



March 2018

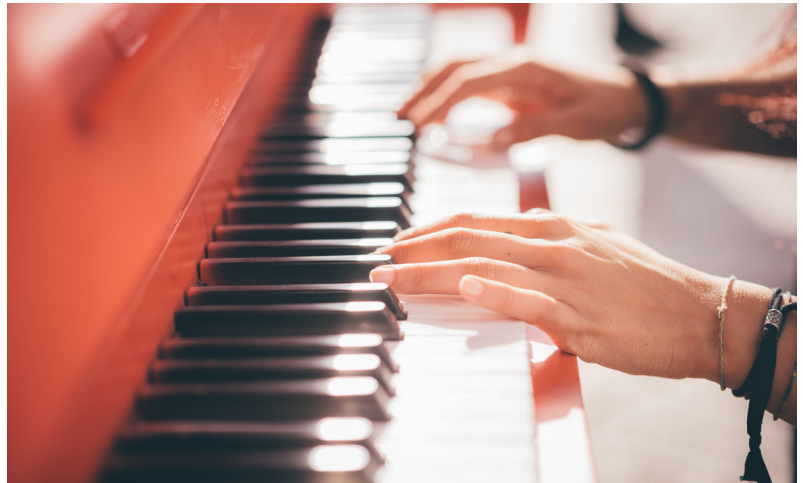
Volume 4, No. 3

The Octagon

Severna Park United Methodist Church News

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Rhythms of Grace

Every spring, I long for the first day I can drive with my windows down. Something about springtime sunshine brings me back to high school, cruising down back roads with country music playing on the radio. Invariably, I'll find myself stopped at a traffic light, tapping my toes, and drumming my fingers on the steering wheel, caught up in the

rhythms of the radio. There's something about a good beat that makes us all want to move. Maybe for you it's the steady strum of a country acoustic guitar, or the beat of the bass drum on 100.7 The Bay – or maybe your heart only lifts to the strains of Sinatra, floating gracefully from the speakers to your ears.

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HOLY WEEK

March 25: Palm Sunday | **WALK**

Palm Procession with all Elementary Children in Worship | John 12

March 29: Maundy Thursday | **WASH**

6:30pm meal, 7pm Experiential Service in Fellowship Hall | John 13

March 30: Good Friday | **LOVE**

7:30pm Passion Service in the Sanctuary | Mark 14:26-15:47

March 31: Eggstravaganza | **HUNT**

9-11am Easter Egg hunt with games, crafts, & treats

In poor weather, activities will be inside

April 1: Easter Sunday | **RISE**

6:30am Sunrise Service

8am Early Service

9:30am Contemporary Service

11am Festival Service

John 20:1-18

HOLY WEEK FOR FAMILIES

On Palm Sunday, we'll offer nursery care for babies and Sunday School for toddlers. Elementary kids will worship in the sanctuary.

Nursery care will be available at each worship service during Holy Week. We welcome elementary children to attend a special Sunday School program on Easter.

PRAY

March 4: **REST**

Deuteronomy 5:12-15 & Matthew 11:28-30

March 11: **CARE**

Matthew 25:31-46

March 18: **TELL**

Mark 5:1-20

PLAY

Picturing Lent

Whether or not you are part of Rev. Ron's *Sacred Lens* class on Photography & Prayer, you can use this season to go on a photographic pilgrimage with our theme words as your guides each week. Send your images to Rev. Ron.
ron@severnaparkumc.org

Easter SPAN Caring

In celebration of Easter, SPAN is offering dinners and Easter baskets to their clients. If you'd like to share the blessing of Easter with others by providing food for a meal, please sign up as soon as possible in the Fellowship Hall on the SPAN clipboard. Meal donations are to be delivered to SPAN on **Monday, March 19, 10am-1:30pm**. If you have questions, please contact Karen Myers.
kmyers333@hotmail.com

Easter Eggstravaganza

Join us as a family on Saturday, **March 31** from **9-11am** for an egg hunt, games, crafts, and treats. Please bring a basket. In the case of inclement weather, all activities will take place inside. If you would like to help on Saturday morning at 8am, let Erica know.
ebenjamin@severnaparkumc.org



ASP Talent-Service Auction

Here is your chance to help our youth in their annual mission trip to Appalachia while having fun and enjoying some wonderful gifts.

The Talent Service Auction raises needed funds for the 2018 Appalachia Service Project to West Virginia, June 23-30, 2018. The Project involves home repair and relational ministry with and for the poor in Central Appalachia.

The Auction is **Sunday, March 18, 6pm** until all items are bid, usually 8:30-ish. Desserts and child care are available at no cost courtesy of the UMYF and ASP participants. The Auction features a long list of services and talents offered by members of the congregation. Some are available to take home from the auction, and others need to be called in when desired if you are the highest bidder.

Examples of auction items:

- Homemade baked goods
- whole dinners delivered to your home
- labor on your home or yard or both
- lessons of various kinds
- services such as tax preparation, garden consulting, etc.
- use of private homes for vacations

Everyone is welcome to attend even if you do not bid! It's a fun night for all ages. The funds collected go toward our huge expense for building supplies and work vehicles, thus insuring a great amount of work will be done by our many volunteers.

Please consider making a donation, and plan to join us on **March 18!**

Picture Frame Pictures!



Winter Relief



Shrove Tuesday



Rhythms of Grace (contd.)

Whatever your genre, I think Gloria Estefan was right: “the rhythm is gonna get you.”

There is also a rhythm to our shared life together. Each year we celebrate the same cycle of holidays, journeying from Christmas to Easter to Pentecost. Each Sunday we gather for worship and journey from praise to prayers to the word of God. Each day we pause in our own way to pray. The rhythms of the Christian life—the yearly, weekly, and daily rhythms—create a structure for our faith.

It’s true that these rhythms can seem constraining. The rhythms of Christian life can sometimes feel confining, keeping us from a life of freedom. But as Eugene Peterson says, we can be *“surprised to be living not a diminished life, not a crippled life, but a zestful life.”* In this focused life of faith, *“God-intensity begins to replace self-absorption; mature wisdom begins to supplant self-importance.”*

Christianity is full of paradox: through restraint, we find freedom; through repetition, we find novelty; through rhythms, we find riffs of new improvisation.

This is the call of the season of Lent: to learn the “unforced rhythms of grace” that come when we walk with Jesus.

Do you have habits that lead you to find God’s grace? For some, daily prayer

provides an anchor in the midst of a busy life. For others, a few minutes of music in the car helps center them. I can still picture mom’s rhythm of grace: each day, she sits at the kitchen table with her Bible, reading, praying, and eating her lunch in the sunlight. We each have our own way of connecting with God. Day by day, week by week, we reach out to the one who connects every rhythm of our lives.

As we journey toward the cross, the rhythms of Christian life intensify. This month, the rhythms of church life accelerate: we have classes and studies, meaningful mission opportunities (p. 3) and worship services during Holy Week (p. 2). If you’ve never entered into the rhythms of church outside Sundays, now is a great time to try something new. From Maundy Thursday worship around dinner tables to the holy darkness on Good Friday, this month is full of grace-soaked rhythms.

I’m still longing for springtime, when I can roll down my window and blast the radio. But even as we fight off the cold, this is still one of my favorite seasons—a time when I find Jesus to be more real and I can hear his words more clearly. It’s a season when I am reminded of how deep God’s love goes, when we can all find freedom in the “unforced rhythms” of God’s grace.

I hope you’ll enter into the song.

grace & peace,

Rev. Carissa

“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.”
(Mt 11:28-30, *The Message*)

New Members



Lacey Bennett



Eric & Melissa Danielson



Jere & Doris Glover



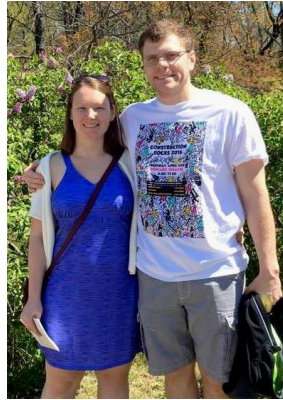
Donna Jarosinski



Linda & Bob Johnson



Kate & Jeff Johnson



Leah & Ben L'Ecuyer



Betsy McPherson



Jason & Jen Meadows



Cristine & Tim Milauskas



Holly & Lance Newcomb



Jeremy & Danielle Swimm

Garage Sale Reminder

Spring is just around the corner and so is the Garage Sale! Now is the perfect time to clean out your closets, kitchen cabinets, book shelves, garage and basement. The Garage Sale is Saturday, May 5. By then, the weather will be warmer, your home will be decluttered and VIM Projects and Trips will be funded. Halleluiah!.



2018 ALL Trips

Adults Loving Life has four trips planned for 2018. Pick up a Trip Packet in Fellowship Hall! Contact Lou or Kathie Kamm with questions. 410-647-5914

May 16: "The Life of Jesus" at Sight and Sound - \$127

July 25: "A Chorus Line" at Riverside Center - \$105

September 26: St. Michaels by Land and Sea - \$117

December 5: Christmas Show at American Music Theater - \$110

Prayer Shawls

The Prayer Shawl Ministry is looking for people to knit and crochet prayer shawls and lap robes for those who are going through chemo, dialysis, or have had a serious illness or operation and are dealing with long recovery periods. You may use your own patterns as long as the shawls are 30 inches wide and 72 inches long without the fringe. Lap robes must be a 45 inch square. You can also use our pattern. For more information please call Cindy Rafferty at 410-647-8453.

ALL March Lunch

Whether you're from Baltimore or not, we're sure you'll enjoy hearing about the many things that happened FIRST in Baltimore as shared by Wayne Schaumburg. Please join Adults Loving Life on **Tuesday, March 27** at **12noon** for fellowship, lunch, and a very interesting program. \$10 at the door. For more information Call Pam Gerolstein at 410-923-1091.

Learn & Share

The Learn and Share circle meets the **first** and **third Monday** of each month at **10am** in the Library. At the present time we are studying Adam Hamilton's book "Making Sense of the Bible." Come join us for study and fellowship. For more information call Cindy Rafferty at 410-647-8453.

OWH Thanks

THANK YOU writers of cards for Operation Welcome Home! Adults Loving Life delivered 7,000 cards with warm messages to our soldiers returning from overseas. We've received several thank-you notes from grateful soldiers. Please pick up a pack of cards from Fellowship Hall and take just a few minutes to personalizing them. Thanks!

Winter Relief Thanks

The Winter Relief mission in our church just ended and we would like to thank the 300 plus volunteers that participated and put in over 1300 hours to make the Winter Relief week a success. We not only provided our 46 guests a place to sleep, three meals a day, snacks, laundry services, sewing repairs, transportation to jobs, and showers but were able to give each guest a goody bag with gift cards and provide both dental services (Dr. Dave Deitrick) and barber services. Our guests played bingo, were entertained by our very own Chris Dillard, Josh Bennet and our praise band Two or More, attended a Bible study led by Nancy Landers, attended an employment networking session led by Sean Wise, and enjoyed the singing of our youth group. One of the highlights of the week was the ice cream social run by Karen Myers on Saturday evening.

But Winter Relief goes way beyond this. I think it was summed up perfectly by one of our guests who stated “It is one thing to open your church to us, it is another thing to open your hearts to us.” Another guest said “This place is filled with the Holy Spirit.” We saw Jesus move from the mountain top to the valley when we saw guests watch over a fellow guest who has terminal cancer. Truly God was present with us during this week.

Our volunteers and leadership team served them with their hands, feet, hearts, and time, but most importantly they loved them as Jesus would have loved them. This is truly what Winter Relief is all about. Not only were the guests blessed in many ways, but our entire church was blessed. If you did not get a chance to participate

in the Winter Relief Mission this February, please consider getting involved in the future. Please put the following week of Winter Relief on your calendars: **November 5–12, 2018.** We would ask you to keep all of the homeless population in your prayers.

Thank you,

Carolyn Heim & Pam Sherman

Celebrating Generosity

Financially, we began 2018 in a very different place than we did 2017. Some of you may recall that we faced an unexpected shortfall at the end of 2016 (around \$35K) which, when combined with several years of small deficits during our Capital Campaign, had us cumulatively around \$70,000 in the red in our General Fund. We are pleased to announce that because of our Mind the Gap response at the beginning of 2017 and your faithful giving throughout the year, we were able to erase that entire deficit with a little to spare as we enter 2018!

We ended 2017 with a net General Fund surplus just under \$8,000. We accomplished this all while continuing to expand the ways that we are helping people of all ages deepen their faith in worship, spiritual formation ministries, and joyful service to others in face-to-face ways. Many thanks for your continued generosity that makes so much possible in and through the life of our church!

Christine Chandler, Finance Chair

Connections Class

If you're new to our church and want to find out more about our congregation, you are invited to come to the next Connections Class on **Sunday, March 18** at **11am** in the Parlor. Join Rev. Ron for a conversation about our core values, ministry opportunities and taking next steps toward becoming a member. The class is for the just-curious and the almost-committed – no strings attached. Childcare is provided. RSVP to Beth if you're planning to come or just show up. bfrank@severnaparkumc.org

Health & Wellness Seminar

Come spend an hour with us on **March 7, 6:30-7:30pm** in **Room 208** as we share our passion for helping to inspire those around us lead healthier lifestyles. Learn the benefits of good nutrition and other simple changes to enhance your current health status.

Our children are our future and mean the world to us. Explore ways to make healthy food choices to help them fight off illness and fun ways to teach them how to make healthy choices. Hear empowering personal stories and the science that backs it all up. Without our health we have very little hope. Be inspired to become the very best version of yourself so that you can be there fully for those closest to you.

Speakers include: Heather Wallace (SPUMC Nursery School teacher, Wellness Advocate), Bliss Bohuslav (Certified Wellness Coach), and Joanne McCallum (Certified Life Coach & Wellness Advocate)

Please RSVP to hwallace645@gmail.com and indicate if childcare is needed.

VBS Donations

VBS may be a few months away but we need your help collecting material now. Stop by the donation board in fellowship hall and find something to donate to VBS. Some items are due in March while others aren't needed until June.

VBS Registration

Online registration for volunteers and children of volunteers is March 19th. If you are interested in volunteering for VBS please contact Erica. VBS takes over 100 volunteers and you can be one of them! ebenjamin@severnaparkumc.org

New "Pray Ground"

We love having children in worship. We also know that some times their active bodies need to move and groove, which can become a distraction. If you need to step out of worship with your child, please feel free to do so. We have a pray-ground in the narthex (the room right outside of the sanctuary) where you can still hear and see worship while your little one can play. Feel free to re-enter the sanctuary when you are ready.

Moms Connect

Wonder how you can prepare your child for kindergarten? Moms Connect will hear from Susan Brunk an expert in early childhood education and curriculum developer for the Stepping Stone School on **Thursday, March 15** at **6:30pm**. Childcare will be provided.

Memorial Garden

Since the dedication of our Memorial Garden on June 2, 1991, many changes and improvements have taken place. During the last 27 years, most of those improvements have been made by Eagle Scout Projects from Troop 993. In recent years, we have seen the addition of two rain gardens, improved brick pathways and the renovation of the benches in the Chapel in the Woods. The Memorial Garden committee members, along with the congregation are very thankful for the dedication of the scouts. Their projects have greatly enhanced the garden and their help with spring and fall clean-ups has been invaluable and immensely appreciated. Monetary donations as memorials have helped to fund some of our recent projects. We are very grateful for the generous gifts given by the families and friends of those interred in the garden.

In addition to the scout projects, we have recently placed our third stone and plaque to remember those whose ashes are interred. So far, almost 90 church member and loved ones have been laid to rest in this bucolic, beautiful garden.

As spring approaches, we hope you will take the time to visit our stunning garden and consider participating with the maintenance. The Garden Committee is always looking for new members to help with weeding, raking and mulching. Our spring clean-up/mulching date is **Saturday, March 17 at 8am**. Anyone can come and volunteer an hour or more.

Weather permitting; we hope to host our annual Mother's Day reception outside. With the azaleas and rhododendrons usually in bloom, it is the most beautiful time of the year for our garden.

If you have questions or would like to know more about our Memorial Garden, how to volunteer or how to donate memorials, please contact Lynnette Cloughley. LynnetteCloughley@gmail.com



Database Help Wanted

Do you work with database systems? Our church is starting to research new church database solutions, so we can have more efficient and integrated systems connecting all the administrative aspects of ministry at SPUMC. We are currently forming a small team of staff and congregation members to spearhead this effort. If you work with database systems in your day job, we'd love to have you on the team! Email Rev. Ron if you're willing to lend your expertise. ron@severnaparkumc.org





UMYF News

Sunday, March 4: 7pm, Choice Night

Sunday, March 11: 7pm, Handling Stress & Anxiety

Sunday, March 18: **ASP AUCTION**
No regular MYF meeting; helping with the Auction. Bring homemade desserts!

Sunday, March 25: 7pm, Group Building Night. Retreat deadline!

Sunday, April 1: NO MEETING – Happy Easter!

Super 6th News

Sunday, March 11: 5pm, St. Patrick's Day. Wear Green!

Sunday, March 25: 5pm, "Everybody's Birthday Party"

Sunday, April 15: 5pm, "Welcome 5th Grade!" Combining groups to show the 5th graders what Super 6th is like.

Sunday, April 29: **7pm, Attend MYF and see what next year will be like.

Sunday, May 6: 5pm, Olympic Games (final meeting)

Young Adult Group

At YAG, we love talking about deep questions so we can do life with one another the way Christ intended. On **March 7** we're discussing "How does God guide us?" and on **March 21** we'll talk about "Who is the Holy Spirit?" Join us from **6:30-8pm** in the Parlor, with childcare in the nursery.

csurber@severnaparkumc.org

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