



The Eastport Spire

“Inspire Us to Great Things”

January 2017

We share our experiences of God’s Kingdom with all, through our faith, love, fellowship, and service. It is our vision to have everyone actively involved in worship that enriches, ministries that empower, and evangelism that embraces all.

From the Pastor

Dear EUMC:

I pray and hope that you had a wonderful Christmas celebration with your family and friends. As Daniel, Eli, and I were driving back from visiting my family for Christmas in Virginia, we decided to listen to the last podcast of the year from “Hidden Brain” produced by NPR. This 26 minute podcast told the story of Maya Shankar a very talented violinist who at the age of 15 suffered a hand injury that forced her to quit the violin. This unexpected change made Maya look for a new dream and vocation where her talents could be used. She eventually earned a Ph. D. from Oxford University in Cognitive Science hoping to use her degree to help people. Her beautiful story about an unfortunate change of plans made Maya discover a new path. Maya described her experience in this way, “One of the great blessings of playing the violin is that it allowed me to see what it really felt like to be in love with something and to be really passionate about something... And then your hope is that in the new explorations, those disciplines or those areas can extract those same qualities from you.”

We all have chapters in our lives that close. And as interviewer Shankar Vedantum said, “when they do, especially if it’s a chapter we have known and loved for a long time, it can feel like the whole book is over, that there’s nothing left to do - maybe even nothing left to live for.” It can be unbearable. And then, another door opens. We discover that there is more than one house in which we can live. And there are many ways we can reinvent ourselves. We all have stories in our lives that demonstrate this truth, that show that we are not the same people today as we were years ago.

Around the New Year, we naturally begin to think about closing and opening, ending and beginning. T.S. Eliot, in his poem “Little Gidding” put it simply, “For last year’s words belong to last year’s language / And next year’s words await another voice. / And to make an end is to make a beginning.” Endings and beginnings happen constantly, regardless of our planning or openness to them. But sometimes, as the New Year comes, we take time to reflect and put more intentionality into the endings and beginnings. The challenge is that we often try to do too much at the same time and have a hard time carrying these intentions throughout the year.

As people of faith we have the advantage of knowing that change, expected or unexpected, welcomed or unwelcomed, can lead us to new places, new paths, new vocations, new callings, and new possibilities. Below is a song that reflects the Celtic tradition of seeing the new year as the threshold of a door. In welcoming the New Year, it is important to welcome Christ as the first across the threshold. I invite you to pray this song, and set one intention for the year that you believe would make God smile.

May 2017 find us discovering new paths, new venues, new ways to share the love of Christ with our neighbors. May we close the chapters that are over and invite the Spirit of God to open us to the next chapters for ourselves, our families, and our congregation!

This day is a new day
That has never been before.
This year is a new year
The opening door.

Enter Lord Christ -
We have joy in your coming.
You have given us life;
And we welcome Your coming.

I turn now to face You,
I lift up my eyes.
Be blessing my face, Lord;
Be blessing my eyes.
May all my eye looks on
Be blessed and be bright,
My neighbors, my loved ones
Be blessed in your sight.

You have given us life
And we welcome Your coming.
Be with us, Lord.
We have joy, we have joy.
This year is a new year,
The opening door.
Be with us, Lord,
We have joy, we have joy.

Blessings,

~ Pastor Michelle



Annual Church Retreat

I am the Church
You are the Church
We are the Church together...

Do you have thoughts/opinions/comments about 2017 at Eastport United Methodist Church? Do you want to be part of the process as we move forward? Please come to our annual church retreat on January 21st from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Let the church office know so we can have plenty of food for lunch. Look for upcoming bulletin announcements with details.
~ Jill Peddicord, Administrative Council Chair



Eighth Annual New Year's Eve Interfaith Celebration

We held our eighth annual New Year's Eve Interfaith Celebration on December 31st with a packed church and music that went over the top! This has come to be a much anticipated event in the interfaith community of Greater Annapolis. Attendance was estimated at 235 – growing every year. We had solos and singing groups, liturgical dancers and chanters, gongs, drums, bells, and horns, and of course multi-faith representatives who shared their own sacred readings. Check out the church website to see the printed program – and if you missed it, be sure to put it on your 2017 calendar. Thanks to everyone who played a part, no matter how small! We will be posting more pictures on the church Facebook page. *~ Eunice Corse*



Until there is peace between
religions, there can be no
peace in the world.

Thich Nhat Hanh



Homework and Reading Christmas

Neighborhood children and their families thoroughly enjoyed our Homework and Reading Christmas Party. The children crafted long pipe cleaner "paper chains" and festive ornaments for their Christmas trees and Pastor Michelle read a special book to the children. Parents and younger children arrived in time for a delicious pizza dinner complete with yummy donated cupcakes. Bells began to ring as Santa entered fellowship hall to meet with the children and distribute gift bags of books to the boys and girls. We once again thank Colonial Nursery School families for purchasing the books, and we also thank a generous supporter for covering all other costs of this special event. We are truly blessed.
 ~ Joyce Conley



Missions

Many thanks to everyone who helped to make all our mission projects a success this past year. Happy New Year to all! Please note the Missions meeting change of date and time for January only – Monday, Jan. 16, 2017, at 6:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome. Think about becoming an active member of this team. We need you! ~ Jackie Cunningham



United Methodist Men

More than 50 games and toys were donated by the congregation, then wrapped, and delivered to Eastport Elementary School for distribution to pre-k students. The children squealed with delight when Mike, Sonny, and Jim appeared in their classrooms with cartloads of presents and serenaded the men with Christmas carols and presented sweet little Christmas wreaths that now adorn our pew ends. The wrapping crew pictured in this photo were assisted by Linda Harrison and Joyce Conley. Thanks are extended to all members of the church who made this ministry of the United Methodist Men successful.

A SPECIAL THANKS to the United Methodist Women and all who participated in the Timothy House gift bag project. We distributed 55 gift bags to eager and appreciative recipients.
 ~ Jackie Cunningham



United Methodist Women

The United Methodist Women celebrated Christmas with a “TRUE” pot luck dinner. As luck would have it, there really was a good variety of food. ALTHOUGH there were some who were very disappointed that it didn’t end up to be all desserts! Yours truly included. After dinner, we were treated to a very interesting video that Audrey got on a recent visit to Lancaster, PA. It was what is called a “Chalk Talk,” which involves music, storytelling and the amazing chalk artistry of a former Old Order Mennonite woman. As the story of Christ’s birth was told, “From a blank canvas, a work of art is created with masterful strokes of colored chalk as the emotional story remarkably unfolds...and... comes to life (and lights up) before your eyes!” It was truly amazing. No UMW Christmas celebration would be complete without our crazy and hilarious gift exchange. As we sat in a circle, each holding a wrapped gift, a funny story was read which involved passing each gift around (and back; left and right)... until each one ended up with the **right** gift, right Ladies?

UMW hopes that your Christmas was a happy one and that you all ended up with the right gift, and the greatest gift of all: Jesus. As we begin a new year, we wish you all peace, love and joy. And we invite you to join us on the first Wednesday of the month (September through June) at 5:30pm in Fellowship Hall for a “brown bag” dinner (dessert and beverage provided), a brief business meeting and a short program. We are finished by 7:15. All women of EUMC are officially members, so come; exercise your membership in our UMW!

~ Wendy Edstrom



Sharing our Blessings



During the time leading up to Thanksgiving I noticed this plaque in our local McDonald’s and thought, “That’s pretty awesome for a retail establishment to have that message hanging on a wall. Good for them!” I was moved to take a picture and throughout the following weeks I wondered if the plaque was still

hanging on the wall or if they had removed it since the “sharing time” of Thanksgiving was over. I stopped by McDonald’s just prior to Christmas and was delighted to see that the sign was still up, for isn’t Christmas also a time for sharing! The more I thought about the sign, the more I focused on the fact that as followers of Jesus, Christians should be sharing and caring all year long.

So as we start the New Year I am asking you to share and care for a young family, the Swarays – Nancy, Divine, and Abdulai who are in need of financial help. This is our young church family who moved to New Jersey this past summer so the family could be together as Abdulai completed his college coursework. Here is an update on them: Nancy continues to look for jobs and posts flyers to let people know she will babysit, house clean or do garden chores. Abdulai is entering his final Ramapo College semester with a high grade point and will be entering the Information Technology Management job market. Sweet little Divine is now a very inquisitive three-year-old who is thriving in preschool. But, unfortunately, Nancy informed me that they do not have the funds to pay Divine’s second half of the year tuition.

With this in mind, I am asking our church family to hold the Swarays in prayer and to prayerfully

consider contributing funds to help cover Divine's tuition so that he may continue to obtain a strong educational foundation. Let us let them know that we care and *we do share*. Any amount you can share will be of great assistance to the Swarays. Please let me know if you have any questions. I will be collecting contributions throughout January.

~ Joyce Conley



Recycling Made Easy

Let Gracious Greetings recycle your Christmas cards. Tear off the fronts of the cards and we'll fashion them into next year's cards to our Timothy House Friends or Christmas gift tags. Look for a box in Fellowship Hall. Please remember we only recycle Christmas cards. Gracious Greetings will meet in Fellowship Hall, 1:30 p.m., January 19 and we'll make Valentines for our Timothy House Friends. Please come join in the fun!

~ The Gracious Greetings Team

Happy Anniversary

- Jan 1 Mitch & Barbara Krebs
- Jan 3 Jerry & Joanne Christofel
- Jan 5 Jack & Sherrie Little
- Jan 20 Dick & Jean Strucko
- Jan 30 Marty & Myrna Dobbs

Happy Birthday

- Jan 1 Cade Clurman
- Jan 4 Dennis Bergsman
- Jan 7 Cyndi Councill
Lauren Moyer
- Jan 11 Devin Clary
Eunice Corse
- Jan 12 Eric Edstrom
Shirley Keller
- Jan 13 Charlotte Kerns
- Jan 14 Michael Valentire Sr.
- Jan 15 Mary Jane Finkle
- Jan 16 Gerald Crouch
- Jan 18 Mike Wurst
Bob Emory
Wendy Edstrom
- Jan 21 Ed Owen
- Jan 23 Steve Duckett
- Jan 26 Kim Wilcox
- Jan 27 Matt Ficca
- Jan 28 Virginia Schultz
- Jan 30 Bev Ferrar

The Spire is published monthly by Eastport United Methodist Church, 926 Bay Ridge Ave., Annapolis, MD 21403. 410.263.5490

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Worship 10am 	2	3 Homework 4pm	4 UMW 5:30pm	5 Homework 4pm Choir 7pm	6	7 TAKE DOWN CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS 1PM
8 Discussion 9am Worship 10am SunSchool 10:15	9 Bells 7pm	10 Homework 4pm	11 Kids Art 4pm	12 Homework 4pm Choir 7pm	13	14
15 Discussion 9am Worship 10am SunSchool 10:15 WORSHIP MEETING FOLLOWING SERVICE	16 Missions 6:30pm Bells 7pm	17 Homework 4pm Trustees 6:15pm Admin Council 7pm	18 Kids Art 4pm Food Pantry 12-2pm	19 Gracious Greetings 1:30 Homework 4pm Choir 7pm	20	21 CHURCH PLANNING RETREAT 9:00 TO 3:00 
22 Discussion 9am Worship 10am SunSchool 10:15	23 Bells 7pm	24 Homework 4pm	25 Lunch Bunch 12:15 Kids Art 4pm	26 Homework 4pm	27	28 
29 Discussion 9am Worship 10am SunSchool 10:15	30 Bells 7pm	31 Homework 4pm				