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The Octagon

Severna Park United Methodist Church News

Contents

Holy Week Schedule	2
April Worship Schedule	2
Celebrate New Life	3
Happy/Sad Announcement	5
Grounded in Art	5
A Musical Lent	5
Let's Meet Outside	6
Thanks to Troop 993	7
Interactive Prayer	7
Sunday School Teachers	7
Baptisms Are Back!	8
Welcome to SPUMC	8
Children & Youth	8
HK Persists	9
Office Hours Resume	9
New Bible Study	9
Easter Flowers	10
Won't You Be My Neighbor?	10



Resurrecting Worship

I love reading children's Bibles, especially now that I can share them with my son. There's something sacred and sweet about the simple telling of these old stories, the straightforward way in which a board book shares the good news with a preschooler. And yet I've found that many Bibles for kids end the story with Easter

Sunday. It's like the story of Easter is the triumphant exclamation point bringing the story of Jesus' ministry to a happy ending. The resurrection leaves us with a happy ending, and proof that God is more powerful than death. The truth is more complicated than that, though, as truth often is.

(continued on page 2)

Resurrecting Worship

(continued from page 1)

In reality, resurrection isn't the happy ending of the Jesus story - it's the hopeful beginning of our own story. Or, as my theology professor once said, "The resurrection is not a period, bringing a sentence to its end - it is a catapult that directs us, in hope, toward the future."

The resurrection isn't the happy ending of the Jesus story - it's the hopeful beginning of our own story.

This theology of hope continues to catapult us forward, even as we've slogged through more than a year of living with coronavirus realities. Now more than ever, we need this resurrection promise to pick us up each morning, and launch us forward into those places where God is bringing new life.

This Easter Sunday, we are thrilled to be resurrecting in-person worship. We have heard so many of you asking, "When will we be back?" and the answer is... **now!** Starting on Easter Sunday, we'll hold **in-person worship services**, outdoors in our beautiful garden and large parking lot. These services will include live preaching, excellent music, and the chance to reconnect with friends from the pews.

Meanwhile, **online worship services will continue**, with no end on the horizon. We will continue to provide fantastic preaching, outstanding music, and the opportunity to connect online. We hope that no matter what happens with the coronavirus, online worship with SPUMC

will help you stay connected to our community and to God. Throughout this newsletter, you'll see more details about all this and more, including the **new worship schedule** – in-person outdoor worship at 9am, livestream at 10:30am – that will begin on **April 11**.

However you worship this Easter, may you remember that the resurrection is not the end of the story - it's the start of the next one. The resurrection of Jesus truly launches us into a life of new hope, where we need not fear death, for we know God is on our side. As we come to the end of a long Lenten season, at the end of a long year of not-so-normal life, we hope to see you (in-person or online) for a joyful celebration of the new life that God brings.

Praying that you are catapulted into newness of life,

-Rev. Carissa

Holy Week Schedule

This is Holy Week, when we see the highest and lowest points of Jesus' ministry. Join us throughout the week, as we enter Jerusalem in triumph, sit at the table of the Last Supper, and stand at the foot of the cross. Worship will be held Online at 7:30pm on both **Maundy Thursday** and **Good Friday**.

New April Worship Schedule

Beginning **April 11**, we'll begin a new Sunday morning worship schedule.

- **9am** - In-Person Outdoor Worship
- **10am** - Online Sunday School
- **10:30am** - Online Worship



HOLY WEEK

<p>Palm Sunday 03.28 Grounded in Humility Matthew 21:1-11</p> <p>Maundy Thursday 04.01 Grounded in Memory Luke 22:14-27 7:30pm</p> <p>Good Friday 04.02 In the Ground John 18:1-19:42 7:30pm</p>	<p>Easter Sunday 04.04 Life Ungrounded Matthew 28:1-10 & John 20:1-18</p> <p>6:30am Sunrise In-Person 8am Outdoor In-Person 9am Online Family 10am Online Festival 11am Outdoor In-Person</p>
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grounded

Celebrate New Life

Join us for one of five worship services on Easter Sunday, or join us for all of them!

We are thrilled to be re-gathering for **Outdoor In-Person Worship at 6:30am, 8am, and 11am**. In the event of rain, the service will be canceled (we'll announce any cancellations on our website).

We ask in-person worshippers maintain the following precautions to protect the health of everyone gathered to worship:

- Stay home if you or someone you live with is sick.
- Register before you come. This helps with contact tracing, should anyone later test positive for COVID-19 or another variant.
- Wear a mask that covers your nose and mouth (for everyone over 2 years old).
- Maintain physical distance of 6 feet from those not in your household.
- Greet from a distance - we'll save hugs and handshakes a few more months!

Click the link below to register to attend an Outdoor In-Person Worship Service on Easter Sunday:

[Click here to Register](#)

In addition, we will have a special **30-minute Online Family Service at 9am** with children helping to lead worship, followed by the **1-hour Online Festival Service at 10am**, complete with brass and the Hallelujah Chorus. Join us for these online worship services on Facebook or YouTube! To access online worship, simply open the church's Facebook or YouTube page, scroll down to the video you wish to see, and click on the video. Need more help with accessing online worship before Easter is here? Contact Ryan Hennesy for a helping hand. rhennesy@severnaparkumc.org

Resurrecting Worship

A Happy/Sad Announcement

Many of you are aware by now that Rev. Carissa has been appointed by the Bishop to be the pastor at Hunt's Memorial UMC in Towson effective this July 1. We knew this day was coming but it doesn't make it much easier. This is a great opportunity for Rev. Carissa and we celebrate with her this affirmation of her gifts and this new chapter of her ministry. Our sadness at her leaving comes soaked in gratitude for all the ways she has offered her considerable gifts in worship, teaching, preaching, outreach, ministry coordination and much more over these last five years. Stay tuned for details about plans for a farewell celebration for Carissa, Matthew and Deacon most likely near her last Sunday with us (June 13). We expect to announce news about the pastor that Bishop Easterling will appoint to succeed her this Sunday.

Grounded in Art

Recently, we had over 50 people participate in our **Grounded in Art Workshops** as we engaged our Lenten theme through music, photography, painting and creative writing. Special thanks to guest presenters **Rev. Martina Efodzi** and **April Doss**, who along with Chris Dillard and Rev. Ron, led these hands-on experiences. For two of the five weeks, participants were guided in a process to paint "story stones" (pictured below) to help create personal testimonies about their own spiritual journeys. At several points along the way, Rev. Efodzi created this group poem based on class interactions that she shared at the closing session:

*I am looking for new experiences, inspiration,
clarification, connection, encouragement,
peace and calm.*

*I hope to find all of the above,
and a little bit of everything!
I came in search of happiness,
time with my family,
and time away from the kids-- a diversion,
focus and more fun.*

*In a word, I anticipate it will be
supercalifragilisticexpialidocious!
I am optimistic that creating art
in this way will spark
new ideas, help me stress less,
and allow my creativity to flourish.*

*Through it all, I am finding gratitude, beauty,
fun and happiness in this meditative practice.
I am leaving with a sense of accomplishment,
an opportunity for understanding connections,
reassurance, and appreciation.*

*I am thankful for having a non-judgmental
space for sharing.*



A Very Musical Lent

In addition to our multi-talented in-house team and musical staff, we have been blessed with an amazing array of guest musicians during the season of Lent. What a blessing to hear the voices of *Francesca Brooks, Ashley Cuzzart, Ava Lazzor, Elissa Edwards, Tori Delgado, Meg Moore, Gaines Johnston, Lauren Crandall, Tracy Emmersen, Katie Main, Marcia* and husband/drummer *Dwayne Holton* along with instrumentalists *Shawn Reese, Aaron Meier, Brian Strawley, Brian Sanders, Preet Saund* and *Holly Slack*. Wow!



Resurrecting Worship

Let’s Meet Outside!

The Regathering Task Force (the team monitoring COVID safety and guiding our congregation) voted to move our church back into the “orange level” of the chart below. This decision was made after prayerfully discussing all the data available to the team, including number of COVID cases per 100,000 people in our community, vaccination rates, outbreaks in comparable congregations, and more. If you have any questions or feedback regarding this decision, please reach out to Task Force Chair Gaines Johnston. gainesjohnston@gmail.com

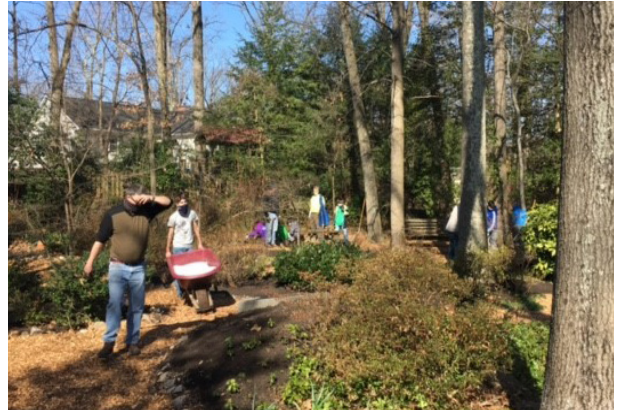
As our church moves into the “orange level,” you will be invited to return for outdoor, in-person worship beginning on Easter Sunday. Bible studies and Committees will continue meeting on Zoom while other groups will resume outdoor meetings. If you have any questions about particular groups meeting in person, please reach out to Facilities Manager Dave McKinney, who coordinates our meeting calendar. dmckinney@severnaparkumc.org

REGATHERING AT SPUMC		
RED	WORSHIP ONLINE	ALL GROUPS ONLINE; STAFF WORK FROM HOME
ORANGE	WORSHIP ONLINE AND OUTDOORS	ALL GROUPS ONLINE OR OUTDOORS
YELLOW	WORSHIP ONLINE AND OUTDOORS (INDOORS IF RAIN)	MOST GROUPS ONLINE OR OUTDOORS; LIMITED INDOOR MEETINGS
GREEN	WORSHIP ONLINE AND INDOORS	GROUPS ONLINE, OUTDOORS, AND INDOORS; STAFF WORK ON SITE
BLUE	WORSHIP ONLINE AND INDOORS	NO RESTRICTIONS
MASKS AND SOCIAL DISTANCING WILL BE REQUIRED AT ALL LEVELS		

Thanks to Troop 993

We would like to thank our Scout Troop 993 and their leaders/parents for the tremendous work they accomplished in the Memorial Gardens area, the Chapel in the Woods and the areas around the

church building itself. Raking out all the leaves, spreading out fresh mulch on all the planting beds and putting down a fresh layer of wood chips onto the paths of the Memorial Garden as well as the Chapel in the Woods area. What a transformation! Thank you, thank you!



Interactive Prayer

Join Erica Benjamin for a fantastic interactive prayer event on Zoom on **Monday, March 29 at 6:30pm**, utilizing some of the resources in your Lent kit!

Contact Erica for more information, and [click here to sign up](#).

Thanks, Sunday School Teachers!

A Big Shout Out to our Winter Sunday School Team: *Kristin Sym, Betty Spengler, Brenda Shields, Ashley Cuzzart, & Lucy Miner*! Thanks for keeping our kids and families engaged in scripture!



Resurrecting Worship

Baptisms Are Back!

After many months of refraining from the sacrament of baptism due to COVID safety concerns, we are now thrilled to be scheduling baptisms for the spring and summer! Families are invited to join us for in-person outdoor worship (when offered) or to step into the sanctuary during the live-streaming of online worship to have their children baptized as part of the worship life of our congregation. Please reach out if you've been waiting to have your child baptized - we would love to participate in this sacrament.

Questions? Read more about baptism beliefs, scheduling, COVID safety, and more on the [Baptism page](#) of our website and email Rev. Carissa with anything else you're wondering.

csurber@severnaparkumc.org

Want to attend the next Baptism Class? Mark your calendar for **Sunday, May 16 at 12pm** and email Beth Frank to receive the Zoom information.

bfrank@severnaparkumc.org

Welcome to SPUMC

Our pastors will be offering a **Connections Class** via Zoom on **Wednesday, April 14 at 7:30pm** for anyone interested in learning more about our church. We'll talk about our core mission and values and how you can get involved with the many opportunities for spiritual growth and mission outreach at SPUMC. We are also happy to answer any questions you might have about our faith community and our ministries. Most importantly, this class helps us connect with you and learn more about your story and the spiritual journey

that you've been on up to this point.

RSVP to Beth in the church office if you are planning to attend so that we can send you the Zoom link directly.

bfrank@severnaparkumc.org

News on Children & Youth

- The **Nursery School** has resumed in-person learning following the best safety practices for Covid 19. Registration for next year has begun. Please contact Heidi Taflan for information.
htaflan@spumcns.org
- The 2020 **Confirmation Class** has resumed, one year later, and is now meeting Wednesdays, 4pm. They will meet by Zoom until April 14 when they will hopefully be outside.
- **UMYF** (United Methodist Youth Fellowship) hopes to resume outdoor meetings on Sunday, April 11, 6-7:15 pm. In the event of bad weather, we will Zoom; link is under Sunday on the Events page.



Heaven's Kitchen Persists!

During the pandemic, it has been difficult to stay engaged with all of our “normal” hands on outreach projects because of covid-19 restrictions (like Winter Relief, VIM, ASP, Backpack Buddies and more) but one ministry that has remained pretty constant over the last year has been Heaven's Kitchen. Like everything else, it has taken a lot of adapting and creativity to make this work but almost every

month, our team has been providing compassionate care and a monthly meal to the guests and our friends at Heaven's Kitchen which operates out of Community UMC in Brooklyn Park. Thanks to our leaders Chip & Hope Linehan and our faithful core of volunteers who keep this ministry alive and well. If you'd like to get involved, contact Chip Linehan. boxslsman@aol.com



Office Hours Resume

We are happy to announce that the church office will be OPEN beginning Wednesday, April 7, and we can't wait to see you! Office hours are:

9am—12noon on Monday
9am—12noon & 1—4pm on Wednesday & Friday

Please remember to wear your mask. As always, we are happy to meet you at alternate times, if needed.

bfrank@severnaparkumc.org

New Bible Study

Rev. Byron is leading a five-week study of 1 and 2 Corinthians on **Mondays at 7:30pm**, starting **April 12** on Zoom. The class will emphasize the strife and division in the Corinthian Church, and the importance of reconciliation and unity.

Zoom Link: [Click the Zoom Link Here](#)

Meeting ID: 992 5971 6361

Password: unity

Resurrecting Worship



Easter Flower Dedications

Jenny Bloemendaal in memory of *Richard Roy Rhine*

Sarah Bochenek in memory of *Dad and Anna*

Ken Brown in memory of *Marguerite Ardis Brown*

Maria Casaday in honor of *Addison, Dominick & Jacob*, and in memory of *Frank, Ruby & Charlene Fletcher*

Margie & Chuck Crouse in honor of our great-grandson *Heath Christopher Dishman*

Diane Dodson in memory of *Florence & George Dodson* and *Mary Dodson*

The Fritz family to *the glory of God*

Bob & Katherine Geissler in memory of *our parents and our sisters*

Ron & Gwen Grubb in memory of *Clyde & Florence Miller* and *William & Ruth Grubb*

Rich & Pam Hall in honor of *our family*, and in memory of *Norma & Dale Hay, John Sr. & Estelle Hall*, and *John Hall Jr.*

Carol James in memory of *June James*

Lou & Kathie Kamm in honor of the *Pastors at SPUMC* and in memory of *our parents*

Joan Kay in honor of *Downing Kay* and memory of *George Kay* and *Tony Grifo*

Toni Leonard in memory of *Charles & Norma Irish*

Doug & Judy Perritt in memory of *our parents and brothers*

Tracy & Ed Prettyman in memory of our parents: *Collette Mesich, John Mesich, & John Prettyman*

Reid Reininger in memory of my wife, *Kay Reininger*

Eldon Smith in memory of *Norma Jean Smith*, wife of *Eldon Smith* and mother of *Robert Smith*

Lorine & Rob Smith in memory of *Dr. Philip A. MacDonald*, and *Mrs. Norma J. Smith*

Vera & Bill Summers in honor of *Susi Klassen & Benita Summers*, and in memory of *Hans Klassen & Robert Summers*

Won't You Be My Neighbor?

We'll begin a new 5-week worship and preaching series on April 18 called **Won't You Be My Neighbor?** It is the complementary question to the one that the lawyer asks of Jesus in Luke 10 (Who is my neighbor?) and that Jesus answers with the familiar parable of the

Good Samaritan. From there, we'll travel through Acts to hear the stories of how the early followers of the resurrected Jesus encountered new neighbors – the Ethiopian Eunuch, the Jailer, Tabitha, and Lydia – who helped them live more deeply and faithfully.

Severna Park United Methodist Church

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