

JOHN WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

JANUARY 2023

The Partner

“New Year Clarity!”

“What has come into being 4 in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it .”

— John 1:3-5

Happy New Year! It is wonderful to greet you in this newsletter, with hopes that you had a Blessed and Merry Christmas ... and are Hopeful about the New Year!

The Gospel of John says that the Newborn Jesus, the Christ, is Life and Light for us all! Jesus’ Light shines, John promises, and no darkness overtakes it. The Light is always there for us, to shine around us and ahead of us. One of its many blessings is that Jesus’ Light shows us the Way and provides clarity for us as we move forward. What an encouraging and comforting promise as we begin our New Year!

We at John Wesley have already recently begun a new, short-term venture that Jesus will use to shine His Light, providing clarity of direction for us moving forward as a church! Last fall, our Administrative Council approved and immediately after Thanksgiving we began an assessment of our church. This assessment will measure our health and vitality and provide clarity about how to best live out our future. The assessment is based in Paragraph 213 of our Book of Discipline and is titled, “A Process for Assessment of Local Church Potential.” It reads ...

“Since every congregation is located in a community in some type of transition, every local church is encouraged to study their congregation’s potential. Upon the request of the congregation, the district superintendent shall appoint a study task force to assist in an extensive study of the past, present, and potential ministry of the local church.”

“Pastor’s Letter” continued on p. 2

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Inside this issue:

Pastor’s Page (Continued); Soup Sale	2
Sharing Team; Wesleyan Sunday School	3
Heavenly Living Workshop; Crafting Saturday	4
Thursday Zoom Study	5
Altar Flowers	6
Building Use Policy; January 2023 Calendar	7
January Birthdays & Anniversaries; REACH Week	8
Puzzle Page	9

"Pastor's Letter" continued from p. 1

Our task force of 8 consists of 4 laity from John Wesley, and 4 clergy from our Cumberland-Hagerstown District, including me. Our District Superintendent (DS), Rev. John Wunderlich, presides over the Task Force. Our 4 laity - Ryan Chapin, Carol Easton, Jim Fritsch, and George Stone - are joined by Rev.'s Dionne Hall, Chris Serafusa, and Becki Wessinger. We are already off to an excellent start!

The assessment will cover 4 aspects of our church:

- Our Financial Health and Potential
- Our Congregational Leadership and Ministry (Recent Past and Present)
- The Make-up and Potential of Our Surrounding Community
- The Condition of our Buildings and Facilities and Their Potential for Future Use

Our task force is divided into four pairs, each with one laity and one clergy, who are assigned to each of the four areas of assessment. The pairs have already begun their work. We will meet over the next 3 months to share and discuss our assessments. As a result of our work the task force will draft a report with recommendations for the congregation to consider. This report will be presented to the entire congregation at an open meeting. Our plan is to schedule this open meeting in April, shortly after Easter. Then in May, the congregation will decide on which recommendation option(s) we will choose, return that decision to our DS, and begin moving forward with our decision.

What is so promising about this venture is that it will offer us, with God's Help and Jesus' Guiding Light, a comprehensive and valuable clarity! We will have new clarity about who we are, where we are, and how we're doing as a church, which will help us see and grasp our vision and mission moving forward!

Please pray for the task force as we continue our work in the opening months of 2023. If you have any questions, please call, email, or schedule an appointment with me at the church office.

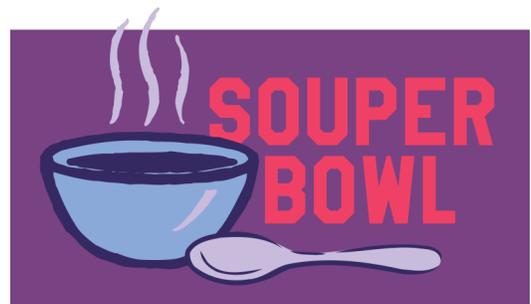
Happy New Year! ... In Christ's Love,

Pastor Doug

SOUPER BOWL WEEKEND

We are planning a soup sale for the weekend of Super Bowl - Saturday, February 11 and Sunday, February 12. Be sure to order your soups and steamer in advance for Souper Bowl weekend. Watch for more information and orders forms.

Proceeds to benefit the Kitchen Committee for the annual equipment maintenance and repairs.



CONNECTING FROM THE SHARING TEAM

During 2022 we found ourselves being able to once again hold events and reconnect.

We had concerts, we had soup sales, we had ice cream socials, we had a summer picnic, and we're having Coffee Fellowship (even if only once a month for now). We had Hershey Park Happiness and Creative Saturdays. We had Supper Club events, with an especially nice Christmas event to close out the year.

The Wesleyan Class meets regularly, as does the Youth Sunday School Class. The Youth Group has been meeting regularly. The UMW Circles have been meeting and Micah's Backpack program is currently sponsoring 10 students at Potomac Heights Elementary School. We did not have a fall bazaar this past year due to the City Farmers Market closing, but we did have the Mummers Parade, and the Youth Group "took the reigns" on the Concession Stand. The Lay Visitation ministry team continues with callers reaching out to connect with our church family. The Men's Breakfast group collected Pennies for Potatoes.



We look forward to enjoying more of these events in 2023. Sharing Team is not a part of the newly formed Leadership Team, and therefore will continue to operate independently. Sharing Team is a valuable tool for coordination and support of the many smaller groups. Sharing Team meets to share thoughts on developing new ideas and plans for outreach in the community, and how to draw new members into our church.

Sharing Team meetings are open to anyone who would like to share ideas, and "make things happen." Currently meetings are held on the 2nd Monday of the month via zoom. Contact Karen in the office or Greg or Barb if you would like additional information to join us.

Greg & Barb Hoover

WESLEYAN CLASS SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Wesleyan Class meets at **9:00** on Sunday morning in the Wesleyan Room. We have a short devotion, a prayer and two hymns. During the past year we have been rather flexible with our lesson topics. We have the Cokesbury Adult Bible Studies curriculum available as a guide. But we have been taking weeks where the class leader would just pick a topic of person or subject matter that has been of interest to them and share with the class, opening it up to discussion. We have also had discussions on different religions. The Youth Sunday School class has been joining us once every month or two to share their thoughts and discussions.

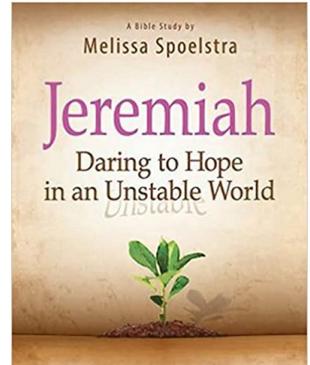
We invite and would love for you to also come and join us on a Sunday morning.

Blessings to you!



WEDNESDAYS HEAVENLY LIVING WORKSHOP

We have an opportunity to engage in a Zoom discussion (Meeting ID: 828 4006 3526 Passcode: 404756) each Wednesday from 7:00 pm until 8:15 pm beginning January 11, 2023. Please join us!!!! We will have some e-fellowship beginning each Wednesday evening at 6:30 pm. Our discussion topic is “*Jeremiah: Daring to Hope in an Unstable World*” by Melissa Spoelstra.



When we look around at today’s world, hope usually is not the first word that comes to mind. In many ways we live in an unstable world where marriages fail, bank accounts run low, friendships end, and the everyday demands of a fast-paced life get us down. In the Book of Jeremiah, we find God calling out to His people with a message of hope—a message that intentional living is possible even in an unstable world. But how do we do this? Where do we start?

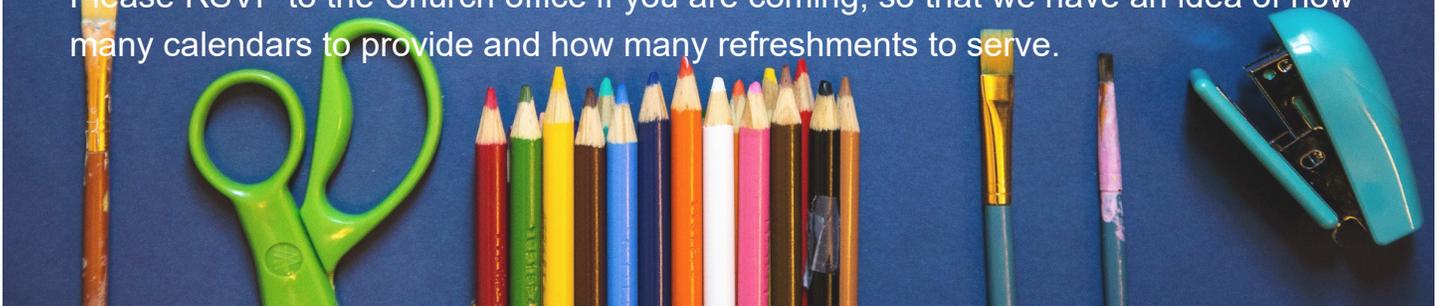
Jeremiah offers us hope for living in an uncertain world by teaching us to navigate the challenges and circumstances of our lives. This six-week study examines God’s words of instruction to His wayward people through the prophet Jeremiah, and provides six guidelines for intentional living to overcome fear, worry, and doubt as we surrender our wills to God’s and put our hope in Him alone. Remember that God is rich in mercy and love and has good plans for us.

- January 11: Session 1. Surrender
- January 18: Session 2. Idolatry
- January 25: Session 3. Listening
- February 1: Session 4. Heart Issues
- February 8: Session 5. Personal Responsibility
- February 15: Session 6. The Promised Messiah

CRAFTING SATURDAY FOR 2023 CALENDARS!

Crafting Saturdays are BACK! We will gather Saturday, January 21st at 10:00 am in the Social Hall to decorate 2023 calendars!! Light refreshments will be served, and wonderful fellowship will be shared!

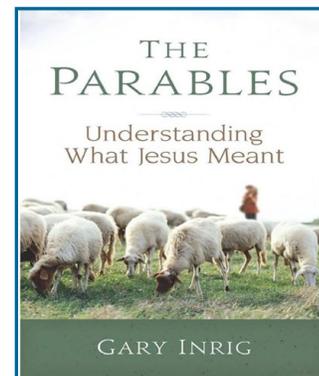
There will be lots of supplies to choose from. We will provide simple 8X10 calendars free of charge, but if you want something different, please feel free to bring your own. Please RSVP to the Church office if you are coming, so that we have an idea of how many calendars to provide and how many refreshments to serve.



THURSDAY ZOOM STUDY

We have an opportunity to engage in a Zoom discussion (Meeting ID: 828 4006 3526 Passcode: 404756) each Thursday from 2:30 pm until 4:00 pm beginning January 5, 2023. Please join us!!!!

Our discussion topic is *“The Parables: Understanding What Jesus Meant”* by Gary Inrig.



“To read the parables of the Lord Jesus is to see ourselves. They are more than mirrors. They can become windows into the heart and mind of God Himself. As a result, they do far more than reveal who we are. They help us know who God is. They not only expose our condition, but also point to a divine remedy. Self-recognition without divine provision would bring only discouragement. The Lord’s parables bring encouragement, because in them we meet ourselves and our God.” – Gary Inrig

- January 5: Knowing the Father (The Prodigal Son)
- January 12: Loving My Neighbor (The Good Samaritan)
- January 19: Thanking My Savior (The Two Debtors)
- January 26: Forgiving my Brother (The Unforgiving Servant)
- February 2: Finding My Master (The Tower and the King)
- February 9: Accumulating My Treasure (The Rich Fool)
- February 16: Assuring My Future (The Shrewd Manager)

** Break for the Lenten/Easter Season

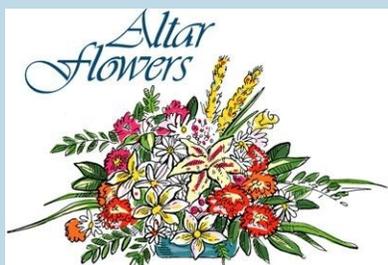
- April 20: Determining My Destiny (The Rich Man & Lazarus)
- April 27: Asking My Father (The Midnight Caller)
- May 4: Reaching God’s Ear (The Unjust Judge)
- May 11: Seeing Myself (The Pharisee & the Tax Collector)
- May 18: Getting My Due (The Vineyard Laborers)

If you have questions or ideas, contact Linda Sappington 301-714-0164 or RSappington@myactv.net. Each person orders their own book and/or workbook from Amazon, Cokesbury, or Christian Book. You can join in even if you choose not to purchase any study material.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS!

THANK YOU to all those who contributed time, money and gifts to make Christmas brighter for our adopted families. Your generosity truly makes a difference in the lives of those less fortunate.



Altar Flowers

If you would like to place altar flowers on the altar for 2023, please reserve through the church office. Since Karen is new, she is not familiar with who has a standing order, so please contact her or fill out the form below. The cost is still \$50.

Date of flowers placed: _____

In Memory/Honor of (circle one):

Given by: _____

Contact phone number: _____

Attendance & Offering Report

December	4	54	2658.87
December	11	51	2155.71
December	18	52	2294.20
December	24	70	1624.50
December	25	14	5454.50

Blessings, Sheila & Sherry

Devotional Literature

If you are in need of a nice daily devotional, we have copies of the Upper Room Devotional Guides. Please pick up one while in church or just call



Karen in the church office and she will mail a copy to you. Regular and large print are available.



January 2023 Events

- 1st: 10:30am, Sunday Worship
- 2nd: 7:00pm, Leadership Team
- 4th: 7:00pm, HLW Study via Zoom
- 5th: 8:30am, Men's Breakfast
- 5th: 2:30pm, Thursday Zoom Study -
"The Parables"
- 8th: 9:00am, Sunday School All Ages
- 8th: 10:00am, Coffee Fellowship
- 8th: 10:30am, Sunday Worship
- 9th: 7:00pm, Sharing Team
- 11th: 7:00pm, HLW Study via Zoom -
"Jeremiah"
- 12th: 2:30pm, Thursday Zoom Study
- 12th: 7:00pm, Property Committee
- 15th: 9:00am, Sunday School All Ages
- 15th: 10:30am, Sunday Worship
- 16th: *Partner* deadline
- 18th: 7:00pm, HLW Study via Zoom
- 19th: 2:30pm, Thursday Zoom Study
- 21st: 10:00am, Crafting Saturday
- 22nd: 9:00am, Sunday School All Ages
- 22nd: 10:30am, Sunday Worship
- 25th: 7:00pm, HLW Study via Zoom
- 26th: 2:30pm, Thursday Zoom Study
- 29th: 9:15am, Sunday School All Ages
- 29th: 10:30am, Sunday Worship

BUILDING USE POLICY

As we move into 2023 and begin to get back to normal (whatever that may mean) and start to use the building more, we need to remind you of the building use policy.

This policy is important so that we know who is using the building, when it is being used, what area is being used, and for what purpose. That is so we have no conflicts in scheduling, so that the area will be ready for use, so that the cleaning company can be aware of any scheduled events and can adjust their schedule accordingly.

For the use of space by a group or committee within the church, it is only necessary to give that information to Karen or myself. Karen will keep a master calendar in the office.

Committee meetings that are held on a regular basis and scheduled Coffee Fellowship dates are not required to notify each time, as that information should already be noted in the office.

For use of space by an individual (member) for a small gathering or event, you will be asked to complete a Building Use Form, giving information on requested date(s), requested space, and purpose. Trustees will approve or reject the request.

For use of space by an outside individual or group, a Building Use Form will need to be completed, giving information on requested date (s), requested space and purpose. A fee and/or certificate of insurance may be required. Trustees will review for approval.

Note use of the kitchen is monitored by the Kitchen Committee and has a separate scheduling calendar. Our Kitchen is a commercial kitchen, licensed under the Washington County Health Department. The Building Use Form has a section for separate kitchen use, which will be shared with the Kitchen Committee.

You can check with Karen for availability of a date or space. We thank you in advance for your consideration of notifying the office of expected use of areas in the church building.

Barbara Hoover, Trustees



- | | | | |
|-------|---------------------------|-------|----------------------|
| 1st: | Laura Bell | 19th: | Tom Routzahn |
| | Emily Bolt | 22nd: | Buck Shipley |
| | Barbara Jones | 23rd: | Danny Seiler |
| 2nd: | Judy Shorb | 24th: | Amy Ernst |
| 5th: | Kevin Hoover | 25th: | Michael McMurtrie |
| | Lauri Ricker | | Kate Suddueth |
| 6th: | McKenzie O'Connor Metzner | 29th: | John Gillespie |
| 7th: | Sandra Dennie | | |
| | Rev. Bill Warehime | | |
| | Louise Wine | | |
| 8th: | Don Eckard | | |
| 10th: | Norris Diefenderfer | | |
| | Holly Robison | | |
| 13th: | E. Zachary Ackerman | | |
| | Robin Deavers | | |
| 15th: | Meghan Leigh Anne Blair | 10th: | Tom & Lori Routzahn |
| | Caroline Harsh | 24th: | Trumer & June Wagner |



(If your birthday or anniversary is this month and does not appear on this list or appears incorrectly, please call the church office or email us at jwumcmd@yahoo.com and let us know. Thank you!)

JW REACH WEEK

The John Wesley UMC Faith Family has a fantastic opportunity to serve our community by volunteering to work at the REACH Cold Weather Shelter February 26 through March 4, 2023.

Be thinking where you can volunteer to show extra respect, kindness, and creative recognition that we are ALL God's beloved children. Please visit the REACH volunteer page (Volunteer - Reach of Washington County (reachofwc.org)) to review the shelter volunteer tasks and to fill out the volunteer form. Call or contact Linda Sappington (301-714-0164 or RSappington@myactv.net) to decide together where your particular skills can be wonderfully used this week.

If you decide that you can not give your physical presence this week to this program, your prayers and monetary contributions are especially desired and appreciated.



PUZZLE PAGE

TASTY CREATIONS

Make this yummy treat to remember what happened on each day of Creation.

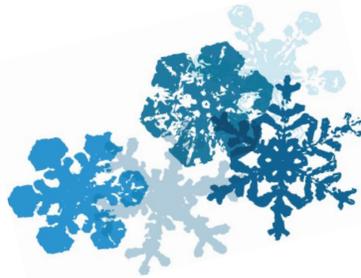
What you need:

- 6 large pretzel rods
- Candy melts (white, chocolate and blue)
- Green sprinkles
- White or star-shaped sprinkles
- Fish crackers
- Animal crackers
- Adult help



What you do:

1. With help, melt the three colors of candy melts in separate dishes. Microwave for 30 seconds at a time, stirring until soft.
2. Decorate one pretzel for each day of Creation:
 - Dip half in white and half in chocolate to show light and darkness.
 - Dip half in white and half in blue to show separation of the atmosphere.
 - Dip half in chocolate, add green sprinkles and dip half in blue to show land, plants and water.
 - Dip in chocolate and add white or star sprinkles to show the stars.
 - Dip in blue and add fish crackers to show sea life.
 - Dip in chocolate and add animal crackers to show land animals.
3. Share the Creation story — and the snack — with a friend!



Ordering the days

God spoke and created all that exists. He separated and ordered his creation. What did God say about all he made?

Directions: Write the correct day of creation next to each clue. Then fill in the circled letters in order below to complete Genesis 1:31, NIV.

FIRST	SECOND	THIRD	FOURTH	FIFTH	SIXTH
--------------	---------------	--------------	---------------	--------------	--------------

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| God made wild animals and livestock. | ○ _ _ _ _ |
| God said, "Let there be light." | _ _ _ _ ○ |
| God gathered the waters under the sky into one place. | _ ○ _ _ _ |
| God made a vault to separate the waters and called it "sky." | _ _ _ _ _ ○ |
| God created plants and trees. | _ _ _ _ ○ |
| God separated the light from the darkness. | ○ _ _ _ _ |
| God made the water teem with living creatures. | _ _ _ _ _ |
| God made the sun and moon. | _ _ _ _ ○ _ |
| God made birds fly above the earth. | _ _ _ _ _ |
| God made stars. | ○ _ _ _ _ |
| God created mankind in his own image. | _ _ _ _ _ |

God _aw all tha_ he _ad ma_e, an_ _t was ve_y g_od.

GENESIS 1:31, NIV

Answers: sixth, first, third, second, third, first, fifth, fourth, fifth, fourth, sixth, God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.



JOHN WESLEY UNITED METHODIST

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

JANUARY 2023 *PARTNER*

VISION STATEMENT:

*“We strive to be a Christ Centered Church, advancing the Kingdom of God
by nurturing and ministering to all peoples.”*

MISSION STATEMENT:

*“Our Mission is to make disciples for Jesus Christ through: Vibrant Worship, Christian Fellowship,
Spiritual Growth, Loving Service, and the Sharing of God’s Word.”*

