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Happy
Thanksgiving!

From
The Lamplighter

The Newsletter of Emmanuel United Methodist Church!



The Lamplighter

The Newsletter of Emmanuel United Methodist Church!

November

Be present.
Let the day flow with grace.
Expect nothing. Give thanks.
Surrender. Be open.
Speak only kindness.
Impart only love.
Never forget you're not alone.
Give so you may receive.
See goodness in others. mary davis

NOVEMBER 2020

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Got
News?

Do you have something
for our newsletter? Send
items to the editor,
Rick Bergmann at
lamplighter@eumcbeltsville.com

From the Pastor's Desk



We are giving the Pastor the month of November off from the Lamplighter this year. She will be back next month with a brand new message for you to read and enjoy. As you know she has been on sabbatical and we figured that she could use the break because writing is an exhausting activity. We hope she has enjoyed her time off and we look forward to reading her words next month.
 Sincerely,
 Rick Bergmann
 Editor

HOLY BIBLE

6 Random Facts about November

Misnumbered Month

The name 'November' derived from the latin word novem means nine. It should have been the ninth month of the year. However, thanks to January and February which were added to the calendar some 2700 years ago, November is now the 11th guy in the 12 member team.

No mention of November in any of Shakespeare's Works

After 37 plays and 154 sonnets, the greatest writer in English literature did not once mention the month of 'November' in any of his works.

No Shave November a.k.a 'Movember'

November is the month dedicated for moustaches and beards. It is that time of the year for men to let their hair grow wild and free. This is done to raise awareness of men's health issues like prostate and testicular cancer.

It is Football Time

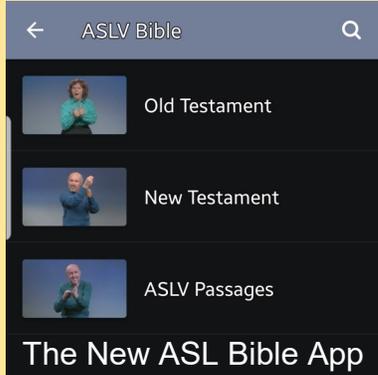
American football is the main sport watched in the United States during this month.

Best Time of the Year to Express Love

According to a recent research, November is considered to be the best time of the year to express love. It is during this month that a majority of Spaniards are more likely to tweet "Te amo" which means "I love you."

It's the Meme Month of the Year!

November, according to statistics from social media sites sees the largest amount of memes posted and shared on the internet than any other month.



American Sign Language (ASL) Bible Now Available

By Rev. Leo Yates, Jr.

The internet has brought new options in accessibility for e-books to phones and tablets for people who prefer the option. A new option is now fully available for Deaf and hard-of-hearing people through Deaf Missions. This non-profit Christian organization provides support, advocacy, and resources for Deaf, hard-of-hearing, and hearing people. They have recently released the ASL Bible. Named ASLV (American Sign Language Version), this video-accessible version offers Deaf and hard-of-hearing users the option to view the Bible, as opposed to reading it, in their own language. This not only better encourages Deaf and hard-of-hearing to engage in studying Scripture, it

reduces misunderstandings and misinterpretations.

The ASLV project was created with the assistance of 53 Deaf translators over a period of thirty-eight years. Similar to the online Bible text, the ASLV video library is available online on the Deaf Mission website and via an app. And it's free!

Billy Deters, the president of the United Methodist Congress of the Deaf, a caucus representing and supporting Deaf, hard-of-hearing, and Deafblind persons, shared his excitement that the ASLV is now complete and feels it will better invite Deaf and hard-of-hearing persons to know the Bible. Deaf missionary and member of Lovers Lane United Methodist Church Esther Choi shared, "Deaf people need access in their own language, because for many Deaf and hard-of-hearing people, English is their second language. An ASL version helps them to better understand the Word of God." Alma Andrews, a Deaf mother and member of Magothy United Methodist Church of the Deaf, who comes from an all-Deaf family (Deaf parents and Deaf siblings) says, "this will help both Deaf families and others, for whom ASL is their primary language, better understand the Bible." Deaf advocate and trainer in human services, Cindy Blair explains, "I have to read the sentences over and over in order to absorb Scripture where viewing it in my first language helps me to better understand it right away." "Seeing the body language, facial expressions and signs of ASL, this helps Deaf people to comprehend it better," says Bryan Branson, president of the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Ministries Committee of Global Ministries.

The ASLV will be welcomed by some sign language interpreters who are new to interpreting in faith settings. Preparation is the norm for interpreters, wherein they read, analyze and practice signing the Scripture (and other parts of the service) before worship. Many interpreters shy away from interpreting worship because they do not wish to sign God's Word incorrectly. By having immediate access to an ASL version of the Bible may provide them with confidence for how to sign/interpret Scripture. Bishop Peggy Johnson, former pastor of Christ Church of the Deaf, wishes she had this thirty years ago. "I remember Deaf people weeping when they first began viewing the videos (on VHS). It sure made Bible study way more interesting! What a gift. I'm so glad it's completed."

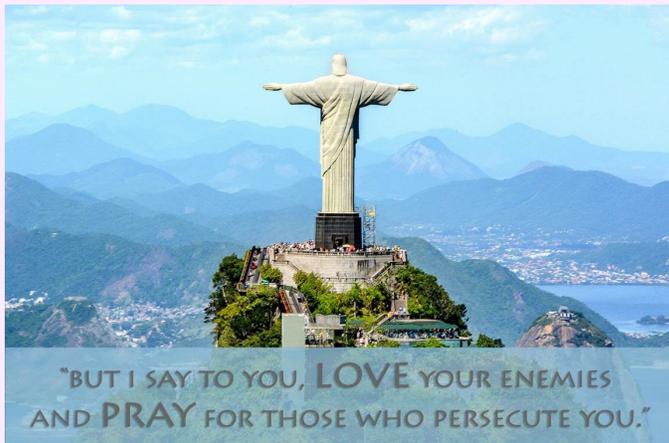
The ASLV raises Deaf awareness even further. In fact, Forbes magazine indicated that ASL is the third most-studied language being outnumbered only by Spanish and French. With the ASLV, what a great option to raise interest in ASL by showing the ASL version of Scripture during worship, especially for many churches who are currently live-streaming their worship services. The videos can be downloaded as well.

Download the app at <https://www.deafmissions.com/app>

Access to the ASLV at <https://www.deafmissions.com/aslv2020/>



How do we love our enemies?



A view of the statue "Christ the Redeemer" in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Scripture is Matthew 5:44. Photo by Jose Guertzenstein, courtesy of Pixabay; graphic by Laurens Glass, United Methodist Communications.

Many Christians struggle with this question. As followers of Christ, we are called to love our enemies. We are to care for, pray for, provide for and hope the best for everyone, and not wish ill upon anyone, including our enemies.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus instructs us how to treat our enemies: Love them as God loves them.

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect." (Matthew 5:43-48)

John Wesley wrote several sermons on the Sermon on the Mount. In Sermon 23, he described Jesus' call to love our enemies:

Love your enemies. See that you bear a tender good-will to those who are most bitter of spirit against you; who wish you all manner of evil.

Bless them that curse you. Are there any whose bitterness of spirit breaks forth in bitter words? Who are continually cursing and reproaching you when you are present, and "saying all evil against you" when absent? So much the rather do you bless: In conversing with them use all mildness and softness of language. Reprove them, by repeating a better lesson before them; by showing them how they ought to have spoken. And, in speaking of them, say all the good you can, without violating the rules of truth and justice.

Do good to them that hate you. Let your actions show, that you are as real in love as they in hatred. Return good for evil. 'Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.'

If you can do nothing more, at least '**pray for them that spitefully use you and persecute you.**' You can never be disabled from doing this; nor can all their malice or violence hinder you.

This radical love, agape love, is hard! It requires action, not just a general sense of goodwill or affection. How can you do it? You might try starting with this blessing exercise, including a blessing of enemies. And you might begin cultivating habits of hospitality that intentionally seek to include enemies, not just friends and associates, where you can do so safely.

In our increasingly polarizing world, loving enemies is also increasingly condemned by many. So in every step we take on this journey of love, we must especially rely on the grace, mercy, wisdom, and love of God. When we do, we know we always find them reliable!

Article originally posted on umc.org

Who is my enemy?

The term "enemy" in English comes from the word "inimicus" in Latin, a word whose roots (in + amicus) mean "not a friend." All of us have people with whom we realize, for all kinds of different reasons, we will not become or remain friends. We may not share enough common values, or the values we hold most tightly put us in conflict with each other, a conflict neither of us see a way to resolve.

Though we may not be able to be friends, our enemies are also beloved creatures of God. When we love our enemies, rather than hate them, we see them and behave toward them as God does. They may remain our enemies and may never be our friends. But they are loved as Christ loves us and gave himself for us, friend and enemy alike.



Remembering those we lost

November 1, 2020 is All Saint's Day, a day when we remember our members and friends that we have lost this year. *Please keep and carry these precious people in their sadness and loss. Cover them with your great wings of love, give their weary hearts rest and their minds sound sleep. Lord, lift their eyes so that they may catch a glimpse of eternity, and be comforted by the promise of heaven.*



Bob Hiner
January 11



Maxine Riggleman
February 13



Edith Marcus
April 4



Doris Wray
April 8



Moises Valladares
April 19



Maria Julia Valladares
May 10



Juan Valladares
May 24



Brian Crotti
May 29



Doris Shirey
May 30



Susan Staton
June 18



Jordan Levine
June 21



Veteran's Day 2020

Submitted by Jane Grays

Originally posted on <https://www.military.com/veterans-day>

You already know why Veterans Day is important. You are the service members, veterans or family and friends of veterans who stay up-to-date on military news, pay, benefits, fitness and veteran jobs.

Veterans Day is a time for us to pay our respects to those who have served. For one day, we stand united in respect for you, our veterans. This holiday started as a day to reflect upon the heroism of those who died in our country's service and was originally called Armistice Day. It fell on Nov. 11 because that is the anniversary of the signing of the Armistice that ended World War I. However, in 1954, the holiday was changed to "Veterans Day" in order to account for all veterans in all wars.

We celebrate and honor America's veterans for their patriotism, love of country and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good. What do you need to know about celebrating Veterans Day? Here's some more information.

Is Veterans Day on the same day every year?

When first celebrated as Armistice Day, the day marked the end of World War I, formally recognized on the "11th hour, of the 11th day, of the 11th month" in 1918.

Today we continue to celebrate the day as Veterans Day, still recognizing the original tie with November 11. That means Veterans Day is on the same day every year -- November 11 -- regardless of on which day of the week it falls. When the date falls on a Saturday or Sunday, government officials or businesses may recognize it on both the official day and the following Monday.

Is Veterans Day a federal holiday?

Veterans Day is a federal holiday, a bank holiday and, in most states, a state holiday. That means that federal employees, including military members, are typically given the day off and, in most states, state workers are as well.

Do schools close on Veterans Day?

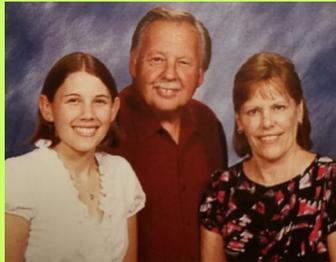
Many schools do close on Veterans Day, but whether they do so is typically not a one-size-fits-all decision. Public school holidays are set by the local school board, while private school holidays are set by private officials. State and private school college holidays are set much the same way. Check with your local school to confirm their calendar.



WE ARE THE CHURCH



This month's member is Linda Hiner



Linda Hiner (R) with her late husband Bob and youngest daughter Jaime.

How long have you been a member of Emmanuel?

I transferred my membership to Emmanuel in 1980 from Mt. Vernon Methodist Church in D.C. where I attended growing up.

Who was the Pastor when you began attending Emmanuel?

The pastor at the time I joined was Susan Morrison

What is your fondest memory of being a member?

My fondest memories are my two daughters growing up in the church attending Sunday School and participating in the holiday activities (especially the Halloween parties when Gary and Olivia Heath were involved in the youth group). Also, the fun trips they took to Camp Harmison and West River.

What are some of the ministries you have been involved in over the years?

During my years at Emmanuel, I have taught Sunday School for pre-K and K, served on Nominations and Hospitality Committees and currently serve as co-facilitator on the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance support group.

What is your favorite thing about Emmanuel?

The closeness of the church family and worshiping with the same people year after year are my favorite things at Emmanuel.

What is your favorite scripture or Bible verse?

Romans 15:13 is a favorite bible verse but many others are special also.

Anything else you would like to say?

Thanks to Kathryn for her wonderful music on ZOOM (with accompaniment). Everyone has done a great job allowing our worship to continue during this time.

Blessing of the Animals

*But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds in the sky, and they will tell you.
-Job 12:7*

Animal blessing is a special ceremony conducted in remembrance of St. Francis of Assisi's love for all creatures. St. Francis considered animals to be his brothers and sisters, saying, "All praise to you, Oh Lord, for all these brother and sister creatures." For many people, a pet is a member of the family. Animals experience emotions such as happiness, love, fear, or loneliness just like people do. Therefore, they build close emotional bonds with human beings.

Animal blessing is an annual tradition at Emmanuel United Methodist Church, and 2020 will be no exception; it will just be a little different. Emmanuel's Blessing of the Animals is going virtual through Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85125785976?pwd=bExodVh2SE5XckxGVjB3N3A0ZFd2UT09>. You and your pets can join us virtually on November 22 at 11:30 am. You will need to register in advance by going to <https://forms.gle/h9cCen2Z8rrUAcky5>. You can register to have your pet blessed, or if you have had a pet pass away this year, you can register to have them included in the prayer for animals. If you have any questions, please contact the office at 301.937.7114 or office@eumcbeltsville.com.



Easy ways to share gratitude this Thanksgiving



Thanksgiving Day elicits a bounty of wonderful memories for many people in the U.S. The crisp air. The smell of a turkey roasting and a pumpkin pie baking. The sound of a cheering crowd at a football game. All these can create warm feelings during this special time of year.

While the Thanksgiving holiday is celebrated on the fourth Thursday in November in the U.S., thanking God for our blessings is a spiritual discipline that should not be limited to a single day. Along with expanding our waistlines, our preparation for and celebration of the holiday can be the impetus toward growing an attitude of gratitude that will carry over into the rest of the year. In

his commentary on 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, John Wesley writes, "Thanksgiving is inseparable from true prayer; it is almost essentially connected with it." Giving thanks is as essential to our spiritual growth as prayer, which 1 Thessalonians calls us to do continually. These creative ideas will help us get started this Thanksgiving.

- **Fill a family Thanksgiving box:** As part of your Thanksgiving preparation, create a Thanksgiving Box. Each day family members write on slips of paper something for which they are thankful that day and place them in the decorated box. The box will make a nice Thanksgiving table centerpiece, and when opened, a way to remember how blessed we are every day. You could add to it all year too of course.
- **Serve someone:** In the weeks leading up to Thanksgiving, many agencies serving those in need expand their work. Food banks, churches, and other service organizations supply meals to the hungry on Thanksgiving. Centenary United Methodist Church in Los Angeles holds a sleepover for their youth called the "turkey lock-in." On the night before Thanksgiving the youth prepare, and the next day, deliver meals to people in the community who will be alone on Thanksgiving. Ask your pastor for suggestions of places near you to serve or donate.
- **Take time for quiet reflection:** As the big day approaches, things get busier. Set aside some time each day to say thank you to God for all he has provided. "A Morning Prayer of Thanksgiving" by The Rev. Dr. LaGretta Bjorn is a great start.
- **Make a Thanksgiving frame:** As you and your family reflect on those things for which you are thankful, compile a list. A few days before Thanksgiving, neatly transfer the list onto a piece of paper you can then insert into a frame for a beautiful expression of gratitude to decorate your home.
- **Invite someone new to dinner:** Athens First United Methodist Church invites international students from the University of Georgia to spend Thanksgiving with their members. The students enjoy spending time away from campus and in family homes. Explore ways to invite those who may be alone or far from family to celebrate with you on the holiday.
- **Share blessings together:** When gathered around the table, many families will ask guests to share something for which they are thankful. In Thanksgiving Celebrations for the Home, MaryJane Pierce Norton suggests creating a list together, such as foods each person enjoys. Then together offer "thanks for the Earth and all with which we are blessed in the world God created."
- **Send cards to those we miss:** Remember those who are not able to be with you this year by making or purchasing cards for them. "On Thanksgiving Day," Norton writes, "invite all who are gathered in your home to sign and/or write a note on the cards to those who are missing." Mail them the next day to share the gratitude.
- **Create a keepsake of thanks:** When you take that group photo around the table or in front of the fireplace, record not only the names of those in attendance, but also something for which each person is thankful. This will be a great item to revisit when everyone gathers again next year. See Thanksgiving Celebrations for the Home for more ideas of celebrating gratitude together.
- **Include children:** Involve the children celebrating with you by sharing the Child's Thanksgiving Prayer. Use this prayer at the kids' table as a grace or an after meal blessing, having one of the older children lead. Then encourage the kids to write their own Thanksgiving prayers, with which they could lead the adults in prayer later in the day.
- **Voice your gratitude:** If your family is musical, consider a Thanksgiving sing-a-long, as you might do with Christmas carols. Dean McIntyre offers Hymns for Thanksgiving Day from our United Methodist Hymnal and Songbooks that would be a great way to celebrate. He also offers a quiz of hymns with lines about thanksgiving in Musical Thanksgiving. Make a game out of who can guess the most.

However you can, find ways to give thanks to God for all of his blessings throughout your celebration this year. Instill the habit of an attitude of gratitude, which will extend far beyond Thanksgiving Day.

-CHURCH- & POLITICS



Since the Church's inception, Methodists have been actively involved in social and political matters in order to build a more peaceful and just world. Graphic by Laurens Glass, United Methodist Communications.

Is The United Methodist Church involved in politics?

from UMC.org

The people called Methodists have been actively involved in social and political matters from their founding in 18th century England. Methodists were among the primary advocates for the abolition of slavery across the British Empire, the organization of labor unions to protect workers from dangerous working conditions, the ending of the debtors prison system, and the creation of new systems of care for poor children. Given this heritage, Methodists have continued to advocate for other social or political issues since that time - women's suffrage, temperance, civil rights, health care and care for the environment, to name a few.

Today our United Methodist Social Creed and Social Principles express our commitment to fully participate in building a more peaceful and just world.

Should United Methodists be involved in politics?

The United Methodist Church acknowledges that we are responsible to God for our social, economic and political life. The Church regards political participation as the privilege and responsibility of citizens.

The Church asserts, "Scripture recognizes that faithfulness to God requires political engagement by the people of God" (Church-Government Relations). "The strength of a political system depends upon the full and willing participation of its citizens. The church should continually exert a strong ethical influence upon the state, supporting policies and programs deemed to be just and opposing policies and programs that are unjust" (The Political Community).

United Methodists rely on the same world-wide Social Principles and Resolutions for guidance about the interaction of church and politics. How the Church is engaged in politics varies across the regions where The United Methodist Church is present. Its response to the state will look quite different in the United States, the Philippines, Germany, Russia or Côte d'Ivoire

What about separation of church and state?

The United Methodist Church also affirms an appropriate separation of church and state. United Methodists reject undue control or interference by either religious bodies or the state in the affairs of the other. "Separation of church and state means no organic union of the two, but it does permit interaction"

Does the UMC have a lobbying office in Washington DC?

The General Board of Church and Society, the church's advocacy agency for issues of justice, equality and peace, has offices on Capitol Hill in Washington and at the Church Center for the United Nations in New York City.

Church and Society is dedicated to implementing the Social Principles by educating, equipping and organizing United Methodists to faithfully advocate for the Church's positions. The activities of Church and Society are advocacy, not lobbying.

The agency communicates the denomination's position on more than 30 social issues with policymakers and church and national leaders, with the mission of transforming the world.

Does the General Board of Church and Society represent me or my church in political issues?

Only the General Conference speaks for The United Methodist Church. Church and Society implements the policies and resolutions adopted by the General Conference. Their role is to educate and equip United Methodists to think through and act on issues from a faith perspective.

What can I do if I disagree with The UMC's position on an issue?

The Church recognizes that individual members may hold varying views on social and political concerns. The Church notes in the Book of Resolutions, "You may find that your denomination's policies give you more 'food for thought.' Maybe you will agree with the denomination's position. On the other hand, you may disagree."

Continued on page 9



Bishop Warner Brown

Bishop Warner Brown assigned as interim bishop of Sierra Leone Annual Conference

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Council of Bishops (COB) has assigned former president of the Council retired Bishop Warner Brown as the interim bishop for the Sierra Leone Area of The United Methodist Church following the death of Bishop John Yambasu who died on August 16.

Current COB President Bishop Cynthia Fierro Harvey made the announcement today after the full Council voted to approve the recommendation from the West Africa College of Bishops as per Paragraph 407 of the 2016 Book of Discipline. The West Africa Central Conference Committee on Episcopacy and the Sierra Leone Annual Conference Committee on Episcopacy were also consulted.

Bishop Brown will assume the interim responsibility of episcopal oversight for Sierra Leone Annual Conference until the election of a new bishop following the 2020 General Conference that is expected to take place in the fall of 2021.

“We continue to grieve the unexpected and tragic death of Bishop John K. Yambasu and continue to pray for the people of Sierra Leone and most especially for the Yambasu family,” Bishop Harvey said.

Bishop Harvey noted that she has been in close communication with Bishop Benjamin Boni, the president of the West Africa College, as they balance the sense of urgency to recommend an interim and at the same time provide needed space for grief for the Conference and for the family.

“During this time, we have consulted with leaders of the Sierra Leone Cabinet, Committee on Episcopacy and the West Africa Committee on Episcopacy. In addition, we have sought the wisdom of many who have knowledge of the current setting who have provided great wisdom that will be helpful during this in between time,” Bishop Harvey said.

The pandemic presents many challenges to the assignment namely the difficulty and impossibility of safe travel to Sierra Leone in addition to the many restrictions that are in place across the United Methodist connection.

Most of the oversight by Bishop Brown will be virtual until it is safe to travel to Sierra Leone. COB Communications Office will assist in providing connectivity by utilizing the best virtual platforms available. Several UMC boards and agencies, including United Methodist Communications, GCFA and Global Ministries, have agreed to step in and assist.

Bishop Harvey described Bishop Brown’s collegial style and his bridge-building gift as essential for this role. “He is a coach, teacher and mentor at the core, which will make his work with the Cabinet and local leaders extremely important,” she said.

Bishop Brown served as president of the Council of Bishops from 2014 to 2016, just before he retired. Rev. Anthony G. Diah, chair of the West Africa Central Conference Committee on Episcopacy, Mrs. Anne Koroma, chair of the Sierra Leone Committee on Episcopacy, and Rev. Francis Charley, dean of the Sierra Leone Conference Cabinet welcomed the assignment of Bishop Brown and offered to provide whatever support is needed during this time.

APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE!

The Pastor is available for appointments on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Email office@eumcbeltsville.com or call 301.937.7114 to make arrangements.

Thank you to Pastor Lenora, Doug Galloway, Roy White, Rick Bergmann, and Deaconess Patricia Marks for helping with worship while the Pastor was on sabbatical and with Laity Sunday on October 18.



Attention Members of Emmanuel, If you are in need of food and were not able to make it during our normal distribution times you can contact Mary Ann Vaughan at mvaughan@ipcmclean.org to set up a time to pick some up.

Sincerely, The Food Ministry



Thank you!

Church and politics continued from p. 7

If you disagree with the Church's position, start by talking with your pastor. United Methodist members who feel strongly about an issue and seek to change a current statement or policy may petition General Conference to request action.

Why do the Church's social statements and government policies seem so far apart on some issues?

Our 2016 Book of Resolutions addresses this question, beginning on p. 23. "The United Methodist Church membership extends beyond the U.S. boundaries; it is global. So, in many cases we are speaking to, from, or with more than one national government. Further, the Christian church must never be a mirror image of any government, whether Democrat or Republican, totalitarian or democratic. We know that Christians are obligated to be responsible and participating citizens under any governmental system, but that response and participation is to be interpreted in light of our faith.

"As the Social Principles state, 'Our allegiance to God takes precedence over our allegiance to any state' (§ 164). And our church's public witness is first and foremost to be judged by God by whether it supports justice, love, and mercy, particularly for the poor and powerless."

Does The UMC in the U.S. support or contribute to any candidate or political party?

No. This is a prohibited activity under U.S. non-profit law for churches and other charitable organizations. Churches and religious organizations qualify for exemption from federal income tax and are generally eligible to receive tax-deductible contributions. Churches may jeopardize or even lose this status if they engage in "political campaign activity." According to the IRS, "all section 501(c)(3) organizations are absolutely prohibited from directly or indirectly participating in, or intervening in, any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for elective public office. Contributions to political campaign funds or public statements of position (verbal or written) made on behalf of the organization in favor of or in opposition to any candidate for public office clearly violate the prohibition against political campaign activity. Violating this prohibition may result in denial or revocation of tax-exempt status and the imposition of certain excise taxes."

Can churches be politically active without jeopardizing their tax exempt status?

In the United States, churches may be wary of engaging in the electoral process out of concern for the church's tax exempt status.

Religious organizations can safeguard the right to vote, educate communities on issues and candidates, and encourage participation in the electoral process when done in a non-partisan manner. Church and Society's resource for local churches, *Creating Change Together: A Toolkit for Faithful Civic Engagement*, lists activities a church can and cannot do.

The IRS clarifies political activities which may jeopardize a church's tax exempt status. One is participating in the political campaigns of candidates for public office. Another is spending a substantial portion of time or resources to influence legislation. The "substantial portion" discernment is made by the IRS on a case by case basis.

The IRS considers a number of key factors in determining whether an activity or communication risks violating prohibitions against political campaign intervention.

The UMC believes that churches have the "right and the duty to speak and act corporately on those matters of public policy that involve basic moral or ethical issues and questions. ... The attempt to influence the information and execution of public policy at all levels of government is often the most effective means available to churches to keep before humanity the ideal of a society in which power and order are made to serve the ends of justice and freedom for all people."

Can church property be used for political rallies, voter drives, or candidate events?

There are multiple issues that inform whether or how church property may be used for such events. An IRS webinar offers guidance on these types of activities by charitable organizations.

Charitable organizations may conduct nonpartisan activities that educate and encourage people to participate in the electoral process.

Continued on page 10

Church and politics continued from page 9

Congregations can:

- discuss moral and public policy issues,
- urge congregants to communicate with candidates about issues or policies important to the community,
- encourage voting and help people get to the polls,
- sponsor voter registration drives if conducted in a non-partisan manner,
- provide education on topics in a non-partisan manner,
- sponsor "get out the vote" campaigns and permit church facilities to serve as a polling place, and
- host candidate forums as long as all candidates are invited, a broad range of issues is discussed, and all candidates have equal opportunity to speak.

Congregations cannot:

- issue statements endorsing or supporting candidates or distribute materials biased toward or against a particular candidate or political party
- donate money to a candidate or solicit contributions on their behalf,
- offer church space to one candidate and refuse it to another,
- sponsor campaign rallies for candidates in church,
- donate to or set up their own Political Action Committee (PAC).

Are pastors allowed to preach about or share personal political views on social media?

The United Methodist Church has official positions on a wide variety of public policy issues. All clergy are expected and encouraged to preach and teach about the church's statements and policies as part of their pastoral ministry.

The scriptures themselves are also full of guidance from prophets, Jesus and the early church that have strong political, social and economic implications. Preaching what the scriptures say and how they apply to current situations is a significant part of what pastors are called to do.

A pastor may not use the pulpit, church publications, website or social media, or any other forum related to the church to declare their individual preferences for any political candidate or specific legislation. They may do so as private citizens using their own social media platforms. The IRS encourages religious leaders who speak or write in their individual capacity to clearly indicate that their comments are personal and not intended to represent the views of their church.

A pastor may critique certain actions or policy positions of specific candidates based on scripture or the official statements of The United Methodist Church. However, such critique must be about policy positions or actions, not whether that candidate should be elected.

Can a pastor be involved in local politics?

A pastor may be directly involved in local politics and even become a candidate for political office, as long as it is on the pastor's own time and not as a representative of the church. The pastor cannot use their position in the church nor any church property or resources to promote their own political campaign.

Are we called to respect our elected leaders even if we disagree with them?

Whether or not our preferred candidate is elected, United Methodists pray for all leaders who serve the public and "support their efforts to afford justice and equal opportunity for all people." We recognize the difficult decisions elected leaders make on behalf of the people they serve and the enormity of the consequences of those decisions. However, we do not submit blindly to governing authorities. As the church, we strive to exercise a "strong ethical influence" upon the government, holding leaders accountable for policies which are just and opposing those which are unjust.

We hold government responsible for protecting the rights of the people and oppose governmental oppression of its people. Citizens may exercise their right to vote to ensure leaders responsibly use their power. When government enacts policies that are unjust or detrimental, the witness of scripture shows us that there may be times when "biblical faithfulness will necessitate civil disobedience to the ruling authorities (Acts 4:1-20)."

Continued on page 12

Fabulous Flashbacks

Thanksgiving is a time of giving and of Food. Here are some photos from our Food ministry and community garden.



MEMORY VERSE CHALLENGE!

Memory Verse number 11: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

16 Rejoice always. 17 Pray continually. 18 Give thanks in every situation because this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 19 Don't suppress the Spirit. 20 Don't brush off Spirit-inspired messages, 21 but examine everything carefully and hang on to what is good. 22 Avoid every kind of evil. 23 Now, may the God of peace himself cause you to be completely dedicated to him; and may your spirit, soul, and body be kept intact and blameless at our Lord Jesus Christ's coming. 24 The one who is calling you is faithful and will do this.

Church and politics continued from page 10

As disciples of Jesus Christ working for the transformation of the world, we take seriously our responsibility to fully participate in building a more peaceful and just world.

How can I faithfully respond to an issue that concerns me?

United Methodists can work individually and collectively to effect change. Write to or meet with representatives; submit a letter to the editor; join in prayer vigils, marches or social media campaigns; team up with like-minded people to learn more about how an issue affects those most directly impacted and work together for positive change. Church and Society staff can help you develop a strategy to address the issues about which you are passionate. They can also help you connect with other teams in your area who are working on similar issues. Creating Change Together, a resource for local churches, offers tools to address public concerns.

How can I talk about political issues with others who disagree?

In this time of polarization around social and political issues, Christians may struggle to have positive dialogue with family, friends and congregation members. Political differences are sometimes experienced as unhealthy conflict, but can be experienced as grace-filled, charitable conversation.

Begin with an attitude of compassion and curiosity. Practice active and respectful listening for understanding. Look for common ground as you clarify your values. Focus on what makes for the common good and not only your particular interests. Test what you say and how you say it alongside scripture, the Social Principles and Resolutions, and United Methodist tradition and history.

Guidelines for Holy Conferencing: What God Expects of Us reminds us that every person is a child of God. People are defined, ultimately, by their relationship with God -- not by the flaws we think we see in their views and actions.

JustPeace Center for Mediation and Conflict Transformation offers tools and resources for having welcoming conversations at <https://justpeaceumc.org/welcoming-conversations/>.

Courageous Conversations (<https://discipleship-ministries.teachable.com/p/courageous-conversation>) is a series designed to help local churches learn to move beyond impasses and discover how to listen well, learn from others, and respectfully disagree in love.

Thanksgiving Day 2020

Submitted by Jane Grays

Originally posted on <https://www.calendardate.com>



Thanksgiving Day 2020 is celebrated on Thursday, November 26th

Thanksgiving Day in the United States is celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November each year. Traditionally it is a time to give thanks for all the sacrifice and hard work done for the harvest. In modern times people take time off work (4 day weekend starting Thursday) and spend time with family and friends over a large feast held on Thanksgiving Day.

Thanksgiving in the early days of the United States was celebrated on a variety of dates and eventually Abraham Lincoln in 1863 with help from Sarah Josepha Hale decided Thanksgiving should be on the final Thursday in November. Later, Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the day into law making the day officially celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November.

Thanksgiving around the world

In Canada, they celebrate Thanksgiving on the second Monday of October. Liberia celebrates the day on the first Thursday of November and Saint Lucia the first Monday in October and finally Grenada celebrates on October 25th each year.

Days to Thanksgiving 2020

Thursday, November 26th is day number 331 of the 2020 calendar year.

Update from the Food Distribution Ministry

By Mary Ann Vaughan



During this pandemic, food insecurity along with shortages of needed items have led the Food Distribution Ministry to ask for donations of \$15.00 grocery store gift cards. This year it is difficult to go and find enough hams and turkeys to distribute for November and December, so we have decided to give each family a gift card along with the bags of shelf stable foods. Please consider helping out our ministry. If you would like to make a donation of cash, please send a check to the church, and designate "food distribution." We will purchase the needed cards with funds collected. If you have any questions, please contact Mary Ann Vaughan at 301.345.2428, or mvaughan@ipcmclean.org. Thank you for your Support!

How Can I Give?

Online: You can now give online through Emmanuel's website at 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. If you have any questions, contact Kemi Oluwafemi.



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

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. To volunteer to serve as a Scripture Reader during our Zoom Sunday Service, just email the office at office@eumcbeltsville.com and they will let you know which weeks are available!

No experience needed!
We will train you on the job!



Happy Anniversary
12. Suzie Kilbourne and Chris Insley

1. Elisabeth Cavallo
2. Crystal Webb
4. Beverly Huneycutt
5. Katie McNealy
6. Kayla Hicks
9. Kathleen Galloway
12. Jaime Hiner
13. Christie Ademiluyi
14. C. J. Huneycutt, Michael Vaughan
16. Glendy Aguilera
21. Edward Mougey
25. Patricia Allen, Judy Diedrich, Sarah Elliott, Claire Wray
27. Ginger Butcher
28. Olamide Oluwafemi
30. Edward White, Jr.



UPDATE: Start your week off with Virtual Worship at Emmanuel!



Join us on Sunday mornings in virtual worship through Zoom.

Join us for 30 minutes of fellowship from 9:30-10:00 am followed by worship at 10:00.

Use this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85125785976?pwd=bExodVh2SE5XckxGVjB3N3A0ZFd2UT09>

or go to zoom.us and click join a meeting.

The meeting number is 851 2578 5976.

The Password is 850888

Don't have a computer to use? You can call in on any telephone (cell or landline) at 1.301.715.8592!

In Memoriam

Christian love and sympathy to:

~The family of Christopher (brother of a co-worker of Abel Martin) on his death.

~The family of John Jackson (friend of Tammy White) on his death on October 2.

~Gregory Parham (from Queen's Chapel UMC) and family on the death of his mother on September 11



Please pray for our sick and shut in Homebound: **Evelyn Adkins, Harry Cottman, Norma Hall, Carolyn Scarcia**
Out of state: **Lil Mizzer**

