



The Eastport Spire

“Inspire Us to Great Things”

February 2024

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



Lent with Peter: A Journey We Share

This Lent, we trace the steps of Peter, Jesus' close confidante. In him, we glimpse both unshakeable faith and wobbly moments, dear friendship and denial, unwavering conviction and fleeting wanderings. Peter’s journey reflects our own - the ongoing quest to navigate life while chasing a flicker of divinity.

Guided by the hymn "Come Thou Fount," we'll sing our way through Peter's story, binding our restless hearts to God. Faith, we affirm, is a constant journey, not a stagnant destination. Wandering is exploration, not necessarily abandonment of or distance from God.

Peter embodies this. He drops his nets, walks on water, stumbles to the empty tomb, swims to meet the risen Christ. He stumbles, falls, yet keeps yearning, searching, loving. In him, we see God's embrace for the imperfectly faithful, for they are the ones God calls.

This Lent, we will look for ourselves in the stepping stones of Peter’s story. We will reflect on the stages of our own faith journeys as well as who and what has shaped us along the way. As we wander, let us tune our hearts to sing God’s grace. May we rest in streams of mercy, never ceasing.

Mark your calendar for these dates:

- Ash Wednesday Service offered at 7 pm
- Join Pastor Chris and Pastor Jenna for Lenten Bible Study Wednesdays at 7 pm or Friday mornings at 9 am thru April 3.
- Palm Sunday is March 24 at 10 am.
- Maundy Thursday Service; March 28, at 7 pm
- Good Friday Service; March 29 at noon.
- Sunrise Service at Thomas Point Park; March 31 at 6 am.
- Easter Sunday Sanctuary Service; March 31 at 10 am.

*Looking forward to journeying with you,
~ Pastor Chris*

Thoughts on Stewardship

Lent is a time for reflection. It is a time to examine our lives and our hearts as we prepare to walk towards Easter.



Some traditions emphasize sacrifice during Lent; the practice of fasting, or perhaps giving up something worldly as part of the resetting of our thinking. But we can also consider in a larger sense how we can refocus and redirect our energies, our resources, and our priorities to better align ourselves with God.

At EUMC, our Admin Council decided to hold our stewardship drive during Lent. The United Methodist Church believes “Together We Do More.” In November and December, we presented Ministry Moments during our services, when speakers reminded us of all the important ways we engage

with our community. Here at Eastport UMC, we are continually growing and developing our capacity to **exemplify God's love, so that we can extend that love** in the world.

So please consider, as part of your Lenten spiritual practice, how you can give back in thanks for all you have received. Church budgets contain all of the regular, mundane expenses, such as utilities, staff salaries, and physical repairs. But we really want to emphasize what our gifts can do in the world around us, to make all people feel included, valued, and surrounded by the love of Christ.

Please join us as part of your personal Lenten reflection to consider whether you can increase your financial support of the church and its missions. We have set a budgetary goal of a 10% increase in annual financial giving. As United Methodists, we pledge to support our church through our *prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness*. We are thankful you are a part of our church family.

You are loved.

Neil Bergsman, Treasurer
Elaine Fors-MacKellar, Finance Chair

Faith In Action Team

The **Faith In Action Team** thanks everyone who participated in one or more congregation community conversations. We continue to welcome additional input and thoughts about what are the concerns you see in our congregation and its community. We clearly heard several areas of need for outreach and advocacy. Many comments were ideas of how to expand or deepen things we are already doing. Over the next several months look for opportunities for EUMC to discern how we can reach out to our neighbors, especially youth and young adults and other faith communities, and how we can advocate for the availability of affordable housing and food.

We also heard interest in amplifying our outreach and advocacy for our LGBTQIA siblings by increasing our presence at Annapolis Pride. Many possibilities are available. Our next step is to decide which possibilities we will take on this year. We will



be pulling together an Annapolis Pride planning group. Let us know if you are interested in helping in planning, doing, participating, or whatever other way. ~ David Emenheiser

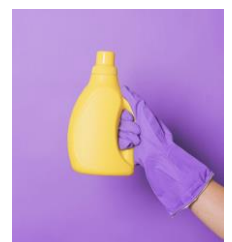
**We said goodbye to
Dionisios P. Devaris "Dan"
April 20, 1930 – December 20, 2023**
**Please keep Val Devaris and the
Devaris-Bergsman family in your hearts
and prayers.**

Food Pantry Special Collection



January's food pantry drive for sponges and scrub brushes was a sudsy success! Your "scrub-tacular" generosity left us overflowing with gratitude (and cleaning supplies!). You've proven that faith and a little elbow grease can go a long way, tackling both hunger and dirty dishes.

Keep the momentum going! In February, we're collecting laundry detergent. Let's show our community the sparkling power of our kindness!



Garden & Maintenance News

Thanks to everyone who helped with our winter cleanup projects: Anne Heald, Rachel Goad, Mike Keller, Peanuts Newquist, Rusty Mack, Donald Cooney, Ruth Gibbons, Tony Fowler, and Val Devaris. Window sills were dusted, display case and windows were cleaned, three rusty toilet paper holders were replaced with shiny new ones, and a lot of scrubbing was done on the church pew seats to remove all the grime



accumulated in the crevices. They look wonderful! A special thanks to Rusty who cleaned and repaired the boilers and air handlers for our heating system. Some of the ends of the pews (there are 72 of them), the baptismal font, a bookcase trim, and the wall between the chapel and Hall were painted. (See before and after photos.)

Sidewalks and ramps were shoveled and salt was put down by Sam Coates and Pastor Chris. Pastor Chris did his best Hulk impression and tore down the old accordion wall. Most of it fit in the dumpster but we did have to pay to have the metal frame carted away.

Jill Peddicord removed two very faded parking lot signs. Pastor Chris and Jill put away Christmas decorations. Lots of small branches were picked up after storms. Outside stair wells were cleared of leaves. It was a busy month! Next month we start on the new wall and doors between the chapel and hall.

Please keep all our workers and volunteers in your prayers to stay safe while they do repairs. If you have extra time and can help with church gardens, lawns, and maintenance, we would greatly appreciate it.

Please contact Joanne or Jerry Christofel at msjohara@yahoo.com or 410-295-5474.

From BW Conference News & Views

Eastport UMC spreads cheer in unique community event....

Posted on Jan 02, 2024

By Chris Broadwell

With Christmas Eve falling on a Sunday, many churches held regular fourth Sunday in Advent in the morning and Christmas Eve services later that night. In a heartwarming twist on their usual Sunday morning service, Eastport UMC in Annapolis brought festive cheer directly to the heart of the community with a carol-filled gathering at *Oscar's Coffee*, a beloved local coffee shop housed in a charming vintage RV.

Instead of pews and hymns, nearly 300 neighbors, dog walkers, and passersby filled the Horn Point Harbor Marina parking lot to join me, my family, and



fellow church members in belting out beloved Christmas carols. The joyful event, a collaboration with *Oscar's Coffee*, offered complimentary coffee from the cozy camper trailer, fostering a warm and welcoming atmosphere.

"It was a wonderful, meaningful, and different way to get the community together," said Will Cunha co-owner of *Oscar's Coffee*.

And different it was! This innovative approach drew a crowd far exceeding expectations, filling the air with familiar melodies and the spirit of the season. To enhance the experience, the church thoughtfully provided booklets containing carol lyrics and QR codes linking to both the church and the coffee shop's information. These, too, quickly found happy homes amongst the enthusiastic crowd.



"We knew it would be fun but the overwhelming turnout and outpouring of joy took us by surprise. It was truly a gift to share such a special moment with our community.

The event resonated deeply with participants, many expressing their delight at being part of something unique and heartwarming. It served as a powerful reminder of the unifying power of tradition, shared experience, and a steaming cup of coffee on a brisk Christmas morning.

Eastport UMC's Christmas carol gathering at *Oscar's Coffee* stands as a testament to the transformative potential of stepping outside the usual walls and embracing the diverse

spaces within our communities. This festive collaboration between church and coffee shop is sure to inspire other congregations seeking new ways to connect and spread joy during the holiday season and beyond.

And, we already have a few ideas brewing for next Christmas.

Homework& Reading



Homework community volunteer Charlie (a senior at Severn School) assists kindergartener Claudio with his homework.



Homework community volunteer “Scottie” works on a “Solar System” jigsaw puzzle with first graders Ashlin and Roberto.

Sally Hight has formalized her return to membership at Eastport United Methodist Church and we couldn't be happier! Welcome back Sally!

UMW/Women in Faith



February UMW Meeting: The United Methodist Women/Women in Faith will hold its next meeting on Tuesday, February 6, at 5:30 in the Fellowship Hall. We will have a short business meeting followed by devotions. You are welcome to bring a bagged meal and drink; dessert will be provided. All women of the church are invited to participate.

Bus Trip to Sight & Sound Theatre to see "Daniel" in June 2024: Please join us on June 27, 2024 (Thursday) on a bus trip to the Sight & Sound Theatre in Strasburg, Pennsylvania, to see the brand-new, original stage production of "Daniel," one of the Bible's most epic sagas. Taken from his people, Daniel is exiled far from home in the powerful kingdom of Babylon. Now this faithful servant of God must navigate his new life inside a palace filled with golden statues and shifting empires. As royal pressures mount, Daniel is faced with a dangerous choice. Will his trust in the one true God remain steadfast through every test of faith? Please come join Eastport and Trinity Churches and witness one of the Bible's most hope-filled stories as it comes to life. From the fiery furnace to the infamous den of lions, "Daniel" is a spectacular theatrical experience for the whole family to enjoy! After the show, enjoy a delicious smorgasbord lunch at Bird-in-Hand Family Restaurant in Bird-in-Hand, Pennsylvania. Tickets cost \$175 per adult or \$120 per child (ages 5 - 12) and include transportation, reserved seats for the show, smorgasbord lunch, and all taxes and tips.

Itinerary:

8:00 AM Depart Annapolis, MD...PARKING LOT OF EUMC
10:15 AM Arrive Strasburg, PA, at Sight & Sound Theatre
11:00 AM Showtime! **"DANIEL"**
1:45 PM Depart Strasburg, PA
2:00 PM Arrive Bird-in-Hand, PA, at Bird-in-Hand Family Restaurant
2:15 PM Smorgasbord Lunch
3:45 PM Depart Bird-in-Hand, PA
6:00 PM Arrive Annapolis, MD

For more information, contact Jean Strucko (410-268-7175 or jeanstrucko@gmail.com). Ticket availability is first come, first served. Jean will collect cash or checks (checks should be made payable to Carol Emory) and asks that you provide your email and phone number along with your ticket request. ~ Kathy Duckett

Mark Your Calendars



IDENTIFY. UNDERSTAND. RESPOND.

The Board of Child Care of the United Methodist Church is a proud Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFSA) training site, and thanks to a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), is offering YMHFSA training at no cost to the community. It is the goal of the Board of Child Care to increase awareness surrounding youth mental health needs and the resources available to help.

This is an 8 hour class that examines typical adolescent development (12-18 years old) and a plan to assist youth in crisis and non-crisis situations.

Eastport UMC has applied and been chosen to be a training site. We are excited to announce that this training will be offered here at the church as a two part session on April 14th and 21st from 2:00-6:00. We think this will be especially interesting for our families and teachers.

Mark your calendars and watch for more information as Eastport UMC strives to give our families healthy and empowering information.

~ Jill Peddicord

BW Conference Restructuring

The Baltimore/Washington Conference of the United Methodist Church will be holding six at-large “listening sessions” on restructuring. Here is one that is in fairly close proximity to Eastport UMC:



February 7 - At Large Session
7 – 9 pm
St. Matthew’s United Methodist Church
14900 Annapolis Rd., Bowie, MD

These sessions are designed to give congregants an opportunity to speak directly to members of the task force that is examining how the Conference “can position itself for greater vitality and effectiveness” and bring a recommendation to the 2024 Annual

Session of the Conference. Anyone interested in attending is encouraged to speak with me.

~ Mike Keller, EUMC Laity Representative
to the Annual Conference

February Birthdays



- Feb 2 Sally Hight
Evan Ugolini
Christina Hataway
- Feb 4 Richard Miller
- Feb 5 Thomas Smith
- Feb 9 Anne Owen
Sam Coates
- Feb 11 James Pawlowski
- Feb 13 Earl Macey, Jr.
- Feb 14 John Allen Wilcox
Luke Wilcox
Lisa Hozey
- Feb 15 Harriet Macey
- Feb 23 Jacqueline Ploof
- Feb 25 Mark Stevens
- Feb 28 Justin Ford



February Anniversaries



- Feb 11 Guy & Dawn Moyer
- Feb 14 Richard & Betty Miller
- Feb 19 Jim & Jean Wilcox
- Feb 22 Scott & Nicole Hughes

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
					1 Homework & Reading 4pm Choir 7pm	2 	3
4 Conversations in Faith 9:15am Service 10am	5	6 Homework & Reading 4pm UMW Meeting & Dinner 5:30pm	7	8 Homework & Reading 4pm Choir 7pm	9	10	
11 Conversations in Faith 9:15am Service 10am Sunday School SUPER BOWL 	12	13 Homework & Reading 4pm Divine Diners Lunch 12pm @Sammy's Mardi Gras	14 Ash Weds Service 7pm  Valentine's Day 	15 Homework & Reading 4pm Choir 7pm	16	17 Community Food & Diaper Pantry 11am (Setup 10am)	
18 Conversations in Faith 9:15am Service 10am	19 	20 Homework & Reading 4pm	21 Lenten Study 7pm	22 Homework & Reading 4pm Choir 7pm	23 Lenten Study 9am	24	
25 Conversations in Faith 9:15am Service 10am Sunday School	26	27 Homework & Reading 4pm Divine Diners Supper Club 5pm Jack's Fortune Admin Council 7pm	28 Lenten Study 7pm	29 Homework & Reading 4pm Choir 7pm 			

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Sunday Worship Service 10:00 a.m.
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