



ST. MATTHEW'S

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The Circuit Rider

April 2025

Volume 62, Issue 4

Holy Week Special Worship



Lenten Brunch *Saturday, April 12, 10 a.m.*

Everyone is invited to attend a morning of faith, food and fellowship. Rev. Marguerite Matthews will speak. Babysitting is available (see page 5.)

Palm/Passion Sunday *April 13, 10 a.m.*

Worship in the Sanctuary with Liturgy of the Palms and the Passion according to Matthew.

Simple Service *Wednesday, April 16*

Soup/Salad Supper 6 p.m.

Simple Service 7 p.m.

Supper in Fellowship Hall, worship in the Sanctuary.

Maundy Thursday *April 17 6 p.m.*

Meal at 6 p.m., followed by the service, handwashing, and communion—ALL in Fellowship Hall.

Good Friday

April 18 7 p.m.

The Chancel Choir will offer a cantata "Not My Will But Yours" with scripture, hymns, and prayers.

Egg Hunt *Saturday, April 19 10-11 a.m.*

See details on page 4.

Easter *Sunday, April 20 8 and 10 a.m.*

Service at 8 a.m. in the garden (or Sanctuary if it rains).



Breakfast at 8:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall.

Traditional service at 10 a.m. in the Sanctuary with communion, followed by Coffee Hour in Fellowship Hall.

Church on the Move: Saturday, April 26



Join us for a morning of outreach and service! Come to Fellowship Hall at **9:30 a.m.** to receive our assignments and gather any tools that are needed.

After completing our projects, we will return to the church for a potluck lunch at 12:30 p.m. **Sign-up sheets** will be in the Narthex to choose your project:

- Make lunches for the Annapolis Light House shelter;
- Join the Christmas in April crew (see page 9);
- Sing at Charter Senior Assisted Living;
- Pick up trash at Bowie HS/Library or Superior Lane;
- Make cards to send to caregivers;
- Hand out bottled water at Allen Pond soccer fields;
- Plant a tree in the community.

Rev. Park's Pastoral Pondering



"He is not here; for he has been raised, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay."

—Matthew 28:6

Dear St. Matthew's family,

Easter is the heart of our faith. It is the victorious proclamation that death has been defeated, sin has lost its power, and Christ reigns as our Risen Lord!

As we journey through this sacred season, we are reminded that resurrection is not just a historical event, but a living reality shaping our lives today.



In the Gospel accounts, the disciples move from fear to courage, sorrow to joy, despair to hope. The empty tomb changed everything! It is a powerful declaration that no darkness, burden, or trial is more significant than God's redeeming love. As Christians, United Methodists, and members of St. Matthew's, we are called to be resurrection people—witnesses of God's transforming grace in our communities and the world.

This Easter, I invite you to reflect on what Christ's resurrection means for you. Where is God calling you to new life? How is God inviting our church to provide hope for others? Let us live as an Easter people, sharing the good news that Christ has risen and His love is alive and at work in us.

May this holy season fill you with joy, peace, and renewed faith. Christ is Risen! He is Risen indeed!

"I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" —John 11:25-26

*Blessings,
JW Park*



World Day of Prayer 2025 was a tropical day of worship at St. Matthew's! The service can be viewed on St. Matthew's Facebook page. Pictured, left to right, Jody Rudd, Abby Dunne, Carolyn Menne, Gail Schilling, Margie Pekala, and Pat Layfield.

Administrative Council Update from March 2025

Please note that Administrative Council meetings are open to the congregation, even when we are holding them via Zoom during times of COVID precaution. If you wish to attend, please contact Chuck Hastings for Zoom details; however, be advised that discussion and voting are limited to Ad Council members. A list of the members of the 2025 Administrative Council can be found [here](#).



Investments decreased by \$3.7K last month to \$629.5K. For the year, the investment account increased \$10.2K from \$619.3K. No funds have been transferred from the investment account so far this year.

The average weekly attendance last month was 143, which is up from 127 the previous month. Average weekly attendance last year was 137.

Financial Status for February 2025

Offerings were \$61.8K, which is \$10.9K over budget for the month. YTD total income is \$142.9K, which is \$1.0K under budget. Total expenses for the month were \$66.5K, which is \$5.5K under budget for the month. Apportionment is current. YTD total expense is \$136.6K, which is \$7.4K under budget, excluding capital improvements.

There was an operating gain of \$2.2K for the month, with a YTD operating gain of \$6.3K (including grants and budgeted transfers from investments).

Community Outreach Coordinator Position

SPPRC presented an updated position description to the Administrative Council. SPPRC now plans to begin the hiring process.

Trustees' Report

The Trustees presented an update on the security system, some grant opportunities through the Bowie Supportive Housing Corporation, and a list of their priorities for 2025. You can read the complete Trustees' report [here](#).

Chuck Hastings, Chair



**Scenes from Lent
Messy Church**

Easter Egg Hunt



Saturday, April 19, from 10 -11 a.m.

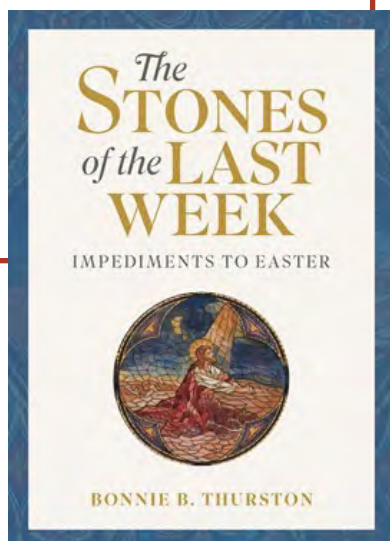
Volunteers and donations of small candies and trinkets are needed.

Please contact Becky Roper at beckyroper@stmatthews-bowie.org.

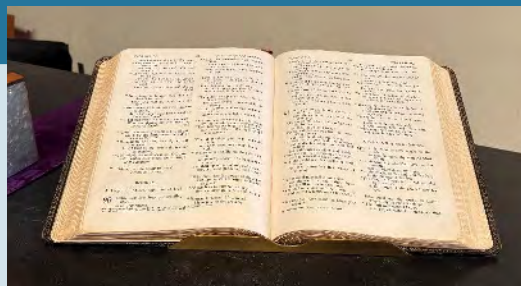
Christian Book Club

On Tuesday, April 15, at 7 p.m., we will discuss Bonnie B. Thurston's book, *The Stones of the Last Week: Impediments to Easter*. As always, the Zoom link will be sent on the preceding day.

Please join us for these discussions as we move through the season of Lent!



Tuesday Bible Studies



Morning

9:45 a.m. Bible Study with Isaac in the Parlor.

Evening

7 p.m. Bible Study with Rev. JW Park on Zoom. Join the Lenten Study, which is using the study book, *In the Footsteps of the Savior* by Max Lucado. We are discussing a chapter each week (except April 15 due to the Christian Book Club meeting), so the study will continue past Lent. You are welcome to join the study at any time. The Zoom link will be sent out prior to each meeting.

Lenten Brunch

Saturday,

April 12

10 a.m.

Fellowship Hall

*Everyone is invited
for Food, Faith,
and Fellowship.*



Speaker: Rev. Marguerite Matthews

Freewill Offering, no RSVP needed

Please join us!

Babysitting is available—please email us at
uwf@stmatthews-bowie.org.

UWF Events, Meetings

Please join us at these upcoming United Women in Faith events:

Lenten Brunch on Saturday, April 12
at 10 a.m. in Fellowship Hall *(See article at left.)*

Car Show Fundraiser on Saturday, June 14
from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. in the church's parking lot.
(Watch for more details in coming months.)

Circle Meetings:

Martha Circle will meet **Friday, April 11**, in the Parlor at **10:30 a.m.** We will continue our video/discussion study of the fruits of the Holy Spirit. All are welcome—no preparation is needed.

Friendship Circle will meet **Monday, April 14**, at 12:30 p.m. for social time. Our business meeting will begin at 1 p.m. Delicious refreshments, great conversation with other women, and learning new things are all positives about our gatherings. We welcome new faces!

Koinonia Circle will meet **Monday, April 21**, at **7 p.m.** in the Parlor.



**United
Women
in Faith**

World Day of Prayer

Thank you to all who were a part of our World Day of Prayer service on March 7. We had over 30 people participate in the service in many ways and over 400 have watched the service on Facebook!



The women of the Cook Islands wrote the meaningful service and many came to the altar to pray. If you were unable to attend, you can still view the service on SMUMC website.

We are all wonderfully made! Thank you and God bless you all.

Carolyn Menne, WDP Coordinator



The altar held symbols of the Cook Islands on World Day of Prayer.

SHEEP Happenings

Guatemala Women's Retreat - 2025

On March 10, the Guatemala Women's Retreat went very well. Their theme centered on grace and roses. The women were excited about the crafts and gifts that the St. Matthew's SEALS group provided and are already talking about next year's retreat.



Helping Hands Resumes!

On March 5, ten SHEEP people arrived in the SHEEP Barn (Room 223) and put tags on 800 organic lollipops. The tags had a welcoming message from St. Matthew's on them. The candy will be distributed during the Annapolis Pride parade on May 31.

Join us on **Wednesday, April 2, at 10:30 a.m.** for spirited conversation and laughter while we stuff Easter eggs for St. Matthew's egg hunt on April 19. Bring a lunch/snack; dessert and a beverage will be provided.

Liberia Church Roof Repair

In late December 2024, the roof of St. Matthew United Methodist Church in Logan Town, Liberia collapsed. Our church supports St. Matthew United Methodist School and Medical Clinic. The Liberian church raised \$1,050 and cleaned out the debris. Our church provided \$600 more, which allowed a contractor to make the church safe while they continue to raise the rest of the funds to complete the repairs. In early March, school principal Alphonso Sieh wrote that "the church was excited to receive the funds and sends thanks for your blessing."



Upcoming SHEEP Events

Please save the dates and look for more information in the *Midweek Messenger*.

For questions, please email

SHEEP@stmatthews-bowie.org

- **Helping Hands**, Wednesday, April 2, 10:30 am, SHEEP Barn (Room 223) – Come help stuff Easter Eggs. Bring a lunch/snack; dessert and drink are provided.
- **Church on the Move** – Saturday, April 26, 9:30 a.m. with Potluck at 12:30 p.m. (See article on page 1 for details.)
- **Earth Care Sunday Service**, Sunday, April 27, 10 a.m.
- **5th Annual LGBTQIA+** special service on Sunday, May 18, 10 a.m.
- **Annapolis PRIDE Parade, Booth & Festival**, Saturday, May 31



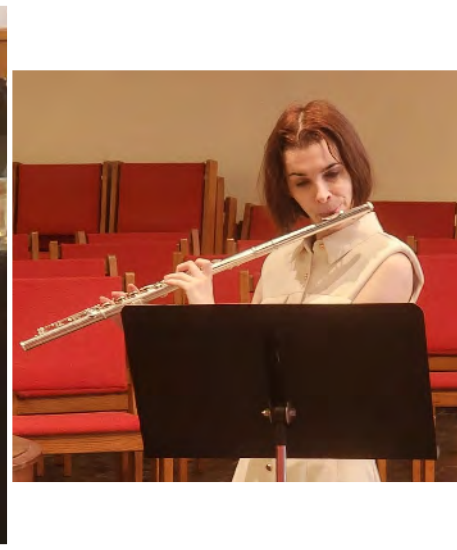
Busy Mission Central HUB

In March, the Mission Central HUB cleared out St. Matthew's coatroom. Orphan Grain Train received 14 bags of clothes and a box of children's books. A box of



books went to B.I.G. International. A box of office supplies went to Helping Hands for its restart. The medical equipment was sorted—a few pieces were saved to serve as St. Matthew's loaners, two canes went to Guatemala,

and the rest is in storage to go to Mission Central this Spring. That shipment will also include many hygiene kits and flood buckets provided by area churches.



Guest musicians have enhanced the worship music at services in March! Thank you to: (from left) Christin Vare on clarinet, Violet Wiedman on clarinet, Jeff Schaumeyer on cello, and Heather Eisinger on flute.

1 Timothy Scholarship Deadline is April 9

If you know a senior at Bowie High School, please encourage them to apply for this scholarship provided by St. Matthew's. The information was sent out in early February from the school's Guidance Office with an **application deadline of April 9**.

For any questions, please contact Beth Obear at 1Timothy4.12@stmatthews-bowie.org.



A cute reminder that Easter will soon be here!

Christmas in April – Saturday, April 26

Christmas in April is a non-profit organization of volunteers in Prince George's County, Maryland. It began in 1989 to repair homes of low-income, elderly/disabled residents at no cost to them. It relies on community support and seeks funding from businesses, corporations, and individuals. Its success is due to the cooperative efforts of the county government, private businesses, civic and community organizations, churches, and synagogues.

The work can involve painting, spackling, plumbing, electrical, and carpentry. Also, volunteers clean up yards, trim and cut down trees and bushes, and clean out cluttered homes. Smoke detectors, grab bars, and stair railings are installed, and windows and doors are repaired. This is a one-day event on the last Saturday of April every year.

There are many different jobs for volunteers. In addition to doing actual physical work, volunteers can be a House Captain, Area Coordinator, House Inspector, and/or serve on the Board.

St. Matthew's has supported this program since its beginning. I have been personally involved since 1991. Some years, St. Matthew's has provided House Captains. Other years, church volunteers have worked with other House Captains in the county.

On Saturday, April 26, from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., we expect Christmas in April to repair sixty homes, reaching a goal of over three thousand houses repaired since 1989—a monumental achievement! Our volunteers mean so much for the warmth, safety, and independence of these homeowners. To sign up, email or call me.



April Communion Offering



The communion offering in April will go to **Native American Ministries**. The offering is used to develop and strengthen Native American ministries in the annual conferences, and Native American rural, urban, and reservation ministries and communities. It also provides scholarships for Native Americans attending United Methodist schools of theology.

Laity Invited to Attend AND Vote at Annual Conference

At the Baltimore-Washington Conference (BWC) Annual Conference, the number of clergy in attendance typically outweighs the laity attendees. To improve the ratio of clergy to laity, some congregants may attend the 2025 conference (**May 13-15, Hilton Hotel at 401 West Pratt St., Baltimore**) with **prior District Superintendent approval**, as follows:

1. They must have been a member of a BWC United Methodist Church for at least one year.
2. They must request advance approval to attend by sending an email to Dr. Johnsie Cogman at jcogman@bwcumc.org.
3. They must pay for all registration (\$149 early bird, \$159 regular, \$199 late), transportation, and accommodations.
4. They will have voting rights.

If this interests you, please email Dr. Cogman at jcogman@bwcumc.org to request approval. For further information, you may contact St. Matthew's Lay Leader, Gemina Archer-Davies.

"The Fantastiks" to Appear at St. Matthew's

The St. Matthew's Musical Theatre Troupe will soon be providing you with a really great, wonderful, superb, some might say fantastic, show. It is so fantastic that the title is "The Fantastiks."

As Wikipedia says: "The Fantastiks is a 1960 musical with music by Harvey Schmidt and book and lyrics by Tom Jones. It tells an allegorical story, loosely based on the 1894 play 'The Romancers' by Edmond Rostand, concerning two neighboring fathers who trick their children, Luisa and Matt, into falling in love by pretending to feud."

We will be presenting the show on April 25, 27 and May 2, 3, and 4. Friday and Saturday shows start at 7:30 p.m. and the Sunday Matinees will be at 3 p.m. Doors will open about a half hour before the show starts, but the ticket/will-call table will open an hour before. Shows will be held in Fellowship Hall. There will be an intermission.



Lectionary Readings for April 2025

April 6 – 5th Sunday in Lent

Isaiah 43:16-21; Psalm 126
Philippians 3:4b-14; John 12:1-8

April 13 – Passion/Palm Sunday

Palms Litany: Luke 19:28-40

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

Passion Litany: Isaiah 50:4-9; Psalm 31:9-16

Philippians 2:5-11

Luke 22:14-23:56 or Luke 23:1-49

April 16 – Wednesday of Holy Week

Isaiah 50:4-9; Psalm 70

Hebrews 12:1-3; John 13:21-32

April 17 – Maundy Thursday

Exodus 12:1-4, 5-10, 11-14

Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

John 13:1-17, 31b-35

April 18 – Good Friday

Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Psalm 22

Hebrews 10:16-25; John 18:1-19:42

April 20 – Easter

Acts 10:34-43; Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

1 Corinthians 15:19-26

John 20:1-18 or Luke 24:1-12

April 27 – 2nd Sunday of Easter

Acts 5:27-35; Psalm 150

Revelation 1:4-8; John 20:19-31

Life Changes

Birthdays:



Please join us in wishing those in our church family who are 80 and older a very Happy Birthday!

Karen Riekert	April 4
Carolyn Goddard	April 15
Galen Menne	April 23
Marie Comstock	April 24
Jessie Matthews	April 25
Margie Pekala	April 26
Ludene Capone	April 29



Rev. JW Park gives the benediction.



The Circuit Rider is published monthly by
St. Matthew's United Methodist Church
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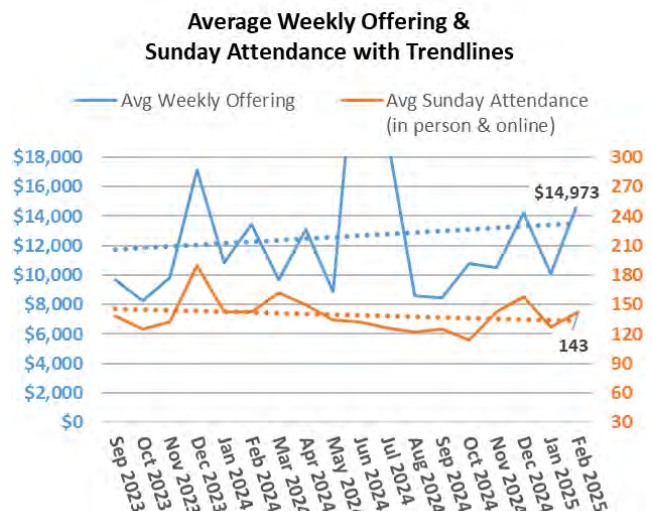
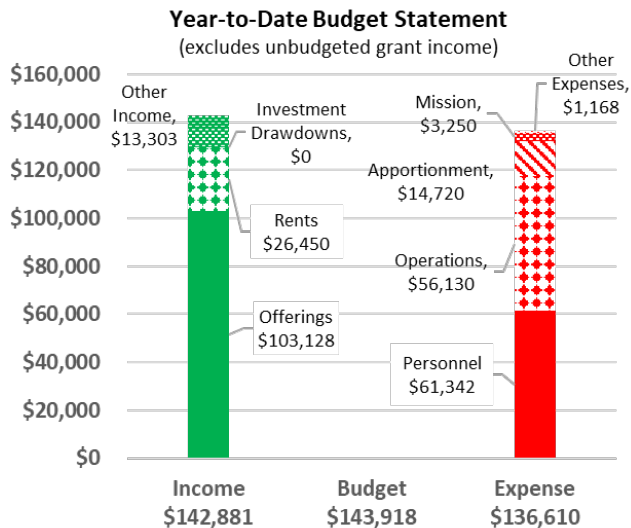
Articles are due by the 15th of each month.
Please e-mail articles to the above address or
submit to the church office.
Please call to verify receipt of any faxed articles.

St. Matthew's Finances at a Glance

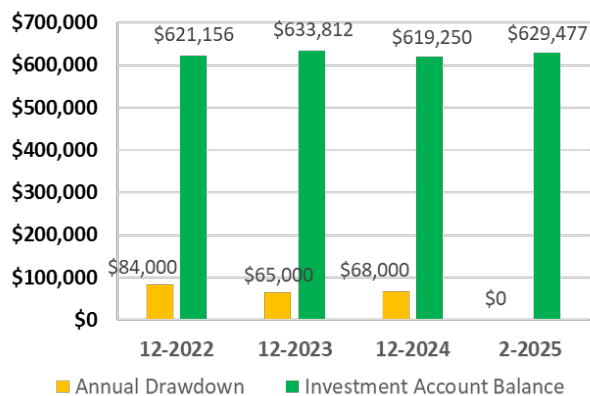
St. Matthew's Finance Committee works very hard to prepare reports for the Administrative Council. It is the Council's desire to share our financial status with the congregation on a monthly basis. Please direct any questions to our Finance Chair, Scot Dahl, at finance@stmatthews-bowie.org.

Click here for
[Online Giving](#)

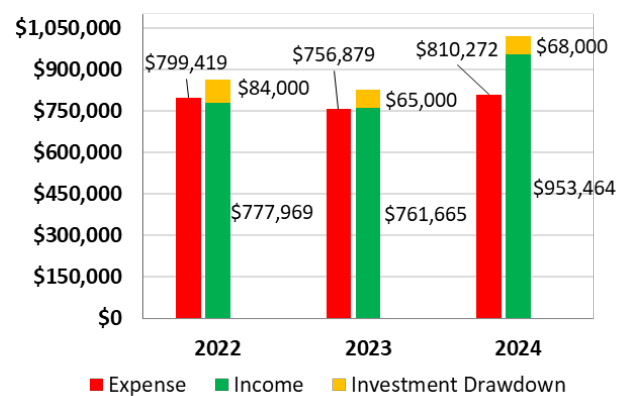
ST. MATTHEW'S FINANCE CHARTS (FEBRUARY 2025)



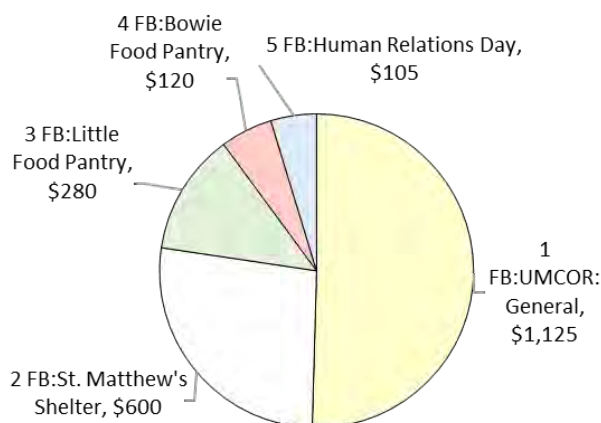
Investment Account Balances & Drawdowns



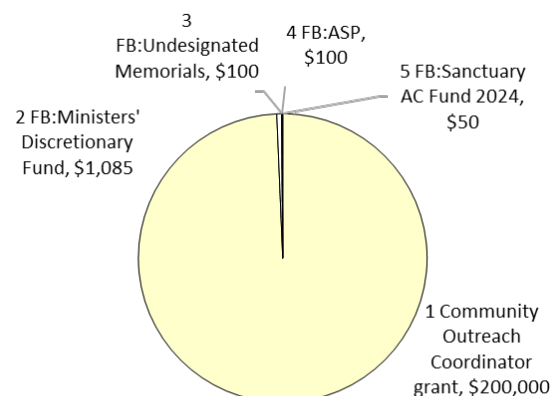
Historical Annual Expenses, Income & Drawdowns



Top 5 Mission Fund Donations Received Year-to-Date



Top 5 Other Fund Donations Received Year-to-Date





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WE'RE ON THE WEB!
STMATTHEWS-BOWIE.ORG

Facebook: stmbowie



Time Dated Material
Please Deliver Promptly



Weekly Schedule — See Page 1 for Holy Week Schedule

Sunday Services In person

8:45 a.m. **Adult Sunday School** (*on hiatus*)

10 a.m. **Worship in Sanctuary** w/Children's Church

- [St. Matthew's UMC Facebook](#)
- [St. Matthew's UMC Website](#)

Zoom: Contact church office for the link.

11 a.m. **Children's Sunday School, Rm 222**

Adult Sunday School, Parlor

Coffee Hour, Fellowship Hall

Tuesday 9:45 a.m. Bible Study with Isaac in Parlor

7 p.m. Bible Study with Rev. Park on Zoom

Wednesday 7 p.m. Special Lent Service (Sanctuary)

In-person or call-in 267-807-9601,
access code 111-576-270#

Daily 6:30 a.m. Morning Prayer (*except Sundays*)

Call-in 267-807-9601,
access code 111-576-270#

St. Matthew's Welcome Statement

Inclusive Community. Connecting in Christ. Making a Difference.

St. Matthew's UMC is an inclusive church, connected to our community, and committed to welcoming all persons in every phase of church life. We choose to live by Christ's example, affirming that all people are created in the image of God.

We celebrate our diversity of sexual orientation, gender identity, race, age, marital status, nationality, physical abilities, mental abilities and economic position. Through the Spirit we commit to live in the words of John Wesley to "love alike though we may not always think alike."

Wherever you are in your faith journey, you are welcome here.