Wed Feb 18	5:00pm	Ash Wednesday Service followed by pancake supper
Sun Feb 22	9:30am	Valentine Sunday School Event
Sun Feb 22	11:00am	Worship
Tue Feb 24	10:30am	Lenten Bible Study
Sun Mar 1	11:00am	Worship
Tue Mar 3	10:30am	Lenten Bible Study
Sun Mar 8	11:00am	Worship
Tue Mar 10	10:30am	Lenten Bible Study
Sun Mar 15	11:00am	Worship
Tue Mar 17	10:30am	Lenten Bible Study
Sun Mar 22	11:00am	Worship
Tue Mar 24	10:30am	Lenten Bible Study
Sun Mar 29	11:00am	Worship
Tue Mar 31	10:30am	Lenten Bible Study