



The Eastport Spire

“Inspire Us to Great Things”

April 2022

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.

From the Pastor

Friends in Christ,

Every now and then there will be things I’ve thought about in preparing for a Sunday sermon that don’t always have enough time to... marinate. Yeah, that’s the word. So they fall to the cutting room floor, so to speak. I spent a bit more time marinating on the story of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15. We spent a great deal of time on it the last Sunday in March, but here are some additional thoughts...

I noticed that the father doesn’t say a word to the son, he simply turns to his servants and orders them to bring a robe, a ring, and sandals for his son. Then he declares that the fatted calf shall be killed and a banquet will be thrown to celebrate the return of his son. A huge festival. If you get around 450-500lbs of meat off a cow, I’ll let you do the calculations of how many people they intend to feed.

It’s a homecoming beyond the youngest son’s imagination. And the gifts that the Father gives are more than just a robe, a ring, and sandals. These items are the Father’s personal items. The Father isn’t sending the servants out to TJMaxx to get new ones, he’s sending them to his own closet. The son is being gifted with items he would remember seeing his Father wear, and items that would reflect his status as a son, not a servant.

Now, some might even argue that he’s a little too generous. But we’re surely learning that grace doesn’t play by the rules during this season. I think if we look closely, we’ll notice something a little less obvious – that the father repeatedly uses his resources to repair relationships and build community. These gifts that the Father gives are intended to be physical signs of the forgiveness and love of the father.

They are intended to make the intangible, tangible and the invisible, visible.

The gifts demonstrate to the son the depth of the father’s forgiveness. The father isn’t just saying he forgives him. He’s actually, truly forgiven. The father put his money where his mouth is. He backs up his words with his actions and his resources. For the father, his son has returned and he welcomes him home as a beloved son.

Wherever we think God’s grace ends, God’s grace goes further. No matter how full, messy, complicated, imperfect, and a wreck we are, God’s grace will still be there.

Go forth and experience God’s grace in the people in your life, without limits, and may it lead you to newness of life.

~ *Grace and peace,*
Pastor Chris

We will begin Holy Week singing songs of joy and praise Palm Sunday (April 10); then, throughout the week we will gradually turn our eyes towards the last days of Jesus’ life Maundy Thursday (7pm) and Good Friday (noon).



Each Easter we gather at Thomas Point to celebrate that Christ is Risen. The service will begin at 6:30 am; be sure to bring a lawn chair and dress appropriately for the weather. The service in the Sanctuary will begin at 10:00 am.

Find more details at www.eastportumc.org/easter.

United Methodist Women

Ash Wednesday

We began the Lenten season with Ash Wednesday. A day that reminds us both of our humanity and God's divinity. We recall where we came from and where we are heading, but always held by God's never changing grace. Thanks to all who joined Pastor Chris and the other ministers at John Wesley for drive-by ashes. It was a joy to worship together in the sanctuary the evening of Ash Wednesday.



The United Methodist Women has changed its "brand" to United Women in Faith; however, the legal name will remain United Methodist Women. The March/April 2022 issue of the UMW's Response magazine provided details on the launch of the new brand. The magazine also included a letter from the National UMW President indicating that "in 2020-2021, the United Methodist Women helped provide more than \$9 million to over 200 projects and partners in the United States and across the globe. You helped more than 150 students in more than 20 countries to get an education through scholarships. That's amazing! Your generous giving also supported regional missionaries, deaconesses and home missionaries, and resources and projects to nurture, educate, and inspire members."



The United Methodist Women/Women in Faith will hold their next meeting on Wednesday, April 6, at 5:30 in the EUMC Fellowship Hall. We will have a short business meeting followed by a program from the 2021-2022 UMW book entitled *Healing and Joy: On our Journey to God*. You are welcome to bring a bagged meal and drink; dessert will be provided. All women of the church are invited to participate.

~ Kathy Duckett

Easter Dedications

April 3rd is the last Sunday to turn in your Easter dedications. Lilies from BruMar Gardens will grace our sanctuary for Easter, and you may take them home after the service. You are invited to make a dedication by purchasing a lily for \$20 or by making a contribution to our food pantry. Order forms will be in your bulletin or on the table in the narthex. Please leave in the offering plates or get them to the church office ASAP. Thanks!



~ Jill Peddicord

Starting Wordle with a Psalm

If you're like a lot of folks, you've become addicted to the popular word game, Wordle. If you haven't, let me explain briefly. You get six tries to guess what the five-letter word of the day is. Simple, right? Well, yes and no. If you're lucky and guess a good word off the bat, and get lots of hints about what letters are or are not in a word, you can solve it in much less than six tries. If you're far off the mark, well, let's just say your results might be less than impressive.



And while Wordle is not really my topic here, the manner in which I solve the puzzle made me think of a recent night at our Lenten study class. We were discussing Psalm 27, and Pastors Chris and Jenna asked, "What struck you about this Psalm?"

Immediately, my mind went to this part of the scripture:

⁸My heart says of you, "Seek his face!"
Your face, LORD, I will seek.
⁹Do not hide your face from me,
do not turn your servant away in anger;
you have been my helper.
Do not reject me or forsake me,
God my Savior.
¹⁰Though my father and mother forsake me,
the LORD will receive me.

I thought about the fear that the writer must have been feeling as they wrote those words. Fear of rejection, fear of abandonment, just so much fear. And that made me think about how many people these days appear to be motivated by fear, which comes through in their words and their actions. They fear those who don't look, act, speak or live like them, and that translates into finding ways to exclude them from the table, from the community, from the church, from the voting booth.

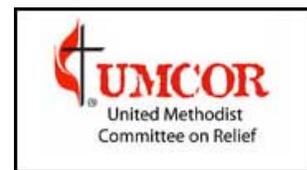
But what was interesting was that while my mind went automatically to fear, that was, thankfully, not a universal reaction. Other folks focused on the following instead:

¹³I remain confident of this:
I will see the goodness of the LORD
in the land of the living.

Instead of seeing fear, they turned instinctively to kindness, knowing that the goodness of the Lord would be manifested in people living out their faith in harmony with those around them. They spoke of watching folks interact at the food pantry, in the grocery store – basically, anywhere they encountered people. I was humbled by their fearless faith, in their determination to see the good in humankind instead of fear.

What I came away with, was that how I feel about a situation is mine to determine. I may not be able to control the event but I can decide how I want to react to it. Translated into Wordle, let's say my first guess is "fears." I get two hits that are correct, the "e" and the "r." It's now up to me – will I let my second choice be "dread" or will I go from "fear" to "cheer?" I know which kind of person I'd prefer to be.

~ Barbara Krebs



Friends of EUMC:

As you may know, the United Methodist Committee on Relief is active in supporting communities in crises across the globe. United Methodist congregations like ours regularly fund the operational costs of the organization so all additional support raised goes directly to support the need.

You can learn more and give at this link: <https://umcmmission.org/umcor/>

Thank you for supporting God's children across the globe. ~ Pastor Chris

April Garden & Maintenance News



Happy Spring! The grass just had its first mowing! Several stones around the hall gardens were glued back in place; we cut three new stones (two still need to be put down with cement and mortar), sharpened blades on the push mower and changed oil. A new metal drip line was installed on the porch shed so that rain water will not run down the brick wall and continue to wear away the brick mortar and concrete steps. Stone was laid down to improve drainage off the shed roof; we organized the shed (Pastor Chris helped), and installed more sand between bricks in walkways. We continue to work on the window wells, weather permitting.

We walked around on the last rainy day and the new drainage pipes from the gutters on the roof are working well (Thanks Bill!). As usual all the normal chores like picking up trash and branches continue. GreenScape day at church will be Sunday, April 24, after service for an hour and a half. Please bring a bucket or any garden tools you have. We will have extra here too. We will pull some weeds and put down new mulch donated by the City of Annapolis. If you can help with any work outside, please contact Joanne or Jerry Christofel at msjohara@yahoo.com or 410-295-5474. We have three small gardens that still need caretakers. Please sign up for one. Many hands make light work. ~ Joanne Christofel

SIGHT & SOUND BUS TRIP

August 23, 2022 (Tuesday)

Sight & Sound Theatre – “DAVID”
& Family-Style Lunch at Hershey Farm Restaurant
Strasburg, Pennsylvania

\$130 – Adult

\$96 – Child (age 3-12)

Includes transportation, reserved seats for the show,
family-style lunch, and all taxes and tips.

Depart EUMC parking Lot 8:00AM

Return 6:00PM

Make checks payable to Carol Emory at 506 Duvall
Lane, Annapolis, MD 21403 to secure your seat.

Questions? Contact Carol at her email

carolemory7@aol.com.



Letter to Bishop Easterling

At their March 15, 2022 meeting, the Administrative Council of Eastport United Methodist Church requested that Mike Keller (Laity Representative to Conference) write a letter to Bishop Easterling regarding the General Conference’s continued delay in voting on the issue of LGBTQ inclusion in the United Methodist Church. The letter was approved unanimously by the Council and is included here for your information. If you have any questions about this issue, please reach out to Pastor Chris, Mike Keller, or Jill Peddicord.

March 21, 2022

Bishop LaTrelle Easterling
Baltimore-Washington Conference
of the United Methodist Church
1711 East Market Place
Fulton, MD 20759

Dear Bishop Easterling:

I am writing in my capacity as the Lay Leader at Eastport United Methodist Church and the laity representative to the Baltimore-Washington Conference. I also am writing on behalf of our church council, which has asked me to contact you regarding the decision to postpone the General Conference for the third time—this time to 2024.

Our church council understands the challenges that the Commission on the General Conference has faced during the past two years. Yet, we are dismayed by the outcome it reached in its most recent deliberations. This sentiment appears to be widespread within the denomination and shared by both progressive and conservative congregations.

Many theologically progressive churches are frustrated by the prospect of a continued delay in removing the language in the Book of Discipline and in the Social Principles that is disparaging of LGBTQ persons and in eliminating the ban on clergy officiating at same-sex marriages and on preventing “self-avowed practicing” gays from serving as pastors and in other ministry positions. Civil disobedience is the likely outcome. Many theologically conservative churches are giving up on the process and unwilling to wait any longer for the General

Conference to act. These churches have taken steps to launch a new denomination, The Global Methodist Church, less than two months from now.

These conflicts have exhausted parishioners and have attracted negative publicity in the news media for the United Methodist Church.

Our church council believes that the denomination cannot afford to wait another two years to resolve its longtime debate over LGBTQ inclusion and to approve a separation plan for those churches and conferences that favor a different direction. There is a proposal on the table, the Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace Through Separation, which appears to have widespread support among both conservatives and progressives especially within the American church. I recall the strong endorsement which it received in the resolution passed in last year's Annual Meeting of the Baltimore-Washington Conference.

For that reason, our church council calls on the Council of Bishops to convene a Virtual Special General Conference this year with just one item on the agenda: a discussion and vote on the Protocol. With the technology that is available, this task should not be formidable even for those conferences and churches that are located in developing countries. As one of the members of our church council put it, "if a delegation can purchase plane tickets and deal with the rigors of international travel, it can find a way to obtain satisfactory internet access for a few hours".

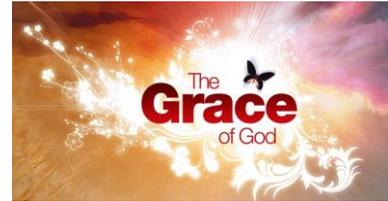
It is likely that the Protocol would be rapidly approved and that would avoid the difficulties and hardships that otherwise will hamper the ministries of the United Methodist Church for the next two years to say nothing about the legal issues that will have to be considered by the Judicial Council. It is time for action, and the Council of Bishops should initiate it.

Thank you for your consideration.

In Christ,

Michael J. Keller

cc: Rev. Christopher Broadwell
Church Council of Eastport United Methodist Church
Rev. Sarah Schlieckert



What Doesn't Play by the Rules

I come into the room
calculating
what I've done,
as if hurt could be measured,
as if there was a score system,
as if we could say what I owe in return.

I come into the room
ready to apologize,
ready to make amends,
ready to tell you all the things I'll do to make it
better, but you put your arms around me.

Grace is the ocean
that softens the edges.
Grace is rain in the desert – you're not sure whether
to laugh, cry, or dance.
Grace is a miracle,
all by itself.

In a scorekeeping world,
grace doesn't play by the rules.
I come into the room calculating what I've done.
You say there's grace here. It feels like a miracle.
I don't know whether to laugh, cry, or dance.*

*Denotes portions of our liturgy originating from
Rev. Sarah A. Speed, A Sanctified Art LLC



April Birthdays

- Apr 2 Butch Stevens
Joe Nasatka
- Apr 3 Ricardo Vasquez
- Apr 5 Bill Schneider
- Apr 6 David M. Owen
- Apr 7 Jason Wilcox
Jim Bradford
- Apr 9 Carole McNew
- Apr 12 Sophia Hughes
Jessie Keller
- Apr 14 Tom Schwallenberg
- Apr 19 Scott Hughes
- Apr 20 Susan Schneider
- Apr 26 Liam Smith
Traci DuPlayee
- Apr 27 Jim Finkle
- Apr 29 Evie Swink
Guy Goddard



April Anniversaries

- Apr 5 Linda & Hillard Harrison
- Apr 7 Mary Jane & Jim Finkle
- Apr 16 Lindsey & David M. Owen
- Apr 23 Kathy & Steve Duckett



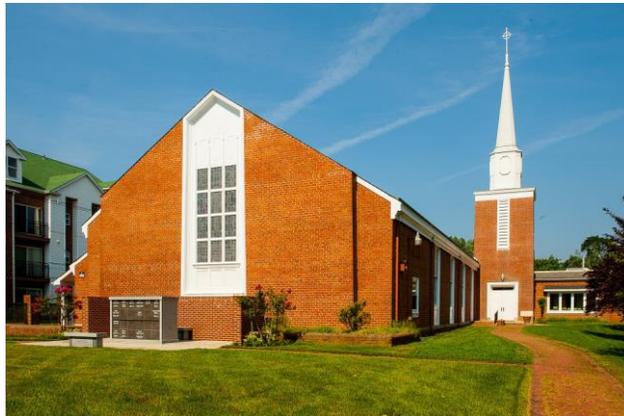
Our office administrator, Rose Maple, has been tidying up member information and is preparing a new church directory. Over the next two months or so the amazing Molly will be taking photos before and after Sunday morning worship. We are excited to include you in the directory! Please make sure the office has your birthday, anniversary, and current contact information.



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

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 	2
3 Worship 10am	4 Bells 7:00	5 Homework 4:00pm	6 UMW Meeting 5:30pm @EUMC	7 Homework 4:00pm Lenten Study 7pm Choir 7pm	8	9
10 Palm Sunday Service 10am 	11 Bells 7:00	12	13	14 Maundy Thursday Service 7pm	15 Good Friday Service 12 noon	16 Food Pantry 10:00 am 
17 Sunrise Service Thomas Pt. 6:30am Easter Service Sanctuary 10am	18	19 Homework 4:00pm	20	21 Homework 4:00pm Choir 7pm	22 	23
24 Worship 10am *GreenScape* after church service	25	26 Homework 4:00pm	27	28 Homework 4:00pm Choir 7pm	29	30

**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**