



The Eastport Spire

“Inspire Us to Great Things”

July 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.

From the Pastor

Celebrating 5 Years Together at EUMC

Dear Eastport United Methodist Church,

It is with immense gratitude and joy that I write to you today, celebrating my fifth year as your pastor at EUMC. These past years have been a journey of growth, challenges, and blessings, and I am humbled to have had the privilege of walking alongside you.

As a community, we have faced trials and triumphs, we have seen doors close and doors open, said goodbye and welcomed new persons. Through it all, our shared commitment to serving and growing together has remained. I am continually inspired by the dedication and resilience of this congregation and its leaders, and I want to express my deepest thanks to all those who have stepped up and listened to the Spirit’s leading in our midst.

Here are a number of things I look forward to in the year to come:

Continuing to embrace our core values, striving to live out the marks that define us as a church community. Seeking to embody Jesus for the world around us, recognizing that our actions and words can be a powerful witness to God’s love. Digging into our United Methodist heritage and deepening our commitment to self-transformation (or as John Wesley would describe as: continually growing in the image and likeness of God, and integrating scriptural literacy with reason, experience, and tradition).

Together, we have accomplished so much over the past five years, and I am excited to see where our journey will take us in the years to come. As we continue to dig deeper into our values and live them out in practical ways, I have no doubt that we will

continue to experience God’s blessings and make a lasting impact on our community.

Thank you, United Methodists of Eastport, for your unwavering support, your commitment to growth, and your passion for service. I am truly grateful to be a part of this incredible church family, and I look forward to the adventures that lie ahead as we continue to grow together.

~ *With gratitude, Pastor Chris*



Homework & Reading Wrap Up

With schools re-opened and the pandemic in the rear view mirror, the Homework and Reading Program returned to the fellowship hall at Eastport UMC. While it did not match the participation levels achieved prior to the Virus, the year was successful by any measure.

There were 75 Homework sessions serving 18 children. There were 13 “regular” participants—children who often attended. The average (mean and median) number of kids was 8. There were nine or

more children at nearly half (47 percent) of the sessions.

For the first time, educational games, puzzles and other activities were integrated into the curriculum to accompany the traditional help with homework. These additions proved to be very popular with the kids.

The academic year ended with a pizza party where each kid also received a personalized certificate of attendance in the Homework program. Ten children also took part in a trip to Barnes & Noble bookstore where each selected up to \$25 in books followed by a frozen yogurt treat—the total cost covered by a private donation. Two of the children will be attending summer camp at the West River Center with financial support from Eastport UMC's Neighborhood Children Education Fund and the Baltimore/Washington Conference.

Fourteen volunteers from the church and the community assisted the program this year: David Aherne, Casey Bartoe, Neil Bergsman, Joyce Conley, Molly Estabrook, Maggie Flamand, Elaine Fors, Craig Friedrich, Judy Gonsalves, Marc Greenberg, Anne Heald, Mike Mullins, Juliet Plaster, and MiMi Schaffer. The “support groups” which meet in the fellowship hall also helped by setting up tables and chairs for the Homework classes. Many thanks for all of the assistance, which made this ministry possible.

The program is now “in recess” to give the volunteers a well-deserved summer break. Sessions will resume when Anne Arundel County Public Schools re-open on August 29.

~ Michael Keller, coordinator, Homework and Reading Program

Sunday School

Sunday School is offered the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month. The kids can exit while we share the peace and return to the sanctuary in time for Communion. All are welcome! Seen here the kids struggle with counting the hairs on a head. (Matthew 10:30-31). If you're interested in helping with Sunday School, please email me at:

estabrook120@icloud.com. ~ Molly Estabrook



"And even the hairs of your head are all counted."

Report from the Annual Meeting of the Baltimore/Washington Conference

The theme “All About Love” set the stage for holy conferencing by 1,200 clergy and laity of the Baltimore-Washington Conference at their annual session –the first held in person since 2019.



The conference opened with Circles of Love, which gathered the members around 92 tables for two hours of conversation based on provocative questions about building Beloved Community.

Visiting Bishop Peter Weaver led a Bible study on the Pentecost story in Act 2, in which he reminded everyone that United Methodists are called to be perpetually Pentecost people—Spirit filled and Spirit sent. “The power of love doesn’t come because we have meetings and manufacture it,” he said. “When we are open, the Spirit moves in”.

The Spirit filled love was expressed throughout the three-day session. For the first time in its 239 year history, members engaged en masse in a service project aimed at supporting Baltimore school children. Another moment came when it was announced that an offering for Seeds of Security raised \$6,300 to assist victims of domestic violence. Conference members responded with additional gifts of \$100 each—bringing the total to \$16,200.

Part of the love involved letting go, as members voted to allow the disaffiliation of 23 churches which had requested to leave the denomination and had completed the required discernment process established by the conference Board of Trustees including the approval by a two-thirds vote of each congregation's professing members. These churches also must make three payments to the Conference by December 21, 2023: an amount equal to 50 percent of the assessed value of the church property, an additional 12 months of mission shares, and payment of the church's pro rata share of the unfunded pension obligation. This requirement reflects Paragraph 2553 of the Book of Discipline, which was added at the last UM General Conference in 2019.

Conference members approved seven resolutions:

- Passed a policy that addresses paid bereavement leave for clergy
- Supported steps to ensure the best alternative use of available church properties for mission purposes
- Voted to oppose apartheid in the Holy Land
- Supported two weeks of paid maternity leave for clergy foster parents
- Affirmed the Queer Delegates Call to Center Justice and Empowerment for LGBTQIA People in the UMC
- Supported the creation of a U.S. Regional Conference
- Supported the removal of discriminatory policies in the Book of Discipline

In other highlights of the Annual Meeting, members:

- Adopted a 2024 budget of \$18,107,147 including a mission share income budget of \$12,564,729, reduced the benevolence factor for mission shares to 17.45 percent, and set the collection rate at 87 percent, 3 percent less than in 2023.
- Increased the base salary for clergy by 4 percent or \$1,920, which will make the base salary \$49,910, and raised the housing allowance by 3 percent to a total of \$22,030.
- Honored 31 retirees, representing 838 years of service to the Church
- Learned about Non Anxious Leadership from Rev. Jack Shitama of the Center for Vital Leadership during the Laity Session

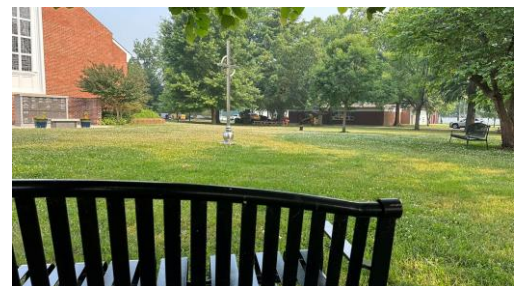
- Received information and inspiration about young adult ministries, the BWC's four campus ministries, IDEA internships, retreat and camping ministries, Project Transformation, and vital ministries at Hughes UMC in Wheaton and Reistertown UMC.
- Approved the closure of four churches: Carlos UMC in Eckhart, Friendship UMC in Martinsburg, Hyattstown UMC in Hyattstown, and Marley UMC in Glen Burnie

If you would like more information about the Annual Meeting or have questions, please contact Michael Keller at mjaykeller@outlook.com or 410-263-7409.

~ *Michael Keller*, Eastport UMC Laity Representative to the Annual Meeting of the Baltimore/Washington Conference.

Each Sunday morning at 9:15 in the chapel we offer Conversations in Faith, a time in which we gather to study scripture and learn from one another. Everyone is welcome to join us or just drop in when you can.

Come and Find a Place of Quiet Rest



Looking for quiet time amidst a busy day? Need less chaos and less noise? We are grateful to offer the new benches for prayer and meditation. Seen in the photo above, the iron benches are a beautiful new addition to our grounds given in memory of Richard Strucko.

Summer Concert at EUMC

Tickets are on sale for the show to be held at EUMC July 20 from 7-9 PM. Featuring Theresa Sise & Sweet Tea and celebrating the 1969 moon walk, the event will raise funds for EUMC and the November festival (many family friendly shows featuring international and regional musicians). Admission for the July 20 fundraiser is \$25. Get tickets from the instant seats website and select the venue "Annapolis Jazz & Roots." Call Paulina Phillips at 410-972-7325 for more information.



Celebrate the anniversary of the 1969 Apollo 11 space mission with an evening of pop, rock and jazz associated with that epic voyage.

Relax at your table or get up to dance to tunes enjoyed by the astronauts, such as Frank Sinatra's hit "Fly Me to the Moon," "Everyday People" by Sly and the Family Stone, and other thematic tunes such as Van Morrison's timeless "Moondance."

Pianist Darius Scott, drummer Nick Costa, and bassist Mike Graham, Jr. will appear with vocalist Theresa Sise who has a solid history of sold out shows in the region. Refreshments will be sold and edible art will be displayed.

The event will help fund the second annual Annapolis Jazz & Roots Festival held at multiple sites in Eastport in early November. International and regional artists perform in free and ticketed events. The July 20 event is suitable for adults and teens. Admission: \$25 advance, \$35 at the door.

Location: Eastport United Methodist Church **Tickets:** www.instantseats.com
926 Bay Ridge Avenue, Annapolis, MD 21403 Select the venue: Annapolis Jazz & Roots.

Planning to be out of town? You can still support the festival! Purchase a ticket online or mail a donation. Make checks payable to: Annapolis Community Foundation. Note "Annapolis Jazz & Roots" in the memo and send to: P.O. Box 4922, Annapolis, MD 21403.

Thank you!



Garden and Maintenance News

We have been working on lowering the electric bill at church by lowering the temperature on the hot water heater, turning off unused appliances, etc. We have already lowered the amount of electricity and gas we use with changing filters and using the shutters in church. Grass is being cut and weed wacked and sidewalks edged and sprayed with weed killer. Gardens are being weeded and trash and sticks are picked up.



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 garden and maintenance, we would greatly appreciate it. Please contact Joanne or Jerry Christofel at msjohara@yahoo.com or 410-295-5474

~ Joanne Christofel

Caring for Each Other



One way that we care for and support each other each month is through the EUMC card ministry. Our goal is to send cards for birthdays, anniversaries, get well, and condolences.

If you know of a community member, family member, or friend who is in need of receiving a "hug" through the mail, please let the church office know so we can reach out to those folks and include them in our Eastport "You Are Loved" ministry."

~ Ruth Gibbons & Elaine Fors

Splashport 2023

The summer heat is on the way, that means the kiddos are invited to join us at **Splashport** (adults are also welcome). We'll gather each Friday afternoon during the month of July from 1-3 to enjoy a huge slip-n-slide, water toys, and maybe even some refreshing popsicles. See you there!

Join us in service with our neighbors at our **Community Food Pantry**. We do this in the parking lot and fellowship hall on the third Saturday of each month starting at 10 am. Distribution begins at 11 am. Our next pantry date is July 15th.

We are Wonderfully Made

The paraments and bulletin image for Pentecost remind us of God's vibrant, messy, and creative dream for our community. We are made of so many different brushstrokes, palettes, and textures and each of us find our place in God's masterpiece as we live "into" who God created us to be. Who are you created to be and how does the Spirit empower you?



participation were a powerful statement of our church's commitment to love, acceptance, and justice. Because of your visible presence, someone who has previously been excluded from home and church (after church, after church, after church) was reminded of the truth and depth of Christ's love for us. Because of your presence someone chose life and others became more fully alive.

Let us continue to follow Jesus together.

~ *Pastor Chris*

Celebrating at the Annapolis Pride Parade!



It was an inspiring sight to see over 50 people connected to EUMC gathered to cheer on those parading, united in love and celebration.

We were reminded of the importance of embracing and affirming every individual's unique identity. It was truly an uplifting experience to witness the joy, love, and compassion that filled the air.

In a time where local churches are leaving our denomination – the newly formed Global Methodist Church has declared it will never ordain or marry LGBTQ people – it becomes more necessary to show that God's love knows no boundaries and that every person deserves to be celebrated, respected, and embraced for who they are. We remain committed to fostering an inclusive space where all individuals can worship, grow, and thrive.

To the 50-odd people connected to our church who attended the Annapolis Pride Parade in person and those who did so in spirit, I extend our heartfelt gratitude and admiration. Your presence and

Ice Cream Social



Scoops of blessings and sprinkles of joy await you at our **Post-Service Ice Cream Social** on July 16. Don't make the sundae sermon be the cherry on top of your morning, join us for some sweet frozen fellowship. We'll host an ice cream social and we encourage you to bring your favorite ice cream to share. If you don't have time to churn your own or run by the store, no worries, we should have plenty to share.



As the warm summer days approach, we invite you to explore a revitalizing and fulfilling activity: morning yoga classes. Yoga is a practice that offers numerous physical, mental, and spiritual benefits, making it a perfect addition to your summer routine. Joining a morning yoga class can be a transformative experience that nourishes your mind, body, and soul.

1. **Physical Well-being:** Engaging in yoga postures and movements promotes flexibility, strength, and balance. By attending morning sessions, you can kick-start your day with a gentle yet invigorating workout. Regular practice can help improve posture, enhance muscle tone, and increase overall stamina.

2. **Mental Clarity and Stress Relief:** The combination of deep breathing, mindfulness, and meditation during yoga helps calm the mind, reduce stress, and improve mental clarity.

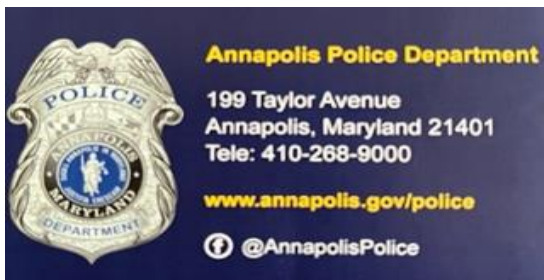
3. **Community and Support:** Connect with like-minded individuals in a supportive community setting. By sharing the experience you can foster new friendships, strengthen existing bonds, and create a network of support on your wellness journey.

4. **Nurturing Self-care:** In the midst of busy schedules and responsibilities, it is crucial to prioritize self-care, nurturing your well-being and overall health. By investing in self-care, you can better serve others and live a more balanced life.

We are delighted to announce that our church will be hosting morning yoga classes throughout the summer. These classes will be led by experienced instructors who will guide you through a gentle yet invigorating practice suitable for all levels.

Contact the church office with questions and we'll direct you to the yoga instructor.

926 Bay Ridge Ave.
Tues & Fri @ 6 am beginning July 11.
Free, donations welcome.



Be Safe from Fraud – Stay Informed

We were so grateful to have **Sgt. Kris Becker of the Annapolis Police Department** come and present information and tools that help us protect our personal information. Here are a few essential tips to

help you stay safe from phishing scams, fraud, and other forms of online threats.

1. **Be Mindful of Personal Information:**

Be cautious when sharing personal details online. Avoid providing sensitive information such as your full name, address, phone number, or financial details unless you trust the website or individual. Remember, your personal information is valuable and should be treated with care.

2. **Recognize Phishing Attempts:**

Phishing scams are designed to trick you into revealing sensitive information by posing as trustworthy entities. Be vigilant in identifying suspicious emails, messages, or phone calls. Look out for spelling errors, generic greetings, urgent requests for personal data, or attachments from unknown sources. When in doubt, verify the legitimacy of the communication through separate channels, such as official company websites or phone numbers.

3. **Strengthen Your Passwords:**

Create strong and unique passwords for all your online accounts. Combine uppercase and lowercase letters, numbers, and special characters. Avoid using easily guessable information like birthdays or pet names. Additionally, consider using a password manager to securely store your passwords and enable two-factor authentication whenever possible.

4. **Secure Your Devices:**

Keep your devices, including smartphones, tablets, and computers, up to date with the latest security patches and antivirus software. Regularly update your operating system and apps to ensure they have the latest security features. Be cautious when connecting to public Wi-Fi networks and avoid accessing sensitive information while on these networks.

5. **Research Before Sharing:**

Before sharing any news, articles, or information on social media or via email, take a moment to verify its authenticity. Misinformation can spread quickly, leading to confusion and potential harm. Rely on reputable sources, fact-checking websites, or consult trusted friends or family members before sharing uncertain information.

6. **Stay Informed:**

Educate yourself about current scams and fraud trends. Stay updated with news related to cybersecurity and fraud prevention. Attend workshops or webinars offered by local

organizations or law enforcement agencies (wink wink) to learn about the latest tactics used by scammers.

Remember, our strength lies not only in our faith but also in our ability to protect ourselves and our loved ones. By implementing these practices and staying vigilant, we can create a safer online environment for all. ~ *Pastor Chris*

July Anniversaries



- July 5 Mike & Lisa Stevens
- July 10 Jason & Shelly Wilcox
- July 17 Gary & Christina Hataway
- July 19 Russ & Lisa Parrish
- July 24 David & Cyndi Councill
- July 26 Gene & Lynn Swanner
- July 28 Jon & Kim Wilcox
- July 29 Mei-jen Hong-Hillary

July Birthdays



- July 2 Dawn Goodnow
- July 4 Richard Hughes
- July 5 Libby Cain
- July 6 Janet Mack
- Judy Bradford
- Michelle Outerbrige
- July 7 Ryan Elliott
- July 9 David L. Owen
- Carrie Vasquez
- July 12 Elaine Fors
- Kathleen Liedy
- July 13 Jackson Kopp
- July 15 Catrina Smith
- July 16 Nicole Hughes
- Debbie Morgan
- Shirley Owen
- July 18 Harriett Newquist
- July 20 Megan Wurst
- Molly Parrish
- July 22 Kevin Heinz
- Alexandra South
- July 24 Nathan Vasquez
- July 25 James Wilcox
- July 26 Joyce Chesney
- July 27 Hattie Broadwell
- Nikki Scott
- July 29 Evan Wilcox
- Tyler South
- July 30 Jerry South

Statement Condemning Acts of Hate

Eugene Peterson, the chair of the Anne Arundel County Human Relations Commission, and I as chair of the Annapolis Human Relations Commission has made a joint statement condemning the recent acts of hate directed at churches in Anne Arundel County and notably the vandalism at Fowler United Methodist Church. The statement has been posted to the City and County web sites. The link appears below. Also included are suggestions to the public from the Annapolis Human Relations Commission as to how citizens can respond to hate crimes and incidents.

The Capital has reported that law enforcement has arrested suspects in these crimes.

<https://www.annapolis.gov/1399/Responding-to-Hate-Groups>.

~ *Mike Keller*



Lifelong game-show fanatic David Ford, an Annapolis native who now lives in Pasadena, appeared on "Jeopardy" on Thursday night. Courtesy

Our thanks to Justin Ford for sharing this information about his son, David. All of us Jeopardy lovers enjoyed cheering David on!

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 Service 10am	3	4 Happy 4th of July 	5	6	7 Splashport 1-3 pm EUMC Yard 	8
9 Service 10am	10	11 	12	13	14 Splashport 1-3 pm EUMC Yard 	15 Food & Diaper Pantry 10:00 am 
16 Service 10am Ice Cream Social 	17	18 	19	20 Moon Dance Summer Concert @ EUMC 7-9pm 	21 Splashport 1-3 pm EUMC Yard 	22
23 Service 10am	24	25 Admin Council Meeting 7 pm	26	27	28 Splashport 1-3 pm EUMC Yard 	29
30 Service 10am	31					