

HIGH SPIRO

March
2018

TUMC

Newsletter for Members & Friends of Towson United Methodist Church



Pastor Mark Johnson and
Bishop LaTrelle Easterling Page 5



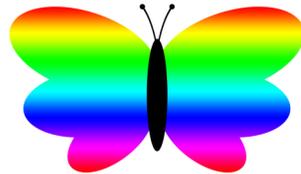
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End of the...

RAINBOW

Many people believe they must be lucky or blessed to find happiness. Others define happiness by their own satisfaction with life, personal pleasure, or the absence of negative emotions. But Aristotle summed it up best: *Happiness depends upon ourselves.*

More than 2000 years later, current research still supports this philosophy. The Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley has determined that true happiness is “more about overall peace of mind and focus on the greater good” — which means, we possess the power to make our minds and spirits rich with happiness.

In 2012, the United Nations declared March 20th an International Day of Happiness to recognize happiness as important in the lives of ALL people across the world. Seeking to end poverty, reduce inequality and protect our planet, the UN selected sustainable goals that pave the way for well-being and happiness. [Continued, page 2]

Hospitality Ministry Committee Spreads

WOW! Thanks to your generosity, Towson UMC donated a trunk-load of socks and valentines to women and children staying at the House of Ruth in February 2018.



Celebrating Towson UMC Membership



Congratulations to Rachel Livingston (our Youth and Young Adult Ministry Director) who joined Towson UMC as an official member on Sunday, February 18, 2018. Welcome!



End of the Rainbow

[Continued from page 1]

What makes you happy and sustains your well-being? Tell us! During March, visit the bulletin board outside the church's communications office on the top floor. Jot a joyful note and stick it on the board. Take a bookmark to remind yourself that life is GOOD and happiness comes from within... but having an outside reminder (like a colorful bulletin board or bookmark) doesn't hurt once in a while either.

Let's fill that 'pot of gold' at the end of the rainbow —with HAPPINESS & WELL-BEING for all!



PRAY WITH US

<http://towsonprays.blogspot.com>

Upper Room devotionals (in regular and

Next High Spire content deadline: **March 9th** for the April 2018 issue. Send photos and copy to: kayres@towsonumc.org

HIGH SPIRE

501 Hampton Lane : Towson, MD 21286

410.823.6511

www.towsonumc.org

*Business Hours: Mon-Thurs 10:00 AM-3:00 PM
Sunday Worship Services: 8:00 AM and 10:15 AM*

MINISTRY TEAM

Rev. LaTrelle Easterling—*Resident Bishop*

Rev. Dr. Wanda Duckett—*District Superintendent, Baltimore Metropolitan District*

Bob Kimmons & Stephanie Kimmons—*TUMC's Church Lay Leaders*

Rev. Dr. Mark Johnson— *Lead Pastor*
410.823.3640 : leadpastor@towsonumc.org

Rev. Margery Schammel—*Assistant Pastor*
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410.823.3698 : yandya@towsonumc.org

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Bob Ashby— *Custodian*

HAMPTON LANE CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Erin Rigley— *Center Director*
410.825.0008 : cdcdirector@towsonumc.org

A ministry of Towson United Methodist Church, Hampton Lane Child Development Center is a licensed childcare center with approved preschool for ages two (2) through pre-kindergarten.

www.hamptonlanecdc.org

Pastor Mark's Meanderings



Creating A Culture of Invitation

Dear Friends,

John 12: 21-22 tells the story of a couple people who came to Philip, Jesus' disciple, and said, 'Sir, we wish to see Jesus.' Interestingly, the people asking Philip about Jesus were identified in the scripture as Greeks who had come to Jerusalem for the observance of Passover. Perhaps Philip was surprised that "outsiders" would be interested in meeting Jesus. But, he was more interested in bringing people to Christ than worrying about cultural differences so Philip told Jesus about the people.

Are there "outsiders" we can introduce to Jesus? Scholars who study religious identity in the United States have noted an interesting phenomenon. A significant (and increasing) number of people, when asked about their religious beliefs, indicate they are "spiritual, but not religious." I doubt anyone knows precisely what "spiritual, but not religious" means; but I think it describes folks who have a yearning for a deep connection with our infinite, mysterious, gracious God, and are not interested in all the baggage of "organized religion." And we all know what kind of baggage I am talking about. Baggage that makes church folks look, to an outsider, as a bunch of hard-hearted, hypocrites who are more interested in building a clubhouse than being salt and light. In short, maybe those who describe themselves as "spiritual, but not religious" are actually Jesus seekers who aren't too keen on the notion of hanging out with the kind of people they are afraid they might find within the four walls of the church.

Here's the catch: even if folks think they don't want to hear about Jesus, we are no less obligated to share Jesus with them. The question is how we share or witness. Often, we think witnessing (or its dreaded cousin, evangelism) is about having all the answers and arguing people into the Kingdom of God. Knowing why your faith is real is important, but rarely will others find that, by itself, persuasive. Witnessing, and evangelism, is about relationships. First, having a personal life-

changing relationship with Jesus Christ. And second, building deep, authentic relationships with others. When that happens, witnessing to your faith is nothing more than introducing one friend to another. What a blessing you can be.

Not everyone describes themselves as "spiritual, but not religious." There are people who know, or are coming to know, that Jesus is "the way, the truth, and the life"; but, for one reason or another, have not found a worshipping community. They are like the people in John 1 who were seeking Jesus and when they asked where he lived, Jesus answered "Come and see." Are there people you know who might like to follow Jesus but need the invitation to "come, and see?" Perhaps these are folks who are new to your neighborhood, people who have fallen away from church and want to come back, or those who have suffered a loss and are looking for love, grace and a community of support.

Christian artist, Steve Green writes: "People need the Lord. At the end of broken dreams, He's the open door." Our privilege is to help others find the peace, joy, hope, grace and love we have found in a relationship with Jesus. One of the most significant ways to help others begin or grow in their spiritual journey with Jesus is to invite them to church with you. As we invite others to share in worship and to connect with the Towson UMC family, it is as if we are responding to those first Jesus seekers by saying, "Come, and see."

Churches grow in size and vitality as its members embrace a "culture of invitation" in which people are consistently inviting others to join in worship, study, and ministry. These weeks leading up to Easter are a perfect time to begin inviting people to share worship with you. I would invite you to pray about how you might share your heart and your faith with others who are seeking what you have found – Jesus.

See you in worship!

Blessings,

Mark

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

Growing Forward Luncheon

The Growing Forward capital campaign began on October 5, 2014, with Commitment Sunday. People submitted two pledge cards, one for the church's annual operating budget and another for Growing Forward. We had a prayer-based campaign with this message in our publications: "Lord, what do You want to do through me to accomplish Your will in our church?"



Successfully completed Growing Forward projects

- Repair and secure steeple
- Purchase kitchen stove and warming oven
- Repair and re-paint the parking lot
- Painting and cladding of building exterior
- Replace sanctuary windows

The B.R.I.D.G.E. Committee, headed by Jeff Mayhew, organized our February 11th celebration — at the end of the Growing Forward capital campaign. Shirley Derksen recruited approximately 18 volunteers to make soup and desserts. It was also Scout Sunday, and boys from our Troop 102 helped by setting up tables and chairs for 120 people and carrying soups and desserts from entry doors to Fellowship Hall. We had at least nine pots of hot soup around the perimeter of Fellowship Hall, and a long table of delicious desserts down the center of the room. Pastor Mark Johnson outlined some of the Growing Forward facts during the 10:15 a.m. service; then he and Bishop Easterling joined everyone downstairs following their post-service receiving line. We had perfect weather for soup — rain! -- and thus a great crowd and good fellowship downstairs. Thanks to all!



**WOW! \$1,192,881 =
Growing Forward \$ Raised**

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Bishop LaTrelle Easterling's Visit



On February 11th, Bishop Easterling preached at Towson UMC and celebrated the success of our Growing Forward campaign with a shared luncheon with church members and guests. [above] Pictured with members of the Youth Group.

Thank you for your support of the Growing Forward campaign!

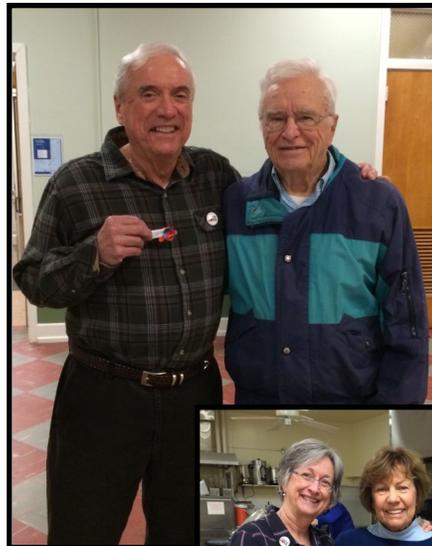
- ⇒ **CHILDREN** for raising funds for the stove and warming oven.
- ⇒ **TRUSTEES** for finding the beautiful windows and overseeing all of the building projects.
- ⇒ **EVERYONE** for meeting your commitments to the Growing Forward campaign.



BWARM Meeting Sparks Colorful Conversations

More than 30 area church leaders gathered at Towson UMC on Saturday, February 17th for a quarterly BWARM update, hosted by TUMC's Reconciling & Accepting Methodists. The theme: *One church that is a place of justice and inclusion for all!*

Pastor Mark Johnson led a lively worship service. "As different as we all are...as connected as we are...could we not dance?" he asked. And, so the group danced!



[left] Fred Crider and Bob Gralley display "Choose Love" pins and rainbow googly-eyed giveaways.



[right] Sue Gralley, Diane Crider and Carol Woodworth serve a deliciously-sweet continental breakfast for the BWARM meeting attendees.



Music News

by Doug Hollida

We've had our share of winter weather so far. But spring is coming. And spring not only brings the glory of Easter—including all its wonderful music—but some other wonderful worship opportunities as well.

For the past few years, we have been blessed each spring with a musical by our children's Carol Choir; and a cantata by our youth choir, the Alleluia Singers.

The children's musical is always a delight and I continue to be blown away by the talent of these young children. Their program — **The Great and Awesome Story** — will be presented at the 10:15 service on March 18th in the Sanctuary.

The youth choir cantata will be offered on April 8th at the 10:15 service in the Sanctuary. This is the Sunday after Easter and will be a great service to keep the joy and excitement of Easter going.

We are so blessed to have the talent and dedication of these groups, and all the folks who work to make our worship times meaningful. See you at these, and other services. Bring a friend!



MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

3/18 The Great and Awesome Story

Children's Musical at 10:15 AM Worship Service

3/25 Palm Sunday

4/1 Easter Sunday

4/7-4/8 Alleluia Singers Lock-In at TUMC

Noon arrival on 4/7 through 11:30 AM on 4/8

4/8 Youth Choir Cantata

Performance at 10:15 AM Worship Service



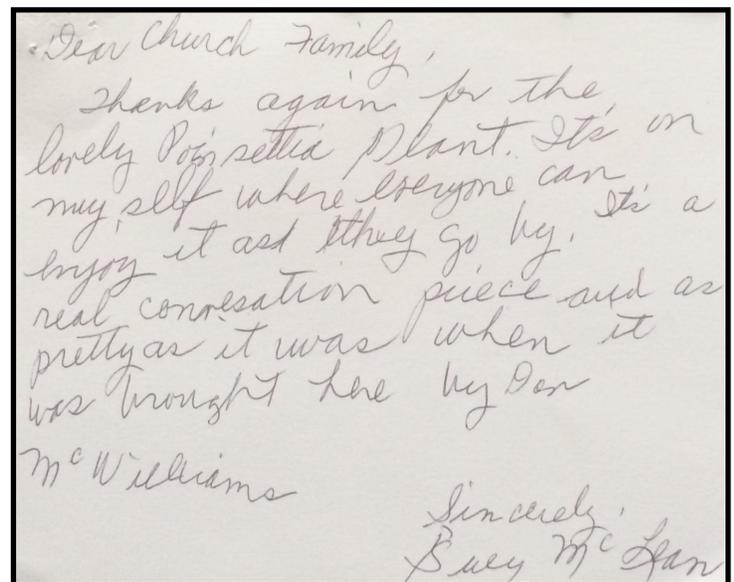
ACTC Volunteer Opportunity

The Assistance Center of Towson Churches (ACTC) opened its doors in 1985 to provide *emergency help*, including food, eviction and utility cutoff prevention, payment for prescriptions, and lunches for the homeless. Currently, with the support of 50 churches and other generous donors, its service area incorporates 21 zip codes in central Baltimore County extending up to the Pennsylvania line.

The center operates with a director, an assistant and a team of 60 trained volunteers. Volunteer applicants are interviewed to determine their specific needs and might greet or serve clients, stock the food pantry and assist with special projects. They could use more volunteers.

They are located at 120 W. Pennsylvania Ave. (between Baltimore and Washington avenues on the alley behind Calvary Baptist Church) in Towson, and are open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.

Contact Linda Lotz at 410.296.4855
or actc316@gmail.com



Towson UMC Trailblazers: Weaving Passion & Prayer into Shawl Ministry

by Maryanne Arthur

In many ancient cultures, fringed garments signified wealth, nobility, rank, and even a type of personal signature, differentiated by color, style and tassel. It's no wonder then that the book of Numbers (15:37-40) in the Old Testament elevates fringes to a higher purpose — a source for spiritual direction.

Again, the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Speak to the children of Israel: Tell them to make tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations...that you may remember and do all My commandments, and be holy for your God."

Through the centuries, these garments have become known as 'prayer shawls', symbolizing shelter, peace and spiritual nourishment. In 2007, hand-crafted prayer shawls made their debut at Towson United Methodist Church.

"At the time, I was fascinated by the origins of prayer and the Jewish custom of using prayer shawls in synagogue," remembered Carol Matlin. "I was participating in my first evening Bible Study class at church; and, while shopping one day, found a unique fabric that fringed easily. I bought every bit of it!"

She cut the fabric into equal panels and had enough to make a shawl



for every member of her Bible Study group, including herself! "Everyone seemed so pleased to have a shawl to signify the conclusion of our time together," said Matlin.

The interest in prayer shawls prompted Carol Matlin and Susan Brown to present a workshop at the church's annual Women's Retreat — teaching women to knit or crochet prayer shawls. Together, with dozens of members, Carol and Susan have woven a tight-knit Prayer Shawl Ministry since 2007.

"In the beginning, during the knitting part of the retreat workshop," explained Susan Brown, "we taught women how to stitch one square, with the intention of piecing all of the squares together to form a shawl. But, so many people wanted to make a

whole shawl that we arranged a follow-up meeting time at church."

And, the group has met regularly ever since.

Nearly 20 Towson UMC Prayer Shawl Ministry members gather in the church parlor three times each month; some members can't attend meetings, but still make and donate shawls. All members infuse passion, prayer and creativity into woven projects that bring comfort and inspiration to more than 1000 recipients annually, including members and friends of Towson UMC as well as patients at University of Maryland St. Joseph's Medical Center and Greater Baltimore Medical Center in northern Baltimore County.

"I marvel at the sustained interest," said Matlin. "And, I am pleased and thankful that our meetings are still so well-attended each month."



Prayer Shawl: continued on page 8

For years, Towson’s Prayer Shawl Ministry has knitted and crocheted a variety of prayer shawls – with and without fringe. No shawls are alike!

In addition, members share ideas, techniques and expertise to create unique handcrafted products, such as wool hats for the Seafarer’s Mission, miniature dolls for Operation Christmas Shoebox, and baby sweaters for Mission Central in support of new mothers with difficult circumstances.

As first-time projects in 2017, the group stitched red, white and blue lap robes for veterans in home hospice at Gilchrist Hospice Care and made tiny red caps to help raise awareness of infant heart health in conjunction with the American Heart Association.



“Somehow we always find something that someone is passionate about!” exclaimed Brown.

And, sometimes, group members stitch a little something extra into their

handiwork — like a knit 3, pearl 3 pattern, representing the trinity. Or a crocheted border completed by a second group member on a shared knitting project.

In a related, but separate, ministry led by Ida Lou Hudler, women produce knitted and crocheted baby caps that are delivered to local hospitals. This vital ministry has existed at Towson UMC for many years (pre-dating the Prayer Shawl Ministry); and volunteers have donated thousands of caps through the years.

The caps, prayer shawls, dolls, sweaters, hats, lap robes and other completed projects are hand-stitched with love and blessed by group members before distribution.

“At the end of each meeting, we place our hands on all the projects and bless them,” explained Matlin. After the meetings, group members make special deliveries.

“When I take the lap robes to Gilchrist in Hunt Valley, I am told that some of the veterans in hospice care perk up. They are thrilled to receive something handmade — and especially in red, white and blue colors!” said group member Judy Hobbs.

Prayer Shawl Ministry meetings are a special time of fellowship and prayer where energy levels are high and blessings for both participants and recipients abound.



Want to join the fun? The group is always looking for new members – it is not limited to church members or skilled knitters and crocheters. Many group participants are church friends.

Rather work from home? Stop by the Yarn Ministry bin to pick up a “Shawl in a Bag” -- complete with supplies and beginner’s instructions.

Need a shawl? Choose a beautifully handcrafted shawl from the basket in the back corner of the church parlor. Be sure to sign the booklet to let the group know they’ve warmed the heart of someone in need.

More information? Contact Carol Matlin at cmatlin1@gmail.com or Susan Brown at sbrown@boyslatinmd.com.

DONATIONS **ACCEPTED**

Donate finished projects AND acrylic yarn, needles, crochet hooks, pattern books, or cash/check (made payable to Towson UMC with “Prayer Shawl” in the memo line) to the Prayer Shawl Ministry. Deliver all items to the Sharing Bins; and, drop money in the church cash box. THANK YOU!



EASTER *PLANTABLE* FLOWER CELEBRATION 2018



**Plant JOY.
Happiness
GROWS!**

Happy Lent 2018! It’s that time of year when the men of Towson UMC have arranged for you to purchase or donate a *plantable* Easter flower — in honor or memory of someone in your life.

Rejoice! I would like to order _____ (# quantity) plants at \$20 each. Check Amount: _____
In honor of _____

In loving memory of _____

Remit this form and check (payable to Towson UMC with E-Flowers on memo line) to the church office by March 25, 2018.

Your Name(s): _____

Choose One: **YES** Send my plants to a shut-in. **OR YES** I will pick up plants after the final Easter service on 4/1/18.

TUMC Youth Scoop

Follow YOUTH GROUP on Facebook at
www.facebook.com/groups/TowsonUMCYouth

Sunday School for Middle/High School Youth 9-10 AM

Middle School: Rm 216
Youth: Grades 6-8

High School: Rm 317
Youth: Grades 9-12

Confirmation 'Class of 2018'

- ◆ Confirmands will meet with their class in Fellowship Hall on Sundays until confirmation day.

Questions? Contact: Rev. Margery Schammel at
410.823.2485 or Mschammel@towsonumc.org.

YOUTH GROUP FELLOWSHIP

- 3/4** RESCHEDULED: **Snow tubing at Avalanche Xpress, York, PA**
12-4PM. We eat lunch at church and leave immediately afterward. Cost \$33/person
- 3/11** Spring Forward One Hour!
Painting Hungry Bowls, 11:30-1:30PM @ TUMC
- 3/18** **Dinner and Discussion, 6:00-7:30PM @ TUMC**
- 3/25** **Game Night, 6:00-7:30PM @ TUMC**
- 4/1** Happy Easter!!! NO Youth Group

Need more info? Contact Rachel Livingston at
410.823.3698 or yandya@towsonumc.org.

2018 ROCK WRAP-UP

- by Emily Cummings

A group of 17 of our fellow youth group members traveled down to Ocean City, Maryland for 2018 ROCK, a Baltimore-Washington Conference Methodist retreat from January 26-28.

This past year was my fifth time going to ROCK. The ROCK weekend is a time when our youth group gets to join together with our conference to worship and praise God, while also getting to enjoy Ocean City. This is a weekend that I look forward to every year knowing that I get to escape the stresses that come from high school and life, and, instead, dig deeper into my faith with some of my closest friends.

This year, we had the privilege of getting to hear Bishop LaTrelle Easterling preach. She repeated an acronym throughout the whole weekend — STAND — meaning Stay True And Never Deviate. Her purpose for this was to communicate to her teenage audience to not get distracted by all the people and things that are not on the path that God has for you.

We spent our free time playing mini golf, going to the boardwalk, doing homework, relaxing, and/or going in the frigid ocean. A fun time was had by all; and we are looking forward to next year!



The youth had a fantastic time at ROCK filled with fun activities, music and worship! Thank you for all your support and prayers. And thank you so much to our chaperones for committing their time and driving our youth safely down to Ocean City! You made our experience memorable!



Adult Learning



Join us for Sunday Morning Adult Classes. Check out this lineup of possibilities. Everyone is welcome!

ALL CLASSES ARE ON SUNDAYS 9-10 AM

Christians Under Construction : Room 111
Topical and Bible studies

Young Parents' Class : Room 114
Support in Christian parenting

Tower Class : Room 214
Current topics from a Christian perspective

Women's Class : Room 212
Learning and support to live as Christian women

Adult Bible Study : Room 218
Studies of various books of the Bible

Men's Class : Room 310
Learning and support to live as Christian men

Lenten Study Offered

We will be studying Made for a Miracle by Mike Slaughter during Lent this year. Check with your Sunday school teacher to see if your class is using this book or join us on Thursdays, Feb. 15th – March 22nd from Noon - 1:00PM in Room 317. Bring your lunch, if you want, and share moving "from your Ordinary to God's Extraordinary".



Please contact Margery Schammel if you have any questions and to sign up for the class. 410.823.2485 or mschammel@towsonumc.org.

Infants, Toddlers and KIDZ

Prefer childcare during the worship service? We have your family covered from infancy through age 11!

Safe-sanctuary, approved adults are available on Sunday mornings to spend quality time with your little ones in the Cribbery downstairs and to host a variety of fun, social and educational activities in church classrooms.

Childcare in the Cribbery* : Room 122
Children: Infants-Age 3
Open: 8:45 AM through the 10:15 AM service

Pray and Play* : Room 314
Children: Ages 4-6
Open: 10:15 through the entire worship service for learning, fun and song.

Kids in the Disciple Zone (KIDZ)* : Room 310
Children: Ages 7-11
Open: Part-way through 10:15 service. Children begin in the worship service and leave for learning and fun when dismissed.

Kids' Sunday School



Children of all ages are invited to join a Sunday School class to learn and grow in faith with one another. Classes are taught by TUMC safe-sanctuary, approved adults.

***ALL CLASSES ARE ON SUNDAYS 9-10 AM ***

Preschool* : Room 311
Children: Age 3-Kindergarten

Elementary* : Room 312
Children: Grades 1-5

*Note: Enrollment forms are REQUIRED for participation. Find forms online at www.towsonumc.org. Click on "Ministries" then "Towson Youth." Return completed forms to church!

Lenten Discipline of Fasting

This Lent, our Resident Bishop, the Rev. LaTrelle Easterling, invites the people of the Baltimore Washington Conference of the United Methodist Church to fast one day a week.

For those new to fasting, it is important to note that this spiritual discipline is always accompanied by prayer. It is an exercise of penitence and sacrifice that builds self-control and demonstrates our reliance on God.

Those who are interested in trying this spiritual exercise are invited to pick up one of the green bookmarks on the table in the lobby.

Please talk to Pastor Mark or Pastor Margery if you have any questions.

Fasting is not just a physical discipline; it can be a spiritual feast.

— Jentzen Franklin



Daylight Savings Time Begins March 11, 2018

Remember the old adage to “Spring Ahead” by setting your clocks ahead one hour before going to bed on Saturday, March 10.

Lent & Holy Week Worship

The worship team, music department and staff of Towson UMC are preparing a number of worship opportunities during Holy Week. Our hope is that you will grow deeper in faith as you, again, are drawn into the life-changing story of Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection. These special services are excellent opportunities to invite guests.

Palm Sunday

March 25 at 7:00 PM (Sanctuary)

Biblical Storytelling Concert (Mark 14-15)

Maundy Thursday

March 29 at noon (Chapel) and 7:00PM (Fellowship Hall)

Remembering Jesus’ Last Supper

Good Friday

March 30th at noon (Chapel) and 7:00 PM (Sanctuary)

Remembering Jesus’ Grace

Easter Sunday

April 1 at 8:00 AM (Chapel); 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM (Sanctuary)

Resurrection Celebration

Join us in Fellowship Hall on Easter morning, beginning at 9 AM, for coffee and goodies.

Lenten Sermon Series: “Ready, Set, Go!”

Lent is a seven-week period beginning with Ash Wednesday (February 14) and culminating on Easter Sunday (April 1). Traditionally, Lent is a period of repentance, contemplation, prayer, and spiritual preparation for the celebration of Christ’s resurrection.

This year, our Lenten worship theme will be “Ready, Set, Go!” and we will consider how our spiritual preparations are like the training and preparation one may undertake before participating in a race or other athletic endeavor. Why not invite your unchurched friends, family and co-workers to worship with you and consider these important spiritual concepts?

February 18	First Sunday in Lent	“Commitment”
February 25	Second Sunday in Lent	“Training”
March 4	Third Sunday in Lent	“Technique”
March 11	Fourth Sunday in Lent	“Persistence”
March 18	Fifth Sunday in Lent	Children’s Musical
March 25	Palm Sunday	“Visualizing The Finish Line”
April 1	Easter	“The Race Begins”

New Time for Our Early Worship Service

Our first worship service time now begins at **8:00 AM**. 15 minutes earlier. Nothing else has changed. It is a 45(ish)-minute service with communion every Sunday. A great way to start Sunday early; grab a cup of coffee in the parlor; and get to your favorite Sunday School class by 9:00 AM. Join us!

Membership Exploration Class: Sundays February 18 – March 11, 2018

Persons interested in joining Towson UMC are invited to attend a series of Membership Exploration classes. Classes will focus on our membership vows and how we live these vows out through Towson UMC as well as our lives. Please join your Pastors on Sunday mornings, Feb. 18-March 4, at 9:00 AM in the Hoffman Room. Topics will include:

February 18	Prayers and Presence	March 4	Witness and Church Overview
February 25	Gifts and Service	March 11	Catch up class and join the Church

Pray With Us

In the Book of James we read “. . . the prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective” (James 5: 16 NRSV). As we consider our own lives and those dear to us, the victims of natural disasters, and the victims of violence at home and across the world can we deny how much we need to pray?

Whenever Towson UMC is open, the Chapel is available for prayer. We are especially encouraging people to stop by on Tuesdays for prayer and to invite a staff member to pray with you.



Men's Prayer Breakfast

We have recently begun a Men's Prayer Breakfast on Thursday mornings at 7:00 AM at the Nautilus Diner (2047 York Rd, Timonium, MD 21093). In addition to prayer, we study one or two of the scripture texts that will be addressed in worship the following Sunday. Everyone orders off the menu.

You're invited to join us for fellowship, study and prayer. Feel free to bring a guest.

Coffee and Conversation

“Coffee and Conversation” is an informal opportunity for people to meet with Pastor Mark and other members of the Towson UMC family. The time and location has moved around so more people can participate. During March, you are

invited to meet with Pastor Mark on **Tuesday afternoons at 3 PM at the Nautilus Diner.**

Address: 2047 York Rd, Timonium, MD 21093. Come on by!

March Mission: Heifer International *Moment on a Mission/Communion Offering*



Heifer International's mission is to work with communities to end world hunger and poverty and to care for the Earth. THIS IS NO ORDINARY GIFT.

Giving an animal is like giving someone a small business, providing wool, milk, eggs and more. Animal donations can provide families a hand up, increasing access to medicine, school, food, and a sustainable livelihood. When considering your donation in March, here is a helpful list so you know what your gift may buy:

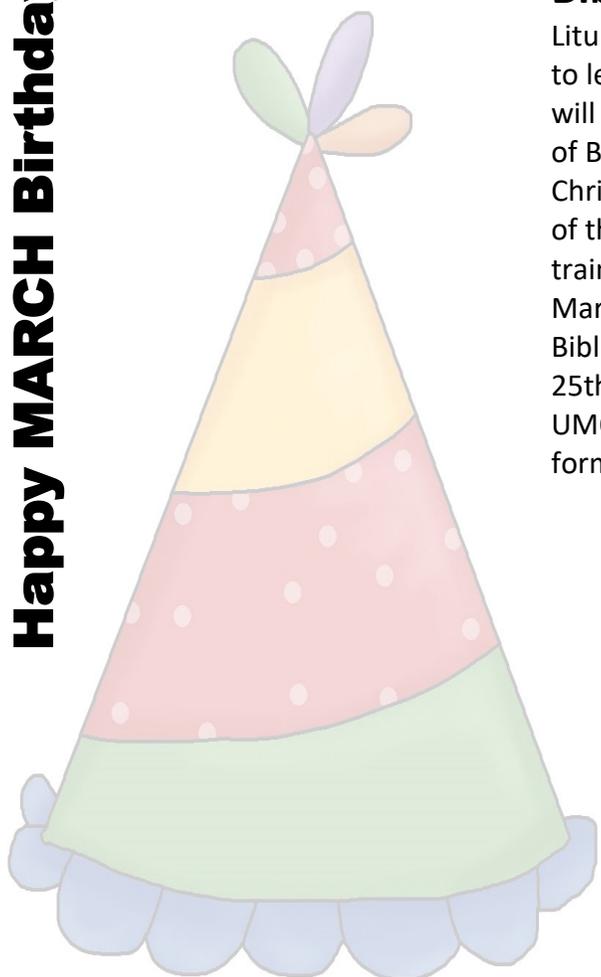
Goat, full price is \$120, a share is \$10
Heifer (a cow), full price is \$500, a share is \$50
Water Buffalo, full price is \$250, a share is \$25

Alpaca, full price is \$150, a share is \$20
Sheep, full price is \$120, a share is \$10
Pig, full price is \$120, a share is \$10
Rabbits or a Flock of Hope, full price is \$60
Flock of Ducks, Chicks, or Geese are \$20

You may give the first Sunday of March in the offering plates as you go up to communion, mail in your donation to the church's business office, or see someone from the Mission Work Area in the main lobby Sundays during March — look for the table with the little animals! Just make sure your check is made payable to “Towson UMC” and that you note it is for “Heifer.” *Thank you!*

Happy MARCH Birthday to YOU.....

NOTE: Personal information of church members was removed for web posting.



Towson UMC Planning Meeting 3/3/18

Everyone is invited and encouraged to attend a church Planning Meeting, hosted by the Church Council on **Saturday, March 3rd from 8:45 AM-1:00 PM in Fellowship Hall.**

RSVP preferred: Alicia Corson at apcorson@gmail.com

Field Trip To Christ Deaf UM Church

Attend worship with us at Christ Deaf United Methodist Church on **Sunday, March 4th.** We will leave from Towson UMC's parking lot after the 10:15 AM worship service (about 11:30 AM) and carpool to Christ Deaf UMC to attend their Noon worship service. We'll stay for lunch and return to Towson UMC about 2:30 PM. Please let Pastor Mark know if you will to participate and/or drive.

Biblical Storytelling Class

Liturgists, Lay Servants, storytellers and everyone else are invited to learn how to tell Bible stories. Pastors Mark and Sandi Johnson will teach a three-session class using the methods of the Network of Biblical Storytellers. This class is sponsored by the School of Christian Missions through the Baltimore Washington Conference of the United Methodist Church and qualifies for Lay Servant training. Classes will be on Sunday afternoons (3:00 – 5:00 PM) March 4th, March 11th and March, 18th and will culminate with a Biblical Storytelling concert at 7:00 PM on the evening of March 25th. Classes will take place in the Fellowship Hall of Towson UMC. The registration cost is \$35 and you may get a registration form from Pastor Mark or register online at www.bwcmc.org.

Thank you for the magnificent poinsettias that arrived at Christmas to help us celebrate the birth of Jesus. They brighten our home, fill our hearts with joy, and remind us of the star shining brightly years ago. The flowers are as beautiful [today] as when they arrived. We are grateful for your thoughtfulness and feel God's love through your generosity. In 2018, may we all help spread love as we move forward together!

*Sincerely,
Gil and Katherine Smith*

Please Remember Towson UMC in Your Will

When you leave a bequest to Towson UMC in your will or estate plan you help to root your hopes and dreams in the bedrock of Christ's Gospel. You also make a good steward's return to God of God's blessings in your life and leave an eternal message of what is important to you. It is easy to include your church in your estate planning by having your advisor include this language in your will or beneficiary designation: "I give, devise and bequeath _____ (insert dollar amount or percent amount) of my estate to Towson United Methodist Church, 501 Hampton Lane, Towson, MD 21286". Questions? Call Pastor Mark and he can connect you with the Planned Giving Committee.



Save the Date: March 24 Community Blood Drive

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Our next Towson UMC Community Blood Drive will be held on **Saturday, March 24th between 6:30 AM and 12:30 PM on the second floor of church.** Anyone older than 16 years of age *may* be eligible to donate.

Check the church website for more information. For medical or travel eligibility questions, call the American Red Cross at 866.236.3276.

Remember... you must wait 56 days between donations of whole blood. If you are a regular donor, then you had until January 27th to donate and still be eligible to donate on March 24th.

For more information, or to schedule your life-saving donation, call the church office at 410.823.6511 or email TUMCBloodDrive@gmail.com.

2017 Communion Donations

The **Mission Work Area** wishes to thank everyone in our congregation for their continued support of **communion/mission activities**. Your monetary donations at communion and gifts throughout the year definitely make a difference to the less fortunate of our community and beyond. Included here is a **summary of your communion donations in 2017:**

ACTC	\$1,184
Heifer International	\$958
Araminta	\$993
One Great Hour of Sharing	\$1,325
UMCOR (Disaster Relief)	\$12,267
Earl's Place	\$1,348
CDC Scholarships	\$1,452
Food for Thought	\$1,622
Church World Service Blankets	\$1,782
PATHWAYS	\$1,058
Emergency Food Pantry	\$7,633

Change Lives — Join PATHWAYS' Board

The Board of PATHWAYS is reaching out to the TUMC congregation in search of new leaders for our program. Our current leaders, Sharon Penhallegon, Mary Wynne Eisenberg, and Susan Killian, have led the successful program for the past three school years. They are ready to step down, to assist, and to pass the leadership on to fresh new people by August of 2018.

We have developed clear job descriptions. These can be changed easily by a new leadership team, especially if our new team has the advantage of observing the current program during this spring session.

New leaders will start with finances in good shape, with material support, with excited tutors and students ready to return, and with support from the past leaders.

Please reach out to your contacts...let them know about our program...ask them to think about the people they know who might be ready to be a part of this leadership. You never know what people are thinking about doing with their time!

Please PRAY that...

—we keep this 12-year old mission going. Students and their families appreciate our love and support.

—we will find the right people to lead PATHWAYS in the fall of 2018

—God makes it clear to us how we are to proceed

Current leaders would be glad to talk to anyone who wants more information. Contact info is as follows...

Sharon Penhallegon at 410.665.2175 : Mary Wynne Eisenberg at 410.908.6216 : Susan Killian at 410.238.4766

Food Pantry OPEN : Saturday, March 24th from 9:00-10:30 AM



We are always collecting much-needed items to keep our food pantry shelves full. When you bring your donations to church on Sundays, or during office hours, please leave them in the Sharing Bins for future Food Pantry guests.

*** Want to help? Contact Dwight Kines at 410.828.0792.

Editor's Note: Our apologies for incorrectly listing the February Food Pantry date as 2/17 instead of 2/24 last month. Sorry for any confusion. Please consult our www.towsonUMC.org website for the annual food pantry listing.



Our annual Easter Egg Hunt will be Saturday, March 24th, 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM. Bring a basket for your eggs, and join us for crafts, games, a story, and the egg hunt! Attend, volunteer, donate and bring a friend! Your donations will be much appreciated! Donations needed: individually wrapped candy small enough to fit in plastic eggs. Please drop off in the Sharing Bins with a note marked "Egg Hunt." Thank you!!



Vacation Bible Camp

Rolling River Rampa : July 23-27, 2018

Join us for fun, learning, games, and a rampage of fun at Vacation Bible Camp! The Rolling River Rampa will be July 23-27th, 9- noon.

"When you pass through the waters, I will be with you." -Isaiah 43:2

It takes many people to make VBC a fun and successful experience for our children. If you are interested in helping, please contact Margery Schammel at 410.823.2485 or mschammel@towsonumc.org.



Thank you for your generosity. Your pledges and contributions are a critical part of how we can make a difference in our church, community and world. For a quick link to donate, scan this QRC code with your phone.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday Morning Worship
8:00 AM and 10:15 AM

- ALL March Communion Offering: Heifer Int'l
- ALL Tues Meet the Pastor @ Nautilus Diner, 3PM
- Mar 3 TUMC Planning Conference, 8:45AM
- Mar 4 Field Trip to Christ Deaf UMC, 11:30AM
- Mar 4 Youth Group: Lunch & Snowtubing, noon @ Avalanche Express, PA
- Mar 10 Spring Clocks Forward ONE hour
- Mar 11 Youth Group, Paint Hungry Bowls, 11:30AM @ TUMC
- Mar 18 Children's Musical: "The Great and Awesome Story"
- Mar 18 Youth Group: Dinner and Discussion, 6PM @ TUMC
- Mar 24 Blood Drive
- Mar 24 Easter Egg Hunt, 11AM
- Mar 25 Palm Sunday; Holy Week begins
Youth Group: Game Night, 6 PM
Biblical Storytelling Concert, 7PM
- Mar 29 Maundy Thursday, noon and 7PM
Worship Services
- Mar 30 Good Friday, noon and 7PM
Worship Services
- Apr 1 Easter Sundays, 8AM, 9AM and 11AM
Worship Services + 9AM fellowship
- Apr 7-8 Alleluia Singers LOCK IN
- Apr 8 Youth Cantata @ 10:15AM
- May 13 Mother's Day
- May 20 Pentecost
Confirmation Sunday
- Jun 3 Family Celebration Day
- Jun 17 Father's Day
- July 23-27 Vacation Bible Camp





TOWSON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
501 Hampton Lane : Towson, Maryland 21286

410.823.6511 : www.towsonumc.org
Business Hours: Mon-Thurs 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM

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SUNDAY MORNINGS AT TOWSON UMC



8:00 AM	Traditional Service in the Chapel Communion every Sunday with piano or organ accompaniment.
8:45-10:00 AM	Coffee Hour in the Parlor
9:00-10:00 AM	Educational Classes & Programs
10:15 AM	Worship Service in the Sanctuary Communion on the first Sunday of each month — open to all — with a richly varied service that blends vocal and handbell choirs, praise band, traditional and contemporary song, old-fashioned hymns, and glorious 3,000-pipe organ music.

Yes! Gluten-free bread is available.

The blessing of the Lord, it maketh RICH

Proverbs 22



Hampton Lane
CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER
of Towson United Methodist Church

Licensed childcare and pre-school
ages 2 through pre-kindergarten



Rejoice!

It's the Lenten Season and Easter is coming! Join us for worship (details p.7) and fellowship. Bring a friend!

March 2018
TUMC

410.825.0008 www.hamptonlanecdc.org