



High Spire

Newsletter for Members and Friends of Towson United Methodist Church

February 2023



Harry Hosier

America's First Black Methodist Preacher

Harry Hosier transcended the racial consciousness of his day. He had a famous sermon nearby at Adams Chapel in Fairfax County, Virginia. "Barren Fig Tree" was the first sermon preached by a Negro in America. Likewise, his sermon in Chapeltown, Delaware in 1784, was the first sermon preached by a Negro to a white congregation.

Traveling around the Delmarva Peninsula, Garrettson reports on Sunday, March 7, 1784: "Harry met me, and preached after I ended;" the next day—"as there was a degree of persecution against Harry I thought it expedient to leave him behind."

Six years later, 1790, on his way to Boston, Garrettson records: "The people of this circuit are amazingly fond of hearing Harry."

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner

Feb 21, 6:00 PM, Fellowship Hall



Come for a delicious pancake supper hosted by the youth group. What is Shrove Tuesday and why pancakes? Join the fun and find out!

Hosier illustrates the point made by a late twentieth-century scholar, who declares that American Methodism "relied much less on the written word than on that which was spoken Methodist preachers...were remembered first of all for their preaching and for the spontaneous verbal responses of their congregations—the shouts, the groans, the sobs of persons brought together to express their most interior and private thoughts."

excerpts from "Harry Hosier: America's first Black Methodist preacher"
by John G. McEllhenney

Visit www.gcah.org/history/harry-hosier to learn more

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The Bible Year

On February 1, 2022, a group of committed individuals embarked on a grand adventure - to read the entire Bible through in one year. Using *The Bible Year* by Magrey R DeVega as our guide, we met together every Thursday to discuss and reflect on what we read the previous week. (One group met at 11 AM at the church and one met at 7 PM via Zoom.) February 9, 2023 will be our last meeting and we will celebrate the accomplishment in worship on February 12 with a special ceremony. Be sure to say congratulations and well done to the following folks who have completed the entire Bible:

Margorie Bandy

Jan Bennett

Mary Benson

Bobby Blaker

Nancy Bopst

Linda Brooks

Brenda Davis

Carole Dean

Shirley Derksen

Ginny Foster

Ginny Foster

Cindy Frank

Suz Ford

Sue Gralley

Kenneth Henschen

Stephanie Kimmons

Dwight Kines

Jan Marburg

Judy Meinhardt

Anna Paz

Bill Rogers

Deborah Ross

Carol Sims

Dee Solomon

Sylvia Solomon

Mike Steer

Nancy Steer

Eileen Wagner

Stephanie Roberts White

We also had a few folks who heard how much fun we were having and decided to join later in the year. They have all completed the New Testament and some have almost finished all of the Old Testament:

Rose Corbett

Joyce Dodson

Linda Good

Susan Killian

Lois Winship

The Prayer Bead Workshop

This workshop was offered to ladies from Sojourners on January 10. Under the leadership of guest presenter, Sandra Gundlach, participants learned the history of prayer beads and enjoyed making their own design. Sandra lives in the Baltimore area and has been making prayer beads for years and sharing her love of the practice!



A Letter from the Leadership Board

January 22, 2023

Your Leadership Team is responsible for church governance, and we are committed to frequent updates about all aspects of your church. To that end, we have recently given two short speeches from the pulpit and will continue to do so every month. We realize that not everyone will hear these updates, so you will read an update in every issue of the High Spire!

Here we go...

The mission statement of all United Methodist churches is to “make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world”. We ponder and pray about this mission during every monthly meeting.

Our roof project is now complete – on time and under budget. Thanks to your generosity, our “Raise the Roof” campaign was able to cover all costs, and we even had a little surplus for a mission project - we raised the roof over another church, this one over Reverend Stephen Njoroge’s (TUMC member) church in Kenya.

Good for you to know there are two sources of funds used for our expenses. Our Trustees have endowment funds from gifts, wills, bequests, etc, that pay for major capital improvements. These funds are invested, and there is a self-imposed spending limit of 6% of principal. Our other source of income comes from our Stewardship Campaign (pledges), plate monies, rent, etc. This income pays our normal operating expenses (salaries, BGE, etc). Now if our operating expenses are more than income, we have to use some of the 6% to balance our budget. That’s why it’s very important that you support our Stewardship Campaign with your pledge. If you have not pledged this year, please do so. We can then use all of the 6% for major improvements to our building.

The bathrooms downstairs in CDC area were renovated and upgraded.

New tile was installed in Fellowship Hall and the third floor + stairs received new carpet. Big projects, both beautiful now.

New cameras will soon be installed in our sanctuary for use in live streaming worship services.

We approved a change in pastoral responsibilities, i.e. Stephanie now has education and teaching while Christine has congregational care, community contact, and prayers. This change matches their interest and talent.

We approved our 2023 operations budget and it is a modest 2.3% increase over 2022 actual expenses. Thank you for supporting this budget with your pledge.

We will develop a long range plan with realistic goals that will be spiritual for all of us and will include improvements to our property, all wrapped into finances.

We will continue efforts to reach out to our Hampton neighbors, to Towson, and to the two nearby universities.

Sunday worship attendance is increasing. There’s new energy and a sense of excitement now within our church. It’s great to see this happen and to be a part of it.

Merrill Frank

Board Chair Person



Thank You!



The Hospitality Ministries Committee wishes to extend thanks to all those who made our **HOUSE OF RUTH** mission project a huge success.

We collected over **160 pairs** of ladies' socks, enough for 40 women to each receive a variety of warm, fuzzy, athletic, and dress socks.

With your donations, we assembled **40 goody bags** for the children. Toddlers got Valentine cards, candy, and toys. Elementary-age children received Valentine cards, toys, candy and pencils. Teenagers received puzzles, pencils, candy bags and card games.

We also donated over **30 warm blankets** this Winter!

The House of Ruth staff extends their sincere appreciation for the generous and thoughtful contributions from our church membership.

February Mission of the Month:

Assistance Center of Towson Churches



The Assistance Center of Towson Churches (ACTC) brings together churches, partners, and people to serve neighbors in need in northern and central Baltimore County and northern Baltimore City. We offer food, help with rent, and other services through the generous support of donors and volunteers.

You can give by visiting towsonchurch.org/give. Click "give securely here" then open the "Fund" drop down menu. Select "mission of the month."

Food Pantry in February

Sugar	Chili
Cereal	Ravioli
Granola Bars	Chunky Soups
Ground Coffee	10oz. Soups
Cookies	Crackers

Please place food donations in the Sharing Bins located in the main lobby of the church. Thank you for your generosity!

Women's Retreat



Join Towson United Methodist Church for a wonderful weekend getaway for women of all ages at Skycroft Conference Center in Middletown, MD. Price includes meals, lodging, and retreat supplies. Early bird rate \$215 available until February 5. After February 5, rate is \$230. Scan here to register online or pick up a paper registration form in the foyer.



Food for Thought

Many years ago TUMC joined with other churches in partnering with county schools to support students experiencing weekend hunger. Unfortunately, poverty among Baltimore County Public School students has increased 11% and affects 1 out of 2 students in Baltimore County. We are members of the Food for Thought program and TUMC has continued to support students at Ridgely Middle Schools.

We partner with Timonium UMC in providing 2 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 2 dinners and snacks each weekend to 9 students who are food insecure and have been recommended to us by school counselors.

We would appreciate your donations in the sharing bin marked Food for Thought. They should all be single

serve items:

- Applesauce
- Fruit cups
- Mac and cheese cups
- Single serve soups
- Single cereal cups
- Granola bars
- Chef Boyardee
- Pudding



Calling All Heroes!

Hero Hotline Vacation Bible Camp

July 17 - July 21, 9 AM – Noon

We are now recruiting super helpers:

Decorations
Craft Leaders
Snack Leaders
Science Leaders
Recreation Leaders
Small Group Leaders and Assistants
and more

Scan the QR code to Sign-Up:



Save the Dates:

Team Training
April 30, 11:30 – 1:30
(lunch provided)

Set up day
July 16, 11:30 – until we're finished!
(lunch provided)

Youth Group

February 12 at 11:15 AM

Lunch and Parent/Youth Game Show
(in the style of the Newlywed game)

February 18

Volunteering at the Food Pantry

February 21 at 4:30 PM

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper
Set-up begins at 4:30 PM

February 26 at 11:15 AM

Scavenger Hunt at Towson Mall & Lunch



Ice Skating at The Avenue 2023



Lent 2023: Practicing Compassion

February 22 - April 8
Sundays at 10:15 AM

Our world seems to be increasingly divided, sometimes leaving us feeling sad and defeated.

“The 40 days of Lent give us the opportunity to reflect on the ways we participate in the suffering and brokenness of the world while holding ourselves and others with love and compassion as we seek healing. What if the journey with Jesus to the cross and tomb was an opportunity to dwell in the gaze of the one who looks upon us all with compassion and love?” (From the devotional guide *Living Well Through Lent 2023: Practicing Compassion with All Your Heart, Soul, Strength, and Mind.*)

Guides will be available for the congregation to pick up beginning on February 19. A downloadable version will also be available.

Journaling through Lent

February 22 | March 22 | April 5
10 AM - 11 AM in room 214
"Change, Forgiveness, & Passion"

Ash Wednesday

February 22 at 7PM in the Sanctuary
Sermon: "Wrestling with Compassion"

Prayer Service in the Chapel

Join Pastor Christine from 9:15AM to 9:45AM in the chapel for reflective music, scripture reading, reflections, and prayer time for one another, communities, and the world. From 9:45 AM to 10 AM, the chapel is open for a space to pray. Every third Sunday of the month, we will share in holy communion. *All are welcome!*

Sunday Sermon Schedule

February 26

Compassion and Faith

March 5

Compassion and Listening

March 12

Compassion and Prayer

March 19

Compassion and Mercy

March 26

Compassion and Well-Being

April 2 (Palm Sunday)

Compassion and Love



Maundy Thursday Soup Supper

April 6, 6:00 PM, Fellowship Hall

Maundy is derived from the Latin word for "command," and refers to Jesus' commandment to the disciples to "Love one another as I have loved you."

Good Friday Tenebrae Service

April 7 at 7 PM

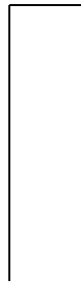


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Hampton Lane

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Connect with Us

Website: www.towsonchurch.org

YouTube: Towson United Methodist Church

Facebook: facebook.com/towsonunitedmethodistchurch

Instagram: Instagram.com/towsonumc

Ways to Give

Online: Visit towsonchurch.org/give to securely donate to Towson UMC by choosing your offering from the drop-down menu.

Cash/Checks: Place checks in the offering box or through USPS to "Towson UMC Attention: Business Office"