

The Lamplighter

Emmanuel United Methodist Church

February 2012



Pastor Daniel Mejia

It seems as if we just finished celebrating Christmas with all its hustle and bustle when suddenly February sneaks in through the back door inviting us to prepare for the renewal season of Lent. Some compare Lent to a serious time of spiritual detox and training, a period when we invest our time and lives in developing our spiritual stamina and muscles, just like an athlete preparing for a race. Lent can be that time when we get back in the best spiritual shape of our lives and be ready to represent Christ faithfully in the race of life.

Traditionally during Lent, Christians pick up a spiritual discipline or holy habit that will help them be spiritually stronger in order to become more Christlike. Lent lasts only 6 weeks, or 40 days without counting the Sundays; however, the real purpose of Lent is to get you started on a spiritual growth path that will last beyond the 6 weeks of Lent. God's plan and hope is that those spiritual practices and holy habits you will begin to practice diligently will remain with you for the rest of your life. God's real goal is to make you

holy. I think that most of us are capable of giving up chocolate for six weeks, but God is more interested in us giving up the sin of gluttony. I think that most of us are perfectly capable of giving up bad language for 6 weeks, but God wants us to stop using our language to hurt others altogether. You get the idea. Or like poet Alice Walker once said, **"Anybody can observe the Sabbath, but making it holy surely takes the rest of the week."**

I want to invite you to make this Lent that "excuse" or "opportunity" you will take to invest in your spiritual growth. I am excited to announce that during Lent we will begin the **"Soup & Soul Wednesday Night Bible study."** Starting on Wednesday February 29 and continuing through April 4, we will gather to share a soup dinner from 6 to 7 p.m. followed by Bible study. For 6 weeks we will gather to eat and study the Bible exploring those spiritual disciplines that will help us to grow in our daily walk with Christ. "Soup & Soul Bible study" will be open to all, including children and youth. For the younger ones we will have a time of teaching and fun. We hope you can join us. In the next few weeks we will give you more details. In the meantime, to get your mind and spirit ready for Lent, here are 10 things you can try during the Lenten season courtesy of The Upper Room:

10. Try an electronic fast. Give up TV, Guitar Hero, texting, tweeting, e-mail and all things electronic for one day every week. (or every day

of Lent!) Use the time to read & pray.

9. Start a prayer rhythm. Say a prayer every time you brush your teeth, hear an ambulance, or check your e-mail. Before you text someone, pray for them.

8. Read one chapter in the Bible each day. (Matthew is a good book to start, or the Psalms.)

7. Forgive someone who doesn't deserve it (maybe even yourself.)

6. Give up soft drinks, fast food, tea or coffee. Give the money you save to help folks in Haiti or others in crisis.

5. Create a daily quiet time. Spend 30 minutes a day in silence and prayer.

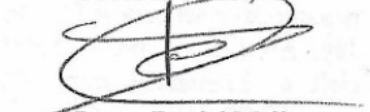
4. Cultivate a life of gratitude. Write someone a thank you letter each week and be aware of the ways many people have helped you along the way.

3. Be kind to someone each day.

2. Pray for others you see as you walk to and from classes or drive to and from work.

1. Volunteer one hour or more each week with a local shelter, tutoring program, nursing home, prison ministry or a Habitat for Humanity project.

Yours in Christ,



Pastor Daniel Mejia



Assistant Pastor Ben Sloan

Weddings

Over the past two publications of this newsletter I've written about the United Methodist perspective on Communion and Baptism as acts of worship. These are the two sacraments of the United Methodist church. Unlike Baptism and Communion, Weddings are not considered a sacrament. They are sacramental (like a sacrament). The bond in marriage represents Christ's covenant with the Church. However, marriage is not something that all Christians are called to. Also, while scripture can be used to support marriage, there is no scripture comparable to the Words of Institution (Communion) or the Great Commission (Baptism) that tell us to go marry or to perform wedding ceremonies in a particular way.

Historically, the wedding ceremony was considered more of a transfer of property than a mutual covenant between two individuals in love. In the Middle Ages in Europe, priests were often the only ones educated enough to do the paperwork

involved in this property transfer. One of the challenges of planning a Christian wedding is discerning which traditions have their roots in the historic, dehumanizing treatment of women, and which traditions and practices highlight the beauty of two people mutually committing to love and cherish each other as a reflection of God's love for us.

With weddings there is significant freedom in determining the form that the ceremony takes. The Bible does not tell us what the "ideal" Christian wedding looks like. Examples of liturgical elements that can be appropriately used to celebrate the bond of marriage include but are not limited to, an entrance, a declaration of Intention, a response of the families, prayer, scripture readings, a homily, the exchange of vows, an exchange of rings, a declaration of marriage, a blessing of the marriage, and a sending forth. Holy Communion can be included or left out of the service, but if it is offered it should be offered to all present without compulsion. Weddings often include a number of other practices and events not directly connected to the wedding ceremony itself. Wedding receptions, post-wedding family brunches, and other traditions that happen around a Christian wedding should not be confused with it.

While it is not the minister's responsibility to approve or disapprove of a couple's decision to marry, the engagement period serves as a key time for pastoral counseling. In premarital counseling questions and conversation can help couples to become more conscious of how they interact as a couple. Hopefully this in turn helps the couple to work through the difficulties and

savor the joys of marriage even more.

By the time this is published I will have been married for almost a year and half. I am exceedingly grateful for all the things Rosalyn, my wife, has taught me and for all the things marriage has taught me about myself. Not all Christians are called to marriage, but I do pray that those who desire to reflect of God's love through the act of marriage will be able to one day.



Our Missionaries are Coming

Nan McCurdy and Miguel are missionaries in Nicaragua. Nan is sponsored by Emmanuel United Methodist Church and several other churches. Miguel, her husband, is sponsored by several different churches. Nan is also the missionary chosen by Dorcas UMW circle.

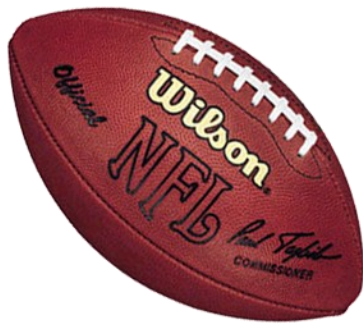
They will be speaking at both services on Sunday, Feb. 26th. They will tell us about Nicaragua and their work there. We are certain that it will be very interesting to everyone.

After the service, Nan and Miguel will join us for lunch and will be happy to talk with us and answer any questions. This will be a Potluck lunch and will replace the usual 2nd Sunday lunch. Also, this will take the place of our February UMW general meeting.

2nd Annual Spaghetti Dinner & Super Bowl Party

It's almost that time again... Super Bowl Sunday, the biggest football day of the year.

We would like you to join us for the 2nd Annual Spaghetti Dinner and Super Bowl party for the entire family on Sunday Feb. 5th. The cost for dinner is \$5 per person and the party is free. All proceeds will go to help the drama ministry buy some much-needed equipment.



Dinner begins at 5 p.m. and kick-off is at 6 p.m. We will be showing the game on a large screen in the fellowship hall where we will have snacks and drinks. If you don't want to watch football for the entire time we will offer an alternative for you; there will be movies shown on the big screen in our Sanctuary. You can buy tickets for the dinner in the Narthex on Sunday mornings or call the church office to reserve them. This is a great event to come out and meet others in your church family and to spend some time outside of worship getting to know other members and their families. We hope to see you there. If there are any questions, feel free to talk to Rick Bergmann.

Automatic Entry Door

The automatic entry door operates by unlocking the door and setting an inside button above the door on the auto setting. Then the inside or outside button is pressed to activate the door. These buttons have batteries.

The auto setting is for wheelchairs or people who move slowly.

If the auto button above the inside door is not set, then pushing the outside button will not open the door.

The Trustees



This outside entry button will not open the church door unless other actions have been taken, as described

Food Bank Report

The Food Bank would like to thank all of the support our church has given us this year. Our first year was a huge success and we fed over 250 families in 18 different cities in MD. The turkeys in November were a huge success for us. We had almost 100 turkeys donated by many families. You insured that families had a wonderful thanksgiving. On Christmas Eve we were able to feed more than 120 families and give out small toys to all of the children who came through our doors. We had a wonderful first year and look forward to being able to serve even more in 2012. One thing we will be doing each month is putting a wish list in the lamplighter and on the website to let the congregation know of things we may need.

Food Bank Wish List for February

- **diapers**
- **wipes**
- **socks**
- **macaroni and cheese**
- **peanut butter**
- **jelly (plastic bottles please)**

The Food Closet

A big thank you to all who help keep our food closet stocked. It is being used on a regular basis for families in our neighborhood.

Currently, we are in need of pasta, sauce, meats, peanut butter and jelly, corn and drink packs. Any donation is appreciated!



News Around the Conference

March 10, 2012 1:30-5 p.m.

In celebration of our 40th anniversary and Women's History Month, the Baltimore-Washington Conference, Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW) will host an afternoon seminar to discuss issues that are important to women who aspire to leadership in the 21st century. The theme is *We've Come a Long Way Baby, but...*

The following sessions are being offered and are open to men and women:

- General Conference Legislation
- Domestic Violence
- Men Supporting Women
- Sexual Ethics
- Young Women in Church Leadership

You don't want to miss this exciting seminar that will answer questions you always wanted to ask. Registration is *free*, but a donation of \$5.00 per person or \$40.00 as a group rate for groups of 8 or more from the same church or cooperative. www.bwcumc.org/events/cosrowevent Registration closes on March 1, 2012

Special Assistance

For individuals needing ASL Interpreters, Spanish Interpreters, and childcare assistance at event, please note such assistance during registration process.

Baltimore-Washington Conference Center

11711 East Market Place
Fulton, MD 20759

Attn: Jane Grays (COSROW Chair)
LadyJaneGra@aol.com

Pre-Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper at Emmanuel

Emmanuel UMC is holding a pre-Shrove Tuesday pancake supper, Saturday, February 18, 2012. Supper, consisting of all you can eat pancakes, sausage, fruit and salad, will be served buffet style starting at 5:30 p.m. But before hand we will hold pancake races starting at 4 p.m. Tickets for this event are now on sale: \$6 for adults, \$3 for children 10 and under. Babies are free. We hope this will be a great fun-filled family event. Our décor will follow a Mardi Gras theme, and our Youth Group will participate with set up, serving, supervising the pancake races and helping kids decorate masks. And for their efforts this year, profits raised for this project will go towards their summer SPY trip.



So, what is Shrove Tuesday and why is it important? Here is a quote from Wikipedia: "The word *shrove* is the past tense of the English verb *to shrive*, which means to obtain absolution for one's sins by way of confession and doing penance. During the week before Lent, sometimes called Shrovetide in English, Christians were expected to go to confession in preparation for the penitential season of turning to God. Shrove Tuesday was the last day before the beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday, and noted in histories

dating back to 1000 AD. The popular celebratory aspect of the day had developed long before the Protestant Reformation, and was associated with releasing high spirits before the somber season of Lent."

In the United States, Shrove Tuesday is marked principally in congregations who observe the liturgical traditions of the Episcopal, Lutheran, Methodist, and Catholic churches. And we as well as people in many other countries, call this day Pancake Day or Pancake Tuesday. Making and eating such foods was considered a last feast using ingredients such as sugar, fat and eggs, the consumption of which was traditionally restricted during the ritual fasting associated with Lent. In the USA it is also called Fat Tuesday, and, of course in New Orleans it is called Mardi Gras.

Well, what is with the pancake races? The most well known Pancake Race is held in Olney, Buckinghamshire, England, and has been an annual tradition since 1445. The story goes that a woman was busy making pancakes when she heard the church bell ring for confession. She was in such a hurry to confess before Lent, that she ran out the door with the frying pan still in her hand! Although pancake races used to be just for women, now days they are for everyone. Look on YouTube and find many examples of this kind of fun event.



Youth Learning Fellowship Program Offers Homework Help

Emmanuel United Methodist Church has begun its Tuesday evening Youth Learning Fellowship program for 2012. Founded last year, the program seeks to give area young people from ages 4 to 18 the opportunity to succeed in their schoolwork while also learning in fellowship.

The first hour of each evening provides homework help in a media center with computers and Internet access available. Volunteer staff help young people with their homework as needed. The second hour of each evening provides young people with fun spiritual learning. Emmanuel UMC's Youth Learning Fellowship runs in conjunction with the church's ESOL program on Tuesday evenings. Both programs will run through April 24.

All Beltsville residents are welcome in either or both programs. There is a small fee for ESOL classes and a small fee for child care for children under age 4, but the Youth Learning Fellowship program is free.

Emmanuel UMC also offers several other programs for children and youth. The church youth group meets on Sunday afternoons and is open to all area teenagers. Meetings begin with lunch and continue with fun and fellowship. The church also offers study classes for children, youth, and adults of all ages at 10:15 a.m. every Sunday between the two worship services. And children interested in singing may join the Maranatha Choir, which includes stu-

dents in grades 2 through 6.

Emmanuel UMC welcomes people of all ages to participate in these and its other programs. For details visit www.emmanuelumcbeltsville.net or call 301.937.7114.

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

Although we're in "wintertime," it's not too soon to look for scholarship opportunities.

General Information

BWC/ UMW scholarships are for undergraduate students enrolled full-time in an accredited college or university in the United States. Applicants must be members of a United Methodist Church in the Baltimore Washington Conference. Applicants must submit a completed application, student and pastor's statements, and their most recent official transcript. ***Incomplete applications and omitted attachments will not be considered.***

On line applications will be available on March 1, 2012 ... the deadline for applications is usually the middle of May.

Scholarships are awarded on the basis of need and merit. Awards range from \$450.00 to \$1,000.00.

Please be aware that the number of applications far exceeds the available funds, so not all eligible students receive aid.

Please share this information with students, family, and friends. Visit www.bwcumc.org and follow the prompt for Scholarship information and applications.

CORRECTION

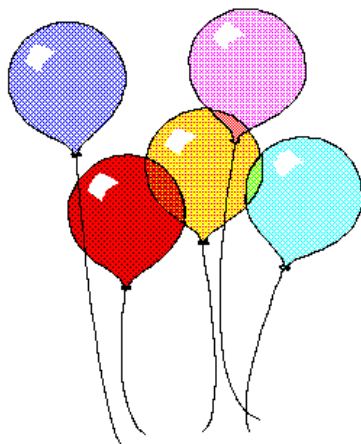
Thank you to the entire cast and crew of, "The Year Without a Santa Claus." Some names were inadvertently omitted from the January Lamplighter. The entire cast and crew included John Stewart, Bobbie Deegan, DeeDee Musachio, Patrick McGroarty, Alice White, **Alex Butcher, Hannah Butcher**, Merton Baird, Marcus Baird, Charlie Deegan, Scarlet Robertson, Greg Stiggers, Mike Hatton, **Jane Grays, Todd Reitzel, Donna Horton** and Erica Belshay.





February Birthdays

- 1 Elmer Padgett
- 2 Sarah Rodeffer
Charles Pavelka
- 3 Patrick Mellott
- 7 Margaret Stanton
- 8 Gloria Slingerland
- 9 Georgia Reitzel
- 10 Juliette Jones
- 11 Amelia Risdon
- 13 Barbara Butcher
Emma McNealy
- 14 Emmet Croson
- 15 Therese Onukwubiri
- 16 Julie Pavelka
- 17 Sheun Bello
- 19 Josh Aplin
- 20 Patrick Elliott
- 21 Tobi Oluwafemi
- 22 Karen Mackey
- 24 Nancy Zerbe
- 26 Gary Heath, Rebecca Heath



 A large, colorful butterfly with blue and purple wings. Below the butterfly, the words "Happy Anniversary" are written in a stylized, purple font.

February Anniversaries

- 2 Susan & Charles Leatherman
- 2 Katie & John Kaufmann
- 4 Mary Lou & Donald Galloway

THE 2012 ALTAR FLOWER CHART is posted in the Narthex. Please sign up for Altar Flowers; fill out a Flower Request Form and place in the office mailbox.

February

- 5
- 12
- 19
- 26 Dottie Gilbert

March

- 4 Mellott
- 11 Wells
- 18 Stacy Graham
- 25 Ann Rowland

 A detailed illustration of a bouquet of flowers, including purple irises, pink lilies, and various smaller flowers, arranged in a blue vase. The words "Altar Flowers" are written in a cursive font at the bottom right of the bouquet.

FEBRUARY 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 6 p.m. Maranatha Choir 7 p.m. Church Council	2 7 p.m. Chancel Choir	3	4
5 9 & 11:15 a.m. Worship 10:15 a.m. Sunday School 12:30 p.m. UMW Exec. Mtg. in AFR 5 p.m. Spaghetti Dinner & Super Bowl Party	6	7 7 p.m. ESOL & Youth Learning Fellowship	8 6 p.m. Maranatha Choir 7 p.m. Worship Committee	9 7 p.m. Chancel Choir	10	11 8:30 a.m. Men's Breakfast Planning Retreat 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
12 9 & 11:15 a.m. Worship 10:15 a.m. Sunday School 1 p.m. Youth Group No Second Sunday Lunch	13 12:30 p.m. Beltsville Women's Club 7 p.m. Depression/ Bipolar Support Group 7:30 p.m. Trustees Meeting	14 10 a.m. Prayer Fellowship 7 p.m. ESOL & Youth Learning Fellowship	15 10 a.m. Susanna Wesley Circle 12 noon Dorcas Circle 6 p.m. Maranatha Choir 7 p.m. Sisters in Spirit	16 7 p.m. Chancel Choir	17 11 a.m. Community Place Café	18 5:30 p.m. Pancake Supper
19 9 & 11:15 a.m. Worship 10:15 a.m. Sunday School	20 12 noon Ellen Hoover Circle	21 7 p.m. ESOL & Youth Learning Fellowship	22 7 p.m. Ash Wednesday Service	23 7 p.m. Chancel Choir	24	25 10 a.m. Food Distribution
26 9 & 11:15 a.m. Worship 10:15 a.m. Sunday School Potluck Lunch with the McCurdy's 1 p.m. Youth Group	27 7 p.m. Depression/ Bipolar Support Group	28 10 a.m. Prayer Fellowship 7 p.m. ESOL & Youth Learning Fellowship	29			

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Emmanuel United Methodist Church
11416 Cedar Lane
Beltsville, MD 20705
301-937-7114
Web: www.emmanuelumcbeltsville.net

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