

# Urbanna UMC March Newsletter



As we journey through the sacred season of **Lent**, we are reminded that this is a time for reflection, renewal, prayer, and drawing closer to God. While Lent often focuses on personal spiritual growth, it is also a powerful opportunity to recognize and honor the families within our church who nurture faith, love, and service in their homes.

Families are the heart of the church community. In homes where prayer is spoken, kindness is practiced, and faith is lived out daily, the teachings of **Jesus Christ** continue to grow and flourish. Two of those families have left a legacy of love and witness to our church Jane Rilee & Debra Marshall. I have asked Larry Chowning to write about the history of the Marshall family and their faithfulness to Urbanna UMC.

Scripture reminds us of the importance of faith within the household:

*"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."* — **Book of Joshua 24:15**

This verse is a beautiful declaration of commitment—one that many families in our congregation live out through their love, dedication, and service to God and others.

Another encouraging reminder comes from:

*"Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it."* — **Book of Proverbs 22:6**

During this Lenten season, we give thanks for parents, grandparents, guardians, and caregivers who faithfully guide the next generation in love and faith. Your prayers, encouragement, and examples make a lasting impact.

As we continue toward **Easter**, may our families grow stronger in unity, compassion, and devotion. Let us support one another, pray for one another, and continue building homes where God's presence is welcomed and celebrated.

May this season of Lent bring renewal to every family and remind us that together, as a church family, we walk in faith, hope, and love.

*"But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."*

Blessings to all our families during this holy season.

Rev. Carl Perez



When Thomas F. “Doc” Marshall Sr. and Lucy Hostinger Marshall moved to Urbanna with their two small sons Tommy and Richard in 1929, it was the start of a generational success story based in part on a dedicated investment in social and community capital that overtime has made the Town of Urbanna and Middlesex County a better place.

Whether Urbanna needed a town doctor, a town plumber, an ace pitcher for the semi-pro town baseball team in the 1940s, a prescription filled at 3 a.m. in the morning, or on bad weather years dollars to keep the Urbanna Oyster Festival going the next year, the Marshalls made sure all these things and more happened.

### **Doc Marshall**

Doc Marshall was a native of Victoria, who graduated from Medical College of Virginia School of Pharmacy in Richmond in 1922. He purchased the former Richarson’s Drug Store in Urbanna and moved here with his family in 1929.

Doc served as an Urbanna Town councilman for 32 years, from 1936 until he retired in August 1968. Throughout his life here he served the community. He was president of the Middlesex Boosters Club and chairman of the Urbanna Labor Day Regatta for 20 years before it was discontinued in 1966. He was named grand marshal of the Urbanna Oyster Festival in 1972 and was one of the founders of the event in 1957 that started out as Urbanna Days.

He was a charter member of the Middlesex Volunteer Fire Department and the now defunct Central Middlesex County Volunteer Rescue Squad. He was one of the main organizers of the fire department in 1937 and for years, sounded the alarm for the fire and rescue units from his home over the drug store.

Doc was a member of Urbanna United Methodist Church, which he served as chairman of the board of trustees and a member of the administrative board. A Mason for more than 50 years, he was past master of Urbanna Lodge 83 AF & AM.

He was on the board of directors of the Bank of Middlesex from 1948 to 1971 and became president of the board and was later named chairman of the board.

Doc was an avid fisherman. He spent many an hour on Hog House bar off Rosegill wetting a line on his boat, Miss Lucy, named after his wife. He loved baseball and supported the Urbanna semi-pro baseball team to a “sin”. His son Richard told the Sentinel in an interview in the 1980s that during the baseball season Doc paid pitcher Phil Phillips of Fredericksburg, known as “Fireball Phillips” to town fans, to pitch for the Urbanna team. “Daddy would send a car up to Fredericksburg to pick up Fireball on Friday right after work, gave him room and board for the weekend, have someone drive him home after the games, and pay him cash to boot.”

When the town had a need, it was often Doc Marshall who took the time and effort to solve the problem. When town doctor Dr. Percy Jones was about to retire in the 1940s, it was Doc Marshall who went to Center Cross and talked Dr. A. L. VanName Jr. to come to Urbanna.

In an interview with Dr. VanName in 1986 at his retirement, he said that he and his wife Grace were happy enough in Center Cross when Doc Marshall came up and talked them into moving to Urbanna, with the promise of modern office space and strong public support. "He was always a man of his word," said Dr. VanName.

It is questionable who was the businessperson in the family, Doc or Lucy. Doc often reached into his pocket and would pull out a nickel for a child who had no money to purchase an ice cream cone. A well-seasoned Urbanna kid in the 1950s and 60s, knew that a full ice cream cone scoop would come from Doc's sister, Ruth Wilkes, while Lucy was quite stingy with her dips. Before ordering a cone, kids were known to wait around for as much as an hour for Mrs. Wilkes' shift to start.

### **Tommy and Roberta and Richard and Pat**

When the Marshalls moved to Urbanna Tommy and Richard were young boys. They went through Urbanna Graded School on Rappahannock Avenue and grew up in Urbanna Methodist Church (South) at the corner of Prince George and Cross streets.

Tommy graduated from Saluda High School in 1942 and served his country in World War II. Richard, who was younger, graduated from Christchurch School. Both boys went to pharmacy school and came back to Urbanna to work in the family business.

Tommy married Roberta Woodward of Plain View Farm between Warner and Saluda. They built their first home in Urbanna on Colorado Ave. and raised their two children, Dickie and Debbie, there. Richard married Pat Redmon of Mechanicsville. They built their first home on Marston Avenue in town and raised four children, Pam, David, Kim and Becky, there.

Pat and Roberta were strong supporters of the Methodist church. Pat served for years working in the church's MYF program. Roberta served on just about every committee in the church and was particularly loyal to the church's history committee.

The boys loved Urbanna and, like their father and mother, worked to make the town a better place. When there was a need, they stepped forward. Several years ago, when the Oyster Festival Foundation found their coffers short of funds to hold the festival, it was Richard and Charles Bristow who stepped forward with funds to keep it going. The foundation honored Tommy and Richard in 1983 as co-grand marshals of the festival.

When Robert S. Bristow Jr. decided to sell Bristow's Store in 1988 Richard and Pat and Tommy and Roberta purchased the building and business to maintain and save the positive commercial atmosphere within the town associated with the store - the oldest surviving commercial business in Middlesex County.

Several years ago, when parking became a problem on Virginia Street, the Marshalls worked with the town to provide public parking on a lot they own on the street. Tommy passed away in 1993 and Richard in 2015. Roberta died in 2011 and Pat in 2023.

When the Town of Urbanna opened its new \$1.2 million swimming pool two years ago, it was named in honor of the Marshall family to celebrate their love and dedication towards making the town a better place for all.

Today, the granddaughters of Doc and Lucy, Becky Marshall Edwards and Kim Marshall Cardlin run Marshall's Drug Store that is to this day the commercial centerpiece on Cross Street in the Town of Urbanna.

*Submitted by Larry Chowning*



# March

## BIRTHDAYS

25 Eric Johnson

26 Allie Hanes  
David Valadez

31 Thomas Walton, Sr.  
William Edwards



# April

## BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

3 Gene Gillespie

14 Tyler Daniel

18 Drew Hanes

21 Barbara Wyker

2 Boyd & Brenda Wiley

4 Rev. Carl & Katrina Perez

9 Angela & Brian Walton

21 Barbara & "Buddy" Wyker

24 Cheryl & James Payne, Sr.



Our church has been accepted into the Hatching Faith Cohort, a year-long program supported by the Virginia Conference of The United Methodist Church. Hatching Faith invites congregations into a child- and family-led process of exploring new ways to engage people of all ages—especially children—in worship and prayer.

Over the coming year, a small team from our church will participate in cohort gatherings, coaching, and shared learning with other congregations. We'll also receive grant support to help us experiment with creative and meaningful changes in our worship life.

We believe this journey will help us grow as a more welcoming, intergenerational, and spiritually vibrant community. Please pray for our Hatch Team and for the ways God will shape our worship and discipleship through this experience.

If you'd like to learn more or be involved, reach out to Rev. Perez or Ann Hays!