

Richardson Park United Methodist Church
11 North Maryland Avenue
Wilmington, DE 19804-1305

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*I am writing to you, little children,
because your sins are forgiven on account of his name.
I am writing to you, fathers,
because you know him who is from the beginning.
I am writing to you, young people,
because you have conquered the evil one.
I write to you, children,
because you know the Father.
I write to you, fathers,
because you know him who is from the beginning.
I write to you, young people,
because you are strong
and the word of God abides in you,
and you have overcome the evil one.*

- 1st John 2:12-14 (New Revised Standard Version)

In what ways can we share Christ with people who need him? Most of us can probably point toward a number of places where the Spirit of the Living God would make all the difference in the world in which we live. I know that I am constantly aware of people and situations that cry out to God for help and salvation. But what does this mean in today's wild, crazy, ever-changing context for ministry? One of today's most engaging United Methodist thinkers, Rev. Dan Dick, has a great deal to say about this topic and I want to share with you this month his take on what the future holds . . .

I will say it again: Our future does not lie in our past. Trying to "become" what we once were is like trying to put the toothpaste back in the tube (a lot more trouble than it is worth). Why can't we be the church we were in the 50s or 70s? Well, for a lot of reasons. We are no longer a big duck in a small pond — there are hundreds of alternative "churches" we weren't in competition with back then. We have a much greater social conscience than we did in the 50s — look at our Social Principles. We are no longer defined by missional service and evangelism — we've gotten complacent in our old age. We were assimilated into the "Church Growth" collective mindset of the late 20th century and have never recovered. Our culture and Western world have evolved and they aren't looking for the

same things from us. We stopped having as many kids, so our Sunday schools dwindled (still the best way to have a booming Sunday school — grow your own! Just add water...). Competition for time, energy, and entertainment value has shifted. Sunday school or soccer? Tae Kwon Do or choir? American Idol or Church Council?

New days call for new wineskins. I look at the churches that are thriving. They aren't wasting time trying to talk people into wanting to come to church — they are doing life-transforming ministry and faith-transforming service, and people who want to make a difference are turning out. United Methodism needs to get the "mega-church" gleam out of its eyes and focus in on the most fertile niche market available — small, intimate, active and engaged cadres of highly motivated people. Big church markets are saturated. Where there is real life and energy is in small clusters of Christians, not much concerned with numbers or the institution, who are living their discipleship in spite of "the church" rather than because of it.

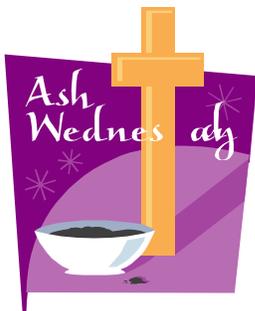
I was talking to a young couple who have a group of Christian friends. Nine people who pray together and meet a couple of times a week. Nine middle-class people... who ponied up a total of \$45,000 to go to Haiti to volunteer two weeks of their lives to serve those in need. I sit with church groups every week who gripe and moan about their financial plight, who have no interest in doing anything for anyone else, but they want to keep their own building open with the lights and heat on. Such a church will have no appeal to a young group of Christians seeking to heal others in the name of Jesus the Christ.

We have effectively coated the gospel with layer after layer of church goop until it is all but unrecognizable. We talk endlessly about the ministry we aren't doing, instead of marshalling our forces to do something worthwhile with what we have. We spend millions of apportioned funds on market research and advertising while the world goes to hell in the proverbial handbasket. Shame on us. We can do so much better. Perhaps the time has come to... I don't know... "rethink" something.

What do you think of Dan's words? Prophetic or irrelevant? I personally think that he has a point, but what does that mean for us? And what should we be "rethinking?" May God grant us the grace and wisdom to know and understand . . .

The God of peace be with you all,

Pastor Tom



ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES

MARCH 9

Noon – Peniel UMC

7 PM Richardson Park UMC



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Hedda Loose	3/5
Morgan Straughn	3/5
Paul McGinnis, Jr.	3/6
Frankie DelCampo	3/7
Janet Dickerson	3/7
Carmen Guelen	3/7
Steven Palmer	3/7
Stephanie Swain	3/7
Kim Cloud	3/10
John DuVall	3/10
Andrew Burgos	3/12
Calvin Brosch	3/13
Susan Eveland	3/15
Josefa Majik	3/15
Donald Painter	3/15
Ruth Carter	3/16
Kevin Cecelia	3/16
James A. Chilcutt	3/18
Ella de Courcelle	3/20
Victoria Maher	3/20
Sarah McFarland	3/20
David Rice	3/20
Tom Beane	3/22
Michael Coverdale	3/23
Austin Painter	3/23
Sue Cummings	3/25
J. Robert Ashton	3/30
Helen Murphey	3/30

NOTE: If your name is not listed on our birthday calendar, please call the church office at 654-0961. Thank you.

COMMUNITY LENTEN SERVICES

Each Wednesday at Noon

March 16	Wilmington Church of the Brethren
March 23	Calvary Presbyterian – Speaker: Jennifer Kerby
March 30	St. James Episcopal
April 6	Peniel UMC
April 13	Richardson Park UMC

There will be a different speaker each week.

Please join the noon prayer services during Lent, followed by a light lunch of sandwiches and soup.



**DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME
BEGINS ON SUNDAY, MARCH 13.
TURN YOUR CLOCKS AHEAD ONE HOUR.**

**WESLEY TOWER BANKS
February 2011 \$102.46**

Our total to date for 2011 is \$158.67. Although the Wesley Tower was completed in 2007, the money collected in the banks each month is used to replace moneys borrowed for the project from the Endowment Fund. It is important that we put back the money in this fund so that we can use it for future projects. So, thanks for bringing your filled banks the first Sunday of each month. Empty banks can be picked up as you leave the altar area each Communion Sunday or requested from the Finance Committee through the church office. Again, thanks for saving your change; every little bit helps.



MISSION TREE



On Sundays in March, we are hanging **Shamrocks** on our Mission Tree. Hang a "shamrock" on the tree in honor or memory of someone special to you. Minimum donation is \$1.00. Our Mission tree is located in the Extension.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS
INDOOR/OUTDOOR YARD SALE
Friday, March 18 & Saturday, March 19

If you would like to donate items or furniture for the yard sale, please call the church office at 654-0961 to make arrangements to have them picked up. We are in need of furniture at this time.

Also, we need help on Monday, March 14 at 9 AM to help set up the tables and on Saturday, March 19 at 3 PM to clean up. Thanks to everyone for your contributions, time and support for this very important project.

The Mission Committee will be holding a soup sale during the Yard Sale on Friday and Saturday. Homemade chicken and rice soup will be sold for \$5.00 per quart.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN



In March, Ruth Circle will take care of the flowers in the church.

Circle Meetings

Rebekah Circle	Tue., March 1 7:00 PM
	Home of Marlene Johnson
Ruth Circle	Wed., March 2 10:00 AM
	Church Lounge
Esther Circle	Sunday, March 27 11:30 AM
	Church Lounge

Circle Leaders

Rebekah Circle	Marlene Johnson
Ruth Circle	Joan Stadelman
Esther Circle	Yvonne Mitten

UMW EVENT

On Saturday, March 19, the Spring event for the UMW will be held at Grace United Methodist Church in Millsboro, DE. Coffee time is 8:30 AM. The program is scheduled for 9:15 AM. The program will be "Methodists in the Congo." A lunch will be served and a collection will be taken for the Congo Mission

UPPER ROOM MEAL

Monday, April 4 6:00 PM
Extension

On Monday, April 4 at 6 PM, the UMW will host the Upper Room Meal. This is a very meaningful worship time. Everyone gathers in the church Extension by 5:45 PM, comes together as a group and proceeds to Fellowship Hall. This service is conducted in silence (except for the readers). The cost of the meal is \$5.00. Everyone is welcome. Please see Pat Cummings for further details.

Health Kits for Migrant Farm Workers

Each year, our church participates in this much needed project of Church Women United. It is not too soon to begin purchasing items for health kits for the Delmarva Rural Ministries – they need all the kits we can collect.

Each health kit should contain:

1 toothbrush	1 new washcloth
1 4 oz. tube of toothpaste	1 new bath towel
1 comb with lg. teeth	4 oz. bar of soap
1 deodorant	1 shampoo

Wrap the above items in the bath towel and tie with ribbon or a pair of shoelaces. Please bring your kits to the church office or give to Mary Alice Bair.

A NOTE OF THANKS FROM...

Richardson Park Community Action Program

Thank you to everyone who helped us with our Pancake Breakfast in February.

It was a great success!!

Thank you also to our new Business Member Christiana Body Shop Inc.

Our wish list for our food pantry includes:

Peanut Butter, Jelly
Canned Vegetables, Spam
Boxed Potatoes



I want to express my sincere appreciation for the lovely altar flowers, the cards and visits following my recent surgery. I am especially grateful for the prayers on my behalf.

Marvin Swain

KIDS' KORNER



Kristi Doughty

Hi everybody! Spring must be around the corner as the days are getting longer and guess what? The decision has been made about Vacation Bible School! We'll be cooking up plenty of fun this summer at "Shake It Up Café!" Mark your calendars now for the last week in June – it'll be here before we know it!!

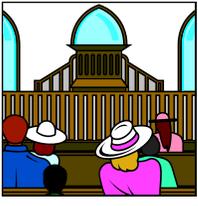
In the month of March, Room 3 will continue our study of Jesus' teachings. The "Bible detectives" will be studying parables. When Jesus spoke to people, he told parables or stories that showed goodness, kindness, and other qualities to follow. Based on the books of the Bible, Matthew and Luke, we will learn of a good Samaritan, a prodigal son, the mustard seed, and the unforgiving servant. Using our Bible readings, role-play, and class discussions, we will "bring to life" Jesus' parables.

Blessings from Ms. Marlene

Grades 4 thru 8 will be continuing to study Colossians, thinking about the Church as the Body of Christ – so why are there so many churches?; The purpose of Church – what am I supposed to do at Church?; Church practices - why is Church so long? And then shifting to faith questions – what's the big deal about sin? How the Holy Spirit Guides Us – is it really sin if you don't know it is?

Grades 9 thru 12 are going to study about Lazarus and Mary Magdalene and then have some lively discussions on some unusual "Do Not's" in the Bible. We'll then begin a 3-part series on worrying that explores what Jesus had to say about the topic – where does worry come from? Why is it so difficult to overcome and what can be done to overcome it?





Laity Enlightenment

Winter is almost over and like many others I am so ready for Spring. It's mostly about the weather; days are getting warmer and longer which means more sun. Hallelujah! The old saying "March comes in like a Lion and goes out like a Lamb" is also mostly about the weather. It's a picture of opposites; a lion and a lamb. These are two very different animals. It's about the contrast between the lion as the fierce wind and aggressive cold and the lamb as the gentle breeze and mild temperatures. Isaiah 11:6 uses a similar illustration which reads, "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them." It's about peace and love.

Life is full of opposites and contrasts: hot and cold, soft and hard, solid and liquid, black and white. There is also quite a bit of grey area in life. There are times when things may not seem as well defined and the lines between them can become blurry: right and wrong, peace and war, good and evil, love and hate. We should easily be able to tell the difference between these examples, but it's how we choose to live that defines each one separately. However, as Christians we can't be so rigid in our thinking that we don't allow ourselves to accept and love those who may not be like us or who may not know God. On the other hand, we can't be so malleable as to allow ourselves to be drawn into what we know is wrong. Romans 12:21 says, "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

Matthew 5:43-44 reads, "You have heard that it was said, you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy, but I say love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." This is a very hard concept to fully understand and even harder to practice. Imagine being trapped in an abusive relationship and, while just trying to survive, having to find love in your heart for a person who continuously hurts you. It would be so much easier to hate your persecutor.

What is love? How do you define it? Is it the opposite of hate? Define hate? It is a very difficult task to put into words such emotion-filled terms. Sometimes it's easier to say what something **is not** rather than explain what something **is**; using opposites as a way to clarify the meaning. The dictionary definition uses many descriptors to try to convey the meaning of love, but I like the biblical definition found in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, "Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."

As we practice loving each other and our enemies, we must look to God, who is perfect and loves us in spite of our many imperfections. We must trust and believe that God will show us the way just as surely as the Spring will come again this year as it did last year. Praise God!

Your Lay Leader, Kathy Russell

March is the Paper Retriever Nationwide Paper Drive.

We can double the earnings for the Richardson Park Church in March 2011! If we meet or exceed our March 2010 recycling weight of 4.03 tons in March 2011, we will receive double our monthly earnings.

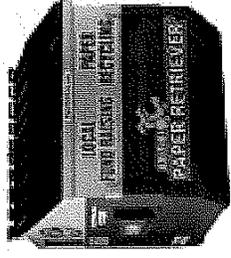
So save your papers and magazines or do a Spring cleaning to generate as much paper as possible for the

March Double Earnings Paper Drive!

Thanks in advance for all your contributions!



The Richardson Park United
Methodist Church
In the large Parking Lot at
11 N. Maryland Ave.



Live in
Concert
THE WILEY

COLLEGE A CAPPELLA CHOIR

UNDER THE DIRECTION OF STEPHEN L. HAYES



FRIDAY

MARCH 25, 2011 • 7PM

HOME OF THE GREAT DEBATERS WHICH WAS THE INSPIRATION FOR THE FILM DEPICTING THE JOURNEY OF PROFESSOR MELVIN TOLSON PORTRAYED BY DENZEL WASHINGTON.

WILEY COLLEGE, FOUNDED IN 1873, IS A HISTORICALLY BLACK, BACCALAUREATE DEGREE-GRANTING INSTITUTION AFFILIATED WITH THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH.

NAMED IN HONOR OF BISHOP ISAAC T. WILEY,
AN OUTSTANDING MINISTER, MEDICAL MISSIONARY AND EDUCATOR.

Simpson UM Church

907 Centerville • Wilmington, DE

Rev Lester Justice, Pastor

For more info call 302 998 4222 or visit www.simpsonde.org

March 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 7 PM Rebekah Circle 8 PM AA Meeting	2 10 AM Ruth Circle 6:30 PM Disciple I 7:30 PM NA Meeting	3 9 AM Ye Olde Shoppe 3:30 PM Kids Café 6:30 PM Chancel Bells 7:30 PM Chancel Choir 8:15 PM AA Meeting	4 10 AM Disciple II 11 AM Soup Kitchen	5 Fellowship Hall Reserved 9 AM Ye Olde Shoppe
6 9 AM Sunday School 10 AM Fellowship Time 10:30 AM Worship 11:30 Education Mtg. 5:30 PM Youth Group	7 1:30 PM UMW Unit Mtg.	8 8 PM AA Meeting	9 Noon Ash Wednesday Service at Peniel UMC 7 PM Ash Wednesday Service at RPUMC 7:30 PM NA Meeting	10 9 AM Ye Olde Shoppe 3:30 PM Kids Café 6:30 PM Chancel Bells 7:30 PM Chancel Choir 8:15 PM AA Meeting	11 10 AM Disciple II 11 AM Soup Kitchen	12 Fellowship Hall Reserved
13 9 AM Sunday School 10 AM Fellowship Time 10:30 AM Worship 11:30 Trustees Mtg. 5:30 PM Youth Group	14 Fellowship Hall Reserved	15 Fellowship Hall Reserved	16 Fellowship Hall Reserved Noon Prayer Service at Church of the Brethren 6:30 PM Disciple I 7:30 PM NA Meeting	17 Fellowship Hall Reserved 9 AM Ye Olde Shoppe 3:30 PM Kids Café 6:30 PM Chancel Bells 7:30 PM Chancel Choir 8:15 PM AA Meeting	18 Fellowship Hall Reserved YARD SALE 10 AM Disciple II 11 AM Soup Kitchen	19 Fellowship Hall Reserved YARD SALE
20 Fellowship Hall Reserved 9 AM Sunday School 10 AM Fellowship Time 10:30 AM Worship 5:30 PM Youth Group	21	22 8 PM AA Meeting	23 Noon Prayer Service at Calvary Presbyterian 6:30 PM Disciple I 7:30 PM NA Meeting	24 9 AM Ye Olde Shoppe 3:30 PM Kids Café 6:30 PM Chancel Bells 7:30 PM Chancel Choir 8:15 PM AA Meeting	25 10 AM Disciple II 11 AM Soup Kitchen	26
27 Fellowship Hall Reserved 9 AM Sunday School 10 AM Fellowship Time 10:30 AM Worship 11:30 AM Council Mtg. 11:30 AM Esther Circle 5:30 PM Youth Group	28	29 8 PM AA Meeting	30 Noon Prayer Service at St. James Episcopal 6:30 PM Disciple I 7:30 PM NA Meeting	31 9 AM Ye Olde Shoppe 3:30 PM Kids Café 6:30 PM Chancel Bells 7:30 PM Chancel Choir 8:15 PM AA Meeting		

RICHARDSON PARK
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
11 NORTH MARYLAND AVENUE
WILMINGTON, DE 19804-1305

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“THE MESSENGER” MARCH 2011

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Parsonage Phone: (302) 652-6168 E-Mail: rpumc@rpumchurch.org
Tom Pasmore, Pastor



LAY READERS

March 6	Joan Stadelman
March 13	Sheldon Edwards
March 20	Lee Powell
March 27	Tammy Brindle

ALTAR FLOWERS

March 6	Tony and Glenda Donnelly
March 13	Jay and Pat Cummings
March 20	Joan Stadelman
March 27	Carolyn Swain

ALTAR FLOWERS

For the month of March, Ruth Circle is responsible for the flowers.

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PLEASE REMEMBER TO BRING FOOD FOR
CAP THE FIRST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH.

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Please submit your articles for the
April Messenger to the church office by
Wednesday, March 9 Thank You.

*The purpose of Richardson Park United Methodist Church is to help people
experience the amazing love of God and develop a vital relationship with Jesus Christ.*