

# The Lantern

MAY 2015

MOUNT LEBANON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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



## Anti-Racism and White Folks: Why #BlackLivesMatter is important

As of this writing, the City of Baltimore is under a State of Emergency and patrolled by the National Guard. The looting and rioting that occurred following the death and funeral of Freddie Gray are inexcusable. The outrage, suspicion and demands for justice surrounding the incident of his arrest, injury and death while in custody of the Baltimore City Police are not.

Yes, the national media is part of a driving force highlighting and escalating tensions around police encounters with African-American men in cities around our nation. Yes, violence against police and other first responders who care for the safety of all is also increasing in our communities. But to only look at those aspects of the equation and not look at details of arrests, incidence of injury, conviction and incarceration of men by race is one-sided and ultimately self-defeating.

For the most part, white folks do not have an understanding or appreciation of the over-arching experience of black folks with our national law enforcement system. The overwhelming majority of African-American men, women and youth have experienced disrespectful treatment by and had a negative encounter with security or police personnel despite the fact that they had done nothing wrong or illegal. What many white folks forget (and what African Americans certainly cannot forget) is the fact that this current reality is set within a long history of injustice toward and brutality of African Americans – from the beginnings of legalized slavery through the Jim Crow days and into the more recent years of the Civil Rights movement.

This chasm of racism is a faith emergency within the Christian church. With Paul, we affirm that in Christ there is no distinction of persons and, with Peter, we proclaim that certainly God shows no partiality.

*"This chasm of racism is a faith emergency within the Christian church."*



And yet, until white folks begin to work intentionally and seriously on affirming and working for African American's rights and needs to be honored and secured at all levels of our society, we will be falling short of Jesus' commandment to love one another as he has loved us. Yes, we must speak out and demand that our national media be responsible and not inflammatory in its news coverage. Yes, we must actively support and respect those public servants who put their lives on the line faithfully and honorably. But, as white people who follow Jesus, we must also step up and step out to seek justice for all God's children so that we might truly become the people of God, known by our love for one another.

In the days ahead, as you pray for the Gray family, for the conditions in our sister city of Baltimore and for our nation, keep your eyes open to rallies and opportunities here in Wilmington to learn more about the conditions and experiences that our city faces. And then make time in your schedules, to go for the love of God and neighbor to listen, to learn and then to act in Jesus' name.

*Rev. Jennifer Kerby*

## Turn the Tide

**Next Meeting: Sunday, May 31**

Mark your calendars now as we continue to educate ourselves and explore meaningful opportunities for growing our relationships and increasing ministry to address the economic and human devastation of the North Market Street neighborhood. We'll meet at 12:30pm in the hall after worship and an abbreviated choir rehearsal. Please join us!

## Special Offerings in 2015

The Missions Team at Mt. Lebanon is once again offering a one-time invitation to give to the six (6) UMC-designated, church-wide Special Sunday offerings to emphasize 13 ministries of the church and the Annual Conference special ministries. In 2014, we issued the invitation in mid September through the end of October. In reviewing the calendar, the decision was made to offer the 2015 one time collection beginning May 15 through June 30, since the Annual Conference ministries collection is now also included. Please look for the invitation letters during the second week of May.

Your generosity last year resulted in a collection of \$2,600 which was divided evenly among the Special Sunday ministries. They include Human Relations Day, One Great Hour of Sharing, Native American Ministries, Peace with Justice, World Communion Sunday and the United Methodist Student Day. A description of each of these ministries will be included in the invitation letter.

*Iva Boardman, Missions Team Co-Chair*

## Prayer for the Broader Community

Heavenly Father and Creator of all, we pray that our Native American brothers and sisters can forgive us for the atrocities that have been committed against them in the past and current practices that show no respect for their feelings. While we cannot erase history, let us commit to being aware and stepping forward into action that shows respect and provides resources for their needs. We cannot ignore or be apathetic to these brothers and sisters any longer. We pray that these words become actions now and continue for as long as it takes for our Native American brothers and sisters to have what we take for granted. This we pray in the name of your Son, our Savior and Lord and with the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*Mt. Lebanon UMC Covenant Discipleship Group*

## Fellowship Helpers

If you like to eat, then help with the treats! Keep it simple is our motto. We are now in need of people to sign up for the weeks ahead. The sign-up sheet is on the snack table in Fellowship Hall. Thanks!

## Habitat for Humanity Walk

One brisk day in March, Pastor Jennifer and two Mt. Lebanon congregants had the pleasure of walking around the neighborhood on the northeast side of Wilmington with Kevin Smith, Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity of New Castle County. The area included the streets directly east and south of our beloved Brandywine Community United Methodist church at 2200 Market Street. We saw the beautifully completed homes that Habitat has completed as well as ones that are scheduled to be refurbished and lots where new homes will be constructed.

Since 1976, when Habitat for Humanity was founded, one million homes have been built or repaired worldwide, including hundreds in Delaware. Habitat helps families achieve their goal of home ownership through sweat-equity and zero-interest mortgages. Families are selected based on their level of need, willingness to partner with Habitat, and ability to repay the mortgage. When the house is completed and the homeowner completes program requirements, Habitat then sells the house, at cost (\$125,000-\$160,000) to homeowners with a 20-30 year zero percent interest mortgage. While there can be challenges, the mission is to give hope and opportunity to families who without Habitat might never be able to be homeowners. The walk updated us on the presence of Habitat in the neighborhood and reinforced how important they are as a partner in our "Turn the Tide" mission.

*Iva Boardman, Missions Team Co-Chair*

## Get Ready for "Dads and Grads" Celebration Service – Sunday, June 21

Please start gathering your special graduate's information now so we can include them in our Celebration Service scheduled for June 21. All information needs to be in to the church office no later than Sunday, June 7. Thanks and God bless!



# WORSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

## SUNDAY, MAY 3

### *Holy Communion*

#### *The Power Abiding in Christ*

1 John 4:7-21; John 15:1-8

## SUNDAY, MAY 10

### *Mother's Day*

#### *The Power of Loving Friendship*

1 John 3:16-18; John 15:9-17

## SUNDAY, MAY 17

### *Ascension Sunday*

#### *The Power of Praise*

Psalms 47; Ephesians 1:15-21

Luke 24:50-53

## SUNDAY, MAY 24

### *Pentecost Sunday*

#### *The Power of the Holy Spirit*

Acts 2:1-21; John 16:7-15

## SUNDAY, MAY 31

### *Healing Service*

#### *Bringing One Another to Jesus*

Mark 2:1-5

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## *Important Dates*

- May 2 — Prayer Retreat (10a-2p)
- May 3 — Service at Shipley Manor (2pm)
- May 8 — Food Closet @ BCC (9a-noon)
- May 9 — All-Church Work Day (9am-noon)
- May 22 — Food Closet @ BCC (9a-noon)
- May 23 — Family Promise Dinner (5p)  
at Aldersgate UMC
- May 24 — Cadia Worship
- May 25 — Office closed for Memorial Day
- May 29 — Prayer and Fasting (9a-2p)
- May 30 — Food and FILMS! (6p)
- May 31 — "Turn the Tide" meeting (12:30p)

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I PRAISE TOO MUCH AND NOW I'M STUCK



## Movie Night with TWO screens!

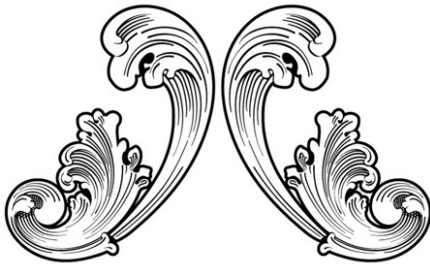
On May 30, we will be showing two excellent films at Mount Lebanon and will share dinner, too!

We will meet for dinner in Fellowship Hall at 6pm. Feel free to bring anything you would like to share, but you don't need to contribute to attend! Just bring yourselves and maybe a friend or two!

After dinner we will show one movie in Fellowship Hall and one in the church. It's your choice what you watch!

**FACING THE GIANTS** (2006) is a movie about an underdog high school football team and their reliance on faith.

**HEART OF THE COUNTRY** (2013) is a movie about a country music artist rebuilding her life and faith after her husband is jailed for fraud on Wall Street. Features country music recording artist Jana Kramer.



## My Tribute

A Poem by Joanne Nelson

(sister of Jack Kirkland)

Thank you Jesus for loving me first.  
And giving me such a hunger and thirst.  
To know you more and more each day  
As in your word to tell me the way.

I am a sinner, it is very true.  
I need a Savior and it is you.  
You sacrificed your blood for me  
As you bled and died at Calvary.

The third day you arose from the dead.  
You went to your father just as you said.  
My hope is when you call my name  
I will arise and do the same.

Your love and mercy did not leave me alone.  
You sent your Holy Spirit to be my own.  
Thank you for peace and joy you give to me  
When I surrender all my life to thee.

Thank you for your faithfulness in all my life  
Knowing you're with me in struggle and strife.  
I'm learning to trust you day by day.  
As in your word to show me the way.

I give you all my worship and praise.  
As I journey through this earthly maze.  
Help me Lord to be a blessing each day  
In all that I do and all that I say.

I love you Lord!



## May Servants

### Readers

May 3	Tracy Hopkins
May 10	Maxcy Hanby
May 17	Donna Winans
May 24	Iva Boardman

### Altar Guild

May 3	Marilyn Hetrick
May 10	Iva Boardman
May 17	Laurence Birkett
May 24	Harry West
May 31	Tracy Hopkins

### Ushers

May 3	Jeff Shoemaker
May 10, 17	Barbara Ewing & Kathy Neilson
May 24, 31	Bob & Claudia Lathem

## Ministry to Shipley Manor

Our ministry to Shipley Manor Nursing Home has been providing Sunday services since 1996 and provided Bible Study every Tuesday night from 1997 to 2013 (a resident of Shipley Manor agreed to lead the Bible study in 2013). Throughout the years there have been groups or individuals who have helped with the services. For instance, our choir has been faithfully presenting a program at least once a year, even through changes in music directors.

The time has unfortunately come for us to step down and to either end the ministry at Shipley Manor or have someone choose to direct the ministry there. Our ministry to the folks at Cadia Rehab has been successful, and perhaps it's time to venture into a continuing ministry there. This situation is in the hands of our church. Is there someone, or a group of someones, who feel the call to continue this ministry at Shipley Manor? If you are interested, please contact one of us. Thank you for considering assisting in this very worthwhile and fulfilling ministry!

*Denise Hudson and Kay Shoemaker*

# Reflections...

God is such a jokester! There I was all ready for another Sunday; I had a great class on Praying in Color planned for Sunday school at 9am, what I thought was a decent and inspiring worship service with a sermon on the 23rd Psalm and then an after worship session with a presentation by Chaz Molins from Christiana Care about the impact of violence on our city of Wilmington and programs that are addressing that violence. Then out of nowhere, I get lightheaded and weak as a kitten and realize I need to get home to get horizontal. Ouch! How did that happen? I missed so much and I missed seeing so many folks, not to mention a great youth event later on in the afternoon.

Church and Sundays for me are like milk and cookies or pancakes and syrup; it's just not the same one without the other. But what's curious and intriguing is that for many people who love God, church and Sundays aren't as necessary as they once were. The Barna research group has compiled survey results that regular church attendance is now understood by the majority of faithful church-goers to mean twice a month rather than every week. So much for milk and cookies or pancakes and syrup; it would seem that a new religious or spiritual "palate" is developing among us.

So how about you? What does attending church mean for you? Have you noticed a change in your attendance and if so, can you identify the reasons? One of the top reasons the Barna study revealed was that folks are finding their faith nurturing in many places, not just church, including online and in alternate spiritual pursuits. Our new worship team is exploring these and many other questions about the experience of worship and its place in our lives and in the life of the church. It may well be that we are in the midst of a larger spiritual transition than what we can clearly see at this time. It may be that we have gotten bored or annoyed with one another to the point that we no longer encounter God in the midst of the community of faith. Whatever those larger scale changes may be and whatever the changes in our individual lives, let us continue as Hebrews 10:24-25 says "to consider how we might spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as we see the Day approaching."

*Pastor Jennifer Kerby*

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## **MOUNT LEBANON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

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Worship Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

Sunday School at 9 a.m.