



The Christmas Octagon

Severna Park United Methodist Church News

Christmas Eve A Thrill of Hope

Thank you for choosing to be with us on Christmas Eve! If you are new here, we extend a special welcome and hope that you will stick around in the new year to find out the amazing ways our church is alive in mission, thriving with vibrant children's and youth ministries, and authentic in exploring and deepening life-giving faith. We encourage you to stop by our Welcome Center or seek out one of the pastors if you'd like to know more about our church. If you are returning after being away, welcome home! And if you are a regular member or friend of SPUMC, we're glad to have you here tonight and all year.

We've had a wonderful December full of warm family gatherings, meaningful

outreach into the community, and inspiring music. We've been singing and serving our way through Advent with a different carol to guide us each week. Now on Christmas Eve, we culminate this journey with the joyful experience of welcoming Christ into our lives in new and powerful ways. Luke describes Mary as "pondering all this in her heart," and there is something about Christmas that takes our breath away and helps us to breathe all at once. May your hearts be filled with **A THRILL OF HOPE!** Merry Christmas to you and your family!

- Rev. Ron

Scenes of the Season

A Thrill of Hope Continues

Our current sermon series, A Thrill of Hope, continues through January 6.

December 30 — *Go: Over the Hills & Everywhere*

January 6, Epiphany — *Shine: Guide Us to Thy Perfect Light*

Connections Class

If you're curious about our church or maybe ready to join, you are invited to attend a Connections Class on **Sunday, January 13 at 11am** in the Parlor. This is a great place to ask questions and learn more about how you can be part of our ministry. Childcare is provided. RSVP to Beth. bfrank@severnaparkumc.org

Baptism Class

If you want to have a child baptized at SPUMC in the coming months, you are asked to attend a one-time class with one of our pastors. The next class is Sunday, **February 17 at 11am** in the Parlor. Childcare is provided. RSVP to Beth. bfrank@severnaparkumc.org

Office Schedule

The offices will be open on **December 27 & 28** and will resume our schedule on **January 2**. Happy holidays!



2017-2018 Nursery School Registration

Registration applications for the new school year open on **January 7** and placement will begin on January 28. In addition to half-day sessions for 3s and 4s, we'll also offer extended days for 4-year-olds. Visit the webpage for more registration information.

severnaparkumc.org/nursery-school

Faith & Race Book Group

In September, Rev. Ron started a monthly **Faith & Race Book Group** to help us explore issues of racial justice and reconciliation. So far we've read *Just Mercy* (Bryan Stevenson), *Raising White Kids* (Jennifer Harvey) and Trevor Noah's memoir, *Born a Crime*. In January we'll read and discuss Jim Wallis' book, *America's Original Sin* on **January 22** at **7pm**. You are welcome to come join in any time you think we're reading something good (*To Kill a Mockingbird* is on the docket later this spring!) or join the conversation each month on the fourth Tuesday in the Parlor.

Intentional Acts of Kindness

This Advent we've given out over \$22,000 in one hundred-dollar bills in worship thanks to the generosity of several families and individuals in our church asking people to use **their hearts and imagination to share the love of Christ with someone who needs it.**

The stories have been pouring in ever since. We've learned how someone bought a hundred-dollar cup of hot chocolate from two young girls raising money for backpacks for the homeless. We've heard about people reaching out to friends, family members and total strangers facing sickness, financial hardship or other challenges. One participant sent books to a church library in El Salvador while another sent solar powered lights to a village in Africa. Most of the money has been spent locally,

though some has traveled across the country and all over the globe to children in Yemen and refugees in Sudan. If you've not yet shared how you spent your \$100, **send your stories to Rev. Ron.** ron@severnaparkumc.org

Thanks to Jamie Costello, News Anchor at WMAR-2, for coming out and helping us share the good news about this project on December 14. The story ran that night on the 11pm news but if you missed it you can see it along with the rest of these poignant stories on our website. severnaparkumc.org/choosekind



Looking Ahead to 2019 at SPUMC

Winter Relief

February 4-11, SPUMC will host Winter Relief, an excellent chance to serve as part of a mission right here. We offer shelter, meals, showers, laundry, warm fellowship, and the love of God to about 45 men and women. There are many ways to get involved: serve as a host volunteer, help with meals or transportation, wash laundry, buy items for the guest's needs list, and more. Sign up online at severnaparkumc.org/relief beginning December 30 or in Fellowship Hall starting January 6. Please consider serving this important mission. Contact Pam Biddlecomb for more information. spumcwr@gmail.com



Holy Week

Holy Week, beginning with Palm Sunday on April 14 and culminating on **April 21** with **Easter Sunday** morning is sure to be an impactful and worshipful season at Severna Park UMC. Make plans to join us for special services on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday and our amazing Easter Egg Hunt on April 20 for the kids!

Garage Sale

If you haven't heard, SPUMC's biannual garage sale is a huge community affair, regularly raising over \$20,000 for missions. The spring sale will be on **May 4**, so mark your calendars now!

ASP 2019



2019 will mark the 39th consecutive year of SPUMC serving as part of the Appalachia Service Project (ASP), as teams head out to repair homes of our neighbors in the Appalachian mountain region from **June 29-July 6**. Contact Rev. Lee if you're interested in being part of a team or for more info. lferrell@severnaparkumc.org

Vacation Bible School

This year's VBS (**July 15-19** and **22-26**) will be called *ROAR!* and feature a safari-themed curriculum. Registration will be opened to the public on April 15, but church members get a chance to register early beginning April 8. Contact Erica for more information. ebenjamin@severnaparkumc.org