



SALEM BROOKEVILLE

A UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

NEWSLETTER January 2024

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A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR



Hello church! Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! I pray your holiday was filled with peace and blessings.

What a joy it's been to celebrate at Salem this winter. From the joyful Visit with Santa to the candlelight service on Christmas Eve, and of course the gorgeous Longest Night service with our piano and violin duet it's been a fantastic season.

As always, the Longest Night service (also known as Blue Christmas) is one of my favorite of the entire year. We continued in the theme of our Advent worship by writing our laments on strips of cloth-those we've lost this year, routines and systems we've lost, laments for our country and world, and laments for ourselves-and then we ripped the fabric in half to symbolize both our mourning and the way we give these laments to God. Between each moment of writing and ripping we prayed while listening to incredible music from Julia and Cecilia Plumer on violin and piano. Once we ripped our cloth, I collected the shreds and tied them onto our "rag wreath". Each person writes their laments alone but once they're tied into the wreath we see how very not-alone we are! We're all lifting up these prayers to God! Physically giving these laments to God is a powerful way to give God glory and trust. If you've never attended a Longest Night service, perhaps you'll try it next year!

Now, however, nights are beginning to get shorter again, finally. It's time to start a new year. I have a new year ritual of looking back over my last year to see what I'd like to do the same, and how I'd like to grow. I get curious about my year and my future. What is God calling you to this year?

Perhaps part of your reflection will be on your Star Word. If you joined us last year on Epiphany, you know we all selected Star Words to guide us through the year. My word was "be." I kept the card in the pocket of my robe, promptly forgot it was there, and got to rediscover it every single Sunday (you'd think I'd learn!). However, it did stick to the front of my mind. "Be." I like to meditate, in theory, but generally I prefer action to simply *being*. I don't want to wait, I want to fix, to build, to change, (to control), to...anything! Anything but sitting still and letting life happen.

But sometimes there's truly nothing we can do. This year I fell in love with the Serenity Prayer all over again.

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

I am so convicted by the last line: and the wisdom to know the difference. Action isn't always possible. And in those cases I'm super amped up and discontent. So, what if God is calling me to just BE?

I hope your Star Word has made you think this year and that you're looking forward to getting a new one this month.

Regardless, we have a fantastic year ahead of us. I am so blessed to be your pastor. Let's continue to learn and grow as we greet 2024!

Blessings,

Rev. Emily

OBITUARY FOR CLOYD BITTNER

Cloyd A. Bittner, Sr., 81, passed away on December 18. Cloyd was a long time member of Salem although he and his wife had been attending Rockville UMC the last few years since it was closer to home. He is fondly remembered as our "fryer guy", always on hand at church suppers, the Bazaar, and other special events to fry up whatever was needed.

His final resting place is Parklawn Memorial Park on Veirs Mill Road in Rockville. He is survived by his devoted wife of 56 years, Betty, and their two children Cloyd, Jr., and Cynthia. He was blessed with three grandsons.

Our deepest sympathies and prayers go out to the Bittner family.

LEADERSHIP TEAM UPDATE

Happy 2024 to all Salem congregants. Hopefully the Christmas season netted all more good cheer than stress of the season.

The Leadership Team did not meet in December and will resume starting January 10. In the new year we will be looking at renovating the sanctuary. Also we will be looking to partner with Brookeville village and plan for mutually beneficial service opportunities.

Salem's 2024 budget needs are about \$208,000 and our stewardship drive pledges total \$199,000. That's a \$9,000 shortfall to start off 2024. Not ideal but workable for now.

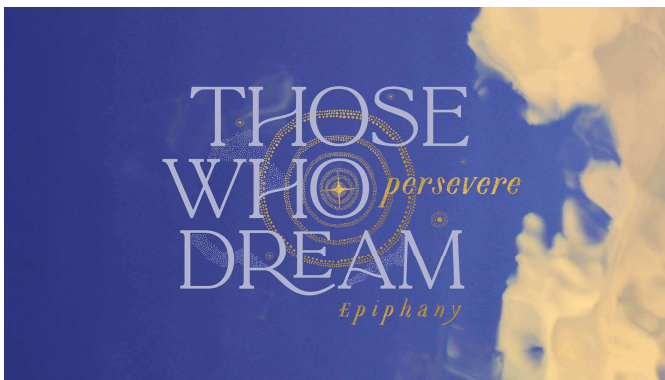
We are looking to expand our membership this year and welcoming new people who attend Salem as guests. Please invite friends and neighbors to services with you.

We hope in 2024 more of you will become involved in Salem's ministries and missions. Salem's success depends on a vital participating congregation.

Mark Aebig, chair

Members: Mary Kay Abramson, Quinn Anderson, Chet Babylon, Buck Bartley, Churchill Groves, Hisashi Yamagata

JANUARY SERMON SERIES CONCLUSION



On Epiphany, we celebrate how God's love transverses cultural and geographical barriers to become good news for all people. We marvel at the persistence of God to shine the way for the Magi so that they might bear witness to the divine. We honor that the Magi trusted their dreams and returned home by another way. As we journey forward, we carry

the dreams of our ancestors in faith. With courage and resilience, we dream on.

Jan. 7 Those Who Dream: Persevere
Matthew 2: 1-12 / Isaiah 60: 1-6

JANUARY / FEBRUARY SERMON SERIES



PART 3

Series Overview

It's a New Year! A chance to do something new! A chance to renew our commitments, change our habits, open to God.

For us at Salem, it's also a time to get curious. In 2023 we did two rounds of "I've been meaning to ask." We asked about everything from origin stories to beliefs about heaven. Curiosity is a gift God has given us! It helps us make new discoveries about the world, about each other, and about God, Godself. Now it's time to ask about our lives. How do we live? Do I really need to deal with *them*? And the perennial question: is God even listening? Join us as we kick off the new year ready to start the year with curiosity.

Jan 14 I've Been Meaning to Ask... What do I do?

Matthew 22: 34-46; Phil 3: 4b-14; Romans 12: 1-5

Jan 21 I've Been Meaning to Ask...How far does forgiveness go?

Romans 6: 1-4

Jan 28 I've Been Meaning to Ask...How do I pray?

Phil 4: 4-7; Romans 8: 26-28

(continues in February)

VISIT WITH SANTA



Santa Claus, ladies from the Mongol Erdem Culture School, Rev. Emily, and Father Snow

The Visit with Santa party was a huge success. Many thanks to Quinn and Terry Anderson, Mary Ellen Eaton, Churchill Groves, Rev. Emily, Nancy Joie Wilkie, and the staff and parents of the Mongol Culture School for their hard work in making this such a wonderful event. There were over 50 people in attendance enjoying this multi-cultural party.



Surprise! Could this be Santa's sleigh? Not today. He actually enjoys riding on a 1940 Ferguson tractor!

GRADUATION CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to **Christopher J. Hart** (Rev. Emily's husband) who graduated with a Master's Degree in Human-Centered Computing from UMBC's College of Engineering and Information Technology. What an accomplishment!

NEW MEMBERS' CLASS

A new members' class will begin in January. Please contact Rev. Emily to get on the contact list.

MISSIONS

The Lord's Table

The next Salem volunteer day at The Lord's Table will be Jan. 5. It will continue to be held the first Friday of each month. The location is Epworth United Methodist Church, 9008 Rosemont Drive, Gaithersburg, MD. Contact Churchill Groves for information.

Olney HELP Food Needs

You may leave non-perishable food donations in the box in the Meeting Room behind the Sanctuary or in the marked box in the Community Hall. Food items needed most at this time: canned fruit (in juice please), boxed spaghetti, pancake mix and syrup, canned chili, canned chicken, sloppy joe sauce and canned pasta, adult cereal, canned peas (low salt), spaghetti sauce – plain kind, canned meats, such as tuna, chicken, turkey, corned beef, spam, salmon, Vienna sausage, etc.;, 1 lb. bags of rice and rice sides (Knorr/Roni), pasta sides (Knorr/Roni), baked beans, canned green beans, corn, peas (low/no salt), Jelly - all sizes, all flavors, condiments - BBQ sauce, ketchup, mustard, salad dressing; instant mashed potatoes - pouches and boxes, juice boxes - 100% juice, shelf stable bottled juice.

For those who find it easier to order online they have a new Amazon wishlist with many useful items on it.

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/B9R4BSW2TAS5?ref=wl_share

If you are interested in volunteering or know someone in need, please call their Helpline at

301-774-4334. If you wish to make a financial donation, you may do so at: www.olneyhelp.org.



A letter to Rev. Emily from Olney HELP:

December 3rd, 2023

Dear Rev Emily Hart,

On behalf of Olney HELP, we are so grateful for your donation in October 2023.

Your donation helped us provide 49 Thanksgiving baskets, and we are working on our holiday baskets.

Your generosity has significantly impacted Olney HELP and the families we serve. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Sincerely,

Ruth Filbert

Director, Food Services, Olney HELP

Prayer Shawls

Prayer shawls are available free for anyone who is ill or needs comfort. Feel free to pick one up near the coat rack.

BIBLE STUDIES

There will be no Wednesday night Bible study during the Advent and Christmas seasons. Studies will resume later in January.

COMMISSIONING OF HERO DOGS TRAVIS

Hero Dogs Travis was commissioned and honored on December 3. We prayed that God would bless him and all the Hero Dogs and their raisers.



Travis and his siblings have moved on to advanced training to spend 6 to 9 months honing their skills and learning new things. Hero Dogs will determine what the best career path is for Travis - hopefully a service dog to a veteran or first responder with a

disability. He could also become a facility dog or a skilled home companion or a therapy dog. Once they have decided, they will look at the applicant pool and find just the right match for him.

The Roberts express their thanks to all of you who have given support during the last sixteen months that he has been coming to Salem.

They do not plan to raise another puppy. Carole hopes to dedicate more time to Sue's therapy visits and dabble in puppy sitting for Hero Dogs whose raisers cannot take them on an outing or trip. So be on the lookout for some surprise guest dogs in church.

JOANNE RANSHAW'S NEW ADDRESS

Joanne Ranshaw has moved to an assisted living facility in Frederick. She would love to receive cards and letters from her friends at Salem. Her granddaughter has asked that you send them to her at:

Joanne Ranshaw
c/o Jenny Ho
5568 N. Annapolis Dr.
Mount Airy, MD 21771

Jenny will then bring them to her.

SOCIAL HOUR

Please remember to sign up to bring snacks to the Community Hall so Social Hour can continue. This is another great way to encourage fellowship following the Worship service. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board down the hall from the sanctuary. Instead of weekly, we'll try once a

month. Nothing fancy. Just a dozen donuts cut in half is perfect.

LUNCH FOR SIX

Would you like to chat with others outside of church while enjoying lunch out? This is the perfect opportunity to socialize during the week and meet people who sit outside your pew. Groups have gone to GrillMarx, Mama Lucia, Panera Bread, Olney Grille, and Dempsey's. There is a sign-up sheet for the next group on the bulletin board down the hall from the sanctuary.

There is a core group that attends these lunches. But when a first-timer shows up, we are thrilled! What a blessing!

READING ROOM

The Reading Room shelves are full! We cannot accept any more books. The good news is there are well over 400 books and DVDs. Take the time to wander up there, browse, and take advantage of this wonderful resource. The Reading Room is open on Sundays from 8:30 A.M. to noon. Thanks to everyone who has donated books.

We have many books by the ever popular Max Lucado:

1. He Did This Just For You
2. He Still Moves Stones
3. In the Grip of Grace
4. In the Manger
5. The Applause of Heaven
6. You'll Get Through This – Hope and Help For Your Turbulent Times
7. 3:16, The Numbers of Hope

We also have many different versions of the Bible, daily devotionals, books on Methodism and history, poetry, and, of course, tons of books on spirituality and faith.

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES



If your name should be on the list, please contact the church. We don't want to leave you out. Thank you!

January Birthdays

Joan Aebig	01/18
Marcia York	01/20
Emily Hart	01/21
Rick Myer	01/30

January Anniversaries

Mark and Anne Ennes	01/25
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HYMN 243 FROM A DISTANT HOME

From a distant home the Savior we come seeking,
using as our guide the star so brightly beaming.

Lovely eastern star that tells us of God's
morning, heaven's wondrous light, O
never cease thy shining!

Glowing gold I bring the newborn babe so
holy,
token of his power to reign above in glory.

Glory in the highest to the Son of Heaven,
and upon the earth be peace and love to
all.

(Traditional Puerto Rican carol about the
Magi, Matt. 2: 1-21, 23)

GIVING

Offerings can be sent to:
Salem United Methodist Church
12 High Street, Brookeville, MD 20833

If you would like to give by app, you can
download the "Vanco Mobile" app and search
for Salem United Methodist Church or by its
invite code R8A63K.

If you haven't been able to access Vanco and
would like to give electronically, we now have
a PayPal option. You can use this link:
<https://paypal.me/SalemBrookeville>

CONTACT INFORMATION

Reverend Emily Hart takes Sabbath days on
Saturdays and Mondays for rest and renewal.
She also honors time with her husband and
dogs in the evening. Please contact her on
these days (or after 8:30 P.M. on other days)
only in an emergency or a scheduled
meeting.

Church Address:
Salem UMC
12 High Street
Brookeville, MD 20833

Church Telephone: (301) 774-7772

Church Website:
www.salemunitedmethodist.org

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The newsletter is prepared by the Salem
United Methodist Church Communications
Team. Contact any team member with
questions or comments. Thanks!

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