

A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR

Written by Rev. Chris Pennington

Here we are cuddled up in front of the fire, several feet of beautiful snow has blanketed the ground outside our house in Penarth, Christy pours hot chocolate into large mugs and we snuggle in for yet another in a long string of quiet evenings. Well, the hot chocolate part might be true, anyway. Without that layer of snow covering the trees and the grass, it's easy to see why this is called the "dead" of winter, and here we are right in the middle of it. How are things with your soul this time of year? Do you find yourself feeling like things look outside? I am a winter type of person so I find myself more happy this time of year than any other. But that's just me. In 1987, Stephen Covey wrote "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People". One of the concepts that he relies heavily upon deals with where one is to concentrate one's focus. He calls it the "Circle of Influence" versus the "Circle of Concern." We should only focus on things which we can actually have an effect upon. This is our "Circle of Influence." This circle starts with ourselves. First, we must take a good look at who we are and the extremely high value that we, as God's children, have, no matter what our station in life happens to be. Secondly, we can influence ourselves by the actions we take and the attitudes we foster. Aristotle said, "We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit." In addition, there is a maxim that goes, "Sow a thought, reap an action; so an action, reap a habit; sow a habit, reap a character; sow a character, reap a destiny". So lastly, if you are feeling "dead" like the things look outside, see if you can influence yourself by creating new actions and attitudes. If habits are learned they can be unlearned and perhaps it has been a habit to be down at this time of year. I have heard that if you tell yourself something enough times, your brain will think it to be reality. Concentrate on the words from John 3:16. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life." My dear friends, the "world" and the "whoever" in this familiar verse includes each and every one of you. That's how I know the tremendous worth of each and every one of you.

I pray God's continued blessings upon you this winter and throughout 2024.

Remember this, God's season of love does not pass like the seasons but is eternal in the heavens.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Chris

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.



United
Women
in Faith

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

BY MARLENE JOHNSON

Happy New Year - 2024! Where did the year 2023 go? Ladies, we accomplished a great deal in 2023. Are you ready to get started in this new year? Of course - I know that is the response from all of you.

To start our exciting new year of United Women in Faith meetings, mark January 14 on your calendars. I will be awaiting your arrival in the extension following the worship service. Remember - the meeting only lasts about 35 minutes and then you can visit with each other. Our gentlemen also meet to discuss whatever topic they select. This is a great time of fellowship.

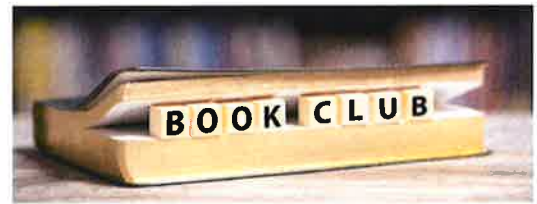
Now, my sisters in Faith:

1. Attend our first meeting of 2024 on January 14.
2. Share an exciting moment of your Christmas celebration.
3. Read Hebrews 13:2.

A prayer for you:

Lord, help me to see people around me with your eyes, putting their needs before mine. Amen

Blessings from Marlene



BOOK CLUB

BY PAUL WEAVER

Our December meeting was held on Friday, December 8th at 2 pm at the church. We discussed "The Longest Ride" by Nicholas Sparks.

Our January meeting will be on Friday, January 12th at 2 pm at the church. We will discuss "The Spectacular" by Fiona Davis.

Coming attractions include "I Know Who You Are" by Barbara Rae-Venter, "The Senator's Wife", by Liv Constantine, "The Guest List" by Lucy Foley 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

What an exciting year 2023 was for all of us in Children's Church. We ended the year with a wonderful celebration - the live Nativity! The children did an amazing job - thank you!

In 2024 we will "walk" with Jesus as he grows from the small baby in the manger to a grown man. What adventures await us? You must join us on Sunday mornings. Meet in the back pew of the sanctuary and go as a group to our room.

1. What will we see on the discovery table?
2. What chapter in the Bible will we read?
3. What activity or game will we play?

You must come on Sundays at 10:30 a.m. to find the answers to these questions!

Blessings from Ms. Marlene

2024
HAPPY NEW YEAR



TECHNOLOGY TIPS

BY JIM CHILCUTT

Scams are Abundant

This is the time of year when scams are abundant. This tip is a simple one. Before paying any of your credit card bills it's a good idea to review your statement and verify your charges. If you make a lot of online purchases, consider setting up a PayPal account. You have the protection of a third party sending a confirming statement, a password is required to authorize payment and you can set up a Pay Pal credit card to make the payments and leave it on file.

One last thing to help manage your accounts is to get a credit report at least once a year. If your identity has been stolen and used for purchases the fraudulent accounts should be in the report.

Getting a credit report is fairly simple. The only potential hard part is proving who you are so prepare to answer a series of personal questions that only you would know.

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



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



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

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!



Happy Winter



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 reopen for shopping on Thursdays from 11 am-2 pm on January 18, 2024



PROCEEDS BENEFIT MISSIONS/OUTREACH

HUMAN RELATIONS DAY



TOGETHER

OUR REACH IS BEYOND MEASURE

The United Methodist Church's special giving structure ensures your generosity blesses as many people as possible in sustainable, strategic ways

YOUR DONATION CHANGES THE WORLD ONE LIFE AT A TIME GIVE TO YOUR CHURCH:

Make checks payable to your local church or donate online via credit/debit card at ResourceUMC.org/SSGive



TO GIVE ONLINE SCAN QR CODE WITH YOUR SMARTPHONE CAMERA

Sunday, January 14th



Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.
The people of The United Methodist Church*



PODCAST



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 **January 4, 2024** 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



let it snow

ALTAR FLOWERS

January 3-Robert Truitt
At the Cross: Richard Locke
January 14-OPEN
At the Cross: Shirl Snapp
January 21-Lee Powell
January 28-Paul Weaver

LAY READERS-To be announced

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY



January 15th

FREE BREAD

**Thursday 9:00am -
12:30pm**
**Friday 9:00am -
12:30pm**
**Sunday 11:15 am -
12:30 pm**

**PENIEL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
115 E. MARKET STREET NEWPORT, DE 19804**

PENIEL UMC CHURCH

Soup Kitchen



**OPEN EVERY FRIDAY
FROM 10AM to 12PM**

**OPEN TO ANYONE WHO WANTS
A HOT MEAL**

115 E Market St, Newport, DE 19804

Absalom Jones Senior Center

Our Mission

New Castle County provides recreational, educational, and nutrition services for seniors 55+ years regardless of race, religion, sex, ethnic origin, or handicap. All those attending the Center must be able to take care of their personal needs and make independent decisions as they participate in the activities of the day.

Dining

A hot, nutritious meal or salad bar is served at 11:30 a.m. on weekdays (excluding holidays) for a suggested donation of \$2.25 for seniors over age 60, or \$4.50 for guests under age 60. Reservations are required by 11:30 a.m. the day before you plan to dine. Please call 302-995-7636 to make your reservation.

Absalom Jones Senior Center

Physical Address
310 Kiamensi Road
Wilmington, DE 19804
Phone: 302-995-7636

Hours
Monday - Friday
9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

New Castle County Department of Community Services

Division of Community Resources in partnership with the Division of State Service Centers

ABSALOM JONES SENIOR CENTER'S EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE for SENIORS

If you are in need of food, please contact:

Absalom Jones Senior Center
310 Kiamensi Road
Wilmington, DE 19804
(302)995-7636

or

Division of State Service Centers
Belvedere State Service Center
310 Kiamensi Road
Wilmington, DE 19804
(302)995-8545



January Birthdays

Michael Coverdale	January 2
David Swain	January 2
Karen Collins	January 3
Paigely Boyd	January 4
Gabriel Klingler	January 4
Harold Spedden	January 4
Wendy Walls	January 5
Donny Pasmore	January 6
Lee Powell	January 8
Cindi Beane	January 11
Joseph Watkins	January 12
Dillon Keffer	January 14



Julie Oakley	January 15
Hunter Saunders	January 15
Kiersten Hughart	January 16
Gail Cooke	January 17
Ginger Pettyjohn	January 17
Emmanuel Lee	January 18
Kenneth Saunders	January 19
David Goss	January 19
Jerry Paoli	January 19
Ruth Phillips	January 20
Anthony Donnelly	January 23
Jennifer Fitzgerald	January 31

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

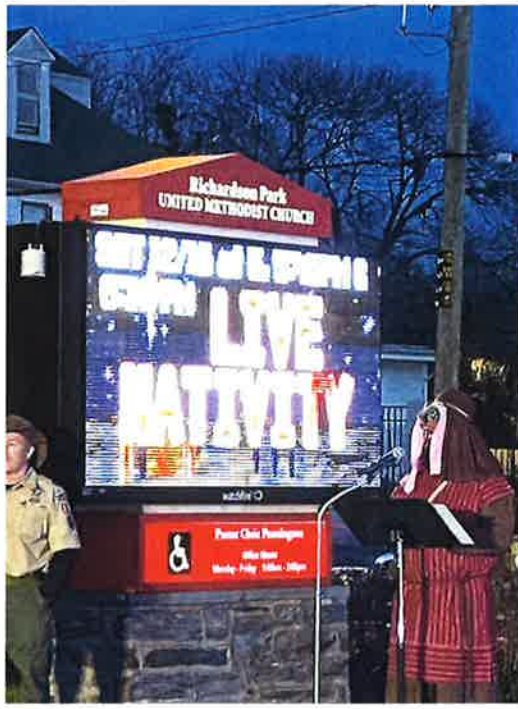
RPUMC AND TROOP 339 - A LIVE NATIVITY

Greetings to all involved!


I cannot thank you enough for the amazing job all of you have done to make this year's Live Nativity a gigantic success! It truly takes many hands to make the work a little easier and you have certainly accomplished that! Many blessings to you and your families!!

Your humble innkeeper,
Pastor Chris





JANUARY 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 NEW YEAR'S DAY Church Office & Building Closed 	2	3 6:30 PM Scouts Board Mtg. - Lounge	4 9AM BMG - EXT. 11:30AM-12:30PM -Free Lunch - FH CLOSED -The Shoppe at RPUMC	5	6 CLOSED First Saturdays' - The Shoppe & Annex at RPUMC
7 FH RESERVED 9AM Adult Sunday School 9AM Choir Rehearsal 10:30AM Worship & Children's Church	8	9	10	11 9AM BMG - EXT. 11:30AM-12:30PM -Free Lunch - FH CLOSED -The Shoppe at RPUMC	12 2PM Book Club - Lounge	13
14 HUMAN RELATIONS DAY 9AM Adult Sunday School 9AM Choir Rehearsal 10:30AM Worship & Children's Church 11:30AM UWif Mtg. - Ext	15 MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY Church Office & Building Closed	16	17	18 9AM BMG - EXT. 11AM-2PM -The Shoppe at RPUMC 11:30AM-12:30PM -Free Lunch - FH	19	20
21 9AM Adult Sunday School 9AM Choir Rehearsal 10:30AM Worship & Children's Church 11:30AM - Trustee Mtg. - Lounge	22  Messenger Deadline Articles Due	23	24	25 9AM BMG - EXT. 11AM-2PM -The Shoppe at RPUMC 11:30AM-12:30PM -Free Lunch - FH	26	27
28 9AM Adult Sunday School 9AM Choir Rehearsal 10:30AM Worship & Children's Church 11:30 AM - Council Mtg. - Lounge	29	30	31			

The Shoppe at RPUMC, Parsonage and Annex will be OPEN for shopping on Thursdays' from 11AM-2PM on January 18th and January 25th.

THE SHOPPE AT RPUMC

WISHING EVERYONE
A Happy New Year!

The Shoppe will reopen
 January 18, 2024



Thank you for supporting the mission.



The Messenger



January 2024

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: pastorchrisc@rpumchurch.org
Office Hours: 9 a.m.-3 p.m. M-F
Administrative Assistant: Jennifer Boyce



2024 Happy New Year

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

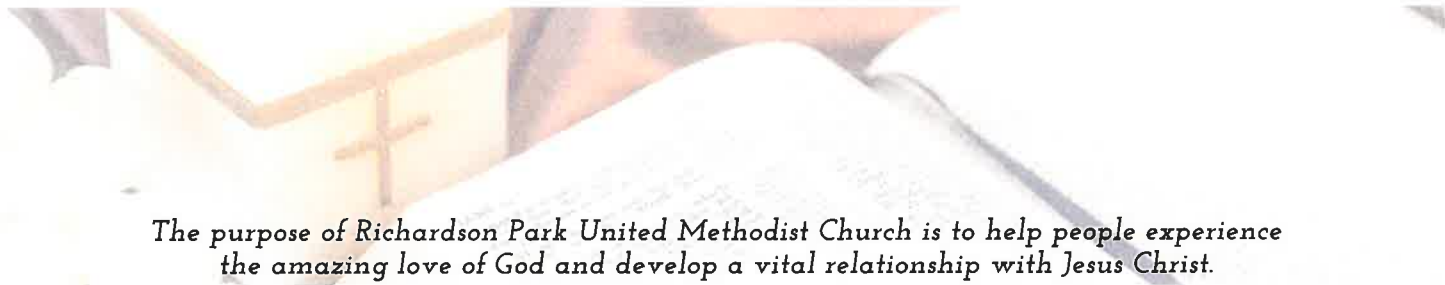
rpumchurch.org/html/streaming_service.html or
Facebook at: facebook.com/rpumchurch

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
Monday, January 1st



Please have articles and information for the February Messenger to the Church Office by Friday, January 19th. Remember to submit all announcements for the Sunday Bulletin no later than Wednesday. Email to: rpumc@rpumchurch.org
Thank you! ~Jen



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