

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

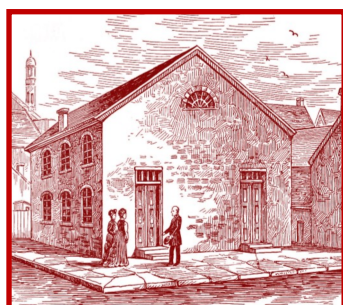
Bill Scanlan Murphy

PASTOR EMERITUS

Rev. Emora Brannan

SEXTON

Ivan Reyes



From the Pastor's Desk: June Pastoral Letter

The Fire Still Falls

"When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind... Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit..."

— Acts 2:1-4 (NRSV)

Dear Beloved in Christ,

June arrives like a warm breeze, carrying with it the anticipation of summer. School bells quiet, calendars open up, and many of us look forward to a slower pace—vacations, time with family, and long-overdue moments of rest. It's a season we cherish, and rightly so.

But June also brings us face to face with Pentecost—the Church's fiery birth and bold commissioning. The Holy Spirit doesn't wait for our schedules to clear. It comes in the midst of our ordinary days, calling us to live with holy awareness, whether we're traveling across the globe or simply sitting on the front porch.

The fire still falls—even in summer.

Pentecost reminds us that the Spirit is not limited by seasons. In fact, summer may be the perfect time to tune in more deeply. Rest and renewal are not just good ideas—they're holy practices. Jesus himself often withdrew to quiet places. But his rest always prepared him for deeper engagement with others.

As you enter this new month, I invite you to balance rest with reflection, and leisure with listening. What might God be saying in the quiet of a morning walk? In the stillness of a road trip? In the joy of an unhurried meal shared with someone you love—or someone who needs love?

This June, let your rest make space for the Spirit. Let your leisure open the door to love.

Celebrating Our Connectional Family

We also give thanks this season for the vibrant presence of our wider United Methodist connection. Over these past weeks and months, we have had the sacred joy of welcoming **confirmation classes, youth groups, and congregational pilgrims** from across the region and beyond to Lovely Lane—the Mother Church of American Methodism.

Each visit reminds us that we are part of something bigger—a Spirit-breathed, ever-evolving movement of grace, truth, and justice. Seeing young people walk these historic aisles, hearing their questions, laughter, and prayers—it rekindles hope and renews our sense of purpose. Thank you to every pastor, parent, and pilgrim who journeyed here. You are a part of our story now.

Honoring Our Founding – June 22nd

This month also marks a sacred milestone in our own congregation's story. On **June 22, 1774**, the Rev. Joseph Pilmore founded what would become Lovely Lane United Methodist Church. It began with a spark—just a handful of people, faithful and courageous, gathering in a city still finding its shape. That spark has become a legacy that continues to burn brightly, 253 years later.

We honor our founding not merely as history, but as a living call. The same Spirit that stirred Pilmore and the early Methodists in Baltimore stirs us now. We are stewards of a sacred trust. And our future, like our past, depends on faithful people answering the call with courage and care.

Devotional Reflection for the Month

Throughout this month, make room for the Spirit in moments of stillness and solitude by praying:

*Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me.
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.
Let my rest be holy. Let my joy be full.
Let my heart be open—to surprise, to service, to sacred interruption.
Even in vacation, make me your vessel.
Amen.*

Call to Action

Whether you're traveling or staying close to home, this month offers a unique opportunity to live out the Spirit's call:

- Use travel time to read Scripture or listen to stories of faith.
- Practice hospitality in your leisure—invite someone into your circle.
- Offer a small act of service on your vacation—help a stranger, tip generously, speak kindly.
- Support local ministries with your time, talent, or treasure—even while away.
- Send a note of encouragement or appreciation to a young confirmand or visiting congregation.
- Honor our founding this month by giving thanks for our heritage and recommitting to our mission.

The Church was born in fire—and we are still called to burn brightly with love, justice, and joy.

Rest well. Serve boldly. Celebrate our shared journey. And let your summer be Spirit-filled.

With Pentecost passion and pastoral love,

Reverend Levon D. Sutton
Pastor, Lovely Lane UMC

THE TOWER MONTHLY

From the Lay Leader...

June 2025

What is your favorite ride?



With Memorial Day just behind us, maybe you're starting to think about your vacation plans. Maybe you will make an amusement park your destination, like Disney or Hershey or Six Flags. Or maybe you will seek out another destination, and find an amusement park nearby, as in Ocean City. For generations, these parks have been popular because they offer a variety of experiences. And the ride you choose says a lot about the kind of vacation you want.

Maybe you want the thrill ride; the highest, fastest, twisty-est roller coaster you can find. Or maybe you want a more relaxing ride like a Merry-Go-Round. And if you want to spend some time with someone you love, you might take a seat for two on the Ferris wheel.

I like to think that if such amusements had existed in Christ's time, he might have made a parable about the Ferris wheel. It is a metaphor for life. Sometimes you are on the way up, and other times on the way down... but if you stay with it, you will be back on top again. Everyone is on the same ride, but no two cars are ever in the same place at the same time. And eventually, you have to get off so that others can get on.

That's my thought... and I imagine you could craft your own lesson for any of the other rides depending on which one is your favorite. And that's the attraction of these gathering places; that you get to choose your own path.

So why all this talk of amusement parks? Well, as my mind spins life lessons like cotton candy... and as I make silly guesses about WWJR (What Would Jesus Ride?)... it occurs to me that there's more to this than a summer daydream. Jesus spoke to his disciples in their own context; fishing and sheep herding. Why shouldn't we find Christ in our own modern-day contexts?

Because one of the wonders of Christian faith – and one of the things that makes it unlike any other doctrine – is that God, through Christ, gives us jaw-dropping amounts of control over our own journeys. While many faith traditions throughout history have constrained their followers with high-walled rules of behavior and “right” living enforced by threat of dreadful punishment... to the followers of Christ our God says “Go forth into every nation...”

Our God is not a god of limitations, but rather the God of Possibilities... of Imagination. And while Christ is The Way (“No one comes to the Father except by me”), the gateway of Jesus opens up onto limitless paths. We can follow Jesus to the most extreme places on earth and pursue His mission in ways that will excite, challenge and even scare us. But we can also move in a circle (or circuit), bringing the voice and love of Christ to our communities over and over again. And if we want to spend time with someone we love, we can mediate and engage in silent prayer as we are lifted up to behold the beauty of God's creation from a new perspective.

Wherever you plans are taking you, be looking for Jesus in your own time and place. Not just as a shepherd or fisherman, but as a lifeguard, or flight attendant, or waitress... because He is present in these times just as much as ever. Rejoice in the gift that God gives you to choose your own ride, and know that “I am with you always, even until the end of the age.”

(Inspired by Matthew 28:19-20).



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. At our last meeting, we received a presentation from a security contractor regarding the installation of a key card system.

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 lovelylanecenter@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

A REPORT FROM OUR TRUSTEES

Restoration Work on Sanctuary Heating System Duncan Hodge

The original 1887 heating system for the main sanctuary at Lovely Lane was very advanced for its time. It's featured in literature written around 1900.

All Steamed Up, our heating technicians, believe it was updated in 1930 to make it more efficient, and now as shown in the before and after photos we're updating it again to heat the space more quickly and use less oil. Even today, 138 years later, it still provides the most comfortable heating for a large open space like our sanctuary. It keeps not just our bodies, but also our feet, warm.

BEFORE



AFTER

A Pew Perspective

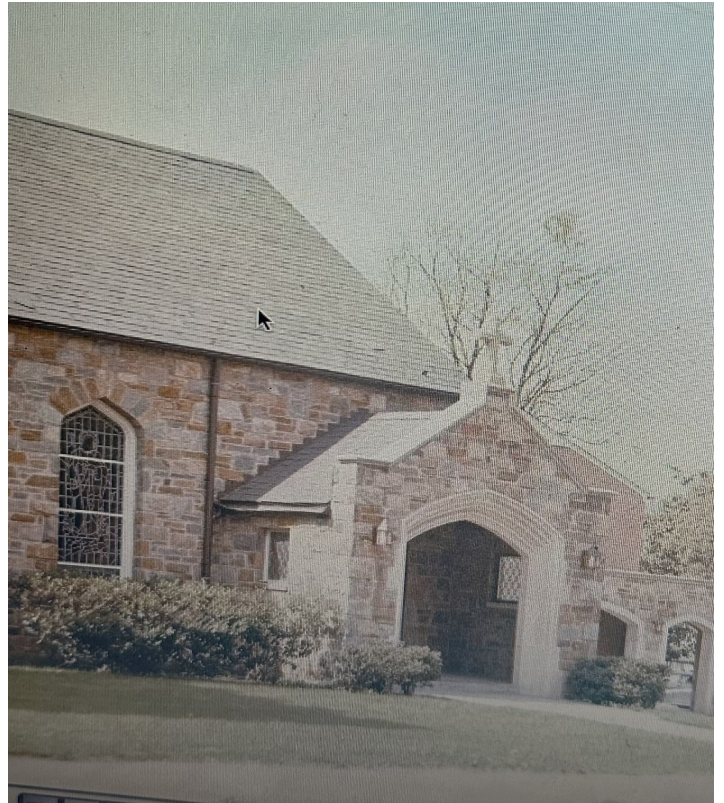
“Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there with them” Matthew 18:20 NRSV

I was lucky enough to grow up in a family in which church attendance was a positive thing. When we moved to Rockville, Maryland in Montgomery County, our family began attending Rockville Methodist Church. This was before the denomination merged with the Evangelical and United Brethren churches, so you know how long ago that was!

My parents were actively involved in a variety of church activities and my siblings and I joined in with all the kid-friendly activities that were offered. I remember helping my mom teach Sunday School, singing in the choir and enjoying the fellowship hour after the services.

Naively, I believed that everyone had the same experience. It wasn't until I grew up and started attending other churches, that I discovered that not everyone had been as fortunate as I had been. Many of my friends had come to the church on their own, seeking a relationship with God. It was a true statement of faith. I have a great deal of admiration for people such as these!

Please don't misunderstand me. I am grateful for the example that my parents set. In fact, their parents and grandparents before



*Photo of Rockville Methodist Church
Courtesy of Jeanni Galloway*

them were also people of faith. Jesus has been a part of my life from the beginning, and I thank God for the greatest gift a person could ever receive.

No matter how we became followers of Christ, we have been given the greatest gift anyone can receive. We can respond to this gift by sharing it with others.
-- Jeanni Galloway

Call to Service

Diverse Opportunities – Perhaps you can help

Work Day

Come, Join Church Family Members on Saturday, June 7, 2025, at Mt. Olivet Cemetery from 9:00 AM to Noon. There is a lot of history at Mt. Olivet, and there are also numerous tasks. Some of the tasks we can accomplish while we contemplate our history. The Bishops of our various Methodist denominations can continue instructing us as we work to keep their resting place in good condition.

While you are at Mt. Olivet, you can look out over the City and see how the scene has changed since the destruction of the Francis Scott Key Bridge. It is remarkable to realize the magnitude of the effects of the destruction of the bridge.



*View of the Francis Scott Key Bridge from the Bishop's Lot at Mt. Olivet Cemetery
Photo Courtesy of Rev. Sutton*

Many people visit the cemetery and leave behind less desirable, large and small bits of everyday life. We work to keep the area in better condition by removing items of trash. We also work to control the overgrowth along the fences.

Please join the group on June 7! Bring your gloves and even your preferred tools. There are tasks suitable for every skill level. It is good to work together; it is good to be outside; it is good to appreciate those who have gone before us in faith.

Summer Worship: SUMMER WORSHIP TIME: July and August at 10:00 AM

“O come, come, come to the church...” No, we are not the church in the wildwood as the old hymn says, but we want YOU—all of you—to come to church at 10:00 during July and August.

It should be cooler in the sanctuary at 10:00; you can still make it to a ballgame, a picnic, a family gathering. It will be good to gather as a church family at the earlier hour and still have other summer plans.

Come! We need all!

Nancy Brannan

In Fellowship & Community

Some Rare and Precious Moments among Congregation and Community Engagements



June Birthdays

Carol Curtis - 6/21
 Sasha Bailey - 6/24
 Liam Hines - 6/26
 Betsy Fisk - 6/27
 Shirley Reckley 6/29



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

Spring Schedule
Worship 11:00am

Fellowship Hour/Guided Tour
Sundays following worship

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

June Workday - June 7th - Mt. Olivet Cemetery 9am - 12pm

Baltimore Lab School
June 9th Senior Graduation
June 12th Last Day of School
June 13th-27th Summer Break

Summer Worship Schedule - Beginning first Sunday in July through August at 10:00am

Father’s Day - June 15th

Juneteenth - June 19th



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.

