



The Eastport Spire

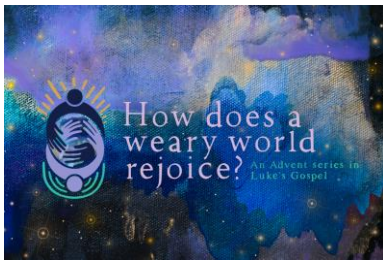
“Inspire Us to Great Things”

December 2023

We share our experiences of God’s Kingdom with all, through our faith, love, fellowship, and service. It is our vision to have each person engaged in worship that enriches, ministries that empower, and missions that embrace and affirm all people.

The Pastor’s Corner

Friends of Eastport United Methodist,



Christ was born into a weary world. King Herod ruled the land with a legacy of ruthlessness. The Romans treated the people of Israel with

contempt, imposing harsh taxes and land seizures that forced many into subsistence farming. Poverty and destitution were pervasive. And yet, Christ was born, bringing good news of great joy for all people.

As Advent comes again to a weary world, we ask, “How does a weary world rejoice?” From the opening chapters of Luke’s Gospel, we have found a few answers: we acknowledge our weariness, we find joy in connection, we allow ourselves to be amazed, we sing stories of hope, we make room, we root ourselves in ritual, and most importantly, we trust our belovedness. In the parallel birth stories of Jesus and John, joy arrives—despite trepidation, fear, or grief. In these stories, we find rhythms for rejoicing. As we move through our series, we hope to create space for acknowledging the weariness of our world while celebrating God’s closeness with great joy.

And so, this Advent, we will hold space for our weariness and our joy. We will seek a “thrill of hope” in our hurting world. We will welcome joy—even if, like the prophet Isaiah, we cry out for comfort (Isaiah 40:1). In this weary world, may we find many ways to rejoice. Please join us during this season!

*See y'all Sunday,
Pastor Chris*



Longest Night Service, December 21st 7:00 p.m.
(especially for those struggling through the holidays)

December 24th

Christmas Eve Morning 10 a.m.
Caroling & Cocoa at Oscar’s Coffee
105 Eastern Avenue, on the Water

Christmas Eve Service of Candlelight and Communion
(very child-friendly) 5:00 p.m.

Poinsettias for the Sanctuary

Poinsettias from Bru-Mar Gardens will be in our sanctuary for Christmas. You may dedicate one in honor of/or in memory of a loved one. The cost is \$25. Dedications may also be made by donating to our Food Pantry. The forms are available in the Sunday bulletin or you may contact Theresa in the church office at 410-263-5490 or office@eastportumc.org.



Please submit your forms no later than December 20th so that your dedication will be in the bulletin. Plan to take your poinsettias home after the Christmas Eve service.

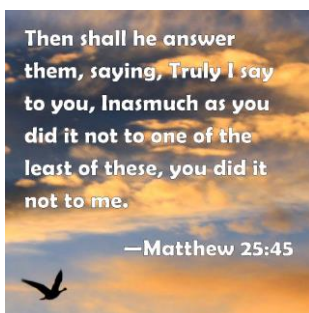
Welcoming New Members



Members of our EUMC family formalizing their connection: Alicia, Andrew, Theresa & Laura O'Brien. Welcome All!

We're collecting your paper towel donations for the December 16 food pantry. Our neighbors are grateful for these small gifts of great love!

Faith in Action Team



The outreach and advocacy ministry is being revived at EUMC to address concerns and conditions of the people in our community and congregation. We are calling it the Faith in Action Team, or FIAT.

The FIAT will engage those not yet part of EUMC, inviting them to participate with us. We will raise our voices alongside "the least of these" for relief and equity. Please pray and plan to join with us.

To get us launched, we will hold congregation conversations in January to learn more about and help build the what and why and how of the Faith in Action Team. If you cannot wait until January or for more information, see, text, email, or call. Leave a message as my phone screens unknown numbers. David Emenheiser, emenheiserde@gmail.com, 410-302-6844. ~ David Emenheiser

UMW/Women in Faith

UMW Christmas Social: The United Methodist Women/Women in Faith will meet on Tuesday, December 5, at 5:30 in the Fellowship Hall. This meeting will be our Christmas Social, which will be a pot luck meal - just bring a main dish, a side dish, or dessert to share. We also will have devotions followed by a gift exchange involving a fast-paced, fun game, so bring a wrapped \$10 gift and join the fun. All women of the church are invited to attend.



Grocery Store Gift Cards for Bowman Place Residents: For many years, we have provided Christmas gifts for the residents at Bowman Place in downtown Annapolis. We have decided to once again provide grocery store gift cards. We hope that you will continue to support this effort to provide a little bit of Christmas cheer to the Bowman Place residents by purchasing a \$25 grocery store gift card from Giant or Safeway. We would like to have them by December 10 so that we have time to arrange delivery before Christmas.

You can bring the gift cards with you to church and give them to me or one of our UMW officers, including Jean Strucko, Harriet Macey, Harriet Newquist, or Debbie Morgan. If you are unable to get to the store to purchase a gift card but would like to support this mission, you can mail a check (made out to United Methodist Women of EUMC) to Harriet Newquist at 1215 Marda Lane, Annapolis, MD 21403. You can also mail gift cards to Harriet Newquist or call me at 410-268-6467 with questions or to arrange pick up of gift cards you have purchased. Thanks in advance for supporting this local mission. The residents have always been very appreciative of EUMC's generosity.

~ Kathy Duckett

Garden & Maintenance News

Many thanks to Molly Estabrook, Mike Keller, Jill Peddicord, Barbara Krebs, and Theresa Sise who helped clean the picnic tables and signs, pull weeds, and bag a lot of leaves during our fall clean-up days.



We continue to mulch and bag leaves as they keep falling. Outside doors and window frames were also cleaned. Jerry edged all the sidewalks. Jerry

also repaired the mower belt that came off its pulley. It is a little chewed up so we ordered a new belt for it. The leaf blower stopped working and we can't figure it out or find a shop that will repair it. New batteries were installed in the thermostat in fellowship hall and clocks were changed an hour forward. The church bottom row of 32 shutters were washed, sanded, primed and painted. We need help taking down some of the shutters in the top row to repair.

Happily we have started receiving checks (\$549) for the electricity used by the cell phone tower this month. Because of that, our previous projects, and using the shutters and new blinds, our electric bill is way down. We are working on T Mobile cleaning the outside of the white steeple which has been getting dirty over the last 15 years.

Please keep all our workers and volunteers in your prayers to stay safe while they do repairs on our church. If anyone has extra time and can help with church gardens, lawns, and maintenance, we would greatly appreciate it. Contact Joanne or Jerry Christofel at msjohara@yahoo.com or 410-295-5474.

~ Joanne Christofel



Sunday School Happenings

Our Bible verse was 1st Thessalonians 5:18. The kids made an awesome list of what they are thankful for, & then they made Thanksgiving cards for friends and family.



And the children heard the message from Matthew where Jesus tells us that when we feed the hungry or clothe the naked, we are doing that for Him. We interpret that as a way to spread God's love. We assembled bags of snacks, socks, and gloves to keep in our cars that we can share with those in need. It

was a beautiful gathering. Thanks to the UMW/Women in Ministry group for funding our supplies!



Note: Sunday School will meet on the 2nd and 3rd Sundays in December.

From the Finance Committee

Often, people have charitable intentions, and truly want to support their church, but they may be on a fixed or limited income. There are various ways to consider to incorporate charitable giving into your budget.



ACH giving, with recurring monthly or semi-monthly deductions, allows predictability, and the ability to choose the best timing around your income and other recurring obligations. It can also avoid processing fees for the church.

The end of the year provides other planning opportunities. For those who itemize income tax deductions, you may support the missions of the church and receive the tax benefit of a charitable deduction.

If you are a senior who is required to withdraw minimum (RMD) annual distributions from your IRA, 401K, or other qualified plan (or anyone else with an inherited IRA account with RMDs), the amount you are required to withdraw is added to your taxable income. This additional required distribution of income can even boost you up into a higher tax bracket, which is undesirable.


Did you know that you can direct the RMD distribution (if you don't need some or all of those funds for your own support) to a church or charity?

In this way, the funds are not included in your income for tax purposes. This is even more beneficial to you than a charitable deduction. This is called a QCD (qualified charitable distribution) and the entire amount is excluded from your income for tax purposes.

Contact your account advisor or investment representative to request the QCD form. The income tax is avoided by using this specific mechanism when the funds go directly from the IRA to the charity.

~ Elaine Fors, Finance Chair

Baltimore/Washington Conference Re-Structuring



Bishop LaTrelle Easterling and a task force of Conference leaders initiated this fall a possible re-structuring of the Baltimore/Washington Conference of the United Methodist Church. Its purpose is to examine how to equip districts, local churches, and other partners for fruitful missions and ministries. The goals:

- A structure that makes the main thing *The Main Thing*--making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.
- Every church should be the body of Christ in motion.

The task force will be seeking the voice of laity and clergy in the Conference through surveys, listening sessions, and small group conversations. The re-structuring proposal is expected to be brought to the Annual Meeting of the Baltimore/Washington Conference next May.

~ Michael Keller, EUMC laity representative to the Annual Meeting

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

Zachary Medera Bergsman
 Born November 8, 2023 to Allison & Louis Bergsman. Proud grandparents are Val Devaris & Neil Bergsman.
 Congratulations to all!

Suzanna Finkle
 Feb. 24, 1940 – Nov. 15, 2023
 Please hold the family in prayer, especially Sue's daughter,
 Debbie Morgan.

December Birthdays



- | | |
|--------|--|
| Dec 1 | Joanne Christofel
Leela Wurst |
| Dec 5 | Valerie Devaris |
| Dec 7 | Andrew Stevens |
| Dec 8 | Margie Hughes |
| Dec 9 | Sharon Owen
Lynne Rittenberg
Sherrie Ugolini |
| Dec 11 | Lynn Goddard
Kristen Stevens
Chelsea Snodgrass |
| Dec 13 | Natalie Somers |
| Dec 15 | Joanne Christofel
Addie Parrish |
| Dec 19 | Jonathan Wilcox |
| Dec 20 | Russ Parrish |
| Dec 21 | Michelle Anderson
Brian Duckett |
| Dec 23 | Rylan Standiford
Ryleigh South |
| Dec 24 | Gary Hataway |
| Dec 25 | Chris Pulley |
| Dec 27 | Lorraine Crouch |

December Anniversaries



- | | |
|--------|--------------------|
| Dec 29 | Bo & Joyce Chesney |
|--------|--------------------|



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 	2
3 Service 10am First Sunday in Advent	4	5 Homework & Reading 4pm UMW Women in Faith Christmas Potluck 5:30pm	6	7 Homework & Reading 4pm Choir 7pm	8	9
10 Service 10am Sunday School	11	12 Divine Diners Lunch Bunch 12 noon @ Sammy's Homework & Reading 4pm	13	14 Homework & Reading 4pm Choir 7pm	15	16 Food & Diaper Pantry 10:00 am
17 Service 10am Sunday School	18	19 Homework & Reading Christmas Party 4pm	20	21 A Not-So-Merry Christmas Service 7pm	22	23
24 Oscar's Coffee Cocoa & Caroling by the Fire 10am ><> Family Service Candlelight @EUMC 5pm	25 Merry Christmas	26 Divine Diners Supper Club 5:30 Jack's Fortune	27	28	29 	30
31 Service of Carols & Christmas Hymns 10am					<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;">UMW/Women in Faith Next meeting: January 2, 5:30pm</div>	

**Eastport United Methodist Church
926 Bay Ridge Avenue
Annapolis, MD 21403-3091**



**Pastor Christopher Broadwell
Church Office 410-263-5490
Sunday Worship Service 10:00 a.m.
www.eastportumc.org**