



# THE BEACON

*"Making disciples for Jesus Christ to share God's love."*

Newsletter of Mt. Nebo United Methodist Church • May 2025

At the end of last month, I participated in a meeting with our Bishop to discuss how we could implement vital changes within our conference to address declining membership, declining attendance and declining participation. The conference has decided to focus on moving closer to Christ, to focus on transformational, outward facing, community driven ministries and to do so in a collaborative manner with our shared values. This involves refocusing on being the hands and feet of Christ in our community in new ways.

Sadly, it is not just our denomination that is facing this type of decline. Over the last many decades, attendance in most large Christian denominations have been in decline. There seems to be widespread agreement that underlying cultural changes were causing these declines.

One author who supported the cultural shift theory to explain what happened in our churches was the late Phyllis Tickle. In her writings, she speaks of semi-millennial tsunamis of change that shape religion and culture. She describes these great changes as occurring every 500 year or so, with shifts so overwhelming and so total, that the old ways are completely replaced with the new ways. She goes on to say that one of the greatest and most transforming changes in this cycle occurred about 2000 years ago, known as the "Great Transformation". It was such a dramatic change that it is a pivotal point in our recording of time – it is marked as a shift in recording of time as "before the common era," and time after marked as the "after the common era." The era that gave us Christianity which resulted in radical, overwhelming changes that shook the ancient world and is still reverberating, although with a significantly reduced intensity.

We are now entering another cultural shift – a shift into post-modernity from the Modern Age or the Age of Reason. It was at the time of the Renaissance and the Protestant Reformation. About five hundred years later we have the next shift - from modernity to post-modernity.

So what has changed as we move from modernity to post-modernity? For one, we see a movement from strictly rational to more experiential. In the church,

rather than praying for you – this group would reach a hand out to help you in time of need or crisis. There is a move from representative to participator. We also see a movement from word-based to image based understanding of our world for those that identify with a culture that is post-modernity. Images are as strong as words for those that embrace the post-modernity culture. The use of emoji images to express an idea or emotion is a good example, especially since this group embraces technology. As a side note, it is just this techno-savvy that allows for deinstitutionalization and a nonhierarchical organization that appeals to this group to exist that otherwise would be impossible without the internet and technology.



Those that continue to embrace modernity are stuck on defining their views based on words. There is also a move from individual to the individual in community. Again, in the church, those that are aligned in the post-modernity culture like to connect in community. They like to share and be with others. These connections are important to them. If one is steeped in modernity – these changes will be very hard to accept. As we move from modernity to post-modernity, we see the culture has changed; however, the church has not followed suit. Church leadership goals are aimed at maintaining the institution based on old cultural norms. Along with the cultural changes experienced with post-modernity, there are also changes in how individuals look at church and in how their spiritual needs are satisfied. The term *Emergent Christianity* has been coined to describe those that embrace this post-modernity cultural shift in how they view the church and practice their faith. Generally speaking, this group looks for horizontal leadership. The traditional form of hierarchal leadership does not appeal to them. They do not want to be preached to. They would rather discuss their faith interactively in a setting more akin to a Starbucks environment rather than a sanctuary. They are generally far more inclusive in their gatherings than the traditional church and they are far more accepting of those that are marginalized in joining with them in worship than those of the traditional church. Since this group is technologically savvy – they would be

# EPISTLE & CHURCH INFO

## EPISTLE CONTINUED

interested in such innovations as cyber church. They are not strong on church doctrine and have issues with the traditional church that forces it on them.

So how should we proclaim the good news going forward? If we wait for them to join us in the sanctuary we will probably never see them. Maybe our proclamation needs to be where people gather – bars, Starbucks, the gym – outside of where we traditionally would gather for worship. Maybe the proclamation should not be from one person or the evangelist or preacher or whatever title that we choose. Maybe it should be a discussion, an interaction of question and answers, followed by some quiet time for reflection. We see with these changes that it's not just preaching, it is also how we share this message in our community. Part of this is going outside the traditional sanctuary serving the community and giving of ourselves fully. Community meals and activities that are the occasion for coming together could serve as the catalyst for sharing the message. How we tell the good message and where we tell it seems make all the difference in world in our effectiveness.

Fortunately for us, our conference has seen the need for change and is actively engaged in addressing this pressing issue within the church. Within the next several months, details of this plan will be made available. I am looking forward to the positive changes that are planned and I believe that you will also as we journey into the future of our church!

*Pastor Bob*

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## CHURCH INFORMATION

### Church Office Hours:

Monday – Friday 9 a.m.—1 p.m.

Office Phone: 301-432-8741

Mt. Nebo Email: [mt.nebo@myactv.net](mailto:mt.nebo@myactv.net)

Website: [www.mtneboumc.com](http://www.mtneboumc.com)

### Sunday Event Times:

9:00 a.m. Worship Service

### Pastor:

Pastor Bob Ruggieri

443-994-9505

Email: [pastorbob2017@gmail.com](mailto:pastorbob2017@gmail.com)

### Staff:

Administrative Secretary – Brandi Puzonia

Minister of Music – Rose Gamblin

Finance – Patty Watson & Shana Wolfe

Sextons/Maintenance – Sky Cleaning  
and Sara Halbritter

### Mt. Nebo Christian Learning Center

Hours: Monday – Friday 6 a.m.—6 p.m.

301-432-6042

[www.mtneboclc.org](http://www.mtneboclc.org)

### Director – Kim Kelly

[director@mtneboclc.org](mailto:director@mtneboclc.org)

### Communications Team:

Toni Wetzel, Katie Smith, Pastor Bob,  
Glenn deShazo, and Brandi Puzonia



# MAY ANNOUNCEMENTS

## BIRTHDAYS

May 3	Bruce Smith	May 21	Dianna Basile
May 5	Rose Gamblin	May 23	Katie Smith
	Kelli Strauss	May 24	Tina Jones
May 6	Rhyan Harding	May 26	Candy Smith
May 11	Paula Gouker	May 28	John Strauss
	Judi Merrill	May 29	Katie Deatrich
May 14	Lilianna Pugh		Gia Gerand
May 15	Jeannette deShazo	May 30	Rob Wetzel
May 16	Dotty Neal	May 31	Kayla Turner

## ANNIVERSARIES

May 2 Dave & Bella Wade



## THANK YOU!

Thanks to all of Mt. Nebo for the prayers, cards, food and visits when I had surgery and during my recovery. *Bruce Smith*



## MAY LAY READERS:

May 4 — Don Dorsey

May 11 — Tony Basile

May 18 — Lisa Riner

May 25 — Rob Young



Darce Easton at an event at the Washington Monument to celebrate the commemorative Appalachian Trail postage stamps. Darce used to live in the park with her parents. Her dad was the first Superintendent there.

## THANKS-GIVING FOR THANKS-LIVING

Many thanks to Pastor Bob for the Lenten Bible Study.

**To the youth and their leaders for the delightful Easter egg hunt for the children of Mt. Nebo.**

To everyone who participated in the Easter Sunrise Service and to Rose and Pastor Bob for their leadership.

**Thanks to all who provided food, set-up and clean-up for the Easter Morning Breakfast.**

To Rose and the Bell Choir for the special music for Easter Sunday.

**And to everyone who took advantage of the Holy Week Services provided by local churches.**



# YOUTH and CLC NEWS

## MT. NEBO YOUTH NEWS

Thank you to everyone who came out for our annual egg hunt! It was a fun time of making bags for collecting eggs, reading a story about Easter, and hunting for eggs!

It's an exciting month for the youth as several members will be graduating from High School! Anna Jackson will be attending the University of Maryland and majoring in Nutrition and Dietetics. Caitlyn Merrill will continue her very successful pet-sitting business, Pleasant Valley Pet Sitting. Lilly Berg will be attending West Chester University and majoring in Criminal Justice. Owen Parish will be attending Salisbury University and majoring in Finance. Please keep them in your prayers as they navigate this new chapter in their lives! This marks my retirement with the youth group as Lilly will be graduating this month. It has been a joy to work with the youth for many years and be a part of their faith journey. I have known some of the youth since they were in kindergarten, so it is especially bittersweet for me.

Don will be the main leader for the youth moving forward and he is still in need of someone to volunteer with him in order to meet the requirements for *Safe Gatherings*. Please contact Don Dorsey for more info about the youth group - all youth in 6th-12th grade are always welcome!

*Alyssa Berg*



## CHRISTIAN LEARNING CENTER

May is always such a bittersweet month. In so many ways, we are excited for the end of a school year as we celebrate the growth and success of our kiddos. But it also means we must send some students off to Pre-k and/or Kindergarten, and parting with them can really tug at our heartstrings. We hope you all feel the genuine love and pride we have for your children. We thank you for sharing them with us this year. We have worked hard to nurture them socially, academically, physically, and spiritually, to instill in them a love of learning and great success in Pre-kindergarten and beyond. Thanks for being a part of our school family!

Also, I am reminded of the many beautiful things that happen each day between my teachers and their students. The view from this desk is so special. Watching my teachers work with these youngest learners is a gift, as they literally are helping to grow their little brains through this critical stage of development. Brain connections made in these early years will be long lasting and effective. I am also joyful to watch the friendships and partnerships between our families.

Teacher Appreciation Week is from **May 5<sup>th</sup> through May 9<sup>th</sup>**. Special things have been planned for our teachers all week. I appreciate all your support as we celebrate our AMAZING STAFF!

**Monday, May 12<sup>th</sup>**, we will be celebrating with all our moms at Mt. Nebo with pastries from 7:30 am to 8:30 am in the school age area. Our 3/4's children that will be heading to Pre-k will be having their graduation on **Thursday, May 29<sup>th</sup>**. Outdoor classroom will have their graduation on **Friday, May 30<sup>th</sup>**.

*Hugs and High Fives, Ms. Kim, Director*



# CHURCH NEWS

## UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

The mission of the United Methodist Women is to serve women and children. Our meetings always begin with a devotional led by one of the members. We also discuss our finances, fundraising ideas, and ways we can help women and children. Our meetings end with a time of fellowship. Our regular meetings occur on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. Join us for our next meeting on **Wednesday, May 21 at 10:00am!**

Alyssa Berg

## MT. NEBO WELLNESS

### Tips for a Healthy May

**Stay Hydrated:** With rising temperatures, it's important to drink plenty of water.

**Sunscreen:** Protect your skin from harmful UV rays by applying sunscreen regularly.

**Physical Activity:** Incorporate physical activity into your daily routine to maintain physical and mental well-being. Even if for 5 minutes at a time, but do 4 to 5 times a day.

**Healthy Eating:** Enjoy seasonal fruits and vegetables to boost your nutrient intake. If you don't plant a garden make sure and shop local at your vegetable/fruit stands!

Jeremiah 30:17 says, *"For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the LORD; because they have called thee an outcast, saying, It is Zion, whom no man seeketh after."*

Patty Watson

## CHILDREN'S CHURCH AND SUNDAY SCHOOL

Children's Church and Sunday School will begin on September 14th and we need volunteers. We are looking for enough volunteers so that those who help are not needed every Sunday, but instead in rotation to be there every 4 to 6 weeks. All material will be provided.

A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board. More information to follow in early summer. Thank you.

Patty Watson



## MISSION MOUSE

The following words of Henry Van Dyke are speaking to me today: "Use what talents you possess: the woods would be very silent if no birds sang there except those that sang the best." Have you stepped outside in the early morning to hear the cacophony of sound of the bird song that fills the air? That makes me think about the many areas of service that need help here at Mt. Nebo. Too many of us say, "Well, I just can't do that well enough." You can do something and something is better than nothing... One little sparrow chirping is nothing, but when the sparrow chirps and the mockingbirds sing and all the other birds join in with their songs, it is a beautiful sound. There are many areas of volunteering at Mt. Nebo that could use your help. The music ministry is looking for choir members and bell choir members, Patty Watson is looking for Sunday school teachers, the Trustees can always use a hand, don't forget to help with the Shoebox ministry and Christmas Outreach ministry, the Mt. Nebo youth are looking for another leader to help Don Dorsey and on and on goes the list. Reach out and use what talents you possess, and Mt. Nebo will become a beautiful symphony of caring and love in South Washington County.





# MISSIONS & OUTREACH

## MICAH'S BACKPACK

Micah's Backpack service is presently serving 148 students in the South Washington County area. Mt. Nebo is presently supporting the service through food donations and volunteering to pack and deliver the bags on the first Thursday of each month. All help is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

*Ruth Resh*



### Micah's Backpack

Packing Thursday  
Delivering Friday  
Feeding Saturday and Sunday

## PICS AROUND MT. NEBO

### OSCAR SHARING A TESTEMONIAL





# PICS AROUND MT. NEBO CONTINUED

## PALM SUNDAY EGG HUNT



## DECORATING CARDS FOR A CHILD IN THE COMMUNITY





# PICS AROUND MT. NEBO & THE COMMUNITY





# MAY 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				<b>1</b> 1p Micah's Backpack 6p Girl Scouts (Sanctuary) 5p Bells 6p Choir	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> 9a Pickleball
<b>4</b> 9a Worship  Native American Ministries Sunday	<b>5</b> 630p Trustees Meeting	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> 6p Pickleball	<b>8</b> 5p Bells 6p Choir	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> 9a Pickleball
<b>11</b> 9a Worship  Happy Mother's Day	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 6p Pickleball	<b>15</b> 5p Bells 6p Choir 6p Girl Scouts	<b>16</b> Newsletter Articles Due	<b>17</b> 9a Pickleball
Balt-Washington Annual Conference						
<b>18</b> 9a Worship Graduate Information Due Heritage Sunday	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 630p Council Meeting	<b>21</b> 10a UMW Mtg 6p Pickleball 630p CLC Advisory Mtg	<b>22</b> 5p Bells 6p Choir	<b>23</b> Office Closed	<b>24</b> 9a Pickleball 8-9a SHARE Pickup
<b>25</b> 9a Worship	<b>26</b> Memorial Day  Office Closed	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> 6p Pickleball	<b>29</b> 11a CLC Graduation (Sanctuary) 5p Bells 6p Choir	<b>30</b> 11a CLC Graduation (Sanctuary)	<b>31</b> 9a Pickleball
						

**Mt. Nebo United Methodist Church**  
**134 S. Main Street**  
**Boonsboro, MD 21713**

**Change Service Requested**



May the God of hope fill you with  
all joy and peace as you trust in  
him, so that you may overflow  
with hope by the power of the  
Holy Spirit. —Romans 15:13