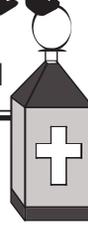


The Lantern

MARCH 2014

MOUNT LEBANON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

WILMINGTON, DEL. | EST^d 1812



Small Groups for 2014

There's not much better way to grow closer to God than by growing closer with others who love God and are willing to support each other in their faith walk. Small groups are tremendously helpful in doing just that. Think about joining one this year; short-term just to try it out or long-term to make that commitment to your God and your faith. All are welcome!



Current Weekly Groups

Men's Bible Study - Sun. at 9am in the Parlor

Women's Journey Group - Sun. at 9am in the Pastor's Study

Bible Study - Wed. at 10am in the Hall (Proverbs)

Prayer and Praise - Wed. at 7pm in the Sanctuary

Sunday Night Specials - Starting in April, watch for details

Short-term commitment: 3 Sunday nights per month

A monthly group using study resources and film, online video and music to help us explore faith related issues in three steps of introduction, interpretation and application. See Becky Byrd with ideas or questions, 690-4992 or rebecca.byrd@gmail.com.

Growing in Faith Group - Thurs. nights, 7pm

Moderate time commitment: 2-3 months

We are starting to read together "In His Steps" by Charles Sheldon. Held at the church in the hall. See Krista Liss Stoume with questions, 897-8917 or kbutch33@hotmail.com.

Covenant Discipleship Group - time to be determined

Long-term commitment: 10 months

This accountability group is designed to help us grow in God through committing to acts of mercy, justice, worship, devotion, sharing our faith and listening for the Holy Spirit. It meets for one hour each week at the church. Please see sign-up sheet on the table in the Hall for information and possible times. Starting in March.

Bible Literacy Campaign: Intro to The Bible – Part 2

The word Bible comes from the Greek word *biblia* which means "books" since it is a collection of many books (remember 66 books total?) It is divided into two primary sections, the Old or First Testament containing the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament describing the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the history of the first Christians. The word "testament" comes from a word that means agreement or witness as in the sense of "testify."

The First Testament includes 39 books and tells of God's creation of all the world, about the call of Abraham and God's promise to make Abraham's descendants into a great nation that would be called Israel. It tells the story of these people, of how God chose them and worked through them, revealing more and more of God's character and purpose. *"For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on earth to be his people, his treasured possession."* – Deuteronomy 7:6

The New Testament contains 27 books and tells about Jesus, his miraculous healings and teachings, of his love and how he died but overcame death so that we might be free through God's grace. It tells of the changed lives of the first disciples, how they told others about Jesus and the growth of the early church and includes a final book revealing visions of the end times when Jesus promises to return to complete God's work of salvation and judgment. *"I have come that they may have life and that they may have life in all its fullness."* – John 10:10

Small Membership Church Seminar

April 26, 2014 | 9am to 3pm | Pecometh

This is a workshop for clergy and laity of any small membership church. Several people from Mt. Lebanon have already expressed interest, but we would love to have more members attend to learn about how our small church can be a beacon of God's light and God's love. If you are interested, please contact Chris Portante at cportante@gmail.com or Pastor Jennifer.

Spiritual Discipline of the Month: Simplicity

Ecclesiastes 7:30 tells us “God made man simple; man’s complex problems are of his own devising.” We know how true a statement that is when we get overwhelmed by the comings and goings of our days. The Christian discipline of simplicity is an inward attitude that results in an outward life-style; based and fed by the freedom that we have in Christ’s peace and power. It comes from what can be called “purity of heart” which can be understood as our willingness and ability to will “One Thing” and from our giving up the belief that somehow we are not enough. As we come to accept God as our portion in this life, fully and joyfully, we no longer need to keep up with cultural status and marketing expectations. Scripture is clear about the potential enslavement of the human spirit to material goods and wealth.

Jesus’ direction is to “*seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, then all else will be added unto you*” (Matthew 6:33) is central to this spiritual discipline. Living this truth inwardly leads to the outward practice. Richard Foster suggests several aspects of this practice; listed below:

First, buy things based on their usefulness rather than their status.

Second, reject anything that is producing an addiction in you. Distinguish between real needs grounded in seeking God’s kingdom and righteousness from everything else.

Third, develop the habit of giving things away; not just your leftovers and those things you don’t use any more but those things that you love as well. I will always remember our daughter handing over her lunch one day to a man holding a sign asking for help. Every bite I took afterwards filled me with that image and her joy of giving.

[...] *Fifth*, learn to enjoy things without owning them.

[...] *Eighth*, pursue plain and direct speech in all your ways; if you say yes to a task, do it. Avoid flattery and half-truths and self-deceptive rationalizations. Let your words be directed by the Divine Center within.

Ninth, reject anything that breeds the oppression of others. Make a commitment to learn about the working conditions of those who produce your food and clothing. Consider how your investments are used to harm or help others. Grow your social conscience.

CONAM Corner



How does one group of people make honest and meaningful expressions of repentance and offers of reconciliation to another group of people who have been deeply harmed, wounded and dishonored? This is the question to be examined and answered by the European/Anglo members of our church in relation to Native American people.

The General Conference of the United Methodist Church in 2012 has called the church to a “spiritual journey that begins with words spoken at the Act of Repentance.” Throughout the four years preceding that gathering, various church agencies, boards and communities began the conversation of what was needed. Their primary work was listening; always one of the hardest tasks we humans face!

Here’s some of what was heard from Native people:

- We are invisible because of our small and scattered demographics.
- We are voiceless because you do not listen. We speak, but you do not hear. The atrocities and injustices of the past live on in the historic trauma of today.
- Your guilt does not help us. Your partnership and advocacy does.
- Words mean nothing if not followed by action.

James 2:26 says: “*For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is also dead.*”

We have been privileged over the years here at Mt. Lebanon in developing relationships with boe harris and Ragghi Rain Calentine, our Native sisters in Christ Now is the time for us to decide if we are serious about honoring that relationship. I hope and pray that we will move together in working on how we might live into those acts of repentance and reconciliation here and throughout our Conference.

"The Lord's Prayer for Lent"

The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 5. As part of our Lenten journey, you are invited to pick up a copy of the Lenten devotional: "The Lord's Prayer for Lent." This booklet guides us through a deeper consideration of that powerful prayer taught by Jesus to his disciples. Each week, a different phrase of the prayer is highlighted with daily meditations focusing on that section of the prayer. Make sure to pick up a copy at the entrance to the sanctuary or in Fellowship Hall to deepen your Lenten experience.

What is Evolution Weekend?

In early February, Evolution Weekend celebrated its ninth anniversary. Over 550 congregations from nearly every state in the nation and 13 countries addressed the relationship between religion and science at gatherings in their own worship or meeting space. This year's theme was "Different Ways of Knowing / Asking Different Questions."

Evolution Weekend is an opportunity for serious discussion and reflection on the relationship between religion and science. An ongoing goal has been to elevate the quality of the discussion on this critical topic, and to show that religion and science are not adversaries. Rather, they look at the natural world from quite different perspectives and ask, and answer, different questions.

Religious people from many diverse faith traditions and locations around the world understand that evolution is quite simply sound science; and for them, it does not in any way threaten, demean, or diminish their faith in God. In fact, for many, the wonders of science often enhance and deepen their awe and gratitude towards God.

The importance of the relationship between religion and science is not just a theoretical one. When the science of evolution is mischaracterized for partisan gain, there are very real consequences for society. The theory of evolution, for example, has led to innumerable medical advances, is responsible for amazing agricultural innovations that have helped us feed the hungry, and can provide the knowledge needed to preserve endangered ecosystems. Similarly, given the centrality of evolution to the scientific enterprise, when the theory of evolution is summarily dismissed, the very nature of science is called into question and our educational system is undermined in a dangerous manner.

Similarly, when some define religion so narrowly that it is categorically opposed to evolutionary ideas, or any of the findings of science, it both demeans and diminishes religion. As members of The Clergy Letter Project have stated so often and so clearly, this narrow perspective is at odds with the broader conception of religion held by thousands upon thousands of religious leaders.

Because religion and science use different methodologies to understand the world, and because religion and science ask very different questions, there is no reason to view them in conflict. One important facet of Evolution Weekend 2014, therefore, was to explore the questions each ask and to examine the different ways of knowing embodied in each.

Through sermons, discussion groups, meaningful conversations and seminars, thousands of people discussed the idea that religion and science are not adversaries.

Whatever way participants chose to celebrate Evolution Weekend, their activities demonstrate, as do The Clergy Letters themselves, which have now been signed by more than 13,600 members of the clergy in the United States, that those claiming that people must choose between religion and science are creating a false dichotomy.

Young Adult Summit

April 11-12, 2014 — Ocean City, Md.

All young adults between the ages of 18 and 35 are welcome to join us as we worship, fellowship, explore and grow in our faith together. Topics to be addressed at the Summit include:

- Developing Young Adult Leaders;
- Understanding God's Purpose;
- Pornography and Life in the Social Media; and
- Walking the Talk.

"May our sons in their youth be like plants full grown, our daughters like corner pillars, cut for the building of a palace."
Psalm 114:12 (ESV)

Brochure/Registration Form:

www.wilmingtondistrict.org/YoungAdultSummit2014.pdf

Habitat for Humanity

March 10-15, 2014

The mission team is very happy to report that we at Mt. Lebanon will be hosting a team from Providence College for the week of March 10. This group of young adults will be doing work for Habitat for Humanity in the Wilmington area. This will be the third time in four years we have hosted students from Providence and are truly glad to have them back. There will be a dinner on Wednesday, March 12 to be followed by Prayer and Worship, which we warmly invite you to attend so that you may come out to meet, greet and have fellowship with these young adults who are doing God's work.

If you wish to volunteer at Habitat for Humanity at any given time during the year, Bob Lathem can provide you with contacts there to get you set up and assisting with this important mission.

WORSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

Sunday, March 2

Transfiguration Sunday

Holy Communion

"The Mountains of Our Lives"

Exodus 24:12-18; Psalm 99

2 Peter 1:16-21; Matthew 17:1-9

Wednesday, March 5 — 7pm

Ash Wednesday

Anointing of the Ashes

"Ring Around the Rosies"

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17; Psalm 51

2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

Anointing of the Ashes

Sunday, March 9

First Sunday in Lent

"Why Is There Trouble?"

Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7

Psalm 32

Romans 5:12-19; Matthew 4:1-11

Jesus and Satan

Missions Speaker: Kevin Smith,

Habitat for Humanity

Sunday, March 16

Second Sunday in Lent

"How do we start over?"

Genesis 12:1-4a; Psalm 121

Romans 4:1-5, 13-17; John 3:1-17

Jesus and Nicodemus

Sunday, March 23

Third Sunday in Lent

"When Are We Satisfied?"

Exodus 17:1-7; Psalm 95

Romans 5:1-11; John 4:5-42

Jesus and the Woman at the Well

Sunday, March 30

Fourth Sunday in Lent

Healing Service

"The Mountains of Our Lives"

1 Samuel 16:1-13; Psalm 23

Ephesians 5:8-14; John 9:1-41

Jesus and the Man Born Blind

Guest Preacher: Ms. Wendy Owen

Sunday, April 6

Fifth Sunday in Lent

Holy Communion

"What Do We Do with Death?"

Ezekiel 37:1-14; Psalm 130

Romans 8:6-11

John 11:1-45

Jesus with Mary, Martha and Lazarus

Sunday, April 13

Palm / Passion Sunday

Matthew 21:1-11; Psalm 118

Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 31

Philippians 2:5-11

Matthew 26:14-27:66

Dramatic Presentation by our Pre-teen Youth

Church Office Closed March 26-March 31

Our Administrative Assistant, Phoebe Chan, is taking a well-deserved vacation March 17-April 1. Please keep her and husband Joe in your prayers for traveling mercies.

Pastor Jennifer will also be traveling out of town, Wednesday, March 26 - Monday, March 31 and returning to the office on Tuesday, April 1.

Pastoral emergencies will be handled by Rev. Tracy Mooney at Peniel UMC (church office: 994-9519 or parsonage: 998-8165.)

Thank you for your support of your church staff.

Readers

3/2	Sheri Videtto
3/9	Tracy Hopkins
3/16	Iva Boardman
3/23	TBA
3/30	TBA

Ushers

3/2	Chris Portante & Becky Byrd
3/9	Harry West & Tracy Hopkins
3/16	Harry West & Tracy Hopkins
3/23	Chris Portante & Becky Byrd

Fellowship Helpers

3/2	Tracy Hopkins & Laurence Birkett
3/9	Harry West & Iva Boardman
3/16	The Hanbys
3/23	Cindy Wilson & Gale Ziegler
3/30	TBA

Altar Guild

3/2	Harry West & Julia Tulloch
3/9	Jerry & Sylvia Eubanks
3/16	Iva Boardman & Gale Ziegler
3/23	Ann Brechtel & Marilyn Hetrick
3/30	TBA

Nurture Committee Needs You!

It has been a challenging few months for our committee with many of our members not being able to carry out their usual tasks for various reasons, including the weather! We have found that the Nurture Committee needs nurturing too! We decided we don't need to have meetings all the time that people struggle to attend, so we are only going to have 2-3 meetings a year and communicate via e-mail, *The Lantern*, bulletins and phone calls the rest of the time.

We would urge everyone to look at the list below and prayerfully consider volunteering in one (or more) of the areas. Some of them can be done at home while watching American Idol, driving in the car (if you have a hands-free set — safety first!), or in your own kitchen if you like to cook. There's something for everyone!

- write cards (or even just a little note; it doesn't have to be a \$4 Hallmark card!) to homebound people and those on the prayer chain list/bulletin board
- call people to check on them (whether they are sick, homebound, dealing with a difficult situation, or just because they weren't at church last Sunday)
- make soup and bring it to church to put in the freezer for our soup ministry
- become a co-chair of this committee
- PRAY! You can sign up to just be on the prayer chain list, get a phone call from the person above you on the prayer chain with names of people who need our prayers, and you can just take a moment out of your day to pray. Easy, right?
- donate items (or money to purchase them if it's easier for you) for care packages we are sending to our college students and our servicepeople overseas to let them know we miss them, have not forgotten them and to remind them of God's love for them. The list will be in the bulletin in March for our upcoming care package (we are sending one this week that was sponsored by a church member).

Lastly, I want to personally thank the past committee leaders who have worked diligently to keep this committee going through thick and thin with a vision that I am hoping to carry out in future: Gloria Brong, Ann Brechtel, and Sylvia Eubanks. I have big shoes to fill! Please contact me to volunteer, even in just one area of this ministry. Thank you.

— Laurence Birkett

lolobirkett@comcast.net; 302-898-0154

Trustees Update

We are now into the new year and the Trustees have been busily compiling and prioritizing a list of capital projects that we would like to complete in 2014. The Trustees receive an allocation from our Endowment fund every year and this year we will receive \$14,200 to be used for capital improvements. As you might imagine the list of projects that we would like to complete exceeds the budget and we do our best to prioritize keeping in mind that there are some projects that are necessary for safety and maintenance.

With the question in front of us as to how we, the Trustees, support making disciples for Christ we felt that this could be reflected in the prioritization of improvements in various communication systems within the church. This is a multi-year project that we started last year with the purchase of the large TV in fellowship hall, new wireless microphones for the sanctuary and new computers for the offices. This year we are planning a major upgrade to the sound system in the sanctuary with the purchase of a new amplifier, speakers and sound board as well as devices for the hearing impaired. Another exciting project that was proposed to the Trustees and endorsed by the committee is the removal of the choir pews. This will allow us flexibility to enhance our music opportunities in the sanctuary, not only with our choir, but also giving us space to bring in other musicians and small bands to share their gifts with us.

If you have suggestion or ideas for other projects that the Trustees can consider for either this year or next, please let one of us know. Your Trustees are: Brent Apotheker, Barbara Ewing (President), Ron Foust (VP), Steve Furman, Doug Hanby, Tracy Hopkins (Sec.), Claudia Lathem, and Karen Yasik.

The Trustees also sponsor a Church Work Day on the first or second Saturday of every month where we have maintenance items and small projects (inside and outside) that are needed for the general upkeep of our church facility. All are welcome to come and help out during Saturday workdays, these are not just Trustee committee events.

The next workday in April 12 from 9am - noon. You can contact Barbara Ewing at 764-3572 or ewingbj@verizon.net if you have questions or requests.

Children's Sunday School Update

Mark your calendar for our annual Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 12 and a very special re-enactment of the Passion of Christ by our Pre-Teen group on Palm Sunday, April 13. Spread the word to friends and family, neighbors, co-workers, school friends etc... More details coming up in the April *Lantern*.

There have been a lot of changes and exciting growth in this ministry:

- Last September, we started a pre-teen group led by Maxcy Hanby and Brent Apotheke for 5th, 6th, and 7th graders. These are the youth who are too old for regular Sunday school but not old enough to be confirmed. These past few months, they have been working on learning the Apostles' Creed and writing their own creed. And recently they have been working on their Passion play. They meet every other Sunday, and on alternate Sundays they stay in the service and take notes so that they can discuss them in the group the following Sunday.
- In the younger groups, we have been digging deep into the Old Testament, learning about Prophets and Kings. Our focus for Lent will be on the Lord's Prayer.
- Our Sunday school format changed recently as we struggled with having enough teachers for two groups, so currently we are combining both younger and older elementary groups which has been a blessing after all, with a variety of ages giving a very different perspective to the lesson each Sunday.
- We are excited to announce that Melissa Schuibbeo volunteered to become the co-chair of the education committee along with Laurence Birkett. Melissa not only has an extensive background in teaching but she also has a wonderfully calm and soothing disposition!
- We have also welcomed a new teacher: Julia Tulloch, who loves having Fun with a big F!!

Our current teaching team is composed of: Melissa Schuibbeo, Cindy Wilson, Julia Tulloch, Laurence Birkett, with Maxcy Hanby and Brent Apotheke in the pre-teen ministry.

We had to release Krista Stoume from her teaching duty as she would like to focus her attention on other ministries in our congregation. Krista, thank you for spending time with the children these past few months!

With only 4 teachers, we are going to be struggling to cover every Sunday, and we are in desperate need of at least one other teacher (but if we get 10 new teachers, we'll make sure to keep them busy!)

Please consider joining our ministry, spending one Sunday a month for 45 minutes upstairs with the children while being provided with all the training and material you need ahead of time. Even if you can only do for a few months, it would be greatly appreciated. Please pray about it.

— Laurence Birkett and Melissa Schuibbeo

Missions Event: March 22 Dinner for Ronald McDonald House Families

Mt Lebanon UMC will be providing dinner for the families at Ronald McDonald House (RMD) on Saturday, March 22nd. This is a time to provide food for the families with children being treated at A.I. Hospital and we could use some additional people to sign-up to help us cook and serve meals to the families. There will be a sign-up sheet in Bambarly Hall with menu items for our planned dinner. We are planning the following menu that we will prepare at RMD: Baked Ham, Chicken Tenders, Sweet Potatoes, Stouffers Mac & Cheese, Tossed Salad, Green Beans and dessert. If you are unable to attend the dinner but would like to contribute please contact Barbara Ewing at 764-3572. If you are planning to join us at RMD, please plan to arrive by 5 pm so that we are ready to begin serving dinner at 5:30. We typically serve about 60-80 people.

The Ronald McDonald House of Delaware provides a safe, affordable "home away from home" to families of seriously or chronically ill or injured children who are being treated at area hospitals. Many of the families staying at RMD return during the evening for a break after a long day at the hospital. Home cooked meals give the families a chance to relax and share time together. By providing a meal and fellowship we provide a bit of comfort, hope and peace to the families staying at RMD.

This year we have scheduled four Saturday night dinners at RMD – our remaining dinners are May 3rd, on Aug. 23rd (cook-out), and Dec. 6th. If you have ideas for a theme for one of the dinners or suggestions for enriching this mission's activity for both the families at RMD as well as for the Mt. Lebanon family, please contact Barbara Ewing at 764-3572 or another member of the Missions Team.

UMW News

The UMW (United Methodists Women) Group at Mt. Lebanon had its February meeting on Monday the 17th. We welcomed two guests to our meeting, Iva's childhood friend and our own Pastor Jennifer. We want to thank Pastor Jennifer for attending our meeting. We always look forward to and enjoy her visits with us.

At the meeting, we voted to give a \$50 donation to the Food Closet for a luncheon at a later date as needed. We also voted on and agreed to take our turns as a group for fellowship hour throughout the year.

We want to thank everyone for a successful Pretzel sale giving us a great start for our 2014 Missions work. We hope everyone enjoyed them, as we completely sold out.

We will be having a bake sale after church on March 9 and hope everyone will join us again and bring your change. Our Bunny Cakes will be selling earlier this year. We know many are away on Easter weekend, so we will take orders up to the week of April 7 and be making them on Friday, April 11. This way they will be available for the Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday the 12th and Palm Sunday. There will also be a couple extra made to sell at the Easter Egg Hunt for families attending.

At our April meeting, we will be welcoming guest speakers from the Congo. We are hoping to have someone from Neighborhood House to speak to us soon, as well.

'Til next month and our thanks again!

— Kay Frick, UMW President

Healing Hope

by Rev. Constance Hastings, MSCC, NCC
Daybreak Counseling Services, Inc.

Those with mental illness have suffered from stigma and misinformation surrounding the disease for centuries. Today, such persons are not considered possessed or locked up for lifetimes in barbaric institutions, but even so, there is a reluctance to seek help and even deny that one needs treatment. Yet, psychiatric research is changing the understanding of mental health and is one of the most exciting fields in clinical fields offering hope to those for whom no chance of successful help seemed possible. In January at the NAMI Delaware 2014 Conference, Dr. Suzanne Vogel-Scibilia presented an overview of some of the most promising areas in psychiatric care. Genetic

research is demonstrating that it may be possible one day to treat schizophrenia, autism, attention deficit disorder, bipolar disorder and other major forms of mental illness through gene therapy. Likewise, research on biomarkers may also indicate which forms of antidepressants would be most effective in different persons, reducing the need for trial and error in prescribing medication. Medications are also improving by being able to target specific areas of the brain affecting different impairments, and magnetic stimulation has demonstrated modest success as an antidepressant. Likewise, research indicates that marijuana use can present symptoms of schizophrenia while omega three fatty acids in the brain seem to help with less incidence of psychotic episodes. Visit namidelaware.org/events for a slide presentation of Dr. Vogel-Scibilia's presentation and other presenters at the conference.

What this and other research demonstrates is that psychiatry is no longer a "soft science" dependent on descriptive diagnoses, but is based more clearly on a medical model or the biology of mental health. However, gene therapy, medications and other forms of treatments do not replace the counseling process. That is because while these interventions are promising (and many still in research trials), the healing process requires a person will need to learn different ways of thinking and relating with others. Thus, both forms of treatment are necessary. Yet, even now there is hope, and cures are not impossible.

As with all healing treatments when understood fully, the human body and mind are incredibly strong. It was designed by our Creator in God's own image, an image that finds its fulfillment in Love. To be completely healed and whole takes faith and belief in our Savior who came to heal and love and in the Holy Spirit who comforts and leads. Leaning into this creation and love fulfills physical, mental and spiritual health.

"I wait quietly before God, for my hope is in him."

Psalm 62:5 (NLT)

Daybreak Counseling Services is a nonprofit clinical pastoral counseling agency that not only addresses the presenting issue or problem but also allows for the inclusion of spirituality within sessions. It is supported through payments determined on a sliding scale basis, private grants, and individual donations. Rev. Constance Hastings, a nationally certified counselor and United Methodist deacon, sees clients at St. Paul's and Atonement UMC with both day and evening hours. Call 302-745-1042 for information or to make an appointment.

(This article may be reprinted, but notification would be appreciated by

emailing cmhncc@yahoo.com.)

March

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
						1
2 Holy Communion	3 Painting Class 1pm	4 Domino Group 10am	5 Bible Study 10am Ash Wednesday 7pm N.A. Group 8pm	6 Growing in Faith 7pm	7	8 Church Work Day 9am-noon "Box City" 6pm
9 Habitat for Humanity Speaker Kevin Smith Emmaus 1pm	10 Painting Class 1pm Habitat Mission Team arrives for the week	11 Domino Group 10am	12 Bible Study 10am Habitat Dinner 5pm N.A. Group 8pm	13 Growing in Faith 7pm	14 Food Closet @ BCC 9am-noon	15 Family Promise Dinner 5:30pm @ Aldersgate UMC
16	17 UMW Meeting 11am Painting Class 1pm Admin Council 7pm	18 Domino Group 10am	19 Bible Study 10am Prayer & Praise 7pm N.A. Group 8pm	20 Growing in Faith 7pm	21	22 RMcDH Dinner 5:30pm
23	24 Painting Class 1pm Missions Team 7pm	25 Domino Group 10am	26 Bible Study 10am Prayer & Praise 7pm N.A. Group 8pm	27 Growing in Faith 7pm	28 Food Closet @ BCC 9am-noon	29
30 Healing Service	31 Painting Class 1pm					2014

Reflections...

For some, the first signs of spring are the sighting of the first red-breasted robin. For others, it's the beginning of baseball's spring training. The way I know spring is on its way for sure is by the arrival of the Burpee Seed Catalogue in our mailbox. It doesn't matter what the temperature may be outside or if we have a foot of snow on the ground; looking at the glossy pictures of those lush delectable vegetables and beautiful colorful flowers reminds me that winter must eventually give way to spring and summer.

I particularly appreciate the garden metaphor at this time of year because our backyard garden is so often like my faith life. Some years, we dig up the soil and fertilize it with rich compost and other years, we barely scratch the surface. Some years, we get ambitious and plant way more than we can ever use ourselves and then are blessed to share the harvest; while other years, we're lucky if we can even plant just the basic few tomato and pepper plants. Some years, we keep the garden free of weeds throughout the entire growing season and other years, the poor garden gets suffocated by the weeds that take over. Some years the harvest is abundant and other years it's minimal at best.

The Christian season of Lent begins this year on Wednesday, March 5. The word Lent itself comes from the old English word *lencten* that actually means spring. These forty days (excluding Sundays) preceding Easter have long been observed in the Church as a time of recalling our baptism ("Remember your baptism and be glad in it," Martin Luther used to regularly proclaim) and as a time of confessing and turning from our sins of omission and commission. The work of repentance or returning to God as we turn away from that which keeps us from God is both an inward and outward practice. So we are invited to a deeper practice of prayer, devotion and worship as well as to a wider work of service and sharing of ourselves with others. I hope you will commit to some deeper spiritual practices this Lenten season.

As with the garden metaphor, much – though not all – of what we put into our faith life determines the outcome. God, after all, is still the one that causes the sun to shine, the rain to fall and the seeds – whether vegetable or spiritual – to grow. We have the great honor and privilege of being co-laborers with God in the garden of our souls. As usual, I'm praying for an abundant harvest this year!

Pastor Jennifer Kerby

MOUNT LEBANON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

850 Mt. Lebanon Road
Wilmington, DE 19803

Phone: (302) 652-8411

E-mail: office.mtlebanonumc@verizon.net

Worship Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

Sunday School at 9 a.m.