

# The Lantern

February 2018

MOUNT LEBANON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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



## Worship Highlights

### **Sunday, Feb. 4**

*Holy Communion*

Isaiah 40:21-31; Psalm 147

1 Corinthians 9:16-23

Mark 1:29-39

### **Sunday, Feb. 11**

*Guest Preacher-Missionary*

*Rev. Pete Campbell*

### **Wednesday, Feb. 14**

*Ash Wednesday Service at*

*Brandywine Community UMC*

*5:30pm; 2200 N. Market St.*

Joel 2:1-2; Psalm 51

2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

*Meet at Mt. Lebanon at 5pm to*

*carpool to Brandywine CUMC*

### **Sunday, Feb. 18**

*First Sunday in Lent*

Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25

1 Peter 3:18-22

Mark 1:9-15

### **Sunday, Feb. 25**

*Second Sunday in Lent*

Genesis 17:1-16; Psalm 22

Romans 4:13-25

Mark 8:31-38

## February Happenings:

### **Enter into the season of Lent**

**Fasting for the sake of others.** Once again this year, your church leadership is inviting you to devote significant time throughout Lent focusing on the traditional spiritual practices of prayer, fasting and generous giving as we prepare for the great festival of Easter.

We have purchased copies of a Lenten devotion to encourage you in a daily time of prayer and reflection. They will be available on Sunday Feb. 11 for you to begin on Ash Wednesday.

In addition, we will be holding a five week study class on fasting at our Wednesday morning Bible study (10am each week) and have additional material available for those who wish to enter into a practice of Fasting; whether from food in some form, technology or anything that may distract you from God. We hope to start a time of weekly support and check-in for those who wish to begin; details to come.

Finally throughout Lent, your Finance and Missions Teams are inviting you to consider sacrificial giving, above and beyond your regular tithe, to either the church operating budget or to the Food Closet ministry with Brandywine Community UMC.

### **Chase the Winter Blues Away Food & Fun Night**

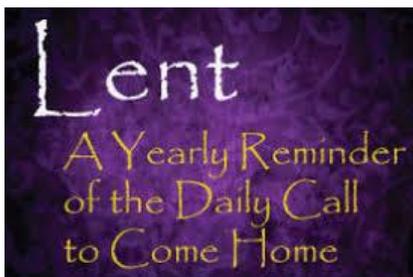
**Saturday, Feb. 10, 5-8pm**

Join with your church family and friends for an evening of your favorite foods and games. Bring a dish to share and whatever games you've been longing to play for an evening of smiles and good cheer.

### **Festival of Spirituals**

**Sunday, Feb. 11, 3pm at St. Helena's RC Church**

St. Helena's Church Choir will host its Tenth Annual Festival of Spirituals, entitled *We Shall Walk Through the Valley in Peace*. St. Helena's welcomes the Choir School of Delaware, the Perryville (MD) High School Chamber Choir, the DuPont Diversity Choir, and the newly-formed Ecumenical Choir of North Wilmington and five choirs from N. Wilmington: Aldersgate UMC, Concord Presbyterian Church, Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Mt. Lebanon UMC, St. Helena's Catholic Church, and St. Paul's UMC. The church will literally and figuratively be filled with more than 200 voices. There is no admission charge, but a free will offering will be taken with net proceeds to benefit United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), Presbyterian Disaster Assistance and Lutheran World Relief. Located at 602 Philadelphia Pike, Bellefonte, 19809.



## **Covenant Disciple Groups now open...**

Our 2018 Covenant Disciple (C.D.) groups will be forming during February and each of you is invited to consider joining one. Each group ideally has four to seven members who choose practices in the areas of worship, devotion, compassion, justice, spiritual promptings and making disciples for Jesus that they commit to growing in and sharing their progress each week with each other. Members find that the accountability that they have to each other greatly increases their progress with the behaviors that they had previously had good intentions to do, but were unable to consistently accomplish. Please see the sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall if you are interested. Questions? Please see Iva Boardman or Pastor Jennifer.

## **Extravagant Generosity...**

Once again our church has demonstrated its great love of God by contributing \$69,781 to missions ministries both near and far in 2017. This is roughly 26% of our total outflow of expenses.

On another note of overflowing generosity: the church recorded a total plate collection of \$188,395, an increase of 14% from the prior year of 2016.

We continue to maintain good stewardship of our church's operating expenses with \$50,948 going to building and program expenses (roughly 19% of the church's expenses) and \$111,788 going to personnel expenses (roughly 42%). The remaining 13% went to special projects and several significant capital improvements this year.



## **Super "Souper" Bowl Challenge...**

The Missions Team invites you to start 2018 with our annual challenge to help stock the Food Closet at Brandywine Community UMC. In the past, we have invited you to provide enough cans and boxes to stack as tall as Pastor Jennifer in front of the altar table. Last year, our challenge was for 400 bags of food. With 139 bags of food and over \$600.00 that equaled another 61 bags, we were blessed with 200 bags. There is thus another opportunity to see how close to 400 bags we can collect. Bags were distributed at church on January 21<sup>st</sup> and the collection will run through February 11<sup>th</sup>. We invite you to take bags to work, special interest groups, neighborhood associations or anywhere you go that there are people who might like to help. We don't know unless we ask.

## **Angel Tree Ministry Update...**

A very big thank you to all who purchased gifts and assisted with the Angel Tree Party on December 9<sup>th</sup>. We were blessed with 25 children from 16 families. Seven of the eleven families from New Castle County were in attendance along with We Kids Rock and church families and enjoyed crafts, cookie decorating and singing before the special story telling by Pastor Jennifer in the sanctuary. Deliveries were made to the remaining four New Castle County families as well as the five Sussex county families.

The Missions Team invites you to remain in contact with your families that you chose by sending birthday cards and inviting them to special events and services at church as well as family events. If you need any of the contact information for your families, please see Iva Boardman or Gale Ziegler. Let's make this a year round blessing!



## **Action Plan Update...**

On Saturday, Jan. 27 some 20 dedicated Mt. Lebanonites met to further fine-tune our action plan for 2018. Our two focus goals for the year are 1) making Sunday morning excellent and 2) discerning what needs to be set aside to focus on communication both internally within the church and externally to the community. We know that if we want to see this church grow we need to be dedicated to God's purposes and timing and then need to do our part to share our faith and excitement in Jesus effectively. A lead team of Amy Furman, Barbara Ewing, Marty Schuler, Iva Boardman, Harry West and Christian Johnson will join Pastor Jennifer in developing first quarter objectives. Details to come!

# Peace

## Prayers of sympathy and condolence to...

**Ashley Passwater and family** on the death of her mother Dana after unexpected complications from a heart attack in December. Ashley is our new Child Care Worker and we want to make sure to surround her with our care and Christ's love. Cards may be sent to her at her home: 25 Boxelder Lane, Bear DE 19701.

**Son Eugene Ainsworth Jr, and daughters Sharon and Judy Ainsworth** on the death of their father, Eugene Ainsworth. Gene was a lifelong member of Mt. Lebanon whose memory stretched back to walking up the hill from his home in Rockland Village with his mother and brother to come to church. He served diligently and honorably on the Trustees and is responsible for much of the painting and many other projects of our church. Cards of care may be sent directly to the church.



## A Modern Day Affirmation of Faith

We believe in God, the Father Creator Almighty  
Creator of the heavens and the earth;  
Creator of the all peoples and all cultures;  
Creator of all tongues and races.

We believe in Jesus Christ, his Son, our Lord,  
God made flesh in a person for all humanity,  
God made flesh in an age for all the ages,  
God made flesh in one culture for all cultures,  
God made flesh in love and grace for all creation.

We believe in the Holy Spirit  
Through whom God incarnate in Jesus Christ  
Makes his presence known in our peoples and our cultures;  
Through whom, God Creator of all that exists,  
Gives us power to become new creatures;  
Whose infinite gifts make us one people: the body of Christ.

We believe in the Church Universal because it is a sign of God's Reign,  
Whose faithfulness is shown in its many hues  
Where all the colors paint a single landscape,  
Where all tongues sing the same praise.

We believe in the Reign of God – the day of the Great Fiesta  
When all the colors of creation will form a harmonious rainbow,  
When all peoples will join in joyful banquet,  
When all tongues of the universe will sing the same song.

And because we believe, we commit ourselves:  
To believe for those who do not believe,  
To love for those who do not love,  
To dream for those who do not dream,  
Until the day when hope becomes reality.  
Amen.

—Justo González



## CONAM Corner

This month we highlight the work of the Peg-Leg Flamingos, a youth leadership ministry developed by Ragghi Rain and Rev. Carol Lakota Eastin, the first Native American woman District Superintendent in our Methodist connection. The youth in the 2011 gathering envisioned a symbol overcoming challenges. Someone humorously asked, "What could be more challenging than a flamingo with a peg leg?" How could it survive? Flamingos already are a threatened species. They survive by living as a community. They share in the raising of their young. Healthy flamingos with proper nourishment are a wondrous pink, but unhealthy flamingos' feathers turn pale. In a world out of balance, flamingos often stand on one leg and then fly above it all. Native youth are like them. "If we put drugs and alcohol into our bodies, we become weak. If we stay in an unhealthy group, we become un-healthy. As future leaders, we learn to not give up, to stand and rise above challenges! We are like them. We are strong, balanced, and connected in community with God. We are the Peg Leg Flamingos!"

## HOW MT. LEBANON WORKS (most of the time)...

United Methodist Churches are a wonderful, though sometimes messy, mix of pastor and lay-led ministries. A pastor's job description in the Book of Discipline goes on for three pages and any given church is organized to best suit its needs and remain accountable to the larger denomination. What can get tricky is that many concerns and/or ministries overlap so there's not always a clear line of decision-making. So here's the basics and we'll try to follow each month in the newsletter with more news that you can use:

**Trustees** – this group is the legal entity of the church and is responsible for maintaining and overseeing the property and grounds. More essentially they are charged with ensuring that the physical property is best situated to enable the effective ministries of this church. Currently this group meets mostly every other month on the first Tuesday of the month. They oversee the decision around priorities for capital improvements (thanks to our Endowment Fund, we have money every year available to work on such projects – this year roughly \$10,000) and project management of those improvements. Doug Hanby is the President of the Trustees; call him at 690-4639 with questions, suggestions or concerns.

**Finance Committee** – this group meets at least quarterly to review our income and expenses, manage the procedures of our financial record keeping and keep working to improve our income and reduce our expenses all while keeping any eye on the heart of this work which is to enable the effective ministries of this church. Amy Furman 479-7765 and Becky Byrd 690-4992 are co-chairs of this committee. This committee also works in close conjunction with the **Endowment Committee** which is made up of the chairpersons of the Admin Council, Trustees, Finance and Missions Teams with additional representation.

**Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC)** – this group is charged with the care and nurture of our church staff. Pastors are appointed by the Bishop and Cabinet in “consultation” with the church which have some but limited voice in the decision. Currently our staff includes a part-time Administrative Assistant, Phoebe Chan, a part-time Lead Music Minister, Christian Johnson, and two part-time Child Care Workers, Cindy Wilson and Ashley Passwater. While the Pastor supervises the staff, the SPRC helps with hiring and evaluating as well as celebrating special moments like Christian's one year anniversary last Sunday. They are also available to assist with any concerns that come up around our staff or pastor. Harry West serves as the chairperson of this committee; contact him at 584-8396.

**Lay Leadership Committee** – this group is chaired by the Pastor and composed of church members who work in hand with the Holy Spirit to match persons and their gifts, talents and interests with the several committees and teams of the church. They also work to connect church leaders and volunteers with various training opportunities. If you haven't yet been asked to serve in some capacity and would like to do so, please contact the Pastor.

**Education Team** – co-chaired by Laurence Birkett and Melissa Schuibbeo, this small but dedicated team provides the leadership needed to keep our Children's education ministry running. While our church may not currently have many young children, we must always be ready for those who might join us one day. If you have a special heart for little ones, please call them Laurence at 484-770-8216 or Melissa at 764-7720.

**Missions Team** – co-chaired by Iva Boardman and Gale Ziegler, this team meets every other month and coordinates, plans and executes our many mission ministries from the Food Closet to Ronald McDonald House to Family Promise, Angel Tree, Urban Promise and many more. Call Iva at 478-8744 or Gale at 592-9645.

**Worship Team** – this small team of dedicated members works to strengthen and deepen our weekly worship experience from planning sermon series and now taking on many of the logistical tasks of creating meaningful worship. Call either co-chair Maxcy Hanby at 478-9599 or Iva Boardman at 478-8744 for comments.

**Admin Council** – meeting quarterly, this is the formal decision making body of the church composed of chairpersons of all the committees and teams above and other interested and committed folks. Coordinating church projects, ministries and concerns and staying focused on the underlying outreach commandments of Jesus in everything we do as we seek to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

## *Reflections...*

At our house growing up, February was always a month for holidays. First, my all time favorite – Ground Hogs Day! followed by President Lincoln’s Birthday (yes I know I’m dating myself), Valentine’s Day, then President Washington’s Birthday and on that same day my father’s birthday. I was always happy about that frequent series of dates we celebrated in some fashion or another, especially in the midst of the cold dreary winter.

So imagine my surprise when recently visiting Gettysburg on another very cold day, to discover that President Lincoln carried and used a daily devotional book entitled “The Believer’s Daily Treasure; or, Texts of Scripture Arranged for Every Day of the Year” published by the Religious Tract Society of London, England. How Lincoln came to acquire the book is lost to history though some speculate that Mrs. Mary Lincoln gave it to him perhaps sometime after 1847 as he rode about on the Old Eighth Circuit busy with his legal pursuits. Lincoln was never a church member at any given locale, but was clearly an avid reader of scripture as demonstrated by his frequent references in his public speeches. When asked one time why he did not join a church, he replied: *When any church will inscribe over its altars, as its sole qualification for membership, the Savior’s condensed statement for the substance of the law and gospel, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself,” that church will I join with all my heart and soul.”*

I want to tell you that while we don’t have that statement inscribed over the altars at Mt. Lebanon, it surely seems to be inscribed in so many of the hearts and minds of those who worship here. This church continues to seek to love God and neighbor in ways that I know will draw others to Christ and to this church family as long as we keep our eye on that particular prize and goal. I pray we will continue to join together to look at everything we do in the light of whether we might be able to welcome a modern day Abraham Lincoln to our fold; one who has been disappointed by the lack of God’s truth and integrity in other places but finds it here.

*Rev. 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.