

THE TOWER MONTHLY

LOVELY LANE | BALTIMORE CITY STATION

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Lovely Lane United Methodist Church

MOTHER CHURCH OF
AMERICAN METHODISM



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Baltimore MD 21218-5805

Worship 11:00 AM

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Monday — Friday
9 AM — 2 PM

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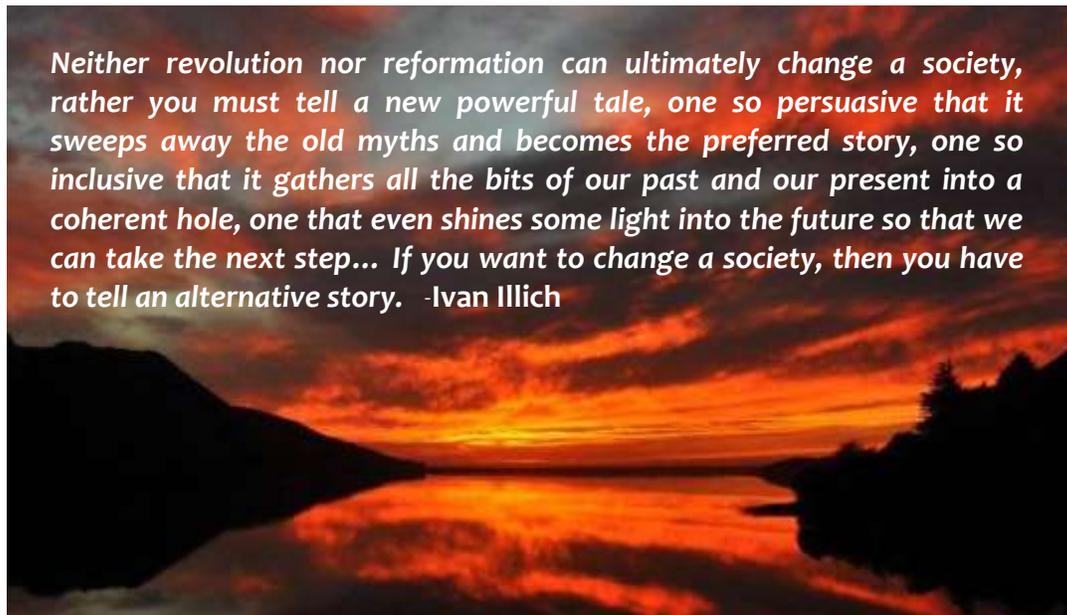
FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK: THE QUESTION ON EVERYONE'S MIND, "WHAT'S NEXT FOR UNITED METHODISTS?"

Erik Alsgaard writes for our Annual Conference, "United Methodists across the United States are gathering by the hundreds to try and figure out what's next. Following the adoption – and subsequent ruling of the Judicial Council affirming – the Traditional Plan at the Special General Conference Session in February, those across the theological spectrum are putting plans in place for the future of the denomination, be it separate or together. But they have to hurry. The next General Conference begins on May 5, 2020, in Minneapolis, Minn., and, per the Book of Discipline, petitions must be submitted 230 days prior to the start, or Sept. 18, 2019."

The Council of Bishops met in Chicago the early part of May, 2019 for the first time following the General Conference in St. Louis, this is what our Bishop had to say following that meeting, "The prevailing understanding is that we must find new ways of relating to one another that promote faithfulness in our mission, prevent harm, and respect our diversity. We also agreed that there is no-one-size-fits-all, quick transition into this new reality... How we listen and respond to one another, speak of and about one another, criticize and critique one another matters greatly. When this new model is birthed, it must have been created, gestated, and born of love, or it will not be of God. As we committedly and earnestly walk through this season of United Methodism, I pray that we remember who and whose we are. Even in our deep and legitimate pain we are disciples of Jesus Christ. As disciples, we are yet called to make disciples, and to model the One who called us into this transforming relationship."

I have been engaged in all sorts of conversations as we collectively try to figure out what the next steps are for our denomination. Much of my thoughts are summarized in this powerful quote:

Neither revolution nor reformation can ultimately change a society, rather you must tell a new powerful tale, one so persuasive that it sweeps away the old myths and becomes the preferred story, one so inclusive that it gathers all the bits of our past and our present into a coherent hole, one that even shines some light into the future so that we can take the next step... If you want to change a society, then you have to tell an alternative story. -Ivan Illich



(continued)

Do we have a new story to tell as God is calling us into the future. At Lovely Lane UMC we are in a very unique position to understand that the past informs the future. One of the attendees at the meeting, happening as I write, of Progressives and Centrists gathered at Church of the Resurrection UMC, Adam Hamilton's Church said this: *My hope for UMC Next is that a large majority of United Methodists, at least United Methodists in the U.S., will be able to walk together into the future hand in hand in the spirit of Wesley's sermon Catholic Spirit. Wesley takes as his text 2 Kings 10:15. Jehu meets Jehonadab and says, "if your heart is as my heart, take my hand." If our hearts are the same, even if we disagree on particulars, then take my hand and let's walk together. That's what I want to do.*

Now go back a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away to one of my favorite scenes in The Force Awakens (which in this Star Wars geek's opinion is one of the best movies in the series). Finn (John Boyega) is on the run from the First Order. He's standing next to Rey (Daisy Ridley), who is now guilty by association. When they're spotted by stormtroopers, Finn grabs Rey's hand and tells her to run. He keeps tugging her hand while they're running until Rey says, "Let go of me! I know how to run without you holding my hand!" After hiding briefly they take off to run again. Finn - again - grabs Rey's hand and Rey yells, "Stop taking my hand!"

So here's my aha moment. I want to put myself in the role of Jehu (Finn) and not Jehonadab (Rey). I want to say, "If your heart is as my heart, take my hand," or "I want to help save you, so take my hand." In today's context, that's not what I need to say. I do believe that we need to hold hands and move forward together. But I don't get to demand it. I don't get to offer a hand to someone on my terms. A better approach in today's context for me, and maybe for some of you reading this too, is a question instead of a command. "I think my heart is as your heart. Can we hold hands together?" I hope the answer is yes.

I believe our hearts can be united if we listen to the voice of God that continues to speak. I read and preached on Acts 11:1-18 last Sunday, look it up. "The bottom line, Who are we to Hinder God?" If we walk in faith, hand in hand, I trust God will lead us where we need to be. It might look different from what we have known, but it is where God is calling us to be.

Grace and Peace,
Rev. Debbie Scott

P.S. AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING AT CHURCH OF THE RESURRECTION IN KANSAS CITY, THESE FOUR COMMITMENTS WERE UNANIMOUSLY VOTED AS A SUMMARY OF THEIR WORK TOGETHER.

FOUR COMMITMENTS OF UMCNEXT

We believe these commitments are essential to a hope-filled future for the global Methodist movement as we make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world:

1. We long to be passionate followers of Jesus Christ, committed to a Wesleyan vision of Christianity, anchored in scripture and informed by tradition, experience and reason as we live a life of personal piety and social holiness.
2. We commit to resist evil, injustice and oppression in all forms and toward all people and build a church which affirms the full participation of all ages, nations, races, classes, cultures, gender identities, sexual orientations, and abilities.
3. We reject the Traditional Plan approved at General Conference 2019 as inconsistent with the gospel of Jesus Christ and will resist its implementation.
4. We will work to eliminate discriminatory language and the restrictions and penalties in the Discipline regarding LGBTQ persons. We affirm the sacred worth of LGBTQ persons, celebrate their gifts, and commit to being in ministry together.

I have little interest in horse racing. As a sport, it's a little hard to relate to. Historically it is "the sport of kings," telling us that only the privileged may play. But at this time of year we all become horse racing fanatics. The Triple Crown races have everyone watching, cheering and picking their favorites.

At this year's Preakness Stakes something strange – and kind of wonderful – happened. One of the horses bucked off its rider, then went on to run the race of its life. Not his best race (he only came in seventh), but certainly his most famous. He seemed to truly enjoy the run, and even continued for a second lap. For maybe the first time in history, commentators are talking about a horse having fun. Almost no one was talking about who won the race. Everyone is talking about the horse that loved to run.

As a culture, we do love competition. Even more, we like talking about competition. Whether it's sports or politics or "reality" TV, we are obsessed with gamesmanship.

Our church is not immune to this. To be ordained as a clergy of the Church, it is not enough to study scripture or profess your faith or even to commit yourself to the service of God. Candidates for ordination must meet certain "rules" of the church. They must be interviewed and compared with other candidates. Those deemed worthy are passed along to be voted upon.

This has become an issue of fierce debate in our denomination, as many people are challenging the rules that determine who makes it to the finish and who gets put out of the game. And it will continue to anger and divide the church until people realize that it is not the rules that are wrong, it's the game itself.

As Christians, all attempts at ordination of clergy must look back to Christ calling the disciples who would be his ministers and his apostles to the world when he was gone. Today we try to hold our clergy to a Christly standard of piety and purity. But Jesus, in his calling, did nothing of the kind. He did not go around calling the most worthy. He chose very ordinary people for his ordinations. Some, like Matthew, were considered to be hated if not criminal. Others were intolerant fanatics.

Not all were poor. Not all were charismatic. Jesus drew a pretty good cross section of people with one exception – he didn't choose anyone who was a trained religious leader.

Jesus knew that his church must speak to everyone; sinners, slaves, and debtors included. Jesus didn't want teachers – he wanted witnesses. He wanted apostles that people would listen to because they were like them.

When John Wesley needed someone to go to America and minister to his followers there, he didn't examine his preachers to figure out who was best suited. He simply asked in a meeting "Who will go..?" And when one man stood up and said "I will," Wesley sent him. That man, Francis Asbury, would go on to be the first bishop of the new denomination. And when Asbury needed to reach the people of America, he didn't comb through its schools for the most learned. He called upon an uneducated and illiterate man of African descent named Harry Hosier, whom he labeled "the greatest preacher in America."

In this year's Kentucky Derby, there was much debate and frustration over who technically won the race because there was an issue of rules. The horse who came in first was disqualified and another was elevated. Yet a couple weeks later another horse bucked its rider altogether and ran for the sheer joy of it. No one cared if he won or lost. But everyone was talking about him.

If our denomination has horse sense, then it will learn that the game of rules is the wrong game. If we will follow the example of Christ, we will call not the kings, but the commoners. Not those who have no sin but those who know what redemption means. Not those who are the fastest, but those who love to run the most.

Peace,
John Strawbridge
LAY LEADER



Membership

Greetings from Linda Webb, new membership Chair for Lovely Lane United Methodist Church. We are updating the Official Membership Records and would like accurate information about church membership, which is part of our annual statistical report. Why is this information important? The church has the privilege of preserving, sharing, and utilizing the records of God's people while maintaining contact with its members and encouraging them to be responsible participants in the ongoing life of our church. There are different types of membership in the United Methodist Church - member or associate/affiliate member. In addition, we maintain a constituency roll, friends and community folks who have expressed interest, but do not wish to join. To assist me, if you know or can locate the information when you became a baptized and/or permanent member of Lovely Lane, please e-mail this information to me at lwebb6666@aol.com. This will just help confirm that our information is accurate.

If you would like information about baptism or becoming a member of Lovely Lane UMC, please let Rev. Deb Scott know by emailing revdeb8@aol.com or calling Rev. Deb Scott at 301-641-4601.

Annual Conference 5/29 - 6/1

The 235th Session of the Baltimore-Washington Conference was held Wednesday, May 29, through Saturday, June 1, 2019, at the Baltimore Waterfront Marriott Hotel. The expanded four-day session provided time for increased youth participation this year. The theme of the conference was "We are One: United to Love." The foundational Scripture for the Conference continues to be Ephesians 4:1-16. Annual Conference is the basic decision-making body of the UM church, and this year's session included more than twenty resolutions and reports to be debated and voted upon. Included among these is the resolution "Called Back to Our Methodist Roots" which calls for a denomination-wide conference at Lovely Lane. The session also included the memorial service and service of Ordinations - both of which employed artifacts from the Lovely Lane Museum.

Please keep Annual Conference in prayer as we find a Way Forward. Many fear it will be a contentious meeting, we pray that the Holy Spirit will be present to guide and direct where God is calling us.



Colonial Day at Strawbridge Shrine 6/15

The fourth annual Colonial Day at the Strawbridge Shrine is Saturday, June 12th from 10:00 am - 2:00 pm. The event features 18th century period crafts people and demonstrations. The historic buildings will be open with guides in colonial costume standing by. Admission is free. Fresh-grilled chicken and fish lunches will be for sale by Strawbridge UMC. Enjoy a day in the country air, it will be a great family outing.

The Strawbridge Shrine owes its existence to the efforts of Dr. George C.M. Roberts, pastor of Lovely Lane (First Church) and founder of our Historical Society, and to the research of Ruthella Mory Bibbins, a member of Lovely Lane (First Church) and graduate of the Baltimore Woman's College (Goucher). It is located at 2650 Strawbridge Lane, New Windsor, MD 21776.

Anniversary Sunday 6/23 & Display of Recent Museum Acquisition

Anniversary Sunday will be celebrated in worship Sunday, June 23rd with a luncheon to follow. As part of the worship service, we will be acknowledging the recent acquisition of a collection of Wedgewood, Staffordshire and rare Wesley memorabilia and to the museum, donated by the family of Rev. L. Carroll Yingling. If you are willing to bring a salad, main dish or dessert for the luncheon please contact Betsy Fisk, Sarah Scribner or Nancy Brannan.

Summer Schedule 7/7 - 9/9 & Lemonade on the Portico

Please be reminded that starting July 7th, Lovely Lane begins its summer schedule (which continues through the Sunday after Labor Day). Worship will begin at 10:00 am. Instead of our Coffee Hour in the social hall, we will enjoy a cool glass of lemonade on the St. Paul Street portico at 11:00 am after worship. The Sunday tour will also begin at 11:00 am.

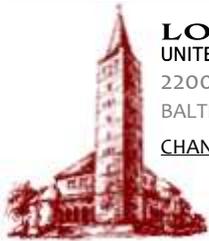
Save the Date: 7/10 Frances Munn Roberts' Book Reading

Save the date of July 10, 2019 for an event at the 2nd Wednesdays at the VLP program. Lovely Lane's own, Frances Munn Roberts, will be reading excerpts from her novel, The War Brides of 24th Street, with a Q & A session to follow.

2nd Wednesdays is a series of free lectures, concerts, and special arts events. This series spotlights local talent and provides community adults an opportunity to spend time sharing culture and conversation with neighbors. It's held on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00 pm, 2521 St Paul St. Parking is available in the lot across the street.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 11 AM Worship Service 12 PM Fellowship Hour 12 PM Public Tour	27 Memorial Day Office Closed 6:30 PM Baltimore Tai Chi	28	29 BWC Annual Conference 8 PM BFMS Dance	30 BWC Annual Conference 6 PM Grace Abounds Youth Dance Ministry 11:30 AM First UMC Tour	31 BWC Annual Conference	1 BWC Annual Conference 8 AM Martial Arts Class 9 AM Church Work Day 10:30 AM Mill Creek Parish & Emory Grove UMC Tour 11:30 AM Flamenco Practice
2 11 AM Worship Service 12 PM Fellowship Hour 12 PM Public Tour 2 PM Hunt's Memorial UMC Tour	3 12 PM BLS Internship Luncheon 6:30 PM Baltimore Tai Chi	4	5 10 AM Middle School Awards & Graduation 8 PM BFMS Dance	6 10:30 AM Grace UMC Tour 6 PM Grace Abounds Youth Dance Ministry	7	8 8 AM Martial Arts Class 11:30 AM Flamenco Practice
9 11 AM Worship Service 12 PM Fellowship Hour 12 PM Public Tour	10 6:30 PM Baltimore Tai Chi	11	12 8 AM Lower School Awards & Graduation 8 PM BFMS Dance	13 6 PM Grace Abounds Youth Dance Ministry	14	15 Baltimore Pride Parade 8 AM Martial Arts Class 10 AM Colonial Day at Strawbridge Shrine
16 Father's Day 11 AM Worship Service 12 PM Fellowship Hour 12 PM Public Tour 12:30 PM Church Council Meeting Concord UMC Tour & Overnight 12 PM Move Dance Workshop	17 9 AM Move Move Dance Workshop 6:30 PM Baltimore Tai Chi	18 9 AM Move Move Dance Workshop	19 9 AM Move Move Dance Workshop 8 PM BFMS Dance	20 9 AM Move Move Dance Workshop 6 PM Grace Abounds Youth Dance Ministry	21 9 AM Move Move Dance Workshop	22 Matthews UMC Overnight Arrives 8 AM Martial Arts Class 9 AM Move Move Dance Workshop
23 Anniversary Sunday 11 AM Worship Service 12 PM Luncheon & The Carroll Yingling Collection of Wesleyana Display 12 PM Public Tour 12 PM Move Move Dance Workshop & Performance Matthews UMC Overnight	24 Matthews UMC Overnight 6:30 PM Baltimore Tai Chi	25 Matthews UMC Overnight	26 Matthews UMC Overnight 8 PM BFMS Dance	27 Matthews UMC Overnight 6 PM Grace Abounds Youth Dance Ministry	28 Matthews UMC Overnight	29 Matthews UMC Overnight 8 AM Martial Arts Class
30 Matthews UMC Overnight Departs 11 AM Worship Service 12 PM Fellowship Hour 12 PM Public Tour						

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.



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JUNE SCHEDULE

OPEN DOORS

	June 2	June 9	June 16	June 23	June 30
Altar Flowers	(OPEN)	In Honor of Our Lay Leader, John Strawbridge & Colonial Day at Strawbridge Shrine on June 15th	IHO All Fathers & In Celebration of the Birthday of Carol Curtis By Lenore Baier & Julia Henslee	In Honor of Anniversary Sunday & The Rev. L. Carroll Yingling Collection of Wesleyana	(OPEN)
Greeters	Jackie Noller & Betsy Fisk	Abedoh & Enos Family	Marisa, Johnny & Daria Olszewski	Aimee & Ken Delaney	Kristie Weimar & Brent Orr
Liturgists	Lee Enos	Betsy Fisk	Dan Bailey	Carol Curtis	Cathy Dryden
Tour Guides	Eleanor Packard	Linda Webb	Lee Enos	Sarah Scribner	Cathy Dryden
Fellowship Hour Hosts	Sarah Scribner	Marisa Olszewski	Sharra Kelly	Betsy Fisk	Kristie Weimar & Brent Orr