



The Eastport Spire

“Inspire Us to Great Things”

July 2026

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 Administrative Council

Eastport United Methodist is undergoing transformation. A new chapter is beginning for us. Starting on July 1, we welcome our new pastor, Pastor Rai. He brings wonderful gifts and energy. And a smile that seems the very gateway to compassion and dedication.

We – some of us – have questions. Why is this happening? What does the future hold? Will everything change? We do not yet know those answers.

What we do know is that although the pastor is changing, Eastport UMC Admin Council, congregation, and community continue. We continue to be a place of welcome, grace, and radical hospitality. Especially when we do not understand, we believe that God is present in us, with us, and most importantly among us. God abides in communion and in community.

When the SPRC was informed of the new appointment, we updated our Church Profile, part of which describes us as:

“Eastport UMC is a proud, inclusive, affirming congregation, welcoming all. ... Our vision is to continue to strengthen our internal congregational bonds so that we can be more effective in reaching out to our community and people in need. We envision Eastport flourishing spiritually, culturally, economically, with greater safety and more opportunity and EUMC being part of it all. ... We will accomplish this vision by being a true body using our gifts together.”

That describes who we are. We are a people saying All are welcome! That is not changing. Now is a time for new growth and transformation. To extend further the welcome, faith, and service. To transition from what was to what will be. From our viewpoint it can be difficult to remember that the caterpillar is the same creature as the butterfly.

We seek and extend grace to bring the best from Pastor Chris as we pivot in becoming who God called us to be and do under Pastor Rai. Grace to each person, the congregation and community, and especially to Pastor Rai as we meet him with unflinching welcome.

~ The Admin Council





VBS Volunteers & Snacks Needed

Vacation Bible School will be held **August 17–19** this year and is a joint program between **St. Anne's, First Presbyterian, and Eastport UMC**.

The organizers are seeking:

- **Adult volunteers** to serve as shepherds and assist with the program.
- **Snack donations** for participants.

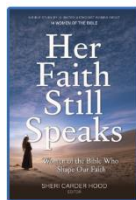
If you are interested in volunteering or contributing snacks, please contact **Ruth Gibbons** at **410-533-1195**.

Thank you for helping make this year's Vacation Bible School a success.

Continuing Book Study

This study continues on Thursdays at 7pm in the chapel throughout the summer.

Our discussions are lively and relevant to today's faith journey. Join us whenever you can.



~ *Jill Peddicord*

The Year: AfterSchool Learn & Play

During the 2025-2026 academic year, there were 69 Learn and Play sessions serving 8 children. All were "regular" participants who frequently attended. The average (mean and median) number of children in each session was 5. There were 6 or more children at 30 percent of the sessions. On average, three volunteers were on hand to assist the kids.

The academic year ended with a pizza party. All of the kids also took part in an excursion to Barnes and Noble bookstore where each selected up to \$25 in books followed by a frozen yogurt treat—the cost covered by a private donation. The children also received a personalized certificate of participation.



The Learn and Play program has helped about 100 children during its 17-year history, most of them for many years. Many thanks are extended to the dedicated volunteers from the church and the community: Anne Heald, Amaza "Scottie" Reid, Judy Gonsalves, Neil Bergsman, Elaine Fors, Mike Mullins, MiMi Schaffer, David Emenheiser, Joyce Conley, and Marcus Waudby.

The program is on recess for the summer, giving our volunteers a well-deserved break. The sessions will resume after Anne Arundel County Public Schools have re-opened for the fall term.

~ *Michael Keller*

West River Camp was a Win!

Two tired boys, Jason and Justin, had an exciting week of summer camp at West River. The cost of their outing was covered by the church's Neighborhood Children Education Fund. David Emenheiser, Neil Bergsman and Amaza "Scottie" Reid, three of the volunteers who provided transportation to and from West River (the other being Anne Heald) offered the following observations:



Neil: “The boys said they had a great time at West River camp. They liked the swimming pool and the campfire best. Justyn and Jason are very polite and engaging young gentlemen. It was a joy for me to play a small role in facilitating their camp experience.”

Learning English, Building Community

This year, students showed remarkable commitment. Despite busy work schedules, family responsibilities,

Fran and Eileen shared their gratitude for Eastport UMC's hospitality and support throughout the year. Whether navigating winter weather, coordinating schedules, or responding to unexpected challenges, they noted how consistently helpful and supportive the congregation has been.

We are grateful for everyone who makes this ministry possible—our partners at Centro de Ayuda, the volunteers who faithfully teach each week, and the students whose courage and perseverance inspire us. Through simple acts of hospitality, a classroom becomes a place of belonging, friendship, and hope.

Report on the Annual Meeting of the Baltimore/Washington Conference

Bishop LaTrelle Miller Easterling challenged members to live out bold love in their communities even in hostile conditions and a divided world. “In Christ, the immigrant is not a stranger; rather, they are our brothers and sisters”, she said. “The poor are not social burdens; they are the least of those from Matthew 25”. Retired bishop Gregory Palmer led Bible studies, reminding members that disciples are called to abide in Christ and bear fruit.

Local churches are invited to participate in the new Love Boldly worship series with resources at www.pdcbbc.org/worshipseries.

Learning, Leadership and Laity

During the Laity session, members reflected on the role of lay disciples in the mission of the church and were challenged to embrace evangelism as an expression of bold love. Laity leaders emphasized that making disciples is the work of the entire congregation and not clergy alone. Keynote speaker Ken Willard said “The No. 1 way people come to the church in 2026 is the same way they came 50 years ago: personal invitation”.

Holy Conferencing

Rev. David McAllister, who is retiring as president of Wesley Theological Seminary, addressed in a statement of “personal privilege”, the biggest challenge he believes facing the church and society today: Artificial Intelligence. “That’s because Ai appears god-like, knows everything, appears everywhere, and even lives in a cloud”, he said.

Conference members adopted four resolutions. These restricted agencies of the Conference from investing in companies whose “core business activity” is the extraction, production or refining of fossil fuels; calls on churches to set aside a portion of each meeting to reflect the challenges in our Baptismal vows; calls for the development of a revised evaluation process for pastors; and recommends the first Sunday in May be Campus Ministries Sunday across the Conference.

Conference members heard reports from Advocacy and Action ministries, Young People’s Ministries, the Office of Congregational Vitality, the Board of Ordained Ministry, the Laity Report, the Wellness and Missions Report, and Hispanic/Latine and Multicultural Ministries. Full-time clergy who are receiving new appointments, along with a lay representative from each church, were recognized. Pastor Rai and I took part in this ceremony.

Conference Business, Stewardship, and Budget

The Baltimore/Washington Conference celebrated having paid off the mortgage on the Mission Center building in Fulton, MD. The current value of the facility is between \$12 and \$13 million.

In other business, members approved the 2027 budget. It shows an expense and revenues total of \$18.5 million, up by less than \$300,000 from 2026. The collect rate, which is the amount of Mission Share support the conference expects to receive, is estimated at 86 percent. The benevolence factor, which is a part of the Mission Share formula used to calculate the amount churches are expected to pay, was continued at 17.25 percent. Conference members also approved the equitable compensation amount for clergy. The 2027 based salary was increased 3 percent, making that amount \$54,273 for full-time appointments. The housing allowance was also raised 3 percent to a total of \$23,846.

~ Michael Keller, EUMC Laity Representative
to Annual Conference

Sight & Sound Theatre Trip

The Sight & Sound Theatre in Strasburg, PA will present an original first-time stage production of the story of *Joshua*. From the banks of the Jordan River to the towering walls of Jericho, *Joshua* is an adventure that tracks the journey of the people of Israel as they navigate their new-found freedom in an unforgiving wilderness. When Joshua is called to succeed Moses as their leader, tensions mount and Joshua’s trust in God’s plan is put to the test.



Please join Eastport and Trinity Churches in experiencing one of the most redemptive tales in the Bible. Then after the show, enjoy a smorgasbord lunch at Hershey Farm Restaurant. Included: round trip bus transportation, prime reserved seats for the performance, lunch and all taxes and tips. The cost: \$185 per person. The date is Tuesday, September 29, 2026. We will depart Annapolis at 8 a.m. and return at about 6 p.m. To guarantee your reservation, send a check to Carol Emory, 2900 Shipmaster Way #204, Annapolis, MD 21401. Please direct questions about the trip to Michael Keller at 410-263-7409 or mjaykeller@outlook.com.

July Birthdays



July 2 Dawn Goodnow
July 4 Richard Hughes 🌟
July 6 Michelle Outerbridge
July 9 David L. Owen
July 12 Elaine Fors-MacKellar
Kathleen Liedy
July 13 Jackson Kopp
July 16 Debbie Morgan
July 18 Harriet Newquist
July 20 Theresa Sise
Megan Wurst
Molly Parrish
July 25 James Wilcox
July 26 Joyce Chesney
July 27 Hattie Broadwell
July 29 Evan Wilcox



A Loving Farewell to Pastor Chris



July Anniversaries



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

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office@eastportumc.org
www.eastportumc.org
Pastor: Raimon Jackson
Editor: Eunice Corse

You
Are
Loved.

Eastport United Methodist Church

JULY 2026



410.263.5490

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 Book Study 7pm	3 Praise Band 10am	4 
5 Conversations in Faith 9:15am Service 10am Welcome Pastor Rai Ice Cream Social after service	6	7	8	9 Prayer Time 9 to 10am Book Study 7pm	10 Praise Band 10am	11
12 Conversations in Faith 9:15am Service 10am	13	14 Divine Diners Lunch 12pm @Sammy's	15	16 Prayer Time 9 to 10am Book Study 7pm	17 Praise Band 10am	18 Community Food & Diaper Pantry 11am (Setup 10am) Charting Careers Innovation Hub 9 to 11am
19 Conversations in Faith 9:15am Service 10am	20	21	22	23 Prayer Time 9 to 10am Book Study 7pm	24 Praise Band 10am	25
26 Conversations in Faith 9:15am Service 10am	27	28 Divine Diners Adam's 5:30pm	29	30 Prayer Time 9 to 10am Book Study 7pm	31 	

WEEKLY EVENTS

SUNDAY

CONVERSATIONS IN FAITH 9:15 AM

SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP 10 AM

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL 2ND/4TH 10:15 AM

COFFEE HOUR 11 AM

MONDAY

AFTERSCHOOL W/ CHARTING CAREERS 3 PM

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS 7 PM

NAPTOWN PHILHARMONIC CHOIR 7 PM

TUESDAY

ESL CLASSES W/ CENTRO DE AYUDA 10 AM

AFTERSCHOOL LEARN & PLAY 4 PM

DIVINE DINERS 2ND TUES, 12 PM / 4TH TUES 5:30 PM

CREATING COMMUNITIES: ARTS & ROBOTICS CLASS 5 PM

WEDNESDAY

CHAIR CARDIO EXERCISE CLASS 9 AM

AFTERSCHOOL W/ CHARTING CAREERS

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS 8:30 PM

THURSDAY

MORNING PRAYER 9:30 AM

ESL CLASSES W/ CENTRO DE AYUDA 10 AM

AFTERSCHOOL LEARN & PLAY 4 PM

ARTS & ROBOTICS CLASS W/ MD HALL 5 PM

EUMC CHOIR REHEARSAL 7 PM

FRIDAY

BUILD A BETER BOOTCAMP 8 AM

EUMC BAND REHEARSAL 10 AM

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS 7 PM

SATURDAY

COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRY 3RD SAT, 10 AM

LA INGLERIA ADVENTISTA DEL SEPTIMO DIA 9 AM

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



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