

# THE TOWER

## MONTHLY

LOVELY LANE | BALTIMORE CITY STATION



VOLUME 15, ISSUE 1

September 2016

## OPEN HEARTS

### Lovely Lane

United Methodist Church

MOTHER CHURCH OF  
AMERICAN METHODISM



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9 AM — 2 PM

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Rev. Travis Knoll

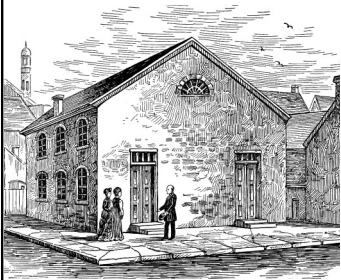
LAY LEADER  
John Strawbridge

ORGANIST  
Bill Scanlan Murphy

PASTOR EMERITA  
Rev. Nancy Nedwell

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT  
Lena Leone

SEXTON  
Ivan Reyes



### *To the Saints at Lovely Lane-*

Grace to you & peace from God our Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost. It is a joy to once again be able to share with you the good news of our faith in the midst of trying times. These are indeed trying times. Peace is elusive, justice is too often mocked, and divide and conquer seems to be the order of the day. The turmoil of terror, the harm of hatred, and the pain of politics are upon us daily. The result? Suffering. What shall we then do, whence cometh our hope?

In no small way, our expectations in this regard are unhelpful. We seem to think that if we are good, we should avoid pain and suffering. We ask why bad things happen to good people, as if they shouldn't. Yet the Bible tells us that rain falls on the just and the unjust alike. Jesus, in fact, said that faithful followers should expect extra suffering for their very faithfulness:

"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you." - Matthew 5:10-12

There is, in fact, an entire book of the Bible dedicated to this very question of suffering and our response to it - the book of Job. In this book, one identified as the most righteous of his age is subjected to suffering as a test of his faithfulness - with remarkable results. Job says it this way:

"Shall we receive the good at the hand of God, and not receive the bad?" - Job 2:10b  
The world we live in is firmly committed to the amelioration or avoidance of suffering. Chemical escape is offered via pills, pipes, and needles. Mental escape via distraction, meditation, hyper-activity, and other separation techniques abound. In all of these, suffering is the problem, and the goal is avoidance or escape. To enjoy our own suffering is considered a mental illness - masochism. I love suffering about as much as the next person, but I have noticed that times of suffering often are

also times of spiritual growth for me. Is this a coincidence? If not, then might there not be something we should seek to learn in the midst of our suffering, rather than simply seeking to avoid it? Brennan Manning puts it this way:

"The dominant characteristic of an authentic spiritual life is the gratitude that flows from trust - not only for all the gifts that I receive from God, but gratitude for all the suffering. Because in that purifying experience, suffering has often been the shortest path to intimacy with God."

Brennan points out that not only is my experience not unique, but it should lead me (and all of us) to be grateful for our suffering, since suffering can lead to a greater good, intimacy with God. Not all suffering does so. Sometimes we allow suffering to make us bitter toward God, to cut us off from God. Yet as the old song said, "I beg your pardon, I never promised you a rose garden." God promises not to help us avoid suffering, but to be with us in the midst of it - comforting with his rod and his staff as we walk together through the valley of the shadow.

Where, then, does this leave us? Do justice, love mercy, but most of all walk humbly with your God. If suffering helps with the last, give God the praise - because what more can we do? Intimacy with God is something that cannot be taken from us, not by principalities, nor powers, not anything in all of creation. Not even by suffering, if we refuse to allow it to.

In the darkest hour, light shines the brightest. If the darkness reveals the light, I will thank God for it. In the deepest valley, God's comfort means the most. If the deepest valley reveals God's presence and comfort, I will thank God for the valley. In the least just, peaceful, or gracious time, God's love means the most. If injustice, war, and hard times reveal God's love, I will thank God for them.

Live in God's love, and do not seek hope in the world. It will only disappoint.

Grace and peace,

*Travis*

# OPEN DOORS

RESTORATION GIFTS	SUNDAY LEADERSHIP	LECTIONARY READINGS
<p align="center"><b><u>In Memory of</u></b>                      Rev. John Park  <i>Laura &amp; Louis Coleman</i>                      Rainer von Saleski  <i>Carol Curtis</i>    <i>Linda Webb</i>  <i>UMC Board of Church &amp; Society</i>  <i>Carol Curtis</i>  <i>Saleem &amp; Roseline Gauhar</i></p>	<p><b><u>Tour Guides</u></b>                      Sept 4 Lee Enos                      Sept 11 Sarah Scribner                      Sept 18 Cathy Dryden                      Sept 25 Craig Smith</p> <p><b><u>Greeters</u></b>                      Sept 4 Aimee &amp; Ken Delany                      Sept 11 Dennis &amp; Angie Ferguson                      Sept 18 Abedoh /Enos Family                      Sept 25 Carrie Harnick</p>	<p><b>Sept 4</b>  <i>16th Sunday after Pentecost</i>                      Jeremiah 18:1-11                      Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18 (UMH 854)                      Philemon 1:1-21                      Luke 14:25-33</p> <p><b>Sept 11</b>  <i>17th Sunday after Pentecost</i>                      Jeremiah 4:11-12, 22-28                      Psalm 14 (UMH 746)                      1 Timothy 1:12-17                      Luke 15:1-10</p> <p><b>Sept 18</b>  <i>18th Sunday after Pentecost</i>                      Jeremiah 8:18-9:1                      Psalm 79:1-9 or Psalm 4 (UMH 741)                      1 Timothy 2:1-7                      Luke 16:1-13</p> <p><b>Sept 25</b>  <i>19th Sunday after Pentecost</i>                      Jeremiah 32:1-3a, 6-15                      Psalm 91:1-6, 14-16 (UMH 810)                      1 Timothy 6:6-19                      Luke 16:19-31</p> <div align="right" data-bbox="1234 1155 1372 1270"> </div>
<p align="center"><b>MANNA HOUSE</b>  <b>435 E 25TH STREET, BALTIMORE 21218</b>  <b>410-889-3001</b></p> <p>The Drop-In-Center provides a morning meal from 8:30 to 10:15, every day of the week. Other services continue from 11:30 AM until 4 PM (Monday through Friday).</p> <p>Among other services, clients are given access to a phone to make important phone calls, given the chance to fill out a clothing form to request a bag of clothes, given the chance to take a warm shower, provided with food vouchers to a local food pantry, assisted with applications for birth certificates or ID's, assistance with completing paperwork, given bus tokens for documented appointments, and access to case management. Many clients just need someone who will listen to them... that can be the biggest service of all!</p> <p align="center"><b>Your support makes a difference!</b></p>		

## ANNUAL MEETING OF THE UM HISTORICAL SOCIETY

On Saturday, September 10th, the United Methodist Historical Society will have its Annual Meeting at Lovely Lane. The business meeting begins at 9:30 AM. Following that, at 10:30 AM in the Sanctuary, the guest speaker will be John Strawbridge, who will present his talk, "Rambles through the United States: Asbury in America" which was originally presented in England for the Asbury 200 commemoration. Following the talk there will be a box lunch, and the Re-opening of the Museum, featuring the exhibits "The Brand and the Bishop" and "Methodism's Malcontents."

All events are free, except the lunch (\$8.00). To register or order a lunch, visit [LovelyLaneMuseum.org/contact](http://LovelyLaneMuseum.org/contact).



## SPECIAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY

Towson UMC is hosting a 4 session course on the church as a missional community. Laity will be encouraged to understand themselves as missionaries to our neighborhood and world with examples, suggestions, and discernment advice as well as guidance on how to work with the congregation in partnership missionally.

If you are interested in participating, please let the office know and we will get you more information and reserve a space for you. The class meets on Sundays from 4:30-7:30 (dinner provided) on 9/18, 10/9, 10/30, and 11/20. Scholarships are available to cover the cost.

## ROCK 2017 REGISTRATION OPENS

Rock is an annual Christian youth retreat in Ocean City in January led by the Baltimore Washington Conference of the United Methodist Church. 3000-5000 youths, youth leaders, and youth pastors will gather to praise God and hear encouraging testimony. This weekend event has had great impact on primarily High School aged young people. If you are interested in going, let Pastor Travis know soon and we will see if we can make appropriate arrangements.

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## OPEN MINDS

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### *From the Lay Leader...*

"Sleeper, awake!"

Just five more minutes...

What is it that makes you get up? Does your alarm clock prompt you to go to work? To school? Does your cat or dog demand that you get up and tend to him? Does your neighbor's banging trash cans or slamming car door disturb you? Maybe the nagging sunlight makes it impossible to stay asleep.

Just five more minutes...

How nice would it be to rest just a little longer? How much more ready will you be after just another moment or two with your eyes closed?

"Sleeper, awake!"

Just five more minutes...

After our night's sleep – how ever long or short it may be – we convince ourselves that just a few minutes more will make us ready. Five minutes turns into ten, and ten into fifteen. And you are still not ready. Worse; you are late. It is always too soon to face the day, until it is too late. It is never the right time.

The words, "Sleeper, awake!" are found in Paul's epistle to the Ephesians. Paul tells them, "For once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light."

It is striking that Paul does not say, "in darkness," or "in light." But that "you were darkness," and now "you are light." He is not saying that the light will awaken you... but that you must awaken others. You will say,

"Sleeper, awake!"

And they will say, "Just five more minutes..."

Paul is writing to a church of gentiles – people unlike himself. "You were," he reminds them, "strangers to the covenant of promise, having no hope and without God in the world."

Did they say to Paul, "Just five more minutes..?"

"But now—in Christ Jesus—you who once were far off have been brought near. For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us."

It is a remarkable time for the church in which Paul is writing. A time when two groups of people who seemed so far apart that they could never have common ground, have found that not only could they be reconciled, but they have come to realize that they are really one people. That whatever anger divided them is broken down in Christ.

To achieve this unity, Paul tells them, "We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming."

Can you imagine living in such a time?

He goes on to say how we can be light; "But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together... promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love."

Speak the truth in love. Join together. Build up in love.

As children, we were woken up by our parents who had to make sure we got to school, or to church, or to wherever we were going on time. Paul reminds us that now we must be the adults. We must be the ones to wake up others. We must be light.

Not in five minutes. The time is now.

Peace,

*John Strawbridge,*  
LAY LEADER

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### THANK YOU, JACKIE AND CAROL!

Jackie Noller has agreed to help the church leadership team by assuming the roles of Finance Committee Co-Chair and manager of the Trustees and Restoration accounts. This was in response to a request by Carol Curtis. Special thanks to Carol, who continues as co-chair, for her service past and ongoing, and to Jackie for stepping up to help us in a new way starting this summer.

### DISCIPLE 1 ORGANIZING SESSION

We are on the cusp of enough people to hold a Disciple 1 Bible Study this year with a few additions from other nearby churches. In an attempt to get organized, we will meet together briefly following worship and lemonade on the porch on Sunday, September 4th. If you are interested in more information, please contact Pastor Travis. Also, if you will be unable to attend our organizing meeting, please speak with Travis regarding your scheduling availability so your needs and voice can be considered as we plan our study together.

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### TWO COMMUNITY WALKS SCHEDULED

On Friday, September 9th from 6:30-7:30 pm a community strengthening walk will be led by our local Community Services Officer. The goal of this is to strengthen community and foster communication among residents. Meet at the office entrance for a walk to learn about and connect with our neighbors. Come out if you are able and interested.

Also, on Saturday, September 24 from 8-9 am (before our work day) we will hold our second prayer walk in our neighborhood. July's prayer walk was very successful, with all involved being blessed. Come and join us in praying for individuals in our community. We will meet at the office entrance. Water bottles and granola bars to share will be available.

### SUNDAY SCHOOL STARTING

We begin September 11 at 9:45 am, in the Pastor's Study. We begin with *The Story Continues: The Acts of the Apostles for Today*, a 12 session study with a workbook (provided). Bring your own Bible, or use one of ours. Please drop by and learn with us. All are welcome. This study is geared toward teens and adults, primarily.

**OUR MISSION:** To celebrate the vision of God’s Good News in Jesus Christ in liturgy, learning, and life, through the revitalization of our congregation, the restoration of our building, and the strengthening of our traditions, while recognizing our unique presence and mission in Baltimore City.



**LOVELY LANE  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
2200 ST. PAUL STREET  
BALTIMORE, MD 21218-5805

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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Organization  
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**TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL**  
*THANK YOU FOR PROMPT DELIVERY!*

**CALENDAR**

**Every Sunday**

Worship, **11 AM**  
Fellowship Hour/Guided Tour, **12 NOON**

**Every Wednesday**

Baltimore Folk Music Society, **8 PM**  
weekly dances

**Every Saturday**

Seidel Martial Arts, **8 AM**

**Sunday, September 4**

**Worship, Sanctuary, 10 AM**  
Lemonade on the Portico, 11 AM  
Disciple Bible Study Planning Meeting,  
Portico, 11:15 AM

**Monday, September 5**

Labor Day - Office Closed

**Friday, September 9**

Community Walk, Office Entrance, 6:30 PM

**Saturday, September 10**

UMHS Annual Meeting, Sanctuary & LL Hall, 9:30 AM

**Sunday, September 11**

**Worship, Sanctuary, 11 AM**  
Fellowship Hour Resumes, LL Hall, 12 PM

**Tuesday, September 13**

Finance Committee Meeting, Pastor’s Study, 5 PM  
Old Goucher Community Association Meeting,  
LL Hall, 7 PM

**Sunday, September 18**

Dr. Emora Brannan Preaching, Sanctuary, 11 AM  
Church Council Meeting, LL Hall, 12:30 PM

**Monday, September 19**

SPRC Meeting, Pastor’s Study, 7 PM

**Saturday, September 24**

Prayer Walk, Office Entrance, 8 AM  
Church Work Day, 9 AM

**Saturday, October 1**

Baltimore Rhythm Festival

