



# North Bethesda United Methodist Church

Fall 2025  
Volume 54 Issue 3

## **"The Stuff of Dreams"**

I was sitting with the choir, getting ready to preach a Christmas Eve sermon, when the District Superintendent walked to the lectern and announced that she had changed the scripture reading to something completely different. Panicked, I looked at my sermon and realized that, on top of the wrong scripture, I only had a few notes scratched out, and no ending. The lay reader walked to the front and began reading a passage that had nothing to do with Christmas at all...

...And then I woke up. Oh, the stress dreams of this season! While not everyone's worst dreams involve last-minute sermons, they often bring up all sorts of underlying fears or anxieties. Showing up to an exam unprepared? Falling from a high building? Being chased? According to several sleep and dream studies, the most common emotion in human dreams is, by a long shot, fear. Here we are in a culture that references dreams almost wholly positively-- "dream jobs," "American Dream," "dream teams"-- when there's a good chance that a lot of our nightly dream time will be spent in fear!

Despite all of the advances in the study of human emotions, behavior, and anatomy, dreams remain mysterious and only vaguely understood. I've heard that dreams are simply side effects of our brains storing the day's events into permanent memory. That's a safe, culturally-acceptable approach to dreams: conversation pieces, nothing more. I've also heard, though, that dreams carry meaning, reflect subconscious desires, and can even predict the future. One of my housemates used to keep a dream journal (interesting!) and would read from it at the dinner table (somewhat odd.) Listening to her detailed reports each evening was a bit too much like reading the strange, lengthy dream accounts for my Early Christian Mysticism class. Really meaningful stuff, I'm sure, but sometimes other people's dreams lose their power and/or hilarity in translation.

To recap: Dreaming has a tendency to make us anxious or afraid. Talking about our dreams with others makes us self-conscious or self-dismissive (you don't really think that dream is a prophecy...?) And hearing other people, like mystical roommates, recount their dreams on a daily basis can get tiresome and just plain bizarre.

So where does that leave us, as Christians in 2025? What do we, in our own historical and cultural contexts, make of the fact that dreams are a frequent God-to-human communication tool in the Bible? From Daniel to Pilate's wife, to Cornelius and both Josephs, there are dozens of active dreamers in Scripture. There are visions, warnings, prophecies, and encouragements. Are these dreams stories too "out there"? Are the Biblical dreams anxiety-producing, relatable, or just weird?

Join us in worship these next several weeks as we look at the Bible's most colorful (and some lesser-known) dream stories. Pay attention to the dream references around you--in songs (there is approximately one "dream song" in every Disney movie), public rhetoric, media, and daily conversation. Is there a place for God in all of this dream-talk? Pay attention to your own dreams, too, if you're someone who remembers them. I do kind of miss my housemate's dream stories, and promise to be a patient and seasoned listener if you've got one to share!

Dream On,  
*Rev. Kara*

# *Recent Scenes of* **Worship**



Above, our four Confirmands led us in worship on June 9<sup>th</sup>. They shared profound insights about their chosen scriptures and heartfelt individual statements of faith. Welcome to full membership in our church, Confirmands!



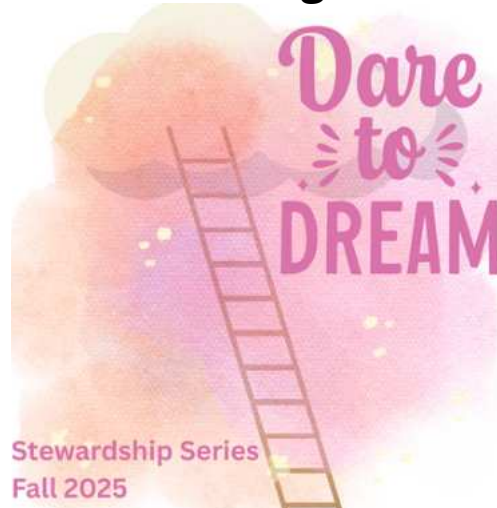
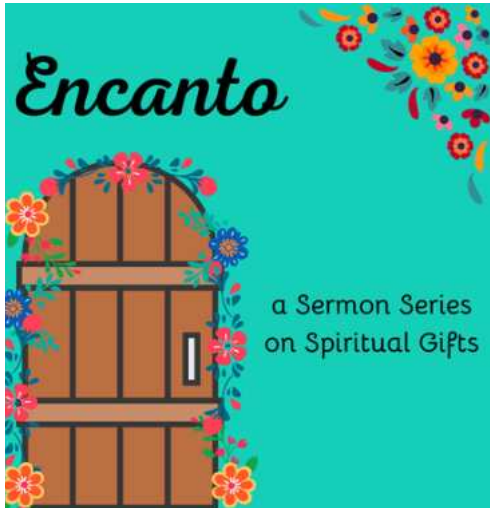
Above and below, some scenes from our summer worship series on sacred and secular songs. We were blessed by the musical gifts of our friends and community members who sang “You’ll Never Walk Alone,” “Rocky Mountain High,” “Let It Go,” and “The Rose.” Thank you!





# Coming Up In Worship

## Fall Worship: Considering the Call



Our two fall worship series go hand-in-hand as we move from exploring our individual spiritual gifts to having conversations about God's vision for our church as a collective body of beautifully and uniquely gifted people. How is God calling us to share our gifts, in this time and place? What dreams have the potential to be realized when we give generously as part of this active, faithful community?

## Blessing of the Pets

All creatures great and small are invited to join us for a Blessing of the Pets service on **Sunday, October 26<sup>th</sup>, at 4:30pm.** We will gather outside for a short service in which we give thanks for our beloved pets and animal friends. Feel free to bring a picture of your pet if physically transporting them proves too complicated. Stuffed animals also welcome! Thanks to our Arts Committee for helping us to offer this popular community event!



## All Saints Sunday

The First Sunday in November is a time when we remember those members of our congregation and members of our own families and friendship circles who have died in the last year. Everyone is invited to submit names to be printed in the bulletin and read aloud during the prayers; simply send the person's name, date of their passing (month is okay), and, if you'd like, a photo, to [office@northbethesdaumc.org](mailto:office@northbethesdaumc.org), by October 29th.

## Worship Themes/Scriptures

September 7: **Encanto & Spiritual Gifts**--Gifts benefit the community. 1 Corinthians 12:1-12  
September 14: **Encanto & Spiritual Gifts**--Not all gifts are obvious. Genesis 32:22-31  
September 21: **Encanto & Spiritual Gifts**--Expectations and pressure can stifle our gifts. Exodus 18:1-27  
September 28: **Encanto & Spiritual Gifts**--You are more than your gifts.  
October 5: **Dare to Dream**--Peter dreams of how to build a church: Acts 10:1-33  
October 12: **Dare to Dream**--Solomon dreams and asks God for wisdom: 1 Kings 3:3-14  
October 19: **Dare to Dream**--Pilate's wife speaks out after her dream: Matthew 27:11-24  
October 26: **Dare to Dream**--Joseph and Pharaoh's dreams help prepare for the future:  
November 2: **Dare to Dream & All Saints Sunday**--Dreams of a New Heaven & New Earth: Revelation 21:1-6



# *Recent Scenes of* **Service & Advocacy**



Above, our United Methodist contingent participated heartily in the Capital Pride Parade in June. Jenna and Javid were on the organizing committee, and NBUMC offered our prayers, our presence, and our financial gifts to this important event.

To the right, we had several members of our church serve as reading buddies (and meal-makers) for Project Transformation's reading camp this summer. We are excited about this new partnership!





# *Upcoming Opportunities for* **Service & Advocacy**

## **Hygiene Kits for UMCOR**

After last year's great success, our Service and Outreach Committee (SOC) is again leading us in a November effort to pack hygiene kits that UMCOR (The United Methodist Committee on Relief) sends as part of their early disaster response. This year, we are joining with all of the churches in our Tidal Basin District, hoping that our collective effort will result in the assembly and shipment of at least 2,000 kits. Let's see if we can contribute 300 of those! We invite you to donate towards the purchase of supplies for the kit (at \$10/kit, we hope to raise \$3000 by October 26<sup>th</sup> so that we have time to order what is needed) and to plan to join us on **Sunday, November 9<sup>th</sup>**, after worship, for a community packing event. You may donate by check to NBUMC or through our online giving platform, specifying UMCOR Hygiene Kits in your donation memo.

## **Grocery Delivery in Support of Immigrants & Refugees**

Are you looking for a concrete way you can help support people in our area who have been made to live in fear because of their immigration status? We have been invited to take part in a grocery delivery service for neighbors who have lost jobs or feel unsafe leaving their homes because of recent events. An organization called Food Justice DMV has been supporting immigrant neighbors through grocery deliveries since the pandemic, and the need for volunteers has grown dramatically over the last several months. NBUMC can sign up as a group for one or more of the following:

- Saturday DC/MD grocery deliveries - (Pick up food in Columbia Heights, DC between 10:00am - 11:30am, and deliver to a cluster of 5-10 families in VA, MD or DC. Deliveries will likely take 1-2.5 hours total)
- Tuesday VA grocery deliveries - time flexible, deliveries are to families in Fairfax, VA
- Pack food & essentials for babies (Thursdays between 5:45 and 8:00pm, in DC)

Rev.Kara is looking to get a group together for a one-time service day in November or December, and then individuals may choose to continue volunteering on an ongoing basis. Email [kara@northbethesdaumc.org](mailto:kara@northbethesdaumc.org) if you're interested!



## **Christmas Free Store**

This is an idea that came out of our Rummage Sale: to hold a "Holiday Free Store" event, in which we offer--for free--children's toys/gifts and Christmas decorations for community members who are in need. Our vision is to invite a particular community with which we already have some relationship (for example, the clients served by the Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless, Bethesda Help, or the Interfaith Women's Shelter) to come do their Christmas "shopping" at our church on a Saturday early in the holiday shopping season (tentatively scheduled for **Saturday, November 22nd.**)

A small team is working out the details, so stay tuned, but know that we will be asking for donations of new and used-but-gift-condition toys and decorations, and that we will also welcome helpers during the week before the sale and at the event itself. Contact Rev. Kara if you would like to join the planning team or be a game-day helper!



# *Recent Scenes of* **Nurture**



Our Children's Sunday School Program continues to flourish (above and left), and our Annual Fall Picnic (below and right, plus next page) was a wonderful gathering. We had 88 people join together on August 31<sup>st</sup> for delicious food and games for all ages. The piñata (next page) was an especially beloved event. Many thanks to our Membership & Evangelism Committee for their leadership, to JoAnne for leading the games, and to our grillers and all who helped to set up and clean up!









# Upcoming Opportunities for Nurture

## College Care Packages

It's time to show our college students some love! Throughout October, you're invited to bring any of the following items to a basket in the Narthex:

- Homemade treats that ship well
- Aspirin/Tylenol/Ibuprofen
- Tea/hot chocolate packets/instant drink mixes
- Dorm-friendly foods (ramen, snacks, etc.)
- Command strips/hooks
- Hand sanitizer
- Pens/Highlighters
- Cough Drops
- Gum
- Chapstick
- Gift Cards

We'll sign cards and pack the boxes together during Coffee Hour after worship on November 2nd. We currently have seven students in college, and we'll put together any extra items and cards to share with the United Methodist Campus ministries at local colleges.

## Men's Ministry

Our Methodist Men's Ministry (M3) is getting off the ground, thanks to the leadership of Zach Elkin and the enthusiastic response of several NBUMC men. All folks who identify as men, of all ages, are invited to take part. The first event of the fall will be a brunch from **10am to noon on Saturday, November 15<sup>th</sup>**. Come as you are and join us in the NBUMC Fellowship Hall for food and conversation! Send an email to [office@northbethesdaumc.org](mailto:office@northbethesdaumc.org) if you'd like to be included in email updates from Zach regarding this ministry.

## Women's Book Group

A new book group is getting started this fall! Linda Hall and Monica Dean are spearheading a women's book group, and their first meeting will be on Sunday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>, after worship. The book for this month is *The No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency*, by Alexander McCall Smith. If you'd like to get connected with this group and to be added to their email list, contact [office@northbethesdaumc.org](mailto:office@northbethesdaumc.org) and we'll send your information along to Monica and Linda!

## Coffee Hour

Have you noticed how great Coffee Hour is, and the difference it makes for our church community to have a friendly, snack-filled place to gather after worship? If you would like to express your gratitude by helping to bring snacks, set up, or clean up every so often, don't hesitate to reach out and let JoAnne know! You can email the church office to get connected, or simply find JoAnne or one of the other Coffee Hour Teammates in the kitchen on a Sunday!

## Youth Group

Our NBUMC-Faith UMC Youth Group for people in grades 6-12 is back in action this fall! The group alternates meeting locations between the two churches, and meets every Sunday from 5-7pm. This year, they will explore a bible study together called "T.B.D: Think, Believe, Do." There are also some fun field trips scheduled, including a Bowling Night on **October 19<sup>th</sup>** and Ice Skating on **November 16<sup>th</sup>**. Contact Suzanne Smedberg, [suzanne@faithworkshere.com](mailto:suzanne@faithworkshere.com) if you would like more information or to be added to the email list for updates. We are always looking for adults willing to provide dinner for our youth group every once in awhile, and/or to serve as a chaperone. Let Suzanne know if you are able to serve in this way!



# Looking Back

## NBUMC Had a Vibrant Youth Ministry in the 1970s

*by Paul Hurlburt, Church Historian*

The photos on these pages reflect the vibrant youth ministry our church enjoyed in the 1970s. There wasn't much text available to accompany the photos, so it's necessary to let the photos tell the story. What they show are groups making the most of the fleeting years of youth as they grow in faith, put it into practice and have a good time. As the author Joseph Conrad put it, "Oh youth, the strength of it, the faith of it, the imagination of it!" Perhaps these photos will prompt you to recall fond memories of fellowship in a one of these groups or a similar group in another time and place. My own experience in the Baptist Youth Fellowship in Vermont growing up the 1960s has never left me.

—Paul Hurlburt, Church Historian



Adult leader Bob Kalk, on the guitar at right, and one of the youth lead a singalong, early 1976.



Crossing a river takes teamwork. 1979.



The senior high youth accomplish a good deed, summer 1979.



Ginny Hawke and Associate Pastor Lynn Cairns camp out with the youth, summer 1977.





**Left:** A class convenes, early 1976.

**Right:** Youth take time out on a retreat to Chincoteague, Virginia, fall 1977.



Youth hold a carwash at church, spring, 1976.



# Community & Outreach Events

## Church Conference

Our annual Church Conference is scheduled as an in-person meeting for Saturday, October 18<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 8:30am. At Church Conference, we are led by our District Superintendent as we celebrate the ministries of the past year, and all church members are eligible to vote on matters such as updated Endowment and Memorial Gift policies, clergy compensation, membership reports, and any candidates for ordained ministry arising from our congregation. We will gather in our Sanctuary, along with the other United Methodist congregations in our geographic hub. If you are available to help provide hospitality for our guests that morning, please let Rev. Kara know.

## Town Hall Meeting

Our NBUMC Board invites everyone to join us for a Town Hall Meeting after worship on Sunday, October 26<sup>th</sup>. This will be a chance to hear updates about our goals for the year, to ask questions, and to share insights and opportunities as we look forward to the year ahead. If you have questions or feedback you would like to share ahead of time, feel free to email [board@northbethesdaumc.org](mailto:board@northbethesdaumc.org).

## Gay Men's Chorus of Washington Concert

Save the date for the Gay Men's Chorus of Washington concert on Saturday, November 8, 2025 at 3:00@ We will be hosting the Rock Creek Singers for a return visit and Seasons of Love, the Gospel ensemble of GMCW. The concert is free and open to all!

## Baby Shower for Rev. Kara & Matt

Save the date! We are excited to host a baby shower for Matt and Rev. Kara on Saturday, November 1<sup>st</sup>, at 11:00 a.m. People of all genders and ages are invited to celebrate in the excitement of the upcoming birth of Matt and Rev. Kara's baby. Gifts are not required, but for those who would like to bring something, a gift of clothes (any size from 3 months to 18 months) or a favorite children's book would be welcome. (Rev. Kara and Matt would love gender-neutral clothes, but they have shared that they are having a boy 😊) Our organizing team is also grateful for monetary donations to help with the cost of the shower, which will be catered. Feel free to reach out to Rose Aehele, Diane Walsh-Barberisi, or Penny Clarke if you're able to come and with any other questions. Email [office@northbethesdaumc.org](mailto:office@northbethesdaumc.org) if you need contact information.



# Calendar: Looking Ahead

## October 2025

- 4: Memorial service for Dick Getzinger, 11am in the Sanctuary
- 15: NBUMC Board Meeting after worship in the Parlor
- 18: Annual Church Conference, 8:30-10am in the Sanctuary
- 19: Youth Bowling Night, 5pm at Lucky Strike Montgomery Mall
- 25: Memorial service for Gordon Cragg, 11am in the Sanctuary
- 26: Town Hall Meeting, 11:30am in the Fellowship Hall
- 26: Blessing of the Pets, 4:30pm outside

## November 2025

- 1: Baby shower for Rev. Kara and Matt, 11:00am in the Fellowship Hall
- 2: Women's Book Group meeting, 11:30am (after worship)
- 8: Gay Men's Chorus of Washington Concert, 3pm in the Sanctuary
- 9: UMCOR Hygiene Kits packing event, 11:15am in the Fellowship Hall
- 15: Men's Ministry Brunch, 10am-noon in the Fellowship Hall
- 16: Youth Ice Skating trip, 5pm at Cabin John Ice Rink
- 22: (Tentative) Christmas Free Store event to serve our neighbors

## December 2025

- 7: Advent Festival for children & people of all ages, 4-5:30pm
- 21: Choir Lessons & Carols service, 10am in the Sanctuary
- 21: Youth Christmas Party, 5pm at Faith UMC
- 24: Christmas Eve Services, 5pm and 9pm in the Sanctuary
- 28: Pajama Zoom Church: 10am on Zoom





# North Bethesda United Methodist Church

10100 Old Georgetown Road  
Bethesda, MD 20814

Time/Value Dated Material

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Fall 2025

- New email policy! Because email phishing scams have recently been taking advantage of email addresses found in church newsletters, we will no longer be publishing personal email addresses for contact information in newsletter articles. If you need an email address for a ministry leader, you are welcome to contact the Church Office, and we will be happy to connect you!
- Photos of children and youth are printed only with permission of their parents/guardians, and/or we blur their faces out of respect for their privacy. We have not identified anyone by name in the photographs from this month. If you have questions or concerns, please contact the Church Office.
- Photo Credits: Jenna Love, Pamela Major, T.C. Morrow, Kara Scroggins, Tsitsi Sithole, Linda Thompson, Diane Walsh-Barberisi, and JoAnne Wong

## North Bethesda United Methodist Church

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Bethesda MD 20814

Phone: (301) 530-4342

Office Hours: Monday -Thursday  
9:00AM– 3:00PM

E-mail: office at northbethesdaumc.org

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

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## Sunday Worship

10:00 a.m.

and via [YouTube](#)

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



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NBUMC Weekly Podcast