



## Advent's Powerful P's

During Advent, we PREPARED and made our hearts and lives ready for the coming of Christ. We reflected on the depth of God's love and sacrifice for us with PASSION. Then, we celebrated God's very PRESENCE with us in and through Jesus at every step of our journey, and we remembered the PROMISE of God fulfilling God's plan of salvation through Christ.

Preparations included **Advent Wreath Making** together in Doe Fellowship Hall and sharing Advent devotions from Pastor Pam. The Pathfinders class took a break from *Context* to study *The Journey* by Adam Hamilton.



Our community generously gave over \$1000 in gift cards and the gifts shown above for **the Angel Trees**. Gifts and gift cards went to the LINK Toy distributions, and the community was excited to support the Herndon HS school social workers and counselors providing over 45 gift cards to meet urgent student needs like clothes, food, and school supplies.

## A Musical Partnership

Herndon UMC's Music Ministry flourished this Advent and Christmas in partnership with the musical community from Herndon High School and beyond.

Wesley Choir Members participated in the **Herndon High School Choral and Orchestra Programs Holiday Concert**, singing parts of Handel's Messiah at Herndon High School.



**Herndon HS Madrigals** offered a new variation on their annual concert with a sweet Madrigal dinner (okay, it was dessert). Doe Fellowship was filled with laughter and music for this special candlelight event. The choral students came back to Doe Fellowship Hall the next night to celebrate together after going caroling.



It was great to have HHS students return to participate in the **Christmas Orchestra** with other musicians from throughout our community. [Watch the Christmas Orchestra in worship on YouTube.](#)



There was “**Room for Christmas**” to help us remember what matters as 20 kids and youth from around our community put on a Christmas Musical in Doe Fellowship Hall. The audience was invited to participate in the show by bringing a gently used item that would keep someone warm as a donation for the Closet. Over 100 items, including more than 47 coats, were collected. Thanks to all the performers (and their leaders and tech team) for a wonderful evening of entertainment, rich in meaning.



A special thank you to Herndon’s Youth families for providing an excellent dinner for fellowship after the show. Donations from the show will support the Summer Youth Mission Trip to North Carolina.



The **Longest Night** worship offered a safe and sacred space for those struggling to feel the joy and light of this holiday season due to loss of any kind. Technical difficulties cut the stream off early, but the service offered those attending a sacred space to offer their struggles to God’s care.



Herndon’s United Women in Faith Circles worked together for their annual **Christmas Greens** fundraiser. Two days of creativity provided more than four tables full of arrangements. Profits from the sales will go to support the mission and ministries of the UWF circles. To make arrangements accessible to all, the sale included artificial greens (for those with allergies) and some other Christmas decorations. UWF also gave arrangements to homebound church members and staff.



## The Joy of Christmas

We moved from the anticipation of Advent toward overflowing joy, which filled our hearts on Christmas Eve. We celebrated the birth of Jesus, our Savior, with Holy Communion and candlelight.



The family-friendly service at 5 pm provided an intergenerational and interactive opportunity to celebrate the Christmas story together. There was Mary and Joseph and Baby Jesus not to mention a menagerie of creatures—cows, donkeys, sheep, birds, and more. Families shared in Holy Communion and sang “Silent Night” with battery-powered candlelight.



The 9 pm service started at 8:35 pm with an extended prelude with some favorite Christmas carols. You can catch all of this [Christmas Eve](#)

[service](#), including the prelude on YouTube. Check out all the beautiful music, including the anthem [“Still, Still, Still” from the Wesley Choir](#).

## Winter Weather Policy Reminder



We have had our first winter storm. Herndon UMC wants everyone to be safe if weather conditions make travel questionable.

Check the [website](#) or call the church office, 703-707-6271, to determine whether the church building is open or closed.

Determinations are based on the weather and the condition of the church parking lot and sidewalks.

Dear Herndon Family,

What a year 2024 has been! We've felt the presence of Jesus Christ with us from Advent through Christmas, and we give thanks for God's guidance and provision throughout the year as we witnessed the fulfillment of God's promises.

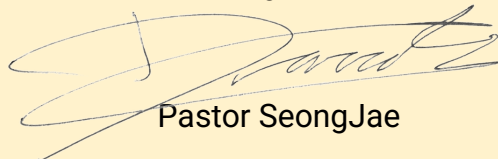
As we begin 2025, we enter this new year with hearts full of hope, anticipation, and excitement for what lies ahead at Herndon United Methodist Church. Our January sermon series, *New Hope*, features weekly messages from different pastors on the newness of hope in Christ. I encourage you to focus on renewal and restoration in and through hope.

On the first Sunday of February, we will celebrate Children's Sabbath, a special worship opportunity where our children will lead us. With the arrival of our new Director of Next Generation Ministries, we are reminded of the importance of empowering the next generation to grow in faith and leadership in the life of the church. Together, we will continue cultivating an intergenerational and multicultural community where people of all ages can thrive and contribute to the church's mission.

Later in February, we will explore what it means to be a multi-ethnic, multi-racial, and culturally unified community in Christ. We will hear inspiring messages that encourage and challenge us to embrace diversity for unity in Christ celebrating the beauty of God's creation in each of us. We're also excited to host Proskuneo, a multicultural worship and missional community, who will lead us in seminars and a special worship service focused on living out our calling as a diverse, unified body of Christ before we enter Lent.

So, let's enter this new year with hopeful expectation for the ways God will continue to move in our church, drawing us closer together and enabling us to be a light in our community. May we be filled with the Spirit, united in purpose as who God has called us to be, and empowered for the work God has called us to do and participate.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SeongJae', is written over a light blue horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Pastor SeongJae



## New Hope in Christ



January's sermon series explores new hope from four different pastoral viewpoints – SeongJae Jo, Pam Bentley, Kirk Nave (our Northern Virginia District Superintendent), and Larry Buxton (our former Minister of Visitation).

**Wear a nametag in January.** To help our new staff and guest preachers connect with our community, please write your name on a nametag and wear it during worship and fellowship times.

Herndon's United Women in Faith will sponsor a reception after worship on January 19 to allow our community to meet and speak with District Superintendent (DS) Kirk Nave on his first visit to Herndon UMC as DS.

Having a picture in the database also helps new staff learn names. If you have not recently uploaded a picture to the app, please do so. Or send an updated picture to the church office at [admin@herndonumc.org](mailto:admin@herndonumc.org), and we will update it for you.

### Worship with Herndon UMC

#### 10 am | Every Sunday | Sanctuary & YouTube

Worship together in the Sanctuary every Sunday 10 am, or join the 10 am service live or later on [YouTube](#).

#### 4 pm | First Sundays | Sanctuary

Once a month, Herndon UMC offers this evening service at 4 pm on the first Sunday. Join Pastor SeongJae or Pastor Pam (for February) for this additional opportunity to worship.

#### 6 pm | Third Wednesdays | Doe Fellowship Hall

Worship & Fellowship Dinners continue. January's will be brought to you by the Herndon UMC Scholarship Team. February's will be brought to you by the UPWARD Ministry.

## Proskuneeo

As Pastor SeongJae mentioned (page 4), February's sermon series explores becoming a more multi-ethnic, multi-racial community unified in our belief in Jesus. Proskuneeo's vision is to help the Body of Christ see, live, and share the vision of multicultural, Jesus-centered worshiping communities among all peoples, on earth as in heaven. There will be an open seminar after worship on March 2 for our church family. You can learn more about Proskuneeo at [proskuneeo.org](http://proskuneeo.org).

## Social Action Conversations



The issue of homelessness ranked first on the Social Action Ministry’s Fall 2024 social justice survey of issues—not surprising, as Herndon UMC has a long and extensive history of compassion and volunteerism on behalf of those who are housing and food insecure. The issue has been much in the news lately, as the past five years have seen this crisis explode nationally and locally.

All are invited to join the Social Action Ministry for a deep dive into the subject from Kerrie Wilson, the CEO of Cornerstones (Reston), who brings a breadth of knowledge and experience. She will provide an overview of the issue and share some exciting initiatives currently in the works. There will be an opportunity to have your questions answered.

Save the date Sunday, March 2 at 5 pm, (following the 4 pm worship). Light snacks will also be offered. Watch the weekly e-News and follow us on Herndon UMC’s social media accounts for additional information as the event grows near.

## Serving and Sharing God’s Love

Through winter, Herndon UMC will continue to support dinners for the Cornerstones **Temporary Overnight Shelters (TOS)**, a.k.a. Hypothermia Dinners. The first January dinner was made and delivered just before the first snowstorm. Groups will cover the second January and the February dinner—Naomi Ruth Circle of the Herndon United Women in Faith and Herndon’s United Methodist Men. As the shelter goes in experience serving these dinners, we are experiencing little changes, like an earlier serving time. Look for information in March about how you can support these dinners. If you would like to be among the first to know about needs for TOS Dinners, you can join the TOS group by contacting Beth Czerwinski at [neighbors@herndonumc.org](mailto:neighbors@herndonumc.org).

Herndon UMC also continues to serve at **The Closet**. Our dates to serve at the Closet include January 27 and February 15. If you would like to be among the first to know about needs for the Closet, please contact Bill and Betty Arey at [thecloset@herndonumc.org](mailto:thecloset@herndonumc.org).

### UPWARD Basketball | by Rachel King

Upward is back for another fun season, welcoming nearly 200 kids to our church! We made it through signups, evaluations, and the first two weeks of practice. New this year, over Christmas break, we held three well-received open gyms that allowed our players to work on their skills and release some pent-up energy!





With our weekends of games now here, I look forward to hosting so many new families and ask that you consider being a part of welcoming them. I'm always looking for scorekeepers and concession stand help, reach out if you would like to volunteer at [upward@herndonumc.org](mailto:upward@herndonumc.org).

**Purple "Food and Love" Bags**  
 Thank you to all who continue to provide food for LINK.  
**The purple bags will be available again starting February to be returned on January 12, 2025.**

## Growing Spirit-filled Relationships

### Join a Group

Joining a group is a great way to connect at Herndon UMC. Find a list of all Herndon UMC groups in the app and on the website ([bit.ly/HerndonGroups](http://bit.ly/HerndonGroups)). In the app, click Connect >> All Open Groups >> View the list. You can filter the results, join the group, or contact the group leader. You may

also contact any staff member for information about groups that may be meaningful to you.

**YoPros** Small Group meets for dinner at 6 pm on Wednesdays. YoPro is short for young professionals. If you want to learn more or get connected, please contact Melissa Chávez at [melissa@herndonumc.org](mailto:melissa@herndonumc.org).

**Top of the Hill**, Herndon UMC retirees meet for lunch on the first Thursday of each month at Noon at Herndon UMC. Learn more or RSVP to Mary Burger at [topofthehill@herndonumc.org](mailto:topofthehill@herndonumc.org).

**Herndon's United Women in Faith** and **United Methodist Men** offer various opportunities to connect in our church family. For information, contact [women@herndonumc.org](mailto:women@herndonumc.org) or [men@herndonumc.org](mailto:men@herndonumc.org).

### KIDS Club (age 3 - grade 6)

On the first Sunday of each month, kids stay with their families in worship to grow their experience and understanding of worship. On other Sundays, children are split into two separate groups for age-appropriate lessons. On the third Sunday, they practice serving others. Contact [kids@herndonumc.org](mailto:kids@herndonumc.org) or [jomo@herndonumc.org](mailto:jomo@herndonumc.org) to get connected or learn more.

### Youth Group (grades 7-12)

Youth large group meets on Sundays at 11:11 am. To stay up-to-date with what is happening for youth, contact [youth@herndonumc.org](mailto:youth@herndonumc.org) or [jomo@herndonumc.org](mailto:jomo@herndonumc.org).

Greetings, Herndon UMC!

I wanted to take a moment to personally thank every one of you for the incredibly warm welcome my wife Sharon and I have received since joining the church family. Transitioning into this new role as the Next Gen Director has been an exciting journey, and your kindness, encouragement, and support have made the transition smooth and joyful. We are deeply grateful for your prayers and hospitality and look forward to growing with all of you in faith, service, and community.

I also want to express my heartfelt thanks to Andrew Bowers, our former Youth Director, for his outstanding leadership and dedication to our youth ministry. His work has laid a solid foundation for the Next Gen programs, and I am honored to build upon his efforts. A big thank you as well to Charity Meals for her incredible work in children's ministry—your contributions have made a lasting impact on our younger generations, and we are excited to carry forward your great work.

As I settle into my new role, I've been truly impressed by the leadership, excellence, and hospitality of the Herndon UMC community. It's evident that this church is a place where God is at work, and I feel blessed to be part of such a vibrant and welcoming congregation.

In the year ahead, I'm excited to get to know both the children and teens of our church in a deeper way—by being an example, building relationships with parents, and, of course, creating fun and meaningful events. I'm looking forward to developing new programs such as monthly outings for teens, skill-building workshops, and even some media creation events where we can capture and share the beauty of the gospel and the spirit of our church community.

However, none of this can be accomplished without the help and support of the volunteers who make our youth and children's ministries possible. If you have a heart for serving, we always need passionate individuals to help guide and mentor the next generation. Whether you are interested in helping with events, leading small groups, or assisting in any way, your support is invaluable.

Once again, thank you to everyone who has helped me settle into this role. Sharon and I are excited to see how God will continue to work through us all in this new season of ministry. We are grateful to be part of such a loving and dynamic church family and look forward to all the ways we will grow together in faith and fellowship.

May Christ be glorified in all we do.

Blessings and Peace,  
Jomo Johnson, Next Gen Director





## Become a Member

If you are new or newly returning to Herndon UMC, welcome! We are so glad you have chosen to serve and share God's love with us. If you are interested in becoming a member of Herndon UMC, please contact the office at [office@herndonumc.org](mailto:office@herndonumc.org).

Discover Herndon is a great way to start a conversation with the staff about how to make connections within Herndon UMC or where your specific gifts would fit best. Join us for lunch after worship on the second Sunday of the month. We try out different restaurants around Herndon as we discover Herndon together. Of course, you may connect with staff at any time. Sending an email to [welcome@herndonumc.org](mailto:welcome@herndonumc.org) serves as an introduction to help get you connected.

## The Return of Handbell Ensemble



With the arrival of Chris Simon as our new Assistant Director of Music Ministry, we're excited to announce the return of our beloved handbell ensemble. [Catch the video of Chris ringing](#) on his first Sunday at Herndon UMC on YouTube. Whether you're a seasoned musician or have never played an instrument, we invite you to join this joyful and fun musical ministry.

To kick things off, we're hosting a **"Try-a-Bell" Interest Meeting** immediately following worship on Sunday, January 26. This is a low-pressure opportunity to explore what it's like to ring handbells and ask questions. Ensemble rehearsals will begin the first week of February, scheduled based on the availability of participants.

### Why Should You Try Ringing Handbells?

1. A Unique Musical Experience. Handbell ringing offers a distinctive way to create music as part of a team.
2. No Experience Required. Whether you read music fluently or not, there's a place for you.
3. Teamwork Skills. Handbell ringing is a group effort, teaching coordination and collaboration.
4. A Joyful Outlet. Making music is a great way to lift your spirits and share joy with others.
5. Intergenerational Fun. Handbell ringing is open to all ages, making it perfect for families or individuals.
6. Worship Enhancement. Be a part of creating beautiful music that enhances worship.
7. Learn Something New. Challenge yourself with a fresh skill and discover hidden talents!

For more information, feel free to contact Chris Simon at [christopher@herndonumc.org](mailto:christopher@herndonumc.org).

If you might be interested in sharing gifts in worship—greeting, reading, providing music or running technology—please contact Melissa Chávez, Director of Worship & Arts, at [melissa@herndonumc.org](mailto:melissa@herndonumc.org).

There are more musical opportunities and new members are always welcome! The **Wesley Choir** practices on Wednesdays at 7 pm. Contact Melissa Chávez at [melissa@herndonumc.org](mailto:melissa@herndonumc.org) to sing for a Sunday or for a season. **Grace Notes**, an intergenerational ukulele group, practices on Mondays and periodically offers music in worship. Contact Margaret Tobat at [margaret@herndonumc.org](mailto:margaret@herndonumc.org) for more information about Grace Notes.

### Some Notes from Leadership

The RMT continued working with hiring teams through Advent and Christmas to interview and approve a new Assistant Director of Music and a Director for Next Generation Ministries (kids and youth). We are very excited to welcome Jomo and Chris.

The **Resource Management Team (RMT)** is our Council, Staff-Parish Relations, and Finance Team. They meet monthly (on the second Monday). The RMT members include Michael Branson (chair), Pastor SeongJae Jo, Melissa Billman, Marcia Henderson, Madeline Hunt, Cathy McCranie, Al Meilus, Charlie Rothrock, Jim Seevers, Jon Simons, and Steve Thompson. Email the full RMT team at [resourcemanagement@herndonumc.org](mailto:resourcemanagement@herndonumc.org).

RMT continues to monitor our financial situation. A mid-year report will be available with the finalized 2024 giving statements by the end of January. If you have questions about Herndon UMC finances, please contact Julie Albanus, Director of Church Operations, [julie@herndonumc.org](mailto:julie@herndonumc.org).

The **Trustees** have continued caring for our beautiful building and property. While working to resolve an urgent issue affecting our tenant, The Children's Place, Trustees also worked with volunteers to solve lighting issues in the church building and plumbing issues at the parsonage. They also made progress towards repairs to woodwork on the "old building" (Sanctuary side). Your financial gifts to and through Herndon UMC help keep our facility safe and welcoming for our church family and the community.

The **Trustees** include Cathy McCranie (chair), Debbie Borden, Warren Cluff, Jim Delisio, Liz Hamrick, Aramis Lopez, Tim Knotts, Bob Weidlich, and Bill Odio. Trustees meet on the second Thursday of each month. If you have ideas for or questions about church improvement projects, maintenance, or repairs, please share them with a Trustee or with [trustees@herndonumc.org](mailto:trustees@herndonumc.org). This email goes to the secretary and chair of Trustees.

The **Missions and Ministries Team (M&M)** meets monthly on the first Tuesday. M&M fosters collaboration and community across generations, interests, and activities. The chair is Jim Seevers and team members include various staff and lay leaders. Contact the M&M at [missionsandministries@herndonumc.org](mailto:missionsandministries@herndonumc.org).

### Calendar and Connections

The full calendar is in the app (**More >> Check the Calendar**) and [herndonumc.org/calendar](https://herndonumc.org/calendar).





There are many ways to know what's going on. Visit [herndonumc.org](http://herndonumc.org), or check the **Herndon UMC app**. Follow or subscribe on social media.

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

**Advent/Christmas Snapshots:**



Santa visiting Top of the Hill with his helper.



Pop-up Pageant cast picture (5 pm Christmas Eve).



Wesley Choir (9 pm Christmas Eve).

The Herndon UMC Staff loves to hear from you! If you would like to catch up with a staff member, it is best to reach out first, to arrange a time and place. Please share your prayers, joys and concerns, and especially your faith stories. We are here to support you!

**Herndon UMC's Staff**

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