



AGAPE Grapevine

January 2023

Happy New Year!

As we enter into the new year, it can be a time of reflection and renewal. It can also be a time of uncertainty and fear, as we face the unknowns of what the future holds. But no matter what the future holds, we can find hope and strength in God.

The Bible tells us that God is a refuge and strength, a helper and a stronghold in times of trouble (Psalm 46:1). This means that no matter what challenges we may face in the new year, God is with us and will provide us with the help and support we need to overcome them.

One way to start the new year with God is by making time for daily prayer and Bible study. This can help to keep us focused on God and remind us of his promises for our lives. It can also provide a sense of peace and calm in the midst of a busy and chaotic world.

Another way to start the new year with God is by committing to serving others. The Bible tells us to love our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22:39), and this can be a powerful way to demonstrate our love for God. Whether it's volunteering at a local shelter, visiting the sick, or simply offering a kind word to someone in need, serving others is a great way to show God's love in a tangible way.

As we begin the new year, let us remember that God is with us and will never leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5). Let us trust in him and seek to follow his will in all things, so that we may experience his peace, joy, and love in the coming year.

Grace and Peace,

Rev Zac Wheeler

Hands and Hearts Ending Homelessness

November 12 through the end of March 2023.

Hands and Hearts Ending Homelessness Update!

Thank you to all of you who have volunteered to help donate food to this program. Bethesda is going to commit to one lunch per month: we will provide the sandwich fillings, chips, drinks and other essential items for the shelter to bag for guests. Watch for a sign-up sheet monthly to highlight needs! It's easy - you sign up for an item, bring it to the church kitchen a few days before and I will transport it to the shelter. Thank you for your support!!

Hands and Hearts Ending Homelessness Needs

YOU! In addition to the once-a-month lunch commitment we are making, there are many ways in which you can provide help to this program! Volunteers are needed for check in (2 shifts/day), snacks, breakfasts, lunches, dinners, are needed. Clothing, personal items, gift cards and financial donations are welcome! To donate/sign up/ send a gift:

1. Go to handsandheartsshelter.org
2. Scroll down to either Check-In Desk or Meal Sign-up.
3. For Check-In Desk, find the day and time you wish to volunteer. Click Sign-Up. Add your name.
4. For Meal Sign-Up, find the day, meal or select items you wish to provide. Click Sign Up. You then detail the menu for Dinner, or whatever you choose.
5. To donate: go to Menu at the top right of the Home page, scroll down to donate and complete donation on line.
6. HHEH also accepts Amazon gift cards, Walmart gift cards, men's clothing, cleaning supplies, and more. Contact Debbie Day, debday26@comcast.net for more needs, questions or if you need help signing up.

In His Service, Debbie Day

Are you interested in signing up to provide one lunch a month from Bethesda! Just click on the link to sign up:

<https://forms.gle/K1MRgiPAm6SzBe1c6>.



**From: The Office Staff, Music Staff,
and Ministerial Staff of Bethesda
United Methodist Church**

Agape



Agape Grapevine is published monthly by

Bethesda United Methodist Church

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Salisbury, MD 21801
Phone: 410-742-8855

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Web Address: www.umcbethesda.org

Editor: Brenda Sawyer

Sunday Schedule

9:00 AM—Contemporary Worship
—Memorial Room
10:30 AM—Traditional Worship
—Sanctuary

[Facebook.com/bethesdasalisbury](https://www.facebook.com/bethesdasalisbury)

LIVE Worship Services—Sunday 9:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

Next Soup Luncheons

Thursday, January 19, 2023
Thursday, February 16, 2023
11 am - 12:15 pm (Take-Out/Pick-Up)
Delivery Available for orders of \$100 or more

Menu:

Chili and Cornbread (Jan. & Feb.)

Vegetable Beef Soup
Chicken Salad
Baked Ham on Roll
Baking Powder Biscuits
Iced Fudge Brownies
Homemade Custard Bread Pudding
Email: Bethesda-umc@outlook.com
Call: 410-742-8855



SALISBURY URBAN MINISTRIES DONATIONS NEEDED FOR

LAZARUS FOOD PANTRY:

- Chapstick
- Potato & rice side dishes

KIDS CAFÉ:

- Ramen noodles
- Pop-top cans (Ravioli, Spaghetios, etc.)

MEN'S WELCOME CENTER:

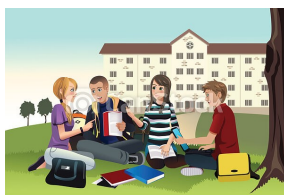
- Men's hand warmers

Donations can be dropped off at
Salisbury Urban Ministries Office
326 Barclav St

College Boxes

College Students (& parents), we need your up to date addresses for the 2nd semester. Goody box treats will be coming for Valentine's Day.

Donations for the treat boxes and to cover to cost of mailing would be appreciated and can be labelled and dropped off at the church office by 2/3/23 or put in the sacristy if you don't see Mary Lynn. Boxes will be packed on 2/8/23. Thanks for your donations!



Agape 2



TEXAS ROADHOUSE GIFT CARDS
for Sale to benefit
Santa's Angels!

Again this year, we are selling *Gift Cards* (Denominations of \$25 or \$50) for Texas Roadhouse and we are still offering a free appetizer with the purchase of \$50 in gift cards. These will make a thoughtful gift for anyone this Christmas or birthday or just to treat yourself during the holidays. You may place an order by calling Lora Adkins 410-726-2977 or by email me at kadkins30@comcast.net or call Lois Moorhead 410-430-3086.



SAVE THE DATE

"Care for the Cause"

Community Fundraising Event

Sunday, February 26, 2023
3 PM

Christ United Methodist Church

211 Phillip Morris Drive, Salisbury
Admission: **Free Will Offering**

Music / Entertainment / Refreshments

Fundraiser Supporting Salisbury Urban Ministries'

- Lazarus Food & RX Program
- Men's Welcome Center
- God's Kitchen
- Kid's Café
After-School Program



Hosted By

Asbury, Bethesda,
Christ, Grace, St. Andrews,
Trinity and Wesley Temple
United Methodist Churches

Salisbury Urban Ministries, non-profit 501c3

www.sbyurbanministries.org
410-749-1563



THANK YOU!

Dear Bethesda Family:

Thank you to everyone for their kind greetings, cards and presents during the Christmas Season. They are all greatly appreciated!

Clergy and Staff
Bethesda United Methodist Church

Dear Bethesda Family:

Thank You! My first year working at Bethesda United Methodist Church has been amazing! I value the help and friendships that you all have offered me. You made me feel welcome from the very first minute.

We all know what a wonderful job Sandy Mills did for over 37 years. She was willing to train me and share her knowledge with me. Her help is invaluable.

I look forward to working with you all for the benefit of Bethesda, our members, and our community for many years.

Brenda Sawyer



Light

The Season of Epiphany helps us celebrate the incarnate Jesus Christ as the Light of the World. The Star in the East signaled Christ's time and place of birth. Through our work for His Church, God's Light shines in us.

Please allow me to tell a story about light at our house. Trish loves her Christmas lights and would prefer that they are up and illuminated from Thanksgiving until Valentine's Day. We also have backyard patio lights so that we can have a little quiet oasis within the city. The patio lights keep her happy in the spring and summer months until she starts planning for Christmas.

Apparently, some depraved individual living near us must be triggered by the lighted red and green candy canes. Said individual has repeatedly snipped the wires to these decorations so that we have had to throw some away and reconnect the other lights to another strand. We thought that the new wooden fence would deter the candy cane hater from reaching through the chain link fence, but that is not the case. Sometimes in the summer, the white lights in the trees have been snipped. By the way, I have watched enough CSI shows to spot the difference between cut wires and wires gnawed by some backyard critter.

What should our response be? To be honest, we did sit around the dining room table batting around some ideas that used car batteries and metal plates as well as Nikko's idea of a ghilly suit and a paintball gun. Our solution was to turn the other cheek: repair/replace the lights. Zander got his soldering iron and went to work fusing the cut ends.

The moral? I guess there will be darkness in the world, but we will choose to keep our lights shining. In all that we do--church, choir, school, the workplace--we will be Christ's light to the world. See you in church, Jeff

Contemporary Music News
by Phil Perdue

The Bethesda Contemporary Band would like to thank everyone at Bethesda for a great year. We would like to wish everyone a happy and prosperous New Year. May God continue to bless all us at Bethesda in 2023!

Agape 7 Circle Meetings for January 2023

- Circle Esther - Tuesday, January 10, 7:00 pm - Todd House
- Circle Eve - Tuesday, January 3, 11:30 am - Dayton's Restaurant
- Circle Martha - Wednesday, January 4, 10:30 am - Todd House
- Circle Mary - Tuesday, January 10, 2:00 pm - Todd House
- Circle Rachel - Monday, January 16, 1:00 pm - w/ Mary Lynn Deckert, Susan Webster, hostess
- Circle Ruth - Monday, January 2, 10:00 am - Todd House
- Circle Sarah - Wednesday, January 11, 1:00 pm - Todd House



United
Women
in Faith

Music News by Dr. Jeff Baer

January 2023

Monthly Planner



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																																					
1 9:00 AM Contemporary Service 10:30 AM Traditional Worship 7:00 PMAA Mtg @ Todd House Communion Epiphany of the Lord New Year's Day	2 10:00 AM -12:00 PM Circle Ruth - Todd House 7:00 PM Boy Scout Meeting Memorial Room Holiday - Office Closed	3 11:30 AM Circle Eve at Dayton's	4 8:30 AM UMM - Dayton's 10:00 AM Kitchen Inspection 10:30 AM Circle Martha Meeting at Todd House 6:30 PM Handbell Rehearsal 7:00 PM God's Word Bible Study @ Todd House	5 8:30 AM Devotions with Rev Zac 7:00 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Step by Step AA	6 6:30 PM Youth Group at Todd House Epiphany of the Lord	7 3:00 PM Melanie Donophan's Lions Club at Todd House																																																																																																					
8 9:00 AM Contemporary Service 10:30 AM Traditional Worship 7:00 PMAA Mtg @ Todd House Baptism of Our Lord	9 7:00 PM Boy Scout Meeting Memorial Room	10 2:00 PM Circle Mary at Todd House 7:00 PM Circle Esther at Todd House	11 8:30 AM UMM - Dayton's 1:00 PM Circle Sarah at Todd House 6:30 PM Handbell Rehearsal 7:00 PM God's Word Bible Study @ Todd House	12 8:30 AM Devotions with Rev Zac 9:30 AM Dominos Group 1:00 PM Senior Singles meet at Back Street Grill 7:00 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Step by Step AA	13 6:30 PM Youth Group at Todd House	14																																																																																																					
15 9:00 AM Contemporary Service 10:30 AM Traditional Worship 7:00 PMAA Mtg @ Todd House 2nd Sunday after Epiphany	16 1:00 PM Circle Rachel meets at Mary Lynn's House/Susan Webster Hostess 6:00 PM UMM Meet at Deli at Pecan Square 7:00 PM Boy Scout Meeting Memorial Room Holiday - Office Closed	17	18 8:30 AM UMM - Dayton's 6:30 PM Handbell Rehearsal 7:00 PM God's Word Bible Study @ Todd House Week of Prayer for Christian Unity	19 8:30 AM Devotions with Rev Zac 11:00 AM Soup Lunch 7:00 PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:00 PM Step by Step AA Week of Prayer for Christian Unity	20 6:30 PM Youth Group at Todd House Week of Prayer for Christian Unity	21 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity																																																																																																					
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Happy New Year! A new year full of opportunities. One of my favorite quotes is "Carpe Diem." (It's one of the few phrases I remember from high school Latin class!) It means "Seize the day!" I found this devotional from Rev. Joel Sheerness, the pastor at First Christian Reformed Church in Crown Point, Indiana, which has inspired me to focus on making the most of every opportunity God sends my way. I hope it inspires you as well.

"Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Colossians 4:5
Do you remember Ashley Smith? One day in March 2005 she came home to find a fleeing murderer waiting for her. He held her hostage for several hours at gunpoint. During that time, she did something extraordinary; she took advantage of the opportunity and witnessed to her captor. She cooked him breakfast, read from Rick Warren's book The Purpose-Driven Life, and talked about God's plan for his life and about Christ. Later the man peacefully gave himself up to the police.

Our text for today reminds us, "Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity." God often presents us with opportunities to witness, but we often let them slip by because we're not wise enough to see them for what they are.

The apostle Paul says we are "God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Ephesians 2:10). God often places good works before us in the form of opportunities to share our faith with people who are outside the faith. But we need to be wise and willing enough to make the most of those opportunities.

As we enter a new year, we need to remember that each new day brings opportunities to serve the Lord and express our faith to others, sometimes in strange and different situations.

Lord, we have often let many opportunities pass by. Give us the wisdom, we pray, to see each opportunity you place before us to do your will and share our faith. In Jesus, Amen.

From [Opportunities — Today Daily Devotional \(todaydevotional.com\)](http://todaydevotional.com)


Tammy Taylor
UWIF President

"Seeing is Believing" Our Stained Glass Windows - continued

Remember that Bethesda is built on the "cruciform principle". The floor of the church makes a perfect design of the cross. Starting at the pulpit "crossing of the Cross", then we have the vertical arms of the Cross.

Moving into the Nave from the pulpit (on your right, after Abraham and Moses), we have David, wearing his kingly crown - the iconic leader of the Hebrew people. His symbol is the Star of David, used to this day as the sign of Judaic faith. Isaiah the Prophet stands next to David. The small symbol is that of crossed trumpets, for Isaiah was one who did not fear proclaiming the word of the Lord in the presence of Kings and Princes—and even from the rooftops.

Dr. Dan



Happy New Year 2023!

By Lora Adkins

To all who assisted in making **Santa's Angels** 33rd year an enormous success, thank you for your generous support. This year, a special Christmas was provided to 151 families in Wicomico, Somerset, Dorchester, Sussex, and Delmar areas. We served 126 adults, and 478 children. Not only were coats, clothes, shoes, pajamas, food, bikes, school supplies, and toys provided; some families were also supplied Christmas trees, comforters, sheets, blankets, pots & pans, dishes, crockpots, microwaves, a toddler bed and a kitchen table. Special thanks to everyone for your help and support we received as this charity continues to be a blessing for many each year.

To each of you, who provided a monetary or material donation, **THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS CONTRIBUTION!** Additionally, our appreciation goes to The Elks, Optimist Club, Perdue, Redman's Lodge, The American Legion, Salisbury Firefighters and the Salisbury Firefighters Union, Toys for Tots, and WBOC-TV (Bless our Children Fund) for their significant contributions. Thank you to teachers & friends from the schools in Wicomico County for the funds they donated from their casual days. Also, many individuals, who shall remain nameless, funded the shopping for an entire family; making this a very special year for families in our community. The Girl Scouts from Troop #86 shopped for a family. Mardela Honor Society wrapped hundreds of extra gifts for the elves to hand out to unexpected children. Thank you to Amanda Adkins and Anne Arundel's Outpatient Physical Therapy facilities for shopping and supporting 25 families this year. And a SPECIAL THANK YOU to Trinity Church for all of the toys, and monetary/gift cards which they donated from their Angel tree, and for their volunteers for shopping, wrapping, and delivering. We appreciate Trinity members for allowing us to use the Trinity Life center gain this year. Thank you to all of the Bethesda members who continue to support Santa's Angels each year. It is a real miracle to see how many folks volunteered to help this year.

On December 22nd, the Lions and the Leos (Lions in training) packed 164 boxes of food and fruit for our families. Thank you to Bob and Angie Langan for coordinating the purchasing and packing of the fruit and food boxes for our families. The Lions Club of Salisbury donated all of the food and the Fruit for our families this year while Perdue donated coupons to purchase Perdue Chicken of their choice for the families.

A special thank you to **Bob Sharp and Bruce Roberts** for transporting several truck loads to the Trinity Life Center. They also picked up the bicycles. Bruce Roberts, Terry Dix and Keith Adkins even put a toddler bed together.



Their help was absolutely a blessing this year! Bob & Jill Krater, Barb and Terry Dix, Nancy Rowe, Kathy Potter, Audra and Sara Phippin assisted with the organization and preparation of the gifts for delivery. Thank you to Chris & Nicole Twilley for mapping out the 14 routes, and coordinating enough vehicles and people to manage the gifts for all families.

On December 24th, many thanks to the many volunteers (especially the Parkside Baseball team) for help with loading and delivering the gifts to the 151 families. This year was a bit more challenging due to the chilling temperatures! Brrrrrrr! It was extremely cold at 7:30 am. The Crisfield route had challenges with several inches of ice and flooding. Roads were closed, but they still managed to deliver to all of their families. It was on the last stop that Santa took a tumble on the ice and many nearly joined him while trying to get him up on his feet again. With all of the challenges, there were still many SMILES and stories to be shared. While in Hoopers Island, Santa had many of the same issues with ice and flooding. Many hands make light work! Hundreds of people assisted this year as God's work continues to inspire our surrounding community.

Each year I try to share some special moments with you. Again this year I would like to ask you to pray for several of our families. We assisted a family of four children whose Mom passed away just prior to Christmas, and they were living with their grandmother. Many families requested extra food, cleaning supplies and essentials this year. Our prayers for these families can help support them in ways we cannot begin to imagine. One little boy received a potty chair and when he saw it he screamed, "I got my own Potty!" The father who received the toddler bed, mattress and bedding for his 1 year old son was overwhelmed. (So were the two young ladies who carried it up three flights of stairs.) Many of our helpers received hugs and thanks from family members silently displaying their joy with tears; while others were given a card of thanks, or a picture to show their appreciation. Whether you have experienced one of these miracles first-hand or through the vision of one of our helpers, please know it was God's mercy and love that guided us to help each one of these families.

God loves each of you for giving in your own special way; whether it was your time, energy, financial support or your much need prayers. ALL assisted in spreading His word. Many hearts have been touched by God through the giving which provided Christmas for these families. Keith and I thank each of you for your continued support of Santa's Angels. There is no way we would be able to help all of these families without **YOU!** We truly hope each of you will be blessed throughout this New Year. God continues to work in mysterious ways as He continues to show us His miracles each day. Did you see or experience one of His miracles this Christmas? I know our family did! Thank you to all of you for 33 years of God's Blessings in our community. **May His Will continue to be done throughout the NEW YEAR! HAPPY NEW YEAR!**



Senior Singles
Thursday, January 12th



Meet at Back Street Grill at 1: 00 pm

All singles over 60 are welcome!
Bring a friend with you—enjoy the fellowship
AND the food!!! New folks are welcomed.
God Bless!

RSVP Sandy Mills, 410-422-7305 (new #)
or Dr. Dan 443-735-3292

Senior Singles at Suicide Bridge
December 8, 2022



Photo courtesy of Penny Bradford

Epiphany, also called **Feast of the Epiphany, Theophany, or Three Kings' Day,**
(from Greek *epiphaneia*, "manifestation")

The Christian holiday commemorating the first manifestation of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, represented by the Magi, and the manifestation of his divinity, as it occurred at his baptism in the Jordan River and at his first miracle, at Cana in Galilee. Epiphany is one of the three principal and oldest festival days of the Christian church (the other two are Easter and Christmas). Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Anglicans, and other Western churches observe the feast on January 6.

The festival originated in the Eastern church, where it at first included a commemoration of Christ's birth. In Rome, by 354 Christ's birth was being celebrated on December 25 (Christmas), and later in the 4th century the church in Rome began celebrating Epiphany on January 6. In the Western church the festival primarily commemorates the visit by the Magi to the infant Jesus, which is seen as evidence that Christ, the Jewish Messiah, came also for the salvation of Gentiles. In the East it primarily commemorates the baptism of Jesus and celebrates the revelation that the incarnate Christ was both fully God and fully man.



In the West the evening preceding Epiphany is called Twelfth Night. The time between December 25 and January 6 is known as the Twelve Days of Christmas. Epiphany is celebrated with special pastries in many countries, and children often receive small gifts in their shoes in honor of the Magi's gifts to the infant Jesus. The holiday also has a number of traditions involving water as a reflection of Jesus' baptism, including the blessing of houses with holy water.

The Baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist

Credit: Britannica online