



MINISTRY MATTERS

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



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THE MINISTRY OF NOTICING

We often think of ministry as something organized—a worship service, a mission project, or a volunteer assignment. But some of the most meaningful ministry happens quietly. It begins with noticing.

We notice when someone who usually sits nearby hasn't been to church for several Sundays. We notice the newcomer who seems unsure where to go or whom to talk to. We notice when someone seems troubled, even when they say they're fine.

And then we take the next step. We make a phone call, introduce ourselves, or ask how someone is doing—and take time to listen.

Noticing is more than seeing. It is paying attention with compassion.

This kind of ministry doesn't require special training or a committee assignment. It requires us to be present to the people around us.

Our commitment to building Beloved Community begins here. We cannot create a community where everyone feels valued if we don't take time to know one another. Opening the church doors is important, but genuine welcome means opening our hearts, too.

So here's a small challenge for all of us at CUMC: During the coming weeks, notice one person. Reach out to someone you haven't seen lately. Welcome someone new. Listen a little longer than usual.

We may not be able to solve every problem our neighbors face. But we can help ensure that fewer people face those problems feeling invisible or alone. Sometimes our most important ministry is simply seeing another person, recognizing their worth, and letting them know they matter.

That is a wonderful place to begin building Beloved Community.





An Opportunity to Serve

Most of the time I write the clergy corner article to appeal to many/most of the congregation. This time I'm writing it for one person, but I don't know who that person is. Could it be you? That's right, I invite you to prayerfully consider if God is calling you to a specific ministry at Christ UMC. Let me tell you more.

As we prepare for the retirement of our faithful newsletter team (THANK YOU, Mary Jo, Judy, and Toni!) at the end of this year, the Administrative Board formed a Communications Task Force to determine how we proceed with our regular communications at CUMC. This task force, led faithfully by Natalie Swirdovich, weighed our options and considered the needs of CUMC in this particular season of our church's life. They produced a detailed report with their findings and recommendations that the Administrative Board accepted and approved.

So, what's next for CUMC communications?

Starting in January, we will be combining the weekly email and the monthly newsletter to form a "beefed up" weekly email. This weekly, skimmable format—with the option to "read more"—creates a predictable rhythm that keeps information clear, accessible, and easy to act on, while remaining a sustainable and flexible solution for staff and volunteers well into the future.

What's that have to do with me, Rev. Angela?

I'm so glad you asked! We are looking for a volunteer (or two!)—could it be you??—who are willing to take on this incredibly essential ministry of communicating news with our church family. This two-hour a week responsibility comes with training, a template, and a whole lot of gratitude from your church family. If you're considering this opportunity, you probably have questions. Wonderful! Contact me (Rev. Angela) or Natalie Swirdovich to find out more—we promise no commitment from just hearing out what the role entails!

As we all (Hint! Hint!) discern how we might be called to serve in ministry in 2027 by filling out our Time, Talent & Treasure form for Pledge Sunday (Nov. 15th!), this is a special opportunity to serve. Please consider this your personal invitation to consider it!



WORSHIP

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



Nov. 1st Eternal Joy

This All Saints Sunday will be a special time to consider the eternal joy we experience in Christ and Christian community. We will honor the saints by reading names aloud, using our special communion cloth with the names of saints on it, and bringing back the photo cloud of witnesses adorning our sanctuary! You don't want to miss it!

Nov. 8th Joy in Generosity

As we approach Pledge Sunday next week, this is a perfect time to consider what exactly is joyful about giving of our Time, Talent & Treasure for the building up of the mission and ministry of our church family. Don't miss a special appearance by our favorite Stewardship Vikings.

Nov. 15th: Abundant Joy

It's time to celebrate! We've spent 10 weeks delving into FULL on JOY! Join us for this special Pledge Sunday worship service in which we genuinely rejoice together for the gift of being in community, sharing God's love, and working for a world in which ALL people have access to the abundant life Jesus came to give. Don't forget to bring your Time, Talent & Treasure forms to church and maybe even wear some fun party attire for this special celebration!

Nov. 22nd: Last Sunday in the Christian Year

CUMC's fall intern, Emily Murphy-Lyons, returns to the pulpit and delves into Luke 17:11-18 with us. What does Jesus' ministry on the margins of society teach us about the relationship between thankfulness and positions of privilege and power? We'll explore together!

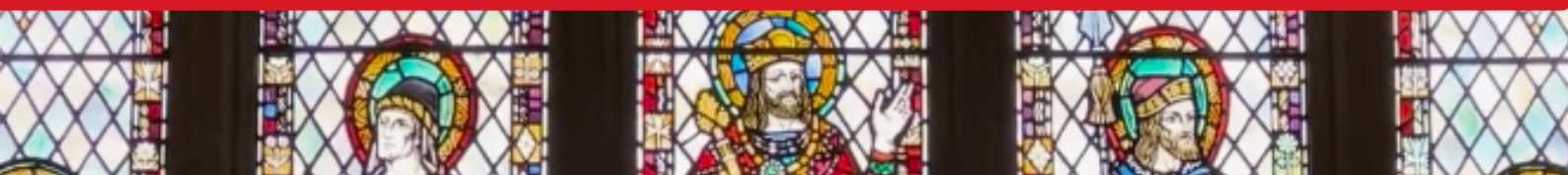
Nov. 29th: First Sunday of Advent

We kick off our Advent series, "Carols of the Coming Christ" on November 29th! We'll light the first advent candle (hope), learn a new season sung communion liturgy, and feature the beloved carol "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel."

May Christ come to us now and always,
and may we have a song in our hearts
to welcome him.

**CAROLS
FOR THE
COMING
CHRIST**

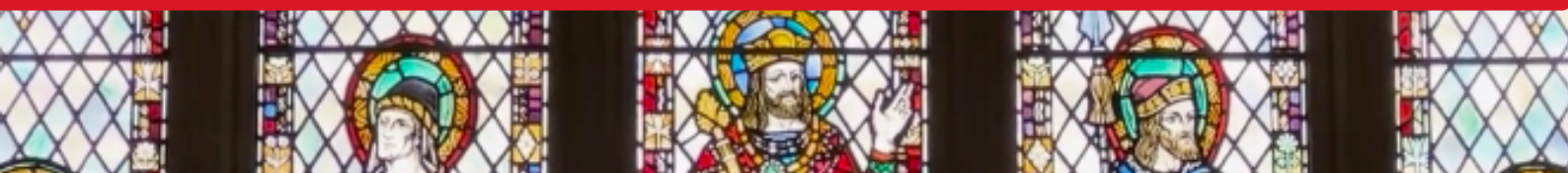
Sundays at 10am: Nov 29-Dec 20
Sanctuary A | Owen Brown Interfaith Center | Columbia, MD





WORSHIP

Our JoyFULL at CUMC Worship Series...



OUR CHURCH FAMILY

- Continued prayers for improving health for **Rev. Angela**.
- A fond farewell for **Tom Curry and Ken Backer** as they return to Florida for the winter.
- Many prayers and good wishes for **Sue Jessen and Darwin Perry** as they move to Seattle, Washington for health reasons.
- Prayers for complete recovery from health challenges for **Becky Nicodemus, Phyllis Kelley, Judy Pittman, Lillian Lehnert, Hilda Gomez, Ann Singleton, and Don James**.
- **Sofi Flanagan-Wells** needs our prayers and cards during her hospitalization.



Deadra Atkins
Carol Meyer
Fred Mueller
Kevin Fitzgerald
Dominic Mello
Joe Farmarco
Judy Pittman

Celebrating 52 Years of CUMC!

Happy Birthday, CUMC! This month marks **52 years of faith, fellowship, and service!** From a wonderful start for our Endowment Fund to baptisms, new members, support for the Howard County Food Bank, a growing relationship with Cradlerock Elementary School, and so many other programs and events, our church continues to grow in faith and share God's love in action. As we celebrate our history, we give thanks for all those who have helped build our church community and for all of us who continue to make it a place of welcome, caring, and hope. Here's to the next chapter of our journey together!



LEARNING FOR ALL

Education Matters

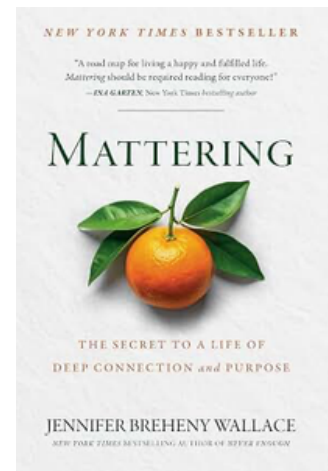
BUILDING BELOVED COMMUNITY: ONE PERSON AT A TIME

What does it mean to help people know that they matter? How can we become better at listening to one another, understanding different experiences, and building relationships that help everyone feel seen, valued, and included?

This winter and spring, CUMC will offer two related adult education studies that explore these questions and consider how we can put the values of Beloved Community into practice in our everyday lives.

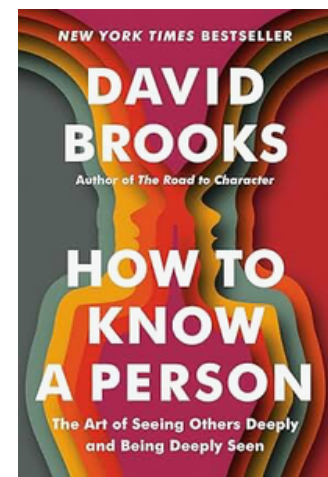
Winter Study: *Mattering* by Jennifer Wallace **January–February**

We'll begin by exploring why every person needs to feel valued and to know that they make a difference. Drawing on Jennifer Wallace's book *Mattering*, we'll consider how encouragement, meaningful connections, and a sense of belonging affect our lives. We'll also explore how we can help people feel valued not just for what they do, but for who they are. What might it look like for CUMC to become a community where everyone knows they matter?



Spring Study: *How to Know a Person* by David Brooks **April–May**

In the spring, we'll turn to David Brooks's *How to Know a Person: The Art of Seeing Others Deeply and Being Deeply Seen*. This study will focus on the everyday skills that help us build stronger relationships: listening with care, asking thoughtful questions, looking beyond first impressions, and responding compassionately when others are struggling. We'll consider how these practices can help us understand one another more deeply and create a more welcoming, caring congregation.



Together, the two studies will take us from understanding why people need to know they matter to discovering how we can help one another experience that truth. Our goal is not simply to discuss ideas, but to find practical ways to live out our commitment to love, inclusion, and Beloved Community—one person at a time.

The winter and spring sessions will be led by Mary Jo and Scrib Messenger. Watch for more information in the December newsletter. We hope you'll join us for these opportunities to learn, share, and grow together!

CUMC CARES

Missions Matter

The Great Legume Extravaganza

WHY BEANS RULE the PANTRY!

Let's be honest, if the Howard County Food Bank had a superhero mascot, it undoubtedly would be a tiny, caped bean! These little round wonders are the ultimate culinary chameleons. Think about it — black beans can masquerade as a savory taco filling or sneakily disguise themselves in a batch of fudgy brownies. Pinto beans cross over into the smooth territory of refried dips, while kidney beans hold down their fort in a hearty winter chili. Meanwhile, sweet and saucy baked beans are the undisputed champion of barbecues, lima beans teach us life lessons about trying new things, and crisp string beans bring the fresh green crunch. They don't care if they are smashed, stewed, baked or tossed into a salad; beans just show up, do the job, and taste spectacular doing it. They are the only food unique enough to count as a vegetable and a heavy-hitting protein at the exact same time...talk about a multitasking miracle!!

Please bring in your donations of beans, beans, and more beans on Sunday, November 8th. A bin will be available in the rear of the church. Thank you so much for your generosity and helping hungry neighbors!

Lillian Lehnert



FELLOWSHIP

Matters

STAY CONNECTED AND ENJOY!

WELCOMING HOSPITALITY awaits all at CUMC's monthly **First Friday**. Gather at 6:30pm on Nov. 6 at the home of Mary Jo and Scrib Messenger. Think of a special dish to share and let the Messengers know that you will be there by contacting them by Nov. 3.

LUNCH BUNCH

MEET, GREET, EAT!! CUMC's monthly **Lunch Bunch** for CUMC women offers all three! Meet new women; catch up with all; eat a wonderful potluck luncheon. Our Thurs., Nov. 12 noontime gathering will be at the home of Lillian Lehnert, so plan your dish to share and let Lillian know of your attendance by Nov. 10.



JUSTICE FOR ALL

Matters

What Do You Know About Palestine?

It's hard to know what to tell someone about Palestine. In trying to explain things, I've found myself essentially writing 2 book chapters, and by the end of the second I haven't even come to the 20th century yet! There's a LOT of history, linguistics, and mythology involved. That's true of the ancient region, and it's true of the modern region. And very often I've felt like I shouldn't form a strong opinion or engage in any action until I understood it ALL. Of course nobody ever can understand it all. Once you learn one thing, if you did it right, you're always aware of at least 2 new things you don't know. There's a lot you will never know about Palestine. But there's a few important things you should know:



1. Palestine is a legitimate term, and is recognized as a "state" by the vast majority of countries (with US and Israel as notable exceptions.)
2. Between the Jordan river and the Mediterranean Sea there are about the same number of non-Jewish inhabitants (called Palestinians) as Jewish ones.
3. The Jewish inhabitants have far more rights, while the Palestinians have gradations of rights depending on where they live. In the most common cases they have essentially no rights.
4. The Palestinians are suffering.
5. The Palestinians in Gaza are the target of an ongoing genocide.
6. This genocide is being carried out by Israel and the US.
7. The Palestinians are human beings.

The 7th part is the most important fact. And it's the *only* fact you really need to remember.

As you listen to arguments, read books, hear politicians talk, etc, THIS simple fact is often most obscured. They ARE human beings. Made in the image and likeness of God. They have kids, brothers, sisters, parents. They like some food and dislike other food. They like to sing, and some are probably embarrassed about their voices. They like to play games, and some of them probably get too competitive and have to apologize to their friends after. They love their parents but still fight with them sometimes. They tell jokes, watch movies, ride bikes, plant gardens, go to church, go to mosque, pray, write, read, and cry. They are humans.

Someone may try to put new words on top of them. Words like "terrorists," or sometimes "antisemites," "Amalek," or even "nazis". Some may try to make them abstract, like they're just "material" in the area.



JUSTICE FOR ALL

Matters

What Do You Know About Palestine?, continued

These are the necessary ingredients of a genocide. And there's one most important part to resisting a genocide: remember that EVERYONE involved is a human being. A human being: a whole UNIVERSE of thought, love, hopes, dreams, worries, ideas. A human being that God loves MORE than any of us are capable of loving anyone. Yes, God loves the humans of Hamas. Yes, God loves Benjamin Netanyahu, and the humans who are Israeli settlers.

These are all human beings. And God loves them.

And I am a human being.

I plan to write much more about Palestine, if you'll indulge me. There are specific actions we can take, and specific things worth knowing. While the injustice is simply understood, the logistics of counteracting it are complex and confusing.

As we explore helping our brothers and sisters of the region, I believe we must always remember one other thing about being human:

It is human to hate.

It's human to *hate* those who *hate*. It's natural, it's contagious, and it's perfectly understandable. I find myself doing it! I sometimes think I understand who the "real" bad guys are, and then I spend some time hating them. Usually, I hate how hateful they are. But Jesus called us to do something absurd: to love those who hate. He didn't call us to find the *worst* haters and dehumanize them or delegitimize them or eliminate them. He called us to love them out of hate.

Martin Luther King perhaps said it best:

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."

May God make us lights.

Tyler Peryea

GOING GREEN

Matters

Reclaiming Our Attention in a World of Smartphones

The following is a summary from the Washington Post's Climate Coach--Michael J. Coren October 13, 2026

Our smartphones help us stay connected, informed, and organized, but they can also distract us from the people and experiences that matter most. In an October 13 article in The Washington Post, Michael J. Coren explores how our growing dependence on smartphones can affect our concentration, our relationships, and our ability to be fully present in everyday life.



Our smartphones help us stay connected, informed, and organized, but they can also distract us from the people and experiences that matter most. In an October 13 article in The Washington Post, Michael J. Coren explores how our growing dependence on smartphones can affect our concentration, our relationships, and our ability to be fully present in everyday life.

The problem is not simply the amount of time we spend looking at screens. Many apps and digital services are designed to keep us engaged, encouraging us to check notifications, scroll through feeds, and return repeatedly for new information. Even when our phones are not in use, their presence can tempt us to divide our attention between the people around us and whatever might be happening online. Over time, these habits can make it harder to concentrate, enjoy quiet moments, and give others our undivided attention.

Coren encourages readers to make thoughtful, practical changes rather than trying to eliminate smartphones from their lives. We can begin by silencing unnecessary notifications, removing distracting apps from our home screens, and setting limits on the activities that consume more of our time than we intend. Establishing phone-free times during meals, conversations, and family gatherings can help us reconnect with those around us. Keeping phones away from our beds can also help create a healthier boundary between our digital lives and our time for rest.

Equally important is deciding what we want to make room for when we put our phones down. Reading a book, taking a walk, enjoying nature, pursuing a hobby, or having an uninterrupted conversation can bring satisfaction that endless scrolling often fails to provide. These small choices can help us become more intentional about how we spend our time and direct our attention toward the things we value most.

The goal is not to reject technology. Smartphones offer many benefits, including opportunities to maintain friendships, communicate with family members, and participate in our communities. Rather, the challenge is to make sure that our technology serves our purposes instead of allowing it to determine where our attention goes.

Perhaps this is a good reminder for all of us: our attention is one of the most meaningful gifts we can offer another person. When we put our phones aside, we make room for deeper conversations, stronger relationships, and a greater appreciation of the life unfolding around us.

BUSINESS CORNER

Financial Information - September 2026

Year-to-Date	Actual	Budget
Revenue	\$ 93,295.71	\$ 82,546.50
Expenses	\$ 90,087.70	\$ 98,020.42
Surplus or (Deficit)	\$ 3,208.01	\$ (15,473.92)
Surplus or (Deficit) Per Week	\$ 61.69	\$ (297.58)

Ad Board Minutes: October 15, 2026

Council of Ministries Minutes: September 9, 2026:

*“There is a calmness
to a life lived in
gratitude,
a quiet joy.”
—Ralph Blum*

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. Order forms are available on the side counter. Forms should be returned to the OBIC office, 7246 Cradlerock Way, Columbia, MD 21045. Orders must be placed by November 15th.



JOIN IN THIS FREE
COMMUNITY EVENT

Santa's Workshop

SAT | 5 DEC | 10AM - 12PM

There will be photos with Santa, games,
crafts, food, and more!

Christ UMC | Owen Brown Interfaith Center
Sanctuary A | 2nd floor
7246 Cradlerock Way Columbia, MD
www.cumcobic.org



BUSINESS CORNER

A Guide to Year-End Charitable Giving: Consider the Possibilities

As the year comes to a close, many individuals look for meaningful ways to support causes they care about while also taking advantage of potential tax benefits. A year-end gift to CUMC can provide both the personal satisfaction of advancing our mission and valuable financial advantages.

Depending on your circumstances, charitable giving may offer benefits such as an income tax charitable deduction, capital gains tax savings, and even potential estate tax savings. As you consider your year-end giving plans, two questions come to mind: When should you give? and What should you give?

Gifts of Appreciated Securities

One of the most tax-efficient ways to make a charitable contribution is by donating stocks or other securities that have increased in value and have been held for more than one year.

When you donate appreciated securities directly to the church, you may be eligible to receive a charitable deduction based on the asset's fair market value at the time of the gift. In addition, you can avoid paying federal capital gains tax that would otherwise be due if the securities were sold before making the donation. This can allow you to make a larger gift at a lower overall cost.

A Simple and Cost-Free Transfer Process

Through CUMC's partnership with the Mid-Atlantic Faith Foundation, donors can transfer appreciated securities at no cost. If you would like to explore this giving opportunity or receive detailed instructions on completing a transfer, please contact:

Mid-Atlantic Faith Foundation

☎ 267-449-0577

✉ tracybrown@midatlanticfoundation.org

Important Deadline

To ensure your gift is processed and credited for the 2026 tax year, stock transfer requests should be initiated no later than December 4, 2026. Transfers received after this date cannot be guaranteed to clear before year-end.

Every gift to CUMC's Annual Operating Account or our Endowment Account makes a difference. Your generosity makes a lasting impact on our ministry and community.





PARTICIPATION MATTERS

November 2026

Date	Events
11/1	Sunday Service* 10:00 a.m.
11/2	Justice for All* 7:00 p.m.
11/3	Book Study <i>Joyful Anyway</i> * 7:00 p.m.
11/4	Prayer Meeting* 8:15 p.m.
11/6	First Friday 6:30 p.m. hosted by The Messengers RSVP to Mary Jo by 11/3
11/8	Sunday Service* 10:00 a.m.
11/9	Community Ministries* 7:00 p.m.
11/11	Council of Ministries* 7:00 p.m. Prayer Meeting* 8:15 p.m.
11/12	SPRC* 7:00 p.m. Lunch Bunch 12:00 p.m. at Lillian Lehnert's. Please RSVP to Lillian by 11/10
11/15	Sunday Service* 10:00 a.m.
11/18	Prayer Meeting* 8:15 p.m.
11/19	Ad Board* 7:00 p.m.
11/22	Sunday Service* 10:00 a.m.
11/23	Newsletter deadline
11/25	Prayer Meeting* 8:15 p.m.
11/29	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

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

CUMC website at this link

2026	Nov 1	Nov 8	Nov 15	Nov 22	Nov 29
Liturgist	Lillian Lehnert	Lee Klinkenberg	Katie Weston	Tracy Klink	Phil Lindberg
Reader	Tracy Klink	Warren Kelley	David Burtnick	Karen Ohlrich	Delvin
Acolyte	Luke Weston	Sophie F-W	Miguel Angel Llanc	Emily Walker	Miamor F-W
Altar Flowers					
Tech					
Ushers 1	Jeanette Rosenber	Becky Nicodemus	Phyllis Kelley	Becky	Lee
Ushers 2	Rob Rosenberger	Lillian Lehnert	Warren Kelley	Tyler	Toni
Altar Set-up	Messenger	Klinkenberg	Kelley	Ohlrich	Duggan
Communion & Set-up	Karen Ohlrich	Kelley	Duggan	Tyler Rosenberger	Pam Wilt
Counters 1	Becky Nicodemus		Natalie Swirdovich	Kevin	Becky
Counters 2	Phil Lindberg	Kevin Swanson	Warren Kelley	Lee	Phil
Refreshments	Klinkenberg	Delvin Daniels	Atkins	Pittman	Becky Nicodemu
Sunday School Assist MS	Karen Ohlrich	Lisa Lindberg	Kevin Swanson	Deadra Atkins	Kevin Swanson
Sunday School Assist ELEM	Don James	Don James	Don James	Don James	Don James
Nurserv					



CALENDAR

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

< > Nov 2026 ▾							📅	🗓️
SUN Nov 1	MON 2	TUE 3	WED 4	THU 5	FRI 6	SAT 7		
Daylight Sa • 10am Wor		Election Da • 8:15pm Pr						
8 Second Sur • 10am Wor	9 • 7pm Com	10	11 Veterans D 2 more	12 • 12pm Lun 2 more	13	14		
15 • 10am Wor	16	17	18 • 8:15pm Pr	19	20	21		
22 • 10am Wor	23	24	25 • 8:15pm Pr	26 Thanksgivir	27 Black Frida	28		
29 • 10am Wor	30	Dec 1	2 • 8:15pm Pr	3	4	5		
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

