

# Ten Big Stories of 2016



## One

**No More Mortgages!** 2016 proved to be a pivotal year for SPUMC in terms of church finances. We retired nearly \$550,000 of church debt, sold the parsonage and helped to build up our Capital Reserve Fund by nearly \$150,000. All of this should put the

church in a position to retire a small operating budget deficit that has accrued over the last five years (around \$40K) and to enter into 2017 with increased financial capacity to support missions and ministries now that we are free of our annual debt service (around \$130K/yr.).

## Two

### A Fond Farewell...

All good things come to an end and after eight years of fruitful ministry, we said goodbye to Rev. Nicole, Brian, and Grady as they headed to Charleston, SC.



The outpouring of gratitude and affection throughout Nicole's Farewell Weekend (which included equal doses of laughter and tears) was evidence of just how much she is loved and how much she has meant to SPUMC. One of the last gifts she left our congregation was an intentional onboarding process for her successor as she passed on the baton to Rev. Carissa.



## Three

**...And a Warm Welcome!** We welcomed Rev. Carissa Surber as the newest member of our pastoral staff this July and she has jumped in with both feet! Her gifts for preaching and worship, organizational skills, musical talent and overall heart for ministry have already been quite evident in her first four months of ministry and she is an outstanding addition to our staff. We

think her husband, Matthew, is pretty cool, too!

## Four

**Multiple Engaging Sermon Series** have made worship especially rich this year. *Warm Hearts & Wide Tables* gave us a chance to (re)claim our identity as United Methodists while *Citius, Altius, Fortius* helped us all to commit to the five rings of discipleship with an Olympic twist. Our current series, *Honest to God*, has invited us to pray the Psalms in new, deeper and life-giving ways.



## Five

**Mission Continues to Define Us:** Winter Relief, Heaven's Kitchen, Living Well on Wilkens: these are just a few of the regular, ongoing ways that we engage in hands-on ministry with our

neighbors. And an expansion this fall of our Backpack Buddies program allows us to reach out to more children facing food insecurity from Park Elementary School.

## Six

**A National Music Director Search** led to the hiring of Chris Dillard from Uvalde, TX. Chris brings with him incredible gifts and background in the areas of choral music and contemporary worship leadership. There is a new energy throughout our entire Music ministry in the two months that Chris has been with us and lots of excitement about where we're headed.



## Seven

**A New Cancer Support Group** just launched this fall and we anticipate that this will become a place of shared strength and resources for members of our church and community based on the high level of early interest.

## Eight

**Stations of the Cross Art Exhibit:** During Holy Week this year, our Sanctuary was transformed into a spiritual art gallery. Artists from within and beyond the congregation helped lead people on a creative and emotionally engaging journey through the events of Jesus' last week and the response was overwhelmingly positive.



The gallery was composed of a wide range of artwork including paintings, photographs, sculpture and quilts.

## Nine

### Mission Trips Have Taken SPUMC to West Virginia & Kentucky in 2016.

This year our youth continued their 36-year tradition of serving in Appalachia with a week in Knox County, Kentucky. This fall our VIM group will also join forces with ASP and spend two long weekends in Greenbrier County, WV helping to build new homes and repair damaged homes in an area severely impacted by floods this past summer.



## Ten

**VBS Overflowed the Surf Shack!** We followed through on our commitment to continue to expand our Vacation Bible School. Over two weeks of VBS, we welcomed just under 300 children (up from 240 in 2015) and more than half of

these came from beyond our church. We also worked to increase the presence and participation of children in worship by engaging them as lay readers and communion servers on a regular basis and this has been received as a mutual gift to them and the entire congregation.

# 5 Priorities for 2017

- 1 Develop a New Mission Statement and 5-year Plan
- 2 Build Partnerships and Engage in Conversations about Race
- 3 Grow our Music Ministry and Strengthen the 11am Worship Service
- 4 Continue to Grow the Mission and Ministry of Living Well on Wilkens
- 5 Continue to Identify and Equip New and Younger Leaders



# Severna Park UMC



## Pastors' Report to Charge Conference

October 29th, 2016

Rev. Ron Foster  
Rev. Carissa Surber  
Rev. Lee Ferrell  
Rev. Byron Brought