

A Tribute to NBUMC's Last Charter Member

Helen Geraldine Everett Poole passed away on Monday, October 4, 2021, at her home surrounded by her family. Helen was born February 27, 1932, to Robert and Virginia Everett in Roanoke, Virginia and grew up there. She met her husband, Russell, when they both worked at the National Archives. After they married, they bought a home in Bethesda, not far from the future site of North Bethesda United Methodist Church.

Russell and Helen Poole were charter members of NBUMC. Indeed, Helen was NBUMC's last surviving charter member. Articles written by Church Historian Paul Hurlburt have many references to Russell and Helen. Russell served as treasurer at one time. Helen's daughter, Dawn Poole Swanson, recalls her mother being on Church Council and Trustees, at one time serving as the Trustee's secretary. Helen is said to have been our first nursery worker—a place where she could show her love “for the babies.”



A homemaker by choice, Helen raised her own children and provided daycare for many others, including both of Michele Bernot's daughters, Misty and Kara. They would all be known as “Maw-Maw's Bunch.” She later worked in the cafeteria at the Montrose Christian School (MCS) where several of her grandchildren were enrolled. Jim Short recalls having two—Jimmy and Heather Swanson—in his Sunday School class and because of their studies at MCS, how they always knew Bible passages when he was stumped.

Heather remembered how her grandmother raised them all “in church,” singing in choirs and acting in plays.

Helen was Rev. Debbie Scott's “go to” cook for church gatherings, especially Vacation Bible Schools and Camps. Rev. Deb also recalled how she could never budge Helen off the back pew. When asked why she always sat there, Helen's family said she replied, “because she could.”

Seldom missing church activities, Helen was present at church suppers and luncheons, Shrove Tuesday Pancake Suppers, plays and pageants. At every church event, Helen was the anchor and go-to advisor for a fleet of “her children,” and meted out warnings to shape up as well as comforting words. A search through recent years for pictures most often turned up pictures of Helen and her best friend, Margie Ellis (right). The two were inseparable. In recent times, Helen's NBUMC family will remember them both serving as greeters, welcoming all to worship. As Helen's health was failing, “Zurch” (Zoom church) kept her connected and made her feel a part of the church.



Margie and Helen

Things we learned that Helen loved:

- The ocean
- Duckpin Bowling
- Children
- Elvis
- Her “pew”
- Penny slots
- Graceland
- Board games
- Gardening
- NBUMC
- Game shows
- Midnight snacks
- Her family
- Purple and Red
- Musicals
- Cruising
- Hymns

Things Helen didn't like:

- The Bay Bridge!

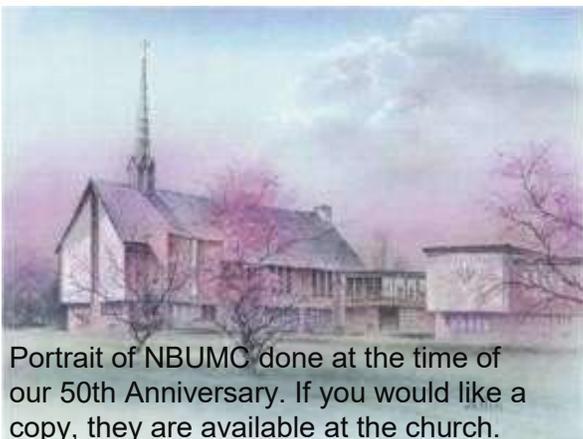


Out of concern for the privacy of our members and friends, we will no longer publish birthdays in the *Contact*. Look for them in the Weekly Email that the Church Office sends out on Thursdays or Fridays.

NBUMC Pays Mission Shares

“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”
– Luke 12:34

Bishop LaTrelle Easterling (Baltimore-Washington Conference, UMC) wrote in her January 28th, 2022 letter: “We celebrate because this past year, in spite of challenging economic uncertainties, 78 percent of churches in the Baltimore-Washington Conference acted out of a spirit of discipleship and paid 100 percent of their mission shares. ... This generous giving was a testimony to the work and spirit of God alive in the Baltimore-Washington Conference.”



Portrait of NBUMC done at the time of our 50th Anniversary. If you would like a copy, they are available at the church.

Photo Credits: Michele Bernot, Trevor Hammond, Ardoth Hassler, Natalie McManus, Sara Barakat. Photos of children shared with parents' permission.

North Bethesda United Methodist Church

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Dear Church Family of NBUMC;

Even though the Holidays of Christmas and New Years are usually very happy times, it sometimes ends up being very sad for some of us when unexpected things happen.

John and I took our usual vacation to Florida for the Holidays however, this year was very different in the fact that I (Mary Lou) lost my brother Delmer Coffey who was my last sibling and my "Big Brother".

We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to everyone for your messages, cards and phone calls in expressing your condolences in our loss. Please continue to keep my brothers' wife Margaret and their daughter Susan in your prayers.

A heartfelt 'Thank You',



What a lovely gift from my church family. I am very appreciative of your generous gift. Praying we could make more visits in the near future and feel safe in doing so.

Blessings, Linda Thompson



We love our children. However, for reasons of security and privacy, we do not identify them by name in our publications or online without parental permission.

Contact Deadline for Pentecost and Summer Issue: May 1, 2022

Message from the Pastor

As someone who gets lost with remarkable regularity—hiking, cross country skiing, in shopping malls, and every time I drive in Virginia—I love a good “You Are Here” sticker on a map. It is immensely helpful to know where I am in the context of everything else; to see where I’ve been, where I’m going, how I might get there. Without the help of a map or a landmark, orienting myself seems impossible.

One word (there are many!) that I would use to describe the last two years is “disorienting.” We’ve lost our sticker on the map! Where are we? I’ve noticed in conversations that we have a hard time determining whether an event we’re remembering was last year or the year before. (“It was 2021, right? Or 2020? Wait, what year is it now?”) Milestones that we use to mark time have been altered: watching a graduation over Zoom; funerals delayed until families could safely gather; new babies going months or years without being held by members of their “village,” who must settle for adoring them from afar. A sense of progress—where we’re heading as individuals, as a church, or as a society—seems murky, and our physical movement has changed as well. Some people stopped commuting to work at all, while others whose in-person presence is essential must find the safest possible way to report to work. Maybe you haven’t been on a plane in two years, or maybe you haven’t been inside our church building in months. I have learned to worship at my desk, sitting on the floor in the square of my apartment that has the most reliable internet, and bundled up outside in the church parking lot.



All of this has left me feeling a little bit lost, with the almost-daily need to re-orient myself: Where am I? What am I doing? As a church, too, I feel we are feeling a bit disoriented and unsure of where we are on the map in this wilderness.

And so we are going to take the gift offered to us by six weeks of Lent to ground ourselves in a sense of place. The lectionary texts for this year focus on physical locations—your room, a party, the street, the Promised Land, etc.—and invite us to slow down and recognize God’s presence with us in a particular place. The resources we’ll be using were developed by a few of my seminary classmates, who have just launched a worship design community called Barn Geese Worship. I am grateful for the richness made possible by collaboration, and for the permission to share their copyrighted material (including the series logo, daily devotion, and worship elements) with you. I will close with the words of one of the contributors, my colleague Rev. Katie Pocalycko (currently at Living Faith Lutheran Church in Rockville), to introduce the series:

Of all the liturgical seasons, Lent is the one that best proclaims how no matter where you are—death included—God can find you. Any location—including wherever you are right now—can become a place for resurrection.

So welcome. You Are Here.

- Rev. Kara

Welcoming New Members

We are thrilled to host a New Members Class this winter, which will meet via Zoom from 7-8pm on Thursday, February 3rd and Thursday, February 10th; and from 3-4pm on Sunday, February 20th. We hope to welcome those who will be joining the congregation during an in-person worship service in early March. If you are new to the community (or have been around for awhile but not formally joined the church as a member) please reach out to Rev. Kara to find out more!

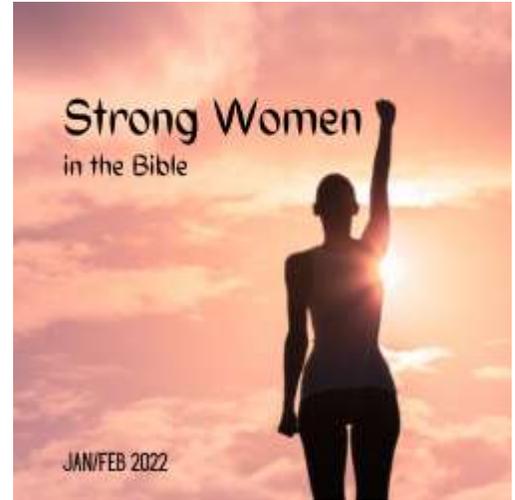
WORSHIP THEMES

Strong Women in the Bible Series January 16-February 20

For an extended Black History Month observation (from MLK weekend through the month of February), we are taking time in worship to learn the stories of six of the Bible's many strong women, and then connecting aspects of their character and resilience to more contemporary African American leaders. We have already gotten to know Shiphrah and Puah, Deborah, and Abigail, and have celebrated the legacies of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Judge Jane Bolin, and Judge Constance Baker Motley. Join us for the rest of the series!

February 6: Esther and Vashti Esther 4:1-17
February 13: Anna Luke 2:22-38
February 20: Tabitha Acts 9:36-42

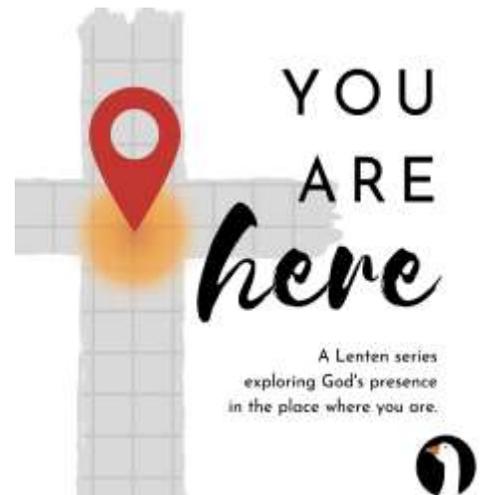
Sunday, February 27th, our youth and children will lead us in worship for the culmination of Black History Month.



Lent: You Are Here

March 6-April 10

- March 6: The Promised Land Deuteronomy 26:1-11 and Luke 4:1-13
- March 13: The Stronghold Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18, Psalm 27, Luke 13:31-35
- March 20: Ground Zero Luke 13:1-9
- March 27: The Party Joshua 5:9-12, Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32
- April 3: The Wadi Isaiah 43:16-21, Psalm 126, John 12:1-8
- April 10: The Street Luke 19:28-40
- Maundy Thursday, April 14: The Table John 13:1-17, 31b-35
- Good Friday, April 15: The Cross John 18:1-19; 42
- Easter Sunday, April 17: The Garden John 20:1-18



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Kudos for Rev. Kara from Bishop Nathan Baxter

On January 30, Rev. Kara's sermon about "Strong Women of the Bible" was entitled, "[The Strength to Seek Peace.](#)" It was based on 1 Samuel 25:2-35 about Abigail—a theology lesson in itself for many of us. In the sermon, Rev. Kara referenced a sermon Rev. Nathan Baxter, then Dean of the Washington Cathedral, preached post 9/11 on September 14, 2001. Specifically, she spoke to the influence the message had on Rep. Barbara Lee, as she was the only person in Congress to vote against extending Presidential war powers. My husband and I are acquainted with now-Retired Bishop Baxter. I wrote to him and shared the link to Rev. Kara's message. He replied, "What a powerfully insightful and challenging sermon (and not just because I was quoted). Your UMC pastor is quite a preacher. ... She's good. Clearly a gift to her hearers."

We at NBUMC are blessed.

- Ardoth Hassler

Services and Practices During Lent

Ash Wednesday, March 2

Ash Wednesday is traditionally a day of prayers, repentance, and intention-setting for the season ahead. The Sanctuary will be open from noon to 5:30pm for anyone who wishes to come for a moment (or longer) of quiet centering and prayer. At 6pm, we will have an in-person outdoor service. Join us around a fire pit to hear scriptures, pray, and reflect. We will devise a covid-safe way to receive the mark of ashes as well. For those who would prefer to attend virtually, we will have an 8pm Zoom service. You may use our regular Zoom worship link to access the service, which will be about 30 minutes long.

Midweek Worship: Wednesdays in Lent

This year for Lent, we will be offering a Midweek Worship Service at 7pm on Wednesdays (March 9, 16, 23, 30, and April 6). These services, all held on Zoom, will each complement the preceding Sunday of our series, and invite us into a justice-oriented Lent. We'll contemplate the connection between the Promised Land and the plight of contemporary refugees; between Abram's nighttime vision and our call to creation care; and between the anointing of Jesus' feet at Bethany and ministry to death row inmates. There will be centering music and prayer, scripture, a reflection, and an opportunity to respond in individual journaling or small group conversation. Join us via the regular Zoom worship link.

Daily Devotional

We will share by email (and have printed copies available upon request) a daily devotional for Lent that ties into our theme of place by taking us into the Holy Land with original photographs, brief reflections, mindful intentions, and short prayers.

Maundy Thursday Plans are TBD! April 14

Both Shrove Tuesday and Maundy Thursday are typically planned by our Arts Committee, which will meet in early February to determine what we can reasonably plan for this year of continued pandemic concern. Stay tuned!

Good Friday Stations of the Cross Experience April 15

On Friday, April 15, we will set up a series of prayer stations for Good Friday that you may move through at your own pace. Different from a traditional Stations of the Cross layout, these stations focus on actual physical locations identified in John's gospel. You will be provided with a guidebook and any physical objects needed for the interactive experience. We haven't yet determined in what timeframe the stations will be open for you to visit, but we will let you know by mid-March.

Lenten Bible Study Small Groups

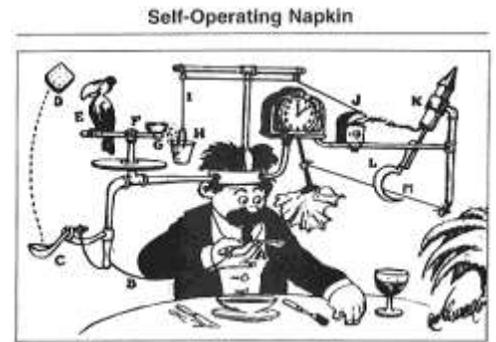
Look out for a survey sent by email to determine the best meeting time(s) for weekly Bible Study groups during Lent! The questions will focus on the previous Sunday's readings and will invite group as well as individual reflection.

The Lectionary

The Revised Common Lectionary, a service of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, may be found on this [link](#). We are currently in Year C,

COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

When Rev. Kara Scroggins arrived at NBUMC she found a conglomeration of communication methods, practices, formats, and technical protocols that had grown up over many years. It worked, but much like a Rube Goldberg invention works: with a lot of hiccups. We've formed a Communications Team consisting of Rev. Kara, Rose Aehle, Ardoth Hassler, Chris Lee and Carol Malmi to re-organize content, update technology, and improve security and privacy. One consideration in redesigning NBUMC's communications suite is the congregation's increasing level of proficiency with virtual and online communication.



Weekly Mail. One of our first tasks is working on our mailing lists—creating a list for congregational announcements and mailing lists for committees. These are the “business” channels supporting committees and work groups as well as “broadcast” messages for the whole church. The “Flash” will still be available for those who like its informal, personal, chatty format.

Website. High on the agenda is updating our Website. Design and content will be refreshed. If you have pictures of the church or other graphics or suggestions for content, please contact Rose Aehle.

Weekly Email. We're also structuring the Weekly Email to be the “go to” place for church announcements and updates. Remember when we printed the bulletin every week, we had inserts with information about upcoming events and opportunities? They're back, in the Weekly Email. Committee Chairs and others are being asked to submit items updating church members on their activities, no later than 9am Thursdays for inclusion in the Weekly Email.

In this issue of the Contact, you will notice some changes already. Out of respect for members' privacy, we are no longer publishing birthdays. They will still be available (with your permission) in the Weekly Email. In order to provide more content, we're providing a link to the Lectionary.

The “Comms Team” welcomes your input and indeed, would welcome others with writing skills, web design experience, and more. This is a “behind the scenes activity” with only occasional meetings! Let Rev. Kara know if you are interested in volunteering.

A Tribute to NBUMC's Last Charter Member

Continued from page 1

A celebration of life for Helen was held at NBUMC on October 30, 2021—a service which Helen planned. Her family recounted her life and loves. The clear message was Helen's unconditional love for her family—her children and their spouses, grandchildren and their spouses, great-grandchildren, her brothers and their wives and children—the whole extended family. Great-grandson Greg Davis described her as “Queen of the Family.” Several spoke of her inseparable best friend - Margie Ellis. Her longtime favorite, Elvis Presley, sang “How Great Thou Art,” and Dawn sang “Amazing Grace.”

Rev. Kara spoke of the safety and comfort Helen gave her family, and especially to all children, saying “you are mine” just as God says, “I'll be with you. Do not be afraid.” Her words were a comfort.

Helen made a difference in life, especially with her family and at North Bethesda. May she rest in peace. She is greatly missed. Her passing signifies the end of an era in our church.

- Ardoth Hassler, ed.

**Rev. Jeff Jones read:
1 John 1:5-10 (NIV)**

5 ... God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. 6 If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

LOOKING BACK

Paul Hurlburt, Church Historian

Our Church Took Form as Bricks and Mortar in 1958

The building we now know as North Bethesda United Methodist Church took form in two stages, first a multi-purpose unit including an auditorium we now call Johnson Hall, and second, the sanctuary that was built six years later. The auditorium was where our congregation first gathered on our own premises, after meeting since 1956 successively in National Guard Barracks, Grosvenor Elementary School, and Walter Johnson High School. Our church matriarch and last surviving charter member, Helen Poole, who passed away October 4, 2021, worshipped in all those places.



First stage of our building: the auditorium we now call Johnson Hall on the upper level (right). The main entrance faces Old Georgetown Road at ground level (left). The steps led to an unpaved upper-level parking lot. The auditorium was used for worship.

Under the heading, “Building news !!!!!” the May 1958 church newsletter, the *Synopsis*, reported, “Groundbreaking ceremonies were held May 11, 2:00p.m. on the church lot. The Rev. Dr. Asbury Smith, the Washington West District Superintendent, turned the first spade full.” Ministers from several neighboring churches including Bethesda Methodist Church took part. Afterwards, Kalwey and Kitty Johnson held an open house in their home nearby. Kal was Chairman of the Nominations Committee, and Kitty was General Superintendent of the Church School.

Less than a year later, the new church facility had been built, with the first worship service held there on Sunday, March 8, 1959, at 11:00a.m. Statistics printed in the bulletin showed that 400 adults “were in church” that Sunday, 183 children attended Sunday school, 50 new members “united with the church,” and three infants were baptized. It’s hard to imagine all those people occupying space in what was a half-built church.

The following Sunday at 3:00p.m. Dr. Asbury Smith conducted a consecration service. Lt. Col. Bruce Witwer sang “Bless This House,” by Brahe, the choir sang the “Festival Te Deum” by Buck, and the service concluded with the congregation standing for a rendition of Handel’s “Hallelujah Chorus” by the choir. Earlier at the morning service March 15, Pastor Richard Irvin preached, and Kitty Johnson sang, “He Shall Feed His Flock,” by Handel.



Original main entrance facing Old Georgetown Road.

The building of our church was cause for hallelujahs, but for *Synopsis* editor Betty Cline *church* meant much more than a building. “I expect my church to be the conscience of the community, to speak out on issues, and to provide leadership for its members,” she wrote in the March 1958 issue, reporting on a National Urban Convocation sponsored by the Methodist Church at the Willard Hotel in downtown Washington. A major theme was that “the church must change with the change in our culture, if it hopes to continue reaching people,” she reported. “I don’t want my church to tell me what it is presumed that I WANT to hear, but to present me with a challenge and a goal toward which to work.”

Future columns will show how our church “showed up and did something,” to paraphrase Rev. Kara, as we continue to look back on the history of our church.

HAPPENINGS



Rev. Kara and Rev. Joye celebrate All Saints Day



Lessons and Carols December 12, 2021



Outdoor Communion December 5, 2021



Christmas Eve Family Service Keli, Eline and Ikaia with Rev. Kara



Emily and Sydney sing "Silent Night"



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

HAPPENINGS

A Blessing in Disguise

Ardoth Hassler

On December 6, 2021, the Internet went out for both NBUMC and the Fernwood Montessori School. Three different Verizon crews worked at NBUMC on December 7th, and ended up stringing hundreds of feet of temporary fiber-optic cable from the street, through a tree, past the old parsonage, around the parking lot, beside the playground and into the building. Verizon would then come back to bury new fiber underground on the property to make the connections permanent.



A tree works when there is no pole where you need it.

The “techies” at NBUMC—presently Ardoth Hassler and Ken Ow, in consultation with Rev. Kara, Diane Walsh-Barberisi (Trustees), and Jesse Jennings (Asst. Treasurer)—saw this as an opportunity to relocate the fiber’s entry point and improve the Internet connectivity on the first floor and especially in the Sanctuary. The earliest Verizon could perform this work was between Christmas and New Year’s Day.

Alas, December 23rd, NBUMC’s Internet went out again, but the school was fine (and not in session!). Walking the perimeter, Ardoth found the problem. A critter, most likely a squirrel, had chewed on the wire!



Pesky critter damage

Christmas Eve was tense. Rev. Kara and Chris Lee, our Office Manager, were in the office preparing for Christmas Eve service. Both used their cell phones as hotspots to connect to the Internet. When the Verizon tech arrived, he quickly confirmed the line was out at the site of the critter damage. Fortunately, he had a 400-foot fiber cable on his truck and was able to patch around the problem. Talk about just in time! Rev. Kara was on the verge of moving the 4:30pm virtual service entirely to YouTube, which, fortunately she no longer needed to do.



Verizon tech, Paul, and Jim Short hide cable in the office.

On December 29, Jim Short and Ardoth were onsite all day with Verizon as they relocated the fiber entry point, determined the path for new wiring, and then ran new coaxial cable into the Sanctuary. “Engineer Jim” served as the Verizon tech’s helper, while Ardoth “supervised.” After New Years, Ken, Jim and Ardoth spent a day at church, securing the equipment, reconnecting the sound system, restringing the wires in the office, and making sure it all worked!



Ken Ow moving wires.

What started out as a service interruption turned into a blessing in disguise. NBUMC now has sufficient bandwidth in the Sanctuary to support streaming—something that has long been our goal. Piggy backing on work Verizon had to do to reconnect the church saved us money on not having to pay out of pocket for all the work that was done. The \$1,000 grant we received from the Baltimore-Washington Conference of the UMC is being applied to fund the project. Are we finished? No. A building made of brick and cinder block poses many challenges to Internet connectivity—both wireless and wired. We have work planned to improve our connectivity in Johnson Hall and our Sunday School classrooms downstairs at a later date. Grateful “thank yous” to all involved.

PS: “Help Wanted!” Trustees, and Ken and Ardoth, would greatly appreciate assistance from other members who have experience setting up and managing network services.

HAPPENINGS

HELPING BETHESDA HELP

NBUMC was very generous to Bethesda Help in 2021. As a church, we donated around 850 pounds of food to the pantry. The food drive in December gathered a record of 342 pounds of food. There were lots of canned meats, vegetables and fruit, as well as beans, rice and pasta.

In 2022, SOC will be running quarterly food drives for Bethesda Help, and we encourage you to participate sometime during the year.



Thank you so much to all who donated to Bethesda Help.

Sara Barakat,
Chair, Social and Outreach Committee (SOC)



Angela Harvey, the [Bethesda Help](#) coordinator, wrote: *"Thank you for coordinating the event. I put all of the food away – our Pantry 'runneth over' with food – such a good problem to have at this time. Please pass along my thanks to the parishioners of NBUMC for their kind donation. The food will help our neighbors!"*

Thank you so much to all who have donated to [Bethesda Help](#) this year.

MEMBERSHIP AND EVANGELISM

Happy New Year to Everyone from the Membership and Evangelism Committee!

We have made updates to the new Directory. However, we are holding publication until we can include our new members who will be joining in March. The directories will be mailed to you. However, if you would like to pick up your copy at the Church Office, please let Chris Lee know and we will hold it for you.

Best wishes for a very Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year.

Mary Lou Griffin

NBUMC Elves Deliver Christmas Spirit to Greentree Road Shelter

The mission of the National Center for Children and Families "is to create a total, healthy living environment for vulnerable children, youth and families, and to provide quality of life which empowers their ability to thrive and demonstrate responsibility". It is solely funded by individuals and corporations. One-hundred percent of all donations, both cash and in-kind, go directly to a child or family in need.

The [National Center for Children and Families](#) (NCCF) is located on Greentree Road's highest hill in Bethesda. North Bethesda United Methodist Church joined other religious organizations, corporations, and individuals to donate toys, gifts, and necessities to assist nearly 50,000 children, from 1,568 families, served by the shelter. The children attend ten local school districts. The toys added merriment to the Christmas season for these families. The gifts and necessities took the form of school supplies, groceries, coats, shoes, eye glasses, dental care and much more.

NBUMC head Elf Natalie McManus, Arts Committee chair (pictured right), and her helper elf, Michele Bernot, delivered NBUMC's overflowing "Christmas gift wagon" on Wednesday, December 8, 2021. Jermaine Lemons, NCCF

program director and in-kind resource manager, said he and the staff are grateful for the many donations from the members of NBUMC.



HAPPENINGS

Mission Accomplished: NBUMC 2019 Rummage Sale Remnants Furnish Afghan Refugees' Homes

With the exception of a single table, we were able to find a good home on Dec. 18 and 19 for all of the leftover, canceled-rummage-sale furniture that we have had sitting and gathering dust on the stage in Johnson Hall. My friend and neighbor, Ron Lobel (Rockville Temple Beth Ami), (right), reached out to me as he is in close contact with several recently arrived Afghan refugee families living in Northern Virginia who needed furniture. Thanks to Jacqui and Gordon Cragg who helped clean and organize the furniture. Ron and I, using a truck he borrowed from his son-in-law, made a couple of trips and stops, and delivered said furniture to several extremely needy and very grateful, beautiful, melt your heart families. One couch was leftover in the truck and would not fit up any stairwells, so we donated it to [A Wider Circle](#). A good interfaith-team community effort! - Rich McManus, SOC



February 2022



March 1

March 2



Women's History Month
March 2022



HOLY WEEK

April 10

April 15

April 17

Methodist Dis-unity

The Rev. Dr. Joye Jones

Methodism arrived in the American colonies along with English, Irish, Scottish and Welsh immigrants. Methodist teachings and practices often appealed to African Americans, both free and enslaved, because of the emphasis on free grace: Grace was God's gift, freely offered to all without reservation. In addition, Methodist preachers went to where people lived, and spoke the language that ordinary – frequently uneducated – people could understand. They preached to both free and enslaved people of any race or color, often in mixed groups – men and women, black and white. Many preachers spoke out against slavery.

John Wesley's model for the Methodists expected each person to be part of a "class meeting", a small group who met regularly with a leader. The class built community and held each other accountable in love. Both whites and African Americans participated in class meetings, but they were usually segregated. Sometimes African Americans served as class leaders.

Methodists depended on "travelling preachers" to lead worship and preach wherever Methodists were to be found. In America, they traveled circuits of hundreds of miles, and were usually in a given location only a few times a year. In the absence of the travelling preacher, Methodist worship was led by local preachers and exhorters. African Americans often served in these roles, but they could not be licensed as travelling preachers.

In 1774, Wesley published a highly-influential treatise entitled *Thoughts upon Slavery*. In it, he asks how could the enslavement of people and the treatment they receive be defended "...on the principles of even heathen honesty?"

His answer? "The grand plea is, 'They are authorized by law' But can law, human law, change the nature of things? Can it turn darkness into light, or evil into good? By no means. Notwithstanding ten thousand laws, right is right, and wrong is wrong still. There must still remain an essential difference between justice and injustice, cruelty and mercy. So that I still ask, 'Who can reconcile this treatment of the negroes, first and last, with either mercy or justice?'"

Even before Methodists became a church in America, the Methodist annual conference required that all travelling preachers emancipate their slaves. When the Methodist Episcopal Church came into being, the Conference declared that all slave-holding travelling preachers be expelled. In addition, slave-holding Methodist laity were required to grant deeds of emancipation to all their enslaved people on a set time-table.

It never happened.

Methodists remained strongly divided about slavery, and tended to follow the dominant culture in the various parts of the US.

A couple of examples:

1834, From *Zion's Herald of Boston*: "Slavery is one general system of violence, robbery, injustice, vice and oppression, ... it is a sin in the sight of Heaven, and ought to cease at once, now and forever."

1838: "It is the sense of the Georgia Annual Conference that slavery, as it exists in the United States, is not a moral evil."

Many Methodists in the non-slave-holding states became active in the abolition movement. Methodists who kept people enslaved continued to do so. Many Methodist bishops, in attempts to prevent schism, sided with the pro-slavery groups, and effectively silenced the abolitionist wing.

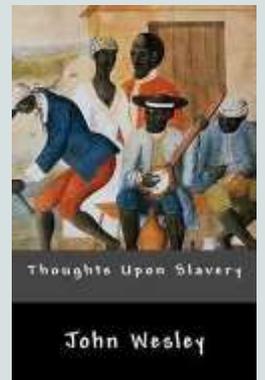
The issue of slavery came to a head at the General Conference of 1844. The flashpoint was Bishop James O. Andrew of Georgia, who owned slaves that his wife had inherited. And in Georgia, it was illegal to emancipate slaves. How could the Conference expect him to disobey the law?

Accepting irreconcilable differences, a split conference approved a plan to divide the MEC and its assets. In 1846 the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, came into being.

This schism wasn't resolved until 1939, when The Methodist Church was formed by the reunion of the MEC, the MEC South and another group, the Methodist Protestant Church.

The new Methodist Church had many issues to resolve, many of them going back to the original conflicts. Although slavery no longer existed in the US, racism had its grip on much of the nation, and Jim Crow laws coupled with legal segregation ruled in the south. The new denomination made a number of structural changes, but one in particular showed how much still needed to be done. This was the creation of Jurisdictions.

The Methodist Church in the U.S. was divided into six Jurisdictions for more streamlined governance. Five Jurisdictions were based on geography (e.g., Northeast Jurisdiction). But the 6th, the Central Jurisdiction,



NBUMC Endowment Fund

Members

Dick Getzinger, who served as Investment Committee Chair and Treasurer (sometimes both at once) for much of the Endowment Fund's twenty-five-year history, retired from the Investment Committee as of December 31, 2021. During his tenure, the value of the Fund rose from an initial \$35,000 to almost \$1,900,000 and the Committee cumulatively released over \$745,000 of investment gain to meet church needs. The Committee bade Dick farewell with deep respect and gratitude for his long service to the Endowment Fund and to the well-being of the Church.

The Investment Committee selected member Carol Malmi to be the new Chair. Jim Short, who remains a member, stepped down as Secretary when his commitment to managing a large new grant program for the University of Maryland limited his ability to attend meetings. At the January 11, 2022 Investment Committee quarterly meeting, the members unanimously approved Michele Bernot to join the committee and serve as Secretary. Michele, who was previously Chair of Trustees and is now Secretary of the Finance Committee, brings welcome strengths and experience. She worked closely with the realtor to maximize the sale value of the Parsonage, which added \$600,000 to the Endowment Fund in 2019.

IC Members

Carol Malmi, Chair
Marv Burt, Investment
Manager
Rich McManus, Treasurer
Michele Bernot,
Secretary
Jim Short, member

Investment Fund Performance

At the Investment Committee's January 11, 2022 quarterly meeting, Treasurer Rich McManus's report stated that the total value of the Endowment Fund as of December 31, 2021 was \$1,872,800. Monies from annual investment gains, released for church needs but not yet spent, total \$91,983.

Endowment Fund Policy Update Project

Carol Malmi and Rich McManus were assigned to manage development of updated Endowment Fund policies. The new set of policies will ensure that NBUMC is compliant with current IRS regulations and Maryland laws. It draws upon best practices and recommendations from the United Methodist Foundation, MidAtlantic Conference. The process has included several levels of review and receipt of specific recommendations and advice from expert readers. The next step is to incorporate changes approved by the Investment Committee, and then send the newly revised version to Trustees for their review. Final steps will include Church Council review and a Charge Conference to formally implement the revised policies.

The United Methodist Foundation strongly advised that NBUMC engage a well-qualified attorney to review the revised policies. Its recommendation led to a strong candidate, who is under consideration. A second candidate is also under consideration.

Ideally, the policy update process will conclude with a Charge Conference before May 2022, one year after the project began.

- Carol Malmi, Investment Committee Chair

Methodist Dis-unity - Continued from page 12

was made up of "The Negro Annual Conferences, the Negro Mission Conferences and Missions ..." (*Book of Discipline 1939*, ¶26, p 28) Thus Methodist churches on the same street could be in different annual conferences and jurisdictions based simply on the race of the members. In a church that was already separate, with whites and blacks rarely worshipping together, racial segregation became church law. (Local examples are Mt. Vernon Place & Asbury Methodist Churches.)

The Methodist Church remained legally segregated until 1968, when the newly formed United Methodist Church abolished the Central Jurisdiction. All jurisdictions and annual conferences are now defined by geography. And, in 2000, the General Conference formally repented of our racism.

Both the AME and AME Zion denominations came from the Methodist Episcopal Church due to ongoing and unresolved racial issues. The first AME bishop, Richard Allen, had been ordained by Francis Asbury. Another African-American Methodist denomination, the Christian ME Church came from the MEC South after the civil war.

NBUMC Emergency Plan

The Staff Parish Relations Committee developed an Emergency Preparedness Plan in 2021 to help North Bethesda United Methodist Church prepare for various forms of emergency events. Christena Johnston-Pulliam, SPRC member, noticed that the church did not already have a published plan covering the activities and preparedness practices and resources that the church had on site. Drawing on her background in emergency operations and planning, she and the other SPRC members worked with helpful information provided by Chris Lee, Pastor Jeff and Reverend Kara to finalize a plan last fall. It is now part of the church files for future reference. A copy is also posted on the bulletin board to the left of the church office door.

The plan covers medical emergencies, emergency closing, fire drills, intruder threats, and other security emergencies, along with information on the responsibilities of church staff and information about church equipment and resources such as location of fire extinguishers and medical equipment. The SPRC hopes that this plan will assist NBUMC with its preparedness posture as it continues to navigate and thrive in the community.

Christena Johnston-Pulliam
Chair, NBUMC SPRC

Safe Sanctuaries Policy Updated

On December 15, 2021, the Church Council approved an update of the Safe Sanctuaries policy originally approved by the Staff-Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) in 2008. This was a work of love begun and shepherded, through changes in SPRC Chairs and even a change in pastors, by **Pat Hilling** and the whole SPRC team.

The major changes in the policy are additive:

- NBUMC is a reconciling church, welcoming all
- Sexual identities of children and vulnerable adults will be respected
- Physical affection should be limited and must be appropriate to the age of the child or vulnerable adult. Touching should ordinarily be initiated by the child and only in the presence of other workers. A child's preference not to be touched will be respected. The same policy holds for vulnerable adults.

Safe Sanctuaries is an overt expression in making congregations safe places where children, youth, and elders may experience the abiding love of God and fellowship within the community of faith.

<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/equipping-leaders/safe-sanctuaries>

Most of the former policies are still required, such as the two-adult rule for in-person meetings and vetting/background checks of paid staff and volunteers who work with children and/or vulnerable adults. It will soon be posted on our website to replace the former policy at <https://www.northbethesdaumc.org/safe-sanctuary-policy/>.

Flora Milans, SPRC, Outgoing Chair

Miscellany

Giant Card Program Earned NBUMC \$750 in 2021

Thanks to our loyal supporters, the Giant Card Fund-Raising Program earned NBUMC \$750 in 2021.

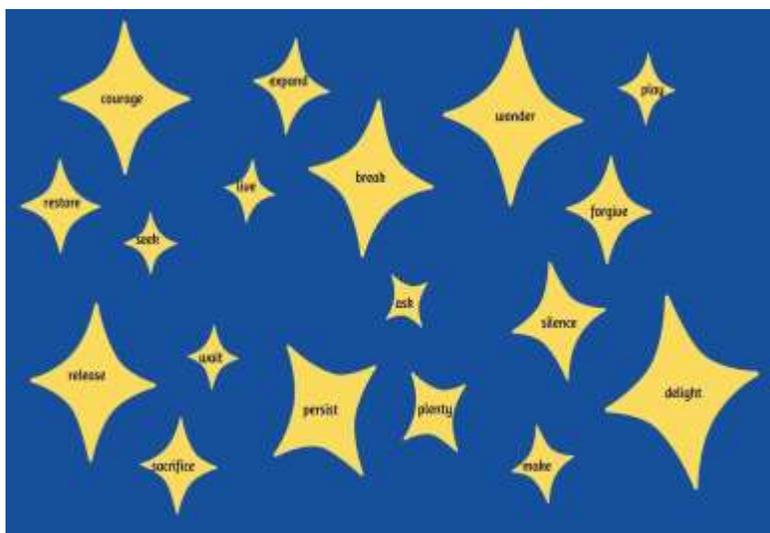
Cards were also purchased to provide emergency aid to individuals and families impacted by the ongoing pandemic and other calamities.

NBUMC sells Giant "Cash for Causes" cards at face value to shoppers, who use them like gift cards to make purchases at Giant Food Stores. Giant sells the cards to nonprofits at a 5% discount, which goes to the church when the cards are sold. NBUMC does not endorse Giant over any other store, but the financial support from Giant is appreciated.

To learn more about the program just ask Paul Hurlburt, NBUMC's Giant Card Fund-Raising Program Manager.



Helen and John Welton helping with Advent Decorations.



What's Your Star?

On Epiphany Sunday (January 2nd,) we did a "Star Words" activity in Zoom worship. The invitation was to look at the array of words and find one that spoke to, challenged, or otherwise drew you in. Maybe your "Star Word" is still on a post-it note that you see every day, or maybe you've forgotten what it was. We are reprinting the graphic as a reminder. You may reflect on what significance this word has on your life, or how God might be speaking to you through it. Maybe you'll incorporate it into a daily prayer or journaling activity. At the end of 2022, we hope to be able to gather and share what our Star Word experiences have been.

ACTS of Prayer

The Rev. Joye Jones learned a guide to structuring a prayer from her father. Always include:

- Adoration
- Confession
- Thanksgiving
- Supplication

Epiphany Star Words

God of starlight,

Allow me to use this star word as a tool to see you in everyday life.

May it guide me, as the star guided the Magi.

May it illuminate your path, as light always does.

Amen.

Adapted from a prayer by Sarah Are | Star words from A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.



Congratulations!

Our own Ken Ow was awarded the AARP Driver Safety Award for 2021. Ken has been teaching driver safety for several years.



Mark your calendars for **MARCH 13th!** Move your clock **AHEAD 1 hour.**

LET IT SNOW!

Personally, I hope there's enough for the kids to play in the snow and make some memories, as well as some snowmen for the rest of us to enjoy. Kathy May

North Bethesda United Methodist Church

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Bethesda, MD 20814

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FEBRUARY AND MARCH WORSHIP SERVICE PARTICIPANTS

This is the schedule for worship participants for the months of February and March. Please note on your calendar. If there is a conflict with your schedule, **please arrange for a substitute and inform the office of that change so it can be published in the weekly bulletin.** Liturgists are for individual Sundays. **Greeters and ushers are for the whole month.** Communion Stewards are for the first Sunday of the month.

DATE	LITURGIST	Sunday Worship 10:00am _____ _____ Contact the Church Office to be added to the mailing list for weekly updates.
February 6	Stephen McSpadden	
February 13	Carol Malmi	
February 20	Pat Haas	
February 27	Penny Clarke	
March 6	Elvira Williams	
March 13	Carol Malmi	
March 20	Jacqui Cragg	
March 27	Irving Williams	