



The Octagon

Severna Park United Methodist Church News

Contents

Can I Join In?	2
A Way Forward	2
Thanksgiving	2
Worship	
Rise Against Hunger	3
Chili Cook-Off Remix	4
Young Adult Ministries	5
Refugee Realities	5
Dios Te Bendiga	6
Stay In Touch	6
VIM Planning 2019	7
Heaven's Kitchen	7
ALL Lunch	7
Born A Crime	7
Garden Clean-Up	8
Baptism Class	8
Christmas Book Fair	8
SPAN Holiday Caring	8
Angel Tree	8
2nd Grade Pageant	8
Poinsettias	8
The Star Movie Night	9
Vets Day Concert	9
UMYF News	10
Super Sixth	10
Winter Relief	10
Memory Walk	10
Staying Home	11
Pray, Trust, Wait	11



Blessed to Be a Blessing

For four Sundays in October & November, we have been tuning in to the wisdom and guidance of the Apostle Paul found in his letter to the Philippians. So far, we've explored what it means to undergo an **Attitude Adjustment** from seeing ourselves as spectators on the sidelines to partners fully engaged on the field in our faith

and service (Phil. 1:3-11). Rev. Lee also invited us into a way of being in Christ that reshapes us from being trapped and limited by anxiety to living deeply and fully in God's joy (Phil.4:4-9). And over the next two weeks, we'll take on the Attitude Adjustments of moving from an orientation...

(continued on page 4)

Blessed to Be a Blessing

Can I Join In? Of Course You Can!

For any group to be successful, SPUMC included, everyone has to do their part. The saying, “A chain is only as strong as its weakest link” is so true. Everyone in the group has to join in and do what they do best to help the church. If you think you have nothing to contribute to the church, you are mistaken. There are so many opportunities to “join in” from working with the worship ministries or missions to being an office volunteer or part of the hospitality team. You can serve on a committee, work with the youth or provide physical labor. Commitments can be large or they can be small to fit everyone’s availability. The key is to offer your time and skills to God and our church.

Another way everyone can “join in” is through the giving of their gifts to the church so it can financially survive.

The Finance Committee is in full swing working on next year’s budget. The pencils are sharpened and the adding machines are plugged in. As the church’s annual Stewardship Campaign moves forward to its conclusion on November 18, 2018, with Consecration Sunday, the Finance Committee reminds all church members that it is very important that the pledge cards be submitted timely and with sincere accuracy. The Finance Committee needs to ascertain a realistic figure of the tithes to expect in 2019 so it can then prepare a realistic, and hopefully workable, budget. As always, the church congregation has been extremely generous with its gifts to SPUMC and it looks forward to the same in 2019.



Finding Our Way Forward

Join us on Sunday night, **November 18, 7-8:30pm** in **Fellowship Hall** for an evening of presentation, Bible study and small group conversation as we consider the issues surrounding LGBTQ inclusion facing the UMC. We’ll talk about the 3 plans for the UMC that will be presented to the 2019 General Conference and how this may affect the shape of the UMC. We’ll also have a chance to share our own thoughts, feelings and faith commitments in a safe and respectful space. All people and perspectives are invited!



Thanksgiving Worship

You’re invited to come worship with us on **Tuesday** night, **November 20, 7pm** for our annual Thanksgiving Service. This year, the service will be held in the Sanctuary and we’ll gather together to offer our gratitude to God as we reflect on the simple and staggering blessings in our lives. *Nursery care will be provided.*

Rising Against Hunger in a Big Way

What a delightful and energizing afternoon we got to spend together at SPUMC in early October. Over 100 people turned out to pack 15,000 meals for **Rise Against Hunger**, 80% of which will be delivered to schoolchildren in poorer countries. Many thanks to all of the families, individuals and couples who came out to make our first RAH meal packing such a success. And special thanks to Coordinators **Becky & Rick Clapp** and their awesome team who set up and cleaned up. What a great inter-generational event where EVERYONE made such a meaningful difference!



Blessed to Be a Blessing

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(continued from page 1)

of looking backward to straining forward (Phil. 3:10-21) and then culminate on **Thanks & Giving Sunday, November 18**, with learning how we can move from being *burnt out to being fueled from within* by God's energizing Spirit (Phil. 2:12-16).

Undergoing a shift in our thinking and a change of our hearts has been on my mind a lot in this critical time of the year for the church. November is the month when we dream about new ministries and build our budget for 2019. It's when we consider all that we have to be grateful for during the season of Thanksgiving and make choices about our own financial stake in the ministry of our church. What would it look like in our individual lives and in our church if we allowed God to do some disrupting, freeing **Attitude Adjustments** in us when it comes to our money? How might things change if we were able to move from attitudes and practices of:

- Scarcity to abundance?
- Fear to Trust?
- Endpoint Thinking (my bucks stop here!) to a Pass-through Mentality (how do I use my resources for others)?
- Closed Hands to Open Hands?
- Being Blessed to Being a Blessing?
- Mine/Ours to God's?

My sense is that if we could make these attitude adjustments in ourselves—with God's help and by God's grace—our lives and our church would be radically

transformed. We would find ourselves living more joyfully, more faithfully, more generously, more freely.

I invite you to make a pledge of financial support for 2019 that is intentional, proportional and joyful. You can do that online or by use of a pledge card that you will receive in the mail or find at our Welcome Desk. Are you ready for an Attitude Adjustment?

Rev. Ron

Chili Cook-Off Remix

What an amazing job Erica Benjamin, Lori Schaefer, Diane Schulkowski, Chris Dillard and all our volunteers did in making the **2nd Annual Chili Cook-Off** such a fun event. Congrats to all our chefs and especially to our winners.



Young Adult Ministries

Here's what's coming up from the Young Adult Group and Moms Connect. Childcare provided for meetings at the church.

Young Adult Group (YAG)

- "Inspired" Conversations based on the book by Rachel Held Evans, **November 29 25, 6:30pm**
- Lunch at Ledo's, Millersville on **Sunday, November 18, 12noon**

Moms Connect

Moms Connect will gather Thursday, November 15 at 6:30pm to continue reading and discussing Heavenly Minded Mom. We'll continue to meet on the 1st & 3rd Thursday of each month
Childcare provided.

Combined!

Wednesday, November 7, 4-8pm YAG and Mom's Connect are joining together on February 7 to prepare and serve a meal for our Winter Relief guests. Meal prep starts at 4pm, but you can volunteer all evening. Childcare provided in the Nursery. For more info, contact Rev. Carissa: carissa@severnaparkumc.org

Refugee Realities

A room full of people were on hand to hear Mari Verrechia-DeLonde's informative and poignant presentation on Refugee Realities and the work of the International Rescue Committee. Living Well on Wilkens is considering entering into a partnership with the IRC so please keep these conversations in your prayers.



Stay In Touch

The Young Adult Ministries always has a lot going on. Be sure to keep in touch!

For up-to-the minute updates on the **Young Adult Group**, text **YAG** to **410-983-3507** and join the facebook group. severnaparkumc.org/yagfb

To stay on top of what **Moms Connect** is doing, text **Mom** to the same number. You can check out their facebook group, too, by emailing moms@severnaparkumc.org

And don't forget, everyone is invited to stay in the loop! Join the church-wide text group. Text **Loop** to **410-983-3507**.

Blessed to Be a Blessing



Dios Te Bendiga

Following is an excerpt from April Doss's blog. Read the full post by visiting our Top 5 page. severnarparkumc.org/top5

The man and his wife had huddled inside their home, listening to the deafening roar of the storm as it lashed for hour upon hour. Sometime during that unspeakably awful day and night, the roof was ripped from its trusses and yanked off the top of their home, flung into pieces across the jungle and road. What had been a comforting refuge was being drowned and dashed to pieces as the storm's intensity tore the home's contents to shreds, drenching people, animals, belongings, ruining roads, and knocking down power lines as the storm raged on through the darkness of this terrifying night.

Our team of six was there to help, part of a group sent by our church as a Volunteers In Mission team. Depending on what language you're comfortable with, you can think of it as mission work, as being the body of Christ in the world, of following Christ's injunction to love your neighbor as yourself. Or simply expressing love for

our fellow-man through service to those in need. There are any number of ways to describe this simple-yet-not-easy set of actions: Raise the money necessary for the trip. Organize the effort. Show up. Try to rebuild stuff that's been broken. Part of the spiritual mystery of this mission process is how much there is that's unseen that goes into it. Especially that last bit about fixing what's broken.

Sure, we traveled to Puerto Rico to put roofs back on homes. But each of us also shows up for life with things that are broken inside us: with shortcomings that separate us from each other, with painful experiences we're trying to make peace with and overcome. Every day, we walk through the world with character defects that make us fear and hide from God, with selfishness that makes us focus first on our own desires and wants; we focus on grudge lists of people and situations who have harmed us rather than on how we can be helpful in the world. Sometimes we invite brokenness into our lives with the choices we make; it's our fears that drive us to self-gratification or self-righteousness, to trying to control or manipulate people and situations, or to other ego-feeding propositions. Sometimes the brokenness within us was inflicted on us in ways we weren't responsible for but which nonetheless left painful twists in our personalities, sharp-edged edges in our psyches that cause us at times to behave like people we neither like nor respect, and to act in ways that we don't understand.

Each of us brought our individual baggage with us as surely as we brought the suitcases that we packed with work boots,

safety glasses, sturdy gloves, and jeans. Our 6-person team was part of a group of 15, ranging in age from 18 years old to 70, and almost evenly split by gender. Some of us had been walking a spiritual path for some time, able to jettison some of our emotional baggage altogether, and to carry other parts of it more lightly. Others among us were early on this journey, struggling to organize the sprawl and weight of what we carried within ourselves as much as we struggled to heft overstuffed suitcases or lift concrete buckets or hoist roof trusses into place.

For all of us, though, the central points in making a trip like this one to PR were simple ones: using physical action to demonstrate tangible love, and through those actions to continue our own journeys on the path of spiritual formation.

-April Doss, first-time VIM Team Member



VIM Planning New Trips

The Volunteers In Mission committee is meeting on **November 26 at 7pm** in Room 301 to discuss some mission trip possibilities for 2019. If you'd like to contribute to the conversation, or if you just want to know more about the possibilities for next year, come to the meeting!

Heaven's Kitchen

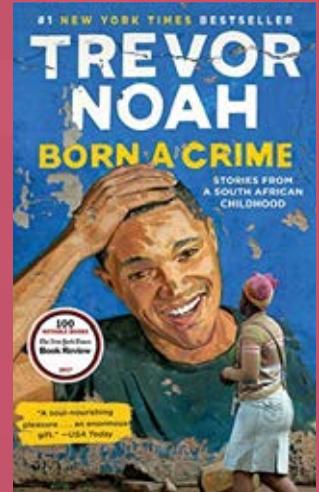
Join Heaven's Kitchen in providing meals for people in need on **November 24**. The holidays are always a fun family time at Heaven's Kitchen, and they can always use baked goods to distribute. Contact Chip Linehan for more info.

boxslsman@aol.com

ALL November Lunch

Join Adults Loving Life on **November 27 at 12noon** for lunch and the heartwarming movie "Wonder" about embracing differences in people. Sign up in Fellowship Hall.

ALL@severnparkumc.org



Born A Crime

The Faith & Race Book Group will meet on **Tuesday, November 27 at 7pm** in the Parlor to discuss *Born a Crime* by Trevor Noah. Books are available in Fellowship Hall and the Welcome Desk (\$16). *Note: This powerful memoir about growing up in apartheid South Africa contains some "strong language" but is well worth the read.*

Memorial Garden Clean-Up

Bring your rakes, tarps, blowers, and work gloves on Saturday, December 2 from 8am-12noon as we work to clean up our beautiful Memorial Garden and the church grounds. Contact Lynnette with any questions.

lynnettecloughley@gmail.com

Baptism Class

If you are interested in having a child baptized at SPUMC, please join us for a Baptism Class in the Parlor on Sunday, November 11 at 11am to learn about this sacrament and what's involved.

Childcare is provided. RSVP to Beth.

bfrank@severnaparkumc.org

Christmas Book Fair

Shop at our Christmas Book Fair throughout November to find great gifts for your whole family—award-winning Bibles, books, and videos for babies to 12-year-olds; board books & picture books; Thanksgiving & Christmas books; Bibles & reference books for adults. Order forms are available in Fellowship Hall and online, and orders should be returned by Sunday, December 2 to ensure you receive your books by Christmas.

All items are offered at a discounted rate, and SPUMC keeps 20% of sales revenue.

severnaparkumc.org/BookFair

SPAN Holiday Caring

Sign up to sponsor a family through SPAN for a Thanksgiving food basket and/or food for Christmas dinner, and/or gifts for children in a family. Contributions are also a welcome alternative. Sponsorship forms are located in Fellowship Hall or call SPAN at 410-647-0889. Please tell SPAN you're from SPUMC. Contact Francie for more information.

fseaman@severnaparkumc.org

Advent Angel Tree

Give generously this Christmas season by fulfilling a need from the Advent Angel Tree. The tree will be up in Fellowship Hall on November 19. You can choose to give through our Backpack Buddies ministry, provide gifts for children whose mothers are in prison, help Heaven's Kitchen provide warm food for the Brooklyn Community, and so much more. This is a great opportunity for your family to participate in missions together during the Christmas season.

carissa@severnaparkumc.org

2nd Grade Pageant

Christmas Eve Prep begins in early December. If you have a 2nd grader interested in being in the 5pm Christmas Eve Pageant or if you have a preschooler interested in being involved in the 3pm Concert, please contact Erica before December 3.

ebenjamin@severnaparkumc.org

Poinsettias

Plants are \$12 each. Order forms are available in Fellowship Hall, and should be received by December 2. Contact Martha for more info.

mholldige@verizon.net

November 2018



We the People

A SPARK Music Veterans Day Concert

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 11 AT 4PM
AT SEVERNA PARK UMC

Free Admission

SEVERNAPARKUMC.ORG



THE STAR

THE STORY OF THE FIRST CHRISTMAS

Sunday, December 2

Cookies & Crafts
4:30–6:30pm
Movie begins at 5pm

- Showing in the Sanctuary & Fellowship Hall
- Bring a snack or dessert to share
- Popcorn provided

Blessed to Be a Blessing

UMYF News

Sunday, November 4, 7pm — Program, “Discovering Your Love Language.”

Friday, November 9-Sunday, November 11 — Fall Retreat at Camp Letts. Returning home around 2pm. No regular meeting on November 11.

Sunday, November 18, 7pm — Regular Program

Sunday, November 25, 7pm — Regular Program

Super Sixth

All 6th graders and friends are welcome as we get started this fall!

November 4, 5pm — New games, plus dinner from McDonald’s (our treat)

November 18, 5pm — Thanksgiving Program: Fun and clever way to remember the importance of being grateful

December 9, 5pm — Christmas Party

Winter Relief

On **November 5-12** our church will host Winter Relief, a mission where for a week we house 45 men and women who are experiencing homelessness. Welcome our guests as we offer shelter, meals, showers, laundry, warm fellowship and most importantly the love of God to our friends and neighbors.



UMYF Participates in Memory Walk for Alzheimer’s

About 40 of our youth and their leaders participated in the Alzheimer’s Association’s Memory Walk in Annapolis this fall. The goal is to raise awareness for the disease of Alzheimer’s and raise funds for research in finding a cure.

Many of our youth have lost grandparents to Alzheimer’s. It is a sad disease, especially when the loved one can no longer remember their family, or the things which had brought them joy for their whole lives. It is fairly heartbreaking for those who must watch their loved ones sort of “disappear” before their eyes.

The good news is that there have been some break-throughs in the last few years thanks to the research being done. There is no cure as such, but doctors have discovered ways to extend the life of an Alzheimer’s patient for a number of years.

We commend our youth for caring and giving their time to bring awareness to this particular cause.

Staying Home

Maya Angelou said, “The ache for home lives in us all.” I have read that quote time and time again throughout my life, sometimes in seasons when I was missing my family ranch in Texas, with its rugged terrain and the smell of the horse stable and barn where I helped my Papa tend the livestock. There was an old basketball rim attached to a single beam on the water tower with no backboard where I practiced my jump shot and tried not to get chicken poop on my hands while I dribbled on a dirt court. I felt like I was learning the game just like Larry Bird did on his family farm. And being called in for dinner by my grandmother... the aroma of Mema’s cooking was pure joy to my nose and my soul. Meal time was a good time! That is what home had always meant for me.

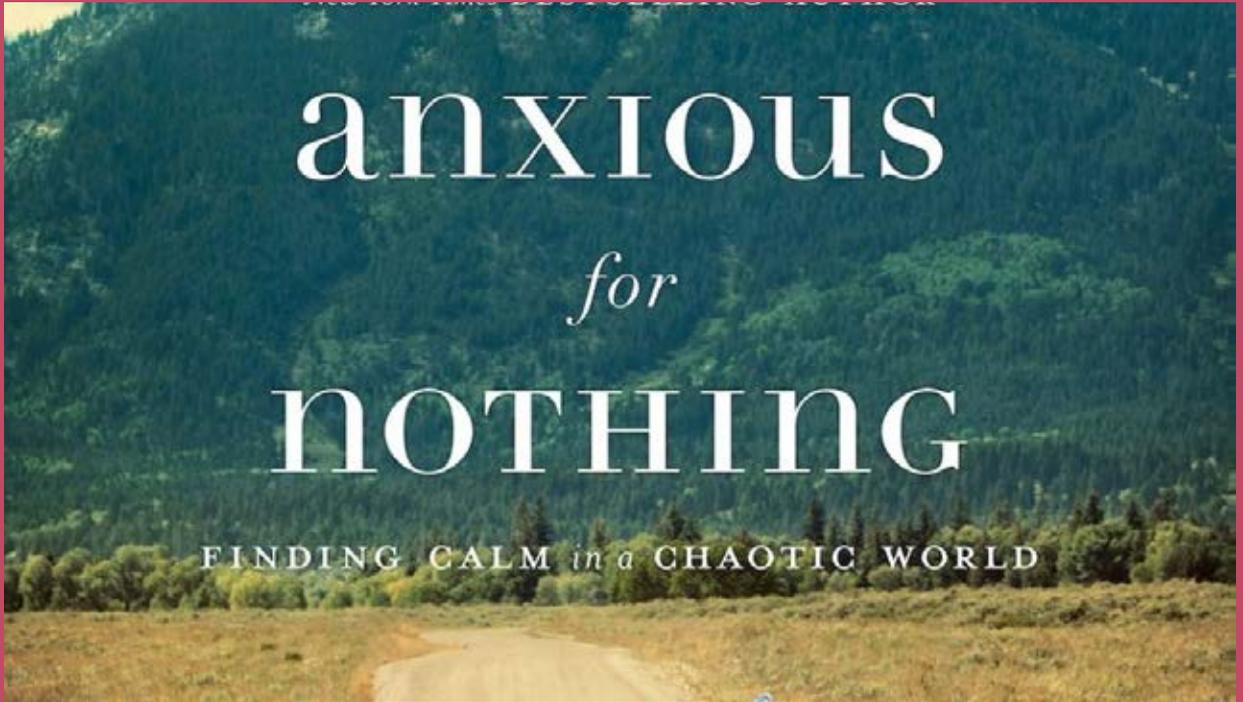
I grew older and home took on a different form. As life changed, I would end up in high school in San Antonio where there were five times more kids in my freshman class than in the entire town where I grew up. I’d leave San Antonio soon after for Baton Rouge, Louisiana where I became an LSU Tiger and experienced a whole new lifestyle and culture. Fast forward to life changing again, and I was back in Texas trying to pick up the pieces of a broken marriage and lick the wounds of losing a loved one. But God stepped in... through years of coaching and teaching children who had been hurt so badly, I was able to climb back to the mountain top and feel alive again. Then God said, “You’re moving to Maryland.” Woah, God!!! MARYLAND! What could there possibly be for me in Maryland? That’s how I landed at SPUMC for the last 2 years.

Anyone who knows a Texan knows that Texans love their state—probably a little too much. You can imagine the tug at my heart when I was presented with an opportunity this summer to not only expand my outreach and growth in ministry to a 5000-plus member congregation, but to do it in my home state. It was one of the toughest decisions I’ve made in my career.

It came down to one question: Where is home? My mom’s blessing was all I needed to affirm that Maryland is my home. Serving this church and community has taught me so much about God’s love. Sure I am swapping chicken fried steaks for crab cakes, but I know I have a strong church family here with so much potential to impact our communities and our world through Jesus Christ. Our music teams are getting stronger and the growth we have seen is amazing. God is moving here, and if we can rally together and continue to work together and love one another, then God will use Severna Park UMC to expand the kingdom. I am so happy to continue being a part of this team and doing my part in helping the vision and outreach of our church become a reality. Thank you for all your prayers, love, and for the encouraging, kind words that you have poured my way throughout my time here and throughout this process of discernment. I look forward to making many more lasting memories in ministry with you all. Thank you for adopting me. I am glad to be home.

Now, let’s get out there and love on this hurting world. Let’s be more like Jesus.

-Chris Dillard



Pray, Trust, Wait

We wait, but not always very well. We wait for Santa, wait in line, wait for test results, wait to hear from a loved one, and if we're O's fans, we wait for next year. Waiting can produce anxiety. This fall I learned from Max Lucado's book *Anxious For Nothing*, that the "presence of anxiety is unavoidable, but the prison of anxiety is optional."

Our class began September 18. Our journey of CT scans, MRI's, visits to doctors with scary titles, surgery, and biopsy began on the 27th, two classes in. By the first visit, I learned to --

Celebrate God's presence (Phil. 4:4)

Ask for God's help (Phil. 4:6)

Leave my concern with God (Phil. 4:6)

Meditate on good things (Phil. 4:8)

I also learned that "Anxiety passes as trust increases." Along the way I received a distinct message. God has gone before us and set a clear path to wholeness. My job is to stay on the path, and to pray, trust, wait. Because if Lee and Max Lucado, I can do it.

-Bette MacWilliams