

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: *March Pastoral Letter*

Beloved Lovely Lane family and friends,

Grace and peace to you in the name of Jesus Christ.

March carries us deeper into the Lenten journey—a season of renewal, clarity, and return. In these weeks, God invites us to make room again for what gives life: prayer that is honest, love that is practiced, and hope that is steady.

In the Gospel, Jesus enters the wilderness led by the Spirit. In that quiet place, the heart is strengthened, the purpose is clarified, and the path forward is made plain. Lent offers us a similar gift. It is a time to listen more closely, simplify what crowds our attention, and re-center our lives in the grace of God.

I give thanks for the ways Lovely Lane continues to shine as a living witness in the heart of our city. As the Mother Church of American Methodism, we honor our history by living our calling in the present—gathering for worship, forming faith across generations, welcoming neighbors, and serving with compassion. God is knitting us together, strengthening our bonds, and growing our capacity for joy and generosity.

As we look toward Holy Week and Easter, I invite you into three simple practices this month:

Pray with joy and consistency. Set aside a few minutes each day to breathe, listen, and speak with God.

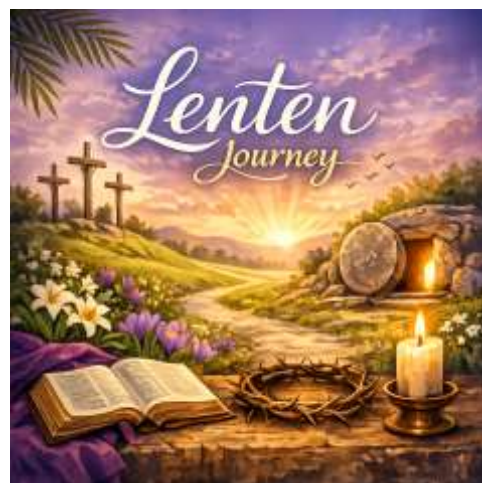
Practice presence. Choose one moment daily to be fully present—to God, to a neighbor, to a family member, or to yourself.

Participate in the life of the church. Worship when you are able, join a group or study, serve with a ministry team, and encourage someone who needs strength.

Thank you for your faithfulness to Lovely Lane—your prayers, your presence, your generosity, and your love for this congregation and community. I am grateful to serve as your pastor, and I remain hopeful about what God is forming among us in this season.

May the peace of Christ fill your home, and may the Spirit guide your steps through Lent and into the joy of Resurrection.

With love and gratitude,
Reverend Levon D. Sutton



THE TOWER MONTHLY

From the Lay Leader...

March, 2026

This month the Lenten season stretches before us, while winter drags slowly to its end. It has been a hard winter. Not only because below freezing temperatures have been relentless and because dirty and hard-packed snow has been piled up for weeks on end...

I am going to be open and honest with you; this winter has been hard because we have seen too much death. Not just deaths of celebrities and famous people that have been in the news. In the past ninety days I have lost family, friend, co-worker and congregation member. Most of you reading this have lost someone too. I have seen sudden, unexpected death and slow declining death. I have seen one man who froze to death in this unforgiving winter.

Perhaps I am shocking you. Death is an unpleasant topic. Should I be talking about it? Death is frightening because we feel helpless against it. It is mysterious; we don't know when it will come or in what form. In our culture we have tried to make death less fearsome by giving him human form... albeit a grisly one. Death, to us, is a man in dark tattered robes with his face hidden under a hood.

To earlier generations, death was a farmhand; a reaper. In our modern world, death is a businessman, with quotas to meet and a schedule to keep. But throughout, death was a thief; come to rob us of our joy, our loved ones, our life.

In this season of Lent, as we journey towards Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, I want you to take that image of death – the scary skeletal man in soiled robes – and put him in a box. I want you to label that box “Old Testament.” And I want you to put that box on a shelf with your old high school yearbooks and bronze baby shoes. Relics of a past that no longer fit.

Because we are on the other side of Easter. True the calendar won't show that until next month, but we are Easter People living in the time of the Risen Christ. We say that Christ, in his dying, defeated Death. But even more, Christ, in His resurrection, transformed death.

And death will never be the same.

Where we used to look at death as the one who took us away. We now know death as the shepherd who leads us home to our Father. Death will reunite us with those who have gone before. Daughter will once again embrace father... son will once again kiss his mother. Grandparents... the young who left too soon... the unbroken line of saints... line up to greet the traveler who comes home.

On that canvas labeled “New Testament” I want you to paint a new image of death; as a friendly man – or woman – with a gentle smile and soft clothing. Instead of a blade, she carries a compass whose needle points toward the light. Instead taking us at the end of a road, death brings us to eternity's path.

Not that we should desire to embrace death before our time, no matter how tempted we may be. In our earthly greed, we want to regain those we have lost. In our human fear, we may want to escape the yoke of this world at times. But God has need of us here in this time, in this place. To be His ministers and to bear His witness. We cannot shrug off God's mantle while there is work to be done.

But what a gift; to know that when the day may at length draw to a close, we do not need to fear the sunset nor shrink from the darkness. To know that when our we lay down our tools and our race is won, that we may meet death not with quaking knees and averted gaze, but with a yawn and a contented sigh, knowing that Christ stands at the open door, and our Father waits to welcome us.

Beyond Lent is Easter. Beyond winter there is spring. Beyond death there is life. Easter people, rejoice.

Peace,
John Strawbridge
LAY LEADER



WORK TO RESTORE, REHABILITATE AND MAINTAIN OUR 19TH CENTURY BUILDING FOR GREATER COMMUNITY USE

MAINTENANCE OF BUILDING/PAST RESTORATION WORK

The Lovely Lane Restoration Fund balances will be used to repair recent roof and masonry damage in the Lovely Lane Tower at the corner of St Paul and 22nd Streets. **Contractors are scheduled to complete work in March.**

21ST CENTURY PROJECT UPDATE

Pending Capital Upgrades

The 21st Century committee continues to pursue bids for the second floor HVAC work in the classrooms and spaces above the fellowship hall. In addition, the committee is exploring security upgrades to complete in the next calendar year.

Community Outreach

In November, the sanctuary was host to Ambient Church, an immersive audio-visual experience bringing together architecturally stunning spaces with modern contemplative music. This event has caused other potential users of our space to contact the church for more information!

GIFT CAMPAIGN

As the new calendar year begins, 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 tax-deductible 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 for greater community use), please contact us at lovelylanecenter@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

The Abendroth Family Fund, IHO John M. Strawbridge
Shatyra Hawkes
Heidi Pratt
Patricia Welch IMO Dorothy Krug

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

Rev. Dr. Emora and Mrs. Nancy Brannan, IMO Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Al R. Crumpler and
Mr. and Mrs. E. Oliver Brannan
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*



Lent and Easter Opportunities

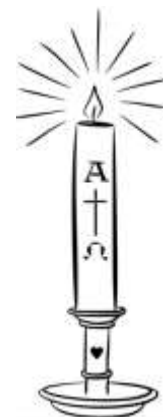
Palm Sunday: March 29, 2026



If you would like to give the palms to be used at worship and distributed in memory or honor of someone, please speak to Rev. Sutton, John Strawbridge or Nancy Brannan. It is a special way to recognize the holy season.

Easter Sunday: April 5, 2026

Paschal Candle: The candle represents the risen Christ symbolizing His presence as the "Light of the World". The candle is a beautiful remembrance used in worship. Perhaps you would like to give the candle for 2026 in memory or honor of someone special to you.



We continue to have openings for hosting Fellowship Hour, scripture reading or Tower lighting. Consider your gifts as part of the salt and light we are to be in the world.

As we progress through Lent, perhaps we can remember members we miss and be in touch with them.
CHURCH COUNCIL: March 8, 2026

****REMINDER****

Our Easter Altar

We invite members and friends of Lovely Lane to help decorate the Lovely Lane altar with traditional Easter plants in honor of our risen Savior. Please submit your listing using this form or by calling the church office (410-889-1512). The cost of a plant is \$15.00*

To meet printing deadlines for bulletin and newsletter listings,
please get this information to the church office by March 16, 2026.

I would like to give _____ plants at \$15* per plant. I would like to contribute _____ toward additional plants.

Print Name: _____ Phone: _____ Total Enclosed: _____

Please indicate if you would like to be listed as the donor, ex: "In honor of ___NAME(S), by ___NAME(S)"

☐ No, do not list ☐ Yes, please list as: by _____

In ☐ honor/☐ memory of: _____

In ☐ honor/☐ memory of: _____

In ☐ honor/☐ memory of: _____

In ☐ honor/☐ memory of: _____

In ☐ honor/☐ memory of: _____

In ☐ honor/☐ memory of: _____

*The increase from previous years is due to supply chain increases.
As always, we appreciate your generosity



In Community

Deferred No More: Advancing Reparations in Maryland The Chloe Center Johns Hopkins University

March 11 @ 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm



As of 2026, Maryland has created a Commission on Reparations. *Deferred No More* will introduce Maryland's emerging reparations framework within the long arc of racial terror and targeted state violence in Maryland. Through artistic presentations and performances that pair the Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 2025 final report recommendations, Newly documented findings on the Baltimore Chapter of the Black Panther Party, and a live podcast on the Reparations Commission, the program draws connections between the history of lynching, State racial terror, and recent political repression.

The evening will feature artistic presentations and public conversation with:

- BIRCKHEAD (jazz trio)
- Karsonya 'Kaye' Whitehead, host of WEAA's Today with Dr. Kaye
- David Fakunle II, Chair of the Maryland Lynching Truth and Reconciliation Commission
- A live onstage podcast with Joanne Braxton, Nkechi Taifa, Lawrence Grandpre, Michelle Coles on the Commission on Reparations
- An excerpt from the documentary theatre performance *Reconciling a Ruse: The Case for Reparations* for Marshall Eddie Conway
- and more!

Held in the sanctuary of **Lovely Lane Church**, the artistic program and public conversation invite Baltimore residents, youth, students, and constituents to learn not only how the harms documented by the MLTRC continue to shape lives today, but how we are living through a critical political moment—and facing a narrow window of opportunity—for meaningful government action towards reparative justice in Maryland.

This free event is open to JHU students, faculty, and staff, as well as members of the broader Baltimore community.

Co-sponsored by the Chloe Center, the Center for Africana Studies, and the Billie Holiday Center for Liberation Arts

Doors/music at 6:30pm; no tickets required.

Location:

Lovely Lane Church
2200 St. Paul Street
Baltimore, MD 21218

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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BALTIMORE, MD 21218-5805
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THANK YOU FOR PROMPT DELIVERY!



CALENDAR

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 Tai Chi Group Session (Fellowship Hall)

Saturday, March 7, 2026 9am-noon

Lovely Lane Volunteer Monthly Workday

Saturday, March 7, 2026 9am-noon

College Volunteer Overnight Group:

St. Norbet College March 15-20, 2026

SPOTLIGHTERS Private Rehearsal Group:

March 2-12 (M-Thurs 7-9pm)

Frequency Sound - Sound Bath Therapy

Tuesday, March 24, 6-8pm

Palm Sunday

Sunday, March 29, 2026

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.

March Birthdays

- 2 Audrey Gillette
- 2 Linda Webb
- 2 Nancy Brannan
- 8 Kate Brannan
- 12 Bill Murphy
- 14 Sonny Brown
- 23 Patricia Strawbridge
- 27 Craig Smith
- 29 Jeanni Galloway
- 31 Kaylee White



Reminder that March 8, 2026 That Daylight Savings Time Begins! SPRING FORWARD!

