

2020 Theme: Epiphany Star Words

by: Pastor Chasity Wiener

There is a season in the church called, “Epiphany,” which begins on January 6. On that day, we remember outsiders who were the magi (wise men, three kings) who followed a star to the Christ child. By following this star, they had an “epiphany,”—an “ah-ha” moment—that God was rewriting the narrative of humanity, liberating us from sin and death, through the Christ child. It’s a beautiful time in the church where we become more aware of God authoring and interceding in our lives.

So, as a tool of our discipleship this year, in the season of Epiphany, my family and I sat at our kitchen table and painted 180 wooden stars. I then thought of you, dear Church, and carefully wrote a variety of discerning words on them—words that held deep meaning, like “purpose,” “awareness,” and “openness,” mixed in with some esoteric words, like “illumination,” “sobriety,” and “spirituality.” Then, we put these 180 wooden stars face down in a basket and I encouraged everyone to select a star with this faith practice in mind: just as the magi were led by a star to the Christ child, let this star word lead you in your growing of faith in 2020

This was a moment of faith, as this was a moment of trust. Whatever word that you chose meant that the holy spirit is leading you (Inviting you? Challenging you?) in that direction. Not surprisingly, I had to scold and redirect some people because we have a human disposition to “control” the word that was picked. We wanted people to be open and be encouraged that the Spirit would work in their random selection.

...and, the Holy Spirit did not disappoint, as I have heard so many stories from folks about how their word is both inviting them and challenging them. I will share some stories here (with their permission), in hopes that their words might invite you (challenge you?) to go deeper. While this practice of “star words” is certainly not new, it is new to us as a congregation. I explained it to someone like this: when you go to the car dealership and you buy an orange car (or a particular brand of car) you begin to be more aware

and notice the other cars of that same fashion on the highway and on the roads. The reality is that those cars have always been there, but your perception has changed.

This is the same theory behind the star words. If we believe that God is always authoring in our lives, then we might be more perceptive of God’s work. Star words provide a lens to do just that.



I will be referring to the star words all year, so hang onto them. Place them in a visible spot (maybe hanging from your rearview mirror of your car) so that you can be reminded of the beauty and work of your word. If you did not get a star word, just let me know and I will be happy to allow you to select from a freshly painted batch.

As promised, here are some stories that I have heard:

Vision and illuminate, from Christine and son, Luke (4 years old): When the basket came around, I reached in blindly, dug around, and came out with the word "Illumination." At first thought, I assumed it was meant to guide me to figuring out my purpose, particularly along my next career path, whatever that may be. As the weeks have passed, I've discovered that perhaps I'm not supposed to focus on my own path, but others as well. In an increasingly toxic and dark world and environment, I think this may be calling me to bring light to others, in whatever form they need. In doing this, I've added a host of other star words, like positivity, encouragement, listening, problem-solving, and patience to my repertoire. Nothing like adding more work!

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By contrast, Luke's word was much clearer (ha!). He pulled out "Vision," and after we read it to him, he immediately put it over his eye. Later that day, when I was trying to get him to eat some carrots, I used the age-old excuse that it was good for his eyes. He looked down for a second, took a deep sigh, and exhaled as he said the word "vision." He then looked up at me and said, "Okay, give me the carrot."

Happiness, from Denise: I loved the word idea! I received happiness which is great for me because I've had so many ups and downs over the last 5 years as you know. I don't believe that it was a coincidence that I chose that word. I hung it on my bathroom mirror. I see it first thing in the morning and last thing at night. I think of how God brings me happiness as well as those around me and how I can bring happiness to others. I'm thinking of starting a journal of how I use this word in my life and how I receive happiness. My two teammates are also Christian and I printed the word out for them and am going to share what I am doing. I also printed the word out so it is at my desk to see all day long. The little seed you planted in me is growing.

Gentleness, from Margaret: If you know me, you know that there are many words to describe me, but "gentleness," might not be the first word that comes to mind. In fact my family said it wouldn't make the list of the first 10 words to describe me. My gifts lay in the realm of "truth teller" more so than "gentleness." As a native of Dundalk, Scottish, and a red-head, it is engrained in me to never mince words. I am challenged by what gentleness means to me and occasionally gripe that my husband, David, got a word that better reflects his personality. His word is "flexible." He thinks he is already flexible because he lives with me! Pastor Chas appreciates my struggle with this attribute and actually chuckled to herself when I read the word aloud after choosing it. She really thought it was funny when the hymn immediately after the sermon and after I received my star was, #396, "Spirit of Gentleness." She caught my attention as we sung it. She smiled, I rolled my eyes towards heaven. Yes, God really does have a sense of humor.

See also **Larry Philip's** expansive article on his study of his word, "Reverence" on page 5.

Happy Stargazing,

Pastor Chas

Unraveled: A new sermon

The word "unraveled" holds a lot of anxious, exhausted energy. It reminds me of someone trying desperately to hold everything together on their own while threads begin to wear and break. Do you ever feel like you are coming "unraveled?" Join us for a new sermon series that **continues through Lent**. This sermon series is also in partnership with our sisters and brothers at Fallston Presbyterian Church who are joining us in our journey through scriptures for "Unraveled."



Time Before Lent

What We can Learn from:	Big Questions & Personal Stories:
Sarah (1/19)	From Disbelief to Joy <i>Can God do the Impossible?</i>
Jesus heals Legion (1/26)	From Outsider to Evangelist <i>Can God Use Me?</i>
Saul to Paul (2/2)	From Enemy to Brother <i>What if I Have Done Hurtful Things?</i>
Job (2/9)	From Righteousness to Wisdom <i>Why do Bad Things Happen to Good People?</i>
Jochabed (2/16)	From Control to Vulnerability <i>What do we do When Our Loved Ones Struggle?</i>
Rizpah (2/23)	From Grief to Activism/Action <i>Is There Anything Good to Come From Grief?</i>

Lent-Easter

What We can Learn from:	Growing in our Faith, as we move:
Jonah (2/26, Ash Wednesday)	From Our Willfulness to Repentance
Peter (3/1)	From Our Doubt to Praise
Zacchaeus (3/8)	From Greed to Generosity
Samaritan Woman (3/15)	From Isolation to Welcome/Belonging
Thomas (3/22)	From Feelings of Despair to Awe
Pharaoh/Moses (3/29)	From Slavery to Liberation
Nicodemus (4/5, Palm Sunday)	From Certainty to Discovery
Exile (4/9, Maundy Thursday)	From Hopelessness to Possibility <i>Part 1: Sitting in the darkness of our current reality</i>
Resturrection (4/12, Easter)	From Hopelessness to Possibility <i>Part 2: God transforms ALL!</i>

Hard and Holy Conversations

We (the ELCA) are the whitest denomination in the United States. Do we “hide” racism—do we smother inclusion—in our church worship spaces? Before we answer too quickly, Martin Luther King, Jr. said that “it is appalling that the most segregated hour of Christian America is...on Sunday morning.” Look around on Sunday. Do you see a segregated hour? How are we intentionally and unintentionally contributing to systemic racism?

Lent calls us to go deeper in faith and ask the hard questions. Join us for another “Books and Broth series,” as we read *Dear Church: A Love Letter from a Black Preacher to the Whitest Denomination in the U.S.*”

About the author? The Rev. Lenny Duncan is an unlikely pastor. Formerly incarcerated, formerly homeless, and formerly unchurched, he is now a black preacher in the whitest denomination in the United States: the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Shifting demographics and shrinking congregations make the headlines, by Duncan connects the church’s lack of diversity to its lack of Vitality. Part manifesto, part confession, and all love letter, *Dear Church*, offers a bold vision for the future of the church (from the back cover).

**Books will be available only by advance order. The cost of the book will be \$15. If you did not pre-order a book through our church, this book is available—in both kindle and print version—via Amazon or other book stores. Please note that you may also borrow a copy through the public library using your personal library account.*

Books and Broth Reading Schedule:

Dear Church, by Lenny Duncan

February 26 (Ash Wednesday): You are invited to Dinner Church! Receive pre-ordered books this day!

March 4: Discuss Intro through Chapter 3

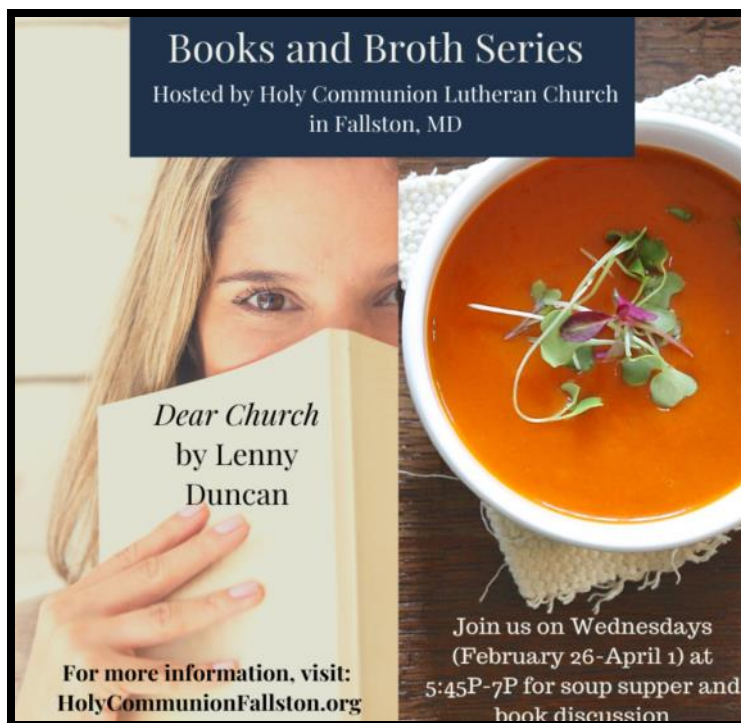
March 11: Discuss Chapters 4-5

March 18: Discuss Chapters 6-7

March 25: Discuss Chapters 8-9

April 1: Discuss Chapters 10-11

After each discussion, join us at 7P, where we will take to heart these hard and holy conversations. What better way to let the Holy Spirit move us by carving out sacred time of peace, stillness, and contemplation!?



Dinner Church: Frequently Asked Questions About Dinner Church

What is “dinner church?” Dinner church is a unique worship experience unlike traditional Sunday worship. In Jesus’ time, people gathered in each other’s home to worship, which often included a meal. Breaking bread together is holy—food (preparing, making, eating) is love shared in community. The church is also love shared in community, so it makes sense to put the two together!

What can I expect? Expect the unexpected! We worship *while* we eat and commune each other (e.g. give each other bread and wine/grape juice as Jesus did at The Last Supper). We sing, light candles, and pray for the world. The sermon is conversational and will create space to reflect on the message in conversation with those sitting around the table. We collect a free-will offering to help off-set the cost of the meal and to support the ministries within our church.

Do I need to RSVP? Yep...because we believe that it is such a tragedy to waste food when so many other people go hungry in our world. There is a sign-up sheet on our church website for each time that dinner church is offered. Our website is www.HolyCommunionFallston.org

Is dinner church appropriate for kids? Uh, yeah... because children have to eat and because children are some of our best theologians/”light bearers!” Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.” Children are hard-wired for faith and this

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experience helps to nurture that. Unlike traditional Sunday worship where children are ushered into their own age-appropriate learning setting (e.g. Sunday School), dinner church supports a sense of family because everyone is gathered around the dinner table for conversation about living life faithfully.

What can I do to help? Come. Invite someone. If you would like to do more, we are always looking for “host” families who plan and prepare the meal. Ideally, we like to have three host families for every dinner church. Planning and preparing is done on your own schedule and availability. Each host family will coordinate with the other host families and then cook the bulk of the meal in their own homes (since our church does not have a commercial kitchen). Food can be warmed on-site. If you are interested in becoming a host family, please contact Pastor Chasity Wiener at Pastor-Chas@HolyCommunionFallston.org

What kind of menu can I expect? Sometimes it might be pasta or pizza; sometimes it might be meatloaf or a vegetarian dish...and sometimes we might be grilling in our backyard at the Outdoor Worship area and making s'mores. We are a small church, not a full-service restaurant, and the point is to create a “dinner table conversation” atmosphere! But, if you have food sensitivities, we can give you some advance notice of what we are serving by contacting our host families (see above, *What can I do to help?*). If you have severe food allergies, we invite you to bring your own dinner—but still come for the conversation and experience. Lastly, we do offer gluten-free communion wafers if you have gluten sensitivities.

Ash Wednesday (February 26, 2020)

Get your “ash” in church:

- **6:30A-8:15A: Drive-Thru Ashes** at the Fallston Park-n-Ride
 - **10A: Midday Contemplative Worship**
- **6:15P: Dinner Church**, a unique worship experience (to learn more about Dinner Church, visit our website www.HolyCommunionFallston.org and click on “Dinner Church” under the graphic



Life asked Death, “Why do people love me but hate you?” Death responded, “Because you are a beautiful lie and I am a painful truth.” Author Unknown

If you think about it, death is what gives life meaning. So many people go about their day as if they are going to live forever. But, it is in those moments when we brush up against death—times that really shake our finitude—we remember how precious life really is and we live differently (purposefully). Ashes place the reminder of our mortality in plain sight, and invite us into those sacred moments where we reflect on our living.

Driver Safety for Older

One in every five drivers is over 65. Traffic safety is imperative to protect drivers and passengers alike. Advancing age is unavoidable; aging can impose physical limitations. Physical changes as we age can cause changes in vision, reaction time and flexibility. Mobility limitations, diseases and medications can affect driving ability.

Understand the following tips for before you drive:

- Do not drive in severe weather.
- Avoid driving at night.
- Schedule routine vision and hearing exams.
- See your primary care physician, discuss mobility and medication concerns at your appointment. Be honest.
- Understand how your medications can affect your driving.
- Choose a car with automatic transmission, power brakes, power steering, and large mirrors.
- Make sure your car is road ready. Tires inflated properly, check fluids, and make sure all lights are working correctly.

Follow these tips when driving:

- Increase the distance between the cars in front of you.
- Avoid left turns if you are uncomfortable.
- Eliminate distractions- radio, phone and conversations.
- Plan your route before you go.
- Highways make you nervous, chose side roads.
- Know the road conditions, stay informed.
- Protect your eyes. Use sunglasses.
- Always wear your seatbelt.



As you age stay physically fit and mentally active. Understand your medications and how they affect your ability to drive. Consider a driver refresher course (two options www.aaa.com or www.aarp.org). Have a mobility plan. How can I remain active if I am no longer able to drive? Consider your alternatives. Family, friends and neighbors. Public transportation. Check www.gettinghterideshare.org and www.harfordcountymd.gov/services/aging for additional information and services.

Resources: www.aaafoundation.org , www.mva.maryland.gov/safety/older/olderdriversafety
With blessings for health and happiness in 2020.

Barb Huber RN, CSRN, FCHN

My Star: Reverence

by Larry Phillips

On January 12, 2020, the sermon theme was “The Sermon of Stories”, the story of the baptism of Christ. As the sermon unfolds Pastor Chas talks about how our baptism rewrites our lives. With that, she then had us pick a word from a basket of stars on which the words were written. My word was Reverence.

Ever since I chose this word, or should I say this word chose me, I pondered on its meaning and what it had to do with me. So here we are, where the Holy Spirit has inspired me to share some words on the importance of Reverence. What it means to us as Christians and what it means to us as a society. Please note, that the following is taken from the website dailygood.org. The article provides insight on what Reverence is and the impact it can have in our daily lives.

By having a reverence for life, we enter into a spiritual relation with the world. By practicing reverence for life we become good, deep, and alive. -
-Albert Schweitzer

8 Great Writers on Why Reverence Matters

--by [DailyGood Editors](#), Apr 14, 2016

Reverence. It's a word that has tumbled out of use and favor in today's world. And humanity has paid a high price for that loss. In this piece, eight writers, including Wendell Berry and Mary Oliver, speak up in voices that are lyrical, incisive, and urgent, drawing us back to the luminous heart of what it means to live reverently.

So ... why does reverence matter?

Paul Woodruff: Because It Is A Forgotten Virtue

Power without reverence is aflame with arrogance, while service without reverence is smoldering toward rebellion. Politics without reverence is blind to the general good and deaf to advice from people who are powerless. (...) Because reverence fosters leadership and education. Most important, because reverence kindles warmth in friendship and family life. And because without reverence, things fall apart. People do not know how to respect each other and themselves. An army cannot tell the difference between what it is and a gang of bandits. Without reverence, we cannot explain why we should treat the natural world with respect. Without reverence, a house is not a home, a boss is not a leader, an instructor is not a teacher. Without reverence, we would not even know how to learn reverence. To teach reverence, you must find the seeds of reverence in each person and help them grow.

Gary Zukav: Because It Protects Life

Reverence is a level of protection and honor about the process of life so while a person is maturing toward the journey and through the journey of authentic empowerment, he or she harms nothing. Because we have no reverence, our journey to empowerment often includes the

experience of victimizing life. Therefore, there are victims and victimizers. The process of destroying Life while we are learning about Life that has characterized our evolution would cease, or at least would be very different if we approached Life with a quality of reverence.

Joanna Macy: Because It Grounds Us In Interconnection

Spiritual exercises for cultivating reverence for life arise now out of many traditions and are welcomed by people regardless of their religious affiliation. I have found adaptations from Buddhist practices particularly helpful because they are grounded in the recognition of the dependent co-arising or deep ecology of all things. Similarly, Native American prayers and ritual forms, evoking our innate capacity to love and respect our Earth, are increasingly adapted and included in gatherings for work and worship. This is a prayer from the Laguna Pueblo people: "I add my breath to your breath that our days may be long on the Earth, that the days of our people may be long, that we shall be as one person, that we may finish our road together."

Wendell Berry: Because Our Future Depends On It

We have lived by the assumption that what was good for us would be good for the world. And this has been based on the even flimsier assumption that we could know with any certainty what was good even for us. We have fulfilled the danger of this by making our personal pride and greed the standard of our behavior toward the world - to the incalculable disadvantage of the world and every living thing in it. And now, perhaps very close to too late, our great error has become clear. It is not only our own creativity - our own capacity for life - that is stifled by our arrogant assumption; the creation itself is stifled. We have been wrong. We must change our lives, so that it will be possible to live by the contrary assumption that what is good for the world will be good for us. And that requires that we make the effort to know the world and to learn what is good for it. We must learn to cooperate in its processes, and to yield to its limits. But even more important, we must learn to acknowledge that the creation is full of mystery; we will never entirely understand it. We must abandon arrogance and stand in awe. We must recover the sense of the majesty of creation, and the ability to be worshipful in its presence. For I do not doubt that it is only on the condition of humility and reverence before the world that our species will be able to remain in it.

Terry Tempest Williams: Because It Invites Us to Live at the Speed of Thoughtfulness

I watched prairie dogs every day, rise before the sun, stand with their paws pressed together facing the rising sun in total stillness for up to 30 minutes, and then I watched them at the end of the day take that same gesture 30 minutes before the sun goes down they would press their palms together in perfect stillness. I don't mean to anthropomorphize, but when you look at a creature that has survived over the millennium begin and end each day in that kind of stance, it causes one to think about one's own life and speed and rapidity in which we live.

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Barry Lopez: Because It Keeps Technology In Its Place

Zeus said to Prometheus, "Okay, you stole fire. Great for you. Now your people have technology. Wonderful. But here's something you don't know. You lack two things. And if you don't take these two things that I will give you, this will be a failure. Technology, you know, fire, all your magic, it will fail completely. It will be your undoing. And the two things that you need to make it work are justice and reverence. And if you have these two things, you won't get in trouble with this third thing that you thought was the be all and the end all.

John O'Donohue: Because It Unlocks Beauty In Our Lives

What you encounter, recognize or discover depends to a large degree on the quality of your approach. Many of the ancient cultures practiced careful rituals of approach. An encounter of depth and spirit was preceded by careful preparation. When we approach with reverence, great things decide to approach us. Our real life comes to the surface and its light awakens the concealed beauty in things. When we walk on the earth with reverence, beauty will decide to trust us. The rushed heart and arrogant mind lack the gentleness and patience to enter that embrace.

Mary Oliver: Because It Invites Us to Pay Attention

*It doesn't have to be
the blue iris, it could be
weeds in a vacant lot, or a few
small stones; just
pay attention, then patch*

*a few words together and don't try
to make them elaborate, this isn't
a contest but the doorway*

*into thanks, and a silence in which
another voice may speak*

So there it is, Reverence, a word that needs to a part of everyone's daily life.

Jesus teaches us in Matthew 5:12, The Golden Rule, *In everything do to others as you would have them do to you...* The basic concept being to respect, revere, have reverence towards everything that impacts your life.

I pray that this thought impacts your perspective on living life as a Christian and creates a new perspective as we develop and maintain relationships in our Christian journey.

Items Requested for HCLC Blessing Box

Good news! Our Blessing Box has seen an increase in demand! That means that we have identified a real need in the community, and are blessing those around us...but we have run out of supplies! We are especially in need of spaghetti sauce, canned meats, sanitary pads/tampons, diapers and wipes, canned veggies and fruit, and toiletries. Thank you, Church, for your continued support and dedication!

- Canned meats
- Canned fish
- Canned vegetables
- Fruit (canned or dried)
- Granola bars
- Mini cereal boxes (one serving)
- Oatmeal
- Instant mashed potatoes
- Nuts/Peanut butter
- Pasta and low-sodium pasta sauce
- Mac n' cheese
- Rice
- Low-sodium soups
- Applesauce
- Powdered milk
- Diapers
- Diaper rash cream
- Baby food
- Powdered Formula
- Basic toiletries
- Feminine hygiene products

Turnkey Shed Donations

While you are working on your spring cleaning, don't forget to bring your unwanted clothes, shoes, belts, purses, blankets, sheets, pillowcases, drapes, and stuffed toys (please no rags, fabric scraps, or household goods) to donate in our Turnkey Shed. Our church actually receives a check based on the amount (pounds) of items donated. So, you will be helping our church while simultaneously helping those in need! Please help keep your donation dry and clean by placing your donations in a closed plastic bag. Thank you for your generous support of this wonderful ministry!



Youth News

From the Youth Director

by: Heather Henderson

As we begin a new year, it doesn't matter our age, we are bombarded with what we can do to make ourselves better. While we don't need to make resolutions we can't keep, we do need to focus on what we can achieve. Has your New Year's Resolution ever been to build a better relationship with God? What does that relationship look like? Do we want our resolution to be like a sparkler that burns bright for a very short period and then fizzles and dies? Or, do we want to build a relationship and make a resolution that is like a candle? It burns slowly, it can burn bright or burn low but it's still burning, the flame might blow out, but it's easily relit. A candle provides light to others as well as us. God told us "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden." Matthew 5:14. As we start anew each day we need to remember to be the candle and shine our light on our relationship with God and know that if it's still burning our relationship is still growing.

Join us for Friday night faith, a spiritual journey to learn more about ourselves, God, our faith, the Bible and how we experience faith and God through our everyday lives for 4th – 6th graders. We meet on the third Friday of the month. Our exploration will encourage *Think.Believe.Do (TBD)*. Join us on Friday, February 21st from 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM.



Join us for First Sunday's (first Sunday of the month) from 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM for 4th – 6th grades and 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM for high schoolers. Come, hang out, talk, play games, share faith, and get to know one another. We encourage you to bring friends! See you on Sunday, February 2nd.

Join us for Illumin8 on the first Sunday of each month during Sunday School for our 3rd graders. By providing a foundation of knowledge, Illumin8 helps them understand what God has in store for them and the many ways that he is already working through them in their everyday lives. Illumin8 aspires to strengthen kids' faith as they participate in fun events, crafts, fellowship opportunities and even good service works within our community.

We look forward to seeing you!

Heather Henderson, Youth Leader

Sunday School: Come Join the Fun and Discover God's Love!

by: Carrie Dorsey

Wow! January is gone already! Time is flying by quickly. We spent January learning about how we are each disciples and how we can share God's Love with others. This month we will turn our attention to The Beatitudes and Salt and Light. Salt and light may seem like an odd combination but it is a good way to teach us that even though we are just one (small) person, we can each make a big difference. Just like a little salt makes food taste better and a little light makes the night not so dark.

Please practice the Lord's Prayer and 10 Commandments at home this month. We will be working on these during the month.

If you have not registered for Sunday school, please take a minute or two and use the link below to sign-up your child or yourself as a volunteer.

<https://vbapro.events/p/events/594eb7>

For questions or to volunteer contact: SundaySchool@HolyCommunionFallston.org

Appalachia Service Project

Join us for an informational session on the Appalachia Service Project (ASP) on Sunday, February 16, 2020 following the second service at 11:45 AM. We will be joining Fallston United Methodist in this effort the week of July 5, 2020. ASP is life changing experience! It is a Christian ministry that inspires hope and service through volunteer home repair and placement in Central Appalachia, one of our most impoverished places in our nation. The project is open to anyone who is at least 14 years old. You may participate at age 13 if you have completed the 8th grade. No experience necessary. Please come see what it is all about. If you have any questions you can visit their website at www.asphome.org or please contact Heather Henderson at youth@holycommunionfallston.org or at 443-528-3553.



Member Spotlight

by: Rebecca Bove

What brought you to HCLC?

“I was searching for churches for several years after about a decade away. I thought I knew what I was looking for but was having trouble finding something that stuck. I grew up Evangelical Southern Baptist but was not comfortable reestablishing a community in that setting. So honestly, I resolved to just try and find a place that made a point on their website to note that they were welcoming and affirming for LGBT individuals and their families. Since a lack of acceptance was the reason I had been away so long, I thought that would be a good place to start. Holy Communion fit that bill so I decided to give it a shot and it stuck!”



What do you see as your gifts to serve God, God's people, and the church?

“Oh goodness - I'm still figuring that out. It's been a long time since I've used them in a church setting. But I think my gifts draw from the experiences I've had. I feel strongly about bringing people together and getting comfortable with being uncomfortable in community. I think that my story sits me in a unique place a desire to understand different perspectives. Even when I may passionately disagree, I typically end up serving as some sort of intermediary or translator between those in disagreement or misunderstanding. But that means I have to keep my 'fixer' tendencies in check too!”

Favorite ice cream flavor?

“Definitely coconut chocolate chip from Broom's Bloom.”

What is something people may be surprised to know about you?

“I'm an art lover. I like to paint - lately I've been doing growth charts as gifts for some of our friends that have little ones.”

What bible verse is meaningful to you?

“I loved Esther growing up. We had the cartoon movie at home. And now that I'm older, I love how subversive it is. My verse comes from that book, and it's about accountability. It's Mordecai's response to Esther's hesitation in stepping up for her people. **“When Esther's words were reported to Mordecai, he sent back this answer: “Do not think that because you are in the king's house you alone of all the Jews will escape. For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?”**”

How do you serve at HCLC?

“I help out with youth events when I can and am involved in the Youth Think Tank meetings.”

God's Way of Grace

“We love because God first loved us”

I John 4:10

by: Pastor Bob Ridenour

For Christmas “grace” fills all things. The “grace” of God is over and above everything.

If we do not understand “grace” in our minds and in our hearts, then we are missing out on God's greatest gift and on faith, worship, and lives are hollow and joyless.

Grace is the love of God for all, the deserving and the undeserving alike. But for most of us this doesn't seem right. Most of us have been taught that we must work and/or do good for God to love us. We have learned since childhood that God loves and rewards the good and is, at best, lukewarm towards those who are “bad” or “evil.” But despite what we think we know, this view is untrue.

The Holy Scripture, and especially Jesus Christ, shows us a God of Grace. Forgiveness and mercy are God's primary characteristics. Jesus Christ came into the world not to punish and exclude sinners, but to welcome them (us), to save, and to make us like him. If we were to list all the Bible pages that assure us of this wonderful fact, there would be almost no room in this article (or this newsletter) to list them all! For Christians God's grace abounds. God's wrath is cast aside.

We gratefully and joyfully worship a God of love, mercy, and grace. We affirm this each Sunday in our time of confession and grace—and so we live our lives confident of God's mercy and love. Our God does not condemn and punish. God does not hold grudges, or act vengeful. Everyone, no matter who, is God's beloved and the recipient of everlasting grace.

If all this sounds strange, it is because as scripture teaches, “God's ways are not our ways.” Mercy and grace are God's way. So, too, are they our way.

We follow in God's gracious steps.

“Grace and peace be to all of you”

The Apostle Paul

Lovin' Life Seniors

LOVIN' LIFE SENIORS

Our goal is to offer friendship and support to one another through social events. Please join us! Invite your friends! Our 2020 schedule and sign-up sheets for upcoming events are posted on the senior's bulletin board in the hallway. Please read the Sunday bulletins and Bread and Wine for any changes to the schedule below. All activities take place on 2nd Tuesdays of the month unless otherwise noted.

2020 CALENDAR

Tuesday, February 11

Mamie's Restaurant—Aberdeen Shopping Center

Tuesday, March 10

The Lodge Restaurant—Hickory

Tuesday, April 14

Greek Village—Rte. 1, Bel Air

Tuesday, May 12

Bayou Restaurant—Rte. 40, Havre de Grace

Tuesday, June 9

Conrad Restaurant, Abingdon

Tuesday, July 14

Fisherman's Catch—Bowling Lanes, Forest Hill

Tuesday, August 11

Friendly Farm, Upperco

Tuesday, September 15

Crab Feast—Church

Tuesday, October 13

Stonebridge Grille—Freeland, MD

Tuesday, November 10

Wargo's Restaurant—Forest Hill

Thursday, December 10

Union Hotel—Susquehanna River Road

We welcome new ideas as well as new members. Contact Ellen Priebe 410-679-8655; Frances Gosnell 410-893-4622; Nancy Campbell 410-836-7688.

February Birthdays



02/01 Chris Vocke

02/03 Krystal O'Leary

02/04 Jeanie Riggs

02/06 Nathaniel Hafner

02/06 Barbara Ridenour

02/08 Kim Thompson

02/09 Heather Rudolph

02/12 Catherine Zechmann

02/12 Jeffrey Hoffmann

02/14 Doug Mueller

02/15 Ron Mickley

02/16 Amanda Appel

02/20 Leonard Burrier

02/24 Bruce Amrein

02/25 Diane Romain

02/28 Dustin Kisner

02/28 Abigayle Taylor

Happy Birthday

Do you have a **February** birthday but do not see your name printed here? That means we do not have your complete information on file. Please contact Hailea in the church office to update your information.

Church App

Did you know you can listen to sermons and access calendars, events, an electronic Bible, and the newsletter on our church app for your smartphone? Here's how: Download the Church app (Tithe.ly) in the Google Play or Apple Store and then select Holy Communion Lutheran Church as your default church. You can read our facebook posts and see pictures posted on Instagram even if you do not subscribe to Facebook or Instagram. There is also space for you to write prayer requests on our prayer wall. Take us wherever you go!



Holy Communion Lutheran Church

Council Members



Eric Thompson,
President



Dave Frieman,
Vice-President



Jon Perkins,
Secretary



Joann Theys,
Treasurer



Sue Phillips,
Council Member



Jane Jackson-
Kolstrom,
Council Member



Larry Phillips,
Council Member



Candiss Dominick,
Council Member



Arlene Weber
Council Member



The Rev. Chasity L.
Wiener,
Ex-Officio Member