



# The Eastport Spire

## *“Inspire Us to Great Things”*

### June 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.*

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## From the Pastor

Since our last edition of the Eastport Spire some exciting news has emerged from the UMC General Conference, our worldwide quadrennial legislative session. These developments move our denomination significantly closer to the values we hold dear at Eastport UMC: radical welcome and love for all.

Here's a breakdown of the key changes:

- **Harmful Language Removed:** Discriminatory language targeting LGBTQ+ individuals has been eliminated from our Book of Discipline. This is a victory decades in the making!
- **Clergy Equality:** Clergy who perform or officiate same-sex marriages will no longer face punishment.
- **Local Church Autonomy:** Churches that choose not to perform same-sex marriages are also protected from repercussions.
- **Funding Ban Lifted:** Remember the "mythical gay agenda" excuse used to block funding for suicide prevention among LGBTQ+ youth in 2016? That's finally over. This funding will make a world of difference in supporting young lives.
- **Traditional Plan Rejected:** The harsh penalties proposed for LGBTQ+ clergy in 2019 and those officiating same-sex marriages have been completely removed.
- **Ordination of LGBTQ+ Clergy:** Restrictions on LGBTQ+ clergy ordination have also been eliminated.

These changes represent a historic step towards inclusivity and justice within the UMC. They align perfectly with our core values at Eastport UMC, where we believe in "a place at the table for everyone born."

We remember the disappointment of 2019's discriminatory legislation yet, we celebrate the progress made and the opportunity to build a more welcoming and affirming church.

Importantly, these changes allow individual churches and clergy to follow their faith and interpretations of scripture while respecting the beliefs of others. The fear of being forced to perform same-sex marriages propagated by some pastors, seems to be rooted in an unfounded moral panic, rather than any actual change in policy. It's important to remember that pastors within most denominations, like ours, have always had the discretion to decide which weddings they officiate. This applies to traditional marriages as well, where a pastor might have a conflict or concern that prevents them from officiating. Ultimately, the decision rests with the pastor to ensure the ceremony aligns with their beliefs and the couple's wishes. Our core mission is to celebrate love and commitment, and we'll continue to do so with all who seek our guidance, following our established guidelines.

Eastport UMC remains steadfast in our commitment to actively welcoming and affirming people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. If you have any questions or want to learn more, please don't hesitate to reach out to me personally, our Annual Conference Delegate Michael Keller, or our Administrative Council Chairperson Jill Peddicord.

~ Pastor Chris

## Annapolis Pride

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On a sunny June Saturday afternoon, a group of enthusiastic individuals from Eastport United Methodist Church gathered at the corner of Southgate and West Street to show their support for the LGBTQ+ community during the fourth annual Annapolis Pride Parade. With colorful banners

and signs in hand, they cheered on the marchers as they passed by, spreading joy and love throughout the atmosphere. Following the parade, the group joined other churches to host an information table, where they shared details about their church and other welcoming congregations in the area.

Thanks to a generous donation from Black Market Bakers, they were able to serve 5 gallons of iced coffee and iced water for free to all who stopped by, providing a refreshing treat and a chance to show hospitality and love to their neighbors. The event was a wonderful opportunity for Eastport United Methodist Church to connect with the community and demonstrate their commitment to inclusivity and acceptance. We hope to continue participating in the years to come, spreading their message of God's love to even more people.

## Faith In Action Team

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Come to the Feast! A feast is a meal. Picking up fast food while running errands or late for an appointment is a meal, but not a feast. Because a feast is also a party. Choice foods, drinks, and people. It's a celebration of something good. An opportunity to share and multiply joy.



On Pentecost Sunday, Pastor Chris said, "The spirit of Pentecost is a wild force, untamed and uncontrollable; blowing open the doors of the church. Filling followers of Jesus so they are empowered to go out and compel the marginalized

by church and society to come to the feast." And that spirit abides in each one of us. Within each of us is a God-given portion of the spirit of Pentecost.

Perhaps Apostle Paul was thinking about the abiding untamed spirit when he wrote, "God has assigned to each of you a particular ability to express what living in complete confidence in God means. Just as each of us has one body with many parts that do not all have the same function, so although there are many of us, we are the Anointed's body, interrelated with one another. We have different capabilities according to the gifts with which God has endowed us." (Romans 12:4 – 6a) Of course, Paul was writing here specifically about what we call ministry gifts, e.g., pastor, evangelist, etc. But the message is clear, no one can or should serve, work, live, or be alone. Your gifts complement my gifts. Beside the directive that no one should go it alone, it also makes things boring. Together our gifts build up; enliven. Together we turn a meal into a feast.

Faith In Action Team is all about helping turn meals into feasts, by helping individuals know what they are good at doing and connecting them with others and opportunities to do it. Do you know your gifts? Would you like to know? Are you using your gifts? Would you like to use them more? As you read through this edition of The Spire, discover all the great opportunities available through EUMC. You want to help: We can use more help. As you go through your days, look at the people and their unmet needs. You have ideas how to meet those needs: We can amplify them. We need you and your gifts to reach the community and to compel one another and our neighbors to . . . come to the feast.

~ David Emenheiser

## EUMC Music

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The Wesleyan Choir is not rehearsing until late August. Their final Sunday of the season presenting an anthem will be June 9th. The dedicated members of the choir are MaryJane Finkle, Rachel Goad, Les and Mae Johnson, Charlotte Kerns, Jill Peddicord, Rusty Mack, Ed Owen and Bill Riggs. Thank you, Wesleyan Choir, for enhancing the worship service with a weekly anthem.



Many thanks to the Heavenly Bells for their contributions to worship on Palm Sunday, Easter and Pentecost. Love those ringing sounds!

Our Praise Band will continue throughout the summer months. Singers Jill Peddicord, Charlotte Kerns, Les and Mae Johnson lead the congregational singing with Screamin' Tommy Eicher on guitar and Jivin' Greg MacDonald on bass (occasional percussion, too). You all are valued more than you know. Thank you! ~ JoAnn Kulesza

## → A Look Ahead

- *June 7:* Secret Best Friends album release concert (7 pm, at EUMC) - Award-winning barbershop quartet, visit [sbfquartet.com](http://sbfquartet.com) for more info.
- *June 9:* Church Budget Info Session after church service
- *June 23:* Church wide Picnic and Games after Sunday service
- *July 7:* Church Budget Info Session
- *July 14:* Churchwide Cupcake Bingo after Sunday service
- *August 3:* The Annapolis Jazz & Roots Festival Fundraiser Concert 4 pm, at EUMC
- *November 1-3, 8-10:* The Annapolis Jazz & Roots Festival Concert Series at EUMC

## Garden & Maintenance News



Thanks to Molly Estabrook, Tony Fowler, Donna Armstrong, Barbara Krebs, and Theresa Sise who helped with our gardens last month. We planted flowers in pots outside. Jerry and I put down grass seed and straw in the front yard and filled two mystery holes in the side yard. We cut back some bushes too. We greatly appreciate everyone's help. The gardens look great.

This month we pulled up the 50 damaged tiles in the basement and replaced them with new vinyl tiles. Rusty Mack fixed a leak on the boiler pump twice. Jerry cut and installed new flagstone on garden wall to replace broken ones. We put a new vent cover on the roof. Grass was cut several times. Jerry, Tyrone

Brown and Pastor Chris did some repairs on chapel furniture.

Work on the new ramp will be in June by Cornerstone Commercial Services. They completed our previous work last year too. We cleaned out the drainage pipes and the small shed in the stairwell in preparation for this work. We will also order tables, chairs, dividers, and a moveable inside ramp.



Please keep all our workers and volunteers in your prayers to stay safe while they do repairs on our church. If anyone has any 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](mailto:msjohara@yahoo.com) or 410-703-0159. ~ Joanne Christofel

## Food Pantry News

Our **community food pantry** is on the third Saturday of the month. We gather at 10am, distribute food at 11, & usually wrap up around 12:30. The special item we're collecting this month is: household cleaning products.

<https://tinyurl.com/junepantrycollection>



LAST MONTH'S COLLECTION

## UMW/Women in Faith



**June UMW Meeting:** The United Methodist Women/Women in Faith will have a pot luck dinner on Tuesday, June 4, at 5:30 in the Fellowship Hall. This will be our last meeting for a few months until we reconvene in September. Please bring a main dish, side, or dessert to share; however, if you forget, don't let that keep you from attending. All women of the church are invited to participate.

**Bus Trip June 27:** There are still seats available for the trip to see "Daniel" at the Sight & Sound Theater in Strasburg, PA. The bus leaves EUMC parking lot



at 8am and arrives back at 6pm. Cost is \$175 per adult or \$120 per child 5 to 12 years; this covers all costs including smorgasbord lunch. Contact Jean Strucko 410-268-7175 or [jeanstrucko@gmail.com](mailto:jeanstrucko@gmail.com).

## Highlights of the Annual Session of the Baltimore/Washington UM Conference



“Like Fire Shut Up in My Bones” was the theme as 1,000 clergy and laity gathered for the 240<sup>th</sup> session of the Baltimore/Washington Conference of the United Methodist Church on May 29 to 31. There was a sense throughout the gathering that God is doing somethings new in the UMC.

### Living Into a New Day

Bishop LaTrelle Easterling delivered a riveting sermon during the opening worship session. Acknowledging a spirit of renewal at the recently convened General Conference, she said there was joy and hope for our future together. “Now is not the time for mandates, dictates and constraints,” she said. “Rather now is the time to immerses ourselves in the Word of God. Now is the time to study together, to learn together, to wrestle with our Wesleyan theology, to hear God speak a fresh word into our lives.” She added that “we need to engage in some deep conversation as we are led by the Spirit. We need to pray with fervor and invention. Come Holy Spirit”!

To better equip congregations for ministry, a Restructuring Task Force spent months gathering insights through surveys and listening sessions in the Conference. Congregations will be placed in hubs of five to twelve churches, which will be led by a Connecting Church and resourced by a Conference staff person. The configuration of the hubs will be announced in January, and the plan will go into effect in July 2025.

The conference laity heard from Rev. Michael Beck, director of Fresh Expressions, who invited them to redefine how they think about church. Fresh Expressions consist of innovative faith communities that connect with people in their daily spaces and lives together. Examples are people who meet regularly in dog parks, tattoo parlors, or burrito joints.

Last year, the Conference’s Discipleship Ministry engaged more than 18,00 people in missional experiences, awarded more than \$1 million in grants, and had 58 churches experiment through Missional Action Planning how to respond more faithfully to God’s call.

### Stewardship and Vision

- Conference delegates passed a \$18.4 million budget with missions to receive \$12.2 million of it. More money will be allotted at the congregational level.
- A new Compass Retirement Plan for clergy was announced.
- A lawsuit continues against the Conference by 37 churches that object to the terms of disaffiliation established by the Conference Board of Trustees.
- Delegates approved the closing of four churches: Mount Vernon UMC in Whiteford, Saint Mathews UMC in Baltimore, Violetville UMC in Baltimore, and Mount Savage UMC in Mount Savage.

### In Other Actions, the Delegates:

- Celebrated the ordination of two deacons and 14 elders and the commissioning of one deacon and six elders, along with the commissioning of a home missionary.
- Participated in Bible study led by Dean Carla Works of Wesley Theological Seminary which explained Romans 12: 1, 9-12 as how we are called to offer all we have to become a living sacrifice to God.
- Approved three resolutions 1) to create a special Camping Sunday on the second Sunday of February, 2) encourage congregations to raise awareness of Sickle Cell Disease, and 3) to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reconciling Ministry Network.
- Gave thanks to the ministry of 33 pastors who retired, representing 789 years of service.
- Offered an apology and pledge to respond more faithfully to victims of sexual misconduct and violence.
- Raised \$9,000 in a collection for Seeds of Security, a ministry that addresses the needs of the survivors of domestic violence.

- Endorsed Rev. Amy McCullough, pastor of Grace UMC in Baltimore, as a candidate for the episcopacy.
- Learned about *Ignite*, a new youth retreat coming to Ocean City in March.

~ Michael Keller, EUMC Laity Representative to the Annual Session of the Baltimore/Washington UM Conference

## Celebrating Pride and Affirming Our Faith

On Sunday afternoon, June 2, we gathered at our church for the annual



Annapolis Pride Ecumenical Worship Service. It was a beautiful celebration of love and acceptance, with around 60 attendees from a dozen or so other churches and members of the Annapolis community.

The call to worship reminded us of our source of life and the love that God has for us, despite our shortcomings. Laura Brown led us in a prayer of confession, in which we acknowledged our mistakes and asked for forgiveness. We were reminded that God's love is boundless and that we are all beloved children of God. The lesson for the young and young at heart by Smith Broadwell inspired us to reflect upon the things God has given us that in turn give us hope. Rev. Mihee Kim-Kort then delivered her sermon, in which she encouraged us to show up for ourselves, for our communities, and for God. She reminded us that our belovedness is not defined by the world's standards, but by God's love for us. After the sermon, we had a prayer of dedication for the offering, which supported the work of local affirming ministries. The offering supported the organizing and witness efforts of the Anne Arundel Affirming Alliance. Rev. Dr. Manoj Mathew Zacharia (St Anne's) then led us in a powerful affirmation of our faith. We affirmed our trust in God's love for us and our belovedness, even in a world that is rarely satisfied. We were reminded to wear our belovedness like a badge of honor and to

speak it confidently, just as we would speak our names.

The Anne Arundel Affirming Alliance (a4) is a coalition of religious communities and groups in Anne Arundel County who are affirming of LGBTQ+ people. The alliance aims to plan gatherings that bring the LGBTQ+ community and allies together to build intentional and faithful communities in Anne Arundel County for mutual support and encouragement. The alliance promotes and highlights religious and faith communities who are affirming, safe, and brave spaces. Currently, the alliance consists of 11 religious communities who are affirming or in the process of becoming affirming, including: Ark & Dove Presbyterian - Odenton; Asbury United Methodist - Arnold; Baptist Broadneck; Eastport United Methodist; First Presbyterian - Annapolis; Gloria Dei! Lutheran Church - Arnold; Joy Reigns Lutheran - Edgewater; St. Anne's Episcopal - Annapolis; St. Luke's Episcopal - Eastport; St. Margaret's Episcopal - Annapolis; St. Martin's Lutheran - Annapolis; United Church of Christ - Edgewater; and Unity by the Bay.

## Sunday School Vacation Bible School

Sunday School will continue through the summer! Thank you to Elaine for loving the youngest of our church family! ~ Molly Estabrook



**Exciting Vacation Bible School news:** Four churches are teaming together to have VBS August 19-21. Here is the link to register:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc5ZAUvUZRJ83792WPLLgPCi0R4rviewGAmO6TrLyU5dq9ixZg/viewform>

We will need many volunteers. Do any of these jobs sound like something you would like to help do?

- Shepherd: Guides a small group of 6-8 kids through the VBS rotation each day. Their primary tasks are building relationships among the group and encouraging full participation in ReNew activities.

- Gather/Send Leader: Leads the Gather and Send time each day—teaching the Bible story, leading (or co-leading) music, and guiding the Daily Ritual. These leaders help VBS kids catch the ReNew vision as they arrive and send them home to share the vision.

- Activity Site Leader: Leads one of the activity sites—Self, Community, or World. Site leaders help kids dig deeper. Kids' love for the wonder of the vastness of creation leads to a sense of the awesome responsibility and opportunity Christians have for its care.

- Preschool Leader: Leads the self-contained Preschool Activity Site.

- Preschool Volunteers: 3-4 year olds at St Anne's PASA campus only.

- Snacks Leader: Coordinates and leads daily snack time, if your schedule includes this option.

- Games Leader: Leads the Games Site if your church space has the capacity or time scheduled for these activities.

- Registrar: Collects registrations and oversees attendance during VBS, signing kids in and out each day

For more information, please contact Pastor Chris or Molly Estabrook.



## EUMC Brown-Bag Picnic

After service on **June 23**, everyone is invited to stay for a picnic and fellowship outside on our lawn. There are several picnic tables outside. Please bring blankets, chairs, and food & drink for your lunch. We'll have games to play and prizes. We look forward to having fun in the sun with our church members and their families.



The Sunday School kids wrote Mother's Day messages and then potted some annual flowers in little pots they had decorated.



Tonya DeMedici formalized her membership in May.  
Welcome to the EUMC family!



First grader Roberto, one of the children enrolled in the Homework & Reading Program, finished this jigsaw puzzle all by himself.





## CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES!

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**Thomas Murphy Riggs**, Loyola-Blakefield High School class of 2024, will be attending Virginia Tech in the fall, majoring in Finance. Tommy is the grandson of Bill Riggs & Joanne Kulesza.



**Michael Valetine** graduated from South River Night School. Michael is the son of Christina Valentine and grandson of Ruth Gibbons.



**Sara Lahoff** graduated from St. Mary's College with a Bachelor of Science degree in Biochemistry. She will pursue her Masters Degree at University of Maryland Eastern Shore in the fall. Sara is the niece of Jill Peddicord and grand-daughter of Eunice Corse.



## June Birthdays



June 1	Jerry Lesley
June 3	Ricardo Vasquez, Jr.
June 6	Courtney Morgan Hardie Benjamin Baker
June 9	Pam Pulley Shelly Wilcox
June 10	Teresa Keller
June 14	Barbara Pearson
June 17	Vaughan Parrish
June 21	Noah Somers Lynn Swanner Randi Aaliah Savoy
June 22	Jan Hopping
June 23	Alaina Ugolini
June 24	Darcey Schultz
June 25	Sharon Stevens
June 27	Ginny Davidson

## Our New Church Shirts!

Let your faith shine wherever you go with our new church T-shirts! We have several unique options to choose from, all featuring uplifting messages and inspiring imagery. (See attached page)



Whether you're looking for a classic design to wear to a festival or something subtle for everyday wear, we have something for everyone. Head over to our store:

<https://www.bonfire.com/store/friends-of-eumc>



Church Spirit Wear!  
5 different designs,  
endless colors & styles.

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## June Anniversaries



June 4	Pam & Chris Pulley
June 11	Wendy & Eric Edstrom
June 22	Holly Green & Matt Ficca
June 25	Christy & Jerry South

This week, we lift up many in prayer. We remember those recovering from illness, as well as those with unspoken and anonymous requests. For those facing uncertainty, struggling with addiction, or grieving loss and change, we offer our prayers and support. We remember those battling anxiety and depression, and those who feel lonely. May God mend broken relationships and heal hurting hearts.

We hold in prayer our neighbors, both near and far, especially those affected by conflict or natural disaster, including those suffering the ongoing impact of the war between Israel and Palestine. We pray for an end to violence and discrimination of all kinds.

We pray for our church, its ministries, and its leadership. We ask for wisdom for our elected officials and continued well-being for our children and youth. Let us reach out to a member of our church family we haven't connected with in a while. We remember those seeking a faith community and pray for our community as a whole. We ask for blessings on our workplaces and first responders, as well as those serving in the military. Finally, we pray for our schools, including the children, teachers, administrators, staff, bus drivers, and volunteers.

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

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Pastor: Christopher Broadwell

Editor: Eunice Corse



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						<b>1</b>  Pride Parade 12 to 5pm
<b>2</b> Conversations in Faith 9:15am Service 10am Pride Ecumenical Service @ EUMC 3pm	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> H&R Pizza Party 4pm UMW 5:30pm Pot-luck Dinner	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> H&R Trip to Barnes & Noble	<b>7</b> Barbershop Quartet at EUMC 7pm 	<b>8</b>
<b>9</b> Conversations in Faith 9:15am Service 10am Sunday School Church Budget Info Session after church service	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> Homework & Reading 4pm Divine Diners Lunch 12pm @Sammy's	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> Homework & Reading 4pm	<b>14</b>  Flag Day	<b>15</b> Community Food & Diaper Pantry 11am (Setup 10am)
<b>16</b> Conversations in Faith 9:15am Service 10am 	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> 	<b>20</b> 	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> Juneteenth Parade!
<b>23</b> Conversations in Faith 9:15am Service 10am* Sunday School *EUMC brown bag picnic after church	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> Divine Diners Supper Club Adam's 5:30pm Admin Council 7pm	<b>26</b>			
<b>30</b> Conversations in Faith 9:15am Service 10am 						

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