



Striving to be the complete church using our complete gifts completely!



# THE SHALOM NEWSLINE



*Happy New Year*

**2021**



"YOU CROWN THE YEAR  
WITH YOUR GOODNESS;  
YOUR CARTS OVERFLOW  
WITH PLENTY."  
PSALM 65:11

### Church Staff

Rev. Mark Miller.....Senior Pastor  
Jean Dart.....Minister of Music & Worship  
Kelly Bittler.....Ministry Assistant  
Jeff Farrier..... Church Musician

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**Church Office Hours**  
Monday: 8am-5pm, Tuesday & Wednesday: 8am-3pm Thursday: 8am-2pm





## Mark's Minute

One year ago...in late December of 2019...I wrote a newsletter article about "heading into the year 2020". And that newsletter article centered around "having 20/20 vision". When we talk about perfect vision...we refer to it as "having 20/20 vision". But, for the entire world, the year 2020 seemed light years away from the vision that we had for it. Little did any of us know...that the year 2020 would become the year that was intensely warped and so "out of focus".

But here's something that I've discovered--when our sense of sight gets affected, our other senses can actually become MORE attuned.

Back when I was in my twenties, I enjoyed spelunking (caving). I would always go caving with a group...and I ALWAYS had multiple sources of light with me (and even backup sources for THOSE sources). And usually at some point during that caving expedition, everyone in the group would sit down...and turn out ALL of their lights. I can't even describe to you how dark it was. A person could literally hold their hand a quarter of an inch in front of their nose and NOT see it. But, in those moments, my hearing appeared to be more heightened. In fact, back in February 2014 a group of scientists discovered that being in total darkness could, indeed, improve hearing. MIT neuroscientist, Mark Bear says that while there "is no direct connection between the two areas of the brain (the primary visual cortex and the primary auditory cortex), there may be a roundabout route." Bear concludes that "given enough synapses, every neuron in the brain connects to every other neuron in the brain."

Ok...but what does this have to do with an "all out of focus" 2020? Everything. You see, because this past year's "vision" got all messed up, it caused many of us to be more greatly attuned to OTHER things going on. Here is a DIRECT quote from my newsletter article from LAST YEAR:

"Our vision may occasionally need a new perspective. Sometimes, vision gets strengthened when we look at things through a new lens or in a new light. Is there a better way to DO this? Is there a more relevant ministry? Does this process connect the way it used to? Are we using technology in new ways to reach people? Looking at things from a different perspective can truly enhance a 2020 vision." (WHOA...Those words were written before we even knew that COVID-19 would turn into a full fledged global pandemic!)

But that's just my point. This past year may have affected our "vision" but it didn't rob us of looking at things from a different perspective. Think about this in light of what the apostle Paul wrote in Philippians 4:11-13: "...for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me."

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Philippians 4:13

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Not long ago, a pastor friend of mine posed this question on Facebook: "What good has come from 2020?" Well, if a person relies on JUST their sight/JUST what they see around them, they might not come up with much...but when we examine things from a different angle...from a different perspective...if we rely on something BESIDES our eyesight to shape our answers...? Well...that's when we can "see" some of the answers he received from that question, like:

- Drawing closer to God
- Finding ways to help our local community
- Family dinners each night
- Saving money

And I'll close with this one..."I think 2020 has given many the gift of perspective. It's been a real magnifying glass, giving us an up-close look at the blessings we have as well as the areas where we might not be as strong as we thought. New perspective is the first step in casting a new vision for ourselves."

Perhaps even the "vision" that we will need moving forward into 2021!

(Happy 2021...in whatever form or fashion it may be...)

In Him,  
Pastor Mark

Meet our Deacon for the  
month of January:

*Ron Bowles*





Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I hope each of you had a happy, healthy holiday!

## prayer corner

A new year can often bring a mixed bag of emotions. Some of us may have had a pretty good year. Others have just trudged through one struggle after another. A new calendar brings desperate hope for things to be better.

Whether it has been a good year or a difficult one, our God is “with us”. We are never alone and He alone has the power to carry us into and through 2021.

The following is a prayer to lead us into the new year:

Dear God,

Thank you for making all things new.

Thank you for all that You have allowed into our lives this past year. The good things and the bad. In each of these we are reminded of Your presence and how very much we rely on You.

We pray that Your Holy Spirit will guide us each day of the new year. Please give us discernment to hear Your voice as the Holy Spirit softly whispers to us, guiding us on the right path. May we not stray to the right or to the left.

We pray for protection for our families. Hide us in the shadow of your mighty wing when the evil one attacks.

We pray that the gifts that you have given us flow out of our lives so that others might be drawn to you.

Forgive us for the times we have forgotten our need for You.

Keep us focused on what is pure and right and holy.

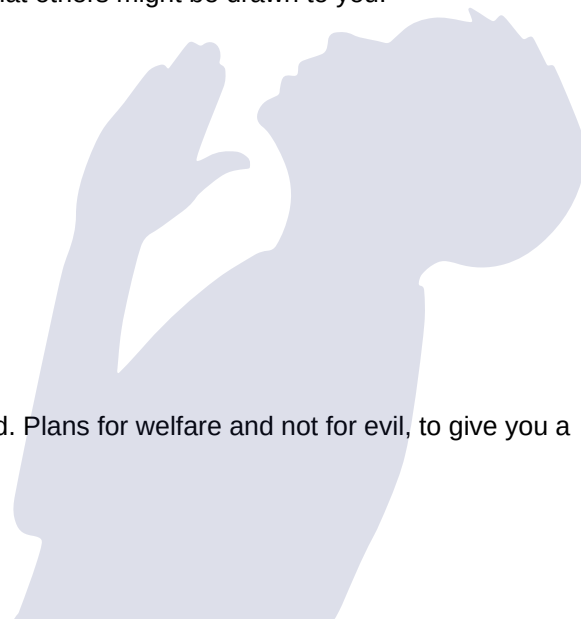
Always shine your light in us, over us, and through us.

In the mighty name of Jesus,

Amen.

Jeremiah 29:11, “For I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord. Plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.”

Be Blessed for I am,  
Dee Miller







Shut-In of the Month:

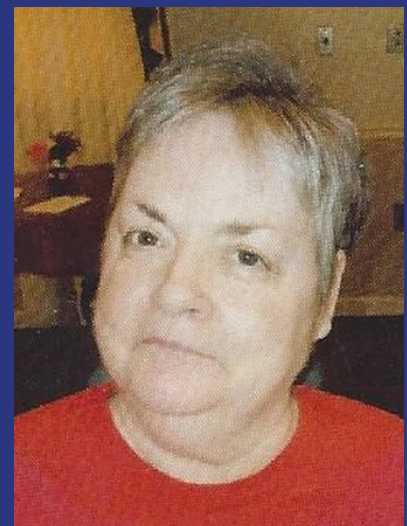
*Pat Harding*

**1719 Bellevue Avenue**

**Room 212**

**Richmond, VA 23227**

Please remember Pat this month by sending her a card or calling. It means so much to our Shut-Ins, that they are remembered and that we still care.



*Please remember that visitation is not permitted at most nursing homes and assisted living locations due to the Covid-19 Coronavirus. Please check in with all of our shut-ins, to make them feel loved, and connected to our church family!*

Reminder  
from the  
Church  
office:

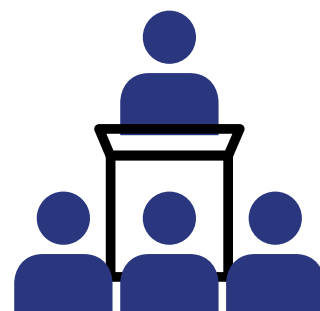


If you are coming off as a chair of a committee, ministry coordinator or team leader, please return your key fob back to Kelly in the church office. If you are starting your term please remember to pick one up. If you have any questions, please contact Kelly at 804-746-7737 or [shalombaptist@verizon.net](mailto:shalombaptist@verizon.net).

## January Church Council Meeting

**01/05/21**

**7:00 PM**







It's hard to believe that we're kicking off another New Year, so I'd like to share MCEF's Mission with all of you:

To help families & individuals:

- Handle financial emergencies
- Prevent Homelessness
- Improve their quality of life
- Promote health & wellness
- Maintain their independence

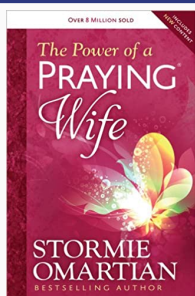
During the months of **January, February** and **March** I will be collecting **canned meats (Spam & Vienna sausages)**. MCEF has voted to help the Moments of Hope ministry during these months and would like food items that are portable.

Thanks to your generosity MCEF gave out 202 bags of food in November + 107 Thanksgiving bags! Additionally, 74 bags of clothing were given out.

\*Please note that the clothing closets are currently well stocked and they are asking that there be no clothing donations until after January 15, 2021.\*

Thanks to all for your past and continued support to MCEF. Praying for a healthy 2021!

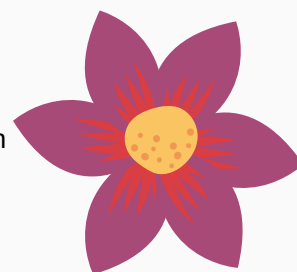
Vicki Crew



**BELOVED**  
WOMEN'S MINISTRY

Beloved Women's Ministry Presents:  
Women's Bible Study-The Power of a Praying Wife by Stormie Omartian

Wednesday evening 6:15pm-7:15pm starting January 13, 2021  
Friendship Class



The 31 week study will enrich your prayer life by showing you how to pray deeply for areas of your husbands life and discover new ways to ask God to encourage and direct your spouse.

Materials Needed: The Power of the Praying Wife book and the study guide-both can be found on Amazon. *Note: PDF version of the book available; if interested contact Dawn Hansen.* Questions please contact Dawn Hansen at 804-647-2925





## *Stewardship Snippet*

As we start the New Year, people often make resolutions, that get broken, in some cases rather quickly. We hope everyone will make a goal to take their financial strategy seriously and begin holding a Board meeting. This meeting, if married, should be the couple sitting down to look at last year and plan for the year ahead. If single, a meeting with yourself is just as important. If you don't know where you've been and are, it's impossible to know where to go.

With the New Year, let's make it a goal to be the best stewards we can be of what God has given us to manage. Looking back, we saw what short-term and long-term goals were. Now we need to integrate those two objectives into a planning strategy. We return to Ron Blue's course on financial contentment and how to master your money.

This planning strategy has a four step process. We will go into greater detail of each of these steps as we move ahead in coming messages. First step, summarize your present situation. Second, establish your financial goals and objectives. Third, plan to increase your cash flow margin. And lastly, control your cash flow. If you know where you are, where you're going and the steps to get there, that's a major step in being a planner and not a responder.

When considering the financial planning process, there are three important implications. First, there are no independent financial decisions. If you make the decision to spend the money in one of the short or long-term objectives, those are funds that can't be spent in one of the other goals. Second implication, the longer the term your perspective is the better decision you are likely to make. Are you able to give up today's desires for future benefits? The last implication of the financial planning process, the lifetime nature of your financial decisions. "Decisions determine destiny and behavior follows beliefs." It's true in financial planning just as it is in our spiritual life. The key to success is knowing where you are going in life and knowing how to get there. The short and long-term goals are not what we are really trying to accomplish, but reflect our real desires of: security, peace, contentment, personal growth, obedience to God, self-worth or acceptance.

Money is the resource we use to obtain our desires. Success is knowing what God would have you be and do and achieve. Our goal should be to hear "well done good and faithful servant". Money is merely a resource and the Creator didn't intend it to be more than that. Financial decisions you made years ago can be affecting your today. The good news is if you turn your financial and spiritual life over to God, he can fix both.

"It is thrifty to prepare today for the wants of tomorrow" -Aesop, "The Ant and the Grasshopper."





## SUNDAY SCHOOL

People need hope, joy and peace and we need to share that light and love of Jesus. We have such an opportunity to share these truths during the pandemic. Continue to look for great things in Christ as we begin this new year. Be ready and excited to see the things God has planned for this body of believers in 2021!

Praise God that there is hope, joy and peace to be had as a Christian. Can you imagine going through the Covid crisis without His strength to carry you, His promise to never forsake you and His perfect will to guide you?

There are several schedules to assist you with reading The Word through in 2021. Let us know if you need direction with making The Word a priority.

Blessings for a safe, healthy and happy year!

"He who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." Philippians 1:6

-Debbie

## ENCOURAGEMENT MINISTRY TEAM

*"The Encouragement Ministry Team (EMT) at Shalom bases its foundation on God's Word to us in 1 Thessalonians 5:11. We strive to use our God-given gifts to build up, encourage, and spread love throughout the community."*

This past October started the beginning of an Encouragement Ministry Team (EMT) at Shalom. This team has done a great job of blessing others in just a short amount of time. Our projects have included:

- **Gingerbread Cottage-** We donated cleaning supplies, showered the teachers/staff with gift cards & goodies, and outreach & gifted items to the parents and children.
- **Pastor & Staff Appreciation-** Our well-deserved Pastor and staff were given gifts of encouragement.
- **Shut-Ins-** We sent cards to all our Shalom shut-ins.
- **Autumn Care-** We made goodie bags for all the residents & staff, made encouraging posters for the residents rooms & common areas, prayed for the residents, and collected items to be used for Bingo prizes.

Our next meeting will be Monday, January 11th at 6:30 PM in the Fellowship Hall, if anyone would like to join us. We will be planning a fund-raiser for a canopy for Gingerbread Cottage Pre-School and start planning a project for the Easter Hanover Rescue Squad.

Wishing everyone love, joy, peace and hope for the New Year!

Your EMT Facilitators,  
Joan Bowles & Michele Nelson





# Celebrate!

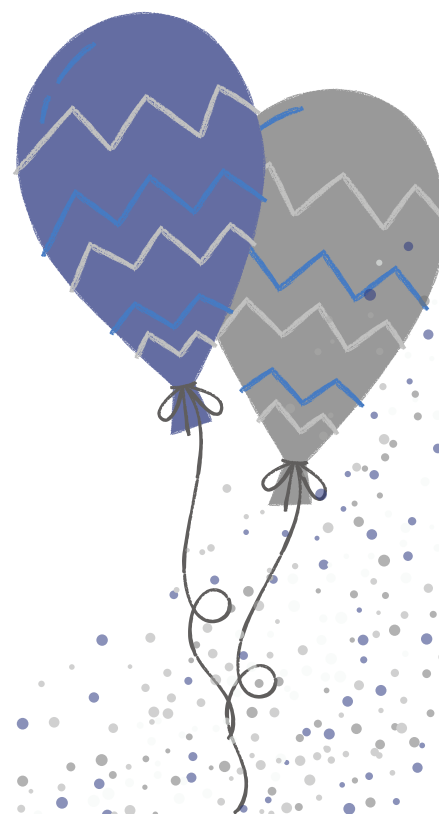
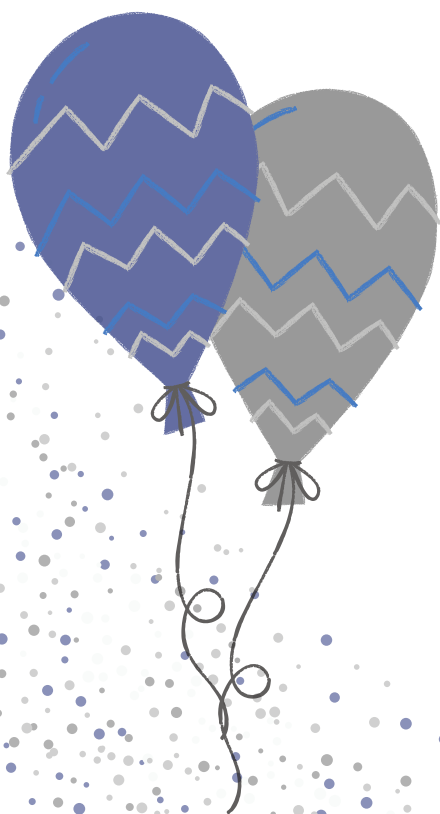
## *January Anniversaries*

7th Mac & Judy Coiner  
18th Bobby & Christine Norman  
21st Ray & Joan Durvin  
28th Josh & Michele Lester

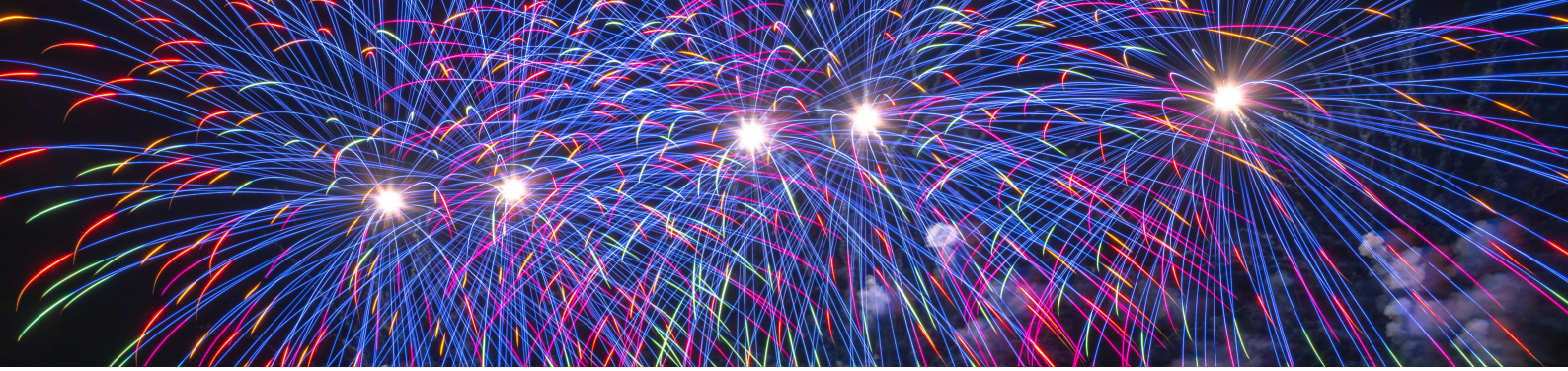
## *January Birthday's*

2nd Brandon Byrd  
3rd Lois DiPaola  
4th Robin Fraley  
9th Dawn Hansen  
Vicky Kidder  
10th Ryan Crew  
12th Jamie Seay  
Jeanne Tate  
13th Paul Michaelosky  
15th Sidney Norman  
16th Phyllis Isbell  
Marion Rainey  
Doc Wright  
18th Marcia Thomas  
Liz Whitt  
19th Evelyn Rice  
20th Joanna Vasconi  
23rd Gwen Heath  
Hunter Helmick  
Martha Thompson  
25th Layton Butler  
Todd Russell  
26th Faye Cosby  
29th Kim Stanley  
Rose Wheat

31st Audrey Forrester  
Wanda Hudson  
Zoe Johnston  
Faye Ward







*Shalom Baptist Church*

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Mechanicsville, VA 23111



*Happy New Year!*