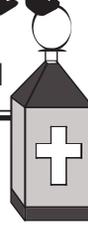


# The Lantern

JANUARY 2014

MOUNT LEBANON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

WILMINGTON, DEL. | EST<sup>d</sup> 1812



## Pastor Jennifer is back!

*We missed you!*

## 2014 Youth Rally in Ocean City

From January 10 to 12, youth in grades 7 through 12 from all across our Annual Conference will gather in Ocean City, Maryland to praise and worship Jesus Christ. This year's theme is "Ransomed" and is based on the following verses from the 1 Corinthians 6:19-20:

*"Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies."*

If you know a young person grades 7-12 who would like to attend please let our youth leader, Becky Byrd, or Pastor Jennifer know ASAP. Final preparations are being made now. Please pray before, during and after the Rally for the youth of our church as well as the other youth who will be attending. It is a very special time of praise and reflection for these youth and the adults who accompany them.

## Spiritual Disciplines

Many of us find ourselves hungry to grow closer to God or stymied over how to let go of attitudes and habits that we know are contrary to the way of Christ. In the long history of the Christian church, the practice of spiritual disciplines has been the traditional answer to these concerns. Over the next year, this column will introduce a new spiritual discipline each month and invite you to explore and apply the practice to your own life. The material is largely taken from a wonderful book entitled "Celebration of Discipline; The Path to Spiritual Growth" by Richard J. Foster. He identifies twelve practices divided in categories of Inward Disciplines, Outward Disciplines and Corporate Disciplines. He writes, "The classical Disciplines of the spiritual life call us to move beyond surface living into the depths... They urge us to be the answer to a hollow world." (p. 1) I pray they will enrich your life and support God's ongoing work of healing and transformation in you and the world! *Pastor Jennifer*

## Seasons of the Christian Year

### JANUARY

The "Christian Calendar" refers to the movement of the grand story of God's work of creation, redemption and salvation throughout the year – that is to say, the big picture of how God loves us and works throughout history.

The first half of the Christian calendar begins with the Christmas cycle, starting with Advent and concluding on Epiphany and then the Easter cycle, beginning with Lent on Ash Wednesday, including Lent, Holy Week, Easter and the Great Fifty Days up to Pentecost. The second half of the Christian calendar is called the Season after Pentecost and focuses on the teaching and life of Christ.

Epiphany is observed on January 6 and the Season after Epiphany continues up to the first day of Lent. Epiphany means "manifestation" or revelation and during these weeks, the church focuses on the visit of the magi, the Baptism of the Lord Jesus and the Transfiguration of Christ on the mountain top, all events signifying God's power and presence made manifest in Jesus. The symbolic color of the Season after Epiphany is green, symbolizing the new and abundant life we have through Christ's presence in the world. The first and last Sundays of the season are special days marking the Baptism of the Lord Jesus and Transfiguration Sunday; on these days white paraments are used.

## Biblical Literacy Campaign

Popular polls and surveys show time and again that the American public is woefully ignorant of the Bible on multiple counts. The same polls and surveys suggest that this Bible illiteracy extends even to those who claim the name of Christian! And it's no wonder really; first we are becoming less and less of a reading people what with multiple video options on a wide variety of technological formats. In addition, the Bible can be hard to read, let alone understand. So each month, our newsletter will publish a brief article to help provide a better look at and understanding of the Bible.

First, we must emphasize that reading the Bible is essential to growing in Christ and a vibrant faith. Even if you don't like to read, it is necessary for you to begin reading your Bible. If your old Confirmation or Sunday School Awards Bible in the King James Version isn't making sense to you, then pick up a more modern translation like The Living Bible or the Message to help you begin to grasp the content and God's living word for you today. You do not have to read the entire Bible at once. Reading plans and explanations of the different versions of the Bible will be forthcoming in future articles.

Second, when we read the Bible we do so prayerfully and devotionally, trusting that the Bible is the inspired word of God and contains all things necessary for salvation. Christians accept the Bible as the means by which God reveals God's self to each new generation through the instruction of the Holy Spirit. Before you sit down to read a passage, quiet yourself to prayerfully ask God to open your heart and mind to whatever it is that God would have you receive. Likewise, after you read the passage, offer a prayer of thanksgiving to God for the priceless gift of this time with the Holy Message God has set at work in your heart and life.

Future articles will cover a host of topics. Keep reading and keep asking God to make you hungry for this spiritual food.

*"For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."* (Hebrews 4:12)

## CONAM Corner

CONAM is our Annual Conference's Committee on Native American Ministries! We are blessed in the Peninsula-Delaware Conference to have an active, compassionate and committed Native American presence. Mt. Lebanon has been so very privileged to participate frequent worship sharing with our friends and Native sisters, bo harris and Ragghi Calentine.

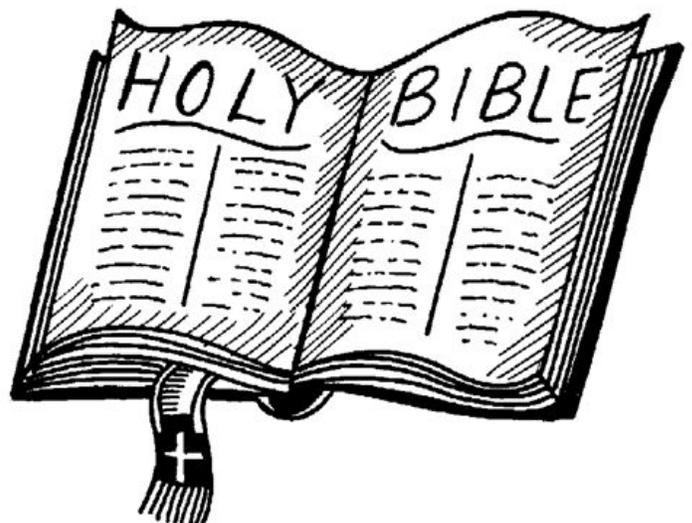
Each month, this corner of our newsletter will share some new learning, update, event, poetry or other pertinent (and hopefully interesting!) material to help each of us grow a deeper understanding of Native people and issues and our role in building bridges. It may be that you or someone in your family has Native relatives or heritage and we pray that you will be especially blessed by these sharings.

Did you know that there are more than 560 federally-recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes in the United States?

Did you know that over half of these tribes are Alaska Native villages?

Did you know that there are almost 245 non-Federally recognized tribes, some of which are seeking Federal recognition and some of which are recognized by their states.

Did you know that in southern Delaware and throughout the Eastern Shore, the Nanticoke people continue to celebrate a rich and vibrant community, including a yearly Pow-Wow held the first weekend in September after Labor Day, as well as the Nanticoke Indian Center and the Nanticoke Indian Museum all in the Millsboro area?



## Congo Partnership Sunday - Jan. 12

Our worship service on January 12 promises to be a special one when we are honored to have Karen Morgan and Julie Burke with us to share information about the Congo Partnership. It was in the late 1990s that the Peninsula-Delaware Conference began a relationship with the Central Congo Episcopal Area and is honored to also now include the Eastern Pennsylvania and Western North Carolina Conferences of the United Methodist Church.

This partnership brings renewal and restoration of spiritual and material ministries for the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). For more than 40 years, the people of the DRC have suffered great devastation from the oppressive policies of a dictator, civil war, invasion from neighboring countries, the collapse of infrastructure and other factors resulting in one of the highest poverty rates in the world. Ironically, the rich natural resources of the country have been the very source of the fighting and turmoil that the country has endured. The 2013-2014 Conference projects include the following:

- MPASA Clinic Project provides maternity, pediatric, internal medicine, pharmaceutical and laboratory services to about 5000 people each year
- MPASA Nutrition Center project is aimed at feeding the severely malnourished children and the elderly
- Agriculture Project provides significant assistance and support for the development of agriculture in the Congo to the point of becoming a sustainable source of income and nutrition
- Children's Ministry in Wembo Nyama aims at encouraging and supporting a program of Christian Education in the area that has an abundance of children living near the mission center and in the nearby villages
- Communication Project aims at providing communication equipment to the offices of the 40 districts and five (5) Directors of Connectional Ministry in the three (3) Annual Conferences for the purpose of effective and efficient communication to spread the gospel and care for the needs of the Congolese people.

This is just a sample of what is happening in the Congo Partnership, so please plan to be present to hear more at our January 12 worship service.

### Some Brief Facts about the Democratic Republic of the Congo

**Location:** Sub-Saharan Africa

**Capital:** Kinshasa

**Area:** 905,355 mi.<sup>2</sup> (a bit smaller than Alaska & Texas combined)

**Population:** 75.5 million

**Religion:** Roman Catholic - 50%; Protestant - 20%;  
Kimbanguist - 10%; Muslim - 10%; other - 10%

**Languages:** French, Lingala, Kikongo, Swahili and Tshiluba

**Independence:** From Belgium in 1960

**Also:** DRC has 12th highest infant mortality rate in the world  
28% of children under 5 years old are underweight  
42% of children ages 5-14 are involved in child labor  
76% of the population has unimproved sanitation

### *Messages From Actual Signs Seen On Church Properties*

"God so loved the world that He did not send a committee."

"Sign broken. Message inside this Sunday."

"Dusty Bibles lead to Dirty Lives"

"If you're headed in the wrong direction, God allows U-turns."

"Forbidden fruit creates many jams."

"In the dark? Follow the Son."

"If you can't sleep, don't count sheep. Talk to the Shepherd."

### *More Funny Quotes with a Message*

Some people are kind, polite and sweet-spirited -- until you try to get into their pew. [George Goldtrap, Madison, TN]

Quit griping about your church; if it were perfect, you couldn't belong. [Msgr. Joseph P. Dooley, Martins Creek, PA]

If a church wants a better pastor, it can get one by praying for the one it has. [Rev. Robert E. Harris]

A lot of church members who are singing "Standing On The Promises" are just sitting on the premises. [Sr. M. Rysavy]

Every evening I turn my troubles over to God -- He's going to be up all night anyway. [Donald J. Morgan, Columbus, OH]

*(Material in this column from [www.gospelweb.net](http://www.gospelweb.net))*

# WORSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

January 2014 ushers in a New Year with new and ongoing opportunities to serve God and witness for Jesus. Pastor Jennifer returns to Mt. Lebanon and Pastor Karen will leave us. We pray that Pastor Jennifer's Study Leave has been indeed a time of reflection and renewal. We pray that Pastor Karen has enjoyed being here as much as we have enjoyed having her. January 5 will be when we celebrate Pastor's Jennifer's return and extend much gratitude to Pastor Karen for her guidance, wisdom and presence during the past four months. God has seen us through the peaks as well as the valleys. May each of us have become closer to God and more committed to His work.

While Pastor Jennifer and our youth are attending the 2014 Youth Rally in Ocean City, MD during the weekend of January 10-12, we will be blessed to have Karen Morgan and Julie Burke as our guests to share information about the Congo Partnership. We look forward to a service after the Rally when our youth bring their Rally experiences to us.

## Sunday, January 5 - Epiphany of the Lord

### Communion

Jeremiah 31:7-14; Psalm 147:12-20  
Ephesians 1:3-14; 1 John (1-9), 10-18

## Sunday, January 12 - Baptism of the Lord

### Congo Partnership Sunday with Karen Morgan & Julie Burke

Isaiah 42:1-9; Psalm 29  
Acts 10:34-43; Matthew 3:13-17

## Sunday, January 19 - 2nd Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 49:1-7; Psalm 40:1-11  
1 Corinthians 1:1-9; John 1:29-42

## Sunday, January 26 - 3rd Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 9:1-4; Psalm 27:1, 4-9  
1 Corinthians 1:10-18; Matthew 4:12-23

## Fellowship

1/5 SPRC

## Ushers

1/5 Ann Brechtel & Marilyn Hetrick  
1/12 Ann Brechtel & Marilyn Hetrick  
1/19 Claudia & Bob Lathem  
1/26 Claudia & Bob Lathem

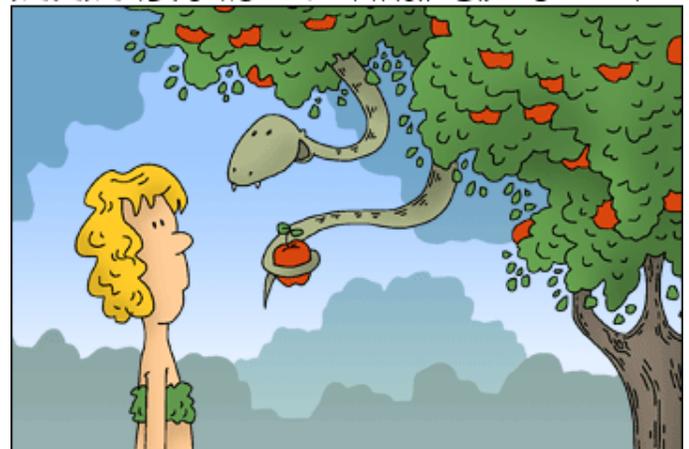


We are in need of **Readers** and **Fellowship Hour Helpers**.

Please consider participating in these important ministries! Sign up sheets are on the table in Fellowship Hall.

**Thank you!**

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(See Genesis 3)

12-30-2013

REMEMBER THAT NEW YEAR RESOLUTION YOU MADE TO TRY NEW THINGS?

# January

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
			<b>1</b> Office closed--New Year Day	<b>2</b> Imagine the Future 7pm	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> Painting Class 1pm	<b>7</b> Domino Group 10am Trustees Meeting 7pm Shipley Bible 7pm	<b>8</b> Bible Study 10am Prayer & Praise 7pm	<b>9</b> Growing in Faith 7pm	<b>10</b> Food Closet @ BCC 9am-noon	<b>11</b>
<b>12</b> Emmaus Reunion 1pm	<b>13</b> Painting Class 1pm Admin Council 7pm	<b>14</b> Domino Group 10am Shipley Bible 7pm SPRC 7pm	<b>15</b> Bible Study 10am Prayer & Praise 7pm	<b>16</b> Growing in Faith 7pm	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> UMW Meeting 11am Painting Class 1pm	<b>21</b> Domino Group 10am Shipley Bible 7pm	<b>22</b> Bible Study 10am Prayer & Praise 7pm	<b>23</b> Growing in Faith 7pm	<b>24</b> Food Closet @ BCC 9am-noon	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> Painting Class 1pm Missions Team	<b>28</b> Domino Group 10am Shipley Bible 7pm	<b>29</b> Bible Study 10am Prayer & Praise 7pm	<b>30</b> Growing in Faith 7pm	<b>31</b>	
						<b>2014</b>

# Reflections...

January is the time of resolutions. People resolve that they will lose weight, exercise more, stop smoking, save more money, see family more often, or another of many possible good intentions. Some of these intentions are a reaction to the activities of the holiday season: eating rich foods, lacking the time to exercise in the midst of holiday celebrations, and spending money of gifts for both others (and if we're honest) ourselves. However, as Christians, we should perhaps think of some other possible intentions based on the holiday season. Perhaps we didn't spend enough time focusing on the meaning of Advent; perhaps we were too caught up in the celebrations, shopping, and holiday specials to read the Christmas story or pray.

Instead of feeling guilty or angry at ourselves for what we didn't do during Advent, this is a time of new beginnings when we can rededicate ourselves to Christ. This is a traditional thing to do in the Methodist Church. John Wesley advocated for a New Year's Eve covenant service where Wesley's covenant prayer would be a centerpiece. The prayer can be found at #607 in Methodist Hymnal.

*I am no longer my own, but thine.*

*Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt. Put me to doing, put me to suffering.*

*Let me be employed for thee or laid aside for thee, exalted for thee or brought low for thee.*

*Let me be full, let me be empty.*

*Let me have all things, let me have nothing. I freely and heartily yield all things to thy pleasure and disposal.*

*And now, O glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, thou art mine, and I am thine.*

*So be it. And the covenant which I have made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.*

I would encourage you to pray the entire Covenant Prayer and use it to kick 2014 off with a fresh start. The power of Christ is that He and God His Father are always willing to give us a fresh start if we simply ask for one. I pray that this New Year's you find the new beginning start that you want and need!

Blessings!

Becky Byrd, Youth Leader

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Worship Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

Sunday School at 9 a.m.