



BREATHING UNDER WATER

A SPIRITUAL PATH ROOTED IN 12 STEPS

God meets us in truth, not performance.



FAITH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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VISITORS

If you are new to Faith United Methodist Church, welcome! We encourage you to complete a guest card available from a welcome host. Please drop it in the offering chest or hand it to one of the welcome hosts following the worship service.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Faith offers a variety of accessibility resources for your use, including large-print hymnals and Bibles, magnifiers, printed versions of the sermon, FM wireless assistive-listening devices, and noise-cancelling headphones. These items are available on the white bookshelf at the Sanctuary entrance. Please feel free to use whatever you need and return the items after the service. If you have any questions, speak with the welcome hosts at the Sanctuary entrance. You may also contact Jennifer Young, Faith's Accessibility Coordinator, at young.jennifer@gmail.com to request additional accommodations.

Sunday, August 2, 2026 | 10:00 a.m. Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

WE GATHER

Centering

Prelude: *My Soul doth Magnify the Lord* Ben Smedberg, organ
Antiphon #1 on the Magnificat; Marcel Dupre (1920)

Welcome Janelle Veazey, Leadership Board, member

Call to Worship Bruce Werber, Liturgist

ONE VOICE: God searches us and knows us completely.

MANY VOICES: Yet still calls us beloved.

ONE VOICE: Christ meets us not in perfection—

MANY VOICES: but in honesty.

ONE VOICE: The Spirit invites us into deeper truth.

**MANY VOICES: God, meet us where we are, and lead us
toward wholeness.**

Opening Prayer

Bruce Werber

ONE VOICE: God of truth,

give us courage to see ourselves clearly.

Quiet the voices of shame and defensiveness.

Help us release illusion and self-protection.

Open us to the transforming work of your grace.

Amen.

WORD

*Hymn #560: *Help Us Accept Each Other*

Congregation; Ben Smedberg, organ

Scripture Reading: Psalm 51:16-17; Romans 5:12-21 (*The Message*)

Bruce Werber

Children's Message

Rev. Dr. Laura Norvell

Message

Rev. Dr. Laura Norvell

*Hymn #463: *Lord, Speak to Me*

Congregation; Ben Smedberg, organ

WONDER

Invitation to Reflection and Holy Communion

Rev. Dr. Laura Norvell; Stewards

Invitation and Confession

Please refer to the projection screen for the liturgy.

Great Thanksgiving

Please refer to the projection screen for the liturgy.

The Lord's Prayer

ALL: Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy name.

thy kingdom come,

thy will be done

on earth as it is in heaven.

**Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power,
and the glory, forever. Amen.**

Breaking the Bread and Invitation

Please come forward by the center aisle at the direction of the ushers. You will have an opportunity to interact with water and remember your baptism as you approach the servers on the side you were seated. From them you will receive a piece of bread, dip it into the cup and eat it immediately. You may then return to your seat by the side aisle.

If you prefer not to receive by dipping bread in a common cup, OR if you need gluten free elements, there are gluten free self-contained communion elements in a basket in the center between the two server teams. Please take one and return to your seat by the side aisle.

If you are unable to come forward for Communion, please let an usher know and Communion will be brought to you.

Prayer After Receiving

Rev. Dr. Laura Norvell; Congregation

ALL: Merciful God,

**You have met us in water,
in bread,
in cup,
in truth,
and in grace.**

**Thank you for loving us as we are
and for not leaving us there.**

**Send us from this table
with honest hearts,
gentle spirits,
and courage for the work of healing.
Help us to see clearly,
to love boldly,
and to walk humbly
with you and with one another.
God, meet us where we are,
and lead us toward wholeness. Amen.**

Invitation to Offering

Rev. Dr. Laura Norvell

Offertory Prayer

Bruce Werber

WHAT NOW?

Prayers of the People

Rev. Dr. Laura Norvell

*Hymn #530: *Are Ye Able* Congregation; Ben Smedberg, organ

Sending Forth

Rev. Dr. Laura Norvell

Postlude: *How Fair and How Pleasant Art Thou*

Ben Smedberg, organ

Antiphon #5 from Songs of Solomon; Marcel Dupre (1920)



We are continuing with our series, *Breathing Under Water: A Journey Toward Wholeness*, based on a book by Father Richard Rohr. Last week we looked at the difficult work of surrender. Today we practice the sacred work of self-examination—not to shame ourselves, but to allow God’s light to reach the places we usually avoid.

As we journey together toward wholeness, we remember that we can breathe, even breathe underwater, because the breath of God is always with us.



ATTENDANCE

Please take a moment to scan the QR code—whether you are a guest or a member—so we know that you joined us today!



OFFERING

We are not passing an offering plate currently. An offering box has been placed on the welcome table in the Narthex. You may also scan the QR code to the right to give online.



WATERCOLORING 2.0

Today following worship!



Is there something about our topic of *Breathing Under Water* that touches the artist in you? If you missed the previous watercoloring session—or want to build on your earlier piece—join us today following worship in room 103 to express yourself through watercolors.

PLACES OF PEACE: SHARE YOUR WATER PHOTOS

Have you been to the water? Do you know a place to go, if only in your mind's eye, *for quiet thought and contemplation*? If you have a photo of that special place—whether it's a stream, a lake, a river, a waterfall, or the ocean—we would love to include it in our slide presentation before the service begins. Please email your photo to office@FaithWorksHere.com.

AMERICAN TEENAGER WITH NICO LANG

Last Sunday, nearly thirty members of Faith UMC and friends gathered for a time of fellowship over lunch and an engaging conversation with author Nico Lang. Nico shared selections from their book, *American Teenagers: How Trans Kids Are Surviving Hate and Finding Joy in*

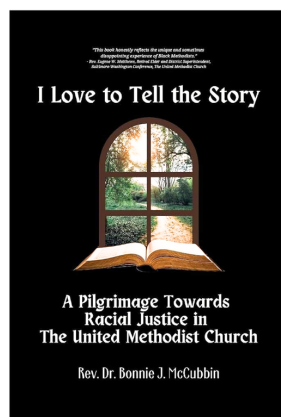


a Turbulent Era, offered thoughtful reflections, and spent time answering questions from those in attendance. It was a meaningful opportunity to connect and learn. Faith extends our gratitude to everyone who helped make this event possible—Gary Clark, Tim Evans, Seren Hemmings-Burk, Nancy Kuhn, Sara Romeyn and Jennifer Young.

I LOVE TO TELL THE STORY

begins Sunday, August 9 at 7:00 p.m.

Join the Baltimore-Washington Conference United Women in Faith Charter for Racial Justice Committee this August for a four-week virtual discussion of the book, *I Love to Tell the Story: A Pilgrimage Towards Racial Justice in The United Methodist Church* by Rev. Bonnie McCubbin. Through historical archives and firsthand accounts, the book explores the United Methodist Church's journey toward racial justice. Sessions begin August 9 and continue on Sundays throughout the month. Scan the QR code to register.



I Love to Tell the Story

BULLETIN INSERT

Each week, a bulletin insert is included for you to carry with you as you leave worship. To learn more about the *Breathing Under Water* series scan the QR code.



WHAT'S WORKING AT FAITH

If you are not receiving our weekly e-newsletter, *What's Working at Faith* and other digital communications, please contact the office at office@FaithWorksHere.com or call 301-881-1881 to be promptly added to our mailing list. Faith will also send communication through the mail upon your request.

SERVING US TODAY

Altar Guild for August: Jane Rall

Audio Visual Volunteers: Andy Basford, Jason Spriggs & Eric Winchenbach

Communion Stewards: Michelle & Michael Buckley; Brian Hahs &
Kristen Wayne

Congregational Welcome: Janelle Veazey

Liturgist: Bruce Werber

Money Counters: Alisa Dowd & Jim Johnston

Nursery Caregivers: Tessa Ricketts & Emily Sama-Miller

Online Host:

Welcome Hosts: Bill Beisner & Sharon Virts

FAITH UMC STAFF

Rev. Dr. Laura Norvell, Pastor | Ann Bartlow, Organist | André Coleman,
Tenor Section Leader | Keshika Dias, Facilities Manager | Valerie Kunsman,
Office Administrator | Tessa Ricketts, Nursery Staff | Suzanne Smedberg,
Youth Ministry Coordinator | Kim Webster, Financial Manager |
Dr. Michael Wu, Music Director

BREATHING UNDER WATER: WE JOURNEY TOGETHER

Step 4: Telling the truth about ourselves.

KEY IDEA: God meets us in truth, not performance.

In this week's experience of *Breathing Under Water*, based on the 12 steps, we begin to take a "moral inventory." This can be a vulnerable experience. In a journal or in conversation with friends and family, we courageously explore some deeper truths about ourselves. It is essential in this journey of discovery to put judgment and self-protection aside and focus on truth-telling and opening ourselves up to healing, grace and transformation. If there are children in your conversation, it will be important to ensure the experience is age appropriate and that the unconditional, grace-filled love of God remains central.

In writing about this step, Father Richard Rohr mentions our "shadow self." This, he said, "is not our evil self, it is just that part of ourselves we don't want to see, our unacceptable self by reason of nature, nurture, or choice." Shadow boxing is when we begin to see, address and wrestle with this part of ourselves.

Below are three questions to consider and discuss:

1. How do you define the difference between living authentically as a child of God and the socially conditioned need to appear "perfect" or "good" to the outside world?
2. Try some "shadow boxing," which Richard Rohr says is "at the heart of all spiritual awakening." Why is shadow-boxing so important to our faith life? Is there a part of yourself that you are hesitant to fully see or address?
3. The goal of addressing our sins is not shame; the value lies in the struggle itself, facing deep truth and finding glimpses of wisdom. What is one time when you struggled to face the truth? What happened? What makes you hesitant or fearful to face some deeper truths? Can you imagine being free of that fear?

Sit in quiet contemplation for several minutes, then make a list of things that are true about yourself – the good and the bad. Consider: when have you used weakness or failure as an excuse not to move forward? How does your faith and God's unconditional love shape the making of your moral inventory?

A graphic with a blue wavy background, resembling water or hills, with the text "GO DEEPER" in white.

GO
DEEPER

In *Breathing Under Water*, Rohr writes: "Somehow, goodness is transferred by radiance, reflection, and resonance with another goodness, more than by any act of self-achievement. We do not pull ourselves up, we are pulled." This week, act as a co-conspirator with God and offer someone you care about a hand up with some reassurance, kindness, and simple goodness.

A graphic with a blue wavy background, resembling water or hills, with the text "FAITH IN ACTION" in white.

FAITH IN
ACTION

FROM AGE TO AGE: Sharing Intergenerationally

When holding this conversation about shadow-self with children, it should be stressed that all human emotions—even the "messy" ones—are normal. It may be helpful to explain that sometimes people feel they must wear masks so that other people will like them or to help them feel like they're doing things right, and that these masks can hide who God created them to be.

Or, you might want to introduce the idea that everyone is a mixture of light and dark – and help identify and list the bright things about yourselves and the things that are in the shadows.



A helpful question might also be: "If you made a mistake today, what would it look like to forgive yourself and start fresh tomorrow?"

IN CONTEMPLATION: THE EXAMEN

Ignatius of Loyola created a spiritual discipline that dovetails with taking a moral inventory. At the end of each day, take time for reflection:

- Place yourself in God's presence. Give thanks for God's love for you.
- Pray for the grace to understand how God is acting in your life.
- Review your day — recall specific moments and your feelings at the time.
- Reflect on what you did, said, or thought in those instances. Were you drawing closer to God, or further away?
- Look toward tomorrow — think of how you might collaborate more effectively with God's plan. Be specific, end with the Lord's Prayer.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE *BREATHING UNDER WATER* SERIES AND TO ACCESS MORE RESOURCES SCAN THE QR CODE.

