



Friday, December 5, 2025

Report from the Leadership Board

The Leadership Board met on November 19. It began to develop the 2026 operating budget, intending to sustain the ministries that were expanded in 2025 to reach more people and help them step more fully into their discipleship journey. Anticipated revenues remain somewhat uncertain, as the Stewardship Team reported that about a dozen households that previously committed financial support had not yet made a commitment for 2026. (At this time, that number is 8 – if you’ve not made your commitment, [help us plan by doing that online today.](#))

As reported quarterly to the congregation, the largest component of the budget is for ministries, and mostly human resources for ministries, which we would like to continue fully. We also wish to continue to tithe (10%) from our pledges and offerings to fund our outreach budget, meeting needs in our community and elsewhere. Almost a quarter of the budget is for building maintenance, likely to increase as it ages. Concern was expressed that while we had reserves to cover the anticipated 2025 deficit, and even one in 2026, if necessary, that path is not sustainable. We all benefit from the investments made in the building by Faith’s congregations decades ago. If we are to continue our ministries, we will need to raise more money to maintain the building, just as previous members of Faith supported the initial capital building fund.

Grateful for the continuity of our staff, the Board approved a cost-of-living increase for them for 2026, using the same percentage increase that will be applied to Social Security benefits. We also discussed performance evaluation of non-clergy staff, emphasizing the importance of consistency in the evaluation process, anticipating that evaluations will be

completed by year end. Jennifer Young and Brian Jones agreed to lead a workgroup to review the current procedures and propose updates as necessary.

Janelle Veazey led a discussion on behalf of the workgroup planning a “Vision Retreat” for this winter. The main goals would be to invite Faith members to think about and commit to what they are called to do in their church and community and to facilitate networking amongst like-minded people. The date for this retreat and other details are to be determined with further discussion planned for December.

The Board accepted the recommendation of the Building Integrity Team (BIT) to commission a comprehensive building inspection to effectively guide long-term planning, budgeting, and maintenance prioritization, and approved funding for it. We also approved the transfer of funds from our investments to our local bank to cover cash flow needs related to paying contractors to replace the sanctuary doors and make other security upgrades. As reported last month, Faith received a \$95,500 grant from the state for these upgrades, but will receive those funds as reimbursement after the projects are completed.

If you have any questions, ask any Leadership Board member: Mike Coppersmith, Rachel Hedrick, Brian Jones, Mike Kitzman, Nancy Kneisly, Jane Rall, Janelle Veazey, Jennifer Young.

Bill Maas

Chair, Leadership Board

News & Events



FAITH UMC ADVENT SCHEDULE

Sunday, Nov. 23
10:00 a.m.

Reign of Christ

Jeremiah 29:1, 4:14

Tuesday, Nov. 25
7:00-8:30 p.m.

Advent Study with our Hub Partners

Four Tuesdays: Dec. 2, 9 & 16
at N. Bethesda UMC

Sunday, Nov. 30
10:00 a.m.

First Sunday of Advent: HOPE

Daniel 3:1, 8-30

Sunday, Dec. 7
10:00 a.m.

Second Sunday of Advent: PEACE

Ezekiel 37:1-14

Saturday, Dec. 13
4:30 p.m.

Messy Christmas

Luke 2:8-12

Sunday, Dec. 14
10:00 a.m.

Third Sunday of Advent: JOY

Isaiah 55:1-13

Sunday, Dec. 21
10:00 a.m.

Fourth Sunday of Advent: LOVE

John 1:1-18

7:00 p.m.

The Longest Night

A worship service held in the Advent season around the winter solstice - designed for those experiencing grief and loss. We offer a space for comfort and hope during a time of year that can be difficult for some.

Wednesday, Dec. 24
4:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve: Family service

Luke 2:1-14

8:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve: Music begins at 7:30 p.m.

Luke 2:1-14

Sunday, Dec. 28
10:00 a.m.

First Sunday after Christmas

John 1:19-34

Sunday, Jan. 4
10:00 a.m.

Epiphany

John 1:35-51

Unto Glory

WWW.FAITHWORKSHERE.COM

[Faith Advent Schedule 2025.png](#)

Advent Resources

We invite you to continue on our Advent journey, **Unto Glory: A Prophetic Pilgrimage** — a walk through prophetic visions of hope, peace, joy and love that lead us to the light of Christ. Each step draws us nearer to the manger, nearer to God’s dream for creation and nearer to the truth of who we are called to be. Visit our website to explore our curated list of books, movies, podcasts and music that can inspire, explore and celebrate a pilgrimage: <https://www.faithworkshere.com/a-prophetic-pilgrimage>.

So lace up your hearts, beloved travelers. The road is set before us. Let’s walk it together — unto glory. If you have suggestions for additional resources that will illuminate our journey, please let us know at office@faithworkshere.com.

Quarters for Kids

Faith Church is collecting quarters during the Advent season to help Heifer International (heifer.org) provide families with chickens and ducks that lay eggs, honeybees that increase the yields of fruit and vegetable gardens, goats that give milk, and sheep that produce wool.

Donations may be placed in the offering chest in the narthex on any Sunday through January 4 or given electronically on the Faith website using the “Give” button. Our pocket change can provide sustainable food sources and warm clothing for disadvantaged families.



A festive poster for a church event. The background is a dark blue and purple night sky with white stars and diagonal light rays. In the upper left, the text 'Messy Church' is written in white and yellow on a red splatter. The main title 'the BIG God FAMILY' is in large, stylized white and purple letters. Below the title is a white silhouette of a nativity scene with a manger, figures, and palm trees. The bottom section has a blue background with white text for the date and time, a paragraph about the church, and a yellow banner with contact information.

Messy Church

the **BIG** God **FAMILY**

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2025 | 4:30 TO 6:30 P.M.

MESSY CHURCH IS A BIMONTHLY INTER-GENERATIONAL WORSHIP SERVICE WHICH EMPHASIZES BEING TOGETHER (FELLOWSHIP), MAKING THINGS TOGETHER (CREATIVITY & SERVICE PROJECTS), EATING TOGETHER, AND CELEBRATING GOD TOGETHER THROUGH PREACHING, MUSIC, AND PRAYER.

Open for all ages to come and have fun!

office@faithworkshere.com
Faith United Methodist | 6810 Montrose Rd., Rockville, MD

Preparing for Communion

Reminder: [bring nonperishable food items](#) with you to worship on Sunday, December 7. On the Sundays we share the Communion feast (usually the first Sunday of the month), we also share our abundance with others. Items can be left in the shopping basket in the narthex. Your donations help keep the Blessing Box stocked.

Toiletries and feminine products are greatly appreciated, too. The Blessing Box is a community effort, so no one person is responsible. In addition to donations, taking the initiative to move items into the closet of the vestibule outside the office or directly into the Blessing Box is always appreciated.

Angel Tree

We are excited to announce that Faith UMC's annual Angel Tree gift drive has partnered once again with Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless. MCCH has created a wish list specifically for our congregation to help uplift families this holiday season. As we enjoy Thanksgiving and look ahead to Christmas, please consider sponsoring an individual or family using the [sign-up link](#). For those who prefer not to use the online sign-up, ornaments with wish list items will be available on the tree at the front of the sanctuary. All gifts should be returned to the church office or dropped off in Room 102 by Friday, December 12, so our youth can wrap them on Sunday, December 14. If you have questions, contact Alisa Dowd at jandadowd@gmail.com.



Staff Gift



Friday, December 19

As Advent continues, Christians around the world celebrate the great gift of the newborn Jesus. At Faith UMC, we also give thanks for those who have contributed so much to our church in His name over the past year. During our Renewal period, members stepped into new roles to help Faith UMC thrive. Their efforts were made possible by the unwavering support of our dedicated staff, who often went above and beyond during this season of change.

Our staff have been instrumental in guiding transitions from traditional approaches to embracing new opportunities and challenges. In addition to ensuring a meaningful worship experience each week—both in person and online—they support community outreach, pastoral care, ministries of justice and programming for children and youth. Their leadership and commitment help us live out our mission and welcome all who seek connection and hope.

The Leadership Board invites you to consider a monetary gift to the staff as a thank-you for work well done. You may contribute using the weekly Sunday online portal (the portal now includes an option to contribute to the Staff Christmas Gift), visit our website at FaithWorksHere.com to give online, or send a check to the church office marked “Staff Gift.” The deadline for donations is Friday, December 19, to allow time to process gifts before Christmas. Thank you.

The Longest Night

Sunday, December 21, at 7:00 p.m.

Join us as we worship together on December 21 — the date of the winter solstice and often referred to as the Longest Night. We recognize that not every moment of the season is joyful. There is space for times of darkness and grief. Often, in retrospect, growth comes from these times. In the moment, God is with us as we sit and rest, weep and wonder. Our hope is that this worship service will create a safe and sacred space for those who are struggling to feel the joy and light of this season. Gather with us.

This service will not be live-streamed; we encourage you to consider bringing someone who might not be able to drive that evening.

Try Something New!

Volunteer to be part of one of the teams below as a ministry of the Faith community.

- **Welcome Hosts:** The sign-up sheet to serve as a welcome host is available in the narthex next to the flower calendar. We need volunteers for December, January and February. If you have never served as a welcome host, we will pair you with someone to teach you the ropes. All you need is a smile!
- **Nursery:** Faith sees the nursery as a child's first step toward a relationship with Christ. As infants and toddlers learn to trust those who care for them, their hearts prepare to have faith in God, who loves and cares for them. Following Safe Sanctuary policies, two unrelated adults are required to work with children. We are asking for volunteers to serve in the nursery from 9:45 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. in Room 210 with Tessa Ricketts. If not already completed, volunteers will need to finish the online Safe Sanctuary training. If you are interested, please volunteer on the church website or contact the church office at office@faithworkshere.com.

[Click Here to Volunteer in the Nursery](#)

Sunday, December 7, 2025

First Sunday of Advent

Preaching: Rev. Dr. Laura Norvell

Scripture: Ezekiel 37:1-14

Communion

This Sunday, we will gather in person and online to celebrate Communion. Communion calls us to remember and live into our oneness as the body of Christ. To participate virtually, gather grape juice and bread or crackers. Spend an extra moment preparing a holy space: consider lighting a candle, setting out flowers and creating a small worship corner in your home for this act of worship.

Until Glory: A Prophetic Pilgrimage

Pilgrimage is not only about what we receive but how we live because of it. On this Advent journey, we are called to move from passive waiting to active witness. Like the shepherds who ran to Bethlehem and the Magi who offered their treasures, we respond with worship, generosity, and justice. We respond with compassion and love. Our lives become a testimony that the Word has become flesh and dwells among us.

Sunday School



Children and youth are invited to begin their Sunday morning in the sanctuary for the 10:00 a.m. worship service. Middle and high school students are dismissed prior to the Children's Message, while children in Kindergarten through 5th grade are dismissed following the Children's Message.

All Sunday School classes return to the sanctuary after the sermon to rejoin the congregation for the remainder of worship.

We joyfully welcome children in worship at all times. Whether your child prefers to remain in the pews or spend time at the kids' table at the front, they are warmly invited to participate in our worship gathering in the way that feels most comfortable to them.

- **Kindergarten–2nd grade:** Room 203 — Godly Play
- **3rd–5th grade:** Room 200
- **Middle School (6th–8th grade):** Room 206
- **High School (9th–12th grade):** Room 205

Youth Ministry

Sunday at 5:00 p.m.

Middle- and high-school youth will meet tonight at North Bethesda UMC, 10100 Old Georgetown Road, for activities, dinner and meaningful fellowship.

Looking ahead, on Sunday, December 14, our youth will gather at Faith United Methodist Church to wrap gifts for the families on our Angel Tree. This is a wonderful opportunity to share joy and serve others during the holiday season. For questions, contact Suzanne Smedberg, youth coordinator, at ssmedberg@faithworkshere.com.

Livestream Service

How do I get to the worship service on the Faith website?

There are three ways to access our worship experience on Sunday mornings through our website. [Click here](#) to learn about those options.

Last Sunday's Worship Service

[Listen and watch last Sunday's online worship service.](#) See and hear the worship service, led by Rev. Laura Norvell, from last Sunday's worship service featuring music, scripture, and prayers.

Monday, December 8

Small Book Group

Monday at 7:00 p.m.

This meaningful small group discusses *How to Fight Racism: Courageous Christianity and the Journey toward Racial Justice* by Jemar Tisby and meets every other Monday at 7:00 p.m. For more information, email Janelle Veazey at jv448@cornell.edu.

Tuesday, December 9

Advent Study

Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. at North Bethesda UMC (10100 Old Georgetown Road).

This year, Faith UMC has been organized into hubs with other United Methodist congregations in our area: North Bethesda, Rockville, Jerusalem–Mount Pleasant, and Millian Memorial UMCs. The focus this year is to build relationships person to person. We will gather for Taizé-style worship and to explore *Voices of Advent: The Bible's Insights for a Season of Hope* by Matt Skinner. For more information, contact the church office at office@faithworkshere.com.

Thursday, December 11

Bells of Faith

Thursday at 6:30 p.m.

Bells of Faith rehearse every Thursday at 6:30 p.m. under the direction of Nancy Kuhn in the sanctuary.

Chancel Choir

Thursday at 7:30 p.m.

The Chancel Choir rehearses every Thursday from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. under the direction of Dr. Michael Wu, Faith music director, in the sanctuary.

Prayer Requests

Please email your prayer requests to prayer@faithworkshere.com. Our congregational care ministers — Tamara James-Fish, Jim Johnston, Susan Keller, Emily Sama-Miller, Chuck Spencer, Sue Walters and Kristen Wayne — will receive your request.

Prayers for Faith UMC members: Lloydie Zaiser; John Redding; Terrie Tuckman; Kathy King.

Prayers for those dear to us: Chris Smedberg (son of Suzanne and Ben Smedberg); Simon (son of Mary Ellen); Bill Chambers (friend of Ann and Mike Coppersmith); Andrew (friend of Lloydie Zaiser); Moses Wambua; Nancy and Jim Helfrich (former Faith members, now in Dansville, N.Y.); Nancy (niece of Jan Lafleur); Joe Murphy (friend of Kay McCarty); Kari Curto (Amanda Curto's former daughter-in-law); Douglas Brown (cousin of Deanna Mardirossian and Josie Villar); and a friend of Arvina Dalaya Gadre.



6810 Montrose Rd.
Rockville, MD 20852
301-881-1881

office@FaithWorksHere.com

www.FaithWorksHere.com



*Faith United Methodist Church
is a member of the
Reconciling Ministries Network*



Faith United Methodist Church seeks to welcome and include all people in the life of this congregation. Our building and gathering spaces are accessible to people who use wheelchairs and walkers. Large-print hymnals and Bibles, FM wireless assistive listening devices, sensory-friendly items for children, and gluten-free communion elements are available during worship. As we grow in Christ's love, Faith UMC continues to take new steps forward to help ensure that all people can participate fully in this community of faith.

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