

Esther Children's  
Musical  
March 26 During  
8:45 & 11 a.m.  
Services



**ESTHER!**

**Ash  
Wednesday**

At Christ UMC  
March 1 at 7 p.m.  
All Are Welcome!

Thinking about  
Joining Asbury?  
Membership  
Classes in March!  
See page 8

**New Members**



**Women's Retreat  
March 3-5  
Register now!**



# the ASBURIAN

Newsletter of Asbury United Methodist Church  
VOLUME 60, ISSUE 1 January/February 2017



*...Join Us in Church!*

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## OFFICERS OF OUR CHURCH

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Dale Cropper, Leadership Team Vice-Chair  
Kim Bradshaw, Staff-Parish Relations Chair  
Carol Walston, Board Of Trustees Chair  
Sara Lewis, Finance Committee Chair  
Sharon Dashiell, ACDC Board Chair  
Mick Roberts, Lay Leader  
Sara Lewis, UMW President  
Suzanne Press, Co-Chairman, BOD, Opportunity Shop  
Priscilla Basehart, Co-Chairman, BOD, Opportunity Shop  
Carlton Bradshaw, Chairman, BOD, ASP

Editor: Karen Corwin

# PASTOR'S MESSAGE

## Is That Really In Scripture?

What an odd title for a book, *In A Pit With A Lion On A Snowy Day*, and yet Mark Batterson talks about this scripture in 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 23:23 being a game changer in his life. I can see most of you now, flipping through the scriptures to see if this is what it really says. I did as well. It frankly wasn't a scripture that was on my radar, but when I came across the book I was immediately intrigued! What does it have to do with any theological doctrine and what in the world does it have to do with me? As I began to read I also began to ponder where we are in the life of the church at Asbury as well. Although Benaiah, the hero in this

scripture, ran toward the beast our natural instinct is to run away. Somehow self-preservation kicks in and we feel far better with a good distance between our fears and ourselves. Batterson states this is how normal people react but not lion chasers, they are wired differently. He says we often think too small and miss opportunities that God puts in our paths. He shares he has learned that taking no risks is the greatest risk of all. Remember in Zootopia when Judy's dad talked about the beauty of complacency being taking no risks, yet also meaning you never risk failure?

He goes on to share a simple definition of success:

"Do the best you can with what you have where you are. In essence, success is making the most of every opportunity. Spiritual maturity is seeing and seizing God-ordained opportunities. Think of every opportunity as God's gift to you. What you do with those opportunities is your gift to God. I'm absolutely convinced that our greatest regrets in life will be missed opportunities." (p. 21)

I believe that Asbury is at a pivotal point in the life of the congregation and its ministries as we embark on new opportunities to be stewards of our youth, families, small groups and how we share Christ with others. Please pray that in this new year we will not miss the opportunities that God puts before us. Pray that as a congregation we defy the odds, face our fears, reframe problems, embrace uncertainty, take risks, seize opportunities, and risk looking foolish in the name of God. (p. 23) Dare to be a lion chaser!

Benita Harris, Senior Pastor

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## Connection Cards Are Important

Don't forget your Connection Card. Connection cards are just that: they let the church connect with you and help you on your faith journey. By providing:

- ◆ Changes in home address, email or phone numbers
- ◆ Prayers for a loved one
- ◆ Opportunities to participate in an activity or a church event
- ◆ A welcome to new visitors

Please help us with this new method of caring for and connecting with our church family and visitors. Thank you!

Dear Asbury Church Family,

We have some amazing events coming up in the next couple of months that you won't want to miss! Please mark your calendars!

**February 25 at 5 p.m.** The UMES Gospel Choir under the direction of Mr. Fernandez Batson will be providing a moving program filled with a variety of musical selections.

**Wednesday Lenten Organ Recital Series:**

**March 15 Dr. Michael Stefanek, March 22 Taylor Harvey, March 29 Veronica Tomanek, April 5 Susan Zimmer** These programs will start at noon and last approximately 40 minutes and provide a great opportunity for mid-week reflection during the day over the lunch hour.

**March 26 at both 8:45 a.m. and 11 a.m. services** the children's musical, "Esther" by Erik Whitehill will be presented in Fellowship Hall.

**April 8 at 4 p.m.** there will be a Handbell Concert featuring Asbury's very own handbell ensembles: Jubilate Bells, Chiming Belles, Revelation Ringers, and Kingdom Kids Ringers.

**Palm Sunday, April 9** the Chancel Choir will be presenting a cantata entitled, "Amazing Love" by Lloyd Larson & Joel Raney at 8:45 and 11 a.m. services. This powerful work combines narrations, scripture readings, and a diverse selection of dramatic songs.

**Easter Sunday, April 16** festive music will be featured at all services.

**April 28-30** We are pleased and honored to have renowned composer, arranger and musician Mark Miller in residence. This weekend will provide opportunities for singers and directors to work with this amazing talent in rehearsals and special workshops. Singers will also be performing in a concert here at Asbury on Saturday, April 29 at 7 p.m. Mark will be also be providing musical leadership at our Sunday morning worship services on April 30. More details will be coming soon!

Dr. Michael Stefanek, Director of Music Ministry

**Little Mozarts**

Little Mozarts classes are back in session after winter break! These fun music classes are for children ages 3 and 4, and include Bible stories, singing, dancing, and playing instruments with our fantastic teachers! The best news? Little Mozarts classes are FREE! There are a handful of openings in the 4:30 and 5:30 p.m. classes. Contact Heather at (410)-749-2131 or by email [heather@asburyweb.org](mailto:heather@asburyweb.org) to register or for more information.

MUSIC MATTERS!



**The Wired Word Class 10 a.m.**

Have you ever considered joining an adult Sunday school class, but don't feel like you have a lot of time for preparation?

Why don't you consider joining us in the Catley Library at 10 a.m. for *The Wired Word*? Each week you will receive a lesson via email concerning a current national or international event or topic. The lessons contain thought provoking questions and relevant scripture, which leads to interesting classroom discussions. There are no materials to purchase and the lessons are independent of one another, so if you miss a week you aren't falling behind. If you are interested in joining us, just send John and Shelly Marshall an email at [mrsjmarshall@msn.com](mailto:mrsjmarshall@msn.com) so they can add you to the list to receive your lesson.

**The Lounge Class 9:50 to 10:45 a.m.**

The Lounge Class, meeting in the Mackey Room, is designed to have the class members select and lead the weekly topic and encourage dynamic discussions using contemporary and traditional materials in the second half of the class.

**February 5**

Don Taylor: Chesapeake Housing Mission

**February 12**

Charles Emery: Marcus Borg Series;  
"Salvation"

**February 19**

Don Taylor: Global Habitat-Nepal

**February 26**

Cristina Cammarano, Ph.D., SU Philosophy professor: Teaching Ethics to Children

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**Bible 101 Study Class 10 a.m.**

During the Advent Season we are studied *Down to Earth* by Mike Slaughter. There were four sessions devoted to love, humility, lifestyle, and obedience. We examined how obedience can be redefined, as saying a big "yes" to God. In January, we began a new study of the Book of Genesis.

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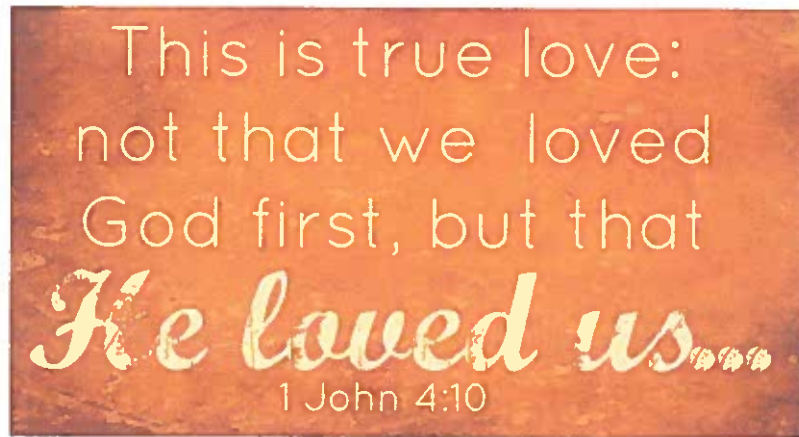
**UMW Circle February Meetings**

**Eve:** Wednesday, February 15 at 7:15 p.m. in the Mackey Room at church

**eCircle:** by newsletter online

**Dorcas:** Tuesday, February 14 in the Mackey Room at church at 7:30 p.m., hosted by Holly Hearne

**Joanna:** Monday, February 13 at 10 a.m. at the home of Carol Bisker



*1 John 4:10 (CEB)*

*This is love: it is not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son as the sacrifice that deals with our sins.*

### **This is Love: Youth Rally 2017 Reflection**

Steve Fitzhugh, the speaker for Youth Rally 2017 weekend, gave us a powerful message about how God's love had enabled him to become the person he is today. Steve is from a broken home, son of a single mother, and had siblings and parents who suffered from addictions and alcoholism. Steve overcame all of the hurdles that were set in his path as he became a track and field star and eventually became a professional football player for the Denver Broncos. Steve now travels the nation bringing a message of hope to young people who are struggling and hurting.

Steve talked to us about how his faith enabled him to realize that he was a beloved child of God. Recognizing his value as a person, Steve gave his life to God and his life was changed. He told the young people at Youth Rally that our hope isn't in the things of this world but that our hope is in our God. I agree with Steve that it is God who gives us value, Jesus Christ who is the model for our life, and the Holy Spirit who can be our guide in life. Yet too often we put our lives in the hands of the world as we strive towards material goals, goals that are ungodly. Money, power, and living a comfortable life become our idols. Steve challenged us to trust God instead of trusting the world.

Many of Asbury's young people recommitted their lives to their faith. They accepted Steve's challenge to put their whole faith in Christ and strive to be a model of Christ's love to the world. Young people are receiving so many contradictory messages from the world today. They are told what to wear, how to live, given a false definition of love, told what to believe and told what they need to be happy by many different sources: the internet, social media, peers, and others. Yet, Christ tells us to conform our lives to his ways. Christ lived humbly, gave his life for our sake, served instead of being served, and reached out to those who were hurting. Christ loved the least, didn't concern himself with wealth, and cared more about others than he cared about himself. This message is so contrary to the ways of the world, but Steve's message to the young people at Youth Rally rallied their hearts towards a new way of living.

Eric Warner, Associate Pastor

# FINANCE

It seems amazing, but here we are at the beginning of another year! I don't know about you, but to me it seems like we just started last year days ago, but of course that's not the case. The finance books have been finalized, and I am happy to report the church finished 2016 with a net income of \$17,131. We are appreciative to everyone who gave in 2016; many of you gave over and above your regular giving/pledge. We also had many contributors giving for the very first time and these contributors are now regular supporters of the church. We also had savings on the expense side of \$59,615 including: music director position was not filled until May, Warren Carter unfortunately was out on workers compensation, and because of mild weather in 2016, there was a great savings in our gas utilities. Our Leadership Committee approved the 2017 budget presented by the Finance Committee at their December 2016 meeting. The budget was approved as an unbalanced budget with expenses exceeding income by \$22,064. Many factors played a part in this budget being recommended by Finance and approved by Leadership. The underlying factor is Finance and Leadership wanted to support the requested funds from our ministries and operations, while being realistic in anticipating income. We realized that God is bigger than our committees and can do more than we can ask, as we put the budget in God's Hands. The 2017 budget was approved as a faith-based budget, praying and trusting we will receive the funds that are needed for Asbury to do great work through our ministries in 2017. On behalf of our Finance Committee, I would like to express our deepest appreciation for your faithful giving. May God continue to richly bless you in the New Year ahead!

	2016 Actual
Pledge Contributions	\$633,469
Unpledged Giving	\$0
Plate Contributions	\$32,937
Special Contributions	\$9,300
Endowment	\$10,884
Rentals	\$27,091
Interest-checking/mma/cd	\$5,070
Gain/loss on stock	\$0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$718,750</b>
Property Expenses	\$127,061
Ministry Expenses	\$256,960
Administrative Expenses	\$116,053
Apportionments	\$91,554
Employee Benefits	\$109,993
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$701,620</b>
<b>Net</b>	<b>\$17,131</b>

## Generosity Pledges 2017

We have received 234 pledges in the amount of \$610,179. This includes 86 increases, 22 new pledges, and 12 new electronic transfers. The generous and faithful giving at Asbury reminds us of the amazing privilege of being involved in ministry. We believe God is a miracle working God, and the same Christ who took money out of the mouth of a fish (Matthew 17:24-27) could also fill our offering each and every Sunday if He chose to. Yet, His method has always been to use people like you and me to follow the example the Father set over 2,000 years ago as He gave His only begotten Son. Then, Jesus walked in submission and obedience to the Cross and gave His very life for you and me to experience the freedom we now enjoy. We look at those examples, and realize what He wants us to give as a tithe and/or offering is a far smaller sacrifice than has already been given, yet His desire is that we experience the joy that comes along with giving. When we do it in the right spirit, there is absolutely something joyful about it! As you read the Finance article this month it talks about our anticipated expenses exceeding anticipated income by \$22,064. Anticipated income for the budget is derived by our actual pledge totals and a history of prior years of giving. Pledges are received in the finance office throughout the year so it is never too late to turn one in. Individual pledge amounts are kept confidential-only totals are shared. If you would like to make or change a pledge please contact me at [janice@asburyweb.org](mailto:janice@asburyweb.org) or call the church office 410-749-2131, ext. 105.

Janice Wilkinson, Director of Finance & Building

**Souper Bowl of Caring 2017**

*For I was Hungry and You Gave Me Something to Eat*

Before the Super Bowl, comes the Souper Bowl. This year, Asbury will again join churches across the country in celebrating this way of helping to feed hungry people in our community. We will be collecting much needed food and toilet articles for the Salisbury Urban Ministries food pantry. Simply pick up a paper bag after services on Sunday, January 29 and fill it with nonperishable items (suggestions attached). Then, bring your offering of food to the altar in the Sanctuary or the Fellowship Hall on Sunday February 5 as a tangible part of the Sunday Service.

**An After Christmas Poem by Howard Thurman**

**The Work of Christmas**

**When the song of the angels is stilled,  
 When the star in the sky is gone,  
 When the king and the princes are home,  
 When the shepherds are back with their flock  
 The work of Christmas begins,  
 To find the lost,  
 To heal the broken,  
 To feed the hungry,  
 To release the prisoner,  
 To rebuild the nations,  
 To bring peace among brothers,  
 To make music in the heart.**



**Saying Goodbye to Warren Carter**

Our Maintenance Worker, Warren Carter, will be retiring effective January 27, 2017. Warren has been a member of our Asbury staff since August 27, 2001. He has performed many tasks not only for Asbury Church, but also for Asbury Child Development Center (ACDC). While Warren was recovering from his shoulder surgery (May 2016) I heard many times from the ACDC staff of how much they missed having him there to help with their everyday tasks. Warren possesses a heart for giving and I know that the teachers and children from ACDC hold a special place in his heart as well. He loves to paint and has sold his paintings from our Fellowship Hall through the Fall Festival's over the years. Please join us as we say to Warren that we wish him well in his retirement, hope he continues to enjoy his children and grandchildren and that we thank him for all of his years with us. A reception for Warren will be held on Sunday, January 29 following the 11 a.m. service. Please join us!

Kim Bradshaw, Chairperson SPRC

# ASBURY NEWS

## CESP

Thank you to all that helped those less fortunate by donating “Happy Hygiene” or “Cozy Cot” bags to CESP. With your financial donations, creating the bags, or rechecking your closets to donate items – you all are amazing. I am so honored to be a part of such a giving congregation. With heartfelt thanks from the bottom of my heart on behalf of our homeless family of men that were so warmly welcomed to our church on January 28.

Sharon Dashiell

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## Eastern Shore Mission of Mercy      March 10-11

Mission of Mercy is a free adult dental clinic provided by volunteer dental professionals and a volunteer staff of several hundred people. All dental services will be provided by licensed dentists and hygienists who are donating their services for this event. Volunteers are needed. Please visit the website for information on how you can help: [www.easternshoremom.org](http://www.easternshoremom.org).



## RAINBOWS      Meetings Postponed

Unfortunately, there was not enough interest to be able to begin Rainbows meetings in January as planned. The Rainbows facilitators will be meeting in the upcoming months to re-evaluate and reschedule the program.

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## Church Membership Classes

The next church membership classes will be held on Thursday nights at 7 p.m. March 2, 9, and 16 or on Sundays after church at 12:15 p.m. March 5, 12, and 19. If you are interested in membership or have any questions, contact Pastor Eric in the church office or email at [eric@asburyweb.org](mailto:eric@asburyweb.org).

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## Registration for 2017 Women’s Retreat

It’s time to reserve your place now for the 2017 annual Women’s Retreat March 3-5 at Camp Pecometh in Centreville, MD. The cost for the three-day event has been maintained at \$199, which includes two nights in a beautiful hotel-like setting and five delicious meals in addition to spiritual study, fellowship, and fun. New this year will be our spiritual leader, Patsy Riley, who will be exploring John Ortberg’s book, *“God Is Closer than You Think”*. Registration forms are available in the Welcome Centers and the deadline is February 3. Your deposit (\$99 double occupancy; \$150 single occupancy) must accompany the registration form in order to secure your reservation. Some scholarship money is available by calling the church office. The fun theme for the 2017 retreat is By the Sea, so we will be celebrating the beach and summer in spite of the cold weather that we normally encounter in March.

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## Kingdom City

Kingdom City was action packed in December! The children put on a puppet show at the end of our unit about “Christmas around the world”. We were excited to find out that our boxes we packed for Operation Christmas Child went to needy children in the Dominican Republic, Lesotho, and Togo. In January, the children began learning the story of Esther and will present it as a musical on March 26 during the 8:45 and 11 a.m. services.



## **The Opportunity Shop**

158 W. Market Street      Salisbury, Maryland 21801      410-749-9777  
Store Hours: Thursday and Saturday 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Donations can be dropped off Monday and Friday 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon

**SERVING OTHERS**

### **Opportunity Shop Update**

As we begin a New Year, the Opportunity Shop Board would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has taken time to bring their gently used merchandise to the shop and the many hours that our volunteers spent, sorting, tagging, pricing, displaying, or selling your goods. We recently held their end of year meeting and are pleased to announce that we were able to distribute \$20,000 to 11 local organizations with the profits made from your donations. We can receive donations any Monday or Friday from 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m. and Thursdays and Saturdays from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. If your New Year's resolution was to try something new, being an Opportunity Shop volunteer might be something for you. We can really use volunteers to work any of the days we are open either for stocking the store or selling merchandise. Thursday and Saturday shifts are only 2 1/2 hours each and Monday and Friday only require whatever time you can spare. Happy New Year from the Opportunity Shop! If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the church office.

Janet Long, Opportunity Shop Board member

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### **Asbury Service Project Update**

Your Asbury Service Project team has been working hard preparing for our 44<sup>th</sup> mission trip to Appalachia in June. We do not yet know our destination, but it is likely to be somewhere in West Virginia. All participants are required to have raised and turned in at least \$350 by February 12 in order to cover the cost of the trip. Thank you for your prayers, presence, and financial support of this ministry!

There is still plenty to do here in our own community before we travel. We will be serving dinner Asbury's homeless guests during CESP on February 1, and we will be serving dinner to the guests at Christian Shelter once per month through the spring. In addition, we will be working with Chesapeake Housing Mission to construct wheelchair ramps for three needy families.

We have just two more pancake breakfasts scheduled for the year; thank you for your generous support at our previous breakfasts, and we look forward to serving you in the future. As always, the breakfast is offered at no charge, but donations to the ministry are graciously accepted. In years' past your generous donations to our fundraisers have covered travel costs and provided additional funding to help the families we serve in Appalachia.

Breakfast dates for your calendar are:

February 12

March 12

In May we are planning a taco and baked potato dinner; stay tuned for more information on that!

Work Skills / Safety Training sessions are scheduled for:

March 18

April 22

May 20

If you have any questions do not hesitate to call me at 410-896-2776.

In His Service, Carlton Bradshaw

## Evangelism

# LEADERSHIP

The word “Evangelism” conjures up all sorts of images and sometimes not particularly positive ones. For me, it’s the roving minister who holds tent services and preaches “fire and brimstone”, or the knock on my front door with a person standing there who wants to recruit me into their faith and/or church over the next 60 minutes. With these kinds of images and others like them, it can be difficult to promote an evangelistic component to Asbury’s ministry and be convincing. However, that is exactly what we will attempt to do in this article.

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines “Evangelism” as 1. “The winning or revival of personal commitments to Christ” 2. “Militant or crusading zeal.” The word origin of evangelism comes from the Greek word (translated as) *euaggelion* meaning “gospel” or good news. The “good news” is Christ’s message given to us through the four Gospels; Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Evangelism is sharing that good news.

What is and what is not evangelism? Evangelism is not a threatening message to alter behavior, or a message of a futuristic reward (heaven after death) if we behave in a certain way. Evangelism is THE message from Christ on how we can change ourselves through Him. Christ’s message defines the many ways this can be done; love others as ourselves, help the sick, poor, homeless, imprisoned, forgive one another and so on. In all cases, it’s not about us, it’s about those around us in need spiritually, emotionally, physically and materially. Christ’s message is about bringing the Kingdom of God here and now.

So how do we transmit Christ’s message? Before we transmit the message, we first need to believe the message. Our faith journey begins. When we accept Christ’s message of salvation, love and redemption, we have accepted Christ as our Savior and into our behavior patterns of everyday life. Now we can start transmitting THE MESSAGE. In today’s technological world of communications, there are SO many ways to get one’s message out and there seems to be new ways springing up every day. But God’s technology has been around for eons and still works today better than current methods. Empathy, sympathy, love, caring, devotion, protection, nurturing and ministering, as well as many other similar paths that are great transmitters of Christ’s message. When you pass the “peace of Christ” with love in your heart, you are evangelizing. When you take the time to help someone who is going through a difficult time with Christ in your heart, you are evangelizing. When you empathize with a friend who has suffered a loss with Christ’s love in your heart, you are evangelizing.

In the coming weeks and months, you will be hearing more about evangelism becoming a component of our faith journey at Asbury from the five Strategic Planning Committees and the Leadership Team. In the meantime, using God’s technology, what is your method of transmission?

“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

John 13:35

Calvin Peacock, Leadership Team Chairperson



Happy New Year! We hope everyone had a wonderful holiday break and are ready to begin a brand new year!

Our Holiday Music Program was quite a success! We are so very proud of our little performers and their enthusiasm! We also want to acknowledge the hard work of our teachers and staff! They brought such wonderful holiday cheer to each and every one of us!

ACDC is starting to plan for next year's registration, which will take place for current students and their siblings on Wednesday, February 15 at 9 a.m. New to registration this year is Member Registration—AUMC Church members may register their child the week before priority registration (Feb. 8-15). Open registration will take place on March 15 at 9 a.m. Registration materials for the 2017-2018 school year can be picked the first week of February in the Resource Room #121. If you have additional questions do not hesitate to contact anyone in the office. Thank you!

Casey Taylor, ACDC Director

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## CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

### MEMORIALS

Calvin & Eleanor Cropper  
Gail and Karen Potts

### BAPTISMS

1/15/17  
Isla Grace Carpenter

### *Woman of the Year!*

I recently had the privilege of presenting the United Methodist Women's 2016 Woman of the Year award to my friend Lou Elin Sheller. A longtime member of Asbury, she sings in the Chancel Choir, led the Cherub Choir, served on many committees, was our administrative assistant for many years, and, of course, was an active leader in her UMW circle. Now that she is retired, she is giving even more time to our church by volunteering as an Andrew Minister, chair of the Ala Cart ministry and much more. A devoted wife, mother, and grandmother, Lou Elin shares her Christian faith with everyone she meets through her actions and her words. We are blessed to have her as a member of Asbury's United Methodist Women.

Emily Saulsbury

Senior Pastor: Rev. Benita Harris  
Associate Pastor: Rev. Eric Warner  
Visitation Pastor: Rev. Bill Sterling

Administrative Office Manager: Karen Corwin  
Administrative Assistant: Sheri Burchard

Director of Music Ministries: Michael Stefanek  
Director Children and Care Ministries:  
Heather Harman

Director Finance and Building:  
Janice Wilkinson

Maintenance: Complete Cleaning, Inc.

ACDC: Director: Casey Taylor  
Asst. Director: Danna Abbott



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