

The Fisherman's Network

St. Andrews United Methodist Church

1020 Maryland Avenue; Hagerstown, MD 21740

www.standrewsumchagerstown.weebly.com

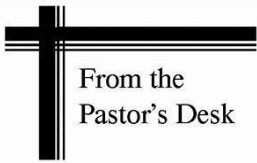
Phone: 301-739-7431

E-mail: standrewsumchagerstown@gmail.com

Our Mission: "To Show, Share and Grow in God's Love, through Jesus Christ."

Our Vision: "Believe in God, Follow Jesus, and Serve Others."

December 2023 Newsletter



From the
Pastor's Desk

Peace for Christmas

Will peace ever be realized in the world? Israel is fighting Hamas, and Russia is fighting Ukraine. There is violence in our cities, families, and our lives.

Where is Peace? Will Peace triumph over hostilities, killings and evil?

Prophet Isaiah promised Peace, that a prince of peace would be born. Peace only comes when God delivers us, sending Jesus to be born in a manger in Bethlehem.

We want peace for people, for our country and for the whole world. Only Jesus who forgives our sins can save us and send us away in Peace - "GO IN PEACE."

Because we are saved through Jesus, we also have peace with God.

As you sing the Christmas songs this month, hear again the words "Glory to the New-born king, Peace on earth---God and sinners reconciled."

Let the peace of Christ make us Peacemakers and let us live like children of God.

We are God's promoters of Peace.

Merry Christmas!

Pastor Serufusa



St. Andrews Music Notes

A new year is fast approaching and I find myself asking God how I can thank him enough for all my blessings this past year. I have so many blessings, and many of them center around the people at St. Andrews. I truly feel we have a church family that is always willing to support each other. Participating in the church activities may strengthen your relationships with other members, like it has for me.

December is filled with special services and activities to participate in. The **December 3rd Advent Brunch** is a great opportunity to socialize and get to know other members better.

Anyone who would like to participate in the **December 10th church play, Bethlehem Speaks**, we have a place for you!

Anyone who would like to be in a manger scene in our **Christmas Cantata on December 17th**, we have a place for you, too! There are always opportunities for you to get involved in the life of St. Andrews. Please join us!

Have a Merry Christmas!

Lisa Shives, Music Director

Jesus
is the reason
for the season

Important Dates in December

Staff Appreciation Month

- 12/03 - 1st Sunday of Advent
- 12/03 - Advent Brunch after worship
- 12/06 - 11:30 am Emmanuel Senior's Lunch
- 12/07 - 9:00 am Potomac Towers mission
- 12/07 - 10:00 am Bible Study
- 12/08 - 6:00 –76:30 "Bethlehem Speaks" play practice and dinner
- 12/10 - Second Sunday of Advent
- 12/10 - "Bethlehem Speaks" Xmas program
- 12/14 - 10:00 am Bible Study
- 12/15 - January Newsletter articles are due
- 12/17 - Third Sunday of Advent
- 12/17 - "Come See, Go Tell" Xmas Cantata
- 12/24 - 10:00 am Worship Service
- 12/24 - 7:00 pm Christmas Eve Service
- 12/25 - Christmas Day (church office closed)
- 12/31 - New Years' Eve



December is Staff Appreciation Month

As in the past, there will be a basket in the back of the church through December 31st. We are blessed with wonderful staff that help keep the church running. Please consider giving generously in appreciation for their efforts.

Poinsettia Orders



Poinsettias which were ordered by November 26 will be delivered on Friday, December 15th, to be placed on the altar in the sanctuary. You can pick up the flower(s) you ordered after the 10:00 am service on Sunday, December 24th, or after the Christmas Eve Service that evening at 7:00 pm.



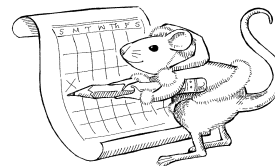
Worship

Savior.

We will celebrate Communion at the altar rail on December 3rd, the first Sunday of Advent.

The results of an informal poll of members resulted in plans to have a 7:00 pm Christmas Eve Service again this year.

In celebrating this Christmas, however different from our usual traditions and celebrations, let us remember that "Jesus is the reason for the season" and keep our faith and love at the center of all we do. Blessings to all!



HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

The Christmas season is such a busy time for everyone. We hope you can take time to enjoy these special days:

December 3 – First Sunday of Advent – Join your friends for an Advent Brunch after the service.

December 10 – Second Sunday of Advent – The Christmas program, "Bethlehem Speaks" will be presented.

December 17 – Third Sunday of Advent – Christmas Cantata "Come Se, Go Tell"

December 24 – Regular worship at 10:00 am – Christmas Eve Service at 7:00 pm



Notes on Finances ...

Don't forget about your church this Christmas season. Please consider a special Christmas gift this year to help support our General Fund. We are approaching colder temperatures and expect a larger heating bill in December and in early 2024. Your gifts will help us be ready for these bills.

Thoughts on Generosity...

Suppose that God allowed you to have one wish. Without limit, you could have anything you desire. You could have unlimited wealth. You could have perfect health and live 1,000 years — or more. You could — like Solomon — have great wisdom. Whatever you want, you may have it. But you only get one wish. What would you choose?

Sad to say, many people would choose great wealth and material possessions. Unfortunately, that would not be a good choice. Listen to the counsel of God as expressed in this contemporary translation of Proverbs 27:20 through Solomon, one of the richest people who ever lived — “The eyes of man are never satisfied.” The behavior and attitude which always wants more has a name: Greed, and it demonstrates itself in our lives as though we were at an auction. If we have \$5, we want \$10; if we have \$10, we want \$20; if we have \$20, we want \$30. Solomon went on to say in Ecclesiastes 5:10, “The lover of money will not be satisfied with money; nor the lover of wealth, with gain.”

A better choice would be to ask for God's perspective on life and all that life entails. When we see life as God does, we realize that everything belongs to Him, that we are just managers and stewards, and that only what is done for Him will endure for eternity. When we have God's perspective, we will be able to say with the Apostle Paul, “...I have learned to be content with whatever I have.”

When we have God's perspective, we will accept with a spirit of peace and restfulness whatever He entrusts to us. And when we have God's perspective, we will put into practice the truth of Hebrews 13:5 — “Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have; for he has said, ‘I will never leave you or forsake you.’”

You are encouraged to look up the following verses to see how they relate to contentment.

Philippians 4:11-12

1 Thessalonians 5:18

1 Timothy 6:6-8

Hebrews 13:5

We are to be content with what we have.

*“Keep your lives free from the love of money,
and be content with what you have; for he has said,*

‘I will never leave you or forsake you’

(Heb. 13:5)

A Christmas Gift for St. Andrew's

You will notice a new bulletin board in the hallway with a Christmas tree covered in envelopes. Each envelope is labeled with a dollar amount from \$1 to \$100. Choose one or more envelopes with the amount(s) you are willing to donate as a special Christmas gift to the church. Simply pull the amount(s) you choose off the bulletin board and place a check or cash with the envelope(s). Write your name and church offering number on the envelope if you wish to receive credit for taxes. Place the envelope(s) in the offering plate with your regular giving or in the box on the church office door. Our goal is to have all envelopes filled with donations by the end of 2023! Thank you for your generosity during this holiday season!

Finance Committee Notes

The Finance Committee met with the District Superintendent, Rev. Wunderlich, at our November 7th meeting. We continue to seek his guidance to improve our financial status and stewardship. This year (2023) St. Andrews is paying 50% of the annual apportionment amount as part of a financial agreement the Church Council signed with the Baltimore-Washington Conference (BWC). As part of this agreement, we are to increase our apportionment amount to 75% in 2024. We have asked Rev. Wunderlich to make a request to the BWC, on our behalf, to remain at the 50% apportionment value for another year.



2024 Offering Envelopes will be distributed before the end of December to

everyone who had envelopes in 2023, or gives on a weekly basis. The envelopes are to be used beginning January 1, 2024.

If you do not use weekly Offering Envelopes, you will be assigned an Offering Number so that your giving can be recorded electronically and you can receive a giving statement at the end of the year.



November- Food Month

Thanks to everyone for the donations of cereal, canned items, snack packs, and boxed items for St. Mark's Food Bank, Bester Elementary School, and the Rescue Mission! Since October 24th we have delivered 17 snack packs to Bester and 44 boxes of cereal to St. Mark's. The rest of the donations will be delivered by the end of the month.

Salvation Army Christmas Stockings

By November 12th the empty stockings had disappeared off the hallway table! By December 3rd they will reappear filled with gifts for 12 boys and girls. Each year the Salvation Army reaches out to needy families making Christmas special for their children. Thank you for being a part of this community outreach!

Red Bird Mission Mitten Tree

In Kentucky, the Red Bird Conference, Inc. which is a part of the United Methodist Church, provides a "Christian School, Workcamp Ministries, Community Outreach Ministries, Senior Center, and Craft and Clothing Ministries in some of the lowest economic counties in the country." Please place mittens, gloves, hats, and scarves on the tree in the Narthex. They will be shipped to Kentucky with love and care from St. Andrews. If we get extras, we will share them with our local Head Start children. Thank you!

Have a blessed Christmas!
Joyce McClanathan



2024 Church Officer and Committee List

The list of 2024 Church Officers and Committee Chairpersons is attached to this newsletter. Please take a minute to review it and reach out to any Committee Chair if you would like to serve on their committee. Volunteers are always needed to sustain the life of the church.



WEATHER WATCH!

If the weather outside is blowing and you wonder if church services will be held, look for an email from the Pastor for a report of canceled worship

services.

If Washington County schools are closed due to the weather, any meetings or choir practices scheduled at the church for that day or evening will be cancelled unless you are advised otherwise by the music director or meeting chairperson.



**Christmas Eve
Service
December 24
7:00 pm**

**The regular worship service will
take place at 10:00 am on Sunday,
as usual.**