



Winter
2019-20

Newsletter for Members & Friends of Towson United Methodist Church

Time to Begin **ANEW**

It's almost 2020! A new year. A new decade. Exciting times!

Here at Towson UMC, we are ringing in the year with some exciting ideas of our own for worship, communications, edu-

cation and fellowship. And, we are thrilled to announce our brand-new, "mobile-friendly" church website at its new home — **www.towsonchurch.org** Can you believe it? After many, many months of planning, writing, editing, and designing, our new website is finally LIVE! Notice how we didn't refer to it as "completed"?

We consider this site a "work in progress" and are dedicating time for edits and enhancements each week. For a few months, our current web address will run simultaneously. Eventually, we will re-route traffic to the new site and embrace our new logo and branding — which is terrifying and thrilling! We are proud to achieve this BIG step toward extending our church's reach into the community and creating opportunities that nurture faith formation and self-expression as we know, grow, and show love for God and others.

**And now we welcome the new year.
Full of things that have never been.**
— Rainer Maria Rilke



Ever wonder what's your story in God's story?! Think about it. How is God moving in your life?

Where have you experienced the peace of Christ? When has the Holy Spirit filled you? Are those coincidences or "God-cidences"?

You are invited to remember those amazing times in your life that you have experienced God's grace through a friendship, an experience, or even a seemingly-random event — and write about it.

Our worship theme during Lent will be "Your Story In God's Story" and we are looking forward to creating a devotional written by the people of our congregation.

More information will be forthcoming about format, deadlines and so on. For now, please pray — and start jotting notes.

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Follow Your Heart with Holiday Giving



Don't Want to Buy STUFF this Season? Give Mission-Minded Gifts Instead.

Watch our church Facebook page for Giving Tuesday stories that give testament to our lives as loving disciples of Jesus Christ. And, consider making a donation to the Towson UMC Mission Work Area (MWA) this season - in honor or memory of a friend, family member, co-worker, healthcare provider or other significant person in your life. MWA projects are varied just like your loved ones. Choose a specific project that speaks to your heart or donate to the general 2020 Mission fund. We'll send you a certificate to keep or give to the recipient. Of course, you can also do this anytime of year by contacting our Mission team! But, the gesture is particularly sweet for holidays and special events. Contact Vicki Coombs at vickicoombs@hotmail.com or Gene Bandy at eugene.bandy@gmail.com to follow your heart this giving season.

NEW! www.towsonchurch.org



Submit Content and Ideas for the 2019 Impact Report

What's inspired you this past year at your church home? Share your group, individual, or committee news for publication in our upcoming *2019 Impact Report*, an annual compilation

highlighting the good work and financial stability of our church's missions and ministries.

Send ideas to Maryanne Arthur by **January 17, 2020** at communications@towsonumc.org or 410.823.3689

Inclement Weather Policy

Monday-Friday

- ★ If Baltimore County Schools are closed, then there are NO church meetings or activities.
- ★ If Baltimore County Schools open late or close early, then church meetings and activities *may* be canceled; check with your group's facilitator.



Sundays

Check the church's Facebook page for the most current information. Most of all, use your best judgment. Be safe!

Pssst! Here's a sneak peek at our new logo.



Next High Spire content deadline: Jan 31, 2020
for the SPRING 2020 issue.

Send photos, story ideas, and written copy to:
communications@towsonumc.org



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—*Towson UMC's Church Lay Leaders*

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

Rev. Margery Schammel—*Assistant Pastor*
410.823.2485 : mschammel@towsonumc.org

Rev. Doug Hollida— *Minister of Music*
410.823.6519 : musicdirector@towsonumc.org

Rachel Livingston— *Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries*
410.823.3698 : yandya@towsonumc.org

Kim Ayres— *Business and Office Manager*
410.823.3693 : kayres@towsonumc.org

Maryanne Arthur*— *Marketing & Communications Director* : communications@towsonumc.org

Bob Ashby*— *Custodian* : 410.823.6511
* part-time team member

HAMPTON LANE CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Erin Rigley— *Center Director*
410.825.0008 : cdcdirector@towsonumc.org
A ministry of Towson United Methodist Church, Hampton Lane CDC is a licensed childcare center with approved preschool for ages two (2) through pre-kindergarten. www.hamptonlanecdc.org



Refresh & Reboot Gets Women Unstuck

by Liz Neal, Chair *Refresh & Reboot*

On Saturday, November 2, 2019, Towson United Methodist Church hosted the second *Refresh and Reboot* event for 64 women of the church and community. The program, “Get Unstuck and Get Into the Flow”, was led by Rev. Ari-
anne Rice, pastor and Certified Daring Way facilitator. Participants developed an understanding of how to recognize behaviors that do not align with their values and integrate practices in their daily routine to transform the way they live, love and lead. Participants shared many positive comments to include:

- ◆ *“It was a wonderful morning in every way. Thank you to the committee for a fantastic and meaningful morning.”*
- ◆ *“What a wonderful morning!!! Thank you very much to your team for putting together an amazing time....I really needed this morning and it just made my day...my year!”*
- ◆ *“Thank you for a wonderful day. I was there to support myself all the way!”*
- ◆ *“Excellent – well planned, nice treats, comfort food, decorations, speaker, and kept on schedule...”*
- ◆ *“Loved the skit as an opening...humor always gets things going. Great content.”*



Thanks!

Many thanks to the *Refresh and Reboot* committee members who planned this successful event: Rev. Margery Schammel, Debby Ross, Stephanie Kimmons, Sue Todhunter, Carol Woodworth, Susan Killian and Maryanne Arthur.



More Thanks!

Special thanks to Maria Springer at Maja’s Kitchen (for the delicious homemade truffles); Kim Ayres and Bob Ashby (for finance and setup respectively); Cindy Frank and Carol Edel (for Friday kitchen preparations and setup); Deb Maciolek and Susan Brown (for Saturday cleanup).



Mark's Meanderings...

Dear Friends,

Contemporary hymnist, Brian Wren, begins his book *Praying Twice*, with words widely attributed to St. Augustine of Hippo, "Whoever sings [to God, in worship] prays twice." I certainly feel the truth of that statement and I bet many of you reading this do, also. While we may not be able to logically describe how either prayer or singing "works" emotionally, physically or spiritually, we can and do know something significant is happening when our church family gathers in song.

And we are approaching a holiday season that immediately brings beloved hymns to mind. We have recently celebrated Thanksgiving and sung "We Gather Together" and "Great Is Thy Faithfulness." As you read this in early December, we have begun our Advent celebration, singing "Come, O Come, Emmanuel". In fact our worship theme for this entire season is based on the hymn "Joy To The World." Soon, we will celebrate Christmas with "Come, All Ye Faithful", "Away In A Manger" and "Silent Night", to name a few. Before you know it we will begin the New Year with hymns like "O God Our Help In Ages Past."

Besides being joy-filled and spiritually fulfilling, singing with one's church family does at least a couple more things. For one thing, singing together builds community and strengthens our fellowship. As we sing, we learn that together we sound better than does any of us individually. As we sing, we drop the barriers separating ourselves from others, re-connecting as the body of Christ.

Second, singing builds spiritual resilience because it rehearses our response to difficulty. When we have

made tremendous mistakes, we can make things right and carry on because we know about God's

"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me." We can experience loneliness but know we are never alone because "He walks with me and he talks with me and he tells me I am his own." We can even face uncertainty and death "Because He lives, I can face tomorrow."

Finally, congregational singing is a foretaste of our eternity. When we sing together -- our voices blending and the harmony angelic -- we are carried beyond our immediate cares and concerns and for a time we experience a bit of what our eternity will be like -- focused on God, surrounded by love.

What does singing with your church family mean to you? How has it blessed you? What hymns have added depth to your faith? Are you passing those insights on to your family and friends?

My hope, and blessing, for you and yours is that you will join your church family at Towson UMC this and every Sunday that we may together share the joy of "praying twice" in worship.

Blessings,



Rev. Mark Johnson



**Singing is a foretaste
of our eternity...
focused on God,
surrounded by love.**
—Rev. Dr. Mark Johnson

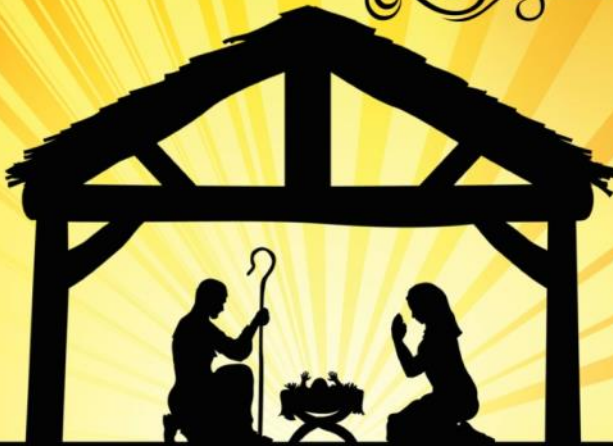


***Preacher, that sermon got me
to think' . . ."***

Have you ever wished you had the opportunity to chat with the Pastor after worship? Maybe the sermon reminded you of something. Maybe you wanted a bit more information. Maybe the anthem, hymns, or prayers moved you deeply. If so, after the 10:15 AM worship celebration, grab a cup of coffee in the Parlor and then head to room 214 to join Pastor Mark (and maybe some other staff members) for conversation. Don't worry about being late, Pastor Mark will be shaking hands for another 15 minutes or so after worship. You will have plenty of time to get your coffee and greet your Church family. We are calling this time "Etc." and you are invited. This is not a committee meeting -- just an opportunity to share how the Spirit moved you during worship and chat a bit. See you there.

Sunday, December 8, 2019
 10:15 AM All-Music Worship
 Towson United Methodist Church

© Come, Let Us Adore Him
A Festival of Carols



Special Holiday Performance of the Tower Chimes, Joy Singers, Carol Choir,
 Alleluia Singers and Chancel Choir—with Doug Hollida, Director

We're Taking a Refreshing Break!

- ◆ K.I.D.Z. is cancelled 12/8 so everyone can attend the All-Music Service at 10:15 AM.
- ◆ ALL classes and choirs are cancelled 12/22 & 12/29. Also, no choir on 12/18.
- ◆ Sunday School, Pray & Play and K.I.D.Z. are cancelled on 12/29. There will be fun, quiet activities in the Parlor for little ones who need to leave worship. Parents can hear the service as little ones play.
- ◆ Cribbery is never closed!
- ◆ The church office is closed: 12/25, 12/26, 12/27 and 1/1.



Upcoming Sermon Series



Season of Advent "Joy To The World"

- Dec. 1 "Prepare"
- Dec. 8 "Rejoice" in a Festival of Carols
- Dec. 15 "Blessings"
- Dec. 22 "Wonder"
- Dec. 22 "Fear Not" Longest Night service
- Dec. 24 "This Will Be A Sign For You" Christmas

Season of Christmas

- Dec. 29 Worship Service of Lesson and Carols (Ugly Sweater/Tie contest)
- Jan. 5 "Emmanuel: God With Us"

Season of Epiphany "Revive Us Again"

- Jan. 12 "Beloved Community: From Fellowship to Hospitality"
- Jan. 19 "Soul-filled Worship: From Event To Lifestyle"
- Jan. 26 "Spirited Commitment: From Membership To Discipleship"
- Feb. 2 "Christ-like Ministry: From 'Serve Us' To Service"
- Feb. 9 "Kingdom Stewardship: From Survival To Generosity"
- Feb. 16 "Church-life: From Volunteer To Lay Minister"
- Feb. 23 "Soul-deep Prayer: From Begging To Breathing"



“Who Are We?” Classes

Exciting NEW study opportunity:

‘Who Are We?’ All-Conference Study

Along with many other United Methodist congregations, we have questions about who we are as followers of Christ and as United Methodists. We will explore answers to these questions for 18 weeks, throughout this coming winter and spring. The study consists of a video and discussion lasting about one (1) hour and will be offered at three (3) separate times so you can find a time that fits your schedule.

The study will be offered twice on Sundays, 9:00-10:00 AM and 6:00-7:00 PM, and once during the week on Wednesdays, Noon-1:00 PM. **We begin our adventure in discovery on Sunday, Jan. 5 and Wednesday, Jan. 8.**

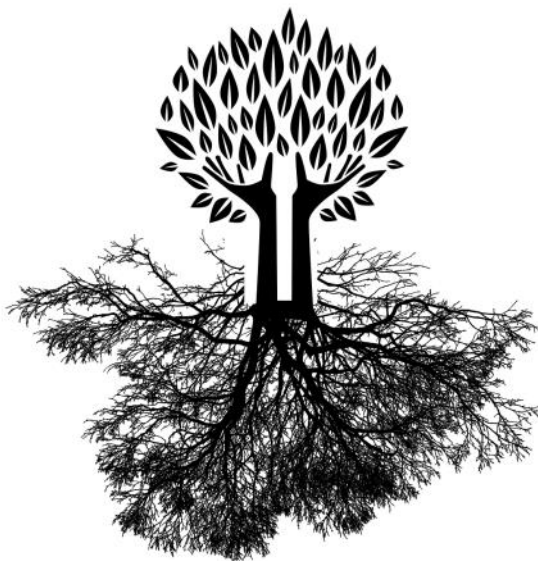
You may choose which class is most convenient for you! And, if you cannot attend your designated time one week, you may drop in to any of the other two classes. We will follow the same video/discussion format for all three classes; and stay on track each week. Here are the options:

- ⇒ **Sunday mornings at 9:00 AM** during Sunday School hour with Rev Mark Johnson
- ⇒ **Wednesday afternoons at noon** during lunchtime (bring your lunch!) with Rev Fred Crider
- ⇒ **Sunday nights at 6:00 PM** during Youth Group hour with Rev. Margery Schammel



TWO EASY WAYS TO REGISTER

1. Login to www.signupgenius.com/findasignup and type mschammel@towsonumc.org in the search box. Select Pastor Margery’s Sign Up. Choose your preferred day and time by entering all the essential information.
2. Contact Pastor Margery at 410.823.2485 or mschammel@towsonumc.org to choose your preferred day/time.



Set Deep Roots

When you leave a bequest to your church, you invest in its future. And you set deep roots for rising generations to grow in Jesus’ eternal love.

To make a gift to Towson UMC, simply include the following statement (with the amounts specified) in your will: “ I give \$ ____ (or ____%) of my disposable estate to Towson United Methodist Church.”

The future depends on it.

410.823.6511

Be a Church Ride-Share Buddy

Our Visitation Ministry is seeking drivers for Sunday mornings to transport some church members to/from church each week. Sign up for one way, one week or both ways, every week. ANY amount of time is valuable for our church friends who need a driving buddy! Contact Diane Crider dfcrider@comcast.net.





TOWSON
United Methodist
CHURCH

410.823.6511
501 Hampton Lane
Towson, MD 21286
www.towsonumc.org

*Peace
by Piece*

Women's Retreat 2020
February 28 – March 1, 2020
Skycroft Conference Center
www.towsonumc.org

Immerse yourself in nature and spiritual rejuvenation at this annual weekend retreat getaway for women of all ages. Enjoy Western Maryland's breathtaking surroundings while you quiet your body and soul, reflect and connect with God, and carry intentional peace into your daily life.

DELUXE Weekend Package at Skycroft Conference Center in Middletown, MD includes:

- workshops
- prayer and reflection
- creative activities
- meals and lodging
- fun and fellowship

Visit www.towsonumc.org for registration information.

Early Bird Special: \$215/person by 12/15/19
Registration Fee: \$230/person by 1/19/20
First-Year Attendee: \$200/person by 1/19/20

SAMPLE FORM



*Peace
by Piece*

Women's Retreat 2020 Registration

Hosted by Towson United Methodist Church
at Skycroft Conference Center in Middletown, MD
www.towsonumc.org : 410.823.6511

Feb 28-March 1, 2020

Name _____
Address _____
Email _____
Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

- Volunteer I would like to help the Design Team at this year's retreat.
- Transport I need a ride to/from the retreat. I can provide a ride.
- Scholarship I would like to request help from the scholarship fund.
- Donate I would like to donate money for the scholarship fund.

Payment Methods

Cash or Check, payable to Towson UMC with "Women's Retreat" memo

Online via website (www.towsonumc.org) includes credit card and electronic fund transfer

Amount PAID

_____ \$215 early-bird attendee pay cash/check by 12/15/19 _____ \$230 Eventbrite pay by 1/19/20

_____ \$230 attendee pay cash/check 12/15/19-1/19/20

_____ \$200 first-time attendee special pay cash/check by 1/19/20

_____ Donation (indicate amount \$_____)

Mail registration form and checks:
Towson UMC
501 Hampton Lane
Towson, MD 21286

Emergency Contact Information

Emergency Contact Name _____

Phone _____ Relationship _____

My Allergies _____

My Medical Conditions _____

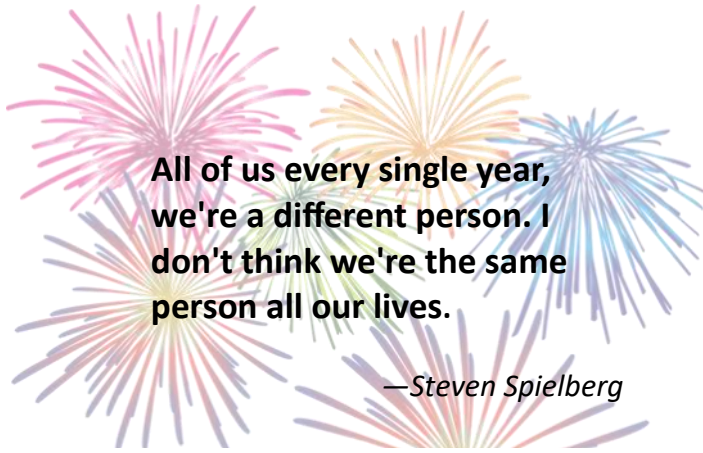
Three easy ways to register!

1. Pick up paper registration forms in the church lobby. Pay by check or cash. Send form and payment to church.
2. Log into the church website and print a paper registration form. Pay by check or cash. Send form and payment to church
3. Pay by credit card on Eventbrite and complete a paper registration form. Send form to church.

Mail all retreat info to: Towson UMC
501 Hampton Lane, Towson, MD 21286

**May Light always surround you;
Hope kindle and rebound you.
May your Hurts turn to Healing;
Your Heart embrace Feeling.
May Wounds become Wisdom;
Every Kindness a Prism.
May Laughter infect you;
Your Passion resurrect you.
May Goodness inspire
your Deepest Desires.
Through all that you Reach For,
May your arms Never Tire.**

— D. Simone



**All of us every single year,
we're a different person. I
don't think we're the same
person all our lives.**

—Steven Spielberg

Coffee & Conversation

You are invited to join Pastor Mark for a cup of coffee (or tea) and a chat about whatever is on your mind. You can find him:

- **Wednesdays 9:00 AM**
Baltimore Coffee and Tea
9 West Aylesbury Road, Timonium 21093
- **Third Thursdays (12/19, 1/16, and 2/20) 6:00 PM**
Panera Bread, Timonium Square Shopping Center
2131 York Rd, Timonium 21093

If those times don't work for you, remember Pastor Mark has an open door policy. If his office door is open, come on in. Please call before you come to the Church just to make sure he is in. You can also call, text, or email for an appointment if preferred.



Stay Updated with E-News

Our digital newsletter, *inSPIRE*, is an excellent way for members and friends of



Towson UMC to stay in touch with church events and happenings. Don't receive it? Then, we probably do not have an email address on file for you.

Write "OPT-IN" to Towson UMC to give us permission to include you on the e-distribution list. Contact us at communications@towsonumc.org

2020 MUSIC OPPORTUNITIES

January is a great time to join a choir! We start anew with all new music. All rehearsals are in the Music Room—321. Start dates are listed below.

VOCAL CHOIRS

- **CHANCEL CHOIR** begins 1/8
Adults - Music reading is not required
- **JOYFUL NOISE** begins TBD
Adults – An occasional “pick-up” choir
- **ALLELUIA SINGERS** begins 1/19
6th - 12th graders
- **CAROL CHOIR** begins 1/14
2nd - 5th graders
- **JOY SINGERS** begins TBD
4-year-olds – 1st graders)



HANDBELL CHOIRS

- **GENESIS BELLS** begins 1/21
For those with limited (to no) experience playing bells
- **CELEBRATION RINGERS**
begins 1/26
For those who read music OR have some ringing experience
- **TOWER CHIMES** begins 1/15
Advanced ringers – Music reading is required but ringing experience is not



UKULELE CHOIR

Beginners ukulele. Music reading is not required but a ukulele is needed. Group practices and performs at various times throughout the year.

Contact Doug Hollida for more information:
musicdirector@towsonumc.org



HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



Streets of Hope Meals & Mission

Our church Mission Team will provide meals for approximately 20 folks who visit a homeless shelter in Essex for dinner and respite this winter. Dates are 12/18, 1/15, 2/12, 3/18 and 4/13 from 5:30-7:30 PM. Contact Dwight Kines drkines4@hotmail.com to join a meal mission team.

Food Pantry: 2020 Calendar! OPEN Third Saturdays from 9:00-10:30 AM

In 2020, the TUMC Food Pantry's dates will be on the THIRD Saturday of each month. Please continue to volunteer and donate. Want to help? Contact Dwight Kines at 410.828.0792. Want to donate food or household blessings? Watch the bulletins for special needs each month. Or shop for some of our "regular" nonperishable food needs. Donate all food items by placing them in the Sharing Bins at church. Still have questions? Contact Valerie Wehrle at valw4321@yahoo.com. Thanks!



Lessons and Carols

10:15 AM service on December 29, 2019

Join us for song and story. Bring friends. Wear your ugly Christmas sweater and/or tie! There may be prizes for the worst-dressed.



CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS 2019

Honor a loved one with the gift of a poinsettia in the Chancel area of Towson UMC this Yuletide Season! Each plant is \$15 and can be donated to church for delivery to a shut-in or picked up after Christmas Eve service. Complete the form to honor or remember someone special in your life. Make all checks payable to TUMC ("Christmas Poinsettias" on memo line). **ORDER BY DECEMBER 15, 2019 to be listed in our Registry!!!**

Rejoice! I would like to order _____ (# quantity) poinsettias at \$15 each. Check Amount: _____

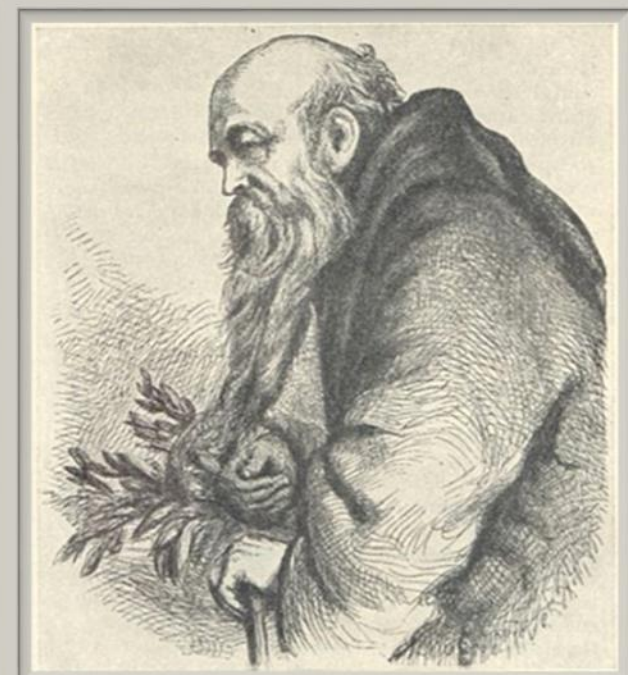
In honor of _____

In loving memory of _____

Remit this form and check (payable to Towson UMC with poinsettias on memo line) to the church office by Dec 16, 2018.

Your Name(s): _____

Circle One: **YES** Send my plants to a shut-in. OR **YES** I will pick up plants after 11pm worship on 12/24/19.



WHO IS St. Nicholas

**Saturday
December 14, 2019
9:00-10:30 AM**

**Special Gathering for Kids
Ages 3-10 with a Guardian**

- FREE pancake breakfast
- Saint Nicholas' story
- holiday crafts
- giving project

Breakfast & Storytelling

Not the typical breakfast with Santa! A costumed storyteller will reveal the real story of St. Nicholas* while you and your children enjoy a yummy pancake breakfast, crafts, and a giving project.

Come participate in the true meaning of Christmas: sharing love!

***PARENT NOTE: no spoilers about the jolly holiday guy; so don't worry!**

Festive. Fun. Educational.

RSVP by 12/8
Rev. Margery Schammel
mschammel@towsonumc.org
or 410.823.6511



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★ All- Music Service, Dec. 8

10:15 AM *A Festival of Carols*

Breakfast with St. Nicholas, Dec. 14

9:00 AM pancakes, crafts & story

Blue Christmas, Dec. 22

7:00 PM worship in Chapel

Christmas Eve, Dec. 24 ★

5:00 PM Carol Quiz: Children's Worship

8:00 PM Traditional Candlelight Service

11:00 PM Traditional Candlelight Service

Year-End Celebration, Dec. 29

10:15 AM Lessons and Carols

+ Ugly Ties/Sweaters



Your success and happiness lies in you. Resolve to keep happy, and your joy and you shall form an invincible host against difficulties. —Helen Keller

December 22, 2019 at 7:00 PM

Towson UMC Chapel

Blue Christmas

a service of remembrance and hope

The holiday season can be difficult for many reasons:
grief, separation, illness, uncertainty...

In this service of light, come to find hope and healing, to honor a loved one's memory, or to support someone else.



Youth Group News

By Rachel Livingston
yandya@towsonumc.org
410.823.3698

Towson Youth—Grades 6-12*

Our youth are engaged in many great and exciting things! We look forward to the many opportunities to engage and fellowship with our faith community and those beyond our walls as we seek to share the love of Jesus Christ with the world.

To Our Youth: We are seeking to build our youth council made up of actual youth. You will be eligible to run for the position of president, vice president, secretary, youth group liaison. We will be having elections in January. Look out for information for descriptions and responsibilities.

Students in Grades 6-12 may participate in fun, educational, missionary and fellowship activities* throughout the school year. Bring a friend!

Upcoming Youth Group Events

December 1: Christmas Lights
December 8: Shopping for Christmas Gifts
December 14: Breakfast with St. Nicholas
December 15: Wrapping Christmas Gifts
December 22: Discussion/Bible Study 6-7:30pm
December 24: Christmas Eve Services
January 5: Bowling
January 12: Discussion/Bible Study 6-7:30pm
January 18: Mission TBD
January 26: Games at TUMC 6-7:30pm
Feb 2: Laser Tag
Feb 7-9: ROCK
Feb 9: No Youth Group
Feb 16: Discussion/Bible Study 6-7:30pm
February 22: Mission TBD



To the Adults of Our Church:

Have you ever felt the pull to interact with an energetic, motivated group of Middle and High School church members?

The Youth Ministry Team is inviting you to try it on for size! If you have a talent or gift to share in a small group setting, we need you! We would like to encourage intergenerational time within our church family for the growth of the body of Christ.

UMYF (United Methodist Youth Fellowship) typically meets on Sunday evenings from 6-7:30PM

Here are some possibilities:

- Carpentry – a small take home project that could be finished in one or two sessions.
- Cooking - Help the youth prepare a simple meal they could prepare for their own families!
- Craft project - from paper folding, decoupage, pottery, needlework, watercolor, candy making
- Coordinating a game night – indoor or outdoor
- Musical experiences

Other areas of need include:

- Providing a simple meal
- Making reminder calls to ask for help in various areas
- Discussion leader
- Chaperone

Reach out to Rachel Livingston, Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries for more information.

*Enrollment forms are REQUIRED for all youth participants under the age of 18. See www.towsonumc.org for details.

Our Young Adult Ministry is rebranding itself as the 20/30 Ministry, seeking to bring the love of Jesus Christ through ministry to those in their 20s and 30s. We have had some great new and grandiose ideas that we plan to bring into the New Year.

20/30
Young Adult Ministry

One of our plans is to create a weeknight Worship Service starting at the end of January 2020. If anyone is interested in helping make this a success, then join us. We will be meeting on the following days immediately following the 10:15am service: **Planning Sessions: December 29 and January 19 — open to all!**

We also hope to develop a small groups model. So, if you have any ideas on that, feel free to help us with that as well. Reach out to Rachel Livingston, Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries, for more information. 410.823.3698 or yandya@towsonumc.org

Ages Kindergarten through Grade 5



Coming in March 2020: Lunch and a movie for elementary-age children. Join us after church for lunch, crafts and a kid-friendly movie! Stay tuned for details.



Angel Tree Gifts for Local Families

Look for the Angel Tree in the church lobby on December 1st. Choose an ornament from the tree to sponsor a local family with toys, clothes, and household items. Wrap the gift (requested on the angel ornament) and affix the angel as a tag to the gift. All gifts must be returned to church by December 8th!!! If you prefer to donate \$, then send a check, cash or online donation with the note "angel tree" to Towson UMC.

Contact: Marjorie Bandy 443.417.5878 or marjorie.bandy17@gmail.com



Operation Christmas Child = Success!

Thanks to all of you who filled a shoebox and/or made a monetary donation to this charitable program. One hundred eleven (111) shoeboxes and \$70.00 were collected. This is one way we as individuals can help spread the Gospel to the less fortunate population of the world. A particular THANKS to Pastor Johnson, Pastor Margery, Gene Bandy, Maryanne Arthur, Kim Ayres, Bob Ashby, Liz & Barry Neal for their help with this program. VACANCY: Need a new Project Leader (s) to replace us. After 10 years and collecting 1597 shoeboxes, we are retiring from this program. We have enough shoeboxes for the 2020 campaign and a comprehensive checklist to pass on. Interested? Contact Pastor Mark, Pastor Margery, Gene Bandy, or John and Nancy Ross by January 15, 2020.

Happy Holidays! —John & Nancy Ross



Learning Opportunities for ALL Ages

Want to join a small group discussion? Delve deeper into your faith? Prefer childcare during the worship service? Thinking of bringing your youth to Sunday School class? Rest assured. We have your family covered!

Childcare in the Cribbery*

Children Infants to Age 3, Room 122
Open 8:45 AM through the 10:15 AM service (approx. 11:30 AM dismissal)
This is a secure ministry, led by paid trained persons helped by caring adults who are background-checked and Safe-Sanctuary approved.



Preschool/Kindergarten Sunday School* : Room 311

Children Age 3 to Kindergarten (must be fully potty-trained to attend)
Open 9:00-10:00 AM

Elementary Sunday School*

Younger Children Grades 1-2 Open 9:00-10:00 AM Room 314
Older Children Grades 3-5 Open 9:00-10:00 AM Room 312

Pray and Play* : Room 314

Children Ages 4 to 6
Open during the 10:15 AM worship service for learning, crafts, music, and fun. (approx. 11:30 AM dismissal)

Kids in the Disciple Zone (KIDZ)* : Room 310

Children Ages 7 to 11
Open Kids begin in the 10:15 AM worship service and leave when directed for an experiential lesson. (approx. 11:30 AM dismissal)

Youth Sunday School* :

Middle School (Grades 6-8) Open 9:00-10:00 AM Room 316
High School (Grades 9-12) Open 9:00-10:00 AM Room 317

Confirmation Class* : Hoffman Room

Children Middle School (Grades 7-8) already enrolled in Class of 2019
Open 9:00-10:00 AM — beginning January 5, 2020

Christian Connections for Ages 18+ : Various Rooms (see below)

Open 9:00-10:00 AM
Christians Under Construction, Room 111
Young Adult Class, Room 212
Tower Class, Room 214
Women's Class, Room 310

Confirmation Class of 2020

Confirmation is an experience for youth grade 7 and above who are interested in deep faith questions and perhaps joining the church. We seek to “confirm” the vows taken on our behalf at our baptism.

Our youth have been meeting for fall events and will begin the regular class on January 5 from 9:00-10:00 AM in Room 216 on the main floor.

If you have questions, then contact Pastor Margery:
mschammel@towsonumc.org
or 410.823.2485



*Enrollment forms are REQUIRED for participation. See www.towsonumc.org (our “older” website) for details and forms.

Finance Update



Thanks to our faithful members who are meeting their financial commitment to Towson UMC in 2019.!

Blessings to those who have exceeded their pledge by giving more than originally planned. We encourage you to try to exceed or catch up with your commitment before the end of the year.

Towson UMC is a vibrant congregation that extends the love of God in Jesus Christ to the community through vital ministries and mission programs. You make that happen through your financial contribution as well as the contributions of your time and talent. In addition, there are many programs at Towson UMC - children's and youth activities, music programs, emergency food pantry, Sunday morning services and classes, pot luck gatherings, etc. – that build the spiritual friendships that enrich our lives.

Towson UMC has built the ministries and programs based on historic giving levels and congregation desires. Even with so many things happening, we are experiencing declining attendance. Many faithful servants have died and many others are no longer able to attend Sunday services and programs. Others have moved away or chosen to worship elsewhere.

With the decline in attendance has come a decline in overall giving. Staff and church members have been careful in their budget requests and frugal in their spending, but operating a building and organization like ours is very expensive. The Finance Committee has the unenviable task of creating income and cash flow forecasts from a shrinking number of pledges.

Even recent tax law changes have affected the ways people give; some reduce their contributions in one year and then double up in the next. If this is your situation, then please let the Business Manager know to help our committee in planning Church income and cash flow forecasts.

Towson United Methodist Church has been a vital force in our community for generations. For us to continue, we all need to redouble our efforts to reach out to our community in love and make disciples of Jesus Christ. And to accomplish that, we will need to give generously to God's ministry at Towson United Methodist Church.

If you have questions, comments or concerns please contact Towson UMC's Finance Chair, Dale Springer or Pastor Mark Johnson at 410.823.6511.



Stewardship Campaign 2020



Don't forget to turn in your Stewardship Cards to pledge support for our 2020 campaign. Mail or drop cards in the Church Office. Thanks!

Watch our Giving Jar Overflow with Generosity

Thank you to everyone who is "Paying It Forward" to help make our 2020 Stewardship Campaign a success. To date, we've received 144 commitment cards totaling \$494,995.20. The great news is that, of those 133 commitment cards, 12 are new givers and 42 have increased their giving. That's about 81% of our 2020 giving goal of 185 commitment cards totaling \$600,000.00. Way to go! But - we are not yet done! Bring your commitment card to church and watch as we FILL the Giving Jar each week to reach 100%. Working together, our overflowing vase will mean continued life-changing ministry in 2020.

-- from Pastor Mark

Moment on a Mission: Communion Offering

December : The Board of Child Care

The Board of Child Care of the United Methodist Church, Inc. is a 145 year old organization which was founded in Baltimore and whose Purpose is " **Enriching communities, one family at a time.**" The Board operates a myriad of Programs throughout the Mid-Atlantic Region. They include:

BOARD OF CHILD CARE
of The United Methodist Church, Inc.



- Adoption Services
 - An Early Learning Program for children from ages 6 weeks to 5 years old.
 - The Strawbridge School - A nonpublic special and regular education school serving preschool through age 21 in a therapeutic environment.
 - Youth Reporting Center - providing full-day educational and therapeutic services for middle and high school students.
 - Outpatient Mental Health Clinic - Individual and group sessions provided for youth ages 3 to 18 and their families.
 - Residential Homes - Campuses provide engaging experiences for youth within a safe, structured setting.
 - Treatment Foster Care - Provide therapeutically structured home environments for youth ages 2 to 21.
- Towson United Methodist Church has a long history with the Board of Child Care. Many Members have served on the Board of Directors and in Leadership positions. Currently, Kevin Gralley and Bob Kimmons serve on the Board of Directors. Kevin is the current Vice Chair and Bob is a former Chairman.

For more than 50 years, Katherine Rigney served as Towson's Key Woman to the Auxiliary of the Board of Child Care and many of you may remember her asking you to become members by paying a \$2.00 annual fee. Katherine worked tirelessly at this job! The Auxiliary has decided to discontinue this practice. **Therefore, we are asking for your generous support of the Board of Child Care through our December Moment on a Mission!**

January : Christ Deaf Church

Christ Deaf Church worships in ASL with tactile and voice interpreting, and captioning so that all God's children can accept the Word of God into their hearts and lives. The congregation's all-Deaf Choir enhances the service with hymns of praise and thanksgiving. People of all faith traditions, or none, are welcome to join. In Fellowship Hall on Sunday afternoons, attendees share a free meal and a variety of social activities. The church is located at 1040 S. Beechfield Ave. Baltimore MD 21229. www.christdeafchurch-umc.org.



February : Emergency Food Pantry at Towson UMC

Our very own Emergency Food Pantry serves local families one Saturday each month with much-needed nonperishable food items and household blessings. Your donation this month will help stock the shelves for the remainder of 2020.



How to Give



Sunday Worship: Give the first Sunday of each month in the offering plates as you go up to communion or mail your donation to the TUMC business office. Note "Board of Child Care", "Christ Deaf Church" or "food pantry" on your check.

Celebrate Your Special Day by Giving: Do you have a birthday or anniversary coming up? Consider asking friends and family to donate to your charity of choice in lieu of gifts.

Matching Gifts: Does your company sponsor a matching gift program? If so, ask the human resources department for forms and information.

Thank you for your generosity!



Send Warm Socks and Valentines

During January 2020, the Hospitality Ministries Committee will be collecting warm socks for women at the **House of Ruth** and boxes of valentines for their children. We are especially in need of women's casual and dress socks! Bring socks and boxed Valentine's to church and place in the Sharing Bins — January 12 through February 2 — and we'll deliver in time for a loving Valentine's Day!

The House of Ruth of Ruth Maryland leads the fight to end violence against women and their children by confronting the attitudes, behaviors and systems that perpetuate it, and by providing victims with the services necessary to rebuild their lives safely and free of fear. TUMC is honored to be a part of this mission. Your generous and thoughtful contributions are greatly appreciated.



HOUSE OF RUTH
MARYLAND

Community Events & Outreach Efforts Yield BIG Payoff

Thank YOU to everyone who has sponsored, attended, funded and/or shared in the JOY of our 2019 community events. This committee hosted the Yard Sale, Crab Feast/Silent Auction, Plant Sales, Tutti Fruitti and Texas Roadhouse fundraisers, and much more, which yielded more than \$7000 to benefit the missions and ministries of our church — and hours of fellowship and friendship for our members and friends. In 2020, we are planning some new events and activities, including a festive Dinner & Dance and a Sunday Speaker/Music Series. Contact Maryanne Arthur at communications@towsonumc.org to join the team. And, stay tuned for more fun and profitable opportunities next year. Looking forward to it!!



The Magic of Baseball

Guess who's visiting the children and teachers in our Hampton Lane CDC on Dec. 9? That's right. The Orioles' Bird!!! Thanks to a CDC parent, who nominated the Center for this fun award through the Maryland Excels program, the Bird will spend some time with our CDC family. Congrats to the CDC—ONE of only FOUR recipients for this treat!!

Also, want to attend an uplifting Holiday Program? Join the CDC for its Holiday extravaganza in Fellowship Hall on December 20, 2019 at 4:30 PM. All are welcome.

LAST CHANCE! \$30 Gift Cards for Sale

Don't forget! The church is selling \$30 gift cards for Texas Roadhouse — good at ANY location, ANYwhere in the USA. The cards are branded with our church logo and never expire! They make excellent stocking stuffers or gifts for special occasions. Or a yummy treat for you! Buy them on Sundays. Call the church office. Or send a note to Maryanne Arthur at communications@towsonumc.org to buy cards.



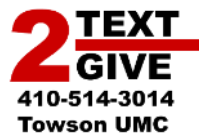
Business Office Tips



Do you know there are several different ways to make your contributions? At year-end, all contributions must be submitted to the Business Office by **December 31st** to receive credit on your contribution statement for the current year.

Here are the different ways to send in your contributions:

- **Cash or Check** placed in the offering plate during worship. Please consider using an envelope including your name when donating cash.
- **Drop Donation** in door slot of the main office attention 'Business Office'.
- **Mail check donations** by the US Postal service to Towson UMC attention 'Business Office'.
- **Online Banking** you set up online checking with your bank. You control the frequency and amount sent. The bank sends a check to Towson UMC. Set up Towson UMC as a "vendor" and include your envelope number if you have one —and name as "account number."
- **Text to Give** simply text your dollar amount to **410.514.3014**. A link will be sent to you to complete a one-time registration form. From then on, just text your amount and it will be applied to your annual contribution to the church. If you wish to donate to the Communion Offering, then please type '**communion**' after the dollar amount before sending the text.
- **Online-Giving (Credit Cards and Electronic Funds Transfers)** Giving online with credit cards and with electronic fund transfers is easy and allows you to set up automatic recurring contributions. Contributions can now be deducted automatically from your checking or savings account at any time or processed using your credit or debit card. Simply follow these easy steps:



Follow these easy steps for online giving:

- Visit our website at www.towsonchurch.org.
 - Choose 'Give' in the main menu.; click "Give Now"
 - On the next site, click the 'Create Profile' button.
 - Follow the onscreen instructions to create an online profile and schedule your recurring contributions.
- **Stock Transfer** Stocks and mutual funds transferred to Towson UMC broker. Details may be obtained from the Business Office. Please notify the Business Office of any stock transfers to accounts below.



Merrill Lynch
901 Dulaney Valley Road, Ste 516
Towson, MD 21204
Phone: 410.321.4323 Fax: 410.970.4295
DTC #5198
Account # **813-04325** Towson UMC

Include the following information with the transmittal from your broker/bank to Merrill Lynch:
Donor Name: _____

Designated to: Towson United Methodist Church
Purpose of Gift: ex. Annual Pledge, Capital Campaign

Everyone is called to be faithful servants. We pray you may find the level of giving that is right for you as you progress in your journey of faith and commitment. Your pledges and contributions are a critical part of how we can make a difference in our church, our community and our world.

As always, please contact Kim Ayres in the Business Office with any questions or concerns: 410.823.3689 or kayres@towsonumc.org.

Make New Year's goals. Dig within, and discover what you would like to have happen in your life this year. This helps you do your part. It is an affirmation that you're interested in fully living life in the year to come. — Melody Beattie

View Our Church Photos Online

www.towsonumc.smugmug.com

Valentine's Day Soiree 2020

festive dinner and dancing for all ages
a ticketed event at Towson UMC

2/14/20



Wear your fuzzy slippers and shop at home!

Don't forget to select Towson UMC as an approved charity with Amazon Smile each time you checkout online this holiday season and beyond.

To designate our church as the recipient of your online shopping, log onto www.smile.amazon.com and choose "Towson United Methodist Church". You will see the church's name under the search box at the top of the page, following the word "supporting". The AmazonSmile Foundation sends donations directly to us!



UPCOMING EVENTS Dec 1 - Feb 29, 2020

All Sundays 8:00 AM and 10:15 AM Worship

DECEMBER

- All Wed Coffee & Conversation, 9 AM
- All Dec Communion Offering: Board of Child Care
- Dec 1 All-Music Dress Rehearsal, 11:30 AM
Youth Group Christmas Lights, 6 PM
- Dec 3 Giving Tuesday, all day!
- Dec 7 Gingerbread House Workshop
- Dec 8 All-Music Sunday, 10:15 AM
Youth Group Shopping, 6 PM
- Dec 14 Breakfast with St. Nicholas, 9 AM
- Dec 15 Youth Group Wrap Gifts, 6 PM
- Dec 19 Coffee & Conversation, 6 PM Panera
- Dec 21 Emergency Food Pantry OPEN
- Dec 22 Youth Group Dinner/Discussion, 6 PM
Blue Christmas Service, 7 PM
- Dec 24 Christmas Eve Worship 5PM, 8PM, 11PM
- Dec 25-27 Church Office CLOSED
- Dec 29 Lessons & Carols PLUS Ugly Sweaters
- Dec 31 All 2019 Pledges/Donations Due



JANUARY

- All Jan Communion Offering: Christ Deaf Church
- All Jan Collect socks and Valentines, Due 2/2
- All Wed Coffee & Conversation, 9 AM
- Jan 1 Church Office CLOSED
- Jan 5 Confirmation Class #1, 9 AM
Youth Group Bowling, 6 PM
- Jan 12 Youth Group Dinner/Discussion, 6 PM
- Jan 16 Coffee & Conversation, 6 PM Panera
- Jan 18 Emergency Food Pantry OPEN
Youth Group Mission, TBD
- Jan 26 Youth Group Games at TUMC, 6 PM

FEBRUARY

- All Feb Communion Offering: ACTC
- All Wed Coffee & Conversation, 9 AM
- Feb 2 Youth Group Laser Tag, 6 PM
- Feb 7-9 Youth Group at ROCK in Ocean City, MD
- Feb 14 Valentine's Day Soiree, evening in Hall
- Feb 15 Emergency Food Pantry OPEN
- Feb 20 Coffee & Conversation, 6 PM Panera
- Feb 29-Mar 1 Women's Retreat in Middletown, MD




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

410.823.6511 : www.towsonchurch.org
Business Hours: Mon-Thurs 10:00 AM—3:00 PM

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RESIDENT or

WINTER WORSHIP SCHEDULE
December 1 – February 29, 2020

8:00 AM 
Traditional Service in the Chapel
Worship and communion every Sunday with piano or organ accompaniment.

8:45-10:00 AM
Fellowship & Refreshments in the Parlor

9:00-10:00 AM
Sunday School, all ages
Gather in designated rooms for educational and spiritual growth opportunities.

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 hand bell choirs, praise band, traditional and contemporary song, old-fashioned hymns, and glorious 3,000-pipe organ music. Gluten-free bread.

Yes! Childcare is available all morning.



Stay in Touch.
facebook.com/towsonumc

Winter is the time for comfort, for good food and warmth, for the touch of a friendly hand and for a talk beside the fire: it is the time for home

—Edith Sitwell

2019-20