



The Saddlebag



Containing the latest dispatches from The First Home of American Methodism

December 2023.

Robert Strawbridge, The First American Methodist Circuit Rider

Vol. I, No. 2



Worship Service Recalls Advents Past

The weather outside was frightful for this year's Advent service at the Strawbridge Shrine, but the rain failed to dampen the spirits of the people who came to worship God in the Log Meeting House. About 35 souls turned out for Shrine's annual Advent service at 4 PM on December 10. The hour-long service included scripture readings, prayers, and traditional carols. At the end, two candles were lighted to represent the light of God's love coming into the world at Christmas, and the light disciples of Jesus reflect into the world. Thanks to everyone who helped make this a meaningful part of the Strawbridge Shrine's "ministry of memory" for 2023.



The Shrine Needs Your Help

Greetings members and friends of the Strawbridge Shrine Association,

The Board of Directors has been very active in several areas this year. We've updated the Shrine's mission statement to focus on the broad impact of the Robert Strawbridge story. We also want to position the Shrine Association for future growth. To build momentum, we need support from you, the members and friends of the Shrine. Financial support is always needed and greatly appreciated. In addition, we also need your active participation in using your skills and abilities to help us make our Association vital for the 21st century.

There are several openings on the Board of Directors that we need to fill for the classes of 2025 and 2026. I invite you to prayerfully consider serving on the Board. Let's begin 2024 with a complete slate of board members.

The Shrine is also in need of a tour coordinator. Tours are an important aspect of our mission. We have several large groups of 20 to 30 people visiting in 2024. We need a tour coordinator to schedule people to assist the curator when we have these large groups.



Have you heard of the Celebrate America Project? Its mission is "to commemorate our country's 250th anniversary with inclusive programs that inspire Americans to renew and strengthen our daring experiment in democracy." The State of Maryland is supporting this project, and some funding is available for participating organizations. This is an opportunity for the Shrine. We need four or five volunteers to develop an event for the Shrine's participation in the Celebrate America Project.

I look forward to hearing your offers of support as we continue to develop and grow.

Grace and peace, Mary Buzby, President

"The mission of the Strawbridge Shrine Association is to preserve, interpret, and share the founding story of American Methodism through the life and legacy of Robert Strawbridge."

New Signs Tell Story of Strawbridge Buildings

Two new signs have been installed on the Shrine campus to help tell the remarkable story of the historic buildings associated with Robert Strawbridge. The signs, which were donated in memory of long-time Board member Ken Stewart, are located next to the road. One near the Strawbridge House describes the home's evolution from 18th century log cabin to early 19th century farmhouse. The other sign, located near the Meeting House, provides an overview of the historic buildings in Carroll County associated with Robert Strawbridge. The buildings in this cluster include those on the Shrine campus (the John Evans House, the Meetinghouse, and the Strawbridge House), along with Bethel Church, the Henry Willis House, the Poulson House, and Stone Chapel. The signs are professionally done and add significantly to our ability to share the story of Robert Strawbridge with our guests. Check them out next time you visit.



Coming in 2024: Strawbridge Shrine Ornaments



Next year, the Strawbridge Shrine Association will begin selling ornaments depicting the historic buildings, people, and events associated with Robert Strawbridge. The ornaments are made of brass and come with a colored ribbon that can be used to hang them up for display. Each ornament comes with a card that describes the historical significance of the building or person depicted. The first ornament in this series celebrates the Robert Strawbridge House as the "First Home of American Methodism." Future additions to the series will cover the other historic buildings on our site, a depiction of Robert Strawbridge, and monuments associated with the Strawbridges. Sale of these ornaments will help raise much-needed funds for the Shrine Association's current and

future operations. Each ornament is \$20. Ornaments will be available for purchase at the annual meeting in January 2024, and at the Shrine Visitor's Center. Details on ordering online will be available early next year.

Annual Meeting Preview

The Shrine Association's annual meeting will take place at Linganore UMC on January 20, 2024. The day begins at 10 AM with a worship service led by Shrine President Rev. Mary Buzby. A brief business meeting, during which we will elect Board officers and approve a budget for 2024, follows worship. Participants are invited to join us for a lunch in the Linganore social hall. Our guest speaker will be Jennifer Secki Shields from Discovery and Faith, an organization that facilitates discussion on faith-science issues from a Wesleyan perspective. Tickets for the lunch are \$15 and can be purchased online at the Zeffy [website](#). We suggest making a \$1.00 donation as a transaction fee. We hope you will join us as the Strawbridge Shrine Association plans for a vibrant future sharing the story of early American Methodism.

Strawbridge Shrine Calendar of Events

Dec 25, 2023	Merry Christmas!
Jan 20, 2024	Annual Meeting @ Linganore UMC
April 1	Opening Day
May 25	Tour Group from Smyrna, GA
June 15	Colonial Days

Support the Strawbridge Shrine through Online Giving

Everything we do at the Strawbridge Shrine depends on your generous financial support. Your donations make it possible for us to host tour groups, put on special events, maintain our buildings, and improve our ability to share the story of Robert & Elizabeth Strawbridge for future generations. Our online donation site is hosted by Zeffy. Click [here](#) if you would like to make an online donation. Zeffy solicits donations for using its service; we recommend using 3 to 4 percent of the transaction. Thank you for your faithful support of the Strawbridge Shrine.

The Strawbridge Shrine is located at 2650 Strawbridge Lane, New Windsor, MD 21776

Visit our website www.strawbridgeshrine.org, or call 443-289-0191 to learn more about the First Home of American Methodism.