

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
Sundays 11:00 AM

Office Hours
Tuesday - Friday
9:00 AM — 3:00 PM

Phone
410-889-1512

Email
admin@lovelylane.net

Website
LovelyLane.net

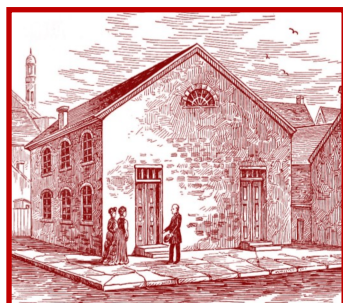
PASTOR
Rev. Levon Sutton
revsutton@lovelylane.net

LAY LEADER
John Strawbridge

ORGANIST
Bill Scanlan Murphy

PASTOR EMERITUS
Rev. Emora Brannan

SEXTON
Ivan Reyes



From the Pastor's Desk: November Pastoral Letter

A Season of Gratitude and Engagement

Beloved Friends of Lovely Lane,

Over the summer, I met a sister and brother sitting on a residential stoop on St. Paul Street—just across from the church. It was after a long day in the office, and my mind was preoccupied with the usual rhythm of ministry: sermon preparation, prayer requests, and the delicate balance of pastoral and daily life. I was ready to head home. But as I walked to my car, the Spirit whispered, “Stop.”

Though my first instinct was to keep moving, something in me knew that grace was waiting on the other side of that street. I crossed, introduced myself, and shared a brief but meaningful conversation with the two. Before leaving, I extended a simple, genuine invitation to visit Lovely Lane—no pressure, just presence. Weeks passed, as encounters like that often fade into memory, until one Sunday, to my surprise and joy, the sister appeared in worship. She remembered the invitation.

Faith is lived not in isolation but in encounter—where the Spirit calls us to cross the street.

That small moment reminded me what engagement and radical hospitality truly mean. It's not about grand gestures or perfect timing—it's about being available, being aware, and allowing God's mission (*Missio Dei*) to unfold through us in everyday encounters. As we enter this season of thanksgiving, Jesus' words from Matthew 6:13–16 call to mind our purpose: “You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world.” Gratitude is not only what we feel; it's what we practice. It moves us beyond comfort into connection, beyond church walls into community. It invites us to see every person, every moment, as an opportunity to reveal the light and love of Christ.

Radical hospitality is not about opening our doors—it's about opening our hearts. Here are a few ways we can live out that call this month:

- **Engage:** Reach out to someone you've not seen in worship or someone new in the neighborhood. A greeting, a conversation, or a shared prayer can open unexpected doors.
- **Serve:** Participate in one of our ministries of care or hospitality—prepare a meal, help with the museum, or assist in welcoming guests during worship.
- **Give:** Practice generosity as an expression of gratitude for what God has entrusted to us—our time, gifts, and resources.
- **Reflect:** Each day, name one thing for which you are thankful, and ask how that gratitude can become an act of service or kindness.

Lovely Lane's story is built on encounters like these—moments when faith met action and hospitality met the heart. In this season of gratitude, let us reimagine ourselves not as a church apart from the city, but as a community within it—a fellowship of light and salt that embodies the mission of God in the heart of Baltimore.

Every act of gratitude becomes an act of mission when it turns us toward others. May we each find the courage to cross the street, to start the conversation, and to extend the invitation that might change a life—including our own.

With gratitude and grace,

Reverend Levon D. Sutton
Pastor, Lovely Lane UMC



Special Feature: An Invitation to Join a 6-Week Journey



Enhancing Engagement: Reimagining Church and Community

Lovely Lane United Methodist Church will soon launch a special **6-week program** designed to explore new ways of connecting faith, community, and mission.

This initiative—**Enhancing Engagement**—is part of Rev. Sutton’s doctoral research project at United Theological Seminary, focusing on how historic downtown congregations like ours can deepen their connection to the surrounding community and one another.

The purpose of this study is simple yet significant: to reimagine how the church can embody God’s mission (*Missio Dei*) in the heart of Baltimore. Lovely Lane’s story is rooted in history yet alive with possibility. Together, we will reflect on who we are, who our neighbors are, and how we can live as a community of **radical hospitality, spiritual vitality, and shared purpose**.

Why Participate

Participants will:

- Join in six weeks of guided conversation, reflection, and community activity.
- Share experiences and hopes about what it means to be a welcoming, mission-minded congregation today.
- Contribute to research that will shape both the future of Lovely Lane and serve as a model for other historic churches seeking renewal.

What to Expect

Each week will center on a key theme—**gratitude, belonging, listening, hospitality, and shared mission**—through Scripture reflection, dialogue, and practical engagement. Participants will be invited to reflect in writing, engage in small groups, and consider actionable steps for growth.

What We Hope to Achieve

This project seeks to nurture a culture of engagement that transforms both church and community. By the end of the 6 weeks, participants will have helped shape a replicable model for congregations seeking vitality in changing times.

The program begins in the **first quarter of 2026** with dates announced in the December *Tower Newsletter*.

If you’re interested in participating, contact
Rev. Levon Sutton at revsutton@lovelylane.net or speak with him after worship.

Space will be limited to allow for meaningful participation.

*Let’s grow together—one conversation, one connection,
one act of engagement at a time.*

THE TOWER MONTHLY

From the Lay Leader...

November 2025

*Try to remember the kind of September
When life was slow and oh so mellow
Try to remember the kind of September
When grass was green and grain was yellow...*

-TRY TO REMEMBER, By Tom Jones & Harvey Schmidt

November is a month made for remembering. Firmly in the grip of autumn and already seeing winter on the horizon, we look back at pictures from summer and remember.

We gather around the Thanksgiving table, live out our traditions, and remember.

We celebrate All Saints' Day. We lift up the names of the saints who have gone on to glory. And we remember.

The song "Try To Remember" from the musical "The Fantasticks" perfectly captures the ritual of remembering. Filled with happy words, its melancholy tune echoes the mixed emotions of memory; gladness for what we had and sadness for what is gone... both at the same time. The lyrics give us a clue as to why our emotions are mixed.

"Try to remember..."

From its very first line we know that remembering is something we can only try to do. We can never really bring back those things... that time... those people. We can but try.

And if remembering is such a fragile and futile thing, why should we even try? Would we not be happier—would our lives not be easier—if we simply let go of the past, like so much weight off our shoulders? Look forward, only forward. No distractions. No holding back.

"And remember I am with you always, to the end of the age."

In Matthew 28:20, Christ commends his memory to us. He does this in the context of the famous commission: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations. He begins with "Go" and concludes with "to the end of the age." Clearly Jesus sees remembering not as

something backwards-looking, but as something forward-driving.

*There are places I'll remember
All my life, though some have changed
Some forever not for better*

Some have gone and some remain...

-IN MY LIFE, By John Lennon and Paul McCartney

In the Beatles song, "In My Life" we are ourselves reminded that memories are not carved in stone. They are living things. Because they are not the places and artifacts of our past but really they are the living function of our minds and our spirits. As we grow and change, so do our memories.

*All these places have their moments
with lovers and friends I still can recall
(some are dead and some are living).
In my life, I've loved them all*

The act of remembering is an act of love. Sometimes it is hard, sometimes painful, sometimes joyous. We try to remember because we want to fill our lives with the places and times and people that we want to be.

The Holy Bible is an act of remembering. It is the collective memory of the faithful, of those who love the Lord. We remember because we love, and we want to make our lives out of those things we love.

On this All Saints' Day, let us try to remember; People and things that went before. Not as shadows, but as light. Not as a distant shore, but as a destination.

Let us remember not for Death's sake, but as an act of living.

*But of all these friends and lovers
there is no one compares with you...
In my life, I love you more.*

The Beatles were not thinking of Christ when they penned these words. But these lines remind us that no memory is a match for a love that is alive in our lives today. And Christ is he who conquered Death and lives eternally in our lives.

This All Saints' Day, and all this month, cherish the memories. But love Christ more.

Peace,
John Strawbridge



WORK TO RESTORE, REHABILITATE AND MAINTAIN OUR 19TH CENTURY BUILDING

MAINTENANCE OF BUILDING/PAST RESTORATION WORK

The Lovely Lane Restoration Fund balances have been used since May 2025 to complete upgrades to boiler equipment to assure efficient heating in the church building. Additionally, balances paid for a new plaque in memory of Harry Hosier, one of the earliest Black Methodist preachers who travelled extensively with Bishop Francis Asbury. The plaque is now hanging in Lovely Lane's sanctuary.

21ST CENTURY PROJECT UPDATE

Pending Capital Upgrades

The committee continues to gather pricing for the second floor HVAC work that will provide well needed air conditioning to the meeting rooms and classroom spaces. The existing basement bath and locker rooms, used by outside groups, have been renovated by Centricity Contracting. New fixtures, finishes, flooring and other improvements are now complete and the spaces are ready for users!

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.

GIFT CAMPAIGN

As the current tax year comes to an end, please consider contributing to one of Lovely Lane's Building Funds. Please follow the instructions and link given below to make donations to our Building Funds.

For more information on how your donations will be put to work in the Restoration Fund (escrowed balances for future restoration work) or in the 21st Century Building Fund (new capital upgrades to our 19th century building), please contact us at lovelylane-center@gmail.com.

BUILDING FUNDS DONOR UPDATE

The Lovely Lane congregation continues to be very grateful for the ongoing support received to 1) to assure the integrity of all past restoration to our 19th Century building built as a centennial monument to the founding of Methodism in the United States in 1784 and 2) pursue our ambitious 21ST Century Project restoration, rehabilitation and building use goals.

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

The Restoration Fund – *to maintain building integrity*

Donations to Lovely Lane Gift Shop

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

Virginia W Myers IRA

*To make a new donation to either of our Building Funds,
please send checks--payable to the church and indicating "Restoration" or
"21st Century Fund" 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: <https://lovelylane.net/church-life/donations-offerings>
and click on either the "Restoration Fund" or the "Rehabilitation Capital Campaign Fund" button
or go to our website to donate online: <https://lovelylane.net/church-life/donations-offerings>*

Scan the QR code here

*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



*To navigate to the
donation page*

In Community

Fall is upon us; Advent and Christmas are nearer than we realize. With the situation of the government shutdown, we are hearing of increased needs in many areas. At our November 23, 2025 Church Council meeting we anticipate making decisions about needs and where we should emphasize our help. Please plan to be part of the decisions. If you have a suggestion, please pass it on.

At our last Council meeting there was a suggestion that we have a Christmas lunch –potluck—after worship one Sunday in Advent. Please share your opinion about that as well.

We continue to ask for hosts/hostesses for Fellowship Hour. Please consider taking a Sunday. It can be very simple. Also, Tower lighting, Altar flowers and Scripture readers are an ongoing opportunity to serve in our worship services. It is not too early to consider gifts of poinsettias for the Christmas altar.

Remember those of our church family that are not with us regularly; let them know we think of them. In the midst of challenges, may we support one another with love and hope.

*Nancy Brannan ,
Church Council Chair*

JAYAUGHN MUSIC

presents



A
Joyful
Nativity

A Christmas Cantata by

JAY M. DEVAUGHN

DECEMBER 14, 2025

AT 4PM

Tickets are \$20

Proceeds to benefit Manna House of Baltimore

Poinsettias for 2025

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 21st, 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 admin@lovelylane.net

To meet the florist schedule and publication deadlines, please have all requests to the church office by:
Sunday, November 30, 2025

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 _____

In ☐ Honor ☐ Memory of _____

Note any additional names on back of form

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
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Permit No. 6575

(Mailing Address Here)

TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL
THANK YOU FOR PROMPT DELIVERY!



CALENDAR

Fall/Winter Schedule
Worship 11:00am

Fellowship Hour/Guided Tour
Fellowship Hour: Sundays following worship

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

Baltimore Lab School
Fall Basketball Tuesday and Thursday, 7 am Gymnasium
Fun Fridays, 10 am Gymnasium
2nd & 3rd PD Classes, 13th, 9:15 am - 11:30 am, Fellowship Hall
LS Friendsgiving, 25th, 8:00 am - 1:30 pm, Fellowship Hall

Church Conference
Grace United Methodist Church
Saturday, November 15th, 11:00 am

Ambient Church
Friday, 28th 2:00 pm - 11:00 pm, Fellowship Hall

Poinsettia Order Deadline
November 30th

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.

November Birthdays

- 11/01 Gavin O’Laughlin
- 11/02 Madeleine Gray
- 11/04 Lee Enos Jacobwitz
- 11/05 Lenore Baire
- 11/06 Sefi Abedoh
- 11/13 Ariel Heartstringe
- 11/17 Sally Knapp
- 11/17 Mieka Smart
- 11/20 Charlotte Sutton



Anniversary

- 11/18 Frankie and John Ewers

