

THE TOWER MONTHLY

LOVELY LANE | BALTIMORE CITY STATION



VOLUME 21, ISSUE 3

November 2023

From the Pastor's Desk:

Dear Lovely Lane United Methodist Church Community,

As November's crisp winds sweep through the changing leaves and the harvest season is in full swing, we find ourselves at a moment of reflection and gratitude. This month brings the beautiful convergence of All Saints Day and Thanksgiving, two occasions encouraging us to count our blessings and appreciate the saints who have inspired us along our Christian journey.

Community and Togetherness

Our church community at Lovely Lane is like a bountiful harvest in itself. We are a diverse group, each with unique stories, backgrounds, and perspectives. Through this beautiful array of individuals, we truly experience the richness of the community. The bonds shared, the support offered to one another, and the love we pour into this place and each other make Lovely Lane so special.

As we gather around the table this Thanksgiving, let us take a moment to reflect on the meaning of community. How has being a part of Lovely Lane United Methodist Church enriched your life? What are you thankful for when it comes to our church family? Have any experiences, connections, or moments deepened your sense of belonging?

The Harvest of Gratitude

The autumn season is a reminder of the blessings we often take for granted. It is a time when we witness the labor of the harvest come to fruition, and it prompts us to think about the abundance in our lives. Take a moment to contemplate the bountiful harvest of your own blessings.

What are you thankful for this year? Is it the gift of good health, the love of family and friends, the opportunities for personal growth, or the strength to overcome challenges? Share your gratitude with others, and let's celebrate the abundance of blessings surrounding us.

Remembering Our Saints

All Saints Day is a time to honor those who have gone before us, those individuals who have inspired us, and those who have shaped our faith journey. As Christians, we have been profoundly influenced by saints of various forms – mentors, family members, friends, and historical figures whose unwavering faith continues to guide us.

Take a moment to reflect on the saints in your life. Who has been a source of inspiration and guidance in your faith journey? What qualities or actions of these saints have impacted your own walk with God? How can we carry their legacy and be saints to others in our community?

Stewardship and Challenges

In this season of gratitude, we are also reminded of the importance of stewardship. As we give thanks for our blessings, we must also consider how we can be good stewards of the gifts God has entrusted to us. Stewardship is more than just financial support; it is about using our time, talents, and resources to nurture and strengthen our church community.

Consider the challenges of stewardship as individuals and as a congregation. How can we better support the ministries and missions of Lovely Lane? How can we generously give our time and talents to help our church flourish? Reflect on your personal role in stewardship and how you can contribute to the well-being of our church family.

This November, let us come together in gratitude, reflection, and a renewed commitment to stewardship. May we be inspired by the saints who have gone before us and the vibrant community we have today. As we prepare for the Thanksgiving feast, extend love and warmth to those around you and invite them to share their reflections.

With an overflowing heart, we give thanks to each of you who make Lovely Lane United Methodist Church a place of love, support, and growth. May this harvest season, gratitude, and stewardship fill your hearts with joy and peace.

Yours in Christ's service,

Reverend Levon D. Sutton, Pastor

Lovely Lane United Methodist Church

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

Email
LovelyLane.BCS@gmail.com

Website
LovelyLane.net

PASTOR
Rev. Levon Sutton
revlevonsutton@hotmail.com

LAY LEADER
John Strawbridge

ORGANIST
Bill Scanlan Murphy

PASTOR EMERITA
Rev. Debbie Scott

SEXTON
Ivan Reyes

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
Fatima Black



From the Lay Leader...

This month one of the biggest companies in America – a major on-line shopping business – is pilot-testing the use of robots in several of its warehouses. These are not the articulated cranes or rolling cargo platforms you may have seen so far. They are “humanoid” robots, meaning that they have two legs to walk around and climb stairs, and two arms with hands that can pick up boxes or even paper forms.

Not surprisingly, this has generated a lot of response from workers both within the company and outside of it. Most are concerned that these robots will be replacing people and eliminating jobs. The company assures that they will only eliminate repetitive and menial physical tasks that people don’t want to do.

This debate has raged in our society for decades. First as work moved from farms into factories, then as those factories became increasingly automated. In our homes, we have embraced automation; dishwashers and robot vacuums. And at other times have resisted it, especially in the workplace when it threatens our jobs.

And it isn’t just the traditional laborers that have seen their jobs automated. Bank tellers are getting fewer as ATMs proliferate. Even cab and truck drivers are looking over their shoulders today as self-driving cars and trucks are developing quickly.

Several high-profile strikes have been in the news this month. Workers in auto factories want assurances. And even jobs once considered safe from automation are now getting worried as AI – short for “Artificial Intelligence” – could potentially take over managerial and even creative tasks. Film and TV writers and actors see a day coming when their work is done by machine.

After generations of automating manual labor, we are now beginning to automate mental labor.

It is becoming a significant problem in school and universities for teachers to know whether their students’ papers were written by the student, or by an AI. The news media is on alert as AI generated stories and images become harder to detect and separate from real reports and pictures. And software is now being introduced that allows workers to skip meetings, and have the computer summarize the discussion, generate reports and graphs based information discussed and even create presentations at the push of a button.

All this artifice and automation can leave us feeling confused and unsettled. Not knowing what is real, or enduring. For some, it is too much. For others, it is too fast. As humans, we are ambitious, but we also crave what is natural and familiar.

In a changing and artificial world, it is a comfort to recognize that one area of our lives has been resistant to automation; While manual labor has been taken over by machines, and mental labor has been taken over by comput-

ers... spiritual labor turns out to be the most human work of all. There has never been any invention or technology which can automate the work of the soul. There is no Artificial Faith.

And it is difficult to imagine anything that ever could take away the work of faith. Both robots and thinking machines were imagined by writers of fiction long before the technology existed. But no one has ever conceived of automated holiness, forgiveness, or compassion.

So if this world has you struggling to know what is real or permanent, remember that it may be that the most intangible things are the most solid. That the work of faith is the most authentic labor. And that while the efforts of hands and minds can be replaced, there is no substitute for the actions of the soul.

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 exterior appearance of Lovely Lane has changed since our last publication! And, other work is progressing to implement additional upgrades to our building and community outreach strategies.

Building Upgrades

The installation of the St. Paul Street portico gating to improve building security was completed in late September. Final touch-up of metal surfaces is pending. The architectural design of the gating permits locked closure when the sanctuary is not in use while complementing the original facade of the building. The gating allows for full, open-door access for Sunday services and other scheduled events in the sanctuary.

St. Paul Street Portico gating, closed St. Paul Street Portico gating, open

The deteriorated church monument signs on St. Paul Street in front of the church have come down. Once finishing work is completed on the original signposts, the new monument signs will be installed in the exact locations of the former signs. Stay tuned for photos of these new illuminated signs that provide important public information for Lovely Lane United Methodist Church. Work to upgrade interior fire safety features to comply with Baltimore City fire codes has also been completed

Finally, members of the 21st Century Committee (LL21CC) continue to advance new priorities to upgrade the church building's amenities and security. The overarching goal of this additional work is to improve the visitor experience at this heritage site and will be funded by \$350,000 of capital improvement grants awarded to Lovely Lane from the State of Maryland the Federal government.

Community Outreach

The website re-design task force is working to compile updated links and images in order to begin beta testing of improved website content and navigation by early 2024. Work has also begun on the Goldseker Foundation management assistance grant to put in place new tools and protocols to increase community use of our upgraded building.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Charitable giving has no season, but eligible donors could receive tax deductions for new donations made before December 31, 2023. All interested in donating matching support to Lovely Lane for ongoing improvements to increase community use while the church continues to serve an active congregation should contact lovelylanecenter@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 qualifying donations received before December 31, 2023. These CITCs could significantly reduce the after-tax cost of your donation. Please contact LL21CC member Susan Preston at lovely.lane.bcs@gmail.com for details about these valuable credits.

MAINTENANCE OF PAST RESTORATION WORK

In September, Tegler & Co engraved the name of our new pastor on an important plaque in the sanctuary. Rev. Levon D. Sutton's name is now alongside those of all clergy who have served Lovely Lane's congregation throughout its history.

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 October 2023 Tower edition.

The Restoration Fund – to maintain building integrity

MAINTENANCE OF PAST RESTORATION WORK

In September, Tegler & Co engraved the name of our new pastor on an important plaque in the sanctuary. Rev. Levon D. Sutton's name is now alongside those of all clergy who have served Lovely Lane's congregation throughout its history.

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 October 2023 Tower edition.

The Restoration Fund – to maintain building integrity

Church Tours & Gift Shop
Dorothea Bell Lankford

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

Anonymous donations from the Maryland Philanthropic Network
Dorothea Bell Lankford
Michael Rouse

*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.*

MANNA HOUSE

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

Board members, Manna House staff and clients thank Lovely Lane members and friends for continued generous support over the years and through the pandemic. We've been working on renovations and expansion, and have had to close the building to clients during the past few months. Our staff have continued to work with a small number of them over the phone and out in the parking lot, handing out mail, helping them get I/D cards, and doing one on one case work. Now we're looking forward to getting our occupancy permit, so we can re-open fully, serve breakfast, provide showers and clothing, and work with clients to help move them towards independence.

Please help us prepare for this with your donations. **We need coats, jackets, gloves and men's knit hats.** We're not ready to accept any food or other clothing items. **We do need cash to cover the higher operating costs of a larger building, purchase supplies, and hire staff.**

Thank you.

Tony Coffield (Executive Director)

Dan Bailey, Emora Brannan & Duncan Hodge (Board Members)



Poinsettias for 2023

Once more the Lovely Lane altar will be decorated with the traditional Christmas poinsettias. The cost of the plant will be \$10.00. Donations of less than the cost of a single plant are also welcome, as several of these together will make it possible to purchase additional plants to beautify the Church. The cost, like any other gift to the Church, is fully tax-deductible.

Memorial and Honorary listings will be printed in both the Christmas bulletin and the January newsletter. The poinsettias decorate the altar on Sunday, December 19th, Christmas Eve and Christmas. We invite you to place your order using this form, by calling the church office (410-889-1512) or sending an e-mail to LovelyLane.BCS@gmail.com.

To meet the florist schedule and publication deadlines, please have all requests to the church office by:
Friday, December 8th.

Poinsettias for the Lovely Lane Christmas Altar

I would like to donate _____ poinsettias @ \$10 per plant.

I would like to contribute \$ _____ toward the purchase of additional plants.

In Honor Memory of

In Honor Memory of

Signed: _____ Phone: _____ Total Enclosed: \$ _____



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

Non-profit
Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Baltimore, MD
Permit No. 6575

TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL
THANK YOU FOR PROMPT DELIVERY!



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

Saturday, November 4

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

Sunday, November 5

All Saint’s Sunday

Sunday, November 19

Following worship service Church Council Meeting

Saturday, December 2

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



Sunday, December 3

Following service Advent Sunday, we will be decorating for Advent and having fellowship together.

Sunday, December 9

5:30pm Christmas with Camerata at the Perkins Square Baptist Church

Saturday, December 16

5:00pm Share the Warmth Drive ‘Jesus Carpentry’ show



We are looking for volunteers to help us with the Church Work Days scheduled for Saturday, November 4th and Saturday, December 2nd. We are also seeking volunteers for the Share the Warmth Drive, which is a fundraiser for Manna House. The goal of this drive is to provide warm clothing and monetary donations for people in need. If you are interested in volunteering for either of these events, please send an email to lovelylane.bcs@gmail.com.