



ASBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
NEWSLETTER

January 2025

ASBURY

Since 1875

A United Methodist Church

Loving God, Growing Together, Reaching Out



New Beginnings at Asbury UMC

Rev. Sharon Bowers

As 2024 ends and as we step into the new year, we find ourselves in the heart and soul of winter. The days aren't as long as they used to be, the sky is often overcast and the nights offer cold air that requires a coat and a warm fire.

Many of us may feel weary, worn, and sad from the challenges of the past year, the weight of our responsibilities, or the unrelenting pace of life. However, hope, help, and healing are on the way. Even amid winter's weariness, there is a promise—a promise that spring is on its way. The frozen ground is yielding to seeds waiting to sprout. Trees are starting to be cloaked with rich shades of green. Creation in its many forms is offering the opportunity to begin again. Let me remind you that winter is not the journey's end. No, in fact, it is an opportunity where you can rest and redirect your efforts for the good of all humankind.

January offers us the opportunity for a fresh start and allows us to embrace God's preferred future. It is a time to reflect and recommit ourselves to the plans and purposes God has for our lives. In Isaiah 43:19, God declares, *"See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland."*

God wants to make a way forward for God's children. No matter what challenges you face, God's promises remain steadfast. God is a God of new beginnings. As we endeavor to go "all in" for Asbury let us consider that God has done marvelous things and this new thing that God is allowing to spring up in your life is the springboard for the miraculous. Let us lean into God's strength as we journey together.

At Asbury UMC, we are excited about the opportunities this new year brings to grow deeper in our faith, to serve others in love, and to share the light of Christ in our community. Together, let us embrace the fresh start of a new year, trusting that God is with us every step of the way.

May this be a season of hope, renewal, and faith for us all. Spring is coming. The flowers will bloom. The days will be longer and the Son/sun will shine. New life is on the horizon. And God is always faithful.





UMW Report - Doris Allen, Chair

NOVEMBER: The UMW had their first meeting in several months and were excited to be meeting again. They met in November and elected new president Doris Allen and Treasurer, Debby Hendrix. They decided to meet every 3rd Thursday of the month (except during the summer).

DECEMBER: The December 19th meeting was at the home of Debby Hendrix. Her home was decorated beautifully for the Christmas season. Her husband Marty greeted the ladies as they entered her home and hot cider and other tasty items were provided.

After fellowshipping together, the meeting was brought to order, and prayer was led by Rev Bowers. Officers were discussed and Alice Russell agreed to be the corresponding secretary. The group discussed the Bereavement list and agreed to contact others in the church to see who would assist with a meal in case of a death in the congregation. They decided to do a covered dish style meal. Debby Hendrix gave the treasurers report, and the group decided to start the scholarship process in late February.

Missions were discussed and it was decided that we would do 4 internal missions and 4 outward focused ones throughout the year.

Greeting cards were signed to be sent to those who are sick and to several shut-ins.

JANUARY: The January meeting was held in the church Parlor on January 14th. President Doris welcomed everyone and thanked Debby Hendrix for bringing pastries. Rev Sharon did a devotional with the group breaking out into 2 small groups. They then reviewed the Bereavement teams and the menu that will be provided as needed. Others in the church will be contacted to assist with this mission, even if they are not members of the UMW. A Sign-Up Sheet was passed around for members to pick a month that they will host a meeting.

Alice Russell reviewed the college student list to send Valentine cards to. Request that church members

PLEASE UPDATE YOUR COLLEGE STUDENTS' MAILING INFORMATION so we can stay in touch with them.

We discussed hosting a Wednesday Night meal on February 12th. The menu will be a Baked Potato Bar, Salad & Dessert. Also, discussed providing the Holy Week meal in April in lieu of a meeting.

NOTE: We look forward to providing our congregations women an opportunity to fellowship, provide scholarships and service to our church and our community. If you are not yet a UMW member, please join us at the [next meeting](#) on: **February 20th at 10:00 am in the Church Parlor.**

Contact Doris Allen @ 423-329-9092 if you have any questions.

WARM UP!

AUMC SUCCESS STORY

Warming Shelter by Art Masker

Asbury is in its second year of providing space for the Warming Shelter. This is a cooperative effort between Asbury and the CARE Center of Greeneville. The C.A.R.E. Center in Greeneville serves as a daytime home for more than 20 people. They are provided three meals a day and assistance with job searches, medical needs, and transportation. The CARE center ultimately hopes to have its own overnight facility once suitable space which meets all city safety codes can be located. For now they coordinate with Asbury to use its facilities for the overnight shelter. Other than providing space, Asbury also helps in recruiting volunteers to staff the overnight shelter. Two adults, one male and one female, serve as overnight monitors/chaperones from 7:00pm to 7:00am each night. CARE coordinates the services, provides staffing and food in the evening, and then transports those who are sheltered back to the CARE facility for breakfast and showers and further day services.

During the frigid sub 32-degree nights (the "White Flag" nights) the warming shelter has been open almost every night over the past 2-3 weeks. On average there have been between 5 and 15 people housed each night. Those coming to the shelter are there of their own free will and can leave as they desire. They have been appreciative of having a warm place with cots and blankets, food and suitable bathroom spaces, and they have not posed any behavioral issues. Thank you to Asbury for providing this space and to church members who have volunteered to do an overnight shift. There is an ongoing need for volunteers. Several other area churches have provided volunteers to fill in with staffing.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Art Masker at artmasker5@gmail.com

Making a Difference Together Bob Leonard

Thanks to our volunteers' unwavering dedication and generosity, all the flood relief supplies have been distributed to those in need, with final efforts wrapped up by December 3rd. This achievement reflects the power of congregation and the compassion of everyone involved. Most people know about Asbury's immediate response of distributing supplies and being a Red Cross shelter, but our reach went and is continuing beyond that.

A Big Thank You to Our "Flood Warriors"

To our incredible volunteers, you made a profound difference in the lives of flood victims. Your selflessness and hard work have not gone unnoticed. A special thanks goes out to those continuing to assist with home recovery efforts, this includes local individuals and people across the Eastern U.S. If you encounter these dedicated individuals in the community, please take a moment to express your gratitude. Tom Smith, who has been leading the charge for Asbury and Aid-Net, remains a great point of contact for anyone interested in helping further.

Where the Supplies Went

We were able to use the Youth Room as a central hub for flood supplies. While most of the supplies were distributed right after the flood, we still had valuable supplies needing to find a home. The remaining supplies are already making an impact, thanks to partnerships with local and regional organizations:

- Diapers/Wipes: Delivered to the Infant Mission at Cedar Bluff, supporting families in need.
- Hygiene Items: Provided to the Family Resource Center at Greeneville City Schools, ensuring students have access to essential care items.
- Construction Supplies: Shared with the Church of the Nazarene Disaster Recovery Team, aiding in flood recovery efforts.

Additionally, outreach efforts connected us with Trinity United Methodist Church, the Coalition Addressing the Needs of Unhoused Persons, and other agencies to ensure every item found a meaningful purpose.

Final Thoughts: This journey has been a testament to the strength and kindness of our congregation. Thank you for every contribution—together, we are making a lasting impact.



Youth Ministry Rev. Natasha DeBord

I can't believe it's a new year! And I get the chance to accompany another group of youth to Resurrection! The most exciting thing for me about Resurrection this year is getting to take some of our youth for their first time! Resurrection weekend is a life changing weekend for all those involved, but especially for our youth. Their experience will go with them through the rest of their lives. Some will dedicate their life to God for the first time while others may recommit their life to God. There are also some who will hear a call to vocational ministry for the first time. But all will experience God's presence in a new way. I remember my experience as a youth and attending Resurrection. It was at Resurrection that I heard my calling for the first time. I could not be more excited for our weekend!

Now I have a big ask of you. As a fellow sibling in Christ's wonderful family, I ask that you hold each of our youth in your prayers throughout the weekend. Remember to pray for them by name. And when we get back, make it a point to find our youth and ask them to share their Resurrection story! Be encouraging! Get excited for them! Help guide and mentor them. These young adults are going to do big, amazing things and it would be wonderful if we get to help them along the way. If you would like to have names or to create a connection with some of our youth let me know and we will make it happen.

Thank you for your continued support of the beautiful students that call Asbury home. Your support means a lot to each of them. We extend an open invitation to join us for any youth meeting to come hang out and get to know us.

