



# SALEM BROOKEVILLE

A UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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

## NEWSLETTER February 2025

### A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR



This season feels like one of great change—for our country, our community, and our church. I know many of you are feeling this deeply, whether you're hopeful about the new presidency or filled with uncertainty. If you're anything like me, this moment might feel a little overwhelming. Personally, I've been wrestling with concerns about the rapid pace of new executive orders and how checks and balances in our government seem to be shifting. But I also know that some of you see these changes as hopeful steps toward progress. I am always concerned about how people in power will hurt or help those without.

One of the things I love most about Salem is that we represent such a broad spectrum of political and theological beliefs. We are a purple church in every sense of the word, with

people on both sides of every issue and plenty of folks in the middle. That diversity is such a gift, but it can also be challenging. How do we live out the unity Paul describes in Romans—unity in Christ—when we see the world so differently?

This is exactly why I'm so excited about our current sermon series, *United: Following Christ in Changing Times*. Romans gives us such a powerful framework for navigating difference and staying centered on what matters most: our shared identity as followers of Christ. Paul doesn't call us to ignore our differences, but

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to meet one another with love, humility, and understanding. Personally, I've been really blown away at how Paul's words apply to our lives right now. And yet. We can't grow into our best unity if we're not taking care of our own pain. Some of us are deeply afraid and others are hopeful because they *have been* so deeply afraid. Before we try to talk together, I urge you to do some soul self-care.

Here are a few things I am doing:

**Ask God to lead me when I wake up.** I don't make this an intense time of prayer. It's more like 10 seconds where I simply say, "God, please lead me today." I don't know if it makes a difference, but I like doing that before I check my phone and start reacting to the world. I feel like it starts my day on the right track.

**Delete social media apps from my phone.** Yes, yes, my generation is addicted to our phones. That's part of why I'm deleting. I'm also doing this because I'm tired of feeling like I'm chasing treats on a hamster wheel. I'm tired of clicking on sensational post after sensational post and never knowing what's true. It's exhausting. I'll keep my accounts on the computer, but self-care means limiting my access.

**Choose a time limit for my news consumption and stick to it.** Just like social media the news can only benefit from me watching it more. I don't have the emotional bandwidth to be outraged at the rate that new stories are written. I will engage for up to an hour a day. If someone sends me something to read, I'll make an exception, but I don't want my emotions to be dictated so completely.

**Limit my news sources to ones that prioritize data and reporting over sensational headlines.** I've continued to like

Pantsuit Politics as a way to know what's going on without feeling like I'm constantly barraged with new things. They are very generous in their summaries. They also do "deep dives" into the history of different things that happen. Most importantly, they call me off the hamster wheel, rather than onto it. I also have a subscription to The New York Times.

**When talking to people who disagree with me I get curious instead of angry.** Disagreement isn't the opposite of unity. Disagreement is an opportunity to learn and grow. I have done my best to be in an attitude of wondering. This is one of the most important things I learned from our Disagreeing Better session with Braver Angels.

**Find someone to help anonymously.** When I just can't get out of my own head I try to find someone who needs help. It can be simple things or more complex, but helping someone else is the best way I know to feel better about something.

To support all of this, we have yet another Braver Angels session coming up in February 2025. It is a Red/Blue workshop. This time, rather than listening and taking notes, our primary education will come from talking to each other. We'll share our ideas, our preconceptions, and our fears. This workshop will require registration to make sure that no one side overtakes the other. People can choose to attend as participants, or as observers.

I'd love to challenge all of us this month: what if each of us reached out to someone who thinks differently than we do? Maybe it's a family member, a coworker, or someone right here in the pews. What if we asked a curious question, listened deeply, and prayed for one

another? What if we committed to unity—not the kind that demands agreement, but the kind that shows the world that love really can hold us together?

This moment is challenging, but it's also an opportunity for growth. As we navigate change, let's lean into the unchanging love of Christ. Together, we can be a community that models what it means to be united amid differences.

Let's keep growing together.

Blessings,  
Rev. Emily

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### IN MEMORY OF HALSEY SMITH

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Halsey, 93, passed away peacefully in his sleep on January 3, 2024. He will be dearly missed at Salem (where he was a member for nine years), at the Lion's Club, at the American Legion (served more than 14 years and was

commander ten years), and in many other groups. He wrote a wonderful piece for Salem's newsletter about the American Legion (see October and November 2024).

Halsey loved our country and the Marine Corps, serving over 30 years and receiving the Silver Star and a Purple Heart. **"In addition to his other accomplishments, Halsey was a Sergeant Major in the Marine Corps. That is**

**the highest enlisted rank you can achieve in either the Army or Marine Corps. During my military career, I only met a handful of sergeants major since the rank was so rare. Every sergeant major I dealt with shared three vital traits: intelligence, natural leadership ability and a wonderful sense of diplomacy—how to navigate different personalities and situations without giving offense. Those traits certainly describe our loyal church member."** –Don Rider

Halsey always attended worship services committing himself to his God Job as money counter. He was a faithful member of the Sunday School class, always prepared, arriving early and getting coffee ready. **"He was a gentleman, friend and contributor to the class in every way. He was a wonderful, interesting man."** –George Robinson

**"In the three plus years that I have been part of the Sunday adult bible study group, I could only remember Halsey missing on about three occasions to attend other important events. He was a dedicated participant, inquisitive, eager to understand the weekly lessons, and curious about new cultures and the country of (my) birth, Guyana, which he initially thought was in Africa instead of South America. He was appreciative when I shared a colorful magazine with him which he said he enjoyed and found educational. RIP. You are missed."**—Janice Vieira

Halsey also attended every Lunch for Six we had. He told wonderful stories that showed us his love for life and what events shaped him. **"I love the story about how he went to a ball game with his dad. Over the loudspeaker, the announcer started naming admirals who were to report for duty. Halsey didn't know what was going on because he was just a kid. It was Dec. 7, 1941."** –Joan Aebig

**“He was a kind, welcoming, smart, worldly, patriotic, funny, generous of heart and authentic man we were blessed to be friends with for far too short a time.”** –Mollie and Gene Haines

**“I don’t believe Halsey ever had a bad day. No matter what, he found a way to put a positive twist on things, even bad happenings, like war. ‘Think of all the medical advances and inventions we have made tending to our wounded warriors,’ he would say. Keep it simple was his theme. He wanted nothing to do with the internet, email, or cell phones. Too complicated. Halsey just plain loved living, and people, and any social gathering, particularly if it involved food. I loved the ol’ Marine. And he loved me and everyone he knew. We all kinda thought Halsey would live forever. He will be missed.”**—Buck Bartley

Halsey’s memorial service will be held in the coming months and then he will be buried by his wife, Geraldine, at Arlington Cemetery. For his official obituary and ways to honor his memory, see the website of the Barber Funeral Home in Laytonsville. Our deepest sympathies go out to his daughters, Kulley Bancroft and Karen Smith.

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## LEADERSHIP TEAM UPDATE

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January’s Leadership Team meeting was a short one. We discussed Salem’s snow policy, a new Covenant agreement between team members, Community Hall issues, use of the Basket Room and lead paint detection and correction. Several members were not in attendance so no voting occurred.

This past month, the area received more snow than in the recent past along with colder

than average temperatures (Captain Obvious here). While Salem’s contractor cleared the January 6 initial heavy snowfall, Emily, Kyle, Michael, Chris Hart, the Heinbuch family and some neighborhood youth cleared away more space to allow for parking and safe passage into the Sanctuary. We are grateful and thank them for all their work. The Leadership Team is now tasked with revising the Snow Emergency policy for future consideration.

With our new members seated on the team, it was decided to revisit the 2023 Team Covenant that members then sign and agree to commit to. We look forward to vibrant and meaningful dialog staying within the boundaries of agreement.

Community Hall issues included repairing two round tables whose legs became loose. This was in lieu of disposing them. Alden English and Dr. Steve Patterson were on hand as observers and volunteered to do the repairs. Thanks to both of them for being a part of the meeting and stepping up. (As an aside, all are invited to observe the Leadership Team meetings.)

The Team was informed of the need to investigate whether lead-based paint is present in the storage area under the stairway. We will test the area with special swabs to determine if there is and the extent of the problem.

It was proposed that the Basket Room upstairs in the Community Hall be re-purposed as a seasonal storage space. No decision was made.

To repeat, the Leadership Team meeting is open to church goers.

Finally, we note with great sadness the passing of one of our own, Mr. Halsey Smith.

Halsey was a contributing member of the Leadership Team and his voice and presence will be sorely missed. The Leadership Team extends our deepest sympathies to Halsey's family in this time. He was a fine man and always a U.S. Marine. Semper fi, Halsey.

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

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## FEBRUARY SERMON SERIES

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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**.

4<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> Sundays after the Epiphany

Feb 2 Living as a Sacrifice: True Worship in Community *Romans 12: 1-8*

Feb 9 Marks of a True Christian: Overcoming Evil with Good *Romans 12: 9-21*

Feb 16 The Law of Love: Living in the Light *Romans 13: 8-14*

Feb 23 New Life in Christ: Freedom from Sin *Romans 6: 1b-11*

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## MISSIONS

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### The Lord's Table

The next Salem volunteer day at The Lord's Table is **Friday, February 7**. The location is Epworth United Methodist Church, 9008 Rosemont Drive, Gaithersburg, MD. To sign up for 2-hour shifts (1-3 P.M. and 3-5 P.M.) or for more information, email Michael at [admin@salemunitedmethodist.org](mailto:admin@salemunitedmethodist.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. For the most needed items, see the list on the table in the sanctuary. 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](http://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. 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.

**WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY**

“Introducing the New Testament”

"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)
Feb 5	Son of David part 2	Session 2, if not yet finished

Feb 12	Son of God part 1	Session 3 and any assigned Bible readings from the session
Feb 19	Son of God part 2	Session 3, if not yet finished
Feb 26	Man of Letters part 1	Session 4 and any assigned Bible readings from the session
Mar 5	No class	Ash Wednesday

The book can be purchased at Christian-book.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](#)

**VISITATION TEAM – A NEW MISSION**

ARE YOU INTERESTED?

Salem’s Mission calls for us to express God’s love through serving others in the community. That community contains a number of nursing homes and retirement centers. We are exploring a plan to form teams of two to visit church family, loved ones, and the lonely housed in these locations. If you have an interest in becoming part of a visitation team, please contact Vern Schinski at [vschinski5@verizon.net](mailto:vschinski5@verizon.net)

**COMMISSIONING OF NEW LEADERS**

New Leadership Team members David Heinbuch and Janice Vieira (pictured below) were commissioned on January 26.



Mary Kay Abramson rolled off the team – thank you for your dedication and hard work!

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## GOD JOBS AND MORE GOD JOBS!!

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If you've been wondering how you can serve our Lord, or our Lord has been equipping you to do so something for him, please take a look at our growing list of God Jobs that have become available:

- Scripture reader – to read the scripture during the worship service; frequency approx. five times per year
- Money counter – after the worship service is over, count the money collected during the offering; frequency approx. twice a month
- Substitute usher – greet people, pass out bulletins, light the candles, collect the offering; frequency approx. once every other month
- Person to crochet or knit prayer shawls – as many as you like; generally meet once a week at JoAnn's home
- Visitation team member – team is currently in planning stages (see message from Vern on page 6)

See Rev. Emily for more info or to express an interest. There is a video about God Jobs on our website under the SERVE tab.

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## WEBSITE NEWS!

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If you haven't clicked around on Salem's website lately, take a look at the NEW page called **SUMC Photo Album**. It's under the CONNECT tab. There you will find lots of photos of our members helping at the YMCA Party. The page will continually be updated with additional photos of fun activities.

Likewise, under SERVE, click on **Serving the Community** to see lots of photos of *you* helping at The Lord's Table. This page will also be frequently updated.

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## BRAVER ANGELS

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The planning of a third Braver Angels Workshop has occurred. This will be a Red-Blue workshop where a small, balanced group of Reds and Blues engage in exercises to help clarify disagreements, reduce stereotyped thinking and discover common values. It will be on February 22 or 23. Contact Rev. Emily for more info or to sign up.

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## THE USUAL—BUT STILL IMPORTANT

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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 \$2000. We have a limited number of

lots for cremains only for \$1,000 a lot. See Quinn Anderson or Chet Babylon.

Lunch for Six—Would you like to chat with others outside of church while enjoying lunch out? This is the perfect chance to socialize during the week. 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 has well over 400 books and DVDs. It is located upstairs in the Community Hall and is open on Sundays from 8:30 A.M. to noon. **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".

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## GIVING

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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>

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## CONTACT INFORMATION

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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.

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12 High Street  
Brookeville, MD 20833

Church Telephone: (301) 774-7772

Church Website:  
[www.salemunitedmethodist.org](http://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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