



# April/May Newsletter

Dear Friends and Family of Asbury UMC,

As we look around, we see the signs that spring is finally here! Flowers are blooming! The sun is shining! Grass is growing! Easter candy is on the shelves! God is good! Winter, although necessary for the replenishment of the earth, can feel isolating, dark and depressing. It can lift our spirits to feel the glow of the sun on our faces and know that life abounds on the earth once again!

Spring also means that we are walking towards the cross and the empty tomb. These are other symbols of new life for us all. Key moments in time for those who have faith in Christ as our Lord and Savior. Without his sacrifice, without this supreme act of love, we would have no hope for the future at all. But on Easter morning, the tomb was opened and Christ rose from the dead, leaving death in the tomb and giving us new life. A promise from God that he is making all things new. We have the promise of a future with hope, with joy and peace because of the grace of God we have received in Christ.

But how does that help in the here and now? It's great to know we have a future that looks good but we're struggling right now. What does Easter mean for us today? Our nation is in chaos and no matter what our opinion about what is happening in our government right now, we see the pain and struggles of those who feel targeted, those forced to retire or are laid off or fired, those who are now living in fear of being forcibly removed from the US even if they have legal status, those who are afraid they won't get the government social security checks they depend on to pay their rent or buy their food, those who are regular workers afraid of prices going up so far they won't be able to put food on their table or buy gas for their cars to get to work. People are challenged in so many ways right now. How can we look at the empty tomb and find hope? How can we be a beacon of light and hope to those around us when they are so afraid?

No matter what is happening in your situation right now, we are a people of hope in the midst of the world's struggles. Jesus was considered dead forever. He was buried in a tomb in the same way as every dead person had been before him. Yet, God is a God of hope and love, so God gave Jesus life. This same life is for you and for me. Because the tomb is empty, even when we feel that we are heading for certain death, that someone, somewhere might blow us all to

smithereens, we can have peace through our faith that God is with us and nothing can separate us from his love. This is the message of Easter! Jesus is alive! He lives still! We have new life! That life is forever! Rejoice!

Grace and peace,

*Rev. Julie A. Lewis*

## Mission Notes

Notes about our missions and ministries beyond the church walls

### Red Bird Mission Trip

A group of people from Asbury will be traveling to Beverly, Kentucky to participate for a week-long work project from Saturday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> to Friday, May 9<sup>th</sup>. The cost per person for the trip is about \$500 that includes room, board and project expenses at the Red Bird Mission Work camp, insurance, one hotel overnight stay, and transportation. We have 10 people going on this trip. Please be in prayer for these wonderful servants of God! It's not too late to join them if you can. Contact the office for more information.

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### HOPP Food Distribution

Asbury UMC has joined with other UM churches in our Annual Conference to distribute food from the Harvest Outreach People Program. This program acquires food for distribution free of charge to those in need. Asbury has been a part of this program for 2 months and has been able to distribute over 200 bags of fresh fruit and vegetables. The distribution takes place in our parking lot on the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of the month from 1 – 3 pm. This program is supported by apportionments from the churches of our Conference so give yourselves a hand in providing for those in need. Thank you to all who come to pack the food and distribute it. God bless you!

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### Blessing Boxes

Our Blessing Boxes continue to be a blessing to those in our community. Please see the list of items on the bulletin board above the bin by the parking lot door. Feel free to donate money if you don't have a way to buy items to donate. We cannot accept perishable food items.

# Asbury's Community Eggstravanza

April 19, 2025

10am – Noon

Asbury Fellowship Park

160 W. Glenwood Ave.

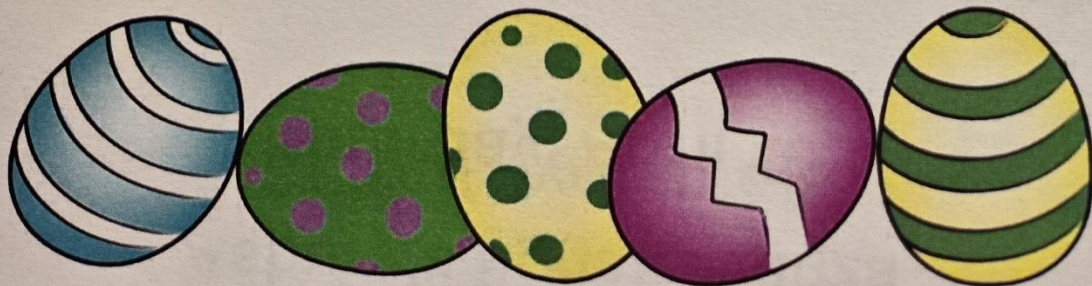
Easter Egg Hunt

Games Snacks Crafts

Story Walk Face Painting

Photo Op with the Easter Bunny

And more



## Fellowship after Worship

**9 am:** Time of food and fellowship after every service. **Bring something to share whenever you can!**

**11am:** We're happy to resume fellowship after worship on the LAST Sunday of each month. Please plan ahead to attend when you can. It would be great to **bring a dish to share** and drop it off in the kitchen before worship. See Lisa Hastings or Lois Bowers if you are available to help set up or clean up.

**5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Combined Services:** There will always be a time of food and fellowship after this service. Please look out for what to bring.

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## Asbury UMC Leadership

These are your leadership teams for 2025.

### **Executive Leadership Team**

Pastor Julie A. Lewis

Chairperson: Laura Willis

Secretary: Carlton Norris

Treasurer: Lisa Hastings

Vice-chairperson: Bart von Klinggraeff

Lay Leader: Susan Wolfe

Class of 2025: Lisa Hastings

Chris Jenkins

Robert Newnam

Class of 2026: Debbie Wicks

Bart von Klinggraeff

Jimmy Smith

Class of 2027: Laura Willis

Susan Wolfe

Carlton Norris

### **Nominations & Leadership Development Team:**

Chairperson: Pastor Julie Lewis

Members:

Class of 2025: Jennings Hastings

Rhoda Bass

Class of 2026: Mike McGrath

Lisa Torbert

Class of 2027: Jennifer von Klinggraeff

Tammy Snow

Stephane Sia

### **Non-ELT or NLDL member Leadership Positions:**

Lay Member to Annual Conference: Lisa Blough

Alternate Member to Annual Conference: Donna Fiedler

Native American Ministries Representative: TBD

## **Team Leaders:**

Children's Ministry Team:	Wanda Foltz
Dorcas Circle:	Lisa Blough and Carol Noronowicz
Facilities Team:	Jennings Hastings
Lighthouse Team:	Janna McGowan
Membership Audit Team:	Kristen McCracken
Memorial Team:	Debbie Wicks
Methodist Men:	Charley Woodley
Mission Team:	Lisa Harshberger
Prayer Care Team:	Lisa Blough
Safe Sanctuary/ SAFE Team:	Wanda Foltz
Worship Team:	Pastor Julie Lewis
Youth and Young Adults Ministries:	Michelle Wilson

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### Lighthouse Team Updates:

Our Lighthouse Team is the group charged with providing opportunities for connections within the congregation. They arrange events and activities to help us get to know one another and discover our other brothers and sisters in Christ as we follow Christ together. Here are some of the things they have done recently:

**Spiritual Retreat:** We had a guest speaker, Rev. Jackie Ford, a praise band and lots of fun activities designed to help us grow closer to one another and to God. This was well-attended and a good time was had by all.

**Game Night:** We had an evening of fun and laughter with big board games for all. Look for the next one, coming soon.

**Talent Show:** Over 15 acts were presented to showcase that we are not just people who come to church. We are all gifted in some way and it was good to see so many people share their gifts for an evening of entertainment.

**Potluck Luncheon after the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in March:** Lighthouse organized the cake and meal for our celebration of Diane Erhart's last Sunday as our organist/pianist for the 11 am service.

This team is always looking for people to serve or who have ideas on how we can find new ways to connect with and support one another in this church. Contact Janna McGowan or call the office for more information.

## Facilities Updates

- 1) **Flat Roof Leaking:** We have contracted to get the flat roof fixed that has caused some damage outside of the sanctuary by the Sacristy. The work should begin soon.
  - 2) **New Code Entry System at Parking Lot Door:** Due to security issues, we opted to get a code entry system installed on the parking lot door. This has been installed but as of this letter, the door needs a new part so we are using keys until the part has arrived. If you received a code, it will work when the door is fixed. If you didn't get a code and believe you need one, please contact the office.
  - 3) **Stained glass Sanctuary Doors:** The doors at the front of the Sanctuary in the middle have panes that are about to fall out. We are in the process of contacting people to get them fixed. In the meantime, please do not use those doors.
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## Senior Helper Program

One of the Ministries of the Mission Team is the Senior Helper Program. This program is to help our older people or those with disabilities to do simple things around the house like change light bulbs or hang new mini-blinds. See the brochure on any of the Information Towers for more information and to sign up. We need people to do the work as well as people to serve.

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## Attention Graduates

May is coming quickly and we want to celebrate any graduates we have among us. Please send the names of any graduates to the office so we can make sure we can share this good news on Graduate Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup>. Please check with the office for scholarship information as well. We do have scholarships available.

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## Family Worship

At Asbury, we have started a new worship service geared to all ages. We call it Family Worship but you can be a single person of any age and are welcome. This service is currently once a quarter on a Friday evening and includes dinner, music, a message and activities for all ages. The next service will be Friday, May 9<sup>th</sup>. Dinner at 6 pm. Service and activities begin at 6:30.

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## Diane Erhart Retires



Our Organist/Pianist of 7 years has retired. We wished her well at a Farewell Luncheon on Sunday, March 30<sup>th</sup>. We will miss her smile and her amazing talent.

Amy Brown, our Director of Traditional Music, will assume her position, doing double-duty until May. **We are looking for a new Adult Choir Director.**

Please direct anyone who might be interested to our website  
**[www.asburysmyrnaumc.org](http://www.asburysmyrnaumc.org)**  
for the job description and information.

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## Easter Services

Holy Week Services: Maundy Thursday, April 17<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm

Good Friday Service, April 18<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm

Easter is Sunday, April 20<sup>th</sup>. We will have:

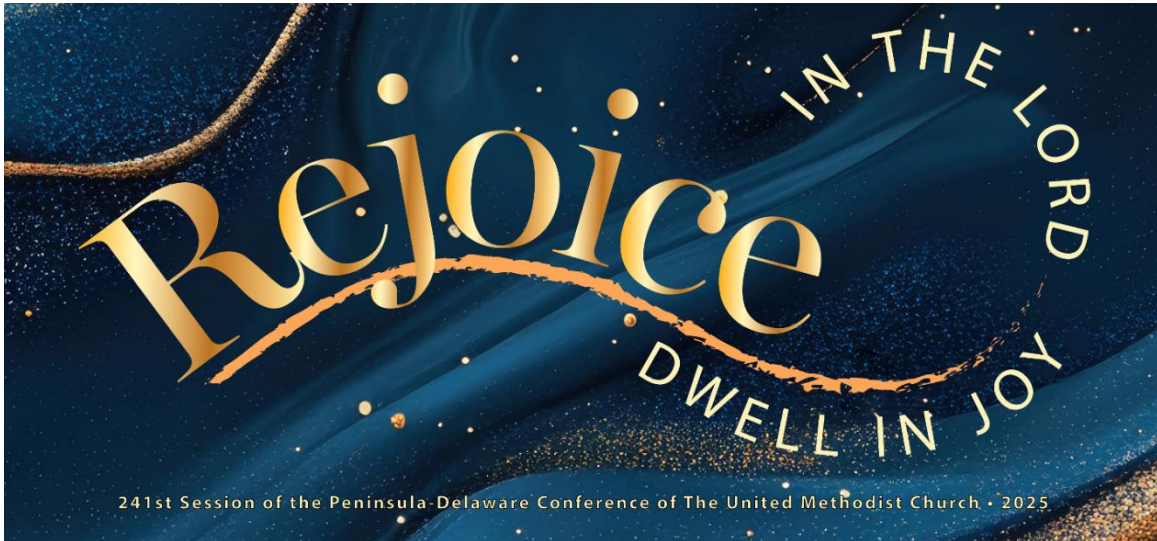
- 1) Sunrise service at Asbury Fellowship Park at 7 am.
- 2) Worship Services at 9 am and 11 am.

Invite your families and friends to celebrate the Risen Christ!

## Adult Choir News

The Adult Choir is always looking for new members. If you love to sing and want more information, please see Amy Brown or come on Tuesday evenings at 6 pm to choir practice. Let us sing to the Lord with gladness!

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## Annual Conference News

Annual Conference will be held Tuesday, May 20<sup>th</sup> – Thursday, May 22<sup>nd</sup> at **Ashore Resort and Beach Club, Ocean City, MD.**

***"Rejoice in the Lord: Dwell in Joy!" Is the theme of the 2025 Peninsula-Delaware Conference session. Our guiding Scripture will be from  
Philippians 4:4-9 (NRSVUE):"***

This Conference will be responding to the General Conference in 2024 that proposed some changes to our Book of Discipline and the Structure of the General United Methodist Church. These changes must be voted upon by all Annual Conferences with a majority vote to be enacted.

### **Proposed Constitutional Amendments 2025**

This year, members of United Methodist annual conferences will vote on four amendments to the denomination's constitution. The amendments deal with regionalization, inclusion in church membership, racism, and clergy-delegate elections.

To be ratified, these amendments need the support of at least two-thirds of all annual conference voters around the globe. The results won't be known or announced until after all 127 United Methodist annual conferences in Africa, Europe, the Philippines and the United States have



voted. The Council of Bishops expects to tally all votes and certify any amendment ratifications at its fall meeting in early November.

**A draft of the amendments can be found online.** (go to the Pen-del.org website and click on 2025 Annual Conference for the links) The amendments address:

- Carrying out the restructuring plan called “regionalization,”
- Expanding inclusiveness in church membership,
- Standing against racism and colonialism, and
- Clarifying who can vote for clergy delegates.

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### Sharing God’s Love in Our Community

Our ELT voted to make this our Focus for 2025. As such, we have asked our Team Leaders to set goals for their teams to show how they will share God’s love in our community. What we’re hoping for is to get out into our community and make Asbury known for our acts of love. The next step is to have people go to community groups and ask questions about the needs of the community. Once we have gathered this information, we will come back and share it with our ministry teams to see how we can begin to address the needs we have discovered.

If you would like to be a part of this outreach, contact Pastor Julie. We are the hands and feet of Christ. Let us show Smyrna/Clayton how we love them in the name of Christ.

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### Redner’s Receipts

Did you know the Dorcas Circle collects Redner’s Receipts? They do! If you shop at Redner’s and have a receipt, please place it in the box on the table at the back door. Please DON’T tear or cut any part of the receipt off. They will not accept them. The Dorcas Circle receives funds from the receipts they can use in ministry. Thank you for helping!

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### A Quiet Place

Author: Glenda Fulton Davis

I daily seek a quiet place  
That's far from trouble and strife.  
Where I can piece together  
All the puzzles of my life.  
It's there, away from TV and books,  
And far from the telephone,  
That I can fellowship with God  
Just He and I alone.  
And there God pours His balm of love  
Into the life I live.  
And there I find a peace and joy  
That only He can give.  
I will not fear the circumstances  
Faced from day to day.  
For daily in my quiet place,  
I'm learning how to pray.