

Eastport United Methodist Church Little Free Library

The Eastport Methodist Little Free Library (LFL) is located near the children's playground on the church's property, across from the Eastport Fire Station on Jefferson Street. The Church LFL steward is Jen Smith, a 7th grade science teacher in the Anne Arundel County Public School system. It was Jen's idea to put a LFL on the church property. Jen was worried that the literacy gains by some of the youngest students were being lost due to the closing of schools this year as a result of the pandemic.



The Church LFL was built by Bill Schneider, painted by Anne Owen and Paulette Schwallenberg and sponsored by the Outreach Team and the Homework and Reading Program.

The Church LFL design is significantly larger than the usual little free library. There are three distinct compartments to better serve three different ages of the readers. The lowest compartment is just 8" off the ground to allow toddlers to choose their picture books. The middle compartment is focused for youth in middle or high school. This compartment is filled with books with popular series, like Harry Potter, Twilight and the Hunger Games. The top compartment contains books for adults.

The Church LFL is unique in offering Spanish and English bi-lingual classics, which allows parents to read in Spanish while their children read in English. They offer Spanish adult bestsellers from donations from the neighbors.

The Church LFL participates in "Read in Color" - a timely initiative bringing diverse books with book-sharing boxes across the country and worldwide. "Read in Color" distributes books that provide perspectives on racism and social justice, celebrate BIPOC and LGBTQ voices, and incorporate experiences from all identities for all readers. "Little Free Library believes everyone should be able to see themselves in the pages of a book" said LFL Executive Director Greig Metzger. "We also believe a broader awareness of the diverse life experiences in American can break down barriers and nurture a deeper understanding of our society's inequities."

The church leadership and congregation enjoy seeing a child excited to select a new book or seeing someone enjoying the garden bench as reading aloud to a child.

You can donate any book as the Church LFL has a spectrum serving toddlers to grandparents.