



MINISTRY MATTERS

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



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Joy in Giving

This fall, CUMC begins another season of stewardship—a time to pause, give thanks for our church community, and consider how we can help carry its ministry into the year ahead.

For the past several years, our stewardship campaign has had some unlikely ambassadors: Olaf and Oline, our Stewardship Vikings! With their humor and good-natured invitations to give generously, they have become a much-loved part of our fall tradition. This year, they will return for each of the three Sundays leading up to Stewardship Sunday on November 15.

But beneath the humor is a simple and important message: CUMC is here because we are here. Our worship, our care for one another, our work for justice, our outreach to our community, and the many small things that make CUMC a welcoming place all depend on the participation and generosity of our members and friends.

Our stewardship letters will be mailed on October 20. In the weeks that follow, we invite you to listen, reflect, laugh with Olaf and Oline, and think about what CUMC means to you—and what you hope we can continue to make possible together.

Stewardship is more than balancing a budget. It is one way we say, “This community matters to me, and I want to help keep it going.” We hope you will join us on November 15 as we celebrate CUMC and make our commitments for the year ahead.

Don James





CHRIST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH ENDOWMENT FUND



CUMC Endowment Fund: Growing Through Meaningful Gifts

Since the establishment of the Endowment Fund earlier this year, a number of generous gifts have been received, helping to build a lasting foundation for the future of our church and its ministries.

Several contributions have been made in memory of CUMC's Mike Plank, creating a meaningful tribute that honors his life while supporting the mission and ministry of our congregation for years to come. Memorial gifts are a wonderful way to celebrate a loved one's life and ensure their legacy continues to make a difference.

In addition to memorial gifts, donations to the Endowment Fund may also be made in honor of someone special or to celebrate significant occasions such as birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, or other milestones. These gifts provide a lasting impact while recognizing the people and moments that are important to us.

An endowment gift is more than a donation for today. It is an investment in the future and a way to keep your values and legacy alive for generations to come. We are grateful for all who have supported CUMC's Endowment Fund.

Gifts can be made to CUMC's Endowment Fund at any time. If you want more information about ways to give, please contact Natalie Swirdovich.

Natalie Swirdovich





Where Did the Passing of the Peace Go?

Yes, we just reintroduced this practice. Yes, we abruptly stopped it. Why?

As good United Methodists we are “going on to perfection” as John Wesley said. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, stated that there are three simple rules to live by, and they go in order for a reason. The first rule is to do no harm. The second rule is to do good. The third rule is to do those things that help us stay in love with God and neighbor. First and foremost—before we can do good and before we can pray and study scripture and worship, before all that—we do no harm.

Well, the short answer is that we paused passing of the peace because we are abiding by the first rule—do no harm.

After attempting to reintroduce this well-meaning practice in worship, we received important feedback from visitors that this practice was not experienced as welcoming but rather it was overwhelming. Not our intent of course, but we know that the impact our actions can have does not necessarily change based on good intentions. I think we can all agree that being welcoming is a core value of our congregation, so such feedback is super helpful as we always seek to live into that value more and more! We know better, we do better. Simple as that.

Furthermore, concerns were raised about some boundaries being violated. Hugs are only cool with consent—each and every time. Not everyone appreciates a hug for a whole lot of different reasons and it may be different week to week. As a justice-minded congregation, we must keep reminding ourselves that consent is key. Offering a hand is helpful as is “Would it be alright if I gave you a hug?” This is one small (big) way we honor our values through the everyday ways we operate.

So, in an effort to faithfully abide by Wesley’s first rule, we’re going to pause the passing of the peace recognizing that we do not want to do any harm. The worship team promises to revisit the topic in the future. In the meantime, please continue to share all those (consensual) hugs at fellowship time after the service!

I am grateful for the ways this congregation is open to continue learning, growing, and living into our faith as we journey faithfully together.





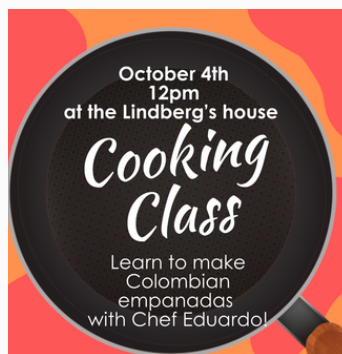
WORSHIP

JoyFULL at CUMC...continued!

In September we kicked off our Fall Worship Series: JoyFULL at CUMC! We had great fun remembering joy in our baptism as the kids sprinkled us with water, and we blew bubbles when we experienced or witnessed joy. We continued the fun with rainbow joy and then joy in service for Laity Sunday. This October our series continues with the following themes. Remember to complete your Joy Challenge each week!

October 4: Joy in Food

CUMC is known for its "casserole theology." We show love through food. We celebrate community through potlucks. Each week we gather around the table for the holy meal that reminds us of our place at God's table. Come celebrate World Communion Sunday as we savor the joy we experience in and through food! And be sure to attend our Hispanic Heritage Month Cooking Class after church at 12pm!



October 11: Joy in Justice

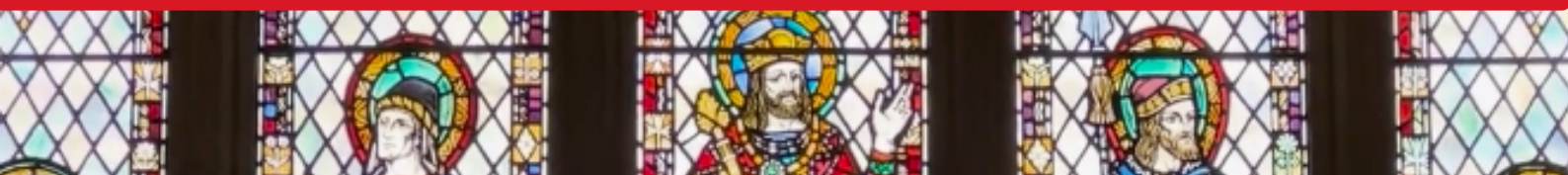
We often associate justice with work, with action, with commitment. Sounds exhausting! And so it is that people too often burn out quickly doing the hard long work of justice. How can we reframe our justice work to celebrate the joy derived not just from the accomplishments but also from the community work done together faithfully? Remember: joy is resistance! We must not let the powers of this world steal our joy!

October 18: Joy in Music

Who doesn't love music?! Music helps us express, process, and share our feelings. Well, this Sunday's hymn sing is Joy-FULL. You are invited to come ready to request a hymn that brings you joy! Just make sure it's in *The United Methodist Hymnal* or *The Faith We Sing* so that we can all sing together.

October 25: Joy in Play

Wear your Halloween costume or attire to worship for this service in which we all embrace our inner child. Play isn't just for kids—all humans need the sacred space of play. Be sure to bring quarters and/or dollar bills as our kids will be trick-or-treating the congregation to benefit UNICEF during the children's sermon, all while spooky music is played of course. Happy (almost) Halloween!





WORSHIP

Looking Ahead to finish out our JoyFULL at CUMC Worship Series...

November 1: Eternal Joy (All Saints Day)

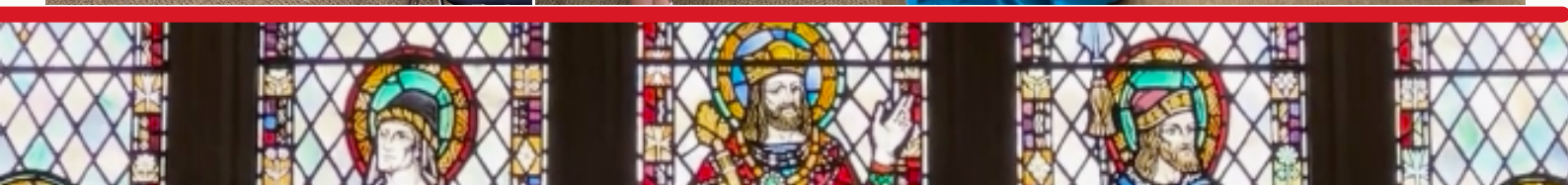
November 8: Joy in Generosity

November 15: Abundant Joy (Pledge Sunday)

Honoring the Saints!

There are three ways you can honor the saints in your life who have gone on to eternal glory this All Saints Day (Nov 1).

1. Sign up on the side counter by Oct 22nd so that their name can be read aloud during worship on All Saints Sunday.
2. Email or text a picture of your saint(s) to Rev. Angela by October 27th.
3. Write your saint's name on the white tablecloth we will use as a parament to cover the communion table on All Saints Sunday. The tablecloth will be available Oct 18 and 25th for you to add names to it.



OUR CHURCH FAMILY

- Healing prayers are needed for **Don James, Becky Nicodemus, Ann Singleton, Hilda Gomez, Andris Salter, Dea Atkins, and Sofi Flanagan-Wells.**
- **Phyllis Kelley** will have surgery mid -October and will appreciate our prayers.
- Several members who cannot attend services would appreciate your visit. Please call ahead and enjoy time with **Janis Battle, Catherine Messenger, Siah Johnson, Alice Frazier, Paul Weller, Darwin Perry or Lucie Pelgrim.**



Sofia Flanagan-Wells
Lucas Burtnick
Adeline Liu
Emily Murphy
Twila Mc Donough
Tracy Klink
Cindy Farmarco



LEARNING FOR ALL

Education Matters

SUNDAY SCHOOL



Two of the hallmarks of our Sunday School program through the years and into the present are love of kids and flexibility! In our small congregation, the attendance varies, and teachers and helpers have been wonderful about adapting from week to week. The Education Committee has planned our 2026-27 children's educational program with ways to expand as others join us and with the understanding that, on any particular Sunday, teachers and helpers may not be needed and can remain in worship.

A joint nursery with the UUs is available for infants through 3 years of age, and Sunday School classes are available for preschool through middle school kids. Student Registration Forms are available on the side counter. Children are also always welcome to attend worship.

Suzanne James

FALL BOOK STUDY: *JOYFUL, ANYWAY*

Join us for a four-week fall book study on joy!

Beginning Tuesday, **October 13 at 7:00 p.m.**, we'll gather on Zoom to discuss Kate Bowler's *Joyful, Anyway*. Our study will be led by Katie Weston and will continue for four weeks, through **November 3**.

Amazon describes the book this way:

"We are overwhelmed. Frightening headlines, illness, uncertainty, grief, and email. We are left wondering why, if we're doing everything right, life still feels like an endless game of whack-a-mole. *Joyful, Anyway* is bestselling author Kate Bowler's bracingly honest exploration of this dilemma."

Together, we'll consider what joy can look like in the midst of the challenges and uncertainties of everyday life.

If you would like **Katie to purchase a copy** for you, the cost is \$16.82. Please place your order with Katie by October 1.

Questions? Contact Katie for more information.

Katie Weston

CUMC CARES

Missions Matter

Give a Bag, Lend a Hand!

Do you have a reusable grocery bag—or, perhaps, a small mountain of them?

You know the ones: tucked in a closet, hiding in the car, or multiplying mysteriously under the kitchen sink!



During the month of October, CUMC will be collecting new or gently used reusable grocery bags (please, no paper bags).

Our goal is to collect **150 bags** to donate to the **Immigrant Rights Coalition**, helping provide practical support to immigrant families in our community.



**MARYLAND
IMMIGRANT RIGHTS
COALITION**

The Maryland Immigrant Rights Coalition works to strengthen support for immigrants by helping connect people with legal resources, providing education about immigration matters, and advocating for the dignity and rights of Maryland's immigrant communities.

Our goal:
**150
bags!**



Look for the collection bin in the back of the church throughout October.

So, as you clean out that bag collection that has somehow gotten completely out of hand,

bring those reusable bags to church!

Your mission: Find a bag. Bring a bag. Maybe find three!



Together, we can turn a little household clutter into a whole lot of welcome.

CUMC CARES

Missions Matter

Surf and Turf

Are you looking for a five-star culinary experience without the five-star restaurant price? Look no further than the rear of the church. CUMC is hosting a "Surf and Turf" food drive to support the Howard County Food Bank.

We are skipping the expensive steaks and fresh lobster tails in favor of high-protein, shelf-stable classics: canned fish and canned meats. Whether you want to donate some "surf" (tuna, salmon or sardines) or some "turf" (canned chicken, ham, beef or Spam), your contributions will provide essential protein to local families in need.

Please drop your non-perishable donations into the collection bin located in the back of the church on Second Sunday Stock up October 11. Let's reel in a great catch and herd up some serious support for our community—no fishing license or cowboy boots required.

Lillian Lehnert



CUMC CARES

Community Ministry Matters

Community Ministry Team: Cradlerock Elementary School Report

Through our Community Ministries team, Christ United Methodist Church became a Community Partner of Cradlerock Elementary School (CRES) and a Community Sponsor of its PTA during the last school year! Cradlerock is one of twelve schools in Howard County to be designated as a Community School and receives funding from the state to provide resources for the larger community.

We participated in both schools' Back-to-School Block Party on August 22nd. Rev. Angela, Kelli Wells, Dea Atkins, and Karen Ohlrich, in our CUMC t-shirts, greeted students and parents, inviting them to our Blessing of the Backpacks service while giving temporary tattoos, lollipops, and balloon animals to the kids. The event was very successful for sharing our CUMC name and location with many Owen Brown residents. Our PTA sponsorship will have us participating again in their Trunk or Treat event on Oct. 25th. Last year's event was fun and very well attended.

If you were in church on August 24th for our Blessing of the Backpacks service, you heard Stephanie Dobson share her dynamic vision for our CUMC partnership with CES. As she shared, the next phase of our support for Cradlerock involves donations of the items listed below.

In response to community feedback, they are creating a "Rock Resources" self-care area for students to be able to come and receive needed personal hygiene items during the day—things like chap stick, deodorant wipes, or socks. These items may seem small, but a student's day can be derailed and important learning can be interrupted when these basic needs are not met. These are important needs that our partner has asked us to collaborate with them to meet.

The links provided are the suggested items (things that will work for a diverse student population and in bulk):

1. ChapStick: <https://a.co/d/bLr0UGp>
2. Sanitizing wipes: <https://a.co/d/5kJ4Khk>
3. Mini hair brushes: <https://a.co/d/h9BZ7rl>
4. Mini combs: <https://a.co/d/3Jlzn85>
5. Pony tail holders: <https://a.co/d/jbTbdYq>
6. Deodorant wipes: <https://a.co/d/8n0YDil>
7. Gloves for kids: (24 pk ages 4-6) (24 pk ages 7-12) <https://a.co/d/cXfg9NT>
8. Kid socks: <https://a.co/d/jaQWYoN>

Thank you for bringing your donations on Sundays throughout October!

We have been warmly welcomed at both schools and will let you know as opportunities come up to help in various volunteer capacities as well as in donating items to support the students and staff. Karen Ohlrich and Sissy Plank are already volunteering in the Media Center. If you'd like to contribute flowers and greens from your garden, or the flowers from the altar, or funds for the weekly flowers, please let Karen Ohlrich know. Thank you!!!

Karen Ohlrich

FELLOWSHIP

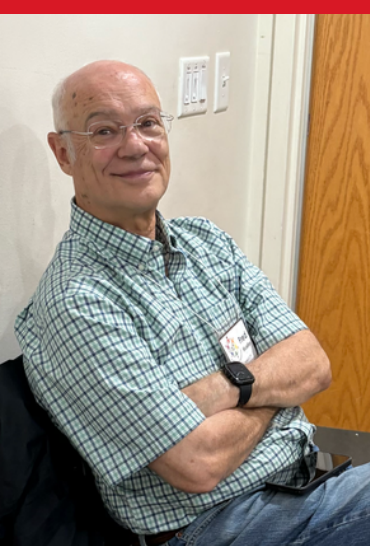
Matters

STAY CONNECTED AND ENJOY!

First Friday friends will be gathering at 6:30pm on **October 2nd** to enjoy the hospitality of hosts Tom Curry and Ken Backer. They reside in Hanover, MD, approximately 20 minutes from OBIC. Plan your potluck dish to share, and please let Tom or Ken know of your participation by Wednesday September 30th.

LUNCH BUNCH

On **October 8th**, Lunch Bunch for all CUMC women will meet for its regular second Thursday gathering at noon. Hostess Jeanette Rosenberger will welcome all in Room A at OBIC. Please bring a dish to share, and please contact Jeanette by Monday, October 5th, to let her know of your attendance.



GOING GREEN

Matters

How your next stove could save you money — and upgrade the electric grid

The following is a summary from the Washington Post's Climate Coach--Michael J. Coren July 28, 2026



Michael J. Coren explores a new generation of household appliances that could change both the way we use electricity and the way the electric grid operates. His focus is on induction stoves with built-in batteries, which can store electricity and deliver extra power when needed. These appliances can draw inexpensive, renewable electricity from the grid during periods of low demand and use their stored energy when demand and prices are high.

Coren examines two companies, Copper and Impulse, whose battery-powered induction stoves cost roughly \$6,000-\$7,000 today. Although expensive, they can provide extremely fast cooking while operating from an ordinary 120-volt outlet, potentially eliminating the need for costly electrical-panel or 240-volt wiring upgrades. Their batteries can also provide cooking power during outages.

The larger opportunity, Coren argues, is what happens when millions of appliances—stoves, water heaters, dryers, heat pumps and air conditioners—contain batteries. Utilities could coordinate these distributed batteries to reduce electricity demand during peak periods and potentially compensate homeowners for allowing their stored power to support the grid. This could create a kind of “virtual power plant” spread throughout neighborhoods.

There are significant obstacles. The appliances remain expensive, battery technology is relatively new in household appliances, and experts question whether utility payments will provide enough financial benefit to consumers. Electric vehicles, with much larger batteries, could also compete with appliance-based storage.

Coren concludes that battery-powered appliances are still a novelty, but they could eventually become an important part of a cleaner, more flexible, and decentralized electric grid.

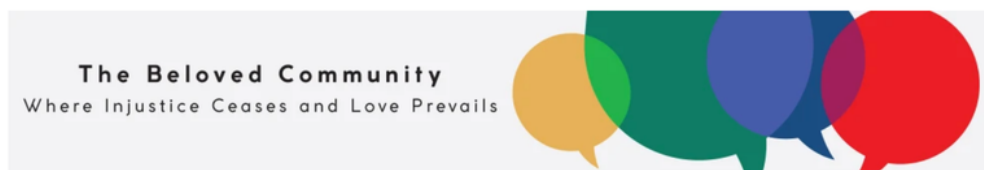
Summarized by ChatGPT



CONFERENCE CONNECTIONS

Matter

Building Beloved Community



Building Beloved Community: Taking Action

In our last newsletter, we explored what the Baltimore-Washington Conference means by Beloved Community and considered ways we can learn, listen, and engage with one another. Now comes the important next step: taking action.

The BWC offers several ways for individuals and congregations to put these ideas into practice. We Rise United to Build Beloved Community is a strategic initiative focused on embedding inclusion, diversity, equity, and antiracism in our leaders, communities, and church processes.

We can also make a personal commitment through the Covenant to Create Beloved Community, a pledge to help create a culture of belonging and to do the work that makes that commitment real. Another opportunity is the Commitment to Embodying Antiracism, which encourages individuals and churches to make a public commitment and engage in specific actions and resources.

Beloved Community also calls us to look beyond our own congregation. Through Legislative Action, the BWC encourages civic engagement around issues such as environmental justice, gun-violence prevention, domestic violence, immigration reform, affordable and equitable housing, and health care for all.

Taking action can feel overwhelming when we think about the size of these challenges. But we don't have to do everything. We can begin with one commitment, one conversation, one act of advocacy, or one step toward making our community more welcoming and just.

The BWC provides resources and opportunities to help us take that next step. Together, our small actions can become part of something much larger: building the Beloved Community that Jesus calls us to be.

[Explore the BWC's Building Beloved Community resources](#)

BUSINESS CORNER

Financial Information - August 2026

Year-to-Date	Actual	Budget
Revenue	\$ 86,063.39	\$ 73,374.67
Expenses	\$ 79,444.18	\$ 87,129.26
Surplus or (Deficit)	\$ 6,619.21	\$ (13,754.59)
Surplus or (Deficit) Per Week	\$ 127.29	\$ (264.51)

*“Attention is the
rarest and purest
form of generosity.”
Simone Weil*

Ad Board Minutes: September 24, 2026

Council of Ministries Minutes: September 9, 2026:

Owen Brown Interfaith Center Memory Gardens

Your Donations Help Us Grow. By ordering a name plate in memory of a loved one or by simply making a donation, you can help maintain and develop our gardens. Over the years we have been able to add hollies, dogwoods, red buds, magnolias, hydrangeas, azaleas, and many other plants, shrubs, and trees. Please help us continue to enhance these special gardens.

Please complete the appropriate sections and return this form to the OBIC office, 7246 Cradlerock Way, Columbia, MD 21045. Orders must be placed by November 15th.

Complete This Section to Order a Memorial NAME PLATE		
Giving Levels for Engraved Name Plates	Memorial Gift	Name as you wish it to appear on the Memorial Name Plate:
Iris	\$200	
Rose	\$300	
Magnolia	\$500	
Oak	\$1000	
Amount of Memorial Gift: <i>Check should be made out to “OBIC Memory Gardens.” These gifts are tax deductible.</i>		

Complete This Section to <u>Make a DONATION</u>
Is this donation to honor a person(s) and /or event? If so, please indicate name(s) and/or event.
Amount of Donation: <i>Check should be made out to “OBIC Memory Gardens.” These gifts are tax deductible</i>

Your Name:
Address:
Email:
Phone Number:



PARTICIPATION MATTERS

October 2026

Date	Events
10/2	First Friday 6:30 p.m. hosted by Ken Backer and Tom Curry RSVP by text to Ken by 9/29
10/1	Justice for All* 7:00 p.m.
10/4	Sunday Service* 10:00 a.m.
10/7	Prayer Meeting* 8:15 p.m.
10/8	SPRC* 7:00 p.m. Lunch Bunch 12:00 p.m. at OBIC. Please RSVP to Jeanette Rosenberger by 10/5
10/11	Sunday Service* 10:00 a.m.
10/12	Community Ministries* 7:00 p.m.
10/14	Council of Ministries* 7:00 p.m. Prayer Meeting* 8:15 p.m.
10/14	Prayer Meeting* 8:15 p.m.
10/15	Ad Board* 7:00 p.m.
10/18	Sunday Service* 10:00 a.m.
10/21	Prayer Meeting* 8:15 p.m.
10/23	Newsletter deadline
10/25	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

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

https://cumcobic.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/volunteer-instructions_updated-6.2026.pdf

2026	Oct 4	Oct 11	Oct 18	Oct 25
Liturgist	Tracy Klink	Kevin Swanson	Phil Llinberg	Miamor F-W
Reader	Dea Atkins	Kevin Fitzgerald	Tyler Rosenberger	Katie Swanson
Acolyte	Miguel Angel Llanc	Emily Walker	Miamor F-W	Heidi Johnson
Altar Flowers				
Tech				
Ushers 1	Warren Kelley	Greg Swirdovich	Bob Kobayshi	Lee Klinkenberg
Ushers 2	Phyllis Kelley	Natalie Swirdovich	Lillian Lehnert	Toni Klinkenberg
Altar Set-up	Messenger	Klinkenberg	Kelley	Ohlrich
Communion & Set-up	Tyler Rosenberger	James	Gomez	Pam Wilt
Counters 1	Kevin Swanson	Phil Lindberg	Natalie Swirdovich	Kevin Swanson
Counters 2	Warren Kelley	Becky Nicodemus	Lee Klinkenberg	Natalie Swirdovich
Refreshments	Duggan	Messenger	Klink	Kelley
Sunday School Assist MS	Kevin Swanson	Karen Ohlrich	Deadre Atkins	Kevin Swanson
Sunday School Assist ELEM	Don James	Don James	Don James	Don James



CALENDAR

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

< > Oct 2026 📅 🗓️						
SUN 27	MON 28	TUE 29	WED 30	THU Oct 1	FRI 2	SAT 3
10am Worsl			8:15pm Pray			
4 10am Worsl	5	6	7 8:15pm Pray	8 12pm Lunch 2 more	9	10
11 Second Sund 10am Worsl	12 Columbus Da 7pm Comm	13	14 7pm Green 8:15pm Pray	15	16	17
18 10am Worsl	19	20	21 8:15pm Pray	22	23	24
25 10am Worsl	26	27	28 8:15pm Pray	29	30	31 Halloween
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

