

The Lantern

JANUARY 2015

MOUNT LEBANON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

WILMINGTON, DEL. | EST^d 1812



2014 Year-End Finance Report

As we close the books for the church in 2014, there is good news and bad news. The good news is that we kept expenses low at just over \$185,000. The vast majority of that is upkeep of our aging church building and our staff costs. The main staff costs are those of a full-time pastor. After that, most of our costs are for educational and other materials. The recent technology improvements and changes to the sanctuary have been funded through disbursements from the Endowment Fund. Similarly, the money that we give for missions projects is raised separately from our congregation or through endowment disbursements.

The bad news is that our giving only totaled \$155,000. The deficit was “covered” by monies from the Endowment Fund and borrowing from restricted gift funds. But that isn’t really covering the deficit; it’s simply a short-term solution to make sure that our bills are paid...which is why we must either increase our giving or grow our church. There simply are no places to cut our budget unless we move to a part-time pastor, which does not seem like a workable situation either.

As we enter 2015, I would urge you to do three things to help our financial situation:

- 1) Pray!** We want to continue to praise God for the gifts he has given us and ask for direction.
- 2) Increase your giving.** Even an additional small gift will work to close our deficit.
- 3) Invite your friends to church.** The most sustainable way to close the gap is welcome new members who will support our church.

—Becky Byrd, Finance Co-Chair

All-Church Bible Study “Too Busy Not to Pray” by Bill Hybels

Beginning Sunday, Jan. 18, all church friends and members are invited to re-dedicate themselves to the practice of prayer. This lively six-week session will use a study guide and a video component to help us further explore and deepen our prayer lives. We will meet in the sanctuary at 9am each Sunday. Bring a friend or coworker! Tea and coffee will be available. Please sign up on the sheet in Fellowship Hall so we know how many guides to purchase. — *Pastor Jennifer Kerby*

Important Dates

See more information throughout this issue.

Jan. 9-11 — Youth Rally in Ocean City, Md.

Jan. 9 — Food Closet

Jan. 10 — All-Church Work Day

Jan. 18 — Beginning of All-Church Bible Study

Jan. 23 — Food Closet

Jan. 24 — Line Dancing Lessons, Music & Dinner

News from United Methodist Women

On Monday, December 15, the Mt. Lebanon United Methodists Women's (UMW) Group was honored to have Pastor Jennifer and her mother attend the meeting. We decided to give half of our money to the church's operating costs and the other half to the District to be divided between different missions. We then discussed the fact that the present board — meaning the president, vice president and treasurer — are all stepping down. We had already lost our secretary, Sylvia Eubanks. At this point in time we all have personal reasons for stepping down.

Pastor Jennifer explained that to continue the chapter someone needs to volunteer to fill the positions, if only temporarily. Due to the fact that no one has state their willingness and ability to do so, the UMW Group will be dissolved indefinitely until such time as there is interest in filling the positions. Maybe someone reading this article would be interested in serving God and the church as a UMW board member. If anyone is indeed interested, please see Pastor Jennifer or Iva Boardman.

We also played our annual Mr. and Mrs. Wright game in memory of our Nancie Owens who used to do it every year with us. We closed the meeting by singing Christmas carols and having Pastor Jennifer lead us in saying grace before lunch.

I want to thank every one in the church for supporting me as president and the entire group for these last few years, making our UMW Group very successful in our missions work for God. I am signing off for now...

— *Kay Frick, Outgoing President, Mt. Lebanon UMC UMW*

New Leaders to Begin Their Service

We give thanks to God for the lay leadership of this church who give so much of their time, energy and prayers in support of our many ministries. Service terms generally begin on January 1 of each year and so we want to extend a special welcome to some special people taking on new roles:

Lay Leaders: Harry West continues at his post and is joined by new Lay Leaders *Maxcy Hanby* and *Kay Shoemaker*. Maxcy and Kay will begin a three year term as they learn the whole of how our church functions and help guide us into new possibilities and new ministries. We thank Iva Boardman for her four years of prior service as she now rotates off this position.

Trustees: Trustees elected at our December 28, 2014 Church Conference are *Geraldine Walker*, serving as a Trustee for the first time, and returning Trustee *Ron Foust*. These are the folks who keep such good care of maintaining and upgrading our physical facility and property.

Worship Team: After a brief hiatus, the Worship Team is being reconfigured to address the whole of our congregation's worship life. Leading this team are *Iva Boardman* and *Maxcy Hanby*. If you are interested in joining these efforts, please give them a call.

In addition, a number of persons are serving in new roles on teams and committees:

Admin. Council Secretary:	Rebecca Byrd
Church Librarian:	Marilyn Hetrick
Communication Coordinator:	Jeff Shoemaker
Finance (new):	Kathleen Rawlins, Amy Schoenleber and Barb Ewing
Lay Leadership (new):	Ron Foust
Membership Secretary:	Pat Darby
Staff-Parish Relations (new):	Helen Brown
Worship Team members:	Marilyn Hetrick, Krista Stoume, Jeff Shoemaker, Doug Hanby, Kay Shoemaker, Joan Anderson and Carol Nile
Acolyte Coordinator:	Denise Hudson
Candle Coordinators:	Denise Hudson and Marilyn Hetrick
Youth Leaders:	Julia Tulloch and Leizel Parks (from Chester-Bethel UMC)

Please keep all of these persons and our church's ministries in your dedicated prayers that we might fulfill God's calling in this time and place!

2015 Youth Rally: Masterpiece!

Have you ever thought about how God has created you to be his "Masterpiece" in the world? Have you ever realized that God is right now sculpting you into the light and witness he has intended you to be? Have you ever connected that God has made you to for service to God's world?

Ephesians 2:10 says this: "For we are what he has made us, created in Jesus Christ for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life."

This year our youth and chaperones will join with the youth and chaperones of Chester-Bethel UMC to attend the ever popular Youth Rally, hearing great Christian bands, listening to inspirational speakers, joining in uplifting worship services, spending an afternoon helping out at a local shelter for homeless folks and generally having an awesome time!

Please keep the group in your prayers for God's hand to touch and change hearts and lives; and please keep Sunday, Feb. 1 on your calendar to share in hearing about their experiences in worship. — *Pastor Jennifer Kerby*

CONAM Corner

“We are still here”

In a land that has always been, indigenous tribal people welcomed each new dawn with prayers of thanksgiving for the rivers that flowed, the tides of the big water and the sacred earth that brought plentiful harvest.

As seasons would come and go, so did others not from this land. Some footsteps were light and respectful. Others walked footsteps heavily placed and harshly walked that left deep wounds upon the hearts of the people and the land that they loved. These deeply embedded footprints of disrespect, dishonoring and greed left trails over the people’s land and hearts and a great hurt began.

Before long the footprints of the first peoples could only be seen by each other and those that walked closely with them. But the original ones were still here, nestled among the trees, their spirits floating on the tides of the rivers and sea, their hearts and hands in the seeds they sowed to feed their people. They danced their dances and sang their songs and stood silently strong.

But the great hurt was getting harder to bare, so brave ones from their tribes stepped from among the trees and spoke of their pain that hurt their hearts and spirits so that awareness and healing could begin.

In time, the words were heard and honoring and celebrations of the first people of the land took place.

The first people have always been here and always shall be. “WE ARE STILL HERE” they declare and they invite you to learn more about them.

(The above reflection was passed on to us by boe harris.)

Please keep aware of articles you read or stories you hear of in the media as we prepare to enter into a year of learning more about the indigenous people of our nation.

— *Pastor Jennifer Kerby and Becky Byrd, CONAM Rep.*

Hot off the Press!

Rev. Dr. Marlene Louise Walter’s latest book “Through Stained Glass” is now available at \$25/copy. The book “attempts to offer positive guidance to those who’ve survived losses and need a hopeful outlook through their life changes.” Call Rev. Walters to request an autographed copy at 321-242-9949 or 321-243-0263. — *Pastor Jennifer Kerby*

2015 Covenant Discipleship Groups

Once again this year, we will be organizing small groups who will join in the practice of Christian accountability through covenant making. The groups will meet once a week for one hour throughout the year and join in holding each other in prayer and loving support as we seek to grow deeper, stronger and more joy-filled in our lives as disciples of Jesus. A sign-up sheet is on the Info Table in the hall.

Please sign up and indicate your available times on the hand-out underneath the sign-up page. Any questions, please check in with Harry West, Kay Shoemaker or Iva Boardman. We hope to have the groups started up by the beginning of February. — *Pastor Jennifer Kerby*

Souper Bowl of Caring

Did you know?

- Nearly 50 million Americans live in poverty?
- 1 in 6 Americans face hunger every day?
- More than 630,000 people in the United States are homeless?
- 23% of those struggling went to college?
- Or that 16 million children live in food insecure households?

When you sit down to watch the Super Bowl with all the tasty food that usually accompanies watching the game, please keep in mind the homeless and the less fortunate who don’t know where they will be getting their next meal. The Souper Bowl Collection began in 1990 in South Carolina, but is now a nationwide effort.

The Mission Team would like to challenge our congregation to collect 600 pounds of food this year and enough money for 800 more pounds. The cans and boxes are beginning to pile up, but we need so much more. Please consider contributing canned soup to the cause to help end hunger in our communities. Thank you.

“Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game,

WORSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

SUNDAY, JANUARY 4

Epiphany Sunday

Holy Communion

Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72

Ephesians 3:1-12

Matthew 2:1-2

Service of Commissioning New Church Leadership

SUNDAY, JANUARY 11

Baptism of the Lord Sunday

Genesis 1:1-5; Psalm 29

Acts 19:1-7

Mark 1:4-11

Guest Preacher while Pastor at Youth Rally

SUNDAY, JANUARY 18

"Fans vs. Followers" series begins

1 Samuel 3:1-20; Psalm 139:1-18

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

John 1:43-51

SUNDAY, JANUARY 25

"Souper Bowl" Sunday

"Fans vs. Followers" continues

Deuteronomy 18:15-20; Psalm 111

1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Mark 1:21-28

Ushers:

Jan 4 Iva Boardman, Marilyn Hetrick

Jan 11 Iva Boardman, Marilyn Hetrick

Jan 18 Claudia & Bob Lathem

Jan 25 Claudia & Bob Lathem

"Pray first, aim high and stay focused"

There once was a man who had nothing for his family to eat. He had an old rifle and three bullets. So, he decided that he would go out hunting and kill some wild game for dinner.

As he went down the road, he saw a rabbit. He shot at the rabbit and missed it. The rabbit ran away.

Then he saw a squirrel and fired a shot at the squirrel and missed it. The squirrel disappeared into a hole in a cottonwood tree.

As he went further, he saw a large wild turkey up in a tree, but he had only one bullet remaining. A voice spoke to him and said, "Pray first, aim high and stay focused." However, at the same time, he saw a deer which would provide more meat than the turkey. He brought the gun down and aimed at the deer. But, then he saw a rattlesnake between his legs about to bite him, so he naturally brought the gun down further to shoot the rattlesnake. Still, the voice again said to him, "Pray first, aim high and stay focused."

So, the man decided to listen to God's voice. He prayed, then aimed the gun high up in the tree, and shot the wild turkey. The bullet went into the turkey, deflected off a bone and hit the deer, killing it. When the gun fired, it knocked the man off balance, he stepped on the rattlesnake's head which killed it and fell backwards into a pond. When he stood up to look around, he had fish in all his pockets, a deer and a turkey with which to feed his family. The snake was dead simply because the man listened to God.

Moral of the story: Keep God first and everything else will follow. Pray first before you do anything. Aim high in your goals, and stay focused on God. Never let people or things discourage you concerning your past. Do not look to man for your blessings, but look only to God.

Meditation: *Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.* — Proverbs 3:5-6

— Author unknown. Shared with Admin. Council by Iva Boardman. Copied for this publication from *daily-dev.com*

If you would like to contribute an article (or if you have a question or comment), please contact our editor: Christopher Portante, cportante@gmail.com or (302) 750-8353

January

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
				1	2	3
ShIPLEy Worship 2pm Youth Group 4:30pm	Painting Class 1pm Admin Council 7pm	Domino Group 10am Trustees Meeting 7pm	Bible Study 10am N.A. Group 8pm	Disciple 6:30pm	Food Closet 9am-12noon @BCC Youth Rally	All Church Work Day 9am-noon Youth Rally
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Emmaus Group 1pm Youth Rally	Painting Class 1pm	Domino Group 10am Worship Team 7pm	Bible Study 10am N.A. Group 8pm	Disciple 6:30pm	Wedding Rehearsal 6pm	Wedding 3pm
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
ShIPLEy Worship 2pm Youth Group 4:30pm	Painting Class 1pm	Domino Group 10am	Bible Study 10am N.A. Group 8pm	Disciple 6:30pm	Food Closet 9am-12noon & BCC	Juke Box Line Dancing & Dinner 5:30pm
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Cadia Worship 2:30p	Painting Class 1pm Missions Team 7pm	Domino Group 10am	Bible Study 10am N.A. Group 8pm	Disciple 6:30pm	Food Closet 9am-12noon & BCC	
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
		Domino Group 10am	Bible Study 10am N.A. Group 8pm	Disciple 6:30pm		
						2015

Reflections...

This last year, I've been reading a devotional book entitled "Come Away My Beloved" by Frances J. Roberts. In it, I am reminded that always, God calls us "Beloved" and invites us to take time away from the busyness and burdens of our daily lives to simply rest in the sweet arms of Divine Love. Thank God for that love and for that invitation. Here is an excerpt:

"Behold, I have placed within you a spring of living water. For My Spirit shall be a continual flowing forth of life from your innermost being. This I have promised to all My children, and this you may experience as you claim it by faith. All My promises are received by faith. None are gained by Merit, nor are they awards for human achievements.

For the promise of the Father is to all who believe, yes, to all who are called, even those who are far off (see Acts 2:39). And this promise is the gift of the indwelling presence of My Holy Spirit, promised to all who have been baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, who have repented of their sins and received remission (see Acts 2:38). It is written: "How much more will your father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" (Luke 11:13, emphasis added). Ask, and you shall receive, and your joy shall be full. As surely as a door is opened in response to a knock; as surely as that which is lost is found by the one who searches after it; and as surely as one who makes a request receives that for which he has asked; even so, in similar fashion, and with corresponding simplicity, I will give to you, My child, the Holy Spirit for no other reason than because you have asked Me to do so. I have not placed this blessing beyond your reach, for it is My desire that you shall have it.

How can My Church be victorious without the dynamic power of the Holy Spirit filling each believer? Your thwart My purposes and block My path when you do not avail yourself of this, My provision. Do you suppose I can accomplish My will through a powerless body? For each Christian is to be a channel through which My blessings may flow, and how can you be open to My blessings if you are filled with yourself? Only to the degree that you allow My Spirit to flow in will "self" be driven out.

The open heart shall be filled. The sin confessed shall be forgiven. The hunger after righteousness shall be satisfied. Be as a little child. I will be to you a loving Father. You shall have what you desire because I love you. Let this be your hope, and your faith shall be rewarded. My power is not reserved for a few selected saints. It is available to all, and it is available to you. Ask!"

Friends, it's time for us to pray fervently and passionately for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on our lives and our congregation. There is so much waiting for us to do for God. There are so many attacks coming at us to keep us from our full service to God. We are in a time of great transition at all levels of the Christian faith. Now is the time for us to rely on God's power through the Holy Spirit. Won't you join with me in the New Year opening our hearts, minds and spirits to a full receiving of the blessings of God's Holy Spirit? — *Pastor Jennifer Kerby*

MOUNT LEBANON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Worship Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

Sunday School at 9 a.m.