

THIS WEEK

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18

9 AM – ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL – LOUNGE
10:30 AM – WORSHIP & CHILDREN’S CHURCH

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19 – PRESIDENTS’ DAY

CHURCH OFFICE & BUILDING CLOSED

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20

6 PM – TRUSTEE MTG. - LOUNGE

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21 – NO EVENTS

SCHEDULED

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22

9 AM – BMG – EXT.

11AM-2PM – THE SHOPPE & ANNEX at RPUMC

OPEN for shopping *Proceeds Benefit Missions/ Outreach*

11:30 AM-12:30 PM – FREE LUNCH – FH

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23 – NO EVENTS

SCHEDULED

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24

11 AM – KOINONIA MTG. – EXT.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25

9 AM – ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL – LOUNGE

10:30 AM – WORSHIP & CHILDREN’S CHURCH

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

Bishop’s Days on the District Feb. 27-29 – Bishop LaTrelle Easterling will be visiting each District the last week of February. Join Bishop Easterling as she visits the districts this month with a vision toward a healthy future. Laity and clergy are encouraged to attend any night that works best for you regardless of your district. We look forward to an inspirational evening of gathering together in person (these are *all in-person*, no hybrid option available) for fellowship, worship, and celebration of what God is calling us to do and be. Please come out to hear her message and fellowship with other congregations. All 3 events will be the same, so choose the location closest to you. Tuesday, Feb. 27, 7-9pm Community Church in Ocean Pines, MD (11227 Racetrack Road, Berlin, MD 21811); Wednesday, Feb. 28, 7-9pm Asbury UMC, Smyrna, DE (20 W Mt Vernon St., Smyrna, DE 19977); Thursday, Feb. 29, 7-9pm Immanuel UMC, Grasonville, MD (102 School House Lane, Grasonville, MD 21638)

Book Club – Our January meeting was held on Friday, January 12th at 2 pm at the church. We discussed “The Spectacular” by Fiona Davis. Our February meeting will be held on Friday, February 9th at 1 pm at the church. Please note the earlier time! We will discuss “The Neighbor’s Secret” by L. Alison Heller. 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 “Seventy Times Seven” by Alex Mar. 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 30, 2024 at 7 pm. We are planning to attend again this year. The author and the book (The Violin Conspiracy by Brendan Slocumb) appear to be very interesting. Thanks, Paul

Flower Containers – 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, Marlene

Free Lunch – Free Lunch program is continuing every Thursday 11:30 am-12:30 pm. We prepare a hot lunch in a take-out container at the main door of the church. Each person also receives a ‘bag of blessings’. Our group of dedicated volunteers work on Wednesday mornings preparing food and the ‘bags of blessings’ to hand out. We are averaging about 100 meals a week now. Contributions of items are always accepted. Some church members pick up meals and deliver them to family and elderly neighbors. Thank you for your contributions.

Free Bread – Peniel UMC has free loaves of bread available every Thursday 9am to 12:30pm, Friday 9am to 12:30pm and on Sundays from 11:15am to 12:30pm. Feel free to stop in to get a loaf or two. Come to the fellowship hall entrance located under the canopy on the parking lot side of the church.

Lenten Bible Study – Please join Rev. Tony Arrington and Pastor Chris for a Lenten Bible Study, *Embracing The Uncertain by Magrey R. deVega*, on Tuesdays, beginning this Tuesday, February 20th at **11 am** in the Lounge at RPUMC. To sign up, please give the Church Office a call (302-654-0961) or send an email to rpumc@rpumchurch.org

The Shoppe – is **Open** for shopping on Thursdays from 11 am until 2 pm. Stop on by The Shoppe & Annex, grab a deal or two and be sure to tell your family and friends! Thank you everyone for your support! *Proceeds Benefit Mission/Outreach*



PENINSULA-DELAWARE CONFERENCE



THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Bishop LaTrelle Easterling

BISHOP, PENINSULA-DELAWARE CONFERENCE,
BALTIMORE-WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

REV. ERICA ROBINSON-JOHNSON *Chief Administrative Officer*

"Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; rend your hearts and not your clothing." – Joel 2:12-13a

During the Super Bowl held on Sunday, Feb. 11, there were ads entitled "He Gets Us," one of which portrayed scenes of foot-washing between individuals often at odds with one another. The commercial ended with the words, "Jesus didn't teach hate. He washed feet." The ad has aroused significant controversy for several reasons, but chief among them is whether the message is genuine or a facade. Can those who funded the ad be trusted with the message it promotes, or is there a conflicting agenda?

Individuals will need to do their own research and draw their own conclusions about the veracity of that controversial commercial. Whether or not the ad campaign is to be trusted is a matter of debate, whether or not Jesus of Nazareth can be trusted is not.

As we enter into this Lenten season to pray, listen, reflect and repent, the Jesus who journeys with us can be trusted with our hearts, minds, souls and bodies -- with our very lives. We need not come cautiously or with suspicion. Jesus does not come as the world comes; Jesus does not judge as the world judges; Jesus does not love as the world loves. As we walk this 40-day journey, we can completely surrender ourselves to Jesus and allow him to continue the beautiful work of transformation in our lives.

Too often, we enter this season in drudgery, void of all joy and hope. While it is a season that reminds us of our finite humanity and anticipates the death of our Lord and Savior, it is also a path to rebirth, renewal and resurrection. Christ bids us come, he creates in us a pure heart and renews a steadfast spirit. That bidding does not originate from a place of disgust, rejection or shame, but pure love. That bidding invites us into a deeper relationship with God and God's creation. It calls us to love ourselves more earnestly and to love one another without condition. That bidding comes that we might be fully liberated from the destructive powers of this world. The healing and transformation we need is not to be healed from ourselves as God created us, but to be healed from the ways we have learned to oppress and destroy God's creation, the ways we have learned to hate one another, the ways we have learned to hate ourselves.

This journey is really a journey of healing -- allowing ourselves to **be** healed. It's healing us from anything that separates us from God; healing us from anything that prevents us from taking on the mind of Christ; healing us from our collective brokenness; healing us from the inside out. As this transformation occurs, we begin to see the world differently. We put aside fear, mistrust, arrogance and privilege, and begin to live as people who are sincerely willing to wash one another's feet. We embody forgiveness and reconciliation. We embrace one another in agape love. We humbly stand as one at the foot of the cross. That is our Lenten journey. May it be so.

Bishop LaTrelle Easterling

Baltimore-Washington and Peninsula Delaware Conferences

The United Methodist Church