



Quarterly Newsletter of Epworth United Methodist Church
September/October/November 2022



BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS

October 2, 2022

1:30 p.m.

Under the Portico
All animals welcome
Special dedication to
Leashes of Love

Beebe Clinic giving out Free Flu Shots

October 2, 2022

9:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

Epworth
Fellowship Hall
Please join us

Fall 2022 Worship Schedule

Sundays: In-house

9:00 a.m. Contemporary Worship
Service

9:15 a.m. Children's Sunday School

11:00 a.m. Traditional Worship Service

Both services are being streamed
through Facebook and YouTube

September 11—Blessing of the
Backpacks

September 17 & 18
Epworth's 125th Anniversary
Celebration

October 2—9:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.
Beebe Clinic—Free Flu Shots

October 2—1:30 p.m.—Blessing of the
Animals (special honoring of all the
Leashes of Love dogs)

October 23—Town Hall Meeting
Following the 11:00 a.m. Worship
Service



Pastor Vicki's Views

Regular Reflection

In 1 Kings 19, we read the story of Elijah who is running for his life. He has just defeated the prophets of Ahab and Jezebel and Jezebel has threatened to kill him. God provides for Elijah along the way and Elijah finally comes to a cave. God tells him that he will pass before him. So, first, Elijah hears the wind. But the Lord is not in the wind. Then Elijah feels an earthquake, but the Lord is not in the earthquake. Elijah then sees a fire, but the Lord is not in the fire. Finally, Elijah stood in the silence and heard the still, small voice of God, encouraging him and sending him out on his next mission.

Each time, Elijah had to pause and reflect on the event, to discern where God's voice occurred. If he had not paused, he might have kept on going and ended up in the hands of Jezebel. Or he might have thought that God was calling him to violence through the mighty wind, earthquake, and fire. Instead, Elijah took the time to reflect on where God was at work. Because he intentionally paused, he heard God's voice in the stillness, calling him to anoint new kings and appoint his own successor, so that his work of prophecy could continue.

This passage of scripture invites us to take time out to reflect, either on our personal lives or on our ministry and what we are learning in the process. Below, I give you an example of how to use regular reflection in your personal life. For Epworth, our Source Collaborative Team, which is working through a two-year program to empower Epworth and our ministries to thrive, has been designing a process of transformation and we identified regular reflection as the base of our process. Most of us tend to get so busy doing ministry that we rarely take the time to discern where God's voice shows up and leads us. In the process, we forget why we do what we do and how to create the most effective process. Often, like Elijah above, we wait until we are burned out or defeated before we take the time to reflect.

However, if we build regular reflection into our rhythm of ministry, we not only remember why we serve, but also who we serve and how we can best serve. Regular reflection allows us to learn and adjust along the way. It can also prevent burn out, as we see early on when the process begins to break down. Learning as we go strengthens our ministry, creating a cycle of learning and growing, and bringing us joy as we see the fruit of our work.

For new ministries, this cycle would begin with an idea. We would gather our team and design a plan. (You can find a new ministry application [here](#).) After the event or after the ministry begins, we would pause to reflect on the experience. As we reflect individually and as a ministry team, we learn from each other and can apply what we learned in the next cycle.

Ironically, we tend to have a harder time reflecting on ministry which is on-going. Yet, on-going ministry

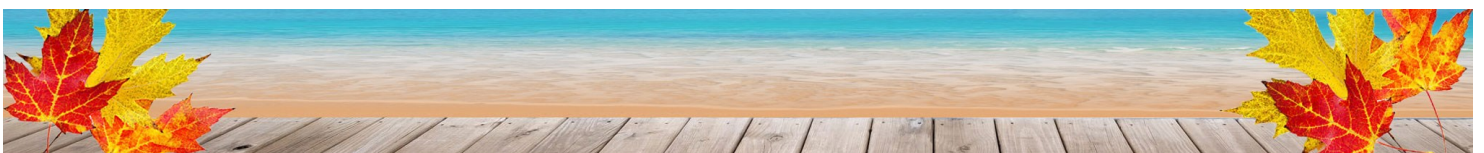
needs regular reflection, too. Ministries have a life cycle—from beginning, to well-established, to waning, and finally, bringing the ministry to a close. If we do not allow ministries to die, we end up with volunteers who suffer from burn-out and may end up harming the people they intended to serve. Even healthy ministries require adjustment from time to time. Pausing to regularly reflect allows us the space to see the ministry in a new light, learning and growing and changing.

Our personal lives also benefit from pausing to reflect. In Ignatian Spirituality, we call this time of reflection an examen. The examen can be practiced daily, weekly, or even monthly. Find a quiet place and imagine yourself in the presence of God. Of course, we know God remains with us moment by moment, but we must make ourselves aware of that presence. Once your mind has paused or quieted, try using one or two of these pairing of questions to help you begin to reflect. You can also create your own questions.

- ◆ When did I feel most connected to God today/this week? When did I feel least connected to God today/this week?
- ◆ When was I loved or served well by others today/this week? When did I love or serve others well today/this week?
- ◆ In what ways did I demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, or self-control? When did I miss the opportunity to show love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, or self-control?
- ◆ For what am I most grateful today? Excited? Hopeful? For what am I least grateful? Frustrated? Disappointed?
- ◆ How am I living out my values? What am I doing which does not align with my values?

After you finish reflecting, try journaling on what you learned. Notice any patterns. What is God saying to you from within these moments? What invitations reside within these moments? What is God inviting you to start, stop, or continue because of your experience? Finally, make a commitment to adjust how you are living as a result of your learnings. In this way, we can build regular reflection into our life of faith.

The Experiential Learning Cycle



Pastor Bo Gordy-Stith's views

Communications and Community Over 125 Years

As we prepare to celebrate Epworth's 125th anniversary over the weekend of September 17-18, I've been thinking about the pace of change we've been experiencing since the turn of the century and particularly since the start of the Covid-19 quarantine.



Change can be threatening and unsettling, but change can also be a time of explosive transformation. Often the church community attracts us because of its seeming immunity from change, but the Bible is filled with examples of tumultuous and transformational change, orbiting around three lynchpins of our faith history: the Exodus and Exile in the Old Testament and the unprecedented ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ in the New Testament.

I hardly need to mention the recent changes that have affected our experience of church so dramatically, but livestreamed worship and gatherings and rip-and-sip communion would have to top the list. According to an [article on the world Economic Forum](#), the percentage of people online in America has nearly doubled since 2000, from half to 90% (and globally, the percentage of persons online has jumped from 7% to over half). At the start of this millennium, 740 million persons had a cellphone subscription. Today, there are now more cellphones in the world (over 8 billion) than people. Every aspect of our culture, from entertainment to education, government to religion, had become personalized and balkanized. Personalization has isolated us while the tribalization fostered by social media has reduced us to polarized,

warring caricatures in stark black and white (or blue and red).

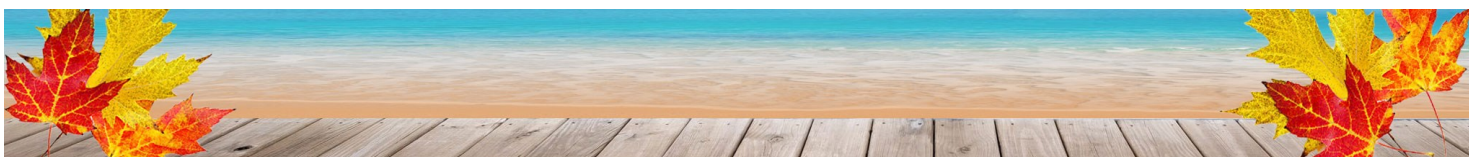
The church is not immune from these trends of personalization, globalization, and polarization. As the dust begins to settle from our 14-month hiatus from gathering in person for worship, we now know that a post-Covid church will never be the same. We face challenges of redefining community as we experience a chasm between in-person and online congregations while undergoing a painful schism in The United (with air quotes) Methodist Church over the full humanity of all people, regardless of affectional orientation or gender identity. It might be tempting to long for the simplicity of the good old days when Epworth Methodist Episcopal Church was founded on September 2, 1897.

Two months earlier, Guglielmo Marconi filed a patent for the radio. In August, Oldsmobile was founded, and Thomas Edison patented the Kinetoscope (the first movie projector). Though the telephone had been patented in 1876, the decade between 1904 and 1914 saw an increase in telephone use in the U.S. from 3 million to surpass the rest of the world in telephone density. A little over five years after Epworth was founded, Orville Wright piloted the Wright Flyer on the first powered, controlled, sustained airplane flight in history. Henry Ford would make the automobile accessible to millions of Americans, rolling the first Model T off the assembly line eleven years after Epworth was founded. And 21 years after Epworth's founding (four years after moving to 20 Baltimore Avenue), the influenza epidemic of 1918 swept a war-weary world, killing 50 million people and infecting one third of the world's population and 25 percent of the U.S. population.

At our beginning, we experienced the introduction of the automobile, airplane, radio, telephone, a World War, and a worldwide influenza pandemic. We've always known a lot about change at Epworth. And like our ancestors in faith, we rely on the unchanging presence of God to navigate a changing world.

Pastor Bo

EPWORTH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
19285 HOLLAND GLADE ROAD - REHOBOTH BEACH, DE 19971



Sunday School Moments Matter

Submitted by Linda BenderHilt

Back to Sunday School

We are thrilled to continue our in-person Sunday School for our children. Depending on attendance, we will continue with two groups: K to 2nd grade and 3rd to 5th grade. Our goal is to help our children learn and grow in Christian faith through education, music, worship, service projects and fellowship. We continue to be so excited about our curriculum, Deep Blue Rotation Stations!

This Fall on Sunday, September 11, we will begin with the Ten Commandments. The children will hear the story of the Israelites receiving the Ten Commandments. (Exodus 3:7-10; 5:1-2; 6:1-10; 12:31-15:21). The anchor point is God cares for all people. They will discover that God took care of the Israelites and will learn that we can trust that God cares for us.

Through the Deep Blue rotation model curriculum, children will experience the Bible story in many different ways. As a result, each Bible story and its meaning will stay with them for life. Through Art, Cooking, Games, Missions, Science, Spiritual Practices, and Storytelling, children will explore the monthly theme. Children will have opportunities to be creative and give thanks for all the great things God has made. October is the story of the Woman at the Well (John 4:1-42), November continues with Community Forgives Zacchaeus (Luke 10:1-10), and December brings the story, A Baby is Born (Luke 2:1-20).

We have a great group of volunteer teachers and assistants to guide the children through each story throughout the year. They will learn how God cares for us all. If you would like to become a volunteer teacher; rotation is once every four weeks, please contact Linda BenderHilt 717-209-0271. The curriculum is very easy to step right into and teach, no training necessary! So, if you love working with kids, please consider becoming a Sunday school teacher, you will get so much out of this experience.

We look forward to seeing you and can't wait for the children to "get back to (Sunday) school." Please feel free to contact Linda BenderHilt 717-209-0271 or Gwen Osborne 443-745-6950 with any questions.

CHILDREN'S Sunday School

125th Anniversary Celebration Moments

By Susan Jimenez



EPWORTH 125

125th Anniversary Celebration, An Historic Rehoboth Event

September 17-18, 2022, Epworth
UMC will hold its 125th Anniversary Celebration at
the church.

EMBRACING COMMUNITY.



Saturday, September 17, Epworth Anniversary Fair 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Welcoming the entire community, Epworth will have a celebratory Fair including kids' games, dunk tank, food trucks and food stands, silent auction, artisan booths, live music with both local performers and rising stars.





The Epworth Skate Park will be open for all and will feature live demos from experienced skaters. All are welcome.

EXPLORING FAITH. Sunday, September 18, Combined Worship Service 10:00 a.m. As is our tradition, we will have a combined contemporary and traditional service featuring music, remembering, and celebrating our 125-year history, and we'll be joined by former pastors and local dignitaries.



CHURCH FAMILY DINNER. Sunday, September 18, 5:00 p.m. Fellowship Hall. Reservations are required for this event either thru Sign-up Genius or by calling the church office. Also, sign-up to bring a dessert.

KEY HISTORIC MILESTONES:

- ◆ 1897 Epworth's history begins in 1897 when members of the original camp meeting association build a church on Rehoboth Avenue near Lake Street.
- ◆ 1914 The church building is physically moved to 20 Baltimore Avenue.
- ◆ 1961 A new sanctuary is built and opened.
- ◆ 1987 A babysitting program, Mom's Morning Out, evolves into the Epworth Preschool and provides the first educational and religious childcare program in the town. It continues to operate to this day.
- ◆ 1989 Facing a need for more space and little room for expansion at its Baltimore Avenue site, the church purchases a 15-acre tract of land on Holland Glade Road outside city limits.
- ◆ 2006 The church officially becomes a Reconciling Congregation. The Reconciling Ministries Network (RMN) advocates within the Methodist church for full inclusion of LGBTQ people and their concerns.
- ◆ 2008 New church and facility opens on Holland Glade Road. The Baltimore Avenue buildings and land are sold to a real estate company, which then rents the buildings to Clear Space Theater and Celebration Mall.
- ◆ 2020 Our new pastors, the Rev. Dr. Vicki Gordy-Stith and Rev. Dr. Bo Gordy Stith arrive to their new appointments and due to the COVID-19 Pandemic restrictions, the church begins live streaming its services.
- ◆ 2022 Epworth celebrates its 125th Anniversary!



**VOLUNTEERS ARE STILL NEEDED FOR THE ANNIVERSARY FAIR
USE SIGN-UP GENIUS OR CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE**

Committee Members:
Jamie Forshey, Kim Witmer, Susan Jimenez,
Cathy Benson, Linda Kauffman,
Gwen Osborne, Suzanne Landon,
Catherine Lewis, David Hagelin,
Loretta Mahan, Penny MacLennan,
Mickie McManamon

Caring Ministries Moments Matter

By Mickie McManamon

Summer is winding down, just a few more weeks until all the kids are back in school and hopefully traffic on Thursday thru Monday will not be in grid lock on Rt. 1. So, what is next for the activities at Epworth? First, please continue to bring canned goods for our Good Sam Mobile. Many in our community are struggling trying to make ends meet with the increase in cost of food, dry goods, gas, and other daily necessities. Tagging on to supporting Good Sam Mobile, please help with our Back to School Supply Drive! There is a list in the Narthex on the Pastoral Care table with supplies needed. As a former school teacher, I can tell you how much I appreciated the items my students received from the churches in my area helping students with new backpacks, crayons, paper, glue, pencils, etc.

September 17 and 18 is a busy weekend for Epworth: *A Space for Grace Celebrating 125 years of Faith and Community!* What a wonderful way to celebrate Epworth's long history of *Exploring Faith - Embracing Community!* It will be a free event with "Fun for Everyone!" Please come out and support our heritage of *125 yrs of faith and service to our community in Rehoboth Beach!* In addition to coming to have fun and eat....please, please sign up to volunteer for a couple of hours in making this the best celebration ever! Visit us at the Pastoral Care Desk or call the office to sign up to help either day or both days!

Finally, for activities on the Caring Ministry Calendar, we are bringing back Christmas Joy!

- ◆ Breakfast with Santa, Saturday, December 3, with a visit from Santa and Mrs. Clause
- ◆ Epworth's Infamous Cookie Walk, Saturday, December 10, from 9 am until cookies are gone
- ◆ Cookie Bakers needed to bake home-made cookies to be delivered to Epworth on Friday, December 9. Delivery times will be posted later!

Ministry Volunteers Needed

We know through the last 2.5 years it has been difficult to continue to serve our congregation and community in the many ways we did until the pandemic arrived. Now, as things start to return to a new normal we are in need of volunteers to serve in Caring Ministries! Listed below are a few of the areas we need you!!

- ◆ Flower Design Team, Breaking down Sunday's altar flowers for delivery to our shut ins
- ◆ Pastoral Care Visitation, Visiting the shut ins, hospitalized, assisted living members to bring prayer and the joys and caring of Epworth to those that can not come to church in person
- ◆ Stephen Ministers, trained volunteers to pray, walk and provide a loving, prayerful support as a church member is in need of this as they walk through a troubling time
- ◆ Stitchers of Love, if you love to knit or crochet this is for you. Making prayer squares, shawls, blankets for members in need of a gentle reminder through the soft touch of a handmade item that was and continues to be made with prayer
- ◆ Card Makers, an artistic ministry, making cards with pens, paper, paint, cricket, etc. that are shared with the congregation to send out
- ◆ Card Writers, writing messages for Birthdays, Anniversaries, Deaths, Illness to congregation. Cards and stamps provided by church, you just have to write and mail.
- ◆ Christmas Cards. If you have old Christmas cards, do not discard them. We use them for the food ministry to share with those in need during the holiday season. Drop off at the Pastoral Care Desk!

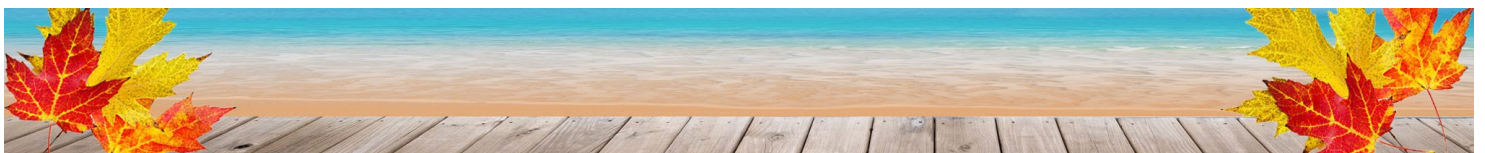
These are just a few of the Volunteer opportunities in Caring Ministry. If you need any information about the specifics of these ministries or questions about if you fit in that ministry please see Mickie or Dee Speck at the Pastoral Care Desk!

Volunteer for the many things coming up that Epworth does! You will not regret it!

Congregational

Care

Ministers



Christmas Joy Moments Matter

Submitted by Sue Brenton

Attention all Epworth Santa Elves!!!!!!!

Christmas Joy needs your support and help!

What in the world is Christmas Joy?

Christmas Joy began several years ago at Epworth and through the years has grown to be a way for us to bring joy and comfort to our families with youth in some need of help.

We have been on a forced vacation from this activity and many others in our world!

Let me briefly explain what we have planned this year:

- ♦ *BREAKFAST With SANTA on Sat Dec 3 at 09:30*
- ♦ *GUEST VISITOR – Santa & Mrs. Claus*
- ♦ *COOKIE WALK will be held on Sat Dec 10 beginning at 09:00 (cookie bakers may want to get your flour and sugar, eggs and butter sooner than later)*

We will need all Santa's Epworth Elves to help us make this the best Christmas Joy ever! More info will follow as we get into the fall...but PLEASE save the dates and join in the fun and fellowship!



Stewardship Moments Matter

Written by Darlene Ford

We want to thank everyone who has made sure that Epworth continued and will continue to operate due to their giving and pledges made. Here are some current statistics:

Money Received 7/1/21-6/30/22:\$729,571
Families Pledged 2021-2022: 155
Money Pledged 2021-2022: \$502,785
Families Pledged 2022-2023: 139
Money Pledged 2022-2023: \$432,661

Donations
are greatly
Appreciated!

Caring Ministries Moments Matter

Submitted by Mickie McManamon

Leashes of Love Ministry Closing



Leashes of Love, our dog therapy ministry, brought smiles and loving licks of delight and comfort to our local community assistive living facilities residents for 11 years. Sadly, due to many factors including the

retirement of its dedicated leader, Babs Kulbaba, lingering COVID restrictions and diminishing visitation areas within some of the facilities, we feel it is time for this wonderful ministry to end.

On Sunday, October 2, at 1:30 pm, during the Blessing of the Animals, we will honor all the dogs (past and present) and their humans who participated in this ministry over the years.

We encourage all to attend this event, outside Bayside under the portico. Leashes of Love will be missed!

EPWORTH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
302.227.7743 eumcrb.org

Mother Earth Moments Matter

by Bob Paulen

LOVE YOUR MOTHER... EARTH!

The crucial issue of the 21st century is the health of our environment. This affects every living person on earth. If we do not resolve this issue, no others will matter. As people of faith who proclaim that "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen 1:1); and as people who have been called to be stewards of the earth, "You have made us little lower than the heavenly beings...you have made us ruler over the works of your hands; you have put everything under our feet" (Psalm 8), we are called through faith to meet the 21st century challenge to the health of our planet.

One way to respond to God's call is by owning our faith and enlarging Epworth's Vision. Not only do we commit to Exploring Faith and Embracing Community but also we include a commitment to Defending our Planet. Our youth, the future of the church, cry out for us to dialogue with them seriously around earth care. They carry a heavy burden and remind us frequently that there is no Plan(et) B. Jesus stated in the Sermon on the Mount, "You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its savor...it is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men." (Matthew 5:13) Let us be salty Christians and take up the primary challenge of our time and leave a better world than we inherited!"



"The earth is the Lord's and they that dwell within." Psalm 24 & I Cor. 10:26

