



The Octagon

Severna Park United Methodist Church News

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This Is Home

As I write this, I sit in the afterglow of a wonderful event at our church. On January 27, we had around 175 people show up for a late afternoon showing of the film "This Is Home: A Refugee Story," which introduced us to the stories of four Syrian refugee families settling in Baltimore in

2016 after fleeing their war-torn homeland. It was at once heart-breaking to see their struggles and challenges and heartwarming to see their courage in facing them. By the end of the movie, all four storylines were in hopeful places:

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This Is Home

Sign Up for Summer Camp

The Baltimore-Washington Conference of the United Methodist Church boasts two excellent camps with full programming this coming summer. Full brochures are available in the “Follow” corner of Fellowship Hall.

West River Center is in a beautiful location right on the river in West River/Churchton. There are camps for children entering grade 3 and up, including a mini-camp for those entering grade 2. There are all-around discovery camps, and specialty camps such as sailing, basketball, leadership, and camps for the deaf. There is a “Grandparents and Me” week as well. High schoolers are especially invited to join our very own Chris Dillard and Rev. Carissa for “Camp Awesomer” and “Camp Awesomest” from **July 28-August 2**.

Camp Manidokan is located in Maryland on this side of the river by Harpers Ferry. It is a more “mountainous” and woodsy setting. Its camps include leadership, adventure, horseback riding, canoe camp, and American Sign Language.

pick up a brochure today, or visit the website. bwccampsandretreats.com



Wanted: Camp Counselors

My favorite week of the summer is the week I spend volunteering as a camp counselor with my husband at West River Center. From Sunday afternoon to Friday evening, we mentor, disciple, play games, and live alongside more than 60 high school campers. Throughout the week, these campers have tons of fun, develop life-long friendships, and encounter God’s love like never before.

We are currently looking for 6 more adults to join our counselor team for the week of July 28-August 2. If you love God, enjoy hanging out with teenagers, and are willing to spend a week in a beautiful waterfront camp setting, then I would love to talk with you about serving on our team of counselors! Lodging is all indoors with air-conditioning and delicious food served daily in the dining hall.

Interested? Have more questions? Send me (Rev. Carissa) an email and pack your bags for a week you’ll never forget. csurber@severnaparkumc.org

Rise Against Hunger Report

We are happy to report that the 15,000 meals we packed in October 2018 were just shipped to Vietnam! Our meals will go to “Children of Vietnam,” an organization committed to providing nutritious meals to orphanages, schools, programs that serve street children, and families in crisis in Danang, Vietnam. We are grateful to all who contributed time and funds to this event. Stay tuned for an announcement soon about another Rise Against Hunger event at SPUMC in the Fall 2019!

We Want to Hear from You!

While the Young Adult Group (YAG) will continue to gather for fellowship events (join us on **February 10** for lunch at **12pm** at Hellas), the group is taking a break from Thursday meetings while we explore new ways of doing ministry with and for the 20-somethings and 30-somethings in our community. If you are in this age range, Rev. Carissa would love to buy you a cup of coffee and get your thoughts on how we can create a ministry that serves your needs! Text her at 301-642-9729 or email her to get connected.
csurber@severnaparkumc.org

LIFT

LIFT (Linked In Faith Together) is a new fellowship opportunity at SPUMC. Everyone is invited (regardless of age or where you are in life)! Meetings will be the 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month in the Parlor at 6:30pm. Childcare will be available for those attending the meeting in the Nursery.

Bring your life stories, the things that are weighing on your heart, the stuff that has you excited about life -- really anything!

There is no preparation required, just show up. We will have a general topic/theme each meeting but we will let God guide us in our journey together. Let's learn and grow from one another through a Christ centered spiritual conversations and fellowship in a loving environment. Reach out to Tracy Emmersen for information.
emmersen97@gmail.com

SPAN/VIM Project

SPUMC sent a great team of folks all the way down Benfield Road over the extended Martin Luther King, Jr. Weekend for a local service project at SPAN (Serving People Across Neighborhoods). In just four days, they did an extreme makeover, taking a quaint, outdated 1960's kitchen and transforming it into a modern and welcoming one. Many thanks to Carl & Francie Seaman (and family!) for spearheading the project and to all those who tore out old cabinets, flooring, and appliances and replaced them with beautiful new cabinets, sub-floor, tile, sink and countertops. Wow! What a lasting difference this will make for SPAN and all the people in our community who come to access their services.

Thanks to all who served: *Dave Chaffee, Duncan Clements, Allen Egloff, Ray Guhse, Charlie Grube, Christy Grube, Ann Harrison, Kevin Kinsella, Carole Parker, Tommy Parker, Ed Prettyman, Clint Provenza, Tony Rodriguez, Carl Seaman, Francie Seaman, Charles Springett, and Bob Wimbrow.*



This Is Home

This Is Home

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people had gotten jobs, kids were doing well in school, all were self-sufficient in the required 8-month window, in large measure due to the caring and supportive efforts of the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and their own inner strength and resourcefulness.

One of the women we were introduced to in the film was Madiha, who has started a small catering business in the area. It was our great pleasure to invite her to provide the refreshments for our event so she and her son were on hand as people came out of the movie and walked into Fellowship Hall. We were treated not only to her culinary delicacies – homemade tabouli (mint & parsley salad), hummus & pita, Yalanji (stuffed grape leaves), Awwameh (fried dough dessert) and Ma'amoul (date and pistachio cookies) – but also to her warmth and smile. People were so excited to have the chance to meet her and showed their gratitude and generosity with the \$1400 in offering we collected. We had contracted to pay her \$750 so you can imagine her shock and delight when I handed her a wad of bills for nearly twice that!

We even had one man there who had himself emigrated from Syria many years ago so they were able to share some words together in Arabic. It was a tender moment that I happened to catch with my camera. For my part, I had fun talking with her 4th grade son, who let on that he loved math. For the next 15 minutes I peppered him with questions and he enjoyed the challenge of solving

complicated multiplication problems in his head for me. Holly and I have been invited to share dinner with them in their home in Catonsville and that is a night I am really looking forward to.

I also sit with a mix of hope and concern in my heart as we are on the edge of an even larger event in the Church (with a capital C). The special General Conference of the UMC will take place in St. Louis later this month (February 23-26) and representative delegates from all over the world have been tasked with trying to discern a way forward as we wrestle with the issue of LGBTQ+ inclusion in our church. The One Church Plan, which would allow for the greatest flexibility for churches, pastors and annual conferences (in terms of how their consciences guide them) is the most likely of three (or more) plans to be adopted, but no one really knows what will be the outcome.

It is likely that whatever passes, there will be some who are disappointed or hurt because the church has gone “too far” or “not far enough.” There is the very real possibility that there could be significant fallout – for example the Wesleyan Covenant Association (which represents some of our most conservative/traditionalist churches) has pretty well-defined plans about a coordinated exit of churches should the One-Church Plan pass. Most of us agree that the United Methodist Church could look very different over the next few years as things sort themselves out.

My hope and prayer for the church that I have called home for 57 years and have served as a pastor in for the last 33 of

those years is that we will find a way to remain united in love for the sake of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. I invite you to join me in prayer for the UMC (and for SPUMC, as well) from 2:23-2:26 pm daily. Whatever happens, I am confident that God will be with us as we continue to do the good work of welcoming, loving, serving, teaching and worshiping together in the name of Christ here in Severna Park. Of that I am sure because This Is Home.

Blessed to Share Sacred Place with You,
Rev. Ron

If you would like to know more about the Special Session of the General Conference, visit our website for helpful information and links.
severnaparkumc.org/wayforward



This Is Home

Endowment Committee Grants

Permanent Endowment Committee Announces Grant Funding for 2019: The Permanent Endowment Committee has agreed to fund \$8,000 in grants for 2019, a \$1,000 increase from 2018, as the SPUMC Endowment Fund continues to grow. Grant requests are being accepted through the end of February. The goal of the Endowment Fund is to conserve principal and use the earnings for purposes above and beyond the church's programs funded by the annual operating budget. The Permanent Endowment Fund began distributing earnings in 2009 and since that time the Fund committee has approved over \$30,000 in grants for non-budget/special projects such as KidCheck and various enhancements to the sanctuary a/v system. The SPUMC Endowment Fund is a way to give a lasting gift to SPUMC. When you give a gift or bequest to the Fund your gift will be invested to provide a legacy of support to SPUMC for many years ahead. Visit the website for more information and opportunities for giving to the Permanent Endowment Fund.

severnaparkumc.org/endowment

UMW National Cathedral Tour & Tea

The United Methodist Women are sponsoring a tour and tea at the National Cathedral in DC on March 26. Cost is \$50. Contact Vera Summers for more information.

verasummers@verizon.net

Don't Keep It a Secret (Unless You Meant To)

Have you ever had your employer, broker or retirement account send a gift to SPUMC on your behalf (such as cash or stock)? If so, did you tell or authorize this entity to inform us that you are the one making the donation? If not, and if you do not let us know yourself, we may never know it was you. When this happens, the donation will not be included on the end-of-the-year tax statement we issue to you. Despite our pleas to the remitter of your gift for your identity they, more often than not, will not tell us who you are claiming they were not provided with authorization to do so. The church struggles with this "problem" a couple times a year as it tries to match unidentified donor gifts with the correct parishioner. If you meant the gift to be anonymous that is fine – but if not, then please take steps to have your employer, broker, etc., tell us. Thanks!

ALL Trip to Covington, KY

Mark your calendars for the Ark and Creation Encounter multi-day trip to Covington, Kentucky from September .23-26, 2019. Sponsored by Adults Loving Life, this experience is open to all of our church family and guests. Informational packets are available in Fellowship Hall. You won't want to miss this amazing opportunity!

Deadline for full payment is August 26. Contact Lou Kamm for more info.
cheetahed1@yahoo.com

UMYF News

Sunday, February 3: No meeting, Super Bowl Sunday

Sunday, February 10, 7pm: Singing for Winter Relief Guests. Meet in Room 208.

8:35pm: ICU groups

Sunday, February 17, 7pm: Program night

8:35pm: ICU groups

Sunday, February 24, 7pm: Program night

8:35pm: ICU groups

“Escalation”

How to Recognize and Respond to Unhealthy Relationships. The One Love Foundation is presenting this important film and discussion at Woods Presbyterian Church on **Sunday, February 24, 6-8pm.**

Appropriate for high school and college students, young adults, and parents, this event will inform on the topic of educating and responding to unhealthy and potentially volatile relationships. With questions, contact Rev. Lee. lferrell@severnaparkumc.org

Super Sixth

All 6th graders and friends are welcome!

February 10, 1-3pm: Special Day of bowling at Severna Park Lanes. \$10 gets you shoes, pizza, and unlimited games. Arrange your own rides to and from!

February 24, 5pm: Regular meeting

David Ellwood, Eagle Scout

Congratulations to David Ellwood, who recently achieved the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest rank in scouting. David is a member of Troop 339 out of Woods Presbyterian.

David started his scouting career in Pack 688, Shipley’s Choice. He achieved all 7 ranks, with a total of 35 merit badges. He served in several leadership positions, and spent many hours camping. For his Eagle Project, David planned, organized, and led an effort to create a display for 46 years worth of band trophies for the Severna Park High School Band and Orchestra Boosters.

David is the son of Jay and Paula Ellwood. He is currently a freshman at Virginia Tech.

Women’s Retreat

You won’t want to miss our final retreat, April 5-7, 2019 at Skycroft Retreat Center. Sign up by February 28 in Fellowship Hall. Contact Dawn Cullis for more information.

dcullis@comcast.net

Donut Help

We need a few more people to help with our Sunday morning donuts. You can choose how often you’d like to help, and we’ll teach you everything you need to know. (It’s easy!) Contact Kris for more information.

carpenterzyla@hotmail.com

Baptism & Connections Classes

If you are interested in having a child baptized at SPUMC, please join us for a Baptism Class in the Parlor on **Sunday, February 17 at 11am** to learn about this sacrament and what's involved.

If you're new to SPUMC and just curious or if you're ready to join our church, you are invited to attend our Connections Class on **Sunday, March 10 at 11am** in the Parlor. Come meet with a pastor to learn more about our core mission, our various ministries, and where you might fit in.

Childcare is provided. Please RSVP to Beth.

bfrank@severnaparkumc.org

Mission Opportunities

Elementary Family Mission Trip

Elementary children and their adults are invited to participate on a weekend long mission trip to Washington DC May 17-19. Each elementary age child must have an adult to partner with on the trip. We will be working to serve homeless persons through various feeding ministries. Sign-ups end February 17. If you and your child would like to participate please contact Erica Benjamin. For more information visit the website.

severnaparkumc.org/familymission

Missionary Luncheon with Maddie Clouser

Join us at **12:30pm** on **Sunday, February 24** for a light luncheon and talk by Maddie Clouser, who recently returned from a year of mission work with CRU in Sydney, Australia. She'll share some of her experiences in discipling students, and how God is leading her ministry going forward. Email Rev. Carissa with questions.

carissa@severnaparkumc.org

Flood Buckets

Severna Park UMC will once again be answering the call for help in our community on **Sunday, February 24** by assembling 250 cleaning supply buckets that will be donated to victims who have experienced catastrophic loss in their lives in one morning. These Flood Buckets will be delivered to the United Methodist Committee on Relief, who will distribute the supplies to the people who need them most.

Can you and your family stop by Fellowship Hall on **Sunday, February 24** before or after you attend service and help by assembling one bucket for us? We can pack these buckets and have them ready to ship on Monday morning!
carissa@severnaparkumc.org

AHOH Bid for Hope

The Arundel House of Hope's auction fundraiser "Bid for Hope" will be Sunday, February 10, 2-6pm at La Fontaine Bleue. Visit their website to download the flyer for more details.

arundelhoh.org/events

VIM Trip to Salt Lake City

VIM is offering an opportunity to “model our lives after Christ”, and we ask you to prayerfully consider joining other SPUMC folks on a mission trip to the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) West Office and Depot in Salt Lake City, Utah October 19 – 26, 2019. At the facility we will prepare emergency kits (like the flood buckets we put together here last fall), sew layettes and infant jackets which will all be distributed within the USA and throughout the world. Our hope is to have 20-24 participants. However, for planning purposes, it is very important that we know of your interest by mid-February in order to start detailed planning by March.

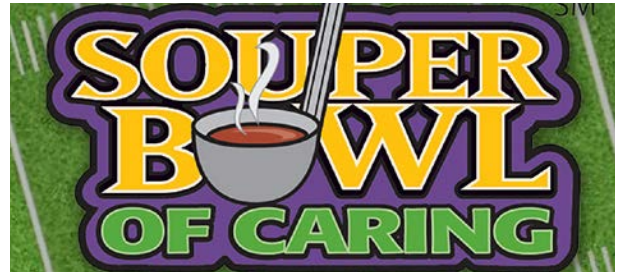
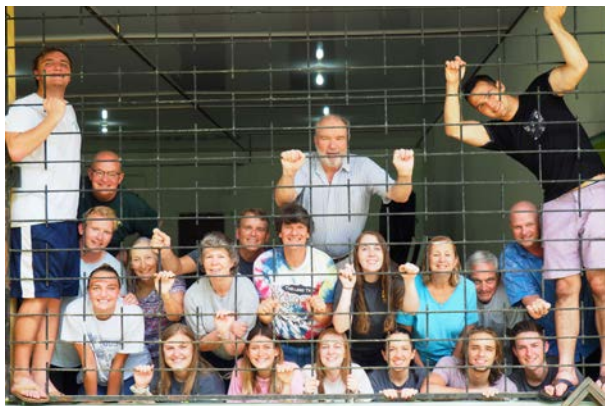
Contact Chip Graber for more information or to express interest.

fourgraber@verizon.net

VIM Trip to Costa Rica

Volunteers In Mission is leading a trip to Costa Rica, **August 3-10**, and now is the time to start making plans to join in! Reach out to Chip Linehan for more information or to express interest.

boxslsman@aol.com



Souper Bowl of Caring

The number of Americans living in food-insecure households is now over 46 million, which means 1 in 8 people and 1 in 6 children struggles with hunger (US Census Bureau, USDA). Since 1990, “SOUPER BOWL OF CARING” has been encouraging people across the nation to work together around the day of the Super Bowl football game to fight hunger and poverty in their local communities.

Wanting to help out, our youth will be standing at the doors as people exit worship on **February 3**, asking for a donation to fight hunger in our area. They decided that once again, the offerings collected will be divided between SPAN (Serving People Across Neighborhoods) and Heaven’s Kitchen in Brooklyn, where we serve a hot meal once a month.

Most of us will feast on plenty of delicious food over the course of the 4-hour football event. We can also give to help the hungry!

ASP Information Meeting

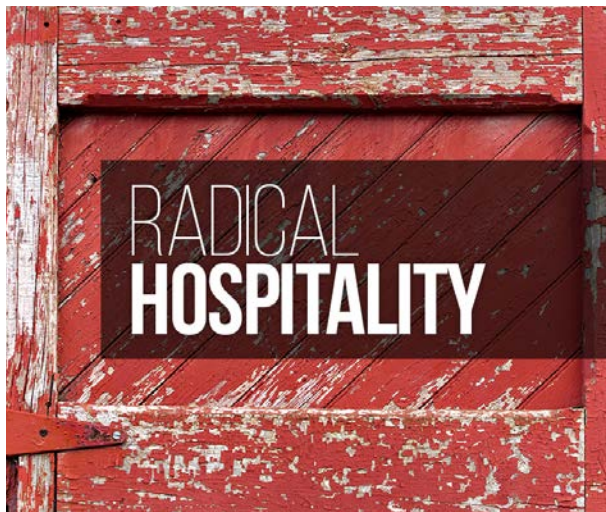
Join Rev. Lee on Monday, February 4 at 7pm in the Sanctuary for the first information session about our Appalachia Service Project on June 29-July 6 in Virginia. Contact Rev. Lee for more.

lferrell@severnaparkumc.org

This Is Home

Winter Relief

SPUMC will again have an opportunity to host Winter Relief, a mission where our church houses 45-50 unhoused men and women beginning **February 4**. We offer shelter, meals, showers, laundry, warm fellowship and most importantly the love of God to these men and women. There are many ways you can be involved such as serving as a host volunteer (working directly with the guests), helping with meals, helping with transportation, doing laundry, helping with some of the activities and so much more. Sign up online or in Fellowship Hall. It takes about 300 volunteers and around 1300 volunteer hours to run this mission. Please think about serving during this very important week. Visit severnaparkumc.org/relief for more information. If you have any questions you can contact Pam Biddlecomb. pbiddlecomb@arundelhoh.org



Radical Hospitality

We hope you were inspired by our January exploration of the biblical ethic of hospitality and how we might deepen our culture of hospitality at SPUMC. If you would like to be part of our new and improved **Hospitality Team** (as a Front Door, Parking Lot or Education Wing Greeter, Welcome Desk Host, or Hand-off Helper for the Pastors) you can: 1) Indicate this on your Welcome/Attendance card; 2) Text Rev. Ron (240-672-1321); or 3) Email him. Thanks! ron@severnaparkumc.org

And everyone is invited each Sunday to practice:

The 10-Foot Rule - Welcome those within 10 feet of you, especially those who may be alone.

3-Minute Rule - Spend at least 3 minutes before and after worship talking with someone you don't know very well.

Fellowship Clubs

Time for a winter warmup! Sign-ups are now open for 2019 Spring Fellowship Clubs. Take this time to renew friendships or get to know new faces in our congregation over a tasty meal. Groups kick off after **February 10**.

How it works: Meals mini-groups meet 3 to 4 times by the end of May. Each group decides whether to A) brunch after church in cafes, or B) take turns hosting Friday or Saturday night dinner at home or in restaurants. Feel free to do it YOUR way: maybe take turns hosting in each member's home or meet each month at the home of a member with an especially cozy dining room. Got a favorite food truck? Hey, get creative - it's about the sharing experience! Then we'll all get together for big celebration picnic in June!

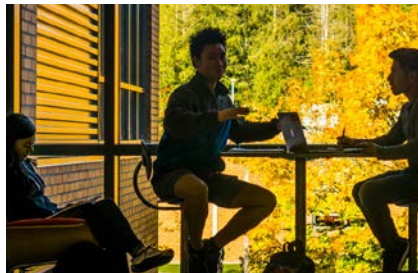
Please designate which type of group you'd prefer (A or B) when you sign up. For more info, email Dixie. dixiecatdc@gmail.com



UMW National Cathedral Tour & Tea

The United Methodist Women are sponsoring a tour and tea at the National Cathedral in Washington DC on **March 26**. Cost is \$50. Contact Vera Summers for more information.

verasummers@verizon.net



Contact a College Student

February is the month we try to contact all of our college students with a card, note, or small package. Take a name from the posters in Fellowship Hall. There are forms if you think perhaps we do not have you or your child's current address.

lferrell@severnaparkumc.org



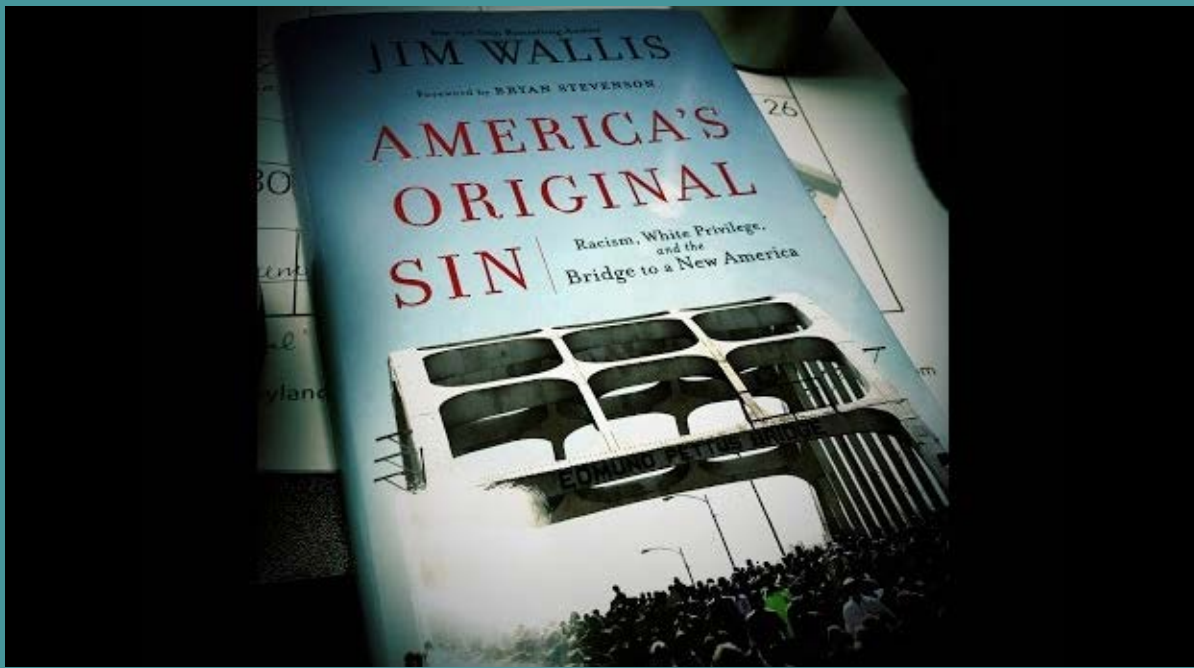
Lent is Coming

Save the date for Ash Wednesday worship – **March 6** at 12noon and 7pm

We need small group leaders for Lent discussion groups, studying Simon Peter: Flawed But Faithful Disciple. Let Lee know if you're interested.

lferrell@severnaparkumc.org

You're Welcome (Really)



February Adult Classes

Claim Your Spiritual Gifts: This 3-week mini-course will help you discover your unique “Servant Profile,” personal style, and ministry passion.

Tuesdays, 7pm or Fridays, 10am
beginning February 5

Leader: Rev. Lee Ferrell

Forgotten God: An exploration of what the Spirit-filled life can be and do for God. Book and workbook discounted to \$20. Childcare provided.

Tuesdays, 9:30am

Leader: Susan Brunk

A Way Forward Through the Bible: For four weeks we’ll examine the interpretive filters that each of us bring to Scripture, reading the Bible in light of Jesus’s message and ministry, and specific texts that speak to the issue of LGBT+ inclusion in the United Methodist Church.

Wednesdays, 7pm beginning
January 30.

Leaders: Revs. Byron & Ron

Faith and Race Book Group: An ongoing conversation on the 4th Tuesday each month. This month, we’re revisit *America’s Original Sin*.

February 26, 7pm

Leader: Rev. Ron

Severna Park United Methodist Church
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