



SALEM BROOKEVILLE

A UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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

NEWSLETTER January 2025

A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR



Rev. Emily's Favorite Things of 2024

2024 has been a year of growth, play, and more for me. Here are some things that helped me to grow, play, be inspired, and be encouraged in this last year.

Growth Things

- Financial Leadership Academy has been a huge opportunity for me to grow in church administration in the last year. We have sessions every few months and then come back and work with a lay team to implement what we've learned. I'm

very excited to see how these ideas take shape at Salem in the coming months.

- I'm delighted our church will be growing into a new database ("Breeze") in the coming year. It will help us to organize our space, money, contact information, classes, attendance, and more. This will be a good chance for us to grow into more streamlined ways of operating and I'm delighted. I am also the kind of nerd that joyfully loves databases, so I've had a lot of fun learning about it.

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- The Pulpit Fiction podcast continues to be one of my favorite sermon writing companions. They read ahead in the lectionaries in order to help other “preachers, seekers, and Bible geeks” think about scripture with reliable research and ideas. It’s been a great way to make sure I’m growing beyond what I was taught in seminary. This would be a great resource for any of you that want to know more about the Bible.

Playful Things

- Nose Work for dogs has been a delight for me and my pups! It’s a dog sport where they are trained to find a specific smell in the room. My dogs are still working on finding a food treat and are probably not going to compete, but it has been a blast for us.
- The New Testament for Gen Z has been the silliest and most fun Bible translation I have read in a long time. I’ve been bringing it to Wesley Freedom’s youth group and they have a blast with it. It’s so much fun to see teens getting excited about the Bible. It’s also funny to hear familiar phrases in such a different way.
- Wicked is easily my favorite movie from the year. I was so impressed with everything they did. I’ve listened to the soundtrack daily since seeing the movie. I’ve known the songs from Wicked since High School choir, but the plot was a surprise. The justice themes throughout the movie were a delight!

Inspired Things

- *Romans: Experiencing Peace Together in A Chaotic World* by Scot McKnight. It has daily devotional readings to help us

understand the complex context and power dynamics in Romans. I’ll be using it to preach my January and February sermon series. So, if you’d like to read along, grab a copy from Amazon!

- Weightlifting for strength has been one of my great joys this year. Up until this year, I’ve always lifted small weights many times. This year my trainer convinced me to lift heavier weights fewer times and I unexpectedly fell in love. I especially love “going to failure.” That means lifting until you literally cannot anymore—until you fail! There are so many avenues in my life where failure is very scary and it’s been a joy to have failure as a healthy goal and tool rather than a fear or mark of worth.

Encouraging Things

- By now, you’ve certainly heard how much I love “I think you’re wrong, but I’m listening.” This book helped me so much with conversations and in choosing my media sources during the election. I have subscribed to their podcast, Pantsuit Politics, on Substack, and listen to it when I want news analysis. It’s so nice to listen to people who aren’t demonizing people or depending on click-bait to get my attention.
- The Enneagram (as always!) is something I find so encouraging. It is a personality typing tool originally used by monks in the 4th century (depending on who you ask). I’ve been taught that when you take the best of each personality type, you see the face of God. This gives me greater compassion for others. My favorite book for learning more is “The Road Back to You” by Ian Morgan Cron and Suzanne Stabile.

- Finch, the self-care app, has been my favorite late edition to this round up. It's an app that "gamifies" self-care. That means it takes your self-care to-do list and gives you rewards and accountability designed to be wonderfully playful. So far, it's been a delight!

Blessings,

Rev. Emily

LEADERSHIP TEAM UPDATE

Last month Salem began its mini-mission Sundays for the Christmas holidays. Reverend Emily heard you and acted on the requests by members to be involved with outreach missions on a smaller scale during our fellowship after services. Salem members have sent out Christmas cards to people we haven't seen recently. They have also decorated walkers and canes to make them a little more festive.

We welcome the Amazing God International Church to our church. They will be worshiping here as well. Pastor Jerry Amara and his wife Elizabeth attended our service to become familiar with everything. Thank you to Michael for facilitating the lease agreement between parties.

Reverend Emily reports that for 2025, Salem had more pledges than last year. While numbers are not tallied yet, we remain confident we will be able to meet our budget. Harding Construction is planning to begin roof work on the bell tower starting in February. You can expect to see various roofing materials on church grounds while this is going on.

Salem is taking bids to remove the playground equipment on church grounds. It is aging and a hazard to children using it. Salem will be making donations to UMCOR in North Carolina and scholarships for IGNITE, a youth gathering similar to ROCK.

Finally, the Leadership Team says many thank you's to Mary Kay Abramson as she rolls off the Team and transfers the Treasurer duties to Churchill Groves. Mary Kay has spent over ten years in the position and welcomes the chance to move onto other things.

If you have anything you would like the Leadership Team to consider, please forward to Mark Aebig (aebigm@gmail.com)

Mark Aebig, chair

Members: Quinn Anderson, Chet Babylon, Buck Bartley, Churchill Groves, David Heinbuch, Janice Vieira, Hisashi Yamagata

JANUARY SERMON SERIES



Come, Let Us Adore Him

Jan 5 Epiphany Come *Matthew 2: 1-12*

United in Christ: Living in Challenging Times

As we enter a new year, we may feel hope or fear or joy or... well, anything! Our last few years have been really challenging. It can be so hopeful to look at the clean slate of a new year and wonder what it will bring. To set ourselves up well for the year, we will do a

deep dive into Romans to see how Paul encouraged early Christians to live in unity even though they have serious division and valid grievances with each other.

I care deeply about loving others. While I don't always like what Paul has to say (which is a story for another time!) his writing is powerful and incredibly helpful in figuring out *what really matters* in following Christ. Join us to start the new year with **hope**.

Sundays after Epiphany

Jan. 12 The Powerful and the Powerless:
A Call to Unity *Romans 14:1-12*

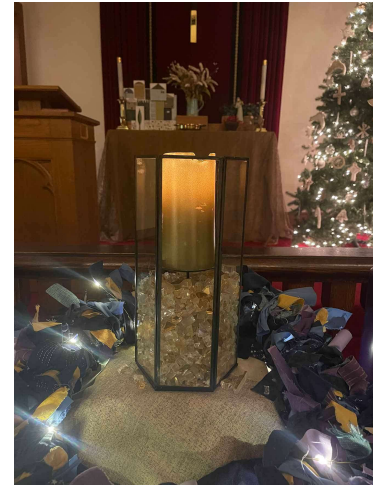
Jan. 19 Stumbling Blocks: Navigating
Division with Grace *Romans 14:13-23*

Jan. 26 Welcoming One Another: Christ
as Our Example *Romans 15:1-7*

SOUL REST SERVICE



The beautiful candlelit Soul Rest Service on the evening of Dec. 10 was a time to allow music and peace to flow into our hearts and minds. A time to light prayer candles and remember and pray for people in our thoughts.



This service was a time to let the Lord fill us. It is a wonderful annual tradition.

MISSIONS

The Lord's Table

The next Salem volunteer day at The Lord's Table is **Friday, January 3**. The location is Epworth United Methodist Church, 9008 Rosemont Drive, Gaithersburg, MD.



Four of the many volunteers in December

Our Administrative Specialist, Michael, is the new coordinator. He has set up 2-hour shifts: 1-3 P.M. and 3-5 P.M. To sign up or for more info, email Michael at admin@salemunitiedmethodist.org.

Olney HELP Food Needs

You may leave non-perishable food donations in the box under the table in the sanctuary or in the marked box in the Community Hall.

Most needed items: canned yams, cranberry sauce, turkey stuffing mix, instant oatmeal, jars of turkey gravy, size 3 and size 5 diapers, condensed cooking soups and canned fruit. Also, canned pasta (adult types), shelf stable bottled juice, canned chili, canned chicken, sloppy joe sauce, canned tomatoes (prefer 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, canned fruit in juice, jelly - all sizes and flavors, condiments - BBQ sauce, ketchup, mustard, salad dressing; instant mashed potatoes - pouches and boxes, juice boxes for the kids (100% juice please). You can also drop off Giant gift cards at the Giant Customer Service desk, and they will hold them for Olney HELP.

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, see their webpage at olneyhelp.org.

Prayer Shawls

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

Greeting cards

On the table leading into the sanctuary, there's a basket full of greeting cards as well as a directory of addresses. Feel free to find the perfect card to bless someone.

Mini-Missions during Social Hour

Social Hour will not only be for fellowship, but it will also be a time in which **all of us** can

participate in 5-15 minute mini-missions and other activities in which we provide for each other. Mini-missions in December included decorating walkers and canes.



Joan C. and Yvette decorating a walker

We also sent Christmas cards to church members we haven't seen in a while and to the staff of MedStar Montgomery ER. And just for fun, we exchanged jigsaw puzzles.

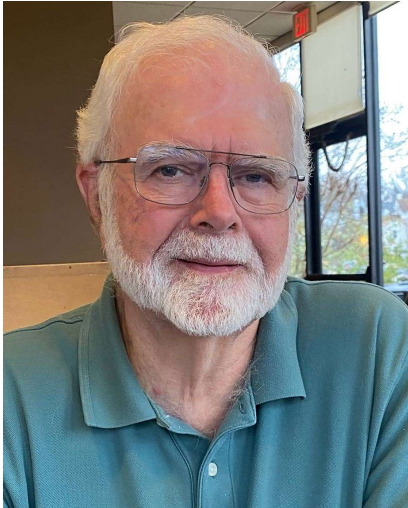


Selecting puzzles to take home and working on Rev. Emily's latest **huge** puzzle!

We will have more mini-missions in January.

There is a sign-up sheet in the sanctuary if you want to sign up to bring food for any of the Social Hours. Nothing fancy. A dozen donuts cut in half is perfect.

**STANDING ON THE SHOULDERS OF
GIANTS**



Chet Babylon was born in Baltimore, Maryland and moved to Catonsville with his parents and younger sister when he was two years old. After graduating from Catonsville High School, he began working at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA) in Washington, DC. NOAA helps protect the world's resources, monitors global weather/climate and supports marine commerce. Chet was assigned to the print shop where he learned the profession quickly and liked what he was doing.

During his early working years, Chet met and married his wife Sandy. After their two daughters, Tracy and Kerry were born, they moved from Catonsville to Olney and when the girls were old enough for Sunday school, the family started attending Salem.

Chet had a 35-year career with NOAA, retiring in 1996, and became active at church. At that time, Salem held two Sunday services, at 8:30 a.m. and at 10:00 a.m. Chet became the regular usher at the early services.

Chet's devotion to Salem took many forms over the years. He was an active member of the Trustees, the Finance Committee, the Pastoral Care committee and he served as president and treasurer of the Methodist Men's group.

For more than a decade, two times each year, Chet organized Salem's famous Sausage Grind. It was a one-day extravaganza of 50-60 volunteers working together from sunup to sundown grinding 1,400 pounds of pork sausage to raise money for Salem. Unfortunately, we no longer have this great event.

In 2012, Chet assumed chief responsibility for the Salem cemetery, in existence since 1834, when an acre of land was sold for one dollar to the Methodist Protestant Church at Brookeville which later became Salem United Methodist Church. Chet worked with the cemetery committee that oversaw the sale of burial plots (a total of 400 plots were available at one time) and the upkeep of the grounds. He recently 'handed the baton' to Quinn Anderson who assumed overall responsibility for the beautiful, quiet little cemetery across the two-lane road from the church.

When Chet was asked what inspired him to give so much of his time to Salem for so many years, he said simply, "If I saw a need and I thought I could help, I did."

Chet, we 'Stand on Your Shoulders' benefitting today from your willingness for nearly three decades to serve Salem as a dedicated leader and worker when you saw things that needed to be done and you knew that you could make a difference. And, indeed you did.

Please contact Rev. Emily about current God Jobs openings – you're probably the perfect person to fill one of them.

VISIT WITH SANTA

The Visit with Santa on Saturday, Dec. 21, was well-attended and a fun time for kids and adults alike. Little ones talked to Santa and Father Snow, sang songs, made candy, decorated cookies and enjoyed delicious Mongolian cuisine.



WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY

"And she wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger." Jesus is the central figure of the New Testament and this third volume in the popular Exploring the Bible series examines Jesus in three distinct ways: A man like other men, a Jewish rabbi, and the Christ of Christian faith.

Then it's on to the cantankerous Paul, the other New Testament authors, and the wild and baffling book called Revelation.

Learn what Nazareth was like in the first century, discover what scholars know and don't know about Jesus as a historical figure, and explore how Paul really wrote all those letters. And who is the Antichrist anyway?

Join us Wednesday nights on Zoom from Jan. 15 to April 9 for this study of "Introducing the New Testament" by Rev. Anne Robertson.

| Date | Lesson | Reading (due at class session) |
|--------|---------------------|---|
| Jan 15 | Son of Man part 1 | Read "To the student", "Welcome: Oh, How I like Jesus", Session 1, any assigned Bible readings from the session |
| Jan 22 | Son of Man part 2 | |
| Jan 29 | Son of David part 1 | Session 2 and any assigned Bible readings from the session |

The book can be purchased at Christianbook.com using this [link](#).

Or at Amazon using this [link](#).

Click on the link to access the meeting on Zoom on Wednesdays. Fellowship at 6:30 P.M. and study from 7 to 8 P.M. [Zoom link](#)

YMCA PARTY

Rev. Emily and seven volunteers from Salem helped at the YMCA party at Gaithersburg High School where well over 60 children of all ages and even some moms attended for an

evening of music, photos, crafts, and cookie decorating.



Cookies decorated by little hands



Mary Ellen and lots of kids



Child-assembled snowman keychain



Selfie Mark having fun

For more photos, check out Salem's website.

SUNDAY CHILDCARE REMINDER

Childcare during the Sunday worship service is offered the third Sunday of the month. If you would like to be reminded by text message when this will occur, please contact Rev. Emily.

CEMETERY NEWS

The price of a cemetery lot is now \$2,000. We have a limited number of lots for cremains only for \$1,000 a lot. See Quinn Anderson or Chet Babylon.

SOCIAL HOUR

Information about Social Hour now appears above in the Missions section.

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. Groups have gone to GrillMarx, Mama Lucia, Silo Falls, Olney Grille, Dempsey's and many more. There is a sign-up sheet for the next group on the bulletin board down the hall from the sanctuary. Consider putting your name on the first space, then you can select the restaurant and date you'd like to go!

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. It's located upstairs in the Community Hall and is open on Sundays from 8:30 A.M. to noon.

Some books on Methodism we have:

- 1) *The Unofficial United Methodist Handbook* from Abingdon Press
- 2) *Three Simple Rules—A Wesleyan Way of Living* by Rueben P. Job
- 3) *Hymns and Sacred Poems* by John Wesley and Charles Wesley
- 4) *United Methodist Questions* by F. Belton Joyner, Jr.

In the near future, **books from the Reading Room will appear at Social Hour!** You'll be able to peruse the holdings without having to climb the stairs.

Also, the **Reading Room Catalog is now on Salem's website!** Go to the GROW dropdown menu and click on "Reading Room Resources List". Then click on "here".

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:
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Church Telephone: (301) 774-7772

Church Website:
www.salemunitedmethodist.org

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Music Director:
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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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