



# CENTERVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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*James A. Cannistraci, Pastor*

## PASTOR JIM'S THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS - EASTER 2017

Dear Friends,

Greetings in the name of our Loving God! I don't know about you, but I can hardly believe Easter is fast approaching. It seems like just yesterday we were singing Silent Night and making Christmas cookies!

**The message of Easter is that God's son, Jesus, gave His life so we can have Eternal Life.** That message assures us Jesus rose from death and can live eternally in our hearts. Once we receive the wonderful gift of Eternal Life... we know death no longer frightens us. We also know the "little deaths" of our lives, the sadness, the disappointment, and the shattered dreams - all become more bearable because we know God loves us, cares for us and guides and directs us! God's love and the promise of Eternal Life, gives us the hope we need to enjoy our friends and family and live a meaningful life, even in the midst of all of the changing circumstances of life! Jesus calls that abundant life!!!

When I think about a meaningful life, I think about all the blessings I've been given. I think about how blessed I am to have family and friends who love me. They are my cheering section who tells me to keep trying even when I'm discouraged! They are my cheering section who tells me when I've done something well! I think about how blessed I am to have a home, food, and my health. I think about how blessed I am to live in this great nation where I have the freedom to worship God. When I think about a meaningful life, I think about how blessed I am to have God's love.

**How about you? As Easter approaches, have you accepted the gift of Eternal Life that comes from a relationship with Jesus Christ? Is your life filled with joy as you stop and give thanks for the many blessings that God has for you?**

I hope your faith journey will find you deepening your relationship with God through your personal prayer life, your reading of the Bible and your time spent in worship on Sunday mornings.

I pray you experience God's richest blessings this Easter. I'm looking forward to seeing you in Church!

Love and prayers,

Pastor Jim



Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.

**The people of the United Methodist Church**