



June 2021

Volume 7, No. 5

The Octagon

Severna Park United Methodist Church News

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My Wish For You

The summer I graduated high school, there was a country song at the top of the charts called "My Wish." It's a song of hopes for the future - and it was played during every graduation party, photo montage, a Rascal Flatts-style blessing for us graduating seniors as we launched into our young adult years.

Being your pastor has

been my pride and joy, and has taught me so much about life and love of God and neighbor. You have loved me so well these last five years. And so as I'm in this sort of "graduation" season, I find myself thinking about this song again, and all the good things I wish for you and for your church.

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My Wish For You

(continued from page 1)

My wish for you is that you always remember that **God loves you exactly as you are**. You don't need to prove yourself, and you don't need to earn it. God's love is already there for you, at all times and in all places, ready to give you strength for each day.

My wish for you is that you **take care of all God's children - and that includes you**. Breathe deeply. Pause to pray. Rest and take sabbath. Drink more water. Love yourself the way God loves you, with grace and kindness.

My wish for you is that you **do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly**. Once you know the love of God and the care of the Spirit, don't let it stop with you. Use that goodness to help others. Be the hands and feet of Christ. Serve others, whether that is as complex as fighting to change policies or as straightforward as serving a plate of food.

And finally, my wish for you is that you **“lead a life worthy of the calling”** to which you have been called...bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:1-3). The past year has been *incredibly* difficult, and there are certainly hard times ahead. But through it all, God calls us to be who we were created to be, made for community, holding each other up in love.

By the end of this month, we'll be living in our new home in Idlewylde. Our son will be 20 months old, Matthew will be three weeks into his new job at the Board of

Child Care, and I'll be setting up my new office at Hunt's Memorial UMC. I will no longer be your pastor - but I will always be your friend, and I will always treasure the time we had together in ministry. I know that you will welcome Rev. Narae with warm SPUMC hospitality, and she will be an amazing addition to the church.

I hope to get to see each of you for an in-person goodbye hug this month - and may God be with you till we meet again.

grace & peace,

-Rev. Carissa

Let's Start Off Well!

Saying goodbye to one pastor and welcoming a new one is a difficult transition. Many of you have had deep relationships with Rev. Carissa, and it can be hard to say goodbye - but a key way to support this transition is by saying goodbye well, and opening your heart to Rev. Narae as your new pastor. To make this process smooth, the Baltimore-Washington Conference has the following policies in place. Please contact any member of the pastoral team if you have a question about this. Thank you for being a supportive member of the SPUMC community during this season of change!

1. As of the effective date of a new appointment, a pastor shall immediately cease all pastoral counseling and pastoral visitation with members or member families in the previous appointment. Since appointments are generally announced several weeks in advance, each pastor has adequate time in which to effect closure and make appropriate referral to another for the pastoral care of members.

2. Pastors shall have a clear understanding with former congregations that they will not return to officiate at baptisms, weddings and funerals, or do pastoral counseling or pastoral visitation in that parish. Pastors, active or retired, shall respectfully decline to participate in such duties when invited by members of a former congregation. Declining all such invitations is the responsibility of the previous pastor. The present pastor, at his or her discretion, may invite the previous pastor to return for pastoral functions. However, the present pastor should never be under any pressure to invite the previous pastor. This policy is ongoing and doesn't have an expiration date.

Farewell to Carissa...

The SPRC is planning a weekend of celebration to help honor and thank Rev. Carissa for her five years of serving our congregation. We'll have an outdoor gathering with Pizza and a Kona Ice truck at **6pm on Friday, June 11** followed by some sharing of memories, thanks, and music in the Fellowship Hall at 7pm. On **Sunday, June 13** we will honor Carissa during our morning worship services and with a cookie and punch reception at **11:30am**. Register online for both Friday & Sunday events. severnaparkumc.org

We are also taking a love offering for Rev. Carissa as part of her farewell gift. You can contribute by check (mark "Carissa" in memo section) or online. severnaparkumc.org/give



...and Welcome Narae!

We are excited to welcome Rev. Narae Kim as our new Associate Pastor who will be preaching her **first Sunday here on July 4**. We are planning several small group gatherings throughout the summer to give her a chance to get to know you and you to get to know her as she settles in to our congregation. If you would be willing to host a small gathering in your backyard, on your deck, etc. for light refreshments and conversation, please contact the Church Office. You can also help welcome Narae by wearing your nametags (we'll make you one if you need it) and by updating your profile in Breeze with current pictures of you and your family. We will be taking pictures after services all through the month of June if you want us to update your Breeze profile for you.

Nursery School Celebrations

It was a fun and joyful end of the year for our Nursery School as students were able to enjoy more in-person opportunities the last two months of the school year and carry on some of their favorite traditions. In late May, the parking lot was alive with fun activities, laughter and lots of smiles as the kids got to experience Field Day. Then on Tuesday, May 25 our 4-year old class “graduated” and took their next big steps toward Kindergarten. Thanks to Heidi Taflan and her amazing team of teachers and aides who have used every bit of creativity and resiliency to make this a special year for our pre-schoolers. Lots to celebrate!



Chris Dillard Steps Down

It is with deep sadness and concern that we announce that Chris Dillard, Severna Park UMC's Music Director for the past five years, voluntarily self-surrendered to authorities on May 26 after learning of allegations against him for the sexual assault of a minor in Texas, where he was employed prior to moving to Maryland. He was immediately released on bail and put on administrative leave from all his duties at our church. On June 3rd, Chris resigned from his position here with much love and sincere apologies to the entire congregation. These current charges are unrelated to his tenure at Severna Park UMC.

Chris, an outstanding musician and community builder, has been an integral and beloved part of our staff and the broader community. We are continuing to support Chris during this difficult time and also fully cooperating with the authorities as this case moves forward.

We deeply value the protection of youth and children and have long had systems in place at our church to vet all of our staff and volunteers who work with youth or children in any capacity. While we take all allegations of abuse very seriously, we must also remember that individuals are presumed innocent until shown to be otherwise. Our prayers are with Chris and his family, the young woman who filed these charges, and with all who have been affected by this situation in any way.

Your pastoral team is available to you as we all process this difficult news together. Do not hesitate to email, call, or text if you want to talk and pray through



your feelings or share any pertinent information with the staff or the SPRC.

Rev. Ron — 240.672.1321

Rev. Byron — 443.924.4669

Rev. Lee — 410.562.9811

Dave Born, SPRC Chair
daveborn23@gmail.com

If you want to reach out to Chris with a card or a note, please contact the Church Office for more information.

bfrank@severnaparkumc.org

Spring at SPUMC







Congratulations Confirmands

It was exciting to finally welcome the Confirmation Class of 2021 into the life of our church on Pentecost Sunday along with two high school students who were mentored by Rev. Lee one-on-one. We pray for all of our teens who have made this important commitment of faith: *Chase Bierdeman, Taylor Bishop, Cole Counts, Mason Fleming, Emma Fritz, Nora Gerig, Robby Haufe, Kyra Hoffmaster, Brendan Johnston, Downing Lose, Stephen Nunn, Bronwyn Patterson, Kendall Reitzes, Emma Rogers, Marielle Unger, and Will VanVeelen.*

Special thanks to all of the Confirmation mentors, to Sean Wise for photography on the big day and to all the Sunday School teachers, youth counselors and other caring adults who have poured love and faith into our Confirmands to bring them to this point in their spiritual journeys. Let's continue the good work!

Help Expand Worship

We are so happy to be worshiping together again each Sunday! Your pastors are excited to offer more worship services each Sunday, but we need your help in a few roles to make that possible:

- Welcome people as they arrive for worship

- Help people find a seat in worship
- Set up chairs for outdoor worship

Please reach out to Beth if you think you can help, or for more information.

bfrank@severnaparkumc.org



Eagle Scout Project

Ben Howard has completed an Eagle Scout Project for the church's Memorial Garden area, installing three new benches for children, with a head bench for a teacher/adult to address the children/class. We wish to thank Ben, Ben's family and the helpers from Troop 993 who gave of their time and efforts to make this project a success, and for the betterment of Severna Park UMC! Thanks so much!

SPARK in the Park

This summer, our Family Ministries will be heading outside with a series of Spark in the Park meet ups at various parks in the area. Come to meet your new pastor, reconnect, cool off with an ice pop, and enjoy the summer sun with your church family! Dates will be announced soon, so make sure to sign up for the church newsletter at severnaparkumc.org/enews. Contact Erica with questions.

ebenjamin@severnaparkumc.org

Worship News

Through the month of June, we will continue to have Outdoor Worship at 9am and Sanctuary Worship at 10:30am (which will continue to be livestreamed on Facebook and YouTube). In the event of rain on a Sunday morning, our Outdoor Worship will be held in Fellowship Hall. Our recent survey confirmed that a good number of people said they still feel safer worshiping outdoors or online and they are not quite ready to come back to the Sanctuary yet. As demand grows for more indoor worship, we anticipate adding a 40-minute 8am service. Our goal is to be back into a more “regular” Sunday morning pattern by September when the school year starts.

Outdoors, worshipers who have been fully vaccinated may remove their masks during worship. We request that all Indoor Worshipers continue to mask for the time being for the sake of those who are not yet vaccinated (over 50% of us), our children and those with other health conditions. All staff and volunteers (vaccinated or not) who are working with children will continue to mask as well as children 3 and older. Thanks for your patience, your cooperation and compassionate care for one another. We will continue to revise our masking and distancing practices as Covid numbers come even further down and vaccination rates rise.

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		

ASP Talent/Service Auction

The Talent-Service Auction is the main fundraiser for the Appalachia Service Project. Though we are not sending youth this summer, we will be doing some local projects and still want to support ASP's summer ministry.

The Auction will be held on June 27, hopefully outside, at 6pm. Items up for bid will be available to read about on the website very soon. Hard copies of the brochures will be ready on Sunday, June 13. Weather permitting, we will have the items already in hand put on display during Sunday morning, June 20 so you can drive by and see what we have!

We would rather not accept new items at this time. If you want to contribute, please come and bid...then when we do this again in the spring of 2022, we will gladly take new donations!

Spots Open in Kids Ministry

Come enjoy the sounds of laughter on the playground! We are looking for teenage and adult volunteers to share God's love with our awesome kids during worship services at 9am each Sunday. Interested?

[Click this SignUp Genius Link](#) (or email Erica) to sign up to volunteer - we would love to have your help on 1 Sunday or each month. If you're a new volunteer, we'll also ask that you complete Safe Sanctuaries paperwork; read more at severnaparkumc.org/safe. If you have any questions, please email Erica or speak to any pastor. Thank you for helping us welcome children back to our church! ebenjamin@severnaparkumc.org

Youth News

UMYF will continue meeting in the summer for games and fellowship, plus special nights and surprises. Most nights still 6-7:15 pm.

NO Meeting on June 27 (ASP Auction) or July 4 (Holiday)

SUPER 6th has begun meeting and will continue on this schedule:

June 6, 4:15-5:30pm: games and group building fun

June 13, 4:15-5:30pm: games and group building fun

NO meetings on June 20 (Father's Day), June 27 (ASP Auction), or July 4 (Holiday)

July 11, 18, & 25 at 4:15-5:30pm

THEN...Super 6th will "graduate" and start attending "Summer MYF" for the month of August, 6-7:15pm. Contact Rev. Lee for more info. lferrell@severnaparkumc.org

Welcome Back, Kids!

We are so excited to see your kids back at church! We want every child to know that church is a fun place where they are loved. This summer, we are welcoming preschool and elementary children back to Sunday school during the outdoor worship service. Each week, check your children in before worship begins by coming to the rear doors of the church. We'll begin inside, but spend much of our time outside.

9am Sunday School (preschool & elementary children)

10am Online Sunday School

10:30am Nursery Care (children 5 and under)



Let's Make VBS Amazing!

Vacation Bible School returns this summer! We need your help to make it a success. You're invited to make a donation by dropping off items at church, or by ordering them online and shipping them directly to 731 Benfield Road.

[Check out our Amazon wishlist](#) to make a donation, or [let Erica know](#) that you're able to donate a sheet of plywood.

Want to know more about VBS? Want to get your child's name on the waitlist? Can't wait to hear those VBS songs again? Go to www.severnaparkumc.org/VBS for all that and more!

Thank You, Ms. Julie

One of our most outstanding and long-term Sunday School teachers will be retiring this fall after almost 30 years of teaching middle high.

Julie Moundalexis is a gifted and unselfish woman who has given heart and soul to our middle highs for years. Along with her co-teacher, Maria Casaday,

Julie has faithfully been prepared for the daunting task of bringing the faith to 6th, 7th, and 8th graders...who can test patience like no other group.

"Miss Julie was always SO nice..." "Miss Julie always had something fun for us..." and "Miss Julie gave us snacks every week!" were some of the praise offered by her alumni. Julie arrived early, often had to re-arrange furniture, and after teaching the 9:30 hour, then went on to her other love...singing in the choir at 11:00. Her love of God in Christ and her commitment to our youth helped build their strong foundational faith at an important time in their lives.

Many find it hard to believe because Julie also teaches special education at Severna Park Middle School. After studying John Ortberg's book *If You Want to Walk on the Water, You Have to Get Out of the Boat*, Julie took it to heart and did what she needed to be certified to teach. Since then she has made a difference in young lives all over the Park.

"Ms. Julie was such a good teacher. She was always a sweet, smiling face to see on Sunday mornings. She explained everything so well and even dealt with our silly questions. She really never lost her temper, no matter how bad we were being. She is one of the best Sunday School teachers I've ever had and she will be greatly missed." (Anna Trull, college sophomore)

All of us echo these sentiments. Julie, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your loyalty, commitment, love, and faith over so many years. Well done, good and faithful servant!!!

Thanks, Ken!

Our love and thanks go out to Ken Taylor, who is stepping down this June after five years as serving as our Head Usher. Ken has been in charge of coordinating all of our usher teams and working with the Worship Committee to provide whatever support is needed for our services. Around the holidays especially, the need for more volunteers and more chairs to cover more services makes this a particularly important role and Ken was always on top of things. He served with great commitment and we will miss his smiling presence. Well done and thank you, Ken!

This means, of course, that we are in



search of a new Head Usher. If you would like to know more about what that job entails or have interest in filling that position, please contact Sam Stephens, our Worship Chair.

stephenssj@gmail.com

Severna Park United Methodist Church

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