

JUNE

High Spire



June Calendar

Now	Sign up for VBC — campers & volunteers	p. 7
June 5	Communion Offering	p. 6
	Pancake Brunch	p. 5
June 7	VBC Volunteer Kick-off	p. 7
June 11	UM Days at Kings Dom.	p. 8
June 12	Men's Fellowship	p. 8
	Youth Group	p. 5
June 15	VBC Craft Prep	p. 7
June 17	Movie Night — <i>Noah!</i>	p. 8
June 19	Summer Sunday	
	Schedule change	p. 4
June 20	VBC Craft Prep	p. 7
June 25	Emergency Food Pantry	p. 6
June 30	VBC Painting	p. 7
	Lots more inside	

Towson United Methodist Church

◆ Monthly Newsletter ◆ June 2016 ◆ Volume 57, Issue 6 ◆

Thank You!

I would like to send a big THANK YOU to everyone who helped to make the April 9th community blood drive a success! Donors from TUMC and the neighborhood arrived between 6:30 AM and 12:30 PM Saturday, April 9th and donated 36 units of blood! A team of volunteers, including a team of high schoolers from Dulaney Senior High, spent their Saturday making sure the donors were registered, hydrated, comfortable, and smoothly moving through the process ... all contributed to this success.

Help keep the momentum going! Put July 2nd and Sept 17th on your calendars now for your next life saving donation!

Thanks! Margot

*Dear Friends,
We appreciate the beautiful
Easter tulip very much!
Thank you for your kind
thoughtfulness!
Thank you & God bless you!
Doris Wagner & Family*



*Dear Towson UMC,
We are greatly appreciative and thankful for your generous gift of \$1,000 to honor Bishop Marcus and Ms. Barbara Matthews [who is retiring this year]. We understand the proceeds are to be designated for the Sports Complex project [at Africa University, a private United Methodist institution in Mutare, Zimbabwe] to be constructed in their honor.
Blessings and Peace! — Rev. F. Lloyd Rollins*

CONFIRMATION **Sunday, May 15, 2016**

**Pictured left, top row:
mentor Earl Smith,
confirmands William Bothwell,
Colin Knabe, and Douglas Oakley,
and mentor Jack Chamberlain**

The three young men confirmed [this morning] are intelligent and gifted. Our church family has been and will continue to be blessed by their talents.

Doug has offered his patience and compassion, beyond the normal expectations, during Vacation Bible Camp.

Colin was not only wielding tools but also his leadership skills at Baltimore County Christian Workcamp.

Will offers his talents in music and fun in worship and youth group.

All three have impressed us with their thoughtful and thought provoking questions and answers in class.

Congratulations Will, Colin, and Doug! — Rev. Margery

(photo taken by Jeff Knabe)



Church Staff
and their responsibilities:

Rev. Rod Miller

Lead Pastor

rmiller@towsonumc.org

410-823-3640 (church)

410-465-2335 (home)

- Preaching, worship, administration, pastoral visitation, visioning, and ministry development

Rev. Margery Schammel

Assistant Pastor

mschammel@towsonumc.org

410-823-2485

- Christian education for children, youth, and adults, and worship leadership

Rev. Doug Hollida

Minister of Music & Organist

MusicDirector@towsonumc.org

410-823-6519

- Children, youth, and adult vocal choirs, handbell choirs, worship accompanist, and composer

Kim Ayres

Business Manager/ Receptionist

kayres@towsonumc.org

410-823-3693

- Financial and office administration and liaison to Finance and Trustees

Cathy Anderson

Director of Communications

communications@towsonumc.org

410-823-3689

- Graphic arts, weekly bulletins, monthly newsletters, webmaster, audio and visuals for worship, liaison to missions

Bob Ashby

Maintenance Assistant

- Assists in building cleaning and event set ups

Erin Rigley, Director

Hampton Lane

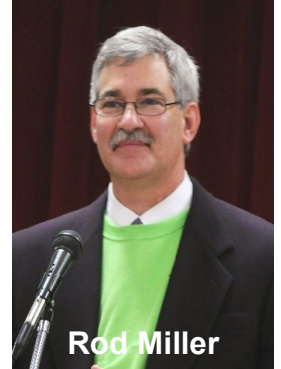
Child Development Center

cdcdirector@towsonumc.org

410-825-0008

Pastor's Letter

With God



Rod Miller

In the book
With — *reimagining the way you relate to God*
author Skye Jethani
observes that we all search for a way
to relate to God
that brings life and freedom.

In our relationship with God, we want to be delivered from fear to love and to restore meaning, beauty, and abundance to our lives and our world. In relating to God, we are also learning our own identity for how we understand God ultimately informs how we understand ourselves.

He outlines 5 possible paths for relating to God.

"I am a sinner" — living constantly under the threat of God's punishment. He calls this path "life under God."

"I am a manager" — a free person who is responsible for following principles and instructions in the Bible and whose fate is determined by how well this task is accomplished. He calls this path "life over God."

"I am a consumer" — who has many desires, longings, and demands, and expects them to be met — even by God. He calls this path "life from God."

"I am a servant" — a worker whose sense of value is linked to the magnitude of my impact on the world. He calls this path "life for God."

Only the fifth path, "I am beloved" — opens us to our true selves and is revealed when we are "with God." Only life "with God" sees God as our true desire rather than a device. Only God sees who we are and, when we are in communion with God, God reveals our true nature to us over time.

Our Pentecost Prayer experience, when our congregation prayed every day for 15 days culminating on the day of Pentecost, was an opportunity to be "with God" together. In so doing, we were able to hear something of who we are as a church and where we might be led next.

We are still in the process of gathering and interpreting the information you wrote and spoke on May 15. Soon we will share what you communicated as part of our ongoing communal discernment of our way forward. And so, I invite your ongoing prayers for yourself and for our church. I believe your prayers and mine will open us to what is next for us together — **with God.**

In Christ,
Rod

Christian Education

SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

Through JUNE 12

- 8:15a **Chapel Communion Service** — Chapel
8:45a Childcare infants-3s (continuous)— Room 122
8:45a Coffee & Fellowship— Parlor
9:00a **Sunday School**
 Preschool ages 2-4 — Room 113
 K – 2nd Grade — Room 311
 3rd – 5th Grade — Room 312
Youth Classes
 Middle High — Room 216
 Confirmation — Fellowship Hall
 High School — Room 317
Adult Classes — Christian Connections
 Christians Under Construction — Room 111
 Young Parents Class — Room 114
 (down the hall from the cribbery)
 Tower Class — Room 214
 Women's Class — Room 212
 Adult Bible Study — Hoffman Room 218
 Men's Class — Room 310
10:15a **Worshipping God Together** — Sanctuary
 Children & Worship, 4-6 yr olds—Room 314
 K.I.D.Z., for 7-11 year olds, Room 310,
 after they are excused from the
 worship service

SUNDAY MORNING SUMMER SCHEDULE

Beginning JUNE 19—August 28

- 8:15a **Chapel Communion Service** — Chapel
10:00a to 11:30... Childcare for children infants to age 3
 in the cribbery, Room 122
10:15a **Worshipping God Together** — Sanctuary
 Children's Learning Experience
 for children age 4 to 6
 Begin in the worship service
 with the families and be
 dismissed during the service
 (after the Children's
 Moment) to Room 314 to
 learn about the **Parables of**
 Jesus.
 Families please pick up your children at the
 end of the service.



WEDNESDAY MORNING PRAYER & BIBLE STUDY:

If you have been following the announcements you are aware that we have a Bible study group that has been meeting Wednesday mornings. You have been invited to join with us, however, this time, I am going to have to take back that invitation. After much prayer, and in speaking with both Rod and Margery about this, we have decided this will be our last year for the Bible study, and that we will not resume in the fall.

This was not a decision we wanted to make, nor was it a decision we made lightly. However, in the past few years, our attendance has dropped to the point where there are only a very few of us who are still a part of this Bible study. I would like to thank everyone who has been a part of this group through the years, and extend my appreciation to you for supporting it.

For the past year or two, our group has included prayer for our church. I would like to encourage us all, whether or not you have been a part of our Bible study, to continue your prayers for our church. Perhaps the day will come when once again, we can have a mid-week Bible study at Towson. At various times in history, nations have been swept by great seasons of revival. Perhaps this is our prelude to another great outpouring of the Holy Spirit, working in and among us to bring glory to His holy name!

—Joyce Keedy

DISCIPLE BIBLE STUDY

Pick a class and mark your calendars now.

Disciple Bible Study is a course designed for participants to read and discuss the Bible in a weekly class setting.

Beginning Sunday, September 11, we will be offering a modified version of Disciple 1 Bible Study during our Sunday School hour at 9:00am. This will allow for participants to take advantage of the child care services offered on Sunday mornings and to complete the whole course without having to allocate an evening meeting during the week.

The Disciple Bible Study course will also be offered **Tuesday evenings** beginning that same week in September, if there are enough participants.

The course will run for 34 weeks, and the expectation is that participants will attend as many sessions as possible. We learn from each other, so attendance and participation is vital.

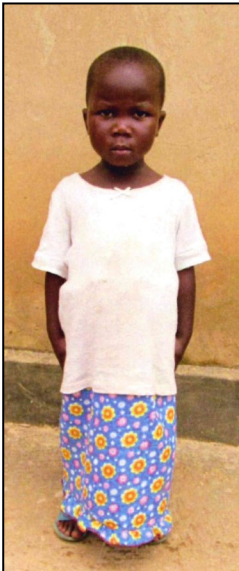
Please let me know now if you are interested in attending either class.

If you have questions or wish to sign up, feel free to call me, Earl Smith, at 410-377-6386 or email me at: j_earl_smith@verizon.net.

PANCAKES! Finally!!

The youth will serve a Pancake Brunch
on June 5th,
immediately following the 10:15a service.
Please join us in Fellowship Hall
for pancakes and sausage.

We ask for a free-will donation
to support our newly
sponsored child
CLAUDETTE.



Special toppings for
your pancakes
are available
for \$1.00 per topping.



TOWSON YOUTH

Last UMYF of the season will be on
June 12th, 6-7:30PM,
as we welcome our newest youth, the 5th graders.
All 5th graders are invited to join us as we eat and
play games in the Fellowship Hall.

Summer youth events will include fun and mission.

Fun — Guppy Gulch, picnic at a park (probably
Rock State Park), Lord of the Rings marathon Lock In,
and more.

Mission — help improve the Bay, one day at
BCCWC, garden at Lovely Lane UMC, gleaning, and
more.

Vacation Bible Camp — We need all the youth to
help with Vacation Bible Camp. The children count on
you to help them understand the lessons and to keep
them safe. Most of all, they count on you for fun!
Remember to register AS A VOLUNTEER online in order
to receive your t shirt!

Please remember to pick up from your school and
bring your service learning hour forms to Margery.



Check us out on Facebook.
Questions? Contact Margery at
mschammel@towsonumc.org or
410-823-2485.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS — Women's Retreat 2017

Join us for the 2017 Women's Retreat to be held on **April 21-23**
at the Bishop Claggett Center in Adamstown, MD.

Website for the Center is www.claggettcenter.org. Take a look — we think you'll love it!



Missions & Outreach

JUNE COMMUNION/MISSION OFFERING

Sunday, June 5, 2016

and throughout the month of June

We (the Mission Work Area) recently received an urgent request from the UMCOR hub at Bentley Springs UMC in Parkton, MD. They had been contacted by Mission Central in Pennsylvania to spread the word that their supply of flood buckets was depleted and they were receiving calls from flooded areas desperate for these disaster kits.



Severe storms have affected many states such as Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas, Missouri, Illinois, Tennessee, Mississippi, and others. The average cost of a five gallon bucket is about \$50, which contains 17 different items to assist people in cleaning up their homes after floods or hurricanes.

Your donations are urgently needed. Please make your check payable to "Towson UMC" and note on it that it's for "Flood Buckets." Thank you!

OUR EMERGENCY FOOD PANTRY

... will be open to the public

Saturday, June 25

9:00 to 10:30AM — in Fellowship Hall

Please place canned food donations in the Sharing Bins marked for the EFP in the church lobby. The list of items needed are in the Sunday bulletins in order to keep current. If you would like to volunteer to help Saturday mornings once a month, contact Dwight Kines at 410-828-0792.

BALTIMORE COUNTY CHRISTIAN WORKCAMP

Work week is July 18-22, 2016

We are gathering youth and adults who are available to work on a home of a needy Baltimore County resident through the Baltimore County Christian Workcamp.

I would also like to bring this to your attention — do you know a resident of Baltimore County who owns their home and needs help to perform work on their home? BCCW accepts requests for help from senior citizens, residents with mental/physical disabilities, and residents on a limited income. We are also seeking veterans who need help. We clean and repair inside homes and clean yards and build/repair decks and build wheelchair ramps.

Please contact Cathy Anderson at 410-823-3689 or communications@towsonumc.org.

DONATE YOUR BLOOD!

As part of the Leader Saves Lives program, the Dulaney High School Red Cross Club is organizing a blood drive this summer!

The blood drive will be **Saturday, July 2nd from 6:30 AM-12:00** here in **Fellowship Hall.**

Anyone older than 16 years may be eligible to donate.

To schedule your life saving donation, contact Marella Schammel at msch1105@gmail.com or 410-823-2485.



Good morning!

This is a picture (above) of an American Red cross volunteer, Vernon Sevier, and myself at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center on May 12th as we delivered all the donations to our wounded soldiers on behalf of Towson United Methodist Church.

I personally cannot say enough about what Towson United Methodist Church members, and especially Vernon Sevier, have done for our soldiers over the years. It is a pleasure to work with him and make these deliveries. There was a very big smile on the faces of the two Red cross workers when they saw all these items and gift cards. Thank you all very, very much.

—Bill Peters



VACATION BIBLE CAMP

Join us at the Surf Shack
to catch the wave
of God's amazing love!

July 25-29, 2016 (Monday—Friday)
9:00 a.m. – 12 noon

- Who:** Children age 3 (by 1-1-2016) through 5th grade (completed year 2015-16)
- Cost:** \$10 per child, maximum of \$20 per family
You may use the online method explained below to pay OR —
pay by check, made payable to "Towson UMC" with "VBC" in the memo line.

We need you to help make VBC a resounding success.

If you are interested in helping, please contact Margery at mschammel@towsonumc.org or 410-823-2485.

How do you sign up for VBC?

It's easy ...

Go to our church's webpage
www.towsonumc.org

Click on MY PICTURE
It will surf you to the sign-up page.
Sign up as a CAMPER
or a VOLUNTEER.

The link to pay for your camper online
will be sent to you
in the confirmation email.

Donations needed to make VBC a success:

ONE liter bottles—washed with lid included
white coffee filters (any size is great)
5 pair safety glasses
empty clean soda cans
beach balls
newspaper

Donations needed to borrow for VBC:

surfboards/boogie boards
sand toys
sand buckets and shovels
fake palm trees

Please place your donations in the education office or drop off in the main office. Borrowed items need your name and phone number on them so we can return them in August.

VBC Kick Off:

Tuesday, June 7th, Room 317, 7:00pm

All volunteers are invited to attend to
learn about the themes, schedule,
and assignments.



Painting Days for VBC:

Thursday, June 30th
Tuesday, July 5th
Room 312
10:00am – Noon

CRAFT PREP DAYS...

Come join the fun and help prep the CRAFTS for the children at Surf Shack VBC. We will be cutting, sorting, and bagging. You will get a "sneak peek" as to what the traveling children will be creating.

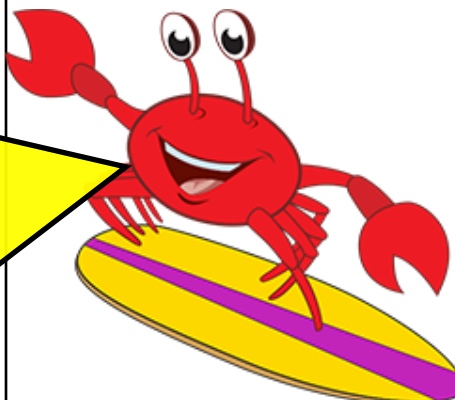
Two dates have been set aside:

June 15 from 10 am - 12 pm
and

June 20 from 5:00 - 7:00 pm

We'll meet
in Room
311-313

Questions? Contact Jeannine Neuen at 410-925-6084 or email jcneuen@aol.com to let her know you will be coming.



Getting to know each other under the Spire



UNITED METHODIST DAYS

at KINGS DOMINION

June 11, 18, 25

July 2, 9, 16, 25

\$34 per person

To purchase tickets, go to:
www.kingsdominion.com/save

Username: KDUMC

Password: KDUMC

TUMC Men's Fellowship

Men's Fellowship will meet next at Steve Schnur's home, 3838 Dance Mill Road, Phoenix, MD 21131 on Sunday, **June 12 at 1 pm** to meet and eat and we will have the Orioles on so we can follow the game as well. Lunch will be provided. You can meet directly at Steve's or carpool from the church at 12:45 pm. —Steve Schnur

MOVIE NIGHT

We are having a Sight & Sound MOVIE night on Friday evening

June 17, 2016, 7:00pm

to enjoy the show *Noah* right here in Fellowship Hall — AND IT'S FREE!

All are invited! This will be a fun night for all ages!



LEARN HOW TO RUN

THE SOUND, VIDEOS, AND RECORDING

We are thrilled to announce that Armbruster A/V has installed a new Bose speaker system in the sanctuary. Thanks to our Trustees who are making this possible.

Now is a great time to learn how to run our equipment and become one of our Sunday morning volunteers.

PLEASE contact Cathy at 410-823-3689 or communications@towsonumc.org.



CRAB FEAST!

Saturday, August 20, 2016

4:00-7:00PM in Fellowship Hall

Last year's Crab Feast was a huge success! Conrad's of Parkville will, again, cater this event.

Henry & Will have agreed to do an encore performance as awesome DJ's.

The price remains at \$45 for adults and

\$30 for children under the age of 12, free if you're under the age of 5.

Proceeds will benefit the future new sanctuary windows. If you want to get your reservation in NOW, contact Ginny Foster at 410-296-4780 or email her at virginiafoster@comcast.net.



TAILGATE PARTY!

To kick off the start of Fall and to welcome the community to our church, The Young Parent's Sunday morning Class will be hosting an all ages, family friendly **Tailgate Event**

Saturday, September 24.

We are early in the planning process and want to reach out to those who may be interested in helping out with the event. If you are interested in assisting with any of the following, please contact Lissa O'Donnell at [443-655-7656](tel:443-655-7656) or lko1783@gmail.com.

- Planning/Organizing
- Helping with a station (face-painting, games, food, etc.)
- Set up/Clean Up
- Donating items to the event (we will have a list of all items needed soon!)



TOWN HALL MEETING

was held Sunday, May 22, 2016 at 11:15 AM
in the sanctuary of Towson United Methodist Church
immediately following the Alleluia Singers CANTATA

The following are the reports given by committees and work areas of the church:

HAMPTON LANE CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER COMMITTEE

The Hampton Lane Child Development Center (HLCDC) was established in 1977 and is a non-profit outreach ministry program to the community sponsored by Towson United Methodist Church. The HLCDC provides a warm, loving, and safe educational environment for children ages 2 through Pre-K and is licensed and has a Certificate of Approval by the Maryland State Department of Education. HLCDC does not discriminate against race, color, national origin, or religion when accepting children into its educational program. Forty four children are presently enrolled.

The Child Development Committee which oversees the operation of the Center is charged with addressing the various concerns of the Center's staff and teachers, the parents, the children, the Church and its staff, and the Maryland State Department of Education. All of these groups play an important role in the operation of the Center.

During the past year, some of the major accomplishments achieved included moving past a period of low enrollment that many centers as well as ours have experienced, providing tuition aid to several needy families, making a contribution to the Growing Forward campaign, improving the appearance of the classrooms and playground, and achieving a #1 rating from the EXCELS program of the Maryland State Department of Education. In addition, the Center Director, Erin Rigley, has added a number of new programs to further enrich the excellence of the Center's educational curriculum.

During the coming year, I would like to see the CDC Committee continue to take an active role in the operation of the Center so as to take full advantage of the expertise of its members. I would like to see an expansion of the tuition aid program to benefit families in need in the community. I would like the Center to be fully enrolled, a challenge in the highly competitive world of pre-school centers, so that the community and TUMC may both benefit from the contributions that the Center can give. Finally, I would like to be able to continue to improve the working environment of the staff and teachers so that the education of our children will continue to be a happy and rewarding experience for all.

David E. King, Chair: Child Development Center Committee

PATHWAYS

PATHWAYS, our church sponsored tutoring program, had a most successful year. Two eighth graders graduated, and we look forward to the return of 20 children from the city and the

county. Our administrative director, Mary Wynne Eisenberg, and our program director, Sharon Penhallegon, will be recruiting additional students, new tutors, and will possibly be adding a new school for the upcoming school year. We had 17 tutors who generously gave their time for 23 weeks, some coming for both hours to work with the students.

A series of career speakers motivated and inspired our children with their messages this spring, and the end of year dinner was most exciting with award medals, delicious food prepared by Sally Savidge, and Tavon Mason's challenge encouraging the children to "Dare to be great!"

For the 2016-17 school year we are looking for a weekly snack helper and a special events coordinator to help with our Christmas Party and End of Year dinner. If you are interested in joining us in any capacity, please contact Susan Killian.

PATHWAYS is most thankful for the many contributions of the Towson United Methodist Church members, all adding to the success of this amazing program.

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Men's Fellowship is a new men's ministry here at TUMC. This past winter, Rod assembled a few men to lead the formation of the group: Steve Schnur, Dave Turlington, Earl Smith and Joe Corson. The leadership team is currently reading a book called "Sleeping Giant" and taking some questions from that book to begin forming the Men's Fellowship. Over the last few months, we've invited the men of the church to three different meetings. The first two were in a discussion format and last week we just enjoyed some fellowship with a little church lot barbeque. Attendance has been between 15 and 30 men. The mission and format are still under development but the interest has been great.

WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

What is Women's Ministries?

As each of the present groups shared their goals, a common thread ran through each group. A journey of faith by women seeking to support, comfort, and sustain each other as they grow in their Christian faith and walk with Jesus.

What are the various opportunities available now to women at TUMC?

Women's Sunday School Class

Trish Turlington shared a history of how the women's class evolved:

In 1997, a group of women began meeting on Thursday evenings for Christian education. Over the next 16 or 17 years,

they studied a variety of books on Christian living, parenting, prayer, women and men of the Bible as well as in depth studies of particular books of the Bible. They developed strong relationships and supported each other in times of need. The members spanned the generations, and changed over the years, coming and going as schedules allowed, depending on the time of year, children's sports or other obligations. In September 2014, the class moved to Sunday mornings during Christian Connections time. We continue to explore ways to deepen our relationship with Christ. The class is currently team taught by Alicia Corson, Robin Smith and Trish Turlington. We welcome any women of the church to come join us.

Sojourner Sisters

Sojourner Sister's began on April 13, 2005 following our first Women's Retreat.

Under the leadership of Sue LaHatte, this group is open to all women who are seeking a personal relationship with God and growth in their Christian faith. They meet twice each month (during the school year) with an optional time for lunch and fellowship (bring a bag lunch and drink.) There is then an hour for discussion and reflection. Dates, time and book study material will be available toward the end of the summer. Why do we meet? As women of faith, seeking growth in our faith, we need each other - as mentors, as friends, as sisters.

Women's Retreat

Why have a Women's Retreat? A time set aside for women to gather in fellowship, learning and to be on a journey of Christian faith together. One of the women on our Design Team made a comment this year. It did not matter where we went on the retreat, we just need to be together. We have held our retreats at West River, Greenwood Hills, and Pearlstone. On April 21 - 23, 2017, we will travel to a new location - the Bishop Claggett Center in Adamstown, MD. As the Design Team begins planning. They will have a discussion of what the retreat will look like next year: a new location, new theme, and new ideas.

HOSPITALITY

The Hospitality Ministries Committee currently has 17 members who are committed to providing a welcoming and friendly atmosphere for visitors and members by extending themselves in a gracious way.

Our group hosts the coffee hour, new member receptions, the Confirmation reception, and the Easter Sunday brunch.

Members of the Hospitality Ministries Committee at the Welcome Station are likely among the first to greet parishioners and guests as they enter our foyer. We are also responsible for recruiting greeters who welcome you as you enter the narthex.

A fairly new mission started a few years ago to help keep in touch with our congregation is our birthday post card mailing. A photo of the church and its surrounds changes each year.

An ongoing effort of our committee involves the green attendance cards found in the pew racks. When visitors leave their contact information, we reach out to them to engage in conversation and request information regarding their worship experience as well as answer any questions they may have regarding the various ministries and classes we offer. For members, these green cards serve to register weekly and

seasonal attendance patterns so we can call anyone who attends regularly but is absent for a few weeks in a row. The purpose of our doing this is to make sure our members know they are missed when they can't attend and to determine whether there is a problem with which the church can offer assistance. People who receive a call appreciate that we care about them and made the call. We encourage you to sign the green cards every week. We also ask if you could please refrain from using the green cards as doodle cards. Thank you.

Lastly, twice during the year we organize drives to collect items for the women and children at the House of Ruth. We have been supporting this mission of House of Ruth for 5 years.

We are committed to serving our church, our community, and our Lord to provide a welcoming, friendly atmosphere for visitors and members.

Thank you.

SERVANTS-IN-SERVICE

Who are Servants-in-Service?

They are the members and friends of OUR church community who are using their gifts in service to others.

"God has given each of us gifts; use them well in service to others." 1Peter 4:11

In February of 2015 the Servants-in-Service (SIS) subcommittee was formed by SPRC (Staff Parish Relations Committee) with the specific goal of facilitating assistance for the re-organized staff of TUMC. SIS created a brochure to create opportunities for involvement by the congregation. Mike Steer's sermon clarified the roles: pastors' and staff's are to "equip the saints to serve" and the members' are to be fully engaged and running the church. We had an exciting response and thank you for the added office help, creation of bulletin boards, visitation and reaching out by writing notes and making calls, teaching short courses....we often don't see all that is happening as a result of our active and homebound members' efforts!

As we go forward SIS is now encouraging all to be in dialogue to get to know each other better, to realize our gifts and unleash the potential in each other to the service each one is called to do.

Let us know how we can help you "LIVE your faith in the world" (from our church mission statement).

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

This month marks the 9th year anniversary of the Prayer Shawl Ministry at TUMC. Over those years, we have made many hundreds of shawls which are donated to GBMC and St. Joseph's as well as being available to anyone in our church who wishes to pick one up for a loved one or anyone in need. This is a remarkable accomplishment and reflects the incredible commitment and dedication of our members to a ministry that touches countless lives. We continue to meet three times each month, year-round, although some of our most prolific shawl-makers do not usually attend the meetings. One person in particular, Eleanor Brown, drops off sometimes a dozen or more shawls each month so that they can be blessed along with the rest of the shawls.

In thinking about what I wanted to say about our Prayer Shawl Ministry—specifically what we’ve done over this past year, I was reminded of something that Alicia Corson said at the Pentecost service last week. She challenged us all to ask ourselves what does love look like and how do we demonstrate God’s love within and outside the walls of our church. The Prayer Shawl Ministry is an answer to that question in a very tangible and profound way. For sure, our meetings are lively and fun. We’ve shared concerns and joys, and supported each other in our craft. We’ve taught others how to knit or crochet, shared patterns and ideas, and offered advice on projects and assistance with problems we may be encountering. In addition, over the years, we’ve supported each other through the death of loved ones, grief and loss; births, graduations, weddings, and countless other celebrations. That is what happens within the walls of this church. But the best way to describe how we impact those beyond these walls is through the stories of people whose lives have been dramatically impacted by our shawls in the past year.

One story is a personal one for me. Earlier this year as we were both arriving for church one Sunday morning, I was talking with Eleanor Brown about a baby whose mother works as a nurse at Hopkins and whom I have come to know over the past few years. She had delivered her second baby, a beautiful little girl, just days before, but the baby suffered serious problems shortly after birth and was very quickly transferred to the Neonatal ICU and then within a day was moved to the Pediatric ICU for a type of treatment only offered in that unit. As I shared with Eleanor how sick this baby was, she immediately offered to bring in a pink baby blanket that she had at home. She brought the blanket in that week and at one of our monthly meetings, we blessed it along with all of the shawls that had been donated. I was able to take the blanket to the hospital and gave it to Amanda, the mother, who immediately put it on her baby’s bed in the midst of all of the tubes, catheters, and machinery. Unfortunately, in spite of all of the best interventions available, little Allyssa did not survive. But I truly believe that that beautiful pink blanket wrapped her in God’s love as she took her last breath. And it was at the front of the room in the funeral home during her memorial service, as a reminder of God’s presence and love. Her parents and extended family were so moved by that gift and so thankful to our church and our ministry for making it possible. I also gave the mother one of our shawls and she told me recently how much that has meant to her these past months and that it is something she will always cherish.

Another story was shared by Phyllis Napfel who is a nurse at Shock Trauma at University of Maryland Hospital and who gave one of our shawls to a coworker. Here is what Phyllis wrote:

“Last December one of my co-workers experienced a traumatic event. I was not particularly close to her, but felt I needed to do something after I heard what had happened. I learned that her boyfriend had tried to commit suicide and she called the police, but he grabbed a knife and ended up being shot and killed by the police in her house and in her presence. I did not know what to do or say. That is where God and the Holy Spirit came into the story, giving me a nudge. God gave me the

idea to send her a prayer shawl. Her friends said that she believed in God, so I thought, why not? I was trying to figure out when I could get it from church and went into the church parlor on Christmas Eve to look at the prayer shawls in the basket. She is a huge Ravens fan, so I thought, maybe there will be a purple one. Sure enough, there was a beautiful purple prayer shawl right on top! I took it and then I had to actually go to the Post Office and mail it, you know, a little extra effort, but I still felt it was important to follow the nudge. I sent a card along with it and included some scripture readings, thoughts and prayers. I got a card from her some time later. Here is what she wrote:

“That was probably the most thoughtful and special gift I ever received. The card alone brought me to tears. The blanket is gorgeous and I absolutely love the purple. I slept with it every night especially on the trip to the funeral. This has been the most traumatic and saddening event of my life. God, my family, and friends have been my saving grace. Thank you so much for thinking so thoughtfully of me. God is great. I will cherish this gift forever.”

And once she came back to work, we started talking and she shared some of her struggles with me, and then promptly said, “I am not sure why I just told you all that.” I told her it was because God was working through both of us and His handprint was on everything from the nudge to give the shawl, to the purple one being on top, to her receiving it right before the funeral, and now her sharing with me some of her innermost thoughts.”

These are two powerful and very personal stories, but each one of our shawls could probably tell a story like these, of grace and healing, promise and hope. The Prayer Shawl Ministry at this church began as a result of one of God’s “nudges” and those of us involved in this ministry continue to seek to respond to God’s direction. When I asked the group what they thought I should tell you all today about our vision for the future, they simply said that they want to continue to do what we’ve been doing all along. We all believe in the amazing power of the prayers and love that are stitched into each and every one of our shawls. That is our mission and our ministry and that is how we are demonstrating God’s love in this world.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

Theme-based worship series have been well received. These have included “Servants in Service,” “When Life Doesn’t Make Sense,” “The Yeses of Advent,” “Learning How to Dance with God,” “Cleaning House” (spiritual practices), and “Opening the Door.” This summer our series will focus on the “Parables of Jesus.”

The 8:15 chapel service is supported musically by Joyce Keedy and Dee Solomon, and have a strong weekly attendance. The 10:15 worship service features a variety of music styles to meet the varied preferences of our congregation.

Music is an important part of our worship experience. Examples include

- Combined choir Advent/Christmas music service – 3rd Week of Advent.
- Carol Choir worship musicals – on Christmas Eve at 5 and Palm Sunday at 10:15.

- Alleluia Singers will sing and lead the 10:15 service on May 22.
- Our youth and adults serving as instrumentalists and in bell choirs.

We offer a variety of worship experiences throughout the church year, including:

- Attentional prayer offered every Tuesday evening.
- Special experiential worship during Lent – 2 on Holy Thursday and 2 on Good Friday.
- 15-Day Prayer for the Church held May 1 – May 15.
- A confirmation service where we confirmed 3 young men on Pentecost this year.

We have a new projector and screen and speakers to support weekly worship services, and new microphones for better recordings of church services.

A large number of members participate in the services by offering community prayers, reading scripture, helping to prepare and serve communion, ushering, sharing personal testimonies (e.g., Allie Corson on June 12th) and assisting in other ways. In addition, Fred Crider, Joyce Keedy, and Doug Hollida offer original texts and music to support our worship experiences.

Fresh flowers are on the altar every week. Be sure to check the bulletin board to the left of the main office door for available dates and donation envelopes.

CARING MINISTRY – (reaching our shut-ins)

We have many members who have been quietly involved in this type of service ministry for many years; they have taken notice of who isn't present and have reached out to them. Over the past year we asked the congregation if they might have a desire to serve the church in this ministry too. Several people responded and have become involved by sending cards, making phone calls and visiting our shut-ins if possible.

We also have a few folks who visit people during their hospital stays and in the rehab centers. **As with any caring ministry, more volunteers willing to make personal contact with home-bound parishioners are always welcome.**

It is a wonderful practice for all of us to be aware of folks whom we may not have seen at church in a while and to reach out to them. It is so important for the continued growth of the church that we take notice of those who are no longer "in their seats," so to speak. In fact this is the first step in knowing who might have needs that we as a church may fulfill. Making the church aware is an important step in this process.

Continuing relationships with our church family is the objective of this caring ministry. If this appeals to you please let Robin Smith, Margery and/or Rod know.

Robin's contact info robin_smith@verizon.net or 410-377-6386.

RECONCILING AND ACCEPTING METHODISTS ("RAMS")

As stated in the Welcoming Statement published each week in our bulletin (and each month in our High Spire), our congregation celebrates diversity, committing ourselves to Jesus' example of inclusive love for all persons, regardless of (among other things) sexual orientation and gender identity. However, we are not a "fully" inclusive church in the sense that

we have not publicly called for the repeal of those provisions of church law which discriminate against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) persons. A congregation that has taken this next step is a "reconciling" church.

The mission of the TUMC RAMs is to advocate for the full inclusion of LGBT persons in the life and ministry of the United Methodist Church. To that end, we have sponsored educational programs exploring the scriptural and ethical dimensions of these issues as well as inclusion-themed social events (including a summer series of movie nights).

Most recently, we have conducted a registration drive in support of the Reconciling Ministries Network (the RMN), a nationwide organization which also seeks to make the church more accepting and inclusive by repealing discriminatory church laws.

Church law can only be changed by the General Conference, which is an assembly of Methodist representatives from all over the world that meets every four years. The General Conference met May 10 - 20 in Portland, Oregon, and the RMN actively supported the efforts made to change church law. (More about this at our Town Hall meeting.)

In advance of the General Conference, the RAMs encouraged members of our congregation to join the RMN, primarily by maintaining a registration table in the foyer before and after the 10:15 worship service. (Our "Choose Love" campaign. You may have seen some of those who have joined the RMN wearing "Choose Love" buttons.)

We recognized the difficulties this effort faced. Many in our congregation are unaware of the church's discriminatory laws, and so there was an educational challenge. There is also a reluctance to "join" any unfamiliar organization, especially when a good deal of personal information (address, e-mail address, phone number) is being requested. The natural inclination of many would be to avoid engagement and pass us by.

In light of these challenges, we thought 50 TUMC RMN members would be a good indication of congregational support for full inclusion. The response of the congregation has been overwhelmingly positive, and we are very pleased to report that (so far) 96 have joined the RMN.

Disregard of church law as it affects LGBT persons is widespread in the United States, and as of this writing it is unclear how the General Conference will act regarding the more than 100 petitions that have been filed which relate to issues of human sexuality.

For further information, or if you wish to "Choose Love" and join the RMN, please contact Kevin Gralley (kevin.gralley@gmail.com)

MISSION WORK AREA

Our Mission Statement: The Mission Work Area (MWA) will coordinate, involve, educate and provide support for our church's Christian mission locally and around the world.

Our dream: To have all members and friends be involved in mission activities. Here is a list of mission activities that the MWA sponsors throughout the year. We encourage you to watch the Sunday bulletins and monthly *High Spire* newsletters for details and contact information:

Contribute to the monthly Communion/Mission Offerings (for local and worldwide needs)

Assist in the Emergency Food Pantry (last Saturday of the month)

Bring in food and "household items of need"

Participate by giving gifts toward the Angel Tree, Operation Christmas Child/Shoeboxes, and presents for children at Homestead UMC in Baltimore, and food for the Thanksgiving Baskets

Assemble health and disaster kits for UMCOR

Assist on a mission topic during Vacation Bible Camp

Participate in Baltimore County Christian Work Camp (week in July)

Go Gleaning at First Fruits Farms (anytime in Northern Baltimore County)

Volunteer as a Volunteer in Mission (VIM) to help others in need (due to hurricanes, floods, etc.)

Assist in "green" functions

Bring in food for "Food For Thought" that feeds hungry children over the weekend

Feed the hungry at Manna House (serve breakfast quarterly/ 25th St.)

Participate in the Blood Drives

Support the wounded soldiers at Walter Reed – provide small supplies that are delivered quarterly

Support Boy Scout Troop 102 (sponsored by TUMC)

Help prepare disaster relief items at UMCOR's Mission Central in MD or in PA

Prepare items for sale at SERRV in New Windsor, MD

Donate clothes to Homestead UMC – use the bin in back of our church

Please join anytime in a mission activity – we want you to benefit from this time of giving to others.

The **Mission Work Area** wishes to thank everyone in our congregation for their continued support of **Communion/Mission Offerings**. Your donations definitely make a difference to the less fortunate of our community and beyond. Here is a **summary your donations collected in 2015**:

Imagine No Malaria - \$2,368

Assistance Center of Towson Churches (ACTC) - \$1369

Food for Thought - \$982

HLCDC Scholarship Fund - \$730

Emergency Food Pantry - \$6,299

UMCOR, disaster relief - \$1,332

Church World Service, blankets - \$803

UMCOR's One Great Hour of Sharing - \$671

Youth Missions - \$609

Earl's Place - \$477

Submitted by the Mission Work Area Committee, Gene Bandy, Chair

YOUTH

This year has been a year of change for the TUMC youth group. We have altered our schedule and timing, gone new places, and met new people. We now meet twice a month on Sunday evenings after choir, once a month in the afternoon after worship, and once a month for a fun event. These fun events have included going bowling, going to Skyzone the

trampoline park, scavenger hunts through Walmart, and corn mazes. This year we have really discovered our love for helping others and getting involved in missions. Some missions we have gotten involved with this year include gleaning for potatoes at Fresh Fruits Farm, painting bowls to donate that will help fight hunger in Maryland, cleaning up around TUMC, and planting trees around the church. One new mission that the youth are excited to partake in is sponsoring a child in another country. We have chosen to support a 4 year old girl named Claudette Nikuze who lives in Rwanda.

This summer, though we will not be meeting on a regular Sunday schedule, we have decided to get involved in even more mission. The TUMC youth group will be participating in 4 to 5 different missions throughout the summer. We will help clean the Chesapeake Bay, do some more gleaning at Fresh Fruits Farm, and volunteer throughout our community. Last year our youth group took on the project of cleaning up and beautifying the garden near Lovely Lane UMC in Baltimore City, which we have decided to continue this summer.

You can help us by donating to our youth group so that we can continue to help others and support our surrounding community. We will be hosting a Pancake Brunch on June 5th in our Fellowship hall and all the proceeds collected will go to support our sponsorship child, Claudette.

Thank you! –TUMC Youth Group

EDUCATION WORK AREA

Education Work Area has had a busy and successful year.

The Cribbery has provided care for numerous infants and toddlers. If you are interested in volunteering in the Cribbery, please contact Lissa O'Donnell.

The Preschool/Elementary team sponsored the Advent Celebration Activities for children as well as the Easter Egg hunt. We plan to continue those activities in the following year.

There are currently 7 Christian Connections classes including the Tower class, Men's class, Women's class, Christians under Construction, Young Parents class, Earl's class, and the Adult Bible study class.

Vacation Bible Camp will be July 25-29. The theme is Surf Shack, Catch the Wave of God's Amazing Love. As you know that week brings many children and youth both from our congregation and the community. We need many volunteers for the week to run all the activities for the campers. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Margery. You can register children by going to our website and clicking on Snappy the Crab.

A few members of the Education Work Area have been working on an Emergency Plan for TUMC. Our main focus has been to develop a plan in case of a fire. Once we have that in place, we may look into other areas such as sheltering in place, etc. We have met with a Baltimore County Fire Marshal and received recommendations from him. In the coming months, please look for maps with evacuation routes posted in each room much like you would see in a hotel. We will also be placing cards in the pews with evacuation routes from the sanctuary.

FINANCE

We began 2015 with a sizeable negative number and ended the year with a substantial positive number – all thanks to your faithful giving and to the staff who carefully managed expenses.

The budget for 2016 is balanced and is shown below. January and February receipts were very strong; however, March and April giving was weak, and even Easter income was less than expected. We hope our usual “summer slump” has moved to spring and our summer income will rebound.

A very comprehensive and thorough audit of CDC revealed no discrepancies or deficiencies. Ken Klueh donated his time and financial expertise for this audit.

STEWARDSHIP

Pledges for the fall 2015 stewardship campaign slightly exceed the budgeted pledge income for 2016. As of now actual receipts are lower than pledged amounts. We encourage all of you to keep up with your commitments.

2016 General Operating Budget	
Income	
Tithes And Offerings	
Envelopes - Pledge	\$ 625,000.00
Envelopes - Non Pledge	\$ 80,000.00
Plate - Anonymous Donations	\$ 28,320.00
Special Offerings	\$ 16,000.00
Total Tithes And Offerings	\$ 749,320.00
Total Facilities	\$ 81,005.00
Total Income	\$ 830,325.00

Expenses	
Total Personnel	\$ 441,308.00
Total Administration	\$ 39,950.00
Total Committees	\$ 7,150.00
Total Programs	\$ 20,875.00
Total Buildings & Grounds	\$ 165,718.00
Total Conference Apportionments	\$ 124,224.00
Total Missions - Outreach	\$ 31,100.00
Total Expenses	\$ 830,325.00

TRUSTEES

We are debt free for the first time in 10 years! All outstanding loans have been paid off! The last note of \$74,300 for the steeple was paid off in April.

The parking lot was repaired and patched, but not resurfaced. It was striped the week of May 16.

New speakers in the sanctuary will enhance the worship experience for everyone — they will be installed by May 29.

The next project to be undertaken will be the windows once sufficient Growing Forward funds have been received. We hope that the project will be completed by early spring 2017.

PROPERTY & MAINTENANCE

P&M handles major projects funded by the trustees as well as routine building issues supported by the operating budget.

A new gas range, warming oven and refrigerator have been installed in the fellowship hall kitchen.

A new overhead door was installed in the garage.

Crepe myrtle trees were planted in the parking lot to replace the dead oaks which were planted by Don McWilliams over 50 years ago.

GROWING FORWARD

Thank you for keeping pace with your commitments to the Growing Forward capital campaign!

\$800,000 has been donated to date.

The Bridge Team will continue to keep you informed of the progress of the campaign.

If you are wondering how we might speed up any of our capital projects — we have a solution. Just advance the fulfillment of your commitments or make additional commitments to Growing Forward. As we have cash in the bank we can take on additional projects.

PLANNED GIVING

The Trustees, along with the Stewardship and Finance committees, are working to establish a Planned Giving Ministry. They will organize an education program to explain charitable giving strategies. This committee will report to the Trustees because they manage bequests for the church.

SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP AT TOWSON

- 8:15 AM Traditional Service in the Chapel. This service has communion every Sunday and usually piano or organ accompaniment.
- 10:15 AM *Worshipping God Together* in the Sanctuary. This service is blended and richly varied. About twice a month we open with contemporary songs led by our praise band. And, about twice a month we are more traditional, with one of these Sundays including an old-fashioned-hymn-sing. Every Sunday, we hear from the 3,000 pipes of our glorious organ. And, every Sunday we are blessed by one or more of our five vocal choirs or three handbell choirs. You may hear anything from an a cappella anthem in Latin from the 1500s, to a classic with the organ, to a recent song accompanied by our praise band. Communion is offered on the first Sunday of the month, and is open to all.

We have gluten-free bread, too, just ask the server.

See the chart outside the main office door — OR — call the church office at 410-823-6511 to order Flowers to be placed on the Altar and to light the Spire in honor or in memory of a loved one.

Orders need to be placed by Noon Tuesday BEFORE the Sunday.

- ✝ **FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR** may be given in honor of or in memory of loved ones. **You have a choice when donating flowers for the altar:** you may order arranged cut flowers that you take home after the 10:15 service on Sunday for **\$30.00**, OR — you may consider ordering from *Paul's Flowers*, which could be a lasting shrub or perennial flowers to be planted here at church for **\$55.00**. *Paul's Flowers* may be ordered April—Nov., and need a 2-week notice.



- ✝ If you would like a **rosebud** on the altar announcing the birth of your child or grandchild, please contact the church office at 410-823-6511.
- ✝ Donate to **LIGHT THE SPIRE IN THE EVENING** FOR THE WEEK in honor of or in memory of a loved ones. **Cost is \$30.00.** Fill out an envelope with the details of your gift and place in the mail slot in the church office door. Envelopes are with the Flower Chart on the wall outside the church office (or call the church office).

TOWSON PRAYS ONLINE

<http://towsonprays.blogspot.com>

Prayers and thoughts written by friends at church!

Make this a “favorite” and join us in prayer.

Upper Room devotionals are available in regular and large print. You can find them on the credenza under the pictures of the church's stained glass windows in the main lobby.



ARTICLES FOR THE NEXT HIGH SPIRE

July/August 2016 double issue is due Tuesday, June 28, 2016.

All articles need to be on time and either in the marked folder outside Room 315 — OR — you e-mail to Cathy Anderson at communications@towsonumc.org.

Thank you!



WHAT IS THIS? No, it's not a new stamp from the Post Office ... but it is for your smart phone! If you have an app to scan QR codes, then **HERE IT IS ...** the new

Towson United Methodist QR code. You can donate to the church online from your home or pew using your credit card or online banking! It's safe and secure.

This includes your Sunday offerings, Capital Journey payments, and monthly mission offerings. For miscellaneous payments & gifts (such as for lunches or Alternative Christmas Gifts), click on OTHER, make sure you fill in the memo line.

You can also submit your donations at www.towsonumc.org, scroll down, click on DONATE. Follow the same instructions as above.

THANKS!



PATHWAYS had a very successful year which concluded with a celebration on May 16. Families came to watch their children receive medals for attendance and effort. From October to May, eleven students from Baltimore city and twelve students from Baltimore county public schools received one-to-one tutoring from seventeen volunteer tutors. Most plan to return next year!

— Sharon Penhallegon, director



Pictured left:
Our Hampton Lane Child Development Center (CDC) Committee:
 Back row, left to right:
 Nancy Andrew,
 Erin Rigley (director),
 Kathy King,
 Tracie Bartlett,
 Trish Turlington, Dave King
 Front row, left to right:
 Nancy Bopst, Carol Engel,
 Ellen Berline, Jan Marburg.
 Not present:
 Carol Woodworth,
 Libby Rogers

TOWSON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**501 Hampton Lane
Towson, Maryland 21286**

410-823-6511

**towsonumc.org
towsonprays.blogspot.com**

Business hours are Monday through Thursday 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM



Towson United Methodist Church is a community of Christ-followers growing in love of God and neighbor. This is what we at Towson UMC believe Christian discipleship is, what we are to be, and what Jesus meant when he sent his followers to “make disciples” —

We believe every person is of sacred worth and created in God’s image. We commit to Jesus’ example of inclusive love, care, and intentional hospitality with persons of every race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, faith story, physical or mental ability, economic status, or political perspective. We respect our diversity of opinion and expressions of faith. Therefore, as God loves us, so let us love and serve in the name of Christ.

— adopted by the TUMC Church Council February 2, 2015

TOWSON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH MINISTRY TEAM



Rev. Dr. Marcus Matthews, Resident Bishop

Rev. Cynthia Moore-Koikoi, Superintendent, Baltimore Metropolitan District

Carole Dean, TUMC’s Church Lay Leader

Rev. Dr. Roderick J. Miller, Lead Pastor

Rev. Margery Schammel, Assistant Pastor

Rev. Doug Hollida, Minister of Music

HAMPTON LANE CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

410-825-0008 cdcdirector@towsonumc.org — Erin Rigley, Center Director

**A Ministry of Towson United Methodist Church — Child Care with an approved preschool
www.hamptonlanecdc.org**