

November 2023

THE COURIER

A Monthly Publication of The Inter-Faith Chapel
A House of Prayer for All People

From the desk of Rev. Dr. Woodie Rea

Though it is not technically a part of the church liturgical year, I consider Thanksgiving to be one of the more spiritual holidays that we celebrate. With its focus on family, feasting, and feelings of gratitude, it embraces many of the core elements of our faith and of a fulfilling life.

I realize everyone is not blessed with a healthy family, nor does everyone have an abundance of food. Some individuals may find themselves eating their traditional meal alone, or in a different setting, this year.

Many of you have experienced losses since the last Thanksgiving holiday. Three beloved members of my family will be missing around our table for the first time. As I write these reflections, Israel and Hamas are engaged in actions that will mean many more families will be missing even more.

Yet the promise of Thanksgiving remains! The benefit of Thanksgiving Day is attainable, and the importance of pausing to be grateful is worth pursuing.

You do not need to do anything remarkable to sample the cornucopia of love, patience, grace, and giving that this day promises. Simply bring a dish full of thanks (thank-full-ness) to be offered and a heart of gratitude for your harvest of blessings.

When the harvest is meager, we turn to each other for support. When the harvest is plentiful, we share it with others. In both instances, we find the spirituality of Thanksgiving.

And so, we gather across the community or across the country. We gather around a traditional table or perhaps a “technology table.” We gather, and we give thanks. Thanksgiving calls us to offer thanks for much, for little, and for all.

We could all use more Thanksgiving. What if each of us were to begin every day with gratitude and thanks? How might that impact the course of our lives, our relationships, and our world? Thanksgiving Day keeps coming around and keeps giving us tastes of what could be and keeps reminding us that “God our Maker doth provide, for our wants to be supplied.”

Let us then, have Thanksgiving every day and let us, “raise the song of harvest home.”

With thanksgiving for each of you,

-Woodie



STEWARDSHIP AND PLEDGE EMPHASIS

One of the special gifts that God has given us is the vibrant community of The Inter-Faith Chapel. Through its many opportunities for worship and service to others and through its ministries of fellowship, education, and spiritual growth, The Chapel nurtures each of us in so many ways.

As most of you know, The Inter-Faith Chapel is located within the Leisure World campus, but receives no financial assistance from Leisure World of Maryland. Our sole financial support for balancing the budget and paying the bills comes from you.

Each year, to help sustain and strengthen our various ministries, we call on our members and friends to consider making a financial commitment to The Chapel. The theme for this year's stewardship emphasis is *Thankful for Little, Thankful for Much, Thankful for All*. On November 12th, we will focus on being thankful for the gifts God has given us. Then, on **Sunday November 19th**, we will celebrate our annual Pledge Sunday, as we gratefully join with one another in presenting our covenants of commitment to giving.

A pledge commitment is statement of intent, not a binding obligation. It is a spiritual decision made between the giver and God and is not designed to be an unpleasant burden, but a way of expressing our thankful gratitude for God's grace in our lives. Many people feel that this type of formal arrangement helps them keep their stewardship in focus.

If you have previously pledged a certain amount over the last several years, we ask you to prayerfully consider increasing your commitment to help support the rising costs of expenses. If you have never made a pledge, we ask you to consider joining in our mutual commitment to help provide worship, pastoral care, spiritual education, and fellowship to this community. Regardless of how the Spirit leads you, we ask that you will join us in prayer and in joyful thanksgiving as we consider all that God has done for us.

2024 PLEDGE COMMITMENT COVENANT

We are asking the Members, Affiliates, and Friends of The Inter-Faith Chapel to make a faith commitment pledge to support the budget of our congregation. Please fill out and mail or deliver the pledge card to The Chapel, email b.bonner@inter-faithchapel.org, or place it in the offering plate when you attend worship on November 19th.

Thankful for Little, Thankful for Much, Thankful for All

As a recipient of many gifts, I intend to give to my church in the coming year.

My/our gift of \$ _____ per week / month / year (circle one)

Name _____

Address _____ Phone _____

PRAYERS OF THE MONTH Crowded With Gratitude

Lord God,

Our hearts are crowded with gratitude as we celebrate the feast of Thanksgiving.

We have come to this our feasting table with great joy and eagerness, for we are truly grateful to you, our God, for all that we have been given.

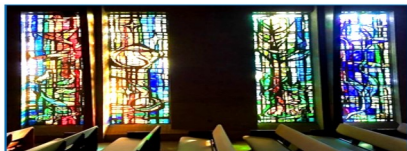
We pause now and, in silent prayer, to thank you for the great generosity of Your gifts.

We also thank one another for gifts - especially for the gifts of love and affection that we have freely shared. We are thankful for all who are present at this our feast as well as for all those who have labored in love in order to bring this dinner to our table.

May You, our God, bless this Thanksgiving feast and all of us who shall share it in your holy name.
Amen

By Edward Hays, from: Prayers for the Domestic Church: A Handbook for Worship in the Home

Come
Worship
with us



Please join us in person for worship at
The Inter-Faith Chapel
on Sundays at 10:00 am

You may livestream on
Sundays at 10:00 am
or view the worship service any time
on our website at:
www.inter-faithchapel.org.

A SIMPLE PRAYER OF GRATITUDE by Kelli Mahoney

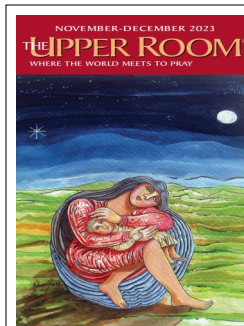
Thank you, Lord, for the blessings you have bestowed on my life. You have provided me with more than I could ever have imagined. You have surrounded me with people who always look out for me. You have given me family and friends who bless me every day with kind words and actions. They lift me up in ways that keep my eyes focused on you and make my spirit soar.

Also, thank you, Lord, for keeping me safe. You protect me from those things that seem to haunt others. You help me make better choices and provide me with advisors to help me with life's difficult decisions. You speak to me in so many ways so that I always know you are here.

And Lord, I am so grateful for keeping those around me safe and loved. I hope that you provide me with the ability and sense to show them every day how much they matter. I hope that you give me the ability to give to them the same kindness they have provided to me.

I am extremely grateful for all of your blessings in my life, Lord. I pray that you remind me of just how blessed I am and that you never allow me to forget to show my gratitude in prayer and returned acts of kindness.

Thank you, Lord. Amen



Upper Room Devotional Books

November/December Upper Room issues are now available. Copies are placed in the Narthex.

You may pick up copies Monday through Friday from 9:00 am—3:00 pm. Please also consider picking up a copy for a friend or neighbor who is not able to get out.



Heaven and Earth: Advent and the Incarnation

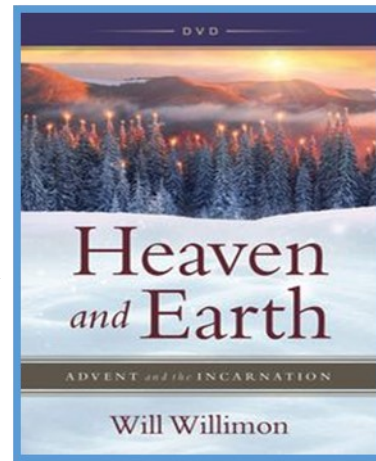
by William H. Willimon

**Tuesday, November 28;
Tuesdays December 5, 12, 19
during Advent at 1:30 P.M.**

**The Fellowship Hall
Facilitator: Dr. Ramonia L. Lee**

Watch out. God is on the way. It's not within our own power to make a fresh start. If we're to have a future different from the past, it must come as a gift, something not of our devising. What we need is a God who refuses to be trapped in eternity, a God who not only cares about us but is willing to show up among us and do something with us, here, now.

In *Heaven and Earth: Advent and the Incarnation* Will Willimon introduces us to the God who does just that, bringing heaven to earth and changing everything. His study reminds us that in Advent we celebrate and anticipate the earth-shaking, life-transforming good news that God is coming to us.



This week study is divided into 4 sessions:

Session 1.	Tuesday, November 28	Meanwhile	Mark 13:24-37
Session 2.	Tuesday, December 5	Surprised	Mark 1:1-8
Session 3.	Tuesday, December 12	Light	John 1:6-8, 19-28
Session 4.	Tuesday, December 19	Rejoice	Luke 1:26-55

Everyone is invited to join us as we study the biblical scriptures and get our hearts ready for the coming of Christ. The cost of the course book is \$13.50. You can request a copy when you sign up for the course, purchase it yourself from Amazon, or download it to your Kindle. Call the Chapel office at 301-598-5312 to **sign up for the class by Monday, November 20**. You must have read the assigned text before class on Tuesdays.

November Birthdays

Each month we encourage our members to wish a happy birthday to our affiliates and friends who live in nursing care facilities or group homes. Please send a card.



November 4

Joyce Gianiny
31224 Whitecap Way
Selbyville, DE 19975-4190

In Memoriam

Margaret Ellis
October 10, 2023





Thanksgiving Food Drive — For Manna Food Center
Tuesday, November 7 & Wednesday, November 8
Drop off outside under the Portico
from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

In our community, hunger is an especially complex issue. Hunger is prevalent yet often goes unnoticed, and its prevalence remains steadily on the rise. Local families struggle with increasing costs, such as rent, food and prescription medicines.

Manna strives to end Montgomery county's hunger problem. Collecting and distributing food is a mainstay of their work. Manna's Food for Families program is their multifaceted response. Manna's focus and belief is that our community is a place where all people at all times have access to safe, sufficient, nutritious food in order to lead fulfilling lives and contribute to making Montgomery County, MD a place where all live in dignity.

Their most needed food list includes instant oatmeal, brown rice, whole grain pasta, canned (in water) tuna, salmon or chicken, nut butters, low sodium canned vegetables, canned fruit in juice, fruit cups, shelf stable milk boxes, cooking oil, spices, infant formula and baby food. They do **NOT** accept sodas, cakes, candy, and cookies. Please do not donate any expired items or items in open or damaged containers.

To donate your items, drive up or walk up to The Chapel to drop off your non-perishable food items. Blue bins will be available outside from **10:00 am—2:00 pm on Tuesday, November 7, and Wednesday, November 8.**

THANKSGIVING EVE SERVICE
Wednesday, November 22 at 5:00 PM

For many years, The Inter-Faith Chapel has hosted an Annual Thanksgiving Eve Community Service. Over the last few years, due to COVID concerns, our time of being together in-person was replaced with a pre-recorded service that was available for viewers on Leisure World television.



This year, on Wednesday, November 22 at 5:00 PM we are pleased that we will once again have the opportunity to “gather together to ask the Lord’s blessings” in our Sanctuary for a worship service of praise and thanks. The service will include traditional Thanksgiving music, representatives from various faith communities, and a message of hope and gratitude.

Our guest speaker for the evening will be Sr. Barbara Spears (SNJM). Sister Barbara is a close colleague and friend of The IFC and is a member of The Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Name of Jesus and Mary - an international community of Catholic women religious committed to the advocacy of education and the promotion of justice.

“Come, ye thankful people, come,” and join us for this special evening of worship.

THE GIFT OF THE PRESENT:

An Advent Daily Devotional from the Society of St. Andrew

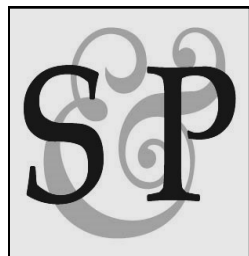
As the Advent season arrives, we prepare to celebrate the birth of the Christ-child. Despite the ups and downs of the year, we acknowledge the greatest gift the world has received.

The theme for this year’s devotional from the Society of St. Andrew encourages us to look forward and prepare for the things promised, yet to come. Each day we will reflect upon the stories and experiences of people of faith, both pastors and laypersons, from all walks of life. This is a timely reminder to not let the struggles of the present prevent us from hoping in the promises of the future.



As your spiritual hungers are fed by “The Gift of the Present” devotions this Advent season, please consider giving back to help the Society of St. Andrew meet the physical needs of others by giving a monetary contribution that will provide healthy nourishing food for people in greatest need, right here in the United States. Perhaps you will give an amount equal to what you would spend on a gift for a friend or neighbor. You will find coin boxes in the narthex to remind you to set aside your gift to St. Andrew each day or you may give a one-time gift to them by writing a check to the Inter-Faith Chapel and writing The Society of St. Andrew in the memo line. Our gifts to St. Andrew will be sent to them at the end of this year.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE FOR THE MONTH



All beginnings require that you unlock new doors. The key is giving and doing. Give charity and do kindness.

~Nachman of Breslov in *The Empty Chair*
by Moshe Mykoff

To Practice This Thought:

Make a beginning.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE FOR THE MONTH

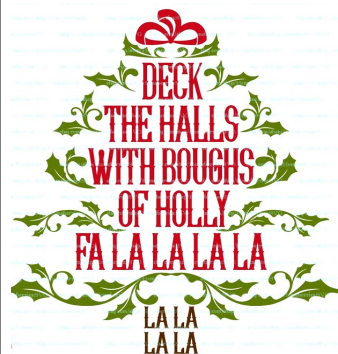


Notice that the moment you become unhappy is usually the moment you attempt to control another person.

~Hugh Prather in *The Little Book of Letting Go*
by Hugh Prather

To Practice This Thought:

See what happens when you stop trying to control people.

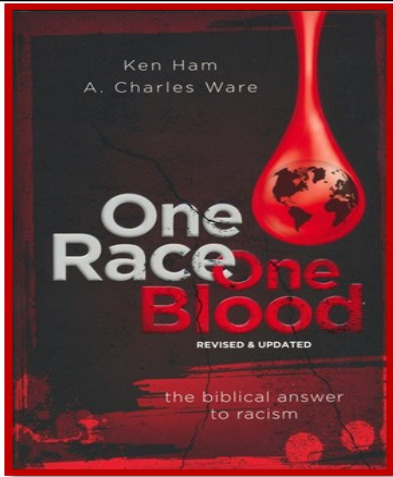


Deck the Halls

Wednesday, November 29 @ 10:00 am—12 noon

We invite you to participate in decorating our Chapel on **Wednesday November 29 at 10:00 am.**

This is a delightful time of the year to spend a morning with affiliates and friends as we transform the Sanctuary, Narthex and Fellowship Hall for the Christmas season! There will be Christmas music and laughter for our decorating enjoyment.



And He made from one blood every nation to dwell on all the face of the earth...

Acts 17:26

BLOODLINES IN THE BIBLE

**A Bible Study presented by George Samara
Mondays, November 6th and 13th**

10:30 AM

The Inter-Faith Chapel Fellowship Hall

Join us as we explore and discuss what the Bible says about our shared ancestry. We will follow our ancestry back to Adam and Eve, through Noah and his sons and the Nations that descended from them, then to Abraham, Moses, and finally to ourselves.

We will examine the years of existence of humankind as found in Genesis, the accuracy of scripture as defined by Jesus, and delve into the genealogies found in Genesis and beyond.

The text for this class is *One Race, One Blood: The Biblical Answer to Racism* by Ken Ham and A. Charles Ware. Ken Ham, the founder and CEO of the Creation Museum and the Noah's Ark Encounter, is recognized for his *Answers in Genesis* series, addressing cultural issues from the biblical foundations in Genesis 1-11. Dr. Ware serves as Executive Director of Grace Relations and Special Assistant to the President at the College of Biblical Studies in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Their book will be used to remind us that we are all one human race with variances of culture, skin color, and language which make us unique, but alike. The authors remind us that we are all called to be one through Christ.

The illustrations for the chart of Nations and a chart of World History will also be examined and discussed. Bring your Bible to class. George Samara will be providing textbooks for all who attend the class. **Please call the Chapel at 301-598-5312 no later than Thursday, November 2nd to register.**

**MARK YOUR
CALENDAR!**

**Inter-Faith Women Program
December 7, 2023 at 1:30PM
In the Chapel Sanctuary
"The Creche"**



Learn about the history of the Creche and about the people who were there when Jesus was a newborn. There will be lots of caroling and other Christmas music. This program will be held in the sanctuary and will be open to men and women.

Refreshments will be served in the Fellowship Hall after the program for a time of fellowship.



Stepping Out: Finding Ways to Connect While Keeping Safe

November 6, 2023

1:30 PM

Fellowship Hall

Social ties are necessary for us to thrive and survive. But as we age, we often find that we spend more time alone ourselves. Living alone as an older person may make us more vulnerable to social isolation and loneliness, both of which can be harmful to our health. Research indicates that loneliness and social isolation increase the risk of illnesses including depression and cognitive deterioration.

Please join us Monday, November 6th from 1:30 pm - 2:30 pm in the Inter-Faith Chapel Fellowship Hall for a discussion on *Stepping Out: Finding Ways to Connect While Keeping Safe*. Find out what loneliness is, the value of connections, and how to feel happier. Also, learn the benefits of socialization.

This topic is important because:

- We are wired for connections throughout our lives.
- Social relationships are critical for taking care of our health.
- Our communities need us.
- The longer it takes, the harder it gets.

Social isolation and loneliness increase risk for high blood pressure, obesity, heart disease, addiction, depression, anxiety, dementia, and weakened immunity.

Christine Bitzer, LICSW, LCSW-C, LCSW, Assistant Director of Education & Licensure at Seabury Resources for Aging, will lead our discussion on this important topic. She will discuss the following:

- Finding ways to connect while keeping safe
- The Who, What, Where, When, Why and How of connection
- Dealing with setbacks
- Making a plan
- The importance of getting out there
- Why we need to get out there

Health Risks

This workshop is presented by The Inter-Faith Chapel and Bedford Court. All are invited to come and bring a friend to this discussion at 1:30 p.m. on Monday, November 6th. There is no cost to attend this event.

Financial Report			
Giving Actual Month of September 2023	Giving Budget Month of September 2023	Giving Actual Year to Date 9/30/2023	Giving Budget Year to Date 9/30/2023
\$32,035	\$34,608	\$308,403	\$320,350

You may call Bonnie Bonner, Chapel Administrator, at 301-598-5312 if you desire a more detailed financial report.



Save the Date

A Service of Lessons and Carols
December 10 @ 10:00 AM
Featuring:
The Chancel Choir
Singers from
The Baltimore Musicales



I would like to invite you to join with the Chancel Choir and the Baltimore Musicales in singing for the annual Lessons and Carols service, on Dec. 10.

Our choir rehearsals are on Thursdays at 1:00 pm. The Lessons and Carols service we are doing this year is not difficult. It is all made up of familiar carols and readings from the Bible.

I know you will enjoy it and we hope to have many people join us this year!

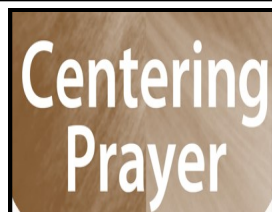
~Holly Oberle 



The Club Helping the Homeless and Working Poor (CHWP)

CHWP thanks the community for making the coat and hat drive a success. Over 25 bags of items were collected and will be donated to Interfaith Works Clothing Center serving Montgomery County residents.





**Please Join Us for
Centering Prayer:
Wednesday, November 15
6:00 pm – 7:00 pm**

You are welcome to join others who seek to draw closer to God in a sacred circle of prayer on **Wednesday, November 15 at 6:00 pm** in the Chapel's fellowship hall. During our time together we will devote 20 minutes of silence to the practice of centering prayer, a method of contemplative prayer with the sole intention of offering ourselves to God and consenting to God's presence and work within us.

Centering prayer is a spiritual practice of intentional silence, in which we let go not only of the noise and sounds of the outside world, but we also seek to let go of the *inner noise* of our mind's wandering thoughts.

Centering prayer invites us to contemplation: communion with God beyond thoughts, words, emotions, sense experiences, or acts. In addition to centering prayer, facilitator Bertie Knisely will lead the group in deepening prayer practices such as breath prayer, sacred movement, and chanting.

To register, call the Chapel office (301) 598-5312, or email Bertie at bertiek@moravian.edu.

**November, 2023 Health
Being Thankful**

This is the special season when we come together to give thanks for our many blessings. We are thankful for being able to maintain our mobility, our independence, sound mind and our ability to age in place by maintaining good health and staying active.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) defines aging in place as: "The ability to live in ones' own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably regardless of age, income, or ability level."

Our health officials agree that for this upcoming fall/winter season it is safe to receive the flu and COVID vaccines at the same time. We all should consider getting both vaccines this fall/winter season. The flu season will peak in December of this year. Vaccinations are the right thing to do to protect yourself and others from the flu and other diseases and infections. Vaccinations can lower dementia risk. Vaccines also might decrease the risk of age related cognitive decline and enhance the ability of the immune system to remove amyloid plaques.

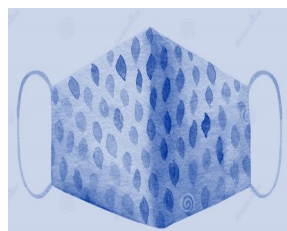
The COVID virus cases increased in recent months. It is affecting our lives and causing an increase in hospitalizations among the elderly. Ask your primary healthcare provider about the new respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccine for seniors.

Our lives are precious and holy gifts from God. In this season of Thanksgiving, a humble attitude of gratitude certainly helps to simplify life. Thank you God for our life.

Andra Matthews, RN, BSN, CM Health Educator

Welcome!

**However...
Please be mindful of
others.**



**MASKS ARE
OPTIONAL**

Self-monitor and refrain from attending in-person when:

1. You have had COVID within the last 10 days
2. You have been exposed to COVID within the last 10 days
3. You have cold or flu symptoms

November CALENDAR

Monday, November 6 @ 10:30 AM — Bible Study - *Bloodlines In The Bible*
 Monday, November 6 @ 1:30 PM — Stepping Out: Finding Ways to Connect While Keeping Safe
 Tuesday, November 7 @ 10:00 AM — 2:00 PM — Thanksgiving Food Drive
 Wednesday, November 8 @ 10:00 AM—2:00 PM — Thanksgiving Food Drive
 Friday, November 10 — Veterans Day (obs.) — **OFFICE CLOSED**
 Wednesday, November 15 @ 6:00 PM—Centering Prayer
 Wednesday, November 22 @ 5:00 PM — Thanksgiving Eve Service
 Thursday, November 23 & Friday, November 24—**OFFICE CLOSED**
 Tuesday, November 28 @ 1:30 PM — Advent Bible Study “Heaven and Earth: Advent and the Incarnation”
 Wednesday, November 29 @ 10:00 AM—12 noon — Deck the Halls



THANKSGIVING

WORD SEARCH

Y A G A T H E R I N G W T H R
 S L B L E S S I N G S A N S E
 S S I E X Y A D I L O H N R L
 Y E E M D O C C A S I O N C A
 S I Q N A U V V R B I O H N T
 T R N M L F T E J T Z I O O I
 N O E O E U M I A O L Q U I V
 E M E G S I F R T D Y Z S N E
 R E U H N A O K R A X Q E U S
 A M O I L C E E N H R U H E L
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 E C R D R E N N I D H W L F E
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- | | | |
|-------------|-----------|--------------|
| BLESSINGS | HOLIDAY | PARENTS |
| CHILDREN | HOME | RELATIVES |
| DECORATIONS | HOUSEHOLD | REMEMBER |
| DINNER | JOY | REMINISCE |
| FAMILY | MEAL | REUNION |
| GATHERING | MEMORIES | SEASON |
| GRATITUDE | OCCASION | THANKFULNESS |



What does a turkey eat for dessert?

Peach Gobbler.

How did the turkey get home for Thanksgiving?

It took the gravy train.

Thanksgiving blessings Gatherings
 GRATEFUL Family
 Give Thanks Prayers Blessed

Let us come before Him with Thanksgiving

Psalm 95:2

**THE INTER-FAITH CHAPEL
3680 S. LEISURE WORLD BLVD
SILVER SPRING MD 20906**

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

phone 301-598-5312
www.inter-faithchapel.org

Rev. Dr. Woodie Rea, Senior Minister

Rev. Dr. Ramonia L. Lee,
Minister of Congregational Life

Rev. Dr. Robert W. Perry
Minister Emeritus

Dr. Holly Oberle, Director of Music

Bonnie B. Bonner, Administrator

Joy M. Dufour, Administrative Assistant

Steve Buck, Gary Carpenter
Video Technicians and Chapel Sextons

