

A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR

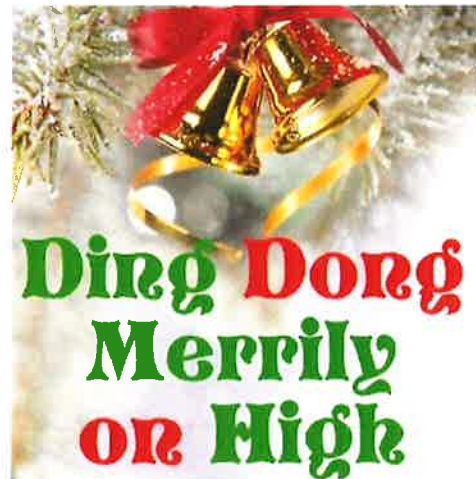
Written by Rev. Chris Pennington

Ding Dong! Merrily On High

1. Ding Dong! merrily on high
In heav'n the bells are ringing
Ding, dong! verily the sky
Is riv'n with angel singing
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis

2. E'en so here below, below
Let steeple bells be swungen
And i-o, i-o, i-o
By priest and people be sungen
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis

3. Pray ye dutifully prime
Your matin chime, ye ringers
May ye beautifully rime
Your evetime song, ye singers
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis



Ding Dong! Merrily on High is a popular Christmas melody often heard during carol concerts, including the Choir of King's College Cambridge's famous Nine Lessons and Carols service on Christmas Eve. Its origins, perhaps unsurprisingly given its sprightly, agile tune, are in dance music. The melody was originally named 'Branle de l'Official' and was found in a 16th-century book on French dance forms. English composer and church bell ringing enthusiast, George Ratcliffe Woodward (1848-1934), came across the melody and, through his passion for pealing, was inspired to give the tune a bell-inspired text. The carol was first published in 1924 in one of Woodward's many song books, The Cambridge Carol Book. Harmony was later added by Irish composer Charles Wood, and Sir David Willcocks more recently did a new arrangement for a Carols for Choirs book.



Woodward was not only a composer and bell ringer, but also a gifted linguist who translated many hymns from Greek, Latin, and German. Inspired by archaic poetry, Woodward wrote Ding Dong! Merrily on High in a macaronic style, combining English and Latin for lyrical effect. Its most famous line, 'Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis', a Latin refrain meaning 'Glory! Hosanna in the highest', sits alongside an otherwise English text. The 'o' of 'Gloria' is a long, melismatic phrase that requires carolers - usually of the soprano variety - to sing 33 syllables in just one breath.

As we encounter "The Bells of Christmas" this Advent season and you hear this song as you're traveling about or at home remember to give praise and glory to God but in doing so keep in mind that the word "Hosanna" means "Save us, please" and that is exactly why God sent Jesus to earth. We sing praise to God and merrily ring the bells because God loves us enough to sacrifice Jesus so that our eternal home is secure.

From my family to yours, Merry Christmas!

Pastor Chris, Christy, James Connor, Keila and Nicholas

PENNINGTON'S
*Christmas
Open House*

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10
12:30-3:30 PM**

15 Penarth Drive
Wilmington, DE 19803
RSVP pastorchris@rpumchurch.org



United
Women
in Faith

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

BY MARLENE JOHNSON

It really seems impossible to be writing a message for December! Where did the months go? Our group of women were busy throughout this year sharing God's love with so many folks. What a blessing to have these women at R.P.U.M.C.!

In December we share our gifts with many groups. I will take a few moments to mention a few of our activities.

1. Friends in Need
2. Door of Hope
3. Richey School
4. Heifer Project
5. Books for Children Program
6. Visit shut-ins: in person, phone calls and cards
7. Helping at free lunch
8. Helping at The Shoppe

We are a busy group sharing God's Love!

Our December meeting will be held on the 10th. Our meetings only last about 35 minutes with prayer, fellowship, business and sometimes a surprise! Please join this active group in the extension- I will be looking for you!

Activities for All:

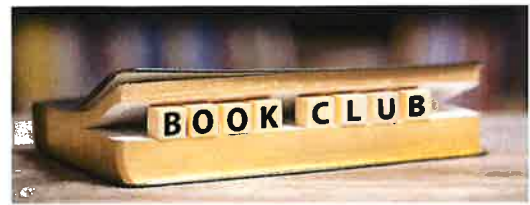
1. Christmas Card Box will return on November 26. I hope to see it bursting with cards for shut-ins, Churchman's Village and the V.A.
2. The large Christmas Box will be back again this year. Scarves, caps, mittens, or gloves and socks are being collected for the Richey School down the street. Both boxes will be collected on December 17 for delivery. Thanks you!

Now, my sisters in Faith:

1. Attend our last meeting of 2023 on December 10
2. Share a Christmas memory

A prayer: May we embrace wonder, joy and hope during this special time of year. Amen

Blessings from Marlene



BOOK CLUB

BY PAUL WEAVER

Our November meeting was held on Friday, November 10th at 2 pm at the church. We discussed "Maid: Hard Work, Low Pay, and a Mother's Will to Survive" by Stephanie Land.

Our December meeting will be on Friday, December 8th at 2 pm at the church. We will discuss "The Longest Ride" by Nicholas Sparks.

In January, we will be reading "The Spectacular" by Fiona Davis. Other coming attractions include "I Know Who You Are" by Barbara Rae-Venter, "The Senator's Wife", by Liv Constantine and "The Neighbor's Secret" by L. Alison Heller. And if you would like to join us and have a book to share with the club, please let me know. A number of our recent books have come from your suggestions, please keep those coming!

We received information on the New Castle Reads event for 2024, which is scheduled for April 2024. We are planning to attend again this year. The author and the book appear to be very interesting. Thanks, Paul



THE CHILDREN'S CORNER

BY MARLENE JOHNSON

The excitement is growing in Children's church- it is December!

Our small group of children is growing! What a blessing to greet the children each Sunday in the back of the sanctuary and follow each one to our classroom. We have a mixed age group which is wonderful- everyone helps!

After our individual candles are lit, songs are sung. Many of you will remember the words to these old favorites:

- This Little Light of Mine
- The Bible
- This is the Day
- And a few more.

Our study of Joseph was completed on November 19 and now we are all awaiting December 24.

May all of you have a wonderful Christmas!

Blessings from Ms. Marlene



TECHNOLOGY TIPS

BY JIM CHILCUTT

Safe Spending Tips for the Holidays

- **Only Shop on Popular or Familiar Websites.** Search results can be rigged to lead you astray or even send you to a sight which can infect your computer with malware.
- **Make sure you are using secure connections when making online purchases.** When in doubt, look for the padlock avatar or https:// in the web site's address line.
- **Research the Seller before buying.** If the site is not a well-known vendor do your due diligence. Look for referrals or user feedback about the vendor you are using.
- **Lie or omit personal information on shopping forms.** When a online site asks for personal information it's ok to provide false personal information to protect your identity. Another good rule to follow is never use your name in your email address.
- **Don't use your debit card to shop online.** If your debit card is compromised, scammers have direct access to all your bank funds. Alternatively set up a PayPal account to make payments instead of using a credit card.
- **Pay with your phone when purchasing in stores instead of using a credit card.** Using a mobile payment app like Apple Pay or Google Pay means you've authenticated your identity on your device and it protects you from skimmers.

If you have any questions or suggestions send an email to rpumc@rpumchurch.org or call the church office.



Thank You, LORD!



A BIG THANK YOU TO WEGMANS!

RPUMC would like to thank Wegmans for again supporting our Harvest Home In-Gathering by providing a \$500 gift card to purchase supplies. We, and more importantly, the community, appreciate Wegmans generosity!



MEMORIAL TREE

BY GLENDA DONNELLY

Thanks to the great work of the Trustees and the BMG, we have a beautiful Memorial Tree to recognize all our loved families and friends who have passed.

Take a moment and stop by the Extension and see the Memorial Tree. If you are interested in adding a loved one's name to the Memorial Tree, there are forms located on the table near the Tree. Any questions, please contact Glenda Donnelly at (302) 998-5047 or call the Church Office.

Thank you. Glenda

BAGS OF BLESSINGS

DONATIONS NEEDED

Please donate "single-served" food items such as granola bars, fruit cups, pudding cups, 16 oz. water bottles, snack crackers, cookies, peanut butter, etc. in support of this important adjunct ministry to our Free Lunch program. Volunteers are needed to fill the Bags of Blessings which are given out at the Free Lunch Ministry on Thursdays. Any questions, please contact Kathy Rogers, Missions Chair

FREE LUNCH MINISTRY

BY JOE TUCKER

Free Lunch program is continuing every Thursday 11:30 am to 12:30 pm with a grab-n-go lunch. We deliver a hot lunch in a take-out container at the main door of the church. Each person also receives a bag of crackers, power bars, a bottle of water, cup of pudding, etc. Our group of dedicated volunteers work Wednesday morning preparing food and 'bags of blessings' to hand out on Thursday morning. We are averaging about 100 meals a week. Contributions of items are always accepted. Currently, Free Lunch is in need of plastic grocery shopping bags at this time.

Some church members pick up meals and deliver them to family and elderly neighbors. Thank you to all volunteers who help on Wednesday and Thursday to prepare and serve free lunch!! Thank you. Joe



ONLINE GIVING - TITHES & OFFERINGS

ONLINE GIVING NOW AVAILABLE

Hello RPUMC Family!

We are pleased to announce that ONLINE GIVING is NOW Available! During this time of social distancing and quarantine, you can still support the work and ministry of Richardson Park UMC through your tithes and offerings by either sending them in the mail or now by giving online through our website!

(Click the "GIVING" tab on our website).

www.rpumchurch.org/html/giving.html



New Women's Al-Anon Meeting

Women's Al-Anon Family Group is an open meeting available to all women on Thursday evenings from 6:30-7:30 pm at Ebenezer United Methodist Church, 525 Polly Drummond Hill Road, Newark, DE 19711. Please use the main front entrance of the church.

The Al-Anon Family Groups are a fellowship of relative and friends of alcoholics who share experience, strength and hope in order to solve their common problems.

If you have any questions please call 302-731-9495, Ext. 10.

Peniel Soup Kitchen 10:30 to 12:30—Every Friday

Pick Up Free Lunch—Goodie Bag For All

Looking forward to seeing all of our friends again.
Please come everyone.



WELCOME!



Holy Land Tour Opportunities

District Superintendent Archie authorized the following link from a local tour agent offering a variety of Holy Land tours for 2023.

<http://www.etsftours.com/larue>



ALTAR FLOWER ORDERS

Please remember that if you would like to dedicate altar flowers "In Honor of" or "In Loving Memory of" a loved one, please submit your order and donation to the church office at least one week before.

Thank you.



The Shoppe at RPUMC

The Shoppe at RPUMC will be open for shopping on Thursdays from 11 am-2 pm. Closed Dec. 28-Jan 18



PROCEEDS BENEFIT MISSIONS/OUTREACH



Flower Containers Needed

We love delivering altar flowers to shut-ins and they love the visit BUT we are in need of containers. I have found the 1 lb. metal coffee cans do work very well. Please donate these so we can continue this wonderful program. Blessings from Marlene



GRIEF SHARE 2023

GriefShare a friendly, caring group of people who will walk alongside you through one of life's most difficult experiences. You don't have to go through the grieving process alone. Groups meet to help you face challenges and move toward rebuilding your life. GriefShare meets once a week on Thursdays from 4:00pm-5:30pm. To join the group contact: John Jennelly, Coordinator (302) 383-4704 or register online. Online registration go to: Griefshare.org enter zip code 19804. Click on Aldersgate United Methodist Church GriefShare and follow prompts. You are encouraged to join on any week. Sessions are self-contained.

Meeting	Date
Session 11 – Lessons of Grief – Part Two	Thu, Dec 7, 2023
Session 12 – Heaven	Thu, Dec 14, 2023
Session 13 – What Do I Live for Now?	Thu, Dec 21, 2023

ALTAR FLOWERS

December 3-Richard Locke
 December 10-Dennis & Marlene Johnson
 December 17-Open
 December 24-Poinsettias
 December 31-Sandy Ide

LAY READERS-To be announced



Bishop LaTrelle Easterling continues her podcast. Thursdays at the Table

Asking good questions, engaging in deep conversation and telling the whole truth can change the world. In her podcast Bishop LaTrelle Easterling invites you to join her for Thursdays at the Table as she is joined by leaders from across the connection, serving up new insights and interesting ways of experiencing our lives together.

New podcasts are the first Thursday of each month. Tune in **December 7** for the next podcast.

You can join at 8 a.m. or listen any time on: Spotify, Apple Podcasts or at pdcbwc.org/thursdays-at-the-table.html

The Bulletin

A newsletter published by Bishop LaTrelle Easterling is a reproducible resource for local churches. In the most recent issue, Bishop LaTrelle Easterling offers a word of gratitude for the United Methodists serving faithfully in a vast array of mission and ministry. "It is a privilege to serve in ministry with you as we share the love of God and bring hope to our communities," she writes. "Because you rise every morning and say, 'Yes!' to discipleship, seeds are being planted, challenges are being met and lives are being transformed."

You can view The Bulletin at: www.pdcbwc.org/the-bulletin



STRENGTHENING THE BLACK CHURCH

Join us for an unforgettable morning of inspiration and community at our annual:

GATHER | SCATTER GROW | SERVE

December 2, 2023 | 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
 Whatcoat UMC, Dover, DE
 Continental breakfast will be provided

Get ready for a powerful event featuring Keynote Speaker: Rev. Dr. Anthony C. Hunt of Epworth UMC, Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference

Special Guest: Episcopal Servant Leader, Bishop LaTrelle Easterling

Free to attend - registration required:
pendel-reg.brtapp.com/GTG2023

Questions? Contact Rev. Lester Justice
ljustice@pen-del.org

**RICHARDSON PARK UMC
CELEBRATES**

THE SEASON OF ADVENT

**First Sunday in Advent
December 3**



**Second Sunday in Advent
December 10**



**Third Sunday in Advent
December 17**



**Fourth Sunday in Advent
December 24**



Christmas Blessings this Advent Season

The beautiful Advent Wreaths which will adorn our church during Advent are graciously provided by the following members of RPUMC and are **Given to the Glory of God.**

Advent Wreath

In loving memory of Amanda and George Stewart by daughter, Phyllis Bowman

Altar Wreath

In loving memory of Ruth and Leonard Gibney by family

Balcony Wreath

In loving memory of Rick Cleaver, Corporal Chris Shea, Melvin and Lil Collings, Joyce Collins and Joyce Toy by Raphael and Paulette Cleaver-Lazzaro

Door Wreath

In honor of our sisters and brothers by Dave and Kathy Rogers

Door Wreath

In loving memory of Ralph and Dorothy Scarborough by daughter and son-in-law Nancy and Jim Quillen

Door Wreath

In loving memory of my family by Janet Dickerson

*Advent
begins*

December Birthdays

Tammy Brindle	December 1
Jeffery Daniels	December 2
William Edwards	December 2
Devon Manley	December 2
Bryan Cummings	December 3
Brian Cox	December 5
Don McFarland	December 7
Josiah Straughn	December 7
Zackery Casalvera	December 9
Andrew Hughes	December 9
Billee Boyd	December 10
Emma Warfel	December 10
Carolyn Stafford	December 11
Dana Bourdon	December 12
Rose Davis	December 12
Steven Ott	December 12
Justin Farren	December 14



Melanie Mitten	December 14
Megan Edwards	December 15
George Smallwood	December 15
David Brown	December 16
William Klingler, Jr.	December 18
Emma Mae Manley	December 20
Gladys Swain	December 21
Michael Toy	December 22
Fran Tebbutt	December 24
Cherie Krebs	December 25
Gloria Williams	December 25
Barbara Przywara	December 26
Betty Swain	December 26
William Aurelio	December 27
Jason Bourdon	December 29
Amanda Graham	December 31

Note: If your name is not listed on our birthday list, please call the church office

RPUMC AND TROOP 339 PRESENT

A LIVE NATIVITY

SATURDAY - DECEMBER 16

Shows at 5:00, 5:45 and 6:30 PM

Mark your calendar for an exciting way to experience the joy and wonder of the birth of Jesus. The Church and Troop 339 will present a Live Nativity with animals featuring children and adults, sing-along carols and a "Family-friendly" narration of the Christmas story. Refreshments. Collection boxes for coats, winter clothing and canned goods. Invite someone to join you for this wonderful presentation that will be staged outdoors in our parking lot.



CHRISTMAS EVE

CANDLELIGHT WORSHIP SERVICE


SUNDAY - DECEMBER 24

at 7:00 PM

We invite you to join us at RPUMC and invite your friends, family and neighbors as we celebrate the birth of Jesus and God's love that knows no limits. This service will feature music, a Christmas message and candle lighting. We look forward to sharing the Joy of the season with you. Hope to see you there!



DECEMBER 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2 11AM-2PM OPEN First Saturdays' – The Shoppe at RPUMC
3 9AM Adult Sunday School 9AM Choir Rehearsal 10:30AM Worship & Children's Church	4	5	6	7 9AM BMG – EXT. 11AM–2PM -The Shoppe at RPUMC 11:30AM–12:30PM -Free Lunch – FH	8 2PM Book Club – Lounge	9 FH Reserved
10 9AM Adult Sunday School 9AM Choir Rehearsal 10:30AM Worship & Children's Church 11:30AM UWif Mtg. – Ext	11	12	13	14 9AM BMG – EXT. 11AM–2PM -The Shoppe at RPUMC 11:30AM–12:30PM -Free Lunch – FH	15	16
17 9AM Adult Sunday School 9AM Choir, Rehearsal 10:30AM Worship & Children's Church 11:30AM – Trustee Mtg. – Lounge	18  Messenger Deadline Articles Due	19	20	21 FIRST DAY OF WINTER 9AM BMG – EXT. 11AM–2PM -The Shoppe at RPUMC 11:30AM–12:30PM -Free Lunch – FH	22 Church Office & Building Closed	23
24 CHRISTMAS EVE 9AM Adult Sunday School 9AM Choir Rehearsal 10:30AM Worship & Children's Church 7PM Candlelight Service	25 CHRISTMAS DAY Church Office & Building Closed	26	27	28 9AM BMG – EXT. CLOSED The Shoppe at RPUMC until Jan. 18, 2024 11:30AM–12:30PM -Free Lunch – FH	29	30
31 New Year's Eve 9AM Adult Sunday School 9AM Choir Rehearsal 10:30AM Worship & Children's Church						

The Shoppe at RPUMC, Parsonage and Annex will be OPEN for shopping on Thursdays' from 11AM-2PM the month of December.

COME ON OUT & SHOP AT
THE SHOPPE AT RPUMC

on Thursdays 11 AM-2 PM

PRE-LOVED GOODS

**DISCOVER GREAT FINDS
IT'S HOLIDAY TIME!**



WISHING EVERYONE
A Very Merry Christmas
and Happy New Year!

Thank you for supporting the mission.
The Shoppe will be closed from December 28, 2023 until
January 18, 2024



@rpumchurch.org

proceeds benefit
missions/outreach



RICHARDSON PARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

11 NORTH MARYLAND AVENUE
WILMINGTON, DE 19804-1305
Office: (302) 654-0961
E-Mail: rpumc@rpumchurch.org
Website: www.rpumchurch.org

Rev. J. Christopher Pennington
Cell Phone (302) 229-5626
E-Mail: pastorchris@rpumchurch.org
Office Hours: 9 a.m.-3 p.m. M-F
Administrative Assistant: Jennifer Boyce



In-Person and **Live Streaming** Sunday Worship Services at the following sites:

rpumchurch.org/html/streaming_service.html or
Facebook at: facebook.com/rpumchurch

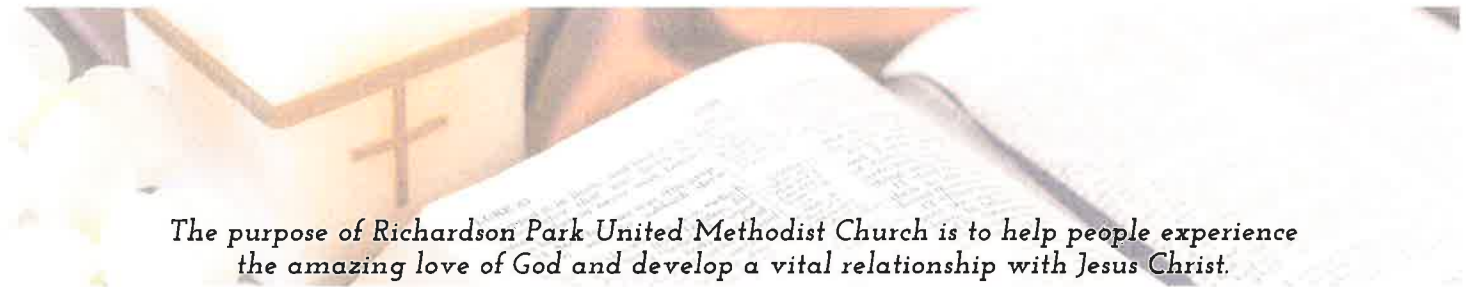
Sunday School.....9:00 A.M.
Fellowship Time.....9:40 A.M.
Worship & Children's Church.....10:30 A.M.



The Church Office & building
will be closed on
Friday, December 22 and
Monday, December 25



Please have articles and information for the January Messenger to the Church Office by Monday, December 18th. Remember to submit all announcements for the Sunday Bulletin no later than Wednesday. Email to: rpumc@rpumchurch.org
Thank you! ~Jen



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.