



WARD'S CHAPEL

United Methodist Church

The Lamplighter January 2024



The young pastor was excited when he was asked to preach one Sunday in prison, but he was also very nervous. On the day he arrived at the prison, he was greeted by a large group of prisoners waiting to hear him. As the young pastor walked and stood behind the pulpit, he said, "Good morning. It's so good to see you here!"

Sometimes, I feel like I repeat all kinds of silly things. One main worry is if I am "preaching to the choir" every Sunday. For example, during Advent, we deal with the same concepts: Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. Then we meet in the New Year after we celebrate our Christmas Day service. And during the Lenten season, we deal with the interesting stories of Jesus, and meditate on the meaning of his death and resurrection during the Holy week. . . and then I think,

What am I doing here? Am I just repeating the same stories?

But I know my answer. Preachers don't simply repeat the same things over and over again; what they do is remind the congregation, including the preachers themselves, of crucial messages and the commandments of God—reminding.

As we begin another year of blessed 2024, I just set up my own spiritual resolution and I remind myself of finding a calling as a preacher, which is reminding the congregation of the wonderful plans and blessings of God. So, on the first day of 2024, I share my resolution with you. I have been doing my best to help you keep remembering the promise of God, and I will continue to work with you to follow God's guidance this year again. So, if you have any suggestions or advice, please do not hesitate to contact me and the SPRC team.

One more thing, I really appreciate your full support to visit my family in Korea this month. It means a lot to me. I will come back full of energy, comfort, and a refreshed heart so that I can work powerfully to start a new year with all of you.

Happy New Year friends!

-Pastor Steven

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



January SPECIAL REQUESTS:

- soap
- toothbrushes
- toothpaste

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

January is usually a calmer month for our preschoolers. After the excitement of the holiday season, we all need to slow down a bit. We still cover plenty of information, but we don't have to work toward any special programs, like we do at Thanksgiving and Christmas. Our children will explore winter topics

like snow, ice, and what animals do in the cold months. We'll make bird feeders and learn about bears and other hibernating animals.

We'll also have a visit from the Irvine Nature Center. They'll be bringing some animals that the children are allowed to touch and sometimes even feed. They normally bring a raptor bird (like an owl or hawk), a mammal that we can pet, a reptile, an insect, and a frog or toad. All ages of our children will be able to take advantage of this program.

It's hard to believe, but registration for the 24-25 school year will be held in mid-January. We are praying that our enrollment will increase with the new year!

Ms. Bridget

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Please note: The Sunday School schedule will change a bit in January and the 1st week of February. Sunday School will resume on January 7 at 9:45am. Then from January 14 – Feb 4, Sunday School will be from 9:30-10:15am. Thanks and we can't wait to see you in January!

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
- Edna Harrison – Columbia Cottage of Hanover
- 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

First Fruits Farm: We are thankful that our Ward's Chapel Food Pantry is receiving donations from the First Fruits Farm. In 2024, we hope to continue this connection and perhaps have volunteers from Ward's Chapel go to the farm as volunteers. For more information about their program you can go online to First Fruits Farms or speak with Carol Parker.

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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.pdcbbc.org/uploads/1/0/2/7/102773790/volumn\\_1\\_issue\\_10\\_newsletter.pdf](https://www.pdcbbc.org/uploads/1/0/2/7/102773790/volumn_1_issue_10_newsletter.pdf)

From: Vol. 1, Issue 10:

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

### **A Christmas Message from Bishop LaTrelle Easterling:**

Beloved, I was recently in a meeting where the following beautiful prayer was offered. It resonated deeply. It simultaneously captured and spoke to the depth of exhaustion, pain, trauma and lament so prevalent among us today. It also answered a question we didn't realize our souls were asking, "How does a weary world rejoice?" This is not the first Advent and Christmas season when this question was relevant, and yet it has a different profundity this year. May this prayer speak to your heart as it did mine, and may it remind you that even in the darkest of nights, Hope shall be born!

Loving God, in your constant presence with us, we lift our eyes to you and ask, How does a weary world rejoice?

How does a world, weary in the realities of war, poverty, violence, division, and despair, find a way to rejoice?

In your constant presence among us, a connectational people, we turn to you, tired, anxious, doubtful, grieving ... and you receive us.

In your loving presence among us, a beloved community, we turn to you, longing for joy, inspiration, healing, hope...and you receive us.

In your unfailing presence with us among friends, strangers, allies, or foes, help us to remember we have stories of hope ... we must tell those stories.

Help us to trust that seed-planting actions of justice will bloom in the spring despite a hardened winter ground ... we must act.

Help us to pray without ceasing for children, youth, and adults who live in fear and the immense grief of overwhelming losses, whose eyes bear witness, night and day, to unimaginable violence and inhumanities...we must never forget them.

Loving God, in your constant presence among your people and all of creation, Open our eyes, lest we forget that Holy Night, when a world long laying "in sin and error, pining," received the gift of our Savior's birth that brought it to its knees to "hear the angel voices." Help us to remember that with our Savior's arrival among us "souls felt their worth," and out of despair weary souls rejoiced at the breaking of a "new and glorious morn."

How does a weary world rejoice? With gratitude and assurance, that you, as our Loving and ever-present God, are Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, forever and ever. Amen.

May God bless you and bring you joy.  
Blessings and peace, this Christmas and always,  
Bishop LaTrelle Miller Easterling

*Prayer inspired by A Sanctified Art's Advent resource, "How Does a Weary World Rejoice?" and words from the first verse of Oh, Holy Night, Placide Cappeau, 1847, translated by John S. Dwight. (Public Domain)*

### **Another birth story: 240 years ago on Christmas Eve**

*From a video by John Strawbridge, Lovely Lane UMC, Baltimore*

In 1874, every Methodist preacher in America left their homes and their parish on Christmas Eve, which is something that could not happen today. For them, the important place to be was in the church, forming a denomination, dealing with the business that it took to create a church that would serve the people.

All the preachers in America, about 86 of them at the time, met at the Lovely Lane Chapel on Christmas Eve to form a new denomination. They met in conference for 10 days, established a Discipline, a Book of Worship, they ordained preachers, and they set aside Asbury as the first superintendent.

It was 10 days of debates and struggles and accusations and reconciliations, and all the kinds of things that we do as Methodists, which is beautiful in its own way. This church of ours is not something that was handed down from on high, but those people – all those lay people – all came together to create a new faith expression to serve God. It's so important that we realize that we are not an audience, we are the church. We are expected to continue the work of a church established 240 years ago on that Holy Christmas.

## **Creating Faith**

Not all people are created to be artists, but God does entrust each person with the task of creating their own life. Created in the image of a creator God, the world becomes our canvas, and nothing is more artistic than how we love people. But at Wesley Seminary, the founder of the Luce Center for Arts and Religion, Catherine Kapikian, who recently had her mural of the Last Supper dedicated in the refectory, issued a sacred challenge, calling on people of faith to create art – to put their imaginations to work and express their faith by making something interesting. The arts, she said, provide “meaning-making opportunities” to explore the mystery of how God reveals God’s self.” Each person, she asserted, bears the divine image. “Creative capabilities are divinely given to every person as a birthright.” And therein lies the challenge. In this new year, pick up a paintbrush or a camera, put your fingers to the piano keys or sewing machine, begin to tap your toes, write a poem, sculpt some clay, begin at once to live – echoing God’s call to creation.



# January 2024

| Sunday                                                                           | Monday | Tuesday                                           | Wednesday                                                                                         | Thursday                                                                                 | Friday            | Saturday                                                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | 1      | 2                                                 | 3<br>Bible Study<br>10:00 am                                                                      | 4<br>Alcoholics Anonymous<br>6:30 pm - 9 pm (FH)<br><br>Online Prayer Meeting<br>7:00 PM | 5                 | 6                                                                                     |
| 7<br>8:30a - worship<br>9:45a - Sunday School<br>11:00a - worship                | 8      | 9<br>Finance 6:30 pm<br>Church Council<br>7:00 PM | 10<br>Bible Study<br>10:00 am<br>Liberty Goodtimers<br>11:30 am<br><b>Lampighter<br/>Deadline</b> | 11<br>Alcoholics Anonymous<br>6:30 pm - 9 pm (FH)                                        | 12<br>4-H 7:00 PM | 13                                                                                    |
| 14<br>9:30 a - Sunday School<br>10:30 a - worship                                | 15     | 16<br>SPRC 7:00 PM                                | 17<br>Bible Study<br>10:00 am                                                                     | 18<br>Alcoholics Anonymous<br>6:30 pm - 9 pm (FH)                                        | 19                | 20<br>Food Pantry<br>9am-11am                                                         |
| 21 <b>Heifer Sunday</b><br>9:30 a - Sunday School<br>10:30 a - worship           | 22     | 23<br>Star Fellowship<br>12:00 pm                 | 24<br>Bible Study<br>10:00 am                                                                     | 25<br>Alcoholics Anonymous<br>6:30 pm - 9 pm (FH)                                        | 26                | 27                                                                                    |
| 28<br>9:30 a - Sunday School<br>10:30 a - worship                                | 29     | 30                                                | 31<br>Bible Study<br>10:00 am                                                                     |                                                                                          |                   |  |

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



**IN THE EVENT OF WINTRY WEATHER...**

you may contact the church office  
where the message will be updated.

Notification of closings and  
cancellations also will be emailed,  
posted on the church website,  
and posted on Facebook.

**Office: 410-922-6556**

**Email: [wardschapel@verizon.net](mailto:wardschapel@verizon.net)**

**Website: [www.wardschapel.org](http://www.wardschapel.org)**

**Facebook: Ward's Chapel United Methodist Church**