

The Greater Olney **Editorial**

Celebrating Sharp Street UMC's rich

Our community is rich in history. In the coming months, we will have an opportunity to honor an important part of that history as Sharp Street United Methodist Church commemorates its 200th anniversary with a series of celebratory festivities recognizing its presence in Sandy Spring.

The theme of the 200th Anniversary is "Marching Toward Our Future".

The Sharp Street Church Anniversary Committee invites the entire community to attend the anniversary events. The first event will be held Sept. 10.

Founded in 1822, Sharp Street United Methodist Church is the oldest African-American church in Montgomery County. The land on which the church stands was deeded to free African Americans in Sandy Spring by Quaker friends.

Sharp Street Church has served as a beacon of hope and freedom in the village of Sandy Spring. Since its founding, the church has maintained a vital presence in the community and has evolved into a vibrant place of worship and educational, social and cultural institution serving African-Americans in Montgomery County.

"This anniversary celebration is an opportunity for us to reflect on how far we have come as a church for the past 200 years and how our presence has provided hope and progress in the community," said the Rev. Diane Dixon-Proctor, pastor of Sharp Street United Methodist Church. "As we march into the future, we plan to reach greater heights and serve people in our community and beyond."

Sharp Street Church's 200th Anniversary highlights will include:

SSUMC Picnic and Parade, Sept. 10, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. — Join for a community-wide parade with floats, music and performances by local groups. After the parade, a picnic will be held at Sharp Street UMC, featuring vendors, food, a health clinic and community resources. Parade route from Sherwood High to Sharp Street UMC

Anniversary Weekend / Community Fellowship, Oct. 14 — Church and community members will join together to reflect and celebrate the 200th Anniversary with prayer, song and fellowship at Sandy Spring Slave Museum, 18524 Brooke Road Sandy Spring.

Anniversary Weekend / An Evening with Sharp Street Reception, Oct. 15, 6-8 p.m., Sandy Spring Museum, 17901 Bentley Road — Enjoy an evening of light hors d'oeuvre and fellowship with members of Sharp Street and community leaders. Guests will have an opportunity to view the museum's exhibit on Sharp Street Church's history.

Anniversary Church Service — Sharp Street Church, 1310 Olney-Sandy Spring Road, will hold a special church service Oct. 16 at 10



a.m. Service will feature a guest speaker, a presentation of the church's history, and uplifting and spirited music. Join in person or on Zoom. Visit the church's website at <https://www.sharpstreetumc.org> for login details.

Children and Youth Worship Service, Nov. 20, 10-11 a.m., Sharp Street UMC, 1310 Olney Sandy Spring Road — Church's youth will lead a child-centric and family-friendly church service that

incorporates traditional worship styles with spirited music and activities for all ages. Join in person or on Zoom. Visit the church's website at <https://www.sharpstreetumc.org> for login details.

Ring of the Church Bell, Dec. 25, 10-11 a.m., Sharp Street UMC, 1310 Olney Sandy Spring Road — Church will host a bell-ringing ceremony where the historic bell on top of the church building will be rung in celebration of the church's 200th anniversary.