

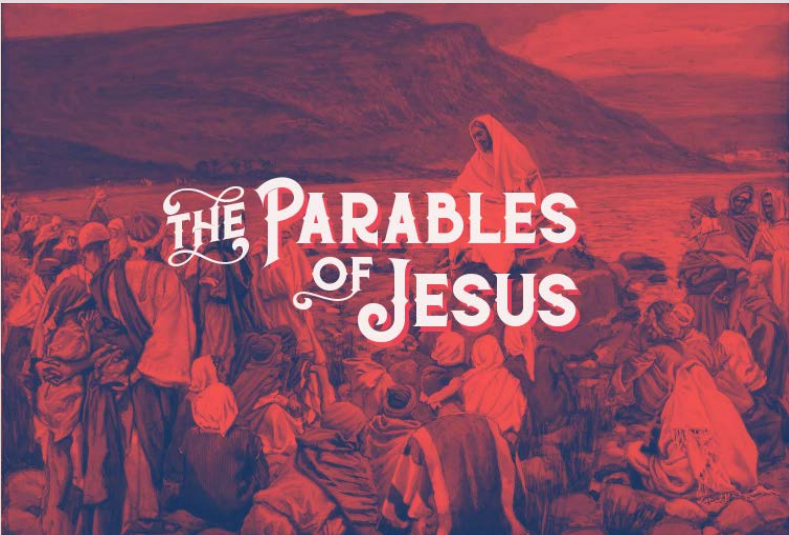


The
 Octagon

Severna Park United Methodist Church News

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Truth In Fiction

I love Harry Potter. I first read the Harry Potter books as they came out, keeping pace with the publication by being at the top of the local library waitlist. After seminary, I downloaded them onto my Kindle, re-reading them during our camping trip through Maine. It was only once I had finished reading them all through for

a second time that I discovered the audiobook versions, beautifully narrated by Jim Dale in a way that combined the detail of the novels with the energy of the films. Since this discovery, I’ve lost track of how many times I’ve listened through the series – but it has surely been at least once per year.

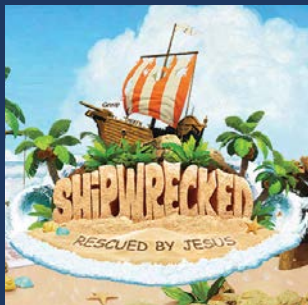
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VBS News

Thanks for all the water bottle donations. We've got all we need! Check on the donation board in Fellowship Hall to see other ways you can help.

VBS prep days are June 11, 13, & 18 9am-12:00noon. We will be preparing decorations for the hallways and could use your help. Whether you are a creative painter or can crumple paper, we have something at your skill level.

VBS set up is Sunday, July 8th 12:00-4:00. Please come and help us deck the church halls for Shipwrecked. Lunch is provided.



YAG Summer

It's summertime for the Young Adult Group! And that means that here at the church, we are shifting toward fellowship and fun. This summer, Rev. Carissa has worked with Leah and Tracy to plan a bunch of fun activities for YAG, all focused on spending time with one another and getting to know each other better. We'd would love for YOU to plan to join us! Here's what's coming up:

Lunch at Ledo's Pizza, Millersville

Sunday, June 24 at 12pm & Sunday, August 5 at 12pm

Bowie Baysox Game vs. Harrisburg Senators

Sunday, July 8 at 1:35pm
Contact Leah to get tickets!
westlw88@icloud.com

Food Truck Tuesday

Tuesday, July 24 at 5:30pm
Church at Severn Run:
8187 Telegraph Rd, Severn, Maryland 21144

Food Truck Thursday

Thursday, August 23 at 5:30pm
Odenton Volunteer Fire Company: 1425 Annapolis Rd, Odenton, MD 21113

I'm looking forward to a summer of delicious food, good conversations, and relaxing with you all. Best of all for you parents - you're welcome to bring the kids along for any of these activities, and we'll all enjoy hanging out together.

I hope you are excited for the months ahead, and I hope between all your travels you'll have a chance to join YAG for some fellowship and fun!

grace & peace,
Rev. Carissa

Welcome New Members

On **Sunday, May 27** we welcomed *Allen & Linda Egloff* and *Mike & Lori Trull* into the life of our congregation. Please extend your personal greetings to our new members.



Allen & Linda Egloff



Mike & Lori Trull

SPUMC Nursery School Graduation



Truth In Fiction

(continued from page 1)

I like to think that I have an appropriate obsession with this series of books, tales of courage and self-sacrifice in a world that has always captured my imagination. But when it comes down to it, the truth is this: life is stressful. And in times of stress, one way we all cope is by escaping into pop culture. For me, it's Harry Potter. Perhaps for you it's a film series like Star Wars or Indiana Jones, a hit show like NCIS or Friends, or a reality-TV binge-watch like the Bachelorette.

Why do we do this? What is it about a good story that brings us comfort? Sometimes, I'll admit, it feels good to escape daily stressors by entering into another world. It's like taking a vacation from your life, even if it's just for the 20 minutes when you're caught up in a good book. But I suspect, as one of my favorite podcasts says, that "reading fiction doesn't just help us escape from the world, it helps us live in it."

This month, we are exploring the parables of Jesus: fictional stories told by Jesus to those who followed him. It's a bit odd, in a way, to think of these stories as fiction. But it's true. After all, the "good Samaritan" wasn't an actual human being Jesus saw one time in real life, and neither was the "prodigal son."

But these stories are more than good fiction for us who follow Jesus. And these stories do more than simply help us escape our lives. These stories, made-up though they may be, are actually stories that point us back toward our real lives more clearly than any other.

See, fiction isn't all falsehoods. What Jesus knew – and what we can recognize – is that sometimes, we need a bit of fiction in order to see the truth. Like King David in 2 Samuel 12, we are sometimes so caught up in our own stuff that we aren't ready to respond to a direct call from God. Instead, we need someone like the prophet Nathan to tell us the right story in the right moment, to wake us up and change our whole perspective.

And luckily for us, Jesus loved to tell the right story at the right moment.

We all have daily struggles, pitfalls and roadblocks that keep us from the way of Jesus. And there's no denying that in the stress and struggle of life, it's tempting to escape into fiction. But if we are able to turn toward the stories of Jesus, we will be awakened once again to what God is doing in this world.

This month, may the parables of Jesus wake you up. May these stories surprise you afresh, jolting you into the realization of what God needs you to be and do. May you find that in reading fiction by Jesus, you are equipped not to escape the world, but to live in it with more compassion, wisdom, and fierce love each day.

Rev. Carissa

Finance Committee Thinking Ahead

The SPUMC Finance Committee, headed by Christine Chandler, consists of seventeen members including Rev. Ron, Rev. Carissa, and representatives from the congregation. They work diligently to make sure the generous tithes and offerings are

properly protected, managed, and spent. With an annual budget of approximately \$1.4 million, there is much to be done!

Each year in November and December the upcoming year's budget (based on requests from the various church committees and departments) is prepared for submission to the Church Council for approval. During this process, the needs and goals of the church for the upcoming year and future are reviewed and discussed to make sure the church's funds are utilized properly. Accordingly, the annual Stewardship Campaign conducted in the fall before the budget making process begins is an important time for SPUMC, as it provides the Committee with a projection of the revenue to expect in the new year.

The Finance Committee has already started planning for this year's Campaign and is developing ideas to make pledging and giving as easy, exciting, and inspirational as ever before. With the ongoing generosity of SPUMC's members, our church will continue to flourish and be a beacon in our community for Christ.

Summer Giving

We hope you get away this summer for some vacation. But when you are away, your giving doesn't have to go on vacation, too. Help support our ministries all summer with online giving. Thanks! severnaparkumc.org/give

"Grow Up!"

I recently quoted our Bishop in a sermon when she said "Grow up into the fullness that God intended for you." To that end, our area of Christian education, appropriately labeled **Intentional Faith Development** will begin a study this summer of a bigger, broader program of learning for adults.

We will look at what is already offered, and what needs to be in place so that every adult could enter a learning setting exactly where they are. We will consider some new options such as "Trust Circles," and Covenant Disciple groups. The field is wide open; we just need to pray and discern what the future holds for us.

If you would be interested in some lively discussion as we plan, please contact Rev. Lee on Sunday or by email. lferrell@severnaparkumc.org

Church Office Closures

The church offices will be closed on:

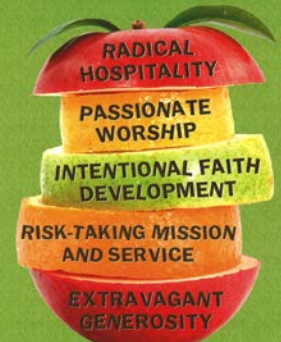
- Friday, June 29
- Monday, July 30
- Friday, August 31

Red Cross Blood Drive

Tuesday, June 19th
2pm-7:30pm

Make someone whole again by giving the gift of life—give blood!

FIVE PRACTICES OF FRUITFUL CONGREGATIONS



Pentecost Sunday



A Way Forward for the UMC

At their recent meeting, the UMC Council of Bishops received the report of the Commission on a Way Forward (created to help the church find a way through our differences around full inclusion of LGBTQ persons in the UMC) and have recommended the “One Church” model to the 2019 General Conference. You can read BWC Bishop Easterling’s letter explaining this and discover other interpretive resources on our website. severnarkumc.org/a-way-forward

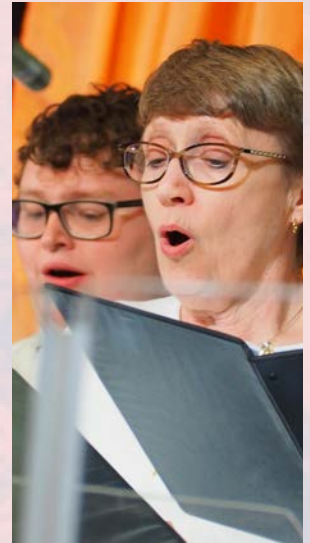
We have scheduled information forums for **June 10** and **17** in the Parlor with our pastors. They will be on hand to help describe some of the tensions in the UMC around issues of LGBTQ inclusion and also an outline of the process leading up to the 2019 General Conference. Feel free to come to whatever session works for you; they will all include the same information.

June 10 @ 9am: Rev. Byron
 June 10 @ 10:30am: Rev. Carissa
 June 17 @ 9am: Rev. Lee
 June 17 @ 10:30am: Rev. Ron

We are also planning some small group studies that will explore the biblical, theological and cultural factors that contribute to our understanding of these issues in the late summer/early fall timeframe. Stay tuned for more details.

Annual Conference Worship Highlights

SPUMC was well-represented at Annual Conference. Not only did Heather Kraus, Beth Davis and Erica Benjamin attend as our Lay Members, but Chris Dillard was part of the music team throughout Conference and brought with him members of our choir and drummer Tim Krippendorf to sing and play for opening worship and ordination. What a joy to see our music ministry do us proud!



Missions Moment

Prayer is the one thing everyone can afford to give.



Women's Summer Bible Study

We are offering an 8-week Women's Bible Study on the book *Jesus Calling: Experiencing God's Presence* Tuesdays, 9:30-11am in Room 303 beginning June 19.

Book is \$6. Sign up in Fellowship Hall.

Holy Land & Oberammergau Pilgrimage

Sign up for the Holy Land & Oberammergau Pilgrimage that Rev. Ron & Holly are leading **June 14-27, 2020**. The itinerary includes stops throughout Galilee, Nazareth, Megiddo, Caesarea, Bethlehem, Jericho, Qumran, the Dead Sea and of course, multiple days in Jerusalem. We also see castles and churches throughout the Alpine region of Germany, spend at day at Oberammergau for the Passion Play and visit Salzburg and Innsbruck, Austria.

The cost is \$4695/person and over 75 people have expressed interest so far. If you want to be part of this once in a lifetime (or at least decade!) trip, you'll find brochures around the church at the Welcome Desk and on the main bulletin boards or you can visit the Educational Opportunities website at www.EO.travelwithus.com. A fully-refundable deposit of \$600 (payable directly to EO) to reserve your space is due by **June 15**. Contact Rev. Ron and Holly for more info. holronfost@aol.com

SPUMC Softball Team Schedule

Games are played on Sundays at Cypress Creek Park or Elvaton Park.

June 10: 2pm, Cypress 1

June 17: 2pm, Cypress 1

June 24: 2pm, Cypress 2

July 1: No Game

July 8: 3:30pm, Cypress 1

July 15: 3:30pm, Cypress 1

July 22: 2pm, Cypress 1

July 29: 2pm, Elvaton 1

August 5: 2pm, Cypress 1

August 12: 3:30pm, Cypress 1

Baptism Class

Baptisms take place several times each month. If you are interested in having a child baptized at SPUMC, please join us in the Parlor for a Baptism Class on **Sunday, June 24 at 11am** to learn about what is involved. bfrank@severnaparkumc.org

ALL October Announcement

Do you have a hobby or a collection that you'd like to share with others? If so, please let Lou Kamm know so we can include you in our October ALL meeting program. lkamm@severnaparkumc.org

ALL June Luncheon

On **June 26** at **12noon** Adults Loving Life are pleased to welcome Cpl. Meghan Ott representing the AACO Police Department by sharing strategies for keeping us safe and preventing scams. We'll have an opportunity to share our concerns and ask questions. Additionally, please bring a picture of your pet(s), past or present, for sharing with your neighbors before lunch. Signup in the Fellowship Hall by Sunday, June 24. Cost is \$10. Please contact Pam Gerolstein with questions. pgerolstein@severnaparkumc.org

Sunday School News

Sunday School comes to an end for the summer on **Sunday, June 10**. Children 3 and older will celebrate and thank their teachers with a banquet during their usual Sunday School hour. This year the kids tithed \$371.46 for missions (backpack buddies, UMCOR, and heaven's kitchen.) Please thank those who guided our children during the school year:

Linda Barstow, Susan & Jon Brunk, Lynette Walters, Melissa & Jathan Biddlecomb, Molly Gerig, Rebecca Cservek, Shelly Hoffmaster, Martha Hollidge, Carrie Linthicum, Meredith Barger, Alison Cherowitzo, Lori Sexton, Ashley & Rachid Harrison, Alyssa Pepper, Kristin Sym, Karen Merritts, Sarah Sealey, Danita Yetter, Michele Lechowicz, Vera Summers, Amy VanVeelen, Josh & Lacey Bennett, Dave Colborne, Kendra & Audrey Collier, Leslie Dolsak, Joanne Main, Maria Casaday, Julie Moundalexis, Jennifer Dooley, Gina Ingel, Lucy Miner, Jennifer Pilholski, Katie & Jay Carlin, Ryan Dill,

Joe & Bonnie Graham, LeAnn McCreedy, Jeff & Jenelle Piepmeier, Bobby Piepmeier, Pam Hall.

We also have a host of youth who help care for our children in the nursery: Elizabeth Bosanko, Leslie Kelley, Haley White, Sophie Piepmeier, Julia Koul, Jessica & Christina Smith.

We would also like to thank December Brown who cares for our littlest disciples not only on Sundays but often on Wednesday and Thursday evenings. And finally, MaryAnn Spanolia our Sunday School superintendent extraordinaire.

Summer Sunday School begins on **June 17**. Our toddlers will continue to learn Bible stories and faith concepts through the Frolic curriculum. For part of the summer, pre-k and elementary kids will explore the Bible through the whimsical world of Dr. Seuss (**June 17, 24, August 12, 19, & 26**). For the remainder of the summer, preschoolers will dive into Bible fun by bringing the stories to life through PlayDoh while elementary kids will spend more time in worship exploring the ins and outs of why we worship the way we do (July 1-August 5). If you would like to help guide children in their faith walk this summer, please contact Erica ebenjamin@severnaparkumc.org

We're giving our Sunday School teachers a break this summer and will intentionally welcome our children into worship in July and the first week of August. Our theme for that time will be **An Hour on Sunday** as we begin an intergenerational exploration of the "what" and the "why" of worship. We will continue our Pre-K classes and nursery care for infants and toddlers.

UMYF News

The MYF has begun its “Summer Schedule,” meeting every week, **7-8:30pm** for relaxing fun. We will enjoy a variety of games (both physical and board), snacks, special nights, and hanging out. Incoming 7th graders are welcome to attend once school is out!

****We will NOT meet on June 24.**

Congratulations to the students who were honored at the 2018 Banquet.

Outstanding Counselor: Janey Dike

Leadership Awards: Sean Ostrowski and Elizabeth Bosanko

Spirit Awards: Blake Bierdeman and Sophie Piepmeier

Unsung Heroes

12th grade: Ryan VanVeelen

11th grade: Chase Meadows

10th grade: Jacob Russell

9th grade: Nora DiMaggio

8th grade: Olivia Unger

7th grade: April Collins

Creativity Award: Bella Hahn

Best All-Around Performer:
Bradley Hogan

College News

We will be listing college and graduate school grads in the next issue; please email Rev. Lee with your school, degree earned, and in what field.

lferrell@severnaparkumc.org

Congratulations Grads!

We'd like to extend our sincere congratulations to this year's graduates. We celebrate your accomplishments and your next, future steps.

Arundel High School: Megan Look

Severna Park High School:

Brian Albert, Grace Atkinson, Stevyn Ayoola, Jacob Briganti, Ryen Dill, David Ellwood, Jack Finnerin, Bella Hahn, Chase Hoenscheid, Sam Keeler, Kevin Kobosko, Abby Lizewski, Abby Miller, Maryellen Myers, Sawyer Phillips, Nick Plummer, Ryan VanVeelen



Welcome Confirmands

We were blessed to receive 21 new confirmands into full membership on Pentecost Sunday, May 20.

Kevin Bredeck, Addison Bridges, Olivia Danielson, Olivia Edwards, Delaney Finnerin, Elliot Gerig, Evan Gruver, Paul Isenberg, Julia Koul, Kaitlin Looock, Nora Lechowicz, Ava Meadows, Katherine Miller, Andrew Myers, Abbey Ollinger, Bobby Piepmeier, Cole Rogers, Morgan Schultz, Christina Smith, Olivia Unger, David Young

Confirmation is five months of classes in the basics of the faith, church history, worship, the sacraments, prayer, and the application of faith. We confirm 7th and 8th graders; senior highs wishing to be confirmed can schedule separate classes.

If interested for the class of 2019, email Rev. Lee to receive notices about dates in the new year. lferrell@severnaparkumc.org

Thanks to Mentors

A Confirmation Mentor is an experienced person willing to encourage, coach, and

guide someone in the challenge that is before them.

We want to thank this year's mentors for a job well done.

Erica Benjamin, Rebecca Bosanko, Ann Chaffee, Delanie Colborne, Logan Dill, Rev. Lee Ferrell, Maddy Finnerin, Martha Hollidge, Joanna Kavouras, Maddy Koul, Megan Looock, John Miller, Kevin O'Donnell, Lori Sexton, Alison Shephard, Suzanne Wimbrow

We did not have quite enough this year, so if this is a role you would like to try, please talk to Rev. Lee. Classes run from January to Pentecost.



May Coffeehouse



Severna Park United Methodist Church
731 Benfield Rd. Severna Park, MD 21146
410.987.4700 | severneparkumc.org