



The Eastport Spire

“Inspire Us to Great Things”

January 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

2021 YEAR IN REVIEW

From John 1: “The Word came into the world—the Word through which the world came into being—yet the world did not recognize the living Word. The living Word came to its own people, but they did not accept the Word.

But all who received the Word, who gave their hearts to that grace, were enabled to become children of God, children born not of natural descent, nor human desire or will or effort, but born of God.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, the favor and delight parents give an only child, full of grace, full of truth. From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. No one has ever seen God.

It is the Only Begotten, who is close to God’s heart, who has revealed God.

The light shines in the darkness. And the darkness cannot overcome it.”

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

In Eugene Peterson’s translation of this scripture in *The Message*, he writes “the word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood.” God in the flesh— not in a book, not in paper, not in stone, not in an advertisement, but in Jesus— moved into the place where you and I reside, here and now.

How? The Word of God becomes flesh as we express God’s love and grace in the ways we serve and respond to others in need.

Where is God? Where is the kingdom of God? Contrary to Bette Midler’s song where she mentions that “God is watching us from a distance”, God is...

well... right here! Right now! The eternal isn’t so far off, it is here and now.

I thought that it would be appropriate for us to do a bit of a year in review, to celebrate how we’ve been the hands and feet of Christ, “moving into our neighborhood.” 2021 was an exceptional year of deepening and strengthening existing connections with our immediate neighbors.

Our church was granted \$10,000 to hire a Community Navigator to direct our community services into the hands of those most in need. **Since we have added the staff Community Navigator position, we have:**

- fed more than 2500 persons through our food pantry.
- served alongside 61 volunteers; 14 are EUMC members; 47 pantry volunteers are from across the Annapolis community; our youngest volunteer is 5 years old; our oldest is well into her late 80s.
- gathered volunteers from area congregations including Mt. Zion UMC, John Wesley UMC, Fowler UMC, Bay Ridge Christian, Bay Area, St. Mary’s and St. Anne’s congregations.
- recruited 9 community partners to expand our pantry to offer fresh meals, eggs, pies, produce, warm winter wear, toiletries, and diapers each month:
 - Ethan’s Buddies, Chesapeake Harbor Condo Association, CHOW, Dangerously Delicious Pies, Grumps Cafe, Grow Annapolis, #JustOneSweater, Marshall Hope and Storm Bros Ice Cream.

- partnered with two non-profits which have applied to become rent-paying tenants on our lower level; and
- created a partnership with The Marshall Learning Center to establish a neuroscience based after-school program mapped to the Kirwin Commission's Blueprint for Maryland Future establishing Church partnerships with Community Schools like Eastport Elementary where poverty exceeds 80%.
- completed two very successful vaccine clinics;
- hosted a community swap meet;
- welcomed CHOW, a veteran food truck culinary training program to gain experience while feeding our neighbors;
- provided numerous festive holiday parties for our neighbors, including:
 - an Easter egg hunt with food and prizes for the children at the Eastport Community Center
 - a Halloween Cookout at Eastport Community Center;
 - a Thanksgiving dinner for 80 community guests;
 - a Breakfast-for-Dinner-with-Santa for neighborhood families, estimated around 70 individual.;
- received cash donation and over 2,000 diapers from Forward Brewing on 4th St.
- received donations from Eastport Volunteer Fire Dept. food drive.
- [one of our church members] organized a collection of 300+ pairs of underwear for Afghan refugees.
- prepared and delivered to the streets 150 packages of supplies that included socks, wool hats, emergency heat packs and new underwear for homeless persons to withstand cold weather.
- partnered with Annapolis Office of Emergency Management and Dept. of Health to distribute COVID Rapid test kits.
- received a grant of \$2400 to provide neighbors with emergency food grocery gift cards.
- shared 42,000 cloth masks with area teachers, *Centro de Ayuda*, churches including *John Wesley UMC*, *Fowler UMC*, *Heritage Baptist* and *Spanish Seventh Day Adventist Church*, and numerous local food pantries.
- hosted *Creating Communities* to offer after school arts programs in the EUMC parking lot throughout the Spring, Summer, and Fall.
- hosted the *Service from the Heart* charity weekly distribution of food to support school children during the weekends.
- welcomed *Charting Careers*, a local nonprofit, to establish a home base office at EUMC. *Charting Careers* has the mission of breaking the cycle of poverty and inequity in Annapolis through mentoring, education, and family partnership.
- partnered with Maryland National Guard and the Annapolis Education Commission to get initial and booster vaccines to over 100 individuals.

Our Food Pantry Program:

- received a \$3000 grant and a \$500 grant to purchase collapsible grocery carts for 100 families used monthly to bring the supplies home and upstairs to their apartments safely. They are used also to haul their laundry to the laundromat, and carry kids' school books, backpacks and sports equipment to and from school.
- partnered with a 10 year old boy who gave up his birthday party and instead raised funds to purchase 2000 pairs of new socks for infants, children and adults which he gave away at a February community pantry.
- hosted 12 food pantry events connecting with individuals and families to become neighbors who live together.

Homework and Reading has had 13 children join their afterschool programming. They have a number of new and returning volunteers joining them on a regular basis. The connection with the children (and H&R graduates!) continues to grow.

We gave away over 2000 English, Spanish, and bilingual books to neighbors through our monthly

Our Community Assistance Program:

- received a grant of \$5000 to provide 400 backpacks stuffed with over two dozen school supplies for kids in our neighborhood.

Food Pantry “Read in Color” table with our Librarian Judy who also keeps our Little Free Library well stocked.

We received a *Community Heritage Grant* of \$750 to share an important community story keeping history alive for future generations. We chose two Artistes Jóvenes from *Maryland Hall* to depict the story of civil rights activists Pip Moyer and Zastrow Simms whose legacy applauds their quieting the unrest on the April evenings of 1968.

The *Anne Arundel County Food Bank* granted an extending conveyor belt used for sorting pantry supplies and a fabulous new ADA ramp entrance, totaling in-kind donations of \$1600 and \$14,000 respectively.

The Community Outreach ministry has been the blessed recipient of an additional \$5400 in private individual donations – mostly from an outpouring of generosity in Memory of Leona Bergsman – which supports our efforts to directly reach our neighbors most in need. Since 2018, all community outreach work has been fully funded by a community of donors including individuals, corporations, foundations, and non-profits. Indeed yes, this is an outstanding fact. Our community has been closely watching EUMC extend the faithful hand of friendship to our neighbors and has blessed this ministry with financial resources and gifts in kind. The EUMC budget of monies has not needed to be used for any Community event for the past 3 years.

Friends, the heart of the Gospel is the relentless love of God that does not remain at a distance, or hidden from us, but comes up close and personal. In Jesus, we can know God ‘up close and personal.’ “No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.” (John 1:18 NIV)

Alister McGrath writes “Rather than asking us to climb up a cosmic ladder in order to touch the face of God, God descends to us, to make God’s face known to us.”

God went to great lengths just to draw near to us.

I hope you are as wowed by this Martin Luther quote as I am: “It must be a serious situation and God must love human nature very deeply... when God not only loves me but comes so close to me that he becomes a person with me.”

~ *Grace & Peace, Pastor Chris*

Advent Theme

This Advent we took an in depth dive into Mary’s Magnificat in a sermon series that was led by Pastor Chris, Pastor Jenna Johnson, Alicia O’Brien, and District Superintendent Rev. Schlieckert. Thank you so much for welcoming them as they shared the good news with us!



So You Wanna Be a Wise Guy ...

It is most definitely a cliché when we talk about New Year’s resolutions. Health clubs gear up for new memberships, dieters purge their pantries of sugary sweets, and folks take stock of what they can do differently in their lives.



For me, I got an early start on the health club gig, signing up for a local Pilates studio in November. Because, of course, I ain’t gettin’ any younger. And having witnessed many dear friends (younger than me – gulp) getting hip and knee replacements, I realized it was time to get more intentional about keeping my body flexible, limber and strong.

And while it is most apparent to us as our bodies age, we also need to review what we can do to keep our minds flexible as well. Because rigid thinking is as bad for our soul as deteriorating flexibility is for our body.

One of the ideas that came to me as I did a self-diagnostic were ways in which to keep the mind thinking creatively, moving forward and imagining a

better world. Just as I signed up for Pilates in November, I also was handed a mental tool during a sermon that Pastor Jenna did for Christ the King Sunday that same month.

She talked about, not the kingdom of God, but the kin-dom of God. While we often hear about and discuss the kingdom, she stressed that achieving that depended on us striving for kin-dom. Working to become more inclusive, working to walk a mile in someone else's shoes, working to see the humanity in all, no matter how different they may look, think, or act from us. No easy task, to be sure!

This made me look at familiar scripture – which we often take for granted – and how we might reframe it to see it with fresh eyes. For example, the Our Father prayer. We say this every Sunday, mostly on autopilot. So I started praying it with new words. Our Mother (for God has no gender, so why can't I call her mother?), who art everywhere (because Heaven is remote and inapproachable and the Bible tells us repeatedly that God is around us in all that we do). Thankful is your name (yes, your name is sacred but I also feel so much gratitude that I want to make sure you know it!) Thy Kin-dom come (thanks, Pastor Jenna!).

You get the picture. And while we'll stick to Our Father's traditional words in service (otherwise, we'd have the Tower of Babel), I think taking a creative approach to standards is a good exercise in faith building. This works with any time-worn scripture – The 23rd Psalm is another fine one to try. Finally, I got a smile-worthy way to look at the manger scene anew. A friend of mine told the story of how, when her kids were little, they were unpacking the manger scene and out came the Magi. As children do, they got things a little confused and began referring to the trio as the Wise Guys. And thus, a family tradition was born. From that point on, even as her kids grew to be adults, the kings from afar remain the Wise Guys.

So, as you ponder your New Year's resolutions, maybe it's time to think about how you can keep both your mind and your body more flexible. A little sarcasm (I'm a wise guy, how 'bout you?), a little creativity, a little open-mindedness are potent weapons in our fight to keep our spiritual muscles from atrophying. Now excuse me, while I head to the Pilates studio ...

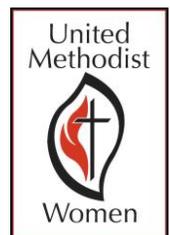
~ Barbara Krebs

It was a joy to receive the poinsettias from Bru-Mar Gardens again this year. Thanks to everyone who made donations and added to the beauty of the sanctuary at Christmas.



United Methodist Women

The United Methodist Women will hold their next meeting **online via Zoom** on Wednesday, January 5, at 5:30. 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*. All women of the church are invited to participate. I will send out a Zoom meeting invitation to all who have attended meetings over the past year and would be happy to send one to anyone else who is interested – just let me know!



~ Kathy Duckett

A Prayer for the Day

“Lord, help us remember that no matter what things look like today, there is always a new dawn, a new morning, a new creation on the horizon. Your mercies are new every morning. Great is your faithfulness, Lord. Amen.”



Wesleyan Choir



Our Wesleyan Choir joined us for the four Sundays during Advent, presenting special music. Many thanks to those who brought their voices and thanks to JoAnn for conducting them!



Heavenly Bells

The Heavenly Bells welcomed us into worship on the Fourth Sunday of Advent.



Christmas with our Church Family

It was a beautiful evening celebrating Christmas with our church family. Special thanks to all who came out, to the Annapolis Woodworkers Guild for beautiful handmade toys, to Mo and Dee for doing the toy drive and giveaway, to Mike Mullins (aka Santa), and especially to Diesha Contee for whipping up a great meal.





Garden Committee News

Many thanks to Sam Coates and Jerry Christofel who helped me clear the massive amount of leaves from the church property. Jerry repaired the leaf mower and one of the leaf blowers too. There are still plans to remove two small dead trees. Thanks to Mitch Krebs who volunteered to take care of another garden. There are some gardens that still need caretakers. Jerry and Pastor Chris repaired the shingles on the office porch roof too. We have started working on the interior and exterior lights at church to provide more light at night. Thanks to Sam, Jerry, Pastor Chris, Gary Wieboldt, and Rose Maple who helped replace the burned-out bulb above the altar in front of the stained-glass window with the extension ladder. What a job! The church grounds will look great during the day and during the night too. If anyone would like to help with any of our projects or gardens, please contact me at 410-703-0159 or msjohara@yahoo.com. ~ Joanne Christofel

Pastor Chris News



Back in the spring of 2019, members of the Church's Administrative Council participated in a series of listening sessions about Reconciling Ministries. In May of that year, we began embracing the idea of becoming a fully welcoming church for all people, regardless of race, sexual orientation, faith history, family structure, marital status or gender. One of the points that resonated with everyone was that it was not about changing hearts and minds, but about expanding hearts and minds.

As a continuation of that goal, I'm pleased to announce that our Pastor Chris Broadwell was nominated and elected to the Annapolis Pride Board. He will serve with other leaders in business, human relations and government to create community and affirming spaces for LGBTQ+ persons here in Annapolis. Congratulations Pastor Chris!

~ Jill Peddicord, Admin Council Chair

Another Community Partner



Forward Brewing is a brand new brewery in town and they recently collected cash donations and a ton of baby supplies for the Community Food Pantry. We are so very grateful for their support of the community.

Be sure to drop by their location on 4th Street and say thanks!

We are asking that all wear masks while indoors unless drinking, eating, or speaking at a microphone. We thank you for your help in creating a safe atmosphere for all!



Recordings of Sunday's services can be viewed on EUMC's website, www.eastportumc.org.

You can also listen by phone to our prerecorded services by calling 1-410-233-3163.



Anita Andrews
December 19, 1930 – December 2, 2021

Joyce Lorenz
June 15, 1929 – October 20, 2021

January Birthdays

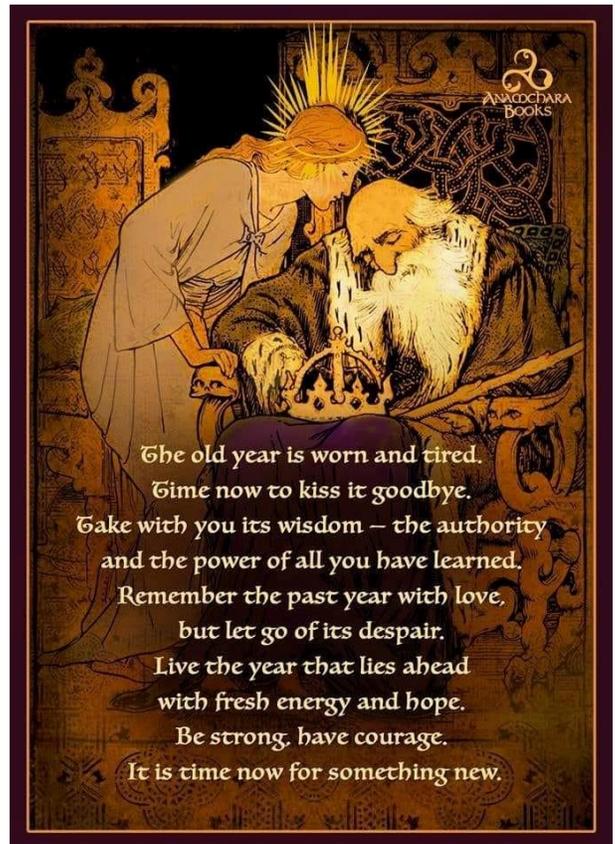
**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY**

- Jan 4 Dennis Bergsman
- Jan 7 Cyndi Councill
Lauren Moyer
- Jan 11 Eunice Corse
Devin Clary
- Jan 12 Eric Edstrom
- Jan 13 Charlotte Kerns
- Jan 14 Nathan Somers
- Jan 15 Mary Jane Finkle
- Jan 16 Gerald Crouch
- Jan 18 Mike Wurst
Bob Emory
Wendy Edstrom
- Jan 21 Ed Owen
- Jan 22 Emily Broadwell
- Jan 23 Steve Duckett
- Jan 24 Rusty Mack
- Jan 26 Kim Wilcox
- Jan 27 Matt Ficca
- Jan 28 Virginia Schultz
- Jan 30 Bev Ferrar
- Jan 31 Jaden Vasquez

January Anniversaries

**HAPPY
ANNIVERSARY**

- Jan 1 Mitch & Barbara Krebs
- Jan 3 Jerry & Joanne Christofel
- Jan 5 Jack & Sherrie Little
- Jan 12 Bill & Susan Schneider
- Jan 30 Marty & Myrna Dobbs



The old year is worn and tired.
 Time now to kiss it goodbye.
 Take with you its wisdom – the authority
 and the power of all you have learned.
 Remember the past year with love,
 but let go of its despair.
 Live the year that lies ahead
 with fresh energy and hope.
 Be strong, have courage.
 It is time now for something new.

*May there be
 Peace in our hearts
 Peace in our homes
 Peace in our country
 Peace throughout the world*

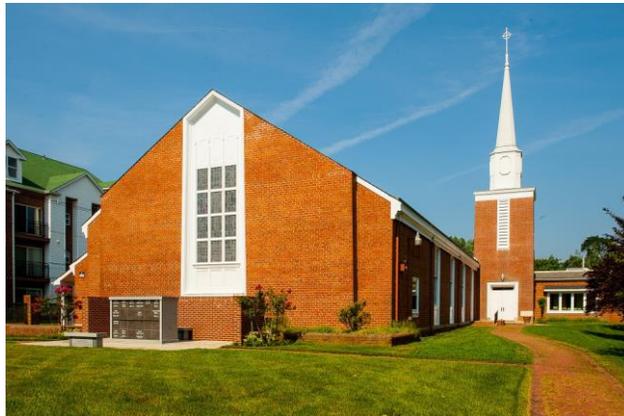
HAPPY NEW YEAR

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 	
2 Worship 10am	3	4 Homework 4:00pm	5 UMW Meeting 5:30pm ZOOM	6 Homework 4:00pm	7	8
9 Worship 10am	10	11 Homework 4:00pm	12	13 Homework 4:00pm	14 Prepare for Food Pantry	15 FOOD PANTRY 10:00 AM
16 Worship 10am	17	18 Homework 4:00pm Admin Council Zoom meeting 7pm	19	20 Homework 4:00pm	21	22
23 Worship 10am	24	25 Homework 4:00pm	26	27 Homework 4:00pm	28	29
30 Worship 10am	31 					

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Sunday Worship Service 10:00 a.m.
www.eastportumc.org**