

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

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Website
LovelyLane.net

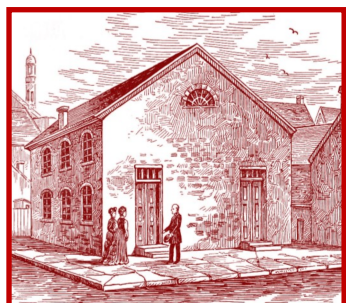
PASTOR
Rev. Levon Sutton
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LAY LEADER
John Strawbridge

ORGANIST
Bill Scanlan Murphy

PASTOR EMERITUS
Rev. Emora Brannan

SEXTON
Ivan Reyes



From the Pastor's Desk: October Pastoral Letter

A Season to Return, Renew, and Rejoice

Beloved in Christ,

October is a season when creation itself becomes a sanctuary. The air sharpens, the days shorten, and the leaves blaze with color before gently falling to the earth. It is as though all of nature pauses to remind us that change is not only inevitable—it can also be beautiful, holy, and filled with promise.

We often think of autumn as the “season of loss.” The trees grow bare, the fields are harvested, the flowers fade. Yet in God’s design, this loss is not an ending, but a preparation. The soil rests so that it may be ready for new growth. The trees conserve their energy for the spring to come. What looks like decline is in truth a quiet work of renewal.

So too in our lives of faith. There are moments when God invites us to release what we cling to, trusting that something greater will take root. Jesus said, “I am the vine, you are the branches... every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit” (John 15:5, 2). Pruning is never easy. Letting go is rarely comfortable. Yet just as the leaves fall in trust, so we are called to trust that God’s Spirit is at work in the seasons of change.

Perhaps this autumn God is asking you:
What must be released?

Is it a burden of worry that has weighed too heavily?

Is it a bitterness long carried in silence?

Is it the need to always be in control?

When we surrender these things, we make room for God’s renewing grace. Just as the branches stand bare for a season, waiting for the spring, so we can rest in the assurance that Christ holds us steady until new life blooms again.

And remember this: the beauty of autumn lies in its honesty. The leaves do not resist their falling, but in their release, they blaze with glory. So may our faith shine brightest when we learn to let go and entrust our lives to God’s care.

This October, may we see the world around us as a teacher of grace. May the colors of creation call us to gratitude. May the cooling air invite us to breathe deeply of God’s peace. And may the rhythm of the seasons remind us that we are always being shaped, always being renewed, always being carried forward by the God who makes all things new.

In faith and hope,

Reverend Levon D. Sutton
Pastor, Lovely Lane UMC

A Prayer for October

God of the changing seasons,
as the leaves turn and the earth grows quiet,
remind us that You are the Lord of all time.

Teach us to welcome change,
to release what we cannot hold,
and to trust Your Spirit at work within us.

Grant us the courage to let go,
the wisdom to rest in Your promises,
and the hope to believe
that in every ending

You are preparing a new beginning.

Through Christ our Lord we pray. Amen.

THE TOWER MONTHLY

From the Lay Leader...

October 2025

I've been looking at my front porch steps. I think I'm going to have to replace them. They are made of concrete, and they've lasted a long time. But they won't last forever.

I was able to ignore them through the spring and summer. But as the weather starts to turn cold, I know that rain water will seep into the cracks. And when things get cold and harsh it will freeze, and the concrete will break apart more and more. I don't know if they can last another winter.

Concrete seems so strong. But I look at the sidewalk and see how even small weeds can push through concrete. And over time, they will grow and either break up the surface or cover it over

If I hire a contractor to come and replace my steps and sidewalk, they will need a jackhammer to loudly break them up and haul them away quickly. But weeds and water are slowly and quietly doing the same job.

I've been watching the news. I don't think things can continue the way they are. The world is cold and hard, and has been for a long time. But it can't stay that way forever.

God gives us an almost unbelievable amount of free will and choice. But when we treat each other coldly and harshly, God knows it's time for change. In the Old Testament, God came into the world as a jackhammer. Floods, fire and earthquakes brought about renewal loudly and quickly. But even God began to soften. God knows slow and quiet is even more potent.

God sent Christ into the world to be water. Water both refreshes and sustains. But over time, water can effect enormous change. Water drowned Pharaoh's army. Water carved the Grand Canyon.

God sent the Holy Spirit into the world to be weed. Sustained by water, weed spreads... into every crack and every corner. Weed withstands cutting and poison. Weed keeps coming back.

Weed is blackberry and clover, violets and goldenrod, mustard and strawberry. But weeds are also nettles and sumac. God is not alone in His mastery. Any force which can cut through concrete can cut both ways.

There are jackhammer events which shock us and shape how we see the world. Which make us feel hopeful or make us feel devastated. Which pull us together or rend us apart. Which, because they are loud and fast, grab our attention. But only for a moment.

Without realizing it, we are much more effected by the things which move slowly and quietly. Which spread into the cracks and corners of our consciousness and become a part of our landscape. If someone came into our yard with a jackhammer, we would see soon see them. But water and weeds do their work over many seasons before we begin to think we need to pay attention to them.

So what are we to do? What are we to do when the world seems hard and impenetrable? We are God's gardeners. And we must be about our Father's business.

From the beginning – indeed “In the beginning...” – God placed us in the Garden. God put tools in our hand, and gave us wisdom to use them. Sometimes we need the jackhammer. But more often, we need the watering can, and the seeds. We need to do the planting and tending to be sure that our garden is fertile, and fruitful.

We cannot rush the seasons, but must take winter and summer in turn, that we may bask in the spring, and reap in the fall.

And as fall overtakes us, we will see that we can only harvest that which we planted.

Peace,
John Strawbridge
LAY LEADER



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 make upgrades to boiler equipment to assure efficient heating in the church 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, have been renovated by Centricity Contracting. New fixtures, finishes, flooring and other improvements are almost complete!

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

All interested in making donations to help assure 1) increased escrowed balances for future restoration work or 2) capital project completion under the terms of pending grant awards should contact lovelylanecenter@gmail.com for details. Alternatively, please follow the instructions and link given below to make donations to our Building Funds.

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 **July/August Tower** edition.

The Restoration Fund – to maintain building integrity

Edward & Eileen Bernhoft bequest
William L. Motley
John M. Strawbridge
United Methodist Historical Society of the
Baltimore Annual Conference
Alexandre Zamov
Mary Zober

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

Linda M. Webb 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 Building Project" in memo line of the check--
Mail to Lovely Lane United Methodist Church, 2200 St. Paul Street, Baltimore, MD 21218*

*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*

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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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.

USA Basketball
Monday and Wednesday, 5:30 pm Gymnasium

Baltimore Lab School
Fall Basketball Tuesday and Thursday, 7 am Gymnasium
Fun Fridays, 10 am Gymnasium
Senior Service Project, Tuesday 7th, 8:30 am, Fellowship Hall/Kitchen
School Wide Kickoff, Wednesday, 8th 12 noon, Fellowship Hall
Tera Sumpter Training, Friday, 17th 8:30 am, Fellowship Hall
College Info Session, Wednesday, 22nd 1:30 pm, Fellowship Hall

Baltimore Folk Music Society
50th Anniversary, Saturday, 11th, 1:30 pm, Fellowship Hall

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.

October Birthdays

- 10/10 Dennis Ferguson
- 10/18 Melvin Schaefer
- 10/18 Sarah Scribner
- 10/21 Samantha Hodge-Williams
- 10/22 Denzel Enos



Happy Anniversary

- 10/3 Duncan Hodge and Maxine Stitzer
- 10/8 Johnny and Marisa Olszewski
- 10/16 Phil and Jean White

