



JUNE 2025 ISSUE 58

MINISTRY MATTERS

The Newsletter of Christ United Methodist Church
Owen Brown Interfaith Center, Columbia, Maryland



LEAVING A LASTING IMPACT: THE POWER OF LEGACY GIVING

Legacy giving is a meaningful way to support Christ United Methodist Church beyond your lifetime, ensuring its mission and ministry continue to thrive for generations to come. By including CUMC in your estate plans, you create a lasting impact that strengthens its ability to serve the community, provide spiritual guidance, and uphold its values. There are various ways to make a legacy gift, including bequests in wills, beneficiary designations on retirement accounts or life insurance policies, charitable trusts, naming CUMC as recipient for memorial contributions in your honor, and endowments while potentially providing tax benefits for you and your family now and in the future. Each option offers an opportunity to extend continue your work and efforts in perpetuity.

Legacy giving isn't just for the wealthy—it's for anyone who wants to contribute to a brighter future for their church. No matter the size, every gift helps sustain important ministries, maintain facilities, and support outreach efforts.

In the upcoming months, CUMC will be focusing on living your legacy now and into the future. A Legacy Giving Committee is exploring the options of setting up a formalized way to extend your legacy through educational information to make it easier and setting up an Endowment Fund that will be used for the future of CUMC's mission with your help. Together, we can ensure that faith and community continue to flourish for years to come.

Natalie Swirdovich



CHRIST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Owen Brown Interfaith Center, 7246 Cradlerock Way, Columbia, MD 21045
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The Reverend Angela Wells (she/her), Pastor



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CLERGY CORNER

Rev. Angela



Pride Month

This pride month, I want to address a very valid question I've heard among our reconciling congregation. Why "queer"? Why use a word that has historically been used as a slur? Is it appropriate for allies to use this charged word? Why not just use another word? While I don't and can't speak for all LGBTQ+ folks, I choose to use the word "queer" as my primary descriptor so I can speak to my experience. While I may occasionally use terms like gay or lesbian, queer is the primary way in which I identify my sexual orientation.

First, it's important to clarify that queer is used in two primary ways. The first way is as an umbrella term, a substitute for 2SLGBTQIA+. (If you don't know all these letters, I invite you back to our previous [JFA newsletter](#) article.) While the acronym is constantly changing and always inevitably leaving someone out, the word "queer" is used as a convenient catch-all term so as to cover all persons who are not cis/straight individuals. Also, some folks don't feel like other categories or labels quite fit, and queer becomes a preferred descriptor. But why this word for a catch-all when it has such a problematic history? Let's jump into the second meaning and see if that helps answer the question.

Queer also has a more political flavor. Here's what I mean:

- Taking back a word that was previously used to harm us is a subversive linguistic technique. You call us queer? OK, we'll take it on with pride. The term Methodist is the same—it was initially used as an insult. There is power in taking back a word to strip it of its initial intent of harm.
- Queer—as an insult or now as an identifier—means other, different, or strange. To take this label on is to reject and subvert the normal status quo. By claiming my queerness, I choose to abide by a different paradigm. I'm choosing to subvert gender roles and stereotypes, to live in a different/strange/other way in this heteronormative, patriarchal, capitalist society. In this sense queer can be used as a verb like in my friend's book title "Queering the American Dream" (excellent book by Rev. Dr. Angela Yarber, highly recommend). Queer theology is a field of study that specifically disrupts patterns of domination, hierarchy, and binaries that have historically harmed so many of God's children.
- By using queer as a catch-all term (see above), we are claiming collective identity, voice, and power. Historically, as with many marginalized groups, the powers that be have fomented divisions and mistrust between various segments of the LGBTQ+ community. For example, gay men have been pitted against lesbians, and cis LGBTQ+ persons have far too often abandoned our trans siblings in favor of our own protection. These divisions and mistrust serve to keep the status quo of heteronormativity, homophobia and transphobia. It's a divide and conquer strategy. By claiming a common identity as queer, we are refusing to let ourselves be divided and manipulated to support the status quo.

CLERGY CORNER

Rev. Angela



Other folks who identify as queer may have different reasons and not all LGBTQ+ people, especially those of older generations, like to use the word queer. If you are an ally, my best advice is to follow the lead of LGBTQ+ persons when speaking. If they use the word queer—either as an umbrella term or as a specific personal identifier, then you can/should use it too. **The fundamental rule of respecting sexual orientation and gender identity is this: when someone tells you who they are, believe them.** If I call myself queer, but then someone refers to me as a lesbian, in some sense they are claiming to know better who I am than I do. So, if I call myself queer, you can and should refer to me as queer too. If someone uses a different word, use that word. And, when you're unsure, ask! Genuine questions that come from a place of wanting to know better so we can do better are almost always welcome.





WORSHIP

Pride Playlist Sermon Series

While music is important to many, it plays a particular role in communities that have historically faced oppression. There can be liberation and imagination in music that is often lacking in other parts of our lives. We often think of the role of music in immigrant communities and various cultures around the world, but this importance of music is true in the LGBTQ+ community as well. This June we'll explore songs by 5 artists who are iconic in the LGBTQ+ community and put these secular texts in conversation with scripture as we have some fun exploring lessons in faith we can learn from the queer community.

June 1st: The Gospel According to Lady Gaga

How can Lady Gaga's song "Born This Way" become an anthem of our God-given identities as children of God made in God's own image?

June 8th: The Gospel According to Diana Ross

We'll have some fun with Ross' "I'm Coming Out" exploring Pentecost as God's coming out story.

June 15th: The Gospel According to Chappell Roan

What can LGBTQ+ bars teach us in the church about community, welcome, and identity? Chappell Roan's viral song "Pink Pony Club" helps us explore the idea of our calling as children of God, even—especially—when that calling ruffles the feathers of the status quo.

June 22nd: The Gospel According to Brandi Carlile

The original Pride was a riot and Pride continues to be an act of sacred resistance; and yet, we must not let that resistance harden us. Carlile's song "Stay Gentle" reminds us of the gift of gentleness even in the face of struggle.

June 29th: The Gospel According to Dolly Parton

One lesson the LGBTQ+ community continues to try to teach the church is that binaries limit the ways we can imagine the breadth, height, length and depth of the love of God. Labels, binaries, and categories blur the beautiful spectrums inherent in God's creation. Dolly's "Halos and Horns" gives us an opportunity to explore queer Christian ethics.

Looking Ahead:

We welcome Rev. Lydia Muñoz to the pulpit July 6th and 13th while Rev. Angela is on vacation. July 27th we'll celebrate Christmas in July!

CUMC CARES

Mission Matters

SECOND SUNDAY STOCK-UP is June 8th

Here's the clue: Cheerios, Frosted Flakes, Corn Flakes, Oatmeal, Rice Krispies, Frosted mini-Wheats, Fruit Loops, Raisin Bran, Apple Jacks, Special K, Sugar Pops, Honey Nut Cheerios, Honey Bunches of Oats, Cinnamon Toast Crunch, Lucky Charms, Cookie Crisp, Trix, Cocoa Puffs, Boo Berry, Grape Nuts, Fiber One Bran and Grits.

Got it? CEREAL!!!!



THANK YOU!!!

The Missions Team is overwhelmed by your generosity of clothing donated to the Day Resource Center of Howard County. We collected clothing during the month of April and it's a comfort to know the visitors to the center can count on us through whatever life brings.

You donated: 34 tee shirts; 9 pairs of jeans; 6 pairs of slacks; 5 sweaters; 15 pairs of underwear; 19 shirts; 1 jacket; 8 sweatshirts; 4 sweatpants; and 20 pairs of sneaker socks!

May you be blessed for the kindness you have shown.

SO WHY DO WE DONATE to OUR NEIGHBORS???

The Howard County Food Bank reports that 18% of shoppers FEAR running out of food before the end of the month...and 14% HAVE run out of food before the end of the month.

*"When we give cheerfully and accept gratefully,
everyone is blessed."*

v

— Maya Angelou

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

- Congratulation to **Mark Endsley** on receiving his Master's Degree in Information System Engineering from Johns Hopkins University!
- Please remember our members and friends who are homebound or recovering from long illnesses...**Emma Angelo, Sofia Flanagan-Wells, Alice Frazier, Catherine Messenger, David Nevitte, Darwin Perry, and Joanne Piersall.**
- Prayers for a speedy recovery for **Sissy Plank** as she recovers from knee replacement surgery, and **Mike Plank** who is in the hospital.
- Congratulations to **Tracy Klink** who was awarded the Scouting America 2025 District Award of Merit!

Happy Birthday!

Janis Battle

Sophia Burtnick

Vivian Rexroad

Andy Liu

Becky Nicodemus

Mark Endsley

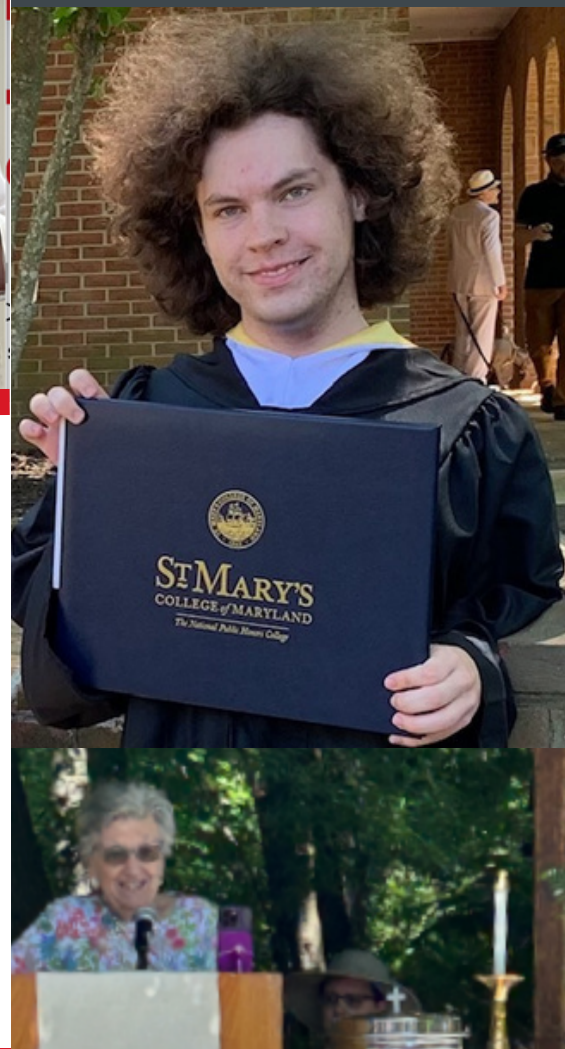
Natalie Kelley

Suzanne James

Sue Jessen

Toni Klinkenberg

Katie Swanson



LEARNING FOR ALL

Education Matters

SUNDAY SCHOOL BREAK



Sunday School for pre-school through High School ends June 8 and will resume Sept. 7. Children of all ages are certainly welcome at worship. A table with quiet fun activities is available at the rear of the sanctuary for younger children.

CHILDREN'S SERMON TIME



“Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all.” —Cristotle

FELLOWSHIP

Matters

THE FIRST FIRST FRIDAY OF SUMMER!

Summer, winter, spring or fall, CUMC always enjoys the fellowship and food at First Friday. Toni and Lee Klinkenberg will host us on June 6 at 6:30pm so you can get better acquainted, catch up with folks, and NOT have to prepare a whole meal. A summer dish or anything you choose, will make a good addition to our potluck dinner! Please see or call the Klinkenbergs by Tuesday, June 3rd if you plan to attend.



LUNCH BRUNCH...YES BRUNCH!

The second Thursday monthly gathering of CUMC women will be June 12 at 11am for **brunch** at the home of Mary Jo Messenger. How about bringing ham, bacon, quiche, potatoes, grits, French toast casserole, fruit salad, veggie salad, biscuits and no one ever refuses dessert!! Please contact Mary Jo by Mon. June 9 so you can enjoy the company and the feast!



“There is something profoundly satisfying about sharing a meal. Eating together, breaking bread together, is one of the oldest and most fundamentally unifying of human experiences.”

—Barbara Coloroso



JUSTICE FOR ALL

Matters

IN HONOR OF PRIDE MONTH, I want to tell you about a group of women who defied their organized religious sect to love their children- no matter what. Being LGBTQ+ is not tolerated in the Mormon church. In this sect, your whole social circle, school, neighborhood and even livelihood is somehow attached or influenced by the church.

Imagine choosing between everything you know and love and your child, and sometimes yourself. These women did just that, often moving across the country to carve out a safe life.

They call themselves Mama Dragons - and they launched a country-wide movement to support families of LGBTQ+ people with education, kindness, celebration and love. This safe and secure network has helped countless mothers with the tools and support they needed to navigate difficult topics in childhood and parenting with resources that do not exist anywhere else.

I have participated in several of their activities including a now secure social media page that offers support, and programs to send birthday and celebration cards to kids who feel lonely or need some kind words.

Feel free to check out <https://www.mamadrasons.org/>

Wendy Newton

JUSTICE FOR ALL: Interesting Opportunities to Learn and Serve

Justice for All Ministry would like to highlight three areas where you can become involved in furthering our mission of justice and reconciliation.

1. Marching in the Baltimore Pride Methodist contingent on June 14, 2025 Pride parade. Carpools will be leaving from OBIC mid-day. Although exact details are not yet available, Rev. Angela is the contact for this event. Come march with us!
2. A national non-profit, Braver Angels (borrowed from an Abraham Lincoln quote), has a Howard County chapter that offers a variety of workshops on helping participants understand the values and concerns of those who differ from them politically. One is "Skills for Disagreeing Better" which teaches essential skills for communicating effectively in the presence of disagreement by finding common ground.
3. The third area is short-term support for hosting immigrants. Since these needs tend to come up without much notice, we are gauging who may have a guest room for short-term housing or be able to provide transportation or other support for immigrants. Rev. Angela has done this before and will be pleased to answer questions.

See Justice For All members Suzanne James or Kevin Swanson for more information.

"Inclusion is the celebration of diversity put into action."



CONFERENCE CONNECTIONS

2025 Annual Conference resounds with joy

[Click on the photo below to read more about the Annual conference.](#)

Posted by on May 15, 2025



By Melissa Lauber

Claiming joy as a mindset, a discipline, and a way of life, the members of the 241st session of the Baltimore-Washington Conference met to worship, witness and celebrate the glory and possibilities of God, May 13-15 at the Hilton Hotel in Baltimore.

With ribbons soaring over their heads during opening worship, members sang, danced and embraced the theme of “Rejoice in the Lord: Dwell in Joy.”

Joy and Pain as we ‘Sought the Lord’

Bishop LaTrelle Easterling reminded members of the profound truth that “joy and pain can coexist, and sometimes, oftentimes, they must.”

Joy, the bishop said, “is not an escape from life; rather, it is a declaration that we will not succumb, surrender, secede, nor submit. What we *will* do is rejoice, dance, sing, and shout of the goodness of God.”





PARTICIPATION MATTERS

June 2025

Date	Events
6/1	Sunday Service* 10:00 a.m.
6/4	Prayer Meeting* 8:15 p.m.
6/5	Justice for All* 7:00 p.m.
6/6	First Friday at the Klinkenberg's 6:30 p.m. RSVP by 6/3
6/7	Ending Well Resource Fair OBIC, Room C 10:00 – 12:30 p.m.
6/8	Sunday Service* 10:00 a.m.
6/11	Prayer Meeting* 8:15 p.m.
6/12	SPRC* 7:00 p.m.
6/12	Brunch Bunch hosted by Mary Jo Messenger 11:00 a.m. RSVP by 5/10
6/15	Sunday Service* 10:00 a.m.
6/18	Prayer Meeting* 8:15 p.m.
6/19	Ad. Board* 7:00 p.m.
6/22	Sunday Service* 10:00 a.m.
6/23	Newsletter Deadline
6/25	Prayer Meeting* 8:15 p.m.
6/26	Community Ministry Team* 7:00 p.m.
6/29	Sunday Service* 10:00 a.m.

*To join services or meetings connect through Zoom link on the front page of the CUMC Website: cumcobic.org

June 2025

Please find the new updated Worship Volunteer Instructions on the CUMC website at this link:

<https://cumcobic.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/volunteer-instructions.pdf>.

Position	Jun 1	Jun 8	Jun 15	Jun 22	Jun 29
Liturgist	Phil Lindberg	Daniel Klinkenberg	Suzanne James	Lee Klinkenberg	Lydia Munoz
Reader	Bob Kobayashi	Cristin Messenger	Rob Rosenberger	Karen Ohlrich	David Burtnick
Acolyte	Layla Burtnick	Emily Walker	Daniel Klinkenberg	Nadia F-W	Emily Walker
Altar Flowers		Klinkenberg	Messenger	Klinkenberg	Hilda Gomez
Tech					
Ushers 1	Phyllis Kelley	Greg Swirdovich	Kevin Swanson	Dea Atkins	Lee Klinkenberg
Ushers 2	Warren Kelley	Natalie Swirdovich	Hilda Gomez	Lillian Lehnert	Toni Klinkenberg
Altar Set-up	Mary Jo Messenger	Toni Klinkenberg	Kelleys	Karen Ohlrich	Cora & Austin
Communion & Set-up	James	Cora & Austin Duggan	Hilda Gomez	Mary Jo Messenger	Kelley
Counters 1	Becky Nicodemus	Greg Swirdovich	Natalie Swirdovich	Greg Swirdovich	Lee Klinkenberg
Counters 2	Phil	Kevin Swanson	Lee Klinkenberg	Kevin Swanson	Becky Nicodemus
Nursery Volunteer					
Refreshments	Mary Jo Messenger	Kelley	Lillian Lehnert	Hilda Gomez	Cristin Messenger
Sunday School Assist	Karen Ohlrich	Don James			
Feather Flags	Scrib Messenger	Scrib Messenger	Scrib Messenger	Scrib Messenger	Scrib Messenger

BUSINESS CORNER



Council of Ministries: May 21, 2025

*“The afternoon knows
what the morning never
suspected”
— Robert Frost*

THE BIG REVEAL: A CONTEST?? A PRIZE??

Remember those paint by numbers we did as kids? Well, get ready for a creative twist with a major artwork upgrade! This summer, CUMC is bringing the fun to life with a special version of the classic concept. A painting – created by our very own talented artist, Mary Jo Messenger – will be fully hidden beneath envelopes, each labeled with a designated donation amount. As you choose an envelope and make a contribution, sections of the painting will gradually be revealed, unveiling the mystery masterpiece piece by piece! This special giving will fund the mission and ministry of CUMC over and above our regular pledges to help close our 2025 operating budget gap. Be part of the excitement and watch creativity unfold – stay tuned—more details coming soon!

Natalie Swirdovich

Ending Well RESOURCE FAIR

Saturday June 7, 2025

10am-12:30pm

**Owen Brown Interfaith Center
7246 Cradlerock Way | Columbia
Sanctuary C**

*Meet with community resources
for all things End of Life. Exhibitors include:*

- Infinite Legacy (organ donation)
- Gilchrist Hospice
- HoCo Office of Aging
- HoCo Registrar of Wills
- Legacy Attorney, Jennifer Kidwell
- Advanced Care Planning
- Green Burial Assoc. of MD



Sponsored by:
Christ United Methodist Church &
the Unitarian Universalist Conareation of Columbia



BUSINESS CORNER



OBIC Yearly Joint Congregation Meeting

On May 18th the Owen Brown Interfaith Board of Directors had the opportunity to inform the owning congregations (CUMC and UUCC) of what has happened in the last year. The whole Board participated with Linda Adcox-Kimmel, President, leading the way. Current CUMC Board members include Rev. Debbie Scott (VP), Clara Fitzgerald (Treasurer) and Greg Swirdovich. Please contact us if you have any questions.

Highlights of what was shared: The Cradlerock Children's Center has given notice to vacate OBIC on or about November 2025 to move to a larger space that can accommodate more children. We already have folks interested in renting that space.

The Board went through an extensive process, including the development of a business plan, that called for a change in the staffing at OBIC. It was felt an Executive Director with greater skills in finance, management, marketing and staffing would serve the needs of the OBIC Board, owning congregations and building users. This led to an extensive interviewing process and Kevin Buker was hired March 5th replacing the outgoing Building Manager, Tyrone Morton. The Board also updated the By-Laws with both Congregations approving.

The OBIC board is working diligently to improve policies and practices as well as improving our financial situation. With his strong financial background, the Executive Director is reviewing all contracts and expenses making adjustments as necessary to improve our financial position. We barely finished 2024 in the black. Any help you can give to market OBIC will help us increase revenue. Having an Executive Director in place, the Board can refocus its' energy from operational (reactive) to strategic (planning for the future). In the coming months the Board of Directors, working with Jennie Fitzpatrick (who helped immensely in the hiring process) to develop a strategic plan that updates its' mission, vision and values.

Thank you all for your support and interest in the Owen Brown Interfaith Center. Together we are excited about our future.

Rev. Deb Scott

BUSINESS CORNER

“Life is beautiful. It's about giving. It's about family.”
– Walt Disney



SHARE YOUR SUMMER!

Traveling to Portugal, Colorado, Ocean City, D.C.? Are you doing a mountain hike, outdoor concert, neighborhood picnic? How about wearing your CUMC t-shirt and have a photo taken of you at a special summer activity for consideration to be included in a CUMC newsletter! Not only fun for newsletter readers to see YOU but is a way to keep connected and quietly support CUMC with t-shirt wearing! Please consider your June through Aug. activities and email your photo to Mary Jo Messenger for consideration.



Graduations, Father's Day, Weddings, Anniversaries, and Birthdays!!!

They all occur during June! What else do they have in common?? Gifts, of course!! Gifts, gifts, and more gifts!! Oh my! What are we going to give for all those gifts??? Why not use Gift Cards from CUMC to purchase your gifts - and/or to give as your gifts for their favorite store or restaurant or sports team or fun activity or whatever? You'll be amazed at the wide variety of gift cards we can get for you for all your favorite people and their favorite things!!

And, in addition to that simplifying your shopping experience, I think you know by now that buying your gift cards from CUMC means that our CUMC treasury receives the rebate earned for each gift card purchased from CUMC. And, it does not cost you anything extra! If you are going to buy gift cards, why buy them somewhere else and give that rebate to some other organization or store rather than to CUMC?!?! It will be a good feeling to know the rebate is going to CUMC!!

We're looking forward to seeing you at the gift cards place on the side counter after Sunday worship. Or contact Dea Atkins by text or call for what you would like to order and any questions. Many thanks in advance from the Finance Committee!!

Dea Atkins



CALENDAR

Click on the calendar to go to the interactive calendar on the website.

< > Jun 2025						
SUN Jun 1	MON 2	TUE 3	WED 4	THU 5	FRI 6	SAT 7
• 10am W			• 8:15pm	• 7pm Ju:	• 6:30pm	• 10am E
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Second S • 10am W			• 7pm Co • 8:15pm	• 12pm L • 7pm St		Flag Day
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Father's • 10am W			• 8:15pm	Juneteen • 7pm Ad		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
• 10am W	• 6:30pm		• 8:15pm			
29	30	Jul 1	2	3	4	5
• 10am W			• 8:15pm	• 7pm Ju:	Independ • 6:30pm	
Christ United Methodist Church, Columbia, MD GMT-04						

At Christ United Methodist Church, all are invited to experience God's love, build beloved community, and pursue justice for absolutely everyone. We welcome, celebrate, and affirm the sacred worth of people of every race, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, ethnicity, nationality, physical and mental ability, level of education, family structure, and every economic, immigration, marital, and social status. As followers of Jesus, we commit ourselves to stand in solidarity with all who are marginalized and oppressed; as such, we have committed to being an Anti-Racist church. At CUMC, believers, seekers, and doubters join together to grow in our love for one another, creation, and the Divine through worship, small groups, advocacy work, and mutual support as we strive to be the church God calls us to be!



Christ United Methodist Church
Love. Justice. Community.
Black Lives Matter

