

THE TOWER MONTHLY

LOVELY LANE | BALTIMORE CITY STATION



VOLUME 21, ISSUE 2

October 2023

Lovely Lane United Methodist Church

MOTHER CHURCH OF
AMERICAN METHODISM



2200 Saint Paul Street
Baltimore MD 21218-5805

Worship Online 11:00 AM

Office Hours
Tuesday, Wednesday,
Thursday,
& Friday
8:00 AM — 3:00 PM

Phone
410-889-1512

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LovelyLane.BCS@gmail.com

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LovelyLane.net

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Rev. Debbie Scott

SEXTON
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Fatima Black



From the Pastor's Desk:

Dear Beloved Lovely Lane Church Family,

As the vibrant colors of autumn paint our surroundings and the crisp breeze carries the promise of change, I am deeply grateful for the privilege of sharing this pastoral letter with you in the beautiful month of October.

This October, we find ourselves immersed in the season of harvest. It's a time when fields yield their bounty, and our hearts are naturally drawn to the concept of gratitude. Just as the earth offers its gifts, so too does our Heavenly Father provide for us abundantly. Let us remember to give thanks not only for the tangible blessings but also for the love and grace that surround us.

Change is in the air, both in the world around us and within our own lives. The falling leaves remind us that transformation is an inevitable part of life. Just as the trees shed their old leaves, we too must let go of the past, embracing growth and renewal. In our faith, we find the strength to weather the changing seasons, for our God is constant, and His love is unwavering.

Halloween, a day of costumes and candy, often occupies our thoughts in October. Yet, as Christians, we can use this occasion to delve deeper into our spirituality. We should discern the spiritual aspects of our culture, reminding ourselves of the importance of faith in the face of worldly distractions.

With the holiday of Thanksgiving on the horizon, let us prepare our hearts to give thanks not only for the abundance we enjoy but also for the strength and resilience that allow us to navigate life's challenges. Thanksgiving should be more than a day on the calendar; it should be a way of life.

This month, we also look forward to our Annual Church Conference. It is a special time when our church family gathers to reflect on our mission and vision, celebrate our accomplishments, and chart the course for the year ahead. It's an opportunity for us to come together in unity and purpose, reaffirming our commitment to serving God and our community.

As we journey through October, let us remember that we are not alone on this path of faith. We are a community bound together by love and fellowship. As the days grow shorter and the nights colder, let us draw closer to one another, supporting and uplifting our church family in times of need.

Lastly, for those in denominations that observe Reformation Day on October 31, it's a time to reflect on the history and significance of the Reformation. It's a reminder of the courage of those who sought to reform and renew the Church, sparking a movement that shaped our faith.

In closing my dear brothers and sisters, October offers us themes to explore in our spiritual journey. Let us approach this month with hearts full of gratitude, minds open to change, and a deep sense of community. Together, as a church family, we can embrace the challenges and joys of this season, knowing that God's love remains our constant guide.

May the blessings of October fill your lives with warmth, love, and unwavering faith.

In Christ's love,

Rev. Levon Sutton

From the Lay Leader...

The Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu said that the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. Maybe that's so... but it's still a thousand miles. Or about two million steps.

I confess that lately I've been feeling like I'm facing a thousand-mile journey. And even when I have tried to do something, one step has felt like very little progress. And with all due respect to Lao Tzu and the "Dao De Jing" (or "The Way"), I like to make the Bible be my go-to book when I am struggling with life. So what does the Bible teach us when the journey feels too long?

The lesson that comes immediately to mind is the forty years Moses and his people spent wandering in the wilderness. Perhaps we should learn patience from this. That things happen in "God's time." And that if we are patient, God will lead us to the Promised Land. But we also remember that the forty years was a punishment for their lack of faith. Assuming we have not brought down God's wrath against ourselves, we must keep reading.

Another literal journey of a thousand miles might be the route the magi took to find the newborn King. For these three, it must have taken great strength to keep going; knowing their direction but not the destination. Yet, we think of the magi as kings – men of wealth and standing... their pilgrimage well-funded, well-staffed and well-supported. They set out in an attitude of hope and a spirit of promise. Maybe this is not a good comparison to how you and I feel when we are standing at the foot of that long road. We must keep reading.

In Genesis 12, Abram is sent on a journey. God directs him to leave his home and all that he has known and go the place that God will show him. We know something of where Abram left, and something of where he arrived. But we learn very little about the journey, apart from a few waypoints. An old cruise ship ad from the 1950's claimed "getting there is half the fun." But for Abram, the "getting there" was nearly irrelevant – it was all about the leaving and the arriving. As a lesson in obeying God, it's pretty good. As a lesson in how to face the task, it's not that helpful. We must keep reading.

In the New Testament, Jesus is compared to a man going on a long journey. He warns that the servants of the house must remain watchful, because they do not know the day or the hour when he may return. But this parable is more about those who stay than the one taking the journey. We must keep reading.

We don't have to read all that far, really. Not even past the first page. "In the beginning" we find God Himself face a long journey; the very creation of the universe. What surprises us is that God, with all God's power, does not simply will the universe into being in one breath. He breaks it down into many steps; first making day and night, then sky and earth, then land and sea... and so on until God makes human beings in God's own image. And, as a final step, God rests.

It offers some comfort to know that we are not that different from God. We are made in God's image, and we go about our work one step at a time. Still, we don't have God's power, and maybe we don't see ourselves facing the long road in the same way God does. Maybe we must keep reading.

Yet, for me, I did find my answer. It was there all along; We must keep reading. Throughout my life, I have read stories in the Bible over and over. And every time I do, I find new meaning and understanding as I read on. This journey may be a thousand miles, but it is never the same mile twice. With God, every mile is made new. And I never grow weary, because every step is a beginning.

Peace,

John Strawbridge

LAY LEADER



Announcements



There are open dates for altar flowers. Flowers are a way to honor someone's anniversary, birthday or special event. Flowers grace the altar each Sunday.

There are also open dates for fellowship hour hosting. If you are interested in hosting after Labor Day, please sign up at the Bulletin board in the church or call/email the church office.



As petitions for prayers are received, these requests are passed on to those who include these joys and concerns in their prayers. To be included via e-mail, please contact Eleanor via email at jnpemp@gmail.com.

Worship service will begin at 11:00am starting on October 1st.

WORK TO RESTORE, REHABILITATE AND MAINTAIN OUR 19TH CENTURY BUILDING 21ST CENTURY PROJECT UPDATE

The Lovely Lane 21st Century Committee (LL21CC) continues to work on behalf of the congregation to complete pending projects. The new exterior church signage is undergoing fabrication. Its installation should occur in October. Post-installation photos will be published in the monthly *Tower* upon completion.

As the October 2023 *Tower* went to press, the installation of the St. Paul Street portico gating was scheduled to begin. Stay tuned for photos of the new look of the church east-facing façade in our next issue.

The web-site re-design task force is working to compile updated links and documents in order to begin beta testing of the new website design in late 2023/early 2024.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

The LL21CC is pleased to announce two new grant awards for Lovely Lane:

\$150,000 Non-Profit Security Program grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to address current gaps and deficiencies in current security programs and capabilities.

\$17,500 Management Assistance Grant from the Goldseker Foundation to leverage church outreach strategies and systems to increase public, non-sectarian use of our upgraded space known as the Lovely Lane Arts & Neighbor Center.

LL21CC members continue to cultivate funding opportunities with- public agencies and private foundation/corporate funding sources to leverage our 2022 State of Maryland **\$200,000** award. This authorized grant is earmarked for additional restoration and rehabilitation efforts for non-sectarian use of our building in areas such as the gymnasium locker room area and the 2nd floor above the Fellowship Hall.

All interested in donating matching support to these important awards totaling **\$367,500** should contact lovelylane-center@gmail.com for details or follow the instructions and link given below to make donations.

And, for those donors and businesses subject to Maryland State income tax, we have **Community Investment Tax Credits (CITCs)** available for add to qualifying donations received before December 31, 2023. These CITCs will significantly reduce the after-tax cost of your donation. Please contact LL21CC member **Susan Preston** at love-ly.lane.bcs@gmail.com for details about these valuable credits.

MAINTENANCE OF PAST RESTORATION WORK

In August, Pope Welders began boiler repair work to assure efficient functioning of the heating system in advance of colder weather.

BUILDING FUNDS DONOR UPDATE

The Lovely Lane congregation continues to be very grateful for the continued support received to 1) pursue our ambitious 21st Century Project restoration, rehabilitation and building use goals 2) replenish our escrowed restoration maintenance fund for our 19th Century building, built as a centennial monument to the founding of Methodism in the United States in 1784.

We have received the following donations since we published a listing in the September 2023 *Tower* edition.

The Restoration Fund – to maintain building integrity

IRA of Linda Webb

The 21st Century Building Project Fund – to improve building for greater community use

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Non-Profit Security Program
Goldseker Foundation
IRA of Linda Webb

*To make a new donation to either of our Building Funds,
please send checks--payable to the church and indicating "Restoration" or
"21st Century Building Project" in memo line of the check--
Mail to Lovely Lane United Methodist Church, 2200 St. Paul Street, Baltimore, MD 21218
or go to our website to donate online: www.lovelylane.net/donation.*

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
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CALENDAR

Fall Schedule

Worship 11:00am

Fellowship Hour/Guided Tour

Sundays following worship

Baltimore Folk Music Society

1st and 3rd Wednesdays 8 PM bi-weekly dances in Lovely Lane hall the first, third, and fifth Wednesday of each month

Sunday, October 1st

World Communion Sunday

Saturday, October 7th

9:00am- 12:00pm Church Work Day



Sunday, October 29th

1:00pm Church Conference via Zoom. Rev. Sutton will have an in-person gathering at the church as well, and lunch will be provided.

Sunday, November 19th

Following Service there will be a Church Council Meeting

MANNA HOUSE

**435 E 25TH STREET, BALTIMORE 21218
410-889-3001**

The morning meal is served every day from 8:30 to 10:15 AM. The Drop-In Center continues from 11:30 AM until 4 PM (Monday through Friday).

Staples: sugar, coffee, rice, pasta/sauce

Hygiene items: toothbrush/paste, deodorant, shampoo,

lotion, shaving cream/razors, towels, washcloths

Funds are needed for operational expenses.

Your support is needed and appreciated.