

# Contact

## North Bethesda United Methodist Church

Advent 2023  
Volume 52 Issue 5



Advent, Christmas and Epiphany



Letn and Easter



Ordinary Time



Pentecost and the Birth of the Church

For everything there is a season...  
*liturgical*  
^

## GIFTS OF CARING - A HOLIDAY ALTERNATIVE

NBUMC is a qualified charitable organization (a 501(c)3). Through the church, members are able to make charitable contributions to local, national and global organization via additional donations. Don't want to get on another mailing list, but want to donate? Designate the organization and give through NBUMC. NBUMC then aggregates the donations and sends them out. Gift cards, and organization descriptions, are available. Watch the *Weekly Email* for further information.

### We support 5 Local organizations:

**Bethesda Cares:** works to prevent homelessness through programs supporting people in danger of eviction/utility shut-off in Montgomery County, and having other needs.

**Bethesda Help:** supplies food to needy families in Montgomery County. Their pantry is housed at NBUMC.

**Capital Area Food Bank:** supplies food to needy families in the Washington region.

**Cornerstone Montgomery:** empowers people living with mental health and substance use disorders.

**Primary Care for Kids:** affordable healthcare children of low-income families in Montgomery County.

### We support 3 National organizations:

**Bread for the World:** lobbies Congress for support of programs to feed the hungry in the US and globally.

**Henderson Settlement, Kentucky:** supports poor and abused families in Appalachia.

**Intermountain Children's Home, Montana:** cares for abused children and families from the US.

### We support 6 Global organizations:

**AHEAD Inc.** (Adventures in Health, Education, and Agricultural Development): Founded by NBUMC members Irving and Elvira Williams; supports education and health programs in rural Tanzania and Gambia.

**French Medical Institute for Mothers and Children, Afghanistan:** Founded by the French and Afghan Governments, the Aga Khan University, and the French NGO, La Chaine de l'Espoir; provides world-class healthcare to Afghan families at a hospital in Kabul. The governing board is chaired by NBUMC member, Lee Hilling.

**Institute of Grace, Haiti:** provides education, healthcare and meals for poor families in Haiti.

**Samata Sarana, Clarendon Foundation, California:** supports the homeless and hungry in Sri Lanka.

**Samburu School, Kenya:** support for the education and meals for poor rural children in the Samburu region. (Dr. Janet Jalloul; contact Jacqui Cragg)

**I AM ZIMBABWE:** our very own Tsitsi Sithole is on the leadership team of this wonderful organization in Zimbabwe that works to nurture, educate and empower a community of safe and healthy children, youth and older adults.

Thank you so much for your thoughtfulness and generosity. - Sara Barakat, Chair, SOC

## Finance Committee Update

At the end of September 2023, NBUMC 's YTD 2023 budget has a surplus of \$16,225. Revenue for January - September was \$299,069. This includes \$183,516 from Pledges & Identified Offerings and \$20,573 in rental fees from Other Building Use. Expenditures for this period was \$282,844.

We've paid 100% of our Mission Shares to the Baltimore-Washington Conference.

NBUMC's planned financial budget for 2023 is \$419,043.

- Jesse Jennings, Assistant Treasurer

Photo Credits: Rev. Kara, Sue Ernst, Ardoth Hassler, Guillaume LaPlace, Joe Roberts, Linda Thompson, JoAnne Wong



# MESSAGES FROM THE PASTOR

## November/December Worship Highlights

Whether or not we are ready for it, we've come once again to the "turning of the year," as Christ the King Sunday on November 26th is the last Sunday in our liturgical calendar, and a new year begins with the contemplative and preparatory season of Advent. We're trying something new this year for Christ the King Sunday: a service called the "Celebration of the Christian Year," which is intended to help us understand and find more spiritual meaning in the liturgical seasons of Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, and Ordinary Time. Our service will take us on a whirlwind tour of the whole year, including short teachings and readings, a favorite hymn from each season, and an explanation of the colors and symbols connected to it. It will be a fun service, with participation from our Arts Committee (and anyone else who wants to do a reading.) Thanks to Rev. Angela Wells for the idea and worship resource.



**Rev. Kara**

Our guiding theme for this Advent is "God's Grand Entrance." The lectionary readings assigned for each Sunday invite us to consider the tension between the ways we expect God to arrive, and the reality of God's chosen vulnerability. We will hear from the prophets, recall the stories of some of our favorite Advent and Christmas characters, and allow for the possibility that Christ is continuing to be born in our world in unexpected ways, even today. Our choir will lead us in a service of Lessons & Carols on December 17th, with special guest musicians and music that brings the challenging and hopeful words of the prophets to life. On December 24th our Brunch Church will be an opportunity to experience the radical love of a God who saw our hunger, came in person to feed, heal, and restore us, and who surprises us with grace every time we gather at a table in community.

### Worship Themes/Scriptures

November 5: All Saints' Day Revelation 7:9-17, Hebrews 11:23-12:2

November 12: Amos 5:18-24, Matthew 25:1-13

November 19: Mark 2:1-12

November 26: Celebration of the Christian Year

December 3: Advent 1

December 10: Advent 2

December 17: Advent 3: Lessons & Carols

December 24: Advent 4: Brunch Church

### Taizé Tuesdays Return for November and December

Back by popular demand, our weekly services of music and silence in the style of the Taizé community in France will return starting November 7th. All are invited to join us in the sanctuary on Tuesday evenings from 7-7:30pm for a contemplative time of singing and silence. We hope that this offering will nourish your spirit in what can be a hectic or lonely season. Come as you are, to sit in the light of Christ and the warmth of the community surrounding you, for just 30 minutes a week, and see what a difference it makes in your holiday season this year!

### Advent Bible Study Groups

Are you interested in exploring scripture more deeply, in conversation with a small group of fellow seekers? Join us for a weekly study through the season of Advent. One group will meet in person at 6pm on Tuesdays (leading into the 7pm Taizé service.) The second group will meet on Zoom at noon on Mondays. Both groups will meet for four weeks beginning the week of November 27th. Let Rev. Kara know if you are interested in joining or would like to help lead a group!



# Caregivers Support Group

Please take note of a new opportunity for support and community, specifically for those of you who are in a caregiving role (for a child, adult child, partner, parent, sibling, or other friend or family member.) We have just launched a support group that meets monthly on Zoom and provides a place for open and confidential conversation. The group is facilitated by Renée Delacroix, a long-term church member who has dealt with caregiver issues both professionally and in her own family. If you would like to learn more about this opportunity, please contact [Renée](#) or Rev. Kara to for more information. We are looking forward to providing a safe gathering place for all caregivers who are interested.



## GAME NIGHTS

Our group for people in the 20s and 30s has started a monthly game night! Join us the first Thursday of the month (November 2nd) for games and conversation at 7pm. Some of our gatherings will be in person, and others will be on Zoom, so that we can include people who are currently living at a distance or don't have access to transportation. The November gathering will be on Zoom; email [kara@northbethesdaumc.org](mailto:kara@northbethesdaumc.org) for the link.



## KINA MAMA CALM BREAKFAST November 4th

Rose Aehele is organizing a *Kina Mama Calm* breakfast! It will take place on November 4th, at 8:30am. "Kina Mama" means strong women in Swahili, and this breakfast is a time when women of all ages can meet in fellowship. Why "calm?" Because it takes place around the time of year when life gets a little more hectic due to the upcoming holidays.

Come and enjoy breakfast and a meditative activity. Please contact Rose if you're interested in attending.

## CHRISTMAS EVE

It's one of those years when Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday! We will have "Brunch Church" in the morning, similar to the service we did in Johnson Hall this past June. All are invited to join us around the table at 10am for the Fourth Sunday of Advent. The service will include music, scripture, a short reflection, and, yes, a meal! We are hoping to make this an outreach opportunity by inviting residents of a group home or guests at a nearby shelter to join us for a festive, home-cooked meal on Christmas Eve morning. If you would like to be part of the team planning this meal and service, please reach out to Rev. Kara.

Later that day, we will celebrate Christmas Eve with two services of carols and candlelight: one at 5pm, with worship leadership from our children and youth, and the second at 9pm, with worship leadership from our choir and a brass quartet. We hope you'll come to one or both, and that you'll extend the invitation to neighbors, friends, and family!

## Greentree Shelter Collection

The Arts Committee will be collecting new toys and baby supplies in December for the nearby National Center for Children and Families--the Greentree Shelter. More information will be forthcoming later in November.

## CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA UPDATE

The Altar Guild again plans to decorate the altar and not purchase so many poinsettias this year. It's hard to find homes for 80 poinsettias after Christmas! As we did last year, memorial contributions may still be made and will be recognized.



# Church News: From the Board

The NBUMC Board hosted a “town hall” meeting on October 29th to share with our congregation the work that has been accomplished in 2023, and the plans underway for 2024—all in preparation for Stewardship Sunday on November 5th.

- Some of the accomplishments we listed include:
- re-designing our visitor bags and adding contact cards to the pews to welcome our visitors
  - installing a new security camera system using a \$12,000 grant from Montgomery County
  - replacing the office computer
  - transitioning to web-based church management software
  - moving excess general funds to high-yield accounts
  - initiated building a new church website



If you have talents in any of these areas, please let me know.

Rev Kara led the discussion around our ministry in 2023 by focusing on how we Worship, Nurture, and Serve. Each of the staff and committee chairs shared highlights from 2023 and some plans for 2024. There were so many wonderful highlights (far too many to list) the joy was overflowing!

A significant part of the Board’s work is centered around our staff. In addition to working with and supporting Rev. Kara, we acknowledged that in the past 12 months we welcomed Simon Charette as Director of Music, Gwendolyn Daniels as Office Manager, Tsitsi Sithole as Director of Children’s Ministries, and Grace Thompson as Prime Time Assistant. And, we applauded the ongoing work of Linda Thompson as Minister of Visitation. We hope to add a shared Youth Minister very soon.

Our building is the center and sign of our ministry, and it is also an important source of revenue. Taking care of its aging bones and plumbing takes a great deal of attention and resources. We are taking steps to identify the maintenance and upkeep priorities. We are also forming a building and grounds committee to help address the building’s needs. Please contact me if you can serve.

For 2024, we announced exciting plans to host a 2024 Community Concert Series in memory of Valerie Blane. Three events are scheduled:

- February 25th: **Greg Zelek**, 31, Principal Organist of the Madison Symphony Orchestra will offer a concert co-sponsored by Allen Organ Company
- June 2nd: Vocalist **Rochelle Rice** will bring her program **And We Shall March** about the Civil Rights March of 1963
- September 28th: We will host two ensembles of the Gay Men’s Chorus of Washington, **D.C. Rock Creek Singers**, a 32-voice chamber ensemble, and **Potomac Fever**, a 16-voice contemporary a capella group

In 2024, the Board agreed to a theme of “Deep Listening.” Much of what we talked about in our planning revolved around listening to each other, to the community, to our members and ultimately God—through prayer, study, conversation, and outreach. We hope you will join us as we work on sharpening our listening skills and behavior.



We hope you will prayerfully consider how you can support NBUMC with your time, talents, gifts, service, and prayers. Please feel free to reach out to any Board member with your questions and feedback.

Faithfully yours,  
Janet Replogle, Chair

# Our Pastor and Staff

## October Birthdays

### *Thank You Rev. Kara*

*by Natalie McManus*

*Kara is our Pastor,  
The leader of our flock.  
She does so many things,  
She works around the clock.*

*She leads our worship service,  
She visits those in need.  
She's guided us in praying-  
Recites the Nicene Creed.*

*Her homilies are moving,  
They prod us - as they should,  
To work and do much better  
To serve the common good.*

*Her faith, it is apparent,  
Her actions tell us so-  
Encouraging us likewise  
To get up and to go*

*To feed and clothe the homeless,  
And care for those in need,  
To follow Jesus' teachings-  
Be kind and good in deed.*

*Our church is very thankful  
For Kara's presence here.  
We're blessed to have you with us  
To us you are so dear.*

*Your energy is boundless,  
Your smile so warm and true,  
We're grateful for your guidance-  
This North Bethesda crew.*



Gwendolyn Daniels, Rev. Kara and Simon Charette celebrate their October birthdays at coffee hour (with a little help from Irene).

### **Rev. Kara: she preaches AND she bakes!**



Rev. Kara's July-August sermon series was entitled, "Lessons of Faith from the National Parks". We visited eight different parks, getting our Parks Pass stamped every week. Everyone who collected all eight stamps received a home-baked pie made by Rev. Kara. Those receiving pies were: Kathy May, Jesse Jennings, Ken Ow, Linda Thompson, Julie Toohey, Joanna Voight, John Welton, and JoAnne Wong. Rev. Kara said she used 18 pounds of apples to make the pies! What a special Pastor we have.

### **October: Pastor Appreciation Month**

Members write notes appreciation for Rev. Kara during a special coffee hour.





# What Does Welcome Look Like?

Perhaps, more importantly, what does a *proper* Welcome feel like? A proper Welcome feels good--not only to the receiver but to the giver.

As an usher at NBUMC, I love to welcome the visitor to our church! Do you remember that time when you were the visitor? Do you remember that apprehension, as you parked your car, checked your face in the mirror, took a deep breath and made your way to the church entrance?

Did someone greet you with a hardy handshake, elbow bump, or at a minimum, a welcome smile? I remember a time. My husband had passed. I moved to Northern California to be closer to my daughter. Not only was I missing my husband, but I was missing the church life that we had enjoyed so much as a couple.

I made it from the parking lot to the church entrance. A lovely lady, a very senior citizen for sure, but not lacking in a welcoming smile and strong hand shake, greeted me at the door. "Welcome! We are glad you're here!" she said, while handing me a church bulletin.

I stepped into the Narthex and eyed the huge sanctuary just ahead. Pews to the left. Pews to the right. Where should I sit?

Before I could make up my mind, that dear woman came up to me and said "Would you like to sit with me?" I could feel my shoulders soften as I started to relax. "Yes! I would love to!"

Her name was Evelyn. She had lost her husband a few years prior, she said, leaning into me and speaking in a soft voice. "It's good to have someone to sit with. Make sure and stay after service and have a cup of coffee with us," she whispered.

That fine welcome, the Methodist way of worshipping our God, the hymns, all of it, felt so good and I knew that I had found my church home.

I followed Evelyn to the Narthex, where the coffee hour had been set up. A round table in the middle of the room was crowded with plates piled high with treats surrounding a pretty bouquet of flowers.

"I'm an usher but I also head up the coffee hour!" Evelyn laughed as we stood side by side watching folks enjoy the fellowship. "Do you have any interest in helping me? I'm getting older and could use some help," she said bravely!

"I would love to help you Evelyn! Thank you for making me feel so comfortable on my first day here!", I laughed. And with life, comes change. It was two years later that I moved to the east coast and received a proper Welcome at NBUMC!

In Gratitude,  
Sue Ernst, The Coffee Lady!

## Welcome to the Daniels Family



The Rev. Matt Daniels (left), preached October 15th while Rev. Kara was on vacation. Rev. Matt and his wife, Rhonda, are Gwendolyn's parents. They serve the First United Methodist Church in Crossett, Arkansas. It was the senior Daniels' first sightseeing visit to Washington.

Pictured right, Rev. Daniels, Janet Replogle (NBUMC Board Chair), Rhonda and Gwendolyn.



# Our People

## Congratulations to A. J. Ow, ETC

A.J. was promoted to Chief, Electronics Technician (ETC) on September 29, 2023. He recently completed six weeks of initiation for Chief and mission training in Pensacola, Florida. This November, he will then be forward deployed for one to two years to Souda Bay, Greece. Left, A.J.'s son, Atticus, pins on his dad's Chief-Rank devices. Proud dad and granddad, Ken Ow, looks on.



## Alice Wang

Alice Wang, our oldest church member, passed peacefully away at age 103 on October 11, 2023. Alice is pictured (right) wearing a cedar cross made by Ed Swanson. A celebration of Alice's life is planned for the spring.



## Newly Trained Liturgists

Rev. Joye Jones (front, left) regularly offers training in "how to be an effective liturgist." The new volunteers include Pamela Major, JoAnne Wong, (rear) Jenna Love and Sue Ernst.

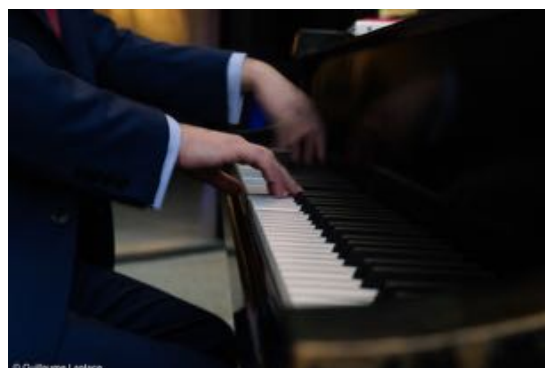


**Brother Emile**

We had a wonderful experience with our Taizé Tuesdays in September; the weekly invitation to pause for prayer, silence, and beautiful music was a welcome gift. In October, we had a wonderful and unexpected opportunity to host one of the brothers from the monastery in Taizé, France. Brother Emile visited the United States for the first time since the pandemic. He visited NBUMC for morning prayers and breakfast on October 19th. Taizé Tuesdays will continue in November and December.



Rev. Kara presents a 3rd grader with his new Bible as the choir looks on.



**The Maestro's Hands**  
(Printed with permission)



# We Are an Active Church!

## Fall Picnic! Food, Fellowship and FUN!



Grillmaster, Anthony Gaskins



Food and fellowship!



Loser and winner (Monica Dean and Joye Jones) in one of the many games!

A good time was had by all at the church picnic on Sunday, September 3.





# We Are an Active Church!

## Young Adults Group

Our young adults group has been meeting on the first Thursday of the month for a game night. We are currently meeting on Zoom because several members of our group live in other states, and we want to create an inclusive community. Our gatherings start at 7pm with some sharing about our week, and then we play games using an online platform designed to allow groups to play board games over Zoom. Some of our favorites have been a Pictionary variation called "Drawful," and a trivia game. We tend to have around eight people on a given night. If you know of someone in their 20s or 30s who is looking for a safe place to connect and build relationships, let Rev. Kara know!



What did you draw???

## Blessing of the Animals!

NBUMC held it's annual "Blessing of the Animals," hosted by the Arts Committee, on Sunday, October 22, 2023.

JoAnne Wong did an awesome job of making this event very fun. We had doggies, kitties, and two ferrets present. Each pet received a special blessing from Rev. Kara. There were toys and treats and bright bandannas for our fur-children to enjoy!



Détente between Caddie and Boy George.



# We Are an Active Church!

## Youth Programming Begins

We were delighted to begin our combined youth programming with Faith UMC this fall. We are in the final stages of hiring a youth director to lead a weekly Sunday evening ministry, but in the meantime we have gathered periodically throughout the fall. We met at Faith UMC on October 1st for a scavenger hunt and pizza. On October 29th, we met at St. Paul's Kensington UMC for running-around games and more pizza. On November 5th, we will gather at NBUMC for a special time of discussing and marking All Saints Sunday as a group. We're grateful to the team of NBUMC volunteers who are providing a taco bar dinner for the group that night. Stay tuned for updates!



Rev. Kara and youth at St. Paul's, Kensington.

## Music Fills the Sanctuary!

NBUMC welcomed [L'Opéra Comique de Washington](#) for a benefit concert on October 28, 2023. Under the direction of our own Simon Charette, the featured soloists were Darcy Monsalve, Victoria McGrath and Isreal Lozano. The chorus was comprised of the combined choirs of The French Choir of Washington and The Choir of the Embassy of France. Their next concert is March 8, 2024.



**NBUMC's own choir will present a Ceremony of Lessons and Carols on December 17th during worship. Simon and the choir welcome new singers. Join us!**



# Service and Outreach: We Serve

## Serving the Interfaith Works Women's Shelter

NBUMC provided meals at the Women's Homeless Shelter in Derwood, MD, for five nights during the week of October 23 to 26. Volunteers providing food or financial support include: Rose Aehle, Sara Barakat, Gordon and Jacqui Cragg, Bob and Monica Dean, Sue Ernst and Alissa DiFranco, Joy Hallman, Ardoth Hassler, Gail Hazelrigg, Nancy Kane, Brandon Kesselly, Jenna Love, Basil Manns, Leslie McIntire, Natalie McManus, Flora Milans, Christianne and Gabriel Nieuwsma, Ken Ow and Erin Shannon, Kim Santoro, Cheng Sithole, Diane Walsh-Barberesi, Jerome and Jeremiah Williams, and JoAnne Wong. Thank you to the Craggs for their continued leadership that enables NBUMC to support the women in shelters.



Jacqui and Gordon Cragg drop off supplies to the Shelter.



Cookies and Ice Cream! The ladies' favorites from Jerome and Jeremiah Williams.



A happy shelter staffer receives a box full of salads from the Sithole family.



Ken Ow grills burgers for the ladies.



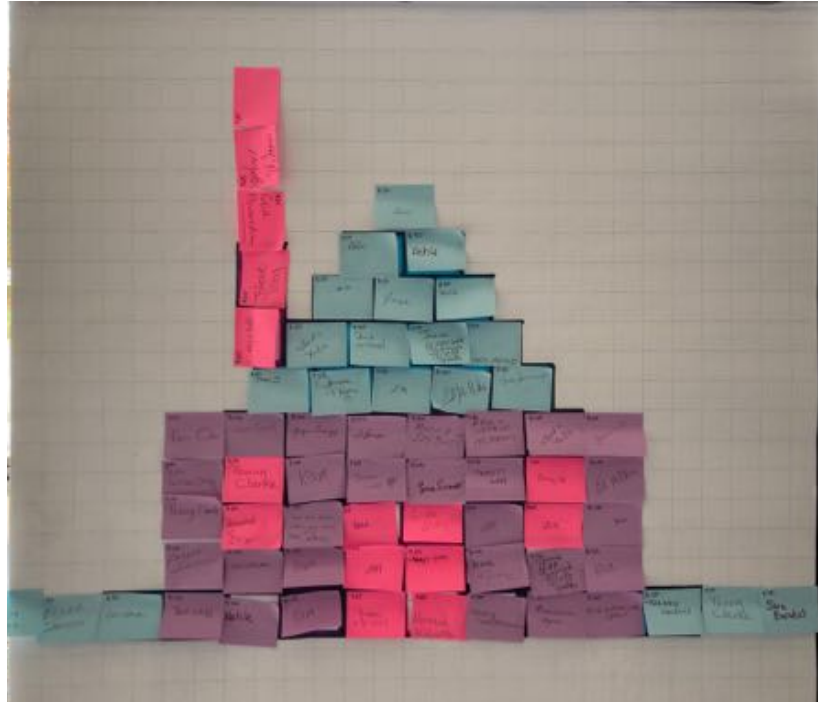
Alissa DiFranco, Sue Ernst's daughter, helps here mom prep chicken.

**Mark your calendars for 2024:**  
**July 14-20 at Crabbs Branch in Derwood, MD**  
**October 27-November 2 at Taft Court in Rockville, MD**

# Service and Outreach

## RENTAL ASSISTANCE FOR AFGHAN FAMILY

During worship on October 29th, we were challenged to join together as a congregation to raise money for an Afghan refugee family connected with Merwyn and Kirstin DeMello, who preached and shared with us in May. This family has sought asylum, is living in Baltimore, and is in need of money to help cover their rent until their U.S. work permits come through this spring. We are working through the New Neighbors Interfaith Alliance (NNIA) to support them. We brought forward post-it notes, with each color corresponding to a dollar amount, and used them to fill in a picture of a house. When the house was completed, our goal of \$3,400 was reached. We ended up adding several "additions" to the house, and surpassed our goal by more than \$1,000! We are delighted to be able to offer the Nawroozi family enough money for five months' rent, which will hopefully bridge the gap until they are able to be employed. Thank you for your enthusiastic generosity!



## A Heartfelt Thank You from the Samburu Children

This sweet note arrived from Kenya to thank NBUMC for a "Gifts of Caring" donation of \$300 that provided badly needed food for the children and families of the Samburu School at a difficult time of drought and inflation in Kenya. The original is posted on the bulletin board together with other tokens from the school.

From an email from Janet Jalloul, who built and runs the school: "We now have 200 children in nursery through primary 6 classes. We also have a clinic with a nurse on the school site and offer a hot lunch every day. The age range of the students is five years to fifteen as some start school late. We also give the students uniforms and shoes because many do not have."

Recent donations from NBUMC have helped buy sewing and building materials, sports equipment, and additional textbooks. Thank you to all at NBUMC who have supported Samburu School over the years. We look forward to seeing what will happen next at this place where so much is done with modest contributions. And please remember Samburu when our Gifts of Caring campaign begins soon!

- Jacqui Cragg

*Hello from Kenya to Maryland,  
U.S.A.*

*Just to say Thanks  
Thanks  
Thanks!!!*

*Our baskets full of food now, and all is  
well and happy at our school in Kenya now.  
We appreciate so much. Enjoy food bowls  
make all the children sad.*

*banana  
orange  
apple  
rice  
milk  
tea*

*< Class 6 and 7 Students  
the Samburu school >*

## Symbols in Chancel Window Explain Why Christ Matters

At least 13 sermons have been preached over the years on the stained glass window installed in our sanctuary chancel in 1965. Henry Lee Willet, son of the American church stained-glass window pioneer, William Willet, designed the window especially for North Bethesda. Summed up in the window's title, "Tree of Life," the symbols embedded within it together explain why Jesus Christ matters. At left is a drawing of the entire window including each of its symbols by Lillieanna Beck, longtime member of our church.

Starting from the bottom of the window, the first symbol is a human foot encircled by a snake. Referencing Genesis 3, it anticipates the coming of Christ by showing that we are doomed without God's saving grace. In effect, Jesus takes the place of the garden of Eden's tree of life, with its forbidden fruit. Continuing up the window, the manger symbolizes Christ's humble birth, described in Luke 2:1-7, as an act of reconciliation. Above it are the letters "X" and "P," for the Greek symbols Chi and Rho for "Jesus Christ," joined to the Star of Bethlehem, signifying that Jesus is the light of the world.

In the third panel, we see a scallop shell with three drops of water. Together, they represent the baptism of Jesus, described in Matthew 3:13-17, and the baptism of all Christians into a life of fulfillment in Christ. On the same panel are two fish, referencing Mark 1:16-20, in which Jesus bids his future disciples, some humble fishermen, to follow him. This task calls to mind the real task of Christian discipleship. We learn what discipleship means in the fourth panel, symbolizing the Sermon on the Mount with the letters "X" and "P" rising over a stylized mountain. As described in Matthew 5:1-12 and Matthew 5:43-48, Jesus proclaims a message of hope and fulfillment to all who show mercy, loving even their enemies.

The chariot of fire that carried the prophet Elijah up by a whirlwind into Heaven, II Kings 2:9-11, is symbolized in the middle panel. Mr. Willet chose this symbol to show how Jesus fulfills the work of the prophets and the Law. Like Jesus, who appeared in glory before the disciples, accompanied by Elijah and Moses in Luke 9:28-36, we too are called upon to transcend meaninglessness and death by living lives in Christ's light. The Last Supper is symbolized in the panel above with bread representing the Body of Christ in a chalice below a strand of wheat. It reminds us that we come to Christ for nourishment so that we may go out to serve a needy world (Luke 22:1-23).

In the panel above, a cross behind nails and a crown of thorns symbolize the passion of Christ. In his final days in human form, Jesus accepted every degrading gesture and act of a humankind that rejected his invitation to live as God's people. Suffered by God so that we may be healed, Jesus' death on the cross is God's ultimate act of reconciliation (Matthew 26:57-68; 27:11-50).

The top quadrant symbolizes the resurrection of Christ with an empty tomb from which emerges a banner of victory over sin and death (Luke 24). It signifies that God's spirit remains alive in the world, available to all who receive it.

The chancel window comes to a point with a crown, stars and palms, symbolizing Christ enthroned in glory at the right hand of God (Ephesians 1:16-23). So, too, does the Tree of Life come to a point—with everything converging upon God.





# Miscellany



Rich McManus won a prize at the Fall Picnic. He selected a bag labeled, "For the Person Who Has Everything"!



Bless this bunny and the children who love her.



At the beginning of the pandemic, a Kensington neighbor started posting daily "Bad Dad Jokes." This is a representative sample at day 1,276. While the worst of the pandemic is behind us, "groaner" jokes continue.

## FOR EVERYTHING THERE IS A SEASON

Dear Friends:

It has been my pleasure to service as your Contact editor for the past four years. This will be my last issue. In parting, I express my sincere thanks to my co-editor and principal writer, Carol Malmi; our pastors, who never complained about my bugging them for material and deadlines; to Natalie McManus, who was always the first work area chair to respond with Arts Committee news and events; to Paul Hurlburt for his "Looking Back" articles at NBUMC history in what has become a regular feature; to Christine Lee and Gwendolyn Daniels, our office managers, for their production assistance; to Linda Thompson and Joanna Voight who faithfully folded and prepared the Contact for mailing until we decided to "go digital;" and, to all the many contributors. Thanks, too, for indulging my humor and "free form" in the "Miscellany" feature.

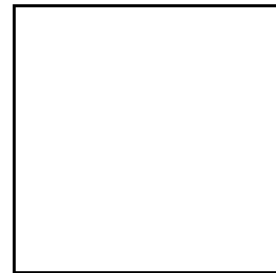
For Everything There Is a Season...

Peace, Ardoth Hassler

# North Bethesda United Methodist Church

10100 Old Georgetown Road  
Bethesda, MD 20814

Time/Value Dated Material



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Advent 2023 Issue

## North Bethesda United Methodist Church

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Bethesda MD 20814

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9:00AM- 3:00PM

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Website: [www.NorthBethesdaUMC.org](http://www.NorthBethesdaUMC.org)

Pastor: Rev. Kara Scroggins cell: 202-618-1078

Office Manager: Gwendolyn Daniels

Minister of Visitation: Linda Thompson

Music Director: Simon Charette

Director of Children's Ministries: Tsitsi Sithole

Church Board: board at northbethesdaumc.org

Contact Newsletter Editors and Principal Writers:

Ardoth Hassler-Short, Carol Malmi

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## Sunday Worship

10:00 a.m.

and via [YouTube](#)

Visit us at:



[northbethesdaumc.org](http://northbethesdaumc.org)



@lovingallneighbors



**NBUMC Weekly Podcast**