



**Emmanuel United Methodist Church**  
11416 Cedar Lane  
Beltsville, MD 20705  
301-937-7114  
[www.eumcbeltsville.com](http://www.eumcbeltsville.com)



**The Lamplighter**

The Newsletter of Emmanuel United Methodist Church

# The Lamplighter

The Newsletter of Emmanuel United Methodist Church!



DECEMBER 2021

## IN THIS ISSUE

- + Updated Worship Schedule p. 2
- + Ask the UMC: What do the candles in our Advent Wreath mean? p. 2
- + A Thank you from UpStage Artists p. 3
- + Update from Boy Scout Troop 1033 p. 3
- + 'Ever Faithful' United Methodist pens Army hymn p. 4
- + Cooking with Pastor: Optional Crab Cakes p. 5
- + Haitian migrants bring vitality to declining church p. 6
- + Church Funnies p. 7
- + Pastor found 'treasures' in depression battle p. 8
- + Ask the UMC: What names can we use for God? p. 9

Got News? Do you have something for our newsletter? Send items to the editor, Rick Bergmann at [lamplighter@eumcbeltsville.com](mailto:lamplighter@eumcbeltsville.com)



From the  
Pastor's  
Desk...

## The Ten Days of Christmas

Charles and John Wesley were two of the sons of Rev. Samuel Wesley, an Anglican Priest.

Charles became a renowned songwriter and wrote what were considered "contemporary" Christian songs in his day, often by setting church lyrics to popular tunes.

John was also an Anglican priest who developed an evangelical preaching style that was considered outside of mainstream Church of England because he popularized the practice of preaching outdoors and holding church revivals. Additionally, he was a teacher-preacher, who through his sermons taught the "scripture way to salvation."

This Wesley duo of "preacher and church musician" proved to be quite an effective means to bring the Methodist Movement to common everyday folk, especially to those in American colonies.

As an ordained clergy member of the Church of England, John never intended to create a new denomination called "Methodist." However, the zeal of the movement and the lack of a structure to serve the ministerial needs of the ever growing "Methodist Societies" demanded that something had to be done. Therefore, between 1763 and 1774, John Wesley sent a total of eight lay preachers to the colonies. However, the American Methodists wanted to have their own organized church. Doesn't that sound like young rebels?

At the onset of the Revolutionary War in 1775, only James Dempster and Frances Asbury remained as the sole Methodist lay preachers, and Asbury essentially and subsequently became the leader of Methodism in newly formed "United States of America." Asbury (as a British citizen) lived somewhat clandestinely, yet he risked visiting parishioners in Maryland in 1780. Asbury even met and traveled with "Black Harry" Hosier (a.k.a. Harry Hoosier), who himself was an influential Methodist preacher.

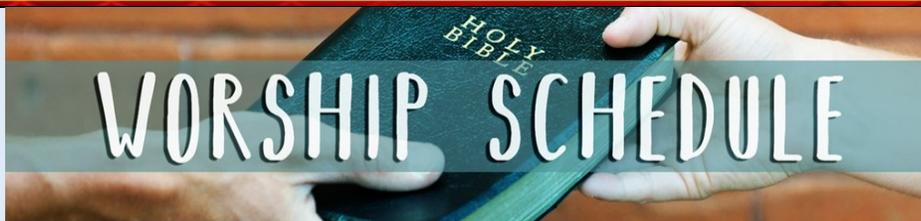
When peace was restored in the American states, Wesley sent Thomas Coke in 1784 to find Asbury. The two Methodist preachers met at Barratt's Chapel, a Methodist Meeting House in Delaware, where Coke had been invited to preach. There, during the service, the sacraments of communion and baptism were administered on November 14, 1784. This hallmark was the first-time ordained clergy performed these sacred rites. Afterwards, Coke and Asbury developed a plan to call together a meeting of all Methodist preachers to gather in Baltimore, Maryland on Christmas Day.

Freeborn Garrettson was assigned the responsibility to notify all of the Methodist preachers to attend the gathering. This circuit rider rode somewhere between 1000-1200 miles over a period of 5-6 weeks to take word of the historic Methodist gathering. On Christmas Eve 60 lay

*Continued on p. 5*

### A Correction:

Last month when we listed those who have passed away this year in "Remembering Our Saints" we inexplicably left off Kathleen Galloway. We apologize for the error.



#### Worship Schedule for the remainder of Fall 2021

- Sunday, December 5, 2021: Indoor, in-person and online virtual worship at 10 am
- Sunday, December 12, 2021: Online virtual worship at 10 am
- Sunday, December 19, 2021: Online virtual worship at 10 am
- Friday, December 24, 2021 (CHRISTMAS EVE): Online virtual worship Time TBA
- Sunday, December 26, 2021: Online virtual worship at 10 am
- Sunday, January 2, 2021: Indoor, in-person and online virtual worship at 10 am  
(This will continue on the first Sunday's of each month and be reassessed regularly)

(REMEMBER THAT ALL OF THESE DATES ARE CONTINGENT ON THE COVID RATES AND MAY CHANGE IF NEEDED.)

### Ask the UMC: What do the candles in our Advent Wreath mean?



A wreath with three lit candles marks the third week of Advent. Photo by Kathleen Barry, United Methodist Communications.

The Advent wreath began as a German and Scandinavian home devotional practice used to mark the four weeks of Advent. Families would light a candle for each past week and the current week at their dinner or evening time of prayer. The configuration of candles, whether in a line or a circle, did not matter. Neither did the color of the candles (all colors are used in homes in Europe). What mattered was the marking of time and the increase of light each week in the face of increasing darkness as the winter solstice approached.

As Advent wreaths began to be used by congregations on Sundays in some places in Europe and America beginning in the late 19th century, several adaptations were made to make them work better in public worship spaces. Candles needed to be larger and more uniform than the "daily candles" handmade or purchased for home use.

They also needed to be more uniform in color to fit with other décor in the sanctuary. That is why candles used in the Advent wreath are usually purple or blue, to

coordinate with color of the paraments used during this season.

This shift in context from home to public use also made it important in the eyes of some for the candles to be given a meaning more than simply marking time and increasing light. This led to special ceremonies being developed for lighting these special candles each week.

As this practice began to catch on by the mid-twentieth century, several church supply houses who sold Advent wreaths and candles for public worship also developed resources, banners, and bulletin covers assigning a theme to each week, and thus each candle, based on scriptures from the one-year lectionaries used at that time. Those themes were Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace, in that order.

Today, almost no one uses those one-year lectionaries, so those themes may not always fit the scriptures we hear in worship. The one exception is the Third Sunday of Advent, where the current lectionaries have continued to support the centuries old observance of "Gaudete" or "Joy Sunday." That is why church supply houses often offer rose or pink colored candles for the wreath for use on this day.

So how may we talk about the meaning of the Advent wreath today?

We can reclaim the original home use of marking time with the hope of increasing light as we await the return of Christ, that day when "The city no longer has need of the sun or the moon to shine upon it, because the glory of God illumines it, and its lamp is the lamb."

And we can develop meanings or themes for each week based on the focus of the scriptures themselves. After all, the candles and the wreath are an accessory, not an end in themselves. Their meaningfulness comes from how we use them to point toward Christ, the world's true light, who was, and is, and is to come.

## Thank you from UpStage Artists

By Rick Bergmann

The Board of Directors of UpStage Artists would like to send a big thank you to Emmanuel UMC for allowing us to use the church for our performance of *Frankenstein* in October. It was a great success, we sold out 2 of the 3 shows and the 3 show we sold 70% of the seats. It was a wonderful experience working with actors from the community and bring live theater back after almost 2 years. Thank you for allowing us to be a community partner with you as well as buying tickets and coming to see our performances. Our next show, *Driving Miss Daisy*, will happen in February. We will send out information as the show dates get closer.



## Update from Boy Scout Troop 1033

By Jenny Kresge



Troop 1033 has been busy this Fall! In September, the troop went on their first camping trip since the Covid pandemic shut everything down. They spent one night tent camping at Manidokan Camp and Retreat Center in Knoxville, MD. While there, they hiked up Maryland Heights as well as to historic Harpers Ferry and back to camp. The weather was gorgeous and everyone had a good time.

In October, the troop participated in an Orienteering competition at Patuxent River Park's Jug Bay Natural Area near Upper Marlboro. The scouts used map reading and compass skills to find specific locations and then earn points based on how many they found and how difficult they were. Troop 1033 placed 3rd in the Smaller Troop (less than 10 scouts participating) category!

In November, the troop conducted their annual food drive, Scouting for Food. The scouts collected many carloads of food donations from the Beltsville/Calverton area. The donations were split between the food pantries at Emmanuel and at St. Joseph's Catholic Church. Many thanks to those who contributed!

Troop 1033 is back to meeting in person on Thursday evenings at 7pm, following Emmanuel's Covid safety precautions. If you know any boys aged 11-17 who might be interested, we always welcome new members. As always, the troop thanks Emmanuel for their continued support!

## 'Ever Faithful' United Methodist pens Army hymn

By Jim Patterson



Lifelong United Methodist and Vietnam veteran Tom Lough (pictured above left in Vietnam and above right in 2021) has composed a song as a tribute to Army veterans. Photos courtesy of Tom Lough.

A new hymn written for Army veterans, "Ever Faithful to the Call," exists because its author survived a close call during the Vietnam War.

Hovering in a helicopter so soldiers could rappel onto the battlefield during the Battle of Hamburger Hill, Capt. Tom Lough felt death was near.

Seventy-two American soldiers died and 372 were wounded in May of 1969 during the battle on Dong Ap Bia mountain in central Vietnam. Lough was nearly number 73.

His helicopter took fire and went into a tailspin.

"The image of a sitting duck definitely comes to mind," said Lough, 79, who had already enjoyed a career as an Olympic athlete at that point and would go on to write a hymn for Army veterans.

"I was in the cargo area of the Huey (helicopter)," he remembered.

"And I said to myself, 'So this is what it's like to die.'"

Lough remained calm during the experience. He credits his United Methodist faith for that.

"I could calmly manage and process what was going on and be aware of the things that were happening because death is a fantastic transition into everlasting life," Lough said. "I wanted to be alert for that transition if it was coming up for me, so I could experience it to the fullest."

Because he survived, Lough reevaluated his life and came to the conclusion he needed take "any gifts that I might have been given, to develop those to the fullest potential." He felt he had a gift for music and potential as a songwriter.

"Ever Faithful to the Call" is Lough's shot at giving the Army its own hymn, like "Eternal Father, Strong to Save" is for the Navy and "Lord, Guard and Guide the Men Who Fly" for the Air Force.

The Army, strangely, doesn't have its own hymn. It does have an official song, "The Army Goes Rolling Along."

"I'm a West Point graduate and of course we have a fierce rivalry with the Naval Academy," Lough said. "My wife said, 'Well, listen, quit grousing about this and just go ahead and write (a hymn for the Army).'"

"Ever Faithful to the Call" can be downloaded along with a license for nonprofit use. The author is hopeful that church music leaders will use it for Veterans Day events and worship services.

"I think veterans experience things in their lives that people who haven't served in the military maybe don't readily relate to," said the Rev. Pat McCain, executive pastor of First United Methodist Church in Round Rock, Texas, where Lough is a member.

McCain, also a veteran, said Lough's hymn "resonated with the heart of our military veterans."

Lough debuted the hymn during an annual potluck dinner held at the Texas church around the anniversary of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. About 20 veterans and their spouses enjoyed potluck staples such as deviled eggs and Jello salad before hearing a recording of "Ever Faithful to the Call."

"You could tell by the tears that welled up in people's eyes, as well as the look on their faces as well as the conversation that took place afterwards, that the hymn resonated with a deep part of their soul," McCain said.

Lough, who grew up in Elkton, Virginia, is a lifelong United Methodist. His father was the son of a preacher.

"I was part of the community chorus and the choir growing up in the church," Lough said. "I was in the West Point Glee Club and Cadet Chapel Choir at West Point. Wherever I served in the military, I tried to find some way to serve, either as a choir member or sometimes I was the organist."

Lough is working on a song inspired by his athletic career. He competed in the Modern Pentathlon in the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City. He and his two teammates almost won a medal, finishing fourth.

"It's an unlikely combination of horseback riding over jumps, fencing, pistol, shooting, swimming and cross country running," he said. "It turned out that I'm not really good at anything athletically. But I'm average or a little above average in lots of things athletically, and an Olympic event like that seems to be almost tailor made for someone like me."

He's approached his life the same way, "trying different things and combinations."

"To my delight ... I have a little bit of skill in (music) I can develop and actually make a contribution, and that's very fulfilling personally and professionally. ... It's very fulfilling spiritually as well, that some of the work that I'm doing is actually benefiting others and adding and enriching their worship experience."

From the Pastors Desk continued from p. 1

preachers and untold visitors gathered at Lovely Lane Meeting House.

John Wesley had sent Coke specifically to supervise the process and to consecrate Asbury as "general superintendent" (what is now termed Bishop) of the Methodists in America. Francis Asbury noted in his journal:

*Friday, December 24, 1784: ...It was agreed to form ourselves into an Episcopal Church, and to have superintendents, elders, and deacons. When the conference was seated, Dr. Coke and myself were unanimously elected to the superintendency of the Church, and my ordination followed ... We spent the whole week in conference, debating freely, and determining all things by a majority of votes... We were in great haste, and did much business in a little time.*

That "little time" lasted for ten days of debates, decisions, elections, and consensus. Not only was the Methodist Episcopal Church in America "born" (formalized), but 12 elders were fully ordained (elected), standards for ordination were set, the order of Sunday Service established, the liturgical guide agreed upon, and the Book of Common prayer adopted.

These ten days of Christmas marked the first formal conferencing of the Methodist Church, and is commonly referred to as the Christmas Conference, wherein December 24, 1784 is rooted and grounded in the life and history of every branch of Methodism that continues to exist today.

## Cooking with Pastor King: Optional Crab Cakes



Depending on which option you choose, before you begin, you will need to:  
**(1)** Peel green zucchini squash. Grate them with a cheese grater and absorb ALL of the moisture with cheesecloth, tea towels, or white paper towels. **OR**  
**(2)** Cook turkey necks and remove meat from the bones with a fork then cut long pieces with Kitchen shears. The striations mimic crabmeat.

### Ingredients:

- 1 large egg (optional)
- 1/4 c. mayonnaise *NOTE: If you leave out egg, increase mayo to 1/2 cup.*
- 1 TBS. chopped fresh parsley (or 2 tps. dried)
- 2 tsp. mustard
- 2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce (optional)
- 2 tsp. Old Bay seasoning (you may want to start with ONE tsp, depending on your taste).
- 1 tsp. fresh lemon juice (use bottled lemon juice or a fresh orange if need be)
- 1 pound "crab meat" (substitute 1 cup or 8 oz. of zucchini, turkey necks, canned tuna, canned salmon, or imitation crab)
- 2/3 cup "cracker crumbs" (I recommend French fried onions, but panko, Italian bread crumbs, even cornbread - any crumbled bread that suits your fancy). *NOTE: Make some extra "crumbs" to coat your cakes before you cook them.*
- 2 TBS. butter (optional)

Except for the "crab" and "crumbs," whisk all ingredients together in a bowl. If there is no raw egg in your mixture, give it a taste test. Layer the "crab" on top of the wet mixture. Layer the "crumbs" on top of the "crab."

*NOTE: Set aside extra crumbs to coat.*

With a rubber spatula (or large spoon), gently fold all the ingredients until blended. Do not OVER blend the ingredients.

Refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Preheat oven to 450 degrees Fahrenheit.

Scoop (or shape into patties) "crab cakes" on a greased or nonstick cooking sheet and bake for 10-15 minutes. Check after 10 minutes, then check to see when cakes have turned brown. An air fryer is great for cooking, also.



## Haitian migrants bring vitality to declining church

By the Rev. Gustavo Vasquez



A mural at the United Methodist Christ Ministry Center in San Diego illustrates part of the text of Matthew 25, the biblical basis of the center's ministry among immigrants who have crossed the nearby border. Still frame from video by Joey Butler, UM News.

One of the big differences between a traditional church and the ministry center model is the use of the building. In the traditional church model, members focus on their Sunday activities.

"Almost everything is around Sundays," Jenkins said. "If 90% of the time, energy and congregational resources are focused on a few hours during Sundays, the church is on its way to death. The ministry center is a seven-day church."

The decision to change the church ministry model affected attendance significantly. "In 2011 — the last Sunday that I preached in the old congregation — we had around 35 people in attendance. Now, during the pre-pandemic days, we had around 2,000 people a week," Jenkins said.

Even amid the pandemic, more than 1,000 people meet every week in the building. Sunday worship alone draws about 300 people to the 10 racially and denominationally diverse congregations hosted in the United Methodist Christ Ministry Center.

Migrant ministries are common in border areas. The former Christ United Methodist Church had a refugee assistance program that was revitalized and expanded under the new ministerial model.

"For more than 20 years, we have been in love with ministry among migrants. My estimation is that we have helped around 10,000 migrants in 20 years," Jenkins said.

In 2009, a group of 22 Haitian migrants arrived at the center seeking shelter. They stayed in rooms that were prepared in the building, then they started worshiping on Sunday nights because that was a time when the chapel was empty.

"That's not empty anymore," Jenkins said. "They came to our Sunday worship, with their wonderful Caribbean-rhythm gospel music, and we doubled our attendance, just opening our arms, our hearts, our minds and our pockets to receive them."

The earthquake that struck Haiti in 2010 drove many people seeking refuge to the U.S. History repeated itself with another deadly earthquake in Haiti early this year, and the new refugees to the U.S. knew about the Haitian United Methodist congregation and the support it offered. More than 300 took shelter at the ministry center and became part of the new Haitian United Methodist Church.

In 2011, about 46,000 Haitian migrants went from the U.S. to Brazil seeking job opportunities, drawn by construction companies looking for cheap labor to support work related to the soccer World Cup and the Olympic Games.

In 2016, after the Olympics, Brazil became politically unstable. A presidential impeachment occurred, the economy was hit and the new political administration kicked out the Haitian migrants.

Many of the migrants have been trying to return to the U.S. Last year, more than 6,000 Haitian migrants were on the border in Tijuana, waiting for asylum, according to the Asociación de Defensa de los Migrantes Haitianos (Haitian Immigrants Advocacy Association).

At the beginning of this century, the Rev. Bill Jenkins did not imagine that he would see a deep transformational process in the congregation that he was starting to serve.

Jenkins had been appointed pastor of Christ United Methodist Church in 1999 in San Diego, and for 12 years, he had worked hard to revitalize a declining church.

"The first six years, we tried to grow the church in the old Billy Graham way: revivals, knocking on doors and all of that. The harder that we worked, the smaller the church got," he said.

In 2005, he told the congregation, "If we don't do something different, you know what could happen: The church will be closed, the property sold, and you know that movie."

Jenkins shared with local and conference leaders a proposal for a different church model, focused on community ministries and services. Based on the biblical passage in Matthew 25, about the final judgment and the importance of caring for those in need, he proposed changing the traditional congregation model into a ministry center.

"I wanted to let them understand that it would be such a great loss if we just closed the church and sold the property," Jenkins said.

*Continued on p.7*

Haitian Migrants continued from p. 6

“On Thanksgiving Day, the border was closed for Haitians, and around 6,000 were allowed to cross, and we received 5,000 of them. Another 40,000 remain somewhere out of the borders, most of them in Mexico but also in Central and South America,” Jenkins said.

In 2021, after the Biden administration reactivated the regular asylum process, new groups of Haitian migrants crossed the border and started sleeping on the streets of San Diego.

“We received a phone call telling us what was happening, and we went looking for them in a church van driving around downtown,” Jenkins said. “When they saw the van that says Haitian United Methodist Church, they said that they saw Jesus.

“We brought a group of them here, and the next day we received another group, and the next day another one. Between June (and) Thanksgiving, we received around 5,000 Haitian migrants here.”

The city’s fire department warned the Christ Ministry Center that the building could not accommodate so many families for safety reasons, so the center started finding other places to relocate people.

The center bought a house in front of the building, and churches and houses of worship from other religions opened places for about 150 people.

“Now we are renting more places through receiving some funding from international organizations, other churches, individuals (and) foundations, who believe in the ministry of welcoming the stranger,” Jenkins said.

Ronald Fildor, 43, is from Cap-Haitien. He left his country in 2014 and crossed 10 borders (Brazil, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala and Mexico) to arrive in the United States.

“I arrived here in August with my wife and two daughters, after many difficulties,” he said. He was robbed several times and found people who had been murdered on the journey, he said.

Fildor and his family attended a church in Haiti and now have been in the Christ Center since August. They attend Exodus United Methodist Church, a Haitian congregation that operates in the center and is led by the Rev. Donald Owens. The pastor and the people of the center are their “only family,” Fildor said.

Most of the migrants need to stay 48 to 72 hours in shelters until they can travel to meet family or friends. About 10% don’t have a place to stay and need more time to find ways to incorporate into communities.

“We have been providing long-term care from six months to two years with the support of other organizations and churches,” Jenkins said. “It is a miracle to us to see how a dying small congregation has been able to help more than 10,000 people.”



# Church Funnies



## Pastor found 'treasures' in depression battle

By Sam Hodges



The Rev. Juanita Rasmus, co-pastor of St. John's United Methodist Church in Houston, is sharing lessons she learned from her experience with major depression. She's written a book, given workshops and done a TED Talk. Rasmus' five-hour "Learning to Be: Immersive" event, to be held in person and online, will occur Nov. 20. Photo courtesy of the Rev. Juanita Rasmus.

"Juanita's story has connecting points for many different types of people," Bunch said. "She even has different labels for her experience — 'depression,' 'exhaustion,' 'nervous breakdown,' 'dark night of the soul.' All of it was a part of her experience."

Rasmus is 60 now, and remains co-pastor at St. John's United Methodist with her husband, the Rev. Rudy Rasmus, himself a published author and popular speaker on church issues. They assumed leadership of a tiny, elderly congregation in 1992, and soon had it growing by 500 members a year.

Currently, St. John's membership is almost 11,000, with average attendance (in person and online) at about 2,500, according to the 2021 Texas Conference Journal.

Along with being an urban megachurch, St. John's Downtown (as it is locally known) is recognized for community outreach, working with partner nonprofits to address food insecurity and provide low-cost housing.

In the early days, Juanita and Rudy Rasmus were trying to lead their growing congregation with just one other staff member. Usually, one of them was at a church meeting at night, so breakfast — when the family was all together — was a cherished time and one the parents sought to make special.

Juanita Rasmus recalls that on Aug. 27, 1999 — a Friday — she served their daughters heart-shaped pancakes and apple cider in wine glasses. When the meal ended, Rudy said he would drive the girls to school — an offer Juanita gladly accepted.

"That way I could put my makeup on in the bathroom mirror instead of the rearview mirror," she said.

But as Juanita Rasmus looked in the mirror a bad feeling gripped her, body and soul.

"It kind of felt like the flu," she said. "I could literally feel the nerves in my body were frayed."

Rasmus called the church and postponed her morning appointments, then went back to bed. A short while later, feeling worse, she re-dialed the church and said she wasn't coming in that day and didn't know when she'd be back.

What ensued was a lengthy, incapacitating bout with the blues and fatigue. Rasmus' physician sent her on to a psychiatrist, who diagnosed her as having a major depressive episode.

"My grandmother would have called it a nervous breakdown," Rasmus said.

Roughly three years would pass before Rasmus was able to return to full duties at St. John's, and she's quick to acknowledge that depression is not something she's licked — but rather learned to deal with.

Her recovery has included taking medication, but also many hours of talk therapy. She became deeply invested in lectio divina (spiritual reading, prayer and meditation), as well as the self-understanding tool called the Enneagram. The latter helped her recognize that — despite all her public speaking — she was fundamentally an introvert.

Early in her depression, Rasmus felt God assuring her that good would come out of what she was going through. Later she would connect that communication with Isaiah 45:3: "And I will give thee the treasures of darkness . . ."

*Continued on p. 9*

*Depression continued from p. 8*

Rasmus considers one of those treasures a new understanding of God.

"I had this very punitive, judge-oriented image of God," she said. "For me, God was a cross between Judge Judy and Santa Claus."

Rasmus would come to embrace the description of God offered by James Weldon Johnson in his poem "The Creation" — "Like a mammy bending over her baby" — and let go of what had been a desperate need to fulfill others' expectations, especially in a church setting.

"I was a performance addict, addicted to doing," Rasmus said. "For me the church was like a crack house, and I was a crack addict."

Eventually Rasmus reentered church life, fortified by a better understanding and strengthened spiritually by practicing the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius, particularly the Daily Examen.

Meanwhile, Rasmus committed to self-care, drawing boundaries around work, making time for retreats and gardening, and even fulfilling a childhood dream of skydiving.

At St. John's, she began to share her story while teaching and preaching, and found crucial support from the congregation's recovery community.

"One of the things they taught me was transparency and that sharing your story could help others," she said.

Through the years, she and Bunch, the InterVarsity editor, would run into one another at conferences. Bunch pushed for a book.

"I heard the wisdom she had to offer, appreciated her presence and thought her voice was needed," Bunch said. "She showed me pieces of writing from time to time, and we kept talking. Finally, the time came when a book outline came together for her, and I contracted 'Learning to Be.'"

The book's publication — smack in the middle of the pandemic — yielded a good bit of press coverage, as well as podcast interviews. One was with Nathan Foster, director of community life for the Christian resources center Renovaré, with which Rasmus is affiliated.

"I think the world of Juanita," Foster said. "She's an amazing person with a compelling story. I believe many will find her upcoming event to be extremely helpful."

The Nov. 20 immersive will draw from the book, while also addressing the emotional challenges brought on by COVID-19.

Rasmus calls the event an occasion for "spiritual reorientation," and she can't wait to offer solace and point the way for those with full-blown depression or even low-grade malaise.

"The time is long gone for just showing up in the world without a desire, without recognizing that our longing and discontent are ways the spirit invites us to live our most abundant life."

### Ask the UMC: What names can we use for God?



The names we use for God both reflect and shape how we think about God. They help us get to know God and introduce others to God. Each name points to a quality that helps us better understand the Holy One.

Early biblical writers, drawing from human experience, use a variety of terms to express their understanding of God. They speak of God as shepherd, judge, rock, light, warrior, and fortress. In Isaiah, we see images of God as a woman in labor (Isaiah 42:14), a woman giving birth (Isaiah 46:3-4), a loving mother (Isaiah 49:15). Luke portrays God as a woman searching for a lost coin (Luke 15:8-10).

United Methodists are encouraged to use "diverse biblical images and titles for God, including masculine/feminine metaphors."

However, at two important events, baptism and ordination, United Methodists exclusively use "Father, Son and Holy Spirit" for the Trinity. Baptism and ordination are key moments of initiation in the lives of Christian individuals. For us and our ecumenical partners, this standard helps us recognize each other's baptisms and ordinations.

But on nearly all other occasions, we are encouraged to name God with the many names provided in Scripture and across the course of Christian tradition.

Despite our efforts, we realize that our language falls short in our attempts to describe God. Our language can never contain or give a comprehensive description of God. The names we choose suggest attributes of God, but cannot completely express God's infinite, divine mystery.

"So then, what name shall we use for God?" asks Rev. F. Belton Joyner Jr., United Methodist pastor and author. "When Moses asked that exact question, God answered, 'I AM WHO I AM.' In fact, God said, 'This is my name forever' (Exodus 3:13-15)."

*“It is Christmas  
every time you let  
God love others  
through you...yes,  
it is Christmas  
every time you  
smile at your  
brother and offer  
him your hand.”*

**—MOTHER TERESA**



### How Can I Give?

**Online:** You can now give online through Emmanuel's website at [www.eumcbeltsville.com/giving](http://www.eumcbeltsville.com/giving) or scan the QR Code below. This is a great way to keep up with your giving if you are out of town, are sick or if you can't come to church.

**Through the Mail:** You can mail your offering to the church. The address is 11416 Cedar Lane, Beltsville, MD 20705.



## HAPPY DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1. Motunriyo Oluwafemi
3. Ann Rowland
4. Gretchen Buchen
13. Cheryl Grays
15. Becky Cavallo, Michael McNealy
26. Alexandra Scotland
30. Kim Hiner, Maggie Leatherman

### Christian Love and Sympathy To:

the family and friends of Beverly Ward  
the family and friends of Lorna Marsales  
the family and friends of Sharon Wilson (friend of Sonia Kassambara)

### CAN YOU HELP?

Share your talents at Emmanuel by sharing the Word as a Scripture Reader during our Sunday Zoom Service! Help for a single Sunday or choose several. You choose how many Sundays you are able to help. Just email the office at [office@eumcbeltsville.com](mailto:office@eumcbeltsville.com) and they will let you know which weeks are available! No experience needed! We will train you on the job!

### Christmas Gift Suggestions:

- To your enemy - forgiveness.
- To an opponent - tolerance.
- To a friend - your heart.
- To a customer - service.
- To all - charity.
- To a child - a good example.
- To yourself - respect.



"I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand." John 10:28 ESV

### Please pray for our sick and shut in

- Homebound
- Harry Cottman
- Norma Hall
- Carolyn Scarcia
- Dottie Gilbert
- Out of state
- Lil Mizzer



Keep up with the all the latest info on our Facebook page  
[www.facebook.com/groups/EUMCBeltsville](http://www.facebook.com/groups/EUMCBeltsville)



### Virtual Worship at Emmanuel!

Join us on Sunday mornings in virtual worship through Zoom. Join us for 30 minutes of fellowship from 9:30-10 am followed by worship at 10. Use this link:

<https://zoom.us/j/97839889289?pwd=YzUxZjJKTzUybTJnZEt4UC9qTkI4QT09>

or go to [zoom.us](http://zoom.us) and click join a meeting.

The meeting number is 978 3988 9289. The Password is EUMC

You can call in on any telephone (cell or landline) at 1-301-715-8592

If you're calling on the telephone the information is

Meeting ID: 978 3988 9289 Passcode: 479360