



WARD'S CHAPEL

United Methodist Church

The Lamplighter December 2023



In the last month of the year:

Advent season is near. In the church calendar, we celebrate this month as a time of remembering the promise of the Old Testament, and also we celebrate the coming of Baby Jesus, the promised one. The word, Advent came from a Latin word, *adventus* which means "coming". So, we focus on God's promise, the promised one "came" to the world and also, we are still waiting for Christ coming to our lives.

We love to decorate our houses and even our church sanctuary with a Christmas tree, wreaths, different colors, a nativity and Advent candles in this month by following our protestant tradition which adopted four different themes: Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. Along with the Christmas tradition that our society follows, however, as Christians, what we do during this season is to meditate on those four themes.

Do we have hope in our lives? Does the world pursue peace? Do we own heavenly joy? Do we love God and love people? Do we?

I am so very excited to have a wonderful time with you this Advent. We continue to have the Community Fellowship Event on Dec 2nd (a pilot program of A Table Church). We faithfully follow our traditions, singing carols, decorating our sanctuary with a Christmas tree, family Advent readings, candle lighting, and so on.

Also, I plan to deliver a sermon series by using interesting plays written by Oscar Wilde. He was a playwright and left many interesting books and articles. We don't know much about his life and how faithful he was. He was unlike famous Christian writers or apologetics such as C.S. Lewis. However, what he wrote was very intriguing. He loved fairy tale stories, and loved children. And I think the way that he introduced his idea in the plays can help us to meditate on our advent themes by asking questions like: Do we have true hope? Are we just following fake joy? What do we love?

I am very delighted to announce that this Advent season I will work with Kevin Costa (Ph.D, English Major) every Sunday. Kevin will be storytelling Oscar Wilde's plays and adding his comments about the theme, and I will bring up Christmas stories side-by-side so that we can identify and compare them with Christian teaching.

If you have time, check out the following book and plays: *The Picture of Dorian Grey*, *The Happy Prince*, *The Young King*, and *Star-Child*. Please keep in mind that we will have a Christmas Eve service on 12/24 (Sunday) at 7 pm.

-Pastor Steven

ADMINISTRATIVE MINISTRIES

FINANCE

Please find the latest update near the end of the newsletter

Bill Showman, Chair

TRUSTEES

I hope that you will have noticed our new flagpole on your way into the building or driving by. The Trustees voted to go ahead with the installation at our November meeting. Until we get the spotlights installed, I will put up and take down the flag on the days that I am here.

We had some plumbing work done on pipes connecting to the hot water heater in the Youth Room. They were dripping from a connection. The plumber has recommended replacing all but a small portion of the copper pipes with CPVC (a modified version of PVC that is more heat-resistant). It will depend what the hot water heater manufacturer requires. We have had to make repairs to those pipes at least once a year and I feel that it would be better to be proactive about it than to come in to a flooded lower level one morning.

At our meeting, we discussed the Fellowship Hall bathroom-remodeling project and repairs that are needed for the FH roof, walls, sidewalk, a foundation leak in the stairwell between the PS and Sunday School levels and the organ chamber roof. I met with the roofing contractor twice in November and will present the proposal to the Trustees for approval.

We also have some electrical projects in the line – a new fixture for outside the red doors to the FH, the light in the bottom of the stairwell, the lights for the flagpole and we need to have 1-2 surface-mounted lights installed in the 3s classroom. Where the fire suppression system runs through the ceiling, they were unable to install lay-in fixtures so it's always been a bit dark in that area of the classroom.

Please let me know if there is anything that needs attention in the building by either leaving me a note on my desk or mailbox or emailing me at wardschapelpreschool@gmail.com.

Bridget

PROGRAM MINISTRIES

MISSIONS

Food Pantry



We are so grateful for the MANY donations of food items, money, and gift cards to our Food Pantry. Please continue to check the website for our needs.

Please see the full list on the church website for our regular needs. **Please see below for what items we need to re-stock our shelves:**

- soup
- peanut butter
- jelly
- chicken
- tuna

December SPECIAL REQUESTS:

- green beans
- cream of mushroom soup
- French-fried onions
- Scalloped potatoes
- Corn bread mix
- Brownie mix
- \$20 Gift cards from Aldi or Wal-Mart

Keep in mind, we will take donations of any nearly new items such as clothes, towels, sheets, blankets, etc.!

Any food items should be **checked for expiration dates** before donating!

Remember students can receive volunteer hours for helping at the food pantry so if you are interested please contact Wendy at wrmille@gmail.com or texting/calling our Food Pantry number 410-756-0665. Thanks so much!

Wendy Miller, Missions Chair

PRESCHOOL



What a wonderful time of year to be a preschooler! Surrounded by the sparkling lights and festive decorations, the children are eagerly preparing for their Christmas programs, making gifts for their

families, and baking cookies. In the midst of the excitement, it is easy for children to lose sight of what is the true meaning of Christmas. At preschool, we stress the importance of the gift of God's son, Jesus, and the grace of the Nativity Story.

In addition to preparing for Jesus' birthday, December brings the construction of gingerbread houses and gumdrop trees. The 2s will hear about the nativity story, the Wiseman will drop in on his way to find the newborn King for the 3s, and a wayward shepherd will find his way to the 4s chapel time. This month, the four-year-olds will visit the BSO for a special holiday program.

Finally, as part of our Kids to Kids program, the students will be collecting Golden books to be donated to the children's ward and emergency department of Carroll Hospital Center. Have a blessed holiday!

Ms. Bridget

STAR FELLOWSHIP



As you think about Christmas gift giving, remember that RADA Cutlery makes a great present that is used over and over all year through. Each utensil or knife is very reasonably priced with a lifetime warranty. The RADA display case is located in the Narthex. Check it out! See Cindy Reisberg to purchase. Thank you.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes- Thank you to those who participated with boxes, postage and prayers. We collected a total of 79 shoeboxes (60 were done by the youth). We received enough postage to cover all 60 boxes, plus some. Thank you for your generosity.

Family Advent- Families may join us Sunday, December 3rd during the Sunday School hour in the Fellowship Hall for our annual holiday activities. We hope to see the children and their families there!

Board of Childcare Mitten Tree- Now through December 10th, we are collecting new mittens, gloves, scarves, hats for the Board of Childcare Youth in Randallstown. The children are all ages, but there are more teenagers and young adults in their programs. You may decorate the tree in the Narthex with your donation. Thank you!

Note: There will be ONE worship service at 10:00 am on Dec 24 and Dec 31 with NO Sunday School. We'll see you again on January 7!

Julie Weller

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

Please pray for those who are not able to join us for worship due to health issues.

- Barbara Hartman – at home
- Bert Rushing – Golden Crest Assisted Living
- Janet Feezer – at home
- Janis Miller – at Future Care Old Court
- Lulu Karagjozi – Lorien Encore
- Margaret Hare – at home
- Mary Libby Green – at home (*at Jay's*)
- Ralph Fletcher – at home

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Wreath Laying: On **Saturday December 16**, the R. Wayne Feezer Memorial Foundation will have 70 wreaths from "Wreaths Across America" delivered to Ward's Chapel cemetery. We would appreciate anyone who would like to help place the wreaths on veteran's graves. We will meet in the cemetery at **11:30 am** following the close of the Food Pantry on December 16.

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**Community Fellowship Event:**

If you missed this inaugural event, don't worry! We have another planned. Please mark your calendars now for the evening of **Saturday, December 2 from 3:00 - 5:00**. We will revive the magic from October with music, food, quilts, and conversation. And if you have music requests, we're taking them! Please let Kevin Costa or Pastor Steven know!

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The latest issue of *The Bulletin*,

a monthly reproducible message from the
Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference

on vitality for local churches:

https://www.pdcabc.org/uploads/1/0/2/7/102773790/volume_1_issue_9_bulletin_ab.pdf

From: Vol. 1, Issue 9:

Bishop's message:

*Bishop LaTrelle Miller Easterling | Episcopal
servant, Peninsula-Delaware & Baltimore-
Washington Conferences*

"That my glory may sing your praise and not be
silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you
forever!" – Psalm 30:12

Beloved of God, during this season of
Thanksgiving, I am filled with an overwhelming
sense of gratitude for our journey together. My
heart is full of love and appreciation for your
steadfast commitment to our mission and ministry.
We have come through the valley of the shadow of
disaffiliation, sometimes being overwhelmed with
grief and lament. And yet, here we are. Continuing
to praise God together; continuing to deepen our
discipleship together; continuing to serve our
communities together. As a conference, we are
more than just a gathering of like-minded souls; we
are family.

I am keenly aware of the toll this year has
taken on so many of you. You remained faithful
through personal loss, communal trauma, societal
unrest and financial difficulties. The latent effects of
COVID finally surfaced for many of us and we
served in and through exhaustion. And yet, here
we are. Continuing to embody hope and
inspiration; continuing to offer healing and
restoration; continuing to lift as we climb. Your
Christ-centered lives have made a difference in
countless ways, and I am humbled by the love and
support that permeates our communities.

In the midst of the challenges we face, you,
your church, and the Baltimore-Washington and
Peninsula-Delaware annual conferences serve as
beacons of light, reminding us of the divine
presence that resides within and around us. You

are a testament to the power of unity and faith,
reaffirming our belief in the goodness of Almighty
God. Thank you! Happy Thanksgiving and may
God richly bless you.

Turning the World Upside Down

This month, area United Methodists gathered
with the Rev. Michael Adam Beck, an expert in
Fresh Expressions, and the Rev. Bill Brown, the
affiliation's Director of Innovative Evangelism, to
explore how to create small, often lay-led faith
communities for those not currently connected to a
church. These communities are cultivated by
United Methodists in the daily rhythms and spaces
of people's lives and are being formed in
unexpected places like tattoo parlors, dog parks,
nursing facilities, and community gardens.

During the training Brown encouraged United
Methodists – especially the laity – to take risks and
turn the world upside down for the sake of the
Gospel. "I believe right now is a profound
opportunity for us to access the imagination of
God," Beck said. "It's not about our imagination, or
our bright ideas, or our innovation, but God has an
imagination for communities; God has imagination
for people's lives and if we can prayerfully access
the imagination of God, it helps us see the gaps in
our communities between the fullness of God's
Kingdom and what exists as our current reality. It's
only through prayerfully accessing the imagination
of God that we can join in with what God is doing
and see the fullness of God's kingdom manifest in
real places with real people.

Called to grow in vitality

Within the Baltimore-Washington and
Peninsula-Delaware Conferences, every church is
called to grow to be 100 percent vital. Vitality isn't
measured with numbers, but rather how much
congregations embrace the four pillars to live and
love like Jesus, see all the people, deepen
discipleship, and multiply their impact. Multiplying
impact can feel complicated. In 2 Peter 1:2, the
apostle writes: "May grace and peace be multiplied
to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our
Lord." Multiplication signifies abundance. In this
pillar of vitality, we are called to abundance –

aligning what we do with where God is calling the church to be in this season. Many United Methodists mistake activity for impact. But we don't need to be all things to all people. Rather, we are called to reflect on what God is calling us to do and be and focus on creating that – with grace and peace – in abundance.

Meet the Methodists: Rev. James Lawson

The son and grandson of Methodist ministers, the Rev. James Lawson, 94, is known as the architect of the nonviolence movement. The Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., called him “the leading theorist and strategist of nonviolence in the world.” As a young man, he worked as a teacher and minister in India and was influenced by Ghandi, coming home to lead college students in Nashville, Tenn. how to put their lives on the lines as they conducted a peaceful witness at segregated lunch counters in the South. His teachings led to staggering results. On May 10, 1960, Nashville became the first Southern city to desegregate its lunch counters. For Lawson, Jesus’ message of love and justice stands central in all things. “The politics of Jesus and the politics of God are that people should be fed, that people have access to life, that people should be treated equally and justly,” he said. “Through nonviolence, courage displaces fear,” he said, “love transforms hate, acceptance dissipates prejudice, hope ends despair, peace dominates war, faith reconciles doubt, mutual regard cancels enmity, justice for all overthrows injustice.” “There’s

an idea in the New Testament that love vanquishes all fear,” Lawson said. “There is an energy in the universe that can allow us human beings to be fearless in living out our lives and in facing whatever the tumult of living is.”



**Wards Chapel UMC Operating Fund
Year to Year Comparison as of Oct 2023**

YTD Financial Summary:

Offering and other gifts are trending as planned. The negative cash balance will continue until December when we should receive "Other Donations".

Pastoral/Staff/Office variance is the result of 5% salary increases, increased staff salaries related to Choir starting back up in 2023.

Overall expenses are trending as expected with the exception of the \$4,523 amount related to prior years services performed but not billed until 2023.

Comparative Analysis Adjustment - The \$4,523 was expensed in 2023 but the services were performed from 2017-2021. This amount is excluded for year over year analysis only. The \$6,565 represents one additional month of salary paid early for tax purposes. It is excluded for year over year analysis only.

	<u>Oct YTD Amounts</u>		Comparative Analysis Adjustment	<u>Incr/(Decr) 2022 to 2023</u>	
	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>			
<u>Total Gifts (sources):</u>					
Offering	\$ 169,444	\$ 174,405		\$ 4,961	3%
Other Donations (note 1)	\$ 16,500	\$ 16,500		-	0%
Total Support to Operating Fund	\$ 185,944	\$ 190,905		\$ 4,961	3%
<u>Expense:</u>					
Blding/Grounds	\$ 58,457	\$ 57,355	(4,523)	\$ (5,625)	-10%
Ed./Ministry	\$ 4,395	\$ 4,124		\$ (271)	-6%
Apportionments	\$ 29,578	\$ 28,037		\$ (1,542)	-5%
Pastoral/Staff/Office	\$ 142,830	\$ 158,499	(6,565)	\$ 9,104	6%
Total Expense	\$ 235,260	\$ 248,014	→ 236,926	\$ 1,667	1%
Surplus (Deficit)	\$ (49,316)	\$ (57,109)	(46,021)		
Available Cash on Hand		(14,825)			

(note: Insurance proceeds of \$22,291 and related expense (\$22,291) to repair sign not included in total)

note 1 - other donations consist of Preschool funding of \$750 per month while school is in session, Parsonage Endowment of \$3,750 at the end of each quarter, R W Feezer Foundation annual gift and other one time gifts.

December 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 One Worship Svc. at 10:00 am					1 4-H 7:00 PM (youth room)	2 Community Fellowship Event at WC 3-5 pm
3 9:45 am Family Advent Project	4	5	6 Bible Study 10 am	7 Online Prayer Mtg. 7:00 PM Alcoholics Anonymous 6:30 pm - 9 pm (FH)	8	9
10	11	12	13 Bible Study 10:00 am Liberty Goodtimers 11:30 am Lampighter Deadline	14 Alcoholics Anonymous 6:30 pm - 9 pm (FH)	15	16 Food Pantry 9am-11am <i>Wreath Laying</i> 11:30 am
17 Heifer Sunday	18	19	20 Bible Study 10 am	21 Alcoholics Anonymous 6:30 pm - 9 pm (FH)	22	23
24 One Worship Svc. at 10:00 am Candlelight Svc. at 7:00 pm	25 Christmas	26 Star Fellowship 12:00 pm	27 Bible Study 10 am	28 Alcoholics Anonymous 6:30 pm - 9 pm (FH)	29	30

Ward's Chapel United Methodist Church
11023 Liberty Road
Randallstown, MD 21133



Christmas Eve Services

December 24

10 am Worship Service

7 pm Candlelight Service

New Years Eve Service

December 31

10 am Worship Service

