



AUMC WITNESS

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

Annandale United Methodist Church
6935 Columbia Pike, Annandale, VA 22003
P: 703-256-8330 F: 703-914-8896
office@annandale-umc.org

Ministers:
Rev. Dr. Clarence R. Brown, Jr.
Rev. Eduardo Carrillo
Rev. Cynthia Johnson-Oliver
Rev. Luz Zuleta

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We are a Stephen Ministry Church

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New Year – New Sermon Series “Living with Passion and Purpose”



“We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.”

- Romans 8:28

To kick off the new year, the pastors have begun a new sermon series on "Living with Passion and Purpose." Drawing upon scripture, recommended reading, and life experience, the sermon series will challenge worshippers to discover their purpose and to passionately live out their life calling.

The pursuit of a life purpose is a common existential quest for many people at various life stages. Such questions are raised by the teen more seriously wondering what she wants to be when she grows up, the young adult who recently graduated from college, the mid-career adult reevaluating his life choices, and the senior adult planning how to spend retirement.

Regardless of age or stage, many people want to know whether there is more to life than daily routines and activities, more than our material existence, and more than the superficial dictates of popular culture.

Much has been written about how to discern one's life calling. Frederick Buechner has famously said, "The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." Parker Palmer has said, "Before I can tell my life what I want to do with it, I must listen to my life telling me who I am." Michael Slaughter has more recently said, "If the purpose is from God, it will always honor God, bless others, and bring you joy."

Beyond these wise words, we find confirmation in the words of scripture that each of us has a divine purpose and calling. The letter to the Ephesians reminds that "we

have... been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will." (Ephesians 1:11) The Letter to the Romans reminds us that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to God's purpose.

This begs the question: What is your life purpose? Are you passionately living your life calling? This sermon series will explore these questions and more. To help answer these questions, Slaughter recommends writing a "God-sized" mission statement for your life. We believe that this is a fruitful exercise. Through a series of "homework" assignments, you will be guided in reflecting on whether you have been living your purpose and how you can discern and live your life calling. Let's make 2014 the year in which we live with passion and purpose.

Blessings,
Rev. Cynthia Johnson-Oliver

LIVING WITH PASSION AND PURPOSE

Sermon Series, Jan 12 - Feb 2, 2014

Recommended Reading

Parker Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak*
Michael Slaughter, *Dare to Dream*
Rick Warren, *The Purpose-Driven Life*
Kenda Creasy Dean, *Almost Christian*

Join the Discussion

Visit Academyofdiscipleship.com/blog for further commentary and discussion.

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Almost There

Grace and peace in the name of our Savior! Almost. Almost is quite a word, isn't it? The dictionary informs us that it carries the meaning of "...nearly; not quite accomplished; slightly short of..." Many of us can recall automobile

trips wherein our youthful travelers would inquire, "Are we there yet?" The answer to which would be... almost.

In recent days your clergy have undertaken to share a series entitled, "Living With Passion and Purpose." The aim of the series is to enlighten and inspire, to move and to motivate. The cause is the understanding that over the years many persons have become more "church goers" than full fledged disciples of Jesus Christ. No one at Annandale, of course, but we have observed this to be true of many.

In addition, we have seen persons settle into the rut of hum drum, going through the motions, passionless existence. They are less than enthusiastic about life, about church, about anything. Once again, this description does not apply to anyone here at Annandale, but it is a truism none the less, and a sad one at that. Why should we be concerned about this? Glad you asked!

No less a personage than the forebear of the Methodist Church, John Wesley, clairvoyantly saw what the church could become. His sermon number 2 was rightly entitled "Almost Christian." The portrait he paints of the "almost Christian" is a "good" person. One who doesn't lie, cheat or steal; tells the truth, supports justice, lives moderately. In Wesley's words, one who has, "a form of godliness; of that godliness which is prescribed in the gospel of Christ; the having the outside of a real Christian. Accordingly, the almost Christian does nothing which the gospel forbids." But Wesley questions if that is enough.

As it attends to us and our efforts to make disciples of Jesus Christ, it is not. This is especially true of engaging youth and young adults. In an illuminating book - *Almost Christian: What the Faith of Our Teenagers Is Telling the American Church* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010) - Dr. Kenda Casey Dean digests the data from the landmark study of the religious patterns and beliefs of the young. Says Dean:

Since the religious and spiritual choices of American teenagers echo, with astonishing clarity, the religious

and spiritual choices of the adults who love them, lackadaisical faith is not young people's issue, but ours. Most teenagers are perfectly content with their religious worldviews; it is churches that are—rightly—concerned. So we must assume that the solution lies not in beefing up congregational youth programs or making worship more "cool" and attractive, but in modeling the kind of mature, passionate faith we say we want young people to have. The National Study of Youth and Religion reveals a theological fault line running underneath American churches: an adherence to a do-good, feel-good spirituality that has little to do with the Triune God of Christian tradition and even less to do with loving Jesus Christ enough to follow him into the world. (pp.4-5)

It follows, then, that just being good people is not enough. If we would follow Wesley's prescription, the antidote would be first to love God. Why? Because we are convinced of the overwhelming love God has for us; so much so that we would love our neighbor in like manner. We would literally run into the streets with that love, and in doing so blaze a trail for others to follow. Within this we have our purpose. And further, we would pursue this purpose with a passion. We might teach this to others.

Clarence
Clarence

DATEBOOK

- Jan. 23** – UMM dinner
- Feb. 2** – ACCA Food Drive
- Feb. 12** - Wednesday Night Together
- Feb. 15** - Stop Hunger Now
- Feb. 27-28, March 1** – The Wizard of Oz

ACCA's furniture ministry (which delivers donated furniture to needy families) needs volunteers! AUMC's next date to assist is Saturday, Feb. 15, 8 a.m. to 12 noon. If interested, call Peter Taylor, 703-477-3903. For more information about donating furniture and to arrange for pickup, contact Don Di Spirito at ddmld@verizon.net or 703-256-9513. Items needed include: mattresses/box springs (all sizes except King size), kitchen and dining tables and chairs, sofas (not sleeper sofas), living room chairs, coffee tables, end tables, and lamps.

NEWS IN BRIEF

The UMM will enjoy a Steak Dinner on Thursday, Jan. 23, 7 p.m. in Wright Hall. RSVP to Gary FitzGibbon at gary@garyfitzgibbon.com or 703-963-8707 and bring a friend! Also please let Gary know if you are available for set-up or clean-up.

The Communion Steward Committee needs a new chairperson! If you are interested in serving, please contact Worship Chair Steve Reynolds mtnsteve@mac.com or 703-906-3861 or Garry Bell, gbell@annandale-umc.org or 703-256-8330.

January is **National Human Trafficking Awareness Month** and during the Jan. 19 11 a.m. service, the founder and executive director of Restoration Ministries will talk about how her organization provides faith-based services to survivors of sex trafficking in the DC metropolitan area. AUMC's Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force will have a table in Wright Hall with more information.

Promote your business, praise a family member or friend, or wish "good luck" to the cast and crew of AUMC's Wizard of Oz by placing an ad in the printed program! The ad proceeds help offset the costs of the production. Deadline for ads is Feb. 10. For more information about purchasing an ad, as well as details about AUMC's Wizard of Oz, visit www.annandale-umc.org.

New Member Class: "Brownies with Brown" will continue on Sundays, Jan. 26, and Feb. 2, 9:45 a.m. in room 212C. The class, taught by Rev. Dr. Clarence Brown, Jr., is a time of exploration and discernment of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ at Annandale UMC. Topics will range from Wesleyan Theology to United Methodism 101; from Stewardship to Spiritual Gifts. Pre-registration is not necessary. For more information, call 703-256-8330.

Tickets go on sale the first of February for AUMC's presentation of The Wizard of Oz on Feb. 27, 28 and March 1. Mark your calendars! Don't miss this musical fantasy adventure based on the 1900 novel by L. Frank Baum with such favorite songs as "Over the Rainbow", "If I Only Had a Brain" and "We're Off to See the Wizard"! If you are talented with stage makeup, ironing/sewing costumes, lighting and sound and would like to volunteer "backstage" at AUMC's The Wizard of Oz, contact Barbara Gordon bgordon@annandale-umc.org or call 703-256-8330.

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 year 'round: Volunteers are needed for sandwich making and food distribution at the Heritage Drive campus. Every Thursday, volunteers make sandwiches for guests at Bailey's Homeless Shelter from noon – 1 p.m. and help distribute food from 5 – 7 p.m. The second Tuesday each month (Feb. 11 and March 11) – volunteers make 600 sandwiches and then transport them to Poe Elementary to be the evening meal for the after school program. Volunteers are needed to make sandwiches at 1:30 p.m. and to distribute the sandwiches at 3:30 p.m. For more information call Betsy Clevenger, 703-425-6424.

The ACCA food pantry is low on jelly, peanut butter, spaghetti sauce, canned fruit, bags of rice, crackers, dried beans, cookies, Jello, pudding mixes, and canned meats. ACCA collection day at AUMC is the first Sunday of each month (next time Feb. 2) but donations of non-perishables can be brought to the church office weekdays between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.



Flowers on the Altar Needed

If you would like to place flowers on the altar in memory or honor of a loved one, please circle the date(s) you wish and return the form below along with a check, made payable to AUMC. Cost: \$25 per arrangement. Flowers are not placed on the altar on the first Sunday of each month, Communion Sunday; Easter Sunday and the Sunday before Christmas have special flowers.

January			19	26
February		9	16	23
March	9	16	23	30
April		13	20	27
May		11	18	25
June	8	15	22	29
July		13	20	27
August	10	17	24	31
September		14	21	28
October		12	19	26
November	9	16	23	30
December		14	21	28

Name of Donor: _____

Phone: _____

In Memory of In Honor of (check one)

I/we wish to leave the flowers for distribution to shut-ins or those in the hospital. YES _____ NO _____

MINISTRY MEETINGS

Tues., Jan. 21	Church Council	7:15 p.m.	Room 302
Tues., Jan. 28	SPRC	7 p.m.	Room 210

LECTIONARY TEXTS

Jan. 19, Second Sunday After the Epiphany: Isaiah 42:1-9; Psalm 29 (UMH 774); Acts 10:34-43; Matthew 3:13-17

Jan. 26, Third Sunday After the Epiphany: Isaiah 9:1-4; Psalm 27:1, 4-9 (UMH 758); I Corinthians 1:10-18; Matthew 4:12-23

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Annandale United Methodist Church

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WEEKLY VOLUNTEERS

Sunday, Jan. 19

Door greeters: 8:10 a.m. S. Fleming, J. Beyer
9:30 a.m. D. Ruhter,
10:30 a.m. W. Ward

Welcome Desk: 8:30 a.m. L. Miller, 11 a.m. C. Jones

Fellowship hour: Deborah Circle

Ushers: 8:30 a.m. S. Fleming, S. Groves, R. Roberts, S. Nkesi (c)
11 a.m. E. Carrillo, G. Rothman, R. Witkowski, P. Snitzer (c)

Sunday, Jan. 26

Door greeters: 8:10 a.m. J. Vance, B. Brown, S. Naugle
9:30 a.m. A. Witkowski, B. Otto
10:30 a.m. L. McConville, E. Moss

Welcome Desk: 8:30 a.m. M. Cody, 11 a.m. A. Lohr

Fellowship hour: Education Committee

Ushers: 8:30 a.m. A. Cogswell, D. Pemberton, R. Gordon,
E. McKenney (c)
11 a.m. S. Fleming, C. Jones, C. Jones, P. Adams (c)

NEXT DEADLINE

Friday, Jan. 17 is the deadline for the
Jan. 28 Witness which covers Feb. 2 and 9.

The 2014 Lenten Study begins March 2 and will be based on *The Prodigal God* by Timothy Keller. Visit www.annandale-umc.org for more information and to register for classes and small groups.

Acolyte and Crucifer Training: Join us on Sunday, Jan. 26 at 9:40-10:15 a.m. (immediately following the 8:30 service) in the Sanctuary to learn how to serve in this very important role in our Worship Service. Pat Vaughn will be leading this training. All children (3rd grade and older), youth, and adults are invited to become a part of the worship team.

ESL teachers are needed for a program at the Heritage Drive campus and training is scheduled for Jan. 25 from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. (snow date Feb 1). Training will include 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, 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. ESL classes will be at the Heritage campus, the training will be at Literacy Council of Northern Virginia, 2855 Annandale Road, Falls Church.

The Women's Retreat is scheduled for May 2 - 4 and the final payment is due Feb. 15. The Women of AUMC will travel to Amish Country and will stay at the beautiful Eden Resort, located in the heart of Amish Country and featuring a heated indoor pool, restaurants, fitness center and more. Attendees will have the option to enjoy "Moses" at the Sight & Sound Theater - one of the most popular tourist attractions in Lancaster County, PA, the largest Christian live theater in the United States. A second option is to enjoy a family style meal at the Amish restaurant Good & Plenty. Good & Plenty has been chosen as one of AAA's Top Ten Best "down home dining" restaurants in as well as voted "the best" local PA Dutch restaurant for 17 years. Space at the retreat has been reserved for 68 women; 18 spots are still available. The keynote speaker for the retreat is Katie Webster Carson who will speak about "By Faith we Conquering Kingdoms" - Hebrews 11:23. Sign up at church on Sunday or for more information contact Cyra Doty at 703-354-5330 or email radu94@aol.com.