

SUMMER at HERNDON UMC

A Reflection on Art and Resilience

by Pastor Jo Ann Batteiger

In the summer of 2012, I had the opportunity to be the first choir to sing the anthem "I Believe" written by beloved composer, Mark Miller. I was between my sophomore and junior year of high school at the time, and I remember being so struck by how the lyrics written and the melodies created became a powerful anthem that I have continued to carry with me throughout the last 11 years of my life. The lyrics were simple: "I believe in the sun even when it's not shining. I believe in love even when I don't feel it. I believe in God even when God is silent." Mark shared with us during our rehearsals that these words were etched in the walls of a concentration camp during the Holocaust and over time, became words that carried communities in turmoil, in transition, in seeking peace and justice, offering words of hope through all that was before them.

And I am struck by this notion, because it seems that throughout the 11 years I have encountered this song, whether in singing or in listening, it seems that a different part of me heals; I think about something different, and my soul is left feeling reassured, that somehow, someday, the music and the lyrics have continued to meet me in spaces that I did not realize needed healing.

When we talk about art as resilience, we are not simply coming to art to make everything

magically better. We come to the arts because there is a generosity in being able to slow down and appreciate the craft that has been given to us or that we give— not so that we can be the best or win first place, but because we know that it is in the spaces of encounter, and presence with our crafts or with others who are gifted in the arts, that we are transformed, that we experience healing, both individually and as a community. Art gives us the ability to enter fully into our humanness and to experience the full breadth of human emotions and experiences, and to know that no matter how alone we might feel in this world, there is something bigger than us that is carrying us through and offering refuge. It offers us hope when we feel like there is none. It offers us comfort when we are feeling the depth of our pain and grief. It offers us peace when we are feeling anxious and afraid. It offers us strength when it feels like we have none left. Art is critical to human flourishing, so take in all that you can, make art wherever and however you can, and be open to the possibilities of transformation within yourself and our community.

Herndon Pyramid Art Show | April 28-May 4



Building on the connection between art and resilience, we spent some of our resilience grant money on an art hanging system in preparation for a very special exhibit that would fill the hallways around Doe Fellowship Hall and the Hall itself.



Dedicated art teachers from all the schools within the Herndon Pyramid: Herndon, Dranesville, Clearview, Aldrin, and Armstrong Elementaries, Herndon Middle, and Herndon High came to Herndon UMC and assembled the show that was open to the entire community for a week. There were hundreds of wonderful pieces of art visited by the friends and family of the artists.

Thank you to all of our church family who helped prepare for the show or stayed to host guests in the building. What a great way to be a part of our community and to support the arts! Save the dates April 5-11, 2024 for next year's show.

Handbell Showcase | April 29

The Virginia Bronze returned to Herndon's Sanctuary with two other handbell ensembles for a Handbell Showcase in late April. More than 100 handbells rang in the Sanctuary. Look for more partnerships with Virginia Bronze in the future. They are already planning for a workshop and showcase again next year.

Sit and Dream Concert | May 6



Members of Herndon UMC's choir, other choirs, and vocalists from the community joined forces with the Accord Symphony Orchestra from the District of Columbia to perform a concert featuring Mozart's C Minor Mass here at Herndon UMC and then the next day in DC.

The Herndon concert honored the memory of beloved staff member Jennifer Score, and started the butterfly project that adorned our Sanctuary for Pentecost through June.

Rise Up! Concert | May 20



The Rise Up! Concert returned in 2023 even bigger and better. Doe Fellowship Hall was filled with musicians and music lovers working together to support the Northern Virginia chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). The great variety of groups included a number of students from Freedom and Herndon pyramids. The youth choir is pictured above.



With free will donations and a silent auction, over \$1,350 was raised to donate to NAMI. This contributes to the mental health and resilience of our community as NAMI Northern Virginia advocates for better lives for those individuals who have a mental illness and offers free programs for all ages. Learn more at nami-northernvirginia.org.

Conference Health Kits



The Naomi Ruth Circle of Herndon's United Women in Faith assembled 221 Health Kits for a variety of ministries including: UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief), Cornerstones/Embry Rucker Shelter, LINK, and Good Shepherd of Northern Virginia (in Ashburn). In providing kits locally and to UMCOR, the circle supported the United Women in Faith priority of serving local, regional, and global communities while also supporting Herndon UMC partnerships with the larger United Methodist Church, Cornerstones,

and LINK. Herndon UMC also contributed an additional \$700 that was donated for UMCOR. Thank you to all who donated to support this mission project or helped pack the kits.

A Visit to the Holy Land



by Pastor Jonathan Page

Several months ago, I was speaking with someone from our church about visiting the Holy Land. She said "it will change the way you read the Bible." In the month I've been home, this has proven to be so true. We had an incredible experience, ate awesome food, and met wonderful people. What has stuck with me the most has been the landscape and the importance of this holy land. Being on the Sea of Galilee, on the Mount of Precipice, or in the many significant sites of Jerusalem all were reminders of the significance of this place and what has happened there.

I know I join our pilgrims from Herndon in sharing with you what an incredible time this was. I hope that many from our church will be able to find an opportunity to travel to the Holy Land at some point. It is a transformative experience.

The End of an Era



For over 20 years, Herndon UMC supported Thank God for Tutors (TGFT), a legacy program under the Herndon UMC/Herndon High School community partnership. The mission was to help Herndon High School students who needed occasional and/or regular assistance in science and math subjects. For many years, the Wednesday evening sessions were held in person; the team then successfully transitioned to the virtual domain in 2020. An estimated two dozen tutors (both members of Herndon UMC and professionals outside our membership) participated in this program during its lifetime, as well as five greeter/administrators. Many of our volunteers spent ten years and more helping students navigate fully eight subject areas. Though no records were kept on student numbers, we are confident in stating over 2000 student “units” were served. The decision to retire the mission on June 7, 2023 was made when competing student services (YouTube, Kahn Academy, Tutors.com) developed, resulting in underutilization of TGFT...or, as we prefer to put it, “What better way to be put out of business, than to acknowledge students feel they are receiving adequate assistance elsewhere?” Thanks to Herndon UMC for the support and the confidence you showed in us—it was quite a run!

Friends,

So this is it! It is hard to believe that after five amazing years in ministry together, the time has come to part with a blessing. Since receiving news of this transition a couple of months ago, I’ve found myself vacillating between places of grief and places of hope. I’m sad to be leaving Herndon sooner than I’d care to leave, but I’m also hopeful for what is to come for this church and in the new position I’m taking with the Virginia Conference.

After celebrating our last worship service together, I want you to know that while I will still miss all of you and this place called Herndon that has become home, I am leaning more into the hope of what is to come. Your new lead pastor, Seong Jae, is going to be a blessing to you and the wider Herndon community. The work that preceded me and happened during my time with you will continue. New opportunities for connection are on the way.

For these reasons, I leave you with hope. The Page family departure is not a funeral; it is a fresh cutting and re-planting. It allows for new growth in all of us, even if our growth might happen a couple miles down the road. 😊

So may you be about discovering the hope that is all around us. Thank you for allowing me to be your pastor over these last five years, and for reminding me of the power that comes when the hope and love of Christ can guide our every step, our every word, and our every breath.

In Love,

Hello, Herndon!

I am honored and excited to introduce myself as your new pastor. My name is SeongJae Jo, and I am eager to love God and serve alongside you in this faith community.

I first want to say thank you so much for welcoming me before I even arrived there. I have already received so many cards, Facebook messages, and texts to welcome the Herndon family. Thank you for allowing me to feel God's love through each and every one of you.

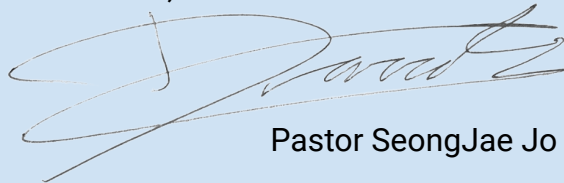
There are many good news that I want to share and celebrate with you. First, I was ordained as an elder in full connection at the Virginia Annual Conference. This ordination process has been a remarkable journey of God's constant grace and love. Praise the Lord! Also, some of you might already know, but I am engaged with the lady that I have been dating, Ella. I proposed to her, and she said "YES." I am so thankful for this new journey together. And as all of you know, I am appointed to serve at Herndon UMC from July 1st . What a great joy and opportunity to serve our Lord together.

We celebrate together when there is joy like the news that I shared above, and we also grieve together as we go through a hard time in our lives, such as the death of our beloved ones, and even a pastoral transition. But that is the community! That is the church who shares joys and challenges as a whole. I believe this is the church that God intended us to be, so let us continue to be the church together.

Therefore, I look forward to getting to meet each of you personally and hearing your stories of faith and life. I want to walk with you through the joys and challenges of life, to pray with you, to support you, and to share the love of God and the grace of Jesus Christ with you. Together, let us seek to grow in our relationship with God and with one another, and to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Thank you for welcoming me and my fiancé into your community. I am excited to see what God would do and how God will work through us to impact Herndon and beyond.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'SeongJae Jo', with a stylized, flowing script.

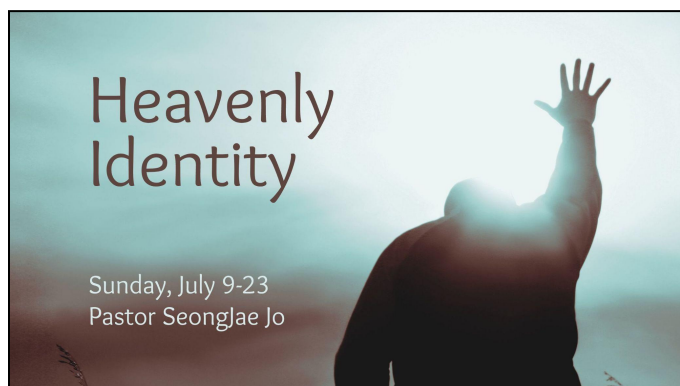
Pastor SeongJae Jo

Contact Pastor SeongJae, seongjae@herndonumc.org, or through the church office, 703-707-6271.

God's Green Growing Season

During June we have been in transition as God is doing a new thing at Herndon UMC. In worship, different voices have spoken to us about our call **to live the teachings of Jesus so that everyone may know God's love and grow in Spirit-filled relationships**, each through their own perspective and stories. Please continue to share your "Flat Jesus" pictures [from worship on [June 26 | Jesus Has Left the Building](#)] throughout the summer. You may email images to admin@herndonumc.org.

As we move into July, we will explore our "Heavenly Identity" in a new series with our new lead pastor. Pastor SeongJae will offer messages asking each of us to consider: Who am I? Where am I from? Where do I belong?



Worship together on Sundays at 10 am, in person or on [YouTube](#). There will not be KIDS CLUB, but worship tools and the Nursery are available during the worship services.

If you would be interested in sharing gifts in worship—greeting, reading, providing music—please contact Melissa Chávez, Director of Worship & Arts, at melissa@herndonumc.org.

In the Summer, many of Herndon UMCs groups take a break for a month or two. You can find a list of all Herndon UMC groups in the app and on the website (bit.ly/HerndonGroups). In the app, click **Connect >> All Open Groups >> View the list**. The list gives you the ability to filter results and an opportunity to join or contact the group leader. Let the leader(s) know that you are interested in learning more about the group and they will contact you back! If you would like help finding the right group or groups for you, please feel free to contact any staff member. The staff is here to support you!

Game On!

The United Women in Faith held a game night in June as an opportunity for fun and fellowship. Game On! #2 will be held on Friday, July 21. Contact Janice Watson, women@herndonumc.org for more information.

Meet the Pastor: Listening Tour

Pastor SeongJae wants to get to know you and to hear your stories. We are scheduling small group gatherings with Pastor SeongJae on Mondays through Thursdays each week in July and early August. If you would like to invite him to meet with your group or you are willing to host an open session for anyone, please contact admin@herndonumc.org. Watch the announcement slides and Tuesday News for upcoming scheduled open sessions.

Three questions to think about for your listening session. **Why did you come to Herndon UMC? What do you love about this church community? What do you hope for the future of our community?**

Serving and Sharing God's Love

Introducing the Purple LINK Bags

Earlier this year, church leaders gathered to discern missional priorities for Herndon UMC in the coming year. One of those priorities was our ongoing partnership with LINK. You may know that Herndon UMC supports LINK in a number of ways, including: housing and providing for the pantry, offering a 24/7 food drop off point, and hosting the LINK Toy Distribution (in November and December).

LINK provides food to over 275 families each week, and while it has support from throughout the community, our purple "Love and Food" bags offer another opportunity for the Herndon UMC church family to engage in mission with LINK. Even more, they are an easy way to invite others into serving and sharing God's love with you. Take a bag for a friend and invite them to purchase food. They can return the bag to you or come with you to church to return it.

This first round, the bags will come back the week of **July 9** to be blessed after worship and then our VBS students will help take them to the pantry. The bags will be reintroduced in August to return in September.

The Closet!

Another missional priority is The Closet. The Closet is a non-profit, thrift store that serves our community in a number of ways. This

season and always there are several ways to serve at The Closet. You can volunteer time during Herndon UMC's days or for special sales like the Big Toy Sale (July 15). Sign ups can be found in the app and on the Connection Corners. You can donate gently used household items to The Closet. See their website, theclosetofgreaterherndon.org, for details. And you can shop The Closet. You never know what kind of treasures may be available there.

Ready, Set, Move! | VBS | July 10-14

Kids (age 3 to grade 6) from around the community will move to follow Jesus here, there, and everywhere in this engaging, hands-on summer Vacation Bible School (VBS) program, where kids are inspired to DO What He Says, BELIEVE Who He Is, LOVE Who He Loves, SHARE What He Did and GO Where He Leads. In addition to games, crafts, music, and stories, during VBS, the children will also support and serve the LINK Pantry and The Closet.

Student Summer Mission | July 16-22

Pastor Jo Ann is excited to be taking a small mission team of students and adult leaders to Wilkesboro, NC to spend the week with Carolina Cross Connections! The week will be spent doing home repairs, building relationships, and learning more about the area we are serving in. Team members are: Claire Dzara, Colby Smith, Owen Smith, Andrew Bowers, and JoAnn Batteiger. Please be in prayer for the Carolina Cross Connections staff, the communities they serve, and for our team as they work together.

Summer Musical Theatre Camp | July 23-28

Summer musical theater returns to Herndon UMC in this summer camp opportunity for ages 5-18. Registration is open June 26-July 18. Honk! Jr. tells the story of the ugly duckling.

Save the date, July 28, to support young performers and enjoy a great show.

In Pursuit of Our Vision

The Resource Management Team (RMT) is our Council, Staff-Parish Relations, and Finance Team all-in-one. This team meets monthly (on the third Monday). You can email the team at resourcemanagement@herndonumc.org. RMT is currently working to facilitate the staff transitions and on hiring new staff member(s). Work to align staffing and resources to our strategic plan continues. There will be another community update on July 30 with a Called Charge Conference for approval of the budget.

**WANTED
PRODUCTION COORDINATOR**

responsible to manage the production of worship services and other church events, technically and administratively, while also supporting the administrative work of the church office. The specific duties of this full-time (30 hours per week), exempt position are listed in [the Indeed post](#).

Finance Update from Resource Management

Snapshot of Finances (fiscal year to date as of May 31)	
Tithes/Offerings	\$ 614,025
Other Income	88,332
Total Operating Income	\$ 702,357
Operating Expenses	\$ 809,589
Net Income	(\$ 107,232)
Total Assets (cash and investments)	705,378
Change (from previous newsletter)	\$185,685

The numbers above indicate the financial health of Herndon UMC. We continue to run at a deficit. RMT continues to work towards a balanced budget while better aligning all of our resources with our mission and vision, but needs a little grace to allow for the pastoral transition and involve the new pastor. The goal is to have a balanced budget for the period starting January 2024.

The significant positive change in the church assets came from the **Employee Retention Credit**. These funds will help us recover from losses sustained, pay Apportionments for 2023, and provide funds to enrich missions and ministries aligned with our vision.

If you have questions about Herndon UMC finances, please feel free to ask Julie Albanus, Director of Business and Communications, julie@herndonumc.org.

The **Missions and Ministries Team** meets monthly (on the second Monday) and fosters collaboration and community across generations, interests, and activities. Contact the Missions and Ministries Team by email at missionsandministries@herndonumc.org.

HELP WANTED

There are a few tasks around the church and parsonage that still need some work. If you have some time that you could help the church take advantage of the quieter season, check out the list at bit.ly/HerndonUMCNeeds.

If you are willing to do odd jobs for the church or parsonage on an as needed basis, you can join the **Building Action Team**. This type of contribution helps us keep our facilities nice and safe and helps keep maintenance costs down.

To join the Building Action Team, contact office@herndonumc.org.

Trustees Update

More than four days of work, went into preparing the parsonage for Pastor SeongJae and Ella. Rooms were painted, closets repaired, ceiling fans installed, the deck was restained, trees came down, and gutter guards were installed. Thank you to the many who gave some time to help prepare the parsonage and pastor's office. A special thank you to our Trustees, Cathy McCranie and Debbie Borden, who took the lead coordinating all the work.



Calendar and Connections

The full calendar is in the app (**More >> Check the Calendar**) and at herndonumc.org/calendar.



There are many ways to know what's going on. Visit herndonumc.org, or check the **Herndon UMC app**. Follow or subscribe on social media. (To get it, text "herndonumc app" to (833)-841-6111.)

There are other groups connected to our Facebook page as well. HUMC KIDS post information on the [KIDS](#) group. There are other groups for [music](#) and [youth](#) families, the [women](#), and a [Herndon UMC Community](#) group for sharing community information with our Herndon UMC church family. Many of these groups are private to protect the privacy of minors and members, but joining the group is easy if you are a part of the Herndon UMC church family.

Similarly, on Instagram, the youth ([@herndonumcyth](#)), Preschool ([@herndonumcpreschool](#)), and UPWARD ([@herndonumcupward](#)) ministries have accounts.



Preschoolers stop and smell the flowers.



Herndon Ukuleles steal hearts at the Rise Up! Concert.



Staff farewell dinner for the Page family.

The Herndon UMC Staff loves to hear from you! Please share your prayers, joys and concerns, and especially your faith stories. We are here to support you!

Herndon UMC's Staff

Senior Pastor

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Pastor, Student Ministry & Upward

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Office Hours are officially Monday-Thursday 9 am - 4 pm, and Fridays 9 am - Noon.

Staff members work a variety of hours and places throughout the community. If you would like to catch up with a staff member, it is best to reach out first, to arrange a time and place to meet.