

# AUMC WITNESS

*Our Mission: Love God, Love Neighbor, Serve the World*

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Rev. Jason Micheli  
Rev. Peter Kwon  
Rev. Chenda Lee

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 We are a Stephen Ministry Church

May 14, 2019

## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE GRADUATES!



Katherine Ackley is graduating from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, NY, with a B.S. in biomedical engineering. She was a member of the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps for four years and will commission as an ensign in the US Navy. After graduation, she will report to the USS O’Kane in San Diego, CA.



Brenna Schields is graduating from Juniata College in Huntington, PA, with a B.S. in zoology, a minor in psychology and a certificate in genomics. While in school, she held several leadership positions, most recently as vice president of the Pet and Animal Welfare Society and the local Humane Society shelter. She'll begin

working next month as an assistant scientist for Eurofins, a world leader in food, pharma and environmental testing, in Lancaster, PA.



Casey “Anna” Bonanno is graduating from Annandale High School. A member of the Music Honor Society, she has played cello for the last 10 years and finished her high school career in the top orchestra. Her many accomplishments include being an AUMC student leader, an active and certified member of the Alexandria



Bailey Senyitko is graduating from Mississippi State University with a B.S. degree in agricultural business-management and a double minor in business administration and economics. After graduation, she will return to this area to work for USDA’s Foreign Agriculture Service under the Cochran Fellowship Program.

Ham Radio Club, a student of Krav Maga and a participant in several 48-hour movie projects. She will attend West Virginia University in Morgantown, WV, and plans to major in forensic science and minor in performance cello.



James “Jack” Curtin is graduating from the University of Alabama in Tuscaloosa, AL, with a B.S. in accounting and a specialization in professional accounting. Jack has accepted an assistantship and full scholarship, so he can continue his education at the University of Alabama and earn a Master of Business Administration

degree. Jack will work as a community director in the Division of Housing and Residential Communities for two years while he continues his education.



Victoria Rodriguez is graduating from TC Williams High School with an Advanced Diploma. She is a highly decorated Girl Scout, having earned the Gold, Silver Trefoil and Silver Awards. She has played varsity softball and field hockey and was selected as 2nd Team All District Goalie for 2018. She is a member of the Math National

Honor Society and the Art National Honor Society. At AUMC, she participated in Christmas pageants, service projects and the youth choir, and assisted at Vacation Bible School. She will attend Christopher Newport University in Newport News, VA.

### Mark your calendar

**May 18 – UMW’s Spring Tea and Fashion Exchange**, 10 a.m. in Wright Hall. \$10 for fashion exchange. RSVP to Dana Goward, 703-916-0336 or [dbgoward@gmail.com](mailto:dbgoward@gmail.com).

**May 26 – Memorial Day Tribute** at 9:45 a.m. in the AUMC Cemetery (see page 2).

**May 26 – Children’s Day of Service** at 9:45 a.m. in Hughes Hall with hands-on service projects.

**June 2 – Youth Sunday** (single service at 10:30 a.m.; Sunday school at 9:30 a.m.)

**June 2 – Scripture and Sexuality** Sunday school class begins in Hughes Hall (see page 3).

**June 2 – AUMC’s Got Talent!** at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. Contact Pat Vaughn, [pvaughn@annandale-umc.org](mailto:pvaughn@annandale-umc.org) or 703-256-8330, to show off your talent!

**June 7 – Book party** for Jason’s new book at 6:30 p.m. at Auld Shebeen in Fairfax. RSVP at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/living-in-sin-book-launch-party-tickets-59398646952>.

**July 8–12 – Vacation Bible School**, 9 a.m.–noon. Register at [www.annandalechurch.com/vbs](http://www.annandalechurch.com/vbs); volunteer at [www.annandalechurch.com/vbsvolunteer](http://www.annandalechurch.com/vbsvolunteer).



## THE MAJESTY AND HOLINESS OF GOD

*“And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and inside. Day and night without ceasing they sing, ‘Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God the Almighty, who was and is and is to come.’”*

- Revelation 4:8

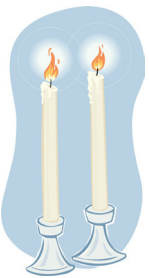
I want to invite you to take a moment to just reread the text above slowly.

“Holy, Holy, Holy, the Lord God the Almighty, who was and is and is to come.” One holy doesn’t cut it...holy, holy, holy!

As we continue our festal season of Eastertide and focus on celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ, I thought it would be an excellent time for us to reflect on the immense majesty and holiness of God before we celebrate the day of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (June 9).

Holiness or holy, קדוּשׁ (kō’-desh), literally means “apartness” or “separateness.” It reveals God’s character that is beyond this realm of reality. Simply put, God is set apart, different—holy.

We often take great comfort in the fact that we have a high priest who is able to empathize with our weaknesses (Hebrews 15). We take comfort in the fact that Jesus was human just like us. Yes, he understands our pain. He understands our suffering. He knows what it’s like to be human. However, we must realize that the humanity of Christ, though in every sense comforting and relatable, is certainly not the only side of Jesus that the biblical writers carefully present. Simply put, we are only half Christians if we are unwilling to fully acknowledge the divinity of Christ. In fact, it is the divinity of Christ that is presented to the readers before the humanity of Christ. Christ, being God, created the universe before creating human beings. This indicates that the creative agent of God’s divinity predates the concept of humanity in Genesis.



We certainly try our best to balance the humanity and divinity of Christ in our worship services. Do you know why we light two candles on the altar? The light that is carried by the acolyte serves as a symbol of Jesus’ coming into the presence of the worshipping community. We, like other churches, use two candles on the altar to point out that Jesus was both human and divine.

So why is this dual nature of Christ so important in our faith journey? Understanding this duality changes our attitude towards God and our time of worship. Awe and reverence. I mean, how many times do we really stop to think about the holiness of the God we are worshipping? How often do we truly humble ourselves before coming to God’s holy presence? Why would the writers of Proverbs say, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of all wisdom...” (9:10)?

We don’t really like using words like “submission” and “surrender” to describe our relationship with God. However, how can we not submit and surrender to God in all His glory and majesty? We are talking about God! The seraphim sing aloud, “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of His glory.” In Exodus, what’s the first thing that the angel of the Lord tells Moses when He appears in the form of a burning bush?

“I love you, Moses”? No. “I’ve heard the cry of the Israelites and I feel their pain”? That’s way later. It was a statement that got Moses to really fear the Lord. “Remove the sandals from your feet. You are standing on a Holy ground” (3:5).

As we prepare to celebrate the day in which the spirit of God was poured out to inspire and empower Christ’s timid and frightened disciples, let us continue to reflect on the holiness of God in awe and reverence.

Thanks be to God,

Peter



### A Memorial Day tribute to our fallen service men and women

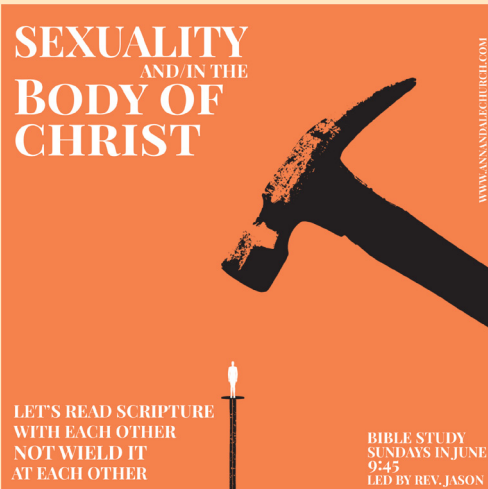
On Sunday, May 26, at 9:45 a.m., AUMC members

and guests are invited to participate in a Memorial Day tribute in the AUMC Cemetery. At the heart of the event is the ceremonial installation of American flags on the gravesites of the 41 veterans interred there. The congregation will gather after the 8:30 a.m. service and proceed as a group to the cemetery.

Boy Scouts from Troop 150 will raise the national colors at the flagpole, and we will hear brief ceremonial words. We will then walk as a group through the cemetery as three details implant American flags on the gravesites of all interred military service veterans. After the flag placements, we will congregate at the flagpole for the playing of taps. Everyone is invited for fellowship and refreshment in Wright Hall following the ceremony.

Placing the stars and stripes on the gravesites of AUMC’s interred veterans is how church members and visitors bestow their deepest and most grateful recognition and honor to those who risked and gave their lives for the sake of our country.

If you would like to help with the flag installations or have any questions about AUMC Cemetery, contact Cemetery Manager Mike Moser at [mmoser@annandale-umc.org](mailto:mmoser@annandale-umc.org) or 703-591-1210.



## Scripture and Sexuality Sunday school class begins June 2

Next month, Jason will begin a new Sunday school class that explores scripture and human sexuality. Jason will look at what the Bible has to say about sexuality and marriage, and how there is room for diversity of interpretation. Faithful, Bible-reading Christians can and will come to different conclusions on the subject, so come with an open mind. The goal will be to get beyond polarizing rhetoric and create a safe space for dialogue and discussion. The class will meet in Hughes Hall at 9:45 a.m. (9:30 a.m. on June 2).

## AUMC Way Forward Task Group forms, input welcomed

Our Task Group of volunteers was created in early April to help our church discern the way forward after the divisive 2019 Special Session of the General Conference of the United Methodist Church, February 23–26, in St. Louis, which voted to more strictly enforce language in the Book of Discipline prohibiting United Methodist Churches from performing same-sex marriages and ordaining gay clergy. The General Conference upheld current policies and strengthened their enforcement. In late April, the UM Judicial Council reviewed these decisions and found most of them to be constitutional; they will take effect on Jan. 1, 2020.

These decisions caused great hurt and pain for many in our global church as well as our congregation who were praying for policies which affirm the sacred worth of all persons and allow for differing views on these sexuality topics within the church. Also, guidelines were provided for congregations who wish to leave the United Methodist Church “for reasons of conscience” regarding these human sexuality policies.

Pastor Jason has done a masterful job of keeping you informed about these actions over the past couple months, including his recent April 27 Update: UMC Judicial Council Ruling, which provided more details on the Judicial Council ruling.

Surveys Jason conducted last fall and this spring indicate that our congregation has diverse views on these matters. We believe there is richness in our diversity, and we embrace that diversity. Our task is primarily to provide recommendations to Church Council and our clergy on steps and actions our church should take as we heal from these decisions, build unity and understanding, prepare our congregation regarding future options, and serve as the primary point of contact for your thoughts and concerns regarding these topics. There is a Way Forward Task Group mailbox outside the church office where you may leave your notes for the Task Group. Please sign your note so that we may follow up with you.

There will be a large gathering of approximately 600 centrist and progressive laity and clergy, who disagreed with the decisions of the General Conference, in Kansas City, May 20–22. These representatives come from all UMC conferences across the U.S. They will discuss various paths forward for the larger church that allow for disagreement on these sexuality issues, in contrast to the decisions of the General Conference which do not allow for disagreement. In the end, there may even be dissolution of the UMC and the formation of new Wesleyan/Methodist denominations. These new paths forward will take time to develop. Our task group will keep you informed and make recommendations to Church Council when options are developed.

For now, we appreciate your love, concern and prayers for our church—globally and here in Annandale. As opportunities develop for your discussion and learning, we encourage your participation. Through our sharing, we will grow in our understanding and appreciation of each other as we move forward together.

Bill Iwig, Chair  
Way Forward Task Group



### Task Group Members

Pam Adams, Elvira Arteaga, Bill Chambers, Harry Day, Bill Harrod, Jan Harrod, Sophie Luckenbaugh, Jon Page, Christi Schwarten, Pat Sherfey, Peter Snitzer Jr., Terri Ruhter

## Spirit is Moving and HVAC Update

Thanks to all who have donated to the Spirit Is Moving Campaign. From July 2015 through April 2019, we received \$438,592 in donations. At the end of April, we had a balance of \$172,846.

The funds have allowed the Trustees to repair, improve and maintain the heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system at AUMC. For example, we have installed attic heaters to keep pipes from freezing, made stopgap repairs to the units in Hughes and Wright Halls, and repaired the chiller and boilers.

Our biggest current expense is \$67,950 to replace the units in Wright and Hughes Halls. These units are over 25 years old and have simply reached the end of their useful life. By the time you read this, these units and a new chiller should be installed and online.

Because the campaign hasn't raised enough money to replace all the systems likely to fail, the Trustees will be staging the replacement of six more units and circulator pumps that move cooled or heated water to maintain the buildings' comfort. We are also working towards a goal of operating all the systems through a computerized management program.

The Spirit is Moving Campaign runs through the end of July. If you would like to donate, make a check payable to AUMC and note that it is for "Spirit is Moving." You may also donate online at [www.annandalechurch.com](http://www.annandalechurch.com) (click on Online Giving).

If you have questions about the heating and air-conditioning in our church, please ask us.

Trustee HVAC Subcommittee:  
Frank Svenson, Jeff Draper, Dale Ruhter

## MINISTRY MEETINGS

Tues., May 14	Finance Committee	7 p.m.	Room 210
Tues., May 14	Missions Committee	7 p.m.	Room 302
Tues., May 21	Church Council	7 p.m.	Room 302
Tues., May 28	SPRC	7 p.m.	Room 210
Tues., June 4	Trustees	7 p.m.	Room 303
Wed., June 5	Stephen Ministry	7 p.m.	Room 303
Tues., June 11	Finance Committee	7 p.m.	Room 210
Tues., June 11	Missions Committee	7 p.m.	Room 302



## Many thanks to all who have helped with the Poe feeding program

As another year ends at Poe Middle School, we would like to thank all those who have made this a wonderful mission program. Each year, we serve over 6,000 meals! This mission starts in October and ends the last Tuesday of May with an ice cream social for the kids. To get involved, contact Sheila Kyer at 703-981-6080.

This year's Poe team leaders and members:

Pat Sherfey: Gary Sherfey, Molly Wilmarth, Marie and Mike Cavanagh, Jessica Vance, Memrie McKay-Cook, Rhodes Cook, Jolie Fleming, Melissa Snyder, Susan Williams, Ron Torezan, Dana Goward, Dale Ruhter, Debbie Strickland, Linda Clark, Dottie Rogerson

Sheila Kyer: Sindy Keplinger, Wanda and Fred Warren, Lou Anne Hemmings, Luanne Pond

Jennifer and Denny Stokes: Sally Bizer, Judy McConville, Evie and Bob Herbst, Ron Torezan, Susan and John Clarke, Maribeth Day, Melanie and Isabelle Bodrog, Mary Chambers, Dottie Rogerson

Betsy Clevenger: Trisha Martino-Shapiro, Mark Pearson, Bill Iwig, Jerry Beyer, Eldon Hildebrandt, Tom Moore, Ted Torsch, Janet Woods, Bea Pittore, John Crowley, Burke UMC Middle School Munchies group

## WEEKLY VOLUNTEERS

### Sunday, May 19

**Door greeters:** 8:10 S. Naugle, M. Pearson;  
10:30 J. Houston, S. Houghton

**Front desk greeters:** 8:30 T. Carney

**Fellowship Hours:** In His Steps

**Ushers:** 8:30 A. Cogswell, A. Powell, G. Sherfey, P. Sherfey (c)  
I I N. Bentsi-Bansah, T. Rose, G. Rothman, R. Gordon (c)

### Sunday, May 26

**Door greeters:** 8:10 D. Ruhter, J. Vance; 10:30 L. Riley, P. Snitzer

**Front desk greeters:** 8:30 J. Fleming

**Fellowship Hours:** Kairos Prison Ministry

**Ushers:** 8:30 J. Clarke, C. Jones, C. Jones, E. McKenney (c)  
I I S. Fleming, F. Madill, R. Gordon, J. Haymaker (c)

### Single Service Sunday, June 2, 10:30 a.m.

**Door greeters:** J. Beyer, C. Cox, D. Johnson, E. Jones

**Front desk greeters:** J. Hartley

**Ushers:** S. Fleming, D. Robinson, R. Gordon, P. Snitzer

### Sunday, June 9

**Door greeters:** 8:10 S. Fleming, S. Naugle;

10:30 J. Houston, S. Houghton

**Front desk greeters:** 8:30 D. Iwig

**Ushers:** 8:30 J. Clarke, G. FitzGibbon, A. Powell, S. Fleming (c)  
I I N. Bentsi-Bansah, D. Robinson, G. Rothman, J. Haymaker (c)

### Sunday, June 16

**Door greeters:** 8:10 M. Pearson, D. Ruhter;

10:30 L. Riley, P. Snitzer

**Front desk greeters:** 8:30 M. McCarthy

**Ushers:** 8:30 W. Annan, R. Patton, G. Sherfey, P. Sherfey (c)  
I I S. Fleming, T. Rose, P. Adams, P. Snitzer (c)

## NEXT DEADLINE:

Friday, June 7, is the deadline for the June 18 Witness, which covers June 23 and 30, and July 1, 7 and 14.