

Salem United Methodist Church

December 2016 Newsletter

«183 Years and Still Loving, Serving and Celebrating»



SALEM United Methodist Church 2016



SALEM Methodist Protestant Church 1833

12 High Street, Brookeville, Maryland 20833

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

TO THE SALEM UM CHURCH COMMUNITY



Rev. Dr. Sue Shorb-Sterling.

Blessed Advent, Salem UM Church Community!

With our presidential election behind us, some of us are looking forward to the hope of a new president while others are filled with fear. With all the current hopes and fears in our nation, I am reminded of the words to a favorite Christmas carol, "O Little Town of Bethlehem," "The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight."

Before Jesus was born, the people lived in fear as their country was occupied by the Roman government. They hoped for a Messiah to save them. As humans we may never understand why Almighty God picked that time long ago to come down to earth in human form. But God did. God willingly humbled himself and entered into our

human struggles. Jesus is our "down to earth" God who walks, talks, lives, and loves among us.

As we live in hope and fear, we continue to wait for the promise of Jesus' return, too. When it seems like the world is falling apart, I breathe the words, "Come, Lord Jesus, come. We are waiting." As we wait, we are not called to just sit and twiddle our thumbs. We are called to work while we wait. To work for God's kingdom to come on earth as it is in heaven. How can we live out these directives from our "Down to Earth" God?

This Advent in our worship we will be using resources from an Advent series by Rev. Mike Slaughter of Ginghamburg UM Church called "Down To Earth." As we walk to the manger again we will wrestle with these questions. How do we grasp this miracle that took place when Jesus was born? What does this miracle mean to us today? How has it made a difference in our lives? Can we live a down-to-earth love, a down to earth lifestyle with down-to-earth humility and obedience?

Each Advent season we focus on the wonder and awe of the meaning of the incarnation when God came down to earth. As we strive to understand the deeper meaning of this greatest of

miracles, may God bless us on what the implications of Jesus' birth has for our lives.

With Advent hope,
Rev. Sue

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Advent Sermon Series: The Hopes and Fears of
All the Years

First Sunday of Advent: Nov. 27:

“Down to Earth Love”

Second Sunday of Advent: Dec 4:

“Down to Earth Humility”

Third Sunday of Advent: Dec 11:

“Down to Earth Lifestyle” Poinsettia Sunday

Fourth Sunday of Advent: Dec 18:

“Down to Earth Obedience”

Youth Bell Choir playing

Christmas Eve, Dec. 24:

5:00 pm Family

7:30 pm Traditional Candle Lighting

Christmas Day, Dec. 25: 10:00 am only

New Year's Day, Jan 1: 10:00 am only

YOUTH GROUP

Youth Group Meets Every Sunday Evening

All middle and high-school students are welcome.
You do not need to attend Salem.

6:30-7:00 pm Youth Bell Choir

7:00-8:00 pm Time Together

Dec 4: 6:00 pm Christmas Tree Lighting
Youth Bell Choir playing

Dec 11: What is Advent? 6:30-8:00 pm

Dec 18: Youth invite the congregation to go
Christmas caroling, 6:30-8:00 pm

Dec 25 and Jan 1 No Youth Group

Youth Group will resume on Jan 8

ROCK!

Feb 3-5, 2017; Ocean City, MD

Presenter: Preston Centuolo

Bands: Sidewalk Prophets and Urban Street Level
Twelve are registered: Seven youth and five adults

NATIVITY ROOM

Bring in a favorite or a special nativity scene to be displayed in the room behind our worship space from Dec 4-18.

BLUE CHRISTMAS OR THE LONGEST NIGHT SERVICE

Sunday, December 18
5:00 pm

Christmas isn't a joyful time for everyone. Many feel blue for a variety of reasons. The purpose of this worship service is to create sacred space for those who are living in dark times. This is a time of reflection, healing, and offering hope.

CHARGE CONFERENCE



Charge Conference was held on October 30th at Faith UMC, Gaithersburg. Standing from left to right: Connie Somerville, Trustee Chair; Deb Ambrose, Church Council Chair; Kulley Bancroft, Finance Chair; Mary Kay Abramson, Treasurer and Recording Secretary; Samantha Larson, Seminary Intern; Carole Roberts, Membership Secretary; Hisashi Yamagata, SPRC Chair; Suzanne Friis, Communications; Velma Durant, Newsletter Editor; seated from left to right: Rev. Dr. Sue Shorb-Sterling, Pastor; Rev. J.W. Park, District Superintendent.

FROM THE CONGREGATION

JACOB SAVAGE

By VelmaDurant

Last year everyone at Salem was excited when Brandon Savage announced in worship that he and Debbie were expecting twins. We prayed for them, cried with them, and helped in any way we could. When these MIRACLE babies were born, we each felt the birth pangs along with Debbie and Brandon.

Matthew and Jacob are Savages by birth and by law but at Salem they are “OUR” twins. When it became obvious that Jacob had a problem

we (Salem) fell on our knees before God once again.



Jacob has a bad liver. He needs our prayers. However there is something else we can do, we can pray for a donor. If you or someone you know, wants to help Jacob and you are between the ages of 18 – 50, Blood type O, in good health and willing to share your liver with Jacob, please contact Debbie, Brandon, or Rev. Sue. Sometimes God uses people to perform miracles. Could you be Jacob's miracle?

Debbie requested I add the following to this article: "Can I ask that you include information about registering to be an organ donor on your drivers license?"

The reason that they want 18-50 is for living donors. But if people are registered as organ donors and then pass away, someone older than 50 can save Jacob's life."

BLOOM NEWS

[Mary Bloom <maryjbloom@gmail.com>](mailto:maryjbloom@gmail.com)

To velma_durant@yahoo.com

Nov 21 at 11:30 pm

Hello Salem Family,

Gosh, it has been a very long time! We miss you. A bit of news from our family to yours... Stephen and Emily are expecting their first child within the next 4 weeks. We are over the moon! Jannette is getting married in October 2017. Exciting times for our family.

We wish a Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas to all.

Love,
Mary

Mary J. Bloom
3752 Thomas Point Road
Annapolis, Maryland 21403

GREATER OLNEY INTERFAITH MINISTERIUM'S THANKSGIVING SERVICE



On Tuesday, November 22 about 300 people from sixteen different faith traditions, which included two Muslim communities, two Jewish communities, and a variety of Christian traditions met at Oakdale Church in Olney to celebrate Thanksgiving. This is the seventh year that the Greater Olney Interfaith Ministerium hosted this event. The theme this year was "Healing in our Community." An interfaith choir sang several praise and thanksgiving songs. There were scripture readings from each of these traditions: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim. The speaker for the evening was Rev. Dr. Thelma Colwell, chaplain of Medstar Montgomery Hospital. For many this event provided healing and hope as our diverse community came together to give thanks.

SALEM BOOK CLUB

Tuesday, January 17 at 7:30 pm at Suzanne Friis' house. We will be reading "Hillbilly Elegy" by J.D. Vance. Considered by The Economists as "the most important book you will read this year" Hillbilly Elegy is a passionate and personal analysis of a culture in crisis—that of white working-class Americans. The decline of this group, a demographic of our country that has been

slowly disintegrating over forty years, has been reported on with growing frequency and alarm, but has never before been written about as searingly from the inside. J. D. Vance tells the true story of what a social, regional, and class decline feels like when you were born with it hung around your neck.

ASP 2017

The first of the many fund raisers, our ASP Breakfast, will be December 4th after the 10:00 am service; come hungry! Remember this is a freewill offering deal but also remember it is helping our ASP crews do their Missionary work in our own country.

December is quickly approaching and our annual Cookie Bake-off is right around the corner on Sunday Dec. 18 at 11:15 am. It is time to start thinking about what you are going to enter.

I hope everyone knows this is open to everyone, MEN, WOMEN and CHILDREN.

Also it's time to remember this IS a fund raiser for the June 18-24, 2017 ASP trip. The site yet unknown but wherever it is, people in that area will get the help our crews provide to make their lives just a little more comfortable.

A TIME FOR CHILDREN



On All Saints Sunday, November 6th we had in attendance Debbie Ambrose and her grandson, Charlie, Brandon with Matthew and Debbie with Jacob Savage. Rev. Sue spoke of remembering those who have gone before us.

On the First Day of Advent, November 27th, Samantha, our intern talked about lighting the Advent Candles.



IN SUNDAY SCHOOL



In Sunday School on November 27th, the lesson was about building God's House, the Tabernacle, that the Israelites built to God's specifications. Shelby and Piper made their own block model, with the Ark of the Covenant behind the veil.



Submitted by Carole Roberts

ALL SAINTS SUNDAY

The service was special in so many ways and our Music Director made sure the music fit the occasion.



Joann Rider played an Irish drum named a bodhran, Chuck Sterling sang and played an Irish tin whistle, and Rose Eide-Altman played the autoharp to a song, "Talk About Suffern."



Chuck Sterling singing, "The Land You Love the Best," with Amy Roberts on guitar and Rose playing the violin.



As we entered the sanctuary we were given flowers and during the service we placed our flowers in vases in remembrances of our loved ones who have gone on before us.

THE LORD'S TABLE

Saturday, December 24, 1-5 pm

Our next commitment is the Saturday before Christmas. What a better way to thank God for sending His Son for our redemption and prove our

commitment to Him than to serve others! As we have been told many times, if you can't spend the whole 4-hours there, pick a time to help with set-up, cooking, serving, or clean-up.

The feeling you have in your heart as you leave the building is well worth the 4 hours or less you spend providing a meal for someone who is hungry.

THE SALEM UMC WOMEN'S GROUP

Community Tree Lighting

Sunday, December 4:

6:00 pm to 7:30 pm

Community Hall

All Welcome - Free Family Event - Rain or Shine
Join us to start the Christmas season with our first tree lighting. Festivities will begin at 6:00 pm with music by the Youth Bell Choir. The evening will include carols, cookies, hot chocolate, a craft for kids, and of course "lighting" the tree on the front lawn. The tree is a donation to the church from the Sandy Spring Lions Club.



Salem UMC Christmas Bazaar

December 10

10 am - 2 pm

Community Hall

The Salem Women are again planning an extraordinary event with their wonderful gift baskets, baked goods, lunch featuring Betty Bittner's vegetable soup, unique treasures, kid's corner, and a visit from Santa. Join us and bring your friends!

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING

Next Meeting –January 26, 7:15 pm

All are welcome!

Church Council Highlights - December 1, 2016

Church Council met December 1, 2016 with Christie LaTona, mission strategist from the Balt/Wash Conference. The purpose of this meeting was to begin to address concerns raised at our November meeting about the future direction

of our church, including our decline in membership and attendance, and our desire to be prayerful in and plan for changing this direction. Rev. Sue and I reached out to our District Superintendent, J. W. Park, and Christie Latona for support. Christie joined our meeting to help us begin the process of examining where we are as a church.

We will begin with a congregational survey followed by a sharing of the results and, based on those results, planning for ministry at Salem in 2017 and the years beyond. Meetings with the congregation to explain the process and the **Readiness 360** survey will be scheduled in early 2017. The sharing of the survey results will take place at a **Congregational Meeting on Saturday, February 18, 2017. Please put this date on your calendar!** Your participation and input is critical to the health of our church and our future work and ministry. We encourage everyone to work together to help discern God's vision for Salem. Please keep the future direction of our congregation in your prayers.

Prayerfully,
Debbie Ambrose, Church Council Chair

Recently the Church Council voted to move forward with the Drive-Thru Coffee and Prayer for Commuters. It is with great joy to announce that the Eugene Otto Memorial Fund has presented Salem with a check for \$500.00 to help us get this program started.



A WORD ABOUT MISSIONS

Our Thanksgiving Gift Baskets presented to be prayed over for blessings for the four families who received them.



HOLIDAY GIFT BASKETS

We will be collecting foodstuffs again for the Christmas food baskets. St. Peter's Catholic Church coordinates this ecumenical event each year and distributes the baskets to make the holidays more enjoyable for those less fortunate.

Sign-up sheets will soon be available for four food baskets. Please pick one or more items to contribute. They'll be due at the church the Sunday before Christmas.

YMCA MENTORING PROGRAM

Each Christmas Salem takes several names of children in the YMCA Mentoring Program. This year we have 22 names; these children are involved in the child welfare system. Members of the congregation take a snowman with a child's name, age and gift request attached. Gifts are already appearing but they are all due by December 4th. The children will receive their gifts at the YMCA's Christmas party.

SIGN-UP FOR ALTAR FLOWERS

If you would like to provide flowers during the 2017 worship year, please sign up on the list posted on the bulletin board in the Hallway.

When signing up, please indicate if the flowers are a tribute (for example: from the Jones family in honor of John's 10th birthday). Tributes will be listed in the Sunday announcements.

Purchase your flowers at the vendor of your choice and bring by Saturday afternoon. Call Rev. Dr. Sue before you head out so she can open the church for you. Contact Suzanne Friis with questions.

COFFEE HOUR

Have you signed up to provide snacks for coffee hour? Please volunteer to provide a coffee hour or two this year. You may sign up on the list posted on the bulletin board in the Hall or go to: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0d4fa8aa2ba3f85-coffee2>

MEMORY GARDEN

If you are interested in placing an order for a brick to honor/remember someone please see Joyce Howes for more information.

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

If your name should be on one of these lists, please contact velma_durant@yahoo.com. We don't want to leave you out. Thank you.

Our December Birthdays are:

Espejo, Christina	12/08
Gundersen, Magne	12/08
Groves, Lexie	12/10
McClosky, Barb	12/11
Achstetter, Barb	12/11
Shorb-Sterling, Sue	12/21
Gregg, Kasey	12/28

No December Anniversaries

OUR COMMUNITY

Sandy Spring Lions Club: The next dinner will be on Monday, December 19th at 7:00 pm. **There is a standing request for help in preparing the dinner, setting up, serving and cleaning up. If you can help, please contact Mary Ellen Eaton.**

Eyeglass Collection: Salem continues to collect used eyeglasses, cell phones and hearing aids to donate to Lions Club. Please leave them in Salem Community Hall.

Spirit Club: Spirit Club, a fitness group for those with disabilities, meets Wednesdays in the Community Hall from 6-7 pm. Our own Philip Weinberger is an avid participant.

Seniors on the Move – Exercise Class: Fridays, 9:00-10:00 am in the Community Hall. Drop in – registration not required! Participate and pay by the session or for the full fall program. For more information contact the leader, Mary-Jo Cosgrove, at mjcosgrove58@gmail.com.

JUST A REMINDER

To order your Café Justo Coffee please contact Kathryn Ennes at church or via e-mail at k_ennes@yahoo.com.

Café Justo is a coffee grower cooperative based in Salvador Urbina, Chiapas, Mexico – a ministry of Frontero de Cristo. They market a pure, organic coffee which is grown, harvested and marketed in the spirit of justice.

“FOR I WAS HUNGRY...”

Manna Food Center: 9311 Gaither Road, Gaithersburg, MD 20877
To volunteer call 301-424-1130 or online at www.mannafood.org.

Olney Help: P.O. Box 430, Olney, MD 20830
To volunteer call 301-774-6829. They still are in desperate need of rice sides (Rice-a-Roni/ Knorr sides), peanut butter, jelly, canned chicken, fruit juice, snacks such as granola bars/crackers, cake mix/frosting, canned pasta. Please place items in the box marked for Olney Help in the church hallway. No glass jars.

PRAYER SHAWLS



On November 13th another set of Prayer Shawls were dedicated to God's service. As soon as the prayer was over there were people selecting shawls to pass onto those who need the comfort and healing power from our Heavenly Father.

Prayer Shawls are available in the Salem entry hall on top of the coat rack. There is no cost. If you know anyone you want to share a prayer with all the time, please help yourself to a shawl. The comfort they give is well worth the effort of delivering one to your friends, family, or co-workers. They do help. Just knowing someone cares is sometimes just the right medicine. They will thank you!

A Prayer Shawl Thank You

Many many thanks for the beautiful Salem Prayer Shawl. It's so soft and cozy-and I appreciate the fine workmanship-and the love that went into its creation.

Bobby and I are also so very grateful for your well wishes and prayers.

Jane Bartley and Bobby Odle

O Holy Night Lyrics

O holy night
The stars are brightly shining
It is the night of our dear Savior's birth
Long lay the world in sin and error pining
Till he appeared and the soul felt it's worth
The thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices
For yonder brinks a new and glorious morn
Fall on your knees

O hear the angel voices
O night divine
O night when Christ was born
O night divine
O night, O night divine

O Holy Night
The stars are brightly shining
It is the night of our dear Savior's birth
Long lay the world in sin and error-pining
Till he appeared and the soul felt it's worth
The thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices
For yonder brinks a new and glorious morn
Fall on your knees

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O night divine
O night, O night divine

Songwriters

John Sullivan Dwight;Adolphe Charles
Adam;Placide Cappeau

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Luke 2:7 New International Version

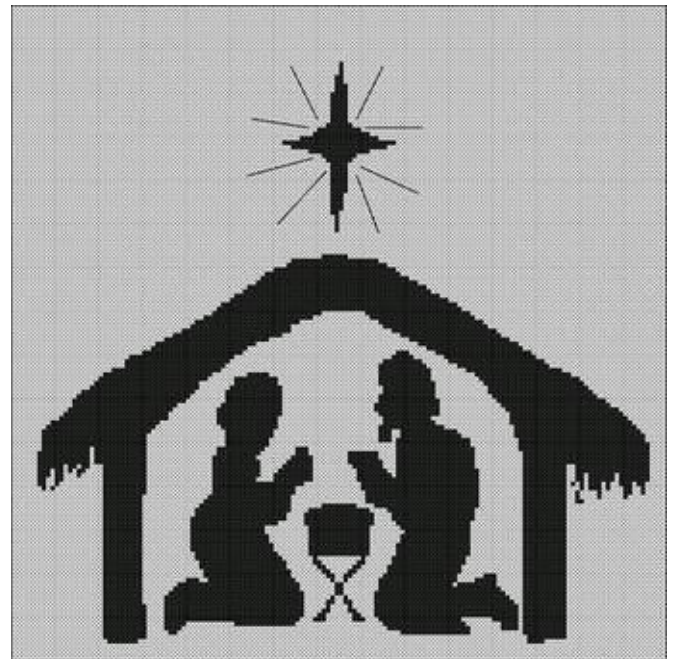
...and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

Isaiah 9:6 New International Version

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

We hope you and your family have a very Merry Christmas as you celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ!

And a Blessed New Year!



The Salem Newsletter is assembled and published by
Velma Durant, and edited by Curtis Smith and
Rev. Dr. Sue Shorb-Sterling or Suzanne Friis

