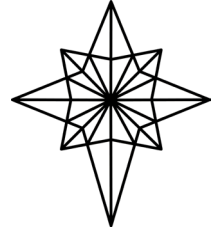


AUMC WITNESS

Our Mission: Love God, Love Neighbor, Serve the World

Annandale United Methodist Church
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Rev. Dr. Clarence R. Brown, Jr.
Rev. Eduardo Carrillo
Rev. Cynthia Johnson-Oliver
Rev. Luz Zuleta



Vol. 10 No. 26



We are a Stephen Ministry Church

December 17, 2013

Celebration and Gratitude

It is once and again that we celebrate the coming of the Christ, God incarnate; the entry into darkness and brokenness, the blessings of light and healing. It is this signature event in human history that gives us hope and empowers our ministry.

This has been a year of signature events in the life of our faith community: we have expanded our reach in spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ to our neighbors in new and exciting ways; we have committed ourselves to eradicating homelessness one person at a time; we have empowered our brothers and sisters in Haiti, Brazil and Mozambique in sustainable and self directed ways; we have studied and are studying how we might be more authentically and transparently hospitable; we have been salt and light.

The engagement of a new year cannot pass without appreciating those whose work has forwarded the agenda of making disciples for the transformation of the world. While they are transitioning from some formal responsibilities, they continue to show forth a remarkable witness. We give thanks for Ryan Witkowski, Loren Shields, Laura Cook, Randy Gordon, and Janet Sabo for their work on the stewardship of Finance, Staff Parish, Trustees and Nominations.

I give particular thanks for Richard Robinson, Tracy Carney, Pat Sherfey, Kevin Sabo, and Lance Witkowski for their leadership. As Administrative Council Chair, Chair of Staff Parish, Lay Leader, Chair of Worship and Chair of Trustees respectively, they have given above and beyond, and we pray God's blessing upon them. Please join me in thanking them.

As we look forward we welcome Donna Rodriguez,



Elizabeth Moss, Terri Ruhter, Marcia Twomey, Mel Hottman, Steve Reynolds and Cheri Brown as they join our leadership team. We also welcome Pam Jones as our new Lay Leader and Bill Sinclair as our new Council Chair. I am well assured that they will steward the life of our community of faith well as we continue our singular focus on discipleship formation and community transformation.

As we look ahead, I cannot help but pause and give a special word of thanksgiving to God for each of you. I may have shared this with some, but my relationship with Annandale United Methodist has been the longest span of any engagement I have had along my ministerial journey. It has been rich and deeply rewarding. You all are a gift to me and Jaie. A blessed Christmas to you all.

Yours for a Vital Witness to Christ,
Clarence

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News in Brief



Carry Them All the Days of Old

Isaiah 63:7-9

*I will recount the gracious deeds of the LORD,
the praiseworthy acts of the LORD,
because of all that the LORD has done for us,
and the great favor to the house of Israel
that he has shown them according to his mercy,
according to the abundance of his steadfast love.*

*For he said, 'Surely they are my people,
children who will not deal falsely';
and he became their savior
in all their distress.*

*It was no messenger or angel
but his presence that saved them;
in his love and in his pity he redeemed them;
he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.*



Have you ever seen a movie several times? Or read a book for a second, third, maybe fourth time? We already know the punch line, the climax, the twists, yet we like to relive it one more time. Likewise, Isaiah writes, "I will recount the gracious deeds of the Lord." Isaiah believed in remembering how God's mighty hand was always at work in the world.

As we celebrate Christmas, this is the time when we come together and tell the stories of old. We gather our families, our friends, and even meet new people and sit for a while to hear the amazing story of the birth of Christ who was born to bring justice, peace, and joy.

I want to challenge you to do as Isaiah does and recount the times God's presence has been with you. This divine presence is a reality in our lives each and every day, not just in our Bibles or Sunday morning. The steadfast love of God is present, and just like Isaiah says, "It was no messenger or angel, but his presence that saved them."

Can you imagine how powerful this Christmas would be if we were mindful of all of our blessings, especially Immanuel—"God with us"? This invitation to participate in God's never ending love is to each and every one of us. "For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6).

This Christmas, let us take a second look at our lives, and let the light of Christ shine upon you. Let the voice of God echo in your life and be heard among every person you encounter. May your words and actions be in accordance to the steadfast love of the Holy One.

Eduardo A. Cardillo
Eduardo

DATEBOOK

Dec. 22 – Brethren Christmas Concert at AUMC;
Love Feast at Heritage Drive campus

Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve worship at 4, 7 and 11 p.m.

Dec. 29 – ONE worship service, 10:30 a.m., led by
college students

Jan. 5 – ONE worship service, 10:30 a.m.

Jan. 8 – Wednesday Night Together

NEWS IN BRIEF

A Brethren Christmas concert will be held Sunday, Dec. 22 at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are \$10 in advance or \$15 at the door and are available after Sunday worship services.

Christmas Caroling: AUMC children and youth will be caroling at Evergreen on Dec. 22, 3-5 p.m., and anyone who wants to join the kids should meet at the church at 3 p.m. Hot chocolate and treats will follow the singing!

A Christmas Love Feast will be held at the Heritage Drive campus on Sunday, Dec. 22, 7 p.m. A Love Feast seeks to strengthen the bonds and the spirit of harmony, goodwill, and congeniality, as well as to forgive past disputes and instead love one another.

Christmas Eve: Bring your family and friends on Dec. 24 for a Family Christmas Eve service at 4 p.m. and a Candlelight Christmas Eve worship service at 7 and 11 p.m. Childcare will be available at the 7 p.m. service.

Bailey's Crossroads Hypothermia: Volunteers are needed to help with setup on nights when the Bailey's Crossroads Homeless Shelter is at capacity and AUMC serves as an overflow site. Setup is easy and takes less than an hour, and it ensures that the homeless men and women in our area have a safe, warm place to spend the night. Contact Jay Morris at jmorris55@verizon.net or 703-200-6300 to sign up.

Children's Clothes Closet: Donations of new or gently used clothing for infants and children are being collected for families who live around the Heritage Drive campus. A collection box is located on the third floor of AUMC Parent Resource Area (near room 311).

Fighting hunger during the holidays: During the very busy weeks of Christmas and New Year's Day, our neighbors are still hungry and needing the supplemental food we provide each week. Volunteers are needed for sandwich making and food distribution at the Heritage Drive campus every Thursday, including Dec. 26 and Jan. 2. Help make sandwiches for guests at Bailey's Homeless Shelter from noon – 1 p.m. and help distribute food from 5 – 7 p.m. For more information call Betsy Clevenger, 703-425-6424.

Caring Ministries is collecting 2014 picture calendars, note/greeting cards, Christmas cards, writing paper and "Forever" postage stamps for women who are incarcerated. Bring items to the collection box outside of the church office. Please give postage stamps to the office.

One-time driving opportunity: Drivers are needed Thursday, Dec. 19, between 6:30 and 7 p.m., to take folks home following the food distribution event at the Heritage Drive campus. If you can provide transportation on Dec. 19 to one or more families from the Heritage Drive campus to their nearby home, please contact Betsy Clevenger, 703-425-6424 or etclevenger@verizon.net.

Blankets needed: The ACCA Furniture Program needs blankets (single, double and queen size) to send with donated beds as they are delivered to our neighbors in need. Blankets may be left on Saturday morning at the small white building behind the Little White Church. Before dropping off blankets, please call the Di Spiritos at 703-256-9513 to let them know you will be coming. The building will be staffed from 9 to noon on Saturday, Dec. 21.

ESL Teachers Needed: Planning is underway for an English as a Second Language program at the Heritage Drive campus. Teachers are needed and ESL teacher training is scheduled for Jan. 25 from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. (snow date Feb. 1). Training will include the basics of language learning and teaching as well as practice putting lessons together. To sign up for the training or for more information, send an email to Erin Finn EFinn@LCNV.ORG who is Director of Classroom Programs for the Literacy Council of Northern Virginia. In your email, please note "I'm interested in becoming an ESL instructor, preferably at the Annandale United Methodist Church trial group at the Heritage campus location." Classes will begin as soon as we have enough volunteers to teach ESL, hopefully in January. ESL classes will be at the Heritage campus, the training will be at Literacy Council of Northern Virginia, 2855 Annandale Road, Falls Church.

AUMC note cards (\$10) and **magnets** (\$5) can be purchased in the church office. Please pay exact amount in cash or write a check to AUMC.

Inclement Weather Announcements: When the weather is severe enough to cancel services/activities, information will be recorded on the office voice mail system. Call 703-246-8330 to hear the recorded message.

Seeking chorus members for the Wizard of Oz: Children (3rd grade and above), youth and adults interested in being a flying monkey, Munchkin, Ozian, Winkie, or another "chorus" part in AUMC's production of the Wizard of Oz should contact Barbara Gordon, bgordon@annandale-umc.org for more information. The full production is scheduled for Feb. 27, 28 and March 1, 2014. Rehearsals begin in January.

MINISTRY MEETINGS

Tues., Jan. 7 Trustees 7:30 p.m. Room 303

LECTIONARY TEXTS

Dec. 22, Fourth Sunday of Advent: Isaiah 7:10-16; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 (UMH 801); Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-23

Dec. 24, Christmas Eve: Isaiah 9:2-7, Psalm 96 (UMH 815), Titus 2:11-14, Luke 2:1-20

Dec. 29, First Sunday After Christmas Day: Isaiah 63:7-9, Psalm 148 (UMH 861), Hebrews 2:10-18, Matthew 2:13-23

Jan. 5, Epiphany Sunday: Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14 (UMH 795); Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12

Jan. 12, First Sunday After the Epiphany: Isaiah 42:1-9, Psalm 29 (UMH 761), Acts 10:34-43, Matthew 3:13-17

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Annandale United Methodist Church

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WEEKLY VOLUNTEERS

Sunday, Dec. 22

Door greeters: 8:30 a.m. E. Wilson, C. Cox, S. Naugle,
9:30 a.m. M. Pearson, 10:30 a.m. W. Ward

Welcome Center: 8:30 a.m. J. Brooks, 11 a.m. C. Jones

Fellowship hour: United Methodist Men

Ushers: 8:30 a.m. E. Carrillo, R. Gallagher, G. Sherwood, P. Snitzer(c)
11 a.m. S. Fleming, G. Sherfey, P. Sherfey, R. Gordon

Single Service Sunday, Dec. 29

Door greeters: R. Hampton, W. Lord, B. Brown,
L. McConville, E. Moss

Welcome Center: M. Cody, A. Lohr

Fellowship hour: Witness/Missions

Ushers: 10:30 a.m. J. Clarke, S. Groves, G. Sherfey, P. Sherfey (c)

Sunday, Jan. 5

Welcome Center: 8:30 a.m. R./N. Sayre; 11 a.m. M. Sherwood

Sunday, Jan. 12

Welcome Center: 8:30 a.m. S. Kenski; 11 a.m. G. Rothman

Join the Bread Team: The Bread Team makes sure that loaves of bread (not peanut butter and jelly, just bread) are available on Sundays for the ushers to distribute to first-time visitors. The team needs more volunteers to pick up loaves of bread at an Annandale bakery on Saturdays, wrap them up, and bring them to church by the 8:30 a.m. worship service the following day. The number and rotation of volunteers needed depends on how many volunteer. To volunteer, or for more information, contact Sheila Kyer, 703-981-6080.

The Haiti Mission Team needs donations of children's play equipment. The team will depart for Haiti on Jan. 6 and is scheduled for construction work and providing two days of Vacation Bible School for the 300 to 350 Haitian children to attend VBS. Please bring the following items and place in marked boxes in the Atrium by Friday, Dec. 27: 1 megaphone, 3 tarps (20' x 30') for the children to sit on, 6 regulation-size soccer balls, 6 Chinese jump ropes, 4 jump ropes 12' to 14' long, 8 plastic beach balls (to use with parachutes), 350 Quaker Variety Bars (48 count pack available at BJ's), stickers -- anything child oriented, clothes pins, 350 felt tip markers any size box. For more information, contact Pam Jones at 703-820-0058 or foueverfree@verizon.net.

End-of-Year Party: The Ogoni People of the Washington Metropolitan area are having their Year End Party on Saturday, Dec. 21, 3 p.m. in Wright Hall. Everyone is invited. The party is hosted by the Nkesi family, members of AUMC. The Ogoni are one of the many indigenous people in the region of southeast Nigeria.

Welcome Desk volunteers needed for 11 a.m. worship service. If interested, contact Kendall Soulen, ksoulen@wesleyseminary.edu or 703-624-0814.

Year-End Reminders: All gifts to be credited for 2013 tax purposes must be received in the church office by 11:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 31 or postmarked by Dec. 31. If you are responsible for expense vouchers for your work area, vouchers must be submitted on or before Dec. 18.



**NEXT
DEADLINE**

Friday, Jan. 3 is the deadline for the
Jan. 14 Witness which covers Jan. 19 and 26