

April/May 2025

The Messenger



Pastor

Rev. Kenneth McDonald

Music Director

Kathi Hiatt

Song Leader

Jeff Thompson

Office Staff

Debi Vaeth

Custodian

Ron Hensley

Sunday Service

9:00 – Contemporary –
Social Room
11:00 a.m.
Traditional-Sanctuary

Communion 1st Sunday

Facebook

Livestreaming
Service 11:00am

YouTube

Taped Service

Radio

11:00 a.m. WFBR
1590AM or
www.1590WFBR.com

Contact Us

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The Winning Side

Everyone likes to be on the winning side. For example, as I write these words, we are in the midst of the NCAA basketball tournament. Out of over a thousand schools, only 64 schools are selected for the tournament and have a chance to emerge as the top team. But only one will be so fortunate!

If you are a Maryland Basketball Fan, like I am, you are excited that both men's and women's squad made it to the Sweet Sixteen! This is the first time in school history that both of the teams made the Sweet Sixteen in the same season. Go Terps!

No matter who you may root for (even if you care less), I know of another situation where everyone that wishes to be can be victorious, and this relates to the Easter season we are about to celebrate!

Easter points to the one great event-the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Easter was God's vindication of our Lord's life and death. Jesus had endured rejection, agony and death in the belief that

God would not remain silent in the face of sin and injustice. Everything that Jesus had taught about the real meaning of life was proven when God raised him from the dead.

The resurrection of Jesus speaks a victorious word to us. In spite of our haunting problems in life, Easter affirms the mighty truth that God loves us with a love that is greater than any we can imagine. Not even death can separate us from God's love in Jesus Christ. Now that is a victory worth celebrating!

May Easter 2025 be the time you start to experience the victory our God wants us to have: victorious living every day of the year!

I invite you to our special Holy Week and Easter Services. On Palm/Passion Sunday, April 13, our Choir will present their Easter Cantata at the 11:00 a.m. service (there will be no 9:00 a.m. service). On Holy Thursday, April 17, our service will be at 7:00 p.m. We will share in the Lord's Supper and I will be preaching. Our Easter celebration will be held at 9:00 a.m. in the Social Hall and 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary.

With Jesus in our hearts, we will always be on the winning side! I wish all of you a blessed Easter experience today and every day.

In Christ's service,

Pastor Ken

A Mother's Day Prayer

(Anonymous)

Dear God above in heaven bright,
I thank You for my mother's light;
Her gentle ways and loving care
Are blessings that I cannot compare.

On this Mother's Day I pray,
Bless her heart in every way;
With joy and peace throughout her years—
May she know Your love and calm her fears.

Redefining Disability Perception in Church: Bringing Hope Back to Families with Disabilities

Written By: Brooke Gulvas

It is a Sunday morning. Your family is in the car on the way to church. You arrive and as you enter the building, you are warmly greeted by other members. After some casual conversation, the kids rush to find their seats.

The service starts, people are enjoying the worship. Scripture is read, and the pastor begins the message. All the while, your children are quietly reading, drawing, or listening to the pastor. After the service, your kids run to connect with their friends. You casually talk with parents in the hall, set up a play date, and head back home. Sounds familiar, right?

No one bothered you, questioned your kids, or made you feel unwelcomed. However, this is not the case for many. Who am I speaking of? The families of young kids and adults who have disabilities. For these families, the experience is very different.

Their day starts the same. They are greeted at the door with a smile and a warm hello. They find their seats and await the service. During the service, however, their child gets excited about everything going on around them: the music, the lights, the movement. They get overstimulated and here is where the difference lies.

In the child's best attempt to regulate their body, they start to stim. Flapping their arms, bouncing, making happy sounds. They are working so hard to calm their bodies from the sensory overload. To the family, it is natural. To the congregation, it is a disturbance. The looks and sideways glances start, the judgment. One person has finally had enough. They come over and suggest to the family that they take their child outside so the rest of "us" can focus.

The family leaves, hurt and devastated that they cannot participate in worshipping our Lord and Savior. The child was only doing what was best for them, working hard to keep calm to prevent a meltdown. Why would a place that is welcoming to all turn us away, and make us feel less than?

Anger and frustration sets in, at the church and God. The family decides that church is not for them. God lost a few more souls, exactly the opposite of what He wants.

For many families of people with disabilities, this is the reality experienced every week. They blame the church and lose their faith in the Lord. It has been reported, 46.6%, nearly half, of parents of individuals with disabilities refrain from participating in church because they do not feel welcomed. Of those families that do attend, 60% say there are little to no supports to help them. Up to 85% claim the church needs to be educated on people with disabilities and how to be more supportive.

God does not call us to push people away. Jesus demonstrates through the Gospel over and over again, we are to help those in need. We are to care for everyone, the sick, the poor, sinners — which is ALL of us by the way, saved or not—. Why then, do these families feel cast out, and what can we do to change it?

The church has volunteers of all kinds. You name it, people volunteer for it; greeters, ushers, children's ministries, the list goes on. Where then are the volunteers for inclusion? Where are the volunteers to help families who need the extra support? What if I tell you that it is not too late and there is still hope to make this right?

I know how this feels, first hand. This story is my family's story. We were cast out of several churches due to our child's disability. Initially, I was mad, I was hurt, and I did blame God for a moment. But thanks to growing up in the church, I knew this was not of God. I knew that there was a place for us. And once my emotions calmed and with God's guidance, I gave it another shot and we found our church home.

Awareness needs to be brought to this dilemma, to let churches know there is a problem. Thankfully, there is a solution. Might I be clear, this is not entirely the church's fault. People come and go silently. It isn't until awareness is spread that a difference can be made. I have compiled a list of ways churches can help families with disabilities find their church home. So let's get started!

1. Approach: The approach to the family needs to be genuine and welcoming. We already know our children can be a distraction from time to time. What we don't want is to be judged for it. How can you help?

- a. Don't aggressively come at us, telling us to quiet our child or step out. We are very aware of our children's behaviors. We are often in fight or flight mode due to the lack of societal education regarding us.

b. Do ask a family, How can I help you? Is there anything I can do to make this easier for you?

2. Listen: Families with disabilities know very well what they need to feel included and welcomed. Keep in mind, most families won't initiate this type of conversation so in knowing this, you can plan to do this instead.

a. Don't assume you have it all figured out. People with disabilities are all different. It's not a quick fix and you're all done.

b. Do offer a time to meet to hear their story. Be open to suggestions and hear what they have to say. Be open to new ideas. Most importantly, be supportive in your responses. If something suggested is not feasible, be supportive by offering something within the church's means.

3. Mandatory Trainings: Looking back at the statistics, over three-quarters of special needs families feel the church needs to be educated. This statistic includes my family. After all, you don't know what you don't know, right?

a. Don't have all the physical pieces to your building needed for inclusion, and assume you are ready to go.

b. Do take time to learn about the daily struggles. Make sure the people on staff and volunteers are trained in what it means to be disabled, what to expect, and how to help. Having a specific volunteer group for these families is a great way to show support.

4. Accessibility: When we think of accessibility, we first think of the wheelchair. There is much more to consider in regarding accessibility than safe access to the building—something that resonates with my family—. Thankfully, it is simple to make your building more inclusive for everyone.

a. Don't claim accessibility for all if the only thing offered is wheelchair access. Accessibility encompasses more than just the physical entry to a building.

b. Do have quiet sensory toys and fidgets available in the Sanctuary and other high-traffic areas. Sometimes all that is needed to help a family is a fidget spinner or cube,

maybe a sensory stone or two. These are available at your local store in the toy section, or Amazon sells them in bulk. Do offer a quiet, safe space for the individual. They may need a place to escape for a minute to calm down. Meltdowns happen, and a quiet, safe, and soft place with low lighting will do wonders.

Churches need to self-reflect and recognize those present in the community but absent from their congregations. Who are we failing to reach? What barriers have we inadvertently created? By taking time to learn about the needs in all communities, the church can become a place of support and assurance. It is about the effort taken to learn and grow. A place for families like mine. We are eager to be welcomed, loved, and awaiting to find a community to worship with. Let your church be the one to lead the way!

Looking Ahead

Apr 1 st	10:00 a.m.	Lenten Study – Social Hall
Apr 1 st	10:00 a.m.	United Methodist Women’s Circles Meeting – Social Hall
Apr 1 st	7:00 p.m.	United Methodist Deborah Circle Meeting – Social Hall
Apr 2 nd	10:00 a.m.	Quilting Mission – Ward Room
Apr 7 th	10:00 a.m.	Prayer Shawl Missions – Room #59
Apr 8 th	10:00 a.m.	Lenten Study – Social Hall
Apr 9 th	10:00 a.m.	Quilting Mission – Ward Room
Apr 12 th	9:00 a.m.	United Methodist Men Prayer Breakfast – Social Hall
Apr 13 th	11:00 a.m.	Easter Cantata – Sanctuary (there is no 9:00 on this day)
Apr 16 th	10:00 a.m.	Quilting Mission – Ward Room
Apr 17 th	7:00 p.m.	Holy Thursday Service
Apr 23 rd	10:00 a.m.	Quilting Mission – Ward Room
Apr 27 th	7:00 p.m.	Administrative Meeting – Social Hall
Apr 30 th	10:00 a.m.	Quilting Mission – Ward Room
May 7 th	10:00 a.m.	Quilting Mission – Ward Room
May 10 th	9:00 a.m.	United Methodist Men Prayer Breakfast – Social Hall
May 14 th	10:00 a.m.	Quilting Mission – Ward Room
May 14 th	6:30 p.m.	Trustees Meeting – Social Hall
May 21 st	10:00 a.m.	Quilting Mission – Ward Room
May 28 th	10:00 a.m.	Quilting Mission – Ward Room

Scholarship Committee

The GBUMC Scholarship Committee has been blessed to be able to assist members of our congregation who are furthering their education by attending a trade school or college. We will be accepting applications until May 31st. See Debi in the church office or email office@gbumchurch.org for an application. Please call Mary Ann Clevenger at (410)760-5011 or 410-253-6209 with any questions.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

The Prayer Shawl Ministry crochets and knits items for school children, the ailing, and shut ins. If you know of anyone in need or someone having an emotionally tough time, please contact Donna. The group meets every 2nd Tuesday of each month at 10:00 a.m. in Room #58. If you have any questions, please either call the office or Donna Haehl, (410) 969-0541.

Nursing Home Ministry - Volunteers Needed!

Anyone interested in working with our nursing home ministry, please contact Jan Hacker (443-995-9555). The ministry visits Morningside House of Friendship every 3rd Sunday and Sunrise Senior Living every 4th Sunday of the month.

GBUMC Quilters

Our group has been meeting weekly and has expanded our ministry to include making larger quilts for Arundel House of Hope, Board of Child Care, and Disaster Relief. Lap quilts for our Nursing Home ministry continue as well.

If you wish to join or support this ministry, you may do so in the following ways:

- *Your sewing skills (cut and sew squares, sew binding, hand sewing)
- *Help assemble and knot the quilt layers.
- *Donate sturdy fabric, new or clean, gently used queen sized top sheets or blankets.

For more information, contact Jan Hacker, Lois Shaffer or the church office.

United Methodist Men

The United Methodist Men will continue to have their Prayer Breakfast in the coming months. The next two dates will be April 12th and May 10th at 9:00 a.m. in the Social Hall. Devotions will be led by Mark Harris.

GBUMC Choir

Anyone who loves to sing please come and join the choir! They meet for rehearsal on Thursday evenings at 7:00 p.m.

In Loving
Memory

Cynthia Campbell

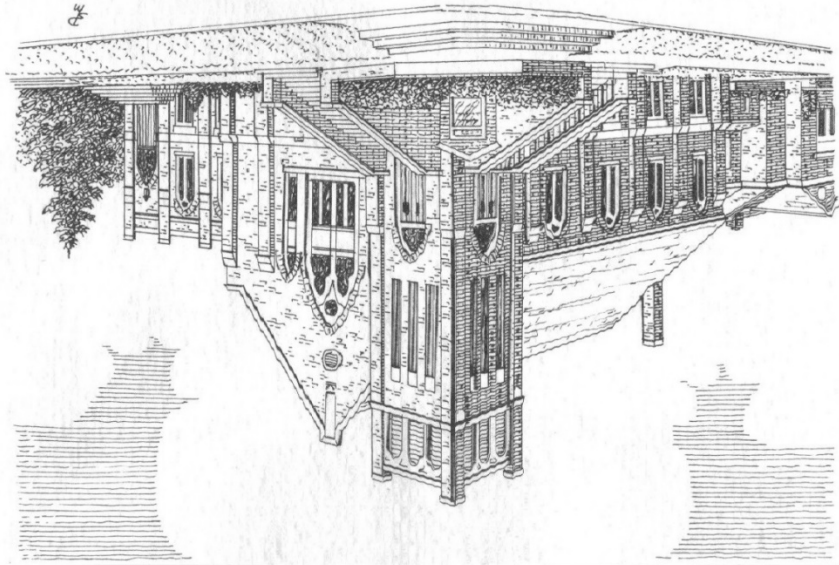
2/25/25

Joyce Golden

3/20/25



Glen Burnie United Methodist Church
Glen Burnie, Maryland



The Messenger

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