Open WINDOWS
by Maryanne Arthur

“The ‘window’ metaphor has an long career in the history of art and, in fact, in the evolvement of the human perspective in general,” said German sociologist Hans J. Krysmanski. Humans have always needed windows as a means to bring light, fresh air, and sound into dwellings. But, perhaps more curiously, we are drawn to windows as beacons of growth and hope — as openings that illuminate darkness.

What better way to warm our flesh and ignite our spirits than to push back the curtains and throw open the sash? This spring, take note of any unconscious yearning to remain in the comfort of familiarity and ambivalence. Instead, embrace the season as an opportunity to let in a breath of fresh air, a unique perspective, and moments of enlightenment to prepare you for the miracle of Easter and the pure joy that a single, open window can bestow.

New Lead Pastor Arrives July 1

In early January, Pastor Mark Johnson announced that he and his wife, the Rev. Dr. Sandi Johnson, would be retiring effective July 1, 2021. After serving in the Baltimore Washington United Methodist Conference for the past 12 years, Pastors Mark and Sandi have decided it is time to move back to Colorado to be nearer to family.

District Superintendent, the Rev. Dr. Wanda Bynum Duckett, announced Bishop LaTrelle Easterling’s intention to replace Pastor Mark on July 1, 2021 with the Rev. Stephanie Roberts White.

Born and raised in the Fort Worth, Texas area, Rev. White began attending a United Methodist Church at the age of 17 and accepted her call to ministry at age 21. She has served as a youth pastor, a co-pastor with her husband, Kevin, a pastor, an associate pastor, a Director of Family Ministries, a Director of Women’s Ministries, and even as a church office administrator! Because of her husband’s military service, they have lived in Texas, Ohio, Washington State, Georgia, and Maryland, where they are currently living near Washington, D.C. Stephanie has had the rare privilege of serving churches in all five United Methodist jurisdictions of the United States. The Whites have four children (Malachi, Ezekiel, Liberty, and Gabriel). Stephanie holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Christian Education from Texas Wesleyan University in Fort Worth, Texas and a Master of Divinity degree from Asbury Theological Seminary in Lexington, Kentucky.

More information will be coming from the Staff Parish Relations Committee about plans to honor Pastor Mark’s retirement and to welcome Pastor Stephanie this summer.
COVID & Inclement Weather

Monday-Friday Church Office & Building

At this time, the church building remains closed to the public due to COVID-19 regulations and safety protocols, except for Sunday in-person 10:15 AM worship and the Hampton Lane CDC program. Thank you for your continued kindness and patience!

Sunday In-Person Worship

Check the church’s Facebook page for up-to-date information. We strive to post any closings or schedule changes at least one hour prior to the start of worship time. Please use your best judgment if you venture outdoors in inclement weather. Be safe!

Next High Spire content deadline: May 1, 2021
for the upcoming SUMMER 2021 issue.
Send photos, story ideas, and written copy to:
communications@towsonumc.org
Dear Friends,

As I write this in late-ish February, I have just come inside from trying to chip three inches of icy snow off the sidewalks, driveway and cars. Perhaps, as you read this in early March, you remember the storm I’m writing about. Perhaps, you spent some time scooping and chipping, too. Anyway, as I worked I found myself singing a song from the musical, “Annie”. Maybe you remember the song and maybe, you, too, found yourself singing:

♫ The sun’ll come out, tomorrow. 
Bet your bottom dollar that tomorrow there’ll be sun!

Of course the sun I was thinking about would melt that blasted ice that was such a problem to remove from my driveway. But, you know, the song isn’t really about the sunshine that melts snow and ice. The song goes on:

♫ When I’m stuck in a day that’s gray and lonely

And who among us haven’t been stuck in some “gray and lonely” days? For nearly a year, now, we’ve been separated to protect ourselves and others from COVID 19. We’ve masked, stayed home, kept our distance when what we’ve really wanted to do is get together, hug our family and friends, laugh great belly laughs with each other, and sing at the top of our voices.

♫ I just stick out my chin and grin and say –
The sun’ll come out, tomorrow
So you got to hang on ‘til tomorrow
Come what may

And here is where we diverge from the song. Our hope is not in the sun, but in the Son. Our Savior, Jesus Christ is the One who is in charge of both our todays and all of our tomorrows. Life will resume after COVID – perhaps differently – but we will still be invited to find richness, peace, and joy. Christ’s ministry at Towson UMC will invite you and others to do God’s will at our corner of Hampton Lane and Dulaney Valley Road – and beyond. Pastor Stephanie will share vital ministry with you and we will all grow in the love of God and neighbor.

♫ Tomorrow! Tomorrow! I love you, tomorrow! You’re always a day away!

It may be cold and icy outside and it may feel gray and lonely inside, but in the love of God our Creator, Christ our Redeemer, and the Spirit our Sustainer, our todays and tomorrows are secure.

I pray that you will feel the warmth of the “Son-shine” in these days and always.

In Christ’s Love,

Pastor Mark Johnson
Coffee & Conversation
You are invited! Pastor Mark continues to meet for a time of informal conversation on Wednesday mornings at 9:00 AM. Until it is safer to gather in person, this meeting will take place on Zoom. Any questions? Want to join the conversation? Contact Pastor Mark Johnson at leadpastor@towsonumc.org and he will email the link to you.

Stroll for Peace
Take a stroll down the footpath at the edge of the parking lot into our beautiful Prayer Labyrinth. Find tranquility in this easily-accessible location. It’s good exercise for the heart and soul!

Men’s Prayer Breakfast
All men of Towson Church are invited to a time of fellowship, prayer, scripture, and Bible study weekly at 7:00 AM Thursday mornings. Each week, we read and discuss scripture that will be used the following Sunday in worship. Until it is safer to resume in-person breakfast meetings, we gather on Zoom. Interested? Contact Pastor Mark Johnson at leadpastor@towsonumc.org to get the Zoom link and weekly emails.

Need a break? Take a quiet, self-guided walk and be sure to carry a copy of our Spiritual Walk meditation booklet. It’s chock full of scripture, activities, brain boosts, and more. Download a digital PDF copy at www.towsonchurch.org. Or write communications@towsonumc.org for a paper copy.
You’re Invited

NOTE: At the time of this publication, all Sunday worship services are scheduled to be live (in-person) at church and livestream/recorded on our YouTube channel. Follow us on Facebook for the most up-to-date information about any coronavirus containment strategies that limit live access to our sanctuary.

The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet; they break forth into singing. –Isaiah 14:7

The word ‘Lent’ comes from an old English word for ‘lengthen,’ and refers to the lengthening days of spring. Anticipating Easter, the church prepares with 40 days of fasting and reflection, the better to celebrate the great feast when it comes.

The word ‘sabbath’ comes from an old Hebrew word for ‘to stop’ and refers to pausing secondary activities (like work or indulgent habits) to clear space for primary ones (like relationships, study, delight, and restoration).

During the Lenten season, Christians set aside ‘sabbath’ time for stepping away from work and busy-ness to rejoice in the soul-full rejuvenation that springs forth after deliberate rest. How appropriate that Lent is also a harbinger of spring when gorgeous seasonal blooms burst through the soil only after a long winter’s rest? We could all benefit from the same.

How are you resting? Connecting with nature? Being gentle with yourself? Feeling more joyful at the day’s end? Carve time from your daily schedule to design a personal sabbath day or hour to grant a much-needed seasonal rest!

Refer to the Lenten booklet we mailed in February to guide you this Lenten season. Call the church office if you need a paper copy. Or visit our website.

Source: “Wendell Berry and the Sabbath Poetry of Lent” — the Salt Project

Lenten Activities

Lent Sundays

Easter DRIVE THRU Celebration, March 27
11:00 AM to Noon, drive by church to pick up baggies filled with the Easter story and treats for children up to age 10. Remain in vehicle and wear face masks.

Palm Sunday, March 28
10:15 AM service, featuring blessing and distribution of palm branches

Maundy Thursday, April 1
9:00 AM Meditation video, commemorating the sacrifice of Jesus, posted on YouTube

Good Friday, April 2
Drop by church between Noon and 7:30 PM to walk in Jesus’ footsteps in a self-guided Prayer Walk through our sanctuary. Check-In and face masks required.

Easter Sunday, April 4
10:15 AM Worship in-person; watch the livestream or recorded video posted on YouTube. Celebrate the resurrection of our Lord with special music and message.

inSPiRE

E-News SIGN UP
Submit the “Sign Up” form at www.towsonchurch.org or choose the “News” tab to read our e-newsletter inSPiRE.
Coronavirus Containment

CHURCH UPDATE

Members of our Re-opening Well Task Force continue to monitor the pandemic to direct the Church’s response to COVID 19. Until the pandemic subsides and/or the majority of our members are vaccinated, we will continue having limited seating, mask wearing, and physical-distancing for in-person worship and for some approved church ministries.

If you have any questions or concerns, then please contact Pastor Mark Johnson at 410.823.6511. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

NEW! Committee Chairs and Lay Leaders 2021

Congratulations to our NEW and RENEWING Church Leaders for the upcoming year!

- Church Council: Joe Corson, chair
- Church Council: Carol Caplan, secretary
- Finance: Dale Springer
- Trustees: Dwight Kines
- Property and Maintenance: Michael McWilliams
- Staff Parish Relations (SPRC): Merrill Frank
- Education Work Area: Carolyn Schnur
- Congregational Care: Susan Killian and Linda Brooks
- Missions: Gene Bandy
- Hospitality: Rev. Diane Crider and Kathy King
- Community Events and Outreach: Maryanne Arthur
- Lay Leader: Stephanie Kimmons
- Lay Members to Annual Conference: Kevin Gralley and Michael Gambuto
- Child Development Center: To be determined

Please take an opportunity to thank them for their service and pray for them as they guide Christ’s ministries at Towson Church.

Do good & Be well

Stay home if you do not feel well.

Wear a face mask properly over your nose and mouth.

Wash hands and use hand sanitizer often.

Keep at least six feet of physical space between yourself and others.

Got Grads?

It’s that time of year when we celebrate ALL the graduates of our congregation!

If you (or a family member) is a 2021 graduate, then please send your graduate information and a photo to Maryanne Arthur at communications@towsonumc.org by May 16. Be sure to include the graduate’s full name, current school, degree/specialty, and next steps in your email note.

We can’t wait to celebrate YOU during worship in June (date TBD)!
EASTER PLANTABLE FLOWER CELEBRATION ‘21

Rejoice! I would like to order _______ # quantity) plants at $20 each. Check Amount: _________

In honor of ________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

In loving memory of _______________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

Send this form and a check (payable to Towson Church with “E-Flowers” on memo line) to the church Business Office by Sunday, March 21, 2021. Mail to: 501 Hampton Lane, Towson MD 21286.

Your Name(s):_____________________________________________________________________

Circle ONE of the following pick-up OR delivery options:

YES  Send my plants to a shut-in.  YES  I will pick up plants after the Easter service on 4/4/21.
Property & Maintenance NEWS
by Mike McWilliams

The Property and Maintenance Committee members have been meeting monthly on Zoom this past year. Here are a few projects we have been/are working on at church.

- Working on replacing the three spire lights at the request of the Trustees; also we will update lighting to LED to save us money in the long run
- Recently repaired several of the organ pipes and leathers in the organ chamber (in the Sanctuary)
- Repaired and are consistently monitoring a few roof leaks that caused some building damage
- Removed several Ash trees along Hampton Lane and the adjacent property because the trees were infected with Emerald Ash borer
- Logs have been cut up and are free to anyone who wants to haul away
- Repaired roof gutters on the south side of the building due to an ice dam
- Completed many small repairs, spigot replacements, pew rack repairs, light bulb changes, etc. by committee members
- Scheduled concrete walk repairs by the back door (CDC entrance) in the spring or as weather permits

I’m proud to work with our committee members, who are dedicated to our beautiful church building and grounds!

Communion Elements for ALL

Did you know that our pastors are distributing blessed communion elements the first Sunday of each month? The elements are individually-wrapped and available for all to partake safely. Pick up communion elements during the 10:15 AM in-person worship service OR after worship at 11:00 AM by the side sanctuary door. Also, you may call the church office and make arrangements to pick up elements at a more convenient time and hold them until the first of the month. 410.823.6511.

It’s Springtime 2021...

Don’t forget!

Remember to set your clocks forward one hour before you go to bed on Saturday March 13 for Sunday March 14 when Daylight Savings Time begins.

That way, you’ll arrive in worship the next morning—on time! Or tune in for the livestream/recorded service online at our church YouTube channel.

Dear Friends at Towson Church,

What a lovely surprise when Carolyn Eckes arrived at our door with a beautiful poinsettia! You were so thoughtful to remember [us]. We will enjoy remembering our wonderful friends as we look at the poinsettia each day.

Thank you and blessings!

-- Carol and John Engel
LaVerne Schneider has been knitting for as long as she can remember. As a member of the Prayer Shawl Ministry at Towson Church, LaVerne specializes in creating handstitched baby caps for local hospitals. She is a whiz with knitting needles and makes more than 350 caps each year! She credits Carol Matlin with bringing her a continuous supply of pastel yarn and for delivering the caps to local hospitals.

LaVerne and her husband, Harry, were longtime church members until Harry became ill and homebound last summer. During one of life’s most difficult years, LaVerne stayed home to care for Harry and keep him company; relying on her knitting for comfort after his death. “If I didn’t have my knitting,” she joked, “I’d go stark crazy at home by myself!” LaVerne remains in close contact with her church and Prayer Shawl friends. She relishes the written and handmade correspondence she has received from church staff and other ministries. And, wants to thank everyone for their time, talent and generosity. When asked about her other creative endeavors, and if she knits items for herself, LaVerne replied, “No! There is nothing I’d rather do than make something for others.”

Congratulations to Kathleen Cotter who was inducted into the Maryland Senior Citizens Hall of Fame in 2020 for the many hours she has given to others and for her “skills and willingness to serve in many capacities in [her] volunteerism.” As an honored member of the Class of 2020, Kathleen was nominated by a peer for her longstanding volunteerism. In her early years, Kathleen was a Girl Scout Mariner, serving through sailing, singing, and community projects and events. Through the years, she maintained strong church and school connections, participating in many choirs, committees, and programs in New York. Here in Baltimore since 2017, Kathleen volunteers at the YMCA, the Bykota Senior Center, her condo complex, and Towson Church. She is a political advocate for senior benefits. And, for more than 49 years, she has donated whole blood and platelets to the Red Cross. In lieu of an in-person banquet, Kathleen received her pin, certificate, and program through the mail due to covid restrictions.

This February, Nancy Andrew celebrated 40 years of employment at Hampton Lane Child Development Center. In 1977, when the Center opened, Nancy reported, it “felt like a family.” For 32 years, she served as Administrative Director, managing finances and daily administration, and serving as liaison to the Church. During her tenure, the Center grew exponentially. Today, Nancy faithfully supports the Center’s mission, Director, and staff with a variety of invaluable tasks. And, she is an active member of the church congregation.

March 28
Join us for 10:15 AM in-person worship on Palm Sunday or stop by church at 11:00 AM that morning to pick up a blessed palm branch to take home. Palm Sunday commemorates the entrance of Jesus into the city of Jerusalem where palm branches were placed in his path, before his arrest on Holy Thursday and crucifixion on Good Friday. This day signifies the beginning of Holy Week.

Good Friday
On April 2, 2021 - Good Friday - we invite you to come to church for a reflective, self-guided journey of Jesus’ last hours. Scriptures, pictures, and meditation suggestions will be posted to guide your walk around the church Sanctuary. Most folks complete the journey in 30-45 minutes, but feel free to stay as long as you like.

Drop in anytime between noon and 7:30 PM. Be sure to wear a facemask, maintain physical distance, and complete the online Save-a-Seat or in-person check-in at the Welcome Desk upon arrival. See you soon!

https://www.umc.org/en/content/what-is-palm-sunday
Flowers are a loving message from the Lord to give us hope. If you were to look at the dirty root of a flower in the darkness underground, you would never think it was anything but worthless and ugly. You would never realize that it is the beginning of a beautiful work of the Lord’s hands that blossoms in the open air and sunshine. This world is the seedbed, and the Lord has plans to make each one of us bloom. — by Chauncey Giles

Submitted by Kathy Simons
Students in Grades 6-12 may participate in fun, educational, missionary and fellowship activities throughout the school year. Bring a friend!

Upcoming Youth Group Events

MARCH
3/7 Game Night with Ms. Allison via Zoom, 5:00 PM
3/14 Lenten Bible Study “24 Hours that Changed the World” with Pastor Christine via Zoom, 5:00 PM
3/21 Easter HOP THRU Mission Work at Church, 5:00 PM
3/28 NO Youth Group — Palm Sunday

ROCK 2021

More than 1000 youth from the Baltimore-Washington Conference engaged in a virtual, interactive ROCK, Feb 5-6. Our youth group members participated! It began Friday night with getting to know our Bishop, LaTrelle Easterling, who spoke about being authentic and not allowing peer pressure to define us. The youth also had an opportunity to have a Q & A session with the Bishop. It was good to hear her message of faith and reassurance that the youth are made in the image of God. There were many cool breakout sessions offered on Saturday with topics on racism, human rights, mental health and life after high school. In the midst of COVID, we have realized that technology can be our friend. The ROCK team plans to host this amazing retreat next year in Ocean City, MD. Get ready - 2022!
With Gratitude

Thank you to all the church family who connected with me during Bob's COVID struggle and his passing.

A special thank you to all those who were able to join Bob and I in a mass prayer for his comfort during his last few days. The prayers brought Bob to a place where he was not fearful and to where he could even reach out to comfort me. You will never know what that meant to both of us.

I look forward to returning to church and thanking you all personally.

—Stephanie Kimmons
Special Delivery

During Christmas and Easter, the Men of Towson Church sell flowers to decorate the Sanctuary for the holidays and to bring cheer to our home-bound members.

Cozy Up

On Valentine’s weekend 2021, 40 women were residing safely at the House of Ruth in Baltimore. To help make their stay cozy, members of the Towson Church Hospitality Ministries Committee donated more than 85 pairs of snuggly warm socks, plus a variety of other socks. Each resident received two pairs of festive footies wrapped with a Valentine’s ribbon; and, they were so grateful for the church’s generosity!

Welcome Wreath

Each year before Christmastime, members Martha Dase and Janet Kines prepare the gorgeous fresh fruit wreath that hangs boldly and beautifully above our front doors. Thanks to both of these ladies for continuing a longstanding tradition—and to the Maxalea crew for wreath hanging.

Food Delivery

Church members, who are also Edenwald residents, sparked a holiday food drive that yielded several boxes of non-perishable food items for our Emergency Food Pantry.

Streets of Hope

During the winter months, our Mission Team partners with other local churches through the Streets of Hope initiative to provide a solid meal to homeless men in the Essex area. In non-covid times, we would provide home-cooked meals. This year, all food is restaurant-prepared and individually-wrapped. In late December, the Arthur-Merow family delivered dinner, dessert, and drinks plus a surprise holiday gift bag to program participants. Good news: The men were staying at a hotel during one of Baltimore’s coldest 2020 weeks!
Learning Opportunities for ALL Ages

Want to join a laser-focused Bible discussion? Delve deeper into your faith? Meet like-minded folks? Learn more about being a United Methodist? Chat about current events as we follow Jesus’ footsteps? We have a group for that! Contact Pastor Christine Kumar to get connected. 410.823.6511.

Children/Youth Classes and Meetings

- Religious Education Grades Pre-K to Kindergarten “The Lord’s Little Learners”
  Monday nights 6:30-7:30 PM via Zoom.
- Religious Education Grades 1-5.
  Tuesday nights 6:30-7:30 PM via Zoom.
- Youth Group Education, Missions, Games, and More Grades 6-12.
  Sunday nights at 5:00 PM

Adult Classes and Meetings

- Tower Class - Sunday mornings at 8:30 AM via Zoom.
  Host: Kevin Gralley
- Christians Under Construction - Sunday mornings at 9:00 AM via Zoom.
  Host: Patty Hutsell
- Coffee & Conversation - Wednesday Mornings at 9:00 AM via Zoom.
  Host: Pastor Mark Johnson
- Men’s Prayer Breakfast - Thursday mornings at 7:00 AM via Zoom.
  Host: Pastor Mark Johnson

Lent 2021 Bible Study
Rev. Fred Crider is teaching a Lenten Bible study on “24 Hours that Changed the World.” Contact the church for specific dates and Zoom login details.

Winter Book Study
The Women’s Read and Relate Group is diving into a special discussion of the book Why? Making Sense of God’s Will by Adam Hamilton. (The book is available on Amazon.) The book addresses questions that many have about suffering, unanswered prayer, God’s will, and more. The group meets via Zoom on Wednesday evenings at 7:30 PM on 3/10 and 3/24.
Host is Jaymie Watts. Call the church office for Zoom login details.

Help Wanted
If you have a passion and love for children and would like to teach, then come and join the teaching ministry at Towson Church. NOTE: Background checks and safe sanctuary training required for all volunteers.
Contact Pastor Christine Kumar associatepastor@towsonumc.org 410.823.6511

Virtual Retreat: April 24, 2021
Want to dig deeper, reflect, and make an impact on others?

Join us for an online retreat about Julian of Norwich, a woman mystic so ahead of her time, who had 16 visions that changed her life.
Pastor Christine Kumar will lead the retreat.
More details coming soon!

SAVE THE DATE
2020 Wrap-Up

2020 was a challenging year! During the year, churches were required to curtail all in-person activities—which had a significant impact on our income and expenses.

Thanks to all who were able to fulfill their pledge in 2020. A special thanks to the 72 members who exceeded their pledge for the year! The Payroll Protection Plan (PPP) helped fill the gap. Both income and expenses were down for the year. At the end of 2020, expenses exceeded income by $11,365—which is better than we projected through the year. Again, thank you for your support of the missions and programs of our church.

2021 Outlook

As we enter 2021, the income picture is even less clear than usual. We applied for a second round PPP loan/grant, which was approved! Trustees stand ready to provide some assistance from endowment funds as needed. But, fewer family units have made pledge commitments for 2021. The budget is not balanced for this year. The budget projects that, by late spring, many folks may feel more comfortable attending in-person worship; and we will be able to return to more in-person programs and mission activities.

If you have not returned your Together for Joy commitment cards for 2021, then please prayerfully consider your response and send it in. It is never too late!

Our prayers are with those who have lost friends and family members to COVID. Our blessings to all who are persevering through all the hardships. Your church family is here for you!

As always, if you have questions, comments or concerns, then contact Towson Church’s Finance Chair, Dale Springer or Pastor Mark Johnson at 410.823.6511.

Finance Update by Dale Springer

Stewardship Campaign 2021

Thanks to everyone who has returned a pledge card for our annual Stewardship Campaign! It’s not too late. Our church will thrive with your generous and continued financial and spiritual commitment. Please contact Kim Ayres at 410.823.6511 or kayres@towsonumc.org with any questions.

“Sing to God a new song, for God has done marvelous things. Let the floods clap their hands; let the hills sing together for joy.”

+ Psalm 98

Women’s Retreat Moved to 2022

What a year 2020 has been! It's probably no surprise that Towson Church’s annual overnight Women’s Retreat 2021 is not happening next spring. Regretfully, with the current state of the pandemic, we do not feel that our format would allow us to keep everyone safe. We are moving our conference center reservation to 2022,

We’ll let you know the dates for that retreat when we have more details. Thank you for understanding!

Contact Susan Brown: sbrown@boyslatinmd.com

What a delightful surprise to find a beautiful red poinsettia by my door and the lovely print of Towson Church! Our ground is still covered with icy snow and this brought out the Spirit of Christmas.

Welcome to the Christ Child born so long ago but alive and present in our hearts with hope, peace, and love. Thank you for this gift!

Most Sincerely,
Katherine Bradley Smith
March : Heifer International
Giving an animal is like giving someone a small business, providing wool, milk, eggs, and more. Animal donations can provide families a hand up, increasing access to medicine, school, food, and a sustainable livelihood. When considering your donation in March, here is a helpful list so you know what your gift may buy:

- Goat, full price is $120; a share is $10.
- Heifer, a cow, full price is $500; a share is $50
- Water buffalo, full price is $250; a share is $25
- Alpaca, full price is $150; a share is $20
- Sheep, full price is $120; a share is $10
- Pig, full price is $120; a share is $10
- Rabbits, full price is $60
- Flock of Ducks, Chicks, or geese are $20
- Honeybees, $30 hive

For more information, visit www.heifer.org.

April : Araminta Freedom Initiative
Slavery has existed in every society and in every generation. Due to slavery’s legal abolition in many societies and the United States in the 19th century, it has taken on a different form and moved underground. Modern-day slavery exists in the form of human trafficking. In the United States, human traffickers have disproportionately preyed on the most vulnerable of our society: women and children.

Araminta focuses on the sex trafficking of minors within the United States. Araminta’s mission is to mobilize entire communities through the use of volunteers to overcome trafficking. Your generous giving allows Araminta to utilize professionals, such as psychologists, social workers, and attorneys in the rehabilitation process, to help end human trafficking. Find more information at www.aramintafreedom.org

May : UMCOR SUNDAY (formerly One Great Hour of Sharing)
Formerly known as One Great Hour of Sharing, UMCOR SUNDAY celebrates the generosity of United Methodist Church members who help others when disaster strikes around the globe. As responders around the globe scramble to help survivors, the United Methodist Committee on Relief, UMCOR, is prepared to act. In fact, we’ve continued to respond to those in desperate need—in more than 80 countries since 1940.

Your generous giving to UMCOR Sunday is what allows UMCOR to act as the arms and legs of Christ’s church, moving toward the most vulnerable in their darkest days. Convinced that all people have God-given worth and dignity—without regard to race, religion or gender—together we are assisting those impacted by crisis or chronic need. As we respond, we recognize Jesus in those who are reeling in the wake of disaster. And, we offer aid in Jesus’ name. For more information, visit www.resourceumc.org.

How to Give
Visit www.towsonchurch.org and click ‘GIVE’ on the home page to donate NOW.

Sunday Worship: Give the first Sunday of each month at church or mail your donation to the Business Office. Note “Heifer”, “Araminta”, or “UMCOR Sunday” on your check.

Celebrate Your Special Day by Giving: Do you have a birthday or anniversary coming up? Consider asking friends and family to donate to your charity of choice in lieu of gifts.

Matching Gifts: Does your company sponsor a matching gift program? If so, ask the human resources department for forms and information. Thank you for your generosity!
Feeding Our Neighbors

Last year, the Emergency Food Pantry transformed itself into a marvelous drive-by pantry on the third Saturday of each month. It is still functioning in this outdoor capacity to keep volunteers and visitors healthy and safe from coronavirus.

Many thanks to church members, Val Wehrle and Dwight Kines, for coordinating the Food Pantry each month and to all the faithful volunteers who ensure our neighbors are fed well and loved much.

Want to donate food? Volunteer?
Call church at 410.823.6511 to make drop-off arrangements for non-perishable food items and to get all the information you need to join this vital monthly community mission.

Prefer to donate money?
Every donation helps us feed our neighbors! You may donate money and a Mission Team member will shop for you. Send a check to the church office with “food pantry” in the memo line OR visit our website and click on “Give” on the home page to donate electronically — www.towsonchurch.org.

Soup-er Deeds

Right: Food Pantry volunteers brave frigid February weather to serve the community.

Far Right: For the second year in a row, the families and staff of The Goddard School in Towson, MD collected food donations during their "Souper" Bowl challenge to benefit our Food Pantry. Center Owner Chuck Sabia set a target of 300 canned goods this year —with a pie-in-his-face prize if the school reached its goal. Well.....they collected 547 canned goods and other nonperishable foods items. Now, students will put their pie-throwing arms to use just like last year! Many thanks to Chuck and Jocelyn Sabia and the staff and families of The Goddard School in Towson for this unexpected, gracious gift that helps us feed local families in need. God is GOOD!

Streets of Hope Meals & Mission

Our church’s Mission Team continues to provide meals for homeless men in Essex, MD through the Streets of Hope program during winter months. Want to help provide dinner one month? Contact the church office at 410.823.6511 to join a meal mission team.
Business Office Tips

Do you know there are several different ways to bless our church missions and ministries with your contributions?

Here are the different ways to send in your contributions:

- **Cash or Check** placed in the offering box before or after worship. Please consider using an envelope including your name when donating cash.

- **Mail check donations** to Towson Church at 501 Hampton Lane, Towson, MD 21286.

- **Online Banking** you set up online banking to send money from your account. You control the frequency and amount sent. The bank sends a check to Towson UMC. Set up Towson UMC as a “vendor” and include your envelope number if you have one — and name as “account number.”

- **Online-Giving (Credit Cards and Electronic Funds Transfers)** Giving online, with credit cards and with electronic fund transfers, is easy and allows you to set up automatic recurring contributions. Contributions can be deducted automatically from your checking or savings account at any time, or can be processed using a credit/debit card.

Follow these easy steps for online giving:

- Choose ‘Give’ on the main menu; click “Give Here”
- Follow the onscreen instructions to create an online profile and schedule recurring contributions.

- **Stock Transfer** Stocks and mutual funds may be transferred to Towson Church’s broker. Details may be obtained from the Business Office at 410.823.6511.

Everyone is called to be faithful servants. We pray you find the level of giving that is right for you as you progress in your journey of faith and commitment. Your pledges and contributions are a critical part of how we can make a difference in our church, our community and our world.

As always, contact Kim Ayres in the Business Office for questions or assistance.

410.823.6511 : kayres@towsonumc.org

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Even Pebbles Make Ripples

Have you ever skipped a stone across the water’s surface? And watched the ripples spread wider?

That’s how it is when you give to your church through your will. Your gift, no matter the size, makes a big difference.

To make a gift to Towson UMC, simply include the following statement (with the amounts specified) in your will:

“I give $_____ (or ____%) of my disposable estate to Towson United Methodist Church.”

Go ahead. Toss one in.
**CALENDAR**  
*March 1 to May 31, 2021*

Sunday Worship at 10:15 AM  
— live, livestream and recorded —

| MARCH         | All Mar Communion Offering: Heifer International  
|               | All Sun Worship weekly at 10:15 AM  
|               | All Wed Coffee & Conversation, 9 AM  
|               | All Thurs Men’s Bible Study, 7 AM  
| Mar 7         | Youth Group Games, 5:00 PM Zoom  
| Mar 14        | Youth Group Bible Study, 5:00 PM Zoom  
| Mar 20        | Emergency Food Pantry, 9-10:30 AM  
| Mar 21        | Easter Flower Celebration—DUE DATE  
| Mar 21        | Youth Group Easter Kits @ church, 5:00 PM  
| Mar 27        | Easter DRIVE THRU Celebration, 11:00 AM  
| Mar 28        | Palm Sunday Worship, 10:15 AM  
|               | NO Youth Group |

| APRIL         | All Apr Communion Offering: Araminta Freedom  
|               | All Sun Worship weekly at 10:15 AM  
|               | All Wed Coffee & Conversation, 9 AM  
|               | All Thurs Men’s Bible Study, 7 AM  
| Apr 1         | Maundy Thursday Meditation, 9:00 AM  
| Apr 2         | Good Friday Prayer Walk in church, noon to 7:30 PM  
| Apr 4         | Easter Sunday Worship, 10:15 AM  
| Apr 17        | Emergency Food Pantry, 9-10:30 AM  
| Apr 24        | Virtual Meditative Retreat, all day |

| MAY           | All May Communion Offering: UMCOR Sunday  
|               | All Sun Worship, 10:15 AM  
| May 15        | Emergency Food Pantry, 9-10:30 AM |

| JUNE          | All June Communion Offering: TBD  
|               | All Sun Worship, 10:15 AM  
| Jun 6         | Drive-By Goodbye Parade for  
|               | Rev Mark Johnson, time TBD  
| Jun 19        | Emergency Food Pantry, 9-10:30 AM |
RESIDENT or

TOWSON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
501 Hampton Lane : Towson, Maryland 21286
410.823.6511 : www.towsonchurch.org

SPRING WORK is going on with joyful enthusiasm
—John Muir

WORSHIP SCHEDULE
March 1, 2021 — May 31, 2021

Sundays - 10:15 AM Weekly
Worship each week with us — in the sanctuary pews or at home via our livestream/recorded service on YouTube. We share communion on the first Sunday of each month with a richly varied service that blends a variety of musical talents. Currently, we’re following all COVID-19 safety protocols to ensure good health. Face masks and physical distancing required on church campus. Touch-free giving options and individually-wrapped communion elements available. Check-In and health screening required through our Save-A-Seat program. Call 410.823.6511 for details.

Holy Thursday - April 1, 2021
Recorded Meditation Video on YouTube, 9:00 AM

Good Friday - April 2, 2021
Self-Guided Prayer Journey in Church Sanctuary, noon-7:30 PM (check-in and face masks required)

Easter Worship - April 4, 2021
In-Person Worship (check-in and face masks required), 10:15 AM plus livestream/recorded service on YouTube

Join our online community!
facebook.com/towsonumc