

The Visitor

January 2022



Our Mission/Vision is to learn and grow in Jesus Christ to serve others and transform lives here, across the street and around the world.

Worship Services

Worship is 8:15 a.m. and 11 a.m. with entrance via the front doors on Union Avenue only. Livestream worship is at 11 a.m.

Masks are required for all folk (vaccinated or not) when in the buildings as we work to keep the most vulnerable among us safe. We have a supply of masks if you forget to bring yours. Attendance records are maintained for contact tracing, and we are asked to maintain physical distancing.

For individuals not wishing to appear in the Livestream service at 11 a.m. seats behind the projector and in the rear gallery are not in the view of the camera.

To help keep us safe, the air in the sanctuary is filtered through our air-handling equipment in our continuing effort to privilege life and health in the face of Covid-19.

Nursery care will not be available, but we welcome children of all ages in worship.

Sunday School

Pre-K through grade 5 meet upstairs in the education building each week at 9:45 a.m.

Middle school meets via Zoom at 10 a.m. (in-person meeting has been discontinued for now).

Senior high students meet at 9:45 a.m. on the Congress Avenue side of the church to go to Concord Point Coffee.

All children need to wear a mask.

Adult Sunday School meets at 9:45 a.m. each week in both the Mentzer Parlor and by Zoom.

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Weather Cancellations

In the case of inclement weather during weekdays, we will close and cancel meetings and events if Harford County Public Schools close or close early. In the case of poor weather on the weekends, we will try to put a cancellation announcement out via WXCX 103.7 or SMASH Hits WHGM 104.7. We will also put a notice on the church answering machine.

New Year's Sermon Series-Live Streamed and In-Person

"Good News for a New Year: Shining Light in the Darkness"

What does it mean to live a meaningful, joyful life?

January 2

Ninth Day of Christmas

Epiphany Sunday

New Year's Sunday

Celebration of the Eucharist

We continue celebrating the Advent of Christ into human affairs by his Nativity or Birth.

We celebrate the revealing of Jesus as the Christ.

We begin the New Year with a renewed sense of God's grace.

Ephesians 3: 1-12; Matthew 2: 1-12

"Revealing... What?"

"Epiphany" means revelation, but what does it reveal? That God's love is larger than we thought! Thanks be to God!

January 9

Baptism of our Lord Sunday

Renewal of the Baptismal Covenant

We celebrate the Baptism of Jesus and reflect on the meaning of our own baptism.

Luke 3:15-17, 21-11

"Birth into Eternity"

God knows and names us in love and that shapes our identity.

January 16

Human Relations Sunday

Dedication of Church Officers

We call to mind, as championed by Martin Luther King, Jr., the right of all God's children to realize their potential as human beings in relationship with one another.

We dedicate church leaders for 2022 and pledge them our support.

John 2: 1-11

"The Delight of Abundance"

God provides abundantly so we need not squabble over whether there is enough.

January 23

Celebration of the Wesley Covenant Renewal Service

By this service we solemnly re-commit ourselves to be disciples of Christ Jesus throughout the coming year.

Luke 4: 14-22

"The Tertium Quid"

We have the Choice of Response. How will we choose to respond to the current reality? How will we choose to respond to Jesus' call to be his disciples? How will we choose to respond to Christ's claim upon us?

A Winter Sermon Series: Hearing with our Heart

When the weather is coldest, and the nights seem longest what do we hear God say? Sometimes in the dark, hearing is our best navigational tool. God speaks to us. How will we respond? We explore hearing God through stories in the Gospel of Luke.

January 30

I Samuel 3: 1-21; Luke 4: 21-30

"Refusing to Hear"

God's voice shapes who we are, but will we allow God to re-shape us? Or is that too uncomfortable?

Liturgist Opportunities

Would you like to read scripture at the 8:15 a.m. worship service? We provide the information by Friday with tips for pronouncing Bible names. This is another opportunity to serve Christ's ministry. To serve as a liturgist, contact Donna or the Church Office at 419-939-2464.

Praise Service Singers Needed

Do you have the gift of singing? We are looking for additional singers for our Praise Service who can help us lead folk in praising God at 9:45 a.m. Sundays. Please contact the Church Office at 410-939-2464 or hdgumc@verizon.net.

2022 Confirmation Class

Confirmation Class is being planned for 2022. This is an opportunity for young people, in sixth grade or older, to make a decision for themselves about whether they are ready to commit to being a disciple of Jesus. The exact form of the class has yet to be set, but we will work to make it Covid-safe. There will be some homework, but nothing difficult and we plan to do some field trips (on foot) around Havre de Grace. Please let us know if your youth is interested in exploring "being a Christian on-purpose" by contacting the church office. A Parents' Planning Meeting is set for 7 p.m. on **January 3**.

Upcoming Conference Events

Wave (formerly the ROCK retreat)

Friday, January 7 to Sunday, January 9. Visit waveoc.org

This is a new date for the ROCK 2022 as ROCK undergoes a transformation and we affiliate with youth from the Peninsula-Delaware Conference. The new event will be called Wave.

The exact shape of this event is unclear at this time, but we have been informed that it will be virtual only. Watch for further information.

“Christians Engaged in Faith Formation”

Thursday, January 13 at 10 a.m. The theme of this online call is “Vacation Bible School.” Registration is online at BWCUMC.org

Scholarships

The Baltimore-Washington Conference offers scholarships. Watch for more information about this. The application deadline is usually around **March 1**.

STEP OUT Event

Submitted by Rev. Andrew Greenwood, Chair, Baltimore Suburban DCOM



Are you wondering if God has huge plans in store for your life? Are you sensing that God might have a career for you in ministry? Are you ready to STEP OUT and see where God is calling you?

Then join us for our STEP OUT: God Has Plans for You event for an awesome day of worship, breakout sessions, and personal reflection. You will hear from leaders in our church and have the opportunity to ask questions about all the ways YOU could serve God!

Join us on **Saturday, February 5**, from 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Wesley Freedom UMC, 961 Johnsville Road in Sykesville. This event is intended for young adults ages 14 to 25, however all are welcome! Youth leaders and pastors are invited to accompany young people at this event.

For more information, contact Rev. Jenny. To register, visit <https://arenaweb.bwcumc.org/default.aspx?page=3452&event=6068>

Thoughts from our Lay Leader

Submitted by Pat with blessings and peace

First, I'd like to thank all those who came to my rescue after my not so dainty exit from the pulpit on December 12. You all are much appreciated!

During the first week of November our Council of Bishops met for their Fall meeting. Items the bishops prayed for and felt most important are below.

- The ministry and witness of the church in the world during the pandemic.
- Care for God's Creation because of climate change.
- The call and work to end the sin of racism in the church and the world.
- The healing and renewal of former scouts who were sexually abused, including through United Methodist troops and packs, and a settlement with the survivor claimants.
- Advocating for the health and safety of all people around the world through vaccinations.
- Update on the next General Conference. Due to the pandemic, the Commission on General Conference will decide by the end of March 2022 if there will be a General Conference. Key considerations are our progress toward stamping out COVID-19 and its variants, vaccination rates of our delegates around the world, visas for delegates from outside the U.S. (almost 50 percent of the delegates are from outside the U.S.) and the health and safety of all General Conference participants.
- Separation and disaffiliation of congregations due to full inclusion of LGBTQ persons. Below is a statement from the Council of Bishops about the future United Methodist Church. You will see that it parallels BWC's aspiration to be a diverse conference. While we may experience some congregations leaving The United Methodist Church, the bishops and leadership of BWC are prepared to continue to make a way forward for a diverse church and a church that continues to preach the Good News of Jesus Christ and to provide for local and global mission and ministry with the people in our communities.

I WISH ONE AND ALL A MOST WONDERFUL, HEALTHY, SAFE AND BLESSED 2022!!



A Narrative for the Continuing United Methodist Church

United Methodists all over the globe are liturgical, contemporary, charismatic, social activists, urban, suburban, small town, rural and much more. We are children, youth, young adults, senior adults, new Christians, and mature Christians. We are present on four continents, in more than 45 countries, and we comprise an unknown number of cultures and languages. We are a holy communion of different races, ethnicities, cultures, and perspectives united by the Holy Spirit, driven by the mission of Christ, and bearing the good news of an unmerited grace that changes lives and transforms communities.

Christ's prayer for our unity and command to gather all to the table, to make space for one another, appreciate one another, and look for Christ in each other, prohibit us from creating individual tables only for those who think, act, look, and perceive the world like we do. We cannot be a church that fractures its identity and commitment to Christ by aligning itself with political parties. We cannot be a traditional church or a progressive church or a centrist church. We cannot be a gay or straight church. Our churches must be more than echo chambers made in our own image arguing with each other while neglecting our central purpose. This is the way of the world.

Instead, we must be one people, rooted in scripture, centered in Christ, serving in love and united in the essentials. It is hard work. It is sacred work. It is the ministry of reconciliation that Christ gave to each of us. Our best witness is

to love each other as Christ loves us, to show the world the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit to bind us together despite our differences. This is living out the gospel.

We are a church:

- Confident in what God has done in Christ Jesus for all humankind
- Committed to personal and social salvation/transformation
- Courageous in dismantling the powers of racism, tribalism, and colonialism

All of our members, clergy, local churches, and annual conferences will continue to have a home in the “Future United Methodist Church,” whether they consider themselves liberal, evangelical, progressive, traditionalist, middle of the road, conservative, centrist, or something else. We hold on to our Wesleyan heritage that “the living core of the Christian faith is revealed in Scripture, illuminated by tradition, vivified in personal experience, and confirmed by reason.”

We are longing for a United Methodist Church that will move towards new forms of being a connectional church, a General Conference focused on global essentials, and an empowerment of regions for contextually relevant forms of living our common mission mandate. Deeply rooted in the Doctrinal Standards of the UMC, we pledge to exercise our episcopal role in ways that enable as many United Methodists, lay and clergy, as are willing to remain in the UMC and – together – to continue in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. And, because we are part of the Church Universal, we seek to be united visibly and in ministries with other parts of the Body of Christ in God’s mission for the human family and creation.

We are committed to strengthening every local church, where the word is preached and Christ is offered, and where the table is set before all who hunger and thirst for righteousness, confident in the prayer we have learned to say and share:

- Make us one with Christ—this is faithfulness.
- Make us one with each other—this is unity.
- Make us one in ministry to all the world—this is fruitfulness.

This is the United Methodist Church we love and serve!

Council of Bishops
The United Methodist Church
November 3, 2021

Emergency Winter Shelter

The Emergency Winter Shelter starts operating **Monday, January 3** and will run through March and into early April. This year half the hotel rooms will be reserved for families with children. Churches are asked to help provide meals and other things. Watch this newsletter and Sunday announcements for more information about this.

United Methodist Men News

Our United Methodist Men, besides enjoying fellowship in-person and/or via Zoom, have been able to do some other things in 2021, including setting up the outdoor Nativity set and making donations to the Community Thanksgiving Dinner and the Christmas Angel Tree project. Thanks to everyone who purchased subs from our recent sub sale. Our next meeting (in-person at Chesapeake Grill and via Zoom) will be at 8 a.m. on **Saturday, January 8**. Following the meeting, we'll be putting away the Nativity set and helping re-decorate the church at 9 a.m.

Langston Hughes Youth Oratorical Contest



The Havre de Grace Colored School Museum and Cultural Center (HCSMCC) will be holding its annual Langston Hughes Youth Oratorical Contest. The event will take place on **Saturday, February 5** from 1 to 3 p.m. at The Cultural Center at the Opera House, 121 N. Union Avenue in Havre de Grace.

This year's theme is "I, Too, Am America." All participants are required to give a four-to-five-minute speech.

The event is open to middle and high school students in Harford County. It is divided into two categories: grades 6 to 8 and grades 9 to 12.

First place winners in each category receive \$500, second place winners in each category receive \$300 and third place winners in each category receive \$200. The first 10 runners-up will each receive \$100.

Online applications are due by **Saturday, January 8**.

The HCSMCC is excited to continue this tradition which highlights our local connection to Langston Hughes and honors the legacy of those that advocated for equitable access to education for African American students in Harford County. One of the leaders of HCSMCC is our own Brittany.

For more information, visit <https://www.hdgcoloredschool.net/langston-hughes-youth-oratorical>.

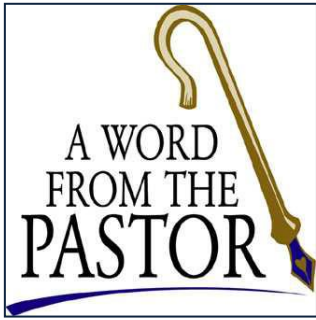
Sacramental Fund Helped Families Remain in their Homes

In the fall, we made a grant of \$10,000 to Harford Community Action Agency from our Sacramental Fund (a fund for the purpose of helping those in need). HCAA is the portal in Harford County for accessing all kinds of help but especially housing. Its Executive Director is our own Pam. We stipulated that this grant be used for housing needs, anticipating a wave of evictions as the pandemic has impacted families' ability to work and landlord restrictions are being lifted. We helped pay rent for 14 families that allowed them to avoid eviction and kept them intact and in their homes. Here's some information about the 14 households we helped:

- *All of them are legal citizens of the US
- *Eight are single parent families with children
- *Four of them are folk over age 60
- *Two of them are veterans
- *Three of them are disabled
- *Five of them are working full-time; one is working part-time; two are seeking work; and three are retired
- *All of them earn under \$40,000/year
- *Six of them make under \$10,000/year
- *Nine of them have a high school diploma or GED; one has neither
- *All of them were assisted through HCAA's Homeless Prevention Program.

Thank you for your generosity in supporting the Sacramental Fund!

Does the Light Still Shine?



In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.
--John 1: 1-5

Dear Fellow Disciples:

After the tree is taken down, after the decorations are put away, after the wrapping paper is discarded, after the boxes are stored, after the lights are unplugged, does the Light still shine?

After the winter grows stronger, after the nights seem deeper, after the temperatures grow colder, after the grass turns browner, after the garden gets deader, after the skies become grayer, does the Light still shine?

After unemployment has impoverished us, after the fear of infection has isolated us, after the strain of child-rearing has exhausted us, after joblessness has killed our sense of self-worth, after aging has taken its toll on our abilities, after family has hurt us or friends have deserted us, after care-giving has worn us down, after worry has broken us, after business or professional failures have emptied life of its usual meaning, after illness has ravaged our bodies, after the weight of grief has crushed us, after loneliness has eroded our mental health, does the Light still shine?

After the daily news has disheartened us, after the scale of natural disasters has overwhelmed us, after the polarization of national politics has frustrated us, after the injustices of the world have discouraged us, after the inability of leaders to act wisely and effectively has made us apathetic, after the actions and attitudes of people have disappointed us, after the danger of climate change has frightened us, after the fear of Covid has numbed us, does the Light still shine?

After the Star stopped shining, after the Magi returned to the East, after Mary and Joseph fled with Jesus to Egypt, after they came back to Nazareth, did the Light still shine?

After teaching to disciples who were obtuse for three years, after healing so many, after preaching to crowds that barely heard him, after signs that many mistook for mere wonders, did the Light still shine?

After being betrayed by one follower, after being unfairly accused by his own people, after being denied by another follower, after being convicted by the rulers of a foreign power, after being whipped and abused by soldiers acting like thugs, after being reviled by the crowd, after being publicly humiliated, after being tortured to death, did the Light still shine?

Yes, it DID! And yes, it DOES! The Light still shines! As the opening of the Gospel of John, quoted above, reminds us: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not, has not, and will not ever, overcome it. For after everything else, there is a resurrection yet to come. Thanks be to God!

May the Light of Christmas shine in and through us this winter. May the Light of the Star of Bethlehem shine through January and the across the year to come. May it guide our footsteps, give us hope and show us the Way in which God will have us walk.

May you have a Merry rest of Christmas, a holy Epiphany and a joyous New Year!

Pastor Norman



Havre de Grace United Methodist Church

"Blessed to be a blessing.... reaching the unreached"

**"God has blessed us so that we might make his will known to all people
that all people may praise God." Psalm 67:1-3**

Here, across the street, and around the world

2021 Missions Team Summary

Submitted by Linda

We've experienced another year with COVID increasing the need of many. Once again, our Missions Team was blessed this past year with a commitment from our Church family to fund missions "Here, Across the Street, and Around the World" by a monthly amount of our weekly Offerings for this purpose. There have been so many in need of food and housing everywhere this year. The Missions Team really strived to meet the needs of the Missions that have depended on our funding. Below is an outline of where Mission funds were spent from January through December 2021 (a total of \$26,550 - \$3,550.00 less than 2020).

HERE:

Alpha's Glory (\$500) - a non-profit ministry providing services for pregnancy, pregnancy loss and parenting; supporting moms, dads, and infants; and compassionately presenting Biblical truth resulting in changed lives. Unfortunately, we were not able to receive the baby bottle donations, but some individuals also designated special gifts to support this mission.

Anna's House (\$500) - provides transitional and permanent housing for homeless women and children in Harford County and helps them on the road to self-sufficiency.

FCCAU/Welcome One (\$800) – Welcome One was again unable to provide services on-site due to COVID and had to use grants to house folk in hotel rooms. However, as the rate of infections eased, Welcome One was able to reopen the shelter site in July with our church family volunteering to prepare meals on the 16th of each month. Welcome One is operated by Faith Communities and Civic Agencies United (FCCAU), a charitable organization supported by churches, faith-based groups, local businesses, foundations and government agencies. It provides a continuum of services designed to reduce homelessness in Harford County. The Emergency Winter Shelter (EWS) will begin sheltering January 3 to mid-April with housing in hotels and churches volunteering to assist with meals. We expect more families will be in need this year.

Grace Place (\$500) – hosted by St. John's Episcopal Church in the parish hall, Grace Place offers a free carry-out meal for those who need it as well as a bag of groceries to take home for the week. Volunteers from many Christian congregations in Havre de Grace support this worthy program. The number of needy people has continued to grow at Grace Place this year. HDGUMC supports Grace Place once a month with food and volunteers as well as non-perishable items. This year, food was also donated by members placing non-perishable items in the red cupboard outside the church office on a weekly basis.

Habitat for Humanity – Susquehanna (\$1,000) - part of a global, non-profit housing organization operated on Christian principles that seeks to put God's love and hope into action by constructing, rehabilitating and preserving homes, advocating for fair and just housing policies, and providing training and access to resources to help families improve their shelter conditions. We have also periodically assisted with dedications and hands-on help in the building of homes. A team of women from our Missions Team participated in a Women's Build where we had to decorate a stud. We chose the name of "Hope Builders", using our Waves of Grace logo. There was a contest for the best stud. Our theme was "Havre de Grace" and various photos of Havre de Grace were used. We did not win the contest, but we raised \$2,300 for Habitat for Humanity. It was a fun project.

God is good all the time. All the time, God is good.

MISSIONS NEWS

Harford Family House (\$500) - the largest provider of transitional housing in Harford County, is the only organization in our county capable of housing a whole family together, including a father, during the crisis of homelessness. They not only provide housing but assist with financial education and help to obtain employment.

Harford Hope for the Homeless Alliance (\$800) – a coalition of the Harford County Government, businesses, and the faith community working together to help the homeless to wholeness. Each component of the Alliance brings a part of the solution. Together, we can make an impact on the gaps of care! HHHA is the umbrella organization for the Emergency Winter Shelter (EWS). Last year, The Emergency Winter Shelter was housed in hotels with meals provided by Meals on Wheels and snacks by churches, including our congregation. This year, the EWS will begin sheltering January 3, to mid-April with housing in hotels and churches volunteering to assist with meals. We expect more families will be in need this year. Our Knitting Ministry is working on providing 100 warm winter scarves for the homeless.

HDG UMC Christmas Project (\$250) – Each year our staff at HDG UMC works with the local schools in Havre de Grace to find families to support so they, too, will have a Merry Christmas. Through the donations of many church members and the Mission Team, we have been able to support eight families as well as provide Christmas stockings for many others. Many from our congregation selected “ornaments” (tags) with gift requests to help provide some special smiles on Christmas morning.

Helping Up Mission – Baltimore (\$800) – helps folk fighting addiction and homelessness get their lives back. The comprehensive recovery programs address root issues of substance abuse and poverty. As one person is healed, Greater Baltimore is raised up. This year, 40 percent of the people helped were women. HUM has an excellent success rate. This January, they will be opening a new building dedicated to women and will use the same program for them as the men – a program which has been very successful.

Homecoming Project-Bel Air (\$500) – an eight bed, state certified half-way house for women recovering from alcohol and substance abuse. The program offers services for recovery, life skills, group and individual counseling, support for the impacts on the entire family, education sessions, recreation, the 12-step program and case management. Homecoming Project has a great success rate.

Kairos (\$500) - Kairos Prison Ministry has two segments: Inside for the inmates and Outside for the families impacted by incarceration. It is a Christian faith-based ministry that addresses the spiritual needs of the incarcerated men, women, youth and their families. This year due to COVID, we could not go inside to be with the inmates, but we were able to provide support for a Kairos Outside Retreat to support those affected by a loved one’s incarceration.

Manna House, Baltimore (\$500) - “It starts with breakfast”-- provides the homeless and poor of Baltimore City with the assistance and support to move towards independence and stability by helping to transform people’s lives by feeding them first.

NAACP Harford County Branch (\$750) - To ensure the political, educational, social and economic equality of citizens and work to achieve equality of rights and eliminate racial prejudice.

Susquehanna Ministerium (\$1,000) - a group of many denominations joined together to provide ministry and mutual support for each other and those in need of help.

Summer Mission Trip (\$1,000) - A team from our church went to Pennsylvania where they helped to rehab homes and porches for those in need, including elderly people.

Thanksgiving Community Dinner (\$200) - provides a free Thanksgiving Dinner to those in Havre de Grace, Aberdeen, and Perryville.

ACROSS THE STREET:

Society of St. Andrew (\$750) - an ecumenical, non-profit, charitable organization dedicated to leading others into lives of Christian community and service and introducing people to God’s grace in Jesus Christ by meeting their hunger needs. They do gleanings of fields after a harvest to feed the hungry, thereby also reducing food waste.

Red Bird Mission (\$500) - provides education, health care and Christian evangelism ministries to people in Appalachian Kentucky.

Tree of Life (\$700) - a ministry of service and presence raising awareness of Lakota culture and connecting with the Lakota Nation on Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota by serving body, mind, and soul.

AROUND THE WORLD:

BMTS Student Support (\$1,500) - The primary mission of the Baltic Methodist Theological School (BMTS), located in Tallin, Estonia, is to promote spiritual formation and provide applied higher theological education and in-service training tied to the needs of church and society in accordance with international requirements. The BMTS, located in the Baltic Mission Center, prepares Christian workers and leaders for positions of service in churches and Christian organizations. Graduates serve all over Eastern Europe and even indigenous communities above the Arctic Circle!

Children of Zion Village (\$500) - a Christian home for 57 orphans in the southern African nation of Namibia. We also contributed (\$3,000) to assist with the salary of the two directors. In August, a team from Mt. Zion UMC went to Namibia to visit the orphanage, build a playground and share some meals from our culture. The team brought back photos that were shared with our congregation. Some from our congregation are supporting an adopted orphan or cottage for \$30 a month.

China Outreach (\$1,000) - shares Christ's love with Chinese students and scholars on North American campuses, reaching them with the Good News and helping them become Christian leaders who share their faith with others. COM also supports these Christian leaders after their return to China. With COVID many students were not able to return home, and by staying in the US, their faith only became stronger with their peers.

Christar (\$1,000) – Jeff and Sharon use their God-given gifts and skills to share the Good News with refugees in Asia Minor; their passion is to go to those not yet counted in the eternal roll call of nations. They encountered problems with their visas and have been able to return and visit supporting churches in the USA. They expect to return to Asia Minor in early spring.

Ganta Hospital, UM Mission (\$1,500) - a mission with the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church Global Health Initiative where the hospital serves many needy families and villages in the area.

Sillamae Pastor's Salary (\$6,000) - provides the salary for Pastor Vladimir of Grace United Methodist Church in Sillamae, Estonia, a Russian-speaking congregation planted by a neighboring congregation.

We would love to have you join our Mission Team. Come help us make decisions about where donations are best needed to support the Missions of our church. We meet on the third Wednesday of every month (except July and sometimes December) at 5 p.m. in the Nursery.

We serve an awesome God and are blessed with a very generous congregation!

Continued Support

Your continued support of Christ's ministry at Havre de Grace United Methodist Church is appreciated – especially while we were unable to gather for worship. To continue your support of Christ's ministry through our church when you are unable to attend, there are several options:

- 1) Gifts may be mailed to or dropped off at the church office via the mail slot in the door;
- 2) Some donors have found bill-pay options offered by their bank convenient, and
- 3) We have an on-line donation option on our website.

Thank you for your ongoing faithful and generous support. It has allowed us to remain here seeking to serve others and transform lives in Jesus' name by providing spiritual care.



Baltic Methodist Theological Seminary 1994 – 2021 From a Dream to Reality: 27 Years of Theological Education

In the beginning there was a vision ...

Serving God on the other side of the Iron Curtain where theological studies were restricted, Olav Pärnamets and others did not have an opportunity to study theology. Eager to do everything possible to ensure the Estonian UMC had its own seminary to assure its future, Olav Pärnamets' vision was born.

By God's provision, Dr. H. Eddie Fox and World Evangelism sent Wes and Joy Griffin, Asbury Theological Seminary graduates, to help establish the seminary along with a handful of Methodists from Estonia. Inspired by God's grace, the initiative and passion necessary for such an undertaking soon became the basic tenets of building the seminary. Many supporters from around the world made this vision a reality in September 1994.



27 years of Methodist theological education in Estonia:

In 1994, the seminary opened doors in the Tallinn Old Town on Apteegi Street. Facilities were tiny, but fellowship and the desire to learn was strong. The first students were mostly pastors who served during the Soviet time when theological education was not possible. At last, there was a school for them to get training.



In the beginning, there was no tuition. All funds were raised by international supporters including food, transportation, and student housing. A small tuition was first charged in 1997. Tuition has been raised as the overall economy has improved. Today, the seminary

receives one third of the income needed for its operations from Estonia. The seminary applies for grants and fundraises at home and abroad to resource its growing mission. The BMTS continues to offer scholarships to support missional students from the Baltics.



The seminary has had state accreditation since 1998. The BMTS has passed the periodic reviews by the international evaluators who have found that the BMTS meets the European standard of higher education.

In 1999, the seminary moved into the newly completed Baltic Mission Center at Narva Street. The spacious classrooms, library, built-in translation booths as well as on site dormitory and cafeteria, provided great study conditions.



From its founding, the BMTS has operated in 3 languages, Estonian, Russian, and English, using simultaneous translation, which creates a Pentecost-like learning environment. We are a multi-ethnic, multi-generational, and inter-denominational body of Christ able to study and work together in harmony. Students develop valuable relationships for local ministry context.

At first the BMTS relied mostly on partners sending guest faculty. While we always welcome guest teachers, now most of our faculty is from Estonia and five current teachers are BMTS graduates.

Our core curriculum has not changed much, but we have focused more on mission. Since 2002 the BMTS has sent mission teams to Siberia to support Christian work among the Finno-Ugric ethnic groups that are related to Estonians. We also have students from these areas. The first international Church Planting Conference in 2020 with Asbury Theological Seminary supports the Methodist vision of church planting and growth.



The BMTS' mission is growing, and we grow with it. Research is an important part of what we do. We are renewing the BMTS library. Thanks to book donations our collection is improving, and our faculty write and publish indigenous textbooks. In their diploma papers our students collect important information about local ministries.

In fall 2021 we set up a hybrid classroom. All our classes can be attended online or in person. We have fitted classrooms with video link capability. This avoids gaps in learning due to the pandemic and opens the way for new learners.

Since the first graduating class in 1998, 256 students from Estonia, Ukraine, Russia, Latvia, Lithuania, Finland, Sweden, Romania, Ghana, and USA have graduated. Today, 78% of our graduates are actively in ministry serving as pastors, social workers, missionaries, youth leaders, chaplains in prisons and military, work in Christian media and numerous other fields. Most of Estonian Methodist pastors are our graduates. Our alumni serve as leaders in many denominations in Estonia and in many countries around the world.



We will always be grateful for the founder's vision and praise God for their courage to set out to build a seminary in Estonia!

At some point in this 27-year journey, you have partnered with us in ministry through your prayers and gifts. Some of you have journeyed alongside us for many years. We would like to thank you for the difference that you have made and continue to make through your commitment!

We hope you will continue to be in partnership with the seminary through your gifts and prayers!

How to make a gift to the seminary:

Sending a check:

Make payable to: General Board of Global Ministries GCFA

Put in memo line: Advance #150218

Mail to: Advance GCFA

P.O. Box 9068

New York, NY 10087-9068

Estonian Contact: Kulli Toniste kulli.toniste@emkts.ee

Online giving through Global Ministries:

<https://advance.umcmission.org/a-275-baltic-methodist-theological-seminary-scholarships.aspx>

Online giving through seminary website:

<https://www.emkts.ee/index.php/en/contributions>

US Contact: Mary Ann Smith mamsmith1@cox.net

Christian Love and Sympathy



Our Christian love and sympathy is extended to the family and friends of:

Leonard Bates, who died October 22 after a short illness. He was a loyal member of North East United Methodist Church where he served for many years as an usher. He touched many lives as co-coach with Bill Chase in Little League and was inducted into the Havre de Grace Little League Hall of Fame in 2000.

May God comfort all who mourn with the wisdom that we are all united in the risen Christ.

Thanksgivings

Commendations to **Katie** on earning all A's in the first term of the school year with a GPA of 4.69! Way to go! Keep up the good work.

Congratulations to **Andrea** on graduating December 17 from Montana State University. She received a Bachelor of Science degree with Honors in Conservation Ecology and Biology. Please pray for her job search!

Thank You

My heartfelt thanks to my Havre de Grace United Methodist Church family for all their prayers, cards and many other ways of expressing their caring, loving thoughts and well wishes during my illness, surgery and recovery period over the last few months. I am healing well and grateful for many offers of help as well. With sincere gratitude, **JoAnn**.

Thanks to all who baked and donated cookies for the UM Women's Christmas Cookie Sale. They cleared over \$500 for missions and ministry!

Thanks to the following folk who helped decorate our buildings and grounds for Advent and Christmas: **Bill, Jon, Ron, Tom, Chet, Christine, Dorothy, Paul, Doug, Dennis, Harry, JoAnn and Tom and Cindy**.



Christmas Angel Tree Thanks. Thanks to your generosity, eight families from our local Elementary and Middle-High Schools were helped to have a Merrier Christmas. The wishes on 169 gift tags were fulfilled, gifts and filled stockings provided and wrapping materials given so guardians can wrap the gifts for their own family. Each family received two games for the whole family to enjoy! 80 additional stockings were stuffed to help at Meadowvale and Havre de Grace Middle-High Schools. We were blessed with homemade scarves and face masks for each person in all families. And our congregation gave very generous financial contributions!

Church Trivia

1. The Christmas Season lasts how many days?
 - A. Starting with Advent and ending on Christmas Day
 - B. Starts with Advent and ends on Epiphany, January 6
 - C. Starts at sunset on Christmas Eve and runs through Epiphany, January 6
2. Who do scholars speculate the Magi actually were?
 - A. Astronomers or sages
 - B. Estate owners from nearby
 - C. Wealthy doctors
 - D. All of the above

Answers on page 15.

Grace Place Food Donations Needed

Help restock our pantry at Grace Place with the following items:

Canned tuna fish (5 oz)	Baked beans
Canned chicken (5 oz)	Oodles of Noodles
Canned soups	Canned spaghetti sauce
Fruit (4-oz cups)	Canned Spaghetti O's
Macaroni and cheese	Peanut butter
Ramen noodles	Jelly
Box of spaghetti	Canned ravioli
Canned chili	Canned meat
Instant oatmeal	



Toiletry items (no razors)
Target brand diapers (sizes 5 and 6)
Target brand pull-ups (size 4T-5T, boy or girl)
Target brand wipes (scent free)

PLEASE – No glass jars, outdated food or fresh milk or bread.

Grace Place is currently trying to distribute foods in reusable fabric bags rather than plastic. If you have extra clean reusable grocery bags at your house, please consider donating them to help reduce plastic use in our community. Our guests at Grace Place appreciate your generosity. God bless you.

Church Office and the Red Cupboard

Any items we are collecting (food, reusable grocery bags, etc.) may be put in the red cupboard by the office door under the breezeway. We have folk willing to sort items and get them to the right place. Please call the office for Church Directories or Adult Sunday School books. Upper Room devotionals are available in the narthex/lobby/welcome center.

The Visitor is published monthly by
Havre de Grace United Methodist Church
Havre de Grace, Maryland 21078

410-939-2464 (phone) E-Mail: hdgumc@verizon.net
443-502-2651 (fax) Webpage: www.hdgumc.org

Pastor Norman, Editor
Pam, Compositor
Christine, Publisher
Juliette, Webmaster
Ashley, Facebook

All newsletter contributions should be left in the Church Office in the box marked for The Visitor or e-mailed to the Church Office.

Deadline for submission of items is the 2nd Sunday of the month by 10:30 a.m. preceding publication. Anything received after that date will be placed in the next month's newsletter.

The editors reserve the right to edit for content and space.
We welcome your suggestions and contributions for The Visitor.

Community Information

GriefShare Groups

- **Tuesdays from 7 to 9 p.m., January 4 through March 29**, Bel Air Church of the Nazarene, 2430 Conowingo Road, Bel Air. Contact: Deb. Cost: \$20
- **Mondays from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., January 10 through April 4**. Haven Community Church, 48 Flint Drive, North East. Contact: Donna. Cost: Free
- **Thursdays from 10 to 11:30 a.m. or 7 to 8:30 p.m., January 13 through April 7**. St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, 1200 E. Churchville Road, Bel Air. Contact: the Church Office at 410-838-3178. Cost: Free

Loss of Spouse

- One time event on **Saturday, January 8 from 10 a.m. to noon**. St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, 1200 E. Churchville Road, Bel Air. Contact: the Church Office at 410-838-3178. Cost: Free

Red Cross needs blood! Donors of all blood types, especially O and those giving platelets are urged to make an appointment to give now. To make an appointment to donate, visit <https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/find-drive>

Smoking Cessation

Free virtual classes, **Tuesdays from 6 to 7 p.m.** To register call 1-800-515-0044.

Feeling stressed, lonely or upset? For mental health here are some resources:

- *Lonely? Call 211 or visit 211MD.org
- *Upset? Call 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746
- *Stressed? Text TALK to 741741
- *Emotional Health Crisis Line: 1-866-342-6892
- *Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255
- *Optum Public Crisis Line: 1-866-342-6892

UM Upper Chesapeake Health has many classes and support groups meeting virtually, including car seat checkups. Simply go to: umms.org/uch/community/events to survey their offerings.

Church Calendar

January 2022 Church Calendar

Havre de Grace UMC, Havre de Grace, MD

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<i>Regular Sunday Services:</i> 8:15 am, 11:00 am <i>Facebook Live 11:00 am</i>			<i>Sunday School</i> 9:45 am		1 Happy New Year!	
2 Epiphany Sunday Sixth Day of Christmas 4 pm GS #1711 5 pm BSA-Girls	3 7 pm Parents' Meeting for Confirmation	4 5 pm AA 8 pm NA	5 6 pm Cub Scouts	6 Epiphany 10 am Prayer Cir 7 pm Choir	7 12 pm N.A	8 8 am UMM Fellowship @ Chesapeake Grill & on-line 9 am Re-Decorate Church
9 5 pm BSA-Girls	10 7 pm Trustees	11 Grace Place 5 pm AA 8 pm NA	12 6 pm Cub Scouts	13 10 am Prayer Cir 7 pm Choir	14 10 am Knitting Ministry @ Concord Pt. Coffee 12 pm N.A	15
16 4 pm GS #1711 4:15 pm Welcome One Dinner 5 pm BSA-Girls	17 7 pm Finance	18 5 pm AA 8 pm NA	19 5 pm Missions Team 6 pm Cub Scouts	20 10 am Prayer Cir 7 pm Choir	21 12 pm N.A	22
23 5 pm BSA-Girls	24 7 pm Church Council	25 5 pm AA 8 pm NA	26 6 pm Cub Scouts	27 10 am Prayer Cir	28 10 am Knitting Ministry @ Concord Pt. Coffee 12 pm N.A	29
30 5 pm BSA-Girls	31					

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Did you know...that in Spanish the month of January is written Enero and pronounced e-nehr-oh.

Have you submitted your name and date?

If you would like your name included, please contact the church office with the date of your birthday and/or anniversary and your name.

Birthdays

January 1 Michele	January 5 Leslie	January 6 Chet	January 8 Mabel	January 9 Pam
January 10 Maren	January 12 Brenda (Jewell) Becci	January 17 Dick	January 22 Judy Brian	January 23 Jenny
January 27 Terri Ned	January 30 Linda			

February 1 Gardner Bonnie	February 2 Ron	February 4 Len	February 6 Erik
February 8 Donna	February 11 Donna	February 14 Payton	February 23 Jim

Anniversaries

January 1 Bob and Mary Jane

February 8 Dan and Leslie
February 11 Jerry and Lynn
February 25 Walter and Kay



Prayer List

To update the Prayer List or add a name, please contact Anita or the church office at 410-939-2464 or hdgumc@verizon.net. Thank you!

Connie
Michelle
Craig
Josh
Tammy
Katie
Keith
Johnette
Vern
Janet
Macy
Patricia
Ron
Steve
Joyce
Elsa
Tina
Suzy
Vicky

Rick
Mindy
Cathey
Cody
Lois
Cheryl
Edith
Marco
Jessica
Tommy
Courtney
Gerald
Alice
Kimberly
Jack
Kerri Ann
Sharon
Emily
Jimmy

Dan
Sharon
Shawn
Pattie
Sandy
Peg
Sandy
Carl
Pat
Owen
Trent
Bob
Jane

Beverly
Mary Ann
Nelson
Rick

*All who are battling COVID-19; an end to racism, Reconciling Team, conflict in the Middle East, persecuted Christians and Jews, disaster victims, families dealing with suicide, first responders, veterans, police, all educators and students, the people of Haiti and Afghanistan, the homeless.

New Year's Prayer

By Joseph P. Shadle, courtesy of womensday.com

God of Love,
You are with us in every transition and change.
As we enter into this new era with excitement and even some anxiety, we recall your deep compassion, presence and abounding love.
We thank you for the gifts, talents and skills with which you have blessed us.
We thank you for the experiences that have brought us to this moment.
We thank you for the work of others that gives breadth and depth to our own work.
Be with us as we move forward, rejoicing with you and supporting one another.
We ask this in your Holy Name.



THIS YEAR:  MY NAME:

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!

2 Corinthians 5:17

 I will spread **kindness** by _____

I will help my **family** this year by 

Throughout the year, I will **pray** for... 

MY BEST MEMORY FROM LAST YEAR:

I will learn more about **God** by _____

WHAT I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO IN THE NEW YEAR:

  DRAW YOUR HAPPY NEW YEAR SELFIE!

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Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.

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Please join us for worship.

Schedule

8:15 AM In-Person, Indoors
11:00 AM In-Person, Indoors and Livestream
9:45 AM Sunday School

For all other program information,
please phone 410-939-2464