

THE TOWER MONTHLY

LOVELY LANE | BALTIMORE CITY STATION



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 - Friday
8:00 AM — 3:00 PM

Phone

410-889-1512

Email

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Website

LovelyLane.net

PASTOR

Rev. Levon Sutton
revsutton@lovelylane.net

LAY LEADER

John Strawbridge

ORGANIST

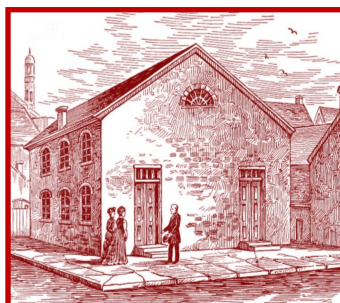
Bill Scanlan Murphy

PASTOR EMERITUS

Rev. Emora Brannan

SEXTON

Ivan Reyes



From the Pastor's Desk: July/August Pastoral Letter

"The Rhythm of Summer — A Season for Gratitude and Growth"

Dear Lovely Lane Family,

Summer brings its own rhythm—a season of long days, gentle pauses, and a slowing of schedules. In keeping with that rhythm, this July/August edition of *The Tower* serves as our summer issue, and we'll return with our next newsletter in September.

Even as we take this seasonal pause, the life of our church continues with strength and beauty. I am grateful for our dedicated leadership, our active members, and our wonderful community partners like the Baltimore Folk Music Society and the Baltimore Lab School. Your work ensures that the ministry of Lovely Lane remains vibrant, welcoming, and faithful—even in these quieter months.

We also give special thanks for the work of our 21st Century Committee and Trustees, whose dedication helps restore, rehabilitate, and maintain our 19th-century building—a space that continues to serve not only our congregation but countless groups across Baltimore. Presently, renovations to the basement bathrooms and locker rooms used by our community partners are underway, supported by a State of Maryland grant. The committee is also moving forward with pending security upgrades, including key card access, security lighting, door refurbishment, and updated cameras—all part of keeping our historic space safe and accessible for years to come.

In this issue, you'll also find meaningful reflections from our members, including one that beautifully recalls the lifelong impact of learning, reading, and growing in faith. These stories remind us that our shared history is made up of countless personal journeys, each one a testament to God's enduring presence in our lives.

You'll also want to spend time with our Lay Leader's thoughtful summer message. It invites us to consider what it means to wait, to hunger, and to truly live—not simply to exist. In a world that rushes toward instant gratification, it is a timely reminder that the most vital things—like faith, prayer, and God's presence—are not bound by time, nor do they require us to wait. They are with us, always.

The book of Isaiah offers this encouragement:

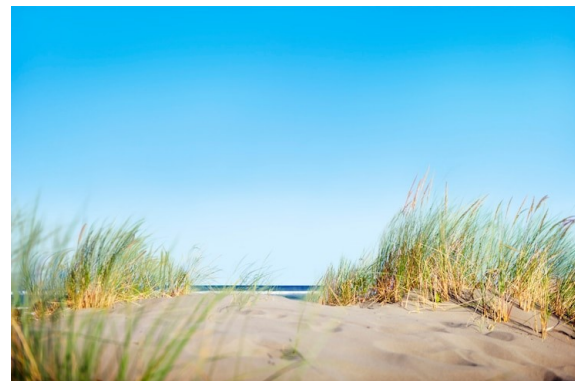
"But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint." (Isaiah 40:31)

As summer unfolds, may we all take time to rest, reflect, and give thanks—for these stories we've written together and those still unfolding. Let us remember that even in seasons of waiting or quiet, God continues the work of growth, renewal, and transformation within each of us.

I look forward to seeing you in worship, in fellowship, or simply in spirit over these summer weeks. May God's grace sustain you until we reconnect in the fall—and always.

With gratitude and peace,

Reverend Levon D. Sutton
Pastor, Lovely Lane UMC



THE TOWER MONTHLY

From the Lay Leader...

July-August 2025

At Lovely Lane, we traditionally make this edition of the newsletter a summer edition. This means we take a month off and return in September. You will have to go two months without a new Tower Monthly.

Most of us don't deal well with having to go without things. In our modern Western society, we live a life not only of plenty, but of easy access.

Yesterday, I placed an order with Amazon. Within five minutes, I got a notice in my email saying that my order had shipped and should arrive the next day. Even email itself is an example; no need to wait for the mailman. But for many, even email takes too long, and so we have invented live chat.

When I was young, we had to wait a whole week for the next episode of our favorite TV show. Now we can stream it whenever we want. We don't even have to wait for the season to play out, we can binge watch the whole series in a weekend (or less!).



Impatience is addictive. The faster things come, the more we want to them to hurry. Waiting seems burdensome, even unjust. We want what

we want. And we don't like having to go without.

In this age of microwaves and Door Dash food delivery, you may be surprised to know that the average person can go three weeks without food. John Wesley encouraged fasting for all Methodists, and I confess that going an entire day without food seems impossible to me. But in truth three weeks is possible.

Water is less forgiving. The typical person can go three days before a lack of water is fatal.

Air, of course, is most urgent of all. A healthy person could survive about three minutes without a fresh breath of air.

The more vital for life something is, the less time we can go without it. So then... how long can you

go without God? How long have you gone without prayer?

The obvious answer is... Eternity. Without God, you can go an eternity. But it is not an eternity you would want.

But the question is not how long after you die, but how long can you live? Live without the Holy Spirit; the breath of God. The living Word.

Practically, we know we can go a lifetime. Many people have no faith in their life. No prayer life. No scripture. Yet they live as long as anyone. Sometimes I try to imagine my life without my relationship with God. Living without a sense of intentionality to the cosmos. Without an understanding of purpose and meaning – even when I don't fully understand that meaning. Living an essentially lonely life – not knowing the kinship of the family of God. Not having a personal relationship with the creator. Not having faith in the redeemer. Yes, I realize, I could live this way. That is to say, I could be alive.

But would I be living?

Would I wake up each day believing that my life is a gift, rather than an inevitable and dispassionate chemical process? Would I feel that my soul is precious and eternal, rather than nameless and fleeting? Would I see the world outside my window as a wondrous work of artistry – or would I be frustrated at the uncaring brutality of nature.

There is a difference between existing and living. But I would go further and say there is a difference between living and... I don't know the word I want. Thriving? Rejoicing? Exalting? What is the word that means perpetually growing and glowing in the grace of the Lord? Of being a part of something with the gravitas of eternity and the vibrance of newly kindled flame? For this is the life we get to live when we live with God above us, Christ beside us, and the Holy Spirit within us. For this gift we don't have to wait even one breath. Without this gift, we don't truly live even one heartbeat.

We will see each other tomorrow. Or next week. Or next fall. Whatever comes, don't be impatient with the passage of time. With God in your life, you already have everything.

Peace,
John Strawbridge
LAY LEADER



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

The committee continues to gather pricing for the FEMA grant security upgrades to our building. The upgrades include new key card access for exterior and interior doors, south portico gate hardware, security lighting, door refurbishment and security camera installation.

Currently, the existing basement bath and locker rooms used by outside groups are being renovated thanks to a State of Maryland grant. The work should be completed by end of this summer.

Community Outreach

Our community outreach continues with contracting for an internet-based wedding venue listing service to help spread the news about Lovely Lane's beautiful space for weddings. The committee will revisit the service after a year to determine the effectiveness of the paid service.

**CAPITAL CAMPAIGN**

All interested in making donations to help assure project completion under the terms of LLUMC's pending grant awards should contact lovelylane-center@gmail.com for details. Alternatively, please follow the instructions and link given below to make donations to the Lovely Lane UMC 21st Century Fund or the Lovely Lane Restoration Fund.

MAINTENANCE OF BUILDING/PAST RESTORATION WORK

In May 2025, flashing and waterproofing work was completed on the south portico roof. Restoration funds were used for this vital maintenance.

BUILDING FUNDS DONOR UPDATE

The Lovely Lane congregation continues to be very grateful for the ongoing support received to 1) pursue our ambitious 21ST Century Project restoration, rehabilitation and building use goals and 2) replenish our escrowed restoration maintenance fund to assure the integrity of all past upgrades to 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 December 2024 Tower edition.

The Restoration Fund – to maintain building integrity

No donations received

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

Donald and Joanna Kann

*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 the 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:

<https://lovelylane.net/church-life/donations-offerings>

And click on either the "Restoration Fund" or the "Rehabilitation Capital Campaign Fund" button

Scan the QR code here



To navigate to the donation page

In Fellowship & Community

On June 22, 2025, the congregation and several guests shared a lovely potluck lunch as we celebrated the 253rd Anniversary of the congregation. Certainly, the worship gatherers did not look as they did when the congregation was organized in 1772, but the church family shared a delightful lunch with several visitors. Everyone brought delightful summer foods so that no extra heat was needed. There was plenty of heat from the weather. You missed a special time of sharing if you were not present.



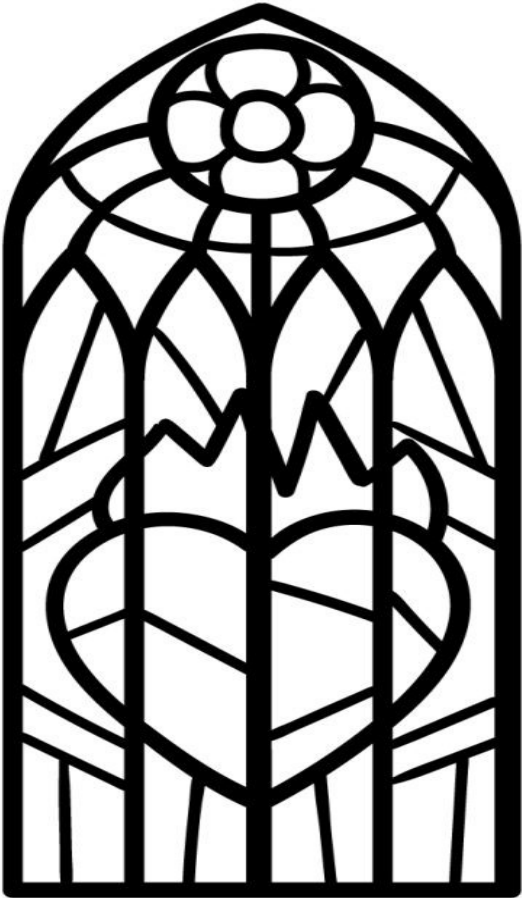
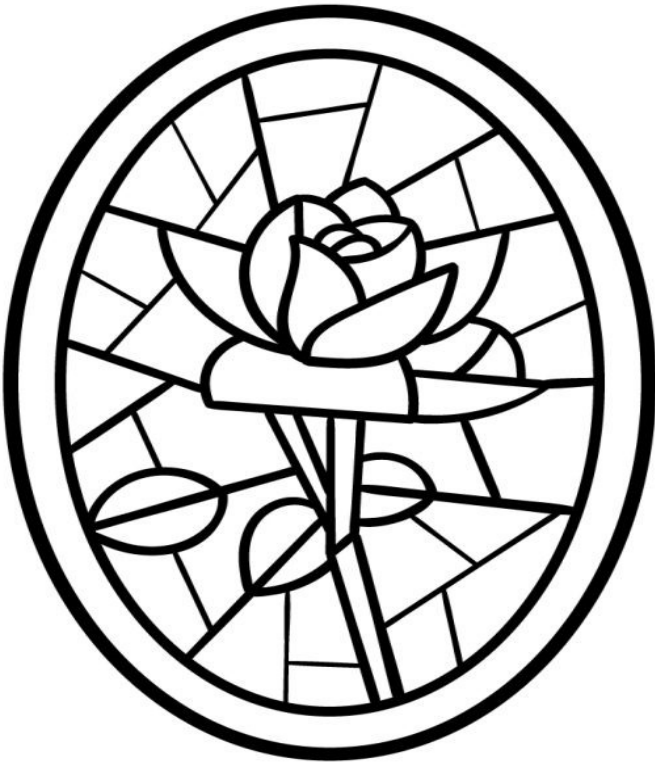
Remember, Worship begins at 10:00 AM on Sundays in July and August. Come join in worship and share lemonade outside with your church family and the neighbors.

Please remember gifts to Manna House and UMCOR this summer. We are hearing that the local needs for food have increased in recent months. UMCOR is active in every location where needs arise for various reasons. Lovely Lane has a long history of working with Manna House since its inception many years ago. We still have members who are part of the Manna House Board.

As we begin the year on July 1st, we welcome a meeting with our new district superintendent, **Sarah Schlieckert**, on July 20th. It will be at this gathering that the congregation will consider the possibilities of ministry and mission as we begin a new Harbor District and Missional hub configuration in our Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference.



STAIN GLASS ART - As we take time to enjoy the beauty of summer, we invite you to take time and enjoy the leisure that comes with play. In this summer edition of the Monthly Tower, we offer you the opportunity to enjoy this time of leisure and share with you these stain glass templates to use the imagination God has offered to each of you. May the wonder of God’s love be expressed in your imagination and creativity as you consider all the colors and hues. Enjoy! *‘Behold, I am making all things new.’ Revelations 21:5*



In Fellowship & Community

Celebrating Our Partners at Baltimore Lab School



As another successful school year comes to a close, we celebrate the students, families, faculty, and staff of the Baltimore Lab School—one of our valued community partners here at Lovely Lane.

The Baltimore Lab School is a place where creativity, confidence, and academic growth flourish. With small class sizes, dedicated teachers, and a focus on each student's unique strengths, the school provides an environment where young people can truly thrive.

Throughout the year, we've had the joy of seeing their energy and talents on full display at events hosted here at Lovely Lane—from the inspiring Winter Arts Showcase to lively athletic celebrations and meaningful year-end gatherings. These moments remind us of the power of education to build self-assurance, foster belonging, and strengthen community.

We offer heartfelt congratulations to the Class of 2025 and deep gratitude to the Baltimore Lab School's remarkable educators, administrators, and families. Your commitment, care, and creativity shape bright futures and contribute to the life of our city.

We look forward to many more seasons of partnership, learning, and shared community here at Lovely Lane!



In Fellowship & Community

Baltimore Folk Music Society – Building Community Through Dance & Music



Every Wednesday night, the halls of Lovely Lane United Methodist Church on St. Paul Street come alive with a warm, vibrant gathering hosted by the Baltimore Folk Music Society (BFMS). What began as a tradition in American folk dance has blossomed into a thriving hub of community—and all through the power of the arts.

A Welcoming Space for All

BFMS welcomes newcomers and veterans alike. No dance partner? No experience? No problem. Each evening begins with a friendly introductory lesson at 7:30 p.m., followed by live music and dancing from 8 to 10:30 p.m. The atmosphere is open, inclusive, and full of energy, drawing people of all ages—from students to long-time neighbors—to connect through movement and music.

Music that Moves the Soul—and the Feet

The heart of BFMS lies in its live music. Each week features talented bands and callers playing styles rooted in folk traditions, from New England to Appalachian to Celtic influences. Local, regional, and nationally known musicians rotate through the lineup, making every gathering a fresh, joyful experience.

Shared Joy, Shared Experience

More than just dance, BFMS nurtures true community spirit. Beginners are welcomed with patient instruction, while regulars offer friendly guidance and conversation. Whether celebrating milestones, enjoying seasonal gatherings, or simply sharing a Wednesday evening, participants build friendships that extend beyond the dance floor.

Community Through the Arts

Thanks to dedicated volunteers and the support of arts organizations, BFMS helps ensure that music and dance remain accessible, joyful, and open to all. Beyond the weekly dances, they also host workshops, concerts, song swaps, and more—each one an opportunity to connect, express creativity, and celebrate shared traditions.

Why We Love It

The Baltimore Folk Music Society offers more than entertainment—it builds belonging. Through music, movement, and shared tradition, BFMS helps weave the individual threads of our community into something stronger, joyful, and lasting.

Join the Movement

Whether you've danced for years or have never heard of "contra" before, BFMS offers an open door, welcoming everyone to experience the joy of live music, connection, and movement. Lessons begin at 7:30 p.m., with dancing from 8 to 10:30 p.m., every Wednesday at Lovely Lane UMC.

In every dance and every tune, BFMS reminds us: community grows stronger when we move, create, and celebrate together.



Arts and Culture Spotlight: A GAME ARTS 3rd Annual Showcase June 21, 2025



Last Month, Lovely Lane hosted the 3r Annual Showcase and Reveal: A production written and produced by Jay DeV Vaughn (Eros Da Artiste) in the Brannan Chapel.

Magnifique! What a performance from “A Game” Arts Academy and its participants in the Academy’s third annual showcase!

An impassioned piano solo from Eros Da Artiste, began the evening. Four Vocal students of his studio A Game Arts Academy, (B’Jion Wright, Ngozi Mewe-Pira, Jade Jones, and Morgan Dixon) each delivered tour-de-force performances of torch songs from classic jazz to modern Broadway, then joined forces to sing Neal Hefti’s “Girl Talk”

Following that was a trio of spirited, empowering songs given by the Charm City Labor Chorus, directed by Darryl Moch and accompanied by Chester Burke Jr. And just when we thought we could not be more uplifted, Eros Da Artiste and Company rendered six vibrant, life-affirming tunes from his musical, “I Choose Pain.” Closing the evening, everyone joined in a musical plea to the world, “If You’re Out There” by John Legend.

Eclectic Mix of Jazz, Sass, Brass, and Class beamed from this performance. The community waits in anticipation for the next showcase!

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**
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THANK YOU FOR PROMPT DELIVERY!



CALENDAR

Summer Schedule

Worship 10:00am During the Months of July and August

Fellowship Hour/Guided Tour

Lemonade on the St. Paul Street Portico
Sundays following worship

Summer July Bible Study

Habakkuk, Wednesdays at 7pm. A 5-week study beginning July 2nd, ending on Wednesday, July 30th. ZOOM Meeting information: Meeting ID: 845 1596 8445 -
Passcode:056881

Baltimore Folk Music Society

Wednesday, 7 pm Weekly dances in the Lovely Lane Fellowship Hall each Wednesday of every month.

Lovely Lane encourages our members and friends to volunteer on the first Saturday of each month to assist with service around our expansive, beautiful, and historic church.

July/August Birthdays

7/1 Atticus Brannan

7/4 Lena Leone

7/12 Susan Allenback

7/13 Hannah Coates

7/18 Kristinae O'Laughlin

7/29 Owen Hines

8/10 Elizabeth Brannan

8/11 Duncan Hodge

8/22 Betty Ammons

8/24 Eleanor Packard